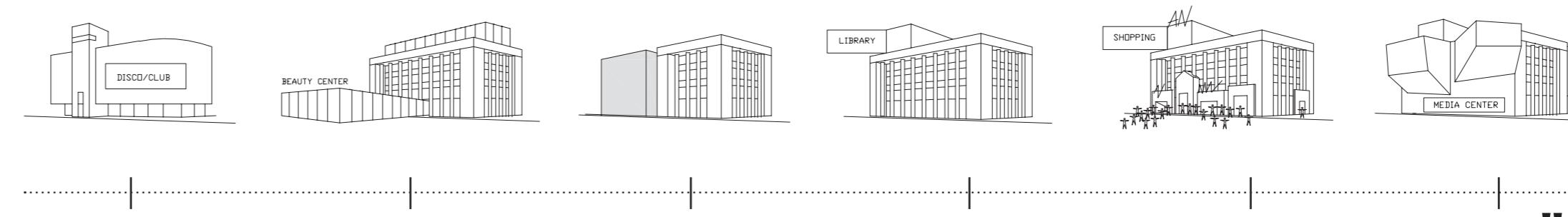


## URBAN THERAPY 2.0

DOMUS  
ARCHPLUS  
KULTURSTIFTUNG  
DES BUNDES  
PROJECT IDEA  
TEAM 2505

## THE PROJECT IDEA

The Shrinking Cities Project required a critical evaluation of the urban phenomena that seems to be more and more evident in the western cultures as a consequence of the social transformations brought up in the last decade. Contrarily to what a mediatc group of architects try to implement, the idea of a constantly growing megalopolis is a forced illusion, since the western economies are affected by a generalized crisis, which primarily affects the capital cities. The growing phenomena can only be predicted in the Asiatic economic phenomenon that tries to attract foreign investments with the prejudice of a clean environment, democratic values and social rights. The proposed cities affected by the shrinking phenomena were effectively four different cases with distinct thematicas. In this sense, our choice for Ivanovo was determined by several factors:



.We have found a lot of similarities between the problems that this challenge supposes and our own reality in spite of the physical distance that divides us.

.We were encouraged by the unstable relations undertaken between the population and the urban environment and consequently at the political and sociological level between the citizens and the institutions, the individual and the architecture.

.The decadence of a politic system and the fable economic recovery could redirect our answer to a more subjective interpretation of urbanism, related directly with people and the experience of the city.

.We are extremely convinced that the social rehabilitation of the city shouldn't be only understood on a political and economic basis (making social operations the mask of political or capitalist undercover trading), but also on a psychological and phenomenological basis that can stand for social relations.

In this particular case of Ivanovo, the Shrinking Cities program should be reinterpreted as a critical and clinical challenge, avoiding the reduction of the problem to an urban scale resolution, but extending its limits to a coordinated psychoanalytic stimulation. The urban planners and the architects should act as collective shrinks, which operate in a social base.

## THERAPY THROUGH PROGRAM

At the same time that a building mutates itself to house different programs through its life it also changes its symbolic value



## The building and the city constitute types of objects that are bearers of subjective functions, partial objectivities – subjectivities

Felix Guattari

## THE THERAPEUTIC METHOD

These kind of projects always have a strong scent of utopia.

Does a better mental environment leads to better cities or is it the way around?

