

**BORDERLAND APPROPRIATIONS:
GLOBALIZATION, OBSOLESCENCE, MIGRATION AND THE
AMERICAN SHOPPING MALL**

A Dissertation

by

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ABSTRACT

The notion of *place* embodies a complex intersection of architecture, occupancy, and identity. Tied to geographic and historical conditions, built environments existing between two worlds or within contested territories reveal the underlying political and social forces that have shaped them. Assuming an analogous relationship between consumption and architecture as interconnected systems, this dissertation examines American suburbia in the early twenty-first century to assess convergent flows related to consumption. It engages with the changing nature of retail form, function, and obsolescence to illustrate transnational and technological influences impacting suburban commercial architecture. More specifically, it analyzes occupancies, appropriations, and informal adaptations of retail environments in two distinct regional contexts in North America—the USA-Mexico Borderlands of Texas and the USA-Canada Borderlands of the Eastern Great Lakes region. This research charts the rise, fall, and transformation of the American shopping mall assessed via post-structuralist theories.

Proposing that the obsolete mid-twentieth century shopping mall is a metaphor for the multicultural American city, this study employs *dialectical*—or comparative—practices to examine conditions which forecast increasing diversity in metropolitan futures. To establish a conceptual framework, two primary theoretical precedents were hybridized in this dissertation—the archival analysis of Walter Benjamin’s seminal *The Arcades Project* (1927-1940) and the theoretical lens of otherness—

or heterotopias—proposed by Michel Foucault in *Of Other Places: Utopias and Heterotopias* (1984). Furthermore, the *terrain vague* territorial critique proposed by Ignasi Solà-Morales and the *dérives* of Guy Debord’s Situationist International influenced similar documentation techniques for suburban shopping malls characterized by marginal—or *borderland*—national, metropolitan, and social-economic conditions. Unlike most of the existing literature surrounding so-called dead malls, this research does not lament the demise of suburban drosscape or junkspace, but celebrates its incremental translation into an organic, nuanced, and temporal placeholder for actual urbanism. By means of case studies, this dissertation serves as a documentation device that identifies, theorizes, and archives largely ignored everyday suburban structures—transitional spaces of otherness serving the needs of immigrants and historically disadvantaged communities that are routinely demolished due to contemporary market pressures, planning initiatives, and real estate practices. In short, it draws awareness to informal actions that have transformed mid-century American shopping malls into liminal places threatened by gentrification and permanent erasure.

DEDICATION

To my family: Tito, Xavier, & Giovanni

To my parents: Thomas Marinic & Diane Vadavacio Marinic

To my paternal grandparents: Edward Marinic & Helen Jansa Marinic

To my maternal grandparents: James Vadavacio & Doralisa Riccione Vadavacio

To my paternal great grandparents: Ignatz Marinčič & Anna Jarnayčič Marinčič

To my paternal great grandparents: Anton Jansa & Rose Baznik Jansa

To my maternal great grandparents: Angelo Vadavacio & Domenica Gaetano Vadavacio

To my maternal great grandparents: Desiderio Riccione & Mary Carnivale Riccione

To the immigrants...

A life without memory is no life at all...

Luis Buñuel

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	ii
DEDICATION	iv
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	vi
CONTRIBUTORS AND FUNDING SOURCES.....	ix
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	x
LIST OF FIGURES	xiii
CHAPTERS	
PART I	
I INTRODUCTION.....	1
II THEORETICAL PRECEDENTS: WALTER BENJAMIN AND MICHEL FOUCAULT.....	5
2.1 Walter Benjamin and ‘The Arcades Project’	6
2.2 Michel Foucault and ‘Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias’	8
2.3 Conclusion.....	10
III TYPOLOGICAL ORIGINS OF CONTEMPORARY RETAIL: FROM PASSAGES TO GALLERIAS, FROM EUROPE TO NORTH AMERICA.....	12
3.1 Emergence: Nolli and Interior Urbanism.....	15
3.2 From the Nolli Plan to the Parisian Arcade.....	16
3.3 Walter Benjamin, Flâneurie, and the European Arcades.....	21
3.4 Translation from Continental Europe to America: The Urban Interior.....	23
3.5 Cleveland and Buffalo: The ‘Second Cities’ of Central Europe.....	24
3.6 Cities Transformed by Density: An American Flâneurie	27
3.7 A New (and Adapted) Typology for Cleveland.....	30
3.8 The Colonial and Euclid Arcades.....	32
3.9 Reflecting/Projecting: From Arcades to Atria and Beyond.....	35

IV	BORDERLAND MEGASPACE: URBAN DISSIMILARITY IN THE GALLERIAS OF HOUSTON AND TORONTO.....	42
4.1	Victor Gruen’s Imprint: Utilitarian and Communal Origins.....	45
4.2	Houston: The Galleria.....	50
4.3	Toronto: Eaton Centre.....	57
4.4	The Dialectical Image and Consumption.....	62
4.5	Houston and Toronto: A Dialectic Assessment of Place-Making.....	66
V	AMERICAN SOCIETY AT A THRESHOLD: SUBURBANIZATION, CONSUMPTION, AND GLOBALIZATION IN THE 21 st CENTURY.....	69
PART II		
VI	OTHERNESS: IMMIGRATION AND IDENTITY AS SHAPERS OF THE AMERICAN BUILT ENVIRONMENT.....	75
6.1	Melting Pot?.....	76
6.2	Selective Visions of America.....	84
6.3	Summary.....	92
VII	INTERSTATE MIGRATIONS: APPROPRIATION OF DYING RETAIL IN TEXAS.....	94
7.1	From Utopian Origins.....	97
7.2	A Periphery in Transition.....	100
7.3	Otherness and Heterotopias.....	101
7.4	Terrain Vague.....	102
7.5	Finding Stability in Obsolescence.....	105
7.6	Adaptation and Resilience within a Globalized Periphery.....	107
7.7	Laredo: The Portal.....	109
7.8	An Edge Condition: River Drive Mall, Laredo	113
7.9	An Anonymous ‘Ruin’: Indeterminate Façade Building, Houston.....	117
7.10	An Interstitial Space: Greenspoint Mall, Houston.....	124
7.11	Conclusion.....	125
VIII	BORDERLAND APPROPRIATIONS: MULTICULTURALISM, RETAIL, AND EMERGENT URBANITY.....	129
8.1	Of Immigrant Origins: From Cities to Interior Space.....	132
8.2	Suburban Migration and Retail Environments: A Brief Overview.....	135

8.3	Immigration and Aspiration: A New Suburbia.....	137
8.4	Theoretical Framing: Heterotopian Spaces of Otherness.....	139
IX	BORDERLAND TYPOLOGIES: TWO REGIONS, SIX CASE STUDIES.....	143
9.1	Methodology: Engaging Dialectics, Heterotopias, & the Dérive.....	143
9.2	Type 1: Adaptive Transformation [Northern Borderland] Euclid Square Mall, Euclid, Ohio.....	148
9.3	Type 2: Cultural Translation [Southern Borderland] Sharpstown Mall, Houston, Texas	164
9.4	Type 3: Micro-Enterprise [Northern Borderland] Ethnic Strip Malls in Syracuse and Buffalo	180
9.5	Type 4: Ethnic Hub [Northern Borderland] Pacific Mall, Markham, Ontario.....	188
9.6	Type 5: Multicultural Aspiration [Southern Borderland] NorthPark Center, Dallas, Texas.....	202
9.7	Type 6: Suburban Erasure [Southern Borderland] Valley View Center, Dallas, Texas.....	208
X	BEYOND THE BORDERLANDS: A SOUTHEAST ASIAN COMPARATIVE CASE STUDY.....	213
10.1	New World Mall, Bangkok.....	214
10.2	Water and Architecture in Southeast Asia: A Brief Overview.....	214
10.3	Theoretical Framework: Consumption, Obsolescence, and Flânerie.....	219
10.4	Urban Nomadism and Everyday Forgotten Space in Bangkok.....	220
10.5	Reflection.....	227
XI	CONCLUSIONS: BORDERLAND DIALECTIC: REFLECTIONS AND PROJECTIONS ON AMERICAN SUBURBAN RETAIL.....	230
	REFERENCES.....	237
	APPENDIX A BORDERLAND INTERVENTIONS STUDIO WORK.....	254
	APPENDIX B EXTENDED BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	261

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE		PAGE
1	Fragment of the Nolli Plan of Rome. SOURCE: Giambattisti Nolli.....	16
2	The Old Arcade, Cleveland. SOURCE: The Old Arcade.....	29
3	Colonial Arcade, Cleveland. SOURCE: Sandvick.....	34
4	Euclid Arcade, Cleveland. SOURCE: Sandvick.....	34
5	Southdale Center, Edina (1956) by Victor Gruen. SOURCE: Life Magazine.....	47
6	Galleria, Houston (1970), Gyo Obata. SOURCE: Houston Chronicle.....	52
7	Toronto Eaton Centre (1978). SOURCE: Taxiarchos 228.....	61
8	Cover of 'The Melting Pot' play (1916). SOURCE: Library of Congress.....	77
9	Henry Ford English School 'Melting Pot' Ceremony. SOURCE: King Rose.....	83
10	Constructing Hegemony: Colonial Williamsburg, Architecture as 'heritage' idealization. SOURCE: G. Marinic.....	85
11	Constructing Hegemony: Colonial Williamsburg, Architecture as 'heritage' idealization. SOURCE: G. Marinic.....	86
12	Constructing Hegemony: Colonial Williamsburg, Architecture as 'heritage' idealization. SOURCE: G. Marinic.....	86
13	Constructing Hegemony: Colonial Williamsburg, Architecture as 'heritage' idealization. SOURCE: G. Marinic.....	87
14	Constructing Otherness: South of the Border, Architecture as ethnic slur. SOURCE: G. Marinic.....	89
15	Constructing Otherness: South of the Border, Architecture as ethnic slur. SOURCE: G. Marinic.....	89

16	Constructing Otherness: South of the Border, Architecture as ethnic slur. SOURCE: G. Marinic.....	90
17	Constructing Otherness: South of the Border, Architecture as ethnic slur. SOURCE: G. Marinic.....	90
18	Constructing Otherness: South of the Border, Architecture as ethnic slur. SOURCE: Wikimedia.....	91
19	View of River Drive Mall from Nuevo Laredo, Mexico. SOURCE: Wikimedia.....	115
20	View of River Drive Mall. SOURCE: Wikimedia.....	115
21	Demolition of River Drive Mall in mid-2015. SOURCE: Alberto Carrasco.....	116
22	Rendering of the new Outlet Shoppes at Laredo. SOURCE: Horizon Group.....	116
23	Indeterminate Façade Building, Houston (1975). SOURCE: James Wines.....	120
24	Indeterminate Façade Building, Houston (1975). SOURCE: James Wines... ..	120
25	Indeterminate Façade Building, Houston (1975). SOURCE: James Wines.	121
26	Indeterminate Façade Building, Houston in 2015 stripped of its architecture. SOURCE: G. Marinic.....	122
27	The Mullet (left) and Almeda Mall 2015 graffiti follies (right). SOURCE: The Mullet & G. Marinic.....	123
28	The Mullet (left) and Almeda Mall 2015 graffiti follies (right). SOURCE: The Mullet & G. Marinic.....	124
29	Graphic of <i>Northern Borderland</i> (upper) and <i>Southern Borderland</i> (lower) showing malls presented in this dissertation.....	147
30	The abandoned and Euclid Square Mall, March 2017. SOURCE: G. Marinic.....	150
31	The abandoned and Euclid Square Mall, March 2017. SOURCE: G. Marinic.....	150
32	The abandoned Higbee’s store at Euclid Square Mall, March 2017. SOURCE: G. Marinic.....	151

33	The abandoned and May Company store at Euclid Square Mall, March 2017. SOURCE: G. Marinic.....	151
34	Abandoned outlot building at Euclid Square Mall, former supermarket, March 2017. SOURCE: G. Marinic.....	152
35	Abandoned outlot building at Euclid Square Mall, former Red Lobster Restaurant, March 2017. SOURCE: G. Marinic.....	152
36	Euclid Square Mall, Euclid (1977). SOURCE: Cleveland Press Archive.....	156
37	Euclid Square Mall, Euclid (1977). SOURCE: Cleveland Press Archive.....	157
38	Euclid Square Mall, Euclid (1977). SOURCE: Cleveland Press Archive.....	157
39	Euclid Square Mall, Euclid (1977). SOURCE: Cleveland Press Archive.....	158
40	Euclid Square Mall ‘Mall of Churches’ leasing diagram showing churches in yellow, miscellaneous uses in blue, and storage in gray. SOURCE: Euclid Square Mall Archive.....	160
41	Sharpstown Mall ‘Clock of Texas’, 1967. SOURCE: Wikimedia.....	166
42	PlazAmericas Quinceañera shop, 2015. SOURCE: G. Marinic.....	166
43	Marketplace Dialectic: 2015. At left, PlazAmericas in Houston; At right, Juarez Market, an urban market Monterrey (Mexico). SOURCE: G. Marinic & K. Gonzalez.....	169
44	Marketplace Dialectic: 2015. At left, PlazAmericas in Houston; At right, Juarez Market, an urban market Monterrey (Mexico). SOURCE: G. Marinic & K. Gonzalez.....	169
45	Marketplace Dialectic: 2015. At left, PlazAmericas in Houston; At right, Juarez Market, an urban market Monterrey (Mexico). SOURCE: G. Marinic & K. Gonzalez.....	169
46	Marketplace Dialectic: 2015. At left, PlazAmericas in Houston; At right, Juarez Market, an urban market Monterrey (Mexico). SOURCE: G. Marinic & K. Gonzalez.....	170

47	PlazAmericas exterior façades. SOURCE: G. Marinic.....	171
48	PlazAmericas exterior façades. SOURCE: G. Marinic.....	171
49	PlazAmericas parking lot showing former banking drive-up teller pavilions being used by customers as parking canopies, March 2017. SOURCE: G. Marinic.....	172
50	PlazAmericas parking lot showing former banking drive-up teller pavilions being used by customers as parking canopies, March 2017. SOURCE: G. Marinic.....	172
51	PlazAmericas mall interior. SOURCE: G. Marinic.....	174
52	PlazAmericas mall interior. SOURCE: G. Marinic.....	174
53	PlazAmericas income tax service. SOURCE: G. Marinic.....	175
54	PlazAmericas christening outfits. SOURCE: G. Marinic	175
55	PlazAmericas repurposed and semi-abandoned outlot buildings. SOURCE: G. Marinic.....	176
56	PlazAmericas repurposed and semi-abandoned outlot buildings. SOURCE: G. Marinic.....	176
57	Dia de Muertos (Day of the Dead) altar and wall mural. SOURCE: G. Marinic.....	178
58	Dia de Muertos (Day of the Dead) altar. SOURCE: G. Marinic.....	178
59	Little Seoul, Syracuse. SOURCE: G. Marinic.....	184
60	Little Seoul, Syracuse. SOURCE: G. Marinic.....	184
61	Little Seoul, Syracuse. SOURCE: G. Marinic.....	185
62	West Side Bazaar exterior. SOURCE: G. Marinic.....	186
63	West Side Bazaar food vendors. SOURCE: G. Marinic.....	186

64	West Side Bazaar vendor stalls (at left). SOURCE: G. Marinic.....	187
65	West Side Bazaar vendor stalls (at right). SOURCE: G. Marinic.....	187
66	Pacific Mall exterior. SOURCE: G. Marinic.....	192
67	Pacific Mall interior. SOURCE: G. Marinc.....	192
68	Pacific Mall cultural heritage center. SOURCE: G. Marinic.....	194
69	Pacific Mall cultural heritage center. SOURCE: G. Marinic.....	194
70	Pacific Mall event stage. SOURCE: G. Marinic.....	195
71	Pacific Mall food court. SOURCE: G. Marinic.....	195
72	Pacific Mall food court. SOURCE: G. Marinic.....	196
73	Pacific Mall food court. SOURCE: G. Marinic.....	196
74	Pacific Mall shopping concourse. SOURCE: G. Marinic.....	198
75	Pacific Mall game room. SOURCE: G. Marinic.....	198
76	Hong Kong City Mall, Southwest Houston. SOURCE: G. Marinic.....	199
77	Hong Kong City Mall, Southwest Houston. SOURCE: G. Marinic.....	199
78	Hong Kong City Mall, Southwest Houston. SOURCE: G. Marinic.....	200
79	Hong Kong City Mall, Southwest Houston. SOURCE: G. Marinic.....	200
80	Saigon-Houston Plaza, Southwest Houston. SOURCE: G. Marinic.....	201
81	Saigon-Houston Plaza, Southwest Houston. SOURCE: G. Marinic.....	201
82	NorthPark Center courtyard park. SOURCE: NorthPark Center.....	203
83	NorthPark Center indoor concourse café: SOURCE: NorthPark Center.....	203
84	NorthPark Center shopping concourse. SOURCE: NorthPark Center.....	204

85	NorthPark Center shopping concourse. SOURCE: NorthPark Center.....	204
86	NorthPark Center shopping concourse. SOURCE: NorthPark Center.....	206
87	NorthPark Center shopping concourse. SOURCE: NorthPark Center.....	206
88	Valley View Center exterior. SOURCE: Dallas News.....	209
89	Valley View Center exterior. SOURCE: Dallas News.....	209
90	Valley View Center interior. SOURCE: Valley View Center.....	211
91	Valley View Center interior. SOURCE: Valley View Center.....	211
92	Aerial view, Bangkok. SOURCE: 123rf.....	215
93	New World Mall, Bangkok. SOURCE: Renegade Travels.....	215
94	Angkor Wat. SOURCE: Wikimedia.....	217
95	Angkor Wat. SOURCE: Wikimedia.....	217
96	Floating Market. SOURCE: Wikimedia.....	218
97	New World Mall, interior. SOURCE: 123rf.....	225
98	New World Mall, interior. SOURCE: 123rf.....	225
99	New World Mall, central courtyard. SOURCE: 123rf.....	227
100	<i>Where are all the other Muslims?</i> The true story of a Syrian family’s journey to America and how a suburban strip shopping mall would come to serve their needs by Jake Halpern & Michael Sloane. SOURCE: <i>The New York Times</i> , February 25, 2017	231
101	Dead Mall Adaptation of Highland Mall in Austin by A. Sotelo.....	255
102	Dead Mall Adaptation of Highland Mall in Austin by A. Sotelo	256
103	Dead Mall Adaptation of Highland Mall in Austin by A. Sotelo.....	257

104	Dead Mall Adaptation of Greenspoint Mall in Houston by J. Hollie.....	258
105	Dead Mall Adaptation of Greenspoint Mall in Houston by J. Hollie.....	259
106	Dead Mall Adaptation of Greenspoint Mall in Houston by J. Hollie.....	260

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In his *The Arcades Project*, Walter Benjamin attempted to map Paris—a city of modernity—as an integrated vision of social, spatial, and formal aspects of the urban built environment (Gilloch, 1996:102). From 1927 to 1940, Benjamin produced a substantial amount of writing on the Parisian arcades that was never completed due to his untimely death (Buck-Morss, 1999:97). Posthumously translated into many languages, his work has become one of the greatest research endeavors in twentieth century cultural criticism (Buck-Morss, 1999:96-101). Benjamin’s research on the Parisian arcades and the urban cultures that they supported remains a provocative filter for the contemporary study of architecture and urbanism. Using Walter Benjamin’s study as an example, this dissertation engages a mid-twentieth century North American retail typology that emerged from the nineteenth century European arcades—the suburban shopping mall—to analyze and document its radical transformation. Benjamin’s *dialectic*, or comparative occupancy techniques, offered a provocative methodology for the study of dynamic conditions over time. Here, this approach has been hybridized with the heterotopian notion of otherness proposed by Michel Foucault to assess crosscurrents between contemporary suburban alienation and the *flâneurie*—or urban strollers—of late nineteenth century Paris. Furthermore, Guy Debord and Situationist International provided a field study method—the psycho-

geographic *dérive*—to experience the spatial complexities of ambiguous territories. In short, this research compiles over five years of monitoring, collecting, documenting, analyzing, and writing on topics surrounding the changing nature of so-called ‘dead’ and ‘dying’ malls in North America between 2012 and 2017. In doing so, it identifies similarities between the marginalization encountered by Benjamin in the Parisian arcades and the physical and socio-cultural status of the aging American mid-twentieth century shopping mall at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

Considering contemporary retail as an increasingly globalized phenomenon, this dissertation measures obsolescence in the United States with a *dialectic*, or comparative, epilogue chapter that studies crosscurrents with a Southeast Asian shopping mall embodying similar notions of marginalization and *flânerie*. On the one hand, the upper-middle and upper classes demonstrate increasingly international and technologically connected social, cultural, and consumptive patterns. On the other, middle and lower-middle-class suburbia in both regions reflects increasing diversity, predominantly through Latin American immigration in the US-Mexico borderland region and Asian immigration in the Eastern Great Lakes borderland region.

The term ‘borderland’ shall refer to these historically and culturally distinct, yet economically linked regions which reveal bi-national flows between the United States and its neighbors, as well as economic crosscurrents within each region. Here, *borderland* refers to not only geography, but also acknowledges a socio-economically blurred landscape of neglected retail buildings which have been appropriated by

immigrants, refugees, minorities, and socio-economically disenfranchised communities in American suburbia. The nomenclature of this study is defined as follows:

Southern Borderland is defined as metropolitan areas of Texas that demonstrate significant influences from Latin America including Houston, Dallas, San Antonio, and Laredo.

Northern Borderland is defined as the Eastern Great Lakes Megaregion shared by the United States and Canada—the American states of New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio, as well as the Canadian province of Ontario—centered on Cleveland, Erie, Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, and Toronto.

Migration is a catalyst for physical change in the built environment on both sides of the border. In this regard, an increasingly trans-national ‘new’ territory housed within obsolete ‘dead malls’ has emerged in contrast to Anglo North American normative conditions. In 2015, there were approximately 1,200 malls in the United States and 1/3 were either dead or dying (Semuels, 2015). Unlike other studies which assume that these malls are entirely “dead” and require top-down remaking by professional architects, designers, and planners, this research asserts that while these malls no longer function in their intended manner, they provide a critical support system for people. As placeholders for actual urbanism they operate much like sanctuary cities. These large-scale spaces of otherness will become even more important to their communities in the current moment of profound socio-political upheaval in America.

This dissertation frames its narrative as a *dialectic*—or comparative—study of the two defined ‘borderland’ regions and the dichotomy between the haves and the

have nots being played out in retail culture. Casting a lens on the increasing diversity of suburbia, it engages the historical dialectic of whiteness and assimilation versus diversity and exclusion in the United States. The territorialization of suburban shopping malls by a multicultural underclass confronts issues of disenfranchisement, rejection, and renewal. As evidenced in the recent rise of anti-inclusive rhetoric surrounding populism, the alt-right, and xenophobia in the 2016 American presidential election—appropriated shopping malls will nevertheless continue to provide defensible environments for disadvantaged communities.

Across time and cultures, people value being part of communities. In the early twenty-first century, dying retail environments in America serve as protected territories for the multicultural expression of immigrants, refugees, and minorities pursuing economic autonomy, social integration, and assimilation. These appropriated spaces demonstrate that adaptive reuse can be mobilized organically with limited means via informal actions; it can create spaces that enable freedom of expression and *civitas* (Aureli, 2011:6). This research uses geographic and anthropological means to study patterns, beliefs, routines, aspirations, and behaviors in dying malls to analyze and theorize emerging forms of spatial occupancy at a critical moment in the early twenty-first century.

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL PRECEDENTS: WALTER BENJAMIN AND MICHEL FOUCAULT

This chapter establishes a theoretical framework engaging architecture, obsolescence, migration, and urban theory relevant to my topical area. The discourse included herein situates my dissertation within post-structuralist theories surrounding retail consumption and spatial production emerging out of the post-1968 student uprisings in France and the subsequent search for new forms of intellectual engagement. Much of the recent interest in commercial disinvestment and suburban obsolescence has generated a relatively thin body of research scholarship beyond photographic documentation and speculative design proposals assuming tabula rasa conditions devoid of non-conforming occupancies. The most significant scholarship in the area has been provided by geographers rather than architects, however their research focuses almost exclusively on social conditions rather than the spatial-formal-architectural-urban consequences of this transnational shift. Trained as both an architect and geographer, I am interested in analyzing not only the design of appropriated malls in relation to the theoretical canon of architecture, but also the broader narrative surrounding their ongoing social and cultural transformation. My intent is to refocus the lens of suburban obsolescence toward an intersectional discourse engaging architecture, urbanism, and ethnography.

The seminal works of Walter Benjamin (*The Arcades Project*) and Michel Foucault (*Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias*) establish a conceptual foundation for my research to determine a gap in the contemporary literature surrounding dead and dying malls of the early twenty-first century. An extended bibliography of foundational secondary source literature is included in the appendix.

2.1 Walter Benjamin and ‘The Arcades Project’

The historical, social, and cultural influence of the arcades on Paris was examined by German-Jewish historian, philosopher, and social critic Walter Benjamin (1892-1940) (Ross, 2016). In his extensive and unfinished study of nineteenth century Paris entitled *Das Passagen-Werk* (‘The Arcades Project’), Benjamin studied the complexities of city life and focused on the iron and glass passages (Ross, 2016:123-128). Exiled in Paris from Nazi Germany, Benjamin asserted that the Parisian arcade represented the most important architecture of the nineteenth century and a space of profound social complexity (Shields, 1994). Benjamin interpreted the arcades as ambiguous territories which gave rise to the *flâneurs*—the strolling men of leisure who wandered the streets of Paris as a performative event (Shields, 1994). *The Arcades Project* represents his extensively researched tome examining the state of retail culture over a period of thirteen years (Hanssen, 2006).

By the time that Benjamin had encountered the arcades they had long since fallen into disrepair and partial abandonment. Unlike the Beaux-Arts train stations,

bridges, and museums of the era, the arcades lacked grandeur, monumentality, and civic gravitas. Their diminutive scale and articulation allowed a finer grained and more provocative social narrative to emerge. As a typology that illustrated emerging complexities within an industrialized society, the arcades were spatial constructs which fueled consumption and a collective imagination (Horton & Kraftl, 2014). Arcades fostered transience, while sheltering the avant-garde and marginalized communities from the larger city. Found spaces, and later forgotten ones, they provided a new territory for various eccentricities and desires—artists, freethinkers, prostitutes, communists, and gays—subcultures that thrived in their seclusion. Furthermore, as a socio-geographic construct, these spaces reflected a pivotal shift in modern society by marking a transition away from production and toward a culture of consumption and alienation. Their complexity spawned a bohemian interior world that Benjamin sought to frame, analyze, and deconstruct (Chisholm 2005). By 1940, however, the advance of the Nazi forces on Paris forced Benjamin to leave the city and abandon his seminal manuscript (Horowitz, 2012:392). He attempted to emigrate to the United States via fascist Spain, but died under questionable circumstances (Caldwell, 2009:218).

Benjamin's investigation of the arcades may be positioned within various theoretical schools of thought in his engagement Freudian and Marxist social theories, while from Brecht he learned that popular consumption could support the cause of socialist utopia (Benjamin, 1998) (Solomon, 2001:541-544). It was Surrealism, however, that imparted the most important influence on *The Arcades Project* in that

social revolution and psychological analysis were framed as a symbiotic relationship (McCole, 1993:206-208). Benjamin alluded to dreams, fantasies, and the surreal simultaneity of the literal world beyond which contrasted to the alternative environment that existed within the skylit arcades of the past. Benjamin's use of the dialectical image as his primary documentation means offered a provocative way for him to capture the temporal immediacy of his observations. My research mobilizes this technique to examine similar conditions regarding twenty-first century retail obsolescence in America—the dead mall—and to document the socio-economic and spatial complexities of these emerging interior worlds of otherness.

2.2 Michel Foucault and 'Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias'

Heterotopia, literally meaning 'other spaces', is a widely studied and critiqued notion in architecture and urbanism which frames difference in conventional, everyday places. Heterotopias exist between two worlds and as fragmented amalgamations of hybrid spatial understandings. Michel Foucault's 1984 essay, *Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias*, was the basis for his concept of heterotopia that framed deeper critiques of alternative forms of public space via social theory (Foucault, 1984). It begins by examining the historical development of space in the West from the Middle Ages to the modern era (Foucault, 1984). For Foucault, the foundational concept of heterotopia, or otherness, is embodied by *emplacement* which asserts that relationships between specific locations in space are defined by spatial perceptions. As places of otherness,

Foucault argues that heterotopias exist in all cultures as isolated spaces that remain tenuously connected to their surroundings. These spaces are manifested in diverse ways that juxtapose several incompatible spatial elements, encapsulate spatio-temporal discontinuities, territorialize space by defined thresholds, and maintain simultaneity with other spaces (Foucault, 1984). Foucault contrasts these spaces with utopias because heterotopias are autonomous places that are, in fact, real. He claims that heterotopias demonstrate six principles which include: 1. All cultures support heterotopias; 2. Each heterotopia addresses a very precise and determined function; 3. Heterotopias juxtapose several spaces in one place; 4. They are often linked to specific moments in time, or heterochronies; 5. They operate via systems of opening and closure, using thresholds which allow for porosity or permeability; and most significantly, 6. They establish places of otherness (Foucault, 1984).

Foucault identifies appropriation as an approach for territorializing heterotopias that act in opposition to normative conditions including public/private, cultural/functional, leisure/work, and so on. In these spaces of otherness, Foucault employs the mirror to frame how heterotopias operate. The mirror engages the viewer by bringing them into the frame, yet they remain connected to the space in which they physically exist. In this sense, heterotopias are within, but apart from their context; different heterotopias operate under different rules. For immigrants and historically disadvantaged or marginalized communities, heterotopias exist in highly specific forms, but share *otherness* as their primary distinction. Furthermore, their simultaneity with

similar sites separated by time and geography engages aspects of several spaces across history (Foucault, 1984).

2.3 Conclusion

As theoretical precedents, the works of Benjamin and Foucault provide an exceptional breadth and depth in urban scale heterotopias. The multi-disciplinary lens of both theorists includes a diverse and intersectional range of architectural, geographic, cultural, and urban influences. Their seminal contributions to the field of architectural theory share a foundation with my dead/dying mall research due to influences of occupancy and the everyday human experience. In this sense, the placelessness of suburban shopping malls and their subsequent informal re-tasking by marginalized populations as accessible, controllable territories expands the concept of heterotopia. As an urban inquiry that operates in a lateral spatial orientation, my research considers heterotopian thought through the interior worlds of disinvested, abandoned, obsolete, and incrementally reborn shopping malls. It pays homage to the work of both Walter Benjamin and Michel Foucault by remobilizing their theoretical ponderings on a gap in the literature of urban theory applied to the state of early twenty-first century shopping malls in the United States.

The works of Benjamin and Foucault provide comparative trajectories that contribute to, but by no means fully embody, my selected research path. Even so, the theoretical framework described herein substantially positions my dissertation within

the realm of contemporary urban growth, suburban sprawl, and late twentieth century emergent obsolescence that had not been encountered by either Benjamin or Foucault. Furthermore, by applying the post-structuralist theories of Benjamin and Foucault, my research identifies dead/dying retail as a secondary or placeholder for conventional urbanism in suburbia. It addresses the general absence of a rigorous 'socio-architectural' perspective on suburban shopping mall abandonment and appropriation in North America and worldwide.

CHAPTER III

TYOLOGICAL ORIGINS OF CONTEMPORARY RETAIL: FROM PASSAGES TO GALLERIAS, FROM EUROPE TO NORTH AMERICA¹

“The crowd was the veil from behind which the familiar city as phantasmagoria beckoned to the flâneur. In it, the city was now landscape, now a room. And both of these went into the construction of the department store, which made use of flâneurie itself in order to sell goods. The department store was the flâneur's final coup. As flâneurs, the intelligentsia came into the market place. As they thought, to observe it—but in reality, it was already to find a buyer. In this intermediary stage, they took the form of the bohème. The uncertainty of their economic position corresponded with the uncertainty of their political function.”

Walter Benjamin (1935)

In the twentieth century, urban growth and social change gave rise to alternative approaches to central city planning and urban development in North America.

Master planning concerns were increasingly addressed by interior spatial systems and connective networks including subway systems, underground cities, skywalks, and shopping malls, and mega-structures which responded to various social, psychological, political, economic, and climatic issues. Although the impressive scale of these projects provided urban development models for the entire world, the individual *buildings* of this shift have been widely critiqued as an architecture which rejected conventional urban principles. The emergence of an identifiable parallel urbanism, however, began to simultaneously transform cities into more complex places incorporating indoor civic

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spaces. The emergence of modern “interior urbanisms” in North America during the 1950s and 60s—or urban experiences based upon interior space and internal connective systems—may be traced to earlier developments in continental Europe during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries—as well as experimentation with new typologies at the turn of twentieth century.

The impact of nineteenth century continental European precedents on American cities was most significant in the same cities that received the largest flows of immigrants. Arriving through Ellis Island, this wave represented a demographic shift toward Central, Eastern, and Southern Europe (Fleegler, 2013:2). Lured by an American dream tied to industrial production, the cities of the manufacturing core states—the group of Northern, industrial, four-season climate states stretching from the Northeast across the Great Lakes to Minnesota—exploded in various flows from the 1880s through the 1950s (Fleegler, 2013:23). It is arguably here that European crosscurrents in American society—historical, ethnic, religious, cultural, and architectural—remain most significant. Manifested in a climatic and geographic context much like mid-continental Europe, the architectural and urban legacies of previously inconsequential Central, Eastern, and Southern European cultures on the American built environment gained traction. It is within this context—confronted with the pressures of an expanding population, competition for real estate, and climatic responses—that the arcaded continental European building typologies flourished in the United States much like they had in cities such as Milan, Vienna, and Budapest.

This chapter engages the Northern Borderland focus area of this dissertation—specifically the cities of Cleveland and Buffalo—to frame foundational research surrounding the emergence of enclosed retail typologies in North America. It examines socio-cultural complexities to frame an historical perspective on the earliest North American *interior* urban prototype—the arcade—and its dual role as a forerunner of the contemporary shopping mall and atrium hotel. It casts a lens on the arcades of the Eastern Great Lakes region—identified as the *Northern Borderland* in this dissertation—to reflect on demographic change and a moment in time which spawned an alternative *interior* commercial world for Americans.

Furthermore, this research surveys the rise of urban-scaled interior architectural principles across continents. As evidenced through the arcades of Paris in the nineteenth century, it demonstrates the transfer of those principles shortly thereafter to cities across continental Europe and North America. The seminal ponderings of Walter Benjamin are examined to analyze the arcades as a social construct. For it is within the shadowed world of the Parisian *flâneur*—or cosmopolitan urban stroller—that arcaded commercial interiors gained influence across the European continent, and later in the Americas through industrialization and immigration. The cross-cultural flow of *interior urbanism* in the form of arcades, gallerias, and atria—as well as *flânerie* in relation to a contemporary American context—is discussed in relation to shifting demographic, economic, and consumer conditions from the Industrial Age to today.

3.1 Emergence: Nolli and Interior Urbanism

Interior Urbanism may be defined primarily by its interiority, as well as the vastness, continuity, and interconnectivity of interior spaces in contemporary cities such as arcades, underground pedestrian connections, skybridges, malls, and mega-structures which together create a *secondary* urban infrastructure. The early origins of a specifically interior filter on urbanism may be traced to the work of Italian architect and engineer Giambattista Nolli. His iconic plan of Rome, the *Pianta Grande di Roma* of 1748, is universally known as the *Nolli Plan* and considered to be one of the most significant historical visualizations of urban spatial patterning (Castello & Rands, 2010:96). The Nolli Plan conveys an architectural vision of the topographic and spatial structure of Rome distinguished by its iconographic graphic representational technique (Maier, 2015:216). As a spatial construct that privileges the interiors of buildings, it envisions the city as a continuous interior-exterior experience (Figure 1). Unlike conventional city plans that objectify buildings, Nolli conceived an entirely new way of seeing and understanding the city and civic space. The simple figure-ground graphic method of representing solids in dark gray and voids in white illuminates the interior-exterior tension of the plan (Lam, 2014:81). Likewise, Nolli's choice of privileging interiority communicates a spatial layering that does not clearly define differences between private and public zones, but rather, assembles them as an integrated ensemble. His contribution to the potential of an interior-scaled urbanism is undeniable.

