

A PLANNER OR AN ACTOR

The Experience of Preserving Japanese Houses in Taipei

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ABSTRACT

Due to the illegal razing on April 10th 2003, of two Japanese houses of National Taiwan University (NTU) located in Wen-Chou Street, the issue of preserving Japanese houses built in the colonial era has received significant social attention. We (DYZ studio) were assigned two projects by NTU and the Culture Bureau of the Taipei City Government, to do the general research and investigation of Japanese houses in Da-An, Zhong-Zheng, Zhong-Shan districts of Taipei City. The mission is to create a database of houses and trees in the area. At the same time, we took a variety of actions against the Central Government Policy. In the process of research and actions from last April, we realized the importance of the role of professionals, which are the main points of discussion in this paper:

1. When facing the nation, communities, and the limitation of structural position, professionals are often faced by the choice of being a planner or an actor. We found that switching back and forth between these two roles may be a better choice. Here we will discuss the model of progressive planners.

2. In undertaking the social action of preserving Japanese houses and the construction of preservation discourse, we will also discuss how professionals deal with the multiple conflicts and contradictions between complex colonial history and ethnic identities.

ENDNOTES

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