



# Design For The Past

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M.Arch Thesis



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Abstract

The thesis project started off with an investigation of the Coal Gas Factory in Datong City, and an interview of a former factory employee. All relevent information is covered in the Report.

This thesis project proposes for an alternative factory design solution for the past (1980s), acknowledging its inevitable failure in its future (2000s).

The design acknowledges architecture's nature of temporality, and is focused on making architecture transformative--creating space and environment for architecture to be transformed in order to accommodate updated programs and activities when its no longer able to serve its original purpose.



# The Report



Coal gas factory, drone aerial view



Largest power plant in Datong



Abandoned factory exterior



Abandoned factory interior



Large amount of affordable housing around the factory area



Large scale of demolition led to both economy boom and unemployment



Foreground: areas ready to be demolished, but the demolition process was suspended due to political reasons  
Background: new apartment buildings built upon demolished zones



affordable housing for retired employees of state-owned enterprises

## Background

Do you know the background of this factory? When was it built?

It was built in the 1980s  
It seemed that our gas plant was built in 1980s  
In the middle of 1980s  
I was young at that time  
I worked in that factory  
It suffered a depression a few years later  
We could not get good wages  
Some of the workers resigned  
And found other jobs  
Several years later, the whole factory went bankrupt  
All workers were laid off

## Coal, Coal Gas, Natural Gas

It led to much pollution  
Serious pollution  
Coal is such a thing  
But coal gas is advanced  
Not every house  
Could afford to light a stove  
That factory turned coal to coal gas (interviewer)  
That's right. Coal gas was clean  
That was good to our country  
And good to all households  
With the aid of pipes, the coal was  
Supplied to all households  
That's right, all households

## Factory Lives

But they had no work to do  
But things were different  
For example,  
In the past, a worker earned 1,000 Yuan  
After the organization disappeared  
One worker earned 600-700 Yuan each month  
The wages were splitted (interviewer)  
Of course, each worker earned lower wages  
Too many workers there  
Finally, the organization was overstaffed  
Because of other reasons  
The factory was a bit depressed then

## Employment

At the end of 1980s  
(here the 1980s is understood as the years between 1980 and 1990)  
In 1990s (interviewer)  
In 1998, 1999, at that time  
In 2000 or so, people gradually used natural gas  
At that time, did this factory provide a large number of job opportunities?  
Yes, that's right. It created many jobs  
And provided a lot of job opportunities  
There were about more than 10, 000 workers at that time

## Housing, Welfare

Some of my friends worked there at that time  
Those worked on the night shift and those doing shift work  
Could a couple afford a house?  
With their wages  
They could not buy a house  
Most people lived in houses assigned by the state-owned enterprise they worked for  
Houses at that time  
Were welfare houses that assigned by state-owned enterprise  
After 1999 and 2000 housing system reformed  
National housing reform  
Workers obtained a housing provident fund  
Adding some money, they could buy a house themselves  
Did they buy houses near the old city? (interviewer)  
Old city  
My family had the same kind of house at the time  
I had two houses  
One of the houses was allocated  
After the institutional reform, I bought the house by myself  
It was not expensive  
When did it go out of business?

## Re-employment

That was a slow process. Not a quick one  
The number of people was reduced then (interviewer)  
Yes  
A service company took the lead in doing that  
At first, there were laid-off workers in some big collectives  
Finally, some workers from state-owned companies also lost their jobs  
Eventually, they were laid off  
And lost their jobs  
Were they allocated to other places?  
No way  
Those veterans could get re-employed because of government order  
The state had a policy for  
Re-employment for the veterans  
Only a small part of workers could be allocated  
There were few veterans in the factory  
The rest of workers should  
Find jobs by themselves  
They could not even get some Severance payment  
No money. The government had no money  
There was no way you could get that money

