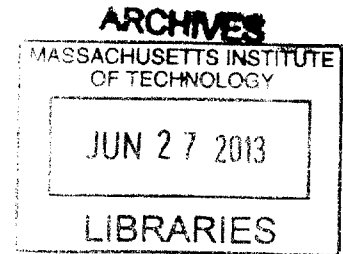


Democratizing Global Tourism
or Designing Diversity to Reach Harmony

by

Slobodan Radoman

B.A. Architecture
Harvard University, 2007



SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE IN PARTIAL
FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARCHITECTURE
AT THE
MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

JUNE 2013

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ABSTRACT

The largest lake in the Balkans, the largest bird “airport” in Europe, multinational, protected under the Ramsar Convention, a candidate for the UNESCO transboundary biosphere enlisting, the Skadar Lake is yet, economically speaking, an “in between” region of Montenegro. The Skadar Lake is the size of the Venice lagoon, with which it shares a parallel potential: while the renaissance Venice was geographically impossible to conquer by its enemies, making it a safe trading destination, Skadar Lake is the forgotten ecological oasis with the potential to flourish new ecological development strategies. This thesis argues that performance, payback and social motivations as design strategies prompt a new type of thinking that simultaneously critiques and challenges the ecological neutrality with which the current architectural and urban design discourse perceives the life in rural areas. It examines tourism as a vehicle to develop the region; it ignites design strategies to experiment with culture and ecological processes in order to excite relationships between the locals and the tourists, the people and the environment. Describing the heritage processes in the National Park through Felix Guattari’s three levels of ecology (the human, the social, and the environmental), and establishing new consumer tastes (geared towards social and multispecies interaction, gastronomy and other aspects of local material culture), the thesis attempts to answer the following questions: Can future development of the Skadar Lake region stimulate a mode diverse economy? How can a more experiential tourism, driven by altered consumerism, stimulate the valorization of the region’s landscapes and further expand them? Lastly, when almost everything has been done already, how to redefine Skadar Lake’s identity in order to secure it a place on the competitive global tourism map? The thesis objective is thus to design a platform - a hybrid of the Skadar Lake’s identity and the experience thereof.

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Democratizing Global Tourism. Slobodan Radoman. MArch. MIT

M.Arch Thesis
Democratizing Global Tourism
or Designing Diversity to Reach Harmony

THANK YOU is not enough for all the help and support
I have received from you, yet for now...

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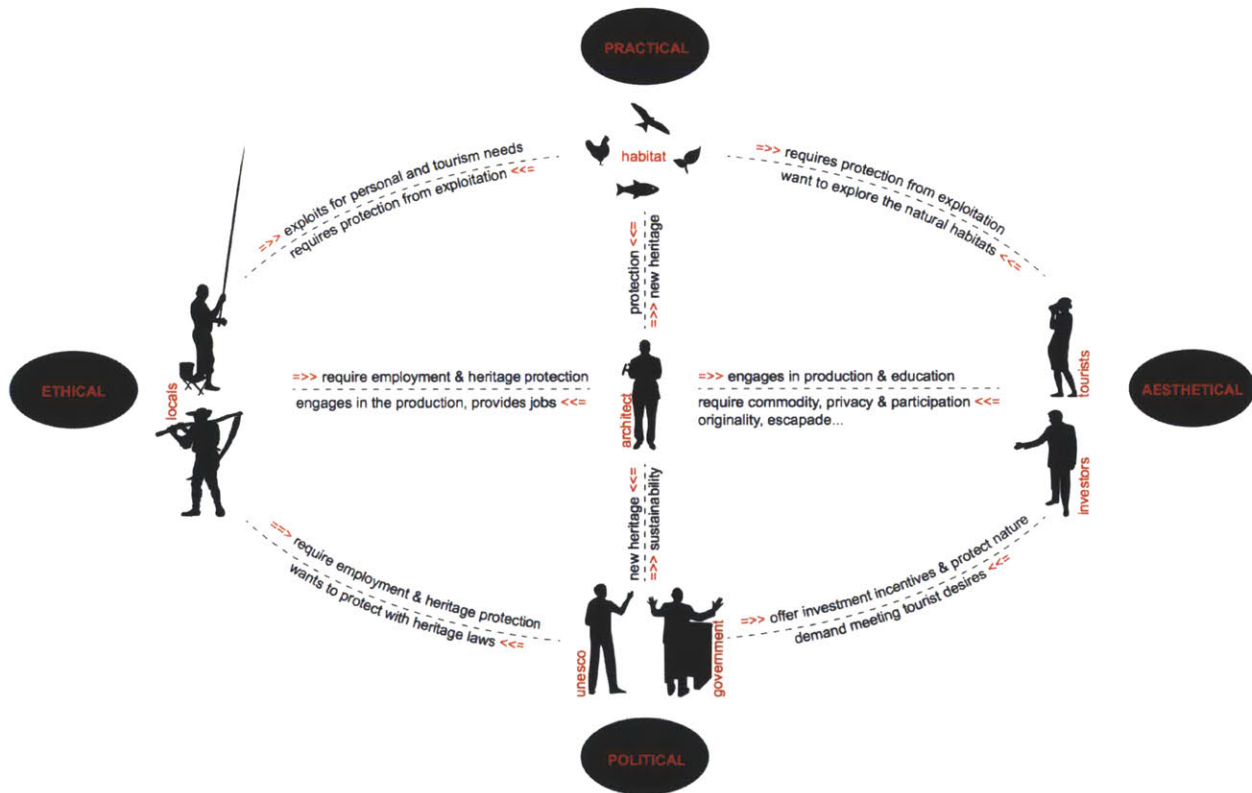
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1. Skadar Lake: the In-Between Paradoxes



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Despite the global economic volatility and the futility of mobility in an increasingly homogenized world, the global tourism keeps growing: in 2012 it reached 1,035 billion tourists.[2] And although new tourist destinations are constantly emerging throughout the globe, more than half of all tourists still travel to Europe, twenty percent of which vacate in the Mediterranean. Montenegro – both an Eastern European and a Mediterranean country – is becoming one of the leaders in this region with an annual increase of the number of tourists of 3% in 2012. [3] Due to its global economic power, tourism is used as the main vehicle for the economic development of the country. As the future development of tourism addresses the altering consumption nature of tourists, it should also recognize the fact that a vast majority of Montenegrins migrate to the Adriatic region and Montenegro's capital, Podgorica, many leaving their home towns for good. In the mid-sixties, Montenegro's rather underdeveloped coast was the primary focus of development in then ex-Yugoslavia. Several decades later, its coastal zone is economically booming, while the rest of the country is economically stagnant. A shift in development thinking is thus needed to address the demographic, economic, and cultural misalignment in Montenegro, characterized by economic "hot spots" and "grey holes".

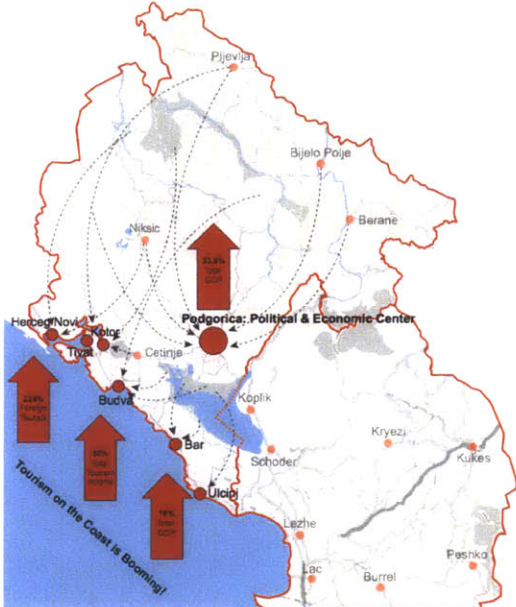
The Skadar Lake region, which annually welcomes about 42,000 tourists and generates approximately 800,000 Euro, is, from the tourism standpoint, an "in between" zone of Montenegro.[4] On the one hand, it has suffered from the constant emigration of its inhabitants to the coast or the large cities, slowly turning into a "grey hole" of the country; on the other hand, its pristine environment, flora, fauna and history signal its potential development into a tourism "hot spot". There are two important trends of the global tourism that stimulate development of the Skadar Lake region. First, the current global tourism shift towards peripheral zones – the new "hip" in the tourist magazines – promotes the regions which have been doomed to failure

a decade or more ago. Due to overabundance and ubiquity of tourism resorts, the tourists tend to seek the atypical tourism destinations (even places like Chernobyl are becoming attractive!). Second, the baby boomers generation (individuals born between 1945 and 1964) from Europe, North America and Japan will have more leisure time, good health and longevity, as well as good financial resources to travel in the next 30 years. Most of these tourists will be highly educated, middle class people interested in experiencing nature through leisure in regions such as the Skadar Lake. Given that there are only about ten tourist objects of very small capacity (the largest one is a two star hotel "Vir" with 50 beds, the next largest is "Plavnica" with only 4 suites) it is clear that there is a need for more tourist accommodations. In fact, the most recent market research by the Government of Montenegro states that by 2015 it is expected that the Skadar Lake region will have 550 basic private rooms, 250 camps, and 500 houses for rental, with 150,000 stays per annum. Therefore an analysis of the potential of tourism resorts becomes crucial for the development of the Skadar Lake region. Such accommodations should include both the adaptation of the existing built fabric – primarily vernacular architecture – and the design of new resort destinations.

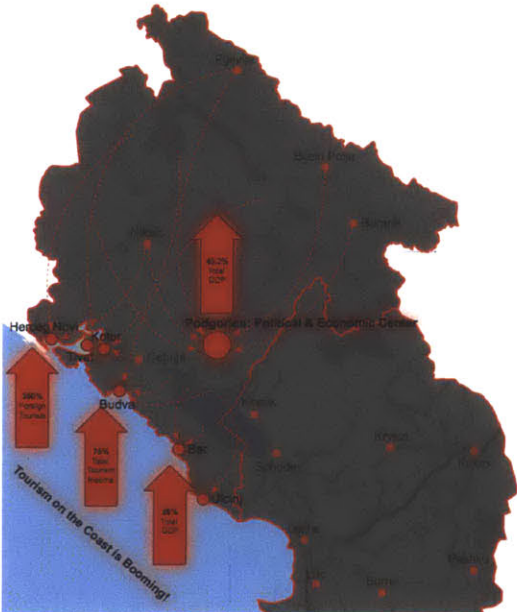


Skadar Lake Location (above) and Transport Infrastructure (below)

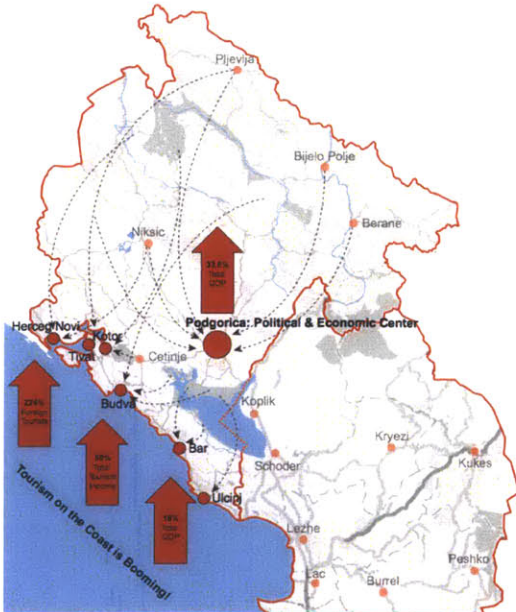




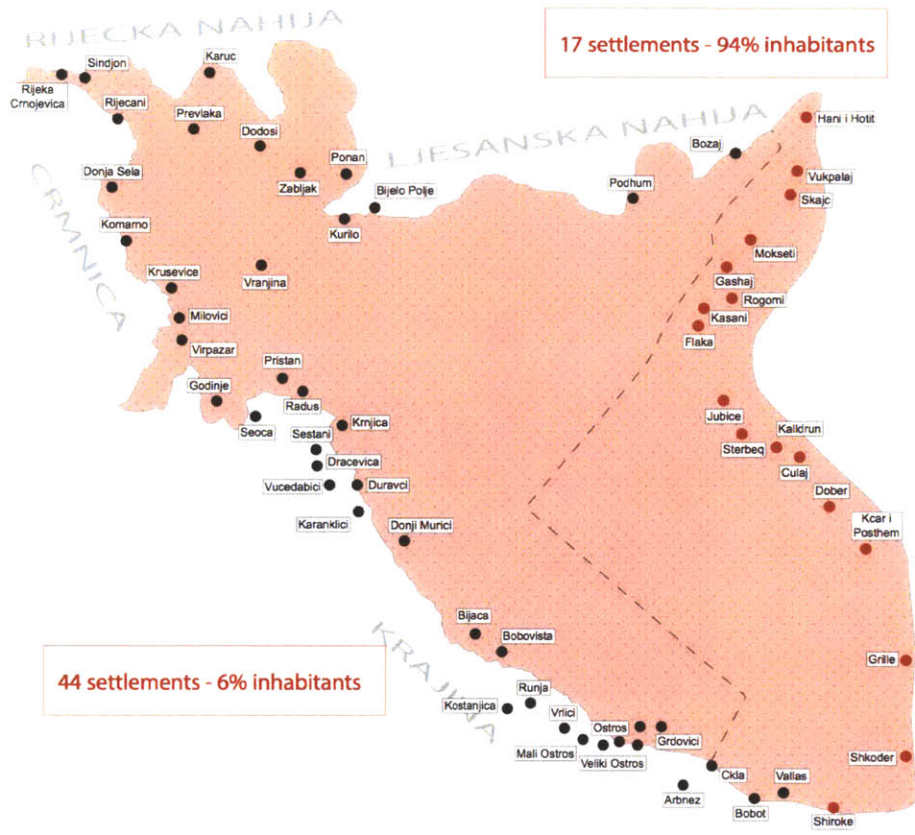
The Current Economic Condition in Montenegro: the Coast and the Capital Booming



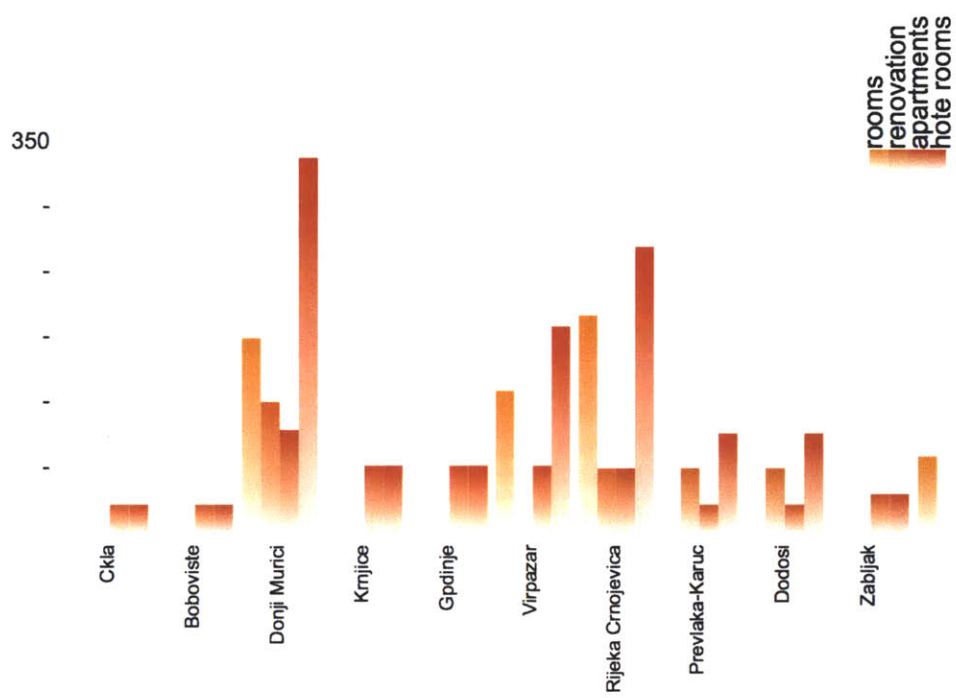
Present Condition Extended in the Future



Re-Thinking the Future Through Dispersion?

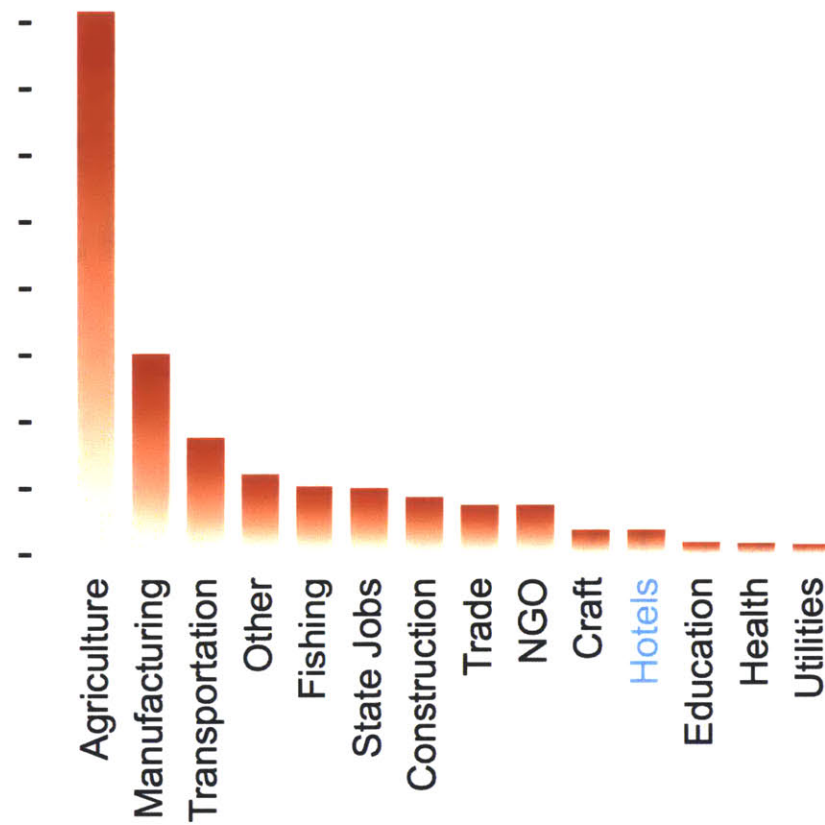


Skadar Lake Settlement Density

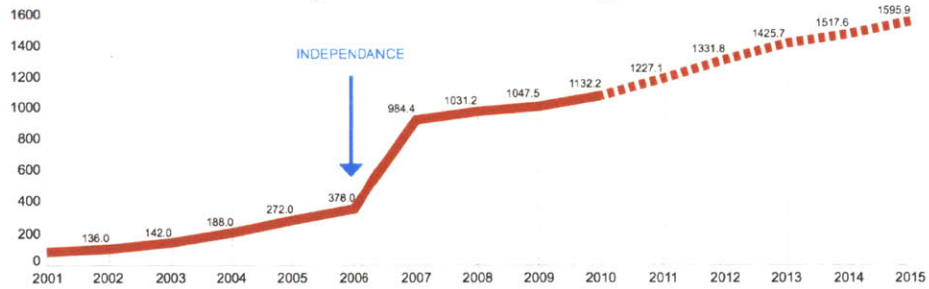


Skadar Lake Anticipated Accommodation Needs by 2015

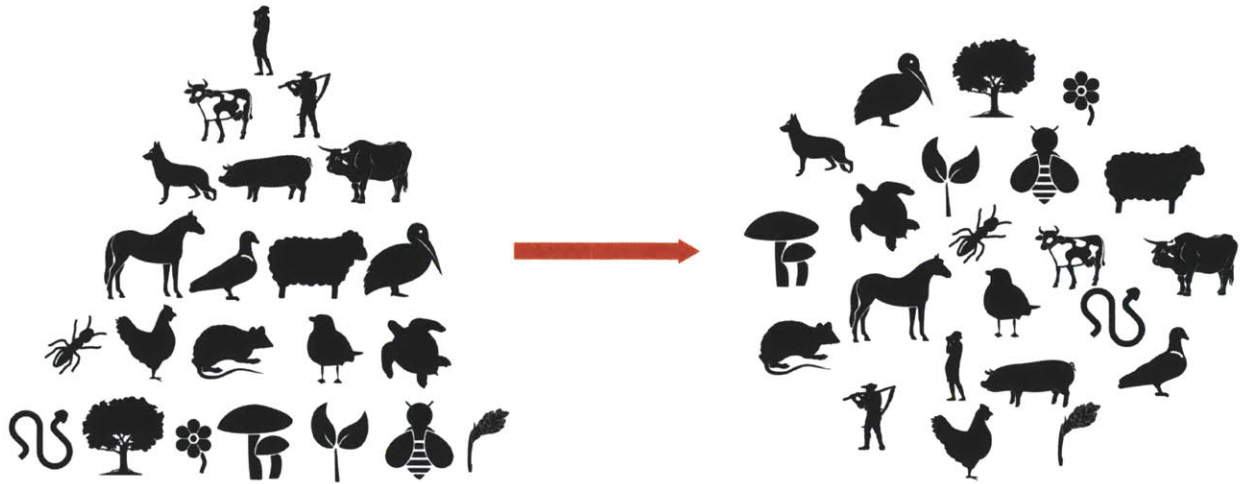
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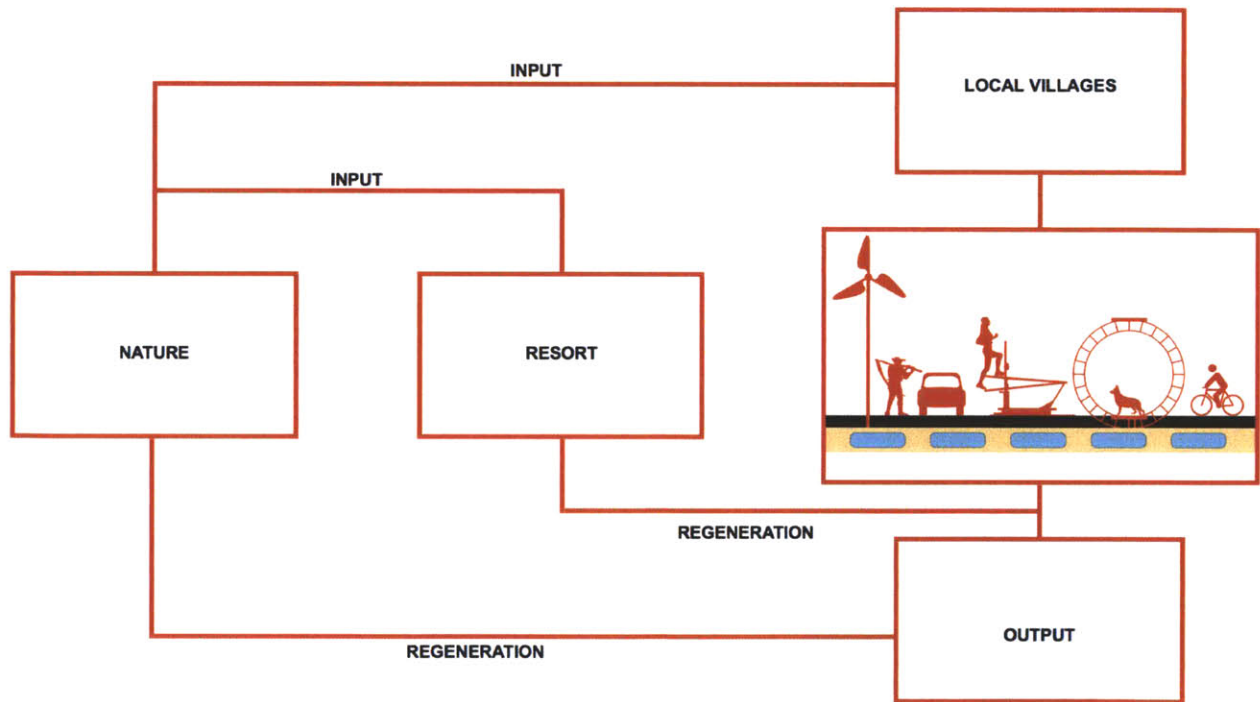
Industry in the Skadar Lake Region



Montenegro Becomes a Tourism Hot Spot on the Global Market Since Its Independence in 2006



Turning Ecological Ego into Art D'Eco!



The Living Machine System Benefits the Tourist and Transversality Participation

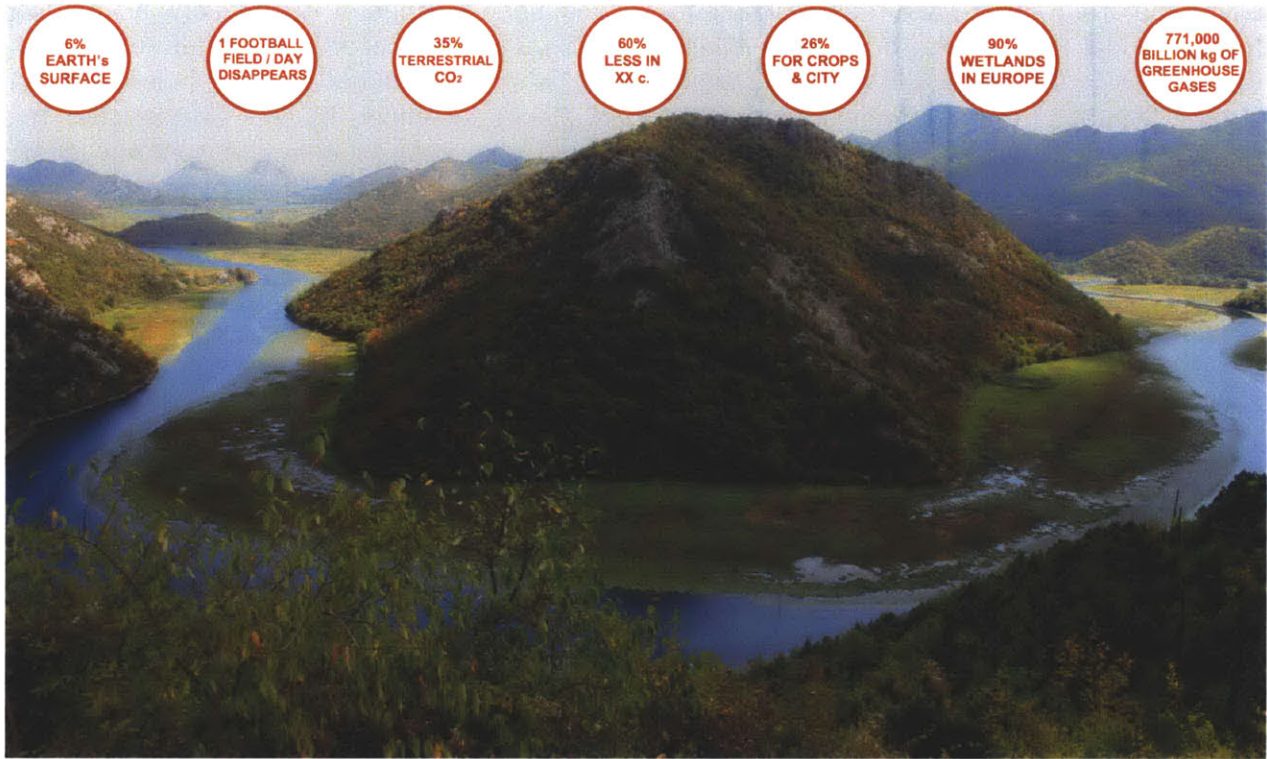
Given that the Skadar Lake region climate fosters seasonal tourism, the adaptation / design of the housing units needs to allow for transformation of spaces to host tourists as well as to facilitate production for the locals during the off season.

The locals and the tourists' daily operations within the units need to be carefully studied to provide for design taxonomies that will inform the optimal use of the envisioned space. It is critical to always bear in mind this parallel between the local and the tourist, not solely for direct economic gains but also for the cultural and educational reasons – the indirect benefits from tourism that are often underestimated for their impact on the economy. The locals can greatly benefit from the tourists' myriad of skills that can significantly impact the way of living in the region.

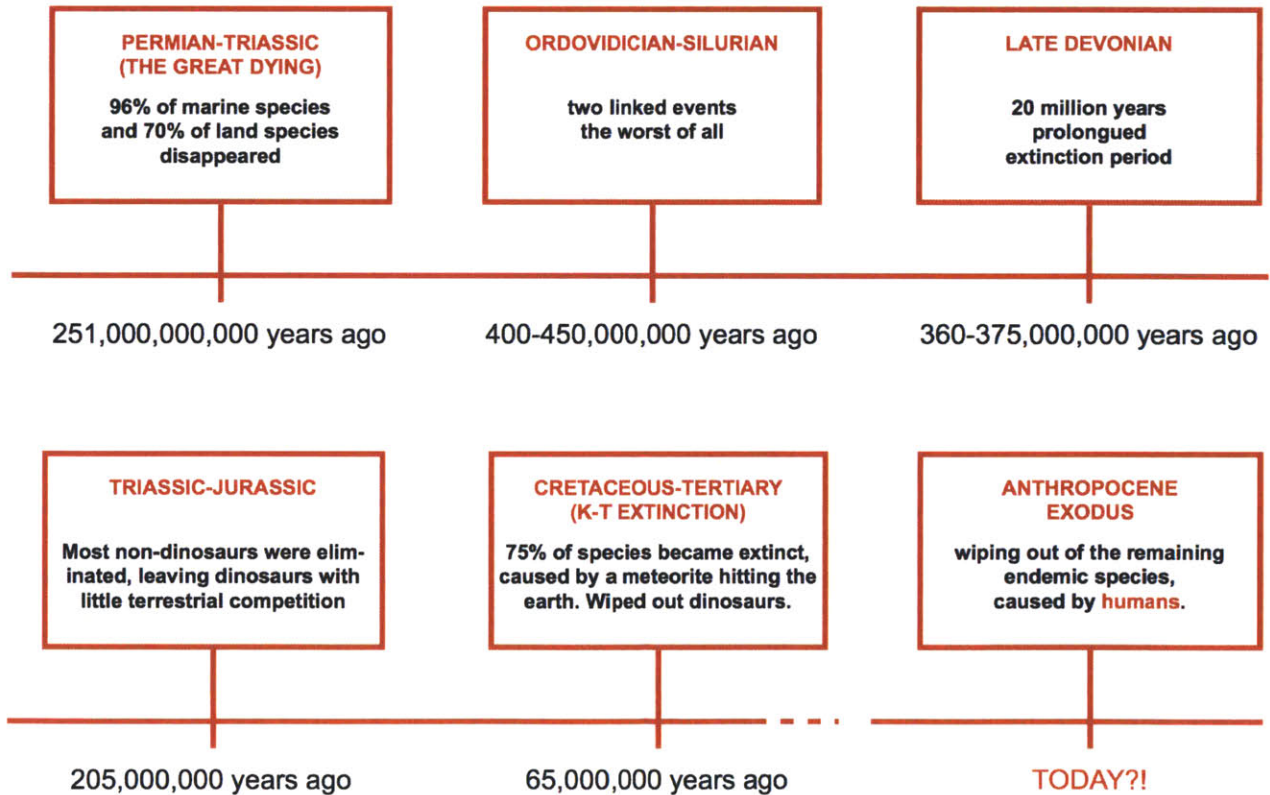
More obvious programs such as language schools, agriculture and fishing industry development, academic and business conferences, technology and construction innovations can all come out of strong local-tourist relationships, but not only that. What at first sight may be considered a negative impact of tourism – organic and non-organic waste, grey and black waters and so on – can be turned into economic generators for the locals, while providing an original tourism experience for the tourists. It should therefore be an imperative for the architects and urban designers to foster locals-tourists relationships while simultaneously bearing in mind the economy of the development. Ideally, the adaptation of the existing fabric and the design of new resorts would have a twofold design strategy: to develop the region primarily for tourism during the tourism season and primarily for the locals during the off season.

