

## **The Future of Terraces/Balconies as In-Between Space**

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Access to private outdoor space is crucial for human well-being. The COVID-19 pandemic pointed out the value of ensuring these kinds of spaces for every dwelling. Aiming to answer the research questions on why it is important to focus on the future transformation of terraces/balconies in response to the pandemic, as a new way of connecting the indoor and outdoor space, the private and the public, the workshop explored a specific case study in the central area of Tirana. The chosen context allows us to follow the development of these spaces from the XX century until today. The first part of the workshop focuses on qualitative methods like observation combined with sketching, mapping, and photography, which resulted in a documented catalog of typologies of space and typologies of use of balconies and terraces. The second part focused on projections for future development/transformation of these spaces by applying the collage as a technique for the research through design. Through this research workshop, new possibilities were explored, and new guidelines for the future of the balconies and terraces as in-between space are provided. The knowledge produced can be further used by researchers in the fields of architecture, urban design, and urban planning.

### **Intorduction of the general topic**

Terraces/balconies are the spaces in-between the private (closed) area and public (open) area. They are visually open to the public, but yet, they are private spaces. This character of in-between space has ensured the terrace/balcony, to be indi-

vidually interpreted. For property developers it is the minimal required area, for façade designers, it is the opportunity to make an interesting facade, for residents it is the opportunity to enclose and get an extra room or space, for some it is the utility, auxiliary, or even garbage space, for some it is the leisure space, summer kitchen area, garden area, smoking area, favorite area, showoff area, suntanning, reading, or planting space. The way this space is perceived and used depends on a vast of factors, such as climate factors of the place, the orientation of the terrace, the view from the terrace, the size and organization of the flat, the number of residents, the character and common sense of the residents, and for sure the regulatory laws of the country. Our perception of the balconies and terraces has shifted in the period of the COVID-19 pandemic. It was a space connected with the provision of well-being. These spaces represented fresh air, nature, plants, concerts, socialization...etc. That is why one should focus on these aspects when we think about their post-pandemic development.

### **Objectives and output of the workshop**

The objective of the workshop was to produce a catalog of existing terraces/balconies in a central area district in Tirana and a catalog of visions on how terraces/balconies in this area should develop in the post-pandemic period. The results will serve architects in their future work in designing the residential buildings and the urban planners on the regulative for future development of this specific area in Tirana. The findings obtained

from the workshop aim to contribute to general knowledge on the semi-private spaces like terraces/balconies in the residential buildings. The research on terraces/balconies as in-between space contributes to architecture, urban design, and urban planning disciplines, by obtaining knowledge that can be further used for similar studies in different contexts, comparative studies, decision making, and design.

This workshop answered the following research questions:

**Primary questions.** What kind of terraces/balconies are specific in the area around the New Bazaar and how are they used? How have the terraces/balconies transformed from the XX century until the present and what are the projections for better future development?

**Secondary questions.** How to deal with the current terraces/balconies to ensure them as a living space of well-being?

Will the pandemic affect how terraces/balconies are used, designed, perceived?

Will this spaces evolve as a space for contact with nature and the outdoor?

### Methodology

The total amount of participants in the workshop was 42, and they were divided into six groups. The students documented the existing condition, did an analysis of it, designed the future projections, and presented their work at the end of the workshop.

Firstly, the students got familiar with the concept and history of terrace and balcony through a presentation of the tutors. Afterward, they started observation of the chosen sites as a case study. The observation was done through site visits in the first three days of the workshop. Secondly, the collage technique was presented as a technique for describing and expressing the future projections. The second part of the workshop as well was done through collaboration among the students within the six groups, where they used collage to imagine the future of terraces/balconies as in-between spaces.

### Selection of case studies

The case study selection aims to cover buildings from various periods in the history of the city of Tirana development. In the area around the New Bazaar, six locations are chosen and divided between six groups of students. The specific locations contain a street and the buildings facing the street. The criteria for choosing specific streets from the neighborhood is to have both street fronts occupied with residential buildings with terraces or balconies. All of the locations are chosen to differ one from the other in the sense of street fronts distance, typology, size and orientation of buildings, vehicle and pedestrian traffic, the period in which the buildings were built, and the distribution of greenery in the area.

The case studies should tell the story of how the neighborhood has site as viewed from a distance while the “topographical system”, a cinematographic method, reorient the viewer through recognisable distances, dimensions and objects. During a film screening, the viewer generates its own mental maps

that localise his/her position in the represented filmic space. This is the case of the single set films that are perceived as entirely shot in a single building, such as *Last Year at Marienbad* (Alain Resnais, 1961) and *High-Rise* (Ben Wheatley, 2015). The former takes place in a baroque hotel, which is, in fact, an imaginary building created by editing scenes shot in several locations, namely three royal palaces in Munich and a film studio in Paris. The latter is situated in a brutalist- styled tower that consists of a monumental garden and a leisure centre in Bangor, a ferry terminal in Belfast and a 3D model for the exterior. In these cases, the filmic space can be considered as a “Frankenstein” location, a mix of different buildings, which appears to the spectator as one. It is a re-composition of various building fragments. When the entire film is located in a single spot, the architecture becomes autonomous from the plot and the camera movements.

### Methodology of the first part of the workshop

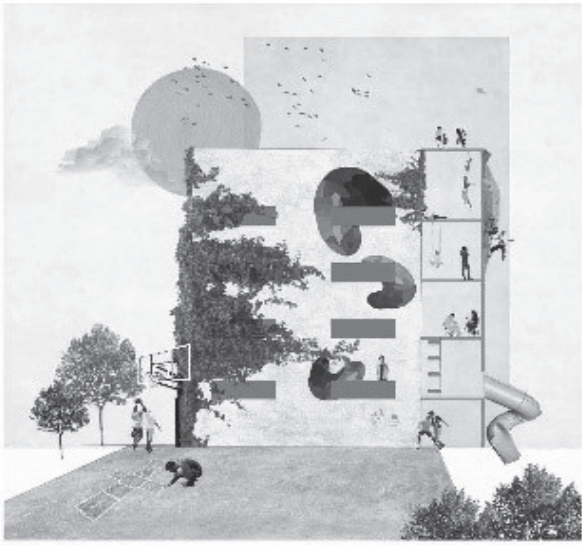
In the first part of the workshop, the focus was on the existing context – the history and current state of usage of the balconies/terraces. The data collection is conducted with qualitative inductive methods to answer the research questions. To collect the spatial typology and the usage typology of terraces and balconies present in the locations of the case studies, the students did a field observation with sketching, photography, and mapping, which resulted in cataloged documentation with photographs and technical drawings.

### Methodology of the second part of the workshop

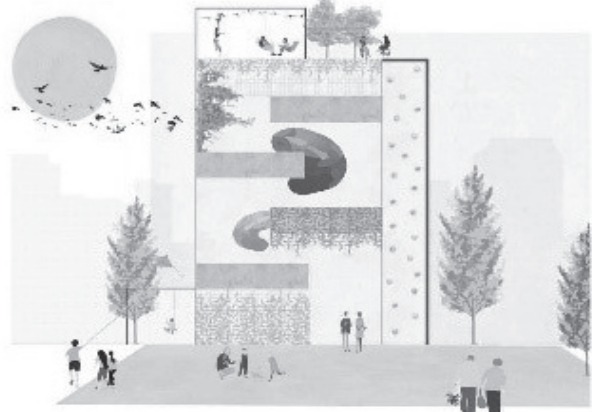
The second part of the workshop was focused on the projections for the future. By research through design, the workshop aims to discover new possible typologies and to project the future of the terraces and balconies as in-between spaces. The main design technique for achieving these new visions for the future of these spaces is the collage technique. This technique enables freedom of expression, speculation and is open for interpretation.

The second part of the workshop was divided into three separate tasks. The first task was to think of the new balcony typologies through its section. Each of the six groups worked with two street sections and three keywords that guided them through the process. Two keywords were selected from the analysis of how residents use the balconies now, and the third keyword was a prediction of how balconies would be used in the future, inspired by the COVID-19 condition. Two simplified street sections from the previous documentation task were given to the students, and by using the given height of the buildings and the distance between the buildings, they were able to work on the new typology of the balconies that will form a different atmosphere and connection in the neighborhood.

The second task of the second part of the workshop was to focus only on the elevation and to form the new typology of the balconies, also using the collage technique. The keywords given to the students in the previous task were used in this task as well. In this part the students were supposed to forget about



Workshop Process Image



SECURITY



KITCHEN AREA



EXTRA SPACE-STORAGE AREA



PLANTING AREA-MEDITATION AREA



STORAGE AREA



KITCHEN AREA



WORK OUT AREA



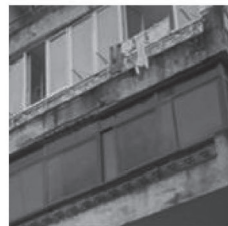
READING AREA



UTILITY / DRYING CLOTHES



LIGHT/PANORAMIC VIEW BALCONY



Workshop Process Image

the sections they worked on the previous task and to propose a new vision represented only through elevations. The last task was concluding a new vision of the typology of a balcony. In this task, the students represented the visions through technical drawings. From the 'sections' and 'elevations' each of the six groups presented a new typology for a balcony answering to specific programmatic needs (the given keywords).

