New Utopia——On the Ruins of Welfare State

During this studio, we will try to find the utopian thinking that comes up when old orders collapse. We are living in an age where nation states seem to become weaker and weaker, under the influence of privatisation, localism but also of globalisation and supra-national politics like that of the European Union. Countries seem to be both falling apart in small fragments as well as being dissolved into huge global networks.

Architecture and Urbanism have for a long time been dependent on the nation state. We cannot imagine doing without a strong government and huge public investments for developing housing projects and public buildings, or for designing huge and even utopian visions for new cities and regions. Architecture and planning are starting to lose their traditional role and authority to represent the nation.

But is this a bad thing? Can we imagine a world without the state? Can we imagine architecture and planning without public authority? Can we imagine a purely community based design? Now that we see the structures and certainties of the twentieth century crumbling around us, the new ideas are coming from small, autonomous even anarchistic communities and initiatives. Here we find the imagination of new societies: on the ruins of the welfare state.

Utopian thinking and design happens when you imagine what to do when forced to start all over again. With this studio we ask students to imagine their ideal small community, as a radical alternative to the large systems that we are living in but that cannot function much longer. After painting their ideal utopian community, the students are asked to develop plausible ways of realizing them. All scales are allowed, all ideologies are allowed, all levels of realism are allowed, as long they are consistent, imaginative and relevant to the problems our cities and regions are facing right now.
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1. Introduction & Motivation
The introduction of this Thesis report first gives an insight in definitions, factors, effects and impacts of urban villages. Then the situation of urban villages in Shenzhen is described followed by the proposal and aims, research questions and relevance of the project. The final part of the report explains how the project is approached, how it is built up in different phases and illustrates the ongoing elaboration at the midpoint of the graduation project.

1.1 Definition

How does welfare system work in China?
The welfare system in China was built up in urban area. It did not start in rural area until 1996. In 2006, the state tried to partly cover the third group of people—the migrants. Until today, the most advanced welfare system works only for people holding an urban Hukou (Household registration). Basing on this fact, the Hukou system becomes a key issue as it defines who you are and if you can enter a relatively full welfare system.

Urbanization
Though in China there are already 54% people living in city now, only 36% people have an urban Hukou which allows them to enjoy the relatively full welfare. The rest of people who live in cities are treated as migrants, who cannot enjoy the equal right as those urban Hukou holders do. For instance, migrants’ children cannot enjoy compulsory education in cities, migrants are excluded in health care system, migrants’ job does not provide them insurance, etc. All those lead to enormous social problems.

Hukou System
Hukou system, also called ‘Household registration system’, was started in 1950s to control the people movement between urban and rural area in a special political and economical environment. (At that time, the state needs to develop soviet-union heavy infrastructure and collective transformation of agriculture.) Farmers were constrained to their land to ensure enough food being produced. During 1970s-2000s, the exploit rural labour surplus to support economic booming, they can enter cities but cannot enjoy the services. They system barrier keeps a large mobile and low-cost workforce working for urbanization. Now, Hukou system lost its useful purpose as migrants are expected to consume more to stimulate the market. However, they prefer deposit money in the bank to spend their money for consumption before they get guarantee from the welfare system.

Hukou system reform
Early in this year, in the national conference, the leadership mentioned the Hukou reform. This is the first time they began to touch this sensitive topic. But of course, they raised a gentle reform way which hardly can solve the problem in one night. And it is in hot debate that the migrants struggling at the gate of welfare system will start a revolution after long-time waiting. In the reform, big cities will still keep the old Hukou system; in mid-cities and small cities, migrants need to collect enough ‘points’ through their education degree, job, and accommodation to get the urban Hukou. The details are still not settled clearly yet. The essential problem is related to the rural land ownership, as in trails many migrants have been reluctant to adopt an urban Hukou because that means they would lose land rights. Which they regard as an insurance policy.

What is urban-village?
The land reform is a more sensitive and political issue in China. After the land distribution and the collectivization period in 1950s, the rural land still belongs to the state and migrants only have the usage right. The new trend happening now is the land expropriation for rapid urbanization. The state has the right to expropriate the farm land and it is written in law that it is obligated. The farmers who lost their land will get place to live somewhere in suburb provided by developers. Those kind of residential area becomes urban-villages.

“Urban villages (Chinese: chengzhongcun; literally: “village in city”) are villages that appear on both the outskirts and the downtown segments of major Chinese cities, including Beijing, Shenzhen and Guangzhou. They are surrounded by skyscrapers, transportation infrastructures, and other modern urban constructions. Urban villages are a unique phenomenon that formed part of China’s urbanization efforts.

Urban villages are commonly inhabited by the poor and transient, and as such they are associated with squalor, overcrowding and social problems. However, they are also among the liveliest areas in some cities and are notable for offering economic opportunity to newcomers to the city.

1.2 History & Events

1.2.1 Welfare, Hukou, Land Reform (Figure 1)
The welfare system in China was built up in urban area. It did not start in rural area until 1996. In 2006, the state tried to partly cover the third group of people—the migrants. Until today, the most advanced welfare system works only for people holding an urban Hukou (Household registration). Basing on this fact, the Hukou system becomes a key issue as it defines who you are and if you can enter a relatively full welfare system.

1.2.2 Regime, Urban Development, Economy (Figure 2)
History & Background
1949 Formation of the People’s Republic. A lifelong employment policy was adopted in cities and in state owned enterprises, state agencies, government departments, and other organizations in the public sector. Able-bodied adult citizens were organized into ‘work units’ (danweis) through which comprehensive welfare packages were provided.

1950-1953 Land was expropriated from landlords, redistributed to farmers.

1953-1966 Forced farmers into collectively owned “people’s communes.” Land was redistributed and divided up between collective farms.

1958 A modern household registration system introduced in, which classifies citizens as either ‘rural’ or ‘non-rural’ and ties individuals’ right to public welfare to their official place of residence.

1960 It was necessary to keep a tight lid on the number of urban (officially ‘non-rural’) hukou holders, who were entitled to grain rations.

1970-1976 Culture Revolution

1978 Third Plenum of the 11th Central Committee collective farms are replaced by 200 million family farms, operating ‘household responsibility system’

1978-1990s Workers were massively laid off, resulting in increasing poverty deep into the working population. Migrants gravitated to cities on subsistence wages and with deep in working class misery.

80% of the urban labour force was covered by the DANWEI system (Wong 1999). In rural areas, farmers were organized into communes, based on collective ownership of land, through which daily necessities were distributed.

1980s It began to break down the de-collectivization of agriculture. As migration controls relaxed, the hukou system gradually ceased to function as a major deterrent to mobility.
The working class experienced poverty due to a period of policy neglect, social chaos, and misery. Migrants gravitated to cities on subsistence wages and without access to any social support.

Late in the 1990s, new arrangements of social protection outside of work and production units started to emerge as systematic reform. The interim was a period of policy neglect, social chaos, and misery.

The central propaganda department instructed all the publications involved to remove the editorial from their websites. All talk of hukou reform disappeared from the public debate overnight.

