



Post War Recovery  
of Cultural Heritage Sites

# Aleppo

تحت  
القلعة

An Urban and Landscape  
Design Studio

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Jala Makhzoumi



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In Collaboration with the Urban Lab  
Graduate Programs in Urban Planning,  
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**Howayda Al-Harithy** is Professor of Architecture and Urban Design at AUB. She obtained a Bachelor of Architecture from the Oregon School of Design in 1985, a Master of Science in Architecture at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1987 and a PhD in History of Art and Architecture from Harvard University in 1992. She joined AUB in 1994 and served as Chair of the Department of Architecture and Design from 2003 to 2006 and from 2009 to 2012. She was a visiting professor at Harvard University, at MIT and at Georgetown University.

Her research focuses on urban heritage with emphasis on the theoretical debate on heritage construction and consumption related to identity building and post war reconstruction. She is widely published with over 40 articles, book chapters and reports in leading journals and refereed books. She is the editor of and contributor to *Lessons in Post-War Reconstruction: Case Studies from Lebanon in the Aftermath of the 2006 War* (2010).

Al-Harithy received many awards including the Teaching Excellence Award at AUB in 2018 and the Makkah Award for Excellence in 2017. She serves on international juries, advisory and editorial boards, as well as scientific committees including the Executive Board of Advisors for IASTE at Berkeley, the Board of Advisors for Dialectic and the Senior Advisory Board for Lonaard Magazine in London, UK.

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Jala is co-founder and partner at UNIT44, a Lebanon based practice offering consultancies in architecture, landscape architecture, ecological planning and urban design. She is also co-founder and president of the Lebanese Landscape Association, the national chapter of the International Federation of Landscape Architects.





# Forward

The social, economic and ecological discontinuities caused by war are exemplified in cities where displacement and conflict disrupt lives and destroy social and spatial fabrics. With time, “urban space develops its own logic and the inhabitants of war-ravaged cities invent new forms of survival and existence” (AlSayyad 2010: vii). In conflict as in war, people reinvent their identities, often by reinterpreting their past within a contemporary framework that offers a future (Al-Harithy 2010). By re-establishing links with the past, shared heritage helps communities overcome discontinuities and transition to a post war future.

As a heritage city par excellence, Aleppo was selected as a site of inquiry for the studio, URDS 602, offered by the graduate program in urban design at the American University of Beirut in the Spring of 2017-18. The diverse backgrounds of students, architects and landscape architects, encouraged a transdisciplinary approach that is integral to the studio-based professional education of the program at AUB.

The studio explored the potential of heritage as a catalyst for multiple recovery scenarios that are responsive to place and culture rather than top-heavy and generic. A broader and more dynamic conception of heritage was adopted to include built and open spaces, formal and informal landscapes, as well as community practices that evolved during the war. The critical lens of urban design and the holistic tools of ecological landscape design formed the methodological approach. The focus was spatial and multi-scalar, while tracking the changing relationships between the historic core, the contemporary city and its outlying region. Issues of social and environmental justice were prioritized in the syllabus with an emphasis on public space as a generator for reconstruction. The studio drew on both academic and professional experiences in post war reconstruction in the region, including Al-Harithy’s role in the Reconstruction Unit at AUB since 2006 and Makhzoumi’s UN-HABITAT work on reconstruction in Iraq in 2003 and the Good Governance for Post War Reconstruction in South Lebanon project in southern Lebanon in 2007-10.

Reconstruction in Aleppo in 2017 posed several challenges. The continuing Syrian civil war meant that reconstruction and destruction were concurrent. This condition allowed the students to envision innovative recovery scenarios that target the public realm, adapted to Aleppo’s urban culture and inclusive of the socio-spatial practices of its inhabitants. It aimed to counter the growing effects of top-heavy or market-led urban development that is shrinking the public realm, degrading the environment and undermining the right of citizens to their city (Makhzoumi 2018).

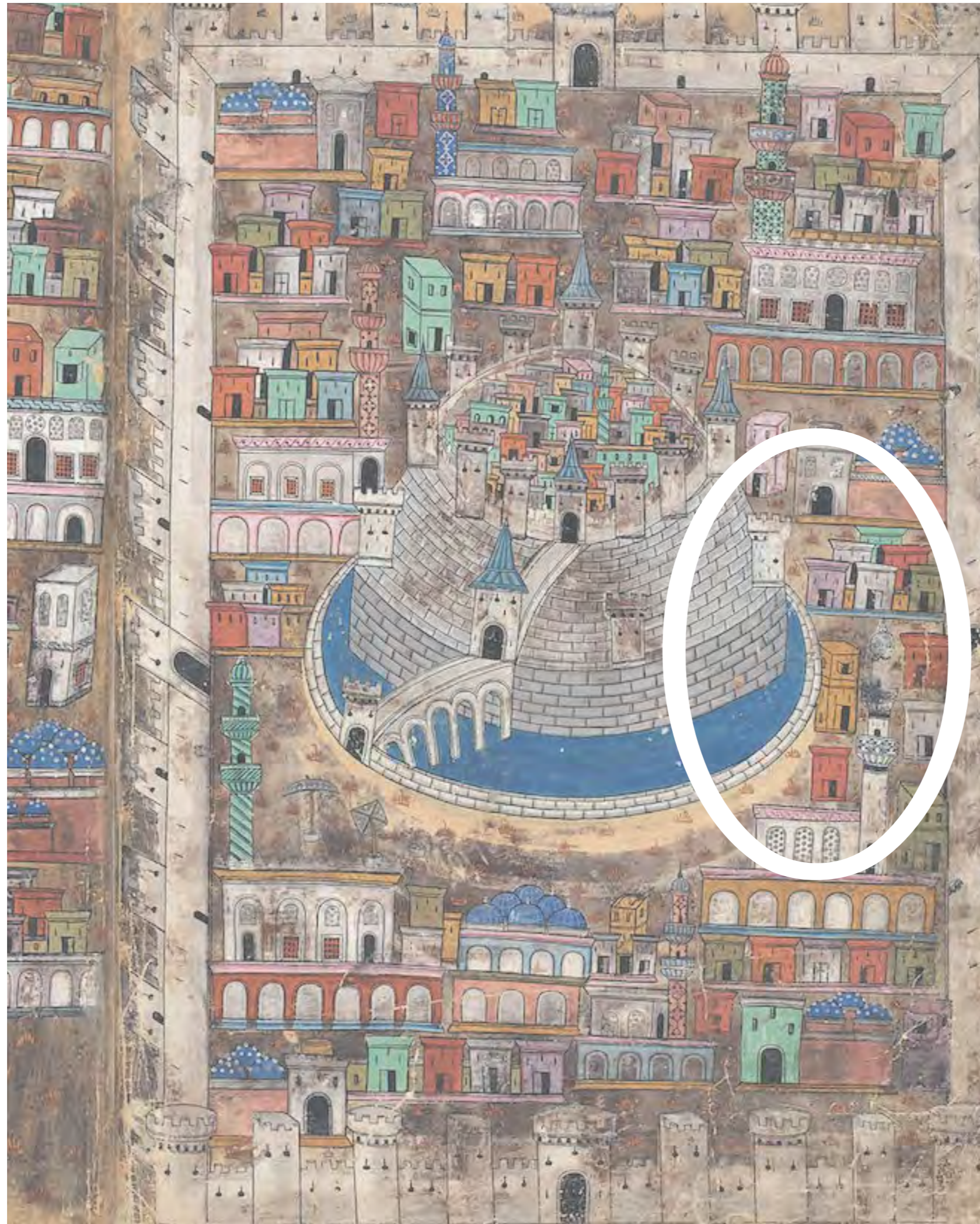
Field work was not possible due to the unsafe conditions of ongoing war in Syria. The students had remote access to the city and its people. They relied on archival data, maps and community web posts that provided the spatial and historic understanding of Aleppo and illustrated the shifting division lines inscribed by the warring parties in the war-ravaged city. Another key challenge was to initiate a community-centered participatory approach. As such, the course organizers reached out to Aleppo residents living in Lebanon and assembled a list that is representative of the city’s socio-economic and political diversity. The residents were invited to key studio reviews to share the post war aspirations of the local community and guide the visions of the students for post war Aleppo. Of equal value was the input of architect and urbanist Omar Abdulaziz Hallaj from Aleppo who was involved in the conservation of the old city and currently active in post war reconciliation and reconstruction efforts.

The studio was structured into four phases. The first phase developed an integrative reading of Aleppo and its outlying region to include historical, spatial, socio-economic, political, environmental and ecological layers. As urbanists, the students positioned themselves against this multi-layered reading and identified their spatial entry point. In the second phase, the focus narrowed down to the space below Aleppo’s citadel, Taht al Qalaa. The layers of the initial reading were collapsed to understand the evolving morphology of the space vis-à-vis changing economic and political narratives from medieval to colonial, nationalist and current times. Mapping and

textual representations formed the base for the third phase on visions for recovery. Interaction with, and feedback from, the representative community was key to testing the multiple visions the students proposed. The community agreed that the Qalaa and historic core underlay the shared identity of Aleppo and that the citadel and adjoining spaces should be restored to their previous imminence. The result was adopting a shared vision to form the basis for the fourth phase of urban design conceptualization and development.

Students, faculty members, community representatives, visiting faculty and practicing urban designers and architects formed a professional group throughout the four phases and brainstormed ways to contest class readings, challenge the proposed scenarios and critique the urban design development. The considerable experience of more than half of the students in architecture practice contributed to the success of this approach. With feedback from the community representatives, the individual recovery scenarios that the students proposed were consolidated into one vision for Aleppo as a resilient city that celebrates its rich past and aims for an inclusive future for all its inhabitants (04). The vision was interpreted individually into concepts (05) and shared by the students as a basis for five design proposals (06): infill, local commerce-led economic recovery; place (re)-making, culture-led regeneration; revitalization, cultural heritage celebration; reinforcement of resilient networks; and regeneration, public space as catalyst. The designs prioritized ownership and the phasing of implementation, proposing guidelines to engage displaced communities and returning residents. Economic drivers that ensure that the proposed narratives are self-financed were also considered a priority, not only because of the shortage of funding available for development but also to avoid top-heavy, state intervention. One of the target outcomes of the studio was generating a conversation about alternative approaches to post war recovery that are place-centered, heritage-led and people-focused.





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About the  
Studio



“ While disasters produce death, injury, heartbreaking economic loss, and widespread disruption, recovery from disaster should not be seen as a set of issues, decisions and events occurring in isolation from long-term trends in the community. The drama of the emergency and restoration periods fades, and the ongoing forces that produced the characteristics of the pre-disaster city re-emerge as the primary determinants of the city of the future. ”

Reconstruction Following Disaster.  
The MIT Press, 1977

#### BRIEF DESCRIPTION

The urban design studio tackles sites of post war recovery upon the disruption of day-to-day activities and the sense of security and belonging that unfolds through spatial rituals and practices. In particular, the studio investigates the design of public spaces and their role in the process of post war reconstruction – one of the most challenging design problems in our region today. To that end, the studio takes a close and critical look at the discourse and the approaches to post war reconstruction, from extreme preservationists who argued for the “obligation to make it again possible for future generations to experience historical continuity” to modernists who argued for the reconstruction as an opportunity to subject the city to rational planning.

The studio investigates as well the role of urban design tools and strategies in the process of recovery using the framework of social and environmental justice. It will focus on public space as a generator of the reconstruction process and will take Aleppo in Syria as its context.

The studio proposes innovative, feasible and concrete spatial strategies for recovery in Aleppo through the reconstruction and reconfiguration of public space in post war times, particularly those charged with cultural heritage. The position of the studio is four fold:

- That the historical nucleus of the city is the most charged urban unit with the highest potential as a generator for urban reconstruction particularly in relation to long-term sustainable cultural, social and economic development.
- That public space is a restructuring and a reconstructive element of the re-planned city.
- That cultural heritage is an adequate entry to post war recovery of identity and reconciliation of communities as it restores a sense of belonging through shared memories and cultural practices.
- That the public realm will be used as the platform to promote socially-just governance and a participatory design approach.

The studio therefore interrogates the approaches to post war reconstruction and the role of urban design in shaping an “integrated social space” within the process of “cultural recovery.” Urban design becomes an instrument for the creation of public amenity as “inclusive space of reconciliation” across the scarred cityscape that witnessed spatial and physical expressions of conflict.

#### APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

Design is approached as a process of inquiry and as an inter- and trans-disciplinary method of urban intervention. The studio therefore approaches the urban design process as discursive and grounded in a scenario based method backed by rigorous research, analysis and interpretation. It intends to propose “strategic design interventions” that recognize ecological, environmental, social, economic, cultural and political layers of the city as a whole.

The adopted integrated urban design methodology dissects and collapses layers of the urban public domain including the ecological, political, social, spatial, economic, infrastructural and cultural.

The studio provides students with the skills, critical understanding and theoretical bases necessary to understand the role of urban design tools and strategies in the processes of post war reconstruction and recovery, as well as engage in the urban design process in a critical, reflective and ethical manner.

The studio engages students in various ways, from design explorations, to debates, to case studies and readings that offer a theoretical framework for the understanding of key issues relating to post war recovery. It provides a basis for developing a project located in the larger contexts of social, cultural, economic and ecological processes. It exposes students to interpretive and design methods borrowed from other fields within its interdisciplinary approach. For example, the notion of “landscape as agency” that has impacted recent discourse on design is explored in the studio as the intersection between Architecture, Landscape Architecture, Infrastructure and Landscape Urbanism.



Source: <https://go.nature.com/2QwkYtG>



Source: <https://bit.ly/2rRYM0K>



Source: <https://bit.ly/2rG5HYp>



## FORMAT

This course follows a studio-based format. It is designed to allow students to develop a greater understanding of design processes and methodologies as they apply them to urban design projects. The studio sessions are reinforced by presentations, pin-ups and discussions of readings. The design explorations and developments are followed up closely and guided by the professors through desk crits. Guest speakers and jurors are also invited to enrich the critical discourse and the design development of projects. Students are required to participate in the discussion of design ideas and processes in the studio through both group and individual interactions.

The studio proposes a strategic and surgical intervention that starts at the core of the built heritage and within the public realm. As the studio takes a critical position towards reconstruction through public space and within sites of cultural heritage, the site of particular interest is the public space in the heart of the old city of Aleppo below its magnificent citadel. The site was an icon of resilience along the frontline during the civil war.

## PROJECT TYPE

Given the uncertainty of the situation in Aleppo, the aim of the studio is not to design a comprehensive plan but a “strategic intervention” as a preliminary response and vision that anchors a longer term process once the conflict comes to an end.

## PUBLIC SPACE

“Granted we can select those spaces, places, and projects that are adept to condense the urban design issues that affect the city as a whole.” Coelho, R. (2017).

The choice of the site for the strategic intervention is a critical start. Public spaces provide an entry point where collective memory and communal practices from the past can work as seeds for imagining a future for the city. Besides their infrastructural values, public spaces are threads in the narrative of the city. They encapsulate past cultural and social celebrations, reference trauma and destruction and facilitate the imagining of the landscapes.

## THE CONTEXT: ALEPPO, SYRIA

The civil uprising that began in Syria in March of 2011 turned into an armed conflict that spread throughout Syria and continues until today. The Syrian conflict caused severe damage and devastation to major urban centers and sites of cultural heritage.

Before the war, Aleppo was the economic capital of Syria and its second largest city with a population of over 4 million inhabitants. Syria’s civil war reached Aleppo in July of 2012. The rebels took control of the city which was divided between a western part under government control and an eastern part under the rebels. Battles took place between the two sides causing extensive damage to the city fabric. More than a million people are recorded to have left. The city fell under the full control of the government in December of 2016.

Aleppo was especially hard-hit by the war and its old city was fully ravaged by the conflict and the bombardments. A UNESCO-led mission reported that approximately 60 percent of the old city has been severely damaged, with 30 percent totally destroyed.

## ABOUT THE OLD CITY OF ALEPPO

The old city was celebrated as one of the oldest continually inhabited cities in the world and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The old city stretches over 360 hectares and occupies 4 percent of the total area of Aleppo. It housed, prior to the war, an estimated population of 120,000 inhabitants; primarily Sunni Muslims and Orthodox Christians. It consisted of the ancient walled area with multiple gates containing Greco-Roman streets marked by medieval Islamic monuments. Historic neighborhoods developed outside the medieval walls of the 6<sup>th</sup> century. At the center of the city rose the citadel of Aleppo, dating to the 12<sup>th</sup> century with roots in ancient times.

The old city witnessed major urban transformation during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Prominent and wealthy families who lived in the old city began to leave in early 20<sup>th</sup> century and the historic core began to deteriorate. Rural migrants moved into the old quarters. Between the 1950’s and the 1970’s, the old city suffered as modern developments took place at its outskirts and began to threaten its heritage fabric. Activists, mostly architects and conservationists, moved to turn things around and to protect Old Aleppo’s

built heritage. They succeeded in raising awareness and opposing the municipal plans threatening the destruction of a neighborhood near Bab Al-Faraj and the 1974 masterplan. These efforts resulted in the formation of the “Old City Committee” and eventually led to two major shifts: Aleppo was recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site and the Directorate of the old city was formed within the municipality charged with the preservation and upgrade of the old city.

In 2010 just before the advent of the war in Syria, the city completed its strategic development plan for 2025. It crafted a vision that recognizes the city’s rich history and economy. The process was cut short by the emergence of the war and the destruction of the city’s core economy and heritage sites.

In 2012, the old city became the frontline of the battle between the Syrian government and opposition forces and became a contested and militarized zone as the armed conflict divided Aleppo. Its citadel that rises approximately 45 meters above ground level was key in the power game over the city until it fell under the control of the regime. Studies showed that “90 percent of the surface area of the old city is estimated to have been damaged by the war” and “a third of the old city has either been highly affected or destroyed.” Its architectural monuments and icons were damaged by rockets and explosions. The Great Mosque that dates back to the 8<sup>th</sup> century sustained serious damage. Many sections of the old souqs were charred or damaged by the fighting between armed groups. It was reported that “amongst this destruction, the cultural heritage, monuments and memories are being destroyed daily through the diverse tactics used by all sides.” Local and international actors called for urgent interventions in the old city to save its cultural heritage. “It is of utmost importance to deliver first aid emergency measures once Old Aleppo is accessible” argued Rima Lababidi (2017) “in order to stabilize and secure assets, but also to pave the way for an inclusive post-conflict reconstruction process that meets the needs of the affected community.”

The question that is raised and addressed by many today is where to start the reconstruction and how? Debates are ongoing and propose comprehensive re-planning or housing and shelter as the priority for

the post war reconstruction project. Others are focused on the old city. In 2017, plans were revealed to restore 250 buildings in the old city. Mazen Samman, UNESCO’s associate program coordinator in Aleppo, stated: “Our vision is to rebuild the old city exactly as it was before the war, with the same stones where we can.” Tim Williams of UCL raised concerns around such an approach: “The danger is that top-down, externally motivated projects will focus on the commercially attractive rather than what enables communities to feel that Aleppo is once more their city and home.” He added: “Aleppo is an example of the need for engaging with the needs of those communities to rebuild themselves, and to examine how heritage and archaeology can contribute meaningfully to that process.”

## THE SITE OF INTERVENTION

The public space has witnessed urban transformations during the last century that narrate and reference the transformations of the city as a whole, thus serves as a place of reflection through design intervention on critical sites of recovery.

## URBAN STUDIO LEARNING OUTCOMES

- To develop an understanding of the cultural, economic, ecological, social and political dynamics shaping the urban environment through historical research, field investigations and analysis of institutional and community networks.
- To acquire skills in documenting, analyzing and interpreting the spatial characteristics of the urban form through visual surveys, typomorphological and structural analysis and mapping of spatial network.
- To develop an understanding of urban transformation over time.
- To acquire knowledge of key urban design principles and to critically pursue them through tools, methods and strategies of intervention within a complex urban context.
- To develop the ability to address issues of urban reconstruction through a process of design conceptualization and development.

- To develop skills in graphic thinking and representation in urban design projects.

- To develop and apply advanced skills in design research, thinking and intervention.

- To apply the design process to complex interdisciplinary problems in the post war recovery of urban heritage sites.

- To apply interdisciplinary design research and thinking in public spaces through an environmentally and culturally sound sustainable and green design intervention.



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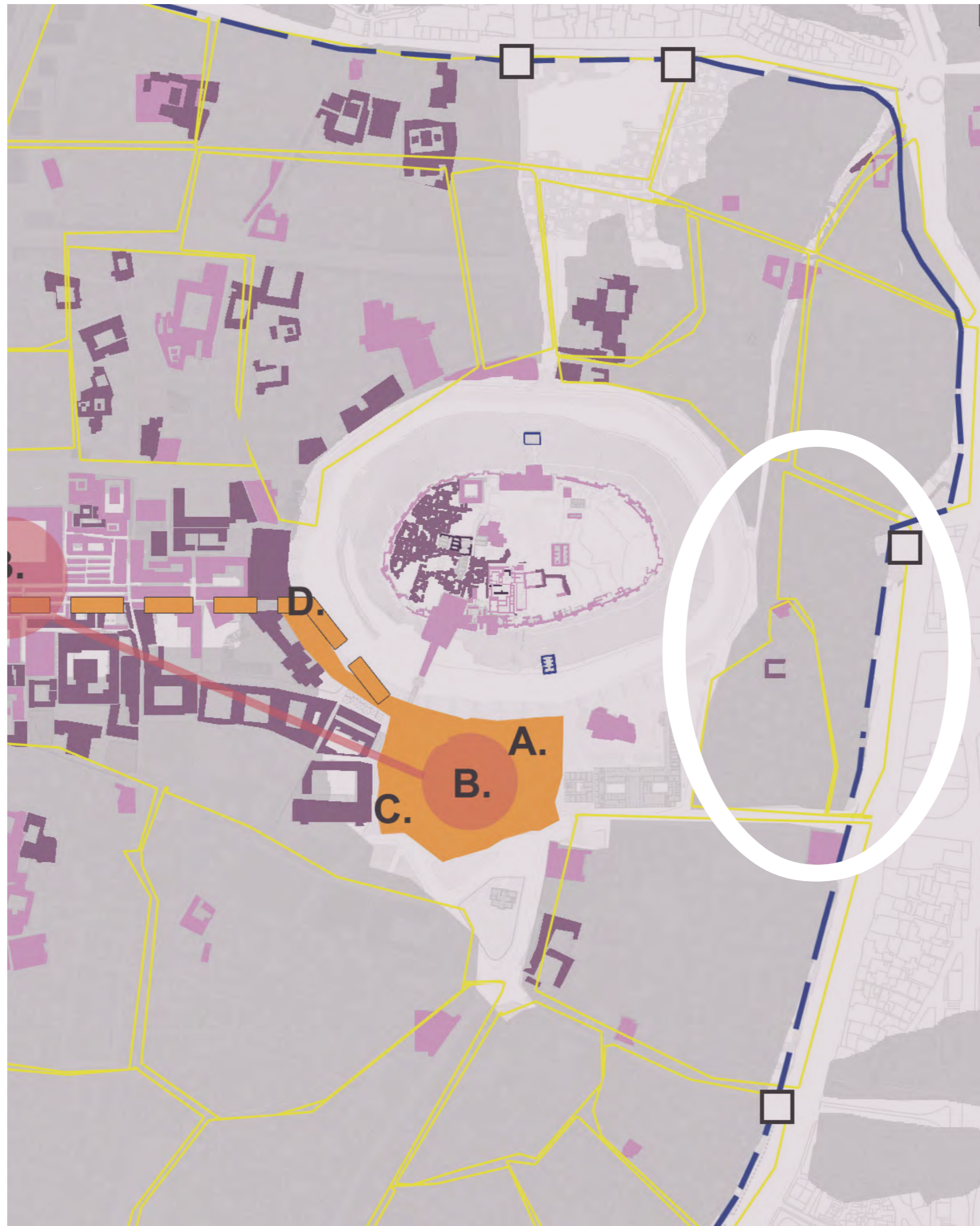
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# 2

Multi-layered  
Narrative



**Ayyubid Dynasty**  
1183–1260  
A Military and Ceremonial  
Space of Parades

- Sultan Ghazi refortifies Aleppo against the crusaders
- The moat was deepened

The Madrasa al-Sultaniya was the first building within the citadel plaza

The Mongol invasion destroyed the eastern and southern parts of the city wall and caused damage to the site

**Mamluk Dynasty**  
1261-1515  
A Place of Exchange, A Market Place

Governors focused on building grander scale sites in the central monumental area located south of the entrance gate to the citadel

The attack of Tamerlane had devastating effects on the city

- Construction of Mosque al-Utrush
- Moralism emerges

Construction of Hammam Yalbugha al Nasri

1186

1223

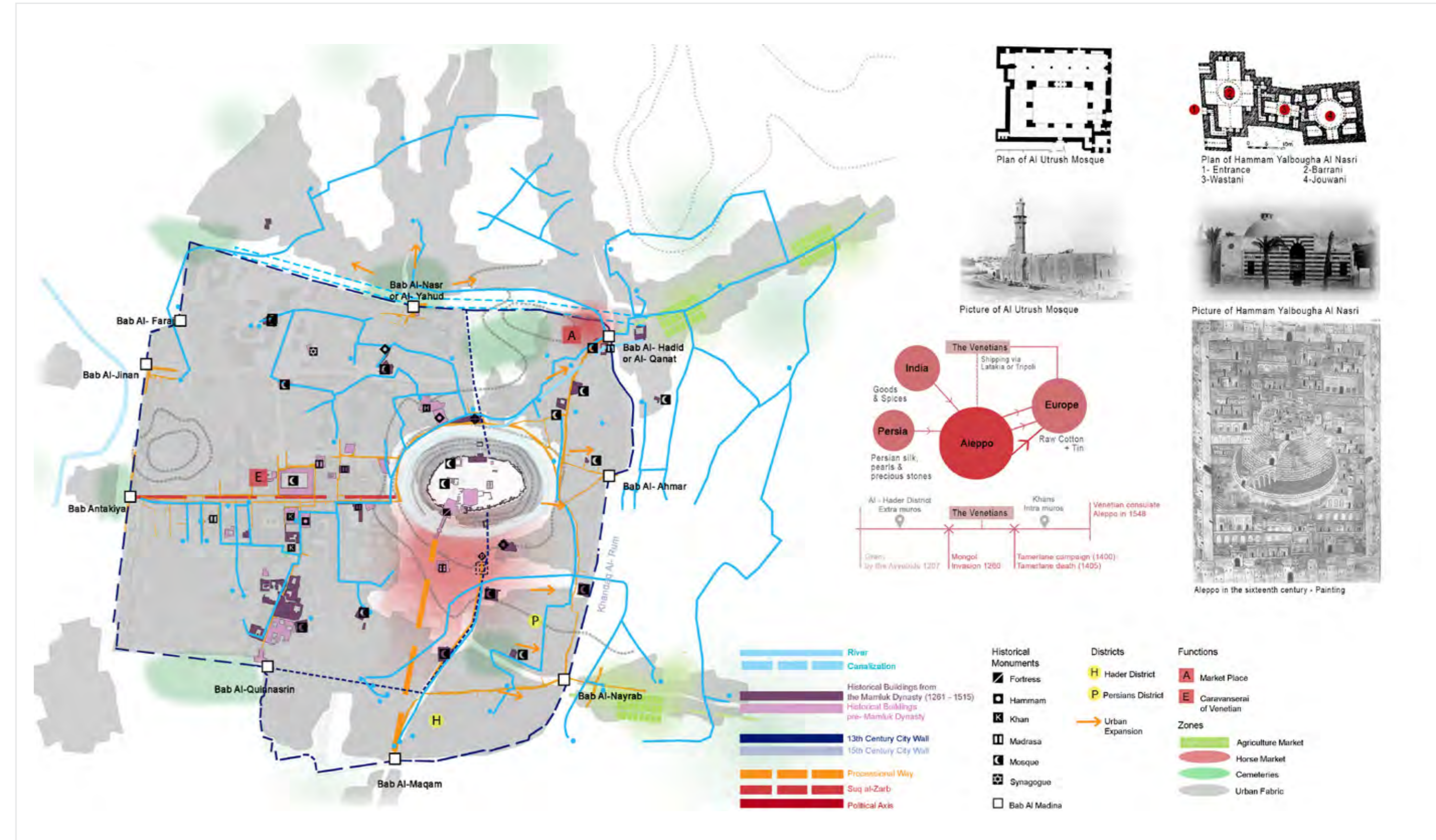
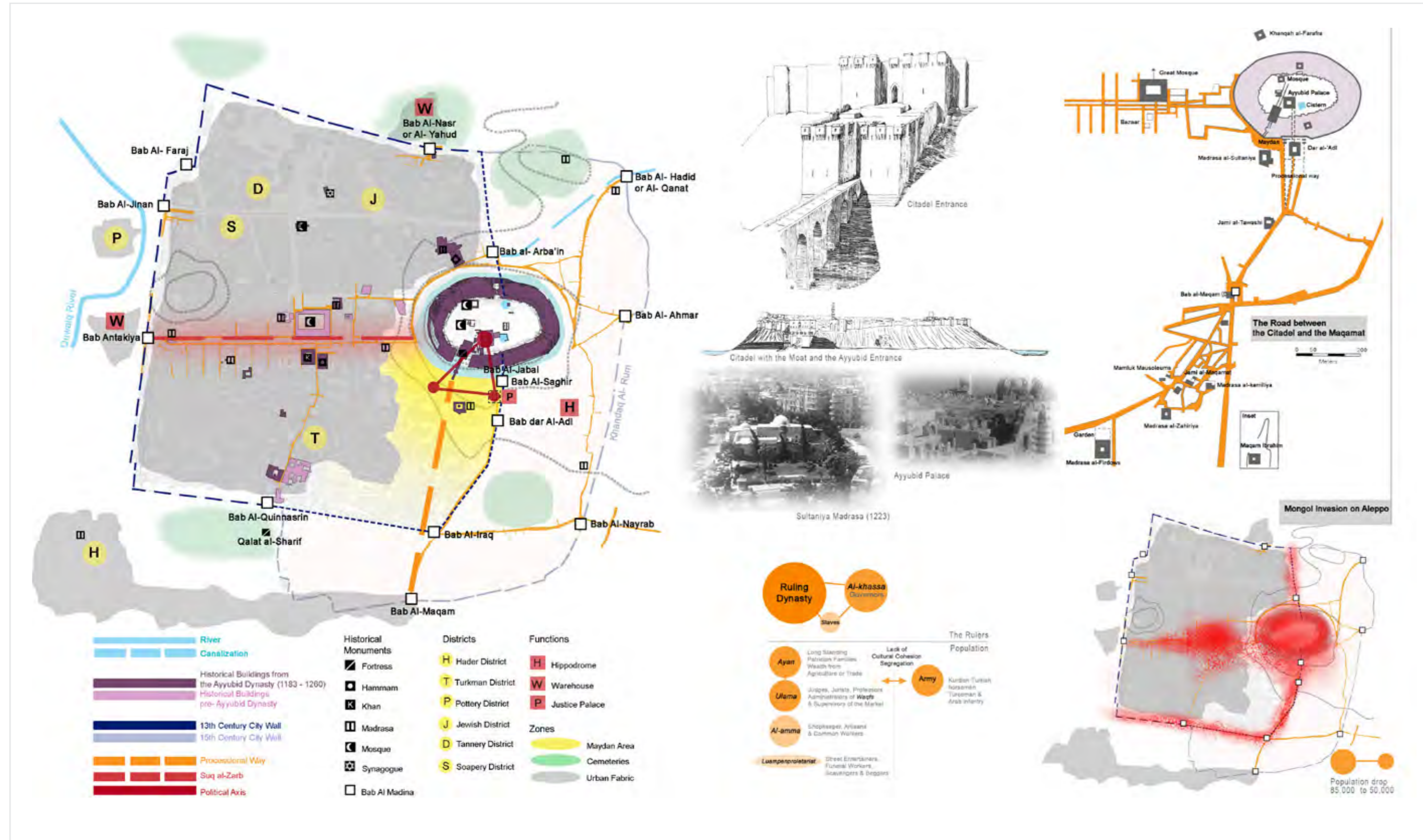
1260

1318

1400

1403

1491





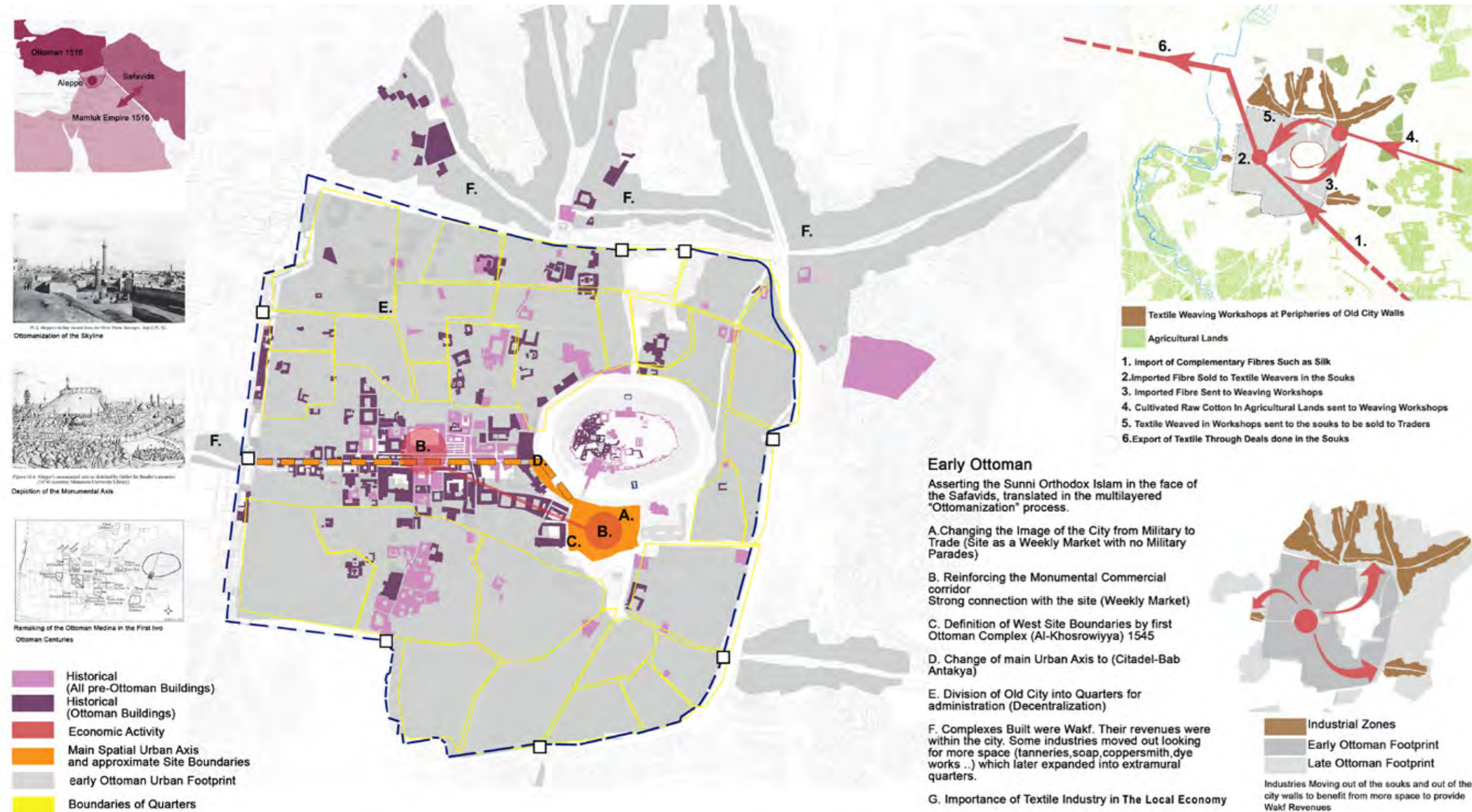
**Early Ottoman**  
1517-1585  
A Market Place

The political context of the Ottoman conquest of Aleppo

Ottomanization of the cityscape

1517

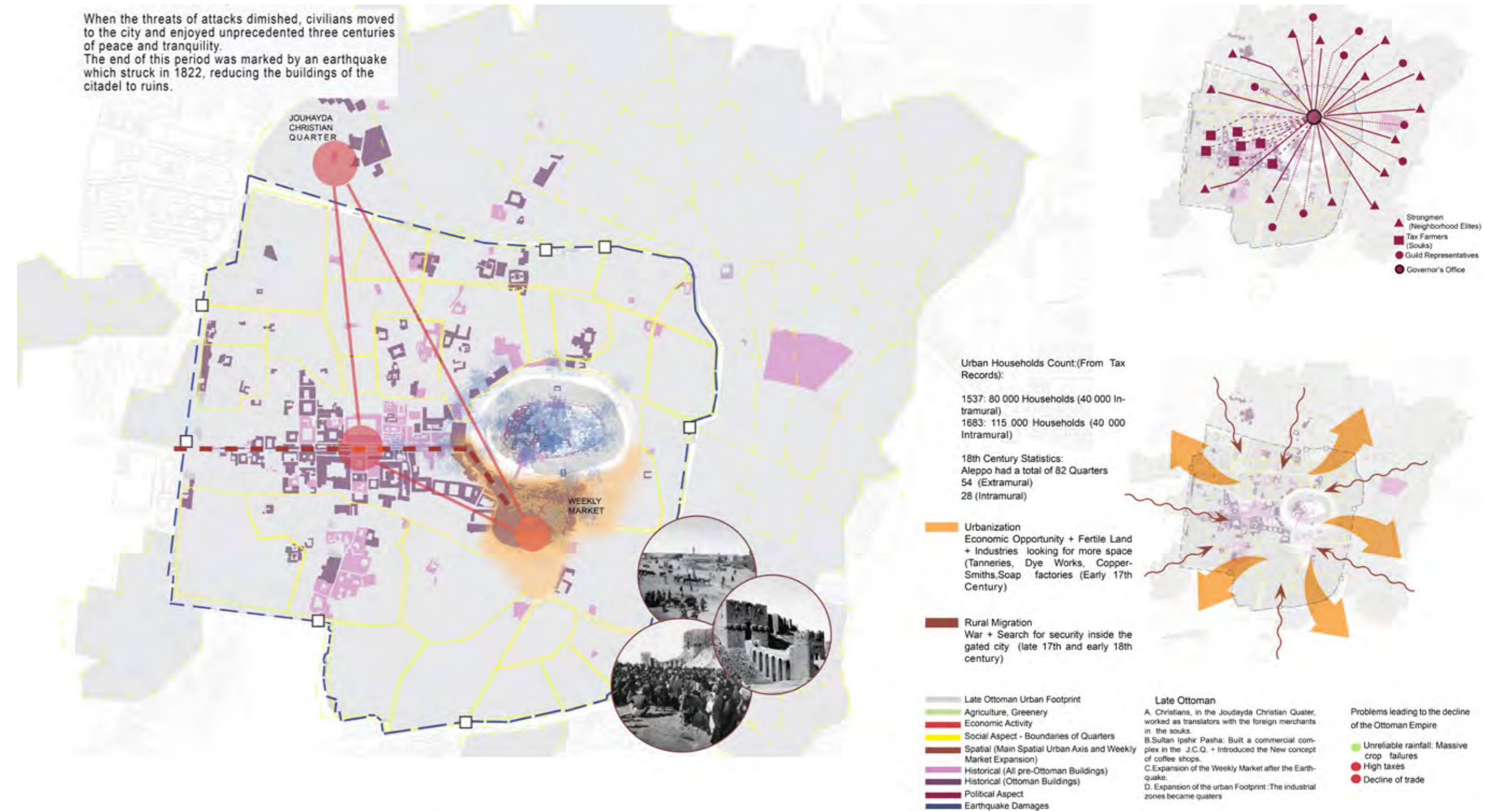
1546  
1585



**Late Ottoman**  
1800-1918  
A Weekly Market Place

Consecutive earthquakes cause heavy damage to the site

1812  
1822





**French Mandate 1918–1943**

A Military Space of Barracks

Nation-state of Syria formed with new boundaries drawn by the French authorities

France colonized Aleppo, Syria

The plaza at the foot of the citadel became a military space

The French began archaeological excavation and restoration works

Syria gained its independence

**Post-Independence: 1950–1990**  
A Transportation Hub.

Water from Queiq River was used in massive irrigation projects

Banshoya proposed new roads for the old city of Aleppo that were implemented later on

New administrative buildings have shifted the urban center outside of the old city towards the west

1918

1920

1920  
1945

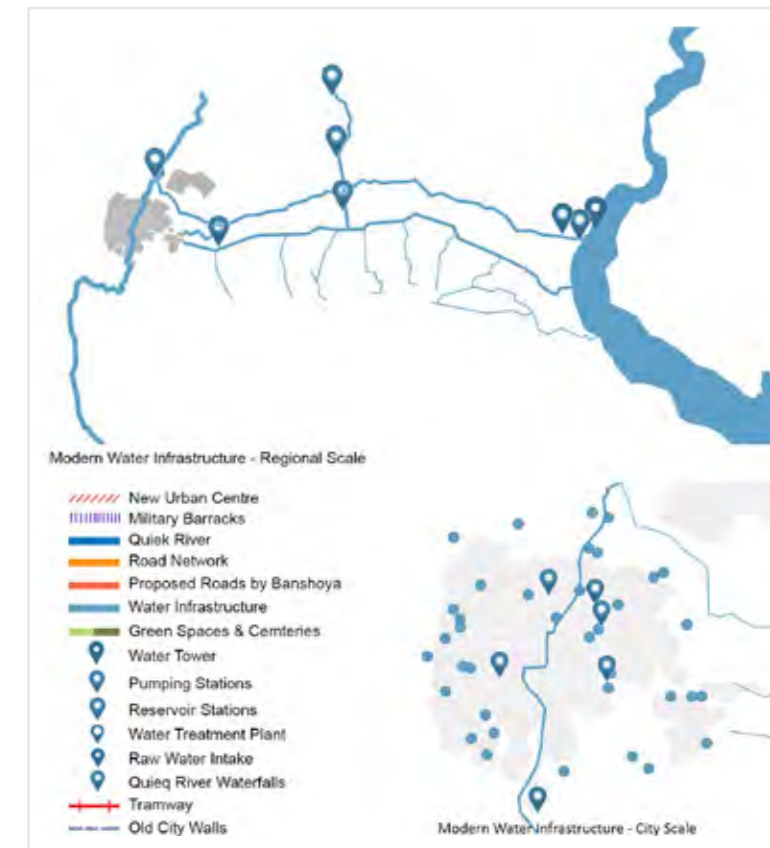
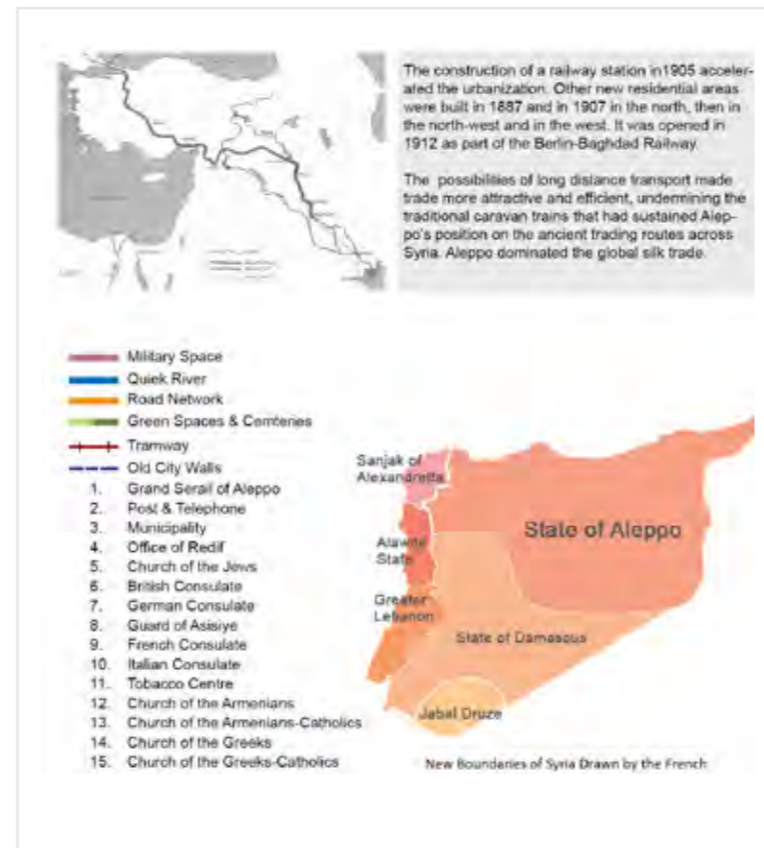
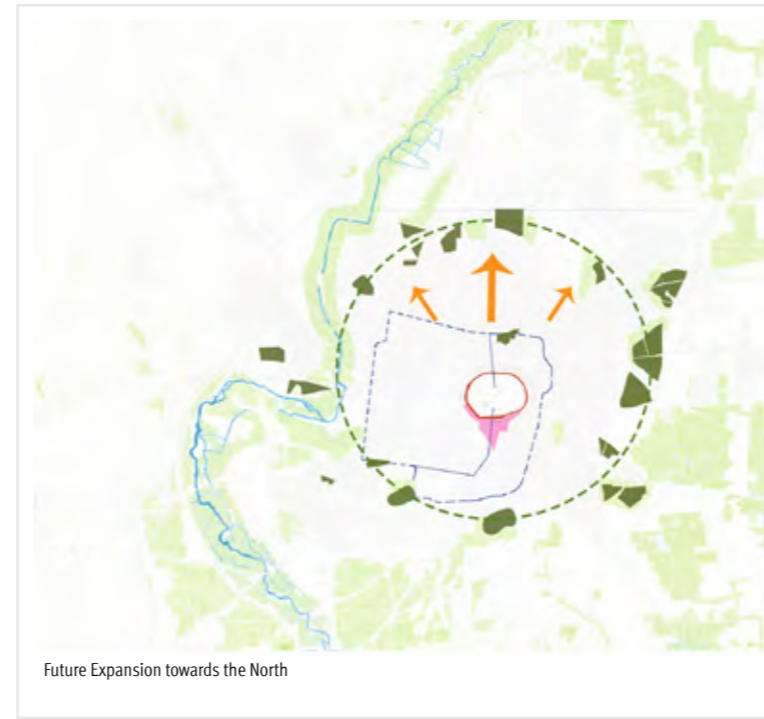
1930

1943

1960

1974  
1980

1980s





**Pre-War  
2003-2010**  
A Cultural Hub and Promenade

The Aga Khan Trust for Culture started a rehabilitation project in the perimeter of the citadel

There was a sudden decline in the average rainfall and a rise in average temperature

Inauguration of the Aleppo Citadel Perimeter Project

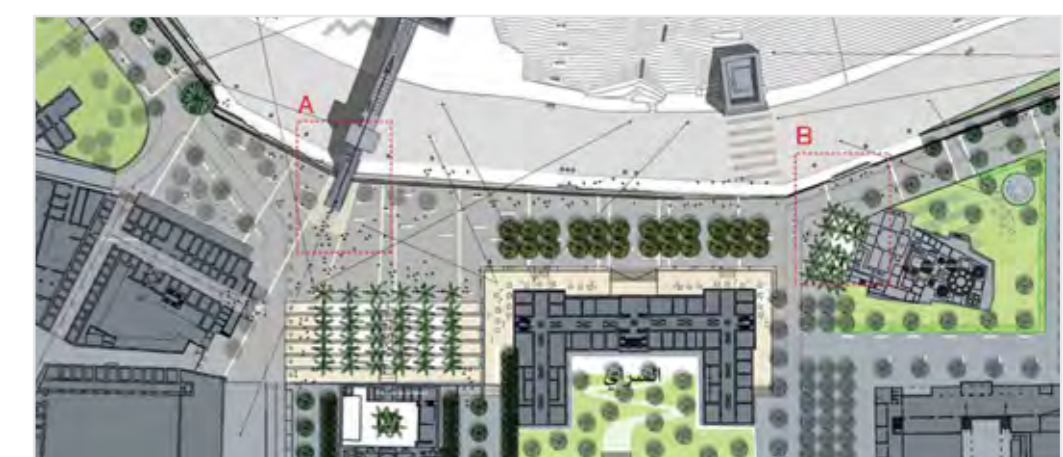
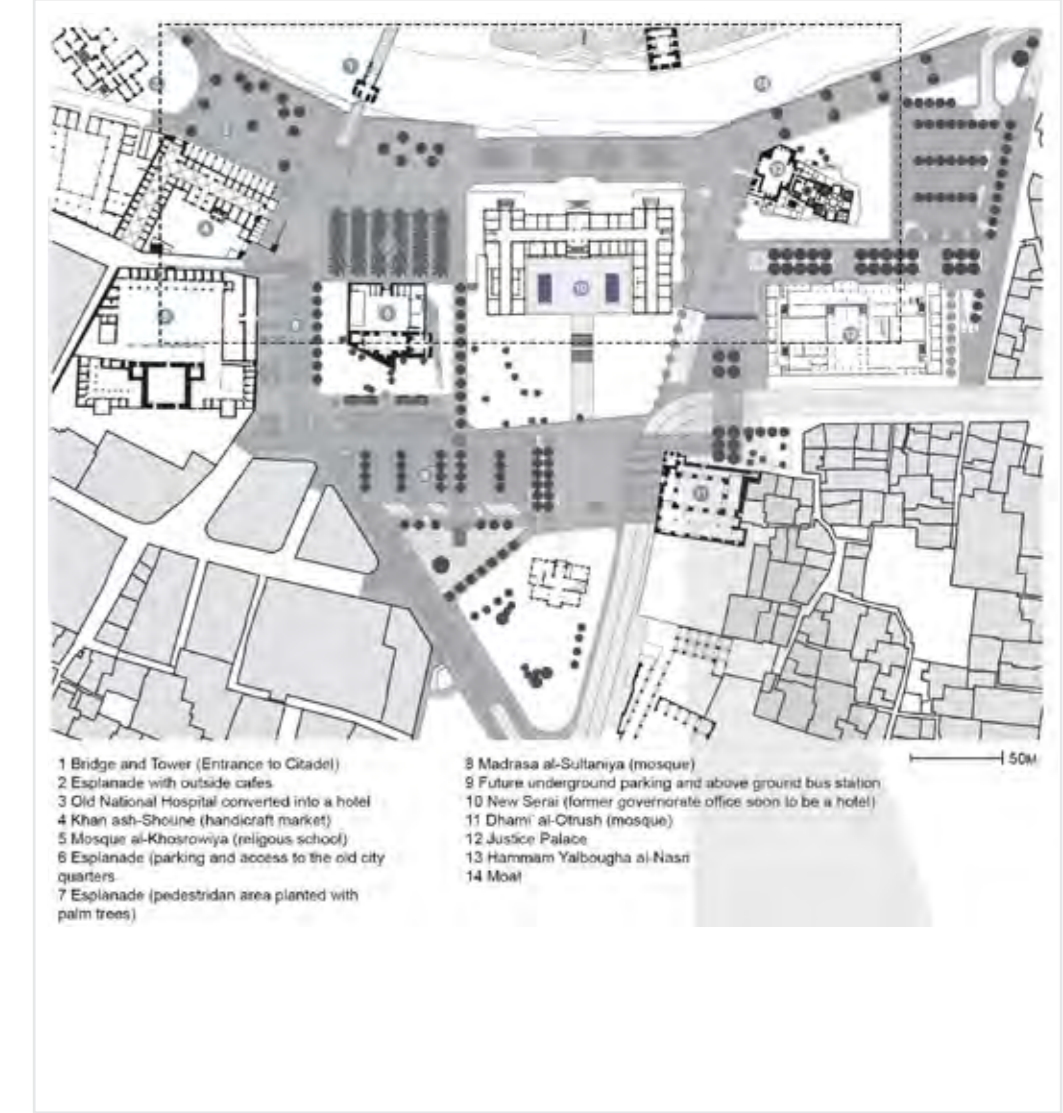
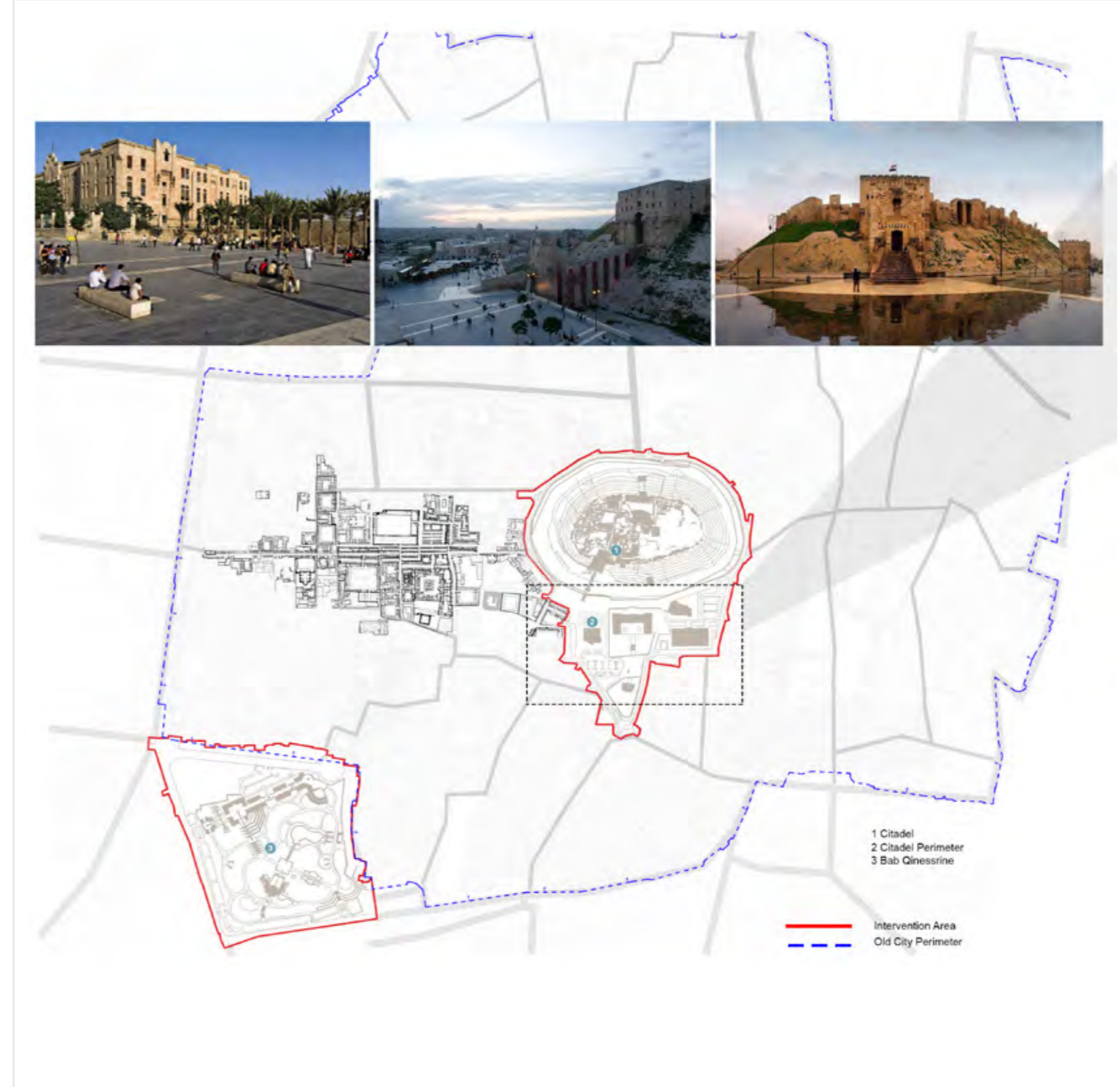
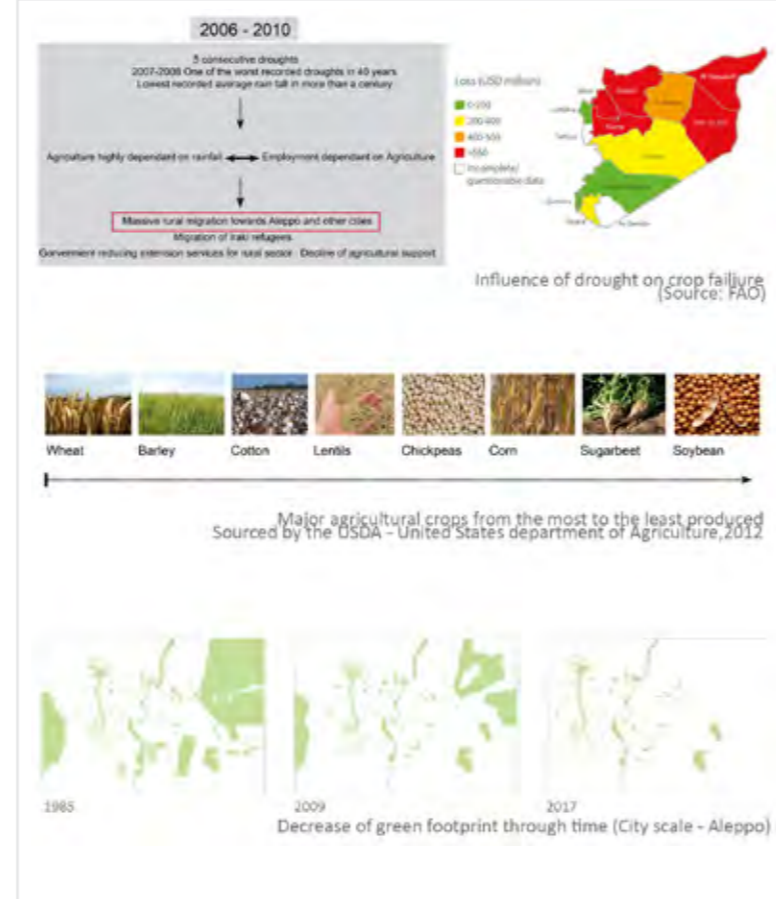
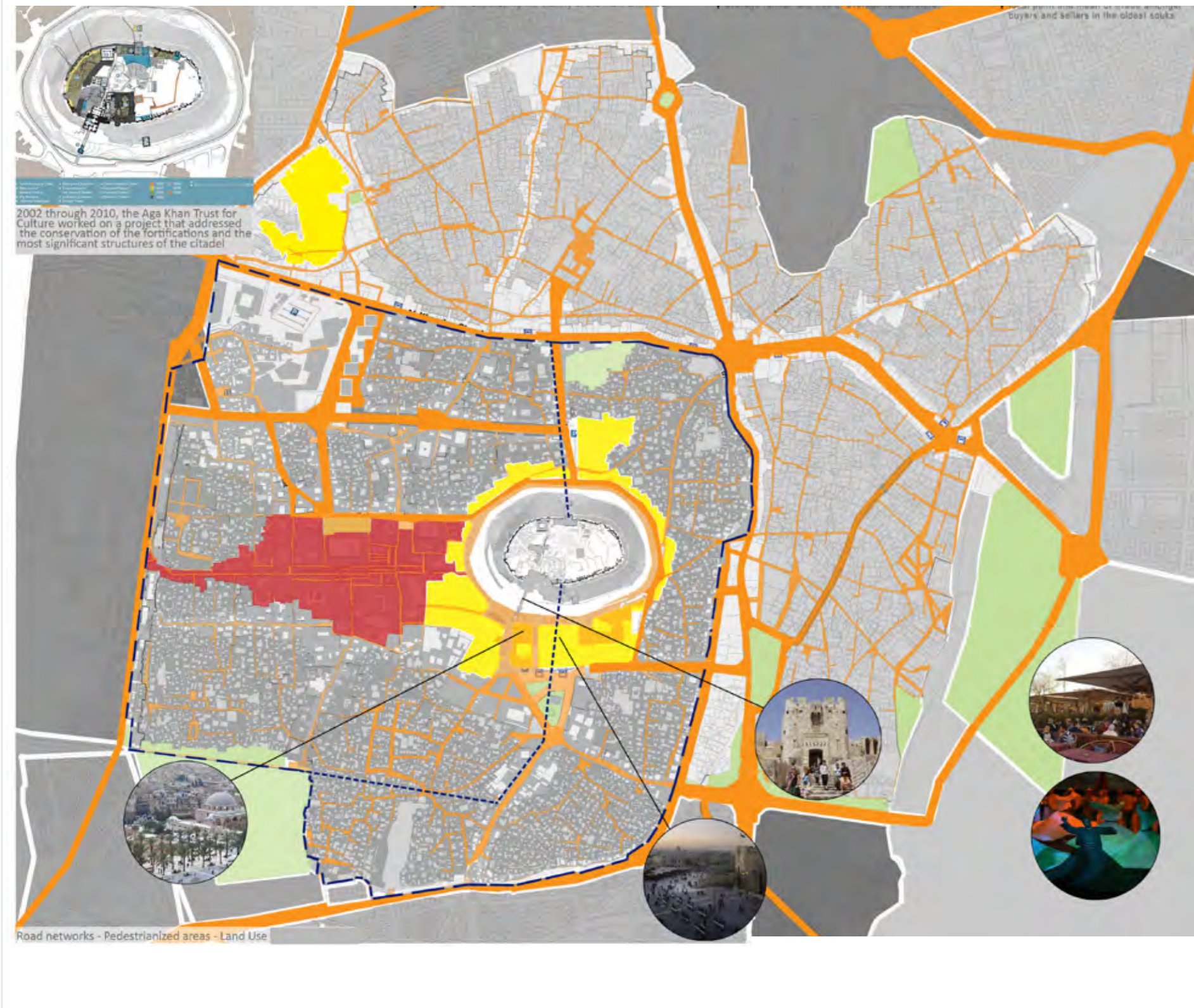
Yarn trading developed to become a focal point for trade among buyers and sellers in the souqs

2003

2006  
2009

2009

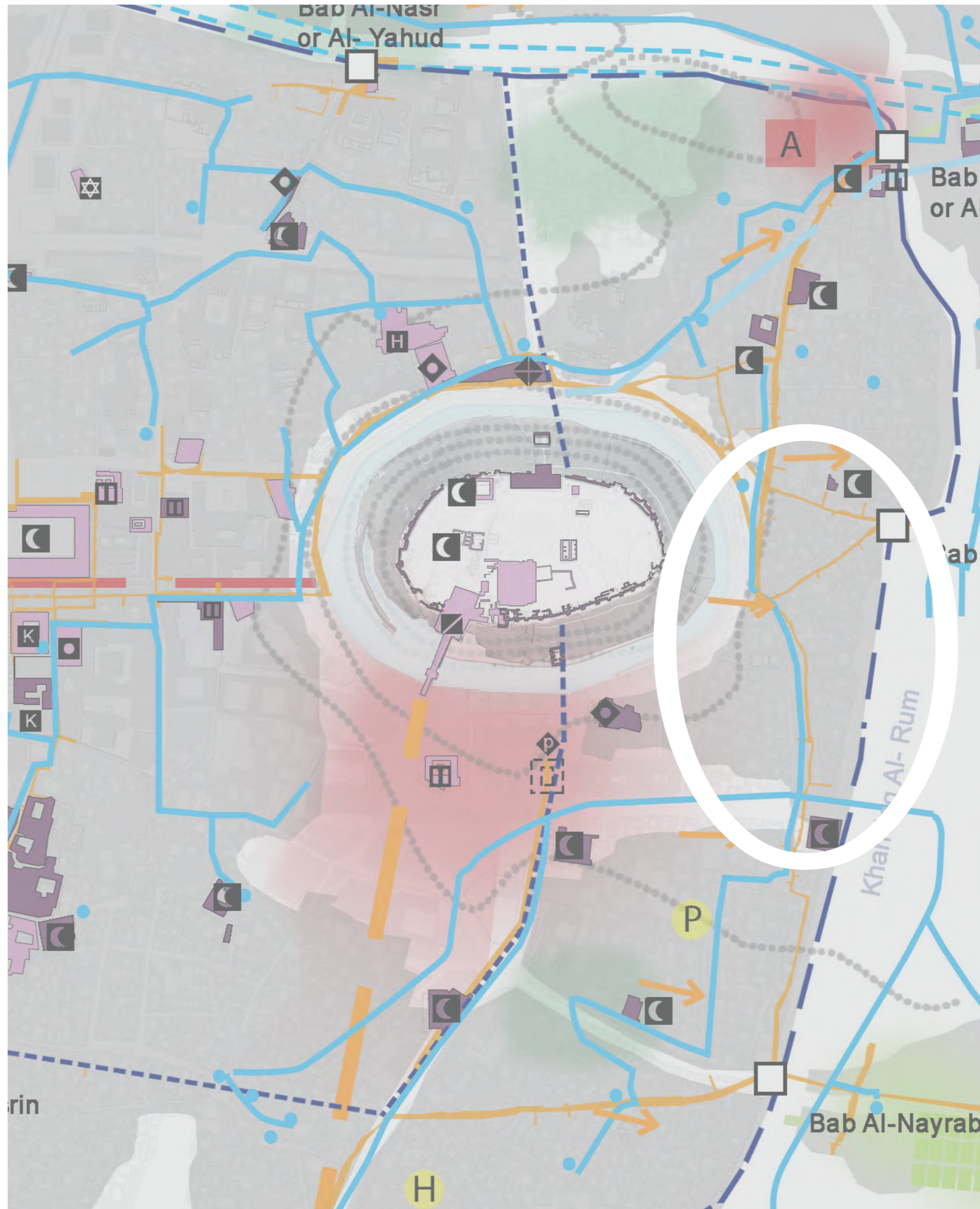
2010











3

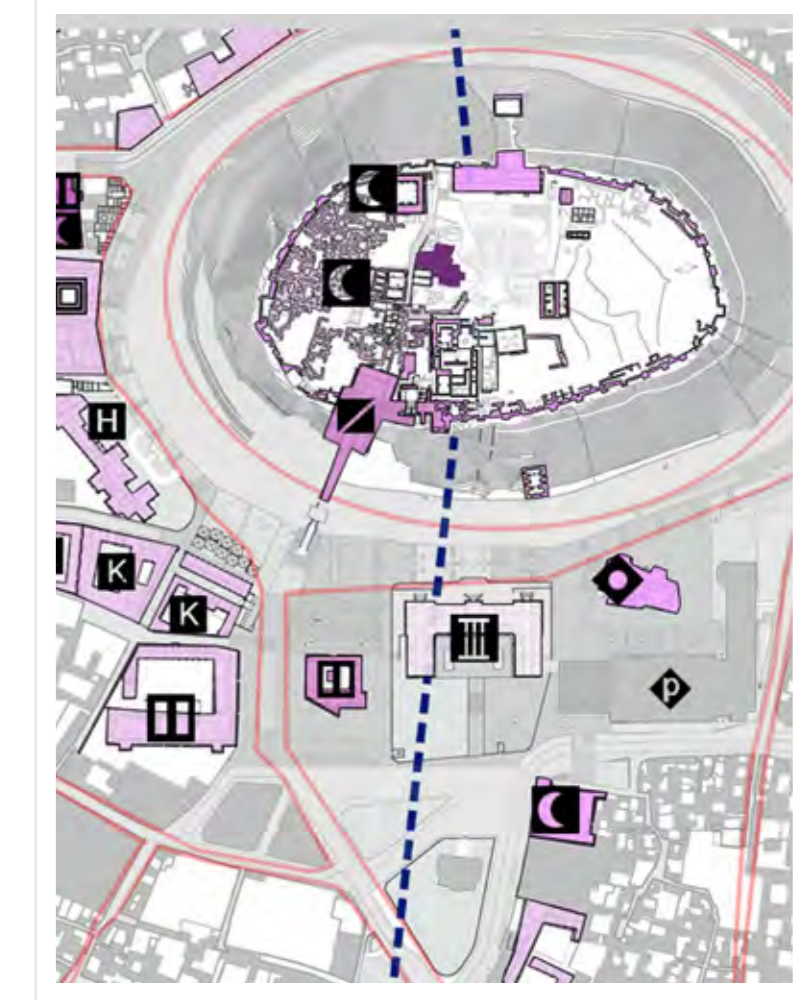
Analysis



# Historical

Cycles of War, Destruction and Reconstruction

Historical Map



FRENCH MANDATE (1920-1941)	BAB AL MADINA (GATE)	QUIYSAIYEH
OTTOMAN PERIOD (1516-1919)	BEYT	SOAP FACTORY
LATE MAMLUK (1408-1515)	BARRACKS	SERAIL
MAMLUK DYNASTY (1261-1497)	CHURCH / CONVENT	SYNAGOGUE
AYYUBID DYNASTY (1183 - 1260)	FORTRESS	Limit of Districts
PERIOD (1118 - 1183) ARTUQID - ZENGID	HAMMAM	Wall Limit (15th Century)
SELJUQ DYNASTY (1068 - 1117)	HOSPITAL	Wall Limit (13th Century)
PERIOD (948 - 1085) HAMDANID - FATMID - MURGASID - UGAYYID	KAHWA	A- Bab Al-Jinan (967)
ABBASID DYNASTY (751 - 945)	KHAN	B- Bab Al-Faraj (lower in 1899)
Umayyad DYNASTY (661-750)	MADRASA	C- Bab Al-Nasr (13th century)
ANTIQUE PERIOD	MATBAKH	D- Bab Al-Hadid (1609)
	MAUSOLEUM	E- Bab Al-Ahmar (13th century -)
	MILITARY SCHOOL	F- Bab Al-Nayrab (1216 - 1237)
	MOSQUE	G- Bab Al-Maqam (13th century)
	PALACE	H- Bab Al-Qinnasrin (1256)
		I- Bab Antakiya (11th Century)



Damage Assessment Map



▲ ALEPPO CITADEL BEFORE AND AFTER  
▲ THE GREAT MOSQUE BEFORE AND AFTER  
▲ HAMMAM TAL BOUGHIA AL NASSRI  
▲ NEW SERIAL  
▲ VIEW OF THE CITADEL

- DESTROYED
- HIGHLY DAMAGED
- MODERATELY DAMAGED
- SLIGHTLY DAMAGED
- DESTROYED MONUMENT
- ◐ PARTIALLY DESTROYED MONUMENT
- ◑ DAMAGED MONUMENT

Citadel Timeline



BRONZE & IRON AGES

A place where temples were erected:  
Dagan (Babylonian God),  
Hadad (West Semitic God),  
Teshup (King of the Gods of the Hittite),  
Shamash (Assyrian God).

