

SALHIYE

Hilltown Damascus

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KATHARINA SCHWIETE, MARIE - LUISE WUNDER
ETH Studio Basel Contemporary City Institute

THE MIDDLE EAST STUDIO
Wintersemester 2009

Prof. Jacques Herzog
Prof. Pierre de Meuron
Manuel Herz
Shadi Rahbaran
Ying Zhou

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An aerial map of a city, likely Basel, with a red line tracing a path through it. The map shows a dense urban grid with various building footprints and street layouts. The red line starts from the top left and curves towards the bottom right, following a specific route through the city's layout.

صالحية

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WITH SPECIAL THANKS TO:
Khaled Malas, architect, Damascus / Istanbul
Jalal Msadi, MAM Damascus
Samer Said, student, University of Damascus
All the people we interviewed in Salihiye

SALIHIYE

Hilltown Damascus



INTRODUCTION

Damascus
Salahiye



HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

Historic Development Damascus and Salahiye
Focus on Salahiye
Historic identities of Salahiye



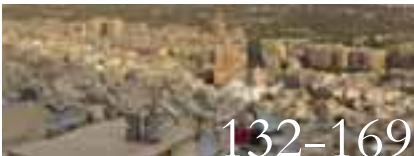
URBAN STRUCTURE

Urban morphology
Urban fabric evolution
Housing typology
Urban structure



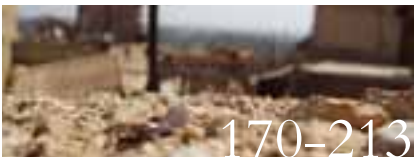
URBAN LAYERS

Layers of Salahiye



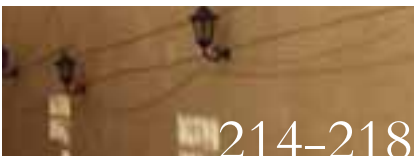
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Experts's opinion
Author's statement



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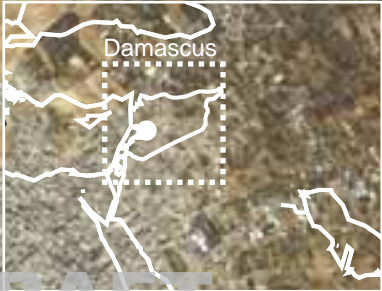
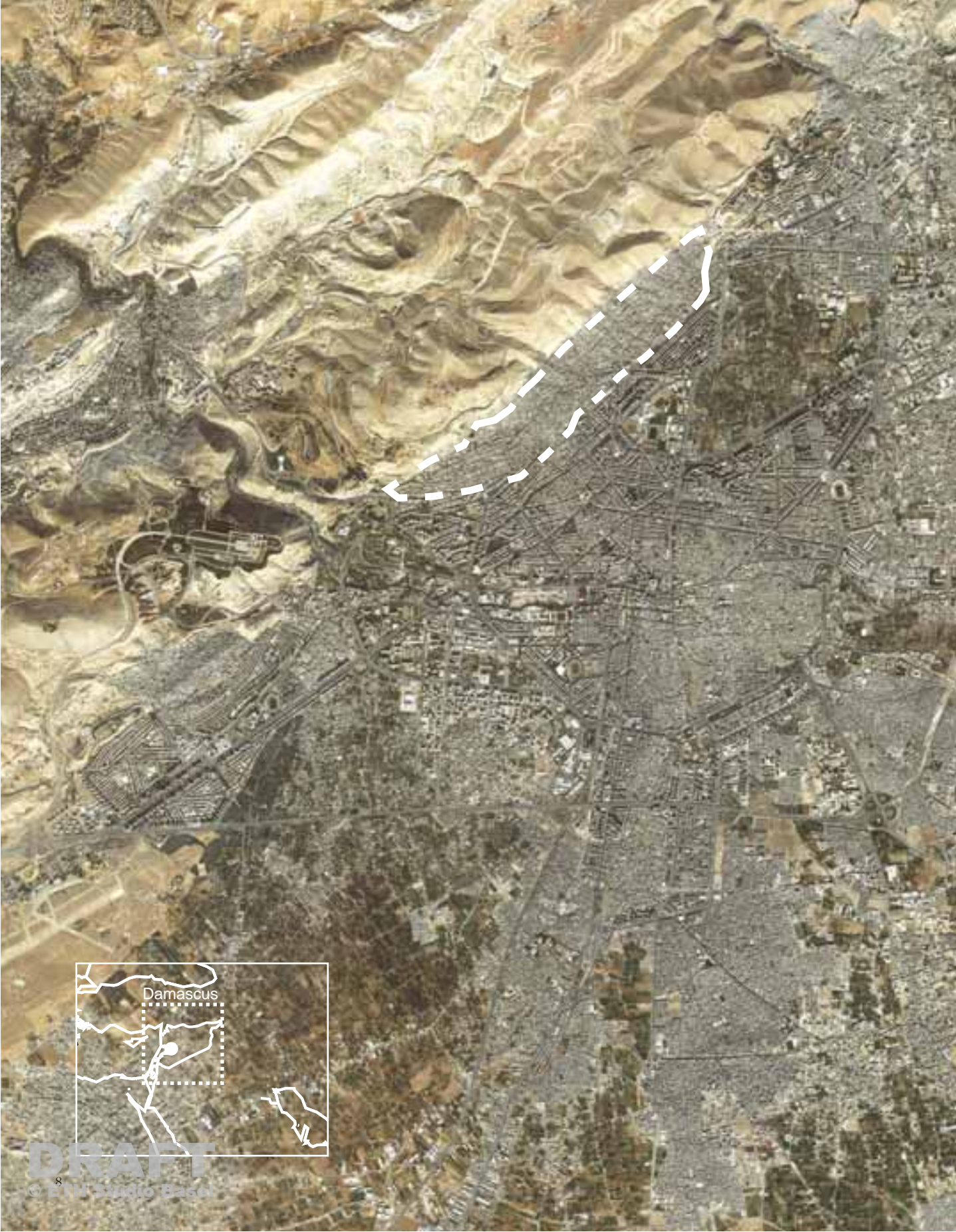
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Introduction

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DAMASCUS INTRODUCTION Damascus is the capital of Syria and one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities. It is seen as a cultural and religious center in the „Islamic world“, not only because of the Umayyad Mosque in the center of its Old City.

GEOGRAPHICAL POSITION Damascus lies in the center of a fertile oasis, the „Ghouta“ at 690 meters above sea level. The Barada river, coming from the Antilibanon provides with its seven arms the agriculture land with water. Raising settlement however caused a shrinking of the oasis and in conclusion at lack of drinking water today. In the north west the city is bordered by the Mount Kassyum. In the east the usable land leads abrupt to the Syrian desert. These geographic boundaries have a big impact on the urban development of Damascus and respectively on the region of Salihiye at the bottom of Kassyum mountain.

CLIMATE AND VEGETATION Damascus finds itself in a subtropic climate zone. Due to its geographical position in the east of the mountain range of the Antilibanon it has only a few rain. The raining period goes from October till April. The average temperature is about 16 degrees whereas it is about 24 to 26 degree Celsius in the summer. During winter, from December to February it goes down to 6 to 8 degrees.

The vegetation has been deeply influenced and changed by human beings, so that there is only about 3% off the woodland in Syria left. Damascus is an oasis city and used to be surrounded by the Ghouta oasis. Increasing settlement and urban extension caused an almost completely disappearing of the oasis.

POPULATION Syria is an Arabic country. The most important ethnical minority in Syria are the Kurds and the Armenians. In Salihiye we find also others, so that a variety of different neighbourhoods live next to each other. Damascus' population counts about 1.5 million inhabitants and is still raising. In Salihiye there cannot be pointed out an exact number, estimations write about 430,000.

SALIHIE INTRODUCTION On the mountainside of Mount Kassyum, 3 kilometers north-west from the center of Damascus, was this suburb developed in the middle of the 12th century. Its name given by Palestine refugees for being the place of the „pious“.

At the beginning Al-Salihyye was developed at the Yazid, the northern artificial made river out of the Barada. A long time it kept its own personalality shaped by the distance to the city and its inhabitants. Its certain holyness attracts a number of holy monuments and sepultres (madrastas, cementeries, tombs) which are built there. From 1875 on the population of Damascus increased, so that between 1887 and 1915 the number of inhabitants grew about 110%. In Damascus have always been many refugees which is one reason for the intense demograhic growth. These refugees coming from areas which the Ottomans lost to other states. The first expelled arrived in Damascus in 1867. More came in 1890, 1896 and 1913 and started to settle down in the later called area Al-Muhajirin.

Salihiye





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An aerial photograph of a city, likely Damascus, showing a dense urban area with a prominent minaret in the center. The city is surrounded by hills and mountains in the background. The image is in grayscale and serves as a background for the text.

Historical Development

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HISTORICAL IMAGES 1920



PICTURES OF MOUNT KASSYUM IN THE EARLY 1920S

In former times, Damascus used to be pervaded with the green arms of the oasis „Ghouta“. The Mount Kassyum was just barely settled.



source: Institut Francaise du Proche -
Orient IFPO



HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

Damascus and Salihye

DAMASCUS

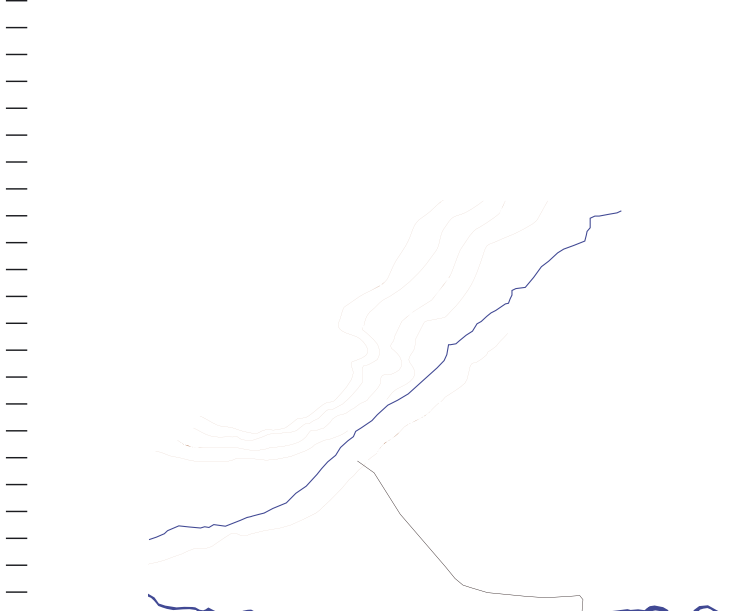
	BC
BC Old Testemony: founding of Damascus to Zu, one of the sons of Aram (a legend of the foundation)	1st cen
	1000
Damascus becomes chief town and religious center of Lebanese Phoenecia	381
	AD
the Romans conquer and establish a intra muros implementing Jupiter Temple	64
the cella of the Temple of Jupiter is transformed into a CATHEDRAL dedicated to St. John the Baptist	391 661
remodelling of the Umayyad Mosque under the reign of Caliph al-Walid I.	705
loss of being the capital decline , end of the reign of Umayyad Califs	750
conquest of Nur ad-Din over the city (known as the era of Islam resurgent) nourished Damascus as his spiritual and strategic base and profoundly influenced its religious life	1186
reign of Al Mu'azzam `Isa a period of flourishing construction	1218 -1228
reign of Al-Ashraf	1229 -1238
Mongol invasions under Timur Lenk	1260

MOUNT KASSYUN

	BC
Old Testemony: Cain kills Abel on the slopes of Mount Kassyun	1st cen
construction of the Tora Canal used for irrigation	1200-853
	AD
the slope of Mount Kassyun hosts religious communities (most famous Murran, Saman, etc.)	app. 391
AD establishment of two Christian monasteries on the slopes of Kassyun	395-635
construction of the Yazid Canal used for irrigation and water supply for the palaces of the arab leader erected here (Umayyad Calif, Yazid I.)	680-683
construction of a caliphal palace at Dayr Murran (Christian monastery)	831
	SALIHIE
foundation of the quarter of as-Salihye by Banu Qudama a pius Muslim family Palestine refugees from the crusades	12th (6th)
construction of Friday Mosque Gami al Muzaffari / Hanbila (first Great Mosque to be built in the vicinity of Damascus city)	1202/3 (599)
Maristan al-Qaimeri evolves to being the new urban center	1248 (664)
Mongol invasions	1260 (658)
Mongol invasions	1300 (699)
Mongol invasions	1400 (803)
construction of a second Friday Mosque near the tomb of the venerated sufi Muhyi d-Din Ibn al Arabi	1518 (924)

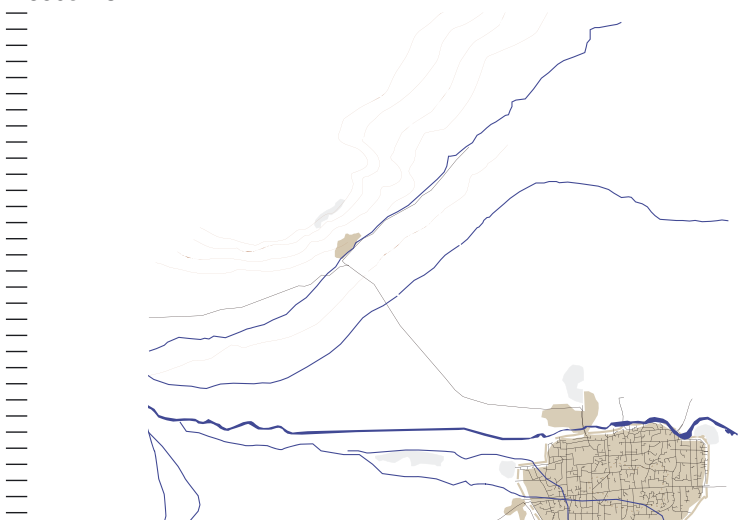
1200 - 853 the Aramaeans
 856 - 539 Assyrians and Newbabylons
 539 - 333 Persians
 333 - 64 Alexander the Great
 64 BC - 395 AC Romans
 661 - 750 Umayyads
 750 - 968 Abbasids
 969 - 1124 Fatimids and Seldjucks
 1099 - 1299 Crusades
 1260 - 1516 Mamluks
 395 - 635 Byzantine rule
 635 - 661 Islamic victory over Syria
 661 - 750 Umayyads
 1146 - 1174 reign of Nur ad-Din
 1174 - 1260 Ayyubids

Population rates Damascus
unknown



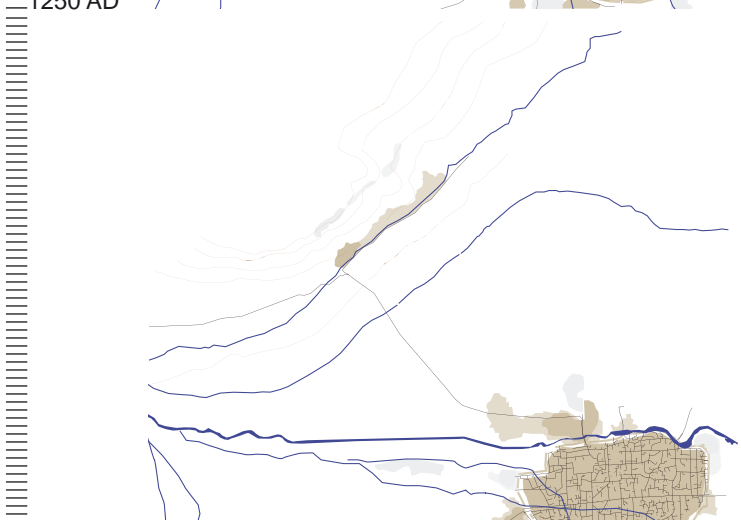
850s BC

unknown



1250 AD

unknown



1500

200 m

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

Damascus and Salahiye

DAMASCUS		SALIHIYE
rule of Sultan Selim I.	1470 -1520	1470-1520 establishing of a Khanaqua and Hospice (known as the soup kitchen) Takiya as-Salimiya
Extra-mural routes were upgraded	1635 -1675	1470 - 1520 enlargement of the pilgrimage site of tomb of ibn Arabi and construction of the Mosque Shaykh Mohieddin ibn Arabi
starting of on a strategic and systematic city enlargement for Damascus started	1832	1675 the route to Salahiye was paved
reign of Nazim Paza		appr. 1800 Salahiye is no longer been refered to as administrative nor urbanistically independet but being more and more suburbanized to Damascus
German Emperor (Wilhelm II.) visits Damascus	1898	appr. 1800 establishment of the quarter of Harat/ al-Akrad by the Kurds
Damascus gets electricity	1907	1840 first phase of city enlargement during the late Ottoman Empire, housing fabric arises north and west of the old city and on the mountainside of Kassyum
French Mandate: Damascus becomes capital	1920	1898 contruction of the quarter of Muhajrin built for Muslim refugees from Crete (arch.Husain Nazim Pasa)
Eccochar d and Banshouya Master-planning	1968	1908 A tram line starts to connect Salahiye, Damascus and Midan, including the settlement of the green zone between the Old City and Mount Kassyun
Damascus remains capital (centralised)	1946	1910 settlement starts to move up Salahiye Street
Damascus remains capital (centralised policy)	1946	1960 beginning of ,informal settlement‘ on the upper mountain region
		1975 the Governate expropriates the area of upper Mount Kassyum and evolves a rapid settlement phenomena

1260 - 1516 Mamluks
 1516 - 1918 Ottomans
 1918 - 1946 French Mandate
 1946 Independance of Syria
 1984 attempt of coup d'etat
 11.07.2000 Bashar al Azad (son of Hazad al Asar)

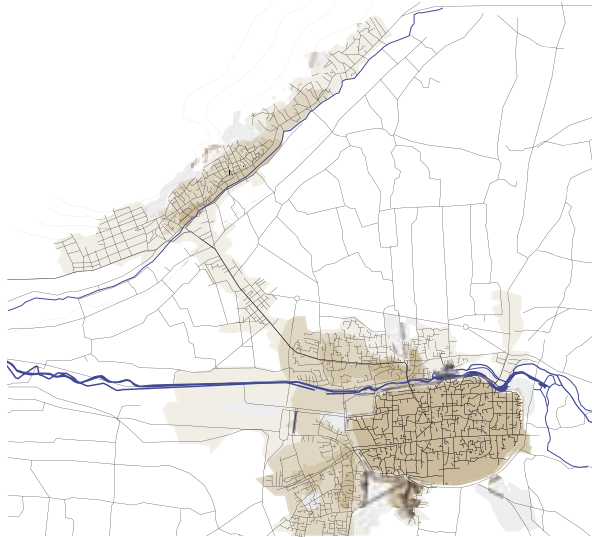


Population rates Damascus
118.000



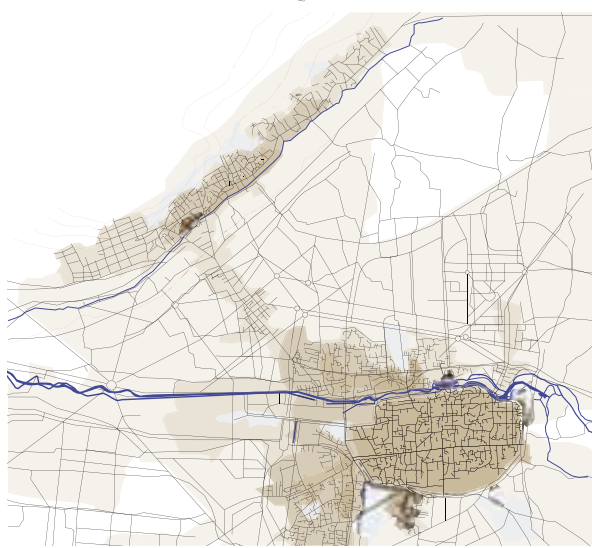
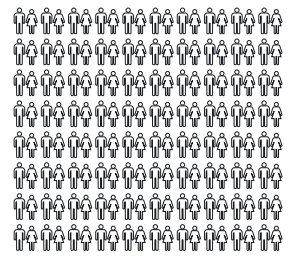
1860

250.000



1929

4.000.000



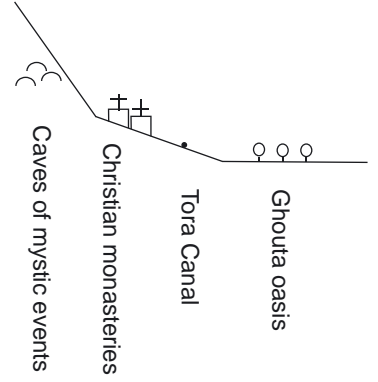
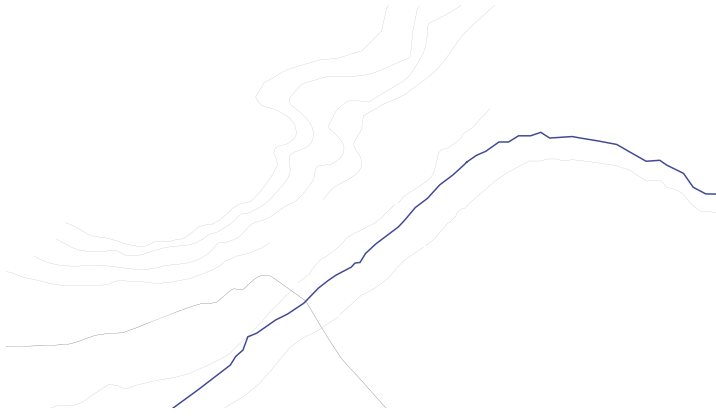
2009



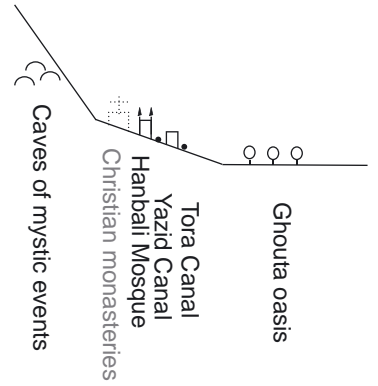
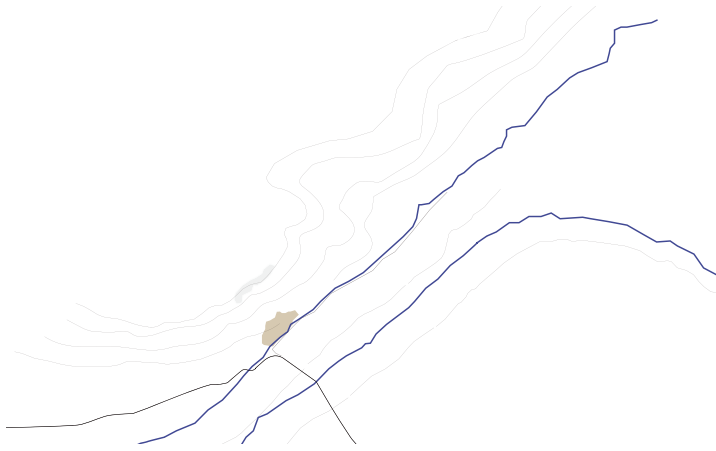
HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

Focus on Salihiye

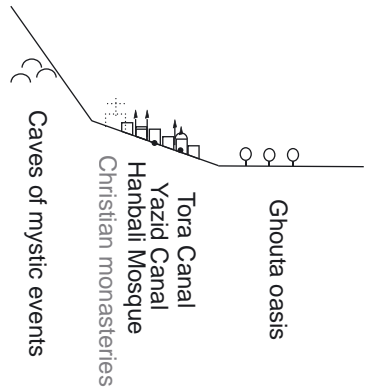
853 BC



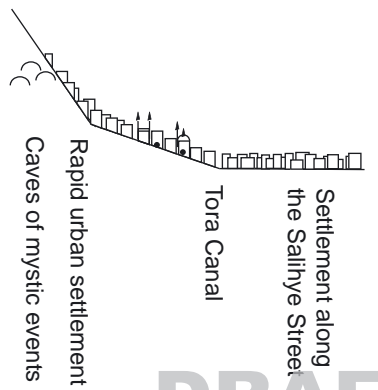
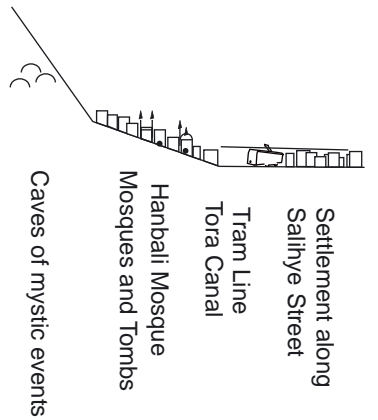
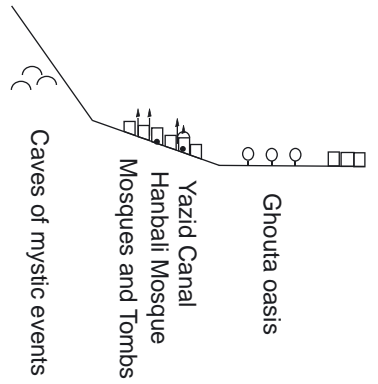
1250 AD



1500



200 m



THE BIBLICAL MYTH

THE HOLY MOUNTAIN

Mount Kassyun has a sacred character because God is said to have spoken to it :

8Cain said to his brother Abel, „Let’s go out to the field.“[39] And while they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him.
– Genesis 4:1-8 (HCSB)

There existed formerly on the slopes of Kassyun two famous Christian monasteries, Dayr Murran and Dayr Sam c an. The location of Deir Murran, a Byzantine monastery complex which was a favourite resort of the Umayyad court and where the Caliph al-Walid died, is not firmly established. In 831 a splendid caliphal residence was built by al-Ma’amun at Deir Murran on the lower slopes of Mount Kassyun.

source: Bible, E12, Ross Burns
image: Titian - Cain and Abel
(ca.1570 - 1576, Italy)





CAVES OF MYSTIC EVENTS

SITE OF THE PROPHETS

Scattered throughout the Mount Kassyun one can find caves and grottoes of which some are part of ancient myths and traditions.

Three of them, Musallat al-Khidr, Magharat al-Djaw c and Magharat al-Dam, which marks the place where the blood of IJabll (Cave of Blood) was shed and where people used to come and pray for rain, today constitute a modern oratory known by the name of Kubbat al-Arba. In memory of forty prophets — seventy according to certain traditions — who died of hunger there (Cave of Hunger); a legend speaks of Yahya b. Zakariyya having allegedly stayed there forty years with his mother. Slightly to the south-west of this oratory, is situated the Grotto of Adam, also called Kahf Djibrll or al-Kahf, an oratory dedicated to the Asfcab al-Kahf, the Seven Sleepers of Sura XVIII.

The Cave of Blood and the Cave of Hunger presumed to be the site of ancient events cited in the holy books.





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HISTORIC WATER INFRASTRUCTURE

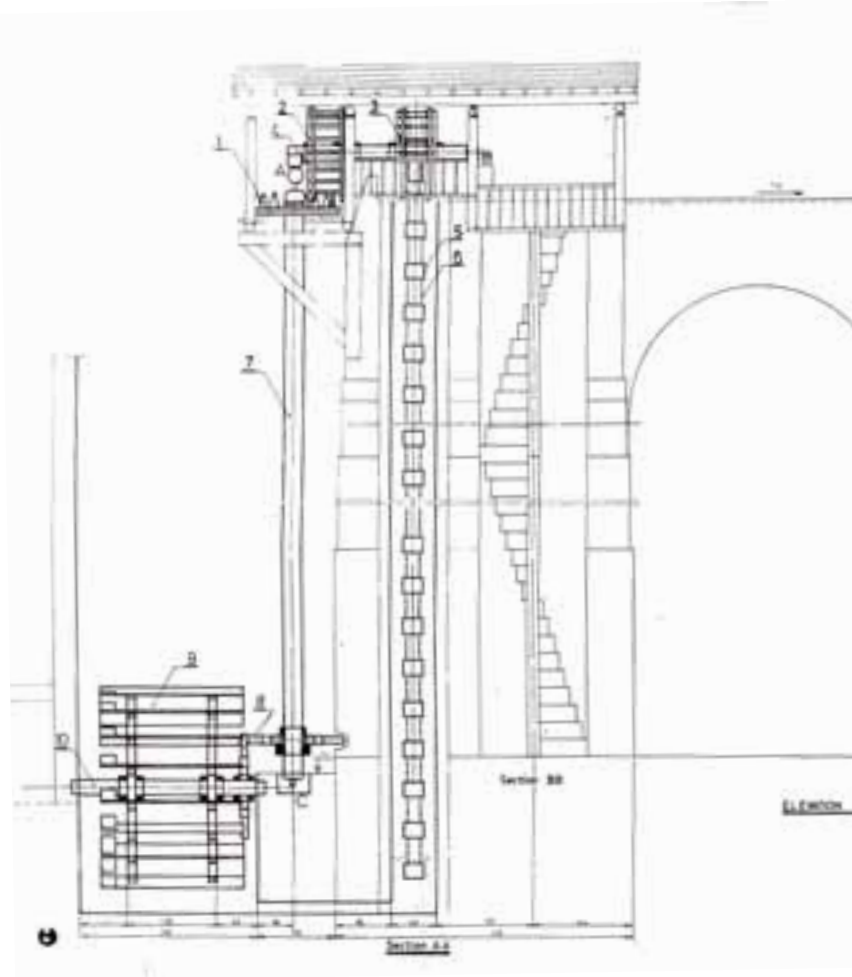
PROVISIONING WATER

No group seems to have had the capacity to construct such sophisticated irrigation works until the arrival of the Aramaeans. The Tora Canal supplied the northern flood plain of the Barada thus allowing intensive irrigation all year round.

The major modification of the canal system bears the name of Caliph Yazid I. (r.680 – 3). It still supplies the upper reaches of the slopes below Salihiye, running two metres higher than the original Aramaean canal, the Tora, to reach the agricultural land as far as Harasta to the east. Originally it may have also been intended to supply the palaces the Arab leaders constructed on the lower slopes of Kassyun.