One of the key reform areas is land – a major source of social unrest in China. The principle, given to migrant workers to access local social services.

In December 2011, 13 newspapers in big cities across the nation made an unprecedented joint appeal to the government to speed up hukou reform. The central propaganda department instructed all the publications involved to remove the editorial from their websites. All talk of hukou reform disappeared from public debate overnight.

Since 2009, Shanghai, Shenzhen, Zhejiang, Guangdong, Jiangsu, Chongqing, and Chengdu have established markets of sorts could be clarified and rural land reforms. The principle of collective ownership could not be changed, but farmers' rights could be readjusted. Land-use rights from fifteen to thirty years and required villages to issue written land-use contracts to every farm household.

In 2008, the land-use rights were abolished. Since 2009, Shanghai, Shenzhen, Zhejiang, Guangdong, Jiangsu, Chongqing, and Chengdu have been chosen to pilot reform. The principle of collective ownership could not be changed, but farmers' rights could be readjusted. Land-use rights from fifteen to thirty years and required villages to issue written land-use contracts to every farm household.

By 2010, the liberalization of the old household registration system is more widespread in smaller cities than in big cities. All cities require outsiders to meet certain criteria to qualify for a local hukou, and the conversion criteria rise with the size of the city — China's 12th Five Year Plan.

One of the key reform areas is land – a major source of social unrest in China. The principle, given to migrant workers to access local social services.
1949-1958: "Besieging Cities with Countryside" is the strategy of Mao at the early stage of building up communist party’s power. Nationalist party occupied main cities at that time, after several times of failure in cities, communist party retreated to countryside and extend their power by guerrilla warfare, and finally seize the cities.

1958, Hukou system (Household registration system) is promulgated to restrain rural people to farmland to ensure enough food is produced and population in cities is controlled. First industrialization boom in cities took place during this period.
In 1978, Reformers Deng Xiaoping raised “socialist market economy” which helped cities to develop in a higher speed. Due to the demand of more labours, migration controls relaxed, the hukou system gradually ceased to function as a major deterrent to mobility.

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On April 1st 1990, the first law in urban planning, urban construction and management, <City Planning Law of the People’s Republic of China> was promulgated. This means the first time of top-down urban planning started in China. City expanded rapidly and expropriated some farmland of villages. Those villages who lost farmland but still keep the homesteads became ‘villages in city’, what we also call them as ‘urban villages’.

During this period, city expanded faster and top-down urban planning extended to suburb. Satellite towns are built to share the pressure of cities. Migrant workers moved into urban villages to live, the demand of more cheap housing stimulated bottom-up transformation of urban villages. Due to the high value of those un-urbanized land, first wave of demolishing urban villages held by government and developer took place in central part of city at this time.

Until 2012, 10 million social housing were built up for low-income group. However, mostly those social housing are located in city fringe, which is much less convenient compared to the location of some urban villages. Bottom-up transformation of urban villages keep going on during this time.

Fake Urbanization

“In 2012, China’s urban-to-rural ratio exceeded 50%, reaching the worldwide average. But behind this seemingly miraculous achievement lies a host of uncomfortable facts—for example, huge numbers of city dwellers still lack official certificates of urban residence (hukou). As of 2012 710 million Chinese were living in cities, but more than 200 million lacked legal resident status. Vast disparities exist between legal and undocumented urban residents when it comes to education, healthcare, access to the social safety net, and other measures of social equality. Because of this, many people believe that China is ‘falsely urbanized’. ” (China File)

Booming Economy

“Since initiating market reforms in 1978, China has shifted from a centrally planned to a market based economy and experienced rapid economic and social development. GDP growth averaging about 10 percent a year has lifted more than 500 million people out of poverty. All Millennium Development Goals have been reached or are within reach.” (The world bank)
Contemporary China

Made in China and/or/to Made for China?
You may know China mostly because of the remarkable period of rapid growth. Made in China and Big export country, powerful economic body.
1. Experiment land of architecture, gathered architecture stars.

2. Experiment land of architecture, gathered architecture stars.

Source: www.google.com
Rapid Urbanization

“In 2012, China’s urban-to-rural ratio exceeded 50%, reaching the worldwide average. But behind this seemingly miraculous achievement lies a host of uncomfortable facts—for example, huge numbers of city dwellers still lack official certificates of urban residence (hukou). As of 2012, 710 million Chinese were living in cities, but more than 200 million lacked legal resident status. Vast disparities exist between legal and undocumented urban residents when it comes to education, healthcare, access to the social safety net, and other measures of social equality. Because of this, many people believe that China is ‘falsely urbanized’.
Fake Urbanization

2000 2005 2010

Urban population
Rural population
Migrants without urban hukou

Source: www.google.com

17.28% × 1.354 billion people (China's population in 2012(billion people))

=234 million people who live in cities but are not legal urban residents

62.07% 37.93%
Urban Village

A By-product in China’s Rapid Urbanization
1.3 The formation of urban villages

The private housing blocks grew up rapidly driven by the open policy at the time and the market need. The used rural villages transformed to "urban villages" and they become the first choice for migrants to settle down in city.

Home of Migrants

I live in the city, I trade my land with government with a urban hukou back. Though, I lost my farmland which make my life, I began to grow houses. Instead of "farm land" to earn money.
1.4 The redevelopment of urban villages

**2000s**

Conflict
The extremely fast urbanization makes urban villages the only un-urbanized land left in city. Plus their valuable locations, the government forced the indigenous to relocate and demolish some urban villages in city centre. The process caused social conflicts and unrest.

**2005**

Negotiation
The social pressure and conflicts made the government change the way they did to transform the villages. The government and the developers started negotiating and compensating the households in a more democratic way.

**2011**

New Billionaires
After a complex negotiation and paying massive amount of money, the government gets the land and the indigenous become rich because of the compensation. More than 10 billionaires are generated in this way and the migrants have to leave and find another place.

**2012**

Changed Policy
The government began to realize the importance of urban villages. They began to think better ways to transform them and took some pilots in some places. Though they tend to increase the housing price during transformation, cheap housing for migrants is still needed.
1.4 The redevelopment of urban villages——Using Huanggang village as an example

Due to the good location of the urban villages and the increasing land price, redevelopment of urban villages becomes an urgent issue that government has to deal with. The multiple modes of transformation is a big progress, though all of them still lead to a higher rental price and the enormous amount of tenants are forced to move out of central city.
1.4 The proposal of redevelopment
Location

Shenzhen
Guangdong
Pearl River Delta Economy Area
China
China is faced with an internal migration crisis, the scale of which cannot be ignored. In 2012, China’s internal migratory population (both inter- and intra-provincial) exceeded 250 million people. Within that population, those without household registration—effectively illegal aliens within their own nation—known as China’s “floating population”, exceed 160 million. Predominantly rural-to-urban migrants moving to the industrial centres of China’s eastern seaboard, this “floating population” is the disadvantaged lifeblood of the Chinese economy.

