Spatial Activist Research as Embodied Praxis

Esra Can, Maria Alexandrescu, Andrew Belfield, Jakleen Al-Dalal'a, Lara Scharf, Doina Petrescu

Abstract: We propose learning from situated, collective, and reflexive action in response to intersecting and interconnected global crises by asking: »What do embodied knowledge(s) that emerge from activist research bring to spatial practice?« Adopting a feminist and decolonial lens on architectural knowledge production, we outline a shared approach to *embodied praxis*, defined as reflexive embodied knowledge production and action towards emancipatory socio-spatial transformation, that can inform spatial practice in times of polycrisis. Drawing on lived experience at the intersections of architecture, research, and activism, we invite four spatial activist-researchers working across contested sites to reflect on the ways in which embodied praxis can operate as a methodology for architectural knowledge production and spatial practice grounded in care, solidarity, and justice.

Corresponding authors: Esra Can (School of Architecture and Landscape, University of Sheffield), Maria Alexandrescu (School of Architecture and Landscape, University of Sheffield), Andrew Belfield (School of Architecture and Landscape, University of Sheffield), Jakleen Al-Dalal'a (Department of Geography, University College London), Lara Scharf (School of Architecture and Landscape, University of Sheffield), Doina Petrescu (School of Architecture and Landscape, University of Sheffield); e.can@sheffield.ac.uk; https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5067-2153; malexandrescu1@sheffield.ac.uk; https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6536-4716; andrew.belfield@sheffield.ac.uk; https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4617-2142; j.al-dalal'a@ucl.ac.uk; https://orcid.org/0009-0003-3638-7219; lascharf1@sheffield.ac.uk; https://orcid.org/0009-0000-8545-8536; d.petrescu@sheffield.ac.uk; https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3794-3219 ᵺ Open Access.

Introduction

Policymakers are increasingly invoking the concept of »polycrisis,« to describe how interconnected global risks converge and amplify one another, producing effects greater than the sum of their individual impacts (Tooze 2022; Jayasuriya 2023). While these overlapping crises – climate breakdown, political instability, economic inequality, and housing insecurity – are global in scope, they are experienced unevenly across geographies (Ruwanpura et al. 2025). In urban and architectural contexts, the disruptions caused by polycrisis manifest through settler colonialism, displacement, land financialization, and extractivism, leading to environmental degradation, segregation, gentrification, housing precarity, and even urbicide (Fawaz et al. 2012). The destructive reach of polycrisis is not only material but also epistemic, as local knowledge systems that enable us to thrive together are often erased. Where compounding socio-ecological urgencies reflect a world which needs to change, how we produce architectural knowledge must also shift towards cultivating alternative, situated knowledges that are grounded in context and oriented toward justice. This calls for (re)new(ed) approaches to both research and practice that recognize that the ontologies and methodologies seeking knowledge production for socio-spatial justice cannot be neutral or apolitical.

Building on the work of architectural practices that have sought to use the skills and spatial intelligence of spatial agency (c.f. Awan et al. 2011), we argue that knowledge production in architecture must respond critically to the unequal dynamics shaping how spaces and knowledges are made. This means confronting the asymmetries not only of spatial production but also of who gets to know, speak, and design.

We understand polycrisis as a structural condition and adopt a feminist and decolonial lens that accounts for the asymmetries it upholds. In this context, architecture must move beyond esthetics to engage with resilience, justice, and collective survival. Traditional, top-down models give way to participatory, activist, and decolonial practices that center those most impacted. As disciplinary boundaries blur, new forms of knowledge emerge, positioning architecture as a vital site for imagining and enacting more just and livable futures. For this, we turn to embodied praxis, which we define as a mode of reflexive, **embodied knowledge** and action rooted in lived experience and collective struggle, capable of responding to polycrisis by generating emancipatory socio-spatial change. These insights emerge

through ongoing dialogue among researchers and communities committed to co-producing knowledge by centering agency, resilience, and resistance.

Background and Methodology

This paper emerged from a collective recognition among activist researchers of the urgent need to articulate a shared position on the value of activist research in architecture.[1] To examine how activist, participatory, and practice-based research can reframe architectural knowledge production as a transformative, collective endeavor, we ask: *What do embodied knowledge(s) that emerge from activist research bring to spatial practice?* With this question, we explore embodied knowledge production not only as a mode of theorization and practice, but also as a vital site for building solidarities of survival in the face of ongoing crises.

