

# Drawing and Performing Exploration in Ruin Site

Şebnem Çakaloğulları

## Abstract

*Concept of ruin is changed today. Building mass becomes a tool for terrorization of the body, it is a structure for the community's memory, and building becomes a place where working as witness is revelatory. The representation of ruin has an important role which not only presents various unity between subject and mass but also creates non-contextualized dialog in which all subjects and their relation with the site is drawing various abstract presentations of the environment. This paper is based on the concept of ruin which comes to architectural design practice in history. The aim of this paper is to meet our ancestral colleague today's experiment of ruin and ruining site at first find a contemporary model and perspective to evaluate this areal research. Drawing is not an analytic tool; drawing becomes a tool to progress the investigation on site what is not given by space in the moment. Drawing ruins offers special interaction with the 21st century where the world of crises becomes a chance to change the dynamic of life in terms of culture and aesthetics. As a result, what drawing ruins teaches us, as it did help with its sacred inspiration about form animation of architects, expands the form to use as a key in tying moments for developing alternatives of experiment in actual time. Drawing is a creation of an actual miracle against physical limits which is an experience kind of a censure.*

*Keywords: ruin, operation, time, aesthetic, Avant-garde.*

## Introduction

Defiguration, with its everyday aesthetic, encompasses more than just a practice of form and color; it serves as a repository of memories, a visual archive rich with data. This visual data engages our senses and triggers recollections of the past, leading us on an enduring journey through the landscapes of both external places and inner thoughts. Every day, we encounter the interplay of body and space, and within these experiences, we find the essence of memories that never truly fade. However, these memories also confront the harsh reality of decay, prompting us to question why certain buildings succumb to ruin over time. The concept of 'ruin' establishes a unique relationship with defiguration, a hybrid of textual and imagery elements. It offers insights into the structural capacity of these decaying

structures while intertwining with the collective memories of those who engage with them. Together, these facets merge to create a timeless interaction, forming a collective experience beyond the boundaries of time. It's in the nostalgic conversations of the elderly, speaking of unreachable places from the past, that a mythic topography comes to life. Each person's perspective introduces a different era, yet the amalgamation of these accounts crafts a seamless and romantic dialogue, bringing forth the essence of the past in the present.

This research delves into the organizational capacity of dealing with ruin, exploring how ancient practices of drawing reveal the intricate connections between ruin, political realities, and practical considerations that significantly influence



spatial thinking and design. Ruin, both as a concept and as a subject in drawings, becomes a vital source for architectural pedagogy. The initial focus of this study is on defining what ruin represents in contemporary times. Additionally, it extensively examines the portrayal of ruin through drawings within the context of contemporary concepts. This drawing practice extends beyond the boundaries of architecture and converges with other disciplines and functions, establishing meaningful relationships. One pivotal aspect that binds the contemporary concept of ruin with various epistemologies of representation is the notion of viewing ruin as an ontological concept of existence. This perspective is notably influenced by the insights of Timothy Morton, which have had a profound impact on the researcher's thinking about ruin. By elucidating the multifaceted connections between ruin, drawing, and various contemporary perspectives, this research seeks to provide a deeper understanding of how architectural pedagogy can be enriched through the exploration of ruins as a significant and evocative theme.

Philosophy and art hold the potential to unlock solutions for various paradoxes. Timothy Morton's perspective challenges the conventional definition of ruins, which is often limited to mere physical structures. Instead, he perceives ruins as complex, integrated webs of relations that beckon us to explore their depths. This immersive and close experience goes beyond the confines of contemporary spatio-temporal concepts, fostering deeper interactions [Morton 2016]. Moreover, ontologically, everything is interconnected and forms an intricate assemblage, a concept Thomas Nail explores in his experiments with assembled unity. Applying this perspective allows for a comprehensive evaluation of this paper's interactions with ruins [Nail 2017]. Form undoubtedly plays a significant role, but it transcends mere aesthetics; it possesses its own memory.