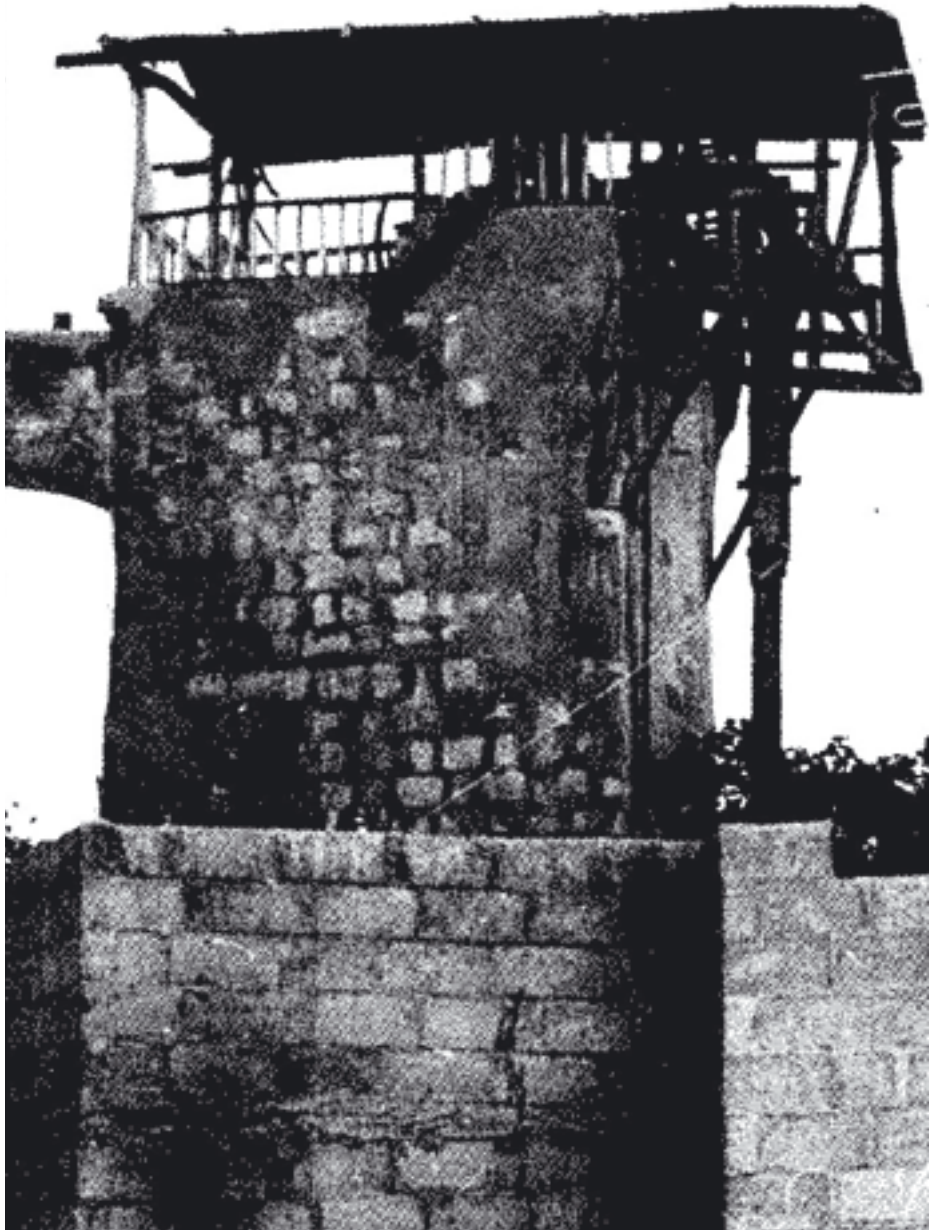
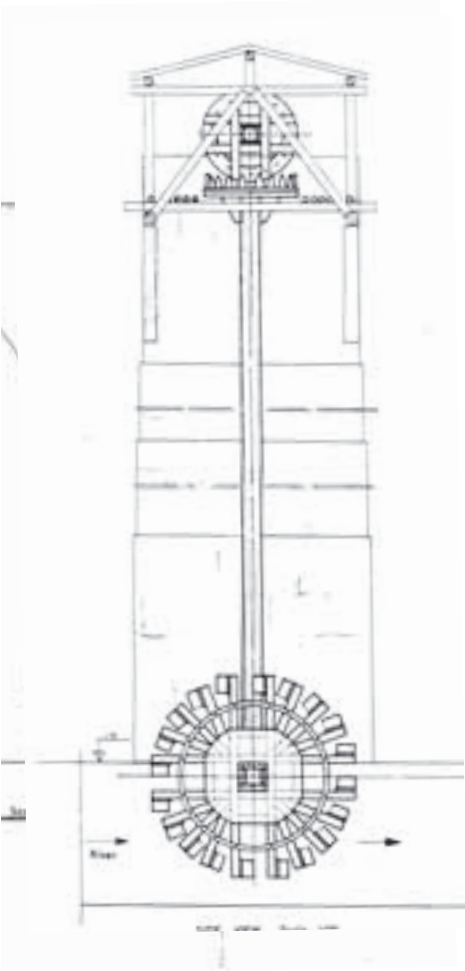
In Mamluk time, one of the most welcome aspects of Damascus to the visitor was its liberal provisioning in water, still drawing on the system installed by the Romans twelve centuries before. Water seemed to flow at every turn, through canals, water wheels and mills on the outskirts, streams around and under the city.

The Fega water line was part of the infrastructural renewal under the rule of the Ottoman. After the water quality had become worse after the additional implementation of sewerage. Husain Nazim Pasha decided to let the water of the Fega dwell being caught and led to a big water tank. In 1906 the construction was completed.



source: Stefan Weber, Ross Burns,
plans: Hanin Munif
map: own design
images: Al-Jazir Mill, Michael Meinecke





- water mill
- Yazid canal
- Tora canal



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HISTORIC MOSQUES

NEW SETTLEMENT

began with the Banu Qudama, a pious Muslim family who had fled the Nablus area of Palestine in 1156 and developed a Hanbali community initially congregated around the Mosque of Abu Salih, a 942 building located outside Bab Sharqi. Under the leadership of Sheikh Ahmad al-Qudama and his son, Abu Umar, the largely Palestinian community took with them the 'al-Salihiye' (arab. „the pious“ label when in 1161-2 they were encouraged by Nur al-Din to establish their khanqah at an existing Hanbali monastery on the Kassyun slopes. Under Al Ma'azzam `Isa (1218 - 1228) the Hanbali Mosque was completed, though funding provided by the brother in law of Saladin, Prince Kreukburi, had been largely instrumental in the project's completion. The Hanbali's Mosque stands on a peaceful Side street of al-Salihiye ist courtyard marked by six crusaders columns.

The construction of a Friday Mosque the first to be built in the vicinity of the city of Damascus (where until then Friday prayers were celebrated exclusively in the Umayyad Mosque) indicates that Salihiye within a half century already gained some urban characteristics.

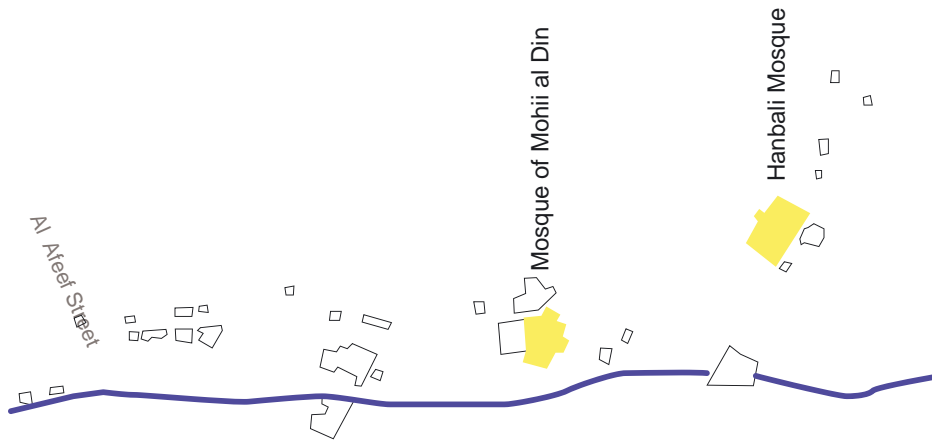
Most important Mosques

Gami al Muzaffari / Hanabila (Friday Mosque) 1202 - 03 / 599

Gami al-Afram 1909 - 10 / 1327

Gami c al - Gadid 1388 / 790

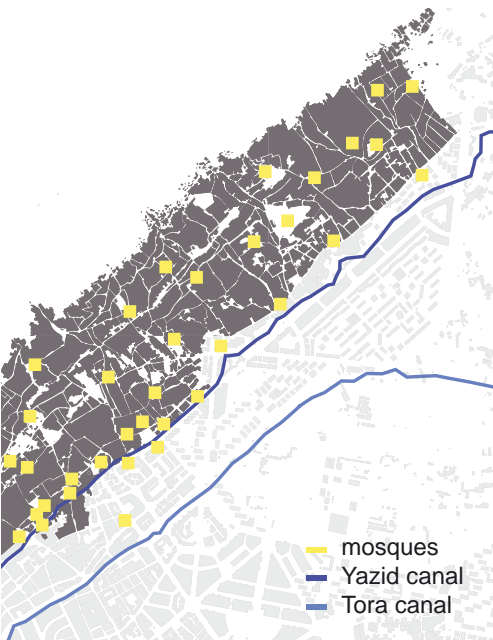
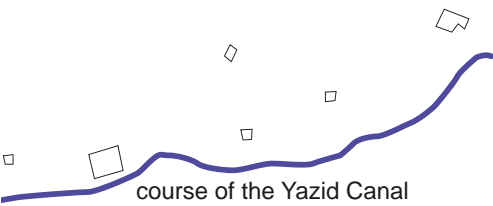
Shaykh Mohieddin ibn Arabi 1518 (924)



expansion in Ayyubid period

source: Ross Burns, Michael Meineke
maps: after Ross Burns, MAM
image: KM



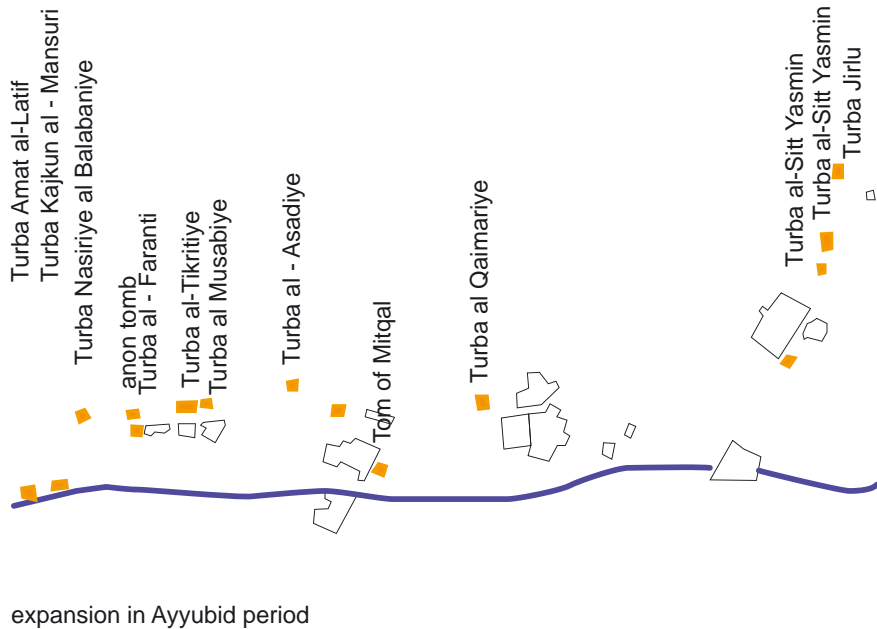


TOMBS AND MAUSOLEA

BURIAL OF THE FAMOUS

Damascus's growth in stature as an Islamic religious centre attracted scholars and mystics from as far away as Muslim Andalusia (Spain). The famed Sufi, Mohi al-Din ibn 'Arabi. His role was to bring fame to the city for centuries as a centre for Sufi mysticism.

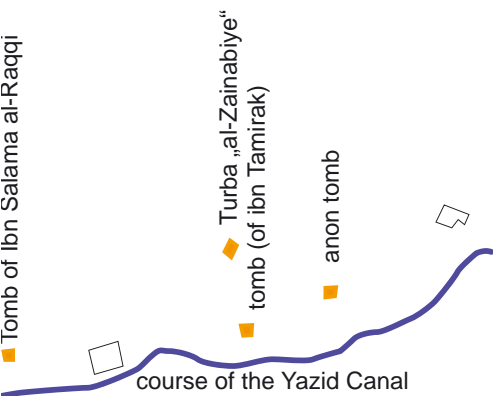
Arabi's sojourn also rebuilt the connection with the Iberian Peninsula that had started with the initial transplanting of the Umayyads after 750. Ibn 'Arabi had settled in Damascus in 1223, probably because his unorthodox teachings found protection with the Ayyubid ruling family. His circle of followers grew in the 17 years before his death. His burial, on the slopes of Salihiye was initially arranged in the family turba of the qadi of Damascus. In later centuries, however, his memory grew in the imagination of those inclined to mysticism and the first Ottoman years were to see a major embellishment of his burial place which until today serves as an important centre of pilgrimage.



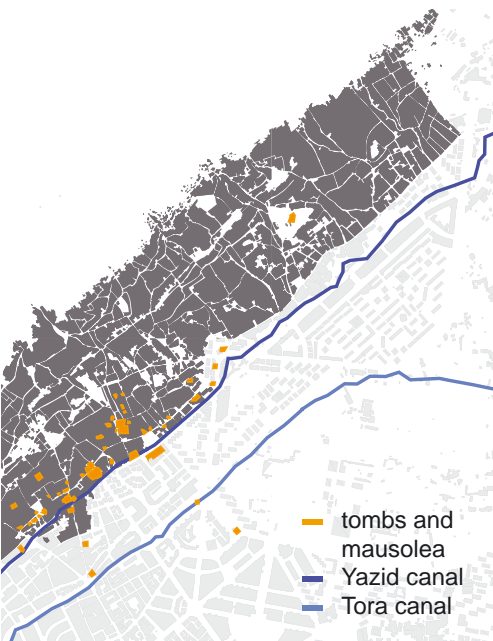
- Most important mausolea
- Mausoleum of Amat al-Latif (middle of 7th/ 13th century)
- Turba al-Hafiziya 648 / 1250
- Turba Aitqal al-Gamdar 621/ 1224
- Mausoleum of Al-adil Kitbuga (Mamluk sultan) 702/ 1303
- Tomb of the very Muhyid din Ibn al-Arabi (famous sufi philosopher)

source: Ross Burns, Michael Meineke
maps: after Ross Burns, MAM
image: KM

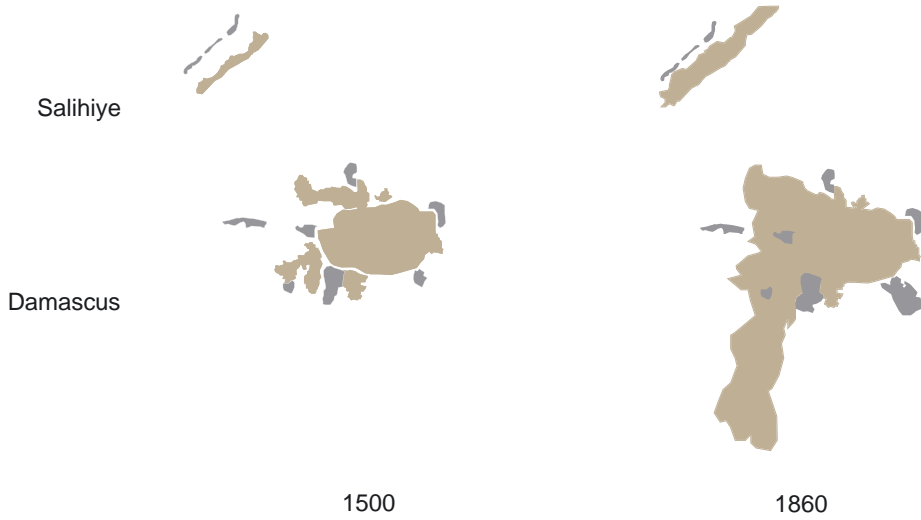




200 m



HISTORIC CEMETERIES



‘CITY OF THE DEATH’

After the foundation of a couple of important Madrasas and the burial place of saints and leaders, Salihyeh became also known as the ‘City of the Death’.

Under the reign of Al-Ashraf (1229-1238) Funerary Madrasas remained favoured means of commemorating service and sustaining faith. It was then when Salihyeh already established as a fitting place to be buried and began to consolidate its reputation for holiness with a string of madrasas.

Muslim Cemeteries in general expand as a process of organic growth around a focus of grace, baraka, the focus in the great majority of cases being the tomb of a saint. It can also be the sepulchre of any distinguished person: one of the Companions (someone belonging to the first generations of Muslims, saw the Prophet with his own eyes), a martyr, a hero, a ruler, a poet or mystic.

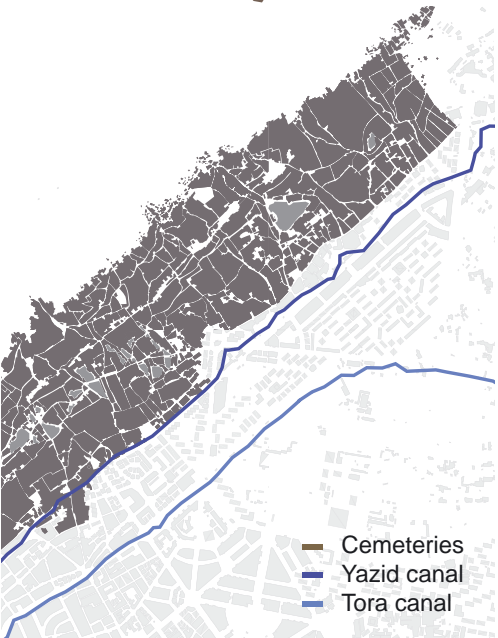
comparison of cemeteries Salihyeh and Damascus

source: Ross Burns, Michael Meineke
maps: after Ross Burns, MAM
image: KM





1929

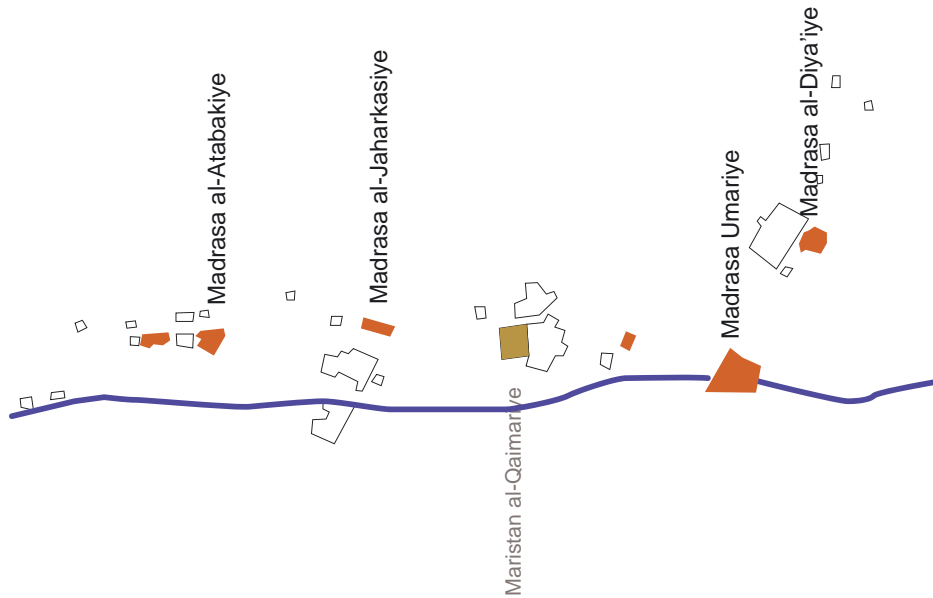


- Cemeteries
- Yazid canal
- Tora canal



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MADRASAS



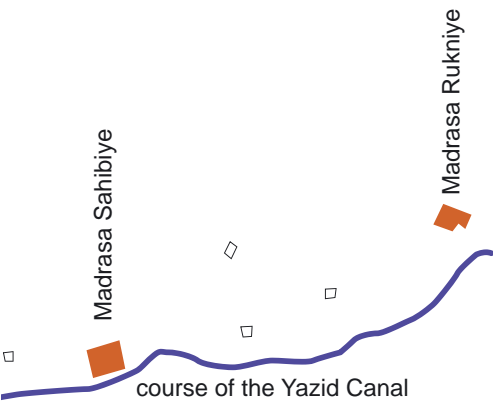
THE HUB OF KNOWLEDGE

Within a century Salhiye became an urban centre rivalling the nearby city of Damascus with Friday mosques and numerous religious foundations, such as Madrasas.

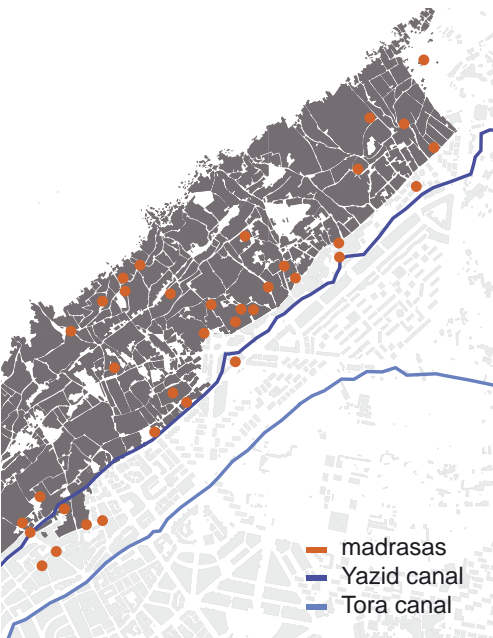
Especially in the Mamluk era new Islamic schools were established and old ones greatly expanded. A total of 78 were operating in Damascus in the Mamluk period plus two for women. The Madrasa al-'Umariye in Salhiye, set up as a Hanbali monastery was now greatly expanded.

source: Ross Burns, Michael Meineke
maps: after Ross Burns, MAM
image: KM



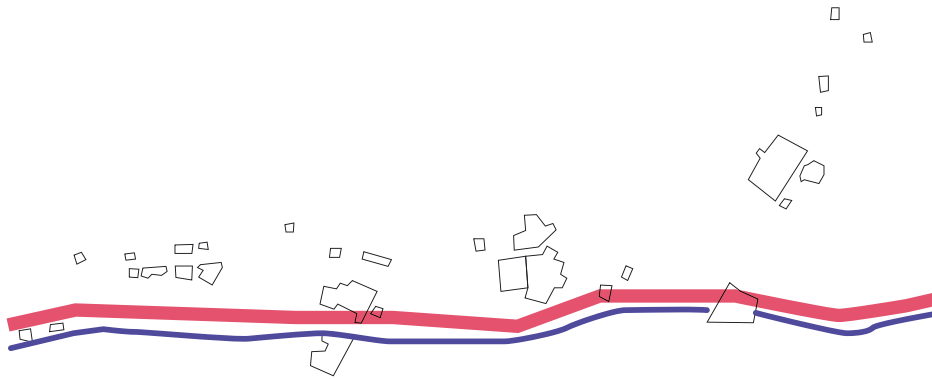


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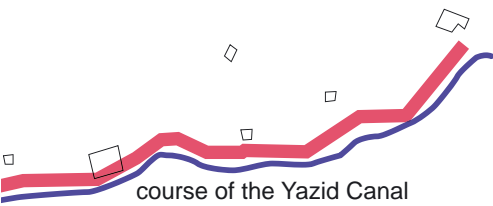


COMMERCIAL LIFELINE

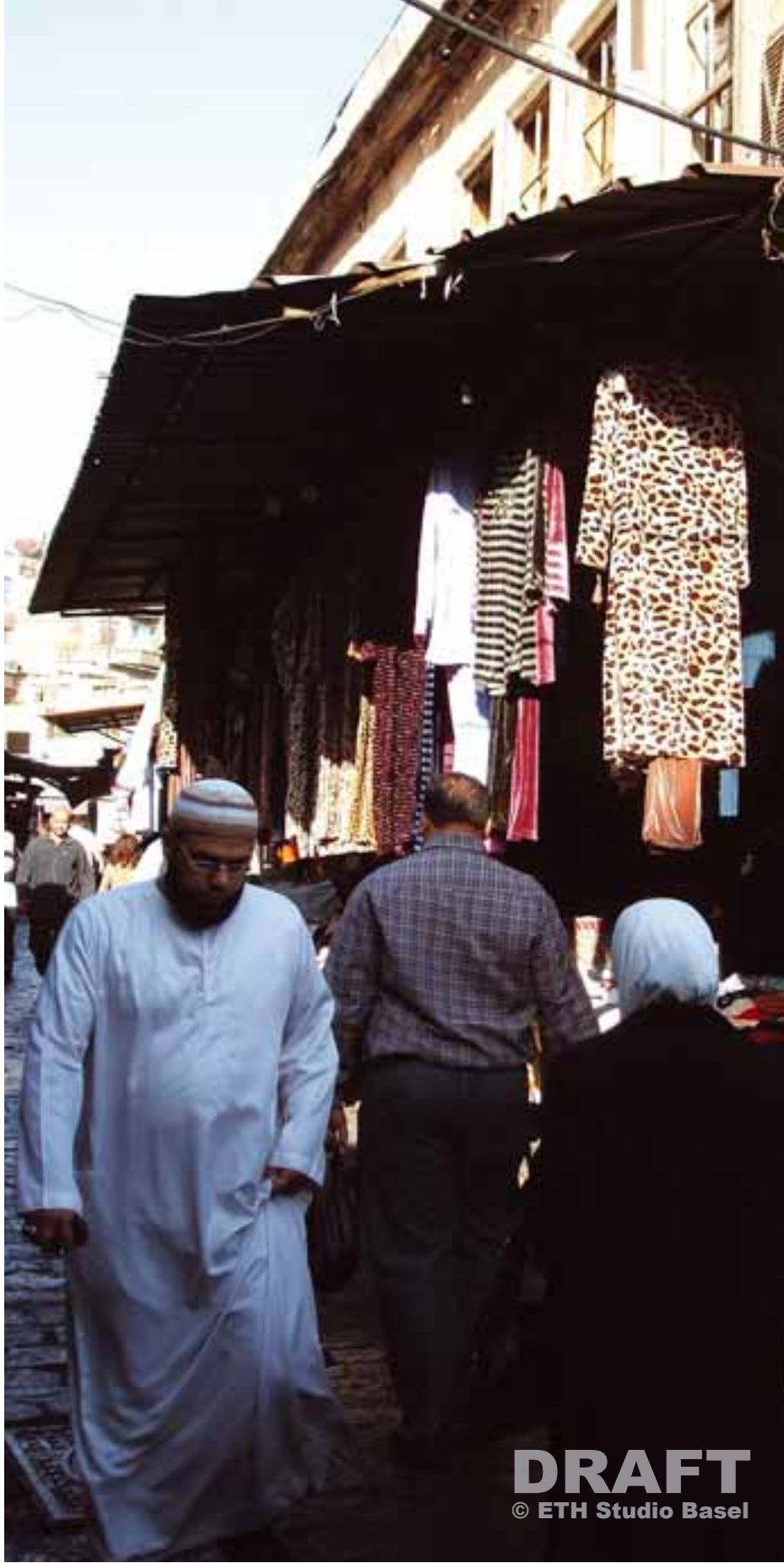
Salihiye also included many civil monuments - suq, khan, hammam, luxurious residences, a bimaristan. The Salihiye bimaristan is the best preserved and perhaps the finest Ayyubid monument in Damascus. Several inscriptions appearing on the gate give a date (aug 1248) for the beginning of construction, as well as the identity of the founder (Emir Sayf al-din Qaymari), and list property comprising the waqf . The plan of the building, inspired by Nur al Din's bimaristan, displays perfect symmetry along the north-south axis: a vaulted gateway with muqarnas, a vestibule, a square court with a central basin, a large iwan in the middle on the southern side, two smaller iwans in the center to the east and west quarters and a dozen or so rooms onto the court.



source: Ross Burns, Michael Meineke
maps: after Ross Burns, MAM
image: KM



200 m

AL-MUHAJIRIN

‘New quarter of modernity’

In the late 19th century a new housing settlement developed in the western part of Mount Kassum. This new quarter was planned by the governor Husayin Nouri Pasha between 1895 and 1911 to house the refugees coming to Damascus. On the other hand important members of the elite of the city, started to build their villas, surrounded by a big yard and out of stone, in the newly developed area.

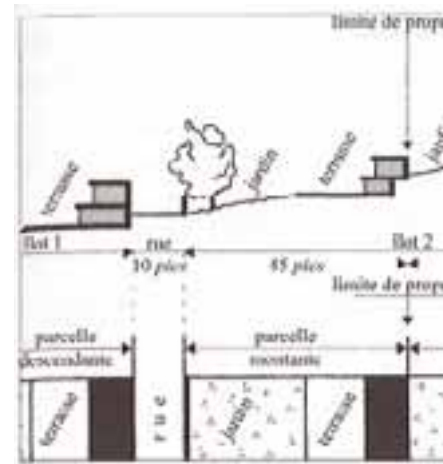
Al-Muhajirin got developed in different periods of time. Several years after the first refugees settled down the first mosque was built in 1893 and others followed. In 1890 the eastern part was already occupied with mostly houses constructed with loam. Refugees from Crete started to build their houses in the western part from 1900 on.

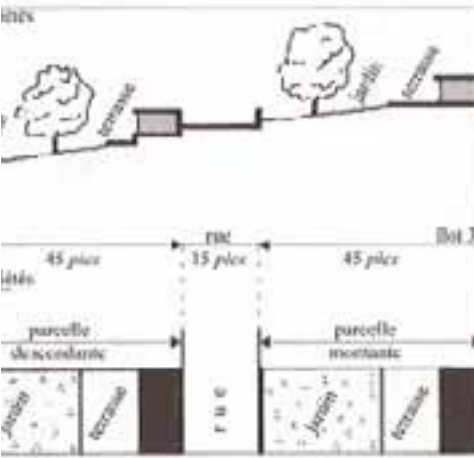
Around the change of the centuries, especially during the first years of the 20th century the extension of the quarter got started. The important road Al-Salihiye-Street was built in 1904, in 1905 the street-grid in Al-Muhajirin was finished and 3 years later it became connected to the new water-system.

With the connection with the tram-line in 1907 Al-Muhajirin was perfectly linked to Damascus.

