BISHENG HONG
SELECTED WORKS IN GSAPP
2021-2022
The Soviet Terminal in New York

the exhibition center of the Ford Foundation's educational programs

REVERSION, BASED ON FORD'S LOGIC

An "EMPIRE" that propagates the "Empire"
FIVE AREAS FOR ACTION

01 To contribute to the establishment of peace
02 To strengthen democracy
03 To strengthen the economy
04 To strengthen, improve and expand education
05 To increase knowledge of individual behavior and human relations

"to strengthen, expand and improve educational facilities and methods to enable individuals more fully to realize their intellectual, civic and spiritual potentialities; to promote greater equality of educational opportunity; and to conserve and increase knowledge and enrich our culture."
...the mass media play a profound role in the general education of youth and have an effect in many instances far more powerful than that of our schools themselves. Cooperation with non-commercial organizations concerned with mass communication offers promise. The Ford Foundation should support activities for more effective use of mass media, such as the press, the radio, and the moving picture and of community facilities for nonacademic education and for better utilization of leisure time for all age groups.
The time, when the bilateral relationship and site reached the bottom, is the best time to reverse the imbalance.
The Inconvenience and Chaos Brought by Adaptability

Nantes School of Architecture, LaCaton & Vassal

Buñuel Hong Kong, July 321

An unpractical practice for architectural adaptability and maintainability, the Nantes School of Architecture, with its twin-structural system design, offers a method simultaneously keeping maximum possibility and minimum renewal cost. This project solves the complex and massive demand of school and provides preceding space for future development. However, from the specific aspect of community, aesthetic, economy, structure, and utility, the ultimate pursuit of adaptability brings not only possibility and flexibility, but also inconvenience and chaos.

From my point of view, “frame-seculas” could be divided into 2 parts: “frame” means across, while “seculas” means area and discipline. A frame-secular architectural design should involve multiple disciplines’ considerations, which have mutual influences on each other and will follow a characteristic priority order. The final result is an integrated output of historical context, time, and interdisciplinary influence, and thus I will unfold the case’s argument from top-3 areas.

1. Segregation brought by Openness | The community connection

LaCaton & Vassal chose transparent and mobile facade panels and open outdoor spaces for direct links with the community and maximum openness. Unfortunately, the openness only stops at the visual perception. Influencing by the elements ignored at the beginning such as: the operating mode, the security condition, etc., the school’s mobile facade is frozen, and the slope is equipped with temporary fences and gates, which become an obstacle to connecting to the community. The clash between visual perception and reality, misleads, strengthens the gap between the school and its surrounding community.

2. Misapprehension brought by Minimalism | The aesthetic style

The minimalist aesthetic style weakens the architectural characteristics, and thus, the building can be defined as vague and blurred cognition, with adaptability for function and image changes. The minimalism glosses details (doors and windows, size, color, etc.) and makes people’s cognition of architecture lose the standard. When architecture actively abandons paradigms and conventions that help form psychological cognition of a building to ensure maximum variability, it is easy for people to misinterpret the building’s real meaning; it’s hard to judge whether a building, with all-glass facades, is an office building, or a factory, or a school.

3. Discomfort brought by Vitality | The utility experience

The range of functional change and the depth of functional mixture is defined by support elements, such as pipeline, equipment, and surrounding rooms, etc. The school’s low-cost design and construction standards make it impossible to utilize non-functional space as all-functional space. Based on limited infrastructure, those spaces could only be used as exact multipurpose, with a non-ideal acoustic environment and the inconvenience of electric devices’ movement.

4. The result of trade-offs

Adaptability should be a "relatively appropriate" solution after dialectically considering and evaluating the pros and cons of all aspects. After considering all the restrictions and conditions from every discipline, the Nantes school of architecture made a decision that maintains the maximum possibility and flexibility via a low-tech and concise design. It is undeniable that the double-structural design, mobile facade, and underfit programs all brought the possibility of vitality to the school, which was the optimal solution in the case of a low budget at that time. However, when our re-evaluation of this project is detached from the specific budget constraints and historical context, we will find that, to some extent, the ultimate pursuit of adaptability has a negative effect. Only when we face up to these negative effects, and make a rational analysis from the current context, can previous projects help architects to judge what kind of choices is more appropriately adaptive for the changing future.
Do we need another architectural alienated experiment?

The FUTURO with FRP material

Fig. 1 Fanciful ski chalet design model, 1968, Matti Suuronen. Fig. 2: The fairy imagination of future. Cover of the Amazing Stories, March 1939. & design drawings of the first case of the FUTURO.

