

Cold War Space: Images, Territories, and Infrastructures

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Architecture

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How can one write an architectural history of a place where the Cold War has never ended? In what ways can architecture's visual techniques and analytics be operationalized to understand the scalar dynamics of a war that is "cold in some spots and not so cold in others"? What can one learn from studying the infrastructures of warfare through the lens of architecture?

"Cold War Space" is an ongoing research project that seeks answers to these questions via two major dimensions of inquiry and analysis:

1) The archival dimension refers to Seçil Binboğa's book project in which she examines the United States-sponsored "war-by-development" in the Middle Eastern/Mediterranean regions, specifically in Turkey—a nation-state that welcomed the war-by-development as a means of resolving and displacing its internal political contradictions. Drawing on the national and local archives in the U.S. and Turkey, the researcher analyzes the visibility of American military-industrial design projects that radically altered the relations between nature, space, and territory.

2) The pedagogic dimension refers to a seminar taught in the Fall of 2023, which offered multi-scalar case studies on the global Cold War, including mushroom clouds, do-it-yourself shelters, space capsules, and nuclear landscapes. As a final project, students created photo- and video essays, some of which, as the projects of Gina Hurtado and Fran Di Caprio illustrate in this exhibit, uncovered the legacy of the global Cold War that still shapes contemporary forms of spatial violence.