The planning for this new suburb was based on structures used in the capital and provided in laws for province regions. Not paying attention to the topography a strict grid was set on the street system. For the first time in the whole history of Damascus one area was unitarily conceptualized. The grid forms a clearly arranged block structure. This model of urban planning is based on European design methods and was firstly put on ground in Istanbul. It leads to a wideness of the streets of 11,45 meters. Although the area was intended to be used for refugees its benefits of a excellent conditions soon attracted wealthier people choosing this place to live. In the upper area mostly houses built with loam could be found, in the middle part rather row houses with courtyards and at the main road, at the southern end, better conditioned residence houses. As the initiator of this development the emperor Wilhelm II is often mentioned. For him, in 1898 a view-platform was constructed. Him following Husayin Nouri Pasha built his „villa at the hill“ between 1902 and 1904. Soon Al-Muhajirin developed into being the prominent quarter of the city, since the site offered a panoramic view over the city and a good climate.

source: Stefan Weber
images: Jean-Luc Arnaud

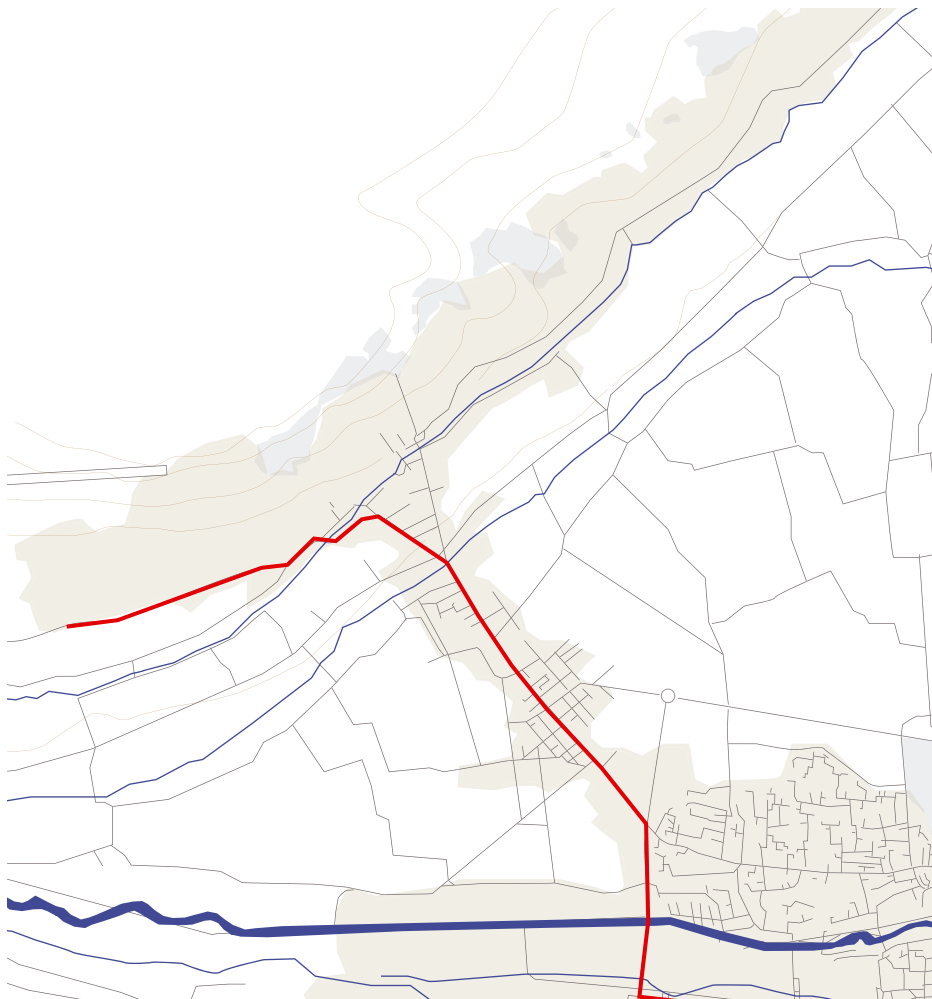




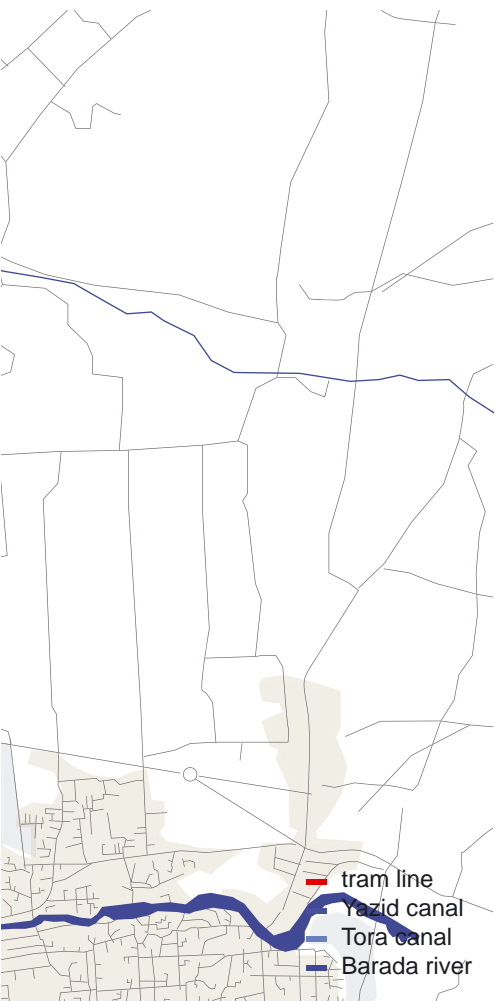
HISTORIC TRAMLINE

CONNECTION TO DAMASCUS

The drive to modernise also resulted in the letting of concessions to European companies to develop new means of transport within Damascus. Merdje Square, expanded and formalised in 1884, became the focal point of an electric tramway system run by a Belgian company under a 1904 concession that also allowed for the electrification of the city. The laying of tramlines required the widening of several streets outside the old city. The central line (1907) was a link from Merdje running along the western edge of the old city and down the Suq al-Sinaniye to the Midan. A second line joined Merdje Square to Jisr al-Abiad, later extending to Muhajrin and Salihiye quarters (1913).



source: Ross Burns, Michael Meineke
maps: own design after Stefan Weber



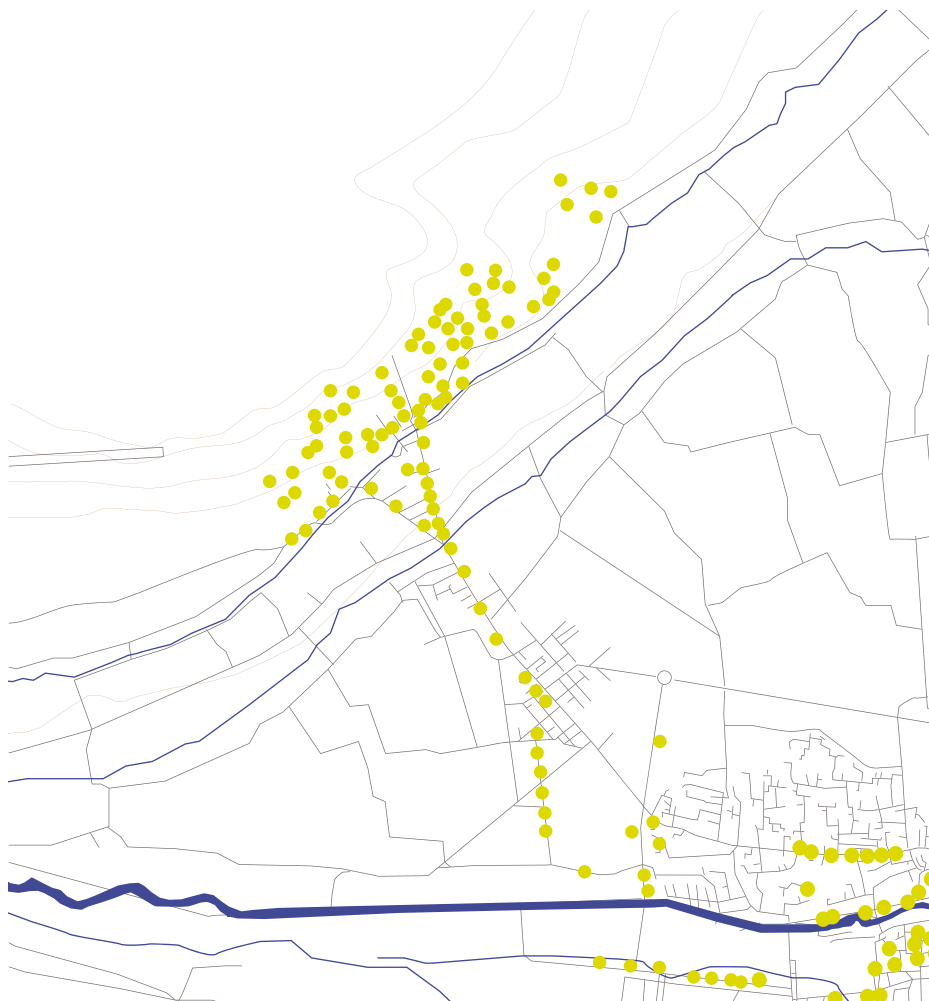
ESTABLISHMENT OF ELECTRICITY AND STREET LIGHTNING

LIGHTING UP

On April 1907 Damascus was supplied with electricity for the first time. The main depot and electricity generating station lay north of Victoria Bridge and the first electric street lamps, 1,442 of them, were turned on since then.

Streets, markets and squares were lightened covering the overall quarters of the city. This implementation was in this way not simply focussed on the new-built districts, the city center or the quarters of the damascene upper class but was providing security throughout and all over Damascus.

The modernization of urban infrastructure was not stopping at the city gate but covered the main street of the Old City (parallel to the renewal of almost all of the houses for commerce and living).



source: Ross Burns, Michael Meineke
maps: own design after Ross Burns,
MAM



ECOCHARD Projections for expansion

1968 MASTERPLAN- NING

Ecochard and Banshouya two French planner developed a general development planning for Damascus, including Salihiye.

When the population counted about 400.000 inhabitants they developed a planning also for the case of expansion.

Therefore the city got divided into fourteen sections as a green belt, local parties, public gardens, governmental areas, rule areas, industrial areas, new and also future developed residential neighbourhoods, historical extension, the city center, the area inside the walls and the Barada river valley. All sections had their own typology.

For population growth Ecochard had a special idea of buffer zones. He developed a strategy for the city expanding up to one million living inside the city and another million in the periphery.

The bases was to let the city grow as a hand, Salihiye as the tenar and the oasis to be kept between the fingers.

Hence less then fifty percent were put on the ground and the population grew intensively this caused a main reason for informal settlement to start.

source: Almahanna Soulaiman
map: IFPO

LES ZONES D'EXTENSION





مسق

امداد



RAPID SETTLEMENT

'Informal Settlement'

MOVING UPWARDS

Informal settlement in Syria can result from the following categories of legal situations:

land tenure
non-compliance of land use/planning regulations
non-compliance of building standards
non-compliance of registration-requirements

quote: MAM, Edesio Fernandes, Informal settlements in Syria, September 2008

The term 'informal settlement areas' in Syria refers to houses built contrary to urban planning or building regulations. However, these areas have basic services (drinking water, electricity, telephone, sanitation) at reasonable levels and a fair number of the buildings have sound structure, a far cry from the 'tin cities' found in other countries.

quote: Government of Syria, 10th Five Year Plan (2006 - 2010), Chapter 14, Housing Sector in Syria

defined by IFPO and MAM

- informal area
- old area
- planned area





REGULARISATION

Contemporary Proposal

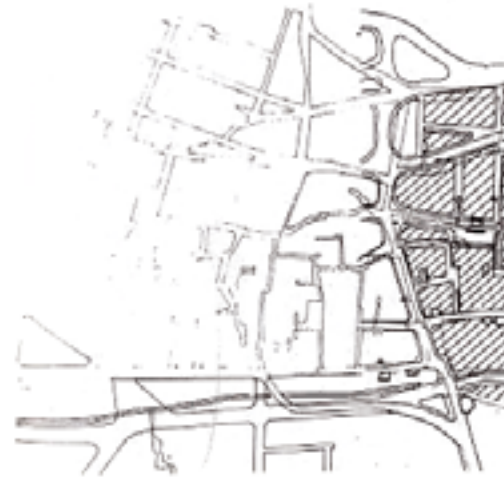
1986

The historical substance became questioned, not only in the Old City, but also in Salihiye. Already in the years before almost one third of the listed monuments became torn down to liber space for bigger access-roads and new buildings. In the 80s again it was thought of widening some streets and threatening more monuments. It was planned to cut through the existing houses by keeping the street structure. The schematic development plan shows the route of the baggers and the planned destruction of traditional quaters.

Differnt to the Old City, in Salihiye the modernisation planning effects on recently built buildings. Their housing typology leans, referring to height and orientation to the courtyard, on the traditional housing as it got developed in the old part of Salihiye.

The in the 80s planned modernisati-on plan would have effected on the destruction of monuments, traditional quaters and traditional housing typologies. They were meant to be displaced by newly imported types for high resedential buildings.

source: Bauwelt 40, 1986,
googleearth





NEIGHBOURHOODS

Mix of residents from Damascus and immigrants from other Syrian Provinces

Kurdish immigrants from various locations)

Older Damascene Community (Al Sawalha)

Lower-income Kurds

Immigrants and
refugees from
other Arab coun-
tries

Circassian Com-
munity

Older settlement of Syr-
ian Kurds now consid-
ered Damascenes (Al
Wanliyat)

Palestinians

Lower-income
Damascenes
(Al Tanaber)

ADMINISTRATIVE DISTRICTS

Municipal and subdistrict boundaries





information based on MAM Report

DRAFT
S.ETH Studio Base

SALHIYE

An isle or a hole? And how is it linked to Damascus?





DRAFT
© 2014 Studio Basel

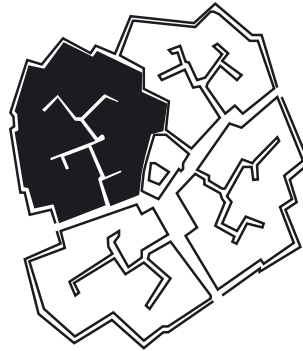




Urban Structure

- 60 Urban Morphology
- 62 Hilltown Salihiye
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URBAN MORPHOLOGY

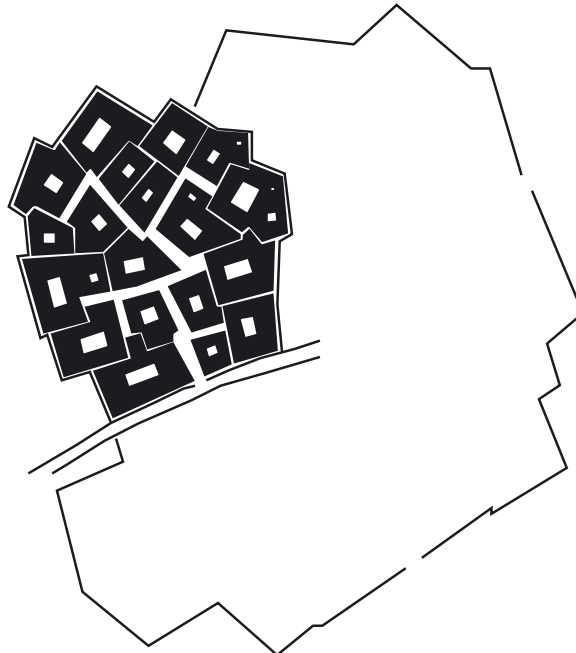


The Old City of Damascus is one of the best city examples of a „Muslimic city“ kind of morphological development. The city itself, but also each quarter, f.e. the Jewish quarter, could be seen as a city in the city.

Similar to the quater communities also the occupation communities have their own logical system. The Suqs form a chambersystem of different market sections, leading to the mosque. The mosque therefor gets the role of an inner room of the market area, protected by the gate-ways formed by the Suqs. This leads to a coexistence of two different types of public spaces. The mosque as the quiet center of the city and the market as the moving space.

The Old City is characterized by its encapsulated structure, where the visitor never sees the whole, there are no specific landmarks, no specific Fassades, but always the feeling of being in the center of a room.

quarter

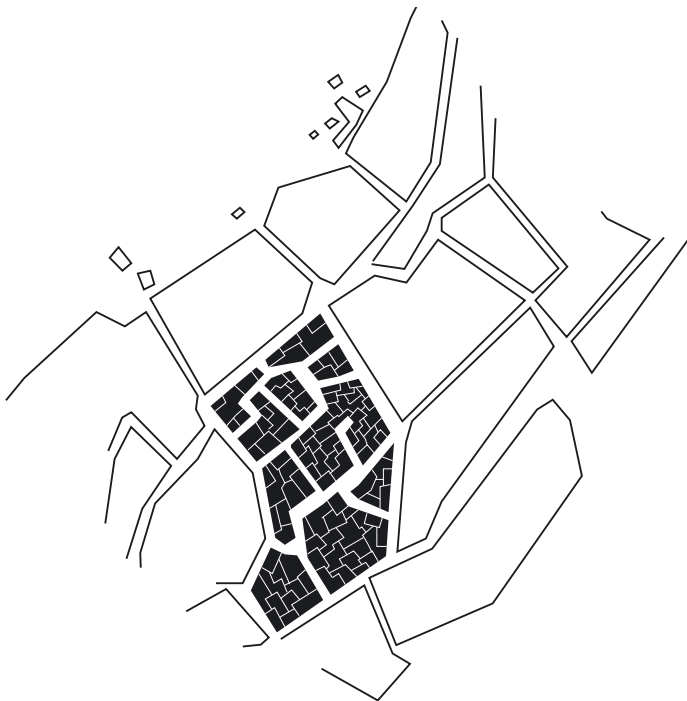


neighbourhood

source: TU Dresden
images: own design after TU Dresden



quarter

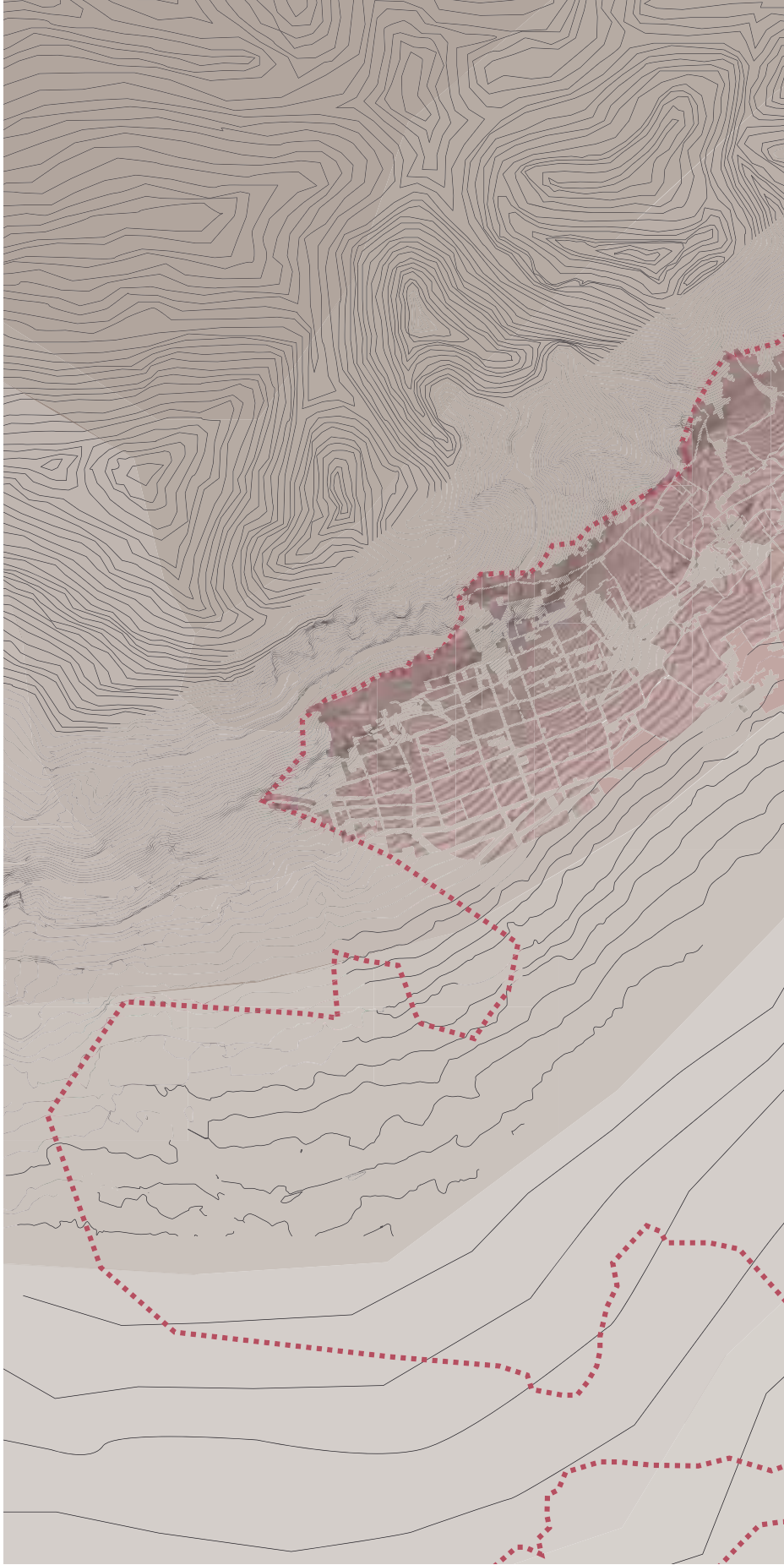


neighbourhood

SALIHIE In Salihiye we can find similar characteristics. Main roads demonstrate the major directions, with the old suq in the lower part as the main commercial area. The inner structures of the neighbourhoods are organized in a labyrinthic and narrow path way which provides foreigners from entering. The paths are mostly stairways which keep cars, traffic, supply and noise outside the residential areas. The whole system, the residential and the commercial, can also be described as an *encapsula* surrounded by bigger streets. The Ottoman Shaykh Mohieddin Mosque innerts the tomb of Ibn Arabi and is one of the central mosques in Salihiye. Similiar to the structure of the Old City little shops are always located outside the housing areas.

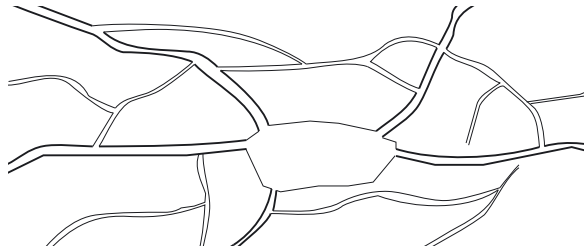
source: TU Dresden
images: own design

HILLTOWN SALIHIYE

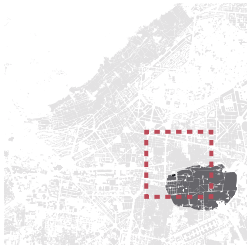


- Hilltown Salihiye
- Old City
- contemporary settlement

URBAN FABRIC



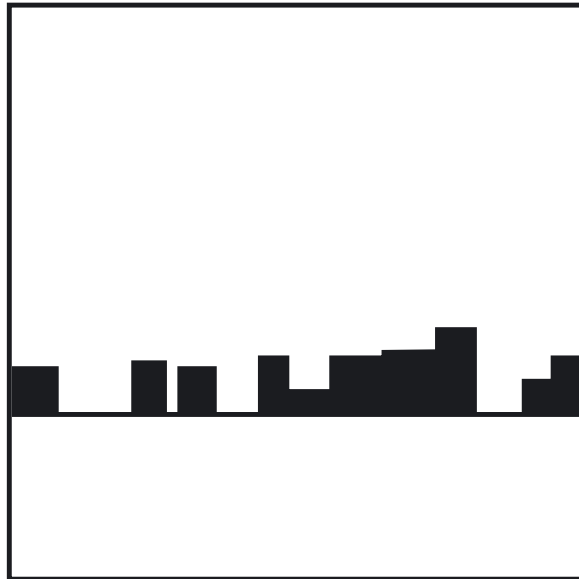
street system



THE OLD CITY The Old City of Damascus is similar structured as other „islamic“ cities. One of the most significant features is the strict division between open and private space respectively territory which has an impact not only on the system of access, but also on the building structure. The public life is determined by the Great Mosque with its surrounding markets and the seven gates leading to main roads, the private life by its residential house and the quarter. Big walls keep the residential areas from the public apart.

The system of access creates a hierarchy between these spaces. From the gates incoming (pedestrians and supplier) are directly lead to the center without passing the living areas.

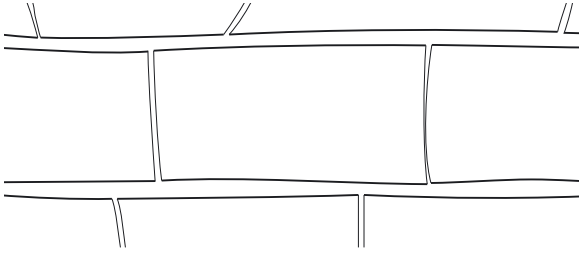
Another mark of this urban structure is that each social arrangement owns one itself closed room. This refers to the residential house itself, but also to each quarter.



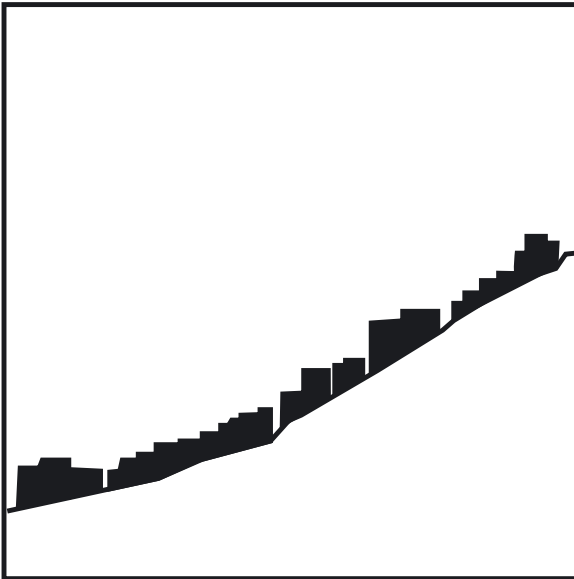
elevation



grain



street system



elevation



grain

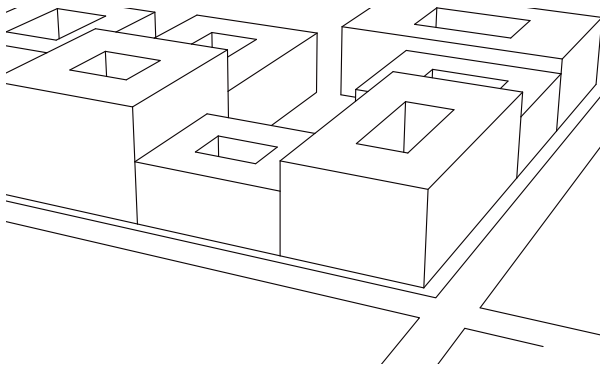
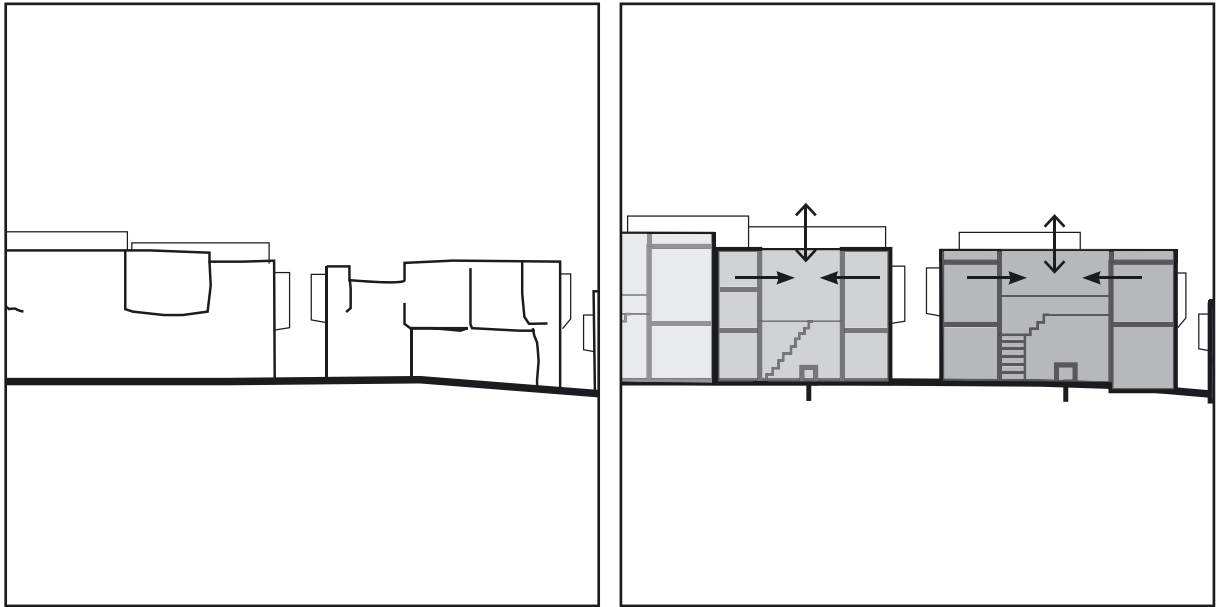


SALIHIE Building blocks, framed by narrow streets and alleys, consist out of a dense arrangement of two- and three story houses. The inner zones are almost completely built upon with houses and are connected by access- and dead end- roads. Those are usually very labyrinthic and lead to bigger, connecting streets. Some of them disappeared by building new housing fabric on them. Bigger story houses, built during the last years, can be found within this structure, whereas som shops along the suq only consist of one story.

In the lower part you find an existing small fad net of coequal streets which is perfectly connected to the bigger roads of Damascus, with the suq as an exception, which is only for pedestrians. The continious main roads lead from down to up. Within you find tiny stairways and paths which make the houses accessible. Their course and the size of the sites is determined by the difficult topography contains running alleys and the vertical and perpendicular running stairways. During time the area fully densified. As a result we find a unmanageable and labyrinthic structure. Foreigners therefore have difficulties to enter this structure.

HOUSING

Evolution from courtyard typology





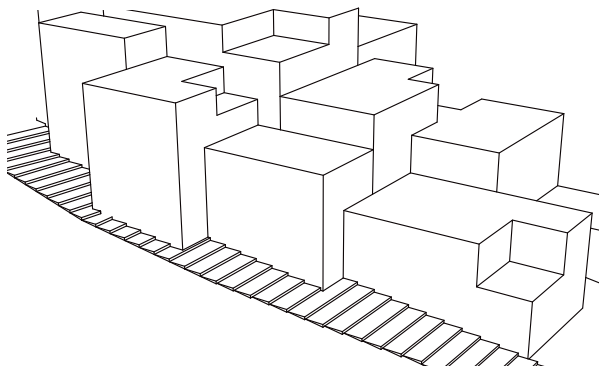
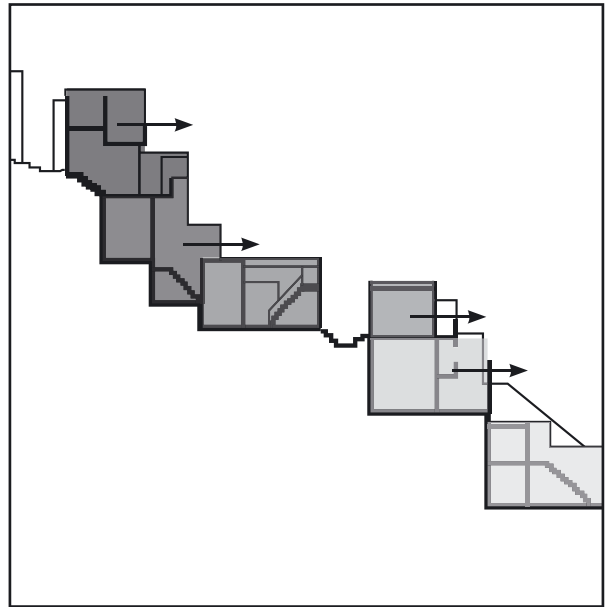
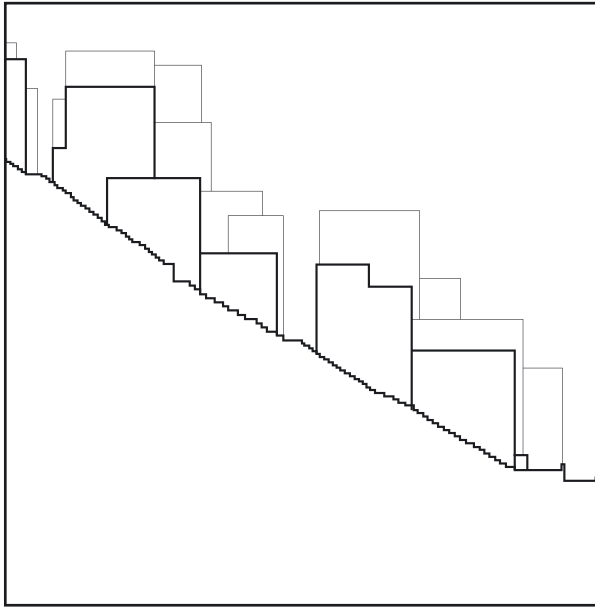
FABRIC IN THE OLD CITY

The traditional Damscene residential building type is a courtyard house. Its strong relation between the inside and outside space, such as the sky determines the arrangement of spaces.

In its courtyard center we always find a fountain.

