Reflection

Master of Science Architecture, Urbanism & Building Sciences

Personal information	
Name	Qiyang Tao
Student number	5260582

Studio	
Name / Theme	Graduation Studio Revitalising Heritage: Faro Convention Lab (AR3AH115)
Mentors	Ana Pereira Roders, Wido Quist, Bruno de Andrade

Graduation project	
Title of the graduation project	Values and Attachment: social and ecological spaces in value-based redesign of former milling factory, Estacao
Location	Faro, Portugal
Design result	

Reflection

1. Basic introduction of the project

This graduation design project belongs to MSc3 Graduation Studio: Revitalising Heritage. The aim of the studio is about developing and testing novel values-based models for redesigning built heritage. In addition to the social value of hosting the Faro Convention Labs in fieldwork and sharing the design results with the local government of Faro, this project is also committed to the transparent architectural design process and scientific heritage designing discussion, in order to create a certain academic value.

Fig1. Values framework by Pereira Roders.

2. Main approaches

Revitalizing Heritage Studio has a rigorous structure with three main phases: cultural significance survey, values-based redesign, and heritage impact assessment.

First, the cultural significance survey of this project selected the topic of place attachment and applied the method of cultural mapping to engage local stakeholders. The results of the research, the hierarchy sheets of values and attributes, were translated into a redesign proposal, clarifying stakeholders' demands.

Second, the value-based redesign of this project applied the method of decision-making participation with value-based scenarios. In further discussion, the architectural design utilized the theories of contextual relationship and value-attribute; the technical design systematically discussed three aspects: structure, detail, and climate.

Third, the reflection of this project applied the method of heritage impact assessment to visualize and evaluate the changing in the original values and attributes. The assessment result told whether the project proposal is realized.
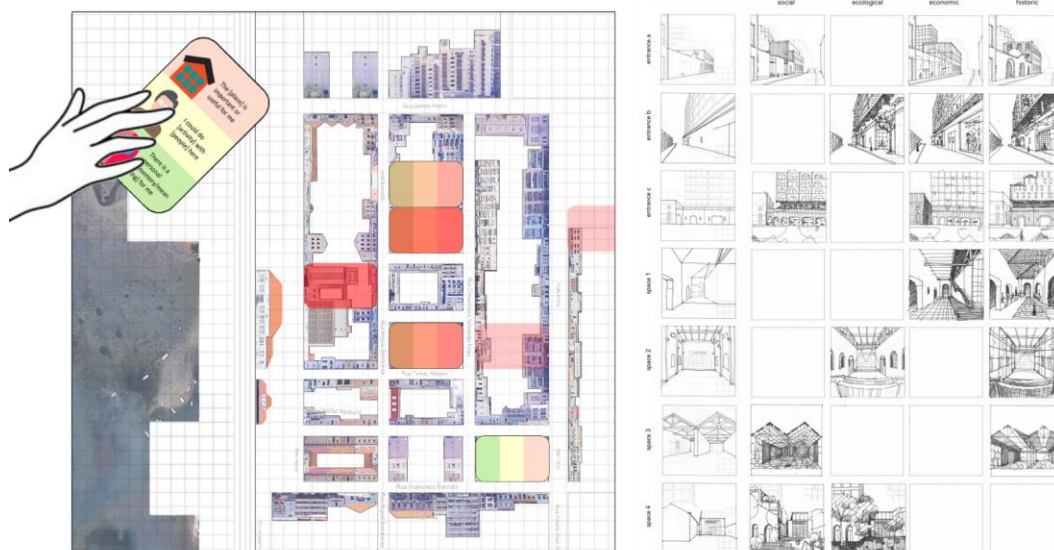

Fig2. The design of cultural mapping method and value-based scenarios.