Unlike craftsmen, architects' work is full of creativity, which makes architects always have the instinct to pursue "being different". However, Futuro, as an ultimate embodiment of "being different", alienated shape and innovative construction materials, finally failed. This makes me question whether we need to be different/alienated? Especially under the modern background of the climate crisis, racial opposition, class solidification, and resource shortage.

Under the encouragement of optimism after World War II, alienation is the ultimate pursuit of "being different". "Being different" is essentially the public's rebellion against the high-pressure political experience of the war, hoping to deviate from human life. This transcendent-human/alienated pursuit eventually evolved into the emergence of FRP architectural prototypes. Represented by Futuro's flying saucer appearance, alienation is a life imagination far away from tradition and a transcendental-human science-fictional imagination.

Futuro's failure is determined by the unique context from 1960 to 1970, which is unrepeatable. Therefore, discussing the feasibility of the alienated architectural experiment must not be isolated from the time. As Zaha Hadid's dazzling and popular architecture shows, alienated FRP architecture, as a luxury, exclusive symbol, has a revival trend. The next alienated architectural experiment is feasible, even with capital support. However, if it continues to become the manifestation of consumerism and reappears in an uneconomic attitude, it will not be expected. It is an arrogant return of capitalism and consumerism.

In social evaluation, the alienated-non-human elements of architecture are always regarded as symbols of luxury. Under the influence of historical fluctuations, this symbol of consumerism and luxury is constantly strengthened. Futuro's design reflects a beautiful imagination of future life in economically developed western countries, in which everything is neat, exquisite, and beyond reality. The high cost of FRP materials, the leisure design, and the independent infrastructure make Futuro exclusive. This alienated and beautiful image of the future is a betrayal of the underdeveloped non-western regions. In recent years, the revival of alienation and the innovation of FRP architecture are strengthening this symbol of consumerism and luxury. Three times the price of concrete, binding FRP materials with luxury. Is it worth spending a lot of money, oil, and carbon emissions in exchange for fancy alienated buildings?

A symbol of luxury

Fig. 3: the historical timeline of the FUTURO project. Fig. 4: Futuro’s luxurious life imagination is a betrayal of the life in poor areas of the same time.

Although the repair of abandoned Futuro can be regarded as the public's re-acceptance and revival of alienated design. The entangled environment to be faced in the future, such as global warming, oil shortage, climate crisis, racial antagonism, social injustice, and class solidification, may form non-optimistic influences and continue to strengthen the luxury symbol of alienated buildings. Based on the context of future environmental crises, response to the complex environment should take priority over alienation. We should stop making exclusive futuristic designs but inclusively design for future life, which could better alleviate the conflict between humans and the environment.
The modernization invasion in the countryside

The question about the future imagination shown in “countryside, the future” - the Samir Bantal’s argument section

Shijing Hong

In recent years, modern high-tech technologies, such as automatic irrigation systems, unipotent farming machines supported by GPS, AI-driven digital transportation systems, and so on, are not limited to the urban environment, but begin to emerge in the countryside. The countryside is moving towards modernization and cyborg’s future at a high speed beyond people’s imagination. Both AMO and Koolhaas expressed optimism about the modernization and cyborg’s future. But my doubt is, is the intervention of “modernization” in the countryside positive and taken for granted? As architects and planners, how should we evaluate and choose the intervention of “modernization” in the future countryside setting?

Modernization is irreversible and irreversible

Most of AMO’s studies focus on the modernization of future villages (involving industry, transportation, agriculture, husbandry, etc.), which shows that the imagination of future countryside cannot be isolated without “Modernization”. "Modernization" is the inevitable trend of human life iteration, and any attempt to violate this historical trend of modernization and stick to the tradition is meaningless and futile. "Modernization" has brought positive improvements to both urban and rural life. The hydroponic tomato planting lab container placed at the exhibition entrance of “countryside, the future” in Guggenheim museum shows that the modern planting technology helps farmers realize crop production with high quality and high success rate. Similar modernization patterns in transportation, construction, production, agriculture, and other fields can effectively, significantly, and radically improve the quality of rural life and eliminate the absolute gap between cities and the countryside. The huge development gap between existing cities and countryside is the biggest internal reason for the one-way migration to the cities. The unbalanced development makes the countryside, which is called “forgotten areas” by Rem Koolhaas, completely lose its competitiveness and persuasion. Modern technologies (such as automation, AI, database, and networking) can effectively resist and even subvert this competitive balance in a short time.