HOUSING

Evolution from courtyard typology





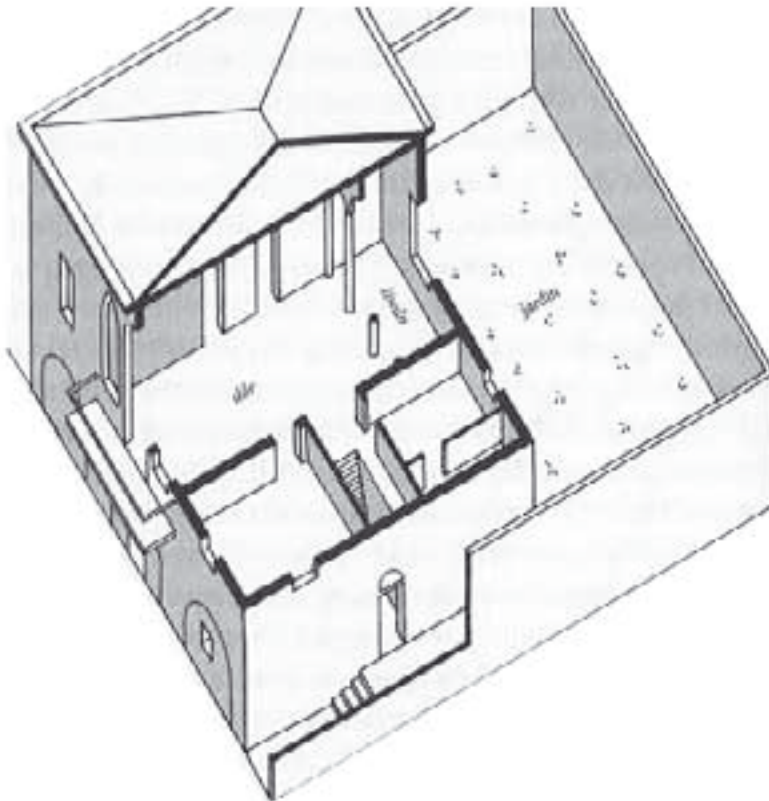
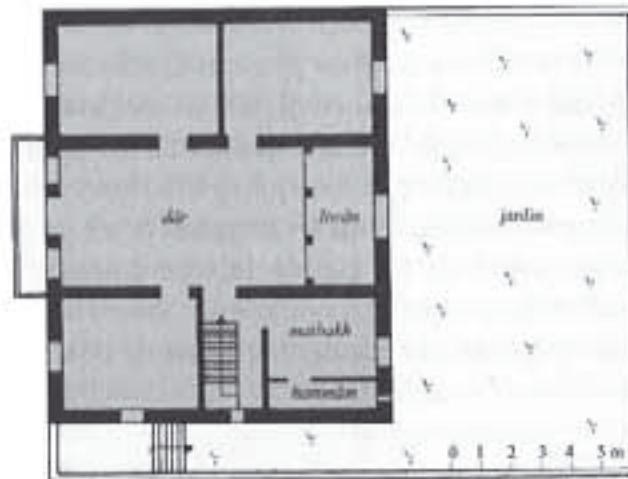
FABRIC IN SALIHIYE

In Salihiye there are additional aspects which have influenced the evolutionary changing of the traditional Damascene house. One aspect is the topography and due to rising attitude, panoramic view and roof terrasses become a compulsory element. In the lower part we also find courtyard houses. Nevertheless they generally follow the traditional search for a strong relationship between the inside and outside. The private life mostly takes place inside the house, where usually the whole family lives together.

source: TU Dresden

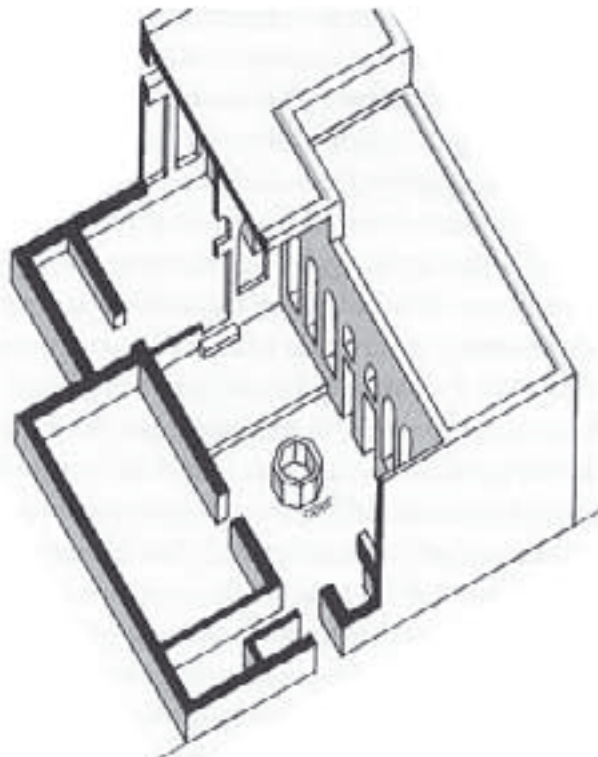
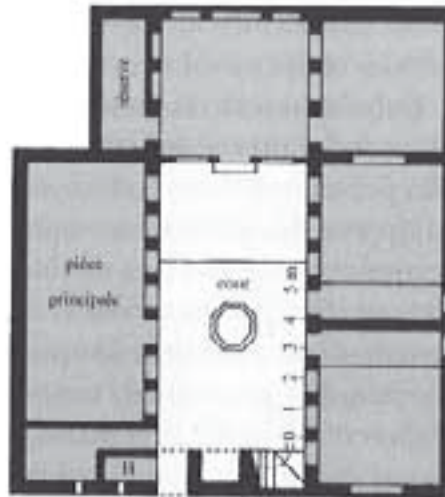
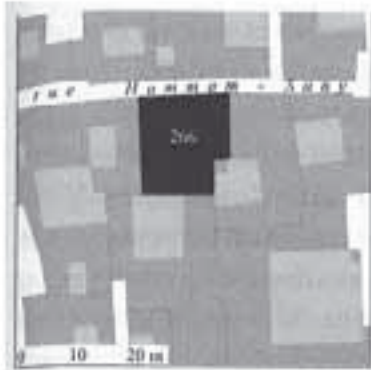
HOUSING typologies

Beyrouth, 19th century



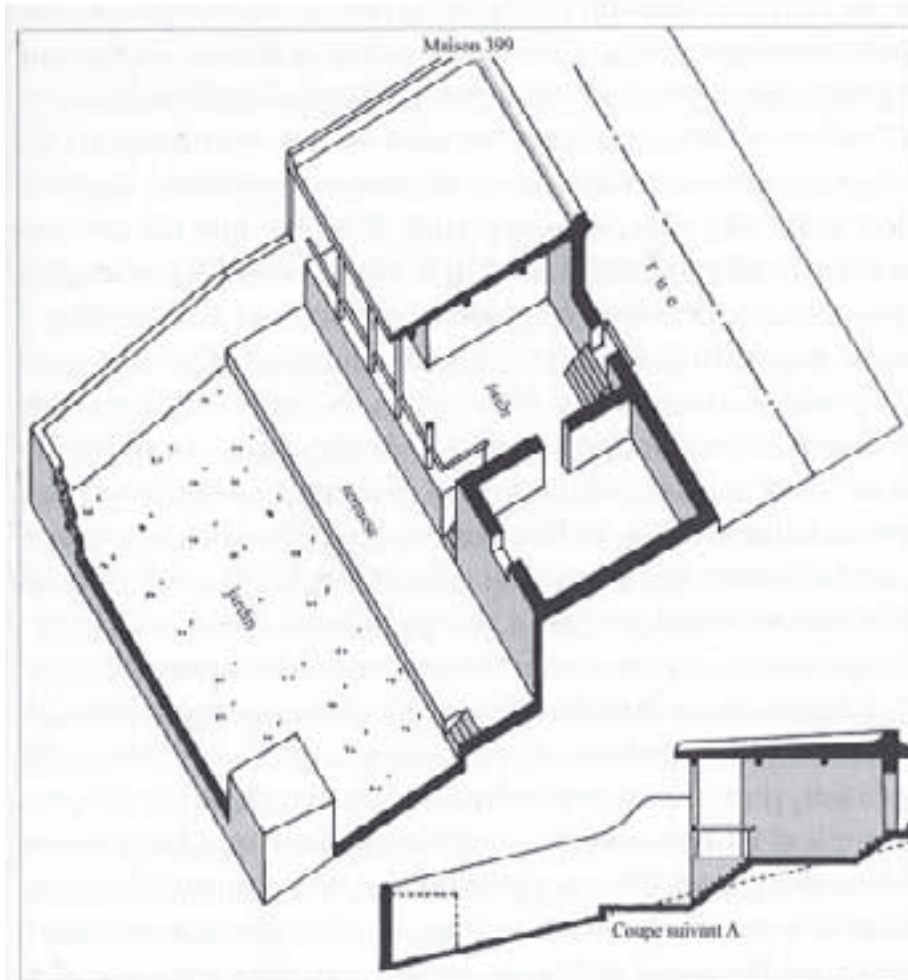
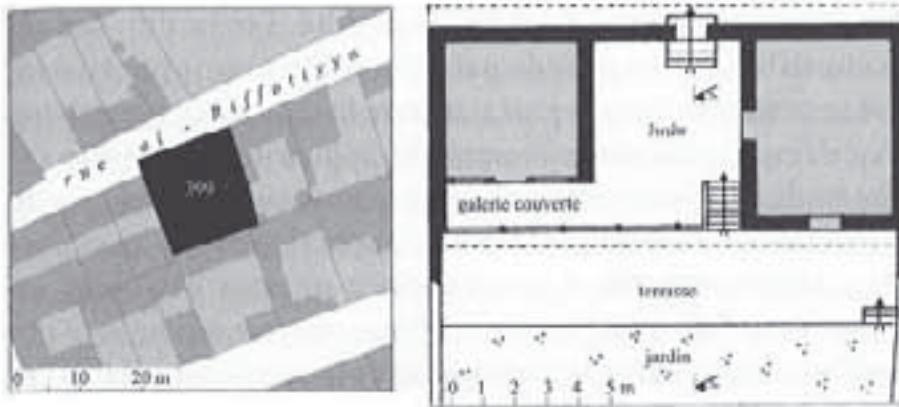
HOUSING typologies

Damascus, Suq Saruja, 1880



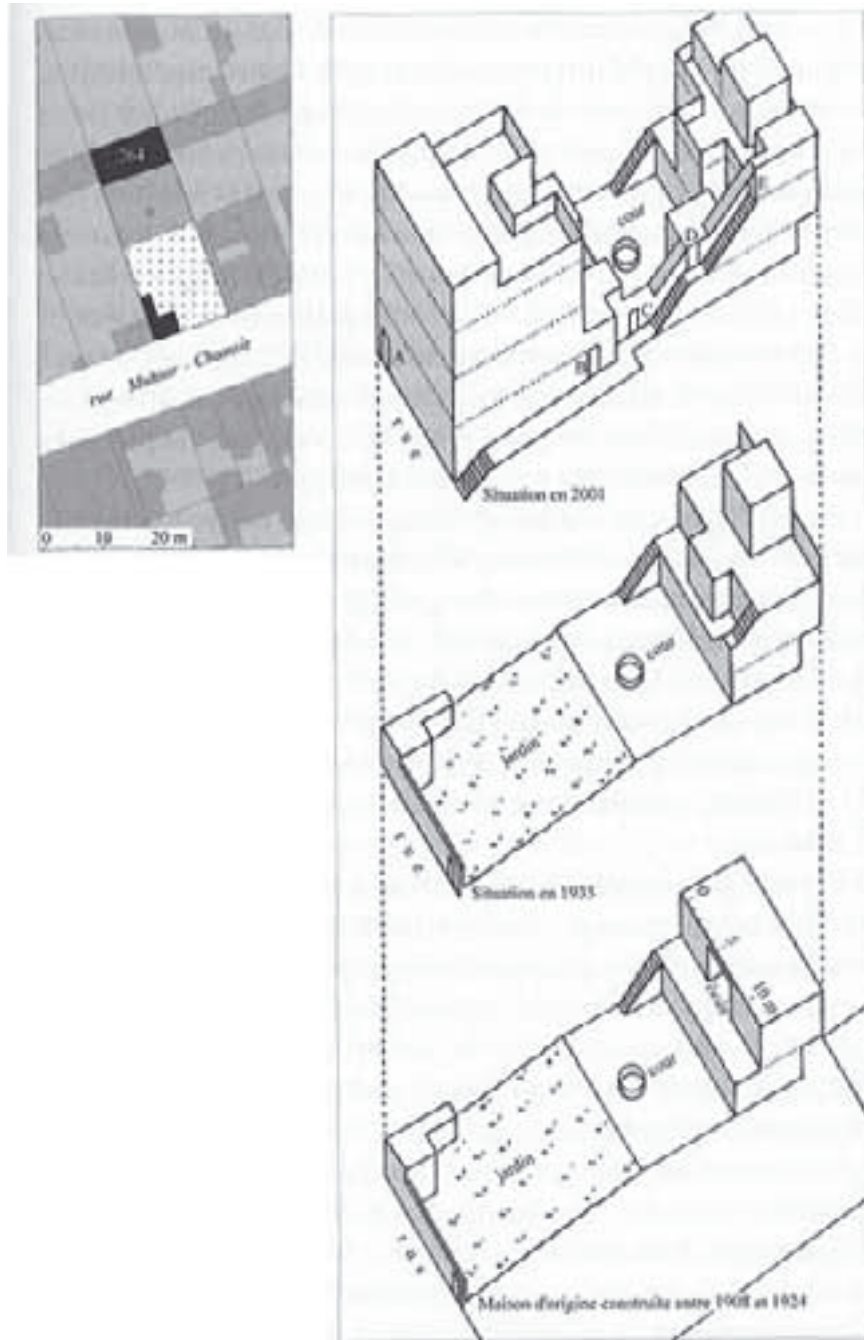
HOUSING typologies

Damascus, Al-Muhajirin



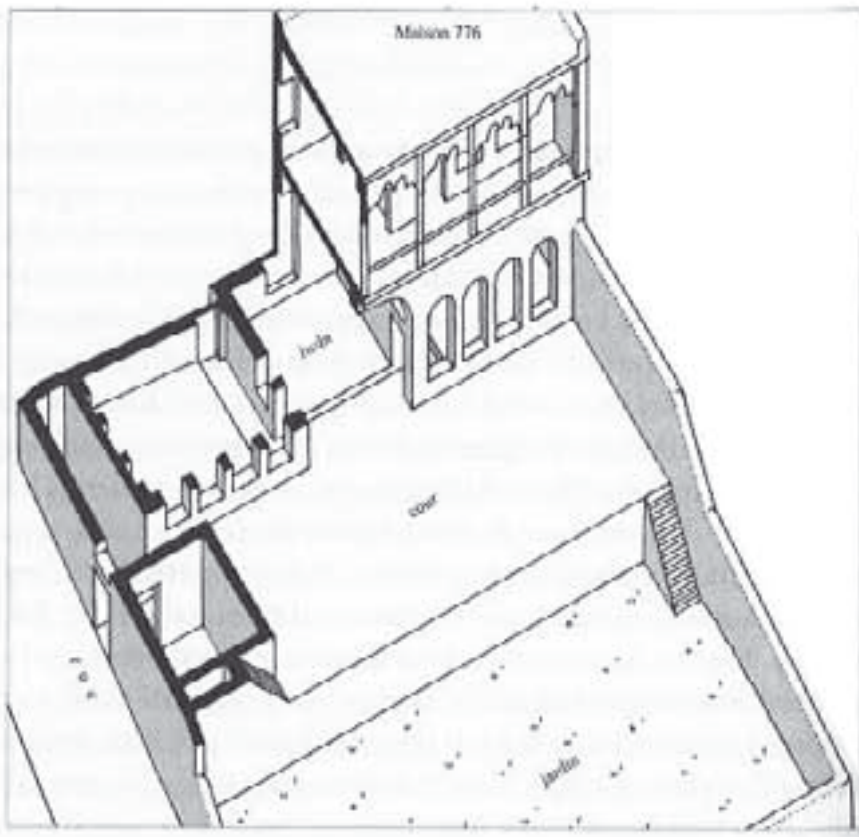
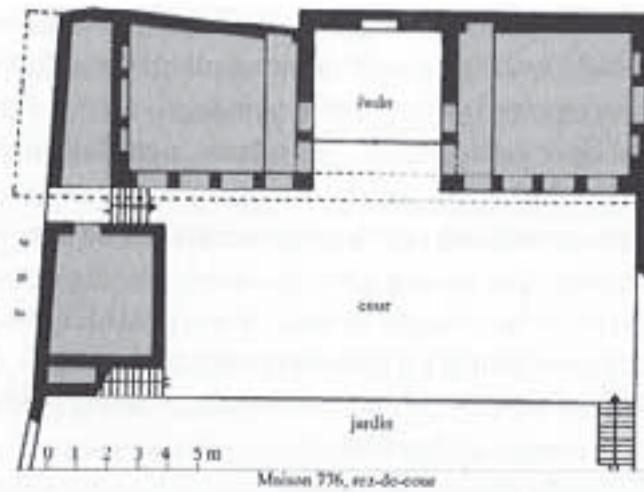
AL-MUHAJIRIN

Densification between 1908 and 2001



HOUSING typologies

Damascus, Salihiye



HOUSING

Typology evolution

original parcelle



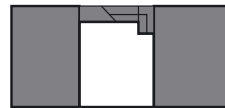
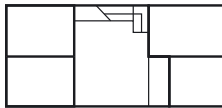
construction of the auroch cell



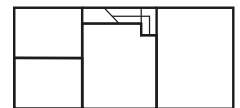
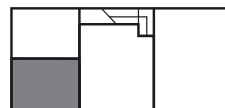
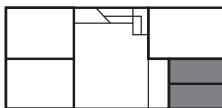
construction of additional rooms (bathroom, kitchen, etc.)



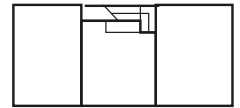
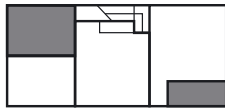
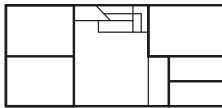
building of a stairway with access to the roof



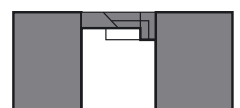
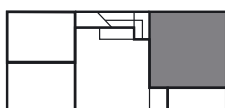
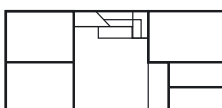
adding a further room in the first floor (sleeping)



covering the courtyard, further rooms added in the first floor



construction of a stairway to the roof



ground floor

first floor

second floor



At the first sight the transition from one to another, between the different building types and structures cannot be pointed out. Old buildings get upgraded by exchanging windows, doors, roller shutters and window grills to new ones. The added stories with use of modern materials such as concrete-stones. Extensions of buildings normally are not dispatched, so that this leads to a more less heterogeneous outside in combination of the decline of some houses. Their outer appearance is characterized by several changes and expansions. The point of construction is hardly identifiable and can only be assumed. At some places we find attempts of unifying the facades and giving them the same appearance. So it is mostly difficult to define the inner borders of houses and flats.

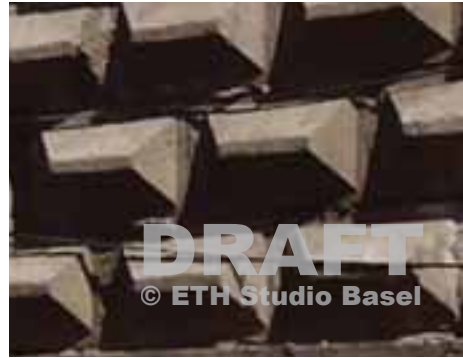
image: own design after TU Dresden
source: TU Dresden

HOUSING
Construction



HOUSING
Material





DRAFT
© ETH Studio Basel

HOUSING
Color

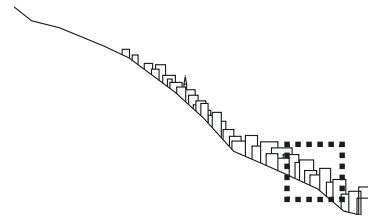
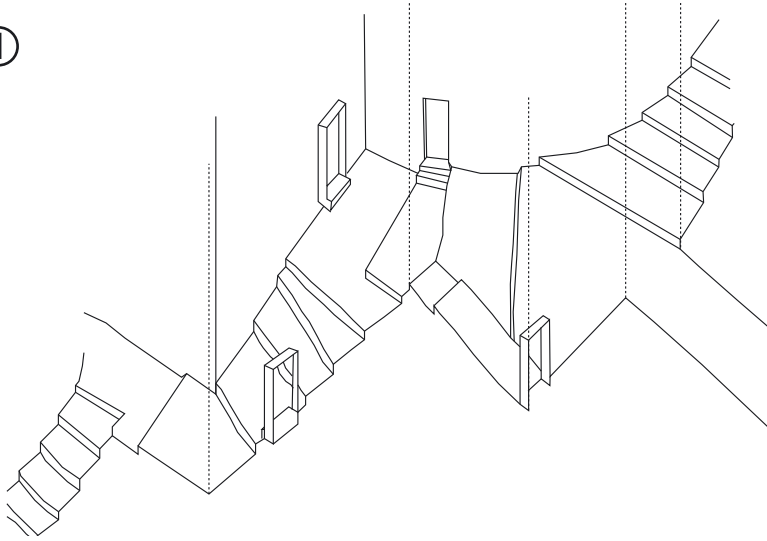




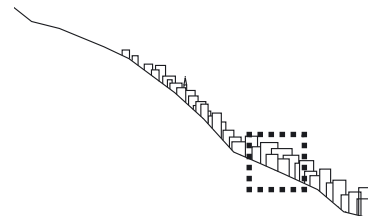
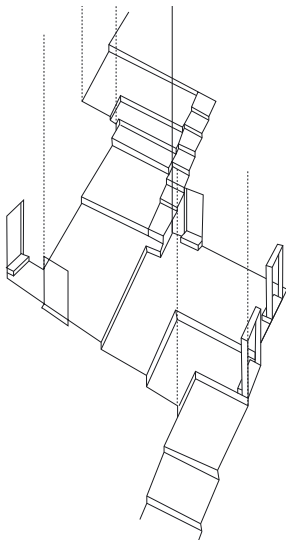
HILLTOWN CIRCULATION

Specific characteristics due to labyrinthic road network, dense building structure and specific topography of Mount Kassun

①



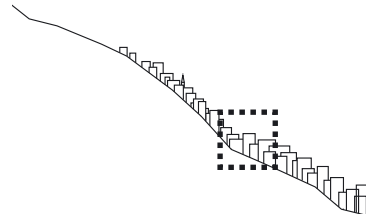
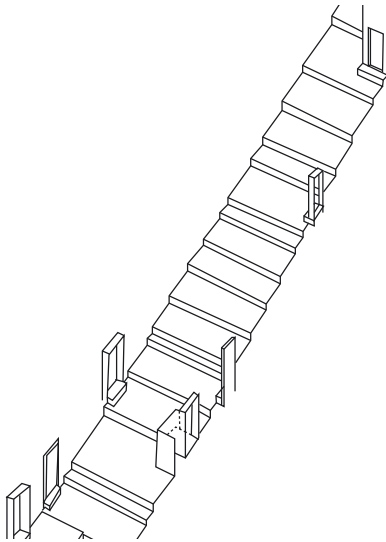
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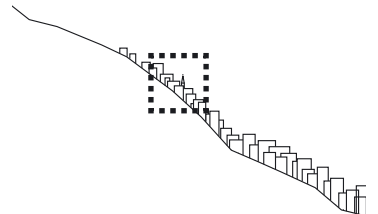
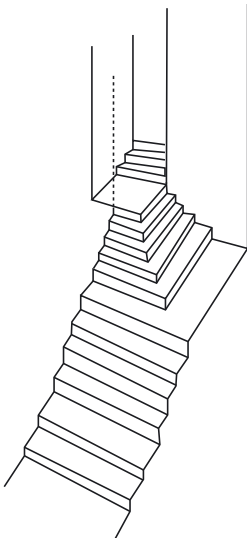


HILLTOWN CIRCULATION

③



④





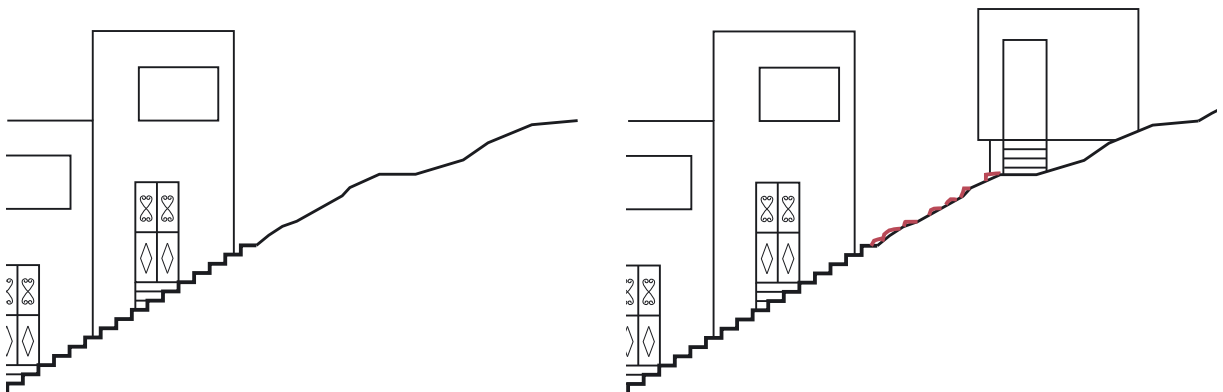
HILLTOWN CIRCULATION

Establishment of accessibility



People occupy land for future house construction. In order to make access possible, they create stairways out of bricks, fill tins with loam or use natural steps in the rock.

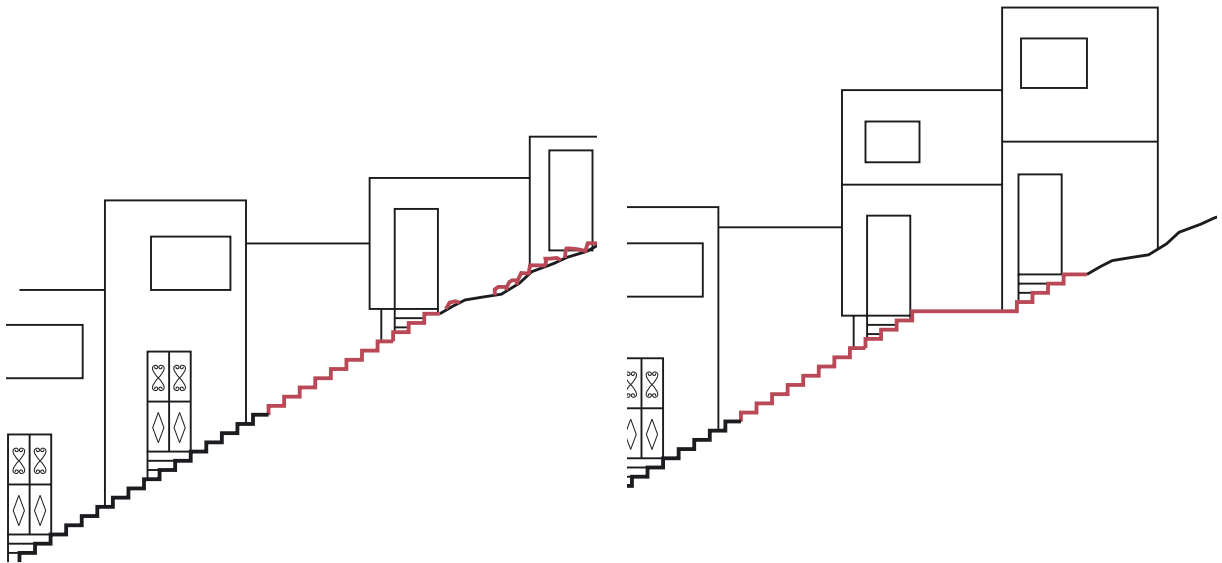
During time they become precised and some parts assured.





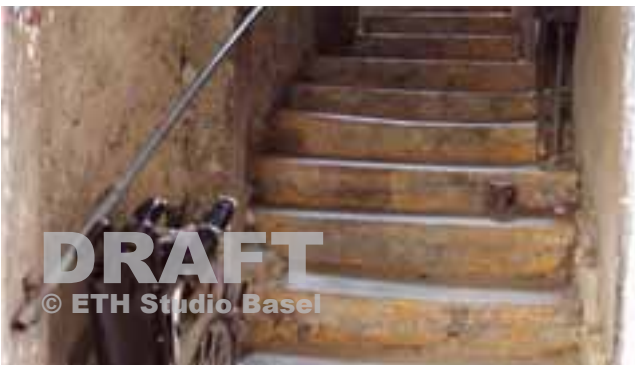
After some time concrete is used to establish are properly formed staircases which make vertical access possible.

The whole process will repeat if new house are built.



HILLTOWN CIRCULATION

Staircases





URBAN CHARACTERISTICS

PUBLIC SPACE The public space in Salihiye is not characterized by specific design or planning. Similar to the Old City of Damascus, the residential houses are introvert. The traditional house does not face with more than the entrance door to the street. This causes a more likely somber public space, which only has the function of providing access and making access possible. Only the different types of doors give the design. Moreover there is just a few greenery, sometimes the inhabitants put plants near their entrance, sometimes trees grow in the public space accidentally out of the courtyards.



PUBLIC SPACE Around commercial areas, important street-crossings or similar landmarks the public space is used for other purpose than access. Here, mostly men meet. Otherwise only playing children activate and use the public space. An indication for private life mostly taking place inside the houses and within the intimate and family structure. No public spaces are developed into freetime places. Unbuilt grounds decline and are used as garbage dumps.



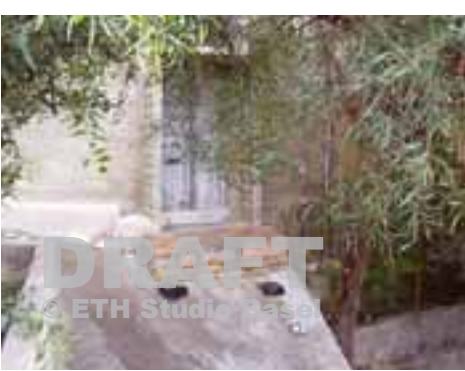


STREET NAME Since the majority of the houses is built informally, street name labeling can only be found in the lower or planned area. This fact also leads to a strengthening of the inner community, because only the inhabitants have the necessary orientation to find their way around. Moreover the street structure is so labyrinthic that even with having a map, it is difficult to keep one's orientation.



ACCESS The topography of Mount Kassyum determines different levels of ground floors, so that there is a variety of entrance stairways. Sometimes they lead up, sometimes down. But the traditional ten to fifteen centimeter barrier (splash water protection) is mostly kept. There cannot be pointed out a real separation between these private and the public spaces. Nevertheless the privacy is being respected by the inhabitants, so that foreign stairways are not stepped on without any specific reason.

URBAN
CHARACTERISTICS





DRAFT
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An aerial photograph of a city street, showing a tree on the left, a building on the right, and a road in the center. The image is faded and serves as a background for the text.

