Since our first issue on Property appeared in the Winter, 2010, we have witnessed the exacerbation of the latest global economic crisis, increasing demands for a programme of global austerity to “save capitalism,” and the confrontations that arise from these intolerable conditions. Within the autocracy of the crisis, architecture and landscape have been called on to manifest a new iconography for a collapsing civil society. Scapegoat responds: in the service of what future will our designs take form?

In the middle of the sixteenth century, Étienne de La Boétie wrote “The Discourse of Voluntary Servitude” to question that peculiar human trait of desiring one’s own repression. In his recent commentary on servility and its twin life through consensus, theorist Sylvère Lotringer has remarked that we have departed from the submission to sovereign power that so irritated La Boétie to arrive at a condition of hegemonic “imvoluntary consensus.” Everywhere, the same refrain: there is no other option; the same refrain everywhere; the global economy must be saved at any cost.

But, as the influence of the carbon democracies of the twentieth century wanes and the massive scores the disproportionate degree to which design has served a global elite that refuses both voluntary submission and commitment? How could design services work with solidarity in the labor of extraction, construction, and maintenance? These questions resonate inside and against the new political economy of global austerity and Canada’s own Harper Doctrine. Scapegoat stresses to contest the production and reproduction of this current social order in terms of both the political power and economic accumulation that create its inescapable crises. Building this confrontation through practice requires that we depart from both apolitical opportunism and self-obsessed criticality and turn instead to a reappraisal of the very terms of social reproduction and the place of design within the social. This is not only a question of social support structures, but also how architecture and landscape can facilitate social organization.

With our second issue, Scapegoat argues that design can no longer hide behind an anodyne image of service. Architecture and landscape might find a renewed voice, purpose, and practice among the detectors and rebels who refuse both voluntary submission and involuntary consensus. This would mean challenging contemporary demands for our austere and compliant service, and continuing our practices of struggle in a productive and resolute denial of service to both state and capital.
Toronto today is not a happy place for those thinking radically about the politics of the city. However, the least of their worries should have to do with the election of a neo-liberal populist mayor.

The liberal discourse of diversity understood as multiculturalism, representing the national government's policy of accommodating immigrant cultures within a homogenous Canadian way of life, has been a real force in the politics of Toronto, it is unlikely that Ford would have gotten away so easily with his non-multicultural, anti-immigrant rankings, along with his crude contempt for cyclists and homeless people. However, it was the classic Third Way discursive approach between liberal cultural diversity and neoliberal economic austerity that paved the way for Fordism in Toronto and similar debacles elsewhere. This was of course the ideological form underwritten by the global political-economic dispensation of the “Competitive City,” which entails the injunction for global cities to compete relentlessly with other global cities for capital investments amidst dwindling public funds. Henceforth, as radical geographer Neil Smith noted in the Harvard Design Magazine, “urban policy” has become “little more than a euphemism for the process by which city governments function as private market investors.”

If the essence of urbanism was so reformed for the new millennium with reference to capital, then what about labour? Enter Richard Florida and The Rise of the Creative Class— the man and the idea welcomed with great fan-fare in 2002 by the University of Toronto, with the influential blessing of the Economic Development people at the City of Toronto and large expanses of weekly space in the Globe and Mail to disseminate his precious wisdom. The boosters of Toronto had already paid Florida a hefty lecture fee the year previous, apparently without getting enough of his seductive solution to the structural problems of Toronto in just one ecstatic evening. But why were so many people in the media and academia suddenly falling heads over heels for such an age-old revelation that is now an utterly commonplace idea—namely, that human beings are inherently creative, and are especially compelled to be so merely in order to survive under the conditions of capitalism? As Marx and Engels said in the Communist Manifesto in 1848, we cannot exist without constantly revolutionizing the instruments of production, and thereby the relations of production, and with them the whole relations of society. “That is to say, constant revolution of production, uninterrupted disturbance of all social conditions, everlasting uncertainty and agitation distinguishes the bourgeois epoch from all earlier ones”—by any conceivable index of “innovation,” “creativity,” or “growth.”

However, Florida’s originality lies not in substance, but rather in a talent for enhancing his own subject—by making a small fortune from the well-worn idea of creativity, which has been famously elaborated for various purposes by a range of writers since Marx, including Joseph Schumpeter (“creative destruction”), Marshall Berman (All That's Solid Melts Into Air), and his own alleged guru Jane Jacobs (The Economy of Cities and Cities and theTRANSITIONS). So we are supposed to think that the revolution to liberate creativity is nothing as old as capital, nothing as new as Ford. Indeed, in Florida’s considered opinion, it is happening right now. In case we haven’t noticed it, he urges us to hurry up and join in: “It is up to us—all of us—to complete the transformation” begun by the world-historical agency of the “creative class.”

The transformation is in progress. Florida writes in the preface to the paperback edition of Rise (his preferred abbreviation), “is potentially bigger and more powerful (than the) great transition from the agricultural to the industrial age.” Such a hubrisic hypothesis would be reckless on the part of a yuppie on drugs, coming from a Columbia University-educated professor of monetarism, it is positively irresponsible. Clearly, Rise intends to address not serious studies of history or cities, and certainly not revolutions. As his doctoral supervisor Peter Marcuse lamented, it reads rather like a series of “after-dinner speeches,” tailored for our business elites and civic leaders suffering from midlife crisis, another5 middle-aged capitalist amnesiac.

What does Florida offer them? Basically, some numbers in the form of “indices” on “talent,” “technology,” and “tolerance,” correlated to “innovation,” “creativity,” and “growth,” and anecdotes explaining how cool cool people are—and why our wonderful cities would be doomed without them. Florida’s homespun stories not only mysticate his audiences; they also flatter them. The gracious-dinner crowds seem to have flattered him in return, as can be seen from the icon labeled “The Praise” on the website displaying his latest book entrances.

Some professors of urban studies who lost their social democratic pudginess in the rapid currents of neoliberal globalization have jumped swiftly onto Florida’s chicer bandwagon. But others see the cracks. In November 2010, the publication of Florida’s book in Canada led to a rather belated and predictable backlash in the pages of The Globe and Mail, with the following headline: “Rise—The Bullet.”

Much ink has been spilt by some disoriented liberals in attributing Fordism in Toronto to a suburban-urban vote split, running the risk of blaming its enviable electoral success on those out-of-downtowners who just could not vote like the more enlightened “creative class.” But their raw statistics and beautiful maps alone say nothing about the production of the conditions that enabled the possibility of Ford. Just under a month before Ford’s election victory, Rick Salutin was right to insist: “What matters isn’t the regnant ideology of Toronto, which serve to negate the aestheticized embourgeoisment of the inner city. None of this would have flown so stealthily under the radars of those now viscerally outraged by Ford, however, without the enabling forces of Ford had been in the making for a while previously, apparently without getting paid Florida a hefty lecture fee the year before. These include, above all, the hard-core practices of Toronto’s neoliberal urbanism: the cynical subjection of the working class to the exploitative policies of the state policy rather than subaltern identity.

Diverse City, Competitive City, Creative City—these are the three sources and component parts of the hegemonic, if not merely dominant, ideology of Toronto, which serve to both mask and glorify the realities of the Exploitative City, the Neoliberal City and the Elitist City that is also Toronto. The liberal discourse of diversity understood as multicultural “tolerance” has long been a staple of this mindset, by way of state policy rather than subaltern identity. Had the latter
were needed in this situation, it would not be for obstructing the obscene vanity of Rice, but to transcend an urban condition that turns charlatans into celebrities, while bohemians overrun their city for “police” of “task force reports” labouring to “unlock the highest standards” and ring an alarm. Sure enough, with a bit further reading the PFP reveals its real purpose: to turn planning into a licensed profession, like law, by narrowly democratising its exclusive domain of standardised technological expertise on the urban terrain, to be policed by rigorous rituals of membership and accreditation. So we should not be surprised to find that the intent of CIP’s new Code of Ethics is to distinguish professionals from “non-professionals,” without a hint of even the most perfunctory gesture towards social justice that one is accustomed to encountering in such high-minded discourse. Yes, it is hard to judge the prospects of professional service based on such an alarmingly neat and desired expression of what Antonio Gramsci called “economic–corporate” interest. But CIP’s apalling self-seeking behaviour also shows us how much our future progressives have to catch up with the aesthetics and politics of medical guilds, which inspired not only John Ruskin and William Morris, but also Walter Gropius. Moreover, it highlights the distance radical urban praxis is now obliged to keep from hallowed “professional practice.”

What Toronto teaches us accords well with the fundamental lesson offered by the history of architecture and urban planning in the twentieth century: it is wise for citizens to abandon the fate of their city to the rule of either the expert (state) or the market (capital). History also suggests that attempts to transcend the logics of state and capital in radically democratic ways are essentially and necessarily urban—a point underlined by Gus Debord and the Situationists when they proposed to call the Paris Commune “an urban revolution,” and elaborated theoretically by Lefebvre in The Urban Revolution (1971). 1 Advancing the novel thesis that urbanization has superseded industrialization as the motor of contemporary capitalism following the “implosion-explosion” of the city, Lefebvre identifies the supreme formal feature of the urban: centrality. “What does the city create?” he asks: “Nothing. It centralizes creation. And yet it creates everything. Nothing exists without exchange, without union, without proximity, that is, without relationships. The city creates a situation, the urban situation.” 2 Urban-capital destroys the city, but by virtue of the forms of centrality that are still fundamentally characteristic of the urban, for Lefebvre the possibility always remains open for a re-realisation of the socio-spatial architecture of the city on a plane beyond state and capital. Beyond political and economic reification lies another city, and an architecture, of radical intercourse. 3 In two recent, coruscating studies of architecture and urbanism—The Project of Autonomy (2008) and The Possibility of an Absolute Architecture (2011)—the architect and theorist Pier Vittorio Aureli opens a similar urban-political possibility by positing a radical autonomy between the city and urbanisation, which he explores with specific reference to the potentials of architectural form, considered against the political-historical backdrop of Italian Operations and Autonomy. The somnolent French and Italian Marxisms of Lablache and Aureli are worlds apart, intellectually and politically, from the Foro and Florias of the moment. Yet, in the unsavoury company of the latter, the former provide just the kind of provocation we need to aim for nothing less than a praxis of politics and urbanism within and against capitalism.
An exploration of Wendy Jacob's recent work reveals key distinctions between different modes of group work. Under the aegis of Explorers Club, and then Autism Studio, Jacob has developed a working method informed not by service or collaboration, but by the communal structure of the club. A club is an affiliation among people with different skills, interests and backgrounds who, as a result, seek different outcomes of their membership. Both Explorers Club and Autism Studio consist of small, special interest groups devoted to the leisurely but rigorous indulgence of shared interests—making YouTube videos, scavenging and collecting, and public space—and interest groups devoted to the leisurely but rigorous indulgence of shared interests—making YouTube videos, scavenging and collecting, and public space—and their memberships are constituted by artists and youth on the autism spectrum. The club’s activities consist of outings and meetings, and almost always have some form of public display. While the clubs are attentive to the various ‘autisms’ of their members, this attention is not developed in order to pathologize them, but to develop projects pursued in this context exist not despite, but across distinctions in ability and political fabric of the places they inhabit, creating projects consistent with Jacob’s work post-Haha.

GB: What were the club’s principal activities?
WJ: To explore. To lay down lines. To go to new locations. To visit every station in the subway system.

GB: Why did you decide to expand the Explorers Club into Autism Studio, formalising its methods and involving more people?
WJ: With the Explorers Club, I was not interested in the pathology or condition of autism per se, but with the experience of being with Stefano (and his partner) in a way of organizing and experiencing the world. In thinking about the club, I wanted to see what could happen if a group of neurotypical students could re-imagine the physical world from the perspective of someone with autism. (Neurotypical is a term coined in the autistic community for someone not on the autism spectrum.) I was convinced that the exchange could be mutually beneficial and that new ways of thinking about space and community might come from it.

GB: How was the experience of teaching the Autism Studio “method”? For two consecutive years, you led Autism Studio as a semester-long course in MIT’s Visual Arts Program. How did it differ from one year to the next?
WJ: In its first year, the class used autism as a point of departure for a broader investigation into the nature of experience. One student, Jackie Lee, worked with Clovis Bockstaele, a young, non-verbal autistic man. Their work culminated in a birthday party, where Jackie and Clovis tore paper together as an act of communication and intentionality. It was a beautiful project. In its second year, I built collaboration into the structure of the class and all the students worked with autistic partners.