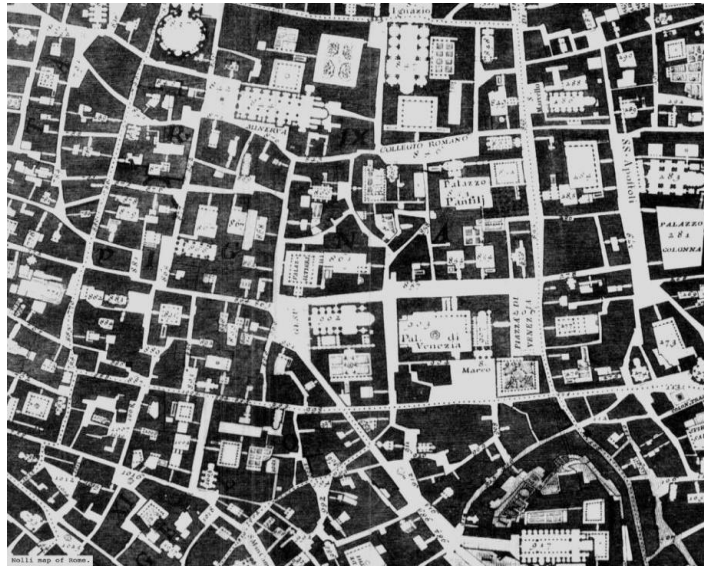


Figure 1: Fragment of the Nolli Plan of Rome. SOURCE: Giambattisti Nolli

3.2 From the Nolli Plan to the Parisian Arcade

The ambitious Parisian society which rose from the ashes of the French Revolution was embodied in the emergence of a new bourgeois class, as well as a highly articulated mercantile system that served them (Heller, 2009:32-41). After the revolution, public real estate auctions allowed wealthy Parisians to assemble contiguous plots of land between parallel streets which became the territory for a new building type—the arcades (McPhee, 2009:5-74). Similar to Giambattisti Nolli’s understanding of the public realms of Rome, the arcades of nineteenth century Paris developed as mediators between interior and exterior (Cannon, 2015). In the first half of the nineteenth century, more than fifty *passages couverts*, or arcades, were built by private investors to establish a secondary interconnective tissue operating within the pre-existing urban

fabric of central Paris (Hitchcock & Kaufman, 1970:226).

The *arcade* denotes a pedestrian passage or gallery roofed in glass and iron connecting two parallel streets and consisting of two facing rows of shops, tearooms, cafes, and other amusements. This building typology was particularly well adapted to the variable climates of northern Europe (Coleman, 2006:52). The term for this typology is *arcade* in English, whereas in French these spaces are known as *passages*. The typology proliferated in Paris before Haussmann's grand boulevards erased the city's ancient fabric. At one time, over 150 arcades existed throughout the city, prominently clustered in the 1st and 2nd arrondissements on the Right Bank (Jones, 2004:288). Envisioned as an alternative to the unsanitary, noisy, and visually disordered city streets, arcades offered a speculative means to extend street frontages within the heart of European capital cities where real estate was both prime and expensive (Salerno, 2003:170). Arcades created more affordable retail space that was neither an entirely indoor nor outdoor experience by developing a controllable and autonomous emergent form of interior urbanism. Shops and cafés in the *passages* benefited from a street-like presence and defensible environment sharing similarities, as well as marked differences with the typical urban street. Paris became the pre-eminent proving ground for the shopping arcade, where it flourished into its fullest effect in a bourgeois and aspirational urban society of the early nineteenth century that launched contemporary consumer culture (Herron, 2014:46).

As visionary examples of industrial age technology, the iron-columned arcades surged during the 1820s and 30s. In 1835, Auguste Luchet identified six principles which defined the prototypical arcade (Moncan, 2001). Luchet characterized the typology as upscale, pedestrian-only, weather-proof, skylit, and connecting two streets. As a social commentator and author, Luchet noted that the arcades were styled with an embellished with a luxuriant architecture that was reflected in the high-quality of goods and services conveyed within their confines (Moncan, 2001). The arcades of Paris tested the notion of semi-public, self-contained worlds mixing commerce with leisure. As restful environments that promoted lingering and people-watching—as well as forerunners of the contemporary shopping malls—arcades responded to consumer tastes as curated one-stop retail experiences. Dedicated to the pursuit of pleasure, the arcades fueled the industrial machine and relied upon newspapers, advertising, word-of-mouth, and other means of consumer manipulation (Muschamp, 2009:560). The popular appeal of the Parisian arcades was vividly illustrated in the *Illustrated Guide to Paris* (1852) as follows:

“In speaking of the inner boulevards, we have made mention again and again of the arcades which open onto them. These arcades, a recent invention of industrial luxury, are glass-roofed, marble-paneled corridors extending through whole blocks of buildings, whose owners have joined together for such enterprises. Lining both sides of these corridors, which get their light from above, are the most elegant shops, so that the arcade is a city, a world in miniature in which customers will find everything they need.”

In Paris, the *Passage des Panoramas* (1800) is considered the first purpose-built, glass-roofed interior street (Rollasen & Rajeshwar, 2002:265). However, an earlier example

of the type included the *Galleries de Bois* (1786), built within the Palais-Royal offered an enclosed market space until its demolition in 1828 (Gilloch, 1996). Galerie Vivienne is regarded as one of the most notable examples of the arcade typology. Built in 1823, Galerie Vivienne was a favorite gathering place for artists, but became derelict and nearly deserted by the end of the century.

Prior to the massive urban renewal program initiated by Napoleon III and advanced through the work of Baron Haussmann, Paris lacked paved streets, coordinated utilities, and sanitation (Weeks & Martin, 1999). In the interest of greater uniformity and integrated urban design, the renovation of Paris resulted in the destruction of over half of the arcades (Coverley, 2010). Wide boulevards replaced serpentine medieval urban patterns to reorder the city and slowly erase the secret world of the flâneurs. As Haussmann's grand boulevards reduced the arcades to ghosts of the past, the rise of the department store exacerbated the waning novelty of the arcades (Weeks & Martin, 1999). The department store—another Parisian innovation—rendered many of these arcades unfashionable and obsolete. As the arcade's most direct descendent, the department store offered a much larger climate-controlled format of vertically-stacked interior streets lined with consumer fantasies. In this sense, the curated luxuries of the arcades were amplified formally, spatially, visually, and atmospherically—evolving into the department store typology exemplified by the Galeries Lafayette and Printemps. These Parisian precedents would ultimately be imitated around the world.

Doomed by the fantasies that they provoked, many of the arcades were demolished to make way for new boulevards designed to facilitate ease of troop movements in times of civil unrest, while making room for grander architectural aspirations (Gourgouris, 2006:217). Furthermore, this citywide “renovation” exposed the decrepit areas of Paris that had been hidden from view within a maze of medieval streets (Gourgouris, 2006:217). In their place, monumental boulevards offered an unusual mix of the grand, as well as the sublime—palatial theaters, cafés, opera houses, and department stores—places that simultaneously fueled consumer euphoria and political paranoia (Jordan, 1996:210). The chaotic streets of Paris which had given rise to anarchy and the French Revolution were reformed to simultaneously the bourgeois desires of the public and centralist powers of government (Walonen, 2009:7). With the rise of the department store and the impact of Haussmannization only about thirty arcades remain in Paris today (Muschamp, 2009). Most of the remaining arcades are located in the 1st, 2nd, 8th, 9th, and 10th arrondissements including Galerie du Palais and Galerie Véro-Dodat in the 1st, Passage du Bourge-l’Abbé, Passage du Caire, Passage Choisel, Galerie Colbert, Passage du Grand-Cerf, Passage des Panoramas, Passage du Ponceau, Passage des Princes and Galerie Vivienne in the 2nd; Galerie de la Madeleine and Arcade des Champs-Élysées/Arcade due Lido in the 8th; Passage Verdeau and Passage Jouffroy in the 9th; and Passage Brady and Passage du Prado in the 10th (Fallon, Pitt, & Williams, 2011).

3.3 Walter Benjamin, Flâneurie, and the European Arcades

Benjamin's research on the arcades of Paris was influenced by the poetry of Charles Baudelaire which characterized the *flâneur* as a gentleman stroller of the streets (Geist, 1983). For Baudelaire, the flâneur represented the sophisticated aficionado of the street—recast by Benjamin as the quintessential connoisseur of a modern metropolitan experience (Benjamin & Jennings, 2006). Flâneurs became an object of greater scholarly interest, analysis, critique, and understanding of twentieth century urban, social, and formal conditions. The phenomenon revealed class tensions and gender divisions of the nineteenth-century city (Benjamin, 2009). These urban explorers shed light upon a sense of modern alienation with the city and the social impact of mass production, as well as the advance of consumer culture and a profound shift in societal expectations (Gleber, 1997:55-57). In this sense, the flâneur is not simply limited to the physical act of strolling in the Baudelairian sense, but also implies an enlightened way of thinking, living, and navigating the world. The flâneurs were at once a product of the bourgeoisie as well as the bohème—a hybrid social type that has become increasingly commonplace in the world's densest and most expensive cities. The contemporary French slang term for such hybridization is evidenced in the slang term *bo-bo*—the unlikely pairing of the *bourgeois* and the *bohemian* (Brooks, 2004).

Walter Benjamin viewed the flâneur as the definitive figure of the modern era, however, it was the *habitats* of the flâneur with which he was primarily concerned (Frisby, 2014:252). As a stroller and loiterer, perhaps without an ostensible purpose,

the flâneur was intuitively invested in the history of his spatial environments. In search of the sublime, delightful, or erotic—he was a wanderer of the boulevards, parks, cafés, and especially the arcades. The societal forces, urban forms, and building typologies which gave rise to flâneur culture simultaneously introduced forces of alienation within the city and its aspirational conventions (Lucas, 2002). Benjamin notes that the habitats and incubators of flâneur culture—the arcades—were being destroyed just as the flâneur was emerging as a recognizable social type. Thus, the otherness of the flâneurie was defined as a person out of place—as the detached spectator who retreated to the protected confines of the interior to territorialize space amidst the chaos of rapid industrialization and consumption (Bohm, 2014:92). For Benjamin, the man of the crowd is not the flâneur, but rather, he is the exception. The flâneur met his demise alongside the triumph of consumerism, however the phenomenon may be resurrected in a contemporary sense to embody the whims and desires of the nomadic global tourist or the bohemian-bourgeoisie—the *bo-bos* that hop-scotch between the most expensive cities in the world (Brooks, 2004).

Benjamin attempted to discern and describe the collective dreams of nineteenth century society. From his perspective, the arcades served as *the* context for utopian illusions of a bourgeois society aspiring to capitalistic largesse; he unknowingly foreshadowed later social phenomenon operating within the suburban shopping malls of mid-twentieth century North America. In *The Arcades Project* he insists that the capitalistic impulse of the arcades is rooted in its deceptive agency, since "*...passages*

having no outside. Like the dream..."(Benjamin, 1999). Here, Benjamin predicts similar futures to mid-twentieth century North American mall culture, pairing the alienation of the nineteenth century arcades with a reductive denial of history. *"The dreaming collective knows no history. Events pass before it as always identical and always new* (Benjamin, 1999)." Thus, the Parisian arcades reveal an authentic historical interpretation of the collective dreams of nineteenth century society, evidenced by Benjamin's understanding of human interactions in space: *"In order to understand the arcades from the ground up, we sink them into the deepest stratum of the dream* (Benjamin, 1999)."

3.4 Translation from Continental Europe to America: The Urban Interior

The modern arcade emerged boldly in early nineteenth century Paris and the concept was soon adopted in other cities across continental Europe. With close cultural and geographic ties to Paris, the mid-nineteenth century arcades of Brussels are among the most expertly refined examples of the type. Likewise, the cities of Turin, Rome, Vienna, and Budapest were early adopters of the arcade, however the most advanced European example of the typology is the Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II in Milan. Their influence soon reached the growing industrial cities in the Americas. Built in 1828, the Westminster Arcade in Providence, Rhode Island was the first arcade in the United States (Hyden & Sheckels, 2016:196). Designed by architects Russell Warren and James Bucklin in the Greek Neo-Classical style, the historic structure is notable for its large

central atrium, skylights, and ionic columns (Woodward, 2003). Modeled on Parisian precedents, the Westminster Arcade was the first indoor shopping street and declared a national historic landmark in 1976 (Conley & Campbell, 1983). The ground floor is configured for retail and the upper floors for office space. Although the arcade typology arrived in the United States on the East Coast, it developed to its highest form in the industrial cities of the Great Lakes region. The Westminster Arcade exemplifies an appropriated European urban-scale interiorism for North America.

3.5 Cleveland and Buffalo: The ‘Second Cities’ of Central Europe

The industrial Great Lakes region of the United States has been historically defined by underlying complexities related to the movement of human capital, raw materials, and industrial products, as well as the corresponding impact of these influences on regional identity and the built environment. Occupying a key strategic position between the North American Atlantic Coast and its mid-continental heartland, the Great Lakes mega-region has disproportionately influenced the industrial and infrastructural development of two nations. Geographic distribution of mineral wealth and manufacturing centers facilitated early flows of raw materials from the region’s north and west to processing and production hubs in its south and east (Poh-Miller & Wheeler, 1990). Demand for industrialization created intercontinental human flows, predominantly from Central, Eastern, and Southern Europe, which continue to shape the character, connectedness, and architectural characteristics of these cities today.

Although the United States was initially settled on the Atlantic seaboard, it was in places such as Cleveland and Buffalo where it emerged as a contemporary industrial nation. Here, Americans left farm life to encounter a sophisticated metropolitan world, followed by early twentieth century waves of immigrants from Europe. The first generation of immigrants most typically worked in factories and in domestic support services and subsequently transformed these cities into the largest American metropolises of their age. Assimilating while establishing the labor movement, they raised closely-knit families, supported vibrant neighborhoods, and built opulent places of worship embedded with memories of past lives. Yet, their impact on shaping a shifting consumer culture has been less closely monitored. Emerging as a growing economic force by nature of their sheer numbers, retail in Cleveland and Buffalo was centralized in the urban core. Retail activities were supported by arcades, department stores, and street corridor shops connected to residential neighborhoods by streetcars.

From the turn of the twentieth century to the 1970s, Cleveland was called the de facto “largest or second largest city” of various Central European nations, including Hungary, Slovenia, and Slovakia (Benton-Short, 2014:161). Chicago has been famously known as the largest Polish city outside of Warsaw, and Buffalo was considered the second largest Polish city in the in United States (Barkan, 1999:440) (Carpenter, 1929). Their relationship to Europe is revealed in contemporary demographics, cultural agglomerations, and the built environment—all of which have changed more slowly than other regions of the United States over the last fifty years. In the first half of the

twentieth century, these cities were economically dynamic and vibrant, growing into sophisticated cities that reflected imported notions of European urbanism. And although they are currently shrinking, Cleveland and Buffalo ranked among the top ten largest cities in the United States during the early years of the twentieth century.

The early internationalization of the largest cities in the Great Lakes region, tied to industry and the human experience, contrasts considerably with current regional realities. On the one hand, economic stagnation, de-industrialization, and out-migration have allowed historical architectural influences to remain visible and relevant—but on the other, these metropolitan areas are shrinking. Apart from fading ethnic neighborhoods and associated social infrastructures such as churches, schools, and national societies, the urban arcades of Cleveland and Buffalo are lasting legacies of Central, Eastern, and Southern European influence. Urban, architectural, and social connectivity remains relevant between these Great Lakes cities and their distant cultural generators. Impacted by harsh climates and responding to urban growth and mercantilism, interior commercial activities became increasingly attractive. Cleveland and Buffalo became proving grounds for the arcade typology in North America.

Due to population loss, Cleveland and Buffalo have migrated toward less significant yet resoundingly authentic places by nature of their stagnation. Urban economies, demographics, and intrinsic cultural contributions shaped their historic connectedness to Central, Eastern, and Southern Europe, and more specifically, to cultures of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire and the cities of Milan, Vienna, and

Budapest, as well as their broader contribution to American interior urbanism. The corresponding nineteenth century experiment with the arcade typology remains intact and encapsulated in time. These arcades are particularly significant as they pertain to the larger narrative of retail history of the United States. In Buffalo, the Palace Arcade (currently the Market Arcade) was designed by architect E.B. Green and built in 1892 (Kowsky, 1981:92-93). Recently renovated and sold to investors, the Palace Arcade has withstood various shifts, yet its resilience remains. In Cleveland, the city's three prominent examples of the prototype represent the most significant arcade legacy in North America. These examples would become the typological forerunners of the contemporary shopping mall in the United States.

3.6 Cities Transformed by Density: An American Flânerie

Downtown department stores in America's industrial cities addressed the aspirational desires of an aspiring middle-class, offering a convenient and accessible retail environment for a linguistically diverse populace where consumption was a path toward assimilation. Likewise, the department stores enabled immediate proximity to the more established, native-born American professional classes working downtown. Modeled on Parisian precedents, the origins of the department store may be traced to the rise of conspicuous consumption fueled by the industrial revolution (Hinshaw & Stearns, 2014:121-123). As reflected initially in the Parisian *flâneurs*, the affluent bourgeois established American middle-class grew alongside the recently arrived

aspirational immigrant labor force. Prosperity and social mobility gave rise to higher disposable incomes and consumer culture in both realms, while downtown window shopping was transformed into a leisure activity akin to the strolls of the *flâneurs* of the previous century. Consumerism led to assimilation of American cultural norms and sensibilities (Miller, 2008:278). Responding to the need for more street downtown frontage, developers looked to continental European precedents—specifically the arcades—to grow the commercial fabric of downtown America from the inside-out.

Downtown Cleveland offers the most significant trove of historic arcades in the United States. The Euclid and Colonial arcades share striking similarities with Parisian precedents translated to a New World context. At a considerably more monumental scale, the Old Arcade was modeled on Milan's *Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II*. The Old Arcade, originally called the Superior Arcade, is arguably the grandest nineteenth century arcade built in the Americas (Figure 2). Designed by architects George H. Smith and John Eisenmann, the developers were unable to find conventional contractors willing to build it, so they approached the Detroit Bridge Company (Keating, Krumholz, & Perry, 1995). Opening in 1890, the Old Arcade reflected rapidly changing commercial, social, and technological conditions that impacted architecture at the turn of the twentieth century. As an entirely new typology in the region, Clevelanders struggled to describe the new arcade. A local newspaper resorted to calling it 'A Complete Town' (Rose, 1950). This notion was perhaps an early understanding of the *city-within-a-city* program that would come to define modern buildings built eighty

years later in the 1960s and 70s. Like the Parisian *passages*, the Old Arcade became a “dream factory” for newly arrived immigrants in much the same way that the Parisian arcades transformed the expectations of bourgeois society in post- Revolutionary Paris. Chinaware, linens, clothing, millinery, jewelry, umbrellas, pianos, and various edible luxuries filled the shop windows of Cleveland's most upscale shopping venue. Impressive in scale and state-of-the-art, the Old Arcade was used as the venue for the Republican National Convention of 1896.



Figure 2: The Old Arcade, Cleveland. SOURCE: The Old Arcade

Unlike the Parisian examples that gave rise to the department stores, however, the Old Arcade followed in the footsteps of the Higbee Company (1860) department store, yet its location near Public Square supported the later emergence of several new department stores in the immediate vicinity. The establishment of Halle Company (1891) as well as the expansion of Bailey's (1899), May Company (1900), Sterling-Linder (1907), and Taylor's (1907) were outgrowths of the Arcade effect (Rose, 1950). The “phatasmagoria” that Benjamin described in his analysis of the Parisian arcades may be equally attributed to the fantasy world that the arcades and department stores offered to Clevelanders, particularly those recently arrived from Central, Eastern, and Southern Europe. The orderly and refined visions that the Old Arcade provided for a non-English-speaking, aspirational, and largely working class cannot be underestimated. Contrasting with previous lives defined by political uncertainty, economic hardship, and war, these retail environments visualized the American Dream and promoted bottom-up assimilation. Within these Victorian state-of-the-art cathedrals of commerce, a stable and affluent future could be imagined.

3.7 A New (and Adapted) Typology for Cleveland

The Old Arcade connects two primary commercial streets in the central business district—Superior and Euclid avenues. Consisting of three structures, it houses two nine-story office towers that flank a five-story enclosed arcade. The Superior Avenue portal opens onto Cleveland’s main east-west commercial street with a grandly arched

Richardsonian Romanesque entrance. The Superior Avenue entrance sits twelve-feet lower than the Euclid Avenue portal, resulting in two main floors that negotiate the sectional change between streets, while the Euclid Avenue entrance opens onto Cleveland's historical main shopping street. Since Superior and Euclid avenues are not parallel, a rotunda at the arcade's south portal on Euclid Avenue shifts the axis twenty-three degrees (Stakes, 1995).

Much like its Parisian and Central European forerunners, the Old Arcade is an architectural hybrid defined by its glass skylight, linear configuration, and commercial program. The arcade itself is a 300-foot long interior street ringed by four levels of circumferential balconies (Gratz, 1989). The central shopping street is formed with iron columns rising 100 vertical feet to create the most impressive interior public space in the city. Apart from its programmatic hybridization, the Old Arcade is also a technological bridge between various techniques. The office building entrance towers employ a masonry load-bearing wall system, however, the floor plates are carried on I-beams attached to steel columns (Johannesen, 1981). The floors and roof of the arcade are supported with an iron and oak columnar structure bridged by steel trusses (Gratz, 1989). Responding to shifting architectural trends and consumer tastes, the Euclid Avenue portal was remodeled by Walker & Weeks in 1939 with a two-story Art Deco curtain wall façade attached to a steel structure.

At their peak, the Old Arcade and downtown department stores anchored a vibrant retail district that compared to Fifth Avenue in New York and Michigan Avenue

in Chicago. After World War II, the growth of suburbia and shopping malls began drawing business away from the Euclid Avenue corridor. By the late 1970s, the Old Arcade had devolved into a shadow of its former self as the incremental closure of several department stores resulted in increasing shop vacancies that further diminished the retail viability of the arcade. In 1975, the structure was listed as one of Cleveland's first buildings on the National Register of Historic Buildings (Gregor, 2010). By the late 1990s, however, the Old Arcade had fallen into further disrepair and was sold to the Hyatt Corporation who committed to adaptive reuse of the building. In 2001, the Hyatt Regency Cleveland hotel opened after a \$60 million dollar renovation (Kelly, 2001). The first two floors remain in commercial use, while the upper floor retail spaces and office suites have been converted into hotel rooms. Guest rooms have been carefully integrated behind the original storefronts that have been restored to conform to historic architectural details.

3.8 The Colonial and Euclid Arcades

Considerably more diminutive in scale, the Colonial (1898) and Euclid (1911) arcades were sited parallel to each other to connect the commercial corridors of Euclid and Prospect avenues. Both arcades share striking similarities with the Passage des Panoramas (1799) and Galerie Vivienne (1826) in Paris, the Passage Freyung (1861) in Vienna, and the Párizsi Udvar (1913) in Budapest. The Colonial Arcade was designed in the Georgian style by George H. Smith, one of the two architects who designed the Old

Arcade (DeMarco, 2017). Its iron and glass interior with exquisite balcony-level detailing evokes the earlier Arcade, but in a considerably smaller format—only two and a half stories—sheltered with a linear skylight running continuously from Euclid to Prospect. The oldest part of the Colonial Arcade grouping is the five-story Kendall Building (1887) and the six-story former William & Rodgers Department Store both on Euclid Avenue (Encyclopedia of Cleveland History, 2003). These two buildings were connected by the Colonial Arcade (1898) to Prospect Avenue (Figure 3). In 1911, the stately Euclid Arcade opened to the public (Figure 4). Designed in the neo-Classical style by architect Franz Warner, its white marble floors, white terra cotta walls, white plaster coffered ceiling, marble floors, and brightly lit barrel-vaulted ceiling contrast dramatically with the Colonial Arcade (Hoefler, 2003). The arcades in Cleveland were embraced by shoppers in their early years as refined alternatives to the city streets. From the late nineteenth century through the 1950s, downtown Cleveland was the predominant shopping district in the region, offering not only the arcades but also numerous department stores, restaurants, theaters, amusement parlors, and cultural attractions. As climate-controlled interior spaces, the arcades provided a desirable alternative to the crowded, noisy, and dirty streets of the central business district. Much like the early suburban shopping malls, women were particularly fond of the arcades which were perceived as safe, quiet, and clean places of leisure.



Figure 3: Colonial Arcade, Cleveland. SOURCE: Sandvick



Figure 4: Euclid Arcade, Cleveland. SOURCE: Sandvick

By the 1970s, shop vacancies in the Euclid and Colonial arcades escalated and they began to fall into decline. Since that time, the arcades have benefited from new commercial and residential development along the Euclid Avenue corridor, as well as increased pedestrian traffic from the baseball stadium (1994) and arena (1994) in the adjacent Gateway district. In 2000, a major renovation effort connected the arcades at their mid-point. A Marriott hotel opened in the former Colonial Hotel and a mix of local retailers including clothing boutiques, jewelers, watch repair, and restaurants were introduced in the newly branded '5th Street Arcades'. In 2013, Cumberland Development master-leased the space and initiated a new marketing campaign to program the arcades with a new retail and events program.

3.9 Reflecting/Projecting: From Arcades to Atria and Beyond

Reconsidering the legacy of the arcades and the work of Walter Benjamin, the encapsulated world of the *flâneur* may be viewed as a re-emergent theme in North American retail at the turn of the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. Today, the phantasmagoria that Walter Benjamin encountered in his analysis of the Parisian arcades has become ever more complex and layered in our emerging globalized world. Since his time, the dreams of the nineteenth century have encountered various scalar and technological shifts. By the late twentieth century, industrial production had been shipped overseas and the forces of media, advertising, and fashion morphed into entirely global enterprises. American cities reveal some of the most dramatic retail

transformations. In the Great Lakes cities of Cleveland and Buffalo, this shift spans a broad range from re-purposed nineteenth century arcades to abandoned mid-century regional shopping malls.

The origins of our own retail desires may be traced to the nineteenth century when the consumptive dream was fabricated. Our contemporary consumptive culture emerged within the arcades of Paris and relied on various primitive means of consumer manipulation; newspapers, magazines, and billboards ultimately gave way to radio, television, the internet, and social media. In this transformative process, we have increasingly traded our physical “retail” landscapes for virtual ones—and perhaps this change is most dramatically evidenced in the United States. Along with mainstream entertainment enterprises, the Parisian arcades also supported an underworld of illegal activities. Gambling and prostitution were considered to rest beyond direct police jurisdiction and were tolerated, which in turn spawned a social atmosphere supporting a bohemian culture of transients, artists, and gays that challenged racial, ethnic, social, and economic boundaries.

After the Hausmannian renovations of Paris, the increasingly forgotten arcades became a fringe territory concealing a parallel world apart from conventional norms. Translated into a twentieth century North American context, a similar condition has been evidenced in the increasingly less mainstream expectations for suburban shopping malls in the early twentieth century. Countless dying and dead malls have slowly transitioned from entirely mainstream environments to inherently decoupled

places of “terrain-vague”—as heterotopian microcosms of ethnic, social, and economic sub-cultures embodied by the theoretical ponderings of Michel Foucault.

With regard to the Southern Borderland cities analyzed later in this dissertation—Dallas and Houston—these Sunbelt cities are centered on automobile culture, yet witnessing resurgent urban cores and diminished peripheral suburban shopping malls. Paralleling this migration, Dallas and Houston have become increasingly globalized and responsive to their geographic location “between” the developed and developing worlds. Here, obsolescence and abandonment have given rise to a new form of resilience embodied by an alternative retail culture—one that offers aspirational immigrants and bourgeois-bohemians—the *bo-bos*—an affordable, flexible, and adaptive territory to sell, to consume, and to participate in the economy. For both merchants and their clientele, the adapted shopping malls and strip malls in the periphery of Dallas and Houston have acquired new purposes as Latin American marketplaces, Middle Eastern souks, and South Asian bazaars. As such, these mid-twentieth century cast-offs are much like the transient, vibrant and vital sub-cultures confronted by Benjamin in the arcades of 1930s Paris. Contrasted with a homogenous suburban landscape of Walmarts and Targets, adapted shopping malls and strip malls provide authenticity, social value, and choice that challenges the placelessness and anonymity of the internet.

Reflecting on social, architectural, and phenomenological conditions of the nineteenth century, Walter Benjamin proposed that the arcade was a visual device—

effectively a space frame that sought to engage the lingering masses with a curated view on life. Through the rose-colored glass of these interior worlds, generational expectations changed and contemporary consumerism was launched. Since then, continual shifts in industrial production, communication, consumption, and connectivity have radically re-wrote the rules of city-building in post-suburban cities. Automobile dependence, expressway systems, and racial tensions are most typically cited as the causes of diminished central city retail districts in the United States. As evidenced in the nineteenth century's transition from arcades to department stores, and later, within the more recent shift from a *physical* world of suburban shopping malls to the *virtual* world of internet commerce, retail architecture is among the least resilient and enduring of building typologies. Consumer society continually disposes of these spaces. As evidenced in the globalized metropolises of Dallas and Houston, the second lives of obsolete retail forms offer resilience, territory, and opportunity to a new generation of Americans and flâneurs.

Re-engaging this argument from the standpoint of late-twentieth century interior urbanism in the United States, the impact of John Portman's downtown retail complexes in Atlanta, Detroit, and Los Angeles share significant common denominators—mid-1960s racial riots, followed by continual white flight, and long-term suburbanization well into the 1980s and 90s. These cities responded similarly by rejecting the messy, uncontrollable, and inconvenient aspects of city life in favor of an alternative urbanism—an *interior urbanism*—which was initially facilitated by a John

Portman-designed retail-commercial-entertainment mega-structure. These enclosed “streetscapes” may be viewed as a twentieth century American example of the speculative Parisian arcade typology, yet in a late Modernist monumental scale. Like the world of the flâneur, desire and modernity were embedded into Portman’s new interior realms in a *land of plenty* aesthetic at an urban-interior scale. Like the Parisian arcades, Portman’s work and its worldwide progeny reveal the impact of social shifts, popular culture, and technological advances in reshaping cities and societies into consumptive utopias. Marginally successful and continually adapted, Portman’s take on the arcade has, in fact, proven to be too large to fail, but reveals common themes of obsolescence, abandonment, neglect, and tragedy intermingled within its largesse.

As we move into the twenty-first century, American cities are attempting to remake themselves into fashionable retail environments that support urban vitality. Unlike the nineteenth century, however, competition is not necessarily located just across the street in an improved product range or new building type, but rather, in the ability for physical spaces to compete with or support virtual ones. In this sense, entire neighborhoods such as Soho in New York operate like Old World arcades at a neighborhood scale, while mid-continental cities such as Las Vegas have become nothing more than showrooms for virtual purchases or shopping malls in place of actual urbanism. In the end, the narrative of contemporary consumerism and the architectures of retail have always been tethered to the volatile forces of trend and fashion. As built environments, they continuously rise and fall relative to society’s

relentless quest for novelty, as well as the quantitative desires of economy, efficiency, and speed. Yet, we are unable to entirely relinquish the qualitative metropolitan pleasures that *physical* spaces ultimately provide.

Walter Benjamin's dream of the arcades remains relevant, but Americans have increasingly traded the allure of the shop window for the limitlessness of the computer touch screen. Across the United States—from the Rust Belt cities of Cleveland, Buffalo, Detroit, Rochester, Syracuse, Cincinnati, and Pittsburgh—to the Sun Belt cities of Phoenix, Dallas, Houston, Tampa, Ft. Lauderdale, and Miami—Americans lament the lost downtown urban memories that cities increasingly make impossible. Central to such memories is the act of consumption. Like the forgotten arcades, the shuttered department stores and empty streets are physical places that the allure of modernity has encouraged us to leave behind. Society has collectively outgrown such desires by seemingly liberating itself from the consumptive vulgarity provoked through their design. Americans rejected the rote narratives that moved shoppers past physical shop windows and on to department store escalators toward lives defined by imitation. And yet in reality, we have simply traded the physical world of consumption for a virtual landscape of cyberspace.

In society's march toward urban modernity, most metropolitan conurbations in the United States—with the notable exceptions of New York and Chicago—have incrementally lost the glorious aspects of a pedestrian-scale retail experience. Although many sentimentally find the diminutive allure of the arcades and city streets

attractive, contemporary consumers have grown to prefer hyper-scale regional outlet malls or the immediate satisfaction of the internet to satisfy desires of ease, choice, and economy. Modernity has offered greater control to pursue consumptive freedoms at leisure—in the comfort of home *24-hours a day!* The physical places that historically provided those needs undergo continual reprogramming, rebranding, redevelopment, and demolition. In a contemporary turn, the top-down urban renovation methods of Baron Haussmann have become democratized through technology. The collective abandonment of our physical world results in on-going obsolescence and removal. We have ultimately left the city behind.

CHAPTER IV

BORDERLAND MEGASPACE: URBAN DISSIMILARITY IN THE GALLERIAS OF HOUSTON AND TORONTO²

At face value, the North American cities of Houston and Toronto share very little in common. Their climates, geographies, social norms, and urban forms are radically different. Their political sensibilities and civic aspirations embody remarkably differed philosophies regarding the public realm. Even so, due to their geographic and economic importance, Houston and Toronto share a dynamic and global cosmopolitanism; they are important cities at national and international scales. Both cities act as primary gateways for immigrants to their respective nations. Both cities have witnessed rapid expansion and transformative development during the 1970s that shifted their economic and cultural significance on a global scale. And both cities have built world-renowned cathedrals of commerce inspired by the Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II in Milan.

It is widely known that Houston and Toronto laid the groundwork for their future growth during the 1970s, an era in which each city grew dramatically in national and international stature. During this time, both Houston and Toronto received several key architectural landmarks, and more particularly—a new regional shopping complex modelled on the Galleria Emanuele II. These new translations—the *Houston Galleria*

² Part of this chapter is reprinted with permission from “A Tale of Two Cities: Dissimilarity and the North American Gallerias of Houston and Toronto” by Gregory Marinic. 2015. *ACSA Conference Proceedings*, Volume 103, pages 398-405, Copyright 2015 by Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture.

and the *Toronto Eaton Centre*—reflected a shift in mall culture toward an alternative design approach to retail, urbanism, and the public realm in their respective cities. The contemporary shopping mall exists at ‘the core of a worldwide transformation of distribution and consumption’ (Jackson, 1996). Together, these late-modern gallerias of the 1970s represent the pre-internet pinnacle of shopping malls and consumer culture.

Through the lens of consumption, this chapter engages the Southern Borderland and Northern Borderland focus regions of this dissertation to examine the histories of the Houston Galleria and Toronto Eaton Centre from the perspective of their design, planning, and developmental characteristics. It discerns larger urban issues that emerged at a critical time in history for both cities. During the 1970s, Houston and Toronto would embark upon vastly different paths of urban growth. The developmental practices evidenced in the design and construction of these gallerias would come to define contrasting visions of the city and urban development cultures that continued to evolve over the next thirty years. Furthermore, enclosed shopping malls represent contemporary North American and increasingly global cultural sensibilities and desires. In this sense, malls are indeed heterotopias—fixed places that are equal parts fictional stage-set and physical reality. The proliferation of climate-controlled shopping malls in the post-war years exacerbated the effect of placelessness in malls—their utilitarian and consumption-oriented architectures sought little more than to provide neutral realms for commercial exchange. They serve as ‘utopias of

consumption’ as well—for shoppers, these malls exist seemingly beyond the reach of time and place—as encapsulated spaces of fundamentally generic and universal intentions and desires.

Both gallerias—one at the heart of its downtown and the other at a peripheral edge—aspired to more. They were built as architectural manifestations of the complementary powers of late twentieth century consumerism and popular culture in North America, as well as attempts to authentically resolve issues of urban growth. The Galleria and Eaton Centre urban-interior “stage-sets” supported the financial aspirations of national retailers, while addressing shifting retail expectations and climate-responsive interior civic environments. Developed as hyperspaces, the Galleria and Eaton Centre blended lessons learned from late nineteenth century, internally-focused European urbanisms with late twentieth century consumerism. Representing a hybridized late modern/post-modernist aesthetic, these gallerias reflect the larger system of capitalism and guilty pleasures of consumerism—pioneering the expansion of North American cities at the *hyper-interior* scale, while redefining expectations for the conventional enclosed shopping mall.

As urbane and sophisticated urban-scale spaces, each stood apart from reigning conventions to assert long-term design influences merging consumption with increasing commercialization. Moreover, each of these twentieth century gallerias presents a very different case for extending the city. In Houston, the Galleria would ultimately influence the design of master planned projects for *tabula rasa* greenfield

locations in the metropolitan area and beyond. In Toronto, the Eaton Centre initiated a greater awareness for historic preservation and the urban fabric—key aspects in defining and ultimately shaping the larger city. Both projects offered significantly different responses to the architecture of “urban-interior” retail, however, each has endured the test of time to remain resilient, desirable, and profitable within an ever-changing retail landscape that has been radically transformed by the internet. Beginning with a survey of interior urbanism and the history of arcade typologies, this chapter unpacks lessons learned from both gallerias—and how these lessons have contributed to the radically contrasting architectural and urban development cultures of each city.

