THE GARDEN AS POLITICAL FORM

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The Garden as Political Form
from archetype to Project

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Summary

The present thesis is a project, which reconsiders the garden as an example of shared domestic space, and gardening as a collective praxis. This project draws on a reconsideration of the garden as an archetype of ‘ideological enclosure’ and, hence, a spatial device with which alternative rules of co-existence may be recognised and practiced. At large, the thesis may contribute to the discussion on whether and how architectural form gives legibility to alternative ideas of living together.

Despite the abundant literature on gardens, the political and social aspects of their architectures have not been sufficiently addressed. Moreover, with the recent advent of a rhetoric of ‘green spaces’, anywhere vaguely planted is often called a ‘garden’, despite being hardly ever distinguishable from other planted enclosures such as parks. Yet, precisely the ubiquitous use of the term in architectural discourse makes it difficult to interrogate the object. This suggests a problematic loss of legibility of the garden as a paradigmatic form of appropriation and distribution of land and social relations. Through this paradigm, it is argued, one may understand how the city itself is constructed and imagined. Every element involved within its architecture mediates both technicality and symbolism. The inclusion of exotic plants, irrigation arrangements, and botanical knowledge, for instance, are not innocent but often identified with dominant ideologies, geopolitics and concepts of urban territory. Such a hypothesis is here investigated through a dialectic relationship between historical analysis and design methodology. Three singular historical events – the Cistercian cloister (twelfth century), the suburban Roman villa (sixteenth century) and the English allotment (nineteenth century) – show how the archetype has been transformed to serve different projects of power, ownership, and household. Each analysis is then used as a springboard for specific design strategies that challenge mainstream ideas of ownership, especially within cities under increasing pressures from real-estate markets. The thesis thus proposes an alternative theory of the garden which reveals what its architecture may become.
Introduction

The garden: An archetype of ideological enclosure

Political questions become insoluble when disguised as cultural ones.

Few forms of architecture have ever been so widely adored and discussed as that of the garden. It has served countless times as a significant paradigm of the human experience, for Eastern and Western cultures. Despite so many variations on the subject in both literary and built forms — or precisely because of it — the term ‘garden’ has become difficult to define. Today, most would say, it readily evokes an image of ‘innocence,’ somewhere for contemplation or cultivation of flowers, birds, fishponds, rocks and sculptures. On a conceptual level, it is also commonplace to associate the term with a possible return to nature and, thus, a refuge from the pressures of urban life. For architectural commissions of various scales, from urban planning and real-estate developments to interior design and fashion runways, it has become indispensable in their so-called success to incorporate spaces termed ‘gardens’.

Moreover, with the advent of a mainstream focus on sustainability, architects have been increasingly compelled to deploy gardens as a means to improve environmental factors while providing a flashy image of ‘eco-friendliness.’ One may discover, however, that the architecture of the garden has deeply social implications since it is closely linked to historical concepts of household and property. The reading of this relationship reveals how groups of people have recognised and practised their own idea of living together.
The Dutch designer Piet Oudolf has captured that innocent and evocative image of the garden in recent projects, such as his Hortus Conclusus for the 2013 Serpentine Pavilion, in London. [Fig. 1] and the gardened renewal of the High Line, in New York, inaugurated in 2009. [Fig. 2] These differ widely in programme, size, site, and form. Yet they do share the strategy of creating a paradoxical sense of "freezing" public space which allegedly allows weather, time and so-called "realistic communities"—perennial plants, insects and humans—to "spontaneously and continually occupy the city." [Fig. C] It is interesting to note here how two of the most politically charged terms of the present decade—"realistic" and "occupy"—frame gardening as a natural phenomenon rather than as a social act. Oudolf's approach is, in fact, new but situates him as part of a generation of designers influenced by French botanist Gilles Clément. His manifesto, since 1980, has described the Earth as a "planetary garden" to be cultivated through the method of the "jardin mouvement." This approach has been practically very successful, because it involves mostly the planting of perennial species which are low-maintenance and do not require intensive gardening. This means the designer can operate with a "soft hand" and the afterlife of his design will also require less labour, cost, and be more efficient. The concept has been comprehensively tested in Clément's Parc Henri Matisse. [Fig. D] proposed for the 1990 Eurolille masterplan, in France. Here we see, unquestionably, the achievement of the designer's intellectual seriousness put into practice. Some interventions, however, such as that "naturally-germinated" L'ile Descartes are conceptually questionable as they ended up "naturalising" the least natural of things— corporate public space —and therefore "over-identifying" with neoliberal ideas of the city. Oudolf's task on the hortus conclusus is also problematic in its own way, in celebrating austerity at exactly the time that the United Kingdom had elected an austerity Conservative government. Additionally, his High Line project helped to speed up the high-end gentrification of Manhattan's Meatpacking District. Perhaps more alarming, however, is the fact that these examples obliterate the most defining trait of the garden: to spatially and formally establish an idea of limit.

In enclosing and transforming the ground, gardens and gardening inevitably produce limits. While configurations where the eye is deceived into missing boundaries may yield pleasant views, the obliteration of limits can be critically reductive once gardens become illegible as the architecture that they are. Gardens are architectonic, not necessarily in the sense of authorship or design but, first and foremost, as urban forms which are always historically constructed. For their forms produce spaces that can, once inhabited and used, transmit ideas of coexistence and acquire social meaning. In other words, gardens put a talk on life. Such a high impact on the daily lives of users is perhaps most evident in the work of Brazilian designer Roberto Burle Marx, especially in his collaborations for Brasilia, the capital of Brazil. The city was built on a flatland and completed only five years after it was originally planned in 1957, when Lucio Costa conceptualised it as a cross of "monumental" and "residential" axes. [Fig. E] While the former formalised the civic sphere as a symbolically empty esplanade flanked by administrative buildings, the latter organised the domestic realm into a grid of large city blocks—the superquadra—measuring 300 by 300 metres each. [Fig. F] As Costa had intended the superquadra to become...
"socially aggregating" or "ordo geographicus" — he interconnected them with a network of roads and pedestrian pathways. Each block was devised to function as a communal neighbourhood, in the form of a "concluded element" clearly framed by a linear mass of trees. It didn't matter if, within the block, building typologies varied, as long as the ground between them — the inter-piazza — provided the everyday with a civic quality. Costa and Burle Marx saw "green space" here not as "leisure space," but as space that could articulate the individualizing interiors of modern apartments with the broader collectiveness of the urban block. Burle Marx's contribution enabled this with a series of gardens, designed to resemble "living rooms" under the shades of tropical plants, as well as to allow unexpected encounters to occur. [Fig. G] These gardens, thereby, were spaces of mediation between the 'private' — legally demarcated by the apartments staked above their plots — and the 'public,' represented by what was outside the superquadra, including the monumental axis and the congested urban core. As the perimeter mass of trees delimited each block as a 'world' of its own, the internal gardens, in turn, mirrored this world, albeit on a smaller scale, as embodiments of the modern concept of capital city. Thus if "the project of Brasilia is a project of limit," the superquadra gardens analogically re-enact such practice from the vantage point of the city residents, who become both actors and — according to Costa — "spectators." Part of the problematic found in the gardens of Oswald and Clément, which stand in conceptual opposition to those of Burle Marx and Costa, is the fact they become almost indistinguishable from parks, "parques" and "forests." Although all of these terms do refer to "naturalized" spaces, they are far from interchangeable. This is not only a matter of size, shape or function but, primarily, one of inherently distinct relationships with the city, the territory and its landscape. The 'garden' differs from these insofar as it is a domestic space, one conceptually related to household and ownership. Hence the general definition of the term: "a piece of ground adjoining a house, used for growing flowers, fruits, or vegetables." While its principal association with horticulture is mostly Western and can be traced to the sixteenth century, its association with the house is cross-cultural and far older, if not immemorial. Etymology offers clues as we see the term enter Middle English from garden, Old Northern French. 

Fig. G. Superquadra, a residential block framed by 30-meter stripes of trees and filled with gardens. L. Costa and R. Bela maro, São Paulo, 1956.

Fig. H. Plan of Park, the plan of Brasilia. Lucio Costa (1957).

Fig. I. Superquadra, a residential block framed by 30-meter stripes of trees and filled with gardens. L. Costa and R. Bela maro, São Paulo, 1956.

Fig. J. Plan of Park, the plan of Brasilia. Lucio Costa (1957).

Fig. K. Superquadra, a residential block framed by 30-meter stripes of trees and filled with gardens. L. Costa and R. Bela maro, São Paulo, 1956.

Fig. L. Plan of Park, the plan of Brasilia. Lucio Costa (1957).

Fig. M. Superquadra, a residential block framed by 30-meter stripes of trees and filled with gardens. L. Costa and R. Bela maro, São Paulo, 1956.

Fig. N. Superquadra, a residential block framed by 30-meter stripes of trees and filled with gardens. L. Costa and R. Bela maro, São Paulo, 1956.
on what should be considered "sacred." That is, enclosures helped to construct and crystallise a collective reality for the world. By enclosing land, thus - by opening their life to something outside which was not sacred - these groups would develop a prototypical notion of ownership. And, while the formation of the settlement implied a way in which the entire community had agreed to live, the formation of such groups was specifically concerned with each household. Since most groups shared the same knowledge, resources, tools, and beliefs, their garden varied little from one another - being used for rituals that generally involved worshipping, bonfires, keeping animals, cultivation, threshing, marking land ownership, and storing food adjacent to the house. However, similar, each garden was a unique microcosm that, in the finitude of its open-air enclosure, posed a dialectic relationship with that of the settlement: on one hand, it was an intimate narrative of the village's past, where trees, shrubs, and flowers were elements that were closely related to the land, both in terms of landscape and function. As the garden emerged as a walled enclosure amongst others, its form produced spatial cohesion by means of enclosure. That is, it has been a paradoxically introverted space that exists only in direct relation to what it leaves outside its walls. Although this may be true of other enclosures, the garden is arguably unique in making such dualistic connection physically tangible at just one glance. Spatially speaking, its relatively small scale, continuous path, openness to the sky, sense of orientation and centrality are the main factors that contribute to such legibility. Additionally, it is singular in being a "domestic space" that caters to humans, fauna, flora, productivity, idleness, taming nature, seasonal time, weather control, and renewal. Hence the garden is a place that is unique to all spaces of the household, as well as the surrounding settlement, with its larger territory, and the wilderness. In the desert conditions found on the Iranian Plateau, gardens would therefore become essential to the maintenance of fertility, irrigation, symmetry, cardinality, order, and unity. They were thus the "sacred" of a life that was not yet possible outside their walls. In the first millennium BC, for instance, the Achaemenid king Cyrus would use both gardens and the art of gardening to legitimise his authority. The gardens grew within the palace in the capital city Pasargadae - which the king allegedly cultivated himself - were rectangular compounds divided by a cruciform system of springs and pathways. [Fig. H] These led visitors through an extensive collection of botanic species that were imported from the four parts of the territory under his rule. In this way, Cyrus also referenced the ubiquitous form of garden found around Persia, the "chahar-bagh," (Fig. H) which translates as "four garden plots," deriving from the Indo-European root bha, "to share out." Such a reference had a symbolic impact on Achaemenid people because it was their image of "terrestrial paradise," or "paradise," meaning "wall estate," at the crossing of two rivers. According to the Astara - the text of Zoroastrian religion - these walls are not for military defense but, in fact, for defining what lives and what does not belong inside that estate, that is, under the rule of its owner. Hence Cyrus' use of the walled cruciform garden as a paradigm of paradise, served both as a testament of sovereignty and an urban model for the epicentre of an empire.
Yet, prior to these appropriations, the idea of terrestrial paradise as a garden was rooted in the original meaning of the word *parthenon*, as an enclosed space for "sustenance and happiness." A place where one "shall dwell" and "wear clothes." So, even here, when the garden was not physically attached to a house, it still embodied the limited, vital, and civic conditions of a household. This took a turn when Xenophon brought the term *parradein* into the Greek language to describe instead the enclosed hunting parks made for the pleasure of Persian royals. By that time, around 400 BC, the Greek term for garden was *thoria*. This did not mean orchard but "farmyard" with a strictly productive connotation, because these gardens existed within an area of the house, as *oikos*, identified by Aristotle as the "focus of economy, management of biological life." Hence, in ancient Greece, only palaces and temples would have *parradeia* within their walls. Meanwhile, to the Romans, it made perfect sense to assimilate the original Persian concept of paradise to their domestic courtyards. The term *hortus*, the Latin word for "walled orchard" or "kitchen garden", had not only a pragmatic but deeply social implications. It belonged to the realm of the *domus*, or house, which, according to Roman law, was the locus of the *domina*, or "master of the household," and his extended *familia*. The *domus* was a unit, composed of a sequence of rooms and functioned as a sort of microcosmic public place to accommodate meetings between the master and his clients, associates and subordinates. As visibility was crucial to legitimise these social relationships as "public", all hosting spaces were aligned by a single axis that was visible from the street entrance. [Fig. 1] Their sequencing ordered various rituals of hospitality offered by the *domus*, where each room was associated with specific gestures that provided a narrative of the *familia* as a tangible "system of alliances." The *hortus*, located either at the rear of the plan or within a central peristyle, was the most inclusive and visible space of all. The peristyle marked—and monumentalised—the legal procedure through which the land had been enclosed and, therefore, became evaluable as a "thing", legally recognised as property of the dominus as a juridical person. The *hortus* inside would, moreover, give this ownership a permanent character through various signs of personal use and cultivation, such as an aged olive tree, unearthed overgrown roots, decorations and, especially, fountains and irrigation. So, this

Fig. 1: House of Trajan (Pompeii, 99–112 AD).

Fig. K: Idealized house inside the peristyle of a Domus (Roman house).
was a microscopic place which represented the core of the familia, where members would personally garden colourful shrubs of vines, myrtles and roses in order to offer them to the extended household during social rituals of worship and dinner parties, ultimately "naturalising" their right to possession. As such, the hortus was an idyllic self-representation of power and appropriation, as it hid the true exploitative workings of the household, which was mostly reproduced by slave labour. Effectively, because Romans did not like to use labour of any sort, especially in representational spaces like the peristyle, they used gardening as a way to celebrate status, or 'leisure'. This ritual became crucial in creating an apparent suspension of business within that ritualistic circuit of affairs between master and clients.

Fig. K] To reinforce that effect, the space was periodically opened to strangers who, in turn, had to abide by the lex Hortorum or 'garden law', typically inscribed at the entrance of the space. Jurisdictionally, that meant neither the city nor any other law could apply to the garden enclosure. As this periodical status paradoxically downplayed the actual private landownership of the domus, the association of garden with the image of a terrestrial paradise was key to tactfully reminding guests and newcomers of the ruling power of the dominus.

The hortus would further become, during the later part of the Roman Empire, indispensable to a new type of dwelling, the villa, as part of the colonisation, gentrification, and systematic expansion of the limits of the Roman Agro region towards a larger territory. Its aforementioned idyllic character would legitimise yet another controversial project of class empowerment, at the expense of land appropriation and slave labour. The villa was not only a country retreat but also a theatre of the good life. It choreographed social rituals through a monumental spread of rooms and garden enclosures. Here the hortus and its programme would become larger and splintered into a series of peristyles and hypodromes, composed of taller trees, grand pools, grotesques, and sculptures. [Fig. L] Remaining visible or open to the public, these gardens helped their luxurious estates to be seen as morally acceptable, by staging the impression they shared out the joy of the land. Meanwhile, in practice, their enclosures enabled the owners to exploit and control not just the area of the villa but also its surroundings. It is here that the walled garden's ontological trait of producing "indica" by means of

of the city during the Republic. This was because the "agricultural" Roman Agro is an urban metropolis, and the soil has been turned into "civic" spaces. The most influential addenda are found in the Aspasia of Plutarch, which is a brief passage through self-important writing couplets such as "I am not a person of the land" and "I am not a person of the city". However, the possibility of being situated on the city's outskirts, even if not from the city, opens the possibility of being associated with the "civic" space in some way.

55. In order to encourage the recommendation that Victoria has that influential themes "should be planned spaces", in Architecture, Book VI. Large or powerful families completely planned more than one room, one of which within the peristyle. The idea of these enclosures grows proportionally with the household, which are known proportionately, as in the Early Republic and the Latin "exemplos" of the high inflection note. See below for a more detailed note.

56. Oliverio. The hortus is as a "site" of the hortus of the hortus. See below for a more detailed note. For a more detailed note, see Oliverio, "City as Political..."
contemporary scholarship with regards to the garden, which often
defines it either in a purely aesthetic or ecological terms, as if these
were aspects devoid of ideology. The reading of the garden as an
archetype reveals, in fact, that nothing about it can ever be entirely
freed of intention. It is an ideologico-embodiment as evidenced by the fact
it has been subjected to continuously different iterations. Its form is
preconditioned and motivated by various degrees of decision-making
on how to encode, organize, and cultivate space. This involves land,
water, living beings and, crucially, social relationships. Whether a
garden is designed or not, it is always made by and for someone. Its
construction and cultivation can be taken therefore as an index of the
forces and active subjects with a stake in these processes. For
this reason, understanding the garden through the device of the archetype
may overcome previous institutionalised histories or scanty evidence on
the subject matter. Most of these have been concerned only with
state-of-the-art gardens up to the eighteenth century, which
happened to be owned by the very same elite with the power to write
history as we know it.34 This thesis does not dismiss case studies
but, on the contrary, seeks to understand how their architectures
have been able to put forward dominant ideologies and practices
while leaving room for alternatives. The latter may perhaps be found in
gardening as collective knowledge and action from the vantage
point of the gardener as a labourer—on that seldom appears in
most specialised literature. The close spatial reading of architectural
form and its aftermath may thus reveal the potential of a counter
project that is latent in every garden. Finally, the political is the shaping
of the possibility of conflict, established in the grouping of distinct
forces, while form is a positive act of (dis)limitation and separation.35
Architectural space becomes a political form as it preconditions antagonist
relations by making them tangible. By the same token, all mankind
endowments may inevitably be political. The garden, it is argued, stands out for its sheer ideological function, through which
equilibrium boundaries are made physical with the utmost intensity. As
we have seen, it originated purely in order to display the division between
what was sacred (inside) and what was profane (outside).36 It is because
of its rendering of this fundamental distinction that garden enclosure
is here defined as an archetype of political form and space.

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get an example in a complex act which suppose that the functioning
as a paradigm is derived from its normal use, not in order to be
contradicted into its proper context or, on the contrary, to prevent
the paradoxes of a whole, which cannot be shown in any other way."
Agamben, ibid., p. 18.

50. "If a is a sign which acts in the physical manifestation of a tree, of which trees interface, and there are examples." Ronald Kwan,


53. "Aristotle's account of theardon, which involves a" project on how things become CHAOS, is a critical point of the garden as a whole and
its relationship to the surrounding environment, as well as the
idea of a "garden" as a particular type of aesthetic experience."—
R.Y. Hetherington, "The Garden as a Political Form," The English

54. "All politico-functional partnerships become a "political form" as it preconditions antagonist relations by making them tangible.
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as 'archetypal' as it is arguably the most exemplary take on the original family-rulled enclosure from which emerged the hortus conclusus. Its configuration adheres to the liturgical practice of communal settlement. The category 'monumental,' applied to the Roman example, refers to the magnification of the hortus into an outstanding public monument within suburban villas. Its design was highly theatrical to formalise, ritualise and, as a result, institutionalise the appropriation of rural land. The more recent English allotment is the image of 'pastoral' polities. It addresses the normalisation of urban re-enclosure of land into garden plots which have formally disassembled the archetype and conceptually reduced it to a simple tool for urbanisation. English allotments served not only for food production, self-help and education but, also, to discipline proletarian families by instilling in them the innocent image of the very landscape that produced their subsistence condition. What is at stake behind this gradual loss of legibility, it is argued, is the variety of ways in which each garden appropriated the archetype to enable distinct projects.

Despite having controversial agendas, these examples share a crucial pedagogical dimension: they turned gardening into a sort of self-care and, therefore, inherently an instrument of resilience and solidarity. In their own transformations of the kyrtia, these planted enclosures either refused or complied with the dominant ideologies of their times. Yet to our present sensibility, some of them tend to be placed low on the list of 'beautiful gardens' recommended to architects for visiting and inspiration. The consensus priority of today seems to be the calming, elevating, and almost liberating visual experiences of greenery together with a profusion of vegetables artificially brought together into tamed exteriors. Irrespective of beneficial psychological effects, what else is left of those once powerful garden forms? Could they be still re-appropriated by alternative projects for recognisable enclosures? And why would these be relevant today? The present research therefore urges us to uncover not only the 'actualities' of such paradigms, but also to argue for their 'possibilities'. Hence it poses a dialectic relationship between historical analysis and design methodology, in which it re-appropriates the formal logic of each case study to propose new collective gardens that may challenge mainstream ideas of ownership. This hypothesis is not only a project of architecture history but also a critique of new design practices


cannot avoid projecting her operative take on history. Due to the projective nature of a 'PhD by Design', the selection of examples would have to not only prove the garden as an ideological enclosure in support of private property but, also, revealing its potential to enabling alternative projects. Another criterion was to select examples which had built evidence of their forms and aims. As the Persian idea of paradise garden has influenced the Roman hortus, and this would later become the Christian image of Mary's womb in the form of the hortus conclusus, monastic gardens have been the obvious choice. No other example has come to mind except for monastic gardens on eastern Europe which were promptly discarded in favour of arguably Western ones. The author has browsed through the gardens within twelfth-century Cistercian monasteries but has eventually discovered the Cistercians had consciously used the hortus conclusus to define their settlements away from the city and private property. After the first chapter, it became clear that the thesis should only consider a variety of historical iterations on the roman concept of the garden. Cistercian monasteries had been dedicated to the control of ancient roman domus, and so, have suburban landscape been a reinterpretation of both. At this point, the research has fallen into an intriguing circle - one from which both research and supervisors did not want to turn away. The question was about how to frame such prolific type and period in architecture history. The answer came with the rediscovery of Villa Peretti, designed by Domenico Fontana in 1585, as the prototype of the modern urban park and star-shaped – thus infinite – planning of urban territory. The second chapter should undoubtedly stop at there since such concepts have dominated Western architecture throughout the following three centuries. This influence would gradually end the garden while a finite domestic enclosure and, thereby, the collective legibility and use of its political form, thus, its spatial power of establishing limits. The analyses of radial gardens, such as those by Andre Le Nôtre, would be therefore redundant within the overall argument. It was at this stage that the consideration following generation, the so-called 'picturesque' landscape, appeared to constructively lead the thesis into a full circle, as it could explain the present age of limitless nature-like park-gardens. The researcher has considered eighteenth-century gardens, such as those by Capability Brown, eventually opting for their counterparts. Unlike picturesque farms, allotment sites would single-handedly return to the garden as a microscopic domestic enclosure while enabling the expansive re-parcellation of the urban territory from the vantage of labouring subjects.

This thesis is therefore far from aiming to be a garden encyclopaedia or to provide a universal definition. Rather, under the guise of a 'PhD by Design', it reconceives history as a series of projects and, also, the possibility of historical research and theory as a project in itself, or that, is, a possible counterproject to 'institutional history.' The methodology of working with paradigms means that the hypothesis may eventually apply to only very specific examples which may represent only small groups of similar cases. Additionally, to read gardens as 'political forms' does not imply that museums, parliament or public squares, for instance, are any less worthy of such a claim. In fact, while we can argue that the political nature of architecture has become something of a theoretical commonplace, very little has been written about gardens in this sense. The reason might be, firstly, because gardens are not typically seen as spaces where politics happens or is represented – that would be too far-removed for current trends in garden theory, already burdened with defining an object less permanent than most. Secondly, the term 'political' is in itself debatable, in the field of architecture as elsewhere. Therefore, within the proposed research framework, a building gains the status of 'political form' not only when it symbolises ideologies but, most importantly, when it enables or normalises its practices. That is, when a building's spatial mediation moves beyond representation to act as a bridge between abstract concepts and social life. However, other than in the physical experience of the space itself, this concept is not easily graspable, through architectural plans of buildings, led alone plans of gardens. Hence the urgency of this thesis in its project of revealing such a possibility through specific examples that, although well known to historians, have never been showcased through the proposed methodology. All the authorial drawings in the thesis share the same graphic language and manner. Sharp lines – in either black or cyan inks – are combined with an economy of hatches to allow both author and reader to rediscover the chosen examples of gardens from the sole
vantage point of architectural form. The aim of this somewhat dry way of drawing is to make the visual outcome of the thesis' non-representational, or the least representational as possible. Although it has been tempting to celebrate garden architecture with overworked drawings through the process, the author has successfully confirmed that, in a PhD by Design, drawing is fundamental research method rather than a celebratory illustration. Alike the — incomparable — drawings by Giovanni Battista Falda on suburban renaissance villas, those in the present thesis have attempted to consistent use of angles and graphic techniques. Besides the comfort of embracing personal abilities and limitations into all drawings, there are many advantages of having produced them in this specific manner.

First and foremost, such economy and consistency have enabled the researcher to develop a comprehensive method of documenting, tracing, redrawing, scaling, framing, selecting, and exposing the selection of case studies. From an editorial perspective, the use of digital software in a clear graphic language has made both editing and printing more precise, more controllable and faster. The troublesome risk of drawing in this manner is to become too impersonal. Although, after reading the present thesis, one may find this impersonality liberating — in the sense of not tightening the work to its authorship — and didactic, as draws the reader's attention to the sheer architectural form of each garden, as described in the text.

The act of redrawing the case studies and subsequently drawing out design projects in response is as important as writing. It allows us to formally consolidate the architecture of gardens, which have always suffered changes or perished. Drawing and designing projects may also overcome the limitation of second-hand experiences of which J. B. Jackson once complained. In this way, we may attempt to think of the archetypal rather than merely to describe or copy it. This work thus acknowledges the experimental nature of drawing as its research method, one by which design may become a process of making associations with the formal logic of singular objects into other proportionally similar contents — that is, design as thinking through analogy.

Such methodology finds its way across the chapters. One may argue that the cloistered baths of the twelfth-century Cistercian monastery was, for instance, a 're-drawing' of the prestyle garden from the Roman дома. The first chapter reveals how this analogy enabled monks to recognize the hortus as an easily portable at the 'centre' of their world, and hence to perform the rules of settling their communal household away from the city. Here, the archetype is brought to its clearest form: a total enclosure where every element — shadowing willows or cruciform pathways — conveys the state of being shut off. The second chapter addresses how the hortus became enlarged and divided into several planted 'interiors' by the suburban rustic villas of sixteenth-century Rome. Highly monumentalized as theatrical juxtapositions of nature and classical architecture, these gardens were meant to choreograph new rituals of hospitality between owner and guests — mostly Vatican cardinals and courtiers. The increasing complexity of such requirements transformed the masonry, domestic orchard into a botanic museum and, eventually, an urban park-farm. Longer walks and heavily staged vistas constructed both the visual narratives and the literal grounds for a broader project of 'suburban countryside'. Just as the paradigm of house-garden shifted from compact to dispersed, so did that of city-country shift from closed to infinite. The garden became visually less enclosed and more divorced from the house. It was now a total art-form that turned property into an emblem of the larger territory and its social order. This culminated in 1700s England, the subject of the third chapter. While the 'picturesque garden' was a version of the art-form, it was its counterpart, the allotment, which ultimately divorced the garden from the domestic. The latter was implemented as the norm for a type of kitchen garden physically detached from the house, placed in a small plot, to be individually hand-cultivated by a proletarian family. Although mostly utilitarian and non-designed, their configuration followed specific practices for subdividing a piece of land without requiring internal partitions and often obscuring outer fences. Intimate, microcosmic plots at once provided access to arable land but also served to pacify neutralise the fact that these very plots were the result of recent, violent processes of enclosure and dispossession of land.

All three cases are variations of the garden, since they make use of the same archetype — the hortus — to give a recognisable form to new concepts of household and property, with or without the city. While each takes the garden "from archetype to project" in
their own project-specific way, what differentiates them mostly are the parties involved in conceiving and using them. The allotment, unlike the Cistercian cloistered garden, was neither constructed nor self-ruled by its community of subjects. Rather, it was implemented by the landowner elite for the dispossessed worker as a project within the broader reactionary intent of making socially visible and morally acceptable the parliamentary enclosure of land. While the suburban villas of Vatican cardinals were used by the landowner class themselves, they shared the aforementioned imperative of a modern patriarchy to legitimise itself by naturalising the arbitrariness of private ownership. Such conditions make these gardens at times more legibly enclosed and designed, and at other times rather pragmatically planted. Here we see how the garden archetype may lend itself to a myriad of different iterations.

Could the garden serve as a device to counteract contemporary problematic practices of household and property? The design projects proposed by each chapter investigate such possibilities in the context of three cities—Tehran, Rome and London—where land value is heavily under pressure from real-estate markets. The Cistercian case, for instance, could apply to contemporary conditions of living similar to the monastic, communal households one experiences today in Tehran. Just as public spaces are mostly shut away from state surveillance, so also a garden only possible behind closed doors. When the case study’s garden could give form to a protocol of rules, one that would enable a number of apartment buildings to join their own backyards into one larger space—common gardens. This space would be accessible from each flat through the common space and could be designed to fit bays on patches of soil managed and shared by the residents. Such a principle would, however, be redundant in Rome, where public parks exist as the result of successful openings of Renaissance suburban villas. The Roman ‘suburbs’ of today are actually now much farther away. Usually called lezze (pejorative term for ‘little town’), these districts are densely urbanised with cheap housing and precarious public spaces. Most border rural land that is beautiful yet idle, or not cultivated. Here, on these rough edges, the concept of the monumental villa—once used to colonise the former countryside of the city—could be implemented: a linear system of gardens that make everyday circulation into a choreography of strolls through canopied sidewalks, encounters on terraced belvederes, or places on steps towards empty fields. Neither public nor private, these places could be developed through policies presented by each district’s population to local bodies, such as churches and commerce associations. In London there are no ‘idle’ landscapes but rather the so-called ‘commons’ or metropolitan grounds for public recreation. The term stands for areas that used to be wastelands enclose for the communal grazing of working families until the Enclosure Act of 1773. Since then, paternalistic provision of allotment gardens has become the usual way to compensate for the systematic privatisation of land that followed—while never truly reversing dispossession. Because these were legally designated to prevent rather than to enable land reform, allotments are non-permanent statutory schemes. Today, increasing market pressure on land value is causing these sites to disappear. A project here would propose to design allotments that enjoy the legal protection of the commons. The association of both schemes could become a strategy for strengthening one another. That could yield a third type of landholding, in which plot-holders self-rule the gardening of public ‘commons’ and, perhaps, reclaim the original common use. The garden, in these projects, would make its autonomous nature spatially tangible.

The thesis puts forward an alternative theory of the garden which reveals not only what it has actually been but, foremost, what it could—and can still—potentially become. The hypothesis presupposes that activity and potentiality are self-evident within the garden only if as it remains legible as an exceptional form of spatial enclosure. This is in contrast to most garden theories and practices of the present, such as the perennial sprawl proposed by Gilles Clément, which remain ideological enclosures without the physical limits which would make them tangible. Such an interest in the garden relates to a broader questioning of how the spatiality of architectural form makes abstract ideas visible. How can architecture today rethink the garden so as to reclaim its legibility, in a world that has made its urban condition completely illegible?

Is it possible to rethink the archetype as a conceptual boundary that offers an alternative to the ongoing commodification of land and social relationships?
Archetypal

The concept of archetypal refers to the transformations that are arguably the most exemplary take on the original family-ruled enclosure from which emerged the hortus conclusus. Both the Cistercian Cloister and the Persian chaharbagh have forms which perfectly adhere to and reveal the rules of two ideas of communal settlement.
Hortus Conclusus as an idea of settlement:
The Cistercian cloister and Persian chahar-bagh

Hortus conclusus means 'enclosed garden' in Latin and is cognate with the Vulgar Latin term ortus conclusus, from which derives the Old French jardin. In its present use, the English word garden is chiefly a noun meaning "a piece of ground adjoining a house, used for growing flowers, fruits, or vegetables" or for (plural) "ornamental grounds laid out for public enjoyment and recreation." In fact, garden only entered Middle English around the late thirteenth century from the Old Northern French gresse "(kitchen) garden; orchard; palace grounds." This branched off either from Frankish godes or from Proto-Germanic geodes, and is cognate with the Gothic godes, 'house', and Old English geard. All of these indicate "enclosure, fenced enclosure, garden, court, residence." Also from geard is derived yard, as in "enclosed patch of ground around a house." Meanwhile enclosure, the "action of enclosing, or state of being enclosed," emerges as a sole noun only around the mid-fifteenth century. Hence one can assume that hitherto, gardens had meant a sort of enclosure.

