

## **Quality Social Spaces in Casual Urban Style: Traces and Interstices and Their Ability to Integrate the Peripheral Areas**

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In many cases, the periphery is an urban area generated by the addition of projects of individual initiative and a differentiated position, the sum of small residential systems of different types, scales and forms of dwelling in which gradually, the citizen finds his urban references. This is a process that is based on important features of geographical support as roads, plots, vegetation, crossroads, small farm buildings, etc. That act as a space - time window between the present metropolitan and the agricultural past. Social diversity reflects the multiple residential types, allows the citizen interaction in these areas, and increases the cultural richness and cohesion of these tissues now converted into neighborhoods. Interstices and traces give structure to a complex mesh of lines and dots, successful spaces of this fragmented city that help us to understand the urban development of periphery as a unique piece articulated with the rest of the city, and forms a system to harbor first level equipment. Through a case study, the southern district of the city of Granada (Spain), you can explore the various stages of formation of this district and deepen the cultural memory of the place, realizing the new role its urban project can begin play on the metropolitan scale.

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# **Quality Social Spaces in Casual Urban Style: Traces and Interstices and Their Ability to Integrate the Peripheral Areas**

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## **1. The need to interpret peripheral spaces**

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3.1. Lot in Primavera Street

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3.3. The migratory sheep Heard path (Cañada Real)