PLACE OF WORSHIP AND RITUALS

HELLENISTIC & ROMAN AGES

A Home for governors.

FORTIFIED ACROPOLIS MILITARY CENTER &

BYZANTINE & CHRISTIAN ERA

Replacement of pagan temples by churches. Two churches located within the Citadel (according to historian Ibn Shaddad).  
A home for governors.

CHRISTIAN PLACE OF WORSHIP

540 A.D

Persian Ruler (Khosru I) captured Aleppo. The inhabitants of the city along with their horses and soldiers took refuge in the Citadel. Problem of short supply of water.

A PLACE OF REFUGE A SYMBOL TO & BE PROTECTED

636 A.D.

Muslim Victory by Khalid ibn al-Walid  
The inhabitants of the city along with Byzantine governor Youskima took refuge in the Citadel.  
Story of the Giant Slave Dames and the goats.

10th Century

Byzantine Rule 962 A.D. Citadel left unconquered. Population took refuge in the Citadel.

CHARGED WITH HISTORICAL STORIES

Revenge for the Death of Theodore; Nicephorus selected 12000 captive Aleppines and forced them to kneel in front of the Citadel and beheld them. Return of Salf al-Dawla (necessary repairs to the Citadel and turning into his residence).  
Bakjour fled to the Citadel withstanding a 2 year siege.

A RESIDENCE FOR THE GOVERNOR

A PLACE FOR IMPRISONMENT & TORTURE

Captivity of King of Jerusalem (1104),  
Joscelin Count of Edessa (1150),  
Ragnald of Châtillon (1160).

ERA OF THE CRUSADES



SECTION OF THE ENTRANCE OF THE CITADEL

AYYUBIDE ERA

Al-Zahir Ghazi:  
Restoration of the city walls and renovation of their gates.  
Digging of a moat around the Citadel and covering up the slope with stone.  
Building a large Mosque and several palaces within the Citadel.  
A place of Residence for Al-Zahir Ghazi and his children.

MONGOLS

Year 1260:  
Unsuccessful siege of the Citadel.  
Massacre of the defenders after the opening of the gates.

MAMLUKS

1401

Year 1261:  
Mongols out of Syria.  
Restoration of the Citadel by Mamluk King Al- Aahref Qala'Un.

1405 - 1407

Attack by Amir Timur a Turco-Mongol conqueror. A disaster damaging Aleppo and its Citadel.

Return of the Mamluks: Reconstruction and consolidation of the Citadel.  
Two outpost towers + large throne room above the principal entry.  
Quanswah al-Qhor:  
Fortification of the Citadel and repair of the walls, strengthening of the two outer defensive towers. Moving all his treasures to the fortress.

1516 OTTOMAN RULE

Salim I: Mocking the extensive fortification by sending one soldier to take possession of the abandoned Citadel.

LITTLE MILITARY IMPORTANCE TO THE CITADEL

Widespread use of gunpowder: Citadel become an official residence of the Turkish Governors.  
A swarm of civilians also took up residence on the hilltop.

1833 IBRAHIM BASHA

Taking over Aleppo. Building barracks. Erection of a windmill. Removal of the stones of the hill, to be used in other new buildings.

DISAPPEARANCE OF THE DEFENSIVE USE OF THE CITADEL

With the advent of heavy artillery military aircraft and powerful explosives the defensive use of the Citadel vanished.

1920 FRENCH MANDATE

1945 French Forces Withdrawal

A PLACE FOR GARRISON

WORK OF RESTORATION  
Preservation works by the Department of Antiquities and Museums

TOURISTIC MONUMENT  
Classified by UNESCO as a world heritage site.

1974 / 1986

Hit by Rebels.  
Reclaimed by the Government in 2013.

SITE OF CONFRONTATION

2012 CIVIL WAR





Site Character Throughout History



1910 - Mingling in front of the citadel



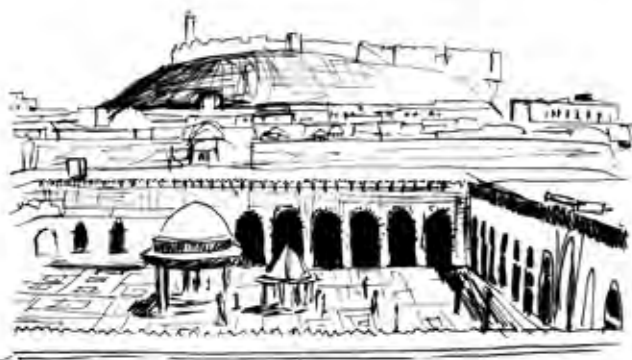
1960 - Citadel facade



1970 - Springtime in Aleppo



2009 - Main square



1930 - Umayyad mosque, remnant of the early Islamic period



2003 - View to the south towards the citadel



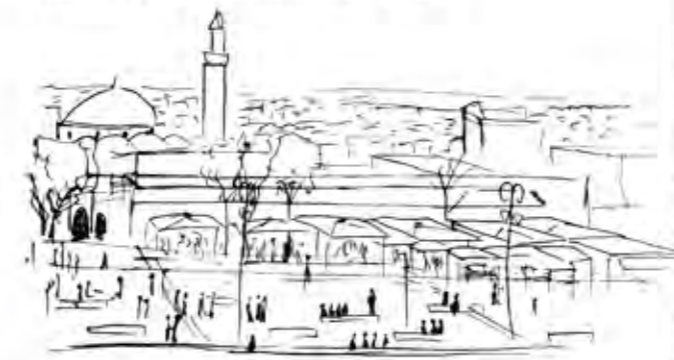
2014 - Damaged citadel



1939 - Aleppo



1960 - Citadel bus stop



2009 - Esplanade with an outside cafe

**Islamic period:** "Orientalisation" of the organic urban fabric. Urban patterns derived from concepts of civic life and social attitudes rooted in the behavioral codes of Islam.

**Mamluk period:** Focus of change on suburbs.

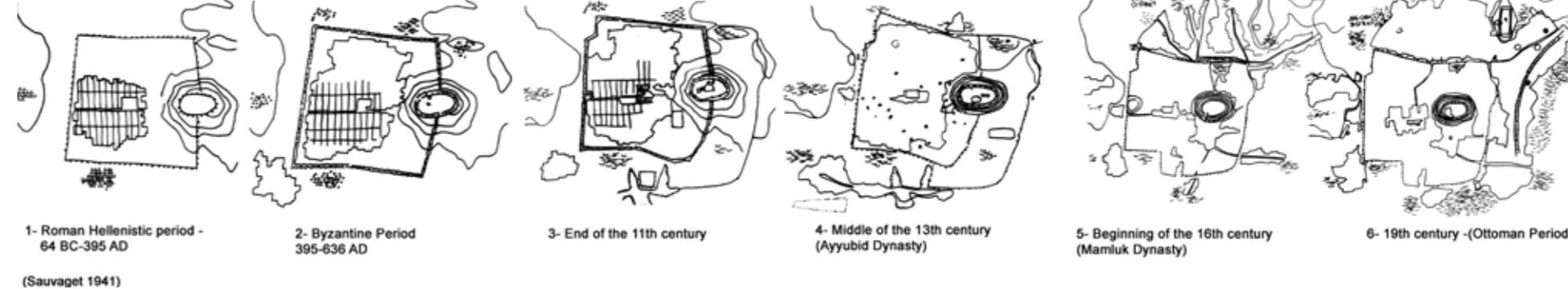
**Ottoman period:** Administrative character of the Site. Modernization process at the late Ottoman era. Expansion of the commercial and industrial fabric. Moats filled to construct peripheral roads accommodating a tramway linking new districts to the Old town.

**French Mandate:** Detachment of the Historical Core from the City. Following western standards of urbanization.

**Before the War:** Rehabilitation Process. Reactivating vacant areas. Recreating a link to the historical core through pedestrianization. A vital and touristic character of the Site.

**During the War:** A site of confrontation between the government and the opposition forces.

Urban Evolution



1- Roman Hellenistic period - 64 BC-395 AD  
 2- Byzantine Period 395-636 AD  
 3- End of the 11th century (Savaqaet 1941)  
 4- Middle of the 13th century (Ayyubid Dynasty)  
 5- Beginning of the 16th century (Mamluk Dynasty)  
 6- 19th century - (Ottoman Period)



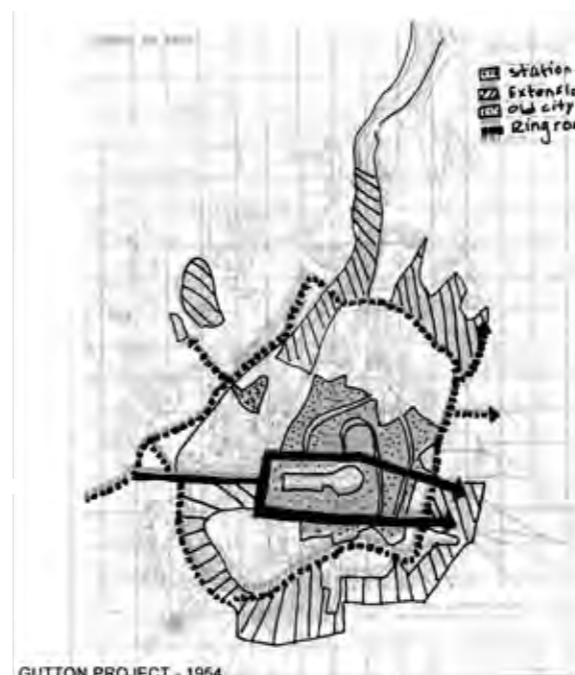
ROUSSEAU - 1825

POPULATION:

1537 - 80,000	1950 - 362,600	2004 - 2,132,100
1883 - 115,000	1964 - 547,030	2010 - 4,600,000 (approx.)
1823 - 250,000	1970 - 639,428	2017 - 1,802,264
1858 - 70,000	1985 - 1,145,117	
1876 - 95,000	1990 - 1,216,000	
1910 - 130,000	1994 - 1,542,000	



SOUTH-WEST ARIAL VIEW OF ALEPPO TAKEN IN 1931  
[https://archnet.org/authors/33/media\\_content/432](https://archnet.org/authors/33/media_content/432)



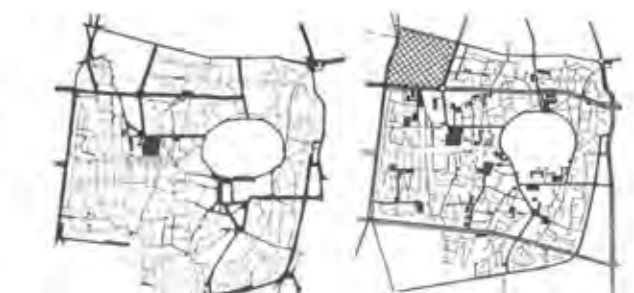
GUTTON PROJECT - 1954



Plan of the District of Farafrah in Aleppo near the Great Mosque before and after



G. BANSHOYIA 1974



The Road Proposal of the 1974 Master Plan by G. Bانشويا cutting through the Old City

**1899**  
 At the time of governor Raef Pacha.  
 Architect: Jung + Municipal Engineer Charles Chartier.  
 European orthogonal grid system.

**1930**  
 Work of the Civil Engineers Danger & Ecochard.  
 Modernizing the city in creating new roads.  
 Opposition by the inhabitants.

**1954 - Gutton Project**  
 Adopted - Work of the Architect A. Gutton.  
 Widening the road leading to the Omayyade Mosque and the Citadel.  
 Facilitating vehicular traffic and circulation around important administrative buildings. (Municipality, National Hospital, City Hall).  
 Partial and total demolition of significant monuments. (al-Wasani public baths, Khans al-Wazir & al-Saboun, Madrasa al-Charafiyé).  
 Join the sea to the desert cutting through the Old City fabric by tracing 2 New Roads.  
 From Bab al-Jinane to Prison sector  
 From Bab Quennesrine to Sahet Bizé  
 Traditional courtyard houses lost with architectural value. Open spaces between the streets originally occupied by beautiful courtyard homes were replaced by parking lots.  
 Ignoring the physical character of the Old City.  
 Damage to the Historic neighborhood of Farafrah.

**1974**  
 By the Japanese engineer G. Bانشويا, a disciple of Ecochard.  
 Master plan partly adopted.  
 No consideration of the drawbacks of an increased vehicular accessibility leading that leads to rampant destruction of the traditional urban fabric of the city.  
 Highlighting the historical importance of some monuments.  
 Fragmentation of old districts such as Jdayde.  
 Acceleration of the Exodus of the residents.  
 Destruction of considerable sections of the Old City.  
 High-rise Buildings depriving the courtyard houses of privacy.  
 Large sections of the remaining fabric isolated from the rest of the Old City, becoming subject of rapid decline.  
 Important houses turned into industrial workshops, warehouses totally abandoned to neglect and decay.

**1979 - 1980**  
 Bab al Farafrah Urban Project in the late 70s :  
 An aim for the creation of a modern urban center in north-west part of the Old City with the construction of new buildings along the Abdel Mon'em Riyad road.  
 The survival of the Old City is at Stake  
 The Master Plan of the Old City was officially abandoned in 1980 after destroying less than 20% of the total fabric of the Old City.  
 Lobbying efforts to convince the Ministry of Culture to issue a decree stating the Old City as National Monument.  
 UNESCO made two reports 1980 - 1983 (Involvement of Stefano Bianco) taking into consideration the preservation of the Old City, and predicting a transitional belt between the old city and the modern one.  
 Re-knit the broken urban fabric.  
 Low density approach.  
 Reestablishing the pedestrian network.

**1983**  
 International Symposium about the conversation of the old City.

**1986**  
 Classified by UNESCO as a world heritage site. Special code for restoration and rebuilding adopted.  
 Pace of destruction reduced.  
 Public Awareness, More attention to the Old City.  
 Not enough measures to stop the exodus.

**1990**  
 Approval of a decree by the Ministry of Housing and Public Services to regulate the preservation of old buildings.  
 Restoration services for the residential fabric in old neighborhoods and regulations of integration with the old fabric.  
 Participation of residents. Self help approach



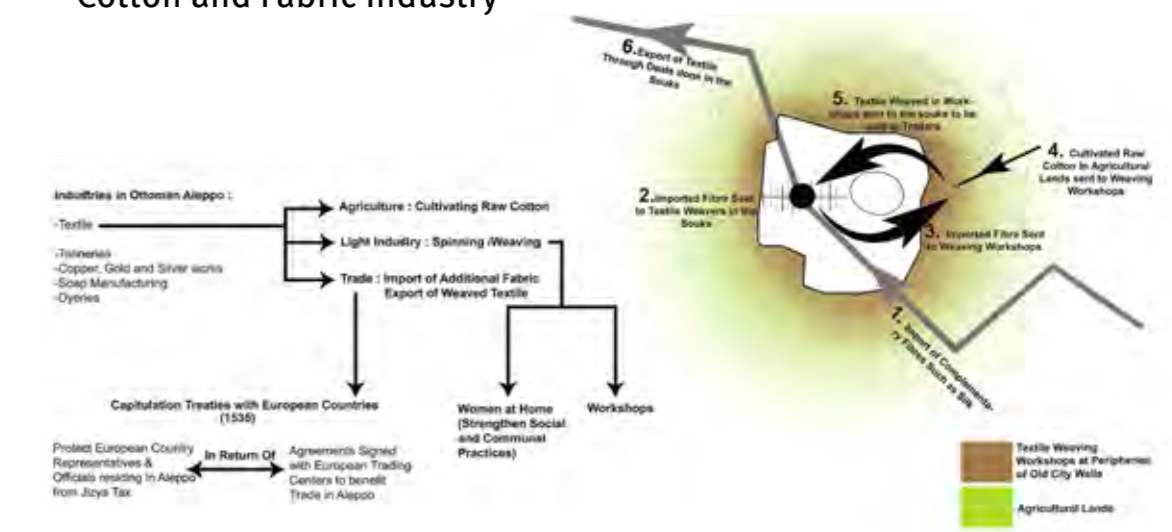
# Socio-economic

The Souqs:  
A Monumental Commercial Corridor

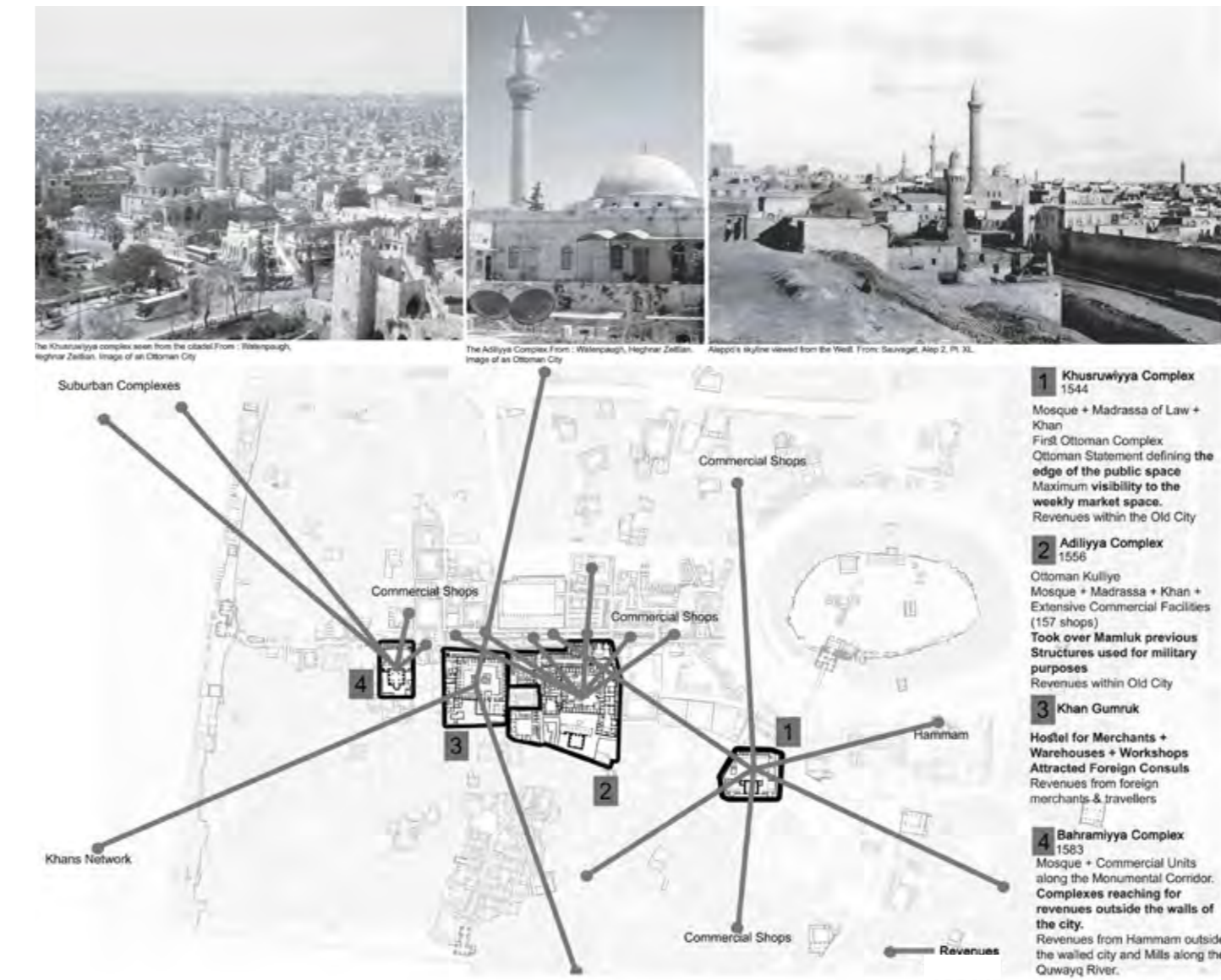
## Ottoman Rule and Aleppo's Socio-Economic Profile



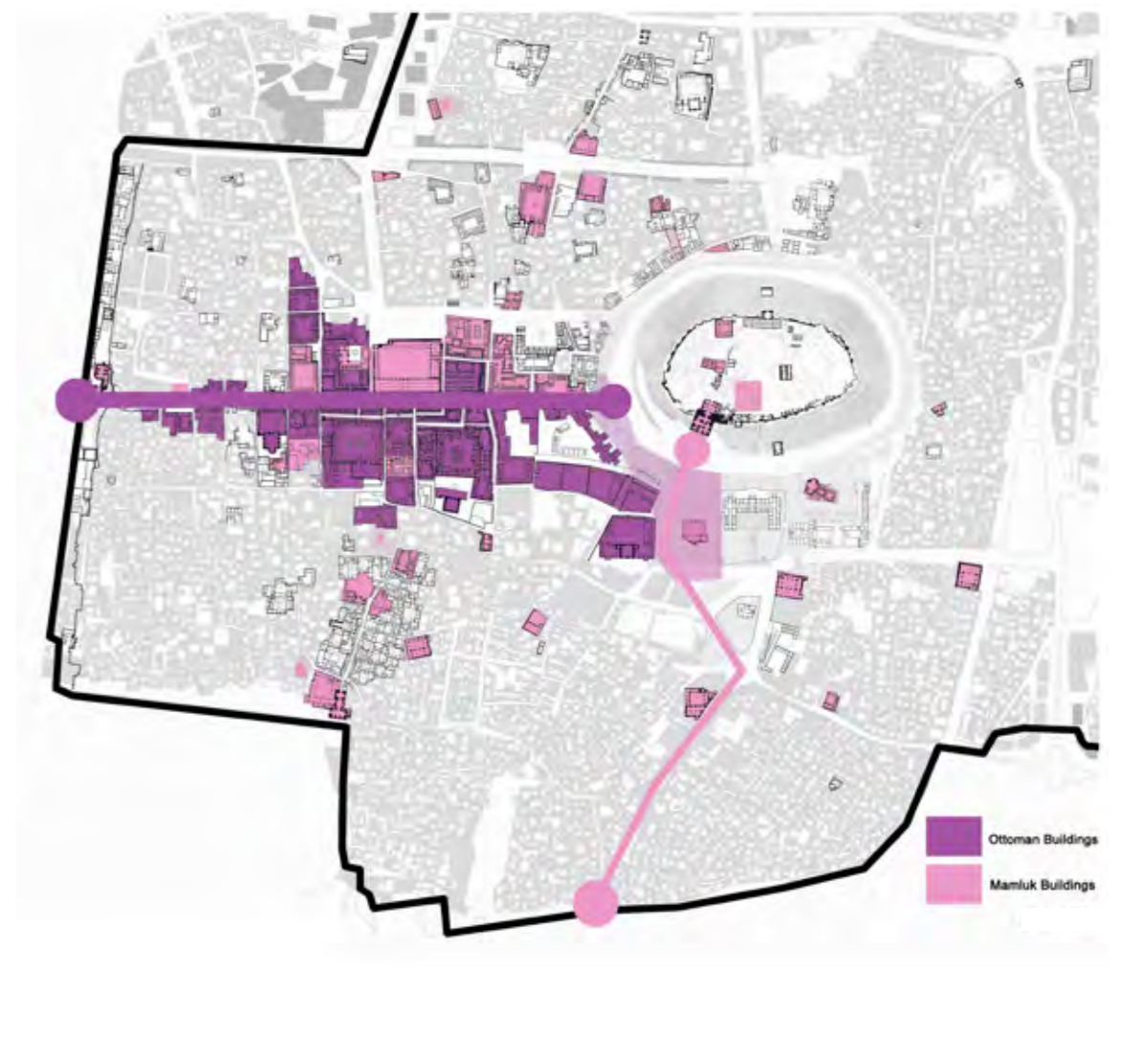
## Cotton and Fabric Industry



## The Monumental Commercial Corridor



## Shift of Urban Axis from Mamluk to Ottoman





**Social Hierarchy, Self-Surveillance and Strong Communal Ties**

**Class Hierarchy in Ottoman Aleppo**

1. Turkish Speaking Ruling Class
2. A'ayan → Notable Class (Ulama), Scholars, Teachers
3. Chalabi → Professional Class (Doctors)
4. A'amma → Commoners (Artisans, Goldsmiths, Carpenters...)

**Factors Determining Class**

1. Relation with the Ottoman State
2. Religious Rank ( Ashraf/Ulama)
3. Wealth

**Reinforcing Communal Responsibility**



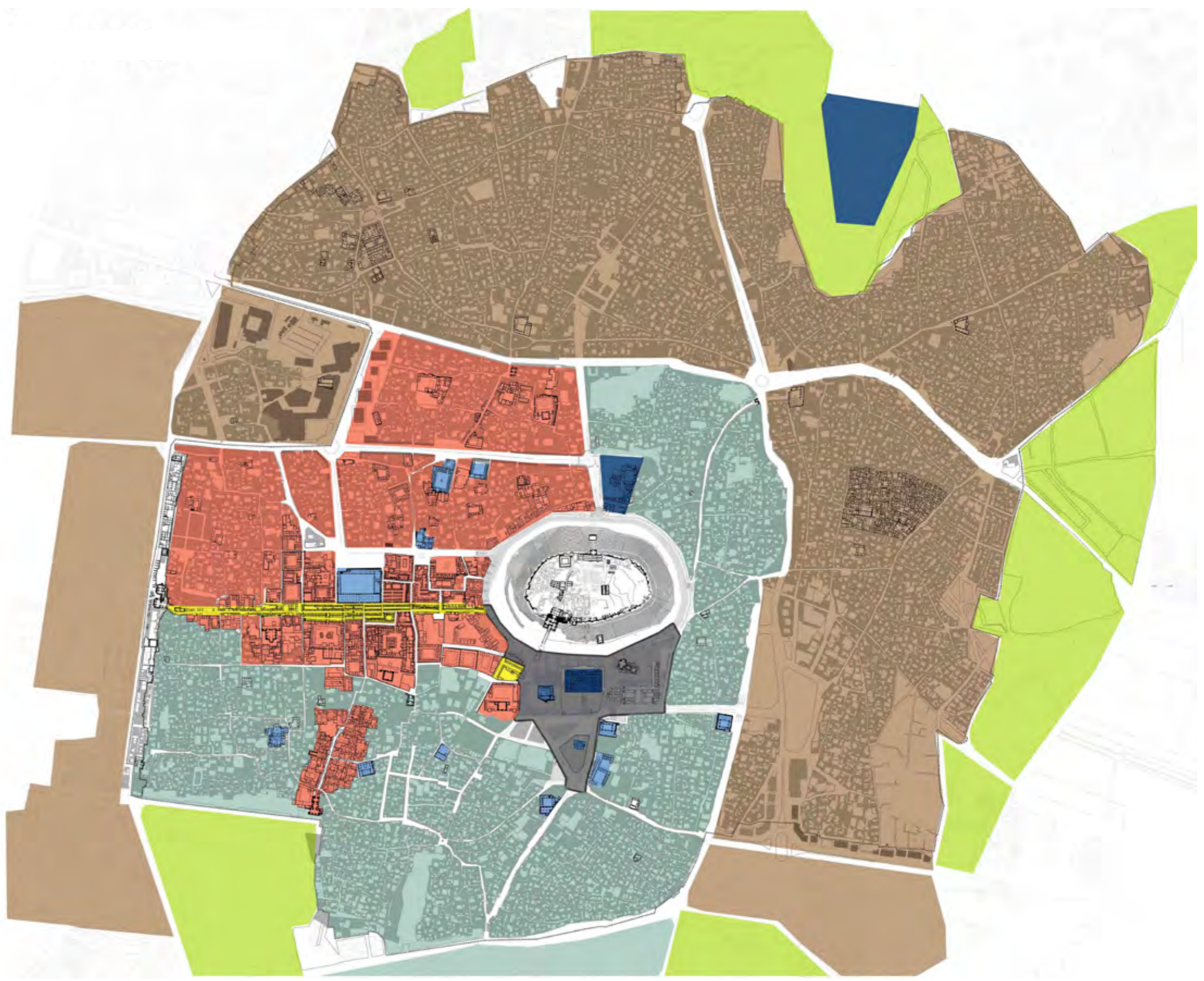
**Urban-Rural Migrations**



**Quarters** (Ethnic, Religious, Class & Occupation Divisions)



**Ottoman Aleppo Land Use Map**

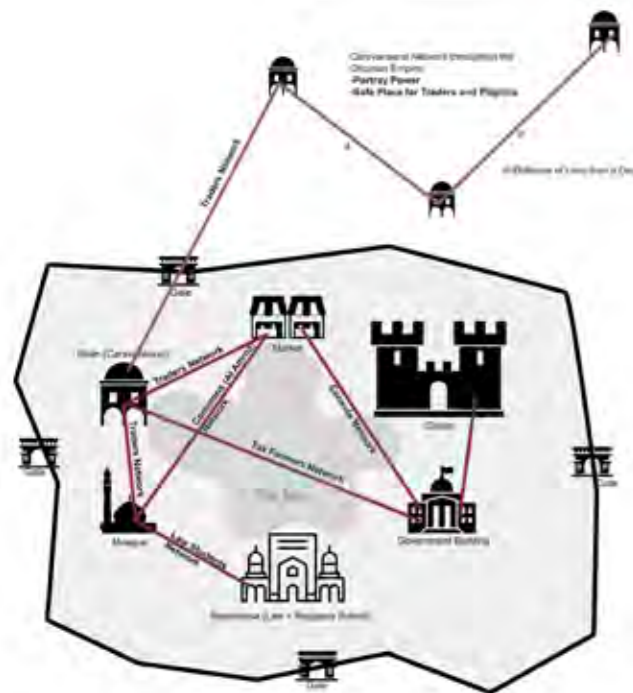


**Role of Site in the City Model**

**City Center Components & Values**

- Citadel + Government = Portraying Strong Ruling Image
- Market + Caravanseral = Strong Trade Role
- Mosque + Market = Religious space as integral part of Communal Daily Practices
- Madrasa + Mosque = Law/Religious Education Valued
- Gates = Reinforce Security

**Site at the Intersection of City Values & Networks**



- Tax Farmers (Souks)
- Strongmen (Neighborhood Elites)
- Guild Representatives

**Tourism and Travelers**

**Aleppo : An Exotic City for Travellers** (Christians & Jews)

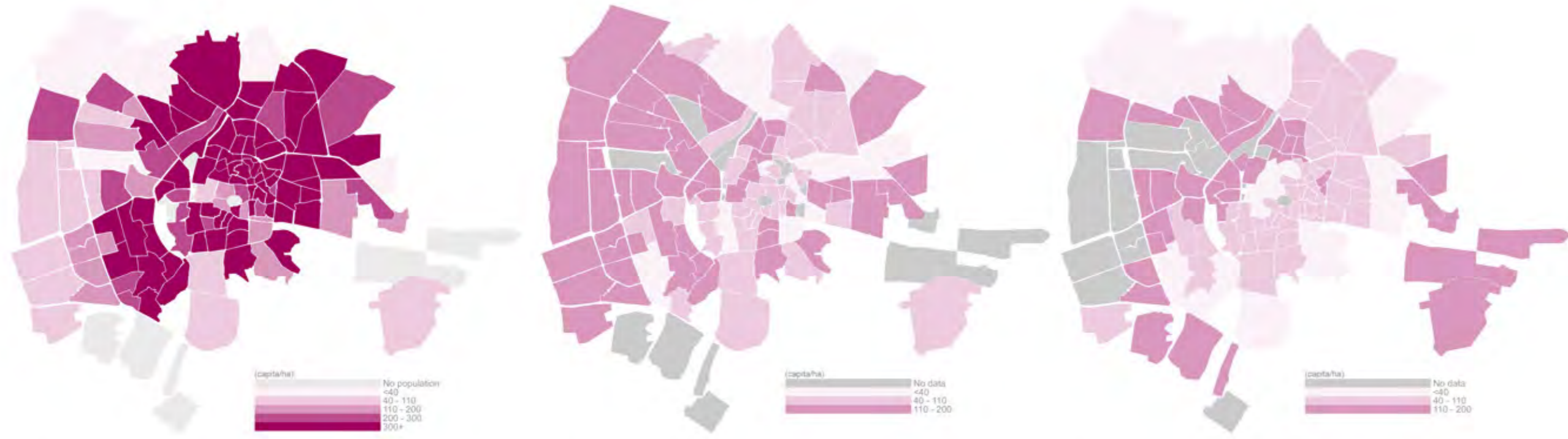
- Travellers saw Aleppo as an exotic city, where they could feel at home due to the diversity of the population (Armenian, Assyrian, Persians, Kurds, Arabs, Turks...)
- Some Foreign Merchants stayed up to 5 years or more in Aleppo

Travel Accounts

- Writings
  - 1. Description of Passage through Aleppo 1671 by Ambrosio Bembo (Venetian Nobleman)
  - 2. 'The Memoirs' by the French Consul Laurent D'Arvieux (1679-1686)
  - 3. Account of Aleppo 1740-1754 by Alexander Russel (Physician)
- Drawings
  - Figure 10.4: Depiction of Aleppo by Ambrosio Bembo, 1671
  - Figure 10.5: Depiction of Aleppo by Laurent D'Arvieux, 1679-1686
  - Figure 10.6: Depiction of Aleppo by Alexander Russel, 1740-1754



A Socio-Economic Profile: Modern to Post War Aleppo - 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Centuries

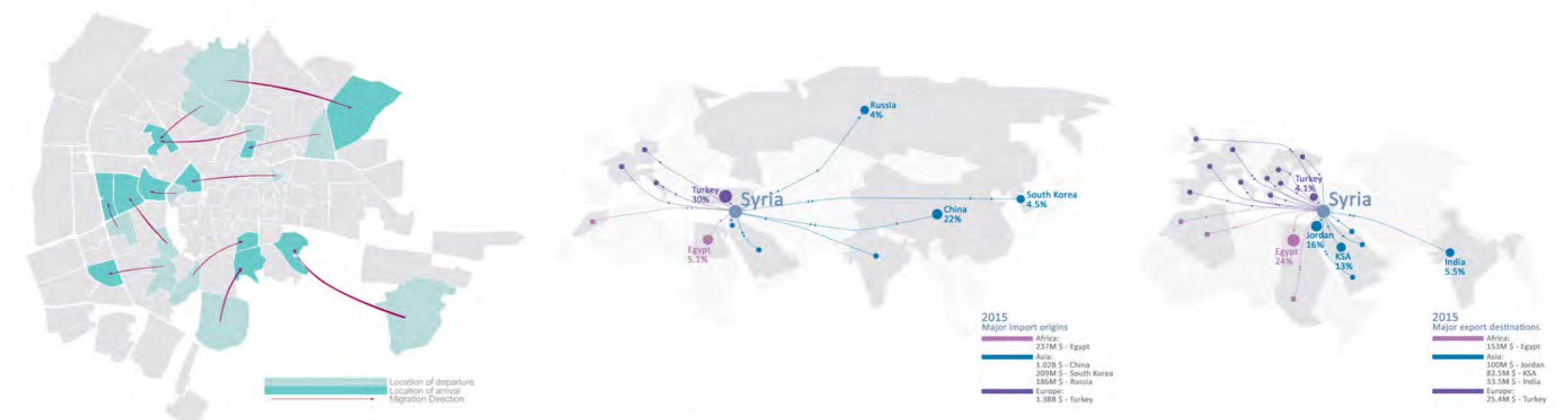


Population density pre-crisis

Population density in crisis 2014

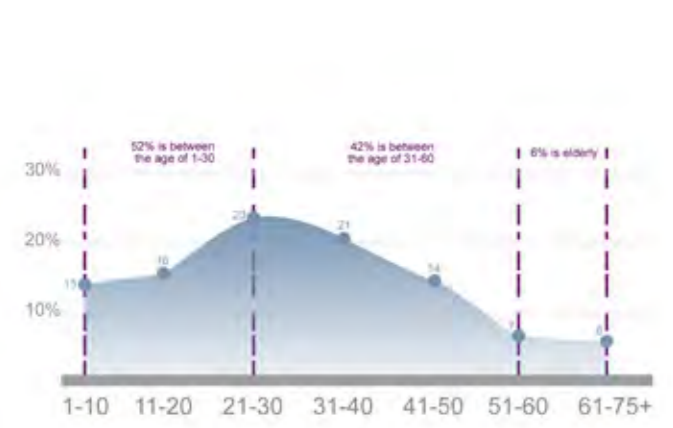
Population density post-crisis 2016

A Socio-Economic Profile: Modern to Post War Aleppo - 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Centuries

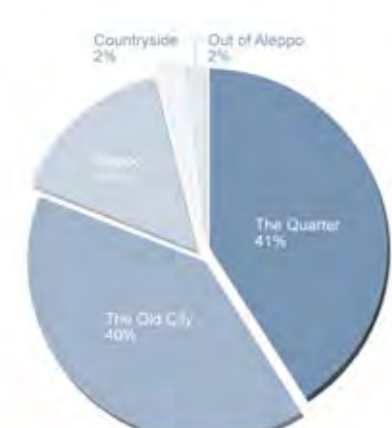


Migration networks in Aleppo during crisis

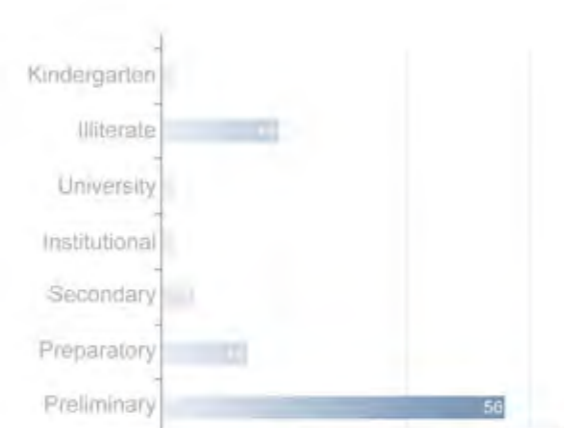
Major import & export destinations in 2015



Population of the old city in 2005



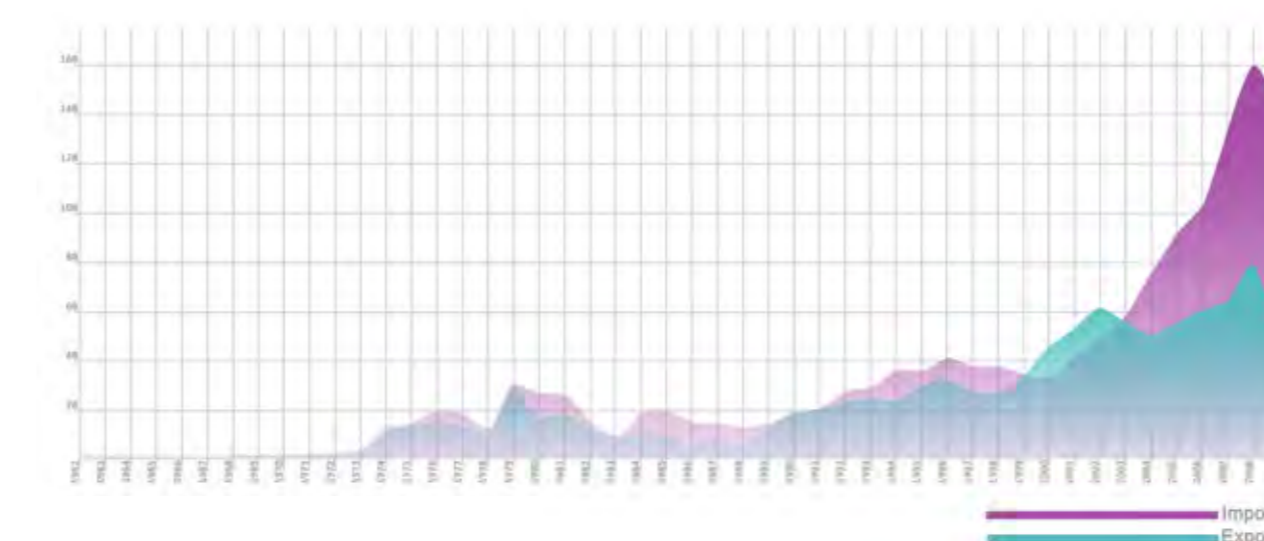
Origins of population in 2005



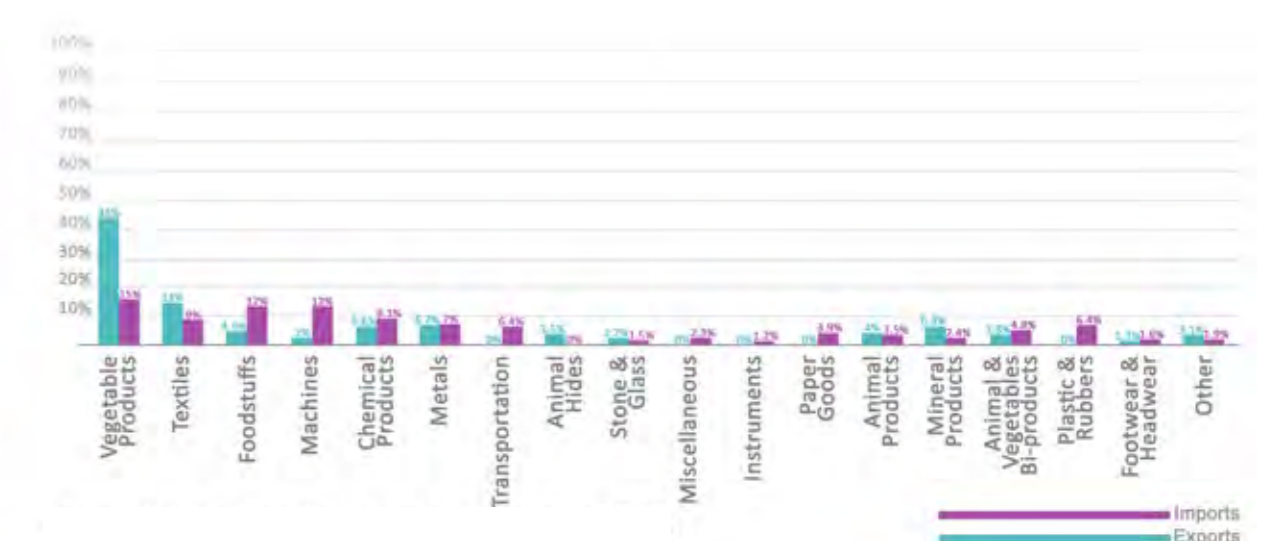
Education of population in 2005



Employment in 2005



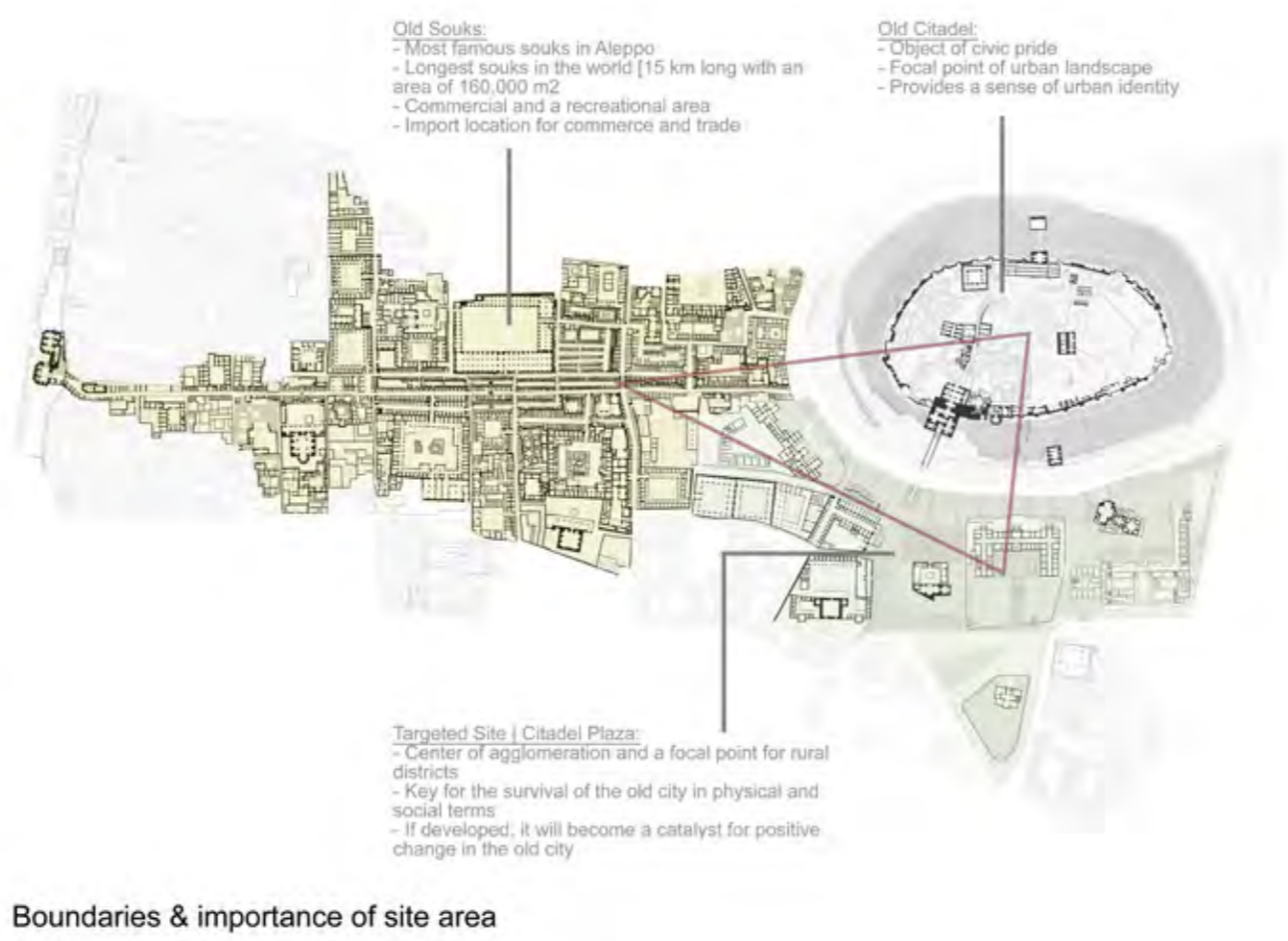
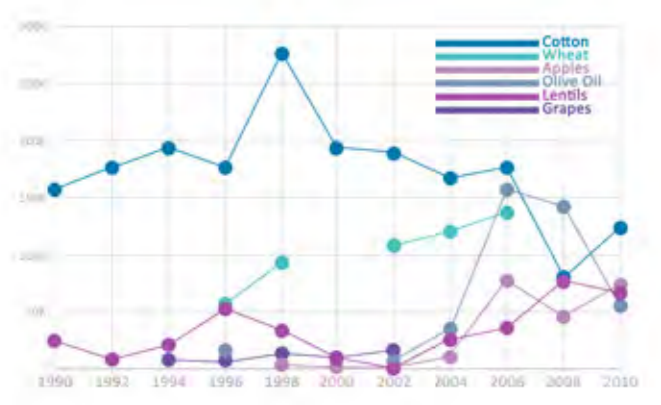
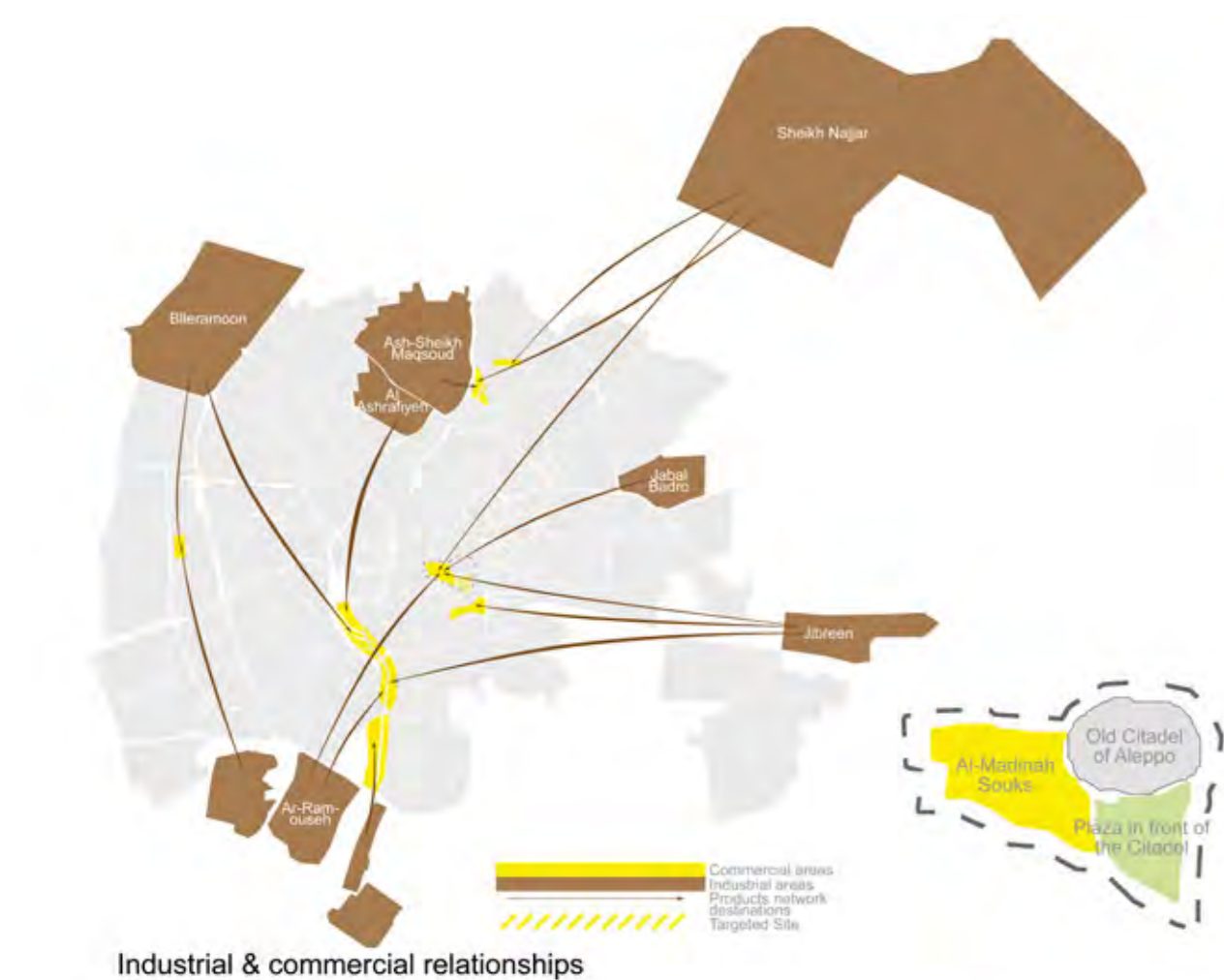
Trade balance in Syria pre-crisis



Imported & exported goods in Syria in 2015



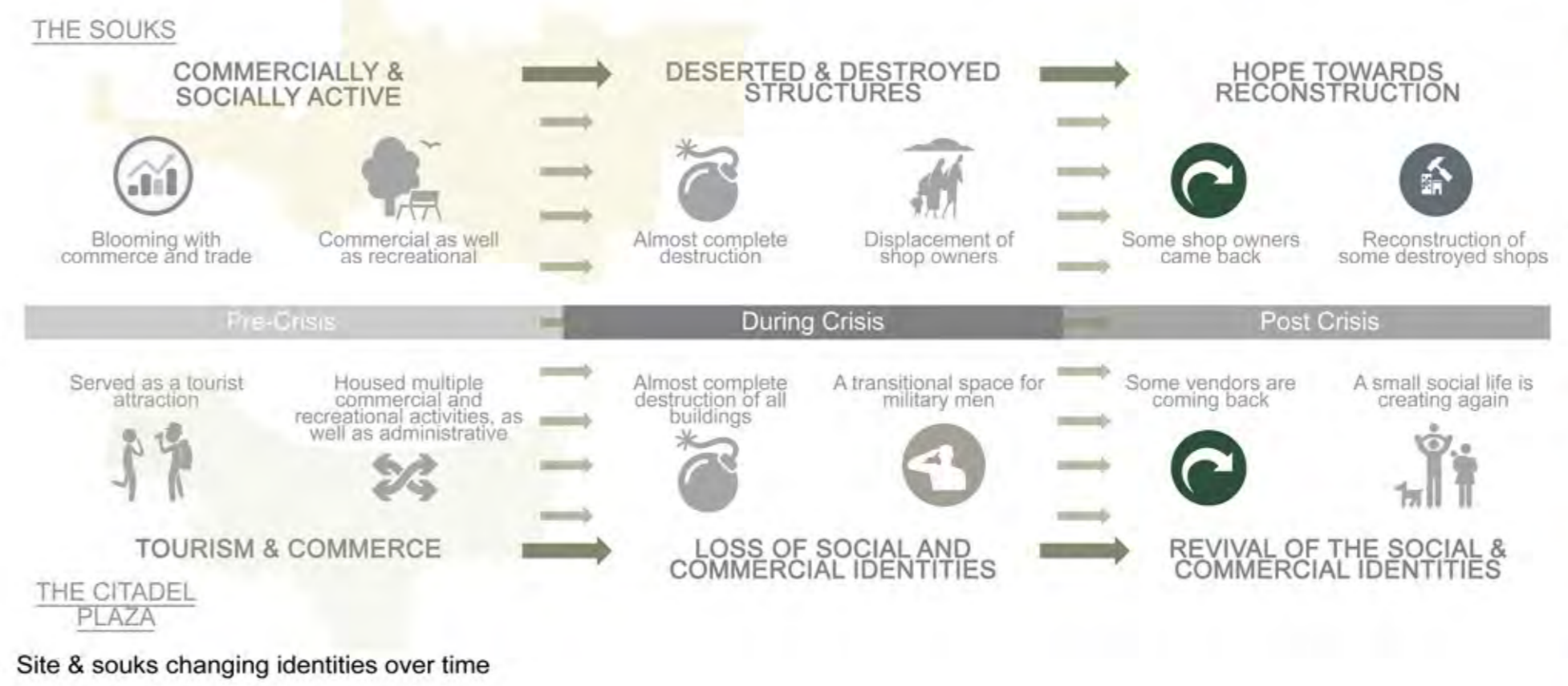
A Socio-Economic Profile: Modern to Post War Aleppo - 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Centuries



A Socio-Economic Profile: Modern to Post War Aleppo - 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Centuries



"But now Aleppo's 5,000 year old Citadel is besieged in the evenings by cheerful families seeking simple pleasures rather than by armed men bent on conquest. Vendors come with boiled and roasted ears of sweetcorn, kebabs, and puffs of pink cotton candy."  
 Michael Jansen - Oct. 25, 2017





# Spatial

Urban Transformation and Reconfiguration over Time



IN 1992, THE REHABILITATION OF THE OLD CITY WAS INITIATED UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE NEWLY ESTABLISHED DIRECTORATE

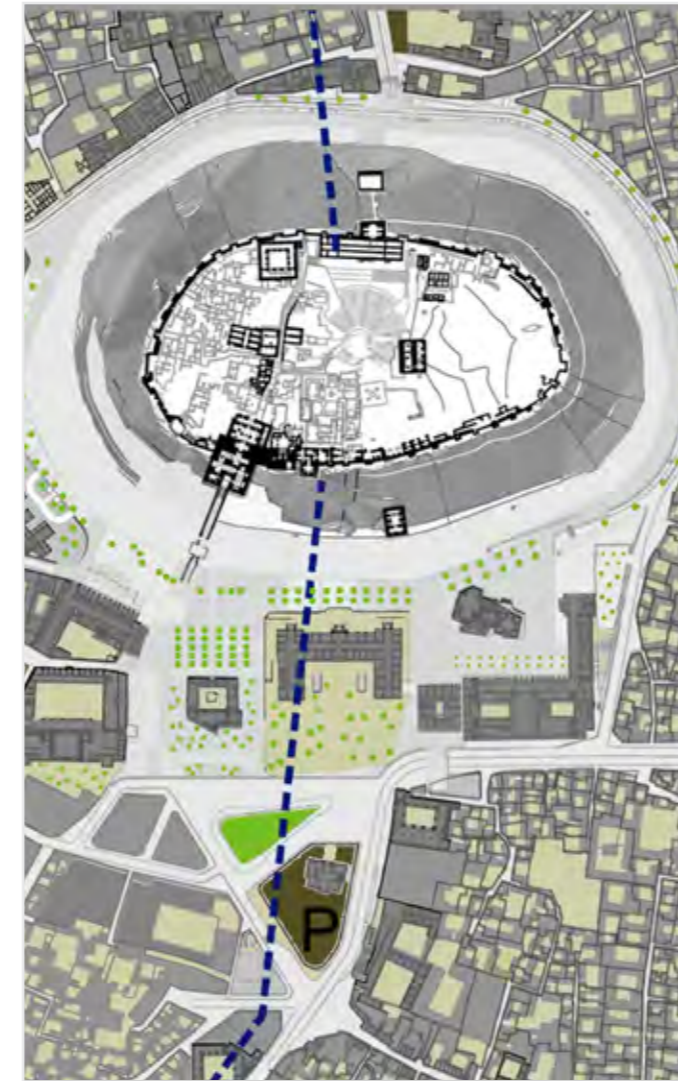
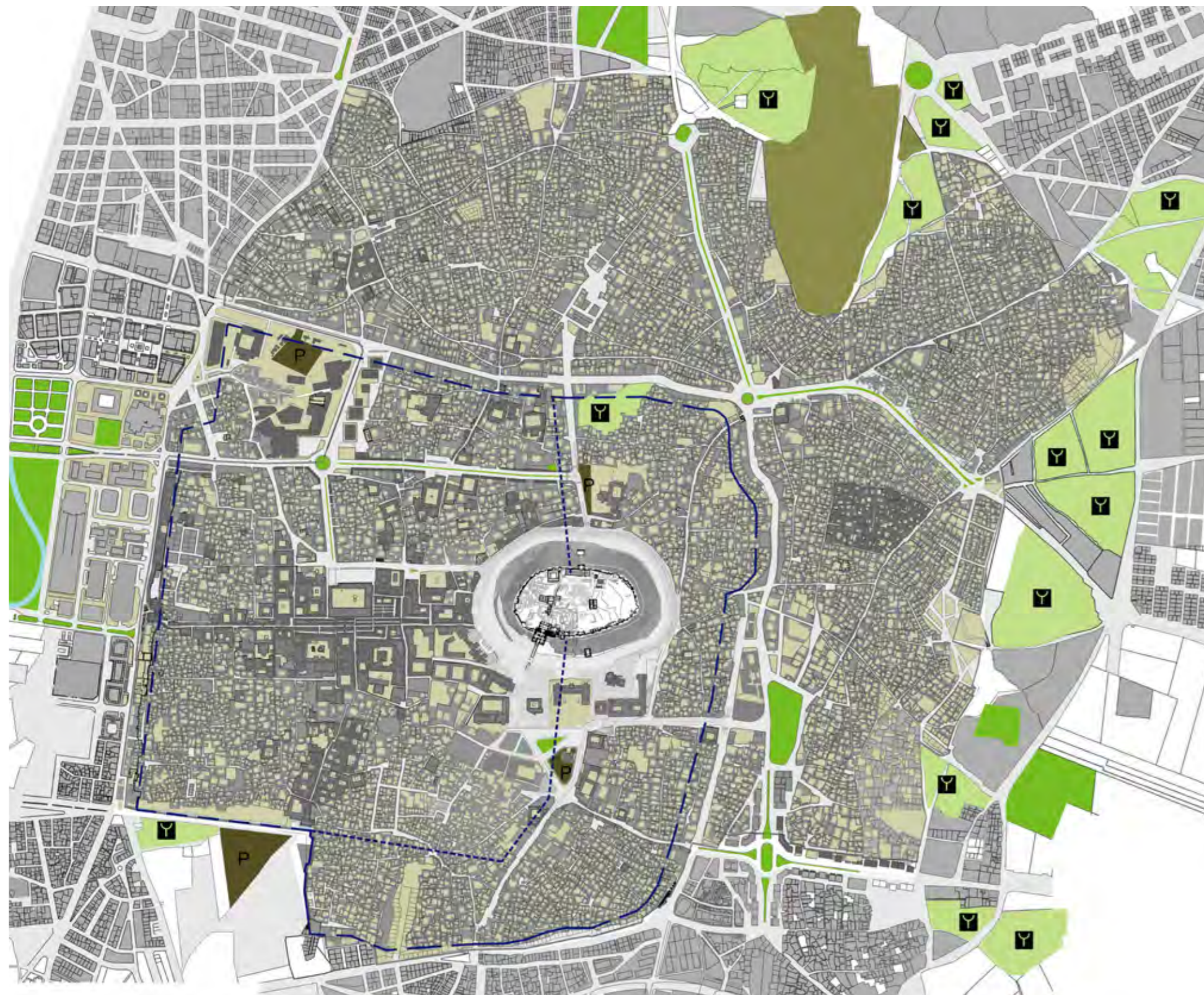
THE SURROUNDINGS OF THE CITADEL ARE STRUCTURE IN TWO LAYERS  
-THE INNER CIRCLE OF PUBLIC OPEN SPACE  
-THE OUTER RING OF RESIDENTIAL AREA

MAIN AIM THE OF THE NEW VEHICULAR PLAN:  
-PROTECT AND IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN THE RESIDENTIAL AREA  
-ELIMINATE DISTURBANCES IN THE OLD HOUSING AREA  
-ENHANCE THE PRIME CIVIC SPACE

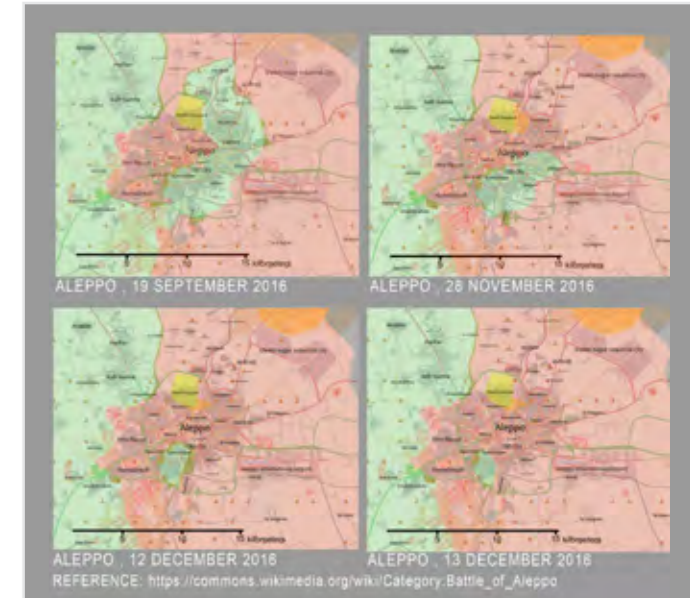
PARKING SPACES ARE ARRANGED AROUND THE PEDESTRIAN AREA ALONG WITH BUS STATIONS

- PARKING
- BUS STATION
- SECONDARY ROAD
- LOCAL ROAD
- PEDESTRIAN ROAD





- GARDENS
- CEMETERIES
- RESIDUAL SPACE
- BUILT FOOTPRINT
- ROADS
- PARKINGS
- MILITARY BASE
- Wall Limit (15th Century)
- Wall Limit (13th Century)



THE FRONTLINE KEPT SHIFTING BETWEEN THE OPPOSITION AND THE REGIME. THE MAIN AIM WAS TO CAPTURE THE CITADEL, A SYMBOL OF AUTHORITY OVER ALEPPO. NUMEROUS CHECKPOINTS WERE IMPOSED, AND SIGNIFICANT DAMAGE TO THE ROAD SYSTEM NEGATIVELY IMPACTED THE CIRCULATION FLOW.