4.1 Victor Gruen’s Imprint: Utilitarian and Communal Origins

In North America, the emergence of suburbia in the 1950s and 60s coincided with the de-activation of lively outdoor street culture within central cities. The simultaneous rise of car-dependency, peripheral sprawl, and urban decentralization resulted in the development of alternatives to the urban shopping street (Axelrod, 2009:64). The suburban shopping mall was spawned in response to the tabula rasa placelessness of suburbia. Based upon commercialization and control, it became the de facto substitute for urban public space. Such spaces were reconceived, reinvented, and rebranded into an *interior* form of urbanism that defined suburban culture, however the origin of the mall aesthetic may be traced to European origins.

By the late 1960s, a renewed interest in more substantial and urbane enclosed shopping experiences emerged, a trend that responded to the consumer-driven need for larger and more upscale malls. With their elevated expectations for architectural grandeur and place-making, these new malls channeled two retail forerunners—the European galleria and Victor Gruen’s Southdale Center. From the historical perspective of earlier *interior* urban prototype, the arcade updated the contemporary bazaar and offered a precedent for department stores, shopping malls, and interior urban connective systems. The historic arcades in Europe and North America reflect a demographic wave and moment in time that spawned the potential for an alternative *interior* commercial world, as well as the trans-cultural rise of urban-scaled interior architectural principles across continents. The nineteenth century arcades of Paris and continental Europe facilitated the transfer of interior urban principles shortly thereafter to cities in North America. Arcaded commercial interiors gained influence across the European continent and throughout the Americas by means of industrialization and immigration. The cross-cultural flow of *interior urbanism* in the form of arcades, gallerias, and atria—and later in the form of shopping malls, tunnel systems, and skywalk networks—may be linked to these earliest arcade forerunners of pre-Hausmannian Paris.

Designed by Austrian architect Victor Gruen, a Jewish intellectual who fled Nazi-occupied Vienna, Southdale Center was the first indoor, multi-story shopping center in the United States (Figure 5) (Hardwick, 2004:144). Gruen was a bohemian artist and

architect who began designing shop interiors for fellow immigrants in New York during the 1930s; he produced streamlined modernist spaces that were novel at the time (Coleman, 2006). In these interventions, he used similar tactics gleaned from his understanding of the European arcade—the framing and encapsulation of goods and the fetishized objectification of objects within eye-level displays. His first enclosed shopping mall commission, Southdale Center (1956), was developed by the Dayton



Figure 5: Southdale Center, Edina (1956) by Victor Gruen. SOURCE: Life Magazine

Company department store in suburban Edina, Minnesota in the outskirts of Minneapolis (Nathanson, 2010:163). Here, Gruen engaged European socialist ideals to re-inform the commercialized suburban lifestyle of 1950s America, embedding within it communal gathering places where people could do more than simply consume.

He modeled Southdale on the Viennese-style arcades and sidewalk cafés in Central European cities and sought to create urbane and sophisticated communal environments—town squares in the suburbs—that conformed to the encapsulated constraints of the climate-controlled shopping mall. The first enclosed and air-conditioned shopping center in the world, kept at a constant 75F degrees, the mall’s promotional brochure welcomed shoppers to a year-round ‘eternal spring’ in four-season Minnesota (Coleman, 2006). For Southdale, Gruen designed a two-level shopping mall with a bi-level service road that funneled shoppers into both levels simultaneously (Hardwick, 2004). The second-level guardrails were designed to be intentionally low, allowing for unobstructed views of shops on both floors. Furthermore, this most American of building typologies was meant to evoke a European city center. Southdale’s store density and atrium core fostered an active pedestrian environment and mingling—an indoor café culture for the suburbs.

A memory of downtown authenticity was rethought by Gruen’s early work in the United States (Wall, 2006). Entertainment and social experiences attempted to blur the notion of the public realm, whereby private developers funded the development of *perceived* ‘public space’ within a suburban context (Bednar, 1990). As a model of a new type of public space—a climate-controlled suburban interior space—Southdale influenced an entire generation of suburban shopping mall designs, but it also changed broader collective understandings of what public space could be. Southdale became an icon of the modern climate-controlled, sterile, and ideal suburban retail experience,

however, it existed in a more modest time. In the European modernist tradition, its restrained architecture and diminutive scale would contrast sharply with the future of shopping mall development. The qualitative value of Southdale became a distinct paradigm that future mall designers and developers would mobilize as a model for far more elaborate and monumental projects.

During their heyday, Gruen's American malls were widely applauded by leading architectural critics. *Architectural Record* magazine claimed that Southdale Center was "...more downtown than downtown itself", and extolled that its civic qualities brought urbanity to the suburbs (Hardwick, 2004). Gruen did not believe that his suburban shopping malls would cannibalize downtown retail (Smiley, 2013). Rather, he felt that this 'civic-minded' indoor retail environment—with its socialist agenda of mixing communal gathering spaces with 'culture'—would put an end to the strip shopping centers and fast-food restaurants lining suburban commuter roads (Smiley, 2013). And although Gruen assumed that his suburban alternative would not plunder downtown commercial districts—the first tenants of Southdale were not national chains, but secondary outposts of stores in downtown Minneapolis (Hardwick, 2004). This doubling of locations initiated a trend which resulted in the ultimate demise of downtown stores. As the developmental patterns of shopping malls became synonymous with automobile dependency and suburban sprawl, Gruen privately lamented his role in fostering these activities (Loukaitou-Sideris & Banerjee, 1998:20). Most of the new, increasingly opportunistic malls fell far short of Gruen's aspirations.

Their utilitarian ‘architectures’ were devoid of anything significant beyond amplified scale and fast-paced consumption. Offering little more than banal strip malls with their blank facades facing the street, most malls failed to invest in the qualitative and quantitative values that set the Southdale experiment apart from its counterparts.

4.2 Houston: The Galleria

“A shopping center it is not. It will be a new downtown.”

Gerald D. Hines describing the Galleria in Houston, 1969

The concept of an indoor shopping mall with attached hotel towers in Houston was proposed in the 1940s by Texas oilman Glenn H. McCarthy (Burrough, 2008).

Envisioned for the Shamrock Hotel, the plan was abandoned once the property was purchased by the Hilton Hotels Corporation. In the 1960s and 70s, the growth of the suburbs catalyzed the need for cities to respond to a seemingly endless desire for retail convenience and novelty. Houston-based developer Gerald D. Hines sought to resurrect the earlier concept and to capitalize upon the limited prospects of a diminished downtown Houston by master planning a new downtown to the west on the 610 Loop (Garreau, 1991:244-247). Designed by American architect Gyo Obata, this spatially and psychologically master planned new downtown was focused on the Galleria shopping mall. Obata, the son of a painter and floral designer, co-founded the global architecture firm Hellmuth, Obata, and Kassabaum (HOK) in 1955 (Coleman, 2006). As an *edge city* and formalized interior world which turned its back on the

unzoned chaos of Houston, the Galleria offered an upscale, highly curated view of the suburban future. The first phase of this master planning project consciously re-framed the sprawling randomness of Houston's strip mall commercial corridors and modest malls, reinvesting people them into an 'urban' environment made up of interior spaces. In November 1970, the first phase of this massive project opened with 600,000 square feet of retail space across three levels including the Neiman Marcus department store and an ice skating rink. The Houston Oaks Hotel opened in 1971. followed by the first office towers. Additional phases added 650,000 square feet in 1977, 360,000sf in 1986, 700,000sf in 2003, and 100,000sf in 2006 (Meeks, 2012). With each advancing expansion, the phases catered less and less to middle-class shoppers. Today, the Galleria offers 2.4 million square feet of space housing over 400 stores and restaurants, two high-rise hotels, and three office towers (Simon Property Group, 2016). It is the fourth largest shopping mall in the United States (Simon Property Group, 2016).

Much like the nineteenth century passages of Paris and the Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II in Milan, the Houston Galleria rejected conventional urban notions of streets and building frontages to create a 'secondary order' based on interior connectivity (Figure 6). This concept fostered a financially lucrative way to mobilize the shopping mall in the development of edge cities and privatized systems. Hines co-opted the shopping mall, bathed it in pseudo-European iconography, and increased its scale to offer an urban experience—one that promised similar comforts, conveniences, and carefree indulgences that middle-class Americans had become accustomed to



Figure 6: Galleria, Houston (1970), Gyo Obata. SOURCE: Houston Chronicle

in the suburbs where they lived, worked, shopped, and played. As an autonomous environment, it also supported a separate social order and offered Houston something that it lacked—a symbolic heart or celebratory core—a consumer-based communal occupancy. Today, the Galleria’s ice skating rink remains one of the most popular spaces in a city that profoundly lacks identifiable public places for social engagement. In this sense, the Galleria serves as a substitute, or placeholder, for actual urbanity.

In recent years, the symbolic heart of Houston has shifted to Discovery Green in the downtown core, yet the central atrium of Galleria remains one of the most lively and vibrant gathering spaces in the city. Hines requested his architect to design an amenity that would elevate the ground-floor rents to those on the upper level (Lomax, 2013). Architect Gyo Obata responded by placing an ice skating rink at the center of

the mall under the barrel-vaulted skylight. The ice skating rink was a major success from both the standpoint of revenue management and qualitative value (Coleman, 2006). Retail rents on the ground level matched the upper 'fashion' level, while the event of ice skating offered a memorable place to mingle and people-watch. While an ice skating rink was a shopping mall novelty at the time, its success follows that its forerunner the iconic Rockefeller Center in Manhattan.

One of the primary criticisms of the Galleria is its internal focus. Like most suburban shopping malls, its architecture excludes street life to create a secondary interior urban experience in its place. In this sense, the Galleria offers an appropriate metaphor for the Space City—a hermetic and floating urban utopia reflecting a moment in time, when the United States was at the pinnacle of its cultural, political, and economic power. Mega-structural interventions of the 1950s and 60s promoted the notion of extended interior promenades based upon terrarium-like, highly-controlled interior conditions. The concept of a domed city stepped out of science fiction films and into reality in 1960 when Buckminster Fuller and Shoji Sadao proposed a two-mile geodesic dome spanning Midtown Manhattan that would regulate weather and reduce air pollution (Fuller, 1965). Although executed on a fundamentally much smaller scale, the Gerald D. Hines organization implemented a phased growth strategy at the Galleria, blending the monumental qualities of the European urban covered arcade with North American mall culture. Unlike the obvious vastness of Fuller's midtown Manhattan dome concept, the incremental develop of the Galleria

established an aggregation system—a lateral system of shopping concourses, tubes, and atria that achieved similar environmental effect sprawling across several city blocks.

A strategic business sensibility and entrepreneurial nature enabled Hines to develop many architecturally significant and economically viable projects throughout Houston and the United States. His hometown of Houston provided a lucrative testing and proving ground for a novel and financially profitable approach to commercial buildings and edge city urbanism. The Galleria master plan for Post Oak was unveiled in 1966 and emerged with the opening of the first phase in 1970 (West, 1980). Hines and his partner Robert Kaim sought to claim the high-end retail market in the West Loop—the wealthiest and densest area of Houston—that was unremarkably surrounded by undesirable shopping centers (Rodrigue, 1981). Partnered with Western International Hotels (Westin), Hines needed a department store to secure funding for his concept—without a department store the banks would not proceed with the project. Hines lured Nieman Marcus away from their commitment on another site and followed the rule to offer a wide range of ‘good, better, and best’ shops with an emphasis on the ‘better and best’ in each category (Rodrigue, 1981).

For Hines, adopting a hermetically-sealed ‘secondary downtown’ strategy for this parallel universe laid the possibility to eventually break the boundary between the interior and amorphous exterior, allowing the project’s master planning rules to inform adjacent parcels. In the early years, this would have been inconceivable in unregulated

Houston, however today, the greater Galleria area has grown into one of the better designed, independently master-planned areas of the metropolitan area. The Galleria learned from several iconic projects by adopting public amenities such as the ice skating rink from Rockefeller Center and the monumental barrel vault from the Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II. Its impact on creating a true urban extension of the city, however, is negligible. Even today, the primary elevation on Westheimer Road fronts an open-air parking lot which remains pedestrian unfriendly. Shoppers prefer to drive across the street, rather than walking between various shopping venues in the Galleria/Uptown district. There is virtually no walkable street life here, nor any form of actual urbanity.

Houston's continual dominance as a hub of the petroleum industry, space program, and health care enabled the Galleria and its larger environs to become *the* focal point of middle-to-high end retail in the south central United States.

Furthermore, it is important to note that the Galleria has experienced enduring public appeal since its inception. In this sense, its success may be linked to qualitative aspects of its monumental interior architecture, spatial characteristics, as well as design characteristics which have remained resilient while being continually adapted over time. In terms of architecturally significant shopping centers, the Galleria generally remains the only option in Houston with few competitors. The rise of the more recent outdoor lifestyle centers at Town & Country and a renovated River Oaks Plaza offer alternatives, however, these alternatives simply cannot compete with the massive scale of the Galleria. Likewise, as a costly infrastructural project with regional and

international appeal, the Galleria has become virtually too big to fail. The complex and its immediate vicinity have been rigorously and continually adapted to remain both relevant and responsive to retail shifts, long-term leasing issues, and financial challenges.

The Galleria is a city-within-a-city that includes several landmark buildings designed by notable architects such as HOK, Phillip Johnson, and others. The master plan was conceived as a world apart—linked by atria and bridges designed to foster safe, weatherproof, and convenient pedestrian movement. Viewed from the standpoint of urban utopianism, the multi-block Galleria complex attests to Hines' commitment to creating a viable alternative to the downtown central business district which stood in contrast to the unregulated sprawl beyond the 610 Loop. Obata's design for the Galleria is based on the premise of a platform city where people can live, shop, and work in a pedestrian-specific zone which is as large as possible—an entirely privatized interior-connective zone where everything is within reach of the pedestrian. In this sense, it shares common ground and agency with John Portman's Peachtree Center in Atlanta. For the Galleria, Hines envisioned an edge city where everything could be accessed within a walkable zone apart from the street—on a raised platform—entirely autonomous, self-sufficient, and automobile-centric. The Houston Galleria allowed Hines to test his upmarket regional mall strategy, which was further refined in a revolutionary design for the Dallas Galleria. Best known for designing mixed-use complexes which reflect his understanding of commercial leasing, retail

density, people, and their response to notable architecture, Hines tested his philosophy in the two largest cities in Texas to create places of notable social importance within largely placeless cities historically devoid of urban design. Viewed through the lens of shopping mall culture, the project is a phenomenal and enduring success. It represents social, public, and aesthetic relevance as an iconic late-1960s project that launched new understanding of enclosed shopping malls—particularly for sprawling and formless cities—a new order that has subsequently given rise to various worldwide imitators.

4.3 Toronto: Eaton Centre

“I believe that, with a certain number of other characteristic postmodern buildings, such as the Beaubourg in Paris, the Eaton Centre in Toronto, or the Bonaventure in Los Angeles aspire to being a total space, a complete world, a kind of miniature city. This new total space, meanwhile, corresponds to a new collective practice, a new mode in which individuals move and congregate, something like the practice of a new and historically original kind of hyper-crowd.”

Frederic Jameson

The Toronto Eaton Centre is an urban galleria-style shopping mall and office complex in the heart of downtown Toronto and the city’s top tourist attraction. Named for the now defunct Eaton’s department store, it is bound by Yonge Street to the east, Queen Street to the south, and Dundas to the north and served by two subway stations. Designed by Eberhard Zeidler and Bregman & Hamann Architects, the Toronto Eaton Centre includes two department stores, three office towers, hotel, and the Ryerson University Ted Rogers School of Management (Moran, 2014). Much more than a

shopping mall, the Toronto Eaton Centre is a Canadian icon and globally recognized symbol of the nation. It is a hyper-space that is more accurately categorized as a modern-day arcade, a multi-levelled urban space that serves as a primary node connecting the central business district, civic center, main shopping district, and subway system. In short, the Eaton Centre is a building-scale, privatized 'public-space' infrastructure for downtown Toronto.

The origins of the Eaton Centre may be traced to Timothy Eaton's dry goods store in the nineteenth century. Over several decades, the Eaton family purchased adjacent parcels to facilitate expansion of the department store itself as well as warehouse and support operations (Coleman, 2006). By the 1960s, many of non-department store related activities were transferred to cheaper sites in the suburbs, and Eaton's began to explore development opportunities to enhance its vast land holdings in the city center (Coleman, 2006). In the mid-1960s, Eaton's announced plans to develop an extensive, multi-block shopping and office complex that would include a new department store (Coleman, 2006). Initial plans called for historic structures such as the Old City Hall, City Hall clock tower, and Church of the Holy Trinity to be demolished. Fierce opposition ensued, and Eaton's placed their plan on hold in 1967 (Coleman, 2006).

In 1971, plans for the Eaton Centre were reintroduced to the public after consideration revisions. The new plan preserved the Old City Hall, but controversy remained as the Church of the Holy Trinity was slated for demolition. The proposal was

revised to preserve the church and to ensure that the new complex would not block most sunlight onto the church (Black, Howland, & Rogel, 1983:31). These amendments resulted in various substantial changes from the original concept. The new Eaton's store was shifted north to Dundas Street since it would be too large to maintain in its original Queen Street location with the preservation of the Old City Hall. This change created a mall anchored by two department stores at either end—Eaton's to the north at Dundas, and Simpson's on the south at Queen. The shopping spine was shifted east toward Yonge Street and designed with no frontage along Bay Street, allowing the Church of the Holy Trinity and Old City Hall to be preserved.

Cadillac Fairview Corp., the largest real estate development company in North America at the time, opened phase one of the Eaton Centre in 1977, unveiling a new type of enclosed, urban shopping mall that channeled the lessons of the nineteenth century arcades (Black, Howland, & Rogel, 1983:31). Its vaulted and glazed roof spans nearly 900 feet and offers a critical mass of shops and retail diversity. Despite its monumental proportions, the Eaton Centre is very well integrated into its urban site. The subdivided plan accommodates a finely grained series of masses and spaces that key the building into its surrounding urban fabric. Rather than a simple linear layout, the existing street patterns generated by the Old City Hall and Church of the Holy Trinity break down the large mass of the Eaton Centre into five separate blocks. Furthermore, distinction is provided at the end portals in that each department store has a very different connection to the main shopping concourse. The former Eaton's

store at Dundas connects directly to the shopping concourse, whereas the former Simpson's (currently Hudson's Bay) department store on Queen requires crossing the street, using the upper-level bridge, or an underground tunnel. Eaton Centre incorporates various pedestrian flows from streets, the underground network, subway stations, and streetcars, as well as vehicular access with integrated parking garages. In the original design, the Yonge Street façade was set-back and monolithic. Corresponding to the conventional shopping mall and its 'encapsulated' program—the façade did not offer street shops or visual porosity. In the early 2000s, the developers adapted the Yonge Street façade to bring it closer to the street with a more typical urban street edge and stores opening directly to the street (Gibbs, 2012). Here, connectivity is layered and complex, allowing for a porous and highly activated enclosed space which feels and operates much like an outdoor public space.

From a spatial perspective, the Eaton Centre is unlike historic gallerias in that each floor plate is considerably different rather than a stacked replication (Figure 7). Beneath its monumental glass vaulted roof, fragments of urbanity are co-opted to blur the boundaries between the interior and exterior. Frozen in mid-flight, a sculptural 'flock' of Canada geese entitled *Flight Stop* (1979) by Canadian artist Michael Snow navigates the central spine, while a geyser-like fountain dramatically claims the sub-grade level (Warkentin, 2010:158). Sectional openings reveal the lowest floor and its connections to the subway, allowing daylight to enter the deepest spaces of the Eaton



Figure 7: Toronto Eaton Centre (1978). SOURCE: Taxiarchos 228

Centre. Augmenting both orientation and circulation, three escalator bays distribute flows and create understandable sequences. Individual zones have been carefully scaled; this multi-level space carries an urban gravitas offering enduring appeal. The Eaton Centre shares common ground with the Milan Galleria by acting as a covered, urban street rather than a downtown shopping mall. Both systems are monumentally vertical as well as linear. Both spaces engage articulated facades and 'windows on the street' that activate the main space. Here, movement and activity are the main event. Pedestrians move about on three levels using stairways, escalators, elevators, bridges, and balconies. Fountains, sculptures, and trees add civic character of an otherwise privatized space of consumption. It blends the aesthetic and spatial organization of the Milan Galleria and Centre Pompidou, while simultaneously engaging the European social and urban aspirations of Southdale Center. The Eaton Centre is designed for spectacle and spectatorship. It harks back to the earliest forms of urban consumption embodied in the bustling arcades and gallerias of Europe and Cleveland.

4.4 The Dialectical Image and Consumption

In his *The Arcades Project*, an unfinished survey of the Parisian arcades and galleries in the 1930s, Walter Benjamin engaged the term 'dialectical image' to describe the phantasmagoria of consumer experience in the arcades. He focused on the mass consumer spectacle of enclosed retail passages which gave rise to new retail practices, as well as the consumptive impulses and alternative social configurations that rose in

response. In doing so, Benjamin endeavored to understand the roots of the ultimate demise of the arcades; spaces that surged with energy in the previous century had been reduced to near ruins by the 1930s. Benjamin sought to reveal the provocations for their temporality:

“It’s not that what is past casts its light on what is present, or what is present is light on the past; rather, image is that wherein what has been comes together in a flash with the ‘now’ to form a constellation. In other words, image is dialectics at a standstill. For while the relation of the present to the past is purely temporal, continuous, the relation of what has been to the ‘now’ is dialectical; it is not progression, but image, suddenly emergent. Only dialectical images are genuine images (that is, not archaic); and the place where one encounters them is language.”

Walter Benjamin, “Awakening” (Arcades, 462; n2a, 3)

The dialectical image is *the* main methodology of *The Arcades Project*, the collection of such images as well as their montage. Yet, Benjamin was not entirely clear in articulating his understanding of the theoretical agency of the dialectical image. The statement above captures Benjamin’s ambiguity, providing an example of his tightly-packed, yet vague and disconnected doctrinal statements which fell short of establishing a clear theory of the dialectical image. Susan Buck-Morss offers the most substantial interpretation of the dialectical image to date, asserting that the term is ‘overdetermined’ in Benjamin’s work as he tends to equally engage and describe it. Furthermore, Buck-Morss states that Benjamin never established terminological precision nor consistency in his claim. Benjamin invoked the term to document and analyze time and historical experience through critical materialist historiography

(Buck-Morss, 1999). For him, the dialectical image captured the temporal actions and agencies operating within a dynamic and continually changing, yet lightly documented environment. These dialectical images captured the simultaneity of changing technology, social conditions, economies, and other conditions existing within the encapsulated world of the Parisian arcades. “Dialectical” typically refers to the concepts to one another; “images” are most conventionally defined by their uniqueness and objectification. Benjamin engaged the term to critique the customary modes of critical historical interpretation, and to frame it through phenomenology and time to confront changing social norms and consumerism. By comparison, Hegel established the inverse relationship of phenomenology to critique physical conditions, visual characteristics, and foundational principles of the concept (Buck-Morss, 1999). Based on logic, Hegel considered the phenomenological realities of history, asserting that complexities give rise to convergent temporalities evidenced through shape, space, and form.

The inherent immediacy of the image is central to Benjamin’s *The Arcades Project*. Pairing the dialectical, or *comparative*, with the image, or *immediate*, provides an opportunity to create tension in both perception and cognition. His unfinished manuscript was meant to propose an entirely new way of establishing a materialist critical-historiography (Osborne & Charles, 2011). The work worked to construct a series of images establishing the philosophical rise of capitalism and capitalist culture over the course of the nineteenth century, as well as its social impact on mass

consumption and urban alienation. Benjamin described that the photo-montage offered significant benefits in its comparative visual quality (Hansson, 2006:159). Using the dialectical image in a similar manner, one may assess the shifting conditions and accretions of the Eaton Centre, or any dynamic retail environment for that matter, as well as the changing relationship of retail space with a dynamic range of users. Dialectical images embody temporality as an immediate and literal documentary form of cultural production. When compared and analyzed, the overall effect of dialectical images initiates the beginning of a collective reassessment of social, technological, and historical layers. This form of analysis has been employed in this dissertation to discern current conditions in shopping mall obsolescence and appropriation in the two identified 'borderland' regions of the United States identified herein.

From a contemporary perspective, Frederic Jameson famously stated that the Eaton Centre was an example of "*...this new total space...*" and he went on to describe its agency on a social scale, "*...it corresponds to a new collective practice, a new mode in which individuals move and congregate, like the practice of a new and historically original kind of hyper-crowd.*" While the development of interior commercial hyper-spaces in North America has considerably waned, the typology has been amplified across the developing world. Dubai, Doha, Abu Dhabi, Shanghai, and Manila offer a new breed of interior urbanisms based on rules developed in the nineteenth century arcades and Eaton Centre to inform a next generation of interior-urban hyper-spaces.

4.5 Houston and Toronto: A Dialectical Assessment of Place-Making

Two cities, two structures, and two vastly different agendas for urban development, Houston and Toronto offer significant contextual differences which have resulted in divergent futures for the Houston Galleria and Toronto Eaton Centre. A comparative analysis of dialectical images of the Galleria and Eaton Centre over time establishes a means to confront the highly variant outcomes within each individual context. The Eaton Centre extended the urbanity of downtown Toronto by incrementally engaging its existing orders and inherent urban conditions. It learned from the desires of the citizens of Toronto how to live in its site to engender a more timeless urbanity. In doing so, the Eaton Centre has organically grown into an integral part of the urban fabric of downtown. As Toronto grew, the Eaton Centre grew with it, and its complexities were further enhanced by demographic and commercial changes which have shifted the tenant mix of the Eaton Centre.

Neither entirely high-end, nor low, the Eaton Centre has increasingly mixed international retailers with Canadian and local brands, while its shoppers have become increasingly globalized. Accretions to the original design have made the Eaton Centre blend more into its context, while the addition of the Yonge-Dundas Square park-plaza by Brown and Storey Architects (2002) extends the connective qualities of Eaton Centre to create a Times Square-like gathering space in the heart of the city (Goodfellow & Goodfellow, 2010:102). In this sense, the Eaton Centre has become more porous. By blurring its edges and networking adjacent outdoor space, it has created greater

connectivity with the larger 'exterior' urban ecosystem. Conceived in 1998 by Toronto City Council downtown business interests, and community groups, the square forms part of the Yonge Street Regeneration Project (Goodfellow & Goodfellow, 2010:102). The adaptive porosity of the Eaton Centre and more recent Yonge-Dundas Square continue to shape the urban context and occupancy patterns of Yonge Street in a highly positive manner.

Conversely, the Houston Galleria aspired to a similar 'Milan Galleria' aesthetic, but did not respond to contextual forces, nor does it address urban development issues beyond its boundaries. The Houston Galleria remains economically viable and continually upgraded; it provides a much-needed communal gathering space for Houston. However, apart from these internal conditions, its effect on the greater good of Houston is negligible. Toronto Eaton Centre became part of the fabric by bowing to the fabric. It has since contributed to establishing a more coherent and blended presence within its neighborhood. Instead of a hermetic and highly defined space, the Eaton Centre has become more visually fragmented over time. The Houston Galleria, however, remains more-or-less undeniably hermetic and car-bound, a place that fostered market-rate developmental activity, but no real urbanity. So, while the Houston Galleria remains a financial success, it suffers from a political, regulatory, and social context that places very few expectations for quality urban design.

As with most market-driven, master planned developments in Houston, the Galleria area provides a controlled district within its jurisdiction, yet most of its

offerings, apart from the more recent waterwall fountain, are entirely transactional. In short, Houston's urbanity remains deeply fractured and dispersed along social, economic, and demographic lines, while its consumer base continues to migrate further beyond the core—and far beyond the Galleria—to populate emerging edge cities including Sugar Land, Katy, and The Woodlands. In these tabula rasa contexts, the Galleria is no longer a reigning paradigm. Rather, lifestyle centers and faux-town-squares act as placeholders for real places—places that a different sort of Galleria might have inspired.

CHAPTER V

AMERICAN SOCIETY AT A THRESHOLD: SUBURBANIZATION, CONSUMPTION, AND GLOBALIZATION IN THE 21st CENTURY

After World War II, American cities began to fracture along social, economic, and demographic lines in response to various anti-urban initiatives of the federal government. The *Housing Act of 1949*, *Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956*, and urban renewal catalyzed and accelerated the abandonment of downtown, while the rise of suburbs backed by federal mortgages deepened the racial, ethnic, and economic fragmentation of American city (Kneebone & Berube, 2013:7). As interstate highways facilitated the simultaneous collapse of downtown retail districts and the building of malls, urban decay stood in marked contrast to a thriving, homogeneous, trans-continental suburban culture. Today, widespread suburban obsolescence forecasts the future of shrinking cities in the Rust Belt and sprawling metropolises in the Sunbelt. Much of this decay takes the form of overbuilt retail buildings and housing subdivisions which have lost their original purposes.

The enclosed shopping mall peaked in North America with the phased development of two mega-malls—the West Edmonton Mall in Edmonton, Alberta (1981, 1983, 1985, 1999) and the Mall of America (1992) in Bloomington, Minnesota. Owned by the Iranian-Canadian Ghermezian family, these vast retail-restaurant-entertainment complexes draw millions of visitors to their respective cities. The

Ghermezians claim that their malls were inspired by the urban bazaars of Persia, places where shopping and entertainment intermingle in one place (Triple Five Group, 2017). In North America, the West Edmonton Mall and the Mall of America represent the apogee of twentieth-century shopping mall culture prior to the rise of alternative forms of retail.

Since the late 1980s, American retail has been increasingly undermined by intersectional forces of demographic change, overbuilding, online shopping, and advancing technology. Lifestyle centers, off-price stores, big box retailers, and outlet malls initiated ongoing challenges to the conventional shopping mall. In the mid-1990s, open-air lifestyle centers and outlet malls emerged as the direct descendants of traditional malls. The popularity of lifestyle centers, outlets, off-price, and big-box retailing in the 1990s accelerated the consolidation of traditional department store chains. Formerly independent department stores including Dayton-Hudson, Marshall Field & Company, Halle's, Higbee's May Company, Joseph Horne Company, and countless others were absorbed into larger conglomerates. In 2005, Federated Department Stores acquired May Company Department Stores Company in an \$11 Billion USD deal (Byron & Berman, 2005). May Company's 491 stores merged with Federated's 458 stores to form a network of 949 stores operating under the Macy's, Bloomingdale's, and Lord & Taylor brands (Byron & Berman, 2005). In 2008, Federated sold its 50-store Lord & Taylor brand to New York-based NRDC Equity Partners for \$1.2 Billion USD. In 2013, NRDC's holding company Hudson's Bay Company purchased

luxury department store Saks Fifth Avenue for \$2.4 Billion USD (Lattman & Clifford, 2013). By 2016, the combined Federated stores numbered only 770 Macy's stores and 38 Bloomingdale's stores representing a net loss of 129 stores. In January 2017, Federated announced the closure of 68 stores in 25 states affecting 4,000 employees (Peterson, 2017). In total, the closed stores represent 11,388,000 square feet of vacant space reducing the Macy's chain to 702 stores, while further diminishing the patronage of malls in twenty-five states (Peterson, 2017).

It is an understatement to say that national department stores have been significantly diminished from their peak in the early 1980s. In 2017, the forecast remains grim for mid-level traditional departments stores—Sears, JC Penney, and Macy's would need to collectively close 800 stores to achieve sales-per-square-foot revenues comparable to their 2006 levels (Wahba, 2016). The remaining nationwide mid-level department stores include Kohl's (1,155 stores), JC Penney (1,014 stores), Macy's (702 stores), and Sears (702 stores); regional mid-level department stores include Stage Stores (855 stores), Beall's (500 stores), Belk (300 stores), Dillard's (294 stores), The Bon Ton (267 stores), Boscov's (50 stores), and Von Maur (31 stores); and nationwide upscale department stores include Nordstrom (123 stores), Lord & Taylor (50 stores), Neiman Marcus (42 stores), Saks Fifth Avenue (40 stores), and Bloomingdale's (38 stores).

In 2017, only a fraction of the former trans-continental network of independent department stores remains. Fewer independent department stores has resulted in

fewer possible anchors for shopping malls and lifestyle centers. Existing malls with more than five anchors are unable to fill empty department stores with comparable retailers. For ailing malls, these anchor buildings either remain vacant or host previously banned discount retailers such as Target, Burlington Coat Factory, and TJMaxx, as well as fitness centers and storage warehouses. Lifestyle centers, outlet malls, and strip malls reveal similar trends. In November 2016, Kenneth Cole announced closure of its entire network of sixty-three outlet stores (Farber, 2016). The retailer will maintain only two branded shops in the United States and continue to sell its goods through department stores, but will focus its efforts on e-commerce and international markets (Farber, 2016). Other fashion retailers including Coach, Fossil, Michael Kors, and Ralph Lauren have announced similar plans (Farber, 2016).

Before online retailer Amazon emerged as “enemy number one” of the traditional retail industry and the American built environment, Walmart was viewed as the greatest threat to the long-term viability of micro-entrepreneurs, department stores, and shopping malls. Their predatory tactics diminished countless Main Streets across the United States and fundamentally changed the way that American retailers approached the retail model. In an ironic turn, Walmart’s cannibalistic retail practices are being waged against it by on-line retailers. In 2016, Walmart announced the closure of 154 stores in the United States (Holmes, 2016).

The current state of American retail may be framed as a joint battle waged by Walmart and Amazon against the built environment. Big-box retailers and cyber

shopping have fundamentally challenged the long-term viability of the retail landscape; the last enclosed mall in the United States was built in 2006 and no plans are currently on the drawing boards (Geiling, 2014). The state of building-based retail in 2017 contrasts remarkably with Joan Didion's post-war vision of the shopping mall as a pyramid to the boom years (Didion, 2006:311). The continual rise of on-line retailing and store closures point toward the inevitability of a post-retail age. These obsolete buildings comprise the territory for this dissertation which focuses on their incremental and unlikely appropriation and adaptation.

As noted in earlier chapters, retail obsolescence and so-called 'dead malls' often grow into temporal places of otherness serving significantly different needs. In both borderland regions identified in this dissertation, the US-Mexico Texas Southern Borderland and the Eastern Great Lakes Northern Borderland, current socio-economic trends challenge the inevitability of new retail construction. As internet retails expands and suburban neighborhoods seek greater density, shrinking cities have embraced the practicality of adaptive reuse and infrastructural interventions. An increased focus on contingency enhances the imperative for architects, designers, and planners to view the built environment through stewardship—fostering connectivity among the environmental, economic, and social dimensions of design practice at the scale of the city. Addressing divergent issues of both urban growth and loss, adaptive practices will migrate toward the center of contemporary design discourse. Like a form of urban acupuncture, small and incisive actions facilitate broader resilient strategies within

established buildings and urban forms. Such interventions offer ways to address urban obsolescence through a dynamic overlap of interdisciplinary practices that simultaneously mend and grow—reweaving a city and region by means of hybrid redevelopment practices supporting informal actions (Jackson Bell, 2015). In recent years, next-use opportunities for existing buildings and infrastructures have grown more lucrative, demanding, and complex. The second part of this dissertation contextualizes current activities in so-called dead mall appropriation through the foundational narrative established in part one.

PART II

CHAPTER VI

OTHERNESS: IMMIGRATION AND IDENTITY AS SHAPERS OF THE AMERICAN BUILT ENVIRONMENT

This chapter surveys the history of territorial expansion, immigration, and nation-building in the United States. It frames a view on the continual construction of ‘otherness’ in Anglo-America alongside the prevailing myth that America is a so-called melting pot nation of assimilated identities. The myth of cohesion was never intended to apply to people of color (Moule & Diller, 2012:72). This chapter considers socio-political conditions in late nineteenth century America to illustrate the construction of ethnic *otherness* in response to changing immigration flows. The intent of this brief survey is to position the appropriation of obsolete, early twenty-first century suburban buildings by immigrants and historically disadvantaged communities within a broader North American socio-political context. As such, this chapter seeks to contextualize the socio-political position of immigrants and historically disadvantaged communities alongside changing normative conditions. It highlights the biases that they have endured through social exclusion, legislation, and laws mobilized by the majority population throughout history. In short, such conditions have resulted in the development of ethnically specific enclaves that were, at once, responding to both exclusion by the majority population, as well as a form of community-building and

survival for immigrants in a new land. Such conditions must be reviewed and contextualized to address the central theme of this dissertation.