## Demolition

When was this demolished?  
It started to be dismantled  
After 2000  
It was demolished around a decade ago  
In 2010,  
In 2010,  
Mayor Gen came and decided to demolish it  
Within about 10 years or more  
I looked at the map and it should be  
They had all been moved away, nothing left  
By 2007, 2008, the plant was empty  
No one was there  
That a factory belonging to the government plant  
Who dared to move it?  
Finally, a new mayor came  
Mayor Gen embarked on a massive urban renovation  
That factory  
A state-owned one  
In front of that factory  
There was a highway right?  
That's not a highway  
That is a city express  
Within a city  
When was it built  
It was accessible last year  
Not long ago  
In the last year  
When was it built?  
It had been under construction for two years  
But had been set aside for two or three years

## Equalitarianism

Did you have this feeling that somewhere around 2000  
We had such a tendency  
That is to say, we changed from a planned economy to a market economy  
We felt that  
There were fewer state-owned enterprises  
But more and more  
Private units  
No one could accept that at the time  
We were used to the equalitarianism, eating from the same big pot  
No one could accept that  
People were accustomed to stable incomes  
They went on and off duty every day  
No matter how much they did  
They could get paid each month  
Different from the planning period  
Market economic years are different  
Patterns  
No one could accept that  
Yeah, yeah, yeah  
They shared the same big pot in the past  
And all workers enjoyed a secured job  
They were used to living a life with no pressure  
They went to work in the morning and went back home in the afternoon  
They earned their salary each month  
In your opinion, were there more good things  
Than bad things in such kind of reform?  
It brought us more good things I think so  
For example I don't like that  
I go to work and go off work each day  
I have no motivation



# The Report



Trucks delivering coal to the power plant

## Pollution

I quit before I was laid off  
I went to work for four years all together and then I quit  
I like to be self-employed  
I did not like that kind of life  
However, such a reform  
Improved our environment  
Our environment became better  
Later, all private mines were abolished  
When was this coal mine (interviewer)  
Abolished? (interviewer)  
Under the leadership of President Xi,  
Recently  
May be recently  
Ten years or so, ten years or so  
Government was not extremely focused on that  
When was the environment most polluted?  
It started ever since I was born  
It is serious, right?  
Yes, very serious  
How serious was it?  
We could not wear white clothes  
It was not suitable to wear white clothes  
Because your white clothes will become black after you walk around  
Things were like this all over the city  
All places had similar situations  
Was there many people coughing or something?  
Things were like that in China  
There were many high prevalence areas of lung cancers  
In Beijing 301 Tumor Hospital  
Almost all people getting lung cancers were from Datong



A typical Khrushchyovka in Datong, most of them got demolished

## Affordable Housing (Khrushchyovka)

My father had lung cancer  
I accompanied him in 301 Hospital  
Those patients were from Datong  
Especially those working in coal mines of Bureau of Minerals  
They had lung cancers because of lung aspirations  
They all had similar situations  
They used to live in houses provided by the government  
All departments provided housing for their stuffs  
All departments  
The kind of Khrushchyovka  
Khrushchyovka  
Recently  
There were many kinds of those buildings  
This kind or that kind  
In the earliest days, there were no buildings but only bungalows  
They provide bungalows  
After the 1990s  
Each department built family apartment buildings  
Two families live in one apartment  
If there were two bedrooms, one person will have one bedroom  
The two families share one bathroom  
And one kitchen  
There was no living room but large corridors  
The Khrushchyovkas you showed me around yesterday  
I saw that two families had two apartments  
That means it's newly built, isn't it?  
It's late (in time)  
One family had one apartment  
In the earliest days, two families lived in one apartment  
At the earliest time  
During my childhood,

因为我父亲就是肺癌  
我跟我父亲在301医院住过院  
都是我们大同  
尤其是煤矿局的煤矿的  
都是肺砂病,肺砂病转变成肺癌  
都是这样的  
以前都是单位分的房  
各个单位都有分房  
那种筒子楼  
也是筒子楼  
比较多  
还是那种还有哪种  
最早的时候没有楼房都是平房房  
单位分平房  
之后随着90年代以后  
各个单位盖的楼房家属楼  
一户住两家人家  
俩卧室就一室一厅  
两家人共用一个卫生间  
共有一个厨房  
以前没有客厅走廊  
那天您带我转的那些筒子楼  
我进去看它都是两户了  
那就是说它 (时间上) 最后是吗  
(时间上) 靠后了  
那就是是一户一套房  
最早的时候一套房两户人家住  
最早  
我们家从小