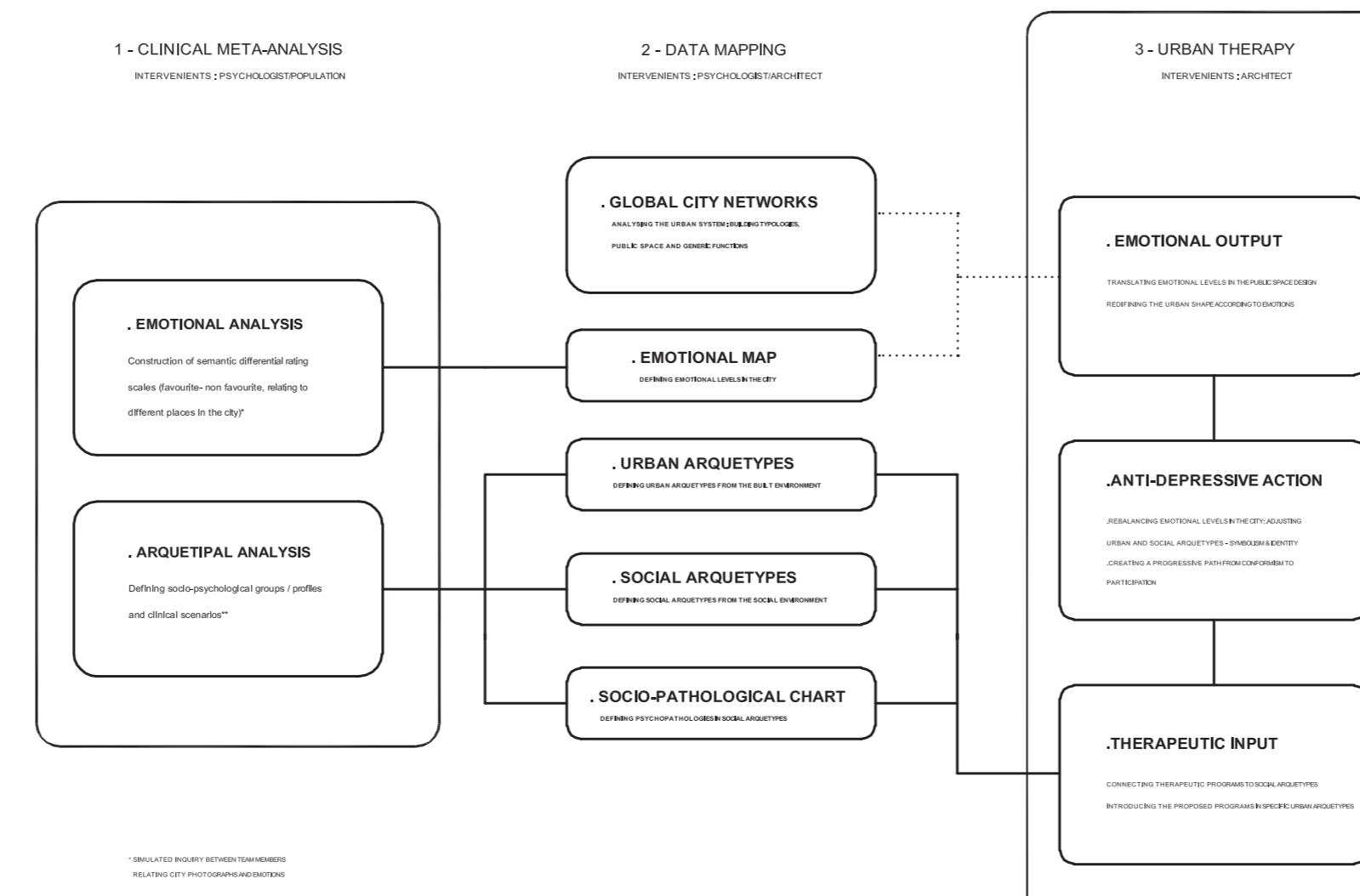
In a way, due to the fact that our field knowledge of the city was not enough to produce/trigger a traditional urban answer to the Ivanovo problem and recognizing that architecture can't in itself or as an isolated phenomena rescue Ivanovo from its present status. Our approach is more an exploration of the potential of its subjective structures (the 'subjective city' that Guattari talks about).

To address this shortcoming and lacking a theoretical model of the subject that accounts for the unconscious or mental environment of Ivanovo, we have tested the prototypes / model based upon our own impressions of the city. Being obviously a non-truthful method it didn't had the operative basis to prove itself but acted mostly as an illustration of our intentions and desires.

