

**Spaces in Transition: Making Room for Junctures in
Hong Kong**

by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis addresses the scarcity of civic spaces in Hong Kong by proposing impermanent interventions to meet city events' demands. There are two cyclical events that contribute to a unique city character, the democratic march held every July 1st and the informal settlement of migrant domestic workers. In one, thousands of locals and NGOs take to the street as expression of their civil rights. The other is migrant domestic workers, who are relieved of their duties every Sunday who sit and gather in the interstitial spaces. Both desire space to fully express their aspirations and maximize potential as social occasions. There is little space for them in the city fabric to gather without hindrance. There is a spatial-temporal aspect to these two events, one yearly, the other weekly. The yearly march is formally organized event by local activists and the other is an informal phenomena. Given the topology and compacted built environment of Hong Kong, this thesis propose interventions on the city core which address needs for public space within the intense urbanity.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Thesis Question

How can ephemerality be used as a positive characteristic to provide infrastructure that enhances the quality of civic junctures in Hong Kong?

Key words: Transitional (Spatial), Ephemeral (Temporal), Hybridization (Spatial-Temporal), Socio-political, public interstitial space.

Impermanence and Contrasting Ideas in Conversation

The architectural virtue of permanence, perceived or enforced, has shaped architecture, its tenets, and its historical development. This approach to architecture is limited in its scope. This led me to seek out the 'other' as much as possible in this thesis and to juxtapose permanence with the ephemeral, a temporality of program in spatial contexts.

This thesis begins with the unpacking of the writings on permanence of theorist and practitioner Aldo Rossi, implicit in my education with an eye to see value in differences. The East and West dichotomy of Hong Kong is a context that makes difference evident. Two sets of thoughts developed in different settings manifests in the former colony.

In his article on architectural education,

Leonidas Koutsoumpos, an architect and educator, discusses ‘praxis’ in Aristotelian terms. Koutsoumpos argues that ‘doing’ is the defining importance of architectural education.¹ It is not only poesis (again in Aristotelian terms), or the ‘poetics of making’ that embodies architectural education.² An increased understanding of different processes can enrich the experience of education and praxis. Through researching for thesis, it is my interest in contrasts that engaged me to combine contrasting ideas. This is put forth as my act of ‘doing’. The differences between permanent and ephemerality with ephemerality as the focus of this thesis. It is my curiosity in researching the ‘other’ that led to my act of ‘doing’.

Propelling Permanence as Impermanence

There are two notions of permanence: place and material. There is flux within both. Place, where people live, work and spend time, is always in transition in terms of function; it is hardly ever at complete rest so long as people inhabit it. Material is a representation of the past artifact, the history of its form, and its formation. The value of the building is in the use of its materials. The monumentality of buildings is achieved through place and material, and through the time based

1. Leonidas Koutsoumpos, “The flute and the house: Doing the Architecture of Making,” *The Politics of Making*. (New York: Routledge, 2007) 108-109. See also Bernard Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*. (Cambridge: The Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1994), 32-33.

2. *Ibid.*, 114.

properties of each. In *Architecture of the city*, Aldo Rossi discusses the theory of permanence. He asserts there is pathological permanence and propelling permanence. Pathological permanence is one that has the artifact as:

...something that is isolated and aberrant. In large measure the pathological form is identifiable because of a particular context, since context itself can be seen either as the persistence of a function over time or as something isolated from the urban evolution.³

Rossi cites Alhambra in Granada, the Doge Palace in Venice as examples of pathological permanence.⁴ Based on his description on pathological permanence, I look to the Ise Shrine in Japan, an Eastern traditional building sample of a pathological artifact. It serves a religious function, deeply embedded in the Eastern tradition of transition and ephemerality. It also serves a conservation technique through its complete renewal of materials.⁵ The building's monumentality is preserved in its essence, or the knowledge of the present moment, as it implies

3. Aldo Rossi, *Architecture of the City*. (Cambridge: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1982), 59-60.

4. Ibid.

5. Noriko Akagawa, "Rethinking the Global Heritage Discourse: Overcoming 'East' and 'West'?" *International Journal of Heritage Studies*. (New York: Routledge, 2015), 16.