Researchers in the field of dark ecological creation, studying complex relations in ruins collectively, showcase how spatial representation tools extend beyond creating visual qualities. These tools reveal the entangled data areas that create an entirely new level of landscape, akin to a ghostly code that enriches our visual interactions [1] [Tsybulnyk, Parvulesco 2019]. By combining philosophical insights with artistic expressions and embracing the complexity of ruins, we gain deeper understanding and appreciation of their profound impact on our perception of space and memory. "Absence is often mistaken for nothingness, non-existence, not-there-ness. It is none of those things. It is physical and

palpable, as real as anything felt with the hands and skin, with the added sensation of longing or pain. The attached emotion is the only difference between absence and presence, and so the un-involved is unaware of its existence. Sometimes, rarely, we catch a glimpse of absence through a special lens, even when we are not linked to the emotional tie. In these pictures we are made part of the secret and the feeling, and will see and feel the absence as surely as though we were there when it became" [Strasheim 2009].

### Contemporary concept of ruin

The definition of ruin in today's context has evolved to encompass various aspects. No longer considered solely a sublime entity, it now represents a concept of space within the early risk society, reflecting the modern world's complexities. Ruin is no longer limited to physical structures; it has transformed into a symbol of fatal decisions and the consequences of human actions on the environment. Nature itself can be seen as a form of ruin, revealing the dark side of technology and its detrimental effects on the Earth. Ruination, as a process of fatality, has become a focal point in understanding the contemporary nature of ruins. The impact of this fatality extends beyond buildings and architectural elements; it encompasses nature's resources, the accumulation of waste and debris, the loss of greenery areas, and the destruction caused by human activity. This complex interplay creates a dark ecology that continually generates new forms of ruin. In the contemporary perspective, ruins no longer stand in isolation; they are interconnected and embedded within small systemic relations. Everything is linked to everything else, forming a holistic vision of interrelatedness. This profound interconnectedness emphasizes the intricate web of consequences that arise from our actions, prompting us to confront the profound implications of ruination in the modern world.

Koolhaas, encompassing the accumulation of all the fatal memories of space, gives architectural representation in a different direction. What he was mentioning was the different set of tools for operating the relation within the living environment. He is called "junkspace". Junkspace revives the censored relation of design through the representation of architectural space as 'junk' [Koolhaas 2002]. This experimental approach delves into the visuality of space, transcending traditional written structures and embracing the visual consequences of tragic events. To see architecture as

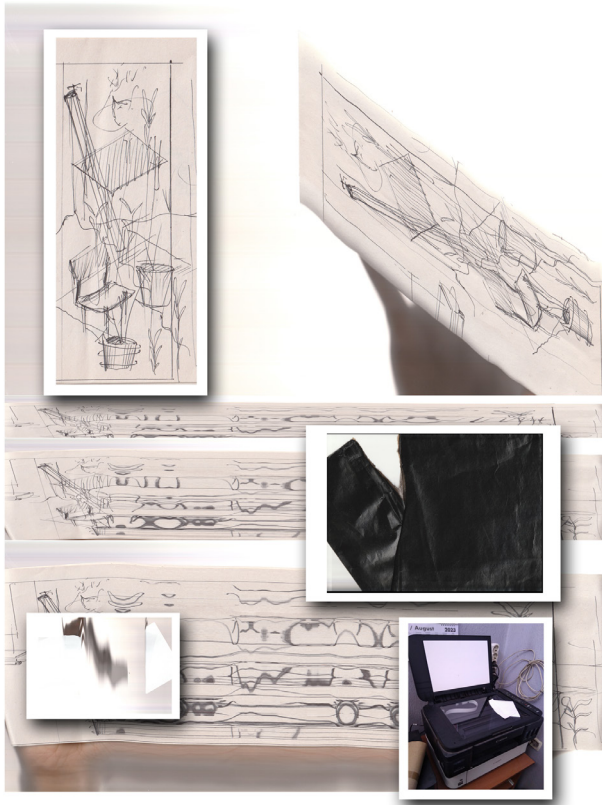


Fig. 2. 'Line' as an investigator. Experiment on scanner (graphic elaboration by the author).

a crisis actor is a potent tool, offering an alternative path towards transformation. It not only advances critical ideas but also challenges the established architectural norms through unexpected events. This operative tool transcends conventional methods via imagery and memory of a space and goes deeper into the profound impact of spatial experiences.

