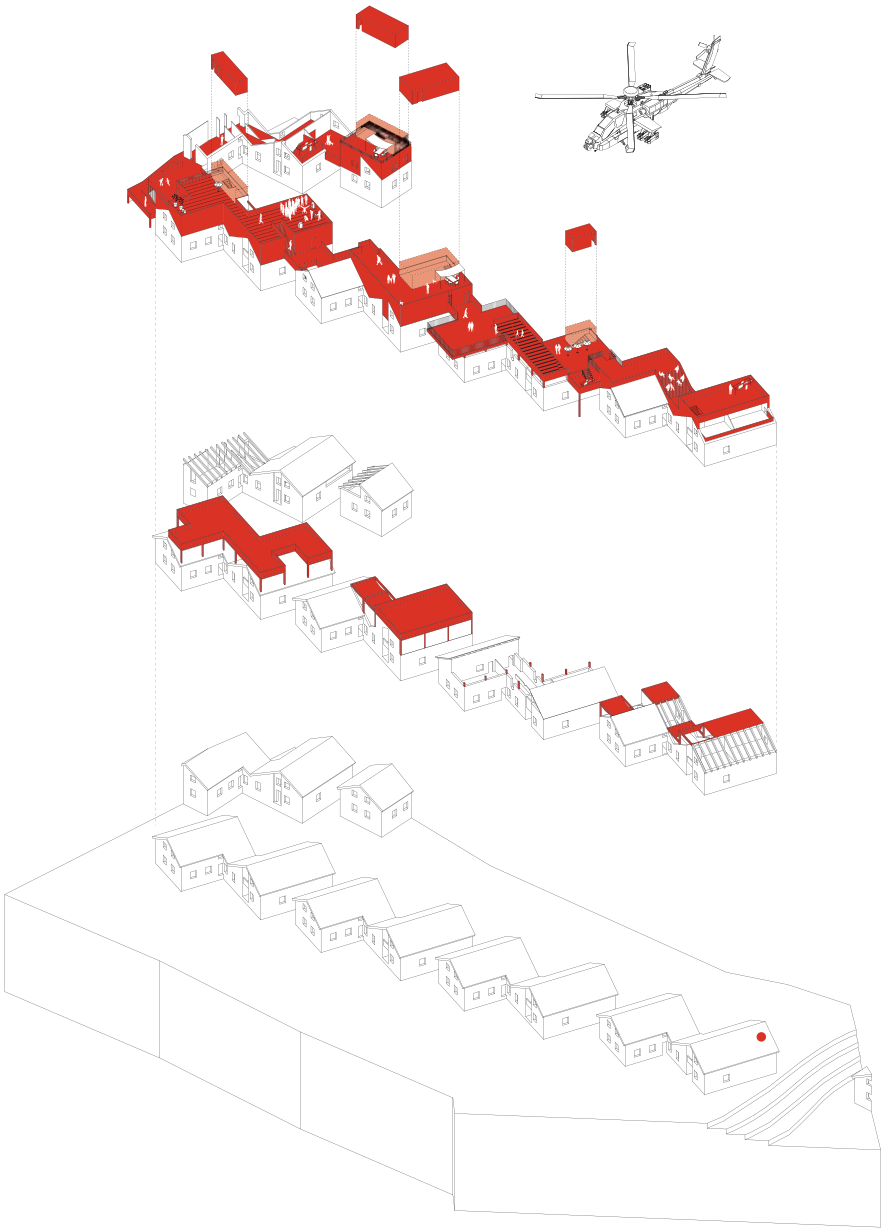


Manual of decolonisation, conception and design overview by Salottobuono

# The Future Archaeology of Israel's Colonisation
## – Sandi Hilal, Alessandro Petti, Eyal Weizman

This investigation uses architecture to articulate some of the various spatial dimensions of a possible process of decolonisation.[1] It engages, however, a less-than-ideal world. The work's starting point is not a political resolution of the Palestinian conflict and the just fulfilment of Palestinian claims and should thus not be thought of in terms of a solution at all. Rather it aims to think through ways of mobilising architecture as a tactical tool within the unfolding struggle for Palestine. It studies the potential application of physical interventions to open a horizon for an ongoing process of transformations.

Whatever trajectory the conflict over Palestine takes, the possibility of further partial evacuation of Israeli colonies and military bases must be considered. It is the most likely scenario in the international political machinatons imposed on Palestinians. It will most likely involve small-scale re-articulations in the carceral archipelago of Israel's colonial project, throughout Palestine.

