

# Appendix 2

## Reflection

### 1. the relationship between the methodical line of approach of the studio and the method chosen by me in this framework

The methodical line of Graduation studio Design as politics is research the relations of Design and Democracy, how architecture and urbanism are or not to related to the wills of the people and how design can give back the power into the hands of the citizens, to empower the citizens as they relate to the city space. Therefore my research for theme “We the people” uses theoretical framework and actor-relational approach on a representative post-communist Danwei, Tegang community in Chongqing, tracing its origins, development, collapse and reconfiguration, addressing the links and conflicts among space, power and grass root democratic development. From my researches, it can be concluded that a core feature of China’s urban transformation was the disintegration of the danwei system and the consequent efforts at community development and community building. The study on Tegang community as a representative Danwei reveals Chinese post-danwei community has become a meeting ground for the various and diverse interactions among party-state, the market organizations and the civil society. No longer just a supplementary institution which sustained state control over society, Danwei now has to confront the crisis in the spatial, economic, political and social transformation. What is more, in the process of the revitalization, there lies the dilemma between the demand of bottom-up politics of the civil society and top-down nature of authoritarian state.

Nevertheless, the researches of the emergent informal urbanism phenomenon in Tegang case concerning grass roots democracy practices reveals Danwei will continue to play the most important role in seeking the model of the participatory democratic community and network governance in China.

Therefore the theoretical framework is structured for the model of participation in Post- danwei regeneration agenda as my community-participation approach to develop a participation & communication strategy into a network-governance tool and a user-co-creation platform as the carrier for actors’ engagement patterns and potential spatial interventions, creates opportunities for more downward empowerment and thus reduce the accountability gap between citizens and policy makers.

### 2. the relationship between the theme of the studio and the case study selection

The theme of our studio is WE THE PEOPLE, it is thought to offer opportunity for architects and urbanists to rethink alternative approaches and solutions to facilitate the people to make collective choices dealing with the complex

urban conflicts. In this sense I should find some excellent case studies to explore design and democracy in Danwei regeneration process. Therefore, four case studies related to my research and design came to me eyes:

- 1). informal urbanism in Song dynasty and Song’s Governance of non-interference model in Song’s Kaifeng and current Wuxi, providing community-level network governance model in Chinese urban history;
- 2). the effects of the community organization and community input on moving threat of demolition of Highline in New York and co-design process with other actors, promoting grassroots participation in spacial strategy and interventions;
- 3). Southwark Circle which is a social support network and actor-engagement model fulfilling local everyday needs and in the process reducing social isolation in inner-London borough, helping me apply this approach in the communication strategy and potential spatial interventions via user-co-creation platform into the alternative municipality proposal proposal fitted into Tegang case and structure power distribution proposal.
- 4). Street Vendor Guide project developed by American-Chinese artist Candy Chang, a good practice of the actor engagement model and communication tool, cultivating the citizens’ awareness of the right to the city, which also inspire me to seek the new technical and communication skills of urban planners.

### 3. the relationship between research and design

The theoretical framework consisted by literature reviews and case studies brings the lights to frame the vision of participatory democratic community model within the conception of the People’s commune 2.0 configuration. And the people’s commune 2.0 configuration is more like a methodology of a community-participation approach, synthesized a participation & communication strategy with a network-governance tool and a user-co-creation platform as the carrier for actors engagement patterns and potential spatial interventions in accordance with the local needs and resources, which could respond to the pragmatic issues and research question mentioned in this project, shifting the conflicts caused by the possible trend of danwei-community regeneration agenda in current municipality means of planning and governance to positive interaction among different actors, creating a win-win situation with the equilibrium on actors voices, expectations and value, and promote participatory democracy development in local community, thereby securing the position of the post-Danwei residents culturally, spatially and economically.

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### 4. the relationship between the project and the wider social context

The people who lived in the collapsed danwei-community and other vulnerable groups can often be excluded from participating in policy design and programmes that have a direct impact on their lives. Their voices can be constrained by low awareness of rights, government resistance, poor access to information and complex laws and procedures for involvement in local decision-making. In many post- Danwei communities therefore there lies the evidence of cultural, spatial and economical vulnerability. Moreover, government financial revenue highly dependent on public-land leasing strategy results in imbalanced public resources and developers' investments inclined to advantage groups instead of vulnerable groups, intensifying social segregation.

At the same time, although there were some strategies to make real efforts to re-legitimizing residents committee by emphasizing its autonomous nature-direct election and residents may have more power to participate in community issue than before, the practice of Residents' committee is facing dilemma between neighborhood autonomy and top-down state- governance. In the current strategies and governance on deprived post-danwei community regeneration, the autonomous and democratic nature of RCs are usually ignored.

Therefore 5 core design elements as integrated community-participation approaches within People's commune 2.0 project are suggested to respond to the pragmatic social problems:

*1) The participation strategy called I/WE/YOU MAKE PEOPLE' COMMUNE 2.0* seeks to give post-Danwei communities direct control over investment decisions, project planning, execution and monitoring, through a process that emphasizes inclusive participation and management. To strengthen the community autonomy power of Residents' committees, the plan team will assist Residents' committee to organize the online & offline community organization as basic premise that the multi-stakeholders as members of "Friend of Tegang" coalition could be better placed to identify their shared needs and the actions necessary to meet them. Taking charge of these processes facilitates a sense of community ownership, which can contribute to the sustainability of spatial interventions.

*2) The communication strategy* as a dialogue platform that involves using the ICTs technology enhancing actor participation and feedback systems in more open environments.

*3) the website* The design of the official website of People's commune 2.0 and Friends of Tegang as the user-co-creation platform and social support network-governance tool is also to seek using accessible and innovative patterns to promote transparency, accountability and regulations in the course of participatory democratic community-building.

*4) actors engagement* in policy formation and implementations to influence and hold themselves accountable i highlights the regulations and agreements of spatial interventions on the production of public-realm landscape and participation in public service delivery

*5) participatory spatial interventions* as the instrument for the physical guidance and accessible regulations for actors to understand the laws and the rights in participating the community environment upgrading process and learn how to follow the physical guidance and regulations to shape their better living and working unit by themselves.