After cataloging the Ivanovo society as a neurotic one (due to political based emotional dysfunctions and in the recognition of personality guidelines consolidated by a repressive social education), we built a kind of scenario made from the characters or social urban archetypes (subjects) that we have recognized in Ivanovo and linked them to specific personality disorders (anti-social, avoidant, dependent, borderline, schizotypal, schizoid, paranoid, obsessive – compulsive, narcissistic, histrionic). The idea was to find urban programs (objects) and architectural actions that would counteract these pathologies. At the same time, as these anti-depressives will act at the level of the built environment – the urban archetypes – the social groups affected by such problems are (hopefully) brought to reflect on them, modifying their habits and mental coordinates, adopting new values and postulating a human meaning for future transformations.

In other words, the main issue that we are trying to tackle through the urban therapy project is whether it is possible to build interfaces where individuals overcome repressive forms of identity to become actors in a constant process of transformation; that can bridge the tension between conscious and goal-oriented action and that can bring forward new forms of subjectivisation and heterogenisation.

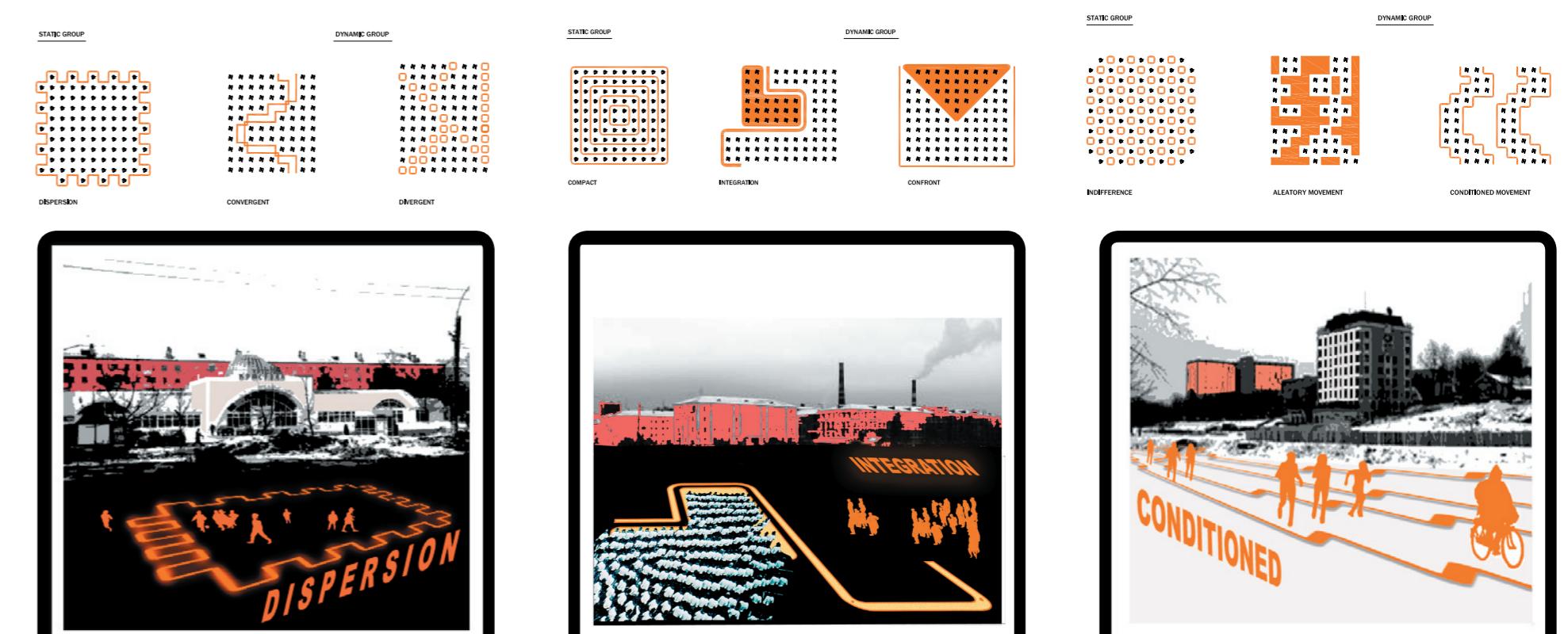
It is true that it is difficult to bring individuals out of themselves, to disengage themselves from their immediate preoccupations, in order to reflect on the present and the future of their cities. They lack collective incitements to do so, but that is precisely why we think that this method is valid and points to: a full scale maieutics that explores the unconscious subjective formations. In this respect, a reconversion of architectural and urbanistic practices could be decisive. The rampant nomadism of contemporary deterritorialization calls for a transversal apprehension of emerging subjectivity, a perception that attempts to bring together points of singularity. What we propose is to consider this affective relation as a material to work with in urbanism. That is to try to incorporate in the instrumental matrix or in the objective parameters of urbanism the subjective data and the affective bonds - codes/communication and identification platforms - between people (subjects) and objects (architectonical). In this situation, the architect is asked to act as interpreter, initiator and project curator. This practice is no longer directive and prescriptive, but prospective and performative, in trying to invent new methods and forms of spatial intervention.

