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1 Aerial View of the new Retail Buildings, Public Plaza & new Bridge to the East
Project Details

Author
Wee, H.K. and SKEW Collaborative

Title
XSD (Xishuidong) Industrial Heritage Retail District

Output
Architectural Design

Function
Commercial New Build

Location
Wuxi, China

Dates of Completion
2013
EXISTING INDUSTRIAL TYPOLOGIES & CANAL CONDITIONS

NEW BRIDGE IN RELATION TO HERITAGE & NEW ARCHITECTURE

1 Industrial typologies - the old and New Architecture
Summary of the Work and its Significance, Originality, and Rigour

This award-winning project raises the question of speed and progress within the context of China’s rapid urbanisation and expanding middle class. Lewis Mumford attributed the biggest invention of our urban-industrial revolution to the mechanical clock, where organized time gave meaning to cities, giving urbanites the possibility of leisure. The city’s connections to community and the environment today are instead lost in the world of consumerist spectacles.

This project was designed against the context of China’s pursuit of luxury housing in the gated housing communities immediately adjacent to
it. Zoned alongside this problematic development, this project takes on the challenge of addressing some of these problems. With a renewed appreciation of the original fabric, pedestrianised streets were reintroduced to link the new retail spaces, new bridge connections, enlarged public amenities, and civic plazas. The project aims to bring a more humanised scale and temporality to these public spaces, while finding innovative ways of engaging the site’s own industrial heritage.
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN OLD & NEW BUILDINGS ALONG NORTH STREET

FOLDED FACADES TRANSFORMING OVER A SERIES OF SECTIONS

UNFOLDING SECTIONS-DIAGRAM
1 Folded Facades Transforming over a Series of Sections
1 Interior and exterior views of the articulated stripes
Originality

Industrial forms and materials of the existing heritage buildings were reworked into the new architecture, yielding new forms of continuous stripes, with traditional industrial materials transformed into new applications such as sun louvers, mechanical equipment screens, staircases, terraces, lighting surfaces, commercial displays, and even urban furniture.

These series of new inter-penetrating two-story architecture was stitched in between the historic buildings, such that one can have full experience of a highly articulated streetscape, flanked by both new and old buildings.
Research Questions

- Can the scales, geometries and materiality of an old industrial fabric be reproduced as a new textured effect and rhythm for the city?

- Can retail architecture that has been interiorized so much within air-conditioned “big-box” typologies be reworked with exterior streetscapes and open common spaces that connect with a historic urban context?

- How does the new retail architecture produce new visual connections between the interiors and exteriors?
1 Diagram of the Different Urban Functions in the New Continuous Stripes
2 New Reflecting Pool in front of Civic Plaza & New Retail Architecture
3 View from Bridge towards Industrial Heritage Buildings and New Retail Architecture
The project aims to bring a more humanised scale and temporality to these public spaces, while finding innovative ways of engaging the site’s own industrial heritage. Several design research questions were raised towards the goal of reengaging an old industrial organization and typology, and adapting it for a new tactile urban experience.

- Research original typologies of saw-tooth forms in the surrounding industrial buildings
- Conduct site analysis to understand the new architecture in its urban scale
- Explore different formal expressions to connect the gated residential community in the vicinity
• Avoid a typical podium-and-tower typology, where commercial spaces are locked up in an enclosed mall with no urbanism
• Incorporate newly created piazzas and bridges to create a full experience of a highly articulated streetscape, flanked by both new and old buildings
Significance

