Contributions to the Hypermapping of Diocletian's Palace:

Layered Space and Conceptions of Place

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Essays by
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In "Ultimate Collage City", Sasa Zivkovic proposes an original "re-reading" of the well-known architecture of Diocletian's Palace through the prism of the theoretical approach of the Collage City, first defined by Colin Rowe and Fred Koetter. Considering its material transformations through recycling and reuse, Diocletian's "multi-didactic Palace", as Zivkovic suggestively calls it, presents a model for a wider discussion about circularity in the construction of future buildings and cities. The Palace, subtly and inspiringly interpreted in this essay as a dynamic archive, effectively advocates for an "ultimate" collage city – a city where collage concepts are iteratively applied throughout history, resulting in a blend of material conditions, narratives, and spatial circumstances.

(From a review by Goran Nikšić)

In "Figure to Mat", Leslie Lok intriguingly explores and interprets Diocletian's Palace through the perspective of Smithson's mat-building concept using the already tested comparative key metrics + program + place. The fact that the flexible theoretical framework of mat-building allows for the independence of this concept of the specifics of architectural expression, which means that the identification of mat-building is not subject to unambiguous code, clearly confirms that, even after several decades, references to Smithson's concept are still highly relevant.

(From a review by Ana Grgić)

The Lok and Zivkovic essays work excellently together, both with a reimagination of how Diocletian's Palace transcends our understanding of what constitutes a "mat" condition. While Zivkovic discusses "matness" in the form of geological and later accreditive architectural collage, Lok "unpacks" the concept – the more urbanistic aspects of what it is to be mat-like.

(From a review by Frano Violich)

"Time–Inclusive Design" by Ana Šverko is a remarkable exploration of Diocletian's Palace as a model for managing change in historical places, cities, and public realms, which implies minimal transformations of form. She successfully demonstrates how inclusive design principles can be applied to historical sites, promoting accessibility and inclusivity while respecting the site's heritage. This essay is of utmost importance for contemporary processes in the city of Split and especially in its core, since our thinking, feeling, and acting affects the ways we view and change, conserve, or destroy our physical and spiritual environment as well as overall human relations. This essay is highly recommended for architects, urban designers, planners, historians, researchers of the humanities and anyone interested in the referential and experiential aspects of time in architecture, and explorations of architecture's temporal dimensions.

(From a review by Tadej Glažar)

"Thinking Shadows, Drawing Place" by Damir Gamulin sets out to frame the need for a methodology that balances preservation and intervention in a historically relevant structure, the core of Split, which grew out of the palace of the Roman emperor, Diocletian. The author utilizes shadow as a means with which to reframe the conversation around this complex urban environment (…) I see this essay as a prospectus for a research project connected to this work on Diocletian's Palace that could result in some very relevant scholarship both for this particular site and for models of intervention in historically sensitive environments in general (…) This kind of research and scholarship is sorely lacking and desperately needed both globally and within the author's immediate context.

(From a review by Ivan Rupnik)

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Split, ortophotograph, 2019

City of Split

Acknowledgements

Editor's Preface

The palace of the Roman emperor Diocletian in Split, Croatia is a late antique structure built around 300 AD. Over time, it has transformed into a city and now forms part of the historic core of Split, serving as both a residential and public space. This typologically-layered structure stands as a living monument, continuously building and changing – both physically and symbolically – for over 1700 years. Throughout its history, considerable parts of the original Palace have been repurposed or adapted, layered and added. The Palace remains flexible, adapting to shifts in the social and political life of its residents, and undergoing continuous physical alteration to its ancient foundations. Even today, the ancient, medieval, Renaissance, Baroque, nineteenth, twentieth-century, and contemporary elements of the city coexist within its original perimeter walls.

According to Joško Belamarić, Diocletian's Palace originally included a textile factory, and was partly adapted into a residence for the retired emperor. Extreme contrasts in the architectural-urbanistic structures of Ancient Rome were further compounded by the addition of Egyptian columns and sphinxes during construction, and followed by numerous elements from later centuries. The eastern Adriatic coast is a peripheral yet dynamic territory that has, throughout history, been exposed to shifting cultural and artistic influences. This region is marked by conflict and unstable borders between East and West. The Palace has thrived within this intricate political and social landscape since its foundation, representing a collage of artistic, architectural, and urbanistic elements assimilated from various

sources within a broad cultural context. Diocletian's Palace stands as a palimpsest, exemplifying a heterogeneous building adorned with a rich tapestry of layered spoliae atop its robust, original Roman form. Given that the building emerged through a transcultural dialogue spanning nearly two millennia, the Palace demands a multifaceted contextualization.