A public toilet in the old town

## Resident Lives

A lot of accidents happened because of that  
You know  
But storied apartments have heating facilities  
and water supply and drainage pipes  
It's very convenient  
However, people could not get along with their neighbors like before  
When living in a quadrangle courtyard, we had harmonious relationships  
However, after living in apartments  
We could not get along with people  
We like before when we lived in bungalows  
We used to share water taps on every street  
A street  
That was enough  
There were more than 20 yards in big streets  
And four or five or six yards in small streets  
Every street has one or two water taps to use  
Public water taps  
Every house had a water tank to store water  
Water was stored in water tanks  
We used public toilets  
There were public toilets in every courtyard  
For both men and women  
Most of them lived together  
They were all workers  
And went to work together  
They lived in similar environments  
And has the same income  
They did the same thing  
Government officials and ordinary people earned the same salary  
They were the same  
There was no difference between them

因为这个事故出了很多  
知道吗  
所以楼房就是晚上有暖气了  
上下水也通了  
这儿方便多了  
邻居们不如我们小时候  
住的四合院和睦  
好像住了楼房以后  
对邻里关系不如住平房了  
我们每个街道都有一个自来水管  
一个街道  
一个街道也修  
大的街道20多个院子  
小的街道也就四五个院子  
每个街道都有一到两个水管  
公共水缸  
家里面都有那个储水的冰缸  
就是用水缸储水  
然后厕所是去公共厕所  
每个院都有公共厕所的  
和男女共用的  
是不是其实住在一起的  
也都是一个背囊的  
都一起打工一起上班的  
生活环境  
我们北方早晚温差大也不行  
都是一样的  
当官的和老百姓的收入  
都是一样的  
没有什么区别



A typical single story house in the old town, it is similar to the house where he lived in as a child

## Resident Lives

We lived in a bungalow provided to my father  
by the government  
We lived in the storied apartment provided to me in 1988  
In March 1988  
The storied apartment  
It has two bedrooms and one family lived inside  
Just like the one you lived in now (interviewer)  
Not that big  
But the orientation  
Was similar  
At that time, apartments were about 50 square meters  
In 1988  
There was no coal gas in the house  
There were pipes (for coal gas and natural gas)  
And sewer tunnels  
Water supply and drainage pipes  
There were water supply and drainage facilities (interviewer)  
When going upstairs, we carried charcoal up every day  
We cooked with raw coal  
Then heating facilities were installed  
Storied apartments were different from bungalows  
Other things were not that good  
In which aspect?  
We enjoyed convenient lives  
To be more specific?  
We used water and heating devices  
And LPG for cooking  
All things became easy  
But we failed to get along well with our neighbors as well as before  
When we were children, we lived in a quadrangle courtyard  
Now, we failed to know each other better because  
We did not work in the same factory  
And we did not have the same background

我们最早是单位分的  
政府给的小房子  
1988年我分的楼房  
我现在记得1988年3月份左右  
分的楼房  
一套一户人家两卧室的  
那时候的房子都是50来平米  
当时是1988年时候  
我刚分房没有通煤气  
管道留下来了  
留下管道了  
有上下水  
有上下水都有  
还在上楼每天搬炭上去  
在家用原煤做饭 有暖气了  
楼房和平房它概念不一样  
住楼房上下水方便不一样  
冬天不用点炉子了  
点炉子因为危险  
每天晚上把炉子闷好了  
但你不能不开火也不行  
晚上很冷  
我们北方早晚温差大也不行  
都是一样的  
当官的和老百姓的收入  
都是一样的  
没有什么区别



A typical quadrangle courtyard in the old town

## Failed Utopia, Quadrangle Courtyards

No difference at all  
Very small difference  
Relatively speaking,  
We might not have good material life  
But we were quite happy back then?  
I felt happy at that time  
People did not feel stressed at that time  
Now, we have better living conditions  
But we are suffering too much pressure  
In the past, we ate the big pot but felt no pressure  
All people did the same thing  
They had similar living conditions  
They used meat vouchers to buy meat and oil vouchers to buy oil  
Use cloth tickets to buy cloth  
Each month  
They did not need money  
There was no need to buy anything  
After living in the storied house, life was more convenient  
Other things were not that good  
In which aspect?  
We enjoyed convenient lives  
To be more specific?  
We used water and heating devices  
And LPG for cooking  
All things became easy  
But we failed to get along well with our neighbors as well as before  
When we were children, we lived in a quadrangle courtyard  
Now, we failed to know each other better because  
We did not work in the same factory  
And we did not have the same background