However, zones of Palestine that will be liberated from direct Israeli ground pres- ence provide a crucial laboratory to study the multiple ways in which we could imagine the reuse, re-inhabitation or recycling of the architecture of colonisation at the moment this architecture is unplugged from the military/political power that charged it.

Recognising that Israeli colonies and military bases are amongst the most excruciating instruments of domination, we assume that a viable approach to the issue of their appropriation is to be found not only in the professional language of architecture and planning but rather in incorporating varied cultural and political perspectives within an architectural arena of speculation.

### GAZA 2005

Israel's attitude to the question of the evacuation of the settlement and their buildings is tied to the potential symbolic effect of *images* of Israeli architecture under Palestinian control. Prior the evacuation of Gaza in 2005, the Israeli government decided that all settlement homes would be destroyed. One of the reasons stated in support of this decision was the government's wish to avoid the broadcast of what it felt were politically destructive images: Arabs living in the homes of Jews and synagogues tuning into mosques. It conjured up images of a Palestinian mob storming the gates of settlements, looting and reoccupying the homes of settlers. This so-called 'apocalyptic scenario', the Israeli government feared, would become the image for a reversal – and thus imply the reversibility – of a Zionist project previously characterised by the seizure, destruction and, in some cases, reoccupation of Palestinian dwellings that became highly

1 Decolonisation: We suggest revisiting the term of 'decolonisation' in order to maintain a distance from the current political terms of a 'solution' to the Palestinian conflict and its respective borders. The one-, two- and now three-state solutions seem equally entrapped in a 'top-down' perspective, each with its own self-referential logic. Colonial regimes are exemplified by various aspects of force relations beyond formal exclusions. Decolonisation implies a continuous process that aims at the dismantling of the existing dominant structure — financial, military and legal — conceived for the benefit of a single national-ethnic group, and engaging a struggle for justice and equality. Decolonisation does not necessarily imply the forced transfer of populations. Under the term decolonisation, for example, Jewish communities could go and live in the Palestinian areas.

prized real estate among an 'orientalised' Israeli bourgeoisie. Images of reused homes, broadcast internationally, may also trigger barely-repressed middle-class anxieties at the root of the suburban project itself: the internally ordered, well-serviced outposts collapsing in the face of a surge irrupting from the outside. The destruction in 2005 of the buildings in the evacuated Gaza settlements was meant, amongst other reasons, to deny the function of this architecture as a political image.

## SPATIAL SCENARIOS FOR A DECOLONISATION

The question of the use of the *future archaeology* of the occupation, like similar questions posed during other processes of decolonisation throughout history, exists within a conceptual spectrum locked between two contradictory/complementary political desires for anarchy and government – destruction and reuse.

Destruction:
The popular impulse for destruction seeks to articulate spatially an exhilirating 'liberation' from architecture understood as a political straitjacket, an instrument of domination and control. If architecture is a weapon in the military arsenal of colonial rule, the means of decades-long crime, then *architecture must burn*... Frantz Fanon, pondering the possible corruption of governments after decolonisation warned during the Algerian liberation struggle that if not destroyed, the physical and territorial reorganisation of the colonial world may once again 'mark out the lines on which a colonised society will be organised'.[2]

The desire for destruction seeks to turn time backwards, reverse development into virgin nature, a tabula rasa, on which a set of new beginnings could be articulated.[3]

However, time and its processes of transformation can never be simply reversed: rather than the desired romantic ruralisation of developed areas, destruction generates desolation and environmental damage that may last for decades. In 2005 Israel evacuated the Gaza settlements and destroyed three thousand homes, creating not the promised tabula rasa for a new beginning, but rather a million and a half tons of toxic rubble that poisoned the ground and water aquifers. The decontamination process has been greatly impeded by the complete closure of the Gaza strip – which is the new form that Israel's occupation has taken. Destruction in the West Bank is less likely – as contamination would happen further up stream – affecting the water supply of Israel's own cities in the coastal plains.

