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Neyran Turan

AGAINST GROSS

When asked about the relationship between architecture and design in 1991, Oswald Mathias Ungers wrote: "I see myself as an architect as opposed to a designer. Design is about fashion and styling, whereas architecture is about construction, concepts, and space. Design has an excessive influence on architecture today. Packaging and consumption are replacing the real and the conceptual. What we are left with is *ersatz-architecture*."[i] And, in 2004, a similar lament would repeat when Ungers commented on architecture's social engagement at an interview: "Social problems cannot be resolved by architecture. Indeed you can only solve architectural problems."[ii]

Were these expressions indicative of a firm conservatism against architecture's lucrative relationships with other disciplines or a nostalgic pessimism for architecture's impotence in the world? The answer would be none of the above. What lied behind these statements was a life-long research and speculation on architecture's collective capacity to engage with the *world* (city, urbanism, environment) as well as with its own *core* (history, autonomy) without resorting into naïve postulations at either extreme. This led Ungers to be dissatisfied with contained architectural dogmas of his time, all of which, in his view, were lost either within facts (world) or within the hermetic nature of the architectural discipline (core). He was ambitiously looking for a project of *both-and-neither.*

Perhaps nothing can represent this dilemma better than Ungers's tenure in the United States while he was teaching at the Cornell University during 1970s as the chair of the Department of Architecture (1969-1975).[iii] During this time, not resorting to any particular discourse of its time would actually come with its consequences for Ungers. In an open letter published in 1979, Team X's Aldo van Ecyk would criticize Ungers ruthlessly and blame him and others—such as Aldo Rossi, Leon Krier, Robert Venturi, Stanley Tigerman and Peter Eisenman—for "tying history into knot,...bending over backwards...[and]...twist architecture into something which it simply is not," and in the end, "cheating" with architecture's autonomy and history altogether.[iv] These words were written, of course, at the midst of and against to a rising postmodernist style in architecture and Ungers's new direction with neorationalist and typological tendencies were quite controversial and disconcerting for the core of Team X thinking. Yet, Ungers's alliance with postmodernism was equally uneasy—if not baffling—as his earlier association with the Team X group. For instance, at the infamous Charlottesville Tapes Conference in Virginia of 1982, Ungers would get strong criticisms from Philip Johnson, Leon Krier, Peter Eisenman and others for his recent MesseTorhau project in Frankfurt, of being extremely tedious, out of scale and compromising. During the discussion right after Ungers's presentation of this project at the Charlottesville meeting, Krier would describe Unger's situation as being in a "total despair doing big business."[v]

Despite these anxious misalignments, one thing that remained constant throughout was Ungers's strong speculative project for architecture's role in the contemporary city. While various interpretations of his built work by others got stuck in the postmodernist readings of the representation of the fragment or the unfinished object, the very idea that haunted Ungers's entire career was left out: his little known articulation of *Grossform*. The framework of his investigation was informed by, yet was fundamentally different from, his two direct encounters, against which Ungers would develop his architectural urbanism. First was his former encounter with Team X in Europe during 1950s and 1960s and the group's emphasis on context (especially Smithsons' "reality-as-found"), user ("human association") and flexibility as well as their interest in structuralist and quasi-biological metaphors of growth and morphology. It was through encounters with the Team X group members along with the postwar building explosion in Europe that would initiate Ungers's interest in the contemporary city. Second encounter was with Colin Rowe and his nostalgic contextualism at the Cornell University in the United States. Rowe's focus on juxtaposition and symbiosis in relation to urban form enabled Ungers to develop a counter-project for the role of architectural form in urbanism.

These two encounters not only offered Ungers an important framework for the articulation of *Grossform*, they also formed by the basis of a speculative project for an *agonistic architectural urbanism*. In parallel, one can speculate on three ideas that were central to *Grossform*. First was the idea of *variety-in-unity*, i.e., the possibility to accommodate diversity in a project while still embodying a coherent framework. Framed around the idea of *coincidentiaoppositorum* (coincidence of antitheses and not their overcoming), Ungers's project flourished during 1970s with an ambitious typological and morphological investigation on developing a language of variety in unity.[vi]Regarding the this idea, Ungers wrote:

A new dimension of thought and perception is opened up if the world is experienced in all its contradictions, that all its multiplicity and variety, if it is not forced into the concept of homogeneity that shapes everything to itself. Only collectivized thought can aspire to unity, the free, individual spirit seeks contradictions, antitheses, heterogeneity….The theme of assemblage should not be confused either with arbitrary decomposition or with the casual products of a pluralistic conception based on laissez-faire. It is also in opposition to the present-day tendency towards a faithful and literal restoration of the past. Instead it is a question of making an attempt, in the sense of a humanistic concept to comprehend thought and action as a morphological whole made up of many different relations, and to give all intellectual potentialities a place, to unfold.[vii]

While Ungers's*Grossform*would transform into *Bigness* by his former Cornell student Rem Koolhaas during 1990s, the first part of the phrase "Gross-" (read: big) would be strongly preferred over "-form" by Koolhaas and strategically replaced by content: big scale and the multiplicity of program. Here, via Koolhaas, Ungers's project was taken to another level by developing a *language for content*.

Ungers's initial articulation for the idea of *Grossform* was via his 1967 essay titled, "GrossformenimWohnungsbau."[viii] In this article, Ungers emphasized the main attributes of the *Grossform* idea, which were further developed through his tenure in the US. *Grossform*literally translates as "big form" from German; yet in this article, Ungers went on to articulate that it was not so much the scale but rather the level of coherence achieved

within multiplicity that makes the *Grossform* relevant for discussion. The "bigness" of Ungers's*Grossform*, then, was not so much about the large scale of forms, but was a totality achieved given capacity to contain diversity in a project. This point is important and would keep alive with him throughout. For instance, when discussing the gradual morphological attributes of the circle-wall proposed for his Morsbroich Museum project in Leverkusen (1975), Ungers wrote:

The conception of architecture is neither unitary or pluralistic, neither closed or open, neither rigid nor free....It is not based on a dogmatic position or a political programme [sic], but on the aspiration for an architecture characterized by conceptual and thematic restraint. It is conceived to prevent the rigidity of total order and also the chaos of total independence. [ix]

Here, Ungers's articulation of totality with a contained multiplicity reminds Robert Venturi's "difficult whole," which aimed to create a unity through inclusion rather than the easier way through exclusion, and proposed complexity and contrast as opposed to the easy totality of the abstract box. Resorting to neither a "false complexity" (chaos, cacophony, incoherent arbitrariness) nor a "false simplicity" (boredom), Venturi would write that "architecture of complexity and contradiction has a special obligation toward the whole: its truth must be in its totality or its implications of totality."[x]One could argue, however, that nowadays it is becoming harder and harder to discern inclusion from false complexity within contemporary architecture and urbanism. In comparison to the ubiquitous obsession with complexities at all levels, the idea of *agonism* remains less scrutinized.