Ruin seeks to understand how these memories shape the built environment and influence human perception. In this context, the focus shifts from the mere description of tragic events to a deeper exploration of their visual implications. Through this unique perspective, modern architecture gains valuable insights, allowing designers and architects to create spaces that evoke meaningful emotions and resonate with the human experience on a more profound level. By incorporating the visual and emotional dimensions of space, this operating tool paves the way for more thoughtful and evocative architectural designs.

Textual representation holds the power to evoke visual operations, particularly when intertwined with the concept of fatality. Architecture's fatal images find their initial expression through representations of ruin and ruination, which in turn offer unique reflections of human consciousness within the built environment. Drawing ruins becomes a transformative operation, akin to a surgical process, unearthing the remnants of criminal events embedded within these architectural relics. In this context, drawing serves a purpose beyond mere artistic expression; it becomes a medium to unravel the mysteries of the past, to confront the consequences of human actions, and to explore the complexities of history. The act of drawing itself evolves alongside these aims, as the technology of drawing adapts to meet the changing demands of representing architectural concepts. No longer confined to the sole goal of designing architecture, drawing now becomes a vehicle for investigating the underlying narratives of the built environment. It becomes a powerful tool for unveiling the layers of meaning and emotion embedded within ruins, offering us profound insights into the interconnectedness between human actions, architecture, and the passage of time. Through this evolved perspective on drawing, we unlock new dimensions of understanding and appreciation for the haunting allure of ruins and their lasting impact on our collective consciousness.

The technology of drawing has evolved and developed through the process of events scene proof-making. This evolution highlights the crucial role of drawing in connecting



time, allowing us to comprehend and unravel the significance of fatal events. Drawing serves as a means of proof, capturing and preserving the essence of these events. Ruined areas become archaeological sites, enabling investigations into past events whose memories lie concealed beneath the surface of the present. It is an aesthetic practice of archaeology, where the event scene itself becomes the storyteller, surpassing the accounts of mere witnesses, objects, and subjects. Through this approach, drawing transcends its traditional role and becomes a powerful medium for unearthing the essence of events, bringing them to life in our understanding and perception.

The formula of creative relation unfolds in the exploration of drawing's diverse objectives, particularly when it intersects with ruined spaces. It prompts us to contemplate the varied possibilities and goals that drawing can fulfill. In this context, drawing becomes a potent tool for investigating the research area that revolves around ruined spaces. The concept of ruin, stemming from fatal events with profound impacts on life, intertwines with the experimental aspect of defigured complex shapes. This exploration of fatal events also delves into the dimension of time, enabling the creation of a compelling concept for visual continuity within living spaces. Drawing, in this creative formula, transcends its traditional role, becoming a conduit for understanding, remembrance, and storytelling, while also serving as a bridge connecting the past and present, unveiling the significance of ruin in shaping our lived experiences within the built environment.

### Concept of drawing ruin

Accustomed to the world of walls, we have suddenly been hit by a brick. The crack edges, shattered mortar, scattered fragments, and shaken alignments offer much to examine. Simplicity of substance explodes into variety of presentation [Ginsberg 2021].

Recording is not only a part of the order but also a medium that establishes connections with the marginal aspects [Canguilhem 2012]. Serving as a tool to establish different scale relationships, recording, in the words of historian Marc Bloch and further clarified by Weizman, involves the interplay between micro and macro determinations, both close and distant to each other. This interconnectedness generates multiple perspectives within the field of architecture, significantly influencing it in a broader sense.



Fig. 3. 'Line' as an investigator. Experiment on scanner (graphic elaboration by the author).