In fact, when the garden first emerged as a place known as the garden, every built space was an enclosure. That was around the sixth millennium BC, with the spread of agriculture from Mesopotamia to Europe. Early agricultural peoples could only comprehend their condition of being in the world through successive acts of formal differentiation and spatial delimitation. Men sought, in the homogeneity of

   Julius Pelenert, Traditions affine
   http://www.s交nische.com/erkenntnis
Spatial enclosure and the concept of sacred

All these events once were interruptions in the continuity of natural experience. Because they were manifested as a wholly different order from given reality, they were sacred. Once they were remembered to be so, a line would be traced around to secure and protect them. The space circumscribed would also become sacred while the field left out would become profane. Essentially, this was the act of making an enclosure: to create an abstract reality from the given in very different surroundings. Hence such a notion of sacred was not like ours, which is implicative of the holy or the institutionally religious. Rather, the sacred meant the only and possibly legitimate modality of existence. To be precise, it differed from the chaotic and self-defeating state of nature. Hence the concept of enclosure is entangled with the human urge to distinguish the things that manifest a sacred character from those that do not. In this primordial sense, every enclosed space was sacred. Every enclosure— from farms to houses to temples— meant the reality of one's world. We may not empathize with this viewpoint today, but it was crucial for early agricultural communities in forming their settlements. By enclosing land, thus— by securing their life from everything else outside which was not sacred— these groups would develop a prototypical notion of ownership, based on what would later become the Roman concept of res or thing. The passage from these enclosures to the legal sense of property as we know it today is of course neither simple nor direct. It does, nonetheless, relate to the act— or procedure— of enclosure which makes space and things sacred or not. As the jurist historian Van Thunsen explains:

(…) we can only see this primary primordial division of the res being affirmed in various conflicts against the state of non-availability in which they [res] are exceptionally broken into sacred law and in public law. In order to openly expose the a priori nature of the things that are conceived, approvable and available, it is necessary that some of those people have been taken out of their area of ownership and exchange, then assigned to the gods or the city, as a mode of investment and wealth— that is common to ancient world— but has only found its truly juridical expression, and perhaps its conceptualization, in Rome.

This point will be developed later in this chapter, when we look at the Cistercian cloister which draws on the Roman concept of res as a means to cut, or separate, the Order's communal settlement from everything else. In the meantime, let us continue to dissect the primordial sense of the garden as a sacred enclosure which led to the medieval hortus conclusus in the first place.

Spatial orientation was therefore a quest for most communities that settled around the Iranian Plateau, from the sixth millennium BC onwards. ([Fig. A]) as setting could only mean living at the centre of the world. In Zoroastrian belief, the Centre was connected with the original force of Ahura Mazda. Also, amid that harsh climate, the omnipresent mountains were understood to manifest that metaphysical power. Therefore, the allocations of all were important to the sacred modality of experience. Agriculture and the "economy of daily life" were not perceived as managerial, as they are in our present. Instead these spheres were completely charged with the sacred perceptions of fertility, of solar cycles, of seasons. Early Iranian archetypes were, firstly, and above all, intended to make these cosmologies permanently present in life. Hence the mosque and most houses had an opening right above their centres. Essentially, ceilings were opened not for better illumination, but rather to mirror the sacred sky onto enclosed ground. The mosque and even the house would thus become also the 'Centre' of
the world. As these enclosures were girled from a central cross, they
replicated that foundation logic of settlement into individuated forms
of sacred realities. A similar dialectics and spatial generation also
applied to the early Iranian walled garden, which was a sacred enclosure
amongst all others, however conceptually unique.

Originally in Iran this type of planted space was not explored as
a significant source of agriculture. In fact, garden horticulture
were planned intensively and, therefore, were asynchronous with the
sacred cycles of millenary agricultural space. Thus, it was never winter
within the garden walls. Although sometimes dwelled in or assimilated
by a household, these were not housing as such. Often used to stage
Zoroastrian rites, the garden was neither a mosque nor a Tower of
Silence. That garden had instead the purpose of arranging every object
known as ‘sacred’ within the finite totality of a single place. In other
words, the walled garden exemplified the perfected form of the world
constructed as an ordered cosmos. That alone does not yet complete
our argument. Neither does it apply to every garden that ever existed
around the world, though in the Iranian example, we may discover
how the evocative symbolism of the sacred spatially defined the archi-
typal garden enclosure: the baq. Moreover, we will need this as a
conceptual base to understand the architectural language of the Wester-
ern medieval hortus conclusus: most biblical symbolism of the Garden
of Eden branches off from Pan-Iranian cosmology: that is, from the
Zoroastrian idea of the salvation temporality: a walled garden. It is not our task
not to argue for such far-reaching archaeology. Instead, we may use it to
discover to what extent the architectural language of the hortus conclusus
was influenced by the Iranian walled garden.

Even up to our day, the baq and the chahar-baq are the most
ubiquitous forms of garden in the Iranian Plateau. The physical
evidence dating these arrangements back to the Neolithic period is
scanty. But, for our purpose, let us describe these garden variations
just before dawn of the Persian Empire. Often found in the desert as
freestanding structures, the baq and the chahar-baq are totally walled
private gardens. [Fig. B] The former was of a rectangular shape,
usually used for burial functions. The latter was quadrangular, mostly
used as a sanctuary within palatial assets. The term baq is derived from
the Indo-European root ‘ba’, which means ‘to share out’, ‘to enjoy’. It
comes from the Old Persian and Avesta as baq, which means ‘distribu-
tor of good fortune’. In Modern Persian, the term appears in two
forms: baq (short ‘a’ sound); ‘God’, and baq baq (long ‘a’ sound): ‘garden’. Perhaps the baq was the formal progenitor of the chahar-baq,
which literally translates as ‘four-gardens’. Remarkably, these etymologies
describe the event as either the owner or a metaphysical entity that
creates and distributes wealth into one or four garden plots. Hence the
most defining trait of the chahar-baq: which is the cruciform subdivision
of its interior— has been consistently recognised as a sign of both
property and coexistence. [Fig. C] As later depicted in a miniature
by a Mughal artist. In other words, the cruciform stream is an index of
the process of allocating a centre, followed by the enclosure of land
and subsequent subdivision and distribution of water, cultivation and
reproduction. Although, prior to that, the double sense of baq— as
both material and spiritual — only confirms the existential dualism to
present in Iran, from Zoroastrianism to Islam and onwards. The baq
variations give spatial legibility to the ideal duality between terrestrial
and celestial cosmos. [Fig. D]
Due to the harshness of the Iranian Plateau, the high gardens were able to immediately convey the fullness of living at 'the Centre of the World'. Although these were private enclosures, they were of exceptional presence, impossible to miss even from the outside, with the regular alignment of tall cypresses hatched out of four orthogonal walls, making the garden not only the densest plantation amongst farming, but also the only legitimate form in the desert. The high and chahar-bagh were also more fragrant than courtyard houses or even mosques. As these were very low, earthy and modestly opened enclosures, they would often conjoin and merge with their surroundings — either built or natural. Meanwhile, the high types had wide openings, out of which larger places could be supposed or collectively imagined.

Hence, in our terms, the high gardens established an exceptional living condition in the homogeneity of harsh biotopes. Essentially, they made visually tangible what and who was included and allowed inside, so their gated walls determined what was 'sacred' by separating it from 'everything' else. [Fig. E] Usually, the perimeter wall was a thick structure of baked clay, almost entirely shut blind to the surroundings. The inner sides were very often inhabitable, with vaulted ceilings and paved passages. These rarely led to a continuous walk as their purpose was to provide the court with punctual niches and cells, specifically functional to each planted quarter. The wall was therefore an inhabitable frame with a very introspective character, for it contained several rooms for both religious rituals and the pragmatic demands of gardening, such as storage of tools and seeds. At the same time, the disposition of these rooms had a tense formal relationship with the interior of the garden, since it matched or confirmed the layout of the ground. Every room carved within the wall was therefore also sacred and symbolically meaningful.

The most important one was the fountain located at the very centre of the planted court. This particular object was charged with evocative symbolism of the highest intensity. The borders were sharply sculptured into a perfect cubical or spherical bow so they could give a legible form to the ever-formless water. It is worth noting the sacred function of such an element in the purification rituals of Zoroastrianism. In this cosmogony, water was referred to as the most primordial of all natures and the origin of everything on earth, even of fire. The fountain spot was hence the first unprompted that connected...
the garden with both the underground of the earth and the highest
point of the sky. It was symbolically 'the navel' of the world, the only
centre where the foundation of a terrestrial garden was possible.
But it was also the literal connection between the garden and the spring
underneath. This source, in fact, was joined to the central fountain
by an underground pipe, the qanat. This was in fact part of a
large 'inter-territorial' irrigation system of underground channels,
carrying melted ice from the mountains towards the desert plateau.
Due to their conditional relation with topography, the course of the
qanat coincided with the orientation of the garden. [Fig. G] This, as we
see, turned to the sacred vision of northwest mountain chains, or (in
some cases) of the western hills. Throughout the garden as an ideolo-
gical enclosure, we will note that symbolical reasons of form are also
eventually conformed with the available technologies of the specific
historical context. Perhaps this is due to the fact that most ancient
forms of knowledge were indeed cosmological.

The next example of such confluence is the cruciform water-
course, girded from the central fountain. This other qanat
replicated that act of crossing that would define any settlement as a sacred
place, thus set apart from the natural desert. Even more visible within
the garden, this cross squares the inner space as image qanat. Water
runs through it, evoking the original crossing of two rivers. Conse-
quentially such a spacing transforms the ground into four cardinal
enclosures. The division symbolises the universe as four horizons
— which implies the analogous distribution of a commune system.

19. An qanat in Babylonia was made of terracotta pipes. Barnard
Ellis, The Water and the Farmer: The Nature of Religion (San

20. "Because these lands contain irregular layers of sand and
polish, they form considerable water reserves. The peculiar
surface configuration of the Iranian Plateau and the available irrigational
technology through qanats allow the water to be moved to the lower lands
by using a drainage or irrigation. Qanats are underground aqueducts that
collect groundwaters at the foot of mountains and carry it: by gravity,
through gravity sloping tunnels into lateral materials, to the fieldlands of
settlements." Masoumeh Khansarabi, Iranian Civic Formation and Developmen,
Ozymas University Press, 2000, p. 99

21. Imagined is a Latin term for image, model, projections of the
world.

Fig. F. Section of a qanat. Iranian gardens are usually irrigated by
these underground channels that bring fresh water drawn from
the mountainous regions at the northern edges of the Plateau.
In between the garden wall and the farming, there is a clock
of lakes. The dams allow lake water into several shafts, linked to
the underground channel, thus pushing the cold water forward. Masoumeh
Khansarabi, Iranian Civic Formation and Development, Ozymas University,
2000.

Fig. G. Plan and section of the Royal Palace Qanat Qanat irrigated by the
underground channel known as qanat. The building sits on the mountain six kilometres north-west
outside the walls of Persepolis. Peter A. Shah had built the garden in the eighteenth century. The construc-
tions was an explicit reference to the Persian tradition of the ab-khar—high but much more
monumental, as it would was an ideal model for the city to expand.
Omnipresent throughout the court composition, this symmetry would have two-fold symbolism: firstly, the divine ordering of the cosmos; secondly, the spatial organisation of a community. The wide rectangular opening above would frame the court as a terrestrial model of the celestial cosmos. It would also perfectly insulate and protect the cardinal flower beds from dusty winds. The layout of these places was never random. Rather, they were rigorously referential to the central cross. In turn, the flowers were typically arranged into evenly modulated orthogonal patterns. Mostly roses and blueberries, these cultures were also used in the Afrangin Ritual of Blessing. Therefore, they had to be grown no longer than a human hand. The colours were mostly red, yellow and white to promote spiritual and material purifications. Jasmine was a symbol of the Lord Ahura Mazda, terebinths of the pax (angel) Bahman, royal basil of the Shishkevar, and so forth.

If the garden were on a slope, a plinth would be gently sculpted from the fountain level towards the lower plateaus. The water spring would be further streamed down through the corners to the central ending at the court borders. From there, the water would be sub-grid channels to irrigate the flower beds. The plinth was symbolically analogous to a sacred mountain and so the climb produced a route of passage from the lower earth towards the higher centre close to the sky. That was, in fact, the very level where the fountain also reflected the clouds. The main axis of circulation was forcefully aligned with and cut out of the crossform walkway. Very often rhythmic rows of ‘eternal’ sacred cypruses were placed beside it. These reinforced the central pathway as a vertical axis up to the sky, where Ahura Mazda abides. In this sense, the mystical ascension through the plinth — followed by the contemplative ‘looking back’ to the court behind — was the ‘programme’ of the walled garden. The lower was always the point of entrance to the garden. This was usually gated with a monumental arch or even a small pavilion, accessed by a road or a bridge. After the fundamental cross and the wall, the gate entrance scaled the formal distinction of sacred from profane, inside from outside. There is much more to be said about the high variations and their amazing architecture. But from here we can take this example of an enclosed garden as the (almost immemorial) archetype for the spatial distinctions of sacred place from profane desert. As previously introduced, such differentiation is conceptually inherent in any manmade enclosure of early antiquity — especially in Iran. However, the garden enclosure is the only one that develops spatial distinctions in order to render a precise idea of the Centre of the world, which is what we mean by “ideological enclosure of the sacred.”

Due to this ease legibility, the walled garden became an exemplary type of shared space for ideological Iranian communities. As these were ruled by the cosmological ethics of Zarcaustanism, individuals needed symbolical spaces to distinguish god from bad, included from excluded, followers from heretics, and so on. Hence, the garden emerges not only as a literal form of ethical distinction but also as a device for collective representation. And that is precisely why (and how) the garden archetype later became instrumental to the Achaemenid idea of empire. As for the further political distinctions of territory from city and from nature, these can only be deduced after the fundamental concern of sacred from profane. In other words, the garden can only become legible as a political form because it was once delimited as a sacred space. In this regard we have, until now, only skinned over how this archetype makes Zarcaustan dualism, from atheist to terrestrial, tangible.

With the thesis Camp of Faith, Hamed Khoori puts forward the bâgh as an instrument of territorial governance: “Iranian gardens were the only spatial configuration wherein in any form of life was possible; they were in fact life-sustaining camps in the literal toda of the Iranian plateau.” 14 Due to the harshness of the content, the relation of garden space to territory becomes explicit. Therefore, such an archetype becomes the spatial device through which the power of the sovereign dominates the territory. 15 From this we learn how the paradigm of garden enclosure serves as an analogy for imperial practices, which is that it is no longer deduced from celestial to terrestrial. Rather, in Persian antiquity, the archetype goes from terrestrial cosmos to become legible as an urban model. For example, in the plan of Pasargad, [Fig. H] the chahar-bâgh was deployed, as the literal image of terrestrial cosmos, to propose the idea of a capital city. 16 Khoori helps us to disentangle this passage through the political theology of paradise as a walled state analogous to the city, as it defines by means of spatial enclosure who does and who does not belong inside, and under the rules of the owner, sovereign or a God. 17 The image that best illustrates this idea of terrestrial paradise

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as an exclusive form of walled enclosure is Topographia Paradisi Terrae, drawn by Athanasius Kircher in 1675. 30 [Fig. 1]

Paradise as a walled garden

Paradise has entered European languages via the Greek paradisos, generally with a sacred connotation. 31 In fact, this etymology goes back to Old Persian pari-daeth, with pari meaning 'around' and daeth 'pile or heap'. In Modern Persian usage, the word holds an explicit spatial dimension, as daeth and dae is 'corner' or 'enclosure' and 'to be made of clay'. Similarly, the Indo-Iranian verb daeh means 'to construct out of earth'. In his essay "The House of Clay," Bruce Lincoln notes that pari-daeth is a non-defensive "clay wall," built with putrid bodily matter. That is, it is an external enclosure, described as the dwelling place of those intimately associated with death. 32 Further, in "As recherche du paradis perdu," the historian enquires more deeply into the conceptual implications of pari-daeth in formulaic inscriptions.

from Mazdean-Zoroastrian to the Achaemenids. As we saw in the case of garden symbolism, these have imbued the ethical dualism of ancient Iranian language and thought. Nevertheless, paradise appears only once in the entire Avesta text, 33 but it is emphatically described as an earthly and manmade place:

The narrator is himself the Creator of paradise. Ahura Mazda, "Who is marked by absolute benevolence, uncompromised by any hint of evil." Wrapped in good force, paradise is a total enclosure in which all can be enlightened with "the Truth" (Atri). The place, therefore, is protected from Truth's deviant opponent "the Lie" (Draeg). 34 Here
the wall is the physical device through which this protection - or to put it better, this distinction - is actualized on earth among men. This is crucial to understanding the sixth-millennium BC chahar-legh as the possible exemplary type for Achaemenid paradise. Such an event had emerged from a similar ethical concern to distinguish (sacred) good from (profane) evil, though in the Persian Empire, the vision of paradise in the chahar-legh was taken as an analogy of imperial practice over communities and territory. So the abstract boundary between "the Lie" and "the Truth" would become legible through that physical boundary established by the garden form. Precisely at this point do both conceptual and formal boundaries become political. Hence this is how the garden archetype operates. Firstly, it emerges as both ethical and formal boundary, in order to make legible an idea of living in the world. So, it gives form to a human condition. Secondly, it makes intelligible the reproducibility of a paradigm without renouncing its own singularity and (potentially) political dimension.

Going back to the writings in the Avesta, paradise is a place that only the followers of Lord Ahura Mazda are allowed to enter. Thence, their lives shall be re-created in righteousness. Meanwhile in Genesis, paradise is a place once lost through the fault of Adam and Eve. But it could still be regained through the work of Christ. Similarly, at both times in history, paradise is a condition of a perfect form of life that - at some given point - is essentially lost. And yet it can be restored to faithful men through the action of a divine power. Although the Persian text this condition is described precisely as an earthly walled garden, in the Bible of the early Church it mostly becomes metaphysical with different images and terms. Some of the best known are Kingdom of God, Heaven on Earth or Garden of Eden, though it is clear the latter is the actual place where Adam and Eve lived up to God's perfection until their deviation towards sin. Similarly, paradise is the spiritual state of purity reigning before Adam's Fall. [Fig. J]

Tenth-century Christian texts claim that paradise was indeed regained by Christ and can be entered once again by those who follow Him. But this action, as well as attendance at church, implies the experience of a whole Christian life to be led in true faith. With this early tradition, it became implied that Christian men should live according to the image of Adam before the fall. Hence, for a century or
distinct and exemplary form of life—from birth to work. Thereafter the Church's kura was walled in order separate clerical from lay practices. It gave legibility to the exceptional life of Christ rather than the mortal fault of Adam. The exceptional birth of a redemptory power mattered more than penance for sin.

The wall was simple, flat, stone and base. The kura inside was fluffly with kitchen herbs and tiny wildflowers. The fountain, central but monumental, was sealed to symbolise the untouched womb and perpetual virginity of Mary. The sensation was of an intimate interior, with the predominance of dark green and blood red. Sharp rays of light cut through a dome of bending willow trees. The Church's kura was clearly a non-"productive" feminine place, a garden that enclosed the perspectivity of a single event with no parallels with anything in nature—the Immaculate Conception. [Fig. 1] The walled garden was also associated with Christ's nativity set.

The personification of Mary in the kura was mingled with the seemingly paradisiacal enclosed garden described in biblical texts, such as the Song of Songs 4:12. Originally, the canon of this book implied that love was something only between Christ and the Church. Meanwhile, by the twelfth century this became (over)-symbolised into a mildly mystical individual interpretation of matrimony. Henceforth, it reflected a metaphysical perspective on the kura as an idyllic garden. A simple wall low in height enabled couples to gain access for playful flirtations "love." In ruin, to date, medieval labyrinths of Western Europe, the kura was a mundane pleasure within a special setting, walled away from the city, yet operating as one of its current forms of use. That space was not really perceived as sacred, since it was mostly allocated to the backyards of the outskirts of the city. That is, it was no longer defined as a 'centr', separated from everywhere else, either to ordinary men or to wealthy landowners, the kura gradually became more of a form of scenography than a representative sort of garden. Hence, the layout variations were more practical and ornamental than symbolic. Sometimes the walled cruciform layout was used in order to make optimal use of the land in the dense urban space of Western medieval cities. If any symbolism could be evoked, it was only an echo of the immemorial associations of the axis that the garden archetype had once carried to Europe from Persia and Egypt via Greece and ancient Rome. While the kura was transformed in the perceptions and uses of laymen in the city, the Church was going through one of its most extensive internal reforms and conflicts.

The emergence of mendicant orders was a reaction against that institution's becoming one of the largest landowners of the urban territories of major medieval cities. One of those orders was the Cistercian, founded by a monk later known as St. Bernard de Clairvaux in the twelfth century. The factor which mainly distinguished the Cistercians from the monks of other Orders was their strict interpretation and practice of what they claimed to be the "original" rules of St. Benedict. They thought that most Orders, such as the Cluniacs and even the Benedictines themselves, had eventually "corrupted" the system of St. Benedict because they let their monasteries thrive too much, and expanding, and accumulate wealth. [Fig. 4] The Cistercians also critiqued extreme asceticism as leading the monks to not only work to the point of producing surplus but, also, to live alone rather than in a monastic community. Their argument was mainly based on the idea that those faults resulted from the contradiction of one of the most fundamental rules of the monastic form of life, the renunciation of private property. That is, monks could possess things for the sole purpose of using—rather than owning them. So the question of rule and law, and property became extremely important for the Cistercians, especially when it came to building their settlements outside the city. Yet how can one settle through building—in stone—and still renounce property? The Order sought the answer to this paradox by redefining the formal relationship of spatial enclosure with rule and use as a means of separate their monasteries from everything else, the city, and its law. (Not that they would have put it in such terms, but this is clearly shown in the architectural evidence that we are about to see in this chapter). In that sense, the typical form of the Cistercian monastery was both the device and direct product of their tale on not only the Rules of St. Benedict but also the notion of property. As the law of medieval towns normalised possession of land and things as well as the entire lives of tax-paying citizens, the Cistercians went in search of an alter juridical concept which would, instead, protect their form of life as a virtuoso practice from the powers of kings and popes. The Order found a possible model in the ancient tradition of Roman law, from which two concepts became useful in defining...
ing their lives and their monasteries as common. One of them was the definition of a juridical person, which means that legal norms can never be applied to life as "a complex biographical reality" but rather always to the individual as "an abstract center." And the other was the concept of which, as we have seen, means at the same time "the thing and the process, the value and the procedure through which it was established." This Order, moreover, was not like the Franciscan one, which opposed property so radically as to have never developed a paradigmatic model of monastery. The Cistercians were, rather, keen on making use of existing laws as an example for their abbots, and of making use of the real monastery itself as a model for the entire community. The Cistercian monastery was analogous to the ancient Roman house. The form mainly responsible for this analogy was the cloister, in a manner that reads as follows: firstly, the quadrangular arcade was similar to the peristyle in marking the procedure through which the entire house (monastery) - and its household (abbots, monks and lay brothers) - had been enclosed and, therefore, set apart (sanctified) from the world (city) outside (profane). Secondly, the enclosed (land) enclosed by this procedure was a garden. Similarly to the house, this enclosed garden made the monastery legible as an autonomous microcosm (paradise). This space, as such, was walled so that only ordained monks could enter. Within the cloister they could practice rituals such as gardening, foot washing before entering the church, and read books or books as the terrestrial manifestation of the Gospel. Like the Roman peristyle, the cloister was therefore a space that had its own specific rules and, at the same time, addressed the exclusive, this common, and purpose of the entire monastery. But before we look at how this analogy would lead to a total reconsideration of the walled garden, both conceptually and practically, let us first understand what paradise meant to the Cistercians.

Initially Bernard had written 86 sermons on the Song of Songs (originally known as Song of Solomon). These were keen on making clear reservations on the kind of love at stake in that text. The intention was to warn of the mirroring of canons, which could eventually yield to temptation. But it was also about setting a clear distinc-

Fig. 11. Abbey of Cîteaux, the parent house of the Cistercian. In a sighted diagram showing just before its destruction during the French Revolution.

54. In 1998, after several efforts to reform monk general errors in the writing of St. Bernard, these monks from the Abbey of Melrose decided to withdraw to a cloister apart in the Château of Cîteaux under the protection of Abbot Louis Florentin. The monks moved to Paris and after several years of the Benedictine Rule. Their practice soon became an example in the form of an Order that was formed completely new and based on that already existing set of Rules. Daily, weekly, and monthly, the Cistercians (University of Chicago Press, 1980), pp. 99-179.

55. See the brief description of the Alcove done in the last section of the present text, pp. 30-32.


58. The perfect life coincides with the legibility of the world, and with the imposition of the clerical and the lay pursuit of Christ's example. In fact, most mendicant Orders, such as the Cistercian, arose in distinct opposition to the current state of Christian practice both in the laity and monasticism. And one of the central issues was the legibility of the true will in living with the Church and understanding Christian life in form and in rules. It was a reform in the deepest sense, because it reformulated the notion of sacred practice together with the rules of use of space. Above all, some Orders sought in the reform a way to position themselves away (or apart) from the medieval city, a place of men's fault. In the anecdote of Antony reported by Evagrius, the overcoming of sloth is presented as a stage in which nature itself appears as a book and the life of the monk as a condition of absolute and uninterrupted legibility: "A sage came to visit Antony and said, 'Father, how can you do without the comfort of books?' He answered, 'My book. O philosopher, is the nature of things, and this is available to me whenever I want to read the words of God.'" The perfect life coincides with the legibility of the world, and with the imposition of the clerical and the lay pursuit of Christ's example.
The cloister as paradise

"Four steps in spiritual life to wit: Reading, Meditation, Prayer and Contemplation. This is the Scale of the Cloister — a scale set between heaven and earth, having but few steps but reaching an immense and unbelievable distance. For, while fixed upon earth, it pierces the clouds and seizes the hidden places of heaven. You must know that these steps are distinct in name and number, so they are in nature and order." 59 The Scale of the Cloister and The Ladder of Monks were written by the Carthusian Prior Guigo II, in the mid twelfth century, to instruct monks in the four steps of the spiritual life. They explain that reading, meditation, prayer and contemplation are the degrees of the ladder. Therefore, they can only lift monks to heaven if exercised uninterruptedly and in a perfect progression. Each degree must be conducted with a precise aim: "Reading is to seek the sweetness of the blessed life; Meditation is to find it, Prayer is to ask for it and Contemplation is to enjoy it." Further, the author demonstrates how "one proceeds another, not only in the order of time but in causality." In the most didactic passage in The Ladder of Monks, the whole path is recapitulated as follows: reading comes first, and then as it were, the foundation; it provides the subject matter we must use for meditation. Meditation considers more carefully what is to be sought after: it digests as it were, for the contemplation it finds and reduces, but since it is not in meditation's power to seize upon the treasure, it directs us to prayer. Prayer lifts itself up to God with all its strength, and begs for the treasure it longs for, which is the sweetness of contemplation. Contemplation when it comes rewards the labours of the other three; it interiorizes the thirsting soul with the dew of heavenly sweetness. Reading is an exercise of the outward senses; meditation is concerned with the inward understanding; prayer is concerned with desire; contemplation outstrips every faculty. The first degree is proper to beginners, the second to the proficient, the third to devotes, the fourth to the blessed. 60

Besides beauty and objectivity, these texts matter because they use the cloister as a paradigm to describe the daily path (and program) towards spiritual ascension. Here, in fact, the cloister is by no means only a metaphor amongst the many employed by the author. Instead, it is the literal outcome of form coinciding with rule, liturgy and thought. The same could also be said in general about most religious spaces or the whole plans of monasteries. However, the late medieval cloister becomes a unique device within monasticism because it actualises the practice of the rule as a will to a form of life. 61 Although it appears in almost every monastery plan, it only developed unevenly throughout the whole medieval period. Precisely because it is such a focal space of monastic thought, it has also varied significantly amongst different Orders.

To the Cistercians, the cloister was more spatially and symbolically prominent than it was for the Carthusians. Perhaps that is why...
the authorship of The Rule of the Cistercian Order was once historically attributed to St. Bernard de Clairvaux rather than its earliest author, the Carthusian Prior Guigo II. To the Order of the latter, the quadrangular arcade was in reality more of a buffer space, or an empty void, aimed at keeping the individual cells far away from each other, so that monks could pray and read in uninterrupted silence. Meanwhile, to the former, the cloister was the space where the steps of the ladder were rendered visible and feasible for the monks to gauge. The discrepancy between Carthusian and Cistercian cloisters is due exactly to the way each Order interpreted asceticism, common life, liturgy, penitence and paradise. For the Carthusians, the cloistered garden was extremely austere, a pastoral-like hedge, with a modestly adorned centre. It meant that paradise lies only above and beyond daily life. Meanwhile, to the Cistercians, the garden was a cruciform hortus conclusus with a well-defined centre. With these a restrained, yet highly evocative, symbolism of axes, a few trees and a central fountain was attained. Hence the garden in the Cistercian cloister was the image of paradise actualised within the monastery. That was so because the Cistercian monks ruled their life in common as if they were already there. Herewith we see the ideological conception and use of garden enclosure towards a particular will for life. Though it is not our strategy to learn by comparison, it is quite remarkable how the cloistered garden appears more prominent to Cistercian monasteries than to those of other Orders. Because the Cistercians had reservations about towards form and the Benedictine Rules, they were keener on architecture and figurative representation. The Carthusian monks avoided these as much as possible. Hence, they restricted the use of ornamental, formal gardens and every built element that did not play a literal role in their hourly liturgy and Sunday processions. In fact, liturgical practice was the main driver of the Cistercians' opposition to their former branch, the Cluniacs. Before we move on to the Cistercian plan, we should note that liturgy was the main ideological device that distinguished the Cistercians from other Benedictine ruled Orders — and from late medieval practices in general.

The Cistercian Order sought to give a straightforward interpretation of the original rules written by Saint Benedict. This induced their (well known) stricter refusal of the material world of the lay world. But it was also a self-critical rejection of deviance and corruption at large, especially regarding most monastic practices of late

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medieval Christendom. Hence the Order started to rethink the faith of their condition by restructuring earthly liturgy — their Divine Office. First this developed through texts, with the reform of the Benedictine Rules by the General Chapter. The main purpose was to strip current practice of the excesses added by the Cluniacs throughout the centuries. So, the new Office banished the over-elaborate masses and cut the singing of 200 psalms a day to 150 a week, because these made the monks too occupied in every hour, leaving only a little time for manual labour. It was also argued that excessive singing and reflection could lead to "tedious and neglectful recitation." Rather, the Order Chapter reduced the number of canonical hours to eight and the Conventual mass to a daily one. Sunday mass was also included and, later, influenced the disposition of many plans such as of Kirkstall Abbey in England. In sum, the Cistercians sought to create a truly self-willed, central and simple form of liturgy, just as in their plans for their monasteries.

Such emphasis on a concise liturgy and the original rule produced a typical scheme of monastery. [Fig. 6] Though by buildings, guest houses, infirmaries and farms were allowed to be placed outside the main building around the abbey. However, what had become paradigmatic of the Cistercian monasteries was a logic of spatial growth that never transgressed the spatial unity and centrality given by the main compound of canonical buildings. In this sense, the idea of spatial seclusion was not manifested in the fortification wall around the abbey, but it was rather conveyed by its own cloistered enclosure towards the entire complex. That was the main spatial character that differentiated the eventual growth of the Cistercian settlements from those of other orders, such as the Cluniacs. The Cistercian Order was highly critical of the abbeys which enriched themselves and let their abbeys overexpand, because they thought that too much wealth corrupted both the monastic will and practice of rules. That is extremely interesting as it reveals the Cistercians either believed in or noted the tight formal relationship between use, rules, and space. And, that is why they became so keen on establishing rules and principles to model their monasteries. Although it was not possible to completely remodel the existing building of Cîteaux, the first to house the Order, that of Clairvaux was built from scratch. [Fig. F] The monks there were thus able to plan it so as to adhere to the Cistercian Rule. This was in fact a
strict take on the precepts of Benedict of Nursia and which, later in the eighth century, had been compiled with the title Rule of Saint Benedict.\footnote{Wolfgang Benz, 
Monastic/Western Europe: The 
Databank of the Centre, London, 
Thames & Hudson, 1972, pp. 9-12} In short, the main goal of his rules was not to establish a religious order but to offer monks an instrumental guide to organise themselves as autonomous communities. Autonomous not only in the sense of subsistence but, above all, a single self-governing group of monks. For this reason, Benedict was concerned with the relationship between ascetic life—-as a common will—and rules. His text therefore starts by distinguishing the main sorts of Christian asceticism which existed at that time, between the fifth and sixth centuries AD.\footnote{According to Benedict of Nursia, the main four modalities of monks were: the group of monks who were not in one monastery, the group of monks who were not in one monastery, the group of monks who were not in one monastery, the group of monks who were not in one monastery, the group of monks who were not in one monastery, the group of monks who were not in one monastery, the group of monks who were not in one monastery, and finally the congregation, the only case where all the monks lived in the same place and shared the same rules. Benedict thus focused on developing this idea further and added:} Amongst these, the monastery provided the only modality in which monks lived in the same place and shared the same rules. Benedict thus focused on developing this idea further and added:

The monastery should, if possible, be so arranged that all necessary things, such as water, mill, garden, and various crafts may be situated within the enclosure, so that the monks may not be compelled to wander outside, for that is not at all expedient for their souls.\footnote{James McCann, The Rule of

Although Benedict was the first to put it clearly into words, this idea of ascetic life within an autonomous compound had existed since the Coptic monachus, who was born and lived in Egypt between 250 and 350 AD. And so, by the time of Benedict, there were in fact living examples of coenobitic buildings, such as the Christian Orthodox monastery of Saint Catherine, \textit{fig. Q} built at the bottom of Mount Sinai around 540 AD. Yet the utmost actualisation of Benedict'stake on coenobitic settlement appears in the ninth-century ideal scheme for a Carolingian monastery. Since this document has been preserved at the library of the Benedictine Abbey of St. Gallen, in Switzerland, it is often called today the "Plan of St. Gall" \textit{[fig. R]}, although it was originally commissioned to be a model.\footnote{There is a high-resolution photograph of the scheme of St. Gall showing and commenting the plan and its inscription on this website, which can be found in the digitisation of Carolingian documents: http://www.
scbhlb.org/ed/index.php} The scheme measures 44 by 30 Carolingian inches, or about 111 by 72 centimeters spread over five calfskins.\footnote{Fig. R. Next page. The detailed contents of the so-called "plan of St. Gall." These were not only the represented dimensions of gardens and gardening box, also, many strips of calculations and planimetry between various enclosures.} Although the drawing reads more as a diagram, the back of its sheet contains several scriptures detailing and listing the logistics of all functions, materials, and maintenance of the monastery. Those also include instructions for the "management
Fig. R (A30-1a). Hypothetical reconstruction of the secondary colonnade with the press at the rear of the main mansion compound. There were many strips of vegetable cultivation, weed and flower planters in almost every space in between the walled colonnades.