Re-Occupation:
The governmental impulse is to impose political continuity and order under a new system of control. It is thus not surprising that post-colonial governments tended to reuse the infrastructure set up by colonial regîmes for their own emergent practical needs of administration. Evacuated infrastructure and built structure was often also seen as the legacy of 'modernisation' and as an economical and organisational resource. A strong temptation present throughout the histories of decolonisation was thus to reuse them in the very same way they were used under colonial regîmes. Such repossession tended to reproduce some of the colonial power relations in space: colonial villas were inhabited by new financial elites and palaces by political ones, while the evacuated military and police installations of colonial armies, as well as their prisons, were reused by the governments that replaced them, recreating similar spatial hierarchies.[4]

2 Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (trans. Constance Farrington), Harmondsworth: Penguin, 2003, p.27

3 The morning after. The first moment of access to the colonies and to the military bases is a possible moment of transgression whose consequences are unpredictable. Although in the Gaza Strip it was the Israelis who demolished most of the buildings, those buildings left intact (mainly public, industrial and agricultural buildings) were mostly destroyed by the Palestinians. The morning after the military left, Palestinians carried out as many remnants of building materials they could use and carry. This destruction is a spontaneous architectural moment of re-appropriation, and as such we believe that it should not be prevented or controlled. It is only after the indeterminate result of this moment of first encounter, and within the possible rubble of its physical results, that architectural construction may begin. It is important to also note that some of the municipal buildings of one of the evacuated Gaza colonies (Neve Dekalim) has turned into the nucleus for the Islamic university of Al Quds.



Using Israeli residential and military areas could, similarly, establish a sense of continuity rather than of rupture and change. In the context of present-day Palestine, reusing the evacuated structures of Israel's domination in the same way as the occupiers did – the settlements as Palestinian suburbs and the military bases for Palestine security needs – would mean reproducing their inherent alienation and violence: the settlement's system of fences and surveillance technologies would thus enable their seamless transformation into gated communities for the Palestinian elite.

Subversion:
In his poem 'Ruins of A Great House' (1956), Derek Walcott looks at the fractured remains of a plantation house. Pondering the decay that has overcome an institution that was once powerful, Walcott wonders about 'the rot that remains when the men are gone', but opens ways to negotiate, inhabit and thus transform the colonial structures that have generated the deep deformations of space and geography.[5] Colonial remnants and ruins are not only the dead matter of past power, but could be thought of as material for re-appropriations and strategic activation within the politics of the present. As Ann Stoller has put it, 'a focus on "ruins of empire" provides not a melancholic gaze, but a critical vantage point on one. Asking how people live with and in ruins redirects the engagement elsewhere, to the politics animated, to the common sense they disturb, to the critiques condensed or disallowed, and to the social relations avidly coalesced or shattered around them.'[6]

Evacuated colonial architecture doesn't necessarily reproduce the functions it was designed for. There are examples of other uses, both planned and spontaneous, that have invaded evacuated colonial architecture, destabilising and undermining their previous uses, negotiating their 'rot' but liberating other potential uses. They demonstrated that even the most horrifying structures of domination can yield to new forms of life. Believing in the potential for existing forces to shape reality, the starting point of our investigation speculates on the use of colonial architecture for purposes other than those they were designed to perform. For this reason, we seek to propose the spatialisation of a set of possible collective functions into the abandoned military structures and the evacuated houses of the colonists. What new institutions and activities can model the evacuated space and what physical transformations do these spaces require? The guiding principle is thus not to eliminate the power of the occupation's built spaces, but rather to reorient its destructive potential. We believe that if the geography of occupation is to be liberated, its potential must be turned against itself. Because the reuse of the colonial architecture is a general cultural/political issue, we do not seek to present a single, unified architectural solution, but rather 'fragments of possibility'.[7]

## A MANUAL OF DECOLONISATION

Planning generally needs a relative stable platform and a measure of spatial and political certainty – a demarcated site, a budget, a schedule and a client. The erratic nature of Israeli occupation and the unpredictable political developments on the ground render this an environment of high indeterminacy. We could not know whether, when or

4 Al- Muqata. An interesting example in this category is Al-Muqata in Ramallah, the present-day seat of the Palestinian President. It was built by the British military as part of their effort to put down the Arab revolt of 1936—39 (often referred to as 'the first intifada'). From 1948 to 1967 it was used as a military base and prison by the Jordanian military and for the same purposes by the Israeli army after 1967. The place was evacuated as part of the Oslo process and became Arafat's headquarters. During this time the compound was closed off and monitored, and some of the cells were used again for incarceration and torture. After the death of Arafat the place was monumentalised into a site of pilgrimage.

5 Derek Walcott, 'Ruins of a Great House', 1956. Available at http://www.poetryarchive.org/poetryarchive/singlePoem.do?poemId=9184 (last accessed on 16 December 2008).

