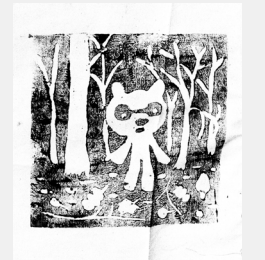
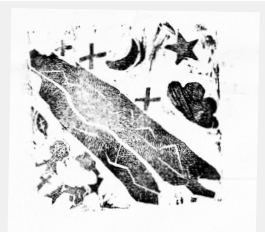




*knot, soil, and print:
Institutes of Anarchism*

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- _ Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts
- _ Political Architecture: Critical Sustainability

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1. preface

Since 2012, a group of environmental activists have occupied the Hambach forest in the Rhenish mining area in West Germany to block further deforestation. From temporary, performative actions to more permanent living practices, the activists have over the years developed tactics against the energy corporation RWE. As the activists successfully pushed to halt the mining plan in 2018, many of them chose to stay in the Hambach area in resistance to further exploitative plans. Despite the halt, the struggle continued as the aftermath of open-pit mining drastically transformed the living conditions of all actors in the Hambach area. The same extractivist mindset that once pushed forward mining continues to be present on this land.

This project is situated in Morschenich, a town located near the Hambach forest that has become home to several marginalized groups. Evicted due to the mining, this 'ghost town' Morschenich is now facing a top-down reformation plan initiated by RWE -- the same company that once deprived the town's life.

With dissent to the extractivist planning that simplifies and erases the region's layered history, this project explores an alternative formation of community. It is firstly an inquiry into the anarchist tactics used in the worlding of Hambi

activists, and secondly an exploration of anarchist architecture/planning through transforming the tactics into an alternative reformation plan of Morschenich. Throughout the years, the Hambi activists have been creating infrastructure and institutions outside of the capitalist regime. In the fieldwork, we observed and documented three aspects essential to Hambi anarchists' lives: soil, knot, and print. They each form infrastructures to resist the capitalist mindset and support autonomous life. This project proposes **institutes** that house **knot**, **soil**, and **print** in Morschenich. Their knowledge will also inform the building processes and construction methods of the institute.

It imagines Morschenich to be a place of both producing and archiving anarchist knowledge. The process of reforming is similarly important, as the collective project of rebuilding and repairing will nurture solidarity across people of diverse identities. In other words, **verbs** and **nouns** will gain equal attention. One political ambition is that through common repair work, Morschenich will become a place that rejects the current productionist politics and cultivates a movement towards an autonomous community based on solidarity.

1.1. reading guide

This brochure guides one into the project; its site, analysis, architectural approach, and propositional plans. Following the analysis, three zines documenting the anarchist tactics in relation to three themes — **knot**, **soil** and **print** — are attached. Each of these three zines package situated research and relevant material, and can be seen as stand-alone or serve as chapters within a whole book.

You can either:

1. Have a through reading of the whole content; or
 2. Take out the zines and read them separately.
- Read the rest as a concise, linear description of program.

If you are reading in digital version, you can choose to click the superlink to jump over the three zines after Chapter 3 and come back to them afterwards.

This project responds to the following UN Sustainable Goals:



through adopting direct action, bottom-up tactics of anarchism



through supporting the same core value by presenting an alternative interpretation of infrastructure and institution

1.2. lexicons

anarchism_

“The name given to a principle or theory of life and conduct under which society is conceived without government—harmony in such a society being obtained, not by submission to law, or by obedience to any authority, but by free agreements concluded between the various groups, territorial and professional, freely constituted for the sake of production and consumption, as also for the satisfaction of the infinite variety of needs and aspirations of a civilized being.” - Peter Kropotkin (Encyclopedia Britannica)

tactics_

With reference to de Certeau’s distinction between strategy and tactic, where “a tactic is defined by the absence of power whereas a strategy is organized by the postulation of power”, we see the anarchist tactics as methods by which this grassroots community gain power against institutional coercion. In our fieldwork, We observed how anarchist intelligence sparks in urgency and precarity, immersed in the action and practice of their everyday life.

autonomous_

Hambi people defined the forest occupation site as the largest autonomous zone in Europe, which “provides a rare opportunity for people to come together on the struggle against the shit system and try to live more wild and free. The occupation is a space for anti-authoritarians from all around to live, build, learn, rest, and assemble. As a political space, we position ourselves against oppressive structures such as patriarchy, transphobia, queerphobia, classism, ableism, racism, colonialism, and speciesism.”

symbiosis_

Symbiosis is “living together”. In the Hambache landscape, it is the interdependency between birds and bats, fungi and soil, trees and the tree-sitters, the activists and the old lady who lent them the land, the forest and the town... and so many others. The making of the Hambache landscape is an intricate entanglement of various stakeholders.



_Morschenich: where the basecamp is located. It is the displaced village now only houses people that refused to leave, the anarchists, and the refugees.

_Hambach forest: right adjacent to the open-pit mining, it is where the forest occupation and tree sitting actually happen.

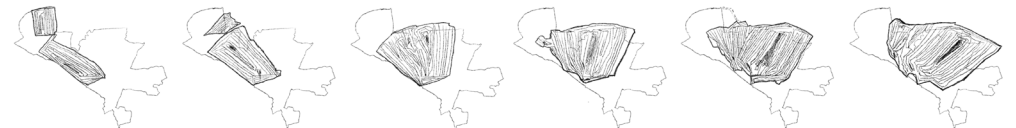
_Hambach landscape: the relational territory that includes the mining site, the displaced villages, and the forest

2. constructing context I: Hambach landscape

This section maps out the current political, economic, and material dynamics of the post-mining temporality in the Hambach landscape. It will analyze firstly, **the productionist development** decision and the resulting consequences, and then **the anarchist tactics** that act against, cope with, evade from, or attempt to repair.

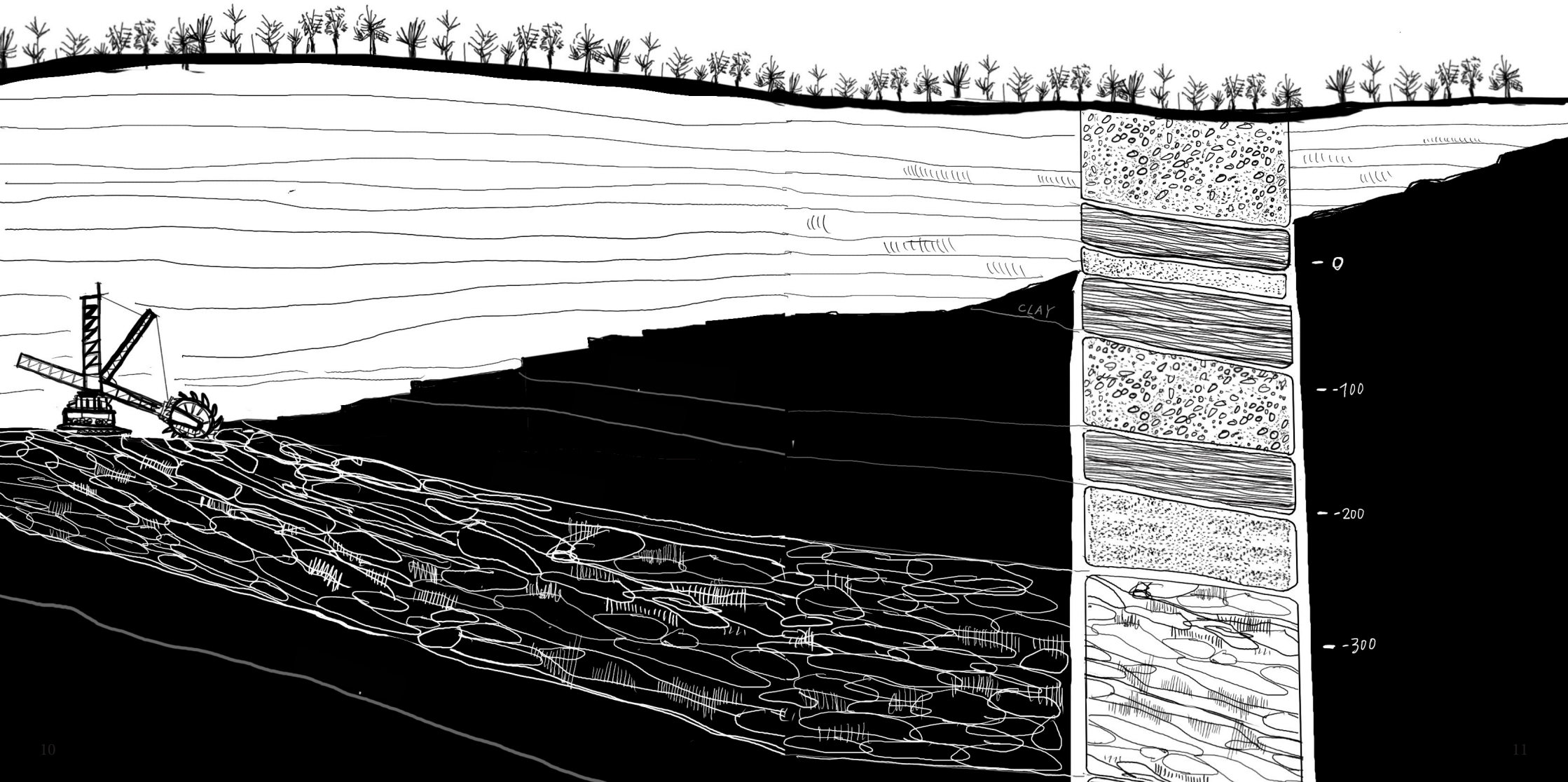
After the halt of mining, the once temporal activism — parading, sabotaging, and tree-sitting — transformed into a more durable living practice that, economically, inspired a circular structure of food, water, heat, compost, etc., and socially, established kinship with other human and non-human agents within this landscape of complex social and political dynamics.

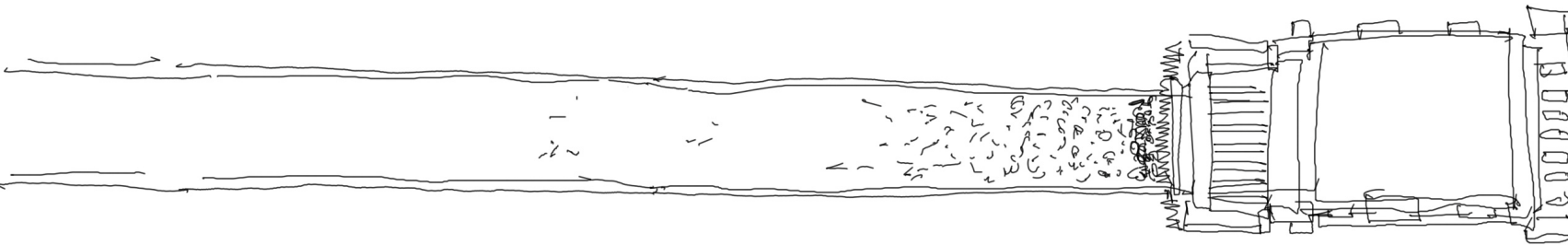
Open-cast mining and productionist development decisions altered the Hambach landscape drastically, resulting in the discontinuity of the place and its people. We see this discontinuity as a glitch in the post-mining context. The glitch is at the same time the virus and the antibody: It is both the problematics in need of amendment and the point of departure for hope and creativity.



2.1. ideological struggles

/// problematic





- + isolation of residents
- + relocation plan
- + Hambach ecology
- + memory erasure

- + control of resource
- + surveillance
- + separation

- + profit-oriented, top-down future planning
- + exclusion

- + precarious forest

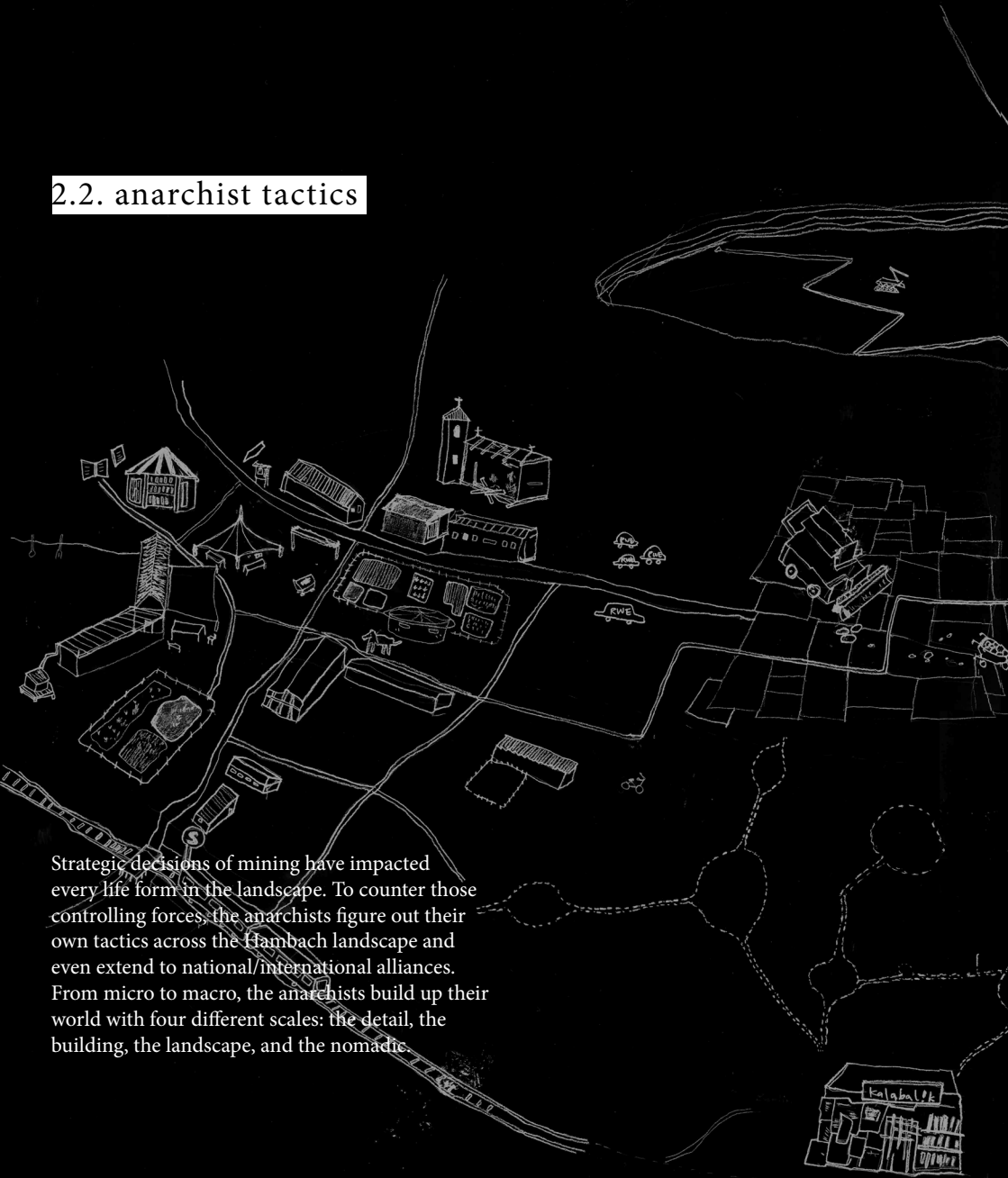
The arrival of mining activities is accompanied by a linear production-centered mindset that mistreats the landscape as a profitable resource separable from its context. This profit-centric logic is manifested in strategic relocation plans, causing problems in both social and ecological spheres. To make way for mining, RWE destroyed the old towns and built a new one; removed the old Hambach forest and promised a “new and better nature”. Here, compensation is a well-used strategy to make invisible the loss of the non-compensable. The removal of soil, underground water, trees, and other entangled species influenced the unique ecosystem of the Hambach forest. The destruction and relocation of villages cut off the material and sentimental connection between people and places, rendering memory placeless.

