

The Process, the fore identity

by Botyo Dimitrov

There is a city that was once relying on collectivity. Equality was the first principle. Affordability was the second. All the houses were on top and next to each other, all the properties were put together to form one united ground.

The new dwellers began to move in. The vast open space was supposed to offer plenty of greenery. The similarity of the dwellings avoided any preferences. Each family had their own apartment however the state was in charge of the common ground.

RUPTURE

At that time it was unknown what the capabilities of the city could be.

First the political system collapsed. Naturally all state properties disengaged the system. Deviated from their former appearance the properties collided with the inert social manners becoming a buffer space of transgression.

Forced to live in constant slum-like conditions, the habitants adopted heretic practices in self-sufficiency. Soon enough the border between private and public shifted relying on the surviving part – personality. A new social balance was about to arise.

With the state missing, the leading role was passed to the person. And they started to apply their ego to the surfaces they used. After all it turned out that the only way to control the environment is to make it recognizable, personal. Gradually the common grounds became undermined by the struggles between personalities, marking the decay of the state-driven society.

Sometimes these struggles grew into direct conflict between neighbors and friends, in others – a truce was established for benefit to all. As for the grounds – they were wasteland.. or maybe unexplored worlds?

PHENOMENA

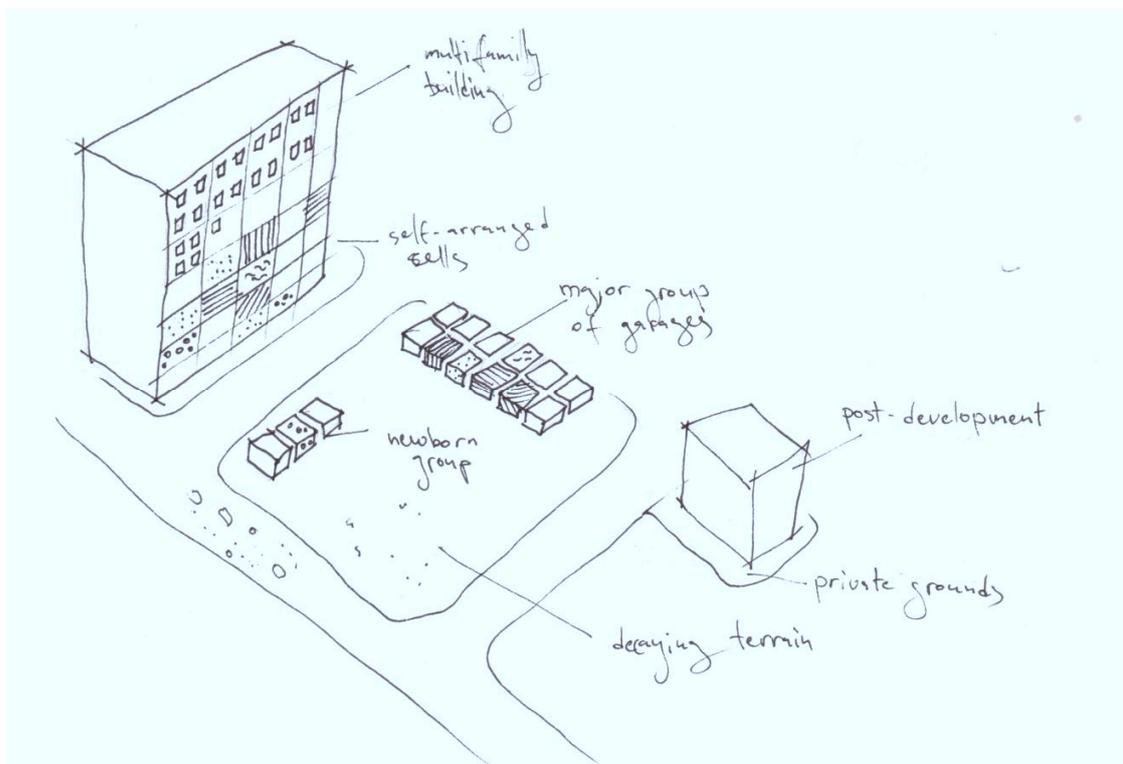
Transgression and excess became a common part of the common space, a traditional system source and fuel. Here it turned out that there is plenty of room to become a physical spatial factor as well.

To understand identity was to examine the way those common features behaved in the environment. Identity was the nature that determines functionality.