Such a design approach would improve the demographics of the local inhabitants who would slowly return to the Skadar Lake region, and over time it would also extend the tourism offer in the off season, likely to young entrepreneurs

who seek peripheral destinations to develop their businesses, or artists and nature researchers who seek to escape the noise pollution of places swamped by tourism masses. This approach would redeem the common desire to create yet another Disney-like resort such as, for example, the Seaside Resort (Florida, US), while simultaneously doing much more than that: making the tourism destination much more locals – and for locals – then it may even appear to be. This process would stimulate a regeneration of the National Park, local production of goods and overall more opportunities.



The Skadar Lake - and all the wetlands in the world - is Experiencing a Potential Sixth Ecological Exodus



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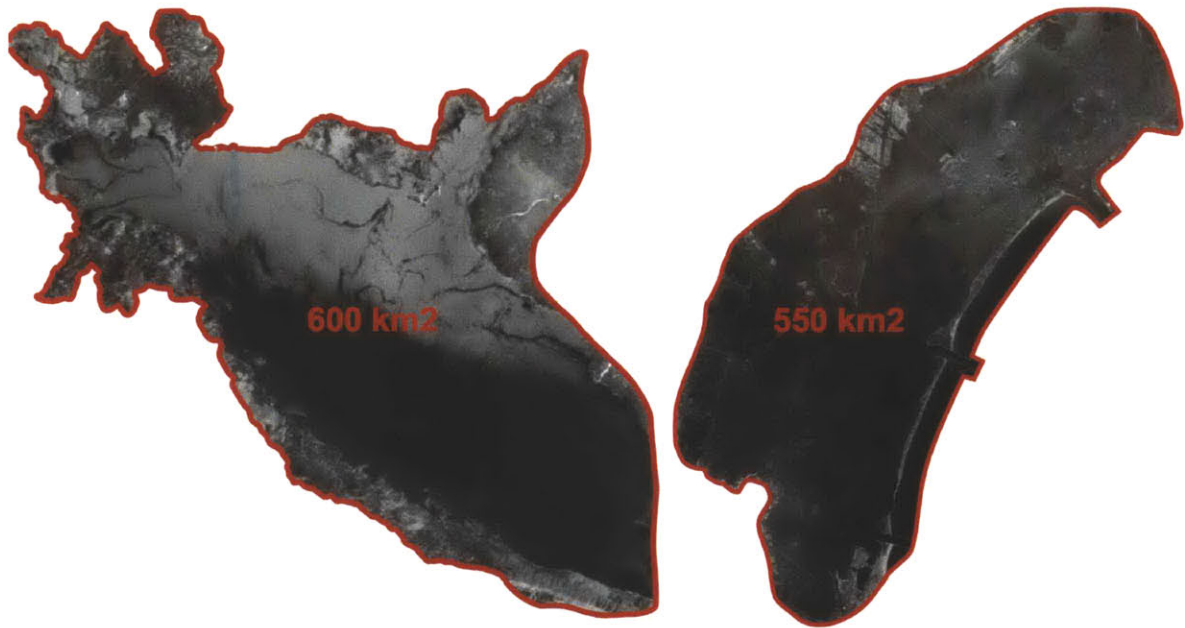


The Less Obvious Side of the Skadar Lake Region

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2. Unesco: a Target vs. a Shield





The Skadar Lake: Another Venice Story or Alternative?

THEN



TODAY



In order for any development of the Skadar Lake region to happen a series of rules and guidelines ought to be met by the Ramsar Convention and the UNESCO, given the desire for the creation of a trans-boundary biosphere reserve and the notion that it is important to protect the national heritage.

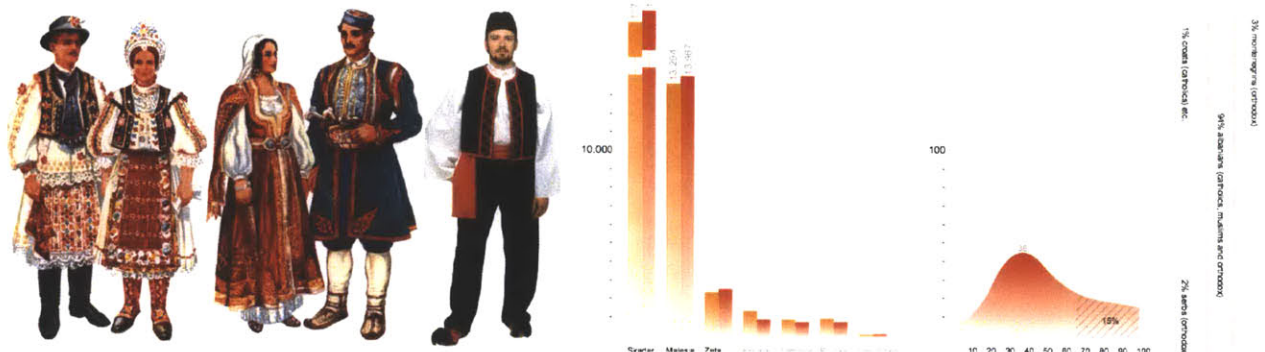
Before we delve into further proposals for the development of the National Park, let us step back by asking a few questions about heritage. What is the true heritage of the Skadar Lake? What are we preserving and why? How does heritage work with time? The concept of “world heritage” has only existed for four decades, since 1972. Compared to the length of human history, it seems that almost suddenly it became important to celebrate the “holy places” that each country or civilization possessed.[5] Typical UNESCO protected destinations are often about-to-fall-apart ruins; as André Marlaux, a French author and statesman, noted “dying fetishes have taken on a significance they never had before in the world... which has at last conquered time”.[6]

Even when placed under the umbrella of the UNESCO these destinations experience a “shield-target” paradox: already ruined due to time and history, upon being preached as national jewels these sites become attractive tourism destinations for large masses (target), which cause a danger of impacting the sites’ “originality” and condition; therefore, the best recipe for solving this problem seems to not touch anything and to keep things as they are (shield).[7]

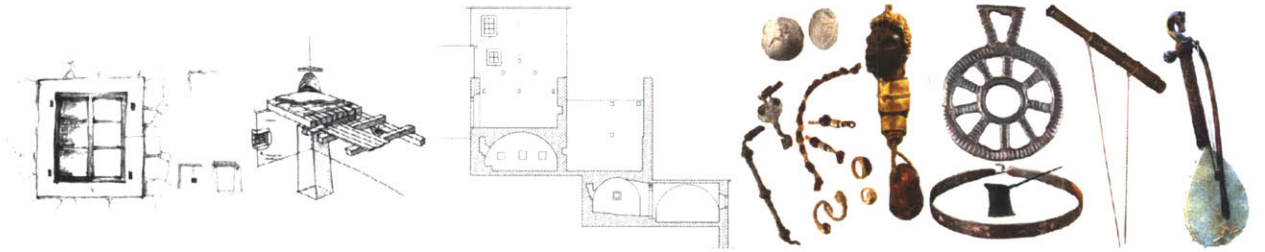
The commonly suggested way to address this paradox is to restore the protected site, which in the case of the Skadar Lake would mean restoring the worn out stone houses, fortresses and religious buildings in their past state. One can imagine a series of archaeological investigations about each and every single stone on a site in order to satisfy a mere cosmetic desire for a hermetical tourist destination. But,

fetishizing the authentic traps tourism “as every foreign experience becomes devalued as inadequate to the “reality” of the place visited”.[8]

As is the case in many UNESCO destinations, the Skadar Lake would turn into a white museum-like box with carefully waxed objects (not to be touched!) and the prime wish to “combat amnesia” rather than engage the site and the locals with the visitors.[9] From the economic standpoint, the Skadar Lake region would not become different from where it is currently headed – the state of the grey hole. It would perhaps become more of a “green hole”, with the locals’ shy benefit from being observed as mere statistical datum of their reality. However, from the global tourism standpoint, this would become yet another “green” site in the world, so why even bother going there?



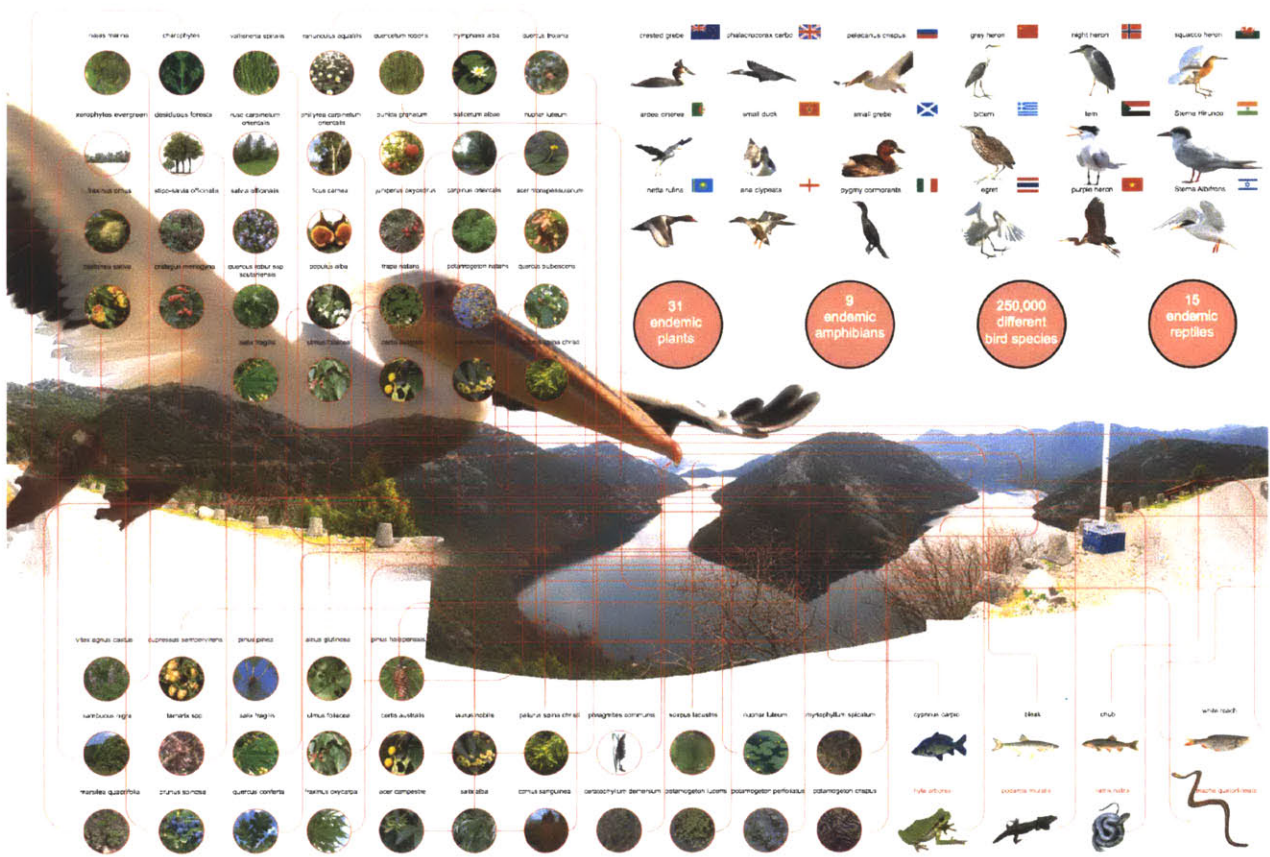
The Skadar Lake Demographics



The Skadar Lake Craftmanship



The Skadar Lake Built Fabric



Natural Park's Natural Qualities

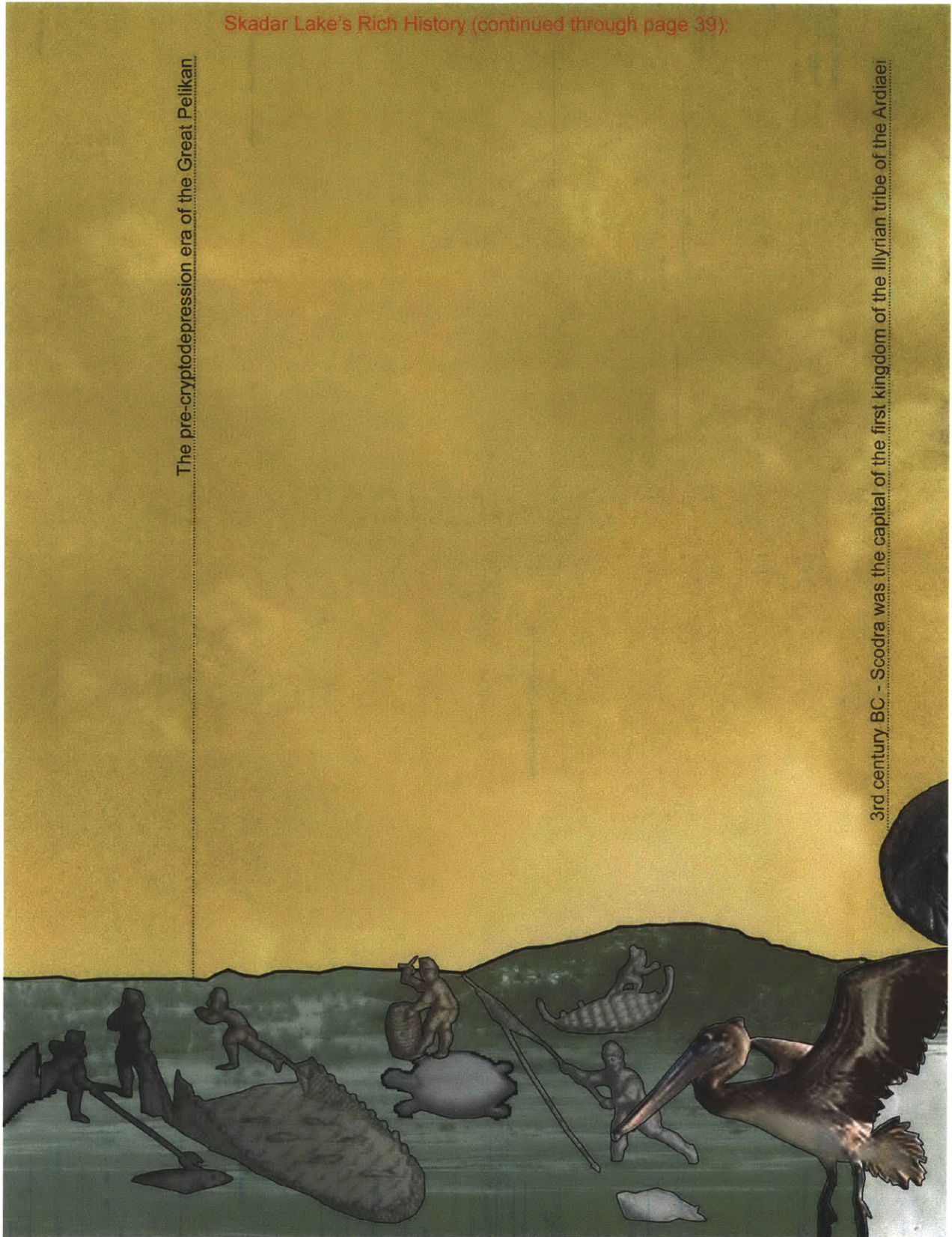


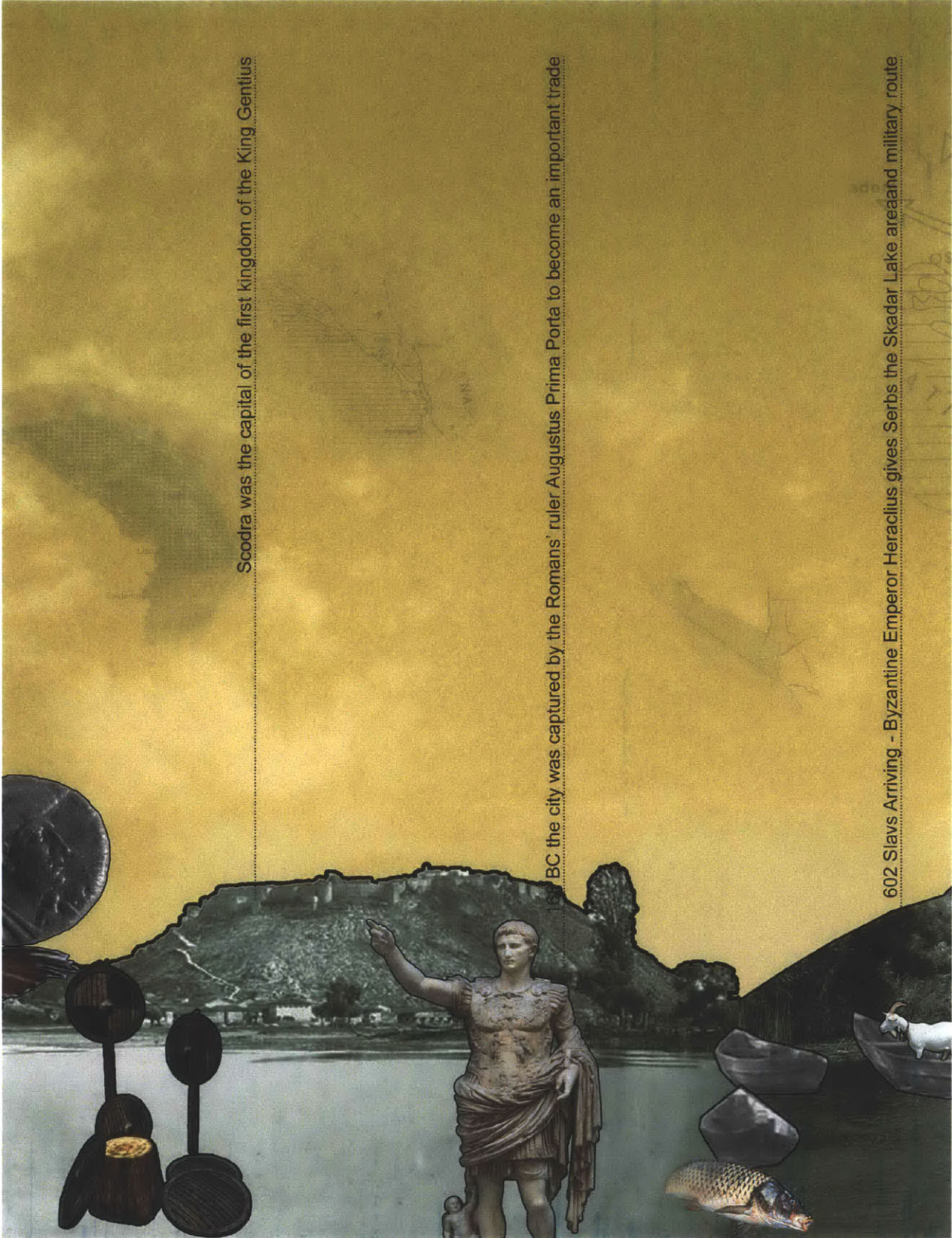
Endemic Species and Natural Pollutants

Skadar Lake's Rich History (continued through page 39)

The pre-cryptodepression era of the Great Pelikan

3rd century BC - Scodra was the capital of the first kingdom of the Illyrian tribe of the Ardiaei

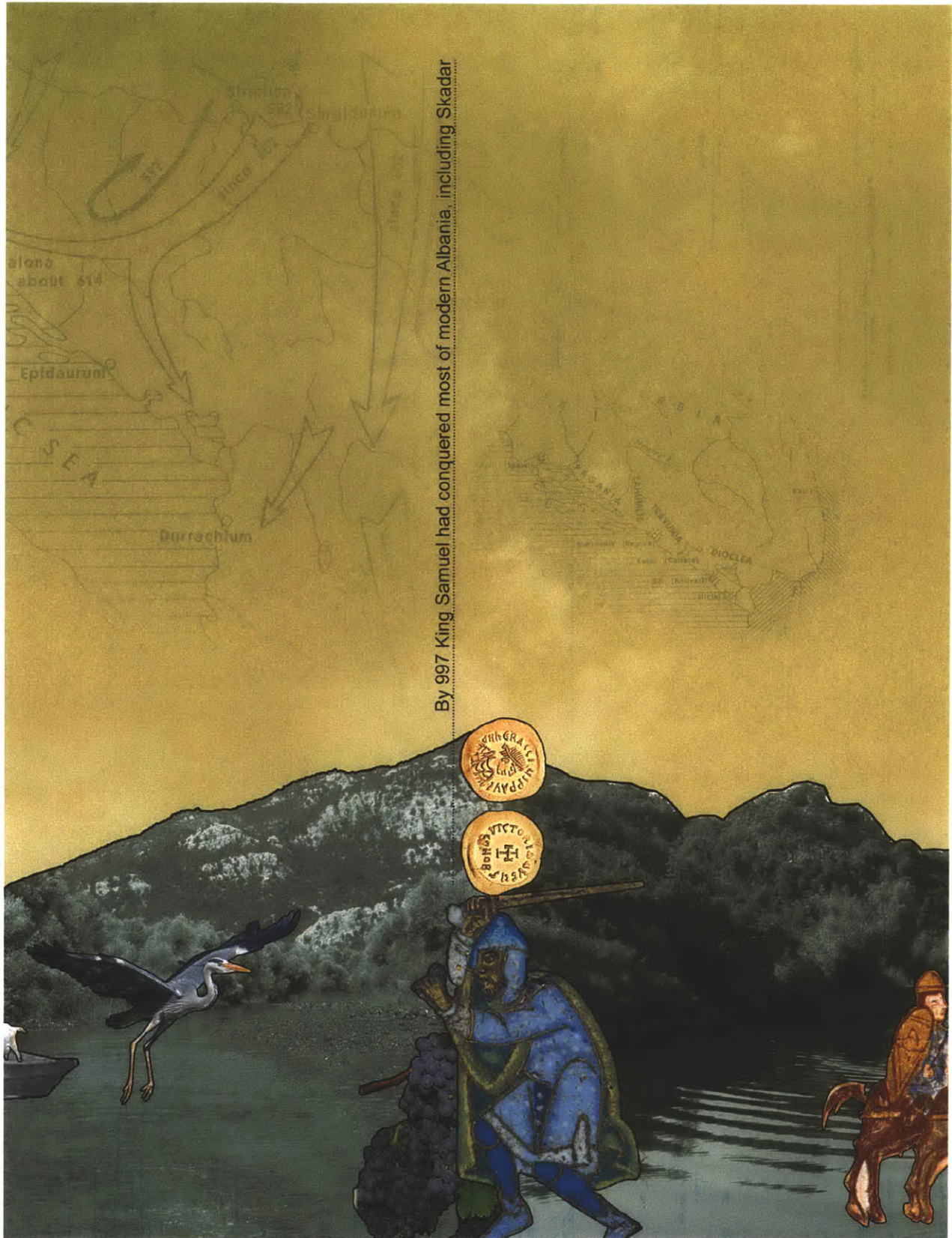


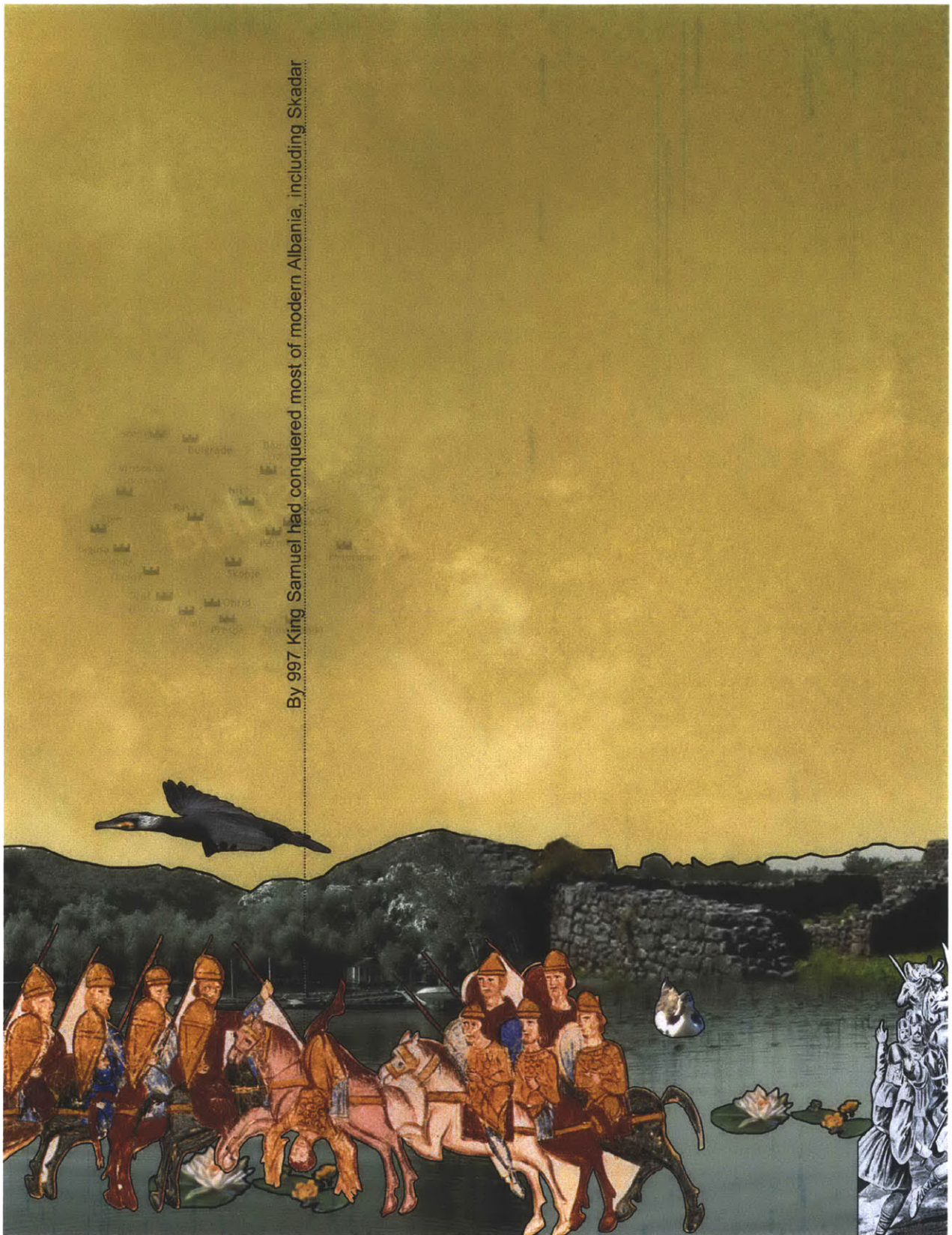


Scodra was the capital of the first kingdom of the King Gentius

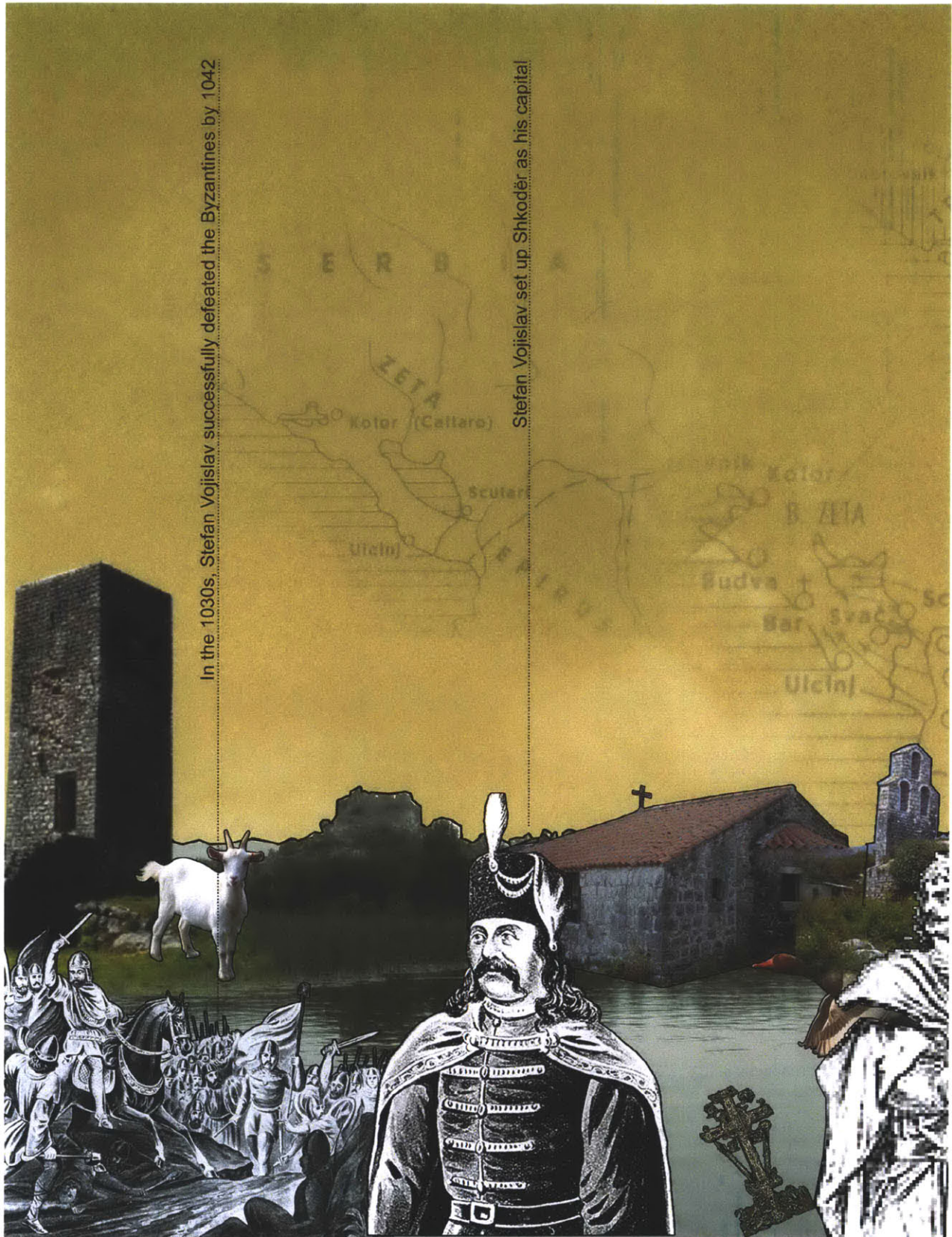
16 BC the city was captured by the Romans' ruler Augustus Prima Porta to become an important trade