6.1 Melting Pot?

The American narrative of the immigrant melting pot and assimilation into 'one' body, or one culture, has been simultaneously mythicized and inherently fraught with complexities. Firstly, the melting pot concept has only fully applied to persons of Caucasian or primarily European ethnicity (Moule & Diller, 2012:72). In recent years, the simplistic concept of a melting pot has been increasingly critiqued for its exclusionary nature and rejection of multiculturalism (Figure 8). The American 'melting pot' inherently disregards the historical legacies of Native American peoples or the violent disenfranchisement of African-Americans who trace their origins to the very beginning of colonial America (Hanlon & Vicino, 2014). Furthermore, social customs and governmental policies of the United States systematically ignored intersectional identities pre-dating Anglo-American settlement of the American frontier, yet borderland regions included persons of French and Spanish descent, as well as hybrid Creole, Cajun, Métis, and Hispanic cultures.

As the United States grew by means of colonization, appropriation, treaties, and wars, persons of non-Anglo-Saxon ethnic, racial, and/or religious traditions were often placed at odds with the new Anglo-American social order. Established French, Spanish, Creole, Cajun, Métis, and Hispanic communities in conquered lands, borderlands, or



Figure 8: Cover of 'The Melting Pot' play (1916). SOURCE: Library of Congress

appropriated zones—such as the Louisiana Territory or Texas—were immediately recast as ‘others’ and systematically disenfranchised under the American system with biases toward peoples who were neither Anglo-Saxons nor white Protestants of northwestern European descent. Furthermore, conquered peoples on the American frontier in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries confronted de facto policies which privileged frontier territories for Anglo-American settlers of English-speaking origin and immigrants from continental Europe. Throughout time and across variant geographies, territorial expansion and immigration in the United States have been characterized by resurgent forces of xenophobia, ethno-nationalism, and racism (Gerber, 2011). At the same time, the intermingling of disparate communities has undeniably shaped the built environment, while informing ways in which disenfranchised communities organize, territorialize, and make space.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, nativist ethnic paranoia rose in reaction to immigrants from Central, Southern, and Eastern Europe flowing into the United States via Ellis Island (Oxx, 2013:54-90). These sentiments formed part of a wave of xenophobia that occurred after the massive migration of Irish Catholics during the Potato Famine of the mid-nineteenth century (LeMay, 2013:15). Responding to a dramatic rise in immigration from continental Europe in the 1880s through the 1920s, social and political discourse in the United States shifted toward increasing isolationism. Exhibiting such extremism, Lothrop Stoddard, an American historian, eugenicist, political theorist, journalist, and Ku Klux Klansman, sought to frame his

racist sentiments as anthropological observations claiming that American exceptionalism traced its origins uniquely to Anglo-Saxon and Nordic ethnicities. In his book, 'Re-Forging America: The Story of Our Nationhood' (1927), Stoddard wrote:

We want above all things to preserve America. But "America," as we have already seen, is not a mere geographical expression; it is a nation, whose foundations were laid over three hundred years ago by Anglo-Saxon Nordics, and whose nationhood is due almost exclusively to people of North European stock—not only the old colonists and their descendants but also many millions of North Europeans who have entered the country since colonial times and who have for the most part been thoroughly assimilated. Despite the recent influx of alien elements, therefore, the American people is still predominantly a blend of closely related North European strains, and the fabric of American life is fundamentally their creation.

During this era, several discriminatory laws targeting immigrants were enacted by the U.S. Congress including the Emergency Quota Act (1921), the Johnson-Reed Act (1924), the National Origins Act (1924), and the Asian Exclusion Act (1924); together, these laws excluded Asians and Africans, ignored Latin Americans, and preferred Northern and Western Europeans to Southern and Eastern Europeans (Frazier, Tettey-Fio, Henry, 2010). The discriminatory National Origins Act limited new immigrants in the United States to no more than 2% of the number of people of the same national origin living in the country (Tischler, 2011:242). This law profoundly favored immigrants from the British Isles (except Ireland) and northwestern Europe, as they were—at the time—the numerically predominant groups. The 1924 law virtually banned immigration from non-European nations with the notable exception of Mexico (Kim & Kim, 2014:570). Apart from The Philippines—an American colony at the time—immigrants from all

other nations in Asia were banned (Kim & Kim, 2014:570). In short, the primary intention of this “rigged” legislation was to exclude immigration from Asia and Africa, as well as to substantially reduce overall immigration of Central, Southern, and Eastern Europeans, Catholics, Eastern Orthodox Christians, Jews, Muslims, and migrants from the Ottoman Empire and the eastern Mediterranean modern-day nations of Turkey, Syria, and Lebanon (Kim & Kim, 2014:570). The National Origins Act was enforced from 1924 through the end of World War II in 1945 (Kim & Kim, 2014:570). Stoddard commented favorably on the racial and religiously motivations of this exclusionary legislation:

“It is perfectly true that our present immigration policy does (and should) favor North Europeans over people from other parts of Europe, while it discriminates still more rigidly against the entry of non-white races. But the basic reason for this is not a theory of race superiority, but that most fundamental and most legitimate of all human instincts, self-preservation — rightly termed “the first law of nature.”

“The cardinal point in our immigration policy should, therefore, be to allow no further diminution of the North European element in America's racial make-up.”

Xenophobia surrounding immigration was acknowledged within underlying themes of F. Scott Fitzgerald’s seminal *The Great Gatsby*. Its central character, Jay Gatsby, (a.k.a. James Gatz) conceals his true ethnic identity and family history in pursuit of wealth and the American Dream. During the first fifteen years of the twentieth century, more than fifteen million immigrants arrived in the United States. This flow was nearly equal to the combined forty previous years from 1860-1900 (Daniels,

1990). In 1910, for example, over three-quarters of the population of New York was composed of immigrants or their offspring (Halpern, 2011). Cities with similar immigration characteristics are concentrated in the industrial cities of the Northeast and Great Lakes regions including Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Syracuse, Buffalo, Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Detroit, Chicago, Duluth, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, and St. Paul. (Calhoun, 2007). After 1900, immigration from continental Europe—predominantly Central, Southern, and Eastern Europe—surged and dramatically changed the demographic composition of the United States. Flowing into central cities and urban neighborhoods defined by cultural and linguistic similarities, most immigrants came from non-English speaking European countries in Central, Southern, and Eastern Europe including Austria-Hungary, Greece, Italy, Lithuania, Poland, Russia, Ukraine, and the Ottoman Empire. (Daniels, 1990). In the beginning, the new immigrants were viewed with suspicion by an oftentimes unwelcoming native-born population and had difficulty adjusting to a new environment.

Resentment of immigrants from Central, Southern, and Eastern Europe was harbored even by the industrialists who most benefited from their contributions to advancing industrial productivity in pre-WWII America. Most notably, Henry Ford, founder of the Ford Motor Company, notoriously vilified “Jewish bankers” and viewed Jewish immigrants and Jewish Americans in general with anti-Semitic bias and profound suspicion (Baldwin, 2003:326). Furthermore, Ford’s xenophobia extended to Southern and Eastern European Catholics, Orthodox Christians, and Muslims. The greatest irony

in Ford's populism and resentment of foreign-born Central, Southern, and Eastern Europeans—or "white ethnics"—is that they formed the bulk of his workforce. Widespread animosity and ambivalence toward the rise time of immigrants in the early twentieth century resulted in discriminatory legislation that virtually cut-off immigration from Central, Southern, and Eastern Europe with the *Immigration Act of 1924* (Daniels, 2001:7-19). In Detroit, a magnet for immigrants at the turn of the twentieth century, the Detroit Board of Commerce established an Americanization campaign that grew into a popular crusade to assimilate continental Europeans (Bates, 2014:28). The obsession for immigrants to become '100% American' encouraged the rejection of native languages and undivided loyalty to the new country (Bates, 2014:28).

By 1914, 70% of Ford's workforce at the Highland Park plant was comprised of twenty-two nationalities largely comprised of Hungarians, Lithuanians, Russians, Slavs, Jews, Greeks, Italians, and other 'new' immigrants to the United States (Batchelor, 1994:51). Nativists assumed that these immigrants represented inherent, even racial, differences that would hinder their willingness and ability to adopt 'American' values (Reavley, 2009:xix). Ford imposed several restrictions on his largely immigrant workforce whom he viewed with great suspicion due to their diverse national origins (Chartoff, 2013). He required attendance to the Ford English School and insisted that his workers become citizens, limit their use of native languages, and disavow their cultural origins. By setting and enforcing standards of 'righteous living', he sought to

Americanize his employees by teaching not only the English language, but personal hygiene, table manners, and cleanliness (Batchelor, 1994:51). On graduation day, the immigrant experience was reduced to a remarkably de-humanizing and perverse parody of both nationality and Americana:

The graduation stage was represented as an immigrant ship. The ceremony culminated in a pageant in which workers clad in outlandish versions of the 'native' costumes—from Poland, Greece, Hungary, or other nations—descended into a giant pot—a twenty-foot-tall crucible made of wood, canvas, and papier-mache—and emerged on the other side wearing modern business suits, waving tiny American flags, and singing 'The Star-Spangled Banner' (Figure 9) (Batchelor, 1994:52).

Linking his actions to patriotism, Ford hoped that his physical manifestation of the melting pot would “impress upon these men that they are, or should be, Americans, and that former racial, national, and linguistic differences are to be forgotten.”

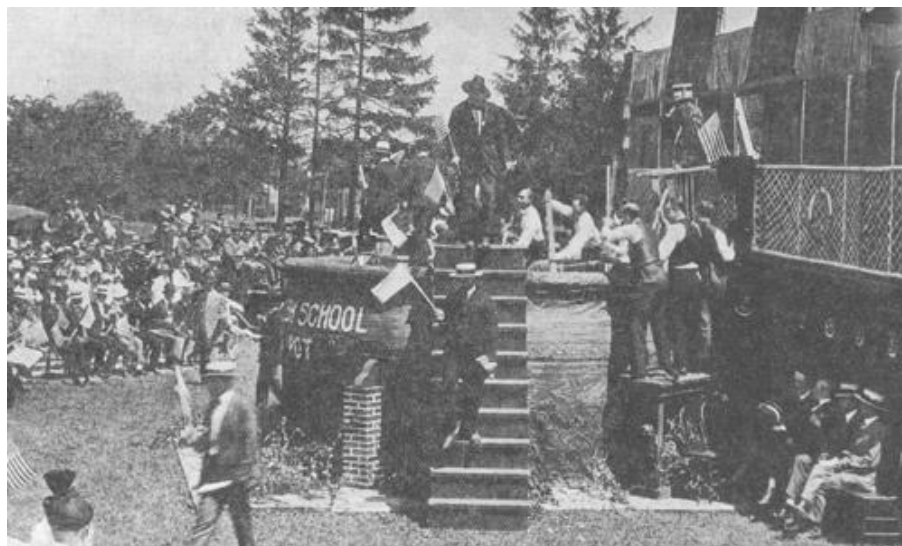


Figure 9: Henry Ford English School 'Melting Pot' Ceremony. SOURCE: King Rose

6.2 Selective Visions of America

While Henry Ford was parodying the melting pot, the rising influence of populism and nationalism in the United States was reflected in greater public interest in the colonial histories of America. More specifically, a renewed interest in the British colonial history of the nation focused considerable resources on restoring Colonial Williamsburg in Virginia during the late 1920s (Stoermer, Brown, & Lounsbury, 2014). John D. Rockefeller was instrumental in the reconstruction effort that ignored the established African-American community of Williamsburg (Harriss, 2017). The inaccurate and grandiose rebuilding of Colonial Williamsburg has been viewed with great criticism in its disregard for historical accuracy, while celebrating a seventeenth century British colonial culture that decouples it from the unseemly—yet undeniable—issues of discrimination against Native Americans, African-American slaves, and persons who were not White Anglo-Saxon Protestants (Huxtable, 1998). Many of the reproduced structures were idealized and far more elaborate than the originals (Figures 10, 11, 12, & 13) (Handler & Gable, 2002). Architectural historian and critic Ada Louise Huxtable claims that Colonial Williamsburg was designed to ‘white-wash’ American history and re-package it for upper-middle-to-highly affluent social classes (Huxtable, 1998). Architectural historian She takes this argument further by claiming that inaccurately reconstructed settlement represents nothing more than an upper-middle-class 1920s American garden suburb with its tree-lined streets, historic reproduction houses, racial segregation, and zoned commercial activities (Huxtable, 1998). More akin to the

aesthetics of a theme park than an actual historical documentation device, Colonial Williamsburg embodies a utopian, highly idealized faux-Americana that rejects the multiculturalism narrative of American history. It ignores the profound social injustices that have underpinned American society since its earliest origins.



Figure 10: Constructing Hegemony: Colonial Williamsburg, Architecture as 'heritage' idealization.
SOURCE: G. Marinic



Figure 11: Constructing Hegemony: Colonial Williamsburg, Architecture as 'heritage' idealization.
SOURCE: G. Marinic



Figure 12: Constructing Hegemony: Colonial Williamsburg, Architecture as 'heritage' idealization.
SOURCE: G. Marinic



Figure 13: Constructing Hegemony: Colonial Williamsburg, Architecture as 'heritage' idealization.
SOURCE: G. Marinic

After World War II, immigration policy in the United States slowly liberalized and then opened widely in 1965 to embrace global immigration (Min, 2007:492). Descendants of non-WASP continental Europeans of became beneficiaries of the white privilege that their forebears had been denied (Rothenburg, 2015). In the post-war years, the full assimilation of European immigrants of all origins and gradual breakdown of religious animosities between Protestants, Catholics, Orthodox Christians, and Jews encouraged widespread acceptance of a neutral 'white' identity (Gordon, 1987). By the 1960s, civil rights legislation removed many barriers for African-Americans, while at the same time, the United States became increasingly multicultural by means of increasing

immigration from Latin America, Asia, and Africa (Rabinowitz, 1994). Rather than simply a nation defined by the polarity of black and white, the United States began evolving into a truly global nation. Even so, American culture lagged and often constructed built environments that framed ethnicity as otherness and ‘exotic’.

In contrast to the idealized world of Colonial Williamsburg, the highly offensive ‘Pedro’s South of the Border’ (1950), built by a speculative land developer in Hamer, South Carolina represents an ethnic slur against Hispanics. The roadside attraction on Interstate 95—a Mexico-themed truck stop with gas stations, motels, shops, restaurants, and other amusements—appropriates Mexican culture as a branding strategy (Figures 14, 15, 16, 17, & 18). The various “Mexican” attractions display a remarkable level of racism and cultural insensitivity; the contrast between Colonial Williamsburg and Pedro’s South of the Border could not be more pronounced. The former is placed on a celebratory pedestal while the latter is publicly mocked. This dialectical perspective on the built environment and public history serves as a stark metaphor for ongoing and widespread implicit bias and xenophobia in American culture.



Figure 14: Constructing Otherness: South of the Border, Architecture as ethnic slur.
SOURCE: G. Marinic



Figure 15: Constructing Otherness: South of the Border, Architecture as ethnic slur.
SOURCE: G. Marinic



Figure 16: Constructing Otherness: South of the Border, Architecture as ethnic slur.
SOURCE: G. Marinic

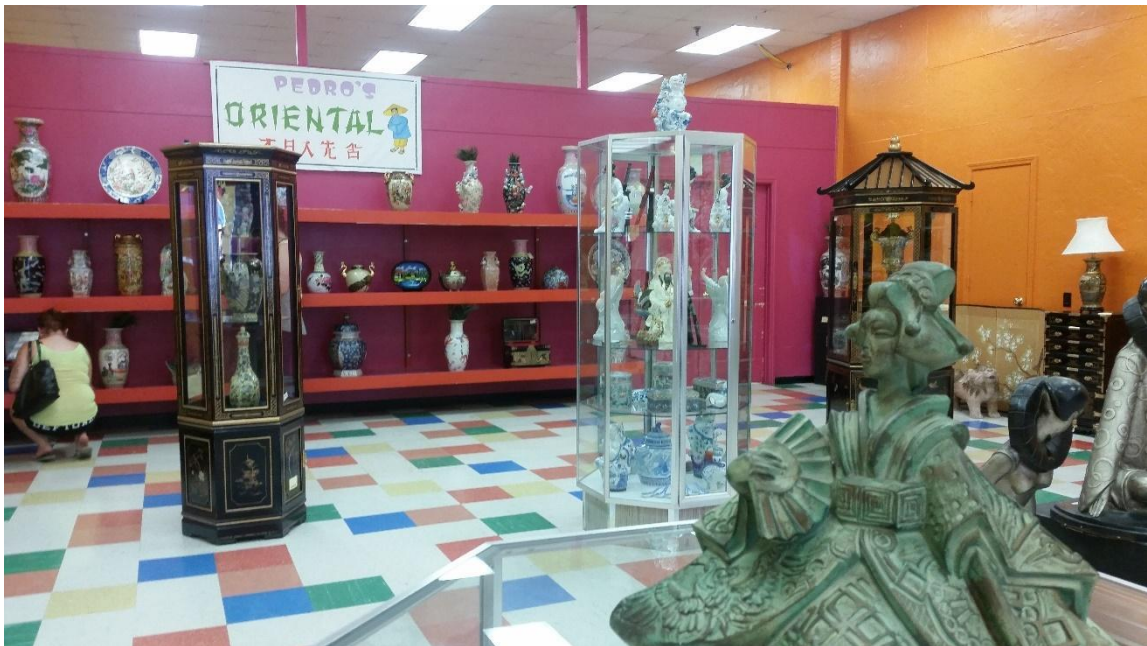


Figure 17: Constructing Otherness: South of the Border, Architecture as ethnic slur.
SOURCE: G. Marinic



Figure 18: Constructing Otherness: South of the Border, Architecture as ethnic slur.
SOURCE: Wikimedia

6.3 Summary

In 2017, forces of nativism, xenophobia, and racism are once again dominating contemporary political discourse in the United States and Europe. During the 2016 American presidential election, the emergence of populism in the guise of Donald Trump has unleashed a torrent of right-wing outbursts and realignments. Political movements such as UK's impending exit from the European Union, as well as the 2017 elections in the Netherlands, France, and Italy demonstrate a resurgent swing toward fascism much like the 1930s. In 2017, U.S. Republican Congressman Steve King of Iowa remarked on the comments of a Dutch politician—Geert Wilders—to make a point about changing American demographics and immigration:

“Wilders understands that culture and demographics are our destiny. We can't restore our civilization with somebody else's babies.”

Republican Congressman Steve King, 4th District of Iowa, March 2017

King later clarified his comments by elaborating:

“There's an American culture, American civilization. It's raised within these children in these American homes. That's one of the reasons why we require that the president of the United States be raised with an American experience. We've also aborted nearly 60 million babies in this country since 1973.

“There's been this effort we're going to have to replace that void with somebody else's babies. That's the push to bring in much illegal immigration into America, living in enclaves, refusing to assimilate into the American culture and civilization.”

U.S. Congressman Steve King speaking to CNN on March 13, 2017

Responding to the xenophobic comments of Rep. Steve King, *The New York Times* editorial board issued the following statement:

Now Donald Trump is in power, and Mr. King is enjoying a moment of ideological solidarity. A few in his party have condemned his latest rant, but the White House has been silent. Mr. King's worldview harmonizes nicely with that of Mr. Trump and the architects of his anti-immigrant, anti-Muslim policies, Steve Bannon and Stephen Miller, and Attorney General Jeff Sessions, who was among the hardest of Senate immigration hard-liners.

Together they are pushing an old nativists' dream: a "self-deportation" strategy, also called "attrition through enforcement," which envisions making America whiter by making life intolerable for unauthorized immigrants. Their crackdown is hurting not only those here illegally but also refugees, asylum seekers, even students and guest workers.

The New York Times, Editorial Board comments, March 14, 2017

This chapter framed a perspective on 'whiteness' as a so-called default or normative condition in the United States contrasted to 'otherness' and multiculturalism. The current political discourse in America has stirred old resentments against immigrants and persons who embody aspects of otherness inclusive of gender, ethnic, racial, religious, sexual orientation, or disability differences. Throughout American history, immigrants and minorities have responded to such injustices while simultaneously reshaping the built environment through alternative occupancies. Existing outside of the mainstream, these communities have continually appropriated space to create defensible realms of self-expression. Part two of this dissertation considers the current state of retail obsolescence in American suburbia through the lens of ethnic exclusion alongside the organic building of autonomous 'other' spaces.

CHAPTER VII

INTERSTATE MIGRATIONS: APPROPRIATION OF DYING RETAIL IN TEXAS³

Historically, the United States has been defined by continual migratory flows that brought immigrants from the densely-populated cities on the East Coast to the hinterlands in the West (Billington & Ridge, 2009:3). Early overland connections to the American West were forged by primitive routes including the Santa Fe Trail (1821), Oregon Trail (1840), Pony Express (1860), and later, with technologically advanced transcontinental railroads after 1869 (Eccleston, 1950:170-198). Since the 1990s, however, the heartland of America has been increasingly transformed by trans-border migration from the South facilitated by interstates rather than railroads, and most significantly—Interstate 35. Linking Laredo, Texas at the border with Mexico to Duluth, Minnesota on the edge of the Great Lakes, change along I-35 illustrates that these shifts are not merely demographic. As the United States continues to absorb new immigrants, its aging buildings and infrastructures are being re-shaped by adaptations which address emerging socio-cultural needs and expectations. In short, post-1965 immigration flows have imparted diverse and transformative influences on the architecture and urbanity of mid-continental American suburbia.

³ Part of this chapter was reprinted with permission from “Interstate Migrations Obsolescence, Adaptation, and the Globalization of the Dead Mall’ by Gregory Marinic, 2015. *Nomadic Interiors: Living and Inhabiting in an Age of Migrations*, Copyright 2015 by Politecnico di Milano.

Today, the twentieth century enclosed shopping mall exists as one of the most widespread and large-scale of America's increasingly obsolete building typologies. American malls are generally set between two extremes—the upscale super-regional and the increasingly obsolete—while being threatened by the growth of newer forms of retail. On the one hand, this study reveals how aging mid-continental twentieth century shopping mall provides support for the socio-economic well-being of immigrants in American society. On the other, it opens a window on to the long-term resilience and economic viability of increasingly “dead” malls that have historically catered to the suburban middle-class. Today, upscale malls serve a racially and ethnically diverse, upwardly mobile and assimilated upper-middle-class, the so-called “dead” or dying malls have come to serve a largely disadvantaged underclass. Furthermore, many of the so-called dead malls along the southern section of I-35—as well as its parallel cousin I-45 which begins in Galveston and joins I-35 at Dallas—are decidedly undead. In the changing suburban periphery of Texas cities, the impact of Latin American immigration on shopping mall adaptation and hybridization has become increasingly evident. Appropriated by an assimilated lower class, senior citizens, ethnic minorities, and recent immigrants—these places have been rejected by the white middle-class, yet offer an alternative socio-economic support system to their regions.

Positioned at a critical pivot point between Anglo and Latin America, the southern sections of the I-35 and I-45 interstate highway corridors illustrate how abandonment, migration, globalization, and suburban obsolescence provide new

opportunities for city-making. Growth and abandonment in the suburbs of Texas cities gives room for alternative occupancies and opportunities to remake suburbia into a more adaptable, resilient, and diverse environment. Using field studies of the Texas segments of the I-35 and I-45 corridors as its geographical focus, this chapter examines so-called dead malls to discern a larger understanding of the changing landscape of American retail culture in suburbia. This research collects evidence along these corridors to forecast mall futures across North America. Case studies in Laredo, Dallas, and Houston sample the state of ‘borderland’ mall culture in mid-continental America, examining trends in repurposed dead malls and strip malls serving immigrants.

In this chapter, Michel Foucault’s notion of *otherness* and Ignasi de Solà-Morales’s concept of *terrain vague* are employed to frame how cast-off dead malls have, in some cases, fostered an alternative perspective on community vitality. Reflecting on Foucault’s seminal *Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias* and Solà-Morales’s *Terrain Vague*, this chapter examines how non-hegemonic spaces contrast with the placelessness of utopia to create ‘counter-emplacements’ and realized utopias—to establish heterotopias (Foucault, 1984). Case studies present examples of how emerging places of *otherness*—or heterotopias—have incrementally seeded themselves within obsolescence and indeterminacy to develop a new American Dream. This research considers these conditions to contemplate futures, while questioning what gentrification means within the increasingly globalized and transnational peripheries of mid-continental America. More specifically, it analyzes how commercial

obsolescence in American suburbia has allowed immigrants to organize, participate, and prosper. Characterized primarily through the adaptation of existing buildings and modest interior interventions—low-cost and participatory actions support socio-economic resilience. These transformational shifts have fostered the emergence of a *new periphery*, a dynamic ersatz-urban place of remarkable demographic diversity.

7.1 From Utopian Origins...

Much has been said about the dramatic collapse of American cities and the social cohesiveness that they fostered, as well as the simultaneous rise of a homogeneous, trans-continental suburban culture. After World War II, urban life in the United States began to fracture and disperse along social, economic, and demographic lines to promote the rise of suburbia. In the meantime, several factors converged to continually drain commercial districts from the central core, while promoting peripheral, tabula rasa green fields as a realm of limitless consumer opportunity (Baumgartner, 1988). Fueled by television culture, mainstream American consumer patterns transferred in successive rings beyond the center core and then matured in suburbia. Suburbs witnessed the emergence of entirely new and autonomous forms of public-commercial space shaped by urban retail fragments within a boundless landscape. Conventionally *urban* commercial and social experiences were displaced to the suburbs and became transactional space whereby communal life became translated into controllable, privatized, and primarily *interior* worlds.

The utopian realm of suburban life has historically epitomized the American Dream, a vision of opportunity and prosperity expressed in greater autonomy, single-family home ownership, and car dependence (Beauregard, 2006:107-108). In the post-war years, suburbs were where most Americans wanted to live and the rest of the world took notice. As Americans left urban neighborhoods for the periphery, mid-twentieth century suburbia imparted profound and enduring influences on popular culture, mass media, consumer tastes, and housing expectations. Since that time, the United States has continuously exported its suburban ideals to the rest of the world, while American suburbia has simultaneously become increasingly globalized. Within this peripheral 'utopia', shopping malls emerged as uncontested icons of American culture—exemplars of social and commercial values that represent the United States to the world and Americans to themselves.

The developmental patterns of shopping malls have become synonymous with automobile dependency and suburban sprawl (Rees, 2003:93). For a generation of Americans raised in the post-war suburbs, expectations of civic space were incubated in the encapsulated worlds of shopping malls, and thus, orphaned from any tangible connection to downtown. Suburban consumer expectations were forged in a throw-away culture of post-war largesse, resulting in subsequent waves of retail abandonment since the 1990s not unlike the demise of commercial districts in post-war American cities. Rather than choosing between the authenticity of urban retail districts versus the convenience of the shopping mall, suburbanites became connoisseurs of

their own realms, choosing between malls that increasingly competed for patrons within the same territories.

Concurrent with these shifts, cities in Texas including Dallas, Houston, San Antonio, and Laredo have attempted to compete with malls by co-opting a suburban typology for downtown. For the most part, however, these appropriated suburban forms have ultimately failed in a downtown context. More recently, central cities have re-emerged through the widespread reassessment of their authentic cultural venues, building typologies, urban configurations, and civic life. In wake of this, a generational shift has placed the suburbs and their utilitarian buildings into a state of increasing disinvestment and abandonment. Enclosed suburban shopping malls have shifted in status from desirable amenities to unwanted liabilities. Changing demographics in the expanding metropolitan areas of Texas have begun to suggest that suburbia has become considerably more diverse and complex, as well as undeniably influenced by urban influences from Latin America and beyond. Within this emerging periphery, undercurrents of racial, economic, and social segregation persist, yet suburbia is being appropriated and hybridized into a place of new opportunities for immigrants. Homogeneity and conformity have rapidly diminished to allow for greater diversity and a dramatically altered built environment. In turn, suburban disinvestment has fueled the growth of emerging places of *otherness*, radical shifts in usage, less formal occupancies, and alternative consumption patterns that fall far outside of conventional expectations. In suburbia, fading utopias have given way to a multicultural landscape

of fragmented *heterotopias* seeking to colonize, control, and exploit obsolescence while establishing new normative conditions.

7.2 A Periphery in Transition

Across time and cultures, the built environment has represented a dynamic social construct based on values, practices, perceptions, and production (Teaford, 2008).

Contemporary metropolitan development in Texas assumes car dependence and is characterized by informal methods of urbanization and suburban sprawl, as well as ongoing obsolescence and abandonment. Within such seemingly adverse conditions, *heterotopias* — or spaces of a shared ethnic, social, or cultural experience — fuel bottom-up approaches to adapting an overbuilt suburban landscape. Small-scale interventions act as autonomous agents of resilience in globalized cities shaped by diverse human needs, daily routines, social desires, and cultural expectations.

Expanding obsolescence in suburbia has created undeniable challenges for urban connectivity and long-term sustainability; it resists typical assumptions for uniformity and mainstream perceptions of upward mobility. Contrasting obsolescence with the conventional notion of suburban stability, impermanence has encouraged more informal occupancies and alternative forms of consumption. Likewise, an implied devaluation of social uniformity and commercial homogeneity increasingly celebrates commonplace and informality as an alternative to the actions of architects, designers, developers, national retailers, and the restrictions of home owners' associations.

Today, the increasingly globalized peripheral regions of Texas cities percolate up rather than trickle down, arguably offering higher autonomy, flexibility, and long-term viability. Intermingled within abandoned 1970s retail strips, enclosed shopping malls, and fading housing subdivisions, adaptation challenges the notion that such places are dying or dead. Physically and psychologically distant from gentrified city centers, these small-scale interventions confront conventional assumptions about suburbia. Growing into spaces of otherness as emergent heterotopias, they are places of modest vitality built upon compromise. These places are creating opportunities and economic freedom for immigrants, as well as multiple paths toward assimilation.

7.3 Otherness and Heterotopias

As globalism transforms the notion of 'territory', the contemporary relevance of utopianism has increasingly migrated away from the unattainable and toward the potential for ersatz-utopias, or *heterotopias*, within the everyday built environment. Michel Foucault employed the term *heterotopia* to describe spaces that intermingle multi-faceted layers of meaning, as well as simultaneity and connectivity to other places. As worlds of otherness often seeded in zones of terrain vague, they engage with the physical, mental, and phenomenological characteristics of memory. Heterotopias appropriate aspects of remembrance through the representation, manifestation, and approximation of physical places among a shared people. They satisfy the basic human desire to claim, redefine, territorialize, and provide security.

In his seminal work, *Of Other Places: Utopias and Heterotopias*, Foucault describes this shift in spatial perspective by identifying diverse occupancies and organic approaches to authorship in the built environment (Foucault, 1984). He asserts that heterotopian spaces of 'otherness' are products of socio-cultural practices; they are highly autonomous, yet connected to conventional spaces by thresholds of variant porosity. A critic of structuralist theory, Foucault argues that these spatial manipulations shape cities into ecologies composed of countless temporal environments. His concept of heterotopia reframes urbanity via the everyday actions of people reshaping buildings and urban spaces (Foucault, 1984). He theorizes a transformative architectural narrative across time and cultures connected to geographically and/or historically distinct occupancies. In contrast to the formal rituals of architecture and urban design, heterotopias are shaped by imprecision, layering, and time (Foucault, 1984).

7.4 Terrain Vague

Catalan architect, historian, and theorist Ignasi de Solà-Morales defines the empty, abandoned spaces at the peripheries of our cities as *terrain vague*, as buildings and landscapes embodying "indeterminate, imprecise, blurred, and uncertain" configurations (Solà-Morales, 1995). With his concept of *terrain vague*, Solà-Morales focuses on emerging forms of obsolescence and the informal actions that they foster (Solà-Morales, 1995). He challenges conventional reactions to urban decay and

obsolete buildings found within the contemporary metropolis. Unqualified, rejected, and without specific boundaries, Solà-Morales defines these areas as the *terrain vague*:

“Empty, abandoned space in which a series of occurrences have taken place seems to subjugate the eye of the photographer. Such urban space, which I will denote by the French expression *terrain vague*, assumes the status of fascination, the most solvent sign with which to indicate what cities are and what our experience of them is.”ⁱ

Terrain vague may be described as an experiential and phenomenological awareness.

The French term “vague” refers to vagueness, a wave or tidal force, and implies the sensation of movement, fluctuation, and instability. When applied to conventional suburban landscapes, undefined spaces convey negative connotations. In transitional post-retail suburban environments, abandonment and deterioration set these zones apart from traditional urbanism. Normative expectations for order, growth, and efficiency are challenged, yet a discernible openness allows non-conforming informalities to emerge. Enabling our gaze to blur the line between perception and reality, seemingly vacant territories enable casual and autonomous transformation. Looking closer, forgotten spaces such as dying malls are not entirely abandoned, but rather, highly transient and richly layered. The imprecise nature of *terrain vague* may be understood as a “nomadic science”—one that is random, variant, and qualified not quantified. Embedding order into intuition, Solà-Morales proposed a cataloging system based on a series of analytical conditions similar to the *plateaus* of Gilles Deleuze. His initial five types included *mutations*, *flows*, *rooms*, *containers*, and *terrain vague* (Solà-

Morales, 1995). Like terrain vague itself, these categories are dynamic, unstable, and ever-changing. In this regard, his plateaus serve as temporal analytical instruments.

Terrain vagues have always been acquired by marginalized communities and alternative occupancies. Viewed through the lens of impending gentrification, Solà-Morales proposes that when formal architecture and urban design project their desires onto a vacant space, violent transformations dislodge the estranged and strive to dissolve the uncontaminated and organic magic of obsolescence (Solà-Morales, 1995). He engaged abandoned urban territories not as a criticism of their viability (Solà-Morales, 1995). Rather, he questioned the relevance of fully reincorporating them into a gentrified, and therefore, generic urban life. Acknowledging the memory of cycles of boom and bust, he supports the value of buildings and urban spaces in their ruined state. For Solà-Morales, the power of unproductivity allows greater variance. These spaces—territories of past technologies, economies, and urbanisms—create places of anonymity that offer less formal modes of residential and commercial occupancy, social variance, and intellectual openness (Solà-Morales, 1995). Their otherness, partially based on underperformance and outmodedness, provides opportunities for casual engagement, affordability, adaptation, and innovation. Solà-Morales posits:

“When architecture and urban design project their desire onto a vacant space, a terrain vague, they seem incapable of doing anything other than introducing violent transformation, changing estrangement into citizenship, and striving at all costs to dissolve the uncontaminated margin of the obsolete into the realism of efficacy.”

Unlike the determinist assumptions of structuralist urban theory, Solà-Morales proposes an intersectional way to engage non-conforming uses in the contemporary metropolis through post-structuralist theory. He asserts that buildings and urban spaces may be assessed through processes of unfolding and differentiation—as an unquantifiable finding process (Solà-Morales, 1995). For Solà-Morales, buildings and urban sites acquire temporal layers and embedded narratives over time.

In contrast to structuralist theory, the notion of *terrain vague* avoids biased understandings of spatial occupancy. Such expectations assume that optimum performance is achieved through consistency leveraged through stable economies, maintenance, and forms of social organization. When any of these conditions fray as it does in dying malls, *terrain vague* begins to emerge. As a form of interstitial occupancy, *terrain vague* harbors instabilities and promotes fluxes which grow organically into dynamic complexities. At the same time, *terrain vague* celebrates the fragmentary nature of spaces that are more typically characterized as degenerate. As evidenced in the dead and dying malls of Texas, *terrain vague* collects divergent uses that occur with increasing frequency in contemporary American suburbia.

7.5 Finding Stability in Obsolescence

In a suburban context, resilience can take on a social dimension based upon existing building stock, re-use, and re-investment, as well as associated redundancies that mitigate the potential for economic collapse. The two largest metropolitan areas in

Texas—Dallas/Ft. Worth and Houston—have been conceived over time in discontinuous bands of residential, commercial, and industrial development. Although fragmented, these suburban ‘places’ have been embedded with the institutional memory of a first generation that was predominantly professional, middle-to-upper-middle-class, upwardly mobile, and Caucasian. Revealing echoes of the past, many neighborhoods across the metropolitan peripheries of Texas cities have undergone considerable change, migrating slowly away from the conventional toward more socially, economically, and ethnically diverse demographic futures.

