THE HEPING DISTRICT, TIANJIN, CHINA: CONSERVATION OF A CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

BY

QIAN GAO

THESIS

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Advisers:

Professor David L. Hays
Professor D. Fairchild Ruggles
Professor Rebecca Ginsburg
The area of the Heping District in the city of Tianjin, China, has undergone dramatic social and morphological changes since 1860, with the invasion of the western powers. The area of the Heping District, once rural, was ceded by the Qing government as a concession to four foreign countries: Britain, France, the United States and Japan. Each state built their infrastructure and urban fabric in their concessions, which made the site a sort of “International Exposition.” During the 1920s and 1930s, with the urbanization and modernization, the area of Heping District developed as the heart of Tianjin city. Although with the establishment of People’s Republic of China, the foreign concessions were returned to the Chinese government, the area of Heping District has still been through dramatic domestic political changes, such as the “Cultural Revolution” and the “Reforming and Openness Policy.”

The buildings in the previous concessions are the city’s root. Though imposed by foreign powers, they did mark the start of China’s modernization process. Also, the pre-concession buildings have made up an incubator for generations of pioneers, reformists and revolutionist before the establishment of the new republic.

During the past century, the buildings in the area of Heping District transformed during the dramatic social changes until now. Each transformation can be seen as a trial for ways of living in those buildings. Thus, the buildings have become a “hull” for ways of living.

Now at another turning point of upgrading industrial structure in China, how to conserve those buildings as a cultural resource is still in debate. This study aims to use the concept of creative industry to help the Heping District again become an incubator for
creative people seeking to develop new ways of living, by designing or growing a creative live-work “metaspace” or “sphere” that is “never finished,” offering “possibilities for a more dynamic urban development, in which a blending takes place among old and new users,”¹ making the pre-concession buildings the symbol of innovation and a new driving force for economic growth, also, through the design process, exploring the role of landscape architect as “curators” given the “proto-urban condition,” which is “spaces for emergent phenomena, for social, political, economic and cultural change”², and finally, exploring how design interacts with decision making, and how to improve the top-down decision making.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This work would have been impossible without the valuable support and feedback of the faculty at the Landscape Architecture Department at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. I offer my thanks to everyone who has contributed toward the completion of this work, especially Professor David L. Hays, my chair and advisor, Professor D. Fairchild Ruggles, and Professor Rebecca Ginsburg.
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The City of Tianjin

Tianjin is located in North China, southeast of the capital, Beijing, along the Hai River, which connects to the Yellow and Yangtze Rivers via the Grand Canal. (Fig. 1) Its ports are located on the Bohai Gulf in the Pacific Ocean (Fig. 2). The municipality includes three parts: the urban area, which is the central-south part, a number of towns, which are in the northeast part along the Bohai Gulf, and a suburban area, which surrounds the urban area.  

Fig. 1. The Plan of the City of Tianjin

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The City of Tianjin is the largest coastal city in North China, the third largest city in China (in terms of area), and one of the four municipalities now governed directly by the Central Government in China. The area of Tianjin is 11,919.7 square kilometers, and the population of Tianjin is 11.5 million in 2009.\(^4\)

\[\text{(Fig. 2. The Plan of the Center City and the Binhai District)}\]

**Historic Stages of Tianjin City**

There are five key stages in the history of Tianjin (Table 1).

\(^4\) Tianjin Shi di fang zhi bian xiu wei yuan hui. 1996. *Tianjin Tong Zhi*. Tianjin: Tianjin she hui ke xue yuan chu ban she, 35-44.
Historic Stages of Tianjin City

Before 1860, during Qing Dynasty, Tianjin was situated in an important geographical position, and it was the north entrance and guard city of the capital, Beijing, with its typical walled and square-arranged center city. 5 “Located at the confluence of many rivers and the Bohai coast, Tianjin has been a center for transportation and salt distribution in north China since the Yuan and Ming period, known as a place at the confluence of many rivers and a center.” 6

Table 1. Five Historic Stages of Tianjin

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Period</th>
<th>Historic Stages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before 1840</td>
<td>Feudal system during Qing Dynasty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1840 to 1930s</td>
<td>Semi-colonial era</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940s to 1960s</td>
<td>Establishment and proliferation of new government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-1960s to mid-1970s</td>
<td>Cultural Revolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980 to present</td>
<td>Reformation and Opening Policy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From 1860 to early-twentieth century, Tianjin was once the only location of nine foreign concessions (the territories ceded by the Chinese imperial Qing Dynasty to the European colonial powers by signing unequal treaties) in China, which are American,

Austro-Hungarian, Belgian, British, French, German, Italian, Japanese, and Russian concessions.

In 1840, having been invaded by the united army of the Britain and France, Tianjin was forced to open its harbor. Soon after that, Britain, France and American set concessions in Tianjin. After the war between Japan and Qing in 1894, Germany and Japan also set their concessions. In 1900, invaded by the International Expeditionary Force (baguo lianjun), Russia, Austria, Italy and Belgium also set their concessions…In 1943, all the concessions were returned but they have left a great effect till now.

During the Semi-Colonial period from 1860 to early-twentieth century, as an urban space containing so many foreign settlements besides its own local city, Tianjin suddenly became a unique place. Tianjin is a place that had a situation of “Hyper-colony, a chaotic crossroads of Chinese and foreigners and a booming showcase of imperialism.” The city of Tianjin is also a place that has been called “laboratory of modernity,” in the context that the process of modernity is, to some extents, a process of westernization in China (hierarchical modernization), because it is an urban space for a large number of imperial powers to show off their advancement to the indigenous people and to compete with each other. As a result, local people in Tianjin witnessed “several

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8 After the Opium War, China went into a half-feudal and half-colony period. Y. Wang, T. Oku, and K. Kamino. 1996: 93.
variant models of urban modernity.” Tianjin is a place that had the phenomenon of “Expo of Administration,” too: in each concession, the imperial power ruled in its own way; in the “walled Chinese city,” although the International Expeditionary Force established a “Tianjin Provisional Government”\textsuperscript{11} to co-administer for only two years after the occupation of the city in 1900, the form of that council as an administrative organization had great impact on Tianjin’s political outlook. Tianjin is a place that was forced to become prosperous through industry and commerce\textsuperscript{12}. Tianjin is a place that had a variety of urban fabrics: “each empire proclaimed its presence through distinctive arrangement of space and edifice”\textsuperscript{13}. Their urban morphology became the symbol of each nation. It is a place that had diverse architecture, such as the “Japanese Concession’s Daiwa Park, with its imposing wooden torii arch, and the British municipal council’s Gordon Hall, a stylized medieval castle with exaggerated parapets and massive towers,”\textsuperscript{14} and has therefore been called “world-as-exhibition.”\textsuperscript{15}

From 1940s, all of the concessions in Tianjin were returned to the Chinese government before the new government’s establishment in 1949. “After the proclamation of the People’s Republic of China on 1 October 1949,”\textsuperscript{16} almost all of the property built up by foreign countries in Tianjin was taken back and nationalized, and

\textsuperscript{12} Ren, Y. 2007, 233.
\textsuperscript{13} Joseph W. Esherick. 2002, 40.
\textsuperscript{14} Joseph W. Esherick. 2002, 40.
\textsuperscript{15} Joseph W. Esherick. 2002, 40.
this process lasted until 1960s. Foreign residents who lived in the concessions returned to their countries, leaving their constructions permanently in the city. Tianjin became one of the three cities directly under the control of national government.

