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GSAPP MS-AUD'23

Selected Works 2022-2023



C O N T E N T S

01.	Food For Health Food Security and Health	Urban Design Studio I 2022
02.	Atlanta Towards Care A Future Towards Justice	Urban Design Studio II 2022
03.	Citizens of the forest community Led Conservation	Urban Design Studio III 2023
04.	Psychology of Temporality Material Memory in Construction	Construction Ecologies 2023 in the Anthropocene
05.	Blue New Deal for Savannah Building Coastal Resilience	Towards Resilient Cities 2022
06.	Post Avenue Engagement Community Engagement	Community Enagement 2022
07.	Ghosts of Delhi	Divided Cities 2023

Postcolonization and Urbanism





Food for Health

Food Security and Health

Project type: Urban Design Studio, Group of 4
Location: Mot Haven, Bronx, New York City,USA
Advisors: Prof. Nans Voron, Sagi Golan,Galen Pardee,
Austin Sakong, Sean Gallagher
Year: 2022

Mott Haven is a neighbourhood dealing with food insecurity. The project aims to provide the neighbourhood with physical and digital infrastructure to enable them to form community care-network in context of food.

Following the intention of choice, convenience and accessibility we proposed a new food distribution system, revolving around food stops. Food stops are pockets across the street scape containing healthy food trucks for people with additional functions like community hubs, community kitchens, open seating, recreational public spaces. Additional mobile system of trucks was placed along the food routes closer to schools, residential areas and public spaces ensuring wider distribution.







2. Promote Food Security



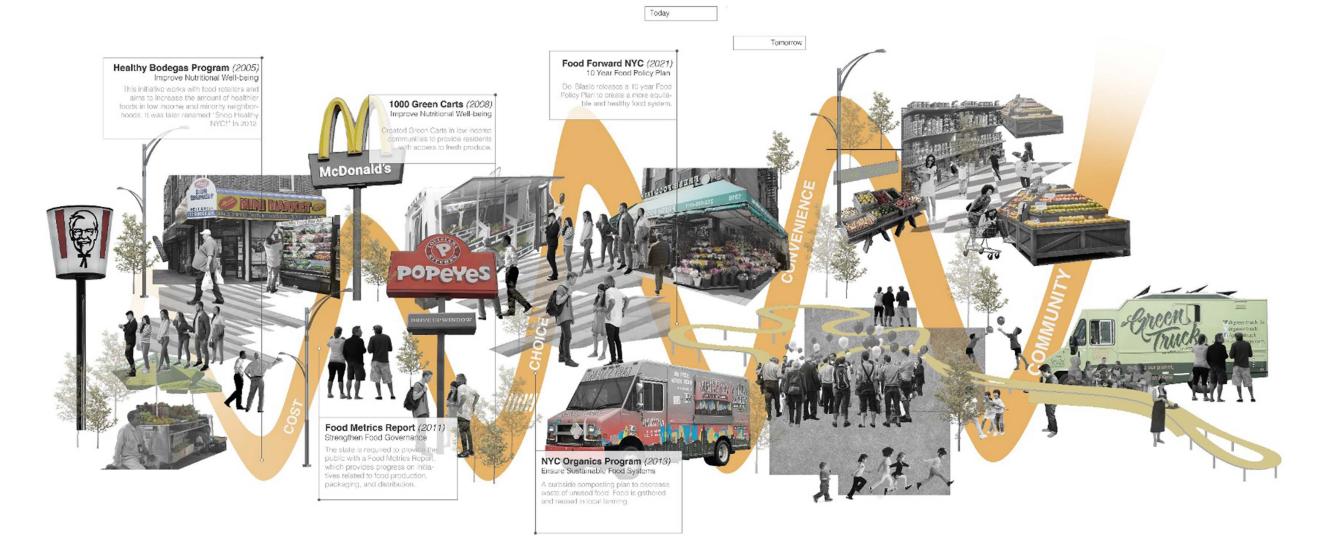
3. Food System Supports Economic Development