根本没有区别  
很小的差别  
相对来说  
排除物质可能没那么好  
其实当时过的也挺幸福的?  
那时候幸福  
那时候人们觉得没有什么压力感  
现在日子好了  
现在好像压力大了  
以前没有压力都是吃大锅饭  
老百姓都一样  
生活条件都一样  
稍贵一点点的就到市里边大医院  
各个厂都有医院  
每个单位都有医院  
医务所  
那出行方面呢  
比如说有需要去远的地吗  
那去市区也不大  
有公共自行车  
远一点坐公交车近一点骑自行车  
公交车方便吗  
那时候也不是很方便  
公交车也不是很多那时候  
公共交通系统也不是很发达  
都是骑自行车  
公交系统是什么时候  
开始变得好的  
就是大家不是一个厂子上班的  
都互相背背也不一样



A print shop in the old town, which is one of the few public facilities

## Public Facilities

Yeah, we had different backgrounds  
For example, in our community  
In the past, people working in the same unit knew each other well  
After the demolition  
People living in this courtyard came from different places  
People did not know each other  
When people lived in the old building  
When seeing a doctor, for example  
They went to hospitals  
There was a big hospital  
The factory had hospitals and there was a hospital on site as well  
People went to the factory hospitals; if they had small diseases  
Their small diseases could be treated in the hospital  
If they had big disease, they would go to big hospital  
Each plant has a hospital  
Every department has a hospital  
Or a clinic  
What about transportation?  
Did you need to go far away?  
There was not a big downtown at that time  
There were buses and bicycles  
People could take buses to distant places and ride bikes to closer places  
Was it convenient to take buses?  
It wasn't very convenient then  
There weren't many buses then  
Public transportation and the public system were not very developed  
Most people rode bikes  
When did the bus system  
Start to be better?  
After the 1990s

不一样  
就是靠我们小区来说  
以前都是一个单位的都认识  
拆迁以后我们这个拆迁以后  
这一个院大家从四面八方来的  
各个单位的人谁也不认识  
当时住在老楼的时候  
比如说看病这些方面怎么样  
都到医院  
有一个大医院  
单位也有医院,厂也有医院  
厂医院就是小楼小楼了  
小病来了这个医院就能处理了  
稍微大一点的就到市里边大医院  
各个厂都有医院  
每个单位都有医院  
医务所  
那出行方面呢  
比如说有需要去远的地吗  
那去市区也不大  
有公共自行车  
远一点坐公交车近一点骑自行车  
公交车方便吗  
那时候也不是很方便  
公交车也不是很多那时候  
公共交通系统也不是很发达  
都是骑自行车  
公交系统是什么时候  
开始变得好的  
就是大家不是一个厂子上班的  
都互相背背也不一样



People have to use public water taps and carry water back home

## Lives in the Past

After 1995  
With the reform and opening up after 1995  
Let's talk about your childhood experience,  
you can be more specific  
I did not like studying in primary school  
I've been playing around since I was a kid  
I liked to be a soldier  
Did you go to state-owned schools?(interviewer)  
The primary school  
The public school  
Belonged to the community or (interviewer)  
The public schools in the city  
Did you take bus to go to school? (interviewer)  
No, it was less than 5 minutes from the place I lived  
There were schools within a few blocks  
There was a school between two or three blocks  
It took us about 5 minutes to walk to school  
I joined the army when I was 16  
I had been a soldier for ten years  
I felt good in the army  
It helped me a lot in my future life  
It changed me a lot  
Made me a better person in the society  
After I came back from the army  
My country assigned me a job  
I worked in that position for more than three years less than four years  
Then I quit  
I was not interested in it  
Retained the job but suspended the salary  
Where were you go?

