IN THE MEANTIME...

INVESTIGATING THE NON-PLACE

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M O N I C A H A R V E Y
“It is a pity indeed to travel and not get this essential sense of landscape values. You do not need a sixth sense for it. It is there if you just close your eyes and breathe softly through your nose; you will hear the whispered message, for all landscapes ask the same question in the same whisper. ‘I am watching you -- are you watching yourself in me?’ Most travelers hurry too much...the great thing is to try and travel with the eyes of the spirit wide open, and not too much factual information. To tune in, without reverence, idly -- but with real inward attention. It is to be had for the feeling...you can extract the essence of a place once you know how. If you just get as still as a needle, you’ll be there.”

Lawrence Durrell, *Spirit Of Place: Letters And Essays On Travel*
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INTERSTITIAL SPACE
A piece of architecture can be thought of as poly-territorial place. There are major zones of programs that are linked together by connecting spaces, the interstitial zones. Luc Lévesque describes these zones as “interstitial constellation[s], made of discontinuous and even often left-over spaces.”

Aldo van Eyck and Herman Hertzberger label this as “in-between space”. They describe it as “a place full of interrelations” where the zone acts as a threshold between major spatial programs. The in-between space belongs to both, and therefore, it is part of both.

Mattias Kärrholm expresses that “the concept of the in-between and the interstitial… have not been theoretically developed or investigated in terms of its function in everyday urban life.” He recognizes that these “interstitial spaces must not be underestimated, and it should not be reduced to merely the physical (geometrical) space between two other spaces or buildings.” The importance of these non-places stems from allowing one to appropriate and associate to a territory in their own way, that in turn, forms their identity of the space.

The transient space is territorially complex. There is a coexistence of a myriad of “non-hierarchical and poly-rhythmic territorial productions in one place.” In other words, there are many rhythms, emotions, and personal agendas simultaneously working together.

This possesses a different quality of space than others because a transient space is a non-place. It is an interstitial zone that is dependent and defined by two adjacent territories. It has a “double identity of being (a) and also being (b)… and implies a sequential transformation from (a) to (b) and then on to something else, (c).”
PUBLIC AND TEMPORAL SPACE: DESIGNING FOR THE TRANSIENT

“The identity of the place is derived from the intertwining of space and time...” Ricky Kwok

There is vitality to transient space. Transient space is an intermediate zone in which one only spends a brief amount of time because it is a link between one destination to another. This zone is a stratum between where you are and where you need to be. It is typically seen as a “left over space” that situates itself between two or more major spaces that demand more design focus.

The real power of transient space needs to be defined. Designers need to realize that occupants frequently visit and value this space. There are many activities that happen here and therefore, it should not be an afterthought, but rather a focal point. The psychology of a human’s perception of transient space must be
understood. Factors such as light, organization, section, threshold, and material choices play a major role in the quality of the transient space. These factors must be understood in order to provide a thoughtful region of transition.

An airport acts as a larger representation of the idea of a non-place. There is no doubt that an airport is an actual place. However, because this space lies between two defined spaces (where you are and the location you want to be), it is perceived as a place that is “weak or heterogeneous… in between stronger and more homogeneous” areas. How the homogeneous zones interact with one another creates the in-between space.4

The problem with the current approach to airport design is that there is rarely any implementation of transition psychology within the design. This includes, but is not limited to, the layout strategies, the formal response to the manner in which people use the space, the material choices, the approach designers take for crafting the public nature of the spaces, and the program that is excluded that could be included.

Most of these problems stem from designers overlooking the implementation of transition psychology into their designs. Others involve a limited scope of airport design specialists in the field (Fentress Architects serves as an example). Thus, the same ideas are replayed over again.