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Fig. 8 (page-18): Hypothetical reconstruction of the garden entrance, flanked by rows of columns. On the right, the framework circumscribed by the law burials.

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Fig. 9 (page-19): Hypothetical reconstruction of the main chamber at the centre of the complex. The configuration of the garden inside - the koi fish ponds - was analogous to the manik's idea of paradise as a perfect place to rest on earth.

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the gardens and the moenia hortulanis (house of the gardener) who also should be a monk? How to lay out and select species to cultivate in the hortus (vegetable garden) and in the hortus hospitii (medicinal herb garden), the cemetery and orchard. And, of course, how to lay out the main cloister, attached to the south flank of the church so its open interior could get enough sunlight for a cruciform hortus, with a central fountain at its centre. Unlike the other gardens, the hortus hospitii was strictly non-productive, as it was only meant to offer calm to the monks, so they could simply rest or concentrate on rituals such as reading, praying, and foot washing before entering the church. Departing from the historical reconstruction proposed by the historians Walter Horn and Ernest Born, we can imagine a bit of the architectural form (Fig. 8) and understand how the cloister was extremely important to making the entire monastery legible as a sacred space. Hence its central position and exclusive spatial relationship within the scheme, yet it still was an enclosure amongst others, since all spaces in the complex—either open or roofed—were also defined by walls and equally introverted. Nothing really stood out from the plan, not even the hortus hospitii. For, in the end, there were not only several gardens but also planters in almost every space between the buildings. The scheme thus implied that every inch of land should be enclosed and put to work.

Later, in the eyes of the Cistercians, perhaps, the "original sin" of the St. Gall plan was to lay out walled enclosures in an additive grid system, which eventually looked and functioned as a city. Or, as we may rather see it today, a campus of modern factories. The Cistercian criticism would be that the resemblance was exactly the problem of most Benedictine monasteries following such a model: the danger of becoming mere machine of wealth-creation, because that carpet-like grid of enclosed areas allowed for indefinite expansion, thus, more appropriation of land, subdivisions, production and surplus. (Fig. 1) Yet the fact that it had the hortus hospitii at its centre allowed the scheme still to pose an alternative to most medieval towns, whose centres were instead defined by market squares. A tendency which would later culminate in the paradigm of the Bastide. (Fig. 7)

So, forasmuch as the Cistercians were so keen on following that original Rule of St. Benedict, their monasteries seem to clearly avoid the grid configuration of St. Gall. They have focused, instead, on the
frusty (the ordinary dayroom of the monks, at the end of the eastern passage) or even the Church's sanctuary could be extended outwards this module. Particularly in Fontenay, the east and west cloister walks were two modules (or two vaults) longer than the north and south ones. This was partially due to the modular mechanism of the Church's body of choirs—which the Cistercians ruled should never be too long, so that singing would not take over from the liturgy as an over-theatrical act. But perhaps such brevity in circulation was also meant to make time for sacramental life—and never otherwise. Hence the Fontenay cloister worked as a clock. It was a device that modulated the lengths of walks from one canonical space to another, making them fall into place with liturgical acumen. [Fig. V]

In fact, the monks' daytime was ruled through seven canonical hours, while nighttime had an eighth one for Vigils. The exact time of each celebration varied according to the season. However, the sequence and orientation of liturgical practices remained the same: starting from the night-time Office of Vigils towards daytime celebrations of the Lauds, at daybreak, followed by the Prime, the Terce, the Sext, the None, the Vespers, and then the Compline. Thus, the monks always began the Divine Office at midnight, when they woke up together in the dormitory, the dorter, above the eastern passage of the cloister. They descended through the night-stairs towards their own choir in the church. Therein they sing for one hour in Vespers. The monks in Fontenay followed the example of St. Bernard strictly. So, it was not rare for them to dismiss the night time and remain in Vespers until sunrise. At daybreak, they would either return to or remain in the Church choir to sing the Lauds. In fact, the monks celebrated every canonical hour in the Church throughout the day until its liturgical completion, the Compline or 'night prayer'. The intervals between the seven daytime prayers were fixed. They were spent in silence, mostly within the cloister arcades and the frasty. The eastern passage was the most important to canonical rite, and so to the whole plan. And this applies not only to Fontenay but also to every Cistercian monastery ever built. In fact, the importance of this passage was predicted in the text of the profession. There the ordination and orientation of cloister buildings were chapter house, auditorium and dormitory (upper level), frasty, refectory, kitchen, offices and dormitory (ground floor). After the church, these follow from the most to the least important, from most...
liturgical to most menial. The overall layout of rooms around the cloister was also meant to conform to the conventual mass and Sunday processions. Hence, after the mass, the monks could leave the choir directly into the northern arcade. There they would sit on the benches to wait for the foot washing. As this rite happened at the lavatory across the quadrangle (south), the monks would reach it following the western passage. Housed in a small portion stepped inside the garden, the lavatory was more used during daily liturgy. That was because the Cistercians washed their hands and bodies regularly between prayers. But it also served the refectory where monks took their Friday feast or only dinner. This was a relatively small longitudinal building, with the kitchen on one side (east) and the office room on another (west). The three were originally accessed from the south of the cloister. They formed, together with the lavatory, a reversed cross. The water was supplied by a channel below the lavatory foundations in the cloister garden. The Cistercian rule in fact aimed also at a coincidence of religious symbolism with water management. Fontenay was one of the best examples. In fact, such criteria were even stated in the Rule of the Order as for Quo in loco et parte Constans. "Neither in cities, nor in courts, nor in villages, should be built our common life, but in places away from the behaviour of 'futile men'."

Most Orders, such as the Dominicans, usually sought to settle their monasteries on cliffs or on desert plateaus—precisely to evoke the emblem of eternal asceticism or of the ancient monastery Monte Cassino. The Cistercians rather avoided such situations as much as possible. The Order itself also instructed that the monastery should never be placed on top of a hill, not on an island, by the sea, beside a lake or a large river. The typical Cistercian monastery should be set up beside a stream in the narrowest part of a valley opened to the west, and closely bordered by mountains to the north, south, east and west. [Fig. W] Such a conditional image of inclusion played a strategic part in the Cistercian renunciation of claiming landownership in the city. In this trait, they were similar to most other Orders. However, they differed in the precise way they refused to address self-representation towards the outer world—and this issue becomes clear once we understand the architectural language of the Cistercian monastery. The suffusion of colours and materials, pictorial stucchi, narrative vitraux
mented—with very little or no topiary. The flowers, mostly red and white, evoke the symbolism of Christ and the Virgin Mary—as we saw earlier. Each cardinal bed was outlined by a sleek curb of stone and levelled with the ground—just a half meter lower than the cloister passages. The steps from the quadrangular arcade to the garden ground were never monumental. In fact, their dispositions were not always in strict consonance with the whole symmetry but were only discrete forms of access. Sometimes the connection between the cloister and the garden was only visual, making the latter appear the literal (and less pictorial) image of paradise. That is, the garden was the spiritual stage of contemplation itself, which the exit of the cloister starts towards and ends with. Here we understand how the garden archetype—which we have been tracing since the Persian chahar-bagh—works as a cosmological construction. The legibility of its few axes reconnect a delimited terrain with the transcendental plan of the sky. Hence the articulation of horizontal crossed ground and vertical trees render the centre as unique and sacred. As did the respective combination of horizontal squared passage and vertical arches. This happened precisely when the monks beheld the garden framed by each vertical arch of the arcade. Here they performed the elliptical walk through the cloister as a perfect—in intelligible—analogy of the ladder towards God.

*Hor_ tus conclus us* as an example of political space

The form of the Cistercian cloister went beyond representation to become the literalization of the monastic project of a totally ascetic (yet communal) form of life. In this sense the exclusive *hor_ tus conclus us*, shut away within the centre of the monastery, was the only possible configuration available to produce the inclusion of the core group of monks through spatial exclusion. Though our reading is far from ended here. Remaining unmentioned are the many spatial meanderings of the Cistercian cloister. Though before we search further, let us reflect on what we have encountered. As a steppingstone, the trajectory of the *hor_ tus conclus us* indicates that formal and spatial legibility develop in a way closely entangled with the human urge to distinguish and delimit sacred from profane and good from decent. It is only from the spatial cognition of these ethical distinctions that political distinctions can arise and become legible to a plurality of men. Like the idea of the *polis*, the construction of paradise entails the constant mediation of antagonistic forces and conflict. Hence the instrumentality of the wall, which defines the mediating character of such space by making tangible the fundamental distinction between inside and outside. In other words, if different individuals can agree upon basic questions, such as where the centre of a finite space is, they can henceforth recognize themselves as a group—with a common will—and reach agreements on more complex conflicts, which inevitably arise from any enclosed form of sedentary coexistence. Both in ancient Persia and medieval Europe, therefore, the collective making of enclosure was attempts to distinguish absolute realities from an indefinite (neutral) field of many. Indeed, the enclosed garden shares this general logic of all other ontological enclosures. But it was the only one whose sole purpose was to formalize intrinsic ethical boundaries into a legible articulation of physical ones. Garden enclosure was the only one whose function was to render an idea of the world within the finitude of a single space. Although it would therefore become a device of representation, the walled garden had always transcended its representational dimension. Due to the ethical reasoning of their deeply evocative symbolism, the Persian *chahar-bagh* and the Cistercian *hor_ tus conclus us* offer two models for experiencing space as a constant act of distinguishing good from decent, sacred from profane, inside from outside. From within the arcade wall to inside the cloister, the *hor_ tus conclus us* established a flagrantly altered condition of living within and apart from vast hostile fields. Each in their own singular way, Persian and Cistercian forms of garden enclosure denoted a clear relation between defined-legible-sacred-enclosure areas undelineed-legible-profane-vastness. Although both would produce very introspective enclosures, they eventually constructed ideas of outside from within.
Paradise Now
A protocol within Tehran plot grids

Amongst the archetypes of Iranian architecture, the Persian garden is the one that most recapitulates the act of founding and managing a city. The garden, in this sense, is analogous to the city. In Tehran, this occurs not only on a symbolic level, but literally. Gardens are the elements that best exemplify how to not only inhabit the harsh desert biotope of that region but, also, to make it thrive. Due to its incredible efficiency in providing protection against drying winds, and in distributing water, the garden posed a possible paradigm, or an urban model properly said, for the formation of the first settlement of Tehran and its future expansions. The city was once in fact described as "a compound of several walled gardens." Yet the relationship between the garden and the building of Tehran as a walled 'garden' city goes much deeper than apparent similarities in terms of greenery and management of life in the desert. The main reason why the garden has been so influential to the form of this city is conceptual, for it was not only an enclosure which protected life but also one that clearly separated this life from everything else. As the archetypal image of the terrestrial paradise—thus a peaceful place where one should abide by a ruling sovereign—the Persian garden functioned as a sort of a perfect diagram for the ideology of power which would build itself up through the urban form of Tehran.
Fig. A. Tehran under the rule of Nasereddin Shah in 1850, after a large-scale reform that transformed the city as a unified complex of gardens and crowded buildings. The outside territory was, in turn, defined by a modification of several other gardenised emirates.

Fig. B. Tehran after the Reza Shah's capital plan of 1925 had transformed the original city wall. The capital no longer encloses a garden, but a grid whose new roads and suburbs expanded the urban territory beyond the limits of the former wall.

This anagogical relationship becomes evident when the Safavid King, Shah Tahmasp I, built the first wall of the city in 1539 as an attempt to tame local tribal unrest and give his government both political and spatial unity. The typical Persian shahar-bagh was the most ubiquitous form of enclosure within the broader enclosure of the city. While almost every citizen inhabited a courtyard house with a chahar-bagh inside, the royal complex at the core of the city was also a compound of courtyard palaces and gardens. Later, in the eighteenth century, in a period of political stability and peace, the reign of Fath Ali Shah would enclose Tehran with a second and larger wall, starting a phase of modern urbanisation from 1798 onwards. [Fig. A] As the Shah was keen on using architecture to put an aesthetic mark on his governance, he made his summer residence visible at the summit of the Alborz mountain just outside the urban walls. As his Qasr-e Qajar Palace had a huge garden, it exemplified how the city could eventually expand towards the mountains. By the end of the following century, Iran's geopolitical position weakened, as it lost the war against Russia and its territory was progressively colonized by Western countries such as Britain. Nasereddin Shah would thus build the third and largest wall as an attempt to rebuild and control the capital as a totally introverted, defensive compound. This move not only aimed at creating an image of a strong state but also understood urban form as a means to control the life of its citizens. And in this sense the garden was again a useful tool, as it could reinforce the idea of the city as a paradise ruled by an omnipotent sovereign. As in 1925, the last wall was totally demolished by the regime of the Reza Shah, Tehran began to sprawl. [Figs. B] The walled character of the capital began to gradually disappear, and the garden was reduced to a tool for urbanisation. By 1950 most of the north and western areas had sprawled through carpets of private plot grids. [Figs. C and D] Gardens were no longer in the central courts of the dwelling but in the backyards. The problem is that, because public space is heavily controlled by the state, most social encounters take place inside these apartments. But this collectiveness is never fully actualized because these buildings lack shared spaces.

These historical events have translated into the socio-geographical anatomy of Tehran, as for instance the disposition of medieval

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Persian gardens around its region. Built to work as satellite sites, these walled assets were mostly located at the waterlogged bottom of the Alborz mountains. This was the most opportune situation to take advantage of cleaner waters (which could be streamed down the mountains with gravity). Thus, the farther north a garden was built, the larger and more fertile it could be. Eventually, this equation would make the northern lands the most valuable suburban domains of the city.

Accordingly, later reforms, between 1890 and 1940, have unquestionably led to the richest private developments and urban expansions being found in the north. This configuration partially explains why the city and its social strata coincide in form: the upper and greener north houses the richer class, while the lower and more arid south houses the poorer. Meanwhile, the middle class emerged at the literal centre of such a strip. Perhaps, due to its focal location in the city, this modern class has grown conscious of its mediating role within the public body and the state, though such critical mass gradually faded away from 1940 onwards as several state housing projects aimed to decentralise intellectuals and civil servants. [Fig. E] G ezee through extensive grids of private plots, these developments would also complete the urbanisation of the Iranian capital. The most successful developments were implemented between the old centre and the northern suburbs. Plot grids like that of Abbas Abad, Vanak and Jordan became the quarters for a 'new bourgeoisie' to arise. [Figs. F - G] As a backdrop to these systems of housing infrastructure, huge urban parks were built — such as Milad Park — next to ‘carpets’ of several residential blocks over the rich neighbourhood of Jordan. This eventual marriage of plot grid and park also marks a crucial transformation of the Persian garden-archetype and its influence on the urban form of Tehran. Because of the park (the intent to frame, normalise and soften public life), new houses would no longer need their own (courtyard) garden — or it was only acceptable to favour the public park as a space where the state could police civilians.

In accordance with the logic of the new plot-grid typologies, the garden lost its central position within the dwelling. Moreover, regulations detached the garden from the domestic space by reducing it to a backyard limited to 40% of the plot surface. Considering that the most usual plot module deployed in those grid projects measured 7 x 30 metres, there was very little space to enjoy the sandy Iranian breeze under the sun. This applied to both single houses and multi-storey buildings. [Fig. H] The problem with this regulation is that it limited the ground floor of residential buildings to commercial use only. [Fig. I] Henceforth, backyards were ultimately prevented from becoming extensions of the households with their own singular forms of social encounter. At best, modern plot backyards became scantly planted areas, leftover areas or storage places for the shops on the ground floor. This typology hardly ever came close to the family shared-high garden frequently found within traditional Iranian courtyards.
Fig. F: Present growth around the urban grid of Kerya, Nusseh, a state-sponsored housing project. The Jordanian government had built the complexes in 1981 to alleviate and control the working class on the east side of Tabuk, further away from the National University and the old city centre.

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Fig. G: Present growth around the urban grid of Albus Alsad and Yusuf Alsad, two state-sponsored housing projects, from 1986. Their purpose was to allocate the middle class on the north, outside the administrative buildings.

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Fig. 1. Existing situation of the ground level of a typical plot-grid block. The strictly commercial use of the ground floor has enclosed most backyards and transformed them into storage, dumping and parking spaces.
Today, such a lack of spatial possibilities only worsens the living conditions of the workers still dwelling in many of those grid projects. Iran's economy, as a whole, is currently shrinking and its middle class is getting increasingly poor. Unlike previous generations, the present generation faces precarious working relations, lower wages, higher rents, and speculation on land value. Meanwhile, the city does not provide many ways out of this situation. Neither ideological or physical quality can be enjoyed directly, since state-run surveillance and censorship of "the private lives of citizens" are still omnipresent.

Besides the typically introverted spaces of the household, there is, therefore, a need to conceal every part of life, making households the ultimate spaces where an alternative publicness may emerge. Although the same can be said about cities and their public spaces (where public spaces are no longer made to represent the possibility of political action), the state surveillance and public concealment dynamic is exaggerated in Tehran. Therefore, it is unquestionably more visible and more potent than elsewhere. Uprootedness, however, is much less recognisable as an increasingly general condition. But one may understand how it happens by looking more closely at what has become of the backyard in most grid projects built between 1930

Fig. 1. Opposite page: Phase 3

The households of two apartments decide to reclaim the backyard of their building to reclaim residential use. So, the group establishes rules on how to collectively organize and share the space.

Fig. 2. Phase 3. The operation of access systems: the group builds a wall with entrance to the ground floor, without the old cluster and partition. New rules help the area to maintain its new structure and to access the upper floors. The area may now decide to share the new entrance away from the street and the ground-floor shops.

Fig. 3. Phase 2. Two new households of the neighboring buildings follow the first example in reclaiming their backyards. The groups team up to maintain all other tenants and are able to claim their backyard together by demolishing the walls between them. In turn, the group builds a new wall to maintain and share the new backyard. The group may then decide to share the access system by maintaining the newly claimed ground. On one hand, many tenants can have a small patch of land to plant anything from a small garden space. On the other, tenants can play or lay down and do nothing.

Fig. 4. Phase 1. After seeing the possibility of having a tracker, a small garden, and generally the backyard, the household of four apartments in the buildings across the block decide to join and perform the same processes of phases 2 and 3. They, in turn, divide the area and decide to approach their backyards. They decide the structure, which can now grow in size, should be maintained with public consent. All rules remain. New questions now arise on whether the newly claimed ground should cater to various needs.

Fig. J. Top: Phase 1 (blue): backyard reclaimed
Fig. L. Top: Phase 3 (blue): shared backyard
Fig. J. Bottom: Phase 2 (blue): wall construction
Fig. L. Bottom: Phase 4 (blue): shared cluster
Fig. N. Possible transformation of the first level. A collective kitchen brings together the household of 12 flats. A concrete wall defines the space. The element also contains cells and storage, which give each apartment access to the outside. This arrangement provides space for leisure and encounters. If users wish to be alone, they can use the individual cells, which open onto the living, bedroom and study. Alternatively, they can take one of the four staircases down to the open ground floor.

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Fig. O. Possible transformation of the ground level. The exclusive spatial enclosure of the scheme has enabled the members of twelve apartments to recognize themselves as an extended household. Moreover, the shared form enabled them to collectively create and continuously perform rules on how to share, use and manage the space. Basically, they agreed on how to enjoy the shared ground as a place to garden, play, rest or do nothing in the presence of others.

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Monumental

The concept of this category refers to the magnification of the hortus into an outward public monument within suburban villas. Its design was highly theatrical so as to formalise, ritualise and, as a result, institutionalise the expropriation of rural land.
Gardened estates as analogical reconstructions of the city: suburban villas in Rome

Renaissance is an inaccurate term to describe what would happen to the home after 1280: this is one archetype that has never ceased to exist. It had, in fact, outlived the Roman Empire through the empirical transmittal of its practice to become the most recognisable form of gardening throughout the following millennium. As seen in the previous chapter, the Oisterian household was only the most developed example of myriad variations on the household garden. As much purposeful as symbolic, these places might have hitherto ranged in productivity but not in sacredness, since all were collectively constructed by religious, peasant or feudal groups. Liturgical motivations had conditioned the configuration of these enclosures to be self-centred and compact. While values like ‘taste,’ ‘possession’ and ‘social order’ may have been implicit in the design of their space and form, these were of secondary importance. Gardened enclosures in the thirteenth century were not conceived of to display surplus. This, however, would change once the rural territories constituted by those communities began to be deeply affected by contemporary events, such as the naval warfare in the Mediterranean, which diversified both the geography and circulation of fortune, thus suddenly devaluing agrarian production. This consolidated the so-called city-states, along with their new service economies and the broad adoption of land taxation, establishing an exploitative system


2. In 1183, Pope Martin IV decided to annul the Byzantine Empire of Constantinople.
through which towns mastered the countryside, changing social relations between them. Serfdom progressively became paid labourers; artists and craftsmen shifted their subordinate ties from the abbeys of isolated monasteries to the patrons of urban guilds, taking along with them three centuries of empirical knowledge in building and gardening. As if it had not been enough to be extorted by popes and kings, and ruined by internal corruption, the Cistercians, especially, lost their terrestrial paradise to the increasing secularisation and popularisation of artistic production. The hortus was literally for sale, and thus prone to re-appropriation and reimagining.

### The hortus as a frame

The earliest reimaginings of the household garden to become well-known were not architectural but literary, perhaps most evidently seen in the De Re Rustica, written by Pliny the Younger in AD 40. An immediate success in its time, it can be said the narrative followed on the footsteps of two previous production generations. The first was the 1275 continuation of the poem Roman de la Rose, in which Jean de Meun turned the hortus amoenus into the hortus amanum, both a lyric type and an allegory of (seemingly) courtly love. The second was the Divine Comedy of 1320, in which Dante Alighieri immortalises paradise, thus reaching out to clerics and schoolmen beyond the clergy. Profoundly influenced by these texts, Boccaccio went further, to re-imagine the walled garden not as an elusive figuration but rather as a framing device for his storytelling. The artificer was used to divide his novel (whose title means ‘days’) into one hundred tales, narrated and shared by ten young characters. In the plot, these characters seek refuge from the Black Death of 1348 in a country retreat at Fiesole, just outside a heavily infected Florence. They amuse one another in order to pass time until the plague ends. Amongst the various enclosures described in the book, they gather mostly around flowered horti. As their daily storytelling becomes a ritual, the hortus transform into stages through which the characters gaze upon the Tuscan horizon to imagine the story scenes, also set in fictitious gardens themselves. Meanwhile, in the foreground, where the young group is seated, terraces, benches and leafy branches provide the shade, comfort and optical stability necessary for mental engagement.

Both in the country retreat and in the stories being told, the hortus is still described as enclosed; however, it is no longer ruled, scored or completely introverted: it is used for the visual delight of real and imaginary places, as well as — unprecedentedly — landscapes. In contrast to Boccaccio’s fellow authors, the microcosmic nature of the hortus archetype is indispensable to the plot. It serves him as a spatial device that facilitates following his long narrative and, at the same time, conveys the ‘pleasure factor’ of such places, where the characters almost forget the dreadful events in the city. [Fig. A]

Boccaccio did not take this idea as such. Since the concept of ‘country as a refuge’ had been contemporarily praised in reaction to not only the epidemic of 1348 but also to an increasing ‘discouragement’ with urban life and — especially in the central part of the Italian peninsula — with monasticism. His friend and fellow Tuscan scholar Petrarch was, in fact, the primary voice of that trend. After having lost his wife to the plague, his sanity to the city, and his faith in the Church, Petrarch fled Avignon to a modest rural estate, with two lodges and a small hortus, in the region of Vaucluse. Since satire was written there to argue (or to personally justify) the choice of a simpler life of solitude in the country. The author refers to his new dwelling as a ‘riparia’, explicitly following Pliny the Younger. Although his autobiographical treatise does not describe architecture per se, he evinces an anti-urban character in the main purpose of the place: to enable him in the sense of idleness, self-indulgent reading and other activities freed from contractual obligations... in other words, the possibility of not working while acting worthy. Petrarch borrowed this from the Stoic concept of oikonomía, which he had rediscovered through reading Cicero. Beyond erudition, this referencing was indeed necessary to convince any schooled reader of the viability and legitimacy of that so-called ‘pleasure with dignity’ (similar to the way in which the ancient Roman lawyer had had to argue it to his patrician audience). This was especially true because most rural areas of Europe in the 1300s meant the very opposite of harmony, due to a permanent state of violent expropriation, exploitative social relations, bad harvests, pillaging and wars. Petrarch needed, therefore, a small square of campestre ground to shut that Dantesque hell off and describe his idea of blissful solitude within an imaginary country. This masterpiece was the enclosure of his
Estate. Within it, the hortus acted as a frame, one similar to Boccaccio's, only to another fiction: an idyllic version of the rural condition.

Hence, to both authors, the archetype became crucial to portraying the enjoyment of simplicity—the rude as such— as either a coping device or a motivation to leave the city for an allegedly 'better' life. While to Petrarch this meant a sobering sentiment, to Boccaccio it had happier connotations. In any case, the prominence of gardens over farms gives each retreat the sort of rusticity suitable for men of letters and rich Florentine youths—or 'bourgeois' subjects', so to speak—who would want to act out a 'country life' for a while but could never live like true farmers. Far more psychological than 'typological', the distinction of garden from farm was precisely what set both country retreats apart from farmsteads, and their houses from farmhouses. De vita solitaria, for instance, praises kitchen gardening and shepherding, for these seem just as bucolic, yet far less laborious than farming or grazing, while still yielding subsistence for a single person. Petrarch further claims those activities benefit not only the body but also the mind, exercising the mental concentration that nobody could ever reach in agitated cities. So besides emphasizing the link between pleasure and business, the idea of gardening over farming prescribes the distinctive pace and gesture of life in his retreat. Within this, men like the author would have to ditch their beaded shoes for sandals, yet without ever losing the comfort of a proper seat for reading, paved steps to climb up and shade to rest in. A similar association happens in the Deuarence, where real and imaginary horti appear as 'interiors' that are much less formal than libraries or ballrooms and, therefore, perfect spots for playful storytelling, courteous flitting, chivalrous games, fights and open-air feasts. Hence in both texts these places and their cultivation mediated not only urban and rural but also reality and fantasy, these eventually translated one into the other. Until then, the hortus had been mostly known and used as a sacred space (making the abstract idea tangible, and not the other way around) and, therefore, with a much more introverted, restrictive and exact purposefulness, Petrarch and Boccaccio epitomize a shift of paradigm.
The rustic villa as a myth of the countryside

The rustic villa as a myth of the countryside was a construct of the collective imagination and acceptance of the rustic villa as a shared enclosure, "economically independent" from the city and "harmoniously integrated" with the rural landscape. However, this was only apparently so because, in fact, the concept is the one of a private estate, whose sustenance and raison d’être derive from urban riches and whose relationship with the fields is nothing but oppressive. Hence a cultural paradox by definition, the villa is a "bourgeois" dream's take on reality, a project where the imaging and cunning effects of architecture become a 'programmatic' front to construct a morally acceptable narrative of the status quo. Previously, within the monastic hortus conclusus, spatial enclosure had adhered to rules so as to reveal an idea of settlement. Meanwhile, within the villa, spatial enclosure enacted appropriation and inhabitation while also working to mask the actual ideology, labour and violence entailed in these processes. And it did so in the most compelling, self-deluding way. For the pure luxury of every rustic villa is precisely the nonchalant manner of providing the owner with time and space for idleness—regardless of the fact that this rest is only possible thanks to the unceasing work of servants and dispossessed peasants. (This is similar to the city itself, which can only exist at the expense of a country by its side).

Further, the more the villa is able to hide its dependency on the urban distribution of wealth, the more leisure is excited and celebrated under the dignified guise of land cultivation. Though one should keep in mind that, between the fourteenth- and fifteenth-century contexts of agrarian crises, such a game of appearances was more about restraining pleasure than showing it. Because, along with the newly landed class of clerics and financiers, came the reactionary fear of peasant riots and (probable) class conflict. These were soon dealt with through the praise of a new ethic that was no longer feudal but, for the readers of Petrarch, very much influenced by Cicero and Roman pastoral.43

It was towards this sensibility that the orchard, as an actualisation of the ancient herb, became extremely important. Not surprisingly, Leon Battista Alberti highlighted in his brief Villa, written around 1440. However, here a large step is taken ahead of Boccaccio
and Petrarch for two reasons. First, the concept in the text is neither proposed as lyrical scenery nor as a place of individual solitude, but rather as an ethical investment per complesa dicta, for 'simple pleasure', and the retreat of a patrician and his 'own' family. Although not termed as such, Cicero's idea of dignitas does come up as something to be earned through land cultivation, which, the architect agrees, is a virtuous mode of sustenance instead of frivolous exhibitionism. This conviction entangles a couple of Alberti's recurrent thoughts: agriculture as second nature, and family as societal nucleus. Alberti further suggests how the orchard could be located precisely at the converging point of these ideas, not only conceptually but also spatially. For Alberti describes it as the element between the limits of the villa and its house, forming thus a 'domestic belt' of greenery around the built core of the complex. It is worth noting that here villa is the whole property rather than just the house. This is a notion that is quite different from the present understanding, mostly derived from the English use of 'villa' to generally mean any detached house or pavilion—whether on a meadow in Illinois or housing estate campus in Stuttgart. The second, yet even more significant, reason the text deserves the utmost attention is the fact that the plantation embracing the house of the villa is called a 'garden': a word rarely written at that time—rather than the usual hortus or the vernacular garumina. Certainly not out of carelessness, the author chose the term to convey the ornamental character for which orchards were not yet recognized. In his view, a 'garden' would make any country estate appropriate for a 'honourable family' to live in.

Field, wall, garden, and house: the villa as a model of the urban territory

The interior arrangement of Alberti's garden was a question he never answered, perhaps to avoid falling into contradictions. For on the one hand, his villa shuns ostentation, while on the other it has an appearance that is impossible to miss. Thanks to the ubiquity of garden-type orchards, it may have indeed gone without saying (or drawing) that his so-called 'gardens' should inevitably hatch out of the property walls to render the entire 'investment' an image of sheer privilege. Regardless of the layout or species, just because of its position of

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29. Leo Schneider, "Alberti's Villa in Italy", edited by Haggard and Banister-Finch. spinach and thyme. The house should be built to everything made at the expense and the garden here. And since the vineyard, let him be assured whether it was more pleasant to stay where he was to another nature. Supported by the vanity of the garden," Leo Schneider, "The Rise of Building in Italy," (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1968), p. 99.


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Fig. 8: Wooden illustration of the fictitious island of Cythera. [Fig. B] one of the main sceneries in the story of the fictional island of Ganymede, in Hypomnemata Archeologiae, presumably written by Francesco Colonna in 1625, and published in 1625.
Hypnerotomachia Poliphili and described as a dream-like labyrinthine place made of several gardens. The relationship between both ideas is not far-fetched since this book had been very influential since its publication in 1499, contemporary to the architect. Although it is commonly attributed to Francesco Colonna, recent scholarship has speculated that Alberti was the actual author. Nonetheless, Villa and its typical scheme were most probably sourced from the knowledge of Vitruvius. Considering that Alberti had previously described the plan of the Roman domus with similar abstraction (as a sequence of rooms moving from the most to the least 'public', embodying the rituals and social hierarchy of patrician families), he may have also seen the rustic villa as an artefact that was as much physical as ideological. Hence the moralistic tone of the text. Knowing his audience, Alberti would have realised that ‘pleasure’ and ‘retreat’ were only secondary to a primary yet hidden motivation, which has noticeably changed very little since De architectura: the urge of a privileged urban class to recognise and justify itself in the social strata, while it expropriates rural land.