- DAMAGED ROADS
- FUNCTIONAL ROADS
- STRIKES





- Built footprint
- Limit of Districts
- Wall Limit (15th Century)
- Wall Limit (13th Century)



**URBAN FABRIC:**  
 ALEPPO IN ITS ORIGINAL QUADRILATERAL CONFIGURATION WAS ENTIRELY PLANNED IN THE CLASSICAL PERIOD. AN ISLAMIC SCHEME WAS SUPERIMPOSED ON THE CLASSICAL ONE, RESULTING IN THE CURRENT FORM OF THE CITY. THIS A CUL-DE-SAC SYSTEM DISRUPTED THE ANCIENT GEOMETRICAL STREET PATTERN IN ORDER TO ALLOW ACCESS TO THE COURTYARD HOUSES, WHICH WERE CREATED THROUGH A DIVISION OF AND ENCRoACHMENT ON THE OLDER DOMUS AND PLOTS WITH COURTYARD HOUSES.

**MAIN AXES:**  
 THE MAIN AXIS OF THE OLD SOUQ OF ALEPPO ORIGINATED FROM THE ANTAKEYA GATE. DURING THE BATTLE OF ALEPPO IN THE SYRIAN CIVIL WAR THE GATE BECAME A KEY TARGET FOR REBEL FORCES WHO TRIED TO TAKE THE OLD CITADEL. THE SECONDARY AXIS IS GUARDED BY BAB JINAN, AS A SECONDARY ACCESS TO THE SOUK AND TO THE GREAT PALACE OF HALBA. THE GATE WAS DEMOLISHED AROUND 1906 IN ORDER TO WIDEN THE ROAD.

BAB AL MAQAM GUARDS THE SOUTHERN PART OF THE OLD CITY. DEVIATIONS IN ITS DESIGN FROM THE MAJORITY OF MEDIEVAL SYRIAN GATES SUGGEST THAT ITS FUNCTION WAS CEREMONIAL RATHER THAN MILITARY.

- BAB AL MADINA (GATE)
- Main axes
- River
- Limit of Districts
- Wall Limit (15th Century)
- Wall Limit (13th Century)
- A- Bab Al-Jinan (187)
- B- Bab Al-Faraj (tower in 1800)
- C- Bab Al-Nasr (13th century)
- D- Bab Al-Khadid (155th)
- E- Bab Al-Ahmar (13th century)
- F- Bab Al-Nayrab (12th-1257)
- G- Bab Al-Maqam (13th century)
- H- Bab Al-Quranastin (1256)
- I- Bab Antakya (11th Century)





**The Roman-Hellenistic Period (64 BC-395 AD)**

In the Roman-Hellenistic period, the urban structure of the city was defined by a straight axis connecting Bab Antakia, the Western Gate, with the Citadel.

Legend:  
(A) Asaba quarter.  
(B) the Citadel as the highest point.  
(C) the Principal Temple.



**The Byzantine Period (395-636 AD)**

The most notable change in the Byzantine period is the transformation of the settlement pattern from regular to a more organic state.

Legend:  
(A) The Principal Temple was converted into a Cathedral.  
(B) Forty Martyrs Church.  
(A, B, C, D) The residential settlements had grown spontaneously from around the main avenue (Via Recta).  
(C, D) Synagogues.



**Aleppo at the end of the 11th Century (Umayyad, Abbasid, Hamdanid dynasties)**

Due to the domination of the Muslims, the social structure of Aleppo has changed, and it also gradually impacted the urban form of the city. The settlement pattern expanded only within the city walls.

Legend:  
(A) Al-Omani mosque.  
(B) The area of the agora was converted into Great Mosque.  
(C) Open area for the prayers.  
(D, E) The Jewish quarter.  
(F) The Citadel functions as a place for governance.



**Aleppo in the middle of the 13th Century (Seleucids, Crusaders, Zengid and Ayyubid dynasties)**

A number of madrasas and public buildings surrounded the city walls during this period, particularly around the souq area. The site of the souq operated as a city center, with commercial, religious and cultural activities.

Legend:  
(A) The Royal Palace.  
(D) The Justice Palace.  
(E) The Jewish quarter.  
(F) The souq factories.



**Aleppo at the beginning of the 16th Century (Mamluk Dynasty)**

The city expanded outside the city walls due to over population inside the city walls and the attack of Tamerlane.

Legend:  
(A) The Palace of the Citadel.  
(B) Place of Celebration.  
(D) The specialized market for horse.

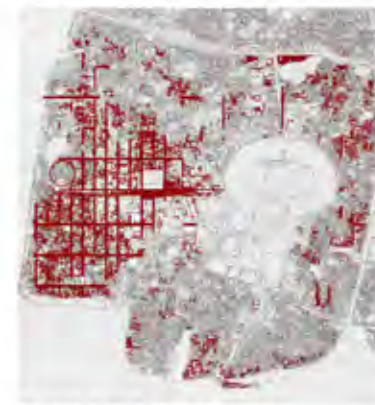


**Aleppo in the 19th Century (Ottoman Empire)**

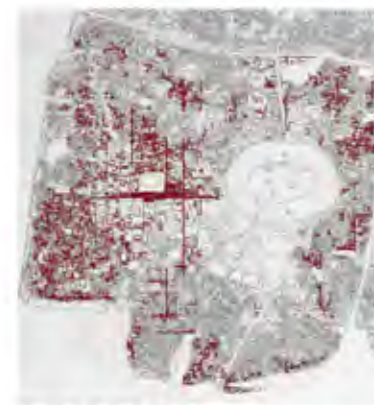
There was demand for new public buildings as a result of the new educational and administrative system. Due to the geographical barrier, the river, the city expanded outside of the city's wall mainly to the north and east.



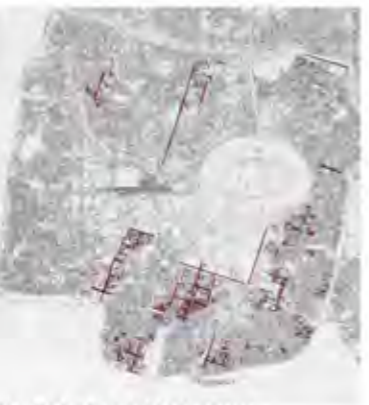
**Aleppo in 1980's**



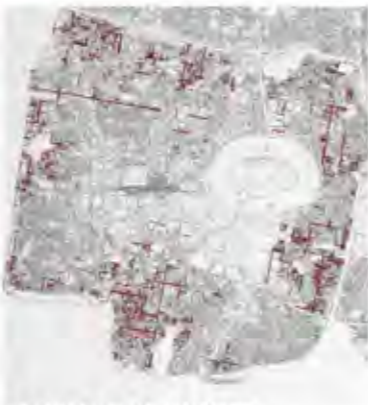
**TRACES OF THE FIRST ORIGINAL PLANNING PHASE OF THE GREEK TOWN**



**TRACES OF THE FIRST ROMAN PLANNING PHASE**



**TRACES OF THE SECOND ROMAN PLANNING PHASE**

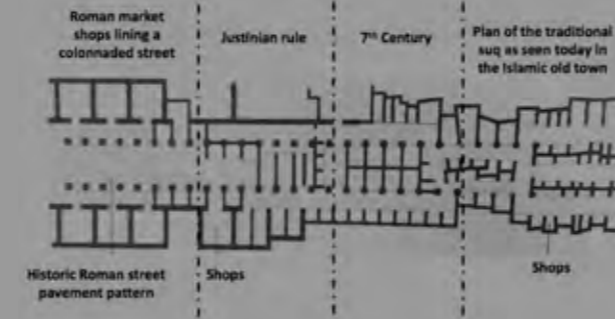


**TRACES OF THE THIRD ROMAN PLANNING PHASE**

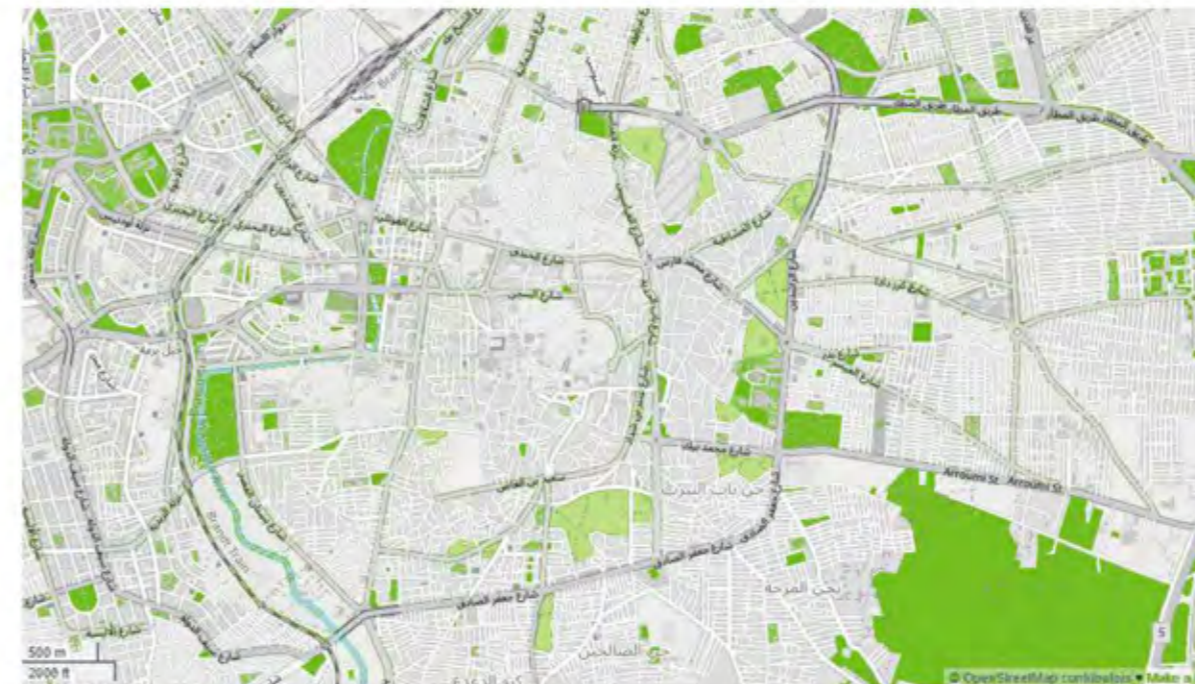
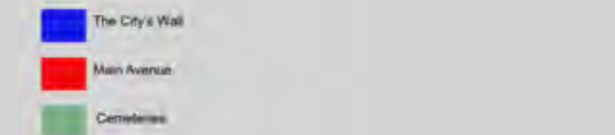


**The Transformation of the Roman Grid into an Islamic structure, From "out-er-related" to "involved".**

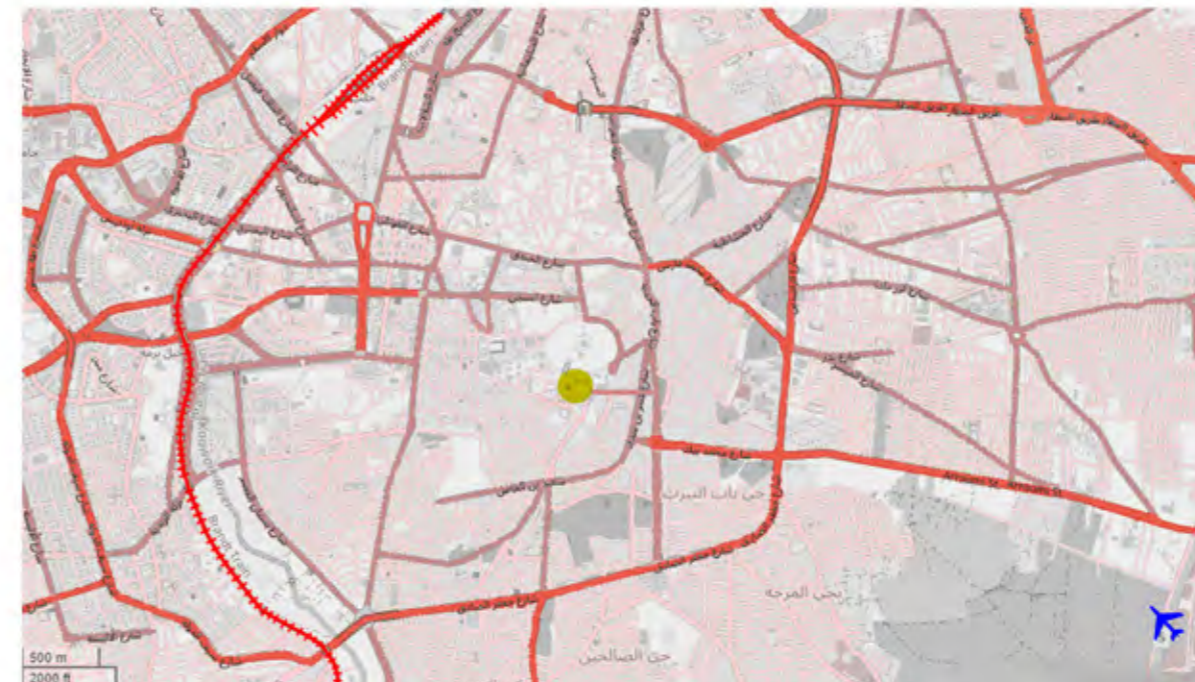
The main structure of city is conserved as "super-grid", the contribution of Islam is the addition of secondary street network. In Roman city, the demand for residential structure was formed by single unrelated farmsteads while in Islamic city the residents grouped themselves into neighborhoods related to their social concerns.



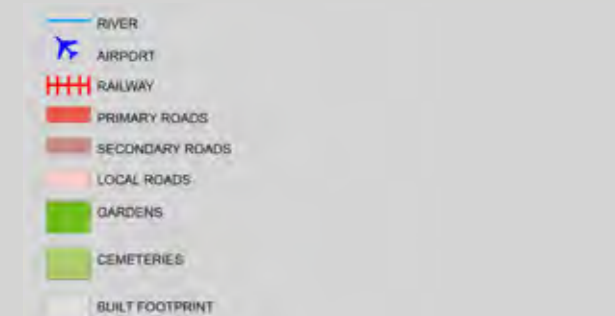
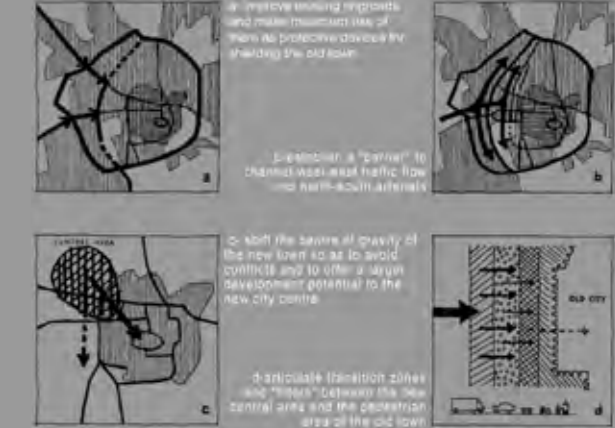
**The Transformation of the Old City's souqs**  
Wide streets allowing for large horse carriage were not part of the oriental tradition of urban form. Pedestrian circulation and transport by camels, mules or donkeys made the wide colonnaded streets of the Hellenistic-Roman period redundant. The street was split into two narrow lanes, and the interstices as well as the large lateral arcades were progressively occupied by shops. These narrow alleys were much more suited to oriental transportation habits and much better adapted to the climate of the city.



**GREEN AND BLUE NETWORK**



**ROAD NETWORK**





# Environmental

Urban-Rural Agriculture and Migration: Interdependencies

## Climate and Rainfall

About 60% of Syria lying east of Aleppo and Damascus has a desert or semi-desert climate. This is the hottest region in summer and it is often quite cold in winter with occasional snow and frequent frost.

To the north and west of this desert region there is a band of steppe country where some non-irrigated cultivation can be carried out. This belt, often called the Fertile Crescent, includes the large cities of Aleppo and Damascus. Temperatures throughout the year are very similar to those found in the Syrian Desert. (BBC, 2012)

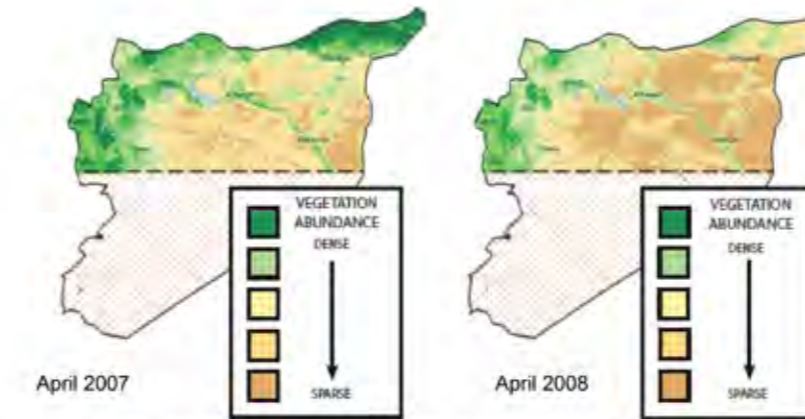
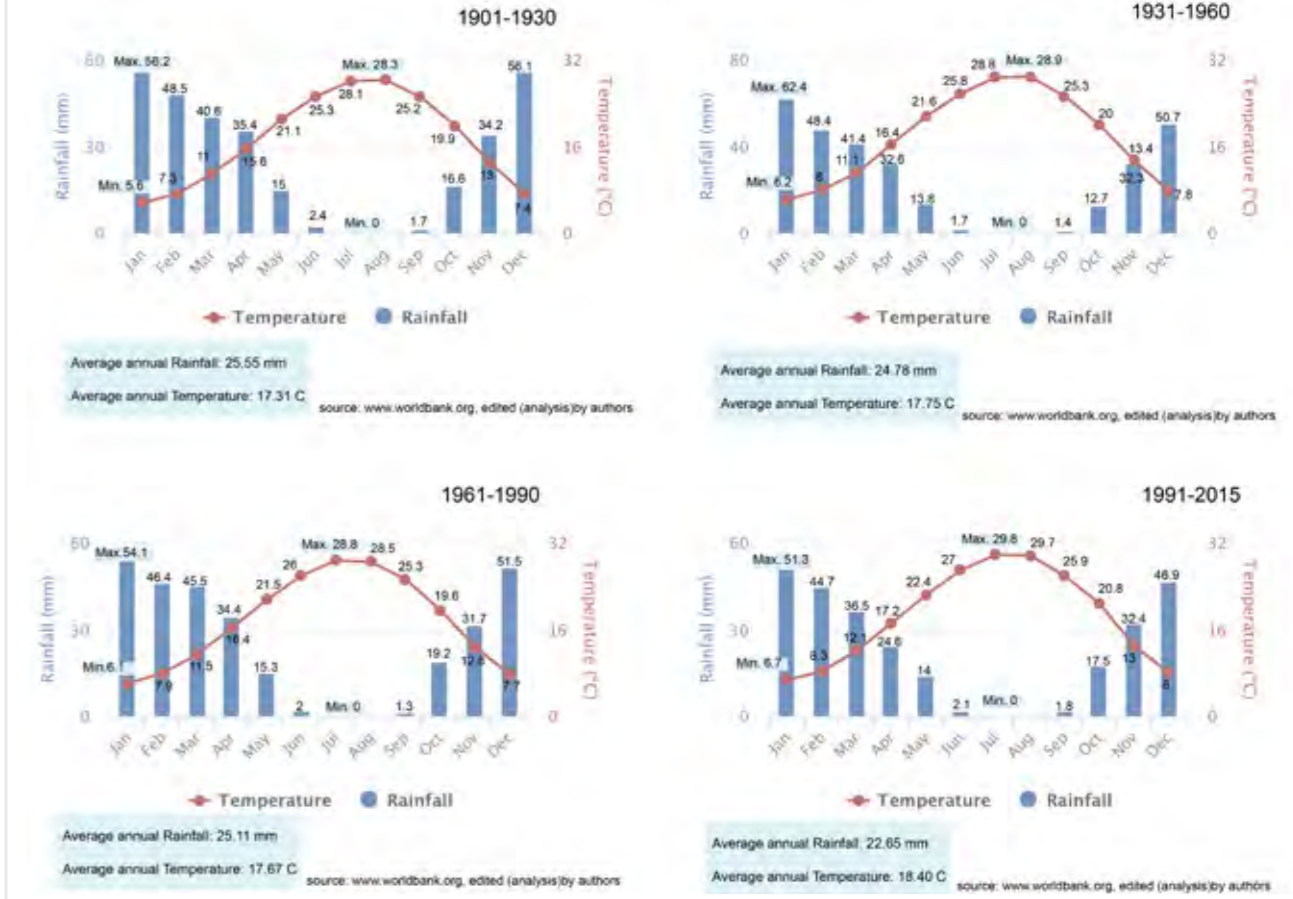
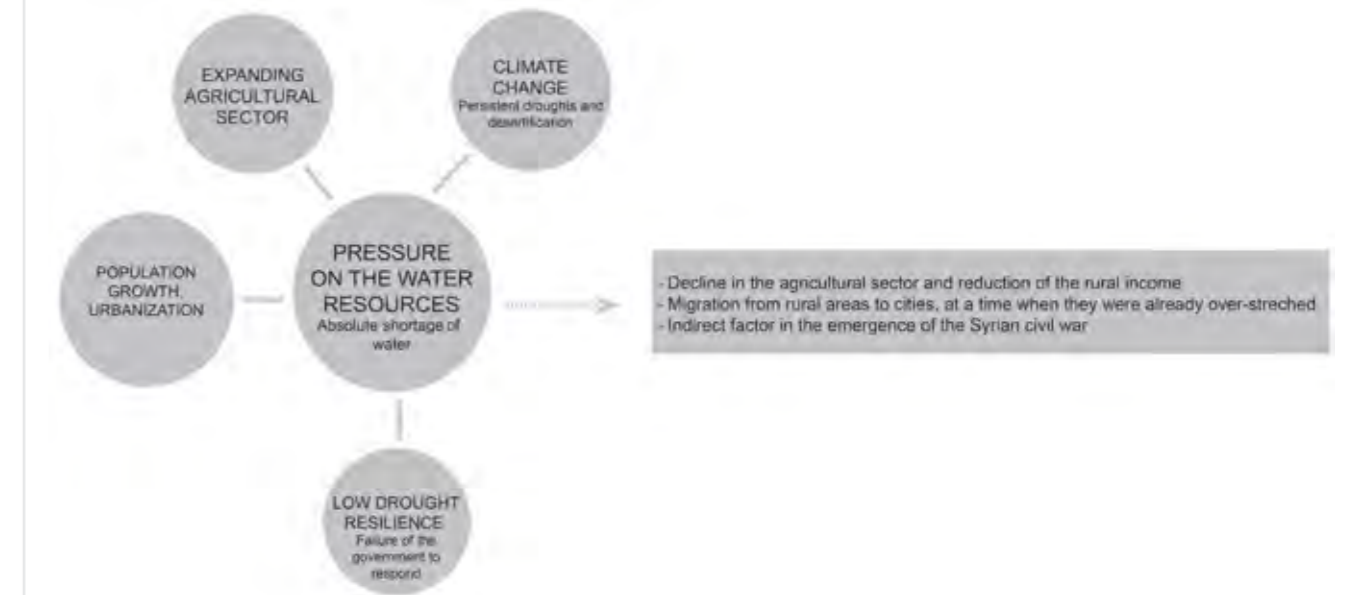
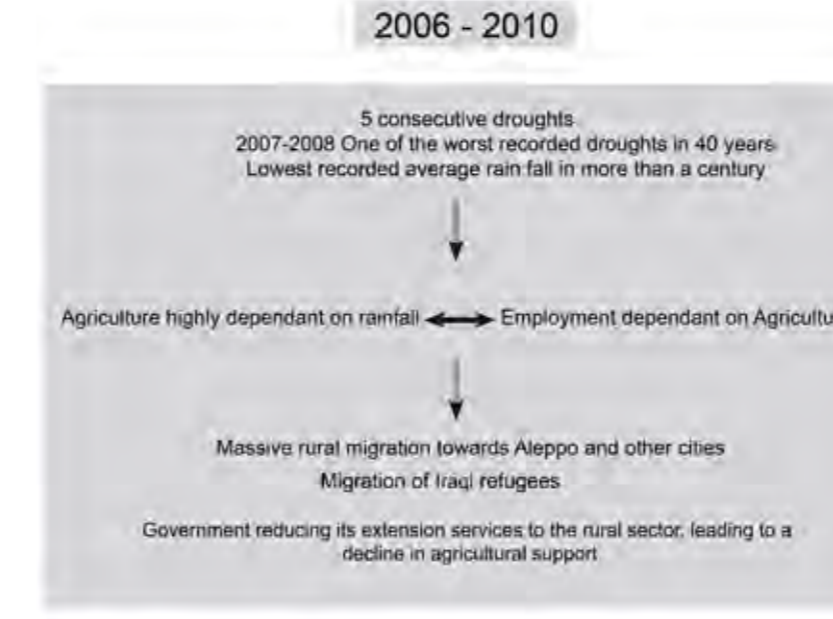


Fig1. Satellite derived vegetation index comparison Source: N. Alhmehdjaevia, 2015, "Drought in Syria"



Over the course of time there has been a clear decline of the average rainfall and rise of the average temperature.  
 -The average temperature has risen from 17.31 to 18.40 degrees. (approx. 1 degree)  
 -As for the average rainfall, it declined from a maximum of 25.55 mm to 22.65 mm. (approx. 3 mm)





Water Networks and Agricultural Resources



Fig 1: Map of the rich water network passing through Aleppo. Source: GTZ, UDR, Aleppo urban development project, 2010, "Aleppo diverse, open city"

**Pressure on the water resources: Water pollution**

- Reuse of untreated waste water in agriculture
- Polluted surface and ground water
- Bad quality of drinking water
- Contamination of river water used for irrigation
- Few urban areas and no rural areas were connected to sewage water treatment
- Treatment facilities did not meet international standards
- Leakage of many waste water pipes

Major Agricultural Crops



Major agricultural crops from the most produced to the least produced

Source: Stated by the USDA - United states department of Agriculture, 2012

Green Spaces and Typology



City scale - Map 1: Green Areas in 1985 ; Pre-Urbanization

The abundance of green areas as this dates back to a period of pre-urban sprawl and no effects of climate change shown yet  
Importance of agricultural lands on the outskirts of the city  
No significant presence of public parks



City scale - Map 2: Green Areas in 2009 ; Urbanization

A decrease in the number and size of green areas due to urbanization pressures with a slight increase in public parks



City scale - Map 3: Green Areas in 2017 ; Post-war

The green areas have decreased, as some might have been completely erased due to the targeting of the war.  
The number of green areas were erased during the war.

Queiq River



Fig 2: Map showing the Euphrates passing through Turkey, Syria, and Iraq. Source: www.googlemaps.com

**Pre-war incident**  
Late 1960s  
Turkey used Queiq's water for massive irrigation projects.

Queiq River dried out completely

Syrians tried to divert the water from the Euphrates to revive their dead river and therefore revive agriculture in the plains

Source: Mohamed Zaki, Queiq river by night, 2010



Source: Mohamed Zaki, Queiq river by night, 2010



Post-war incident : The Queiq river massacre



Fig 1: Map showing the story behind the queiq river during the war.

« It is already one of the defining images of the Syrian civil war: a line of bodies at neatly spaced intervals lying on a river bed in the heart of Syria's second city Aleppo. », The Syrian Times, March 2013.



Locals placed a grate over the Queiq river hoping to catch the bodies that are flowing downstream.

The river is now called by the locals: «The river of Martyrs»



Site scale - Map 1: Site Area in 1985 ; Pre-Urbanization



Site scale - Map 1: Site Area in 2009 ; Urbanization



Site scale - Map 1: Site Area in 2018 ; Post-War

No presence of green areas within the vicinity of the citadel.



Shifting of area highlighted in green into a cultural public space greened by the inhabitants of the city.



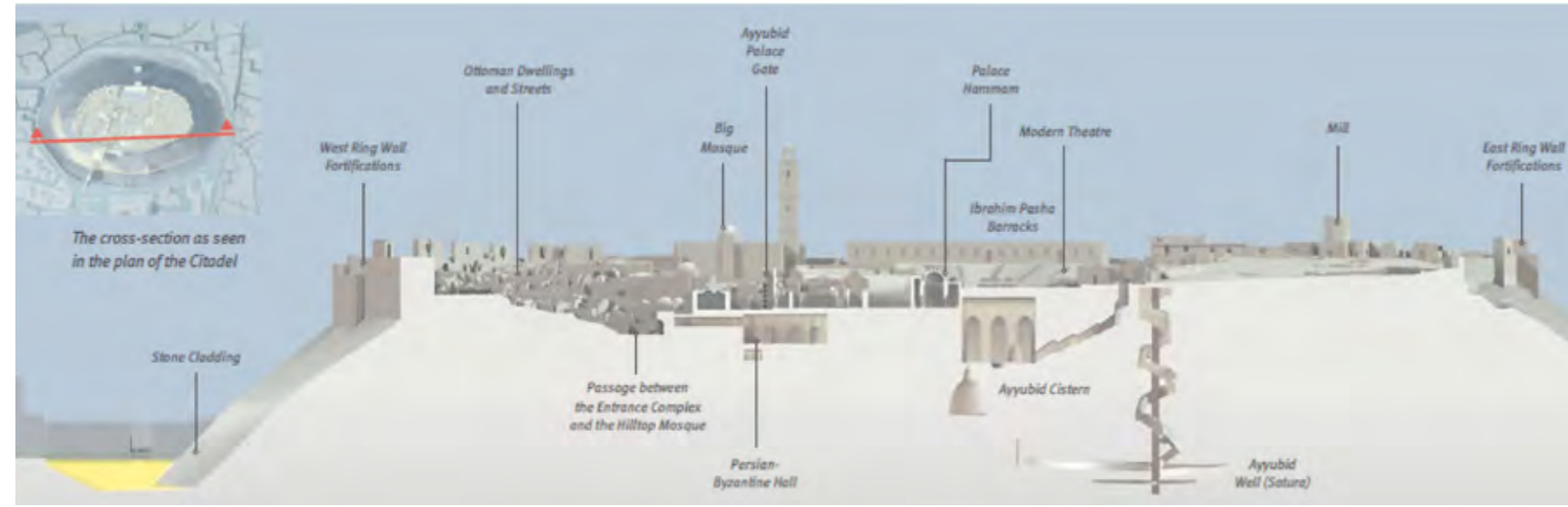
The area lost its green layer due to war attacks ; loss of identity of site.



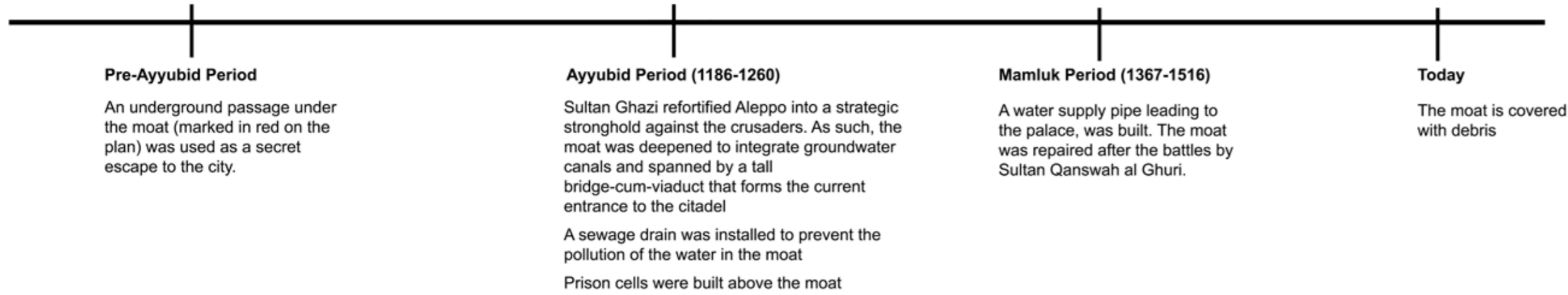


The Moat

Sectional elevation of the citadel. Source: Aga Khan Trust for Culture, "The Citadel of Aleppo," 2008.



Aerial view of the citadel. Source: Aga Khan Trust for Culture, 2006.



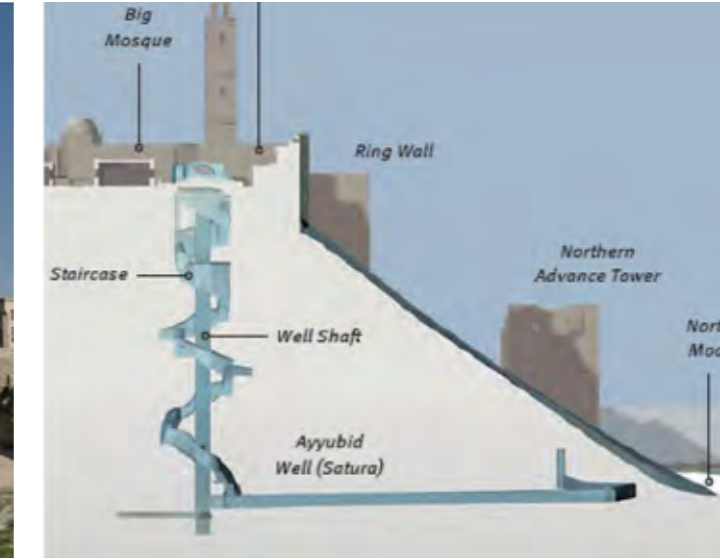
Cross section of the citadel. Source: Aga Khan Trust for Culture, "The Citadel of Aleppo," 2008.



View of the moat. Source: Aga Khan Trust for Culture, "The Citadel of Aleppo," 2010.



The Ayyubid well with a 52-meter underground staircase. Source: Aga Khan Trust for Culture, "The Citadel of Aleppo," 2008.



View of Bernard Gagnon, 2010.





# Political

Social and Economic Dynamics Leading to the War

## Civil War Timeline

### 15 March 2011 – 28 July 2011 Civil uprising phase of the Syrian Civil War

#### Causes

- Government Corruption
- Unemployment
- Aftermath of Islamist fighting in Tunisia (Muslim Brotherhood)

#### Protests

"The emergency law had been used to justify arbitrary arrests and detention, and to ban political opposition."

#### Goals

- Resignation of Bashar al-Assad
- Democratic Reforms
- Regime Change
- Expanded Civil Rights
- Abolition of the Supreme State Security Court
- Lifting off the emergency law
- Equal Rights for Kurds

#### Methods

- Civil Resistance
- Demonstrations
- Army Defections

#### Civil War

#### Regime Suppresses Resistance

### 2012 March to June From Idlib to Aleppo Countryside

#### The Sharia Council in Aleppo

1) to act as a "juridical" tribunal to tackle the trust and loyalty that spread in the city after the arrival of the revolution.

2) because "the city, something that became quickly obvious when the court shunned all secular laws."

Paradoxically, the lawyers working for the Authority report to clerics who never studied law, and yet, they articulate its disputes. Furthermore, the clerics' verdicts are final and cannot be appealed.

- Their negotiable argument: "No, Criminal Law, Sharia codes"
- Then submitting the arguments for these clerics who make up the court.

#### Geneva I Conference on Syria

RUSSIA insisted the Assad issue should be left for the Syrian people to decide

USA said Assad must leave

#### Major Clash in Salah al-Din

### 2012 July-August Bringing the Conflict into the City

#### The Joint Command for Revolution's Military Council

September 2012

Structure of the armed opposition:

- Supreme Joint Military Command
- Four Sector Arms
- Syrian Liberation Front
- Syrian Islamic Front
- Independent Islamic Alliance (including Fatah al-Islam)
- Independent Militants

#### There was no clear frontline

The report accused the government of the worst offenses as it was shelling civilian areas.

Funded by:

- Saudi Arabia: Funding, control and command
- Qatar: Funding, control and command

Increase in the influence of radical ideologies, particularly Salafism

### 2012 September – October The Old city on the Frontline

Map 1: Aleppo with a significant Kurdish population

On 28 September, the head of Al-Nusra was reportedly killed by the possible due to an exchange of shelling between the rebels and government forces. The first displacement between 700 and 1,000 ships.

On 10 October, the area of Tadmor attacked the Grand Mosque of Aleppo in east government forces captured them. Within a week, the mosque had been badly damaged by fire and much of it had been destroyed.

#### Divided City

Opposition Control (Aleppo Citadel and the old city)

Regime Control (Aleppo Citadel and the old city)

The Syrian National Council (SNC) in Istanbul is the main Syrian political opposition of the international world.

### 2012 November - December Limiting the Regime to Aleppo City

Map 2: Aleppo city and western countryside (December 2012)

Rebels now dominated the northwest of Syria → Government was increasingly confined west of the city

In November, a new political body was launched in Syria: the National Coalition of Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces (National Coalition)

FRANCE, USA, Turkey, Qatar

Map 3: Aleppo city and western countryside (December 2012)

Under siege by opposition

Area outside government control

The SNC was particularly influential in the Aleppo region due to its proximity to Turkey, which made supplying weapons easier.

In December, all flights were suspended from Aleppo International Airport when it declared a "no-fly zone" and threatened to shoot down civilian planes, which they claimed the government was using to transport supplies.

### 2013 January - March Encircling the Regime in Aleppo

Map 4: Aleppo

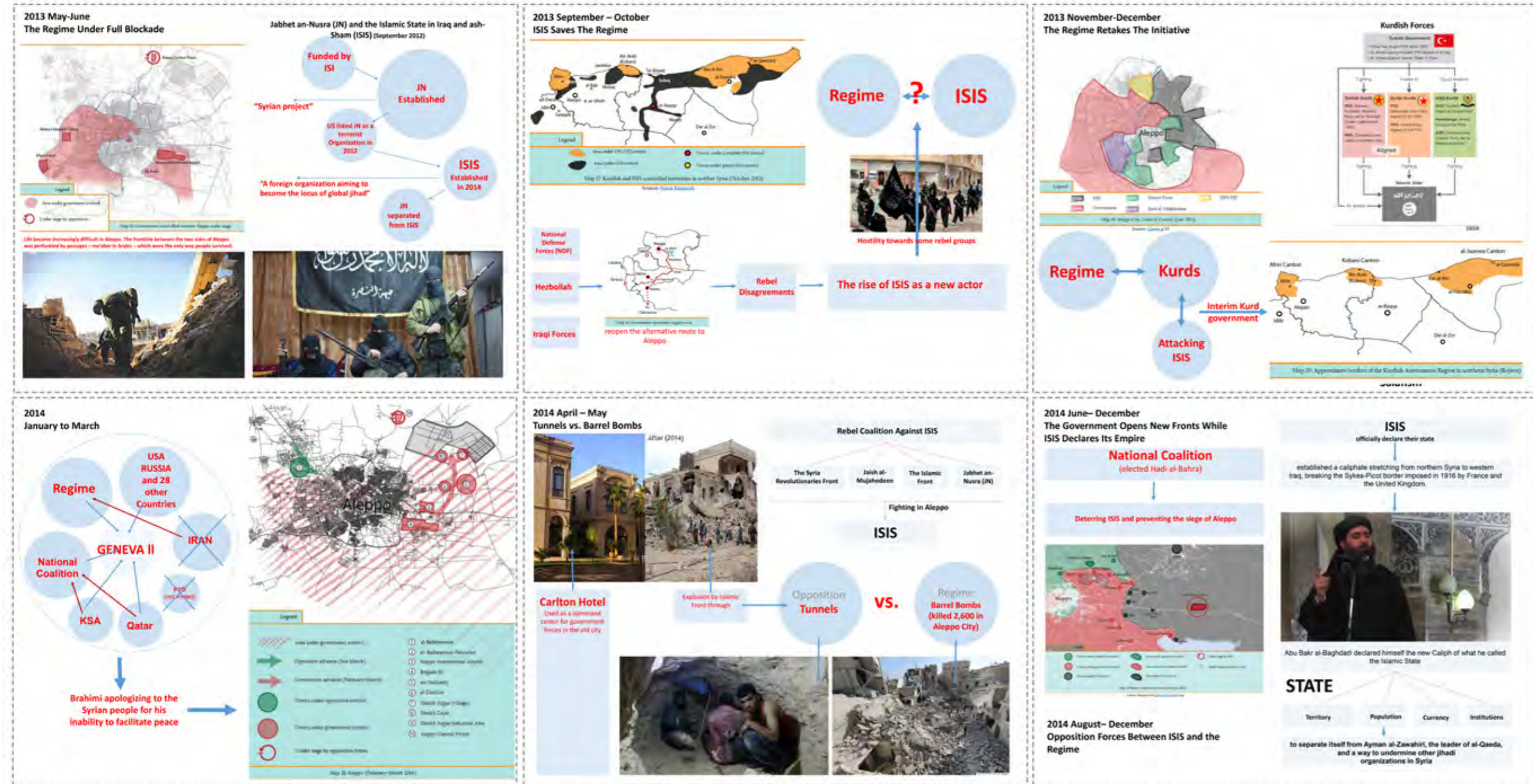
Both axes are under government control, while rebels are trying to cut off regime supply lines to Aleppo

### 2013 April Battle of the two Axes

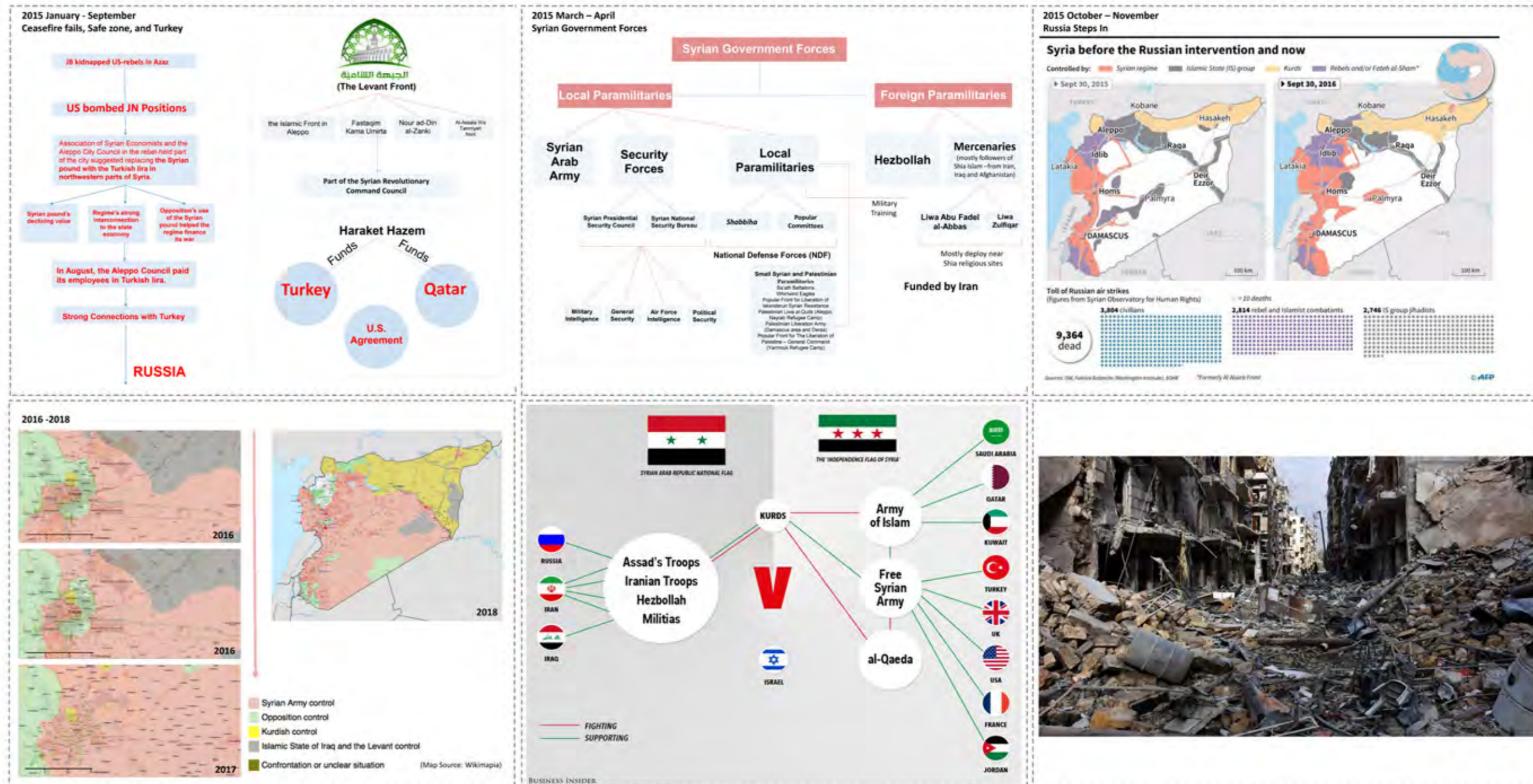
It is most likely that on 24 April, government forces shelled and destroyed the interior of the Umayyad Mosque, built in 696, as they believed rebels were positioned inside. This has been one of the most serious acts of destruction of heritage in the conflict.



Civil War Timeline



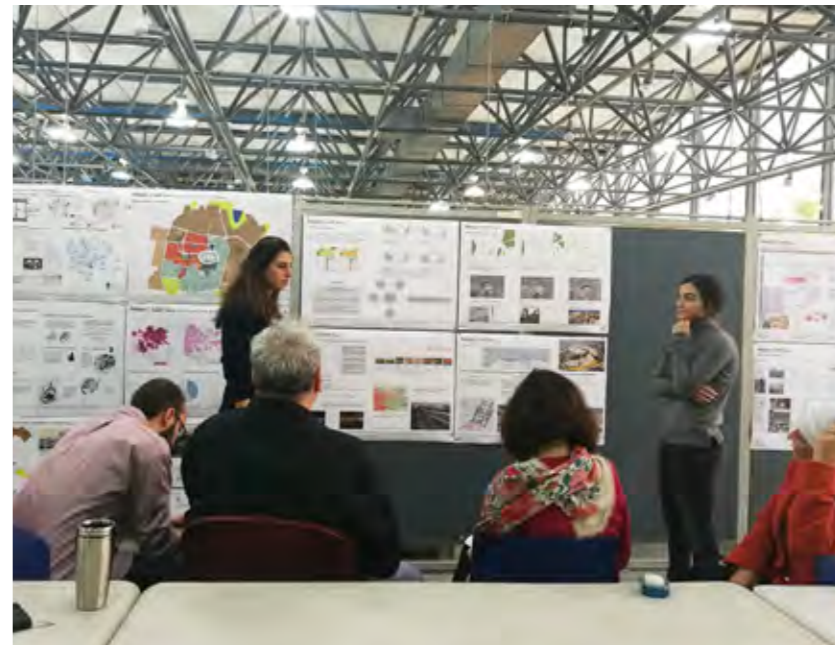
Civil War Timeline



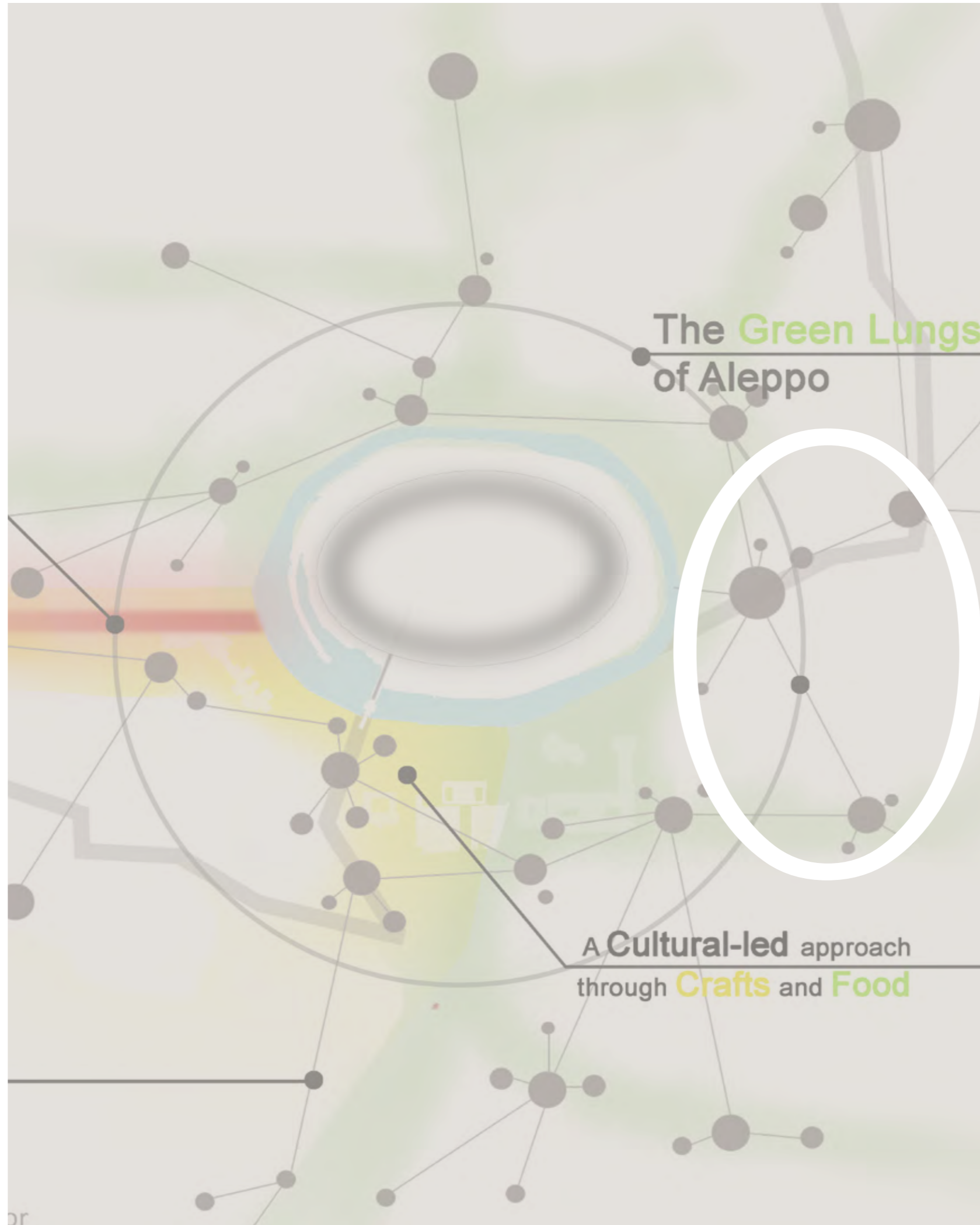


“ The choice of the site for the strategic intervention is a critical start. Public spaces provide an entry point where collective memory and communal practices from the past can work as seeds for imagining a future for the city. Besides their infrastructural values, public spaces are threads in the narrative of the city. They encapsulate past cultural and social celebrations, reference trauma and destruction and facilitate the imagining of the landscapes. ”

Syllabus URDS602







# 4

Proposed  
Visions



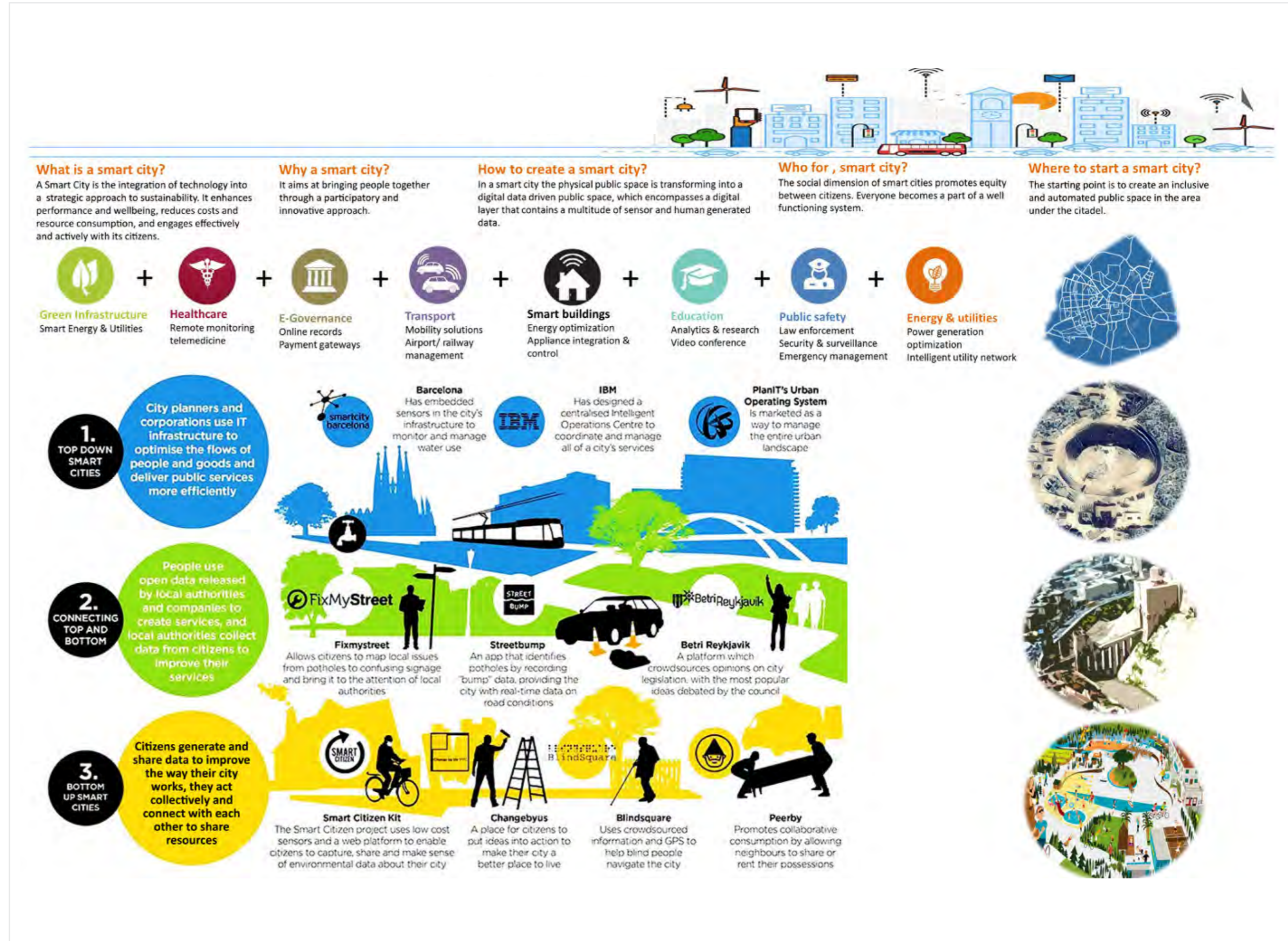
A Digital Platform for 2030

Shantal Ayoub

I envision Aleppo 2030 as a cultural smart city that integrates technology into a strategic approach to sustainability, while reserving the cultural and historic fabrics of the city. The aim is to attract a new generation of Aleppines to live and work in Aleppo and contribute to its restoration. This participatory and innovative approach will bring the city's society together by creating smart public spaces that are digital and data driven.

The social dimension of the Aleppo smart city is to promote equity between citizens. Everyone becomes part of a well-functioning technologically-advanced system. The system extends from the area under the citadel to other open spaces and creates smart, connected, inclusive and automated public nodes around the city.

“ Digital technology connects people. Focusing on IT infrastructure and Smart Cities becomes a path to recovery in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. ”





## An Iconic Space for Democracy and Political Reconciliation

Ali Basma

Historically, Aleppo has been a divided city long before the civil uprising in 2012. This divide was due to socio-economic and political factors that shaped the urban structure of Aleppo and the identity of its residents. During the Ottoman Empire and French Mandate, the heart of urban life in Aleppo was located around the old city and to its west where the central market was located. These areas of Aleppo were home to the regional headquarters of state institutions, the security agencies and the military apparatus. Since the establishment of the modern Syrian state in the early 1940's, the west of Aleppo has been an administrative, social and economic hub for the city and the entire governorate. During the 1950's, the Assad regime refused Andre Gutton's plan, the "Road to Modern Destruction", which led to a rapid spatial expansion to the east characterized mainly by countryside migration. This was followed by Banshoya's urbanization plan in 1974 that further deepened the segregation of the east from the west where most of the funds were allocated for investment.

This historical trajectory led to a large socio-economic divide between the two parts of the city. The western areas tended to be home to the wealthy industrialists and mercantile classes who had a high sense of community and neighborhood identity. People living in these areas, largely self-identified as "Aleppines," claimed deep family roots in their neighborhoods. These were mainly employed in the private commercial and industrial sectors. On the other side, the eastern areas of Aleppo were largely home to the working classes or mustakhdamin (unskilled labourer) who often earned their livelihoods working in the factories owned by the industrialists in the west. Most of Aleppo's informal settlements were also found in the east. These unplanned urban areas grew spontaneously with the influx of workers from the countryside, largely throughout the 1960's and 1970's.

During the 1990's, Aleppo was the focal point of northern Syria where most of the region's economic activities were located. A network of relations linking the traditional Aleppine business class and Syrian regime figures shaped and balanced the relationship between this economic center and the capital and was further consolidated after the neoliberal reforms during the 2000's. These networks and relationships deepened the social and economic gap between the east and west and eventually erupted into a political and military divide during the civil war. This divide was spatially demarcated by a frontline splitting the city in half.

Since 2012, the conflict has dismantled the set of relations that once sustained Aleppo as a hub for the north, led to the ethnic and sectarian cleansing of its population, left large parts of its urban structure in ruins

and deepened the pre-existing, socio-economic divisions in the city. The post war situation in Aleppo can be mainly described as:

**Gentrification of the east:** The east under rebel control was targeted by a brutal regime-led bombing that resulted in an unprecedented displacement of its urban population through evacuation agreements.

**War economy in the west:** A new rising class of local businessmen were connected to either the local war economy or directly to the regime in Damascus, but deprived of a meaningful political weight vis-à-vis Damascus.

**Fragmented political control:** The conflict has isolated many of the regions that were closely linked to Aleppo and were once economically and socially dependent on the city, i.e. Gaziantep and Kilis, Afrin-Qandil.

While a return to the pre-war situation is impossible, it is likely that the process of reconstruction and repopulation of the city will play a significant role in determining the power balance in post war Syria. With key regional and international players involved in the process, two scenarios are possible:

**Political control:** The Assad regime will control the repopulation of the city, empower its warlords and deepen the east-west divide. In this case, Aleppo will lose its people, identity, cultural heritage and history.

**Political resolution:** the Assad regime will (1) work on addressing the forced displacement, (2) ensure balanced development between the east and the west and (3) secure an effective division of power accompanied by a large-scale demilitarization that ends the militia and warlord rule.

In order for Aleppo to rise again and reclaim its leading role in Syria and the region, the only scenario possible is a political resolution that will ensure a safe return for all the people of Aleppo to their city in order to lead on its reconstruction. Aleppo in 2030 should be an **INCLUSIVE ALEPPINE CITY** capable of fighting marginalization, social and economic exclusion and urban decay through an inclusive constitutional process in which majority and minority rights are respected. The site of intervention for the design studio will serve as a political statement that will venture this inclusivity through boldly highlighting the unity of Aleppo and its freedom. The site, with its centrality, should serve as the transitional phase of Aleppo from division to unity.

“ An inclusive Aleppine city capable of fighting marginalization, social and economic exclusion and urban decay through an inclusive constitutional process in which majority and minority rights are respected. The site of intervention for the design studio will serve as a political statement that will venture this inclusivity through boldly highlighting the unity of Aleppo and its freedom. ”

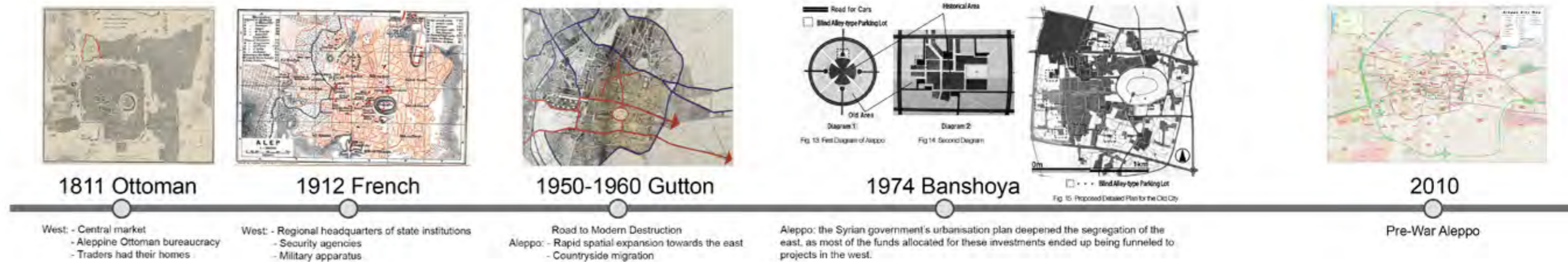
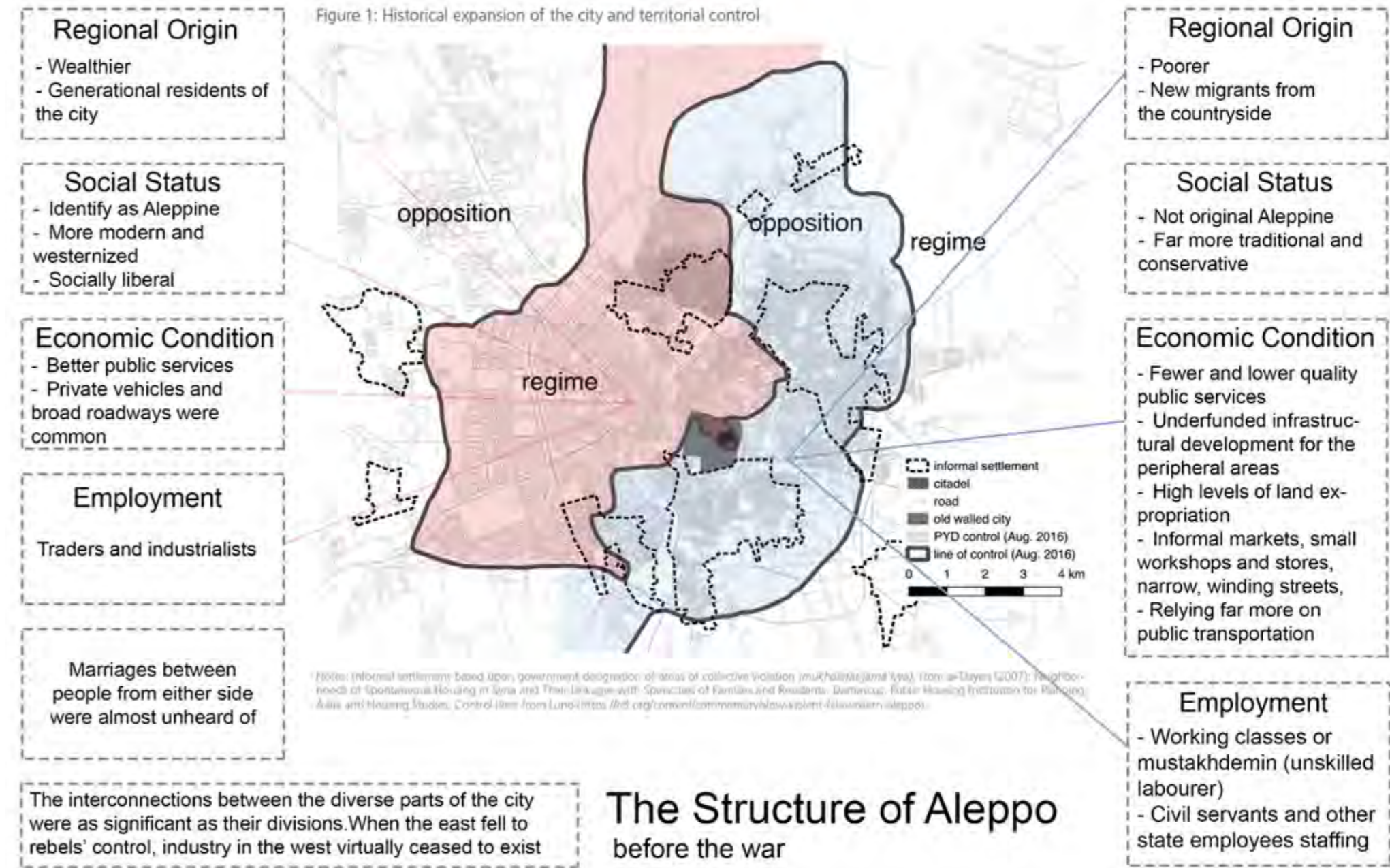


Figure 1: Historical expansion of the city and territorial control





Countryside Migration

Eastern Aleppo countryside  
 Idlib countryside  
 Kurdish City of Afrin  
 Manbij to the East  
 Towns of Haray-tan, Anadan, Mare', and Tal Rifaat

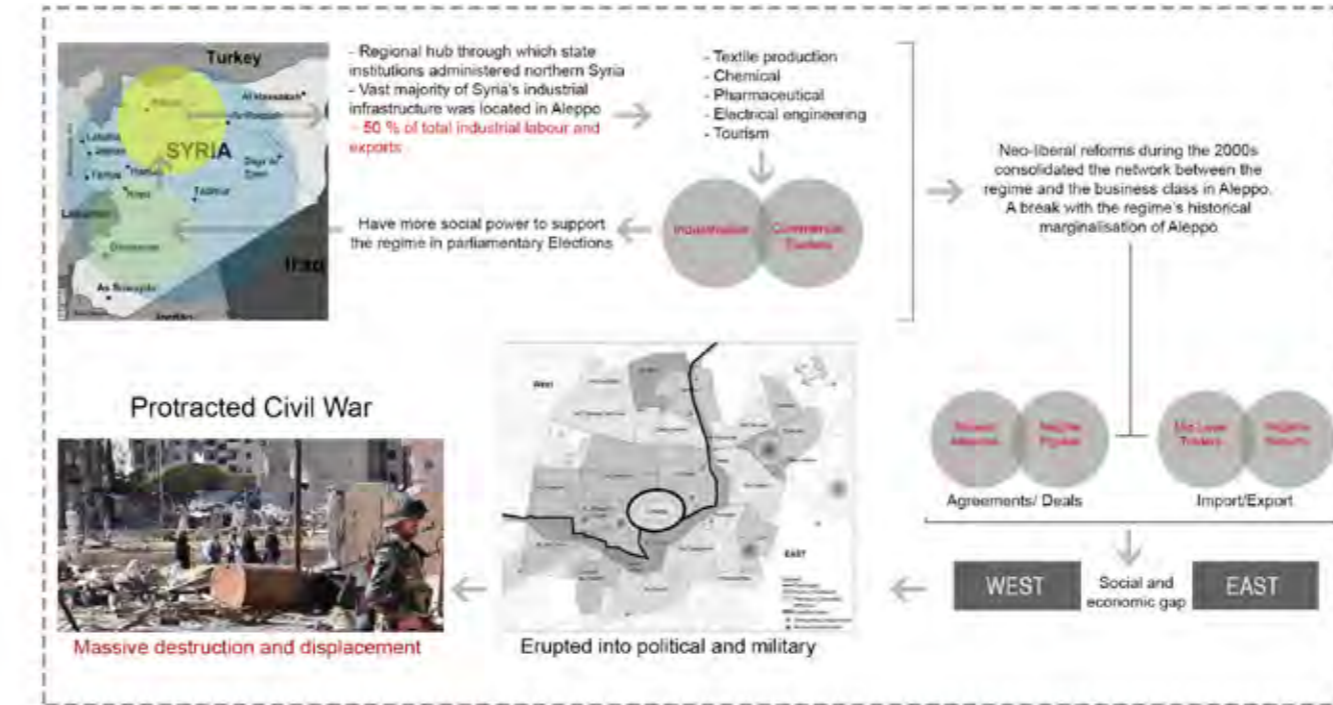
Figure 2: Neighbourhood names and informal settlements



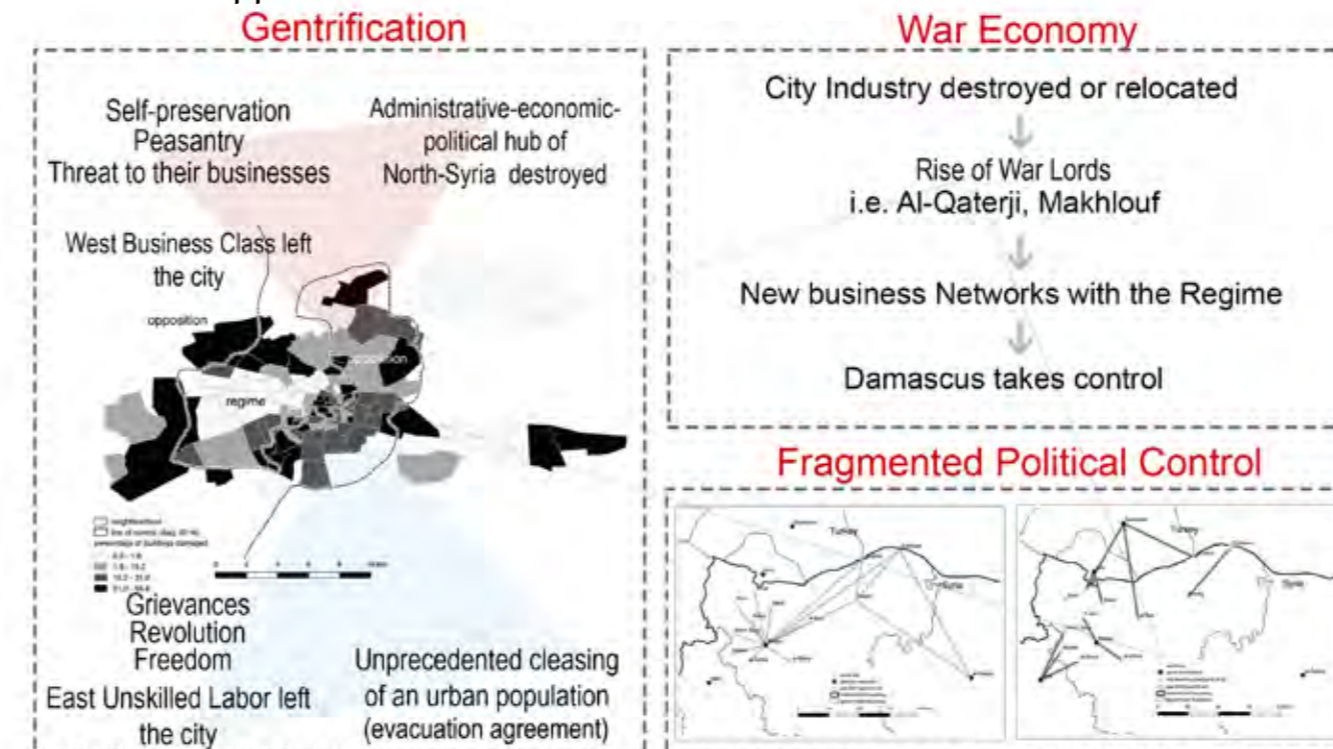
Notes: Informal settlement based on government designation of areas of collective violation (mukhalafat jama'iyya), from al-Dayeri (op. cit.).