From the mid-1960s to the mid-1970s, an upheaval period in China’s history began, namely the Cultural Revolution. It started as a power struggle among leaders, but as the revolution magnified, people’s ideology changed overwhelmingly: their own culture, the radical behavior mode, and western thinking — specifically, Marxism—mixed together. As a result, iconoclasm reached the top compared with other historic stages in the 20th century.17 Besides, “the anti-urban bias of Mao’s revolution tended to relegate urban history to a subordinate role in the grand narrative of modern China.”18

Accordingly, Tianjin became “one of the centers of the campaigns of the socialist.”19 In Tianjin, a large number of temples, shrines, and house altars, whether Buddhist, Catholic, or Islamic, were damaged by the “Red Guard,” because they were considered as symbols of feudalism or superstition. The “Red Guard” also attacked “the structures of general living accommodation” 20 and seized the private buildings of the “Capitalist” or public buildings as their own in the social chaos, incurring urban spatial

During the revolution, the development of urban planning in the city of Tianjin stagnated: the Department of Urban Planning, like other organizations, was ceased for any activity.

With the end of the Cultural Revolution, China carried out the Reform and Opening policy in the late 1970s, first to recover the economy and to mitigate social chaos, and then to improve the overall economic and social development. “Maoist revolutionary class struggle transited to a pragmatic model of economic reconstruction and modernization under Deng Xiaoping.”

Development is the absolute principle”, coined by Deng Xiaoping (the most influential politician and actual head of state in China from 1976 to 1997), as a propaganda call to accept change in the outward circumstances of life.

As a result, especially in the 1990s, Tianjin, like other major cities in China “has suddenly become a huge urban construction site.” Modern constructions have burgeoned, and a great number of service facilities and infrastructure have been finished. The expansion of its urban extent is in rapid development: the urban area expanded three times as it was in 1949. The old district, especially the previous concession area, is facing the threat of “deconstructive construction” — the old buildings in the area of the

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23 Andreas Szesny. 2006, 19.
previous concessions are torn down to make space for new functional buildings and other land uses.

At the beginning of the new millennium, after the prosperity of Shenzhen in the 1980s, and the Pudong District (Shanghai) in the 1990s, the new economic development focus is the Binhai District (Tianjin’s new coastal district) (Fig. 3).27 “Running along 150 kilometers of coastline in the sprawling municipality of Tianjin in northeast China, Binhai District is now in development as the country’s next regional engine for economic growth.”28 The district consists of eight functional zones, most of which focus on manufacturing, and industrial parks for big companies. Also, with the operation of the Pacific International Port, 152 of the Fortune 500 enterprises are moving in, and with 15.9 billion dollars cumulative overseas investment, the Binhai District, or the city of Tianjin, once the “major international trading city with shipping connections to all parts of Asia, is currently globalizing”29 again. This time, Tianjin is no longer forced to be open but displays great initiative in opening, following the central government’s policy. Foreign businessmen come back to earn money “with handshakes rather than guns.”30

At this point, the remaining historic buildings within the center city structures, which “impeded” the urban sprawling in the 1990s, can be thought as a kind of culture

and economic resource. “The spatial forms of former semi-colonial Tianjin are being strategically marketed to attract foreign capital and domestic customers,” which is also called “evidence of the beginning of Tianjin’s globalization.”

One example is “Yi Shi Feng Qing Qu” (Italian Business Park), a gentrification project of the old blocks in former Italian concession built to attract investors from both local area and oversea.

The “Yi Shi Feng Qing Qu” can be considered as a “heterotopia”, since it reveals the “pretentious attempt to re-create imaginary Italian scenery in Tianjin by showing a

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space that is other, another real space, as perfect, as meticulous, as well arranged as ours is messy, ill constructed, and jumbled.”

However, on one hand, by over-emphasizing alien, pseudo-scenery, like Disneyland, projects like the “Yi Shi Feng Qing Qu” make the area an isolated island exclusive to wealthy class. On the other hand, “while pretending to project a cosmopolitan image, it leads to the progressive emergence of geographies of nowhere by adapting sceneries from everywhere”

New Issue: What is the Best Way of Conserving Cultural Legacies?

The “Yi Shi Feng Qing Qu” is an attempt to achieve the “protective transformation” at the cost of being a “theme park” and excluding common people. Are there alternatives for the “protective transformation”, and what will be the best approach among those alternatives?

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32 M. Marinelli. 2009. 33.
33 M. Marinelli. 2009. 34.
35 Zhang Hua. 2001, 55.
CHAPTER 2
TRANSFORMATION OF THE HEPING DISTRICT

Heping District

One of the fifteen districts in Tianjin, the Heping District is at the heart of that city. It was the home to the first four of the nine concessions, which are American, British, French, and Japanese concessions from 1860s to 1940s. Presently (2009), more than one fourth of all the concessions’ original buildings (and more than seventy percent of the historic buildings in Tianjin, generally) remain within the Heping District (Fig. 4).

(Fig. 4. The Heping District in Tianjin)
Despite transformations and demolition, the historic density of the Heping District is still considered high in terms of important colonial era buildings. Thus, debates about “whether or not to preserve” and “how to make decisions about what to preserve now” continue between developers and preservationists. Also, “the very notion of change remains highly disputed.”

The Formation of the Area of the Heping District

Before the establishment of the foreign concessions, the area of the Heping District had been several villages and a large area of wetland at the north side next to the city wall.

(Fig. 5. Plan of Tianjin City before Concessions’ Establishment)

The Hai He River was right on the east side of the city and served as both “an important natural resource and transportation corridor, facilitating settlements and development”\textsuperscript{37} and a network between Tianjin and the rest of north China (Fig. 5).

(Fig. 6. The Establishment of the First Three Concessions)

Established in 1404, the walled city, Tianjin Wei, was first used as military site, but soon the city began to develop other functions. Within the city, commercial activities appeared and flourished. In the rural area, the major daily life for villagers was agriculture growing crops and vegetables. Although the city wall was a concrete boundary that separated them, there were still supplemental connections between the

inner city and the outer villages, like “tax collection, trade in vegetables and seafood.”

The inner city was ruled stably, while the villages and the wetland would change dramatically in the late 19th century (Fig. 6). \(^{39}\)

(Fig. 7. First Expansion of the Concessions in 1917)

In 1840, the united army of Britain and France invaded Tianjin. After Beijing was occupied and the summer palace was burned, the Qing government was obliged to sign


the 1860 Peking Convention. Soon after the treaty was signed, Great Britain and France occupied 56 ha\(^{40}\) agricultural land, drove away the villagers and built up their first concessions in the area of the Heping District “along the south bank of the Hai River.”\(^{41}\)

In 1869, the American concession was established, eventually passing to Britain as a part of the British concession in 1902.

In the 1890s, after the Sino-Japanese naval battle, Japan joined the concessions, setting up their settlement next to the French concession, “creating a two-mile-long row of foreign outposts along the Hai River.”\(^{42}\) About two thousand residents from those countries moved to their respective settlements and settled down.