The transformation of the late antique structure into a medieval city generated a convergence of distinct spatial sequences, construction materials, and decorative elements, along with unique relationships between public and private spaces. This evolution has fascinated architects for centuries, particularly since the time of Robert Adam, who was the first to meticulously examine and document the Palace in the mid-eighteenth century. Its transformative nature – the process of morphogenesis in which fragments or entire objects traverse from one spatial and/or chronological context into another, thereby becoming complementary and acquiring new meaning and value – held a strong appeal for the modern, especially the postmodern mentality. It is the works of neo-classicist and postmodernist authors that serve as a foundation for the four texts collected in this book. As a set, the writings intend to offer fresh perspectives on architecture, urbanism, design, and Diocletian's Palace itself. In recent decades, as the Palace achieved iconic status in global tourism, it gradually receded from the focus of theoreticians and creative planning disciplines. One of our reviewers, Ivan Rupnik, a former Associate Editor of the *Journal of Architectural Education* (JAE), collaborated on the

development of a scholarly article format within the journal known as *Design as Scholarship*. This format enables designers to publish scholarly writing on their design work and reflect on it as a form of research, generating new knowledge for their discipline. Unlike other professional fields such as law, medicine, business management, and even the related field of urban planning, which have established clear pathways connecting practice and academia through case study scholarship, architecture and design have struggled to establish a similar framework. *Design as Scholarship* is intended to bridge that gap. Rupnik's insights prompted us to dissolve the boundary between theory and practice in this publication. Given the tangible transformations' impact on the intangible environment, Diocletian's Palace serves as a valuable research model for contemporary architects, designers, conservators, and sociologists in both theory and practice.

Our intention was to investigate Diocletian's Palace from a comparative perspective that resonates with its evolution as a dynamic place. By perceiving the Palace as a spatial construct interweaving diverse chronological and cross-cultural fragments, this approach would present its complexity through four different viewpoints, each explored by one of the authors. We found our inspiration for the book during the international design workshop "Living Monument: Mat-Organisation and Diocletian's Palace: What If?", held within the Palace and organized by the authors and editors of this book in Split in 2016. To explore Diocletian's Palace as a living monument from theoretical and practical lenses, we

examined and conceptualized its attributes as a form of mat-urbanism. Our goals were to identify and experience the Palace as a highly complex spatial conglomeration and provide a conceptual framework for design speculations that explore radical "what if" scenarios to address contemporary issues of tourism, conservation, and modernization within the city. Our dialogues about Diocletian's Palace continued intensively even after the workshop, the methodology and ideas guiding our work developed from the various analytical lenses, and in a sense, organically from the nature of the Palace itself.

In "Ultimate Collage City", Sasa Zivkovic proposes an original "re-reading" of material transformations – recycling and reuse – of Diocletian's Palace through the prism of the theoretical approach of the Collage City, first defined by Colin Rowe and Fred Koetter. Goran Nikšić highlights that the author, through the development of that concept, presents the Palace as a model for a wider discussion about circularity in the construction of future buildings and cities.

Meanwhile, in "Figure to Mat", Leslie Lok interprets Diocletian's Palace through Alison Smithson's concept of mat-building, drawing a comparison between its spatial principles and the Palace's malleable growth. The flexible theoretical framework of mat-building allows the concept to remain independent of singular architectural expressions, exhibiting adaptability over time, akin to the Palace's evolution. This underscores that the identification of mat-building is not subject to an unambiguous code, as Ana Grgić notes, confirming the enduring relevance of references to Smithson's

concept. While, as Frano Violich remarks, Zivkovic discusses "matness" in the form of geological and later accreditive architectural collage, Lok "unpacks" the concept in urbanistic aspects of what it is to be mat-like.

"Time-Inclusive Design" by Ana Šverko is, according to Tadej Glažar, a thought-provoking exploration of Diocletian's Palace as a model for managing change in historical places, cities, and public realms, which implies minimal transformations of form. She draws attention to the referential and experiential aspects of time in architecture, and an exploration of architecture's temporal dimensions.

Continuing that thread in "Thinking Shadows, Drawing Place", Damir Gamulin sets out to frame the need for an interwoven, iterative methodology of preservation and intervention within historically significant structures. He does so by leveraging the phenomenon of "spatial shadow" as a unique aesthetic phenomenon, but more than that – as a conceptual tool to redefine the conversation about bridging the tangible and intangible aspects of this multifaceted urban environment. According to Ivan Rupnik, shadows, as discussed in this work, could be seen as phenomena as well as noumena in the context of Split's historic core, and this approach could result in relevant scholarship both for this particular site and for models of intervention in historically sensitive environments in general.

While thinking about the title of this collection, we borrowed the prefix "hyper" from the book HyperCities by Todd Presner, David Shepard, and Yoh Kawano, which refers to multiplicity and abundance. The book explains:

More than a physical space, a hypercity is a real city overlaid with information networks that document the past, catalyse the present, and project future possibilities. Hypercities are always under construction. Todd Presner, David Shepard, and Yoh Kawano put digital humanities theory into practice to chart the proliferating cultural records of places around the world (...) Not a book about maps in the literal sense, HyperCities describes thick mapping: the humanist project of participating and listening that transforms mapping into an ethical undertaking. Ultimately, the digital humanities do not consist merely of computer-based methods for analysing information. They are a means of integrating scholarship with the world of lived experience, making sense of the past in the layered spaces of the present for the sake of the open future.[1]

In the broad concept of hypermaps (so characteristic of the Palace as a kind of sediment), we understood the essays gathered here as layers of thinking about the Palace through architectural and urban design strategies as a contribution to its hypermapping, in order to develop design thinking.

