INSTALLATION METHOD
A TOOL FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN HISTORIC PRESERVATION

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree
Master of Science in Historic Preservation
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Columbia University

May 2016
Acknowledgements

This thesis was teamwork. It taught me the invaluable and surprising outcomes of collaboration. The diversity of backgrounds, worldviews, knowledge, and expertise on which this thesis is grounded is its most precious asset. To everyone who put this together with me I am grateful.

I counted on the brilliant guidance of my advisor, Erica Avrami, whose constant feedback made this project a structured and substantiated product that intends to be useful to others in the future. The instrumental commentary of my three readers, Jorge Otero-Pailos, Alberto Escovar, and Carolina Castellanos, was an inspiration that showed me the possibilities and importance of innovation and social impact in the field of preservation.

The team of friends and family who volunteered to participate in this project, made it possible, made it better, and made it fun. This work was enriched and driven by the support and work of my colleague, friend, and mother, Angela Crane; it was structured after the passion and knowledge of Ana Maria Garrido; it was encouraged by the sensitivities of Angela Jimenez; refined by the craft of Catalina Komninos; beautifully documented by the talented Alejandra Cuellar; brightened by the spirit and creativity of Luisa Brando, Maria Lucia Buraglia, and Stephanie Crane; and meticulously revised by the wonderful editor, Alex Weinberg.

At its core, this project was a partnership with the inhabitants of Jordán Sube. It was motivated by their culture, and it was encouraged by their hospitality, enthusiasm, tenacity, and sincerity. My approach to this community received the warmest welcome. The help, insight, and selfless cooperation provided by Isabel Aparicio, Juan Pablo Aparicio, and Fernando Monroy lie at the heart of this project. The support of the town’s administration, headed by mayor Johana Muñoz and planning secretary René Herrera, made this thesis possible and significant. I extend my gratitude to everyone in Jordán who participated in this project and welcomed me into their town.
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CHAPTER ONE Introduction
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A recent shift in historic preservation theory and practice suggests that the field look at heritage through a holistic approach that broadens the range of values considered in understanding the significance of a site. This values-centered approach to preservation emphasizes the importance of including a wide array of stakeholders in preservation processes while considering the multiple layers of values that they ascribe to sites in decision-making. This implies interaction between field experts and non-experts throughout the significance assessment, planning, management, and conservation processes of historic preservation. Although the importance of this interaction is widely acknowledged, there has been little research on how it is to be done, and the field has developed limited tools for its application. This thesis focuses on the relationship between historic preservation experts and local communities during the early stages of the preservation process, and develops a toolset that aids in their interaction. Through a case-study experiment, this project explores the possibility of using spatial installations as a means of communication between the two parties in order to identify the values that local communities ascribe to their heritage. It proposes that the alteration of space, and its integration with ethnographic methods of interaction, bridges barriers between experts and local communities, producing a richer insight into the significance of historic sites. As a case-study to test this proposal, a spatial installation was built in Jordán Sube, a small town in Colombia. The installation was used to foster a conversation with the town’s inhabitants about their heritage. This experiment concluded in a general strategy for implementing spatial installations as a method for community engagement in historic preservation projects. (Jordán Installation Video Link: https://vimeo.com/162827376)

I. AIM AND SCOPE

This thesis studies the way in which preservationists engage with the community in the early stages of a project, when the experts are trying to understand the community’s perceptions of their heritage. It draws from the disciplines of ethnography and installation art to propose a new way for this engagement to happen. It offers a strategy in which heritage itself is altered through an installation, and is used as a tool that fosters communication between preservationists and the local community. This strategy will be referred to, from here on, as the “Installation Method”. A large portion of this thesis was devoted to testing this method in a specific case-study. Jordán Sube, a small town in Colombia, was chosen as a pertinent site for applying the proposed strategy. An installation was designed and implemented in Jordán as a means to communicate with the town’s inhabitants. Assessing this experiment led to a set of general guidelines that serve as a base for applying the Installation Method to other cases, and contributed to an understanding of the potential of installations as tools for communication.

II. METHODOLOGY

This thesis was divided into four phases. The first entailed research, in which current practices of community engagement in preservation and other fields were studied in order to determine where and how these processes could be improved. This phase led to the proposal of using installation art in conjunction with ethnographic tools as a method for community engagement in preservation. In order to test the validity of this proposal, Jordán Sube in Colombia was chosen as a case-study in which the proposed method would be implemented. The second phase of the thesis, corresponds to the research and fieldwork that were necessary for tailoring the Installation Method to Jordán. In the third phase, the installation was designed and built in
Jordán, where it was used as a tool to trigger a conversation with the town’s inhabitants around their heritage. The fourth phase was the evaluation of this experiment.

Phase 1: Research and Development

A literature research was conducted in order to develop the Installation Method. Through a review of sources such as books, periodicals, scholarly articles, and reports, the current tools used in values-centered preservation were analyzed and found to be insufficient. The findings of this research demonstrated a need for a new approach. The cultural, language, and knowledge barriers that the interaction between experts and non-experts entails, proved to hinder community engagement in heritage processes. This research was complemented with an appraisal of tools used in fields similar to preservation that address these shortcomings. This comparative analysis led to the conclusion that installation art could potentially address the deficiencies in the way preservationists are currently engaging with the community. Further research on installation art consisted of a review of theoretic and historic literature, and also on site visits to museums that exhibit this type of artwork. This research confirmed the potential of installations as a communication tool, leading to the development of this thesis’s proposed Installation Method for preservation. (See Chapter Two: Method Development)

Phase 2: Case-study Investigation

Jordán Sube was chosen as a case-study to test the validity of this proposal. In order to apply the Installation Method to the particular context of Jordán, bibliographic research and fieldwork were conducted. Bibliographic research provided a foundational knowledge of the community, which included, a historic narrative of the town and an analysis of current plans for its future development. Fieldwork was also carried out in order to understand Jordán, its heritage, and its inhabitants. It constituted a recognition of the context in which the case-study is located, an assessment of the physical and social fabric of the town, and several instances of community engagement. (See Chapter Three: Case-study and Chapter Four: Fieldwork)

Phase 3: Installation Design and Implementation

The research and fieldwork led to an installation design that was specific to the case-study. The installation was built on-site in Jordán and an activity with the community was carried out around it. The entire experimentation was documented in order to assess its performance as a community engagement tool for preservation in next phase. (See Chapter Five: Design and Implementation)

Phase 4: Assessment

In order to measure the success of the proposed method, the following steps were carried out: first, the findings that the conversation revealed were stated, that is, the values that the community ascribes to its heritage. Then, an analysis was made to understand what elements in the installation led to these findings, and how they enriched or hindered the process. Finally, a conclusion regarding the potential of the Installation Method was drafted, including a set of guidelines that suggest how it could be applied to other historic preservation projects. (See Chapter Six: Findings and Chapter Seven: Conclusions)
CHAPTER TWO  Method Development

The Installation Method was developed based on an iterative process of research and fieldwork testing. The following chapter synthesizes the research process that led to its development. It is divided into three parts. The first describes the approach to a values-centered historic preservation planning model, emphasizing the faults in current tools used for community engagement. The second part justifies the use of spatial installations as tools that enable that engagement, and the third proposes a strategy of how this can be done: The Installation Method.
CHAPTER TWO  Method Development

I. VALUES-CENTERED PRESERVATION

A values-centered approach to historic preservation is a planning model that urges the need for consideration of a wide range of values in the assessment of a heritage site’s significance. It suggests that besides including traditional heritage values (such as historic, associational, or aesthetic ones), preservationists also include contemporary values (such as social, ecological, and economic ones). The significance statement then constitutes the basis for all future decisions (conservation procedures, interventions, interpretation, etc.) concerning the site.1 This is a response to a notion of culture as a changing and evolving process, which reflects on the need to situate heritage in the present in order to ensure its preservation in the future. By acknowledging a multiplicity of values, historic preservation responds to “professional and academic ideals as well as to social needs and concerns.” 2 Heritage sites or objects, are then regarded as assets for development that address urban and social issues and connect to society’s broadest wants and needs, which in turn “ensures the long-term viability of preservation schemes.”3 This thesis’s definition and consideration of a values-centered approach to preservation is based, for the most part, on the Getty Conservation Institute’s publications: Values and Heritage Conservation and Assessing the Values of Cultural Heritage, and on Randall Mason’s article in The journal for Heritage Stewardship, “Theoretical and Practical Arguments for Values-Centered Preservation”.

The broadening of preservation goals and scope also introduces a great deal of complexity in the heritage processes. In order to understand the assortment of values in a site, preservationists need to engage with the full array of stakeholders that attribute these values, as well as with the different professionals who know how to interpret them. These stakeholders “may include, but are not limited to, the individual, the family, the local community, an academic discipline or professional community, an ethnic or religious group, a region, a nation-state...” etc. Identification of these stakeholders therefore constitutes an important task in the valuing process, as does the classification of the different value-types that ensures a comprehensive values study. There are several typologies in the field that classify these different value-types. However, it is recognized, that each site demands its own values typology as well as its own stakeholder analysis depending on the project characteristics.

Among the different stakeholders in heritage, the local community associated with a site can be of paramount importance in providing information on contemporary values such as: social, civic, spiritual, religious, symbolic, identity, or even others. The associations of the local community members with these values not only makes them an important source of information for preservationists, but also reflects their investment in the site as the primary stewards, and therefore their stakes in its future. Even though their importance in the process is acknowledged, there is little research in the field of preservation that specifies methods and tools appropriate for incorporating these non-expert communities into the valuing process of heritage. Moreover, this interaction necessitates tools that guide it and methods that address the myriad of challenges posed by

communication between expert and non-expert communities. These challenges are best expressed by the following questions posed by Setha Low in her piece in the Getty Conservation Institute report: Assessing the Values of Cultural Heritage:

While the values typologies... might make sense to us as conservation professionals, what would be the value categories for outsiders? Would they be different? What kind of language and phrasing and communication would most effectively abet their participation? In devising and applying a typology for a project, these questions must be considered. By what methods can those conservation professionals, officials, decision makers, and other stakeholders at the table generate knowledge about the value assessments of those outside the process? between the perceptions of architectural historians and those of the public is, increased by differences in professional and popular culture. Architects and architecturally trained historians, as well as most conservation professionals, participate in a process of professional socialization that provides a common language, set of symbols, value structure, and code of rituals and taboos. The public does not share this perceptual system but, instead, holds images and preferences that are embedded in its own beliefs, customs, and values.\(^5\)

In brief, what researchers suggest is that communication between expert and non-expert communities face a multitude of language, cultural, and knowledge barriers that may prevent or impair the evaluation process of a heritage site. However, these barriers are not faced only by the preservation field. Most professions that require community engagement are confronted with similar issues. And even though there is a great amount of information in other disciplines that deals with these challenges, there is relatively little research on trying to tie this information into a comprehensive methodology specific to historic preservation.

Current heritage practice relies largely on ethnographic tools for engaging with the community. Although these tools are presumably tailored to each specific preservation project, there is little information on how this is done, and therefore no feedback that helps generalize successful methods and tools for other preservation projects. One of the few formal attempts at creating a historic preservation methodology for assessing community values that was found was the US National Parks Service’s version of Rapid Ethnographic Assessment Procedures (REAP), a methodology introduced in developing countries by the fields of agriculture and public health.\(^6\) The NPS’s modification of this methodology for historic preservation purposes does not alter the methods themselves, but just suggests heritage related information that can be derived from them. Moreover, it is applied equally both to natural and to cultural sites.\(^7\)

The following is a selection of different tools that were found to be used for engaging the community in historic preservation projects as well as some of the methods specified by the REAP. Because the scope of this thesis deals with the barriers faced in communication between expert and non-expert communities, only those instances where there is direct interaction between the two are included. (Other more “passive” methods would include behavioral observation, archival research, policy research, land-use studies, cultural mapping, etc.)

\(^7\) Low, “Anthropological-Ethnographic Methods for the Assessment of Cultural Values in Heritage Conservation".
Interviews

Interviews are “The process of asking individuals (or small groups) questions and recording their responses.”\(^8\) They are used to collect descriptive data as well as perceptions and opinions. Interviews can be structured or non-structured, or can even take the form of oral histories.

Focus groups

Focus groups consist of a group of six to ten individuals, who are usually selected systematically to represent a specific part of the population. Discussions in the group are directed by a facilitator and recorded. They are used to understand a collective set of beliefs or perceptions.\(^9\)

Meetings

Meetings are an assembly of people representing a variety of interests, although the size of the group may vary. They are used to understand community values, needs, and desires. A type of meeting described in the REAP is the “impromptu meeting”, where the facilitator conducts the meeting in a place where people gather, in a public space, and anyone interested can join.\(^10\)

Surveys

Surveys are questionnaires, either written, in person, or on the telephone. They are used for gathering specific data but can also give insights in communities’ perceptions and beliefs.

Transect Walks

Transect walks are routes guided by selected community members to learn about the resources they find important. They are used to understand which sites these community members find important in the landscape.\(^11\)

Understanding and interpreting all the information that these tools can provide involves capabilities beyond those of preservation professionals, and therefore interdisciplinary collaboration in these processes is essential. However, historic preservation projects should be led by preservationists, and preservationists should be able to understand these methods and become fluent in their implementation, even though anthropologists, sociologists, or economists are consulted throughout the process. Moreover, heritage professionals should research these tools in order to tailor them to the specific needs of the preservation field.

Although the aforementioned tools provide a structure for the interaction between expert and non-expert communities, they don’t necessarily address the language, cultural, and knowledge barriers faced in this interaction. They rely in the facilitator’s communication skills to bridge these barriers. In the case of preservation professionals, because they are not trained in these skills (as opposed to anthropologists or sociologists, for example), the success of the tools can not be assured.

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\(^9\) Ibid.

\(^10\) Ibid.

II. INSTALLATION ART FOR COMMUNICATION

This thesis explores a method that integrates conventional ethnographic tools for assessing community values into a heritage-specific strategy that seeks to bridge language, cultural, and knowledge barriers between preservation experts and the local community. The strategy proposed is the use of space for communication, and the tool explored to achieve this is a spatial installation.

This strategy draws from previous efforts in the field of participatory urban planning and human-centered design. Like historic preservation, these disciplines also deal with the built environment, and they face similar barriers between experts and the communities they intend to engage. However, they have a longer history in the research of community engagement, and therefore have developed several tools and methods that address these barriers and are also tailored towards built-environment insights.12

In participatory planning, one of these methods is visualization, which has been identified as a successful tool for facilitating communication and building trust among stakeholders. It is defined as: “…a form of representation in which things that do not exist, but are contemplated, are represented or simulated allowing the user virtually to peer into the future.”13 In this method, experts create images of possible futures of the built environment and generate a conversation around them with the community. The idea behind this tool is that images constitute a language that both experts and non experts understand, because they “overcome racial, social and language barriers.”14

Human-centered design has also been key in developing tools for engaging with the community in processes dealing with space and the built environment. As a leader in the field, IDEO’s Field Guide to Human-centered Design is perhaps the best source of information for these methods.15 Although the guide is not targeted specifically towards built designs, it does address issues through a spatial and material lens, and presents ethnographic methods tailored to design-thinking processes. The guide lists several methods that can be used in the different stages of the design process. There are some, among those, that address expert-community interaction in the assessment stage of the process, and which integrate the built environment into this interaction.16

Three of these tools are similar to participatory planning’s visualization method in that they rely on images to bridge communication barriers. “Card Sort” is a method in which a deck of cards is created by the designers with one image per card. A member of the community is then asked to sort and rank these cards in their order of preference. This activity is intended to start a conversation about what matters most to people. Another of these methods is “Collage”, in which members of the community are asked to create a collage and then explain it. Besides using images as tools to communicate, this method also emphasizes the potential of tangible interaction and creativity as a means of understanding how people think and what they value. “Draw it” is yet another tool that relies on visuals for communication. It proposes using sketches to illustrate the con-

15. Stanford d.school’s Make Space book, or Hasso-Plattner Institute and Stanford University publications Design-thinking Research are also noteworthy sources.
ersation, where either the expert or the community member does the drawing. This activity is not described in detail in the guide, but suggestions of what to sketch include, maps and timelines.17

Two of the methods described in IDEO’s guidebook use space as the tool to aid in communication. The first one is the “Guided Tour”. Very similar to REAPS’ transect walk, this method suggests that a community member give a tour of their home, workplace, neighborhood, etc. The idea is that the tour will reveal physical details as well as routines, habits, and activities, giving insights into peoples lives. The second method in which space is used as a tool is “Immersion”. In this exercise the expert shadows a community member for one day in order to talk and observe them in their context, and therefore use this context to communicate.18

These are examples of how anthropology has infiltrated fields similar to historic preservation in order to foster community engagement, and help experts assess the communities with which they work. The methods described above show that they have been adapted to integrate the built environment as a tool that bridges communication barriers and, at the same time, gears the conversation towards built environment issues. The idea behind these methods is that visuals and space bridge language, cultural, and knowledge barriers by acting as mediators that both parties understand and can relate to.