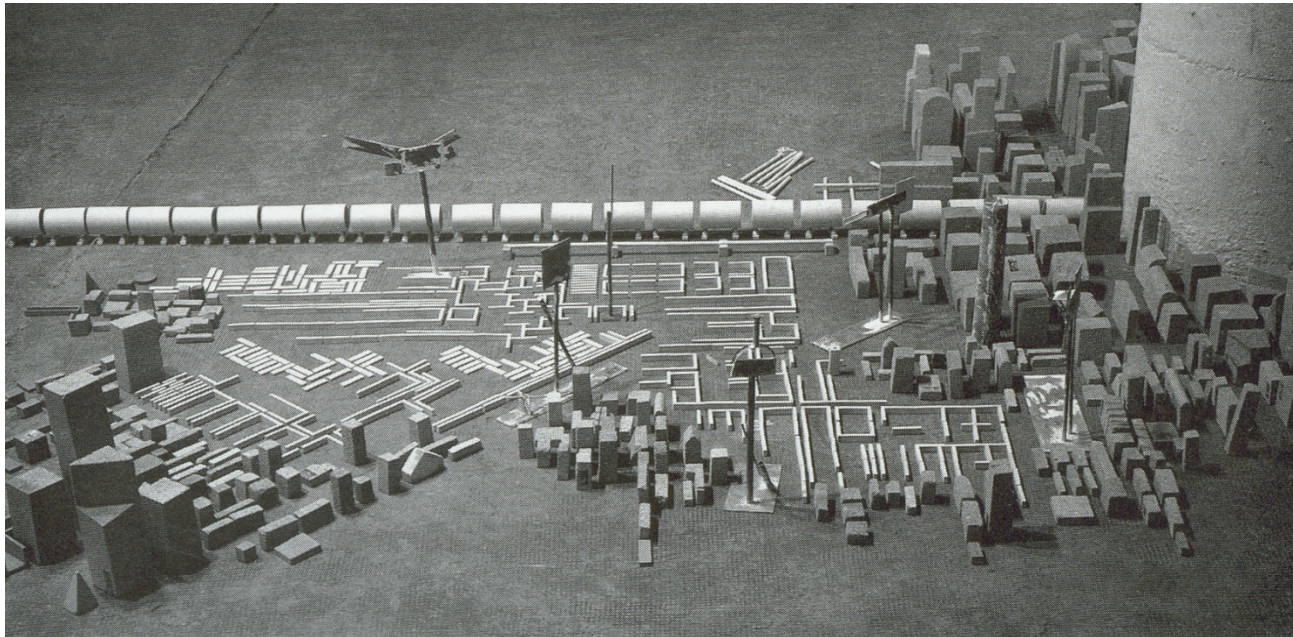
## **4. Conclusions**



## 1. The need to interpret peripheral spaces

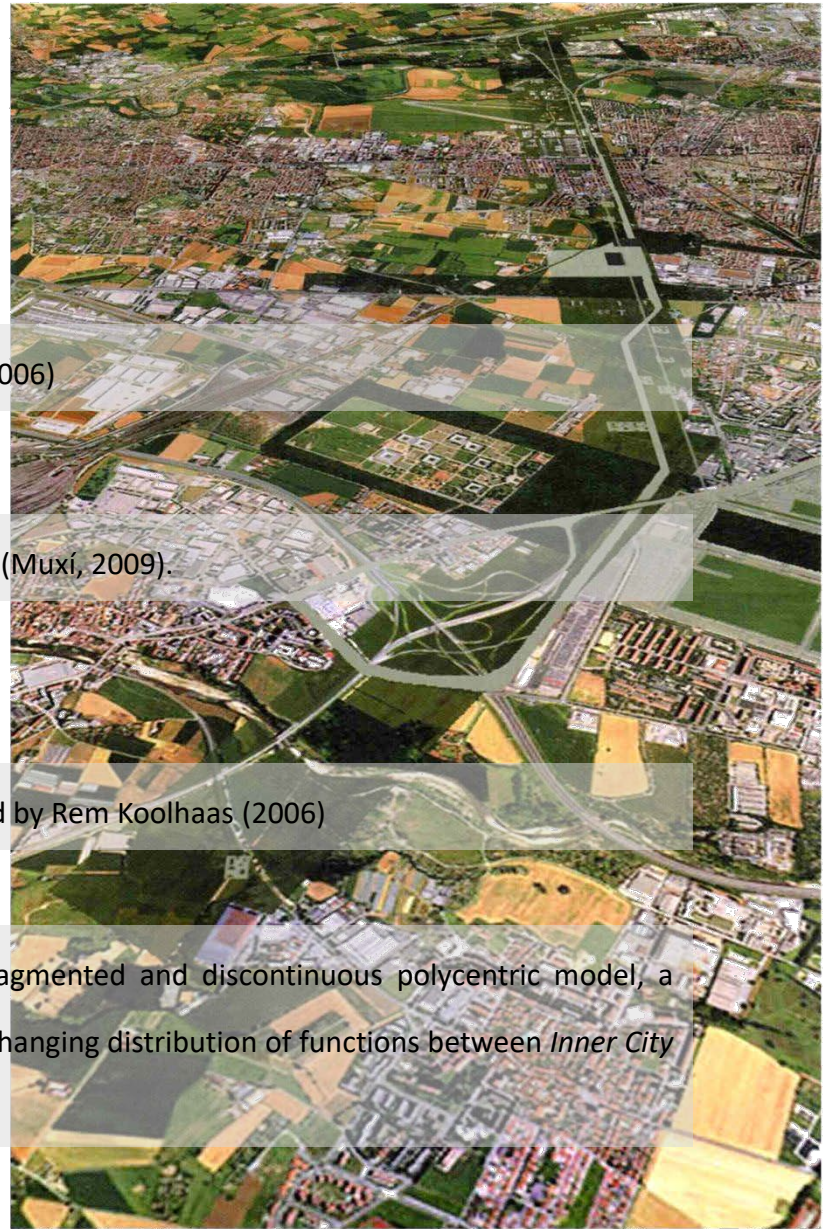
Regardless of their form, scale or position within the territory, the different peripheral spaces have always shared some identifying characteristics:

- A spacial comparison to the compact central or historic city.
- A resistance to generating defined or stable internal centers.
- A strong tendency to dissolve and project towards the landscape.



This type of peripheral simulates a contemporary outskirts that brings to the metropolitan scale:

- An abundance of Non-spaces, as defined by Marc Augè (2006)
- A *weakening* of both structural and symbolic public space (Muxí, 2009).
- A *sedated place of weak and relaxed sensations* as defined by Rem Koolhaas (2006)
- A space that is introduced into the urban idea as a fragmented and discontinuous polycentric model, a regional city that is still confused and with a varying and changing distribution of functions between *Inner City* and *Outer City* (Eduard Soja, 2008)



## 1st Attribute: The outskirts as an urban stage

This type of “historic outskirts”, underrated during the first decades was later vindicated as an important experimental field (Solá-Morales, 1995), and has been and continues to be a stage where urban contemporary life is developed.

The outskirts also meant that the city went from being a place that was accessible by foot to a farther place, in need of its own new infrastructures. It supposed a significant population increase, with new jobs, industrial warehouses, new scales and new formats.



## 2nd Attribute: The outskirts as a territorial articulator



Complex territories became ever more difficult to interpret. A fragmented landscape is the consequence of the sum or the juxtaposition of private pockets lacking the necessary cohesion.



The outskirts then becomes the principal space in the exchange between the metropolitan area and the historic center, maintaining its role as a transformational space.

It becomes a great opportunity for creating new forms, to reevaluate obsolete structures or spaces forgotten in frenetic urban growth on a greater scale.





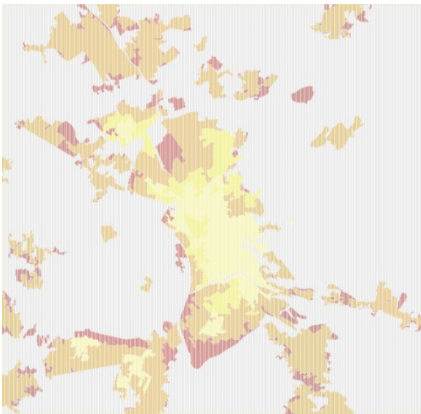
## 2. The study case; Granada's southern district

### 2.1. Granada's growth to the south: the urban scale and the metropolitan scale.



Three main districts can be recognized within it:

- **A central historic and cultural district**
- **A northern district separated from the Center by the Beiro river**
- **A southern district, across the Genil River**



All of this shows a very open city at both ends, full of possibilities or alternatives, and nevertheless, very closed and unambiguous in its centers, strongly influenced by significant prejudice relative to their shape or their future evolution (Parcerisa, 1989).