The construction of the Ise Shrine is a 1,300-year-old tradition of rebuilding and constructing. The shrine is not only rooted in Japanese spirituality but also the passing of traditional craft and construction through out the generations.

that nothing is ever fixed in time.⁶ This binds it to pathological permanence, because the act of doing (reconstruction cycles) exists in isolation; it resists change, nothing can be added to it.

For Rossi, an example of propelling permanence is Padua's Palazzo della Ragione. The palazzo retains its original materiality, but the changes to its program make it to Rossi's definition of propelling permanence:

The form of the past has assumed a different function but intimately tied to the city: it has been modified and we can imagine future modifications.⁷

The palazzo assumes function depending on the present need, as it molds and mend itself to the changing needs of the city's occupants. I propose that propelling permanence is 'spatial-temporal', a hybrid of past, present, and future programs. I will argue that my thesis is 'propelling' as it is flexible to the user's interpretation of its use while also existing as an urban artifact.

Hong Kong: Colonial Past to Special Administrative Region Tensions

The underlying urban fabric of Hong Kong is a combination of indigenous and imposed cultures. Western systems of regulations and governance underlie the formal development of modern Hong Kong, creating a multicultural

6. Kenzo Tange and Noburo Kawazoe, *Ise: Prototype of Japanese Architecture*. (Cambridge: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1965), 202.

7. Rossi, *Architecture*, 59.

society we recognize today with Western and Eastern influences stemming from the majority Cantonese-speaking immigrants from China.⁸ In the post-war years, Hong Kong was exposed to the effects of globalization, and experienced increased wealth and a higher standard of living due to its expanding international links.⁹ Decreasing British hegemony and its position as the gateway to the People's Republic of China further expanded external ties.¹⁰ The pluralistic influences that shaped Hong Kong into an international hub for commerce, transportation and communication have enlarged the locals' world view. The championing of human rights and democratic movements internationally inspired the people of Hong Kong to seek the same. The 1997 hand-over was preceded by a decolonization transition period with the "One-country, two systems" which ensured Hong Kong a high degree of autonomy

8. Peter G. Rowe and Seng Kuan, *Architectural Encounters with Essence and Form in Modern China*. (Cambridge: The Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 2002), 46.

The core cultural values was brought to the former crown colony through immigration, making Hong Kong a globalized society.

9. Barrie Shelton, and Justyna Karakiewicz and Thomas Kvan, *The Making of Hong Kong: From Vertical to Volumetric*. (New York: Routledge, 2011), 4.

The population exploded due to the influx of Chinese civil war refugees, making Hong Kong one of the most densely populated places in the world with an average of 600 people per hectare, rivaled only by Mumbai and Dhaka.

10. Ming K. Chan, *The Challenges of Re-integrating Hong Kong with China*. (Hong Kong: University of Hong Kong press, 1997), 17.

from the PRC for 50 years after the hand-over.¹¹ This paper-autonomy appears to respect the present situation. However, with recent proposals and several incidents in the past few years, this system has received criticism from the locals with regards to the scope and continuation of their autonomy.¹²

Post-colonial Hong Kong began with a wariness of the Special Administrative Region's new post-colonial government to safeguard their interests. To ensure their rights are being protected as promised, they would exercise their rights to free speech through demonstrations. Every year on July 1st, the march for democratic rights and civic freedoms begins in Hong Kong Island's Victoria Park and ends in Tamar Park, the city's municipal government hall. These marches are relatively peaceful; no reported incidents or violence marred the sound continuity of collective efforts to organize the marches (see appendix A for timeline).¹³ All of these marches have the central theme of demanding universal suffrage or

11. Chan, *Challenges*, 1.

The only direct interference from Beijing on Hong Kong's affairs is in foreign policy and the military presence of the People's Liberation Army headquartered in the city.