## Architecture of ruin: Ruin as hyperobject

Ruin has become a critical term in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, significantly defining the architecture of the modern world. Arata Isozaki, in his exploration of incubation, sheds light on how memory becomes an experiment within architecture, transforming built structures into potential future ruins [Isozaki 2004]. In the realm of modern radical architecture, ruin transcends the present; it represents the essence of life within the building, a repository of modern space's memories and a witness to the passage of time. Mc Murrough's intriguing analogy of ruin as an alien or zombie further highlights that it is not the end of the construction cycle but rather a place where memory incubates, resulting in a modern architecture that appears lifeless and consumed by consumerism. This fusion of odd, alien, and zombie-like imagery demonstrates that ruin expands far beyond being a mere product of modernity; it opens up a limitless realm of possibilities, where the past intertwines with the present and the potential futures of architecture converge in an evocative, enigmatic dance.

In Ruskin's illustrations, the focus lies on how the passage of time affects a building's physiognomy, with ruins often depicted as characteristic signs of aging [Muñoz-Vera 2012]. However, Morton introduces a more contemporary notion of aging, emphasizing the consciousness embedded within the stain of time. These marks of aging are no longer regarded as mere fantasy forms; they hold significant implications for the architectural consciousness of space. According to Morton, if the stain of time is a pivotal aspect of the built environment, then our bodies exist amidst entirely timeless spaces, concealing these stains beneath their surfaces [Morton 2013]. Morton's perspective on the contemporary concept of ruin shifts the focus to the political aspect of space. By connecting Ruskin's concept of ruin, centered around the stain of time, with Morton's ideas, we are prompted to explore alternative forms of environmental perception. This amalgamation of viewpoints enriches our understanding of the entwined relationship between architecture, time, and politics, opening new dimensions for architectural thought and expression.

In architecture, McMurrough delves into the concept of ruin, which extends beyond the mere biological aspects of the body. Instead, it embodies a grotesque and uncanny form, encapsulating the memory of the body while remaining detached from biological explanations [McMorrough 2008]. Through the fusion of fiction, materiality, and the remembrance of dire consequences, the architectural image of ruin takes shape. This peculiar relationship, akin to that of



Fig. 5. Print house work experiment about image and imaginary space (graphic elaboration by the author).

a zombie, challenges the conventional belief in cyclic time, where buildings perish and rise again. Instead, it introduces a linear process that signifies architectural space not as aesthetically superior to failure, but rather as an exploration of profound complexities. By embracing the essence of ruin, architects have the opportunity to transcend traditional boundaries and craft spaces that honor the enduring dialogue between decay and creation.

Ruin is undergoing a transformation, evolving from a mere symbol of failure to the addition of banal and non-functional ruinous structures. The terminology used to describe ruins has shifted in modern times, giving way to terms such as 'mutant', 'viral', 'creature' and 'blob'. McMorrough introduces the concept of the 'zombie' in this context, as it embodies the collective desire of the new terminology to infuse vitality and animation into the inanimate. This yearning for animating the non-living represents a departure from objectification, providing an alternative perspective that embraces the liveliness of animation [McMorrough 2008]. This profound inclination towards bringing life to the lifeless blurs the boundaries between the animate and inanimate, offering architects a unique opportunity to explore spaces that exude an enigmatic and alluring essence in their very existence.

The concept of a hyperobject as a ruin intertwines life and death, offering a profound connection that contemporary philosophy and architecture are exploring. This research delves into the unique relationship between ruin and consciousness, expanding the very notion of ruin as an experimental entity with logic and awareness. In the realm of modern architecture, the act of drawing ruins provides a glimpse into the hidden facets beyond our perception, revealing a stage obscured from our immediate senses. As ruin and bodies converge, they leave behind a transformed perception of motion, imprinting a trace of reality that lingers as a testament to their entangled existence. This exploration of hyperobjects as ruins propels us to reconsider the boundaries of life, death, and consciousness, offering a captivating and thought-provoking journey into the depths of architectural expression and human experience.

### Drawing ruin as

Simmel illustrates the concept of ruin by exploring the interplay of force, form, area, and motion in life [Simmel 1958]. This realization prompts us to understand that the ruin itself is a representation of representations, signifying

a novel perspective on the surrounding environment [McMorrough 2008]. Through narration and memory, as well as sensual perception, ruins depict a unique interplay of figures and ground, weaving a cosmological abstraction for our understanding and expectations in the realm of mechanical time. The ruin becomes a profound embodiment of the past and future, converging as a symbol of both decay and potentiality, shaping our perception of the world and offering a lens into the ever-evolving nature of existence.