This thesis builds upon these strategies to develop a tool that delves deeper into the advantages of using the built environment to aid in communication, by proposing that the space is altered through installation art. It argues that the essential characteristics of this art-form potentiate these advantages. The following section describes these characteristics and explains their relevance in facilitating communication between experts and the local community, and their potential to assess the values that a community ascribes to its heritage.

Since the 1960’s, the term installation art has been increasingly attributed to three-dimensional, temporary works of art that are site-specific and interact with the spectator.19 Even though not all installation artworks fulfill the entirety of this description, the factors of space, people, and time seem to be constant (although different sources might consider one more important than the others).

Installation art is usually traced back to early twentieth century works of art that appeared in North America and Western Europe and received the label of “Environments” or “Happenings”. These were large-scale spatial works that created new surroundings in response to specific sites and invited the viewer to enter or participate in different degrees.20 Many pinpoint the origins of installation art to the work Merzbau by artist Kurt Schwitters, who gradually transformed his apartment into an artwork, with plaster and wood, in a combination of collage, interior design, and sculpture that took over the architecture.21 This type of work started to gain importance as a material and spatial experimentation,22 and eventually also as a critique in which its “temporary nature... was a gesture of protest at a time when the museum’s authority as an institution was being questioned.”23 However, by the 1990’s, installation art was fully assimilated in museums and is now a

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17. Ibid.
18. Ibid.
22. Gonzalez, “Installation art”.
23. Julie Reiss, From Margin to Center: The Spaces of installation Art (Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1999): 70.
firmly established field. In any case, these type of works have been characterized by their interest and exploration in the “boundaries between audience, art, and space”.  

“There is always a reciprocal relationship of some kind between the viewer and the work, the work and the space, and the space and the viewer”.

Space

One of the essential characteristics of installation art is its close relationship with space. Firstly, there is the creation of space: the three-dimensional trait of an artwork that is meant to be experienced spatially. Secondly, there is the transformation of an existing space: the reaction of the artwork to a specific site, and the incorporation of this site into the art piece.

This trait of installation art can be used as an instrument in heritage community engagement because it calls attention to, and puts the heritage site in, the center of the conversation. Altering an existing heritage site is an opportunity to experiment with an aesthetic, functional, or spatial element that is of special interest to the field of preservation. It is also a way to present the site differently to the public, so that the same object is looked at, or experienced differently. Installation art’s relationship with space provides the chance to highlight heritage and reflect on it.

25. Reiss, From Margin to Center, xiii.
People

Derived from the spatial experience described above is installation art’s characteristic integration of the spectator into the work itself. The work is meant to be experienced: entered, walked through, touched, etc. This makes the viewer an active participant in the installation, “becoming a functional part of the art itself or at least physically encompassed by it.”

The potential of participation and interaction that installation art provides can be used by preservationists to engage with the community through heritage itself. Since the installation is an alteration of a site (a heritage site in this case), then the participation of the viewer in the piece can be used to create a connection between this viewer and the space. Moreover, if the installation is created by the expert, it can be seen as a statement/question/issue that this expert is putting forward to the community. It is an opportunity for the expert to communicate an idea through space, and get responses to this space from the spectators.

Time

Another element that has been widely experimented with in installation art is time. On the one hand, this is a reflection of installations’ site specificity, in that they are not only concerned with a specific space, but also with a specific moment in time. On the other hand, although not all installation artworks are ephemeral, in many, this trait is essential. This is a manifestation of installation art’s emphasis on criticism and reflection: its ephemerality offers the opportunity to experiment with space, it turns away from utility, practicality and aesthetics in favor of thought and content.

The ephemerality of installation art proves to be a practical advantage if dealing with heritage. Reversibility being one of preservation’s dogmas, the fact that installations do not permanently alter a site makes them

27. Reiss “Installation Art”.
feasible. Furthermore, the important reflection or criticism that an installation can put forward of a specific moment in time, can be of special interest to preservationists because the field itself is centered around bringing the past into the present and forward towards the future. This makes installation art an interesting opportunity to think about a specific site’s role at a specific time.

III. INSTALLATION METHOD

This thesis proposes using installation art in conjunction with the ethnographic tools that the preservation field currently employs, for community engagement. It is grounded in the idea that altering heritage through an installation can be used as a strategy that triggers conversations and fosters interaction between preservationists and local communities. This proposal is structured as a method that can be applied to preservation projects that seek to engage with communities when assessing the significance of heritage sites: The Installation Method. It is intended to provide practical guidelines for its implementation, and to encourage experimentation in the use of heritage installations as tools for communication.

The method has two components: a material installation, and an ethnographic approach. The proposal is based on the idea that the two components work together in fostering interaction between the community, the expert, and the heritage site. The ethnographic approach should respond and integrate the material installation into its implementation, and vice versa, and they should both act on a heritage issue deemed important.

Because the development of each material installation and ethnographic tool is site specific, this thesis implements the proposed strategy and tests it in a case-study, in order to illustrate how it can be done, and to evaluate its real potential. The following chapters explain the way in which the method was tailored for the case-study, how it was implemented in the case-study, and how its performance was assessed. The conclusion in this thesis provides the general guidelines for implementing the Installation Method elsewhere, and hints at the steps that could be followed for its further development.
CHAPTER THREE Case Study

In order to assess the validity of the Installation Method, this thesis tests it on a case-study. Jordán Sube, a small town in Colombia was chosen for this purpose. The following chapter gives the background information necessary to tailor the method to this case-study. It is divided in three sections. The first states the reasons why this town was chosen as a case-study, the second gives a historic background of the town, and the third describes its present conditions and existing plans for the future. The information gathered in this chapter comprises a crucial step in designing the installation for the particular case of Jordán.
CHAPTER THREE  Case Study

I. CASE-STUDY SELECTION

Jordán Sube, a small town in Colombia, was selected as a case-study for implementing the Installation Method. Various reasons were considered in this choice. Firstly, it is a town rich in history, architectural heritage, and traditions, which provides a strong basis on which to work. Secondly, the town is going through a development phase that threatens the conservation of its heritage, making it an interesting time for questioning the future of this heritage through an assessment of the values that the community ascribes to it. Thirdly, the size of the town proved to be practical as Jordán is very small, allowing for a comprehensive analysis and making feasible the implementation of the method in the short time-frame of this project (1 year). Lastly, Jordán is representative of other remote towns in the country, where conserved traditions and their associated built environment are threatened by development, and where heritage is somehow recognized but not integrated into development plans.

The idea of testing this method in Jordán was to evaluate its potential, test its strengths and weaknesses, and create a generalized strategy by which it could be implemented in other preservation projects.

Jordán is a small town in the department of Santander in Colombia, located deep in the Chicamocha Canyon, 464 meters above sea level, immediately south of the Chicamocha River. Jordán is a municipality, an administrative division that has its own mayor, council, and court, meaning its administration comprises its urban area as well as eight nearby veredas (rural villages).

This town emerged as a stop in an important Camino Real (Colonial road) that crossed the river at this point. As an important node in nineteenth century infrastructure in Colombia, it gained national signifi-

1. See Current Conditions and Future Plans section in this chapter
cance: a stopping point for many people and a great amount of merchandise traveling north from the capital, and a key link between different towns in the region. In the 20th century, however, political violence and the opening of a vehicular road that overlooks the town, contributed to Jordán’s gradual depopulation and isolation. Currently only about sixty people inhabit the town, and parts of it lay in ruins. Nevertheless, this isolation has also led to the preservation of local customs, traditions, and lifestyle. Besides the deterioration of abandoned properties, it has also led to little alteration of the town’s physical fabric. Today, this architectural and intangible heritage is threatened by possible future development: infrastructure projects, rising regional tourism, and a recent radical change in the local government, imply that change is soon to come. With the possibility of the opening of Jordán to new projects and new people, the town is ripe for questioning the role of heritage in the town’s future and the role of the community in the preservation of that heritage.

The following sections in this chapter give in-depth information of the town’s past, present and future. Section II illustrates the town’s history: its emergence and development as a Paso Real, and the change and decline that the town went through during the second half of the 20th century. Section III describes the current conditions of the town and analyzes existing plans and possible futures for the development of Jordán and the region.

II. HISTORIC BACKGROUND

Although Jordán’s foundation dates to the 19th century, the area where the current town is located is thought to have been inhabited long before that. By the time of Spanish colonization, the Chicamocha Canyon was territory of the indigenous Guanes. Various archeological finds among these a stone water canal going down the mountain believed to have been used for crop irrigation, rock paintings, and several burials

3. For the reasons behind the depopulation of Jordan see pg.
4. Ibid.
and caves with pottery, cotton textiles, weapons, and jewelry—date their occupation of this territory to the 8th or 9th century.\(^6\)

The Guanes were conquered by the Spanish in 1539 (a date associated with the foundation of the city of Vélez), and their territories were divided into encomiendas (a system in which a certain territory and the indigenous people living in it were submitted to Spanish control). The indigenous population diminished drastically in a short period of time after this, a fact attributed to violence, abuse, and European diseases. By the 17th century the estimated thirty thousand natives had practically disappeared.\(^7\)

The legacy of the Guanes, however, shaped the future and development of Santander. The Spanish colonization left this region of the country an important industrial center, producer of cotton textiles, crafts made of natural fibers, and tobacco: all traditional products since before the conquest.\(^8\) But perhaps more important to Jordán were the roads, built by the Spanish on pre-colonial paths.

Jordán emerged as a stop on one of these roads, the Camino Real that connected Santafé (the capital, now Bogotá) with the northeastern areas of the colony. This road was known as Camino del Reino or Camino del Sogamoso, because it connected with a port in the Sogamoso river.\(^9\) Although it is not certain that there was an indigenous path exactly where the colonial road is found today, it was customary for the Spanish to use these paths to mobilize, and it is believed that this one specifically was previously used by the Guanes, and then paved by the Spanish between 1740 and 1780.\(^10\)

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\(^6\) Juliana Dávila Gamboa, “Las rutas y los productos de intercambio e la Cuenca baja del río Chicamocha y su área de influencia: análisis de su evolución histórica para la valoración de su patrimonio cultural” (Master’s thesis, Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, 2010).

\(^7\) Dávila, “Las rutas y los productos de intercambio”.

\(^8\) Ibid.

\(^9\) Ibid.

Jordán’s importance along this road was its cabuya, used to cross the Chicamocha river. Cabuyas were a system of ropes used to get passengers from one side of the river to the other (used since pre-Hispanic times), and the crossing at Sube (Jordán was initially called Sube and gave the name to the segment of the Chicamocha river near the town: Sube river) was one of the most important ones in the region, receiving the category of Paso Real. Perhaps this cabuya is best described in the diaries of traveler Joseph Brown, who crossed the river in 1823, and recorded the experience in his diary with text and a drawing:

The river Sube runs along the town, and is crossed by means of a thick leather rope (cabuya)… a cable made up of fourteen cords is suspended eighty feet above the water, from one shore to the next, strongly taut, and fixed on each edge to very large tree trunks by the riversides. These trunks are covered by a thatched roof that provides shade to the travelers crossing the bridge, and which serves for unloading luggage and merchandise. I believe the river, at this point, is six hundred meters wide. The system for crossing it using the cable consists on sitting in a small cage that hangs from this cable, and which is not more than a three square foot rectangular platform, woven with the same leather ropes, and fastened on the ends to the cable. The traveler sits on this platform, surrounded by his luggage and his saddle… while his mules swim across the river accompanied by guides who lead them in the water… To get the cage going, the conductor, standing under the thatched roof, pushes it, taking it almost halfway across, on rollers. The rest of the transit is carried out by the other conductor, on the other side of the river, who pulls the cage towards himself slowly.

The town’s earliest documentation is intrinsically tied to its function as a crossing. Maps of the region dating to the 1700’s show the town as a cabuya surrounded by a few buildings, and in later versions in the 19th century only the road and the crossing are depicted, always accompanied by the label: Cabuya de Sube.

11. Dávila, “Las rutas y los productos de intercambio”.
The earliest written document found concerning Jordán dates from 1755 and is also related to the crossing of the river. Written by the mayor of San Gil, it states the permanence of Bernardo Rodríguez in his charge of administrator of the Paso Real of the Cabeza de Sube.\footnote{Archivo Colonial. Fondo Mejoras Materiales. Tomo 13. Folios 955 a 1004. Bogotá: Archivo General de la Nación 2010. In 23}

The role of Jordán during independence is not certain, but rumors in the town claim that Simón Bolívar passed several times through this cabeza.\footnote{Escobar, “Jordán, en la Hondonada del Olvido”} The region now known as Santander was a key player in the independence movement, its strong economy and industrial production provided men and resources to the war, and was the epicenter of the Revolución de los Comuneros (an early armed movement against the Spanish crown); so it can be assumed that Jordán played a role in the mobilization of troops and ideas during independence.\footnote{Dávila, “Las rutas y los productos de intercambio”}

Most of Jordán’s early descriptions date from after independence, throughout the 19\textsuperscript{th} century, and consist of narratives of several travelers, and the journals of Diego Enrique Meléndez, priest of Jordán between 1873 and 1894.\footnote{Martínez, Transitar, habitar y temperar.}

One of the most important texts of this kind is the one found in the Comisión Corográfica of 1850. The Comisión was an expedition led by Agustín Codazzi in the company of writer Manuel Ancizar, throughout the entire country in order to characterize and map the Nueva Granada (what currently corresponds to Colombia, Venezuela, Panama, and Ecuador). The text Ancizar wrote about Jordán, included in his book Peregrinaciones de Alpha, says the following:

\footnote{14. Escobar, “Jordán, en la Hondonada del Olvido”}
\footnote{15. Dávila, “Las rutas y los productos de intercambio”}
\footnote{16. Martinez, Transitar, habitar y temperar.}
The continuous traffic through this site and its favorable climate, famous for ‘tomar sudores’, as Cervantes would ironically say [Jordán was widely known for the healing properties of its climate], have contributed to the emergence in Sube of a neighborhood, which today comprises a decent chapel and twenty houses inhabited by peoples of impoverished looks and valetudinarians who concur to convalesce from long diseases by means of river baths, required by the thirty two degrees Celsius marked by the thermometer in that rocky and desolated chasm. Across the river an ascent begins that is sometimes not a road but a spiral staircase, ending at 1,295 meters above sea level, at the Mesa de Jéridas [today’s Mesa de los Santos] ..."17

Most of these narratives describe Jordán as a small and unattractive place, but still recognize its significance as an infrastructure node and emphasize its dramatic landscape and environment. This can be seen in the following description, written by traveler Alfred Hettner in 1882:

...but the deepest and greatest of these gorges can be found between San Gil and Piedecuesta; it is formed by the Chicamocha river or Sogamoso river, the principal aquatic artery at the interior of Boyacá. Reinforced further down by the Suarez river, and continuing its path to the Magdalena river. The valley, so deep that it cuts through the aforementioned plateau [Mesa de los Santos], takes the name of Sube valley, name taken from the river, which at that point is called the Sube river, alluding to the town of Sube, located at its shore and famous for its heat, classified as Santander’s hell, and at the same time appreciated as a leisure destination. The valley creates a spectacle insistently praised by travelers. Coming from San Gil, and with the town of Los Santos on sight and close-by, the traveler is incapable of imagining the surprise that awaits him. Until suddenly, and on its edge, he finds himself in front of the deep valley, which he has to cross to get to his destination. It seems incredible that bridging the three or four kilometers that separate us from Los Santos demands the four hours that are evidently required. But the phenomenon is easily explained by the need to descend eight hundred meters and then climb them up again.18

Besides travelers and explorers, Jordán saw many military campaigns during the 19th century, characteristic of the long periods of civil wars that followed independence. The wars and the political ideologies that surrounded them were a constant topic in the diaries of priest Diego Enrique Melendez, proving the importance of this site as a node of connectivity in the country through which people and ideas traveled. Melendez was not only up to date with all the current political action, but was also in the know of international affairs, as evidenced by his mentioning of the Pope, Napoleon III, and Umberto I of Italy.19

But the effect of the wars in Jordán was not limited to ideological ramblings in the priest’s diary. It became a strategic point in combat, and the presence of troops in Jordán was not rare. The town is mentioned on several occasions in Agustin Codazzi’s summary of the Northern Army diaries during the Civil War of 1860 – 1862.20 However, more thorough descriptions of the effects of war in Jordán are found in the priest’s diaries, where he narrates episodes of the Thousand Day War in the town. He describes the occupation of the

17. Manuel Ancizar, Peregrinación de Alpha: Por las provincias del norte de la Nueva Granada, en 1850 i 51 (Bogotá: Imprenta de Echeverria Hermanos, 1853).
18. Translated from: Dávila, “Las rutas y los productos de intercambio”.
19. Martínez, Transitar, habitar y temperar.
town square by the troops, the parades of prisoners and wounded who were transferred through the crossing of Sube, and the effects of diseases brought by the soldiers on the town’s inhabitants.  