1995年以后了  
随着改革开放以后1995年以后了  
光谈谈您可以详细一点  
我的经历怎么说呢  
我也不喜欢上学也是学不进去  
从小我就喜欢舞刀弄枪  
喜欢当兵的  
你小时候上学也是国家的  
那种小学  
公立学校  
是在社区里的还是  
就是市里边公立的公立学校  
坐公交去  
不用 我离家不是5分钟就到了  
他们几个街道里边就有学校  
两三个街道中间有个学校  
步行5分钟就到学校了  
我16岁当的兵  
16岁当的兵我当了十年兵  
在部队干我的挺挺的  
对我以后的造器人生帮助很大  
改变了好多  
对我到了社会上帮助很大  
我当兵回来以后  
国家给分配的工作  
我就上了三年不到四年  
我就受不了  
我觉得没意思  
停薪留职自己出来  
当时分配在哪



The old town is planned to be demolished

## The Old Town

A quit company  
I quit my work and then did my own business  
Till now  
I thought that the demolition was good  
It was good for the development of Datong  
I supported it  
I didn't understand it at the time  
As economy develops  
Old things must be eliminated  
Something new will come  
Well, can I take it that way  
It means that  
We must give up something  
Although the history and culture  
Those old things  
Are only valuable  
In order to develop our economy  
To have a better life  
We have to give up something  
It doesn't mean giving up  
It means eliminating  
It does not mean that we want to give up old things  
Old and traditional things are good  
But there's something else  
Such as buildings  
Something, all things  
Some things you have to use  
The old things catch up

当初业务公司变质的  
我就不上班了我自己一直干  
干到现在  
我感觉吧这拆迁挺好的  
对大同以后发展挺好的  
我也挺支持的  
当时不理解后来在理解了  
当时也有点不理解  
因为随着经济各方面发展吧  
老的东西必须淘汰  
肯定新的东西了  
那我能不能这么理解  
就是相当于就是  
我们需要牺牲一部分  
我们历史文化这方面的  
这些老的东西  
虽然它很有价值  
但是我们为了经济发展  
为了生活更好  
我们是要放弃一部分  
它不是放弃  
它必须得淘汰  
不是咱们想放弃  
老的传统的东西有好都是好的  
但是新的东西方面  
建筑各方面  
有的东西它也是各方面  
有的东西你都用现在的东西  
老的跟现在的肯定不兼容不



# The History



**1950s** PRC China was just established, a new town was built around the gate of the ancient city which had been destroyed by during the wars.

**1970s** Multi-story residential building was introduced to Datong city as part of planned-economy system, those buildings are allocated to people as public-owned dormitories not properties. (People couldn't buy or sell real estates.)

**1990s** The coal gas factory was built under a planned-economy (planned and designed by the public sectors, no private sectors are involved.) China was transitioning from planned-economy to a market-economy.

**1998** Beginning of the market-economy (free market), residential buildings became private properties, people started to lawfully buy and sell real estates.

**2000s** The factory and its surrounding worker dormitories are abandoned because of a sudden change in policies concerning the coal gas.

**2010s** Large scale of demolition across the city, high-rise residential buildings took over the place.

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17

12

15

8

10

3

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7

16



Phase 1  
The Adjustment



A typical coal condensation building has cylinder shaped structures to stack and compress coals, however, they are not ideal geometries to be transformed to accommodate other programs. In Phase 1 it is changed into a cube shape with steel frame structures which could be utilized more easily in Phase 2.