Social and material tactics have been employed by RWE to minimize the space of resistance. During the eviction period, the police and RWE company controlled the material necessities of the activists by confiscating climbing gear, water, and clothes in the Hambach landscape. In the post-mining situation, streets and public spaces are under surveillance by RWE employees, preventing personal contact between the residents and activists. Following the halt of mining activities, attention towards the forest occupation cooled down. Activists now require attention and support from a broader public community.

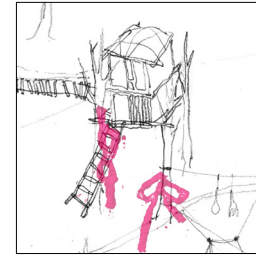
Looking into the future, the RWE company and Neuland Hambach GmbH collaboratively initiated a reformation plan that aims to reform the Hambach landscape into a collection of lakeside landscape, energy infrastructure, and a business incubator. The underlying motivation of this reformation plan is to both fulfill legal requirements and attract more capital investment to the ruined towns. This reformation plan aims to separate and exclude the refugees and the activists to make way for capital investment, cutting their grounded roots off the Hambach landscape.

Meanwhile, the future of the forest is also under precarity. As a pre-action to the mining, RWE company extracted the underground water in the Hambach landscape, posing a serious threat to the forest. After these years, the remnants of Hambach forest are withering and dying due to the lack of underground water. The life expectancy of the forest remains uncertain- how long can the forest and the tree-sitters stay? Where else could the spirit and this multi-species community find its roots if the forest does not exist anymore? These questions are in a place of both openness and concern towards a symbiotic possibility.

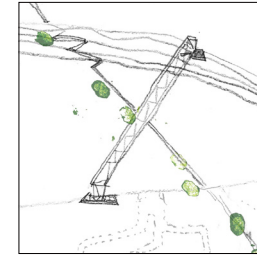
2.2. anarchist tactics



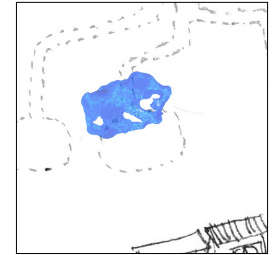
Strategic decisions of mining have impacted every life form in the landscape. To counter those controlling forces, the anarchists figure out their own tactics across the Hambach landscape and even extend to national/international alliances. From micro to macro, the anarchists build up their world with four different scales: the detail, the building, the landscape, and the nomadic



building tree houses



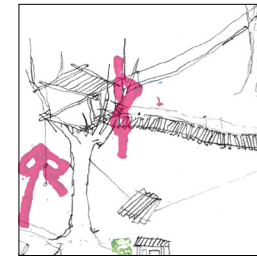
parading, protesting



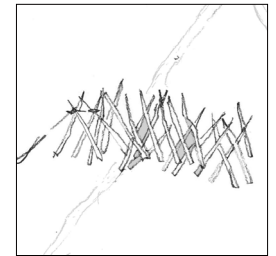
digging tunnels



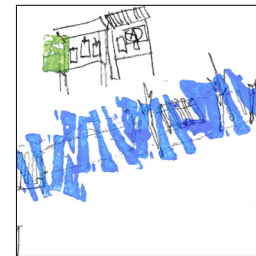
printing for info stand



knotted for inter-trees commute



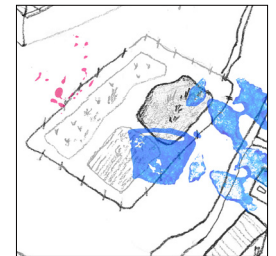
building barricades



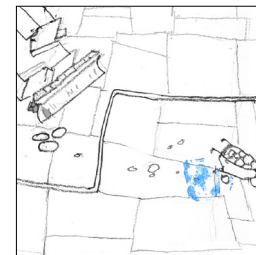
taking care of the soil



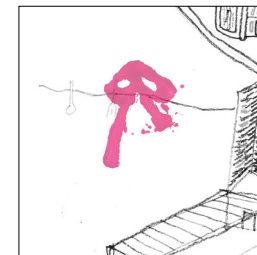
self-publishing, sharing information in anarchist bookstores



perma-culture farming



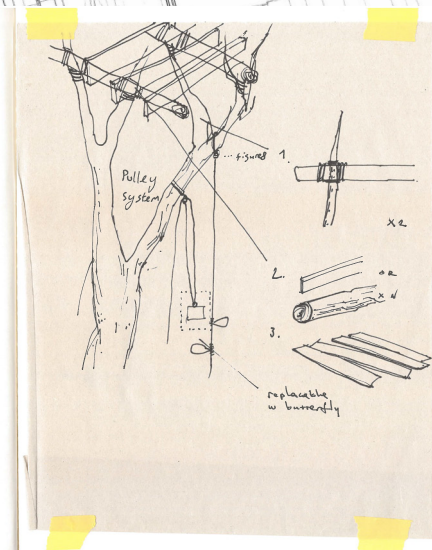
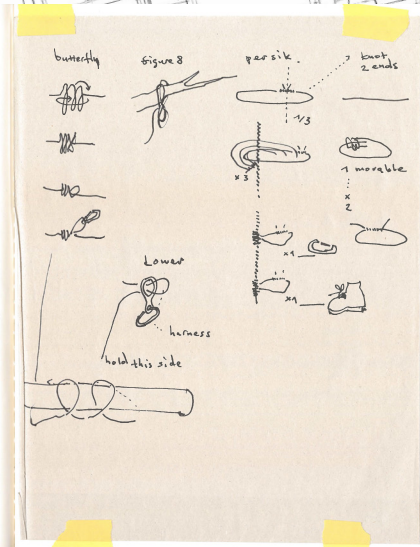
gathering leftover potatoes from machine harvesting



knotted for hanging tools



archiving anarchist knowledge



+ detail scale

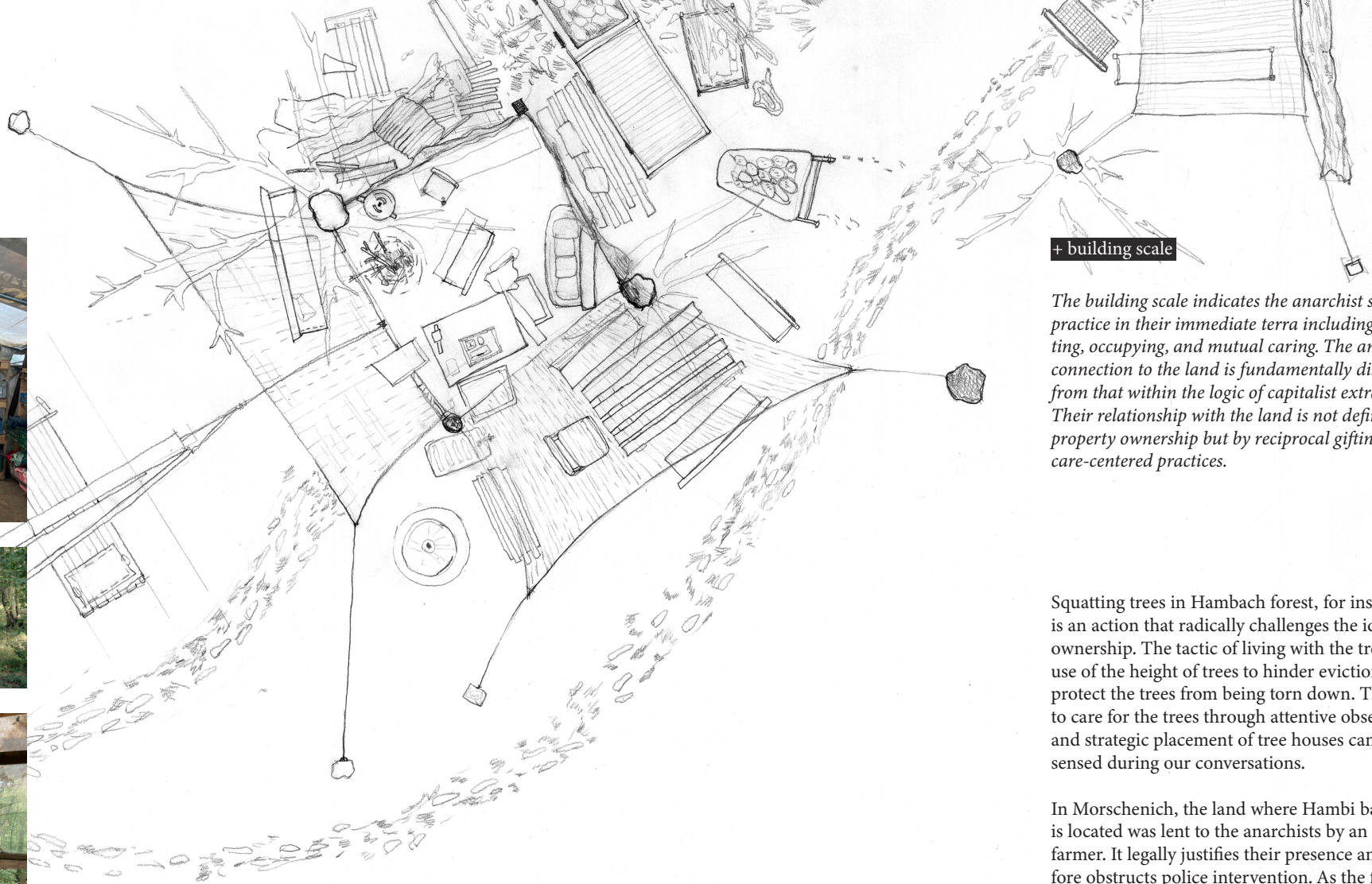
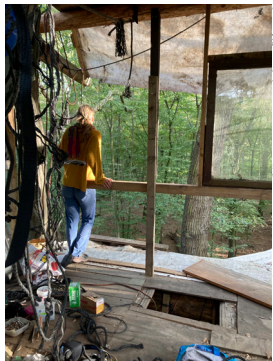
The detail is the most physical interaction between bodies — soil, trees, human body, ropes, and recycled materials. These interactions entail how the anarchists construct spaces to house their own bodies to stay close to the Hambach landscape.

Knotting has been used throughout life in the forest, for constructing tree houses, rain covers, tabletops, and swings, and for hanging kitchen utensils and climbing gear. They also rely on knots for climbing trees, ensuring safety, and transporting items. [\[go to zine knot\]](#)

With **Soil**, the anarchists build barricades and make pathways to protect themselves. During the rainy days, they pave the path with tree branches and leaves to make the muddy trails walkable. Back to the eviction time, the activists dug a tunnel underground and stayed inside, to occupy the forest land against the encroaching of logging machinery. [\[go to zine soil\]](#)

While constructing their built structures, whether tree houses or simple structures at the Hambach camp, the anarchists aim to utilize any material they have access to. The anarchists' structure therefore becomes a **bricolage** of as-found materials. The recycled windows, wood pallets, and truck tarps find a new purpose within the anarchist building practice.