Informal Settlements

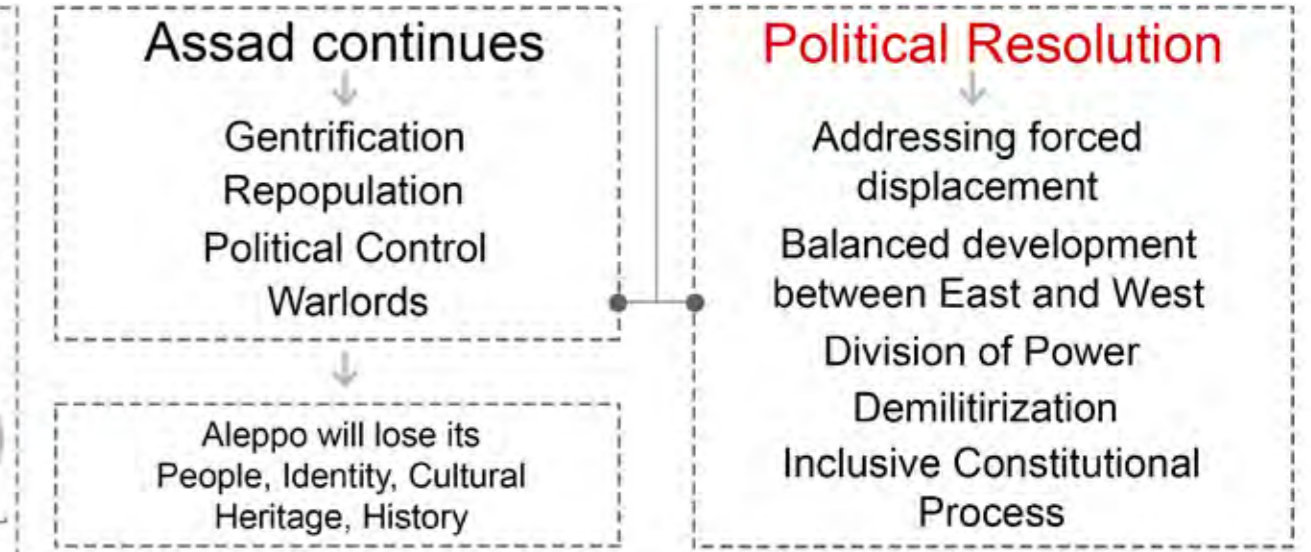
The Aleppo-Regime Bargain



Post War Aleppo



Scenarios



Vision





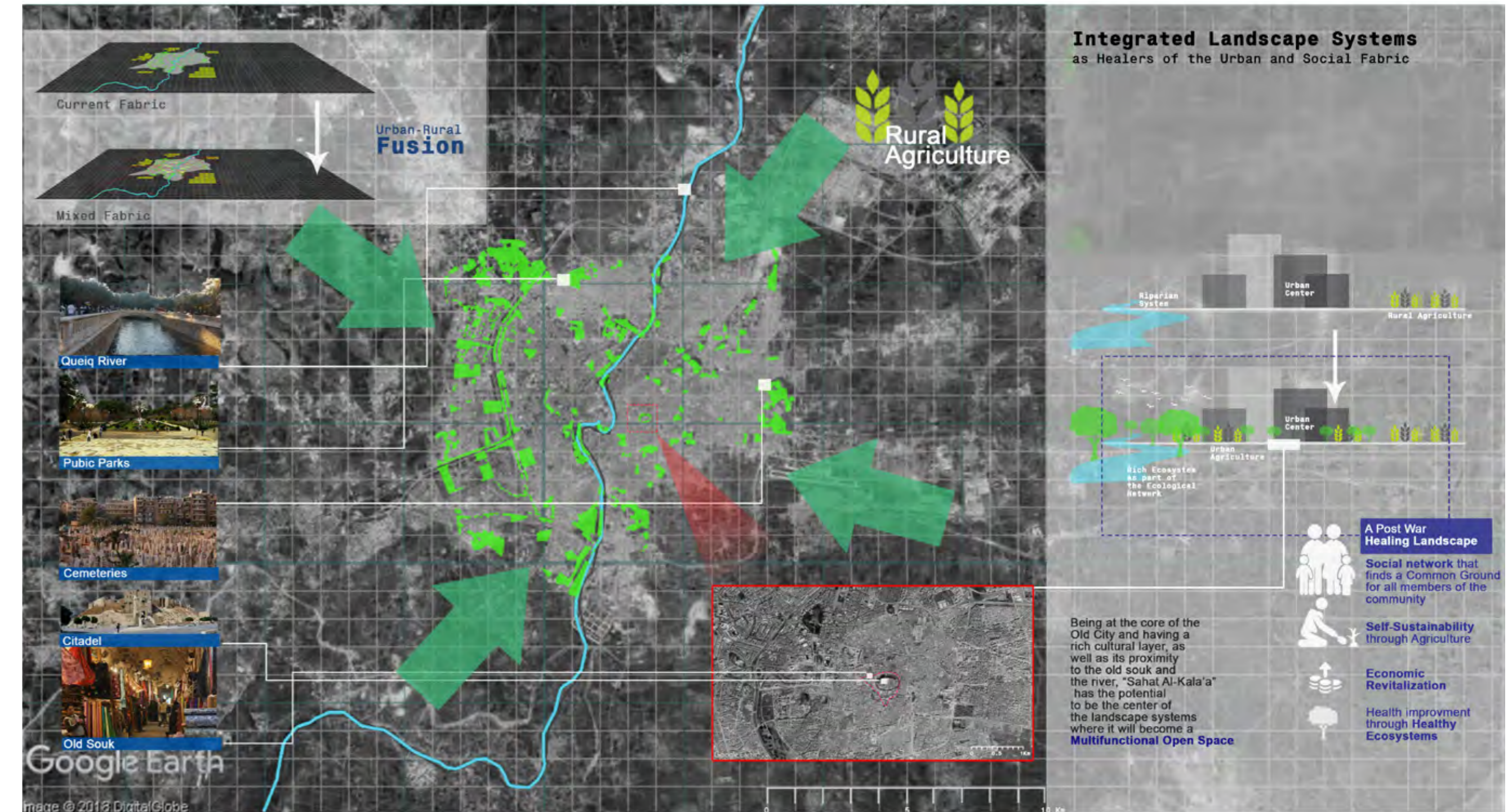
## A Productive Post War Healing Landscape

Mariam Bazzi

Based on the notion that landscape heals the urban and social fabric, this vision for Aleppo's post war recovery builds on the assets of the city--the cultural core including the citadel and old souq, the Queiq River, the public open spaces and cemeteries to propose **Integrated Landscape Systems** that will act as drivers for the post war city formation. This vision is also based on the concept of urban-rural fusion where these systems interact between the dense urban fabric and the rural areas. This is characterized by building an ecological network and integrating rural agriculture into the urban center, thus enhancing the city's sustainability. The vision will be targeting different people across social backgrounds by creating a **network** that will become a common ground and ensure social interaction after the war period of violence ends. As such, the vision will aim to create a **healthy, equitable and resilient urban environment**.

Being at the core of the old city and having a rich cultural layer, as well as its proximity to the old souq and the river, Sahat el Qalaa has the potential to be the **center of the landscape systems**. It will become a **multifunctional open space** that acts as a **hub for cultural and civic engagement** in the city. This vision can be implemented by the municipality through a participatory approach.

“ Women played an important role throughout the civil war by ensuring the safety of their children, generating income and supporting their families during the fighting. Given the opportunity to participate, women in Aleppo can contribute to the process of recovery, reconstruction and healing. ”






## A Creative Network of Knowledge

Mariam Dandachi

For many centuries, Aleppo has been famous for its economic role on both the national and international levels. Although the education and employment rates are lower in Aleppo than in other Syrian cities, Aleppo's citizens biggest asset is their will to work, achieve and do more. From this situation emerges the vision of *Aleppo 2030: a creative network of knowledge*. Knowledge networking is an effective way of combining individuals' knowledge and skills in the pursuit of personal and organizational objectives. It is a rich and dynamic phenomenon in which knowledge is based on three pillars: **connectivity, development and evolution**. Additionally, it is used to propose models of inclusive urban development that offers access to **space and amenities that encourage urban mixing and generate opportunities**. Hence, a creative network of knowledge and labor will allow an exchange between the Aleppines. Each individual shares their knowledge with the community. Implementing such a network improves **connectivity between the neighborhoods, supports innovative and green initiatives for having safe and accessible green public spaces and provides basic services for all**. Additionally, working on the three levels of economy, labor and education, a creative network of knowledge works on **providing quality education for all**. It **strengthens the know-how in the city** (traditional jobs) and **improves the economy**. Furthermore, the center of this network will be the **plaza at the foot of the citadel**, as it is the focal point that connects the residential districts surrounding the citadel. It will serve as the **nucleus of knowledge** from where everything emerges and to where everything flows back. As this network is **community-driven**, the implementation is envisioned to have a **bottom-up approach that the Municipality of Aleppo regulates, supervises and maintains**.

“ Placemaking contributes to recovery by reviving social practices and daily rituals and re-anchoring them in the spaces around the Aleppo citadel. Placemaking integrates economic, ecological and spatial components, conceptualizing them as drivers for recovery. ”

### Aleppo Vision 2030



**CREATIVE KNOWLEDGE NETWORK**  
VISION 2030  
ALEPPO

Knowledge networking is an effective way of combining individuals' knowledge and skills in the pursuit of personal and organizational objectives.


It is a rich and dynamic phenomenon in which knowledge is shared, developed, and evolved.

CONNECTIVITY

DEVELOPMENT

EVOLUTION


**Main Keywords**



**Old City of Aleppo: Population Overview in 2005**

AGES	EDUCATION	EMPLOYMENT
• 52% of the population is between the age of 1 to 30 years old	• 56% received preliminary education	• 91% of women are unemployed
• 42% of the population is between the age of 31 to 60 years old	• 19% are illiterate	• 33% of men are unemployed
• 6% of the population is elderly, over 60 years old	• 2% received institutional level education	
	• 2% received university level education	

*Nevertheless, Aleppo citizens' biggest asset is their will to work, achieve, and do more*




## ALEPPO 2030: CREATIVE NETWORK OF KNOWLEDGE

**Networks of Knowledge**

Used to develop models of inclusive urban development, offering access to space and amenities that encourage urban mixing and generate opportunities for a wide cross section of society, not only academics and students.

The plaza at the foot of the citadel would act as an agglomeration point, a focal point connecting all the residential districts surrounding the citadel. In addition, it will serve as a joining point between the souks and the old citadel.


Hence, the plaza will be the nucleus of the knowledge network, from where everything emerges, and to where everything flows back to.



Knowledge Network:  
→ Knowledge Flowing out of the plaza  
→ Knowledge Flowing to the plaza & between the neighbourhoods  
● Plaza at the foot of the Citadel  
● Neighbourhoods

**Bases of Knowledge Network**

- Improve connectivity between the neighbourhoods
- Support innovative and green initiatives
- Promote safe, accessible and green public spaces
- Provide basic services for all citizens
- Provide quality education for all, on all levels
- Provide an environment where knowledge can easily be shared.
- Work on strengthening the know-how in the city
- Work on improving the economic and labor sectors





A Place of Negotiation and Exchange

Priscilla Fahd

Aleppo witnessed many cycles of destruction and reconstruction throughout history. It is a city that is well known for its rich heritage and its commercial and industrial activities. Before the civil war, the city controlled the bulk of agriculture and two-thirds of the industries in Syria.

I envision Aleppo as a resilient city that celebrates its rich past and aims for a better future for its people.

In order to become a resilient city, the recovery plan should work on three main axes:

REGENERATING THE HISTORIC CORE OF THE CITY

The historic core of the city includes the citadel, the souqs, the mosques, the madrasas and the remaining courtyard houses. The reconstruction should respect and integrate the historic fabric with the new one. The architectural heritage should be adapted to the modern needs of the citizens of Aleppo.

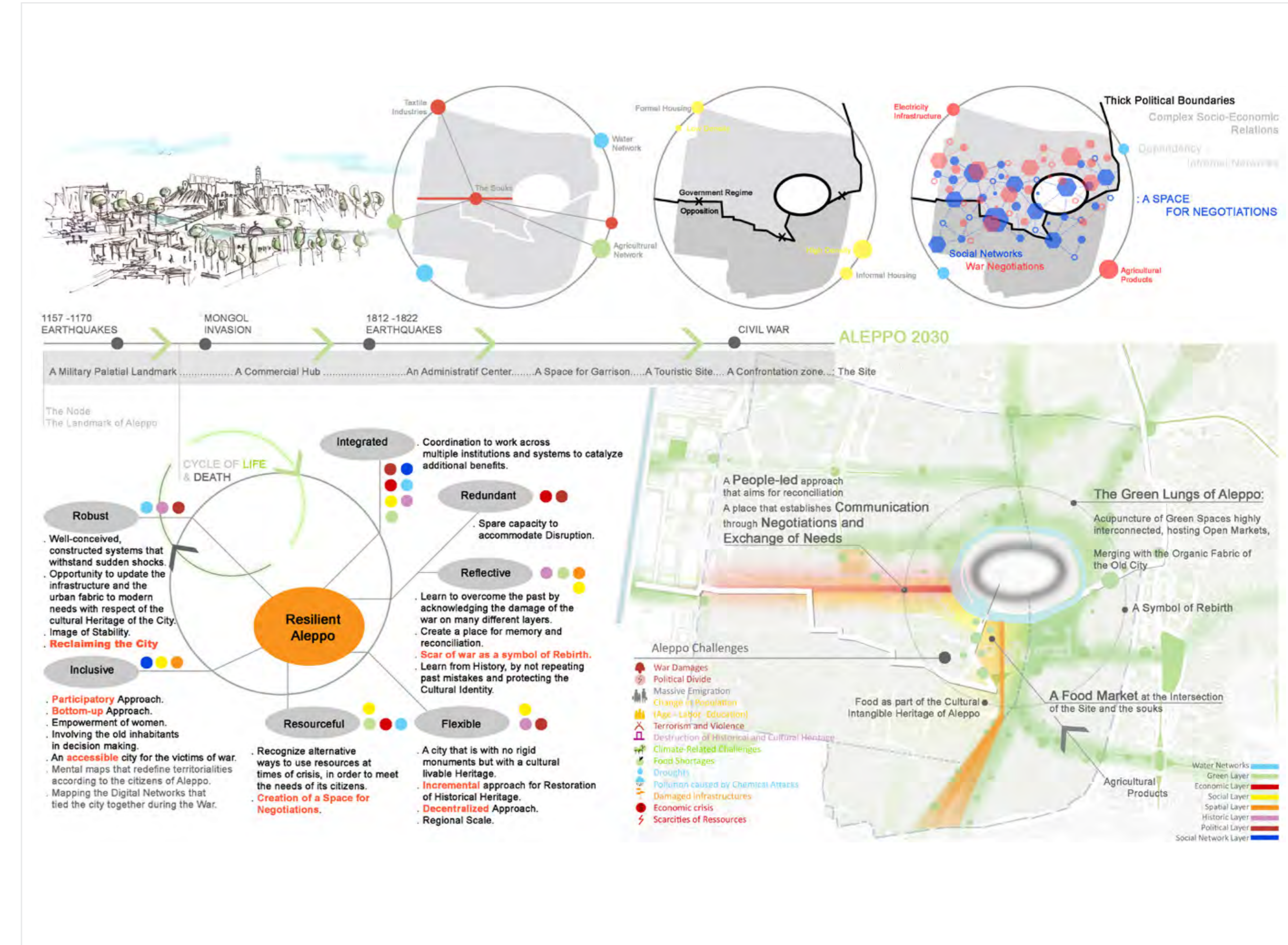
REVITALIZING THE ECONOMY

This will encourage the emigrants to return and invest in the city's commerce and agriculture to support livelihoods and create new employment opportunities.

MAKING ALEPPO A GREEN CITY

In order to respond to climatic challenges such as drought, food shortage and pollution caused by the war, the city should incorporate more public and semi-public green spaces that are sensitive to the lifestyle of the citizens of Aleppo.

“ A resilient city that celebrates its rich past and aims for a better future for its people through three recovery strategies. ”





A Center of Trade and Commerce

Cindy Houes

Aleppo is Syria's largest and its manufacturing center. Its location between the Euphrates River and the Mediterranean Sea positioned the city as a commercial hub since the early ages. The practice of setting up a market and industries dates back to before the Ayyubid occupation of the area, however, it was under the Ottoman Empire that commerce became a priority in steering urban development—facilities were almost doubled during this period.

As such, trade and commerce formed the identity of Aleppo throughout the different periods of occupations. The city collapsed and rose again, while trade and industry remained a successful model to emulate elsewhere.

Aleppo 2030 envisions a city of trade and commerce with both a "business heart" and an "emotional heart." The business heart of the city of Aleppo will involve the revival of local entrepreneurial skills in light industries such as textiles and garments, the agro-food, gold, pharmaceutical products and carpets and soaps.

Therefore, the vision is to revive and enhance what was left of these industries and to provide the means to expand them, such as providing infrastructure, sewage treatment, raw material, rails and highways to be connected to the airport and the port in Latakia. The exchanges will occur around the city of Aleppo (between Aleppo and the cities around it), as well as other countries. Products from turkey arrive to Aleppo and then reach the other cities in Syria such as Damascus and vice versa.

As for the "emotional heart" of Aleppo, the old city and the site around the citadel will serve as a focal point for people visiting the area and for returning Aleppines. It will act as a social and cultural hub that will revive the old souqs. The people who owned shops will be part of the process of reconstructing what was destroyed and revive the sensory experience of walking through the souqs and exchanging goods and crafts. The site beneath the citadel will also act as a cultural and social space—a meeting point where people will reintegrate into the social and cultural aspects of the souqs while contemplating the resilience of the citadel.

“ The disruption caused by the fighting deprived a generation of children and youth from the rich intangible heritage of Aleppo. Reconnecting youth with the exceptional food and music heritage of the city is a key to long-term recovery, with schools as recovery nodes that re-introduce the youth to the rich culture of their city. ”

Aleppo as a City of Trade and Commerce

**The 'business heart' of Aleppo**  
*The intermediate location of Aleppo between the Euphrates and the Mediterranean Sea designated the city as a commercial center since early ages. Aleppo today is the second largest city in Syria and the economic capital of the country.*

**The 'emotional heart' of Aleppo**  
 "The souqs were the beating heart of the city. From spices and traditional sweets to textile carpets and famous Aleppo soap"  
 - World Monuments Fund

**A L E P P O 2 0 3 0**

Aleppo's main identity before the war revolved around the idea of trade based on light industries which took place within the souqs, such as: textiles, garments, soap, agri-food, gold and pharmaceutical products.

Exporting and importing goods will take place through Aleppo (from Turkey to Syria and vice versa).

Throughout the different occupations of the Old city, the souqs always remained as the center/main axis.

The souqs will be rebuilt within the same theme that it used to be, with the same types of shops and materials and possibly similar ownerships.

They will act as the social part of the city where the Aleppians and visitors will come to buy and walk around the souqs to experience them.

The industrial areas will be revived and expanded, they will be supplied with infrastructure, power, sewage treatment, railway connections, etc. (Whatever is needed to facilitate transporting or producing the material).

Aleppo and its context vision 2030

Maps of Old city showing persistence and importance of souqs throughout successive periods



An Urban and Infrastructure Knot

Basma Ibrahim

Based on our analysis of the city of Aleppo over time, we note the important role that the souqs played as a social and economic destination to the citizens of the country, the region and beyond.

In parallel, if we map the effects of the war, we notice that all the historic buildings at the foot of the citadel were destroyed, leaving a vacuumed space that stretches from the entrance of the souqs to the Palace of Justice that remains standing.

These conditions inspired my vision to bring back the city to life through commerce and transportation. The strategy is summarized in three steps:

1. Restore the old souqs as a living market.
2. Expand the commercial activities into the vacuumed space at the foot of the citadel, which now has the entrance tower as a central corridor that should be highlighted for its historical importance. The tower has animated the public space at the foot of the citadel since the Ayyubid period.
3. Create an infrastructural knot or a "point d'eclatement". A point of out-break or a transportation hub that connects the heart of Aleppo to the rest of the city, its hinterland and to the country at large. Using the Palace of Justice as a transportation knot (terminal) will benefit the restored souqs and the new commercial space with the flow of commuters who will benefit from the souq.

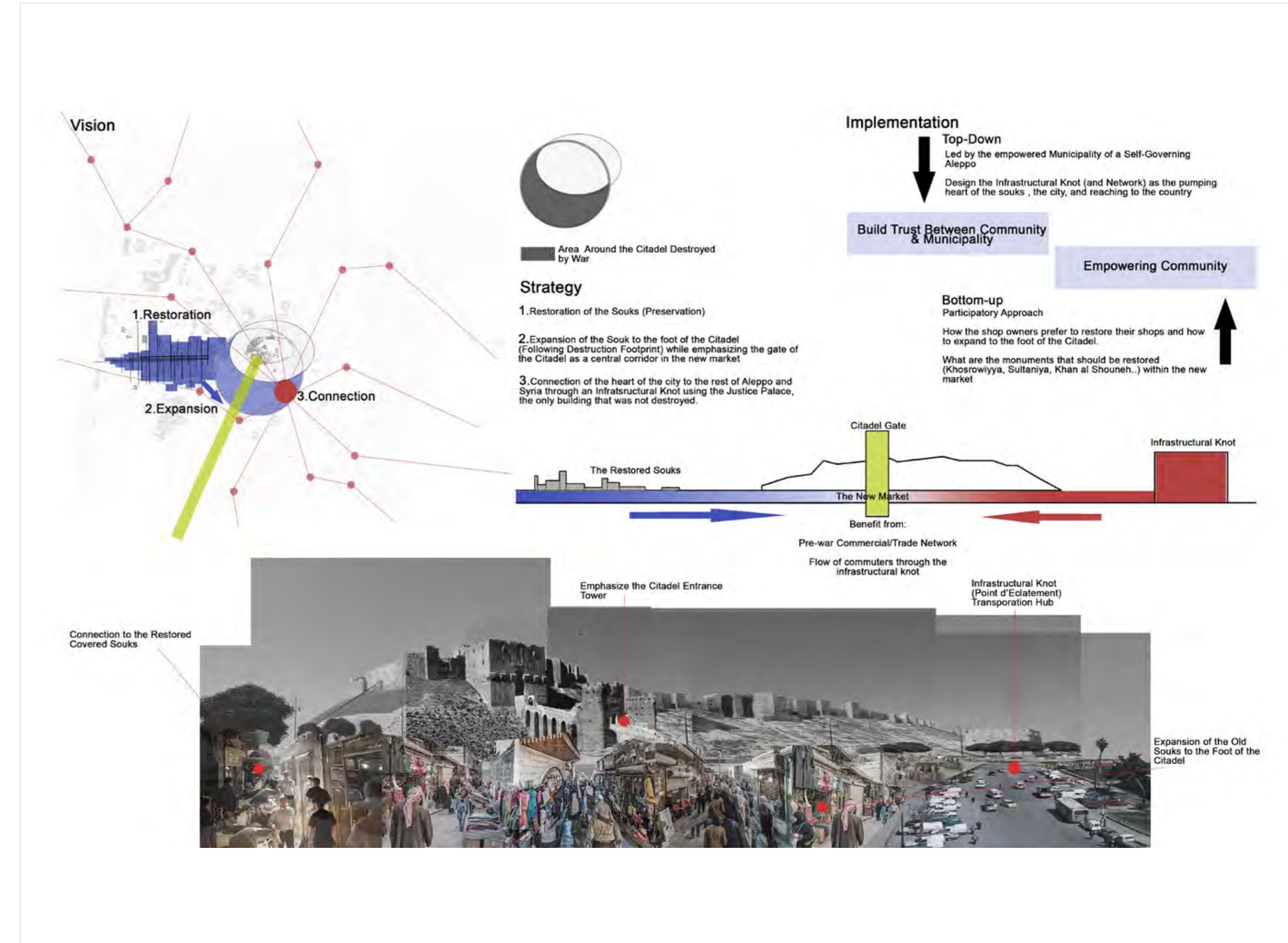
Thus the objective is to utilize commerce and the infrastructural knot as a social and economic revitalizer of Aleppo.

The implementation of the vision adopts a process that is both top-down and bottom-up.

The top-down approach involves empowering the Municipality of Aleppo to manage and implement the infrastructural knot and its relation to the existing and new commuting networks. This will help the municipality gain the trust of the community. The approach is also bottom-up as it involves the shop-owners of the souqs in the renovation process and the design of the vacuumed space and its relationship to the knot. This will empower the community and give them a sense of belonging.

As a conclusion, the market and the transportation knot are mutually beneficial in revitalizing the city at the socio-economic level.

“ Based on the historical role of Aleppo as the center for commerce, manufacturing and agriculture for Syria and the Middle East, recovery should reconnect Aleppo with its hinterland in order to reclaim Aleppo’s role as a regional hub. ”





### A Trail of Artistic Expressions of Citizenship

George Nader

While transitioning from one era to another and at the end of each cycle, the heart of the city evolved (from a maydan, to a civic space, to a market place) while the identity and the essence of the city has remained the same. "In this perspective, resilience is not conceived of as a return to normality, but rather as the ability of complex socio-ecological systems to change, adapt and crucially transform in response to stresses and strains." (Davoudi 2012)

In 2012, Aleppo faced yet another conquest. Confrontations between the Syrian government and the opposition ravaged the old city and for four years, caused severe destruction to the old center which is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. An estimated 33,500 buildings have been damaged and destroyed. Nevertheless, Aleppo began to recover as soon as the war stopped, writing a new chapter in the history of its ancient urban fabric. What would be the main title of this chapter? What is the evolved state that Aleppo will acquire in this new era? And how will it reach such a state?

The war left Aleppo divided into two entities separated by a demarcation line that passes around the citadel. This separation did not, however, eliminate the sense of the Aleppine community and co-operation, with both sides co-ordinating efforts to get water and different merchandises in order to ensure their survival.

Building upon these cultural practices, and focusing on the historical nucleus of the old city, a new narrative for Aleppo can be written. Aleppo in 2030 would be a cultural hub in Syria and the Middle East and a destination for festivities and cultural gatherings where most of the events can be hosted, mainly in "Sahat al Qalaa" and the citadel.

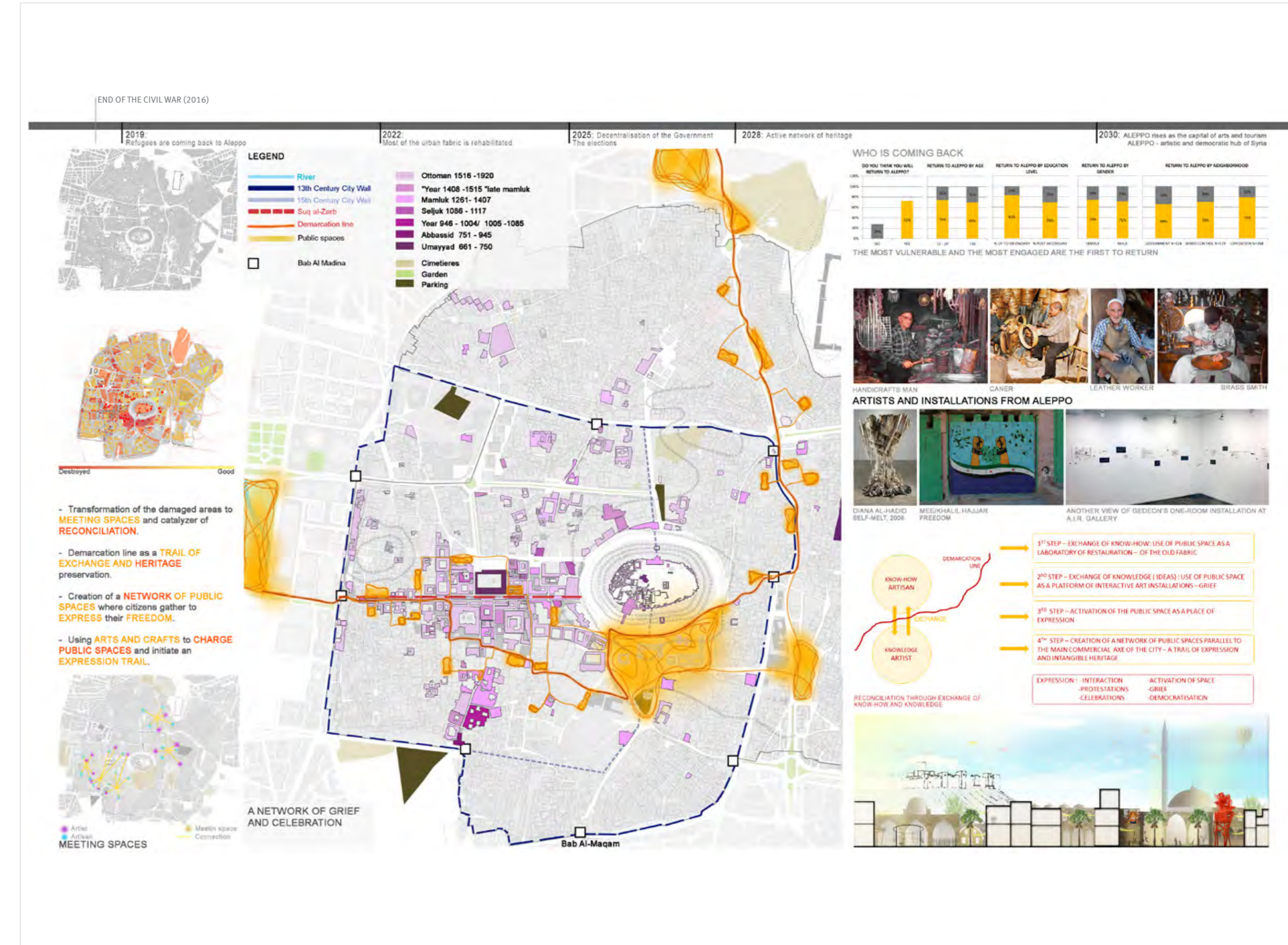
To reach the proposed vision, many steps have to be accomplished. While focusing on the historical nucleus of Aleppo as a reconciliation center, the resolution has to begin at the demarcation line. My aim is to use the scars of the war, the destroyed spaces and the demarcation line as assets to reinforce the city's heritage. Given that the tangible heritage of Aleppo has been destroyed several times, it seems logical to focus on a notion of intangible heritage that was preserved as a mean of reconciliation and reconstruction.

Thus, the primary targets of my vision are the artisans, the people holding an endangered know-how (intangible heritage) and the artists, the people possessing a certain knowledge (ideas to be expressed).

The participatory approach should be divided into pre-reconstruction, reconstruction and post-reconstruction, and the community should be equally involved in the three steps under the umbrella of a democratic governance.

The vision proposes attempts not only to recover the built heritage, but also to reinforce the intangible heritage as a catalyst for the transmission of an endangered know-how. Cultural heritage will be used as a spark that allows the Aleppines to utilize public space as a platform to express their thoughts and hold different political and cultural events, while celebrating unity and diversity.

“ Artists and Artisans can lead the path to recovery through knowledge and ideas. The focus is equally on animating urban spaces and creating processes that engage the people of Aleppo and reaffirm community-inclusive recovery. ”





A Hub of Cultural Pluralism

Nadine Salhab

Aleppo's identity was forged by the overlapping layers of different cultures. The cultural accumulation over the course of time led to the creation of a rich urban space. Since ancient times, and leading up to the Crusades, the Ayyubids and then the Mamluks, followed by the Ottomans to the French mandate, each one of these cultures left its own imprint on the city's fabric with many landmarks and architectural buildings.

Our site, although destroyed, still holds huge potential to return to its former state as a vibrant cultural center on a regional level. Defying the physical boundaries, Aleppo can reach international exposure by using its heritage as a global cultural hub.

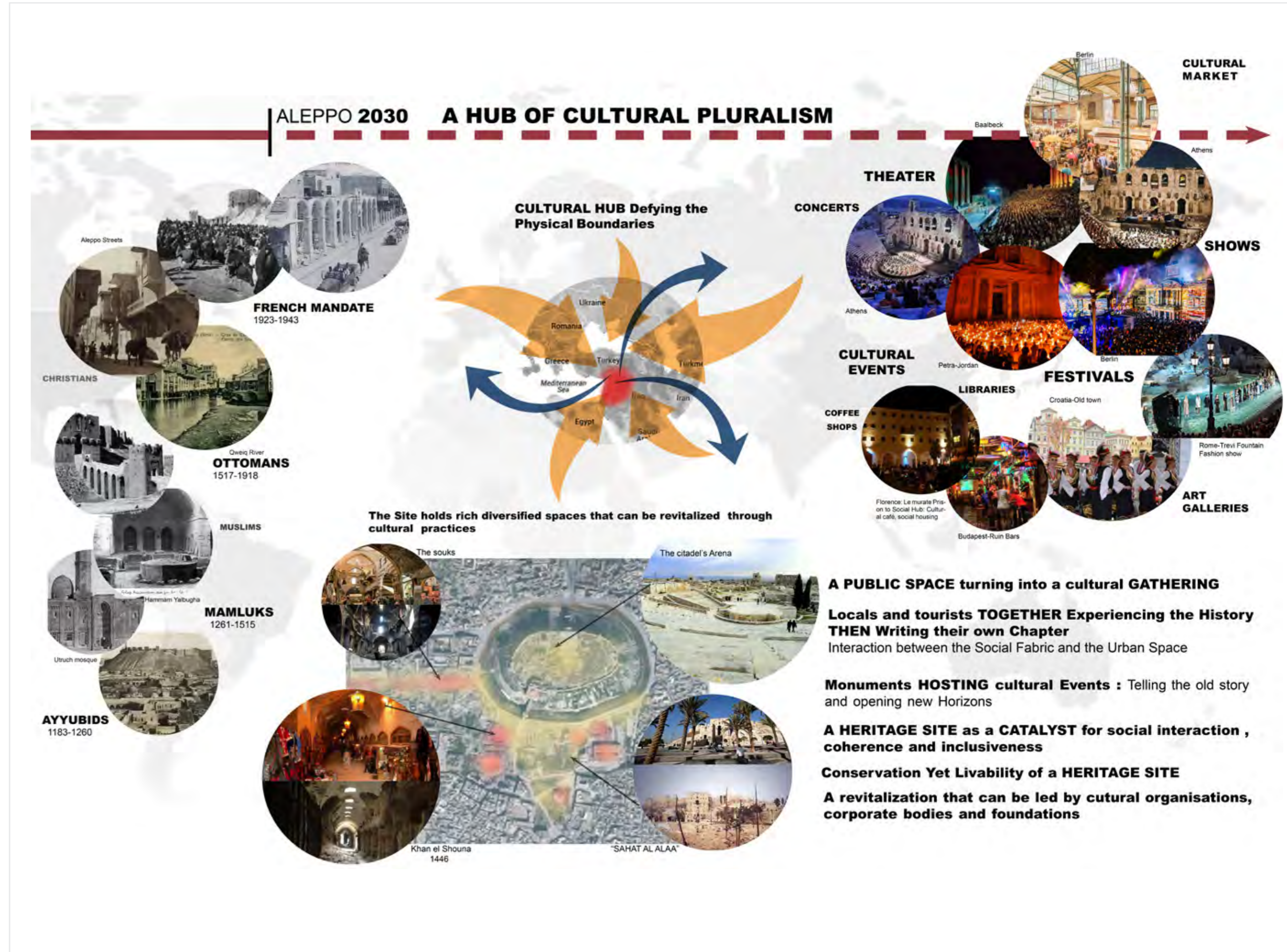
Many heritage cities around the world have one thing in common: their citizens restore and continue to inhabit their historic urban fabrics. They revive these spaces through cultural practices such as events, markets, fairs, libraries, cultural shops and cafés. A cultural vibe has revitalized cities across the globe--Paris with its well-known opera, the cultural markets of Berlin inside historic factories, the festivals in Baalbek and the citadel's arena in Athens. While each of these cities has undergone episodes of destruction and erasure, they have managed through culture-led regeneration to reinvigorate their city centers and heritage assets.

The site in Aleppo holds rich diversified spaces that can be revitalized through a cultural approach. They present many similarities with the spatial qualities of the case studies stated above. The arena of the citadel can host shows, theaters and cultural festivals. Sahet el Qalaa or plaza would be the node of large scale social gatherings in front of the citadel, constantly animated by arts and crafts markets, local and regional art

exhibitions, art fairs and local food markets. Khan el Shouna and the old souqs can promote the rebirth of typical cultural practices by hosting live crafts workshops followed by a spillover of the local production in the left-over and open spaces and of the city. The heart of Aleppo can shape its public space into a cultural gathering. The restored monuments will host cultural events for locals and tourists to experience the rebirth of Aleppo's city center as a global heritage site.

This revitalization can be led and financed by cultural organizations such as the UNESCO. Moreover, many corporate bodies and foundations would be interested in funding this project. The Municipality of Aleppo as well is envisioned to play a major role in the rebirth of the city. However a bottom-up approach is necessary to give the chance to the locals to raise their voices and share their hopes for the city of tomorrow.

“ Aleppo as a palimpsest of Identities, each leaving its imprint. Overlapping the social fabric with the spatial and historic can restore Aleppo's collective identity. ”





A Network for Urban Agriculture  
Maysaa Sarieddine

My vision for urban agriculture is based on an analysis of Syria's agricultural production. Syria consists of five agricultural zones with a diversity of crops depending on rainfall. The northern governorates of Aleppo, Ar-Raqqa and Al-Hasakeh account for 60 percent of the total agricultural land. Unfortunately, after the crisis, assessments show that agriculture has been severely affected.

Factors such as reduced planting area and lack of labor, machinery and fertilizer have resulted in reduced harvest for all crops since the crisis began.

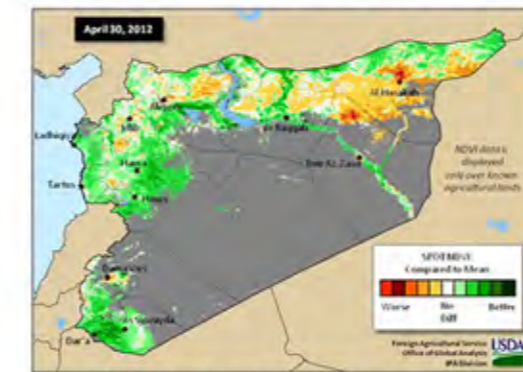
Therefore, I envision a solution to revitalize agricultural production through new methods such as introducing agricultural areas into urban spaces. Some examples of urban agricultural acupunctures include:

- Rooftop farming and locally produced food
- Fruit production
- Edible sidewalk gardens
- Gardening for strangers
- Participation in small-scale cultivation and cultural citizenship
- Fruit picking events
- Specialty crops for restaurants and cafes
- Interior farms
- Controlling the urban heat island effect
- Renting empty lots
- Protecting the fauna
- Connecting amateur farmers with elderly farmers who were forced to abandon their land
- Implementing a plot sharing system
- Receiving resources such as seeds, tools, input and technical advice
- Urban farming related services
- Educational tours and workshops
- Reclaiming old buildings and using their roofs
- Housing herbs and providing local markets and shops
- Organizing food events with scenic dinners

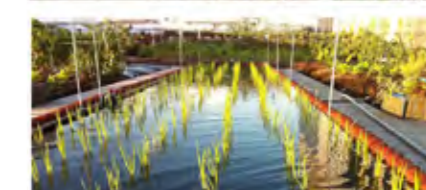
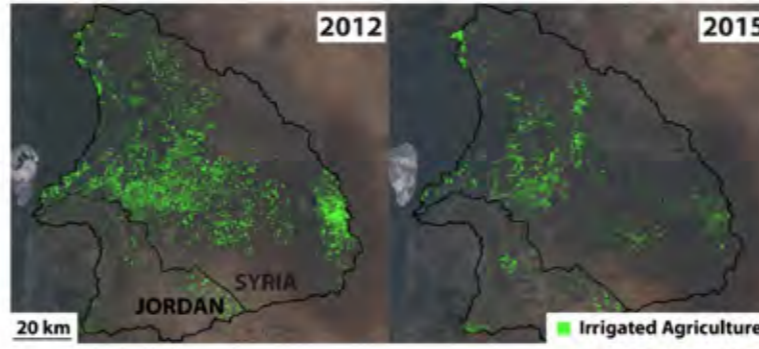
“ Revitalize agricultural production through new methods of urban acupunctures. ”



Source: GeoCover LC 2000, NASA SRTM Elevation and Water Data



Source: SPOT Satellite with Landsat(30M) Landcover-based Crop Mask



Brooklyn Grange (New York City)

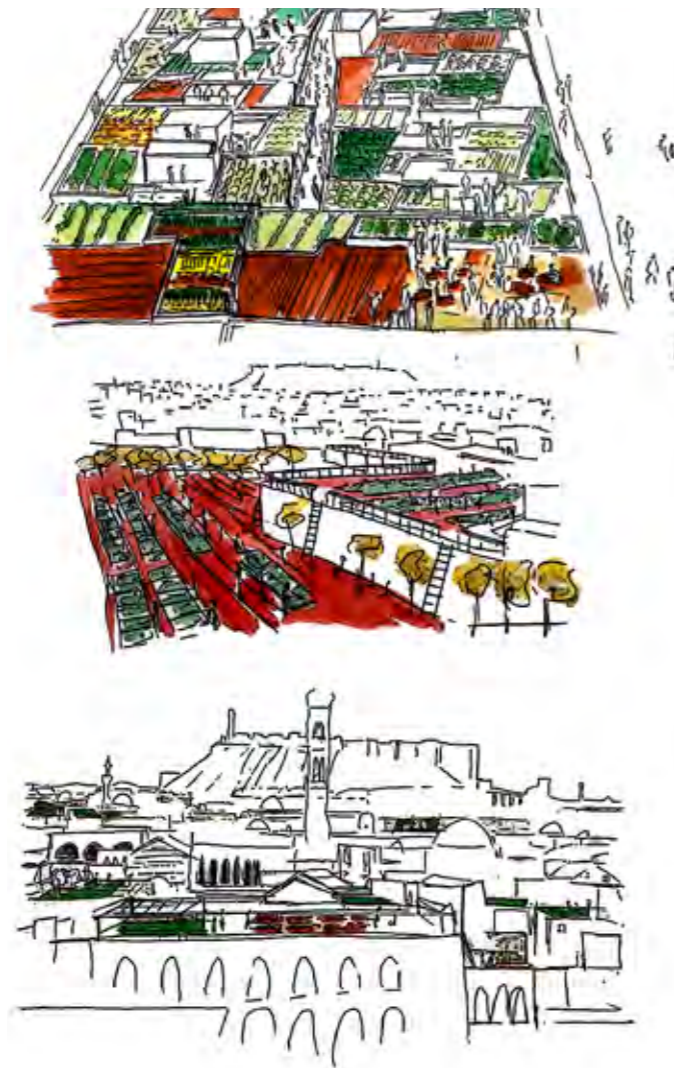
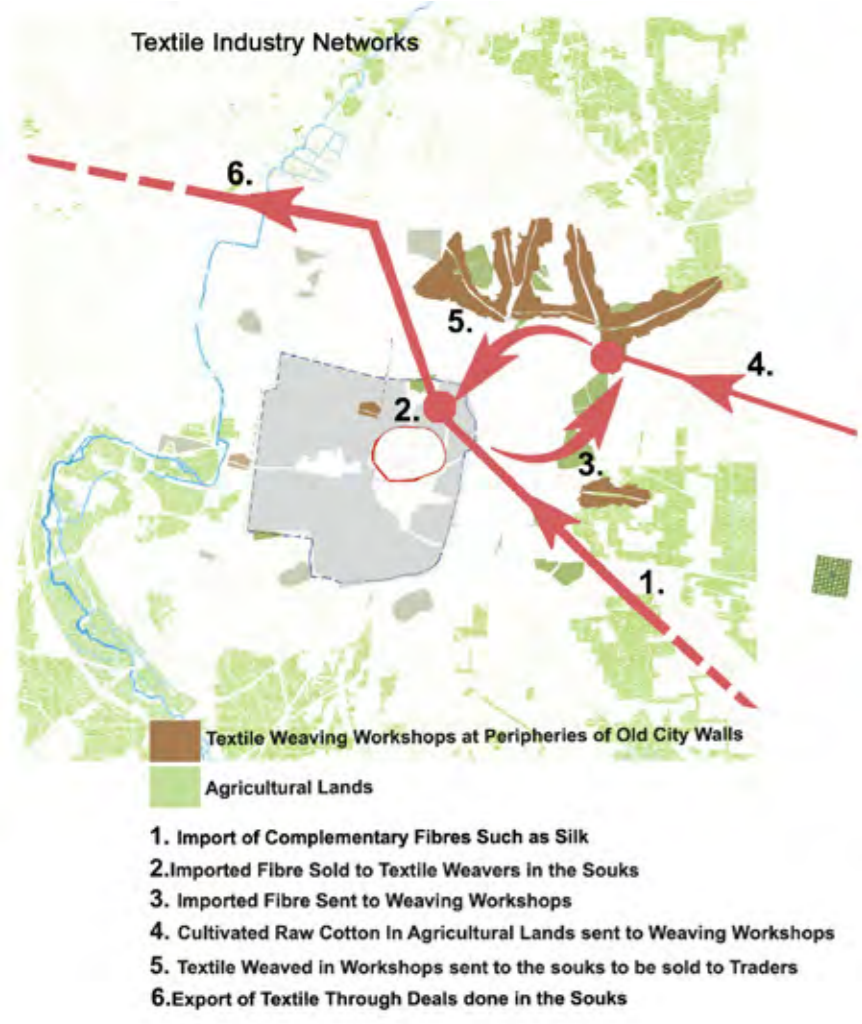


Brooklyn Grange (New York City)



HK Farm (Hong Kong)





**City scape- 1985**  
 Abundance of green areas  
 No green areas or parks within the vicinity of the citadel  
 Many agricultural areas  
 No public parks



**City scape- Early 2000s**  
 Decrease in Agricultural land on the peripheries  
 Slight increase in the parks surrounding the citadel



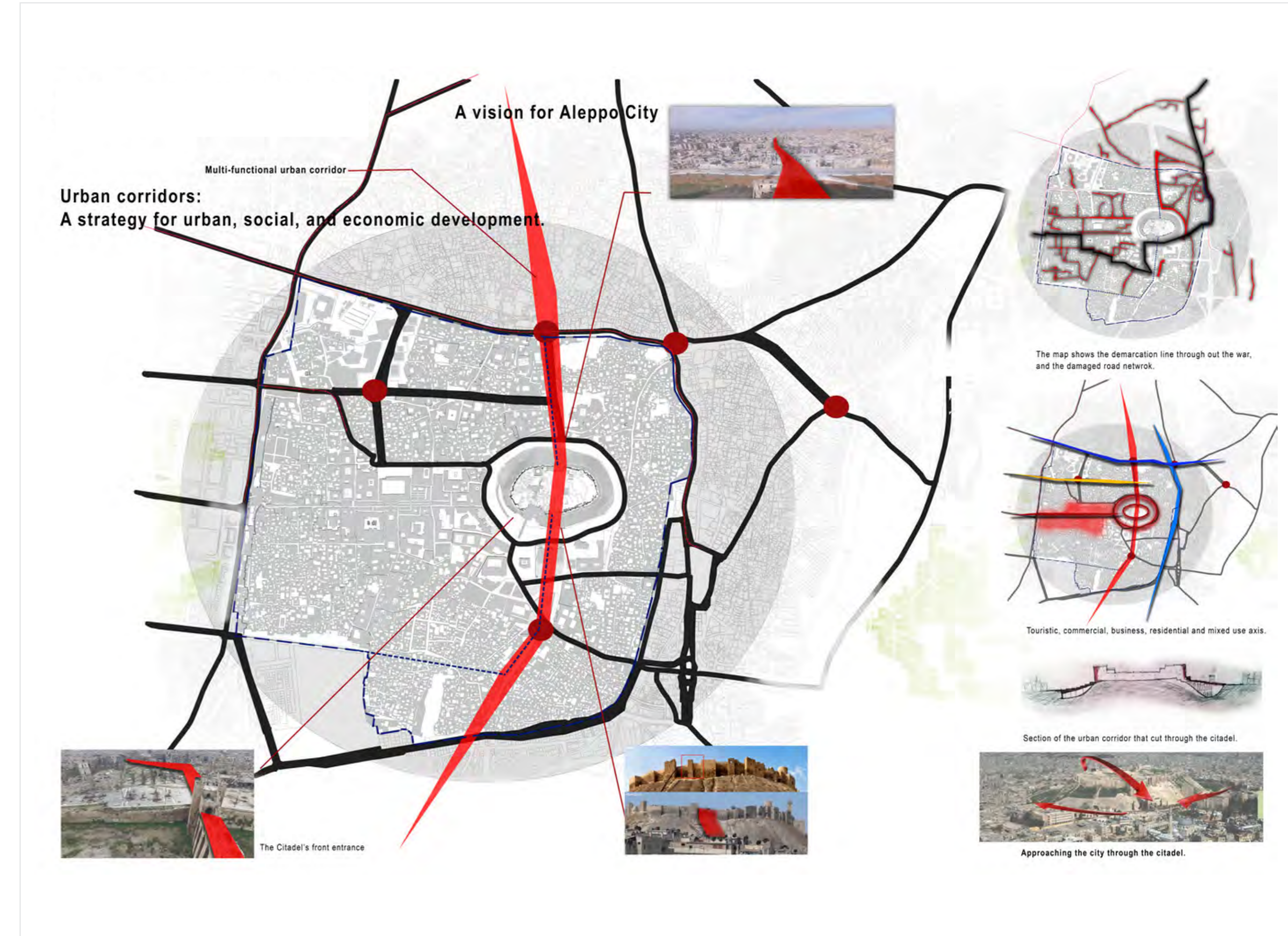
**City scape- 2017**  
 Green areas have decreased  
 Some have been completely erased due to war

- Parks
- Agricultural land
- Green areas
- Residual green



I built my vision on urban connectivity. Instead of connecting the city to the citadel, I connected the city through the citadel. My vision aims to turn the citadel from a monument into an active element in the urban, social and economic realm of the city. The area facing the back of the citadel is relatively marginalized. Urban development is concentrated in front of the citadel's gate. Therefore, the main pedestrianized urban corridor, which extends from Al-Kawakbi Street through the citadel to Bab Almaqam Street, will connect the northern and southern sides of the citadel. It will create a continuous flow of social and economic activities and function as the main distributor to other urban corridors surrounding the area. It will accommodate multiple commercial, residential, business and touristic activities, among others. Without destroying or erasing the old footprint of the street network, the urban corridors will function as initiatives, generators and catalysts of urban, social and economic revitalization and repair.

“ To turn the citadel from a monument into an active element in the urban, social and economic layers of the city. ”





Selected Community Shared Vision

Aleppo a city of trade and Commerce  
Place-centered, Heritage-led, People-focused

The history of Aleppo is marked by “evolutionary resilience” (Davoudi 2012). It witnessed many cycles of destruction and reconstruction over time. The plaza at the foot of the citadel evolved from a maydan, to a civic space, to a military space, to a market place, while the identity and the essence of the city remained the same. Therefore, our vision for Aleppo would be a vision of a resilient city that celebrates its rich past and aims for a future that is inclusive of all the people of Aleppo.

RECOVERY PLAN

In order for it to become a resilient city, the recovery plan should work on three main axes:

URBAN CONSERVATION OF THE HISTORICAL CORE OF THE CITY

The historic core includes the citadel, the souqs, the mosques, the madrasas and the remaining courtyard houses. The reconstruction should respect and integrate the historic fabric with the new one.

Revitalizing the Economy

The revitalization will occur through the celebration of the living and intangible heritage of the city, including food and crafts. These will provide cultural, touristic and commercial value, while supporting the livelihood of the inhabitants and creating new opportunities for employment.

Making Aleppo a Green City

In order to deal with, and attempt to, solve the environmental issues, the vision aims for more public and semi-public green spaces that respond to the lifestyle of the citizens of Aleppo.

VISION FOR THE OLD CITY AND SAHIT EL QALAA

The city will have a series of interconnected open spaces that create a cultural network, with the site at the foot of the citadel as the main focus. These open spaces will be flexible and diverse, serving as zones of interaction and exchange. The network chosen will consist of spaces charged with historical or political symbolism or socio-economic or agricultural values. As for the site itself, it will act as a main hub where the citizens can gather, reconfigure and reshape the space as an act of reclaiming the city. Its functionality will vary but the approach itself will remain people-led, culture-responsive and place-centered. Furthermore, it will host events and cultural festivities, weekly markets for food, arts and crafts and act as an exhibition and space for expression.

STEPS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Activation

These public spaces will allow people to gather and interact with each other. They will become part of the decision-making system and take action in reviving their own city and reestablishing their memories.

Urban Conservation

The citizens will gather in the established nodes to exchange ideas on the restoration of the old fabric. These public spaces will act as laboratories of restoration endorsed by various NGOs.

Interpretation

The public spaces will serve also as spaces of interpretation, where ideas are exchanged and expressed through interactive art installations.

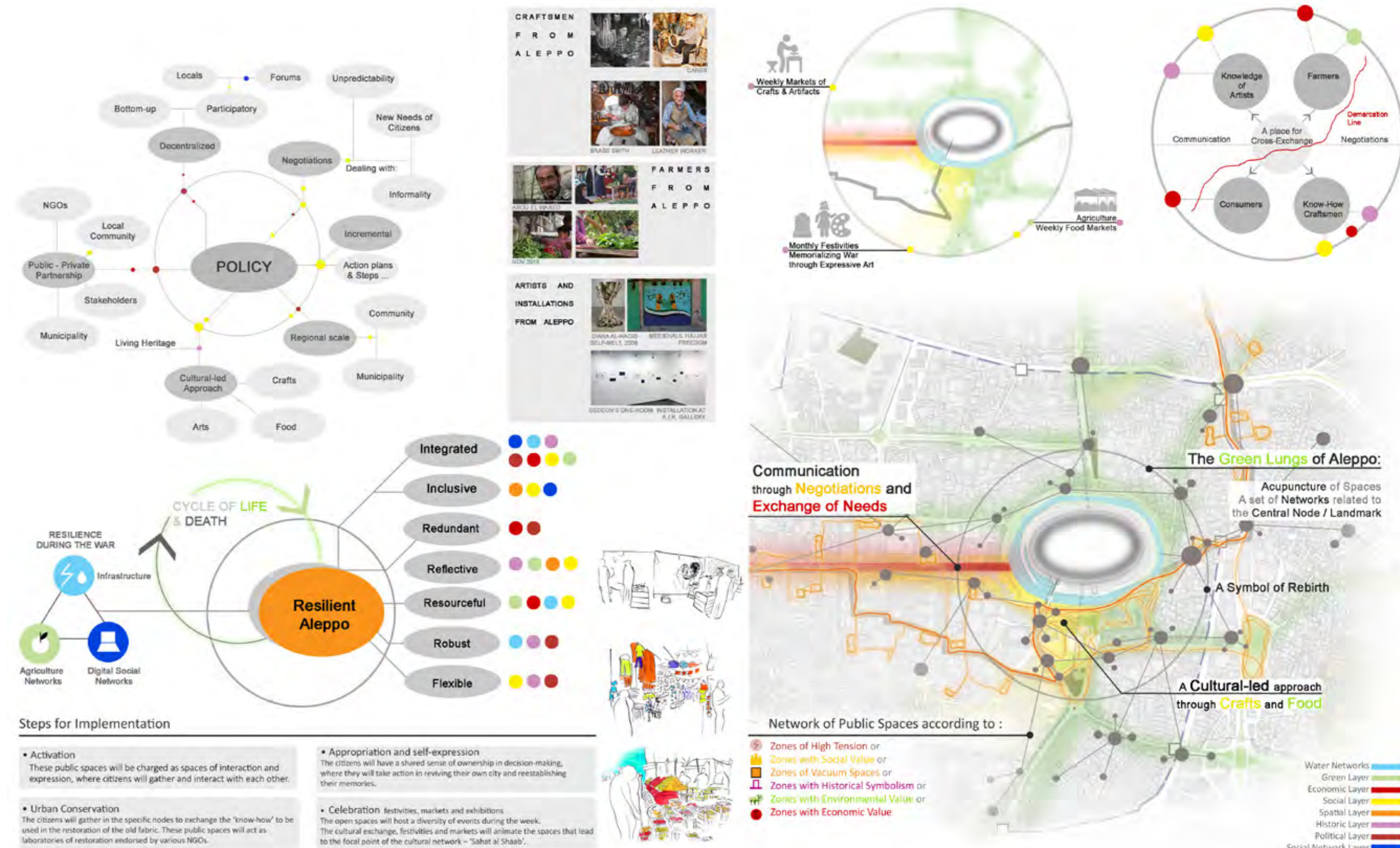
Celebration through Festivities, Markets and Exhibitions

The open spaces will host a diversity of events throughout the week. The cultural exchange, festivities and markets will animate the spaces that lead to the focal point of the cultural network.

POLICIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

In order for the vision to be applied, the community of Aleppo should be involved in the process of recovery. Thus, the municipality should guarantee the right to the city for each citizen. A decentralized governance system should be implemented. The Municipality of Aleppo should take charge and initiate an incremental plan in partnership with the private sector to recover the lost heritage during the war.

This partnership can be created between the municipality, national and international NGOs, as well as representatives from the local community. It will follow a people-led approach with high respect and sensitivity to the living and historical heritage of the city. The planning approach of Aleppo should be well systemized and institutionalized. It should manage unpredictability and be prepared to work with informality. The implementation will be bottom-up by involving the community in decision making. This will help the municipality gain the trust of the community while empowering them and giving them a sense of belonging to the city and its public spaces.