The end of the 19th century left an impoverished and conflicted nation because of war. However, it was this century that saw Jordán develop officially into a town, receiving recognition for its importance in the national context. In 1822, inhabitants of the town made their first attempt at elevating it to the status of parroquia (a religious and political division that implied a certain standing of importance). However, this first attempt failed, and it was not until April 22 of 1854, that Jordán was officially founded. This was also the time at which its name was changed from Sube to Jordán (although it is also known as Jordán Sube), allusive to the biblical river Jordan. The names of the people associated with its foundation are: Domingo Camargo, Rafael Barragan, Venancio, Hilario and Francisco Sarmiento.

Jordán also saw many physical changes during the 19th century. It was during this period that most of its important buildings were built. Its constructions evolved from ephemeral wood and straw structures to the durable stone and earthen structures we see today.

The most important of these buildings was its bridge, at its heart. The bridge is the reason for the town’s existence and the motor of its economy (at least until the 20th century). The date of transition from a cabuya to a bridge is not certain, but the bridge is praised in a geography book of 1880 for being the first of its kind: “A hanging iron bridge is found at this point, the first construction of its kind built in the republic.” The accuracy of this information has not been verified, but it is known that the current bridge dates from 1904 and that there was another one before that, dating from 1863. Earlier references to the construction of a

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21. Martínez, Transitar, habitar y temperar.
22. Ibid.
23. Eladio Mantilla, Geografía Especial del Estado de Santander (Socorro: n.s., 1880).
25. Mantilla, Geografía Especial del Estado de Santander.
bridge in the town of Jordán date back to 1822 when Luis Francisco Durán, leading the effort of Jordán’s promotion to parroquia, writes a letter to a judge in San Gil where he describes the town and mentions the ongoing construction of a bridge with masonry buttresses in the location of the cabuya. The construction of the bridge is mentioned once more in 1943 in a report for a construction company in London, stating that work was ‘actively and solidly’ being done on the bridge over the Sube river. In 1854 the buttresses are mentioned once more as point of reference to describe the limits of the newly founded town of Jordán. However, it is not until 1863 that there is real evidence of the construction of a bridge: a contract signed by Englishman David Mc Cormick, resident of Piedecuesta Jose María Durán, and president of Santander Eustogio Salgar. The contract specifies that existing buttresses should be used for its construction, which suggests that this is the completion of several years of fruitless efforts. Besides this, dimensions and materials are specified, as well as conditions for its administration: the contract states the specific fees that could be charged for crossing, and gives the right of collecting these to the businessman, until 1885, when this right would be transferred to the state.

This bridge is said to have been destroyed during the Thousand Days War in Melendez’s diaries, where he emotionally rages against the ‘rebels’ for demolishing it: “November 12, 1889: ... after a week and two of its days, very bitter, we, the inhabitants, have come to this day without people, or revolutionary authority, or bridge...”; and then applauds its reconstruction in 1904: “August 11, 1904: The bridge, reestablished and enlarged, asks for the church’s blessing.” This 1904 bridge is the one that is still standing today, and

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28. Francisco Vega, Memoria del Gobernador del Socorro a la Cámara Provincial en sus Sesiones de 1843 (Socorro: s.n., 1843).
29. Guerrero et al., La Provincia de Guanentá: Orígenes de sus poblamientos urbanos.
30. Dávila, “Las rutas y los productos de intercambio”.
33. Ibid.
although the priest’s writings do not suggest it was built in a location different from the one of the previous bridge, there are rumors in the town that assert that the new bridge was moved two kilometers down the river.

The priest’s diaries also provide information on other buildings in the town. His expenses mention construction, repairs and alterations to structures like the church, the chapel, the hospital, and the cemetery, as well as the acquisition of fine religious imagery, literature, and liturgical objects. Among these objects, of special value are the images of the patron saint of Jordán, Santa Rosa de Lima and San Isidro. These images were brought from Ecuador, and arrived in Jordán in 1890, and although the second one was meant for Los Santos, they both stayed in Jordán, where they stand today (highly altered). 34

Information regarding the church claims that the ‘sticks and straw’ chapel that existed before the foundation of the parroquia was replaced in 1854 and this one, in turn, was enlarged in 1871, 1873, and then again in 1894. It is also known that the cemetery was built in 1883 by Melendez, who was also responsible for the construction of the hospital and its chapel. 35

These constructions were built using traditional techniques of the area. The most important buildings were stone and lime mortar, plastered with lime putty, a technique called calicanto; and vernacular buildings were built in rammed earth or bahareque (a mode of construction that uses sticks and mud). These houses were roofed with caña brava (Gynernium sagittatum) and ceramic tiles or thatched roofs, and had stone or ceramic tiled floors. It can be presumed that these mud houses belonged to a wealthier class, and that the other portion of the population lived in thatched roofed wooden structures that have disappeared. An important architectural typology in the region that still survives and is constructed in a similar way to that of older times, is the caney, the structure used to dry tobacco leaves. The building consists of a wooden structure where the leaves are hung under a thatched roof (now mostly tin).

34. Martinez, Transitar, habitar y temperar.
35. Ibid.
Although these caneyes were mostly found in the countryside, they also infiltrated the town center. The urban area of Jordán, strongly dependent on farming, has always been an interesting mix of farmland and buildings. Houses usually contain the open-air elements of a patio and a solar (backyard). The social life of the house is centered on the patio, around which all rooms are arranged, while the productive part of it is set in the solar, where fruit trees and sometimes even crops are planted, where outside chores are carried out, and where the animals are kept.

The town was arranged in the customary Spanish grid of most parroquias, with a main square where the church is located, and a grid of streets that springs from it. An interesting urban condition in Jordán is that, despite its small size, it contained two plazas, the main square, and a smaller one on the the entrance where the bridge is located, referred to as the plazuela. The town is not bigger than 14 blocks today, but evidence suggests that by the turn of the 20th century it was probably larger. These parroquias were meant to congregate a larger population that included farmers from rural villages as well as urban residents, specially on market days and for mass.

The 19th century left Jordán an established town at an important location. This location created the town itself and also dictated the lifestyle of its inhabitants. As a crossroads town, its economy was grounded on commerce and transportation, and the provision of services to travelers. Besides agriculture (tobacco has been since colonial times the staple crop of the region) mule wrangling, for example, became an important source of income, and was a key component of commerce throughout the country from the 16th to the 20th century. It is said that at some point 3,000 mules would cross the bridge at Jordán daily. The town’s permanent population of farmers, muleteers, and businessmen was complimented with an itinerant population of travelers and leisure visitors who came for baths in the river during the summer months, and with the elderly and sick who came to Jordán for the aforementioned healing properties of its climate.

36. Dávila, “Las rutas y los productos de intercambio”.
37. Escobar, “Jordán, en la Hondonada del Olvido”,
The end of the 19th century brought new technology to Jordán. The telegraph, for example, was first used in Colombia in 1865, and was afterwards implemented in lines that followed important roads. Jordán belonged to the northeastern telegraph line, which was built in 1873. Reference to an office in the town, with one telegraphist and one mailman, can be found in documents from the early 1900’s. Railroads were also spreading through the country, and the importance of the road where Jordán is located prompted studies for the feasibility of building a line through it, but the geography proved to be too challenging, which, in a sense, was premonitory of what was to happen to Jordán in the second half of the coming century.

Two important factors contributed to Jordán’s decline in the 20th century. The first was the opening of the vehicular road (most importantly the bridge that crosses the Chicamocha river by the town of Pescadero), in 1948, and the second was the period called La Violencia from 1948 to 1958, a time of intense political confrontations between the conservative and the liberal parties.

The arrival of the automobile to the country brought with it the construction of roads, among these, one that connected Bogotá to the Atlantic coast through Santander. This road did not cross the Chicamocha river through Jordán, but through a town further up the river, called Pescadero. The bridge opened in 1940. This created a drastic shift in the economy of Jordán. The mule wrangling trade lost importance to motorized transportation, the colonial roads were no longer used, and Jordán stopped receiving the travelers and visitors that were once a crucial part of its population and economy. Moreover, the only way to get to Jordán was on foot or mule, by means of the Camino Real, meaning that the town did not benefit from this new motorized technology until decades later, and had to compete with faster, more efficient trade alternatives. By the time cars reached Jordán in the 1990’s, the town had already lost much of its power.

The second factor that contributed to Jordán’s decay was the wave of political violence that swept the country after 1949. Since the turn of the century, the struggle between the two political parties in the country, Conservadores and Liberales had created a division within the Colombian people. Tensions came to a peak in April 9 of 1949, when the liberal presidential candidate, Jorge Eliécer Gaitán was murdered in Bogotá. This gave rise to a popular movement that echoed across the country, and eventually evolved into violence between the supporters of the two parties. This conflict was especially crude in remote areas of Colombia, and Jordán was no exception.

The conservatives were in power in Jordán, more specifically the Ferreira family, led by Roque Julio Ferreira. There is a legend that attributes the town’s decay to a curse set upon Roque because he was using the church as storage for his tobacco. But the rumors go beyond that, they speak of atrocities committed by Roque Ferreira: murders, threats, abuse, etc. and blame his violence for scaring away most of Jordán’s liberal inhabitants and many of the travelers that still passed through its road.
Roque Ferreira passed away in 1991 but the power stayed in the family. Today, the Ferreiras own most of the properties in urban Jordán, and have been in office in the town’s administration several times since the 1940’s. Currently, Gloria Isabel Ferreira, daughter of Jose Angel Ferreira, and granddaughter of Roque, is the political face of the family, having been mayor three times. However, she just lost the past elections in 2015 to the current mayor, Johana Muñoz, ending the Ferreira hegemony. The lack of development in recent years is in part attributed to the Ferreiras and their administrations, which have been investigated several times for corruption, and although never officially charged, have a doubtful reputation in the press.

The isolation caused by the new road, the political violence of the 1940’s, and the suspicious administration of the past decades have had terrible consequences on Jordán. The most important one is perhaps the decrease in its population. The population of the municipality of Jordán (both the urban area and the rural villages) has diminished since its first census in 1859, and has followed a trend opposite to the overall growth in the population of Santander and Colombia. But perhaps the most radical effect was felt in its urban center.

The decrease in population also affected the town’s architecture. Houses were abandoned, and lack of maintenance led to the deterioration of many of them. Aerial photos demonstrate the collapse of some of these houses and the shrinkage of the town. However, the isolation of Jordán also prevented the arrival of new construction materials, which in turn, led to little alterations to the houses that were still being maintained. The decline of the town’s economy meant that major changes to the residences were simply unaffordable. The lack of development managed to freeze the town in time.

46. Escobar, “Jordán, en la Hondonada del Olvido”.
But for the people that still lived there, the consequences were dreadful. The effects of isolation on business and in daily life made of Jordán an impoverished and underdeveloped town. It was no longer at the vanguard of the country. Fees for crossing the bridge were no longer charged after 1940 since it was no longer a popular pass.48 Also, the Colombiana de Tabaco, one of the most important buyers in the tobacco industry in the country (with a branch office in the main square in Jordán), closed its Jordán office around the 1970’s. Narratives of the town in the 1990’s give a glum description of it, they mention the existence of only two small businesses, no police station, and only one television in the entire town.49 By 2004 no cellphone reception reached the bottom of the canyon, there was only one telephone line in the town, mail was delivered by foot, the cemetery was abandoned and closed off, and there was no priest to give mass in the church.50 Historic photographs from these times illustrate the town’s acquired reputation of a “ghost town”.

III. CURRENT CONDITIONS AND FUTURE PLANS

In the past ten years, Jordán has transitioned from forgotten ghost town to hopeful village. Although the town has not changed drastically, small transformations and future projects have given it an air of anticipation that contradicts its ghost town reputation. Tourism, infrastructure improvements, and a radical change in government, are the main drivers of this hope. The following is a description of the town as it stands today, noting recent changes, mentioning the projects that have triggered this hope, and finally describing the tools, currently in place, that plan for the future of its heritage in the face of change.

Although Jordán has seen some transformation in the past years, it is still struggling with the effects of violence and infrastructure development of the 20th century. Today, about sixty people inhabit Jordán, and most of them live off farming. The predominant crop is still tobacco, even though fluctuating prices sometimes make it very hard to make a profit. Other crops include the recent introduction of lemon and papaya,

48. Escobar, “Jordán, en la Hondonada del Olvido”.
49. Ibid.
50. Vega, “Un Policía por cada Habitante”.

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and a few of other species like plantain, chirimoya (Annona cherimola), and mamón (Melicoccus bijugatus), which are planted only for domestic consumption in residence’s solares. Goat herding is also a strong part of the economy and is an essential component of the traditional diet. These animals are still part of the urban landscape in Jordán, as are chickens, turkeys, and mules. Although the decline of the mule wrangling trade has certainly implied a decrease in the amount of animals, a few of them still cross the bridge daily, making the journey from Jordán to Los Santos.

Perhaps the most drastic change in the town’s appearance in recent years is the paving of the roads. These were dirt until the turn of the century, when the municipality paved them with local stone. Other built structures have also undergone some change, in some cases because of interventions, and in some others because of extreme decay. There are only fourteen occupied houses in Jordán today. Many of the abandoned ones collapsed some years ago and stand in ruins, completely devoured by vegetation; the others, although still standing, are in an accelerated process of deterioration. The inhabited houses vary in their current condition: some have been reconstructed from ruins, and although they have maintained an appearance similar to the original, most of the new construction work is carried out using modern materials. Other houses have been maintained in good condition and have been repaired discretely with traditional techniques. Others have not been maintained or restored, and their inhabitants live in difficult and sometimes dangerous conditions.

Besides the fourteen occupied residences aforementioned, there are five other structures that are used by institutions. The church was restored a few years ago, as was the hospital chapel. Both of their roofs had collapsed because they had been abandoned. Today, there is a full-time priest in the town, and although he is not officially Jordán’s priest, he takes care of the church and officiates mass every day. Another of the buildings is occupied by the school and is currently undergoing renovation because it needs more capacity. Today sixty children attend the school (which only teaches until ninth grade), but most of them come from nearby rural villages. The city administration occupies another house. This structure is also undergoing construction.
for enlargement, and has been restored recently. Lastly, there is another building that houses both the town library and the judge’s office.

Two hotels are included among the fourteen occupied residences. Besides long-term guests (the judge, his secretary, and sometimes school teachers live here), these hotels receive some tourism. These tourists are, for the most part, small groups with a guide, using the colonial roads for trekking. There is usually one of such groups every two or three nights in Jordán. They either come down from Los Santos and return (although this route is more often done in the same day), or they come walking from Villanueva to Los Santos and stop in Jordán for the night (where other walks to the villages of El Guásimo or Subesito can be done).51 It is estimated that around 120,000 people (locals and tourists) use the colonial roads in Santander yearly on Sundays.52 There is yet another hotel, located a couple of kilometers west of the town. The “Shangri-la” is an eco-hotel by the river that has capacity for over 100 people (sleeping in hammocks), and specializes in big school-group tours that are trekking in the region. Their most popular itinerary is the Villanueva – Jordán – Mesa de los Santos trek, but they also offer hikes around the area, and the rafting route of Prescadero – Jordán – Juntas (see map X).