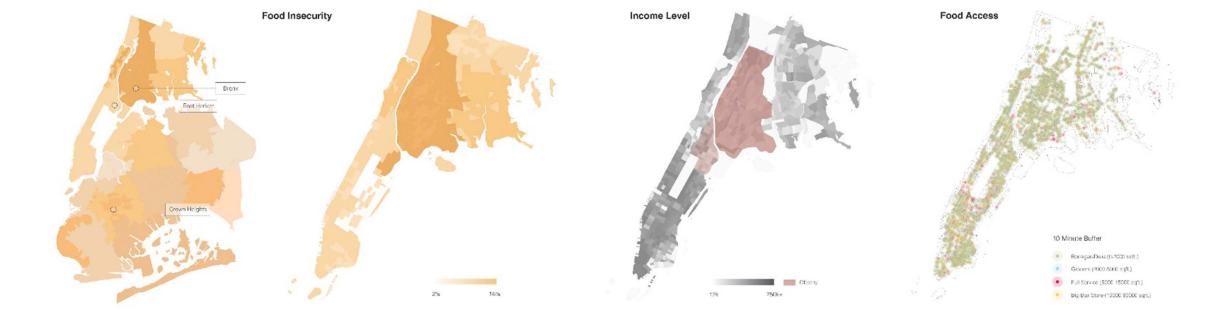


4. Ensure Sustainable Food Systems



5. Support Food Workers

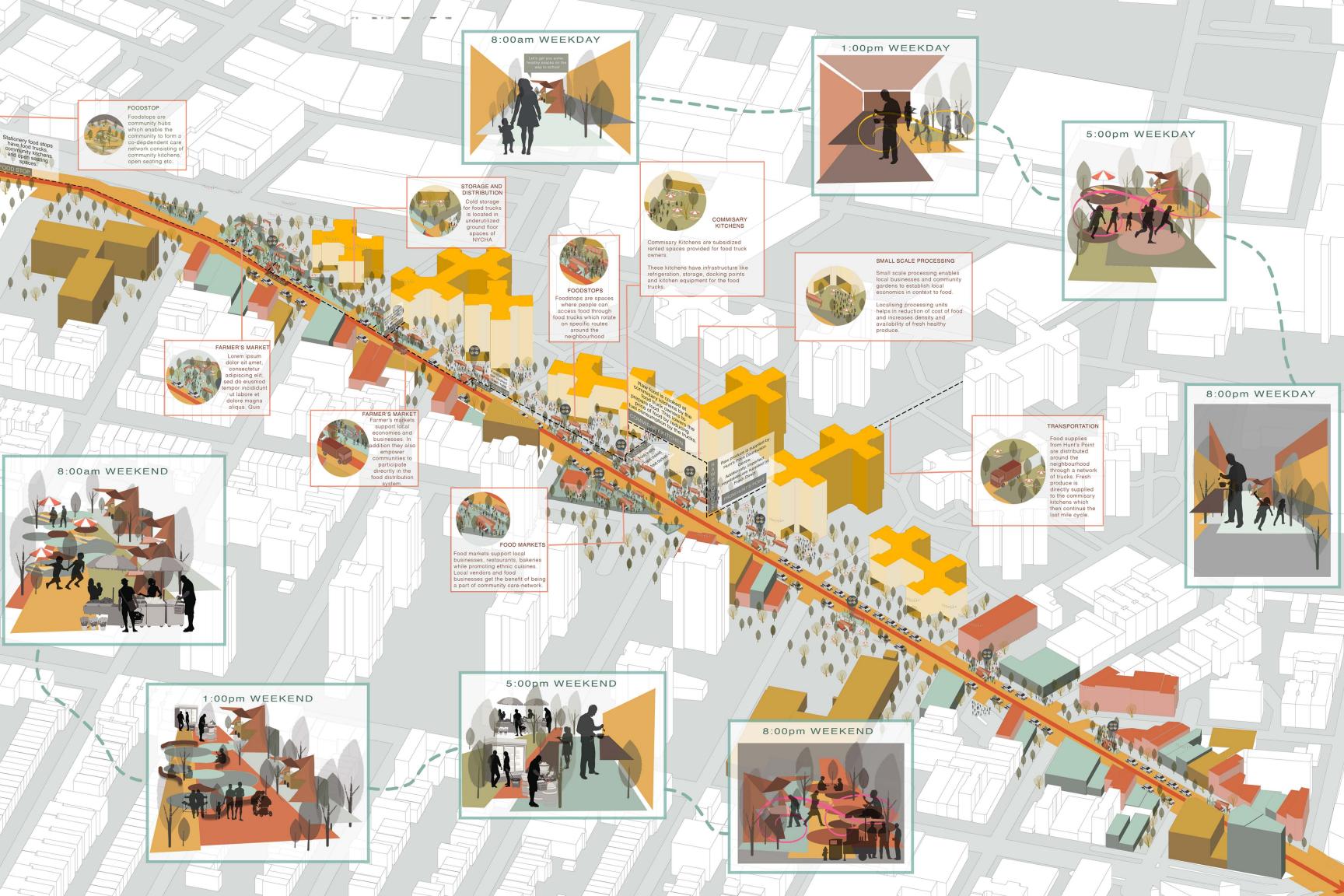




The food policy has failed to address the crucial issues faced by low income neighborhoods in NYC. It takes a top-down approach to food distribution and access and is not grounded in the harsh reality of neighborhoods like the South Bronx.

This is not enough. We as a coalition advocate for a new department of healthy cooked food distribution through food trucks. The goal is to incorporate healthy food into the lifestyle of Bronx residents and positively influence their food habits.

We propose a new food distribution system, which revolves around food stops. These food stops will engage with the existing infrastructure governmentagencies, food distrubtion networks and community organisations. Foodstops will contain healthy food trucks for people with additional functions like community hubs, community kitchens, open seating, recreational public spaces etc. The proposed food trucks would be placed in these food stops with an additional mobile system of trucks which move around ensuring wider distribution. The mobile system would move according to schedules with respect to the type of target audience.





ACCESS CHOICE CONVENIENCE

When the project was proposed post a digitally dependent pandemic it became imperative to the digitalize the access to food. Our team came up with was an app which connected the user base with physical infrastructure. Through the app all that one needs to do is to search for the food product and functions they want, and the app would show them the closest options available. In addition to it the app would also show them the incoming mobile carts and the amount of time they'd take to get to the closest stop.

The aim was to make the communities interact with these stops and evolve their eating habits around them. The spaces could be used as community spaces, farmers markets, weekly local business food fests and regular community-based kitchens. This new street scape would encourage the households to actively integrate healthy food in their lifestyles while engaging them in forming the community-care network.





Atlanta After Care

Redefining Care and Justice

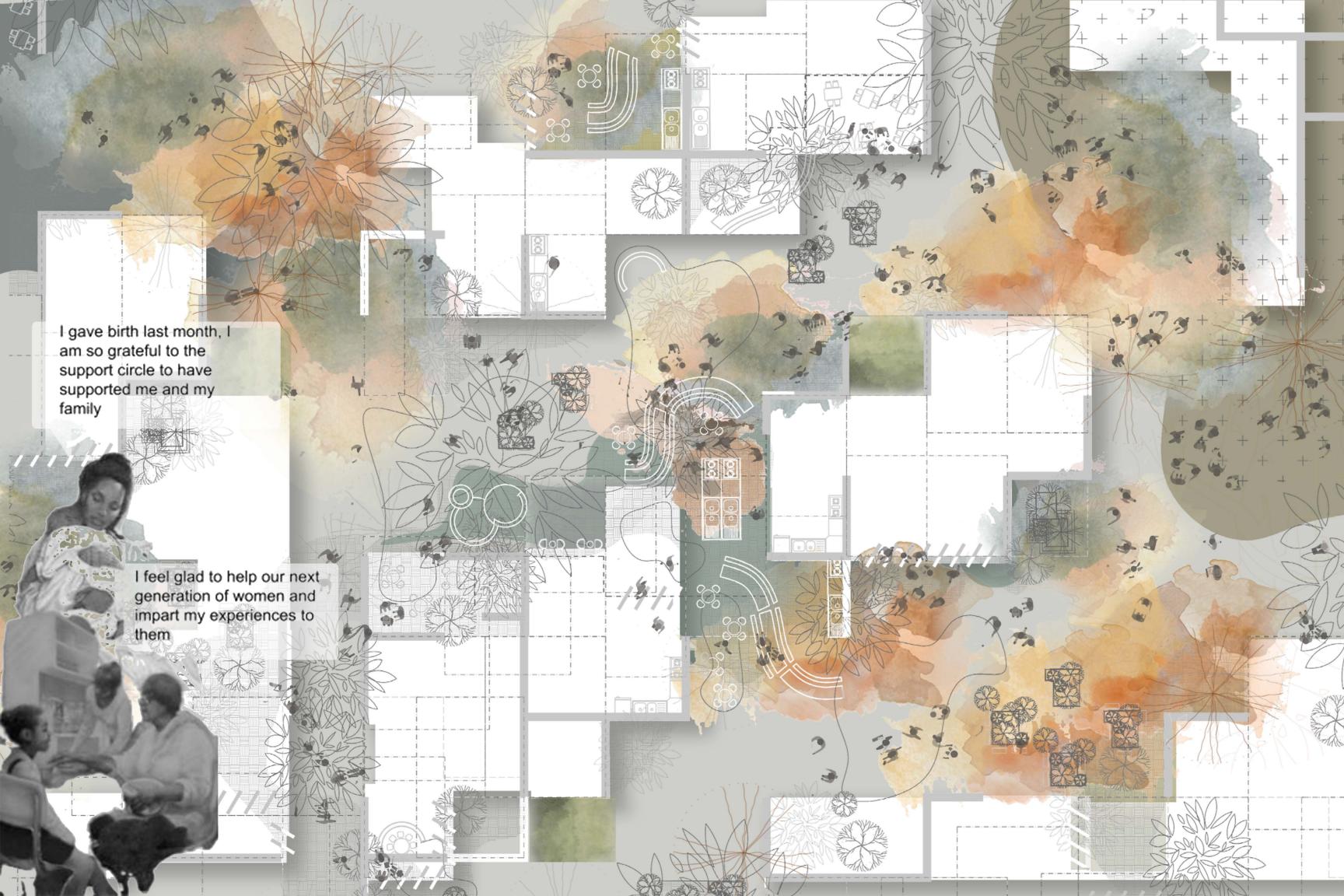
Project type: Urban Design Studio, Group of 4
Location: Forest Cove, Atlanta, USA
Advisors: Prof. Emanuel Admassu, Admassu, Chat Travieso,
Nina Cooke John, Jelisa Blumberg, AL
Hu, Regina Teng
Year: 2022