Part 1 of this paper frames embodied praxis by identifying the situated and embodied character of knowledge production in struggles for socio-spatial justice. In Part 2, we present four reflections based on the co-authors' research, which examine the ways activist and/or practice-based research was informed by, and gained strength from hands-on experiences in four different contexts of crises. Rather than being comparative, they are supported by prompts for co-writing a collective discussion focusing on how embodied praxis as a methodology can inform spatial practice in the future, presented in Part 3.

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1   This paper builds on insights developed during the »Situating Engaged/Practice-based Research as Activism(s)« workshop, organized by the Lines of Flight (LoF) Research Group at the School of Architecture & Landscape, University of Sheffield, in February 2024. The workshop brought together early career researchers and activist scholars to reframe research through the lens of activism, in conversation with the school's long-standing commitment to social justice. The workshop was chaired by Esra Can and Andrew Belfield, and included research presentations from Esra Can, Thomas Moore, Alex Axinte, Ana Mendes de Andes Aldama, Andrew Belfield, Jakleen Al Dalal'a, Maria Alexandrescu, and Lara Scharf, with responding statements from Gabu Heindl, Doina Petrescu, and Emre Akbil. The documentation of the event can be found at [https://linesofflight.wordpress.com], accessed October 4, 2025.

Part 1: Theoretical Orientation: Embodied Praxis in Relation to Spatial Activist Research and Embodied Knowledge

Our collective orientation links embodied knowledge and activist research to articulate *embodied praxis* as a form of spatial practice. We claim a feminist and decolonial lens in approaching architectural knowledge production, recognizing its reciprocal relationship with the ways we live, shape and inhabit spaces, neighborhoods, cities, and territories. From this reciprocal relationship, embodied praxis emerges as a reflexive approach and situated (Haraway 1988) form of knowing and doing that is deeply embedded and entangled in specific contexts. It builds on Feminist spatial practices' understanding of the body as a site of embodied knowledge for »practicing otherwise« (Petrescu 2007; Schalk et al. 2017). Embodied praxis disrupts the academic location of knowledge production by prioritizing the multiplicity of perspectives and knowledges, particularly from the marginalized and minoritized communities, which emerge from collective struggles. By centering embodied knowledge produced through the lived experience of the activist researcher, engaged spatial practitioner, and/or active inhabitant, spatial practice can become more attuned to respond to crises through ways grounded in care, solidarity, and justice.

The situated and reciprocal relationship between spatial production and knowledge production supports thinking beyond the often extractive and exploitative conditions of normative architectural knowledge production. This shifts the sites of knowledge production toward lived and intersectional experiences, revealing the disproportionate effects of crisis on marginalized subjects (Harding 1991) and communities around the world, especially, but not only, in the Global South. While these communities are directly impacted by the ongoing economic dependencies, resource exploitation, and environmental breakdown, they are often the ones that continue to do the care work for local ecologies and vulnerable subjects. This embodied care work for »living together as well as possible« is also where they ground their capacity to resist, offering a critical opening for activist research and spatial practice to learn from (Tronto/Fisher 1990: 41). This emphasis on embodied work and situated knowledge to think within, against, and beyond crisis is inherently political. Scholars have shown that, in the context of polycrisis, architecture's most radical potential lies in creating both material and epistemic spaces, where marginalized communities can assert knowledge, agency and alternative futures (Awan et al. 2011; Escobar 2018; Miraftab 2022). These

interconnected spaces of action and knowledge have been seen in contexts such as Karachi, where tools of spatial knowledge production such as mapping and documenting could align with and activate community knowledges in shaping infrastructures (Hasan 1999), or in the form of »autonomous territorial plans« that embody the territorial knowledges of Indigenous and Afro-descended peoples in Latin America, incorporating local values and ecological management beyond political boundaries (Escobar 2018).

Articulation of knowledge is more than a cognitive process; Latour describes it as always being an embodied practice which requires engagement with the genealogy of the conditions and instruments that frame such reporting (Latour 2004). More recently, the »embodied turn in social sciences« (Thanem/Knight 2019), has argued that all research is embodied, and »asks for reflexivity, an exploration, attention to and non-judgmental awareness of self in addition to attention, exploration and non-judgmental awareness of others' experiences« (Leigh/Brown 2021: 2). Yet, for activist, participatory, and practiced-based research the assumption of a neutral, non-judgmental observer, detached from the context they find themselves in, falls short. Feminist thought (c.f. Harding 1991; Grosz 1994; Braidotti 1994) has long emphasized the role of embodied, lived experience that is necessarily differentiated across intersectional political, social, and historical dimensions as the basis of any knowledge.