These hotels are representative of tourism growth in Santander, which has recently been developed as an epicenter for eco and adventure tourism in Colombia. Indicators show that from 2007 to 2014 the number of visitors went from 37,000 to 650,000, and is expected to grow even more.53 Plans for the future emphasize the industry’s importance as an economic driver in the region (even if today it does not constitute a large portion of the department’s GDP).54 Its importance is also evidenced in the Government Program of Santander’s cur-

51. Dávila, “Las rutas y los productos de intercambio”.
rent administration, which highlights efforts to increase the number of foreign visitors through development and improvement of infrastructure.\textsuperscript{55}

Jordán is located near many of the tourist attractions in Santander, among these are several historic towns like Barichara, Curití, and Guane; a theme park in the Chicamocha canyon, \textit{Parque Nacional del Chicamocha}; the capital of Santander, Bucaramanga; and a city renowned for being the hub of adventure tourism in Colombia, San Gil. The visitors that Jordán receives today indicate that the industry is beginning to infiltrate in the town. The hope of it becoming one of the town’s main economic and social drivers of progress is more prevalent every day (see map X).\textsuperscript{56}

Certain plans for the future suggest that these hopes are well founded. The first of these is the nomination of the “Lower Basin of the Chicamocha Canyon” as a cultural landscape site in the World Heritage list by UNESCO. The site was included in the tentative list for Colombia in 2012 under criteria ii, iv, vii, viii.\textsuperscript{57} Although the nomination process seems to be halted, and there is no public Management Plan yet, its inscription in the tentative list singles it out as an outstanding destination, reaffirming its touristic potential.

The second plan is the “Plan de Desarrollo Turístico de Santander” drafted by the Ministry of Commerce, Industry, and Tourism, in conjunction with the Fondo de Promoción Turística de Colombia, in 2012. Besides regional strategies, this plan mentions Jordán several times. It analyzes the circuit of Aratoca-Jordán-Cepitá, and concludes that, although it has tourism potential, the lack of infrastructure and services connecting the towns make this circuit unfeasible until improvements are made. It does mention, however, the feasibility of connecting Jordán to the existing tourism in the Chicamocha canyon (which is concentrated in the \textit{Parque

\textsuperscript{56} Dávila, “Las rutas y los productos de intercambio”.
One of the proposals is to build a train from Cepitá to Pescadero, and from Pescadero to Jordán, for the tourists to enjoy the views from the bottom of the canyon. The status of this proposal today is unknown, and there are no signs of it being implemented (see map X).

Although many of these plans have not materialized, they do suggest the possibilities of Jordán becoming a tourist destination, and have certainly raised the hopes of the town’s inhabitants. It is interesting to note that these plans focus on the natural resources of the region, and, besides the World Heritage nomination, do not mention cultural or architectural heritage.

Another promising factor in Jordán’s future lies in the improvement of its infrastructure. Today, the difficulty of getting to the town makes it a remote location that requires time and effort. Besides walking (the nearest town on foot is Los Santos, two to three hours away), Jordán can be reached by car through an unpaved road that serpents down the canyon. An off-road vehicle is necessary, and it takes about an hour from the main road to get there. A new road, however, is under construction, and is allegedly close to being finished. This new road will connect Jordán with the bridge at Pescadero, meaning it will run by the river, avoiding the climb and descent that the old road requires. Most importantly, this road will reduce the travel time from Bucaramanga by half: from three hours it takes today, to less than one hour and a half. The relationship of infrastructure and heritage is not considered in Jordán’s plans for the future. Specially worrying is the absence of elements like parking, which are not included in the infrastructure development plan. As it is currently laid out, the new road leads directly into the main square (which in turn, has no road demarcations and cars park and transit in the space shared with pedestrians). This suggests that the expectations of traffic that the road has created are not complemented with foresight of what this might imply.

58. “Plan de Desarrollo Turístico de Santander” Fondo de Promoción Turística de Colombia, Unión Temporal Turismo Cundisant (July 2012).
The third promising factor in Jordán’s future is its new administration. After putting an end to the Ferreira hegemony, Johana Muñoz stands today as the face of change in the town. Looking at her Government plan, it is clear that infrastructure development is a key factor. This includes the creation and improvement of roads and public services, as well as the construction of new facilities. Tourism is also mentioned as a possible economic engine that should be promoted (this has been mentioned by Jordán’s different administrations since at least since 1992), but it is mostly centered on the natural resources of Jordán. In fact, there is no mention in the plan of cultural or architectural heritage.

The one document that mentions Jordán’s heritage, its role in the future, and its relationship with tourism, is the municipality’s *Esquema de Ordenamiento Territorial, EOT* (territory planning scheme), created in 2005. In Article 9: Vision for the Future, it states: “Jordán will become, because of its strategic location in the Province of Guanentá, cultural and touristic heritage with sustainable development in the Chicamocha Canyon.” This chapter does not specify any further. Later chapters, however, contain articles that legally (although vaguely) protect certain heritage structures. There are two kind of designations for heritage in Jordán: Architectural Heritage and Historic Heritage.

Architectural Heritage is defined as: “Lots that are characteristic and representative, and therefore must preserve their facades as witnesses to future generations.” The buildings listed under this category are: the church, the rectory and the bridge. Historic Heritage is defined as: “area corresponding to all the current foundational grid, built in order to guarantee the preservation of heritage, and architectonic, and urban conditions.” These two vague and unclear statements are complemented with Chart XX.

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60. Escobar, “Jordán, en la Hondonada del Olvido”.
62. Ibid.
63. Ibid.
64. Ibid.
References to tourism are even more vague in the EOT. They are generalized tourism development strategies and goals, not specifically applied to Jordán, or connected in any way to the town’s heritage.\(^{65}\)

Although the recognition of Jordán’s architectural heritage at a local level provides certain protection, the lack of details regarding how it should be protected make this a weak and ineffective law. Moreover, it does not provide a cohesive plan that integrates this heritage into the town’s development.

The heritage element in Jordán that has received the most attention is its Camino Real. Although this attention has focused on the road as part of a larger network in Santander, the segment of Jordán – Los Santos is often singled out as one of the most noteworthy segments. Besides civic groups of trekkers that advocate for the conservation of this network,\(^{66}\) there are several academic documents that, through the lenses of heritage, engineering, history, and sociology, highlight the importance of the preservation of the roads.\(^{67}\) Moreover, the government, at a departmental and national level, has also shown interest in their protection. An ordinance of the Assembly of Santander from 2006 states: “Ordinance by which legal, administrative, and technical mechanisms are activated in order to allow for the development of restoration, construction, conservation, use, and permanence policy for the network of roads in Santander...”\(^{68}\) This ordinance prohibits the construction of new roads or railroads on colonial roads’ footprints, and asks for the collaboration between different institutions in order to ensure the roads’ preservation. In 2011 a project funded by the Fondo de Promoción

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\(^{65}\) Ibid.

\(^{66}\) “El camino Real de Santander sigue siendo Real,” Caminos Reales de Colombia.


\(^{68}\) Santander Assemby “Ordenanza No. 021 de Septiembre 7 del 2006”.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Treatment</th>
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<tr>
<td>Church &amp; Rectory</td>
<td>Main Square, Calle 3</td>
<td>maintained and conserved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colonial foundational center</td>
<td>Calle 3 b/h Cra 2 through 9</td>
<td>maintained and conserved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Calle 2 b/h Cra 4 and Cra 6</td>
<td>maintained and conserved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Carrera 4 and 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lenguaje bridge</td>
<td>Over Chicamocha River</td>
<td>Entire structure should be restored and maintained</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Image 37: EOT heritage chart, source: Jordan EOT
Tourística restored a part of this network, the segment Barichara – Guane. All this evidence suggests a positive future for the conservation of the network of roads in Santander, and leaves possibilities open for the integration of Jordán and other towns in its protection and plans.

Today Jordán finds itself at an interesting tipping point. There are hints of development in the town that suggest a transformation, and prospects like the road, the new administration, infrastructure improvements, and future plans, could become the catalysts of drastic change. Although hints of this change are beginning to show, Jordán still retains a rich cultural heritage. Of architectural and historical significance are structures like the bridge, the church, the chapel, the cemetery, the road, the caneeyas, and the vernacular residences representative of a regional style, typology, and construction method. Traditions and costumes are also still present in the town and its surrounding areas, a lifestyle of immense cultural value that constitutes part of the region’s intangible heritage: knowledge and practices around tobacco production and farming, the mule wrangling trade and a pedestrian life, traditional construction techniques, regional cuisine, etc.

Promised change might bring in more tourism, business, and people, and has generated immense expectations of progress in Jordán’s inhabitants. However, these plans and projects are uncertain and vague, and demonstrate lack of detailed planning. Within these plans, the integration of cultural heritage in progress is not evident, making heritage vulnerable to disappearance. Moreover, the community’s participation in the plans is not stipulated, nor is it present in the few documents concerning heritage preservation. This makes it an opportunity to engage Jordán’s inhabitants in a conversation about the future of their heritage. If change is to come, local inhabitants should be central in deciding how this change should affect their heritage, and how heritage might contribute positively to the town’s development. This thesis intends to understand the values that the community of Jordán ascribes to their heritage as a first step in their involvement in future historic preservation projects and town planning. It tests a strategy of communication to get to those values, which could possibly be implemented in similar cases.

Jordán proves to be an interesting case-study because it provides conditions for replication. In certain ways, it is representative of a development process through which many other towns in Colombia are heading. Increasingly strong development indicators, and the nearing end of a sixty year long armed conflict, position the country on an optimistic development track. Although part of the country already experiences the effects of this development, the vast majority of isolated regions are pockets of poverty where progress has yet to come. These towns are now surrounded by hope and projects, that, like in Jordán, promise a better future. These remote places are also characterized by the conservation of traditional architecture and customs; their isolation has fostered the preservation of rich cultural heritage, but, like Jordán, they are also targets for development programs that threaten this heritage. Although these towns make part of a national effort for the recognition of heritage, the protection is limited to weak laws that do not incorporate heritage in future development. The method that this thesis proposes can be seen as a first step for the integration of cultural heritage and communities in planning for the future in these heritage-rich regions where change seems imminent.

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70. Indicators consulted: Human Development Index (UNDP), Income Classifications (World Bank), Fragile States Index (Fund for Peace), Global Hunger Index (International Food Policy Research Institute), Corruption Perception Index (Transparency International), State of Food Insecurity (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations), Travel and Tourism Competitiveness (World Economic Forum).
CHAPTER FOUR Fieldwork

The following chapter describes a crucial step in the process of tailoring the Installation Method to the specific case-study of Jordán: Fieldwork. Before implementing the installation, it was necessary to gather information on-site and create a relationship with the community. It was a combination of theoretical research and fieldwork that led to the design and implementation of the installation in Jordán. This chapter gives a detailed account of the fieldwork prior to the implementation of the installation.
CHAPTER FOUR Fieldwork

Preparatory fieldwork was conducted before implementing the installation in Jordán. This was necessary for making strategic contacts with local people, gathering information, and easing into approaching the community. The process was structured in three preparatory site visits and one final visit in which the installation was actually implemented and tested. The process itself can be understood as a conversation with the community in which different ethnographic and community engagement methods were tested and evolved into the installation on the final site visit. Since the beginning, the tools used were a mixture of interviews and visual aids that were influenced by previous research and site visits, and by the members of the different teams that worked on the ground each time. It was a gradual process, in which the communication progressed along with the depth and detail of the conversation.

Besides informing the installation, these site visits provided a great deal of data and information that was crucial in understanding Jordán. First, historic material was gathered: the background of the recent past of the town was pieced together through a combination of newspaper articles and conversations with local residents during the site visits. Second, the site visits also provided an insight into the character and sensitivities of the community: concerns, taboos, and interests of people in Jordán were revealed though a gradual approach to people, which proved to be decisive when implementing the installation. The findings of the fieldwork are included throughout this paper, they informed the Case-study background, as well as the Installation Design and the Conclusions.

The following is a description of each of the three preparatory site visits. The description is formatted as a field journal entry that explains the visit’s purpose, gives a brief background on the team members who participated, describes what was done, and analyzes findings and accomplishments.
Site visit 1: August 30 – September 4, 2015

PURPOSE

The first site visit’s purpose was to understand the region and context of the town, and to introduce the project to the community and vice versa. For this, two days were spent traveling around Santander and another four were spent in Jordán. The contextualization proved to be very important in understanding the regional architecture, economy, and traditions, and the days spent in the town were a crucial introduction to the town and its residents.

TEAM

Since the conception of the project, I knew more people had to be involved. One of the cornerstones of design-thinking and community engagement is collaboration across disciplines. I was very fortunate in getting the people I needed to participate as volunteers. These are all people who are close to me, and participated out of friendship, but they also believed in the project and worked hard to get to the final results. Because they were all volunteers, it was difficult to get the same people to go to each site visit. This, and the fact that more specific specialties were needed as the project evolved, led to different teams each time. However, everyone who was involved at some point continued to participate in various ways throughout the entire process. Interestingly, a few people from Jordán also became part of the team out of interest in the project. After the first site visit three members of the community kept in touch, provided information, and helped from within the town voluntarily.

Alejandro Arenas: Alejandro is an economist who works in a private equity fund that invests in social impact projects in developing countries. His non-architectural, business-driven vision of Jordán was very important in understanding the town in a regional, national, and global context.

Angela Crane: Angela is an architect. She has had her own practice for more than twenty years. She visited Jordán in the 1990’s and is very familiar with Santander. Besides her skills in architecture and design and her knowledge of the region’s culture, her outgoing personality was crucial in approaching the community of Jordán. She was involved from the beginning to the end of the project, participating on all aspects of it.

Stephanie Crane: Stephanie is an architect with a master’s degree in Advanced Sustainable Design from the University of Edinburgh. She contributed to the project with important insights of possible futures for the town, and was involved in further phases concerning the design of the installation.

CONTEXTUALIZATION METHODS

Comparative case studies

We visited three historic towns: Barichara, Cepitá, and Curití. Barichara (about two hours away from Jordán) is one of Colombia’s most popular tourist towns, renowned for its traditional stone and earthen architecture, and was chosen as one of the destinations in this project for being a model of historic preservation country-wide. Cepitá is a small town located in the bottom of the Chicamocha Canyon (which implies it shares very similar conditions with Jordán) and has undergone several successful restoration projects in recent years. Finally, Curití, a lively historic town, was visited because of its geographical proximity and its current political ties with Jordán. The current mayor is a native of Curití, as are most of the administration employees.
We visited two other sites in order to understand the potential of tourism development in the region. The first was the Parque Nacional del Cañón del Chicamocha (PANACHI), a theme park in the canyon that, although popular, proves to be very disruptive to the landscape. The second was San Gil, a small city that is the epicenter of the region’s ecotourism industry, which has become crowded and pollute. These two visits were a good illustration of the possible future of the region if tourism is to increase, and the danger that this development poses if it happens without regulation.

Countryside touring

Equally important to visiting historic towns and touristic sites, was driving around the countryside in the region. Witnessing an area that subsists mostly on farming and working the land provided insight on the economy and way of living of its inhabitants. It illustrated the importance of tobacco, the quality of the infrastructure, the effects of altitude in the different products that can be farmed, and the potential of the region as a tourist attraction because of its natural beauty.

JORDÁN: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT METHODS

For the four days we spent in Jordán, the procedure for introducing the project to the community and getting to know this community was visiting each and every house in the town. This led to insights on the town’s architecture, its residents, and their way of living.

