AN ALTERNATIVE GUIDE TO BEIRUT*

AUB|Faculty of Engineering and Architecture | Department of Architecture and Design Spring 2010| Vertical Design Studio|Mon. and Fri. 2:00pm – 7:00pm|Facilitators: Carla Aramouny & J. Matthew Thomas

A Studio on Infrastructure and Tourism

ABSTRACT

The studio will investigate **infrastructure** as a focal point for Lebanon's development, and as a method for re-reading greater Beirut. **Tourism**, the city and country's most flourishing sector, which traditionally has been its sole focus, will be re-considered as an essential attractor for the development of infrastructural projects. The country's "public works" are stressed, with increasing populations relying heavily on its various infrastructural sectors for their everyday functioning. Beirut and the greater country manage to sustain themselves despite the flawed systems; however the city's configuration and the urban decentralized sprawl demand reconsideration.

The studio will zoom in on four main infrastructural sectors: **water, transportation, energy, and waste**. Through analysis and mappings, their conditions and effect on greater Beirut will be explored, moving from the macro scale of the city to the micro scale of architecture. Students will be asked to re-imagine the relationship between these public works within the peripheral city limits, and to propose a new architectural intervention that hybridizes infrastructure with touristic public programs.

Throughout the investigation, sustainable thinking will be considered as an inherent need in the future city. How can we propose new design strategies for our infrastructural cities within the impending crises of energy, environment and climate change? How can these diverse infrastructures utilize tourism and public amenities to create attractor points in the city? The interest will be to propose hybrid architectural programs that support the diverse sectors, and help each sustain the other through repurposing, rehabilitating and reinvigorating.

*A more detailed brief will be handed out at the start of the semester