GB: The Explorers Club provides a model for collaboration between artists and non-artists—people with different interests, skill sets, and desired outcomes. Do you view this collaboration as a form of service? And does service imply a kind of longevity? How did this translate in Autism Studio, where students who participated in projects were ultimately framed the duration of the interactions?
WJ: I hesitate to call what we do “service.” Maybe “group work” in a betterfit. Service implies doing for, and doesn’t acknowledge the two-way aspect of the project. If you want a straightforward answer to your second question, I don’t think Autism Studio’s group work necessarily require longevity. A short-term collaboration can be as fruitful as a long-term one. For most of the students, their involvement was determined by the length of the semester. For others, the work has continued. For example, Gershon Dubin and Theo Issaias, for example, have all continued to be involved with Clovis and his family, two, three years after the studio formally ended.

GB: How did you approach the families of Stefano, James Crawley, and Clivia?
WJ: I had known Stefano and Clovis’s families for a while, and recently met James’s mother. By way of introduction, I invited the boys’ parents to meet with the class. During that initial visit, students and families paired themselves up. The families were an important part of the collaborations. We depended on them for guidance and interpretation.

GB: In the iteration of Autism Studio that I participated in, we talked about not wanting to be another form of therapy or to offer some kind of kudo. We didn’t imagine that we would be experts on anything, and we weren’t necessarily interested in approaching action as a pathology. Can you talk about how you conceptualised the activities of Autism Studio participants in contrast to the therapeutic routines of the families we worked with?
WJ: Many autistic children have highly structured lives shaped by a code of therapy, teachers, and other specialists. The participants in Autism Studio met on a regular basis, be-cause each participant’s routine, at least for the duration of the semester. I never had ambitions, however, for the activities of the studio to be part of a larger therapeutic regime. I know about James, Clovis, and Clivia, and their particular therapy in which James was involved and incorporated aspects of it into your project. So that was an interesting crossover, though your use of that information had more to do with your own thinking and process than with supplementing James’s therapy.

WJ: When you presented on Explorers Club in the early days, I recall you saying something along the lines of sometimes you and Addy would plan activities that would play off of or exaggerate Stefano’s autism.” Can you reflect on that (or correct me if I didn’t remember it right)?
WJ: I think what’s important is that we weren’t approaching the Explorers Club as an experiment in behaviour modification. We weren’t trying to make Stefano appear “less autistic,” but were interested in engaging with him as he was, with all his particular abilities and interests.
WJ: I guess what I meant was that you didn’t see any of Stefano’s behaviour as “symptoms” of his autism, as in something to be expunged. Instead you wanted to run with him, just trust and honour his ways of seeing and doing—even, or especially, when they diverged from the norm.

WJ: Maha’s project Flood has garnered renewed attention in recent years. Perhaps this is because of an interest in service as a model for politically engaged art and the desire for two-dimensional works that stand in stark contrast to the itinerant art star production encouraged by biennial culture. Can you talk about the relationship between Haha’s work and Autism Studio?
WJ: With both Flood and the projects of Autism Studio there is a messiness of identity. Is it therapy? Education? Social work? In both cases, the answer is none of the above, and a very little bit of all of the above. Mostly, however, it is art. With Flood, we weren’t trying to change public policy or discover a cure, but were creating an indoor garden that provided clean greens to a limited number of people with HIV/AIDS. The project was different things to different people. For some it was a source of greens, for others it was a place to garden, socialize, or hang out. For one student, it was a patch of green in the middle of a grey Chicago winter.

The focus on collaboration as a means of research is also central to both Flood and the current working process. It isn’t that two or four heads are better than one; it is more about what happens when people with different backgrounds...
and experiences get together for a common purpose. It’s an inefficient process that involves lots of talk, following members, and getting lost.

In describing Hahn’s work, we always up and telling stories. Each project comes out of a particular place and set of circumstances, so we tell stories to establish the context. Maybe the projects of Autism Studio are the same, and would be better communicated as a collection of short stories—each story being about a relationship and what it produced.

GB: I keep coming back to your use of the word club. When I decided to become involved in Autism Studio, this word was the thing that gave me an entry point to the whole project—and made me feel like it was something I could get involved in. The word club makes it really clear that the project can’t be reduced to providing a service. And it’s not about collaboration because collaboration implies everyone is serving a shared goal, or they are investing in a similar way, which just isn’t true with Autism Studio projects or the Explorers Club. I would say that what’s happening about stories is something particular to the relational structure of the club and the project of being able to work at MIT, describing our work as forms of collaboration with people who aren’t artists is a kind of default—that is problematic in its own ways, and has a real currency in the art world.

WJ: It’s now accepted practice for artists to collaborate, both with other artists and with experts from other fields. It’s easy for me to describe my work with an acoustical engineer, or a bright street kid. It’s much harder to describe my work with an autistics boy.

GB: Part of why it’s easier is that the professional identities involved in collaboration projects have shared a goal, each member still had a different stake in accomplishing it. In the Explorers Club, you were the resident artist. You were the one who was in charge of caring about the art part. So, for example, you thought of the exercise of tape as drawing, whereas the other members of the club might not have.

WJ: I’m not sure if Stefano thought of what he was doing as drawing, but I did. There were lots of things going on. Stefano was laying down tape and trying to get to the next train station. I was trying to document the drawing. And Stefano was engaging with Stefano and rolling in the yards and yards of tape. We were each on our own track.

GB: It’s like preschool kids on a playground. It sometimes looks like they’re playing together, but in fact they’re playing side by side. That’s how I felt a lot of the time, like we were playing side by side.

WJ: Now that you’ve had some time to reflect on Explorers Club, what do you think of the outcomes of that? Is it important to present this work as art, and if so, how do you do that?

GB: The work could have just stayed as this weekly activity, but I wanted to have an audience. I decided to make a book where a line would run through all the pages, through different locations and years. Once I made this decision, I started taking pictures differently than I had. Before, to me, the work had to run across the frame horizontally in order to connect with the line on the next page. So then I really shifted gears and focused on framing the line. And Stefano was such an expert at the line by then, he didn’t need any encouragement—he would just grab the roll of tape and go. And I would run alongside, and take pictures as fast as I could. We both just did our thing. At that point I almost began to think of him as my expert shadows assistant. One day, Stefano couldn’t come. I remember it was a sunny day, which was rare that spring, so I asked one of the students to draw with him. The student could put down the line for me instead. But it didn’t work. Without Stefano doing his job, we felt self-conscious. And then it was taking much too long to frame each shot, so the pictures looked posed and flat.

GB: Yeah, which is what makes me skeptical about this whole ‘parallel play’ thing. I don’t buy it. Although it might seem like you’re each doing your own thing, you’re actually thinking about each other. Even if you’re just doing your own thing, you still actually affect each other. Just the fact of being in the presence of another being—even if it’s not another person, even if it’s a cat, or a plant—there’s a really important kind of solidarity at the most basic level.

WJ: Synergy?

GB: Yeah, I think there’s more than that. I think there’s a kind of synergy. And I think that’s exactly what you described.

WJ: I agree. I also think Stefano liked an audience; the more guests explorers we’d have along, the more “on” he’d be. Some times I’d invite other people to come photograph, or at one point we had two filmmakers who were doing a documentary about the club. Stefano just lit up, ran with the line, something he wouldn’t have done before.

GB: The line is a great image, not just for Explorers Club, but to conceptualize on a larger scale your work as an artist, over the last three years or more.

WJ: The line goes through the color of your work as an artist, over the last three years or more. You keep picking up this thread, or tape line, and pulling it into the next project. Explorers Club runs into Autism Studio. And then it’s been picked up again by Gershon and Jackie, who are still working with Clovis, and now you’re with it to Edinburgh. So let’s keep following the line and talk about a couple of other projects. In your response to my question about the relationship between Hahn’s work and Autism Studio, you began by elaborating on the focus on collaboration, which points to a narrative for research. And by exploring through this conversation are the really crucial distinctions between collaboration, the club, and service.

GB: The Square Chair, which you created with Temple Grandin, was a collaborative project. Can you describe the structure of your collaboration with Grandin?

WJ: I was interested in this square space machine that Temple had made for herself, and wanted to find out more about it. I had a hunch that Temple had the key to something that I wanted to know. It wasn’t any clearer than that. I went to her asking if I could visit and see the squeeze machine, and she invited me out to Fort Collins (Colorado) where she lives. Experiencing the machine was a little intimidating because it’s such a huge contraption that you enter on hands and knees. I talked to Temple about making a squeeze device that was less intimidating and embodied comfort. We went out for dinner—I think we had beef tacos, which was funny to me because her profession is designing systems for the meat packing industry—and I talked about wanting to place the squeeze in a chair. Temple’s an engineer, so we just started drawing ideas right there in the restaurant. And that was the extent of our collaboration. It was really just an intensive, two-day visit. After that, fabricated prototypes were shown and showed how the ideas from our collaboration had gone. At each location, Temple and I would come to the opening for a public talk. So for a period of about two years, we each saw each other every four to six months at those events. We went on to get it going. But the real work together happened in those two days in Colorado.

GB: More recently, you’ve been working with Alison Sterling from Artlink. Can you describe that?

WJ: Alison runs this great program in Edinburgh where people with profound cognitive disabilities work with artists. She’s Holingworth, for example, organized the Feral Choir v. Feral Orchestra, a kind of electronic band. She’s working with people who don’t necessarily have a lot of manual dexterity, but who do have rhythm that they express through clapping or rocking. With these instruments that Sheve and his partner invent, the Feral Orchestra can create a kind of industrial sounds. They bring in lights and costumes, and it’s this big production. At the end of the session, they put it all away, and the room turn back into an institutional space.

GB: It strikes me that the public aspect of Autism Studio links right back up to the first thing you brought up about stories. At the heart of all the projects is the interaction between the members of the club. But it’s not just about that. There’s a larger aesthetic project, but there’s also a larger social project, and being part of those is served by the function of them being public. Because that’s about making sure that people outside of the club hear those stories and can be witness to its aesthetic outcomes. I think that part of how the club manages to avoid having their activities being reduced to a service, which is something that is offered in a capitalist economy in lieu of a product—the labour involved in being either a product or a service—and calling it a “service” reduces it to that logic.
Kids on Buildings engages kids in conversation about architecture and the city. There are stark differences between the design logic of professionals and the thoughts and actions of a young public for whom some of these spaces are ostensibly designed. This conversation took place at two of Toronto’s iconic architecture sites: the Art Gallery of Ontario (AGO) designed by Gehry Partners, and the Ontario College of Art and Design (OCAD) designed by Alsop Architects. What follows is an imaginative remaking and inhabitation of these spaces with correspondents Jonah Bachtiar, age 10, and Hannah Alincy, age 11.

SCAPEGOAT SAYS: Designing for people or other animals and plants?
H: A little bit of everything.
J: Designing for whatever the designer wants?
H: Yeah.
J: Do you ever feel like you’re in a designed space where you can’t do what you want to do?
J: Sometimes when I’m in a movie theatre and it’s like a 2-hour movie and I’ve seen one and a half of it and I’m kind of like “Oh gosh—I just want to run around and stuff.”
H: Can you think of other spaces that are not as fun as they could be?
J: Sometimes when I’m in a museum and it’s kind of like a 2-hour tour and I’ve seen one and a half of it and I’m kind of like “Oh gosh—I just want to run around and stuff.”

SCAPEGOAT SAYS: What do you think of this space?
J: You could do whatever you want here! I feel like climbing that.
H: Do you think this building will fall?
J: No.
H: Only if I lie down.
J: Yeah, like school trips. Like on your way to one, when you’re in the bus you have to sit there for hours. It’s sooooo boring.

SCAPEGOAT SAYS: Why do you think they put the building up so high?
J: So they have more space.
H: Why do you think they put the building up so high?
J: So they have more space.
H: So they have more space.