6 Ann Laura Stoler, 'Imperial Debris, Reflections On Ruins And Ruination', *Cultural Anthropology*, Spring 2008.

7 Combined use. Although our proposals are based essentially on the third approach, we consider the possibility in some cases of also using the other two at the same time. Demolition, for example, will be important in cases in which colonies or military camps are constructed in particularly valuable landscape areas, just as simple reuse as residences could be proposed in areas where demand for housing is particularly urgent and in which colonial architecture is constructed on lands belonging to private Palestinians. In these cases, only the owners can decide on the future reuse of these structures.

which settlements might be evacuated. Furthermore, a master-planning top-down approach would also have to accept the internationally imposed limits to the territory of Palestinian rule.

There are hundreds of thousands of Israeli-built structures within more than 200 colonies and military bases in the West Bank, but because the number of typologies in settlements is limited – variations on the single or double-family dwelling – these 'fragments of possibility' constitute a general approach that could be modified to be applied in other evacuated areas. The architectural approach creates an image of transformation that because it is applied on the small scale of the house opens up the possibility of transformations within a much larger field.

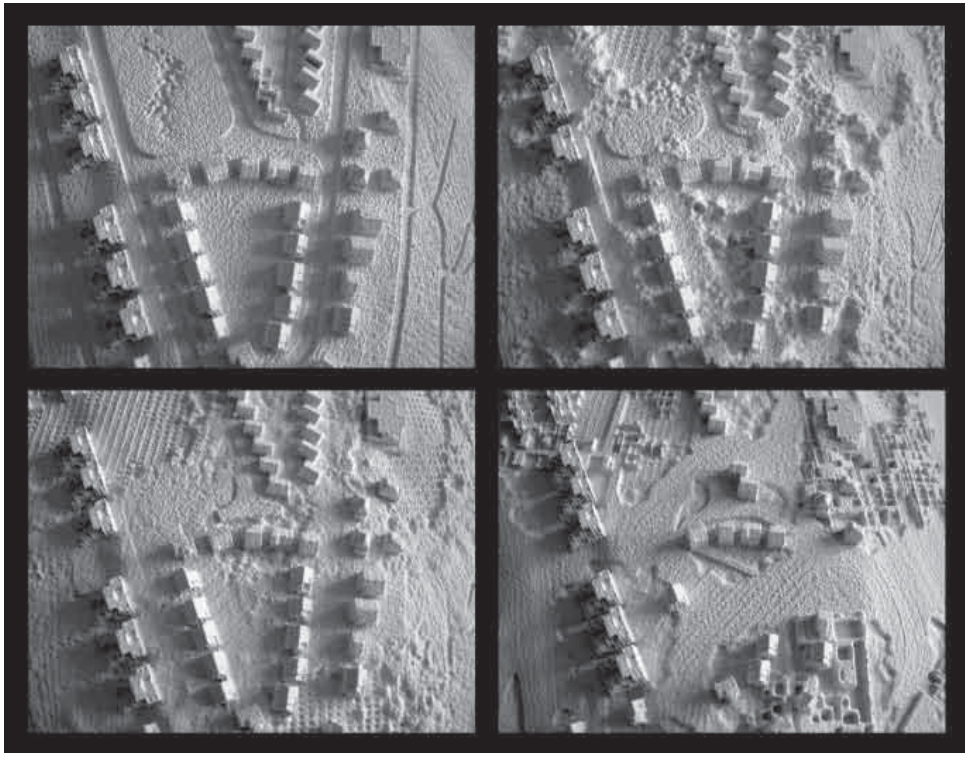
We seek to determine to what extent the evacuated structures are flexible to accommodate new uses and to demonstrate the various ways in which they can be adapted or transformed. The production of this 'manual' is based upon a series of meetings with the 'stakeholders' in this process. It includes representatives of various organisations and individuals, the local community, members of various NGOs, government and municipal bodies, academic and cultural institutions, local residents and resident associations.[8]

We have undertaken two main practical decisions regarding our mode of operation: firstly we have set our office up as a residency for people who wish to work with us. Using a large house in Beit-Sahour we offer accommodation and work together with artists, architects and other practitioners. Our guests come from other cities in Palestine (travel in Palestine is still difficult) as well as from places worldwide. We have also set up a number of programmes within the context of Palestinian universities, and set up a collaboration with Bir Zeit University and with the International Art Academy in Palestine, and institutions such as the cultural centre Sakakini.[9]

Two project sites were chosen as prototypes of decolonisation: the settlement of P'sagot (still inhabited by colonists) and the former Israeli military base of Oush Grab, which offers the possibility of a practical implementation as it was evacuated in 2006.