**Obstacles.** With Covid-19 restrictions and threats, it was not possible for the observation to be done from the inside of the apartments. The observation of the terraces and balconies was done from the street.

## Results

Each of the six groups of students documented one street and its fronts. The documentation of the streets resulted in a catalog of existing typologies of balconies in the neighborhood (Figure 2), and a catalog of variations of how the balconies are used (Figure 3). We got a total of 46 typologies of balconies documented in their primary state and a total of 66 variations of how they are used and modified in each neighborhood. In Figure 2 and Figure 3 are shown only the characteristic typologies. The dimensions of the balconies vary from 1.5m<sup>2</sup> to 15m<sup>2</sup>. Their depth is from 0.4m to 2.7m and the length of the balconies varies from 2.4m to 7.3m. The sizes also depend on the time in which the building was built.

**Group 1** had the following keywords: light, laundry, and work-space. **Vision:** The light is foreseen as a necessity that penetrates the building and enables the residents to enjoy it. The sun rays communicate with the public area as well.

**Group 2** had the following keywords: noise protection, privacy, and socializing. **Vision:** With AI reaching its peaks, the human will prevail in the atmosphere. The industries, the work, the daily commute will be situated in the stratosphere, producing the noise in that area.

**Group 3** had the following keywords: summer kitchen, collective space, and productive landscape. **Vision:** Each building should function as a community and should be sufficient. The food should be produced, sold, and cooked by the residents of the building.

**Group 4** had the following keywords: traditional Albanian family, double shading, and sunbathing. **Vision:** The lockdown brought the necessity of having a balcony or a terrace where multiple functions can be done.

**Group 5** had the following keywords: atmospheric protection, leisure, and playground. **Vision:** This future balcony brings natural amorphous shapes into play. From first sight, the dimensions of this balcony look the same as the current ones, until you discover the caved space that companions the standard shape of the balcony.

**Group 6** had the following keywords: dining area, bedroom area, and exercise & well-being. **Vision:** Having in mind the closed balconies by most of the residents, and the need of having an open space to maintain their well-being, this new typology serves as a plug-in module to the existing buildings.

## Conclusions

The area around the new Bazaar in Tirana is full of different typologies of balconies and terraces. If we categorize them by size; there are standard balconies (who dominate the most), fake balconies, step-in balconies, and spacious balconies. If we categorize them by type; there are open balconies, glazed and eliminated, and their combination/variations of being fully open, corner-open or frontal open. If we categorize them by shape; there are rectangular, square, L-shape, irregular shape, and half-circle shape.

We can conclude that the typologies of balconies from the XX century onwards changed and are getting bigger, more open, and vary in shape and size. The current state of the balconies shows that they are mostly transformed by users into a space that can be closed and opened and at the same time used for multiple functions. They are used mostly for a kitchen area, extra space area, storage area, planting area, utility area, barbecue area, sun protection, noise protection, privacy, collective space, leisure, drying clothes, double shading, maximum interior light, apartment extension, and atmospheric protection. In the post-pandemic period, there is a need to envision new spatiality for the balconies having in mind their usage during the COVID-19 crisis. The collage technique allows successfully to envision the future by combining different elements such as keywords and spatial formations. The collages can be interpreted differently and are a good tool for narration. In the final task, the students could easily conclude what is the new 'needed' type of balcony in the post-pandemic period by analyzing their interpretations of the story they told with the collage.

We can conclude that the final visions for new balcony types focus on the visual and spatial connection of the balconies and the possibility of the people to socialize with each other while balancing their private space with the public space. The notion of protection (of privacy, light, noise, and atmospheric influence) was also emphasized in the narratives of the students. The green balcony, as well, was one of the most mentioned visions by the students on the topics of well-being, atmospheric protection, productive landscape, etc. What is more evident and common within all the group of students, is their visions for a balcony with a transformative and multifunction character, that is inspired by the current situation problems and COVID-19 crisis. This may be the next direction toward the future development of these in-between spaces.

*PUZZLE is a collective of young and enthusiastic architects established in 2018. As a team, they have worked on a wide spectrum of projects including exhibitions, interior design, architectural projects, conceptual projects, research, etc. and successfully participated in many competitions. Throughout their work, they try to have a research-oriented approach thus creating more sustainable, outspoken, and creative solutions for all architectural challenges.*

## The Cadavre Exquis Utopia

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**REMIJON PRONJA**

*POLIS University*

*"A globe that doesn't include Utopia doesn't even deserve a look"*

Since ancient times, when a group of human beings share a certain number of values and decide to settle permanently in a place, they give life to a town. The size of this inhabited center outlines its linguistic definition, country, town, city and today, metropolis, megalopolis.

All inhabited centers have one thing in common that goes beyond their size, and that is their identity, their own genius loci as the Latins would say. With mass industrialization between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the progressive abandonment of the countryside and the (over) crowding of the cities, which became bigger and bigger, determining the identity of the cities became more and more difficult, to understand what they wanted to be, what they aspired to, what was their dream. Yes, cities do they have a dream, which has to do with their identity and which in other historical moments has been called utopia.

"Utopia" comes from the Greek: οὐ ("not") and τόπος ("place") which translates as "no place" and literally means any non-existent society. Sir Thomas Moore coined the term in 1516 when he used it to describe an island where the structure of society and the balance between man and nature are perfectly balanced. Moore himself divides the meaning of the term according to two possible derivations from the Greek words eutopia which means good place or outopia which means no

place. Human beings need these kinds of places because mythical space is an intellectual construct and helps us define our real space. In the description of the island of Utopia, both definitions find their place; the island is eutopic in the sense that it is a good place, where there is a perfect balance between nature and man, and society is perfectly balanced in itself, but it is also outopic, because it exists only in the author's mind.

Between the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the new meaning that the city acquires through its constant and growing urbanization led to experiments in creating ideal or utopian cities, as they were often defined. In these new cities an attempt was made to reconstruct the dream of the city, a dream that in the pre-existing cities, seemed to have more and more the appearance of a nightmare, because they were transforming themselves in a rapid and chaotic way, fraying and losing, perhaps forever, their own genius loci, their identity, their dream. In contemporary cities, in fact, there is often the feeling of disorientation, as if the places in which we live did not really belong to us, as if we could not own them entirely. We live in an eternal chase, in a continuous need to re-know, in the sense of knowing again, places that change faster than we start building a stable memory of them. The city therefore changes continuously, quickly, fiercely. It turns around its dream in a revolutionary motion that resembles that of our planet around its star, around the Sun. And in this movement of revolution our points of reference change, together with our memories, our percep-



Workshop Best Result



Workshop Exhibition

tion of the full and empty spaces of the places where we live. The city becomes a mobile, uncertain, slippery terrain that can only be strengthened by the relentless search for this original dream. The dream is to be sought in small and large things, in everyday gestures and in the tallest buildings, in the corners that seem blocked in time, and in the great expressways that never stop, such as the constant and continuous revolution of the Earth around the Sun. At the end of 2019 world faced the first global pandemic, the COVID-19 infection, as a result of the long months of lockdowns in all the regions of the world, professionals and thinkers started to highlight the needs to think reality from a new and unforeseen perspective, stating that a possible point of view could be that of Utopia. In the reflecting of the new world post-pandemic scenario, art can contribute by re-thinking the spaces of the city through utopia: exiting the frame imposed by the establishment, entering the infinite resources of imagination. In the reality of Albania, revolutionary political transition and a rapid privatization process that dealt to a chaotic urban development followed the end of the communist regime in 1991. The pandemic unequivocally highlight the need for a change in the vision of our cities and the way they must develop.

The workshop analyzed how the idea of utopia could be seen as a way to find alternative and unexpected solutions to contemporary problematics from social, political, urban point of view. During the workshop, students divided in small groups of work, analyzed contemporary Tirana following different paths and layers. The results of the analyses were translated into visions of utopia through drawings realized using the methodology of the *cadavre exquis* (exquisite corpse). *Cadavre exquis* (exquisite corpse) is a collaborative drawing approach first used by surrealist artists to stress the unconscious path of their methodology. An artist begins a drawing on a sheet of paper, folding it and leaving only a small part of it visible, so that the next artist continues the drawing without being able to understand what the first one drew, and so on until the sheet and the drawing are finished.

### **Objectives**

The objectives of the workshop were to reflect on the perception we have on our city and the possibility to develop new possible ideas, only apparently not realizable, in order to change the way we think about the city itself. Nowadays it is a priority to rethink the way we act, the way we consume, the way we live the urbanized area of the planet, which reached an incredibly high surface of land, affecting also the climate, in creating a high concentration of dioxide carbon as a consequence of our activities in the city. Another objective was to underline how drawing is a medium of analyzes of reality. We can understand reality by drawing it, understanding how volumes and shapes work. This offers the possibility of transforming reality, understanding a form, it means understanding how it works, and therefore how to change it, from a functional and formal point of view.

