7. CONCLUSION
Conclusion

The peri-urban zones are constantly redefined and changed responding to the growth of the cities of Hanoi and Melbourne. The research has been explored and developed a number of strategies formulating the Transitional Approach to act upon these urban environments. The approach takes into account the processes of change over time spatially and programmatically. By speculating on possible future changes, it chooses to strategically intervene before developments take place, in order to maintain agricultural production and supportive infrastructures as well as proposing new models of public spaces for peri-urban communities.

The first project, Marysville - Peripheral Living, was an important departure for the research because it started the research interest in the periphery of the city where small towns are located. These towns offer a close to nature lifestyle but still rely on the urban infrastructure of the city. The local communities are disadvantaged in terms of public facilities and resources. They suffered serious devastation from the bushfires in February 2009. This observation triggered the interest of peripheral landscape in transition and the investigation into the public football oval spaces in peripheral towns. The strategies of time phasing and edge intervention emerged. They were used to speculate changes of events or programs over time in and around the football oval and by intensifying the edge of the oval, a new model of public space has emerged. The project created multifunctional and hybrid public spaces around the oval to help the people in town resist the super-imposition of events such as bushfires. From the typological study of similar sites around the oval, a new model of public space has emerged. The project created multifunctional and hybrid public spaces around the oval to help the people in town resist the super-imposition of events such as bushfires. From the typological study of similar sites around the oval, a new model of public space has emerged.

The second project, Hanoi: City in Expansion continued the interest in the interface between rural and urban environments by researching the West peri-urban zone of the city of Hanoi. Early observation of the urban landscape in Hanoi showed fast changes with high density residential and mix-used projects dominating the skyline of the city. Due to the urbanization and industrialization processes, the city of Hanoi’s urban boundary was expanded 3.6 times in 2008 to accommodate future growth. The research questioned how the strategies developed in the Marysville project would work and became more refined in the context of Hanoi and what different strategies or aspects of research would emerge. The peri-urban interface of Hanoi is in transition due to the displacement of farmlands for urban and industrial projects which affect the local farmers and farming industry heavily. This observation and research into Hanoi’s agriculture and food production formulated the question of the project, which was how to sustain the livelihood of farmers and farming industry in peri-urban interface as well as securing the food supply for the city. The strategies of time phasing, edge intervention, hybridization/cross-programming and network intervention were further tested and developed in the context of Hanoi. The strategy of time phasing became critically important for the research to speculate possible changes in the peri-urban environments due to the appearances of new urban projects on farmlands. From this speculation, anchor points of interventions were chosen to integrate and hybridize farming activities with the surrounding programs such as the village market, the Hoa Lo prison or the displaced factories. These interventions resisted the total displacement of farming activities and transformed them into new models of producing food. The combination of temporary or permanent interventions presented a diverse collection of case studies which refined and enriched the strategies started in the first project. One important observation in Hanoi was that the true land ownership is with the government, not the people. Therefore, the farmers are the most vulnerable in the urbanization and industrialization processes. The interventions in Hanoi’s peri-urban sites aimed at exploring a transitional and humanistic approach in architecture which is about how to contribute and create a sustainable living environment for the local inhabitants with respect for local culture and traditions.

The final project, Casey - Transitional Landscape, has pushed further the interests in peri-urban environments and urban agriculture by testing all the strategies developed throughout the first two projects in another context. This research has come back to Melbourne and explored the new urban growth areas of Cranbourne North and Clyde in the city of Casey which is 35 km from the Melbourne CBD. The peri-urban environments of Melbourne are also in transition due to the displacement of farmlands for housing development and population growth. The research has been exposed to a rich foundation of precedents and research on the peri-urban zones of Melbourne and contemporary urban agriculture. The project has
investigated the relationship between food production and consumption under the effects of Melbourne @ 5 million scheme. The findings are alarming due to the fact that local people are living in agricultural zones and surrounded by market gardens but have difficulties in local food access due to poor public transport systems and the control of food distribution by supermarket chains. The research formulates the integrated strategy which combines different disciplines of urban architecture, landscape and infrastructure to support the farming production in the region and protect food security for the city. Important areas of market gardens are proposed to be maintained. They will supply food for a certain area of local population. The existence of market gardens is supported with architectural and landscape interventions around their edges to connect them with surrounding residential areas. The strategies of time phasing, edge intervention, hybridization/cross programming, and network interventions are all utilized. The project aims at creating a sustainable living environment for local people by designing for access to food as well as raising the awareness of the public about the importance of local productive landscape. One observation in the final project is that the land ownership in Australia belongs to individuals, not the government. Therefore, local farmers have a choice of staying and continuing their farming activities instead of selling their land to developers. However, in order to do that they need support in terms of infrastructures, local food distribution system and the involvement of the public. The research has also taken into account unavoidable residential developments in the new urban growth areas to accommodate population growth. However, the dissertation proposes that the strategic existence of productive farmlands and a new model of supportive public infrastructures around the edges of the productive landscape will also benefit the upcoming residential developments in the urban growth areas of Melbourne.

The strategies emerged, explored and developed in this research could be applied in different contexts. They have shown abilities to resist the displacement of agricultural industry and transform it into new models of urban farming and public spaces. However, different sites will create a different collection of interventions and refine the design strategies. Doing architectural research through a project based methodology has also been very effective in terms of testing the relevance of strategies in dealing with a particular urban environment. The theorizing of strategies and the actual design experimentation support each other and enrich the research. The second project in Hanoi could be explored further and enhanced by the outcomes of the final project in Melbourne.
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