“ To the people of Aleppo, the citadel embodies the heritage and identity of Aleppo. ”

Yaman Hilany

“ نحافظ على هوية البلد و نعيد الخانات و الحرفيين مع التجديد كمثال Smart City. ”

Rasha Kayyali

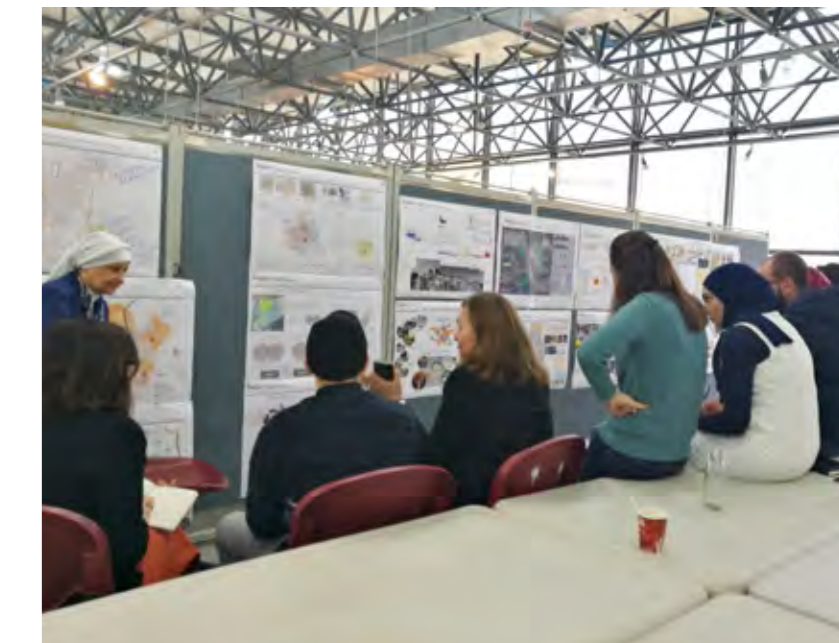
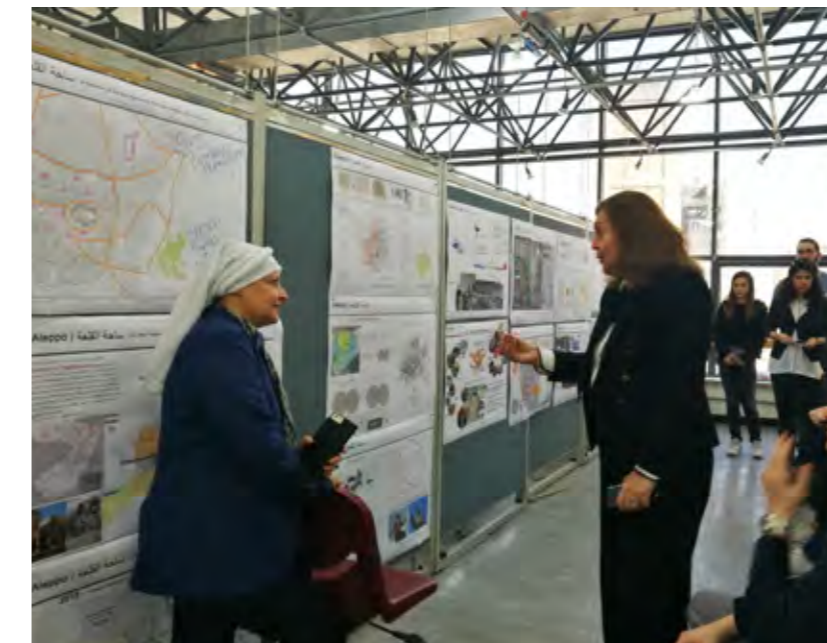
“ خليها تظل للكل، مفتوحة، مساحات عامة و أنشطة إجتماعية. ”

مكان شامل، نعاني من أزمة هوية، نحتاج الى تعزيز الهوية. ”

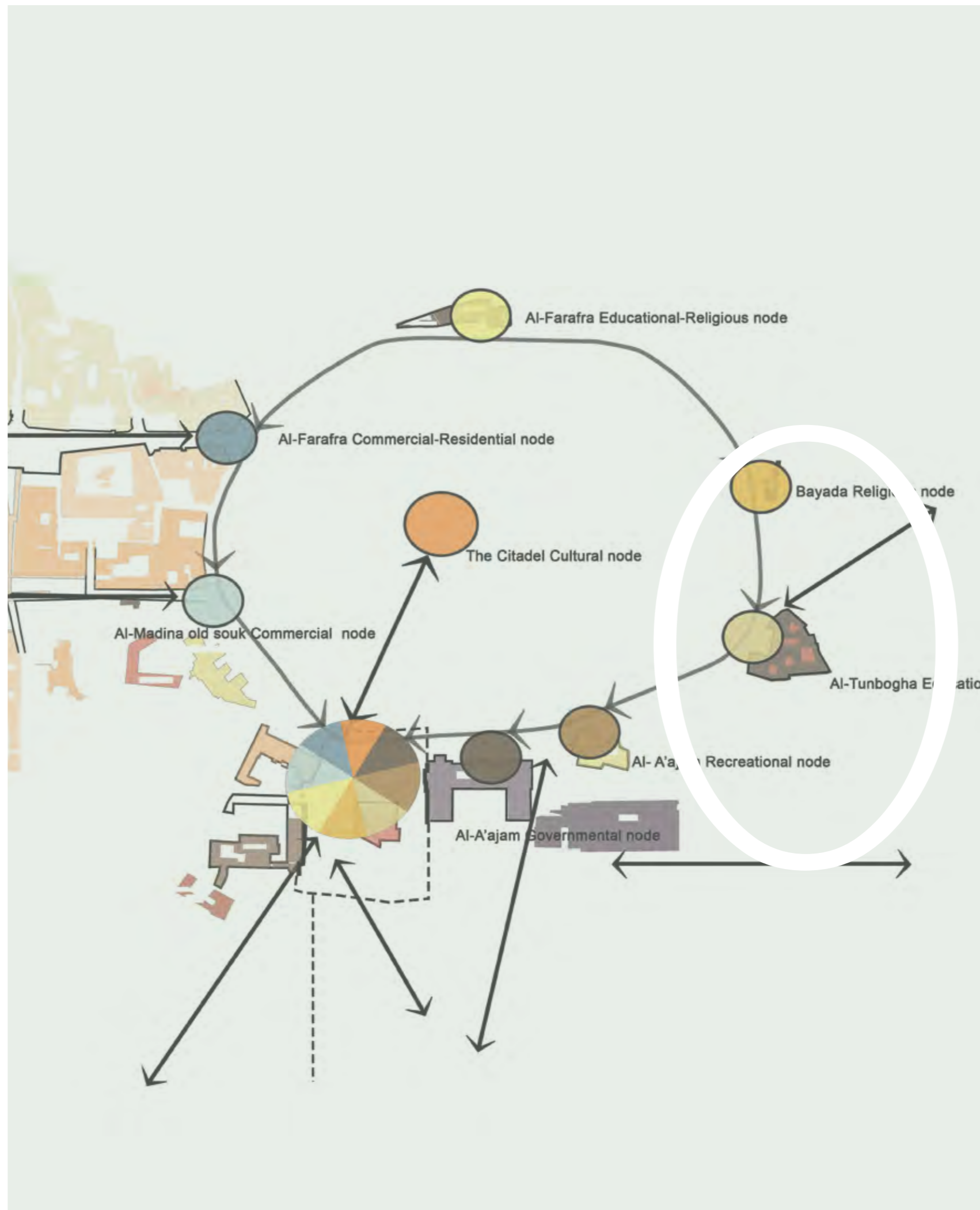
Walid Shayeb

“ الحفاظ على البلد القديم مع تصليح و تحسين البنى التحتية. ”

Noura Wali







5

Proposed Individual Concepts



Urban Greening

Shantal Ayoub

The project aims to transform the site under the citadel into a green memorial space that honors people who passed away during the violent episodes of Aleppo's recent history. The project is culture- and place-led—it will bring the community together to the site to plant and commemorate the lost souls and transform the space into a living memorial. It focuses on human-environment interactions and ways those interactions can foster the health of communities and individuals.

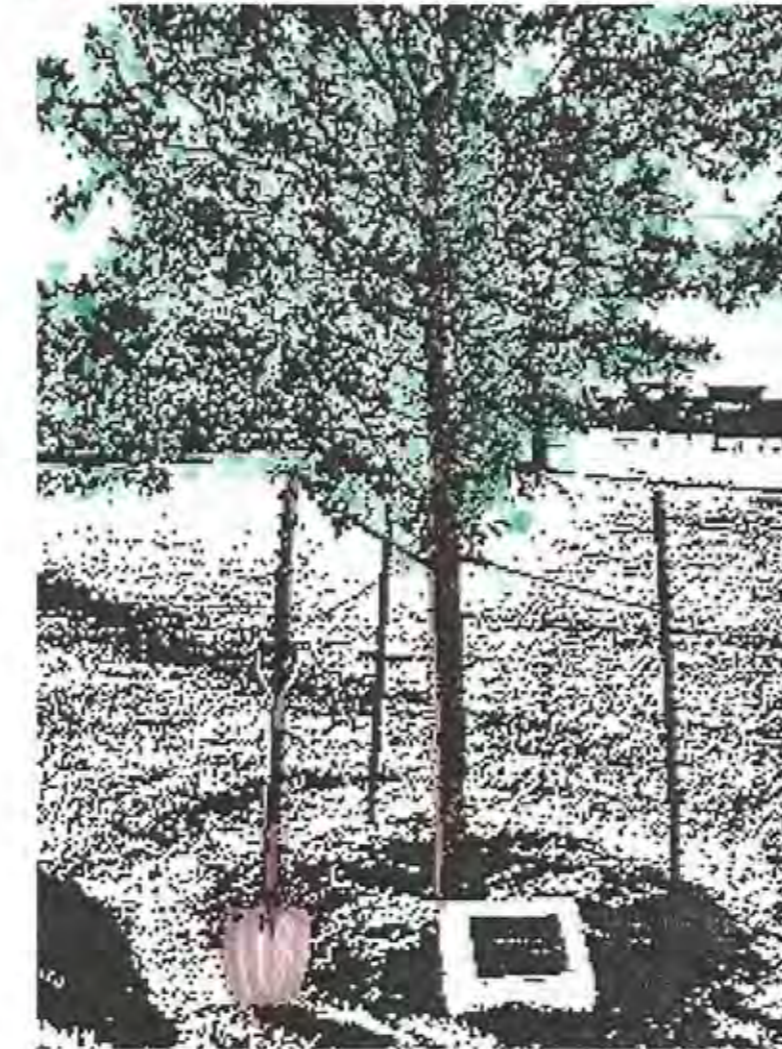
The community-based planting practices in public space are meaningful. They will serve as a mechanism to promote healing and recovery as well as the co-recovery of social-ecological systems.

The project uses urban design tools to facilitate a participatory process and allow people to take part in creating a memorial space for the individuals who passed away. It is inspired by two main ideas:

The floral symbolism that plays a role in keeping memories alive through the use of plants that traditionally honor the dead and local symbols in the site such as colors and habits.

The therapeutic power of planting and caring for flora at memorials—an activity that is expected to provide an outlet to process trauma and grief, a powerful setting of social support and a place to engage with the rhythms and spiritual power of nature.

Green Memorial Space as a Post War Recovery Strategy: Culture- and Place-led

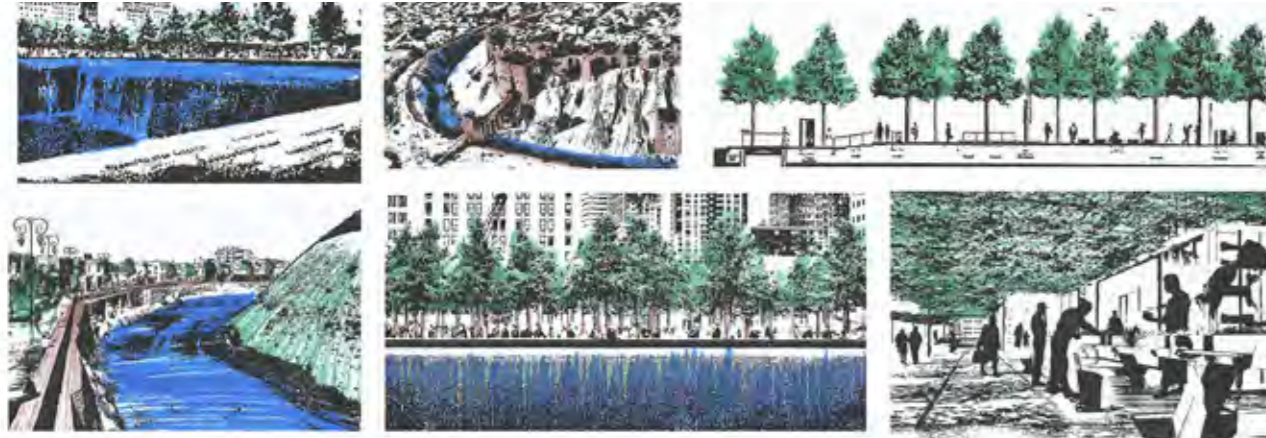




The Process

The End Product

Phase 1: Moat Intervention



Phase 2: Memorial space under the citadel

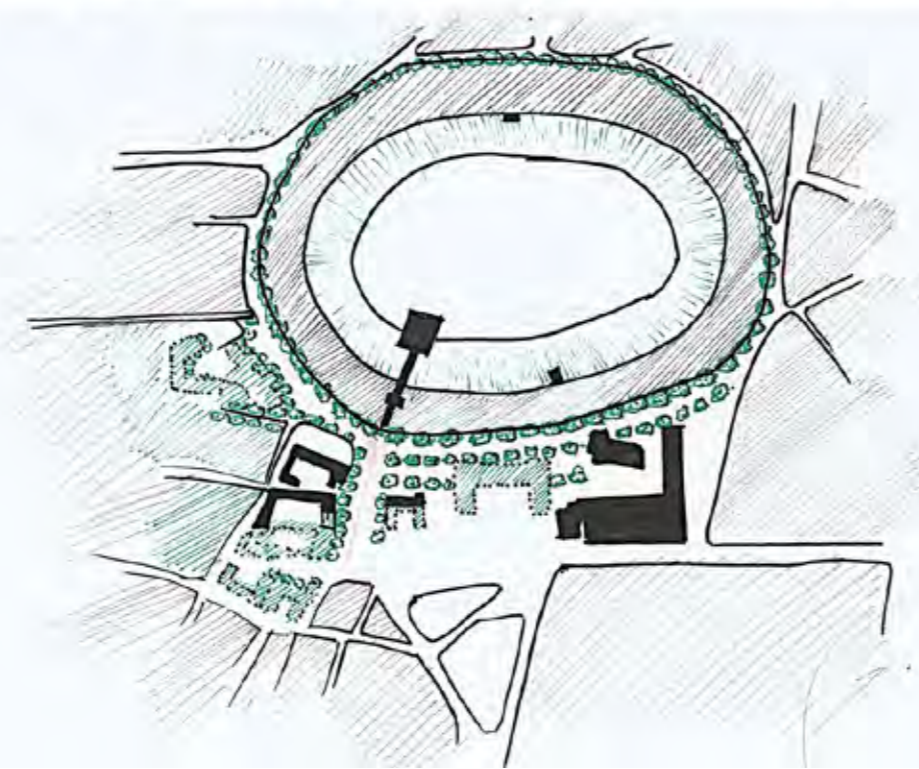
Phase 3: Partially destroyed buildings



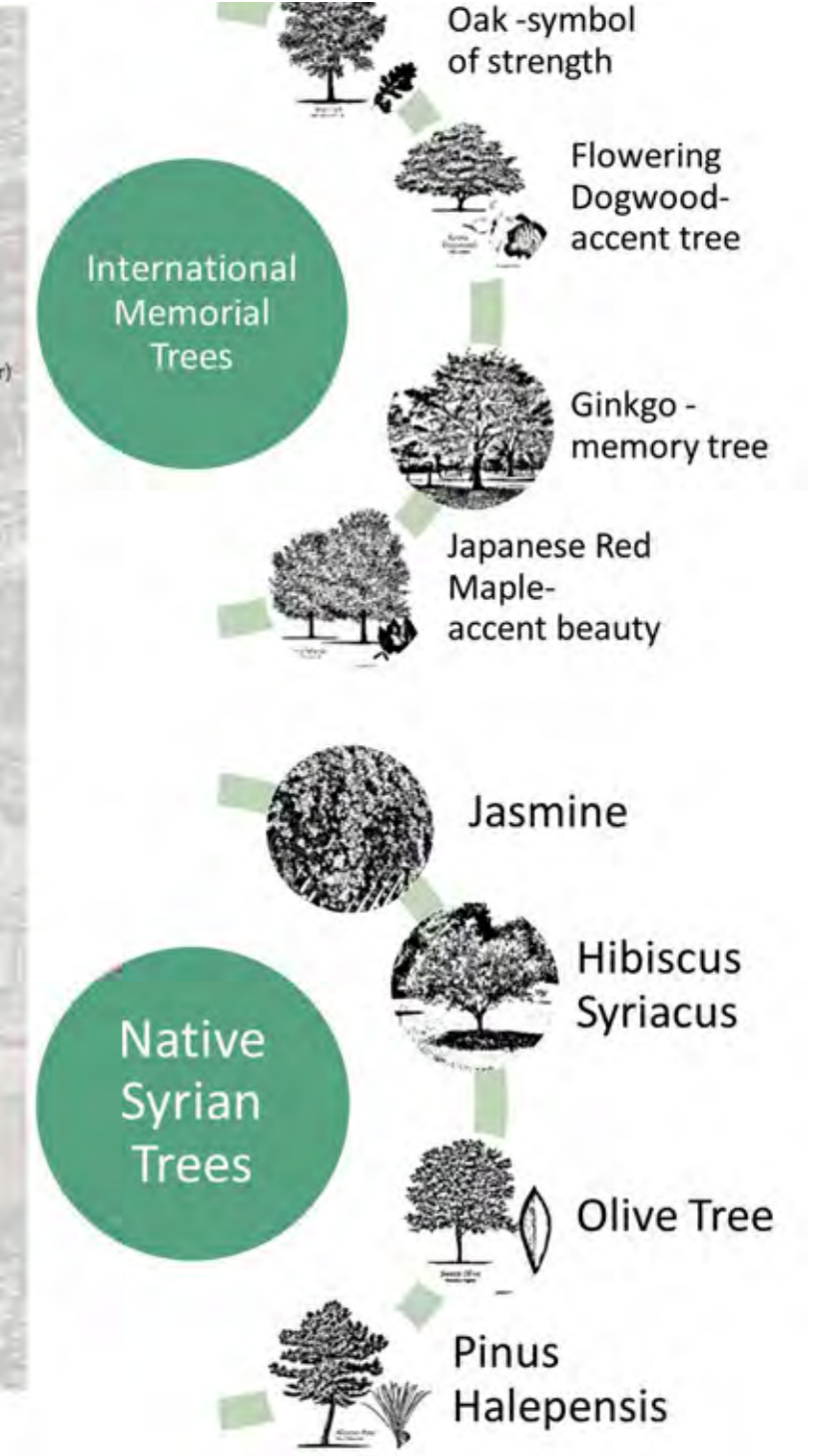
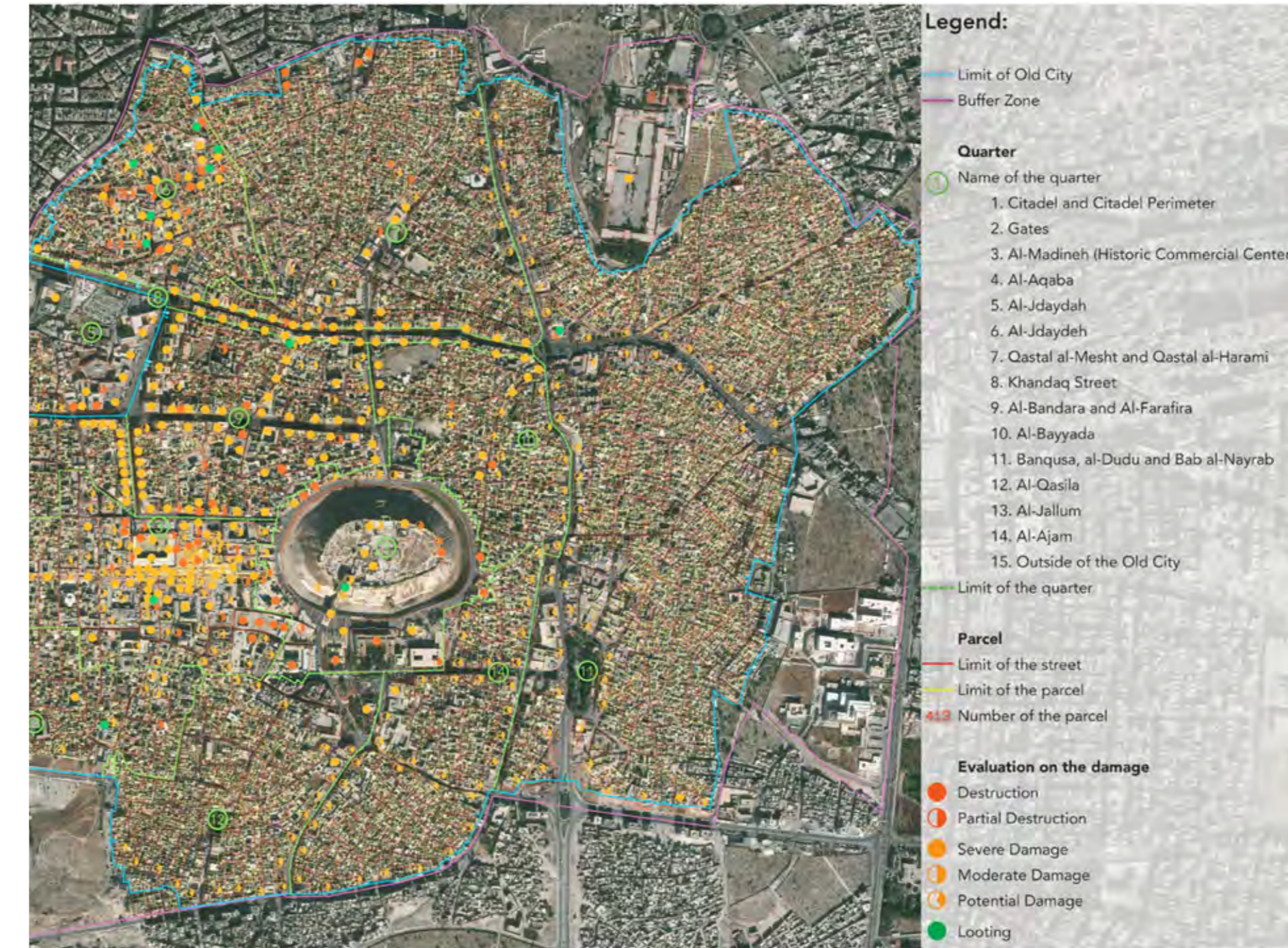
Phase 4: Roof Tops

Phase 5: Open spaces + fully destroyed buildings

Phase 6: Citadel Intervention



Condition of the Urban Fabric and the Patrimony of Aleppo





Demilitarization

Ali Basma

Gradually demilitarize the saha into a civic space through a systematic process of relief, reconstruction and recovery that can serve as a catalyst for change.

PHASE 1: RELIEF

This phase prioritizes the basic needs of the citizens through a people-centered approach that aims to revive the local economy, provide food and water for the residents and link the city to its suburbs. The approach will be achieved through:

1. Establishing a temporary market to meet the basic needs of the people and start reviving the economy of the city.
2. Supplying water to both parts of the city by gradually using the moat as a reservoir through rainwater harvesting and setting up wells and main supply lines.
3. Linking the city to its rural peripheries through water channels and supply routes.

Phase 1 will turn the saha into a hub that can attract farmers from rural areas, merchants, business men, industrialists, pedestrians, lawyers, judges, clerks and residents from the eastern and southern sides of the city in an attempt to diversify the user group of the space. It will also attempt to reverse the people's perception of the space from private, gated and militarized to public, accessible and civic.

PHASE 2: RECONSTRUCTION

Phase 2 will aim to demilitarize the space by decentralizing public facilities and empowering the local authorities and civil society. This will be achieved through the following steps:

1. Gradually removing the temporary market to the souqs
2. Designing a new building in the saha to serve as a civic center that includes the municipality, the relocated Serail and offices for NGOs and Unions
3. Relocating the courthouse to the east for use as a cultural center
4. Rehabilitating the madrasa and hammam to serve as touristic attractions
5. Gradually reviving the saha into an active public space

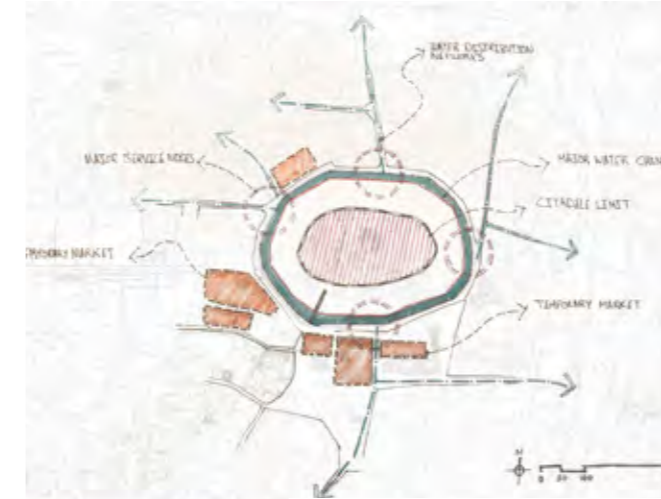
PHASE 3: RECOVERY

Phase 3 will aim to recover the city through revitalizing its cultural infrastructure. Mosques, churches and unions will serve as focal points for public participation in the reconstruction and recovery. The main stakeholders, such as the Dar al-Eftaa' and the waqf as land owners, will be directly engaged in the process under the supervision and authority of the municipality.



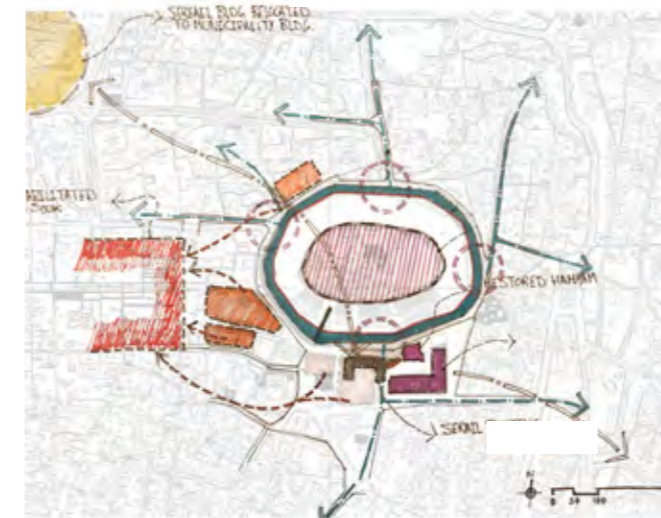
**Phase I: RELIEF**  
**Ensuring citizens' basic needs through a people-centered approach**

- 1- Establishing a Temporary Market to meet people's basic needs and start reviving the city's economy
- 2- Supplying water to both parts of the city through using the Moat gradually as a reservoir (rainwater harvesting, wells, main supply lines)
- 3- Linking the city to its rural peripheries through water and supply routes



**Phase II: Reconstruction**  
**Demilitarizing the space through decentralizing public facilities, empowering local authorities and civil society, and diversifying the space users**

- 1- Gradually removing the marketplace to the souqs
- 2- Relocating the Serail (Military) to the Municipality building and establishing a new building in the saha for the Municipality + NGOs + Unions (Civic)
- 3- Relocating the courthouse to the East and gradually turning it into an active cultural center
- 4- Rehabilitating the Madrasa and Hammam to serve as touristic attractions
- 5- Gradual Exploitation of the Saha as an open public space



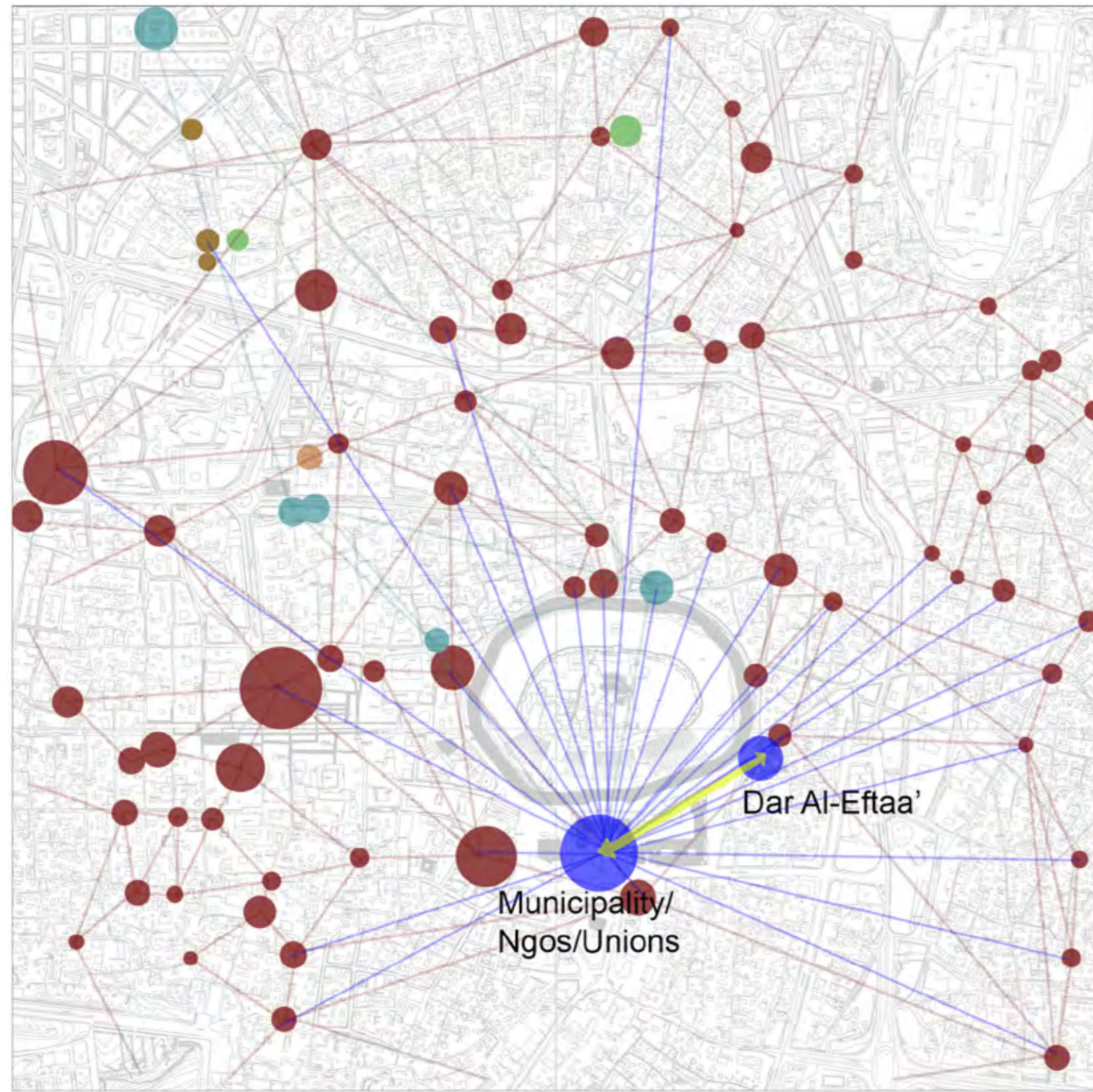
**Citadel/Moat**  
**Water Reservoir**  
**Saha**  
**Temporary Market**  
**Buildings**  
**Militarized**  
**Users**  
 Farmers (rural areas)  
 Merchants - Businessmen  
 Industrialists - Craftsmen  
 Lawyers - judges - Clerks  
 Residents

**Citadel/Moat**  
**Floating Promenade**  
**Saha**  
**Dynamic Public Space**  
**Buildings**  
**Cultural Hub**  
**Users**  
 Aleppians  
 Tourists

**Citadel/Moat**  
**Active Edge**  
**Saha**  
**Open Public Space**  
**Buildings**  
**Urban Catalyst**  
**Users**  
 Musicians - Artists  
 Merchants - Businessmen  
 Industrialists - Craftsmen  
 Municipal Officers - Tourists  
 Local Residents - Unions

**Phase III: Recovery**  
**Recovering the city through vitalizing its networks**  
 Using the mosques, churches, and unions as focal points for participatory approaches through the reconstruction and recovery phases





**BUILDINGS 1**

**Municipality/NGOs/Unions/Courtyard**

- Link with Unions all around the city
- Conduct community Meetings
- Coordinate with NGOs leading on reconstruction
- Coordinate with Dar al-Eftaa' and religious authorities in the city
- Activate mosques, churches, and community centers to enable a participatory bottom-up approach

**CULTURAL CENTER**

- Change status of building from Institutional to Civic
- Change users of buildings and space
- Promote culture, music, arts, and theatre
- Host events to activate the space
- Link to schools, universities, music centers, and community organizations

**2 CITADEL/MOAT**

**3 SAHA**

- Maximize number of entry points
- Daytime and nighttime presence
- Encourage active edges
- Create serial Imagery
- Provide weather shelter
- Places for pausing
- Landmarks
- Human-scale

**Daytime**  
Municipality workers, NGO staff, Union members, pedestrians, merchants, musicians, artists, tourists

**Nighttime**  
Pedestrians, musicians, artists, merchants, locals, tourists



User Empowerment

Mariam Bazzi

The vision of the project for Aleppo defines three axes of intervention: the conservation of the urban and social fabric, the environmental and ecological sustainability and the economic revitalization of the city to achieve resilience. This vision actively supports a more sustainable regional, multi-layered, ecological, economic and social network. It draws from the essential elements of Aleppo's culture and preserves the region's role and local identity. It proposes three phases of intervention. The first phase will promote the participation of women in the economic revitalization of urban and rural areas in Aleppo. The second phase involves linking people in the rural areas surrounding Aleppo to the city center. This connection is both physical and socio-economic. The physical connection will connect the main roads to the center in order to facilitate the flow of people. This takes the shape of a green network that connects open spaces to the main roads. The other socio-economic connection will link production in the different economic sectors (rural agriculture, domestic food production and sewing and stitching) through participation in a weekly market around the citadel. The last phase establishes Taht el Qalaa as a cultural hub—a vibrant mixed-use environment that reinforces the community's sense of place and celebrates the cultural and social heritage of Aleppo through an equitable and more inclusive city center with access to opportunities for all citizens. The hub will become a public destination that extends beyond its local role to put Aleppo back on the regional map. This will empower a wide range of stakeholders; it will challenge the masculinity of the space and the centrality of power, while strengthening a more peaceful and socially cohesive society. As a result, all Aleppines, and women in particular, will participate in peacebuilding efforts in the city.

Stories of the Resilient Women of Syria

**Stories of the Resilient Women of Syria**  
Mothers, daughters, aunts and sisters who stayed, supported, and survived during the civil war

**Aleppo**

**Al Hasakah**

**Dayr az Zawr**

**Hama**

**Tartous**

**Homs**

**Syria**

**Agriculture**

**Packing Lentils & Peas**  
"My son was very happy when he saw his new school uniform that I bought from my first wage, and he was finally very excited to go to school. His smile is everything I am looking for." - *Lina*

**Makdous Production**

**Briquettes Making**  
"I'm glad my briquettes will keep people warm." - *Ghasout*

**Baking Traditional Syrian Bread**  
"My husband used to own a bakery in Deir ez-Zor. We were forced to sell everything we owned to survive, until nothing was left for us. Last year, my daughter died of Tuberculosis due to lack of medicine. Then my husband died while attempting to leave Syria. At the age of 40, I found myself alone with my four children with no source of income." - *Rehab*

**Cooking Classes**

**Carpeting Work**  
"Rana and her family of eight fled Rastan to escape Al-Nusra Front. Barely past her teens, this breadwinner makes strawberrys, peach and apricot jams to support her mother and siblings."

**Sanitation Work**  
"I used to work at a local grocery store but also helped with farming and construction. When we became displaced, we mainly depended on food baskets from humanitarian aid charities and money from relatives. This job changed my life. There are not enough words to describe how happy I am to wake up every morning knowing that I have a stable job and that my family will no longer need to worry about food or shelter." - *Wesaa*

**Making Clothing**

**Preserving Summer Harvest**

**Jam Production**

**Packing Food**

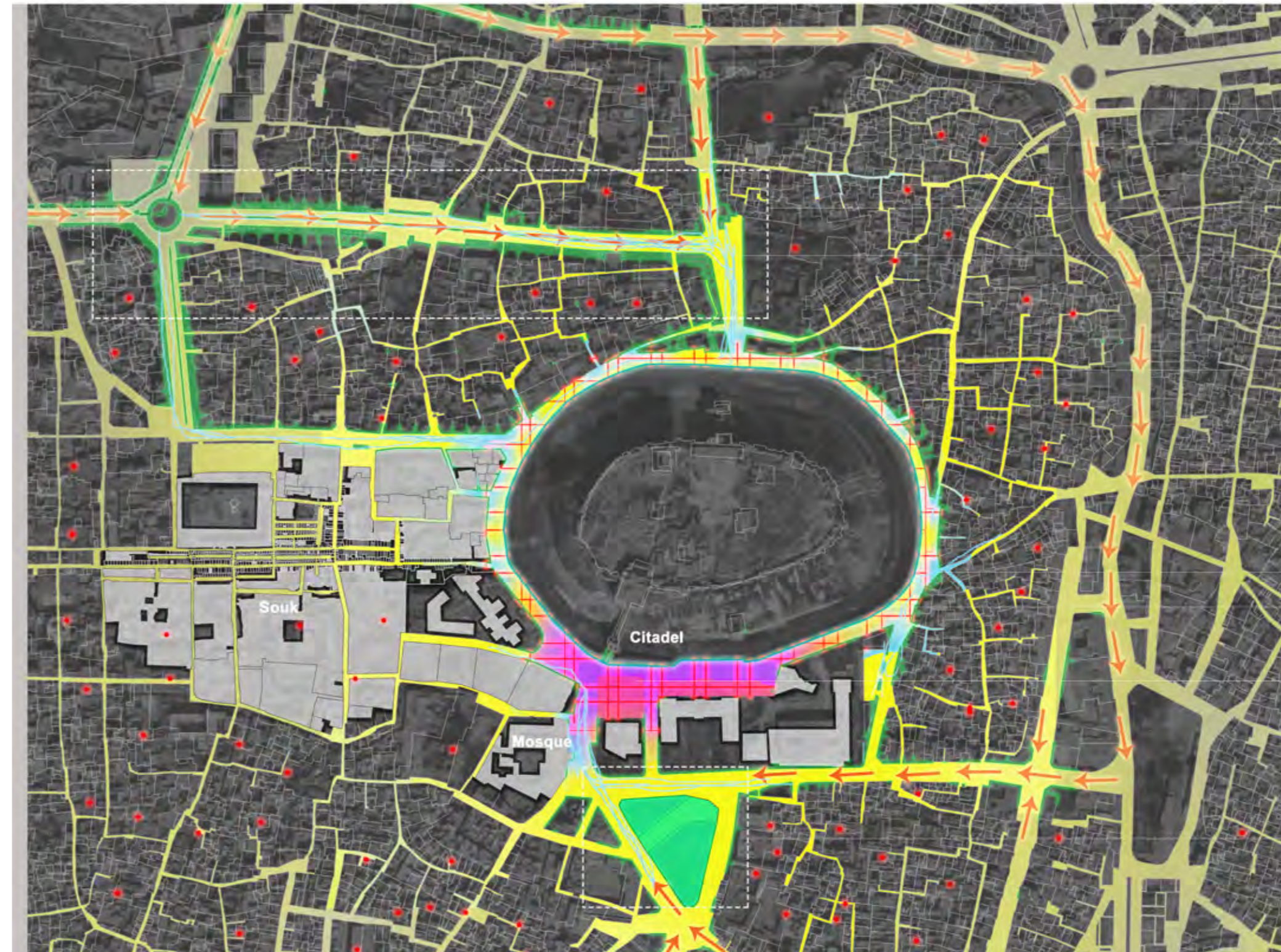
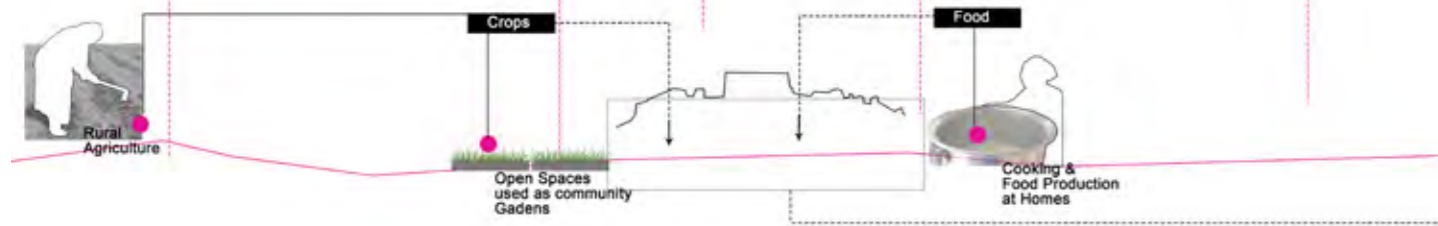
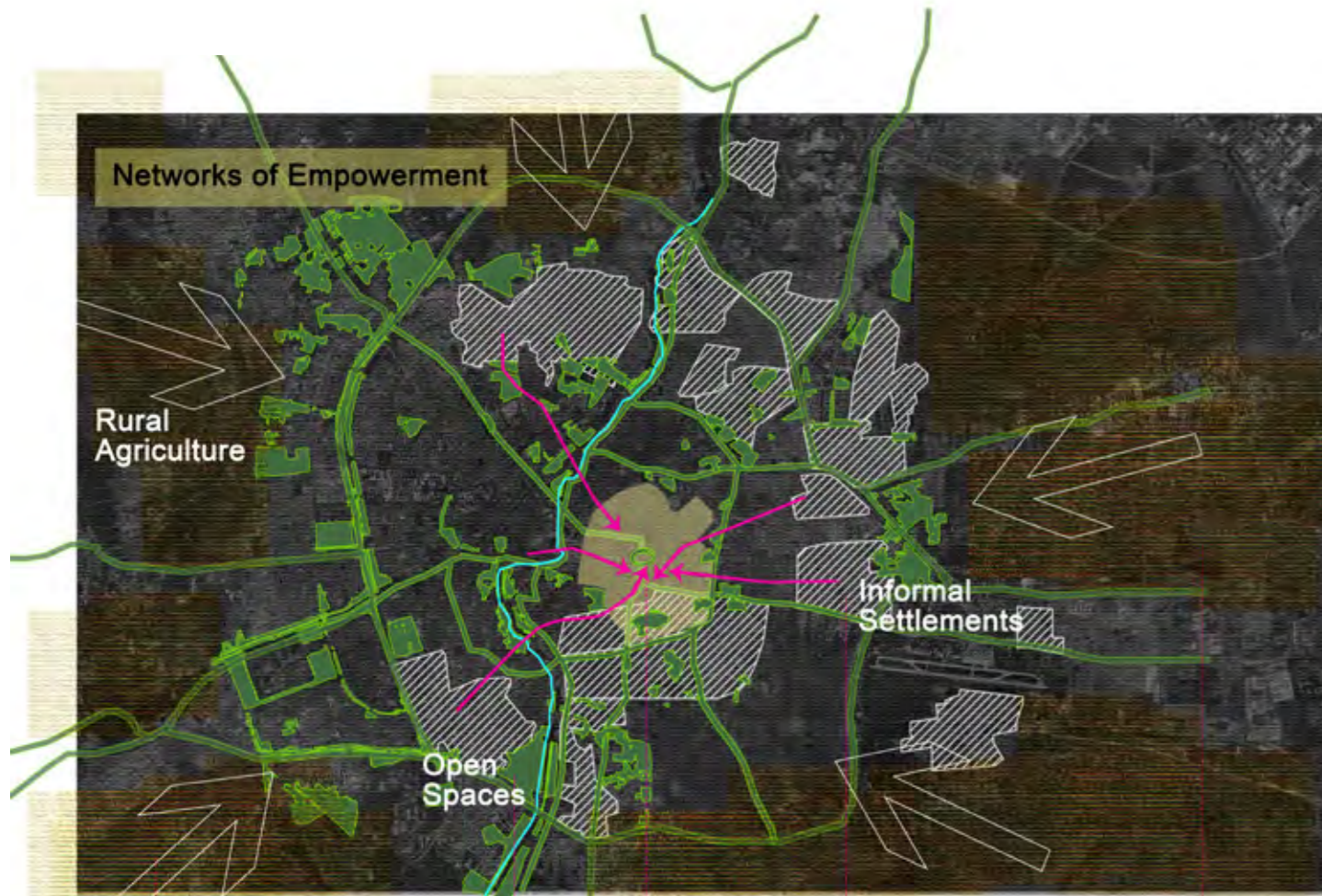
**Drying & Preserving Harvest**

**Labneh & Cheese Production**

**Dairy Farming**  
"I've been working in this food production workshop for about a year now. I am now earning enough now to provide for my family." - *Soumia*



Networks of Empowerment



- Vehicular Flow during market days
- Local Economies
- Redesigned as a pedestrian Friendly street
- Pedestrian Flow
- Weekly market place
- Gathering spaces
- Promenade area
- Mixed use area | Gathering, Exhibitions & Events
- Redesigned as a Transportation Hub

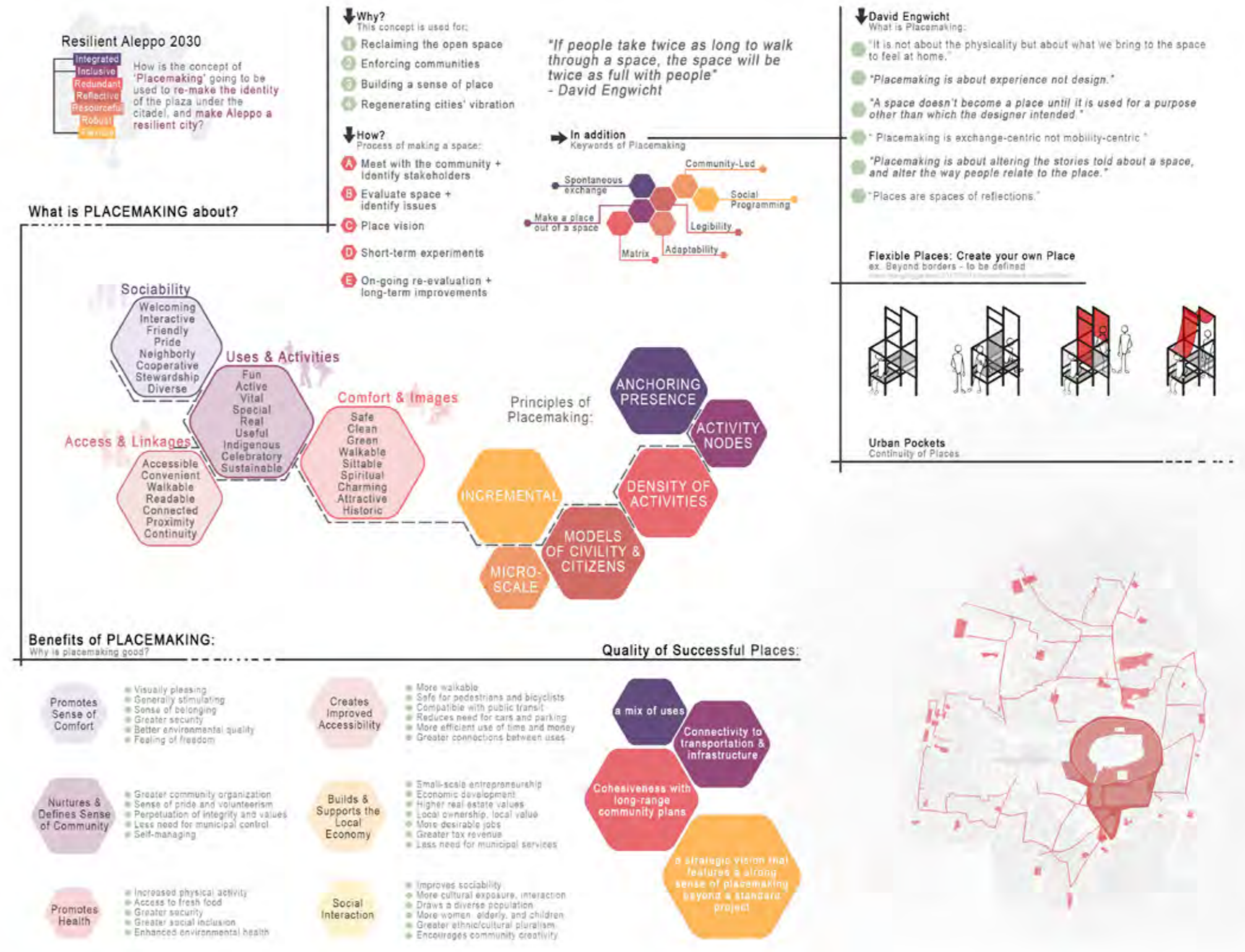


Throughout the war in Syrian, millions of people have been displaced, hundreds of thousands of homes have been destroyed and important heritage sites witnessed immeasurable damage. As the war is coming to an end, there is a glimpse of hope that the city of Aleppo will return to its previous state as a vibrant city that is rich with heritage and tradition. The people of Aleppo need incentives to return to the city and participate in the rebuilding process and recover their livelihoods.

Therefore, the project proposes a placemaking urban strategy that can contribute to cultural revitalization. This people-centered process will start from the plaza at the foot of the citadel, the nucleus of the city of Aleppo. Placemaking is used for the people to reclaim the open space, enforce the community, build a sense of place and regenerate the dynamics of the city.

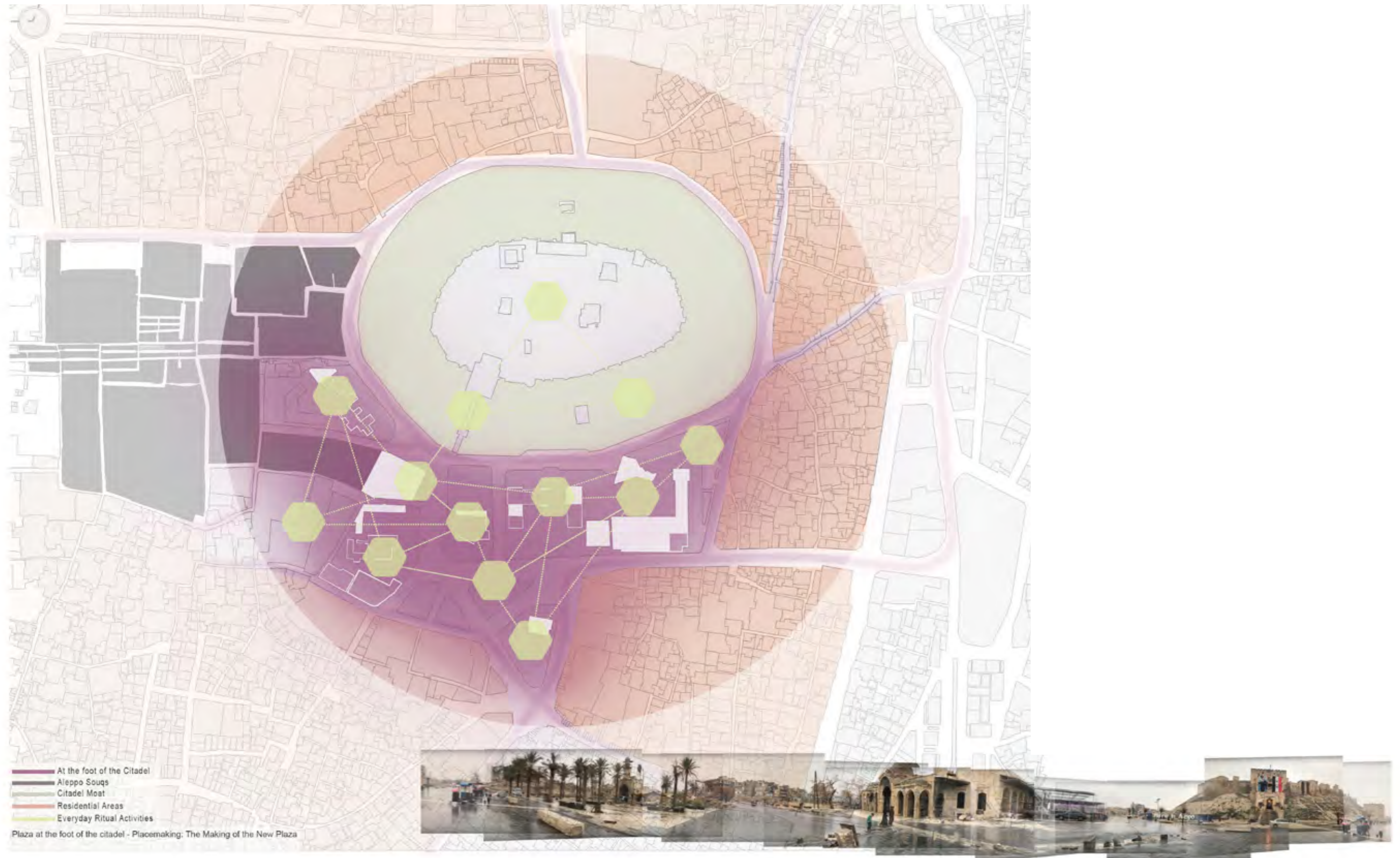
Hence, the plaza at the foot of the citadel will become a point of reflection where the everyday practices of the people shape their spatial experiences. Traditional activities, such as arts and crafts exhibitions, food markets and musical festivals, energize the place and allow people to alter the ways they perceive and use the plaza and the citadel.

Placemaking: A People-centered Urban Strategy





Placemaking: A People-centered Urban Strategy



### تحت القلعة

Active Open Space	Passive Open Space
Sports & Outdoor Activities	Conservation & Heritage
Exhibitions & Theatre Shows	Parklands & Gardens
	Civic Space

An open public space shaped by its users and their daily rituals



Cultural Regeneration

Cindy Houeis

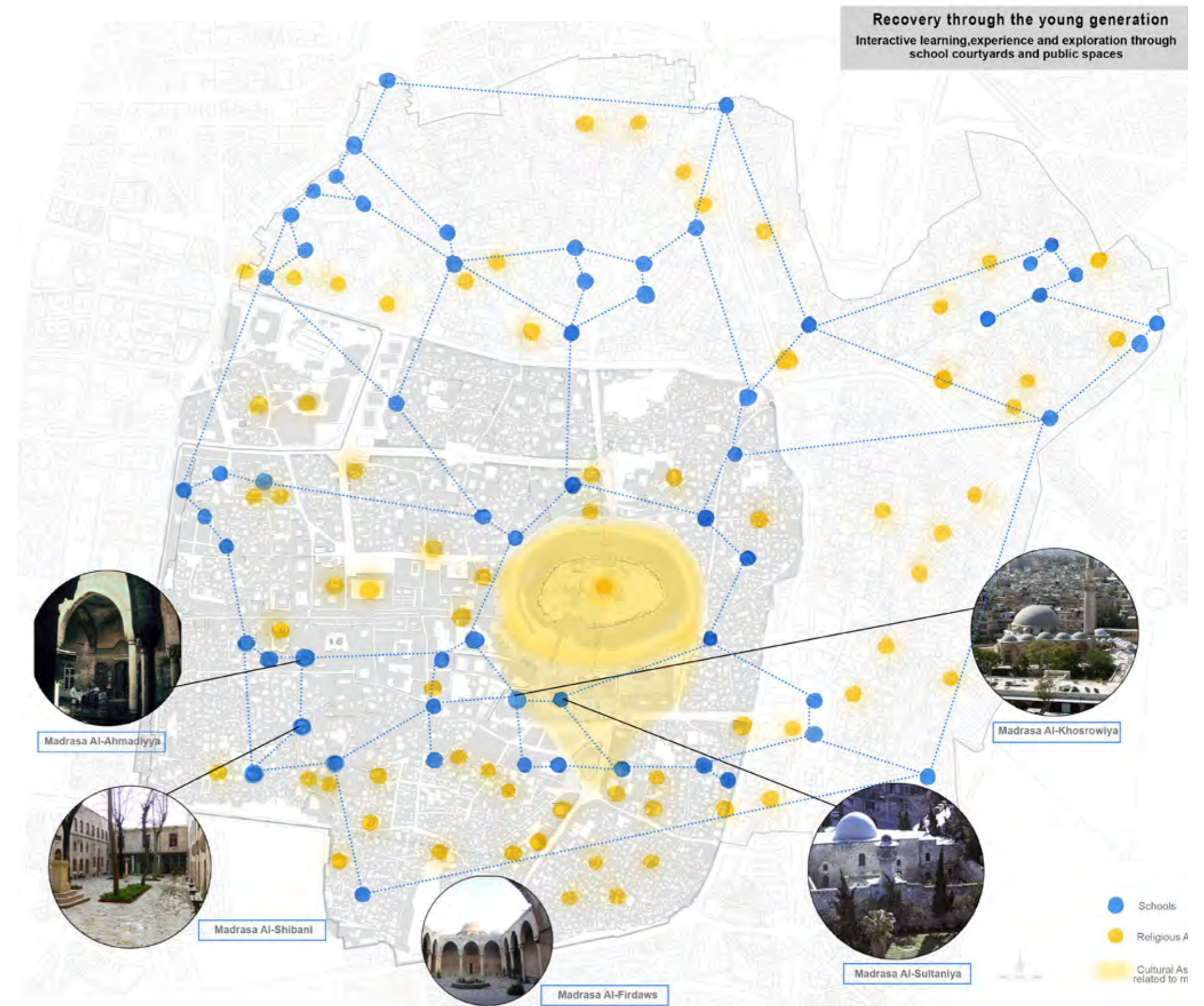
The vision of this project celebrates the rich past and culture of Aleppo and aims for a better future for the city. The younger generations are the most active agents in the recovery process as they will ensure the continuity of tradition.

To do so, the project proposes a network of schools in the old city of Aleppo. The connected series of courtyards and open spaces in the schools can create interactive outdoor learning areas that are programmed with a variety of activities.

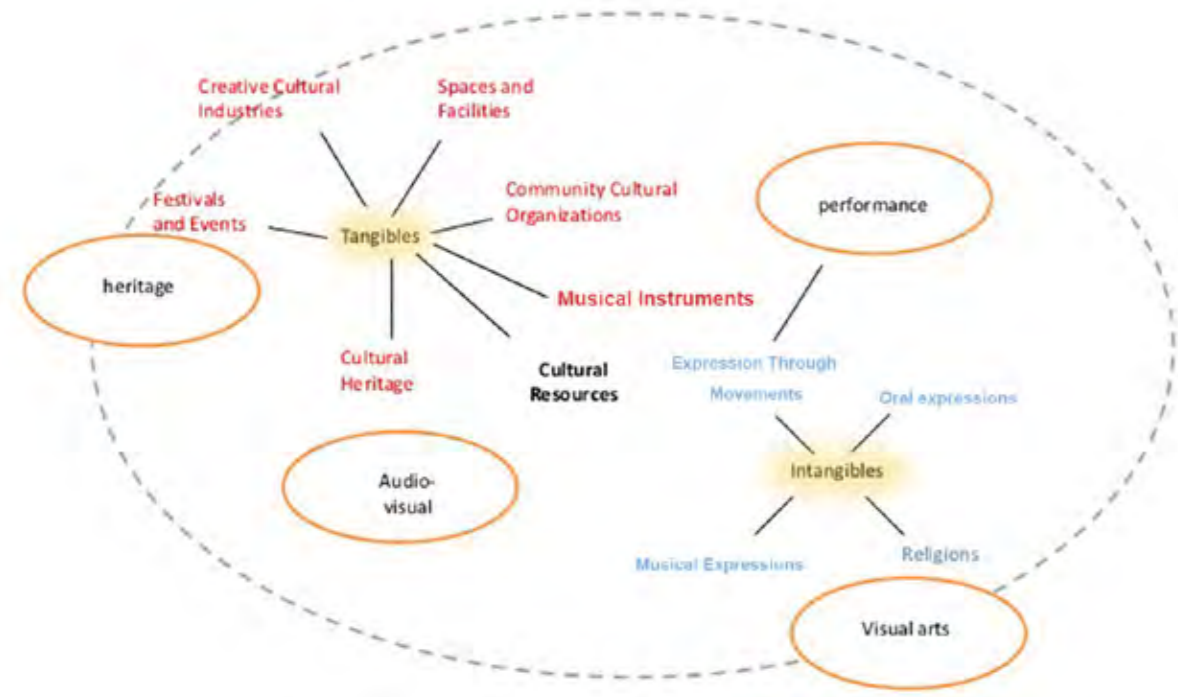
There are around 230 schools that are concentrated around the citadel in the old city of Aleppo. The schools are an opportunity for the youth learn about culture and history. Other cultural assets in the old city include religious structures (mosques and the churches) and the citadel, amphitheatres, cafes and musical institutions. Music is important to heritage and tradition. Musical heritage is both tangible and intangible. Examples of intangible heritage are oral religious expressions. For example, al-Qoudoud al-Halabiyya and the Dzikr Al Qadiriyya were practiced by many civilizations in Aleppo with influences from the Turkish, Andalusian and Byzantine traditions. Examples of tangible heritage include instruments, events, organizations and festivities.

Through the school networks, the youth will be exposed to experiential learning by practicing and listening to music. The citadel and the area underneath it will be activated as a public space to safeguard heritage and will act as a performance hub for the old city. Taht el Qalaa will be linked to the open spaces, creating a site of expression and musical performances and festivities, creating a trail of discovery and exploration for the youth. The users of the site can act as performers or the audience. As a result, the resiliency of the citadel and its heritage will be ensured.

Youth Empowerment and Traditional Continuity



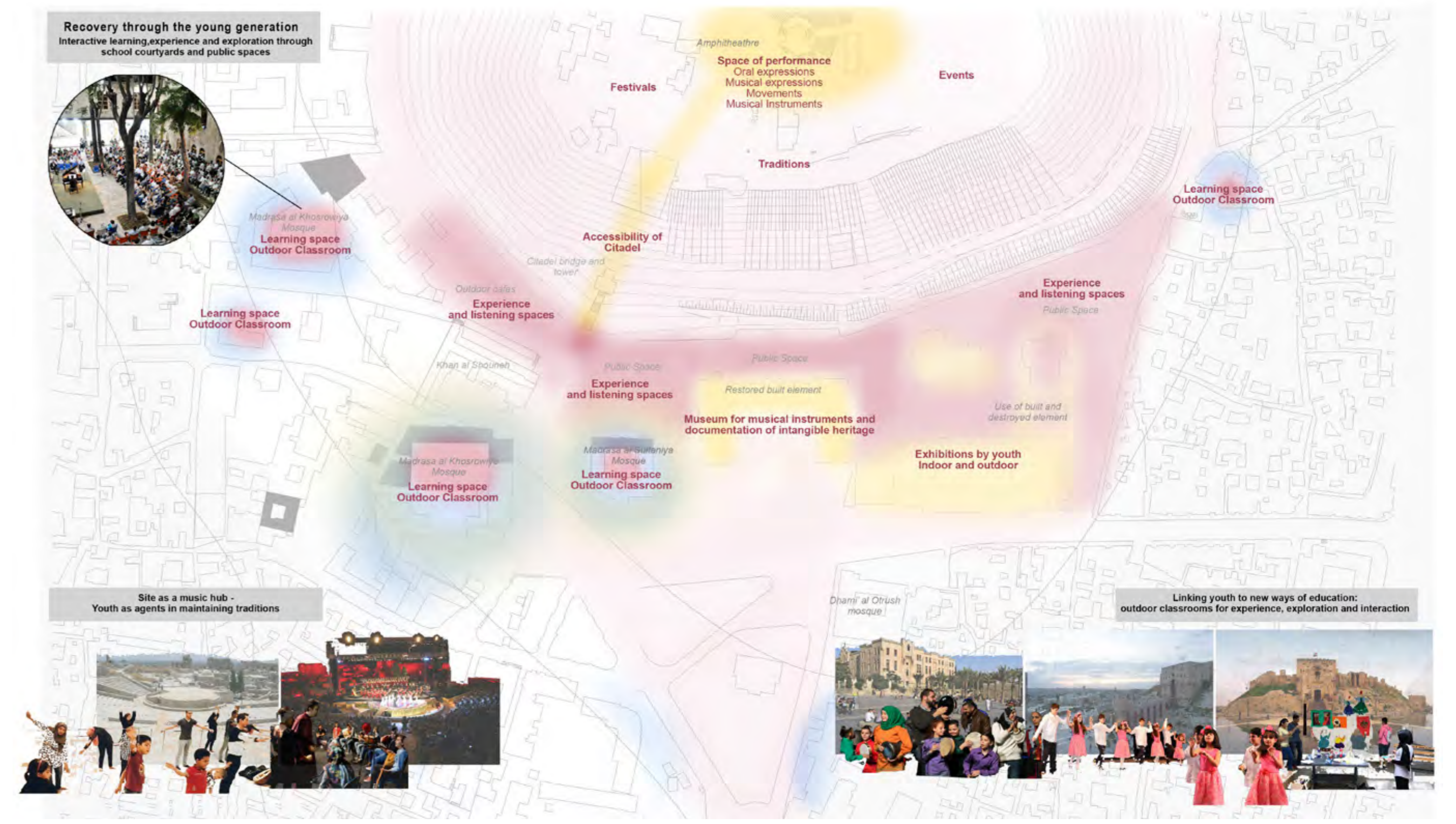




Cultural Heritage and Resources: The intangible and tangible



Youth Empowerment and Traditional Continuity





# 05 | Proposed Individual Concepts

## Urban Redefinition

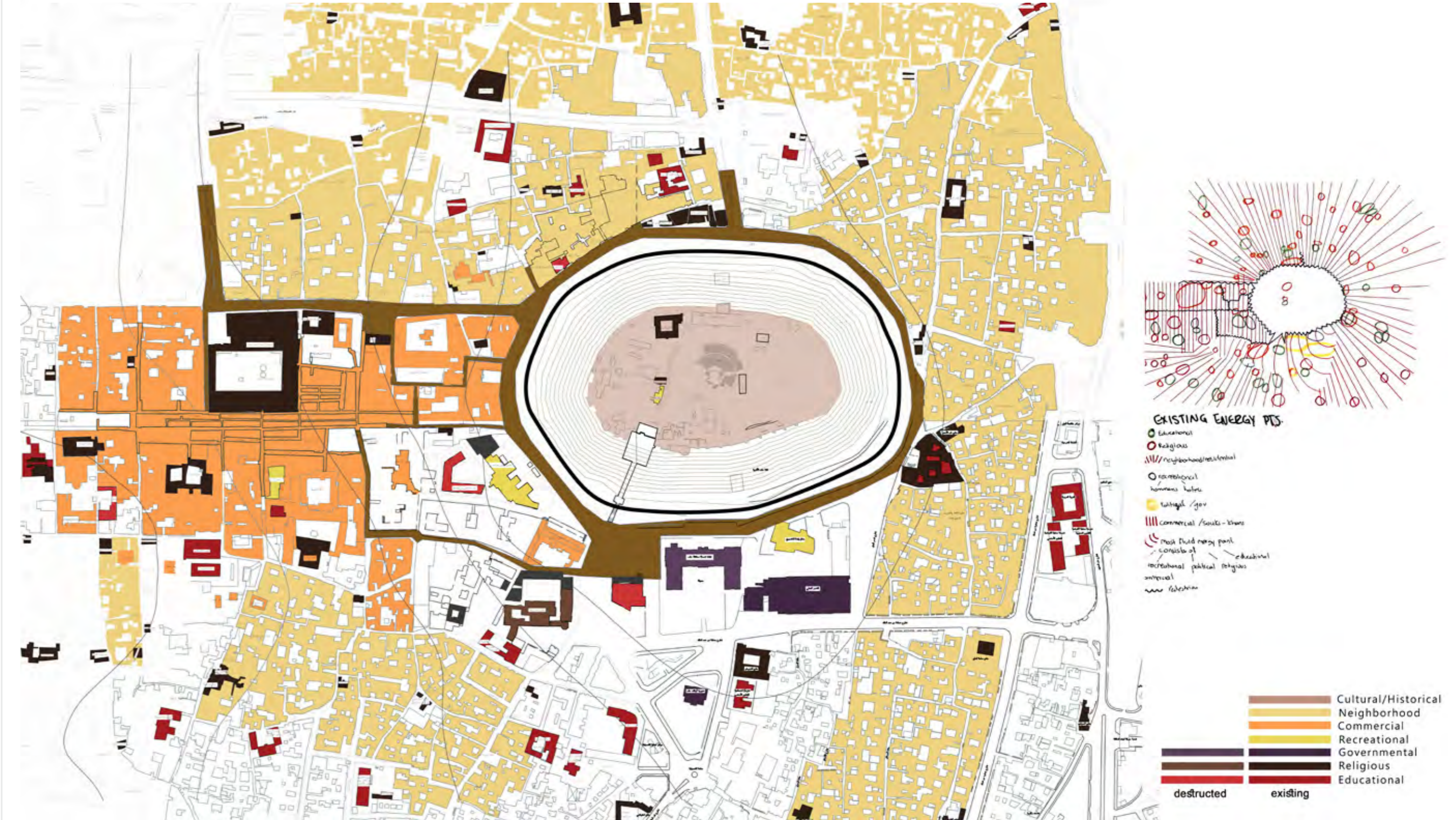
Maysaa Saireddine

The project is inspired by Kevin Lynch's image of the city.

