

REFLECTION

by SELF-REFLECTION

The initial purpose of the research paper presented as early as the Research Plan was to discuss the potential of cinema and architecture as sites for deterritorialization and its translation into the urban fabric of a city such as Madrid. The initial research and findings have set a strong ontological foundation by merging sources regarding the moving image, atmospheres, data and mobility. However, once the theoretical framework was established and the methodology decided accordingly, namely using cinematic tools in both gathering, exploring and visualising data, the empirical data from the site visit raised new issues that ramified into requiring a better understanding of the systems and networks involved in the topic. Due to these ramifications, the focus of the research paper oscillated between water as a main actor and the water body, Manzanares as the protagonist of the narrative thread and research topic.

Whether or not my approach has worked depends on what the reference point is considered for what was set out to achieve. Due to the new findings and closer look at both the site and the water system and cycles in Madrid, the initial set out methods and questions have also adapted into a more hydrological and urbanistic rather than a utilitarian focus than was the initial pivot point.

The early design approach was directly correlated to the historical surveying of the site and the exploration of cinematism in translating into a design process, by attempting sequential explorations of the envisioned promenades. Due to a better understanding of the site and its condition of a riverine landscape within a metropolitan central area, trough literary review ,gathering of historical data and reassessment of the empirical data through the new lenses uncovered in the research paper, the goals of the design rather than the research have shifted from a practical need for a river park to a potential polemic on second nature and ecotones in a city.

by RELEVANCE

The exploration between a city and its penetrating rivers is a topic relevant to most capitals around the world. 148 out of 195 capitals of the world are situated along a river. Even though rivers, and water, are a primary condition for city settlements in early history, throughout the Industrial Revolution the water's utilization has shifted from an exploited natural element to an almost fully controlled system as part of a larger network. This has created enclosed and embanked riverfronts like London, Madrid or even Bucharest, my hometown. The lack of exposure to water for the inhabitants represents a disconnection from the cultural and ecological heritage of a city. This issue I believe is relevant to most riverside cities and the implied conversation of Social Powers of Water and destroyed, or more positively presented as 'unexplored' potential of untaming the tamed.

The particularities of the Manzanares River are very good example to start with. The water flowing through Manzanares in the Madrid portion is around 90% residual water from the city's purification, irrigation and rainwater management. The rest of 10% is actually a controlled stream by the El Pardo Dam at the start of the river upstream. The river could be considered as natural as an artificial lake in a park. The topic of discussing 'green' within a city as an infrastructure and infrastructure as a landscape could be further explored in more than just the riverine or maritime landscapes.

by PERSONAL FINDINGS

The struggles of the research were mainly previously encountered issues of adapting theories relating time-based medium and the moving image as research topics instead of accepting them as utilitarian focuses. By exploring articles and books by researchers such as Bruno (1997), Tawa (2010) and Pallasmaa (2001, 2016) I managed to tame these ambitions into a method within a larger framework. My personal interests in unexplored, latent, heterotopic spaces of a city, specifically within urban riverine landscapes and cinema would meet eventually through the first design attempts that have eventually reflected back into the research. This feedback loop between research, method and design has enabled me to decipher the site.

Secondly, this project has made me question the role of architecture as a ruling figure over man-made and nature but rather as an intermediary between systemic variables, specialists with their corresponding knowledge base, the users and the client, even if in most academic projects it is a mysterious omnipresent entity. The process of the last academic year, specifically within the Architecture Design Crossovers studio, has shifted the way I understand the relationship between design and research in the architecture field and added greater value to the need to understand systems, networks and their links between the various stages of a design project and all of its constituents. The process has revealed itself as the architectural Hippocratic oath of taking part of the burden from previous researchers and designers, trying throughout my professional and academic life to discover, polish and adapt until it would further be passed on.