Modernization can not only eliminate the imbalance between cities and countryside but also create interesting possibilities for a rural development—a new type of future countryside that is simultaneously non-countryside and non-urban. The modern network technologies shown in the exhibition by AMO, such as rural Taobao, Kuaishou, and so on, have brought interesting changes to China’s countryside. "Modernization" elements have built a new connection between rural youth and the integrated community, making the countryside regain its voice and importance in the economic and political network. In these cases, “modernization” helps the countryside to form its unique life mode without being attached to the city.

“Modernization” can improve the quality of rural life, but the intervention of modern technology should be considered and selected more carefully and elaborately. Embracing the paradigm of “modernization” without restraint may bring negative consequences. In Koolhaas’ words, “modernization” is delicate, and we should face its negative consequences directly.

The “modernization” that killing the countryside

The unlimited intervention of “modernization” technology in the countryside may lead the countryside to an end similar to Urbanization – a place with efficiency-driven development and construction logic. Under this setting, “modernization” will destroy and kill the uniqueness of the countryside from many fields such as architecture, economy, geomorphology, society, and so on. Instead of embracing "modernization" blindly, which will gradually kill the countryside and create a “countryside flavor” town, the Countryside’s acceptance of “modernization” should be relatively appropriate and reasonable decisions made after a complex and comprehensive evaluation, to use “modernization” to upgrade the countryside’s iteration to meet the changing needs.
Modern technology not only greatly improves rural production efficiency, but also hides the possibility of transferring the countryside from mankind-oriented to non-living-oriented. This trend is obvious and imaginable, not only in the physical aspects of the countryside’s construction, planning, and topography, but also in the non-physical aspects of production and community connection.

The change in physical aspects is intuitive - the X-Y-Z system of industrialization will directly control the development and construction of the countryside. Amazon’s fully automated warehouse shows that X-Y-Z’s industrial logic is extremely efficient, whose advantage can also be extended to high-tech agriculture, mechanized husbandry, and automated transportation in the countryside. When a large number of automated modern technologies are introduced into the countryside in the future (for example, automatic transportation systems, AI electric tractors, the unplotted farming system with GPS, data-based forest protection system, etc.), the countryside’s elements, such as roads, houses, farmland will be straightened into X-Y-Z’s grid system. The highly automated agricultural process will also transform traditional rural houses (full of the uncertainty of manual technology and response to human activities) into industrialized, non-living-oriented construction logic, just like the completely dark Amazon warehouse. It can be predicted that this homogenization, industrialization, and modernization will be reflected in construction, street grid, and terrain. Can you imagine a homogenous X-Y-Z grid dominating all the construction and development of the countryside? Considered as a countryside version of the American suburbs, the homogenous future sounds boring.

Similarly, modern technology will also fundamentally alienate the relationship between man and nature by changing the production network. The Dutch agricultural greenhouse studied by AMO is a good example, which clearly shows how high-tech planting technology can separate human activities from the natural environment. Trying to cultivate and produce crops in a completely artificially controlled environment is a pursuit of escaping natural interference. High-tech planting technology makes it possible to plant summer crops in winter, which also alienating and cutting off the interaction between humans and nature. The high-tech planting greenhouse that ignores the laws of nature is more like a factory producing agricultural products, which deviates from traditional agriculture. Similarly, the automated and industrialized husbandry also makes the cows more like workers in the square grid, showing the efficiency-first value of Tayloration. This extreme and negative conjecture about the future countryside shows a kind of industrialization logic hidden behind “modernization”, which makes the countryside deviate from its essence closely connected with nature. And eventually, this logic will push the countryside to develop into a fake town with a countryside appearance. Compared with becoming a factory supporting the city, the countryside (with free-running cows, a life that will be adjusted under natural interference, non-linear building settlements due to human activity needs) sounds more attractive.