The justice system in the country is widely dependent upon celebrating criminalization, cops and prisons. Meanwhile, the most criminalised harms are rooted in social and economic inequalities. Shifting the question to "How do we prevent and respond to harm?" broadens our analysis. While focusing on crime only allows us to consider the behaviour of individuals, looking at harm enables us to include the ways in which violence is perpetuated structurally and culturally. One such community is The Forest Cove, located in Fulton County, in the southeast of Atlanta which has been exposed to terrible living conditions, rent surge, and now displacement. Hence, we tried to reimagine an abolitionist future where instead of depending on the PIC for basic functions of care, we instead redefine our relationships and collectivize care through our own communities.



We started on the premise of converting spaces of harm into spaces of care to create an environment of healing and support. This required dismantling the current urban fabric enabling the harm inflicted on the communities. We break down the streets which support surveillance and over policing and turn them into intimate spaces where communities have their own agency. Densifying and developing a new typology of structures defined by the overflow of caregiving functions into the pathways. We then institutionalised the welfare functions creating spaces to accomodate informal forms of care in the urban fabric

This shift of anonymous to intimate, indirect participation to direct agency, densification to building personal proximity and from depending on the PIC for care to embracing care as a constant personal element, would enable the redefinition of relationships into collectivizing care





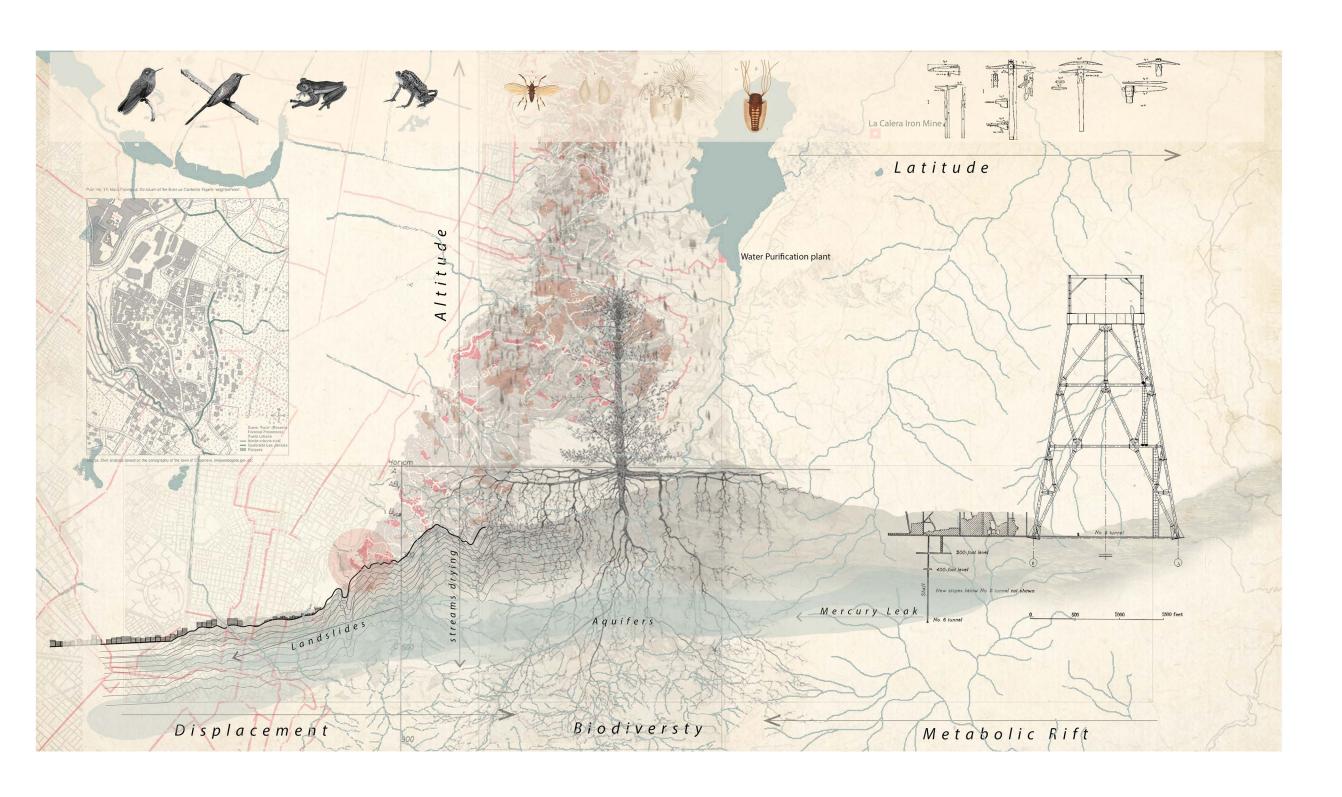




"Even with the presence of efficient infrastructure, a city might lack the city-ness or that socio-cultural,rich urbane quality to it.