The eventual built project consists of five new buildings designed by this team led by the author. They were planned and designed to form a new cruciform retail street configuration alongside the historic industrial buildings, linking up four landscaped plazas and a new bridge. Sitting on the edge of a twin-canal intersection, where the former cotton mills once drew its water, the site embodies the characteristics of the historic Jiangnan canal system, where its canal-front architecture gave distinctive character to the region. The city of Wuxi was not only the birthplace of the first industrial towns of China, but it is now the epicenter of China’s 530 Plan, bringing global talent and entrepreneurship to China. As a part of the largest urban
redevelopment area in the Nanchang District, and following immediately after the Wuxi Protocol for improved methods of heritage protection, XSD anticipates changes from an industrial city to a livable city that connects different global cultures. The project inserts itself within the discourse of preservation in innovative ways. Going beyond the conventions of historic preservation, this project is not merely recreating a rhythm and cityscape of the past. Through highly “corrugated” streetscapes, this project reinvents new concepts of time and culture in a late-industrial context, awaiting the reemergence of new ways of engaging production again in the city.
Dissemination and Evidence of Peer Review

This award-winning project was included in a number of key exhibitions that highlighted important relationships between industrial architecture and the city. In addition, this is one of six case studies in a monographic study of industrialization in China by the same author. Entitled “The Other Factory: Architecture of the Urban-Industrial Complex” this book includes original historical research of the multifarious social and urban conditions surrounding four key phases of industrialisation throughout 20th century China, and published in 2019 by Actar and Tongji University Press. This monograph represents a decade-long design
research that combines history, policy and design. The author successfully obtained a competitive design research grant worth HKD533,000 awarded by C-Foundation in China.

\[1\] Material and Formal Analysis
Appendix

Awards and Recognition


Reviews and Citations written by others:


Exhibitions


“The Other Factory: Late Industrial Organization and Form,” Urbanism and Architecture Bi-City Biennale (UABB): Shenzhen Industrial Station (Luohu Sub-Venue) Exhibition, Shenzhen, Dec 1, 2017 to Mar 1, 2018.

Monograph by Author:

Articulated Facade along the Central Plaza


2 Articulated Facade along the Central Plaza
The project starts with a beautification policy in Shanghai where pitched roofs are added to buildings. The original flat roof was demolished to give way to an attic and references the triangular dormer windows found in the neighborhood. The triangulation is extrapolated to give shape to the ceilings, walls, and staircase. Lighting is concealed along the edges of overlapping triangles, while the staircase takes on a similar form, where each tread and baluster marks the culmination of these surfaces. The new continuous form gives an organizational logic to other programs, such as a small outdoor roof patio, and a passively cooled interior, where hot air rises and escapes.

Many of the original elements, such as the wood floor and steel windows, are retained with a maximized use of recycled building materials. Clay tiles, bricks and timber beams came from demolished neighboring sites. Supplementary heating systems are placed along the perimeters to minimize heat loss and gain. Local builders using traditional techniques were hired during construction. This project therefore connects to the socio-economic roots of its surroundings by searching out the old generation of craftsmen who rebuild with recycled materials from a city undergoing rapid demolition.

Photography by Shen Qiang

The project comprises five new buildings in a cruciform retail street configuration, framed alongside two clusters of historic industrial buildings. The design scope includes a series of low-density retail architecture linking several landscaped public plazas, and a bridge. The site sits on a canal intersection and is surrounded by heritage industrial buildings and signifies the future, which anticipates changes from an industrial to a livable city.

In preserving the original fabric, new street-level architecture was stitched between the historic buildings, so that one can fully experience both new and old architecture, while avoiding the typical podium-and-tower commercial typology. This reduces the dependency on air-conditioned spaces and allows for different ways of relating to the gated residential community and newly created piazzas and bridges.

The new architecture redeployed the north light roof forms found onsite, to bring about a more humanized scale and rhythm in the experience of the street while maintaining the availability of daylight in the new retail spaces. The traditional industrial materials found in existing buildings are transformed into new applications such as sun louvers, screens, terraces, lighting surfaces, commercial displays, and even urban furniture.

Photography by Alvaro Quintanilla / Iuliana Chiras
Xishuidong Industrial Heritage Retail District

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Photography by Alvaro Quintanilla / Iuliana Chiras

1 Selected Works, from 50-Under-50 Book Spreads
In an age of environmental decay and unprecedented inequality, the cities of the world gather in Seoul to explore the urban parliaments where the politics of resources and technologies is enacted. The cities of the world stand as a crossroads. Amidst radical social, economic, and technological transformations, will the city become a driving force of creativity and sustainability or will it become a mechanism of inequality and environmental decay? For the first time in history, crucial questions of the city—climate change, biodiversity, air pollution, food security, automation, unemployment and inequality—are driven by concerns beyond human control and threaten the very survival of the planet.

