

WITH/WITHOUT

**STREET
PARK
VILLA
HOUSING BLOCK
MUSEUM
BUSINESS PARK
RELIC
REFURBISHMENT
MALL
UNIVERSITY
VILLAGE
SITE
SUBURB
SKYSCRAPER**

**SPATIAL PRODUCTS, PRACTICES
AND POLITICS IN THE MIDDLE EAST**

Edited by Shumon Basar, Antonia Carver and Markus Miessen

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IN THE NIGHT

By Susanne Schuricht

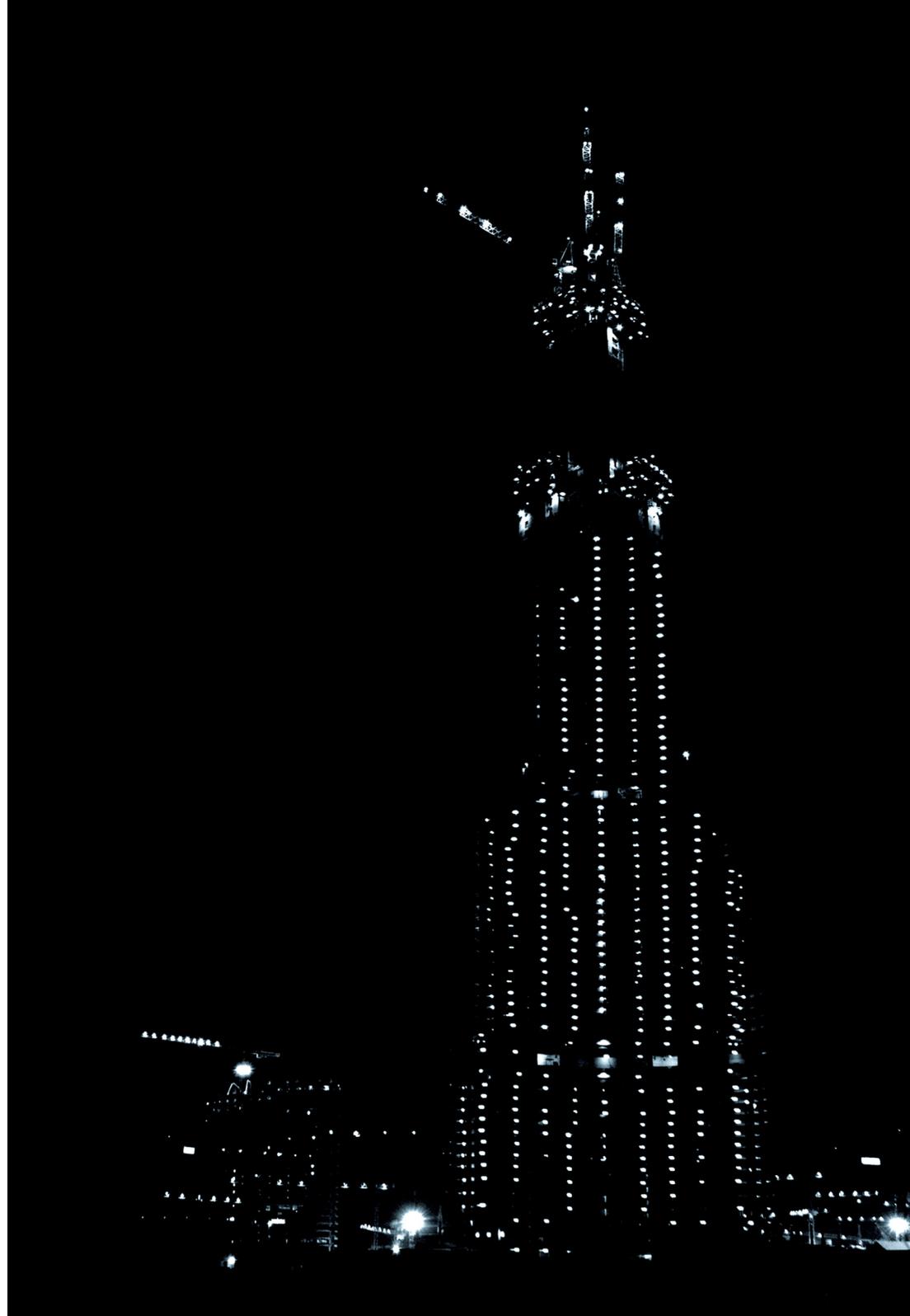
In Berlin, where I live, everything in the city is marked with Prussian frugality and strict regulations that dictate building heights. Nothing changes that much. I wanted to grasp what was meant when Dubai's ruler, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, said, "Why make small steps if you can make big ones?" So I went to see it for real. To see how it compared to the images in my head, of fantasy landscapes and Luna Park, of new Towers of Babel and newer Pyramids of Giza.