bricolage detail

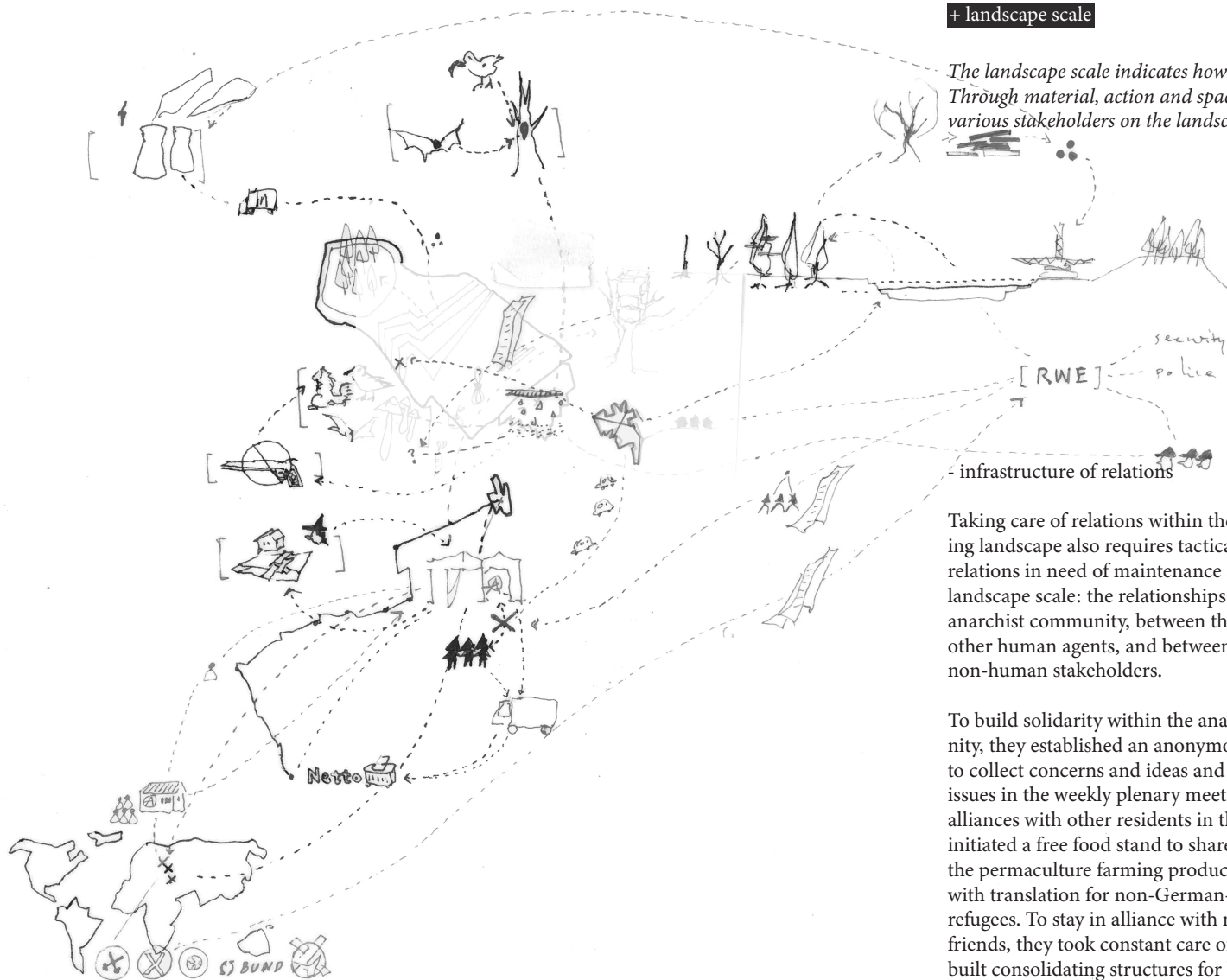


+ building scale

The building scale indicates the anarchist spatial practice in their immediate terra including squatting, occupying, and mutual caring. The anarchists' connection to the land is fundamentally distinct from that within the logic of capitalist extraction. Their relationship with the land is not defined by property ownership but by reciprocal gifting and care-centered practices.

Squatting trees in Hambach forest, for instance, is an action that radically challenges the idea of ownership. The tactic of living with the trees takes use of the height of trees to hinder evictions and protect the trees from being torn down. The effort to care for the trees through attentive observation and strategic placement of tree houses can be sensed during our conversations.

In Morschenich, the land where Hambi basecamp is located was lent to the anarchists by an old farmer. It legally justifies their presence and therefore obstructs police intervention. As the farmer gets older and spends most of her time in bed, the anarchists return the favor by taking care of her every day. On the post-mining shared deprivation, the anarchists' alternative spatial practice builds up interdependent solidarity.



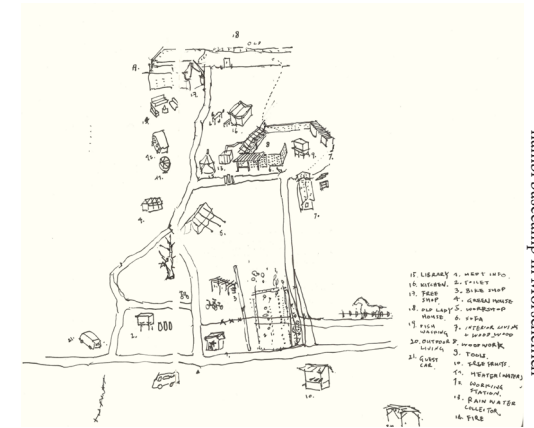
+ landscape scale

The landscape scale indicates how one navigates and builds relations in the post-mining landscape. Through material, action and spaces, the anarchist community synchronizes their own living with the various stakeholders on the landscape.

[RWE] security police
- infrastructure of relations

Taking care of relations within the post-mining landscape also requires tactical effort. The relations in need of maintenance are across the landscape scale: the relationships within the anarchist community, between the anarchist and other human agents, and between human and non-human stakeholders.

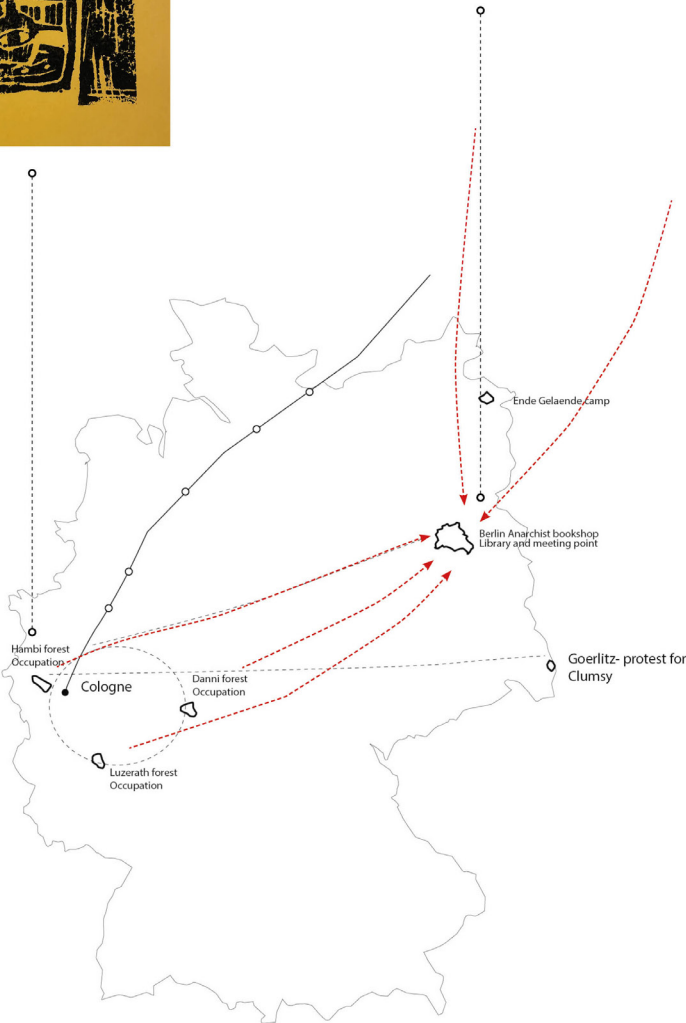
To build solidarity within the anarchist community, they established an anonymous letter box to collect concerns and ideas and discuss these issues in the weekly plenary meeting. To build alliances with other residents in the town, they initiated a free food stand to share the surplus of the permaculture farming produce and helped with translation for non-German-speaking refugees. To stay in alliance with non-human friends, they took constant care of trees and soil, built consolidating structures for branches, and compost facilities fertilizing the soil, to make a living condition for fungi, microorganisms, and animals.



hambt basecamp in Morschenich

- infrastructure of living

Under the control and infrastructural shortage of material resources, the anarchists built their own infrastructure of material necessities. Rain collectors filter the water as the main source of irrigation in permaculture farming and the water distiller produces clean water for drinking and cooking. The food needs are satisfied by dumpster diving, collecting farmland leftovers, and anarchist permaculture farming. Each of the methods builds up a circular living practice built on natural resources and capitalist leftovers.



+ nomadic scale

The nomadic scale indicates the de-territorialized supporting network of the anarchist community. It traces the circulation of embodied and textual knowledge in the anarchist community

After the halt of mining, attention towards the forest occupation cooled down. anarchists aim to cultivate solidarity across the wider activist community. Currently, printing is one major method to spread information and archive anarchist knowledge. The prints- whether stickers, zines, brochures, or posters- spread information outwards, appear in public spaces, and occupy critical interfaces. They hold the ability to produce a counter-narrative in opposition to the mainstream.

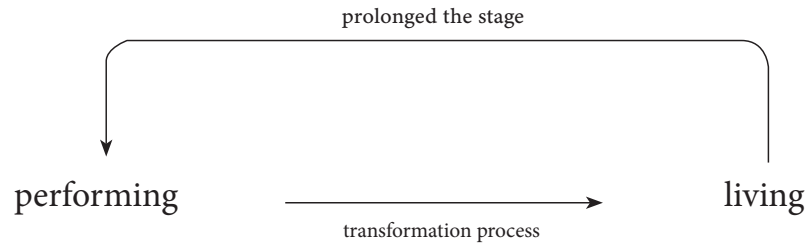
As an institution of knowledge, Print documents the hands-on (technical and embodied) knowledge and textual (ideological and theoretical) knowledge. We saw zines on knots and tree-climbing skills, journals about anarchist space production, and texts on anarchist philosophy. Meanwhile, the print shop holds the physical copy of the prints, being the spatial center of this knowledge exchange. Although the Hambi people

see the Hambach landscape as the main site of activism, their supportive network finds roots in many anarchist copy shops across the wider geography, such as The Kalabalik Anarchist Library in Berlin. The social space of 'Infoshop', for the anarchists, is a combination of the cultural centre, the meeting place, and the library, through which the anarchists interconnect with each other. Currently, the Hambi people plan to make a copy shop in the Hambi camp as an important info-base for the broader tree-sitting community. [\[go to zine print\]](#)

3. constructing context II: Morschenich

One of the towns that was evicted due to mining is Morschenich. Located close to the Hambach forest and mining site, this town of 600 inhabitants was first planned to be torn down completely for the coals underneath it. Most of the original residents were gradually resettled to Morschenich-Neu (new Morschenich), a town built solely for housing the relocated, since 2015. The city council offered the empty houses in Morschenich-Alt to refugees as temporary places to stay. The town also became the place where the anarchists built the basecamp for providing climbing gear, building materials for tree houses, and food supplies for the forest during the forest occupation.





protesting against...
temporal
production of image

living with...
durable



The performative side of the occupation and the protest prolonged the anarchist living experiment in both the forest and Morschenich.

The living side of the occupation made possible the protests by establishing infrastructure necessary for sustaining food, water, gears and tools, etc.

3.1. symbiosis: the town and the forest

/// clue

In 2018, the Hambach anarchists successfully called for a halt to mining altering the doomed future of Morschenich. The current residents were able to stay for longer as the demolition plan was canceled. The basecamp made the forest occupation in the "frontline" possible, and the occupation in return kept the basecamp in its place.

Ecologically, it is also vital for the forest that the town stays in its place, as the top layer of soil underneath Morschenich absorbs the rainwater necessary to maintain the groundwater level. The symbiosis between the town and the forest, between the basecamp and the tree houses, and between the anarchists and the residents shows the interdependency and solidarity across boundaries.

Despite its desolate conditions, the "ghost town" Morschenich is still inhabited by several different groups of people: the old residents who refused to or were incapable of relocating, the refugees, the activists living in the town, and the RWE employees. Each of them holds different concerns, desires, needs, and purposes. The symbiosis is constantly being obstructed and created in Morschenich.



3.2. future plan: surveillance, boundaries

/// problematic

As the demolition of Morschenich was canceled, the municipality and RWE company initiated a collaborative reformation plan, “Ort der Zukunft” (place of the future), to renovate this ruined town into a green town for innovative industry. The core incentive behind this renovation plan is to seek investment and attract green business. This future plan is again not for the current residents in Morschenich but rather for generating profits and development.

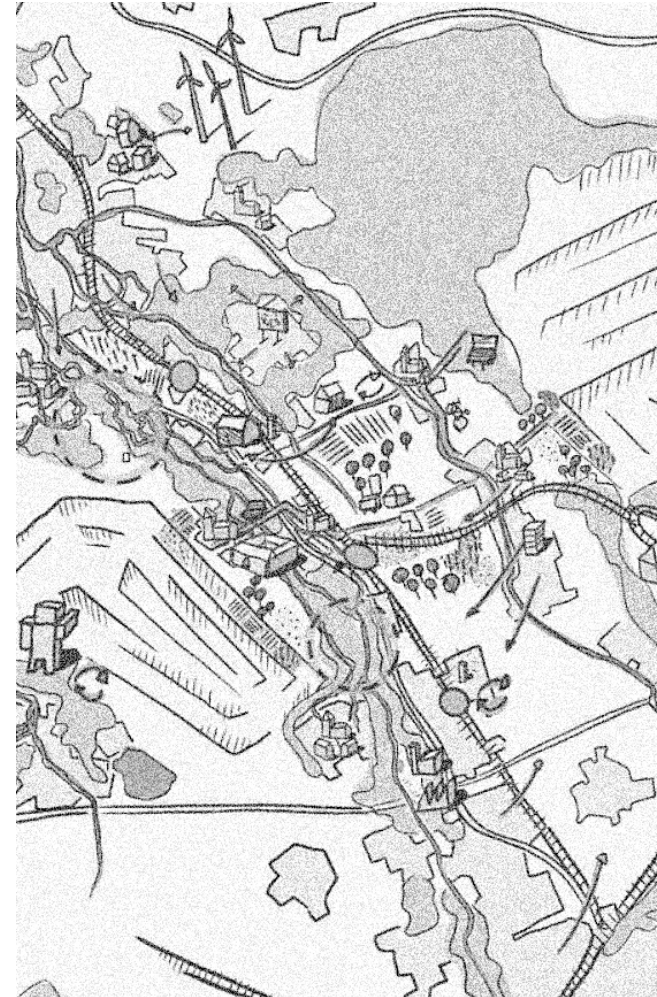
To ensure that the new planning can go smoothly, the town is constantly surveilled by the RWE security people who patrol the streets and stop people from entering the ruined buildings. Moreover, the municipality is strategically separating the Hambi activists and the refugees, creating gaps and conflicts between them in the prevention of their alliance. The anti-solidarity plan has been drafted into detail in the protocol. It is stated in the protocol that a budget is used to hire social workers to talk the anarchists out of the forest and Morschenich. Although the anarchists have been trying to build solidarity with the residents and refugees, the effort is often thwarted.