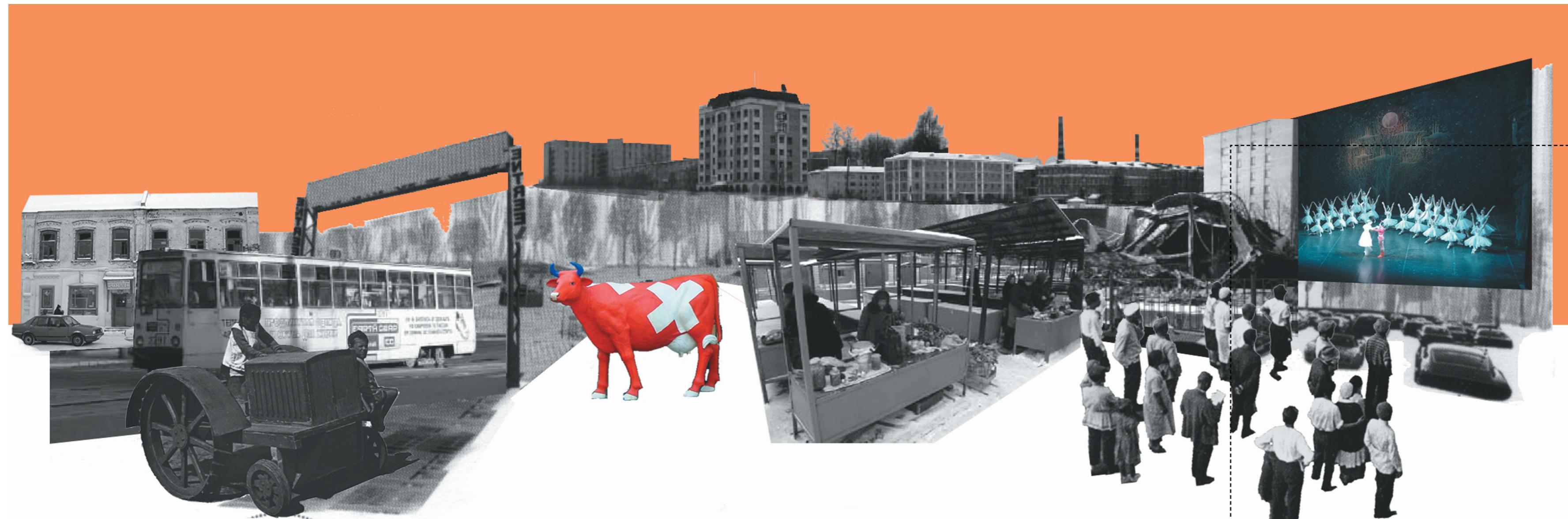


The last procedure of the Generic Therapeutic Method (after the therapeutic input) consists of an emotional output. We hope that this procedure reacts as the necessary stimulus to promote the participation of the population in the city use. We would like to generate a growing envelopment which can progressively lead from conformism to participation. In this sense we designed several urban

patterns, which may organize or stimulate some human concentrations in the public space. This patterns would act as symbols, or simple instructions of use, like airport or trainstation sinaleicas. There are two types of patterns: the static and the dynamic, which act as completely different crowd reactors. They may act as peaceful containers or as aggressive or provocative channels, responding to the different needs of

