

the phenomena of imbrication of city-scapes in nature



Abstract

With nature having a direct influence on our well-being and behavior, it is only natural that it should be kept close to the city borders. City dwellers benefit from having easy access to rural nature, to give them the opportunity to regulate their own body-budget through nature.

However, with urban fabrics growing rapidly, this transitional border between cityscape and nature is being pushed further out, every time the city grows and decentralizes. Trapping not only the majority of the population inside the city perimeter, with in some cases, not even a view of rural nature. But this growth in the urban fabric is also slowly breaking down rural nature itself.

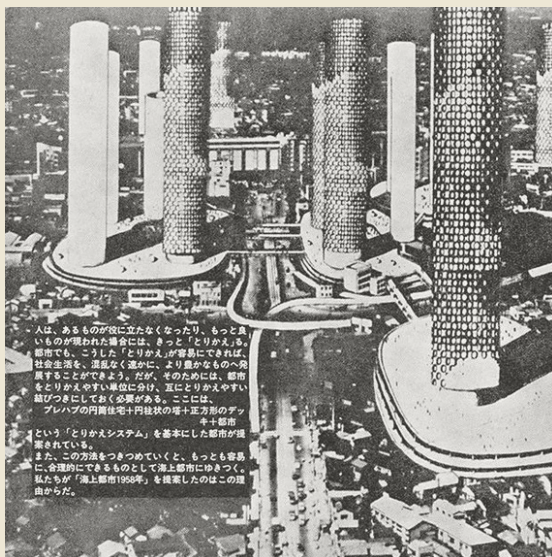
In order to start the discussion to stop city sprawling into nature, utopian designs can function as a radical language, to then inspire future developments. Since this urban growth is on such a big scale, it is incomprehensible to solve with just one simple solution, one could even argue, that there is no such solution.

Nevertheless, with a utopian design, focussed on bringing back city sprawling to the phenomena of imbrication, of the city being a 'guest' in nature. Subsequently, we can start to envision a new scheme to bring back, or more so, to stop what has been lost.

Through axes visible in urban fabrics, as seen in gridiron Roman Times, assumptions of future growth and decentralization of the city can be made. Making it possible to visualize conceptual borders that could function as transitional spaces between the city and nature.

Since utopian designs do not submit to the boundaries of reality, they will solemnly function as a language to provoke emotion, to then ideally, commence a change in the built environment. A utopia will not propose a solution to the matter at hand, but will rather start the sequence needed for change. The sequence needed to then contain city-scapes.

How can a transitional border around sprawling cities bring back the phenomena of imbrication of city-scapes in rural nature?



Marine City in Tokyo, by Kiyonori Kikutake,
ArchEyes / Timeless Architecture 2020

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introduction

Urban sprawling is pushing back nature, creating this complicated transitional space between the natural and designed built environment, resulting in a growing conflict between city and forest in the case of Sweden.

That city sprawling is happening is not unexpected, and neither is it anything new. City sprawling has been happening ever since cities started to grow in population. However, the results of urban growth started to be really visible in Sweden around the 1970s, which is later than in the lower parts of Europe, where it occurred around 1950¹. This Urban growth had to do with the deconcentration process happening in the bigger cities and with the ‘back to the city movement’². Since Sweden is made up of a more sparse population, the process happened later on, this process of deconcentration, or decentralization, more commonly used today, is, therefore, more strongly visible in Sweden & Finland than in other parts of Europe. This is mainly because, in these northern countries, many people moved to the bigger cities for job opportunities³. This then later on also shows changes in the city fabric, with the ‘back to the city movement’ the big cities were changing rapidly. Where there were concentrated urban patterns before, it is now more common to live in suburbs, in the outer ring of a large city. This trend of living in decentralized parts of the city is the aftermath of city dwellers that now all own a car, making them independent of their place of residence and with that the new ‘lifestyle’ preference of living close to nature⁴.

The preference of living close to nature is not only a ‘lifestyle’ preferred by most, it is also, maybe even more importantly, proven to have many benefits for our physical and mental well-being. The influence of nature on dwellers’ health and their behavior, has to do with the automatic arousal it provokes in us through our past and future experiences of nature⁵. So does a calm environment, with rustling leaves, changing shadows, and chirping birds, have the influence to tone down our brain receptors, making us

more resilient to stress and strong negative emotions⁶. With this knowledge, it is not strange that people prefer to live close to the city border, or closer to the outer ring of a city than in the urban core of one. However, this process of decentralization is not a positive one. With the city sprawling outwards every few years, the city keeps growing new rings that then keep moving outwards, people who lived on the edge before will soon be living back in complete urban surroundings, and this cycle will then repeat endlessly. Hence why, it is of importance that this is brought to the attention and more importantly, stopped. Of course, one should not be naïve enough to imagine that this problem is easily solved. A city wall, would theoretically, stop the problem, but would never even be considered in this time and age.