After seizing Tianjin in 1900, the International Expeditionary Force (baguolianjun) divided and extended a large number of lands along the Hai He River. Britain, France and Japan expanded their concessions, when Austria, Belgium, Italy and Russia joined the concession setting “competition”. As a result, the native villagers were forced to move out from their homes, and “all the villages in this area were entirely destroyed.”\(^{43}\)

Each nation arranged street patterns, and erected buildings in its own national style. In the concessions, large-scale construction began: a great deal of buildings were

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\(^{40}\) Tianjin Shi di fang zhi bian xiu wei yuan hui. 1996. *Tianjin Tong Zhi*. Tianjin: Tianjin she hui ke xue yuan chu ban she, 89.


built up with different functions, such as residential buildings, banks, office buildings, commercial buildings, factories, educational buildings and hotels. Certain types of buildings were built up in clusters, forming functional agglomerations. For example, “[t]he Zhong Road, which was the main street of British concession, was lined by banks of many countries and became the center of finance.” 44

Other than buildings, public facilities were also constructed, such as paved roads, bridges, parks, sanitation systems, running water supplies, and electrical systems. The International Bridge in the French concession became an important traffic hinge, connecting the Main Street and the only station at the other bank of the Hai River.

All of these urban construction activities constituted Tianjin’s modernization. There were two completely distinct conditions inside and outside the boundaries of the concessions: “modernized urban fabrics within concessions and traditional Chinese city without modernized infrastructure” 45 (Fig. 7).

After the final expansion of the concessions in 1937, the British concession expanded from 31 ha to 401 ha, the French from 24 ha to 189 ha, and the Japanese from 110 ha to 143 ha. 46

Among all of the Tianjin concessions, British, French and Japanese were the three highest in building-site and building-coverage (Fig. 8).

44 Wang, Y., T. Oku, and K. Kamino, 89-96.
During the establishment of the new Chinese government in 1949, all of the concessions were returned. The administrative district boundaries of the Tenth District were along the former British concession’s boundary. The local government of Tianjin combined the former French and Japanese concessions as the First District and extended the west boundary along Ziya River.
Due to the lack of budget, no large-scale construction was initiated in the area of the former concessions. “The spatial forms of the four concessions did not witness radical external changes;” however, the internal space was reorganized based on the new “socio-spatial process” 47 (Fig. 9).

In the 1950s, the local government redivided the administrative districts, combining the area of the First District and the Tenth District, and extended the south boundary along the Jinhe River and the north boundary to the former city wall, which

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was razed before 1949. Finally, the area of the four former concessions and the extended area became known as the Heping District, meaning the ‘Peace District’ (Fig. 10).

(Fig. 10. Formation of the Heping District in 1956)

During the first ten years of the new government, there was some new construction at the southwest corner of the Heping District to solve the housing shortage problem. Those buildings were “concrete and brick structures, pragmatically following the example of the Soviet Union for a time.”48

48 Andreas Szesny. 2006, 19.
Undoubtedly, the evolving process of the Heping District was largely catalyzed by the establishment of the concessions. The drastic shift from the indigenous to the foreign always implies the consequential interaction between the two, though at first such impact was unilateral, especially in the context of Tianjin’s concession. As what has been declared in Brugger’s article, “The supplanting of indigenous Chinese urban forms by western influence and direct impositions (e.g., the replacement of traditional courtyard residences by multistory apartment blocks) has brought both problems and opportunities that are at once morphological, social, economic, and cultural.” 49 The concessions themselves were incubators of imported ideologies isolated by the physical boundaries and cautious government in eras before and around the independence of the country. Such intangible power however, still permeated through the isolation and exerted its impact both positively and negatively. The corresponding phenomenon was the adaptive physical changes to the concession initiated by the Chinese government once it held the ownership of the area.

Major urban transformations were undertaken in stages, each corresponding to a period of significant political and social transformation. During those stages, federal, regional, and local government attitudes concerning history (specifically, the imperial and colonial pasts) impacted planning decisions throughout China. Given the concentration of colonial buildings and urban infrastructural forms in Tianjin, not to mention imperial Chinese elements, those shifting attitudes had significant morphological and functional consequences.

Demolition of Semi-colonial buildings in the Heping District

During the 1950s and early 1960s, after the concessions were returned to China, the buildings abandoned by previous foreign residents were used mostly as offices, factories, and houses to solve the problem of construction shortage in Tianjin. The urban fabric was also kept by urban planners due to their financial limits. Under a centrally planned economy at that time, “urban planning is very powerful in deciding land uses and

(Fig. 11. Architecture in the Former Concessions in 1965)
urban development, because the state controls resource allocation. At that time, those urban and architectural legacies built in the pre-concession areas were considered more as functional buildings than as cultural symbols (Fig. 11).

While the external appearance of many buildings did not change dramatically, the internal spaces of historic buildings were reorganized and transformed in different degrees. “With the implementation of the work unit (danwei) system, all buildings and villas existing in the concessions experienced a progressive subdivision of physical space to accommodate multiple families; while other constructions emerged in the concession more in line with socialist-style architecture.”

From the mid-1960s to mid-1970s, the Cultural Revolution broke out. People’s Anti-Capitalism started to influence the “line of thinking [that] bore upon the historical built environment.” People started to think about eliminating colonial remnants in a pragmatic way. For example, the Cross on the top of Xikai Cathedral’s dome had been removed by the “Red Guard” because they thought of it as a symbol of Capitalism. But most of the historic buildings were kept for practical uses, except that some parts of the building which was considered as symbolizing Capitalism or superstitions would be removed (Fig. 12).

Natural disaster (earthquake and flood) in Tianjin destroyed a number of former concession buildings in 1976 as well. Almost 60% of Tianjin’s buildings and


infrastructure were destroyed.\textsuperscript{53} Wang Hai Lou (Our Lady of Victory Church), one of the Catholic churches in Tianjin, was damaged severely in the earthquake. Other buildings, residential, commercial or educational, were damaged in different degrees.

(Fig. 12. Architecture in the Former Concessions in 1976)

Despite natural disasters and manmade calamities, the rate of demolition was still low compared to the accelerated construction period later in 1990s.

From the mid-1970s to the mid-1980s, with the end of Culture Revolution and the start of Reformation and Opening Policy, it was like the “night before the urban boom start.” The city planners were able to work again to propose new community development for the worker class by exploiting the land after tearing down the historic.

structures. Thus, historic buildings began to be demolished at a much faster pace (Fig. 13).

(Fig. 14. Architecture in the Former Concessions in 1996)

From the mid-1980s to the mid-1990s, with the expansion of reform, the power of urban planning was weakened due to the “[d]ecentralization of decision making, [and] market-led development initiatives.”\(^{55}\) Although initiatives such as the 1989 City Planning Act had been made to meet the challenges, there were still deficiencies “with

\(^{55}\) Anthony Gar-on Yeh, and Fulong Wu. 1999, 169.
the rapidly changing socio-economic environment, resulting in fragmented district plans, detailed development control plans and zoning. The mixed, chaotic land use in Heping District is one of the examples (Fig. 14).

(Fig. 15. Architecture in the Former Concessions in 2009)

From the mid-1990s to 2009, the “destructive construction” in terms of historic buildings began with the Reform of Real Estate market. A great number of historic

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56 Anthony Gar-on Yeh, and Fulong Wu. 1999, 169.
buildings were destroyed during the acceleration of urban development. The speed of demolition was overwhelming (Fig. 15).

Preservationists argued that those historic buildings should be kept in relation to part of the city’s past and identity. But the official attitudes were ambiguous concerning those historic buildings, quite often depending on what financial benefits the local government could get.