Drawing ruin is drawing this chance form. In order to make this form of ruin representable it is needed for body and space integration. This situation created some unique combination about drawing and the visual experience of ruin. This section is in the modern sense dealing with representation of ruin. The basic abstract concept is the motion and ruining. Ruining to imagine ruin as motion of ruination is drawing a general frame. And this is kind of a parallel abstraction as deformation.

Ruin signifies strategies that point towards a shared practice and represents the common language of a broader quest. When conceptualizing ruins for architectural practice, McMorrough refers to their spatial dimension, which remains constant for everyone [McMorrough 2008]. Ruins are inclusive and have given birth to a kind of collective representational space. Deformation forms defined through architectural design are rendered as an exploratory environment where the spatial and fictional aspects, which reveal the complex identity of the design, interact through mutual movement [Borie et al. 2006]. Consequently, ruins, in their deformed state, become a practical realm for exploration and experimentation, such as through drawing.

Drawing ruins serves as a pedagogical tool, transforming ruin sites into learning spaces where the relationship between subject and object is explored. Wölfflin, in Baroque architecture, was among the first to theorize the phenomenology of the subject and the topographic condition of the object through drawing, moving away from conservative design ideals in search of the ideal [Wölfflin 2009]. Drawing as a learning practice profoundly influences the understanding of volumes, interior spaces, and illusionistic effects, leading to the development of new architectural terminology that expands upon the hidden knowledge acquired from the site. This constructed pedagogy evolves and expands vision through the embodiment of experiences in the material capacity of the body, fostering an inherent learning process between the body and the ruin site.