Houston, the most amorphous of Texas cities, exemplifies globalized suburban informality and demographic conditions that contrast considerably with its origins. Multicultural, unstructured, visually disorganized, and socially fragmented, suburban Houston reflects the subtleties of past usage patterns, as well as the marked transformation of recent shifts. Much like the upheaval encountered by displaced persons, this emerging suburban periphery is defined by unideal physical circumstances, yet it also offers potential for new forms of socio-economic growth, cultural hybridization, and urbanity. The highly autonomous and obsolescence-rich suburban environment encountered by working-class immigrants and refugees in Houston allows more informal commercial enterprises to percolate and prosper. Within an architecturally unremarkable landscape, modest community needs shape an *everyday* built environment leveraged through an accessible cache of undervalued buildings, commercial districts, and neighborhoods. Here, cultural

practices and international mercantile cultures converge to adapt obsolescence.

For marginalized populations including refugees and immigrants, survival is based upon the ability to organize and remake itself socially, economically, and spatially (Hinacapie, Lopez, & Stehlik, 2016:183). Immigrant communities in the suburban peripheries of Texas cities have forged new American identities within obsolescence—retail strips, enclosed shopping malls, abandoned warehouses, and residential streets of a sprawling periphery host these emerging heterotopias. Unmonumental and anti-heroic, such transformations reflect limited means, as well as the impact of time and collective memory. Undervalued existing buildings serve as *the* primary building block of places of otherness, offering an available and accessible infrastructure for mercantile activity. In Dallas and Houston, disinvested suburbs subvert conventional characteristics to reveal forms of occupancies that share common ground with working-class urban neighborhoods in developing countries. Blending immigration and the suburban neighborhood, heterotopias satisfy the basic human desire to mark, redefine, and make space.

7.6 Adaptation and Resilience within a Globalized Periphery

The idea of fostering resilience in urban infrastructure is a strategic theme and operational goal for many cities around the world (Jha, Stanton-Geddes, & Miner, 2013:9-20). Researchers, scholars, and practitioners in various disciplines have struggled with the notion of *resilience* in their respective fields for decades. What does

resilience mean in terms of existing building infrastructures, and more specifically, how might it be accomplished in suburbia? As architects, designers, and planners struggle to develop prescriptive models that guide resilient practices at the metropolitan scale—the ecological, economic, and social dimensions of resilience have become increasingly more relevant within established urban forms (Jha, Stanton-Geddes, & Miner, 2013:22-23). In recent years, the focus on resilience has shifted away from anticipation of risk and mitigation, and toward a more integrated and incremental model that promotes protective and preventative strategies (Goldstein, 2012). Conventional or low-tech approaches to *resistance* may be linked to more responsive and regenerative aspects of *resilience* (Jha, Stanton-Geddes, & Miner, 2013:155).

One of the most vital and central aspects of resilience is the ability for neighborhoods to adequately support their own residential, commercial, social, spiritual, and cultural needs. In the Texas cities of Laredo, Dallas, and Houston, the adaptive potential of existing and undervalued buildings systematizes a bottom-up framework of social support for the economically disadvantaged. The following case studies illustrate retail change and emergent heterotopias tied to influences in the US-Mexico Borderlands. Beginning in Laredo at the international border on I-35, so-called dead malls demonstrate the on-going transformation of production and consumption in suburbia. Here, a landscape defined by 1970s homogeneity has become a place of multicultural hybridization and urbanity.

7.7 Laredo: The Portal

Since its founding in 1755, Laredo has been a majority-Hispanic city blending two identities, well known for its ethnically hybridized schools, churches, and civic institutions that serve a populace in flux (Morales, 2002:221-222). The historical mixing of this region traces its origins to the founding of Mexico, and later, to the development of commercial connectivity with the opening of a trans-continental railroad at Laredo in 1881, as well as a subsequent influx of European immigrants and American migrants from the east. Since the passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement in 1994, Laredo has become a center of global commerce as well as the most important US-Mexico border crossing. In recent years, the intensification of border controls and established the secondary security barrier north of the city have created physical and psychological boundaries between Laredo and the rest of the United States. In response to these constraints, undocumented immigrants now find it much harder to travel beyond Laredo. Thus, the city's appeal as a destination for migrants, rather than a temporary landing point, has become far more commonplace. *Colonias*—unregulated settlements characterized by informal housing—have grown substantially in size since the mid-1970s as an impact of the inadequate housing supply in the Rio Grande Valley region (Arreola, 2002:90-91). More recently, Laredo has become one of the border cities receiving among the highest flow of unaccompanied child migrants from Mexico and Central America (Gordon, 2014). The current humanitarian crisis underscores a dramatic socio-economic and demographic shift that has transformed

Laredo into a substantial international city existing as an ambiguous zone between cultures.

Interstate 35 is one of the most important highways in the United States. Beginning in Laredo and forming its path along the historical nineteenth century Chisholm Trail, it conveys a massive flow of consumer products, car parts, processed foods, and other goods along the NAFTA corridor from Mexico to the United States and Canada. Laredo is the busiest commercial port of entry along the USA-Mexico border, processing over \$98 billion in legal imports during 2013 (US Customs & Border Protection, 2014). The city serves as the pivot point between two autonomous nations—acting as a blurred zone, a third country, and a hybridized place. It is among the most Mexican of American cities, with a bilingual population that often prefers Spanish to English. This narrative is not specific to Laredo, but shared by many cities in the Rio Grande Valley that blend American and Mexican traditions. Both cultures hold historic political and cultural claims to the region, while their parallel stewardship supports the socio-economic integration of new residents with identities that straddle the US-Mexico border.

Immigration is the primary reason for the rise of several private bus lines that use Laredo as hub for operations connecting cities in Mexico with others the United States. In Laredo, route maps of the bus fleets illustrate the extent to which Mexico has blurred into America. Services to Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Oklahoma, Alabama, Georgia, Tennessee, Kentucky, and the Carolinas reveal the places where an

increasingly cross-cultural American experience is taking shape. Tornado, El Conejo, Turimex, Senda, and others weave a daily web connecting Mexican cities in the north and east of the country with small towns and big cities across the United States. Threaded through Laredo, these private bus companies provide a lifeline for families divided by the border. Migration has slowed with closer scrutiny of undocumented immigrants. Departing daily in steady intervals, this connective network gains little notice from mainstream American society.

Many cities in southern Texas traces their origins to the colonial administration of Spain and later Mexico before the establishment of the independent Republic of Texas. In 1845, the Texas lands north of the Rio Grande River became part of the United States (Kemp, 2010:175). The border slowly “changed” on the people whereby Anglo American norms were imposed on Spanish-speaking society casting Hispanics as “others” (Weber, 2003). Regardless of territorial boundaries, Laredo has welcomed migrants and immigrants for many years, while cities in the Midwest have, until recently, reflected ‘difference’ primarily in the conventional American polarity of black and white. For many recent immigrants from Latin America, Laredo serves as a portal to the Midwest—a new Ellis Island—while I-35 acts like the ‘ferry to Manhattan’. Immigrants come to Laredo in various ways—some hold green cards and others cross the border through clandestine means. Temporary visitors arrive with border-crossing cards allowing them to stay in the United States within twenty-five miles of the border for up to seventy-two hours. Of these, some travel north as tourists and overstay their

visas. The historical bilateral openness of the Rio Grande Valley international border zone became more restricted in the 1990s, when undocumented migrants began to use freight railways and private bus companies to move further into the United States (Hernandez, 2010:221-225). At the same time, the population of Laredo doubled between 1990 to 2012 to 244,000—largely attributed to the flow of migrants from Mexico and Central America through the international border (Cave, 2014). After 9/11, border security tightened, followed by a significant increase in infrastructure that added American officers, security cameras, powerboats, and a secondary checkpoint barrier farther north on I-35 (Anderson & Gerber, 2008:212-215). In 2010, border controls reacted to escalating violence in northern Mexico related to territorial disputes between the Gulf and Zetas drug cartels.

Regardless of shifting entry regulations and policies of the American federal government, Laredo serves as a primary gateway for overland migration into Texas and the mid-continental United States—a portal city and anchor of a quintessential American highway. The city is home to the first of many dying malls stretching from Laredo to Duluth. One of these—River Drive Mall—sits within walking distance of the Gateway to the Americas International Bridge on the US-Mexico border. It is an abandoned property sitting within an interstitial zone between two cultures that awaits its future.

7.8 An Edge Condition: River Drive Mall, Laredo

Located within a day's drive of major cities in northeastern Mexico, Laredo serves as a primary shopping destination for a large middle and upper-middle-class based in the sprawling Monterrey metropolitan area. Four bridges connect Laredo, Texas and Nuevo Laredo, Mexico, the busiest of these—the Juarez-Lincoln International Bridge—is jointly operated by the City of Laredo and Mexican federal government. The bridge was built on the eastern edge of downtown Laredo to alleviate congestion on the small-scale Gateway to the Americas International Bridge, while providing a direct connection to I-35 for commercial traffic. This state-of-the-art bridge demonstrates how Laredo has transformed itself from a sleepy backwater town into an international hub of global commerce in thirty years. Even so, the historic Gateway to the Americas International Bridge remains an important and critical crossing point. Originally built in 1889 as the Convent Street Bridge, the current structure dates from 1956 and represents a joint effort between governments in Mexico and the United States (City of Laredo, 2016). This busy yet diminutive bridge connects the downtown commercial cores of Laredo, Texas and Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas with a four-lane roadway, pedestrian paths, and international customs and immigration stations. Unlike most vehicular bridges, the pedestrian paths of the Gateway to the Americas International Bridge are typically busier than the automobile roadway.

Downtown Laredo, Texas is a bustling commercial district that serves local, regional, and international consumers and merchants. Many of the downtown retailers

serve Mexico-based merchants as wholesale supply agents. Situated directly adjacent to the Gateway to the Americas International Bridge, River Drive Mall opened in 1970 as the first enclosed shopping mall in Laredo incorporating anchors JC Penney, Frost Brothers, and Weiner's (Figures 19 & 20). The mall is located within a five-minute walk from the downtown central plaza of Nuevo Laredo, Mexico and was initially popular due to its pedestrian accessibility. Furthermore, it represents a common urban renewal strategy of the era that sought to attach suburban shopping centers and enclosed malls to established downtown commercial districts in small-to-medium size cities. The popularity of River Drive Mall would be relatively brief, however, due to the arrival of Mall del Norte in 1977 that opened outside of downtown on the I-35 corridor. Continued retail development along the freeway corridor contributed to the decline of River Drive Mall through the mid-1980s. Shifting security concerns exacerbated its permanent closure in 2003, at which time Morgan Stern Realty purchased River Drive Mall with the intention of converting it into an outlet center serving the trans-border market (Herrera, 2013). Although the mall offers proximity to the border, it suffers from adjacency to the wholesale district of downtown Laredo—an area that is largely avoided by the class-conscious elites of northeastern Mexico. Morgan Stern renamed River Drive Mall as the El Portal Center and embarked on major renovations in 2003, but abandoned the project by 2005 citing security concerns and marketing issues.



Figure 19: View of River Drive Mall from Nuevo Laredo, Mexico. SOURCE: Wikimedia



Figure 20: View of River Drive Mall. SOURCE: Wikimedia



Figure 21: Demolition of River Drive Mall in mid-2015. SOURCE: Alberto Carrasco



Figure 22: Rendering of the new Outlet Shoppes at Laredo. SOURCE: Horizon Group

Since 2006, the structure has remained on-hold and unoccupied. In 2013, the City of Laredo and Horizon Group Properties announced redevelopment plans for River Drive Mall. The existing structure was demolished in mid-2015 and a new three-story open-air building with ninety outlet stores was built in its place (Figure 21) (Horizon Group, 2013). The new Outlet Shoppes at Laredo opened in 2017 and intend to serve the trans-border upper-middle-class of northeastern Mexico (Figure 22) (Gonzalez, 2016).

City officials believe that the new outlet mall will help to revive downtown Laredo, specifically by increasing visits to the city from Mexican nationals who typically travel to outlet shops in San Marcos, Texas. The new 358,550 square foot outlet mall employs over 2,000 people and include over eighty outlet shops such as Abercrombie & Fitch, Banana Republic, Fossil, Gap, Guess, Michael Kors, Nike, Nine West, Perry Ellis, Puma, and Tommy Hilfiger. Representing an increasingly common shift away from conventional mall retailers, the new outlet stores primarily serve upper-middle-class customers from Mexico.

7.9 An Anonymous 'Ruin': Indeterminate Façade Building, Houston

The Best Products Company of Richmond, Virginia was a catalog retailer founded by Sydney and Frances Lewis in 1958. As merchants and art and design aficionados with a desire to draw interest to their stores, they commissioned James Wines and SITE Architects to design a series of unorthodox and irreverent retail showrooms. The

Houston showroom opened in 1974 on a site near Almeda Mall—a regional shopping mall built by the James Rouse Company in 1968 that was the premier mall in Houston at the time. Named the Indeterminate Façade Building, the showroom was one of nine radical, prototype big box stores designed by SITE (Sculpture in The Environment) for Best Products that rethought utilitarian suburban retail architecture. Wines described the project as de-architecturization of the façade achieved by extending the brick veneer beyond the leading edge of the roofline, resulting in the appearance of something between construction and demolition (Drexler, 1979). The resulting subversive, displaced, and fragmented form evoked ruins or deconstructed buildings, a vision of neglect that would ironically presage a future of disinvestment and decline in the surrounding Kingspoint neighborhood. As a commentary on both the strip shopping center and the suburbs, Wines rethought commonplace buildings to work against conventional expectations, as well as the reigning social, psychological, and aesthetic notions in 1970s suburbia (Moss & Wines, 1991). The ambiguity of its form—subversive decay within a context of perceived “normativity”—foreshadowed the future of the Best Products store to distort its relationship with site, formality, proportion, scale, and time to reveal tentativeness and instability. Wines’ Best Products stores subverted utopia to foretell a dystopia on the horizon—a witty and provocative narrative that challenged the increasing irrelevance and complacency in post-1968 architecture. The first of a series of buildings that James Wines would design for Best Products, the Houston showroom was perceived as a profound conceptual

statement in the art world, however viewed with deep distain by mainstream architects. The Indeterminate Facade Building rejected architectural conventions relative to form, space, and structure. Rather, Wines believed that the Houston showroom was an 'architecture of information', retelling a site narrative while straddling the line between art and utility, environmental and consumption, permanence and deconstruction (Moss & Wines, 1991).

Grounded as not only an architect but as an artist, sculptor, and graphic designer, Wines views buildings as a social provocation. Similarly, the Indeterminate Façade Building's design emerges from a liminal place between art and architecture. Its purposely 'ruined', fragmented, and crumbling profile, has somewhat ironically succumbed to the cyclical rise and fall of suburban retail (Figure 23, 24, & 25). Furthermore, the building has been radically altered to appear more conventional over time—the subversive qualities of its form have been diminished, intentionally leveled, and rebuilt to convey a more ordinary and 'finished' appearance (Figure 26). As the neighborhood surrounding this icon has been crumbling, the Indeterminate Façade Building has assumed a more conventional appearance. Today, this landmark building serves as a warehouse and exists in a tentative state of abandonment. Surrounded by a security fence and parking lot filled with shipping containers, the building has been stripped of both its architecture and memory. A building that forecasted the future of suburban obsolescence has been profoundly violated by the disposable culture that it criticized; however, like the iconic Parthenon in Athens, the Indeterminate Façade



Figure 23: Indeterminate Façade Building, Houston (1975). SOURCE: James Wines



Figure 24: Indeterminate Façade Building, Houston (1975). SOURCE: James Wines



Figure 25: Indeterminate Façade Building, Houston (1975). SOURCE: James Wines



Figure 26: Indeterminate Façade Building, Houston in 2015 stripped of its architecture.
SOURCE: G. Marinic

Building was sited ‘on the oblique’ in the manner of a *real* piece of architecture.

National retailers have largely abandoned the Almeda Mall and its vicinity for upscale malls—the middle ground has been abandoned—and low-end retail has filled the void. Furthermore, the pragmatic and utilitarian Almeda Mall was rooted in the austere aesthetic and new town planning principles of Victor Gruen and European socialism, rather than the current preference for luxury and conspicuous consumerism. In place of national brands and suburban homogeneity, immigrant merchants have carved out a niche to provide general services such as car repair, pawn shops, nail salons, clothing stores, and restaurants serving multi-ethnic and multi-income consumers. Although neighborhood retail has not been entirely abandoned, it has transitioned from one heterotopia to another—from a bastion of 1970s white middle-

class conformity to contemporary working-class Latin American immigrant aspiration. A particularly dramatic transformation in the area is 'The Mullet', a graffiti center that occupies the exterior walls and interior spaces of an abandoned strip shopping center. These once routine retail spaces have become urban scale public spaces fostering art and creativity. In an ironic turn, the Alameda Mall underwent a major renovation in 2015 with upgrades to its exterior and interior spaces including flooring surfaces, concourse storefronts, and new skylights. In addition, the mall interior acquired a series of hanging art follies incorporating graffiti inspired by the nearby Kingspoint Mullet. In this sense, the renovated mall has *learned* from its context and formalized otherness as a form of sanctioned interiority (Figures 27 & 28). The Alameda Mall, Indeterminate Façade Building, and The Mullet have rejected hegemony to address alternative uses, aesthetics, artistic practices, and consumptive patterns for renewal.



Figure 27: The Mullet (left) and Alameda Mall 2015 graffiti follies (right). SOURCE: The Mullet & G. Marinic



Figure 28: The Mullet (left) and Alameda Mall 2015 graffiti follies (right). SOURCE: The Mullet & G. Marinic

7.10 An Interstitial Space: Greenspoint Mall, Houston

In *'The Architectural Uncanny'*, Anthony Vidler considers architecture as the *uncanny*—a metaphor for the modern condition (Vidler, 1992). He analyzes the state of Architecture in an era of increasing obsolescence in everyday building typologies of the recent past. He interprets the ungrounded qualities of abandoned or under-used shopping malls as the wasted territories of consumerism, corporate disinvestment, and post-industrial culture (Vidler, 1992). Vidler considers the problems inherent to such architectures as they lose their novelty and fade into ghosts of the past, proposing a future vision of retail environments built upon the ruins of alienation, suburban exile, and obsolescence. Forgotten by their intended users and appropriated by others, these so-called *dead malls* are the cast-off orphans of a recent past civilization. They exist along the undefined margins of our suburban landscapes as scars and dead zones, yet

there are qualitative nuances in their so-called deadness. Existing in various states of informality and disinvestment, so-called 'deadness' ranges from total erasure to emerging, vibrant, and alternative communities of otherness.

Conventional malls built during the first and second waves of mall development are increasingly a lost generation. One prominent Houston example of this phenomenon is the Greenspoint Mall located at the junction of Interstate 45 and Beltway 8. It has been diminished by the re-emergence of downtown, new retail forms, web-based means of consumption, and shifting demographics. Opening in 1976, Greenspoint Mall was once the largest mall in the Houston metropolitan area. By the late 1980s, it began to wane with the mid-1980s oil recession, the arrival of newer malls at Willowbrook and Deerbrook, as well as a dramatically rising crime rate. Over the last ten years, most of the original six anchor stores have closed, while mall shops have transitioned from national retailers to locally owned merchants. The mall itself has become increasingly depopulated, yet the massive parking lot has witnessed new activity in the form of carnivals and motorcycle meet-ups. These informal activities offer new layers of life that contrast radically with the past.

7.11 Conclusion

Aging strip malls, big box stores, and enclosed shopping malls effectively—if somewhat ironically—afford immigrant communities an existing connective infrastructure that serves many needs. Ethnic shops, storefront churches, and social clubs are housed in

former bastions of suburban conformity. In their transition from solidly middle-class to greater socio-economic diversity, suburban neighborhoods and their long-time residents must negotiate various polarities—chaos/order, ambivalence/adaptation, resistance/resilience—while continually learning and transforming within a new context. The obsolete and radically altered retail environments in these neighborhoods offer a window on the future of ‘suburbia’ in Texas. On the one hand, suburbs are increasingly more urban, heterogeneous, demographically diverse, and socio-economically blended. On the other, they inherently contain core attributes of resilient systems—resource diversity, resource availability, and institutional memory—and thus, offer the potential for even greater socio-economic layering and enhanced urbanity. For Foucault, these dead zones along the edges of cities have never been empty (Foucault, 1984). His ‘space of emplacement’ filters a critical view and rationale for the establishment of heterotopias within dead mall abandonment. Processes of disinvestment and fragmentation create voids in activity, providing physical space for alternative occupancies to germinate and thrive.

For Solà-Morales, this indeterminacy is precisely what cities need to remain dynamic over time. Aging architectures, infrastructures, and urban spaces that are inflexibly programmed can only remain relevant if they may be appropriated and adapted by their communities. Fixed and static places that disallow adaptation ultimately succumb to marginalization. Although enclosed shopping malls and their adjacent peripheries have been conventionally perceived as privatized, and to a certain

degree both 'secure' and homogeneous, the increasing subversion of their formality and conformity by the 1980s gave rise to a significant shift in usage patterns. Malls and their environs are vast spaces, and thus, their abandonment and cannibalization creates unique issues for urban planning and architecture. Private, yet perceived as 'public' space by their users, the interior worlds of dead and dying malls give rise to unplanned and unofficial communities. Left empty, these incrementally 'de-programmed' infrastructures evolve into transgressive places—*terrain vagues*—which have been entirely rejected by their intended uses. As informalized urban-scale spaces, they cannot support hegemony and thus, have been appropriated by socio-economically disadvantaged immigrants and minority groups.

In a similar manner, dead and dying shopping malls escape conventional logic, and thus, require an alternative approach to remediation. These heterotopias juxtapose various seemingly incompatible functions—private investment, national retailers, mom-and-pop shops, social services, and immigrant community activities—whereby their *collection* creates a new level of homogenization (Genocchio, 1995). American society has become desensitized to the post-industrial abandonment that has overtaken former sites of production and consumption, however, suburban typologies which have lost their original functions are generally perceived as both subversive and dystopian. These dead zones create the potential for heterotopia, offering the foundation upon which delicate ethno-socio-economic heterotopias are constructed. Blending the peripheral fringe of Solà-Morales's *terrain vague* with Foucault's '...another

real space, as perfect, meticulous, and well-arranged', dead mall heterotopias reveal how conventional spaces are self-edited illusions. Heterotopias built upon dead malls do not attempt to conceal difference, but rather, reveal inherent flaws of social fragmentation and economic polarity in the late capitalist system.

Today, mid-continental suburbia in the southern 'borderland' is resoundingly less shaped by developers, designers, and the exclusionary views of HOA-defined sensibilities. Adapted through the needs of laypersons, merchants, and makers, this temporal and globalized landscape is increasingly contingent upon affordability, practicality, compromise, and connectivity far beyond the physical boundaries of the United States. This new periphery sabotages conventional wisdoms and shifts our expectations for what is possible in suburbia. Unlike most North American cities, the changing landscape of Texas suburbia offers exceptional affordability and a near limitless opportunity for the adaptive re-use of overbuilt existing retail infrastructure and housing stock. Furthermore, various incremental accretions reveal the subtleties of former occupancies of a fading suburban paradigm. A formerly homogeneous suburban utopia has been replaced by a far more complex and globalized urban heterotopia with strong connections to Latin America, Asia, Africa, and the Middle East.

CHAPTER VIII

BORDERLAND APPROPRIATIONS: MULTICULTURALISM, RETAIL, AND EMERGENT URBANITY

In *The Production of Space*, Henri Lefebvre acknowledges the impact of production, consumption, and multiplicity of authorship in the built environment. He asserts that cities, buildings, and interiors are hybrid productions mobilized not only by designers, but also through cultural traditions, social practices, and autonomous interventions (Butler, 2010). As a Marxist theorist who was critical of the economic structuralism that dominated academic discourse of his time, Lefebvre proposed that the *everyday* manipulation of space is fundamental to the growth of society and the shape of the city (Lefebvre, 2005). In *Critique of Everyday Life*, he posits a theoretical perspective that distrusts the heroic, formal, and fashionable in design. Written during the post-war boom in consumption, Lefebvre condemns design practices that operate as agents of commodification (Certeau, 1984). His ruminations on the everyday became a significant influence on the 1968 student revolution in France (Hays, 1998). By reframing the design of the built environment with the inverse—the quotidian impact of people reshaping space—Lefebvre celebrates the commonplace and unschooled actions that cities, buildings, and interiors receive apart from the schooled hand of designers. He fixes his gaze on the lives of buildings well beyond the moment of their completion.

The impact of human activities within buildings makes the study of the *everyday* a compelling filter for architecture and the built environment. Unlike the formalized rituals of academically trained architects and designers, everyday manipulations are anonymous, layered, and unstructured (Foucault & Miskowiec, 1986). Disorganized and fragmented, they contrast with normative conditions as contradictions and collaborations; they are difficult to quantify due to their irregularities (Certeau, 1984). Standing apart from the formal hand of professional designers, everyday manipulations—ranging from post-occupancy changes to ground-up adaptations—significantly shape the functional and qualitative aspects of the built environment. When coupled with issues of migration, culture, and identity, the incremental aggregation of individual interventions contributes to the building of heterotopias—places and spaces of shared otherness—that adapt architecture by offering aspects of socio-economic resilience to their communities.

This chapter expands knowledge surrounding adaptive reuse by examining how immigrant and minority groups have appropriated retail environments in American suburbia. Furthermore, it reveals ways that architecture and conventional building management practices can work in tandem with such actions. For architects and designers, understanding this way of working is critical considering recent demographic shifts in the United States. In suburbs across the country, countless obsolete commercial buildings have been altered far beyond their original intentions. Aging mid-twentieth century commercial strips and shopping malls host a new wave of

alternative uses and spatial configurations that shift how these spaces function and what they offer. Rejected by the majority populations that they previously served, these reconfigured spaces promote socio-economic stability for new communities through small-scale actions and occupancies. Obsolete retail environments are increasingly being transformed by hybrid practices into *heterotopias*—or places of otherness—that form semi-independently. This tactical form of urbanism reorients latent resources to new audiences, rewilds parking lots into their uncultivated states, and turns abandoned shopping malls into ‘urban streets’. Thus, an acknowledgement of the everyday heightens an awareness in architects and designers of a more regenerative and participatory approach to adapting suburbia.

Working in a manner like geographers, sociologists, anthropologists, and historic preservationists, how can architects, designers, and planners cultivate a more collaborative design culture that embraces and advocates for diverse modes of spatial occupancy? How might architectural practices promote, rather than subvert, these influences to recast spatial obsolescence toward higher performance futures? How might architects and designers engage a more organic mode of practice? This chapter posits that obsolete buildings of American suburbia—and more specifically, retail spaces adapted by and for immigrants, refugees, and underrepresented persons—offer clues to an alternative future. From the standpoint of urban theory, this research mobilizes the lens of Ignasi de Solà-Morales view of *terrain vague*, or indeterminate space, to frame a view on the development of interior heterotopias within everyday

suburban shopping malls (Solà-Morales, 1995). Furthermore, the premise of this chapter aligns with work on resilience in design education advocated by the Resilient Cities lab at Northeastern University, as well as forms of collaborative practice embodied by the Vermont-based Resilient Design Institute. These organizations rethink the built environment at several scales to build resilience through socio-economic self-sufficiency using accessible resources.

Diversity and social justice are crucial aspects of designing for resilience. In this dissertation, case studies are used to demonstrate how the actions of designers are temporal, and that commercial interiors often migrate toward futures in marked contrast with their original design intentions. This chapter examines how adapted shopping malls allow immigrant and underrepresented communities to seek socio-economic freedom via cultural practices and mercantilism. It establishes a context for case studies in the northern and southern US borderlands, and speculates on the transcontinental extent of retail obsolescence and shopping mall adaptation. A brief historical survey of immigration, urban development, and suburbanization in the United States contextualizes the central focus of this chapter.

8.1 Of Immigrant Origins: From Cities to Interior Space

The changing demographics of the United States point toward the inevitability of a minority-majority nation by 2040 (Misra, 2015). For architects, designers, and planners in the twenty-first century, these considerations must be understood so that

architectural practices may adapt more easily to demographic and social change. In the next thirty-five years, the population of the United States is projected to increase by over 150 million people (Greenstone & Looney, 2010). The majority of this change will occur through global immigration from sources other than Europe (Greenstone & Looney, 2010). This trend follows legislation established by the enactment of the *Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965* which abolished a racially, ethnically, and religiously exclusionary quota system dating from the 1920s (Chin & Villazor, 2015). Since that time, immigration policy in the United States has been privileged toward skills, family relationships, and geographic diversity (Chin & Villazor, 2015). Pivoting away from Europe, the resulting multiculturalization of American society has incrementally impacted the ways that buildings are used and occupied, as well as how interior spaces are being adapted.

Shifting demographic conditions are revealed through recent US Census data. In 2014, the population of the United States stood at 318 million, of which 42 million, or roughly 13%, were foreign-born (US Census, Colby & Ortman, 2015). By 2030, the foreign-born population is projected to increase to 17%, and to 23% by 2060 (US Census, Colby & Ortman, 2015). Furthermore, the demographic composition of the United States will begin to tilt away from the polarity of its European and African-American origins, and toward greater diversity. In 2014, 62% of the total population was comprised of ethnically non-Hispanic white persons (US Census, Colby & Ortman, 2015). By 2060, the total non-Hispanic white population is projected to fall to 44%,

while the non-white population, currently referred to as the “minority” population, will rise to 57% (US Census, Colby & Ortman, 2015).

Conceived over time by waves of immigrants, American cities in the early twentieth century became incrementally embedded with the institutional memory of countless former lives, as well as new cultural influences from Southern and Eastern Europe (Alba & Nee, 2003). The dense and durable urban building stock of industrial cities in the Northeast and Great Lakes regions provided a “plug-in” infrastructure suitable for mercantile, social, cultural, and religious uses. Existing urban buildings, walkable neighborhoods, and their private interiors offered immigrants space to nurture memories and cultural traditions. Furthermore, the ongoing assimilation of early twentieth century Southern and Eastern Europeans into American cities resulted in subtle adaptations to normative spatial conditions. This socio-spatial phenomenon occurred through geographic separation and the continual overlapping of cultural strata within a new environment.

For immigrants, refugees, and socio-economically disadvantaged persons, establishing a rooted narrative in an unfamiliar and hostile territory often begins within building interiors (Hadjiyanni, 2002). Interior environments allow people that lie outside the socio-economic or cultural mainstream to share their knowledge, experiences, and aesthetics through spatial manipulations. By addressing their daily needs, people reshape everyday spaces to communicate and reinforce cultural identities (Hadjiyanni, 2013). Their interventions are primarily introduced as temporal

spatial gestures revealing enduring values, perceptions, rituals, and methods of production. Contingent upon existing buildings, interiors offer communities the ability to control and construct shared spaces of cultural consciousness (Hadjiyanni, 2013). It is important for architects and designers to understand how these interventions—material and immaterial traces intrinsically linked to cultural practices—transform the built environment. Research that enhances this discourse improves our collective understanding of how people shape places (Hadjiyanni & Helle, 2010).

8.2 Suburban Migration and Retail Environments: A Brief Overview

After World War II, American cities suffered from suburban migration and “white flight”, resulting in a dramatic collapse of the commercial and social connectivity that central cities fostered (Baumgartner, 1998). Fueled by mass media and television culture, native-born and first-generation Americans migrated to suburbia alongside the simultaneous rise of a homogeneous, transcontinental suburban landscape (Beauregard, 2006). Downtown commercial districts and urban spaces were replaced by subdivisions and shopping malls; communal life was incrementally remade into controllable, transactional, and architecturally neutral spaces. Retail activities were rehoused within the enclosed *interiors* of shopping malls that served as unlikely placeholders for urban space.

By the 1950s, suburbia embodied an American Dream manifested in single-family home ownership and car dependence (Teaford, 2008). For white Americans in

inner-city neighborhoods, the suburbs promised newness, comfort, and prosperity, as well as a chance to fully participate in an assimilated American dream (Alba & Nee, 2003). At the same time, the process of mid-twentieth century suburbanization may also be viewed through the lens of silent, racially motivated forces that produced increasingly segregated communities (Alba & Nee, 2003). Generic buildings, interior spaces, and consumer products—as well as racially and socio-economically divided people—became the status quo in American suburbia. On a national scale from coast-to-coast, standardized building practices produced a neutral array of shopping centers, strip malls, fast-food restaurants, supermarkets, and gas stations (Scharoun, 2012). In regard to suburban shopping malls and strip malls, these typologies represent environments where contextual nuances were diminished or rejected.

Since the mid-twentieth century, the United States has continuously exported its placeless suburban ideals to the rest of the world by means of fast-food culture and big box retailing, while American suburbia has become increasingly globalized and multicultural. Furthermore, suburban building typologies in the United States have succumbed to their inherent temporality and fragility. Leading remarkably short lives as purpose-built agents of assimilation and homogeneity, a transformational shift has placed the formerly uniform American suburbs and their utilitarian buildings into a state of increasing disinvestment and abandonment. Fostered by xenophobia and sprawl, overbuilt retail strips, malls, and entire neighborhoods have shifted from desirable amenities to unwanted liabilities (Lewis, 2014). Moreover, competition from

internet commerce and upscale, open-air, bricks-and-mortar alternatives make the conventional enclosed shopping mall increasingly unattractive, unfeasible, and obsolete. In 2015, the ultimate demise of the conventional “classic graybox” mall was openly acknowledged by the National Retail Federation annual convention. It is widely believed that the typical American mall will become an historic anachronism by 2030 (Merrick, 2014). Even so, the homogenous exteriors of shopping malls bely the unstructured actions, values, and aspirations happening within them—actions facilitated by an increasingly multicultural population.

8.3 Immigration and Aspiration: A New Suburbia

People who have migrated far from their national homelands show tendencies to express their cultural origins and creativity through spatial manipulations (Dettwyler, 2011). Supporting such desires, the design neutrality of suburban interiors, both residential and commercial, has inadvertently enabled great freedom of cultural expression. In a dramatic turn of fate, the racially homogenous suburbs and their tabula rasa building typologies now operate as canvases for the inscription of diverse cultural narratives and identities. Demonstrating the dual impact of immigration and domestic migration, formerly white suburbs have become hybridized territories where global-local identities thrive and prosper.

Immigrants and refugees in the United States have increasingly bypassed cities altogether to settle in suburbia (Ciment & Radzilowski, 2015). The rise of an

increasingly global and multicultural population in America is evidenced by immigrant entrepreneurs who have successfully carved out micro-economic opportunities in the suburbs. A survey of US Census data reveals the depth of demographic change. In 2000, 56% of the immigrants residing in the largest metropolitan areas of the United States settled in suburbs; by 2013, the amount had increased to 61% (Wilson & Svajlenka, 2014). Between 2000 and 2013, 76% of growth in the foreign-born population of the largest metropolitan areas occurred in suburbia (Wilson & Svajlenka, 2014). In 2010, 40% of Fortune 500 companies were founded by immigrants or their offspring (Anderson, 2011). Immigrants are nearly twice as likely to launch small businesses than their native-born counterparts (Stangler & Wiens, 2015). Situating these figures within the broader context of the economy, immigrant entrepreneurs offer a significant contribution to the American economy (Anderson, 2011). Between 2000 and 2013, no metropolitan area in the United States saw its foreign-born population decrease, and in twenty of these, the suburban population of foreign-born residents doubled (Wilson & Svajlenka, 2014). In 2014, 28.5% of new entrepreneurs were immigrants, representing an increase of over 15% since 1998 (Stangler & Wiens, 2015).

Micro-enterprises based on production, culture, and spiritual observances offer minorities a form of urban-scale resilience. These opportunities are often activated through the acquisition and use of commercial buildings that were not purpose-built for their practices. Obsolete retail spaces allow immigrant entrepreneurs to bridge

memory with a socio-economic future in the new land. As encapsulated and controllable spaces, how do commercial building interiors offer similar opportunities? How do these relatively private worlds serve cultural processes, rituals, and events—oftentimes idealized—through regenerative interventions?

This dissertation uses case studies to document and analyze how adapted shopping malls and strip malls act as markers and makers of identity within increasingly diverse American cities. Retail environments provide an opportunity to explore everyday manipulations by community members from diverse global origins. Alternative spatial arrangements and aesthetics reflect the transformative forces of migration, globalization, resilience, and territorialization in the United States (Alba & Nee, 2003). While this research focuses primarily on immigrant communities, it also considers historically underrepresented urban African-American populations motivated by similar needs and ambitions in the suburbs.