### **Methodology**

The methodology used for the workshop was that of the analyzes of the phenomena that shape the city from a functional and formal point of view. Students went into the assigned areas, walking and understanding the neighborhood, highlighting real or possible problematics derived from our behaviors. Drawing was meant to be their medium of analyses and of intervention. The functioning of the city was the case study of the all workshop, developing the idea of utopia as a way to find alternative and unexpected solutions to contemporary problematics from social, political, urban point of view. The notion of utopia was chosen for its possibility to go beyond the existing, starting from it and giving unforeseen answers to unsolved problematics. Problematics that eventually came out from architectonics and urbanistic old solutions which were responsible of our behaviors.

The first day of the workshop students followed a lesson about the notion of utopia and how it has been used in architecture and art. After that, students were divided into groups and each group has been assigned to an area of Tirana. Students had to analyze and document that area through photographs, drawings, sketches and notes.

The second day we analyze what they find in their areas, highlighting the problematics of each zone, from different points of view, politic, social, urbanistic, architectonic etc. The students started to reflect and sketches possible utopias solutions for the problematic they want to highlight in their area.

The third and fourth day of the workshop were divided in two moments, in the morning field trip to the city (all the groups in their areas) to understand if the first utopias they developed were “possible”, highlighting this apparent dichotomy of a “possible utopia”. Then in the afternoon, they continue to work on their projects.

The fifth day was dedicated to the finalization of the projects. This is the part of the project when students have to somehow connect together all the areas of the city were they worked, this was the idea of creating a *cadavre exquis* of utopian drawings on Tirana in the attempt of imagining a new idealized development of the city where we live.

The sixth day there was the student’s work presentations.

### **Conclusions**

The students made a very good work, their analyses were acute and the quality of the drawings were able to eventually visualize another possible image of Tirana. They used a variety of way of expressions starting from simple sketches, to collages, to digital elaborations, and digital drawings. We really believe combining the notion of utopia and that of the *cadvre exquis* methodology was a good way to create new narrations in this moment of crisis that the pandemic speeded up somehow, facing the world with the necessity to rethink our cities in a more healthy and less aggressive shape.

Eduardo Galeano, said that utopia is on the horizon. I move two

steps closer; it moves two steps further away. I walk another ten steps and the horizon runs ten steps further away. As much as I may walk, I'll never reach it. So what's the point of utopia? The point is this: to keep walking.

*Stefano Romano, he is a PhD candidate in a double degree program in the University of Ferrara (Italy) and Polis University (Albania). He teaches visual art in the bachelor's degree in Art and Design at Polis University. Romano works in a processual field, through temporary actions, performances, installations, video and photographic works. He realizes ephemeral, diasporic work built according to a rigid grammatical structure capable of always generating unexpected situations, making the artist the first spectator of himself. His work focuses on the contradictions of social reality, always investigated through a light look, capable of creating transitory and unexpected images. From the beginning of 2000's, he conceived several projects as artist as well as curator. His work has been exhibited in national and international exhibitions.*



# Dealing with the Future of the Emergent Settlements in the Absence of Full Property Recognition. The case of Kashar and Astir in Tirana, Albania.

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## Abstract

In Tirana more than half of the built environment is informal. The more we go outside the more it would be the absence of property recognition. However, this condition has not stopped the process of substitution. Starting from an orchard land, to a highly densified area, Kashar and Astiri areas are the best examples to represent and show the process of substitution. The comparative methodology used in this paper speaks about partial development of the agricultural land made by 200x200 meters, with a fast process of substitution long the existing pathways and a slower process inside the agricultural land. In this substitution process, three actors are played an important role: the primary inhabitants (single family), the investor with multi-family buildings, and the public administration. The substitution process from the primary inhabitants has happened informally, in common understanding and over a long period. These common forms of understanding and sharing consist of signs (communication), resources (construction materials), and development rules (distances). T

he substitution process by the private investors has happened there where was a higher degree of property recognition. Instead, the public administration has set in a process of eradicating the informal settlements, without understanding the two processes of substitution mentioned above and by interfering in the substitution process. Both inhabitants, the first, and the new struggle for the primary urban rights, such as water, mobility, and energy access.

## Introduction

This article deals with key questions and aspects concerning the development of Tirana in the last 30 years. It does so through the thematic lens of emergent urbanism and the tension between statutory planning activities<sup>1</sup>, informality<sup>2</sup>, and loose property rights<sup>3</sup>. Though its relevance is not limited to the contextual case of Tirana, but it provides insights on the issue of emergent urbanism and possible ways to formally deal with it without hampering its beneficial spontaneous forces.

With the fall of the communist regime in 1992, after almost 50 years, Albania opened the development of its territory to market logic and the recognition of private property rights. This transition gave rise to a rapid urban expansion process and, according to many, a chaotic development that often generated grey legal situations<sup>4</sup>. Such a transition was based on two main reforms. Firstly, the Law n. 7501 (1991), allocated

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<sup>1</sup>The first planning activities after the communist regime in Albania, started in the early 1990, latter in (Ligji Nr:8405 "Për Urbanistikën", 17.9.1998), in (Ligji Nr. 10 119 "Për Planifikimin e Territorit", 23.4.2009), and finally, (Ligji 107 "Për Planifikimin dhe Zhvillimin e Territorit", 2014). Till to 2009 there were no planning activities outside the "yellow line", defined by the urban continuity of the city. Many informal practices took place outside the "yellow line", so in "institutional vacuum".

<sup>2</sup>The first informal practices started in at the beginning of the 1990 – with the fall of the communist regime in Albania.

<sup>3</sup>Property rights issues came up with the fall of the communist regime in the early 1990.

<sup>4</sup>See (Aliaj, Misteri i Gjashtë, 2008).

and distributed national land to farmers for agricultural purposes at a “family scale” (around 2 ha). Secondly, a national program, (2005), for the “legalization, urbanization and integration of the informal settlements”<sup>5</sup>. Since then, a series of planning issues are still largely unresolved, and deeply contrasting development forces are in place. On the one hand, several informal, emergent settlements built in the last decades, still lack formal recognition and are unprotected by the State. On the other, several urban development projects promoted by the municipality are taking place often in substitution for the already existing informal settlements. Such a process of substitution cannot but raise important ethical concerns, and constitutional. Existing households are often displaced but not fully reimbursed, neither physically (with a new apartment) nor financially. Also, some neighbourhoods are going through a process of demolition and reconstruction via large-scale projects which seem not to fit into the longstanding spirit and spontaneously generated character of the place. Under these conditions, important questions arise concerning the future of these settlements:

- How is it possible to govern the process of substitution and densification of these settlements?
- How should planners treat the already existing households despite their loose property regime?

This article proposes an evolutionary approach in the analysis and exploration of two relevant case studies – namely, the Kashar neighbourhood and “Astiri”<sup>6</sup>. The goal is to unfold the complexity of these settlements by investigating their morphology, and the property regime process in substitutions under (spontaneous) rules, architectural types, and main social aspects. The ambition is to critically reflect on this phenomenon and come up with strategies that can effectively deal with existing tension from the substitution process.

### **The problem: informal urbanism and property rights**

Before the XX century, most settlements were “emergent”. While today emergent urbanism is associated with informality, in the past emergent development processes were the normality: within a frame of simple rules (urban codes), small initiatives took place and gave rise to incremental and organic urban tissue<sup>7</sup>. Emergent urbanism, however, must be intended not as an illegal or informal practice per se, but as the development process that happens within a certain statutory framework (such as planning rules and land-use planning, as well as the design of collective spaces) or, in certain cases, in the absence of it.

The role of background conditions in the absence of statutory planning activities is essential in emergent practices. To generate emergent forms of urbanism, (spontaneous) orders, the local community should share certain common rules for the maintenance and construction of their houses, as well as find ways to produce certain collectively relevant spaces and infrastructures (streets, etc.). These rules or procedures are not always agreed upon in concert by the local community. Often, they emerge spontaneously over time from the stratification of local practices. These rules start to take the status of habits, traditions, and norms. Their peculiarity is that although they

are not protected by the state, the local community voluntarily obeys and complies with them. These rules indeed are somehow self-emerging, self-imposed, and self-surveilled by its local community. An important aspect of emergent forms of urbanism is the role played by time. The process corresponds to an incremental juxtaposition of new actions, one after the other, where the first “structures/influences” the second which, in its turn, will structure/influence the third, and so on. In this development process, nobody can anticipate or know the final state of affairs, but like in all trial-and-error processes in society, the outcome will be the unintentional results of the stratification of multiple small actions, altogether generating an order which was not designed by anyone specifically<sup>8</sup>. This type of development has some main advantages: bottom-up approach, human scale of the developments, and the ability to get to any cultural dimension and use of the spaces. But it can also give rise to some problems if the minimal background conditions are not respected: lack of infrastructure and services (streets, sanitation, garbage, etc.), disrespect of other people’s rights (accessibility to houses, views, privacy, etc.) and a loose and vulnerable property rights configuration.