AMO pointed out that the future countryside will face more complex fluctuation factors, which makes the future countryside no longer a stable and “romantic” landscape, but a solution to the problems of Globalization (food shortage, climate crisis, public health events, global migration, etc.). The future countryside will be a sophisticated existence beyond the Cartesian system. AMO also recognizes the two-sided feature of “modernization”, that is, “modernization” can not only bring convenience to the countryside but also cause irreversible negative effects. But on the whole, AMO has an optimistic attitude towards “modernization”. Koolhaas believes that the Chinese rural development strategy with comprehensive goals and integrated planning is an appropriate way to deal with sophisticated problems. However, we need to be vigilant that behind the integrated approach, there is a strong colonialism mindset - the homogeneous development strategy decided by higher-level external power rules the characteristics countryside. The integrated development strategy can quickly and widely promote the upgrading and construction of rural areas, which is highly feasible, but also controversial and authoritarian. Taking China’s countryside development strategy as an example, the government tries to build a large number of homogeneous modern villages to replace the traditional natural villages. In these new settlements built by the government, you can hardly distinguish the differences in organization patterns between a southern one and a northern one. Architects living in the city use the logic of the city to assume the life mode of the countryside, and unconsciously apply the modernization paradigm to colonize the natural countryside, more extremely, which will kill the natural countryside’s identity. Local villagers express their resistance to the top-down development logic by refusing to move into the new community. As an ontology with self-consciousness and autonomy, the countryside should have a voice in the rural development strategy, which is the key to the rational use of modernization in the future countryside.

The intervention of modernization in the countryside should also follow a new countryside logic. Compared with the homogeneous top-down planning strategy, the bottom-up feedback should also be
preserved and have the same voice in the overall development mechanism. The maintenance of locality in the countryside development system is sophisticated and indispensable. I once participated in an interesting countryside case in Henan, China—a tourist center spontaneously controlled by local villagers with the help of architects. In the construction stage, the design team subconsciously followed the common sensitivity and experience of the city and purchased the closest foot for the washroom of the tourist center. However, these toilets, like monsters, were blocked by villagers and refused to be installed, because of the conflict with the local living habits. Finally, after a discussion among all the villagers, the toilet, as a concrete symbol of "modernization", was abandoned by the villagers. This drama is a vivid case, revealing the unique self-consciousness and locality of the countryside. Thanks to the fact that the project of Zhouzhuang village is dominated by villagers, the local orientation and choice can be reflected in the construction project. When we enlarge the scale of thinking, maintaining rural self-consciousness and voice power in an integrated countryside development is more complex and subtler. In short, the logic of countryside development should respect the locality - that is, villagers should have the right to say no.

Generally speaking, the future countryside modernization development should maintain both top-down development logic and bottom-up local expression. This is a game process, often accompanied by conflict and debate. As architects, specifically, people affected by western urbanization experience should be humbler in their choice of modernization in the future countryside and pay more attention to the characteristics of the countryside. In the face of new modern technology, we should still follow and extend the traditional countryside development to form a new iteration, rather than radical embrace all "modernization". This means that the "black pill" mentioned by Samir Bantal is not a stable choice, but a swinging, entangle range. (4) The pill will self-correct according to specific influencing factors. Sometimes it changes as a mixture of red and black closer to the traditional countryside logic; Sometimes it's blue and black closer to the logic of modernization.

In short, be cautious of the colonialism mindset, and be cautious of the efficiency-driven modernization. Architects should make the countryside better, not kill it.

[3] Fondation interview with Koolhaas, Rural Futures/To Win Re: crop Weekly Newsletter, 2006/14/13
[4] Finding the Future in the Countryside With AMO and Samir Bantal, Thom Ruger as Art, 2026/01/02
Architecture is a miniature city, the city is a large architecture.

In the limited space in Flushing, immigrants have created a series of anti-typology spaces to improve their living efficiency. Through our research and interview, we found that the more programs the space has, the more cohesive the community here. Taking the private Chinese clinic as an example, the study of healthcare system among immigrants and employers would help to promote the cohesion across different races. Flushing’s unique anti-space breaks the original independent hospital system, juxtaposing various functions in the same space. Eventually these spaces will break through the architectural boundaries in fragmented form and spread to streets, parks and other public spaces.
the same space can be used in two different ways in different time periods, which could increase the profitability and efficiency.

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Indoor - Outdoor Architectural Climate

At the architectural level, this scheme continues and expands the anti-type space of "indoor street" unique to flushing Chinese drugstore, and linearly connects and folds multiple functions to form a vertical street. On the plans, the elderly-friendly public space is embedded into the retail and small business incubation space, and the boundary between the two spaces is weakened to make the elderly feel active. Our proposal is an elder-friendly, ecosystemic cluster to Main Street for fostering social business and supporting more formal community activities following McDonald's NORD logic.
Resistance for Gentrification in Chinatown

Summary

Chinatown is hedged in by three of the borough’s proudest neighborhoods: Soho to the north, the Financial District to the south, and, to the west, Tribeca. In the past 40 years (from 1980 to 2020), Manhattan’s downtown is undergoing rapid urban renewal. With the financial support of the state government’s urban renewal promotion plan, neighborhoods such as SOHO have been rapidly rebuilt. SOHO has rapidly transformed into an expensive and dynamic urban entertainment zone in Manhattan by inventing cultural industry and luxury business. At the same time, the financial district has created huge office space through the construction of a large number of high-density skyscrapers, which continues to provide power for the city’s development. The development and construction needs of these two regions are increasingly difficult to meet and gradually spread and expand to the surrounding neighbors.