12. Tom Phillips. "Hong Kong Protestors Marches over Abducted Booksellers." *The Guardian*. 1 July 2016. Accessed October 2, 2016, <<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jul/01/hong-kong-protesters-call-for-leader-to-stand-down>>

13. Harminder Singh. "Everything You Need to Know about Hong Kong's Return to Chinese Sovereignty." *South China Morning Post*. Accessed October 2, 2016, <<http://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/educationcommunity/article/1983718/everything-you-need-know-about-hong-kongs-return>>

the right to choose the chief executive (a mayoral position) through popular vote rather than by appointment from a select group of councilors. Non-profits, unions, labour groups and other organizations for civil rights, annually join the democracy rally to have their voices heard. With the rising income gap, decreasing affordability of homes, struggles to meet the demand for public housing, labour disputes and rising poverty levels, the unease of the status quo among the populace will lead to unrest.¹⁴ Tension in the populace has resulted in their increasing support for the July First demonstrations, with tens of thousands participating in the march each year.¹⁵

Need for Civic Spaces

In Civic Realism, renowned architectural educator, urban theorist, and writer Peter G. Rowe claims that the success of urban architecture in the public realm needs to balance co-operation between the authoritarian (state) and marginalized populations.¹⁶ Weiping Zhang, a Hong Kong based

14. Gary Cheung, "Is Hong Kong's July 1 rally in danger of going backwards?" *South China Morning Post*. Accessed October 2, 2016, <<http://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/politics/article/1983721/hong-kongs-july-1-rally-danger-going-backwards>>

15. Elaine Yu and James Griffin. "Hong Kong streets packed with protestors for July 1 march." *CNN World Website*. Accessed October 2, 2016, <<http://www.cnn.com/2016/06/30/asia/hong-kong-july-1-democracy-china/>>

This became apparent in recent years with the Umbrella Movement of 2014 and the increase of labour demonstrations since 2008.

16. Peter Rowe. *Civic Realism*. (Cambridge: The Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1997), 34-35.

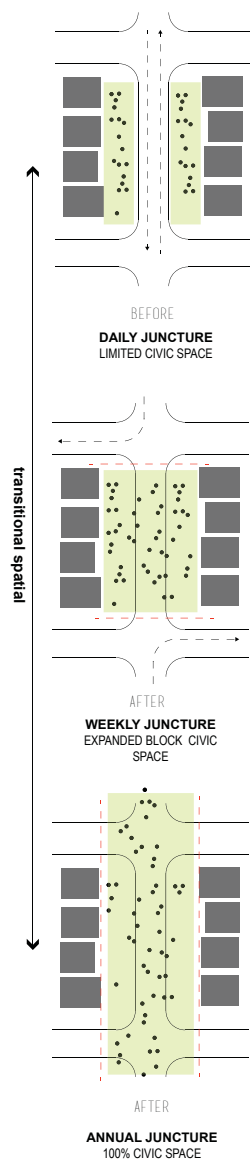


fig. 1.0. An interpretive diagram of increasing civic spaces to accommodate junctures. Base map from Weiping Zhang.

architect and writer, described Hong Kong's urban fabric as being highly commercialized and highly dense, creating little room for public space.¹⁷ A civic space may be the only outlet in which a direct demonstration of civil ideals is possible. This can be observed in the weekly Sunday City Forum held by Radio Television Hong Kong. These forums are not held in an enclosed network studio, but on the open grounds of Victoria Park where visitors can spectate freely (see appendix B). The democracy rally held on July 1st are a direct consequence of using every civic space possible to demonstrate the public's desire to be heard by authority. A civic space is a place for everyone, and yet no one in particular.¹⁸

Hong Kong's Invisibles: The Migrant Domestic Worker

The usage of civic spaces is based on time. The cyclical nature in which events transpire seemingly follows a set of unspoken rules. Every weekend without fail, hundreds of thousands of Migrant Domestic Workers flock to whatever public space available to enjoy their day off. In the unspoken language of the city, this became an informal time-based event. Each Sunday, the interstitial spaces Hong Kong are full of socializing workers, mainly from the Philippines and Indonesia. The overwhelming majority of these foreign workers are women, working and living with

17. Weiping Zhang, *Invisible logic: Hong Kong as Asian Culture of Congestion*. (Nanjing: Southeast University, 2009), 6.