The loss of property rights, or housing tenure, is a process that has happened continuously from early 1990 to now-days with the substitution processes. This process has taken place in the urban peripheries of the cities, where the emergent urbanism occurred, and in the substitution process. In some cases the property right was unclear from the beginning, with the first inhabitants, in other cases, the substitution process created new inhabitants without a property right – those living in the multi-family buildings. As estimated by the national cadastre office, more than 2/3 of 320.000 informal buildings cannot be legalized – and this represents the first layer of inhabitants without a property right. Instead, the substitution process has created new inhabitants without property rights. Many of these inhabitants live in apartments without a property certificate. In most cases, this is attributed due to the nonaccomplishment of the building standards of the municipal planning codes - although single apartments have been sold in the real estate market. The loss of the property right affects more than 1 million inhabitants in Albania. From this national perspective, half of the population is considered secondary citizens, without basic human rights, such as water supply and sanitation, energy, heating, and cooking, or the recognition of the workplace. The loss of property rights affects not only the human rights on the individual scale, listed above but also the ability of the municipalities to keep territorial equity of the wealth distribution, such as education, health, workplaces, and other primary services on the local scale.

The loss of property, has negative effects, i) on the individual human rights, ii) on the institutional level for the delivery of the territorial equity by primary services, and iii) has negative effects on the social and economic term of the substitution process. The loss of the property has negative effects also for capital invested in the territory, iv). Our research will focus on the capital invested in the territory and its effect that has loss

the property right and by trying to find good practices of substitution that has occurred in the neighbourhood of “Kashar” and “Astiri”. In some territorial areas of “Kashar” and “Astiri” the fast substitution process has encouraged the inhabitants toward a continuous, but slow, process of upgrading settlement. Some of the reasons stand on the desire to get into a better bargaining process in case of substitution. Although the new buildings lack standards and consequently a non-recognition of the property, 15 years of emergent transformation shows that the bargaining process between the first informal settlers and the new building has occurred massively in the neighbourhood.

Now, the key question is? Of what nature, and form, are the bargaining process regarding the invested capital in the territory when the substitution happens? “Kashar” and “Astiri” neighbourhood shows that the substitution has occurred by financial means, and by design issues on the landscape. These last forms of communication and bargaining are the focus of our research. Some are made by signs in the territory and on the landscape others are common rules created by the inhabitants.

### **The case study. Main key policies and laws since the transition from a communist regime**

Emergent urbanism took place outside the “yellow line”, in an institutional vacuum of planning practices. The state was the only owner of the land. Although the agricultural reform of property transfer was occurring in early 1990, the process never saw a full recognition process of the property transfer for agricultural issues. Law 7501 will distribute the land at a family scale for the only purpose of agricultural production. This first reform can be considered a first attempt to stimulate the inhabitants in rural areas after the fall of the communist regime. The reform didn’t give the desired purpose, agriculture, and it paved the road of the informal market of land – mainly for urban purposes.

In the second half of 1990, the process of property transfer became the driving force of the new economy that was taking form after a long period of state control over the property. Informal practices of land and building purchases will occur among citizens interested in the new housing solutions on the outskirts of the main cities. Nowadays we can find on agricultural land different owners by documents and different inhabitants, or farmers in reality for the same parcel of land. This is what in Albania is commonly known among inhabitants as “property superposition”. The case of “Kashar” and “Astiri” shows that the transition from agricultural use to urban passed through the Orchard Agricultural Cooperative operating in the area. Figure 1, shows the Regulatory Plan of Tirana in 1990, and the future land use for the area of “Kashar” and “Astiri” - surrounded by dots on the left side of the map. While in some informal areas planning practices will take place with new pilot projects, following participatory and communicative tools<sup>9</sup>, new informal practices will occur outside the informal areas declared by law, getting spread into the consolidated areas and in the city centres as well. Emergent urbanism will spread all around the cities of Albania and will become an economic and housing reality

not only for single families but also for building developers – raising informal high-density buildings and selling apartments out of the regular market. Soon these two informal housing realities, the single-family housing, and the builder of the multi-family dwellings will get into bargaining conditions for the property transfer. Different cases of early 2000 speak out that in some cases single families have received high percentages of reimbursement in apartments for the property transfer from the building developers, respectively at 40% - the highest degree till nowadays.

In 2005, the new right-wing government will open a long institutional process toward a full recognition of the informal settlements, called legalization. In the beginning, it started only with single-family dwellings, and only in 2014, the law included also multifamily dwellings. With this new process of legalization and the opening process for ‘building permission’ beyond the “yellow line”, the housing market will face a shock in real estate value. Dwelling built without ‘building permission’ will be under-evaluated in the real estate market and by housing agencies.

Nowadays the real estate market is made totally of multi-family dwellings with ‘building permissions’, although various forms of informal renting and owner-ships are present. Most of the single-family dwellings build informally nowadays are out of the real estate market – which makes them more vulnerable to future transformations. The “open possibly” for the informal single-family dwelling to get into a financial bargaining process with future urban developers is no anymore possible, since 2014. What remains to do is to see on the territory there where are the problems deriving from the substitution by bringing out the urban practices and common rules, and solutions that reduce the conflict.

### **Overview of Tirana**

1-an overview of the development process of Tirana.

Nowadays the urban area of Tirana has tripled since 1991, and so happened for the number of the population. In mid-grey colour the urban area before 1991, and in light grey what happened after, till to now-days. The division of these two colours signifies not only a historical point toward the private market, but also an administrative limit. Deep is also the division of the territory created from the “Great Western City Ring”<sup>10</sup>, which

<sup>5</sup>(Ligji 9482, 03.04.2006), (Ligj Nr. 111/2018 "Për kadastrën", 2018). As reported by the National Cadastre Office, in 2019, there are 720.000 buildings in Albania, where 320.000 are declared informal settlements – waiting for a legalization process. For the hindering factors for the legalization process in Albania see (Kacani, 2018).

<sup>6</sup> Located at the city entrance from Durrës, Kashar neighborhood was outside the yellow line of Tirana. “Astiri” area is the well know location of an old factory of flour developed along the city ring from the main entrance from Durrës. In both areas, emergent practices occurred, and now a fast process of substitutions is taking place.

<sup>7</sup>See (Kostof & Castillo, 1992), (Akbar; 1988), (Hakim, 2014), (Bertaud, 2018).

<sup>8</sup>See (Moroni & Cozzolino, 2019).

<sup>9</sup>See (Aliaj, Shutina, & Dharmo, Between energy and the vacuum, 2010) in Bathore area.

is planned and projected with the aim to connect the southern part of Tirana with the exit toward the city of Elbasan. This last area, marked with dark grey, developed in the last 15 years, represents a unique form of housing in the Albanian territory. With a price of up to 1200 euros for a meter square these apartments have additional monthly costs for the maintenance of the collective spaces, such may be gardens, pools, and other forms of amenities. Seen from the big scale there are three patterns; i) the first, historical and administrative role, in the city centre; ii) the second, developed in the northern part of the city as an urban extension from the first pattern in an informal way, and iii) the new pattern developed in the south last years, imposing a modernist grid and architecture. The existence of three big agglomerations in housing stock by different characteristics of the development, mixed with big interventions by the state and municipality, by policies and projects, has increased further the social tension. The difference between these three-housing agglomerations consists in; housing tenure status, affordability degree of the housing costs, materials of construction, accessibility, and different cultural activities of the economic sphere, social and demographic. The first lesson coming from these readings by patterns is that the geographic conflict is not only social, and economic but also spatially distributed in the urban continuity of Tirana. The primary factor of this spatial distribution is not only the political factor, which has passed in various periods in shock conditions – such as the loss of the property right but the factors are rooted in the urban morphology of the city and its historical development. Till 2014, with the introduction of law 107/2014, and government changes, the process of property transition was an ‘open will’ of the stakeholders to bargain the price and the retribution – mainly with apartments. In the middle of 2000, the retribution was 40% of the new development, over the years this percentage dropped to 20%. Nowadays this informal practice, of ‘open will’ among actors to bargain, is impossible due to the intervention of the state with the Inspectorate created to track, stop or demolish where informal settlements have been raised. The construction of the “Great Western City Ring” is one of the examples that show this historical transition of the property transition process. As the two case studies show that in the “Astiri” area process of property transition has occurred with an open will to bargain with the stakeholders of future developments, instead in the urban area of Kashar the urban transition with the intervention of the state and the Municipality of Tirana.

The ongoing macro-urban issues. The change of the bargaining conditions by state rules and interventions has left little possibility for the inhabitants to get into a peaceful substitution. However, there are cases, urban forms, practices and common rules that exist in the territory that contributes toward a softer substitution process, by reducing the conflict and adding communication among the inhabitants. Some rules stand on the exchange of material means, beyond financial, while others stand on common rules and communications. The exchange of material means is often a neglected issue by the institutional planning system but is very evident in the territory. It affects mostly

those material means that are denied to the inhabitants by the state, such as alternative land use, the common wells, common materials of construction, common semi-private roads and squares, common lightening by night, common parking, and many other forms shaped in the territory and that in certain circumstances are even co-managed. In other cases, the bargaining conditions that make softer the urban substitution stand not on material means but rather in communicative practices and urban shapes: such are the bricks thrown in the land lots, showing that there’s an interest expressed in the urban development even before building in, or for example the hidden economic activities showing arrows and other forms communication to the local inhabitants.