In 2009, about 1,046 historic buildings still stand in the Heping District, more than half of them are considered to have notable historic values.

Three Categories of Historic Buildings

The Historic Preservation department of Tianjin has designated more than 520 out of the 1,046 historic buildings in the Heping District as worthy of protection: 400 at the important level and 120 at very important level. The rest are categorized as general level.\(^\text{58}\)

The criteria used to determine the preservation value of the historic buildings can be briefly described: the architectural style, structure, and construction technology should feature artistic and scientific value; the historic buildings should reflect the traditional character of history, culture and folklore, and represent exotic architectural style features; some of the buildings feature the representative work of a famous architect; buildings as landmarks or buildings of celebrities or with special significance.


\(^{58}\) Tianjin Shi Zhengxie Wenshi Ziliao Yanjiu Weiyuanhui (ed.), *Tianjin Zujie (Tianjin's Concessions)*, Tianjin: Tianjin Renmin Chubanshe, 2004
Those buildings can be classified as political, commercial, educational, religious, residential, and recreational in terms of their functions.

**Examples of the Transformation of Historic Buildings**

Five examples represent how buildings, as well as urban fabric, transformed in different time periods, whether in terms of function or appearance.

Figure 16 and Figure 17 depict the transformation of urban fabric in one block at the north end of the Heping District. In 1906, Yamato Park was completed by the Japanese government in one block of Japanese concession. In 1945, with the return of Japanese concession after the Chinese-Japanese War, the name of Yamato Park was changed to Shengli (Victory) Park. In 1951, the park was torn down as the site for the building of Children's Hall. From 1961 and on, the Children’s Hall was transformed as a theatre.

While many changes took place, residential buildings were partially kept in 2009.

(Fig 16. Yamato Park in 1906)
Figure 18 and Figure 19 show the transformation of streetscape in the northeast part of the Heping District. In 1902, Asahi Road was built in the Japanese Concession and served as the main road connecting the concessions of France, Britain and Japan.

(Fig. 18. Asahi Road in 1902)
For more than a century, the once main road transformed to a pedestrian commercial street named Heping Road. Figure 19 represents the streetscape of Heping Road, with the concession buildings transformed as department stores: most of the buildings were not torn down in the past century, but several floors were added on the original buildings.

Figure 20, Figure 21 and Figure 22 show the transformation of appearance and function of historic buildings. In 1890, Gordon Hall, the seat of British government, was completed in British Concession. In 1945, the building was used as the Tianjin Government Hall when Japanese invaders were expelled from China. As shown in Figure 21, the structure and façade kept the same appearance while the national emblem and official title was added to the building; Figure 22 shows the current condition of the
building, partially kept and partially ruined after the earthquake in 1976. In 2009, the function of the building is residential and commercial.

(Fig. 20. Gordon Hall in 1890)

(Fig. 21. The City Hall in 1945)
Figure 23 and Figure 24 illustrate the functional changes of another building. In 1896, the building was originally built as Qing Post Office, the first modern post office in China. After over a century, the building now serves as residential building with the subdivided interior space for multiple families to share.

(Fig. 23. Qing Post Office in 1896)
Figure 25 and Figure 26 show the transformation of the appearance of yet another building. Invested by John Innocent, the one story building was built in 1863 as the Astor Hotel. In 1924, the building received another four floors to the north side of the building and installed the first elevator into the building still in use now. In 1943, Japanese troops took charge of the hotel, and renamed it the Asia Hotel. In 1949, the garden in front of the building was removed to make space for new road. In 1984, the east building was expanded to seven stories. During the one and a half century, a large number of domestic and overseas presidents and influential people stayed in the hotel and many historic events happened there, which makes this building worthy of protection. In 2009, $200 million was used for restoration.
(Fig. 25. Astor Hotel in 1886)

(Fig. 26. Astor Hotel in 2008)
Table 2 Historic Buildings in Heping District

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original Name</th>
<th>Present Name</th>
<th>Built Time</th>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Structural Type</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Chartered Bank of India, Austria &amp; China</td>
<td>Liberation Road Post Office</td>
<td>1904</td>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>Reinforced Concrete</td>
<td>No. 153m Liberation Road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yien Yieh Commercial Bank</td>
<td>Tianjin Branch of Chinese Industrial and Commercial Bank</td>
<td>1916</td>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>Brick and Concrete</td>
<td>No. 12 Chifeng Road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yokohama Specie Bank, Ltd.</td>
<td>Tianjin Branch of China Bank</td>
<td>1916</td>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>Brick and Concrete</td>
<td>No. 80 Liberation Road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banque Franco-Chinoise Pour Le Commerce Etl ’Industrie</td>
<td>Tianjin Federation Trade Union</td>
<td>1926</td>
<td>Finance to Political</td>
<td>Brick and Concrete</td>
<td>No. 74 Liberation Road</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Analysis of Historic Buildings in the Heping District

The Information about the 520 historic buildings in the Heping District is available in the book “Fengmao Architecture in Heping District.” Table 2 is a partial list from the book.

Based on the complete list of the historic buildings in the Heping District, the functional transformation of buildings can be charted. Figure 27 shows the functional transformation of the historic buildings. The result of comparing the uses of historic buildings when they were built with the uses of historic buildings at present shows that the functions of historic buildings under very important protection are very flexible. It also shows that residential buildings are most flexible in terms of their functions: they can be transformed to six other kinds of uses except for military uses. This indicates that the residential area is a potential site for a planning project.
Residential buildings are most flexible.

(Fig. 27. Functional Transformation of the Historic Buildings)
CHAPTER 3
A NEW APPROACH TO CONSERVING THE FORMER CONCESSION BUILDINGS

Decision on Alternatives of Conservation

After one century’s dramatic change — driven by a series of social and political upheavals — from an agricultural site to modern industrialization, especially the past three decades’ high speed economic development, it is time for the area of the Heping District to become more resilient.

From 2002, with the establishment of the Binhai District, eight functional areas are about to be completed, including manufacturing, harbor, and industrial parks for big companies: Dongjiang port, the Tianjin Economic-Technological Development Area (TEDA), Free Trade Zone, Binhai High-Tech Zone, an airport-based logistics processing area, Tianjin port, and a manufacturing zone. Decision makers of the central government have given the Binhai District “the ambitious task of spurring industrial growth in Tianjin,” the city which is expected to become once again the economic center of North China (Fig. 28).

While the Binhai District is under development as an industrial and hi-tech center, the role of the center city, especially the Heping District at its heart, needs to be redefined.

Coordination and distribution of responsibilities between the center city and the Binhai

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District are a big issue, which is partially a reflection of the nation’s “bottleneck:” what is next after “made in China”?

(Fig. 28. The Binhai District of Tianjin)

Greg Richard says “In the past, cities competed to attract companies by offering ideal conditions of production: cheap land, cheap labor, cheap energy and good communications. Now cities compete to develop cultural and creative resources to attract
the creative class on the basis of cultural production that helps supply the images and symbols that are vital to competitive success in the new economy.”

In the post industrial era, the Heping District’s industrial land use is shrinking each month with factories moving out for cheaper land and cheaper laborers. The advantage of investment-driven economy seems no longer to exist in the Heping District. Consequently, decision makers and planners have begun to seek other stimuli, such as unique urban cultures conducive to economic growth. In that context, the question of “how to conserve the historic buildings” could be addressed by framing them as cultural capital attractive to development at a moment when China is facing an economic turning point with mandates to upgrade its industrial structure.