rendering view of Morschenich “Ort der Zukunft”



current condition with security guard biking by



Indeland GmbH and NEULAND Hambach GmbH planning for Morschenich

3.3. ruinous landscape: buildings, infrastructure

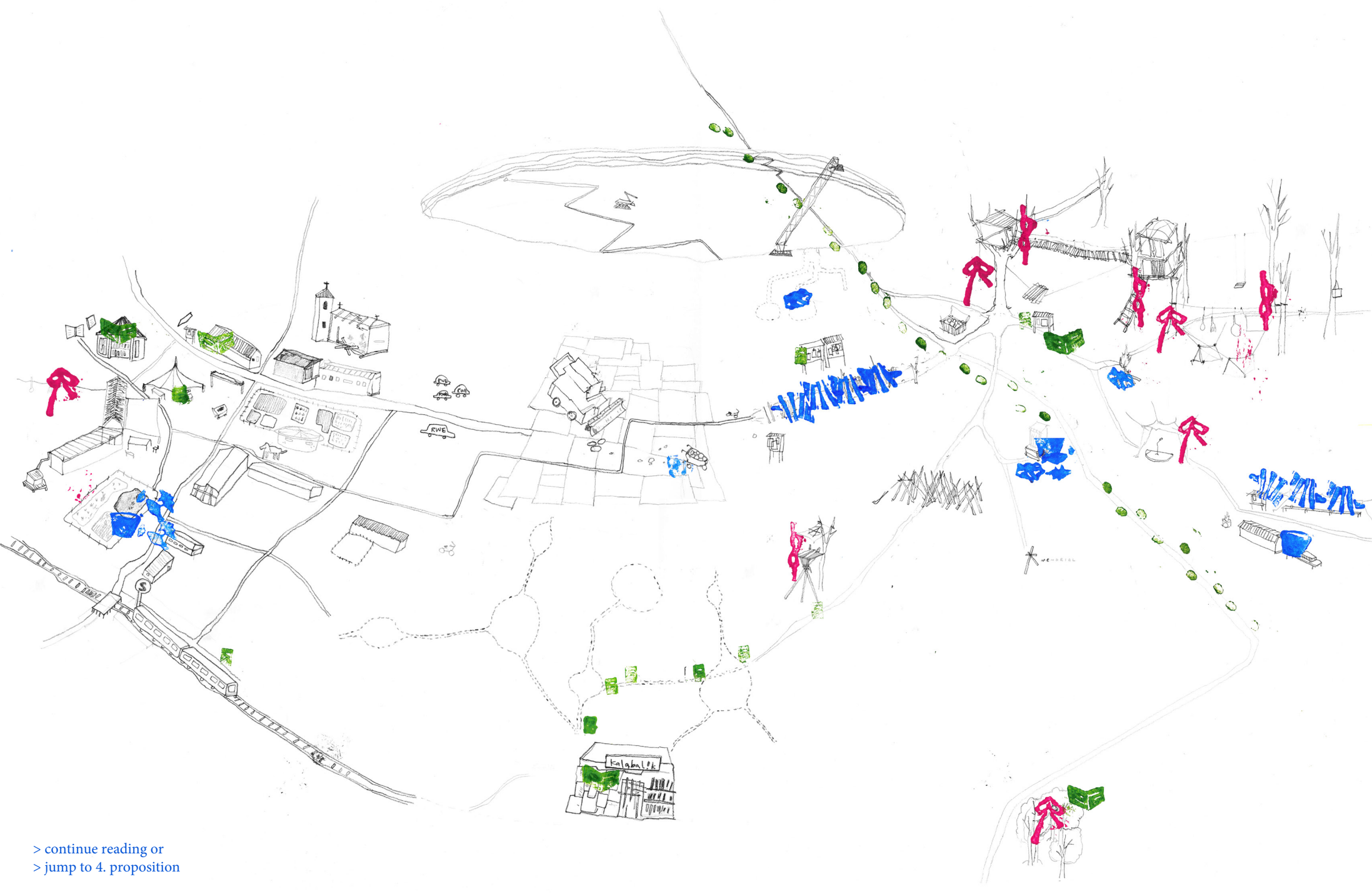
/// site

Although the demolition plan was stopped, the already destroyed cannot be revived. The dilapidated houses in the periphery built in the 1950s have been razed to the ground (map comparison 2018 vs 2022). The center of the town, which remains untouched yet unoccupied, is suffering from a lack of maintenance.

The evicted buildings still contain traces of living and multi-layered histories of a town. A full letter box, ceramic tiles, the medieval style of timber frame with brick infill... They are in need of being archived, repaired, and cared for, in a way that remembers the imprints of the past lives.

The infrastructure of the town is as desolate as the buildings. Without a shop, a drugstore, or groceries in the town, the residents must go to another village for shopping on a weekly basis. The only transportation infrastructure that goes through Morschenich is a minibus — with an unstable schedule. When the basic needs are so closely connected with the transportation infrastructure, the bus route almost drastically shapes the invisible contour of the residents' everyday landscape. Every aspect of life in Morschenich — food, water, heat, electricity — is dependent on a state-prescribed infrastructure.





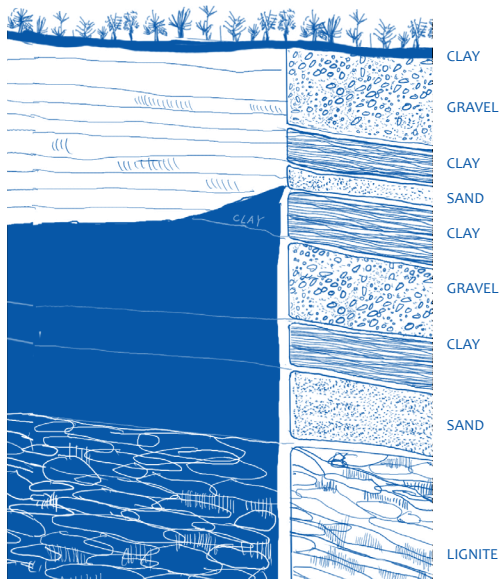
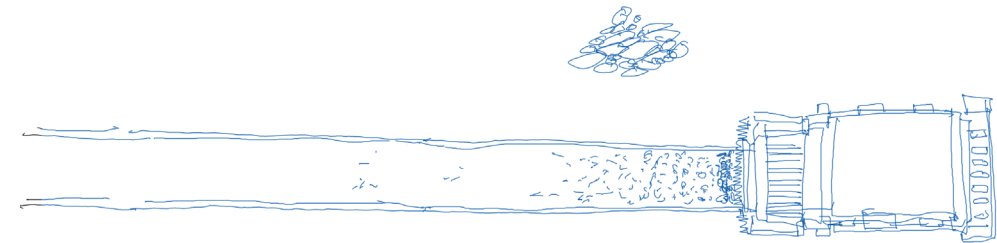
> continue reading or
> jump to 4. proposition



Soil

[n.]

1. the upper layer of earth in which plants grow, a black or dark brown material typically consisting of a mixture of organic remains, clay, and rock particles.
2. the territory of a particular nation.



I Soil ontology

The antagonism in the post-mining landscape is in its first place, an ideological struggle on the soil ontology. The obvious observation of the political tension would be the confrontation of two opposite forces: the institutionalized mining corporation and the grassroots, self-initiated environmental activists community. The mining company RWE represents a linear conception that sees soil as a profitable resource, exploiting the earth for accelerated human-centred development. On the other hand, environmental activists aim to synchronize life with soil and other non-human species. The anarchist practice counters the dominant progressivist narrative

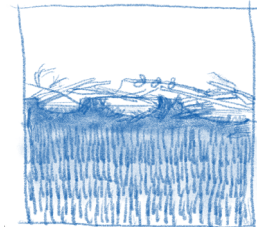
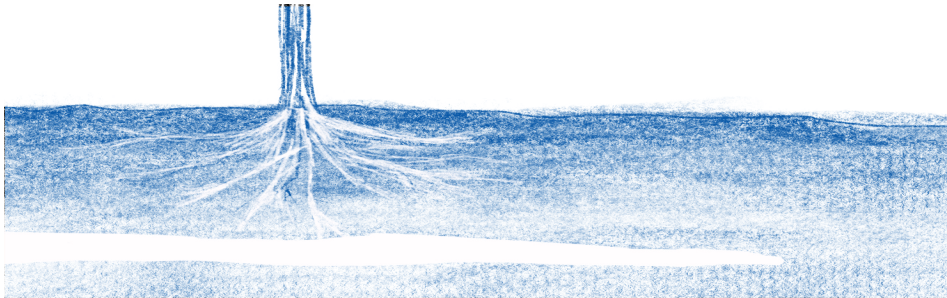
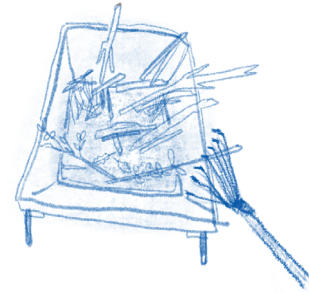
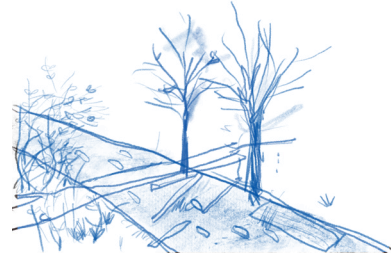
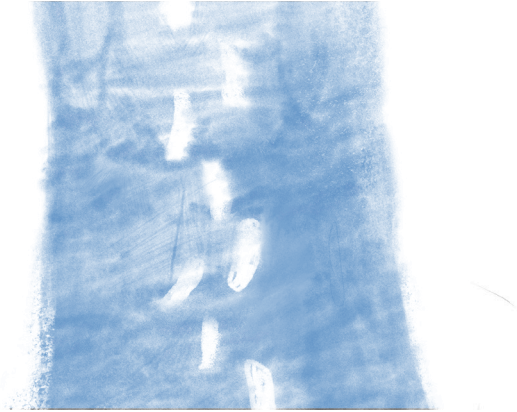
and at the same time, opens up this antagonism between two human forces, into an ecological resistance that entangles multiple species and stakeholders. This illuminates a more-than-human worlding with the land in the landscape of post-mining troubles.

Human-soil relations are an intriguing terrain to explore, with the entanglements of “material needs, emotional attachments, and the ethico-political in the more-than-human worlding.” (María 82) The anarchists embed care and relation-building in the everyday maintenance of soil, with the consideration of the living possibility dependent on soil.

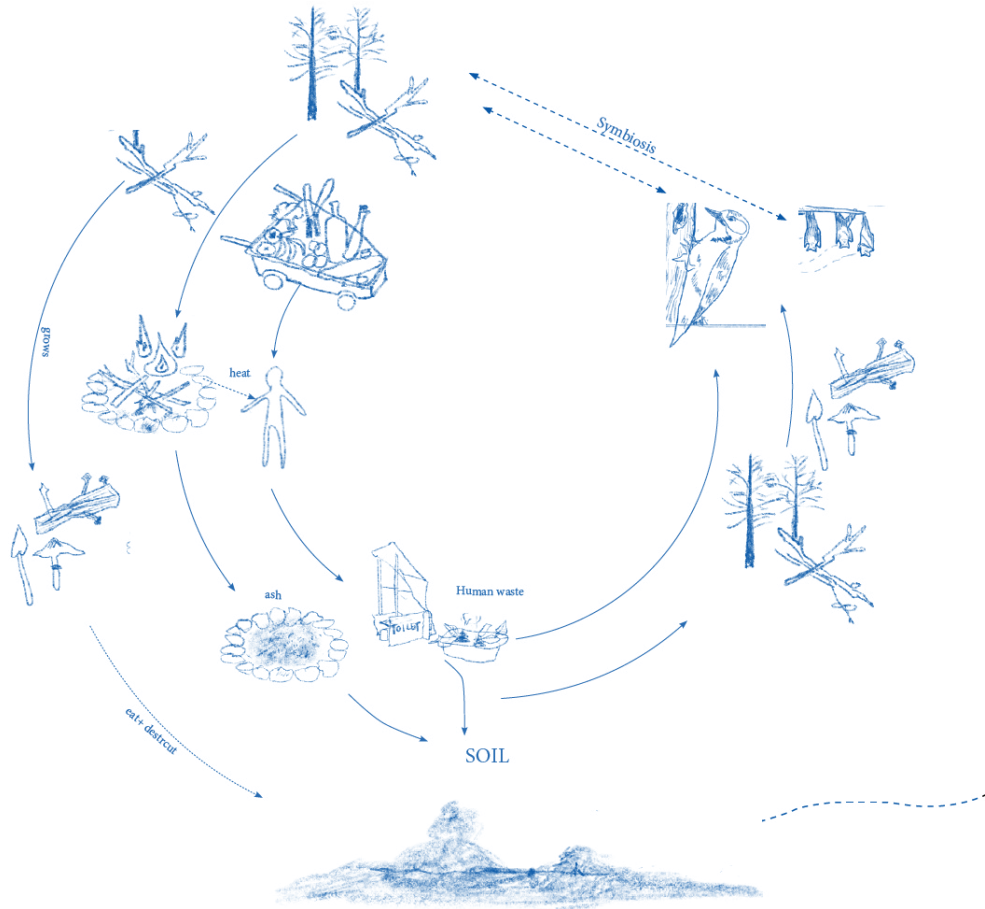


2 Soil as Anarchist tactic

_Paving Land



Stepping on the land is sometimes troublesome. Imagine on a wet rainy day in the forest, while walking, feet sinking into muddy earth and every step becoming difficult. This is a frequent experience while staying in the forest. Throughout history, paving has become a craft developed with solid resistance materials, from brick and stone tiles to the machinery paving of gravel and clay. The mainstream paving method is in search of permanency, human-centric, and automobile-centric convenience. In the forest, however, the anarchist is using a low-tech and organic way to pave the path. They collect the fallen branches and leaves from the monoculture area and place them on the muddy path-forming a small "bridge" on the moist land to step on. This intervention to the land creates softness and lightness while dealing with the as-found condition of troubles, and embraces the maintenance of land as a ritual in the community.