Urban problems are on such a big scale now, that it requires extremely large solutions as well. One way to get the conversation started, is to make the problem known and in a way, provoke the current and future city dwellers. Through architecture, we can make a difference, architecture and with that the built environment, started the problem and thus should be the solution as well.

A common way of provoking emotion through architecture is via Utopian designs. Utopias and architecture communicate such endearing questions in an effective way⁷. In order to start this endearing question at hand, which is in short, the question of border patrol of decentralizing and with that sprawling cities. However, one must first understand the space in between. The transitional space between the city and the forest, the petrified landscape and rural nature, man-made environments, and untouched grounds.

1 Nilsson, Per. Urban Sprawl, a literature study on different aspects of urban deconcentration in the industrialized world. Umeå: Gerum, Geografiska rapporter Umeå universitet, 1983.

2 Ekestam, H. Ortssystemutveckling och ortssystempolitik i de nordiska länderna. Oslo: Nordrefo, 1980.

3 Berry, B.J.L. Contemporary Urban Ecology. New York: MacMillan Publishing Co, 1977.

4 Smith, N. Toward a theory of gentrification. A back to the city movement by capital, not people. Journal of the American Planning Association, 1979.

5 Feldman Barrett, Lisa. How emotions are made, The secret life of the brain. New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2017.

6 Niedenthal, P & Ric, F. Psychology of emotion, Psychology Press Book, 2017.

7 Coleman, Nathaniel. Utopias and Architecture. New York: Routledge, 2005.

point of departure

The dwellers living in the city are growing further and further away from nature since petrification is also happening within the city borders⁸. And that whilst the relation to nature is important for the well-being of the dwellers in the cities, nature has a healing effect on our mental health and thus has a direct influence on our behavior⁹. Emotions are the motivating factor in life, this is because of the 'Two Factor Theory', which is a combination of autonomic arousal and the label it gets through the experience. In short, this means that however you are feeling at the moment, your surroundings will influence what label you give this feeling and how to cope with it, resulting in specific emotions. A well-designed space for improving mental health subconsciously tells the brain to tone down the pain receptors, whilst a poorly designed space will heighten these pain receptors in the body¹⁰. Nature has a strong positive influence on physical and mental health, since nature is naturally stress-reducing it awakens positive emotions in humans¹¹.

All of this happens subconsciously. However, with the growing cities, the majority of the population has no direct access to, nor a view of nature, making it harder for these dwellers to maintain a healthy body budget¹². Hence why it is so important that we, city dwellers, stay close in touch with nature.

Architecture as a tool to influence our well-being is a method not put to its full potential. In a time and age of Modern Architecture, circular economies, and repetitive manufactured building parts, it is easy to forget the true main purpose of architecture. Which is to protect the dweller from external influences, but also to create a safe space to dwell in, this goes for both the building and the urban overall.

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Google Earth, Urban growth in Göteborg, Sweden, 2023.

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Niedenthal, P & Ric, F. Psychology of emotion, Psychology Press Book, 2017.

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glossary



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Rendell, Jane. *The Architecture of Psychoanalysis*. I.B. Tauris, 2017.

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De Renteria, Isabela & Rueda Velazques, Claudia, *Transitional spaces in the architecture of Luis Barragan and Jose Antonio Coderch*. Cambridge University Press, 2018.

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Nilsson, Per. *Urban Sprawl*, a literature study on different aspects of urban deconcentration in the industrialized world. Umeå: Gerum, Geografiska rapporter Umeå universitet, 1983.

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Coleman, Nathaniel. *Utopias and Architecture*. New York: Routledge, 2005.

18
Länsstyrelsen, Västra Götaland. 2023.

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Coleman, Nathaniel. *Utopias and Architecture*. New York: Routledge, 2005.

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Imbrication /

In a psychoanalysis and historiographical way, imbrication stands for distributing the relation between past and present, through placing them next to each other or 'in' one another. In short, a space inside a space, one is 'guest' in another¹³.

Transitional space /

The spatial sequences that both vertically and horizontally connect two distinctly different zones¹⁴.

City sprawling /

Cities that keep growing outwards, claiming more and more new land¹⁵.

Decentralization /

A city loosing its central dense urban core and instead now has multiple 'high' density zones spread out all over the city, mostly in the outer rings¹⁶.

Utopia /

The fundamental architectural language shown in an almost unrealistic and radical but visual representation of the social imagination of the ideal urban concept¹⁷.