602 Slavs Arriving - Byzantine Emperor Heraclius gives Serbs the Skadar Lake area and military route



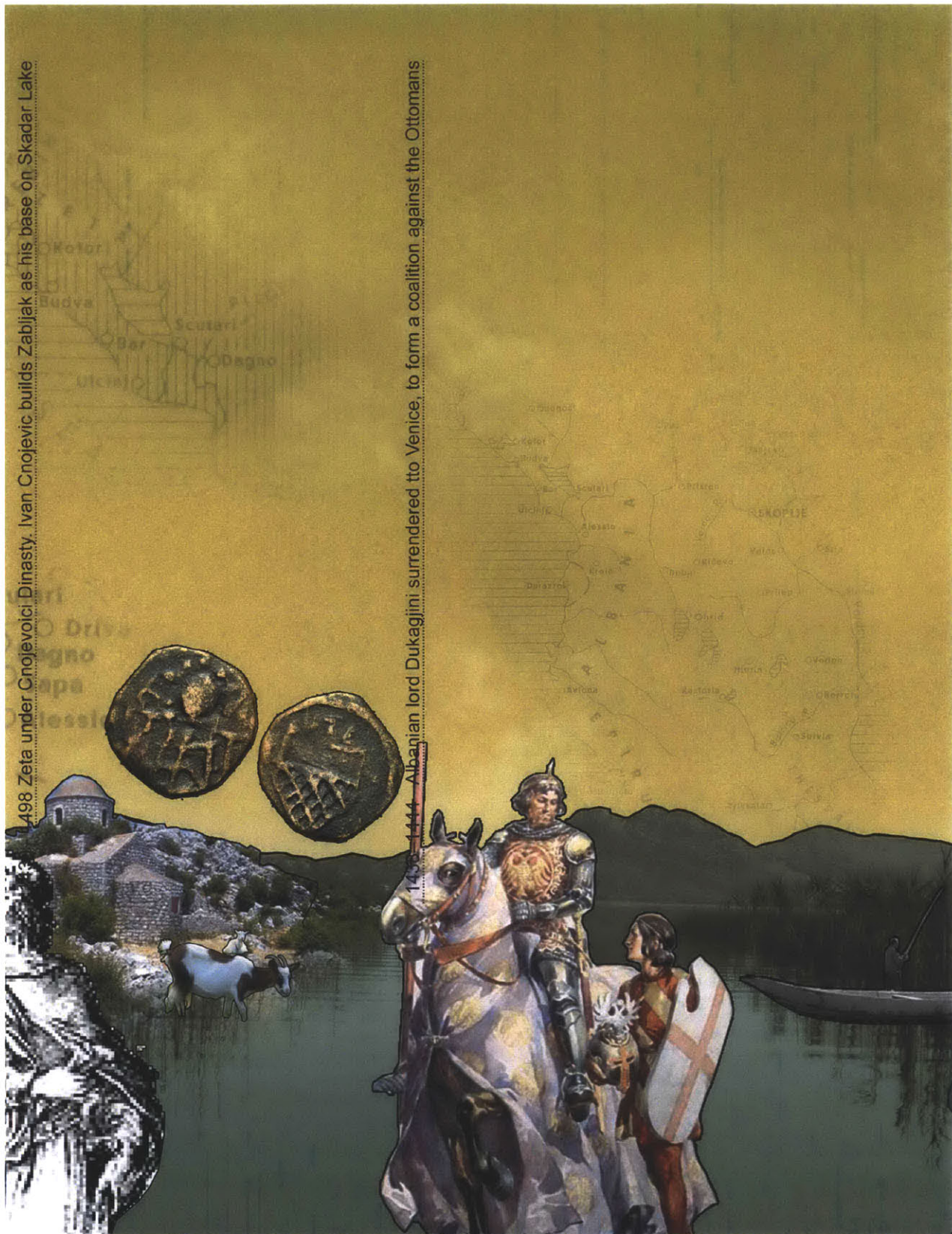


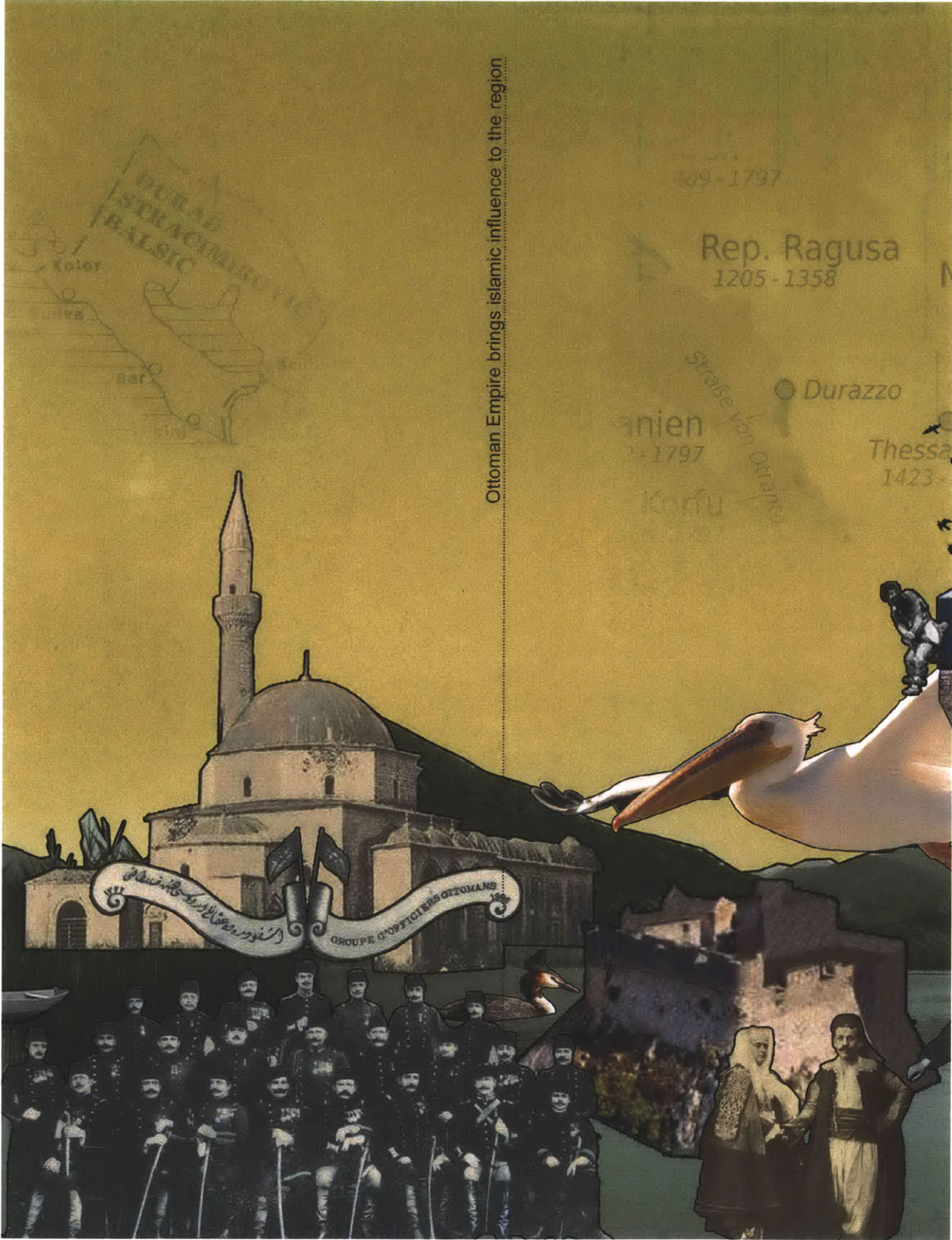
By 997 King Samuel had conquered most of modern Albania, including Skadar



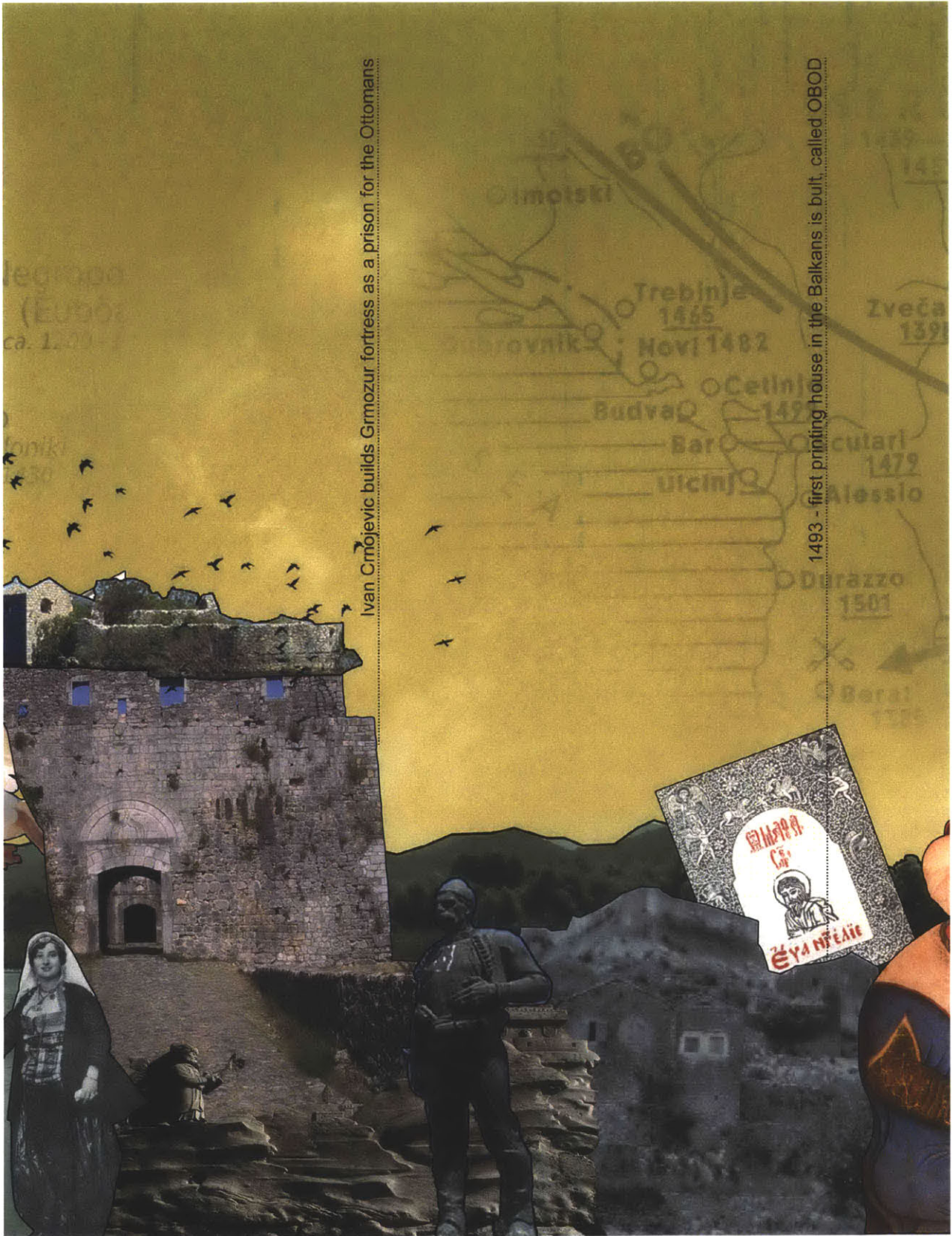
In the 1030s, Stefan Vojislav successfully defeated the Byzantines by 1042

Stefan Vojislav set up Shkodër as his capital



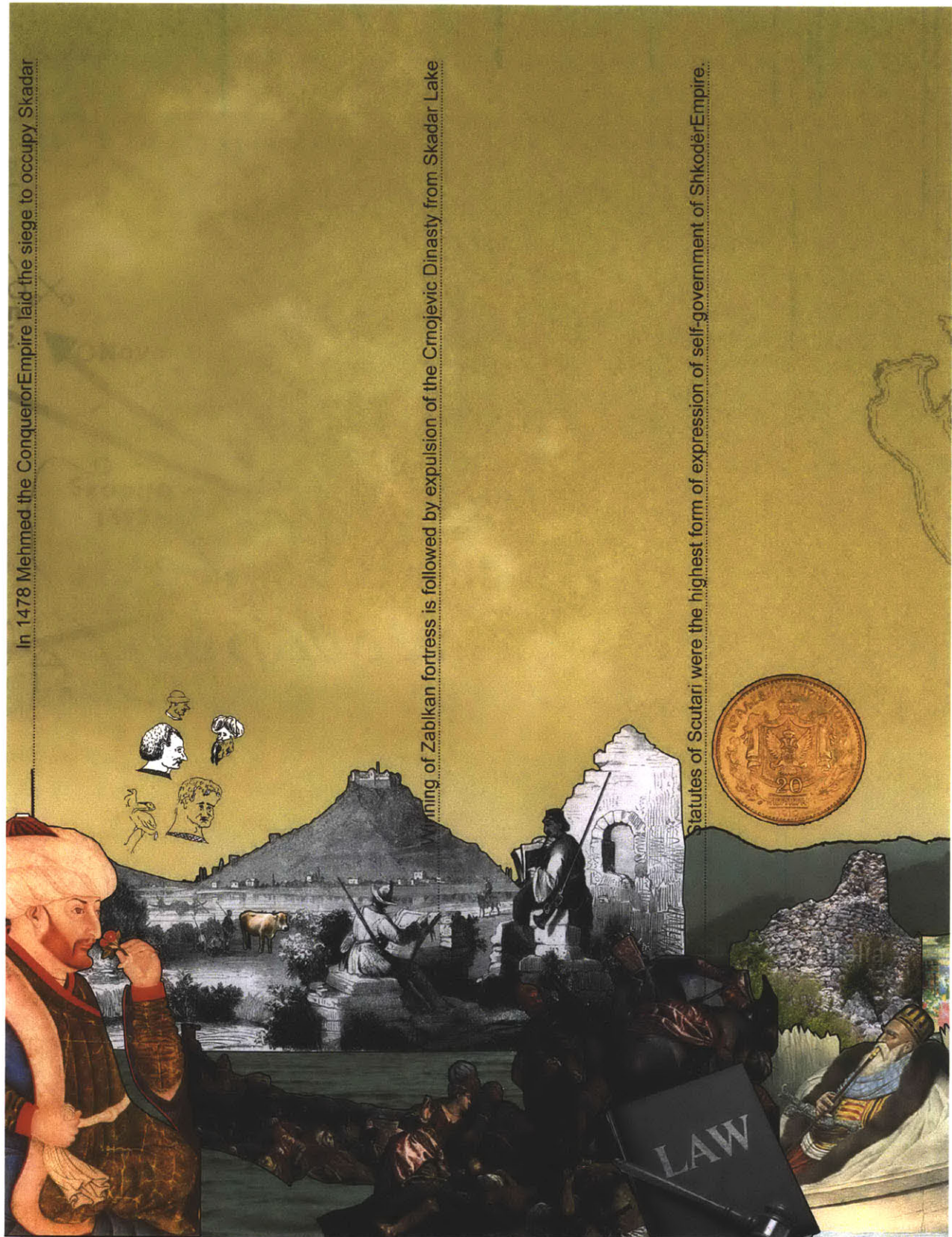


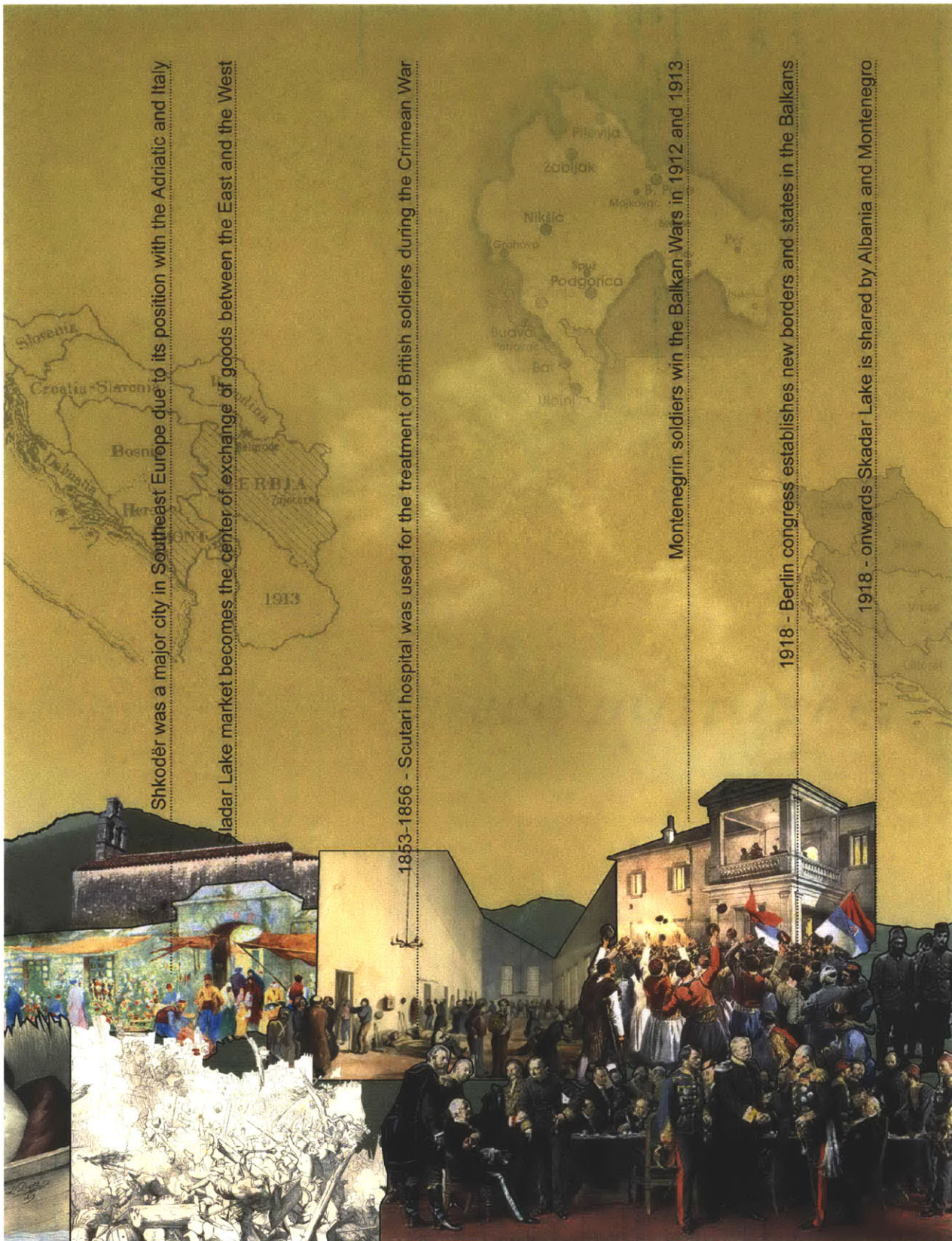
Ottoman Empire brings islamic influence to the region



Ivan Crnojević builds Grmožur fortress as a prison for the Ottomans

1493 - first printing house in the Balkans is built, called OBOD







The Skadar Lake Future?

It is impossible to literally mimic history and, the more locally we try to represent the history as the true reflection of our identity, the more globally we become “non-global”.[10] “An uneasy relationship between regional unknowing and international knowing” encroaches upon the architects and urban designers who are often asked to work in regions unfamiliar to them, miles away from their hometowns and common cultures.[11]

A typical design proposal often becomes a mere copy of another project done at yet another tourist location with, what seem to be, very similar socio-economic and cultural contexts. The product of such design is a building or a development scheme which does not speak to the site itself, although at first it may meet all of the required expectations by the client. One cannot expect a much more different (an original) product if the guidelines for the “green” are always the same for each project: as long as the project has a LEED certified label on it, or an equivalent, then it seems to be satisfactory... until we zoom out and realize that there are innumerable other projects equally labeled.

The most common error in design proposals is the lack of understanding of the processes of development in given contexts – designers take for granted the contexts as they are given to them and seek solutions without a more thorough research. To address the issue of restoration of the Skadar Lake region and its overall development, it is not enough to list a series of “green” architectural techniques which will “protect” the National Park’s “identity”. It is not enough to design yet another resort that will take place on a peaceful island, far away from the everyday struggle of the locals; it is not enough to consider those resorts “green” solely because they use solar panels, or because they use effective technology to produce as little waste as possible. It is not enough to claim responsibility by attaching a global brand to the local product. It is not enough to be yet another destination on the global tourism map. Monte-

negro – the first ecological state in the world – has to become a leader in tourism development in the ever ecologically dazed times.

How then does one define heritage? How to address the ever existing desire for a tourism destination that will provide an escapade from the everyday life? How to avoid the globally non-global quality of the ubiquitous tourism destinations? How to engage the tourists with the locals, instead of separating them? To answer these questions we need to redefine heritage and its role in restoration and development. We need to stop romanticizing architecture and urban projects as objects that need to be protected from its surrounding and the army of tourists willing to experience them. Since the beginning, architecture and urban design have reflected the socio-political and cultural contexts of their time, serving as representations and fragments of processes that caused them to exist ever since. Examining these processes will give us ideas for design and the development of the National Park. It will enable us to restore the existing built fabric by means that respond to the ecological processes that surround the built fabric, thus adding to its quality the value of the time instead of reducing it to the past. And by doing so we need to rid ourselves of the notion to preserve anything, for no restored object is left “untransformed”, and no object belongs only to the people who built them, but “partly to all the generations of mankind who are to follow us” and to the tourists themselves, for it is the tourists that are able to transmit the qualities of humankind shared across different borders. [12] The result will be a redefined Skadar Lake that will strike tourists as uncanny mutable region whose each moment of existence is unique both in terms of its identity and the experience thereof.

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3. Rethinking the Relationship between Heritage and Global Tourism



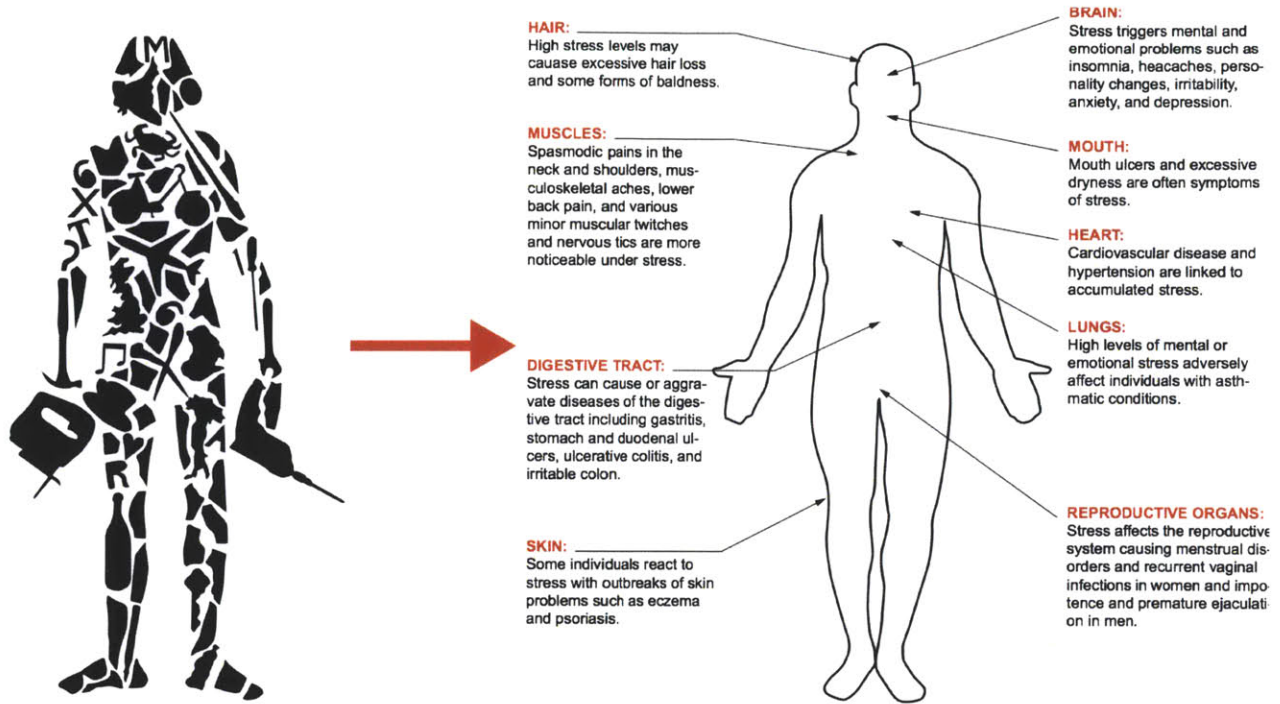


locally global => globally non-global

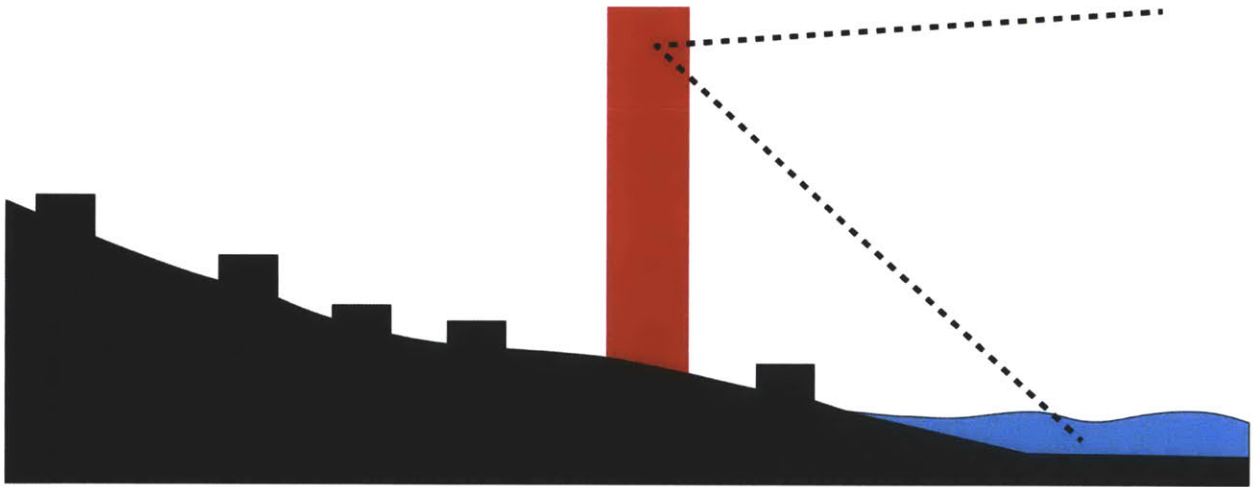


To propose new development strategies for the Skadar Lake region it is necessary to defamiliarize ourselves with the Skadar Lake context, and in such way examine its past and current processes of development; it is further necessary to tie those processes to the consumption nature of global tourism, which also needs to be examined. I will first address the latter. The desire for travel has radically shifted since the beginning of mass tourism. Half a century ago tourists looked for places to escape the reality, where the potential new dreams would happen; they were fully satisfied with the beach and sea experience only. Today, due to technology improvements and a myriad of tourism magazines and technology gadgets (Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, etc.) it is practically impossible to create places of escape as everything becomes immediately known. John Urry, a British sociologist, addresses this issue in his book *The Tourist Gaze*. But designing new, dream-like destinations is not the only challenge of contemporary tourism. Today, more than ever, the desire for escaping the reality faces a paradox: aside from being connected by the sheer frenzy of being jam-packed together, the tourists are estranged within their own societies, due to constant stress and intense working hours, turning them into foreigners to their own neighbors, colleagues, relatives, even nuclear families. It has become so common in today's society to not have time for the family, to fully dedicate oneself to the expectations of respective professions. Multitasking has become a desire and a challenge, yet this seemingly noble quality detaches one from passion, focus and desire to devote oneself to anything in greater depth. Vacating in the places where one can meet the locals and have a taste of their culture becomes crucial. In other words, the person who feels estranged in their everyday life seeks to become part of community in another, dream life. The tourist destination still needs to retain the dream aura, but it must also carry the participatory component as the most significant one.

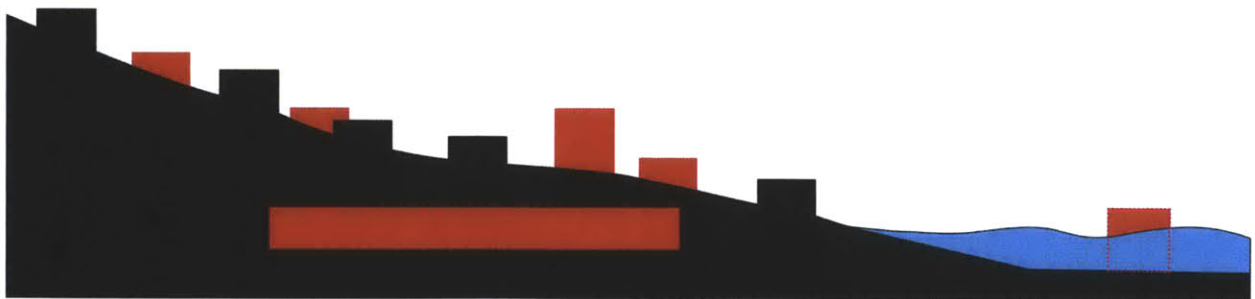
The heritage – the common objective of the development design strategies – should therefore exemplify these qualities. If we carefully analyze the existing built fabric in the Skadar Lake region, we will notice that, in fact, the “participatory” has been closely related to the development of the region, through both the social and the environmental processes. One of the most common case studies of the built fabric in the region is the housing agglomeration in the village called Godinje. A number of stone houses are connected through internal tunnels which served as a protection from the enemies and for the production of wine. Another production space of the village called “gumno” (a small circular stone plaza) was used for the social gatherings of the villagers when not used for production. such processes.