Similarly, if the function is taken away from a street , it's access is shifted ; the urbane quality of it (the hawkers, pedestrians , vibrancy) would go missing. It is the overlap of the physical and the intangible aspects that make a street or a route centers of life in the urban landscape."



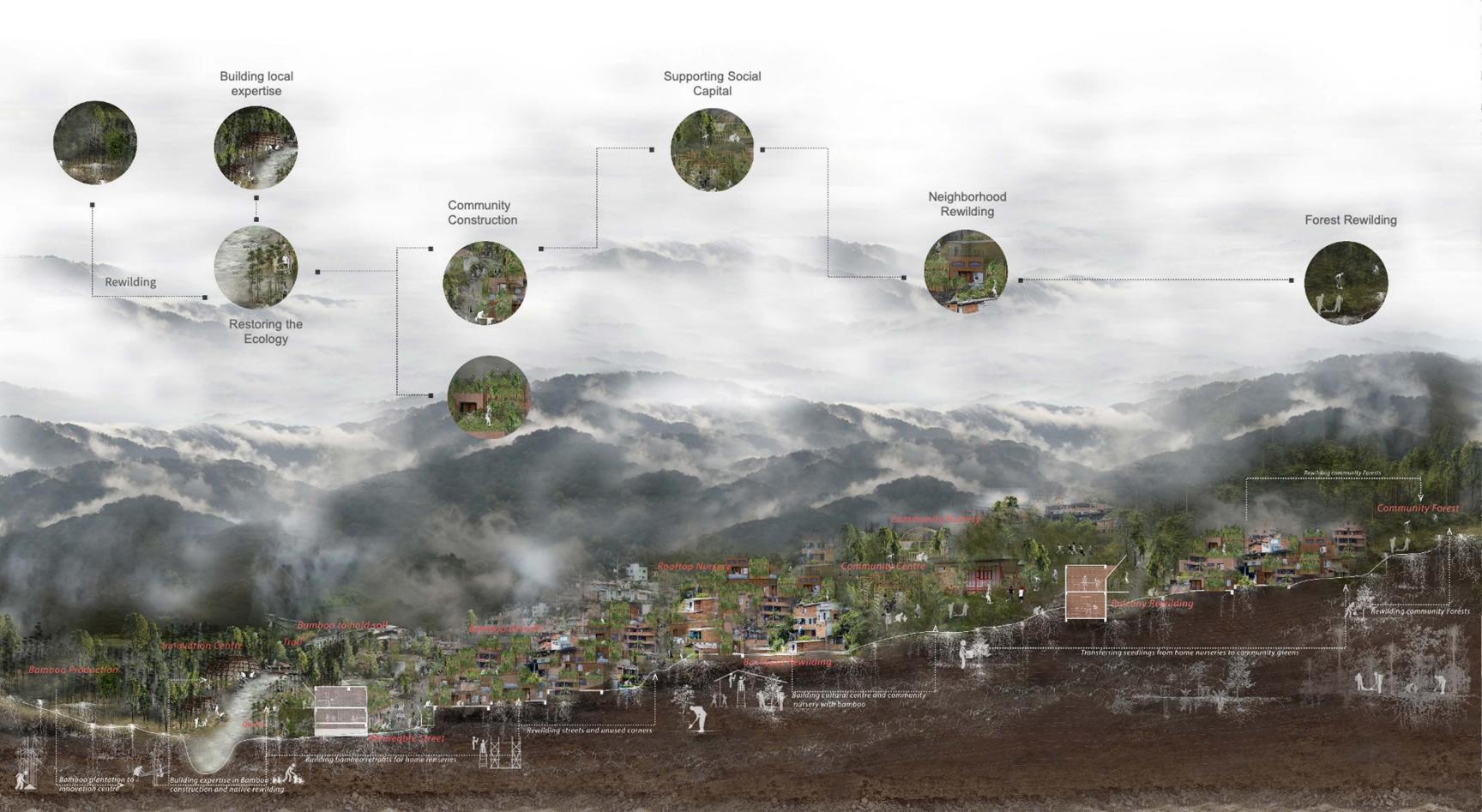


These forests lie between the altitudes of 600–2,675 metres and are habitat to numerous endemic species. However, due to the rise in temperature caused by climate change, the species are rising towards higher altitudes to achieve appropriate temperatures. Meanwhile the introduction of invasive species like pine and eucalyptus is causing a drop in the groundwater levels and causing forest fires. This displacement and deprivation of the endemic species is also affecting the other socio-ecological ecosystems that we are talking about.

Through the discourse about the 4 ecosystems, we tried to ground our research on one of the most important actors- water. We acknowledge water as an organism which takes on different identities across the 4 micro-transects. Where water is an important part of the urban-infrastructure for Bosque Calderon, it is an independent member of the ecosystem of the montane forests and the paramos. Invasive species and the rise of local vegetation is depleting the aquifers. On the other end of the spectrum, water faces regular exploitation due to the extractive economy of mining and agriculture causing a metabolic rift. As water transitions through these 4 thresholds, we contemplate on how we can contribute to ease out the rift and evaluate the negotiations across these ecosystems.



The community are citizens of the forest. They belong here and have inhabited it since generations. The elder citizens reminisce about the close-knit values associated with the ravine and the forest. The afternoons and rainfalls are spent along the stream hiking up the eastern hills every Saturday celebrating the ecology they call home. With these strategies we aim to initiate a recovery of this association with the forest by restoring the stream, bringing the community closer together and activating the neighborhood and then finally sustaining the forest community





