THRESHOLD INFRASTRUCTURE: SURVIVAL *THROUGH AND WITH*

Pelin Tan

Through a series of instalments in collaboration with The Esch Clinics (TEC), the research I am initiating explores the sovereignty of foodscapes in terms of food and ingredients, focusing on the commoning practices that intersect with precarity and daily survival in the urban and its hinterlands. The methodologies will be based on open assemblies, which will transform into focus groups, collective happenings, mapping through video interviews, collective readings, and writing. I ask:

How does migration impact the foodscapes? How are solidarity practices created around it? How does food logistics between urban and hinterlands work? How is transhumance practice in grazing lands preserved as spatial heritage under capitalist extractivism and the climate crisis?

These inquiries are framed through the conceptual lens of thresholds and everyday critical spatial practices, aiming to understand how non-normative strategies of spatial appropriation can be recognized and supported—and how such strategies contribute to the creation of threshold infrastructures that enable survival through and with. Threshold infrastructure is defined as both a spatial condition in extreme topographies and geographies and as an intangible form of solidarity exchange.

Socially engaged artistic and architectural practices foster solidarities based on labor exchange, interdependency, and autonomous forms of dwelling. In such cases, urban gardening, cultivation practices, and reactivating common spaces function as threshold infrastructures that sustain social relations and care for precarious communities. These infrastructures are embedded in the ethics of locality, conveyed through systems of support and exchange economies grounded in solidarity.

Contact will be established with local researchers as well as with associations such as Transition Minett, Mesa, Vivre Ensemble, and various migrant organizations in and around Esch-sur-Alzette. These partners will support the upcoming phases of the research through a series of public assemblies. The assemblies will serve as platforms for collective reflection, knowledge sharing, and the co-creation of tools to address issues related to migration, food sovereignty, and spatial justice.

Luxembourg-based architect and M.Arch. student Zeynep Helin Kaya will be the project affiliate.

PELIN TAN is a Turkish art historian and sociologist, currently a professor at the Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Batman; based in Mardin/Turkiye. Senior research fellow of the Center for Arts, Design and Social Research. For more than two decades, she has focused on urban & territorial conflict, commons, labor conditions, alternative pedagogies, and methodologies in art & architecture. Her current short documentary "Landscapes as Archives" is about the production of architecture in Palestine supported by the Qattan Foundation, Ramallah (2023). Forthcoming books: Forms of Non-Belonging (E-flux book/Sternberg Press, 2025), The Thresholds of Architecture (dpr-barcelona, 2026).

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Foodscapes_Firik Bulghur, Antioch, Turkiye.

REFERENCES AND RESOURCES:

Readings
Decolonizing Architectural Education
https://planlibre.eu/decoloniser-lenseignement-de-larchitecture

Entangled Exiles
https://www.e-flux.com/journal/131/502144/entangled-exiles

The Scale of Commons
https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.4324/9781003349785-3/scale-commons-pelin-tan

Camps as Trans-Local Commons
https://www.decolonizing.ps/site/2017/07/refugee-heritage-conversations-pelin-tan-camps-as-trans-local-commons

Short Film:
Dimeşin / Walking - Tigris Phenomenologies: https://youtu.be/O6uUaXWSUSA
Fisher Women / Pearl River Delta China - Threshold Infrastructure: https://vimeo.com/1096191992