Before elaborating on Ungers's agonistic plurality further with a focus on his projects, one could mention briefly the group forms of Fumihiko Maki, who perhaps was one of the first architects who was aware of the problem of the "difficult whole." Maki theorized an idea of legibility in the context of large forms that were comprised of many units, presented in his 1964 mini-booklet titled *Investigations in Collective Form: Three Paradigm*.[xi] What came out of this research at the time was a taxonomy of *compositional form* (which mapped modernist composition techniques), *megaform* (by which Maki actually meant megastructure, a large frame with discrete and rapidly changing units which fit within a spine framework, for which he uses KenzoTange's Tokyo plan as example), and, finally, *group form*, a collection of units linked not necessarily though a large frame as megastructure does but through certain operational qualities that build certain "linkages" between collective forms. According to Maki's formulation, examples to these linkages would be a common medium such as open space, a limit condition that holds them together or a common feature that repeats in each unit. As Maki used the phrases of megaform and megastructure interchangeably, he was emphasizing the limitations of megastructure especially in the context of open and closed systems. He wrote: "The ideal is not a system in which structure of the city is at the mercy of unpredictable change. The ideal is a kind of master form which can move into ever states of equilibrium and yet maintain visual consistency and a sense of continuing order in the long run."[xii]

It could be argued that it is exactly this search for another level of consistency or a "difficult whole" that made the *group form* necessary in Maki's discussion. That is, replacing the literal spine or frame of megastructure with a more conceptualidea of the linkage, Maki aimed to define another form of coherence for the large form while allowing difference and plurality in its formation and use.

Here, one should note that the distinction between megaform and megastructure would actually become more evident in Kenneth Frampton's discussion some thirty years later, in his lecture-essay titled *Megaform as Urban Landscape*.[xiii] In Frampton's formulation, megaform continued to differentiate itself through its coherence and legibility, yet this time via a prominent horizontal profile and its contextual attributes of differentiation. In the context of the "space-endlessness of the megalopolis," Frampton defined megaform as a dense large-form extending horizontally rather than vertically, and a form that is not articulated into a series of structural and mechanical subsets like megastructure as found, for example, in the Centre Pompidou. While taking architecture as the concrete measure of the city, the examples used in Frampton's discussion were projects that present a search for typological specificity in form while aiming a confrontation with context. It is interesting to observe that Frampton's discussion on megaform would actually be taken as a reference for its emphasis on symbiosis and neo-contextualism (i.e., horizontal continuation of the surrounding topography) for landscape urbanism rather than its emphasis on legibility (i.e., distinction from megastructure as well as his highlight on contextual contrast).

Different from the operational categories of Maki's linkage, and the horizontality focus of Frampton, Ungers's emphasis on *Grossform* was more on the very nature of multiplicity, or on the cohabitation of opposites. Initiated with his competition entry for the GrünzugSüd project (1962-1965), Ungers's*Grossform* not only offered initial reflections regarding the idea of variety-in-unity and coherence for an architectural project, but also emphasized collection as a form of reduction rather than accumulation of an amorphous mass. The design problem of the GrünzugSüdproject was the redevelopment of a suburban district of Cologne. Ungers's proposal was almost like a linear large wall, a collection of six distinct building typologies, each presented as a thematically classified city fragment whose clues were taken by a rigorous research on the existing context and connected with a reduced language of form.[xiv]

Connected to his research on variety-in-unity, second important idea for the speculation of Ungers's*Grossform*was a very specific articulation for the idea of context, developed initially with the GrünzugSüd project. Ungers's context was a counter project to Rowe's contextualism of the figure-ground dialectic, accumulative fragmentation and collage. Unlike Rowe's *Collage City*, Ungers's*Dialectical City* was achieved through clear definition of the borders of each identity and separation without any overlap or symbiosis.[xv] More importantly, there was an inherent realism in Ungers's architectural urbanism where context was not just an indicator of mere formal relationships as it was in Rowe. What was also specific in Ungers's realism was that it was not prescriptive and full of fact-fetish. Rather than focusing on merely descriptive documentation of external systems in the city and positioning the architectural project as a consequence to that analysis, Ungers's agonistic interpretation of contextsaw the *city as a consequence of architecture*. In his essay titled "Planning Criteria," Ungers elaborated on his understanding of realism and its relationship to diversity:

The first criterion of my design is the dialectical process with a reality as found: a) The impulse of the design comes usually from a permanent confrontation with the environment as it exists as well as the acceptance of specific economic, social and historical conditions. b) The design process as a continuous experiment of knitting and fitting elements in so a complex grown and sometimes simply banal reality….[Another] criterion that I want to

demonstrate with the design is the plurality of solutions or the wide spectrum of the architectural interpretation of one and the same element...Implicit in this criterion is a catalogue of alternatives, in contrast to the usual attempts at an ideal solution. The projects are better characterized as fragments and partial solutions of a very specific area rather than ideal realizations of a platonic idea...Pseudo-ideological criteria like flexibility versus fixity or objectivity versus subjectivity, process versus object, form versus content or whatever antagonisms do exist as an ideological hang-up become relative in this 'contimuum-concept' as I call it.[xvi]

Here, what made Ungers's approach unique was the willingness to tackle with the realities of world (*context as environment*) with a strong emphasis on architecture's disciplinarity and history (*context as core*).[xvii] This allowed Ungers to freely experiment the intricacies involved within these two dimensions and build unconventional relationships between the two. If much of contemporary urbanism's intrinsic theorizations during early 1990s were for the most part a reaction to the historicity and contextualism of the earlier generation (remember: the "fuck context" motto), it would do so via bypassing Unger's understanding of context altogether and positioning the phenomenon of *context as environment* as a direct counter-project to classical interpretations of urban form and contextualism (i.e.Rowe).