Ratio of registered population and floating population in Shenzhen.(2010)
I picked Shenzhen as my research city. It is the first pilot city for the socialist economy market reform in 1978. In Shenzhen, rural structures play a key role as villages were propelled into a booming, global city in one of the most rapid urbanizations in history. This rising metropolis provides a flourish market in need of millions of cheap labor, which makes it a destination of the largest amount of migrant workers in China. In 2010, ¾ people who live in Shenzhen are floating population, which makes it the city with highest ratio of floating population in China. (6th Census of Shenzhen Municipality). “There are 241 villages within Shenzhen today, which in various ways use their rural vestiges to co-produce the city. These so-called ‘villages-in-the-city’ play a complex role in a context where the legacy of the urban-rural divide lingers as a critical social and material demarcation.” (Jonathan Bach, 2010, p.421-458.)
If we mentioned urbanization, we cannot skip a city called Shenzhen, the first —and one of the most successful special economy zone in China, the pilot city for Chinese economic reform. Shenzhen has seen unprecedented growth from a village of 30,000 to a city of over 325 times that.
Land use is running out, 50% is constructed, 50% is preserved as Green; 20 more land is needed for its growth. Instead of diminishing the green growth boundary, Chinese officials designated more than 200 square kilometers of occupied land as “urban regeneration areas”. The idea was to clear dilapidated low-density buildings and properties to build newer, higher density facilities.
As Shenzhen enjoys special policy for factories, and it has a location, many world-famous companies choose to put their production here. Now, Shenzhen port is becoming one of the busiest port in the world. Famous for its manufacture, it is called World Factory. Attracted by enormous working opportunities, it becomes one of the biggest migration destination. It shows on this commuting map during spring festival, all migrants leave Shenzhen to home for festival. In Shenzhen, about 7 million people are migrants, which is more than 3/4th of the whole population.
Urban Village in Shenzhen
Urban villages
(Chinese: 城中村; literally: "village in city")

Villages that appear on both the outskirts and the downtown segments of major Chinese cities. They are surrounded by skyscrapers, transportation infrastructures, and other modern urban constructions.
forming mechanism of Urban Village
Urban Village Distribution Map in Shenzhen

5 Million People in 241 Urban Villages
Futian District, Shenzhen

Figure 4.5 Occupation structure of temporary populations
(Source: Investigation report of urban villages in Futian district, 2005)
The table (Table 4.3) below is a list for occupation groups.

Table 4.3 Groups and occupations of temporary populations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>Occupations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Worker</td>
<td>Decorator, Construction worker, Porter, Carrier, Waiter, Pub dancer, Barmaid, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office staff</td>
<td>Technician, Manager, Taxi driver, Sales staff, Journalist, Editor, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Businessman</td>
<td>Small capitalist, Small-scale businessman, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>Number of black gangs, Smuggler, Drug traffickers, Brigands, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(Source: Investigation report of urban villages in Futian district, 2005)

Table 4.4 Motivations of temporary populations living in urban villages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>Attractive reasons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Worker</td>
<td>Cheap rent, convenient living environment; some of them are arranged in villages by their employers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office staff</td>
<td>Cheap rent, convenient living environment; near the working places</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Businessman</td>
<td>Cheap rent, convenient living environment; some of them have business in urban village</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>Weakly administration; it is easy to hide in villages</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(Source: Report about influences on real estate market from urban village redevelopment, 2004)

Figure: Comparisons of the building density and plot ratio in six districts of Shenzhen

Figure: Comparisons of the footprint and building area in six districts of Shenzhen

Figure: Comparison of the average stories in six districts of Shenzhen
(Source: Report of Shenzhen land use investigation, 2006)
Different types of urban villages
Different types of urban villages
Visible Wall
Invisible Wall

Social Segregation
Street Life & Public Space
Invisable border

No formal public space at all
Invisible border Public space:

No formal public space at all

Main street: 8-12 m

2nd street 3-5m
3rd Street 1-3 m

Back Street 1-3m
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Village</th>
<th>Hierarchy of streets</th>
<th>Public space</th>
<th>Security &amp; Sanitation</th>
<th>Social separation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shangsha &amp; Xiasha Village</td>
<td>★★★★★ ★★★★★ ★★★ ★★</td>
<td>Quite ok.</td>
<td>Fire truck can pass main streets. Most houses can be reached by fire access.</td>
<td>Indigenous villagers and migrants have choose different public places to go; Senior centre and ancestor temple are only opened to indigenous villagers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huanggang Village</td>
<td>★★★★★ ★★★★★ ★★★★ ★★★</td>
<td>Easy to access.</td>
<td>Most streets are wide enough for fire truck. All houses can be reached by fire access.</td>
<td>Senior centre and ancestor temple are only opened to indigenous villagers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shawei Village</td>
<td>★★★★★ ★★★★★ ★★★ ★★</td>
<td>Lack of main street.</td>
<td>Most streets are not wide enough for fire truck. Quite some houses are not easy to access by fire truck.</td>
<td>People share the only square; No identified cultural space exists.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gangxia Village</td>
<td>★★★★★ ★★★★★ ★★★ ★★</td>
<td>Almost no hierarchy.</td>
<td>Fire truck can hardly access inside the village.</td>
<td>The only senior centre are locked and only open to indigenous villagers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Social Segregation

Belongingness

Income

Rent
Bonus from village company

Population

Compensation during redevelopment

Negotiation power

Yes.
Dominant position.

Yes.

Yes.

Demand

Less than 10%

More than 90%

Working/Business

More than 90%

No.

No.

No voice at all.

Affordable housing
Low living cost
More public space

More luxury houses
Village based facilities
Farmland
5. Problem statement

Urban villages in Shenzhen provide housing for 60% migrant workers, however all current redevelopment plan of urban villages are not sustainable enough as it:
1. Mostly ignore the tenants’ benefits, low income migrant workers are forced to move to suburb;
2. Focus on economic compensation for households but not enough social and cultural care;
3. Blindly urbanizes urban villages without considering traditional village culture.

Urban village is a complex issue, the redevelopment of it is a long term ongoing project related to multiple groups and multiple disciplines. The 4 villages that are analysed above can stand for 4 different stages in urban villages. At different stage, different design products are demanded.
6. Design Goal

Build up a tool box consists of “Spatial design” and “Strategy design” for the long term dynamic redeveloping process. Basing on different needs on different stages, choose elements from the toolbox to combine into a customized method to fit different situations.
7. Research questions

6.1 Main research questions
How to develop a more sustainable way of redeveloping urban village to balance benefits from different groups (Households, tenants, government, developers), while securing the value of urban villages culturally, socially and spatially?

6.2 Sub-research questions
1. What kind of policies can be made to improve the negotiation and communication between different interest groups?
2. How can urban villages be redeveloped into a more integral manner taking into account the settlement of migrant tenants?
3. What can be done in community scale to help to add up social and cultural value of urban villages?

8. Theoretical frame work

7.1 Not only a spatial design - The production of space
Lefebvre’s argument in *The Production of Space* is that space is a social product, or a complex social construction (based on values, and the social production of meanings) which affects spatial practices and perceptions. This argument implies the shift of the research perspective from space to processes of its production; the embrace of the multiplicity of spaces that are socially produced and made productive in social practices; and the focus on the contradictory, conflictual, and, ultimately, political character of the processes of production of space. As a Marxist theorist (but highly critical of the economic structuralism that dominated the academic discourse in his period), Lefebvre argues that this social production of urban space is fundamental to the reproduction of society, hence of capitalism itself. The social production of space is commanded by a hegemonic class as a tool to reproduce its dominance (see Gramsci).