Urban Layers

- 102 Monuments & Institutions
- 106 Public Space
- 110 Semi-Public Space
- 114 Public Transport
- 118 Commerce Mobile trade
- 120 Commerce suq & shops
- 122 Infrastructure electricity
- 124 Infrastructure satellite
- 126 Sewage & water lines
- 130 Garbage collection

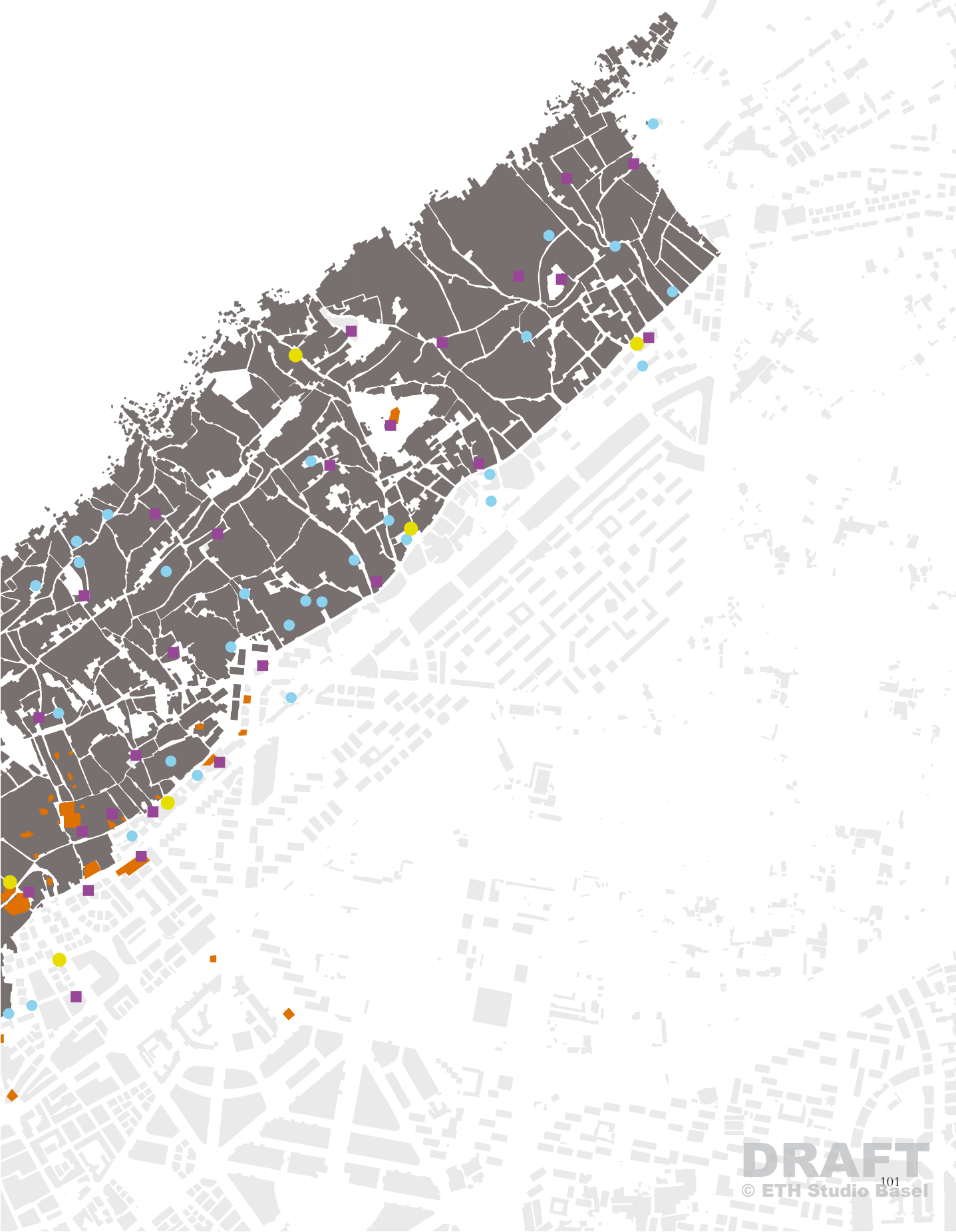
MONUMENTS & INSTITUTIONS

The actual number of monuments are situated in the historical development of Salihiye. Schools and Health clinics are usually not recognizable from the outside, often houses are converted into schools, health care institutions usually located on the first level and most of the time only in the below part.

map: own desgin after MAM

- monuments
- mosques
- health clinics
- schools

100 m



MONUMENTS & INSTITUTIONS





DRAFT
© ETH Studio Basel

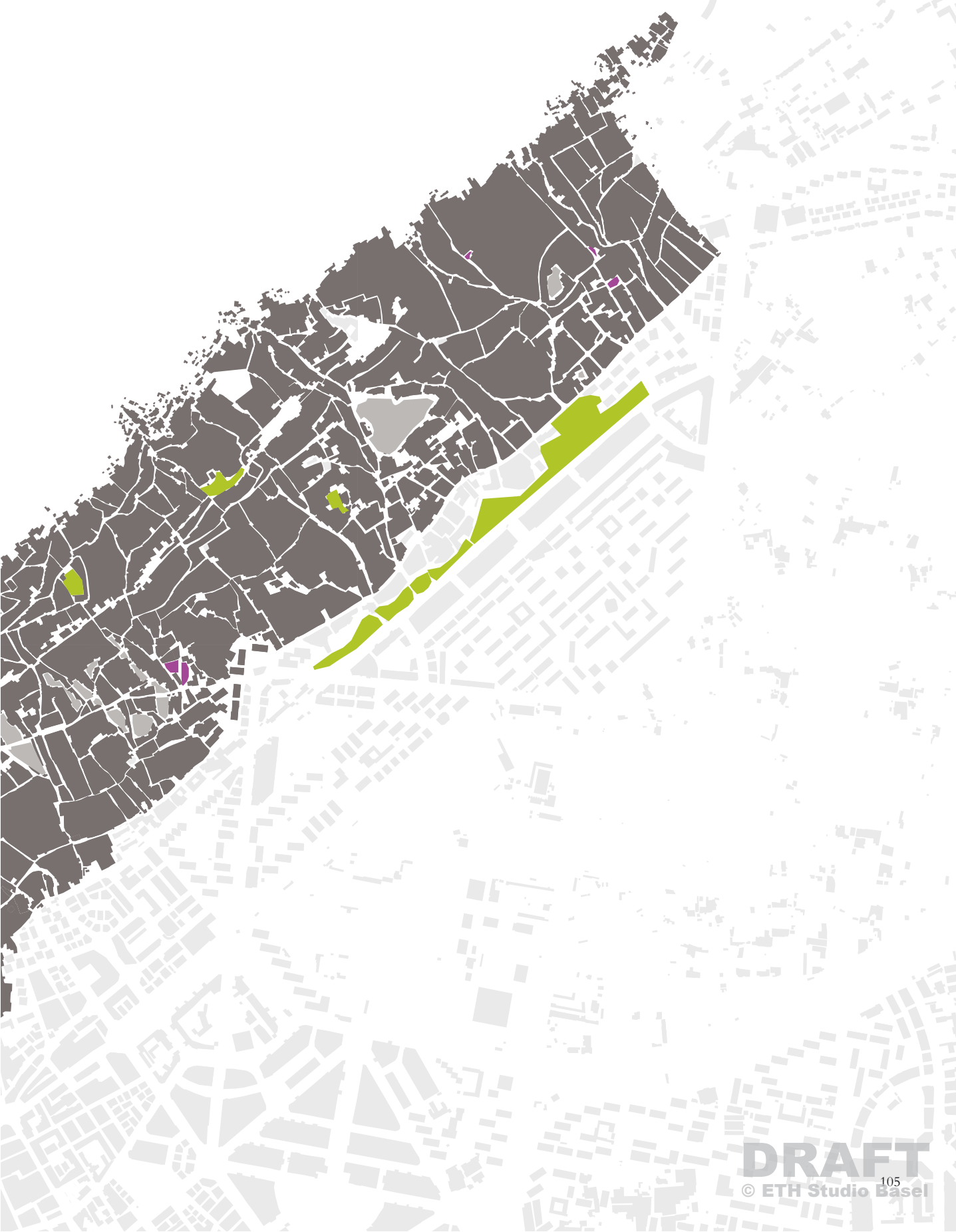
PUBLIC SPACE

Only a few public spaces can be found in Salihiye. At some street crossings the space is used as meeting point, but usually public places serve only as parking places. The officially arranged park and children playground below Al-Akrad is not used by the people. The determining characteristic is the number of cemeteries, which run along a thought line through the whole region.

map: own desgin after MAM

- green open space
- mixed open space
- cemeteries

100 m



PUBLIC SPACE






SEMI-PUBLIC SPACES

Besides the few number of formally designed public spaces. The inhabitants of Salihiye have adapted open space to their daily routine. This characteristic pattern of dividing public or semi-public areas from the public space, is clearly visible in the whole area of Mount Kas-syun. You find individually generated semi-public open spaces integrated into road network.

perceived
— semi public green spaces



100 m



SEMI-PUBLIC SPACES





DRAFT
© ETH Studio Basel

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

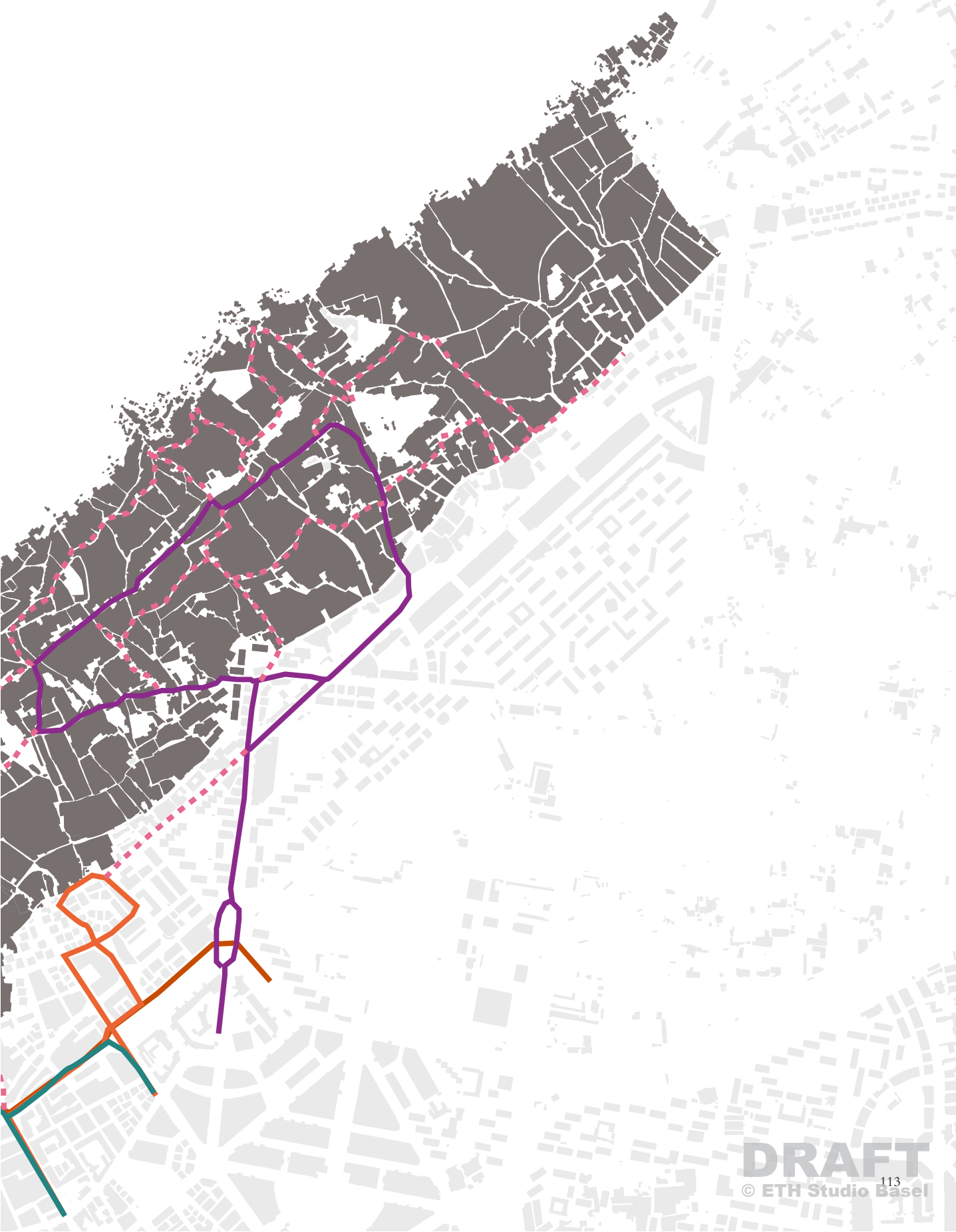
The bus-system in Salihiye is run by a private company. Suzuki-Pick-Ups are used for public transport, as school busses or to support people by bringing up f.e. new construction materials. There are no bus-plans or clearly defined routes. But, as we found out, they run very frequently, all day long and nearly everywhere. Lately, a change of transport vehicles has started due to the increasing number of accidents with school busses.

map: own desgin after MAM

- route 1
- route 2
- route 3
- - - perceived routes

100 m





PUBLIC TRANSPORT







COMMERCE
Mobile trade



MOBILE TRADE Few times a week mobile-trade Suzukis run through the mountain range of Kas-syum and sell food, such as fresh vegetables and fruits. They are bought at the great market in Damascus, which allows cheap reselling prices. Especially because of the strong topography, it is much used by the inhabitants.





COMMERCE: Suq and shops



SHOPS The traditional souq at the bottom in Salihiye builds the accomodation backbone for the entire area of mount Kassyun. It is also well known for having a variety of fresh vegetables and fruits and maybe the only area in Salihiye, where also closer living Damascenes go to. On bigger streets all over the mountain small shops cover the need for daily life.







INFRASTRUCTURE

Electricity



ELECTRICITY The municipality installed a greater electricity network-system for Salihiye. The inhabitants keep on expanding it on their own, so that open cables run everywhere, are spanned over the street or tightened on housing walls.



INFRASTRUCTURE

Satelite



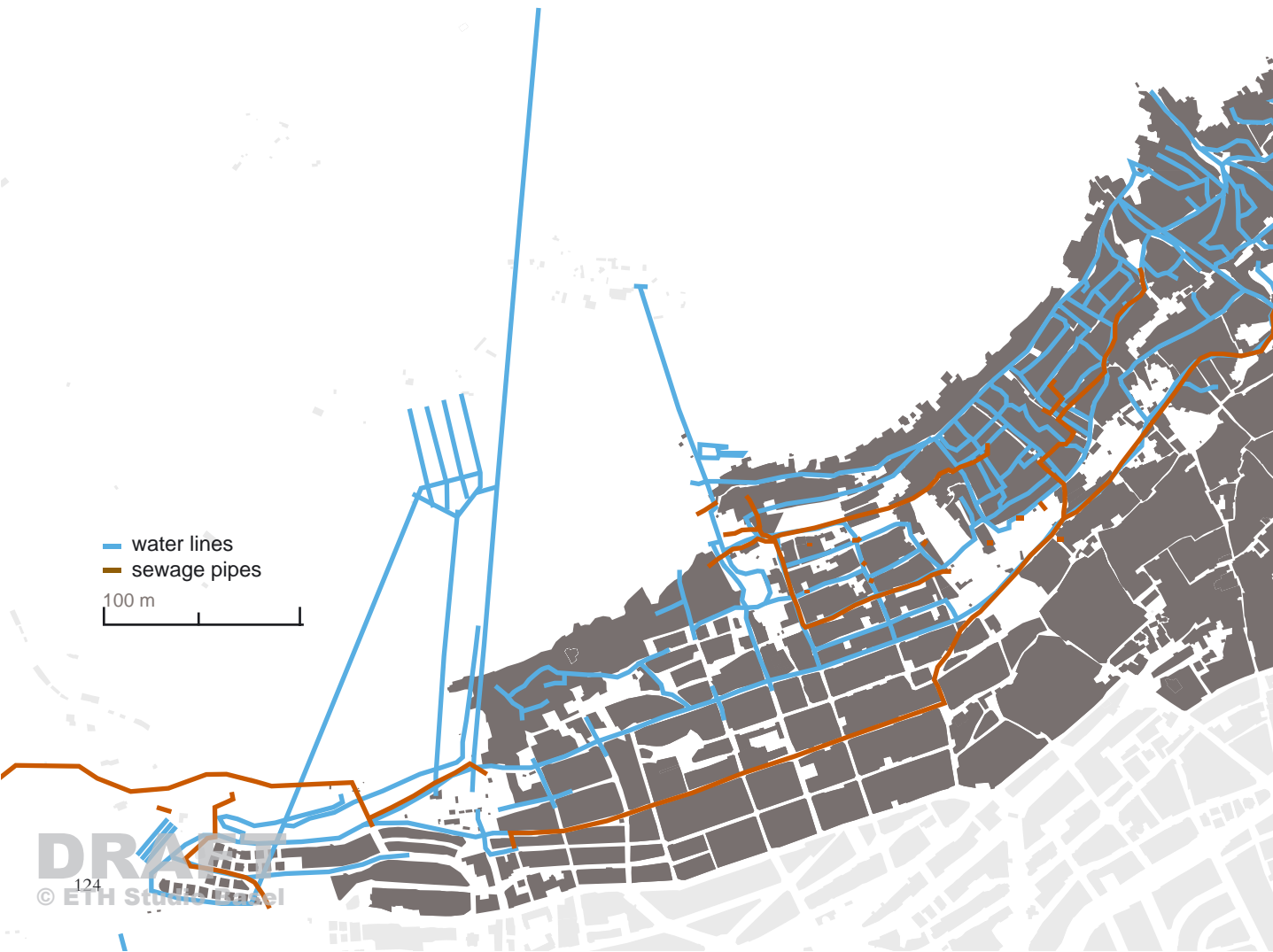
SATELITE The topview of Mount Kassyun is characterized by the numbers of satelits found on every roof from the bottom to the top area. Even the, on the very top and recently built houses, have satelite accommodation.



SEWAGE & WATER LINES

The municipality of Damascus built up a water - system which provides fresh-water for some hours a day, so that the inhabitants have to collect their personal need in water tanks, located on the houses' s roofs. Usually the inhabitants themselves connect their house to the water- and sewage- system.

map: own desgin after MAM







SEWAGE & WATER LINES



DRAFT
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GARBAGE COLLECTION





DRAFT
© ETH Studio Basel





Case Studies

- 134 Case study work
- 136 Approximate localisation
- 140 Questionnaire
- 142 Case Studies
- 158 Sum up
- 162 Salihiye, its link with Damascus

CASE STUDY WORK

APPROACH On our field-trip to Damascus/ Salihiye, we had the idea of getting an insight of the quarter on the whole. After walking around in the whole region we determined three sections, we wanted to have a closer look at, for getting an overview from the bottom to the top.

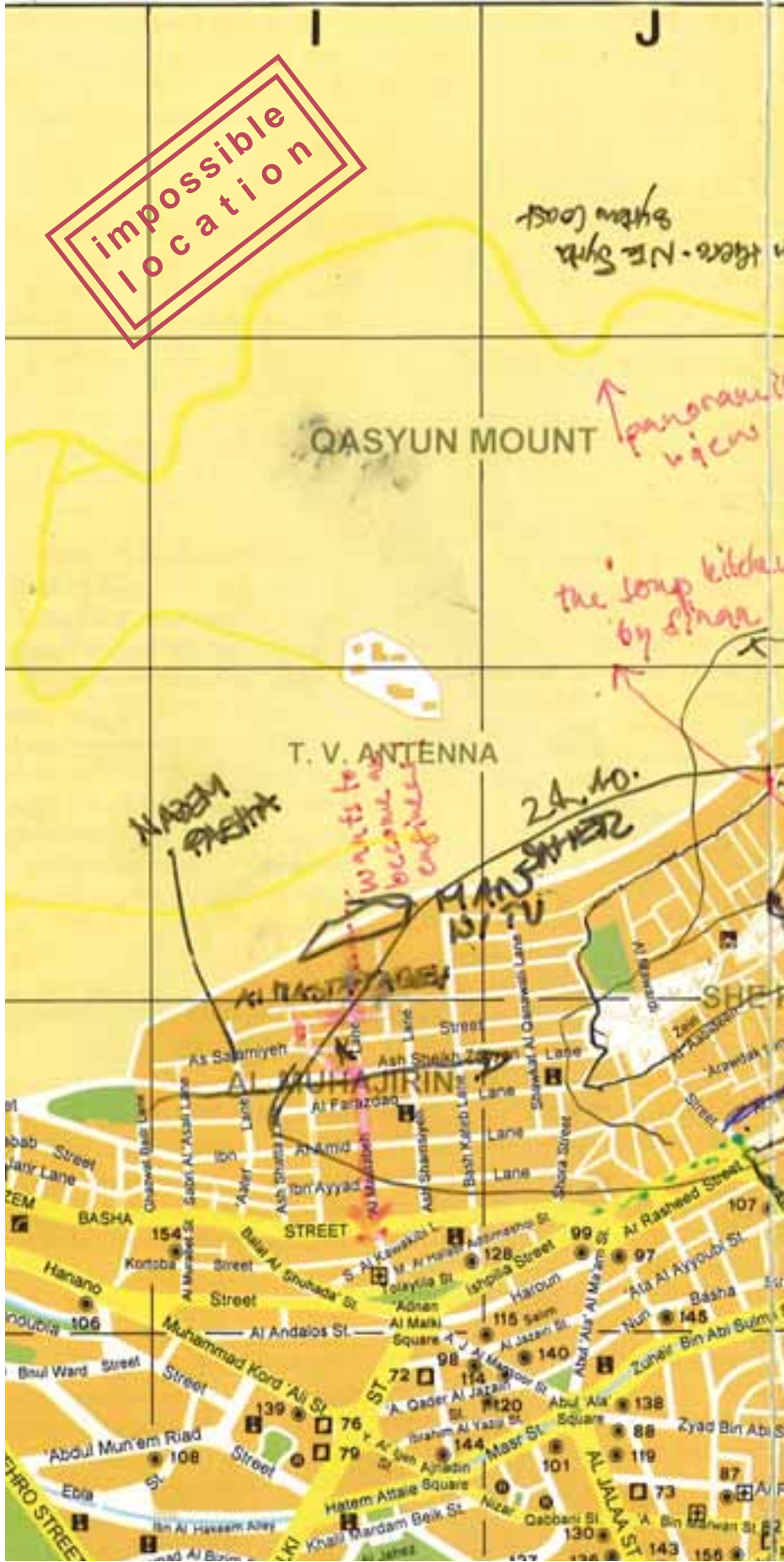
Through case studies we wanted to have a closer look to get an impression of everyday life in Salihiye.

The intention was getting an understanding of the site, its characteristic of circulation, social structure and urban fabric.

The method was a walk through Salihiye on our own with „gate openers“, such as Damascenes and people from Salihiye.

Experience can only be subjective, but do reflect nevertheless lifestyles and inhabitants of Salihiye.

It is to mention that, according to the labyrinthic street structure, the none existence of street names and the difficulty in orientating by map (English, Arabic and Google Earth), the house location as shown in the following case studies is just an assumption and to be seen as an approximately determination of the house in its quarter.





K

L

M

N

شاهد - منظر
مسجد كندش
مسجد كندش

the fault!!

concept of the forces?

Saline
light!

CAVES MOSQUE

28.10
25.10

MOSQUE
28.10
25.10

OMAR BRUC
ABDUL NABI BIRNIYEH STREET

MOUHIDDIN

ABDUL NABI BIRNIYEH STREET

Al Fayha Sports Complex

AL THAWRA STREET

AL THAWRA

DRAFT

APPROXIMATE LOCALISATION

impossible
location

2 Man I



1 Abdul



DRAFT

© ETH Studio Basel



8 Man II

7 Yusuf

5 Women

6 Shaban

4 Foad Mardini

3 Shop owner





QUESTIONNAIRE

INTERVIEWER

What is their name?
Where do they come from?
What do they work?
Where do they work?
Who is living with them?
How many family members are they?
How many rooms do they have?
Where does their family live?

HOUSING

Why do they live there?
Why did they chose to live up the mountain?
How did they build their house?
Why did they chose to live up the mountain?
Did they get help building it?
Did they change anything on their house?
Did they build the house by themselves?
How long did it take to build the house?
Where did they get the materials from?
How did they bring the material up?
Where do they get their water from?
Do they have electrictiy all day long?
Is there anything they miss at the house?

ADMINISTRATION

Where do their kids go to school?

CIRCULATION

Do they often go to Damascus?
Where do they buy their food?
Where do they buy their clothes?

NEIGHBOURHOOD

Who are the neighbours?
Are there any rules?
How did the environment change within the last years?
Is there much crime?

FUTURE

Would they like to live somewhere else?
Where are they going to live in 10 years?
Do they want to change anything on their house?





1 kind: suburbs of Damascus
 ready some direct neighbors
 almost 100 years old
 for whole family
 handcraft family
 used to work (Sabbows)
 now retired for a public company
 often go to Damascus, market
 then he lets the mosques, mosque
 house will be distributed
 on the ground

TRAF
 TRAF

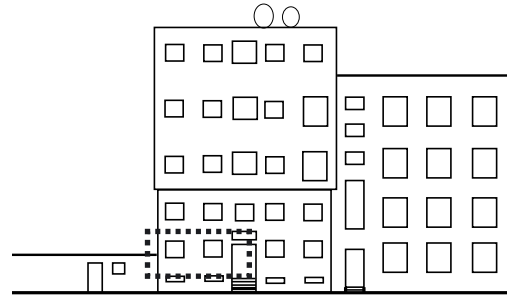
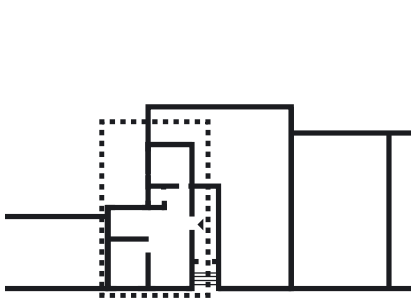
WHERE DO THEY GO TO REST?
 WHERE DO THEY WORK?
 WHERE DO THEY GET EDUCATION?
 WHERE IS YOUR CENTER OF THE CITY?

WHY DO THEY LIVE THERE?
 WHY DID THEY MOVE?
 WOULD THEY MOVE?

YEARS OF
 EVERYDAY

CASE STUDY 1

Abdul was born in Damascus and just until now used to live in a big flat in Harasta, east of the city. He bought this new apartment in a newly built big residential-flat-house. Some years ago, at the same place have been smaller, traditional houses, as the left neighbour. These small houses have been torn down to liberate space for this apartment house. The resettled people will get a flat in exchange. Abdul is going to move in with his wife and two children. Since he is a carpenter as profession he is making the whole interior design and construction himself. The reason moving back to Salihiye is that he is his originally from this place and wants to live close to his family. He has been living and working in London for a couple of years and is able to speak English fluently, so that we could directly address our questions to him.





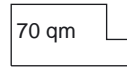
„I sold my old big flat for the same price of the new one.“

ABDUL HAMID

west - middle
Al-Muhajirin
formal
flat



1 family, 2 child



no private open space



5 stories
with basement



2009
under construction

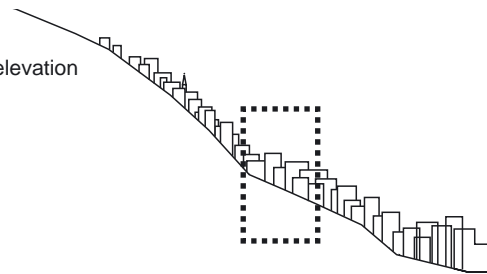


architectural planning
professionally constructed



reinforced concrete

elevation

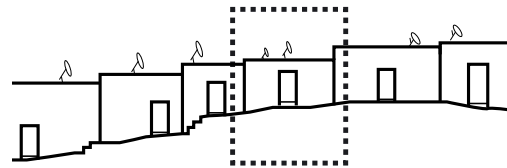
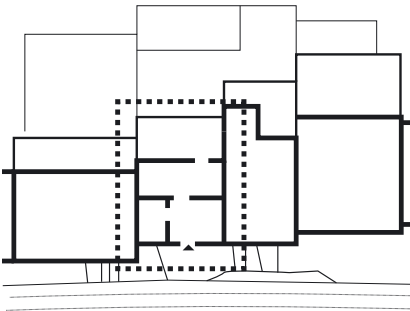


plan



CASE STUDY 2

This man we met somewhere in the upper, west area. He was only speaking Arabic, but he let us in, to see his small house. His house is built on the small plateau, right on the bottom edge to a raising up steep rock. A tiny unpaved path with steps at some parts, leads to the house. It is well maintained and clean. Tiles on the floor, wood - doors, big kitchen, TV, computer and wall decoration. In front of his house he had arranged a small front-yard with trees and flowers.





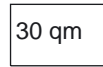
„I really like the view.“

MAN I

west - top
outside Al-Muhajirin
informal house



one person,
maybe more



roof terrasse



1 story



some years ago

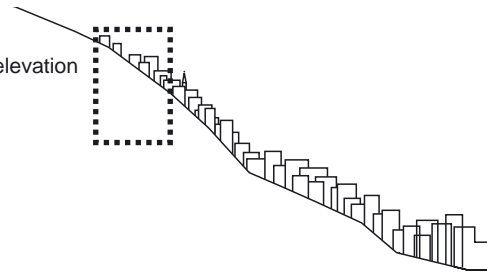


self- constructed



brick

elevation

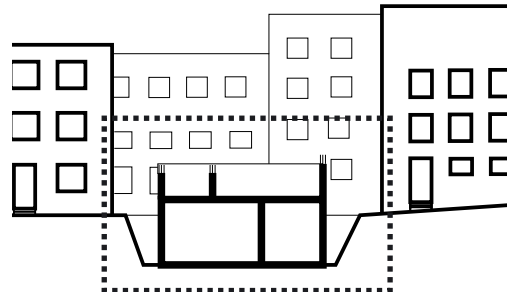
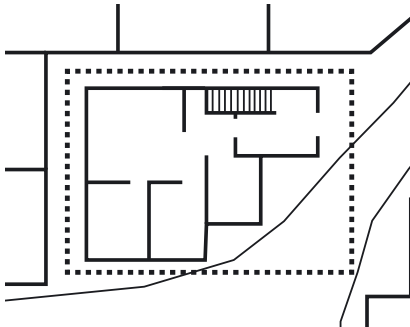


plan



CASE STUDY 3

Foad Mardini (builder) was with his civil engineer, when we met him. He is building a five story house with nineteen flats. Five flats he is going to keep for his own, the others are to be sold. The one he will live in consists out of five rooms and a living room. It is a very modern house, with integrated parking, solar collectors, air conditioning and an earthquake guard system. It took one year for planning and will take an other for constructing it. There are no private green planned, since the ministry of Damascus is going to tear down some of the old houses nearby to arrange public green spaces. He is going to move into this building with his whole family consisting out of six members. His children go to a private school which is close. They are the third generation in the family living in Salhiye and other family members are living close. As we found out in the next case, the civil engineer is an investor and not an engineer, so, the written content needs to be questioned.





„I will offer high standard appartements with integrated parking“

FOAD MARDINI & CIVIL ENGINEER

middle- bottom
Al-Salihiye
formal
flat in a self constructed house



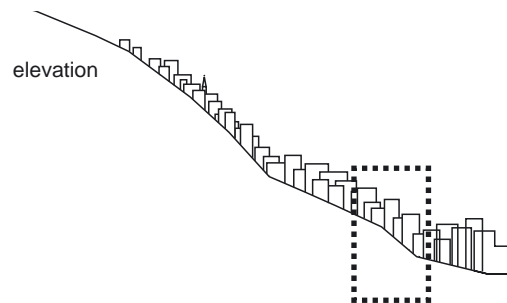
80 qm
no private open space

5 stories

2009
under construction

engineered planning
professionally constructed

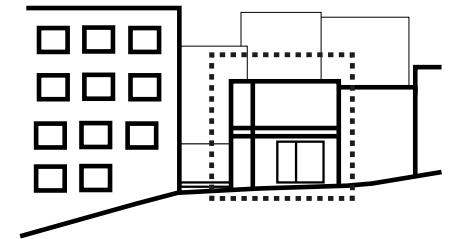
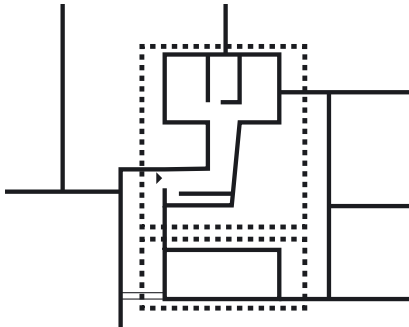
reinforced concrete



CASE STUDY 4

The shop owner and his wife have a Kurdish family background. His father moved to Salihiye several years ago. The house, which is about 100 years old, later got divided into two pieces and the shop owner's brother now lives in it. They have 8 brother and sister who all live spread around the world and four children. The daughters live in the neighbourhood.

The man used to work in a public company as a steel worker and since he now is retired he leads the mini-market which is right next to the house. Every year they go to Mekka, for which we find a painting on the entrance wall. They mostly stay in their area and just barely go to the city of Damascus. In two years the house will be torn down to make space for a big apartment building. They are going to give their properties to a real-estate investor and will get a flat in the new building as an exchange.





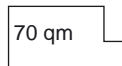
„In two years our house will give way to a new apartment building.“

SHOP OWNER & WIFE

middle- middle
Al-Salihiye
formal
self constructed house



couple, family guests



70 qm courtyard, roof terrasse



2 stories



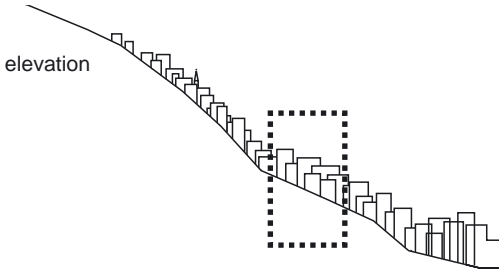
100 years ago



self- constructed



brick, loam



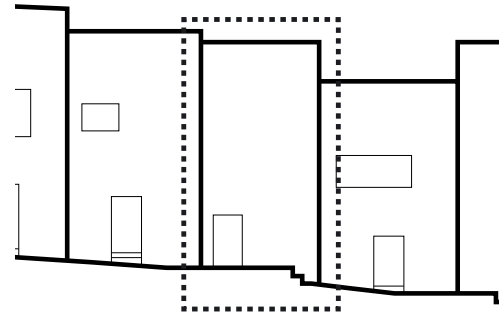
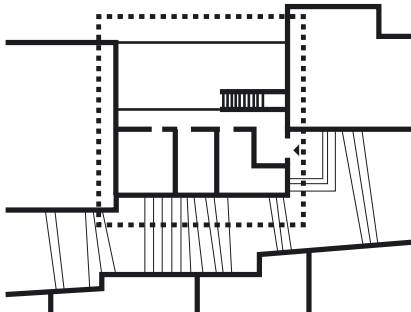
elevation

plan



CASE STUDY 5

Two sisters and their families, coming from a suburb of Damascus, live in this house. The contemporary outer appearance of the house took three years. Now they do not want to change anything more. When they built it, twenty years ago, there was only a few houses around and the material was brought up with donkeys. There are no specific reason for choosing this site. They chose to live on the mountain, because there, nobody had to be paid for the ground and so it was cheaper than building in the city. They would not mind living somewhere else, but they are happy. There is no crime, people help each other, all important infrastructure elements, such as doctors, waste disposal, etc. are close. But they pointed out, that the streets and alleys in their area are built up so dense, so that there would not be enough space for emergency help in case of fire or personal accidents. Since the social structure is very strong, people help each other and would carry down injured persons to bigger roads. The children go to school and personal needs can easily be achieved. Food and clothes they buy at the Suq at the bottom. To Damascus they only go for holiday, usually they stay in their quarter.

