

Reflection

gardening
the  static

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Gardening the static: an ethic of care in architecture

Since the beginning, this project is concerned with questioning the research/design divide in the discipline of architecture. It started with the design of a methodology that was related to the very particularity of this project: we were living in it. From that unique situation for a student in architecture, grew a way to value the ordinary of the building, in other words, the mode of valuation of this project. Through the survey of Gele Scheikunde we were seeking to appreciate the value of what was left unthought by the economic lenses of the developers. Engaging with the material reality of a place to the extent of its dailyness, shaped progressively an alternative to the ongoing project of its demolition.

During the development of the project, it became clear that a conscious or unconscious mode of valuation, is the start of any project. The prism through which the socio-material conditions of a site are examined reveals the ontological ethic of one's approach. The decoding of the developer's mode of valuation is a significant engine to fuel a critique on the origin of their preconceptions and habitus of thoughts. From the capitalistic subjectivity colonising our immaterial existences to the constant renewing of our physical world through the cycle of creative destruction, we formulate a reflexion on what it means 'to last'. In opposition to the architect's complicit role in this globalized system of extraction and culture of obsolescence, the design proposes a gradual mutation of a locality by a series of acupunctural interventions. These interventions don't aim to a final state but rather reveal the processual condition of architecture. Concurrently, they dismiss the need for architects to claim any authorship on the built environment. Instead of invoking the grand narrative of progress, these interventions find their justification in their adequate relational position within their milieu.

A situated project depends on the tacit knowledge ac-

cumulated through the contact between the building and the architect. This affirmation instantly interrogates what is the architect's role. Can it be thought of a guardian of the environment, a gardener of the static? What if the architect transforms into a caretaker, spending lengths of time in a place, learning its regularities and particularities to practice continuously an ethic of care. Our project wonders how to take distances with the norms and standards of the architectural field, complicit of a system of extraction and exhaustion. If such a mutation of the discipline is conceivable, the research/design divide no longer needs to be stated. The building, is the pivotal milieu from which a constant loop between situated concepts and design intentions can occur

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