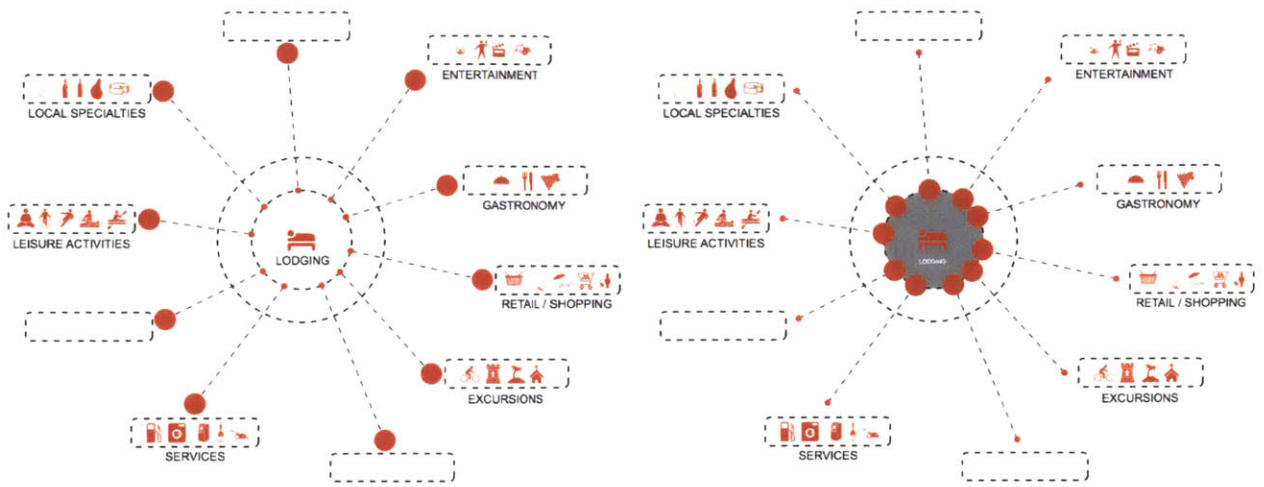


Impact of the Everyday Lifestyle Changes the Prospective of Tourism Experience



The Tourist/Local Separation (above) is to be Replaced by Hybridization (below)





Resort Distribution Benefits the Locals

Tourism Resort Vision: Experiencing Real Skadar Lake Heritage Processes



The island “Grmožur”, a former prison, is an example of what Jacques Derrida calls the “eccentric centric”, that which has always been contained within all layers of the lake’s rich development processes. It radiates a wealth of culture and ecology, peculiar activities and cultural debris inviting the tourists hungry for exploration and fantasy. While the Godinje housing complex can still be identified as a community oriented village, the island of Grmožur has completely transformed its military into the natural production purpose. Similar is the case for a myriad of fortresses around the lake which have, due to time and ecological processes, changed their performance and identity. It is important to notice that the identity of the Godinje housing complex, although it retained the physical looks, has also changed: today its tunnels do not serve for protection anymore, causing those who are not engaged in wine production to become storage spaces or, unfortunately, just abandoned ruins. The important lesson from these two case studies is that the processes under which the buildings were constructed have changed over time, causing the buildings to change as well, and it is critical to deduce the consequences of

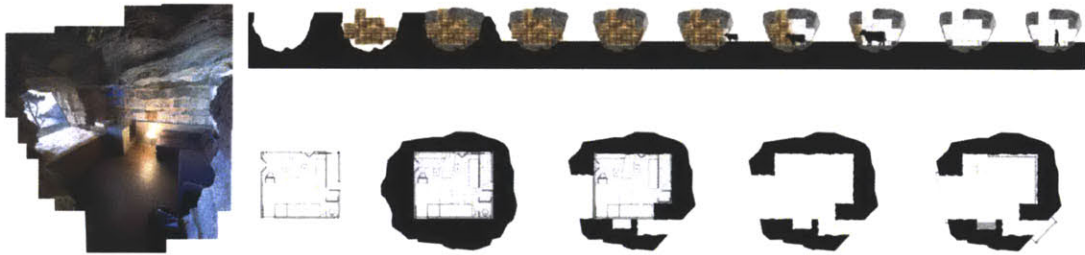
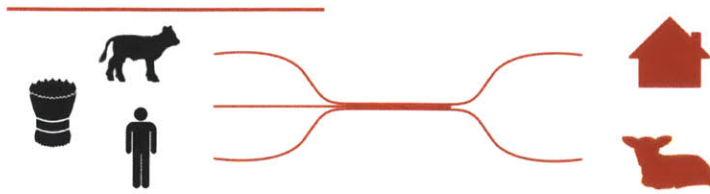
The Grmožur of today is a vibrant, ever changing and captivating natural habitat, a story each visitor wants to tell upon their return home; some of the buildings in Godinje, alike many abandoned buildings dispersed around the many ghosted villages in the Skadar Lake region, have a negative appearance in the eyes of the visitors. They do not invite for engagement, their performance has practically stopped. The fact that these houses lack the participatory component – the influence of the humans, animals and plants – completely changes the way they are perceived in the eyes of the tourists. Furthermore, it is important to notice that humans alone cannot respond to the challenges of the environment, but need to collaborate with it. Also, it is not enough to let the nature impact the built fabric on its own, as is the case of the island of Grmožur. The design of the tourist destinations needs to engage the tourists with their living habitat, influencing it as much as the rest of the environment.



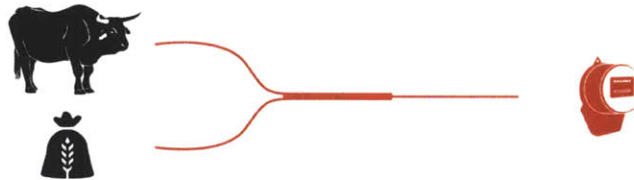
Island Grmozur - a former tower, prison and now habitat for the pelikans - is a Perfect Example of the Ecological Processes in the Skadar Lake Region



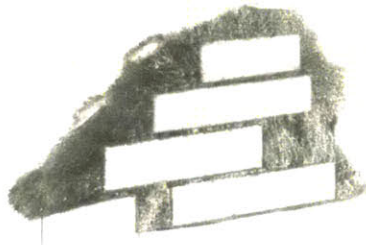
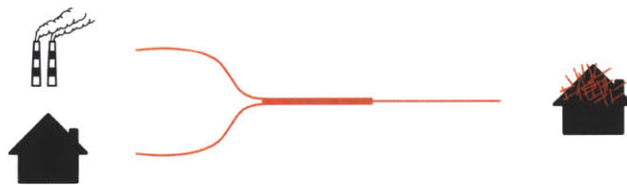
The Dust of the Dust Project by Jorge Otero-Pailos in Venice (2009) - Preserving the True Ecological Heritage of a Wall Facade



Anton Garcia Abril's Trufa House - Participatory Use of an Animal in Construction



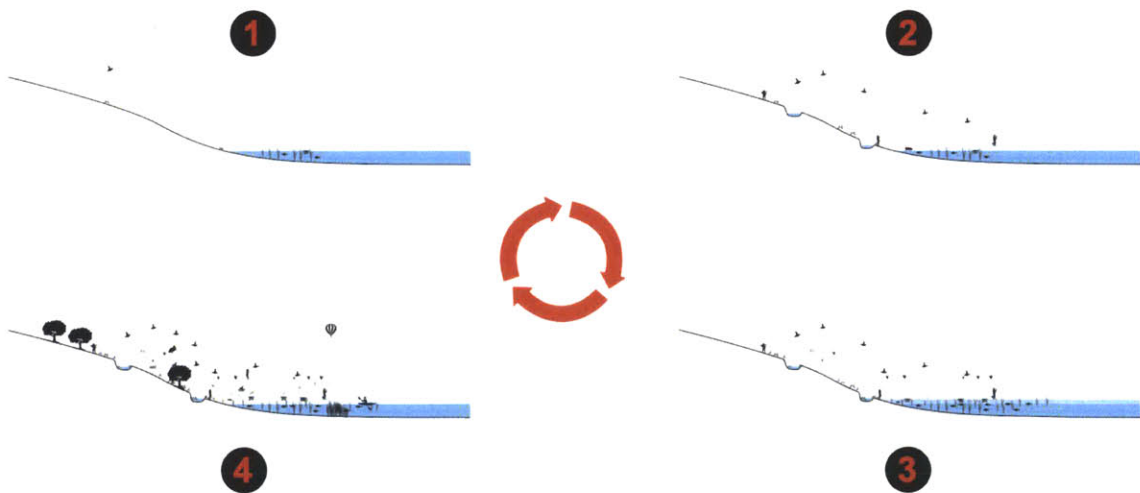
Francois Roche House in Thailand Powered by the Animal Force



Simon Starling's Warrior with the Shield; Francois Roches Bangkok Museum (Right) - Both are Examples of Deploying Pollution for Cultural Production of Art & Architecture

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4. Development through Phasing: Growing Ecologically



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Bearing in mind the transversality principles of design, the development of the National Park needs to fully address the existing situation in the region. This means engaging with all the components that currently comprise the environment, the good and the bad. Montenegro has the opportunity to open up a new ecological debate on the national level, and serve as an example to the rest of the world (which would, by the way, radically influence its tourism benefits!). While the pristine environments should be celebrated and capitalized upon through the tourism development, we also need to address the negative aspects of the Skadar Lake: the pollution, the erosion, the flooding, and water contamination. The Skadar Lake development should demonstrate new strategies in agribusiness, water management, and social commons.

A new sociological turn, Antropocene, is in accordance with the transversality principles of design development: it addresses “the way we eat, carry food home from the market, dispose of garbage, use transportation or water”.^[14] The Skadar Lake region can become the first region in the world to address the true reality of today’s ecology through a working landscape principle which accepts the climate action fail as a reality. In architecture and urban design, we are mostly reacting to what is often considered a Starchitect’s vision: to design revolutionary objects which will, through their spectacular form and existence, radically influence the society. However we fail to realize that the true impact on our daily lives lays in much smaller moves, as small as the atoms, the matter. Imagine tourists arriving to the Skadar Lake and facing a beautiful “a la Gehry” resort complex. The initial reaction would be that it is flabbergasting, but a moment later the tourists will realize that they have the same type of objects all over the world, from the Eiffel Tower to, in fact, a series of other Gehry buildings all across the globe. Such a resort will be a momentary pleasure.

Now, imagine a resort which grows with its surrounding landscape: it sinks with it, it breathes

with it, it eats with it, it sleeps with it, it and celebrates nature with it. Imagine being a tourist who is able to transform – and not only observe – the resort itself through a collaborative participation with the plants, birds, chemicals etc. Then imagine such tourist leaving the resort return to their home destination and initiate projects that truly address the ecological problems of their respective communities and environments. Can you imagine the impact that the Skadar Lake would make through the tourists’ experience? Since tourism is the most influential mass phenomena of our era then why not use it as a catalyst for ecological change all across the globe. Similarly to tourists, imagine how locals would develop their communities after exchanges of ideas with their visitors.

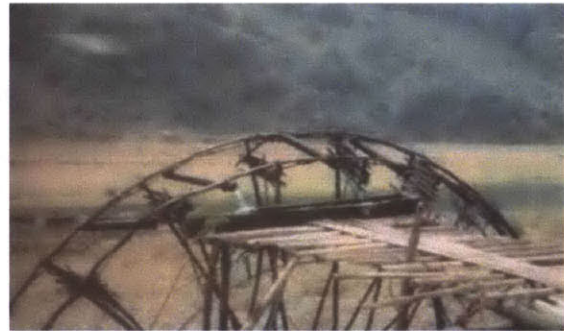
The development of the Skadar Lake region that I am advocating would happen through phases and in conjunction with the existing infrastructure. This means that the resort development would initiate in the proximity of existing villages and communities, if not directly as part of them. In each of the development phases the architecture and urban design play a key role in engaging the locals and the tourists to collaborate with the environment at multiple levels. Contrary to a starchitect’s resort, this resort would not dominate the environment, in fact over time it would almost suppress itself in favor of enabling the productivity of others and the landscape. For instance, rather than a golf club, there would be a landscape of fresh fruits, as well as cypress trees that have been largely devastated across the National Park.

We would benefit from all the natural processes which we all love and deeply enjoy even in the present era of technological “perfection” (imagine eating a healthy – although not perfectly looking – apple from a Wholefoods store or a farmers’ market versus eating a shiny apple produced in some GMO greenhouse). The resort production of carp would benefit the locals as much as the tourists, and the ability to grow plants for medical, energy and construction

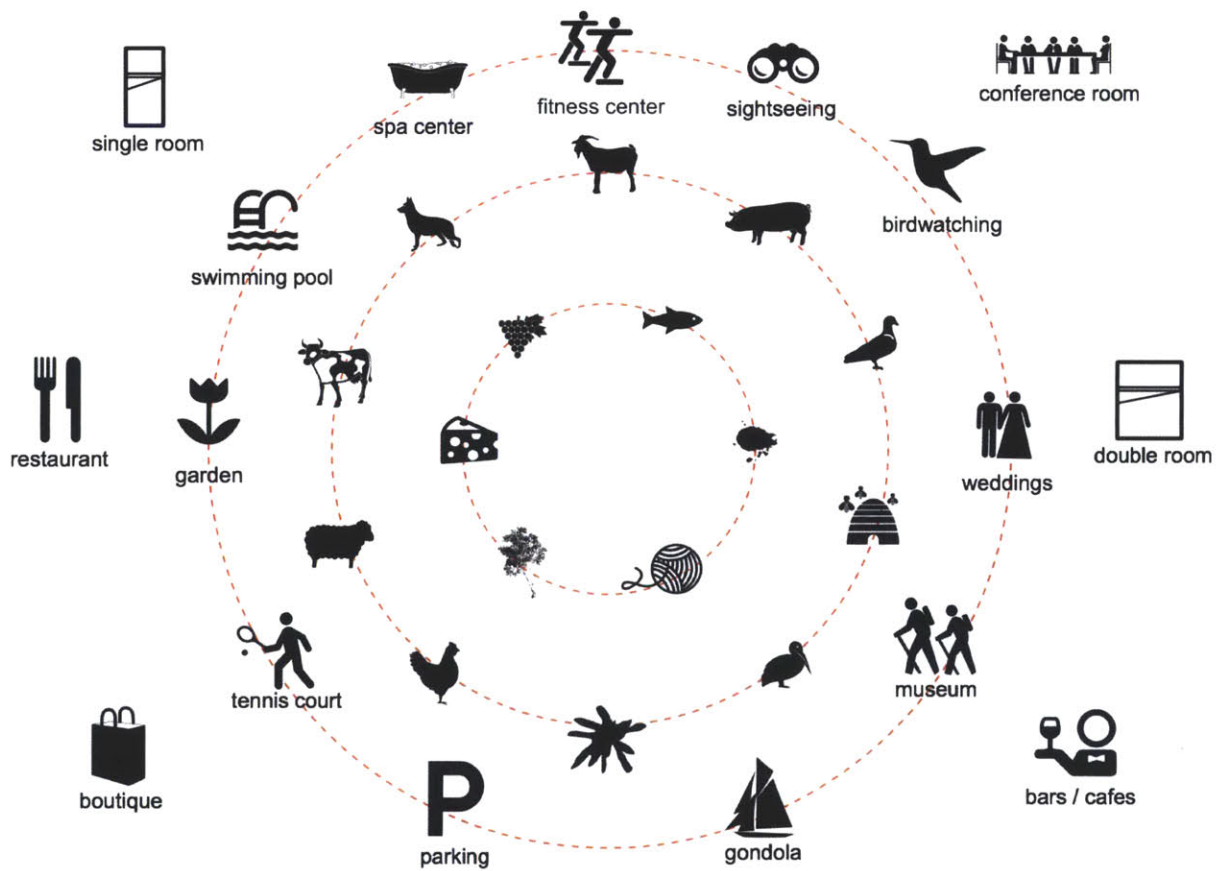
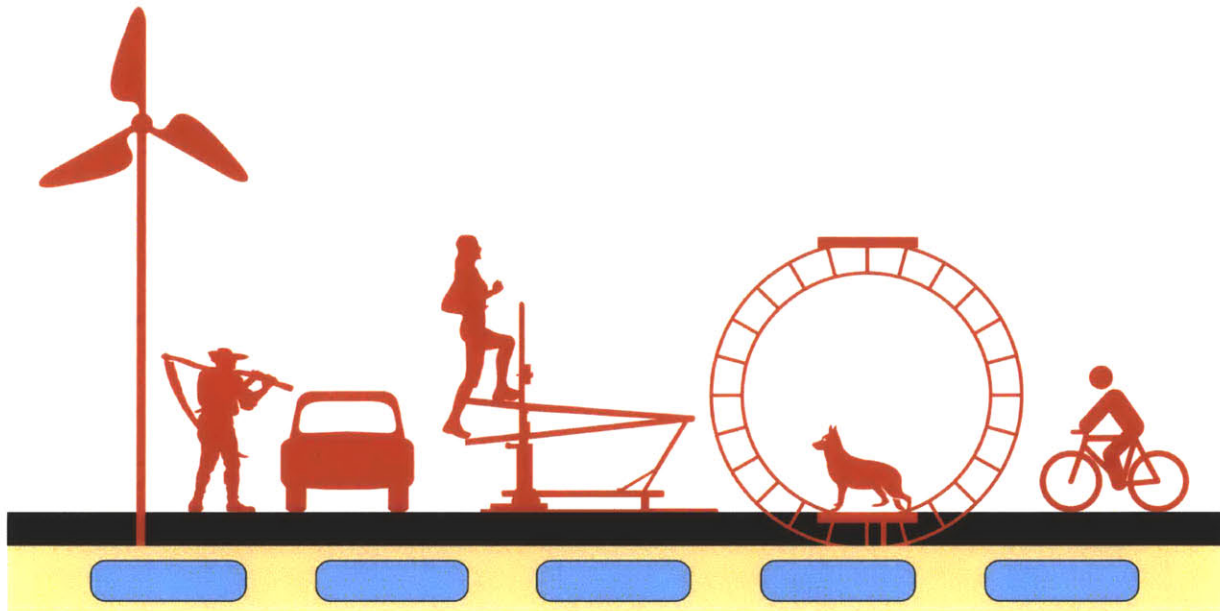
purposes would strengthen The resort production of carp would benefit the locals as much as the tourists, and the ability to grow plants for medical, energy and construction purposes would strengthen the social bonds of the growing community and maximize the collective creative potential. Indeed, the Skadar Lake resort would not look slick but it would look real. It would initiate conversations at the scale of the matter: how the nutrients are participating in the production of food, how the grey and black waters are being used for the production of drinkable water, how the construction techniques from the ancient times have become a new "hip" thanks to the newly produced fiber that comes from the plants grown on the site. In short, the Skadar Lake resort would address the matter that matters as a trans-disciplinary

proposition. It would, if you will, become a new version of the island of Grmožur: a productive community benefiting from the environment and positively impacting it, while simultaneously growing its human and economic potential.

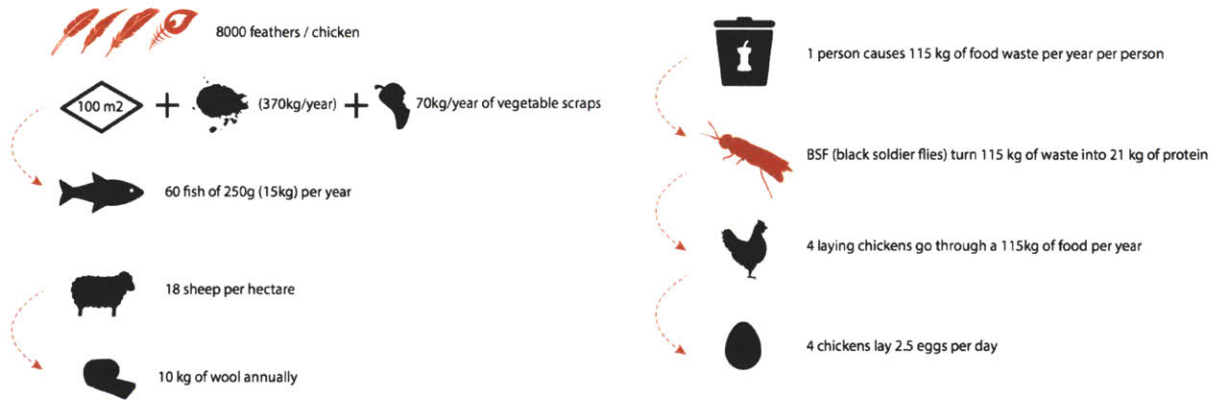
As such, the Skadar Lake resort would become the center of the attention in the region, a brand that would be carried away to tourists' homes.



Participatory Irrigation as a Gym and Spa -
Examples of Production as a Fun Experience



Ecological Interconnectivity Between Different Species
Creates a Unique Resort Experience

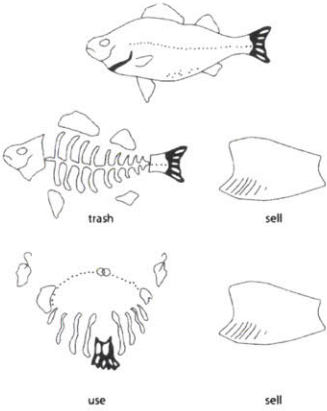


Participatory Irrigation as a Gym and Spa -
Examples of Production as a Fun Experience

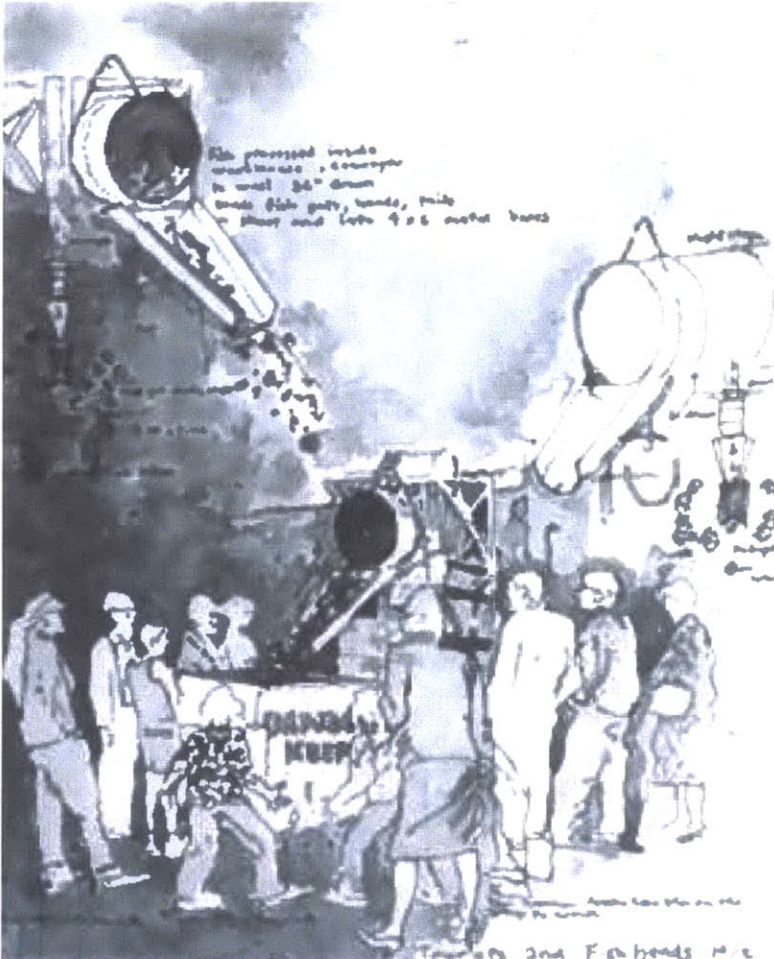


Parking as a Productive Landscape



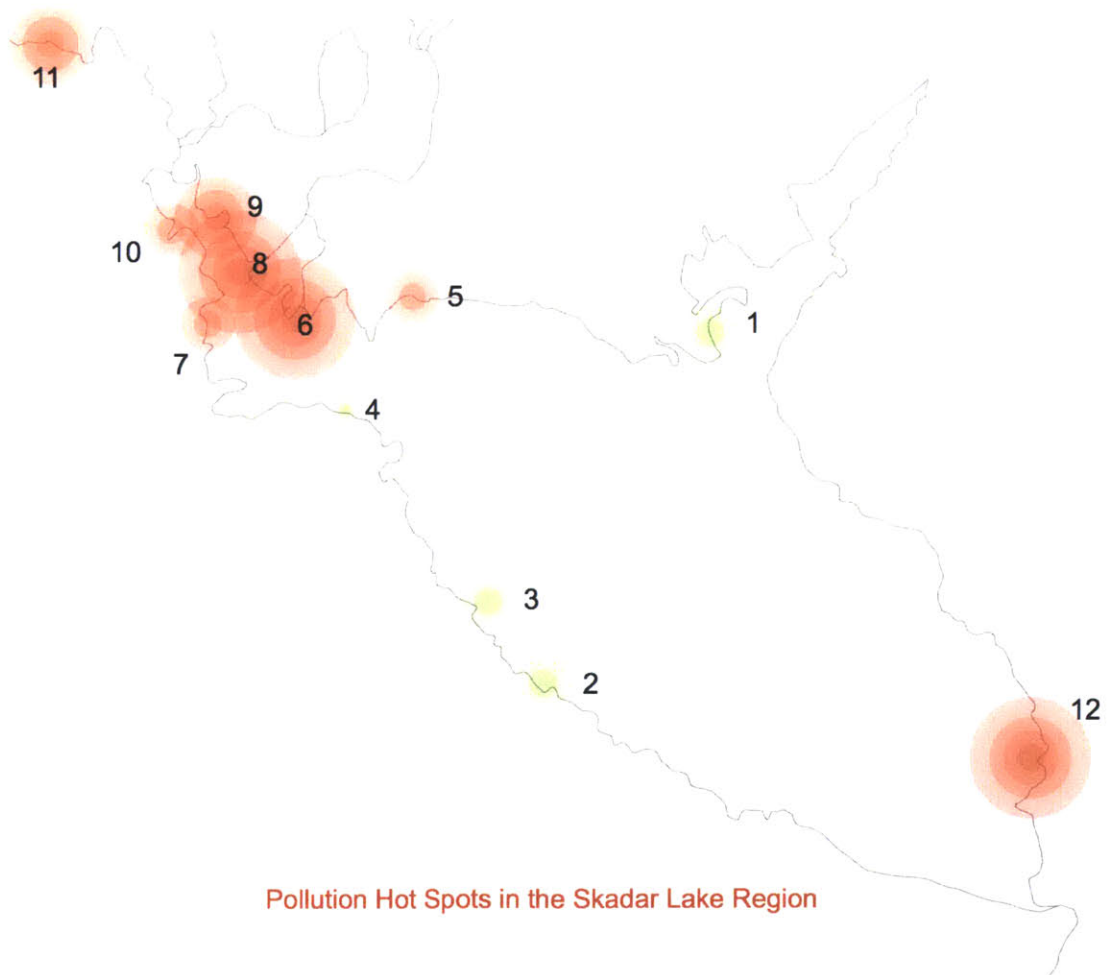


Fish Production as a Tourist Attraction (above & below)

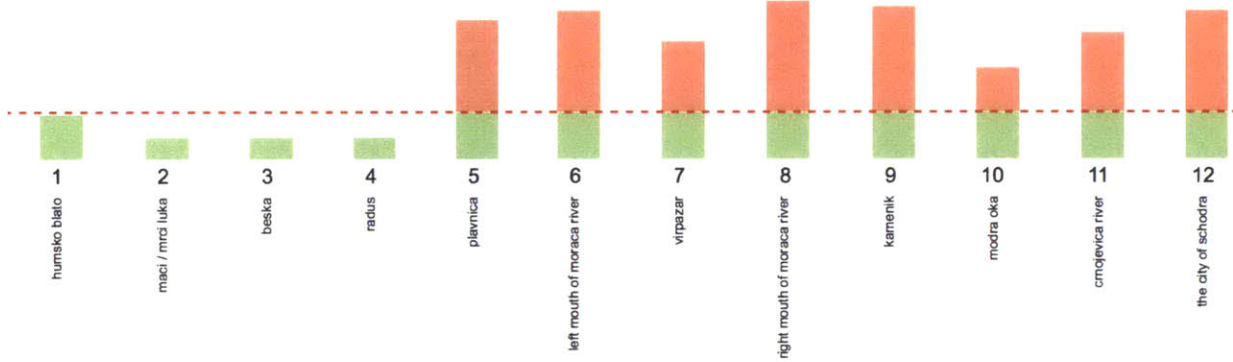


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5. Development at Different Urban Scales



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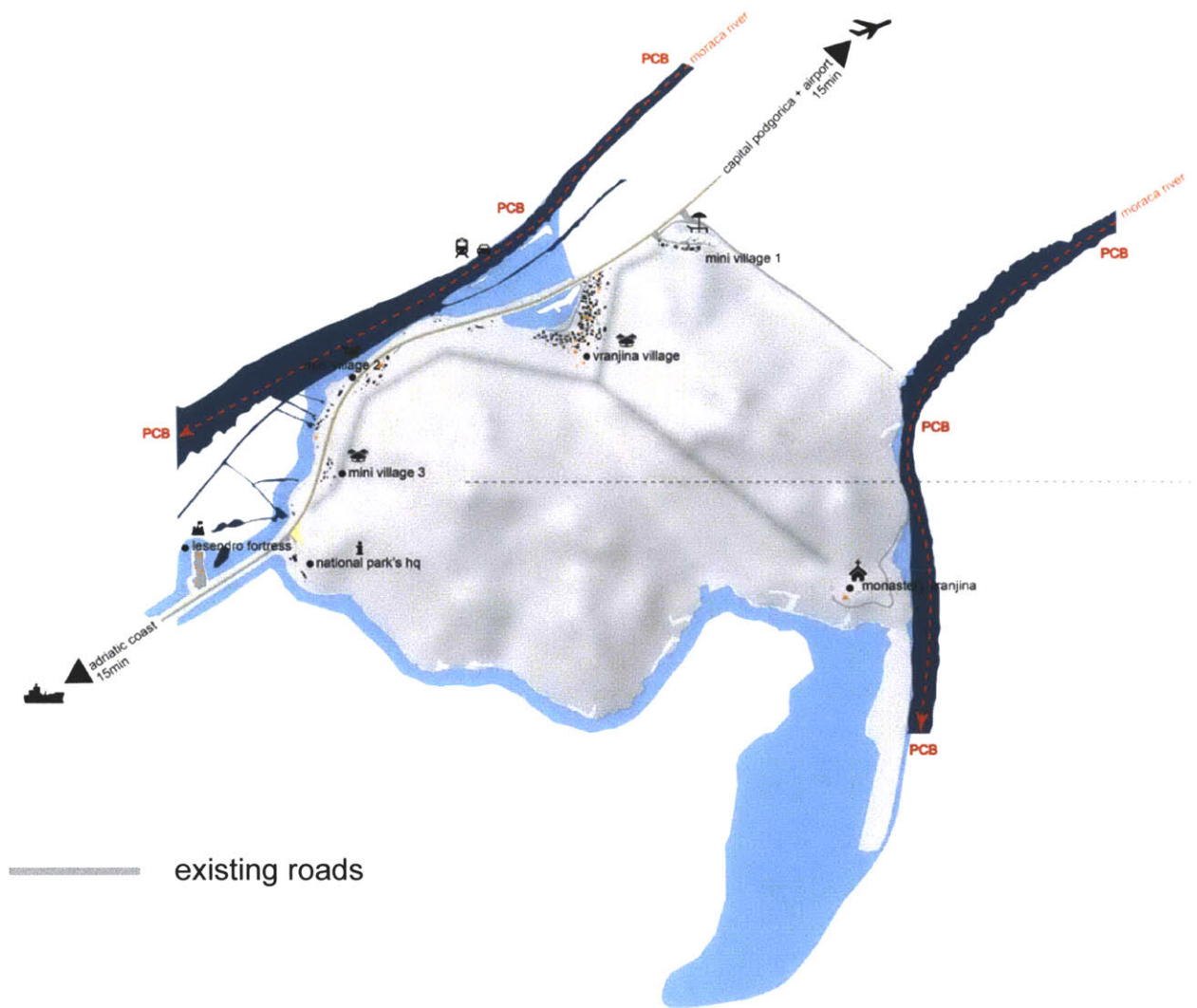