However, unlike the full development of “Yi Shi Feng Qing Qu” (Italian Business Park) (see Chapter 1), it is less clear how to conserve the buildings from the former concessions in the area of the Heping District, or to make use of them as culture capital. “Under the current investment friendly regime,” there are many possibilities for preservation and development in this district. Methods of conservation include common tactics such as real estate development and cultural tourism.

Several proposals for real estate development in the former concessions have been put forward by local or foreign companies; however, as a typical gentrification project, the impact of real estate development is obvious: another “Land King” (Di Wang) will

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61 Greg Richards, and Robert Palmer. 2010. 24

appear. Di Wang refers to a phenomenon in large cities in China when a business tycoon invests in real estate in an area of a city at an extremely high price and makes it unaffordable as a place to live, which in turn forces everyone except the wealthy to leave.

Cultural tourism is also not an ideal solution for the Heping District. First, relying too much on tourists, it is too unpredictable and uncertain as a basis for the long-term development. Once the overall economy goes down, this kind of single industry district will go down immediately, due to the lack of diversification. Second, with the development of the pre-concession area, the residents’ present way of living will be forced to change dramatically. Third, throughout history, influential people living in the former concessions, and the historic events that took place there, have made the Heping District unique. If tourism is developed, the area will become a monument to past residents and events, overlooking the potential of become home to newly influential people and innovations.

Therefore, there should be a better approach to conservation of the Heping District, since those conventional ways have flaws in regard to social stability, economic dynamics, and urban functional diversity. According to the rapidly changing economic situation, especially the need to upgrade industrial structure, the proposal should be resilient, and not driven by traditional investment.

In relation to industry upgrading, it makes sense to propose a live-work zone for creative enterprise, in order to attract people, especially the “creative class” to contribute to the Heping District and, to use creative industry as a solution to stimulate

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the growth of Heping district’s cultural capitals.\textsuperscript{64} (Chapter 4 will go into detail about creative industry) Also, with the vision of the creative class, it is possible to create a new form of live-work using the pre-concession buildings, because the “creative class” seeks out sound live-work space and “inspiration or freedom,” which discovering and, to some extent, generating such “innovative spaces.”\textsuperscript{65} Moreover, the dynamic planning process (see Chapter 5) makes resilience possible. As Greg Richards says, “Developing creativity implies not only that a city can place new products on global markets, but also that it can quickly respond to changing competition and demand. A creative city is one that has learnt how to use its cultural and environmental capital to attract creative class and services as well as members of the mobile class.”\textsuperscript{66}

Besides timing, two critical conditions support this proposal.

First, sixteen key higher educational institutes are within or near to the Heping district, including three national universities, one art institute, one music college, one foreign languages college, and various performing arts schools. All of those organizations introduce to the vicinity potentially creative people, who will be the “actors” within the Heping District, as Michael Keane suggests, “it has been widely demonstrated that clusters situated close to universities and research institutes are able to take advantage of technology transfer and knowledge workers.”\textsuperscript{67}

Second, the multiple and flexible uses of the pre-concession buildings (see Chapter 2) forms the basis and premise of this project.

\textsuperscript{64} Lily Kong, and Justin O’Connor. 2009, 110.
\textsuperscript{65} Panu Lehtovuori. 32.
Gentrification

Gentrification, whether top-down or bottom-up, usually becomes a concern when regeneration takes place in old urban area. If the live-work metaspace is in development in Heping District, the phenomenon of gentrification is minor, given the fact that the main body of residents is a floating population, and the phenomenon of self-replacement is operative. A study of the process of “transformation of housing ownership in Heping
District,” as well as of local annual directories and site inventories, and the demography of the Heping district, sheds light on the floating population and the self replacement.

(Fig. 30. Transformation of Housing Ownership)

All of the concession buildings were owned by individuals until the establishment of the new government in 1949. Then, ownership began to shift from private to public. During the Cultural Revolution from 1966 to 1976, most of the private houses were confiscated and reassigned to workers in the form of shared dwellings. However, according to the “public property” agenda, the workers did not own their places of
residence. Instead, they had only the right to live there. In 1994, because of a new policy, the new housing was once again commodified and marketed (Fig. 30).

A site inventory concluded by the student survey team at Tianjin University, as well as on Professor Jin’s partially finished survey, reveal the demography in most of the pre-concession areas of the Heping district. Those statistics show that, of all the residents living in the pre-concession area, the permanent residents are about 18 percent, including permanent right holders and new buyers. For the other 82 percent of the residents, the
real situation is different from the official report: the main body living in the area is a floating population, including workers, small trades people, laborers, students, and others, while the right holders who are counted by the government in the official report are actually not living on site. The fact reveals that, because of all the radical ownership transitions, only less than 18 percent of the houses and apartments are currently private. That fact also reflects the new housing policy in that most of the right holders (82 percent of all the residents) bought new apartments (not permanent rights to live in, but 70 years living right) and moved out from the old shared houses, although they still have their living right in the assigned pre-concession buildings. Also, for their benefit, a large number of living right holders subleased their right to the floating population, usually students and people from other areas of the country without ties to Tianjin. In that way, the self-replacement phenomenon has impacted Tianjin, as it has many other major cities in China.

In conclusion, based on the “Demography in previous concession area in Heping District”, the largest number of people living in the area is the Floating Population, while the living right holders self-replaced to other areas of the city of Tianjin, the bottom-up gentrification is not going to have much negative impact.
CHAPTER 4
THE CONCEPT OF CREATIVE INDUSTRY AS THE FUNDAMENTAL FOR PLANNING

Scholars have described several distinct understandings of creative industry; In his Book “Creative Industry,” Richard Caves surveys on art-based industries, such as book publishing, painting, filmmaking and fashion, and examines the commercialization of art, focusing in particular on the reason why art industry is inefficient compared with the traditional industry. He describes in detail seven basic characteristics of so-called “creative industry”:

1. Nobody knows principle: Demand uncertainty exists because the consumers’ reactions to a product are neither known beforehand, nor easily understood afterward.
2. Art for art’s sake: Workers care about originality, technical professional skill, harmony, etc. of creative goods and are willing to settle for lower wages than offered by 'humdrum' jobs.
3. Motley crew principle: For relatively complex creative products (e.g., films), the production requires diversely skilled inputs. Each skilled input must be present and perform at some minimum level to produce a valuable outcome.
4. Infinite variety: Products are differentiated by quality and uniqueness; each product is a distinct combination of inputs leading to infinite variety options (e.g., works of creative writing, whether poetry, novel, screenplays or otherwise).
5. A list/B list: Skills are vertically differentiated. Artists are ranked on their skills, originality and proficiency in creative processes and/or products.
Small differences in skills and talent may yield huge differences in (financial) success.

6. Time flies: When coordinating complex projects with diversely skilled inputs, time is of the essence.

7. Ars longa: Some creative products have durability aspects that invoke copyright protection, allowing a creator or performer to collect rents” (Caves, 35-36).

However, Caves does not abstract an economic model or differentiate the essence of that kind of industry from the traditional industry.

