Synopsis

The spatial practice of a society secretes that society's space; it propounds and presupposes it, in a dialectical interaction; it produces it slowly and surely as it masters and appropriates it.

Henri Lefebvre, The Production of Space

Within each HDB\(^1\) unit is a unique space, appropriated by the inhabitants as they dwell within it. The diversity and richness of life is decipherable only at close inspection and study. The architecture of mass housing and the resulting urban landscape speaks little of these individual differences. Instead, the homogeneity of the city speaks about the conceptualised space of planners, architects, social engineers, real estate developers etc. Is it possible, then, to begin to understand how the spaces is appropriated by the users and conceive an architecture that speaks of the lived experience?

The investigation into the operational patterns of city inhabitants in the district of Rochor discovers that the essence of city living lies in their daily human interactions. A living city is therefore the stage where chance encounters occurs, where evidence of minor domestic activities surprises.

In the chosen site, there is already an existing neighbourhood operating in a network of routes and nodes. The area, however, is considered to be in need of urban revitalisation, and to fulfil the aspirations the city. The thesis presents a possibility of intensification, which responds to the old network and creates upon it, a new network.

The proposed scheme deals with the idea of holding spaces, where programmatic controls and circulation routes interact, producing the possibility of exchange. The resultant is a mixed development of public housing, communal and commercial facilities.

The housing units are conceptualised as dwelling spaces in time. A range is provided to accommodate the different phases of living, allowing residents to move into another unit whenever their living structure and preference change.

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\(^1\) Housing Development Board (HDB) is the body responsible for government-subsidized housing.