The Peninsula Vranjina (above) is the Area with most Pollutants in the Skadar Lake Region and is a Perfect Artistic and Architecture Site of Intervention

Mapping of Vranjina (through page 75) Enable us to Develop a Scattered Master Plan for the New Resort Destination that is Geared Towards the Locals (page 76):

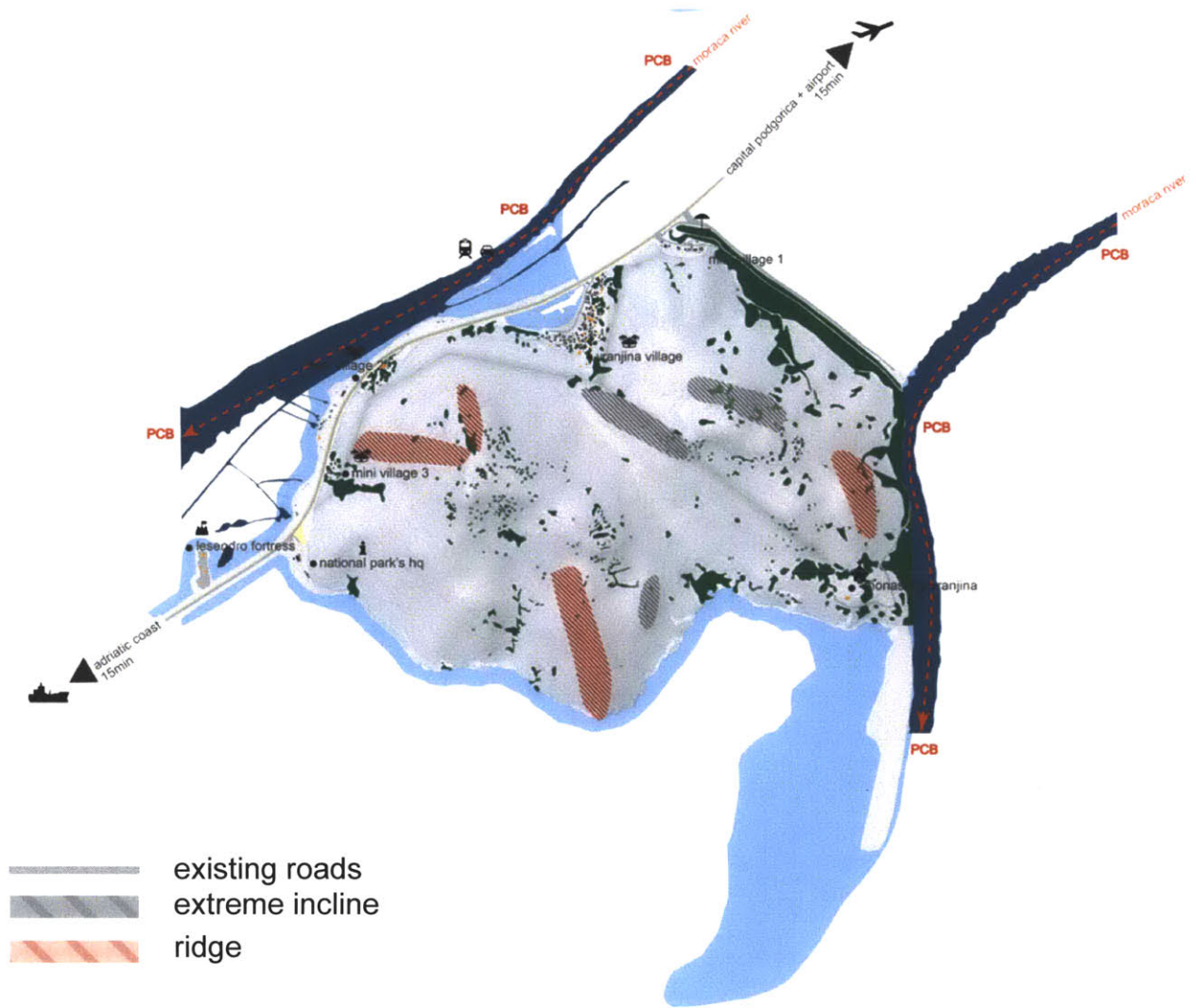


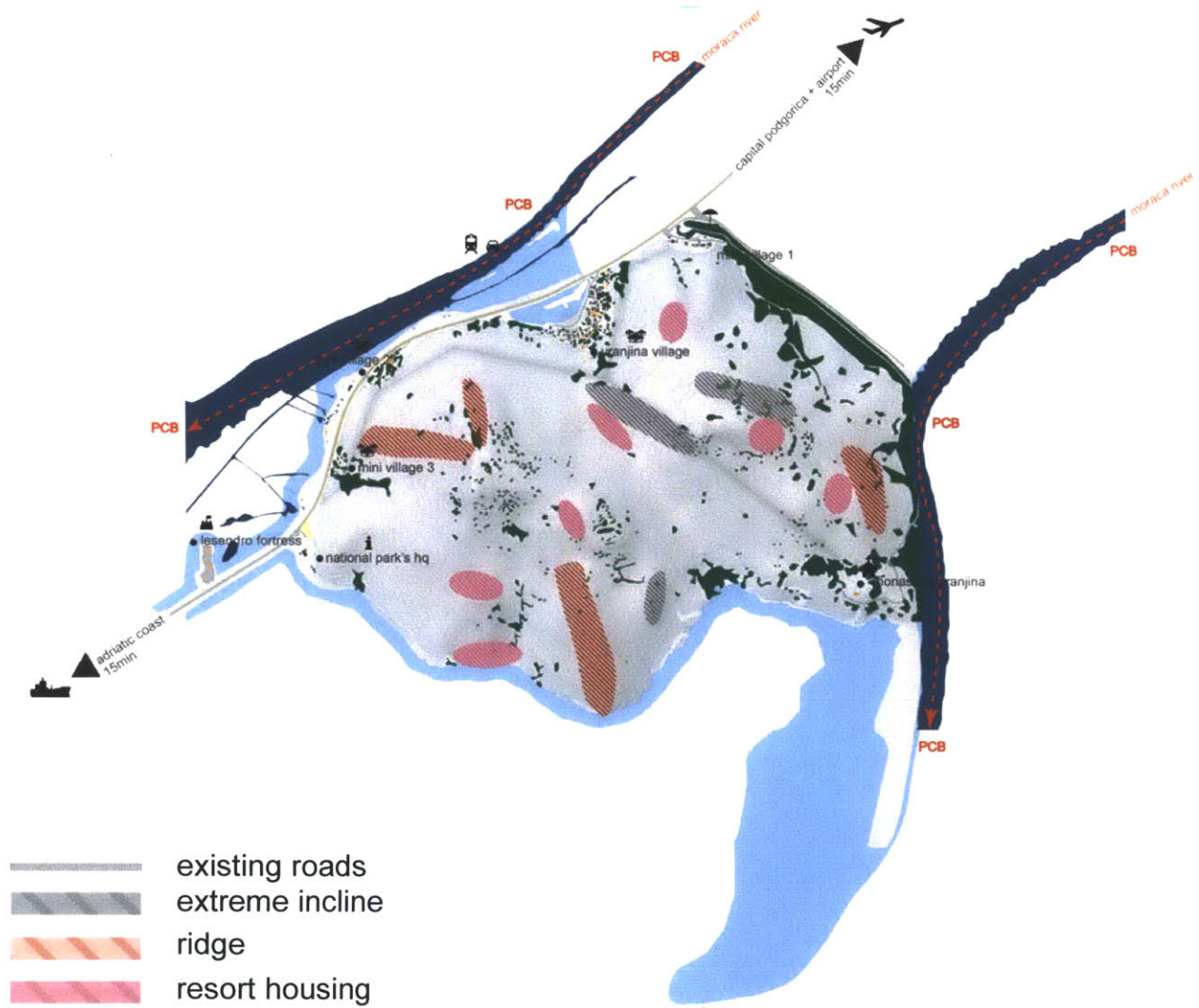


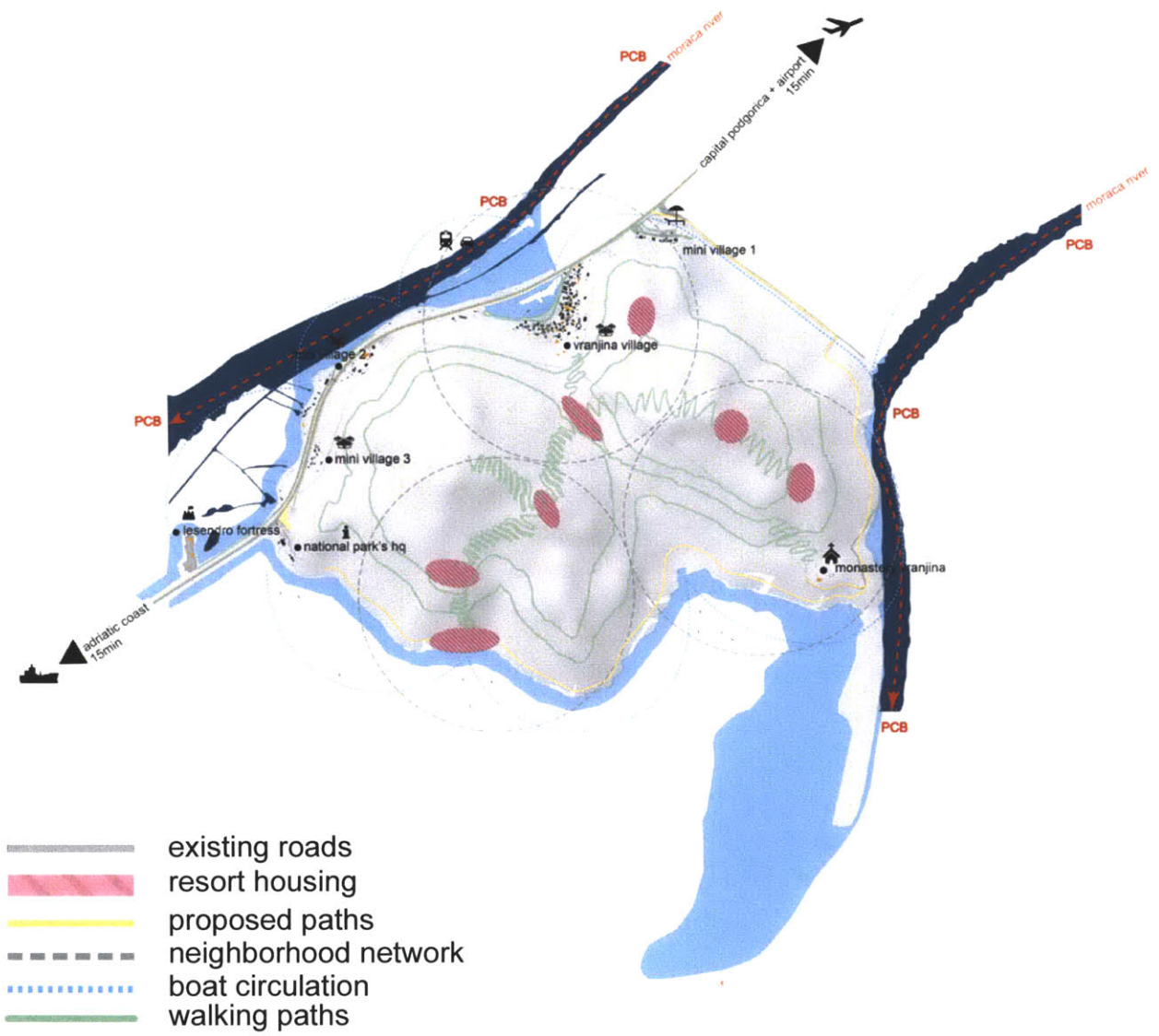


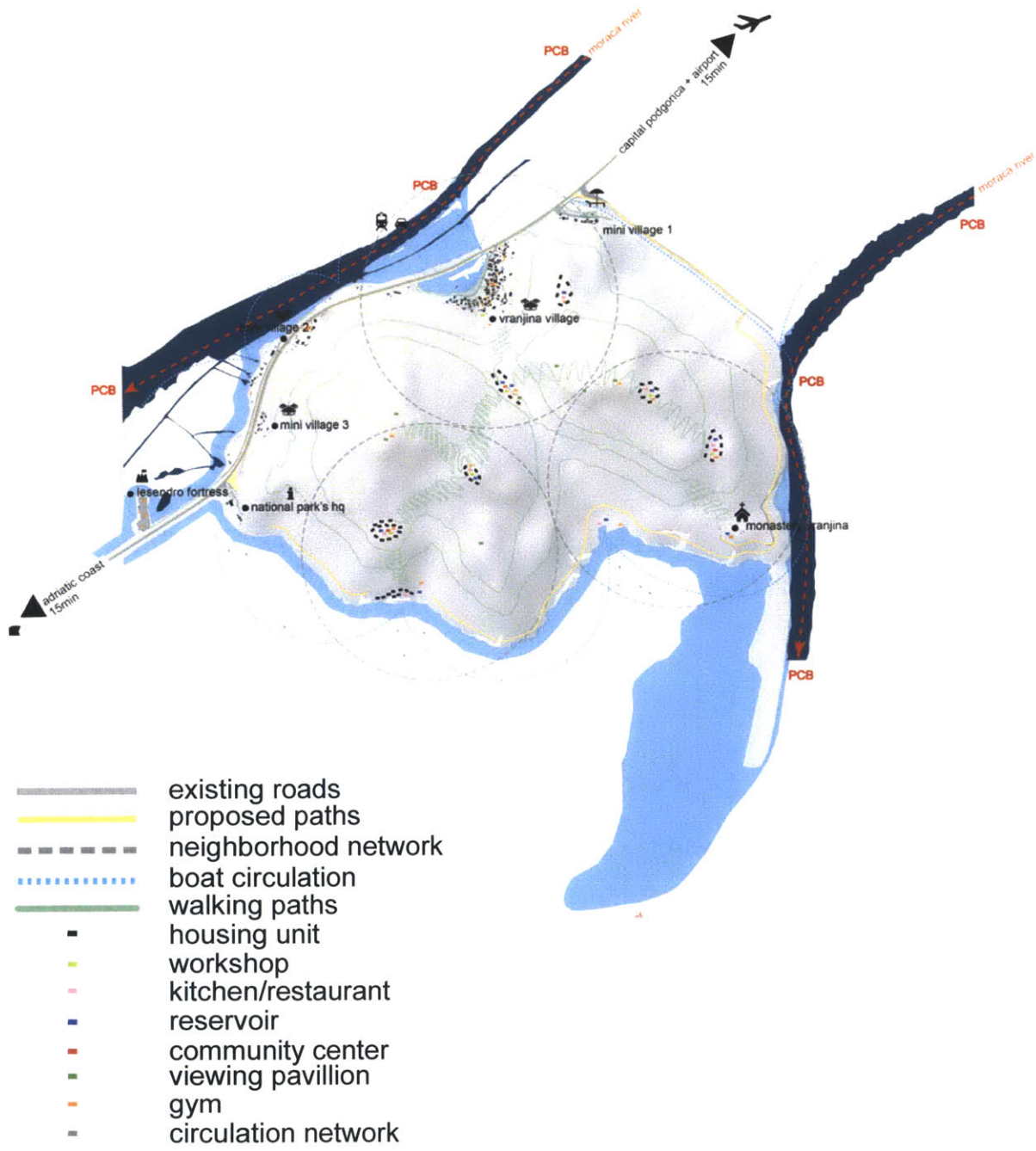


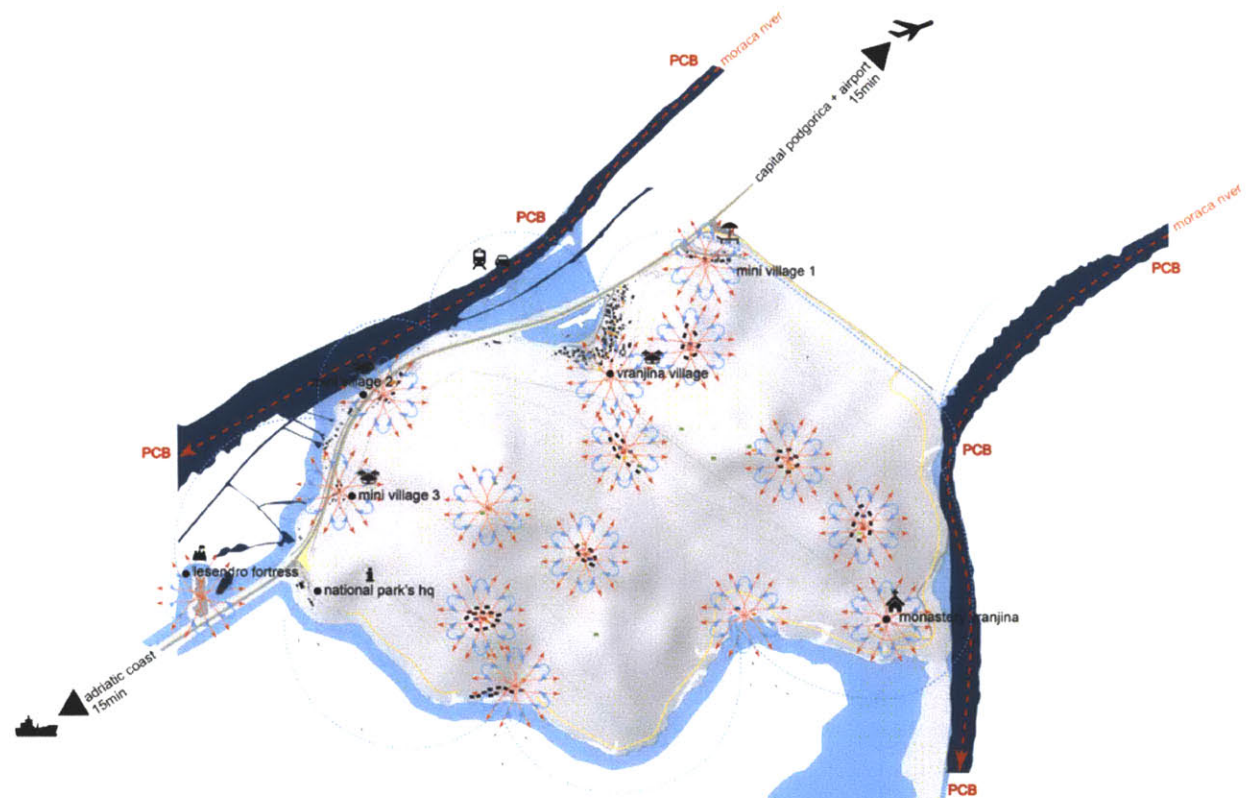




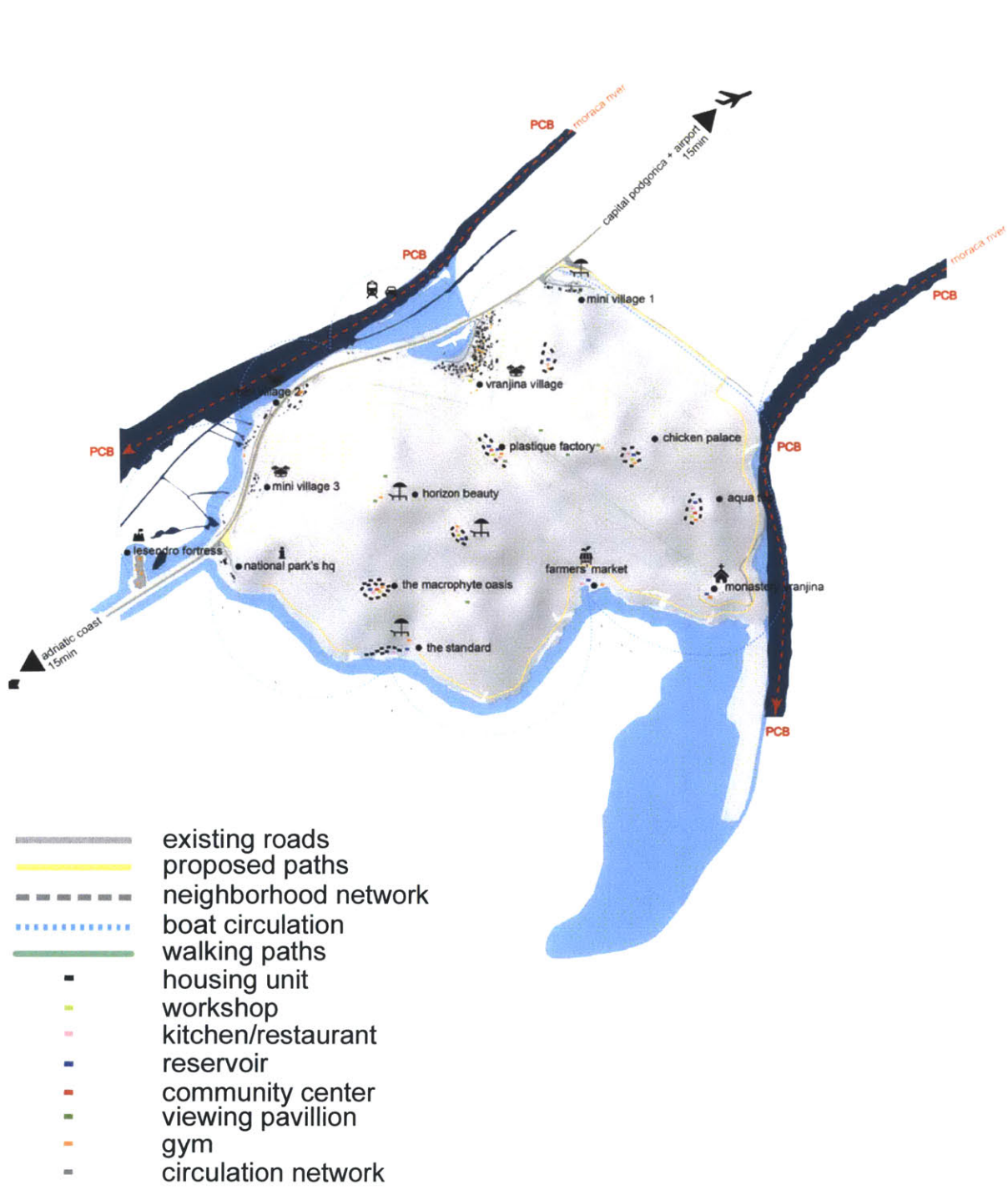


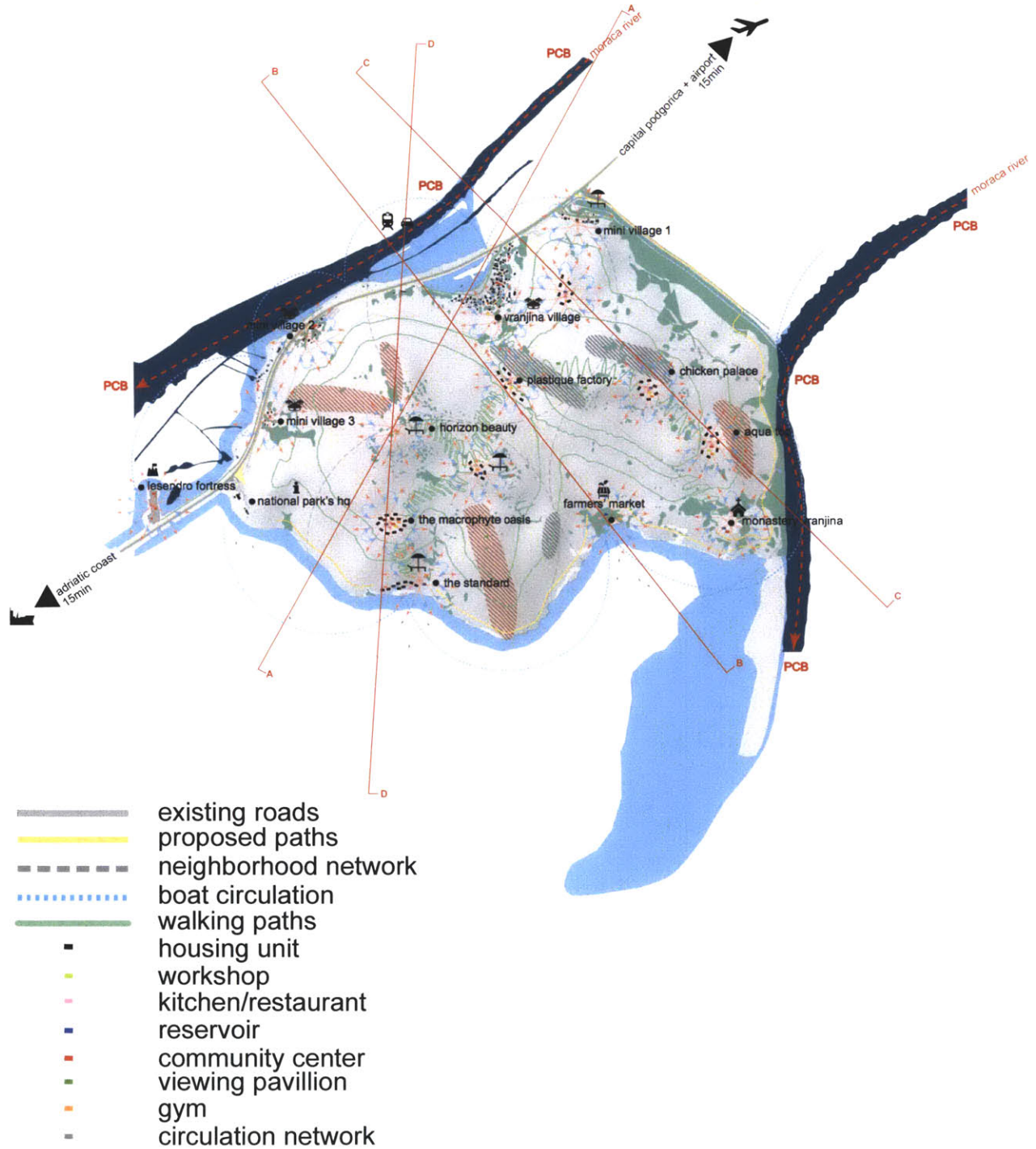


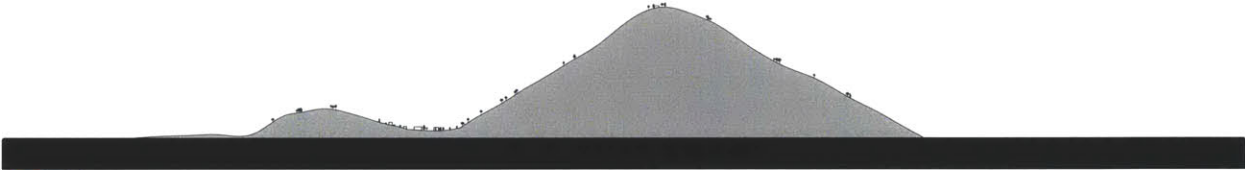




- existing roads
- proposed paths
- - - neighborhood network
- ... boat circulation
- walking paths
- housing unit
- workshop
- kitchen/restaurant
- reservoir
- community center
- viewing pavillion
- gym
- circulation network



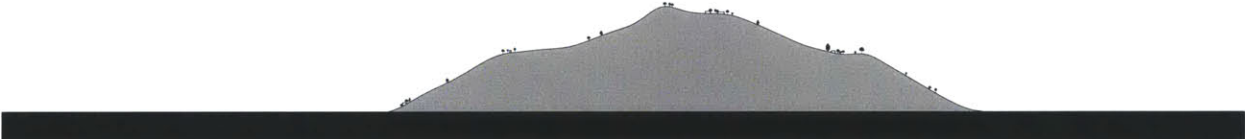




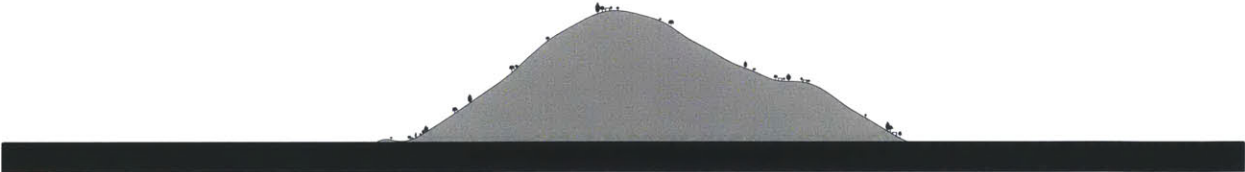
SECTION A-A



SECTION B-B



SECTION C-C



SECTION D-D

Sectional Cuts of the Vranjina Resort Outline the Privacy/Intimacy as well as the Community Qualities of the Proposal