**Unique Features of Creative Industry**

In his book *The Rise of The Creative Class*, Richard Florida states that the essential difference between creative industry and traditional industry is that creative industry is innovation driven whereas traditional industry is investment driven. In the latter, growth and improvement of economic conditions come from expanding investment in raw materials, labor, and related resources. Innovation driven means creating “more profitable output” by supporting “higher-value inputs such as physical, human, and knowledge resources.”

Figure 32 illustrates the model of creative industry — that is, an innovation-driven economic model. There are two main parts of the model: the “super creative

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core”\(^70\) and “workers in related industry.” Also, “the cluster force”\(^71\) is a necessary part of the model, which attracts the creative class tied to a specific place and makes them the super creative core.

![Model of Creative Industry](image)

(Fig. 32. Model of Creative Industry)

**Super Creative Core**

The super creative core is made up of creative class. According to Richard Florida’s book, creative class refers to individuals who work to "create meaningful new forms,”\(^72\) or ideas that have origin. Their careers include “scientists and engineers, university professors, poets and novelists, artists, entertainers, actors, designers, and architects, as well as the thought leadership of modern society: nonfiction writers, editors, cultural figures, think-tank researchers, analysts, and other opinion-makers. Members of


\(^{71}\) Richard L. Florida, 2004, 45.

this super-creative core produce new forms or designs that are readily transferable and broadly useful — such as designing a product that can be widely made, sold and used; coming up with a theorem or strategy that can be applied in many cases; or composing music that can be performed again and again... they share a common ethos that values creativity, individuality, difference, and merit.”73 As engines of creative industry, such individuals play the most important roles in stimulating growth when the investment driven model of economy is limited by depending too much on resources and capital.

**Workers in Related Industries**

Workers in related industries include professionals, who develop and commercialize creative people’s ideas, apply core ideas to specific projects or mass production is included in the related industries, and workers from service industries, who provide basic living needs for creative people.

**Cluster Forces**

Cluster forces are also needed to keep attracting creative people as well as workers engaged in related industries. Four essential personalities of a city, according to Richard Florida, constitute the cluster force for creative people and innovative people who have similar personalities, given the theory that places have personalities that attract people with similar personalities.74 Those four personalities are diversity, openness, aesthetics, and capturing dreams and imagination.

**Sectors of Creative Industry**


To specify creative industry from the theoretical model, the UK Government Department for Culture defines creative industry from the perspective of industry sectors. According to the Department, creative industry “typically includes industries that focus on creating and exploiting intellectual property products.”\textsuperscript{75} Ten sectors are included in creative industry, namely “Software, computer application and electronic publishing; Advertising; Designer Fashion; Publishing; Music and Performing Arts, Architecture, Film, Video and Photography; Visual Arts; Publishing; Communication Design.”\textsuperscript{76}

\begin{center}
\textbf{CREATIVE SECTORS}\\
\begin{itemize}
\item Software, PC Games and E-publishing
\item Advertising
\item Designer Fashion
\item Publishing
\item Music, Performing Arts
\item Architecture
\item Film, Video and Photography
\item Visual Arts
\item Crafts
\item Communication design
\end{itemize}
\end{center}

(Fig. 33. Sectors of Creative Industry)


\textsuperscript{76} DCMS. 2001.
Figure 33 shows the creative sectors as the fundamental cores or seeds of the whole planning process for the Heping District. Those sectors will be further categorized based on their spatial requirements (see Chapter 5).

**Two Cases**

Two cases, one successful and the other failed, indicate previous experience and concerns dealing with actual creative industry zones in China, in which opportunities and challenges coexist.

The first case is the 798 Art District in Beijing, described here at length by Bart De Muynck:

A former electronics factory in the 1950s, 798 is a benchmark and a tourist attraction for many visitors to Beijing. For both artists and visitors alike, the district is a symbol of Beijing’s new openness. 798 is situated within a larger industrial cluster initially called Joint Factory 718 between ring roads 4 and 5 on Beijing’s central north-east, occupying a total land area of 290,000 m², 225,000 m² of which are occupied by buildings. The area originally contained multiple factories designed in the Bauhaus style by East German architects in 1952, occupying 93,000 square meters of the whole factory complex. In 1964, the 718 Joint Factory was disbanded and six sub-factories (700, 706, 707, 718, 797 and 798) took on their own lives…

…In 2001, the factories joined together under the name Seven Star China Electronic Group (qixing huadian jituan). The area includes a power generation Factory 751, which is adjacent to the arts centre…

The precinct was first made available for individual studios, when the Seven Group rented out these plants for short term. Attracted by ordered designing, convenient traffic, unique style of Bauhaus architecture, many artists came to rent the vacant plants and transformed them, gradually formed a district gathered galleries, art studios, cultural companies, fashion shops etc. As
the earliest area where the art organizations and artists moved in located in the original area of 798 factory, this place was named as Beijing 798 Art Zone.

(Fig. 34. Exhibition Hall in the 798 Art District)

(Fig. 35. Lounge Bar at the 798 Art District)
Mottled red-brick wall, scattered orderly industrial plants, crisscross pipelines, slogans of different ages on the wall, uniformed workers, and fashion visitors form the unique scenery. History and reality, industry and the arts coexist there…

Within 2 years, the area had transformed into an exhibition space featuring China’s avant-garde. The design elements of 798 were further enhanced by Chinese artists who had experienced loft style living overseas…In 798 Art Zone, there are nearly 400 organizations including galleries, artists’ private studios, cultural companies like animated cartoon, television media, publishing, design and consultation, which comes from France, Italy, Britain, the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, Japan, Australia, South Korea, China, China Taiwan, Hong Kong and other countries and regions.

On 28 March 2006, the complex came under the joint management of the Chaoyang government and the Seven Stars Group. A management group called the Beijing 798 Arts District Construction Management Company was formed. From 28 September to 14 October of that year, the site hosted the “2006 Beijing 798 Cultural Creative Festival.” In December 2006, the site was officially recognized as one of Beijing’s ten designated cultural creative clusters. The future of 798 is currently under local government review. Urban planners have recommended extending cultural tourism aspects to include the adjacent 751 factory and even turn one of the gas tanks into a boutique brewery, together with further landscaping. Investment has flowed into the site, enhancing the contemporary look of the art district.

By April 2007, the co-owners had positioned three large projects for 798’s future status. Together with improved road access and further greening of the

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site, 798 would house a Chinese Contemporary Art Academy, the 798 Creation Factory, and the Beijing 798 International Copyright Trading Centre.\textsuperscript{79}

(Fig. 36. 798 Developing Model)

Figure 36 illustrates the bottom-up formation and development model of the 798 Art District. Black dots represent the abandoned factories as the original sites for creative class. Analysis based on the creative industry models shows how these abandoned buildings, associated with the distinct personalities (diversity, openness, aesthetics, and capturing dreams and imagination) attracted a group of artists to come, transform, and use those kinds of spaces to produce art. Given the area is open and free atmosphere, more and more creative people moved there, spontaneously engaging in different sectors of creative industries. Different sectors served as the “super creative core,”\textsuperscript{80} or the economic engine of the 798 area, attracting related services (represented as a radial loop)

\textsuperscript{79} B. De Muynck. 2007.
\textsuperscript{80} Richard L. Florida. 2008, 45.
such as gift shops and restaurants, etc. Thereby, the 798 area became more and more
diverse in terms of the industry sectors and finally formed an art district until it was
acknowledged by the local government (represented as solid lines). That bottom-up
progress fits the feature of the creative industry.