Dominant architectural and urban research and practices, and their »neutral methods,« often reinforce the very systems of capitalism, colonialism and patriarchy and reproduce the same unjust power relations which underlie crisis, further embedding these structures into the everyday lives of marginalized communities, often in violent ways (Patrick 2017: 747). In response, Shafique (Shafique 2025) calls for »dirty research,« bridging the gap between theory and action by emphasizing *reciprocity* for genuine parity in research that attends to the socio-spatial dynamics shaping the »ground« and leads towards meaningful research co-inquiry. We suggest that spatial practices would benefit from a generative relationship between knowing (embodied, situated and critical) and doing (practice, intervention and organizing). This echoes the pedagogical praxis based on action and reflection that Paul Freire developed in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (Freire 1970). He suggested that knowledge emerges through dialogue, critical reflection and action, together posing an empowering liberatory process, which informs our position that knowledge emerging from embodied action

can be transformative for architecture as a discipline and practice, and can empower the communities and contexts in which it unfolds.

Embodied praxis aims for a socio-spatial change within everyday lived experiences. By making structural inequalities visible in the processes of spatial production, it expands our capacities for sensing and understanding diverse forms of agency. The lived experiences merge the researcher and »researched« positions in a shared confrontation of diverse forms of (in) justice, creating emancipatory openings for both. From decolonial and feminist perspectives, we approach these openings revealed through embodied praxis as incubators of collective subjectification (Petrescu 2005), from which to develop new epistemologies and emancipatory practices that are in constant dialogue with the context in which they emerge. We explore this in the next section through four reflections from different activist research and spatial practices in contexts with distinct contestations.

Part 2: Embodied Praxis Reflections

makāna: resisting and rebuilding amid constraining contexts in Amman, Jordan. | Jakleen Al-Dalal'a

In 2021, *makāna* was established as an interstitial movement based in Amman, emerging from a belief in the power of grassroots agency. Co-founded by two researcher-activists together with two architects and two urbanists. It was born from the ethos of a decolonial, Southern and feminist doctoral research, tackling the critical question of how alternative ways of participation can be practiced within constraining contexts, rather than remaining on the fringes as a critique of dominant paradigms of city-making. This research emphasized doing as a means to imagine alternatives, aligning with Peter North's call to develop our power to create the world we want to see« (North 2014: 1058). Embodied knowledge emerged through direct collaboration with local grassroots actors and participation including community gardeners, youth groups, and neighborhood organizers in their conversations and struggles.

The learning generated throughout these collaborations informed action, establishing a politicized, care-based accountability toward public participation practices. Inspired by Southern scholars (cf. Miraftab 2022; Ortiz 2022), we co-created spaces of solidarity in diverse venues, including community

centers, community gardens, public parks, and informal public settings across Amman. Bringing together those who are usually at the margins of the research process, such as women-led collectives, stateless groups, and youth networks operating without formal organizational status. This work became especially urgent in the context of Jordan's restrictive civic space, where laws regulating public gatherings, foreign funding, and association registration often curtail political expression and limit the operation of independent civil society actors. In response, we adopted a relational approach grounded in care to build translocal alliances by collaborating with regional networks of urban practitioners, solidarity economies, and other grassroots collectives beyond Amman. This approach allowed different conversations, dialogues, and practices to flourish and facilitated new networks resisting the co-optation of care into the patriarchal-racial-capitalist accumulation agenda. Following Miraftab (2022), by challenging restrictive systems such as forced evictions, urban displacement, and privatization of public space. These alliances included collaborations with grassroots organizations, such as Yalla Nel'ab and CLUSTER from Cairo, and local practitioners like architects, planners, and community organizers from ARINI and MMAG, co-hosting monthly public workshops and events in community centers, informal spaces, and university venues between 2021 and 2024. Across these gatherings, we collectively mapped neighborhood struggles, shared lived experiences of exclusion, and co-designed participatory actions addressing community priorities in East Amman, particularly in Hashemi and Jabal Al Natheef. Some of these initiatives continue through community stewardship and are documented on makāna's public channels.