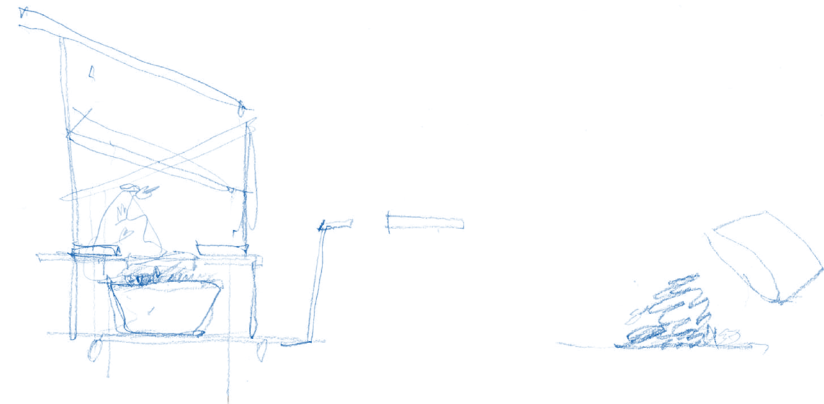
Permaculture

Permaculture connects agricultural practice and ecological care work. This is how the anarchist community produces their food and shares its results with neighboring human agents. The anarchists give away the surplus of their permaculture farming harvest to nearby residents so that they do not have to travel to the other town for groceries. The anarchists immersed themselves in the ecological cycle in an embodied manner.

Compost

Compost marks two things simultaneously: the flow of energy, whatever is consumed; and the emergence of life, whatever is born. It is therefore at the same time the destruction and the reconstruction of life, the death and life, the decay and growth.

“Growing soil” is an interdependent care work that returns what we consume to make food for microorganisms. In the anarchist practice, this is how they circulate the gift back to the land. Technically, composting is an important technique to process waste into the top layer of soil. Infrastructures are invented and constantly researched in maintaining everyday life in the forest, such as compost bins, removable toilet structures, and water filters.





Material studies _clay+ ash glaze, M



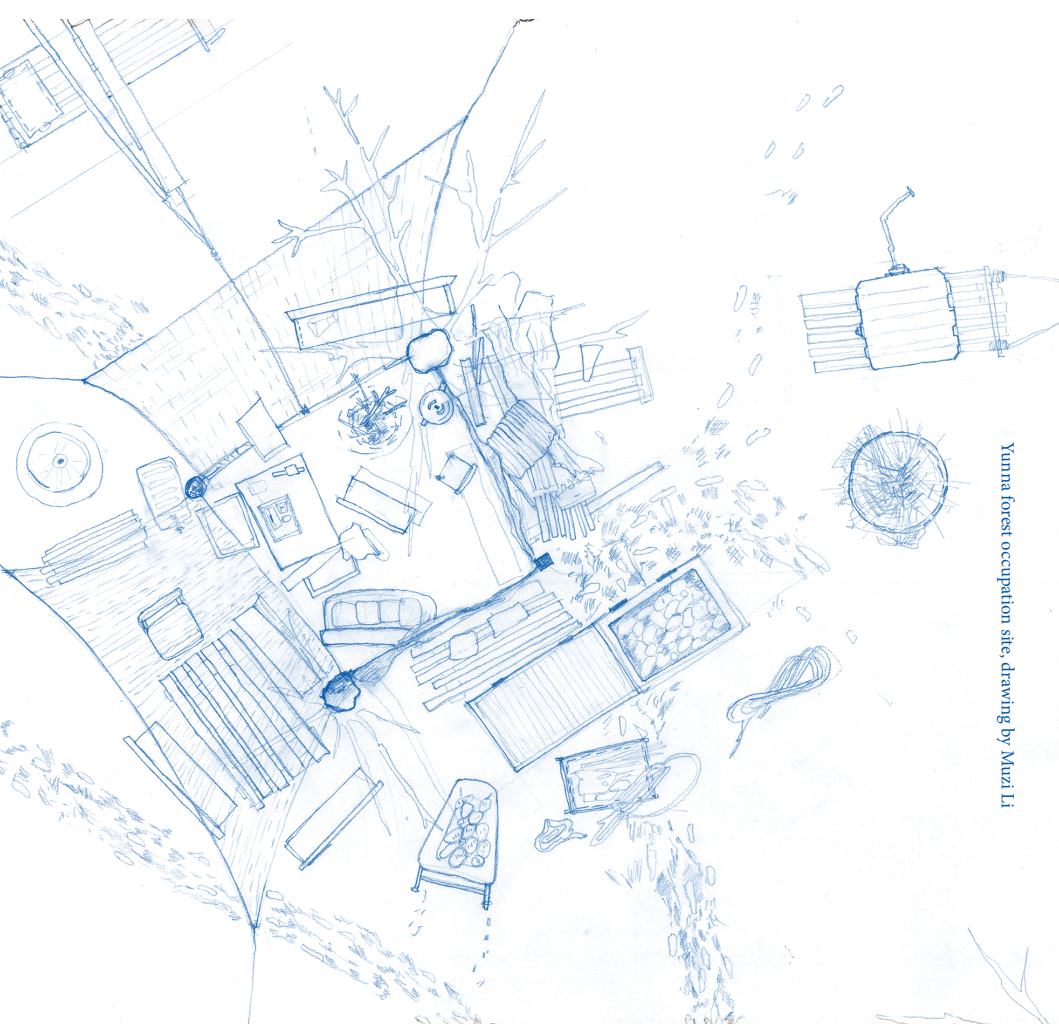
3 making of clay; flow of energy

"Around the hearth the first groups formed; around the hearth the first groups assembled; around it the first alliances formed; around it the first rude religious concepts were put into the customs of a cult..."

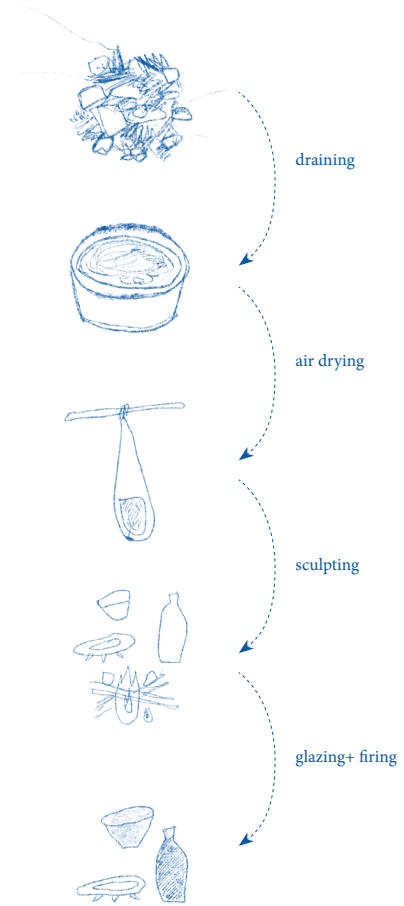
-Gottfried Semper



According to Semper, the fireplace gives birth to the first assembly and its alliances. The material context of the forest occupation traces back to the initial human building methods that protect one from the ******hostile environment. Living in the forest, fire brings about a dry and warm environment where people can meet, make, and gather. The material and sensual context of the environment is crucial for us to imagine life in the forest. This circulation of energy provokes a present and urgent practicality. By studying the energy flow, we explore ways to intervene with compost, water circulation, and heat conservation.

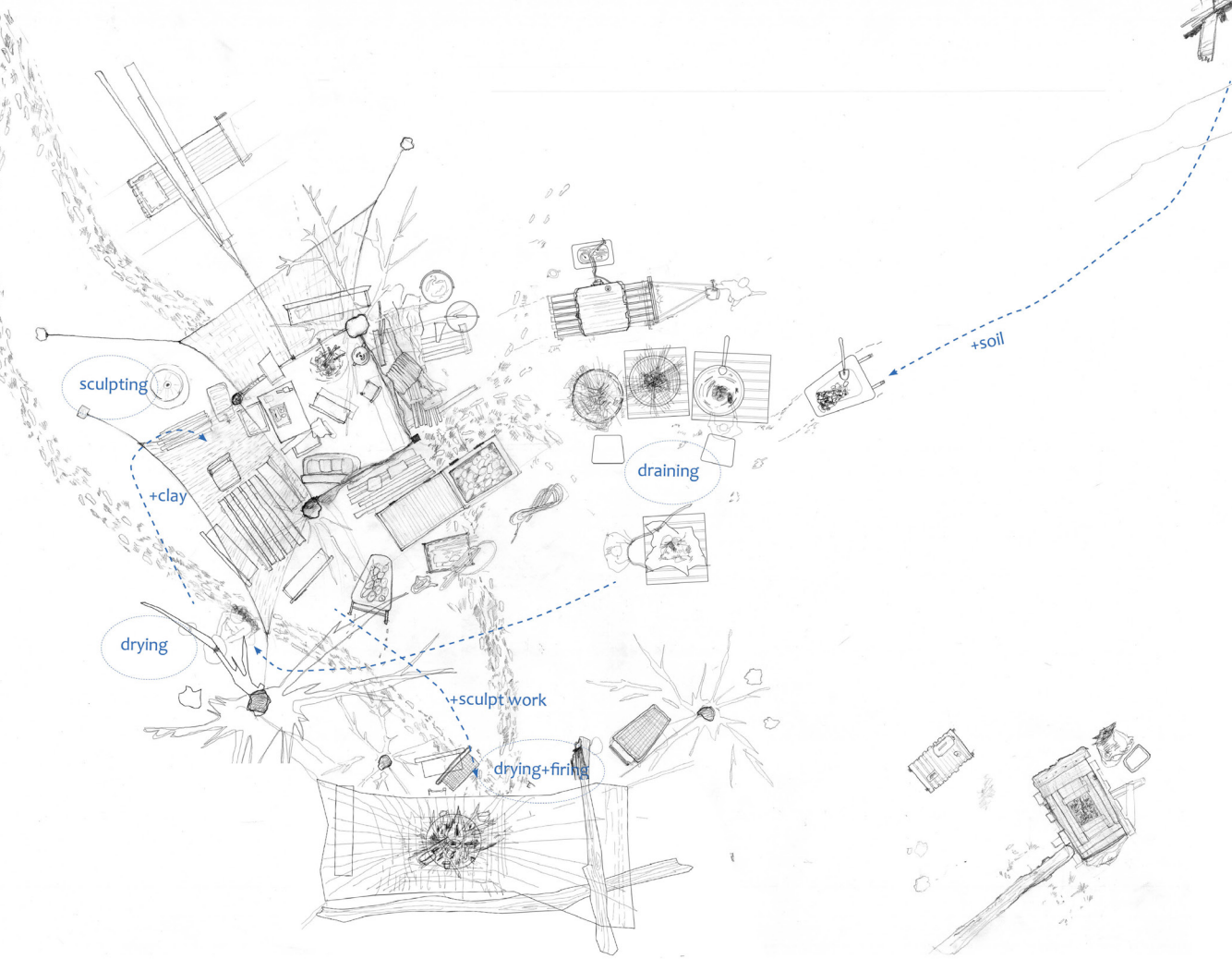


Yunna forest occupation site, drawing by Muzi Li



_human and the earth

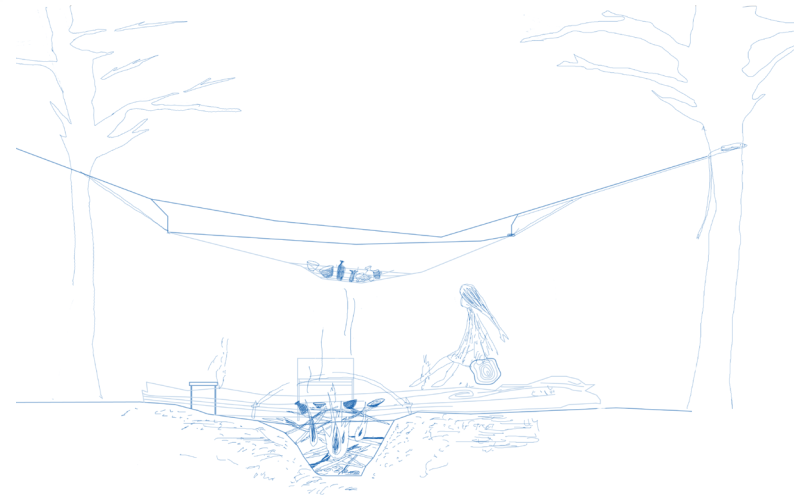
The material potential of soil leads us to the world of clay-making, the making of clay and ceramics has been a situated practice in the very initial stage of its invention. In the Hambach landscape, the incentive for building a clay workshop is to use the existing material condition to cultivate creative practices and an alternative economic model for the Hambach landscape. The craft of clay-making registers an inter-contact of one's body with the materiality of soil. The intimacy between one's skin and the rough coarse texture of soil forms an affective relation between the human body and the terrain.



4 soil workshop

_between human agents

The workshop is a place of gathering and making. Unlike a plenary meeting or a demonstrative gathering that imposes an assertive political agenda as such, the workshop is a spatial tactic of softness, a chance for embodied interaction. It provides a platform for connecting, negotiating, and forming alliances and at the same time reduces the threat of surveillance. It aims to bridge the gap between different groups of people (the old residents, the RWE employees, the Hambi activists, the refugees, etc.) on the politically contested ground across the forest and the ruined town of Morschenich.



_Ref

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Knot

[n.]

a fastening made by looping a piece of string, rope, or something similar on itself and tightening it.

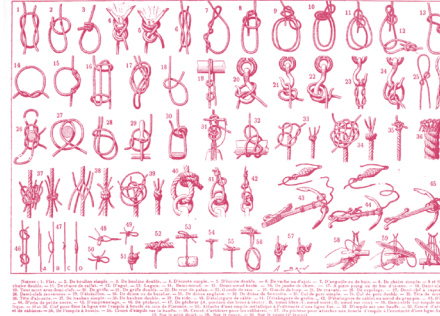
[v.]