SCAPEGOAT SAYS: Do you like playgrounds?
J: Yeahhh… (Hesitantly)
H: Could this one be better designed?
J: Like bigger stuff! Way bigger stuff!
H: What’s wrong with it?
J: It’s small.
J: And boring.
H: What would you do to make a way better playground?
J: What’s wrong with it?
H: It’s small.
J: And boring.
H: More space where?
J: You could put something under it, but there’s nothing there.
H: You could put something under it, but there’s nothing there.
J: Nothing…
H: But don’t you think people still like to hang out there?
J: Well, yeah but it would be more surprising if you could hang out in something.
H: You know what I want? I’d like a big big big big slide and then it’s more exciting.
J: Oh, there’s something.
H: Not when you see it more than once and it’s the same thing. (Recalling a trip) Causing it was mostly just grass. Trees there wasn’t anything.
J: Do you think of this space?
H: You could do whatever you want here! I feel like climbing that.
J: You could do whatever you want here! I feel like climbing that.

SCAPEGOAT SAYS: More space than once and it’s the same thing. (Recalling a trip) Causing it was mostly just grass. Trees there wasn’t anything.
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J: Nothing…
H: But don’t you think people still like to hang out there?
J: Well, yeah but it would be more surprising if you could hang out in something.
H: Oh, the slides are too close together. If it was wider it would be more surprising.
J: Anything else?
H: Maybe a slide that connects to OCAD.
J: I want it more exciting.
H: It’s small.
J: And boring.
H: What would you do to redesign your school?
J: Do you think of this space?
H: You could do whatever you want here! I feel like climbing that.
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J: You could do whatever you want here! I feel like climbing that.
H: You could do whatever you want here! I feel like climbing that.
SS: Because you want something surprising?
J: Yeah.

SS: And something to jump on.
J: Like jumping.

SS: What else would you change in your school?
J: Hallways...

SS: They're so boring. Hallways are so boring, they are so straight. Lines are boring.
J: In schools you wouldn't get your own tubing-things, and it had a floor so that water didn't get through and then you walk out of the classroom and you're in the water and you get to ride until your next class.

SS: Do you think dogs would want a space that's similar to a space you have, or not?
J: Yes, they like to run.

SS: What else would you do if you were to design a house for dogs?
J: You know how you see a normal little dog house, and then you go inside and there's a disco party...Woof!—and a dog bar.

SS: A Doggie Disco.
J: Woof! Oh yeah!

SS: DJ Doggie... (Raging)
J: ...And then you see DJ Doggie with headphones and he's done... "POMM!" Shooosh, "POCOPOPM!" Shooosh, "POCOPOPM!" Shooosh, "POCOPOPM!" Shooosh...

SS: What do you think of this space?
J: It's boring.

SS: Boring but big—it's just stairs, and wood.

SS: What's the fun material to use?
J: I want it to be Bubbles.

SS: Foam, Styrofoam, did you know bubble wrap was originally created as wallpaper?

SS: No way, really?
J: Don't you love bubble wrap dances?

SS: Yeah! How about dancing with other materials like straws, all over the ground?
J: You're trying to use it and then you slip extra. So if you want to do a slipping move, don't even try...it will do it for you!

SS: Do you think dogs would want a similar space to the one you have, or not?
J: Yes, they like to run.

SS: What else would you do if you were to design a house for dogs?
J: You know how you see a normal little dog house, and then you go inside and there's a disco party...Woof!—and a dog bar.

SS: A Doggie Disco.
J: Woof! Oh yeah!

SS: DJ Doggie... (Raging)
J: ...And then you see DJ Doggie with headphones and he's done... "POMM!" Shooosh, "POCOPOPM!" Shooosh, "POCOPOPM!" Shooosh, "POCOPOPM!" Shooosh...

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SS: What do you think of abstract art?
J: You mean that stuff that kind of looks like what you did in kindergarten?

SS: What do you think of abstract art?
J: I think they copied the ROM (Royal Ontario Museum). The ROM looks kind of similar, but it's smaller. They used the screen thing. I don't like the ROM thing.

SS: What do you think about this space?
J: I like it 'cause it's awesome.

SS: What do you think of comfort material?
J: That would be Weird Art.

SS: What would make this space more fun?
J: Colour. I wish you could yell.

H: I wish you could yell.
J: And someone says, "You're not allowed to sit on it because it's art"..."It's a chair!"

J: Did you know that one time I was on a couch and then I fell asleep, and I fell off and went headfirst!

H: I wish you could yell.
J: SS: Why do you think people are quiet in a museum?
J: To admire.

SS: What makes artbook interesting for you?
J: I like it 'cause it's weird. If it's weird, you could do something on it.

SS: If you could play on it...
J: That would be awesome.

H: Do you think that kind of looks like what you did in kindergarten?

SS: What do you think of comfort material?
J: I feel queasy...how is it going to work for dogs?

H: I wish you could yell.
J: And someone says, "You're not allowed to sit on it because it's art"..."It's a chair!"

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H: I wish you could yell.
Mona Fawaz is an associate professor in the Masters in Urban Planning and Policy/Masters in Urban Design at the American University of Beirut. I had the pleasure of interviewing her about her research on Hezbollah’s post-war reconstruction project in Beirut, which was quickly put into place after the Israeli bombing of Lebanon in 2006. This interview focuses on the site of Haret Hreik, a suburb in the south of Beirut that was completely destroyed during the bombardment. I was interested in knowing more about her intervention as a practicing urban planner, and how it coincided with that emergence of Hezbollah’s new role as urban planner during the reconstruction period specific to Haret Hreik.

Nasrin Himada: Why did you choose Haret Hreik as a case study? Describe exactly where Haret Hreik is in Lebanon and how it was affected by the Israeli attack in July 2006?

Mona Fawaz: Haret Hreik is located south of the municipal boundaries of Beirut, within what is generally described as the “Greater Beirut Area” (fig. 1). Until the 1960s, Haret Hreik was an old Christian village, an independent municipal district on the southeastern coast of Beirut that included orange groves and a handful of individual houses. Several factors contributed to the densification of the neighbourhood and its transformation into a dense residential and commercial hub of the Lebanese capital city: rural migration fueled by unequal national rural-urban development as of the 1950s, the repeated Israeli incursions into/eviscerations of South Lebanon as of the 1980s, which precipitated counter-attacks toward the city; and the Lebanese Civil War (1975–1990). By the 1970s, Beirut had grown beyond its municipal boundaries to include many villages and was nearing a continuous metropolitan zone. Haret Hreik is one of those.

Within Greater Beirut, Haret Hreik is part of Dahiyah, the southern suburb of Beirut widely identified as the Shiah (Muslim) territory of the city, an area largely controlled by the two Shiah political groups, Amal and, especially, Hezbollah. In many ways, Haret Hreik was the core of this Shiah suburb until its demolition in 2006. It was the richest and most established neighbourhood in Dahiyah, the seat of many branches for local and international banks, several widely attended private schools, and vibrant commercial activities (fig. 2). Haret Hreik was also central to Dahiyah until 2006 because the neighbourhood acted as the central seat of Hezbollah in Lebanon. It housed the Party’s political headquarters (majlis al shura in its security zone (‘al ma‘wara al ‘amm)), as well as the headquarters of most of the NGOs through which the Party organizes the provision of social and infrastructure services for its constituencies.

On the last days of the 33-Day War on Lebanon, which Israel waged in July and August 2006, the Israeli army implemented several air raids on Haret Hreik. It was a blitz that weakened the residents in the neighbourhood. It destroyed an estimated 260 multi-story apartment buildings and severely damaged hundreds of others. Ten- to twelve-story apartment buildings were turned into craters, infrastructure networks were annihilated, and street boundaries became unidentifiable (fig. 3 and 4). The Israeli blitz on Haret Hreik carried a strong symbolic dimension. Israel flattened this neighbourhood as an act of revenge against the Party it was unable to defeat militarily, the Israeli government was ordering the erasure of what it had identified as the spatial body-politic of Hezbollah. In practice, however, the Israeli army turned a lifetime of investments into rubble, destroying thousands of family homes and businesses. In that sense, Israel collectively punished thousands of urban dwellers and reduced their position to the uni-dimensional role of supporters of the Party. The dwellers were being chastised for an assumed political belief—their support for Hezbollah, a militant Islamic movement. One can dwell on the fact that this is a violation of the Geneva convention and many other international treaties on war and peace, but that fact for many people in the Arab Middle-East, especially in Lebanon and Palestine, talking about international rights has become a dull exercise in which we denounce one Israeli violation after another, and we decry the double standards of the international community to no avail.

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finance, was the head of the coalition. He is widely recognized for his role in implementing neoliberal economic policies in the country. If you look at the preceding period, Hezbollah repeatedly accused the national government of plotting the demilitarization of Lebanon and its allies and the national government. Hezbollah strongly believed that members of the government were delaying reconstruction in order to agitate the dwellers, hoping they would later blame Hezbollah's military resistance for their troubles. At the same time, al-Saniura, the prime minister, also placed the reconstruction effort at the heart of the standoff with Hezbollah. In several of his speeches, al-Saniura condemned the neighborhood dwellers, identified as Hezbollah's constituency, for having built their houses "illegally," and threatened them with delays in public compensation based on contested property and building status. These accusations were in reality exaggerations, but they illustrate the symbolic dimension of legal and how it can be manipulated to accept or contest the right of a certain class or religious group to be in a part of the city.

The main options offered through the Hezbollah reconstruction project in 2006 need to be analyzed in this context. Interviews we conducted with Hezbollah officials at the time revealed that most Party members were convinced that the less they involved the national government in the construction process, the more efficient it would be. They were concerned about the neighborhood dwellers resettling elsewhere if reconstruction dragged on. So, sparked the experience of El-Saray, the public agency that was set up for the rehabilitation of the southern coast of Beirut. The project has been halted since 1996, trapped in political tensions, and they were wary that any negotiations between the national government and the Hezbollah Party would determine the outcome of the project. First, there was the decision that the Party would take charge of the reconstruction effort itself, that it would set up an independent agency (loosely affiliated with Mudha al-Bina, its state-recognized reconstruction arm) that would oversee the reconstruction process, defining the general framework and strategy, but also commisioning the design of individual buildings and overseeing their actual contracting and building. Second, the option to rebuild the neighborhood largely as it had been before the war, meaning that every building and block will be rebuilt in the same volume and form that it had occupied in the pre-war era, sitting on the same blocks, in the same places—even if it is widely recognized that the pre-war buildings suffered from severe deficiencies of natural lighting and cross-ventilation. These decisions were geared toward reducing negotiations with public agencies and other actors, like the neighborhod dwellers, who were able to delay the reconstruction project. Centralizing the reconstruction process in its hand allowed the Party to coordinate the entire reconstruction effort, and they became the ultimate decision-maker in all stages of the process. Rebuilding the site as it was before the war had the merit of eliminating a potentially lengthy phase of exploring design options, which would have to be discussed and agreed on with dwellers, and with public actors in planning and municipal agencies. It also reduced the demands placed on state planning agencies to a single, one-time exemption: the rebuilding of houses as they had been in the pre-war era.

The architectural plan was justified by emphasizing the memory of place and the "people's attachment to particular elements of the built environment." The "preservation of memory" would justify rebuilding blocks otherwise in violation of building and zoning regulations, but also and more importantly, standards of architectural practice that secure natural lighting and cross-ventilation in buildings—meaning the quality of life.

The main actors included in these decisions was the mayor of Haret Hreik, including its vice-president, despite the fact that he was, and is, an active member of the Party. At the time, the municipality had agreed with a group of us (professors from the AUB) that an international urban design competition would invite architects from all over the world to design for the post-war reconstruction of the neighborhood. Our role was to support the municipality by developing the ideas that were being canvassed. We were interested in seeing that no other individual or group can do the same without facing repercussions from the local authorities. In that sense, the absence of a legal framework in which the post-war reconstruction can be worked in favor of Hezbollah—in the post-war balance of power that provided the ground for reconstruction—could make the neighborhood dwellers can rebuild their homes by delegating authority over the process to the Party. By involving them in a legal battle over their property rights, Hezbollah put into a very difficult position the municipality, no less the national government. Hezbollah, on the other hand, was prepared to take control of the reconstruction effort, and, with its power, was able to bypass this legal hurdle, which made it easier to bring together the neighborhood dwellers, including the Party, that were interested in rebuilding their homes.

Like your question about the type of an act, Hezbollah is a political party and, as such, it is not as clear as it seems. In the summer of 2006, Hezbollah had three ministers in the national government and several deputies in parliament. In Haret Hreik, the mayor at the time and the president of the municipality was a member of the Party and the mayor was affiliated with another political party allied to Hezbollah. A Hezbollah member was part of the national commission set-up by the prime minister to determine what compensation should be disbursed. Many of Hezbollah's allies at the time were also highly placed in the national government. In that sense, Hezbollah had the ability to influence the process of public decision-making, as well as to halt it.