Interviews

Informal interviews were conducted during the visits to the town’s houses. Because it is a cultural practice to visit neighbors in their houses and socialize in the house’s patio, this proved to be very successful: by just knocking on their door, residents would invite us to come in and chat (and sometimes to have coffee) without requesting much explanation on who we were. Explanations were limited to a brief description of the project as academic research on the town’s historic architecture. Jordán’s troubled political history made it important
to emphasize the project was not in anyway associated with politics. Even though approaching people was an easy task, maintaining the conversation was sometimes difficult. It was supposed to be a casual meeting that would generate trust, but it sometimes became more like an interview where we would ask questions that the residents answered. The residents would not ask questions back, making it a very unbalanced conversation.

**Personal photographs and interviews**

In order to sustain a more balanced conversation with the residents, obtain richer information, and establish a deeper relationship, we used personal photographs to support the interview.

I had visited Jordán with my family in the 1990’s, and had digital copies of the photos on my phone. We showed the photos from this trip to the residents during interviews with the hope of enriching the conversation. Besides it being interesting because it showed how the town looked like at this time (it has changed much), it also gave way for us to share stories about ourselves.

This made the conversation much more personal and casual, it was helpful in starting and maintaining it, and it helped build trust and start a relationship with the town’s inhabitants.

**Strategic contacts**

From the interviews we conducted several people emerged who seemed to be interested in the project and in collaborating with us in the future. These people were identified as strategic contacts, and a relationship with them was established since this first site visit. They became crucial members of the project team:

**Isabel Aparicio:** Isabel was the first contact person in the town. She is the manager of the hotel *La Posada del Caminante*, where the team spent two of the four nights of this first visit and most of the nights in subsequent ones. Isabel was born in Jordán and has lived here for most of her life. Besides managing the hotel, she was elected in 2016 as a member of the city council, and is very much involved in the town’s development projects. Throughout the project Isabel was the most important source of information on what was going on the town.
Juan Pablo Aparicio: Juan Pablo is Isabel’s brother and is also a native of Jordán. He is the manager of the eco-hotel Shangri-La in the outskirts of the town. The Shangri-La receives the most visitors out of all three hotels, and has links with tourism agencies that bring big groups to Santander. Juan Pablo is in charge of leading and organizing tours of the canyon, and therefore is familiar with the regional tourism industry. Besides providing this information, Juan Pablo was also crucial in putting the installation together in the final site visit. He was in charge of all the preliminary tasks on the ground before the rest of the team arrived.

Fernando Monroy: Fernando is the town’s judge. He lives at the Posada del Caminante, which fostered a strong relationship between him and the team. He was interested in helping with the project since the beginning and provided a significant amount of information. Among this information were documents of the town’s history, maps of the town, aerial photographs, historic photographs, and instructions on how and where to get more information from the different governmental institutions.

JORDÁN: DOCUMENTATION METHODS

Information compiled was mostly about who is who in the town (conversations centered around life stories for the most part) and, very superficially, what the condition of the architecture was. The following are the documentation methods used during this site visit. This documentation was crucial in remembering people and buildings on subsequent visits.

Notes

Notes were taken after the conversations had already happened, which might have led to inaccuracy, but was important in generating trust and in maintaining the flow of the conversations.
Map

The notes also translated into a map of the town that contains information about its inhabitants, as well as the uses of all the buildings in the town, noting the ones in extremely poor physical condition.

Photographs

Photographs were taken with very discrete cameras (iPhone and GoPro) that would not intimidate the residents or hinder the conversation.

ASSESSMENT

In conclusion, this first visit served as an introduction to Jordán and Santander, and as the base of the relationship with the community. It was also the first instance in which traditional ethnographic methods were supported by visuals that fostered conversations between outsiders and the town’s residents. It also showed the difficulties in communication and proved that tools that go beyond verbal language can help promote a more personal and thorough dialogue.
Site visit 2: December 27 – 31, 2015

PURPOSE

The purpose of the second site visit was to obtain a deeper insight on the community’s perception of their town in order to get a general landscape that would shape the focus of the installation in the final visit. It aimed to create a stronger connection with the community, and it was also a first strategic approach to the new administration (elections were held on November 2015 and the elected officials were in place January 2016).

TEAM

Ana María Garrido: Ana María is an anthropologist who works at the Instituto Colombiano de Antropología e Historia (Colombian institute of history and anthropology, ICANH) and has extensive experience working with and researching communities in the country. Her expertise was invaluable in approaching people in Jordán and in formulating the questions for this and the last visit’s interviews (during which she was also present).

María Lucía Buraglia: María Lucía is an artist and an actress. Her knowledge of installation art was crucial for background research in later phases. Even more valuable, was her sociable personality and her ability to connect to people through deep, spiritual conversations on religion (a strong cultural factor in most of Colombian society).

Luisa Brando: Luisa is an architect and an artist. She contributed greatly during the design process with creative ideas and feedback, and during this second site visit with professional photography (both of people and of architecture).

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT METHODS

Interviews and photographs

The method used to gather the community’s perceptions was a set of interview questions accompanied by photographs. We conducted the interviews, again, house by house, but these were much more specific than last time’s casual conversations. The team split up in two, and the two pairs asked the same questions to each resident:

- What do you like about the town?
- What do you dislike about the town?
- What would you like to see in the town?
- How do you imagine this town in ten years?
- What places do people use the most in the town? Why?
- What other towns do you like and why?
- Which is your favorite building in this town?
As a strategy for personal engagement with the interviewees, photographs that had been taken on the last visit in which they or their house appeared were given to them as a present. This helped them remember us, and also generated a sense of gratitude toward the project. People who did not have their photographs taken on the last visit were photographed then and given a small copy of the picture printed instantaneously on a small portable printer (Polaroid ZIP). This proved to be a very successful method for engaging the community, a fruitful activity in building trust and a relationship with community members. It also provided an opportunity for us to ask the community for their own photos of the town, a crucial part of the research process that lead to a historic photos collection at the end (see booklet: https://issuu.com/mariadelatorre8/docs/de_la_torre.compressed/1).

Photo sort

Photographs were also used as visual aids to understand people’s perceptions of the town. In a way similar to the “Card sort” method proposed by IDEO, a stack of photographs of the town (taken in the previous visit) were shown to interviewees and they were asked to pick a couple that they could have as a present. Most interviewees chose photos with which they had a personal connection (houses where they or their relatives or friends lived) and photographs of monumental buildings in the town (the church, the chapel, the bridge, or the cemetery). This exercise revealed the importance of the personal connections of interviewees with the photographs. This finding was crucial for framing the installation in the final visit.

Mapping

Many copies of aerial photographs were printed and employed as maps to understand where exactly the places mentioned in the interviews were located. This did not prove to be very helpful. Many people did not feel comfortable drawing or pointing at places in the photograph, and the ones who did, still did not use it much.
Strategic contacts

This visit was also important in building a relationship with the new administration of the town. A meeting with the new mayor, Johanna Muñoz, was set up. We explained the project and the mayor offered her support. It also proved to be an important meeting for understanding the mayor’s vision for Jordán (see Future plans in Chapter 2: Case-study Jordán Sube). This meeting also led to an important contact within the town’s administration, the planning secretary, René Herrera. Since this second visit, René became involved in the project, providing information and leading communication between the project team and the administration.

Assessment

This second visit was very important in deepening the relationship with Jordán and its residents, both by establishing a closer connection with the community and by starting a formal channel of communication with the town’s administration. Conclusions from the interviews conducted and the methods used, were the base for developing the installation.
Site visit 3: February 20 – 22, 2016

PURPOSE

The third site visit was a product of work and research conducted after the second site visit. After an analysis of the town’s urban fabric, its history, its development plans for the future, and the information gathered from the community in previous site visits, a decision was made of what the installation was going to be in terms of purpose, site, concept, and materiality (See Chapter Five: Design and Implementation). This site visit’s purpose was to confirm the feasibility of the proposed installation.

TEAM

Angela Crane: Angela’s extensive experience in design and construction was crucial in this site visit to determine the feasibility of the design. She contributed extensively in developing technical details, a production schedule, a budget, and all the necessary practicalities that would make the installation happen.

PRACTICALITIES

Permits

Getting the permit from the administration to install the project was a priority in this site visit (for this, a meeting with Mayor Johana Muñoz was arranged).

Site survey

Also key was taking detailed measurements and assessing existing conditions, such as wind patterns and existing infrastructure that could be incorporated into the installation.

Team building

The visit was also an opportunity to organize a team on the ground that would take care of preliminary tasks. The strategic contacts within the community, with whom a relationship had been maintained, proved to be crucial in managing preparatory practicalities before the installation was implemented (hiring local workers, distributing flyers, spreading the word about the installation to invite participants, etc.)

Assessment

This site visit was an indispensable step for ensuring the feasibility of the installation.
CHAPTER FIVE Design and Implementation

The following chapter describes the design and implementation of the Installation Method in Jordán. It states the intent of the installation, describes the design of its material and ethnographic components, and provides an account of its execution.
CHAPTER FIVE Design and Implementation

The design of the installation for Jordán was developed after the second site visit. At this point, with enough information on the historic background, future plans, and current conditions of the town; and with certain established relationships within the community, a decision could be made on what were the important issues that needed to be raised, and how this could be realistically accomplished through an installation.

I. INSTALLATION PURPOSE

One of the most pressing issues for heritage in Jordán right now, is the possibility of development that seems to be near: Jordán finds itself in a moment where change seems imminent but the past is still present. As stated in Chapter Three: Case-study, the town is ripe for questioning the role of heritage in the town’s future and the role of the community in the preservation of their heritage. For this reason, the installation developed for Jordán, intends to uncover the values that the community attributes to their heritage in the face of change, and to shed light on the role of the past in the future, as seen through the eyes of the town’s inhabitants.

II. SITE SELECTION

For implementing the installation, a specific site had to be chosen within Jordán. Although the issues that the experiment intended to address concern Jordán as a whole, the material feature of the installation and the logistics of its implementation suggested the selection of a smaller scale location.¹

The site chosen was the plazuela, a small square located at the bridge entrance of the town. This space was lost around 1995 with the demolition of one building on one of its sides.² The building used to be a small lo-

¹ The selection of the site, although informed by previous fieldwork in which information from community members had been collected, was based on expert values. The idea of the Installation Method is that it complements these values with those of the community, and at the same time communicates them to the community. It works as a tool for communication both ways.
² This date is based on historic photo comparisons and interviews with the town’s inhabitants.
Today, the space of the *plazuela* merges with the space of the main square, disrupting the traditional Spanish grid, in which the main square of the town is usually rectangular. Besides the urbanistic value that this lost square represents, the main reason why it was chosen for the installation is that it physically and symbolically represents the issues that the town’s heritage is facing right now. The essential elements of Jordán’s past, present, and future can be found concentrated in this small space.

**Past**

The strongest representation of Jordán’s past in the *plazuela* (and perhaps even in the entire town) is the bridge. The bridge is the historic heart of the town. The town emerged because of this crossing, and evolved around it. It not only represents Jordán’s historic importance, but also the way of life that developed around its existence, and is still present. The bridge is the town’s insignia of the *Camino Real*, the symbol that locates Jordán within a larger network of heritage of national importance. Moreover, the bridge is one of the town’s monumental structures, designed to illustrate its importance. It stands today as a significant example of pedestrian bridge architecture of the early 20th century in the region.

**Present**

One of the most pressing issues in Jordán today is its process of depopulation. The effect this has had on the physical fabric of the town is best represented in the ruins scattered throughout the urban center. The *plazuela* is no exception. Different stages of a building’s decay and are present in this space: the ruins of one of the booths on the side of the bridge, the complete disappearance of the one on the other, that state of disrepair of the bridge itself, and the accelerated process of deterioration that one of the houses in the *plazuela* is going through. In fact, this abandoned house lost what remained of its roof and all of its portico between the first

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3. This information was provided by interviews with the town’s inhabitants.
and the second site visits of this project. This building was one of the only three remaining ones with a portico in the town, a typology representative of architecture in the region.

Future

Possible futures also find material depictions in the plazuela. The new road that is being constructed, on which all the hopes of development rely, leads directly to this space. Besides the symbolic meaning of the colonial road and the new road intersecting in this point, the layout of this road also poses functional problems that would affect this space specifically. The hotel located on the western side of the plazuela is also a physical manifestation of the development that the town inhabitants anticipate. It represents the region’s bet on tourism, and hints at its infiltration in Jordán (see Chapter Three: Case-study).

The combination of these elements in one space make the plazuela a powerful representation of Jordán. It is a space that is no longer there but at the same time is still present, it is a hint of the past moving towards the future, certainly loosing some fabric but also promising brighter days.

III. STRATEGY

The strategy used to link the spatial-temporal trait present in the plazuela to the town’s inhabitants was to revive the community’s memory of the space.

“The creation of cultural heritage is largely derived from the way people remember, organize, think about, and wish to use the past and how material culture provides a medium through which to do this. The stories invested in objects, buildings, and landscapes, by individuals or groups, constitute a currency in which the valorizing of cultural heritage is transacted.”

The installation sought to uncover the values that people ascribe to the plazuela, through their personal memories.
memories of the space. The design of both, the material and the ethnographic components of the method methods were targeted towards this goal. The idea was to get personal stories of the people’s past, present, and future of the space.

IV. DESIGN

In order to trigger the community’s spatial memories of the plazuela the material installation would recreate and emphasize this space. Two components in the installation were designed for this. The first was a fabric that imitated the corner of the demolished building, simulating this building’s mass and closing the square at its lost edge. The second one was a series of lanterns that delineated the square’s perimeter, emphasizing the space that was going to be discussed. This design was not meant to be a literal reconstruction of the space, but a symbolic one. It intended to recreate the experience of being in the plazuela, but also to hint at something new and different.

A white fabric was chosen for the reconstruction of this building. White is the color of most buildings in the town, and the fabric was hung tight at the approximate height where this building used to stand. Only the corner on the sides of the plazuela was reconstructed, in order to emphasize the public space, not the building itself. This was further reinforced by the lanterns, which discretely insinuated the space at night, further focusing attention towards the plazuela. The spatial experience of being in this reconstructed space was intended to trigger personal memories of the plazuela, therefore creating a connection between the space and the participant. This element was crucial in the design because it embodied the spatial and temporal qualities of the installation to be transmitted to the community.

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5. The fact that this building used to be a jail was taken into consideration before the design was implemented. The possibilities of it having a bad connotation, and of its reconstruction generating negative responses among the community, was discussed beforehand with some of the strategic contacts within the community. The conclusion was drawn that its function as a jail was not a sensitive topic in the town. It was a local jail where people were imprisoned for very short periods of time and for committing minor offences (like getting drunk, or fighting), and it was rarely used (at least in the times people today can remember).
Since the idea of the installation was to approach people through their personal memories, the ethnographic method chosen was individual interviews. The way in which these interviews were designed responded to the materiality of the installation and at the same time informed and altered this materiality. The interview was designed to use the space itself for communicating. It aimed at linking people’s memories to the physical environment and then bringing these memories towards the present and into the future. Two specific strategies were used to connect the interviews to the space. The first one was conducting the interview in the space itself. Interviewers were encouraged to move around the plazuela, get close to the building that was being discussed, enter it, touch it, point at it, etc. The second one integrated the material component of the installation into the interview: the lanterns on the perimeter of the plazuela were designed as an interactive component of the method. The interviewees were asked to move them around and place them in the specific building/location that was being discussed, encouraging the participants to occupy the space, integrating it further into the conversation (for further detail on the interview questions and design see the attached Interview Guide at the end of this chapter).

These lanterns also intended to incentivize participation and to share some of the research with Jordán’s inhabitants gathered in previous phases of the project. The lanterns were given as a gift to the participants who were being interviewed, and were designed in such a way that they contained a poster-sized historic photograph of Jordán that the participant could take home. This decision was informed by the community’s interest in images revealed in previous site visits.

Building on this interest on images, the design incorporated the historic photos into the space by projecting them on a wall of one of the buildings in the square. This also gave logistical structure to the installation: the interviews were designed so that they would take place during an event, and the projection of the photos would serve as a distraction for all the people who were not being interviewed. They were intended to trigger conversations about the town’s past among the participants who would be casually chatting during the event.
The event was designed as follows: it was to take place on one evening after people finished their daily jobs. Members of the community were invited one week prior to the event via flyers that were distributed by Juan Pablo Aparicio (see Chapter Four: Fielwork). The decision of to whom these flyers were to be distributed was left to the discretion of Juan Pablo and Isabel Aparicio, who were familiar with the project and with the community. The idea was that people would gather casually in the space while interviews were taking place. The photo projection and refreshments were intended to entertain people in the meantime.