Abundant space = abandoned space

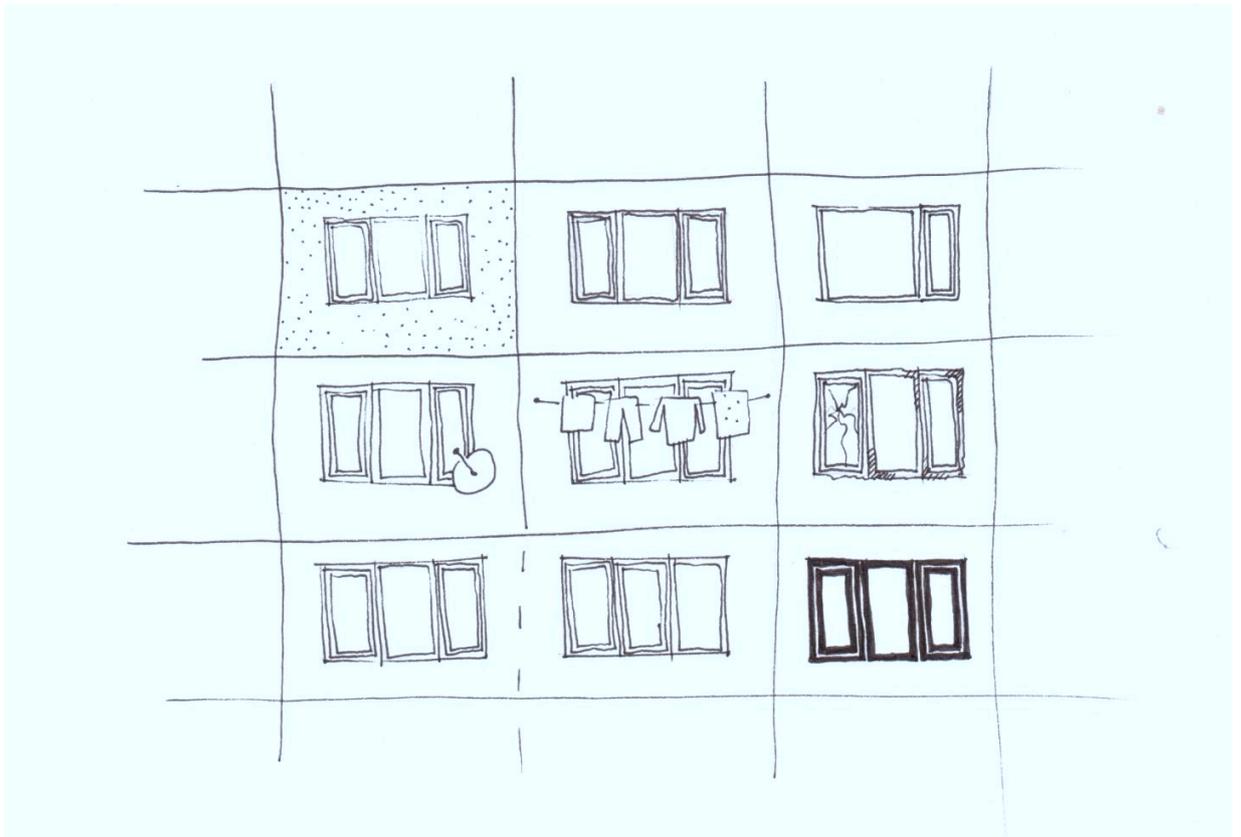
Integrated into the housing project, the open spaces gradually transform into wasteland. The wasteland is filled with artifacts of the past condition. If the wasteland is purged to become something of use, its history is extracted.

The wasteland contains the signs of decay - it has been modified by the users to serve their needs. There is an instance - the case with cars. In the past cars were few. Now they are dominant. They have overtaken the green space because it has become stray. What used to be common is currently uncertain - torn apart between users' expansion and its former condition. This uncertainty becomes an excuse for the conflict between actual need and the doomed vision. But it also allows probability to happen - a room of chances isolated from ordinary lifestyle.