“(Social) space is a (social) product [...] the space thus produced also serves as a tool of thought and of action [...] in addition to being a means of production it is also a means of control, and hence of domination, of power.”

My project starts from looking at the spatial product ‘urban village’, however, the social and economic issues are the real driving factors of it. Talking about spatial design without politics is a danger as an urban designer, as it may lead to a picturesque urban design, but would be meaningless for the reality.
9. Relevance

9.1 Societal Relevance

“Architecture and planning are starting to lose their traditional role and authority to represent the nation. Now that we see the structures and certainties of the twentieth century crumbling around us, the new ideas are coming from small, autonomous even anarchistic communities and initiatives.”

—Design as Politics

1. Preserve social value of urban villages

Urban villages are commonly inhabited by the poor and transient, and as such they are associated with squalor, overcrowding and social problems. However, they are also among the liveliest areas in some cities and are notable for affording economic opportunity to newcomers to the city. In reality, tenants, the largest group in urban villages, have no voice in the process of redevelopment. A bottom-up redeveloping way of urban villages would help to hear the voice from the vulnerable group and provide a fairer solution which will help to build a harmony society.

2. Preserve cultural value of urban villages

During the process of urbanizing the urban villages, lots of traditional rural customs are erased. Cultural value of urban villages are not well considered in existing redevelopment plans. For original villagers, the social connection inside the village is broken down; For tenants, the urban village is lack of cultural attraction. As more academics participate in this issue and more open discussions are held, the culture part of urban villages is causing people’s attention.

My project aims at addressing these problems and providing a more sustainable way of redevelopment, which will balance benefits of multiple groups and preserve social and cultural value of urban villages.

9.2 Scientific Relevance

1. Affordable housing in developing countries

In 2014, more than 250 million Chinese migrant workers live in places where they are not registered and are thus legally excluded from some local public services. Only 0.2% of migrant workers live in affordable housing provided by government, while more than 60% of them live in urban villages. Therefore, urban village plays a positive role in housing enormous number of low-income migrant workers in cities. Due to the high land price, existing redevelopment usually will not be able to provide enough affordable housing. Those low-income migrant workers are forced to move to suburb, which is not a healthy way for the city. This phenomenon happens a lot in big cities in developing countries, like Mumbai in India and San Paulo in Brazil. This makes this topic meaningful. Is it possible to consider high dense affordable housing in the redevelopment of urban villages? Or there are some alternative solutions? This is one of the questions that are expected to be answered in my project.

2. Strategy & Policy design

Redevelopment of urban village is an issue that involves benefits of multiple groups: villagers, tenants, developers, etc.. Besides, it is also mixed with complex land tenure issues. All these facts make every step forward of redevelopment more difficult. All these driving factors behind makes me realize the importance of understanding policies and considering them in design process as an urban designer. An urban designer, in contemporary society, who becomes more like a negotiator instead of a pure designer, has the advantage of capturing a bigger picture including developers, government and citizens.

“Design as Politics” offers a new way to think about the role of urban designer in urban planning and leaves me great freedom in defining and developing my own idea. Those will help my project to be inspired in both academic way and practical way. This determines my project would not only be a picturesque urban design, but would focus more on developing a policy-oriented design.

10. Methodology

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<tr>
<td>Migrant workers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Affordable housing</td>
<td>Draft design 2: Choose location</td>
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<td>Chinese politics</td>
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<td>Data analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mapping</td>
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<td>Comprehensive planning of Shenzhen</td>
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<td>Futian district</td>
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<td>Case study</td>
<td>Draft design 4: Modify design</td>
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<td>Regeneration of urban village</td>
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<td>Affordable housing competition</td>
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<td>Field trip</td>
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<td>Residents</td>
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</table>
10.1 Research data
1. 6th Census of Shenzhen Municipality, 2010
2. Report of Shenzhen land use investigation, 2006
3. The comprehensive plan of Shenzhen city(2010-2020), Urban planning land and resources commission of Shenzhen municipality

10.2 Case study
1. Regeneration of Dafen village
2. Urban design & research by Urbanus Architecture & Design
   Hubei Old Village Urban Regeneration Research
   Luohu Caiwuwei Redevelopment Urban Design
   Baishizhou 5 Villages Urban Regeneration Research
   Study on Shenzhen’s Urban Villages Fuxin Village,
   Kejia Weiwu traditional housing typology

3. Public competition and discussion
   Exhibition of Shenzhen affordable housing competition, 2012
   Discussion by Shenzhen Urban Design Institute
The current fate of the urban villages can be summarized into three types: demolition and renewal, beautification, and regeneration.

**Demolition and Renewal**
**Beautification**
**Regeneration**

---

**CAES STUDY**
Dafen village

- **1980:** Area: 0.4 Square Km
  Native Born Urban Villagers: 300
  Migrant Workers: > 10,000 people

- **1989:**
  - It was Huang Jiang, an oil painting businessman from Hong Kong, who 'got the ball rolling' for Dafen Village. Huang rented village

- **1990:**
  - A peripheral location, unattractive environment, low education levels, low incomes, and high unemployment and crime rates
Oil Painting Street: Number of galleries increased from 20 to over 800.

2000:

2002: Buji town government organized more than 30 artists to travel abroad and promote Dafen’s oil paintings in South Asia and Turkey.

Per Capita Income: < 200RMB/ year

2004: Dafen Village was selected as the sub-venue of China’s first Culture Fair, which again fostered infrastructure construction in Dafen Village.

2007: “Art and public life are the city’s symbolic connective tissue.”

The government's timely intervention in Dafen promoted an ‘industrial ecology’ and ‘social ecology’, as well as an innovative urban culture. A Promising sustainable urban development for China’s rapid urbanization.

Upgrading the Industrial Chain

Oil Painting Industry

- Tourism
- Manufacturing
- Trading zone

- Hotel
- Theater
- Financial Facilities
- Restaurants
- Café Galleries

- Art Industry Management
- Community Facilities
- Training

- Oil Painting
- Chinese Painting
- Calligraphy

- Framing
- Mounting
- Brushes and Painting material

Area: 0.4 Square Km
Native Born Urban Villagers: 300
Migrant Workers: > 10,000 people
Per Capita Income: < 200RMB/ year
Site Analysis

Gangxia Village
Futian
Shenzhen
Among those urban villages, I choose Gangxia as a sample for design. It is on hot debate for a long time and now half of it is being demolished after negotiation and the other half is still kept. This half-half typology allows me to test different approaches on their different situations.
As urban village project involves different groups and the negotiation about the compensation always makes it complicated. The redevelopment of Gangxia is proposed in 1998, until 2006, developers came in and pushed the project further together with the municipality. Now the left half is demolished and the right half stays.
Gangxia Village

Area: 241290 m²
Population: 58000
Status quo: Demolished and redeveloped
Function: Offices, Commercials, Hotels, Residential

Area: 16400 m²
Population: 52000
Status quo: Preserved
Function: Cheap residential, small business, offices&residential buildings on the border
Lacking public space
Overwhelming population
Overwhelming production
Lacking management
High density
Right Part Building Typology

Old Village
Typical Urban Village
New Village
Market Building
Restaurant Street

Public park
Square
Street space
Non public sports center

Rent: 50RMB/m2/month  
Indoor Farming: 120RMB/m2/month
LEFT PART
(Under-construction)

High end office building?
Luxury residential building?
Follow the market?

