Bringing back the life to half-dead urban structures
The concept of bringing back the life to half-dead urban structures reveals cities hidden potential.

Field studies conducted on its reciprocal relationships and focus on mapping of non-physical and physical parameters with a view of sustainable development and projective analyses.
“What is needed is not the revolution’s “New Man”, but a new conception of space for the person who already exists.

(...)  
Individuality is attained only within community. Without community, there is only isolation.

(...)  
Intervention? For a good reason it is a duty, not a right. We are travellers today, strangers away from home, from any place of origin. Home is today a concept of movement, and origin is only in the mind.

(...)”
= Dąbrowa Gornicza PL - DG Reality Check

fieldstudies = Charleroi BE - urban tools in service of new identity

= Beirut LEB - Porous Matters
Dabrowa Gornicza is a medium sized town located on eastern edge of Silesia Superior.

Today the city is trying to survive drastic economic fluctuations by evaluating its industrial heritage and recalling its hidden potentials.
Concept idea of our intervention is based on focusing interest of tourists and inhabitants on historic, 19th C unique spirit of special places within the region, and bringing their attention to various possibilities of spending time in leisure areas offered within borders of the city.
Destroyed urban tissue, neglected and imperceptible ecological morphology of environment, scarce space in public capacity - these are but few factors exerting negative impact on standard of living in this southern post-industrial town.

As a disappointing result - rarely anyone finds their own city attractive. A clearly noticeable lack of strong and positive link between inhabitants and their town makes it impossible for them to call this place their dream home.
Leading emphasis was put on development of public space net, providing inhabitants with sense of security - moreover, inspiring them to participate in city reconstruction as a functional and friendly social organism.
Within the process of reinventing eco-connections, we face infinite, waste areas of unused space. New proposed connections should result in a clear communication pattern, supporting and facilitating redevelopment of city’s green spaces.
In other words we concentrated on revitalization of post-industrial quarters by re-defining their functions, preservation at their architectural heritage.
Introduction of this new connection would facilitate access to leisure areas concentrated in Dabrowa Gornicza, especially for inhabitants living in the old part of the town, and visitors coming from surrounding towns of the conurbation.
Another worth mentioning designed area, intending to stimulate social interaction and providing space for sustaining cultural heritage of the region is urban agora. Function of a meeting place reflects the origin of urban agora. Although nowadays, it certainly would not serve as an ancient agora for philosophical disputes, it may surely provide educational and cultural promotion of Silesian heritage.
Charleroi inherits at the same time very prestigious and very heavy past. Its glorious times are combined with present by a lack of urban project during the decades of exodus and urban decline - and all of that combined together with the reorganizations of heavy industry and massive unemployment.
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The proposition of present research is to re-invent the idea of tourism which could serve to restructure the neglected tissue and - in effect - to bring back the life and the optimism to the city.
By the end of 19th C, with the spread of industrial revolution and the radical change of priorities, the fortifications were destroyed, leaving huge plot of land to urbanise: perfect for new living districts for coal-mine workers - the people who made the industrial success of Charleroi.
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The city continued to grow until the 2nd World War, and even after - the coal and metallurgical industry prospered very well, encouraging the local powers to propose the strategy of development for the area, which leaned on big plans for road network.
The problems of the city showed first by the end of ’60: deposit of coal started to worn out, the metallurgical industry moved overseas, and finally the growing (due to the amalgamation of 15 communes) complex territory became more and more complicated to manage.
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As the effect of lack of a well defined strategy of development till the end of ‘90, nowadays, Charleroi presents highly decomposed urban structure which has impact on its society.

Its inhabitants are embarrassed by the presence of still functioning metallurgical industries, heavy road network and abandoned plots in the very city center.
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Spaced-out urban tissue, decentralization (the effect of amalgamation of communes), urban sprawl and excessive road network are main spatial problems of Charleroi.
which part of this industrial inheritance must be preserved?
- which part of this industrial inheritance must be preserved?

- which must be given away to Charleroi of the future?
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- which must be given away to Charleroi of the future?