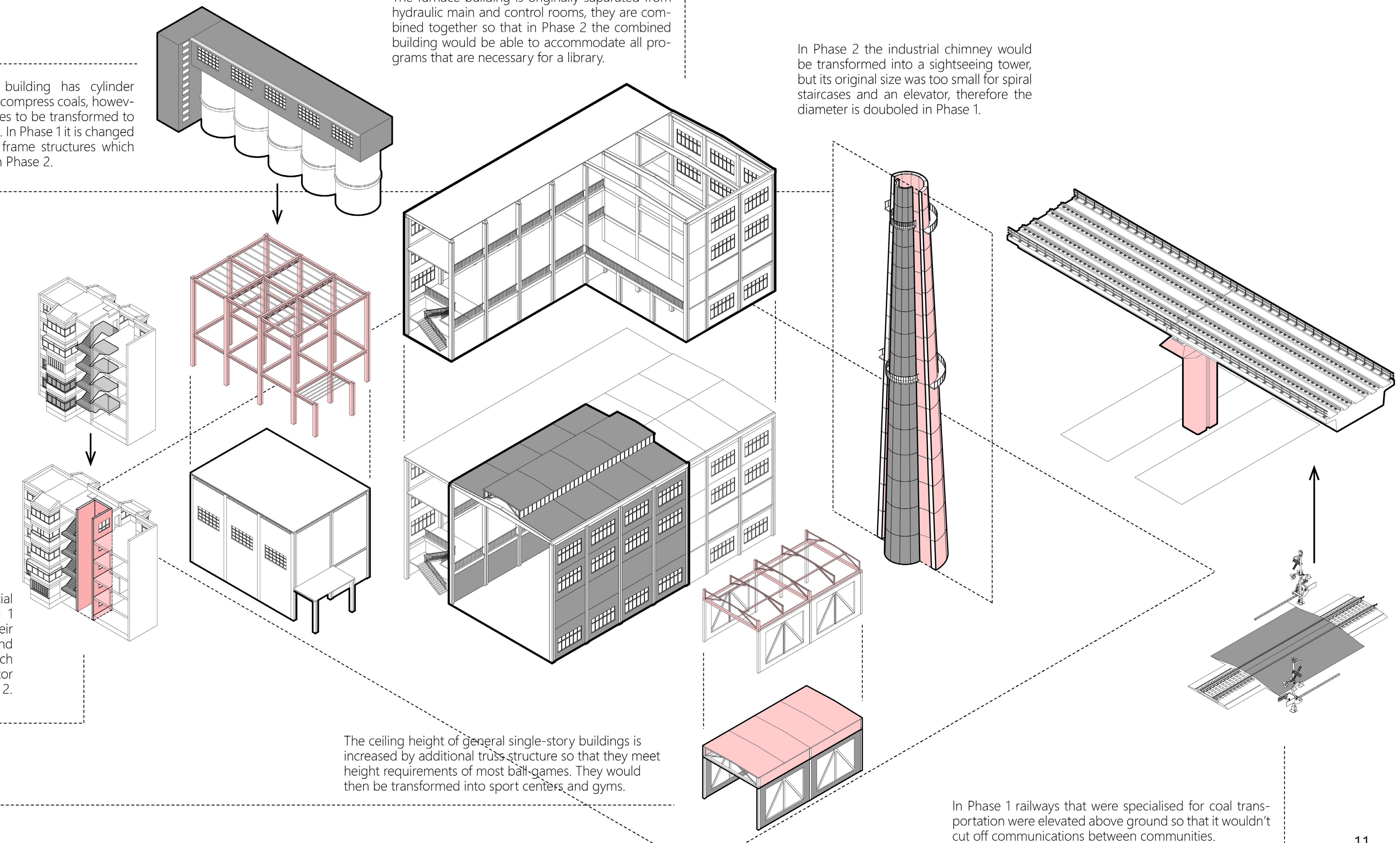
The furnace building is originally separated from hydraulic main and control rooms, they are combined together so that in Phase 2 the combined building would be able to accommodate all programs that are necessary for a library.

In Phase 2 the industrial chimney would be transformed into a sightseeing tower, but its original size was too small for spiral staircases and an elevator, therefore the diameter is doubled in Phase 1.

The multi-story residential buildings in design Phase 1 are slightly modified: their corridors are elongated and lightwells are created, which creates space for elevator installation in design Phase 2.