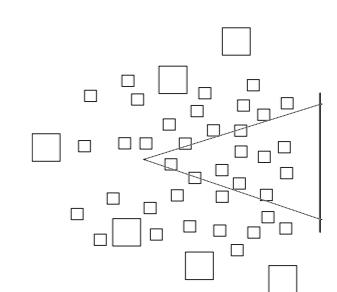
the urban conglomerate. The relation between the public space intervention (emotional output) and the psychological action (therapeutic output) will generate an anti-depressive action. This first procedure is the ideal preparation for the second phase initiative - the urban stimuluss - who will act as a participative activator, a promotor of urbanity, capable of motivating the use of the public space.





## GENERIC THERAPEUTIC METHOD

Can we think in an architecture turned into a series of therapies, each one with particular specifications that are supplied upon a prescription?



SCHIZOTYPAL THERAPY  
outdoor cinema / billboard  
using information (media) as a treatment

## CLINICAL META ANALYSIS

### DATA-MAPPING

### PERFORMATIVE URBAN THERAPY

#### EMOTIONAL ANALYSIS

Inquires to the general public: construction of differential rating scales (favorite - non favorite) relating the different places of the city. The idea is to see people as actors - and interveners - of the urban universe by which they are regulated.

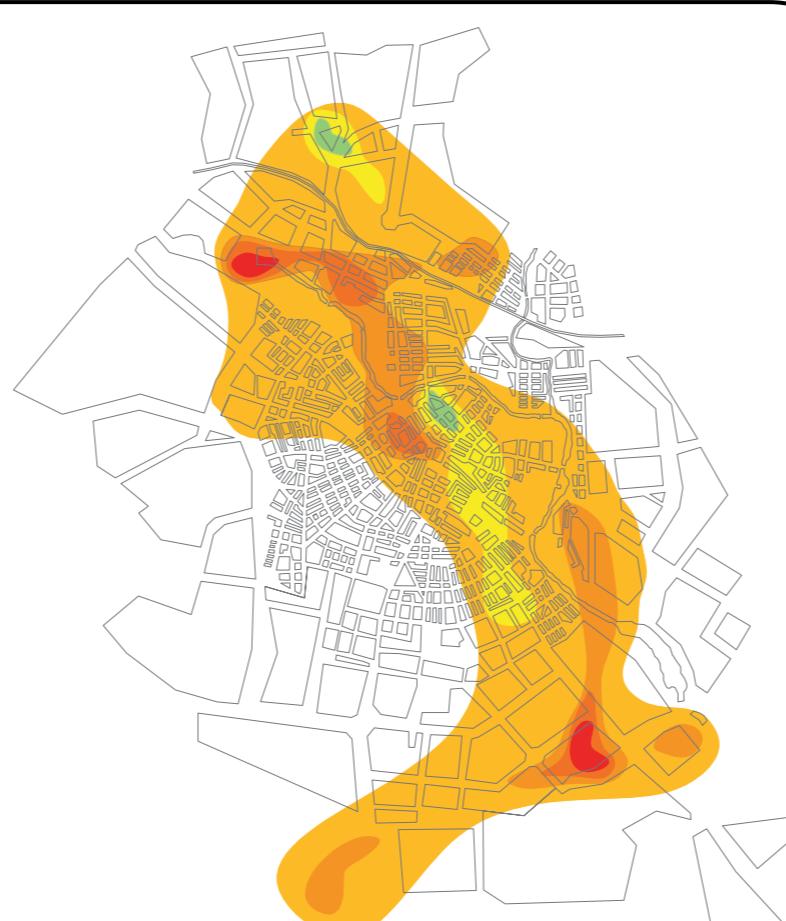


The individual (and finally the community) are here faced with a double demand: they are, in fact the ones that are going to show us in what measure they self-construct and self-organize to face their own internal world/ reality and open new possibilities for redefining institutional participation in the creation of urban space.