However, when it comes to a long-term progress, the local government is facing
challenges. Lacking legislative support to protect their intellectual property, many
creative people’s works have seen their works copied. Also, the abandoned buildings are
an uncertain factor affecting the fate of the creative people in the 798 district, since
whether artists can have the right to use the buildings will be determined by the
buildings’ owner, the Seven Star Group.

Creative people have the capability to find the marginal places and to transform
them into more dynamic places.

In typical contemporary planning processes, municipalities use a top-down
approach dealing with “creativity.” Using the investment driven model, local
governments invest in building some new “factories” and impose the name “Creative
Zone” on them. The failed Tianyi Creative Industrial Park is one such example.

Tianyi Creative Industrial Park was directly invested in by the local government
in Changxing, Zhejiang Province and planned to be an attractive site for college students
and other potential creative class members. The incentive policy was to waive the first
two years rental, and return half of the tax. However, two years later, no new enterprises
moved in, but a large number of them moved out, despite the incentive policy (Fig. 37).
The failure of the Tianyi Creative Industrial Park can be attributed to a government-led decision to build a new area (solid lines in Figure 38) and to put people into it to undertake different kinds of creative work (dots and circles in Figure 38). That program failed because the local government did not focus on the characteristics of creative industry itself but instead used the traditional investment production model. Moreover, from analysis based on the creative industry model, the “cluster force,” or, specifically, the personalities of Tianyi Creative Industry Park — is insufficient, since the aesthetics of the new buildings are not able to satisfy creative people, the finished project
is not able to capture dreams and imagination, and top-down designation of the area as a creative zone lacks openness and diversity. In this milieu, the vibrant life style cannot be created by fiat (Fig. 38).

(Fig. 38. Investment-Production Model)

In conclusion, the two cases described above show that, to develop a creative cluster, it is necessary to follow and include all the factors of the creative industry model and to plan a development process in keeping with the characteristics of creative industry. The government’s role in the planning process needs to be defined carefully, including support and regulation through legislation and policy, instead of direct intervention.

**Conceptual Model for Developing a Creative Industrial Zone in the Heping District**

Based on the model of creative industry and both of the real world cases described above, four social environment requirements based on urban “personalities” and three development phases have been embedded in a conceptual model for developing a Creative Industrial Zone in the Heping District (Fig. 39).

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Phase I: Examining and building up the four personalities

In phase I, examining and building up the four personalities is the process for attracting creative class. These are:

1) Diversity: The mixed land use of the Heping District provides alternative potentials for groups of people from different creative sectors as well as related industries, “which are lacking in mainstream urban places.” Government policies can also be made to introduce creative people from all ten of the creative sectors.

2) Openness: Local government’s role is to provide relaxed circumstances by making protective policies and regulations instead of imposing top-down administration.

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81 L. Kong, O'Connor, 2009, 213.
or interventions. In addition, it should seek to attract creative class members not only from the local area but also from overseas.

3) Aesthetics: The pre-concession buildings urban fabric are the hey selling point for the area, since they represent diverse styles from different time and places, forming a living museum of the pre-concession architecture embedded within the contemporary city.

4) Capturing Dream and Imagination: Marked by each historic moment since the mid-nineteenth century, the concession buildings represent the story of historical transformation in the city, and they provide opportunities for the creative class to explore hidden stories in their “social-spatial realities,” which look surreal and alien. Sometimes, the historic buildings in the Heping District create the illusion of time-space criss cross, a condition in which dreams and imagination tend to happen.

With all of the above personalities, the area will start to attract the creative class.

**Phase II: Development and growth**

In this phase, unlike the traditional approach to planning, no center is assigned. Creative class members from different sectors come, build, and develop their start-ups. Some sectors may succeed, so their influence grows bigger, tangibly or intangibly, and finally they create a center. Other sectors may not succeed, and people from those sectors may leave when they cannot afford the cost. Thus, the self-growth model takes hold.

In the growth process, resilience is needed to accommodate as more creative industry sectors thereby increasing the breadth and depth of the zone until the industries become mature.

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82 L. Kong, O'Connor, 2009, 213.
At the same time, rather than focusing on the observable and permanent, the projects within this area should emphasize the ephemeral for rapid urban changes.

**Phase III: Dynamic Balance**

In this phase, one or more creative sectors grow bigger and bigger, forming clusters by attracting related industries to the surrounding area. Then, one or more centers will emerge from the self-growth and be the dominant industry of the creative zone.

Also, various creative industry sectors are needed to ensure the breadth and depth of the creative industry zone.

Finally, the sectors will achieve a state wherein, although some sectors cannot survive, new enterprises will join in and finish the process of replacement, and the whole area will stop growing.

**Specified Model with Creative Sectors**

According to the creative industry model and the ten defined sectors, ten specified models illustrating different creative sectors are generated. Representing the industrialization sequence for each creative sector, the model can be used to guide the development process and spatial planning in the next phase.

Figure 40 shows the general industrialization sequence for all of the sectors. In the center, the ideas and creative works by the creative class serve as the super core, which is the essential part of the industry. Derived from that core, direct products are the secondary level of the creative industrialization sequence. Then, through marketing and business promotion, ideas and direct products are further commercialized for more
common uses as related products. In the specific model, other life services for consumption by participants are involved in the industrial development.

![Diagram](image)

(Fig. 40. General Industrialization Sequence for Creative Sectors)

Taking online games from the “Software, computer application and electronic publishing” sector as an example, the creative design of virtual games generates core ideas. Those virtual ideas can then be converted and produced with physical formats such as CDs and DVDs, which are direct products. To commercialize the products, marketing needs to become involved in the sequence. Through ground marketing and promotion, related products such as the theme toys or other peripherals will appear on the market. At the same time, service is involved in the process.
Different colors represent different creative sectors. The target-like symbols are abstracted from the specific industrialization sequence model.

(Fig. 41. Spatial Distribution)
**Spatial Distribution**

The spatial distribution of the different functional parts of the industrialization sequence is categorized into possibilities (Fig. 41).

All of the functional parts of the sequence can be put into one building if the building is large enough. Or they can be amorphous buildings clusters, with one or more as core buildings, the carriers of creative people and creative activities and works. Others in the cluster will be related retailers, services, marketers and so on.

In conclusion, creative industry, conceptual planning phases, and spatial distribution of creative functional parts are the theoretical concepts engaged for the specific site planning of the Heping District presented in Chapter 5.
CHAPTER 5
GROWING THE CREATIVE ZONE

From 1949 to now, four stages can be generally identified in China’s urban planning practice:

(1) Physical planning evolved from industrial site planning in the 1950s;
(2) Idled urban planning during the political turmoil (1960-1978);
(3) Recovery and establishment of the urban planning system (1978-1989);
(4) The new urban planning system since the 1989 City Planning Act in a transitional economy (1989-present).\(^{83}\)

During those four stages, “urban planners in China are overwhelmingly obsessed with spatial patterns and physical limitation.”\(^{84}\) Take conventional zoning as an example: to define a one-block parcel, a planner usually begins with density, use, FAR, setbacks, parking requirement, and maximum building heights.\(^{85}\) Yet, government policies are not integrated or involved in urban planning process.

Moreover, during the expansion of economic reforms, the deficiencies of the conventional system of urban planning in China have been exposed. “Inadequate

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\(^{84}\) Anthony Gar-on Yeh and Fulong Wu. 1999, 178.

development control has led to the diminishing effectiveness of urban planning," leaving chaotic mixed land use in the former concession area in the Heping District.