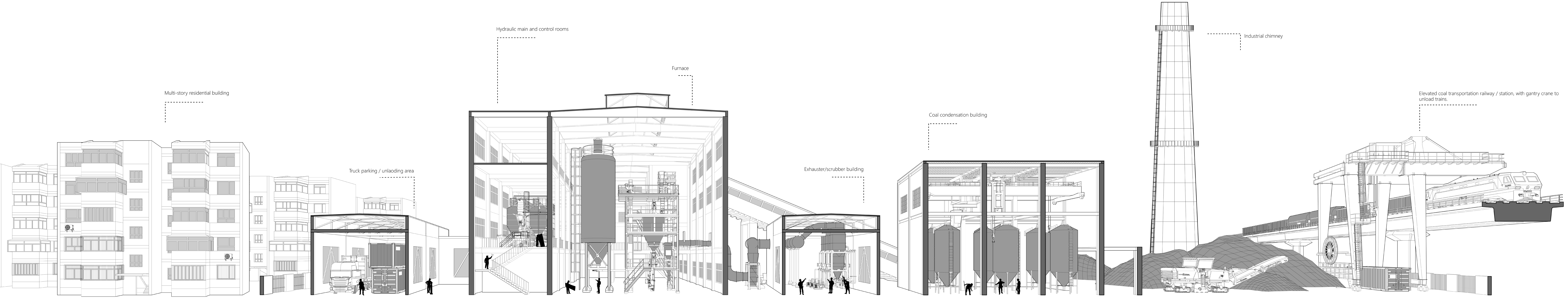
The ceiling height of general single-story buildings is increased by additional truss structure so that they meet height requirements of most ball-games. They would then be transformed into sport centers and gyms.

In Phase 1 railways that were specialised for coal transportation were elevated above ground so that it wouldn't cut off communications between communities.





Phase 1  
The Rearrangement





# Phase 2 The Adaptation

Based on the redesign, the factory would still serve its original purpose starting from the 1980s, with buildings rearranged and adjusted.

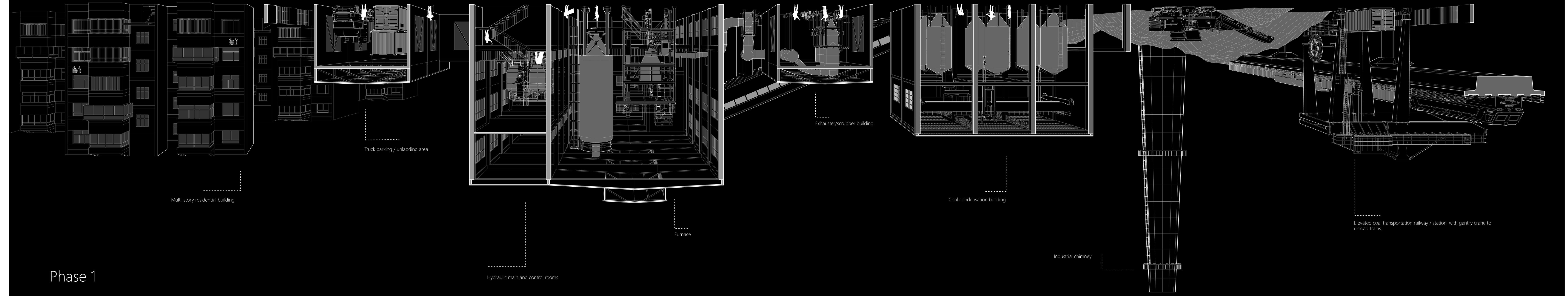
Phase 2



The factory would then be repurposed and transformed into a community center which includes a library, gyms, art galleries, open parks, etc.

The selection of programs is based on the interview and urban policies of local government.

Phase 1





This article discusses the potential impact that architecture could have on the environment. Architecture has never been a leading force of environmental change, but architecture is responsible for it in a way that architecture should be a facilitator to provide conditions for potential changes in society. With the concept of “modularised architecture” and “customised architecture”, this article calls for a localised design thinking that focuses on the relationship between architecture and its environment in terms of culture and history.

### CHANGED/UNCHANGED

It is critical to fully define the term environment with respect to architecture in the first place. Mohsen and David in their book *On Weathering* understand the environment mostly as pure natural processes that have direct effects on architecture, while David Gissen came up with the term “subnature”<sup>1</sup> to describe some natural forces entangled with human activities. Meanwhile Dan Barasch argued that abandoned architecture itself would become an important social context as part of the environment.<sup>2</sup> It is obvious that all their definitions of environment fall in to one of the two categories:

- 1.the act of nature
- 2.human society

This article focuses more on the social aspect of the environment with the belief that human interference is the dominant factor that determines the form of architecture. As environmental change continues over time, it makes the final state of architecture necessarily indefinite.<sup>3</sup> Thus it is important to examine how architecture would react to such changes actively or passively, to see if architecture has evolved or remained unchanged.

