

TITLE

THE DESCENT OF ARCHITECT: Questioning their role as agencies in architecture.

Power relationships in the reconversion of a farming complex in Brandenburg.

NAME

Simone Martini

AFFILIATION

TU Berlin

EMAIL ADDRESS

si.martini3a@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

The reconversion of Güldenhof is the field of my research. This is a project I have been working on the last 4 years, together with the architecture studio Heim&Balp. I now decided to go deeper, exploring it through the lenses of Actor-Network Theory. This approach is less interested in determining "who is acting" but seeks rather 'to decide what is acting and how.

Güldenhof is no direct application of theory, but tries to "develop an exploratory practice and a theoretical analysis, both of which constantly inform one another". Petrescu, R-Urban

An ANT prospective demands Action. Where is action in architecture? Action happens when human and non-human actors form associations. So of course during planning, design and construction, but also and maybe even more in the way spaces are used, lived and transformed again by other actors, when the construction is finished.

Güldenhof is the transformation of an entire farming complex into a centre for art, sustainable living and human interaction. The program is huge, therefore divided into different phases and always adapting to the creative impulse of the community living in it and to the results achieved. Here I have the possibility to explore action taking place at the different stages of construction and observe how the people use and transform the space after the architect (in their official role) left.

The expertise, knowledge, values and interests of the actors, concerned and affected by the project formulates in a collective way the design result itself. They affect each other's knowledge and values in such a way that the common knowledge and objectives of the organisation is both questioned and developed. All actors in the process are regarded as *experts* and their participation is therefore based on their relevant knowledge rather than on their roles as representatives for different interests. All internal actors are also *users*. This puts them in an interesting dual situation.

Theoretical frameworks like ANT may help explicate the roles and contributions of all parts of these complex network. If I have always been convinced that architecture is not only the work of architects, thanks to ANT I am able to analyse this position and also see the influence of other non-humans actors. In this way I want to question the classical role of architects and try to find out what sort of architect would make the world a better place, for everyone?