Expropriation of land does not presuppose the making of villas but, precisely through these artefacts, it may become a systematic process of cultural appropriation and class endorsement. Hence the type has always been the favourite means for every new gentry class to seize and update former patriarchal staples towards the institutionalisation of its power. This was the paradigm of the Medici, who entrenched themselves as bankers in Florence but only rose to rule the city after gaining control of the larger region through the ‘villasification’ of several of their farmlands. This started from the valley of Mugello, where Trebbio and Casciggiolo had been possessed by the family as early as 1539. The area was then a system of fields, towers and castles mastered by the Lombard clan. Ubaldini, Trebbio and Casciggiolo were not ‘villas’ – in neither name nor form. Instead, they blended in with the feudal landscape as, respectively, a podere (a share-crop farm typical of Tuscany) and a rocca (similar to a fortress). [Fig. C] According to original registers, only recently rediscovered, Casciggiolo contained a palazzo (a palatial building) and a 36-square-metre orme. This garden was strictly utilitarian, participating in the large agrarian production of the property and surrounding. This relation would remain even after 1573, when ‘garden’ was introduced to the cadastre as a synonym for a sort of open garden (mixed culture), with fruit trees and grapevines. A tax return of 1425, nevertheless, replaced the term with the Florentine word orto, stressed as “cultivations” that did “not yield any income” and were “part of the dwelling.” This reflects not only a formula to escape increasing taxation but, crucially, a change of purpose in possessing arable land. Since gardening was then clearly recognised and declared in relation to ‘dwelling’ rather than farming, a tighter spatial interaction was established between the orchards and the primary household. This relationship was formalised by the addition of leggios, which not only connected those spaces but also made Casciggiolo seem less like a fortress and more like a summer residence.

Trebbio was similarly expanded with the addition of a fruit-bearing orrò enclosed by pergolas, thus acquiring the appearance of a podere meant for familiar retreat.
Orchard and loggia and the 'villafication' of the countryside

Whether incidental or not, these alterations did eventually convert these properties into what was becoming increasingly known as rustic villas. And by doing so, through the very reshaping of these grounds, they have as well started to 'villafy' those fields. (That is, not villafication in the sense of portraying someone as a villain but, instead, 'villafication' as a building process that ends up rendering an area into a system of enclosures analogous to the singular complex of a villa.) For on the one hand, the prototypical marriage of orchard and loggia enabled the Medici to expand their patrimony without further taxes, by putting more land under the guise of unprofitable gardening. On the other, it profoundly transformed the cultural and visual perception of the region. As that prototype looked so new yet so local within Florentine traditions, it stood out as a clear sign of non-feudal social relations, private cultivation, and, most of all, the influential presence of the Medici while an institution. Cafaggiolo and Trebbio thus became the very artefacts through which the group would progressively wrest the rural territory from Lombard control. Since this happened along with the full of feudalism, the family of bankers took advantage of the fact that service economies were becoming increasingly dependent on the exploitation of agrarian land. Even without possessing every inch of this newly urban domain—but just by redefining two farmlands as pleasure-purposed dwellings—the Medici started the systematic process of cultural and social appropriation that made them the civil power of Florence. At this point, one should ask whether this was the "honourable family" that crossed the mind of Alberti while he was writing Villa. The similarities between his conceptual description and Cafaggiolo are flagrant. The only nuance is the word ‘garden’, chosen by the author to mean a different sort of orto than the one mentioned in that cadastral of 1425. The fact that Villa was finished only a decade later moreover suggests that either the spaces called ‘gardens’ or the term itself were becoming increasingly ambivalent. Still, it does not prove any significant change in practice. It is more likely that Alberti had himself put forward, especially after the Medici events, that the household garden could acquire ornamental (thus, more ideological)

40. Becoming the loggia coupled with the aligned culture orchard look quite similar to the produce of most Florentine country houses.

41. In the groundbreaking research of Eva E de Santis Giusti, The Medici Gardens of Fifteenth-Century Florence: Conception and Reality: A Tradition of Urban Open Spaces, 2006. Through the evidence of original gardens, the authors and contemporaneous correspondence, the author suggests that the 'orto' and 'garden' of Cafaggiolo— as well as all gardens of the Medici patrimony in the late 14th-century—were on-site implementations, thoughtfully organized and crafted rather than designed, but above all considered as works of art. These therefore had nothing do with the so-called "garden villas"—a concept only invented and popularized through treatises and century-honored books written by English and German naturalists and botanists, who convinced Florentine artists how always had highly formal gardens with symmetrical geometry, ornamental borders, carefully planned features and so on.

Giusti further reveals how the Renaissance mode to counter the myth of the "Italian art of gardens", by dismissing local traditions and regional identities, this legitimised the political unification of the country.

dimensions once coupled with built forms. In other words, Alberti’s ‘garden’ either proposes or acknowledges (or redesigns) the garden as an architectural space.

For the rest of the fifteenth century, in fact, the articulation of orchard and loggia remained crucial to identifying the Medici patrimony beyond Mugello, but through a certain way in which beauty always appeared incidental and visual delight subliminal, so as not to break the myth of these possessions as 'ethical investments'. Their loggias were therefore consistent similar to real villas, just as their orchards were compact attachments and 'informally' planted. Modesty and casuistry not only accorded with the alleged purposes of household gardening but also the practice itself was still based on empirical horticultural knowledge. Whether in town or country, rich or poor, most gardens enclosures during the quattrocento were on-site implementations, far from being designed. Therefore, there were those introduced in the first reform of Careggi around 1440. [Fig. D] and those planted at Fiesole by 1457. Fourteen miles
away from Mugello and just one hour’s walk from Florence, these places served the wealthiest and busiest generations of the family—hence their closeness to the city. But while the ‘villa suburbana’ of the original property at Careggi was circumstantially similar to Trebbio and Cafaggiolo, the case of Fiesole was completely different. The patron was not Cosimo de’ Medici but his son, Giovanni, who sought to purchase land that had never been owned by the family. He commissioned their favourite architect, Michelozzo—in probable collaboration with Alberti—with the building of a farmed estate to admittedly function as a ‘villa suburbana’. At that time, the concept was not yet so clearly different from the ‘rustic’ one. Since Giovanni was so fond of Cato (the ancient agricultural writer who praised the rewarding simplicity of life in the country) and quite nostalgic about Careggi, his retreat evoked the rusticity of the earlier Medici properties, though it undoubtedly had a ‘suburban’ condition as it was so close to Florence, both physical and visually. This relationship thus produced a different psychological state and, so, a changing programme in which pleasure was increasingly associated with comfort, social gathering and leisure, and less with the past fourteen-century praise of modesty, solitude and cultivation. This villa never really functioned as a lodge. Yet its suburban character did not mean the ground was ‘idler’ than the ones at Careggi, though it did make their architecture with built structures much more controlled and formally important.

Because the topography at Fiesole was so complicated, possessing and inhabiting the site required substantial earthworks. The solution was thus to reshape the hilly profile into a stepped system of walled parterres, terraces and orchards, capped by a cubic house. [Fig. E] According to a contemporary exchange of letters this idea was first suggested by Giovanni and was inspired by the local monastery of St. Jerome. Interestingly, the terracing of his villa was the first in the region to be carried out for private use. Until the construction of 1452, only churches and monasteries were structured in such a manner. Meanwhile, the loggia made it clear that the estate was not an abbey; the typically religious stacking of terraces set the residence apart from local farmhouses. Even though not all levels were originally interconnected by stairs, they provided the house with a useful landing. The cube, in turn, generously opened itself unto the higher terrace through three arches, thus smoothing the transition between interior and exterior. This time, the loggia was not attached but scooped out from the volume of the wall, so to direct attention towards the terrace, which was shaded by a garden. Whereas the positioning of loggia and terrace was intentional, the plantation was a suffusion of short citrus trees which followed the flow already set in motion by the other built volumes. Furthermore, the sequence of these spaces not only made contact with nature more gradual and comfortable, but also established a new item in the programme: the view. And here one understands best why the villa sits on top of such steep terrain. For what defined the suburban character of the event was its enabling the owner “to look back at the city from a high and distant promontory” vantage point. Precisely at Fiesole, and over a hundred years after the Dononjones, architects had finally caught up with the literary use of the Hortus as a framing device. The scene, in fact, of Giovanni de’ Medici looking back at Florence through the branches of pomegranate trees could have been as lyrical if only
his gaze was one of longing. Instead, he may have just been seeking better visual command of the city under his rule. [Fig. F]

Decades later, his aged son Lorenzo also visited the villa in pursuit of the same view, only then through enlarged terraces and a couple of new orli, one of which was called a 'giardino.' The term appears in an inventory from 1492 to distinguish one space meant for growing flowers from another, used only for vegetables, fruits and threshing grains. This distinction was in fact similar to the categorisation used by Bolognese jurist Piero de Crescenzi in Opus Novum Commodum, written around 1305 but widely republished only in the year 1471— a decade after the first orli at Fiesole. But these were on-site implementations that may have not been influenced by that treatise. Because it aimed at explaining agriculture to fourteenth-century landowners, gardening was included mostly in its economic aspect. There was no guidance about layout nor anything remotely close to a 'design procedure', let alone the formal effects of each species of tree and so on. The word 'pleasure' was only mentioned with a moral tone by ancient agricultural writers, dismissing whether the purpose would require a specific organisation of space. So while the republishing of Novum may have reached Giovanni—who preferred walled parterres for their productivity and finitude—it did not impress Lorenzo. He preferred lushy plantations, mostly for growing flowers and fruitless evergreens, such as firs and cypresses; hence the many other agrarian improvements made all over the property until he died towards the end of the fifteenth century. Though again, curbed flowerbeds did not yet mean his gardens were symmetrical or anything less than casual and undoubtedly domestic. They did, nevertheless, reflect a creative re-appropriation of gardening techniques motivated by the specific desire of a patron. Even before the rediscovery of Novum, clipping flowers or kicking vines on pergolas (and so forth) had been activities mostly performed by monks, who had perfected them as rituals of collective cultivation.

Once commissioned, these gestures lost their liturgical meaning and simply provided individual pleasure. Though to some born a Medici, a great deal of such feeling derived not only from studying and contemplating but, above all, from "possessing the world." Hence the outward character of the flower garden at Fiesole, which works with the terrace to frame Florence amidst the rural and larger...
region. If to a tourist today this is just another photogenic sight, to Lorenzo it was instead the 'correct' (mollified) vision of a still-fragmented yet newly urban territory and, therefore, instrumental for him to recognize and assert himself as the ruling power in that system.

As a two-generation process, the event of Fiesole, moreover, epitomizes the late fifteenth-century 'subject' development of wealthy and influential townsmen, who similarly sought to institutionalise their public figures by associating themselves with inventary representations of the landscape. That was the case with Federico da Montefeltro, a successful mercenary who had seized the lordship of Urbino by 1444. Three decades later, as a ducal and paternalistic ruler, he became known for being as diligent towards soldiers as to the people, whom he referred to as "citizens." Federico was in fact interested in Aristotle, and in (recently rediscovered) Roman law, and from tempering power not only in practice but also in appearance. In order to turn that still-feudal duchy into a stable-looking court, he lined up the best possible front of secretaries, scribes, writers, philosophers, mathematicians, painters and architects. From painting to building, the general approach was to formally fuse the alleged 'magnificence' of his governance with the glory of his military achievements and, especially, the splendour of his personal life. It is, therefore, hard to find an artwork under this type of patronage which does not celebrate at least one of these dimensions. All appear entangled—for instance, in the famous cycle of dipinti painted around 1465 by the Florentine artist Piero della Francesca, in which the Duke and Duchess Battista Sforza face each other while they are (literally) backed up by a rural landscape. [Fig. H], which expands far beyond the actual territory of Urbino. The 30-year refurbishment of the Palazzo Ducale, led by architect-engineer Luciano di Laurana, also displays similar associations, especially in the decoration of the studiolo, whose cabinets and walls had been covered with trompe-l'œil marquetry portraying the patron in scholarly dress amidst literary canons, fictitious objects and imaginary windows looking onto the hilly fields of his dukedom. In the midst of mingling fantasy and reality, these commissions freely

![Image](http://example.com/image.jpg)
chose subjective yet distant 'points of view' that overestimate the span of the landscape around the city. This happens not out of imprecision but, on the contrary, from the intent to project with extreme realism the daydream of an ongoing process of re-appropriation, territorial expansion and control.

Besides their instrumentality in representing a political institution, these images were artistic experiments at the highest intellectual level of their time. They reconstructed the landscape so compellingly thanks to the rules of geometric perspective, improved by Alberti and Paolo Uccello after Filippo Brunelleschi, and mostly theorised by Piero della Francesca. The work by the latter in Urbania was, in fact, a prolific phase in his lifetime's research, which happened to cross paths with the specific demands of Montefeltro. From this encounter yielded the 1474 publication of the treatise De prospectu pingendi and the whole ethos of a so-called 'mathematical humanism', which distinguished the duchy from earlier centres of humanistic culture such as Florence and Siena. As the Duke had declared (certe post De re auctoriarum), architecture became a 'liberal art based upon arithmetic and geometry'. In practice, this implied a conscious interaction with what was being developed in painting. Not only the perspective of architectural space could generate the form of an image, but also the invented process was then made available and, first of all, encouraged. That was the case with the hypnotic Vogas and Child. [Fig. 1] argued by Manfredo Tafuri to be the first rendering in history since it had probably been commissioned to verify an alternative altarpiece for the construction of the church of San Bernardino. However, there is no evidence of a direct collaboration between the renderer Piero della Francesca and the painter Francesco di Giorgio Martini. As a matter of fact, building and painting look quite different. Yet both share the same quest for synthetic geometry, each in its framing and formation of space. To the Siennese architect, specifically, that meant a possible common language between his long-term experience with military structures and the demand for a religious building with civil undertones, which had become typical of all the interventions commissioned by Montefeltro towards his 'palacisation' of Urbania. 

Monument and perspective, memory and ideology

The resultant "city in the form of a palace" can still be seen from the entrance of San Bernardino, far outside on the eastern hill of San Donato. Its profile is arrowed by a strange building: six massive arches emerge out of the earthy cliff to bear a garden terrace, enclosed by the protruding wings of a double loggia. [Fig. J] Solemn rather than monstrous, this architectural object was the highlight of the reform of the convent of Santa Chiara — another commission from the Duke to Martini during the construction of that church. Hence, the U-shape resulted from opening up the main cloister of the former compound. [Fig. K] Despite the lack of contemporary plans showing the old and new plantations, it is logical to assume that raising half of the quadrangular arcade was just enough to completely alter the existing courtyard. Because such an intervention disregarded all exclusive rules, the sacred function of the original enclosure was irreversibly
disabled. Unfortunately, the earliest spatial depiction of the outcome dates only from 1619, [Fig. 1] braided with the background of a painting by Palma il Giovane. If the five artists were faithful to reality, that space had become a hanging garden of some casually planted dark-green shrubs flanking an empty terrace. Whether this "ingenious" design had been designed or implemented on the site, it did follow the protruding loggia to embrace the view rather than the center, confirming that it was no longer meant to address the whole concept as an autonomous settlement. And since the new plantations would still have provided the nuts with fruits and flowers, everything indicates their primary purpose was to direct bodily movement, especially of the visitors, towards the verge of the terrace. What else was laid down along the way remains a mystery since the garden has been reconfigured many times until becoming the carefree garth of today. At the very least one may visit it and discover that its vantage leads exactly to San Bernardino, far across the valley. That is why the U form turns at the east rather than the southern cut—this is the division which would moreover make Santa Chiara, the resting place of Battista Sforza, function as a "symbolic "guardaroba" for San Bernardino, where Federico da Montefeltro had chosen to be buried."

The garden terraces thus served as a stage for the afterlives of the ducal couple.

Alternatively, to rephrase it within our theory of "architecture as an artifact," this marks the transformation of the "artifact" into a "sacred space" into a monument. Despite the fact that neither Francesco di Giorgio nor any of his contemporaries ever called this a garden as such, it indeed functioned as a "place of remembrance." This is explicitly true if we observe it within the bigger picture, for which that visual connection between buildings also functions as a remembrance and monumentalizes the landscape as a political achievement. The sight eventually dominated the visual plane of the terrace, thus recalling the territorial expansion of Urbino under the tenure of Montefeltro. Regardless of the circumstances or the intentions of patron and architect, this association was the inevitable product of a specific mindset, or a way of seeing, within the artistic ethos influenced by Piero della Francesca. In fact, as with his friend portraying husband and wife, church and convent face each other from the highest vantage points of the valley. Similarly with the painting, these situations also create the necessary optical distance for the viewer to comprehend those objects within their rural region.

which consequently appears larger than ever before. In Santa Chiara, specifically, the confident adherence of flanking garden and protruding loggia thus indicates that Francesco di Giorgio was affected by the possibility of conceiving form and space through geometric linear perspective—even if he had only traced rays and planes in his mind. This method, of imagining action through a sequence of forms, was unprecedented amongst architects, although it had been present in embryo since the Damauro and was already fully-fledged by the advent of mid-fifteenth-century perspective. Tafuri notes the contemporary case of the Palazzo Piccolomini di Pienza, [Fig. M] with its compact U-shaped block facing a lightly walled courtyard in front of a terraced garden. Nonetheless, he asserts the intent at Urbino to be the "first occurrence, in the history of humanist architecture, of a total reorientation of the built volume towards the landscape." From this derives the monumentalism of garden and loggia, not as a matter of scale but for forming a perspectival stage set through which landscape would be looked at as a gestalt, impressing and thus mobilizing human memory to associate this image with both an ancient-looking structure and the ducal institution which had built it.

The example of Urbino was of course not the first time that an architecture made one "think through remembrance." For monuments have existed all over the Italian peninsula since early antiquity. Two examples are the sepulchral fountains in the Villa of Publio Funto Sinisistleo of Bescara or the burial grotto in the Tomb Garden of Seafest, both built and planted in Pompæi before the eruption of Vesuvius in AD 79. Similarly to the event of Santa Chiara, there were symmetrical enclosures of forms arranged for the vantage point of the human eye, so as to invite and absorb its attention and direct it towards a narrative of reality from the "points of view" of the families who ruled them. Ancient architects (and particularly) pursued this theatrical effect so much more consciously than Francesco di Giorgio, whose era had not yet uncovered such ruins. The Romans knew from the Greeks that the images of places on the human mind was a technique of sorting and accessing memory—or mnemotechnics, the "art of memory." The artistic transformation of perspective into iconography thus played a fundamental role in the process. By simulating and manipulating the visual sensation of a place, perspective puts cognition alike to be associated with past experience.
es, so as to organise abstract thought into a transmissible story — that is, 'memory'. Despite their distinct historical contexts and mediums, the three cases thus exemplify how ideology, perspective and monumentality are intrinsically related to and motivated by each other. And this is why it is essential to ask of artistic periods and regions not only whether they have perspective, but also which perspective they have. For what differentiates ancient from late-quattrocento monumentality is precisely the kind of perspective each one produces. Whereas in those Pompeian examples, the backgrounds are walled gardens close behind the first visual plane — meaning the world is 'small' in that of Urbino, the background is a rural landscape distanced through an incredibly long depth of view, meaning that garden and loggia aimed at framing (in the sense of capturing) infinity. Not incidentally, this happened with the rise of the gentility of Montefeltro, who sought to institutionalise their 'possession of the world'. This was a world that was expanding following the advent of global trade and maritime colonisation. Hence the fifteenth century rejected the self-containing perspective of medieval, replacing it with the reformulation of Euclidean geometry, a systematic method of depicting space far beyond the sphere of the human body.

**Villa d'Este:**
the 16th-century reinvention of Rome

The gratuitously tall loggias at Santa Chiara not only confirmed the reinvention of the koros as a framing device but also inaugurated the monumentalisation of landscape. This shift relates to the quest for the formalisation of infinity that would culminate, a century later, in the Baroque concept of urban territory. However, significant, that was not yet recognisable to anyone at that time, let alone when put in such terms. Nonetheless, that monumentality undoubtedly impacted on whoever was active in Urbino - such as Baldassare Peruzzi, assistant to Francesco di Giorgio, or Donato Bramante, apprentice to Pietro della Francesca. This is evident in most of their later works, especially the Cortile del Belvedere and Viridarium da Agostino Chigi (today known as Villa Farnesina), both complexes defined by monumental loggias embracing terrace gardens in Rome. [Fig. O] the city where Peruzzi and Bramante moved at the beginning of 1500 when the city had

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*Fig. O:* The proliferations of rustic villas Florence and suburban villas around Rome between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries. New Urbino on the top right.
just emerged from its "eternal" decay. Their patrons were "men of action" (the same chivalrous subject of Montefeltro), popes, cardinals, and their court of aristocratic relatives, secretaries, treasurers, and businessmen turned-electoral-sponsors - mostly foreigners aiming at an office in the Holy See and financial gain. This thriving was due to the political renunciation of Bonifacio VIII that had been initiated by Martin V in 1417, furthered by Nicholas V until 1429 but retracted since the death of Sixtus IV in 1484. In short, the "renovation of the city" was intended to consolidate the merging of the religious and temporal powers of the Church through the imposition of new urban policies and piecemeal planning that could polarize and reclaim civic governance from the lay administration. Both centuries were thus similarly marked by strategic reappropriations of Christian places and buildings towards a systematic re-appropriation of the city, though the sixteenth-century approach was crucially different in having turned "restoration" into a means to colonise, suburbanise, renew and gentrify the precarious rural area as edging the Aurelian walls, and further beyond. Interestingly enough, these processes were not only pushed through warfare, but also by the architecture itself, along with the cultural revival of the Roman pastoral myth of the idyll countryside. Ancient writers (such as Catull, Varro, Pliny and Cicero) were then more widely read than ever before, and so professionals such as Peruzzi, Bramante and Raffaeo Sanzio di Urbino, were required to reshape dried-up vineyards into (what may now be reconsidered) "suburban villas": these were the very type of enclosure that could legitimise the expropriation of idle land and, at the same time, celebrate the country as a place for leisure and contemplation. Orchards, terraces and loggias were thus fundamental to inhabiting, while monumentalising, the forgotten landscape of the Roman Agro, which was far from an idyllic peaceful place, but, instead, decadent and violent. [Fig. P] Moving further ahead of the precedents of Florence and Urbino, sixteenth-century Rome was therefore the precise context in which the karta went from a site-implemented to a designed place, while the "programme" of the suburban villas shifted from the one of a private estate to a public museum, a botanical garden, towards, eventually, an urban park. This meant that - just as Alberini might have previously suggested with his diagrammatic Villa - these variations would also formalise specific ideas of urban territory which, within less than a hundred years, had gone from compactly closed to indefinitely spread. Considering that the architectural reinvention of the enclosed garden into a public, secular, monument was crucial to such progression, one should ask what else specifically motivated the formal organisation of these projects?

**Amphitheatre of vineyards and power**

First and foremost, the rural region around Rome was utterly different from that of Urbino and Florence, or anywhere else. And, particularly up to 1500, that place was decadent, precarious and depopulated, since the fourteenth-century plagues and sackings had destroyed most aqueducts and fountains. And so, the city was itself an unbearable agglomeration of unfinished urban work, muddy riverbanks, churches and public buildings clustered alongside medieval housing. [Fig. Q] All thus radially spread out from the northern Campo Marzio towards the entrance of the Via Appia,
in the south-west, where the built mass waned away between trees of idle land.\textsuperscript{85} Although anyone could graze and plough on these voids, the public provision of water was so precarious that agrarian production was too scanty to supply the Roman service economy. As a result, 30,000 inhabitants were confined within a few heads of the Tiber River, where they could collect water manually. And the river, moreover, was constantly clogged with ships importing food from other regions.\textsuperscript{86} Hence this landscape was far from being the "rose garden" of the picturesque 'Campagna Romana' later invented by British travellers on the Grand Tour. Regardless of that general state of precarity, the simple pleasure of a country retreat was a commonplace to most native Romans. And the usual place for such experience was not yet a suburban villa (it had never been a rura or a poëdra) but, instead, a castra or a signum.

While the castra was a fortified farmstead ruled by wealthy clans - thus units typically isolated amidst the farther open fields - the signum was a walled vineyard with a house, an orchard, and a kitchen garden; it was thus a mixed culture and the most ubiquitous form around the city, since nearly every Roman family, from peasants to bankers, cultivated at least one patch.\textsuperscript{87} Even today, it is even possible to find the original plantations strewn along collinarian roads, such as Via Flaminia. Until 1500, however, their locations would usually range from the north-west to the south-western hills within the Aurelian walls.\textsuperscript{88} This was partly because these areas were the most developed ones - if not in a state of abandonment - but mainly for the reason that vines grew best in hilly volcanic areas. Since a signum could be as small an urban parcel, it could also be found on almost every vagrant terrain of the lower peripheries as well. In this case, wealthy families that could arrange irrigation would implement larger vineyards with separate orchards over the blueprint of undiscovered ruins such as Vigna Inglesi and Orsato degli Ebrei, which arose from the earthy relief of the Circo Massimo.\textsuperscript{89} [Fig. R]

Secondly, the geographic distribution of Roman vineyards was intrinsic to the legal definition of the urban territory, just as their holdings and cultivations were to citizenship.\textsuperscript{90} Because - unlike the medieval origin of the castra - the signum came from a much older tradition that dated back to the Early Republic, when the Empire sought to colonise the Roman agrarian region (the ager romanus) outside the ancient peninsula by awarding veterans danae-size parcels of arable land.\textsuperscript{91}

Suddenly turned into domestic settlers, these soldiers did not know how to farm extensively but could intuit and collectively learn how to manage animal husbandry, fruit trees and especially vines, one of the most resilient species in Latium.\textsuperscript{92} Moreover, with agricultural writers such as Varro promoting the morals of rural life, aligned with the fact that grapes are harvested in the summer, the image (or memory) of Roman rurality has been associated with the ritual of reaping vines as a "dignified" way to enjoy seasonal holidays.\textsuperscript{93} Henceforth "signe culture" proper became not only an aspect of Roman society but also a consolatory emblem of the increasing tension between city and "its" countryside.\textsuperscript{94}

Ironically, it is from the highest vineyards that one may picture how this relationship implies a complex spatial order, one that is even emphasized by the natural condition of the arch of hills ranging from north-west to south-east. [Fig. S] These are similar to an amphitheatre that beholds Rome commanding all action on the

\textsuperscript{85} Olsan Mara (2015-19): All rights reserved / No reproduction without permission.
central stage. In 1768 this stage was split into two when the Church emancipated itself from the Holy Roman Empire. Until then, these opposing powers had been polarising Rome between the clerical west and the secular east. The Holy See dominated the Lateran, Vatican, the civic administration and the Capitoline Hill. And just as this resulted in a double society—one of the Papacy and the other of the "city"—sign culture was also two-sided. The location of a sign therefore implied where the owner stood in that arena, or the sphere of power which Rome would gradually become throughout the first half of the sixteenth century. Having a villa around the northeast of the city, for instance, meant siding with the Medici and the Florentine community.56

Third, yet equally significant, precisely because of that double character, a sign was the place where both sides of society could meet each other and potentially intermingling.57 This possibility was something that every foreigner would have to learn about to participate in this "game". Further, because the Roman nobility scorned commerce but prized agriculture,58 being a rich landowner was not enough: one should also know, or at least appear to know, how to work the land since this was considered the only "honourable" way to enjoy it. So when a cardinal or a cleric arrived (from Naples, Genoa, Florence and so forth), the first step for him to introduce himself into Roman society and establish his presence in the city was to acquire both an urban palazzo, in the centre, and a rural signa abutting the Aurelian walls.59 It was almost as if these appropriations were a tacit agreement between his alien figure and the local ways of doing things, one not only cultural but, also, political. On the one hand, the cultivation of a sign meant the chance of blending one's personality in with a very Roman tradition. On the other, the possession of anything above all of land—meant a proportionally large influence over the administration of the commune. Furthermore, for either the cardinals obsessed about the throne, or the treasurers and electoral sponsors overwhelmed with hard work and greed, gardening was a relaxing activity. As we have seen, it meant the possibility of "carmen with dignity."60 For the popes, who were commonly elderly and sick and so usually power for less than a decade, a sign provided not only shade and wellness but, foremost, a space through which to leave a hallmark on the Roman landscape. Many pontifices would there-
fore have their ages reformed and expanded. Sometimes these would become experiments to test their plans for the city. More often than not, they were private initiatives that led to broader processes of expropriation and infrastructural renewal of idle land to, eventually, subsume entire areas under the control of the Pontifical States.

By the early sixteenth century it had become clear that the conversion of rural vineyards into what would be later called 'suburban villas' was much more than a cultural phenomenon. But it was the Genoese Cardinal Giuliano della Rovere who first used these processes as a strategy for urban transformation. Immediately after his election as Pope Julius II, in 1503, Rovere addressed the 'villa ex equo' trend by promoting the development of Via della Lungara, a new type of street meant to be entirely flanked with lush garden estates. [Fig. 7] The papyrus carried out this work along with other swift yet massive interventions – such as Via Giulia and the reforms of the Papal Palaces – aimed at finally establishing the Vatican Hill as the most visible and powerful centrality of Rome. In this sense, the entire western side of the Tiber also had to change from a depleted outskirts to a thriving 'suburb'. But to produce this radical change of landscape was even harder than convincing a fragmented city that it had only one 'nave', and that this nave had been transferred to a site with no significance to anyone (except to Christian pilgrims who climbed the Vatican to worship at the shrine of St Peter). Until Julius II, the west side was a fragmented area controlled by a few baronial families, who owned most of the land from below the hill to the south end of the Janiculum. Due to the steep topography and scanty serfs, those groups had progressively walled the fields into small farmlands to be cultivated like the more adaptable Roman vineyards. All, nonetheless, had dried up since Pope Alexander VI had neglected the aqueducts, leading the entire city into crisis. As hunger, disease and crime weakened papal authority and undermined civic order, the feudal gentry were able to retain their local domains even though they had become unproductive.

The idea of Via della Lungara, nonetheless, dates to the plans of Alexander, who already saw it as an alternative route for either pilgrims or the flux between the Vatican and the harbour of Riva Grande, henceforth bypassing the west side. Julius acted more

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Fig. 7: The street Via della Lungara runs through the remnants of ancient stones (overlooking Via Giulia) across the River Tiber (c. 1514). The U-shaped obelisk at the centre in the main house of the villa of Agostino Della Scala, which was not yet at that time.
quickly than his predecessor in understanding not only that he had to solve the socio-economic crisis to be able to govern but also that, crucially, the moment was also an opportunity to restructure the urban geography of power in his favour. The new papacy therefore put forward a double agency that worked either to avoid a plebiscite revolution or against the interest of the oldest oligarchies. Julius financed public bakeries, for instance, and built streets which cut through areas of wasteland to raise taxation until the local barons had no option but to sell them. 124

If the Via della Lungara was to stir fierce opposition and local resistance—which it did, as did all Julian interventions—the Pope made sure the construction was swift and the architecture "successful.125 The commission naturally went to his chief architect, Bramante, who had been in any case interested in fusing town planning with stage set design and so traced the new street as a compelling piece of perspective through a simple straight line, paved with white stone for over a thousand metres.126 The result can still be seen today from Porta Settimiana, where the street is constantly banked by walls three metres high that are regularly interrupted by leafy treecops behind them.127 The Via, moreover, instantly changed the broader area as it ran over the tortuous tracks of an ancient road to cut through the narrow coomb between the Tiber and the Janiculum Hill. Although the gesture simply formalised the north-to-south direction of the topography, it eventually unsettled the medieval configuration of enclaves to impose a more rentable parcellation. Land use, however, was limited, since the lots were neither large enough for farming nor small enough to become affordable again. The sizes were instead just enough to fit residential estates in which gardening could only satisfy the reproduction of leisure. The location itself already implied such a programme, for it was vividly close to the city and still remote enough to provide "tranquillity. Just across the river, Julius was also building Villa Giulia to rival the lay administrative centre of the Capitoline Hill, on the south-eastern side. One of the factors that stressed that this street denoted business (negotium) was the parallel existence of Via della Lungara, denoting pleasure (amusement). For negoziato, both literally and conceptually, the anti-urban character of the latter legitimised the urbanty of the former. While Giulia was an "enclame of a city street" in the manner

of a monumental corridor of palaces and other institutional buildings, Lungara was an "enclame of a suburban street," the "facades" of which had trees over columns but were less impressive.128 In any case, parallel they eventually formed a comprehensive U-shaped circuit around the west side, an urban loop of multiple uses and perspectives of which the Vatican was no longer a satellite.129 In this sense, Via della Lungara contributed to a process of suburbanisation perennis, as it submerged an entire rural area under the domain of a new urban centrality.