NH: As you mention above, the highest authorities in the Hezbollah Party wanted to quickly return the displaced population back to Harat Hreik, in order to restore its previously consolidated territorial base. In order to do this without any state intervention, they made a request that the suburb be returned to its exact state prior to the Israeli attack on Lebanon. How did they go about doing this? And how did it then bypass legislation and other involvement from the state? How did this ensure their autonomy?

MF: Two critical decisions were made in November 2006 that would determine the outcome of the project. First, there was the decision that the Party would take charge of the reconstruction effort itself, that it would set up an independent agency (loosely affiliated with Mudha al-Bina, its state-recognized reconstruction arm) that would oversee the reconstruction process, defining the general framework and strategy, but also commisioning the design of individual buildings and overseeing their actual contracting and building. Second, the option to rebuild the neighborhood largely as it had been before the war, meaning that every building and block will be rebuilt in the same volume and form that it had occupied in the pre-war era, sitting on the same blocks, in the same places—even if it is widely recognized that the pre-war buildings suffered from severe deficiencies of natural lighting and cross-ventilation. These decisions were geared toward reducing negotiations with public agencies and other actors, like the neighborhood dwellers, who were able to delay the reconstruction project. Centralizing the reconstruction process in its hand allowed the Party to coordinate the entire reconstruction effort, and they became the ultimate decision-maker in all stages of the process. Rebuilding the site as it was before the war had the merit of eliminating a potentially lengthy phase of exploring design options, which would have to be discussed and agreed on with dwellers, and with public actors in planning and municipal agencies. It also reduced the demands placed on state planning agencies to a single, one-time exemption: the rebuilding of houses as they had been in the pre-war era.

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Wa’d empowers them to do it. In this context, if you want to assess the intentions of the dwellers then have they re-assessed their planning to gain ground and re-gain territory as well for Hezbollah to take complete control of in opposition to the state agency. If one takes this out of this impetus for radical urban planning in a neighbourhood that was completely devastated, the dwellers gave permission for Hezbollah to take complete control of the planning process. But this became strategic on the part of Hezbollah and was used to gain ground and re-gain territory as well as a populace base in this neighbourhood. How do you see this change today? If they have maintained a hold on this territory then they have re-assessed their planning initiatives?

MF: In one of the most cited classifications of planning approaches, John Friedmann places planning along a spectrum that ranges from the conserva-tive to radical. One of the main ways in which the classification is conducted is to look at who has the planner or whom the planner considers to be the “client” to whom she is accountable. Conserva-tive planners are commissioned by state agents and conceive of their projects (e.g. master plans, etc.) as tools to help public administrators manage and plan the territories over which they have juris-diction. Radical planners are commissioned by neigh-bourhood dwellers and respond to the latter, often in opposition to the state agency. If one takes this classification seriously, it is possible to describe the Wa’d project to be an attempt at radical planning, as some of my colleagues have, as it stands in the face of state regulations that prevent neigh-bourhood dwellers from rebuilding their homes. Instead, Wa’d empowers them to do this. In context, however, to claim that the neighbourhood dwellers had an imperative for radical planning is a huge leap. If you want to assess the intentions of the dwellers or property claimants in 2006, I think you have to go back to the points raised above about both the legal framework and the political agenda between Hezbollah and the national government. I will do this exercise briefly because I think that it is already clear from the above discussion.

In the absence of a legal framework that recognizes the actual entitlement of property, claimants in the neighbourhood, property owners and/or building committees cannot apply for a building permit and secure authorization from public authorities to begin reconstruction. In that context, they cannot apply for a permit and would hence be stopped from rebuilding their houses by the local municipal police. The only actor capable of actually defining all local authorities in Hezbollah who can commission reconstructions even if they are not sanctioned by national law. This was the scenario that took place. All discussion of whether dwellers were inclined or not inclined to delegate the reconstruction to the Party is speculation. Certain facts—such as the hike in the price of steel in 2007—may have precipitated this option and was likely the case. But it should be clear that dwellers didn’t have the choice. If they wanted to rebuild, they had to delegate to the building to the Party. But this is not the only reason why Hezbollah planning falls short of radical. Friedmann, Leonie Sanderson, and others have also attempted to combine their efforts to stand against the state by way of a methodology of planning that is participa-tive, and that challenges the traditional structures of power by enabling neighbourhood dwellers to take part in the decision-making process that determines the orientation of the project. In that sense, I argue that there is nothing radical about Hezbollah’s planning intervention.

To make matters worse, the dwellers were also not involved in the selection of the committee of ar-chitects who defined the scope of the intervention—never met them. They also didn’t choose the architect who was appointed to build their houses. When they were finally invited to “participate” by expressing their opinions on its final layout and the selection of kitchen and bathroom tiles, they did so in the Wa’d offices—the Wa’d architects worked with them. Again, you can see that the dwellers had little control over the decision-making processes.

NH: As you mention, in practice there was no actual effort to re-build through community-oriented participation. Rather, there was a lot of restrictions and confines put on the architects hired, which left no space for any formal consultation initiated with local dwellers, any of their representatives, or the local municipality of Haret Hreik. In this planning process, the dwellers of Haret Hreik were not involved in any decision-making concerning, as you mention, the scale of the neighbourhood rehabilitation, the potential choices of rebuilding in the original form or in new ones, changes in layout, or any other design decisions. What was introduced was a participatory-based building plan became strategic and oppor-tunities to express their concerns back from the people whom they were building for.

At the end, a lot of what was being planned and the procedural aspects of re-construction planning were kept in secret or away from the public eye and debate, and in this way became characteristic of compre-hensive planning. Would you be able to elaborate further on what “comprehensive planning” means in this context? How did Hezbollah manage to be radical in its plan-ning strategy, and comprehensive? Was the planning initiative directly used to uphold and further implement the political agenda of Hezbollah, especially during that time? And thus the secretive and private negotia-tions that were held between Hezbollah, the Wa’d, and the architects? Were there any cases where the dwellers actually did benefit from the plans? Did Hezbollah’s popularity grow from the re-construction effort, or were they solely focusing on the populace in Haret Hreik in order to re-claim their territorial base? And what exactly was their agenda at the time?

MF: There is no doubt that there are certain advan-tages to the reconstruction options that Hezbollah offered, and the Party needs to be credited for those. At the end of the day, in a country where popula-tion displacements are an easy currency, and where the landmark reconstruction initiative of the city’s historic core amounted to the desecration and permanent eviction of thousands of claimants, to uphold on-site resettlement of pre-war dwellers is quite an achievement. By the fifth anniversary of the 2006 war this coming August, Hezbollah will also be able to show the national government—and the world—that it has rebuilt its “headquarters” entirely and resettled a large population, which is unprecedented in Lebanon. It is also true that the building standards it has adopted are well above those of the aging buildings that it replaced. In that sense, property owners in the neighbourhood who have benefitted from the reconstruction plan. This positive evaluation is strengthened when one places the reconstruction tasks in relation to the chal-lenges faced by the Party throughout the past five years, especially in terms of local and international politics. (For example, the United States’ sanctions and bans on donating funds to Islamic charities have complicated the fundraising process for the Party and limited some of its revenue.) But, to conclude, Hezbollah’s intervention in Haret Hreik was not a progressive form of planning.

There are many reasons why, to my mind, Hezbol-la’s planning intervention falls largely into the lib-eral, market-driven, comprehensive, and top-down approach to planning. There is not sufficient space here to detail every element of the project, so I will stick to only a few points.

1. Who are the claimants to whom the Party’s reconstruction is responding?

From the beginning, the project claimants’ beneficia ries are identified to be property owners in the area, those who can produce a substantiated claim for property ownership and whose entitlement for a housing unit with the same qualifications (size and location) as before the war. These claim-ants were invited to the first—and only—commu-nity meeting that the Party organized in November 2006. They were reassured by Sayed Hassan Nasal-lah, the Party’s secretary general, in one of his rare public appearances, that the neighbourhood will be rebuilt “more beautiful than it had been.”

To view Haret Hreik as only the sum of 200 private independent apartments is nonetheless quite problematic. After all, the neighbourhood was also, for example, the centre of economic and education-al activities in the area. In that sense, many other dwellers and visitors should be entitled to bring claims and participate in articulating a communal vision for what the neighbourhood was and the potential it has.

2. What kind of input is solicited from the recognized claimants?

This is again a key issue in planning that is immediately derived from the first point. One of my graduate students, Nancy Hikal, conducted inter-views with neighbourhood dwellers immediately af-ter the end of the 2006 war; after Nasallah’s speech. We asked dwellers about what kind of improvements they envisioned. Most answers revolved around the public realm, which was particularly destitute at the time: better sidewalks, more open spaces, playgrounds, less “traffic” congestion. There was no mention of these elements in the reconstruction plans. In the end, they were invited to choose be-tween types of bathroom and kitchen finishes, such as tiles and colour preferences. For Hezbollah plan-ners, this was called the first participatory initiative in planning. But it hardly qualifies as such.

3. What volumes does this reconstruction rebuild?

Those of us familiar with the history of spatial production in Haret Hreik recognize that it was largely developed by a handful of profit-driven developers. During the 1980s, large tracts of agricultural land were subdivided and sold to individual developers, each of whom built a multi-

Scapegoate

Mona Fawaz and Nasrin Himada

Hezbollah’s Urban Plan

10
story apartment building. This process largely disregarded (legal and non-legal) considerations for public space. No empty lots were allocated to the provision of open spaces or public facilities such as playgrounds, schools, or hospitals. In addition, developers built intensively in disregard of the possible negative repercussions on the livability of the neighborhood. (By livability, here, I mean the standards that architects normally consider when designing spaces that would provide natural light and ventilation, a level of privacy, etc.). In one extreme case, for example, two-story apartment buildings were built at a distance of 2.5 meters from each other, leaving no possibility for natural lighting and/or ventilation. More generally, the sun-pattern projections we developed of the neighborhood showed that even within the main arteries, sunlight rarely penetrated at noon, even in the middle of the summer. These are not just criteria that architects use to define how the space should be; these are considerations that impact poor lives. For example, our interviews with dwellers indicated that they complained from food rotting quickly due to high levels of humidity. Dwellers also consistently talked of the importance of public spaces in the area and how much they longed for them. These considerations had no place in the profit-driven housing market of the neighborhood in the 1990s and 1990s. They also have no place in the post-war reconstruction.

**NH:** As you point out, while Hezbollah's plan and strategy did not seek the accumulation of financial capital, it did, however, focus on gaining a different source of accumulative power—"political capital." It provided a service as non-state actors and informed the planning process on a mass scale, which also, in effect, had strengthened their position in Haret Hreik. Hezbollah also consistently talked of the importance of public spaces in the area and how much they longed for them. These considerations had no place in the profit-driven housing market of the neighborhood in the 1990s and 1990s. They also have no place in the post-war reconstruction.

**MF:** When I think about how the production of space was influenced by the strategy of its producers, I am thinking again with Henri Lefèbvre. My main concern is that in both cases, the production of space is a political and social process. In the case of Hezbollah, and that it is therefore becoming to that interest at the expense of others that comes as a way to produce the space. Spaces produced by powerful, capitalist forces were denounced by Lefebvre as molecules, where it is particularly difficult for users to inscribe aspirations, dreams, emotions, memories. Talk of the space reconstruction of the historic core of the city in the hands of the private development company Solidere provides a good example of this process of abstraction. The historic heritage of the city was turned into a commodity, easy to navigate for a community of high-class Lebanese and regional users accommodated to the luxuries of western-style malls and restaurants. The city's historic souks, or markets, were transformed into a western-style high-end mall—designed by a signature architect—where global franchises like H&M are operating. There is, of course, a huge difference between this form of abstract space and the one produced by Hezbollah, where the ultimate users of the space are those dwellers who were evicted in 2006. Yet, when one looks at the process by which a city is designed, there are very few possibilities for dwellers to reclaim images of themselves, their spaces where they had lived. A critical analysis of the discourses of the project's planners shows that when they discussed the transforming process, they were often referring to their physical volumes, specific property rights that translate the liberation of the southeastern areas that need to be reproduced. Space, in that sense, is again reduced to abstract volumes. The importance of these spaces is now more than ever from a different rationale, one that is rebuffing for a family of five or six who plan to “go back” to the neighborhood. In this process, these dwellers are themselves conceived of as “supporters of Hezbollah” who are coming together to reaffirm the territorial base of Hezbollah. In Haret Hreik, Hezbollah wants to maintain and consolidate its space as much as it can. It has prevented people from leaving and has invested the compensation money elsewhere. However, today you see property owners selling back their apartments and choosing to move elsewhere. I think, in this way, the popular base will change.