In order to locate critical energy nodes on the sidewalks surrounding the citadel, I mapped the existing character areas in the surrounding spaces connected to the pedestrian ring through existing paths, the landmark buildings within these energy areas and the pathways that connect them. Therefore, at the junctions between the paths and the pedestrian ring, are the main nodes, urban magnets and points of interest on the urban scale which are defined by important landmarks and pathways. Some nodes are characterized by their landmarks while others by the paths on which they stand. Our site, Taht el Qalaa is the largest of the nodes in question.

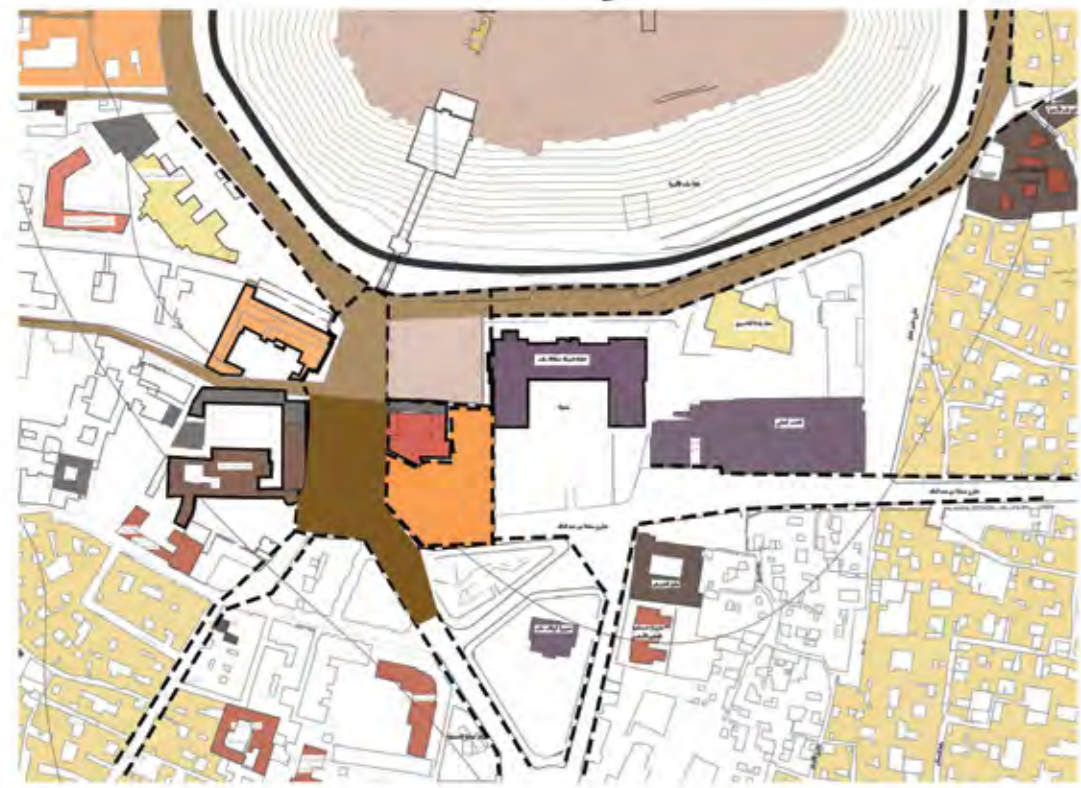
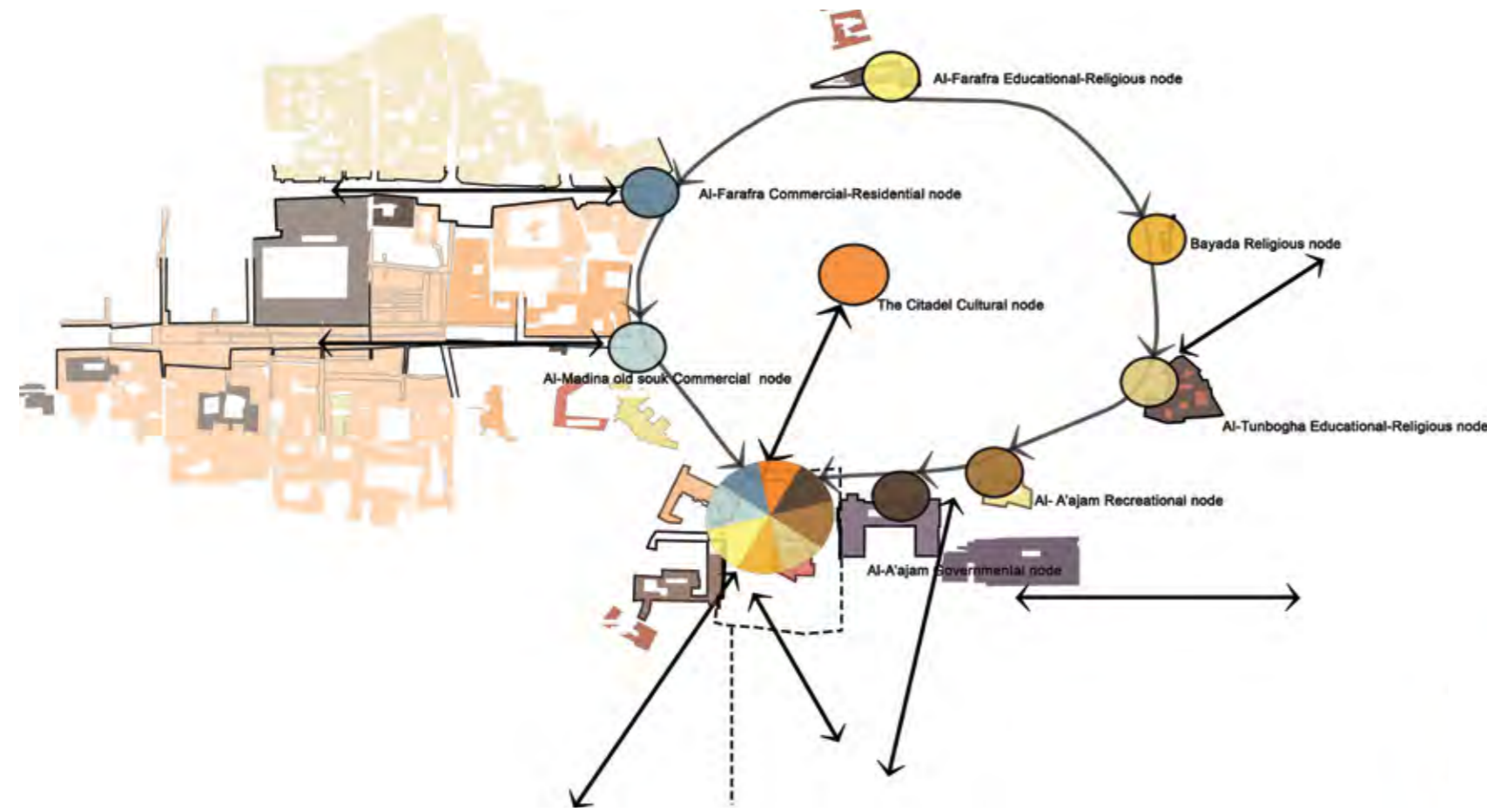
In order to allow the nodes to merge in our space, the project uses the strong edges of the landmarks located in it to define the space and create two subspaces around the school. One of the spaces is linear, following the continuity of the paths that converge at the center of Taht el Qalaa, while the others are subspaces that act as extensions to the souqs, adding a commercial layer to the cultural and historical ones of the citadel.

### Analysis and Strategy

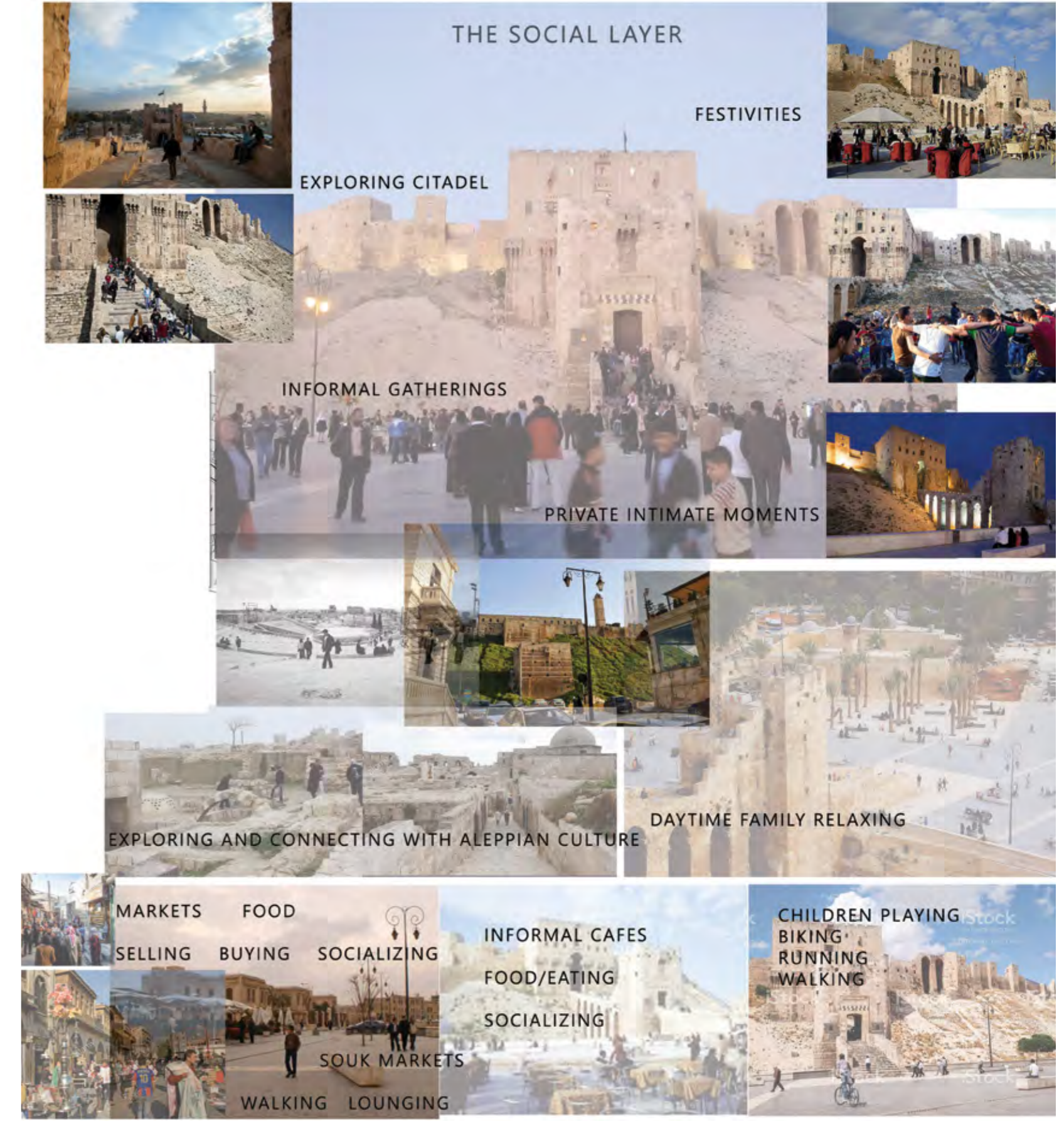




Spatial Response to the Concept



- LEGEND**
- Al-Farafra Commercial-Residential node
  - Al-Madina old souk Commercial node
  - Al-A'jam Governmental node
  - Al-A'jam Recreational node
  - Al-Tunbogha Educational-Religious node
  - Al-Farafra Educational-Religious node
  - Bayada Religious node
  - The Citadel Cultural node





Make Shift Spaces

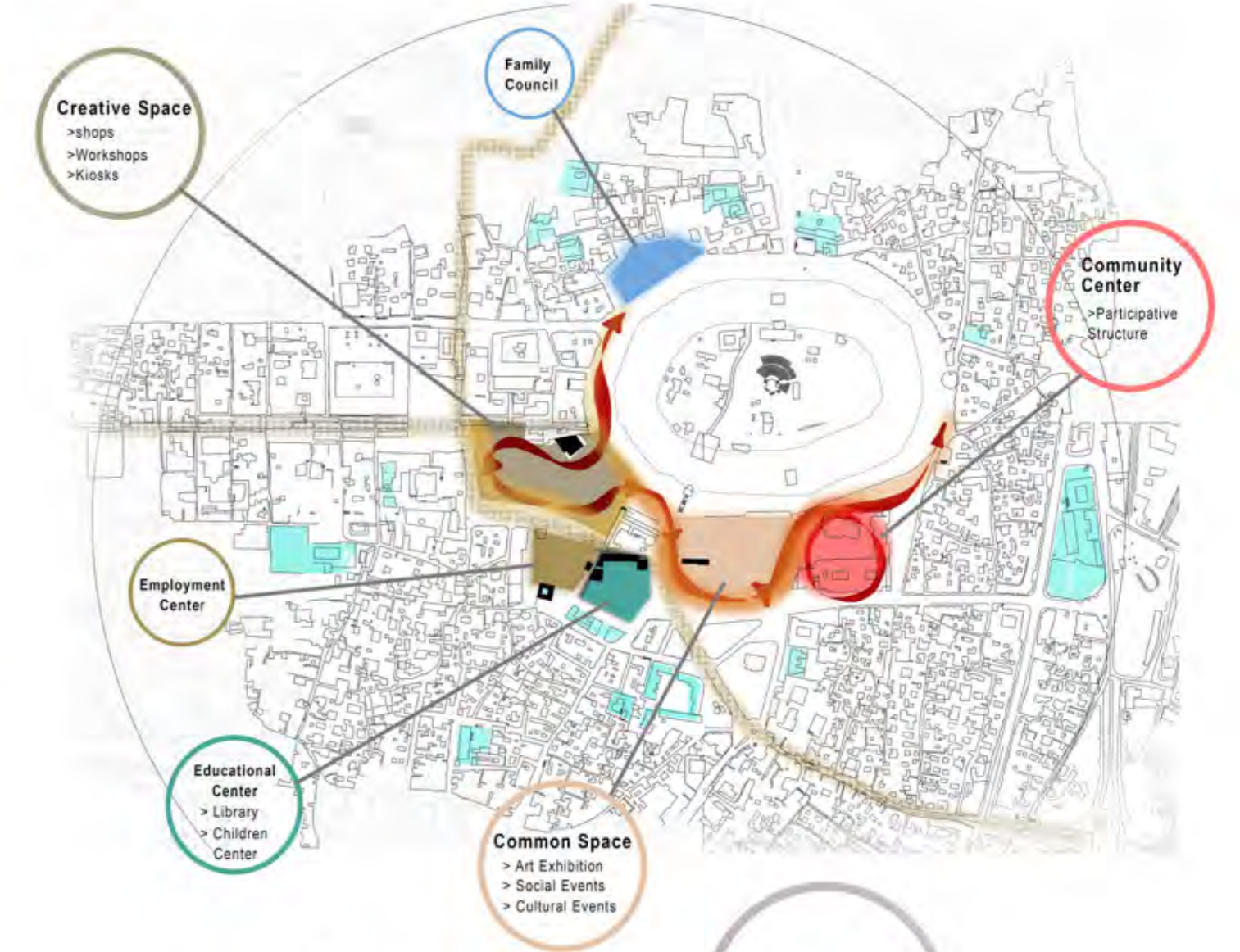
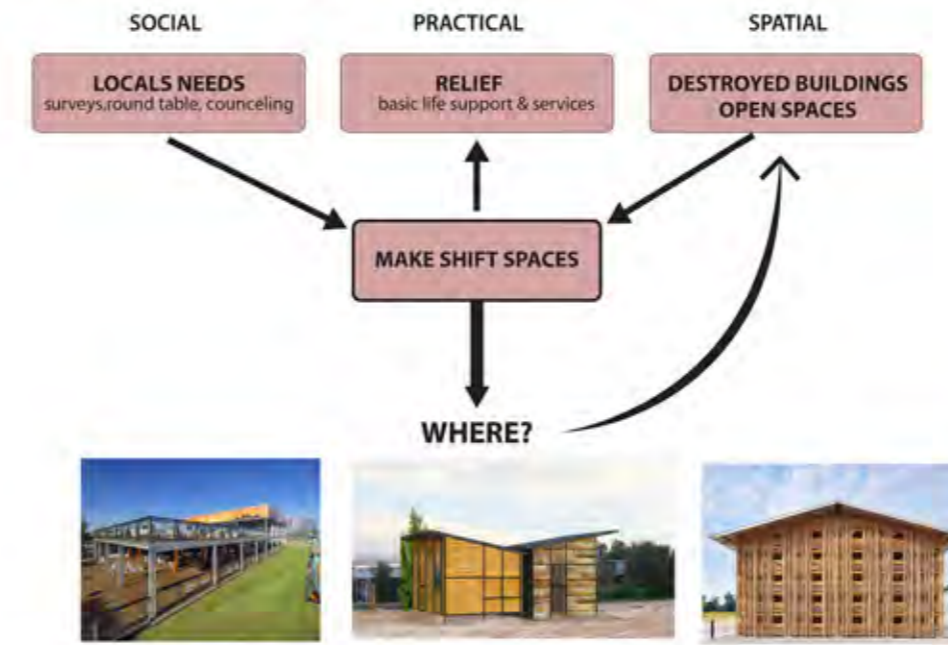
Ghalia Wahhoud

This project addresses the massive physical destruction along with the socio-economic damage that has occurred in old Aleppo and the lack of urban public spaces in the area that serve the neighborhood's residents. It aims to reclaim Taht el Qalaa space for the locals of the old City of Aleppo—a space that would respond to their needs after the hostilities end with social and economic activities. It will use "the make shift spaces" approach through the temporary, purposeful replacement of something that is absent. The space will be divided between three interlinked programs: (1) the community center; (2) the creative space as an extension to the present souqs where independent local business will be located; (3) the common space that will host social and cultural events that are determined according to a participatory approach by the locals.

This intervention will function as a social and business hub for the locals who lost their livelihood during the war and are in need for a new source of income.

>Make Shift Spaces: stands for a temporary, purposeful replacement for something that is absent.

>Temporary Structure





Economic Revitalization

Priscilla Fahd  
George Nader

Our role as urban designers is to represent the Aleppo community as opposed to dictate top-down interventions on space. Accordingly, the project is inspired by the existing networks of resilience that were established during the war and operates along three main axes:

- Revitalizing the economy through the creation of markets and spaces for communication and exchange of basic needs
- Urban conservation of the historic core of the city and the preservation of the culture and know-how of Aleppo
- Turning Aleppo into a green city

This dynamic approach can be incrementally applied and adapted to each stage of implementation.

Given that the souqs of Aleppo and Taht el Qalaa were heavily damaged during the war and covered with rubble, the project encourages people to benefit from the remaining assets of the city by using the moat as a public space.

As a first step, the moat will be temporarily activated by revitalizing the commercial activities that were previously in the souqs and are currently awaiting reconstruction. The moat will house kiosks for food and crafts as well as art installations. Craftsmen will help in cleaning the rubble and restoring the built heritage.

As a second step, the rubble will be recycled and reused. The activity that was previously in the moat will be relocated to the main public space. Negotiations will begin in order to use the public realm. Youth communities will replant the moat.

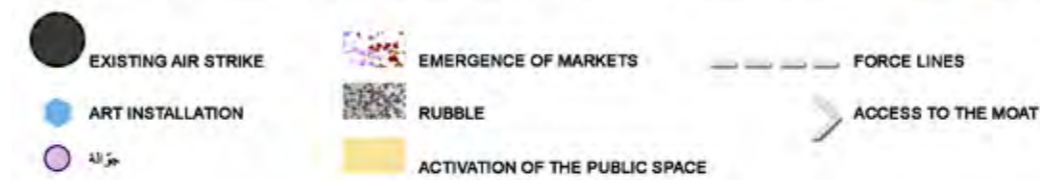
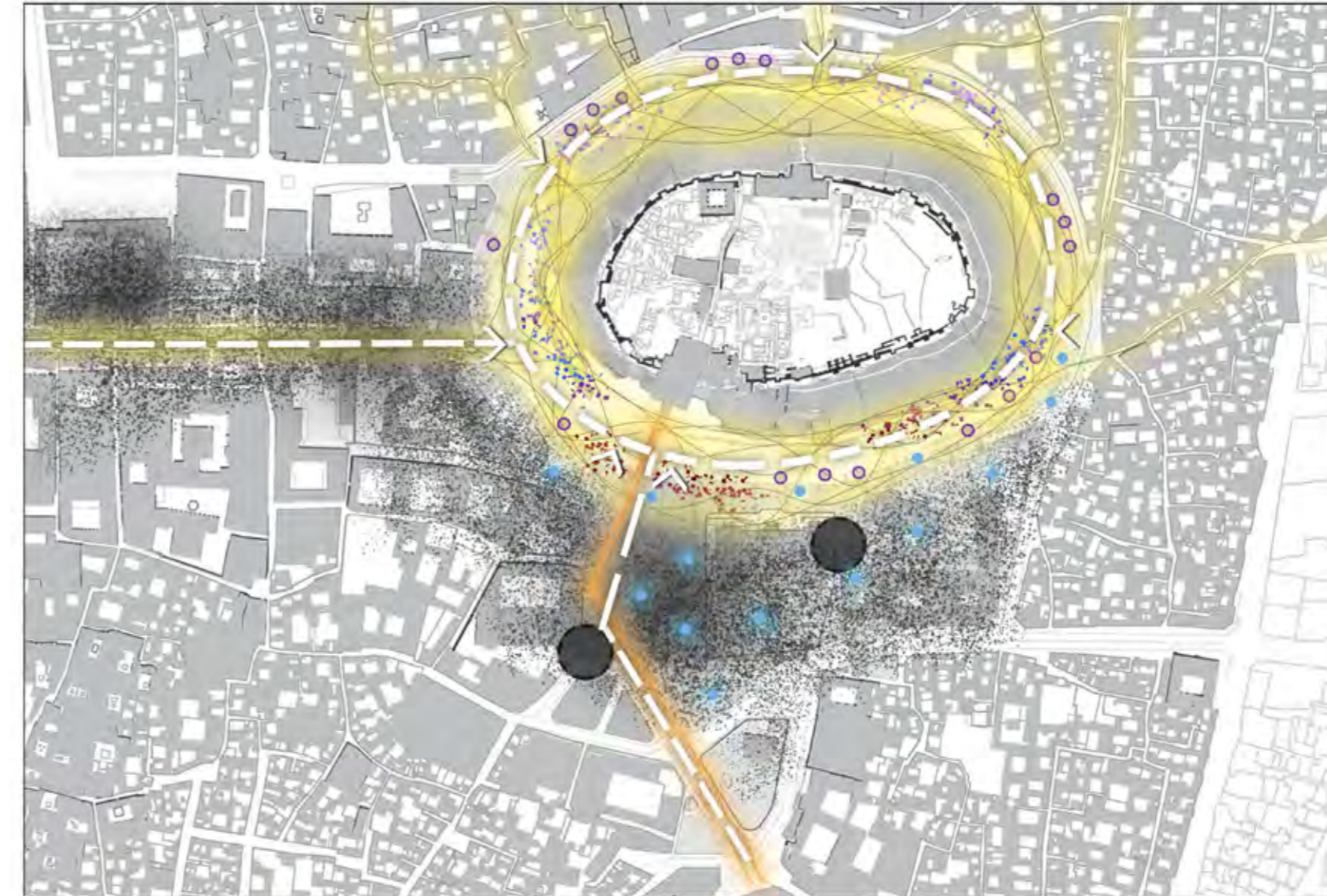
Craftsmen and artists will collaborate to design interactive art installations in the small networks that are connected to the central hub.

A proposed food market will invite local women to be more engaged in the social dynamics of Aleppo. The market will initiate an exchange between the parties engaged in the conflict and will establish a base for communication.

Finally, the public realm will become more spatially defined within the restored built fabric. The activities in the buildings of Taht el Qalaa will activate this public space.

This approach operates on two scales: the micro-scale which involves a surgical intervention in Taht el Qalaa and the macro-scale which connects the main core of the city through healing spaces placed at zones of high tension. The existing functions around Taht el Qalaa will activate the proposed small networks, while the central hub will remain the green lung that pumps life into the city of Aleppo.

Concept Phase I - The Moat as an Activator of the Public Space



Given that the souqs and the piazzas are heavily damaged and covered with rubble, our idea is to encourage the people to use the moat as a public space.

The moat will be temporarily activated by the interrupted commercial activity that was previously in the souqs and is awaiting reconstruction.

The moat will be hosting kiosks for food and crafts along with art installations while the craftsmen will be working on the removal of the rubble and restoration of the built heritage.

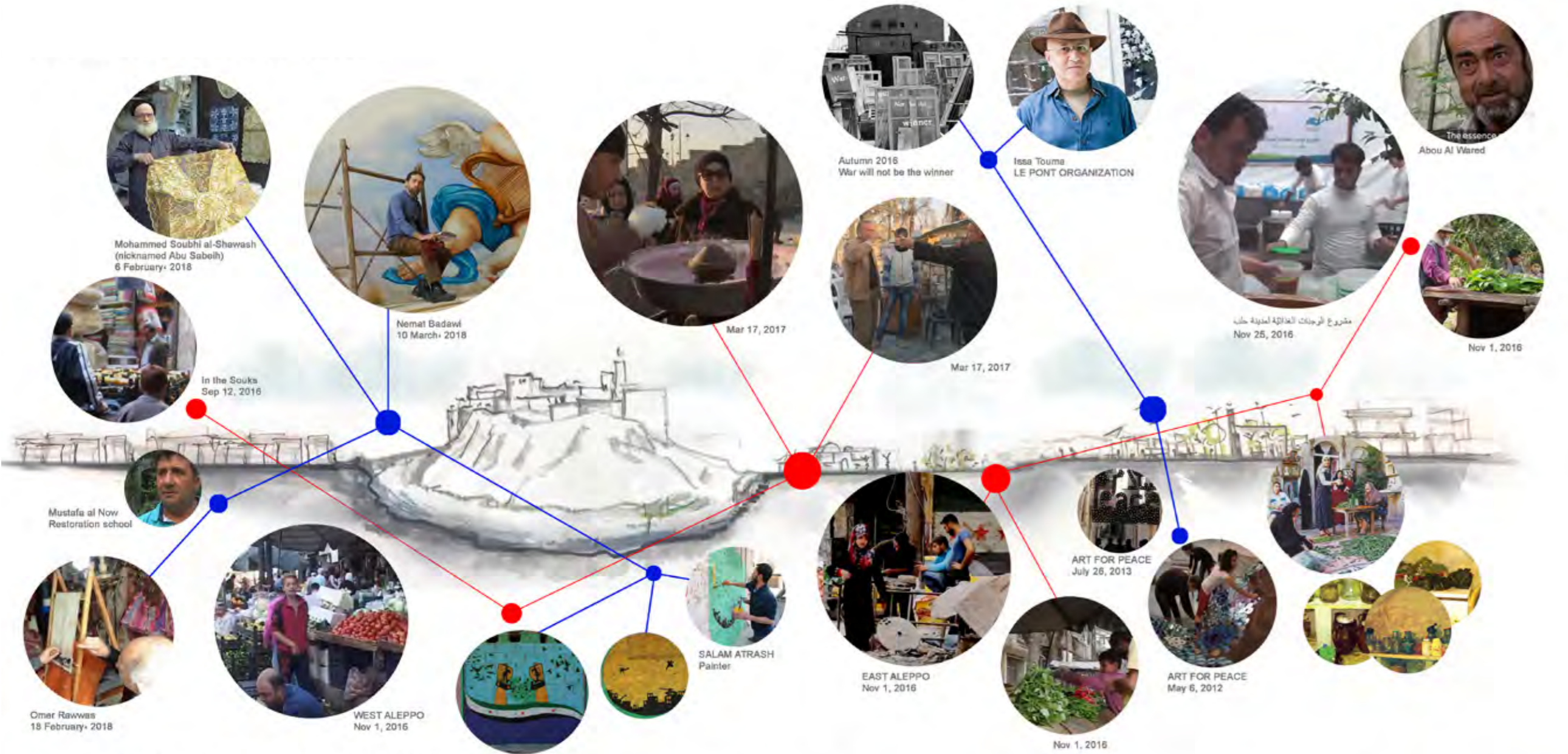








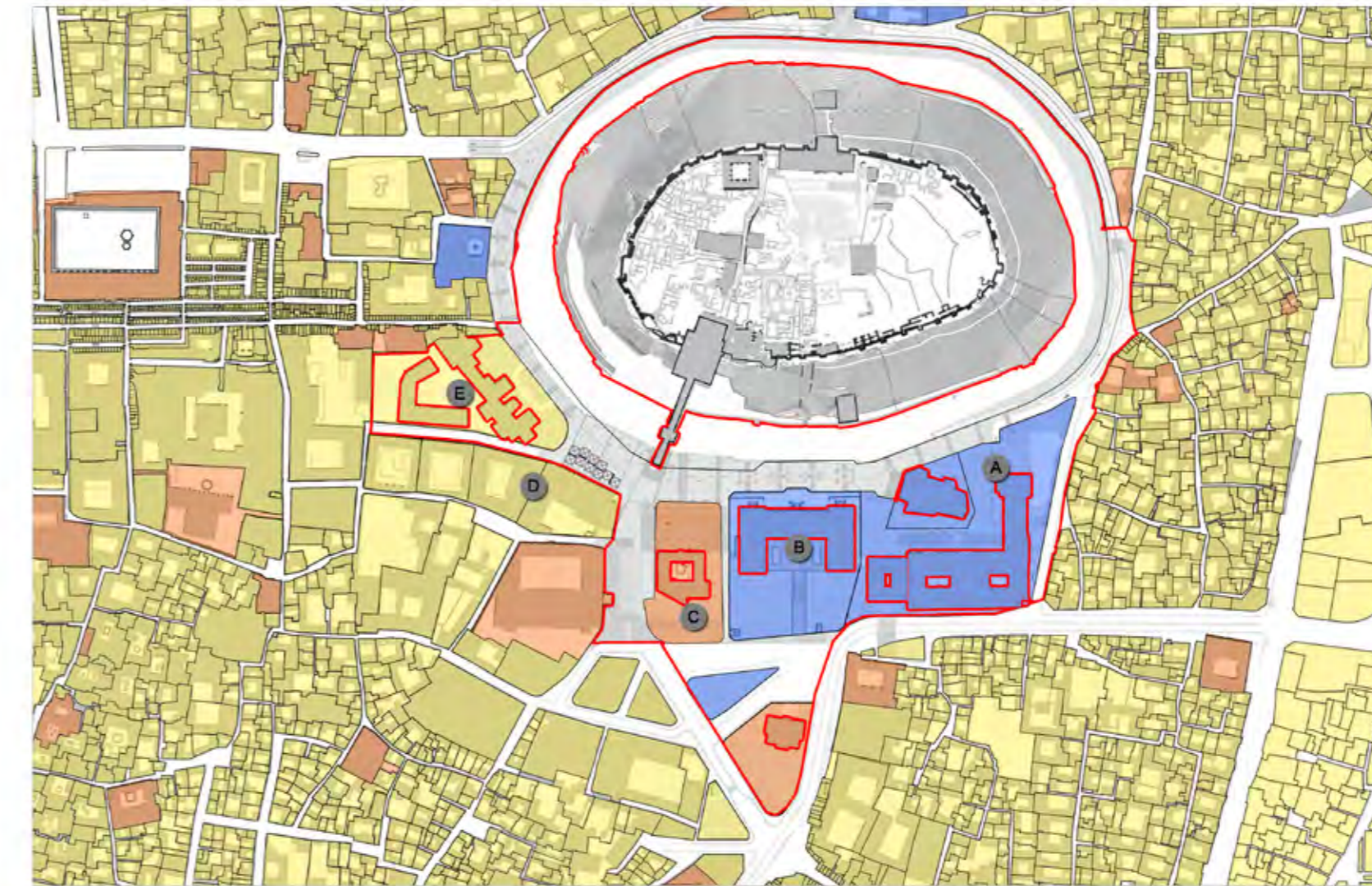
Networks of Resilience



SOCIAL SPACIAL PRACTICES AROUND THE CITADEL



Negotiations with Stakeholders



**A JUSTICE PALACE**  
Negotiation to use the A Part of the Justice Palace as a space for Exhibition. This space was planned to be demolished by the Aga Khan plan.

**B SERAIL**  
Negotiation to use the Ground Floor as a space for a Community Center to win back the People and Activate the Public Space.

**C MADRASA ALSULTANIYA**  
Negotiation to use the space around the Madrasa for Weekly Markets in return of Restoration.

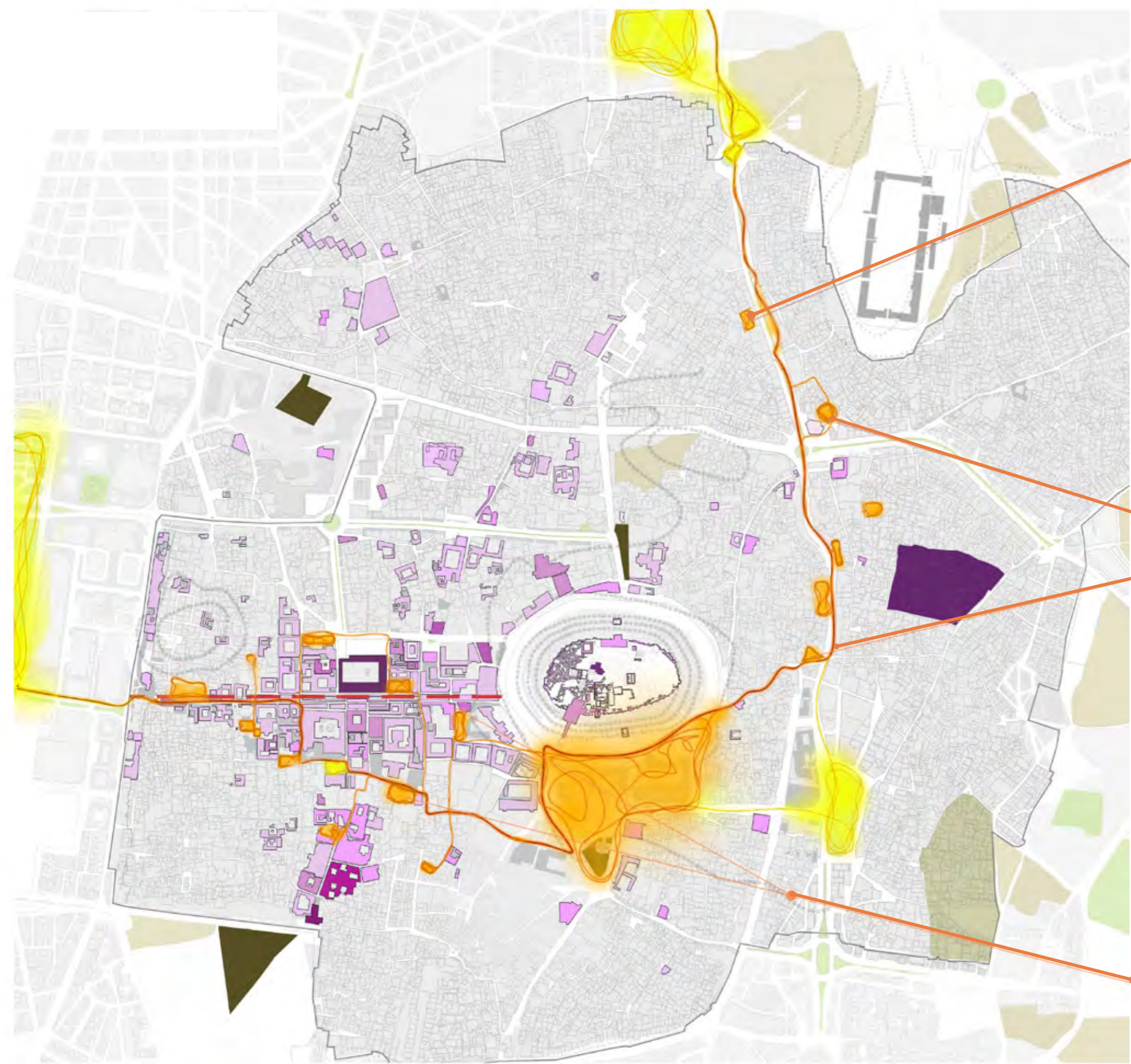
**D KHAN ASH SHOUNEH**  
Keeping the use of the khans as it was before, a space for craftsmen.

**E CARLTON HOTEL**  
Restoration of the Building  
Use of a part of the Land behind the building for the Arts& Crafts Market  
Multi purpose room:  
During Restoration: Laboratory of exchanging Know-How between Craftsmen and Locals.  
After Restoration: A space for events





Networking



**ART INSTALLATION - AMMAN 2016**  
Rayah Kasssieh

**WALL OF EMPATHY**  
Hundreds of people posted messages of love and support on the Wall of Empathy on Monday morning at the 10th Street BART Station in San Francisco

**HAYT EL KHAYR**  
Lebanon - 2017

**JAWWALA IN ALEPPO**

**Republic Triathlon Championship - Aleppo July 2017**

**Artist Sedki al Imam form Aleppo**

**ALEPPO**

The right page features a collection of circular images connected by orange lines. These images depict various community and artistic initiatives: an art installation with hanging threads, a person holding a woven basket, a person in a wheelchair, a wall covered in colorful sticky notes, a group of people in traditional attire, a group of people at a table, a triathlon event, and a red silhouette of a person's head.



Urban Regeneration

Basma Ibrahim  
Nadine Salhab

The site is conceptualized as a hinge between various urban networks. Its historic value is highlighted by directing the community to the site through Infrastructural, economic, social, cultural and environmental networks. The focus is on linking public spaces to a network of pedestrian and vehicular green corridors that can act as catalysts for urban recovery. This intervention works on three different scales: the city, the old city and the site at the foot of the citadel.

To compensate for the lack of open spaces within the old city and enhance the quality of urban life, the intervention uses the destroyed areas as shared open spaces that are connected through pedestrian pathways, while treating the site at the foot of the citadel as the main point d'eclatement (point of outbreak). Essentially, it proposes creating a network of open flexible spaces revolving around Taht el Qalaa. Taht el Qalaa is the first surgical intervention that will spread out to the network of open spaces in a celebration of recovery. It will be the main prototype which will act as a model to be replicated throughout the network of open space. The pedestrian corridors increase accessibility to the foot of the citadel as an urban node. Taht el Qalaa and the network of open spaces will host a multitude of scenarios that will change at different seasons. Those scenarios are a fusion of social, economic, cultural and environmental practices.

In order to activate the site at the foot of the citadel, the intervention uses the surrounding buildings as space activators. The following activities will be injected into the buildings at the ground level and will spillover to the in-between open spaces.

**CARLTON**  
To be restored as a hotel with a Khan typology  
Crafts shops on the ground floor as a continuity to the souq; they empower craftsmen and attract both locals and tourists

**KHAN EL SHOUNEH**  
To be restore into a culinary school with a restaurant that serves local Aleppo food  
Involves all user groups interested in celebrating food heritage

**AL KHOSROWIYYAH MOSQUE**  
Restore the mosque due to its historic and religious importance

**AL SULTANYA MOSQUE**  
Restore the mosque due to its historic and religious importance

**SERAIL**  
Allow the government to rebuild the Serail that is located within the horizontal axis that defines Taht el Qalaa according to the following guidelines:

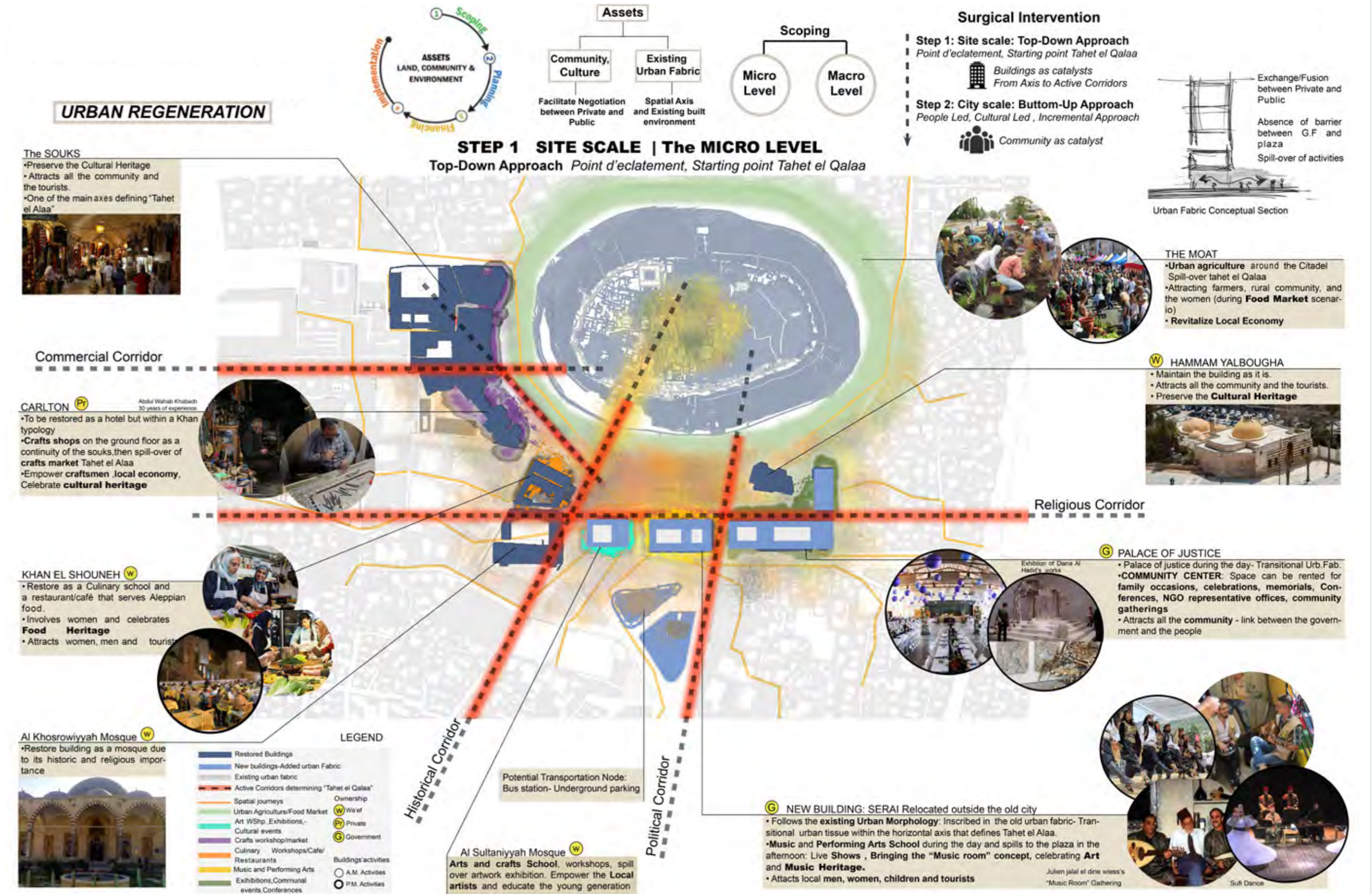
The ground floor is designed as a porous space that directs people into the plaza

The ground floor holds art and performance workshops during the day; the activities extend to the plaza in the afternoon for open-air exhibitions

These guidelines help counter the stigma over government buildings, attract local men, women, children and tourists and build trust within the community.

**PALACE OF JUSTICE**  
Restore the palace to its original form, with the ground floor operating as a community center in the afternoon; the space can also be rented for communal and family occasions, memorials and conferences.

Catalyst for Urban Recovery



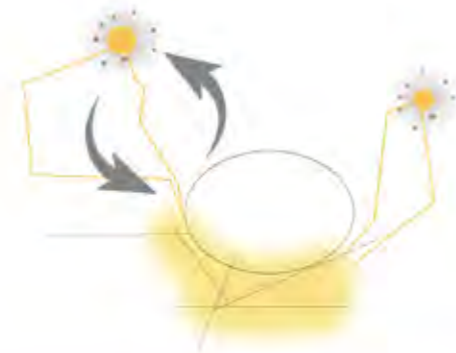


Catalyst for Urban Recovery



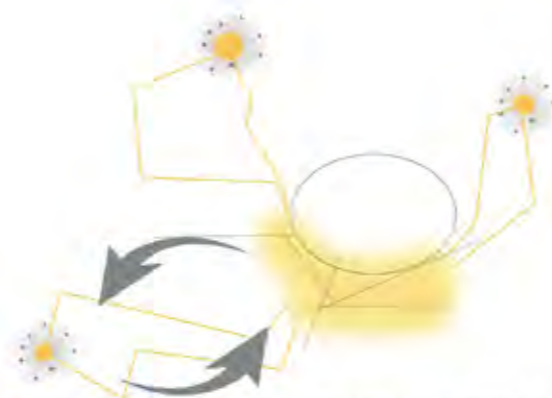
- A call for **community gathering** in Taht el Kalaa along with the **Municipality & NGO representatives**

- To take **spatial journeys** through the city towards **destruction sites of communal and social significance** through **circuits** centered around Taht el Kalaa.

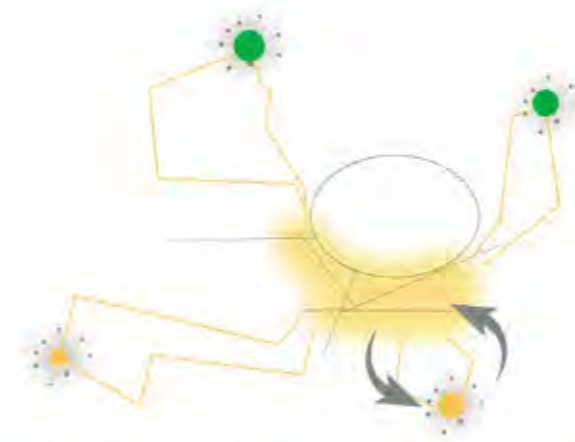


- To have **discussions of urban recovery scenarios** and an exchange of knowledge and know-how.

- This will **empower the community**, emphasize **recovery through participation** and start creating a **post-war spatial social memories**.

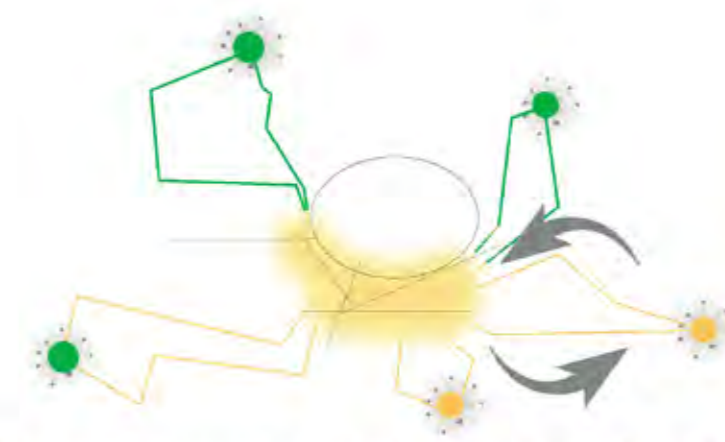


- **Incrementally**, communally significant pockets and pathways will be highlighted. Forming the network of significant spaces that need to be **restored, revitalized, upgraded** first.

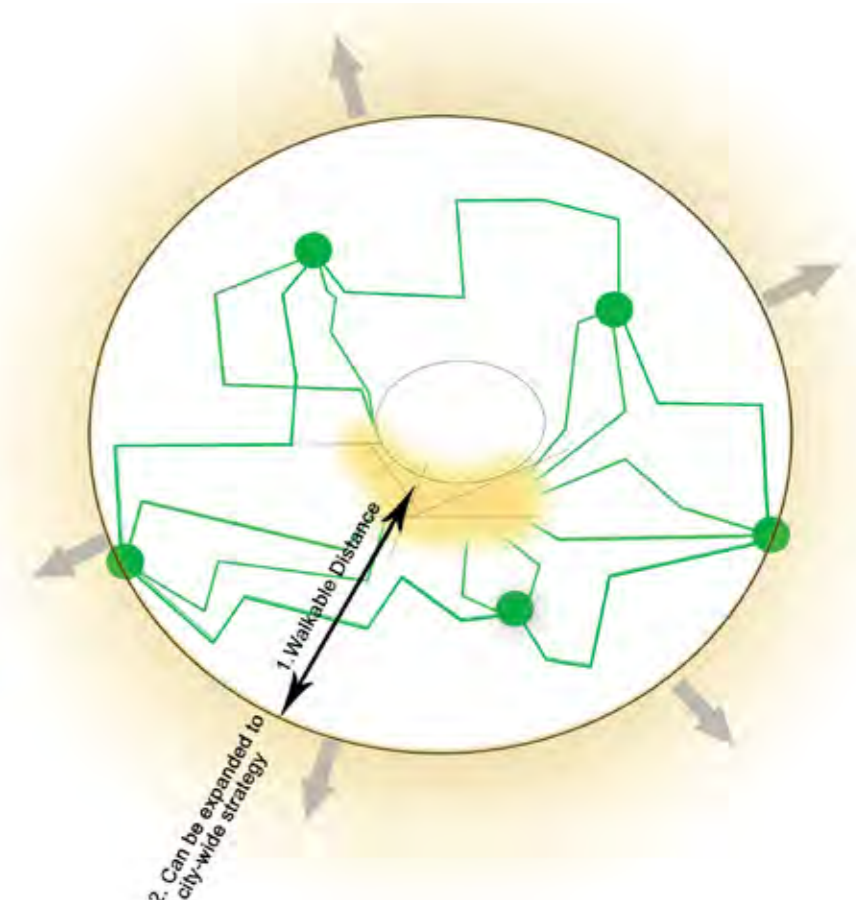


- **This network of pockets and the pathways** will become the **green arteries** within the old city.

- Upgrading quality of life and building a **resilient network of Community Spaces** charged with memories of **post-war recovery discussion and exchange of ideas, hopes and visions**



Post recovery, this communal green network will host communal activities that **strengthen communal and neighborhood ties and celebrate living heritage**



Urban Regeneration

STEP 2 CITY SCALE | The MACRO LEVEL

Spatial Scenarios



Targeted Users

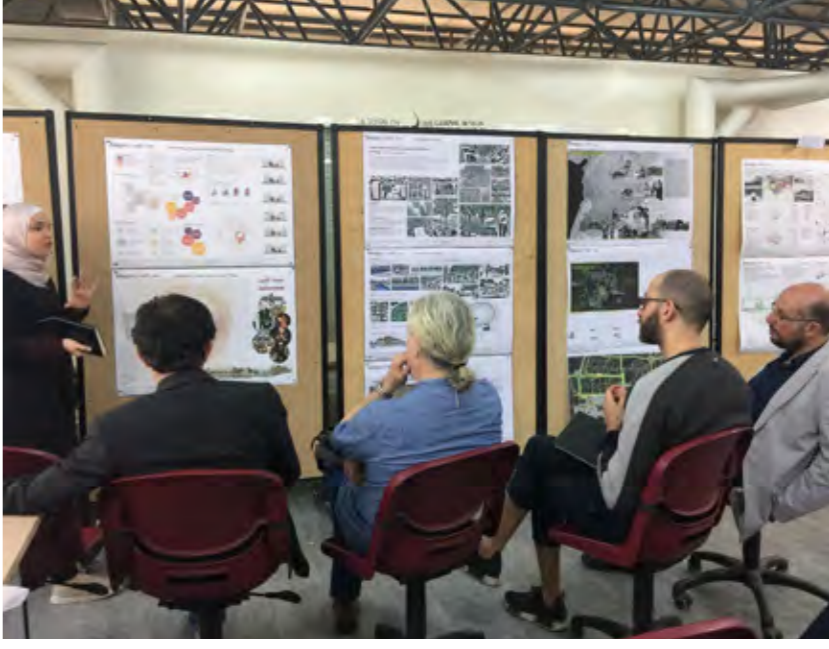


- Craftsmen  
Tourists  
Men/Women Clients
- Women Cooking  
Men/Women Clients Culinary St  
Tourists
- Men  
Women  
Children
- Men - Government Officials  
Artists - Performers
- Men - Government Officials  
Men - Women - Children
- Tourists  
Men-Women

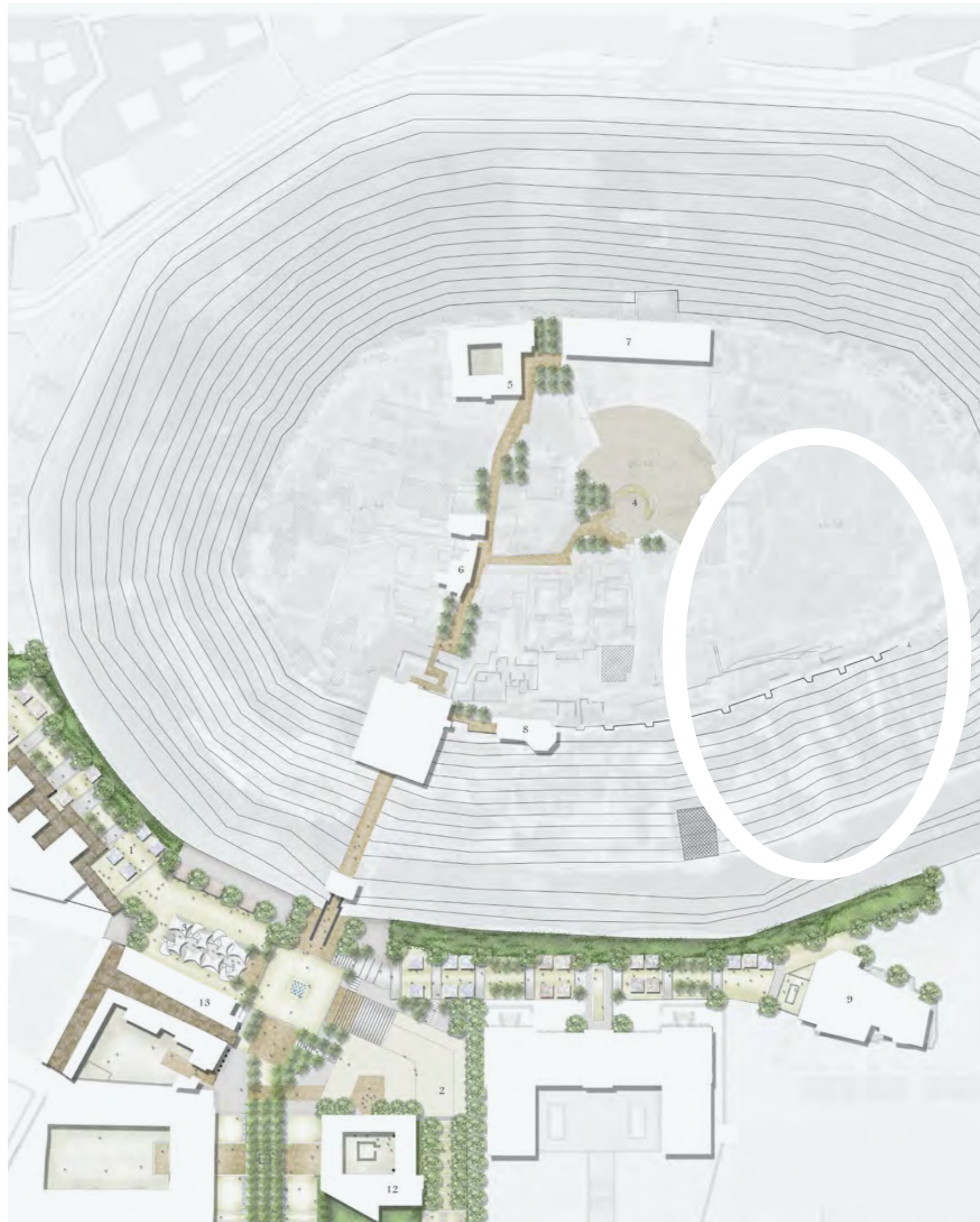


“ Politics is integral to the discourse on urban heritage. Funding comes with strings attached and agencies as key decision-makers.”

Howayda Al-Harithy







# 6

Group Design  
Proposals



**Infill: A Local Commerce-Led Economic Recovery**

Ali Basma, Ghalia Wahoud

Historically, Taht el Qalaa has been a highly militarized site long before the civil uprising in 2012. This was evident during the civil war period when the site became the main frontline that divides the city into two parts, east and west. With the Serail and the palace of justice heavily present in the site, the space was divided into gated inaccessible spaces. The Aga Khan project in 2003 rearranged the site according to a formal street grid that altered the human-scale of the city.

Based on the above analysis, the design intervention aims to demilitarize Taht el Qalaa, revive the local economy and increase accessibility and permeability to the site.

An in-depth analysis of the old city shows that open spaces were defined by three main factors: continuous daily practices, shared religious values and social rituals. These factors connected the socio-economic activities with the religious and educational functions. They ensured a smooth transition from public to semi-public-private open spaces rather than a rational grid of streets and squares.

Accordingly, the proposed intervention aims to extend the typology of the old city through a network of spines and open spaces that will connect the sites' various polarities. This will be achieved through an infill strategy that will eventually lead to a local commerce-led economic recovery. Taking into consideration that we are working in a post war situation and dealing with multiple actors and stakeholders within the site, the project will be gradually implemented in three phases:

**PHASE 1: MICRO-REZONING**

Applying law number 10 issued in 2018 that reunites ownership in a designated zone. This will locate the main actors, define site boundaries and redistribute ownership within the site.

**PHASE 2: RELIEF AND RECONSTRUCTION**

Securing people's basic needs by establishing a temporary market in the destroyed areas. This step will be followed by decentralizing public facilities, empowering local authorities and civil society and diversifying spaces users.

**PHASE 3: RECOVERY**

Revitalizing the city's networks and using the mosques, churches and unions as focal points for participatory approaches. The municipality, the waqf and Dar al-Eftaa' are the main actors in the site and will have the highest number of shares. Multiple ownership will be used as a powerful tool to avoid gentrification on one side and empower local authorities on the other. Unions, NGOs and the Ministry of Tourism and Ministry of Culture will have a vital role in supporting the municipality and ensuring the site is accessible for all users.

The proposed intervention will be spatially translated through a spillover of the souqs to Taht el Qalaa aiming to revive the economy and provide different experiences within the same site. Three interconnected spines will define the spaces and connect the site to its surrounding. The main spine will extend from the souqs to Dar al-Eftaa' connecting the site's main polarities (souqs, khans, madrassas, citadel, the waqf, the palace of justice and Dar al-Eftaa') and including the main commercial activity. The mobility spine will define the edge of the site and ensure vertical access to the site. The citadel spine will be more silent and host the leisure activities and events. Buildings with historical significance such as madrassas, hammams and khans will be gradually restored. Militarized buildings will be reconfigured to serve as civic buildings i.e. the Serail will be used as a municipality building and hub for NGOs and unions; the palace of justice will be moved to a community center that will activate the site through continuous daily activities. Finally, infill will be applied in various locations to boost the economic activity while maintaining a smooth shift from temporary to permanent structures.

The project aims to provide a people-centered, commerce-led and culture-oriented approach that seeks to reconnect the site and citadel to the city while respecting its urban fabric.