## SITE 01: JABEL TAWIL /P'SAGOT SETTLEMENT

Located on the hill of Jabel Tawil, 900 metres above sea level, the colony visually dominates the entire Palestinian area. Until the occupation it was used as an open space for recreation. The hills of Jerusalem and Ramallah were popular with families from the Gulf, especially Kuwaitis who travelled there to escape the summer heat (the people of Ramallah still call the hill 'the Kuwaiti hill'). In 1964, the municipality of Al Quds (Jerusalem) bought part of the land of the hilltop and prepared a plan for its development into a tourist resort. The work started in early 1967 with the construction of an access road, but it was interrupted by the war and the subsequent Israeli occupation. In July 1981, on the initiative of the Likud party, the colony of P'sagot was inaugurated as 'compensation' to right-wing Israelis for the evacuation of the Sinai Peninsula. The area designated for tourist accommodation was the first to be occupied by settler housing. The first houses set on the hill of Jabel Tawil were prefabricated structures wheeled over from Yamit, a settlement in the north of the Sinai. P'sagot is at present a religious settlement inhabited by 1,700 people, mainly American Jews and a minority of recent Russian and French immigrants.



Three-stage covering of the ground diagram (P'sagot over Ramallah)

<u>Ungrounding: Urbanism of the First 10 Centimetres:</u>
Settlements are suburban when thought of in relation to the Jewish geography in the occupied territories, they are fenced-up bedroom communities fed by a growing matrix of roads and other infrastructure, but they could be understood as potentially urban when put in relation to the Palestinian cities besides which they were built. The surface of the suburb is marked by its various uses. It is inscribed extensively with the signs of the lifestyle that it nourishes: an excess of roads and parking lots, private gardens, fences, sidewalks. The pattern of streets in the settlements/suburbs is a folded linear structure strung by roads and sidewalks. By marking drive/walk/no-walk areas, channelling movement, and designating the different degrees of private and public

8 NGOcracy: The role that NGOs play in Palestinian society must be explained: Palestinian civil society was greatly strengthened during the Intifada of 1987—92. Local leaders organized resistance and a set of alternative services like schooling and medicine, to those shut off by the Israeli army. When the Palestinian Authority was established in 1993 there was a clash between two systems of government. The Palestinian Authority, whose leaders have largely come from abroad, attempted to centralise and regulate the network of self-governing institutions that developed throughout the intifada. The network of institutions locally formed during the first intifada was transformed into the infrastructural framework of contemporary NGOs in Palestine. The local leaders of the first Intifada largely preferred to become directors of NGOs rather than 'officials' in the Authority. Most former leaders of the leftist 'Popular Front' are now directing leading NGOs. A good example is Mustafa Barghouthi and his healthcare network. The West Bank has since been governed in parallel by the Palestinian Authority and by a series of local and international NGOs, both under the umbrella of ultimate Israeli sovereignty. In many cases Palestinian NGOcracy (as the phenomenon came to be known) provided better quality services — medical, educational, planning — than those of the Palestinian Authority, which was always 'less than a government in less than a state'. NGOcracy has its dangers of course. Most NGOs, much like the Palestinian Authority, are internationally funded, and although donors are operating 'in support of Palestinians' they are in fact not accountable to the people of Palestine and often pursue the cultural and political agendas of the donor states. Philanthropy has thus become one of the main vehicles for western countries to intervene within the politics and culture of Palestine. Baring these dangers in mind, the network of NGOs seems to us an important vehicle in developing new types of Palestinian public, social and communal spaces, and some NGOs might be the first to occupy the evacuated and transformed spaces. We have noticed that the archives of these NGOs are also the 'living archives' of Palestine. A combined archive of the hundreds of local NGOs, or access thereof, would provide information about the environment, welfare, human rights and politics throughout Palestine, and thus offers a diffused and multi-focal alternative to state centred information centers.