Rural nature /

The concept of nature belonging to nature. Not as strict as a protected landscape, but rather as a landscape dominated by nature instead of by the urban¹⁸.

City-scapes /

The urban fabric seen as isolated constructed buildings, contributing to a larger whole, the built environment¹⁹.

Body-Budget /

The human brains capacity to regulate emotional and physical well-being, through this 'symbolic' scale, the body-budget. It is about physically spending energy throughout the day, to then psychologically charge this budget again through our environment and surroundings²⁰.



the space in between

A transitional space is the relation between the past and the present, through a transdisciplinary practice of site writing²¹. There are different ways of looking at this space; the transitional space could be treated as an imbrication, meaning one space in the place of another. Or as a repetition, the first space reproduces and replicates the space in another form. In both cases, it is the same question, “what takes the place of what?”²². In the case of sprawling cities, the idea of imbrication seems in place, the city is a fragment of man-claimed land ‘inside’ the natural landscape, so then why are we treating it the other way around? We treat rural nature as an asset for ‘the city’, the city is here the main partaker, the one with the loudest voice. But isn’t the city only a small portion of a bigger whole?

The city fabric is designed with the mindset of ephemerality, meaning a temporary design, created for change in the future²³. For example, visible in Göteborg Sweden, where the urban fabric was designed with this hand-like structure, as had been done in Denmark before²⁴. This urban plan was created with the ideal concept, that as many dwellers as possible could have easy access to the surrounding nature. However, within a span of only 20 years, this hand-like structure turned out to be an ephemerality, instead of a permanence. The hand-like structure is growing in on itself, this is the direct result of an ephemeral design versus the rapidly growing city²⁵.

To be able to design a permanent solution against city sprawling, the relation between the two different zones needs to be understood. As Siegfried Giedion puts it, it is vertical and horizontal, it is the sequence of spaces that partially reveal and announce, and frame and blur it all together into this continuous space²⁶. This space could then become a no-place, an utopia²⁷.

21 Rendell, Jane. *The Architecture of Psychoanalysis*. I.B. Tauris, 2017.

22 Rendell, Jane. *The Architecture of Psychoanalysis*. I.B. Tauris, 2017.

23 Szacka, Léa-Catherine. *Insight: life, death, and ephemerality of Postmodern Architecture*, Arq. Cambridge University Press 2018.

24 Five Finger Plan, Denmark. Earth Resources Observation and Science (EROS) Center, Web. Accessed 10 December 2022, <https://eros.usgs.gov/media-gallery/earthshot/five-finger-plan>

25 Google Earth, Urban growth in Göteborg, Sweden. 2023.

26 Szacka, Léa-Catherine. *Transitional spaces in the architecture of Luis Barragan and Jose Antonio Coderch*, Arq. Cambridge University Press 2018.

27 Coleman, Nathaniel. *Utopias and Architecture*. New York: Routledge, 2005.

visionary concepts

Utopias are not designed to directly solve a ‘problem’, but rather, to show an exemplary concept that could solve it, in such an extreme way that it provokes emotions and reactions whilst at it. It exaggerates to such an extent, that it dissociates from the ‘real’ to then be able to inspire ‘real’ solutions²⁸.

Absolute utopias are not designed to be realized, as sociologist Karl Mannheim argues, “Absolute designs are crucial, they resist realization, but through that, contain different possibilities for application compared to realistic utopias”²⁹. Utopias can also be divided into scales, eutopia is the scale of a good graspable design and outopia is more about potential goodness³⁰. Since the topic is on city sprawling, one could argue that this is a matter per city, with its specific border making it a question of eutopia. However, the positive trait of a utopia is that it ‘could’ be applied everywhere since it can be so radical, and thus making it an outopia would benefit the argument of starting a conversation on rural footprints being claimed for city-scapes on a large scale.

All in all, utopian concepts are projections of ideal cities, proposed in such a way that it becomes objective, and besides the fact that they are rarely achieved, they should attempt to create this ideal built environment nevertheless³¹. Plato believed that we should not concern ourselves with ‘where’ this ideal city is, but rather what ‘type’ of city would be best. He believed that “we should prefer that city which most closely resembles this ideal. We too should project a city by way of example, which the learned may judge commodious in every respect, yet which will nonetheless conform to the requirements of time and necessity. In this, we should follow Socrates’ advice, that something that can only be altered for the worse can be held to be perfect”³².

Jacques Ranciere also talks about utopias this way with similar arguments, he sees the 19th-century utopia as this contrast between everyday living spaces and the ‘distribution of bodies in their place and their function’. It’s a regime of the sensible, this relationships system of visible, sayable, and doable. Ranciere speaks about the order of the police, and the order of the regime, a utopia is there to propose ‘consistently consistency to insistent politics’³¹.