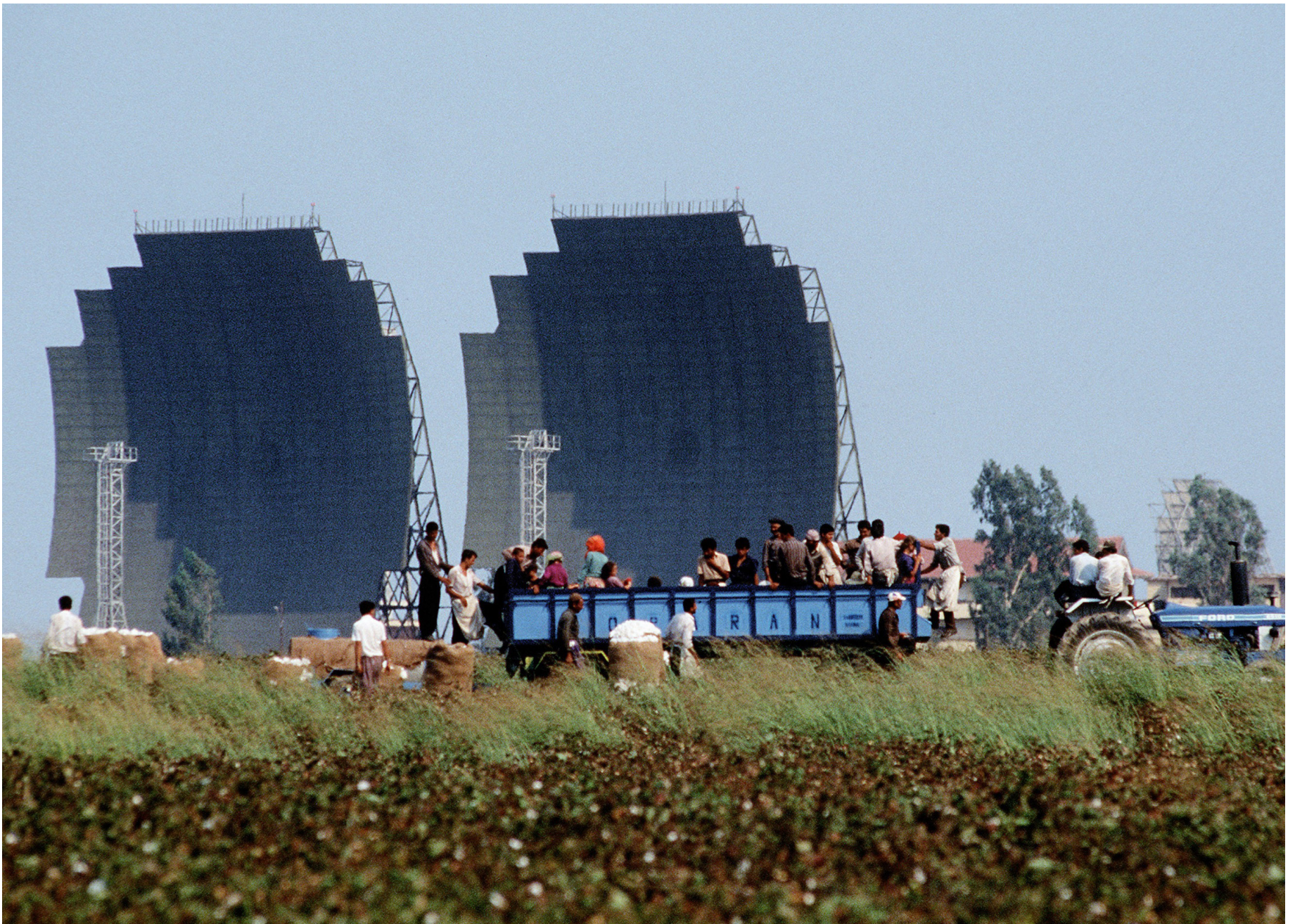


Figure 1: Agricultural workers picking cotton in a field near the tropospheric antennas at a communications facility run by one of the U.S. Air Force communications squadrons (8/22/1989), Karataş, Turkey, by Scene Camera Operator, SSGT F. Lee Corkran. Electronic Record; RG 330: Records of the Office of the Secretary of Defense, 1921 - 2008 Series: Combined Military Service Digital Photographic Files, 1982 - 2007; National Archives (NARA) at College Park, Washington DC, United States.

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 MW 11:15 AM – 12.30 PM
 Office hours MW 1-2 PM: Courtyard

COLD WAR SPACE **LANDSCAPES, IMAGES, TECHNOLITICS**



"Calamity came from the air on a sweet afternoon in Lincolnshire, Britain." *Yerli Adana*-January 25, 1957—National Library Newspaper Collections, Turkey.

The Cold War is over. Yet as historian Rashid Khalidi contends, "its tragic sequels, its toxic debris, and its unexploded mines [continue] to cause great harm, in ways largely unrecognized in American public discourse."¹ Notwithstanding that filmmaker Christopher Nolan's recent intervention, *Oppenheimer* (2023) offers a popular recap of the breaking point that inaugurated a series of not-so-cold wars, the question remains: What counts as the architecture of the global Cold War? To answer this question, our seminar will explore the changing paradigms of "space" during the Cold War era. We will draw on a wide variety of media to conduct a historical study of the complex relations between technologies, territories, and infrastructures—that all together contributed to the design process of what we will term "Cold War space."² Our cases include but are not limited to mushroom clouds, do-it-yourself shelters, space capsules, atomic cities, protest graphics, and examples of Cold War Cinema.

¹ Rashid Khalidi, *Sowing Crisis: The Cold War and American Dominance in the Middle East* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2009) 34-35.

² The course title is borrowed from ARCH 823: *Cold War Space, Doctoral Area Seminar in History and Theory*, taught by Professor Will Glover at the University of Michigan in Winter 2015. The discussions that I had a chance to participate in that seminar inspired the design of this seminar.

Figure 2: ARCH 4410/5410-course flyer: "Cold War Space: Landscapes, Images, Technopolitics" Fall 2023.



Figure 3: Operation "Weldfast": A British naval aircraft here takes off on anti-submarine patrol defense of convoys in the N.A.T.O. Exercise WELDFAST under the direction of Greek Vice-Admiral Lappas, R.H.N., who is conducting naval and air operations in the East Mediterranean zone on behalf of the Commander-in-Chief, Allied Forces Mediterranean-Admiral Earl Mountbatten, K.G. (10/8/1953), Southern Turkish Thrace, Dardanelles. RG 286-MP, Marshall Plan Programs, Exhibits, Personnel (1948-1967), NARA at College Park, Washington DC, United States.



Figure 4: A tank on exercise in Turkey for CINCSOUTH [Commander-in-Chief, Allied Forces Southern Europe] exhibit. (6/17/1954). RG 286-MP, Marshall Plan Programs, Exhibits, Personnel (1948-1967), NARA at College Park, Washington DC, United States.



Figure 5: "Shadows of Strife: Fear and the Palestinian Predicament." A collage created by Gina Hurtado as part of her final video essay submitted to ARCH 4410/5410: Cold War Space, Fall 2023.



Figure 6: "Israel has signed but not ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty. Israel is generally understood to have become a nuclear power in the 1960s, despite a history of deliberate ambiguity as to its nuclear capacity. Israel's Heritage Minister Amihai Eliyahu suggested on a radio interview the possibility of a nuclear strike in Gaza, though he called his comment 'metaphorical' after global condemnation." A snapshot from Fran Di Caprio's final photo essay, entitled "Caught in a Loop: Understanding the Legacy of 90s' Disarmament Politics," submitted to ARCH 4410/5410: Cold War Space, Fall 2023.