The principles of modern urbanism—the mass integration of production, employment, and consumption; the separation of work, dwelling, leisure, and transportation; the division between the natural and the artificial—are no longer effective in addressing the urgent questions of today's cities. The Seoul Biennale of Architecture and Urbanism 2017 is an experimental platform for an emergent urbanism that goes beyond human-centered function, ownership, and consumption towards a commons of resources, technologies, and production.

Hyungmin Pai, Alejandro Zaera Polo

Notes
Participating cities are listed alphabetically except for Seoul and the City of San Francisco which are listed by city.

Cover Image
Sakura Whi, Seoul, phosphate (part), 2009 © Sakae Whi

Communing Cities

23 Amsterdam Amsterdam Approach
24 Bangkok Street Food: A Common Concern
25 Buenos Aires Mist and Mixed Uses, Mixed People
26 Berlin Code City
27 Berlin Die Laute in the City Garden: Architecture as a Trigger Towards a Co-produced City
33 Copenhagen Three Cities: Assembling Urbanism
35 Chicago At the Cross-River: Reconnecting Chicago
50 Chinese Cities Ghost Cities: Understanding Patterns in Chinese Urbanization
50 Dubai Hotelprovided for the Commons in Dubai
49 Hong Kong / Shekou By-City / By-Product
44 Jakarta Micro Practice and Macro Perspective for Building Resilience in an Urban Kampung
96 Jeju Daelimong: Between Hesia and Hapnamong, Jeju Urbanism
57 Johannesberg Johanneburg: Reclaiming Borders and Building Bridges
60 London London Made
64 London, Annex Place, Spaces, Work
66 Mexico More Shaped by Use: Formalizing the Vernacular Customization of the City
69 Mexico DREAMadrid
69 Mexico City Medellín: A City for Life
70 Messina Messina Waterfront Polymer: A Socio-Economic and Cultural Catalyst
73 Mexico City Uxmal: Living Laboratory to Prototype: The Future of the Cities We Want
92 San Diego / Tijuana
93 San Francisco At Home Together
94 São Paulo Food Court in São Paulo
96 Sejong Zero Energy Smart City Development
98 Seoul Sectioning Seoul
104 Seoul, Seongdong Seongdong Art Commons
104 SH Corporation Self Housing and Community Movements 1: Towards Open Communities
106 SH Corporation Self Housing and Community Movements 2: Landscapes for New Communities: Seoul via Vierba
110 Shanghai The Other Factory: Late-Industrial Organization and Form
113 Shanghai Shenzhen to PRD Method
114 Singapore White Space
115 Singapore Spatial Frameworks: City Strategy in the Twenty-First Century
118 Taiwan Cultivating Taichung
119 Tijuana / San Diego Living Borders
123 Tokyo Common Matters
124 Vienna The Vienna Model
132 Yenbungsu Multiple Systems of Urban-Rural Integrated City: Yenbungsu Public Architecture Masterplan
settlements. The objective of design is to address residents' needs, encourage interaction among social classes, and promote innovation and high-quality public and shared spaces. Originality of architectural typologies is not an expression of style, but of a new model of urban living. They challenge settled models and promote variety in contemporary residential architecture.

**Environment**
Mass migration into cities inflicts permanent damage on the natural world within their boundaries. Particularly affected are the outlying metropolitan areas; thus, our focus here is the preservation of the natural environment and the creation of healthy neighborhoods. In the conditions of extreme density typical in newly built areas, the goal is to create an environmentally responsible lifestyle with a network of green areas and common spaces. The design of “urban furniture” and “green rooms” has to respond to technical and ecological criteria by taking into account the needs of different user groups. A further goal is to bring about improvements in energy standards, and in the use and production of renewable energy, as well as to minimize material flows and emissions in the construction of residential buildings.