The diagram below shows the working process of this graduation project and highlights the relationship between research (black lines) and design (red lines). On the one hand, the staged results marked by values and attributes serve as the bridge that supports the transition between design and research. On the other hand, the outcomes of value-coding analysis work as the assessment target which could be discussed and compared cyclically.
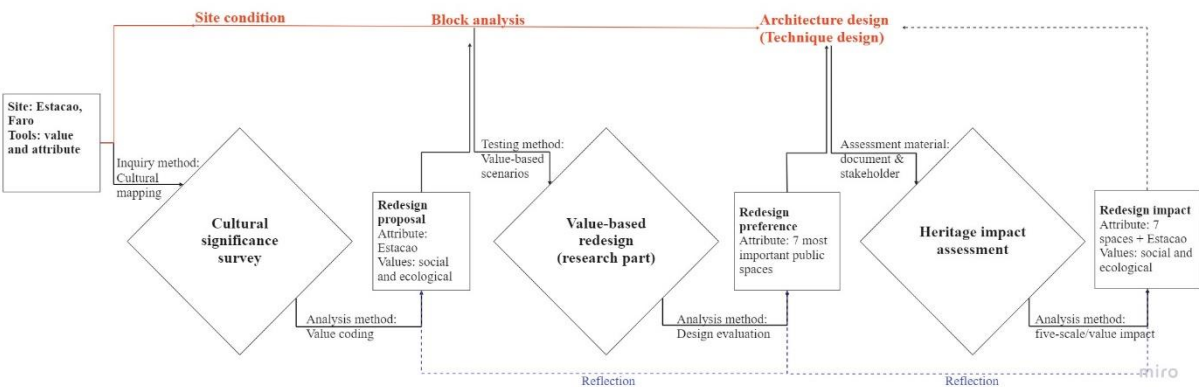

Fig3. Working process of the graduation studio. (Each diamond block as an independent research, including one data collection method and one value-based data analysis method).

3. Results and reflections

The outcome of this project is an architectural design with the accompanying technical design and research report. According to the results of the heritage impact assessment, this redesign intervention has greatly enhanced the ecological and social value of the site with a limited reduction of the historical value. (see diagram below) The design result meets the design proposal and according to the conclusion from the cultural significance survey, it will have a positive effect on promoting residents' place attachment.

As a reflection, I think there are the following shortcomings of this project. In terms of design, the demonstration of urban design is relatively insufficient. In addition, the detailed design of the project (such as the selection of materials) lacks theoretical guidance after completing the discussion of the participating design. This kind of subjective design problem has been corrected to a certain extent under the guidance of the tutor. In terms of research, the initial keyword "place attachment" is relatively abstract and connected more with the urban scale, resulting in insufficient influence in the later stage of the project.
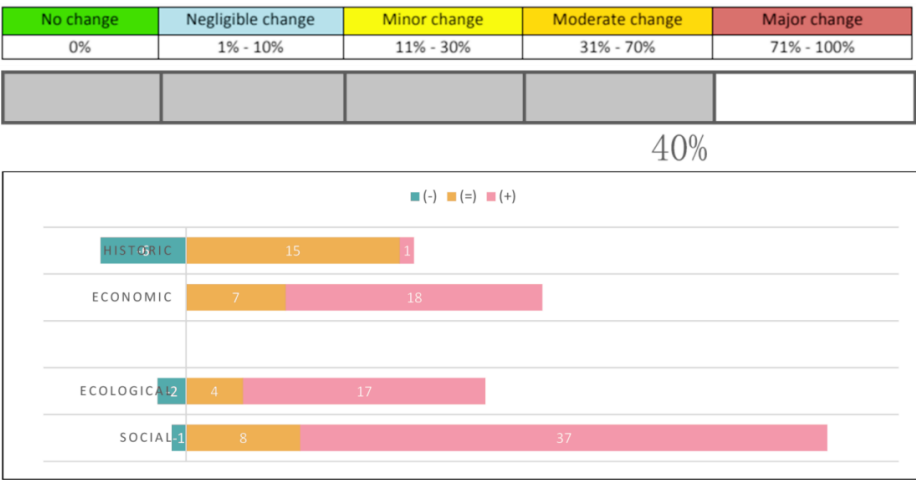

Fig4. The result of heritage impact assessment

4. The feedback from tutors and my gains during the project
During the tutoring process, the first thing I gained was the simultaneous working mode of research, writing, and design advocated by the studio structure. Through communication with the tutors, I gradually learned the method of connecting research and design and constantly compared this process with my practical working experience to upgrade myself.
During the research process, I learned the significance of community participation in heritage design, the charm of field research in the form of games, and the social value of participatory research itself. During the design process, I learned about scientific discussions on design decisions based on architectural theories, especially using value-based models to evaluate design decisions and impacts. The feedback from my mentor gradually influenced my former working habit of relying solely on aesthetic taste for subjective design. From a technical point of view, the structure, details, and climate considerations of this project are far more adequate than my other previous projects. The new method of combining spatial rendering and technical consideration in designing inspired me especially.

5. Plan for the final part of the graduation period
The following is the work plan between P4 and P5. First, I will continue to update the report and make a solid model for the P5 presentation. In addition, the cultural significance survey of our group is invited by Urbinat Conference to submit. Therefore, we will continue to optimize paper 1 to prepare for submission.