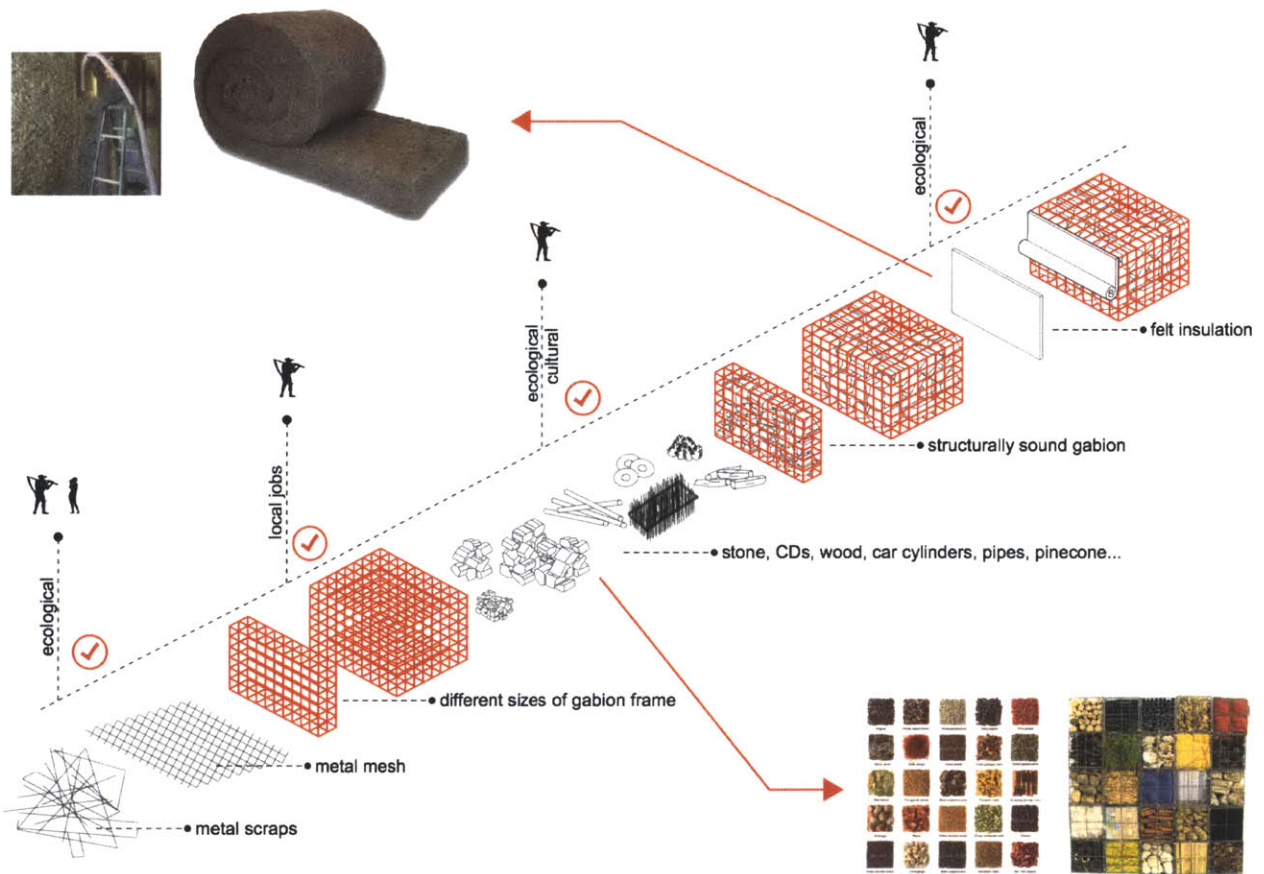
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6. Transversality: a Participatory Use of Nature and Technology

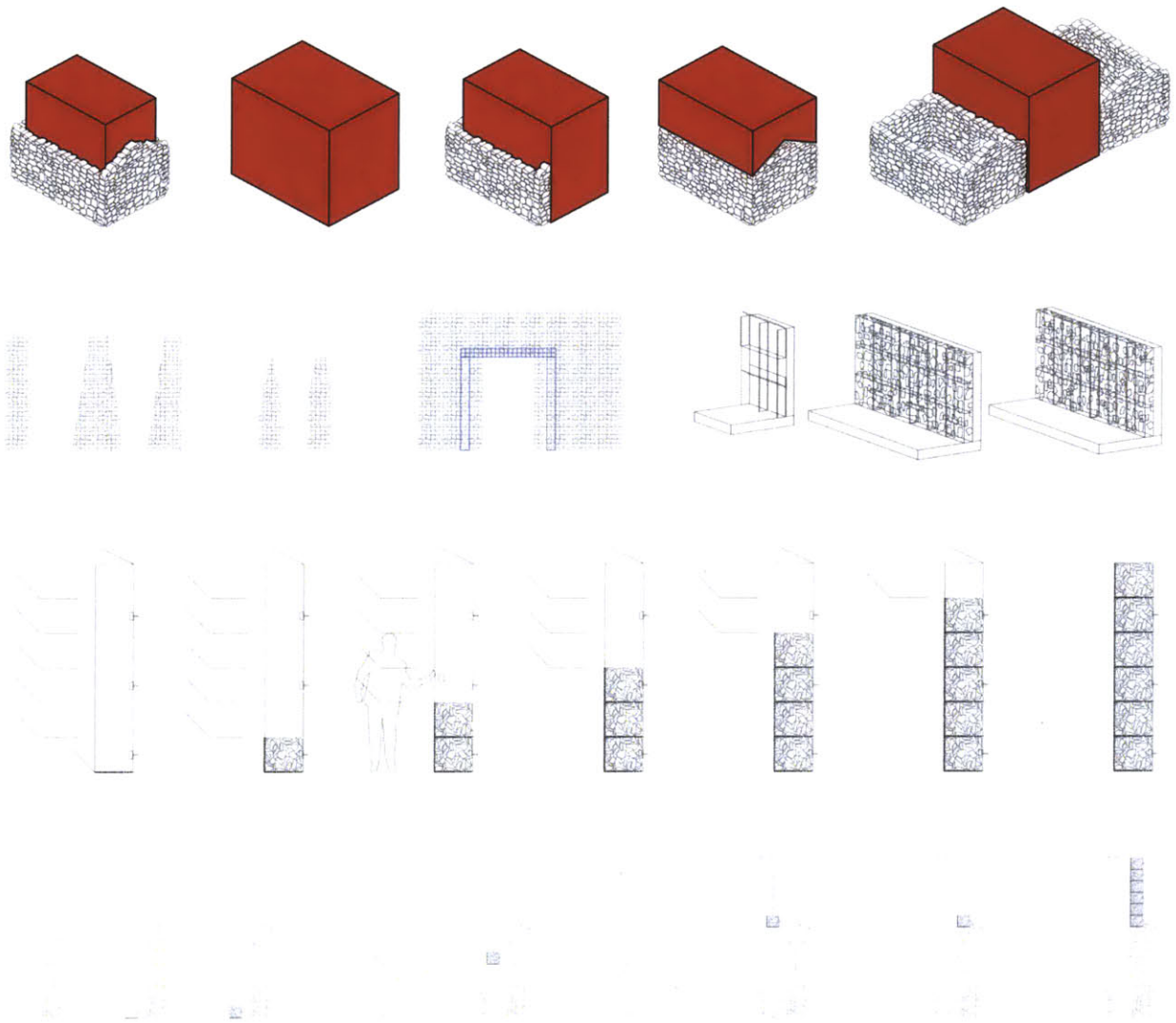
“‘Weird’ is good because it’s discursive, not exclusive. No one process, image, culture or idea can produce the “weird”. What’s “weird” is different everyday but there is always something “weird”...”

- Filip Tejchman

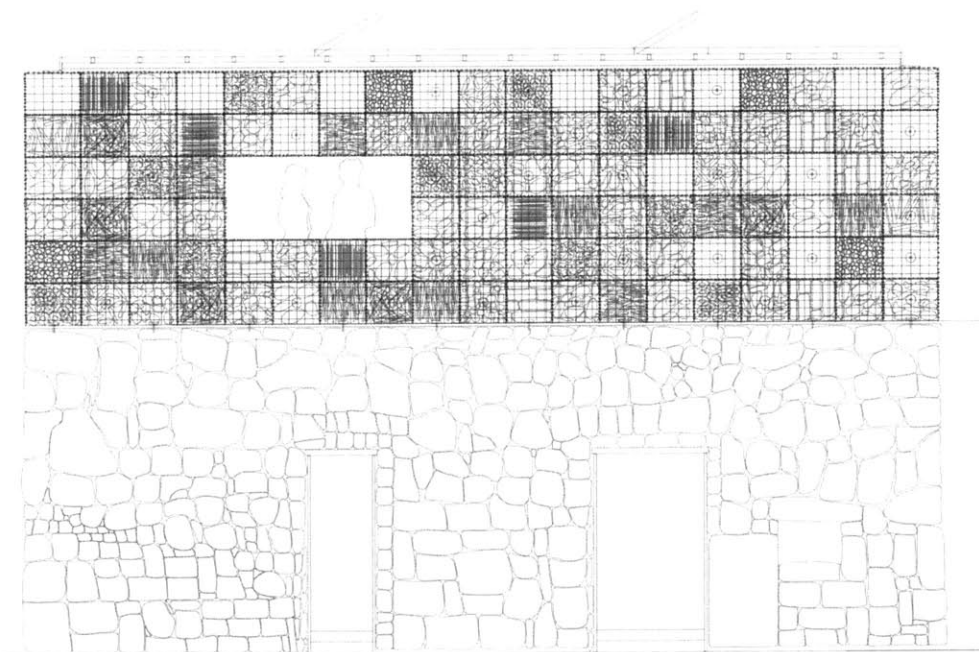
THE SOCIAL LEVEL OF ECOLOGY

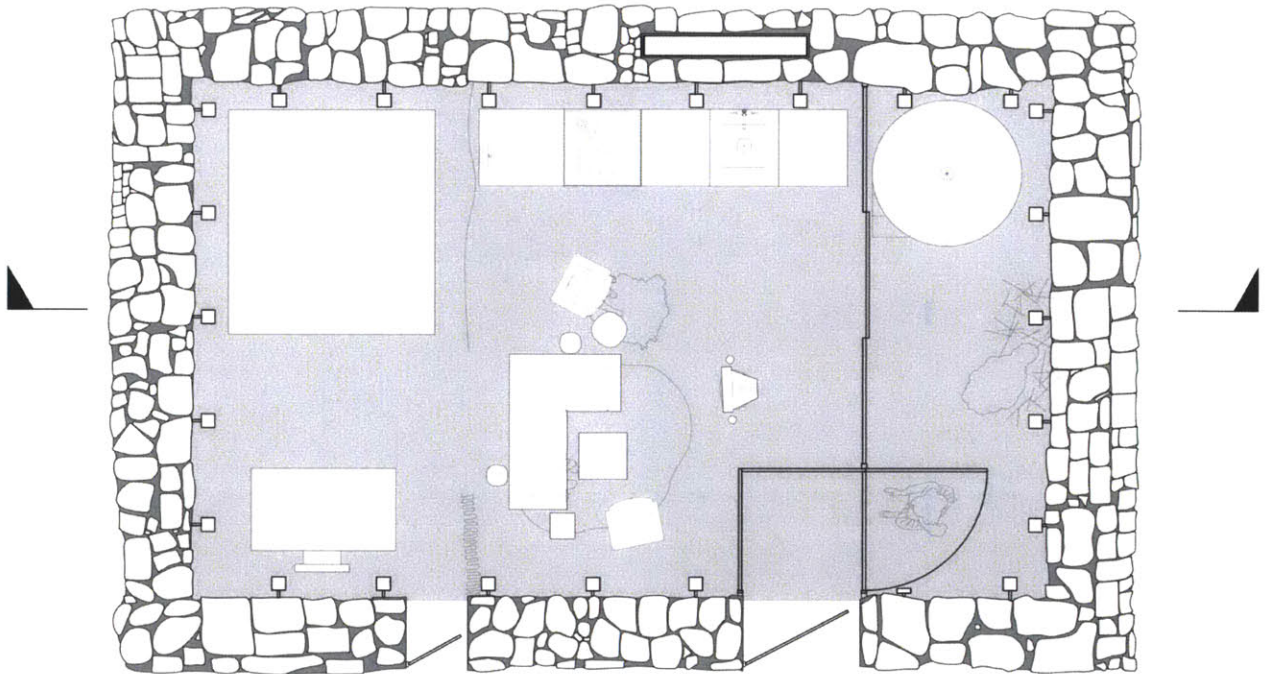
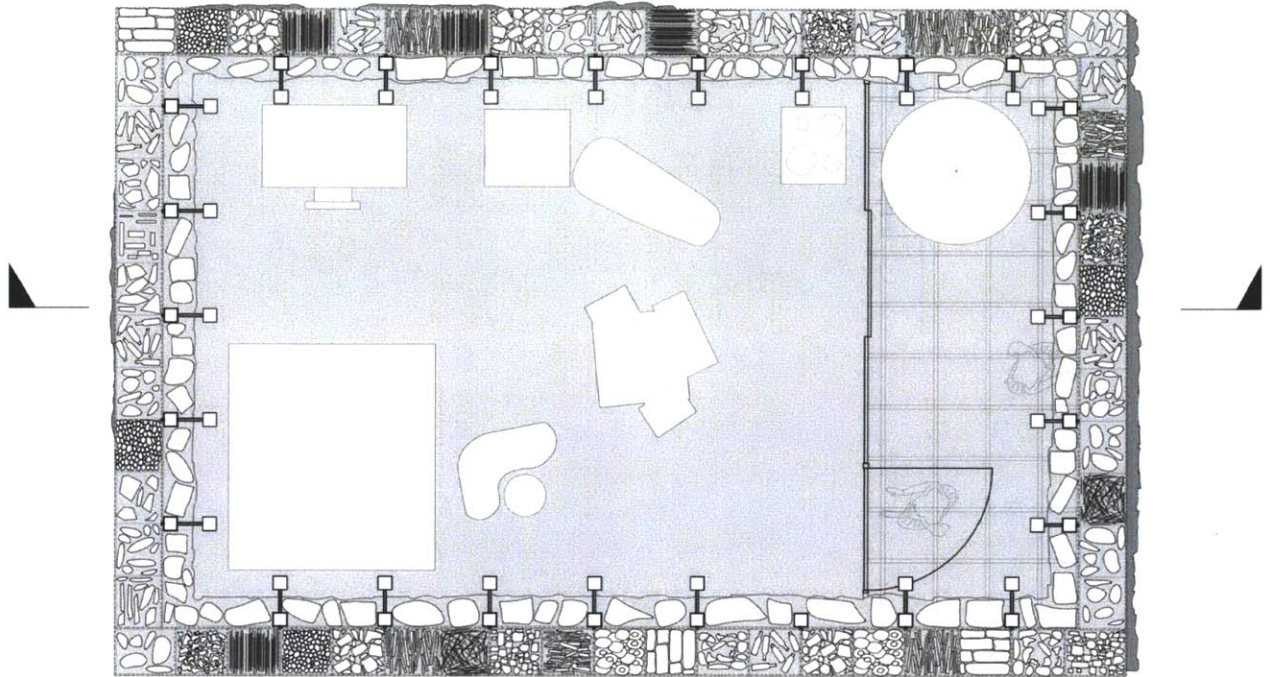


Montenegro as a country recycles only 2%, while the EU recycles 40% of its trash. The first architectural proposal is concerned with reusing the local waste as part of architectural components to both create a novel architecture and re-create the culture of the region.

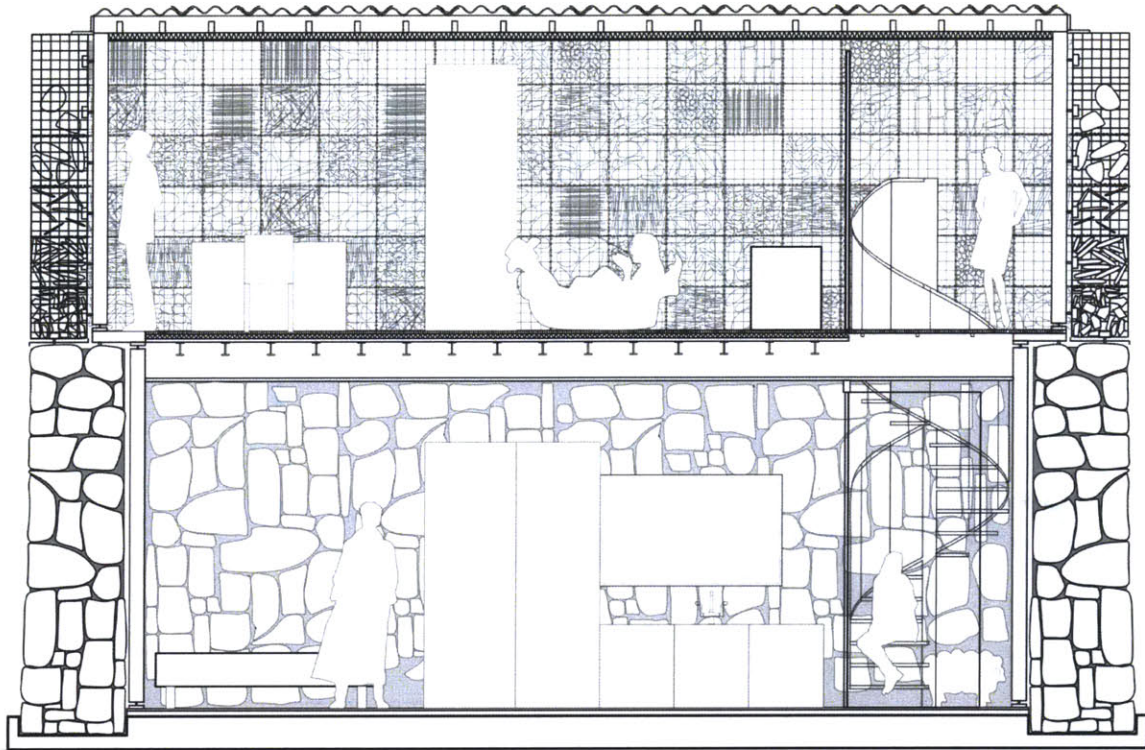


Recycling and gradual construction as participatory techniques in the construction of architecture and culture.





Ground and first floor plans of the renovated house



Renovated house section (above) and facade (below)



Tourist Built Up Floor with Local Tradition Touch



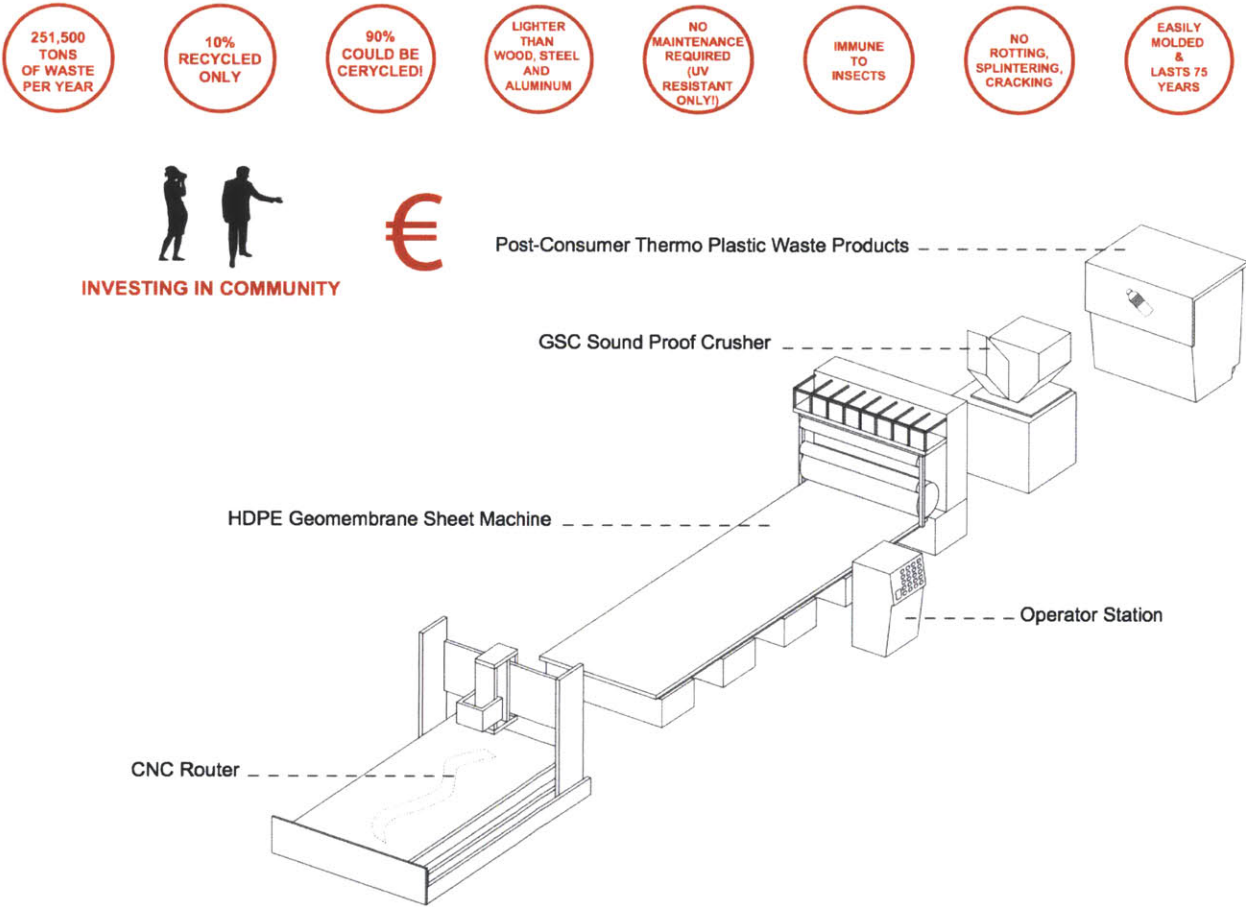
The local family ground floor, having its own garden and animal



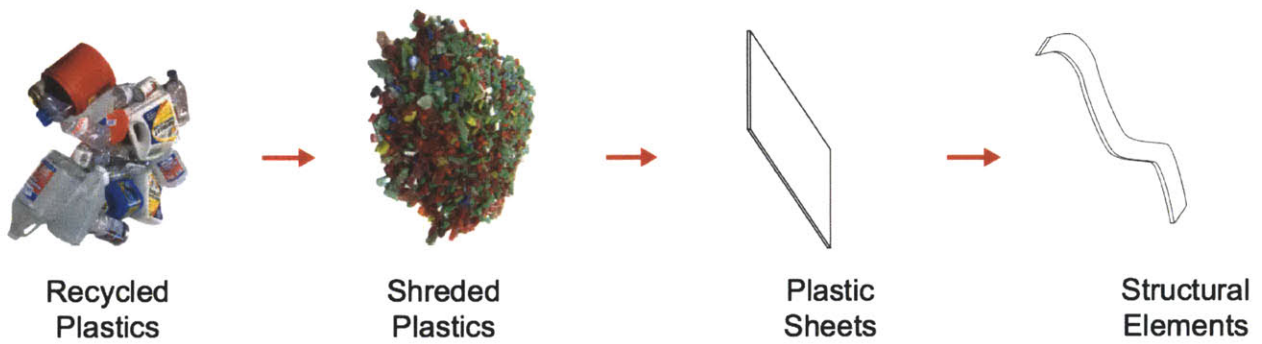
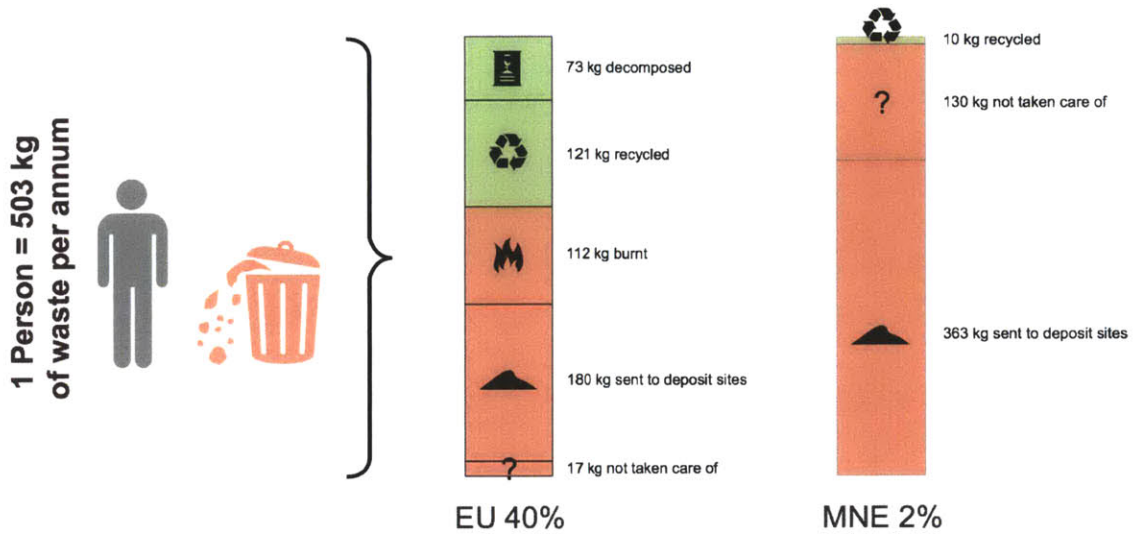
Renovation of a Fortress iZabljak n the Skadar Lake Region (above and to the right) calls out for new means of experiencing museums and heritage.



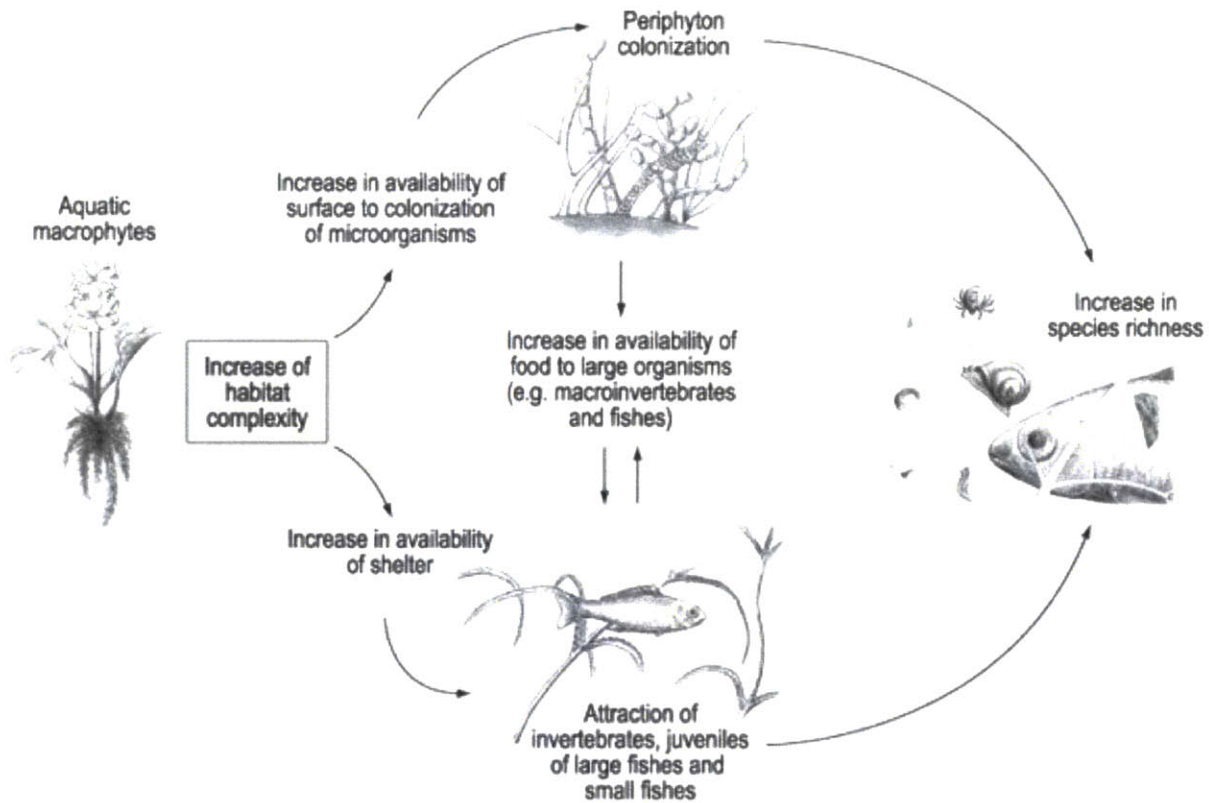
THE ENVIRONMENTAL LEVEL OF ECOLOGY



Recycling of plastics in order to yield innovative construction technique and product.

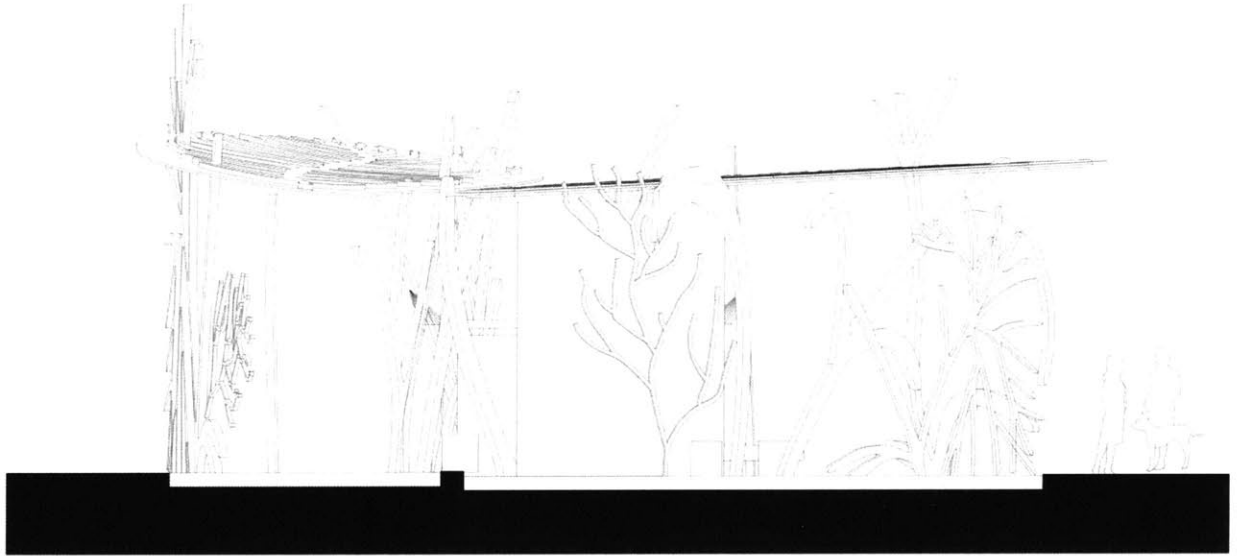


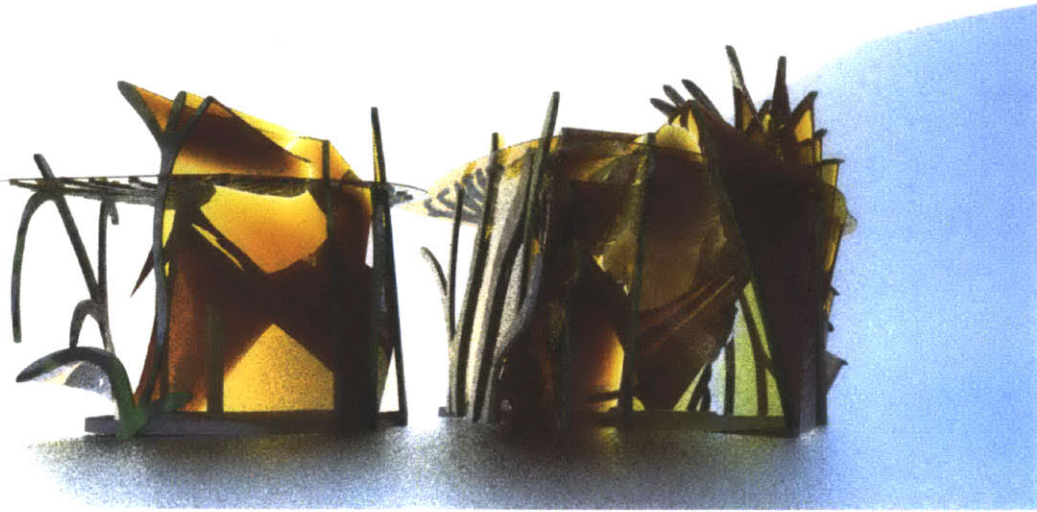
Locals recycle as part of the construction process. Investors invest in the infrastructure rather than only in the buildings



Capturing the quality of plants ecosystem calls out for innovative house design - a home for the visitors and locals but also a porose environment that hosts plants and animals, as well as frames views of the landscapes.