1   See: https://www.hup.harvard.edu/catalog.php?isbn=9780674725348

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Damir Gamulin is a designer and researcher with a focus on the interplay between technology, disciplines, and scales. He holds a degree in Design Studies from the Faculty of Architecture, University of Zagreb. Gamulin's diverse expertise covers a broad spectrum: from graphic, interior, and architectural design to museum exhibition setups and cutting-edge digital interactive designs. His research-driven design projects have garnered numerous awards and recognitions. They have been showcased as exhibitions, installations, or designs at prestigious venues including the *Triennale di Milano* in 2022 (in collaboration with A. Sevšek, I. Slipčević, and J. Kalajžić), the *Taipei Biennial* in 2020 (alongside N. Bojić and M. Roman), the *Venice Biennale* where he took on the art direction of the Croatian pavilion in 2006, and various regional events. Gamulin is cofounder of OO (Organizirano oblikovanje / Objet Order), design and research practice, that he established with Antun Sevšek. Their designs and self-initiated research projects often explore spatial transformation themes, such as the *Adriatic Highway – Infrastructure as a generator of territory project*, which was presented at Croatian art galleries and publications, including scholarly journal *Život umjetnosti* (2015). Recently, his efforts have centered on digital reinterpretations of spatial experiences, pushing the boundaries of technology.

Leslie Lok is a cofounder and coprincipal at H.A.N.N.A.H, an experimental design practice for built and speculative projects across numerous scales. H.A.N.N.A.H's work focuses on contemporary building practices and utilizes novel material applications and innovative construction methods to address subjects of architecture and urbanism. Allied with computational technology and with a focus on urbanism, Lok's research explores the intersection of housing, urbanization, and mass-customized construction methods at multiple scales. Her teaching at Cornell also focuses on visual representation relating to topics in urbanism. She previously taught design studios and visual representation seminars at McGill University.

Prior to the founding of H.A.N.N.A.H, Lok practiced architecture at various offices in the U.S., Canada, and China. Her contributions were exhibited at the 2019 *Bi-City Biennale of Urbanism/ Architecture* in Shenzhen, Canadian Centre for Architecture, the Pinkcomma Gallery in Boston, and have appeared in various publications such as *Frame Magazine*, *Wettbewerbe aktuell*, and *Mark magazine*.

Lok received her master of architecture at MIT and bachelor of arts at Wellesley College. H.A.N.N.A.H won the 2018 *Folly/Function Competition*.

Ana Šverko is an architect and architectural historian, a Senior Research Associate at the Institute of Art History – Cvito Fisković Centre in Split, and Assistant Professor at the University of Split. She graduated in architecture from the University of Zagreb in 1998, received her Master of Urban Design degree from UC Berkeley in 2002, and her PhD from the University of Zagreb in 2011. From 2014 to 2015 she participated in Harvard University's postdoc research seminar *Art on the Move in Eastern Europe and the Mediterranean in the Early Modern Period* supported by the Getty Foundation. She led a research project related to the Grand Tour of Dalmatia (2014–17), the *Croatian Glossary of Classical Architecture* project (2018–19) and since 2019 she has been a team member on the project *Exposition [Ekspozicija]: Themes and Aspects of Croatian Photography from the 19th Century until Today,* all funded by the Croatian Science Foundation. In recent years her research was also supported by the Getty Foundation's Digital Art History initiative (2018–19), and the Paul Mellon Centre (2021). She was awarded a Berenson Fellowship at *I Tatti, The Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies,* Florence, in 2022. She is the author of papers, chapters and awarded books on the architectural history, perception and representation of places, from the early modern to contemporary periods, focusing on the Eastern Adriatic.

Sasa Zivkovic is an assistant professor at Cornell University AAP where he directs the Robotic Construction Laboratory (RCL), an interdisciplinary research group investigating robotic based construction technology. Zivkovic is a co-principal of HANNAH, an experimental architecture practice based in Ithaca, New York. HANNAH's *RRRolling Stones* project won the 2018 *Folly/Function competition* hosted by the Architectural League of New York and Socrates Sculpture Park. In December 2018, HANNAH was named *Next Progressives* by *Architect Magazine* and recently completed a 3D printed Guard House in Suzhou, a pro-bono Modular Dental Clinic in Ladakh in India, and a 3D printed Corbel Cabin in Ithaca, New York.

Zivkovic pursued his graduate studies at MIT where he was the recipient of the AIA Certificate of Merit, a merit-based MIT full tuition scholarship, and a scholarship from the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD). Prior to MIT, Zivkovic studied architecture and city planning at Stuttgart University where he was awarded a fellowship from the German National Academic Foundation (*Studienstiftung des Deutschen Volkes*) from 2007–12. At Cornell, Zivkovic teaches graduate and undergraduate core design studios as well as elective seminar classes or option studios with a focus on digital fabrication, construction, and representation.

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