Perhaps, seen from the other perspective, it could once more make the glory of the city?
SIMPLE URBAN APPLICATIONS
SIMPLE URBAN APPLICATIONS

the point

the line

the landmark

the path
SIMPLE URBAN APPLICATIONS

the point

the line

the landmark

the path
SIMPLE URBAN APPLICATIONS

the point

the line

the landmark

the path

The essential needs of the tourist are points of interest, points of orientations and connections between them
SIMPLE URBAN APPLICATIONS
SIMPLE URBAN APPLICATIONS

the colour
SIMPLE URBAN APPLICATIONS

the colour

the symbol
SIMPLE URBAN APPLICATIONS

the colour  the symbol  the logo
SIMPLE URBAN APPLICATIONS

the colour

the symbol

the logo
Definition of elementary visual and formal guideline gives opportunity to find lost (or new) identity, and that’s the aim of touristic places.
Re-invent the city’s space thanks to clear, not very sophisticated tools which are based on existing heritage means to bring back its character - or to give it the new meaning.
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Beirut as a substantially affected urban system is facing real social and political challenges of the 21th C. As a zone of mutual and conflicting interests this city is constantly exposed to rapid demographic changes.

In our filed research we concentrated on possible tools for developing and guiding complex and frequently contradictory cultural and recreational needs.
Sets of microcommunities existing in today’s Greater Beirut can evolve and not alert its diversity, which serves as an effective tool in preserving environmental, physical and social values of given area.

Amongst all of the answers to their needs was a call for preserving autonomy build up with such an effort during years of war and instability.
All of communities represent exciting cultural heritage and are opened for culture oriented visitors and adventure hunters.

While working together with representatives of Bourj Hammoud district we managed to conclude our basic idea of new way mapping their historical and cultural heritage and sketch projective analysis of areas potentials.
Design task was aiming for alternative method of mapping districts historical heritage, rising up inhabitant’s cultural awareness and making area more attractive for visitors.

Higher level of visitors oriented suitability would be possible to be raised by non standard tool such as structural urban interventions, tracing Beirut’s recent history of transformation of “an agrarian republic” into “extended city - state - a metropolis with its hinterland” - as Albert Hourani described it in his writings.

**MIGRATION:**

Continuous change in demographic profile, degree of movement intensity:

- Armenians: 70%
- Muslims: 20%
- Other nations: 10% (Syria, Philippines, Ethiopia, Somalia, Iraq, Sri Lanka)
**MIGRATION:**

Continuous change in demographic profile, degree of movement intensity:

- **stable**: 70% (internal migration, trends for suburbanisation)
- **mobile**: 30% (transnational migration, migrant workers)
1930-1970 massive migration from Armenian refugee camps

1965-present Lebanese Shia migration

parameters
migrants movement interpretation
superimposition of two gradient maps
event points - intersections of the surfaces representing inhabitants migration
SCENARIO + ACTION FRAMEWORK = phasing

behavioral pattern + toolbox = test run 01
migration pattern + urban prototypes = representation
A metaphorical term which describes Beirut’s status quite well would be ‘the order’ or ‘the process of undermining of the order’.

Order, set of stable relations can be undermined by porosity. Ensemble of elements breaks up from more independent, highly organized systems.
Block Monachi 01
18 shops
- 6 fashion, 2 spices, 3 mobile
- 1 pharmacy, 2 jewelry
- 3 launderer, 1 grocery store
7 workshops
- 2 shoemakers, 1 leather worker, 1 sculptor
- 1 jeweler, 2 makers
60 apartments
- around 200 residents, mostly Armenians

Block Adams 02
7 shops
- 1 vegetable store
- 1 restaurant, 1 furniture
- 1 butchery, 3 grocery store
3 workshops
- 3 hairdresser, 1 IT service
80 apartments
- around 400 residents, mostly Armenians

Block Gio 03
11 shops
- 1 car parts, 2 toys, 2 books
- 1 restaurant, 1 furniture
- 2 fashion, 2 grocery store
6 workshops
- 1 hairdresser, 3 car service, 1 bicycle
- 1 cooper
70 apartments
- around 450 residents, different nationalities

Data collection from ETH Studio Basel Contemporary City
toolbox
existing types and configurations

types translation
synthesis of multiple forms and connecting tissues
condition between the space and void is reactive elements response to the environmental data input

singular modules merge and build-up clusters
condition between the space and void is reactive in a way that they would interpenetrate one another

one solid would push in, and this would cause a reaction in the other solid of pushing out... or interpenetration
intensive infrastructure
soft responsive tissue
inhabitable cells for
movable part of
district

tissue

network
district's body
societal communities
response edge
condition