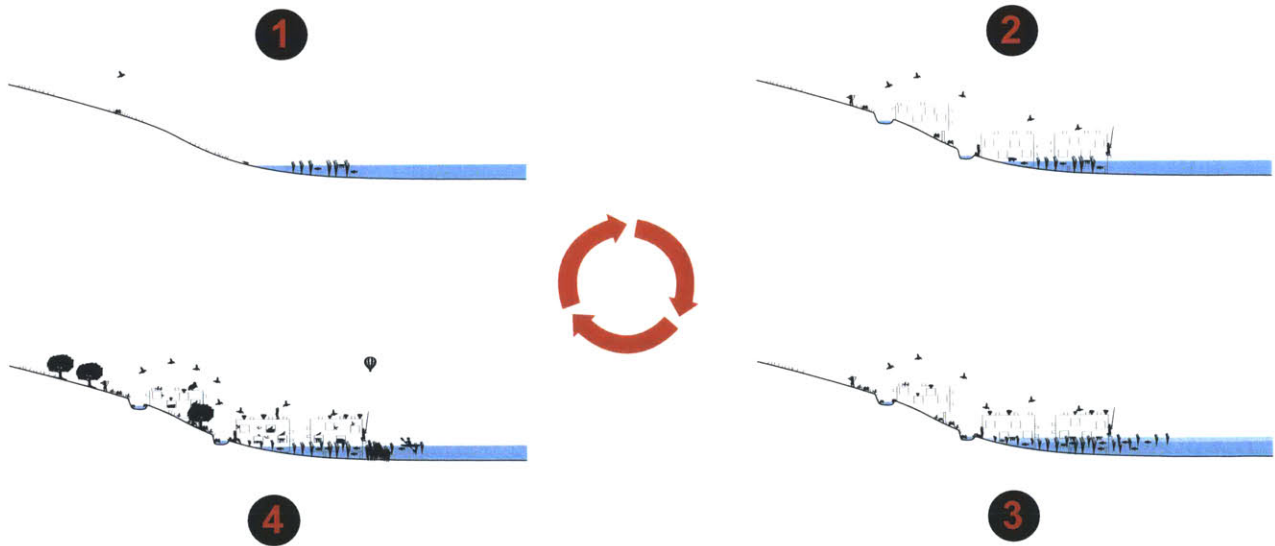
The drawings and renderings on the following two pages represent a study of one of such potential buildings, which serve both as pavilions and resort destinations.

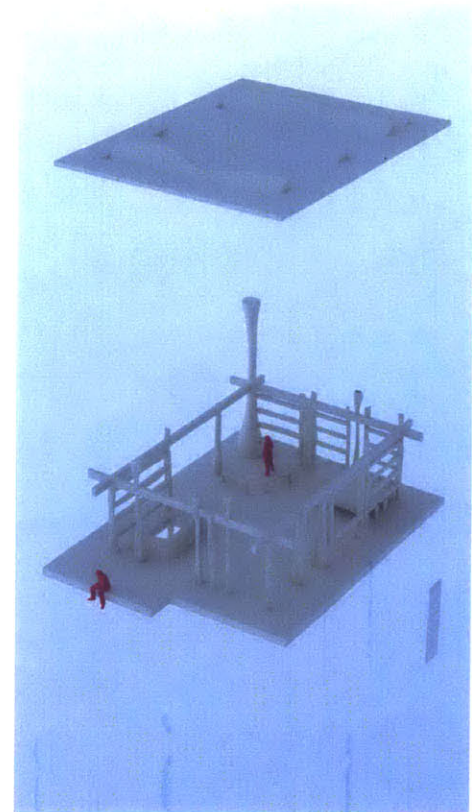
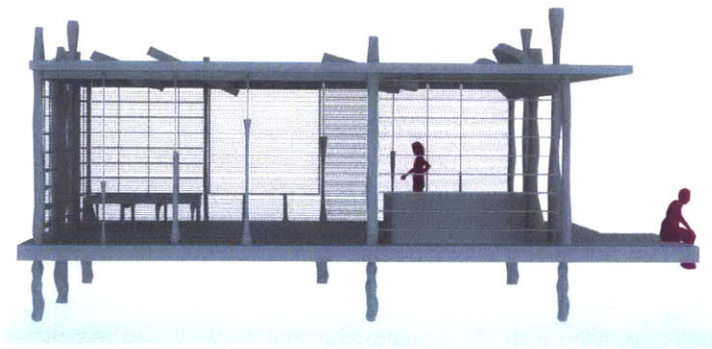




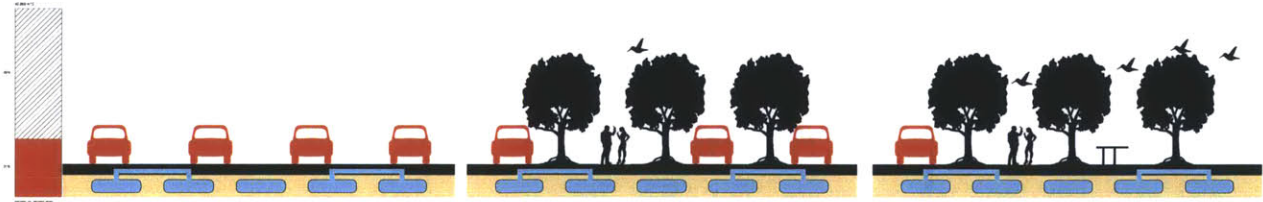
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THE SELF LEVEL OF ECOLOGY





The resort destinations are accompanied with installations, paths, cottages, production spaces which allow for locations to reflect and rebuild the social bonds discussed by Felix Guattari and in the introductory essays of this thesis.



• **Parking becomes a place for wine tasting and break from a long journey.**



A typical hiking experience in the resort area.



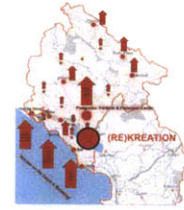
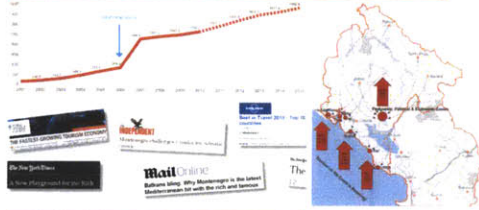
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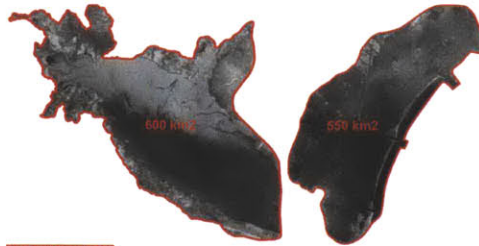
7. Thesis Final Review Documentation

UNESCO as a TARGET

MONTENEGRO'S BOOMING TOURISM AS A VEHICLE FOR THE SKADAR LAKE DEVELOPMENT



SKADAR LAKE AS VENICE FROM THE RENAISSANCE PERIOD



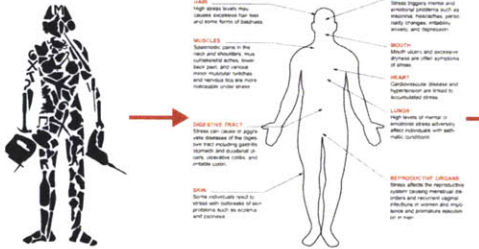
THEN



TODAY



THE EVERYDAY LIFE



THE LIFE IN THE RESORT



CITY CONTAMINATION



RESORT AS A LABORATORY



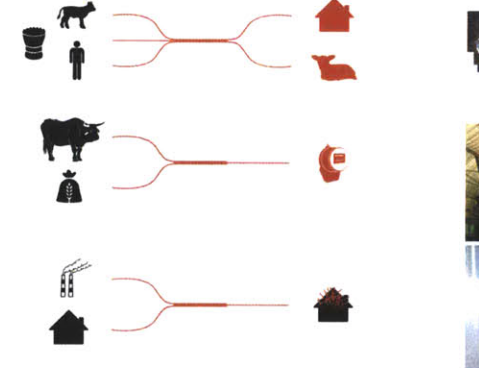
LOCAL VS. TOURIST



LOCAL AND TOURIST

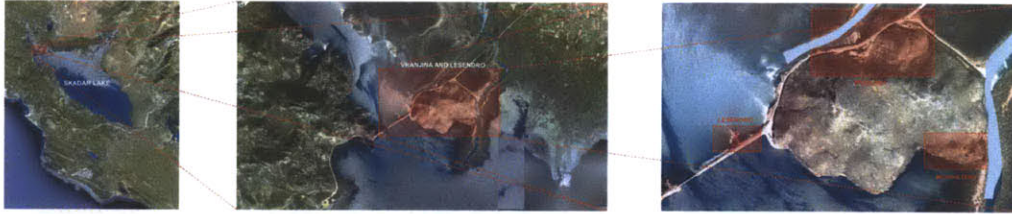


TRANSVERSALITY PRECEDENTS



VRANJINA RESORT

DISPERSION STRATEGY



VIEWS FROM VRANJINA



SITE SIZE COMPARISON



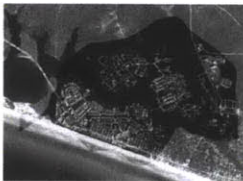
VENICE CENTRE



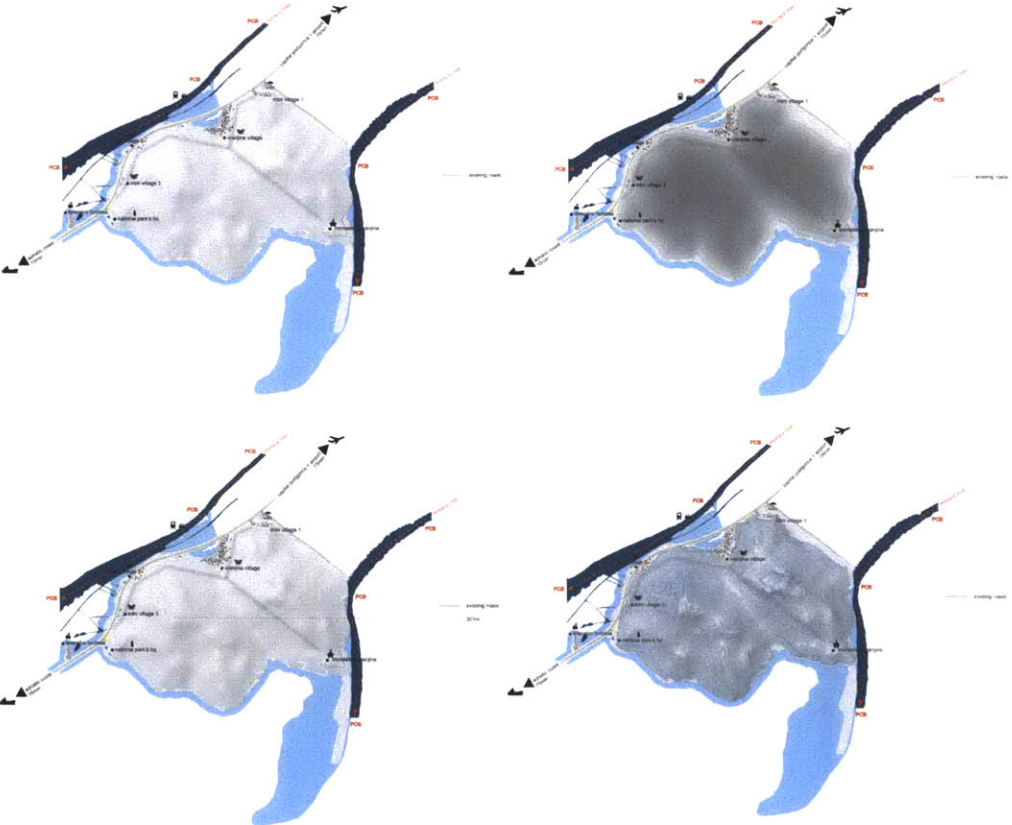
THE CITY OF PULA, CROATIA



THE SEASIDE RESORT, FLORIDA

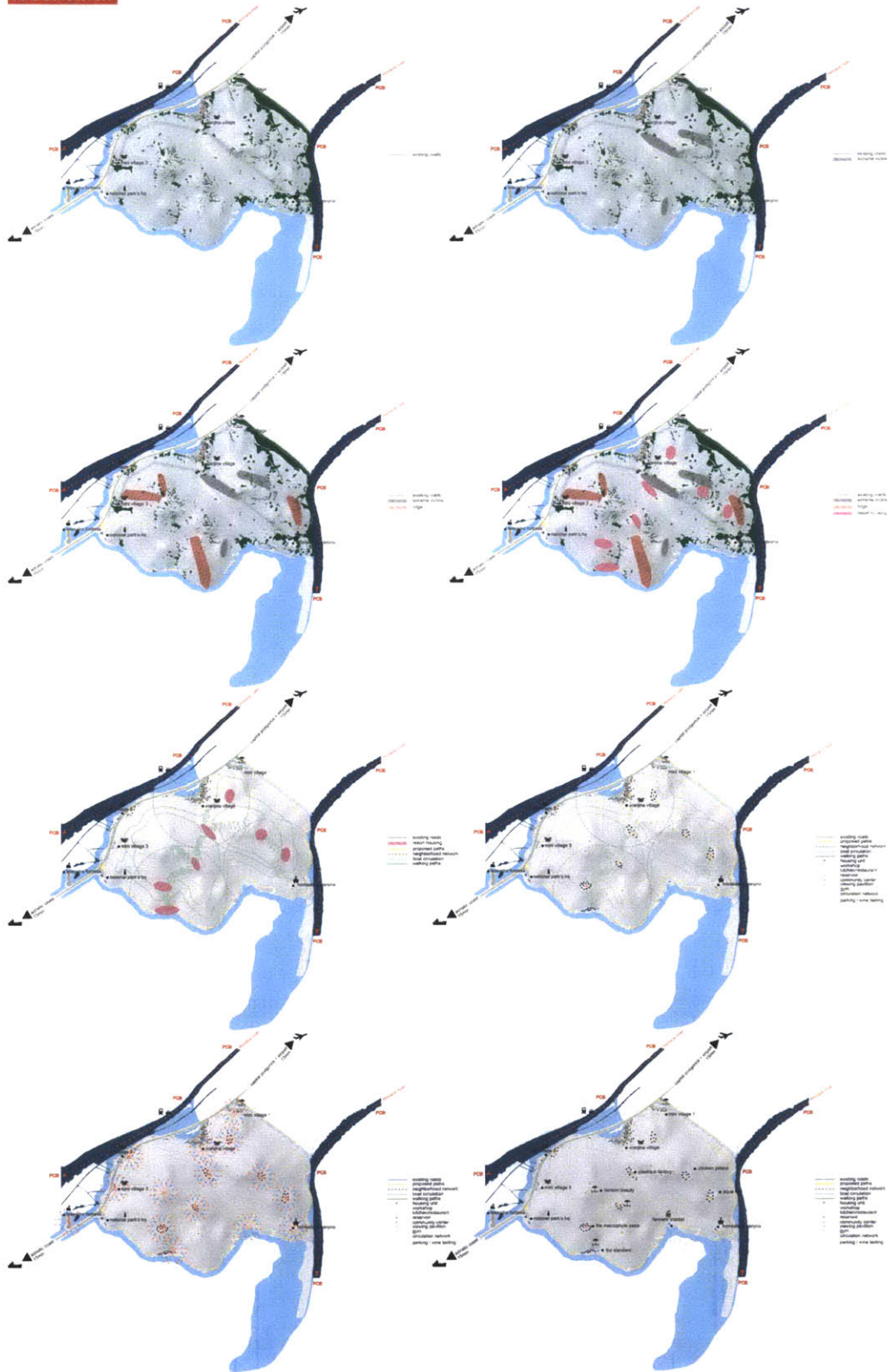


SITE PRESENT CONTEXT



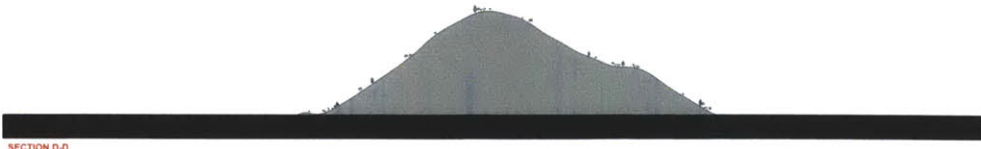
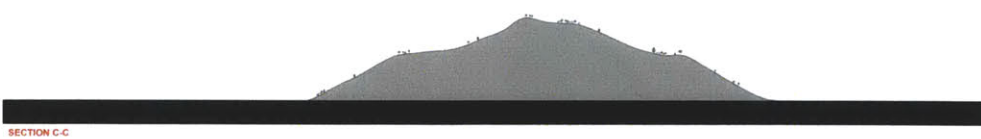
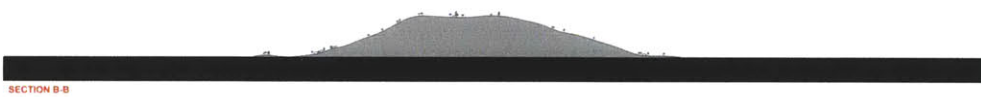
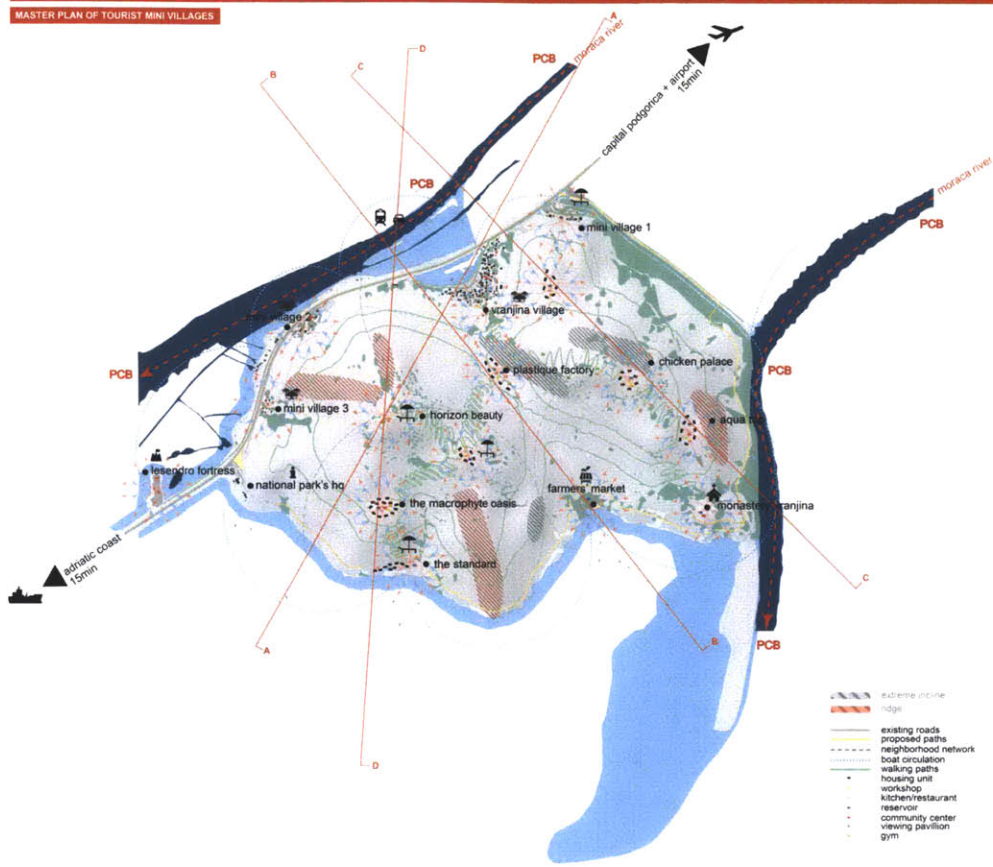
VRANJINA RESORT

DISPERSION STRATEGY



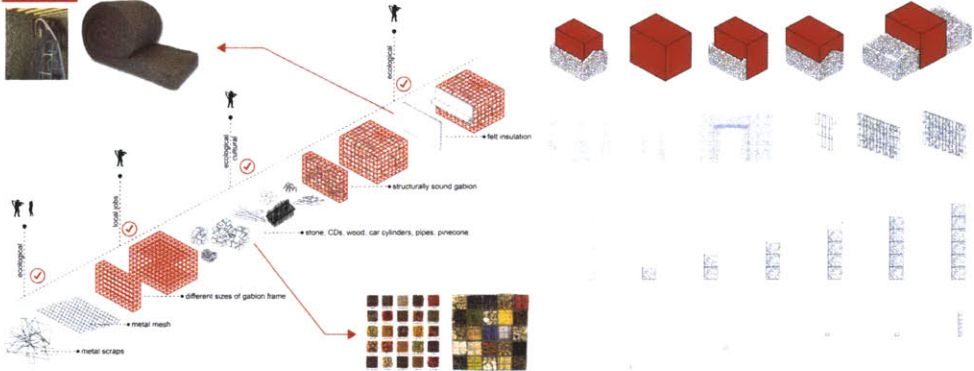
VRANJINA RESORT

MASTER PLAN OF TOURIST MINI VILLAGES

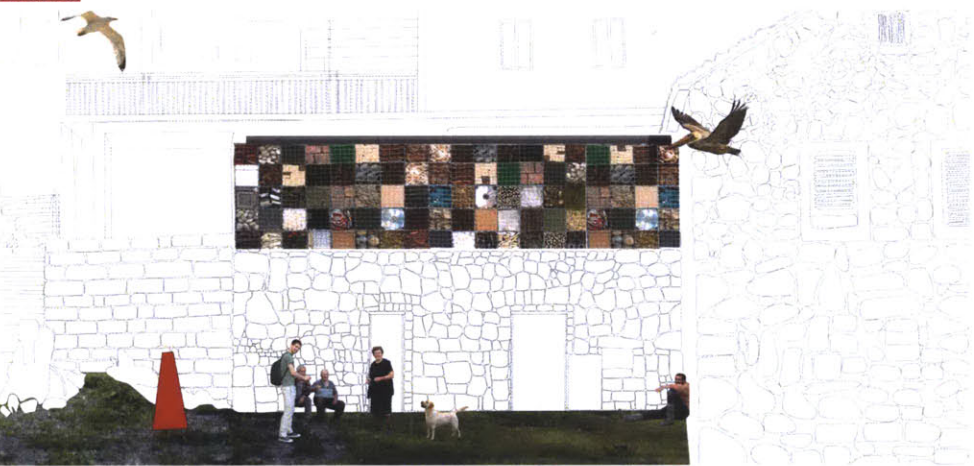


THE SOCIAL LEVEL OF ECOLOGY: AN INERT URBAN TYPOLOGY

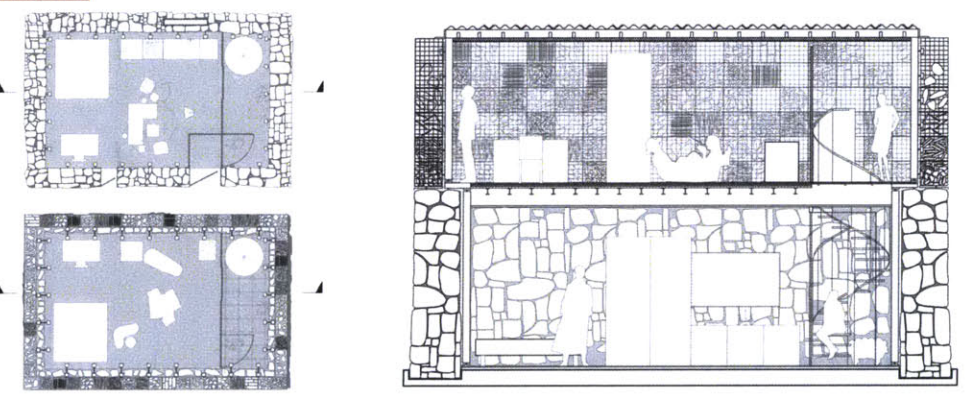
TECHNOLOGY



TYPICAL IMAGE



PLANS & SECTION



THE ENVIRONMENTAL LEVEL OF ECOLOGY: AN ORGANIC TYPOLOGY

PLASTIQUE FACTORY

- 21.800 TONS OF WASTE PER YEAR
- 15% RECYCLED ONLY
- 85% COULD BE RECYCLED
- LIGHTER THAN WOOD, STEEL AND ALUMINUM
- NO MAINTENANCE REQUIRED OR RESISTANT TO WEAR
- IMMUNE TO INSECTS
- NO ROTTING, WARPING OR CRACKING
- EASILY MOVED & LIFES 10 YEARS

INVESTING IN COMMUNITY



Post-Consumer Thermo Plastic Waste Products

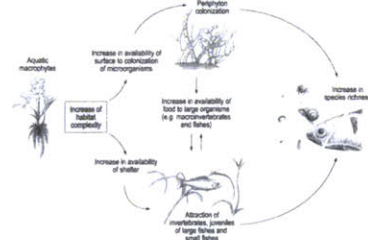
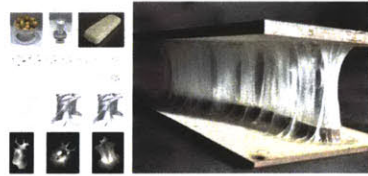
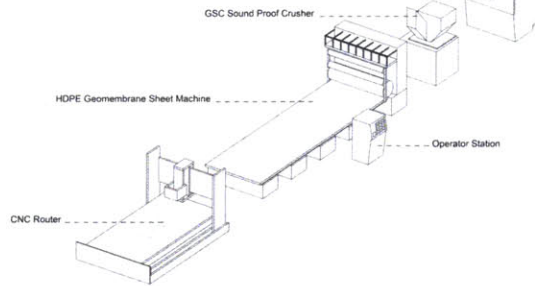
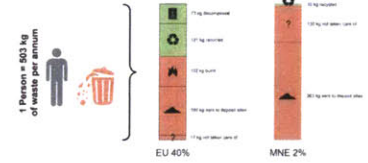
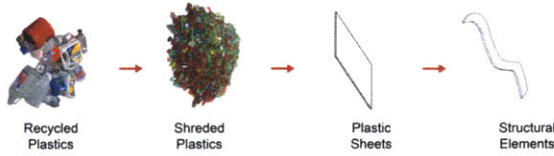


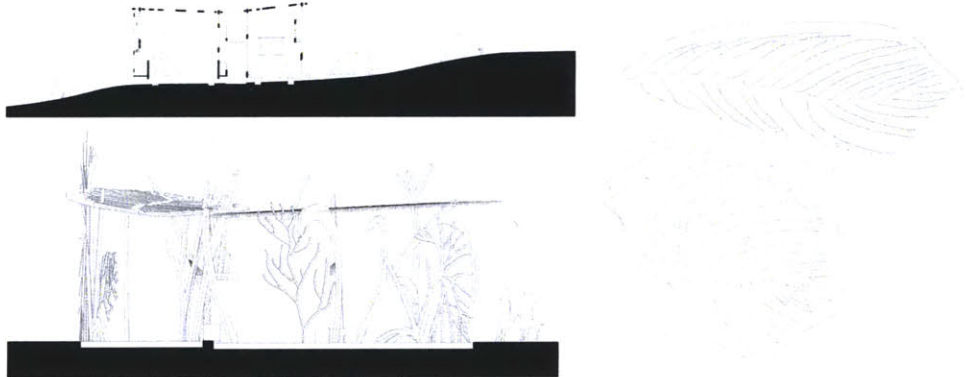
Figure 4. A conceptual model explaining why the structural complexity provided by macrophytes increases the diversity of other aquatic assemblages.