I got the impression that most of life is going on indoors in Dubai: inside the villas, office buildings, and malls. At night, it's like Dubai is waking up, exactly when the temperature is going down.

During these hours, the future face of Dubai appears. The buildings are set out against the darkness by their construction lights. Each lit-level marks each new floor. Everything shifts at night. In the daytime Dubai is impressive, but not mystical. That's why I began to feel that I wanted to shoot at night. I had a special interest in construction sites because there you can feel at night what is still hidden during the day. I call these photos *First Series*.

This series deals with structures that have their own life, their own temporary dynamic. Burj Dubai is just another structure in the night, with lights that rise towards the sky and make it seem taller than it already is. The promise of the Burj seems more genuine during these hours.

Sometimes, at night, you're in a *Matrix* movie, where only a campfire of orange lights offers some heat. Sometimes beings from foreign planets appear at the horizon or on a gigantic opera stage. Robots communicate with their antennae. The rest of us don't exist. It is a surreal atmosphere. When the lights are switched off maybe they've gone. In a way, it is all a mirage, on the way to somewhere else.





CITY AND CITIZENSHIP

GATED COMMUNITIES AND NEW URBAN IDENTITIES

By Pelin Tan

According to urban myths surrounding Istanbul's Tophane district, murder and robbery are common, walking around in the evening is unsafe, and prostitution and drugs are rampant. This neighborhood, where I happen to live, is an area of the city near the main cosmopolitan cultural centers of Taksim and Galata; its residents are mostly Gypsies, Arabs from Anatolia, and Kurds. Tophane represents the “other” in the urban conscious of Istanbulians; it is both uncanny and dangerous, a place to which urban clichés and misconceptions of danger are readily attached.

In *The Architectural Uncanny*, Anthony Vidler discusses the connection between “urban memory” and the city. He writes, “In the traditional city, antique, medieval or Renaissance, urban memory was easy enough to define; it was that image of the city that enabled the citizen to identify with its past and present as a political, cultural and social entity; it was neither the ‘reality’ of the city nor purely imaginary...the city might be recognized as ‘home’, as something not foreign, and as constituting a moral and protected environment for actual daily life.”

Vidler goes on to offer a crucial point on the notion of what he terms the “uncanny” in global cities. As a result of ethnic and social diversity and accompanying segregation in modern cities, he argues, it is difficult to create a collective urban memory with which citizens can identify. As a result, obscure identifications with place lead to urban discourses based on fear, safety, and insecurity. Urban ghettos, peripheries of city centers, gated communities, and other urban areas whose inhabitants have diverse cultural, economic, and social backgrounds are mythologized via such discourses even if they are not based on fact.

Over the last couple of centuries, the terms “city” and “metropolis” have represented the utopias of cosmopolitanism—diversified communities and the participation in public space on a mass scale. In the 1990s, however, we have witnessed the failure of urban utopias and the idyllic notion of the elite, multicultural, modern citizen. In the past ten years, suburban areas marked by “gated communities” have developed on the margins of cities the world over—Istanbul included. Such commu-

