

## Abstract

The thesis is concerned with spatial practices of resistance employed in Palestinian struggles against Israel's violent dispossession of Palestinian land through half a century of occupation.

In the political configuration of the built space of the West Bank, architecture appears as a tactically deployed weapon of territorial control and a dialectical resistance to displacement. Standing in the position of being both a means to achieve an objective and the objective in itself, the elementary gestures of architecture — to control and inhabit a place — are employed in a conflict that concerns, fundamentally, who has the right to a future in this land.

By viewing architecture in its dual dimension of praxis and object, built structures are investigated as agents that induce and manifest territorial struggles. The spatial instrumentalisation of architecture is effected by Israel through commonplace civic practices of spatial organisation, forming a distinct category, in this thesis denoted as *unplanning*, and whose violent and attritional effect is the production of *unliveable spaces*.

Conversely, Palestinians inhabiting Palestinian land turn to a number of tactical tools against unplanning and its detrimental effects. Some of these tools are employed to challenge the mechanisms of the occupation, and others used for survival in everyday life. Together, these practices form a spectrum of practices that the thesis proposes to explore as *situationally moulded acts*.

The main objective of the thesis is to unfold this spectrum: under circumstances where both coloniser and colonised deploy architecture as tactical weapons for expanding or, conversely, protecting land, the fundamental volatility of the order of occupation requires the colonised part to navigate a territory in constant movement.

Through case studies of Palestinian spatial practices, and historical and theoretical considerations on power, resistance, and violence, the thesis ventures to show how said navigation by means of spatial practices stands in a dynamic relationship with the occupation, yet also, through acts of speculation, attempts to exceed the restrictions given by a regime that ceaselessly produces obstructions to Palestinian inhabitation of Palestinian land. The thesis proposes that there is a common ground between the kind of speculation that is conjured in the mounting of situational spatial practices of the everyday, and speculative imagination evident in artistic and activist practices concerned with the Israel-Palestine conflict.