Among the seminal publications that provide a helpful framework for the reemergence of *context as environment* during 1990s, or more specifically, the relentless logic of infrastructures and capital, and their relation to the city, one should mention *Zone 1/2,* the 1986 volume edited by Sanford Kwinter and Michel Feher that issubtitled *The Contemporary City*. A compilation of a wide range of essays from various architects, philosophers, and artists, the publication supported its understanding of the city as an elastic, flexible, and evolving assemblage of economic and cultural flows and material forces.[xviii] Here, a methodological update regarding the two prominent interpretations of context mentioned above would be pertinent: in *Zone 1/2*, architecture would shift from the historical context (context as core or, more specifically, "contextualism") to a biological/ecological one (context as environment).As much as being a disciplinary repositioning of urbanism, the book was a proposal for a new speculative project for architecture in the city. This methodological turn was positioned as a critique of both the intrinsic morphological attributes of classical urbanism on the one hand and extrinsic socioeconomic laws of social sciences on the other.[xix]

Abovementioned two ideas of *Grossform*—variety-in-unity and agonistic context—can be observed in Ungers's relatively unknown Landwehrkanal-Tiergarten District competition project (1973) for Berlin, which introduces the repetition of specific large-scale objects as multiple interventions on particular sites along the city canal in accordance with a new traffic plan for the underground subway system.[xx] The competition was for the development the city-band along the Landwehrkanal, which was located at the edge of the East Berlin border and in-between the Tiergarten Park on the north and the Tiergarten district, the historical housing and commercial area in the south. The area on the north was also known as the Kulturforum area, the new cultural center of West Berlin, in which Mies van der Rohe's National Gallery and Hans Schaorun's Philharmonic Concert Hall. In the project proposal of Ungers, rather than the comprehensive planning of the entire competition area, five interrelated yet distinct proposals were formulated for five different sites located in the area. (01)
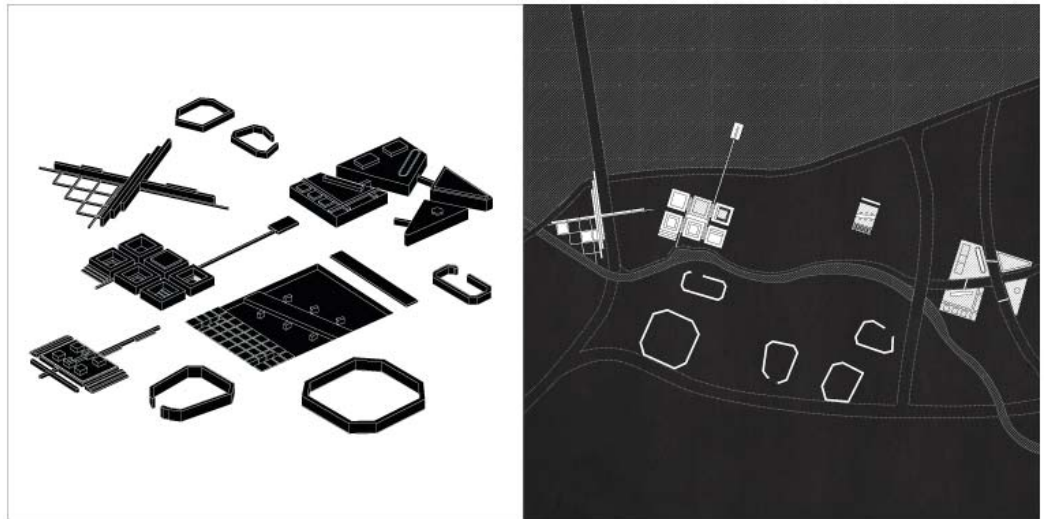
01 *GROSSFORM* IS AGONISTIC WITH A PERVERT FANTASY OF TOTALITY. IT IS ABOUT VARIETY-IN-UNITY ENABLED BY ARCHITECTURE.

Ungers' Landwehrkanal-Tiergarten project (1973). Constellation of multiple interventions (left), and the site plan of punctual interventions positioned along the Landwehrkanal (right). Drawing by the author. Image credit: Neyran Turan.

In an earlier competition project for the Kulturforum area, the Tiergarten Museums project (1965), Ungers had already emphasized the fragmented character of the surrounding landscape of Tiergarten, enabled especially with the two opposing building characters of Mies'sNationalgalerie and Sharoun'sPhilharmonie, one being pure, the other being expressionist in language. This very dialectical condition would actually frame the basis of his proposal for this earlier museum project. Proposing the model of an "urban forum of contradiction," the project was consisted of individual buildings that each had its own identity as a type in relation to their program yet the whole complex was united in the contradiction of the assembly of different events and parts.[xxi]

Going back to the separate punctual interventions of the Landwehrkanal project, first intervention of the project maintained the existing mixed use (dwelling and commercial) structure of the Tiergaten district and intensified density by proposing 8-storey ring-shaped superblocks that contained housing, department stores and hotels (same type replicated in various scales). Second intervention was a monumental cruciform-shaped complex which provided a below-ground square with subway station marking the transition between the center of West Berlin and the cultural institutions on the northern part of the competition zone while providing amenities such as a school, a kindergarten, shops and various social services. Third was composed of same-sized six perimeter blocks containing housing, offices, hotels, department stores, theatre and cinema providing a direct link to the Tiergartenpark on the north. While fourth intervention created an underground void (plaza) just across Mies's National Gallery, fifth intervention proposed a square form cut in aligned with the street network and provided sports areas, shops and offices.