### **The two areas: Kashar and “Astiri”**

Presentation with the area. The area of “Kashar” and “Astiri” is one of the last neighbourhoods added to the city administration of Tirana Municipality after the territorial reform of 2014<sup>11</sup>. Our focus in Kashar and “Astiri” is going to that urban area that is continuous and attached to the city, intending to look at the deep territory of the west that brings to the agricultural land. In this perspective, the limits of our territorial focus are the Great Western Ring and the city edges. Our area, in the northern part, is confined to the Lana River, and in the south Rruga e Kavajës. In 2002 the new Mayor of Tirana pushed the building interest of the city outside the administrative borders, to Kashar Commune. From 2002 to 2004, more than half of the empty agricultural land will be filled with big building blocks. Most of these building constructions will be settled on the primary road, following the old agricultural lands, without a regular permit. Slowly new processes of bargaining processes will take place, singular informal family houses will be substituted by multi-family dwellings - big urban blocks. In many cases, these territorial substitutions have configured the land partitions, occupied, fully by those actors, and inhabitants, engaged in a financial agreement. In other cases, the land configuration has happened partially. For a better understanding of the substitution process that has taken place, we should look at different property regimes and not only. In some cases, the substitution process has occurred also in the infrastructural network, in some parts, and in others show two different pictures, each of which focuses on the extreme contradiction of the substitution process. We two different forms of housing typology, in the same neighbourhood, co-existing at the same time and with different land configurations. Also the main boulevard in the Kashar area, where in the middle of the crossroad there is an electricity supply cabin. The substitution process, from a water canal, into a path, and later to a paved and designed process from the top down gives a complex and different result on the territory and land configuration.

**Why these two areas?** Beyond the territorial contradictions, the area of “Kashar” and “Astiri” keeps many forms of common rules that make softer the process of substitution from the top down to those bottom-up initiatives. The focus area is one of the oldest villages not only in the Tirana region but even beyond.

A historical village named Yzberisht has been on the feet of the hill, west part of Kashar, and the downfield with Lana river was used since the middle ages for agricultural purposes. Only after 1990, the area will be affected by the first settlements as a continuity with the city of Tirana. A historical church named “Kroji I Shengjinit”, destroyed during the communist regime, was one of the only buildings in the area in that period. Some of the water canals were following the direct award that building. The area of “Astiri”, brings the name of one of the first shops in 1990 selling colours and varnishes for the new buildings in the neighbourhood. Since that day locals, and not only, calls the southern part of Kashar that name, “Astiri”. Both areas share the same history as many other informal neighbourhoods developed after 1990 in many big cities. The similarity of these neighbourhoods is the primary factor that brings our territorial focus research to Kashar and Astir. The other factor stands on the maturity degree of the area with the informal settlements, which are dated by historical moments of being the first areas to be developed informally.

One of the last reasons that explain our focus area in the Kashar and Astiri neighbourhood stands on external properties of the area, such as the geographic position. The area is limited on the north and the south from two main boulevards that connect the city centre with the interurban network, such as the SH2 highway with its extension, Rruga Durrësit, to the city centre, and the southern SH56 with its extension, Rruga e Kavajës, to the city centre. Being in the middle of these two infrastructural networks put the area of Kashar and Astiri under high mobility pressure. The area shows a high appeal to have various forms of land use and property configuration.

**Research Limits.** The research focus is on a spatial configuration, considering forms and common rules that shape the territory. The research is not going to focus on transaction planning from the substitution process, but rather on communication tools, formal a not formal. As emergent urbanism happens, the substitution process flourishes. The area of “Kashar” and “Astiri” shows that the process of substitution which has occurred between two housing typologies, and less on the infrastructural network, has created various forms of land configuration. Most of these new land configurations are a product of common rules. Our research focuses on these conditions in “Kashar” and “Astiri”, in the section “voice from the field” with various urban forms and architectural dimensions that explains better the situation when common rules shape the substitution process. The methodological limit is the historical developments of each condition, shown in the last section. The substitution process will be described on the neighbourhood scale but without showing the detailed substitution process for each condition in different stages.

### Description/analysis

The first historical building in Kashar and Astiri neighbourhood had a mono-function of land use – that of housing. Even-though mono-function land use the area shows various configurations of property regimes. The area of interest, in 2002, approximate-

ly 160ha. The black marks the buildings, spread following the water canals and the pathways on the side. The water canals had a standard distance of 200x200 meters following Lana River, coming from the city centre, toward the vast agricultural field of west Tirana. Most of these buildings will be settled in the middle of the agricultural land, others right on the crossroad of the pathways along the water canals. Latter these different positions will lead to complex use of the land and the property regime but also the accessibility issues toward the houses build in the depth of the agricultural land. These new complex conditions in most cases are made of common rules among the inhabitants. The land occupied and fenced, signed with dark green in, is a static factor of the property use, but what makes more complex the property configuration more is what remains outside the built and occupied land. Some of these areas speak about partial development of the agricultural land made by 200x200 meters, with a fast process of substitution along the existing pathways and a slower process inside the agricultural land. In another case the process of substitution has changed the property regime of the householders, transforming the area from a complex configuration of property regime made by the single-family houses into rational planning of multifamily dwellings.

For a total of 36 agricultural lots, made of 200x200 meters each, in 2002 there were 10 lots with few or no buildings in them, all the other land lots were filled by single-family houses, see Figura 7. In 2021, see Figure 8, four of these land lots, will be transformed from agricultural areas to multi-family dwellings, respectively lots nr 10, 15, 27, and 31. The other 6 lots will remain till nowadays for agricultural purposes. The rest of the land lots that were built in 2001 were 26. The total substitution process of the housing typology will occur in only 6 of these land lots, and partially in 20 of them. The land lots involved in the substitution process are closer to the Great western city ring and less on the edges of the city. From this perspective, we understand that the multi-family dwelling has been located partially on agricultural land and partially on the existing urban layer of single-family houses.

The substitution process happened there and the legalization process was unclear for the inhabitants. These areas were close to the great western city ring but less in the internal consolidated area on single-family houses – such as lots number 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 19, and 21 – this last located along the Lana river basin at the north. For a better understanding of the uncertainty that the inhabitants of the informal areas face regarding the tenure right, we should see the size of the land and the dimensions of the building, see (Kacani, 2018). On some land, these configurations and building dimensions are designed and used by various local practices and voluntary actions of the inhabitants shared and accepted commonly. Figures number 6 and 7 show on the map not only the land occupied by the single-family houses but also those land parcels shaped for common use and access.

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<sup>10</sup>The Great Western City Ring of Tirana was planned since the Regulatory Plan of Tirana in 1991. Now-days only the western part is developed.

<sup>11</sup> Territorial and Administrative Reform in Albania

These land parcels cannot be legalized but at the same time are a common resource for the inhabitants living in these lots – respectively 1, 2, 5, 8, 9, 12, 13, 17, 21, and 23. These land lots are also those where the substitution process did not occur. In the next session, voices from the field, we will find out that the common resources and rules have maintained these settlements consolidated for more than 30 years.

### **The ongoing process of substitution**

In this part, the new developments in the substitution of the old urban tissues should be presented analytically. We could also select 2 or 3 relevant examples for each case. Lot numbers 1, 5 and 23 are the most significant areas where the substitution process had occurred partially, but not and the centre of it – where single-family houses are consolidated. These lots are significant because they are a good representation of the spatial substitution process, what we are looking for, and at the same time areas where common resources and rules are shared among inhabitants.

### **Voices from the field**

Starting from the map, and the identification of the lots in substitution, the pictures below show how the cases in which inhabitants have shared common resources and rules. Figure 9 shows how land is used for common purposes, such as a long pathway passing through the land occupied by single-family houses. The two rocks at the beginning of the street signify common rules of reference. The other case shows that land has been preserved for trustworthy newcomers, such as relatives of local inhabitants. The other cases below, from lots 8 and 9 in Figures 6, 7 and 8, show that common resources, such as land and local materials of construction are a reality for future constructions and houses.

The first case shows how soil consolidation happens before new constructions will take place. It is local knowledge based on the common rules and acceptance degree. Happens that when inhabitants do not accept the new practice the bricks are removed. This case shows the beginning of the process of land occupation. The other case shows local materials, saved from the previous constructions for new ones.

The next cases from lot 1 and 5 show that common rules give the possibility to create different economic activities and mobility networks. Sometimes hidden from nonlocal inhabitants these places offer the needed affordable service and the ability to move into the private land occupied. The first cases show a shop covered by the main street but opened if you follow the left entrance. This design issue permits the shop owner to maintain common rules and a certain selection of his clients. The second case shows a corridor 15 meters long created by the inhabitants to pass through the single-family houses to the urban block of multi-family dwellings and later to the western city ring.