9 The Smile. Whenever we presented and discussed our plans and models the initial reaction of our discussants was a smile. In the beginning we feared we were ridiculed. Were our plans too far fetched and outlandish within this environment of permanent impossibility? It is true that models are reduced worlds 'under control' and that they often make people smile. Everybody likes models. But on the other hand, the smile we noticed may be the first moment of decolonization. It is feels strange — particularly for Palestinians — to imagine the transformation of Israeli settlements. But we would like to interpret the smile as an opening up of the imagination to a different future. Decolonisation starts when Palestinians articulate their right to plan their future and regain their agency.

space, the first 10 centimetres of the urban ground surface embody most of its operational logic and also its ideology.

This surface is the primary site of our intervention. It is the logic of the surface that we seek to deactivate in order dismantle the structures that define the internal organisation of the suburb as it will become a set of public and communal functions. Under the category of 'ungrounding' the manual suggests a radical transformation of the first 10 centimetres of the ground. Ungrounding is achieved through the dismantling of the existent surface – roads, sidewalks, private gardens – and their replacements with a new surface layer. Methods of ground transformation are based on accelerating the decay of existing surface elements. Material decay becomes a process of place-making that seeks to create the ground from which new life could emerge. The pervasive system of concentric roads and spaces for parking will be eroded, removed or buried under new surface layers of earth. The barriers and fences that demarcate the edges of the private lots of the single-family homes will be removed as the ground gets abstracted and 'collectivised'. Built structures will be suspended like pavilions on a single, unified, new surface. The re-grounding of the surface is a central part of a strategy that seeks to reconfigure a new figure-ground relation. The possible connection between the individual buildings is reconceived. Connection will be undertaken across a field in which movement is not prescribed by the linear folds of the roads and the sidewalks.

Land ownership map of Jabel Tawil, 1954

<u>De-Parcelling:</u>

In the course of our analysis, we made use of both documentary and narrative sources to try to recreate the pre-colonial pattern of land ownership and some of the landowners within the areas of the colonies. Jabel Tawil/P'sagot is at the gravitational centre of various orbits of extra-territoriality: displaced communities, individuals, migrations and family connections. Our investigation traced some of the Palestinian landowners to the US, Australia, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Iraq and of course closer at hand in Palestine, sometimes fenced off a few metres away from their lands. Their private and family histories are the intertwined histories of Palestine and its displaced communities, forced out by the occupation and by economic and professional opportunities overseas. About half of the area occupied by the P'sagot colony belongs to private owners with the other half registered as belonging to one of various kinds of collective lands.[10] The fate of private lands should be decided by their owners; it is within the communal lands that we propose various types of collective uses.

10 Public lands. The differences between the various categories of collective land ownership were erased by the regime of occupation, which considered all these lands as 'public lands' and thus as the property of the sovereign. As sovereign Israel used these 'public lands' to construct upon these areas most its settlements.

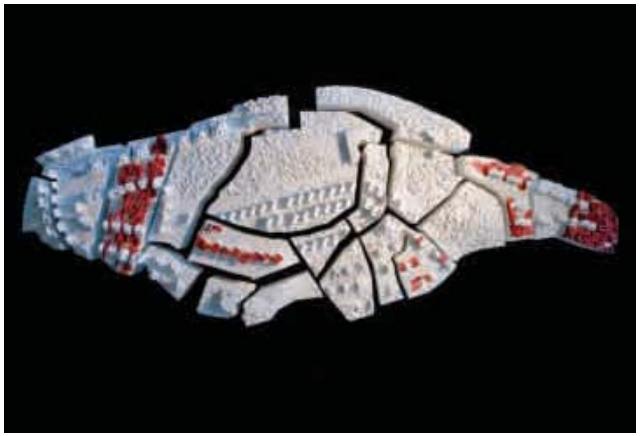


We discovered a map dating 1954 which shows the original parcelling of Jabel Tawil. We superimposed the 1954 plan onto the plan of the colony. The Palestinian demarcation lines do not correspond to the suburban fabric of the settlements, and if allowed to emerge would cut the settlement into arbitrary-looking plots, creating a new relationship between the houses and their parcels, internal and external spaces and between public and private spaces. Most of these 'odd lots' are privately owned but some of them are public lands. The principle of our proposal is that whatever belongs to a private family returns to its owner, and whatever lots are public would be reserved for the public. The archipelago of public lots forms thus the basis of our proposals.[11]

This act forms the central principle of any material articulation of an idea of return, and thus helps define this intervention as a laboratory for a much more profound and complete material articulation of a decolonisation that would see the return of refugees to areas within 1948 Palestine. Any such process of return would have to tangibily articulate the contradiction between the pre-colonial pattern of land ownership and the physical reality of buildings on the ground.