How can you connect architectural response to the psychology of travel and the unique characteristics of transient space?
A TRANSIENT PLACE

Fulfilling the identity of a place can be examined within the context of a small to medium (regional) sized airport. The airport is the physical manifestation of a transitional place. In fact, there are many rhythms of transition. A traveller may be running to catch a plane, waiting around for an hour or two during a layover, or even forced to spend hours waiting for a rescheduled flight. In juxtaposition to rhythms, this location also offers many scales of ephemeral space that could lead to different scales of exploration. [diagram to follow on pages *]

Transient space offers an identity for a place. The importance of these non-places stems from allowing one to appropriate and associate to a territory in their own way, that in turn, forms their identity of the space.

Cities are often judged by their airport. It is not
seldom heard one saying. “I have been to city name, well, at least to their airport.” There is an interpretation of this space that is not only on the local scale, but also from those who are in no way related to the place.

Airports also offer a variety of zones that can be understood as transient spaces such as waiting zones, restaurants, and circulation corridors, to name a few. Airports can be analyzed for what they are already “known” as, but new spaces can be introduced that are not inherent to airport typologies like courtyards, outdoor areas, or sleeping quarters. This examination is not only about offering my design point of view on a standard typology but to ask if the way this typology has been done over and over again is it working in the sense of thoughtful series of transient space?

It could lead to an airport that offers a richer experience of identifying with a place by means of creating a more complete identity through its transient spaces.

There are several interrelated themes at play: producing a formal response based on the psychology of those in transition, using the airport typology to represent the identity of place, and extrapolating sense of identity of place by incorporating new program that involves the community in order to enhance the sense of place.
Steady Pace.
All is going according to plan without any unusual problems arising. There is no sense of rush.

A Small Blip.
All is going according to plan. A small incident arises, and therefore, a slight sense of urgency is produced. However, all returns to the steady path.

Frantic.
Nothing is going according to plan. The process is rushed and hectic from beginning to end. The plane is caught just in time and the journey may continue according to plan.

Unsuccessful.
Nothing is going according to plan. The process is rushed and hectic from beginning to end. The flight is missed even after all of that stress. The passenger must wait for the next connecting flight.
PART TWO: EXAMINING THE TRANSIENT SPACE
MOVEMENT AND STASIS

Mattias Kärrholm, author of *Retailising Space: Architecture, Retail and the Territorialisation of Public Space*, discusses the psychology behind an important and successful public street in Malmö, Sweden. Since airports contain major zones of circulation similar to this pedestrian street, I found it applicable to my concept of understanding varying scales of public realms and the interaction amongst them. 4

He begins by addressing how pedestrians are not only concerned with the activity at hand, but also the unexpected opportunities that might arise from being there. These opportunities play a part in encouraging or discouraging certain behaviors within a space and are vital qualities that form an opinion of a place4. How might unexpected opportunities be juxtaposed with the preconceived expectations of the airport experience?

The book suggests that in order to successfully plan a public place, it must be understood as a balancing act between human and non-human forms. Objects of stasis (such as seating zones, shops, ramps, etc.) must stabilize the pedestrian zone. There is a strong relationship between walking and dwelling, occupation and movement, dynamism and stasis. In other words, as more and more “actants” work together (people and objects), the space becomes more clearly defined, and therefore, acts as a more successful transient space. When static objects are used to support mobility and circulation, there is synchronization with the rhythm of bodily movements. 4

An example of supporting mobility and circulation would be rather than placing zones of stasis (seating areas, restaurants, etc.) adjacent to main circulation paths, they could be
discreetly placed within the paths—“designing islands in a stream of circulating people”. This promotes longer stays, and therefore, encourages commercial consumption as well as a thriving atmosphere. 4

One of the most compelling arguments made by Kärrholm is the “territorial association”. This idea suggests that certain concrete objects lead to specific behavior by the occupant. For example, when a person sees bookshelves, carrels, and a circulation desk, they know they are in a library, and therefore, they are quiet. 4

The key is to take these qualities that are easily identifiable and transform them into a new representation. They remain recognizable, and therefore retain the same associated behavior, but take on an extrapolated form. These key identifiers provide stability to the notion of the place, but the form around it takes a different shape. I could see this potential for an airport. You know you’re in an airport—you see the planes, the check-in desk, and the security station. However, newly introduced program and the form of spaces are different.