#### EMOTIONAL MAP

defining emotional levels in the city; Use of the informative groups of the first phase as the input to create pathological maps that will work as perceptive platforms; the idea is to cartograph the subjectivity.

These "mental" maps are a city's psycho geographical, subjective record. By recombining texts and images, they record psychological patterns of a specific place



#### SOCIO-PATHOLOGICAL CHARTS

establishing links between the social-psychological groups and determined personality disorders

#### EMOTIONAL OUTPUT

This emotional output results from the interpretation and the crossing of the emotional map information with the public space analysis.

We hope that this procedure reacts as the necessary stimulus to promote the participation of the population in the city use. We would like to generate a growing involvement which can progressively lead from conformism to participation.

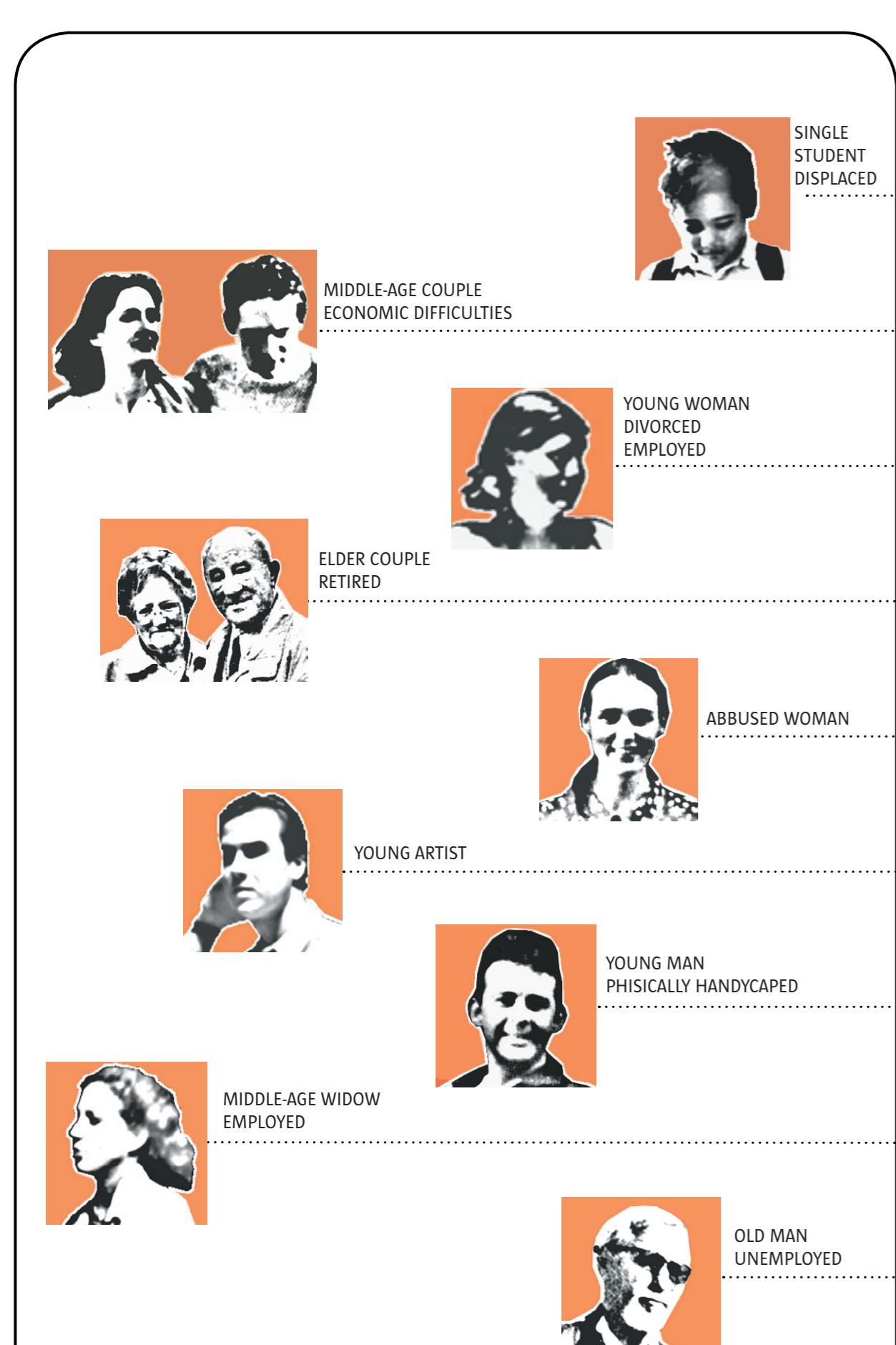
The relation between the public space intervention (emotional output) and the psychological action (therapeutic output) will generate an anti-depressive action.