18. Rowe, *Civic Realism*, 7.

a Hong Kong family, taking care of their domestic needs (cooking, cleaning, childcare, caring for the elderly).¹⁹ Their position is particularly vulnerable, since they are legally required to live with their employers and labour exploitation. The live-in policy has blurred the hours between ‘work’ and ‘rest,’ making the MDW on-call with open-end work hours. Many suffer debt bondage towards their hiring agencies, creating vulnerable situations where they cannot leave their employer in fear of being unable to pay their agency the loan they accrued while entering Hong Kong.²⁰ Laws protecting their rights are more progressive and minimum wage is higher than other neighboring countries.²¹ On paper, Hong Kong appears ideal but labour rights abuses and claustrophobic conditions of make life in this city harsh. Sundays are the only time of the week when foreign domestic workers are mandated to take the day off. The pedestrian walkways, park spaces, freeway underpasses, or any space with minimal overhead shelter are occupied with makeshift picnic blankets, cardboard shelters

19. Mike Douglass and Lili Huang. “Foreign Workers and Spaces for Community Life”, *The Politics of Civic Space in Asia: Building Modern Communities*. (New York: Routledge, 2009), 52.

Their home governments signed reciprocal treaties with Hong Kong. By bringing income to their beleaguered economies, and they are encouraged to follow the practice. In most cases, half their income is sent back home.

20. “Coming Clean: The prevalence of forced labour and human trafficking for the purpose of forced labour amongst migrant domestic workers in Hong Kong.” *Justice Centre Hong Kong*. Accessed October 15, 2016, <<http://www.justicecentre.org.hk/comingclean/>>

21. *Justice Centre*, 22.

and impromptu dance sessions. Hong Kong is a curious display of Edward Relph's definition of the 'identity of places'; deep knowledge of interactions through assimilation (old and new knowledge) and accommodation creates identity. Relph writes:

But while every individual may assign self-consciously or unselfconsciously an identity to particular places, these identities are nevertheless combined intersubjectively to form a common identity. Perhaps this occurs because we experience more or less the same objects and activities we have been taught to look for certain qualities of place emphasized by our cultural groups.²²

To give their space an identity, there are signifiers through behaviour and material markers. The MGWs mark their place through tarp blankets and group membership (kinship through a shared heritage).

During the mid-1970s, a law was passed allowing the hiring of foreign workers, resulting in an influx of workers mainly from the Philippines. The workers shaped the identity of civic spaces in Central on Hong Kong Island as their own in the subsequent decades. Indonesians, the second largest group of foreign workers behind Filipinos (see appendix C), have placed their stamp on the city fabric and are mostly known to sit in Victoria Park and Kowloon Park on the Kowloon side of Hong Kong (see appendix D for timeline of MDW population in Hong Kong). To prevent abuse and the reporting of incidents, migrant worker associations such as the Federation of Asian Domestic Worker

22. Edward Relph, *Place and Placelessness*. (London: Pion Limited, 1976), 45.

Unions cater to these women.²³ It was bemusing to observe these women attempting to stay out of other pedestrians' paths, and yet inadvertently shaping the flow of traffic around them. They are on the periphery of society, a marginalized group, yet an indispensable part of Hong Kong's labour network. They have no representation in the society they serve and architectural interventions can juxtapose a place of identity they can claim visibly. For the demonstrators, their identity can be cemented through the infrastructure they can adapt to the protests. Opportunities to broadcast their cause through telecommunications can be enhanced with the proposed interventions.