**Micro-Economy**
The basic requirement of subsidized housing is its financial viability for both developers and users. Two strategies are in place:

a) First, the main purpose of a design process is to minimize the cost of construction and building equipment, and consequently to reduce the costs for end-users, including tenancy terms.

b) Second, the purpose of the design process is to create spaces that promote existing micro-economic networks and facilitate new sources of income for tenants. Public funding and well-organized vocational communities greatly improve the rentability of subsidized housing. In terms of comprehensive sustainability, smart design ensures a proper balance of initial investment and follow-on maintenance costs.

**Community**
The planners are expected to design an infrastructure that enables socialization through strategic planning of specific community areas, both indoor and outdoor.

Every housing project contains sub-projects that promote social mixing—women’s emancipation, integration of disabled and elderly people, immigrants’ assimilation—and provide educational and cultural content as a principle of coexistence. In doing so, planners demonstrate a high level of awareness of the requirements for everyday life. Spatial organization and sequencing are primarily meant to enable socialization and promote already existing networks on every scale: among the most immediate neighbors, within housing blocks, and on streets across neighborhoods. A proper organization of a housing unit will create an identity by linking all the spaces “in between.” The goal is to motivate tenants to actively and independently participate in community life because they wish to do so.

The City of Vienna has declared affordable housing a basic requirement and an essential ingredient of a just, inclusive, and sustainable city. One of the key accomplishments is its one-hundred-year tradition and experience in building subsidized housing as well as in “soft” renewal of the city. Vienna's experience could be shared and established as an international model of synergy that takes into account economic, environmental, architectural, and social elements.

**Shanghai**
The Other Factory: Late-Industrial Organization and Form
H. Koon Wee
SKEW Collaborative

This research is a close investigation of the process of industrialization in Shanghai in the twentieth century. It reveals a particular history of—and potential for—Shanghai, by identifying the indirect effects of industrialization in the context of a relentless form of urbanization that has been ubiquitous in China in the last decade. This work would also begin to describe the cycles of industrialization
and deindustrialization, in a global ecosystem of rust belts and collapsed economies, in relation to the rise of newly industrialized and urbanized nations. The by-product of the global manufacturing economy has led to the formation of unsuspecting and alienated consumers around the world, people whose lives are cross-subsidized by the poorer newly industrialized cities. In the city of Shanghai, the late-industrial and post-industrial built forms that would in turn become instantaneous building stock for the next invention of a city. The late-industrial forms and organization in Shanghai would suggest that the industrial typology is now highly unstable and evolving, with a stronger need for hybridity. Hence, there is a departure from Nikolaus Pevsner’s factory typology and the modern treatment of a highly segregated system of industrial land use in cities. There is an emergence of a highly reflexive non-type that follows the conditions of rapid urbanization and structural changes in socio-economic realms. It is also important to extend Reyner Banham’s critique of the aesthetics of the machine taking the place of the scientific and economic rationale in order to argue for a new form of aesthetics emerging in late-industrial Shanghai.

The new industrial organizational complex remains a legacy of Lewis Mumford’s account of the mechanical clock and how urban time organizes the formation of industries and cities. These historically inseparable concepts of “cultural preparation” would have unexpected expressions in the cases of Shanghai. This is an inescapable organizational complex that governed cities in a particular period in history, but the liberal capitalization and urbanization processes in China are seeking to readjust the same industrial-consumerist space and time. One would also have to update Herbert Marcuse’s critique of a totalitarian form of scientific rationale in advanced post-industrial societies. This “non-terroristic
economic-technical coordination," which manipulates organization, industry, and productivity in the creation of a bureaucracy in the United States, would not have the same results in Socialist China.

