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Track: Landscape Architecture

Reflection

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The main focus of the Flowscape studio was to think of 'landscape as infrastructure' and 'infrastructure as landscape'. By doing this, we as landscape architects had to explore spatial, societal and environmental issues through various scales and timeframes. My graduation project is titled "Retreat; creating a regional framework for the future of Semarang". The project focuses on tackling environmental, spatial and societal issues by creating urban landscape framework for the future. The framework is reflected from the current issues in the landscape, and strives to guide the future development in a more sustainable way.

The Shared Heritage Lab was centered around how we can preserve the complexity of the heritage and invigorate the livelihood of the residents of the area. The Shared Heritage perspective believes that maintenance of heritage will help to drive sustainable development. As landscape architects, we also had to consider the importance of environmental protection and the integration of the blue and green structures with the urban fabric. Thus, the project also had to take into account the cultural background of the study area and the tendencies of the residents. The cultural aspect was crucial in developing the regional framework, because the community structure in Indonesia is a unique structure which only exists there. It was very important to learn the RT-RW structure in how the neighborhood functions. Although the project is titled creating a 'regional' framework for the future, the details of the project also focused on the neighborhood and small scale interventions as guidelines for future developments.

My graduation project is to build a regional framework for the future city of Semarang, taking into consideration not only the current constraints, but also the future development plans and the environmental state of the area. The current state of development is not sustainable for the future. At this speed of development and deterioration of nature, the ecological values of suburban Semarang will be broken in the next few generations. Because the population is always increasing, new methods to encompass the residents and keeping nature intact needs to be thought of. The framework in general aims to preserve certain areas of the landscape as ecological areas but make the urban areas more densified to embrace population growth in the future. Thus, the project involves the ecological aspects of the landscape, infrastructure in the urban and suburban areas, and the residents in the site.

Societal relevance is answering questions the society has and solving the problems it has. It usually focuses on the cultural and economic value of the project. The project itself is centered around looking at the problems the site and residents face, thus the beginning of the project began at the societal level. Furthermore, the interventions that are taken in the project does not only look at the environmental or spatial functions of the landscape, but also strives to help strengthen the livelihood of the residents by invigorating tourism in the area by establishing stronger infrastructural connections and ecological values in the area. If the societal relevance of the project is to be strengthened, more investigation about the residents has to be taken through interviews, and extensive review of the RT – RW structure in the neighborhood needs to be executed to directly influence the lives of the residents.

3-4-5

The theories used in the theoretical part of the project were mainly Ecocity Principle, Ecopolis, Casco-Concept and Layer Model. These theories were mainly used for the structural background, as well as the basis for research. The information gathered about the site was sorted using the above theories in the methodology. The possibilities and constraints of the site were also processed the

same way. Then, the current situation and the possibilities were layered together to draw out the zones possible for development and preservation. From this, design was carried on by doing research by design and design by research. In this process the theoretical principles were applied to provide a strong reasoning for the design strategies. This process worked well throughout the design development, because it helped to organize the information gathered during research, and moving on to the designing part. Furthermore, the theories were reflected efficiently in the design masterplan outcome.

However, the shortcomings of the chosen methodology is that the theories chosen were focused mainly on the larger scale interventions and not the small scale interventions. Thus, it was convenient to use the theories for regional design, but difficult to use them for detail designs.

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The biggest moral issue involved with my graduation project is the fact that whole neighbourhoods need to be moved. Because the project deals with altering the current lifestyle of the local residents, the moral issues always had to be a part of the consideration. I have made radical the decision to alter the lives of people, which in the end is beneficial for them. In the future, the current level of urbanization and destruction of nature will come back at the residents with bigger consequences; the current method is just a means of pushing the consequences away and not dealing with it properly. However, this could only be my point of view, for many of the people who reside in the danger prone areas are happy with their houses and do not want to move away. The values they have and what I have of what a good living environment is radically different. This means that the choices I make will never be able to reflect the residents' opinions a hundred percent.

Also, for a country which is rapidly growing, all methods of economic income is crucial in helping the livelihood of the people. However, in my design concept, certain areas need to be reserved for nature, not for development. This would mean that less financial rewards from the land. The solution I had chosen would be the method to choose when thinking about passing on the environment to the next generation. However, this is only in the case of developed countries, and for developing countries like Indonesia, all means of economic activity is important. The design masterplan may seem like a utilitarian choice-in which the solution which has the most benefits for the greatest number of people- but in the current state of the living condition of the locals, I am not completely sure if this is the right choice to make.

However, we cannot continue to ruin and take advantage of nature in the means of development; it has to stop eventually, and this method of slowly changing the landscape will help the people to slowly adjust to the different lifestyle. In the end, words will turn into action, and action will turn into thoughts. Endless vicious cycle of pointing fingers and NIMBY needs to be stopped, and this is the first step to take to ease the thought of environmental awareness into the people's lives.