Garden and loggia staging new rituals of hospitality

Overall, the Lungara development had all the ingredients to attract every wealthy foreigner who was keen to possess a signa and convert it into a summer retreat. [Fig. U] And that was the specific subject of the July II wanted to "wallow" by colonising the Agro while he took control of Rome. Because—even if many cardinals and clerks were not his allies—their mere presence in the west side was enough to weaken the old families who threatened his authority. That is why the Pope was so keen on paving the suburban street to embody his governance, while leaving its "completion" to the new landowners, who were in any case seeking to represent themselves through privately improving their parcels.130 Rovere encouraged them to do so by conceding generous tax breaks so that the western area became more inhabited and attractive— in other words, a pied-à-terre towards a faster and easier process of gentrification.131 For urban gentiles such as the banker from Siena, Agostino Chigi, the trade-off fulfilled not a duty but a desire: Via della Lungara could serve him not only for short sojourns but also to assert his social position to his clientele just across the Tiber.132 As early as 1505 (when he was living in a palazzo on Via dei Banchi, he purchased a medieval signa next to the one owned by Cardinal Alessandro Farnese on the southern entrance of the street, at Porta Settimiana—and just across from the sign of Cardinal Riaori, currently Villa Corsini.133 Besides the prestige of these neighbours, the choice of location reveals that Chigi was primarily interested in the direct connection between the Vatican (through Porta S. Spirito).
and the harbour of Ripsa Grande, two of his busiest workplaces. He was not only the wealthiest citizen in Europe but also the chief curator of the Vatican Palace and the owner of a mercantile empire of more than 100 ships, which often cruised from Civitavecchia to Frumincio bringing the alum from his Tolentini mines to the Roman market. Hence the estate at Via della Lungara was a critical point in his financial affairs all over the national, political, and territorial contexts. 

The Chigi fleet could thereby also offload red marble, fresh meat, gold-plated chairs, peacocks, mature trees, and other goods to go from the suburban docks straight to the city accusation of the retreat, which by 1511 resembled more a pleasant embarkation than an underbrush opera. From the date of purchase, Agostino had the old soil cleared and gradually rebuilt into one large terrace drained by gutters and fountains, planted with a kitchen garden, a secret terrazza, an extensive orchard, and an unusually large garden. This one in particular stood out from the other ones for its particularities. Firstly, the area of nearly 50 x 50 metres was divided into four planters by a cruciform pergola and probably bound with boxwood. Hence the place produced views similar to the woodcut illustrations of Hypnerotomachia Poliphili, published only a few years before. [Fig. V] Second and more significantly, those elements were ‘swallowed up’ by an unforeseen profusion of fauna and flora: colourful birds and butterflies; flowers traditionally cultivated in Rome (pink cabbage roses, narcissus, laurel, jasmine, iris), indigenous trees (peaches, beech, chestnuts, maritime pines, vines, evergreen shrubs of the maschile mediterraneo); and exotic species (such as the Tuscan hop-hornbeam, Sicilian lemon, Turkish pomegranate and American squash). There may have been ancient statues casually distributed under the shadows of those leafy treetops, though the cast of unusual plant species was the true motif of the garden.

In case such exotism was not enough to imply the intercontinental reach of the owner, it occasionally came up as a conversation starter while he hosted his guests. Stoppard’s shipyards were shipped from the Agro and other regions directly to Agostino, who apparently had become a collector and called that space a “vindemia.” Although the Latin
not only with an admirable exterior, visible from the city, but also with equally impressive interiors, where Agostino could 'generously' disclose his botanic collection while hosting his guests through other specific gestures, ordered and catered to by a bespoke sequence of spaces and objects. More than defining the retreat as an environment of hospitality and entertainment, while staying on Chigi's certain charisma, the scritto was here crucial to portraying him as a 'magnificent' patron— a concept that had just been published in a treatise of 1458 by the humanist Giovanni Pontano to advise new curators on how to display private wealth, splendour, and express public goodness, 'magnificence', without presuming to the status of royalty. (This was a convenient adaptation of Aristotle, to whom magnificence was both a virtue and a responsibility for prestigious men to either maintain their households or govern the city.) Although Pontano had targeted the elite under the (Aragon) King of Naples, his concerns were shared by the Roman society of foreigners who, like Agostino, had to justify themselves as a court within the 'imperial' plans of Julius II. And in this context, another refashioning— of Cicero— helped them to understand that, in antiquity, magnificence was a (controversial) praxis amongst Roman politicians and oligarchs, one that had nothing to do with exclusive luxury but with magnanimity, "doing something great," for the (visible) 'benefit of the broader community of citizens'. This mentality was fitting, again, to late Renaissance Rome not only because it came from the classical canons but because this was the Julian way of seizing the civic administration from the Capitol Hill. Whether Chigi had ever read Aristotle, Cicero or Pontano, but the real 'climate' to which his suburban place was a response. Hence one of the strongest motivations for him to convert his arable edge into a walkable system of pleasant gardens was to make the grounds public—not in the (present) sense of handing it over to the state so the people could use it but, instead, to invite authorities and influential figures to enjoy it and, thereafter, to recognise such expenditure as a legitimate contribution to their broader project of the urban territory.

On a summer night in July 1516, for instance, the Pope visited the Vedereum with his entourage, even though the owner had been away for several months working in Venice. Whether arriving by boat or carriage, the group must have noticed that, while the eastern
rampart formed a riverfront, the western walls shaped the course of Via della Lungara to give access to the main gate. The reception inside welcomed cassocks and beaded shoes with a paved vestibule.

This was followed by a bright rectangular court, enclosed by the oratory on the left-hand side, the pergola garden in the front and the principal residence on the right. As it was warm, and most rooms smelled like fresh plaster, 'the House of Chigi' invited Julius to dine on an elevated loggia, [Fig. W] which served as the grand lobby of the casino, that is, the main house of the villa. Over there he looked at the court from the perspective of a sort of 'balcony', to which the empty parterre below had suddenly become a 'stage'. The illusion continued as the treetops hatching out of the orchard, on the opposite side, formed a leafy 'proscenium arch', while the building embraced the void with two tower-like wings, as if to complete the occasional 'theatre'. Between 1505 and 1511, Chigi had commissioned the casino from Peruzzi, who was also about to design, in fact, the stage set for a play written by Cardinal Bibbiena; hence the intentional use of architectural perspective to turn the Chigi into a theatre to retell
the stories and the apparent similarity with another monumental building, the Villa Medici at Urbino. However, the main influence may have come from another work by Francesco di Giorgio, with whom he had possibly collaborated: Villa Chigi a la Volpe, owned by Agostino's brother, Sigismondo, in the rural region of Siena. [Fig. X] Because Volpe was intended to do for the Chigi what Maggiora had for the Medici, Agostino probably requested the referencing to imply that possessing rural land was a 'tradition' in his family. Both houses are thus almost identical U-shaped blocks accessed by a central loggia. This element is exactly what distinguishes the one in Volpe from a farmhouse; and the other at Lungara from an urban palazzo. And the crucial difference between the two was the ethos of the Roman revival of magnificence within that 'suburban' condition posed by the new street of Julius II. The loggia for Agostino was therefore designed to impress rather than to undersell, since either the patron or his architect had understood that the entire property should function not as a rustic podere but as a public monument to represent the Chigi as a civic powerhouse, amongst others (just as the Roman down used to do for the patrician families).

Following that architectural statement right at the entrance of his
palace, Agostino could thereafter emulate the character of a (much less restraining) potestas to host friends and enemies, from gentle clerks to senators and clerks. 56

In that sense, the reception court was at once a square, a parterre, a stage, a room and a glade opened within the dense plantations of the orchard and vintarium. Hence it analogically mediated between urban and rural, courtesy and chivalry, magnificence and splendour, publicity and privacy, to introduce the whole property as a "world" where these categories intermingled — and setting henceforth the ludic tone of the events to follow further inside. For the first time, a Renaissance architect used such a spectacle effect to monumentalise a residential compound that was neither a palace nor a palazzo. Although it may not have impressed Julius — who would have asked Peruzzi to triple the scale — Vindaria Chigi was the perfect scenery to please someone like Giovanni di Lorenzo de' Medici, who became Pope Leo X, someone with a penchant for theatricality and who, by 1518, had invested heavily in theatrical art and architecture to transform the whole city into a court. 57 More importantly, the property should indeed have satisfied Leo, since two years before he had passed a policy that granted tax breaks and building privileges to the suburban gentry. 58 His announcement of this not only to how suburbanisation was at the core of the papal strategy to colonise and reshape the urban territory but, crucially, how and why a private landowner should do it:

(…) to enlarge and to embellish his own not only for the dignity and beauty of the manor but also to make a profit, where many gardens, vineyards and other buildings as well as some nice, useful and necessary residences have been rising in the last few years. 59

What this bull describes is a process of villafication of the agrarian region. Does it sound familiar? It does as, in fact, Leo was a Medici and might have learned from his father Lorenzo what one should do to legitimate the unproductive appropriation of arable land. He therefore issued that policy in the same period that Chigi was enlarging the Vindarium. [Fig. 1] Such good timing was more than a coincidence, as Leo still owed Agostino for the financing of his passage (papal coronation). It is equally worth noting that the modus

Fig 1. The situation of the "Vindarium Agostino Chigi" in 1515. Note how the site of Via della Lungara has gone from a rustic "rural" towards a comfortable "suburban" place.
opera of the ingenious pontiff was to mask that sort of abuse of power with gestures seemingly selfless yet never without pomp. By “to enlarge and to embellish” he meant to make suburban possessions appear anything but idle, so that their land could never be reclaimed—neither by the peasantry nor by the commune of Rome. Hence many of the new estates had gardens planted with tall trees, which made their inhabitation visible from outside, or reformed with other monumental objects such as aqueducts and public fountains, which represented the Church or influential families—as these were the only institutions capable of installing and maintaining them. [Fig. Z]

Form and function—and size—were therefore just as critical to confer these places with the appearance that Leo X considered “useful.” Further inside, the courtly manners of showing splendour were thus more exaggerated than ever before. And so they implied a magnificence increasingly formalised through theatrical perspectives, through “stage set architecture”, thus not necessarily by scale. In that same year, for instance, Chigi commissioned a “dream team” of star artists to help (and pressure) Peruzzi to finish decorating the main house of the villa. The focus in this phase were the trompe-l’œil frescoes that could maximise the theatricality that would make the entire estate ready to enter to extremely playful rituals of hospitality. Raphael, therefore, intervened in the entrance loggia with the mythological story of Daphnis and Erysibe. [Back to Fig. W] The fantastic scenes drew the guests’ attention to the dramatisations of Ovid’s Metamorphoses, which usually took place on the empty parterre just below. The classics had become direct references to the idea and culture of retreat, just as suggested by Petrarch almost two centuries earlier. And so, Giovanni da Udine wrapped up the fresco by admittedly beautifying the arches with grotesque flowers (a recently rediscovered style of Roman art) and the vaults with realistic ivy festoons. Fruit pendants and wicker curbs with colouring typical of the Venetian school. This mocking of natural elements made the whole structure allude to the wooden pergola outside. The gallery, however, did not give access to the vault, which was instead connected to the main house of the villa through the south façade, by the “Garden Loggia” (today the “Loggia of Galatea”), [Fig. AA] This loggia was also compellingly frescoed by Peruzzi, Sanzio and Sebastiano del Piombo, with epic scenes and landscapes of (im-

164. Agostino Chigi was famous for initiating the best manner of that time to compete with each other on long-term collaboration. Even though, by 1510, Raphael was still a pupil of Giulio Romano, he was already the most wanted painter in Rome, a role to Peruzzi. David R. Coffin notes that Raphael was the chief designer of the noble and gentlemanly, the so-called fumists, since “he painted in 1510 additional levels to his house in the square. A document of May 1512 reveals, for the first time, work on combined study and picture frame (De rerum) that Raphael designed to stand on the north-western corner of the house along the Via della Lungara but the idea, and even the design, may date from the time of the land acquisition. By the time of Chigi’s death on April 10, 1520, the fresco was not completed, but in a contract of the end of June of that year, the master permitted to complete his work within 6 months. Meanwhile Chigi had no connection with the work that was begun by his friend and assistant, Pietro da Cortona. [Back to Text] 165. Ch. Marien, La Villa Farnesina (Rome: Edizioni di Storia Moderna Franco Cosimo Panini, 2000), pp. 163-165; and for a quite specific account of the participation of Raphael, see Berenice Dourou, “A Study for the Terracotta Figure of Apollo” in The Burlington Magazine, Vol. 142, No. 1123 (Aug. 1999), pp. 510-513. 166. Elia Ghezzi, La Villa Farnesina a Roma (Roma: Edizioni di Storia Moderna Franco Cosimo Panini, 2000), p. 7. 167. This structure was the most monumental space facing down the main street. Thus, in Visconti’s time, the entrance to the loggia, which is well up and the same, medium-sized portal and staircase. For instance, the trees and landscape hanging on the Baroque gables adorned with the coat of arms, the “Torre e Muniz de la Villa Romana” in Domani 67-70, no. 2, Parma University of Parma (Parma, 2002), pp. 20-27.


Fig. Z. The Vincenzo Farnese (blue) conversing on the main ground floor with visitors in the city between 1575 and 1591 in Via della Lungara (shaded), Villa Farnesina (blue outline). Leo X (B), Via Appia and Santi Felici (shaded).
possibly harmonious rural fields. The pleasant decoration helped to make the lodge-like room suitable for more formal banquets, mostly during the winter, or to gather the guests before long walks such as the secular 'processions' through the (real) pergola towards the "Tiber Loggia." At a party held in August 1518, for instance, he used this exact choreography to celebrate the Feast of Saint Lawrence with a banquet on the riverside pavilion. After each course, a 'ballet' of servants collected the gold plates (designed by Raphael especially for Chigi) and threw them away in the Tiber. The act tricked even the smart Pope, unaware of the nets installed beforehand on the riverbed to retrieve them.

The hoax, however, could not have worked without the help of fine wine, and certainly not before the spatial 'prelude' of the Viridarium. The 'procession' through the exotic microcosm was in itself a bewildering experience, in which the various scents, shapes, shades, shadows and silverware immersed the guests in a mental state like that of fiction and reality were hardly discernible. This garden was therefore used as a scene for plays, dances and banquets. In this case, servants would assemble tables on trestles covered in silk along the curvilinear pergola. Once coupled with live music, and live birds served in individual pans, the setting was able to overcome the imagination of the most avid reader of the Divinae." The extensive orchard nearby functioned towards the same goal of illusions, as it carried on the flux from the Tiber Loggia to the guest house through an equally absorbing enclosure, analogous to the mystical forest of many chivalrous tales. Despite the fact that both gardens had been empirically implemented on site, it is evident that an architect in chief—probably Peruzzi—had decided to place them precisely between the three polarities of the property, not simply to connect the buildings, to each other and to the exterior, but to take advantage of this exterior by making it intelligible as an interior amongst the others—an intelligibility that could only be achieved through reshaping the ground into a physically comfortable and socially inhabitable system of enclosures. Hence the development of gardening as a process—of working through the site—to formalise the signs into the place so-called Viridarium Chigi. The medieval vines could not have lived up to the new sixteenth-century demand for rituals of hospitality. Meanwhile if
The garden as a pedagogical project

Although Agostino was perhaps too dazzled to convince in that role, his retreat succeeded as a monument essentially because the garden, along with the frescoes inside the casino, gave it a fully fledged pedagogical dimension. That is precisely how the Viridarium redefined the humanist concept of the suburban villa. For the garden not only hid the property’s economic dependence on the city to fulfill the programme of courtesy reception and leisure but also transformed this programme into a spectacle, one which legitimised the expropriation of agrarian land. The gardens and loggias were used to give a spatial order to gestures that justified splendour as magnificence; they eventually formalised the entire estate into an artefact that commemorated the act of possession, over and over, from various angles and in different ways. In other words, by making the place public, those archetypes validated private ownership. The fact that, to the Renaissance ideal, this validation was not a paradox, did not make the re-appropriation of agrarian land any less controversial, though the Viridarium normalised this process by ritualising abuses and hospitality. It is interesting to note that, here, the same event meant to negate business by enabling pleasure, has conversely merged both together again — since antiquity — yet into a condition much more glorious, and architecturally interesting, than the present one that we happen to know so much about. That ritualisation resulted, in fact, in a 24-hour ‘play’, to which the labour and materials (such as slow-cooking artichokes, polishing goblets, curving roses, and so forth) entailed in the reproduction of statum and hospitality had become supporting acts and scenography. It is precisely this paradoxical blend of conspicuous consumption and the concealment of labour that makes the Viridarium a humanist villa. While the game of illusions of leisure and autonomy develops well...
of a pleasant place, but quite vague as a specialised architecture of possession. However, the sixteenth-century suburbanisation was so similar to the ancient colonisation of the countryside that the overall disposition of the Viridarium ended up reproducing the same formal logic of occupation implied by the Roman type. And if one reconsiders the plan solely as a diagram — following Alberti in that typical reading of wall-garden-house — Chigi’s system of enclosures comes across as a model of urban territory that reflected the transformations happening to Rome at that time. In this sense, the orchards and kitchen gardens analogically related to the rural region with the internal limits to the Aurelian walls, the viridarium to the new suburbs and the main house to the administrative centre. Such spatial order thus spells out the logic of organising a territory within which a planted area revolves around the life and mastery of a single built centrality, defined by the embrace of a compact U-shaped mass in the manner of an amphitheatre. This situation was similar to the Roman topography itself, which had conditioned the centre to increasingly subsume the countryside as a means to support its service economy and governance. Although we may only arrive at this analogy by reducing the Viridarium to a schematic plan, it affected the memory of late-humanistic subjects — even if only subliminally — once they experienced space through bodily motion and perspective. Precisely for the lengths required to correctly direct these perceptions, size did matter, not to monumentality (which does not depend on largeness) but to the visual recognition of the property as a place, which, while a system of enclosures analogous to the urban territory — implied a particular idea of coexistence and social exclusion, a ‘correct’ decorum of forms and gestures, and — in the specific programme of durnum — the possibility of designing.

Garden and steps as theatre of the city

Durnum, however, was not a possibility for Julius II, whom durnum was less a pretext to emulate the moderating figure of a potestas, and more a heuristic device to reconstruct the authoritarian character of an authoritarian ruler such as, indeed, Julius Caesar. For throughout his mandate, every urban renewal — from streets and squares to courtyards and gardens — was an opportunity to up-
generously sized, Julius’s pleasure garden—the Cortile del Belvedere—was huge and therefore became a caricature (and the first ‘failare’) of that progressive change of form and function.

The project, in fact, took the monumentalisation of the basilica to the point where the archetype even lost its most defining trait: the formal intelligibility of an idea of household. As we are about to discover by reattracting the original plan, [Fig. A1] it is (and might have always been) difficult to understand the Cortile del Belvedere as a garden—let alone that of a country retreat—even though James S. Ackerman and Arnaldo Bruschi have thoroughly argued that it was “a classical villa.”[58] This is perhaps because, as the nickname indicates, Julius meant the “Cortile” to be the new courtyard of the Casino del Belvedere, formerly the summer residence of Pope Innocent VIII (1434–1492).[54] It is worth noting that, until the sixteenth-century intervention, this was a U-shaped loggia-pavilion isolated on the summit of Mount St. Egidio to the north of the Vatican Palaces. [Fig. A2] Due the date of construction—in the fateful decade of the 1480s—and the evident similarity with the loggia of Santa Chiara, Frommel attributes the mysterious authorship to Baccio Pontelli, a pupil of Francesco di Giorgio.[55] But the designer does not matter as much as the fact that, like its contemporary in Urbino, this arcade opened up towards a church (the old Constantinian Basilica) on a cliff just across the rural valley. Hence the portmanteau belvedere, Italian for “beautiful sight” — though the Casino was not just about looking at the landscape but also being looked at as it stood over the routes taken by Christian pilgrims and especially, diplomatic guests coming from the north to publicly enter Rome through the gates of the Leonine Wall.[56] Despite this privileged location, the pavilion had been idle since the death of Innocent. Precisely so, Julius decided to reclaim it as a fundamental site to transform the papal estates from a scattering of objects into a single and visibly ‘autonomous’ complex, like the imperial villas described in ancient literature.[57] To the Pope, who was proudly restless, the choice of programme was neither about amplifying the retreat nor enjoying the view which the Cortile eventually blocked. It meant, instead, fulfilling his promise of undertaking the unfinished legacy of his uncle, Sixtus IV, well following in the footsteps of Martin V.[58] The difference this time was the employment of an architect...
like Bramante, who was more enterprising than Julius and already driven
to research classical architecture; he was thus able to overcome the
lack of archaeological knowledge of his generation. The architect,
in fact, surpassed the idea of the type with the powerful gesture of
connecting the old Belvedere to the Vatican Palace through a massi-
court building in the unprecedented shape of a straight
line half a kilometre long. For this reason alone, one may already
understand why the space inside could never look nor function like
anything 'domestic', especially a garden.

Even though Bramante enclosed the Cortile with a continuous
arcade in the exact centre of the papal settlement — similarly to the
main cloister of an abbey — his design eventually expands the archi-
tecture into a sequoia of colossal steps and terraced gardens to make
another idea of collective enclosure legible: instead of a household,
referred to the 'head' — literally the capital — of the Holy See.
Hence the project managed to formalise Julius' pretext of bypassing
the Middle Ages to return straight to classical antiquity, when tempo-
ral power was actualised through the liturgical, thus religious, use of
civic space. And that is why the new court for the Belvedere was
neither a hortus nor a horto quoddam, but a forum aedilis. Julius II,
in fact, issued a commemorative medal calling the building a 'Via'.
The main question is why he took the unusual solution of terracing
and gardening such an urban space instead of simply paving it
flat and leaving it empty.

The most apparent answer is Julius' imperial agenda, which
called for the oversaturation of even the simplest of urban events.
But the actual motivation behind those design decisions was Bramante's
take on the site itself. For upon arrival he discovered that the 'void'
between the Casino and the Vatican Palace was far from a 'turbidus
but, instead, was a complex topography densely planted with vines,
historical and symbolically charged. The cultivation, nonetheless,
was not known as a vine but a 'viridarium' or a 'pomarium', as seen
in contemporary registers, perhaps because the area was originally
part of the religious boundary that had formerly defined the Ager
Vaticanus, outside ancient Rome just above the military frontier of
the Campo Marzio. The naming, though, dates from 1479 when
Nicholas III purchased the land, amongst several other vineyards,
meadows and woods around the north of St Peter's, expanding the

Fig AP-SW. Pope Innocent VIII dies, leaving the Leoneine Wall filled with farms, woods,
and a large wall stump with vestigial, an ancient structure, and the Canino del Belvedere.

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Church's headquarters to roughly the same limits we see today. As this Pope was the first to leave the Lateran for the Vatican, he annulled the Constantine Basilica with a Romanesque sort of 'Domus Aurea', which contained a large walled garden, a fountain, an orchard of orange trees and a secluded giardino segreto or 'garden of simples', where the pontiff would cultivate medicinal herbs (as if he were a monk). The ground — where the Cortile stands today — was locked away outside the Leonine Wall to provide the papal residence with a protective plantation, one resembling the ancient pomarium. But since the Church had lost Jerusalem in 1244, the enclosure soon acquired the value of a 'paradise regained', or a boat filled with various plants and animals like the Ark of Noah, as Fra Paolo da Venezia illustrates in a map of 1523. [Fig. AG] These associations overlapped with the medieval belief that the parterre was the exact ruin of a Naumachia, an ancient type of stadium with an artificial pond for the staging of naval battles. In any case, by the time Bramante encountered the site, it did have the long rectangular shape of a circus and the profile of a basin which perfectly matched the form of a theatre, specifically one at the new urban scale dreamt of by his client. The enclosure even fitted the exemplary ratio of 1:3 which (as mentioned by Vitruvius and confirmed by Alberti) was the proportion of the Circus Maximus and of an ancient Roman forum. Bramante, moreover, understood that natural curiosity as the missing centrepiece of the palatial complex started by Nicholas III, which simply needed the addition of architecture to formalise it as such, like the hippodrome of the Domus of Augustus on the Palatine Hill. Since this ruin was just a myth and not yet excavated, he found a similar model in the hippodrome which Pliny the Younger had famously described as the climax of his Tuscan villa.

At first sight, therefore, Bramante should have been confident of the rectangular block, 'stadium-like' parti. On a closer look, the full architectural arrangement of the inner space was still in question, since the stage inside Pliny's hippodrome was a gymnasium — a necessarily smooth garden walk — that could not 'deal' with the sharp rise of the Vatican valley. As terracing had always been the most successful way of taming Roman topography since the Etruscan settlements, the architect looked further around until he found the Forum and Sanctuary of Fortuna Primigenia in Prenestine.
just outside Rome. This ancient sort of city building inhabited a seemingly impossible climb through an axial system of great temple squares, flanked by continuous arcades and interrupted by terraces connected by triangular ramps and retaken by walls with niches. In other words, the very design brief of the Cortile del Belvedere, whose only difference was having re-purposed those elements in the narrower confinement of a hippocrodeo. Moreover, either by chance or intuition, Bramante sensed that the emulsion of Palestrina dovetailed with Julius's idea of city being a Roman example of civic space in which the ritual practices of religious and temporal powers were not (yet) separated, neither from each other nor from architecture, while being also an act of inhabiting and organizing the territory. Hence by aiming at the same monumentality, the Cortile could fully embody - not become the model for - the Pope's project of renewing the city within its broader region. The terraced climb, furthermore, produced a rhythm of tension and release that, by affecting neuromuscular perception, predisposed the human body to long walks and critical breaks and thereby, to experience space from the perspective of both actor and audience. So instead of framing the landscape as its background, the Cortile had (literally) transformed the landscape itself into a theatre. The main auditorium of this theatre was composed of three-storey loggias, the upper galleries of which should also serve as museums and passageways from the Casino to the Vatican Palace, while the ground-floor arcades gave direct access to the courtyard. This, in turn, was (almost) symmetrically divided into two levels of rectangular terraces bridged by two triangulated ramps and a colossal step, which served as another audience seat for the gladiatorial games, bullfights and tournaments occasionally staged on the lower court. Meanwhile the upper terrace was a garden of classic sculptures around a flowerbed laid out in a wide semicircle, similar to that within Pliny's hippodrome. And so, through the frame of this 'horseshoe', one could look back at the long axial climb and picture the gigantic courtyard as a unified whole of repetitive forms - such as the 6C arches, 110 steps and countless rosebuds - and have a sense of direction, centrality and order.

While symbolically this perspective spelled out the unification of the Holy See under Julius's command, in practice it induced the crowd of new couriers to recognize itself as a group within the papal project of temporal power. After all, an empire can only validate its existence if it has an audience, which is, in other words, the constituent force of the public which - as a body politic - recognizes the imperial rule. This is the reason for the socio-political function of theatre and why Roman forums were often similar to circuses, as some late Renaissance squares similar to forums. Unfortunately, neither Bramante nor Julius ever saw their Cortile functioning as such, because its construction took more than six decades to complete. In any case, the Belvedere remains an important experiment above all to garden architecture - because it was one of the first times (since the fall of the Roman Empire) when an architect (especially someone like Bramante, who was one of the pioneers of the profession as we know it) designed a garden prior to its implementation on site. This does not mean that artists before him had never conceptualized courtyards and cloisters intrinsic to the gardens inside them. (The courtyard of Santa Chiara, once again, is a definite example of the marriage of built and planted enclosures - as most monastic gardens prove - and that the household garden had never ceased to be a form of architecture.) But the Belvedere marks the moment when this architecture becomes not only a design in terms of the perspectival control of a layout and other compositional questions (such as the choice of flowers for their color and so on), but fundamentally, a project in the sense of deciding how to actualize an idea through form and space. If Bramante conceived the Cortile in perspective and it is likely that he did - the hemispheric garden was surely a key space, and the most poetic experience of space in the entire building. For, in fact, what could be more effective to stress that anachronistic 'stadium' as a monument than turning the final stepped terrace into an oval flowered, one cultivated for sheer ornamental purposes? Moreover this 'denouement' was a secular reminder of Nicholas's 'pomerium', which confirms that Bramante took the site not only as a condition but as a blueprint. If anything, the Belvedere makes the site the regulatory idea of the project, thus inverting, henceforth, the fifteenth-century paradigm in which architects, instead, imposed the programme on the physical context.

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The Cortile del Belvedere significantly contributed to the garden becoming a design model and a mode of planning through the formalisation of the site into a place (or "sub-urbanism," as Sébastien Marot would put it). Yet the Cortile eventually failed the task of mobilising living memory to believe in Julius' resurrection of the Rome of Nero's Nymphaeum—hence the fresco in which the painter Perin del Vaga mocks the unfinished courtyard by representing it as an "ancient ruin" in his intentional pastiche of Hellenistic landscape painting. [Fig. AK] Vaga produced this work in the early 1540s, when it was finally clear that an ambition like that of the Belvedere could have been achieved most effectively with much more subtlety, though it was not Bramante's fault, since he was one of the best at fulfilling ambitious projects with monumental, yet tactically punctual stage set design. Take, for instance, his garden loggia for the nymphaeum of the villa of Cardinal Colonna in Genazzano, [Fig. AL] built between 1508 and 1512. Here the architect answered the demand for a 'domestic' open-air theatre by formalising the site and casting ancient prototypes in a similar way to the project he had carried out for the Pope. The 'problem' of the Cortile, though, was the fact that it has never carried collective acceptance as a villa—even though it was meant to be one. And that happened precisely because the rose-flowered hemicycle and its court read more like a forum made for civic action than a household garden made for intimate domestic leisure. The example of this 'failure', therefore, makes one think of the critical role of the garden in making an idea of place that stands between domestic and civic. Alternatively, the garden is an architecture that offers the possibility of not belonging to any category, and this is where its potential lies—either becoming a project in itself or enabling (or disabling) the very aim of one. In comparison with the Cortile del Belvedere, the Vedutismo Chigi was much more 'successful' because Peruzzi took full advantage of the interaction of the garden—while a collective place in the household—with the humanist interpretation of avenus and the programme of the villa as a 'theatre' of social life. This enabled, thereby, the whole property to didactically transmit its own (acceptable) version of the suburban condition and its historical implication to the urban territory.

The villa of Pope Julius III was the last humanist villa because it confidently fused the spatial experimentation and prototypes which had been introduced in the previous five decades. [Fig. AM] The architect Giacomo da Vignola reconciled the 'domestic theatricality' of Vedutismo Chigi and the ultra-filialised motifs of the Belvedere with Raphael's idea of the suburban villa as a system of rooms, of paved gardens designed as interiors. More-
over, the tripartite plan of walled gardens—going from the most to the least public—seemed like Alberti’s reading of the ancient Roman house. Late in his papacy, Julius III faced increasing antagonism from the Curia and therefore left the Vatican for his villa on Via Flaminia. Similarly to Pope Leo X, he had a team of star architects reform the property into a comfortable garden retreat, a place where he could both rest and govern away from curial politics and conspiracies.  

However, the idea of an outward-looking enclosure would survive the following decades until 1551, when Villa Giulia was built to break it. At the same time, the casino was surrounded with various enclosures: from vineyards to meadows (prati), woods (boscheto) and lofty parks (bosco) for hunting.  

Fig. 4A. The main house of the property of Julius III and the different zones of various enclosures that ranged from vineyards (vigne) to meadows (prati), woods (boscheto) and lofty parks (bosco) for hunting. Vei Generale del Corte della Villa del Papa Giulio. Giuliano Papini and P.F.L. Forana, 1809.


Fig. 4M. The central part of the Villa or “Vigna” of Pope Julius III as Giacomo da Vignola had designed in 1557.
a single building. This one was so large and self-resolved that it represents the entire villa. The inside was divided into three courts: gardens. The first was more of a geometrical carpet of hedges, limited by the U-shaped loggia and entrance to the colonnade. This was followed by a walled and sunken symposium. Lastly, there was an actual loggia — called here a portico garden. [Fig. A0] The main free-standing house in the diverse field of the villa was a sharp reminder of the difference between the outside and the inside, introverted enclosures. Hence this spatial configuration analogously established an antagonistic relationship of city versus countryside. Yet the entrance way of the property faced Via Flaminia with the frame of two public fountains, which gave the villa its monumental, thus, civic character, clearly differentiated from the rural land around it. [Fig. A1] The visibility of those fountains right on that road, which led through the northern entrance of the city, was important in making the owner seem a benefactor to the city and its new rural territory, thus giving legitimacy to the villa. Hence the introverted place that would follow after that first impression may have just reflected how Julius III wanted his retreat to enable him to live introvertedly while governing the Holy See from outside the Vatican. Since he wanted to govern in seclusion, it was only logical that his property had a clear microcosmic and seemingly self-sufficient character for which a walled system of enclosed gardens, vineyards, and hunting parks, was crucial. That was also why the symposium was not only walled but even sunk six metres down. The fountain was the Pope’s favourite place to relieve his gout. However, the space was periodically open to anyone willing to follow a code of conduct posted at the entrance. Known as “in herum,” the text imitated the epigrams found in imperial gardens around Rome.