**Infill: Towards Local Commerce-Led Economic Recovery**



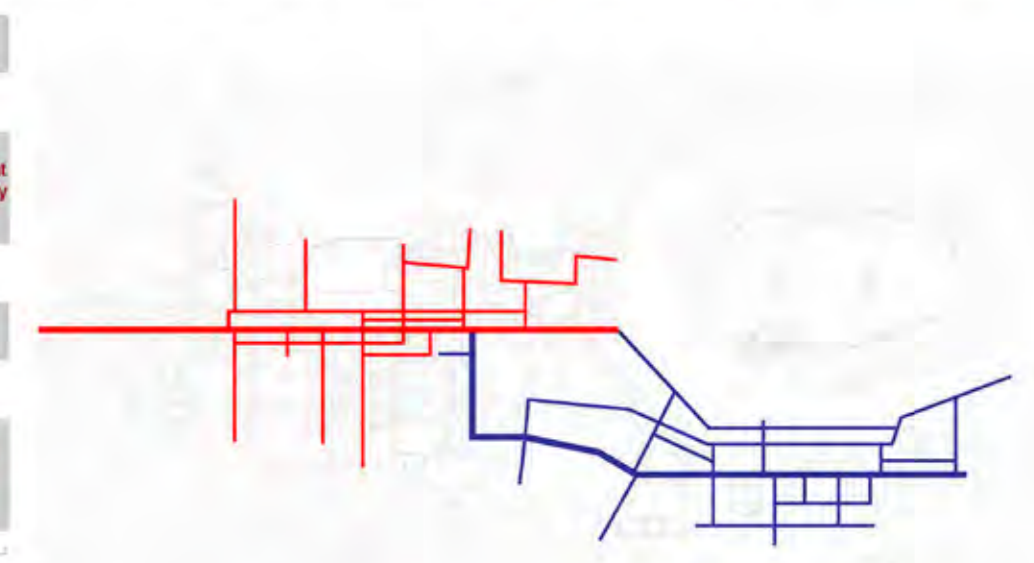
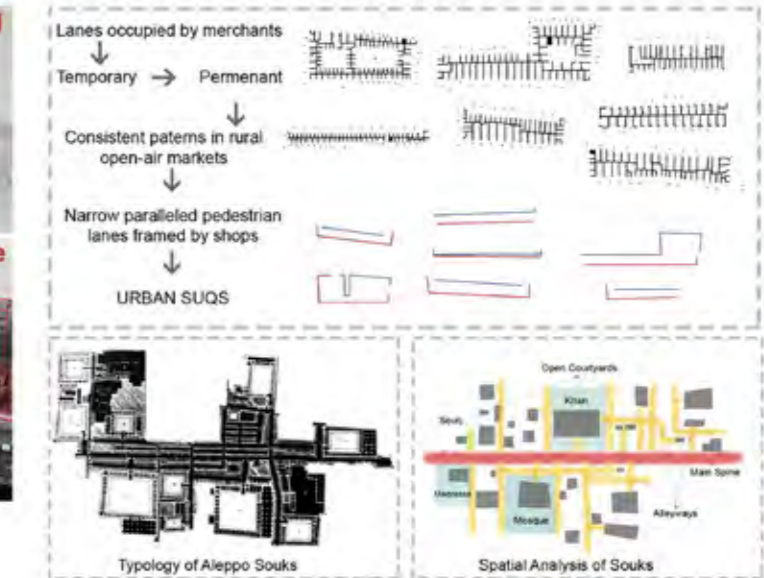
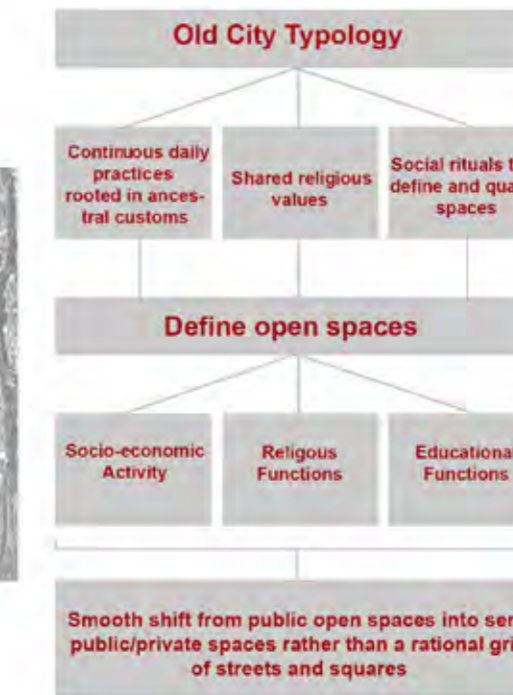
Pre-War Site Analysis  
Militarized

- Problematic:**
- Militarized buildings and sites
  - Huge open spaces that are not part of Aleppian urban morphology
  - Lack of accessibility, privacy, and characteristics of old city typology



Post-war Site Analysis  
Frontline

- Design Objectives:**
- 1- Demilitarizing Taht al-Qalaa
  - 2- Reviving the Local Economy
  - 3- Allowing more accessibility and permeability to the site



**Concept:** Extending the old city's urban typology through a network of spines and open spaces that will connect the site's polarities

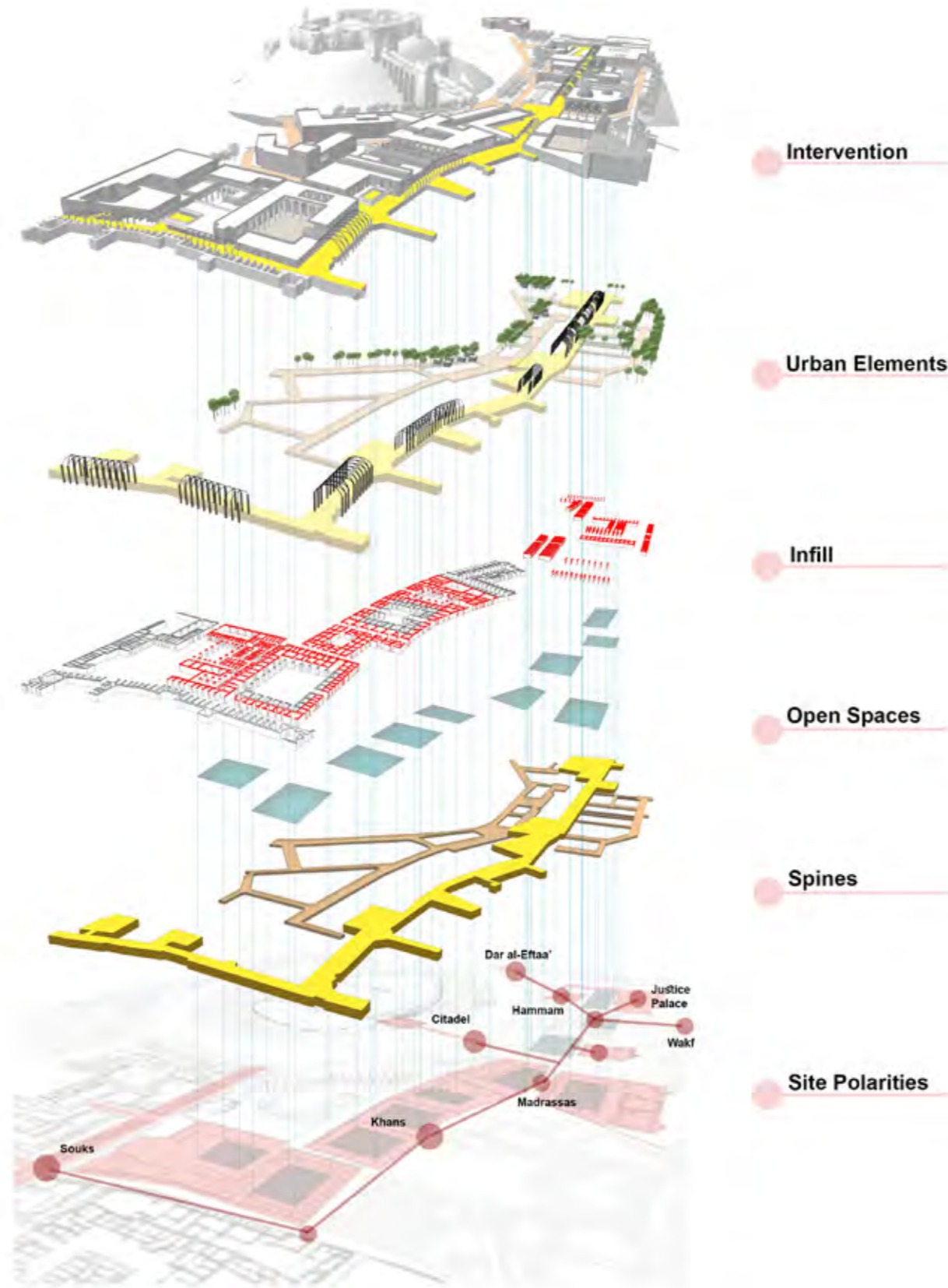
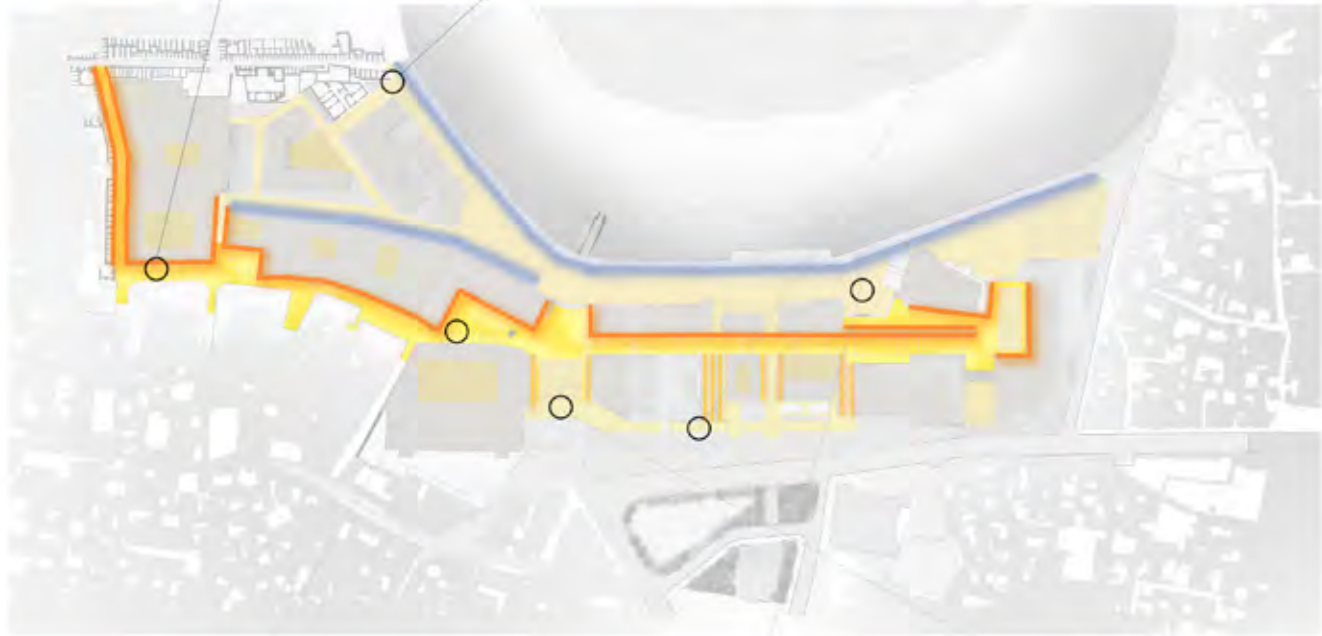


Spines Definition and Experiences

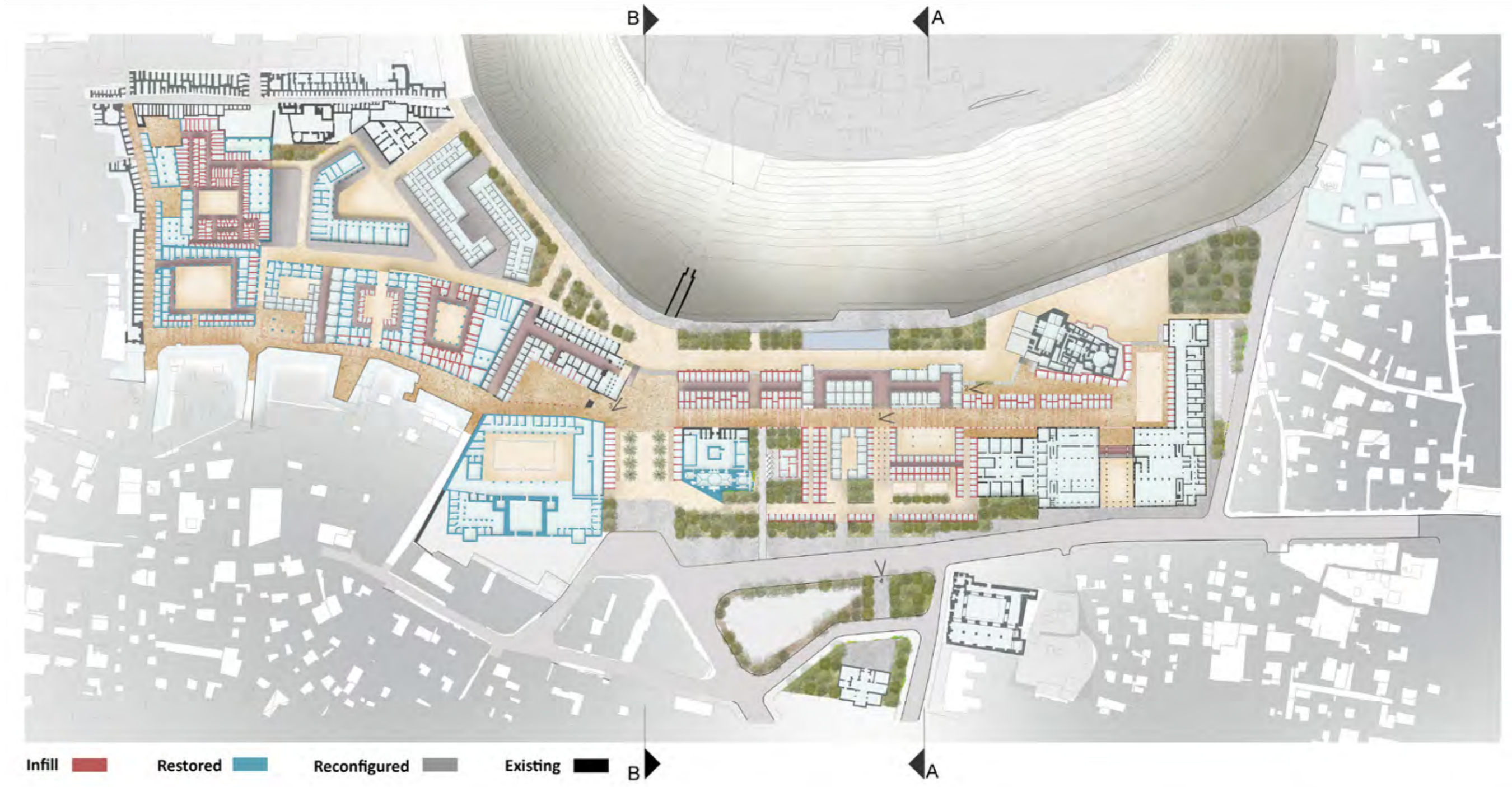
**Main Spine:**  
Includes the commercial activities.

**Mobility Spine:**  
The site's edge insures vertical access to the site.

**Citadel Spine:**  
Hosts the leisure activities and events

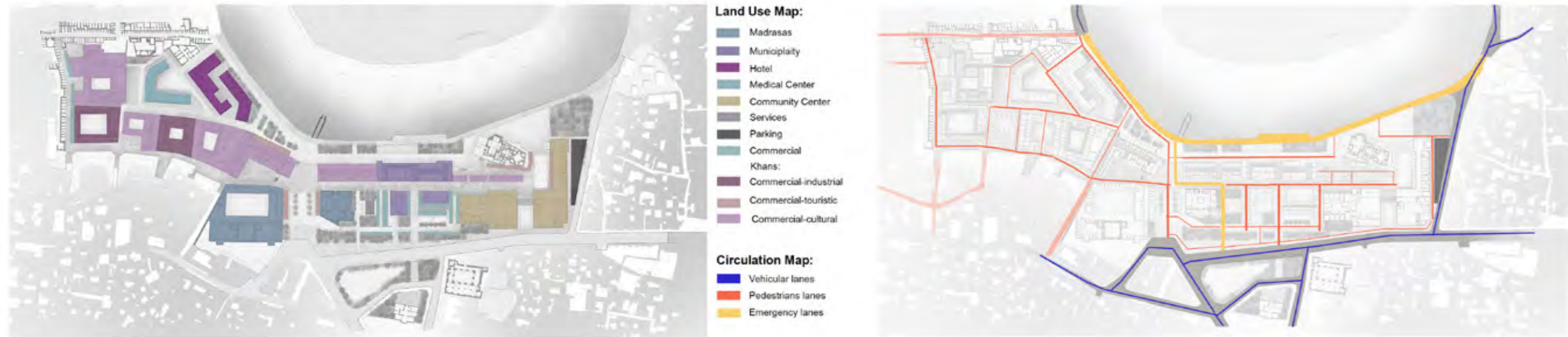


Infill: Towards Local Commerce-Led Economic Recovery



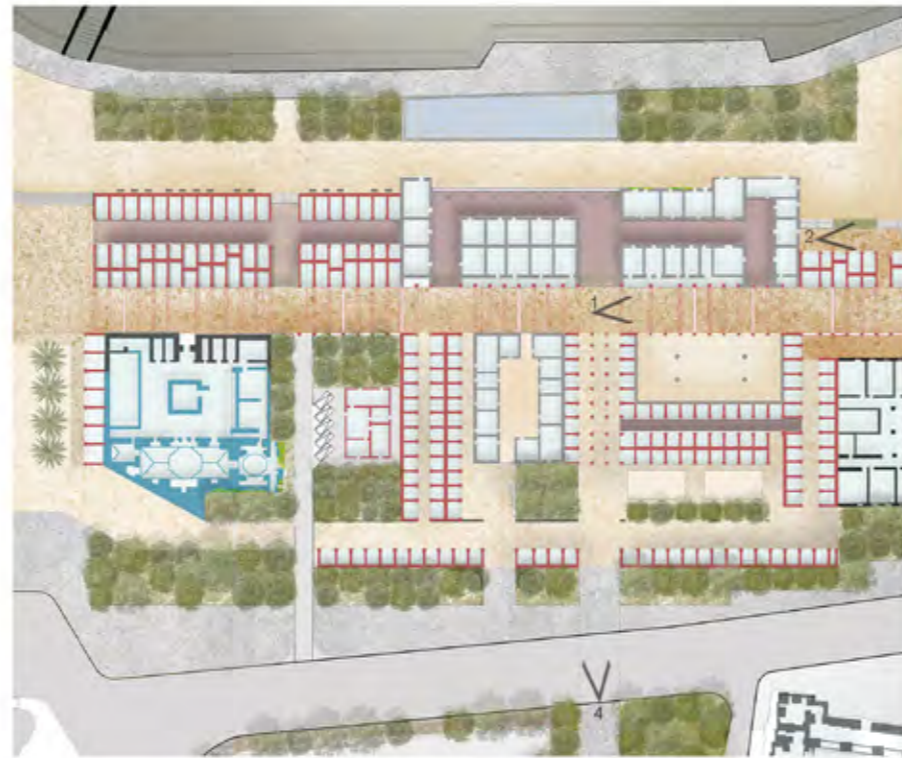


Infill: Towards Local Commerce-Led Economic Recovery



Top View

Zoom-in



Infill: Towards Local Commerce-Led Economic Recovery



View 1

View 2



Section A-A



Infill: Towards Local Commerce-Led Economic Recovery



View 3



View 4



Section B-B

Infill: Towards Local Commerce-Led Economic Recovery

Phase I: Rezoning

1- Defining Ownership and Locating Main Actors



2- Defining Site Boudaries



Apply "Micro-rezoning" based on law number 10 issued in 2018 that reunites ownership in a designated zone

3- New Ownership Distribution



Phase II: Relief and Reconstruction

1. Relief



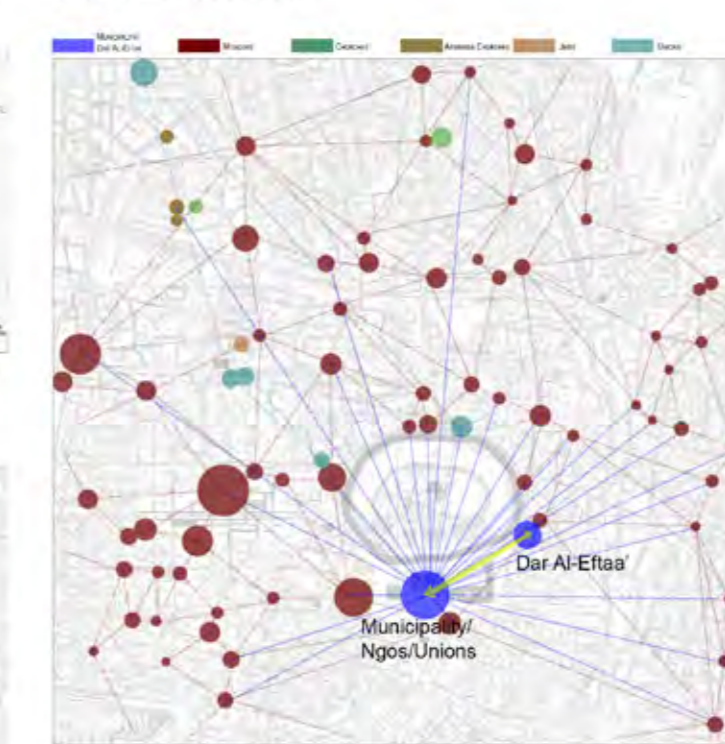
Establishing temporary market and facilities in the destroyed areas to secure people's basic needs

2. Reconstruction

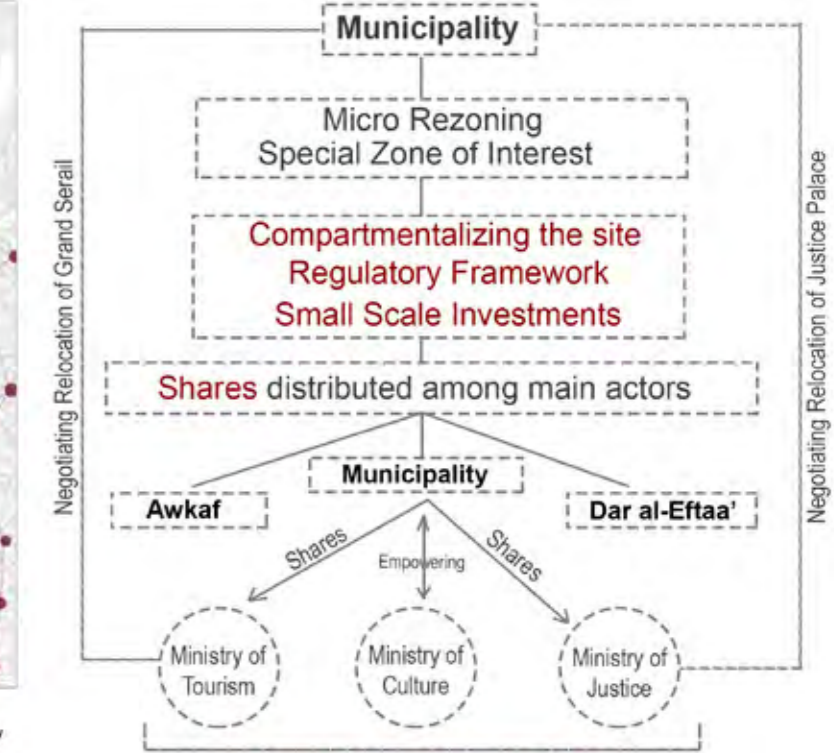


Decentralizing public facilities, empowering local authorities and civil society, and diversifying the space users

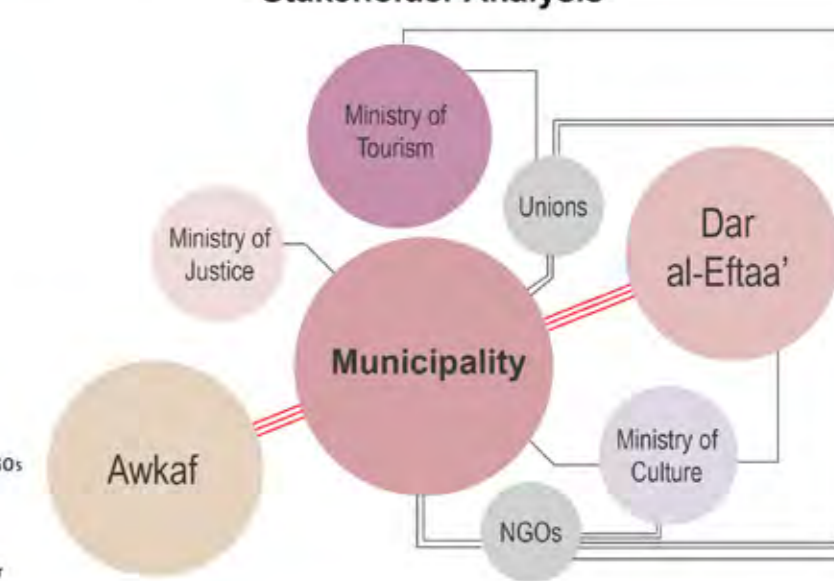
Phase III: Recovery



Recovering the city through vitalizing its networks. Using the mosques, churches, and unions as focal points for participatory approaches through the reconstruction and recovery phases



Avoid GENTRIFICATION





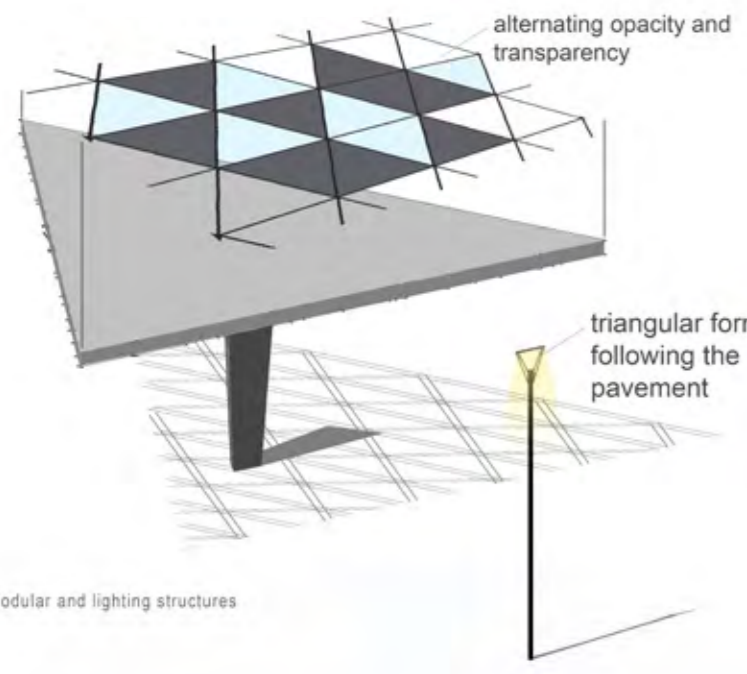
Looking at the history of Aleppo, one finds that the space at the foot of the citadel has never completely been a civic space. It has always been affected by political tensions due to the governmental buildings present on site. During the French mandate, it held military events and during the Ottoman period, it was a hub for economic activities. Therefore, our aim is to allow the people of Aleppo to re-claim their heritage and culture, by creating a new identity of the space: the civic identity. Through the complete removal of the Serail, the re-programming of the palace of justice and the implementation of the place-making theory, the space at the foot of the citadel becomes a place for the memorialization of heritage, of celebration and honoring of the victims of the war and operates as a place for everyday rituals and activities to occur. This place-making theory is strengthened by the use of existing urban elements, such as nodes, edges and pathways, which allow for a hierarchical division of spaces: a central funnel space approached through three main axes with multiple sub-spaces. These spaces are activated through a multi-functional program, where modular structures are installed to carry on economical, artistic, educational and entertainment activities. Similarly, the edge of the moat works on animating the space, as it is treated as an outdoor exhibition space, where the citizens exhibit their artwork and produced crafts. Furthermore, the space at the foot of the citadel is linked to a larger network of urban pockets. These pockets are character spaces that are created in-between urban landmarks in multiple residential neighborhoods around the old city, forming a green network of open/public spaces.

Place-Re-Making, a Culture-led Regeneration





Place-Re-Making, a Culture-led Regeneration

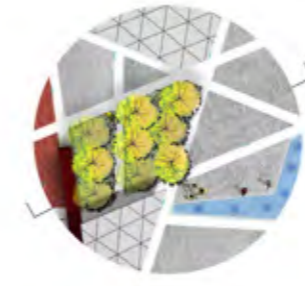


Place-Re-Making, a Culture-led Regeneration





Place-Re-Making, a Culture-led Regeneration



**Prunus Dulcis (Almond)**  
 5 to 8 m white and pink flowers, fragrant, full light, low water

**Carissa Grandiflora**  
 1 to 1.5 m white flowers, fragrant, partial light, low water

**Plumeria Obtusa**  
 3 to 5 m white flowers, fragrant, full light, low water

**Genista Lydia**  
 0.5 to 1 m yellow flowers, no smell, full light, low water

**Tabebuia Aurea**  
 3 to 5 m yellow flowers, no smell, full light, low water

**Canna Indica**  
 1.5 to 3 m red flowers, fragrant, partial light, low water

Vegetation layer



Longitudinal section Scale 1:250

Place-Re-Making, a Culture-led Regeneration





Place-Re-Making, a Culture-led Regeneration



Ownership diagram



Circulation diagram

**PART #1**  
Design Development

•Design proposal selected for the plaza under the citadel

**PART #2 A**  
Implementation Agencies

•Municipality  
•Ministry of Culture

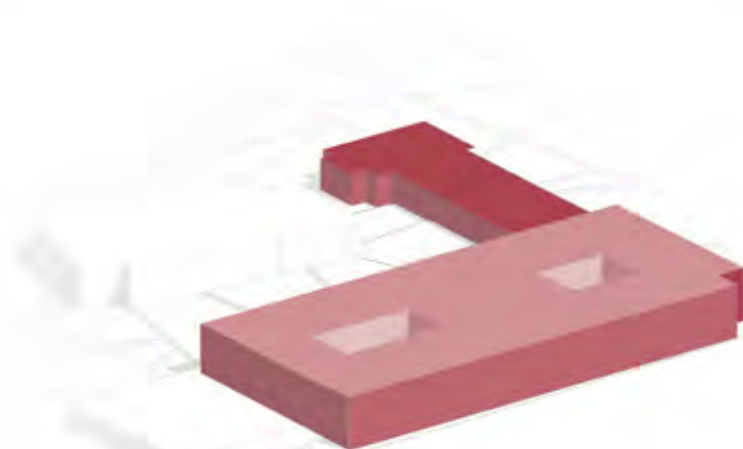
**PART #2 B**  
Funding Actors

•Municipality •Ministry of Culture •Local businesses  
•Awkaf •Ministry of Tourism •International Donors  
•Ministry of Labor

**PART #3**  
Management + Maintenance

•Municipality  
•Ministry of Tourism  
•Al-Adiyat NGO

Implementation strategy



Reconfiguration of the justice palace

- **Phase #1**  
**Stabilizing the community**
  - Micro-finance agencies + administration
  - Job trainings
  - Advisory functions for restoration (engineering syndicates)
  - Temporary learning center
  - Health center
- **Phase #2**  
**Shift to culture**
  - Exhibitions spaces
  - Clubs (music, arts and crafts, performance and theatre)
  - Workshops

Place-Re-Making, a Culture-led Regeneration

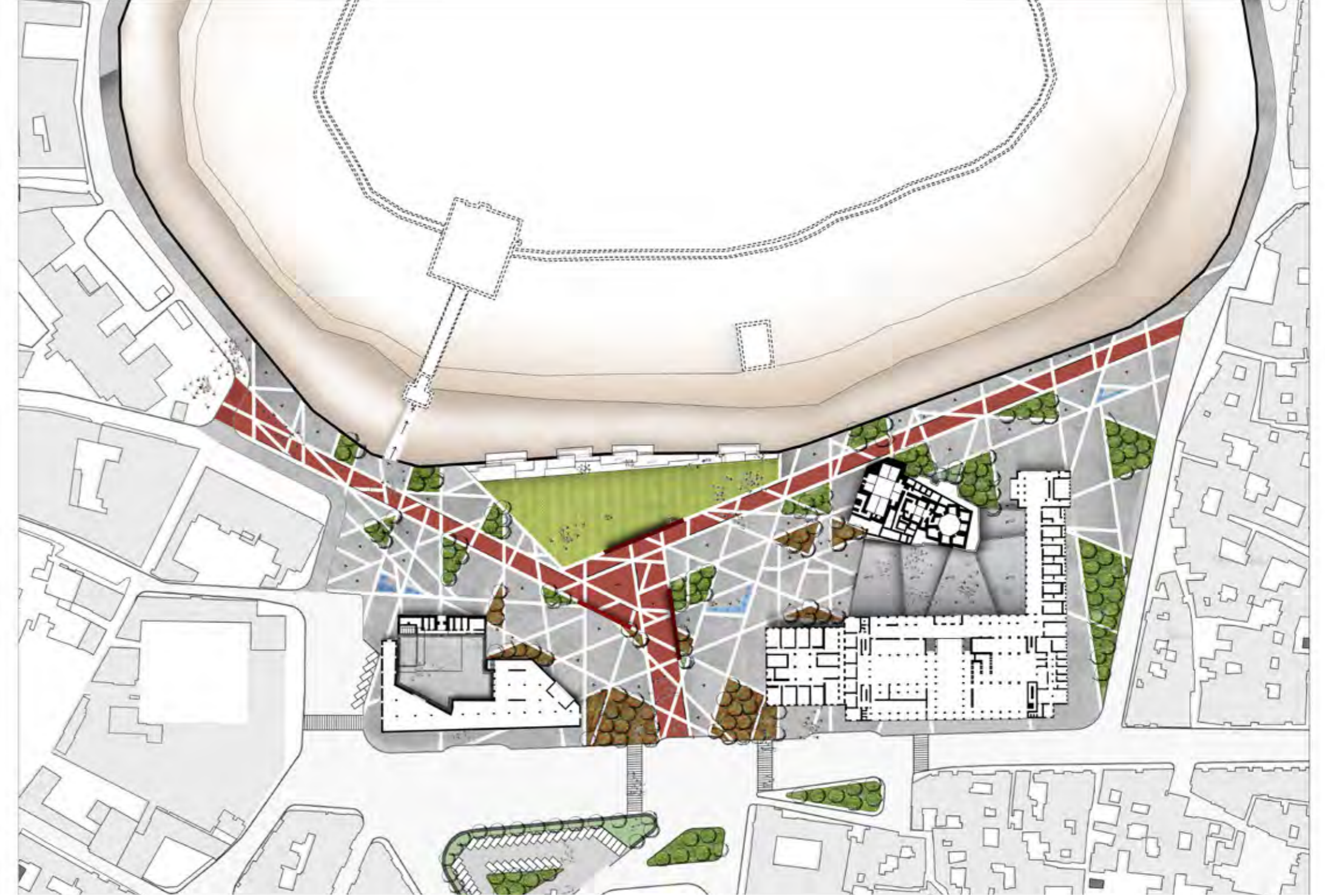




Place-Re-Making, a Culture-led Regeneration

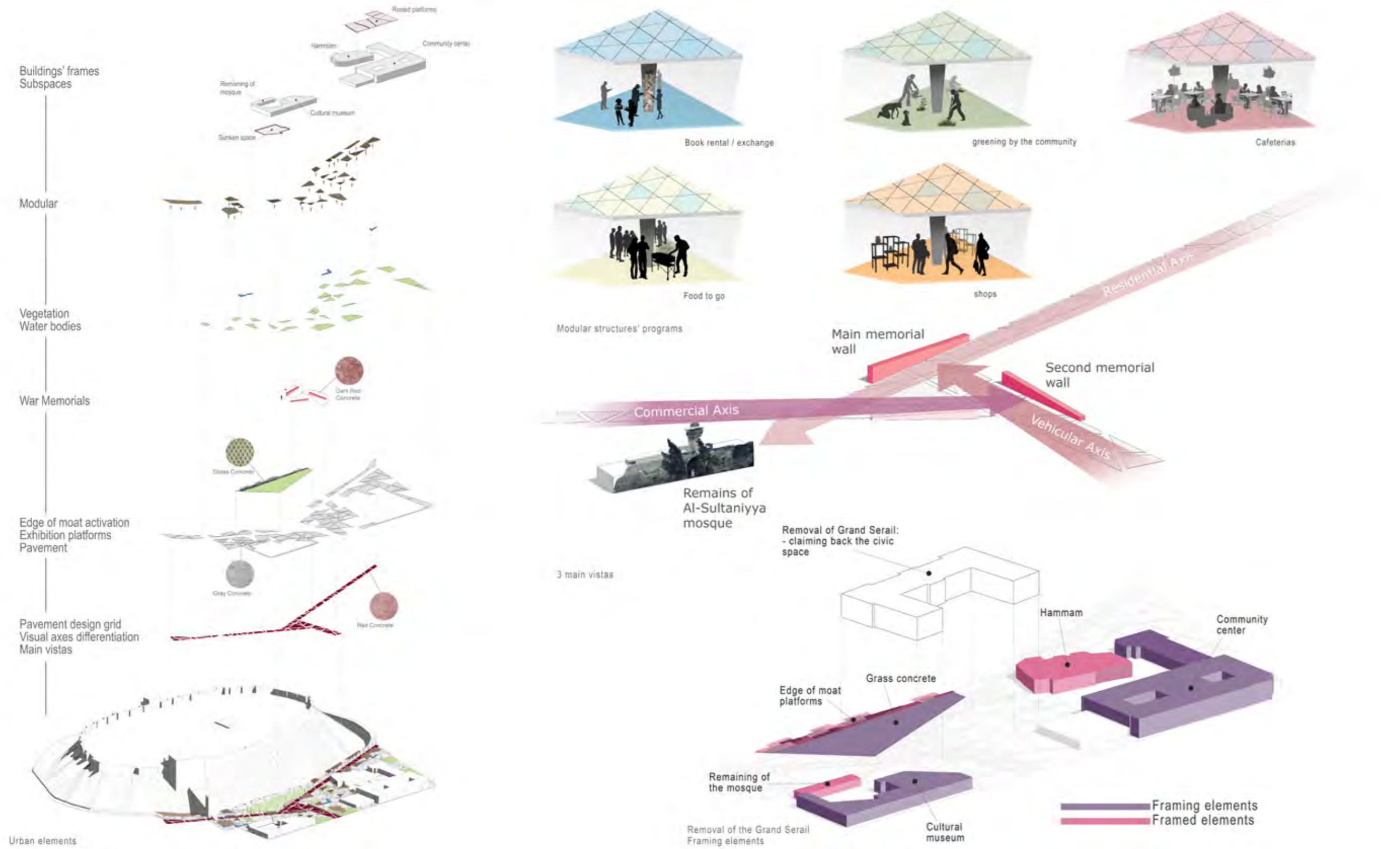


Place-Re-Making, a Culture-led Regeneration





Place-Re-Making, a Culture-led Regeneration

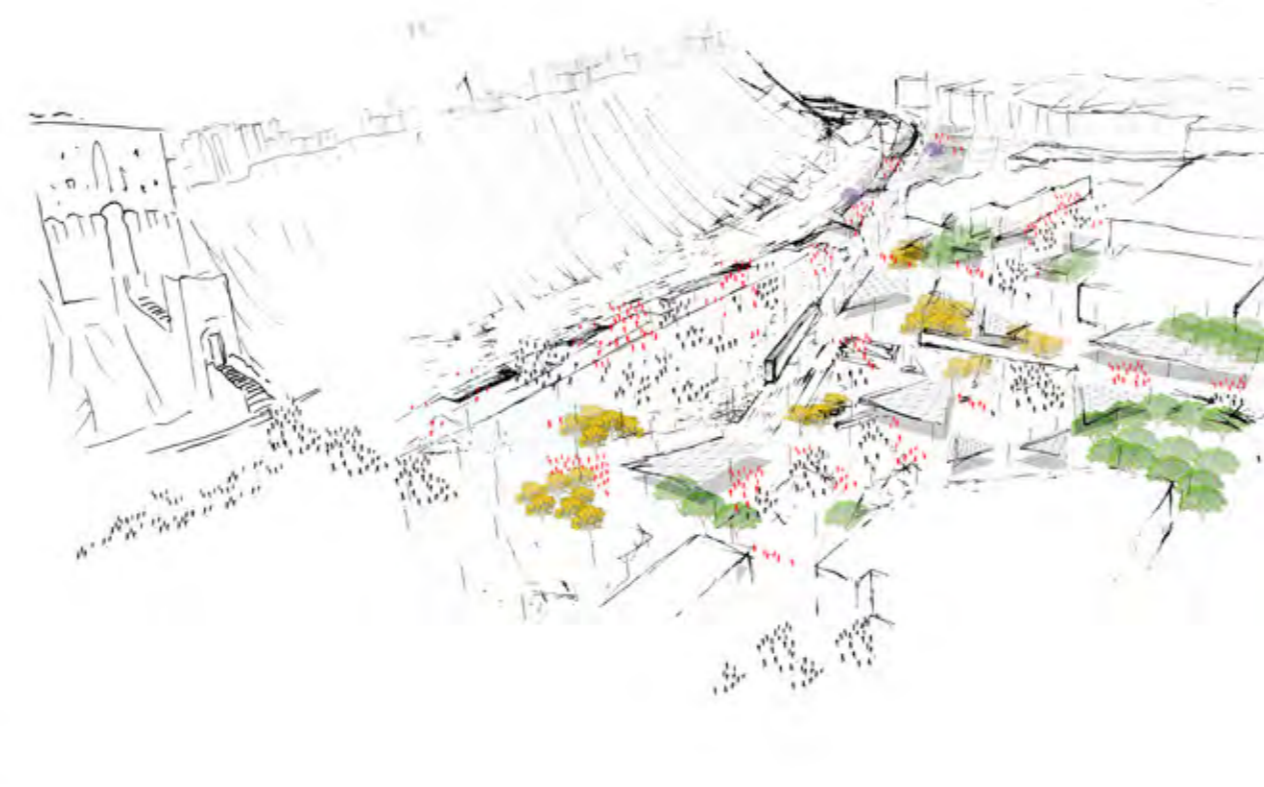
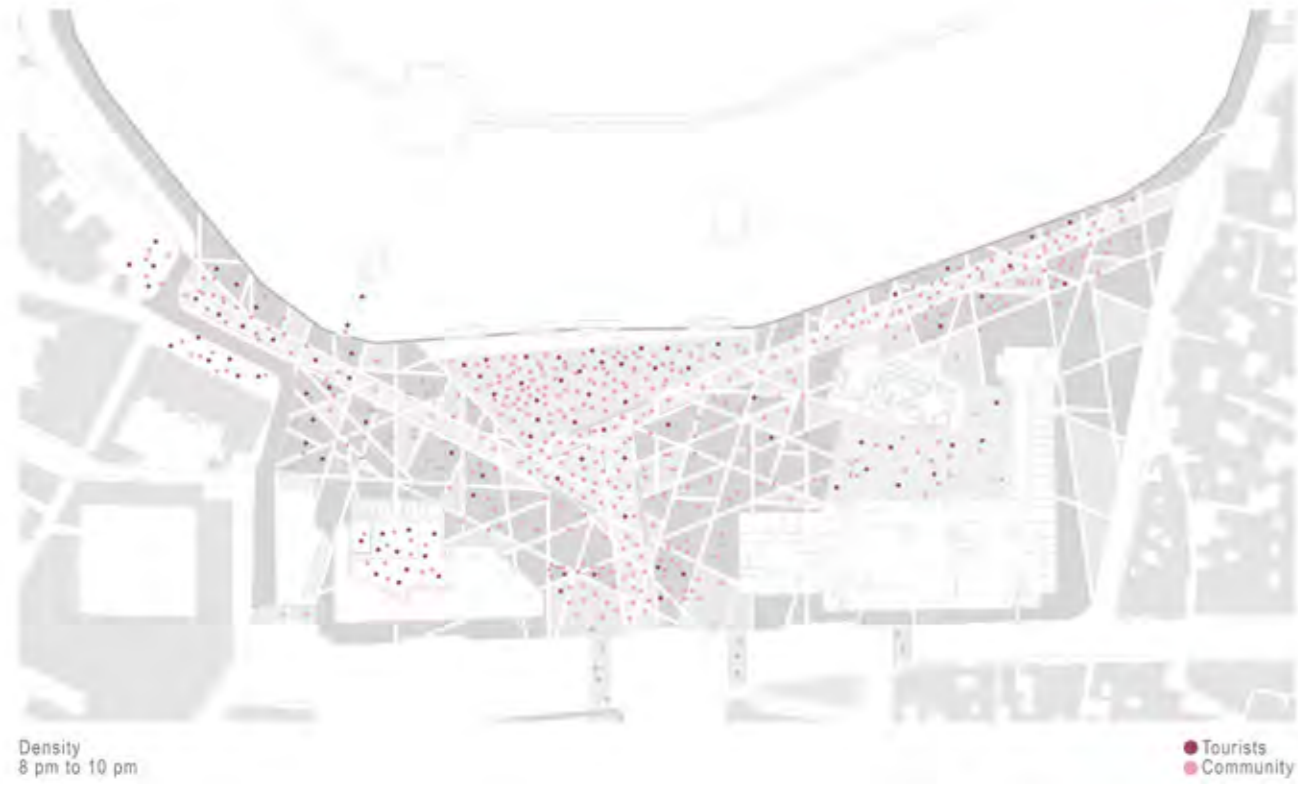
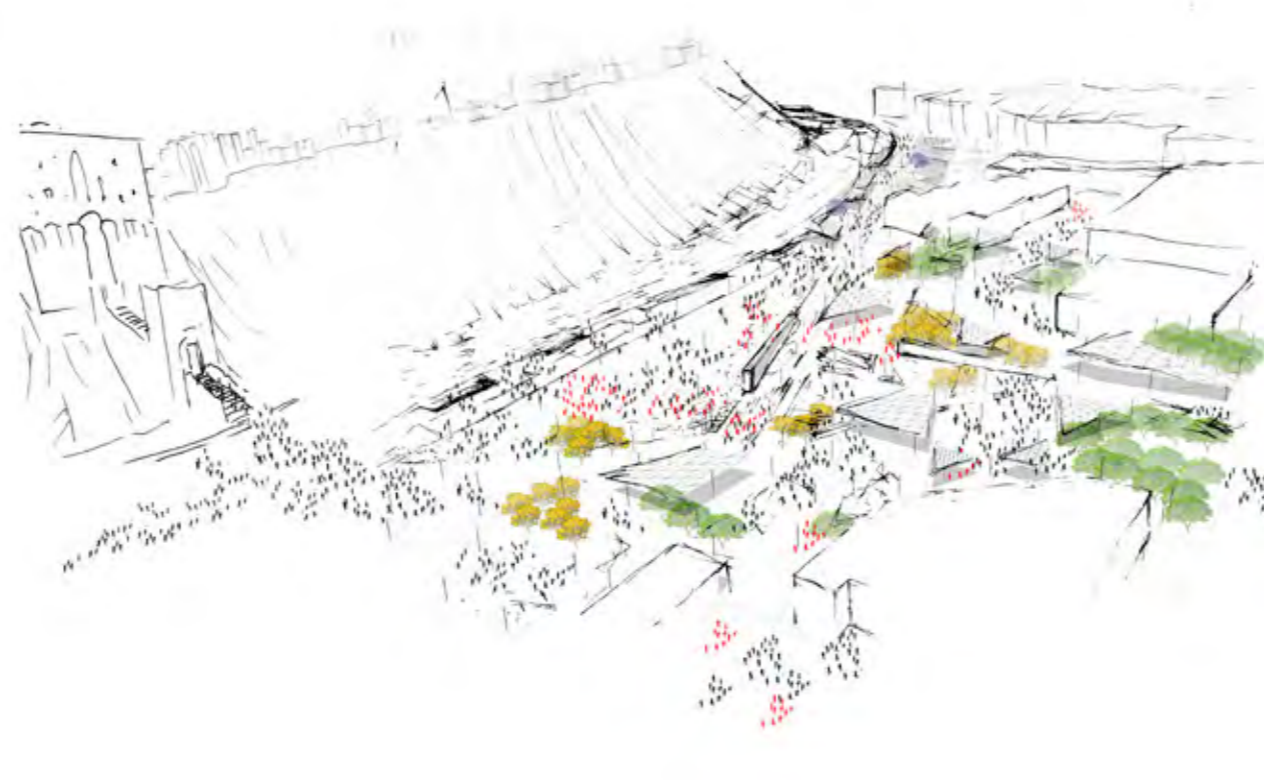


Place-Re-Making, a Culture-led Regeneration

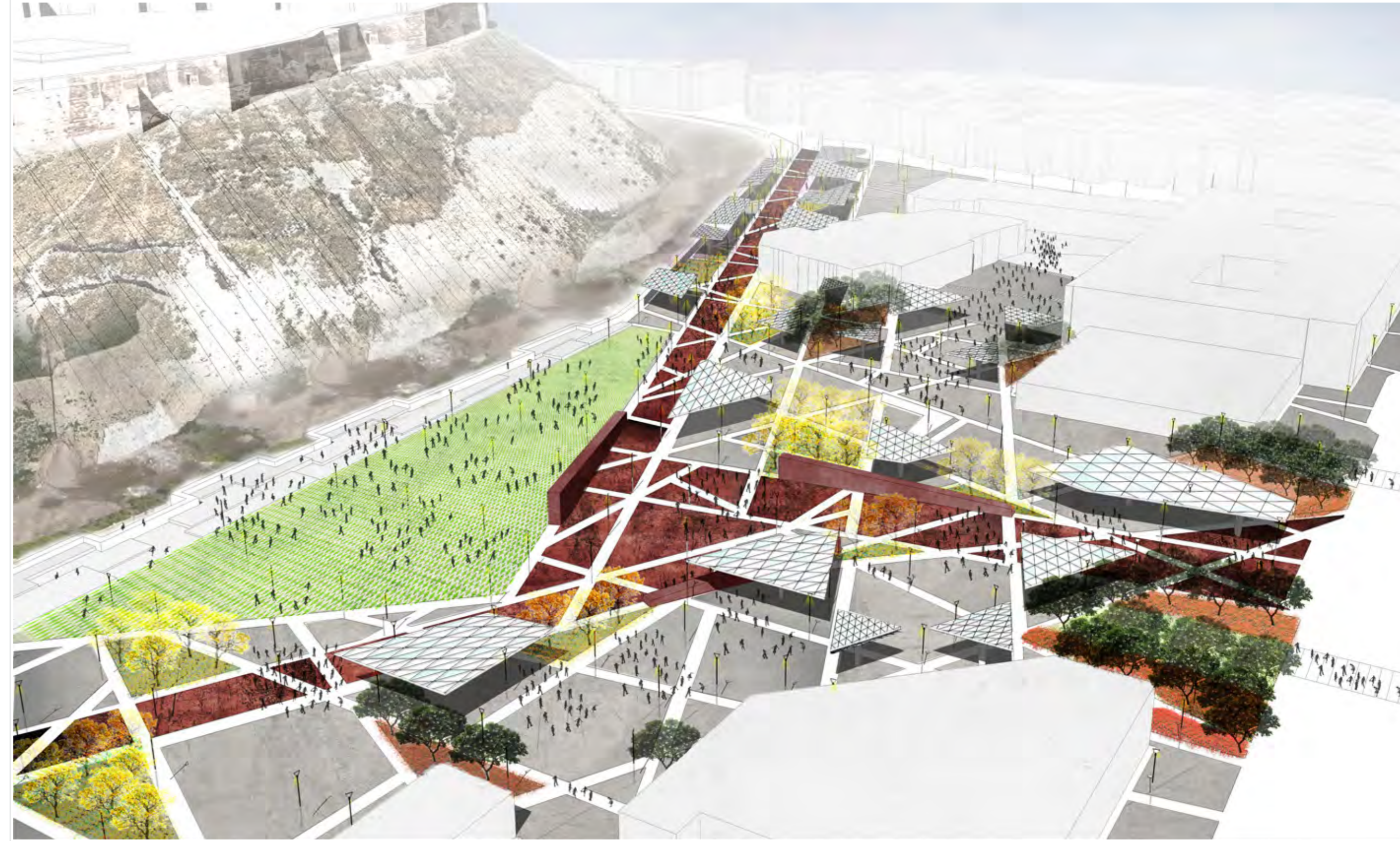




Place-Re-Making, a Culture-led Regeneration



Place-Re-Making, a Culture-led Regeneration





### Revitalization: A Cultural Heritage Celebration

George Nader, Priscilla Fahd, Nadine Salhab

Looking back at Aleppo's history, we can see clearly the cycle of life and death that this city endured, with each resurrection occurring as a result of Aleppo's resilient society. Thus through the last war, many networks of resilience could be mapped, relying on individual force, such as the story of "Abou El Wared" or team work between the two parties in conflict, and the story of cooperation between the East and the West to allow the water supply network to continue providing both sides of the city with water to ensure the survival of besieged populations.

Our main strategy is to reinforce this network of resilience and to resurface these individual efforts through an economic revitalization. Thus creating a communication platform based on the exchange of basic needs while taking cultural heritage as the base of exchange. We followed a place responsive, people centered and cultural led approach in our design, scoping on a micro level, in Taht el Qalaa and at the macro level, in an elaborated network of spaces serving as meeting points between craftsmen, artists, food producers and farmers.

Through this intervention we aim to preserve and enhance the visibility of the citadel from different points of view, create a pedestrian zone and remove vehicular dominance. While acknowledging the scale of the citadel and embracing it, we include all the perimeter of the citadel in our intervention, equalizing the proportions of mass versus voids. To compensate for the high density of the existing urban fabric, we enhanced the open public space. Finally we used the buildings in Taht el Qalaa as space activators, without imposing any function on the public space.

The scheme proposed revolves around three main activities: food, crafts and arts. Thus our main actors are craftsmen, local artists, food makers, women and merchants. In order to ensure the livability and the inclusiveness of our project, we positioned ourselves as facilitators elaborating an incremental project.

In the first phase, given that the souqs are covered in rubble and Taht el Qalaa is mostly destroyed, our intention is to provide a temporary place for the souq around the moat. The scaffolding serving the restoration of the souk will extend to the moat on 3 steps, to finally reabsorb the commercial activity back into the souq. Meanwhile, the edge of the moat will be rehabilitated in order to accommodate exhibition spaces, greenery, seating and extensions spaces, as well as a system of ramps and stairs to access the moat.

In phase II, the scaffolding around the Hammam Yalbougha and the Madrasah become inhabited by the commercial activity in the afternoon

when the restoration activity stops. The scaffolding is used as a space for exchange and for exhibition. The scaffolding around the moat fades away step by step while the souq is being restored. Service roads are managed to allow the construction sites to function adequately.

In phase III, the restoration of the main cultural heritage buildings on site is done. The kiosks that used to inhabit the scaffolding will begin to spillover, and the edges of the buildings are wrapped around by a buffer zone while the kiosks get settled in zones constructed using the dismantled scaffolding.

In phase IV, infills around the edges of the site are constructed, allowing a better definition of the space and enforcing its peripheral edges, while the buildings in the space remain floating on the mesh created. The functions of the existing buildings will be modified in order to fit the needs of the people and to allow a flexibility of the economic exchange.

The phases can be numerous since our proposal is an open ended process and not a final product. This malleability is achieved by using as a main design element "the mesh": a pixelated grid changing scales and adjusting to the irregularities of the built fabric. This mesh takes as a grain the scale of the dense fabric of the city and incorporates it on the large open space, giving it a human scale. This grid allows the integration of different functions, from seating to shading to greenery, to kiosks, and creates buffer zones around buildings. The bigger the scale, the more static the space becomes and vice versa. More importantly, the grid defines spaces similar to the souqs that can be rented at subsidized costs to the locals, in order to bring to the surface their efforts and enhance their sense of expression.

#### LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND NEGOTIATIONS

- Collaboration between the public and private sectors
- Public-private partnership (PPP) that is led by the municipality
- Use of Law No. 10 to empower the municipality to maximize the public space and redefine the public realm
- Include the community in the PPP
- Participatory approach through organized round tables, forums and conferences
- The PPP will sell each site to a different developer based on the phases of rehabilitation

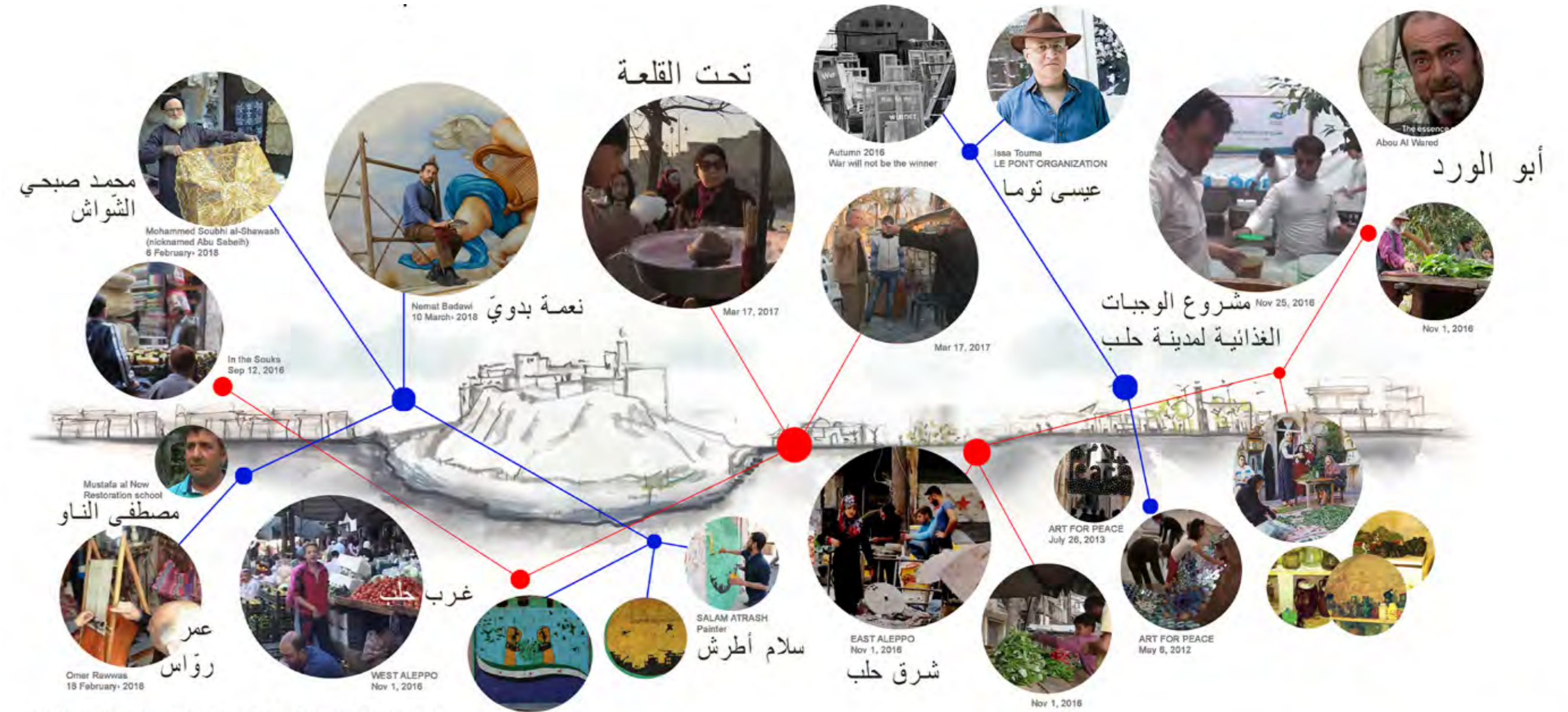
#### Ongoing negotiations between the municipality, the waqf and the private sector, including the developers:

- The municipality should negotiate with the developer: Taht el Qalaa site should be developed as an annex to another project outside of the walled city, granting the developer density bonuses in return for upgrading and rehabilitating Taht el Qalaa
- Negotiations between the municipality and the waqf, which is the owner of the majority of the land: Allow the municipality to use the vacant space of the plots as public spaces in exchange for free restoration, upgrading of infrastructure and granting properties in the new development sites
- Decentralization of political powers and moving the palace of justice outside of the site
- Impose value capture, height regulations, plot ratio and material specifications to avoid gentrification in the old city
- Proposed commercial units are leased to the locals with subsidies from NGOs and the municipality and imposed tenure regulations

#### Construction conditions and regulations:

- Inhabitants of the city: Craftsmen, construction workers and people who are unemployed should be the main working force on site
- Use of local materials and phasing of construction works to match the proposed incremental approach

### Urban Design Proposal | Networks of Resilience



#### SOCIAL SPATIAL PRACTICES AROUND THE CITADEL





Urban Design Proposal | Concept Diagrams and Policies

**Urban Design Strategies**

- Economic Revitalization
- Creation of a Platform of Communication based on the Exchange of Basic Needs
- The use of the Cultural Heritage as the Base of Exchange
- Scoping on a Micro and a Macro level
- Enhancing Inclusivity and Gender Equity
- Working on an Incremental Approach
- Place Responsive, People centered and Cultural Led Approach
- Urban Designers as Facilitators

**Community Actors**

- Craftsmen
- Local Artists
- Food Makers & Women
- Merchants

**Stakeholders**

- Ministry of Tourism
- Ministry of Justice
- Directorate of Antiquities
- Waqf
- Municipality
- Community

**Urban Design Objectives**

- Preserve the visibility of the Citadel from different points of view
- Create a Pedestrian Zone and remove the Vehicular Dominance
- Acknowledge the scale of the Citadel and embrace it
- Include all the perimeter of the Citadel in our intervention
- Compensate the high density of the existing urban fabric by enhancing the open public space
- Use the buildings in Taht al Qalaa as space activators

**Concept Diagrams**

**Legal Framework and Negotiations:**

- Collaboration between the public and private sector.
- Public Private Partnership, led by the municipality
- Use of the Law (n#10) to empower the municipality to maximize the public space and redefine the public realm.
- Inclusion of the community in the PPP (public private partnership) board.
- Participatory approach through hosting round tables, forums, conferences...
- The PPP would assign each site based on the phases of rehabilitation to a different developer.
- On-going negotiations between the municipality, Waqf and the private sector(developer):
  - The municipality should negotiate with the developer : The Site of Taht el Qalaa should be developed as an annex to another project outside of the walled city, granting the developer density bonuses in return to upgrading and rehabilitating Taht el Qalaa.
  - Municipality and Waqf (the owner of the majority of the land) negotiations: Allow the municipality to use the vacant space of the plots as public spaces, in exchange of free restoration, upgrading of infrastructure and granting properties in the new development sites.
- Decentralization of political powers and moving the justice palace outside the site.
- Impose value recapture, height regulations, plot ratio, material specifications to avoid gentrification in the old city.
- Commercial units are leased to locals with subsidy from NGOs and municipalities by imposing tenure regulations.
- Construction conditions and regulations:
  - Inhabitants of the city: (craftsmen, construction workers, unemployed), should be the main working force on site.
  - Use of local material.
  - Phasing of construction works, to match the incremental approach proposed.

**Network Diagram**

**Network Phasing**

Urban Design Proposal | Activation of the Edges

**ACTIVATION OF THE EDGE OF THE MOAT**

THE EDGE IS REFINED BY A SMALLER SCALE INTERVENTION

- ATTACHED TO THE BUILDING
- ATTACHED TO THE BUILDING
- INHABITING THE EDGE OF THE MOAT
- PASSIVE EDGES
- URBAN CORRIDORS
- POCKETS SPACES
- MAIN ACCESS

ACTIVATION OF THE EDGES

- SPACE FOR ART EXHIBITIONS AND FOR MARKETS
- BENCHES
- SPACE FOR ART EXHIBITIONS
- PLANTING SPACE AROUND THE MOAT
- FLOATING URBAN LANDMARKS
- THE GRID THE MESH
- HARDSCAPE
- URBAN FURNITURE
- LANDSCAPE
- SOFTSCAPE
- SHADING ELEMENTS
- THE MESH AND ITS DESIGN ELEMENTS

The urban corridors which used to be defined by Gates leading to the old historical city, are now active corridors leading to our "Taht I Qalaa". The site is then defined and bounded by the existing old urban fabric which edges remain passive.

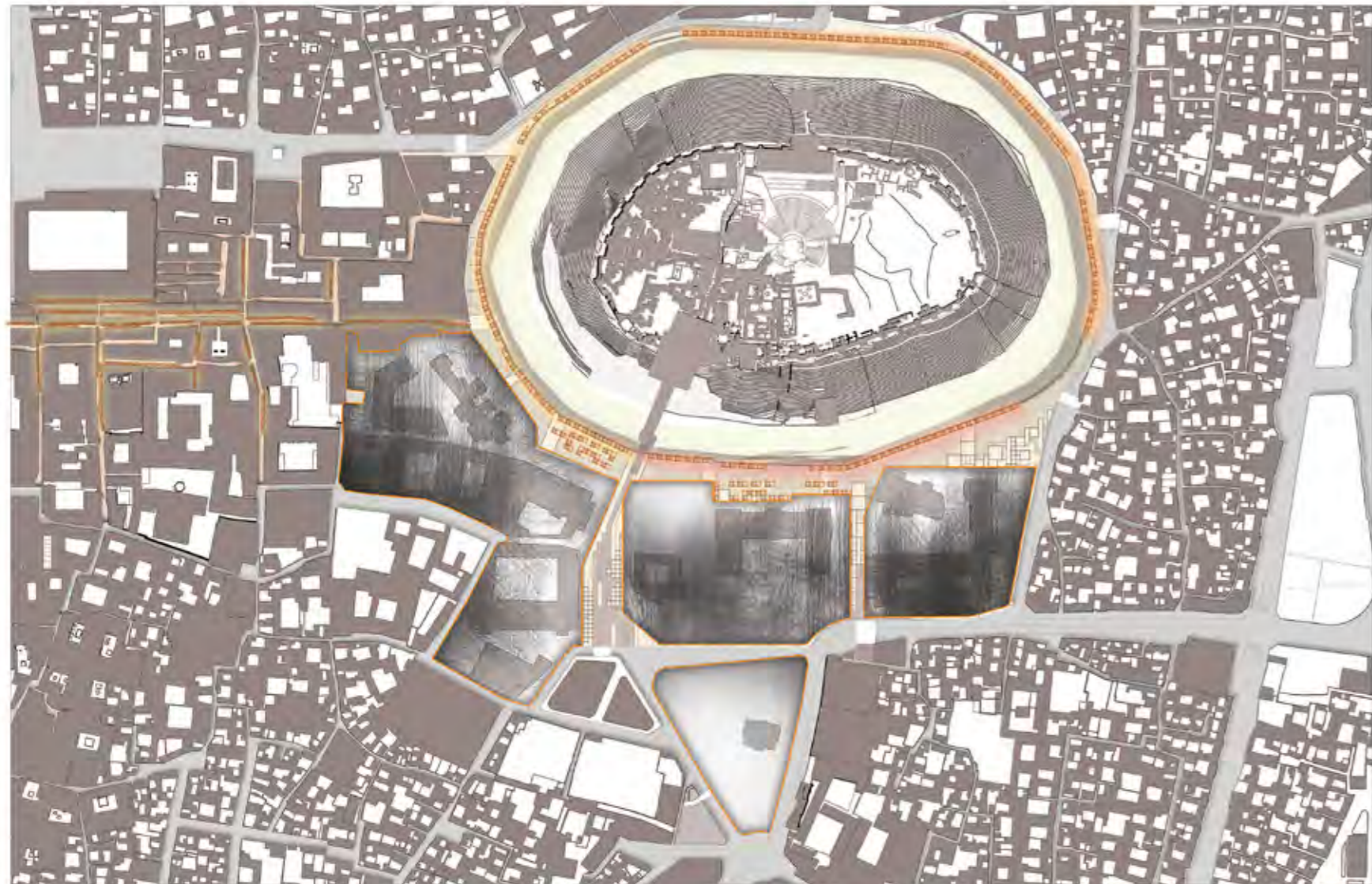
The remained buildings, including the citadel, are floating in the defined Saha. These buildings find their edges activated and refined by a smaller scale intervention, such as kiosks, and shading elements creating sub-spaces within the public realm.

These interventions activate the urban fabric in three different ways by being : attached to the building edge, detached from the edge and inhabiting the edge (which is the case of the moat).

One mesh will be holding all the spatial components (Hardscape and Softscape) that will define the relation between multiple diversified spaces created and shaped by the users.



Urban Design Proposal | Phase I

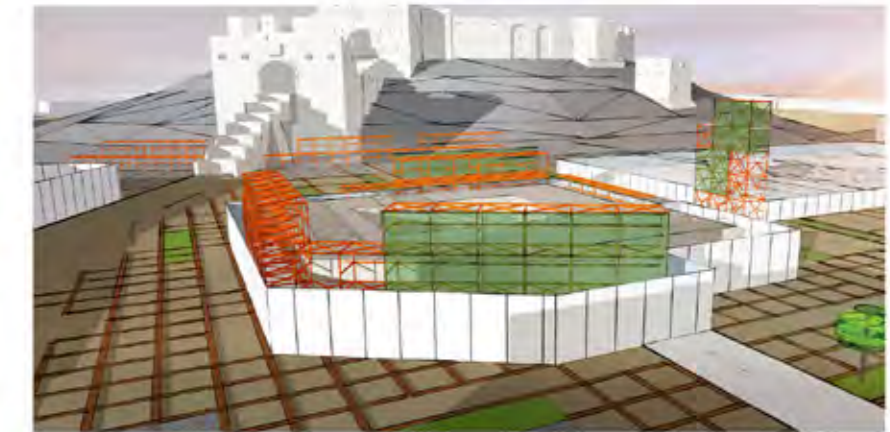
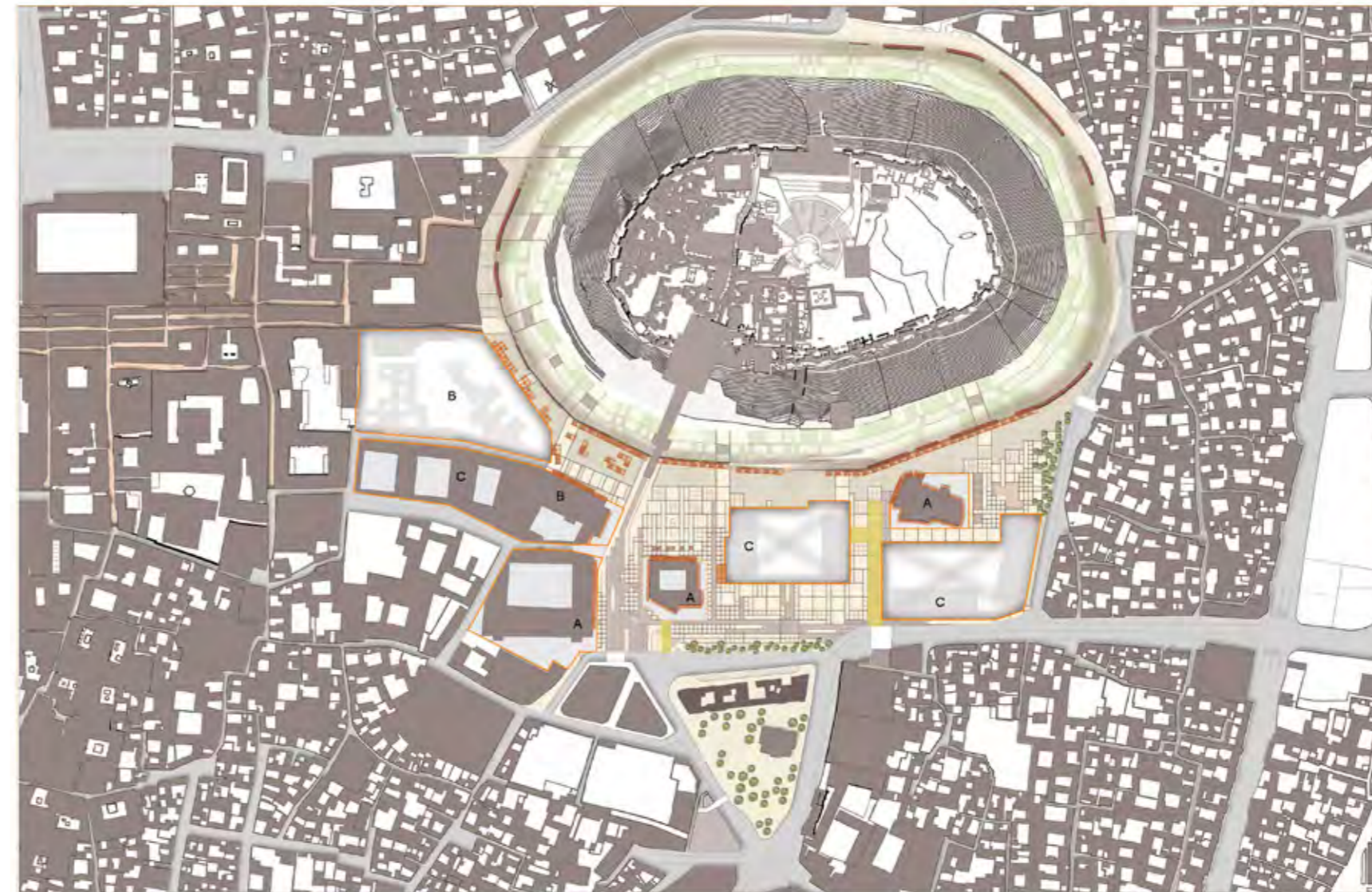


GIVEN THAT THE SOUK IS COVERED IN RUBBLE AND TAHET EL QALAA IS MOSTLY DESTROYED, OUR INTENTION IS TO PROVIDE A TEMPORARY PLACE FOR THE SOUK AROUND THE MOAT.