Source: Rendering from SOM design proposal
High Density
Overwhelmed population
Overwhelmed activities on ground floor

Source: www.google.com
Before I built a wall I'd ask to know
What I was walling in or walling out,
And to whom I was like to give of
fence. Something there is that doesn’t
love a wall. Than wants it down!

…And they said, ‘Come, let us build
ourselves a city, and a tower whose
top is in the heavens; let us make a
name for ourselves, lest we be scat-
tered abroad over the face of the
whole earth."

A MANIFESTO
OF
A BABEL VILLAGE

Babel

The story of the city of Babel is recorded in Genesis 11:1-9. Everyone on earth
spoke the same language. As people migrated from the east, they settled in
the land of Shinar. People there sought to make bricks and build a city and a
tower with its top in the sky, to make a name for themselves, so that they not be
scattered over the world. God came down to look at the city and tower, and re-
marked that as one people with one language, nothing that they sought would
be out of their reach. God went down and confounded their speech, so that
they could not understand each other, and scattered them over the face of the
earth, and they stopped building the city. Thus the city was called Babel.

New-Babel

The story of the village of Babel is recorded in Utopia Manifesto 26:1-5. Everyone in the village spoke different dialects. More than 95% of them mi-
grate here from somewhere else to settle in the village. People there sought
to cooperate and build the community and a tower with its top in the sky, to
make a name for themselves. People move out and in, new members keep
joining in the building process, thus the tower is never finished, so as the
whole village. The village is called Babel.
Master Plan of Left Part
Left Village Development

FUNCTION

TYPOLOGY

EVENTS

TIME

<table>
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<th>2015</th>
<th>2020</th>
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<td>Declaration of Anti-Babel village</td>
<td>Credits’ system is built completely</td>
<td>Public services are built up</td>
<td>Population: 50400 Utopia Era</td>
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Element 1

Wall

"…
Before I built a wall I’d ask to know
What I was walling in or walling out,
And to whom I was like to give offence.
Something there is that doesn’t love a wall
Than wants it down!
…”

——Robert Frost <Modern American Poetry>

The wall has been standing there since the village was a shabby cheap settlement for vulnerable residents who do not belong to the outside/formal city. By then it was a fence for the city to keep the mess away, it was a border exclude the villagers from the city, and it was a sign to flaunt the priority of the citizens.

Now, the Wall is converted to a fence for the village to keep the outer dystopia away, it is a border exclude the citizens from Utopia village, it is a declaration of the establishment of a Utopia.
I am a migrant living in another urban village. I heard about the Anti-Babel Village and they need volunteers to construct it. I like cooperation.

Hi, I come to help you to construct the Anti-Babel village! So you are one of the initiatives.

Hi, welcome! Yes, we need more villagers. A lot of people moved away after the demolition. You are not working for free, you get 2 credits/hour.

Oh, sounds great! But what is credit using for?

Credit is almost like our own currency used in our village. You earn credits only by working for the collectives or donation, they cannot be sold/bought in market.
Element II: Unit Core

Every building consists of about 60 single cubes which roughly can accommodate 60 villagers. Every 4 of this kind of buildings form one Unit, which is considered as the smallest collective in the anti-Babel village. The core of this unit holds functions like child care centre, elder care centre, community library, voting & debating hall and is shared by the members of the unit.

Element II: Moveable Cube

"Between 2004 and 2008, the production amount of sailing shipping box is about 3 million, at the same time there are 1 million TEU boxes being obsoleted."

Located 30 kilometres away from one of the busiest and fastest growing ports in the world, anti-Babel village takes the advantage of those obsolete shipping boxes, which are cheaper, stronger and easier to be constructed as living cubes after refit.
Buy your home.

As a new comer, you first use credits to buy a living cube, that is your future home here. One cube costs 1800 credits.

Matching & Experiencing

Not only about that, you also need to find a spot to put your cube. You can choose an available spot, but you also need to get the permission from the neighbourhood. You need to spend some time with them, working for the neighbourhood to win their trust. This is Matching & Experiencing.
Buy your home
Intergrate into the community
What if I cannot find a spot in short time? Where should I put my cube then?

You can apply for a temporary spot in our public space. As long as you keep it clean and tidy, you can put your cube there for some time. Any bad behavior will damage your credits, so be pay attention.

Maintain “Residence Permit”.

However, owning a cube cannot ensure have the right to stay in our village. You need to work for public for at least 2 hours/day, then you can maintain your living right.
Public space in community
Open education & open service.

And what kind of work do we need to do? I am not sure I can handle the work.

We have unit centre where people help each other to take care of kids/elder people. Or do cleaning or maintenance for public facilities. Even you need some skills, you can always apply for an traineeship in our Anti-babel tower.
Element Iv: Tower of Babel
“...And they said, ‘Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower whose top is in the heavens; let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth.’”

——Story of Tower of Babel, <Book of Genesis>

This tower is about 100 metres high, with a central courtyard on the ground floor. It is a tower gathers all intelligence from the villagers. It includes hi-tech labs as a research centre, craft man workshops as a cultural centre, debating hall as a democratic centre. The construction of the tower is always going on, by different volunteers in the anti-Babel village.
Looking at Tower of Babel
Looking at Tower of Consumption
Tower of Consumption & Tower of Babel
Tower of Consumption & Tower of Babel
In Tower of Babel
Connection between Left and Right
Connection between left and right part of Babel Village
Master plan of the Right Part
Square of Right Part
Stage of the Right Part
Post Utopia Era-City scale: complete system
Post Utopia Era in City Scale

Urban Village B

Health Care Centre

Urban Village A

Science Lab

Urban Village E

Babel Village

Urban Village Committee

Digital Data Centre

Goods Trade Centre

Urban Village C

Urban Village D

Urban Village A

Science Lab

Urban Village E

Babel Village

Urban Village Committee

Digital Data Centre

Goods Trade Centre

Urban Village C

Urban Village D

Urban Village A

Science Lab

Urban Village E

Babel Village

Urban Village Committee

Digital Data Centre

Goods Trade Centre

Urban Village C

Urban Village D

Urban Village A

Science Lab

Urban Village E

Babel Village

Urban Village Committee

Digital Data Centre

Goods Trade Centre

Urban Village C

Urban Village D

Urban Village A

Science Lab

Urban Village E

Babel Village

Urban Village Committee

Digital Data Centre

Goods Trade Centre

Urban Village C

Urban Village D

Urban Village A

Science Lab

Urban Village E

Babel Village

Urban Village Committee

Digital Data Centre

Goods Trade Centre

Urban Village C

Urban Village D
Connections in city scale: Infrastructure

C
11. Reference

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ZHOU, S., 2007. Study on the redevelopment of Urban Villages: Case study of Futian District Shenzhen. INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR GEO-INFORMATION SCIENCE AND EARTH OBSERVATION


12. Schedule and plan

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- Literature review
- Concept design
- Data analysis
- Case study
- Design on city scale
- Site analysis
- Field trip
- Detailed design+design developing
- Strategy design
- Evaluation
- Presentation

- Site visit
- p1
- p2
- p3
- p4
- p5
Appendix 1
Manifesto of Babel Village
Before I built a wall I'd ask to know
What I was walling in or walling out,
And to whom I was like to give of-
fence. Something there is that doesn't
love a wall. Than wants it down!

