WATER IN THE CITY

POINT SUPREME EPFL
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Introduction

Athens has lost its relation to water. Part of a general absence of any conscious, let alone designed, integration of nature in the contemporary city, the presence of water has been completely eradicated from the city center and its urban experience; an ironic fact considering that in Ancient times Athens was covered by a network of rivers that were sacred. Athenians considered water to be a supreme good, an inextricable part of daily routine with cisterns at the center of the Academies.

The rivers of Athens were built upon and turned into highways in the years of intense construction. There are extremely few public or open pools. There are not even any drinking fountains on streets or public spaces. It is difficult to explain why and how the city erased water from its daily public life so dramatically, especially considering the climate change causing record-high global temperatures and life-threatening heat waves that are going to be longer and more frequent, a condition coupled with reduced rainfalls.
At the same time there exists the underground Hadrian Aqueduct, a 20km long ancient monument from 140CE, that still has water running below the city.
It is therefore urgent to bring back the presence and public use of water, creating new types of quality public spaces for citizens to be closer to nature, in turn creating a more efficient and resilient city with more walking and biking, less motorized transport and a more enjoyable urban life.
Water has always been a significant part of the construction and identity of cities worldwide, whether with an emphasis on program (leisure), the creation of icons or functionality (aqueducts). The studio will study examples of water projects in the scale of the city.
Pools have always been invaluable social places for gathering, cooling, and having fun. Types and cases of public open pools will be studied in relation to their context and program.
Exceptional pools
Pools as objects- mobile pools, unconventional pools.
Pool is Cool, residents initiative in Brussels

Belizona
Water as Monument
Water Storage
Water For Energy
Water Purification
Teaching method

Tasks:
1. Analyze a water project from the history of cities.
2. Invent a new public water project for Athens.
3. Create a new type of public space in relation to water, promoting innovative natural resource management models.

Learning Outcomes

• Study historical and contemporary architectures with water
• Invent and imagine new water related architectures.
• Draw plans and construct models
• Identify potential contemporary qualities in water-related architecture
• Adopt and transform given sites and architectures
• Reflect on the political and social meaning of water
• Establish a pertinent formal language
• Apply representation techniques borrowed from artistic works

Assessment methods

Weekly Table critics
Intermediate and final reviews with guests juries