<u>Unhoming:</u>

The *molecular* level of the occupation is the single-family house on a small plot of land. Investigating ways to transform this repetitive semi-generic structure may open up ways



Landscape design and model, Situ Studio

to transform the entire geography of occupation. What are its limits of transformability? Can a single-family home become the nucleus of new types of public institutions? Which structural features should be retained and what are the possible ways of connecting together groups of houses? The problem is also how to transform a series of small-scale single-family houses into unified clusters of communal space, to accommodate larger functions like schools and universities, halls and classrooms, laboratories for a research institute, clinics and offices.

11 The Public, the Communal and the Non-Governmental. The long period of Palestinian 'statelessness' under colonialism shifted the manner by which public space is understood and functions. Until the beginning of the 1990s, Palestinian cities where directly managed by the Israeli Military. Through the 'civil administration' the military controlled planning and development permission and thus the central activities of the different municipalities. During this period the Palestinian cities where transformed into dormitory towns with very little public space. Furthermore, the 'civil administration' actively inhibited pubic institutions from developing. Private clubs, cinemas, schools and universities were put under close scrutiny or forcibly shut. The military required any association of more than three persons to have a permit. But difficulty in establishing and maintaining public institutions persisted even after the Oslo accord of 1993. The main reasons that impeded the creation of open public space in the Palestinian cities were the borders set up for Palestinian 'self administered areas'. These borders where drawn tightly around the build up area of the Palestinian cities and villages leaving out little potential land for new construction. The structure of land ownership within Palestinian cities meant that very little land was not privately owned, and municipalities have had a difficult access to lands. Most open spaces and new institutions were created by the many international organisations and NGOs.

The problem of 'unhoming' is not only a technical question of transformations. A lingering question throughout the project was: how to inhabit the home of one's enemy? Within the multiple cultures that have lived in Palestine, rarely has one ever been the 'first' or 'original' occupier of a plot of land; rather one is always a subsequent. To inhabit the land is always to inhabit it in relation either to one's present-day enemies or to an imagined or real ancient civilisation. This is a condition that turns the habitation of old cities, archaeological sites, battlegrounds and destroyed villages into culturally complex acts of co- and trans-habitation.

## SITE 02: OUSH GRAB, EVACUATED MILITARY BASE

An opportunity to implement our approach in a situation when some of the infrastructure of occupation has been evacuated came earlier than expected. In May 2006, the Israeli army evacuated a military camp strategically located on the highest hill at the southern entrance to the Palestinian city of Beit Sahour, in the Bethlehem region. It was a menacing fortress overlooking the edge of the town. Most houses surrounding the camp were destroyed by tank shells and gunfire originating at the base. Flood-lit during the night, flash lights constantly scanning the area around it, the base was caught in an 'endless day'. The evacuation was itself a violent operation: at night dozens of tanks rolled into the town and in the morning the base was found empty. Moments later, Palestinians entered the base and took away every element and material that could be recycled.

The military history of the hill is longer than the occupation. It was built as a military base by the British Mandatory army during the Arab revolt (referred to by some as the very first intifada). After 1948 it became a military base of the Jordan Legion. After 1967 it became an Israeli military base.

Oush Grab. Images by Sara Pellegrini

As part of the Oslo Accords an agreement was also signed between the municipality of Beit Sahour and the central government under Arafat, guaranteeing that in case of a possible Israeli evacuation the base would not be used by the Palestinian police and would be handed over to the management of the municipality as a public park. Upon gaining control of the site a municipal master plan designated a set of public functions; a hospital and a public park, a restaurant and an open garden for events have already been constructed on the slopes of the hill.

The most contentious part of the site is its summit. There, several concrete buildings formed the heart of the former camp. Surrounded by a giant earth mound running along the top rim of the hill, these buildings seem to inhabit the crater of a volcano. Although the summit is evacuated, it is still kept under the (remote) control of the Israeli military. Providing the most strategic views in the entire area, the military does not want to accept its occupation by Palestinian eyes.