On the description of extrapolating grounded ideas…“Old urban sorts such as the piazza, the market, the festival and the carnival, could, thanks to their fluidity, be easily let, represented and transformed in the context of the new urban landscape, and still remain recognizable as a certain territorial sort.”4
Airports are a dynamic typology because there are so many types of rhythms interacting with one another. There is a man running to catch his plane, another person waiting around because their flight is delayed, as well as the passenger who arrived on time and is casually strolling to their departure gate. An airport is a location where all of these rhythms are synchronized and coordinated.

There is much to be said about the form a public space must take to be successful. However, there is little study on the temporal quality that can be crafted within the space. Henri Lefebvre studied rhythm analysis, in which rhythm is related to space and body. He found that “places [are] hectic and dense at some times and deserted at others” and there must be a “coordination [between] these flows and rhythms in time”. This is the reason why typologies such
Organization and efficiency were both main goals of Le Corbusier’s Ville Contemporaine. Programmatic elements such as transportation, pedestrian zones, service, housing, and green spaces all had their place within the plan of the city.

This drawing illustrates how pedestrian zones are separated from vehicular zones with pedestrian bridges.

as the corridor were invented in order to “to separate different types of movements within it, thus desynchronizing different types of rhythms.” Take Le Corbusier’s Ville Contemporaine, where he desynchronized social functions and placed them in their own zone of the town. Could this same idea of desynchronization be an applicable approach to an airport design?  

Architecture answers the question of temporality in a couple of ways. The first way is through form. Certain rhythms are integrated into structure and façade. This implies a visual response. The second is through portals (entrances, windows, openings, etc). This physical manifestation of space “[shapes]…the movement, flows, and trajectories” of occupants. When one rhythm changes to a faster or slower rhythm, there is a scale transfer. Scale transfers occur repeatedly in a place of transportation due to the various types of temporality coordinating together.  

The idea must be analyzed through “micro-scales”. With a micro-scale, there is a small transfer in rhythm such as a person getting out of their parked car and then walking across a parking lot to arrive at the front entrance. Kärholm describes this concept as a “scale transfer node” which is “a place with an ordered plurality of mobilities.” Architecture can respond to this idea by “both [acting] more of less as a rhythm machine, supporting the temporal control of a certain territorial production, or [acting] as a scale transfer node, collecting and ordering different rhythms at a specific place.” Therefore, the design of temporal architecture must be shaped around its nodes of scale transfers.
Early ideas of interstitial space can be seen in the works of Post-Impressionist painter Georges Seurat who gained inspiration from Paul Cézanne’s ideas of dualities between figure-background (object-space) relationships. He implemented the idea of irradiation within his paintings.  

Irradiation is described as a “phenomenon of light which makes objects stand out one from the other, setting them in sharp relief.”  

This “endotopic-exotopic... (inside-place/outside-place)” concept produces a greater contrast level between light and dark objects. Paul Klee describes this concept “as [values alongside one another] move away in opposite directions from the line of contact, the light one grows darker and the dark one grows lighter… one side of the form will oppose light [figure] to dark [ground]” and vise versa.  

Take, for example, Seurat’s piece View of Fort Sampson, Grandcamp. The contrast amongst objects is amplified by the use of irradiation. 

The darkest point of the cabin is at the edge of the gabled roof, which is black compared to the lighter brown color it becomes eventually. This is juxtaposed against the lightest part of the sky, which is a shade of white compared to the darker blue it becomes eventually. This endotopic-exotopic relationship provides a sharp relief between the foreground and background. 

This gradation of values from the line of contact is a nod to the same relationship between two adjacent territories within architecture. An architectural response to this idea could be a zone of tight and solid spaces juxtaposed to a loose and diaphanous zone. [diagram to follow on pages *]

Close-up view of the cabin meeting the sky showing the endotoopic-exotopic relationship. The darkest point of the cabin is at the edge of the gabled roof, which is black compared to the lighter brown color it becomes eventually. This is juxtaposed against the lightest part of the sky, which is a shade of white compared to the darker blue it becomes eventually.