1. fasten with a knot
2. make tangled



A tree house at Hambach Forest, photo by Rubin Zhou

1. knot



The recognition of knots' prevalence and significance resonates with many scholars' views, from Gottfried Semper's bold statement that buildings share the same origin with knotting to Tim Ingold's line ontology (Semper 1989; Ingold 2015).

One cannot ignore the critical role that knots play in Hambach, as they are ubiquitously pres-

ent in the forest. Knots in Hambach are simultaneously a construction method, an embodied language, and a self-initiated infrastructure. The activists use knots for every aspect of life in the forest ever since the occupation: to build and inhabit tree houses, to set up a rain cover, tabletop, and even a swing, to hang the kitchen utensils and climbing gears; to climb a tree, to secure oneself and others, to carry things up and down. In a sense, knots have shaped the world of the Hambi activists.

From a knot perspective, one comes to understand the anarchists' ideology, their tactics of resistance, and the current political situation in the forest. As the dependency on a living being, the tree, requires constant care, replacement, and adjustment, a knot's property of being tied and untied can provide certain flexibility and adaptability. When constructing a tree house, the hambi activists have been using knotting, intentionally, instead of using a treehouse attachment bolt (TAB), to protect the tree trunk. Precisely in this simple alternation of detail, the two-folded facets of the occupation unfold: the action of living with the trees is, on one hand, a performative action to stop the systematic devastation of resources, and on the other, a more permanent attempt to live with the surroundings sustainably.



tree house of knots, model by Jacee Tong

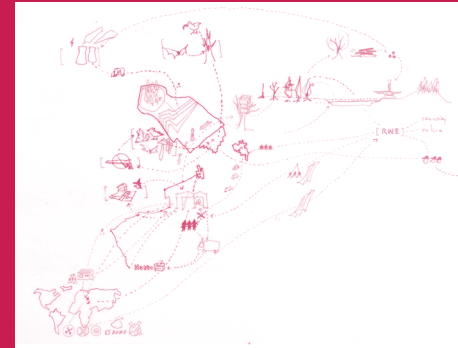
2. knot as infrastructure, as technology

“In Scandinavian languages, there are two words for knots: knude and knob. While a ‘knude’ describes any binding of rope in general, a ‘knob’ has specific properties and therefore is tied with the knowledge of varying functions and stories.” (Tong, 2023)

Simple as a knob — knots that contain specific functions internal to them, when used systematically, can be regarded as an infrastructure, a technology shared within and utilized by the Hambi activists. For example, the alpine butterfly knot, known for being able to tie at any point of a rope, is largely used in the forest. Combined with a pulley system, it will require less force to carry things, a bucket or material, up and down, therefore enabling the action of building on a tree.

An infrastructure contains an inherent disposition, as Keller Easterling defines in her book *Extrastatecraft*, “a form of hidden agency that inclines to the benefit of certain groups” (2014). In a similar way, Latour (1992, 259-60) describes the ‘built-in’ prescriptions of technologies as scripts. He believes that an artefact invites a program of actions or behaviours, just as the instructions of a programming language. In the forest, knots as a self-initiated infrastructure enable the movement of resistance. It allows the activists to create a system that enables their movement and at the same time restricts the police’s. With the use of knots, they are able to create a vertical transportation system as well as a transversal one among trees (more developed in oak town- the evicted area in Hambach forest), making use of the height of the trees to hinder eviction. The image below taken during one eviction perfectly illustrates the ‘built-in’ prescriptions of technology: when police needed to approach the activists, they could not do so through knots and ropes and had to resort to the help of cranes.

3. *knotting* as action of resistance, as embodied knowledge



recurrent workshops are climbing and building sessions where one participant will share the knowledge of knots through doing. The action of knotting often begets stories as each knot has a specific function and links with a specific past — the personal one and the collective, in a similar way knitting or crocheting does — the making of continuous knots. I have come to realize that not just the result, but the action itself is a resistance through building solidarity.

“Knotting is symptomatic of the binding of lives in relations of kinship and affinity.” - Tim Ingold

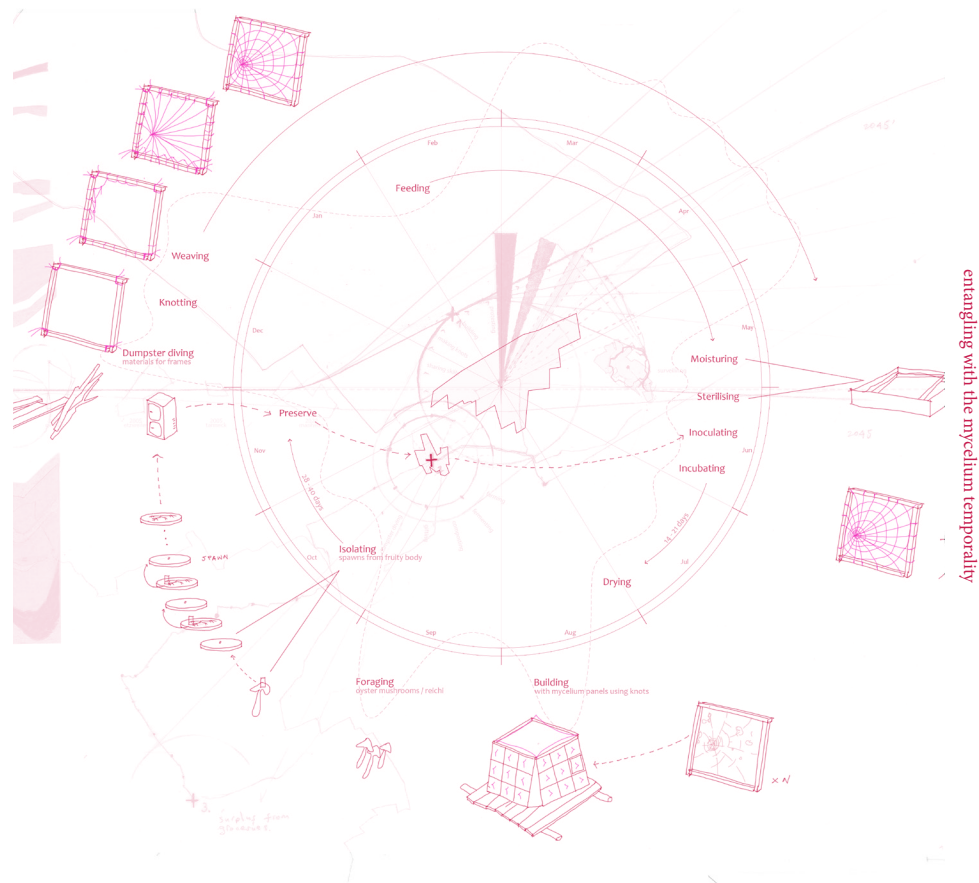
One could also, akin to Ingold’s statement, extend knotting to the metaphorical realm when theorizing the Hambach activists actions in the landscape of Hambach. The activists have been actively making kins with the human and non-human actors in the landscape. To align themselves with a bat and even a mushroom in the forest radically forms a new political subjectivity, interspecies solidarity that has the power to fight against systematic exploitation based on exclusion and isolation. The lawsuit case from the global environmental groups that eventually called for an end to the mining was, in fact, drafted based on the fact that the endangered species Bechstein’s bat had been threatened by the mining.



tree sitters confronting the police: photo by Daniel Charard

knot cannot be discussed without acknowledging the performance of knotting, Tim Ingold draw our attention to the actions — to knot, as a verb (2015). Through multiple fieldworks, we have come to see knotting as a form of embodied knowledge that is shared among the participants through doing together. During the skill sharing festival in the forest, some

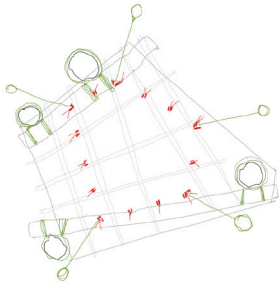
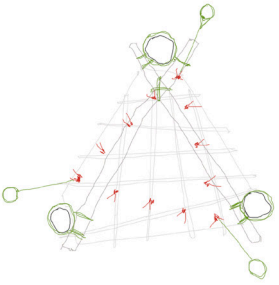
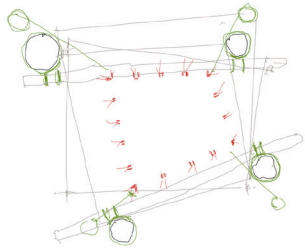
4. knot, temporality, mycelium



As the mining was halted by the court, the short-term occupation has been prolonged into semi-permanent living. The frequency of direct confrontation has been lowered ever since, making it possible for the living side of the anarchist practice to come to the foreground. With less confrontation now, many people left, even for who stayed in the forest all the time during the eviction period. The hambi activists are now facing a new predicament: they need to recruit more people to experiment with living in the autonomous zone and work to prevent unexpected evictions.

The action of knotting both physically and metaphorically becomes the inspiration for the introduction of a new material: mycelium. The physical knot, currently used for the connection, can be extended to the surface through knitting, crocheting, and weaving; the metaphorical knot encourages further entanglement with other species. With the limitation of equipment in the forest, the making of mycelium facades takes full use of the seasonal change. In this sense, introducing mycelium means introducing a new temporality that the hambi anarchists have to synchronize with. This may require more maintenance effort, but can form a seasonal ritual of building within the forest.

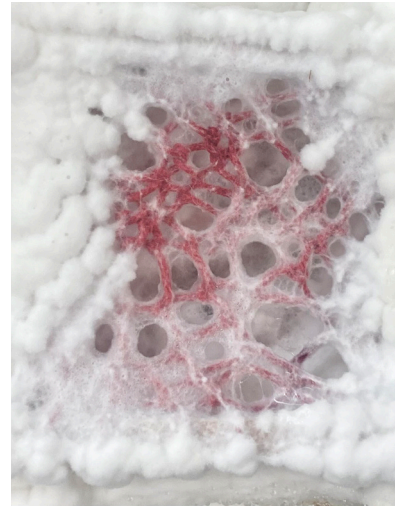
Can the knowledge of the knot — knot as infrastructure, as an action of resistance — be archived and used in Morschenich? Can knotting become a point of departure where inhabitants start to build solidarity from co-making?



tree house form responding to trees



tree house construction of knot



material test

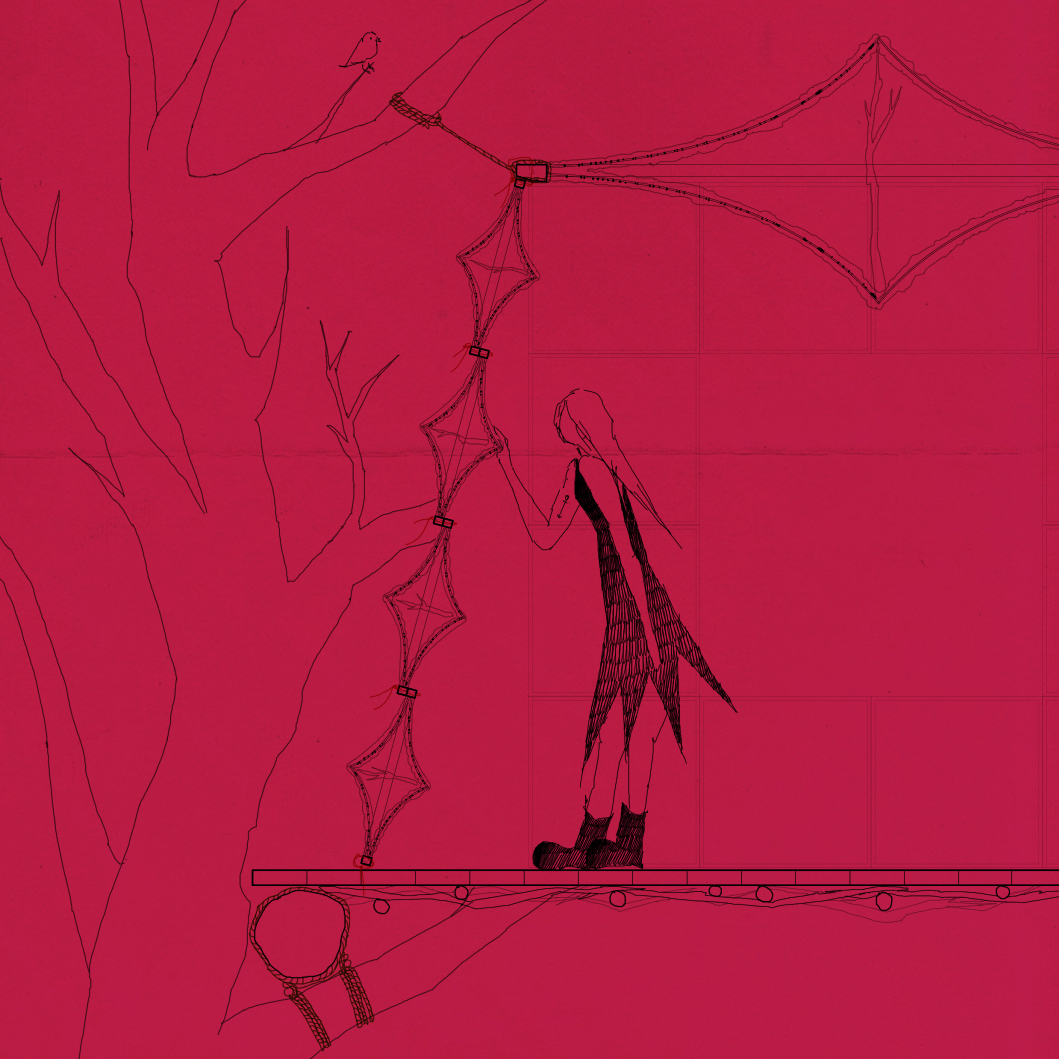
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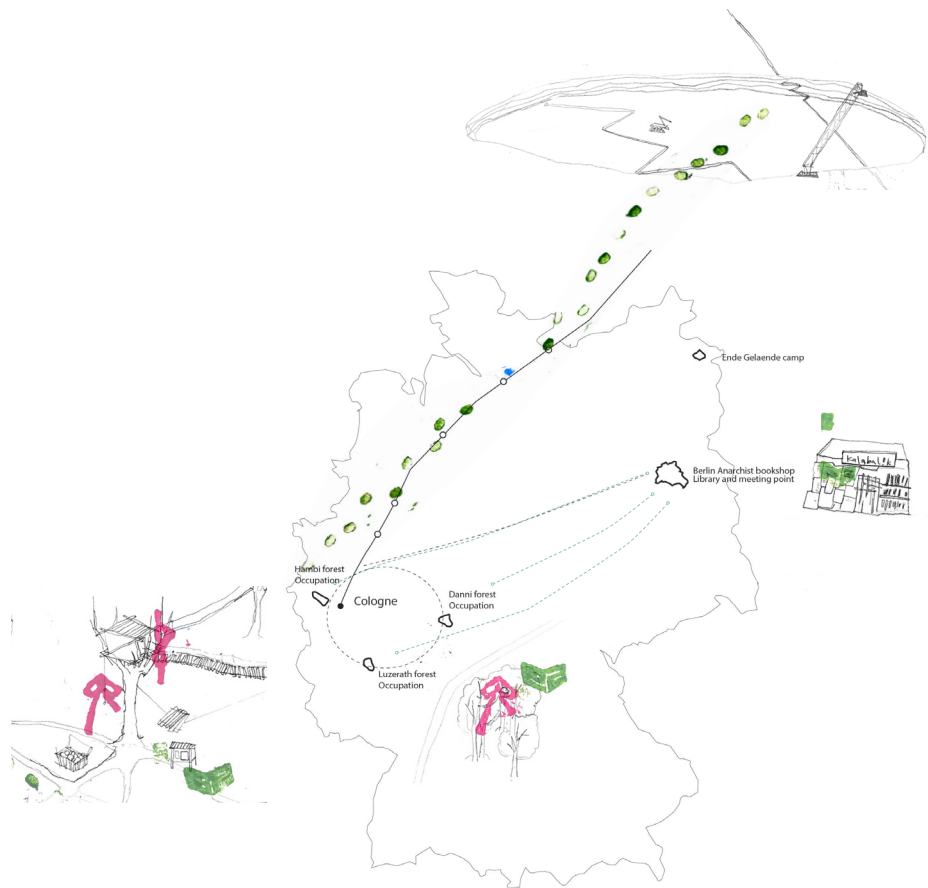
Print