TYPICAL IMAGE



PLAN & SECTIONS

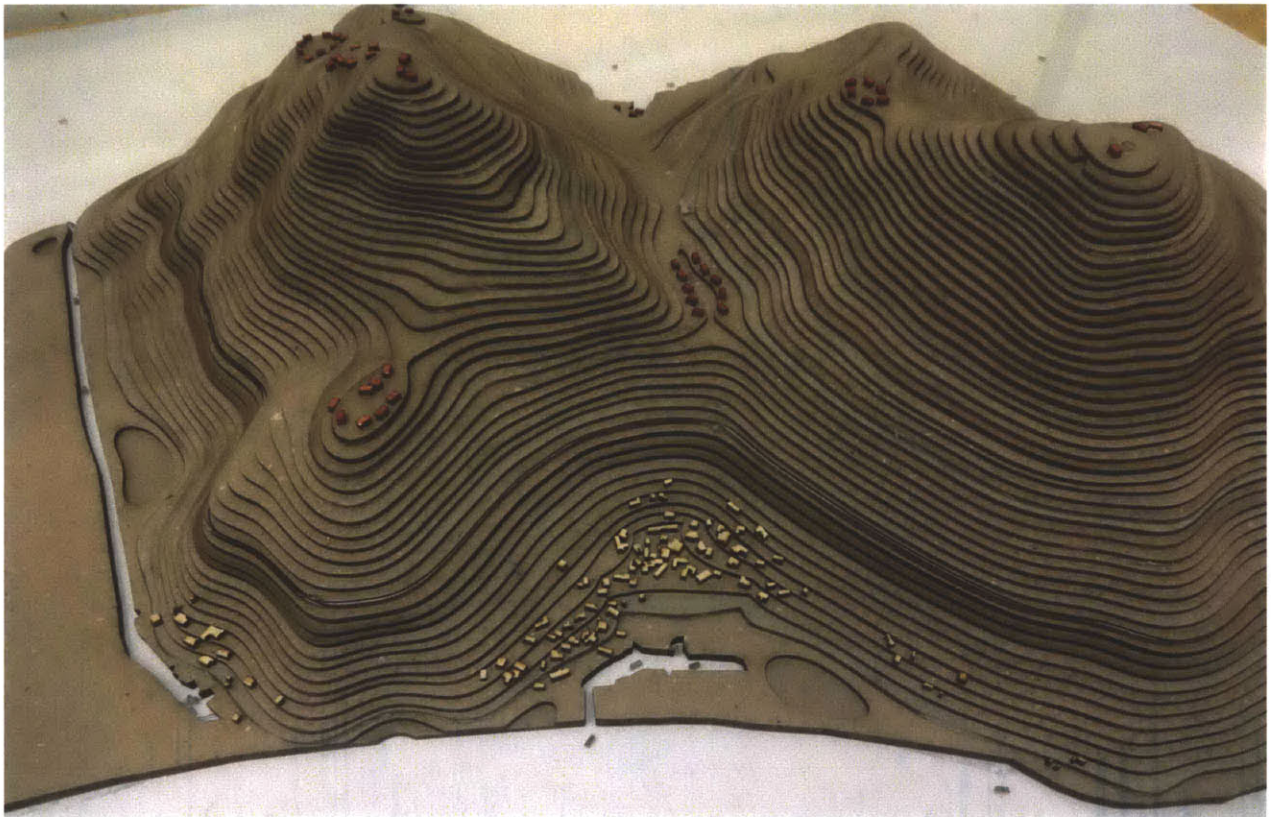


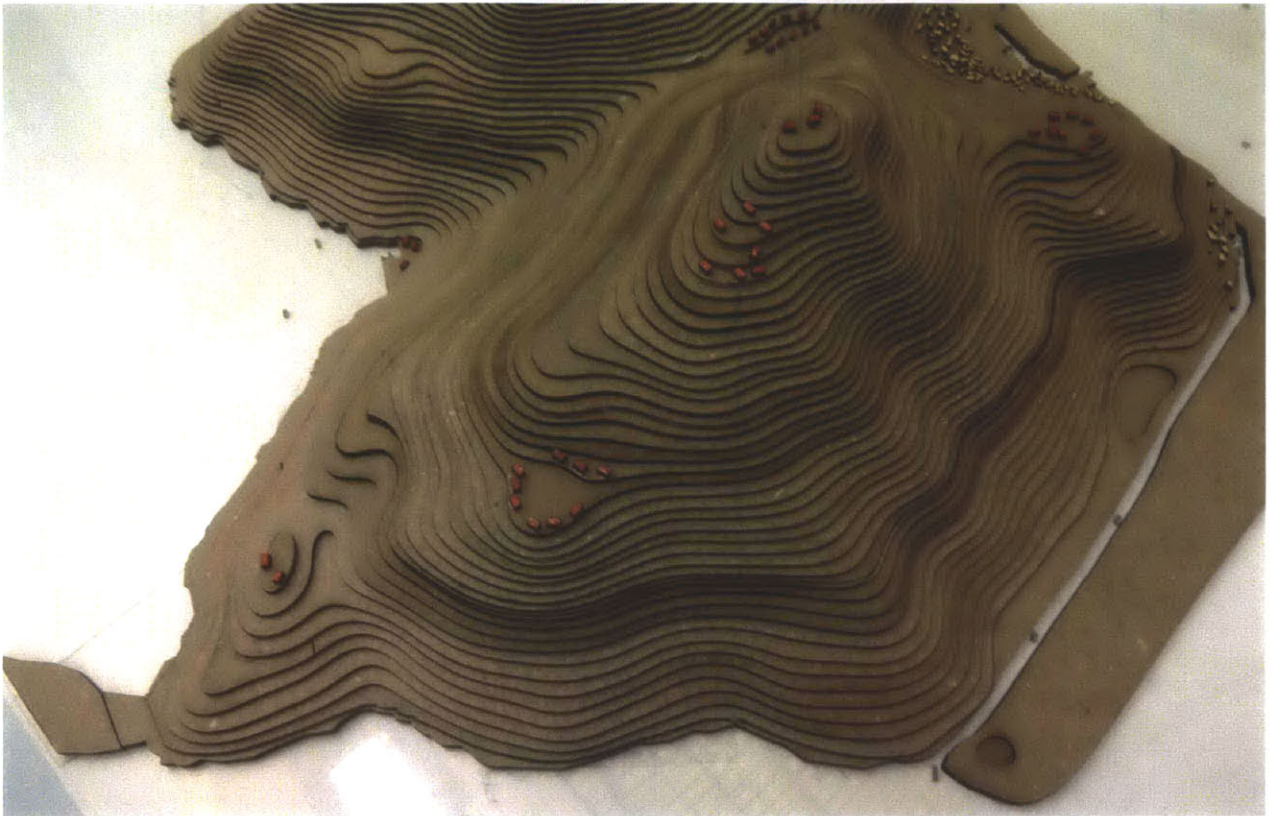


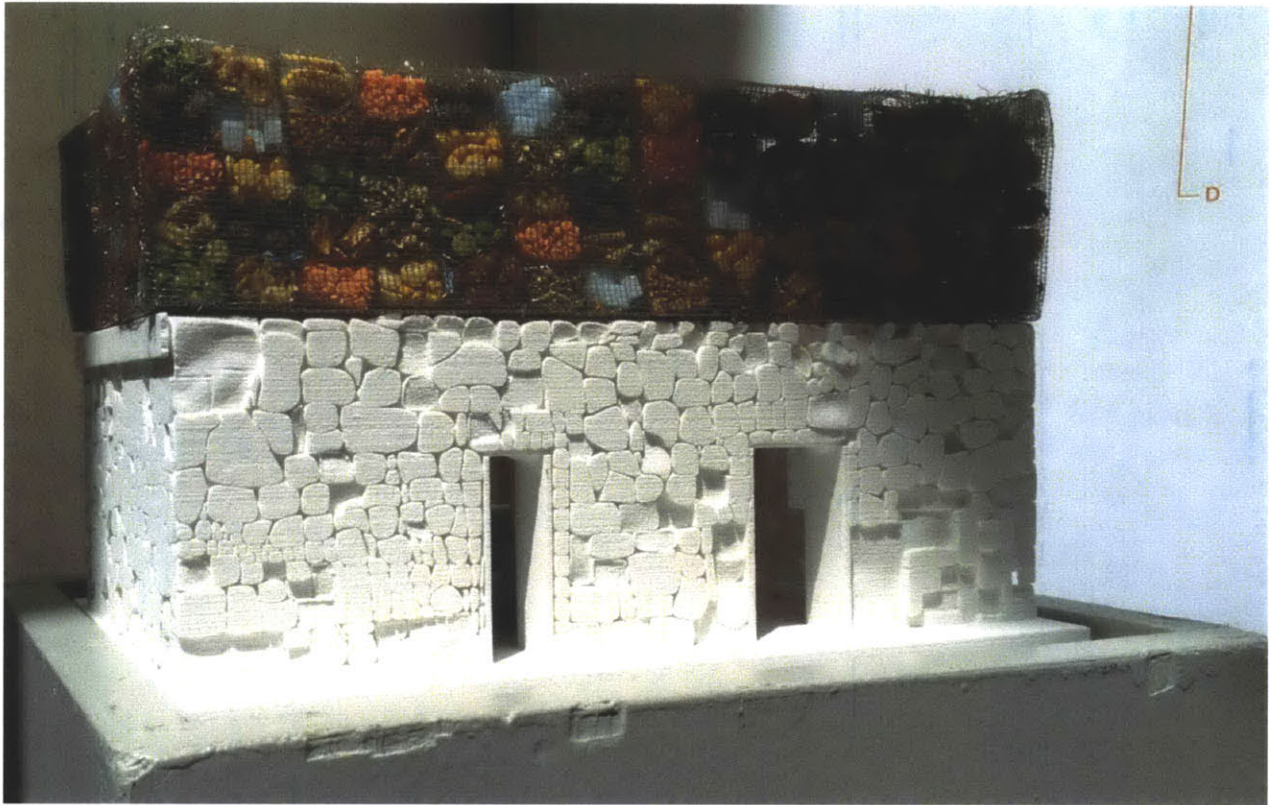




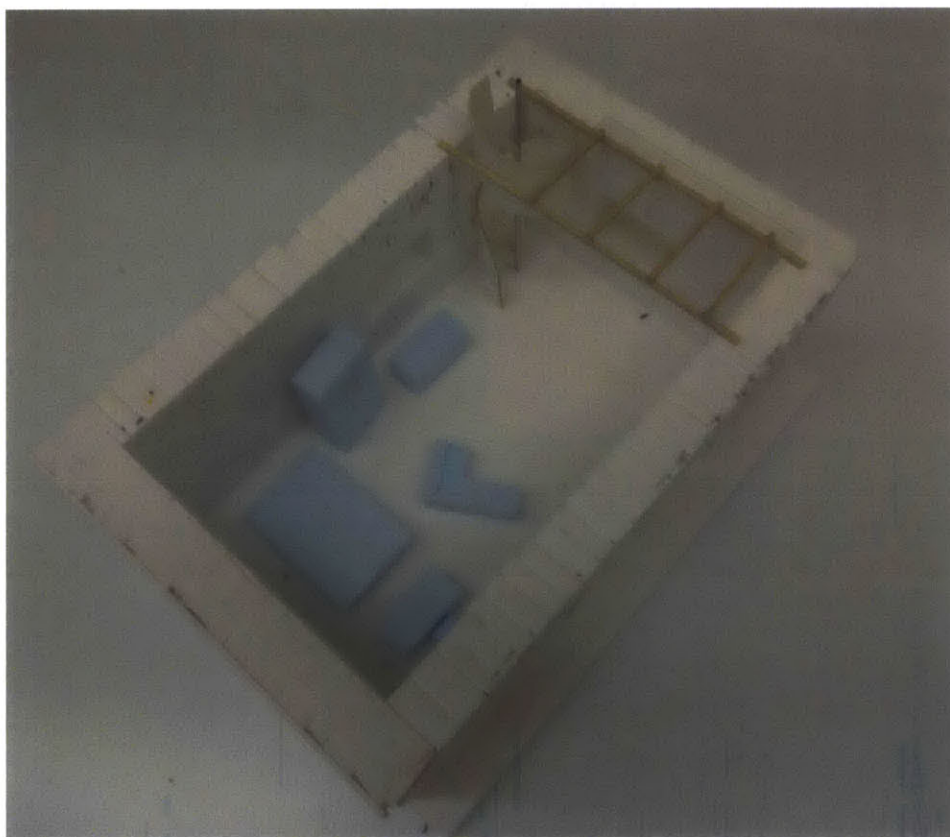
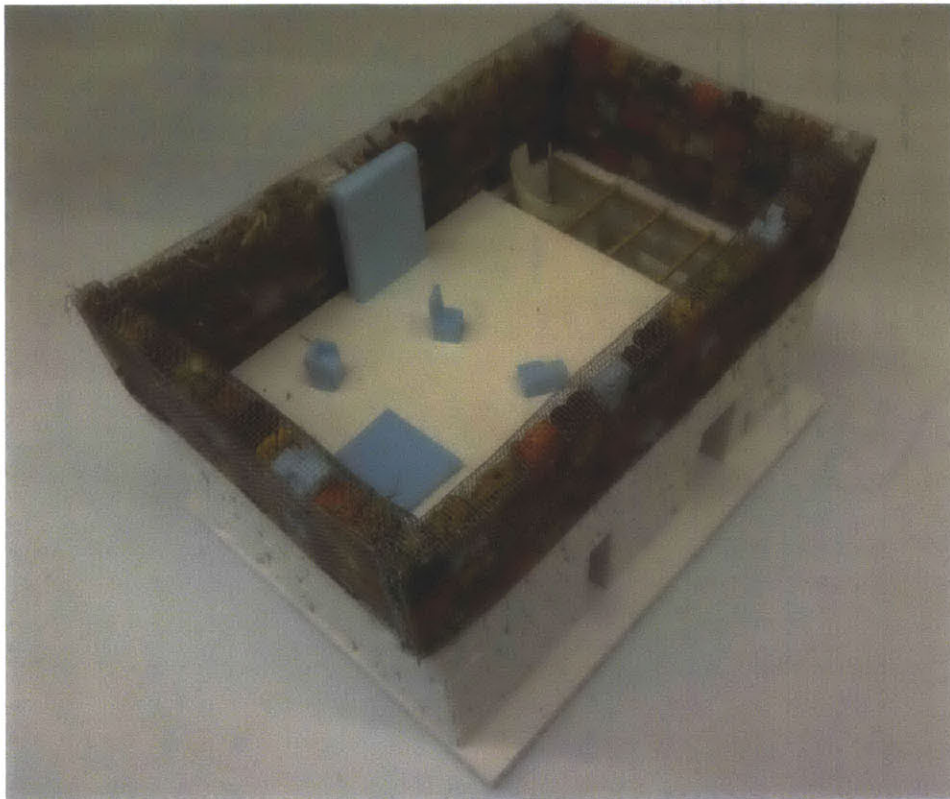
Vranjina Resort dispersed and distributed in clusters similar to the existing village clusters (below and to the right)):



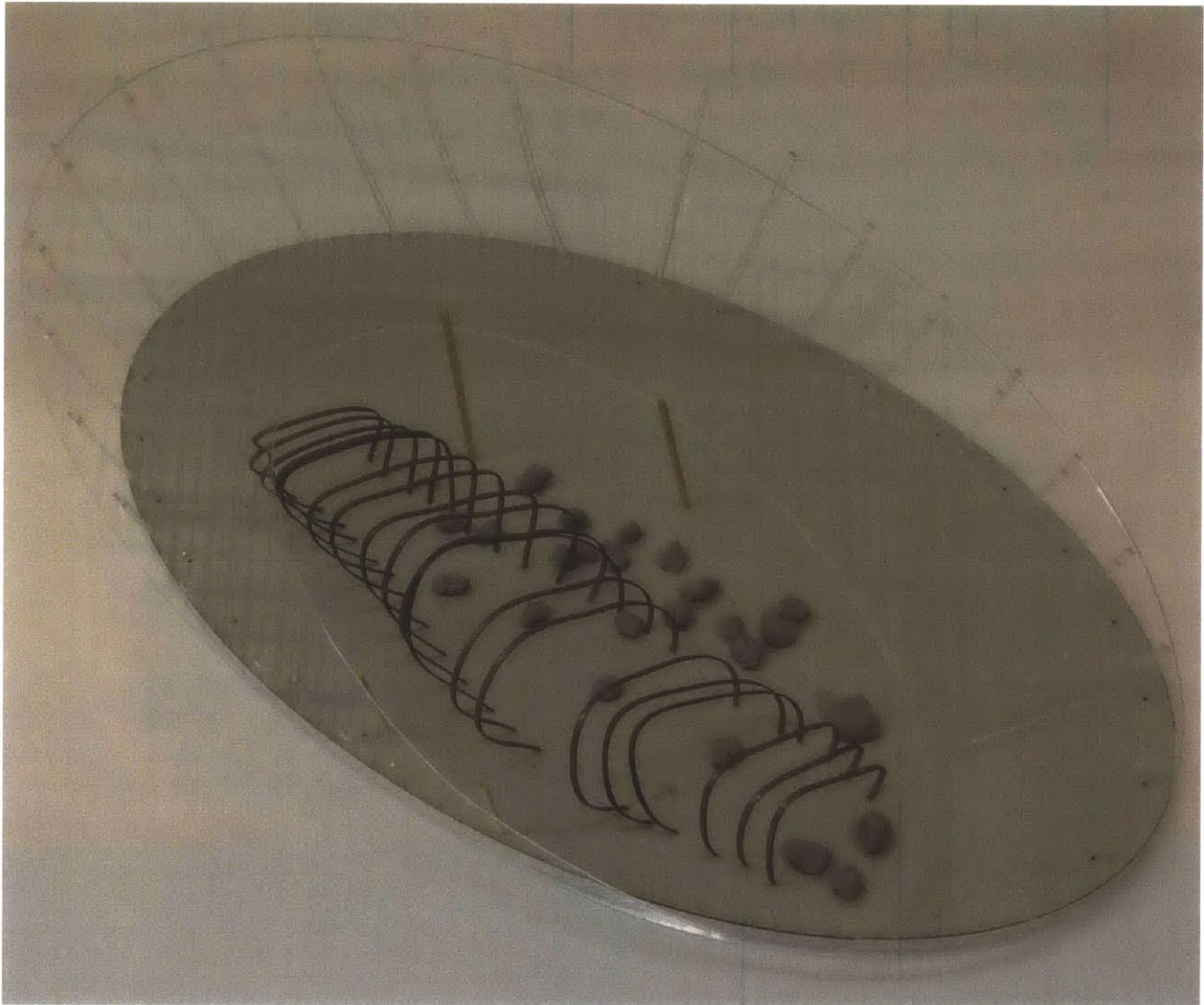


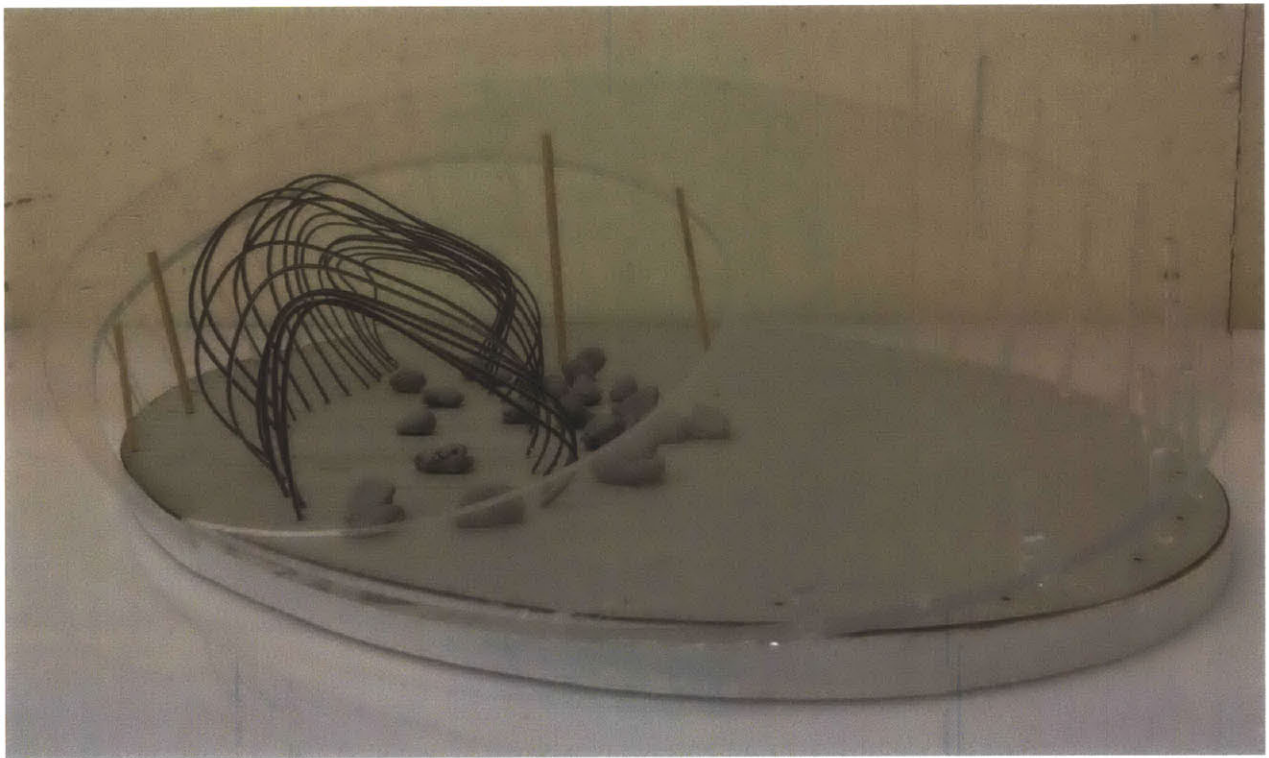


Renovated house with gabions and recycled trash (above and to the right).



Cave study models (below and to the right):





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8. Thesis Preparation Material



By 2030 eighty percent of world's population will live in cities, which will occupy twenty percent of the world's land. Within architectural discourse the rapid urbanization is predominantly addressed by constant re-thinking of cities' urban, infrastructural and architectural challenges, without acknowledging the limitations of such approaches – mathematically speaking, it is only possible to fit so many people in a city before putting their socio-economic well-being in danger. This thesis looks at the flipside of the rapid urbanization phenomena – the village – as an alternative to world's ever daunting urban problems. With utilitarian simplicity, it proposes minimal instead of spectacular; transformable instead of permanent; communal instead of individual. And it does so from the bottom up approach, by using tourism as a vehicle for development strategies to economically resuscitate the rural poor.

This thesis is not necessarily a critique of the urbanization but rather a challenge to the neutrality with which the current architectural discourse perceives the life in a village. The project of the thesis is located in the Skadar Lake region, a pristine natural park shared by Albania and Montenegro and one of the most important regions in Eastern Europe during the period of Ottoman Empire. Comprised of several small villages that have predominantly been abandoned due to constant migrations to the business driven capital of Montenegro or the tourism rich Adriatic coast, each day the region loses hope for the future despite its beautiful nature and rich history. In an era of global crisis it is almost impossible to imagine large government investments that would allow for the regions re-birth: Skadar Lake region remains subject to time and natural degradation.

While designers of today focus most of their efforts towards the emerging new issues of the city, the neo-liberal companies find potential in the Skadar Lake region and similar ones throughout the world. Using pristine environments in the developing world to fulfill the need

of the global tourism phenomena – the largest economy in the world – these companies generate large profits without much contribution towards the local community development. To worsen the case, the government of Montenegro has recently introduced a law by which all the rural areas that are not being used for production will be additionally taxed, thus putting the owners of the lands in an even worse position. The thesis asks the question, how can a localized design intervention bring attention to and address a global issue?

This thesis rethinks the economy of global tourism through a lens of a designer. It uses modern technologies to propose soft gentrification strategies by which local inhabitants – and not the global corporations – become the beneficiaries of the tourism economy. Through this process the thesis rethinks the role of the village in the twenty first century and proposes alternative solutions to urban life, and it rethinks the role of global tourism. Lastly, it is the hope of this thesis to also rethink the role of the architect in the neo-liberal era.



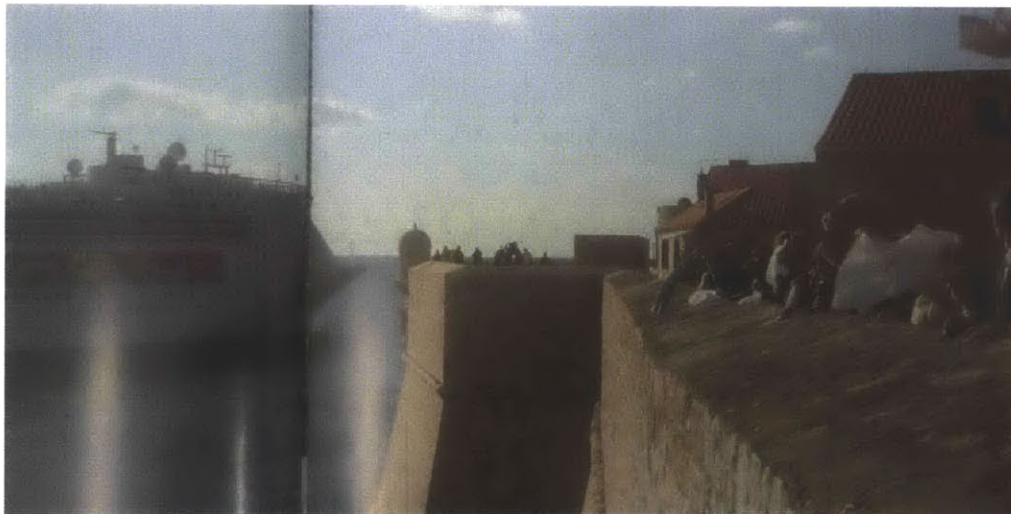
Since the 1960s the demand for the traditional seaside holiday in the UK has declined year on year, as a result of increasing competition from the Mediterranean resorts, a pattern which was also replicated in other European manufacturing regions. While the new tourism destinations once used to be the fabrication/manufacturing industries, and as such were considered highly the “third world”, now they become the hot spot destinations however the glamour is just on the surface. The statistics shows that little stays in those countries, so the tourism, in a way, plays a new form of occupation during the neo-liberal regime. The coast of Montenegro, in particular, has since its independence (2006) largely been developing thanks to the foreign investments. One of its largest investment, Porto Montenegro, represents a \$256,000,000.00 investment by the Canadian magnate Peter Munk. Although the company claims to be supporting the local community through myriad of events, this participation is rather negligible. With such a huge capital investment, it is bizzare that the company feels proud to announce the following on its website:

community. The total value of the equipment is EUR 3,300.”

It becomes clear that the global corporations leave little for the local communities besides glamour and marketing. If one takes into account that the Government of Montenegro has lowered the VAT taxes and the commercial taxes for products purchased in shops of Porto Montenegro (from 17% to only 7%), it becomes obvious that the local Government is conditioned to succumb to the pressure of foreign investments so that it can hope for a more lucrative future developments in Montenegro.

Also architecture and infrastructure have to bridge the local and the visitor, so that they feel distant upon massive inflow of tourist as in Croatia, or sudden realization of economic disparities, as is the case Cuba.

“This past Friday “Adriatic Marinas” has donated twelve “HP” and “Toshiba” laptops to the “Drago Milović” Primary School and “Mladost” High School from Tivat. Once again, we have expressed our dedication to support the local





THE 'BILBAO EFFECT'

"I'm not sure as many people would go to Pisa if the leaning tower wasn't leaning." - Oren Safdie

A global example of Porto Montenegro would be Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao. Spain's Basque country decided to invest \$228,300,000.00 on a modern art museum. Critics objected to squandering so much public money on something so irrelevant and exclusive. The author of the building, the architect Frank Gehry declared that the notion that a single building can alter the fate of an entire region is... "B.S." In fact, the reason for the 'Bilbao Effect' to be successful is that the country decided to invest in several large infrastructural projects (subway line, airport, new drainage and water/air clean up) and the museum happened to be so successful.

The proof that the 'Bilbao Effect' cannot rely on the museum only is the fact that several other examples of museum projects that tried to emulate this effect did not work: Santiago Calatrava's new wing at the Milwaukee Art Museum or the KIASMA Helsinki Museum of Contemporary Art by Steven Holl, failed to attract the number of visitors they had initially projected. 'Bilbao Effect' may shoot itself in the foot. Given the current global proliferation, why will people travel to Bilbao in the future if they can see a Gehry in Los Angeles or closer to home?

Indeed, it is fair to say that the new architect monuments are really non-places. They are pieces of a global assembly line, relating as much to their location as do the brand-name products and franchised businesses that surround them. Essentially, this is architectural discipline's best shot at a contemporary hit machine; unfortunately, similar to each new version of iPhone or apple computer, these 'products' of architectural consumerism thinking are short-living and are thus not effective for a long-standing economic benefit.

The Guggenheim has also been fighting battles at home. In January 2005 the museum's chairman of the board, Peter Lewis, resigned over the institution's overextended finances and Guggenheim's director Krens' franchise strategy for growth. Two years earlier it was forced to close an outpost in Las Vegas, designed by Rem Koolhaas, which opened shortly after September 11, 2001, and fell victim to a national downturn in tourism. A major project by Frank Gehry himself for a second Guggenheim in NYC, close to the site of the World Trade Center, was also left in limbo after the terrorist attacks. This experience demonstrates that investing in a singular massive project cannot be a reliable economic strategy.

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The current architectural and urbanistic solutions to global tourism are either manifested through buildings that serve as architectural icons (above) or resorts that are fully constructed in such a way to meet the tourists experiences (below). Both of these design manifestations suffer from lack of use in the off-season period, representing a huge infrastructural burden for the local communities. Furthermore, they show little true resonance with the locations in which they are built, and could be placed almost anywhere. This demonstrates "an uneasy relationship between the regional unknowing and the international knowing" (Koolhaas, 367). In short, these projects are products of McDonalization.



THE NEGATIVE ASPECTS OF GLOBAL TOURISM

HOMOGENIZATION OF THE EXPERIENCE.

Globalisation of tourism however has a flip side to it. While it enables an increase in economy through foreign investments in hotels and resorts, it calls for global management and competition which diminishes the importance of local interventions in tourist destinations. This further creates a “global tourist” with a uniform traveller behaviour: the tourist spends all of their time trying to do the activities listed in the tour guide brochures. In the case of cruises, the tourists spend a vast majority of their holidays with people from their communities. In the case of spring break holidays, students from same parts of the world travel to other destinations to meet the other students from their local areas. While on a tour, each tourist has to obey the same touring rules, it has to follow the lines, stay in cues... To meet all these expectations, the tourist destination becomes designed to provide the most opportunities for the global tourist, and consequently becomes a global tourist village - a place common for all.

HOTEL / RESORT BECOMES A DESTINATION.

This becomes crucial in the design of tourist destinations, as they end up becoming target destinations themselves. In order to maximize on the time available for a holiday, the tour operators require as many activities to happen in the proximity to the tourist accommodation. This is also how the hotels/resorts end up marketing themselves - the more there is to offer, the better. In short, more is more.

*“With the wide array of Cancun hotels that we offer, **there is something for everyone!** Choose from resorts with all-inclusive options, and others with more cost-effective pricing to suit your budget. Regardless of where you decide to spend your trip to Cancun, you will be experiencing world-class service, amazing views and location, beautiful pools and beaches, great dining options, and so much more!*

*These luxurious resorts are built for the ultimate tropical experience. **These hotels aren't just a place to sleep, they're the main attraction!** With us, you'll be right in the middle of all the action; from day parties, to night events, any of these Cancun resorts is where you want to be!”*
- online description of the Cancun hotels.

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9. Bibliography and Appendix

*Please Note: Unless otherwise stated, the images from the research materials belong to the authors of the thesis, or they are collected from the google image cloud.

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