The congested and high density culture of Hong Kong's urban fabric challenges me to think about the flexibility of spatial resources to cater to the site's function and program. The temporality of the programs in the shared and ambiguous public space requires non-traditional definitions of architectural program. I propose transitional spaces to be utilized not only for circulation (civic space, streets, pedestrian walkways) but occupied space for ephemeral events. The need for identity, to be able to identify a space as their own can be achieved for the migrant domestic workers and the locals desiring democratic rights.

23. *Justice Centre*, 22.

The extension of reciprocal treaties between neighbouring countries brought workers from India, Thailand, Nepal, and Indonesia to Hong Kong (see appendix C).

CHAPTER 2: HISTORY

Urban History and Culture of Hong Kong.

Notions on the Ephemeral in Eastern Traditions

Ephemerality is a deeply rooted concept found in Eastern traditions and an attitude towards nature. Time-based transformation as a virtue parallel to Aldo Rossi's propelling permanence theory. The durability of architecture is the ability to adapt to changes whether it is in material or program.²⁴ Kenzo Tange, a modernist architect wrote China's tradition of wood buildings creates the sensitivity to the inevitable failure of material over time, a cultural attitude similar to his native Japan.²⁵ In some cases, tectonic fixation of architecture is challenged with dwelling forms that reflect their inhabitant's mobile lifestyle. Dai Haifeng's Egg House mobile is a prototype house designed for small building accommodation in response to the issue of 'ownership' of land as a far-reaching reality of most urban Chinese.²⁶ The combination of practical response to material decay, lack of adequate urban space, and tradition, the concept of ephemerality is fitting towards Eastern attitudes to architecture.

24. Rossi, *Architecture*, 59.

25. Kenzo Tange and Noburo Kawazoe, *Ise*, 18.

26. Mark Taylor, "Time Matters: Transition and Transformation in Architecture." *Architectural Design*, 86 (2016), 46.

Collision of East-West Dichotomy in the Urban and Cultural Fabric of Hong Kong

The Crown government imposed a consistent operation of governance in the colony. The stability in steady governance and policy worked for the consistent development of Hong Kong's intense urban form. Hong Kong is bewildering in the extremity of its urban environment, comparisons to New York City have been made. Rem Koolhaas' description of a congested culture in *Delirious New York*, a manifesto for Manhattan, shaped the North American sense of metropolitan development.²⁷ With Hong Kong's regime, their adherence of eastern tradition and economic development demands a different approach to the concept of congestion. Weiping Zhang, writes that a defining characteristic of Hong Kong is 'hyper density'. Hong Kong's trend of densification does not show signs of decreasing.²⁸ In a manner befitting the values of Critical Regionalism, the East Asian approach to building is not fixed to a location, but rather time-based transformations.²⁹ This causes the continual transitions and transformations some traditional building forms experience in East Asia, nothing is fixed in place.³⁰ Architecture in

27. Rem Koolhaas, *Delirious New York: A Retroactive Manifesto for Manhattan*. (Italy: Monacelli Press Inc., 1994), 89.

28. Zhang, *Invisible*, 6.

29. Taylor, *Time Matters*, 42.

30. Joseph Needham, *Science and Civilization in China*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 45.

The acceptance of transience and ephemeral events are rooted in Chinese cosmology, where 'man' and world (the cosmos) are mutually interdependent to create harmonious nature is a cause and effect.