[n.]

- 1.the text appearing in a book, newspaper, or other printed publication, especially with reference to its size, form, or style.
2. an indentation or mark made on a surface or soft substance.

[v.]

- 1.produce by a process involving the transfer of text or designs to surfaces.



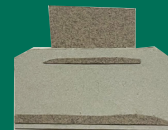
Mapping - Anarchist print

I Print Ontology

“Freedom of the press is guaranteed only to those who own one.” - A. J. Liebling

[The printer]

place: in the communal working space



“Anarchists figure prominently in the resurgence of letterpress media and other older printing equipment; they find in an erstwhile obsolete technology an opportunity for creative resistance.”

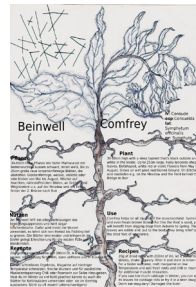
“Printers and presses did more than report on the movement; they were constitutive of it, and their vitality in anarchist communities helps explain anarchism’s remarkable persistence in the face of continuous harassment, arrest, assault, deportation, and exile.”

- Kathy E. Ferguson

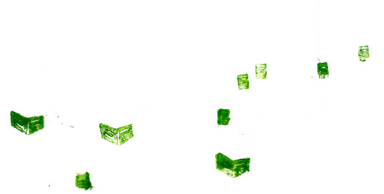
It was in the Berlin Anarchist Library (Kala-balk) where we met Taro. On the night of early autumn, they were giving a presentation about the activist movement in the Hambach forest from the insider’s view. Taro comes here regularly to offer talks about the forest occupation. Sometimes larger audiences come, up to about 30-40, and sometimes much fewer. Places like the Anarchist Library are where the anarchist and activist groups share knowledge and skills within their anarchist network while extending their connection to a broader public community. As for Taro and many people in the Hambach forest occupation site, they stay in the Hambach home only for a part of the year and come back to school or old home during the rest. When she is away from the occupation site in the forest, in her words, she would like to “contribute in another way” by giving a talk, sharing information, and connecting with others. (Li 2023)



Print_Hambi Library, by Muzi Li



Posters and Zines, made by Hambi activists



When we later proceeded to Hambi camp and Hambach Forest, we realized the importance of prints in constituting and maintaining the situated anarchist practice. Prints aid the anarchists in voicing their needs and beliefs, developing a common knowledge base, and establishing a collective ideology. In the Hambi camp, there is a small library storing both the anarchist literature as theoretical references and the RWE legal documents and government protocols as strategic supports. In the forest occupation sites, multiple info stands showcase maps, texts, and posters through which the objective and chronicle of the tree-sitting movement are made visible. Through various formats-stickers, posters, zines, booklets, literature-, theoretical and embodied knowledge circulates in the anarchist community.

10

Currently, the anarchists are planning to build a copy shop in Hambi camp as a place to produce and document textual materials. We see the importance of a copy shop as knowledge producing, information sharing, archiving, and history-making.

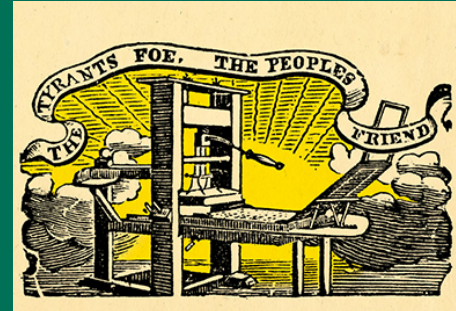
2 Radical Print History

While the stock image of the anarchist as a masked bomber or brick thrower prevails in the public eye, a more representative figure should be a printer at a printing press. - Kathy E. Ferguson, Letterpress Revolution - the Politics of Anarchist Print Culture

printer_hambi prints



Letterpress Revolution
The Politics of Anarchist Print Culture

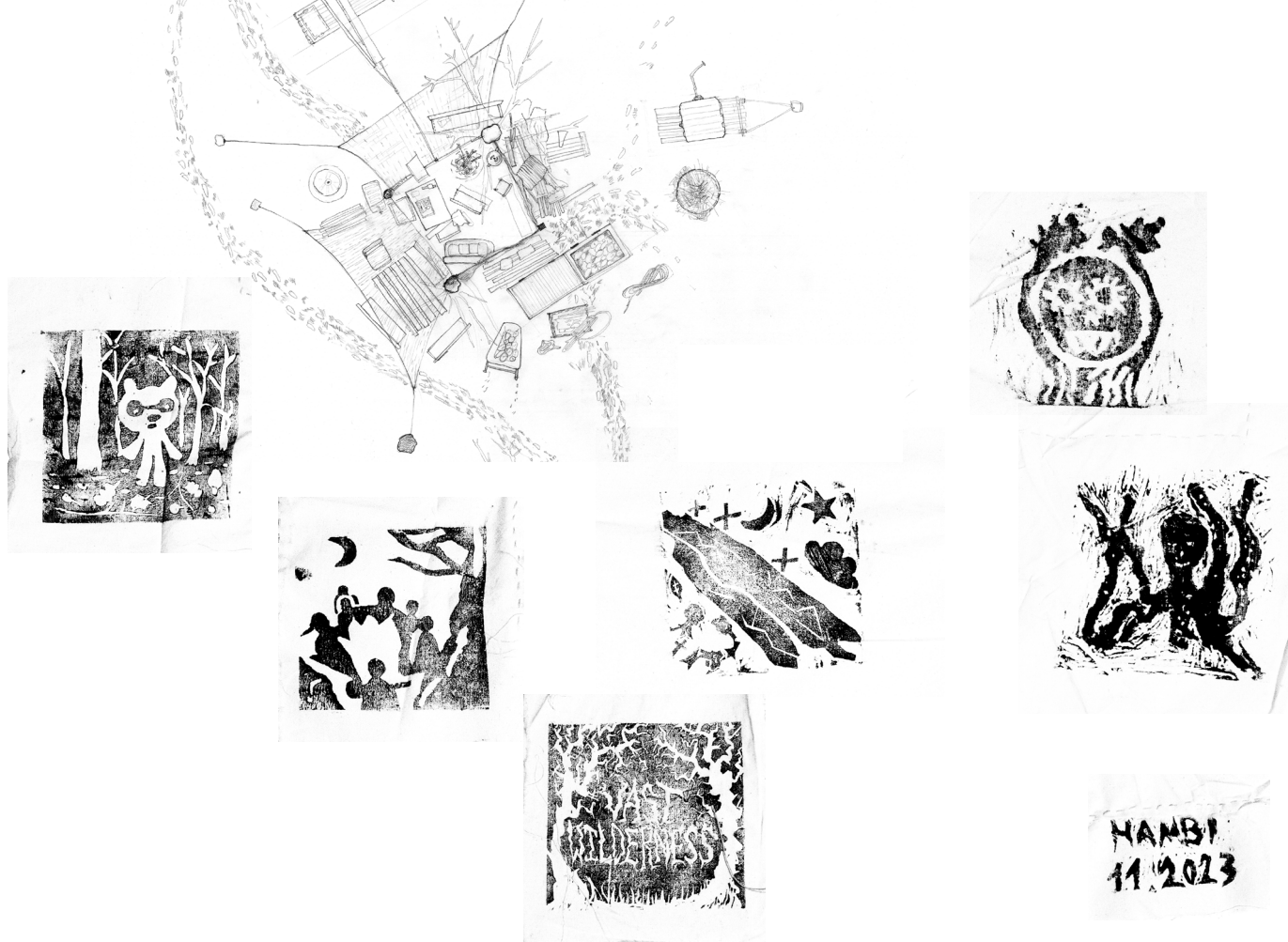


In fact, what we observed in Germany was a glimpse into how prints, printers, and the printshop constructed the local anarchist community as well as global anarchist discourse. The critical role that print plays will become evident when placed within the radical print history of anarchism.

Printing not only documented but also constituted the global grassroots anarchist movement from the late nineteenth century to the 1940s. When the control of printers becomes equivalent to the control of discourse, people's takeover of printing as a technology signifies a transition from centralized monologue to a polyvocal narrative. Printers and presses coordinate brains, bodies, and machines and generate energy to make anarchism possible (Ferguson 2023).

Infoshops like the Berlin Anarchist Library (Kabalalk), on the other hand, are physical spaces that not only archive and distribute knowledge of anarchism but also serve as locales of resistance where solidarity starts to grow. Tom Goyens (2009) articulates the role and meaning of infoshops clearly that “[t]hey form nodes in a network of solidarity and grassroots direct action. Infoshops themselves are seen as forms of direct action; an inkling of anarchist living amidst a dominant culture based on property and competition.”

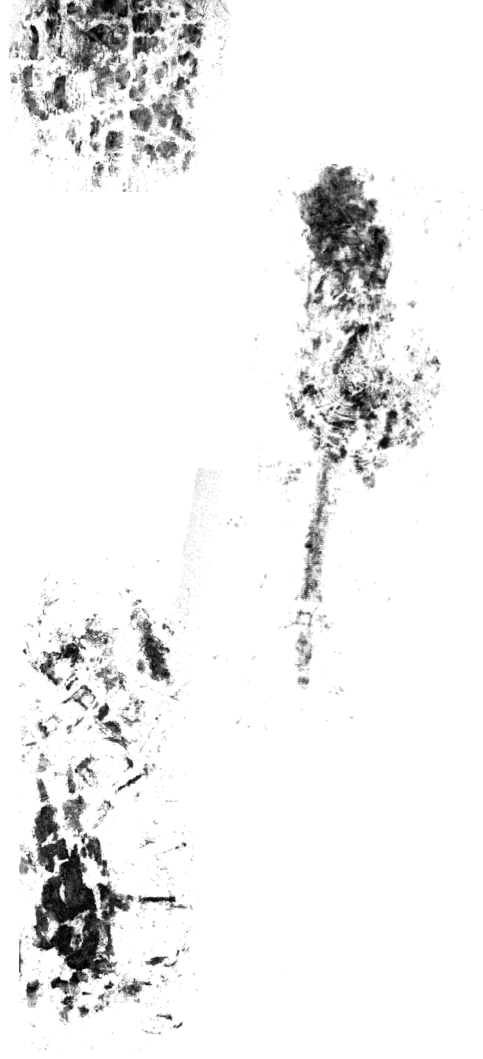
3. print workshop [attempt]



In the exploration of printing as knowledge sharing, co-making, documenting, story-telling, and post-trauma healing, we hosted a print workshop in the forest occupation site during the Assembly Festival. We asked the Hambi people to verbally share their memories on the forest occupation and then make them into lino prints. The hands-on practice of cutting and printing is always accompanied with chatting and storytelling when the anarchists share their personal experiences of climbing trees, building tree houses, police eviction, and their personal pasts. The print workshop, on the one hand, provides a place for the anarchist community to express and exchange personal anecdotes and on the other hand, offers us a closer listening to the anarchist oral stories, needs, and beliefs.



Frottage print in Hambach forest by Jacek Tong and Muzi Li



_Frottage



Frottage is the action of printing on surfaces to make records of their materiality. With this method, we make visible the material memory of the broken, ruined past- the burnt-down tree houses, the demolished buildings, the withering trees. Each of them tells the story about the mining-altered landscape, and the people, creatures, and materials living within.

4 Print [proposition]

Print is simultaneously an action, a material, a machine, a place, and a network. As a practice that critically remembers, archives, and leaves traces, printing will be explored as a motif that informs the building processes, architectural functions, details, and our working methods. The properties of printing correspond to the intention and contribute to the theoretical background of the project, as it aims to act against the erasure and control of memories.

Actions related to printing to be explored include overlay, archive, stamp, footprint...