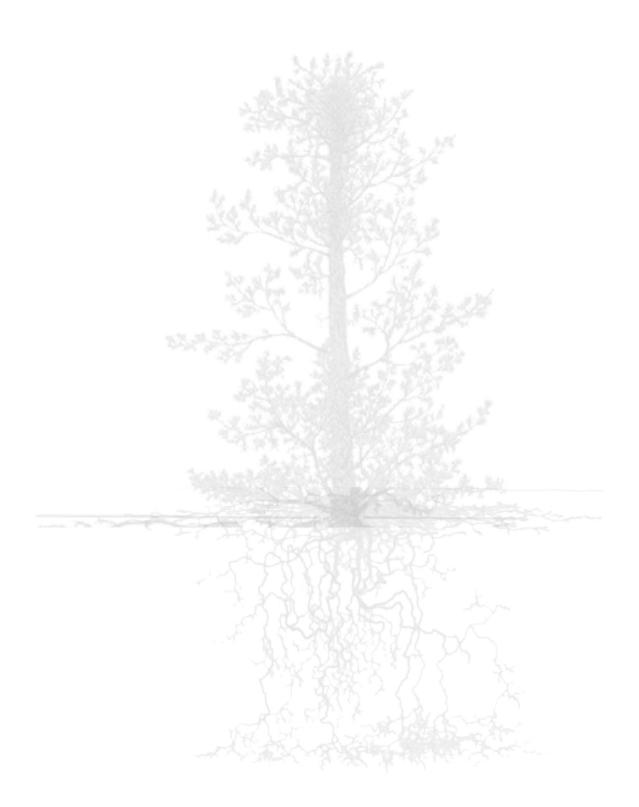






In addition to holding the soil, chuesque bamboo is also grown as a construction material amplifying the communities heritage in construction and building. Local species like quiche are planted to purify water and enrich the aquifers. As the stream recovers, it yet again becomes the space where the community gets together to celebrate water and the association they had with the creek.

As we bring back the joy with ecological care-giving with the community, the community comes together at the innovation centre on the edge of the stream where they experiment and learn about the rewilding, with the centre of material memory where generations talk about the rich history of the neighborhood and the forest





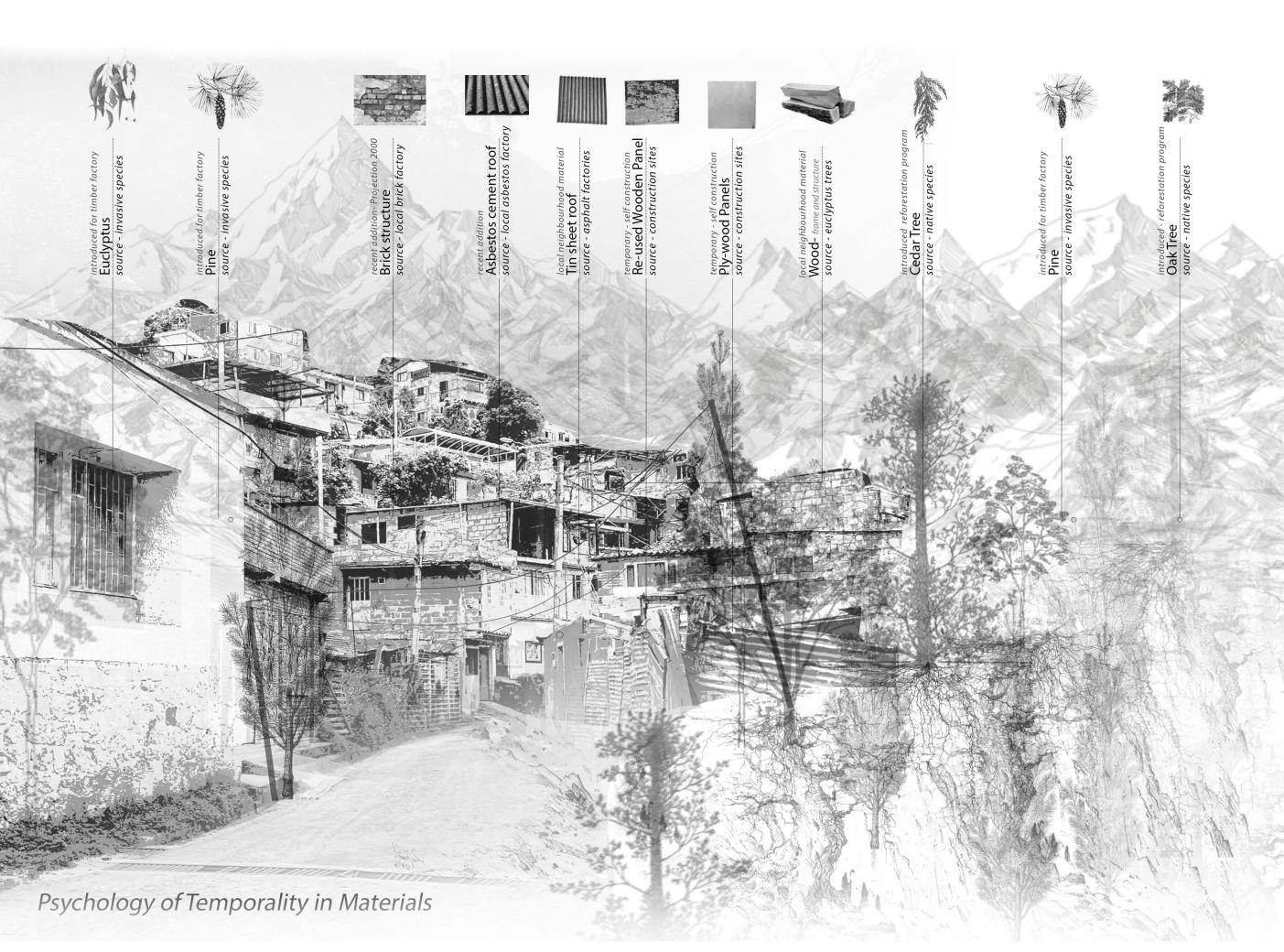
Psychology of Temporality

Construction Ecologies in the Anthropocene

Project type: Elective
Location: Colombia
Advisors: Prof. Thomas Schaperkotter
Year: Spring 2023

he course investigates diverse perceptions of the Anthropocene, spanning geological, historical, and cultural dimensions of material construction and labour.

This project zooms into the spectrum of displacement in Colombia focusing on the temporallty of the self-built settlements on the edge of the cities. Can Colombia's national law of right to home be redefined into a collective social practise of building by communities? Can the definition of shelter expand beyond the building envelope across the ecology and forests from where the shelters and materials are acquired? Such questions are explored to propose an alternate construction typology to accommodate the ecology and growth of the communities



Colombia is home to one of the richest ecosystems in the world, with the Andes mountains which is among the world's longest mountain ranges. Nearly 55% of Colombia is covered by forest, well above the OECD average of 30%.

Additionally, the country has been exposed to displacement and disposession since decades due to socio-political conflicts. This has attracted a wide range of migrant population towards the city edges to seek security, pushing the city edges across the protected forests.

Due to lack of affordable housing, the communities develop self-constructed homes in 'informal' and illegal settlements. Hence, it is imperative to study the psychology of temporality regarding the material and construction adopted in this landscape of displacement and ecological degradation on the forest land.