**NH:** Hezbollah strengthened its credibility as a service-provider, which further gave strength to what you refer to in your article as a “morpah-nationalistic political project.” If Hezbollah’s planning initiative is deeply embedded in the social way of doing things,” in the context of a dysfunctional and corrupt political system, how then do you see members of communities actually participating or strategizing with planners over how they want to live, and how as a planner do you ensure that livable standards are put into place?

**MF:** Also, Hezbollah is driven by political power, which informs its urban planning strategy. There is a gap to fill in the creation of work and what do the Smyth and other members of the community actually consider their agenda from within their own community? Are there non-state actors working on the ground that actually do analyze the opinions and needs of the dwellers? How do you see yourself, as an urban planner, taking a position in this regard?

**NH:** I don’t think it’s possible to paint things in black and white. There are clear political motivations in the decisions taken by Hezbollah in this reconstruction, but these decisions don’t entirely contradict those of the dwellers. I am confident that many dwellers would have prioritized the prompt reconstruction as much as the Party did. There were also speculations they are using the reconstruction to the purpose of the neighborhood, which is very close to the international airport, which would be very fruitful as investors. Some compared this time to the post-war reconstruction of downtown Beirut (by Solidere) in which property companies were invited from a large insurance company, and [owners] lost their right and ability to determine what will happen to their property and/or assets in the city's historical core. Instead, it was turned into a high-end exclusiveness that commercial and residential district restricted in its use to the richest social classes of the region. One merit that Hezbollah’s plan certainly has is to have prevented such a scenario and to have helped the on-site resettlement of many middle- and lower-income dwellers who wanted to come back to their neighborhood.

As I explained above, the decisions of the Party Nonetheless they do not entirely coincide with the interests of the dwellers. Our field interviews showed that dwellers and local public municipal actors interested in improving the public spaces of the neighborhood, for example, in investing in its public infrastructure to respond to the demand for greater, more pedestrian-friendly routes. In January 2017, we organized an urban design workshop at AUB, and we published the proceedings and distributed them widely in order to create some mobilization around the importance of public participation. We also took our ideas to Ward 4 and to the municipalities, on numerous occasions, while always reiterating our main criticism of the project that: it has prioritized the private realm over the public one by reducing the reconstruction to the restitution of private property. Also, I want to create public debate around this post-war reconstruction.

In some sense, Hezbollah is rebuilding a neighborhood of Beirut and its reconstruction should be discussed in Beirut at large. In November 2008, we finally confirmed Mr. Hassan Al Jufi, the director of Ward, to come and present the reconstruction project to a wide audience of planners and architects at AUB. It was the first time the project was presented to the public. Since then, we have organized several debates at AUB with the Order of Engineers and Architects, and other practitioners in and around Beirut. Just last week, at our yearly City Debates conference, we included a panel in which we had the Salloum and Ward projects presented side by side. These debates are meant to help generate a public conversation on the interest in the reconstruction, to make the Party accountable in some way.

I personally feel that debates about public involvement are very important. There are a number of private planning interventions in the city, and each of these interventions force the city, in face of interventions of other forces that are also trying to make the Party accountable in some way.
EB: What is striking in your work is the concern that you demonstrate for the singularity of practices. It matters to you to think of practices in terms of their divergence, which allows you to preserve their political potential. I see in this a praxematic tenor that strongly contrasts with the obsession over an anesthetizing consensus that marks our time.

EB: Effectively, the encounter with pragmatism has been very important in the sense of, “So this is what I do!” [laughs] Here is what animates me! This pragmatism, which I take from William James, from his more speculative dimensions (meaning the concern for consequences, in terms of invention, of speculation on consequences), this is what pragmatism, in its common usage (which is an insult), passes over in silence. We don’t know how these things can mature. But we can learn to examine situations from the point of view of their possibilities, from the way they communicate with and that which they poison. Pragmatism is the care of the possible.

Spiritual pragmatism? No thanks!

EB: Your reading of pragmatism seems to be the exact opposite of the sort that has led to the present domination of the liberal ethos and of “keeping conversation going,” in the vein of Richard Rorty. But I would like to return to the care of the possible: while speaking of the “speculative,” you have made a very singular gesture; it seems to me a spiritual one, as if to open up the future.

EB: I will never take up the label of “spiritualism” because that would support the spirit, the spiritual, to other things. Conversely, absolute silence (we can’t even say contemplation) on what might represent a concern for the spiritual seems to me to come from a badly directed Marxism and scientism. In any case, I situate myself primarily as a postcolonial European. I don’t really come from medicine, at least in the way that we are often being told. They were invented, at one way or another, still children. It is something that is in all of our words (Kant expressed this very well in What is Enlightenment?), and it is a lot of work to work words, to acquire words that break with this state of affairs. What I like about the concept of practice, in the way that I am trying to think it, is that it creates an angle from which to approach our most “serious” holdings, including the sciences as “hazards,” as hazards practices that we have the tendency to classify as superfluous, etc.

EB: All of you on work in hypnosis, therapy, ethnopsy- chiatry...

EB: Yes, ethnopsychiatry has been extremely important for me, notably because it has taught me up to which point, precisely, in the eyes of others, we can be “hazards.” Bizarre is important because I am refusing another one of our speculatures—denouncing ourselves. We are matters of goodwill as much as we are feeling guilty [laughs]—from the moment that, as Westerners, we consider that we are exceptional. To think practices is an attempt to situate ourselves, starting from the way in which practices were destroyed, poisoned, eradicated in our own history. As a result, I refuse all positions that would have others act as the conspe- cators of our “grieving,” or as “victims,” someone like Third Worldism did, with “us” always at the centre. This is again and always thinking in the place of others. I try not to think in the place of others because I look to a future where they will take their place.

EB: This is where I like to think of the Third World very much, in the great efficiency with which things are formulated in terms of capture and vulnerability, and conversely the question: How to get a reliable new hold so that divergent practices emerge within the smooth and neutral- ized spaces of capitalism?

EB: How to get a hold? [comment faux prises?] This question proclaims that I resist what I call, pejoratively, the theatre of concepts. Whether it’s [Alain] Badiou, [Slavoj] Žižek, and so on, we have the impression that the one who discovers the right concept of capitalism or communism will have discon- nected something extremely important. So, “I reclaim,” as the neo-pagan witches say, a pragmatist Marx. That is, a Marx about whom we can say when reading him, “Yes, at the time, effectively, his analysis was an excellent hold.” But also a Marx whose nightmare would have been thinking that more than a century later, we would continue to rely on this hold and to make of it concepts that are more and more disconnected from his question. This was a pragmatist understanding in a “consequent” mode, that is, in contact with the pos- sibility of transformation. So, “reclaim” Marx, recuperate him, but also and this is a move that I learned from the witches.
rehabilitate him, reproduce him. And not for any concern for justice on his part, but from the perspective of asking his question once again. If we want to understand him in the sense of transformation, we have to re-ask ourselves to what capitalism could give hold today [if tout se re-demande à quoi le capitalisme pourrait donner prise aujourd’hui].

EB: In Out of This World, Peter Hallward, a philosopher close to Badiou, develops an acrimonious critique of Deleuze, which seems to me to correspond to what you reject in Badiou or Žižek. In his little theatre of transcendence in relation to the state of things.

EB: Exactly. He does not ask the question about the modes of existence, and this transcendence justifies his “pure” politics...

EB: You have situated yourself in relation to Badiou. At the extreme of the philo-political spectrum that interests us, we find a certain kind of messianism. In particular, I am thinking of Giorgio Agamben, Tiqqun, the Invisible Committee, etc. I can’t help myself from seeing several points of contact with your work, in particular at the level of a reflection on the hold and the capture, an attempt to position our vulnerability to being captured by apparatuses [dissipating with the difference that this thinking is dramatized in a messianic or apocalyptic manner.

EB: Yes, but this difference is crucial, it is everywhere.... For me, Agamben is the inheritor of a tradition from which I want to escape, from which one must escape. This tradition says: We are in a disaster that conjures up a truth. And, those that possess this truth find themselves in a non-colonialist situation. They have nothing to learn from others. Their knowledge has value for Man (or Ourselves, or the Subject, or Bare Life...). And so, once again, this means we don’t think from where we are, but instead for everyone in a de-localized manner.

This is the movement to reclaim, taking into account what has happened to us, that we are further away from being in a position to touch the Real. We are very sick. It is not an illness of Deleuzian philosophy or of Nietzsche, who must pass through the grand illness. No, we are immeasurably sick [Maladie maladie]. And so, simply recuperating a few points of joy, of resistance, of thought, etc. and understanding where this occurs from—the vulnerability to stupidity [stupide], the feeling of being responsible for humanity, the communication between our histories and the vocation of Humanity—it would not be bad if our concepts could contribute to that. Deleuze said that if philosophy has a function, it is to resist stupidity. Not stupidity as an anthropological trait, like I have read in the work of certain Deleuzians, but as our stupidity. I am not far from this position, except that one must always be suspicious. Deleuze himself dates the question of stupidity.

As such, this problem emerges in the 19th century, at the moment when science, the State, and capitalism forge an alliance. Africans do not suffer from stupidity—maybe that is what suits them; they are not unharmed by this definition. But in any case, stupidity is nothing inherently anthropological. So, confusing what happens to us with something that not only would necessarily happen to the rest of humanity but, additionally, would somehow contain a truth that would allow the philosopher to be the one who truly sees—no way? That’s what a hold is for me: it involves a body-to-body relation to the world, which has a relative truth. And, it’s also linked to a thinking of the relay [relay]. The consequences of this hold do not belong to the one who produces the hold, but to the way in which this hold can be taken up, to work as a relay [le manière dont cette prise peut être repprise, et faire relais].

And so, when considering Tiqqun, I have often conversed with inheritors or those close to Tiqqun in France and it seems to me that, for the moment, a discussion topic among them is the role of Agamben. There are tensions, there are those who have discovered that it is really not the kind of thinking that they need. Because I enjoy stirring the pot, I told them that, when reading certain Agamben texts, I felt what Deleuze calls “shame”—all the reformation of what happened at Auschwitz, the “musulmann” taken as an anthropological truth of our time: this is instrumentalization. A philosopher does not have the right to do that; he has to create his own concepts. He cannot take possession of Auschwitz to formulate a philosophical anthropology.

EB: I have to say, I find myself in a very particular position, hopefully that of an intercessor, between a certain “Tiqquonian” milieu and those that adhere to what I call, echoing your work, an idea of “speculative presence.” In fact, the people that I am going to see in Brussels after our interview belong to this Tiqqunian constellation.

EB: Yes, they were repeating a logic that is reminiscent of the Situationist purifications...

EB: For two days we had a “frank” conversation, and since then it has not been love, but it seems to me that they have accepted that I can exist without being their enemy. In the same way, I recognize that faced with the world as it is, the urgency that they are taken with cannot be more justified.

EB: If I feel like I am taking up the posture that you did when you wrote Beyond Conversation, half-way between the theology of Process and the French Deleuzians,” I feel that I occupy the same relation to the people in the Tiqqunian constellation, or to the Barcelona collective Esqué en blanc, by way of my own trajectory. Canada appears to me as a place of very low political intensity, where the energies of belief in the world are made manifest mostly through a therapeutic bias. Moreover, this culture of the therapeutic is the site of a disastrous privatization of existence. It is in Europe that I found the collective presences necessary for understanding that the problem of affective misery and of general anesthesia under the regime of the Spectacle is not a psychological or even psycho-social problem, but a political one. From there, I started to conceive of a strong idea of the political, guided by a certain intuition about anonymity. In effect, everything seems to me so excessively personalized in our time...

continued on pg. 14
ASHES, FRUIT-
ANALYSIS OF
BANANAS.
(IN JAMAICA)
BANANAS.
DRIED
BANANAS.
EAST INDIAN
DYSENTERY.