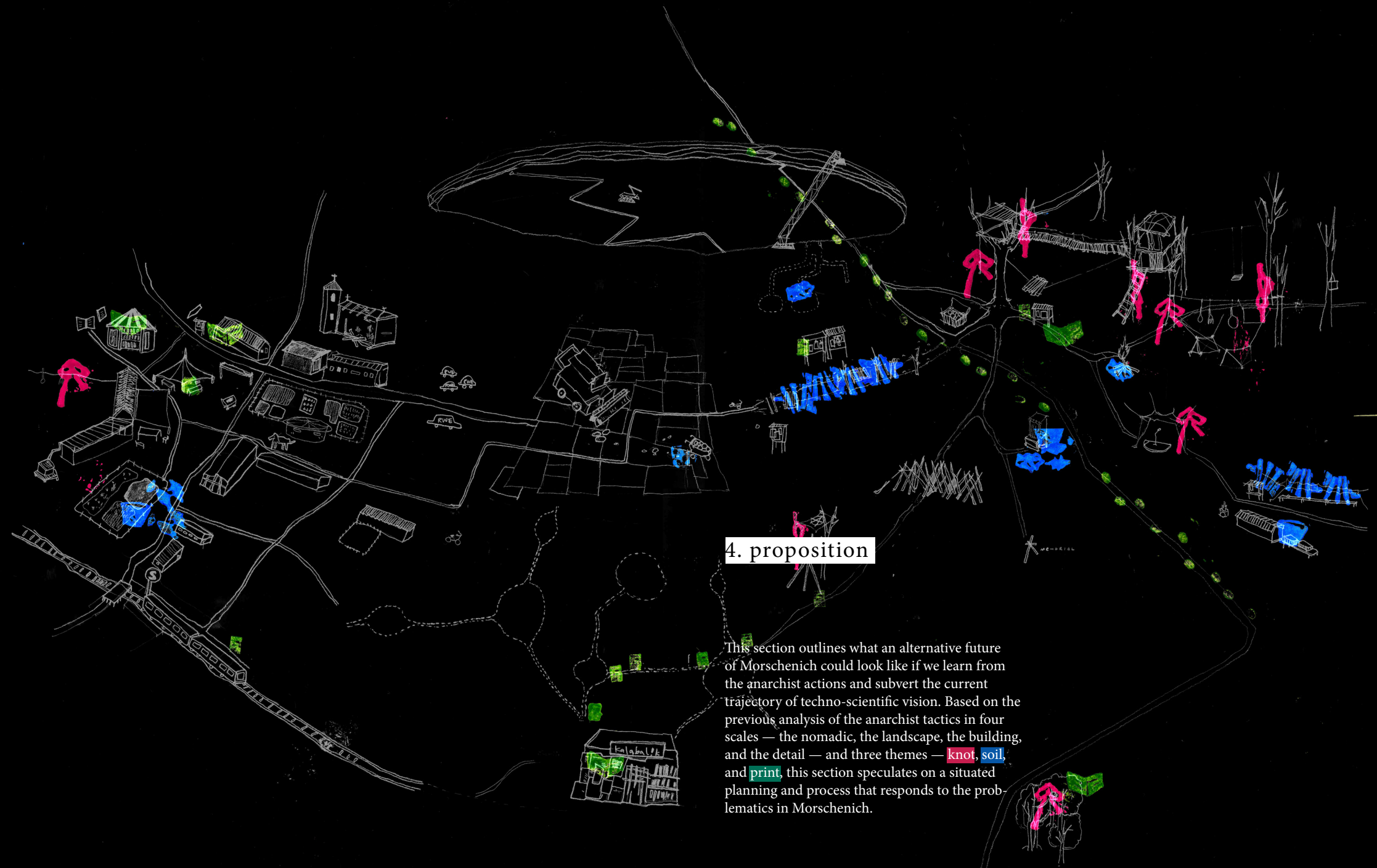
Ref

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Li, Muzi. 2023. *The Art of Living on the Post-mining Landscape, A study into Hambach Forest Occupation*



4. proposition

This section outlines what an alternative future of Morschenich could look like if we learn from the anarchist actions and subvert the current trajectory of techno-scientific vision. Based on the previous analysis of the anarchist tactics in four scales — the nomadic, the landscape, the building, and the detail — and three themes — **knot**, **soil**, and **print**, this section speculates on a situated planning and process that responds to the problematics in Morschenich.



4.1. the Institutes of Anarchism

/// proposition

“Anarchism is, itself, an idea, even if a very old one. It is also a project, which sets out to begin creating the institutions of a new society ‘within the shell of the old,’ to expose, subvert, and undermine structures of domination but always, while doing so, proceeding in a democratic fashion, a manner which itself demonstrates those structures are unnecessary.” (Graeber 2004)

Situated in the ruined town of Morschenich, the Institutes of Anarchy spatialises the anarchist planning strategies contrary to the production-centred planning vision by governmental forces. It is imagined to be a place of both producing and archiving the anarchist knowledge gained through the forest occupation as a prefigurative living experiment. The town of Morschenich was once protected by the forest occupation from planned destruction. Now with the future of the forest remaining uncertain, Morschenich is imagined to stay in symbiosis with the forest occupation by preserving their spirit. Through three intertwined institutes of **knot**, **soil** and **print**, the Institutes of Anarchy explores how anarchist self-initiated tactics could repair the wounded material and social infrastructures in the ruinous landscape.

“Institution provides, rather than limitation, an invention, a positive model for action. (Tosel 2020) The institution altered the anarchist space from chaos to auto-organisation, transferring the practice from temporal to durable.” (Li 2023)

Contrary to the governmental institution that centralizes political power by layer of bureaucracy, the anarchist institution aims to ensure direct democracy and political horizontality (Goldman 1914). In the same way, the Institutes of Anarchism act against capitalist enclosures and encourage a common base of direct action. Anarchism is both an idea and a practice; it is rooted in everyday doings and suggests immediate agency.

4.2. event and space

/// program

The three institutes (**knot**, **soil**, **print**) defines both the repairing process and the resulting programs, taking both the event and the space as the subject of design. The project treats the making of space as equally important as the space itself, seeing actions as central to the anarchist planning.

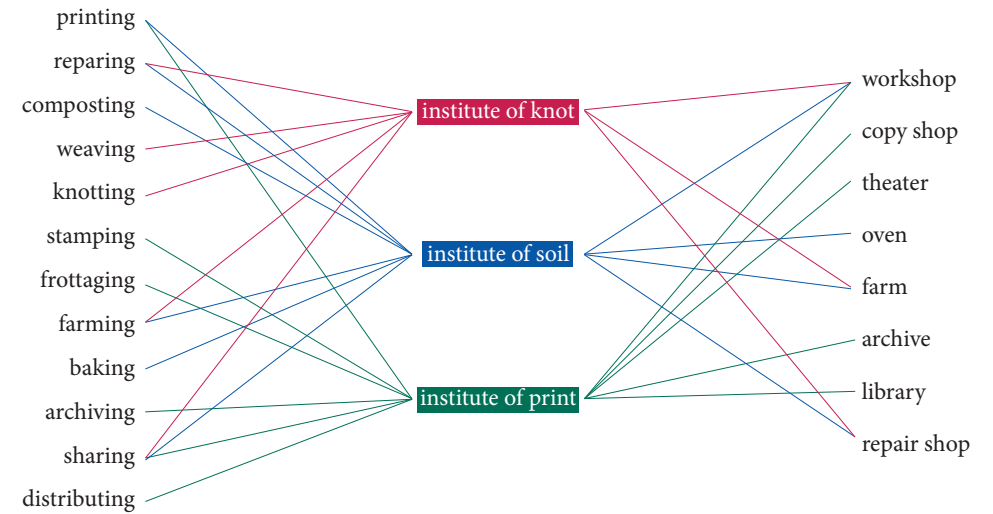
As mapped out in the diagram on the right, the intersecting possibility of these three institutes co-creates the spatial configuration consist of both actions (verbs) and places (nouns).



people dancing around fire creates simultaneously an event and a space.
(print on fabric by Hambi people. Made during print workshop)

v.
event program

n.
functional program



Four scales

(anarchist tactics)

detail scale
building scale
landscape scale
nomadic scale

embodied knowledge, skills, crafts
squatting, communal gathering
self-initiated infrastructure
producing counter narrative

against

(the problematics)

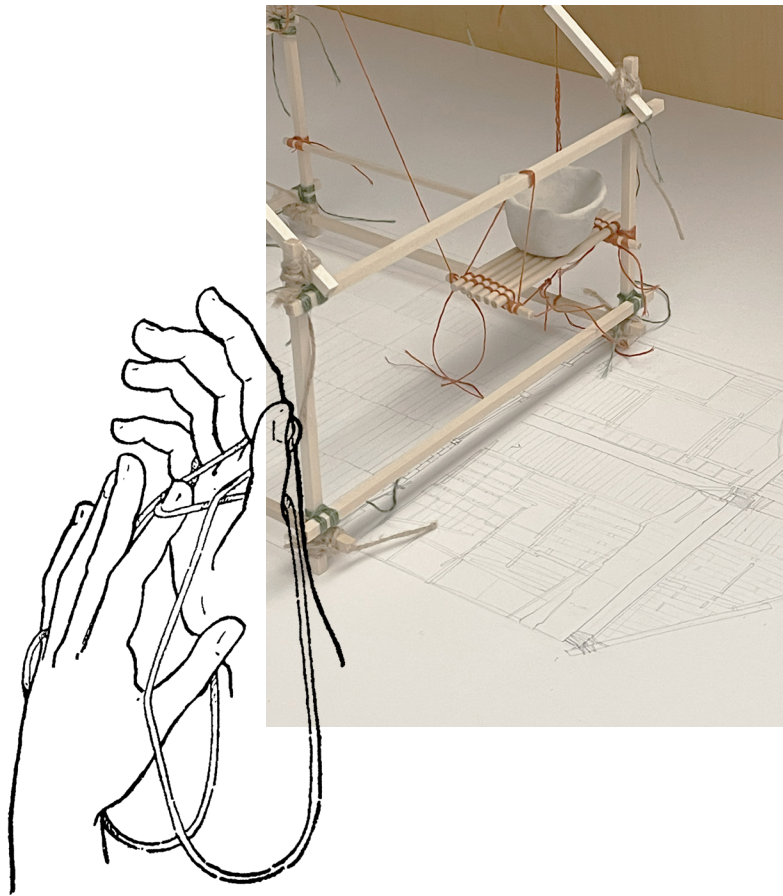
wounded desolate buildings, wounded relations
top-down planning, property ownership, surveillance
self-initiated infrastructure
producing counter narrative

Three institutes

institute of knot [in charge of making possible the bodily movement, making kin]
institute of soil [in charge of nurturing life, circulating energy, gathering heat, filling the gap]
institute of print [in charge of producing, archiving and spreading the knowledge, documenting the traces]

5. working plan

/// approach



This section synthesizes our past working method and envisions their potential to feed into the proposition. Here the three institutes of **knot**, **soil** and **print** lead us through the situated field research and hands-on material experiment, towards anarchist spatialisation.



5.1. fieldwork

/// method

The ethnographical fieldwork is central to the project as it provided us with first-hand knowledge of the situation that differs from the media representation of it. The fieldwork consists of several visits to the Hambach Forest and the town of Morschenich, with us staying in the space with the anarchists. Through the embodied experience of knowing and making, we get closer to the anarchist's world, unpacking their actions, ideas, struggles, and beliefs.

Oct 2023 - initial observation of the current situation in Morschenich and the Hambach Forest, with a focus on the anarchist self-built spaces (Hambi camp 2.0 and forest occupation sites)

Nov 2023 - During the Hambi festival, we stayed 5 days in the occupation site, getting involved in the everyday ritual and habitual of forest living. As a catalyst, we hosted a print workshop in the forest and invited people to make lino cuts of their own Hambi memories.

Mar 2024 (planned) - collect information for possible sites in Morschenich

Apr 2024 (not yet planned) - returning visits, possible on-site action/ workshop



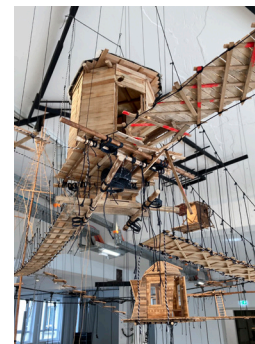
print from charcoal in the post-arsenry area



helping with tree house building



tree house and platform



activist architecture exhibition about hambach in Frankfurt



waking up in the forest



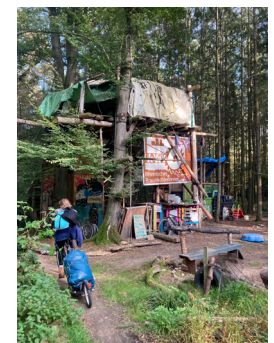
free shop at hambi camp



info talk at berlin anarchist bookstore



print workshop

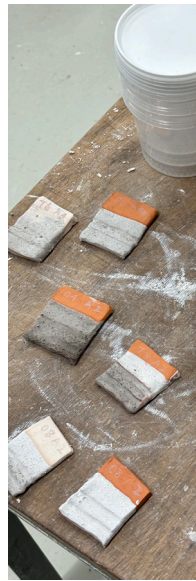


tree house in the forest

5.2. material test

/// method

The emphasis on making and hands-on experience mirrors the anarchist spirits of direct action. The material test of **soil** (clay), **knot** (weaving and mycelium), **print** (frottage) will continuously inspire the project from a detail scale, as they are central to the processes of building and the spatial configuration. We believe the materiality holds the agency to inform actions, relations, and spaces. The test will also take into consideration the site's material, social and economic condition to ensure the feasibility of collective making on site. Eventually, the knowledge of material can be textualized into an open-source material handbook, becoming a catalyst for direct actions to happen in Morschenich and beyond.



soil



knot



print



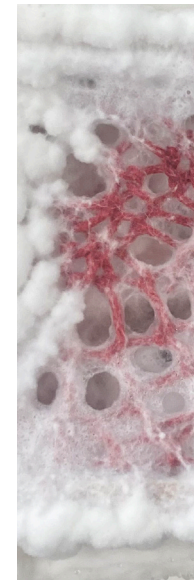
soil



print



knot



knot

5.3. hand-in

/// deliverables

- material test

knot: weaving + mycelium samples

soil: clay samples

print: prints, frottage

-repairing handbook

craft (material + action)

design (formal + methodological)

situation (scenario of co-making)

-spatial configuration

drawings (1:500, 1:100, 1:10)

maps

models

references

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