### **Discussion: main problems and what should be improved**

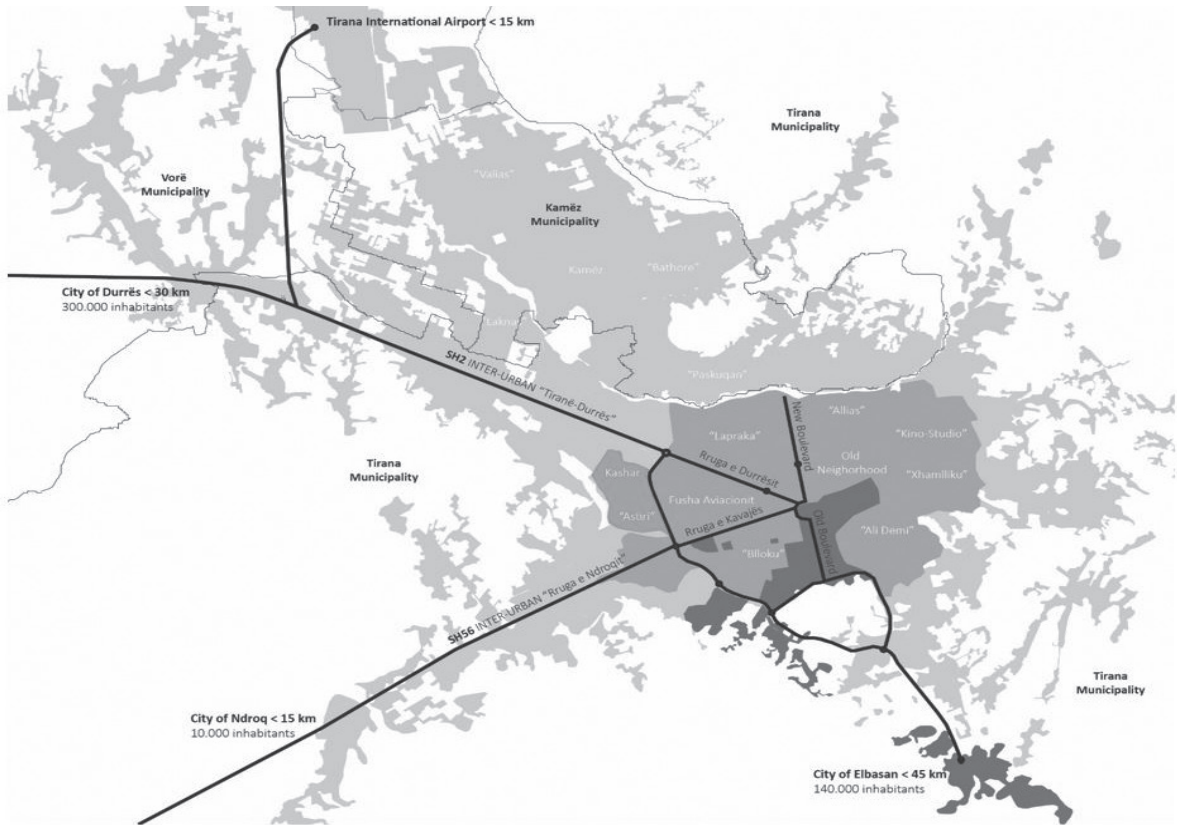
Beyond the existence of alternative common resources for the

inhabitants, more affordable, and more connected to the local solutions and knowledge, the area of Kashar and Astiri misses a broader scale of management of the common spaces. Many are the “urban pockets” where the common land is seen not as a resource – due to accessibility or omniscient design from the top down created by the real estate market of the multifamily dwellings. Missing a larger scale of management means at the same time losing the ability to be recognized institutionally – which might mean getting primary needs and services, such as water sanitation, adequate energy consumption, education, and health. Although some of these needs and services are commonly created and shared among the inhabitants the area remains not integrated with the rest of the city.

What remains to be done is to understand further the complex common rules and resources that have been created in the territory and find out whether they exist or not in the other informal areas and prevent the social tension created by the substitution process.

For more than 20 years the area of Kashar and Astiri has generated financial and spatial substitutions. The financial substitution process has generated a competitive situation to get into better situations of bargaining. Instead, the spatial substitution has generated common rules, resources and territorial signs and identifications for better mobility and more affordable economic activities. However, the informal situation, coming with the new transformations the substitution has created a neighbourhood without primary services and with a low degree of housing adequacy.

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Workshop Results



## A Stage For The City-The Meant-to-Mend Element

MONIKA MARINOVA

*FA Platform*

DORIANA MUSAJ

*POLIS University*

Over the past year and a half, people around the world have had to change their lifestyle, beliefs and priorities within a turbulent race to outrun nature's biological avalanche by means of structured thought. This debate has often put subtle and intangible considerations in the background – are public man and public life injured? – Public life is an essential component in every society, but have the recent conditions created a context, which we can no longer enjoy? These conditions can be redesigned as either creative proposals or a catalyst for such. The design workshop is driven by a search for a simple functional part of a building or the public realm that has the potential to change its presence, be discovered as a versatile object within a space. Students will be encouraged to look for ways in which this part can be multifunctional and perform while being in a changing environment. We will be looking for the new presence an object or a space can have, and how this object or space can carry a symbolic societal function that is visible through its materiality and design. Main questions of the workshop are: How can we design something (a defined object) which can be a valuable addition to the public realm, but also be inspired by the rising debate about Covid and offer a point for contemplation and discussion; How can we find a way to give a material life to a non-material topic, design something concrete inspired by a social condition.

### Objectives

The main objective of the workshop is to build a mindset that

does not take restrictions and safety as templates and margins that frame a design; rather they are a milestone for a creative rethinking of spatial notions. The design component asks for a thoughtful piece of architecture, be it in the shape of a thoughtful proposal for renewed circulation and wayfinding, or something as simple as a doormat, a bench, a door, a coat hanger, paving design, etc. to be considered as an embodiment of a global debate.

### Methodology

The workshop is imagined as a mini real-life project for an urban intervention – including survey, research, proposal, mock-up. This methodology helps to understand the importance of each component within a project of any scale – a month, or a year – but the current project exposes the students to the full process within a week. A successful design process will embody a material representation to this conceptual debate about society impacted by Covid-19, modelled at 1:1 or 1:5. Learning the practical skills of model making and knowledge of materials, their constraints and opportunities, becoming confident in working with specific colours, materials, shapes.

**The content of the course.** The course was held within 7 days, within the university auditorium and outdoor activity. The first day, is a presentation to the site where the students identified a location (within Skanderbeg Square) within the public realm that has been transformed as a result of the new imposed ways of behaving in public – a concrete, physical, but also an





Workshop Process Imagine

ideological change, or a pattern of use can be identified. (New behaving in public, queues, distances, bus stops, lobbies, pavements, entrances, shops, parking spaces) The purpose was to carefully evaluate the pre and post-Covid-19 characteristics of the place, as well as conduct a physical survey: photographs, measurements, a drawing and a piece of text containing the surveys.

The second day was dedicated on relating the found situation, to a theoretical background in order to contextualize and scrutinize the findings and observations. (Theories on place-making, hygiene, psychological effects of social distancing, new cultural life, new social life, new patterns for conducting work, abandoned place such as car parking) . The transformative power of design is seen as a tool to suggest new ways to approach the object studied: through an addition of a carefully designed piece, through redefining a public room, through re-designing a threshold, etc. Make suggestions for improvements through design.

The third and fourth day of the workshop, was a self-directed study. Students developed independent work from the tutors, by creating simultaneously groups of students. By working outside the auditoriums, in the site or common places, this time was preserved to thinking through the ideas and suggestions for new interventions, sketch ideas and think about ways to realize them through a 1:1/1:5 model, by refining the surveys, drawings, photographs, quotes. During these time, students, returned to the auditorium, to consult with the tutors, and define a clear project, to develop a specific proposal model digitally or a 1:1/1:5 mock-up, within three next days. After establishing the model, material and conceptualized the main project-idea, the sixth day was dedicated to the preparation of the presentation and the composition of an exhibition panel A1 size, which includes a title, subtitle, paragraph with your idea, survey, photograph, drawings/photographs/images of the proposal. As a last product, the students had to create a design for a postcard and use this period to practice with each other how to present the proposal in front of the group of the class within 5-10 minute period.

The last day of the workshop was the presentation of the work held. By organizing a lively event where participants comment and critique each others advancements, propose speculative scenarios and suggest what the future of their projects could be, a discussion period after the presentation was held. Other university members and class students also visited the exhibition with the projects and models.

## Conclusions

Each of the ongoing tasks are seen as individual short assignments, where, it is required to produce a succinct piece of information related to each – a simple but evocative drawing or a photograph of the chosen object, a diagram showing the broken working of the particular setting, a succinct quote from a studied reference, a drawing or a model of the proposition – presented in a simple expressive way – a clay marking, an expressive charcoal sketch, a performance etc. Working in groups

was a successful experience as the students, connected and exchanged their knowledge, but also learned new skills from each other such as: photography, text, drawing, low-tech printing, modelmaking with clay, wood, plaster, metal, cardboard, paint.