Garden terraces as choreographies of possession

Architecture becomes an instrument of power once it acknowledges that humans are subjects, and that social relationships are never black and white. On the one hand, the form of a space has to be easily understood to transmit an idea or simply fulfill whatever practical purpose it was intended for. On the other, it must ‘disappear’ to allow the needs for interaction to inhabit it. That is how buildings...
get into everyday life and become didactic instruments promoting a project larger than their footprints. Leo X seemed to have 'known' that — on some level — since he did not make architecture for the worship of his person nor as propaganda for his papacy but, instead, to sustain the specific social milieu which, eventually, could work for him. “Sweet is the yoke of mine” was the Leonine motto, expressing that his authority was ‘softer’, even though he was just as (if not more) ambitious as Julius II.²⁹³ The crucial difference was that the Medici Pope was a subtle strategist, who would never clash with the old senatorial class as did Rovere. Instead, Leo focused on making diplomatic advances while discreetly granting favours that raised the influence of his family and the broader Florentine society — which he promised to reconcile with that of Rome.²⁹⁴ An example of such practice was the commissioning of a summer retreat, now known as Villa Madama, on the summit of Monte Mario to the north of Rome, beyond the Vatican Hill.²⁹⁵ The pontiff himself had personally acquired the land in 1509, when he was still a cardinal, to enjoy it as a typical Roman agreement with a house smaller than many papal residences, an orchard and close proximity to the hunting ground of the Prati.²⁹⁶ But — after his papal policy of 1516, which extended the building privileges for suburban landowners — he started to convert the property into what contemporary documents already termed a “villa suburbana”.²⁹⁷ Only a year later, though, he put the estate in the name of his cousin — whom he had just made cardinal — Giulio de’ Medici. [Fig. AQ] The reasons for that transfer are worth noting. Firstly, it served Leo to prevent future problems with the Camerlenghi’s still keeping the possession in the hands of the Medici.²⁹⁸ Secondly, the Pope had just appointed his protégé as vice-chancellor in charge of the Vatican’s foreign affairs.²⁹⁹ So, it would look legitimate to give him a spot right at the northern entrance of the city to receive diplomats and guests of the Curia with the necessary pomp of such an office.³⁰⁰ Yet Giulio lacked the temperament and charisma for diplomacy and, therefore, needed all the help he could get from architecture and other art forms of social mediation and collective delight.³⁰¹ So he followed through with the enterprise of transforming the sign into a monument to ‘his’ public life as a representative of the theatrical court to which Rome had just been reduced.³⁰² Raphael was Leo’s appointed architect and the natural choice for the job. It perfectly fitted his stardom, thorough knowledge of classical culture and hedonism — which made him just as anxious to show erudition to his peers as to lead the life of a humanist courtier.³⁰³ Moreover, he was both a key collaborator and frequent guest in the Villa Madama of Agostino Chigi. Hence not only was this a professional who knew Giulio’s ‘programme’ from first-hand experience but — after Bevati’s death in 1514 — he was the ablest man to compete with Peruzzi’s invention of the suburban villa. That mattered because competition and innovation were demands by virtue of both the type and the ethos of ostentatious patronage established under the Leonine papacy.³⁰⁴ In any case, the architect had to be inventive since the site posed the difficult condition of a sharp rise, suggesting the blueprint of a theatre, similar to that of the Belvedere. Unlike Bramante, though, Raphael did take advantage of the view, which dramatically opened the north of the Agro towards Monte Pincio (where the client’s family possessed their fourteenth-century palazzos, which only a few decades later would become the famous Villa Medici).³⁰⁵ Hence the new retreat for Giulio (and Leo) was to stage not only the rituals of diplomatic reception inside its enclosure but also the ‘Florentine side’ of the Roman landscape. In this sense, the other Medici property at Fiesole was a resourceful precedent to invoke, and it does come to mind today when one sees the cubic house of Villa
Madama seated on the rectangular terrace that emerges from the forested cliff. [Fig. AR] This building, however, corresponds to less than half of the original design and would not even come close to the final result had all the terrace gardens been built—particularly those emulating a hippodrome, a circular court and a nymphaeum, work carried on by Antonio da Sangallo after the architect in chief had prematurely died in 1519. [Fig AS] Though before we finally land there, let us start with a brief look at the first drawing by Raphael. [Fig. AT]

For as much as it is tempting to project on this plan our modernist expectations for so-called “high Renaissance” symmetry, the main building of the villa was not symmetrical. That is because overall mirroring would have created unavoidable duplications, whereas the festive programme required every space to be unique. As Robin Evans has (beautifully) argued, the villa for Giulio de’ Medici was “a picture of social relationships,” normed by a decorum of gestures meant to choreograph the correct sequel of ceremonial encounters in diplomatic receptions that lasted whole days, if not weeks. Like Bramante, therefore, Raphael used Pliny’s villa as conceptual models but his formalisation of the hilly site into a theatrical place was even cleverer— or rather— because he did not lose sight of the “domestic” dimension of the programme. As for the diplomatic receptions under Leo, Scarpia would lead straight to musical concerts and these to other rituals without interruptions except for the change of ambience. So the design transmuted that into an enfilade of walled enclosures interconnected by portals, loggias, chambers, steps, courtyards and gardens, which transformed the walls from blunt separations to smooth transitions. Hence Raphael’s rejection of corridors. Yet there was still a strong sense of movement since the constant variation of levels put the guests in continuous circulation from one space to another. What was not clear from the plan, though, was which compartments were roofed, and which ones were open to the air. But that was precisely the fundamental idea of this project: every enclosure was a room. Only then did the architect deploy symmetry within the individual space of each set to define it as a moment that demands attention, similar to the acts of a long Roman play. It may be a cliche to say that was the move of a ‘genius’, but it does show how Raphael acknowledged a concept that had been

Fig. AS: Villa Madama today.


237. The thesis has been based on the reconstructions of Raphael’s villa on the grounds developed by Guy Dewar, since that is the narrative that is the default interpretation of the existing project, and the one which is currently validated by most scholars, such as Christopher L. Fruen and Sabine Eckert. For more information on the structural process of research, see Guy Dewar, Villa Madama: A House Belonging to Raphael’s Papacy (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1993), pp. 112–15.


239. Raphael wrote a letter to Dalmazano Costanzo in 1519, alleging his project as a misunderstanding of Plato’s symmetric villa. For the English translation of this text, with commentary, see Guy Dewar, Villa Madama: A House Belonging to Raphael’s Papacy (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1993), pp. 22–23.

240. Even though vaults were the most common type of construction for public buildings throughout the sixteenth century they were also applied to domestic spaces. The introduction of vaults to the Palladian villa was only made later, in the eighteenth century.

Fig. 4.5: Hypothetical reconstruction of the Villa di Cardinal Giulio de’ Medici or “Villa Madama” on the site of Monte Mario—and the Pope completely built of the original project.
developing since the fourteenth century, but most architects had shied away from fully fledging gardens on interiors. And so, the site became a viable system of interiors once Raphael filled it out with a narrative of various gardens, each one working like a painting.244

Similarly to the way Raphael constructed his paintings (under the influence of Perugino), he ordered each enclosure so that it shaped symmetrical perspectives in which the central subject matter was not merely the picture, but the picture itself. The triple-arched loggia, for instance, drove the guests' eyes to the brighter centre of the terrace garden, where a long table would occasionally be used for ambassadorial banquets. In this sense, the compact measure of each interior mattered just as its concentric (self-referential) forms. Outside the main building of the villa, however, Raphael pushed the limits of this rule with a sequence of three terrace gardens; these are much wider than the others within the main building and yet do not seem different from the interiors. Following the same principle, each one is uniquely shaped into a square, a circle and a hippodrome-like composition of two semi-circles and a square. Unfortunately, there is no evidence about the species or the precise layout in which they were landscaped. Equally importantly, though, recent findings have discovered that these gardens ran in parallel with the house instead of meeting it transversely.244 And, again, either Raphael or Sangallo (who continued drawing this proposal) avoided an overall symmetry. The choice is interesting because it could have thrived on the example of Bramante's Belvedere, which negotiated its climb with the more 'obvious' solution of connecting the terraces by a triangulated system of ramps and steps. But Raphael avoided this artifice because it would have produced an overall axiality alien to the spatial 'narrative' of the other rooms in the villa.245

The three garden terraces below the villa formalise the act of possession into a processional climb. The movement of climbing up the cliff through consequential terraces connected by stairs is not only the very physical process through which the land here was formally enclosed and spatially appropriated, but also transmits a visual narrative of this appropriation in relation to the broader territory.245

244. As noted by Jellicoe, "Raphael was the greatest master of all time of the composition of objects in space, but the severance is insufficient to show whether he could transfer the three dimensions of a room into those of landscape. We must therefore consider our garden study as a means to the end of Raphael's manner Perugino." Geoffrey Jellicoe, "Italian Renaissance Gardens," in Journal of the Royal Society of Arts, Vol. 141, No. 8092 (6 February 1953), pp. 275-285, p. 285.

245. David R. Coffin, "The Plan of the Villa Madama," in The Art Bulletin, Vol. 49, No. 3 (June 1967), pp. 421-435. "The value of this essay is in the way it challenges our understanding of the garden's spatial organization. It is a powerful reminder of how much we still have to learn about this complex landscape."

246. The only perspective that mattered was the one within each enclosure and, occasionally, their outlook onto the Roman landscape outside.
These gardens framed more than just the site, though. They opened up to the landscape much more frankly than the other enclosures inside the main building of the villa. And so, by framing the view of Rome with the Agro, these gardens transformed the movement of climbing—as ‘conquering’—the site into a ritual that actually refers to the broader territory. This reveals that gardens are not just interiors but ones that necessarily relate to the world outside them. Here, the posing of this relation aimed at appropriating land beyond the footprint of the villa.

Garden and avenues as a farm-park

After the Sack of Rome in 1527, Villa Madama was burned and so were its gardened terraces.** Decades later, though, another form of private garden open to the public emerged. This was the case of the Orti Farnesiani, designed by Vignola in 1550. Like all the other examples, the site was a deserted rural fringe—but this one was at the ancient kernel of the city. Cardinal Alessandro Farnese purchased various small parcels of land on top of Monte Palatino. The villa was built in two main phases. First, the east cliff of the hill was tamed by a long two-storey façade. [Fig. AU] This happened to also straighten up the muddy Campo Vaccino (and Via Sacra), which passed just by the front. Entering the façade through a sculptural gate, one finds a semi-circular hall, niches with ancient statues and a long shallow climb. Up on from the first terrace, the street was framed by the windows on the façade. A room with a grotto was carved in the turf of the hill. Three other stairways would lead to a second terrace. But this climb was accompanied by two gardened ramps. Above it, a small belvedere frames the view of Tempio della Pace on the opposite side of the street, and the Roman Forum. These gardens were periodically open to the public.** Despite the variety of plants, their main theme was the large collection of ancient sculptures owned by Farnese. In 1570, he gave the property to his nephew, Cardinal Odoardo Farnese (who was an expert botanist). Here began the second and most important phase of the project, when a new and larger garden was laid out further over the hill. Literally built on the exact grounds of the Domus Tiberiana, this was the first private botanical garden in Italy. At the same time the type emerged as a didactic...
space for universities in other Italian cities, such as Pisa and Padua. Within the Farnese property, however, this was a place to display the capacity to import and cultivate species from all around Italy and the globe. [Fig AV] Because of its role in the spatial narrative of gates, steps, terraces and casinos, this botanical garden still offers an analogy with the city: the re-establishment of a new form of open garden right on the grounds of an ancient public domus that had both private peristyle-gardens, and gates here facing the Roman Forum. Hence, consciously or not, Orti Farnesiani actualised a reinterpretation of the late-republic juridical framework of publicness with the city—but, however, one only ruled by the Farnese family. Hence the garden as a new botanic acropolis, [Fig AV] overlooking the process of suburbanisation—and gentrification—of Campo Vaccino and the surrounding area towards the precariuous south-east side of Rome.
This vector—of the park-like villa—had underlain not only Oriti Farnesi’s but also other contemporary cases, epitomized and best represented by Villa di Cardinal Ippolito d’Este, in Tivoli. [Fig. A1] In this, the park Ligurio had laid out an extensive garden so huge it looked and functioned like a park. This tendency to almost blur—both formally and conceptually—two distinct ideas of spatial enclosure reached an unforeseen acceleration between 1561 and 1565, when Cardinal Felice Peretti di Montalto, and the architect, Domenico Fontana, deployed garden design to transform an old house into a cultivated villa and this, even into a “farm-park.” This would later become Vigna Peretti di Montalto, commonly known as “Villa Peretti.” [Fig. A2] With the latter, the property was enlarged and the garden entirely reconfigured. Peretti was later elected Pope Sixtus V and launched simultaneous reforms from Colli Quirinale towards Monte Esquiline—the location of his property. The more area was renewed, the more the villa was made sense located there. Although traces of a written heritage were never discovered, the Pope’s garden was periodically opened to visitors. These facts bring to the fore the question of whether such publicness was meant to offer pilgrims a secondary entry of connection between S. Maria Maggiore and Fiesole, the future fair at Piazza del Duomo. If true, this would invest the garden with an innovative programme: turning circulation into a producible productive activity. Therefore, it stands on the border between garden and park. In our discussion, such a strategic move is another proof of the great success of monumental villas in exiling rural suburbs. What is singular here? The garden of Villa Peretti demonstrated how such a process could be indefinitely reproduced all over Rome and the entire countryside.

If we agree with Giedion, we may immediately understand Villa Peretti as the literal reference model for Sixtus V’s implementation of his urban reforms of Rome—such as straight streets linking the basilicas to guide the visits of pilgrims. The principle of these interventions was illustrated in a map of Rome by Antonio Bordini in 1518. [Fig. A2] Whether this relation was ever conscious may never be proved nor ruled out. More much telling, though, would be to determine whether his own garden experience could have spatially enacted the Pope’s perception of the Roman landscape, just as his villa may have shaped and enabled the gentrification of the south-eastern and

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265. The basilica was built by Sixtus III in the fourth century and was later a Peretti shown to be the seated Stibbert Bosco. Reissue of Sixtus I’s plans, Lateran Baptistry. 1519. [Bosco. Officina Editoriale. 1893.]

266. Giedion. Ibid. p. 49.

Fig. A1V. Villa del Barone [Villa Peretti]. Plan, [1579].

Fig. A2. Quintilius and to the papal villa of Gregory XIII.

Fig. A3. Birds Eye View of Rome, 1518. Map of Rome by Antonio Bordini.

most precious edge of the city. Whether Peretti purchased the dried-up vineyard in 1576 with this in mind, is unknown, but not impossible. In a brief commentary on Villa Peretti, recent scholarship has raised a similar suspicion, observing that, by 1580, the estate was enlarged until it bordered the terrains of Acqua Alessandrini. Just three years later, their landowners promoted the restoration of the aqueduct. In turn, this was purchased in 1583 by the newly elected Sixtus V. Perhaps the trade was too timely not to be a planned association. Yet the idea of building Villa Peretti on that old vineyard might have made sense for Sixtus mainly because the vineyard laid just beside his favourite building, the Basilica S. Maria Maggiore. Moreover, he knew his active role in the Counter Reformation would soon get him the throne, hence building such a retreat while he still had the power was a way to make a legacy and leave his mark on the city. The fear of not being able to do that in time was real since, backstage, the Cardinal had been progressively disenfranchised by Gregory XIII. So he needed a tacit retreat, but could not afford the aristocratic choice of Monte Pincio.

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On the other hand, Monte Esquilino was not only cheaper but deserted enough to work as a tabula rasa.

The closest depiction of this area is found in a city map engraved by Mario Cartaro and first published in 1576. [Fig. BA] Here, the south-east fringe of the Aurelian Wall (at the top of the plate) looks almost the same as the countryside outside: hills evenly covered with striped checkerboard plantations, divided into farmsteads shaped by curvilinear roads. The uniform appearance is interrupted only by a few objects without apparent connection: the S. Maria degli Angeli building over Terme di Diocleziano, some aqueducts and the Basilica S. Maria Maggiore. Two straight roads seem to tear the area away from the city: Via Pia (from Piazza Montanare) and Via Gregoriana, almost converging at ninety degrees. The former arrives at Palazzo Quirinale and the latter at the Basilica. The space of their lost crossing looks steep and messy. Only S. Maria Maggiore stands out from a scattered building, porticoes and arches. At the other side of its nave, a clear ground is flanked by a long wall with a gate in the middle. That is the entrance to the vineyard purchased by Peretti. Inside, there is a small walled court towards the chapel S. Lucia. At the back, there are crops eastwards all over the piano-shaped terrain. There is not a legible centre nor a prominent pathway. In fact, the map remains neutral about the state of cultivation. But it was probably bad because the Esquilino was very poorly irrigated (most aqueducts nearby were ruined).

In the following year, 1577, a map published by Etienne Duparc and Antoine Lefèvre did not show any changes, except for a clearer representation of the slope inside the property and a medieval tuultus columnatus, substituted Turnus Monstrinius. This was probably part of the larger Hellenistic-Persian garden of Maccenas, which is described in the Satires by Horace. [Fig. BB] (Had the Cardinal been a humanist reader — which he was emphatically not — the Turri would have been kept as a cherished feature of his villa.) This was a new start, even for Peretti, who was the son of a peasant and knew what to do. So, he spent nearly five years mainly ploughing and enlarging the grounds of his vineyard. Only in 1581 was Fontana commissioned to redesign the estate as a villa. The original plans of that stage are unknown. But an advanced outcome was reached by Antonio Tempesta in a map first issued in 1593, but probably finished by 1589. [Fig. BC]
Here the villa is subtitled Villa d’Montalto. Now much higher, the walls are cornered with watchtowers. The original gate has been replaced by a monumental entry. Outside the front, Obelisk Equilino (1587) is off-centred to align with both the Basilica and the entrance of the Montalto property. Two parallel rows of short trees ‘guard’ the newly rectangular piazza.

Another free-standing object joins the family of Basilica and Obelisk: Palazzo Felice (1587), the cubic loggia placed inside the villa which originally reads as a monumental garden. Each of the four linear spaces girded a different framing element: from the front loggia, an avenue of cypresses hosts the entrance gate; from the back portico, a court clears the sight for a fountain trio to emerge niched by poplar trees; on the right, a pergola walks through two crops of olives to end at last in a hilly shady bosom. The left façade is draped by an apparently ornamental kitchen garden. The sequence suddenly stops at another avenue. Transversal and longer than the first, it links the upper bosom to the second gate, Porta Quiriniana (1587). Regular gaps between cypresses reframe, on one side, the villa at the longest length, and on another, aqueducts backed by the city walls. As these huge column-like objects are carefully planted side by side, they would flank the straight avenue as two huge walls, making the space completely shaded and breezless during a summer afternoon. This effect would thereby make of each pathway a prolongation of the inside space of the small casino— that is, from the centre of the villa onwards.

This seems to be, in fact, one of the intentions behind the star-shaped plan, though the most evident one is to draw our gaze to what awaits outside: for instance, S. Maria degli Angeli (1586) next to Piazza delle Termi (1588), with Monte Pincio in the background. So, garden architecture is not so much driven to frame villa as landscape but, first and foremost, landscape, city.

Such a change only accorded with the productive role of Villa Peretti towards its surroundings. Instead of facing the Termi with a castle wall, the property offered the façade of its secondary (yet bigger) Palazzo Montalto (1588). Fig. BD This had a lower wing (the bottega) which was designed to assist merchants with 18 shops and dormitories. The villa was thus put to work, just like the other urban reforms of Sixtus V. First, the garden lay out a possible system to make the rural side inhabitable and walkable. Second, it is reconfigured along with

...the changing city: in and out, straight roads making sense of old bits and new pieces. Indeed, the Equilino eventually looked like a vibrant suburb entirely connected with both city and countryside. However, the map did not picture the most crucial transformation: Acqua Alexandrina was streaming hastily from 1586 when it was restored to become Acqua Felice. Throughout the century, irrigation was a problem as Roman as the floods in November. The latter were countered by successive reforms along the Tiber banks – the flanking of Via Giulia and of Via della Lungara, where Villa Chigi was grounded 10 metres above water.

Nevertheless, none of the Popes before Sixtus V (including his enemy Gregory XIII) had managed to repair and improve the water supply on urban scale. Thus, more than roads and obelisks, the reclaiming of Roman aqueducts was the actual civic triumph of his papacy. But this was only accomplished precisely because it had started beforehand within the private endowment of his villa. It is equally worth noting that in 1585 Sixtus V had also purchased Villa d’
Napoli from Cardinal Caraffa—the reign was a gardened checkerboard tabula in a vast expanse of greenery.

Having two huge properties to keep irrigated, Peretti was thus personally interested in solving the irrigation drama once and for all. The result is evident in the famous axiomatic plan of Giovanni Battista Falda. Printed in 1675, Falda was known for his highly detailed perspectives of the major villas and gardens around Rome. So we may trust his depiction of Aqueduct Pellicia leading Porta di S. Lorenzo to enter Villa Peretti. Water streamed down for about 500 metres in parallel with the longest wall of the property, whose original size had nearly tripled. At earlier times, the colonnaded enlargement of the villa had a lot (if not everything) to do with the appropriation of the aqueduct itself. In fact, it would have been impossible to cultivate the extensive garden without it. Despite the date of 1675, the layout depicted by Falda was probably built from 1588 until the Pope died in 1590. By expanding the outer limits of his villa, Sixtus V had also encompassed the convent annex of S. Maria Maggiore and straightened up Strada di Porta S. Lorenzo and Via Gregoriana.

The whole villa is now formed by two areas which are divided by a great open area with columns. The left-hand portion, the original garden here was replaced by a triangulation of avenues cutting through the property, thus opening up several gardens. Each enclosure is bounded by a low wall topped with a line of conifers. Two types of plan dominate: the cruciform flower bed centered around a fountain and the grass and gravelly bed, small trees. Perhaps many of these were of pecans, which must have been planted in Sixtus V's time, and were means in the Roman dialect. The casino lost its shady aspect to be surrounded by two private yet monumental gardens. Meanwhile, a miniature farm replaces the hilly slopes. Within a single tunnel, which might have been at least partially supported with small columns, because of those narrow, narrow bases, the painting of canvases would cover the garden with light. David R. Croft, Garden and Landscape in Roman Art. (Princeton, University Press, 1955), p. 160.

Fig. 8D. Hypothetical isometric view of the gardens and main house in the Villa Peretti.
Given the huge amount of soil removed, it is impossible not to question the reason behind the decisions made by Peretti and Fontana. Famous predecessors, such as Villa Madama and Ori Farnesiano, had dealt with similar sites by building up terraces to stage their gardens. This was, in fact, the Roman way, making theatrical spectacles out of topography. Thus, why were terraces so timidly deployed in Villa Peretti? Sixtus V was not interested in referencing ancient prototypes of the so-called Golden Age. (Instead, he would only look at imperial and medieval pasts to cherry-pick useful objects.) Furthermore, he had a completely different purpose in framing the city with its landscape: to drive civic and pilgrim traffic. I would like to argue that none of his urban work was clearer about this idea than the last garden layout inside his villa, because here the obsessive use of straight avenues aims solely at creating distance. It is all about the very distance times the experience of motion. So that points of arrival (gates, courts and fountains) are given enough reverence — as they emerge from long walks through repetitive scenes, such as the compassed pitches of *coppa* cypress trees. Occasionally, a well-ordered garden could be glimpsed between cypresses. Hence the overall image of Villa Peretti was of a highly cultivated place. In fact, Sixtus V was himself an eager gardener who planted and nursed the first seeds of olive and cypress trees, using, perhaps, the horticultural knowledge gained either from his father or from his youth as a Franciscan friar, along with the garden manuals published during his childhood. Further, with that miniature farm on the scene, not only would the villa appear self-sufficient, but also Sixtus V could play the pastoral character — while in fact he was a powerful landowner. At that turbulent moment, that was the most cautious image-making for a former mendicant turned Pope. 

While that first area is undoubtedly the garden of the villa, the annex looks like a *jardini* with polygonal boxes and ornamental shrubs. Still, both plans read as parts of the same villa narrative, since the cypress crossroads centred in the former is prolonged towards the latter, while the set-square wall between allows for their independent access and controlled connection. In my view, the *jardini* would be locked whenever the garden was opened to visitors. Surely, the two enclosures had different architectural programmes. But were they complementary?

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*Fig. 3.2. Hypothetical reconstruction of Villa Peretti. The situation plan clearly shows thevilla as a distinctive enolsh of monumental gardens, orchards and farms. Note how the star-shaped plan of formalized *mature* spatially sets up a potential opening of the estate while it runs through the Guasto Precinct. Between the thirteenth and sixteenth centuries, the City of Rome had demolished the entire property to exploit it with the Termini Station.*
or autonomous? What could that annex to the villa that was not yet accomplished by the main garden? In 1986 (one year after the second area was acquired) Sixtus V started to develop the silk industry as part of his economic revitalisation of Rome. He legislated that mulberry trees should be planted everywhere so that silkworms could be raised on a large (or visible) scale. Eventually, he even planned to transform the Colosseum into a weaving factory. Given this ambition, we may speculate whether he had used his poder to grow mulberry trees. Otherwise, where else in the city could one extensively crop a species that requires an empty circle of 15 metres around it?

From archetype to project

Whether it was ever involved in the silk industry project, that annexed poder appears indeed to address the city rather than just the villa, for either its productive nature or the apparent infinitude of its limits and connections. Foremost, the space housed a major aqueduct of Rome. The duo of monumental garden and urban poder pushes Villa Peretti outside the family of suburban villas. Today, this villa would be naturally understood as an urban park with several gardens and two palaces. But this oversimplifies what is as complex as a threshold. First, the park did not exist as a concept at that time. Second, the spatial disorientation (that one can only experience with this type of enclosure) did not happen anywhere inside Villa Peretti, because garden visitors could always guide themselves through the star-shaped layout of straight avenues. Despite the impossibility of seeing the outlines of the villa, the star-shaped avenues produced an order of cardinal spaces and centralities. So, this villa did not break up the Renaissance marriage of nature and architecture. However, it did shake many of its principles, as it had inverted the supremacy of walls in shaping gardens. It constructed, thus, the literal scheme of the city to become an open (almost infinite) and multi-centred territory. (Fig. BF) Hence, these six villas only touched on here related to the very crux of this entire thesis, namely from 'archetype to project' — that is, when the garden ceases to be legible as an enclosure and shut away from the city (or desert), to gradually become an architecture obliterate urban limits, rather than making them legible.
Otium cum Dignitate
A policy for the Roman borgate

These six paradigms of suburban villas were formal acts of appropriation that happened to be analogous reconstructions of the spatial relation between Rome and its countryside, from compactly enclosed to infinitely open, like the very logic and direction of urban development that have influenced the much later transformation of Rome into the capital of Italy, as is perfectly clear from the conversion of those garden villas into picturesque parks, such as the opening of Villa Borghese. [Fig. A] However, now there seems to be a revival of the sign orchard, quite similar to the sixteenth-century refashioning of the rustic vineyard into monumental gardens. [Fig. B] Non-profit associations such as the Zitadelle Romana are mostly responsible for helping groups of people — mostly residents in precarious areas, with little or no public space — to occupy vacant land, where they self-organise several "giardini comunitari." [Fig. C] During the last decade, these small "local" interventions have resulted in what may be considered a "new wave" of 200 allotments around Rome, [Fig. D] in a region that is no longer that idyllic countryside just outside the Aurelian wall, but at the far periphery of the Grande Raccordo Anulare (Great Ring Junction) or, simply, the GRA.3 The third similarity is that large portions of this territory are owned by a few families, who are the major contractors of the city. The Salini, for example, possibly own as much land as did the Rovere family during the renaissance. In the 1990s, such powerful
groups built several housing districts, mostly illegally, on the abundant vacant agrarian land around the Roman Agro.⁴

According to urbanists Italo Insolera and Paolo Berdini, around 60% of these urbanisations were illegally built by private developers, forming the borghi.⁵ Lacking cohesive planning and regulation, borghi are usually precarious neighbourhoods with almost no public infrastructure (from rubbish collection to pavements). As their private developers firstly launched a shopping mall by a highway, and then included housing schemes, these districts often invade the limits of nature reserves, protected areas or the abundant vacant agrarian land around the Roman countryside.⁶ The borghi often vary in size, shape, density and social strata.⁷ But they always follow the logic of the real-estate market, with a predominance of the palazzine and villette. Their target population is mostly the migrant families of low-income workers. As neither the contractors nor the mayor have ever accomplished an interconnection of the periphery with the - already insufficient - infrastructure of Rome, these districts have gradually formed

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Fig. A. The reopening of Villa Borghese to the city of Rome, 12 July 1969.

4. Ibid., p. 87
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid., p. 44

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Fig. B. The urban territory of the Comune of Rome in 2019 (the hatched area) around the imperial walls (thick black line) with the main nineteenth-century suburban villette (blue dots). Note the areas of the largest villas (blue boxes). Which would respect as public parks the nineteenth-century estates.
an archipelago of Borgate around the city centre. [Fig. F] Many of these developments — especially the ones built between the 1990s and 2000s — critically lack cohesive systems of even the most basic public spaces, such as sidewalks. [Figs. F and G] However, these conditions may not be entirely bad, as these settlements are isolated but nonetheless next to beautiful natural, or rural, fringes. [Fig. H] and some Borgate have found compensation for the absence of conventional squares in the local establishment of small parish churches, which provide the residents with some sort of collective space, and schools.

[Fig. I] The following design brief questions the role of the monumental gardens of Roman villas in the process of appropriation and suburbanisation of the rural area around of Rome. Further, such a prototype — once displaced and reversed — may enable a policy for re-appropriating idle land around the many peripheries of the city today.

Even though the general precarity of infrastructure, services and public spaces accentuates the insular condition of the Roman Borgate, they do have great potential to become less dependent on the city or, at least, to enable relaxation, leisure and social encounters. If only the land around these places were inhabitable. [Fig. J] In this sense, the Borgate populations face the same problem faced by the sixteenth-century papal court, having to make the countryside into an architecture of dwelling in retreat with spaces for social rituals. Upon this possible analogy, the project gives the Borgate a readable system of collective spaces for both the stoppage and circulation of pedestrians. It is an affirmative act of delimitation, of both natural and built borders, that takes advantage of the landscape, similar to the examples of suburban villas, but with a totally different aim. Instead of privately appropriating idle land for the sake of colonisation and urban development, our design strategy aims at enabling emergent groups and associations of local residents to reclaim idle land. The first step towards this is to rethink the garden as an architecture that can formalise the rough edges of these Borgate so that residents may begin to recognise and demarcate their space of intervention. [Figs. K to N] Through the very shaping of the ground, an alternative paradigm of the ‘common’ suburban villa could gradually start to interconnect the insular Borgate with a linear system of terraces, steps and shared...
Fig. D: The new wave of 800 allotments (blue dots), of which most were occupied between 2020 and 2021 on the periphery of Rome. Although most are far away from the old city center, they still are within the municipal limits (black circle line) of the Grande Raccordo Anulare or SRA.

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Fig. E: Spread of Borgate (blue lines) 1960/1993, within the Concession of Rome These illegal zones are usually on the north-western periphery "legal" (blue hatching), over the city limits, and considered an urban social and cultural area, archaeological parks (cross-hatched) and reserves (blue dot hatching). Preexisting urban areas range from north to south-east.

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Fig. F: Primo district is a housing estate mostly illegally built from 1990 onwards. The settlement edges the Natural Reserve Gavݴa, on the north region outside the GBA. This location is generally pervious for it lacks public services and infrastructure. The site is characterized by two nucleoids (blue lines), each with a nucleoid core (white). The nucleoid cores consist of most of its indigenous vegetation (blue lines). As these fringes that the two main surrounding roads of the settlement, they could feature a linear system of pedestrian circulation, essential for leisure and collective activities.

Fig. G: Vito district has a housing from 1990 onwards. Its settlement edges the Natural Reserve Gav時点で, on the south region outside the GBA. The site is mainly characterized by single-family housing that lacks public squares, sidewalks and even paved streets. The local parish church (blue line) is the only collective space in the settlement, even though it's isolated on a high slope with difficult access, especially for pedestrians. This space, however, has the potential to become a model for future strategies of intervention.

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Fig. 1: A neighborhood mostly illegally built from 1990 onwards. This settlement edgess the Natural Reserve Marghada on the north outside of the GBA. The site has several problems, such as the lack of a comprehensive system of public spaces, circulation and infrastructure. One map, however, notes the remaining sites, land along the River Gurnee (blue line). These areas could gain a linear system of collective spaces of tenure and pedestrian circulation for residents.

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Fig. J: An edge between Giardini Cannelli and idle land, at the east end of Roman Campagna.

Fig. K: Top: Edge (blue) between Pope Pius and the Roman della Grotta (circle hatch), a drawn mixed forest.

Fig. L: Edge (blue) between Polla and idle land, marquis stitches (dot hatch), grass (circle pattern).

Fig. M: Top: Edge (blue) between Giulio and Roman della Magna (circle hatch) and idle land (dot hatch).

Fig. N: Edge (blue) between Giardini Cannelli, agricultural and idle land (dot hatch).
orchards. [Fig. O] A set of local policies could regulate their building and management through the association of existing parochial churches and allotment organisations, such as the Zoppa Romana.