EARTH
ENGLISH
WORMS
CHARACTERISTICS
FATIGUE
FEEDING OF INFANTS.
(BY THE NOSE)
Endeavour Birds

HUMAN NATURE
Injuries in Masts
Repair of
INSANE,
LETTERS OF THE

KAPOK FIBRE
LEMON
CULTURE

LIME CULTIV
YIELD OF
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CONCENTRATED
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Nutmegs.
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Miscellaneous details, Memory Books (1881–1928) of Henry Alfred Alford Nicholls, M.D., C.M.S.S., Principal Medical Officer of Dominica; corresponding member of the New York Academy of Sciences and of the Chamber of Agriculture of Basseterre, Guadeloupe; honorary member, the Royal Agricultural and Commercial Society of British Guiana and the Central Agricultural Board of Trinidad; Fellow of the Linnean Society, London; Special Commissioner on Yaws in the West Indies (1891); Commissioner for Dominica of the Tropical Products Exhibition, London (1914); aspirant (unsuccessful) to the posts of Director of the Dominica Botanic Station and Administrator of Dominica; correspondent to the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. (Collection Dr. Lennox Honychurch, Turtle Point, Dominica)

**THE EFFECT OF TROPICAL LIGHT ON WHITE MEN**

A project by CATHERINE LORD
IS: How capitalism is making us into little entrepreneurs of Self... 

EB: Yes, and it is in Europe that I met people that have reacted politically toward this civilization phenomenon. And, it seems to me that thinking of getting reliable holds is right on, and permits a problematization of the conditions for effective action. And, to articulate it one way, it is also there that I see a site of possible encounter between “messianic” and “speculative” milieus.

IS: Ah well, let’s say that messianism is what I would call a strong “pharmakon” that is able to incite force but which can also very easily become a poison. Poison as it allows for heroic vocation and a conception of truth all the more true that it is insidious. All are traits that seem to me to be very masculinist (polybirds). Where messianism incites the desire for separation, I try and think practices of the interstice. This is an idea developed in Capitalist Realism, which goes back to Whitehead. The interstice is not defined against the block, it produces its own presence, its own mode of production. It knows that the block is certainly not a friend, but it does not define itself through antagonism, or else it would become the mere reflection of the block. This does not mean non-conflict. It means conflict where necessary, in the way that is necessary. This is thinking in the interstices! So what I like about these messianises is that they are looking to make their own lives.

EB: Which changes from the sort of resistive by proxy, which unfolds in the wake of Zizek’s thought, for instance...

IS: Exactly. It is like Tijou’s concept of “forms-of-life.” But no form of life is exemplary. The interstice is not asociated with any exemplarity, and has nothing messianistic about it. Rather, its mode of existence is problematic. Each interface is an interface in relation to a block, without being legitimate other than the hold that it accomplishes. This requires humor, lucidity and pragmatism. It also consists of ecological thinking, because the milieu, the block, is never, ever a friend. Therefore, we must never trust it. Recuperation is always a danger, but it is necessary that we are not taken aback by this danger or else suspicion poisons everything, and then it is no longer a form of life. Dangers are what one must be pragmatic in relation to: foreshadowing them and constructing the means of doing that might allow us, at a given moment, to not have to tear ourselves between the good-pure-radicals and the bad-interested-traitors, knowing that this kind of situation is nothing more than a foreseeable failure in relation to which we must think. With messianism there is a difference of temperament because messianism is always close to the selection of the chosen, of those who know how to maintain loyalty. This kind of selection signifies situations where you can recognize traitors are more on the side of truth than failure.

What I call this difference in temperament can easily be described otherwise—my pragmatism is what is most comfortable for me. Except that I know that to do otherwise would injure me. I have always flat situations that hold one hostage—and there, where it is important to be loyal, the suspicion of treachery is present and holding hostage never far away. So, I don’t have any desire to convince or to convert. Instead, I think that there is a force in not letting oneself be divided. All the “or this... or that...” is deadly. The groups that are looking for forms of radical or messianic life, one of the ways of resisting being held hostage could very well be to cultivate a bit of Jewish humour—especially yet because we are talking about messianism—of the kind like, “Shit, we are the chosen people, we are walking in the shadow of the law. In any case, what I find interesting in the interstices is the knowledge that there is some messianic component, which is precious in the sense that it stops to extend oneself closing in on the block. This maintains a sense of the urgency that must remain open and which should not become the basis for a mobilizing command.

EB: Demonstrating this urgency in the North American academy already puts us in a slightly contentious position, in the sense that after one's master's degree or doctorate, everything happens as if to be run, a different sort of race to finding a way to be satisfied with the world as it is. We must soften our indignation. And, this tacit requirement certainly does not spare Deleuzian milieus.

IS: In France, we say that the Americans desired for Deluze to die before taking possession of him. For me, there is a line that separates people with whom I can work and those with whom I can only be friends: in this sense, the difference is normal at first approach? Whenever I feel that a position implies something that can be said, I understand that I am not with the group. And, I have democracy, tolerance, etc., there is not much for me there. Instead, I align myself with those who think viscerally about how this world is not normal, and who are tolerable, and those who say “we are not happy all at once.” We can argue, for sure, but for me it’s first and foremost because the situation has surpassed us all.

Here is a short remembrance that left a mark. I was at a protest in front of an interment center for illegal immigrants, what we call here the “santi-papiers.” On a buffer, there was a group with really smashed faces carrying a socialist syndicate flag that read “handsome sector.” And they were screaming, their voices hoarse. “We are not happy at all, we are not happy at all!” And yes, it was exactly what needed to be said! This is the cry, the cry of reconciliation. This is the reason, obviously why I am closer to the Chavannais than to the majority of my colleagues. This must be...

EB: But can’t we consider the messianic as an accelerant, a creator of beneficial emergencies? 

IS: I am not sure if an emergency as such is beneficial. Evidently, faced with the horrors that are associated with it, emergency and all kinds of other things that make you find oneself in an emergency. Sadly, it is not in the name of an emergency that we will be able to respond. In the name of urgency, those who govern us will rather require some “necessary sacrifices.” The emergency felt by radicals—I can’t do anything but understand it. Still, how does one not give more power to the police if they expiate a bomb?

Thinking with Whitehead

EB: I like your book Thinking with Whitehead a lot, and, more specifically, the way you dramatize his thought. And one of the culminating movements of that dramatization is the presentation of the idea of peace as it is presented in The Adventure of Ideas. 

For you the extraordinary passage on how peace can easily be reversed to become Anesthesia. Whitehead says that we cannot “want” peace too much, and how the experience of peace is sometimes more tragic than the advent of war. The emergency felt by radicals—I can’t do anything but understand it. Still, how does one not give more power to the police if they expiate a bomb?

Conversely, the destruction of GMO fields, for me, is a success because those who have pled themselves outside of the law have understood how to act so that police power, even though it would usually be too much, is now not any more a force of good like terrorists.

But if messianism doubles as pedagogy in the hopes that “people will understand” not only that GMOs are a story of lies and subversion but rather, in the messianic sense, that a veritable conversion catastrophe is the only road, the risk is that only the police will profit from what they do. Nonetheless, a line of thought in particular, are getting together to cultivate plots of land, people who learn manual trades to be able to go from alternative space to alternative space. And, all of this requires skills that interest me: there are concrete situations of these spaces, which become precisely because of the way in which they are lived in and from the type of force that they require. Cultivating a plot of land without pesticides and fertilizers, but also learning how to trust yourself, asking questions together, making other relations—all of this is complicated and demanding because vegetables cannot be taken...
15. Today, Whitehead's philosophy is having some success in China, Korea, and Japan. But I think that its meaning is not merely a question of thinking, or even more accurately, of the conditions for holding language in a way that is aligned with others who don't have the same history, or, to put it another way, the one that benefits colonialism. That Whitehead ignored by the African for such a long time is not my point. I do not deny the possibility of being an exotic creature who does her all to shock, but rather because it is a vital test for thought. I have become aware that the whole of the human spirit is a conscious one, like Donna Haraway, don't do this, maybe because all this is happening right under our nose. Or maybe because American universities form such a dense network amongst themselves that there is no room for what happens on the outside. My highest ambition on this line, that profounder source is being translated into English, is that American academics will begin to realize that there is something happening in their backyards that they consistently ignore. They love French Theory, so I am serving them Whitehead from Harvard and California's witchcraft.

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SS: Was the theatre an architecture of civil society when it was under Soviet control?

GU: Yes, though this contradicts the popular belief that cinemas were propaganda machines.

SS: Are you trying to preserve one of the few remaining spaces of civil society?

GU: This is very complex. Many people see the theatre as a legacy of totalitarianism. However, totalitarianism was a reaction to the challenge coming from the West during the first years of the Cold War. The style emerged out of the first tours of American exhibitions occurring all over Western Europe, and then Eastern Europe—so for instance, the invasion of American modernist designers in the World Expositions. All the propaganda of American architecture and design filtered into Eastern Europe through these exhibitions. The Soviet modernization project instigated by Khrushchev in 1959 came immediately after the first American National Exhibition in Moscow and the Union internationale des architectures in 1958. Following these, there was the import of Soviet architecture bearing the influence of American modernism. For example, the Soviet Union Pavilion at the 1967 International and Universal Exhibition in Montreal. The reception of American modernism in the U.S.S.R. gave legitimacy to continue the construction project repressed by Stalin, while it was also a reflection upon what was happening in Western architecture and the result of a demand to create a competitive international product.

Fig. 8

So, the Lietuva Cinema and other cultural centres built at the time were formed by American influence as well as the post-Stalin liberal possibilities during Khrushchev. Suddenly, it was possible to do things between 1958 and 1968; the repression came around 1972 with Brezhnev, when because of socialism transformed into totalitarianism. The Lietuva Cinema is precisely a result of these years of possibility, conflict, complicated legacies, and international exchanges.

For Lithuanian nationalists though, the Cinema is a monument to Soviet totalitarianism.

But from a political perspective, it's more complicated—we can't collapse things too easily. We can see that the cinema is in fact the result of a liberal project; it was built in opposition to totalitarianism.

Fig. 9

Public institutions were given great priority by the Soviets, no matter if it was Stalin or Khrushchev, primarily as vehicles of propaganda. Nevertheless, there was the possibility for free discussion in those places that you could find in apartments or private spaces. Just look at the layout of Soviet apartments, with their kitchens built to hold only three people. It was impossible to meet in large groups. Public discussion could only happen at these gathering places, waiting in the queue before a cinema, or leaving the cinema and having a cigarette in the big square, or the big halls and ticket office.

Fig. 10

There was inadvertently the possibility to link things to loosen or to take control in these cultural centres, even under surveillance and repression.

Fig. 11

SS: Has the project been to disseminate a definite image or interpretation of the cinema and its role in culture?

GU: Absolutely. But you see, from a neoliberal perspective any type of project that tries to re-negotiate history is not profitable. It puts the domino scenario into question. Our idea was to think more dialectically and critically about this history and to put into question the nationalist project, neoliberalism, and nostalgia. The past is not resolved, it must be re-negotiated.

SS: What is happening now with the project?

GU: Well, from the beginning, our work has tapped into this hybrid body of actors. There are all of these different negotiations centered around the cinema, coming from historians, nationalists, preservationists, urbanists, anthropologists, anarchists, students, film enthusiasts. We ended up squatting the theatre lobby and creating workshops. (fig. 12) Gradually we moved to the legal project, and that's where we are at the moment, involved in several lawsuits.
that are attempting to create a precedent for public involvement in territorial planning and to challenge the very laws that define territorial planning. Our project was understood as threatening—it made this very clear. The theatre is throughout the country. The questioning of the privatization of that particular site, because it is so charged, is seen as a threat to the very idea that there should not be touched. They say it is important because it is in front of the medieval defense wall, a site which was left built for centuries so the guards could maintain sight lines from the castle. So, the only other buildings around were valueless, small wooden buildings set up for trade. The Soviet cinema was the first prominent building to inhabit the space. Moreover, the Soviets built the cinema atop the medieval water infrastructure. So, strangely, if they excavated it, the city could have a fantastic water supply again. We were fantasizing about producing mineral water to subsidize the project. Pledged by the private developers was planning to destroy the medieval infrastructure and build major avenues. There are a lot of contradictions between those who want to keep and those who want to destroy.