8.4 Theoretical Framing: Heterotopian Spaces of Otherness

Today, changes in suburban retail interiors increasingly percolate up informally, rather than trickle down through formal interventions. These processes arguably offer higher self-sufficiency, more flexible organization, and greater long-term viability for immigrant populations and underrepresented communities. Physically and psychologically distant from the gentrified center city, largely interior interventions challenge conventional assumptions about suburbia. Growing into spaces of

otherness—or heterotopias—these interior worlds are places of modest vitality altered by and for their users. Retail buildings that house spaces of otherness were not originally purpose-built to the needs or preferences of their current users. For example, storefront mosques have taken the place of dry cleaners, as obsolete gas stations are being converted into tacquerias and nail salons. While not always housed in ideal building typologies, these informally reprogrammed spaces create first opportunities for assimilation into the larger economic and cultural fabric of the American city.

As previously mentioned, Anthony Vidler (1992) examines the built environment by using the *uncanny* as a metaphor for contemporary conditions. He analyzes obsolescence in everyday buildings of the recent past and interprets the ungrounded qualities of abandoned shopping malls as the after effects of consumerism, corporate disinvestment, and post-industrial culture. Much like Walter Benjamin and his seminal *The Arcades Project* (1927-40), Vidler considers the trajectory of buildings that lose their purposefulness and fade to host alternative uses. He proposes a future vision of retail environments built upon suburban alienation, exile, and obsolescence. Intermingled within the interiors of semi-abandoned 1970s retail strips and enclosed shopping malls, heterotopias exist along the undefined margins of suburbia.

Globalism and technology have transformed the notion of “territory”, as well as the contemporary nature of how heterotopias operate (Dehaene & De Caeter,

2008). Michel Foucault (1984) employed the term *heterotopia* to describe such places and spaces that engage intersectional layers of meaning, as well as simultaneity and connectivity to other places. Since time immemorial, heterotopias have appropriated aspects of remembrance by representing physical places among a shared people. Today, however, the immediacy of the internet and ease of long-distance travel has changed their relationship to not only distant homelands, but also to the notion of memory itself. As immigrants increasingly by-pass cities altogether for the suburbs, unremarkable suburban building typologies have become a vast—though unintended—territory for immigrant heterotopias. Obsolete extant buildings and their underused interiors provide *the* primary locale for places of otherness in the northern and southern borderland regions of the United States. These suburban landscapes and their structures offer an available and accessible interior infrastructure for communal activities ranging from commerce to spirituality. For immigrants and other socio-economically underrepresented persons, heterotopia satisfy basic human spatial needs.

Today in the United States, heterotopia is often manifested *inside* of buildings. The research in this chapter mobilizes Foucault’s theoretical notion of heterotopia to explore and examine incremental practices of appropriation in the suburban landscape. In American suburbia, forces of globalization, technology, and demographic change have imparted significant influences on reshaping the built environment. The intersection of these changes has, in some cases, created new territories for cultural occupation and building renewal. Heterotopias most often seed themselves within the

cast-off buildings of failed and overbuilt enterprises (Solà-Morales, 1995). As evidenced by the retail buildings analyzed in this study, retail obsolescence has been recast as a place of renewal.

The relative lateral vastness of shopping malls allows controllable interior urban conditions to emerge through their spatial encapsulation. Heterotopian theory embraces non-conformity by appropriating terrain vague. The next chapter seeks to uncover and celebrate the specific *interiority* of this heterotopian turn in building usage. It focuses on specific case studies to demonstrate intersectionality of suburban retail obsolescence, migration, diversity, terrain vague, and culture as makers of heterotopia.

CHAPTER IX

BORDERLAND TYPOLOGIES: TWO REGIONS, SIX CASE STUDIES⁴

9.1 Methodology: Engaging Dialectics, Heterotopias, & the Dérive

The methodology for this research comprised a study of malls in two ‘borderland’ regions of the United States—one influenced by proximity to Mexico and another shared with Canada in the Great Lakes—considered alongside the larger trajectory of mall development, changing consumer tastes, and immigration on a national scale. To illustrate the continental extent of this phenomenon, malls in the two defined borderland regions of the United States—*Southern Borderland* (centered on Houston, Dallas, and Laredo), *Northern Borderland* (centered on Cleveland, Buffalo, Syracuse, and Toronto)—were sampled and studied by comparing original plans and occupancy statistics with current conditions.

As discussed earlier, this dissertation was inspired by the example of Walter Benjamin’s analysis of retail obsolescence in Paris in his *The Arcades Project* (1927-40) and the theoretical notion of heterotopia proposed by Michel Foucault, as well as the urban exploration techniques—or *dérives*—of Guy Debord and the Situationist International (1956). For Debord, *dérives* were intended to combat the boredom and malaise of the ‘society of the spectacle’ (Debord, 1970). In this dissertation, I propose

⁴ Part of this chapter (section 9.2) served as a research foundation for “Internal Appropriations: Multiculturalism and the American Shopping Mall” by Gregory Marinic. 2016. *Journal of Interior Design*, Volume 41, pages 47-67, Copyright 2016 by John Wiley & Sons.

that there is a critical theoretical connection linking the tactics of Benjamin, Foucault, and Debord with the continual transformation and fragmentation of contemporary American suburbia. The retail obsolescence in Benjamin's Paris, encapsulation in Foucault's heterotopia, and societal malaise of Debord's view of consumption establish an intersectional means to reconsider the American shopping mall in the early twenty-first century. My own excursions from 2012 through 2017 took the form of frequent, ongoing, and rapid walks through shopping malls or suburban drives documenting obsolescence, abandonment, and occupancy patterns using digital photography. As Debord claims, *dérives* are most successful in groups of two or three. Accordingly, my urban explorations often benefited from the companionship and insights of Tito Mesias, Craig Babe, Ziad Qureshi; my father Thomas Marinic, or my brother—Peter Marinic; as well as studio-based excursions with my undergraduate students at the University of Houston. More often, however, I would “*dérive*” alone by taking full days to visit and revisit countless malls in Houston, Dallas, Cleveland, Buffalo, Rochester, and Syracuse—as well as visiting malls along the transcontinental corridor connecting Dallas to New York City via Oklahoma City, Kansas City, St. Louis, Chicago, Toledo, and Cleveland. Collectively, this research represents five years of monitoring and documenting malls, strip centers, and big box stores that would become exemplars for *borderland typologies*—exemplars demonstrating the state of suburban American retail circa 2012-2017.

Furthermore, this research was integrated into academic design studios at the University of Houston whereby students studied malls in each region to determine adjustments to building programs, façades, and spatial configurations. Research included primary materials collected from various archives (developers, mall managers, architectural offices, and libraries), secondary sources such as newspapers and blogs, as well as extensive on-site field documentation research. Portions of this research were developed into elaborate graphic visualizations which have been vetted in multiple academic forums and awarded. On-site field visits served as the most critical means for determining current occupancy conditions. This information was assessed in comparison to demographic data for each metropolitan area. In addition to regional research of the northern and southern borderland areas, the history and cultural impact of American mall culture was collectively engaged. In design studios, malls became indoor territories of student projects that proposed speculative, blended programs for socially, economically, and culturally diverse new environments. This pilot studio resulted in the development of enhanced interior architecture studio curriculum engaging retail obsolescence and adaptive reuse. Research generated via the studio was blind peer reviewed, formally exhibited, and presented at the *Creating_Making Forum* sponsored by the University of Oklahoma Division of Architecture (2014), Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture National Conference in Toronto (2015), and the Interior Design Educators Council National Conference in Ft. Worth (2015). Furthermore, this studio-based student research has been recognized by an

Outstanding Design-Research Award by the University of Houston Undergraduate Research Day (2014), as well as by the American Institute of Architects—AIA Ft. Worth with the 2015 AIA Student Design Excellence Award, a competitive award at the Texas statewide level. Studio-based dead mall adaptation research undertaken at the University of Houston is included in the appendix.

Through insights gleaned from research and academic studios, *borderland typologies* have been defined as interstitial environments that reject conventional expectations for shopping malls due to partial abandonment and appropriation. Apart from an upscale mall in Dallas (NorthPark Center) and a purpose-built retail center serving an ethnic community in Toronto (Pacific Mall)—these retail types demonstrate significant levels of occupancy change, obsolescence, and transformation. ‘Borderland’ shopping mall typologies have been defined using the following parameters:

- Malls and strip centers in inner ring and outer ring suburbia
- Opening dates between 1950-1990
- High store vacancies
- Lack of anchor stores
- Decreasing national retailers
- High percentage of immigrant/minority-owned enterprises
- Notable level of non-commercial activities
- Notable non-commercial occupancies include places of worship, community organizations, social services, military recruitment offices, etc.

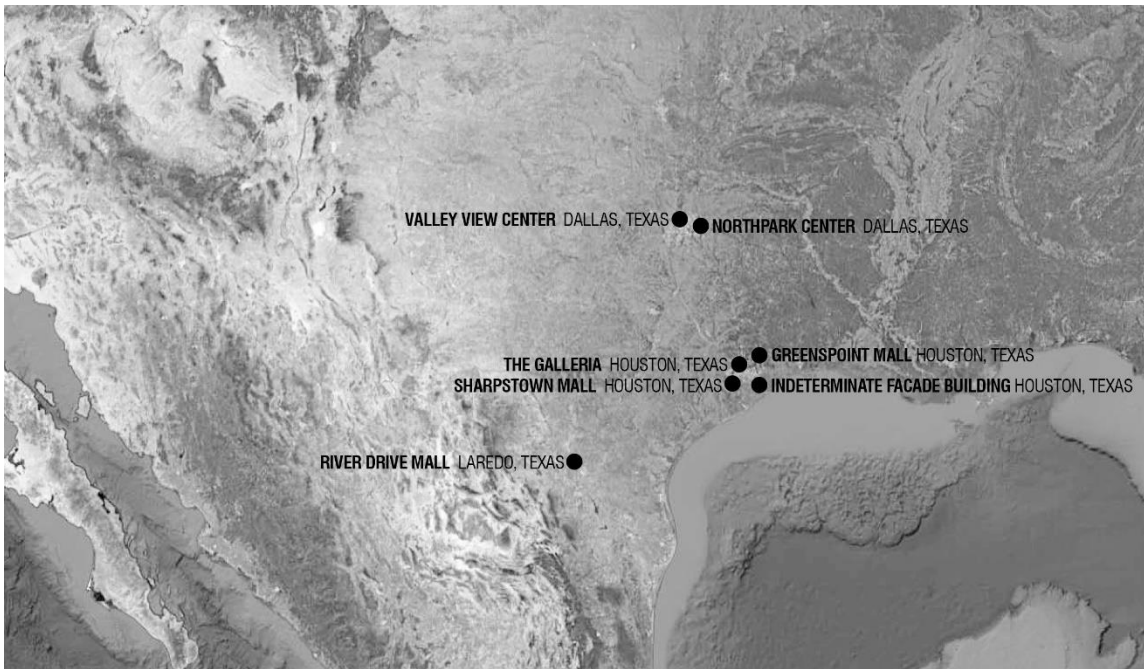


Figure 29: Graphic of *Northern Borderland* (upper) and *Southern Borderland* (lower) showing malls presented in this dissertation. SOURCE: G. Marinic

In this chapter, six case studies identify typologies that embody the scope and regional variance of shopping mall abandonment and adaptive renewal in the borderland regions of the United States—three in the *Southern Borderland* US-Mexico Texas region and three in the *Northern Borderland* US-Canada Eastern Great Lakes region (Figure 29). The first typology, Euclid Square Mall (1977), represents the ‘Adaptive Transformation’ typology and uses a modestly-scaled mall located in an inner ring suburb on the east side of Cleveland as an exemplar. The second typology, ‘Cultural Translation’, is demonstrated by Sharpstown Mall (1961) in southwest Houston. The third typology, ‘Micro-Enterprise’, summarizes the ethnic transformation of strip malls in Syracuse and Buffalo. The fourth typology, ‘Ethnic Hub’, contextualizes the purpose-built Pacific Mall in Markham, Ontario as an outgrowth of multicultural Toronto. The fifth typology, ‘Multicultural Aspiration’ examines the design and long-term resilience of NorthPark Center, as super-regional shopping mall serving the multicultural upper-middle and upper classes of Dallas. The sixth typology, ‘Suburban Erasure’, uses the Valley View Center in Dallas to illustrate the final phase of appropriation which often faces increasing gentrification or impending demolition.

9.2 Type 1: Adaptive Transformation

[Northern Borderland] Euclid Square Mall, Euclid, Ohio

In the first half of the twentieth century, metropolitan expansion in the United States was dominated by the rapid expansion in the industrial cities of the Northeast and

Great Lakes regions. After World War II, urban expansion shifted away from cities to suburbs whereby metropolitan growth became equally distributed between cities and suburbs (Hanlon, Short, & Vicino, 2010). By the end of the twentieth century, the geographic advantage of inner ring suburbs was undermined as economic prosperity migrated far beyond the urban core. This demographic pattern is most evident in the shrinking industrial cities of the larger Eastern Great Lakes region. In Cleveland, the oldest postwar suburbs, particularly those built in the 1950s, became less desirable and began to experience increasing levels of disinvestment, abandonment, and decline (Palen, 1995). In short, many of the oldest suburbs in Cleveland now confront the same challenges that plagued the central city in the 1960s and 70s.

The Euclid Square Mall was a modestly-scaled mall in a working-class suburb on the east side of Cleveland. By 2017, the mall was abandoned due to the re-emergence of downtown Cleveland, competition from other malls, web-based retail, and shifting demographics (Figures 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, & 35). Its development, however, marked a moment of optimism and significance for Euclid—a modest suburb built by European immigrants and their first-generation offspring. Opening in 1977 with 687,000 square feet, ninety-two shops, and two major department stores, Euclid Square was targeted to a middle-class “white ethnic” shopper who would have otherwise shopped in downtown Cleveland, Severance Center, Richmond Mall, Randall Park Mall, or Great Lakes Mall (Rutti, 2013). Euclid Square Mall was built by the Jacobs, Visconi, & Jacobs Corporation on the former site of the Chase Brass & Copper Company tubing mill.



Figure 30: The abandoned Euclid Square Mall, March 2017. SOURCE: G. Marinic



Figure 31: The abandoned Euclid Square Mall, March 2017. SOURCE: G. Marinic



Figure 32: The abandoned Higbee's store at Euclid Square Mall, March 2017. SOURCE: G. Marinic



Figure 33: The abandoned May Company store at Euclid Square Mall, March 2017.
SOURCE: G. Marinic



Figure 34: Abandoned outlot building at Euclid Square Mall, former supermarket, March 2017.
SOURCE: G. Marinic



Figure 35: Abandoned outlot building at Euclid Square Mall, former Red Lobster restaurant, March 2017.
SOURCE: G. Marinic

It is important to reflect on the demographic history of Euclid to understand the context of Euclid Square Mall. In the early twentieth century, Cleveland was a place where European immigrants found a new home in America. The suburban municipality of Euclid, in fact, was often listed on trans-Atlantic ship manifests as the destination for Ellis Island-bound Austrians, Germans, Hungarians, Slovenians, Croatians, Serbians, Czechs, Slovaks, Rusyns, Ruthenians, Bulgarians, Greeks, Ukrainians, Lithuanians, Poles, Italians, Irish, and others (Encyclopedia of Cleveland History, 2003). As an inner ring suburb of Cleveland, Euclid was predominantly home to Central, Southern, and Eastern European immigrants and first-generation Americans. For instance, of notable significance is the predominance of Slovenians in Euclid. This historically small ethnic group from Central Europe imparted a significant influence on the growth and development of Euclid evidenced in several Slovenian-language street names—unique in the United States—including Drenik, Grdina, Kapel, Mavec, Mozina, Recher, Trebec, and Ljubljana. Euclid offered European immigrants and their assimilated offspring an intermingled urban-suburban streetscape of well-built homes and intimately-scaled commercial corridors. By the 1970s, Euclid’s multicultural European heritage was firmly established and broadly reflected in the architectural diversity of twenty-six churches representing sixteen denominations (Encyclopedia of Cleveland History).

From its early settlement through the late 1970s, Euclid was ethnically diverse, but racially homogenous. Like many cities in the Northeast and Great Lakes regions, Cleveland has experienced a considerable level of racial intolerance and

xenophobia. Historically, however, the city was a center of abolitionism founded by New Englanders who favored reform. Throughout most of the nineteenth century, the status and socio-economic conditions of African-Americans in Cleveland were better than other northern cities (Kusmer, 1976). In the early years, whites and blacks lived together in intermingled neighborhoods. And although public areas were fully integrated throughout the nineteenth century, whites and blacks eventually migrated into segregated residential neighborhoods by the end of the century (Kusmer, 1976).

Cleveland traces the expansion of its African-American community to the Great Migration (Kusmer, 1976). Between 1890 and 1915, African-Americans settled alongside Jews and Italians in the Central Avenue district near East 40th Street. Although the city became increasingly industrialized in the early twentieth century, African-Americans were barred from working in the steel mills and foundries that became the backbone of the local economy; trade unions excluded them as well. Improving job prospects and a thriving industrial sector drew larger and larger numbers of African-Americans from the South to Cleveland (Davis, 1972). By 1960, the African-American community represented 30% of the total population of the city (Davis, 1972). The community slowly outgrew the Central-Woodland area and African-Americans began migrating into the Hough and Glenville neighborhoods on the near east side (Davis, 1972). Simultaneous to this growth, whites left Hough and Glenville for inner ring eastern suburbs such as Euclid, Shaker Heights, Cleveland Heights, Richmond Heights, Garfield Heights, Bedford Heights, Maple Heights, and Mayfield.

In 1966, the Hough Riots broke out and white flight increased. Although the spirit of racial tolerance in Cleveland was not entirely undermined by these events—as evidenced by the election of the city’s first black mayor in 1967 and successfully integrated suburbs such as Cleveland Heights and Shaker Heights—Cleveland’s demographic divide grew increasingly polarized. For instance, racial tensions are often cited as a primary reason for the closure of the lakefront Euclid Beach amusement park in summer 1969 (Wolcott, 2014:221).

Although Euclid was historically viewed as a hostile place by blacks, the homogeneity of its predominantly white population began to shift (Kusmer, 1978). By the 1970s, the offspring of European immigrants and first-generation Americans assimilated, achieved prosperity, and moved to more distant suburbs further east. At the same time, African-Americans began migrating to Euclid in search of better public schools, job opportunities, home ownership, and suburban comforts (Smith, 2011). By 1980, African-Americans comprised 8% of the total population of Euclid. As white flight increased, the black population of Euclid grew to over 50% by 2010 (Smith, 2011).

Long before Euclid Square Mall opened in 1977, East 185th Street was the main shopping district on the east side featuring mom-and-pop clothing stores, grocers, pizza parlors, gift stores, ethnic travel agencies, hardware shops, and photography studios. The opening of Euclid Square Mall in 1977 drained the commercial viability away from this walkable retail district, downtown Cleveland, and the historic

commercial corridors of Euclid. Merchants in the walkable shopping districts of 185th and 200th streets suffered immeasurably after Euclid Square Mall debuted in 1977 (Cuyahoga County Planning Commission, 2016). These retail corridors were effectively appropriated and “replaced” by the interior concourses of the mall (Figures 36, 37, 38, & 39). By the early 1990s, the traditional commercial districts of Euclid were considerably diminished (Cuyahoga County Planning Commission, 2016).



Figure 36: Euclid Square Mall, Euclid (1977). SOURCE: Cleveland Press Archive



Figure 37: Euclid Square Mall, Euclid (1977). SOURCE: Cleveland Press Archive



Figure 38: Euclid Square Mall, Euclid (1977). SOURCE: Cleveland Press Archive



Figure 39: Euclid Square Mall, Euclid (1977). SOURCE: Cleveland Press Archive

In an unanticipated turn, Euclid Square Mall began to decline in the early 2000s, while East 185th Street slowly reemerged. Since the early 2000s, a blended community of aging white ethnics, African-American middle-class families, recent immigrants, and multicultural urban pioneers has been remaking Euclid into a new frontier. Today, the depopulated interior concourses of the original Euclid Square Mall feel like a distant relic. The renewal of Euclid has grown within formerly vacant buildings along historic commercial corridors by means of reprogrammed interiors and adaptive architecture. City streets are coming back to life again as young professionals, artists, and entrepreneurs renovate historic housing stock and launch small businesses celebrating

the blended European immigrant and African-American cultures of Euclid (Cuyahoga County Planning Commission, 2016).

An example of this transformational change, *The Standard* restaurant, occupies a previously vacant storefront space on East 185th Street. It honors the multicultural heritage of Euclid with a menu that features Slovenian, Italian, Austrian, Hungarian, and African-American cuisines. The space maintains much of its original detail while introducing contemporary elements that celebrate Cleveland's industrial heritage—exposed brick walls, polished concrete floors, mahogany-stained walls, crystal chandeliers, and vintage sepia-toned images of its manufacturing infrastructure. The remixed interior resonates with the cultural mosaic and contextual authenticity of Euclid by means of ethnic cuisine and materiality.

The religious built environment of Euclid has undergone significant change as well. Many of the original churches in Euclid were built by Central, Southern, and Eastern Europeans that continue to serve their predominantly Roman Catholic, Eastern Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, and Lutheran congregations. Several others have been adapted to accommodate the liturgical needs of African-American Evangelical Protestants. Most remarkably, however, the former Euclid Square Mall was incrementally adapted after 2005 into a “mall of churches” serving the expanding African-American community (Figure 40).

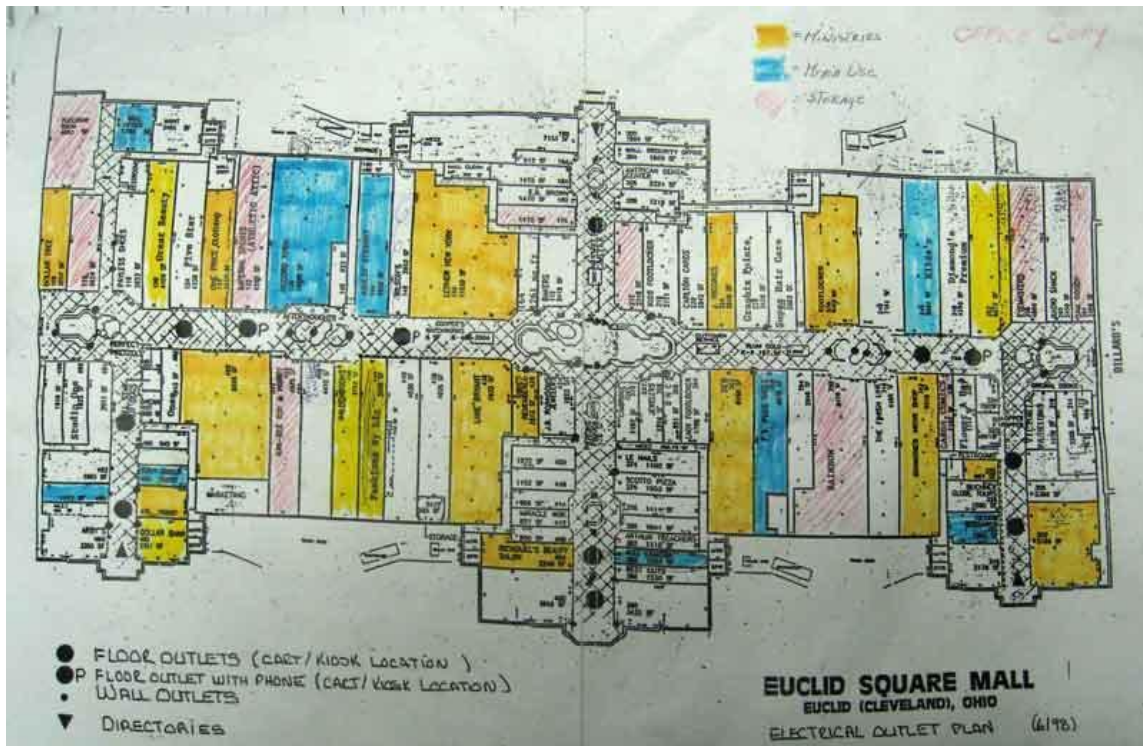


Figure 40: Euclid Square Mall ‘Mall of Churches’ leasing diagram showing churches in yellow, miscellaneous uses in blue, and storage in gray. SOURCE: Euclid Square Mall

Alongside socio-economic shifts and changing consumer tastes, Euclid Square Mall was impacted by the expansion of nearby Richmond Town Center. In 1998, the exodus began with the closure of the Kaufmann’s department store and the conversion of the Dillard’s department store into a clearance center in the early 2000s. In 2005, First Church approached mall management to rent a space in a former video arcade (Scharf, 2012). National retailers continued to leave, others were replaced by outlet stores and additional churches. In 2013, the Dillard’s clearance center closed (Rutti, 2013). In the most unlikely of places, consumption was replaced by spiritual redemption and a suburban shopping mall interior was metaphorically transformed

into an interior street of churches. Through this process, the worship of materialism was subverted by divine aspirations. By 2016, the mall housed over twenty African-American churches and minimal retail, which gave rise, in part, to the reemergence of the East 185th Street retail district (Rutti, 2013). In mid-2016, Euclid Square Mall was over 60% occupied, primarily by faith-based non-profit organizations. It functioned much like a town square that comes to life once a week on Sundays.

Regrettably, this era came to an end on September 19th, 2016 when the Euclid Square Mall permanently closed due to safety violations cited by the City of Euclid. The unexpected closure has had a very negative impact on the storefront churches. As of January 2017, very few congregations have successfully relocated. Churches that remain in limbo continue to list Euclid Square Mall on as their physical address on their websites and Facebook pages including God's Way. In an ironic turn of fate, the once industrial site that the Euclid Square Mall occupies is poised to return to industrial use in the future (Jarboe, 2017). In May 2017, the City of Euclid was considering a request to re-zone the 66-acre site from retail to industrial use. Seefried Industrial Properties of Georgia has been identified as a potential buyer (Jarboe, 2017)

Euclid Square Mall illustrates the physical manifestation of heterotopia described in Foucault's philosophical ponderings as an unexpectedly nurturing space which symbolizes a new multicultural identity for the city. The mall represented an interior space of racial reconciliation built upon the ruins of industry, consumerism, white flight, and suburban obsolescence. Conventional storefronts that previously

housed mid-level, 1980s-era retailers such as The Limited, Casual Corner, Merry-Go-Round, Chess King, Jean Nicole, and were transformed into African-American churches and other related services. This dramatic shift was exemplified by a radical change in usage from consumptive to spiritual—Grace and Mercy Church of the Living God (formerly Foot Locker), New Faith Ministries (formerly Lane Bryant), House of Elohim in Jesus Christ (formerly Diamond’s menswear), Crown of Life Church (formerly Fashion Bug), God’s Way Gospel Church (formerly Dollar Tree), and the Faith Baptist Church occupied a defunct beauty salon (O’Malley, 2013). Apart from churches, the mall housed additional services including a wedding planner, online Gospel radio station, and piano lessons; and independent retailers including Design Inspirations Hair Salon, World of Shirts, Public Auctions, Marg Andreyah Dress Shop, All-in-One Wedding, and a design practice called Eye of Solomon. Most of the original interiors were minimally modified, whereby traces of the original commercial interior architecture remain visible.

It is important to note that professional, academically-trained architects and designers were not involved in the most recent interior transformation of Euclid Square Mall. When the mall was failing in the late 1990s, mall management and professional designers attempted to reprogram it with outlet stores and department store clearance centers (Scharf, 2012). In its new guise, the mall failed to broaden its appeal. The remaking of Euclid Square Mall with African-American churches illustrates the inverse—an organic intervention mobilized by the actions of community members facilitated by

mall management. Euclid Square Mall offered small congregations a place to grow and prosper. Affordable month-to-month leases—\$500-\$1,000—allowed congregations an opportunity to build financial resources and eventually move on to their own buildings (O'Malley, 2013). Unlike conventional malls, individual congregations paid for their own utilities and maintenance. Individual congregations rebranded and reconfigured retail storefronts to accommodate *storefront* churches by means of new signage, pulpits, pews, choir risers, Christian symbols, inspirational banners, and artificial flower arrangements. Inserted objects conveyed the religious aesthetic of African-American Evangelical Protestant worship. Although most congregations maintained the original wall surfaces, flooring, and lighting—inserted objects were the most significant new elements within these reconfigured spaces.

Today, Euclid Square Mall exists only in memory as it faces impending demolition. As an interior “Church Street” serving African-American congregations, its transformation served an entirely unforeseen program that was never envisioned by mall developers, architects, and interior designers in 1977. The underutilized structure became a heterotopian interior serving the incremental needs of an increasingly multicultural community. In an unassuming context such as the Euclid Square Mall, professional designers and design educators can learn from the informal actions of organized stakeholders. Here, a seemingly fixed and rigid commercial program of national retailers was appropriated and transformed for religious practices. Operating much like a conventional street, the interior street of a shopping mall harbored a

spiritual heterotopia remade by and for the African-American community. Euclid Square Mall's alternative occupancy offers an example of the dynamic forces of urban change by means of an organic interior regeneration. In this sense, a formerly underused secular space was charged with temporal new life through faith traditions. Over the course of 100 years, the site has witnessed a full lifecycle---from industrial-to-industrial—via retail usage and spiritual practices. The mall became a metaphor for the complexity of the city.

9.3 Type 2: Cultural Translation **[Southern Borderland] Sharpstown Mall, Houston, Texas**

The metropolitan area of Houston has been built over time as an unstructured experiment in laissez faire capitalist urbanism. Since the 1990s, Houston has grown increasingly organic, reflecting the subtleties of past usage patterns, significant disinvestment, and abandonment (Pope, 1996). Many neighborhoods have undergone considerable change, migrating slowly toward more socio-economically and ethnically diverse demographics (Alba & Nee, 2003). In this context, immigrant communities have forged new American identities within the underused malls, retail strips, big box stores, abandoned warehouses, and sprawling residential subdivisions of suburban Houston. In the Sharpstown neighborhood, a multicultural population with modest needs has fundamentally reshaped the community from the inside-out.

Sharpstown was conceived in the 1950s by developer Frank Sharp (1906-1993) as one of the first “suburbs” of Houston (Moran, 2012). Within a fifteen-minute expressway commute from downtown Houston, its growth reflected the 1970s oil boom and an unregulated, growth-at-any-cost mantra of Texas politicians and their allied business interests. Quickly built single-family ranch houses and garden apartments attracted a homogeneous community of white, single professionals and families migrating from the rest of the country for employment in the oil and space industries. Sharpstown Mall, the center of the community, opened in 1961 as the first air-conditioned mall in Houston with forty-three stores, a suburban branch of the Foley’s department store, and convenient access to Highway 59 (Moran, 2012). Its interior featured a range of design curiosities including the ‘Clock of Texas’, a diorama of Texas across the centuries; a ‘Six Flags of Texas’ installation, and a time capsule encased within the cornerstone of the mall (Figure 41) (Bivins & Hassell, 2001). These exhibitions reflected an Anglo-Texan ethno-cultural bias that was prevalent throughout the state at the time. Such bias is evidenced by the racially charged filter of Texas historian T.R. Fehrenbach (1925-2013) who argued that Anglo-Texan culture was inherently superior to its regional rivals which included the cultures of descendants of Mexico and the French and Spanish colonial empires (Burka, 2013).

As a case study, Sharpstown demonstrates the impact of white flight on conventional shopping malls (Bevins & Hassell, 2001). Beginning in the late 1980s, white middle-income professionals began moving away from Sharpstown to more



Figure 41: Sharpstown Mall 'Clock of Texas', 1967. SOURCE: Wikimedia



Figure 42: PlazAmericas Quinceañera shop, 2015. SOURCE: G. Marinic

distant suburbs. By the early 1990s, the neighborhood became predominantly Latin American and demographic changes began to impact mall revenues (Moran, 2012). The diversification of Sharpstown Mall reflects immigration growth in the Houston metropolitan area. Between 2000 and 2013, the eleven-county region grew by almost sixty percent at a rate of nearly twice the national average (Kriel, 2015).

Since the mid-1970s, Houston has become a magnet for migrants and refugees fleeing economic hardship and political unrest (Kriel, 2015). In light of this, the affordability and geographic benefits of the Sharpstown area began appealing to a new generation of residents. By the 1990s, the neighborhood had received significant growth in foreign-born Chinese, Vietnamese, and Latin American residents (Kriel, 2015). With a mix of low-cost housing, commercial, and retail buildings which support immigrant entrepreneurship, Sharpstown has become one of the most ethnically diverse neighborhoods in Houston. Today, the neighborhood is home to roughly 94,500 people living in 8,000 single-family and 7,000 multi-family dwellings (Southwest Management District, 2015).

Alongside demographic change, a shift from national retailers to local merchants accelerated during the late 1990s and early 2000s. Mid-range national retailers, such as Macy's and JC Penney, abandoned Sharpstown Mall and the larger vicinity to focus enhancements on upscale alternatives such as the Galleria, Willowbrook Mall, and The Woodlands Mall. As vacancies in the Sharpstown Mall rose, immigrant merchants began providing general services such as remittance offices,

travel agencies, clothing stores, nail salons, tire shops, quinceañera showrooms, and restaurants serving multi-ethnic consumers with modest incomes (Figure 42). Today, 90% of leasable space in the mall is occupied by non-national retailers. Here, abandonment became an economic opportunity for new immigrants. The departure of the white middle-class allowed new groups to inherit buildings, claim space, and reinforce identity through ethnically relevant mercantile activities.

In 2009, responding to an influx of foreign-born residents, mall management announced a name and programming change for Sharpstown Mall—PlazAmericas—as well as a dramatic interior reconfiguration of the former JC Penney department store into ‘Clarewood Mercado’ (Sarnoff, 2010). Outmoded conventional retail interiors were redesigned as a Latin American marketplace that belies the generic commercial foundation upon which it was built. Clarewood Mercado, renamed ‘Latino City’, reconfigures the interior space of the former JC Penney department store with independent vendor stalls and carts spatialized in a manner more akin to an antiques multi-dealer or flea market (Figure 43 & 44). It reflects a Latin American urban market house typology akin to the spatial qualities of the Mercado Juarez in central Monterrey (Figures 45 & 46). Although no structural changes were made, wall partitions were removed and replaced with metal mesh vendor stalls. Stalls are customized by the tenant with signage, lighting, and interior furnishings, resulting in a more organic environment than the former JC Penney. Here, the transformed department store no longer houses products marketed to a nationwide clientele.



Figure 43: Marketplace Dialectic: 2015.

At left, PlazAmericas in Houston; At right, Juarez Market, an urban market Monterrey (Mexico).

SOURCE: G. Marinic & K. Gonzalez



Figure 44: Marketplace Dialectic: 2015.

At left, PlazAmericas in Houston; At right, Juarez Market, an urban market Monterrey (Mexico).

SOURCE: G. Marinic & K. Gonzalez



Figure 45: Marketplace Dialectic: 2015.

At left, PlazAmericas in Houston; At right, Juarez Market, an urban market Monterrey (Mexico).

SOURCE: G. Marinic & K. Gonzalez

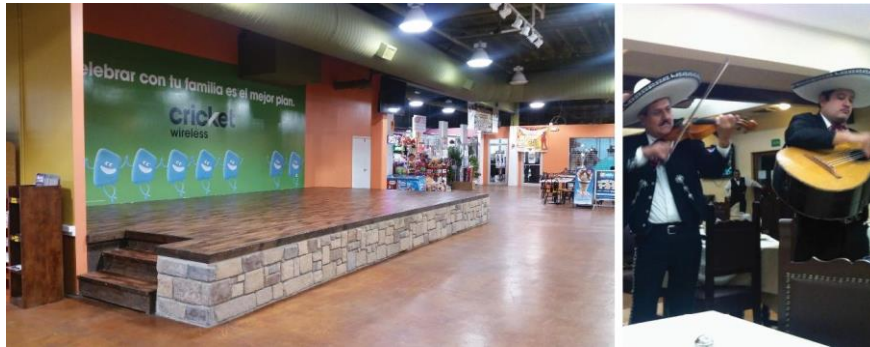


Figure 46: Marketplace Dialectic: 2015.

At left, PlazAmericas in Houston; At right, Juarez Market, an urban market Monterrey (Mexico).
SOURCE: G. Marinic & K. Gonzalez

Today, 'Latino City' reflects the preferences and more modest buying power of the surrounding community (Lane, 2014). Furthermore, its interiors support far lower overhead costs as well as higher informality. The new format offers immigrant merchants the ability to pursue micro-entrepreneurship through affordable, small-size spaces selling dry goods and food. Similarly, a group of individual mall stores was combined into an 83,000 square foot open-plan space for clothing, jewelry, electronics, and home goods called 'El Mercado'. Mall management, Urban Retail Properties LLC, described PlazAmericas in the following promotional statement from 2014:

PlazAmericas offers over 100 stores with a diverse variety of retailers, dining options, entertainment, carts, and kiosks. Occupying 83,000 square feet, the Mercado section of PlazAmericas is filled with numerous stores and small businesses providing unique items and services. Providing an eventful calendar every week, including live music on Saturdays and Sundays, with many other scheduled performers including mariachi bands, novela stars, variety acts, and so much more. PlazAmericas offers seasonal and cultural ways for families to gather at this one-of-a-kind center. After undergoing a \$10 million dollar renovation, it is now infused with a Latin feel which fits its surrounding community.