Interviews were targeted towards people who had lived in or around Jordán for long periods of time. Isabel and Juan Pablo Aparicio served as guides to indicate to the interviewers who these people might be.

The event was video-recorded and photographed, and the interviews audio-recorded, for a later assessment of the method. (Link to video: https://vimeo.com/162827376)

Below is an account of how this design was implemented (formatted as a field journal entry) followed by the document that was used in the field to guide the interviews.
Site visit 4: March 14 – 18, 2016

PURPOSE

The installation assembly and the community event took place on the fourth site visit to Jordán. The first two days were used for preparation and set up, the event took place on the evening on the second day. The third day was used for getting feedback and more participants (some could not make it the day before), and the fourth day was used for dismantling the structure.

TEAM

Alejandra Cuellar: Alejandra is a filmmaker specializing in documentaries. She was in charge of recording the event and its assembly, and of editing the footage into a three-minute explanatory video.

Ana María Garrido: Ana María’s expertise in anthropology was crucial in developing interview questions and ways for approaching the installation participants. She was in charge of conducting interviews during the event.

Angela Crane: Angela’s long-term involvement in the project was key in the assembly of the installation. She was also in charge of conducting interviews during the event, for which her established relationships with the community proved to be useful.

Angela Jimenez: Angela is an architect and renowned artist in Colombia. She has extensive experience in community-building projects, many of which have taken place in Santander, since her second residence is in Barichara. Her broad knowledge of the region’s culture, architecture, and traditions, as well as her sensibilities regarding art and design were indispensable contributions to the project. Catalina Komninos: Catalina is a textile designer who has had her own business for over twenty years. Besides contributing to the design and detailing of the reconstructed building, her knowledge of textiles was fundamental in the assembly of the installation, especially in last minute challenges and changes.
PREPARATION

The first day was spent setting up the reconstructed building (this was done with the help of the workers who were hired to install the poles some days before). Cables were tied taut between the posts with the fabric strung to them, and the fabric was bundled up and left hanging until the next day. Stones were also brought from the river that day, which would serve to weigh down the fabric when it was straightened. Some of the day was also used for getting all team members on the same page regarding the event proceedings and the interview questions and methodology. The rest of the day was used to visit some of the houses in the town to invite people personally, and to check on food and drink preparations for the next day (empanadas were purchased from a family in the town who makes them, and soda and beer were bought from one of the town’s stores). A booklet that contains all of the historic images found during the research was given as a gift to people who had been especially helpful during the entire project (one of these was also given to the town’s library for public consultation). Link to the Booklet: http://issuu.com/mariadelatorre8/docs/de_la_torre.compressed/1

On the second day, the set up was completed: lamps were made and positioned on the perimeter of the plaza, the photo projection was set up on a wall of the house on the east side of the plaza (this house, in ruins, had its white walls stained with characteristic earthen architecture leak marks so it had to be cleaned), and music was set up using Fernando Monroy’s borrowed stereo (it was decided that traditional music from the region would be played during the event).

EVENT

People began arriving at around 6:00pm; they instinctively sat on the sidewalk (as it was planned), looking at the photos that were being projected.

When the plazuela was crowded I made a short speech. I thanked everyone for coming, and I explained what the event was about:
I’m studying architecture and this is a research project on the old buildings of Jordán. I came to this town in the 1990’s with my family, and since then, I’ve believed it is beautiful. Now that I’m looking at the buildings’ history I want to hear from you, because you are the ones who know the stories behind the architecture.

I then explained that the idea was for them to socialize and enjoy the photos, the food, and the drinks, and that my team and I would be walking around talking to them and asking questions about the buildings’ stories.

The event went as planned, the four interviewers conducted sixteen interviews in total over a period of two hours, while members of the community sat around the plaza and discussed the event among themselves. Although the interviews were targeted towards people who had lived for a long time in or around Jordán, children or more recent inhabitants would spontaneously join the interviews, showing interest in what was being talked about.

Alejandra Cuellar video recorded the entire evening. Interestingly, people who were being interviewed agreed to being audio recorded but not filmed, which is why footage of this type lacks in the video.

POST-EVENT

The building reconstruction part of the installation was left in place for one more day in order to conduct a few more interviews with people that had not been able to attend the day before. People on this last day were, for the most part, elderly residents who do not like to leave their homes at night. A very interesting, spontaneous reunion occurred, from which a group conversation around the town’s history emerged. The reunion continued until it became darker, so the photos were projected once more in order to enrich the conversation. On this day, people also came back for the lamps that had been given away the day before. This was used as an opportunity to ask them for feedback and opinions on the previous evening.
Interview Guide: March 14 – 18, 2016

GOAL
Assess the values that the community ascribes to the entrance plaza of Jordán Sube through an account of their personal stories of the past, present, and future of the space.

STRATEGY
This is a semi-structured interview where themes are presented by the interviewer, but the interviewee leads the conversation. The idea is to use open-ended questions that lead to life stories and that shed light on the meaning that the space has for the interviewee. Although the goal is not to get accurate facts, a strong emphasis should be made on the physical characteristics of the space (past, present, future) in order to strongly establish a connection between the space and the story. The aim is to acquire anecdotal information, a personal link between the interviewee and the space.

Interviewers should encourage the interviewee to dig deep into their story by paying close attention and asking follow-up questions. However, they should ask only one question at a time, not interrupt, and leave space for silence, for it leads to important reflection time. Interviewers should ask if there is anything they do not understand, they should remember to use relatable language, and they should use the space to help communicate (point at, move to, touch, look, explore, experience).

INTERVIEW TIME
About 30min per interview (recorded time)
PROCEDURE

Individual/one-on-one interviews will be conducted on the first day (March 15) from 5:00pm to 8:30pm.

1. Explain the purpose of the interview to the interviewee:

   - This is a project for architecture school. We are studying the history of architecture in Jordán and we want to know what the people who live here think about it.

   - The idea is that you chose a space within the ‘plazuela’ for us to talk about. *Explain space and options: building, plaza, bridge, street, etc. give them time to choose, encourage them, and answer their questions, but try not to influence their decision. The following diagram explains space options (see Image X:XX):

   - We want to know about the space’s history, what it looked like in the past, how people used it, how you use it now, etc. (reassure them that this is NOT political, but rather an architectural study).

   - Choose the space and go to it with one of the installation lanterns (used to mark the space and create a material link to the story being told). Explain that the lantern will be given as a gift to them after the interview (the next day). The interview should be conducted in the chosen space.

2. Get consent for recording and using the information later on:

   - I will record the conversation is that ok with you?

   - You can ask to erase any part of it that you don’t want to include.

   - I will only use it only for school. It will not go on the news or the radio, and I will not share it with anyone without your authorization.

   - I can send you a copy of the recording if you like or you could hear it after the interview (the next day) and ask for edits.

3. Start recording: Introduce interview (Interviewer name, interviewee name)
4. Interview themes

Start the interview asking about the past of the space, trying to get at specific memories/anecdotes of the interviewee in the space in order to create a spatial-personal connection. Smoothly try to bring the memory to the present, exploring the current conditions of the site, what led to them, and what was gained/lost in this process. Finally tie the story to the future of the town, making an emphasis on how development might affect the space.

a. Past:

Ask an open ended question:

*What do you remember about this space?*

Ask follow up questions that leads to physical descriptions of the space and to the interviewee's experience of it.

*In the past, how did the space look? Feel? Smell? Sound? How was it used? By whom? When? Where exactly?*

Try to get a specific memory/anecdote of the place

*Tell me about a time when you...*

b. Present:

Connect the story to the present

*What happened? How did it become what it is now?*

Try to get their impressions of this change

*How is it used now? Who uses it? How do you use it? where do you do now what you did here then? How does it compare to before?*

c. Future:

Try to understand their vision of the future

*What do you think will happen to this space?*

Tie their vision to possible futures:

*New road, increase in tourism, more cars, more outsiders, more people, more movement, more noise, more buildings...*

5. End Recording: Conclude interview

Finish by asking them if they want to add anything, delete anything, or listen to the recording the next day. Thank them, and remind them to come the next day for their lanterns.

6. Label lantern

Write the name of the interviewee in the lantern they chose and leave it in the place chosen. The entire entry plaza should start filling up with the lanterns as more and more interviews take place.
CHAPTER SIX Findings

The Installation Method was successful in providing information on the community’s perception of the plazuela. After revising the documentation (video, audio and photographs), conclusions were drawn on the values ascribed to this place by the towns inhabitants, which in turn led to important generalized information of their perception of the town’s past, present and future. This chapter describes these findings. The performance of the method itself is evaluated in Chapter Seven.
CHAPTER SIX Findings

The use of the installation for obtaining information on the values ascribed to the plaza, was crucial in creating a connection between the participants, the space, and the interviewers (“experts”). This method of engagement led to narratives where very detailed physical descriptions of the plaza’s past were intrinsically tied to the space’s use and to the personal experiences of its inhabitants in that place. These narratives revealed the values that this space represents. They highlighted the importance of spaces for socialization, demonstrated the community’s pride in the town’s history, illustrated a lifestyle that is characteristic of Jordan, and unveiled the community’s longings for the future. The following chapter summarizes these narratives and categorizes them in the different values that they represent. Four categories were found: social values, economic values, aesthetic values, and identity values. Quotes from the interviews are included in this chapter, but not attributed to specific individuals so as to protect privacy.

I. SOCIAL VALUES

Jordan was at one time prosperous and important, and attracted a great number of people. Today’s inhabitants long for those times and hope that the future development of the town will bring this back. Certain memories shared by participants gave importance to physical structures because they represent Jordan as the epicenter of the region, a place for gathering, socialization, and commerce. Ambiente was a word repeatedly used to refer to this lively atmosphere present in Jordan’s heyday. The following examples are detailed descriptions of spaces that were identified during the implementation of the installation as having a social value.

Perhaps the most popular building in the interviews was the house with a portico (the portico had collapsed a few months before, but the house was still referred to as the house with a corredor, i.e. portico). The repeated mention of this structure in conversations might be attributed to the importance of the social values for which the house stands.

The house was remembered during the interviews for its legacy of housing negocios (literally translates “businesses”, this is a term used for places where groceries, beer, and alcohol are sold). Stories of these negocios continuously referred to the portico as the most important characteristic of the house. The portico generated shade, so people gathered there. There were tables, chairs, and a bench attached to the wall. Located at the town entrance, it also served as a place to rest for people who had just arrived, and as a place to watch people leaving and arriving Jordan.

“I used to come here a lot to drink beer here in this house. It was here yes, because everyone who came here on Sundays, to go to Los Santos, they all came in here. Because it had the portico. They had chairs, and anyone would sit here. To rest. To drink soda or beer. To rest...”

The oldest memories that were shared of the negocios in this house, spoke of the time when Doña Josefa lived here. Josefa had a restaurant where she sold cabrito (goat) and sudado (cooked meat). It was most special on Wednesdays, because people who came to the Compañía Colombiana de Tabaco to sell their product would have lunch here. This negocio was remembered as a gathering spot during the best days of the tobacco industry in Jordan.
The house was later bought by Roque Ferreira (the son of Roque Ferreira, the town’s tyrant, whom people refer to as the difunto (deceased) Roque, to differentiate him from his son, see Chapter X), and the negocio that used to be located on the southernmost room of the house moved to the northernmost room. The negocio was managed by Roque, and it was remembered with nostalgia as a gathering place. People (mostly men) from the countryside would come here on Sundays to drink and meet with friends, and occasionally throw parties with dancing and music. There was also a bolo in the house’s backyard (a court for playing a traditional Colombian game, also known as tejo), a game that is still very popular, but the only court in Jordán today is located a few kilometers out of the urban center.

But the house was most remembered for Roque’s wife, the school teacher Ninfa, who would invite her students after school to watch television. This house had the first television in the town, and both children and adults would gather here in the evenings to watch it in the salón (living room), a big room in the center of the house.

“This house was, initially, I remember my father used to say, it was a restaurant. Yes, they sold... Doña Josefina, I think was the name of the lady. It was a restaurant. Then, when I remember, it was the house of a teacher, my school teacher, Ninfa. And she lived there with her husband. And it was the only house with a television, so at night, everyone came to watch television in the teacher’s house. They always got together here. Adults and children. The living room was big, they went in, and if there wasn’t enough room they would stand on the door…”

The house was later sold to a lady of Bucaramanga who never lived here and did not maintain it. The fact that people know who she is, and emphasize that she let it fall down, expresses the concern people give to abandoned buildings, and how much they resent owners who don’t use or maintain their property.

The current hotel La Posada del Caminante also turned up often in interviews. It was most remembered for formerly housing a guarapería (a place where guarapo, a local liquor made of fermented cane sugar and fruits, is sold). People would drink guarapo and play darts in the house’s patio, where there was an alberca (pool/water
tank), surrounded by plantain trees and fruit trees, and where animals were kept. The guarapería was complemented by a hair salon in the northernmost room of the house, where everyone got their haircuts, and which had its door always open to the plazuela.

“I knew a lady here, her name was Ana Delfina, Ana Delfina Prada, and her mother, Doña Socorro. Yes, they had a guarapo business here. Yes, guarapito. The business was at the end of the house, inside. There, like where the rooms are now. There was a patio there, and in the patio there was a tank, a water tank. There was a portico, a corridor. And there were plantain trees inside, where the rooms are. And there was an orange tree, and ‘cayenos’. It was like a forest inside. Yes, a pretty house. And there were chickens and ducks…”

Another element in the study area that reflected the importance of gathering places for people was the river. Women used to do laundry together in the river, where they would use a plant called pepino to scrub the clothes. When the river was clear (this happens in January due to rain patterns) people from the veredas (rural villages) would come with their families to Jordán as a weekend trip to bathe, which is something that still happens.

“For example, in December and January, when it was summer, they all washed together in the river. On the weekends. They all went to do laundry there. And they took, to whiten the clothes, there is a reed, which they call... hmmm... pepino, and they would scrape the clothes with that…”

The photo slide show that was projected during the event triggered conversations about elements outside the study area that also served as gathering places. Interestingly, most of these do not look monumental in old photographs, and were not the main focus of interview questions or the installation, but were certainly revealed as landmarks that hold an important place in the collective memory of the town.

The quiosco, a pavilion located in the main square was mentioned several times as a gathering and leisure location. Its photos triggered conversations about playing games and having fun. Kids used to play there with
marbles and spinning tops [which the kids themselves carved out of guayabo (Calycolpus moritzianus) wood] because the floor was very smooth. One of the interviewees remembered falling and hurting her head while playing there. Today, children still play in the pavilion. They use it for a variation of soccer where there are four goals. The quiosco used to be different though; the previous one caught fire during a New Year’s party because they used to burn Año viejos there (a Colombian tradition in which, for New Year’s Eve a life a size doll is made, filled with fireworks, and then burned. It is symbolic of getting rid of all the bad things of the past year).

“At the end of the year we would make año viejos, and we would burn them there, next to the quiosco. And in a party the quiosco caught fire. They threw a fuetón (some type of fireworks) ... and the fireworks fell and shhhhhhh! People were dancing like at one in the morning and the quiosco caught fire. We had to run with buckets of water to throw at it, at the straw…”

II. ECONOMIC VALUES

Narratives of the best days of Jordán emphasized its importance as a gathering place as much as its economic prosperity. People coming to Jordán not only implied a healthy, fun, entertaining environment, but also a productive one. People still believe the town can recover this prosperity. The new road, the new administration, and touristic development have generated hope of the town recovering its role as an epicenter in the region. The following are examples of buildings and structures in the town that were associated with the past prosperity, and which triggered the interviewee’s nostalgia of Jordán’s days as an economic center.

Most conversations on the best days of tobacco led to talk about the Compañía Colombiana de Tabaco house. Located in the main square, it is the largest house in Jordán (some people even refer to it as the Casa Grande), and the symbol of the town’s heyday. People have lived off of tobacco agriculture ever since they can remember, and the fact that the Colombian Tobacco Company had its headquarters here is representative of Jordán’s importance. Not only was this a source of pride, but it also structured life in the town: the day when
people came to sell their tobacco in this house was the most important day of the week in Jordán. One of the interviewees even remembered getting married in this house because the church roof had collapsed.