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make a name for themselves. People move out and in, new members keep
joining in the building process, thus the tower is never finished, so as the
whole village. The village is called Anti-Babel.
Elements

Wall

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Now, the Wall is converted to a fence for the village to keep the outer dystopia away, it is a border exclude the citizens from Utopia village, it is a declaration of the establishment of a Utopia.

Tower of Babel

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Moveable Cube

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Located 30 kilometres away from one of the busiest and fastest growing ports in the world, anti-Babel village takes the advantage of those obsolete shipping boxes, which are cheaper, stronger and easier to be constructed as living cubes after refit.

An outline of Babel Village

The social model
Shenzhen, a city with its ¾ population made up of migrants, the city lacks any historical district that is supposed to give city a sense of belonging and history, which in turn resonates emotional warmth and nostalgia.

Everything in this city is manufactured and so now the next problem to solve is how to manufacture a culture in a city that lacks one? The model, with the name: “Anti-Babel”, emphasizes multicultural cooperation as the core of the society. The apparatus of Anti-Babel village rely on every villager’s contribution. People get credits by contributing to public service and certain credits can ensure you enjoy the free services. The Unit Cores are where the smaller neighbours cooperate; the Tower of Babel is where people with different culture and knowledge cooperate; the wall, the wall is where inside meet outside. The relationship between society in-wall and city out-wall is ambiguous. It has certain degree of separation, which is the original purpose of the wall; however, it also keeps certain degree of dependency. The surplus of products and services in the Anti-Babel village will be sold to the outside citizens, and people are willing to buy them at a higher price as the quality are much better.

There are some basic principles every villager needs to know:
1. Collective ownership of the land and the means of productions, and rationalization of the production of consumer goods, facilitates the transformation of this energy into creative activity.
2. Credits earned by contributing to public will decide if you can maintain the living rights in Anti-Babel Village, they are also counted as the sharing stocks in collective companies.
3. The final goal of Anti-Babel is to open up itself for those vulnerable people who need help, which is called the era of Post-Utopia.
4. As the Anti-Babel village is always developing, practical policies need to be changed at least every 5 years.

Policy
Even it is a collective, there should be a way to make decisions. Everyone’s idea is taken into account, however, not all of them are counted as the same value. For instance, an anti-Babelian who just arrived probably knows less than the one who have been living here for 2 years. Besides, people who have worked on the related topic may have more insight of the problem. Thus, there is a board who acts as a judge in the final session when there is a discussion/debate going on. The board consists of two groups: one is people with highest credits; the other is people working in different areas.

Normally, a discussion will have 4 sessions,
Session 1: Every anti-Babelian expresses his/her opinion or votes for one side.
Session 2: The board checks if the choice generated from the mass democracy is reasonable during discussion with the members.
Session 3: The board announces the result and leave some time for argument.
Session 4: Final decision is made.

Network
In Utopia we see no invocation of a machine, nor any wishing away of the deficiencies of man or nature. Systems have to be devised whereby men will be able to offset their own continuing wickedness and cope with the
deficiencies of nature. The Utopia idealises not man nor nature but organisa-
tion…. Anti-Babel village, starting from sharing facilities and building up the
credit system, aims to make the disappearing good of man out of them.

The first Anti-Babel village will be a pilot case for all other urban villages, with
a better, almost self-sufficient environment. After seeing the progressiveness
of the first case, the rest urban villages start the reform in the same say. The
reform means a bright future, but at the beginning, it means giving up one’s
private property and treating oneself as a part of the collective. Once this first
harsh sacrifice is made, the following steps will come naturally and easily.

More and more Anti-Babel villages are built up, all together consist of a big-
ger and stronger system, within which exchange surplus products and work-
ers happens to avoid wasting resources. After certain time of capital accumu-
lation, the system begins to expand by building up their own infrastructure for
further development and more public institutions to expand its public servic-
es. One of these institution will be a Data Centre, which is used for collecting
data from all villages for a better systematic allocation of resource.

Realization
The construction of an Anti-Babel village starts once people come to re-
think about the wall set by the outside citizens and the rights they deserve
to enjoy. Only such reflections make people motivated to change the status
quo and chase better side of a society and human.

The implementation of Anti-Babel village is a slow process of growth of a
self-constructed world that progressively replaces pre-existing urban struc-
tures. At first, using the profits from the existing real estate to invest main-
stay industry. Instead of manufacture, hi-tech production is considered as
the mainstay industry. Indoor farming would be the first choice, both as a
promising industry for future and a way to feed the villagers. First group of
people come to apply the residence right by working on the construction
of this new land: managing the indoor farming, constructing public ser-
tices and Tower of Anti-Babel. With certain amount of credits, first group
of residents come to settle down and still they need to contribute to the
community to maintain their living rights. The population keeps growing,
more people come to help, and those public services are developed into
high-quality services, which are opened to outside world to make profits.
The ideal population of one village is 50400, 10 times by Plato number,
which can be divided by 1-12 except 11. Once the population reaches 50400,
it announces the finish of this Utopia. Is this the end? No, we cannot stop people
chasing the right to become a member of Anti-Babel village, so it will ex-
pands and colonize more land. With a bigger network, it is capable to even
open up freely to the vulnerable people as a temporary refugee camp. We
call this Post Utopia Era.

Topography
Wall is a 6-floor (4 floors above ground and 2 floors underground) mega
building around the village, defining its territory border. It contains the
mainstay production: indoor farming. The ground floor is used for trades
with outside world, and the roof is used for entertainment and consump-
tions. The high-rises standing on this “Wall” are real estate rent by outsid-
ers as offices & shopping malls. They also provide all functions that are
considered to be “a good life” for the outside world: Luxury shops, spa,
plastic surgery hospitals……

The tower of Anti-Babel is inspired by Tulou, a traditional building typology
in Shenzhen. It is the symbolic core of the village, brings people together
to make decisions for the collective. It is also a place for multi-culture inheritance, which helps to form a unity of culture of Anti-Babel villages. It never stops growing and changing, as people come and go, every one of them helps to shape the tower in their own and unique way. In the end, the tower becomes the common memory of the collective. More than this, it influences the whole city, which be regarded as a pilgrimage destination to celebrate the multi-culture of Shenzhen.