The study of three sites of industrial organization and form corresponds with three dominant periods of industrialization in Shanghai, namely those of the Sino-Soviet Alliance, Cultural Revolution, and Open Door and Economic Reform. Key historical planning and socio-economic policies and strategies are included in the exhibition, including many diagrams, policies, maps, photographs, and other archival materials. There is also mapping and documentation of organizational networks formed by global and regional actors, such as the governmental research institutions, state agencies, private manufacturers, and other agencies.

Three key agencies are being studied under this research, following the organizational formation of each of them through time, and identifying the built forms across the city that corresponds to various formations of Chinese society. Such formations include technological change, education and labor improvements, urbanization, and many others. One of the key agencies at work during the Sino-Soviet Alliance period was the Chinese Academy of Sciences, established in 1949. Today, it takes on a much more elaborate multi-group form with a less desirable name: the Chinese Academy of Sciences Holdings (CASH). It remains one of the leading national-level science and research organizations that are responsible for making industrial towns in various parts of China. In particular, the Jiading New Town in Shanghai, planned and built in the early 1960s, was part of this study. In the contemporary period, as a northernmost district of Shanghai, Jiading New Town continues to grow into a city of one million residents. This study includes an experimental adaptive reuse of one of Jiading’s laboratories from the Sino-Soviet Alliance period, built as part of China’s technological revolution at the onset of the Cold War. Jiading was designated a Science Town, incorporating universities and many laboratories and buildings focused on research and development.

The second study is the Shanghai Automotive Industry Corporation (SAIC Motor). Since its modest beginnings in 1955 as the Shanghai Internal Combustion Engine Components Company, it would evolve through the policies and disruptions of the Cultural Revolution and the Great Leap Forward, and emerge as a critical player in the automobile industry in China. The automobile was seen as a symbol of progress in Communist China, which explains why it was selected as a key industry to propel China forward. It led to the growth of peripheral industrial areas near the urban core of Shanghai. The Pengpu and Taopu industrial districts were key urban sites for the production and assembly of automobile parts. Such districts also benefited from the development of infrastructure such as railways and new road networks to assist the industry's production lines and their connection to river ports. Worker housing in
the form of communes was also dispersed among the urban factories, taking advantage of the original village settlements that existed in the area. This building stock has evolved into creative offices as the car industry was reconsolidated, with German and other global partners, in the district of Anting. Districts such as Pengpu would gradually change into spaces of consumption, offices, and commercial functions. The piecemeal reconstruction of the district would inherit the odd pockets of space, which carried the traces of industrial activities as well as a wealth of localized domestic, commercial, and work functions.

The third study is the Caohaijing Hi-Tech Industrial Park, which was developed in 1982 as a flagship district of the Economic and Technological Development Zone (ETDZ) policy. It was positioned as one of eleven elite, national-level, high-tech industrial parks, with special policies not only to incentivize the entry of global multinational corporations, but also to promote rapid urbanization.

Added together, these organizations and sites offer insights into many inherent contradictions in the explosion of industrialization, modernization, urbanization, and globalization. The specific site and policy conditions are carefully documented to reveal a series of new urban functions, problematic environmental issues, and uncanny juxtapositions of social, economic, and global classes. These conditions would lead to innovative designs represented at an architectural scale as well. Four architectural projects are also represented to demonstrate how these ideas come together to impact everyday life. This study demonstrates that the industrial type is no longer the typological form familiar in European and United States historical cases. In China, the emergent socio-political, technological, and environmental conditions would give rise to unique organizations and forms.

Shenzhen
Shenzhen to PRD Method
Jason Hilgefort
Merve Bedir (Future + Aformal Academy)

The notion of Shenzhen "speed" has led to a way of thinking about, learning about, and operating the productive city in the last thirty years. Today, this method includes a dispersed network of rapid manufacturing and logistics throughout the Pearl River Delta (PRD).
H. Koon Wee's The Other Factory provides a penetrating historical and systematic analysis of the architecture of an urban-industrial complex. It presents an important Chinese alternative: the results of a notion of human life that accepts all forms of labor and excludes none.