“There was a lady here... Josefina... I don’t remember her last name. Here she would sell ‘piquetes’ (food), on Wednesday, which was the day of the selling and buying of tobacco, here in the Colombiana. So she would make lunch, with goat and... for the ones who were here selling their tobacco. They would buy the tobacco there in that building. It was called the Colombiana de Tabaco...”

Also emblematic of Jordán’s better days was the andén (translates as sidewalk). This element was used constantly for exemplifying the amount of people who came to the town. The structure was just a platform on which meat was sold, which was raised so that water would not ruin the meat if it rained, and was covered to protect the products from the sun. The amount of meat sold or animals killed (some said six cows were killed every week in the town) was mentioned repeatedly to illustrate the town’s former prosperity (probably because it reflects the amount of people living there and the economic status that buying meat denotes).

“Tell me about it! They would kill, on Sundays, they would kill pigs, goats... daily... there they sold the cattle... and the people who got here found what to eat... there were stores, and meat. If you wanted to buy meat, there was meat to but. Goat, pig, beef, sweets, ‘yuca’, plantain, potatoes, vegetables... now to buy vegetables you have to go to San Gil...”

Other structures that also represented the importance of Jordán as a service supplier and as the epicenter of modernity in the region were the water tank, the electric generator, and the telephone and telegraph office. The water tank was located behind the jail, and any reference to this building (or to the fabric reconstruction of it), led to narratives of the tank. Because the tank is no longer there, photographs were very useful to illustrate these narratives. The tank was where everyone used to get their water. It had three faucets and a canal around it where animals could drink. Water came from the other side of the river, from a place called Nacuma (also the name of an important plant in the region), and made its way through stone canals and then metal water pipes that crossed the bridge (these pipes can also be seen in the old photographs). An electric generator
also came up when the jail was mentioned. The jail had two rooms: one for the prisoners, and the other one for the generator (power plant), which was the only source of electric energy in the region. It was talked about with pride because it provided light only to the urban center at a time when villages did not have any electricity. The telephone and telegraph office was also mentioned a couple of times, but it was situated in different buildings in the different versions. Stories told that only Mesa de los Santos could be reached by phone, that the lady who worked the phone was called Esperanza, and that you had to turn a crank to make it work.

“I still remember a little when it was... they called it the water tank... it was a tank that was there, behind where you have your white thing, and water came there from the mountain, because they would not get it from the river... it came from up there and it would fill the tank. And at that time there were no tubes or plumbing, so everyone had to come here to get their water. In that water tank.”

III. AESTHETIC VALUES

Because the interviews were targeted towards the space and the built environment, the buildings themselves and construction methods turned up frequently in the conversation. The physical condition of built structures make an essential part of the ambiente that people long for in Jordán. Most interviewees agreed that one of the most important challenges for the future is getting people to sell vacant properties or build them up. Abandoned houses are considered one of the town’s biggest problems. Most showed a desire for the houses to be restored in the “old style”, and Barichara was used as an example in a couple of interviews as a model town of old architecture. Although people praised the aesthetics of old architecture, they do not believe that using traditional construction methods is important. Most houses that have been restored in the town do not use traditional techniques, and new materials are considered cheaper and easier to use. Most people are aware of how old houses were built, they understand the tapia pisada technique for building walls, appreciate traditional materials like caña brava and ceramic roof tiles, and still use lime wash to paint their houses. However, the interviews revealed that people in the region are not interested in construction, and because of
this, some traditional techniques have been lost. The following are examples of construction methods that were discussed during the interviews, which, although aesthetically appreciated by the interviewees, were not considered essential for the town’s development.

Talk of *tapia Pisada* (rammed earth) came up in discussions about how to rebuild ruined properties. Conversations exposed the lack of workmanship for this technique in Jordán. This was attributed to the lack of interest of the younger generation in working in construction, but interviews also revealed no intentions, from the part of the owners, of using rammed earth walls in their properties because they believe it is more expensive. They used Barichara as an example to illustrate that rich people are the ones who build in *tapia*.

“not everyone has the money to invest in old style constructions, like ‘tapia pisada’... on one hand the construction takes too long, on the other hand it is very expensive. Because people here... there is no one here working with that. Maybe in other municipalities yes, but here-here... so it would be more expensive to bring the workforce. The men who used to work with ‘tapia’ here have passed away. And no one has continued that tradition...”

The topic of *tejas de barro* (ceramic roof tiles) came up several times when talking about the portico house because its roof recently collapsed. Conversation evolved into the origin of the tiles, which are now brought from Barichara or Villanueva, but in the past might have been produced near Jordán in what seem to be the ruins of a kiln according to one interviewee.

“...’bahareque’ is mud with cane and stones. But new walls are brick, brick, only brick... the tiles are brought from Villanueva or Barichara... there were ceramic tiles from here. I think they made tiles here. There in the roads there were these kilns. I don’t know if it was roof tiles or floor tiles, but there are still some stone kilns there...”

A discussion on carpentry was triggered by the mention of the work on a recently restored house just south of the hotel. This revealed the presence of the craft in the region and even revealed the name of a carpenter, Lionel Sanchez, famed for his work.

Photos of the *quiosco* when it had a thatched roof (it is now ceramic tiles) prompted conversation about this technique. The conversations centered mostly around the plant used to to make the thatching. The *nacuma* (*Carludovica palmate*) used to be widely cultivated around Jordán, but now only a few people grow it, and roofs are no longer made out of this material. Instead, tin or ceramic tiles are used. The *nacuma* plant’s leaves are used for thatching, but its sprout is used to weave crafts like brooms and esteras (mats). Few people still use these products, and they are not commonly produced, but one interviewee still makes and sells them. She has *nacuma* plants at her home and inherited the craft from her grandfather. He used to have a plantation and would take his granddaughters with him to Barichara, where hats were made, to sell his plants.

“At that time they made the houses, the roofs, out of that nacuma. Dry. So he [her grandfather] would cut it, dry it, prepare it, and sell it. The caneyes, the kitchens, were made out of that, out of that roof. And it was a very cool and fresh roof, because it was like that... very fresh.”

IV. IDENTITY VALUES

Conversations about buildings inevitably led to talk of how these buildings came to be and what they were used for. Besides the personal memories of socializing and economic prosperity, these conversations gave insight into a lifestyle, daily routines, a way of living, and a way of producing that respond to the site’s geography.
and to its sociopolitical and historic context. The isolation of Jordán in the previous decades has resulted in the preservation of some of this lifestyle. However, this is beginning to change, and the installation revealed some of these changes. Interviews demonstrated the reciprocal relationship between the built environment and people’s way of living; through stories about the buildings, recent alterations in people’s daily lives were revealed. The following are examples of costumes, traditions, and trades that constitute an essential part of Jordán and its residents, but which are somewhat threatened by the changes that the town is experiencing.

The arriero lies at the origin of Jordán. The town is inseparable from the Camino Real that gave it its purpose, and this trade became central to its economy. Today the trade is still present, although in a much smaller scale. This topic repeatedly came up in the interviews, specially when talking about the bridge. Memories of crossing the bridge and walking the roads are inseparable from the animals that carry the goods from one town to the other. Some remembered times when 300 mules (referred to as bestias) would cross the bridge in one day, some remembered the mules they had once owned, and others remembered the mule that fell through the boards of the bridge a few months ago. Most of the conversations turned quickly into the decline of the trade, and the strengthening of other modes of transportation. The opening of the first road in 1996 came up, as well as the arrival of the first car in the region, and an interviewee even shared a memory of how they once managed to get a car through the pedestrian bridge. This change in transportation is a pressing topic currently, with the opening of the new road, and these conversations are, in a way, predictions of the ways in which this new infrastructure will impact the use of historic structures such as the bridge.

“they used it more before [the bridge], because at that time we all had to go do our shopping in Mesa de los Santos. And everyone carried their shopping on mules, on ‘bestias.’ An we would go down from this side. But not now. Because there is transportation, from San Gil, form Aratoca, so everything gets here from that side... and it it loosing like that... how should I call it?... like that image that there was before. Because today the majority of people don’t walk any more, they don’t travel on their horses..."
Today, farming is the main economic driver of the region. The possible shift from a farming economy to a service one with the arrival of tourism highlights the importance that the agricultural products have had in shaping the town, and raises questions on the possibilities for their continuing use in the future. The bridge, again, was perhaps the most important catalyst for conversations about farming because it constitutes an important element in people’s routine. Most of Jordán’s inhabitants have (or had) to make trips across it once or twice a week for business and trade, which gave them a chance to talk about the merchandise they carried. This merchandise was usually some sort of agricultural product.

Besides tobacco (the town’s most important crop), conversations on agriculture provided information on other products, such as lime, melon, and papaya, which have been recently introduced and have gained some commercial importance. In addition, there is *mamón* (*Melicoccus bijugatus*), *chirimoya* (*Annona cherimola*), and *plátano* (plantain), which are not very profitable, but are grown for domestic consumption. These last three fruit trees are usually found in the houses’ *solares*, so they were mentioned frequently in conversations about this space.

“The essential crop here is tobacco. Only maybe three or four years ago some men from Cepitá came and implemented melon plantations, because we didn’t use to have that here... the other crop that has been a base here, always, has been the goats... and another one, more or less, is the ‘mamón’, and the other one, is now the lemon. Because lemons are new here. We did not use to grow lemons as much as we are now... now things are changing, maybe... with tourism maybe it will modernize, but it will still take some time... people will come here with new ideas, new methods, and then people will see where they can develop faster, or what will give them better production, more income, then people will change...”

Discussion about the *solares* also sparked conversations on the animals that are kept there; goats, chickens, mules, etc., emphasizing their constant presence in the daily lives of Jordán’s inhabitants. One such story
mentioned that the solar of the jail was a jail for animals. If an animal misbehaved, it would be locked up in this solar until its owner paid for the damages it had caused. This story was told with pride, mentioning that it was the only jail of this sort in the region.

“It had two rooms there. And it had a place where they would put the animals when they damaged something somewhere. They would bring them down and put them in there. So the owner had to pay for the damages they had done there. Yes, that is how it was... I was very very careful. It was a jail, for the animals, in the solar... people went on another room.”

In conclusion, the installation revealed the deep relationships of people’s lives to the built environment. Asking questions about personal memories of buildings generated countless conversations on the lifestyle, the trades, the objects, and the products that, for the town’s inhabitants, make part of Jordán’s past, present and possible future. Although all interviews were very different, they provided an understanding of generalized perceptions of the town’s current condition, where it came from and where it could go. Through an analysis of their narratives, conclusions were drawn on the social, economic, aesthetic and identity values that they ascribe to their heritage, which could serve as a basis on which to plan for Jordán’s development.
CHAPTER SEVEN

Conclusions
CHAPTER SEVEN Conclusions

This thesis proposes a means of better connection communities and preservationists. It proposes the use of the core concerns of heritage (space, time, architecture, history, etc.) to bridge the relationship between experts and non-experts in an effort to incorporate the community into the preservation process. The Installation Method provides a platform that strengthens the relationship of preservationists with people with the aim of including the community’s voice and perception of their heritage in planning for the future. The local community’s relationship with heritage and their perception of their own space and history, compose a collective memory, an identity, a culture, an intangible social cohesion, that are intrinsically attached to the physical fabric of a place, and therefore, should be a part of the preservation project.

Understanding these immaterial features of heritage is certainly a challenge, and requires preservationists to include knowledge and techniques from other fields in their toolbox. The Installation Method proposes incorporating ethnography and art installations into preservation as a means of enhancing communication with local communities. Ethnography provides conventional manners of understanding and relating to people: established procedures, good practices, and tested tools are a firm basis on which preservationists can stand in order to tailor and create their own approach. Art installations, on the other hand, deliver a vehicle for expression and creativity that leads to open-ended, unexpected outcomes which result in a more inclusive process. This encourages diversity, generates an unorthodox manner of collecting different opinions, attracts a varied public, and raises interest and awareness in inventive ways.

The Installation Method proposed by this thesis is a practical approach to community engagement in preservation practice. The preservation field widely acknowledges and encourages this engagement, and preservationists vehemently argue that it should be done. Then, why is there so little of it? The challenge lies in going past discussion and into implementation. This thesis sought to move forward and put it into practice, try it, experiment, make it happen, learn from it, and provide a way for its replication. In the end, preservation is a practical endeavor with tangible, physical repercussions. Therefore, it is by ‘making’ that this project sought to prove itself. This chapter establishes a set of guidelines that are based on the experimentation in Jordán, but which could be used for the implementation of an installation elsewhere.

The guidelines are structured as a step-by-step narrative that includes the most significant components used during the development and implementation of the installation in Jordán. They briefly describe what was done in each step, analyzing why the step was beneficial or not, in order to understand how it contributed to the larger goal of assessing values. Since this method was only tested in one case-study, the following guidelines do not purport to be comprehensive, and certainly do not cover all necessary steps and possible setbacks that a strategy intended for diverse cases requires. They should be understood as a starting point for subsequent experimentation on the use of installations for community engagement in historic preservation.

I. PREPARATION

The preparatory research and fieldwork conducted in order to tailor the Installation Method to the case-study, proved to be crucial in the installation’s development, and is therefore considered an essential part of the guidelines. An assessment of the most important steps during the preparation is included below, stating each step’s relevance and necessary considerations.
Research

- Conducting Historic Research: Thorough research on the site’s physical and socio-political evolution—through consultation of sources such as archives, books, periodicals, historic photographs, and experts in the area like historians or academics—leads to an understanding of the current conditions of the place. This provides support for engaging with the community because team members can approach people with an understanding of their culture. In addition, a historic background can reveal crucial information about a site’s heritage, and helps situate this heritage as a product of the past in the present.

- Researching Future Plans: Researching policy, government plans, development plans, and contacting politicians and developers is beneficial in understanding what role heritage could (or is planned to) play in the future, and how the community is involved (or not) in decision-making at the site. This is not only important for Jordán, a town facing imminent change through development projects, but for any project that seeks to assess the value of heritage in planning for the future.

Preparatory Fieldwork

- Recruiting a Team: A multidisciplinary team proved to be essential for developing and implementing the installation in Jordán Sube. The whole strategy is grounded on preservation, but draws from the fields of anthropology, art, and design; and depending on each individual installation, other experts may need to be involved. Preservationists should be team leaders and should be familiar with ethnographic tools and design principles, but some degree of consultation from professionals in these other fields should be pursued in the different phases of this process. This method encourages the cooperation between different viewpoints as a response to the diversity that a values-centered approach to preservation implies. Moreover, the collective character of the method benefits from diversity in backgrounds and knowledge.

- Exploring the region: Contextualizing heritage is crucial if the goal is to understand its role in its physical, socio-political, ecological, and historical environment. An understanding of the region, through research, analogous cases studies, and regional site visits, is an important first step in unearthing the past, present, and possible futures of a specific heritage site. In this step, including a team member who is familiar with the region can be of great help by guiding a regional tour, and providing a rich insight into local customs.

- Approaching the Community: The first approach to the community is essential for building trust and creating a relationship that allows for the successful implementation of the installation. Having an insider introduce the team to local community members could be beneficial since it could mean entering the site with a pre-established reputation. However, if that is not possible (as was the case in Jordán), a gradual approach that enables the team to understand the town’s culture and sensitivities is key to creating this reputation. Building trust through establishing a relationship with the community based on respect, responsibility, and honesty should be the main goal in approaching the site for the first time. This first interaction is a way to assess the response of a certain culture to outsiders and to community engagement projects.

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1. This poses challenges for the implementation of the method, both in economic and practical terms, but current training does not prepare heritage professionals to address some of the issues that may arise in community engagement through an installation.
2. For a reference on ethics in community engagement see IDEO’s Little Book on Design Research Ethics.
Approaching the Community in Jordán: The project in Jordán benefited from making this first approach a personal one in which casual conversations were used as the primary tool for engagement. Videorecording, voice-recordings, note-taking, and photographs were limited in order to generate uninterrupted communication that was not intimidating due to its formality. Moreover, the use of photographs to share team-members’ personal experiences proved to be very successful in creating a personal connection that fostered conversation.