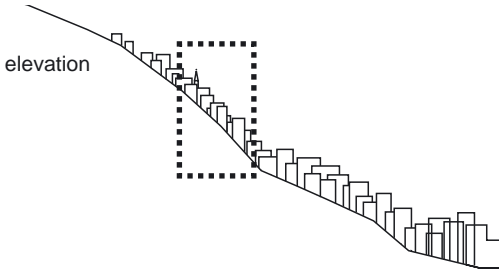
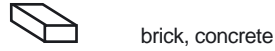
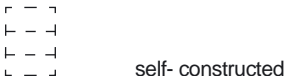
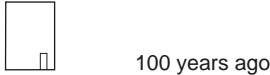
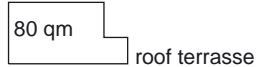




„We do not want to change anything on the house, just putting tales on the terrasse.“

WOMEN'S HOUSE

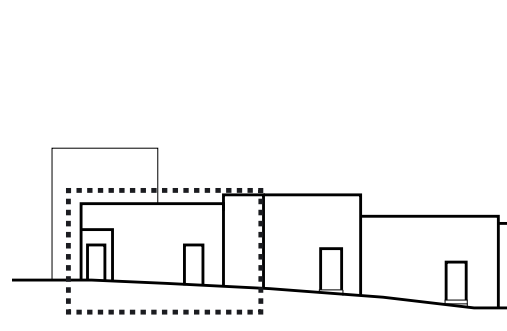
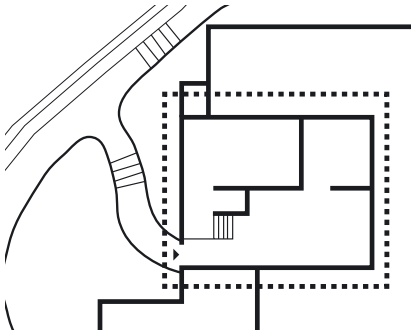
middle- upper are
above Al-Salihiye
informal
self constrcuted house



CASE STUDY 6

Shaban, born in Damascus, since eight years he lives in Berlin. His family's origin is Palestine and came to Salihiye as refugees in the 1960s. He works as an artist/ mosaik hand-craft in Germany. All his necessary skills his learned from his uncle and decided to turn this in to profession. He mentioned, that traditionally children learn their later profession from their families and quit school after tenth grade.

As he is strongly connected with his origin he comes to Syria at least six times a year. All his family members live close to each other and all houses were built by themselves. People chose the mountain to live on for profiting from all the excisting benefits as fresh air and panoramic view. His grandmother's house was built in a traditional way, with an oven and a courtyard. After her husband died, she now lives there alone.




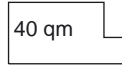



„I have to come back to Salihiye at least six times a year.“

SHABAN & GRANDMOTHER

East bottom
Roukn Ad Din
informal
self constructed house


 one person

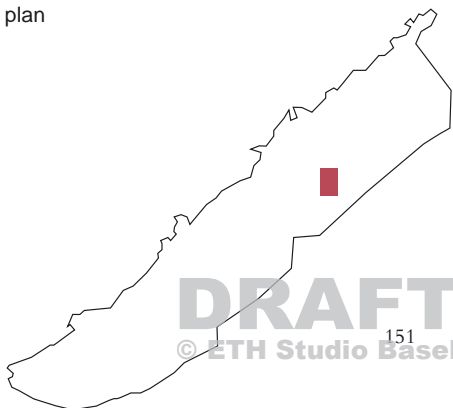
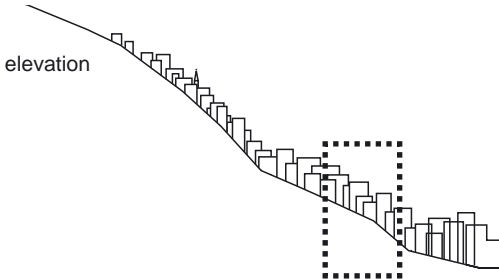
 40 qm courtyard

 1 story, different levels

 60 years ago

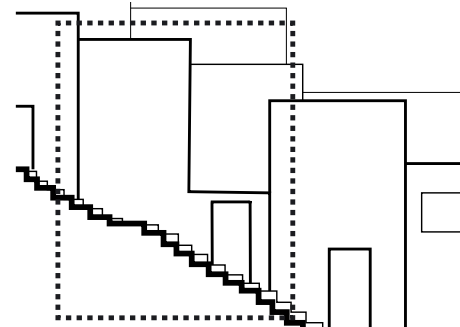
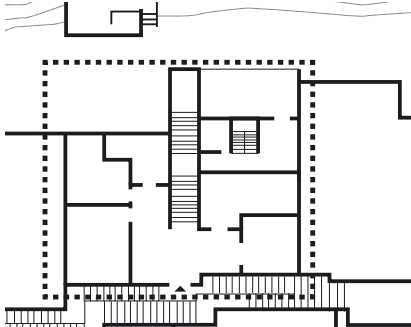
 self-constructed

 brick, loam



CASE STUDY 7

Yusuf was born in Palestine and came to Salahiye in 1948. He lived in London for six years and used to work as a chauffeur for the Swedish Embassy. He lives there with his whole family, they are 28 members, spread through all different generations. They live a traditional Palestine way with making their own bread, cakes and cookies. They have a small vegetable yard and birds. The whole family is proud of the roof terrace they have and appreciate living all in the same house. Yusuf built it by himself with getting help from neighbours and other family members. In the basement floor they recently renovated an appartement which is going to be used by one daughter.





„We are 28 family members living in my house“

YUSUF & FAMILY

East middle
Roukn Ad Din
informal
self constructed house



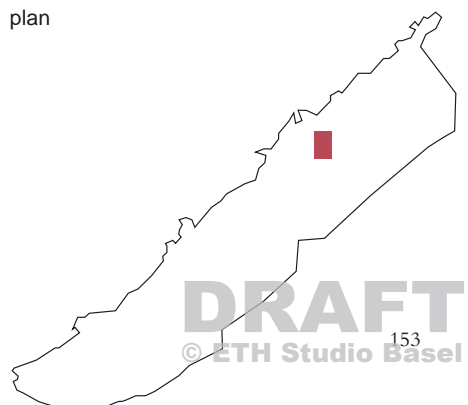
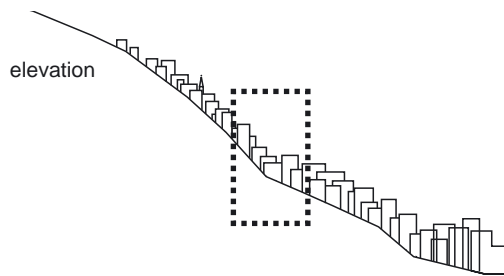
150 qm
courtyard, roof terrasse

3 stories, different levels

50 years ago

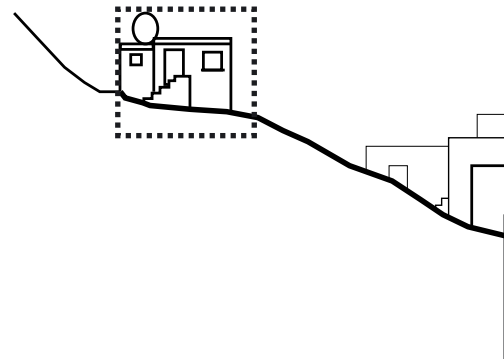
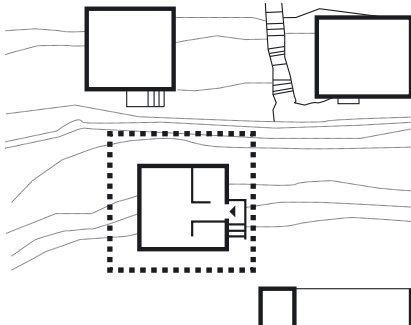
self-constructed

brick, concrete



CASE STUDY 8

With the best view and best air on top we arrived at the house of this man. He is lucky having his own piece of land where he crops plants and vegetables. His house is on the very top and (still) freestanding. Infrastructure as streets and shops is lacking and not existing and just a small track in the structure of the rocks leads to his house. A Staircase is still missing, but, electricity, fresh water, sewage pipe-lines and satellite exist for all the other houses, too. Having a closer look at the surrounding fabric you can make assumptions for further development for this area. You already can see, how people start adding further rooms to their house.





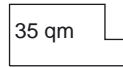
„I grow my own vegetables“

MAN II

East top
above Roukn Ad Din
informal
self constructed house



one couple



backyard



1 story



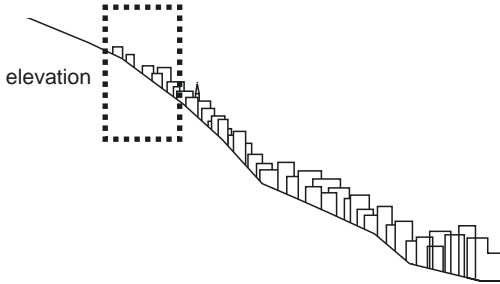
recently built



self-constructed



brick, concrete



plan



SUMMARY

interviewer



district / major district population

section height

native origin

family members

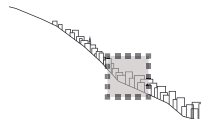


1

**ABDUL
HAMID**

Al-Muhajirin

Older Damascene
Community



originally from
Damascus

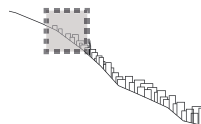


parents with
1 child

2

MAN I

outside Al-Muha-
jirin
Older Damascene
Community



./.

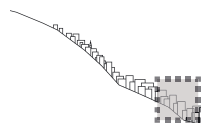


one person,
maybe more

3

**FOAD
MARDINI &
CIVIL EN-
GINEER**

Al-Salihiye



from Salihiye

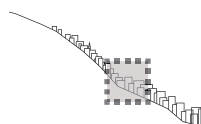


parents with
2 children

4

**SHOP
OWNER &
WIFE**

Al-Salihiye



from Salihiye

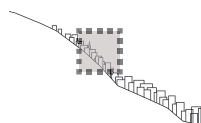


couple
family mem-
bers as guests

5

WOMEN

above Al-Salihiye
Mix of residents
from Damascus
and immigrants
from other Syrian
Provinces



originally from
Damascus

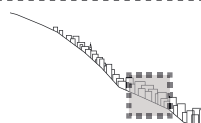


two brother's
with their family

6

**SHABAN &
GRAND-
MOTHER**

Roukn Ad Din



originally from
Palestine

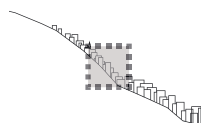


one person
after her hus-
band died

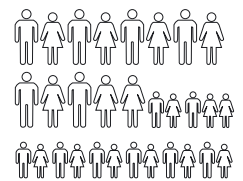
7

**YUSUF &
FAMILY**

Roukn Ad-Din
Lower-income
Damascenes (Al
Tanaber)



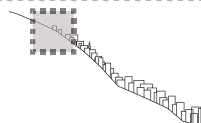
originally from
Palestine



8

MAN II

above Roukn Ad
Din

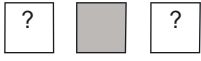


./.



one person,
maybe more

neighbours

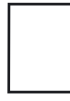


point of down settling

residential type



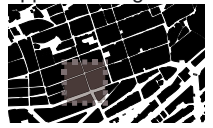
year of construction



greater context



approximate grain

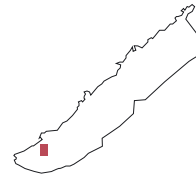


family members and relatives

moving in 2010

flat first floor

2009 under construction

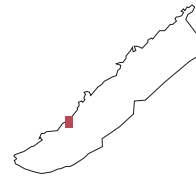


./.

./.

house

possible built recently



other family members will live in the same house

moving in 2010

flats five for his own

2009 under construction

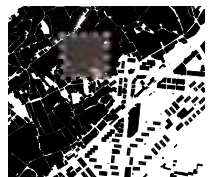
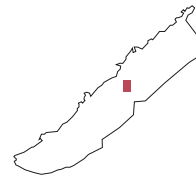


other family members (brother got the other half of the house)

third generation living there

house, which got seperated some years ago

approximately 100 years ago will be torn down in two years to make space for a high story apartment building

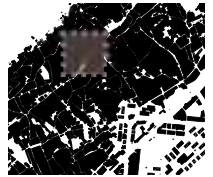
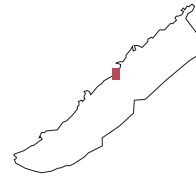


relatives

about 1990

house

about 1990

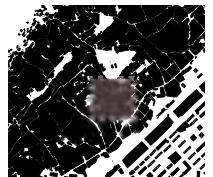
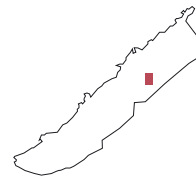


the whole family who flet from Palestine

about 60 years ago

house

approximately 60 years ago

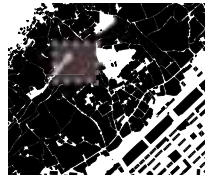
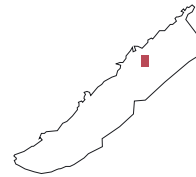


relatives

about 50 years ago

house

50 years ago

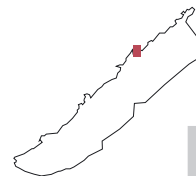


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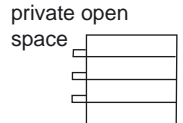
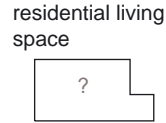
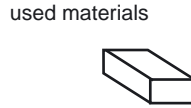
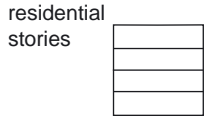
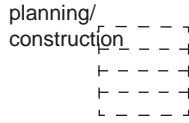
./.

house

possible built recently



SUM- MARY

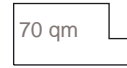


1

architectural planning
professionally con-
structed

5 stories
with basement

reinforced concrete
plaster
wood
tiles



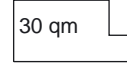
no private open
space

2

most likely self-con-
structed

1 story

brick
wood
tiles



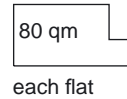
roof terrasse

3

architectural planning
professionally
constructed, modern
technology, earth-
quake guard system,
solar collectors

5 stories
with basement and
parking garage

reinforced concrete
wood
tiles



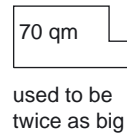
no private open
space
will use a newly ar-
ranged public one

4

self-constructed by
his grand-father

2 stories

loam bricks
tiles
wood



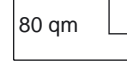
courtyard
roof terrasse

5

self-constructed by
the whole family

3 stories

loam bricks
tiles
found construction
material



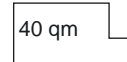
roof terrasse

6

self-constructed by
the whole family

1 story
different level

loam bricks
tiles
whitely patched



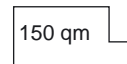
courtyard

7

self-constructed by
the whole family

3 stories
different level

reinforced concrete
tiles
wood
patched



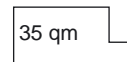
courtyard, roof ter-
rasse

8

most likely self-con-
structed

1 story

brick
and other



backyard

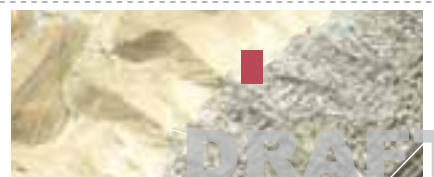
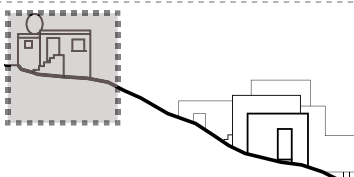
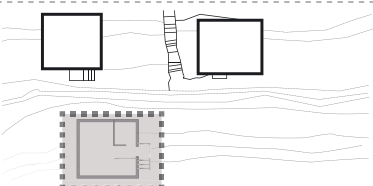
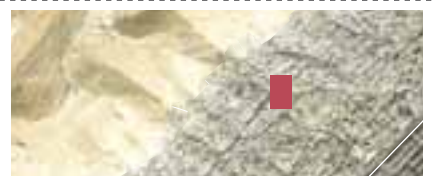
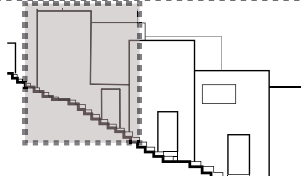
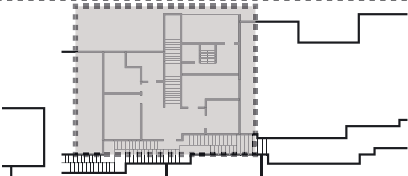
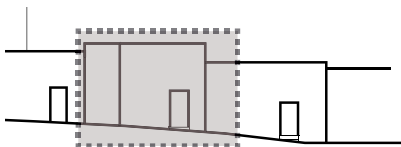
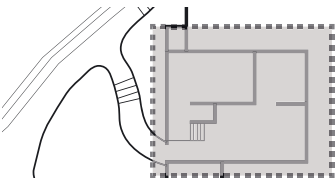
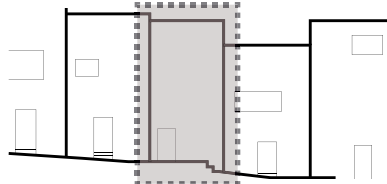
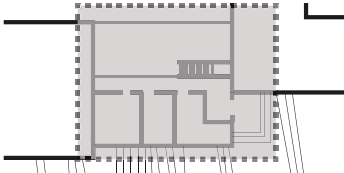
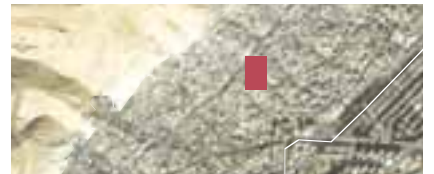
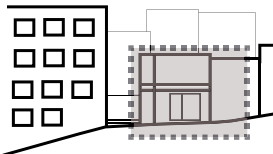
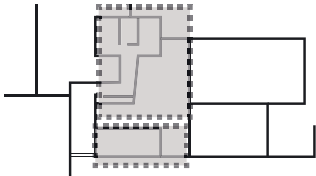
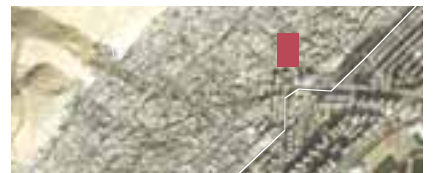
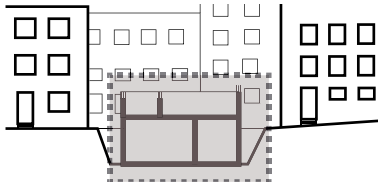
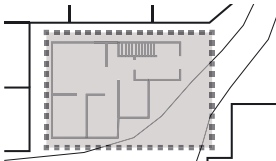
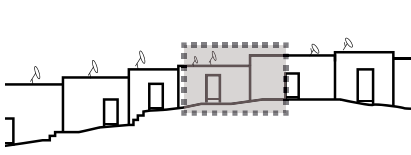
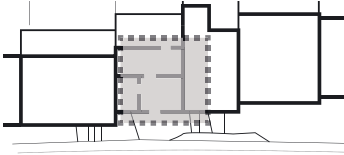
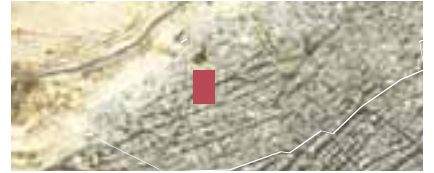
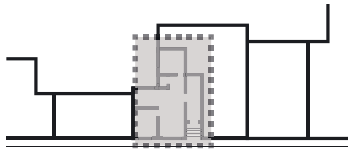
floor plan



elevation



smaller context, aerial view



SALIHIE

Its link with Damascus



Regarding Salhiye's history and urban development we have the feeling of Salhiye being

„THE OTHER DAMASCUS“

Over time Damascus and Salhiye grew together. Starting on Salhiye Street, nowadays the whole bottom side touches Damascus. But as looking at the urban fabric, the roadnetwork and life of the inhabitants and its location there is still a big distinction to be made between these two.

After talking to the inhabitants and having a closer look on its development, a possible conclusion would be, Salhiye being a piece of puzzle, which is set in its frame and whose edges will be blushed soon. People from Salhiye work and sometimes go to Damascus, the other way round, Damascene yet do not go on Mount Kassyum. But, as the city is still expanding and the smog is getting worse, they start looking on Mount Kassyum.



DRAFT
© 2014 Studio Basel





PEOPLE IN SALI-HIYE DEVELOPPED THEIR OWN CITY. THEIR OWN SPACES. THEIR OWN PLACES TO LIVE. THEIR OWN INFRASTRUCTURAL SYSTEM. THEIR OWN PERSONALITIES. THEIR OWN IDENTITIES. THEIR OWN TRADE STRUCTURES. THEIR OWN BUILDING TRADITION. THEIR OWN SERVICES. THEIR OWN WAY TO LIVE. THEIR OWN NEIGHBOURHOODS. THEIR OWN COMMUNITIES. THEIR OWN IMPROVEMENTS. THEIR OWN WAY OF CONSTRUCTION. THEIR OWN WAY OF URBAN LIFE.



AND THEY HAVE
SOMETHING YOU
DO NOT FIND AN-
YWHERE ELSE IN
THE CITY



FRESH AIR AND
A PANORAMIC
VIEW OVER THE
WHOLE CITY OF
DAMASCUS



Potential Proposal

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THE MAM REPORT Stakeholders

THE MINISTRY OF LOCAL ADMINISTRATION & ENVIRONMENT

was established with the Decree No. /36/ of 1971. Decree No. /69/ of 1973 specified the responsibilities with regard to Local Administration as follows:

1. Supervise the implementation of the Law on Local Administration
2. Coordinate among Governorates
3. To propose and issue legislations and regulations etc.



Legislation

MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATION OF MODERNIZATION (MAM)

is a programme which aims to 'improve the quality of life in urban centres across Syria.' They cooperate as Partners with 'The Delegation of the European Commission', the Syrian Ministry of Local Administration & Environment and the White Young Green (international multi-discipline consultant). The MAM's Head Office is composed by the: Project Management, Experts and Local Staff. So called 'Action Plans' are developed by specific teams and focus on the MAM's Pilot cities: Damascus, Old Damascus, Aleppo, Lattakia, Tartous, Homs, Derzour, Palmyra.



Urban improvement

THE DELEGATION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Commission to the Syrian Arab Republic

was opened in 1979. As a diplomatic mission, it is responsible for managing official relations between Syria and the European Commission. The Head of Delegation is accredited to the President of the Republic, as the official representative of the European Commission, with the rank of Ambassador. The Delegation deals with five main fields: political issues and human rights, economics and trade, technical co-operation projects, information and culture.



Funding

**Syria Ministry of Local Administration and Environment
Municipal Administration Modernization Project (MAM)**



A programme funded by the European Union
Delegation of the European Commission

**Qassioun Urban Development Strategy
and Improvement Plan**

**Prepared by:
Mona Serageldin**

October 2008



THE MAM REPORT Authors and project premises

Qassioun Urban Development Strategy and Improvement Plan

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October 2008

Qassioun Urban Development Strategy and Improvement Plan

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Qassioun Urban Development Strategy and Improvement Plan page 1

1 INTRODUCTION

This study focuses on the part of the Qassioun mountain range that overlooks Damascus' civic and business center. It presents the plan for Qassioun developed following an extensive data gathering effort by the Damascus team and community meetings with the women's and the youth organizations in the area. The data collected was mapped and the household surveys processed to give a profile of the inhabitants. This information, which was compiled for the first time, is in and of itself a valuable resource for the agencies involved in planning, management and development projects in Damascus.

The site can be divided into four parts:

- The lower part, which is connected to the main urban fabric through the historic quarter of Salihiya and the major street which is known by a succession of names along its alignment: Ibn al Nafees, Ibn Abidin, Nabulsi, etc; and the transportation nodes at Shamdin Square and Shura.
- The middle part, for which a regularization plan has been adopted but not implemented, and which includes a series of old cemeteries.
- The upper part above the cemeteries. This part was expropriated by the Governorate in 1975 when it consisted of a few large holdings, and is now densely settled informally by settlers who are legally considered to be squatters.
- The plateau above the steep slopes has a strong topography and except for military zones and a few restaurants along the lower crest road it remains basically undeveloped.




Photo: Ahmad Shama

Illustration 1.1: View of the Qassioun Mountain Range.

October 2008



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Project premises

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION The Women's meetings pointed out to discuss the issues and problems encountered in everyday life in Kassyun. The youths were very enthusiastic and offered to collaborate with the project team so that it was possible to complete 124 short household surveys which gave the team insights into household size and composition. But participation is actually limited.

Public announcement

SCHEDULE The programme was launched on august 2006 with a preliminary presentation to the Prime Minister, the Minister of Local Administration and the Environment and the Governor of Damascus city. Further meetings with the Syrian officials followed until the outcome of the report concluding with a public exhibit at the MAM head quarter.

The report however is not freely accessible for the public of Salihiye and held as a secret.
The phase of implementation is set up for 2010.

Financing policy

\$ COSTS has been preliminary estimated to a total 516,200,000\$ partioned into to two phases of the implementation.

FINANCING will be provided through the EU which is funding the project starting in 2010. The Syrian Goverenate is going to pay back the loan provided by the EIB and some parts of the planned project are suggested to be financed through investors and PPP (Public Private Partnership).

The Area

the area division according to MAM



THE MAM REPORT Image of 'informality'

4.1 Existing Conditions in Qassioum

The Qassioum informal settlement is characterized by steep slopes and dense settlement patterns, resulting in significant challenges to providing access, utilities and public services to the site. These slopes are more pronounced in the upper sections of the settlement that are in some cases only accessible to pedestrians. While the lower section boasts a well-built housing stock and encompasses important historic and religious monuments and cemeteries, full use of these assets is limited by physical constraints that can be addressed and changed.

In the upper section, narrow streets, some of which are not linked to main roads, limit circulation and create bottlenecks, particularly in the higher elevations where the steep slopes result in dangerous intersections and sharp turns. The access roads are inadequate for emergency vehicles, and some residents are out of range of transport service in case of disasters or accidents. In addition, bus service is currently too limited leaving large areas without public transport. These locations are only serviced by unreliable and unlicensed private "suzuki" operators.

As in similar informal settlements, the site lacks adequate utilities. To its credit, the Governorate has extended water lines throughout the built up area except the unserviceable steeper slopes. Most houses are connected with the regular water and electricity networks and metered, although some lines, particularly the electric lines, run haphazardly across streets and along the facades of buildings and can cause risks. The houses are also mostly connected to sewers, but these lines were put in by the settlers and connected via laterals to the main collector below. The only lines that are mapped are segments of this informally installed network that broke down and were subsequently fixed by the sewerage department. These breakdowns lead occasionally to sewage running along streets or down stairs. In the higher elevations slopes often exceed 50 degree gradients and it is practically impossible to extend regular water and sewerage networks in these areas. Houses built on these slopes most often lack structurally sound foundations and frames. They rest on each other, rely on pirated connections to water and electricity and lack sewerage of any kind.

Stairs have been frequently constructed throughout the site to navigate its sharp inclines. However, these stairs have rarely been maintained and are often in poor condition creating hazards for residents and detracting from the settlement's overall appearance. Moreover, wires and pipes frequently traverse stairs, leading to increased risks and the potential for damage to existing utility networks.

Public services, including health centers and schools, are particularly lacking in the upper part of Qassioum where accessibility is more difficult, and almost no community facilities have been constructed for the use of the residents. The elementary schools there are housed in rented old buildings that are in bad condition. They should be surveyed to ascertain their structural soundness. Safety services are also highly inadequate. There are no fire hydrants on the site and there is practically no patrolling by police in the less accessible upper elevations. This has resulted in an increase of assaults and robberies in

an otherwise safe area. The dangerous locations are usually in the less traveled and badly lit areas around the cemeteries, the caves and the more remote upper elevations.

Because of its dense settlement pattern and steep slopes, Qassioum lacks sufficient open space for its residents. The very few unbuilt areas are generally too steep to be used as recreation space, and the small pockets that do exist are often in heavy circulation areas or are poorly lit and inadequately landscaped. No sports fields or playgrounds are available for the large number of children living in the settlement.

Illustration 4.2: Circulation and infrastructure issues in Qassioum



INFORMALITY According to the report lacks of accesibility, providing utilities and public services sum up the major difficulties regarding the upper part of Mount Kassyun.

Are these problems a solely result of informality?

non accessible roads **ACCESS** In the report the access roads are declared now as inadequate for emergency vehicles and some residents were out of range for transport service in case of disaster or accidents. In addition, bus service was considered as too limited leaving large areas without public transport.

Nevertheless we noticed that the lacks of public transport are compromised through self initiative private transport companies which stretch out all over the Kassyun area. The inaccesibility of certain areas in case of emergency still point out a major lack which though can be solved.

pirating utilities **UTILITIES** According to the report the site of Kassyun lacks adequate utilities as similar as in other informal settlements.

But houses are connected to water piping, sewerage and electricity networks. Established by themselves or provided through the Govenerate.

site bounded public services **PUBLIC SERVICES** The report stakes that public services, including health centers and schools, are particularly lacking in the upper part of Qassiou where accessibility is more difficult, and almost no community facilities have been constructed for the use of the residents.

The lower part as we have experienced is notably dense with medical centre, mosues and madrasas)

INFORMALITY

Legislation

INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS

Reasons for the rapidly growing illegal/informal settlements consist of various intertwining factors.

The still lasting rural depopulation is one of these factors. Further more the legislation of Syria in some way seven admits certain rights for the squatters.

The squatter's status of illegality is somehow just 'formal'.

1) There is an old tradition in Syria that no house can be torn down ever since the first ceiling was constructed.

(CODE)

2) Even at a further extend the Administration should provide housing for people being expropriated

(LAW)

CODE a decree which has been generally agreed on; a tradition that is hold on.

LAW a passed law which is obligatory. Nevertheless the right of expropriation is reglemented.

This is been reglemented through the Legislaive

DECREE/20/ OF 1983

EXPROPRIATION LAW:

Chapter (1)

Permissible Expropriation Cases

Article 2:

It shall be permissible for the ministries, administrations, public institutions, administrative bodies and public sector bodies to Expropriate built and non-built real estates, whether they are pure properties, endowment or weighted with endowment right properties, in order to implement their projects of public benefit stipulated in this Legislative Decree.

RAPID SETTLEMENT All theses facts bring the settlers to build as quickly as possible and to be able moving in at the earliest time. Some houses are completed within just a few days and people move in, although the concrete is still wet. Some houses in the beginning only consist out of one room with an entrance door. Windows are broken later into the walls and depending on the income situation more rooms are added during the following time.





INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS

The closeness of living and working is especially for people of lower classes of big importance, since they usually cannot afford fare for public transport. Hence settlement usually takes place close to potential workplaces, nearby to commercial centers and markets.

Usually settlements take place on fallow land, such as small curtilages of a buildings, empty and ruinous buildings, mountainsides and spaces in the peripherie formally used for agriculture.

Dependent on the income rate of the settler it sometimes is possible to buy the land from an owner to build on. In other cases sites are just taken and occupied. Besides these characteristics informal settlements consist of a certain homogeneity. Mostly groups with a same origin, same family structure or religion settle down close to each other.