Examples of passive reactions are the coal gas plant in Datong, China (documented by Research Network on Urban Ruins in Contemporary China) and other abandoned factories in the same area.<sup>4</sup> It was built in the 1980s when China’s industry was fast growing, and was shut down in 2008 when the local government was shifting to a more sustainable energy policy. It is clear to see that when confronted with environmental change (in this case the change in government policy and the local economy), the factory had limited resources to adapt to such change and ended up with partial demolition. An important reason for such failure was that the factory was a result of “modularised” architecture, meaning that its design was policy/regulation driven. The factory was proposed only because the government policy required one at a specific time spot, and the form of the architecture is only based on the local building code. In this sense it was modularised because a factory in Beijing and a factory in Datong would look the same despite the fact that they are hundreds of miles away, since the building code for a factory is almost the same across China. Such modularised architecture failed to consider the local culture and history and has little connections to the local communities, which explains why they had low resistance to change. Their passive position prevented potentials to impact society.

<sup>1</sup> SubNature: Architecture's Other Environments: Epilogue, David Gissen

<sup>2</sup> Ruin and Redemption in Architecture, Dan Barasch

<sup>3</sup> On Weathering: The Life of Buildings in Time, Mohsen Mostafavi

<sup>4</sup> Ash is purest white, Zhangke Jia



## PHANTOM PAIN

Phantom pain is originally defined as "pain that is localised in the region of the removed body part". In the film preview it is used to describe the illusion or mirage of architecture that had already been removed, also to describe the emotions that ruin experience brings. Phantom pain is the only proof of people's inhabitation in history and such emotion peaks when there is evidence showing people's attempt to customise the factory for their needs while it was intended to be the least inhabitable place by policies and regulations.

Ruins are also memorials that witnessed the history of environmental change, through the map series that documented the chronological order of the changes that took place in the same factory area, it is obvious to see that policies and regulations are not the only factor that determines the development of an area. Local people collectively and spontaneously reshape the place they are living in without the push of urban planners or policy makers. Modularised architecture loses its ability to have dialogue with those changes over time, as urban planners tend to take a pure rational thinking like Corbusier and his Radiant City<sup>5</sup> in regulating people's lives. The rigidity of policies and regulations jeopardised the connection between public infrastructures and local communities.

Customised architecture on the other hand should be "inherently humanist, site and user specific, integrated into the larger social network"<sup>6</sup>. Architect's job here is to incite possibilities for potential change by listening to the needs of local people and integrating architecture into local communities. This sometimes means that there shouldn't be a clear border that separates one program from another by zoning code. If people spontaneously decide to inhabit places that are never intended to be inhabitable, architects should respect that choice and adjust accordingly. In this sense architecture's impact on society is invisible but sustainable. Architecture lobby for itself when it is the most integrated into peoples' lives, inhabitants would find their own way spontaneously to adapt the place they live in to the changing environment.

<sup>5</sup> Towards a new architecture, Le Corbusier

<sup>6</sup> Effecting Social Change--Architecture as Servitude, Lauren Jones

## FAREWELL

The coal gas plant in Datong is a good example that the policy/urban planning driven architecture is no longer suitable for the current society, although back to the 80s it might be the best solution. To achieve a customized architecture one needs to look carefully at the environmental change in chronological order, which reveals the real needs of local communities. And by collaging those needs together one would be able to come up with a new type of design thinking that argues for the inhabitants rather than instructing them. The failure of the coal gas plant could be a farewell speech of modularised architecture, and customised architecture with the help of culture and history of local communities, should be the design thinking we adopt for the upcoming public infrastructures.



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“Architecture is not about steering social outcomes toward an ideal through architectural composition, but instead aims to provide the conditions to allow social factors and processes to guide and define architecture.”