THE SCAFFOLDING SERVING THE RESTORATION OF THE SOUK WILL EXTEND TO THE MOAT ON 3 STEPS, TO FINALLY RESORB AND TAKE BACK THE COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY INTO THE SOUK.

MEANWHILE, THE EDGE OF THE MOAT WILL BE REHABILITATED IN ORDER TO ACCOMMODATE EXHIBITION SPACES, GREENERY, SEATING AND EXTENSIONS SPACES, AS WELL AS A SYSTEM OF RAMPS AND STAIRS TO ACCESS THE MOAT.

Urban Design Proposal | Phase II



IN PHASE II THE SCAFFOLDINGS AROUND THE HAMMAM YALBOUGHA AND THE MADRASAH GET INHABITED BY THE COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY IN THE AFTERNOON WHEN THE RESTORATION ACTIVITY STOPS. THE SCAFFOLDINGS ARE USED AS SPACES FOR EXCHANGE AND FOR EXHIBITION. THE SCAFFOLDINGS AROUND THE MOAT FADE AWAY STEP BY STEP WHILE THE SOUK IS BEING RESTORED. SERVICE ROADS ARE MANAGED TO ALLOW THE CONSTRUCTION SITES TO FUNCTION ADEQUATELY.



Urban Design Proposal | Phase III



THE RESTORATION OF THE MAIN CULTURAL HERITAGE BUILDINGS IN THE SITE IS DONE. THE KIOSKS THAT USED TO INHABIT THE SCAFFOLDINGS BEGIN TO SPILL OUT, AND THE EDGES OF THE BUILDINGS ARE ROLLED AROUND BY A BUFFER ZONE WHILE THE KIOSKS GET SETTLED IN ZONES CONSTRUCTED USING THE DISMANTLED SCAFFOLDINGS.

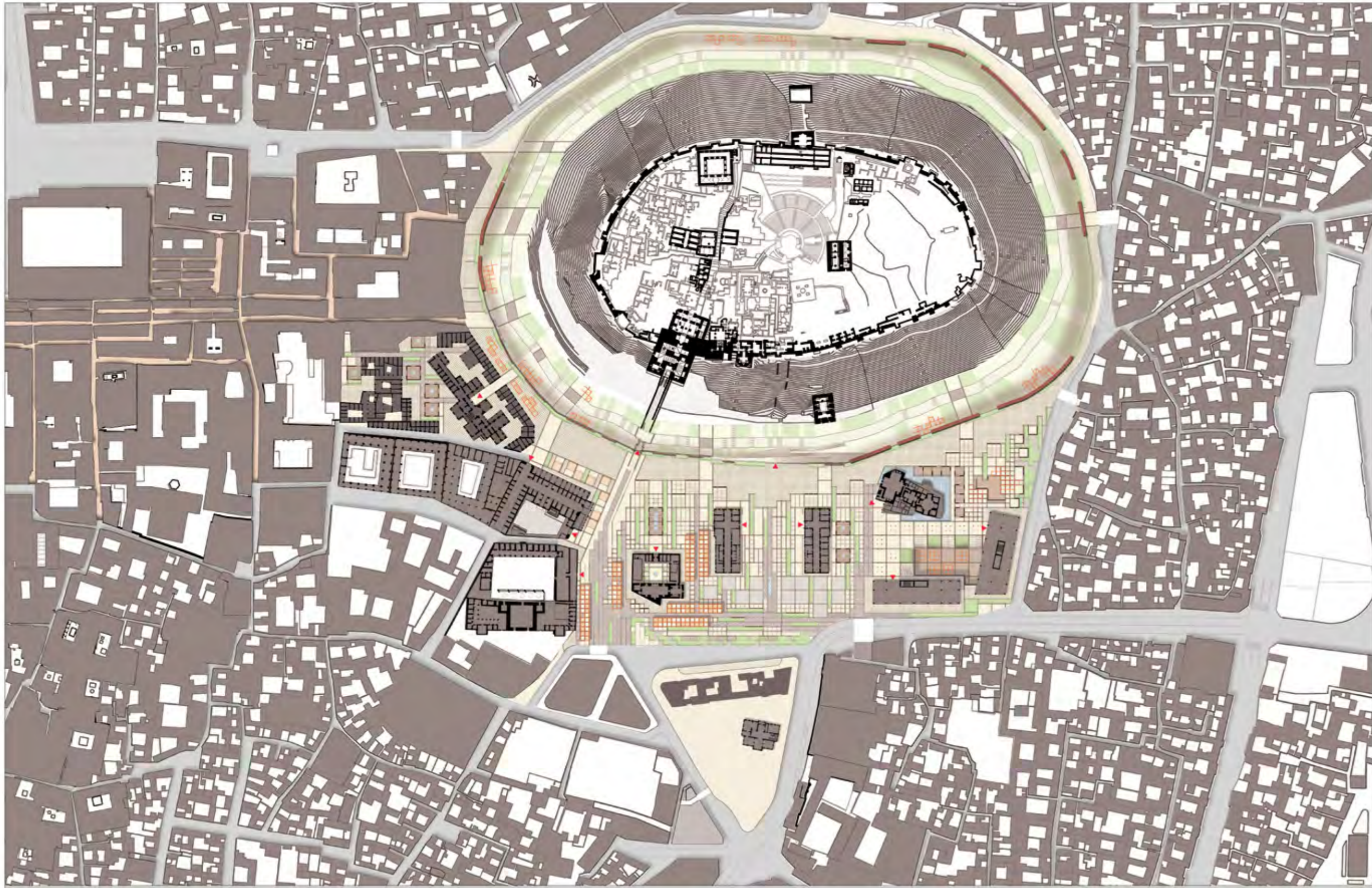
Urban Design Proposal | Mass Plan



Existing Fabric      Historical Landmarks to be Restored Related to the Site      Infill Strategies and New Buildings Integrated with the Fabric



Urban Design Proposal | Ground Floor Plan



Urban Design Proposal | Building Use and Typology

**STAKEHOLDERS**

- Ministry of Tourism  
Khan Al-Shoune
- Directorate of Antiquities  
The Citadel, The moat
- Ministry of Justice
- The Waqf Madrasa Al Sultaniya  
The Souqs ...
- The Private Sector

**INCREMENTAL APPROACH**

- I- ACTIVATION OF THE MOAT
- II- ACTIVATION OF TAHT AL KALAA
- III- BUILDINGS AS ACTIVATORS

HISTORICAL LANDMARKS THAT ARE FLOATING ABOVE THE MESH

EXISTING IMPOSING FABRIC THAT SHOULD BE ADJUSTED

THE MESH

THE EXISTING FABRIC

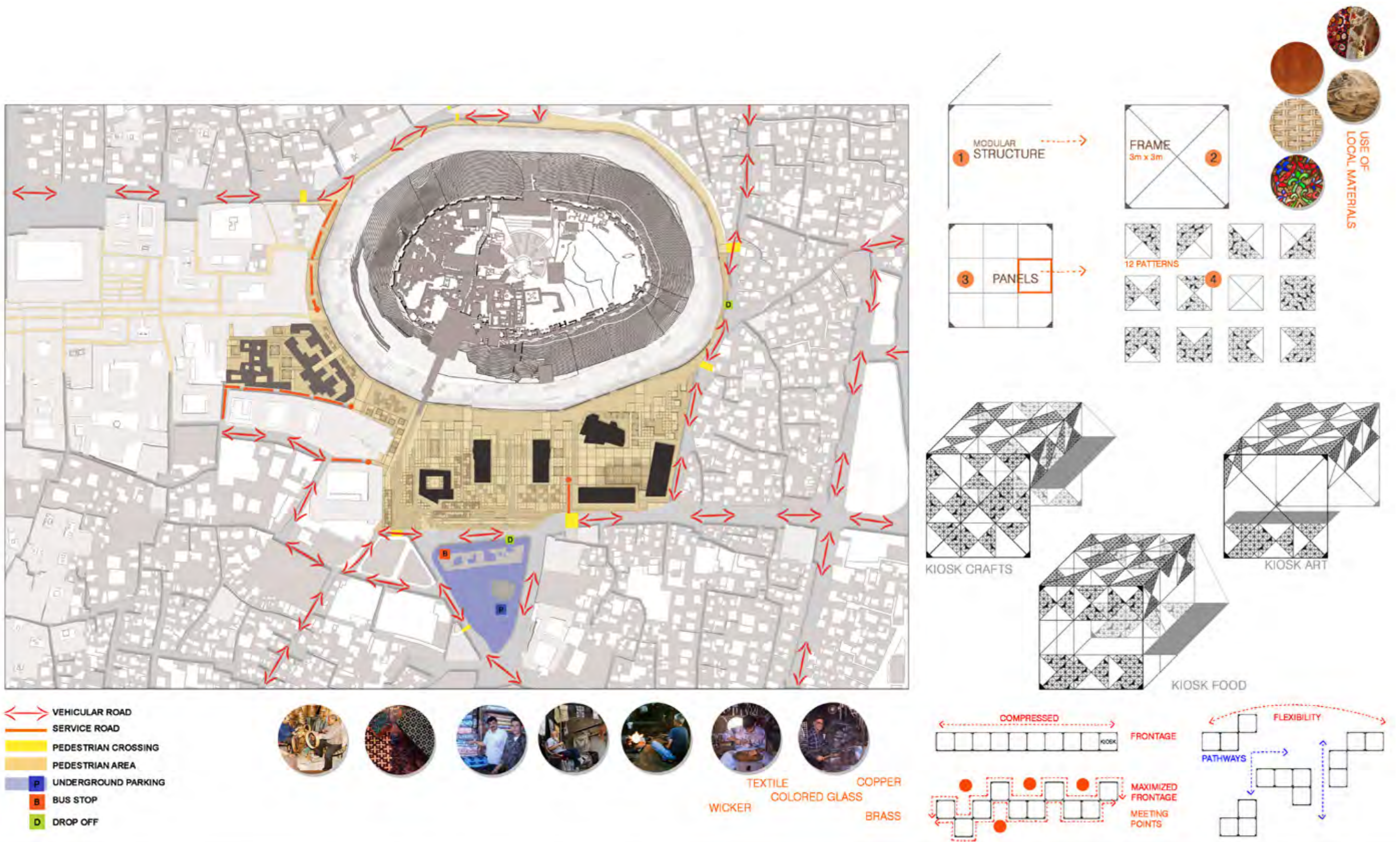
NEW FABRIC WITH A TRANSITIONAL SCALE

NEW FABRIC INTEGRATED WITH THE EXISTING FABRIC PERFORATED BY INTERNAL IRREGULAR COURTYARDS & CUL-DE-SACS.

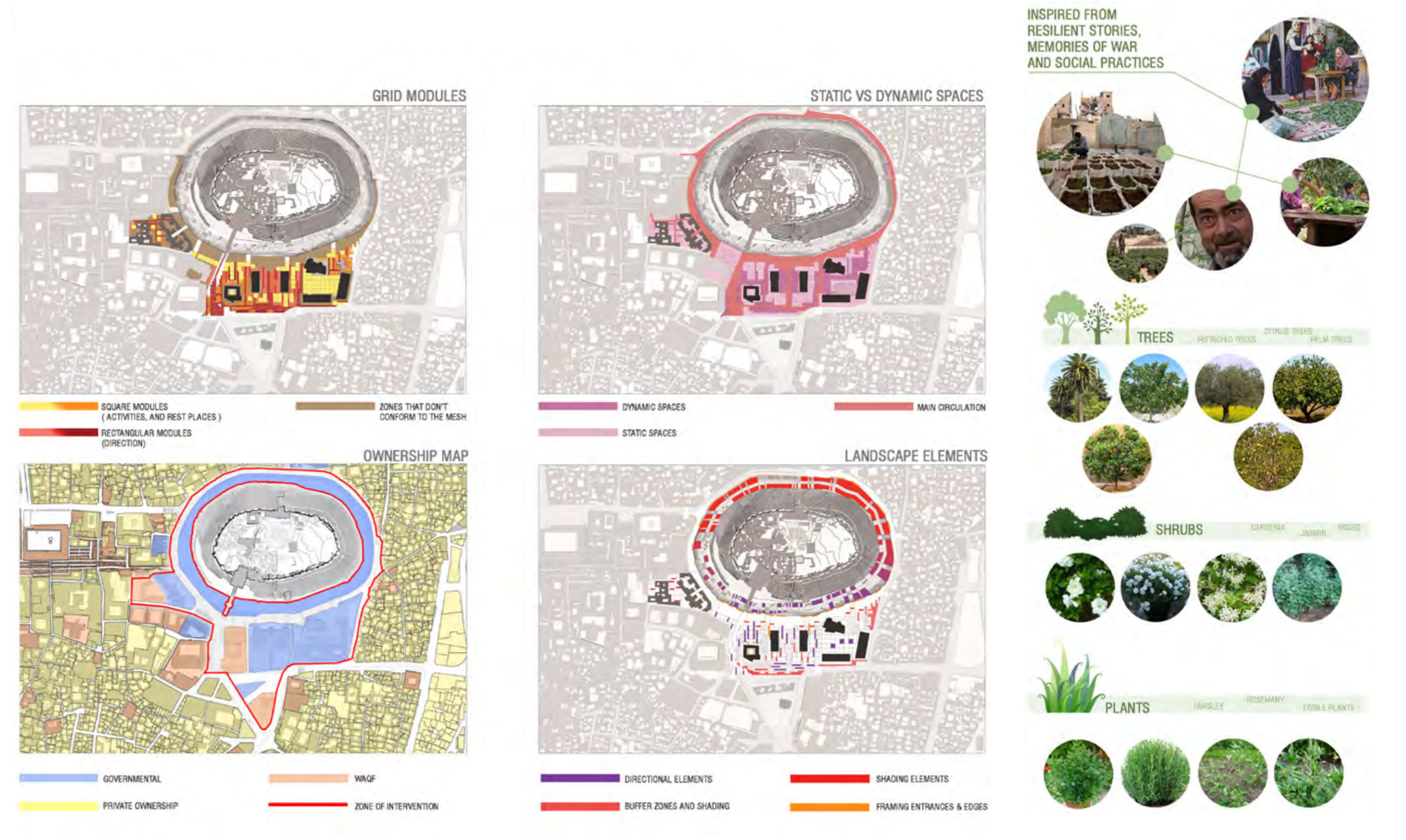
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: red; margin-right: 5px;"></span> LEISURE</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: orange; margin-right: 5px;"></span> RELIGIOUS</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: yellow; margin-right: 5px;"></span> FOOD MARKET AND CULINARY SCHOOL</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: lightorange; margin-right: 5px;"></span> CRAFTS MARKET AND WORKSHOPS</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: blue; margin-right: 5px;"></span> ART INSTALLATIONS AND WORKSHOPS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #FFD700; margin-right: 5px;"></span> COMMUNITY CENTER THAT GATHERS THE THREE MAIN ACTIVITIES</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #FFA500; margin-right: 5px;"></span> CAFES</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #8B4513; margin-right: 5px;"></span> SERVICES</li> </ul>
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Urban Design Proposal | Circulation Plan and Kiosk Diagram

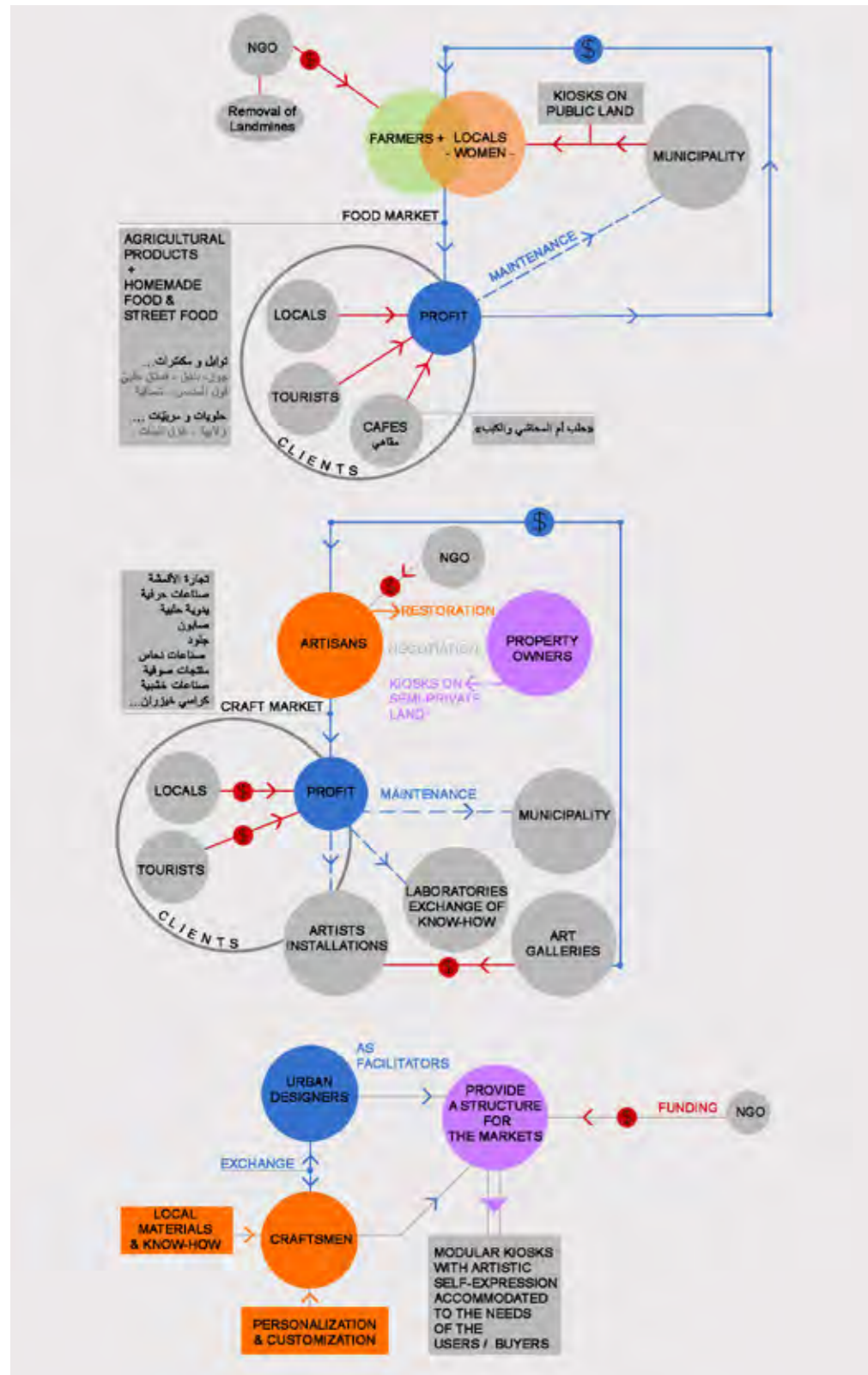


Urban Design Proposal | Concept Diagrams and Ownership Map





Urban Design Proposal | Sections and Systems



Urban Design Proposal | Perspectives



KIOSK GATHERING IN FORM OF SOUQ AROUND AL MADRASSAH



AREA OF COLLABORATION BETWEEN ARTISTS AND ARTISANS - EXHIBITION SPACE



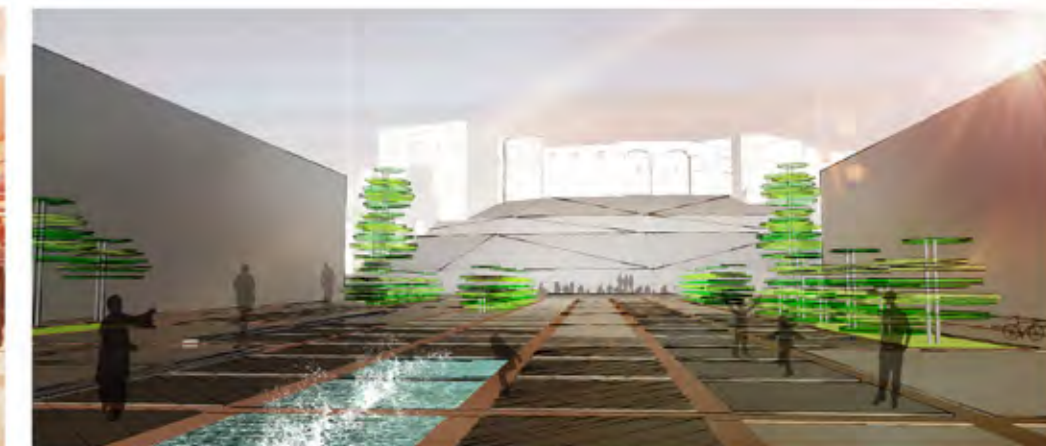
POCKET SPACE BEHIND THE CARLTON HOTEL



MULTIPURPOSE SPACE NEAR HAMMAM YALBOUGHHA



CAFÉ IN FRONT OF KHAN EL SHOUNEH



VISTA FROM THE NEW COMMUNITY CENTER FRAMING THE CITADEL



### Urban Recovery: A Reinforcement of Resilience Networks

Mariam Bazzi, Cindy Houeis

The vision for Aleppo is that of a resilient city—to celebrate its rich past and culture, as well as aim for a better and more inclusive future for the people. Through a recovery plan, three main axes are emphasized: conservation of the historical core, economic revitalization and urban greening.

In order to guarantee urban revitalization and recovery, a culture-led regeneration strategy will ensure the continuity of tradition, specifically the intangible heritage of food and music that are essential to the culture of Aleppo and incorporate traces from many civilizations.

This will be done through the involvement of two user groups: youth and women who will act as powerful agents to safeguard Aleppo's heritage. The focus will be on the network of public spaces and courtyards of mosques and other cultural assets that can act as models for education, interaction and exchange.

The proposal will also focus on the local culture of food in rural and urban areas and creates a network between the two. Women will actively participate in the economic revitalization of Aleppo's city center. They will target the different economic sectors (rural agriculture, domestic food production, sewing and stitching) that will contribute to educating the youth and to the markets around the citadel. This approach will challenge the masculinity of the space and the centrality of power and strengthen a more peaceful and socially cohesive society.

The citadel, Taht el Qalaa and the courtyards will be revived as vibrant and inclusive public, cultural hub that is intensified and enriched with different instances of food and music. The simplicity of the strategy relies on an implementable and practical design with minimal changes. Since the space is already under reconstruction, the design will not require the transfer of property ownership.

This cultural hub will be a combination of an open market for agriculture food products, crafts, musical instruments and textiles, as well as a learning center and performance spaces of art expression. The public space will link the youth and women together and to the different categories of music and food. The open spaces will reflect the cultural assets present in the citadel and its neighborhoods. It can be reclaimed and reshaped by the visitors themselves. The intervention will be extensive and will reinforce the importance of the citadel. The main gateway will be strongly accentuated as the main axis with frequent activities. The citadel will be anchored and branched out into two main

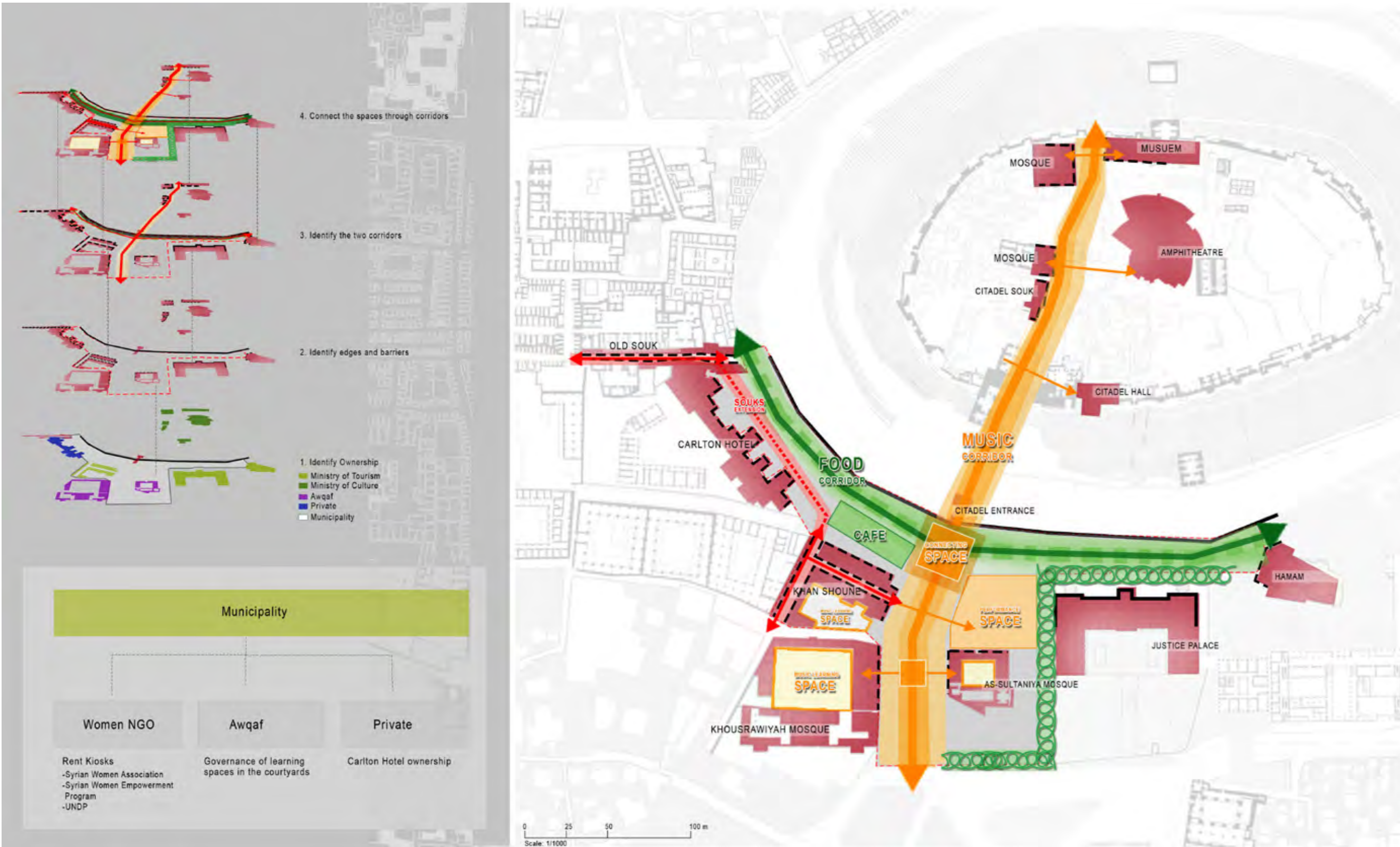
cultural corridors, the food and the music corridors, that will intersect at the foot of the citadel emphasizing the main entryway. The courtyards of the mosques will be used as learning facilities and for taking part in the Dzikr Al-Qadiriyya, an important Sufi tradition that occurs in the 'zawiyas' of mosques, as well as other instances of religious ceremonies and chants tightly related to the heritage of Aleppo. The courtyard of Khan el Shouneh will be used for musical concerts and education to further reinforce the established music corridor. A performance space will be shaped with the backdrop of the Sultaniyah Mosque to create a public space for expression. This spine will continue along the axis and into the citadel where the different landmarks will be exhibited to further reinforce the music heritage trail. The food spine will be managed by women. The repeated typology of colonnades will be extended and market spaces will be constructed by patterns of kiosks, trees and pavements.

In order for this proposal to be implemented, the community of women and youth from different age groups should be strongly involved in the process of recovery. The municipality should enforce the rights of these user groups. A partnership will be created between the involved institutions and actors, such as the Ministry of Tourism, the Ministry of Culture, the waqf, UN-HABITAT, the schools and the sheikhs, as well as representatives from the community.

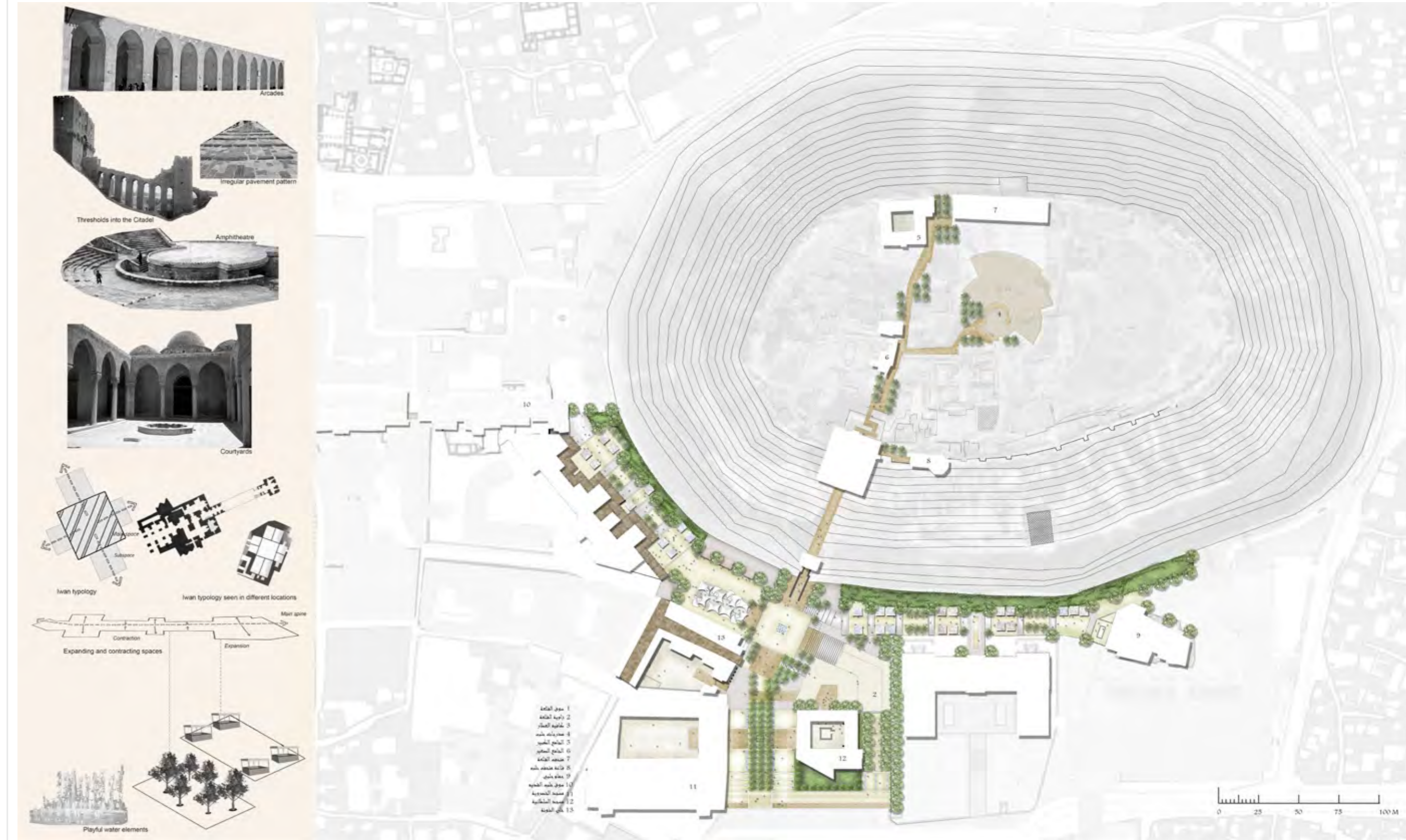
#### Large Scale Strategy



Concept

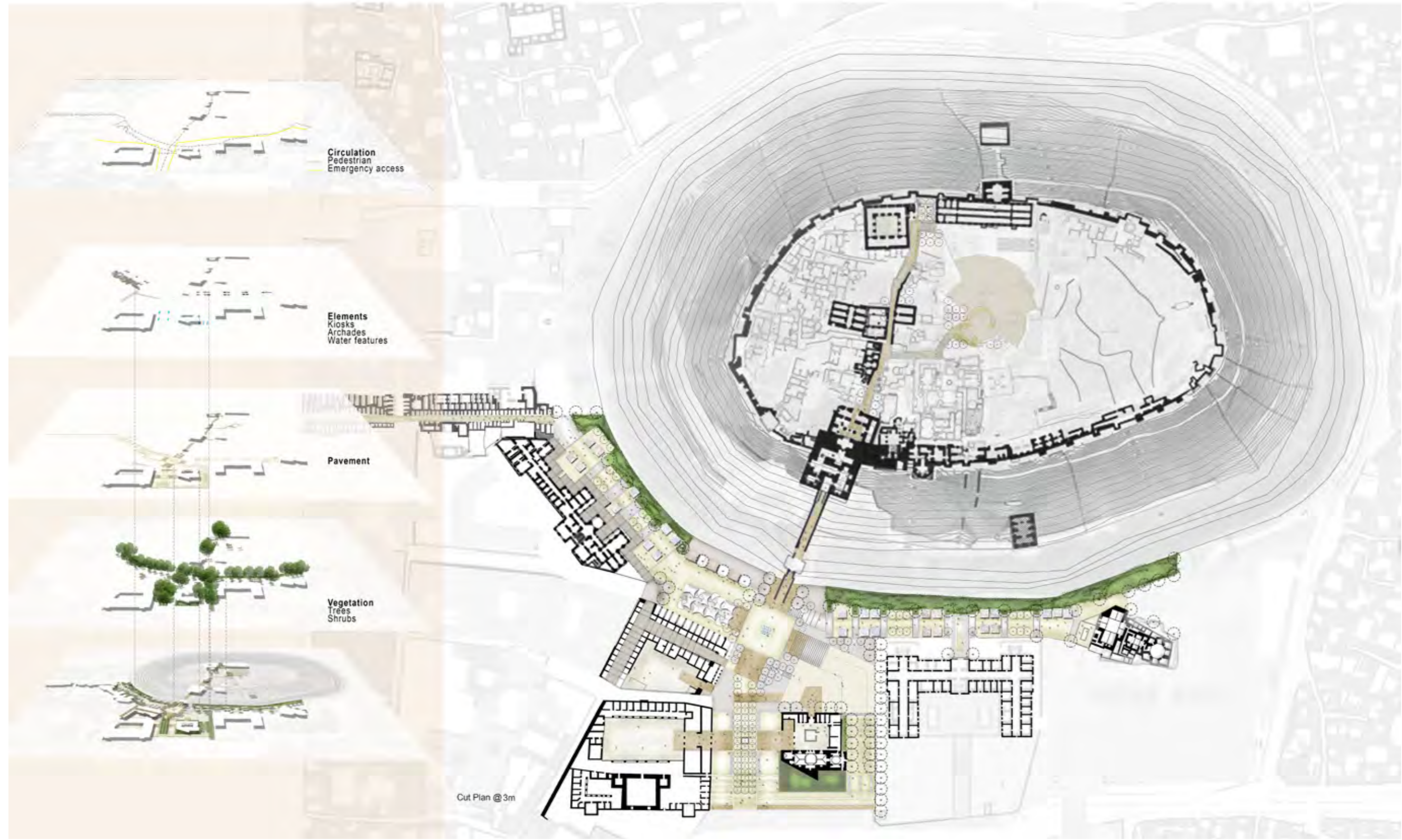


Design Strategy and Development





Design Strategy and Development

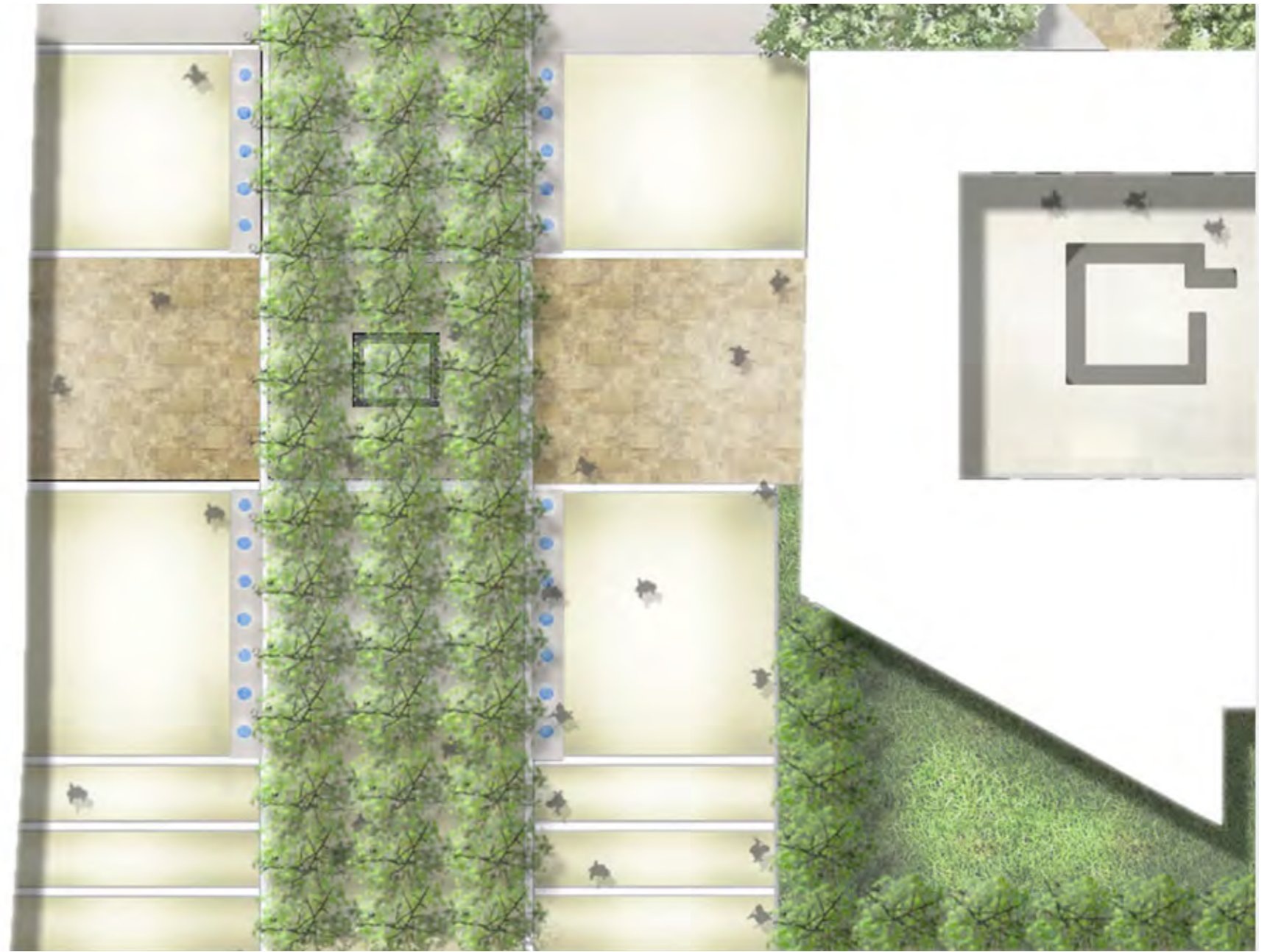


Design Strategy and Development





Design Strategy and Development





Urban Regeneration: Public Space as Catalyst

Basma Ibrahim

The strategy uses the potential of public space as an initiator and catalyst of post war urban and communal healing. It highlights the power of public space as a place of exchange and inclusiveness and empowerment of people.

MACRO-LEVEL STRATEGY

The surgical intervention at the macro-level targets the site of Taht el Qalaa and the ring road around the citadel. The framework and the methodology used at the micro scale can be repeated incrementally and used in significant sites of communal importance at the level of the city. This will result in the macro-level strategy. Activating the site seeks to involve a large number of actors in order to increase public participation. The ownership map shows the important role of the waqf that owns religious, commercial and khan properties. The involvement of the waqf in this diversity of significant communal activities makes them an essential player in the proposed scenarios of rent that will activate the site. Also, Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Justice are other principal actors in the reconstruction and activation process. Not to be undermined is the role of the private owners, especially around the ring road of the citadel. This justifies the choice to extend the boundaries of the site to encompass the ring road and involve more private actors in the project. This multitude of actors will result in an inclusive approach and the involvement of a larger portion of the community.

MICRO-LEVEL SPATIAL STRATEGY

**a. Buildings as Space Activators**  
Taking into consideration that all the buildings surrounding Taht el Qalaa hold values of communal significance, from the religious to the commercial to the touristic, the strategy is to strengthen the presence of such programs at the ground level of buildings and to allow those functions to spillover to the outdoor areas adjacent to those buildings programmatically and spatially. Thus, programmatic and spatial design guidelines will be applied on the ground level of the buildings and the immediate outdoor spaces that surround them. In addition to the guidelines, proposed renting scenarios and incentives will involve the maximum number of actors in a single outdoor space, from its ownership to its rental to its management and use. This variety of actors will enhance the communal environment and will encourage people to claim back the outdoor space as part of their daily activities.

**b. The Ring Road**  
The ring road will be changed from an edge between the citadel and the rest of the city to a porous membrane that invites the community to form a stronger spatial relationship to the moat that will become

accessible at strategic locations. The moat itself will be densely planted with canopy trees that will be visible from all around the ring road, adding to the specific character of the site and strengthening its image in the perception of the Aleppo community. The sidewalk around the moat is widened at strategic locations and cantilevers over the moat, forming balconies that allow for a closer spatial relation to the landscape of the moat. This porosity and activation is achieved through a flexible design of the road infrastructure that minimizes vehicular traffic to a two lane zone. It prioritizes pedestrian passage by widening the sidewalks and allowing alternations between active and silent frontages. When a building is an active frontage, the sidewalk in front of it is widened and the sidewalk along the moat becomes the silent frontage and is thus reduced to a minimum.

OWNERSHIP - SCENARIOS FOR RENTING SPACE AND THE ACTIVATION OF OUTDOOR AREAS

The renting scenarios and incentives involve a larger number of actors to design, rent, manage and use the outdoor spaces adjacent to the buildings surrounding the site. The buildings are either privately owned or owned by the institutions mentioned above, with the importance of the waqf as a main actor. The outdoor space adjacent to the buildings is either part of the owner plot and is thus privately owned or publicly owned. In Taht el Qalaa the outdoor space, even when privately owned, is sometimes used by the public as a public passage or to hold a specific function related to the program on the ground level of the building. In the later case, the outdoor space can be rented by another private entity that might be interested in designing and redeveloping it in a manner that serves the public interest. The other option is when the outdoor space is part of the public realm. In this case, the municipality can either design it to incorporate urban furniture and landscape elements that will make the space community friendly, or can rent the space to interested private investors who can hold events that celebrate the living heritage and attract the community.

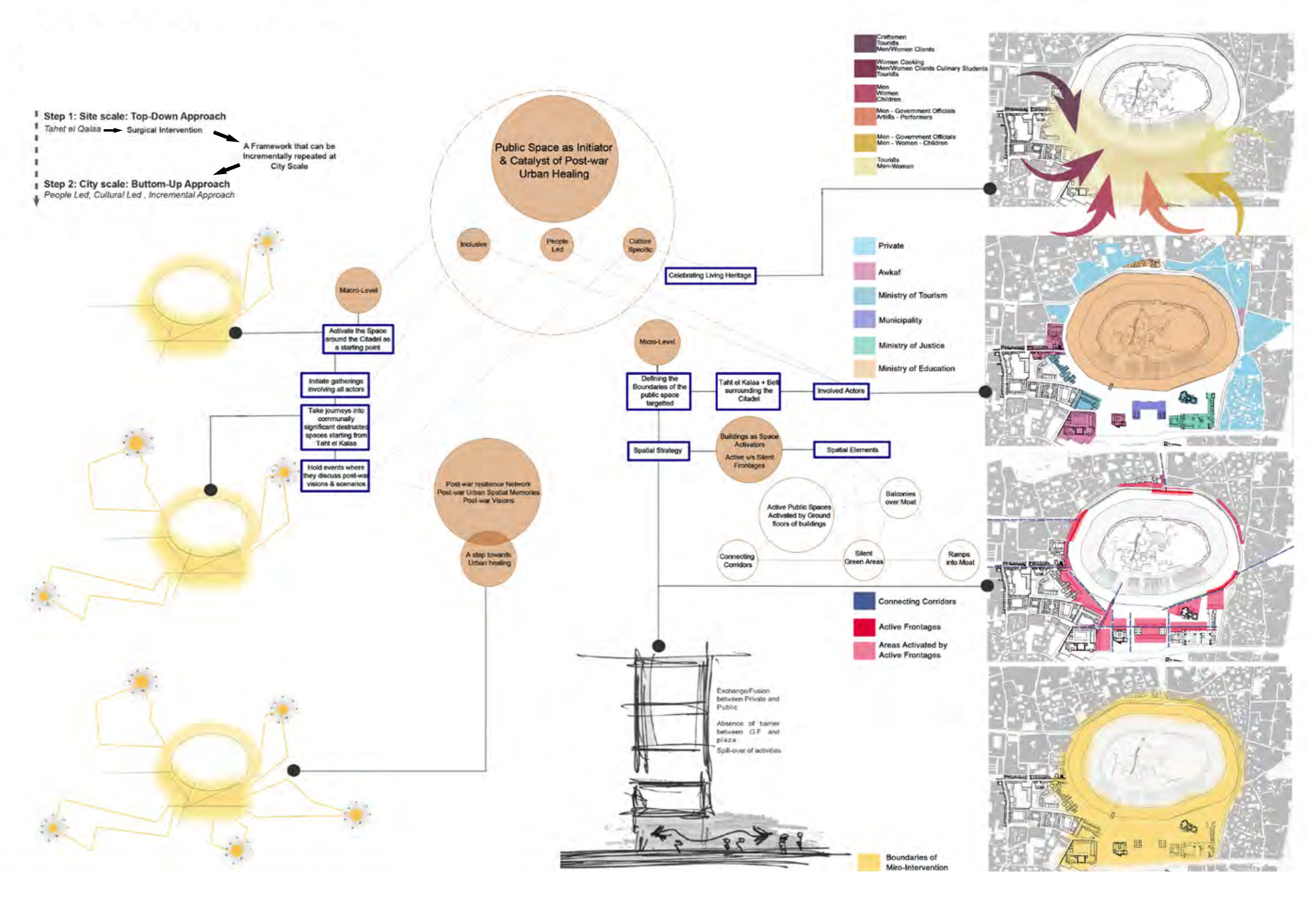
DESIGN OF SPATIAL ELEMENTS

Depending on the program on the ground floor of the buildings, the design of the outdoor space adjacent to it will differ and the spatial elements used to articulate the space will be specific to the function they will hold. For example, Khan el Shouneh used to be a destination for cafes and restaurants before the war. Its outdoor space used to have tensile shading structures above the seating spaces used by the cafes and restaurants on the ground floor. A similar system will be used for the cafes, the culinary workshops added to the ground floors program and for the space in front of the Carlton hotel to shade kiosks which will house artisans and craftsman displaying their products. Concerning the Khosrowiyyah

Mosque, the outdoor space adjacent to it will have fountains for ablution, in addition to a colonnade punctuated by trees for shading and green areas for faithful people to rest after the prayer and while listening to the Friday Khoutba. The colonnade is used to create a sense of direction for the praying lanes, in addition to places where people can rest their back while sitting on the floor. The Sultanya Mosque with its main façade as a historical feature will affect the outdoor space in front of it differently; the main façade will dissolve gradually, from the most porous to the less porous, reaching to the main façade of the mosque. The Serail will be restored by keeping the structures that are behind the main horizontal axis that define the two mosques and the palace of justice. Thus the remaining two portions of the ground level will be restored with the option of building on the top floors in between them. Hammam Yalbougha, being the building that brings in the water element to Taht el Qalaa will have a water surface with a bridge and benches over it, creating a calm retreat in the middle of the urban setting. It will also have a dense tree-lined entrance that emphasizes the role of landscape in people's well-being, in addition to an area of playful fountains. The elongated space in front of the palace of justice will be designed as a stepped playful garden with green patches, breaking the stigma around the palace of justice as a solemn, military space.

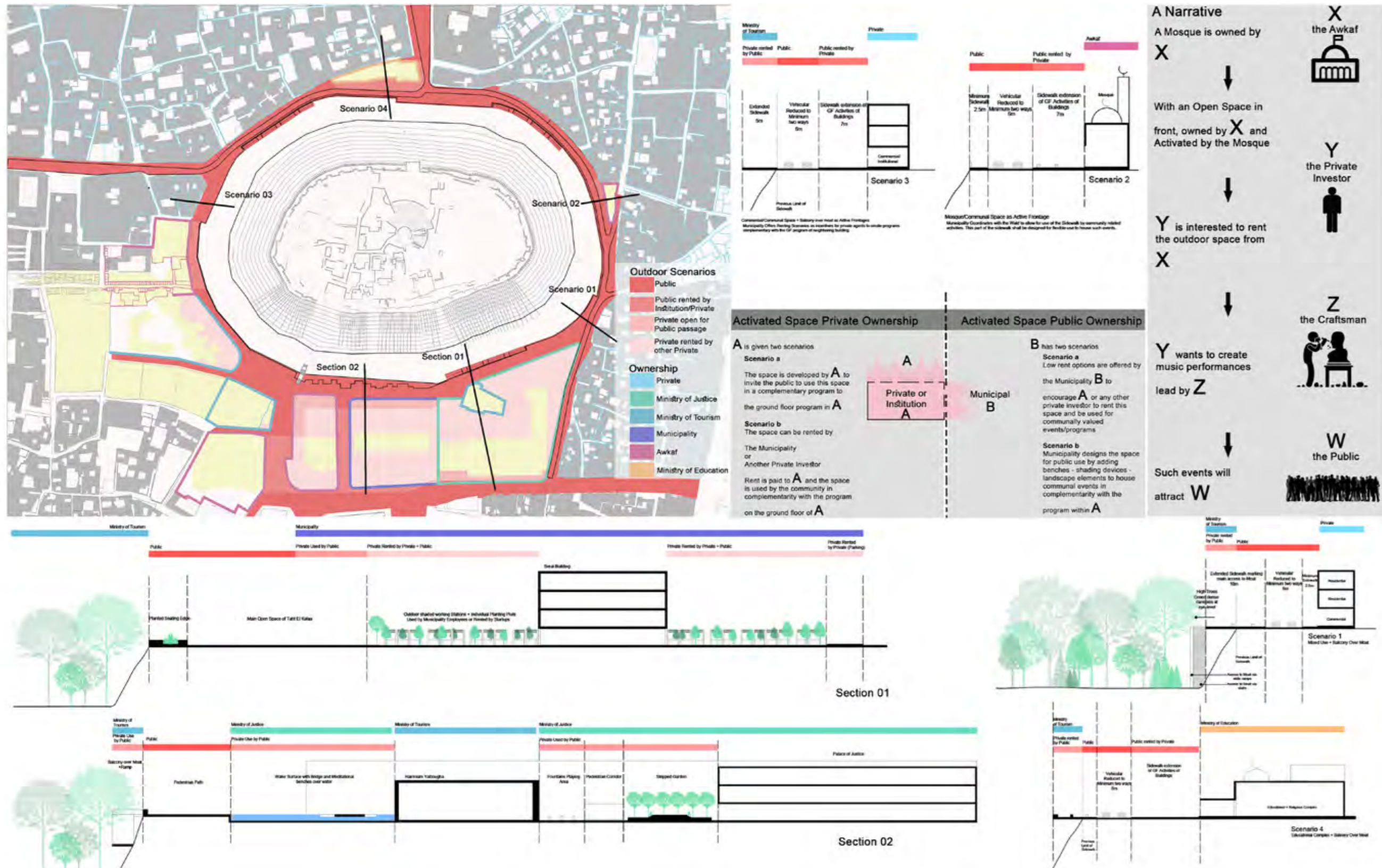
As a conclusion, the outdoor spaces will be designed to complement the programs and functions on the ground level. They will be rented by other entities, designed and managed by them or by other entities, with the purpose of creating an active, dynamic and inclusive, communally significant outdoor space.

The Strategy

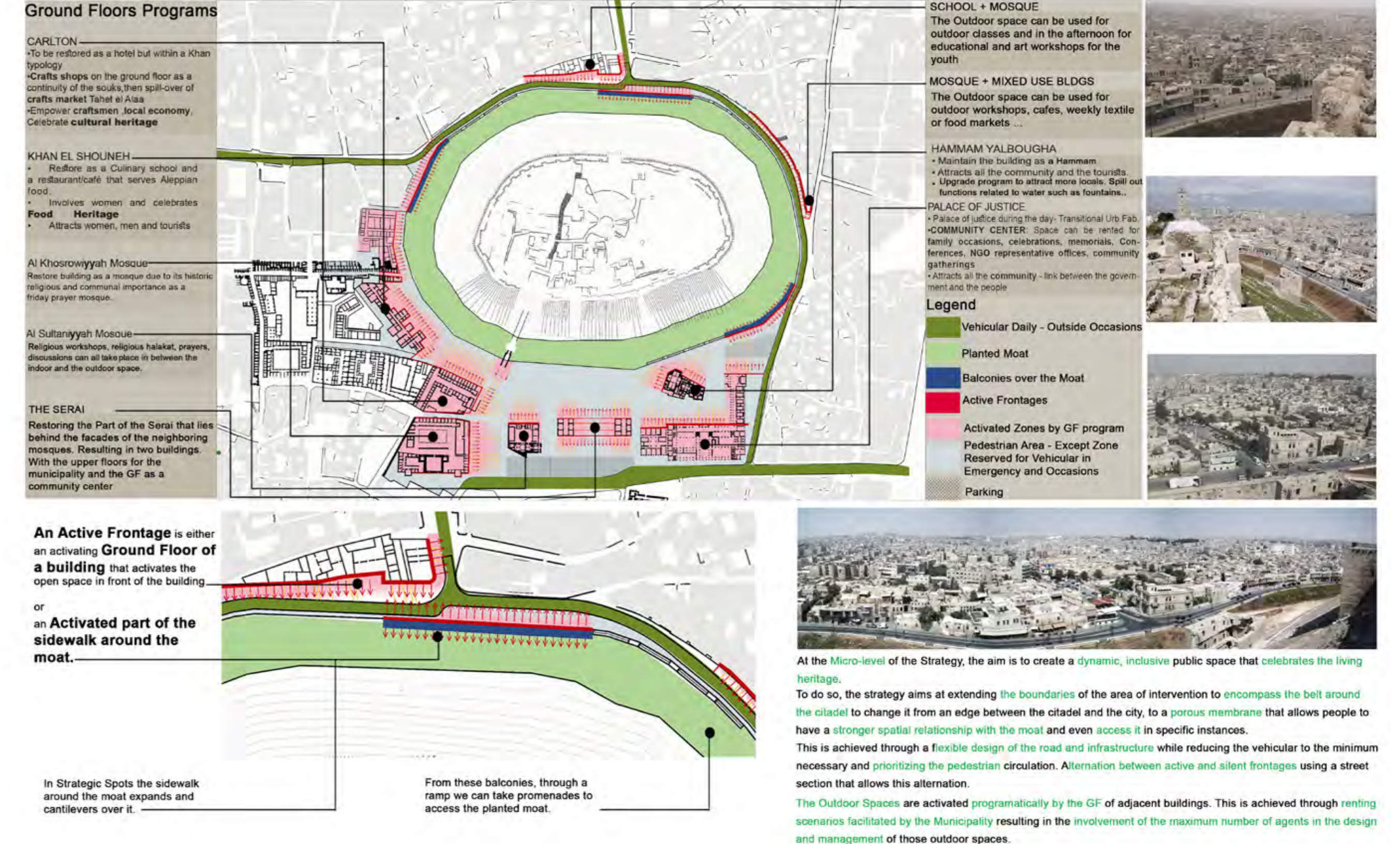




Spatial Strategy and Ownership/Renting Scenarios

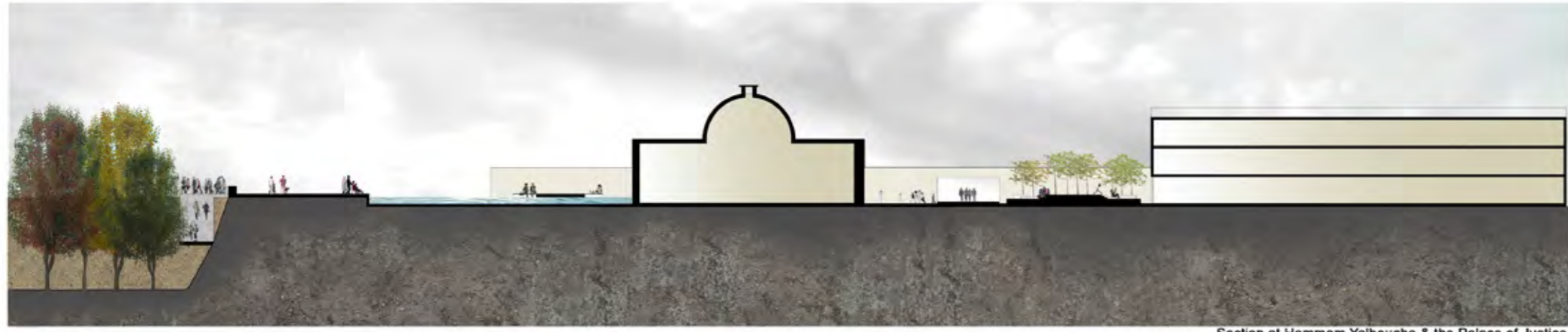


Concept Diagram - Program - The Belt Road





Partial Sections



Section at Hammam Yalbougha & the Palace of Justice



Section through the Serai Building & the Main Taht El Qalaa Space

Site Plan

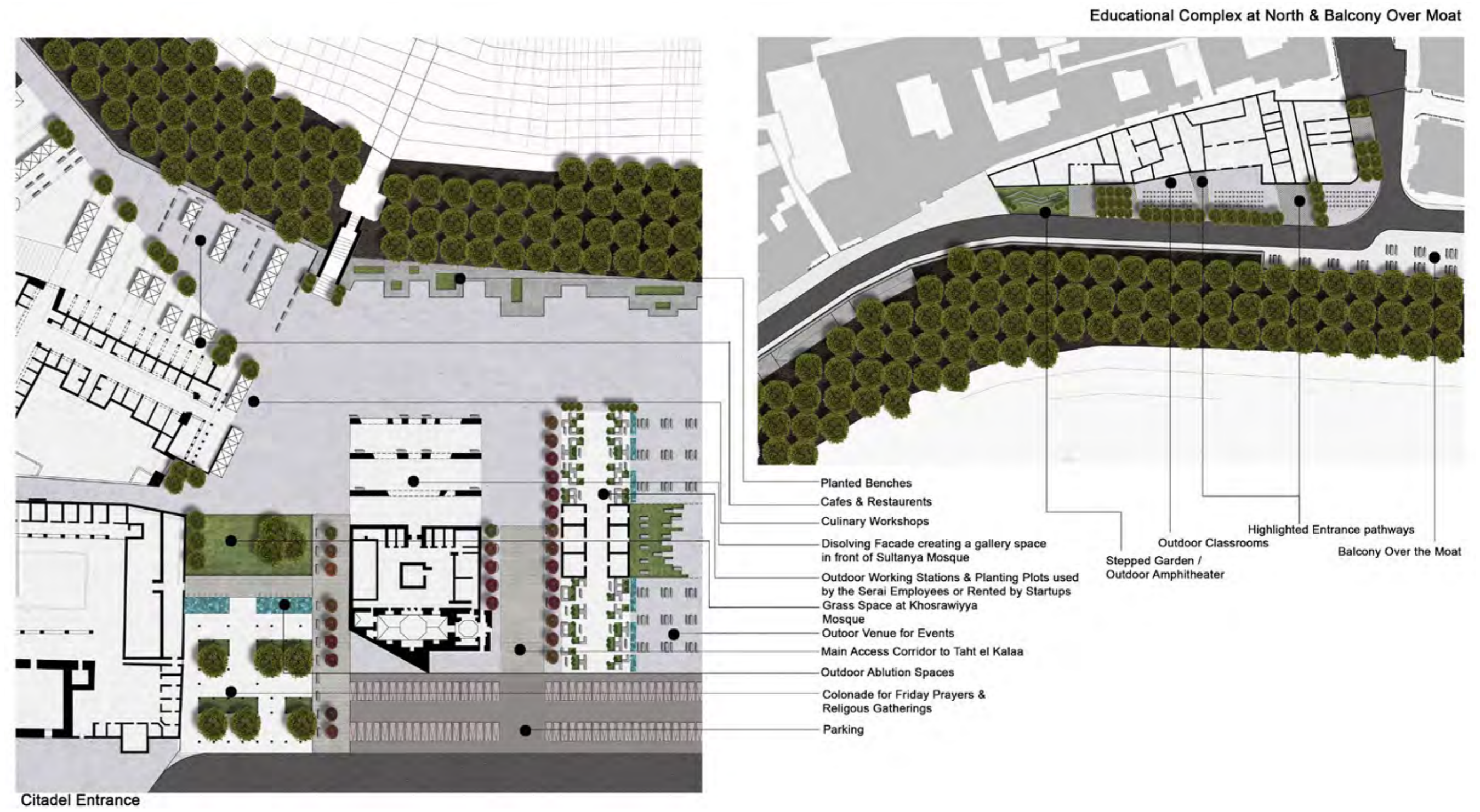




View Towards the Citadel



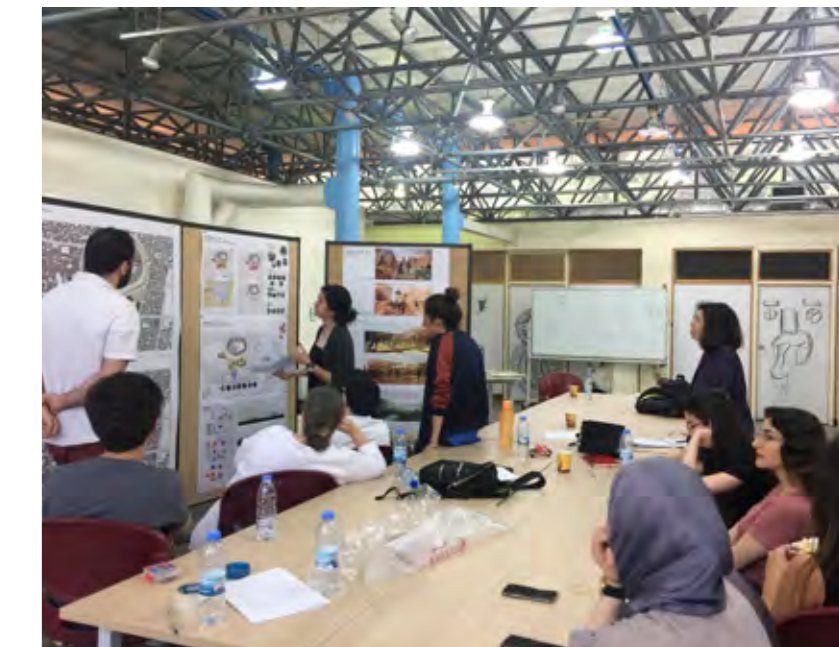
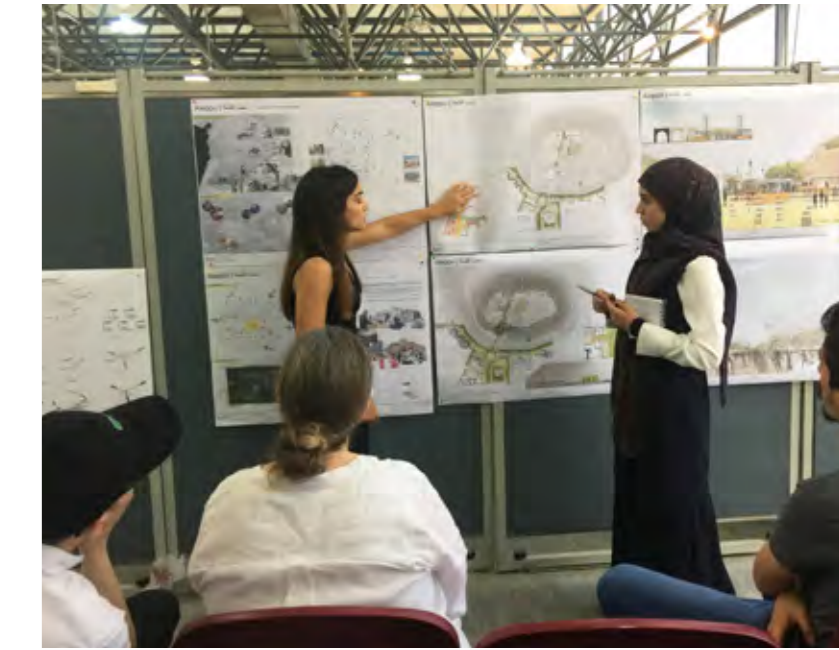
Partial Plans





“ The designs prioritized ownership and phasing of implementation, proposing guidelines to engage displaced communities and returning residents. Economic drivers that would ensure that the proposed narratives were self-financed were also considered a priority, not only because of the shortage of funding available for development but also to avoid top-heavy, state intervention. ”

Jala Makhzoumi





“ One of the most important outcomes of the studio was to generate a conversation about alternative approaches to post war recovery that are place-centered, heritage-led and people-focused. ”

Howayda Al-Harithy







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