The rest of the village is built on the original fabric of it, all the streets and squares are kept. The lively ground floor commercial is kept, the height of the building and the cozy atmosphere are kept. As cooperation is emphasized as a priority in Anti-Babel village, the whole villages are divided into smaller units and each of them use their indoor ground floor as the public space where people help each other and maintain public services together.

As mentioned before, the moveable cubes that are transformed from obsolete shipping boxes are the main and smallest elements. They are affordable, flexible and moveable. One only need two things for a liveable place, the credits to buy a cube and the credits to apply for a spot to put them. And once one gets a cube, he can move to other urban villages under certain conditions. It makes the people movement between villages much easier and flexible. And it also gives free choices for people.

When there are enough Anti-Babel villages and the cooperation between them is strong enough, they are capable to build infrastructure between 2 villages for better connection and more space to expand their high-quality public services. Those mega infrastructure can be regarded an extension of the “wall”.

The Babelians

Cooperation instinct
The cooperation instinct which was necessary for primitives to survive with the deficiency of nature, however is dissolved during the developing process of human society. Living in a credit system and receiving everything from others by contributing to others, all the anti-Babelians re-learn how to behave as a collective. By building up a common community and culture, everyone takes the responsibility to shape the collective life without class divisions.

Tolerance and open mind
One carpenter who hasn’t been to university can open up his own craft man workshop in the Tower of Anti-Babel. He teaches others and makes things for community using his own skills. He is also free to take chances to learn new things after other people. One university professor who is working in the hi-tech lab but gets no idea of carpentry, may need to take classes after the carpenter. There is no distinction between different jobs as long as one lives and works as a contributor, one’s contribution to the collective counts most. Chances are always open to everyone to get new skills and knowledge. For anti-Babelians, any discrimination is regarded as rude behaviour and not acceptable, tolerance is the biggest virtue.

Some explanations of Babel culture

Form of behaviour
It is well-known that behaviour is strongly influenced by environmental elements. In psychiatry the manipulation of these elements is called ‘brain-washing’. In Anti-Babel village, where each person can freely take chances to learn anything, move around and actively participate in the collective organization of space, these element cannot be chosen according to a pre-established goal. Any initiative in one direction or another can, at any moment, be detoured by different, even opposed initiatives.

The dynamic cubes
The cubes, which are transformed from obsoleted shipping boxes by anti-Babelians, are cheaper, more flexible and easier to construct than normal buildings. This transformation industry, which is first to fulfill the demand of the Anti-Babel Village’s own use, later on, becomes another mainstay industry besides indoor farming.

A basic cube, is 3 metres’ width, 6 metres’ length, 2.7 metres’ height, costs 1800 credits (100 credits/ square metre). After one purchases a cube, the next step is to find a place to put it, which is called Matching. Before he/she finds a place for his/her cube, he/she can get a temporary spot on the street/in a public centre, as long as he/she promises to maintain the place
tidy. They need this temporary spot because the Matching step may take some time. For a newcomer, once he makes a choice of which Unit, which floor and which spot he wants to settle down, he needs to get agreement from his future Unit and neighbours. It takes some time for them to get to know each other and build up trust, so there is a period called "Experiencing Week". This period can be shortened/extended depending on different situations. After the newcomer passed this Experiencing Week with sanctification from both sides, he/she will officially get the spot to put his/her cube and become a member of the community.

As the cube is moveable, one always has the freedom to move his cube to somewhere else after going through certain procedure. The procedure includes the application from the applier, reference letter from the unit where he/she used to live, the admission letter from the unit he/she wants to move in. Then again, the Experiencing Week comes in the new unit.

By making certain rules, we want to keep the maximum cohesion in all units without damaging the free choice of individuals.
Appendix 2
Reflection
Reflection of Graduation Project
Di Fang

4297962 / D.fang@student.tudelft.nl
Delft University of Technology, Department of Urbanism

1. The relationship between research and design

Main research questions
How to develop a more sustainable way of redeveloping urban village to balance benefits from different groups (Households, tenants, government, developers), while securing the value of urban villages culturally, socially and spatially?

Sub-research questions
1. What kind of policies can be made to improve the negotiation and communication between different interest groups?
2. How can urban villages be redeveloped into a more integral manner taking into account the settlement of migrant tenants?
3. What can be done in community scale to help to add up social and cultural value of urban villages?

Research process
Basing on these questions, my research starts from looking at the spatial product 'urban village', however, the social and economic issues are the real driving factors of it. I looked into the history of urban villages and figured out that "Chinese urban-rural dual system", "rapid contemporary urbanization", "internal immigration", "manufacture industry" are all related.

Design reflects research
Generally speaking, the land of urban villages are collective property, the buildings in urban villages are illegally built by villagers, people live in urban villages are mostly migrants and a small group of indigenous villagers. All in all, urban villages are always regarded as an exclusion of formal city system. The complexity revealed in my research process determines my design will, rethink about the existing system first, put policy making as a priority instead of a spatial design.

Within a single urban village, besides diagnosing the spatial quality, social quality is also an important evaluation. A strong social segregation exists between the two groups in urban village, the indigenous villagers (landlords) and migrants (tenants). Due to the unequal social and economic position, there is hardly communication between them. My design also aims to break down this invisible wall in-between and try to create not only sharing space buy also sharing events to strengthen the whole community, which comes to the concept of my design: Tower of Babel.

"...And they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower whose top is in the heavens; let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth..."

------Story of Tower of Babel, <Book of Genesis>

2. The relationship between the theme of the graduation lab and the subject/case study chosen by the student within this framework (location/object)

My project focuses on 'urban villages', a special by-product during China's rapid urbanization in recent 30 years. "Urban villages (Chinese: 城中村; literally: "village in city") are villages that appear on both the outskirts and the downtown segments of major Chinese cities. Urban villages are commonly inhabited by the poor and transient, and as such they are associated with squalor, overcrowding and social problems. However, they are also among the liveliest areas in some cities and are notable for affording economic opportunity to newcomers to the city. To some extent, urban villages play the role as a spontaneous public housing for migrant workers which the government can hardly afford to provide. However, due to the high value of the land, redevelopment of urban village is an inevitable trend that involves benefits of multiple groups: villagers, tenants, developers, etc... Besides, it is also mixed with complex land tenure issues. Top-down urban planning can hardly take all those factors into account and would ignore voice from vulnerable groups. The necessity of connecting the bottom-up oriented design is needed to ensure the fairness between different groups and the value of urban villages. This point fits my research studio "Design as Politics" very well as it emphasizes:

""Architecture and planning are starting to lose their traditional role and authority to represent the nation. Now that we see the structures and certainties of the twentieth century crumbling around us, the new ideas are coming from small, autonomous even anarchistic communities and initiatives."

------Design as Politics

Case Study
One of my case studies is Dafen Village in Shenzhen.
Dafen (Chinese: 大芬, Pinyin: Dàfēn) is a suburb of Buji, Longgang, Shenzhen in Guangdong province, China. (Wikipedia, 2014) In 20 years, with the help of Huang Jiang, an oil painting businessman from Hong Kong, this small village develops into an integrated industry that employs thousands of painters who reproduce oil paintings from photos at...
very low cost. Huang rented village houses and trained apprentices. The paintings copied by his fellows were then sold abroad.