Through these practices, *makāna* promoted advocacy, forged connections, expressed solidarity, supported local initiatives, and worked toward progressive social change. Translating solidarity into tangible actions by collaboratively producing contextually relevant knowledge with and for grassroots struggles. This took shape through diverse formats aimed at the public: facilitating workshops, hosting open discussions, leading collaborative mapping sessions, and curating exhibitions, both in community spaces and online platforms such as websites and social media (see makāna 2022: Instagram and LinkedIn @makana.jor) (fig. 1).

Positioned at the intersection of activism and research for just urban places, *makāna* became a living platform engaging with issues of social and spatial justice, self-organization, experimentation and imagination in advocating for participatory urban practices in Jordan. *makāna* created spaces

1.
Workshops with grassroots organizations and local communities at makāna.
Photograph by Jakleen Al-Dalal'a, 2022.

for dialogue and alternative social infrastructures that challenge top-down, formalized modes of city-making. Offering a vision of urban development rooted in solidarity, empowerment, and the right to the city. This case articulates embodied architectural knowledge production as integral to participative activist spatial practice, in response to the structural crises shaping Amman's urban space.

Civic Co-learning as Activist Research in Poplar, East London, UK | Andrew Belfield

»Climate Companions« (CC) was a two-year participatory research project exploring the transformative potential of design-driven civic pedagogies in nurturing agency toward more resilient urban futures. It was nested within an existing R-Urban hub (Petcou/Petrescu 2015) supporting its members (4 non-profit associations and 10 resident food growers) to open up to new networks and citizens. This co-inquiry responds to our unfolding ecological and climate crisis, grounding its urgency within learners' everyday experiences of the city, as a form of consciousness building through civic learning. Civic Pedagogies are situated and embodied practices, utilizing the neighborhood as the site of knowledge production and exploration, with the aim to catalyze local action and agency (Antaki/Belfield/Moore 2024). The process was iterative, working with a citizen co-design group of 10 local residents, alongside another 20 civic associations, non-profits, artists, and educators, to develop and trial two »festivals of learning.« The first was in September 2022, before collectively reflecting and co-designing a second, which responded more directly to local needs in June/July 2023.

The research became the site of activism, setting up a process with the intent of »nurturing agency and capabilities for action« within participants. Situated and embodied knowledges were co-created through the collective inquiry. Rather than creating binaries of »researcher« and »participant,« the term co-learners was adopted, as recognition of the diverse community of practice (Wenger 1999) assembled to learn together without an ingrained hierarchy. Co-learning became a collective practice and research method, embedded within a place and learning through the body. The pedagogies trialed were situated and embodied; learning was primarily through action (by doing), from place (via urban exploration) and through togetherness (by building social relations and networks) (fig. 2). This process supported the valorisation of situated knowledges; rooted in experience and embraced its

2.
Learning through togetherness – Companions Digest, discursive dinner and celebration of the Climate Companions 2022 program. Photograph by Andrew Belfield, 2022.

»partial« positioning by sharing subjectivities within the group. By learning through the body, the collective made sense of our surrounding lived world, how everyday life at the scale of the neighborhood interfaced with our contemporary crises, and through small actions, committed to their transformation.

Climate Companions recognizes the innate activism of emancipatory learning, by making »change« in different capacities. This materializes through »small acts« of hope, by altering individual habits, learning new skills, or by expanding networks and alliances of grassroots groups who steward the hub. By diversifying these voices and the alliances that govern the hub, you ensure local needs and urgencies are foregrounded throughout the process. Agency was nurtured individually, by raising consciousness and is realized as »achievement« by sharing knowledge between co-learners (Biesta/Tedder 2007). In parallel, civic agency is formed through the collective capacity of R-Urban as a space where climate action is taken. Architectural research and knowledge can respond to our climate crisis by instrumentalizing the collective; by initiating processes of co-learning with the intent of generating new capabilities for citizen action in the neighborhood. By centering situated and embodied learning practices, researchers may act as allies for communities seeking change and nurturing capabilities which were previously obscured and raising collective consciousness.

In this case, »embodied praxis« was the shared method of learning and unlearning toward equitable futures in the neighborhood in which the participants live and work. The »doing« of this praxis produces new knowledge for spatial practices by stepping back, relinquishing researcher control and engaging as a co-learner with others. This »dirty« research process (Shafique 2025) builds reciprocity by blurring the roles and identities of researchers and citizens, helping to alter subjectivities toward neighborhood spatial transformations.