In other cases, this same approach might not be possible or pertinent, and therefore, the background research should try to shed light on possible ways to approach the community for the first time. Some cases may call for a more professional and distant approach, rather than a personal and close one. Each case is different, and cultures and individuals respond differently to outsiders. The first approach to the community should be about understanding the particularities of the case in order to develop a strategy on which to build trust and interaction.

- Approaching the Site: Besides initiating a relationship with the community, the first site visit is also an introduction to the site itself. An understanding of how the place functions on a daily basis is central to discovering the role of heritage in people’s lives and its position in the built environment. To some extent, this introduction should aim for a general assessment of the site in the present. A general appraisal of existing facilities, building conditions, social patterns and relationships, political structures, etc., should lead to a basic understanding of the site’s dynamics that will inform subsequent steps in the project. This information should be documented through maps, photographs, and/or notes that can be consulted throughout the development and implementation of the installation.

- Creating Strategic Contacts: One of the most important outcomes of a first site visit should be the establishment of relationships with insiders in the community. It is crucial to have people on the other side who understand the project and are somewhat committed to its success. They can vouch for its validity in front of the rest of the community, and they can help provide information on the ground while the team is not present. Although many projects start with some sort of local contact (though the project in Jordán did not), this first site visit serves to identify those individuals who can be helpful during the development and implementation of the installation. Politicians and community leaders (the latter don’t necessarily have to be officially designated as such, but are sometimes regular individuals that have some sort of leadership role in the community) can be of great assistance during the project, some of them being absolutely essential for the project’s implementation.

- Gathering Community Information: As mentioned in Chapter Four: Fieldwork, before the implementation of the installation in Jordán, methods for gathering information from the community were tested (interviews, mapping, ‘photo sort’, etc.). This was done in order to develop the Installation Method as a concept. This is therefore not a crucial step before executing the installation because the installation in itself is intended to gather information from the community. However, it can be useful to gather some more information from the community after the aforementioned general introduction and before the installation design. This can help target the installation towards more meaningful issues. The greater the amount of information before creating the installation, the more profound and thorough the installation will be. This can also serve to test the response of the community to interviews, images, maps, interaction, etc. and consequently guide the design of the installation.
Verifying the Design: During the project in Jordán, one last site visit before the implementation of the installation was not stipulated and had to be organized last-minute. It proved to be crucial to visit the site after the installation had been designed in order to verify its feasibility. This site visit included taking detailed measurements, conducting an assessment of specific site conditions, filling out permission paperwork, and checking the availability of local materials. This is an essential step in the process to ensure that the implementation of the installation does not face any preventable setbacks.

II. DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

The findings and analysis of the preparatory fieldwork and background research should be the basis on which the installation is designed. The following steps correspond to the actions that follow these findings and that lead to the design and implementation of an installation. These guidelines are structured after the installation process in Jordán, so they don’t necessarily apply to all cases, but can serve as a way to organize the development of the method in different sites.

Conceptual Approach

- Stating a Purpose: In the first place, the preparatory fieldwork and research should reveal the problems or issues in the heritage site that the Installation Method will address. In some cases, these issues might be identified prior to the preliminary work (they might be the reason why the method is put to use), but, in any case, these findings should be used to clearly state the objective of the installation.

  Jordán Installation Purpose: Uncover the values that the community attributes to its heritage in the face of change, and shed a light on the role of the past in the present and the future, as seen through the eyes of the town’s inhabitants. (See Chapter Five: Design and Implementation)

- Finding a Specific Focus: After identifying the issues that the installation will address and stating the installation’s purpose, the case should be narrowed in order to assure that it can be implemented and fully accomplish its purpose. This might include selecting a specific space within the heritage site, or addressing only a specific section of the population. This step should constrain the project’s goals so that they can actually be achieved.

  Jordán Installation Specific Focus: By focusing on the ‘plazuela’, which physically and symbolically represents the most pressing issues that the town’s heritage is facing right now, the installation intended to understand the general perceptions that Jordán’s inhabitants have of their heritage. (See Chapter Five: Design and Implementation)

- Developing a Strategy: As mentioned in Chapter Two: Method Development, the potential of using an installation lies in the temporal, spatial, and personal relations that this art form can generate. Therefore, a strategy that fully uses a temporal, spatial and personal approach will most effectively benefit from the Installation Method.

  Jordán Installation Strategy: Reconstruction (spatial) as a mnemonic trigger (personal) that unveils past, present, and future values of heritage (temporal). (See Chapter Five: Design and Implementation)

Material and Ethnographic Design

- Designing the installation: The Installation Method has both a material component and an ethnographic component. These should not be designed independently; the material design should inform and en-
hance the interaction and vice versa. The following steps are meant to be addressed simultaneously and cohesively and therefore are organized in a non-sequential order. They correspond to the considerations that were important during the installation in Jordán, and aim to explain how each of the components of the installation was designed for a specific purpose that informed the greater goal of the project. Since only one case-study was developed during this project, only one strategy was explored. Therefore, the following steps are constrained by this strategy and, for the most part, relate to projects that would deal with similar approaches to the one implemented in Jordán.3

Reconstructing Through an Installation: Choosing what to reconstruct and how, is a crucial design step because it defines the way in which the temporal and spatial qualities of the installation are communicated to the community. Besides addressing the general objective of the installation, the detailing of the reconstruction should consider certain specific issues. In the first place, the design of the reconstruction should respond to the particular physical issues that the installation intends to address. It might be the volumetric character of a building, its ornament, or (as was the case in Jordán) its spatial role in the urban fabric.

In Jordán, the choice of reconstructing only the corner of the building that made up the ‘plazuela’ proved to be successful in focusing the attention of the community on the public space and not on the building or the installation itself. This detail reinforced the objective of the installation, and focused the interaction with the community towards the established goals. (See Chapter Five: Design and Implementation)

In the second place, the way in which the reconstruction is done should also be sensitive to the message that is being conveyed. The materiality and detailing of the reconstruction should be effective in transmitting this message. The installation should be seen as a communication tool, not as an end in itself.

In Jordán the abstract/minimalistic character of the reconstruction of the demolished building had its strengths and weaknesses. For some people it was clear that the space was being brought back, and the fabric triggered conversations on the jail and the ‘plazuela’, and at the same time the object itself was appreciated as an interesting aesthetic intervention. However, for some others, this non-literal representation did not make it clear that the white fabric was an interpretation of the demolished building, and until this was explained, it generated some confusion.

In the third place, the reconstruction of a space should also be used as an opportunity to physically test spatial ideas that cannot otherwise be experienced first hand. The notion of reconstruction implies that something is gone, and therefore, bringing it back might confirm theories about the space, and might reveal other spatial characteristics that had not been considered. The installation can be a way to test these spatial ideas as an “expert experiment”, but also as a way to get community reactions to them.

In the case of Jordán, reconstructing the space of the ‘plazuela’ confirmed the spatial qualities of this space that had been inferred from drawings and historic photographs. Moreover, gathering the community in this space in an event made participants also realize the socialization potential that the space used to have.

3. Further exploration of different strategies is crucial for the refinement of the method. Although the possibilities are infinite and respond to each case in particular, a set of possible strategies, as a methodological approach, that states different ways in which an installation can address community engagement in historic preservation, would be of great use for implementing the method in diverse cases.
Physically Delimiting the Space: The installation design should respond to the narrowed scope mentioned in earlier steps. Since the installation is intended to address a specific space, its material design should emphasize this by making clear/marking/delimiting the physical area that is being addressed.

In Jordán, the lanterns around the perimeter of the ‘plazuela’ were successful in informing people where to gather, and in guiding and focusing conversations towards that space. (See Chapter Five: Design and Implementation)

Fostering Interaction with the Installation: Since the aim of the Installation Method is to encourage communication through the use of space, the design should incentivize people to move, use, and interact, with the space. Sometimes asking people to do this is not enough, and further incentives can promote this. Making the installation physically interactive can ensure that this happens.

In Jordán, asking people to move the lanterns around was crucial for encouraging participants to experience the space. However, lanterns were moved only once, at the beginning of the conversation, and as interviews were carried out and conversation topics moved from one place to the next, the participants did not always transfer the lanterns to the place they were discussing, and the power of using space for communication was somewhat lost. Further thought on how the interaction could have been continued throughout the conversation would have benefited the interviews.

Reciprocity: The Installation Method intends to gather information from the community. In a way, it asks for something from people. Although the end goal of the installation is to benefit the community by integrating their perceptions of heritage in the assessment of significance, in the moment of the implementation this might not seem evident. Making the installation an exchange in which the participants are supplying information but are also receiving something in return can be a successful strategy in generating engagement. This by no means implies that the participants should be materially compensated, but a symbolic exchange can go a long way in expressing the importance of their participation in the project, and in sharing parts of the research with the community. This exchange should further encourage the relationship of people and the heritage site, and should set the tone for the purpose of the installation.
In Jordán, an exchange with community members was implemented in two different situations. A booklet was given as a gift to the people who had been involved in the implementation of the installation (one of these was also given to the municipal library for public consultation). The booklet contained all of the historic images found during the research phase of the project. It intended to share some of the most important information that the research had revealed. The other instance was during the installation itself, when participants were given the lamp they chose to move as a gift. The historic poster that the lamps contained was the main focus of the gift. This also intended to share some of the findings of the project. Making posters out of historic photographs of Jordán also aimed at raising awareness of the town’s heritage and making its inhabitants proud of their town.4

- Planning the Engagement: The ethnographic component of the installation should be planned simultaneously with the material design, and should be fully integrated into the physical components of the installation.5 An adequate ethnographic tool should be chosen to gather information from the community, and all the practicalities that this involves should be planned for in advance, taking into consideration who will participate, how will they be invited, when, and for how long.

In Jordán, individual interviews were conducted on one evening during an event. This proved to be interesting because the community gathering fostered communal thinking and chatting around heritage. In a way, it generated consensus on the importance of heritage, just by the fact that so many people were gathered at an event intended to celebrate this heritage. This celebratory nature of the intervention design intended to show Jordán’s inhabitants their town in a different way. It meant to raise awareness of the value of their heritage and to generate pride among the community.6 This gathering successfully began a conversation about heritage among Jordán’s residents that was somewhat independent of ‘expert’ guidance.7 The photo projection played an important role in generating this conversation, as it was a trigger that guided communication among the participants towards the town’s physical history. Organizing the interaction around an event was also effective in dealing with time constraints: many people were interviewed and many more got to experience the installation. However, gathering information during the event also proved to be complicated. Firstly, the different age groups and backgrounds of the people that attended made it difficult to tackle the diversity of people present. For example, interaction with children was not anticipated, and therefore, their input was not gathered. Also, being in a public gathering sometimes made interviewees feel uncomfortable: in a way, they felt, “selected” among the crowd, which in some cases resulted in shyness and reticence.

- Designing the Interaction: Beyond the logistics of the interaction, communication with the community should also be carefully planned. This communication should follow the ethnographic tool chosen for the installation (interviews, focus groups, meetings, etc.). The design of the tool should state the goal of the interaction, specify the means by which this goal will be achieved, give the practical details that it entails (duration, location, etc.), and stipulate the way in which the interaction will relate to the material components of the installation. Some important considerations in this step are: how the project will

4. Measuring the success of these goals (raising awareness and pride) was out of the scope of this project. However, the effect that the installation might have had in these respects can certainly be interesting for further research on the benefits of the Installation Method.
5. This thesis suggests communication between experts and the community as a means to gather information, but further modes of interaction through installations could also be explored.
6. The success of the installation in raising awareness and generating pride was not the measured in this project. These consequences can only be assessed some time after the installation was implemented, in order to determine if it indeed generate lasting and meaningful effects.
7. A very interesting follow-up to the installation in Jordán would be to assess weather there has been any continuation to this conversation.
be introduced during this interaction, the nature of the communication (casual conversations, formal interviews, oral histories, etc.), what crucial themes should be addressed or avoided, and how the space will be used to inform communication. A practical way to synthesize this is through a guide that contains the objective, the strategy, and the procedure of the tool (See Chapter Five: Design and Implementation). This will ensure that the data gathered can be compared and analyzed after the installation is implemented. The personal nature of this interaction should be taken into account when designing this part of the installation. In the end, a community engagement project is only as good as the relationships established between team members and the community, and although there are tools to help foster this relationship (this method being one of them), the project is always subject to and reliant on each team member’s ability to empathize.

In Jordán, the guide created for the interviewers provided a general framework on which all interviews were structured. This ensured that all interviews addressed similar issues, targeted similar goals, and related to the material installation in the same way, regardless of the interviewer and interviewee. This facilitated a subsequent analysis of the information gathered. However, the diversity of people interviewed and the interviewers’ different backgrounds and personalities were reflected in the information gathered. Fortunately, all team members in Jordán were successful in engaging with the community. Furthermore, the diversity of the team led to many different points of view and a great variety in the findings. For example: Ana María Garrido, with a background in anthropology and biology, collected interviews that were rich in information regarding past and present agricultural practices in Jordán. Angela Jimenez, with an expertise in crafts in the region, gathered very detailed descriptions on the fabrication of artisanal products.

III. NEXT STEPS

The guidelines listed above represent a summary of all the different elements that were considered for implementing the Installation Method in Jordán, describing how they contributed to the broader goal of assessing local values. They constitute an effort to structure further exploration on how space can be used to foster interaction between heritage experts and the local community. Each individual step is founded on existing tools that are applied in different fields and have been thoroughly and independently developed though the years. This thesis intends to coalesce all these tools into cohesive guidelines that target the preservation field specifically, drawing from the advantages offered by the approaches of other disciplines.

The experiment in Jordán also sought to re-examine the role of the preservationist in the process of heritage decision-making. Although the project is very clearly a preservation project, it exposed a lack of skills within the preservation profession for engaging with communities. It is understood that heritage is preserved for the good of the people, and that the relationship that heritage establishes with individuals and communities is one of its greatest assets. Then why aren’t preservationists more thoroughly trained in understanding these relationships? Limited capacity-building and training in this area could account, in part, for the absence of community engagement in the preservation field. People are an integral part of heritage. Preservationists should embrace the challenge of engaging with them directly in their work, rather than of assuming it lies in the scope of other fields.

The Installation Method proposed only addresses a first step in incorporating the community in preservation projects. It provides a way in which to assess the values that a community ascribes to its heritage. These values give an insight into the relationship that people have with the built environment, and provide infor-
formation on their wants and needs. But for these values to make a difference in the future of heritage, further research on the use of this information must be conducted. Values are understood to inform a site’s statement of significance. This statement, in turn, guides decision-making in the future of the site: policy. However, in the simple translation of significance to management policy, there may be community values—and opportunities—that are lost. Historic preservation’s impact through policy, although evident and considerable, proves to be limited to buildings, objects, and sites themselves, and might not be the most appropriate approach to address issues of social identity, lifestyle, and traditions. These intangible aspects of heritage, closely related to living culture, established communities, and ways of life, might benefit from a relatable, personal, and inclusive approach for which the heritage community has yet to develop adequate tools. In any case, there is an urgent need for different ways of incorporating values into heritage projects—not limited to the formulation of a statement of significance—that permeate the entire process of preservation planning, conservation, and intervention.

Furthermore, this thesis addresses only the values assessment stage of a preservation project, but the Installation Method could be applied to other steps in the process. Its benefit lies in its ability to help build relationships with the community through heritage. This proposal focused on the relationship between preservation experts and the community, but perhaps it has the potential to strengthen the relationship between the community and its heritage, to improve the involvement of the community in decision-making, to empower the community to take action on their heritage, to initiate a long lasting conversation on the importance of culture and architecture. Beyond gathering information on the perceptions and values that explain the relationship of people with their heritage, this approach could be used to enhance this relationship by incorporating it into different phases of heritage planning. This thesis demonstrated that the Installation Method reveals the personal connection of people and buildings. The challenge lies in preserving this connection—this social fabric—as a means of preserving built fabric. In the understanding of how buildings are built, used, needed, maintained, and appreciated lies the stewardship that ensures their long-term survival and future relevance. The next step for the Installation Method should be to strengthen these relationships: “in this next stage, the fragile fabric walls set up in Jordán could acquire the dimension of the tapia, and the ancestral knowledge of this construction technique could shape the lost building. Then, the community would understand that heritage is not only a nostalgic past, but also a future that lies, literally, in their hands.”

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