Chinatown, Chinatown is greatly compressed by the surrounding proudest neighborhoods, facing fierce gentrification and development pressure.

Faced with rising housing costs, a large number of Chinese are moving to other boroughs of New York, such as Flushing and Brooklyn. The immigrant population in Chinatown has doubled since 1980 - which makes the lower east side still the place with the highest residential density in Manhattan. Thanks to the continuous influx of a large number of foreign-born immigrants into the lower east side, Chinatown did not disappear as quickly as other historic immigrant enclaves such as Ireland and Little Italy, but Chinatown gradually began to show a decline in development. Chinatown is no longer the preferred destination for immigrants. Flushing has gradually become a popular springboard to enter the United States rather than Chinatown.

In order to safeguard the quality and vitality of the neighborhood, the Chinatown community has gradually spawned civil rights organizations representing the mainstream voice of the neighborhood, such as AAFE and CAAAV. These community-based civil rights organizations have been trying to influence and reverse the trend of Chinatown’s gentrification by organizing civil rights protests, developing affordable social housing, providing small business incubation plans, calling for neighborhood rezoning, and developing political influence.

Research questions

In the past 40 years (from 1980 to 2020), lower Manhattan has experienced rapid urban renewal. As the last neighborhood with a great possibility of development, Chinatown is facing the strong pressure of gentrification and urban redevelopment. In the past 40 years, the Chinese community has continuously resisted the general real estate market law, and actively participated in the development of the city through civil rights organizations such as AAFE and CAAAV (with affordable social housing as the topic). How can such bottom-up community development projects help Chinatown preserve and maintain the unique characteristics of the historic community? And how does it affect the urban space and demography of Chinatown?
the opinion of civil rights organizations, the large proportion of the poor in Chinatown can not be ignored, and it is also the vulnerable group most affected by the gentrification of the community. Meanwhile, the low- to moderate-income groups are also the source and motor of neighborhood vitality.

AAFE and other civil rights organizations have preserved and redeveloped many vacant buildings on the lower east side into affordable social housing by integrating federal financial support and the support of the Department of building NYC. As of 2005, AAFE has built or rehabilitated 43 buildings in Chinatown and on the lower east side, housing more than 500 low- to moderate-income families.

Chinese civil rights organizations provide a feasible way to oppose gentrification and stabilize the community, but more similar efforts are needed to fundamentally maintain the vitality and characteristics of the community. It is not enough to maintain and preserve the diversity and vitality of the city only by the efforts of the community. Chinatown also needs stronger political and government support to resist the laws of the real estate market.

Deliberate deportation of low-income Asians – Housing Woes for Chinatown’s Chinese

Since the 1980s, the economy of Chinatown has been declining. In the fierce competition of industrial globalization, many advantageous industries in Chinatown (such as the textile industry and jewelry industry) have lost their competitiveness and advantages. Since the 1980s, factories in Chinatown began to close down and transfer outward, and foreign capital investment into Chinatown has also been greatly reduced. On the contrary, the number of immigrants pouring into Chinatown is increasing year by year. The economic recession makes Chinatown more vulnerable to being invaded by its surrounding neighborhoods. The limited space and increasing population make the population density of Chinatown higher year by year."

Different from the stereotype of Chinese with diligence and prosperity, Chinatown has a large proportion of the poor. These people are often uneducated workers who immigrated to the United States around 1980. They come to New York under the call of the American dream and hope of high-quality life by working in factories. Unfortunately, they are living in a bad situation due to the industrial recession in Chinatown and the gradual severe Asian hate discrimination. Data show that these low-income groups often need to use more than 30% of their monthly income in exchange for a sleeping space."

In order to meet the huge residential demand, the basement of Chinatown will be illegally transformed and divided into extremely small living units to accommodate a large number of low-income immigrants. A large number of low-income immigrants live in damp and dark basement compartments. These living spaces can not meet the basic regulations of fire safety and health in New York City, which greatly threatens the mental and physical health of low-income groups."