Activating Embodied Knowledges for Emancipatory Territorial Practice in Famagusta, Cyprus | Esra Can

The crisis that gave rise to grassroots urban activism in Famagusta was multi-layered. This divided city is shaped by the consequences of the post-conflict condition in Cyprus, which became the pretext of segregation, militarization, and territorial partition rooted in colonialism. The resulting status quo led to an urban development shaped by the financialization of city-making (Can

3.
Participating in a bicommunal gathering of Famagustians across the Cypriot division within the fenced-off district of Varosha. Photograph by Esra Can, 2023.

2023), where the absence of participatory and transparent decision-making processes has exacerbated everyday challenges. This institutional neglect, or structural uncaring, has facilitated the expansion of development and enclosures, risking the integrity of Famagusta's urban eco-culture.

Conducting spatial activist research in this context necessitated embracing a plurality of interwoven roles: a spatial practitioner, an urban activist and a researcher, each role continuously blurring into the next. This fluidity enabled reconfiguration of relationships through the generative cross-contamination of skills, methods and knowledges. Embodying the city's everyday urban controversies as an architect and as a Turkish Cypriot raised in a neighborhood shaped by infrastructures of division meant that the research agenda had extended much beyond knowledge production toward urban action. A multilayered researcher subjectivity emerging from these interwoven roles enabled the city, its ecologies, and spatial thinking to be positioned as active agents within the research. I collaborated with architects and urbanists across the territorial divide, fostering collective imaginaries of a shared urban future and resisting the dominant narratives of territorial separation (see *Hands-on Famagusta*[2]). Being a member of an urban activist network[3] contributed to shaping collective care and solidarity grounded in counter-militarist, counter-developmentalist, environmentalist, and decolonial advocacy, foregrounding eco-cultural sites as connective elements of coexistence (fig. 3). Through a reflexive research praxis, these entangled roles coalesced into an interdependent ecosystem of knowledge production.

With these interdependent roles, a plurality of knowledges and agencies were shaped through interactions and collective experiences. Petrescu suggests that revealing micro-agencies of participants compose a shared and collective agency towards enacting change (Petrescu 2005). Central to the transformative dimension was becoming the initiator of new connections, initially by building transversal networks of solidarity, and then for the spatial actions which extended beyond human participants. The »reconstituted relationships and existential dimensions of people,« as Lopes De Souza also observed in the autonomous spatial praxis of Latin American social movements (2016: 1298), gave way to new networks of interspecies care

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2 Hands-on Famagusta project promotes a unified urban future for Famagusta, opening up the reconstruction process as a means for collective peacebuilding.

3 Famagusta Initiative urban activist network is a grassroots group advocating for local ecologies and peacebuilding in Famagusta.

4.
Building collective counternarratives by inventorization of trees, with aici a fost o pădure/aici ar putea fi o pădure. Photograph by Maria Alexandrescu, 2023.

and solidarity with expert citizens. On the ground, this new, situated, and transformative mode of spatial action challenged not only the financialized development but also the conventional understandings of what architecture and urbanism can do.

Two key premises emerged from the embodied praxis developed within this contested context. First, architecture was extended as an embodied territorial practice, where territory is not a fixed ground but a »transversal process« (Tan 2020) shaped by human and more-than-human entanglements beyond infrastructures of division. Defying the imposed borders and enclosures by thinking and doing architecture with care materialized as the recognition of interdependence between bodies, ecologies and territories, which opened up its space to a variety of actors and positions. Second, activating embodied knowledge fostered generative spaces and alliances across urban activists, expert citizens, ecologists, and spatial practitioners that fundamentally shifted how the crisis condition was approached. Together, they account for a more embedded role for spatial praxis, in actively navigating the crises by responding not only to how it is lived but also to the ways it is collectively resisted.

Maidan Research, Park Activism in Bucharest, Romania | Maria Alexandrescu

This research inquiry begins with the Romanian maidan, a situated social-ecological landscape whose meaning shifted from referring to an open space to something akin to a wasteland. The issues faced by Bucharest's maidans spaces reveal multiple crises intertwining local and planetary scales: the financialization of housing and land, (green) gentrification, and struggles for the rights to urban nature, to life in the city in a postsocialist context.