The creation policies maybe an efficient — and emancipatory — way to counter the historical negligence of both the Administrative Commune of Rome and private developers. Eventually, these self-built and self-managed systems of monumental gardens may not only deal with the difficult topography of the Roman Agro but, also, choreograph everyday circulation into social rituals. These rituals could be communal gardening or, simply, sitting on a terrace to gaze at the sun setting over the landscape. The main reference models for this would be the very prototypes taken from the suburban villa. [Fig. P]

So, each project is a process that starts with the extraction of crucial prototypes from each villa to understand their logic of operation and formal principle. This is, in fact, the linear pathway punctuated by monumental gardens framing city and landscape. Further, those prototypes are extrapolated to compose a wide linear villa-garden. At each point of stoppage, a specific prototype enacts a principle of our policy, such as: inhabitation of existing borders with linear walks and pergolas; formalisation of (potential) centrals with canopies; accessibility of natural fringes via steps, stairways and plinths; re-appropriation of idle land with terraces; reclaiming streams with water mirrors. [Figs. Q to Y] Eventually, these new paradigms of ‘suburban villas’ may even be welcomed by real-estate attempts to market the Roman periphery as a “greener and, thus, vibrant and sustainable.” Nevertheless, even before that happens, our project may house many collective forces on the rise and foster their potential to become autonomous. To start with, it reclaims the formal representation and the spatial use of their immediate landscapes. All this may lead to the possibility of re-appropriation of idle land through a system of terraces which demarcate and, at the same time, give the borgate population the luxury of enjoying outdoor dignity. That is, the possibility of ‘doing nothing’ after a long journey back from work. [Figs. Z to AA]
Fig. 7. Top: A rough edge between the road and a strip of idle land.
Fig. 7. Bottom: A central street without sidewalks in Emma di Gravante.

Fig. 8. Top: A jogged redefines the edge as an inhabitable limit.
Fig. 8. Bottom: A jogged self-forms existing centrality, such as a busy street. The same device also gives access to idle land and attractive features, such as breeze and open space.
Fig. U. Top: A street stop at the verge of Via del Galatino, in Prima Porta.
Fig. V. Bottom: A street sudden stop at the field level, in Ponte d’Anio.

Fig. X. Top: A space offers a place for leisure while giving access to a natural reserve.
Fig. Y. Bottom: A house frames Rome, "as far away," within the urban territory.
Fig. 2: The rain falls on the tiles heard around 8.00am.

Fig. A4: The terrace of a collective garden after the flood, 8.00am.
Pastoral

The more recent English allotment is the image of 'pastoral' politics. It addresses the normalisation of urban re-parcelisation into garden plots which has formally dissolved the archetype and conceptually reduced it to a tool for sheer urbanisation. English allotments served not only food production, self-help and education but, also, to discipline proletarian families by instilling in them an innocent image of the very landscape that produced their condition of dispossession.
Garden plots as final naturalisation of Enclosure: allotments in London

Life’s getting hard in here
So, I do some gardening
Anything to take my mind away from where it’s supposed to be
The nice lady next door tells of green beds
And all the nice things that she grows in them
I can’t grow tomatoes on the front step
Sunflowers, beans sprout, sweet corn and radishes
I feel practiced, I pull out weeds

As living conditions currently worsen everywhere—from neglected peripheries to expensive urban centres—gardening comes to signify not only a relaxing activity but also the possibility of a ‘better life.’ That is because the cultivation of a garden implies a significant amount of space, time and autonomy, which happen to be the ultimate ‘luxuries’ one can aspire to today, especially within cities such as Rome and London. Despite their many singularities, these urban territories share the same living conditions, mostly defined by their ‘service/knowledge economies’ and so-called ‘post-Fordist’ or ‘immaterial’ modes of production. Every worker involved in the reproduction of these systems—from Chief Executive Officers to factory assembly workers, doctors, cleaners and even farmers working ‘outside the city’—currently face a diminution of rights and a lack of contractual warranties. Although the scheduling and management of time have become two of the most fundamental job skills, workers cannot plan their own lives. The precarious condition of zero-hours contracts further emphasises that paradox. Moreover, the innate human “feeling of not feeling at home” is no longer an existential problem, but a real
fact for most young workers who cannot afford to buy a house. To 'do some gardening' somewhere may become, therefore, a way to at least compensate for that feeling. As Courtney Barnett sings in "Acne GYCancer," growing tomatoes can make one forget about all problems and 'feel proactive,' thus 'in charge' of some part of a life increasingly precarious. Such an effect is also important to 'well-to-do' workers. To corporate agents, for instance, whose entire 'careers' fit in few Excel spreadsheets, the cultivation of the simplest 'window-box herb garden' can bring a tangible sense of accomplishment. If done properly, either as a ritual or a hobby, gardening can bring consistency, pleasure and imagination to the everyday. Mostly for all the reasons above, there is a current resurgence in the demand for allotment sites within London. This popular interest is comparable to the present 'new wave' of 'giardini condivisi' around Rome. In both cases, allotment gardening has become a way for either retired middle-class or young workers to improve their lives with healthy habits, self-care, socialisation and local associations. Their key difference is the way in which each has developed historically. The present Roman tale on allotments draws directly from the ancient tradition of almost every household - even the humblest - having a small garden with an orchard to cultivate in the idle outskirts of the city. So, there is no nostalgia there but a sense of continuity and, perhaps, reinvention of a practice - and knowledge - common to nearly all social classes. Whereas in London, there is a general view of the English allotment as either a past 'culture' that is disappearing or a 'proletarian' symbol of utilitarianism and resistance. Although none of these propositions are wrong, they are neither historically accurate nor complete. It is nonetheless a fact that in England, and especially London, allotments are disappearing despite the growing demand. And, in order to understand why, one must look closer at their history.

During the 2017 UK elections, Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn described himself as an "incorrigible runner, cyclist and allotment gardener," who, if becoming Prime Minister, would not give up his plot in East Finchley. While this "candid" statement was probably an attempt to identify with a larger electorate than Labour's, such hobbies do imply the very qualities required from the most effective workers, who (like the politician) should be (or become): self-disciplined, self-initiating, healthy, skilled, hands-on and creative. An
allotment in this sense means much more than its general definition of "a land of usually 250 square metres rented by an individual for growing vegetables or flowers." [(Fig. C)] Not coincidentally, Corbyn concluded his self-portrait by remarking that "digging and clipping gives me peace to think." Parry for this kind of association one understands why the practice has become increasingly popular amongst Londoners and the mainstream media. The BBC recently launched its series "The Great Allotment Challenge," while the Guardian's online "Allotment Blog" has been a success since 2012. Browsing through markets and bookshops, one finds that "slow-cooked organic home-grown foods" are in fashion. Often married with environmentally-friendly slogans, this may also hint at the making of a broader ethos, one that is already crystallised in the city, with stores with such names as Planet Organic found on almost every street. Meanwhile, chronic surges of Conservative austerity have been progressively pressuring tax payers to provide alternative ways for their own basic needs. For instance, the less public funding goes to hospitals, the more the NHS resorts to promoting outdoor activities as a major profligate. Faced with such a scenario, it is easy to agree that vegetable gardening is one of the most productive uses of one's spare time. Besides life-style pursuits and rigorous consumption, the latest wave of allotment-holding has been also pushed by a general need for wellbeing, the significant share of which is so typically attributed to verdant places. Although London has a well-cultivated tradition, over 40 parks, 150 garden squares and 200 commons, 20,000 allotment sites with 36,000 plots do not fulfill the growing demand.

Over 2,000 aspiring gardeners face long waiting lists. Conversely, land has been made less available. Ever since their lowest popularity in the 1970s, many sites have been removed, some entirely revoked. For instance, from a 1972 listing of 59 sites in Barnet, 20 were removed due to either new urban planning or private development. Similarly, Ealing Dean Allotments had more than half of its original area replaced by charity housing for the elderly. Across the city, on east-side Hackney Wick, Manor Garden was threatened by the construction of the 2012 Olympic Park. All this happened lawfully, because most sites were statutory schemes and thus subject to government decisions. They ran on land that had previously been acquired by local authorities and allocated for the specific purpose of allotment gardens, a procedure that generally implies legal protection against removal. Nevertheless, just as councils "must provide" plots following popular demand, they also have the power to alter or not to renew their lease. The latter often prevails. This is especially true after the London Government Act of 1963, which released the duty of allotment provision for inner boroughs, changing it from mandatory to discretionary. Therefore there is a contrast between centre and suburb when it comes to the quantity, concentration and size of sites. But in general, all local government is increasingly pressured to prioritise real estate over community participation. Such a condition is clearly visible in the way these gardens survive around London: 80% lie outside the central boundary where new urbanisation is constrained by Green Belt policies, while 13% are gathered in the less-valued boroughs just below the Thames, and less than 1% persist in the more disputed areas. [(Figs. D-E)] In other words, allotments have been equally valued for their grounds and desired for their welfare and form; they therefore represent a critical enclave between private interests and the collective benefit. The fact that their geographic distribution has been almost the same for nearly two centuries suggests this present condition is only one stage within a larger, older and perhaps ongoing process with the city.

No other clue is more telling than the name of this garden type. "Allotment" originally means "that which is allotted; a share, part, or portion granted or distributed; that which is assigned by lot, or by God; anything set apart for a special use or to a distinct party."

The noun may have been either natively formed by the late seventeenth century or, most probably, came into English a century earlier through allotment, from the Old French "allottement" and "distribuer", for "allocation or assignment" and "to parcel out, to divide or distribute as by or into lots." In any case, both formations share the -lot, which is the Germanic word for "parcel of land." This is cognate with Old High German "lhut" for "share of land" and Old English "lot" for "object used to determine someone's share." Hence the connotations "distributed or assigned by lot" mentioned above. These definitions thus confirm that allotment denotes the result of a specific process of distribution, which historically has always been enacted by a higher entity. Depending on the narrative of power, this entity may be seen itself, an auspice, a deity, a king or the state. Meanwhile, for the first
Fig. D. Distribution of allotment sites (blue) within Greater London.

Fig. E. Density of allotment sites per borough within Greater London.
Towards a ‘prehistory’ of English Allotments

While Parliament wrote the ‘legal history’ of English Allotments, David Crouch and Colin Ward have been amongst the first historians to address the matter from the perspective of plot holders. who — until the 1940s — were mostly British middle-aged male workers. It is important to note, though, that during those years Colin Ward was a young architect on his way of becoming one of the most prominent anarchist thinkers of that generation. His interest in that type of gardening has therefore focused on the possibility for small communities to self-build allotment sites as means to self-organise and support a substantive form of life outside the system of private property. And it is perhaps due to his compelling book — The allotments, its landscape and culture — that figures such as Jeremy Corbyn, or even young East-London hipsters, tend to suppose the model is a ‘working-class invention.’ Likewise, the author of the present thesis personally admits to having almost promptly accepted this hypothesis at the very early stages of her research. After all, it is rare to find an urban event which has not been established by ruling classes or other powerful institutions, such as the Church or State. The angle proposed by Ward and Crouch is that of an investigation, or at least a possible theory of allotment as a social practice. But for some as one sympathises with this assumption or thinks it could take the type a step further architecturally, still, it should be taken as a partial and incomplete view. Instead, in order to reframe the English allotment towards an architectural project for an alternative form of living in London, one must understand this has always been an extremely ambivalent model. This ambivalence does not only come from the archetypal trait of enclosed gardens but, mainly, the fact that allotments do have a ‘prehistory’ within the process of allotting the city. If only sites were more often looked at from above, even the most innocent observer would become sceptical; their shapes do fit into urbanisation, precisely, as the necessary planted ‘voids’ within densely built areas. Although these ‘voids’ have now become rare and precious, most stand on land that was once the least productive arable soil, the residual edges, the last ‘crumbs of the cake’, of large apportionments of land. Hence the insular condition of these places today. That also confirms why they are usually far from central London — in the zones where the former ‘country side’ was. The comparison of an Ordnance Survey map from 1930s (Fig. F) with another from 1860s (Fig. G) reveals that both allotment gardens and suburban housing blocks have the same shapes of former rural gebees. It is also not by chance that, roughly within the second half of that period, both allotment practice and the urban amalgamation of rural land boom.
But when and how did the term allotment become a garden type? The concept had emerged and resurfaced in multiple places in Britain, developing unevenly from a range of practices from the late eighteenth century onwards. Just as they varied amongst parishes and counties, so did their names: 'garden ground,' 'field gardens,' 'potato gardens,' 'cottage gardens.' Meanwhile, 'allotment of land' by itself was frequently associated with the provision of fuel and collection of turf [Fig. II] as described in the first Allotments Act of 1822, in which the term 'garden' is not mentioned at all. Or, with the Select Vestries Act of 1819, parishes were formally allowed to 'let land for labourers.' Yet cases of areas more precisely described as 'allotted in gardens for the labouring poor' were already reported in 1797. Hence it took a while before these events spread widely. The small landholding named "allotment garden," as it is presently considered, was only normalised for the first time with the Allotments Act of 1908. Ever since, many associations of plot holders have transformed the type into a practice, properly said, to lessen the cost of household reproduction by offering the possibility of growing one's own food instead of buying everything from supermarkets. In promoting new popular access to the land, English allotments have almost become a possible mechanism towards land reforms. Although this has never happened in this country, overall, the model turned out to be unquestionably beneficial to the development of civil agencies. Ultimately, it poses an alternative model to the increasing commodification of life and urban land. That is perhaps why most people and even scholars believe allotments are a "grass-root movement," set in antithesis to modernisation. For instance, in a compelling essay about the disappearance of New York's rogue gardens, leftist thinker and self-professed "avant gardener" Peter Lamborn Wilson praises English allotments as "remnants of pre-Enclosure commons. "[40] [Fig. I] That is, however misleading. As Jeremy Burchardt has thoroughly proved, "neither in its intentions nor in its effects was the mainstream allotment movement backwards-looking. On the contrary, allotments were a persistently modernising force."[41] This is evident in the earliest sites around the 1970s, when landowners...
and farmers provided peasants with "potato grounds," so they could survive the severe subsistence crisis during and after the Napoleonic Wars. This crisis was also caused by Parliamentary Enclosure, which had abruptly dissolved the open-field system into a homogeneous territory of intensive agriculture. These were much less productive and resilient and produced a series of bad crops and failed harvests.

The relation of "field allotments" and "allotment gardens" with parliamentary enclosure is nonetheless much more complex and ambivalent than it appears. It had varied over time in the face of political and social events, such as peasant riots and the establishment of philanthropic societies dedicated to help the "labouring poor." The emergence of the so-called "Swing Riots" between 1830 and 1831 was a series of protests by small farmers, cottagers, and labourers against the effects of this acceleration of enclosure. For not only had parliamentary enclosure abolished a system, which (for better or worse) gave the peasants access to common and waste lands but, crucially, they had denied them their labour. Since that process favoured the re-organisation of diverse farmsteads into extensive monocultures, it increased the need for horse-powered machines, which ended up reducing the quantity of manual labour required. Machines, moreover, made tangible how the new gentility had alienated the peasants from the land in all possible dimensions. And it is difficult to define the origins of the "land question" in English culture, the Swing episode does give a significant clue as to why land has become so central to working-class struggle. Yet the protesters did not focus on attacking the legal acts that had legitimised that massive privatisation of landownership. Instead, they threat landlords and rich tenant farmers with demands for higher wages, better working conditions and less machinery. The Swing Riots were important, in this sense, for reclaiming the land from the point of view of labour, or, in other words, for addressing the idea that land does not imply just soil and yields but also an entire process of cultivation through social relationships from which it should not be estranged. To the peasants, enclosure was tragic precisely for having freed the manors from the traditional duty to provide them with the right to use — not own — the land. However, their claims, which were thus essentially ethical but relatively modest, upset the landed class beyond Kent, where these protests concentrated, as evidenced by the events that followed immediately after the Riots, such as the foundation of the...

44. The Swing Riots were referred to as "Swing Riots," a caricature name coined by the protesters and used to signify the intransigence of the landowners, farmers, (or) poor, vice versa, and so on. The Structure Riots were first mentioned by The Times on 24 October 1830.

45. About 6 million acres of common land were taken from tenants under the Enclosures Act of 1723 and the land of the Swing Riots in 1830.

46. The Swing Riots happened in two stages. First, by seizing their land, were thrown out of their homes; second, by the destruction of thousands of machines, machinery, huts and cattle. More than 1000 of these machines were destroyed only a few months after the first outbreak.

Fig. 1. Plan of a typical medieval manor in England.
Plots and the moralisation of rural labourers

Northfield Allotments is the oldest surviving example of allotments within the urban territory of London.64 The site has been in continuous cultivation since its establishment in 1824, in the old centre of Ealing, 12 kilometres west of Charing Cross [Fig. J]. This case is extremely significant not only for marking the late development of allotments near the city but, also, being one of the earliest Enclosure enactments with the specific purpose of allotment gardening.65

The original name of the site was, in fact, “Ealing Dean Common Allotments,” after the formerly open field it occupied. At that time, Ealing was not yet the Metropolitan Borough it is today, but an agrarian parish divided into large medieval manors, such as Gunnersbury and Pitshanger.66 These estates cropped wheat, barley and rye to produce mixed-grain flour.67 Because of their location, at the very crossroads of Middlesex, they made Ealing a hotspot for the seasonal agricultural and horticultural economy of the county. As this system relied on migrant wage labour, the area hosted great influxes of foreign labourers—mostly Irish, some either going to or coming from London—which peri-odically inflated the local population. The parish was attractive also for its various tracts of wasteland along main roads, such as Hanger Lane and Dysterley Green, which allowed non-parishioners to graze.68 At the same time, only certain groups of parishioners had access to the common fields, where they could plant potatoes, dig turf and collect fuel.69 The Ealing Vestry had the authority to impose these restrictions since it governed the parish on behalf of the Diocese and of the Bishop of London, Charles James Blomfield, who held the manorial rights over all land, wastes andproduce.70

To enforce its power and control, the Vestry made communing and intercommoning increasingly difficult from the sixteenth century onwards. However, this changed after 1800, when the entity decided to couple such practices with workhouses in order to reduce poor rates and aver social struggle. These problems, however, were only to increase as London rapidly expanded, accelerating the enclosure and mechanisation of agricultural production at large.71 Three decades later, failed crops in Aetos and Hampstead hit the economy of Middlesex, causing massive starvation, imprisonment of seasonal labourers and social unrest.72

In Ealing, consequently, workhouses became overcrowded, and parishioners complained about still having to pay rates.73 In response, the Vestry insisted upon enforcing respect for the Church and policing the roads.74 However, in 1832 it decided to also experiment with its largest common, Ealing Dean,75 and petitioned the Bishop for his consent to enclose and allot the land for “poor relief”.76 By the end of that year, he officially authorised the enclosure.77 [Fig. L]

There is no record in the official minutes of the exact reasons for the petition.78 Moreover—contrary to what projective historians, such as Colin Ward, would have chosen to presuppose—there is no evidence to suggest that labourers were the initiators of the process. Instead, given the obscurity and speed of transactions between the
Vestry and the Bishop, one can suspect both parties had already been interested in
transforming Ealing Dean, regardless of the actual will of the parishioners. In
fact, according to the Poor Law Reform, ongoing at that time, enclosing the
Common would give the Vicar more political credibility amongst philanthropists to raise funds
for the parish. Meanwhile, for the Bishop, the further subdivision of the
land into garden plots mattered for two main reasons. Firstly, the process
would legally reinforce his authority over Ealing, a strategic unit of the Diocese.
Secondly, as we have seen earlier in this chapter, he believed letting garden to labourers was more beneficial than
"simply providing land for grazing or ploughing. Although such an
alternative had been experimented with rather timidly by late 1700,
mainly in northern counties, the year 1830 saw greater interest from
the southern gentry, ecclesiastical figures, cosmopolitan philanthropists
and Members of Parliament. It was no longer far-fetched to consider
that spade horticulture could make allotments more economically efficient
than those conventional modulities. Above all, for the Bishop,
with his clerical role, the purposeful task of gardening and growing
food had a dignifying educational value for any man - let alone the
"poor parishioner," who, could then, find his own family. Subsistence
gardening, in this sense, spoke to the heart of the Protestant faith in
individual self-help, nuclear households and pastoral governance. So,
it was not the case that the Bishop and Vicar planned the enclosure
of Ealing Dean out of sheer ambition for ownership, social control and
power. From their viewpoint, enclosing and allotting that site into familial
gardens was the most "appropriate choice from every possible angle.
Moreover, after the historical unrest between 1800 and 1830, the
Vestry might have suspected that the "poor problem" in Ealing was complex
and, thus, required solutions beyond the - clumsily - pragmatic
construction of workhouses and limited provisions of sites for grazing
and collecting turf.

One can understand the persistence of the idea of the
garden as an archetype of collective enclosure, crucially different from
farms and parks. Unlike farming, which addressed the reproduction
of the entire parish and - at that point - of London, gardening was a
domestic, thus "private," affair. It therefore seemed to exist outside the
political economy of parliamentary enclosure which caused so much
controversy in early 1830. Unlike public strolling, which shaped the
"mundane" behaviour of urban subjects, gardening was a "humble,
and so "noble," occupation for the parishioner and "family man.
(Pre-)Victorian England thinks and speaks in parables. The moralising
character behind the enclosure of Ealing Dean permeated the legal
deed of consent, even though the text was intentionally technical:

I Glaed, James Bishop of London, at Lord of the Manor of Ealing,
otherwise Ealing in the County of Middlesex. Do hereby contain in
so far as by Law I may or can, to the Enclosure of ALL THAT piece or
parcel of Waste or Common land or ground called Ealing Dean
Common within the said Manor containing twenty acres two rods and
six inches parcel or the extent thereof according to the plan hereunto
inscribed that in order to the same might be occupied solely in Allotments
of not more than one rod to each person, by poor Parishioners of the
said Parish of Ealing, to be appointed by a Committee of Management,
of whom the Vicar for the time being always to be one - the
said Allotments to be cultivated with the Spade. Provided nevertheless
that no person or persons be permitted to work on the same ground
on the Lords day, or at sound of bell before his or her occupation.
Provided also that no nuisance or inconvenience be occasioned
to the public, especially to the Occupiers of the Houses, upon
or near to the said Common. And that a sufficient quantity of
the Common is reserved for convenient roads and footpaths and
the fringes to Houses if necessary. WITNESS my hand and seal this
twenty-seventh day of November in the year of our Lord one thou-
sand and eight hundred and thirty-two.

"Twenty acres" corresponded to the entire Common, whose area and
triangular shape had been predefined by surrounding globes and
roads. What mattered most in this document was not the perimeter of
the enclosure but the internal subdivision and use of the land. So
the writer starts by referring to the annexed document, a drawing
strikingly similar to the "planning application" which most London
authorities presently require for any development. [Fig M] The
scheme proposed pathways and new lanes to integrate the site to the existing
grid of public circulation. The draftman was equally precise in
stressing the properties nearby, such as the "land & tenants belonging to Mr
Sam Tompkins." Topography was nonetheless missing, except for the
couple of ponds and streams, coloured in dark grey, and ditches offsetting
the eastern and western fences. In further contrast to the accuracy
of the text, the plan abounds from laying out the grid of one-road
parcels, which would form the future allotments? One must note how

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emphasize the Bishop was in linking "one rood per person" and then categorising such an individual as a "poor parsoner." That implied the process was about redistributing land to a specific subject—the labouring parsoner—yet without acting against the status quo. On the contrary, the allotment of Ealing Dean followed the age of private property as identified citizenship with landholding. Such respect for ownership is equally evident in both drawing and text. For instance, the writer asserts that the site should never disturb the "public" nor the "Occupiers of the Houses" nearby. Even more remarkable, though, is the absence of the word "garden," which the Bishop replaces by "Allotments to be cultivated with the Spade." He thus meant the enclosure was for rural horticulture rather than enclosed farming. One may further interpret the emphasis on "Spade" as implying that such cultivation should serve productive rather than ornamental purposes. Finally, the clearest indication of the ideological element in the plan to enclose the Common appears when the Bishop prohibits work on "the Lord's day." That is, no gardening on Sundays.

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The first contract and tenancy agreement for a single plot of Dean Common Allotment.

1. Thomas Adams, of the Parish of Ealing, Labourer, being desirous of renting Twenty Rods of Land, as marked out on Ealing Dean Common, on the Plan, and Numbered 40, do promise faithfully to observe the following Conditions, on Penalty of being immediately dispossessed of the Allotment if they are not strictly performed:

First.—I will pay to the Parish Officers for the time being, to commence from Lady-Day next, the Sum of £10 10s. 0d. Shillings yearly, for the said Lot, in Quarterly Payments, to be made at the Cross-House, Ealing, at the first Monthly Audit immediately following the Quarter Day on which the Rent is payable.

Secondly.—I will keep the Land well and properly Cultivated (as a Garden) and Manured, and will keep the Quickest Hedges at all times well Weeded and Cleaned, and Mended when necessary, I will not erect, or suffer to be erected, any House or other Building upon the Land.

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More than a 'tenant', this document was a sort of an 'agreement' for the enclosure and future use of the Common. The entire event thus seemed an opportunity for the Bishop to put an urgent idea into practice. Although it was the Vestry that drafted the tenancy agreements, the terms perfectly coincided with the Episcopal will. The Vestry let the first plot in 1833 to a parishioner named Thomas Adams. The tenancy agreement requires the tenant to declare himself as a "Labourer" and "promises to faithfully observe" six conditions. These are as follows:

1. I will pay to the Parish Officers the annual sum of £10 10s. 0d. Shillings.
2. I will keep the Land well and properly Cultivated and Manured.
3. I will keep the Quickest Hedges well Weeded and Cleaned.
4. I will not erect, or suffer to be erected, any House or other Building upon the Land.
5. The Visitor and Parish Officers may be at liberty to come at their pleasure on the Land, to see the Cultivation of the said.
6. I will then Traspas, and allow any of my Parishioners on any...
Such norms are of worthy consideration as they completely dismantle the present image of the English allotment as a ‘movement’ invented by the working class. Cases such as Ealing Dean reveal that, instead, allotments had existed for almost a hundred years under the tight control of parochial authorities and influential landowners.

There are many terms in the tenancy agreement. Firstly, the annual payment of five shillings was symbolic. Its function was to remind the labourer that the allotment was not the fruit of charity but implied a contractual relationship between him and the Vestry. Secondly, the obligation of “proper cultivation” meant the plot should not be only used but also be productive. In other words, the land should never become idle— and neither should the labourer. Note that this is the first time the expression “as a Garden” appears to describe the purpose of the site.60 Meanwhile, the text mentions “hedge” instead of “fence.” The primary use of hedging over fencing is one of the most defining traits of allotments in England. To the present day, hedges and narrow pathways aim to delimit the plots without locking them. The chief reason for the norm on hedging was to convey the legal nature of such possession, which is not about owning but about holding a small parcel of land, subject to certain conditions. Unlike a house, whose dwellers may hide the interior behind a façade and shutters, the space of an allotment must always remain visible to the outside. The absence of built, thus, legal boundaries paved the way for the third condition. For it gave the Viceray easy access to “inspect” the plot at any given time. Meanwhile the fourth condition forbade the labourers to “trespass” on the other’s plot. The combination of these two norms was ana-

gous to the governance of London, which entangled the right of the police with that of private property— similarly to the present status quo in the city, and most other cities in the West. “Biopolitics,” though, was neither a theory nor a buzzword at the time in question, as it has become today.60 However, one may argue that the presence of the Vicar— both physical and psychological— had a “biopolitical” dimension. If the workhouses had been evident instruments of social control and exploitation of the “poor,” the allotment mechanism was much more subtle yet profound in its reach, because the Vicar could tune, care for, and shape the labourer’s life where capital’s knife cuts most keenly: the vital— everyday— reproduction of the human body and its labour power.60 One could say the same about workhouses, but garden plots were crucial different because of their pedagogical, social and cultural dimensions. Ealing Dean was, in this sense, a project of governance through not only subjugation but, above all, subjectification. Despite the coercive nature of such techniques, the entire endeavour presupposed some empowerment of the labourers. This idea is evident in the fifth term of the tenancy agreement, “commanding” the labourer to become a moral model for his community. That is, by conducting himself as a “good Christian”: “sober, honest and thrifty.” Such a “command” was, however, soon turned into a sheer threat with the word “dispossession.” The sixth term describes the “penalty” to be imposed if the plot-holder fails to respect any of the five earlier terms. Here one cannot help suspect cynicism on the part of the Vestry, because it wrote the contract exactly when parliamentary enclosure was utterly despising labourers’ rights to commenting on open fields.

In order to better understand this historical context, one should also consider another crucial event, indirectly related to parliamentary enclosure: Poor Law Reform, which started in 1832, precisely during the implementation phase of Ealing Dean. The Bishop (of course) chaired the Central Board of the Royal Commission responsible for recommending the changes which eventually led to the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834.64 Since the English Parliament wanted the reform to lower the spending on “poor relief,” the Board focused on correcting the workhouse system.65 Garden allotments, therefore, did not feature in the final report to MPs. Allotments nonetheless soon became a topic of debate, as the assistant commissioners interviewed labourers, farmers and landowners.65 When...
questioned about the "recent experiment," the participants offered either positive or contrary opinions. Most of them, though, agreed that gardening plots could help low-income families to produce their own food. Precisely for this reason, employers were opposed to the practice because they worried it could make employees "tired" and, thus, less "willing" (or not seeing) to work for them. Many landowners, however, had mixed feelings about allotments: some held to the belief that sites could reduce violence and riotousness amongst rural labourers. As the Commission reported these perceptions, many MPs and philanthropic organisations — such as the Labourers' Friend Society - changed their emphasis in regard to promoting this 'new' type of landlordship; instead of focusing on food production, they started to highlight data showing that sites had improved both the workforce and reliability of their tenants. The Reform further influenced the allotment debate, leading to a shift away from "providing land to the 'poor'" towards "boosting industriousness amongst labourers." In this context, not only was there not only a different agenda, but also the Protestant concept of 'self-help.' Thanks to this development, allotments became interesting not only to Conservatives but also to the increasing number of Liberal MPs. "Helping the 'poor' to help themselves out of poverty" was the key point upon which various political figures, with divergent agendas, could agree. Such a consensus undoubtedly reflected the remaining influence of late eighteenth-century evangelicalism over Parliament and the political economy at large. However, 1830 inaugurated a phase in which pragmatism gradually disguised the appearance of ideology in politics and economy. It was precisely this change that would reinvigorate paternalism and its interest in garden allotments. And for Liberal MPs allotments seemed ideal, for they could neither benefit and reform the moral character of the 'labouring poor' but also lower public spending on poor relief.

The Bishop was thus not alone in his enthusiasm. However, unlike other powerful figures and landowners, he knowingly focused on the pedagogical dimension of garden allotments. Besides the pious nature of his position, such a focus was due to his prior first-hand experience in the early 1820s. Bloomsbury had started an experimental site in the village of Chesterford, Essex, where he was Rector, eight years before his election to the Diocese of London. (19)
size of allotments today. From the perspective of the tenant, this was enough space to produce a substantial part of the annual intake of his family. Meanwhile, for the Vicar, such a fraction was small enough to prevent total subsistence and emancipation of his 'flock' of parishioners. In other words, the allotment should make labourers self-reliant but - near - independent from wage, employment and paternalism. In addition, one eighth of an acre easily translated into a rectangular area of 20 perches, which enabled the Vestry to systematically subdivide the triangular Common into a totalising grid. By 1835, the entire enclosure was divided into 145 plots. Through the process of demarcating such a grid, Parish Officers would moreover deepen their knowledge of a good portion of the larger territory that they had to control and collect tithes from. It is worth noting that Ealing Dean Common Allotments featured in the Apportionment Book and Tithe Map of 1839 (Fig. 0), where they are described as "Property of the Bishop of London occupied by the Poor of Ealing."

The parish commissioned the map on the occasion of the Tithe Commutation Act 1836, which required local authorities to publish detailed surveys of all landownership within their bounds. This demand was due to the Tithe Reform, which established that payments to the Church should be in cash instead of in kind. This event epitomised a period of general empowerment and suburbanisation of parishes, at a time when the territory of London was rapidly expanding towards the countryside. From the map one learns that the occupation of Ealing was still quite agrarian. However, accurate, the mapping ignored the railways under construction at that time, even though Uxbridge Road - on the north of Dean Common - appears straighter and larger than it was. Soon after the inauguration of Ealing Broadway Station in 1838, the local population grew rapidly and the parish went from being a rural settlement to being a town and, eventually, a suburb. As this process occurred first on the northern side, the map still shows Dean Common, on the south, entirely surrounded by farms. If the map had provided greater detail regarding the site, one would be able to further understand how the allotment grid signalled - if not anticipated - the forthcoming urban re-parcelisation of its context. The similarity between the logic of allotting Ealing with that of privatising urban land becomes
visible in the Ordnance Survey Maps of 1890 and 1934. [Figs. P-Q]

Solely based on such a formal relationship, one may argue that the allotment was indeed far from a ‘backward’ ruralist practice. On the contrary, it related much more to the production of urban space and its subjectivity than the rural life of the parish, which was, in fact, on the verge of ending. Such a claim sounds far-fetched in the context of the present fetishisation of allotments, but the allotment of Ealing Dean was not at all about farming, but about gardening. Furthermore, the one eighth of an acre plot grid made such cultivation much denser and more diverse than it was on the manors and glebe farms around it. Even though potatoes, wheat and barley were the most popular crops amongst plot holders until 1850,\textsuperscript{16} the strict rule of spade husbandry gave them a horticultural character. Thus, the site must have stood out from that late-agricultural landscape. While such a perspective would only be obtainable today from an aeroplane, a labourer inside his plot was not able to differentiate this enclosure from that of the site — let alone from the outside.