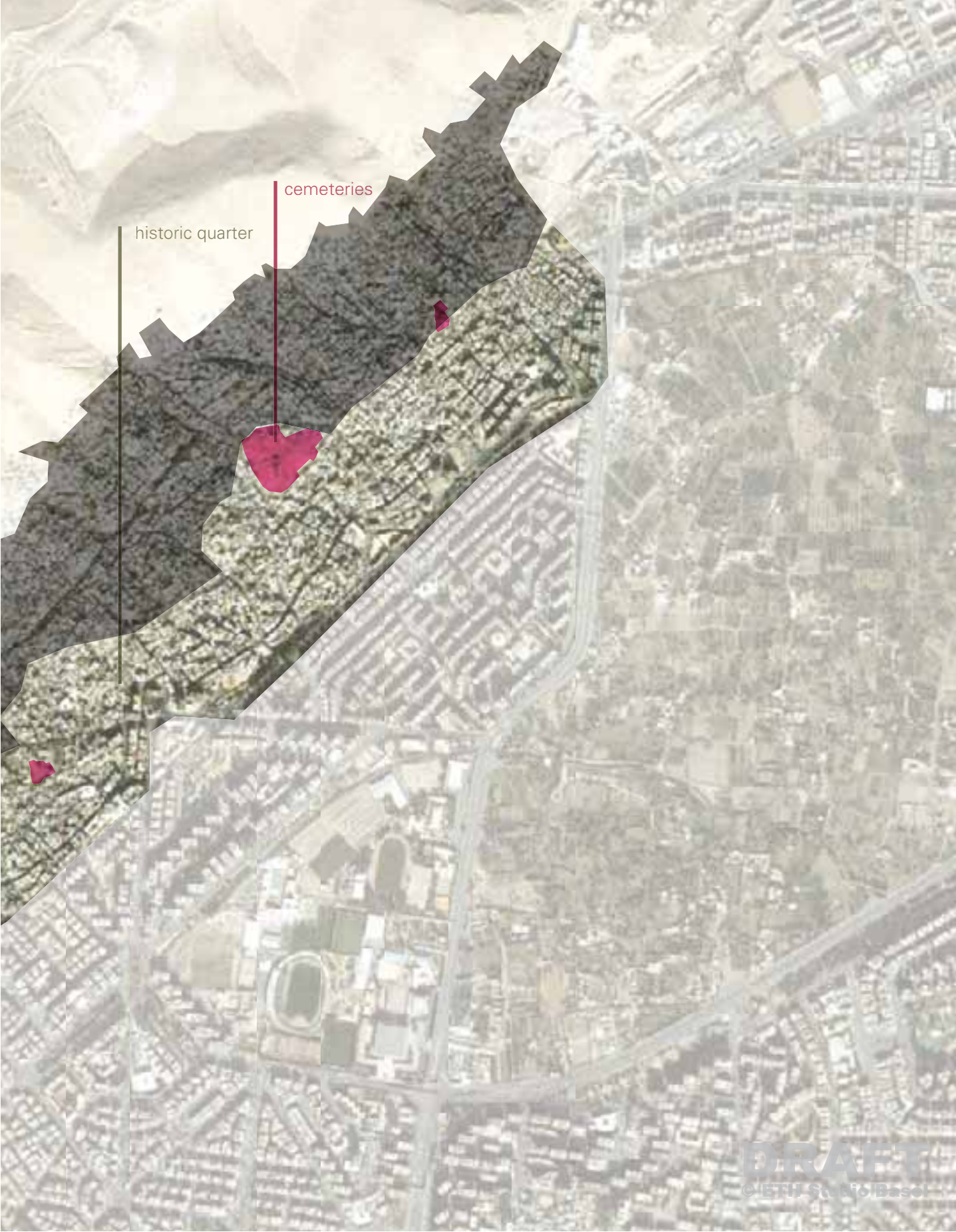
Concluding one could say that the informal is the turn around of the formal: the informals first occupy land, then start building, before getting infrastructure. At the end they get possessing rights on the site and increase the value of the site by investing in their personal housing fabric.

source: Kassioum, Eine spontane Siedlung in Damascus, TU Dresden, 2001

map: based on IFPO 2009

upper part above the cememteries

'Harat al Muhajadin'
planned by Nazim Pasa
(1895-1911)



historic quarter

cemeteries

INFORMALITY

Assumption

‘THE DEFINITION of informal settlement: The term informal settlement areas in Syria refers to houses built contrary to urban planning or building regulations.’

(according to the Five Year Plan 2006-10, Government of Syria)

The 4 Seasons, a five star hotel recently built in 2007, must be then declared as ‘informal’ through these laws.

ASSUMPTION As we can see the term ‘informal’ is not appropriate to use as it does not determine architecture nor the structure of a building. It is but an abstract term of legislation.





DRAFT
© ETH Studio Basel

THE MAM REPORT Image of ‘danger’

6 GEOPHYSICAL STUDIES AND GEOTECHNIC ISSUES ENCOUNTERED IN THE SITE

As work progressed, it became clear that the **geotechnic problems in Qassioum** were of such a magnitude that a detailed study of the area by geologists was necessary. The alignment of the **lower fault, the more important of the two fault lines** could be reasonably well-approximated from the 2003 aerial photography. Field documentation confirmed the relative accuracy of the mapped alignment. However the upper fault line was not apparent on the aerial photographs and could not be identified on the ground. It was therefore crucial to undertake further geologic investigations to delineate more accurately the boundaries of hazardous zones.

Meetings were held with the Director General and geologists at the General Organization of Remote Sensing and Dr. Randa Mohamed from the National Earthquake Center to discuss the difficulties involved in undertaking more detailed geologic investigations regarding the seismic and geophysical hazards. A team of geologists from the two institutions collaborated to undertake this study combining satellite images and aerial photography with field investigations. The field work was led by Dr. Randa Mohamed who had done her Master's thesis on the Qassioum mountain range. Their work was vastly complicated by the chaotic settlement pattern and the steep slopes. Since the built-up area had extended over the two fault lines, the dense fabric limited the use of the ground-penetrating georadar to a few locations, too few to give a good picture of hazards across the site. Nevertheless the readings gave at least some indication of underground conditions in these specific locations.



Illustration 6.1: Team of geologists at work.

The geology teams worked for six months. They defined the alignments of the two main fault lines as well as several small secondary faults, areas prone to landslides and areas with unstable rocks and boulders that minor disturbances can send rolling down the slope. They also delineated natural stormwater drainage channels. Uncontrolled settlement in the high-risk areas at the edge and the foot of the lower fault had already been recorded by the planning team.

The alignment of the upper fault line, which was not as clearly identifiable, was studied and delineated through ground investigation by the geology team for the first time. Excellent coordination between the planning team and the geology team allowed work to proceed smoothly with data provided by the geologists immediately integrated in the plans as it became available (See Map 6.2). See Annex I for a detailed summary of the geology team's report.

The geophysicists stressed that all open land on the high plateau and the selected relocation site should be geologically surveyed before any construction begins.

Map 6.1: Alignment of Fault Lines



DANGER Due to the discovery of the two fault lines the area around was divided into several risk zones.

uncontrolled settlement in high risk zone

HIGH RISK ZONE As declared in the report the high risk zone lies at the edge and the foot of the lower fault. Nevertheless uncontrolled settlement had already taken place here even inside the crack.

FAULT LINES In the report the lower fault line was easily detected whereas the upper fault was not clearly identifiable. Since the built-up area had extended over the two fault lines, the dense fabric limited the use of the ground-penetrating georadar to a few locations, too few to give a good picture of hazards across the site. Still the upper fault was then mapped and delineated.

necessity of geological investigations

EXPROPRIATION According to the report a line of expropriation has been set up and mirrors the continuancy of the lower fault line. Furthermore geophysicists stress that all open land on the high plateau and the selected relocation site should be geologically surveyed before any construction begins.



Jalal Msadi
MAM Associate
Damascus

associate

§
Legislation

> But, we have a legal problem here; acceding to law 1570 year 1984 (resettlement decree, part of your Q4 answer) resettlement can't happen on lands previously defined for city expansion. We are still trying to find a way out of that and to convince the Governorship that this is the appropriate location.
> Law 20 is the appropriation law in Syria, but we understand that it will be modified soon, depending mainly on the equivalent Turkish law.

GEOGRAPHIC SITUATION Damascus

“THE PRECISELY POINTED OUT ALIGNMENT IS TO BE QUESTIONED. YOU CANNOT ISOLATE A FAULT LINE.”

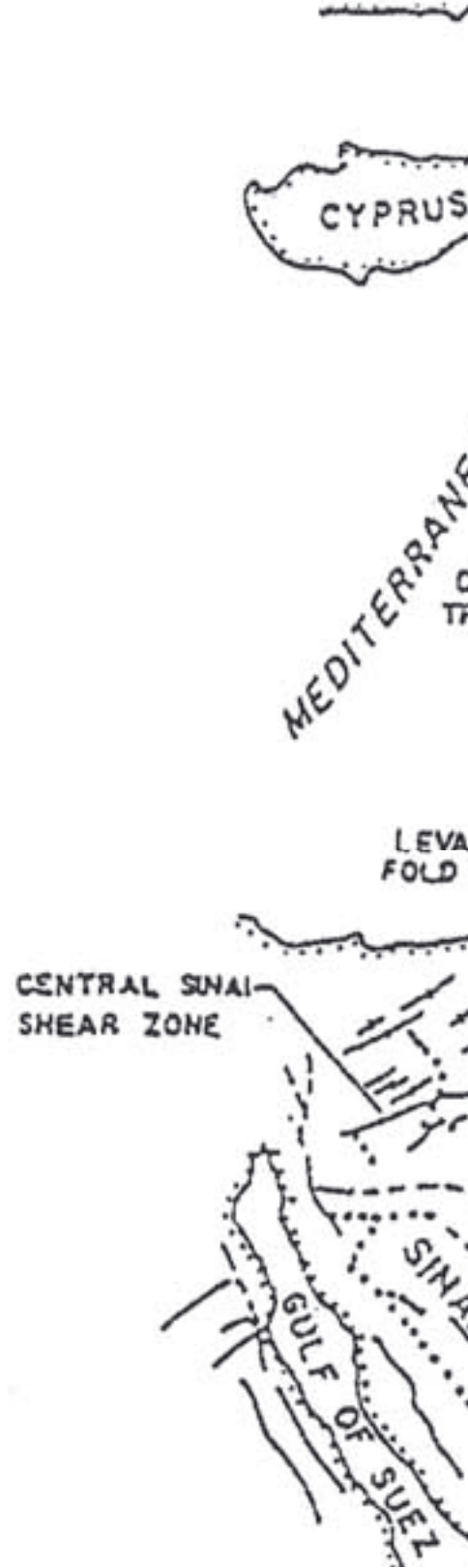
Dr. Donat Fäh
Schweizerischer Erdbebendienst
ETH Zürich



Expert

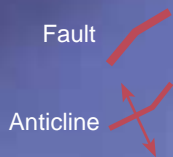
IN DAMASCUS It is expected that in a case of an earthquake most damage would happen in the flat plane and less on top of the mountain. Lifelines, such as gas- and water-pipelines as well as important electrical power cables, passing through the fault line need special constructions to accommodate for the displacements. Public buildings such as schools or hospitals should be built far from any recognized surface fault. Together with the importance to strictly follow the building code, this calls for special education for architects, structural engineers and urban planners.

source: Donat Fäh, ETH Zürich
map: © 2003 RAS, GJI, 153, 658-674



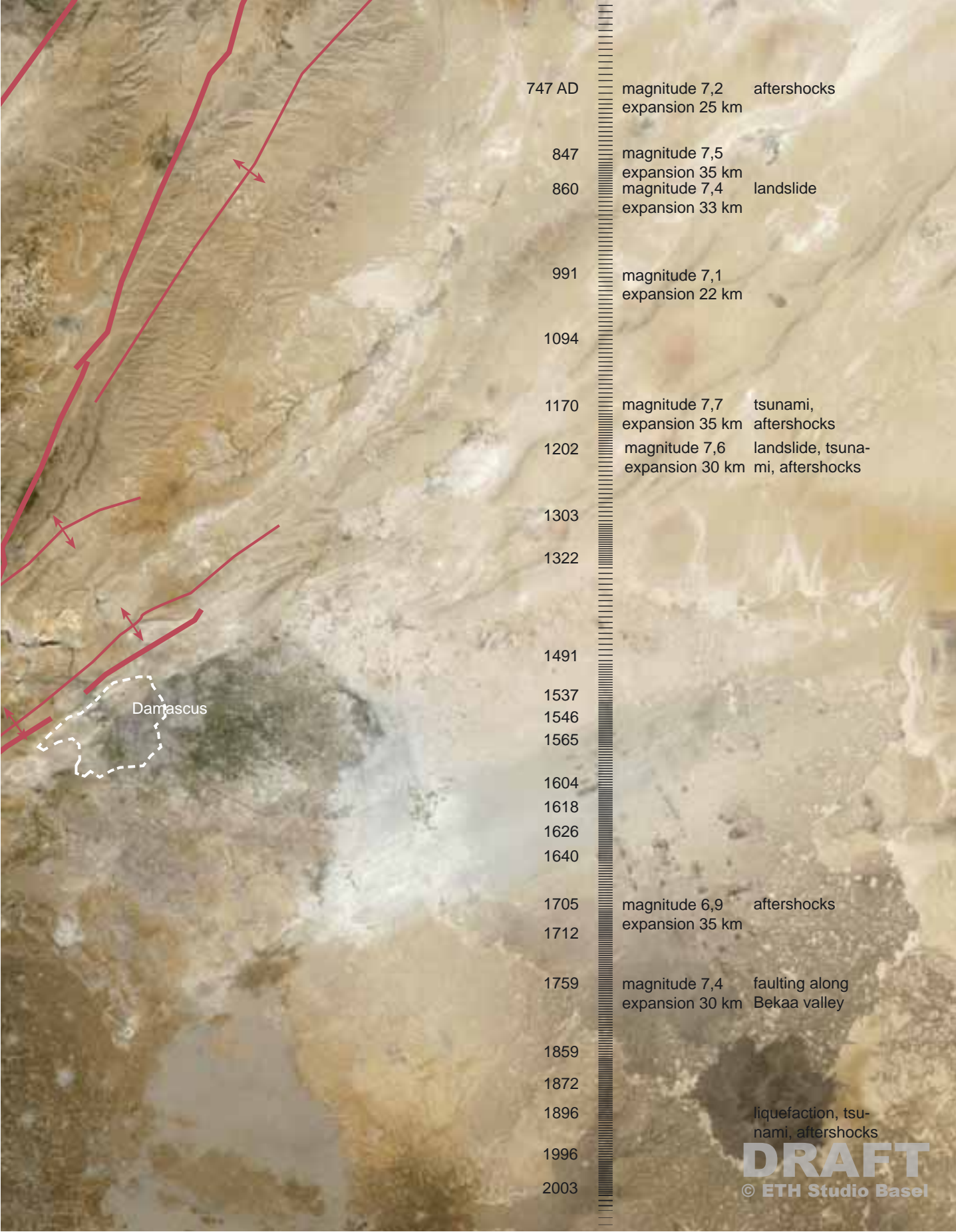


HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF EARTHQUAKES



own design after
© 2003 RAS, GJI, 153, 658-674,
www.earth-prints.org/handle/2122/908





VISIBLE FAULT

After the Earthquake of 2003





ALIGNMENT AND TREATMENT OF FAULT LINES

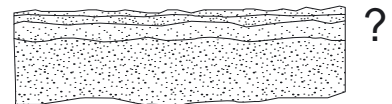
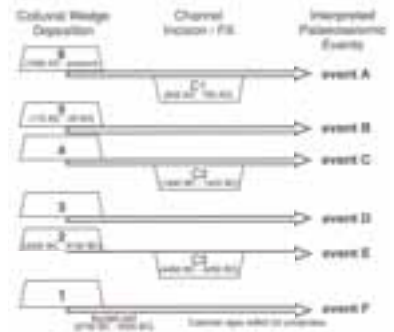
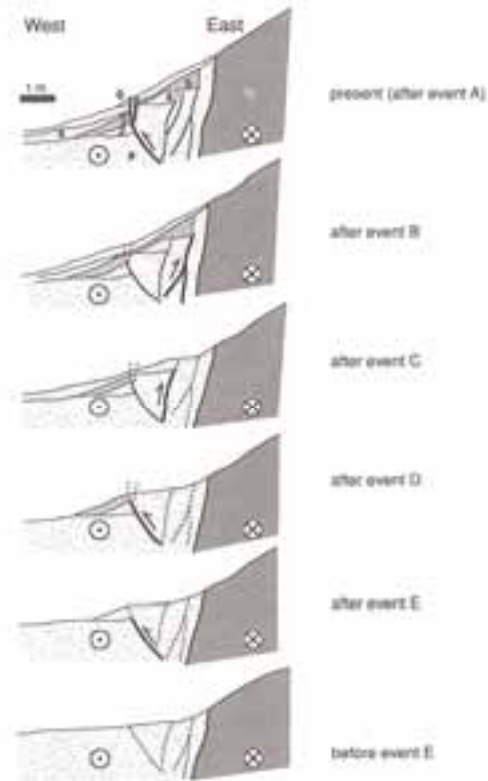
Dr. Donat Fäh
Schweizerischer Erdbebendienst
ETH Zürich



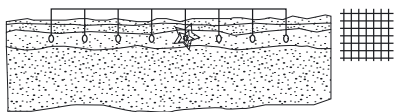
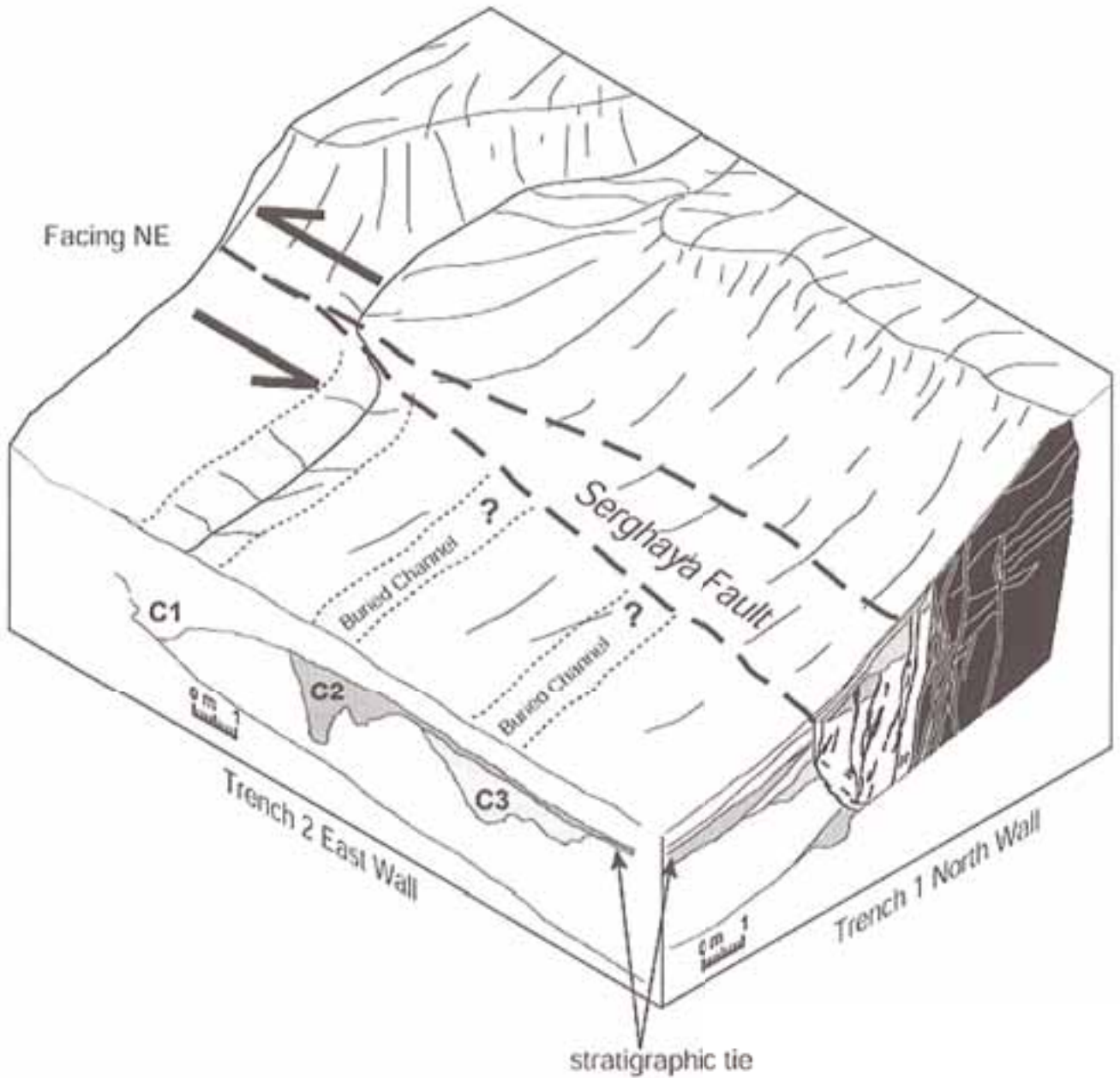
Expert

PRELIMINARY JUDGEMENT The exact location of a fault generally is difficult to be defined. This is due to the complexity of fault systems and the flower structure of an active fault close to the surface. Active seismic methods can be used to locate the different fault segments and sometimes allow to image the fault's geometry at depth down in the basement. The active parts of a fault system can be defined by locating small earthquakes through observations on dense seismic networks. MAM's approach to clear the risk zone from residential houses in order to save human lives might be good if really this part of the fault system will be active in a future earthquake. Nevertheless constructing such a wide road would make more sense only if it could be used as a runway and emergency road in case of an event. This would mean to plan the road so that it can be used after an earthquake, or to define a green space „over“ the fault line and an accommodation street close by or at some other place. In order to define efficient mitigation strategies against possible earthquake impacts in the city, it would also be necessary to investigate the behavior of the soft sediments in the different areas of the lower part of the city and to evaluate the stability of rock and soil slopes in the upper region, as well as to estimate the possible impact of soil liquefaction and landslides.

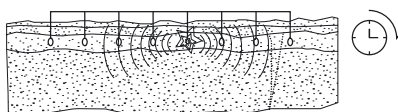
RESULT the planning of MAM is to be questioned. It has become public that the originally draft geologist quit his job for MAM in Salihiye.



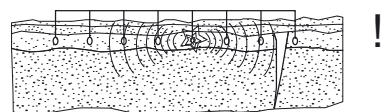
unknown terrain



installation of the reactor and the sensors on a dense grid



posting the impulse and measuring the reception through time



evaluating the data and point localise the fault

THE MAM REPORT Proposal overview

7 DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY AND PLAN

All previous projects for Qassioun proposed by the Governorate Planning Department were taken into consideration and assessed based on the scientific data provided by the Geologists. These projects included two key components:

- A **east-west highway** crossing the site with a right of way of 40 meters. This project was included as part of the proposed circulation network albeit with a new alignment and a reduced right of way.
- **Touristic development** above the Muhajirin regularization line. This project was moved from the area between the two faults as was originally proposed to the crest plateau because of the unsuitability of development in high risk zones. Areas with minor secondary faults, unstable rocks or prone to landslides were also avoided in delineating potential development sites on the stable plateau.

7.1 Key components of the development strategy and plan

The development strategy provides a coherent framework for the development of an **integrated plan for the whole site** and more detailed plans for each of its constituent parts.

1. The historic area with monuments and lively markets has great potential as a touristic and cultural zone **attracting a wide range of foreign and domestic visitors**. It is anchored by Shaykh Mohieddin Mosque and mausoleum, an important religious and cultural node in the city's social life. The urban fabric retains much of its original layout but it is deteriorating. Some of the buildings have been altered or partially demolished. Quite apart from its historic and heritage value, the area encompasses markets particularly along the Souq El Jumaa Street. Dr. Abir Arkawi, professor of architecture at Damascus University and MAM Historic City Development Expert, assumed responsibility for the study of improvements along this important historic axis.
2. Lower Qassioun is a legally regularized area and has a standard regularization plan drawn up by the Governorate Planning Department. **This plan requires the widening of streets it is implemented through mandatory setback of all new construction**. This leads to a pattern of jagged facades and skylines and discordant juxtapositions that complicate the treatment of public space. The development plan proposes a series of pilot projects **focused on environmental issues, solid waste management and improvement to strategically located public spaces**.
3. Upper Qassioun encompasses the unregularized informal settlement. It is the part of the site that is crossed by the fault lines. **Below the lower fault the settlement is geotechnically stable and can be regularized**. The area in between the two faults is the most hazardous. **Inhabitants should be relocated starting with families in the highest risk areas as determined by the geologic studies**. Above the upper fault line **chaotic urbanization on unserviceable slopes and along natural drainage channels must be stopped**. The development plan proposes to use landscaped

Map 7.1: Development Strategy



public spaces as physical barriers to prevent further uncontrolled building construction. These spaces have the added advantage of providing badly needed amenities in the settlement.

4. The high plateau is a geologically stable area overlooking the city. The magnificent panorama and the access provided by the crest roads make it an ideal location for the development of touristic/commercial facilities and high end residential projects. The land is owned by the Governorate. **A portion of the receipts from land sales to private developers are to be earmarked to subsidize the cost of infrastructure improvements in the existing settlement and to contribute to the cost of resettlement of households living in the hazardous zones**. The mass plan of the potential development is included for illustrative purposes only. Private developers interested in the site will present their own proposals to the Governorate. It is assumed that the Governorate will be selling land parcels. If all areas exposed to minor hazards are avoided, the readily developable area is still substantial. Assuming 40% land coverage and a floor-area ratio of one, the site can accommodate no less than one million square meters of floor space. Judicious use of topography and landscaping can greatly enhance the environmental quality of proposed projects and foster creative designs.
5. **The relocation site located within the Ma'araba urban extension area is considered an integral component of the development plan**. Households moved from the **high risk areas and households displaced to build the East-West connector** and upgrade the street network and the public spaces as well as households currently living in structurally unsound buildings or on unserviceable slopes have to be relocated to a safe area. The Ma'araba site is the closest to Qassioun and within relatively easy access.

project's inclusions **PROPOSAL OVERVIEW** The report's development strategy includes the improvement of the informal settlement, treatment of the area around the fault line, road network, resettlement of households living in hazardous zones and more.

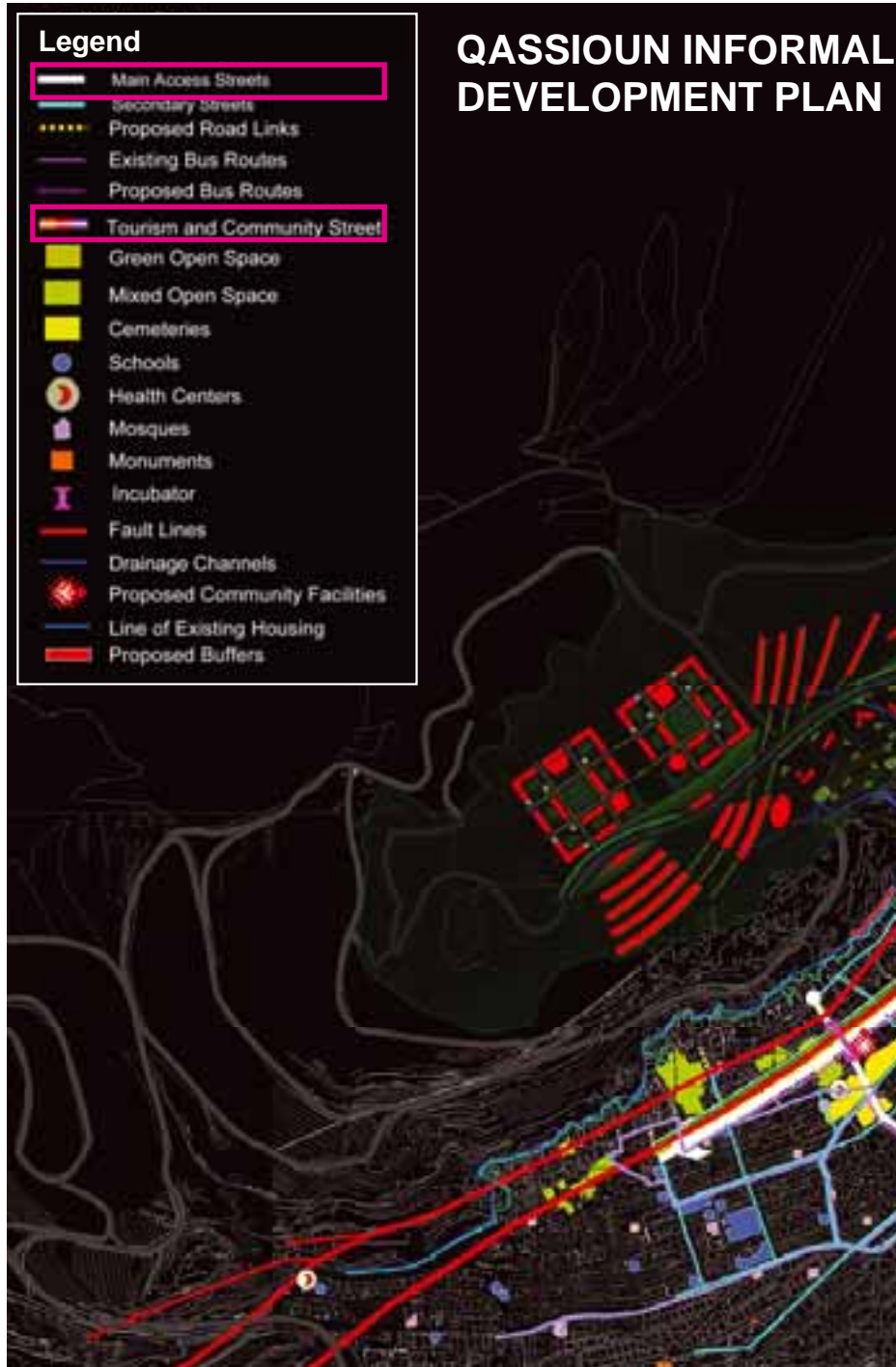
monuments with potential **TOURISM** The historic area with monuments and lively markets has great potential as a touristic and cultural zone attracting a wide range of foreign and domestic visitors.

upgrading existing roads **INFRASTRUCTURE** The MAM development plan proposes to upgrade existing roads and build new ones in order to form a coherent hierarchical transport network with three key components. (Main access street, tourism and commercial road)

cleaning the crack **LEISURE** will be upgraded as Commercial Axis to enhance its potential to provide a variety of services to the stable middle class population living in the surrounding neighborhoods and to visitors. The elongated depression (Environmental Axis) is will be cleaned and planted and could encompass paved spaces as well as playgrounds.

low- income housing **TYOLOGY** A low-income development with courtyards and environmentally sensitive are designated for the resettlement area . But this will provide housing for only 40% of the expropriated families.

Map 7.2: Development Plan



Mona Serageldin, MAM Urban Planning Expert



October 2008

THE MAM REPORT Traffic alternation and new urban nodes



Illustration 7.5:
Perspective of
proposed East-
West connector
and adjacent
green area.



Illustration 7.6:
Section through
main East-West
connector:
Street at-grade



Illustration 7.7:
Section through
main East-West
connector:
Street below-grade

Illustration 7.4: Proposed treatment of a section of the fault area.



essential component for Damascus

AN EAST-WEST CONNECTOR The connector is considered an essential component in the Damascus city transport system and will also relieve the pressure on Qassioun's existing streets.

This widened corridor will not only facilitate travel but will also allow for the positioning of fire stations, police stations and emergency health centers with ambulances, three services desperately needed in the settlement.

The road will be separated from the edge of the fault by a 10 meter safety zone that will be landscaped to preclude future building. Excluding this safety zone, the total right of way for the new road will be 20 meters, and it will comprise fairly wide sidewalks, four lanes of traffic, a median strip and a parking lane on the side furthest from the fault.

bypass to relieve traffic situation

TRAFFIC SITUATION IN THE CITY

A bypass to solve the traffic situation in Damascus? With more than 4 Million people living currently in the city, the plan by Eccocharad, has become out of capacity as it was designed for a population of about 1- 2 million people and nor was realized.

The East-West Connector would not only accomodate the enormous traffic amount, but furthermore have an impact on the whole concept of Ecochards visions for Damascus. With the planned new road, the municipality would establish a second bypass route. This might have the effect of the road becomng highly frequented and slicing Salhiye into two parts.



THE MAM REPORT Tourism Axis

Illustration 7.12: Proposed improvement of area near Shaykh Mohieddin Monument



Illustration 7.15: Stairs and housing improvement along the environmental axis.



Illustration 7.16: Children's play area overlooking the city along the environmental axis.