As a secretive minority, low-income Chinese immigrants will face deliberate and systematic discrimination when seeking affordable public housing from the government. "The lack of effective access to affordable public housing
provided by the government and a high degree of community isolation make the Chinese immigrants being trapped in Chinatown in an extremely disadvantaged situation. Civil rights organizations in the Chinese community know the cruel housing dilemma in the neighborhood, which is why they chose affordable housing for low-income immigrants as the focus of all activities - this is really the key to improving the neighborhood fundamentally.

Chinatown is not for sale. The characteristics of Chinatown threaten by real estate development and gentrification

Small businesses with unique characteristics and delicious Chinese restaurants will be replaced, too. With the uncontrolled gentrification, the exotic restaurants and diverse small stores in Chinatown will face painful struggles with fierce market competition.

More and more high-class restaurants, luxury hotels, and fashion bars have occupied Chinatown, which makes Chinatown more and more deviate from the immigrant groups living in it. As other communities that have experienced gentrification will experience, bars are often the standard-bearer of upscale. A noisy nightlife is the beginning of the rich invading the working-class community. The influx of rich people will quickly drive the community in an expensive and unaffordable direction. At the same time, it is also threatening the characteristics of Chinatown. The data show that more than 50% of small businesses in Chinatown are considering moving out of Chinatown due to the consideration of rent and market competitiveness. There are also a large number of small shops that give up adhering to the diverse sales strategy and sell the same New York tourist souvenirs for more profits. It is not difficult to imagine that in the current future, Chinatown will be occupied and dominated by large chain businesses such as CVS and Starbucks.

Chinatown will be developed into an exotic theme park without immigrants. The media and the real estate industry awakened the hype and publicity of “new” Chinatown as an exotic and chic neighborhood in order to pursue greater market value. The developer positioned the new apartment as “pedro-a-terre”- a house close to the workplace, which is suitable for the rich living in the suburbs who need a place to sleep on weekdays. Real estate developers try to build the new luxury apartments in Chinatown into a style and atmosphere similar to SCHO and Tribeca to achieve market competitiveness. But this has greatly erased the characteristics of Chinatown and pushed it in a monotonous and boring direction. Meanwhile, in recent years (especially after 2005), a large number of new luxury apartments have replaced the buildings where low-income immigrants lived, kicking low-income Chinese out of Chinatown. Ironically, it turns Chinatown, a vibrant community, into an exotic theme park empty inside.

The Lower Manhattan Development Corporation and city planners have encouraged gentrification in Chinatown, which will be highly dense and financially ruin the special urban space in Chinatown. This will fundamentally destroy the comfortable, lively, and exotic street space of Chinatown and turn it into a boring urbanized street scene.

Chinatown for resident. Chinatown for all. Low-income groups are the soul of Chinatown

Gentrification will inevitably cause the displacement of a large number of low-income immigrants and seriously threaten population diversity. Since the promulgation of the first rent stabilization law in New York in 1969, a large number of buildings in Chinatown have been controlled by the rent stabilization law - these houses are rare and achievable homes for low-income immigrants. "Driven by soaring house prices and development interests, many landlords will deliberately drive out existing tenants by means of no house maintenance, no renewal of lease file, no
rent receiving, no hot water supply, no heating, intimidation, fraud; and so on. The landlord tried every means, even illegally, to expel and harass the residents. Once the house is vacant, the landlord will renew and upgrade the building and re-lease the units to escape the control of the rent stability law. “The building will be rented again according to the market price to obtain higher profit. Facing the pressure of gentrification, the remaining affordable housing in Chinatown is also greatly reduced.”

The demographic diversity of the neighborhood is very important to the vitality of the neighborhood and the urban atmosphere, which is why the Chinese civil rights organizations in Chinatown try their best to protect the low-income groups from the infringement of gentrification and maintain their proportion in the community population. A healthy and dynamic community should be a place suitable for citizens of all classes to live, work and entertain. Class-eliminating urban renewal has fatal lethality to the vitality of local communities. Delicious Chinese restaurants, highly skilled hair salons, exotic handicraft shops, great commodity stores, and so on in Chinatown relied on low-income workers. In other words, the dynamic and vibrant urban life needs to be maintained and operated by the low-income working class. It is unreasonable to cruelly expel the working class from the urban space while enjoying the outcomes of the working class.