\textsuperscript{177} Local historians believe that around half of the allotment land was given over to the growing of potatoes, the remainder used mostly to grow wheat and barley. Paul McCleave, interview by the author on his garden plot at Ealing Dean Common Allotments, Digital audio recording, London, 2 September 2007.

Since allotments were — and still are — the ‘non-designed’ antitheses of the picturesque garden, their spatial experiences have never been the focus of local histories and scholarly research — that is to say, not from an architectural point of view. This is because historians — and even architects — generally tend to think the making of architecture presupposes professional design practice and authorship. Although cultural studies have successfully brought to light the perspective of labourers, they dismiss the fact that allotments do produce spaces and, thereby, perspectives. These enclosures are thus no less formal and ideological than those of Lancelot ‘Capability’ Brown or late-Renaissance Roman villas. Still, the nineteenth-century ‘plebeian’ garden is crucially different for being — a priori — the result of quasi legal norms and, later, parliamentary statutes that pre-established the dimensions, shapes and uses of their enclosures. In other words, the English allotment is a type which, as such, is conceived and ‘designed’ by norms. This normalisation has reduced the garden archetype to a sort of urban re-parcellisation and social
control in a way that not even the other two paradigms accomplished. With this hypothesis in mind, one should attempt to reconstruct the interior perspective of a typical plot around 1850—for instance, on the east side of Ealing Dean Common. [Fig. 8] Picture the perspective of a middle-aged male bricklayer, standing before his crops at the height of his (average for a Victorian) 5'7 feet:

The August sun slowly sets. It is a Monday—but work tax waits another four weeks until the dew will sparkle, and green leaves spread. But that is for tomorrow, but not yet ready for harvest. So he leans down to check on the spinach, gets his basket and takes a deep breath, looking up to the sky. On the way back up, he looks around and only for a second, the spiders are scurrying everywhere. How far does this house go? Where does the river start? Where does it end? He wonders. The space of his plot, though, is finite. In the same manner, the ‘invisibles’ in the world, his frame of the house, where he can forget all and exclude the immediate hardship that comes every winter. Was life better during his childhood, gardening with his parents and uncles on the croft near to their house? This memory fades away, along with the cloudy vision of the quick-cut hedges. Are these ‘out of the way’? he worries. ‘When will the fuses finally fix the fences around our site?’ he complains, though he can’t see them from his plot any more.

Nothing—apparently—is ‘wrong’ with this picture. The bricklayer lives in a precarious condition but, at least, the parish lets him one eighth of an acre “as a peppercorn” to help in the reproduction of his household. Gardening, moreover, brings him psychological comfort as it gives consistency to the everyday life, and so some certainty in life. He thus feels ‘protection’ within the vegetal interior he has single-handedly crafted. This ‘self-valourising’ feeling nonetheless crumbles as soon as the labourer starts to worry about the vigilant Vicar. Although worth noting, such worry—or fear—is less problematic than the fact that he is not able to visually understand the entire site as a finite enclosure. Since all plots were laid out in such a compact grid, and each husbandry made their gardens so microscopic, a tenant could not see the fences around the site. On the one hand, this situation was ‘good’ for them: they could forget about everything else and focus on gardening. On the other hand, it was extremely problematic as regards making the labourers oblivious to the very signs of the historical process which had caused their condition.

Fig. 8. The perspective from a garden plot on the eastern side of Ealing Dean. The observer is looking south, with the Parish Church at the background.
of dispossession and precarity in the first place. The fences around Ealing Dean were not just for blocking the entry of animals. Above all, these were formal enactments of the legal procedure through which the access to that land had ceased to be a common right of the local population. While the perimeter fence enclosed and kept the site private, the gardens inside obliterated the limits of that enclosure, thus making it seem a natural feature of the landscape. In other words, allotments made the garden archetype act as a frame that naturalized enclosure and ownership.

As deeds and norms 'designed' the site at Ealing Dean, one cannot confirm whether such complex formal relationships were the work of art of the Bishop or the Vestry. It is nonetheless safe to suppose that both entities did not expect the allotments to become so ambient—especially in regard to the self-valorisation, commodification and—eventually—social activism amongst plot holders.

As previously noted, the activity of gardening was mainly responsible for the first of these three processes. Meanwhile the construction of friendship based upon shared interests took a bit more time and occasional chats about seeds, soil and seasons. That kind of effect evolved rather gradually, while landowners perceived themselves to a singular group of tenants facing the same landlord, represented by the site's Managing Committee. This situation was highly politicising as it was analogous to the power relationship between the people and the state. According to archival evidence, the Committee met with the Parish Officers at least seven times between 1856 and 1864. Since their minutes focused on the preoccupations of management rather than feedback from users, one cannot suppose the tenants were organised at that point. The scenario starts to visibly change from 1853 onwards, when the tenants collectively sent the Committee open letters concerning encroachments and site improvements and requesting the resignation of certain managers. These complaints reflected how the growth and urbanisation of Ealing threatened to intrude upon the allotment area. Above all, they also trace the formation of a collective sense of belonging amongst tenants. So, if the spatial perspectives from within the site succeeded in naturalising ownership, they eventually failed to accomplish the same result when shaping the labourers' subjectivity. That is also because the Vestry did not allow the tenants to spend 'too much' time on the site. From the inauguration date until the end of the century, tenants could only garden their plots until 9 A.M. As discussed earlier, the Parish Officers were also committed to shutting the site on Sundays. Unfortunately for the tenants, they were not the most religious parochioners and, in 1868, petitioned the Managing Committee to allow Sunday gardening until 6 A.M. Any waged worker today can easily relate to the main reason behind this request, which is the use of free time. That is, dedicating the weekend to leisure and other productive activities—seemingly 'outside' employment.

The Sunday gardening appeal included the names and occupations of the petitioners. Of a total of 139 participants, there were 91 farm labourers, 11 gardeners, nine carpenters, nine bricklayers, five shoemakers, two cow keepers, two household service, and one each of ten miscellaneous occupations, such as painter and blacksmith. From that period forward, the typical plot-holder profile gradually shifted from rural labourer to suburban worker, so did the local population of Ealing. The predominantly masculine character of the site moreover changed—though not as quickly—until its reversal during the two world wars. It is nonetheless evident that, by 1860, the reality of the allotments was far from the paternalistic ideal [Fig. 5] of transforming the labouring poor into docile subjects. Even though the 1856 petition failed to convince the Committee, it reveals that most plot holders were not all passive. Perhaps because the norms restricted gardening hours to early mornings on weekdays, the site possibly became a 'guilty pleasure' but never the whole 'world' of the labourers. There were other social experiences at play in the politics of those subjects, such as, for instance, work in itself, talking with a colleague, walking the streets and so forth. In addition, it is highly possible that labouring tenants would bring these influences into their morning chats with other plot holders. In other words, the allotment would thus function as what 1970s O.M.A would call a 'social conditioner' for this reason, one may associate the nineteenth-century allotment with the development of agricultural trade unionism in the 1860s. Although extremely important, this happened mainly in the south Midlands and there is no evidence to support a similar correlation with Ealing Dean, or any other site close to London at that time.
In any case, this example is interesting in regard to architectural theory, as it reveals how the potential for activism amongst plot holders underlay the spatial ambivalence between unplotted individualities and unsocialized geographies. In this sense, the restrictive norms on plot sizing and gardening became twofold. On the one hand, the one eighth of an acre rectangle and its sparse husbandry restrained subsistence and surplus. On the other, it made ‘living labour’ tangible, measurable and visible, rather than invisible. Later, in the 1900s, the interiors of individual tool sheds would have a similar effect on labourers’ awareness, as their bare shelves revealed all the utensils and thus the amount labour involved in gardening. [Fig. 7] The urban event of Ealing Dean could have thus partly enabled each plot holder to realise not only their ‘use value’ but also the immense potential of his or her ‘labour power.’

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Fig. 5. Frontispiece in the 1895 volume of the Labourers’ Friend Summer Magazine. Following the proletarianist character of the LFS and its publications, this image idealizes the rural labourer gardening his allotment alongside his nuclear family. The setting is idyllic and picturesque domestically.

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Fig. 7. The interior of a typical tool shed at Ealing Dean Common. Allotment plots are the beginning of 1900. Following these practices around that time, the Vent for each plot holder to build only one small shed. To prevent this ‘building’ to become a burden for the tenants, the Managing Committee established it could not occupy more than 10% of the single plot.
Victory and Defeat

One may research beyond Ealing Dean and investigate other historical consequences of allotment sites within London’s zone of influence. However, the present thesis aims instead to trace how the example of Ealing Dean relates to the modern mechanism of enclosure, through which the city was harnessed and amalgamated with the countryside. While the acts of enclosing and allotting Dean Common played a direct role in those processes, the following subjectification of plot holders played a more elusive role. Archival evidence and spatial analysis nonetheless suggest that this site helped to transform labour subjectivity from a rural to an urban subjectivity: involving thus a move from ‘labourers’ — mainly concerned with reclaiming access to the land — to ‘workers’ — preoccupied with wages. This is not to say that land and landownership ever ceased to matter to both categories. On the contrary, between 1870 and 1920 those issues remain a cross-regional subject of debate, in which allotments were a frequent and extremely ambivalent topic. Several events led to the inclusion of garden plots in that conversation. First, the progressive disfranchisement of labourers and workers. Second, significant changes in the legislation demanding large landowners provide the ‘labouring poor’ with smallholdings. And third, the Victorian development of urban infrastructure, working-class housing, public parks, gardens and allotments. There was therefore a potential for associations, philanthropists and MPs to put forward allotments as a project — one in which a system of shared horticultural sites could present an alternative to the socially problematic system of private property and intensive farming. Still, from both Liberal and Conservative perspectives, allotments were a way to prevent the rise of socialism in England. Because if labourers could rent — and cultivate — their plots on the land, they would feel, and would legally be, a part of the capitalist status quo. Hence the ambivalence of allotments. Whenever a crisis arose, lawmakers would moreover make the model more instrumental to the state than to workers. This happened in World War I, as Parliament passed the Cultivation of Lands Order of 1916, empowering councils to extractively appropriate vacant land for allotment gardening. The government took similar action during WW2, with the “Dig for Victory” campaign, urging civilians to garden vegetables everywhere, to ‘battle’ war-time austerity. [Fig. U]
Those war-time incentives suggest how garden allotments had rapidly gone from a controversial experiment to being seen as a means of cheap and self-reliant production of food within the domestic sphere. As most sites were still the fruit of paternalistic reaction to poverty, they had to ensure tenants would benefit from successfully gardening their plots. So, either landlords, managers or local charities often provided holders with spades, seeds, manure, and expertise. This assistance was key to fulfilling the purpose of poor relief, and thereby promoting patriarchal benevolence. The more Parliament controversially accelerated the enclosure of open fields, the greater became the need for that promotion. The faster industrial growth consumed natural resources, the more urgent became the reactionary praise of ‘nature’ and seemingly ‘anti-urban’ themes, such as horticulture. There was therefore a Victorian climate proper for gardening in general, with mass-produced tools, flower shows, awards for garden achievements, publications and guides. [Fig. V] Above all, the very process of organising allotments entailed the development of an associating life-style which favoured their productivity. The exchange of seedlings and experience was particularly important to workers whose connection to the land had never existed or been literally uprooted by migration. This was the case of most tenants in the East Finchley Allotments, established in May 1917 within the parish of Finchley, Middlesex, eight kilometres north of Charing Cross. [Fig. W] Similarly to
Ealing Dean, this site filled the enclosure of commonable land, over which the Bishop of London also held the mortuary rights until the 1960s. Unlike the previous case, though, Finchley Common was a much larger area, extending over 900 acres when local landowners campaigned for the Bishop to privilege it in the early 1800s. An Act of Parliament of 1811 separated 15 acres to be let as fuel allotments to local farmers. Five years later, another Act enclosed the entire field and immediately parceled out more than 100 acres to pay for the costs of this Act. By the Cultivation Order of 1916, the Ecclesiastical Commissioners of England—who had inherited the Bishop's demesne over the Common—leased the land to the Finchley Urban District Council in 1917. The site was, and still is, a 15-acre rectangle on a valley surrounded by a cemetery, a forest, and housing dating from 1890. In spite of the Allotments Act of 1908, which allowed plot sizes to reach 2,000 square feet, the Council has kept parcels at a quarter of an acre to increase their number and match local demand. The local authority also had to follow the given shape of the enclosure and, regardless of the sloped terrain, organised the site into a uniform grid of 96 plots, arranged in two continuous rows, only interrupted by the original features of the Common, such as ditches and streams. The first tenants in 1917 were mostly middle-aged male workers from Middlesex, or immigrants, paying annual rents of ten shillings. Even if most lacked gardening skills, cultivation was nonetheless easy since the Finchley soil is a fertile layering of chalk, brown clay, and gravel. Thus, many plot holders succeeded in cropping the species advised by the RHS to maintain their households during war-time austerity. By 1923, plot holders had not only established a garden but also a cohesive and active Holders' Association. As membership soared in 1930, the group pressed the Council to buy the freehold from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. Since the Church still had a pedagogical interest in promoting allotments, the conveyance established that the site should always serve such a purpose. However, the document did not mention site rules. The Association decided to maintain the original rules, but with some relaxations, such as all-day gardening on Sundays. But rules became concerned with facilitating coexistence rather than 'good Christian conduct.' Still, they reinforced private property. As the Association thrived, it put on annual shows stimulating tenants to plant ornamental species. [Fig. AA]
Although 'industrialness' still mattered, East Finchley epitomised the moment when the normalisation of urban allotments started to come less moralistic and more pragmatic. In particular, from 1920 onwards, legislation significantly increased the number of sites, their social inclusiveness, and the assurance of land tenure for tenants. One may understand this transition by tracing the development of Cumberland Basin Allotments, 3.2 kilometres northwest of Charing Cross. [Fig. AB] The formation of the site was somewhat connected to the private enclosure of a 'common', since it took place over the landfill of Cumberland Market Basin. [Figs. AC-AD] Built in 1830 as part of the Regent's Park development planned by John Nash in 1813 – the Basin received the deliveries of hay, straw, coal, vegetables and meat for Cumberland Market. As this was the core of a 'service district' between the Park and Euston Station, the Crown Land Commissioners – which owned the land – built several warehouses, workshops and stables to house the merchants and artisans in the backline of the Regent's Terrace housing. After WWII

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...and further decline of the Market in the 1920s, the Commissioners decided to demolish and redevelop the district with small workshops and housing for war veterans and community workers. The renewal brought seven new buildings that were six storeys high (the Crown Estate Flats), to form a residential centre around the Basin, which had already become idle by the time the estate was complete in 1937. The flats were thriving less than a year later, when a group of neighbours founded the Crown Tenants Horticultural Society (CTHS). At first the CTHS was only concerned with window-box gardening 'to practice the principles of horticulture and improve the aesthetic environment around the estate.' This slogan echoed the Crown Flats' reputation for tidiness, which was in fact a product of the strict rules of 'good Christian' conduct imposed on the tenants. In 1938, the CTHS requested land for allotments but got no support. The perfect opportunity came about only after the London Blitz in 1940, when the army gradually drained and filled the Basin with bomb-damaged debris. Only a year later the Crown decided to enclose the landfill site. [Fig. A.E]
While the terrain remained idle, with an obscure legal status, the Crown Estate supposedly used the allotment premise to acquire the freehold of the land. Indeed, as soon as the Commissioners got tenure over the former Basin, they stopped supporting the CTHS. The tenants spent another year struggling to organise and finance the site, especially because the landfill was far from fertile. As the contemporary minutes book report, the main concerns were drainage, groundworks and irrigation. Meanwhile, infrastructure seemed unattainable in the short term. The Managing Committee took only a couple of meetings to subdivide the 5.5-acre site into a regular grid of 54 plots, aligned in two long rows. [Fig. AF] In this respect, the only difficulty was for the members to agree on how to distribute the parcels. Since most preferred to have their gardens as close as possible to their dwellings, the managers decided to 'zone' the site according to the position of the buildings around it and to make specific ballots to allocate the plots to each group of residents. Cumberland is therefore an extremely rare case of modern English allotments in which the holders were not only the ones who envisioned and organized the site ex nihilo but also where their plots and homes were spatially connected. Contrary to the conditions of Eding and East Finchley, the limits of this site were constantly visible. And this visibility was not due to higher fences - which would only be installed much later, in the 1960s - but rather the combination of a smaller area being situated within a residential courtyard. This situation produced two powerful perspectives from the vantage point of the labouring tenants, who could thus see their houses from and through their garden plots and vice versa. [Fig. AG] Despite the homely, utilitarian appearance of allotment gardening at this point, this placement eventually gave the site a monumentality, which reminded the holdovers - and all other local residents - of the collective process of reclaiming the idle landfill for their shared use. This was a significant achievement, even though this condition was still subject to tenancy restrictions - hence, to private property - and the 'good will' of the Crown Estate. The Cumberland site was an exceptional example of collective enclosure that allowed its users to interact with each other, as well as to directly intervene in its spatial organisation. This is remarkable, considering that it happened just ten minutes away from Regent's Park, a public space meant to shape urban subjects into captive consumers of the city.
Allot in Common
A practice of London Commons

Most allotments within Greater London currently suffer from the threat of the same process of urban re-parcellisation which their ‘prehistory’ helped to establish. While the type has developed from a measure for ‘poor relief’ towards a middle-class hobby, many sites have thrived into not only beautiful gardens but also lively spaces of social encounter. As such, Ealing Dean, East Finchley and Cumberland Basin have given some quality of life to their neighbourhoods. From the present vantage point of real-estate markets, these places are ‘green’ and ‘community’ features which add value to the land. Since their landlords have recently considered selling parts of them to either private or public developments, associations have recently petitioned to get Parliament and local authorities to act in their favour. As these specific sites are objects of historical interest and preservation, the struggles ended with long-term leaseholds and statutory protection against encroachment. But this history of urbanisation has not been so kind with other, less famous, sites. Especially those outside the central boroughs now have to fight in order to survive the real-estate speculation of the last – or latest – frontiers of the city. Even though allotment gardening has ultimately become a fashionable and highly commodified activity, it still generally strengthens the friendship, union and activism of many plot holders, who can thus press the councils to act in their favour. Part of the problem, though, is the fact that the
protection of sites depends not only on legislation but also on political will, which is increasingly given to economic interest. The solution could be to articulate these gardens more closely with the space and concept of dwelling. With the exception of Ebenezer Howard, the British have never addressed the allotment as a housing question. During the 1920s in Germany, for instance, Leberecht Migge conceived projects of allotments in which gardening was an integral — biological — process of self-sufficient dwelling. [Figs. B–C]

Similar to allotments, 'commons' are enclosures aimed at compensating for the loss of collective access to the open fields. Yet both are utterly losing ground to urbanisation. Contrary to the common misunderstanding, all common land within Greater London is private property. [Fig. D] Any place called 'common', 'beast' or 'green' always belongs to someone, that an authority, corporation, community or an individual. The owner enjoys the same status as any landowner, except that the first demarcation of the property was followed by a second legal process which subjected the land to certain Rights of Common. The individuals who jointly hold and exercise these rights are called 'commoners'. As a landholding, commons vary widely in size, shape, character, management and terms of entitlement, since this may have been either petitioned by councils, reached by private agreement or fought for by groups of citizens. In any case, current legislation advises councils to register and subscribe the sites under the Commons Act of 2006, which classifies commonable land as that which is uncultivated and has natural or historical features, where members of the public may exercise certain individual rights, depending on so-called local customs and traditions. Although some commons — especially within rural areas — still serve these purposes, most have been converted or newly created under the general prerequisite of the recently redefined Freedom of Roam. This means the right to trespass, walk, ride, move through open land for leisure or sheer enjoyment of wild areas, such as mountains, grass and woodlands, marshes, grove pits, and so forth. Until the mid-1900s, such rights usually ranged from grazing specified livestock, cutting wood (except timber), digging turf for fuel, taking minerals out of the soil, and fishing on ponds and streams — all for non-profitable produce only. The so-called 'commons' around London originally refer to the enclosure of the open fields and wasteland within former feudal
Ealing Common thus fairly represents most commons within Greater London. The biggest shrinkage of this particular site occurred during the 1930s, when the area known today as 'Ealing Borough' was a conurbation of Victorian towns — as were many other middle-class suburbs — sprawling across what was still considered 'countryside'. For over 60 years up to that decade, the commoners shared ten hectares for mixed-culture farming on the south-east of the site, the Ealing Common Farm. Regardless of the demand for and full entitlement to the activity, the local Council — who owned the manorial rights over the land — decided to lease that parcel to the Rothschild private development of single-family houses, built along the construction of Gunnersbury Avenue. [Fig. E] Following the enlargement of West Acton Underground Station and subsequent densification nearby, the rights of the entire common generally shifted from household produce to leisure. That happened even though small husbandry and collective mixed-culture farming fitted the definition of "local traditions" under the Metropolitan Commons Act of 1866. This was when Ealing Council purchased the manorial rights over the land and registered it under such legislation. That year, however, was also the precise time when Ealing Common lost most of its area. That was not only due to encroachment and urbanisation but also urban design. The architect Charles Jones, who worked for Ealing Council as a surveyor and planner from 1863 to 1913, decided to cut three diagonal avenues across the common; these would be shaped as "straight parkways" continuously flanked by chestnut trees in a similar fashion to the ubiquitous urban embellishment of London at
that period." [Fig. F] Although the new scheme did not touch most of the inner area of the common, it interrupted the specific ways through which the commoners collectively experienced, negotiated and had long struggled to keep their rights to the land. [Fig. G] Up to 1866, the old track of this crossroad had served grazing and horseback passage through the Manor of Pitshanger. [Fig. H]

The total area of Ealing Common today, of 73.67 hectares, is less than half what was first enclosed in 1840. And it no longer differs in character from most urban parks around the city. [Fig. I] The site has even served to raise the land value of the surroundings since it is still wide and green enough to be marketed as "a landscape" and a "free space" for leisure. [Fig. J] The crucial difference, nonetheless, is that while parks typically enjoy the legal status and protection of "public spaces," commons are overseen only by statutes. [Fig. K] That is why they are more vulnerable to encroachments and have increasingly become contested grounds. In other words, commoners have to constantly reclaim and exercise their rights over the land, otherwise the landlord may either revoke or pressure them to sell such entitlements. The challenge in saving the commons around London is therefore not to design spaces that cater to the current politics for their conservation but to, instead, rethink these enclosures as collective practices. Within this framework, the thesis proposes an alternative process of allotment which at once responds both to the deficit of vacant plots and the ongoing shrinkage of commonable land within Greater London.

The experiment could take place in the present situation of Ealing Common, as it has been the outcome of a paradigmatic history of private enclosure, encroachment, urbanisation and, highly likely, extinction in the next few decades. The idea is to allot the entire area to the people who currently queue on waiting lists for garden plots, either from Ealing Council or the local authorities of other metropolitan boroughs. [Fig. L] Although this strategy departs from the existing regulations on allotments, it puts forward an entirely different procedure based on a couple of twists: firstly, the statutory protection of the Common should rather instantly extend to the new site and future — and possibly multiple — associations of plot holders from...
the very moment of foundation. Secondly, the configuration of the site does not start from the sheer parcelization of the ground but the even distribution of twelve parallel lines of continuous sheds. [Fig. H]

Similarly to the present traditional scheme, these should be self-built by the plot holders, perhaps, with the same construction systems available and well-known modules. Their key difference, though, is to follow an architectural principle—or logic—that always group and interconnect individual sheds into linear pavilions. These should have no internal partitions. In circles two metres above the ground and distanced 30 metres away from each other. [Fig. I] At large, the plan of stripes divides and, at the same time, redefines the wide—and virtually endless—area of the Common into a system of several allotment sites. The continuous sheds could perhaps remain the only elements to formalize the limits of the Common and, still, leave its perimeter open. While this scheme makes such a place visible and accessible by nonmembers, it also produces interior perspectives that orient and let plot holders understand the process of enclosure which originated the site. In doing so, the users can gradually recognize and organize themselves into small associations. Each group will collectively garden and take care of two linear sheds and the void in between. [Fig. J] Initially, this space could mimic the typical enfract of ten-road parcels, which the members would have to rent—at a peppercorn—from Ealing Council. In the long term, however, each association could gradually replace the original configuration with plots of various sizes, shapes, species, and purposes. These ad hoc transfomations would certainly alter the layout of pathways and crops, so that members could constantly negotiate the sharing of the land. Should conflicts arise, the associations could use the linear sheds as places of assembly and group therapy. The open plans of these pavilions could moreover facilitate the sharing of tools, seeds, manure, books, knowledge, cooking, and effects. In doing so, each association would thrive on increased cooperation. A barter economy could emerge in which small groups of members could exchange, for instance, an afternoon of manuring for a night of childcare. The entire Common could thereby eventually return to the ancient meaning of its name, that is, to become again a place of a shared and self-sufficient system of social relationships.
Fig. 1. Initial configuration of the grid between two continuous shreds.

Fig. 3. Initial state of the single plot (with striped crops and straight pathways) bordered by continuous shreds. In becoming typically larger, these shreds may house local facilities for small communities of plot holders. The new structures could provide the associations with shared storage space for tools, seedlings, manure and books, open kitchens, log tables, toilets, and small individual rooms.
(Dis)closure

The garden: a project within yet outside the city

The garden, as we have seen, is a paradigmatic form of enclosure through which it is possible to understand key passages in the development of settlements, cities, and urbanisation. It has been historically and spatially connected to the house — although existing somewhere between the household and the city — and has, at times, lent itself to controversial processes of land appropriation and the domestication of nature and society. The *horreum* or ‘hovel’ of the Cistercian cloister (twelfth century) materialised an idea of communal settlement. It was an introspected enclosure that delimited inside from outside, which enabled the monks to recognise and, thereby, practice the rules of living together as an ascetic ‘family’ or ‘household.’ In giving a sense of unity, stability and direction, the cloistered garden was not only an exemplum of a highly ritualised form-of-life but, also, and an architectural model of autonomous inhabitation within harsh — and homogeneous — biotopes, such as deserts and forests. The possibility of the garden as an urban model would later enable the total reinvention of the rustic Roman villa into monumental gardens (sixteenth century). These suburban ‘gardened estates’, so to speak, were analogous reconstructions of the city as an enclosure in progressive expansion. In becoming a theatre of new
social rituals of hospitality and gnom, these places reinterpreted the hortus into a wider and outward-projecting enclosure. As such, the archetype started to frame and construct a narrative of the landscape to legitimise the appropriation, colonisation and further ‘gentrification’ of the Roman countryside. Far from ‘economic phenomena’, these processes were phases in broader political projects of the Roman Church, seeking to increase its power through the expansion and reformation of the urban territory around Rome and the Vatican. For such as the archetype has never ceased to be one of a domestic space, from that moment forward, it would gradually lose its intimate connection with the place of the household and become as expansive as parks. Such a transition led the way for the garden to become a tool of modern urbanisation, as it was the case of the English allotments (nineteenth century) during the ‘heyday’ of parliamentary Enclosure. The model had nonetheless emerged a century before as a mostly philanthropic experiment for promoting ‘poor relief’. Later, with the Victorian incentive to paternalistic politics, the London elite of landowners, for instance, would press the British Parliament to use such a premise as a means to make the private enclosure of open fields morally acceptable. Spatially, the normalisation of garden plots into a type of small landholding enabled several Acts of Enclosure to ‘finish off’ the privatisation of commumable land. Meanwhile, in practice, the potentially endless grid of allotment sites has eventually naturalised the urban re-parcelisation of the countryside.

The three chapters have thus traced a historical vector of the enclosed garden as an instrument for different projects of urban territory. Throughout this trajectory, we have observed a progressive enlargement and formal disruption of the archetype’s sense of limits of such a form. These tendencies have led to a general loss of legibility of the garden, not only as a singular finite enclosure but also, as an entire architecture of domestic space. Thus, a place in the very sense of a microcosm, where dwelling and living can be constantly and collectively reconstructed — possibly — apart from everything else which happens outside. (Be that a congested urban condition or a forested area, a desert, and so forth.) Moreover, that formal ‘dissolution’ has contributed to the present misconception of gardening as a commodified hobby of predefined activity and scientific knowledge. That is not to say that, for instance, spaces for the public enjoyment of botanic species ‘are not gardens’. To be sure, there are no such things as ‘bad’ or ‘good’ gardens: only those which are legible as ideological enclosures and those which are not. And both equally matter to architecture theory. The question of the present thesis has never been about judgement or creating a universal definition of a subject that cannot — and should not — be reduced to a single accepted form. On the contrary, this research reconsiders the garden as a way to rethink architecture as both a practice and a project in — or of — itself. One of the most interesting (re)discoveries of the three chapters is the fact that gardening is essentially a mode of building. As such, the activity has always had the potential to completely transform the processes of design and construction which crystallise the garden as a form of appropriation.

In this sense, perhaps one of the most influential aspects of the historical transformation of the archetype is the gradual re-signification of gardening: a family-ruled social ritual towards a normalised practice. For each of those paradigms, there has been a specific discourse on gardening as a productive — thus ‘dignified’ — form of enjoying land, experiencing and controlling nature. And, the more such an enclosures has served as a spatial procedure for powerful institutions to appropriate land and labour, the more it became urgent for the proprietors to recontextualise the garden as a theatrical landscape to establish a morally acceptable narrative of landownership. It can be argued, therefore, that the history of the enclosed garden is a history of the Western tradition of private property and social division of labour, starting from the domestic sphere. However, unlike other architectures directly involved in these processes — such as the house, farms and the city itself — which have arguably become sheer spaces of production, the garden has always kept a certain degree of ‘uselessness’ and experimentation. Thanks to gardening, such a space has retained the ambiguity of the earliest or ancient forms of dwelling, where worship, leisure, idleness and pragmatic concerns fluidly occurred within the same space. It is precisely because of such ambiguity that the garden is one of few archetypes of domestic
enclosure that may still offer the spatial means to a way 'out' of the status quo which it has helped to establish. This view of the garden is not to be found in the extensive histories written hitherto on the subject. The research thus presents a fresh understanding, in which the garden allows for the possibility of continuous interventions that 're-signify' spatial coexistence.

Perhaps the major contribution of this thesis is to develop a research methodology that is as analytical as it is propositional. It reconsidered the history of the garden through relevant events that may yield, at once, historical analyses as well as projections of what the relationship between the garden and the city can potentially become. Under the guise of a 'PhD by design' this research understands history as an on-going project. Each analysis of the paradigmatic garden works towards clearly defining the formal relationships and associations between the example and its context. This is then followed by specific design strategies where learned architectural form is incorporated into other proportionally similar contexts in contemporary cities: design thinking through analogy. For Tehran, Iran, within the state-sponsored blocks of private housing, it is proposed an annexe glade to enable the collective construction of common space. Precisely the legible enclosure of the space allows for the shared practice of protocols and its juridical setting apart from the housing complex. In Rome, Italy, along the precarious periphery between illegal loggia and the surrounding countryside, the concept of the garden villa is taken to enable the collective enjoyment of idle land. The proposal is to be implemented in phases with the participation of residents and local organisations. Urban policies are created that do not need the state or master planning to operate. Architectural form here may eventually reclaim idle land. In London, UK, new forms of allotments are proposed to enable the collective production of a system of social relations that may enjoy the legal protection of the public statute of commonable land. Given time and the will to participate, gardening may indeed promote self-valorisation and emancipation.

Despite the different contexts of each design proposal, the notion of the archetype has proven an alternative to that of type...
Gardening may facilitate a willing group of people to organize themselves and share space and resources. The present thesis has attempted to debate this question, which hopefully may remain open: how to rethink the garden archetype and enable gardening as a panoply, through which we can redefine what it means to work and live together. The garden, in this sense, may also serve architects hoping to challenge the very idea of design as a predefined imposition. It may, therefore, open up a space for communitarian self-valorisation against the increasing commodification of public space and conditions of "not feeling at home." Architects should reconsider the garden as a way to envision new rituals and modes of organising collective life.

In doing so, this is a space that blurs conventional distinctions between designing and building. So, this is an architecture that functions alongside the conception of protocols and policies which, if collectively constructed by the users of the garden, may construct shared spaces that extend the preconditions of public and private. That is how the garden becomes a political form: it not only materialises an idea in space and practice but, most importantly, it leaves room for experimentation, imagination and awareness. At its best, gardening becomes both the project and construction of an alternative form of life enframed outside the city.

6. Paolo Virno knowingly coined this expression after Martin Heidegger. "Today, all forms of life have the experience of not feeling at home which, according to Heidegger, would be the origin of capital. Thus, there is nothing more shared and more common and to which a manner supposable, than the feeling of being not feeling at home." No one is untranscended than the person who feels the graceful presence of the ineludible world. In other words, that feeling in which fear and anguish converge is necessarily the concern of many. One could, perhaps, that "not feeling at home" is in fact a distinctive trait of the concept of the sublime, while the separation between the "inside" and the "outside." (Paolo Virno, *The Grammar of the Multitude*, New York: Verso, 2004), p. 39.

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Allie C. Cameron

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