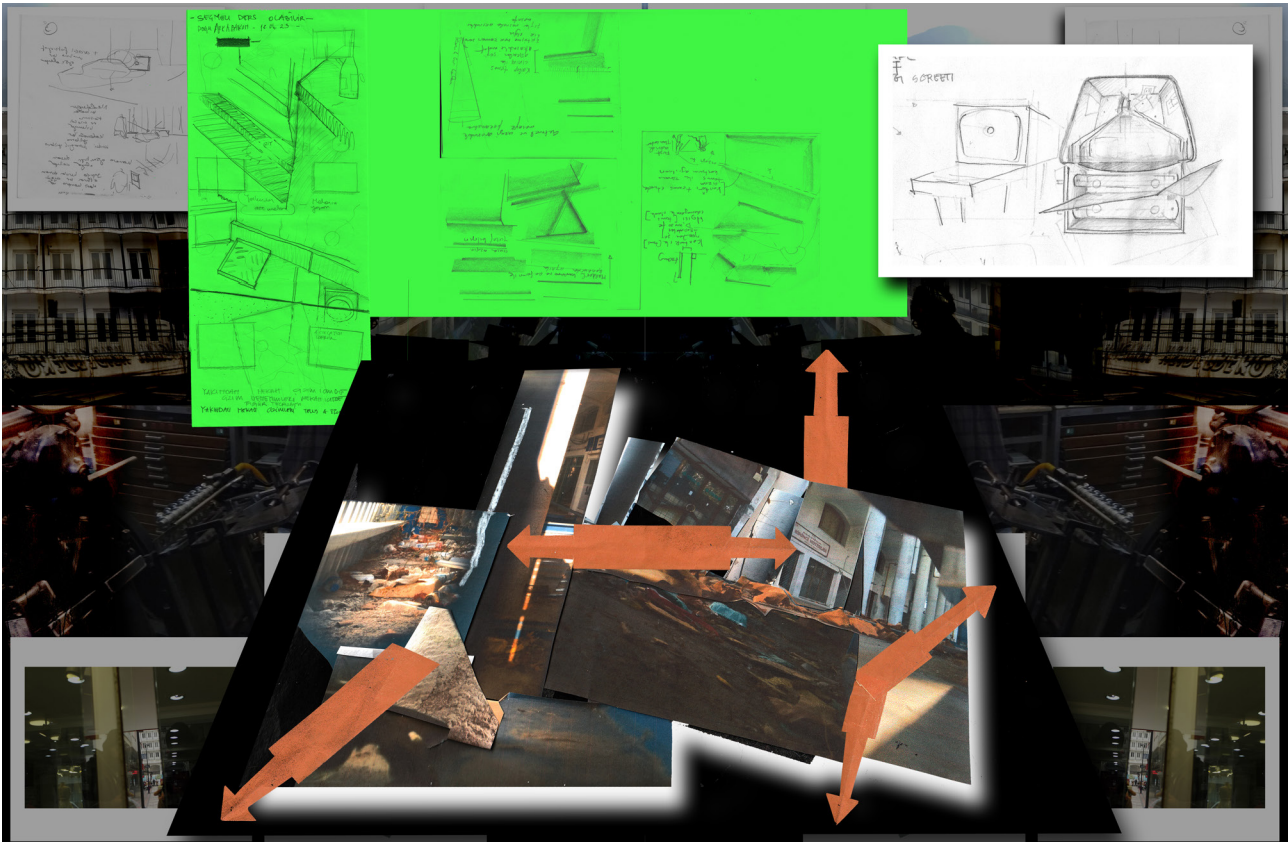


Fig. 6. Print house work experiment about image-imaginary space and force on lines (graphic elaboration by the author).

The consequences of the theoretical and artistic relationship regarding ruins are seen as an experimental ground for exploring politics and representing scope of spatial references. Ruin is a non-hierarchical concept that has gained a different context in the city environment. The pieces of the ruin area offer us a multi-dimensional experience of city. This experienced site is located at the very center of Manisa and constitutes a significant piece in the city's core. It is imprinted in the memories of the locals and

serves as an essential example of civil architecture, leaving a lasting impact on the collective memory of civil architectural practices in Turkey. The ruined area introduces itself through continuous covered metal sheets, extending along the city, offering a unique aesthetic recognized through its white color, elegant row of tall columns, and characteristic black metal French balcony parapets. The experience described in the continuation of the text opens up the experimentation and representation attempt here.

## Drawing continuity on the surface

### *Tracing the body trauma: put in the contour of area*

As shown in the ideogram (fig. 1) the process involves capturing the imprints present on the body. With the body's elastic and curvaceous form, a mold presses onto it, leaving repeated imprints that need to be transferred. The interaction between the body and the mold's materiality introduces a fascinating variability in this transfer process. As the mold carves itself onto the body over time and through consistent pressure, the imprints become more enduring and take on a distinct form, altering the body's elastic structure. The surface practice becomes the crucial starting point for this exploration, enabling a close and dynamic interaction with lively images and memories of the objects encountered. In the context of the ruin area, this practice reveals the significance of certain unchanged elements like bushes, rubbish, and other objects that evoke familiarity and recognition.

### *Lines are investigator*

The lines capture subtle micro-movements that emanate from the materiality within our field of vision. As these lines extend beyond the object, they gradually fade into the surrounding space, especially when encountering materials denser than air. The connection with the air generates contact particles instead of a solid surface, contributing to the gradual crumbling of the ruin mass. As shown in the Line a investigator series above (fig. 2, 3), this process prompts us to contemplate the essence of line drawing, as it becomes a reflection of the random crumbling and disintegration observed in surface volumes. It is through this exploration of impermanence and decay that we come to learn and appreciate the delicate interplay between form, materiality, and the passage of time.

### *Memory of surface practice total live moment*

Lines are a time indicator over its elasticity like body and traces of biomaterial. Line is a temporal and while making itself it leaves a memory of other bodies. The area is marked by the presence and activities of bodies, leaving traces akin to the mucosa of a snail. We are inexorably bound to the materiality of the site, and in turn, the site carries these hidden imprints of biological materials. This dynamic interaction resembles the illuminating effect of Luminol, guiding our vision towards the site's deformable biologic inclusions. It highlights the concept of biofidelity, where all complexities

in the environment possess inherent motion [Farberov 2014]. Furthermore, these residues are not static but can be dislodged, signifying the ever-changing and active nature of the relationship between the human body and the site [Brook 2018]. As shown in the surface from past to now (fig. 4), the accumulated motion memory on these spaces creates a dynamic narrative, making them carriers of unique stories through intertwined traces of memory.