Acting initially in a therapeutic way, this action will try to insure the rebalancing of the emotional levels in the city, adjusting urban and social archetypes (symbolism and identity) and responding specifically to the several pathological situations found in the human environment.

#### PSYCHOLOGICAL ACTION

translating emotional levels in the public space design: determining/programming the sensitive micro-events and connecting therapeutic programs to social archetypes the social groups affected by such problems are (hopefully) brought to reflect on them, modifying their habits and mental coordinates, adopting new values and postulating a human meaning for future transformations.

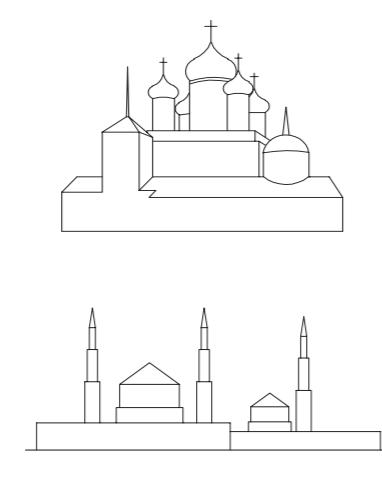
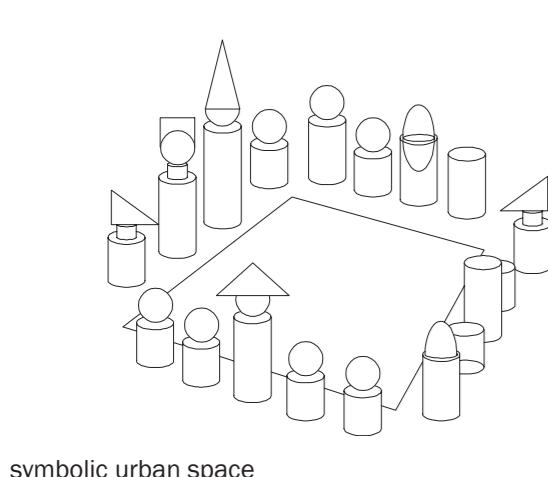
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#### ARQUETIPAL ANALYSIS

SOCIAL ARQUETYPES: detecting socio-psychological groups / profiles

URBAN ENVIRONMENT ARQUETYPES: identifying the sort of structures of domination of Ivanovo



The main objective resumes to an intervention that aims to act upon the collective unconsciousness. In this sense it is fundamental the use of symbols capable of evoking behaviours and situations that may subsist in a medium/long term. This project will have a clinical objective, recovering habits and stimulating actions capable of challenging the pessimistic unconsciousness that society has created in relation to the urban environment.

In this mental construction, that should have a degree of ambiguity to stimulate the individual creativity, we may consider two fundamental domains of action in the city: the public space while representational space and the architectural virtualizations as therapeutic factors and boosters of urban stimulus.

The public space is the most relevant element of this actuation, once it constitutes the scenery of the urban activities, capable of stimulating behaviors and uniting the critical mass, designing with its agglomerating character the spaces of populational convergence that give sense to what we may refer as "social image" (representation of the society).

In the other side, the built body, even though it may have more ambiguous representational character, may translate a new message when allied with a fictional image, recreating illusion and constructing itself as the necessary engine to the future requalification of the urban environment, adjusted to the ambitions of a society confident on its own potentialities.