It is conceivable that when low-income immigrants in Chinatown are replaced on a large scale, local urban life, especially urban activities at night, will lose support. City streets and public squares will fall silent early, and shops and restaurants on the streets will close early. To a large extent, this will reduce the safety and comfort of the street. Now Chinatown has begun to show this trend gradually. From 7 o’clock at night, a large number of shops and restaurants begin to close. When Flushing’s nightlife is about to reach the busiest time. Because shop and restaurant waiters were forced to move out of Chinatown, they had to leave an hour early to safely return to their homes in Brooklyn or Queens every night.

Therefore, it is understandable that the protection of the quality of life and rights of low-income immigrants is not only for democratic and moral considerations but also for the sustainability and vitality of the community itself. This is why in recent years, Chinatown began to unite, safeguard the rights of neighbors in all aspects as a whole, and formally express their resistance to gentrification. (Chinatown is a diverse community with people from different regions, class positions, and ideologies in China. The community rarely has a unified leadership to represent them. However, facing the potential threat of gentrification, the second generation of immigrants in Chinatown began to change their ideas and pay attention to the unified attitude of the community and the occurrence of politics.)

**Bottom-up development of Chinatown** - Non-profit developers representing the community

Moved to action by a developer who refused to hire Asian workers for the massive Confucius Plaza construction project, local activists raised their voices, staged months of protests, and finally prevailed. During this civil rights activity in 1973, AAFE - Asian Americans for Equality was founded. In the 1980s, mayor Ed Koch’s Government quietly promoted the construction of the “Special Manhattan Bridge District”, encouraging the construction of luxury apartments to replace low-income apartments. In this context, AAFE began to mobilize other community organizations to prevent developers from exploiting the neighborhood. Since then, AAFE has accelerated the investment in affordable housing development to maintain the stability and vitality of the neighborhood.

In 1985, a fire in 54 Eldridge St, provided an opportunity for AAFE to intervene in affordable public housing development as a non-profit developer. In 1988, AAFE purchased two buildings - 176 and 180 Eldridge St - confiscated due to tax default from the NYC Department of building at a very low price. AAFE formulated a widely imitated affordable housing strategy - using the federal low-income housing tax credit to attract financing, and persuaded the Enterprise Foundation, an affordable housing pioneer. And Fannie Mae to fund $5.2 million for the rehabilitation project. The development named equality house considered 59 apartments for low-income and formerly home residents.

Because AAFE acquired the development model of the confiscated vacuum building due to tax default from the Municipal Department of building, the affordable social housing projects developed by AAFE are scattered in
Chinatown and the Lower East Side. Unlike other large-scale residential projects developed by NYCHA with a risk of community self-isolation, these projects enable low-income immigrants to integrate more organically into urban life. By means of acupuncture to install renewal projects in the city, assisting in the development of preferential small business space on the ground floor, and small business incubation plan, AAFE is not only improving the living plight of low-income immigrants but also protecting small businesses from the persecution of gentrification. To a certain extent, it helps the block where the development project is located to maintain a unique local business atmosphere and is not squeezed by the large chain businesses of CVS and Starbucks.

After 2000, AAFE experienced a stage of rapid development, not limited to the construction and development of Chinese communities, gradually expanded the target beneficiaries of non-profit housing development into the elderly, low-income, and Pan-Asian immigrant groups, and maintained the population diversity of Chinatown and Lower East Side neighborhoods from a broader perspective.

Our homes, Our Rights- Urban development tied to civil rights activities

CAAAV Organizing Asian Communities was founded in 1986 by working-class Asian women to build power in Asian communities against rising police and hate violence. CTU under CAAAV is an organization focusing on residential rights. For many years, they have paid attention to the protection of the legitimate rights and basic life quality of low-income tenants in the region. It can be said that CAAAV will never be absent from the anti-gentrification activities in Chinatown. Unlike AAFE is a non-profit housing developer, CAAAV also effectively intervenes and affects the urban renewal process of Chinatown through civil rights movement and protest.

In addition, in the past two decades, CAAAV has devoted a lot to calling on rezoning Chinatown. The contents of the manifesto mainly include opposing the demolition, harassment, and eviction in the historical block of Chinatown, curbing the approval of new buildings in the historical block, ensuring the rent protection in the historical block, ensuring more affordable housing in the new projects, encouraging the development of small business, etc. In terms of urban space control, CAAAV also calls for limiting the construction height of the plot to protect the unique urban space in Chinatown.