28
Coleman, Nathaniel. *Utopias and Architecture*. New York: Routledge, 2005.

29
Ibid

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Coleman, Nathaniel. *Utopias and Architecture*. New York: Routledge, 2005.

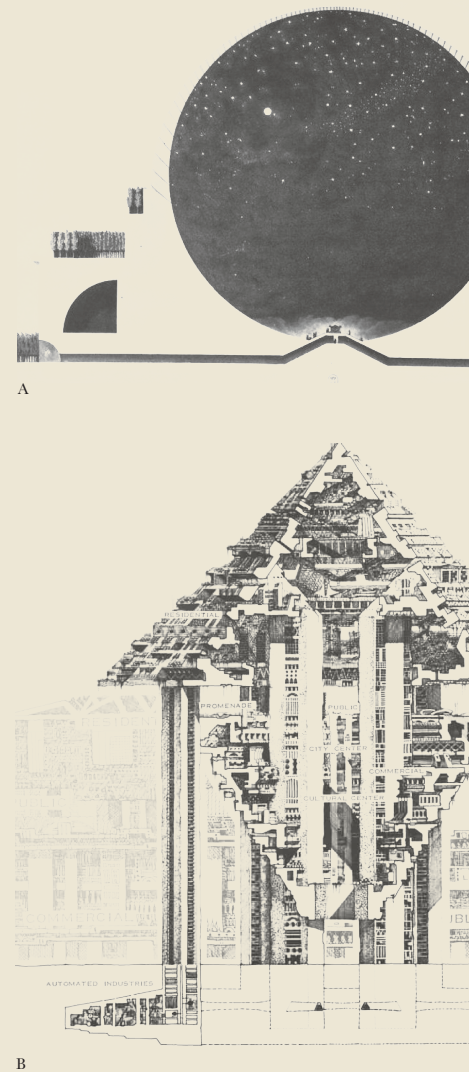
31
Leon Battista Alberti, *On the Art of Building in Ten Books*, Joseph Rykwert, Neil Leach and Robert Tavernor, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1998.

32
Ibid

33
Anthony vidler. *Partage de l’utopie*. 2019. Web. Accessed 18 Januari 2023. <https://architecture.exchange/exchange/ranciere/>

A
Étienne-Louis Boullée, *Cenotaph for Sir Isaac Newton, daytime section*. *Artland Magazine*, *Imagining New Worlds*, 1784.

B
Paolo Soleri, *Hexahedron Arcology*. *Artland Magazine*, *Imagining New Worlds*, 1969.



[1] Steven Holl

The visionary architect Steven Holl, spend his career studying and understanding the connection of buildings to nature. Holl desires to create architecture that is in “union with the land”, he describes this as “anchoring”. A term he uses to describe the site of a building as more than just a mere ingredient in the whole conception, the project site is the physical and metaphysical foundation of it all³⁴. Holl’s notion of architecture is the capacity of architecture to prompt dwellers to think, feel, and act in particular ways³⁵. In 1991, Holl published the essay “Edge of a City”, in which he speaks about this reconfiguration of ‘architecture that changes the way we live, a way that alters our experience of time of day, of season, and of our mood and bodily temperature’³⁶. In all his projects, Steven Holl designs spaces where the landscape merges with architecture and the spaces become one, he creates sequences of shifting perspectives in that transitional space making it all one whole³⁷.



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Critchley, Simon. *Continental Philosophy*. Oxford University Press, 2001.

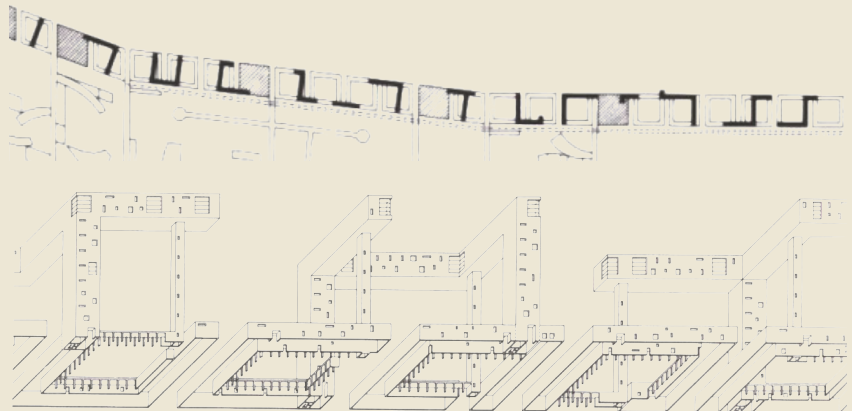
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Holl, Steven. *Making Architecture*. New York: New Paltz State University of New York, 2018.