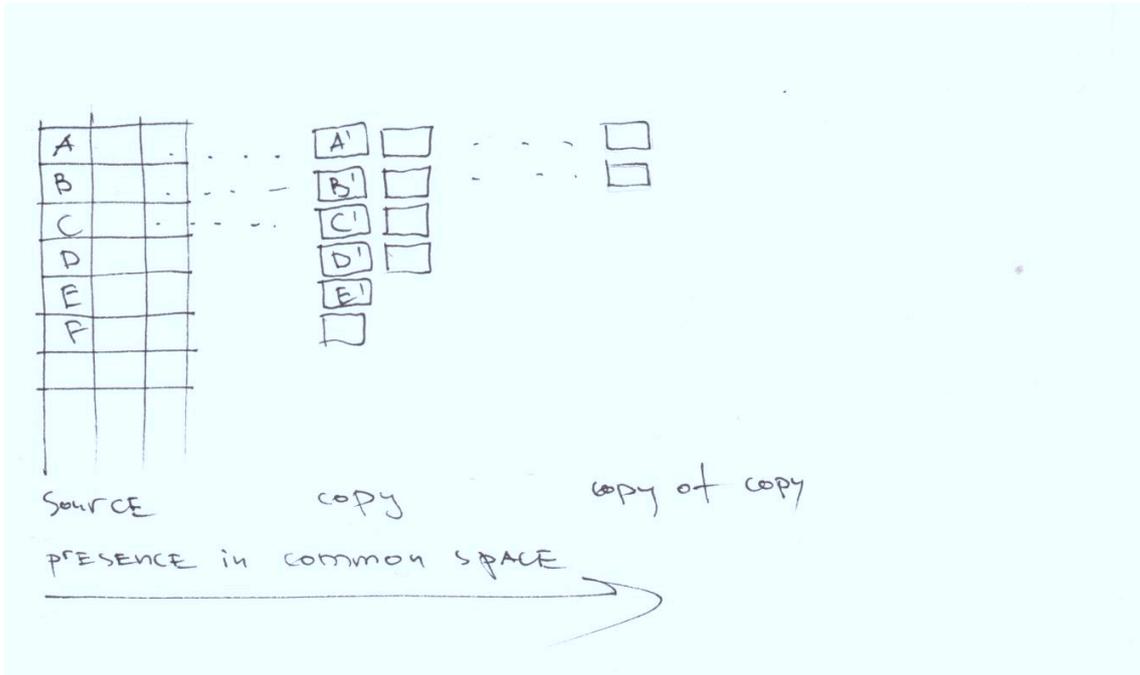
Generic Buildings

Each façade is consisted of repeating cells. When the content of the cells is replaced the appearance of the façade evolves. The façade is an outcome. The generic buildings are completely honest – they provide equal conditions only to express the differences for the viewer. The viewer observes the outcome and regards it as a representation of the desires of dwellers. As the personal strives are being exposed the grid structure becomes clearer and operational.



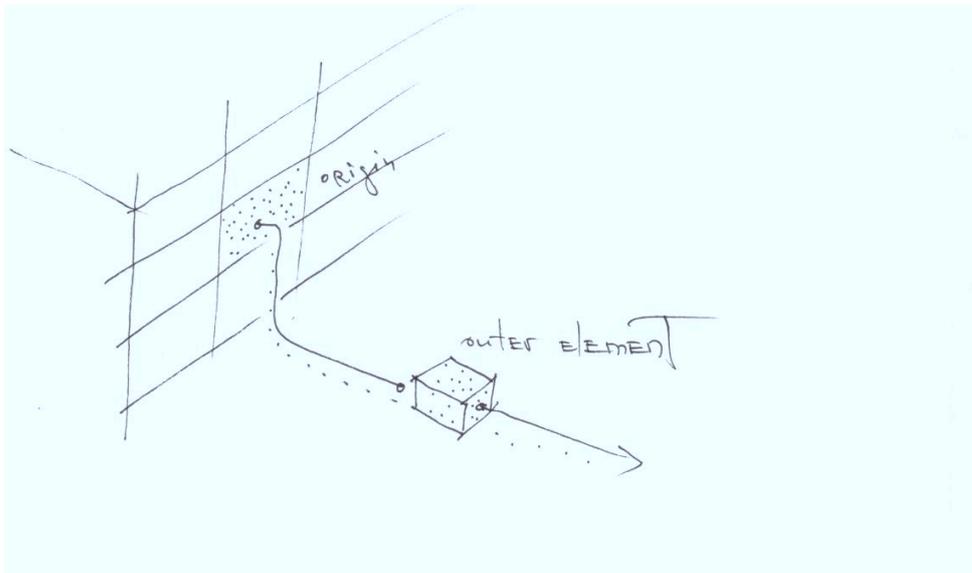
Self-repeating grid

Curiously the invasion in the public space is regulated by the housing grid. As the monolith dwelling structure is getting separated through time the same happens to the common grounds. Whilst being torn apart their former zoning loses its load. Instead, a chain of units appears where the zoning is no more legitimate. A space of vector links reigns.



