

## Reflection

Transient Liquidities along the New Silk Road II

Borders & Territories

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1. What is the relation between your graduation project topic, the studio topic, your master track, and your master programme?

The advance understanding in the practice of architects, which could be mainly divided in urban and territorial (including landscape and seascape) these two contexts framed the exploration of topic at the start. The former one is human settlement constituted of historical development, planned by human intelligence and necessity of activities, containing sociological involvement. While the dominant subject in the latter one is natural resources, for instance, surface, skin and ground of land. The topic of my research in the early stage is slowly decided on the former during a swing round continuing the interest in the infinite territorial environment or practicing alternative approach in urban context, as well as difficulty in concretizing and clarifying proper medium and scale for site investigation. In other words, the topic of the graduation project emerged and evolved slowly with the succession of exercises and methodology step by step through the agenda and schedules of the studio.

The Sea of Marmara and Bosphorus strait is the larger site of investigation. Behind the phenomenon of vessels passing through the strait for transmission, maritime and ship maintenance workers dedicate to its normal running.

The research aims at comprehending what kind of “territory”, a specific group of people - heavy industrial workers are living and working in. The site is narrowed down to a harbor for ship repair and building. This area is taken as an ideological “territory”, since physically it is guarded by gates along the road. Also, invisible eyes and movable guards wander around, which allow the entrance of internal members and keep outsiders away. Compared to its urban surroundings, this area with its characteristics and anomalies is looked upon as a field for further spatial condition analysis. As marginal space, it is filled with contradiction and complexities, being chaotic but also harmonious, undertaking production while consuming human, environment, and materials.

The master track of architecture emphasizes on endowing ideas and architectural thinking with tectonic solutions. The recognition of this broad term is expanded from physical components as a building to be representation of thinking. In this project, frequently discussed topics such as movement in spatial practices are looked into through personal making and products exercising. To develop oneself as one of the goals of the master programme, the topic touched categories which are rare to meet

in rigid planned context and made addition from the aspect of approach to design.

2. How did your research influence your design/recommendations and how did the design/recommendations influence your research?

The research is conducted by the iteration of collective mapping on a larger scale infrastructure project and its impact on territory, theoretical position formation, site visit, drawings on relations of contextual things and Modi operandi workshop. These phases engender a few pop-up experimental tests and try-outs instead of fixed perspectives. Themes such as spatial dynamics, chaotic, marginal space are extracted as the spatial condition of the research area. The conclusion from research further informs and leads to the thematic space in design. Research revolving around the heavy industrial district concluded a workers' club as the subject of design.

When it comes to design, the interpretation of research products shifts from its source. The aim to reintroduce the findings on spatial mechanisms formed by movement (of artefacts and subjects like cranes and vessels) to the site of intervention guides the direction of other ways to explore and utilize the research products. One of them is to connect with contextual elements such as sun, air and workers' daily shift which stays as merely introduction and statement during the research stage. The concrete manipulation is operated through 3 2.5D models as in-between translation from drawing to physical space.

3. How do you assess the value of your way of working (your approach, your used methods, used methodology)?

The way of working is mostly characterized by process-oriented and thus coincidental in my instance. There are jumps between being open and having a decisive goal. In this process, new findings could emerge from research. Nevertheless, without a clear mind and design intention in the beginning, it is unavoidable to be immersed in shape playing.

Significant methods used for investigation of sites are change of scale and filtering information with themes. These steps helped to acquire invisible spatial mechanisms and avoid merely obtaining direct observation from a specific research area.

4. How do you assess the academic and societal value, scope and implication of your graduation project, including ethical aspects?

The project is exploring and trying to find a solution for the research question "How can architecture be a medium to reveal the status of workers?" and "How to appropriate a place offering them a sense of belonging?" The project is a proposal that offers a collective space close to the workplace to workers in positions of insecure safety and employment.

In addition, it builds up possibilities for building types such as workers' club, workers'

stadium, workers' union, which are essential projects in socialism society, reflecting the diversity of social groups.

Concerning the process, although insight from personal fascination and solution might be difficult to convince others in terms of "why", experiments in it offer alternative approaches to design besides common methods and tools such as case study and references variation. And it broadens personal toolkits for design progress.

5. How do you assess the value of the transferability of your project results?

There are a few sociological researches on the status of workers. It is reported that they are experiencing informalization of production with dilemmas of long work hours, insecure employment and occasional injuries. This project proposes a solution with architectural tools and language, reflecting its social and transdisciplinary involvement.