SS: Are you more interested in bringing together as many as these contradictory perspectives as possible rather than resolving them or taking a position in relation to them?

GU: I think the former is right. If you look at our first calls and meetings we would say, “Lietuva is for all.” It’s not just for one group or one private interest. And we need to understand, or define, what a public interest is, though we do recognize that the public is agonistic—structurally so. The cinema can become this monument through which we re-negotiate these agonistic perspectives. We need to slow down the process of development to accomplish this. We turned the space into a constant workshop and constantly took possession of backgrounds and introduced different vocabularies of public space into the local community’s popular consciousness, and specialist jargon.

SS: You are trying to return the theatre to what it was in Soviet times, a space of agonism and a space of freedom?

GU: Yes. And what’s uncanny is that the nationologists today consider the former cinemas and housing as propaganda machines. But there were always unanticipated or double functions. When intellectuals were sitting around the table in a restaurant, bar or cultural centre and having a discussion, they knew that the KGB was recording them, but they developed a subversive language that allowed them to discuss things and attempt to change the system. At the same time, both the KGB and the intellectuals knew very well that they were each listening to each other in a sense, they were communicating with each other while avoiding each other. The Lithuanian case is an example of this very specific and uncanny communication that demands this subversive language. I’ll give you another example. Once we were understood as diametrically or even just questionable processes of privatization, there were no lawyers who would dare to join us. So as a consequence, one of the members of the movement, who was a musicologist, decided to go to law school. The court processes are so laborious and take so much time in Lithuania (we’ve been in the courts for almost five years now), you would not believe it. For example, they appointed a judge in October, and then in December they cancelled the hearing because the judge said that he is not objective because our lawyer was his student. Then they appointed another judge in January and announced the hearing would take place in March. Then it came out that this very judge announced a positive decision about our case in the lower court a few years ago, so again they dismantled the court to announce another judge. Now we are waiting for the new judge to be announced, but it is summer and they won’t do it during the summer because everyone is on vacation, so it won’t be until the fall. This is in our favor because the musicologist has time to finish his law degree.

But to get back to the intellectual and subversive language, one of the preservationists was sued by the developers for defamation of character. They had hired a media monitoring company to make records of all of our public speeches and gather all of our written statements. So we have to be very careful of how we speak. In one of the recordings the preservationist said, roughly, “companies like these are destroying playgrounds for kids to play, public parks, and cultural space, etc. The developers are taking over lots that used to be in the public good.” So the developers brought her to court for defamation and provided these recordings as proof. In return, we commissioned the Lithuanian Institute of Semiotics to provide a counter analysis of the recordings. The president of the institute—who by the way is a good friend of Germania—successfully argued that the preservationists’ comments were recontextualized by analyzing all of the pauses and the intonation of our speech. That’s how we won the case!

You see, it’s a war with many fronts.
The Nightmare of Participation
(Crossbench Praxis as a Mode of Criticality)

Cortlandt Housing Project: those balconies

tion great? What's the problem?

that Miessen is trying to theorize through

the grey area between producing nothing

tion is the problem of consensus, or the

as the “uninvited outsider” and the “cross-

and wiring dynamite. It’s this grey area

is the way in which participation exists in

Markus Miessen,  Sternberg Press, 2010,

Does it end in agreement? Obviously,

one way or another, requiring the architect

level. Architecture projects always start with

his critique of consensus, and providing

compared to and used as a useful—albeit

arguably for its lack of concern for the relevance

turgy for its lack of concern for the potential us-

ers. While Miessen seems perfectly capable

of the archive with regard to its potential us-

ogy for its lack of concern for the relevance

around his assertion that he is in fact merely

is primarily remembered for its endorse-

men around an empty void.”

The French interdisciplinary journal Utopie

Latin American urbanism and “Architecture as a

works exemplified by each of the firms that

as a galactic model, in which planets circu-

and this may also be an apology: “Each one

as a subject that does not yet have an archive.

in trying to imagine this new species,

Nightmare comes from the inextricability

ence from the University of McGill in

might the process of discussion?

Mason to learn more about how Dufferin Grove

home, even in winter).

sides; there was so much fighting and cursing,

Wood Garage showed up to donate $1,000 worth

ness frame the role that residents have to play in

and this may also be an apology: “Each one

 Harmlessness  is a landscape architecture

as an archive, structured “not like a

Mason proposes in her interview. As Miessen

 dubbed “the oracle.”

Thus, the Ministry of Urbanism, the

the first to the city, most of the horticultural

theorize around a number of similarly titled

exploring the different strategies of the

architects, landscape architects, socio-

uninhabited grassed space with trees, a soccer

revised to include the modifications to the

similarities in the way in which the two different

are about the future of city life, and not the

In contrast to the incompatibility between

society, and what a future can be. He named the

architects, landscape architects, socio-

uninhabited grassed space with trees, a soccer

the ad-hoc citizens’ group

1992 led by resident Jutta Mason, whose out-

1993: Adventure-playground style playground

night park dinners are cooked in its communal

“Oh! Food!” Then we thought that the bad be-

1998: Staff changes at the rink were instigat-

its doors; giant puppets repose in its rafters

In its first incarnation, Utopia was a

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Craig Buckley and Jean-Louis Velskes, eds.,


Reviewed by Will Christensen

The French interdisciplinary journal Utopie

projection is presented as an improved form of

Utopia:

“An Interview with Jutta Mason, Cities, 2006: Neighbourhood offered new play-

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itself in revolutionary politics and practice. The reason is both more abstract and more precise, retroactively casting a certain light on the earlier importance of epistemology in architecture. Particularly striking is the anonymously authored letter attributed to Baudrillard, polemical text, ‘The Environ-
mental Witch Hunt’. Baudrillard and Jean Aspin brought this as their contribution to the 1970 International Design Conference in Aspen, where they appeared as part of the ‘French Delegation’. In the current context of global warming and green-
washers who are actually using design fund-
go to ‘developments in sustain-
able cities’, this piece has only become more meaningful. It is worth quoting here:

The therapeutic mythology which tries to convince us that, if things are going wrong, it is due to microbes, to virus, or to some biological dysfunction, this therapeutic mythology hides the politi-
cal fact, the historical fact that it is a question of social structures and social contradic-
tions, not a question of illnesses or deficient metabolism, which could easily be cured. All the designers, the architects, the sociologists who are acting like medicine toward this ill society are accomplices in this inter-
pretation of the question in terms of illness, which is another form of illness.1

This critique of environmentalism, which we can now extend to sustain-
ability, biogeography, and bioregiona-
rism, is presented in such a clear denunciation of the post-criticial haze from these pages like a light-bulb from the dark sky. Notwithstanding the aforementioned treatment of the various contributors to the ‘French Delegation’ in the previous contributions, I hope it is clear why I am by now treading on the terrain of an explosive force in Urbanism.

There is a number of other important issues from the themes of Utopia covered in this issue of the Spatial and the Design, as well as a number of articles dedicated to the question of death mark the end of the volume. The Ethical Slut: A Guide to Infinite Sexual Possibilities


The Ethical Slut

Thomas Facione is a Professor of Philosophy at University of California, Davis, the author of dozens of books and articles, and the editor of The Reasoning Mind, a journal published by the Foundation for Critical Thinking. His book, Ethics for Professionals, contains a chapter on ‘Ethics for Architects’, which I highly recommend. In that chapter, Facione argues that professions like architecture have a moral responsibility to serve society. In the following paragraphs, I want to expand on that argument and discuss some of the implications it has for architectural practice.

Facione begins by discussing the concept of ‘professionalism’. He defines a profession as an occupation that is characterized by a commitment to serving society. He argues that professions have a duty to serve society, and that this duty is different from the duty of non-professionals to serve society.

Facione then discusses the concept of ‘ethical obligations’. He defines ethical obligations as the duties that professionals have to perform in order to serve society. He argues that these obligations are different from the obligations that non-professionals have to perform.

Facione then discusses the concept of ‘ethical standards’. He defines ethical standards as the rules that professionals use to guide their behavior. He argues that these standards are different from the rules that non-professionals use to guide their behavior.

Facione then discusses the concept of ‘ethical education’. He defines ethical education as the process of teaching professionals how to serve society. He argues that this education is different from the education that non-professionals receive.

Facione then discusses the concept of ‘ethical evaluation’. He defines ethical evaluation as the process of assessing the effectiveness of professionals in serving society. He argues that this evaluation is different from the evaluation that non-professionals receive.

Facione then discusses the concept of ‘ethical accountability’. He defines ethical accountability as the responsibility of professionals to be held accountable for their actions. He argues that this accountability is different from the accountability that non-professionals must bear.

Facione then discusses the concept of ‘ethical advocacy’. He defines ethical advocacy as the practice of promoting the interests of professionals in serving society. He argues that this advocacy is different from the advocacy that non-professionals must undertake.

Facione then discusses the concept of ‘ethical leadership’. He defines ethical leadership as the practice of leading professionals in serving society. He argues that this leadership is different from the leadership that non-professionals must undertake.

Facione then discusses the concept of ‘ethical engagement’. He defines ethical engagement as the practice of involving professionals in serving society. He argues that this engagement is different from the engagement that non-professionals must undertake.

Facione then discusses the concept of ‘ethical participation’. He defines ethical participation as the practice of participating in the affairs of professionals in serving society. He argues that this participation is different from the participation that non-professionals must undertake.

Facione then discusses the concept of ‘ethical commitment’. He defines ethical commitment as the practice of committing professionals to serving society. He argues that this commitment is different from the commitment that non-professionals must undertake.

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Facione then discusses the concept of ‘ethical passion’. He defines ethical passion as the practice of passion professionals in serving society. He argues that this passion is different from the passion that non-professionals must undertake.
enforced by law as a means to achieving a good life. In his emphasis on ‘should’ and behavioural regulation, Fisher has no problem determining the right and wrong answer to an ethical quandary. For example, the section ‘Obligations to Colleagues’—Office Affairs offers a nice liaison between the two tests. A married boss is having an affair with an employee, so Fisher recommends that the other employees send their boss an unsigned letter reading, ‘I’ll see to have dirty hands, better that it comes from doing what we think is right than participating in what we know to be wrong.” The institution is to focus on a moral life and to model ourselves on an authoritative and instruct us to respect our feelings and the feelings of others, which seems to be a recipe for an adult ethics not based on predetermined rules.

Ethics for Architects takes a moral code for “warmth, love, and sex,” but nothing else. The slut must make a constant effort to articulate to others what their wishes and needs are, and much of the book is anoration of pafiala in communication, clarity, and honesty. Most of all, The Ethical Slut instructs us to respect our feelings and the feelings of others, which seems to be a recipe for an adult ethics not based on predetermined rules.

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Where Art Belongs
Chris Kraus, Semiotext(e), 2011, 171 pp.

Kraus avoids an explicit condemnation of the gallery wall, without any online or print reproduction. This work is a poem as an art object. In her essay about Malcolm McLaren, "Twelve Words, Nine Days," Kraus remarks, "It's possible for someone to be highly intelligent, and yet have no information."

An important emphasis is that Kraus is not simply "emmerging" herself to the spectators that is normally attacked for its lack of coherent content or ability. Instead, Where Art Belongs characterizes the broader context, and problem, of being an artist and making real, tangible work in the world. Because a "practice" is a daily routine, rather than assuming the position of critical lens, her focus on the daily practice, avante-garde structures. Take, for example, Kraus's essay on the Bernardette Corporation (BC) and their decision to mount an epic poem at Greene Naftali in New York in 2009. Deciding to show the poem as their primary installation (themed and hung on the gallery wall, without any online or print reproduction), BC was met by confused colleagues who were shocked to see a poem as a work of art.

Coyly, Kraus addresses the topics of "art-making" — namely, the growing trend of writers who have no historical grounding taking on the task of writing about art. In doing so she addresses those artists who presume that their text will "take over" conventional art-making. By shedding light on our conventional categories without delectantly assessing them, Kraus utilizes her text to offer up suggestions about making while merely emphasizing the actual event.

Armed with a poetic sensibility and phenomenological appreciation, Where Art Belongs is both far reaching and, inevitably, a failure; in short, it is a great example of a living, breathing piece of contemporary visual text-art. In her essay about Malcolm McLaren, "Twelve Words, Nine Days," Kraus remarks, "It's possible for someone to be highly intelligent, and yet have no information.