36
Holl, Steven. “Edge of a city” in *Pamphlet Architecture 13: edge of a city*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1991.

37
Holl, Steven. *Making Architecture*. New York: New Paltz State University of New York, 2018.

C
Holl, Steven. *Spatial Retaining Bars*. *Hidden architecture journal*, 2022.

This relationship conception of ‘anchoring’ buildings to the ground is opposite of what would be considered ‘best’ for the ground surface it is anchored to. Nevertheless, the concept of separating the two different zones through physical, spatial, and inhabitable volumes, can be considered a concept that could define the boundary around the city, to be able to actively visualize city sprawling. Even so, the city fabric might just continue on after this physical boundary, as it would have without.



C

[2] Plug-In City

A polar opposite, but still a visionary approach we can learn from, is the Plug-in city concept by Peter Cook & Archigram. Plug-In city proposes this futuristic idea of a city that is all connected to each other, to such a degree that the whole urban environment is programmed for change³⁸. It then becomes this controlled system that is designed for changes via removable and addable urban elements, plugged into a megastructure framework³⁹. However, more importantly, it was designed with the philosophical approach of the ideal sustainable life that would promote reverse-consumerism⁴⁰.

Do take into account that this concept was developed in the 1960s and there was little environmental awareness then, this concept would never have been so well-liked had it been proposed now in the 21st century.

Apart from this, the visionary idea of a controlled built environment is a mindset

one could apply the other way as well. What if we were to create an extremely radical transitional space between the forest and the city, controlled in such a way that the city simply ‘cannot’ sprawl outwards anymore and has to find the solution for urban growth inside the city’s perimeter?

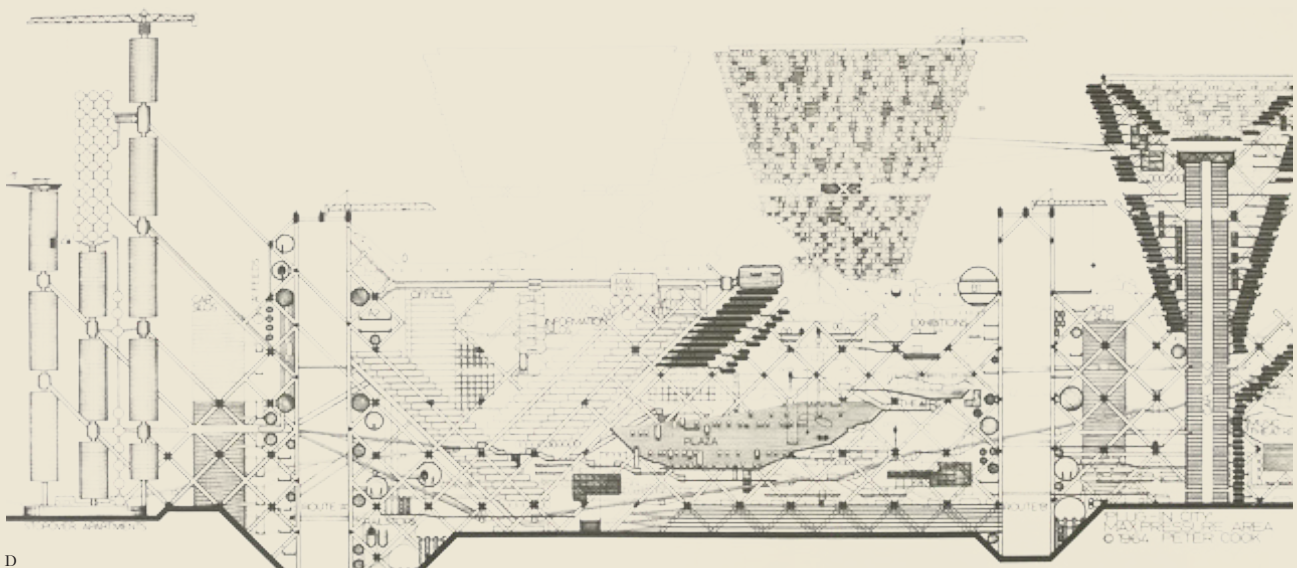
Imagine if the forest was portrayed in the same way as Archigram portrays their connected city, the trees all plugged into this mega structure, that connects all rural nature to one another. With such precision and control, there would simply be no space left for cities to grow into? The city would then become one small ‘element’ plugged into a bigger whole, the rural nature, within their plugged-in elements from the forest and mountains. Supposing that that concept would leave no gaps for city sprawling, it would at the same time also leave no room for rural nature to sprawl. Nonetheless, might it be a radical concept to contemplate.