THE SELECTED PILOT STREET

crossing the urban fabric The study team selected a sequence of streets that together cross the different urban fabric typologies found in Kassyun.

CULTURAL/TOURISTIC AXIS

The plan proposes the special emphasis be placed on the improvement of the network of streets and spaces leading to important landmarks.

leisureing history Dr. Abir Arkawi, Professor of Architecture at Damascus University and MAM Historic City Development Expert mapped the monuments, delineated the proposed touristic route, including a link to the street leading to Shaykh Khaled cemetery. Along the main axis special paving and improvements to street facades are proposed in order to control chaotic awnings and temporary structures obstructing the original street perspective and masking views of the monuments as shown in the following illustrations.

LEISURING HISTORY

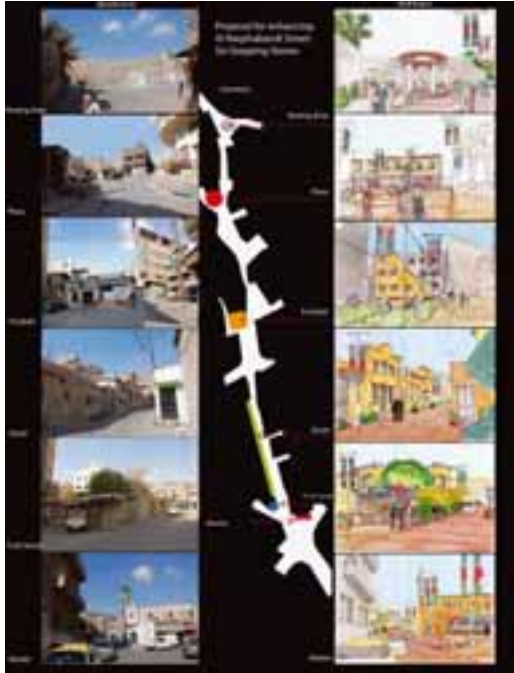
commercialising history The tourism axis will be considering a new treatment with the cultural heritage.

Will it compete with the Old City? Is all this about commercialization of historic fabric?

For sure it will shift the awareness for cultural heritage in Salihiye and new economic possibilities will be brought into the quarter. Selling the uniqueness of the quarter and spotlighting the proper identities of Salihiye.

THE MAM REPORT Commercial Axis

Map 7.13: Proposal for a commercial axis



Map 7.14: Entrance to Shaykh Khaled Cemetery



THE SELECTED PILOT STREET

The commercial axis forms a part of the selected „pilot street“ and goes along with environmental and touristic improvement.

THE COMMERCIAL AXIS This street lies within the middle class neighborhood that developed around the mausoleum. It is acquiring a commercial character which is emphasized in the improvement strategy. It will be upgraded to enhance its potential to provide a variety of services to the stable middle class population living in the surrounding neighborhoods and to visitors.

apropriate identity The plan will focus on the sequence of six currently amorphous spaces with encroachments, mostly vending stalls, that not only hamper circulation by narrowing the right of way but also blight the area with their shoddy construction.

The commercial axis will combine shops with sights. It and is about the treatment of the important but neglected public space. At the entrance of Shaykh Khaled cemetery.

incorporating stakeholders In addition to the community, the involvement of the local merchants, the Committee on Tombs and Mausolea, and the Rokn al Din Municipality as key stakeholders together with Governorate and the Ministry, will give an impetus to the project and help sustain the momentum.

the historic mosque With small interventions public space shall become attractive for public use. Outside taking place attraction spots, commercial areas and public places for the role of meeting points are going to characterize the street.

It is to question in which way this planned improvement will match with the contemporary life style found in Salihiye. Will it fit with tradition and habits of the quarter? What kind of impact will the changing have for existing urban fabric?

THE MAM REPORT Gentrification and new lifestyles

7.5 Resettlement of households living in hazardous zones and those affected by road improvements

An estimate of the number of households to be relocated was developed using the 2003 aerial photos to count buildings (roofs) in the different risk areas as well as those affected by street improvements, the bulk of which is to free up the right of way for the East-West connector. **There are 4,256 buildings affected.** Assuming there are 2.5 households per building, about **10,640 families would eventually need to be resettled.** However the urgency is to relocate the residents of 2,440 buildings that are located in the highest risk area along the main fault line. Under the same demographic assumption, a relocation site capable of accommodating **4063 families but to be secured as close as possible to Qassioun.** Following lengthy discussion with the Governorate Planning Department a site in the Urban Extension Area on the Ma'araba Road was selected. The ownership of the designated Extension Area has already been transferred to the Governorate.

It is imperative that a sustained public information and awareness program involving all the stakeholders be launched well ahead of the resettlement. **People must understand the dangers created by the seismic and geotechnic hazards and why they have to move.** They also have to know the importance placed on ensuring their safety and on providing them with the **best relocation option feasible.** The use of audiovisuals and models will help convey the messages in a clear and convincing manner.

Table 7.1: Estimate of households to be relocated

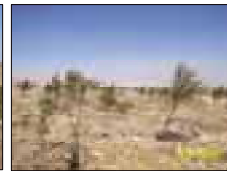
	Highest Risk Zone	High Risk Zone	Displaced for upgrading purposes	Total
Buildings	1625	815	1816	4256
Households	4063	2038	4540	10640
Persons	28816	13451	29964	70224

The relocation site is very close to the Qassioun informal settlement, a situation that is beneficial for those who will have to move. It comprises 100 hectares of land with fairly strong topography. Constructing **new housing for the households** who will be displaced will provide an opportunity to introduce new housing typologies better suited to development on sites that have not been previously leveled.

The proposed plan relies on **terracing**, the creation of a **green spine** and **well-articulated building arrangements** to accommodate the required density in an environmentally sensitive manner suited to the topological features of the site. It avoids cuts that destabilize the rocks and provides for ecologically sensitive plantings to protect the **natural rainwater drainage channels.** The architectural **design should integrate modern elements to keep costs low** while also taking into account environmental sustainability and aesthetically pleasing facades and layouts. Neighborhood convenience shops and services are provided. Given the age structure of the population at least six elementary schools are needed. A secondary school could be inserted in the green spine which could include sports facilities and play fields.

Further extension of the site is anticipated in order to provide housing for those who will be relocated from less hazardous zones and households displaced to provide for the right of way of the main East-West connector.

Map 7.4: Relocation site and road access to Qassioun settlement



Map 7.5: Existing roads and drainage channels



Illustration 7.8: Concept plan for the design of the relocation site.

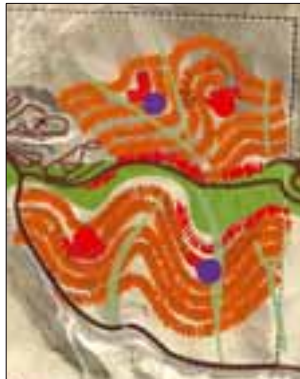


Illustration 7.9: Low-income development with courtyards and environmentally sensitive building design. Markusevic, Croatia.

Illustration 7.10: Attractive design for lower-income housing, Egypt



Illustration 7.11: Diversity in design for lower-income residents, Favela Bairro, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.



RESETTLEMENT OF HOUSEHOLDS

According to the report about 32,267 persons live in the high risk zone. They have to be relocated urgently as there is the risk of the active fault.

The relocation site „Maraba“ comprises 100 hectares of land and has been chosen for its proximity to the Mount Kasyum area. The typological feature of Salihiye and its region shall be matched at the new site. Besides other aspects the proposed urban structure relies on terracing.

We speculate that there is actually a gentrification process going on. This will have a huge impact on Salihiye, and the resettled families.

gentrification = process of replacing a lower status population by a higher status population within one housing area



Jalal Msadi
MAM associate
Damascus

associate

Reasons for planning > MAM started the work in Maraba and proposed it as a relocation land, because MAM thought that the topography of the area is pretty similar to that in Qassioun, and also because it is very close to the whole. MAM has also proposed to link the 30 meters service street directly with Maraba expansion in order to provide a direct link.

> The plan you can see in the report is only an illustration of a previous work that has been done by the Governorship for the area.

\$

Financing policy

> We know that the EC may fund the TA of Qassioun project and not going to be included in the EIB loan.
> EC is the European Commission in Syria, TA stands for technical assistance. The last will not be funded within the loan money, as the EC is going to offer Syrians a separate grant of another 5 million Euros to do all detailed studies. The Municipal Funds programme initiated by the EIB loan was signed as a protocol agreement only few days ago; it didn't include anything about Qassioun as it is designed to be a separate programme.

existing type / life

> Syrian Government will be paying back the loan of course, and all the selected pilot projects within this programme are non profitable, and the interest rate will be around 2-3 percent, which can be supported by the EC in turn.

> The initiation of the Municipal Funds Programme will take place next week, and Minister of Local Administration in Syria is making a visit to Brussels next week in that order.

THE MAM REPORT Talking to Mona Serageldin (author)



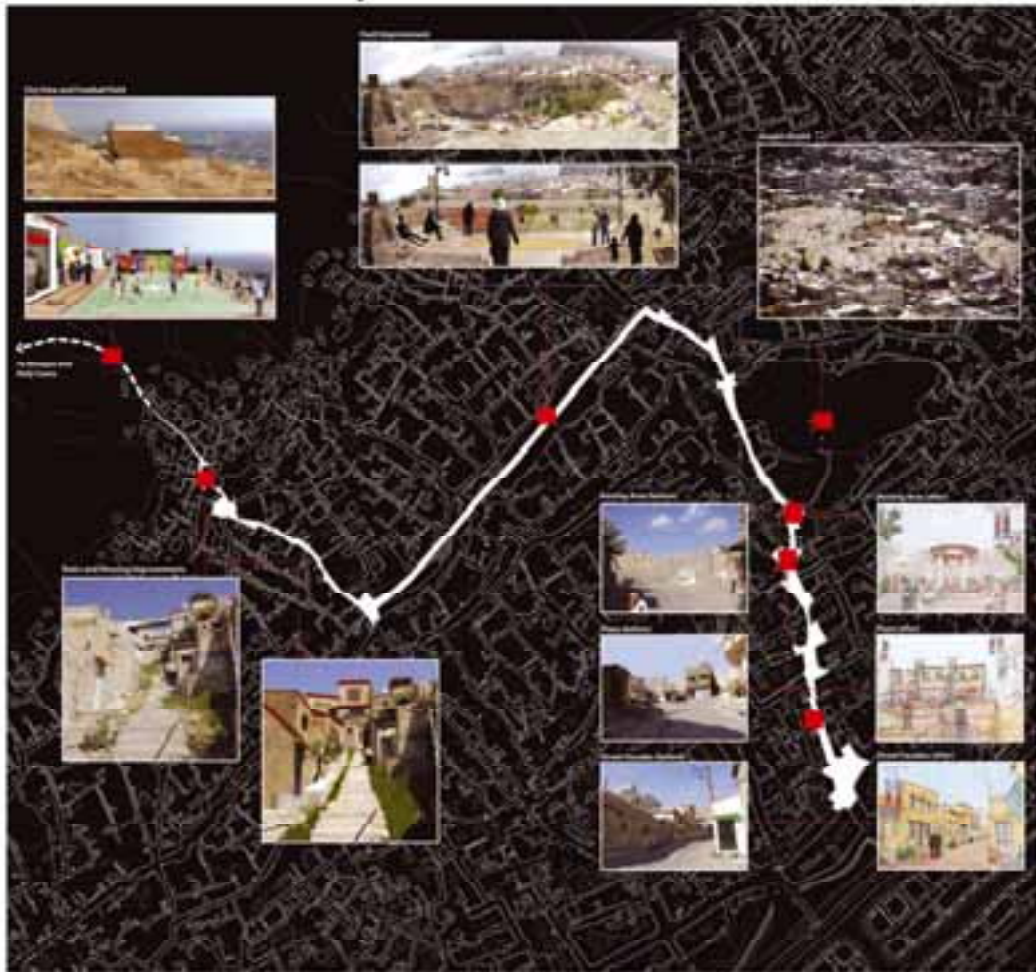
SYRIAN MINISTRY OF LOCAL ADMINISTRATION AND ENVIRONMENT

Municipal Administration Modernisation Programme

A Programme funded by the European Union
Delegation of the European Commission

QASSIOUN INFORMAL SETTLEMENT DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Pilot Street: Selected Improvements



Mona Serageldin, Urban Planning Expert, presents the pilot street for the informal urban development, MAM Urban Planning Expert, Study Team Lead

Commission Project Team
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Adjunct Professor of Urban Planning

Harvard University

Vice President

Institute for International Urban Development

Dr. Serageldin has developed new approaches to project design and implementation that rely on capacity building methods through training and technical assistance. Actively involved in national and international conferences, her ongoing research and numerous publications have dealt with issues of urban strategies for economic development, strategic planning, public/private partnerships, small business development and micro-credit, and community-based approaches to housing and economic development.

exceptional project > This is not a normal upgrading project. There are very unique problems as the alignment of the fault line and the problem of people living on an active fault. Their safety is of highest priority to the project goals.

fundamental fault alignment > Without the correct alignment of the fault an improvement plan of the area can not be set. up . The geologists worked 8 months on this.

safety and accesibility > Of major concern is to provide safety and infrastructure at Salhiye. Establishing access for emergency vehicles, upgrading public space and connecting Salhiye to Damascus through the proposed east-west highway, a plan which has been at stake for long time in city planning.

replacement area > In comparison latin america projects, people just are kicked out, here you have to find a replacement area

religious tourism > The actual tourism axis will attract pilgrams who normally go to Umayyad Mosque. Casual tourists however will not come.

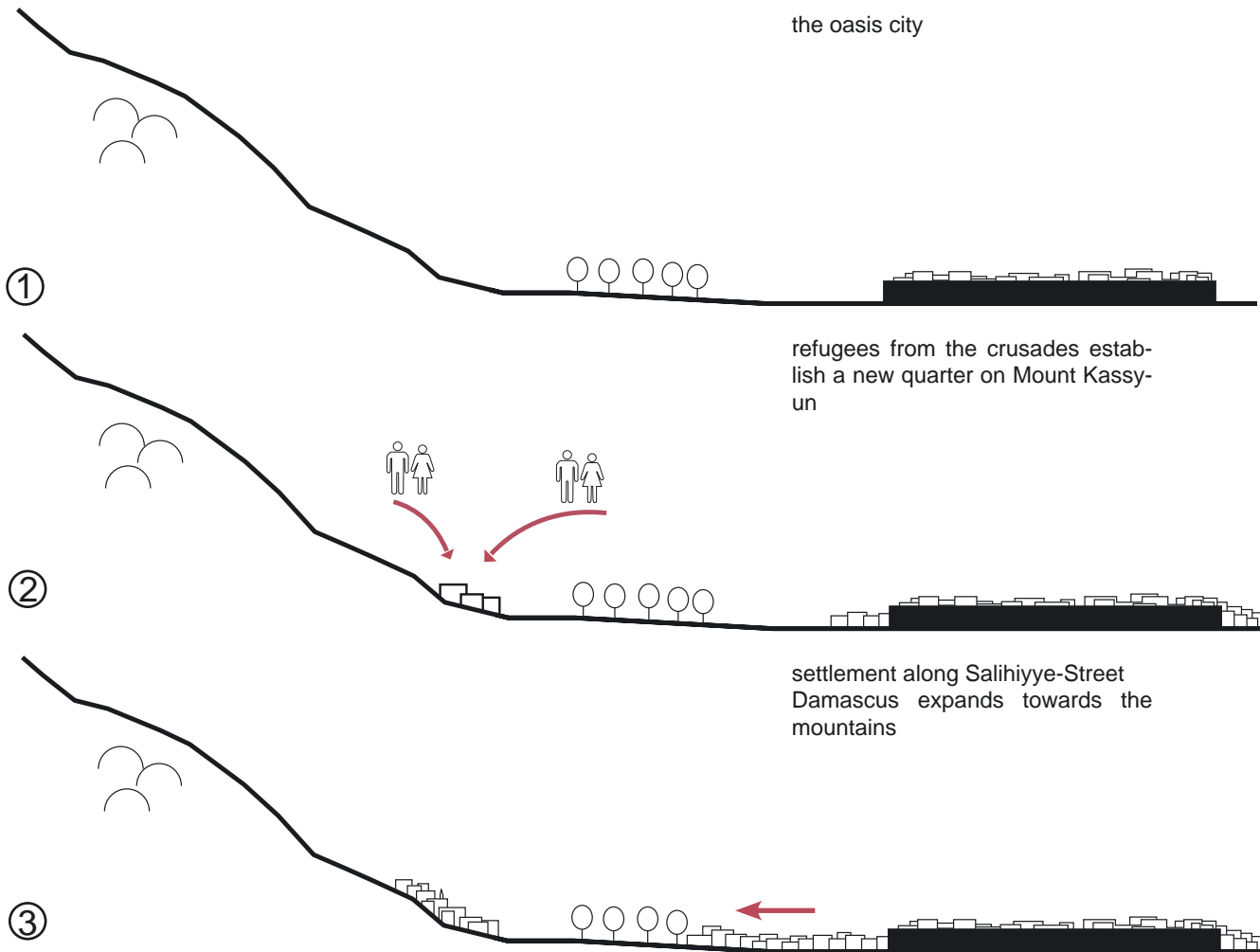
no value > The Old City, while having similar problems of accesibility cannot be touched in the same way, since it belongs to the UNESCO world heritage.

‘THE URBAN FABRIC OF SALHIYE HOWEVER HAS NO CULTURAL VALUE EXCEPT FOR SOME MAUSOLEA.’

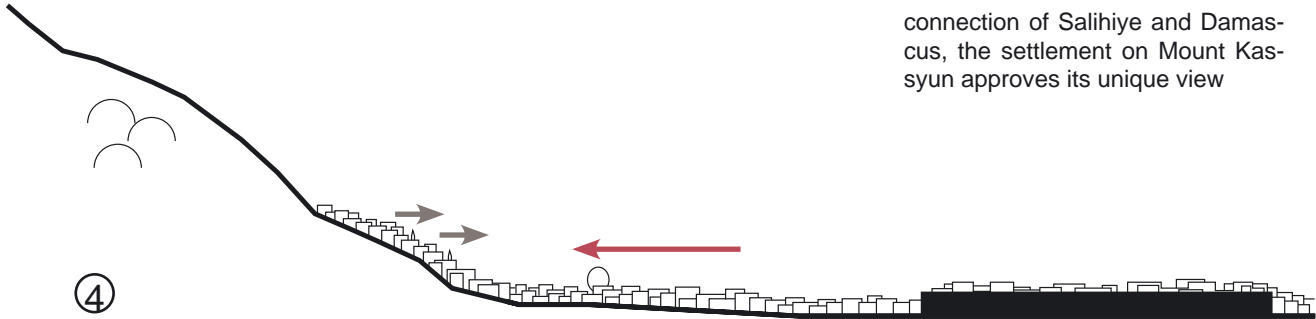
financial doubts > The only excisting doubts for putting this planning on ground is financial. The project is supposed to be implemented in consecutive phases for financing step by step for further development.

outcome > The outcome of the report is over all satisfying, since it is a determination of all fundamental issues of the improvement of Salhiye.

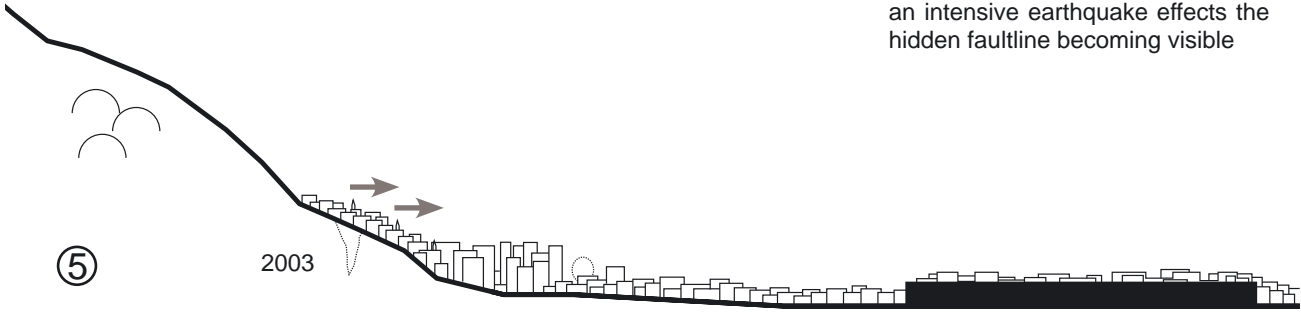
SALIHIIYE Historic and assumed future development



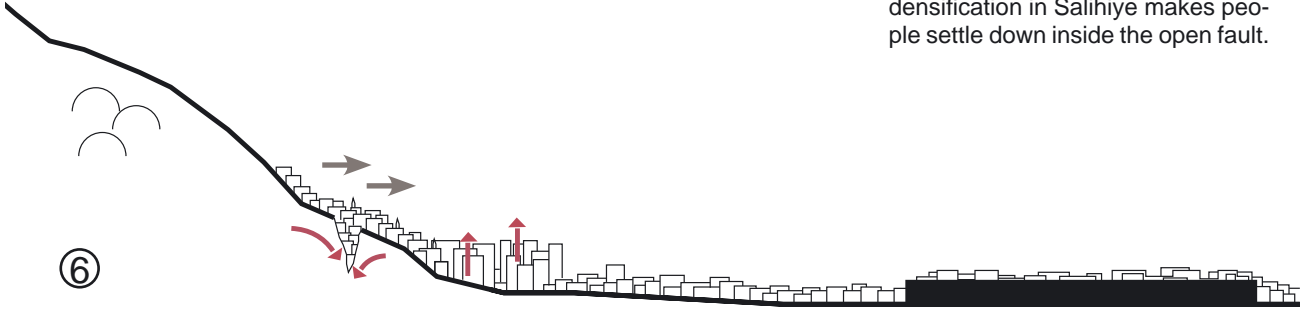
connection of Salihiye and Damascus, the settlement on Mount Kas-syun approves its unique view



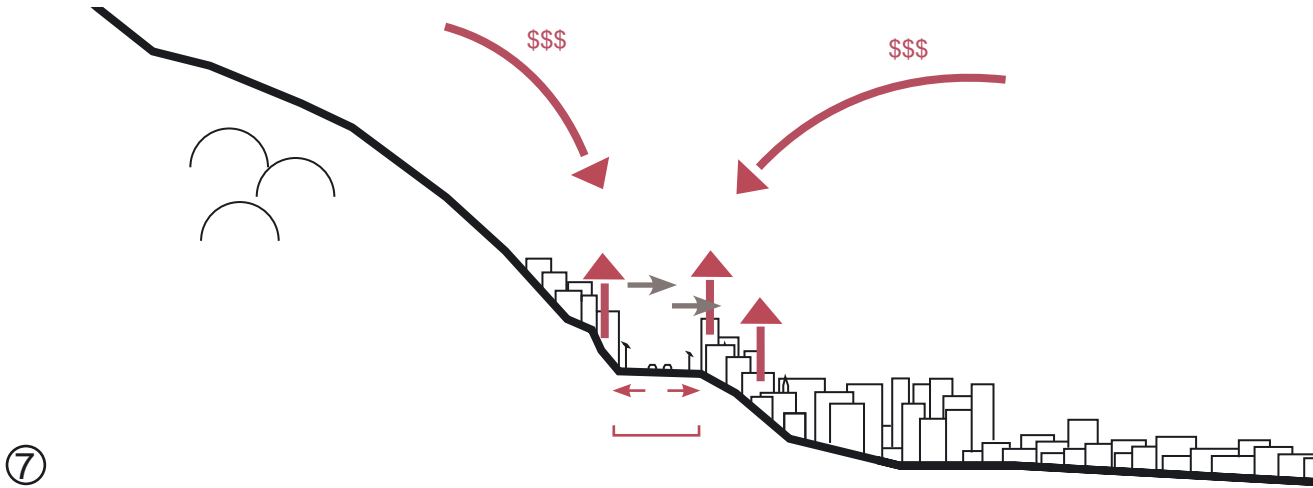
an intensive earthquake effects the hidden faultline becoming visible



densification in Salihiye makes peo-ple settle down inside the open fault.



SALIHIYE Historic and assumed future development



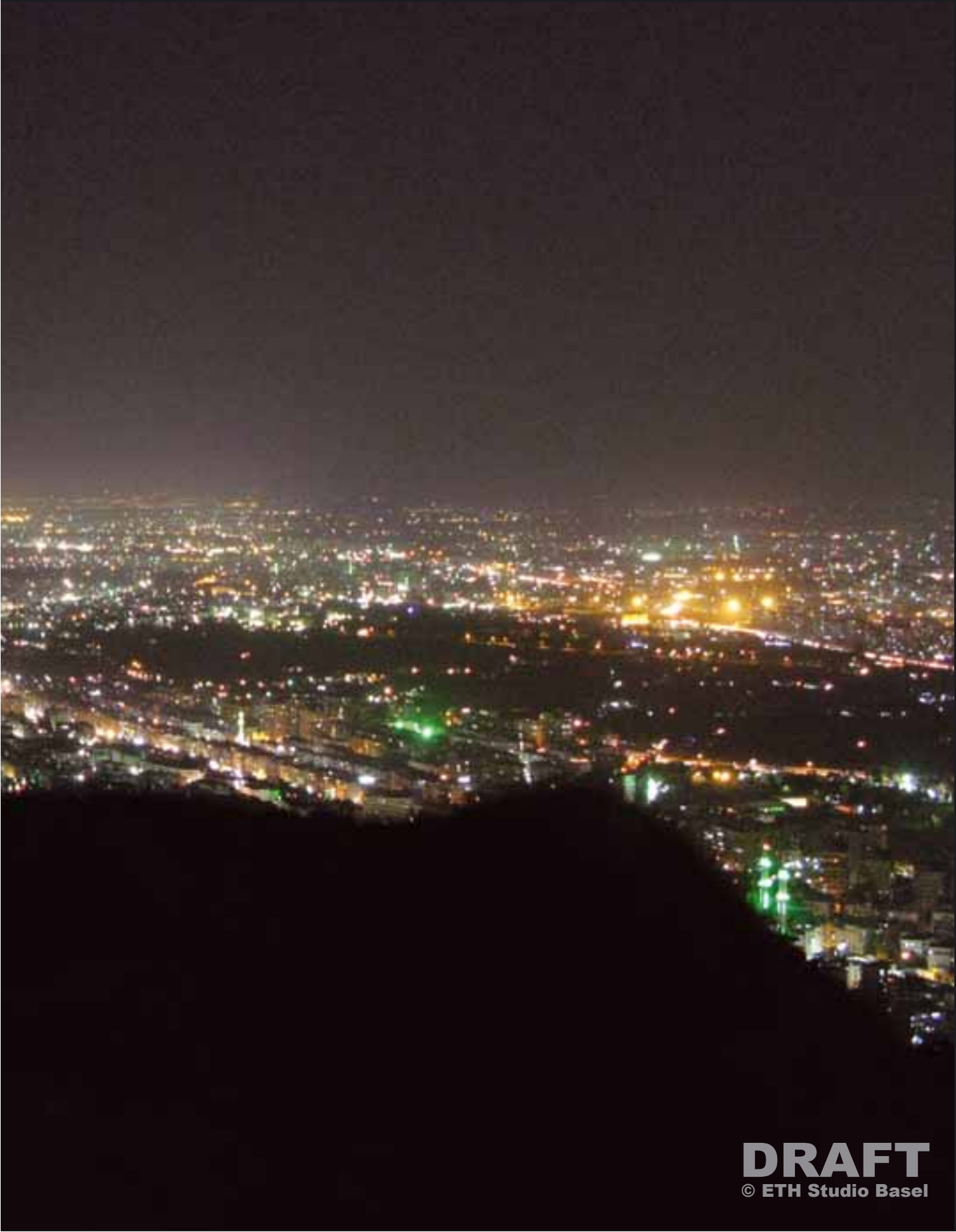


The 50 million \$ EIB loan, given to the Syrian government, will allow building the wide street.



Within time, especially in accordance to the intended commercial and tourism axis, it is to assume that the usually planned upgrading for safety reasons, will also cause in enormous increase of real estate prices and a gentrification will come up.



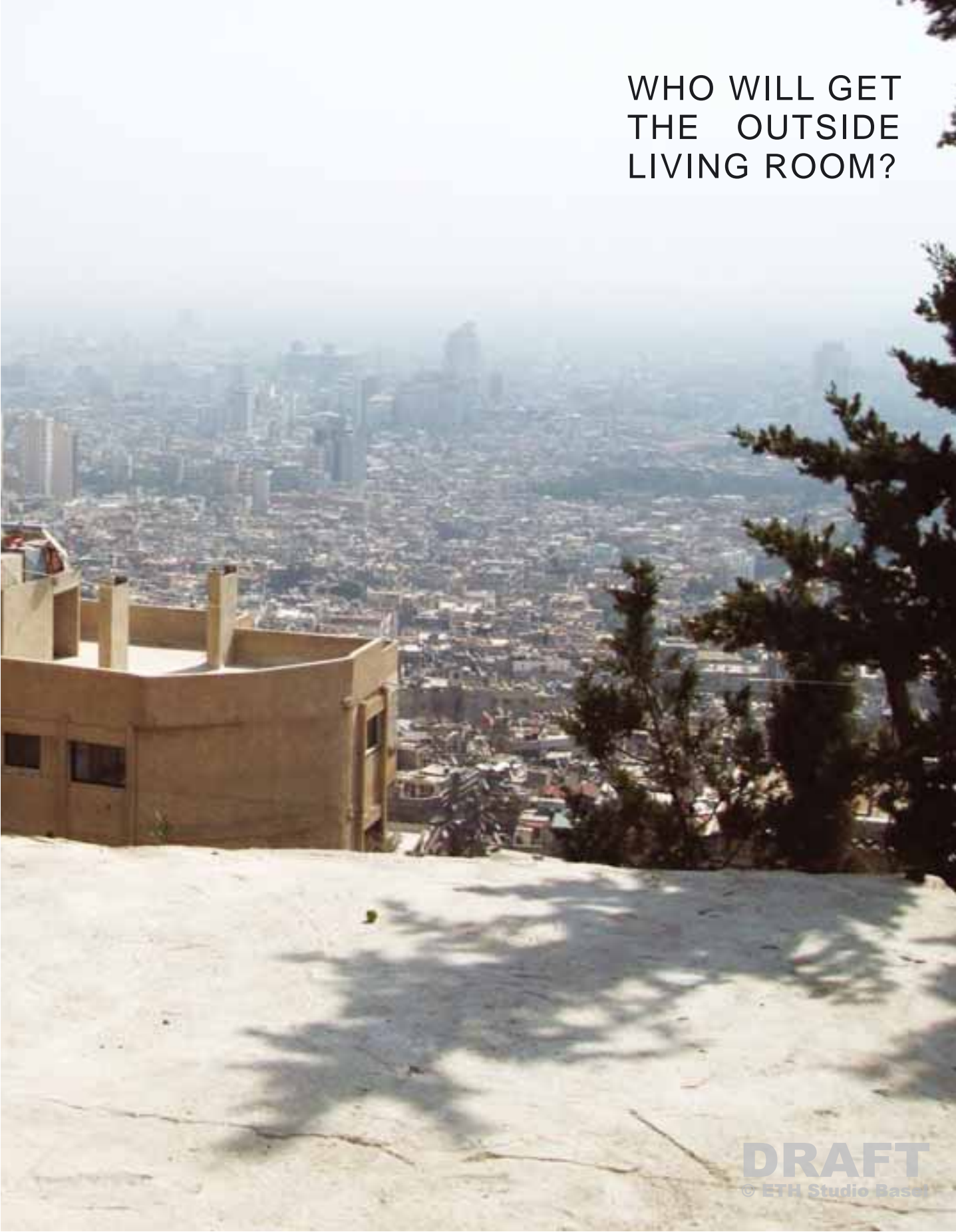


DRAFT
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WHO WILL GET
THE OUTSIDE
LIVING ROOM?





The background of the page is a faded, sepia-toned photograph of a building's exterior. On the left, there is a window with a white frame. Above the window, a black, ornate street lamp is mounted on the wall. To the right of the lamp, a vertical pipe or downspout runs down the side of the building. The overall image is semi-transparent, allowing the text to be clearly visible over it.

Appendix

216 Sources
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Acknowledgements

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