Diagram of the Irradiation phenomenon.

A: By placing the darkest edge to the lightest edge, a higher level of contrast is created amongst the values.

B: An architectural response might be to place more solid zones (groupings of heavier program) next to a more diaphanous zone (a gradient zone of the adjacent space).
PART THREE: PROGRAMMING
Les Jardin des Tuileries, located in Paris, France, is situated between the Louvre and Orsay Museums. This garden creates and strengthens the 5 km monumental axis that runs through Paris. It connects the Louvre Palace to the Arc de Triomphe.

Much like the airport, Tuileries is a non-place. It has a “double identity of being (a) and also being (b)… and implies a sequential transformation from (a) to (b) and then on to something else, (c).” It is a node of transfer, a stratum, a place in anaphase. The gardens are “a place full of interrelations” where the zone acts as a threshold between major spatial programs. The in-between space belongs to both, and therefore, it is part of both. This is true not only because it is the zone between two destinations, the Louvre and the Orsay, but because it is also an integral part of the identity of Paris: the monumental axis at the heart of the city.

There are many similar forms of rhythms in this interstitial zone that are similar to what may be found in an airport. People wait until they must go to the next even in their day, they get concessions from a food truck, they promenade around the fountain, and children run around the terraced gardens.

They are all the same acts that take place in in-between zones. However, the main difference is the formal response to them. Instead of walls, there are hedges. Instead of an atrium, there is a cruciform of the paths coming together around a major meeting zone. Could these be a nod to how a built form respond to such qualities? [diagram on next page]
Image: View of Les Jardins Des Tuileries
This image studies how there are three major spaces connected by a main promenade. Small, tightly formed gardens form the edges of the walkways. The pathway then filters out to public open zone.

Image: Enlarged portion of the North Western Gardens within the park.
This image studies how the tightly niched gardens along the main promenade work similarly to irradiation. The heaviest zones fade into the lighter zones, creating a gradient. These form pocket gardens while still maintaining a diaphanous relationship to the main public walking zone.
The Prince George Airport by mgb (McFarlane | Green | Biggar Architecture) offers a fresh outlook on airport design. This project serves as an example of both size and strategies for appropriately planning the airport program.

The size would be very similar to this project. Evidence of this is shown in the floor plan, where there is a simple, but logical, organization of the departure and return operations. These zones are located adjacent to one another and a circulation bar links them together.

The service and back of house zones are also handled well. They are juxtaposed adjacent to the main public spaces, but they are integrated in a seamless way without trying to conceal them entirely. This clean and simple solution offers a distilled example of airport design.
RETURNS  DEPARTURES
CIRCULATION

BACK OF HOUSE  WAITING ZONE
The diagram on the left shows how the departure zone and the return zone are placed adjacent to one another. There is a main circulation bar that connects the two. Even though they are in such close proximity, there is a clear separation that prevents confusion between the two based on formal responses to those in transition.

The diagram on the left shows the clearly linked relationship between the service and public waiting zones within the building.

This is also expressed externally through the use of materials. The service zone is a lantern-like aluminum box. The waiting zone is made of glass, steel, and wood. The separation zone is made of thick concrete.

Different types of activity are expressed through the section.

The circulation zone responds to the more active transient nature with a higher ceiling and light filtration.

The waiting zone responds to a slower and more relaxed transient nature with a form that pulls attention outwards towards the runways.

The office space is more compartmentalized.
The Ivar Aasen Museum, designed by Norwegian Architect Sverre Fehn, exhibits the history of the Ny Norsh language through design.

The principal concept behind the Ivar Aasen Museum was to carve the building directly out of the surround landscape.

Another idea implemented into the design happens structurally. Through a series of structural elements, Fehn creates many facets of movement that guide visitors through the space. These elements use gradients of light and compression of spaces.