While cities have expelled industries in favor of high-yield and service-oriented land use, the factory and its organizational complex remain very much embedded in the city and its architecture. Industrialization took place in China relatively late compared to the West. China's intensified industrialization at the beginning of the 20th century, and its equally rapid deindustrialization and unchecked urbanization, make its cities the ideal sites for the study of the urban-industrial complex. This complex evolved as industries inserted themselves within the same framework of urban formation and social control. By investigating sites from the Yangzi River Delta and other parts of China, this analysis reveals the organizational logic of the actors of this urban-industrial complex, from state-owned enterprises, private corporations, research academies, vocational training institutes, infrastructure builders, housing providers, to art and cultural producers, and many others.

The goal is to learn how this urban-industrial complex operates and discover new strategies to prevent Chinese cities from becoming overly exploitative. The totalizing effects and exploitation of factories are without question, whether they are for profit or social control. Factories and societies have continually developed institutional checks and balances to keep exploitation in check. However, to conceal industries and the working class from cities would be a double erasure—further expunging the knowledge and narratives of inter-dependency, social inequality, and environmental degradation. Relocating factories from the suburbs and offshoring them only exacerbates social inequities. Cities serving only consumption without production will be devoid of a healthy, resilient and socially responsible citizenry, capable of self-correcting measures. In short, cities cannot afford to deindustrialize with the illusion that there is improved equity and livability for a limited population.
H. Koon Wee's *The Other Factory* provides a penetrating historical and systematic analysis of the architecture of an urban-industrial complex. It provides a fascinating and well-documented investigation of Chinese industrialization, urbanism and architecture that should be of use and interest to both specialists and the general audience. Prof. Wee uses a wide range of critical social theory to provide unique perspectives on Chinese history and current society that greatly improves our comprehension of China and the global-industrial-urban order.


The Other Factory is both an accessible history of Chinese urban and industrial development since 1900, and an architect's polemic in favor of continuing to situate industry in urban environments. Contrary to expectations, Koon Wee argues that Chinese cities should not become primarily post-industrial consumer environments, and instead presents here a set of compellingly documented case studies of how properly designed industrial areas can enhance, rather than diminish, contemporary urban existence.

Eric Mumford, Rebecca and John Voyles Professor of Architecture and Urban Design, Washington University in St Louis, and author of numerous books on the historical and ideological formation of modern architecture and urbanism, including *Designing the Modern City: Urbanism Since 1850*, and *Defining Urban Design: CIAM Architects and the Formation of a Discipline*.

European and American urban history has been, in one important way, a history of removal of labor from the city, in order to establish a notion of human life free from subsistence. The systematic adoption of slavery, the precursor of today's global sweatshops, brought a cruel material form to this determined struggle to define life away from toil. Today, instead of slaves, the environment bears the brunt of violence. By virtue of its artificial contrivance, the exclusion of labor from the city is doomed to fail. H. Koon Wee's *The Other Factory* presents an important Chinese alternative: the results of a notion of human life that accepts all forms of labor and excludes none.

Shiqiao Li, Weedon Professor in Asian Architecture, University of Virginia, and author of *Power and Virtue, Architecture and Intellectual Change in England 1660-1730*, and *Understanding the Chinese City*.

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1 This project incorporates original landscape design with the design of the civic spaces and the new architecture
1 Original Site Condition

2 New Bridge & Canal-Front Civic Plaza

3 Site Plan showing relationship of New and Heritage Buildings

4 West Street: North Facade linked to Residential Gardens
New Landscape and Bridge Ramp leading to the New Hydraulic Bridge designed by the Author
The Department of Architecture educates students in an active culture of service, scholarship and invention. Uniquely situated at the crossroads of China and global influence, the Department takes the approach that design is best explored from a sophisticated understanding of both. With a multidisciplinary curriculum emphasizing technology, history and culture, students gain broad knowledge and skills in the management of the environmental, social, and aesthetic challenges of contemporary architectural practice. With opportunities for design workshops, international exchanges, and study travel, graduates of the Department of Architecture are well prepared for contribution to both international and local communities of architects and designers.