Figure 47: PlazAmericas exterior façades. SOURCE: G. Marinic



Figure 48: PlazAmericas exterior façades. SOURCE: G. Marinic



Figure 49: PlazAmericas parking lot showing former banking drive-up teller pavilions being used by customers as parking canopies, March 2017. SOURCE: G. Marinic



Figure 50: PlazAmericas parking lot showing former banking drive-up teller pavilions being used by customers as parking canopies, March 2017. SOURCE: G. Marinic

From the standpoint of architecture, the mercados of PlazAmericas share much in common with indoor market houses in Mexico and Central America, places of origin for most of the merchants. Although PlazAmericas continues to house one large retailer—Burlington Coat Factory housed within the former Montgomery Ward store—and conventionally-sized retail shops, the new mercados demonstrate a notable departure from the past.

In the case of 'El Mercado', the redesign included extensive renovation to the exterior facades and incremental repurposing of abandoned outlot buildings (Figures 47, 48, 49, & 50). Furthermore, interior surfaces and partitions in the former individual stores were removed and replaced. The new design includes a interior courtyard that functions like an historic market plaza in Latin America. Inserted portal arches delineate spatial zones within the reconfigured space. These brightly painted portal arches reflect Spanish colonial stylistic influences including outdoor light fixtures and park benches. The bare, polished concrete floor feels more like an exterior surface, while the removal of ceiling tiles to expose black-painted HVAC systems makes the ceiling appear more like a sky plane. Conventional department store space was remade into neutral, free plan environments serving far more diverse needs. Designers created small-scale spaces rather than highly-articulated, large-format stores for national brands. Here, the role of the professional designer has shifted to anticipate and accommodate more modest needs, allowing very small businesses with limited means to grow in spaces as small as 100 square feet (Figures 51, 52, 53, & 54).



Figure 51: PlazAmericas mall interior. SOURCE: G. Marinic



Figure 52: PlazAmericas mall interior. SOURCE: G. Marinic



Figure 53: PlazAmericas income tax service. SOURCE: G. Marinic



Figure 54: PlazAmericas christening outfits. SOURCE: G. Marinic



Figure 55: PlazAmericas repurposed and semi-abandoned outlot buildings. SOURCE: G. Marinic



Figure 56: PlazAmericas repurposed and semi-abandoned outlot buildings. SOURCE: G. Marinic

Several outlot spaces exist in varying states of usage, abandonment, and decay (Figures 55 & 56). On the interior, however, mall management has significantly altered the overall spatial programming of the original Sharpstown Mall to provide more space for the civic activities of PlazAmericas. For example, the recent renovation includes a 6,000 square foot space open to community groups free of charge. The central court—a cavernous space that was virtually empty in 2009—has been reprogrammed into a beehive of Latin American social and entertainment activities. The food court was redesigned to focus on a new performance stage that hosts mariachi bands and quinceañera fashion shows (Sarnoff, 2010). In addition, mall management responded to tenant requests for additional performance spaces for local musicians and special events. Several performance stages have been integrated into the reconfigured spaces that currently house the El Mercado and Latino City marketplaces. In addition, a vibrant yellow, green, and orange paint scheme replaces the former palette of neutral whites, beiges, and grays. One of the largest interventions, a Latin American mural, adorns a former circulation space that serves as a gallery for changing cultural exhibits (Figure 57). The space is used during the Dia de Muertos (Day of the Dead) festival in early November as an altar for this important Mexican religious holiday (Figure 58).



Figure 57: Dia de Muertos (Day of the Dead) altar and mural. SOURCE: G. Marinic



Figure 58: Dia de Muertos (Day of the Dead) altar. SOURCE: G. Marinic

Outdoor public spaces generally do not exist in the sprawling, transactional, and unplanned suburban periphery of Houston. As a placeholder for an actual Latin American public plaza, the reconfigured central court of PlazAmericas hosts events, concerts, and street entertainers. In this regard, designers have transformed a conventional interior space into a form of interior urbanism. The PlazAmericas central court satisfies a shared expectation for the Latin American public realm—collective outdoor spaces in the old country—reflecting cultural values and spatial memories of home. It serves a notable cultural-spatial preference for actual urbanism. The redesigned central court reveals a design action that allows alternative occupancies and unique cultural expressions to take root and prosper.

PlazAmericas illustrates the impact of continually shifting demographics and international migration on building interiors in suburban America. The mall interior shows how global cultural influences have significantly changed the aesthetic and spatial qualities of a formerly conventional retail environment. Mall management responded to market conditions by embracing the retail preferences of a new clientele and local merchants.

9.4 Type 3: Micro-Enterprise [Northern Borderland] Ethnic Strip Malls in Syracuse and Buffalo

In the early 1950s, Syracuse and Buffalo were robust, mid-size manufacturing cities producing industrial products, clothing, furniture, and consumer goods for widespread consumption across North America. Both cities grew substantially by means of overseas immigration from Europe before and after World War II. Along with Rochester and Utica, the downtown commercial districts of Syracuse and Buffalo were the most important in Central and Western New York—defined by department stores, shops, restaurants, and entertainment venues that shaped human-scale districts punctuated by buildings designed by notable architects.

Although downtown Syracuse and Buffalo were thriving in the 1950s, both cities stood at the cusp of transformational change. The passage of the *Federal-Aid Highway Act in 1944* initiated an era of interstate highway construction which would dramatically alter major cities across the United States (Weiner, 1992:17-19). The impact of this legislation on mid-sized cities in upstate New York was traumatic and long-lasting. Central city expressways in both cities reflect mid-twentieth century urban redevelopment policies which subversively disenfranchised minority groups—and disproportionately African-Americans—from their neighborhoods. Widely regarded as slums, the primary difference between targeted inner-city districts and other neighborhoods was demographic; the ethnic and racial characteristics of targeted residents qualified their residents as “others”.

In Syracuse during the 1950s, thriving strip malls along Erie Boulevard contrasted with central city retailers on Salina Street that struggled to compete. In spite of this, municipal officials and the downtown Syracuse business community supported the central viaduct of I-81 and envisioned a revitalized business district centered on Salina Street. Furthermore, business leaders and politicians perceived I-81 as an essential urban infrastructure that would allow Syracuse to engage on a regional scale. Merchants hoped that downtown expressways, structured parking, and skywalks would energize the central business district and its retail activities, yet such interventions would have precisely an inverse effect. I-81 accelerated the demise of downtown Syracuse and the rise of suburban shopping malls in Dewitt Shoppingtown Mall (1975), Camillus Mall (1963-2003), Fayetteville Mall (1974-2001), Great Northern Mall (1988), and Carousel Center (1990).

In both Syracuse and Buffalo, the oldest strip malls are situated along peripheral corridors dating from the early 1960s. Many of these offer an unexpectedly well-suited retail typology for small merchants—one that has been entirely rejected by big-box national chains and ancillary specialty retailers. The neighborhood-scale and affordability of strip malls is particularly important to the social, economic, and communal parameters of resilience. Offering immigrants and refugees the ability to become economically autonomous, these modest retail strips offer critical support to emerging micro-entrepreneurs.

The everyday strip mall falls into the category of non-pedigreed ‘architecture’ and is defined by its vernacular, spontaneous, and anonymous development. Like other American storefront typologies, outer loop retail corridors are defined by their neutrality and functionality. As one of the most ubiquitous ‘vernaculars’ in Syracuse and Buffalo, the strip mall is a quotidian architecture that develops informally and incrementally. Although it is derided, the strip mall operates much like an urban retail street, offering an interior-based *plug-in* system for quick-start economic opportunity. As a temporal typology, the strip mall vernacular in the United States remains largely ignored and undocumented, however it serves specific needs for retail, sacred spaces, cultural organizations, and restaurants. Adapted to the complexities of a more diverse population, strip malls have become a new context which allows an ersatz-street culture to develop within inner ring suburbs and declining inner-city neighborhoods.

Opportunity exists within obsolescence. The oldest strip malls in Syracuse and Buffalo have confronted not only demographic shifts, but also changes to the institutions that have come to define our contemporary culture—relative proximities, consumer technologies, and unlimited choice. When the oldest strip malls were new, they provided developers a way to provide low overhead and moderate-yield shopping districts. Adjacent to urban neighborhoods or residential subdivisions in a generally pre-Big Box era with minimal options, strip malls created a commonsense efficiency that addressed basic needs with modest expectations. Big box stores, regional

shopping malls, and the internet have effectively undermined the viability of most of these early strip malls. National retailers avoid them since they suffer from both insufficient parking and low profitability. Services have decamped with small shops — jewelry repair, greeting cards, photographers, printers, banks, optometrists, and dentists may now be found within big-box stores as well.

In the shrinking cities of Syracuse and Buffalo, new needs have emerged within the demographically diverse Syracuse suburb of Dewitt and on the West Side of Buffalo. Obsolete strip malls address modest consumer needs — ethnic restaurants and grocery stores, bakeries, barber shops, nail salons, and foreign-language video stores have filled a void left by dry cleaners, hardware shops, and wallpaper stores. In formerly vacant drug stores and strip malls, newer occupancies have transformed these obsolete infrastructures into places of *otherness*—‘Little’ Seouls, Saigons, Shanghais, Darfurs, Mexicos, and Sarajevos are intermingled within the suburban placelessness of suburban Syracuse and inner-city obsolescence of Buffalo (Figures 59, 60, & 61).

In Buffalo, the West Side Bazaar is a non-profit initiative and micro-business incubator serving immigrant, refugee, and low-income entrepreneurs. The project was envisioned in 2009 by several stakeholders including the Niagara District community group, Westminster Economic Development Initiative, local businesspeople, and social organizations serving immigrants and refugee. Housed within a formerly vacant drug store, the bazaar consists of several food and retail vendors offering a diverse range of



Figure 59: Little Seoul, Syracuse. SOURCE: G. Marinic



Figure 60: Little Seoul, Syracuse. SOURCE: G. Marinic



Figure 61: Little Seoul, Syracuse. SOURCE: G. Marinic

foods, goods, and services from Burma, Indonesia, Iraq, Nepal, Peru, Rwanda, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, and elsewhere (Figures 62 & 63). In March 2017, Mayor Byron Brown recognized the needs and contributions of Buffalo's immigrant and refugee community by announcing the expansion of the West Side Bazaar due to its increasing popularity. The West Side has slowly rebounded from white flight and suburbanization through international immigration; the bazaar creates an organic path toward assimilation and socio-economic freedom for new Americans. Here, the livelihoods of individuals and families are leveraged upon small investments fostering supportive interdependencies within and beyond the West Side of Buffalo (Figures 64, & 65).



Figure 62: West Side Bazaar exterior. SOURCE: G. Marinic



Figure 63: West Side Bazaar food vendors. SOURCE: G. Marinic



Figure 64: West Side Bazaar vendor stall (at left). SOURCE: G. Marinic



Figure 65: West Side Bazaar vendor stall (at right). SOURCE: G. Marinic

9.5 Type 4: Ethnic Hub

[Northern Borderland] Pacific Mall, Markham, Ontario

Toronto, the largest city in Canada and fourth largest metropolitan area in North America, has been ranked by UNESCO as one of the most multicultural cities in the world with 49% of its population comprised of foreign-born residents (UNESCO, 2016). Although contemporary Toronto represents a resolutely global and multi-ethnic city, its emergence has been relatively recent. In the first half of the twentieth century, Toronto was a socially conservative, predominantly white Anglo-Saxon Protestant city composed of ethnically British (73%), Protestant (72%), and Canadian-born (69%) residents (City of Toronto, 2016).

The multicultural mosaic of Canada was achieved incrementally, but not without anxiety and conflict. Before 1900, the country was predominantly composed of persons of British and French descent who lived in relative social and cultural isolation from one another (Cameron, 2004). By the turn of the twentieth century, however, the economy boomed and attracted more diverse immigrants from other European nations, particularly from Southern and Eastern Europe (Mosher, 1998). Continental Europeans flowed primarily into English-speaking regions of the country where they were viewed with suspicion by native-born Anglophones who discriminated against them because they were neither British nor Protestant. Although anti-immigrant anxieties caused resentment and retaliation in the late 1800s and early 1900s, immigration surged from non-British sources in Europe and the Levant after 1901

(Mosher, 1998). Between 1901 and 1914, over 750,000 immigrants migrated from the United States including returning Canadians, as well as persons of German, Hungarian, and Scandinavian descent who had originally settled in the American West (Government of Canada, 2011). By 1914, more than 170,000 Ukrainians, 116,000 Poles, 60,000 Italians, and smaller numbers from the Austro-Hungarian, Russian, and Ottoman empires including Bulgarians, Hungarians, Romanians, Finns, Greeks, Lebanese, Syrians, and others had settled in Canada (Bowker, 2014). As immigration shifted increasingly toward eastern Europe and the Levant, the era was characterized by high numbers of Catholic, Orthodox Christian, and Jewish immigrants.

Although Ontario was becoming more diverse, suspicion of and resistance to the ethnic and religious diversity of immigrants continued after World War II. The Orange Order, a fraternal organization that traces its origins to Northern Ireland Protestantism, was historically the chief social and benevolent organization in Upper Canada (Ontario). The traditional adversaries of the Orange Order in Toronto were the Irish Catholics and Jews (Smyth, 2015). In an open letter to its lodges in 1946, the provincial grand master of Ontario West recognized the scale and perceived threat of increasing diversity. It proclaimed, "Ontario must be kept Protestant and English-speaking if we are to remain a truly democratic province (Smyth, 2015)." In the pre- and post-war years, Orange Order members resented the increasing municipal political power of Irish Catholics and economic prosperity of Jews, as well as the increasing numbers and visibility of French, Italian, Hungarian, Polish, and Ukrainian Catholics in

the city (Smyth, 2015). Their suspicion, of course, extended to visible minorities. In 1927, the Grand Order Lodge of British America proclaimed, “The Orange Order has taken the definite stand that Canada’s energies should be directed mainly to supplementing our population from the surplus of the Motherland.” The Orange Order resentment for the increasing predominance of religious and cultural differences in Toronto was revealed with greater transparency after World War II. In 1946, the Provincial Grand Lodge of Ontario West passed a resolution demanding a new immigration policy (Smyth, 2015:231). “The people from lands who have possessed for some time a democratic form of government are the type we require, not a motley throng who have no knowledge of what democracy means. They can be secured in the British Isles, the United States of America, and north-western Europe (Grand Orange Lodge of Ontario West, 1946).” In 1935, there were ninety-three Orange Order lodges and 6,641 members. By 2010, the numbers had radically diminished to five lodges and approximately 150 active members (Smyth, 2015).

The Orange Order contributed to the conservative and exclusionary social tone of Toronto at the time which sought to reaffirm the British and Protestant heritage of the city through the early 1950s. Perceived as both historic adversaries and as an increasing threat due to their numbers, European Catholics—either Irish or continental in origin—found it difficult to gain official affirmation of their citizenry and a general unwillingness to contribute to the broader civic culture (Smyth, 2015:273). Until the early 1950s, the socio-political sensibility of Toronto was defined by white, Anglo-

Saxon, Protestant values—guarded by Orangeism—which preserved the Sabbath for family and church, prohibited alcohol sales, and shuttered all theaters, shops, playgrounds, and most restaurants (Smyth, 2015:273). Placed at the margins of society and framed through otherness, an exclusionary environment persisted for Catholics, Jews, and visible minorities (Smyth, 2015: 274). The winds of change, however, were quickly shifting. Religious differences would soon diminish as ethnic and racial diversity became a central priority of the federal government. By the mid-1950s, Toronto stood at the threshold of transformative change.

Ethnic and religious animosity between white Torontonians began to recede in the 1960s as federal immigration policies that restricted visible minorities from developing countries were being dismantled. Following World War II, attitudes toward immigration, multiculturalism, and the welfare state began to change due to unprecedented economic growth. In 1947, the federal government removed the ban on Chinese immigrants that had been established by the Canadian Parliament with the *Chinese Immigration Act of 1923* (today referred to as the Chinese Exclusion Act). Prior to 1923, Chinese immigration was controlled by the *Chinese Immigration Act of 1885* which imposed a substantial head tax on all immigrants from China. Furthermore, immigration from most countries was restricted in some way, but only the Chinese were entirely banned from entry in Canada apart from those holding the status of diplomat, foreign student, or ‘special status’ designated by the Minister of Immigration.



Figure 66: Pacific Mall exterior. SOURCE: G. Marinic



Figure 67: Pacific Mall interior. SOURCE: G. Marinic

Indian and Chinese immigrants account for nearly 1/3 of all recent immigrants to the Greater Toronto Area which includes more than 230 ethnic groups (Roth, 2014). After World War II, urban growth shifted away from the center city of Toronto to adjacent municipalities of Etobicoke, Mississauga, and Scarborough. Retailing has demonstrated a remarkable shift toward internationalization, particularly in suburban areas to the east, north, and west of downtown. In Markham, the Pacific Mall exemplifies the affluence and reach of Chinese immigrants in Canada (Figures 66 & 67). Opening in 1997 and designed by Wallman Clewes Bergman architects, the mall derives its name from the Pacific Place in Hong Kong. The interior incorporates a Chinese cultural exhibition called 'Pacific Heritage' in its design and its interior corridors are named after streets in Hong Kong (Figures 68, 69, 70, & 71). Contrasted with Toronto's early history of ethnic and religious discrimination and exclusion, Pacific Mall exemplifies the dramatic globalization that Toronto and Canada have achieved since the mid-1960s. Emblematic of the success of Canada's official policies promoting multiculturalism, Pacific Mall offers a retail-based entertainment environment that simultaneously presents and promotes Chinese culture in the community.



Figure 68: Pacific Mall cultural heritage center. SOURCE: G. Marinic



Figure 69: Pacific Mall cultural heritage center. SOURCE: G. Marinic



Figure 70: Pacific Mall event stage. SOURCE: G. Marinic



Figure 71: Pacific Mall food court. SOURCE: G. Marinic



Figure 72: Pacific Mall food court. SOURCE: G. Marinic



Figure 73: Pacific Mall food court. SOURCE: G. Marinic

Pacific Mall is an exemplar of a *purpose-built* mall serving a specific ethnic community; it demonstrates the economic prosperity and independence of the Hong Kong Chinese community who built it to serve their needs. The mall was built to compliment an existing shopping plaza which surrounds the purpose-built, 270,000 square foot indoor mall. Together, the circumferential shopping plaza and Pacific Mall offer 500 stores served by 1,500 indoor and outdoor parking spaces. The retail mix includes clothing, housewares, video games, movies, music, electronic devices, and small appliances (Figures 72 & 73). Pacific Mall dubs itself as the largest Chinese indoor shopping mall in North America. It is particularly popular as a food destination due to its high number of hawker stalls selling Asian foods, teas, bakeries, sweets, and soft drinks, as well as several full-service restaurants (Figures 74 & 75).

Although Pacific Mall marked the beginning of a trend in purpose-built 'ethnic' malls in suburban Toronto, few of the planned ethnic-oriented malls scheduled to open between 2005 and 2010 ever materialized (Bascaramurty, 2012). Analysts believe that the interest in mimicking megamalls much like those in Hong Kong and Mumbai has waned in the Toronto metropolitan area (Bascaramurty, 2012). Although the ethnic-oriented 'hub' has slowed in Greater Toronto, the typology continues to gain momentum across North America as evidenced in the massive Plaza Mexico in Lynwood, California; as well as the increasingly popular Hong Kong City Mall, Lion Square, Saigon-Houston Plaza, and Mahatma Gandhi District in Houston (Figures 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, & 81)



Figure 74: Pacific Mall shopping concourse. SOURCE: G. Marinic



Figure 75: Pacific Mall game room. SOURCE: G. Marinic



Figure 76: Hong Kong City Mall, Southwest Houston. SOURCE: G. Marinic



Figure 77: Hong Kong City Mall, Southwest Houston. SOURCE: G. Marinic



Figure 78: Hong Kong City Mall, Southwest Houston. SOURCE: G. Marinic



Figure 79: Hong Kong City Mall, Southwest Houston. SOURCE: G. Marinic



Figure 80: Saigon-Houston Plaza, Southwest Houston. SOURCE: G. Marinic



Figure 81: Saigon-Houston Plaza, Southwest Houston. SOURCE: G. Marinic

9.6 Type 5: Multicultural Aspiration

[Southern Borderland] NorthPark Center, Dallas, Texas

The upscale and thriving NorthPark Center in Dallas offers a counterpoint to the dead malls of the I-35 corridor. Likewise, it represents a paradigm shift in mall culture, one that is increasingly abandoning the 'middle' to serve an upscale, multicultural upper-middle-class. Likewise, NorthPark offers a window into the competitive nature of mall development, as well as the resilience of upscale super-regional malls in the largest metropolitan areas of the United States. In the 1960s, Raymond Nasher—who, with his wife Patsy would later become patron of the Nasher Sculpture Center—leased a 96-acre cotton field at the edge of Dallas for the development of a new enclosed shopping mall. Nasher hired architect E.G. Hamilton to design NorthPark and address a more civic purposefulness for shopping mall design (Figures 82 & 83). In this sense, E.G. Hamilton engaged a vision with similarities to Victor Gruen's design for Southdale.

The early years of North American mall development were defined by Southdale Center—a project developed by the Dayton Company department store and designed by Victor Gruen, an Austrian-born American architect and pioneer of American shopping mall design. Although Gruen was highly critical of the suburban lifestyle of 1950s America, he attempted transform suburban retail environments into communal gathering places—the lost urban spaces of the downtown core—new places where suburbanites could participate in the pleasures of communal space. Accordingly, Gruen modeled Southdale on the arcades and café-culture of central European cities,



Figure 82: NorthPark Center courtyard park. SOURCE: NorthPark Center



Figure 83: NorthPark Center indoor concourse café. SOURCE: NorthPark Center



Figure 84: NorthPark Center shopping concourse. SOURCE: NorthPark Center



Figure 85: NorthPark Center shopping concourse. SOURCE: NorthPark Center

hybridizing shopping with entertainment and introducing public social space into a tabula rasa suburban context. As a model of a new type of public space—a climate-controlled suburban interior space—Southdale influenced an entire generation of suburban shopping mall designs, but it also changed broader, collective understandings of what public space could be (Figures 84 & 85). Southdale set the standard for popular expectations of the modern climate-controlled, ideal suburban retail experience.

Conventional indoor malls built during the first and second waves of mall development in the United States represent an increasingly lost generation. Consumer appreciation for them has been diminished alongside the more recent reemergence of downtown commercial districts, new super-regional retail forms, outlet malls, and web-based means of consumption. NorthPark Center has bucked this trend, in part due to Nasher’s original intent for the project to offer not only commercial offerings, but Architecture, civic space, and public art. E.G. Hamilton lensed NorthPark through principled architecture that employed an architectural language based on materiality, space, and uniform aesthetic (Figures 86 & 87). The mall was one of the first to use a uniform material—buff beige brick—and a uniform signage program. Fundamental to the design of NorthPark, public art was used as an integral aspect of the interior architecture. The American Institute of Architects awarded architect E.G. Hamilton the ‘Design of the Decade 1960s’ prize for NorthPark Center as it is one of the first commercial centers in the United States to integrate public art. In 1992, NorthPark Center was once again honored with the AIA’s ‘Twenty-Five Year Award for Design



Figure 86: NorthPark Center shopping concourse. SOURCE: NorthPark Center



Figure 87: NorthPark Center shopping concourse. SOURCE: NorthPark Center

Excellence’. The enduring aesthetic and civic qualities of the project are undeniable, as well as the initial and on-going commitment to an enlightened view on Architecture—a belief that commercial space can be woven into the collective experience of a community. While NorthPark is managed by an aggressive development corporation with commitment to financial gain, the project blends civic qualities of previous infrastructural projects of earlier decades such as railway stations and cultural venues.

NorthPark incorporates uncharacteristically monumental gardens and large sculptural works by world-renowned artists such as Jim Dine, Frank Stella, Andy Warhall, and Jonathan Borofsky to create a form of interior urbanism. The 2006 expansion referenced the original architectural language, but also created more monumental spatial experiences and introduced several large-scale, typically ‘outdoor’ sculptures. These include the 48-foot tall *Ad Astra* sculpture by Mark di Suvero, the 21-foot tall *Cordon Pin-Blue* sculpture by Claus Oldenburg, and *20 Elements* by Coosje van Bruggen. In part due its prime geographical location in the Park Cities, as well as a distinctive atmosphere created by architecture, upscale retailers, and ‘civic’ amenities, NorthPark Center is perceived by the public as *the* shopping mall for Dallas socialites and the aspiring upper-middle-class. With a solid demographic and critical mass as the largest mall in the Dallas-Ft. Worth metropolitan area, NorthPark represents as an enduring shopping mall that offers civic gravitas. Its resilience, however, is grounded in top-down, corporate, and opportunistic agencies, rather than the organic dead mall ‘rebirths’ of appropriated malls serving the immigrant underclass.

9.7 Type 6: Suburban Erasure **[Southern Borderland] Valley View Center, Dallas, Texas**

The Valley View Center in north Dallas opened in 1973 on the I-635 outerbelt near the North Dallas Tollway (Figure 88) (Halkias, 2017). Developed by the Homart Development Company real estate subsidiary of Sears, Roebuck, and Co, Valley View initially included three major department stores (Figure 89) (Nicholson, 2014). The fate of Valley View Center was determined by outside factors much like other dead malls. In 1982, Hines Interests opened the super-regional Dallas Galleria literally within view of the Valley View Center (McDonald, 2011). The Dallas Galleria followed in the footsteps of an earlier Hines success at the Houston Galleria. While the Dallas Galleria was originally conceived as a higher-end mall to compete exclusively with NorthPark Center, it began to incrementally incorporate mid-level retailers and mid-level department stores. By the 1990s, Dallas Galleria held not only the high-end, but also increasingly drew the broader mid-level customer base away from Valley View. The closing of Bloomingdale's in 1990 initiated the slow decline of Valley View Center which included litigation between owners of the property and rising store vacancies (Nicholson, 2014).

Confronting opportunistic developmental practices in its immediate vicinity and high vacancy rates, Valley View Center reflects shifting socio-economic conditions of the surrounding community. Since the 2000 census, the neighborhood has become more economically disadvantaged, younger, and more ethnically diverse. In 2008, two



Figure 88: Valley View Center exterior. SOURCE: Dallas News



Figure 89: Valley View Center exterior. SOURCE: Dallas News

of the five anchor stores at Valley View closed, followed by another anchor closure in 2013 (Dallas Business Journal, 2008). In mid-2012, several sections of the mall were converted into art galleries and artists' studios called the 'The Gallery at Midtown and Artists Studios'. The project emerged for Valley View to address rising vacancies while creating new tenant potentialities. Mall management partnered with local artists to establish a mix of occupancy types including the main 'Gallery at Midtown', artist-run studios, experimental galleries, showrooms, workspaces, actors' studio, and movie school (Figure 90) (Danser, 2014). On the third Saturday each month, Valley View hosted an open galleries evening event called 'Art Walk' (Danser, 2014). By 2016, both remaining anchors were closed, while 90% of the storefronts on the upper level of three wings remained occupied as artist studios, galleries, and other creative endeavors (Figure 91). Additionally, a Latin American marketplace offered leasable retail carts, while the repurposed food court houses test kitchens for local food trucks. Although a portion of the mall gained new purposefulness as an art center, its future remained uncertain.

Valley View Center remained marginally occupied through 2016, but provided a community hub serving the surrounding predominantly Hispanic neighborhood and multicultural artist community with locally-relevant retail and services. Its program mix, however, was only a temporary intervention as plans emerging for a major redevelopment project on the site. In 2011, the North Dallas Chamber of Commerce



Figure 90: Valley View Center interior. SOURCE: Valley View Center



Figure 91: Valley View Center interior. SOURCE: Valley View Center

began exploring alternative uses for Valley View Mall. Dallas-based Omniplan Architects, design architect of the highly successful NorthPark Center, were selected to develop a comprehensive urban design and architectural plan for a \$2 billion dollar redevelopment of the 400-acre site (Wilsonsky, 2012). Dubbed Dallas Midtown, the City of Dallas has approved a \$250,000 redevelopment study addressing land use, density, infrastructure, transportation, utilities, green space, and program mix (Wilsonsky, 2012). In early 2017, Valley View Center was demolished to make way for Dallas Midtown (Brown, 2017). The artist-immigrant heterotopia that emerged in place of a conventional retail environment was erased by forces of gentrification and re-homogenization.

CHAPTER X

BEYOND THE BORDERLANDS: A SOUTHEAST ASIAN COMPARATIVE CASE STUDY

This chapter considers retail obsolescence from a global perspective by analyzing the incremental actions which transformed a conventional shopping mall in Southeast Asia into an indoor-outdoor aquatic landscape. The New World Mall extends my North American research of retail appropriation and adaptation by demonstrating a global correlation with the theme. It examines how unscrupulous development practices and partial destruction transformed an ordinary shopping mall in central Bangkok into an extraordinary space shaped by informal actions. Viewed through the lens of heterotopian theory, this study acknowledges organic methods of adaptive reuse mobilized by ecology, people, and everyday actions. It begins with an overview of the historical interface of water and architecture in Southeast Asia to provide context for this blended building-landscape. It constructs a broader narrative surrounding the New World Mall in relation to the spatial theories of Walter Benjamin, Michel Foucault, Guy Debord, Henri Lefebvre, and Anthony Vidler, as well as practices of urban nomadism across time and cultures. It frames a socio-cultural perspective on retail architecture unintentionally remade with water, adapted through everyday practices, and rediscovered by global wanderers—a new flâneurie.

10.1 New World Mall, Bangkok

In 1997, an extension to the New World Mall in central Bangkok was ordered to cease operations by the Supreme Court of Thailand. Developers had been originally granted permission to construct a four-story addition that was ultimately built seven stories taller than allowed. To conform with the court order, the owners of the New World Mall demolished the top seven stories of the eleven-story annex. The compromised structure attracted vandals who set fires that further exposed the interior to the elements. Monsoon rains slowly flooded the ground floor into a lake which came to host tropical fish and aquatic plants. Over the next twenty years, this 'dead' mall incrementally evolved into an urban ecology connecting a neighborhood in central Bangkok to the global backpacker circuit. Here, *water* radically remade a conventional space of consumption into a place of rogue tourism (Figures 92 & 93).

10.2 Water and Architecture in Southeast Asia: A Brief Overview

Across the geographically and culturally diverse region of Southeast Asia, water has historically served as a feature in both sacred architecture and urbanism. Beginning in the third century BCE, the Hindu and Buddhist religions expanded from India into the Indochinese Peninsula via sea trading and overland migration (De Blij & Muller, 2000). At the beginning of the Common Era, Indian merchants brought Hindu Brahmins and Buddhist priests to settle in the region (Hill, 2008:35-38). By the end of the first



Figure 92: Aerial view, Bangkok. SOURCE: 123rf



Figure 93: New World Mall, Bangkok. SOURCE: Renegade Travels

century, many of the kingdoms of Southeast Asia had adopted Hindu and Buddhist traditions suited to their needs (Tiwary, 2008). Since then, both faiths have imparted significant influences on social organization, literature, art, architecture, and urbanism in the region (Tiwary, 2008).

Water is revered in the Hindu and Buddhist traditions for its purity, cleansing powers, and spiritual properties. Ancient Sanskrit texts advise that temple sites should include water features to support the growth of lotus, water fowl, song birds, and fish (Bharne & Krusche, 2012:19). Vedic scripture states that such characteristics were meant to engender nirvana and the idyllic realm of deities. As such, the holiest Hindu pilgrimage sites are sited in natural areas along rivers and lakes, while temple compounds in urban environments incorporate constructed pools used for ritual bathing. Similarly, Buddhism employs water as reflecting pools, ponds, and lakes in the landscape design of temple complexes. Monumental Hindu temples to Vishnu and Shiva were built during the ancient Khmer empire along major bodies of water (Behnke, 2008:24-25). Among the most impressive, Angkor Wat was conceived during the twelfth century as a Hindu temple and later converted to Buddhist use (Figures 94 & 95) (George, 2008:77). Surrounded by stone ramparts and a moat teeming with lotus and koi, it demonstrates a strong connection between sacred architecture and water, as well as common themes in the Buddhist and Hindu traditions. Today, the nations of Southeast Asia share water aesthetics informed by hybrid spiritual influences.



Figure 94: Angkor Wat; SOURCE: Wikimedia



Figure 95: Angkor Wat; SOURCE: Wikimedia

In contemporary Bangkok, water is an omnipresent and atmospheric condition that shapes the urban experience. Known as ‘The Venice of the East’, the Thai capital was historically defined by a vast network of khlongs (canals) which connected the Chao Phraya River with districts and neighborhoods throughout the urban core. From the fourteenth through the nineteenth centuries, floating markets served as nodes which spawned the growth of mercantile, social, and cultural activities (Heberle & Opp, 2008:177). Floating markets allowed farmers and merchants to sell agricultural products, prepared foods, textiles, and other goods directly from their boats. By the twentieth century, however, road and rail networks began to supplant many of the khlongs, while at the same time, others were eliminated due to public health and sanitation concerns (Bharne, 2013:86-89). Today, the Chao Phraya River continues to serve as a primary commuter artery in Bangkok, while floating markets remain active in Wat Sai, Taling Chan, and Khlong Lat Mayom (Figure 96) (Bell, 2003:77-80).



Figure 96: Floating Market. SOURCE: Wikimedia

10.3 Theoretical Framework: Consumption, Obsolescence, and Flâneurie

It is important to situate the lifecycle of the New World Mall within a broader social, historical, and theoretical context. Since the early twentieth century, theorists have routinely critiqued the impact of capitalism on buildings and urban space. It is widely acknowledged that the consumptive origins of contemporary society may be traced to the nineteenth century. As evidenced by the twentieth century transition from arcades to department stores, and later, by twenty-first century shifts from a physical world of shopping malls to the virtual world of internet commerce, retail environments have become an increasingly obsolete. Continual changes in production, communication, and connectivity have radically transformed the rules of retail, as well as the future of retail building typologies around the world.

Over the course of the twentieth century, theorists Walter Benjamin, Michel Foucault, Guy Debord, Henri Lefebvre, Ignasi Solà-Morales, and Anthony Vidler analyzed the influence of consumption on architecture and urbanism. Beginning in the 1930s, Walter Benjamin studied the Parisian arcades to discern the social, architectural, and phenomenological conditions of a declining nineteenth century retail typology. In his seminal work, *The Arcades Project*, Benjamin viewed the arcades as a visual device, or space frame, that provided the bourgeoisie a curated view on life. Within the confines of these interior worlds contemporary consumerism emerged (Leslie, 2006:87-89). Representing a hybrid social type, flâneurs were at once a product of the bourgeoisie and the bohème (Peng, 2015:6-8). Benjamin framed the flâneur as the

definitive figure of the modern era, however, it was the *habitats* of the flâneur in which he was primarily interested (Benjamin, 1969). As an urban stroller and loiterer without an ostensible purpose, the flâneur was intuitively invested in urban history.

In search of the sublime, delightful, or erotic—he wandered the boulevards, parks, cafés, and arcades. The urban forms which gave rise to flâneur culture simultaneously conveyed both aspirational largesse and zones of alienation in the city (Budziak, 2008:47-52). Although the flâneurs met their demise with the triumph of consumerism, new forms of this socio-cultural phenomenon have emerged in the contemporary era. Today, urban nomads and global backpackers seek out authentic experiences in a similar manner to the flâneurs, yet on a transcontinental scale.