While each individual intervention in the project was specific and distinct as a shaping device for its context, the territorial collection of the typological variation of the large-scale objects and their relational contradiction created a totality, or a *Grossform*, at the scale of the city-territory. Here, rather than a variation on a particular type, the nature of the typological differentiation was based on each intervention's specific context. Since these

specific interventions had a very simple and generic formal grammar, the unity among these interventions was achieved via reduction and abstraction within the formal language of the project as a whole. Similar ideas of abstract morphological variation could be observed in many other Ungers projects.(02)
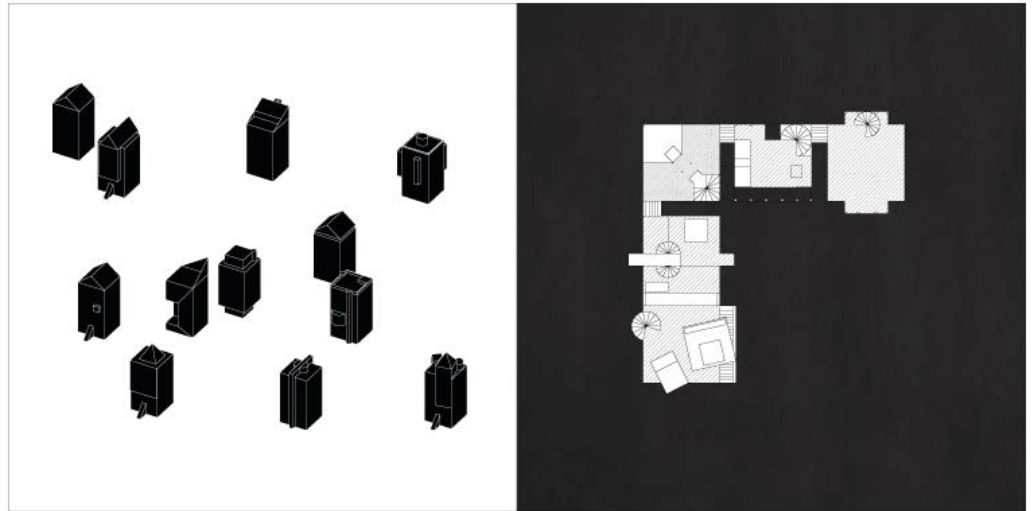
02 *GROSSFORM*'S AGONISM CAN BE SUBTLE (FORUM OF SERIES)OR DRASTIC (FORUM OF CONTRADICTION). *GROSS*-IS ABOUT FORMAL COHERENCE BETWEEN PARTS, NOT ABOUT SCALE.

Subtle differentiation in Ungers' group houses project at Marburg.Variations on a type (left) and their position in plan (right). Drawing by the author.Image credit: Neyran Turan.

And finally, the third formulation of *Grossform* would be the taxonomy of *scaleless model-forms*, which Ungers named as 'world as idea'. Since a small house, a housing block or an entire city could be a *Grossform*, as it was articulated in his 'GrossformenimWohnungsbau' essay,[xxii]Ungers's investigations on *Grossform*were not about large scale but rather speculations on a *scaleless*conceptualization about architecture.
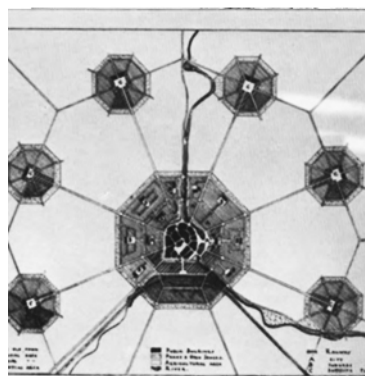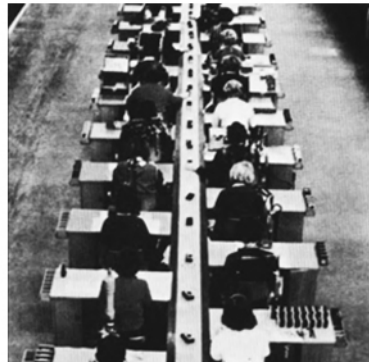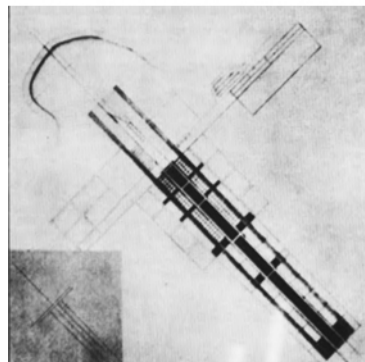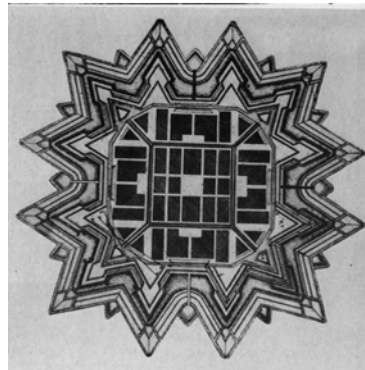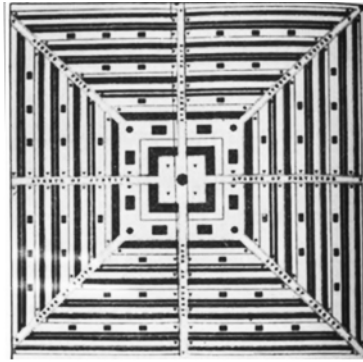
03 Selection of spreads from Ungers's book *City Metaphors*.
Image credit: © UngersArchivfürArchitekturwissenschaft UAA

This formulation was further developed into the idea of 'city metaphors' by Ungers.[xxiii]
Compiled as a book titled *Morphologie = City Metaphors*, this work was initially exhibited at
the "MANtransFORMs Exhibition" at the Cooper-Hewitt Museum of Design in New York in
1976. The exhibition and the book was a series of analogical juxtapositions that each portray
a city plan coupled with an image from an entirely different context. (03) Here, Ungers's
metaphors should not be confused with willful accumulation of images, as his project was

one of reduction not accumulation. Similar to the initial theorization of *Grossform* as a form of coherence among parts of a project, with the city metaphors formulation, Ungers expanded this agenda to a much broader framework, into a general methodology of conceptual and speculative thinking and design. In the accompanying text of his exhibition, Ungers wrote:

What all that means—thinking and designing in images, metaphors, models, analogies, symbols and allegories—is nothing more than a transition from purely pragmatic approaches to a more creative mode of thinking. It means a process of thinking in qualitative values rather than quantitative data, a process that is based on synthesis rather than analysis...Therefore, the cities as they are shown in the exhibition are not analyzed according to function and other measurable criteria but they are interpreted on a conceptual level demonstrating ideas, images, metaphors and analogies...There are three levels of reality exposed: the factual reality—the object; the perceptual reality—the analogy; and the conceptual reality the idea, shown as the plan—the image—the word.[xxiv]

Ungers's city metaphors would be best exemplified with his "doll-within-the doll" formulation, for instance, a *scaleless model-form* articulated at a territorial scale with the Berlin Green Archipelago Project (city-within-a city), at a building scale with the Hotel Berlin Project (building-within-a building), and at a house scale with the Solarhaus at Landstuhl (house-within-a-house). What would be important to note here is that with the "doll-within-the-doll" idea, the repetitive nature of variety was achieved again via the confrontation of opposites yet this time by keeping the perimeter limit intact and achieving an inward interaction. While stable (yet different) urban islands were spaced within an instable territorial void at the Green Archipelago Project, in the Hotel Berlin project, the *flexible boundary* between the circle and the rectilinear frame created space for various typological and programmatic juxtapositions (urban perimeter block, glass-house reception hall, access towers and inner rotunda). (04)
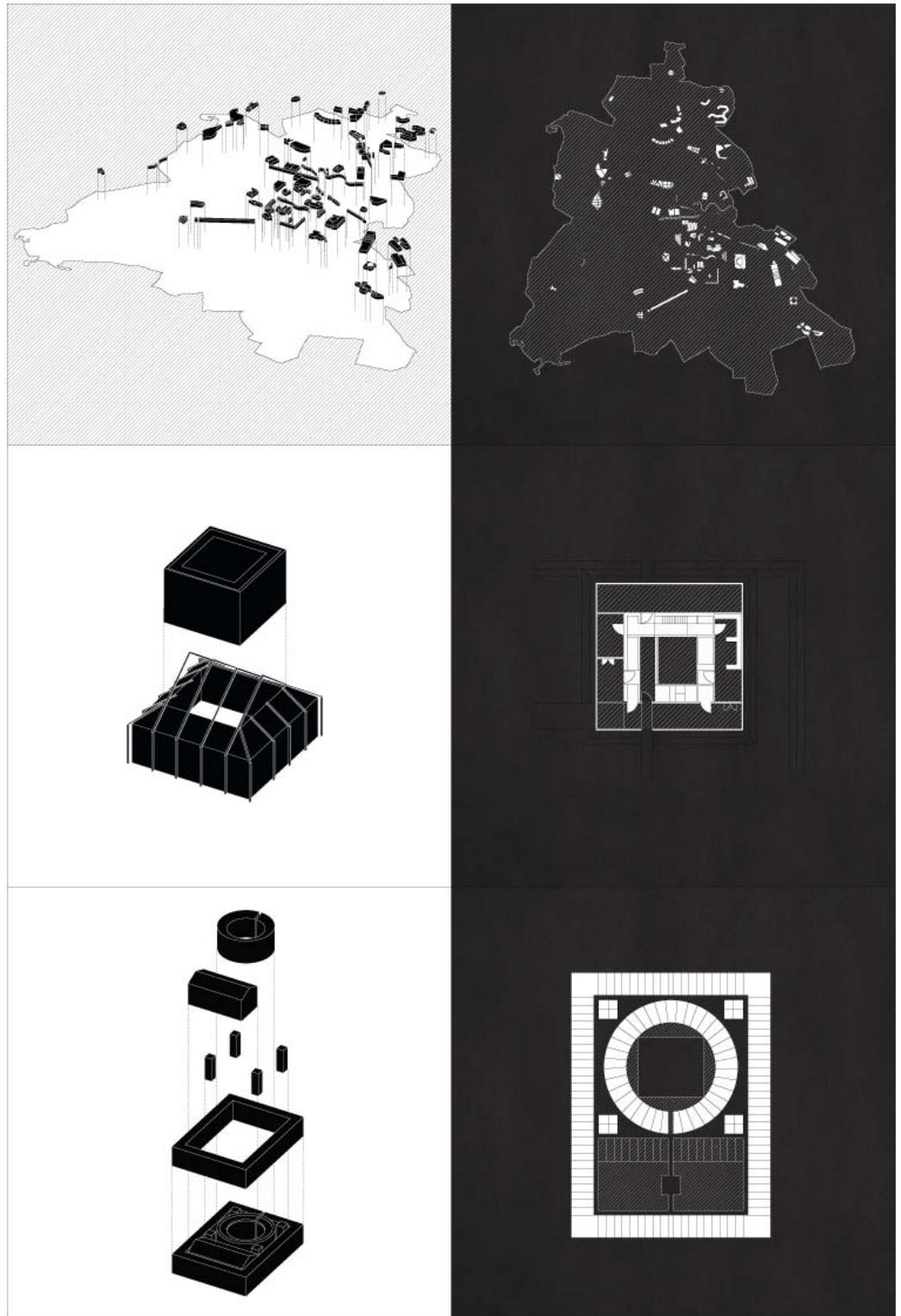
04 *GROSSFORM* IS A FORM OF COHERENCE ACHIEVED THROUGH A SCALES-LESS MODEL-FORM.

Three Ungers projects with the same scale-less model of the "doll-within-a-doll."Berlin Green Archipelago Project (city-within-a city), Hotel Berlin (building-within-a building), Solarhaus at Landstuhl (house-within-a-house). Drawing by the author.Image credit: Neyran Turan.