The final outcome was a short presentation on a single A1 sheet (digital) containing the outcomes of the individual design tasks executed: a quote, a survey, a diagram, a motivation text. The final one was a photograph of a specific designed and fabricated element which has been installed in a real place in Tirana - a thoughtful urban design provocation. The workshop was imagined as a mini real-life project for an urban intervention – including survey, research, proposal, mock-up. This methodology helped the students to understand the importance of each component within a project of any scale – a month, or a year – but the current project exposes the students to the full process within a week. They could approach the project within their personal experience during the pandemic lock-down or either from other perspectives. The reflections on the new approach to the post-pandemic city, generated several new aspects on the way they think of the space, the green and the community engagement to the common spaces.

*Monika is a young architect who graduated from London Metropolitan University. Her ethically-driven project won the Young Talent Architecture Award, part of the European Union's Mies van der Rohe Award. Previously, Monika worked with Hawkins/Brown and Takero Shimazaki Architects on education and public projects requiring a sensitive approach to design. Continuing to explore the intersection between social value and design, she is currently part of interdisciplinary studio Think Forward.*

# Data Processing for Risk-Based Design

**ILDA RUSI**

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**ENDRI DURO**

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Facing natural hazards and reducing their impact has always been one of the most challenging tasks for many professionals including civil engineers. Since natural hazards are characterized by many uncertainties, their prediction and the consequences on society are difficult and the results are tightly dependent on the available data. For years now there has been a shift in the way disasters are faced, going from post-disaster emergencies and recovery to a risk-based pre-disaster measure. Achieving this requires a full understanding of the concept of risk, which is composed of three elements: hazard (H), vulnerability (V) and exposure (E). How each of the elements is characterized is depended on many factors including mainly the data availability. The models used to analyze a built environment or single buildings vary from advanced probabilistic quantitative analysis to simplified qualitative analysis. There is no “correct” model to be used, the selection of the appropriate model is based on many factors including; the group of stakeholders, the scale of the problem and data availability. If an event has a non-human nature the consequences of such events are due to human interventions therefore it is of greater importance to properly analyze the built environment to define the level of vulnerability, which gives roughly the level at which certain buildings or areas are susceptible to being affected by a possible future event (seismic, flood, landslide etc.) causing, therefore, a disaster.

## **Objectives**

Reliable quantitative and also qualitative analysis requires a good level of data no matter their nature. Thus, the aim of the workshop, taking into consideration the fact that Albania is prone to many natural hazards mainly earthquakes and flooding, is that of collecting appropriate data in a qualitative and/or semi-quantitative way through several questionnaires and forms which can then be used to characterize the risk, which on the other hand can be a handful for several decision-making purposes for authorities and specialist, or even communities in a local territorial scale. The workshop will focus on one of the major cities of Albania, Durrës which recently was affected by a strong earthquake.

**Specific objectives of the workshop:** Elaboration of the data collected by the questionnaires, forms or other means (measurements, photos, visual interpretation etc.)

Using the data to define the levels of risk and to determine which levels are acceptable and which are not.

Based on engineering judgement the determination of proper measures to reduce the levels of risk through the proposal of several mitigation measures.

## **Methodology**

The workshop was divided into two parts: a theoretical part and a practical part.

In the theoretical part during the first day of the workshop, an extended lesson was introduced to the students participating in

the workshop. In the presentation, several basic concepts were introduced regarding the topic, the importance of such analysis and the impact on future developments, the role in sustainability and resilience and a brief introduction of how such analysis can be performed. The practical part consisted of a site visit for 1 (one) day for the students to collect appropriate information through several elaborated questionnaires' by the tutors of the workshop. The class was organized into 4 (four) groups, each one covering a specific area within the selected case study zone. Site visits combined with google maps were fundamental to collecting appropriate and complete. The remaining days of the workshop consisted of the elaboration of the collected information in the form of thematic maps, each one giving a piece of specific information for the buildings located in the studied area. Some of the elaborated information; is the number of stories of each building, building age, structural system, road accessibility, state of conservation, function, utilization, proximity to open spaces, building density and building irregularities in plan and elevation. The questionnaires and forms were elaborated specifically for a seismic event since the selected variables have a direct or indirect contribution to the level of vulnerability and therefore the level of risk. Other similar questionnaires can be elaborated to evaluate the physical vulnerability of a built environment for those natural hazardous events.

On the final day of the workshop, each group presented their findings using the elaborated maps and also a PowerPoint presentation, briefly explaining the procedure, setbacks and recommendations for the areas they were studying.

## Conclusions

Following the work done by the students during the week of the workshop and their presentations some of the main conclusion points are as follows:

The studied area has a similarity of buildings in terms of building typology and building age. Mainly new buildings not older than 20 years are present and the most used structural typology is the frame reinforced concrete with cases of masonry buildings

Most of the zone is developed along the road axis, therefore, making them accessible to the infrastructure lowland ring the risk since the access during the emergency phase is immediate. There are some areas though due to hilly characteristics that have slightly lower accessibility

Most of the buildings were flooding resisting floor or multi-floor, and very few critical infrastructures including hospitals and schools were located.

It is important that besides the information on a building scale there is the need for a combination of such information with additional data characterizing the surrounding built environment (infrastructure and open space) to take into account the complex nature of urban and non-urban systems. Such connection is very important during the emergency phase, but also during a long-term post-disaster situation. Mapping the information is one of the easiest and clearest ways of representing the data. Such information can be easily interpreted and understood by

various stakeholders, from municipality experts, engineers and planners to the simple community, which is the main stakeholder since it is directly affected by these possible disaster scenarios. To prevent losses and prepare for future events, information, perception and education are fundamental.

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Teachers and students together during the workshop



# Recycling Junkspace

XIAOYANG FANG & YUANPEI ZHUANG

*FA Platform / UN-Office(Uncertainty Network Office)*

MIGEL SHEHU

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The Covid-19 pandemic has turned or at least revealed the world into a literally junkspace: government disorder, construction shutdown, garbage rampage, mass unemployment, and so on. Human beings are confronted with the most pervasive stagnation and chaos after the Cold War. Inspired by the "Junkspace" concept by Rem Koolhaas and a series of shelter prototypes in the 1960s and 1970s such as Drop City, Environmental Bubble, Manila's "self-help" squatter settlements, and so on, "Recycling Junkspace" intends to seek new shelters or prescriptions of the junkspace to drive human beings into a sustainable relationship between human, environment, and technology. Rather than additive re-creation upon junkspace, we aim to transform junkspace into creative agencies. We hope to recycle junkspace and fabricate residue to re-examine the "surplus production" brought by industrialized modernization. We propose to challenge the students to create new prototypes of "Shelter" (installations or devices) with recycled construction trash (plastic sheets, plywood formworks, etc.) or by-products of industrial or everyday production (bottle caps, wasted cement, abandoned clothes, etc.) to produce new materials, new tectonics, and new forms to rebuild and reactivate the junkspace in the city: unfinished constructions, abandoned assets, decaying public spaces, shanty slums, and so on. Inspired by Levi-Strauss's "bricolage", we intend to provide environmental debug codes of urgent humanitarianism and survival formulas for homeless squatters. "Recycling Junkspace" tries to provide a repair mechanism and visual reference to solve the

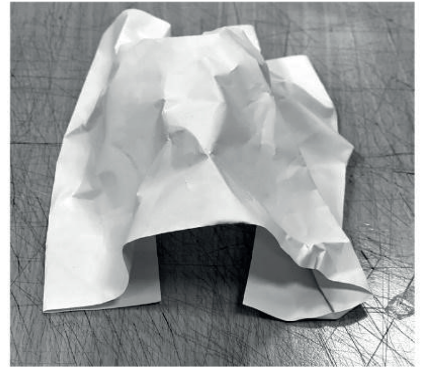
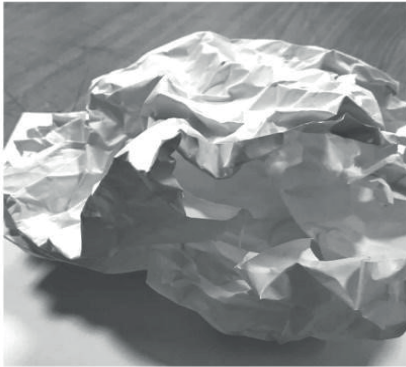
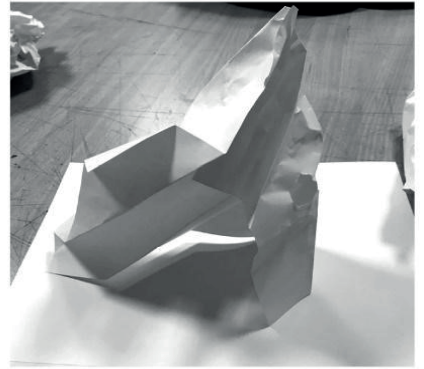
problems of overpopulation, over-construction, over-consumption, and so on.