The activities of CAAAV and AAFE promote and help each other. The former as a protestor and the latter as a developer express the resistance and organization of the Chinese community against urban gentrification from multiple angles. From a certain point of view, these civil rights organizations have indeed brought great obstacles to the marketing and upgrading of Chinatown by real estate developers. However, due to the limited social voice and political energy of civil rights organizations, these interventions are always somewhat inadequate.

Historical neighbor in downtown needs more voice- Unique Chinatown urban space

In general, the trend of civil rights organizations in Chinese communities to intervene and resist urban gentrification has indeed brought some improvement. However, to fundamentally reverse the development trend of Chinatown, these practices are far from effective and sufficient.

Little progress has been made in providing low-income housing for poor Chinese immigrants. The “affordable housing” built by non-profit organizations and private developers with the help of various urban subsidies has produced only a few hundred sets. Even so, residents must earn $60,000 to $40,000 a year to participate in the lottery for these units, while the average middle income of the community is about $20,000 a year. In the long run, a large number of urban-driven development of public housing will be the only solution, not only for Chinatown but also the whole of NYC.

However, it is worth noting that there are also diversity and differences in classes and opinions within the Chinese community. Landlords and speculators have placed their hopes on the economic rewards brought by urban renewal and gentrification, so they uphold the attitude of supporting gentrification. Civil rights organizations and low-income immigrants strongly oppose urban renewal out of the consideration of community vitality. These internal divisions and conflicts also contribute to the current situation of Chinatown’s hesitation about gentrification. To some extent, it
is also carving the characteristic urban space mixed with luxury apartments and historical buildings in Chinatown.

YouTube, “Our Homes, Our Rights”, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D6V2pCIR5vU&list=UU8mmPy2TmgsrVCVbtvUAew&index=9


↑ AAFE, “Our History”, https://www.aafe.org/who-we-are/our-history


* CAAV, Converting Chinatown: A snapshot of a neighborhood becoming unaffordable and unavailable(December 2008)


A STORY OF MY LIFE
CARTOON
60 S
1. Vertical metal support (with conduit)
2. Lateral metal supports
3. Back projector
4. Vertical metal support (with conduit)
5. Mirror glass with LED panel behind
6. Metal structure (supporting the upper cubicle)
7. Ring equipment slot (for placing wires, pipes)
8. Ring-shaped metal support (area for placing speakers, monitors, etc.)
9. Equipment gap (fresh air outlet, air conditioner outlet, humidifier outlet)
10. Switchable glass
11. Multi-layer extruded panels with heating grid sandwiched inside
12. Metal base (computer, air conditioner, wifi, humidifier and other mechanical placement areas)
13. Vertical metal structure column (with customized decorative layer attached on the surface)
14. Equipment pipeline grooves
15. Chair’s electronic moving track
16. Base metal X-beam
17. Base metal beam

Metal base with plenty of openings for mechanical

The screen uses rear projection, no longer needs a monitor

Mechanical pipes are connected to the base through hollow

Ring device slot and monitor settings area hidden out of sight

The structure is self-supporting between cubicles

HVAC system hidden under
Aiming to link Harlem’s daily life and diverse culture to Columbia University, the project is located at the main dynamic axis on the central axis. Bozes are designed as containers to support daily activities for Columbia communities while recording the everyday life of Harlem.

Four maps related to the food, art, music, and historical building are set on the eight boxes as puzzle. By moving around the boxes, people can actively explore the miniature Harlem. At the same time, the volumes can turn into small tables or shelves for people during their break.

During the daytime, materials with different textures and colors are used to guide the puzzle, exciting people to participate in the interaction. Postcards are designed to place in iPhones as lighting sources. The transparencies of the materials make them possible to explore during nighttime as well.

The Smith African Diaspora (1986-1991) campus community on the northeast corner of the existing Library. The library is located on the north side of the campus and the library is the central building of the campus.

The new library project is located on the south side of the campus and the library is the central building of the campus. The new library project is located on the north side of the campus and the library is the central building of the campus.

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INSTRUCTIONS

DRAW IT! PLAY IT!
MOVE IT! STACK IT!
FIND IT! EXPLORE IT!
REALIZE IT!
PARTICIPATE IT!
BE PROUD OF IT!
LOVE IT!
IMPROVE IT!
BE PART OF IT!
DARE IT!
PLAY IT!
MOVE IT!
STACK IT!
FIND IT!

LIGHT IT UP GRAFFITI IT MOVE IT AROUND

TEXT borderRadius=10px style="font-family: Arial, sans-serif; font-size: 14px; line-height: 1.5; text-align: center;"