These ideas were taken to a further level with Ungers's Roosevelt Island (Welfare Island) competition project (1975). In this project, the *scaless model-form* is Manhattan itself and the replication of an original and its morphological repetition were emphasized by the multiple variety of four existing typologies of Manhattan (street, avenue, block, and park) placed on a miniature Manhattan grid on the project site. A variety of housing blocks—each with their own identity yet ordered to create a whole—are differentiated according to characteristics of size, typology (terrace or pergola), function (garden or penthouse), site orientation (facing

water, park or mall), and shape ("T" versus "U"). (05) For this project, Ungers writes: "The theme of reproduction should not be interpreted as a cheap trick aimed at giving the project a touch of wit. It is a serious attempt to translate the concept of an image and its replica architecturally, exploiting the idea of reproducibility as a possibility for a creative design. The project for the Welfare Island is an attempt to develop, through a new interpretation of the image, to a new expression that is not to be found in the original."[xxv]
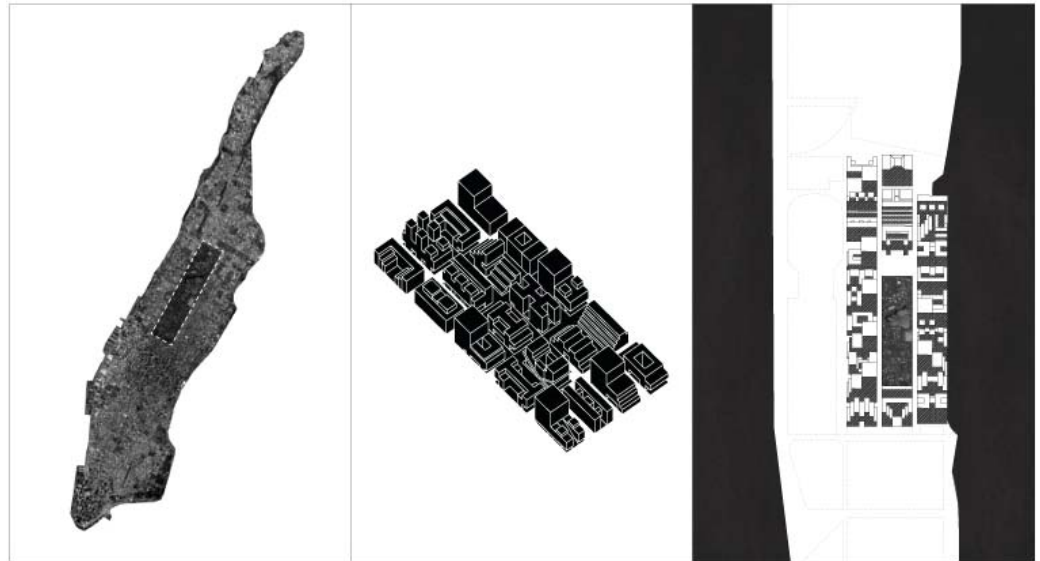
05 WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE SCALE-LESS MODEL-FORMIS MANHATTAN? Ungers'sRoosevelt Island competition project (1975). Drawing by the author. Image credit: Neyran Turan.

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Why bring up this recent history on Ungersand why would that be relevant today? During the last two decades, architecture's engagement with the world has mostly been speculated as a scale or content problem. Take social participation, infrastructural urbanism, or sustainability, in all of which architecture's role is reduced to either problem solving or ethical criteria. In parallel, architectural engagement is equated with a social, or a neo-environmentalist do-goodism. While social participation marks a fascination with the informality of bottom-up organizations, for instance, infrastructural managerialism serves as an alibi for solving systemic problems. Triggered by global urbanization, environmental problems, and an emerging participatory culture of social networks and Web 2.0, these practices utilize "design research" techniques—mapping emergent urban phenomena with analytic tendencies—and focus on scenario thinking, programming, and indeterminacy.

Once historicized within the immediate past, the contemporary dilemma described above becomes nothing more than the newest version of an ever evolving disciplinary problem for architecture: the dialectic between architecture's singularity (disciplinarity) versus its total immersion within external forces (interdisciplinarity), or between *context as core* versus *context as environment*. The former focuses on autonomy and favors disciplinary history and form, while the latter speculates on heteronomy and favors interdisciplinary engagement and program. The dilemma described abovenot only makes evident these dualities of context apparent again but more importantly their respective limitations. Within that framework, architecture's relationship to urbanism plays a vital role.

While abovementioned contemporary tendencies of engagement have been natural extensions of recent discussions on the interdisciplinarity of architecture—which could be formulated as a contemporary version of the *context as environment* discourse—it was an idea that was timely and needed especially after the early 1990s. With their emphasis on content (program, scale, or system), these discourses have necessitated more and more articulation of content's multiplicity if they were to relate to the world over time; and, architecture's specific role within all this remained rather unclear. Although these approaches have both provided necessary interdisciplinary conversations between architecture and other inquiries; in parallel, however, at a much deeper level, political and formal significance of that very same empowerment has been less speculated. Accordingly, the question of disciplinarity for architecture has by and large been limited to self-referential attributes of exclusive singularity (fantastic icon). At the midst of expansionist tendencies of multiplicity and inclusion on the one hand, and self-referential attributes of singularity on the other, Ungers's unfinished project haunts our generation.

Ungers's project is daunting after an era on polemical yet ubiquitous large scales and contents: sexy complexities, wild urbanisms, programmatic diagram architectures, continuous surfaces, and other multiplicities.

Ungers's dissatisfaction with his contemporaries has a paradoxical resonance for our generation. Rather than an overemphasis on architectural core (history, autonomy, form) or the world (environment, engagement, content), what we see in Ungers is a constant search for an architectural project that offers a third way between the two. For him, this third way had to be open to accommodate the heteronomy of life fully, but only through a rigorous and speculative project for architecture. A renewed agonistic project for contemporary architectural urbanism can only benefit from Ungers's project as well as its many struggles and contradictions. In this third way, *New Autonomies*[N/A] would be experimented where the term would not register so much to a referral of an older definition (autonomy as retreat, as opposed to engagement) but instigate a yet-to-be-elaborated definition of disciplinarity for contemporary architecture, where engagement is neither perceived as a compromise nor as a celebrative immersion but understood as a specific and valuable content to relate to the world.

N/A awaits further speculation. N/As would not be scared of new questions regarding aesthetics, form and language while being still being extremelyrigorous in interdisciplinary dialogue. N/As would be ready for radical risks and productive failures. They would strive for radical anomalies between aesthetics and engagement.

Enough about reductive seductions. The time may have already arrived for anomalies of seductive reductions.