Outward views and the close relationship with the immediate landscape establish a harmonic correspondence between the two.
THE AIRPORT AS A UNIQUE BUILDING TYPE
The airport is more than just a place from which planes board and debark passengers. It serves as physical representation of a city. The organization of the airport has been said to mimic the layout of a city itself, “with a center (where the terminal buildings are located), industrial areas (hangers and warehouses), effective road systems, and residential areas (nearby hotels)”. Could the airport in the chosen destination start to mimic the layout of the city in which it serves?

INTRODUCTION
The project goal is to design a regional airport that uses the psychology transient space to shape its form. The power of the project comes from exploring places that are not the final destination, but serve as the connection between one major destination to another.
Some regional airports that provide a relatable regional size include local examples like the Chattanooga and Knoxville airports with roughly 300,000 and 800,000 enplanements (commercial passenger boarding) a year respectively. These types of airports tend to serve a smaller city in a state, or in some cases, tend to be a secondary hub to a main airport as seen with the Dallas-Fort Worth airport, where the main airport has over 27 million enplanements, while the smaller hub at Dallas Love Field only serves 3 million boardings. 

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Looking at these types of statistics may be a good way to determine whether or not a city needs another airport in which to spill over. Another approach would be to look and see which growing cities have no representation at all.

Boulder, Colorado represents a city in need of a hub airport. The city currently has a very small municipal airport that serves fewer than 10,000 departures. However, Boulder is in a very close proximity to Denver (which has an international airport). This would be a perfect place not only for an airport of its own, but also as a satellite airport for Denver.
TERMINAL DESIGN

“There are three main formal elements that give [the airport] shape: the plan, the design of surfaces, and the handling of light.”

Required spaces:
- Car Parks
- Bus/taxi drop off area
- MAIN TERMINAL: 200,000 SQ FT.
  - Ticket check-in
  - Baggage handling
  - Gate check
  - Security check
  - Offices (not limited to) for health
  - Passport, customs control
  - Employee lounge
  - Airline offices
  - Retail zones
  - Restaurants/ Bars
  - Banks, post office

Ancillary Spaces:
- Business and conference support
- Leisure and tourist information
- Amusement arcades
- Information points
- VIP facilities
- Passenger lounges at gate
- Bathrooms + First aid
- Baggage reclaim
- Runway
- Hangars

Potential additions:
- Courtyards/ outdoor spaces
- Fitness facility
- Observation deck
- Flight training facility
Basic zones of an airport:
1. Runway in which the length/alignment dependent on altitude, temperature, wind conditions, and plane weight. Either, parallel enlightenment or placed a an angle for cross-wind conditions.

2. Aircraft fuelling/maintenance

3. Aircraft stands

4. Terminal Building which divides the land-side from the airside. It acts as the division between the public realm and the privately owned air field through processes like baggage drop-off, passport checks, and duty-free zones. It provides the waiting zones for passengers. Within the terminal are opportunities for shopping, food courts, and waiting zones for airlines.

Secondary zones:
- Flight control tower
- Connecting forms of transport
- Road system
- Car parks

Structure of the airport system
- Centralized
- Multi-Hub
- Dispersed

Layout is determined by prevailing wind direction, size and number of terminal buildings, ground transport system, mandatory clearance dimensions, and topography and geology.9
BOULDER, COLORADO

Boulder, Colorado would be a great location to link the Eastern region of the US to the Western side of the US, which is divided by the Rocky Mountains. The airport would function as a hub from one major city to another major city. It could also act as a subsidiary airport to Denver’s international airport since the two cities are located within close proximity to each other. 12

The only sizable airport in Boulder is Boulder Municipal Airport, which consists of several hangars, one runway, a small terminal building, and a small flight training facility. The National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems (NPIAS) reported that the number of enplanements from this airport is so insignificant that data isn’t even recorded. This suggests that in order for anyone to travel to or from Boulder, they have to go to Denver for its facilities. 13
Along with being a great location for a hub airport, Boulder itself can be seen as a destination point. The city contains 100,000 people, located at the base of the Rocky Mountains, and is home to the University of Colorado, Boulder. Therefore, the airport could juxtapose two types of travelers: the traveler in transit and the one in stasis. This could provide opportunity to play the game of opposites and examine if there is a different physiology amongst the two, leading to different formal responses.