38 Cook, Peter. “Plug-In.” Archigram. Basel Switzerland: Birkhäuser Verlag, 1991.

39 Archigram. Plug-In City Study. Archigram Archival Project, 1964.

40 “Social Sustainability.” Wikipedia. Wikimedia Foundation. Web. Accessed 22 Februari 2023. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_sustainability>.

D AD Classics: The Plug-In City / Peter Cook, Archigram. Archigram Archives, 2013.



[3] Roman Times

The Romans were very good at understanding this sphere of operations, not yet for the transitional space, but more for the whole administration of unsurpassed perfection for the regulation of human behavior; their imagination was also earthbound and factual. For the Romans everything was subordinated by the dominance of the axis, the gridiron layout shows clearly this principle of order⁴¹. The Romans were subconsciously ‘anchoring’ their buildings in a rigid grid, just as how Steven Holl will years later bring back to the attention again.

Today, we still see remnants of strong axes visible in the urban fabrics, such as in, linear and gridiron cities. Driven by the need for rapid transportation, this linear urban geometry with all its functions parallel to one another, becomes overwhelmingly dynamic⁴¹.

The urban fabric axes give us an almost ‘guideline’ of how the city might expand, how it is likely to continue sprawling if it

is not stopped if we are not to design an urban border, that will disrupt the continuous growth of the current fabrics of the city.

An example of a linear urban proposal is the Pampus project in Amsterdam by J.B. Bakema, this concept was never built. Nevertheless, it shows how architects are willing to give up the rural ground footprint, to be able to provide dwellings surrounded by open space, an all-round view of nature, ‘so that city dwellers can live in the country’ as Bakema puts it⁴³.

All in all, we can state that nature is never the first priority itself, but it is, however, seen as a great asset for the built environment. By looking at strong axes in current city fabrics, predictions for future growth can be made and taken into account when creating the city boundary, to slow down city sprawling.

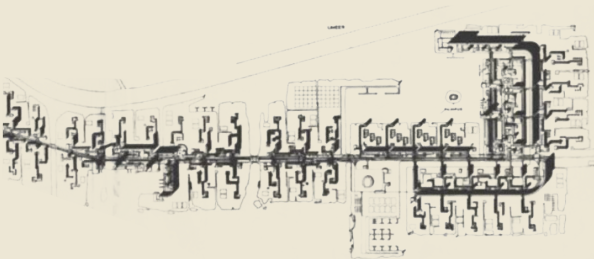
41
Giedion, Sigfried. *Architecture and the Phenomena of Transition, the three space conceptions in architecture*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971.

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ibid

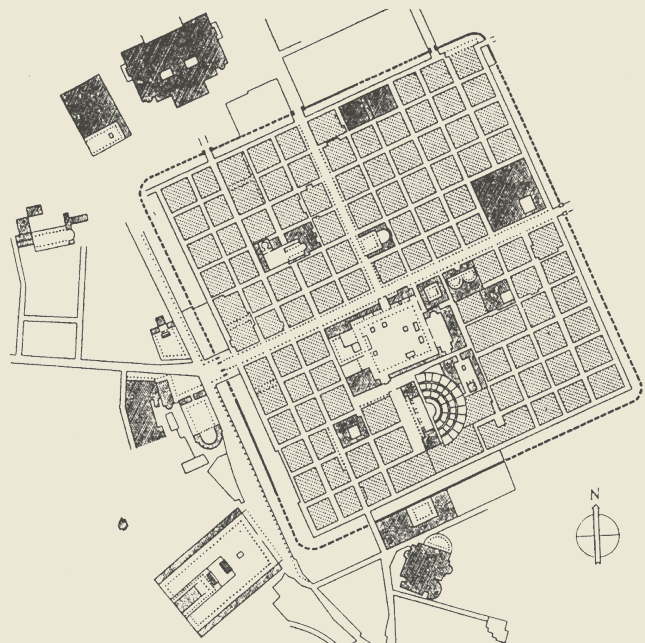
43
Giedion, Sigfried. *Architecture and the Phenomena of Transition, the three space conceptions in architecture*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971.

E
Pampus Plan, a linear city, Amsterdam. J.B. Bakema, 1964.