During the fieldwork, I came across a call from *aici a fost o pădure / aici ar putea fi o pădure*, a grassroots citizens' movement fighting for one of Bucharest's many contested parks, Parcul IOR. The privatization of 12 ha of this park meant that what once was a park became *maidanized*, becoming a feral landscape (Alexandrescu/David 2024). Since 2022, this area has increasingly been the target of tree poisoning, arson, and illegal tree felling, presumably to circumvent existing legislation protecting green space in order to eventually build on it. Neighbors of the park have been mobilizing for its protection and recuperation for over 10 years. Responding to this urgency, I joined this struggle, shifting my position from that of a situated

observer (Haraway 1988) to one taking part in what Solomon and Kaika describe as »skin-in-the-game« methods, referring to the »sustained practices of intense physical and emotional labor« (Solomon/Kaika 2024: 1505). Such methods challenge the expectations of the time, labor, and boundaries of research, but produce embodied knowledge that is able to respond to the crisis at hand. Understanding how crisis, as a structural condition, affects all aspects of urban nature, city life, and how it might be tackled across multiple scales toward a more just city.

Working in solidarity with the activist group for two months, the fall of 2023 was spent organizing around its defense, mapping its remaining vegetation, and discussing what its future could be. (fig. 4) The body – both individual and collective – was a key site of knowledge production, whether in the memories of those who have passed through this park every day and continue to do so; in the bodies of the volunteers who inventoried the trees, embracing each one in measuring it; or in our shared coming together on the park site. The embodied knowledge resulting from these forms of engagement challenged official and developer narratives about the park and empowered and mobilized the park's neighbors by valorizing their knowledge and lived experience. The activist's sustained presence around the site became a way of caring for this landscape, mobilizing more-than-human latent commons (Tsing 2015) to prefigure shared visions for its future. This opened possibilities for collectively reimagining this landscape's future beyond preexisting urban forms such as parks or nature reserves (aici a fost o pădure / aici ar putea fi o pădure 2024). While these are yet to be negotiated and enacted, the experience shows how collective embodied knowledges can provide a different grounding for rethinking urban nature that can challenge existing city-making processes and mobilize around alternative visions driven by citizens.

Part 3: Discussion: Reconfiguring Scale, Tending Collective Reflexivity, Infrastructuring Embodied Praxis

Across these four reflections, embodied praxis emerges as a means of engaging with the deeply political dimensions of crisis as they manifest within distinct context-specific ways. This shifted our understanding of what constitutes social and spatial justice activism combining situated knowledge and practice. The modes of engagement varied, ranging from building grassroots alliances and shaping climate and spatial justice advocacy movements

(*makāna*, Climate Companions, Famagusta's urban activism, *maidan*), forming community-led neighborhood hubs (Climate Companions), establishing partnerships with local spatial practices (*makāna*), and supporting initiatives for alternative forms of urban governance and decision making (Famagusta's urban activism).

These *diverse modes of engagement* are grounded in the researchers' own embodied ambivalences, necessitating ongoing negotiation of positionality on when to witness, participate, facilitate or lead within socio-spatial activism. Such embodied praxis contributes to a reimagining of spatial practice: one that privileges cultivation of relations, building alliances, and enacting solidarities over physical interventions. In this section, we trace this shift by reconfiguring scale, tending to collective reflexivity and infrastructuring embodied praxis as a mode of transformative engagement.

Embodied praxis generates relational spaces embedded within and shaped by the specific contexts they operate in, where social, political and spatial dimensions are negotiated through lived, situated action. A key element of this negotiation is articulating links between *scales*, whether scales of urgency, scales of action, or scales of agency. These scales are often necessarily determined but not limited by how the crisis as a structural condition is experienced within different contexts. For example, the operation of *makāna* was initially a form of micro-agency, scaling up to respond to urgencies of capitalist paradigms of urban production. Similarly, the scale of urgency often influences the scale of action. Climate Companions sought to link the planetary scales of the ecological and climate crises with the everyday scales of the neighborhood. Similarly, living in a divided city such as Famagusta has a very palpable impact on the everyday life of people, experienced in part through the intentional uncaring resulting from the financialization of city-making, but also in the urgency to contest this condition. Situated encounters of polycrisis that embodied praxis account for, forges diverse solidarities across scales and sites, allowing for a spatial practice which challenges the abstract, nested scalar configurations of (colonial) power (Tsing 2012) and actively works to reconfigure their constraints. As spatial practitioners, we bring this ability to think in multi-scalar terms to other communities, as much as we learn from multiple sites to work together for a wider socio-spatial justice.