## Objectives

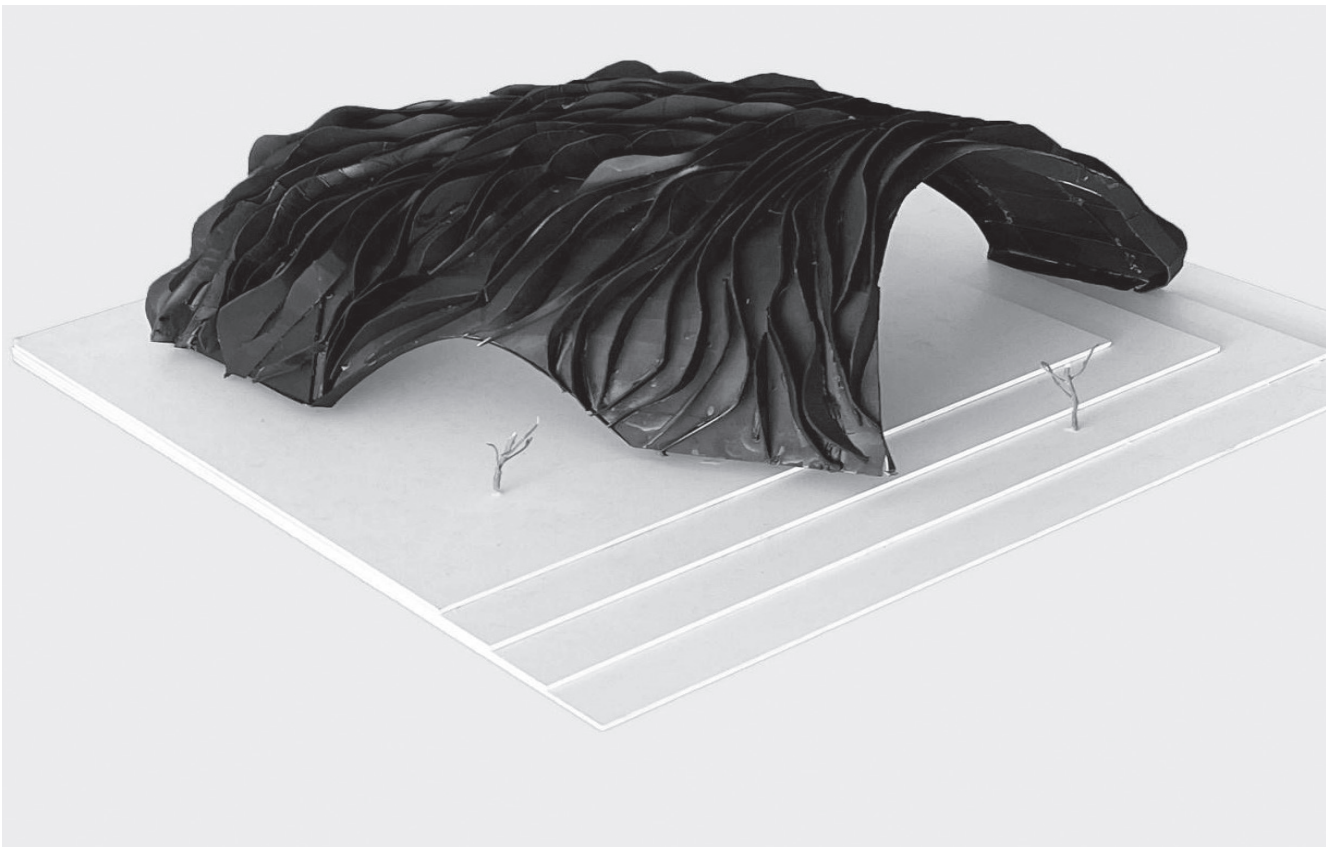
Shelter design, model making, social aspects of architecture (reactivation of urban junkspace, new post-pandemic urban "shelter", Informal architecture& urbanism, etc.), materials in architecture (informal/"formless" construction, construction trash recycling, new tectonic and form by recycling material).

## Methodology

In the workshop, students developed a strategy of RECYCLING for both architecture and city-making. Students worked with a sustainable approach to healing the city during and after pandemics. By recycling junk material, students expanded their understanding of the material, tectonic and construction. Informal material with informal tectonics produced informal but brand new and creative informal architecture and city-making strategies. Students made eccentric, weird and slumpy models which provided us new perspectives into architectural forms. Recycling surplus material and urban space can create sustainable, reciprocal and negotiative tactics into urbanism. Teaching was delivered in multiple formats. From thematic 'handstorming' -improvising model making, site visits, material study, etc. Work at all times was iterative and playful, testing multiple visualizations and model design strategies. This way of working is critical, as it allows you to gain better control of the design



Workshop models



Workshop models

and performative strategies, to test and then refine them. And it also allowed you to demonstrate, more broadly, that adaptive projects could respond in multiple ways to multiple possible conditions; while no single outcome was certain or fixed.

### **Conclusions**

During the workshop, the students collaborated to study the junkspace in Tirana and the "junk" as new material to construct. Each group of 4-6 student selected one junkspace to reactivate and series of junk to reproduce. By the end of the workshop, each group produced a shelter design with junk as construction material and plug it into the junkspace to empower them with a fresh form of life and possibility. We are not providing shelters for artists, but artistic shelters; we are not creating a utopia, but a realistic bricolage in pragmatic templates." Recycling Junkspace" aims not to normalize or romanticize junkspace, but to fill the useless junkspace with "formless" creation to utilize the surplus space into a new form of creativity, which endow human being with more humanity, empower the society with more democracy.

*Uncertainty Network Office ("UN-Office") is an unofficial, unlicensed and unprofitable group of architects, urban designers & artists. UN-Office was founded by Xiaoyang Fang in 2017. We call ourselves an office while it's more like a community. "An" and "Un-" is not only a pun but also conveys our focus on duality, contradiction, complication and ambiguity in architecture, art, urban and humanity.*



## Tirana Guide of Post-Pandemic Public Devices

**EDUARDO CORALES**

*MOB Projects*

**KRISTIANA MECO**

*POLIS University*

MASË its an exercise about the possibilities of some devices to improve the public condition where they operate. The work will be focused in the common condition of some Tirana places trying to stablish a itinerary of micro-architectures (or mi cro-uthopias) The abstract condition cre ate a mass of possibilities and new strategies to give to the city the necessary elements for a post-pan demic era. There's some thoughts about it.

**Parku Rinia.** The site chosen for this project was 'Parku Rinia', wich is one of the main parks of Tirana. The reason behind this desition is that as in most parks, this is a place with many trees and plants with a large green area and swings for children. A place where people go to relax, a place for enjoyment where children and people can go to walk, run, play or sit. It has walking paths and benches for people and it is located in the heart of Tirana. We've chosen to work on a bench. The design of which is a simple one. Considering this is a place for relax the chosen shape of hexagon is a shape that is often used in religious space designs to exude peace and clamness. The hexagon is a pattern with natural motifs that for example is found in the 6-sided cell of a honeycomb, the skin of a snake and even the segments on pineapple skin are also essentially hexagonal in shape. Like a hexagonal prism this bench is unique, modern and comfortable. It is practical to make with little waste of mate rial. The designed bench blends in with the overall design of the park, giving it a more contemporary look.

**TID Tower.** What we thought was that this TID Tower area could be turned into a vertical garden.

The two forms supported on the wall represent vertical gar dens while the other form is intended as a bench, also filled with plants.

**Skanderbeg Square.** The Skanderbeg Square is the main plaza in the centre of Tirana, Albania. The square is named after the Albanian national hero Gjergj Kastrioti Skënderbeu. The total area is about 40.000 square metres. The Skanderbeg Monument dominates the square. As we can see this square goes way back in history and this is one of the reasons why we chose this place, we want to give it something new for the eye public. We chose this design to put in the middle of the square because it is not only something new and unique but it is also environmental healthy. This way we mix old with new. The base of the design is made of steel and the circles where the plants stay are made of strong glass, this way we can see everything from beneath. This kind of design is something that we don't usually get to see that's why we think is going to do good in the post-pan demic time in this Square. This are possible solution for public space in different urban context. It would make people curious to see, which would increase hang-outs and bring life back to normal.

**New Boulevard.** For this area it is planned to place some large benches with a space determined by each other. The benches will be of different shapes and all made of plastic in order to be more 'friendly' for the children who will play in that area, and they will be less at risk of having injuries. This choice was made because this area has a very large and unused space which could very well be a space dedicated to some extent for

children. These are benches that are not only commonly used, as they will not only be used to sit but because of their unevenness they will be used by children to play, slide and have fun. Some of them will be high enough to sit an adult and some of them will be too low and will be used only by children. So their different sizes will determine their use at first sight. But the characteristic of these benches will be the unevenness they will have. So these benches would be the most efficient choice for that area so that the area becomes more attractive and not only, but also usable by people.

*MOB is an international design incubator that develops furniture projects designed by artists and architects. Based in Lisboa and Santiago de Chile, MOB aims to invite young creators from different parts of the world to present proposals that confront their points of view around a piece of furniture. Through exercises based on their own local realities, these pieces are located in a global scene and then finally return to the intimate context of their daily use.*



Workshop process



## TIRANA STUDY CASES



- 1 \_ THE NEW BOULEVARD (2021) - various
- 2 \_ PIRAMIDA (1988) - Pirro Vaso
- 3 \_ PARKU RINIA (1950) - various
- 4 \_ TID TOWER (2016) . 51N4E
- 5 \_ SKANDERBEG SQUARE (2017) . 51N4E



Workshop material