### *Print house practice - Drawing - printing-operation*

In this concept the montage is a multi focal surface situated in a print house. Area always has a gap point. I need to visualize some unseen areas. Therefore the drawer as I am and the experienter deeply of this edge of ruin site create a perfect match like the mountain and its unseen part. Therefore continuity of recording is experienced half onsite, and half on print house through the soul of the environment. As shown in the print house work experiment (fig. 5, 6) drawing becomes a land work, it is emerging around the tool that is used for printing on paper. Images are cut, pieces are placed over and over and many combinations are tested for perfect match. Some structural pieces become clear and some of them lose their clarity. The final total image is created by lines. Continuity of image which is also visual practice of the ruin area creates its own map code. Rubbish, bush that is encoded form is integrated on the montage that directs our way through.

## Conclusion

Drawing imagery starts with the vision of trash, becoming a catalyst for creating continuity in the area that transcends mere object form and delves into the realm of aesthetic visual experiences that captivate us in fleeting images. Drawing takes on a tactical role in making these journeys happen, expanding itself as a medium where conventional notions of drawing by hand diverge. Drawing becomes an act of inventing new objects, pushing the boundaries of the areas it encounters (fig. 7). These areas go beyond mere architectural elements; they serve as gates that lead into the materiality of images, uncovering clues that have not yet solidified into tangible forms. The process assembles dynamic temporal traces, akin to dust on a pant, dirt on a hand, or scars on a knee, which become haptic memories for the drawer. The surface, once merely a screen, is now experienced through



Fig. 7. Ruin is developing tactics on how we are able to grasp things over and over (graphic elaboration by the author).

the position of imagery and trauma, imparting knowledge about matter:

The form of continuity takes on a deformed and defigured appearance, capable of creating patterns. These patterns extend beyond being purely topological or topographical; they carry not only abstract forms but also the memories of encounters between things and their movements. The patterns are wavy, reverberating, and foggy, breathing life into abstract forms, unveiling a myriad of other possibilities.

The act of drawing the ruin serves as an experimental exploration of the area. What enables this process is the profound engagement with the experiment through drawing, delving into various spatiotemporal relations observed within the site. The resulting conclusion provides a practical approach to drawing, encouraging continuous exploration and deepening of both the physical site and its emotional essence. Consequently, this approach offers a distinctive way of perceiving ruins.

## Note

[1] One of the works called K-object reflects the practice of earth, landscape image through image and information. This work is open to online

watch on the web site <https://creatingruin.net/project/k-object> (accessed 2 December 2023).

## Acknowledgement and Credits

Firstly, I would like to express my gratitude to my esteemed Professor Ayşe Şentürer for providing me with the opportunity to expand my architectural knowledge and for inspiring me with her work and lectures on architectural representation. I would also like to extend my thanks to my sister for her valuable assistance in my field research, particularly in capturing site photographs and Ferhat Biricik for our insightful discussions on editing site documentation from a cinematographic perspective and for encouraging me to explore the concept of censorship. I am grateful to the locals who invited me into their home, providing valuable information about the areas and events related to my research. Special thanks to the librarian at Kitapsaray for their friendly assistance and granting me

access to the archive. I owe a debt of gratitude to my father, who not only fulfilled my dream but also allowed me to work in his print house, where I gained critical insights and technical guidance during the experimental phase of my ruin representation work. I would like to express my appreciation to Beyaz Fil Çiçekçilik for helping me revive the memory of Beyaz Fil through their photo archive and sharing their experiences from the past. Lastly, I extend my thanks to my family, who are local residents and provided me with valuable insights into their memories and experiences. This work serves as a collective memory repository for the local community. I am deeply thankful for the support and contributions of all those mentioned above in making this research possible.

## Author

Şebnem Çakaloğulları, Department of Architecture, Istanbul Technical University, cakalogullarisebnem@gmail.com

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