F
The city of Timgad, Algeria. A classical example of gridiron Roman colonial urban design from 100 AD, with its orderly military organization. *Quadralectic Architecture*



E



F

the phenomena of transition through a utopia

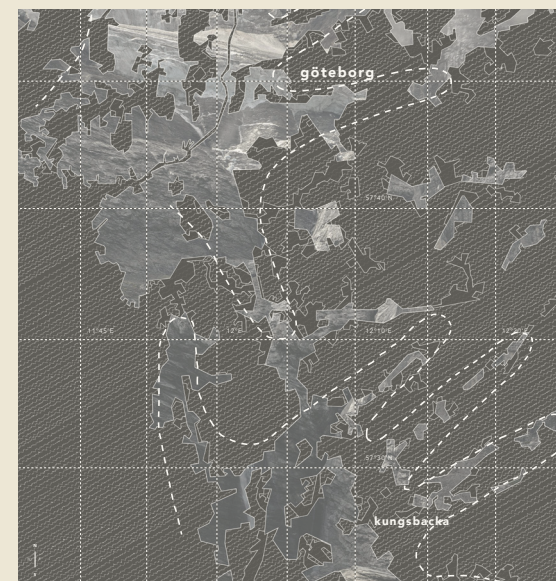
The phenomena of transition argue that the act of transition can be divided into different theoretical groups. Most interestingly regarding spatial transitioning, is the third space conception, the separation of function. Urban design is moving towards an increased separation of urban functions that are closely intertwined⁴⁴. Such as the separation of traffic and pedestrians, and business districts and residential areas, so then why are we not yet looking at the separation of city and forest? To be able to answer this question, we should also look at the second phenomenon of transition, the interaction of volumes. Le Corbusier understood this principle and designed buildings with freedom of sculptural interrelations, creating buildings that are placed so that they radiate their own space, whilst at the same time subordinate to the whole unity⁴⁵. And as Rudolf Steiner puts it, “We can choose to acknowledge or ignore the history of a site, but it exists nonetheless”⁴⁶.

The interdependent patterns of isolated volumes illuminate the genius of the exemplary architecture, that is the optimism of utopia⁴⁷. However, in this last half-century more and more isolated buildings have been constructed without any pattern in between, these radically isolated builds do not contribute to a cohesive environment, let alone include nature. A utopia is all about envisioning all these loose elements optimistically together into a potential whole⁴⁸. Without utopia, the greatest paradox would be faced, ultimate rational mastery will resolve into existence without ideals, making humans mere followers of impulses⁴⁹. This pattern of continuous sprawling and decentralizing city cores makes cities unbearable to live in. With cities growing larger in diameter, it has become increasingly more difficult for city dwellers to have easy access and contact with rural life whilst people feel most comfortable when they can experience the ‘countryside’.

Without the contact of city dwellers and rural nature, the city simply becomes a prison⁵⁰. A solution that was proposed in the late 1900s, was that city-scapes should be designed as ‘long sinuous fingers’ that extend into nature⁵¹. However, despite the fact that Denmark and Swe-

den both applied this method in various large cities, in the long run, city sprawling still won out any shape or form and the finger-like structure is almost invisible now (as visible in the image belowA).

If by definition, access to certain parts of the city or nature is restricted, then the parts where access is still possible will start to function as gateways and get special importance, these gateways could if designed properly, play a crucial role in bordering and containing city sprawling⁵². This gateway transition, or entrance towards nature, should have a clear feel of arrival, the transition in the case of housing should not feel too abrupt, which would then lose the feeling of an inner sanctum⁵³. However, in the case of bordering a sprawling city, the transition might benefit from an abrupt change in zones, so that it physically feels like ‘changing’ between two totally different places. The abrupt transition could be emotionally loaded so that it will get resistance from city dwellers if the ‘zone’ or outer ring of the city is trying to sprawl outwards again.



G

44 Giedion, Sigfried. *Architecture and the Phenomena of Transition, the three space conceptions in architecture*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971.

45 *ibid*

46 Holl, Steven. *Color Light Time*. Zurich: Lars Müller Publisher, 2012.

47 David Leatherbarrow, *The Roots of Architectural Invention*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993.

48 Coleman, Nathaniel. *Utopias and Architecture*. New York: Routledge, 2005.

49 Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia*, 1936

50 Alexander, C., Ishikawa, S., & Silverstein, M. *A pattern language*. New York: Oxford university Press, 1977 / connection with nature

51 Five Finger Plan, Denmark. Earth Resources Observation and Science (EROS) Center, Web. Accessed 10 December 2022, <https://eros.usgs.gov/media-gallery/earthshot/five-finger-plan>

52 Alexander, C., Ishikawa, S., & Silverstein, M. *A pattern language*. New York: Oxford university Press, 1977 / passages

53 Alexander, C., Ishikawa, S., & Silverstein, M. *A pattern language*. New York: Oxford university Press, 1977 / entrances

G Overlay of urban growth in Göteborg, Sweden. Light grey footprint of 2000 & dark grey of 2020, with the hand-like structure visible

the proposal

The aim is to create a repositioned utopia that will function as a positive informing model. The utopian concept should be open, rather than closed, implying an almost familiar demonstration of the objectives of architecture within this phenomenon of transition and 'border patrol'. To then start the conversation on city decentralization and urban sprawling. But more importantly, to show a radical way to solve the problem at hand. This radical utopian transitional border should be visualized to easily demonstrate the importance to solve this. If only to get future dwellers to start discussing or architects to get inspired and take it into account in future proposals.