We may say the choice of Dafen becoming the oil painting industry’s base is largely be chance. This resulting agglomeration was the perfect combination of the urban village being open to ideas as well as the urgent space demands required by vast industrial expansion during China’s rapid urbanization. Dafen Village demonstrates an alternative solution to a difficult urban problem. It created a new ‘community activation’ model and realized ‘urbanization on site’ for urban villages. The government’s timely intervention in Dafen promoted an ‘industrial ecology’ and ‘social ecology’, as well as an innovative urban culture. The success of Dafen provides a promising sustainable redevelopment of urban villages in the context of China’s rapid urbanization.

3. The relationship between the methodical line of approach of the graduation lab and the method chosen by the student in this framework.

**Design as Politics: Policy Research & Strategy design**

As shown in its name, the chair of Design as Politics is exploring, researching and defining the boundaries, commonalities and tensions between the fields of politics and design. It offers a new way to think about the role of urban designer in urban planning and leaves me great freedom in defining and developing my own idea. Those will help my project to be inspired in both academic way and practical way. This determines my project would not only be a picturesque urban design, but would focus more on developing a policy-oriented design.

“Design & Politics does not consider design and politics to be two separated worlds, but rather considers politics to be an important dimension of design and, simultaneously, design as an equally important tool for practicing politics. An alternative name for the chair could thus be ‘Design as Politics’. This means that looking at the realm of politics will renew the toolset of the designer, while the spatial perspective of developments in society will be considered to enrich the existing set of political instruments.”

———Design as Politics

My method

Redevelopment of urban village is an issue that involves benefits of multiple groups: villagers, tenants, developers, etc... Besides, it is also mixed with complex land tenure issues. All these facts make every step forward of redevelopment more difficult. All these driving factors behind makes me realize the importance of understanding policies and considering them in design process as an urban designer. An urban designer, in contemporary society, who becomes more like a negotiator instead of a pure designer, has the advantage of capturing a bigger picture including developers, government and citizens.

**My Research Tools**

In general, the overall methodology starts with the study of urban context, followed with the problem statement and research question that lead to research. The research will generate the preliminary vision and strategy, which also guide the further analysis. Finally, the design and the results of evaluation will answer the research question and contribute to the theories.

1. Literature review and case studies
   They are the basic tools to understand the context of the project. To find of the concept of urban villages as well as the forming mechanism, the related literature is reviewed. Theoretical framework and theory paper explain the background and the values of urban villages in the city.

2. Data research and Statistic
   Demographic is the main element to reflect the city structure. Population, gender, education level, employment statistics as well as the rent show the role of urban villages and the demands of the migrants. Statistic data is taken from www.google.com, Shenzhen Urban Planning Bureau, and literatures, etc.

3. Site Visit
   Site visit reveals the real living quality of the migrants, the physical condition of houses and the function of the village. To some extent, street life, social behaviours can also be recorded. The method is more important to location analysis and design.

4. Questionnaire
   In order to know the views of reconstruction from the inhabitants who live in or around village, interviewing them is the direct way. It is also easy to find the problem of socio-spatial segregation happened in this area. The inhabitants will be asked what do they like, dislike, need, and lack in the villages. Moreover the questionnaires about leisure activities in public space are been done.

5. Mapping
   At least not last, mapping is the most important instrument to illustrate the situation of the city and the village. In the district scale, mapping of networks, function, location of facilities is helpful to see the
potential of the village. In the village scale, land use, typology are shown which indicate the demands of the migrants. Data for mapping is taken from maps.google.com, image.baidu.com, and analyzing area photos.

My Design Tools
1. Policy making
   As the existing policies and system are tackled during my research process, policy making is necessarily demanded in my design. By making new rules, my project tries to reorganize the community and balance the unequal power distribution of different groups.

2. Cost-benefit Calculation
   My project tries to develop new policies, however, it also takes the real market into account. In a market-based economy society, where prices for goods and services are set freely by the forces of supply and demand. A profitable cost-benefit system helps to make my design goal more achievable.

3. Spatial design
   Lefebvre's argument in <The Production of Space> is that space is a social product, or a complex social construction (based on values, and the social production of meanings) which affects spatial practices and perceptions. In my project, space is a result which can be used to test if the policies and strategies work well. Society is always in progress instead of a static product, and during the process, policies and the space are always associated.

Illustration 6 Manifesto-explaining policies
Illustration 7 Master Plan
4. The relationship between the project and the wider social context

1. Constrained Land use of Shenzhen & urban village redevelopment

Land can be used for construction in Shenzhen is running out. 50% of its land is constructed, the rest 50% is preserved as green land which is asked by central government. Depending on Shenzhen’s developing speed, 20 times more land is needed for its growth. Instead of diminishing the green growth boundary, Chinese officials designated more than 200 square kilometers of occupied land as “urban regeneration areas”. However, simply demolish the low-density buildings and build up high rises is not a sustainable redeveloping way. Blindly urbanized every piece of city land should also be reconsidered. Questioning the status quo and exploring new possibilities is the aim of my project. Not only Shenzhen, many metropolises in the world are facing the same unbalanced supply and demand problem of land use. Therefore, my project which focuses on Shenzhen issue can also apply to other cities.

2. Preserve the value of urban villages

Social value of urban villages
Urban villages are commonly inhabited by the poor and transient, and as such they are associated with squalor, overcrowding and social problems. However, they are also among the liveliest areas in some cities and are notable for affording economic opportunity to newcomers to the city. In reality, tenants, the largest group in urban villages, have no voice in the process of redevelopment. A bottom-up redeveloping way of urban villages would help to hear the voice from the vulnerable group and provide a fairer solution which will help to build a harmony society.

Cultural value of urban villages
During the process of urbanizing the urban villages, lots of traditional rural customs are erased. Cultural value of urban villages are not well considered in existing redevelopment plans. For original villagers, the social connection inside the village is broken down; for tenants, the urban village is lack of cultural attraction. As more academics participate in this issue and more open discussions are held, the culture part of urban villages is causing people’s attention.

My project aims at addressing these problems and providing a more sustainable way of redevelopment, which will balance benefits of multiple groups and preserve social and cultural value of urban villages.

3. Affordable housing in developing countries

In 2014, more than 250 million Chinese migrant workers live in places where they are not registered and are thus legally excluded from some local public services. Only 0.2% of migrant workers live in affordable housing provided by government, while more than 60% of them live in urban villages. Therefore, urban village plays a positive role in housing enormous number of low-income migrant workers in cities. Due to the high land price, existing redevelopment usually will not be able to provide enough affordable housing. Those low-income migrant workers are forced to move to suburb, which is not a healthy way for the city. This phenomenon happens a lot in big cities in developing countries, like Mumbai in India and San Paulo in Brazil. This makes this topic meaningful. Is it possible to consider high dense affordable housing in the redevelopment of urban villages? Or there are some alternative solutions? This is one of the questions that are expected to be answered in my project.