Neyran Turan is an architect, and currently an Assistant Professor at Rice University School of Architecture. She is the founding editor of the Harvard University Graduate School of Design (GSD) journal *New Geographies*, which focuses on contemporary issues of urbanism and architecture, and is the editor-in-chief of the first two volumes of the journal: *New Geographies* 0 (2008), *New Geographies: After Zero* (2009). Turan is also a co-founder of NEMEstudio, a research and design collaborative based in Houston. She has received her doctoral degree from Harvard GSD, holds a masters degree from Yale University School of Architecture, and a Bachelor of Architecture degree from Istanbul Technical University. Turan's work draws on the relationship between engagement and aesthetics to highlight their interaction for new trajectories and disciplinary alignments within architecture and urbanism. Turan's recent and upcoming publications include articles and book chapters in *20/20: Editorial Takes on Architectural Discourse* (AA Publications, 2011), *Megacities* (Springer-Verlag, 2010), *ACSA: Flip Your Field* (Chicago, 2010), *ACSA: Where Do You Stand* (Montreal, 2010), *Cycles* (ACTAR, 2012, forthcoming), and *Architecture and Geography* (Routledge, 2012, forthcoming). Turan has also acted as the assistant editor for the book, *Joseph LluisSert: The Architect of Urban Design* (with Hashim Sarkis and Eric Mumford, Yale University Press, 2008).

i "O. M. Ungers," *Daidalos*40 (June 1991): 74.

ii Rem Koolhaas and Hans-Ulrich Obrist, "An Interview with O. M. Ungers," *Log* 16 (2009): 83.

iii Before moving to United States, Ungers taught at the Technical University of Berlin (1963-1969) where he also acted as the Dean of the Faculty of Architecture between 1965 and 1967. For a brief documentation of Ungers's teaching and pedagogy in Berlin, see the two issues of the ARCH+ magazine dedicated to Ungers: *ARCH+* 179: *Oswald Mathias Ungers. Berliner Vorlesungen 1964/65* (2006)and *ARCH+* 181/182: *Lernen von O. M. Ungers* (2006). Also, for a close analysis and interpretation of some of Ungers'ss early projects in Berlin, see Pier Vittorio Aureli, *The Possibility of an Absolute Architecture* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2011): 177-227.

iv Aldo van Ecyk "A Message to Ungers from a Different World," *SpazioSocieta* 8 (1979): 63-64. Ungers was invited to the Team X-Berlin meeting in 1965, and following that, he was an active participant in the meetings and discussions. As the chair of the Cornell Architecture Department, he organized a Team X studio at Cornell in 1971-72 and invited most of the group's participants to lecture and supervise studio work. Max Risselada and Dirk van den Heuvel (eds.), *Team 10 1953-1981: In Searchof a Utopia of the Present* (Rotterdam, 2005), 180.

v Ungers's response to L. Krier in the same discussion would be equally harsh: "Why should we not get involved in doing a building that has 45-square-meter rooms to show products? Should I say, 'No, I am artist, I don't want to get my fingers dirty?' I spent ten years theorizing, and many people profited from that work. You know it perfectly well. You came as a little boy to my office and you profited too. You admitted it. But you know what? I decided to go back to practice, get my fingers dirty, and work with those big developers. And I wish you would do the same. Then we can talk again. But on this level we can't." *The Charlottesville Tapes: Transcript of the Conference at the University of Virginia School of Architecture,* November 12-13, *1982* (Rizzoli Publications, 1985), p.73

vi For Ungers's urban theory of opposites, see O. M. Ungers, *Dialectical City* (Skira, 1999). For most extensive English writings on Ungers, see Andres Lepik, ed. *Cosmos of Architecture* (HatjeCantz, 2006), and more recently, P. Vittorio Aureli, *The Possibility of an Absolute Architecture*, op. cit.

vii Oswald Mathias Ungers, *Architettura come Tema = Architecture as Theme* (Milano: Rizzoli, Electa, 1982), p.35.

viii O. Mathias Ungers, "GrossformenimWohnungsbau," *Aujourd'hui: Art et Architectures* #57-58 (October 1967): 108-113.Former to that, the essay was initially published as #5 of *VeröffentlichungenzurArchitektur*(Berlin: TU Berlin) in December of 1966. Ungers initially delivered this text as a lecture in 1966 in Moscow during his field trip with TU Berlin students to the Moscow Architectural Institute. During this trip, Ungers and the students all met Ivan SergeevichNikolaev, one of the most influential constructivist Soviet architects of 1920s, who was the director of the Institute at the time.

ix *Ibid*, 19.

x Robert Venturi, *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture* (Museum of Modern Art, 1966), p. 16, 54.

xi Fumihiko Maki, *Investigations in Collective Form* (St. Louis: Washington University Publication, 1964). ReynerBanham would rely on Maki's very definitions in this booklet in his introduction to his book on megastructure: ReynerBanham, *Megastructure: Urban Futures of the Recent Past* (Thames& Hudson, 1976). Maki exhibited a creative dialogue between his Japanese Metabolist sensibilities of flexibility and growth on the one hand and the legibility emphasis of the New Monumentality discussions of his teacher JosepLluisSert at the Harvard University Graduate School of Design during 1950s.

xii Maki, *Investigations in Collective Form,* p. 11. Defining urban design as the establishing of "comprehensible links between things" and thus "making an extremely large entity comprehensible by articulating its parts," five operational categories of linkage were listed by Maki: to mediate, to define, to repeat, to make functional path and to select which could be physical or implied. Ibid.,p. 29.

xiii Kenneth Frampton, *Megaform as Urban Landscape* (Ann Arbor: College of University of Michigan, 1999). Also see, K. Frampton, "Toward an Urban Landscape," in *D: Columbia Documents of Architecture and Theory* 4 (1995): 83-94.

xiv For more on the GrünzugSüd project, see Oswald Mathias Ungers, "ErlaeretungenzumProjektGrünzugSüd in Köln," in O. M. Ungers, ed. *Team-X Treffen: 1965, Berlin* (Berlin: Technical University of Berlin, 1966), pp.20-28. Also see Dirk van den Heuvel, "GrünzugSüd Competition, Cologne Zollstock 1962-1965," in Dirk van den Heuvel and Max Risselada, eds., *Team 10, 1953-81: In Search of a Utopia of the Present* (Rotterdam: NAi Publishers, 2005), pp. 154-155.