<u>Revolving-Door Occupations:</u>
Since its evacuation the summit and its buildings were at the centre of various contentious confrontations between Jewish settlers, the Israeli military and Palestinian organisations, in which our office has been directly engaged. In May 2008, protesting against US President George W. Bush's visit to Israel and in anticipation of some 'government concessions', settler groups sought to use the emptied buildings of the military base as the nucleus for a new settlement-outpost. The topographical location of the base on the summit and its existing fortification would easily lend themselves, they thought, to their regimented and securitised way of life. The military declared the site a 'closed military zone', but nearly every week settlers come back to occupy the base, hold meetings, conduct heritage tours and Torah lessons, and raise the Israeli flag. Israeli soldiers arrive to 'protect' the settlers. Palestinian and international activists

including members of our office also occupy the site and confront the settlers. A set of competing graffiti written by one side and then obliterated by the other testifies for a 'revolving-door' occupancy. Our proposal for the reuse of this site becomes also an intervention into the contentious political struggle for this hilltop.

Return to Nature:
The site is a point of singularity within the natural environment. Every winter and spring tens of thousands of migrating birds, on their way from north-eastern Europe to east Africa pass over Palestine. The large swarms of starlings and other birds tend to land in similar places, usually high points they can identify. The hill of Oush Grab is one of these annual stops. In a breathtaking (and somewhat nightmarish) scenario, thousands of birds land on the hilltop. Around them, for a period of few days, a rich micro-ecology of small predators and other wildlife is coalesed.

Given the intense claim for the site, our intention is not to renovate and convert the base into another function, but rather to return it back to nature. The buildings and the artificial landscape will stand at the centre of a park in which nature will gradually take over the buildings.

Our physical intervention is to accelerate this process of return to nature. We have employed the first stages of our architectural proposal as forms of destruction or substraction. We aim to perforate all external walls within the buildings of the former military base with a series of evenly spaced holes. Our colleagues in the Palestine Wildlife Society expect that these holes will be inhabited by the birds.

We also transform the landscape around the former base, opening up the fortified rampart enclosure to allow access and drainage. This transformation of the earth rampart will partially bury the buildings in the rubble of their own fortifications, reorganisîng the relationship between the buildings and the landscape.

## SITE 03. A LABORATORY FOR RETURN

Our intention for future engagement is to form a possible laboratory for architectural actions whose reach may go beyond the local specificity of these interventions in the West Bank. Further beyond the 1967 occupied areas an unfolding process of decolonisation, in the context of the real articulation of the return of refugees, will have to negotiate the built realities of Israeli towns and villages. We hope that our project may also point to a possible transformation of the seemingly inevitable suburb, a home for many of those in credit crisis or already evacuated worldwide. The ritual destruction, reuse, 'redivivus', or *détournement* of the suburban occupation of Palestine may suggest a possible repertoire of action in regards to the larger transformation of other types of secluded suburban spaces at large.

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Decolonizing Architecture is a project and an exhibition by London/Bethlehem Architectural Studio directed by Sandi Hilal, Alessandro Petti and Eyal Weizman, showed at the Venice Biennale of Architecture 2008, Gemak Gallery, Den Haag, 2008 and Bozar, Brussels, 2008.

The project was originally conceptualised and its pilot stage produced in dialogue with Eloisa Haudenschild & Steve Fagin partners in Spare Parts, a division of the haudenschildGarage.

In residency:
P'sagot re-design: Barbara Modolo, Pietro Onofri, Armina Pilav, Rana Shakaa, Manuel Singer and Alessandro Zorzetto.
Oush Grab re-design: Mario Abruzzese, Jiries Boullata, Sara Pellegrini and Francesca Vargiu.
Manual of decolonisation, conception and design overview: Salottobuono.
Landscape design and models: Situ Studio, New York.
Future Archaeology, stereoscopic video installation: Armin Linke, Francesco Mattuzzi and Renato Rinaldi.
Video editing: Roberto Sartor and Allegra Martin.
Web design: Fabio Franz.
Artists and architects in residence: Ursula Bieman, ^^^BRAVE NEW ALPS^^^^ (Bianca Elzenbaumer and Fabio Franz), Vincezo Castella, Anne Gough, Zakiya Hanafi, Jake Himmel, Jesse Long, Salvatore Porcaro, Francesca Recchia, Lorenzo Romito and Rianne Van Doeveren.
Academic collaboration: International Art Academy Palestine and Goldsmiths Centre for Research Architecture.
Committee: Nasser Abourahme, Senan Abdel Kader, Giorgio Agamben, Yazid Anani, Stefano Boeri, Teddy Cruz, Lieven De Cauter, Jad Isaac, Reem Fadda, Thomas Keenan, Laura Kurgan, Omar Jabary Salamanca, Andrew Ross, Salim Tamari and Omar Yusuf.



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