## 2.2. Attributes of the southern district. Three concepts for observation: active limit, dynamic additive and border fabric.

To understand the resulting fabric of this growth process to the south of the city, it is necessary to identify or rationalize the links that exist between its elements. The entire urban spaces must be understood as one organic system growing according to long growth cycles.

<b>Attributes of the Southern District</b>	<b>Active Limit</b>	→	Natural limit: The Genil River
	Establishes the relation between the historic center and the outskirts.		Infrastructural limit: Highway heading to the coast.
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	<b>Dynamic additive</b>	→	Fragments with their own identity
	Construction through accumulation during long periods of time.		Specific relationships <i>Living spaces vs Public space.</i>
			Respect for inherited forms
<hr style="border-top: 1px dashed black;"/>			
	<b>Border fabric</b>	→	Interior residencial spaces.
	An intrinsic space defined by the users		Spaces between residential units.
			Network of spaces that fuse the whole.



### 2.2.1. Active limit

The limit of contact between the southern district and the center of Granada is a fundamentally a geographic space, a flood plain and related to both the mountain and the valley (Genil River)

Since the 19th century this limit has served as a scenic space in the collective life of Granada. With the construction of public historic spaces (Salón and Violón gardens) and the posterior incorporation of cultural centers.



The cultural and historic character of the limit has integrated in a friendly way to this southern peripheral space in the consolidated city ensemble.

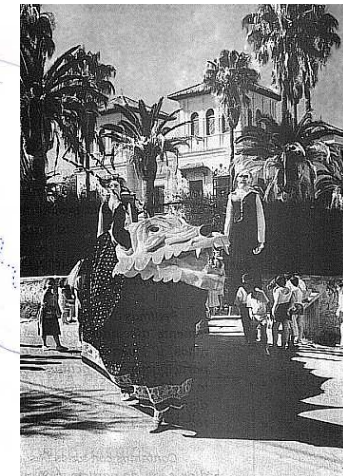


### 2.2.2. Dynamic Additive

It is the result of temporary compositions of different spacial projects that avoided the suppression of the urban inheritance that was previously encountered.

Each fragment had its origin in a social action of a specific moment in time and attempted to integrate into the urban context with little consideration to the whole.





The urban villas built in the beginning of the 20th century, the traces of rural roads, the social housing of the 1950s, the high density streets defined by residential towers, etc., are pieces that are superimposed yet conserve their own identity, at the same time they are a recognizable whole beyond the banks of the Genil River.



<b>Period 1. 1920-1940</b>	Transformation of the agricultural valley into a residential urban fabric, through the fragmentation of agricultural plots and the construction of urban villas.
<b>Period 2. 1940-1960</b>	Social housing promotions.
<b>Period 3. 1960-1980</b>	Streets laid out in a planned manner and construction of high density housing.
<b>Period 4. 1980-2010</b>	Consolidation of the fabric and construction of facilities and public spaces in the district.



### 2.2.3. Border fabric

If we observe the group of open spaces, in this structure there appear two essential types:

**The interior landscape** of each residential construct.

**The border fabric** made up of spaces on the margins between one system and another

*The border fabric or web of intrinsic spaces* is a fabric of cohesion for this fragmented city



As James Boswell put it in 1791, *“public space is not a place of collective rituals, although it could be, but rather a private place for all of the citizens that use it”*.



The types of use, the spaces that concentrate activity, the success of the public spaces....this grid of streets and border spaces, but also urban interior spaces are defined by the citizens that inhabit them. We could say, as did Jane Jacobs in her day (1961) that the urban fabric is the result of citizen action



### 3. Quality social spaces

#### 3.1. Lot in Primavera Street crossroads of a network of interstitial spaces



### 3.2. Crossroads of Dilar Avenue and Cadiz Avenue

(territorial intersection, crossing of suburban roads with local responsibilities)

A place of multiscale compromises

- Territorial scale: relation with the metropolitan area
- Intermediate scale: articulation between important urban axis
- Local scale: convergence of important residential units, infrastructures and local businesses.



### 3.3. The migratory sheep Heard path (trace that acts as a public space agglutinate for residential use)

The agricultural past in this area of the city is present in multiple lines, lots, buildings, etc. Traits that maintain enclosed in the modern fabric not only as forms but also assuming a singular role.



## Conclusions

It is essential to understand the processes that create these spaces that conserve characteristics of the formed geography like roads, lots, vegetation, crossings, small agricultural buildings, etc. They are windows between the urban present and the agricultural past.



The borders between the urban pieces, the inherited lines, paradoxically become better places for meeting and collective intensity.

Here, the social plurality, a reflection of the multiple types of residential constructs, enter into contact with unplanned liberty, increasing the cultural wealth and cohesion of these fabrics converted now into true neighborhoods of the city. A privileged position between the center and edge of the metropolis.