10.4 Urban Nomadism and Everyday Forgotten Space in Bangkok

The impact of human activities in cities and buildings makes the study of the *everyday* a compelling filter for architects, designers, sociologists, and geographers. Unlike the formalized rituals of design, everyday manipulations are anonymous, layered, and unstructured actions linked to social needs and cultural traditions (Foucault, 1984). Independent from the formal hand of professional architects and designers, everyday manipulations—ranging from post-occupancy changes to ground-up adaptations—significantly shape the functional, aesthetic, and qualitative aspects of the built environment. Henri Lefebvre acknowledged the everyday impact of production, consumption, and multiplicity of authorship in the built environment. He asserted that

cities, buildings, and interiors are hybrid productions authored not only by designers, but also through cultural traditions, social practices, and autonomous interventions (Foucault, 1984). As a Marxist theorist who was critical of economic structuralism, Lefebvre proposed that the everyday manipulation of space is fundamental to the growth of society and the shape of the city (Lefebvre, 2005). He posits a theoretical perspective that distrusts the formal and fashionable, while condemning design practices that operate as agents of commodification (Lefebvre, 1991). Reframing the design of the built environment with the inverse—the everyday impact of people reshaping space—he celebrates the ordinary actions that cities, buildings, and interiors receive apart from the top-down hand of architects, planners, and designers. Lefebvre ponders the agency of designed spaces well beyond the moment of their completion.

In 1956, Guy Debord defined the term *dérive*—or drifting—as “a mode of experimental behavior linked to the conditions of urban society, a technique of rapid passage through varied ambiances.” As a founding member of Situationist International, he contributed to shaping a mid-twentieth century discourse of urban drifting which embraced playfulness, constructive exploration, and awareness of psycho-geographical effects (McDonough, 2002). The *dérive* is a form of urban exploration that differs from the typical journey or stroll; it embodies a more alternative engagement with the city. Debord defined the *dérive* as an environmental analysis of fissures in urbanism, urban micro-climates, and distinct neighborhoods with no correlation to administrative boundaries. His work sought out the

“psychogeographical” effects of cities in relation to their ambiance, temporality, and social occupancies (Debord, 1958).

As political revolutionaries and provocateurs of the 1960s counterculture, the Situationists proposed a different way to read, analyze, and critique cities; they acknowledged the inherent value of marginalized urban spaces. The broader counterculture that the Situationists contributed to emerged from the earlier Beat Generation as an anti-establishment social, cultural, and political movement. Its origins may be traced to European bohemianism and a rising awareness of Eastern religions and spirituality (Burke, 1979:357). The “hippie” subculture found significant inspiration in non-western cultural traditions and espoused an ethos of communal living, creative experimentation, ecological balance, recreational drug usage, and global awareness (Misiroglu & Allen, 2015:379). From the early-1960s to the late 1970s, young people from North America and Europe acted on their international curiosities by incrementally forging an overland route to the East (Sobocinska, 2015:227-228). The “hippie trail” began in London, moved across continental Europe to Istanbul, and then traversed the Middle East and Indian subcontinent to Bangkok. This alternative, modest, and interactive form of tourism contrasted sharply with the bourgeois tastes of the international jet set. The trail was defined by hostels, cafés, and shops that catered almost exclusively to Westerners as they journeyed both east and west (Sobocinska, 2015:227-228). Much like the nineteenth century flâneurs, these global wanderers sought out the sublime, delightful, and erotic by wandering the bazaars, temples, and

markets of the East. Although the hippie trail ended by the late 1970s due to political upheaval in Iran and Afghanistan, its influence on contemporary backpacker culture endures along fragments of the original route and beyond (Waller, 2016).

As Westerners migrated east in pursuit of authentic experiences, the East was developmentally moving “west” in pursuit of urban modernization and economic expansion. By the early 1970s, a first generation of shopping malls were built in the national capitals of Southeast Asia, joining a retail landscape historically defined by shophouses, open-air markets, hawker stalls, and department stores (Turnbull, 1997:229). Traditional commercial types were violently displaced in a wave of urban renewal that forged broader streets, infrastructure, and office towers in central Bangkok (Turnbull, 1997:229). Retail activities were increasingly relocated and encapsulated within the earliest shopping malls. In 1973, Siam Center opened as the first climate-controlled mall in Bangkok achieving an international standard. Housing sixty shops and the offices of Pan American World Airways and Chase Manhattan Bank, it set a new precedent for retailing in the central business district (Grossman, 2009). By the early 1980s, shopping malls became increasingly common, and later, overbuilding throughout the 1990s and early 2000s resulted in notable levels of underuse and abandonment (Kongarchapatara & Shannon, 2015:7-9). Today, many of the oldest malls in Bangkok house remarkably alternative uses.

Located in the Bang Lamphu district, the New World Mall opened in 1982 during the second wave of shopping mall construction. In 1997, a court order filed by the

Bangkok Metropolitan Administration claimed that an extension to the mall had been built seven stories taller than approved (Byrnes, 2015). In response to the court order, the owners of New World Mall haphazardly demolished its outlawed floors. The compromised structure attracted arsonists who attempted to burn it down in retaliation for being taller than the Grand Palace (Pleasance, 2014). Meanwhile, the abandoned mall filled with rainwater and the exposed floor plates slowly came to host vegetation (Figures 97 & 98). Since its closure, litigation between municipal authorities and the owners has focused on who should fully demolish or rebuild the building.

In 2003, residents of the surrounding community released koi, tilapia, and catfish into the waterscape to combat a mounting mosquito nuisance (Fredrickson, 2014). Locals began introducing tourists to the otherworldly space and began selling food to feed the fish (Wancharoen, 2014). In 2013, 30-year old American backpacker Jesse Rockwell stumbled across New World Mall and wrote a blog post to document his visit (Goldstein, 2014). By mid-2014, Rockwell's blog was discovered by a popular website, *The Verge*, and interest in the New World Mall went viral (Goldstein, 2014). Cyberspace transformed the mall into a popular stop along the global backpacker trail, while proximity to the Khao San Road hostel district made it accessible to the masses. With increased foot traffic, the narrow alleys surrounding New World Mall spawned mom-and-pop shops and *cafés* serving a rogue tourist industry.



Figure 97: New World Mall, interior. SOURCE: 123rf



Figure 98: New World Mall, interior. SOURCE: 123rf

In an ironic turn—embedded within a city known for its floating markets—the New World Mall represents a radical inversion of retail and water. Blending the vastness of a temple complex with the spatial ambiance of walled aquatic gardens, the New World Mall recast the sacred relationship of water, koi, building, and landscape. Although this unplanned “aquarium” remains extremely popular with tourists, as well as economically beneficial to its surrounding community, municipal authorities view it as a public health hazard. In January 2015, fishermen were dispatched by municipal authorities to net the fish for transport to the Thai Department of Fisheries and various bodies of water throughout Thailand (Wancharoen, 2015). Although entering the former shopping mall remains illegal, urban explorers continue to find their way into the condemned structure. Haunted by a recent past much like the dying arcades of Benjamin’s Paris in the 1930s, the New World Mall rests in limbo between politics and the people awaiting an uncertain future (Figure 99).

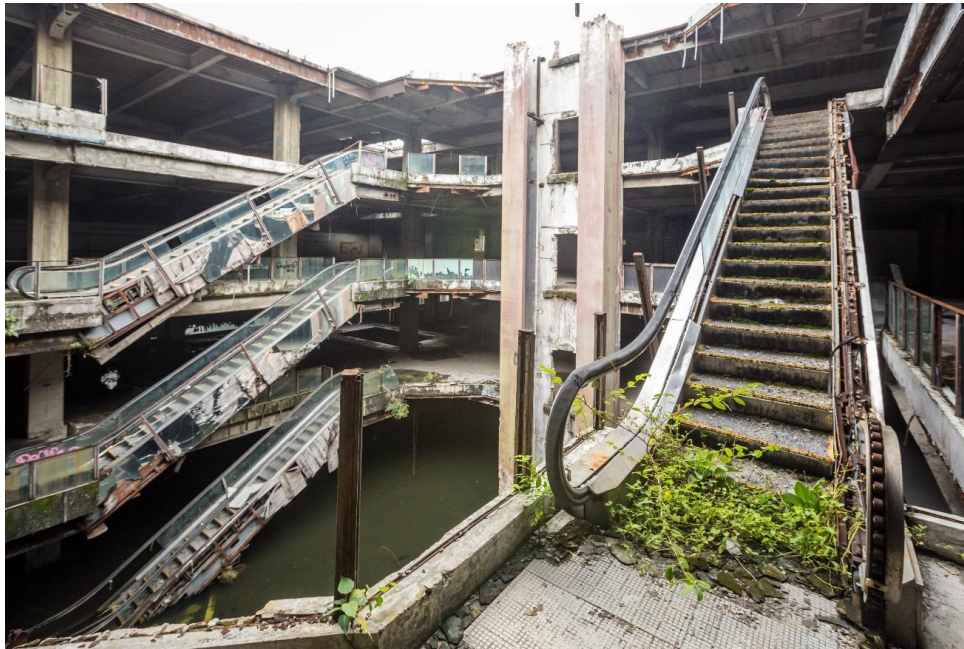


Figure 99: New World Mall, central courtyard; SOURCE: 123rf

10.5 Reflection

Urban theorist Anthony Vidler use of the term “uncanny” as a metaphor for unplanned influences and the after effects of consumerism, corporate disinvestment, and post-industrial culture applies specifically to the fate of New World Mall (Vidler, 1992:3-5).

Like Benjamin’s analysis of the arcades, Vidler proposes a future vision of retail environments built upon the eccentricities in their advancing obsolescence. In a similar manner, the New World Mall reflects the hetertopian conditions of Foucault in its detachment from intended uses and appropriation by others. The mall documents a recent past embedded within the dense urban fabric of central Bangkok to embody a place of *otherness* connected by thresholds to the ‘real’ world. As both a public interior

and an aquatic landscape, New World Mall exists along the undefined margins of the built environment by means of incremental, parasitic, and illegal actions. Furthermore, the appropriated mall demonstrates subtle similarities with the walled, water-oriented sacred spaces common to both the Hindu and Buddhist traditions of Southeast Asia. Here, water became a force of spatial appropriation and cultural expression that motivated communal responses (Baudrillard, 1994:139). Water represents an informal occupancy that has reshaped the larger built environment, from the inside-out, via natural processes of adaptive reuse. Water became a catalyst for human actions ranging from community mobilization to mercantilism and rogue tourism.

Through an uncommon convergence of circumstances, New World Mall demonstrates how ecology and people transformed an obsolete shopping mall into a place of delight for the twenty-first century global flâneurie. Intentionally destabilized by government-sanctioned demolition, this structure also offers a perspective on the transformative forces impacting retail infrastructure worldwide. While internet-based retail threatens the worldwide viability of sustaining overbuilt physical environments, aging shopping malls also fall prey to shifting urban-suburban redevelopment strategies and the opportunistic impulses of real estate interests. In the case of the New World Mall, the marriage of physical destruction and water allowed an interior urban space to organically grow within the ruins of a failed space of consumption.

From a design perspective, the temporal nature of retail buildings coupled with shifting socio-economic conditions fuels a vast interior territory of worldwide

obsolescence, abandonment, and potential for radical regeneration. Viewed through the post-structuralist theoretical perspective of Foucault, this de-programmed mall has never been empty—it resonates with subtle traces of the past, fosters social interaction, and draws tourism with links to the Situationist *dérive*. Today, however, the mall exists within a markedly different era defined by the immediacy of social media connectivity to the masses.

As makers of the built environment—architects, landscape architects, and designers should more intentionally anticipate non-conforming future uses in their work. As evidenced here, disruptive and destructive forces can informally reactivate underused buildings and infrastructures. Design scholars and educators should critically engage the ways in which informal occupancies spawn adaptation. Rather than destabilizing unideal conditions, architects and designers should consider advocating for occupancies that organically grow and change over time. Likewise, it is important for architects and designers to understand the narratives of places and users (Hadjiyanni, 2013). The next generation of designers must be prepared to embrace more nuanced, porous, and adaptive ways of intervening in the built environment. They will need to better anticipate diverse forms of appropriation that take root within the buildings and spaces that they design. By celebrating the inherent value of informal adaptations in an era of diminishing resources, architects and designers can recalibrate their agency by supporting regenerative, emergent forms of urbanism.

CHAPTER XI: CONCLUSIONS

BORDERLAND DIALECTIC: REFLECTIONS AND PROJECTIONS ON AMERICAN SUBURBAN RETAIL

In this dissertation, suburban shopping malls were compared in the northern and southern *borderland* regions of the United States to demonstrate how informal appropriations have imparted similar transformative effects on aging retail structures. This research defined six typologies—via exemplars—which exemplify the current state of indoor shopping malls serving a range of users from multicultural elites to socio-economically disadvantaged communities and immigrants. Many of these malls have experienced considerable economic decline or erasure, such as the ‘Adaptive Transformation’ typology embodied by the Euclid Square Mall in a suburb of Cleveland; it demonstrated slow decline and temporal reuse as an interior territory for African-American churches. This typology illustrates alternative occupancy patterns that middle-class shopping malls temporally host prior to their ultimate closure, demolition, or re-development. The ‘Cultural Translation’ typology illustrated by Sharpstown Mall in Houston offers an example of demographic change, reconfiguration, and interior renewal. Adapted into the Latin America-themed PlazAmericas, Sharpstown has successfully embraced a mom-and-pop retail mix relevant to the surrounding neighborhood. It demonstrates how unassuming shopping malls and strip centers can address the ethno-cultural needs of new users and collaborative stakeholders.



Figure 100: *Where are all the other Muslims?* The true story of a Syrian family's journey to America and how a suburban strip shopping mall would come to serve their needs by Jake Halpern & Michael Sloane. SOURCE: *The New York Times*, February 25, 2017

The cartoon on the preceding page, featured in *The New York Times* in February 2017, exemplifies how immigrant identity in America is being currently incubated in non-descript suburban structures (Figure 100). Much like the narrative of this dissertation, it shows how shopping malls and strip centers afford immigrant and underrepresented communities a supportive infrastructure serving everyday needs including spiritual spaces. These unlikely building typologies represent commercial environments where historically marginalized communities have found safe spaces to forge identities.

Obsolete and altered retail environments offer a window into the future of suburbia in the United States. Ethnic shops, storefront mosques, and social clubs have gained traction in former bastions of ethnic, racial, and income uniformity. On the one hand, suburbs in the early twenty-first century have become increasingly more diverse, cosmopolitan, and socio-economically blended. On the other, they contain core attributes of resilience — resource diversity, resource availability, and institutional memory — offering the potential for greater socio-economic layering and urbanity. Viewed through the post-structuralist theoretical perspective of Michel Foucault, the underused malls surveyed in this research have never been empty. Instead, these spaces resonate with traces of original occupancies intermingled with emerging forms of spatial intervention. Serving demographically diverse populations, appropriated shopping malls and strip malls are holders and makers of culture.

The theoretical lens of Foucault’s notion of heterotopia—“a space of emplacement”—provides a critical rationale regarding the establishment of heterotopias within obsolete malls. Processes of disinvestment and fragmentation created voids in activity, as well as physical space for alternative uses to germinate and thrive. These incrementally de-programmed infrastructures eventually evolved into transgressive places which were appropriated by new users. Through these actions, they have been regenerated and made anew. When approached from the standpoint of adaptive reuse, design practices which allow for flexible space planning and more modest needs—demonstrated by the metal mesh market stalls in PlazAmericas for instance—can foster micro-enterprise. As evidenced in the case studies, alternative uses such as ethnic marketplaces and places of worship were not anticipated by developers, architects, planners, and municipal officials. As a placeholder for actual urban space, appropriated mall interiors represent a viable alternative to the conventional street. Here, obsolescence allowed accessibility to communities with limited means, while the inherent spatial density of the shopping mall typology encouraged a critical mass of complementary uses to take root, propagate, and prosper. Architects and designers should support adaptable practices by more intentionally anticipating future, non-conforming uses in their work. In this sense, critical design practices can support long-term spatial resilience that works to reactivate underused buildings through organic forms of adaptive reuse.

Architects, designers, planners, educators, and American society stand much to learn from the incremental remaking of American suburbia into a realm of increasing diversity and multiculturalism. The temporal nature of retail buildings and the shifting socio-economic future of the United States fuels a vast interior territory of obsolescence, abandonment, change, and the potential for regeneration. Modest changes—leveraged through the cultural memory and limited means of immigrant communities and historically disadvantaged communities—offer ways to foster assimilation and resilience.

This dissertation narrates how the historically market-driven culture and capitalist economy of the United States has been privileged significantly toward financial gain and efficiency, rather than the preservation of socio-cultural subtleties. It asks architects, designers, planners, and theorists to appreciate the informal interventions that emerge within obsolescence long after architects and developers have made their mark. It documents the agency of ordinary people and their cultural imprint on buildings, compelling architects and designers to rethink the notion of expertise. It proposes that architects and designers should always work with an eye toward the *probability* of future alternative uses which respond to disruptive conditions. It shows how informality gives rise to an increasingly participatory “modus operandi” for design practice. Most importantly, it documents highly temporal environments subjected to change and erasure. With specific regard to Euclid Square Mall and Valley View Center, this dissertation has physically documented buildings and

spatial cultures that are in the process of being demolished. Much like the arcades of Walter Benjamin's Paris, these places and their agency will soon be erased.

Finally, this dissertation proposes a strategy for how architectural scholarship might enhance the body of knowledge in relation to immigrant communities and building culture, as well as the ability for designers, design-scholars, and design educators to respond to adverse economic and political conditions. As evidenced in the design studio exercises, shopping malls can be enhanced by professional design interventions that do not dislodge organic activities. In this sense, architects and design educators can help steward obsolete retail interiors to become unlikely incubators of cultural diversity in suburban America—spaces that support micro-economies and independence. Furthermore, the spatial impact of immigration should be engaged by designers as a more strategic and critical approach to design education that acknowledges cast-off, yet vibrant “new” zones of multicultural hybridization.

Architects and designers should acknowledge and advocate for the diverse forms of cultural expression supported by unassuming spaces. Introducing community-based ethnographic curriculum into academia offers students in the spatial design disciplines—architecture, interior architecture, interior design, environmental design, historic preservation, and adaptive reuse—opportunities to contemplate their agency through the lens of social justice at urban, building, and interior scales. Modestly adapted shopping malls—albeit highly temporal—reaffirm the principles of adaptive reuse by mobilizing latent resources, keeping waste from landfills, and restoring

buildings to the tax base. These typologies reveal the positive impact of immigration on adaptation in everyday suburbia, while borrowing from the ethics of sustainability.

The next generation of architects, planners, and designers across the disciplines must be prepared to confront more culturally sensitive, ecologically innovative, and porous approaches to intervention. As evidenced in these ‘borderland’ typologies serving diverse needs, adaptive urbanism promotes a resilient city of *difference* in lieu of the faded notion of the utopian city of *community*. Rather than destabilizing informal conditions to produce conformity, designers should advocate for underrepresented populations and support their ability to organically grow and change. This expanded view on adaptive reuse promotes a culturally inclusive built environment acknowledging diversity and the right to the city. It expands the understanding of what can and should be preserved—as well as by whom and for whom. Responding to the xenophobic political turn of 2016, informal actions contribute to resisting social fragmentation via organic processes of social justice. Furthermore, embracing the imperfections of obsolescence and informal adaptive reuse aligns with Foucault’s celebration of otherness and Lefebvre’s notion of cities as places of encounter and exchange. Subjected to the rhythms of life, such spaces support diversity while enabling unhindered access for all.

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APPENDIX A

BORDERLAND INTERVENTIONS STUDIO WORK

Research undertaken in this dissertation was applied to a fourth-year interior architecture studio focused on adaptive reuse of dead and dying malls in Texas.

The following pages comprise work undertaken in design studios at the University of Houston College of Architecture and Design (Figures 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, & 106).

As previously discussed, this studio-based design research resulted in awarded student work by the AIA American Institute of Architects Ft. Worth chapter for the Texas state-wide Student Design Excellence Award (2015) and University of Houston

Undergraduate Research Day (2014). Portions of this work were selected for the

Creating_Making Forum Symposium Exhibition (2014) at the University of Oklahoma

Division of Architecture, for the *Art+Architecture* Exhibition (2014) at the AIA

Philadelphia Center for Architecture, and for the IDEC National Conference Exhibition (2015) in Ft. Worth.

LABYRINTHIAN LATTICE

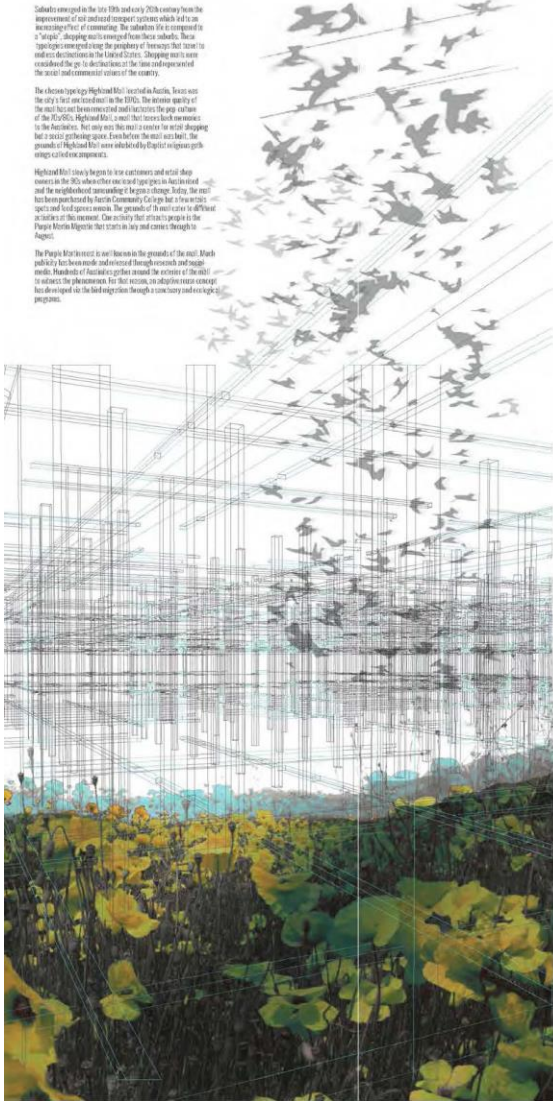
AN ADAPTIVE REUSE OF HIGHLAND MALL

Saltwater emerged in the late 19th and early 20th century from the improvement of salt and steel transport systems which led to an increasing level of connectivity. The saltwater fish is considered a "single" shipping route emerged from these systems. These shipping routes connecting the periphery of territory that have to address decisions in the United States. Shipping routes were considered the key to development of the time and represented the social and commercial values of the country.

The chosen type of Highland Mall located in Austin, Texas was the only one that was built in the 1950s. The entire majority of the mall has not been renovated and has become the great emblem of the 1950s. Highland Mall is small that have been renovated to the Americas. But only one that has a space to be changed but it is a good starting space. Even before the mall was built, the grounds of Highland Mall were established by the city's original streets and its own programs.

Highland Mall slowly began to lose customers and retail shops owners in the 1980s when other new retail type spaces had been built and the neighborhood surrounding it began to change. Before the mall had been purchased by the City Community College but a few years ago and had a space renovation. The grounds of the mall were in a place as well as the renovation. One activity that attracts people is the Purple Martin Migration that starts in May and continues through August.

The Purple Martin is not known in the grounds of the mall. Much public has been made and interest through research and design studio. Hundreds of birds are gathered around the entrance of the mall to witness the phenomenon. For that reason, an adaptive reuse concept has developed on the field experience through a community and design program.



HIGHLAND MALL | CORRIDOR | MIGRATION ANALYSIS

Mapping through Austin and North America | South America

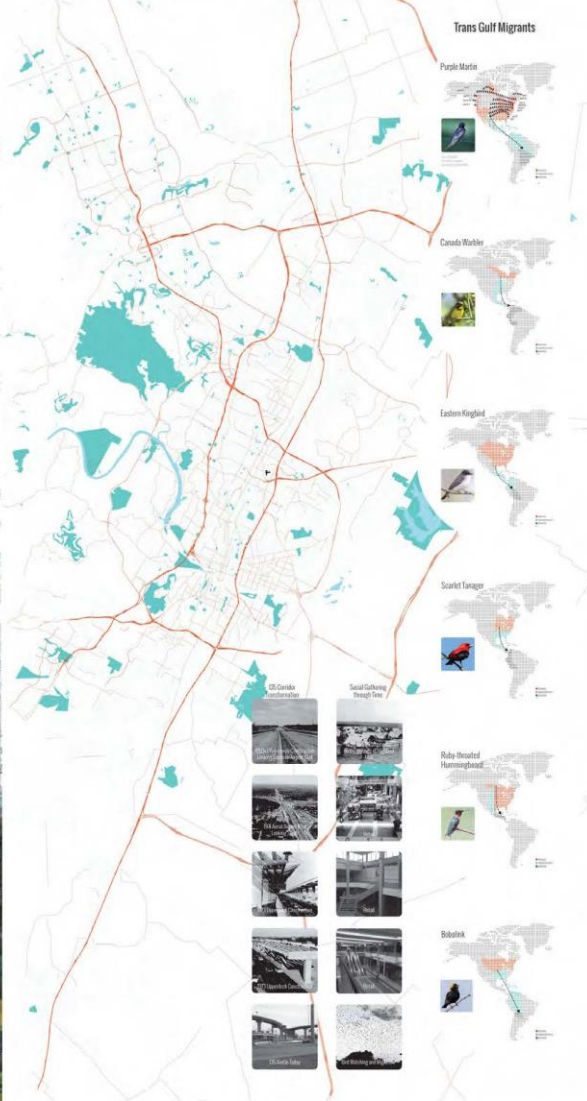


Figure 101: Dead Mall Adaptation of Highland Mall in Austin by A. Sotelo

SCHEMATIC DEVELOPMENT

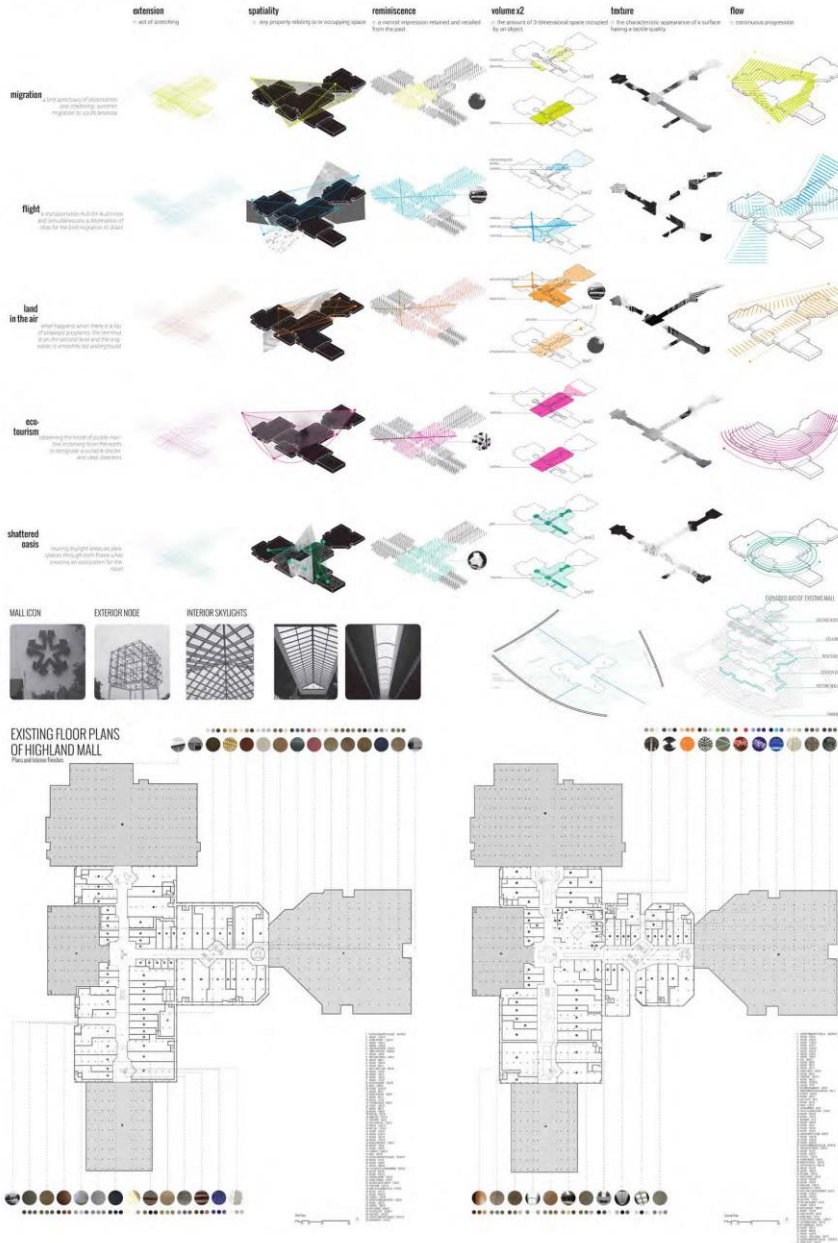


Figure 102: Dead Mall Adaptation of Highland Mall in Austin by A. Sotelo

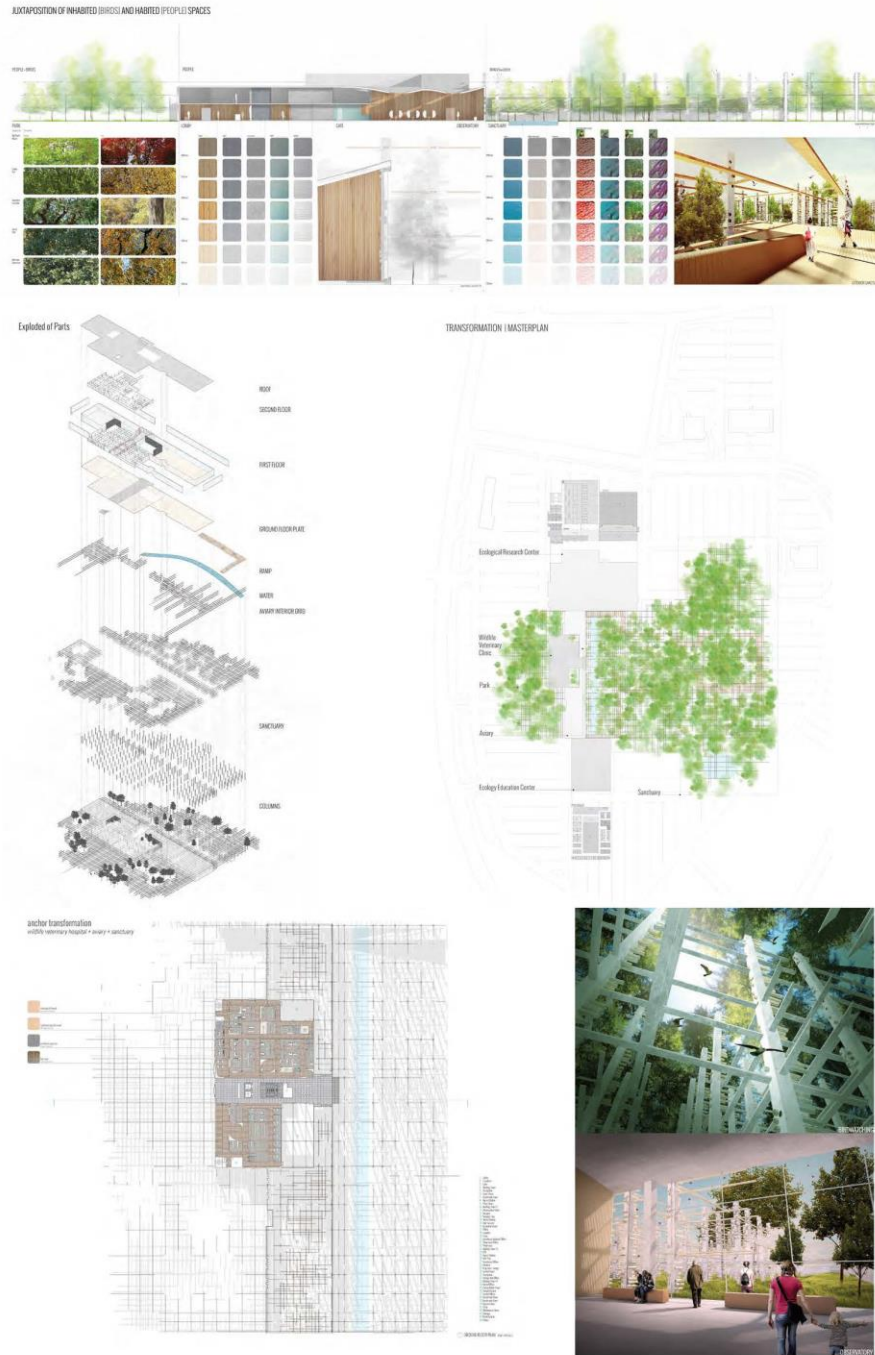


Figure 103: Dead Mall Adaptation of Highland Mall in Austin by A. Sotelo

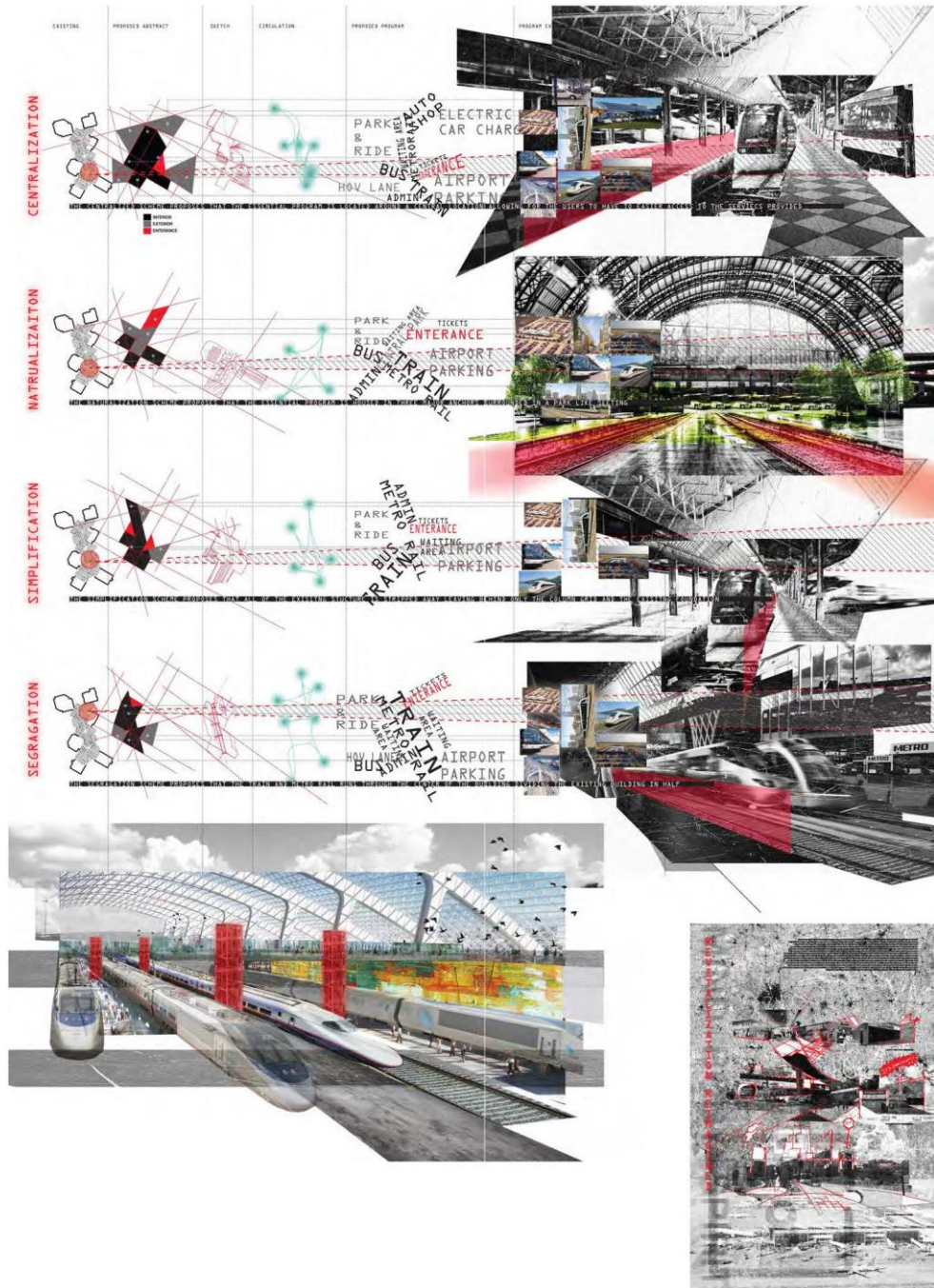


Figure 104: Dead Mall Adaptation of Greenspoint Mall in Houston by J. Hollie



Figure 105: Dead Mall Adaptation of Greenspoint Mall in Houston by J. Hollie

APPENDIX B

EXTENDED BIBLIOGRAPHY

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