It is important to me that this project does not encroach negatively to its surroundings. The Rockies are a valued landscape and in no way would I want to disgrace their beauty. I would prefer a small footprint and minimal ecological impact to the site as much as possible. This site would produce such a strong relationship with the identity of the city for the traveler, leading me to believe it strongly supports my thesis.
The site would be located at the base of the Rocky Mountains in order to provide a direct link to the major identifier of the city of Boulder.
The site is located within close proximity to the city. It provides a rich palette of character and identity and would serve as a driver to the project.
The topography would offer the opportunity to carve into the landscape. By doing so, the airport would be more a part of the landscape.

The architecture could act as a small lantern piece tucked away into the mountain side.

Prevailing winds are the biggest determinate for the master plan of the airport.

In this diagram, Boulder’s wind rose is overlaid onto the site. It shows that prevailing winds come from the Northwestern direction and the Western direction.

This information shows where the runways must be placed. It also indicates that this leaves three zones in which the architecture could be placed.
This diagram outlines the site and shows the runway locations. It also indicates buffer zones located on the Northern and Eastern parts of the site.

These are zones that I would like to use as buffers to prevent against unwanted visual and sound penetration to the neighboring residential areas.
Based on the previous diagram, this analysis distills the site down to the zones the airport could occupy (cross-hatched zones).

The hatched white line indicates the desired visual connection to the mountains behind and to the left, as well as the downtown area to the north. Placing the program at this hinge would allow for the maximum connection to the city.
PART FOUR: CRAFTING
MYRIAD

An element that is very unique and interesting to airports is that there are so many types of people located in one place that feel so many different emotions. This is one of the only programs, such as hospitals, where such extremes of emotions are felt. There are many emotions that play the foil to another like excitement versus sadness or boredom versus stress, to name a few.

This watercolor is juxtaposed on top of an entrance lobby floor plan where the majority of extreme emotions are concentrated—this is where people say goodbye to their loved ones or can’t seem to locate their passport. It represents this occurrence where people’s emotions, represented by different colors, interact with one another. Feelings can be uninterrupted, or they can blend together creating a new feeling entirely.
There are very clear indicators that differentiate zones within airports. This is an example of a portal in the ____ airport that provides a physical threshold for how people occupy a space. On the bottom portion of the plan are the concession areas where people buy products, go to restaurants, or meander their way through to the airline departure lounge. The top portion of the plan is the departure lounges where people wait for their flights. A tight zone in the middle provides a transition from a busy setting to a more contemplative setting.

The watercolor over the plan view represents activity within the spaces. The concessions side indicates a more direct route from point A to point B, while the airside possesses an outward reflection zone towards the planes landing or departing or towards other people occupying the space.
RHYTHMIC TRANSITION
Airports possess many facets of rhythm. In this analysis, I analyzed a section of the Raleigh/Durham Airport. From curbside to airside, there is a clear separation of programs based on the rhythms of the travelers. On the right hand side is the landside. This is where people generally have the most frantic part of their journey. It requires a high level of attention, figuring out where one needs to go, and a lot emotion.

The middle part of the section shows where passengers go through security checks and retail parts of the program. This space is the transition zone from arriving to departing, and therefore, provides many different types of rhythms. However, as denoted in section and in the watercolor, the pace is slowed.

The left hand side of the image is the airside. This space possesses the slowest rhythms. People are sitting, waiting, watching, and contemplating. Much of their focus is outwards towards the airstrip. Even though it is just several minutes from the airside to the landside, it seems like you are in an entirely different place—not quite in the physical location of the city, but also not quite to where you need to go.
Image: Munich Airport with montaged courtyard space.

How would spatial relationships changed if courtyard spaces were introduced into public zones?