Layers of planning representing each historic stage appear on current maps of the Heping District, especially with mixed land use as the result of conflict between a lagging planning system and the rapidly changing socio-economic environment (see Chapter 2) in the fourth stage. However, the unorganized condition gives an opportunity to apply the new model of a creative core to planning, at the same time providing possibilities and inspiration for creative class.

Illustrated in Table 3, the dynamic growth process based on creative industry theory is designed to strengthen the integration of government policies and plans and to create resilience in the urban fabric when dealing with rapid socio-economic change. Also, it can be used as a new, alternative approach to conventional zoning system.

**Project Site Selection**

Since the formation of the Heping District designation in 1968, many historic buildings have been torn down. The overwhelming majority of historic buildings can be found in two areas. In Figure 42, the historic buildings in the zone marked with green-blue highlighting are not available because they are presently used as financial buildings and offices. With educational and mixed used buildings and most of the remaining historic buildings, the zone marked orange-yellow — known commonly as the Five Road area — has been selected as a proposed live-work zone for the creative class (Fig. 42).

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86 Anthony Gar-on Yeh and Fulong Wu. 1999, 178.
There are five phases to develop the creative industry area using historic buildings.
In each phase, three parts are focused: government policies and regulations, individual historic buildings as core buildings, and the Five Road area (Table.3).

(Fig. 42. Land Use in the Area of the Former-concessions)
Table 3. Five Phases to Develop the Creative Industry
Phase I. Preparation for Startups

In this phase, a list of the available historic buildings should be established as the carriers of creative cores.

**Historic Building List**

The Department of Historic Preservation of Tianjin has categorized the historic buildings in Heping District into three levels: General, Important, and Very Important (Fig.43). Among those, buildings under the Important and Very Important categories will first be proposed as potential live-work spaces for the creative class. These buildings are not allowed to be torn down and are restored in a certain time period, according to the preservation department’s regulations.

(Fig. 43. Categories of Historic Buildings)

Different creative sectors have their own spatial requirements. Criteria for the buildings include cost efficiency and long-term development of the creative sectors. Figure 44 illustrates a
rough assessment of the spatial requirements of the ten different creative sectors in terms of the largest single space of each historic building, the flexibility of interior space, and other specific requirements. The figure also shows that the best space for different sectors varies, which makes diversity of sectors possible in the core buildings. More than half of the sectors require flexible interior spaces. Other special requirements, such as skylight or sound isolation, may apply to sectors such as music and other performing arts, as well as visual arts.

(Fig. 44. Spatial Requirement of Creative Sectors)

According to the spatial requirements of the ten creative sectors, the available Important and Very Important historic buildings are categorized into different sizes. In this context, size means that of the largest single spaces within historic buildings in the Very Important and Important Categories. The available historic buildings are then classified to see how they fit the special requirements of the ten creative sectors. Four size categories are defined, which are larger than 600 m², between 300 m² and 600 m², between 100 m² and 300 m², and between 50 m² and
100 m². Not limited to the rough categories, some unconventional design work using these buildings may happen.

(Fig. 45. Sizes of Largest Single Space of Historic Buildings under Very Important & Important Categories)

**Governmental Support and Regulations:**

First, to better use the historic buildings as capital resources, a new department is established which combines historic preservation (providing consulting on policies related to historic buildings and records of the current situation of the available historic buildings) with economic development.

**NEW DEPARTMENT=**

**Historic Preservation Department + Creative Industry Development Department**
Moreover, to attract the creative class, incentive policies are established, which include: tax rebate, rental rebate, funds for startups, and events, such as competitions to win startup funding and architectural competitions to renovate the live-work spaces.

**Phase II: Sowing**

In this phase, after the preparation of both the historic buildings list and the incentive policies is completed, more work will focus on adjustment and regulation. For the creative class and historic buildings, adjusting and regulating the creative activities and historic buildings’ limitation for specific situations is needed.

(Fig. 46. Creative Clusters in the Five Road Area During Phase II)
With the conditions prepared in the first phase, creative people start to move into the listed historic buildings as core buildings to begin their startups. This process can be compared with the process of seeding, in which creative people are seeds, and the historic buildings are the medium.

**Phase III: Sprouting**

In this phase, for the creative class and historic buildings, additional adjusting and regulating of the creative activities and historic buildings’ limitation for specific situation is needed.

Startups from some of the sectors begin to develop, and related industries start to move next to the core buildings and become involved in their economic activities, which represents the sprouting process. However, other sectors may not be able to survive and will be replaced by other sub-groups of the creative class.

(Fig. 47. Creative Clusters in the Five Road Area During Phase III)
Phase IV: Growing

In the growing phase, the creative class and related industries develop as well. The dots in Figure 48 represent the creative cores of different sectors, and the circles represent the related industries. The expanding radii of the circles represent both economic and spatial growth along the creative industrialization sequence. One thing to notice is that the spatial growth is amorphous instead of in the form of circle.

In this phase, as more and more direct creative products come out, policies must protect the creative class’s intellectual property. At the same time, legislation and policies on intellectual property and on free market that fit the actual local context should be made during the popularizing and generalization of the creative achievement.

(Fig. 48. Creative Clusters in the Five Road Area During Phase IV)
Also, recording the transformation on site is a never finished project for the newly established department. The new department must document the historic buildings’ physical and historic conditions and make and provide consultation about policies related to historic buildings. With the spatial expansion of the creative sectors, historic buildings in “general” categories should start to become available and categorized for the creative cores or the related industries to meet the economic extension.

Tourism, in this phase, would become a “byproduct” of creative industry and contribute to the fiscal revenue as well.

(Fig. 49. Creative Clusters in the Heping District during Phase V)

**Phase V: Maturing**

In the maturing phase, one or two fields develop deeply and other sectors coexist, providing the breadth and depth of creative industry. In this sense, resilience can be achieved as
well as dynamic balance (see Chapter 4). As shown in Figure 49, the whole of the Five Road Area would become an economic engine and creative source encompassing all of the creative sectors within the Heping District, attracting more capital and growth.

In this phase, not only local members of the creative class but also national or even international members would come to pursue their dreams. Therefore, besides intellectual property, immigration-related issues would need to be put on the agenda.

To prepare long term development of the creative sectors, long term lease should be provided and rents should be established.

With sufficient funding, the new department would establish a fund for special proposals such as avant-garde arts.

The new department, in the last phase, would still map and record the physical conditions of the historic buildings and analyze cultural phenomena within the Heping District to determine how the latter affect economic growth.

**Conclusion**

Planning decisions made in different time periods have determined the urban morphology of the Heping District and people’s ways of living therein. Before 1860, feudal governance was expressed in a walled city condition (see Chapter 2), with architecture shaped to represent social hierarchy. From 1860 to 1949, diverse governments determined the separately developed urban fabrics in the concession area with foreign and modern architecture, symbolizing colonization. From 1949 to the present, political shift and reform policies have determined the rapid transformation of this area, with the demolition of former-concession buildings as symbol of
liberation, then symbol of capitalism, and now of potential. In this new approach to planning, historic buildings and urban form will be symbols not of stagnation but of innovation (Fig. 50).

(Fig. 50. Transformation of Planning Decisions and Historic Buildings)
The text in the image is presented as follows:

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**


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