If embodied praxis is to work relationally between scales, the relations must be built and maintained through embodying pluralities, both as individuals and as part of collectives. Such praxis follows a *feminist ethics of care and reciprocity* (Tronto/Fisher 1990) and works to build alliances from and

with the margins and allows for the emergence of *collective subjectification* (Petrescu 2005). In the case of Climate Companions, the researcher and participants shifted their roles to becoming co-learners, »learning to act« by/through »doing« to collectively realize alternative modes of civic pedagogy. In the case of *maidan*, the collective embodied knowledge developed through sustained practices of intense physical and emotional labor as a way to challenge institutional claims to knowledge and mobilize solidarities. For *makāna* and urban activism in Famagusta, the frame of the research extends beyond knowledge production to serve as a catalyst for building solidarities, and alliances. Embodied praxis in the context of activist research can be thought of as a mode of *knowledge co-production* (Perry 2022) oriented to transformative change, one that requires a negotiation of the boundaries of knowledge production and enclosure within and beyond different systems of knowing and doing, their institutions, and power structures. A care-full shift in spatial practice toward modes of embodied praxis relies on these moments of negotiation for *tending collective reflexivity*. These practices are needed to navigate power relations and resist knowledge extractivism, instead by empowering and building capacity for action through grounded research.

Embodied praxis can be a form of *generative*, feminist, decolonial spatial practice that produces relational spaces of collective reflection and action, such as in the case of *makāna* and Famagusta's urban activism. These spaces might be thought of as *infrastructures for future resistance* (Shantz 2009) operating beyond the conventional forms of activism such as contesting, negotiating and protesting. In the case of makāna, this infrastructure exists through creating spaces not only for collaborative reflection but also as infrastructural space for caring practices, including healing, maintaining, recovering, and making peace. In Famagusta, architectural infrastructures become the medium to build care and solidarity in the collective imagining of new ways of moving and acting. Such infrastructural spaces operate on multiple temporal scales and are able to generate multiple forms of solidarity in a given context. By centering the care and maintenance of infrastructural place, embodied praxis enables engaged spatial practices to nurture collective reflection, build solidarities, and grow capacity for action amid conditions of polycrisis.

Conclusion

In this paper, we put forth *embodied praxis* as an approach to architectural knowledge production that attends to the specificities of place, body and experience, challenging us to think of architecture and urbanism not merely as technical professions, but as practices capable of cultivating spaces of care, solidarity, and justice. Embodied knowledge emerges in the back and forth of doing and reflecting – reworking spatial practice through more equitable methods, shared responsibilities, and orientation toward supporting collective and shared agencies. Building a reflective praxis through situated and embodied architectural research invites us to, in Haraway's terms, »stay with the trouble,« forming unanticipated coalitions for »making oddkin« as »we require each other in unexpected collaborations and combinations« (Haraway 2015: 4). Embodied praxis thus becomes a transformative mode of engagement, grounded in the lived experience of structural conditions and capable of enabling socio-spatial change. Learning from spatial contestations and relational ecologies, we suggest a feminist, decolonial, and Southern agenda for spatial practice (Vasudevan/Novoa 2022), shifting the role of the architect/urbanist from the isolated/outsider position to engaged participants in generative collectivities.

This study suggests that reconfiguring scale, tending to collective reflexivity and infrastructuring embodied praxis could transform spatial practice towards not only being responsive but generative. Embodied praxis is transformative across individual, collective, and planetary scales, reconfiguring how and where spatial interventions take place. By centering lived experience as a site of counter-knowledge and collective world-making, embodied praxis contests dominant narratives and mobilizes a coalition of engaged citizens and spatial intelligence toward collective futures. The knowledge produced through embodied praxis does not simply address crisis but actively prefigures more just and caring spatial futures through spatial action.

The diversity of reflections presented in this paper highlights the potential of collective subjectification emerging from embodied praxis. One which incorporates multiple histories, experiences and imaginations in the making of more just and equitable urban futures and is the basis for an emancipatory spatial practice. The spatial production through embodied praxis differs from normative approaches in generating different configurations in response to structural crisis, whether through emergent collectivities, situated epistemologies, or new ways of working together. Future spatial practice

can learn from these relational spatial configurations by further expanding the understanding of the material and immaterial relations which sustain them, so it may better address, resist, and ultimately prefigure transformative futures beyond the conditions of crisis.

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