Due to lack of legal ownership, the risk of relocation is always high so people wait for decades before investing into permanent building material. According to the national laws, a settlement cannot be legalised till it is built in permanent and 'non-perishable' material. The aim is to negotiate with the socio-ecological realities in context to building material and find alternate ways of providing access to dignified homes while redefining building as a social practise.

All the material used in constructing homes and neighborhoods are acquired from the forests consolidated in the structures for their serviceable periods.

New construction typologies should restore the reverence to the forests and redefine the built environment as an extension of the forest.

Can the homes be the next generation of the forest?

To protect the ecology and the communities alike it is important to consider the extractive practises of acquiring material from the forest. The use of RCC structures which disturb the soil ecology should be discontinued. Instead the invasive species of euclyptus should be used for building the frame of the structures.

This would reconnect the communites with the cycles of forest while connecting the cycles of a generation and expansion of homes to the generations of a euclyptus tree.

As the built is developed as the next generations of the forest. The families would grow, dismantle and rebuilt with the same material continuing the lifecycles of the forest.





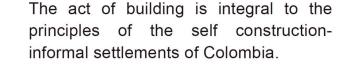
Building local expertise in making the 'permanent' material bricks from local soil



Redefining land ethics and replenishing the association communities have to the land and soil they 'borrow' for the shelters



Developing a culture of both construction and deconstruction and dismantling the structures and rebuild to accomodate future generations and growth

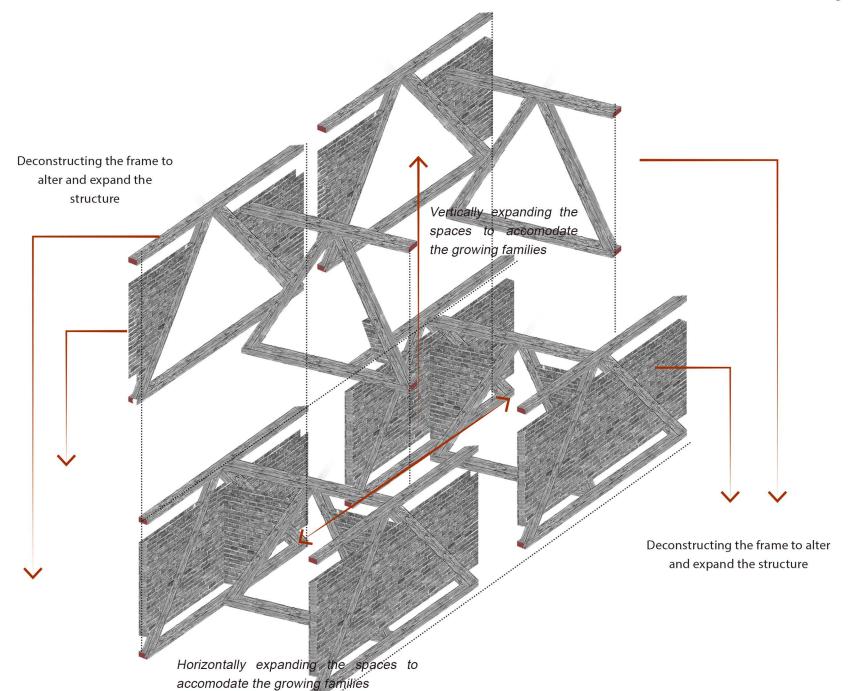


It is not just an expression of survival but also to express their agency and ownership over the land they inhabit. In this precarious landscape of displacement, it is important to nurture and encourage this conection they have to the land and the ecology around.

The communities should be enabled to replenish their bond with the land through action and collective building

The most essential asset of such communities is their social capital. To enhance this capital and provide the agency to build their own homes while accomodating growth is an important aspect of facilitating better access to dignified homes.

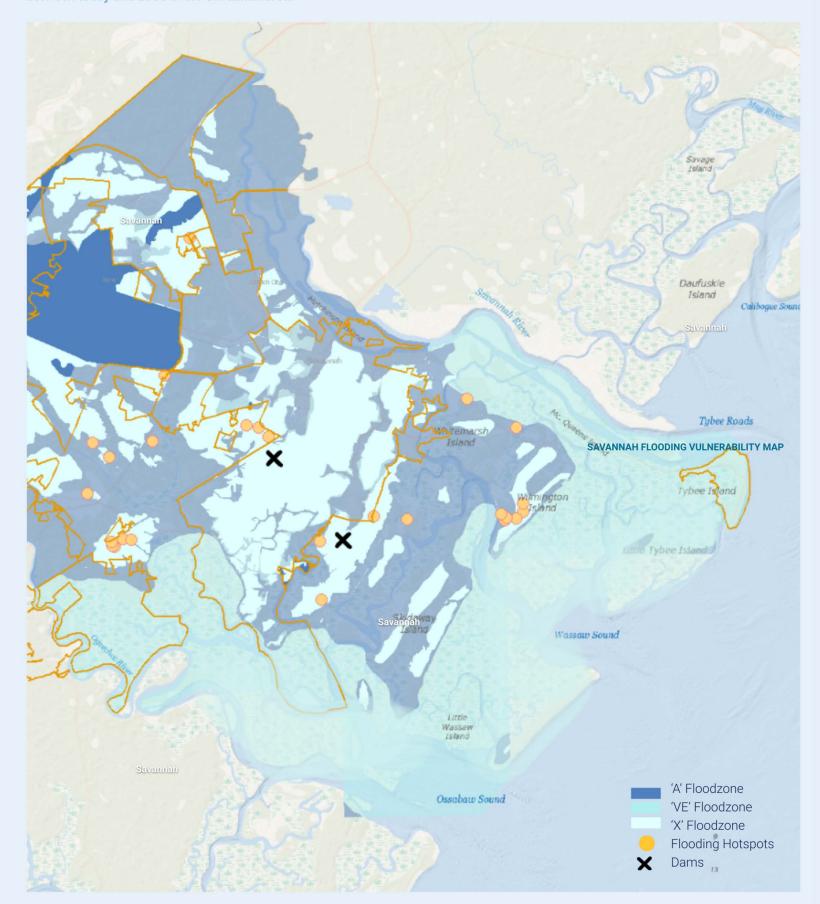
Perhaps the practise of construction should be reiterated from architects being the producers of the spaces to the coordinators of processes for the communities to produce their own spaces



"Without allies, friends and partnerships beyond our own backyard, we're not gonna make it."