xv For an illustration of Rowe's contextualism see, William Ellis, "Type and Context in Urbanism: Colin Rowe's Contextualism," *Oppositions* 18 (Fall 1979): 3-27. For a brief history of contextualism, see Sandy Isenstadt, "Contested Contexts," in *Site Matters: Design Concepts, Histories, and Strategies*, ed. by C. Burns and A. Kahn (Routledge, 2005), pp. 157-185. Also see Colin Rowe and Fred Krotter, *Collage City* (Cambridge, MIT Press, 1983), and Ungers, *Dialectical City*, op. cit.

xvi Mathias Ungers, "Planning Criteria," *Lotus* 11 (1976): 13.

xvii These two interpretations of context are briefly discussed in: Dirk van den Heuvel, "Another Sensibility: The Discovery of Context," in *OASE* 76 (2008): 21-46. As van den Heuvel argues, it is hard to unify various interpretations of context under one umbrella other than as a postmodern critique of modernist architecture and urban planning. Still, one could perhaps see Colin Rowe and Christopher Alexander as roughly portraying the two ends of the spectrum (historical/core vs. positivist/environmental context). For a brief reading of the disciplinary conceptualization of these two figures as harbingers of the paradigm vs. program (a priori ideals vs. empirical facts) dialectic in architecture, see R. E. Somol, "Dummy Text or Diagrammatic Basis of Architecture," *Risco*5 (2007). Albeit calling attention to this dichotomy himself and noting the need to go beyond the dialectic in an essay written in 1982, Rowe would still support the paradigm (a priori ideal/type). See, Colin Rowe, "Program vs. Paradigm: Otherwise Casual Notes on the Pragmatic, the Typical, and the Possible," *The Cornell Journal of Architecture* 3 (1982/83).

xviii Michel Feher and Sanford Kwinter, eds., *Zone 1/2: The Contemporary City* (Zone Books: New York/MIT Press: Cambridge, 1986). In the context of architectural and urban discourse, initial elaboration of these discussions could be observed, for instance, in: Lars Lerup, *After the City* (MIT Press, 2000);

Albert Pope, *Ladders* (New York Princeton Architectural Press, 1996); Keller Easterling, *Organization Space: Landscapes, Highways and Houses in America* (MIT Press, 1999); Alex Wall, "Programming the Urban Surface," in *Recovering Landscape*, ed. by James Corner (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1999), pp. 233-249.

xix This was hinted in the introduction of *Zone · by the editors: "To draw a carp, Chinese masters warn, it is not enough to know the animal's morphology, study its anatomy or understand the physiological functions vital to its existence. They tell us that it is also necessary to consider the reed against which the carp brushes each morning while seeking its nourishment, the onlong stone behind which it conceals itself, or the rippling of water when it springs toward the surface. These elements should in no way be treated as the fish's environment, the milieu in which it evolves or the natural background against which it can be drawn. They belong to the carp itself...The following texts may be seen as an attempt to draw a picture of the city faithful to the precepts of the Chinese masters. This method differs greatly from the contributions of classical urbanism whose richest achievements remain circumscribed by their morphological or at best, physiological approach. It differs also from most attempts in sociology and political economy to conceive of the city as a site shaped by exterior forces, as a particular configuration of more general laws...While classical urbanism is devoted to the intrinsic analysis of a distinct object..., the social sciences perceive the city and its evolution as the product of extrinsic socio-economic laws...[T]he group of works assembled here seeks rather to let the "city" emerge...Its task is different: to delineate and, as far as possible, to define a political *regime* of the city. [italics in original] Feher and Kwinter, *Zone 1/2, pp. 10-11*.

xx For further project details see, "Tiergartenviertel Project, Berlin, 1973," in *Lotus* 11 (1976): 21-27. Also see "Oswald Mathias Ungers," in *DortmunderArkitekturhefte No.3* (Dortmund: Herausgeber und Autore, 1976).

xxi For Tuergarten Museums project, Ungers wrote: "The theme of the project, fragmentation, fits with the surrounding landscape of the Tiergarten, which includes buildings of different architectural character: Mies van der Rohe'sNationalgalerie and Scharoun'sPhilharmonie stand against one another in a dialectical relationship, as thesis and antithesis...This contradiction between ceremonial and simple architecture, between different conceptions and historical epochs, between the complete and the fragmentary, gives rise to an architectural variety that at the same time is an expression of the quality of urbanity. While the situation of a village is a homogenous one, the life of the urban place derives from its wealth of discontinuity, of contradictions. The ideal model of an urban center is the forum, just as Schinkel used in his plan for the Acropolis, and it also forms the basis of the idea of the Museumsinsel [Museum Island] in Berlin. The project for the museums in Tiergarten is an attempt to give formal expression to a spiritual and cultural forum." Ungers, *Architecture as Theme*, op. cit., p.57. Ungers'ss Court of Justice in Berlin project (1978) comprises another such investigation. For Ungers's discussion on this the theme of contradiction in relation to the Tiergarten Museums and the Court of Justice projects see, Ungers. "A Humanist City – Berlin," *Design of the Cumulative City: Recent Traditions and Current Positions in Urban Design Theory - The Preston Thomas Memorial Lecture Series 1978* (Cornell University Publication, 1999): pp. 85-96.

xxiiUngers, "GrossformenimWohnungsbau," op. cit, (note 8), p.5.

xxiii O. M. Ungers, *Morphologie = City Metaphors* (Köln: W. König, 1982). In the book, Ungers juxtaposes 100 various city maps throughout history with 100 non-thematic images, each image having a visual and metaphorical relationship to the map. Ungers assigns each coupling a title, a single descriptive word printed in both English and Germap.n.

xxiv"Designing and Thinking in Images, Metaphors and Analogies,"*MANtransFORMs Exhibition Catalog* (New York: Smithsons Institute Cooper-Hewitt Museum of Design, 1976), p.104.

xxv*Ibid*, 115.

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