The transition between the cityscape and the landscape should be clear, it should be a change of space in a way of change of light, direction, surface, level, view, and enclosure. This is important because if a transition is spatially strong it will also have a strong psychological change in the mind, making it better resistant to change⁵⁴. It is all about the hierarchy of space, there should always be a hierarchy in open spaces so that the transition is clear. Changes in volumes create this hierarchy, one smaller space next to a large one, or/and one space that looks like another, then there are openings and thresholds that should differ as well⁵⁵. The boundary should be made ambiguous, all spaces designed deliberately so that no one can get around this 'radical' transition between the city and nature, and how this boundary is then hard to cross if it is spatially clear and visually easy to understand and follow.

The plan

Foremost, the transitional border can be defined by examining the strong axes in current city fabrics, the axes reveal premature signs of possible urban growth. With this, the 'poetic' border around the city can then be addressed.

Through a radical utopian design, a first manifestation of a possible solution can be crafted. This image should portray the transitional space, the sequence in between, the city and rural nature. Significant is that this image should illustrate the city as an imbrication of nature. Or in an extremely radical way, possibly not even showing the city at all. The utopia should operate as an activist for nature.

As seen in the depicted case studies of previous utopias, a utopia should be radical to the point of being 'unrealistic' to evoke strong emotions. Solely then, can the utopia operate almost as a method of 'propaganda'. A city wall, will not solve the concern of city sprawling, the solution has to come from within. But can be addressed through architecture, through a utopia. The aim is to construct a concept, where the city is not superior to nature, but the other way around.

54
Alexander, C., Ishikawa, S., & Silverstein, M. A pattern language. New York: Oxford university Press, 1977 / transitions

55
Alexander, C., Ishikawa, S., & Silverstein, M. A pattern language. New York: Oxford university Press, 1977 / hierarchy of open space

H
Utopian concept of cities in nature's cavities, making nature the priority.
By author; van Rhee, K., in thesis report.



H

conclusion

Ironically, in modern times now, computer renderings try to portray emotive expressionism through hyper-realistic and detailed renderings. But whilst at it provokes no emotion at all⁵⁶. Architecture has always been seen as a medium to describe the discipline's configuration of volumes and spaces⁵⁷. Why not put this to use again as was done in Roman Times and before? Architecture is not only about buildings and their drawings, architecture is also a language everyone can understand, it is about spaces and patterns. And that is exactly what rural nature needs, a translator, an in-between mediator of volumes, to then create a 'drawing' of the untraversable grounds.

When an image is believed at first glance we are less likely to question reality. However, we have to start actively questioning large design choices again. Just because an algorithm can make hyper-realistic renderings, does not mean that it is the best design in the long run. We have come to an era where we trust too blindly in computer programs. Just because it can, does not mean it should.

In order to come up with architectural solutions in the form of a utopian design, further research is required. Research that goes further than the small introduction of previous utopias and their language in this essay. To truly be able to tackle the problem of urban sprawling and rural nature being pushed away, we ought to understand the reasoning behind urban growth. Not just the theoretical reasoning of preferred lifestyle and freedom with transportation, nor is it just about population growth. Of course, all these details matter, but through this research, one starts to question, is there a larger problem at hand? The true question is; "Why is the regulation designed to control this issue not working?". It is not just Sweden that is dealing with urban growth, it is a planetary complication, so then why has no country saved this problem as of yet? Is it not pressing enough? Is it because we believe there to be enough space for now? Is it because 'we' humans think ourselves superior to all else?

Throughout the process of this thesis, more questions started to arise, rather than be answered. But that might also be the exciting side of it.

There is already so much built environment we can work with, so why not use architecture as more than a physical form? Architecture as a paper language will start discussions that we are bound to have. However, it requires more than just an architect to translate this problem. Landscape architects and urban planners together with people with an excellent understanding of the law should get together and start talking about this pressing problem, perhaps even practitioners of forestry should join the table. What and where is the role of city planning and how do we eventually contain it?

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the phenomena of imbrication of city-scapes in nature