> – Dr. Mildred Mcclain , Harambee House/Citizens For Environmental Justice

There is a 86% risk of at least one flood over 4 ft taking place between today and 2050 in the Savannah area.





Blue New Deal for Savannah

Building Coastal Resilience in Community

Project type: Urban Design Seminar, Group of 3
Location: Savannah, Georgia, USA
Advisors: Prof. Kate Orff
Year: Fall 2022

The City of Savannah is built on the south side of the Savannah River, approximately 17 miles upriver from the Atlantic Ocean. Its site is a level and elevated sandy plain. The City stands at an elevation just 44 feet above sea level, and the shape of the coastline poses a greater surge risk during hurricanes.

The project aims at proposing alternate policy-frameworks for the community to build resilience in the socio-hydorlogical structure of the city. The framework includes alignment of climate priorities and actions on a regional level, building more climate-resilient infrastructure along flood zones and building trust through adequate social infrastructure through community angagement efforts



Risk Awareness Disaster The communities should be constantly educated about the environmental risk that they are vulnerable to and should be Community equipped with skills to assist efficiently in disasters Information **Risk Inventory** Warning Residents should be given information about the physical damage their residences are susceptible to, with the help of GIS data and projected flood-rise levels with the smart sea sensors Assess Infrastructure Daage **Contact Impact** During impact the residents should be provided with relief infrastructure and resources Filing **Assistance in Filling for Aid** for Claims Rescue While filling for flood insurance, the communities should be provided with assistance aided by the risk inventory which would fast-track the process



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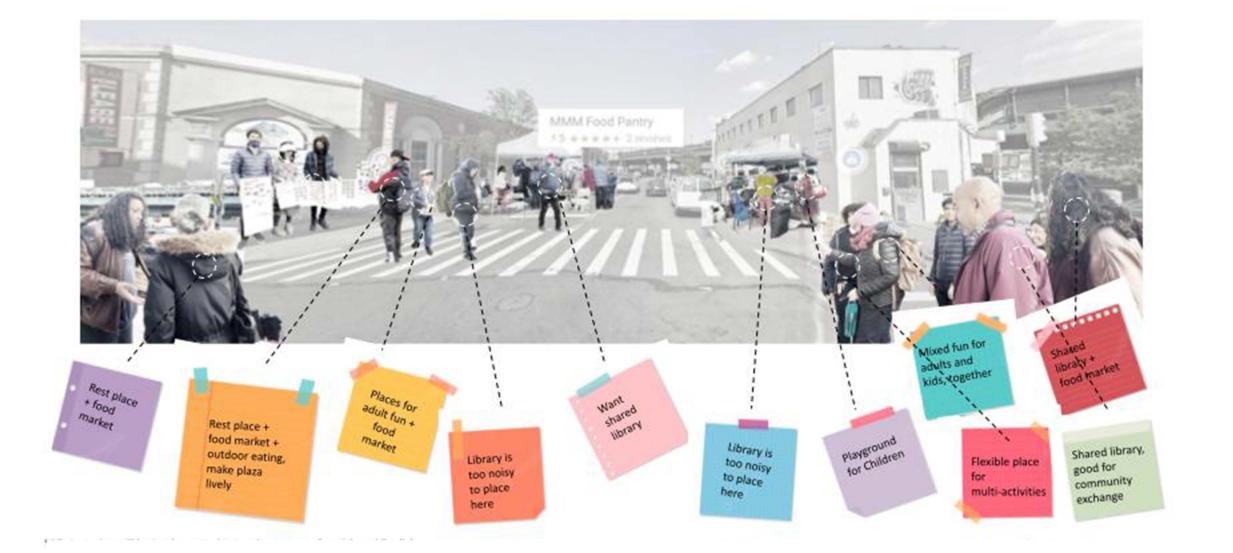
Post Avenue- Community Engagement

Community Engagement

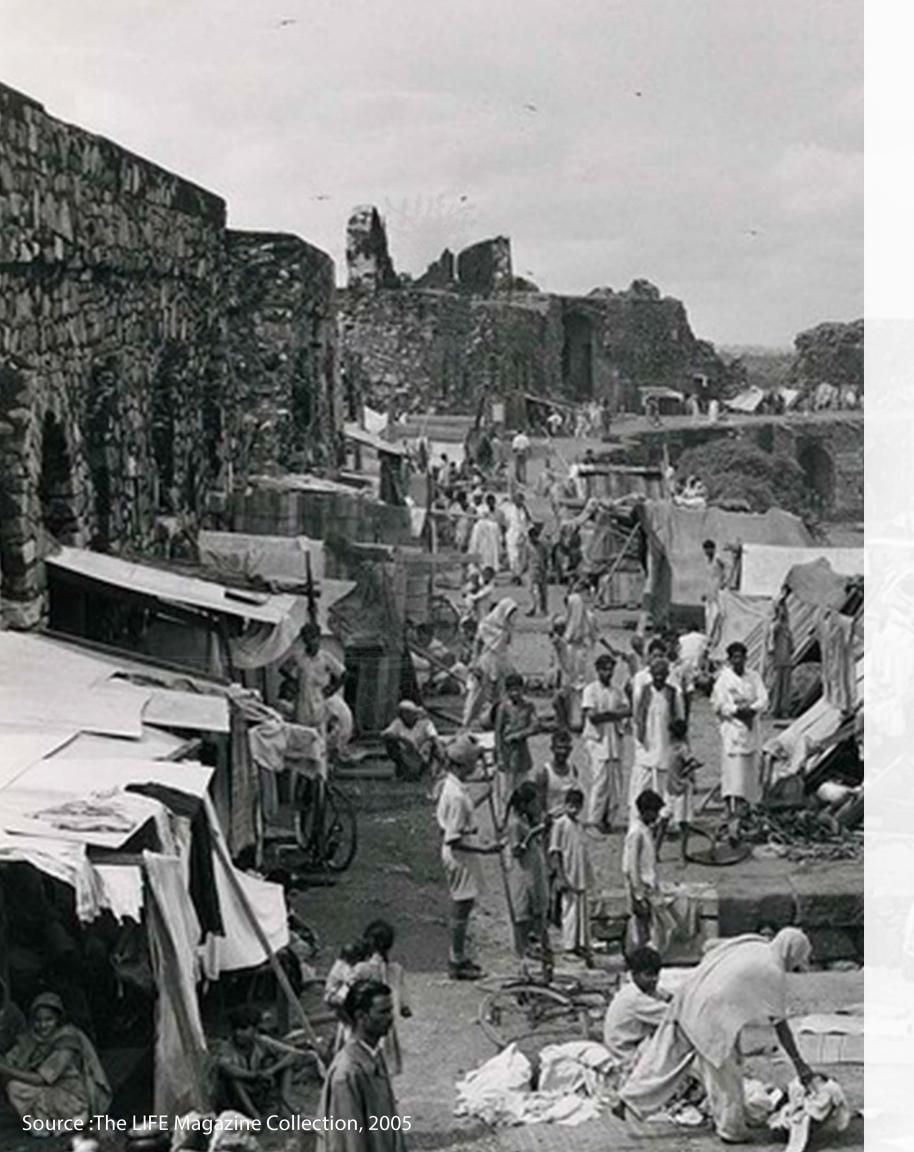
Project type: Urban Design Seminar
Location: Post Avenue, New York City, USA
Advisors: Prof. Kaja Kuhl
Year: Fall, 2022