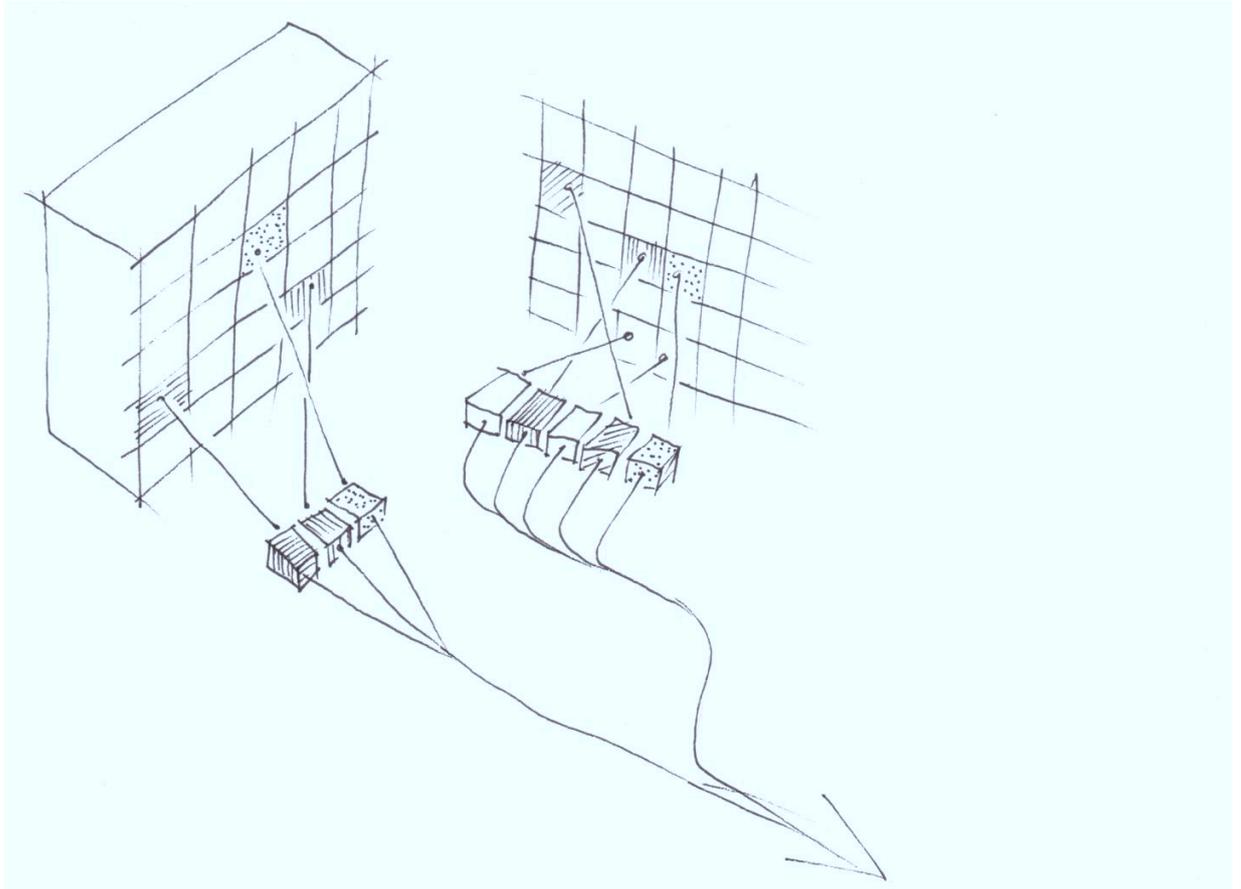
Vectorization of space

Provided a new framework the zoning becomes a minor factor. To the foreground is brought **grouping** – the ability of separate workflows to reach singular goal. The condition of synergy defines effectiveness – minimum space, services, supervision, security, community development. On the contrary, lack of synergy results in higher consumption and gives room for chance and opportunity. An example is the way of organization of outer structures (ends of chains) – in order to operate with the adjacent terrain required for services.



Social Vacuum

The confrontation between singularity and unity allows future spontaneous developments. Gaps in state economy occur as new structures that serve local needs.



THE PROCESS

Thus the architecture of the city lost its significance. It was used as a backstage of transition of events that architecture could no longer guide. With the forthcoming visions all the previous meanings of the city were washed away, making path for the ultimate architecture – the physical limit.

See also:

Gil Doron, 'The Dead Zone and the Architecture of Transgression'

Ignasi de Sola-Morales, 'Terrain Vague'

Rem Koolhaas, 'Supercritical', Rem Koolhaas on globalization