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This project consists of the mise-en-scène of an urban experiment, city merging. Stuttgart and Utrecht try to become more competitive by joining forces and establishing unlimited network power. Stadtstaat is managed via an information architecture called 'Trust,' a social networking platform that governs through participation. Stuttgart and Utrecht merge the role of design in a managed and technocratic European reality more tangible and debatable. The graphic surface becomes a platform that turns communication into political interaction. Stadtstaat was presented in 2009 in an exhibition at both the Kunstlerhaus Stuttgart and Casco: Office for Art, Design and Theory, Utrecht. It also appears in Metahaven’s recently published book Uncorporate Identity.

Friend,

Thank you for your letter, in which you voice a number of important concerns regarding our civic freedoms here in Stadtstaat. Utrecht and Stuttgart have, after their merger, maintained a reasonable level of economic prosperity. This is certainly not true for every other Western European state. I don’t believe the wild stories about slums—they are inventions by those who want to destabilize our common sense of belonging. Slums may exist in Latin America, but not in Stadtstaat!

You should be happy about the fact that the government will have a major Kunsthalle built where, finally, artists from Stadtstaat may properly exhibit in ... to those in the Gulf region. There will be a display of works there dedicated to the concept of freedom of expression!

Stadtstaat is a hotbed of foreign investment, and we are a climate-neutral, equal opportunity employer with a large gay and lesbian community.

I do not share the concerns you have when weighed against the many pros. Bringing our two cities together has revealed that we have a great deal in common in terms of identity! As children of the Enlightenment, we are the natural defenders of progress, appalled by humanities engrained ethical and moral values characterize our common identity as citizens of Stadtstaat.

Of course, we are vigilant to stand up against those who threaten and abuse our civic freedoms. This is one of the reasons why ‘Trust,’ Stadtstaat’s online social network and panopticon, is such a huge success!

Let us foster great free minds here in Stadtstaat, where we have overcome the evils of the past by conquering the future.

—Friend
Coming Democracy
Going beyond place branding, Utrecht and Stuttgart form a regional Stadtstaat (city-state). This programmatic reflection on the urban fabric created by European unification invites us to interrogate policy decisions to weather the economic downturn while enhancing networking capacities. Stadtstaat is managed via an information architecture called “Trust.” A socio-political Facebook, Trust is a networking platform that governs through public participation—an “open system” presenting a shift from central decision-making to managing social dynamics. The progress and partial victory of network architecture over built form is one of the core attributes of Stadtstaat’s new equilibrium. The transformation of urban space into an arena for networked sociability brings about a new understanding of what makes a place public. Not a public guaranteed by policing, but one negotiated by groups within the territory. Enduring the politically correct jargon in the city-state of the oxymoron “Managing diversity.”

The apparent lack of order seems to be the new order.

Excerpt by a studio for research and design based in Amsterdam, consisting of graphic designers Daniël van der Velden and Vinca Kruijff, and formerly, architectural designer Renzo Piano.


Notes


2. Strategic Planners. Strategic Partners.

3. Wir sind verbunden.

4. First there were the mission statements. A mission, an identity. A mission statement. Stadtstaat is the political lingo of the creative industries, “the client loved it.” Then things stalled. A manager took the stage. Invariably he would begin by stating his diagnosis that we are defining architecture too narrowly and too formally. Architects, he argued, must avoid the need for monumentality structures—so what should I do? Burn my architecture degree and move to the Black Forest? Neither Stuttgart nor Utrecht is metropolitan. But there are agreeable living conditions, knowledge capital, proximity to airports, etc. Neither of the cities experiences the staggering changes encountered in the global East and South. In a combination of melodrama and relief, it seems as if both cities—sainted by a strange managerial invention, called Stadtstaat—are merely waiting for the storms to impact. Or, perhaps even more pleasing, Stadtstaat is subject to a hyper-intensity transformation revealed through an increasingly peculiar urban and social vernacular, sometimes called a “Pizza-Staat” or “Gadgetopia.” Stadtstaat is managed via an information architecture called “Trust.” A socio-political Facebook, Trust is a networking platform that governs through public participation—an “open system” presenting a shift from central decision-making to managing social dynamics. The progress and partial victory of network architecture over built form is one of the core attributes of Stadtstaat’s new equilibrium. The transformation of urban space into an arena for networked sociability brings about a new understanding of what makes a place public. Not a public guaranteed by policing, but one negotiated by groups within the territory. Enduring the politically correct jargon in the city-state of the oxymoron “Managing diversity.”

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First there were the mission statements.
One of the courts’ primary concerns with bubble laws is the First Amendment and the degree to which the law restricts one’s freedom of speech and freedom to peacefully assemble. In the two court cases mentioned in this article, one of the most discussed issues was whether restrictions violate or unduly restrict the First Amendment’s guarantee of free speech. When the courts consider whether free speech is being unduly restricted, they inquire as to “whether the challenged provisions of the injunction burden no more speech than necessary to serve a significant government interest.”

When considering free speech and abortion, the courts ask: How much is too much? At what point does the right to clinic access become an equal or greater issue than the right to freedom of speech and freedom to peacefully assemble? And what does this mean for the interests of the First Amendment? Concerned with public safety, the courts must ensure the protection of abortion procedures, ensuring a woman’s constitutional right to travel to have an abortion, and that this right is not “abraded in the interest of defendants’ First Amendment rights.” When this is no longer the case, to what extent should the courts go to ensure access and safety?

**Legislative Bubbles**

Through a number of court rulings legislating physical boundaries around clinics and those entering and exiting such spaces, a series of terms emerged codifying spatial relationships as they pertain to the First Amendment. The cases reviewed below are now legal precedent and are typically referenced in abortion cases where limits of the First Amendment are debated.

- **No Approach Zones**
  - Areas where no person can come within “x” distance of another person while she is within “x” distance from a reproductive health care facility; this zone requires the assent of the person they were counseling and remain outside with a “prophylactic approach.”

- **Buffer Zones**
  - Defined public areas surrounding health care facilities where demonstrations and access are restricted or sharply limited; they can include public entrances, so that doorways and driveways cannot be blocked; they also limit what people can do around these areas.

Bubbles of State Variation

Examining states with highly restrictive abortion laws requires a closer reading of two states where legislation significantly affects, and often precludes, access to reproductive health care. Mississippi and South Dakota have one abortion provider (frozen in from out of state) and enforce some of the most restrictive abortion legislation in the country. Of particular interest are the relationships between providers and the distances patients have to travel for healthcare access. Not only must a woman find the money to pay for the procedure, but she must also find the money for round-trip transportation and accommodation because of mandatory delays required by each state. Although Roe v. Wade declared abortion legal in 1973, if one cannot physically access a clinic because of numerous state-imposed restrictions, then the stipulation of “without undue interferences from the State” is clearly being abused. These statutory and normative policy changes make the medical procedure difficult to obtain, especially for women who are young and poor. As Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg stated, “There will never be a woman of means without choice anymore…we have a policy that affects only poor women, and it can never be otherwise.”

**Bubbles & Abortion**

Over the past three decades, an intricate legal and spatial scaffold has developed around abortion clinics in the United States. Bubble laws protect people, clinics, and clinic sites from protestors attempting to prevent access to reproductive health care facilities. As the geographer Dr. Warren Hern, director of the Boulder Abortion Clinic in Colorado, criticizes how bubble law is to enforce. Public entrance and driveway entrances, blocking or hindering access to the property and people accessing the clinics. Smaller groups of protestors tried to disrupt clinic operations through trespassing on clinic parking lots and into clinic buildings, crowding around cars, and surrounding, pursuing, showing, yelling, and spitting at both women and their escorts entering clinics. "Side-walk counselors" approaching patients along public sidewalks in order to "ounsel" women not to have an abortion used similar methods.

A temporary restraining order (TRO) was issued by the District Court, stipulating a 5-foot "floating buffer zone" area around any person or vehicle seeking ingress or egress with an exception that two "sidewalk counselors" were allowed to have "a conversation of a non-threatening nature." Protesters lengthened the first month but soon resumed. A preliminary injunction, issued 7 months later, included the "buffering buffer zone," as well as the "fixed buffer zone," or the "unraveled demonstrations within 15 feet of clinic doorways and entrances, parking lot and driveway entrances, and clinic driveways. To address the sidewalk counselors, the injunction stated that once the "ease and desire" request was involved, counselors must remain 15 feet from the person they were counseling and remain outside the buffer zone.

The Supreme Court concurred with the lower court, upholding the ban on demonstrations within a 15-foot fixed zone around doorways and driveway entrances, parking lot entrances, driveways and driveway entrances of the clinic facilities. However, the Court struck down the ban on demonstrations within 15 feet of any person or vehicle seeking access to or leaving such facilities. They deemed the second part violated the First Amendment and burdened more speech than was necessary to serve relevant government interests.

Schendel v. Pro-Choice Network of Western New York, 519 U.S. 357 (1997)

In 1990, doctors and clinics with Pro-Choice Network of Western New York filed a complaint in the District Court seeking to enjoin petitioners from illegal conduct at their clinics. These clinics experienced numerous large-scale blockades, where protestors knelt, sat, and lay in clinic parking lot driveways and doorways, blocking or hindering access to the property and people accessing the clinics. Smaller groups of protestors tried to disrupt clinic operations through trespassing on clinic parking lots and into clinic buildings, crowding around cars, and surrounding, pursuing, showing, yelling, and spitting at both women and their escorts entering clinics. "Side-walk counselors" approaching patients along public sidewalks in order to "ounsel" women not to have an abortion used similar methods.

As the ascriptive right in the United States continues to evolve, Roe v. Wade through state legislative restrictions, the right to abortion is becoming increasingly difficult, if not impossible, for poor women of color. With the Supreme Court's recent decision to eliminate all federal funding to Planned Parenthood, it is unclear how this will impact law enforcement. Activists have demonstrated the political will to eliminate medical care to a vast segment of the female population. This list examines spatial access to such services and how the reconfiguration of physical landscapes expedites the continued elimination of a woman's right to choose how and where she cares for herself. It is part of a larger research project examining emergent spatial forms of securitization in the United States, focusing particularly on hospitals, women's shelters, and abortion clinics.

**Bubbles & Spatial Complexity**

Dr. Warren Hern, director of the Boulder Abortion Clinic in Colorado and one of the few late-term abortion providers left in the United States, criticizes how bubble law is to enforce. Public entrance and driveway entrances, blocking or hindering access to the property and people accessing the clinics. Smaller groups of protestors tried to disrupt clinic operations through trespassing on clinic parking lots and into clinic buildings, crowding around cars, and surrounding, pursuing, showing, yelling, and spitting at both women and their escorts entering clinics. "Side-walk counselors" approaching patients along public sidewalks in order to "ounsel" women not to have an abortion used similar methods.
Continued from pg. 5, “In the Presence of Another Being”

With the explosion of the Internet and the emergence of new online platforms, the role of artists in responding to social and political issues has become more prominent than ever. Artists are not only creating works that address the conditions of our time, but they are also using their platforms to engage with a wider audience. The art world has become a space where ideas and concepts are shared and debated, and this has led to a more diverse range of voices and perspectives being heard. The works of artists such as Jacob’s are a testament to the power of art to challenge and provoke thought, and to inspire action.

Notes
2. Olga Mishchenko, born in Kiev, Ukraine, and moved to Canada in 1980, is an artist and writer who works between Toronto, Montreal, and Los Angeles. She has a Master’s degree from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and a Bachelor’s degree from University of Toronto, Toronto, and has been a research assistant at the Art Institute of Chicago’s Art History and Culture and Technology program. She is currently a member of Aesthetica Studio, which is currently the Director of the Architectural Studies Program (PSD Reproductive Health). Her research focuses on installations, sculpture, performance and food based projects.
3. Wendy Jacob is a professor at the University of California, Berkeley, where she teaches Architecture/Landscape/Political Economy. She is the author of “The Effect of Tropical Light on White Men,” 2011, from Phaidon Press. She is currently at work on the text/image project “The Architecture of the Future.”
7. See also, for example, Thierry de Duve, The Einstein of California (Los Angeles: Remarque, 2013).
8. See also, for example, Thierry de Duve, The Einstein of California (Los Angeles: Remarque, 2013).
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67. See also, for example, Thierry de Duve, The Einstein of California (Los Angeles: Remarque, 2013).
68. See also, for example, Thierry de Duve, The Einstein of California (Los Angeles: Remarque, 203.