The neighborhood of Post Avenue has bee running a community led market since about a decade. To assist the community in preparing a proposal for the DOT to be authorised as a non-profit, we organized a community enagement session with the vendor's association and the residents to finf out their aspirations for the plaza.

The engagement strategy is to display images from nine different plazas of New York City, which enhances different pedestrian activities. The idea is to understand if the vendors opinions about the activities while ensuring that these would be secondary activities, primary being the vendors market.









The Ghosts of Delhi- A postcolonial capital

Divided Cities

Project type: Elective in Planning, Paper Advisors: Prof. Tom Slater Year: Spring, 2023

The elective drives the discourse about urbanization in unequal cities, highlighting issues liek poscolonization and planetary, territorial stigmatization amoung several other issues haunting the cities we practice in as planners and designers.

The paper talks about the postcolonial city of Delhi a former imperial capital of the british Raj. The discussion focuses on the overlapping histories of the city of the old Delhi and more importantly the 'cityness' of the walled city developed through the regimes of the Mughal rule, colonial rule, and independent India. The discourse then drives towards the legacy of the planning infrastructure left pst colonization and how are thye still affecting the urban structure of the city

The city of Delhi has been loved by poets and sultanates alike. While some built the towering walls of the forts to consolidate their power, others dedicated their lives trying to map the loss, longing, and memories of the city across the alleyways of the walled city into words. The present city of Delhi is a successor to 7 different cities consolidating into the 8th city of Delhi- the imperial capital of the British raj in India. I'd leave the task of manifesting the magnificence of the city into words to abler pens, as have come before me, and would rather serve as a source of reflection on the 'ghosts' of the city of Delhi haunting the present realities of the Indian capital (Arkush and Lee 1989, 174-181).

The 'ghosts' represent the overlapping histories of the city of the old Delhi and more importantly the 'cityness' of the walled city developed through the regimes of the Mughal rule, colonial rule, and independent India. The Mughals developed the city as a center of art and commerce where the streets were generously filled with music and bazaars. The imperial government came with the intention of regulating the urban structure of the city to segregate the natives from the British officers as a 'tool of social control' (Lefebvre, 1991). The newly planned garden city of Delhi was an expression of power, to buffer the densified old city from the airy government properties building green spaces, private residences, and educational institutions. During the resistance, Delhi had exposed the political vulnerability of the British Raj, making it essential to cultivate this new imperial identity in the city. The new garden city embodied the colonial ideology of rationality and brutal efficiency whereas the densified old city challenged the British government in regulating spatial order.

When India gained independence and Nehru signed the 'tryst with destiny' building this nation anew and rupturing the continuity of the colonial extractive policies with the promise of development and growth. However, the newborn democracy struggled to break out of the colonial legacies as the development was based on the technological and intellectual apparatus inherited from the west. While coming up with new developmental strategies for Delhi, though appreciative of the past and cultural capital of the city, Nehru carried certain clarity that the city would stand as an international symbol of growth in the terms of science and technology. The ghosts of the old city were considered 'densified slums', a major urban problem to tackle.

Once Sir Radcliff established the line bisecting India and Pakistan as two independent nations, approximately 14.5 million people crossed it. About half a million of these refugees migrated to Delhi flooding the refugee camps (Ward, 1949). "We should have realized it sooner, at least my father should have, that there was no coming back. Not in September when the riots died down, not in October when the subcontinent still lay in shock, not even in November as he had hoped and promised us. Lahore was now lost forever" (Malhotra, A. 2016). Countless more stories could be found on both ends of the Radcliffe line across Delhi and Lahore, the imperial twin cities which still carry the legacy of loss and displacement spanning through generations.

Following their political predecessor, the regional planning of Delhi and the areas around was done on the precedent of uneven development. While Gandhi was an avid supporter of the idea of Indian democracy being a village republic, Nehru considered villages to be 'backward intellectually and culturally where no progress could be made in the backward environment' (Staples, E. S., 1992). This assumption continued the colonial ideology of consolidating resources in the cities to drive economic development while alienating the rural counterparts close to the cities as agricultural resources. This unequal exchange attracted a massive population from the 'undeveloped' suburbs towards the interior of the city.

Meanwhile, the new democratic government came up with the Five Year Masterplan for the city "to bring the whole of India- agriculture, industrial, social and economic-into one framework of thinking". The masterplans continued in solidifying the western ideology of deeming the rising density of the city as defiance of proper civic behavior and the rise of 'slums' while being completely indifferent to the cultural differences of the indigenous cities of India and that of the colonial predecessors. The color-coded maps in the masterplan mark different land-use as residential, commercial, and mixed-use while disregarding the needs of the urban population. The city which once had sprawling bazaars along the streets now has locally designated markets within appropriately measured radii of residential colonies. Informal vending has no place in the planning of the streets and pathways in the city. The influx of population in search of employment opportunities remains constant while the master plans established 7 decades ago still fail to provide affordable housing in the city. When the urban poor step out of the lines of the law to procure housing and develop slums, they are periodically eradicated to 'cleanse' the city. These administrative solutions and apathy towards the population of the city replicate the planning policies running on the industrial logic of the colonized cities being means of progress and development. The lifelessness of the masterplans puts into perspective the lack of understanding of the urban culture of the city by segregating Old Delhi from New Delhi deeming it a slum. The old city defied the color-coded masterplans of the city with its mix-use development and density while interrupting the desirable image of the global city



The proposed Land-Use Plan of Delhi for 1962 Source: Master Plan of Delhi 1962-Delhi Development Authority

Notes and Bibliography-

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