Hong Kong has always been driven by the need for accommodation. They need to accommodate commercial use to sustain its role a major finance and trade centre and housing the 7 million habitants on only 17% of built up land.³¹ Hong Kong is defined as a 'micro-Japan;' the mountainous region of Guangdong province creates more land from the sea through artificial reclamation projects (see appendix E).³²

Urban Development of Hong Kong from Colonial Period to Post-handover

Given its unique development, Hong Kong has experienced change that defies static categorization. Change is a process parallel to growth, and Hong Kong's growth is complementary to the meteoric rise of China's economy on the global stage.³³ The drive of economic growth places pressure on Hong Kong's ability to perform as an international finance centre and transportation hub, thus straining resources for its citizens. The urban development creates tension in its transition from crown colony to a special administrative region and contrasted with the nostalgic image Hong Kong citizens have for its past.³⁴ Kevin Lynch wrote about image in his book *What time is this place?*

I shall argue that a desirable image is one

31. Shelton et al, *Making of Hong Kong*, 4-5.

32. Peter Cookson-Smith, *Urban Design Impermanence: Streets, Places and Spaces in Hong Kong*. (Hong Kong: MCCM Creations, 2006), 193.

33. Rowe and Kuan, *Encounters*, 162-163.

34. Chan, *Challenges*, 1.

that celebrates and enlarges the present while making connections with past and future. The image must be flexible, consonant with external reality and above all in tune with our own biological nature.³⁵

The image of Hong Kong in the minds of its citizens is one that is being taken away from them, hence the fervent need to express their displeasure. It culminates to the balancing act of which the locals demonstrate their discontent, politicians trying to maintain relations with Beijing and the local populace.³⁶

35. Kevin Lynch, *What Time is this Place?* (Cambridge: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1972), 30.

36. *Justice Centre*, 26.

At the bottom of it all, the domestic workers bear the brunt of the discontent of their Hong Kong employers. One migrant worker explained that despite knowing what working in Hong Kong is like, she had a steady acceptance, "That all depends on the employer."

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Comments on Design Methodology and Site

Grounds of Civic Spaces and the Ambiguity of Public Space in Hong Kong

Hong Kong's highly congested culture is largely driven by a combination of two factors: the impracticality of building on mostly mountainous islands and a large influx of Chinese immigrants during the post-war years. It has capitalist free market with the socialist (without ideology) governance/ownership by the British. The colony gained great capital from selling and leasing land for development. A total of 67 square kilometres has been reclaimed from the sea, making up 6% of the total land area of Hong Kong. However, this reclaimed land makes up about a third of Kowloon peninsula (see appendix E). The developed land consists about 17% of Hong Kong's total landmass (excluding the airport), with 35% reclaimed from the sea. Urbanist and architect, Peter Rowe describes Hong Kong as,

Begins to define a difference in the kind of living environment, rather than a simply difference in degree.³⁷

With a density of 28,405 people per square kilometre, it is incredibly hard to absolve the ground from use.³⁸ In comparison to other major cities

37. Peter Rowe, *East Asia Modern: Shaping the Contemporary City*. (London: Reaktion Books, 2005), 158.

38. *Ibid.*, 27.

such as New York, increased accessibility to the sea and mountains is a crucial break from fatigue arising from hyper-density. Because of its relation to the sea and mountains, Hong Kong's space is ultimately three-dimensional. The civic space is no different. Both Victoria Park and Tamar Park stands on reclaimed land. The reclaimed land is the result of a high demand for private development, it is difficult at times to distinguish public and private space simply because of the absence of explicitly public areas and highly commercial traffic through all tiers of space (see figure 2.0. for map of public roads versus civic spaces versus sky walks) .³⁹ The city is 'compacted' and thus we need to understand that its functionality can only be achieved with knowledge of place and time-based intimacy with its form.

Informal Urban Architecture

The quick pace of life in Hong Kong is influenced by ambiguous transitions between the various ways space is used in the urban fabric. The few civic spaces in Hong Kong rarely see any 'down-time' in terms of time-based events. The sub-tropic climate also causes a nearly year-round use of civic spaces, ranging from hawkers peddling wares, exercise groups running or practicing qi gong and tai chi in the park. All these groups seek fulfillment of similar needs, such as temporary shelter, space for assembly, and accessibility to light, air, and civic

39. Adam Frampton et al, *Cities Without Ground: A Hong Kong Guidebook*. (China: ORO Editions, 2012), 6.

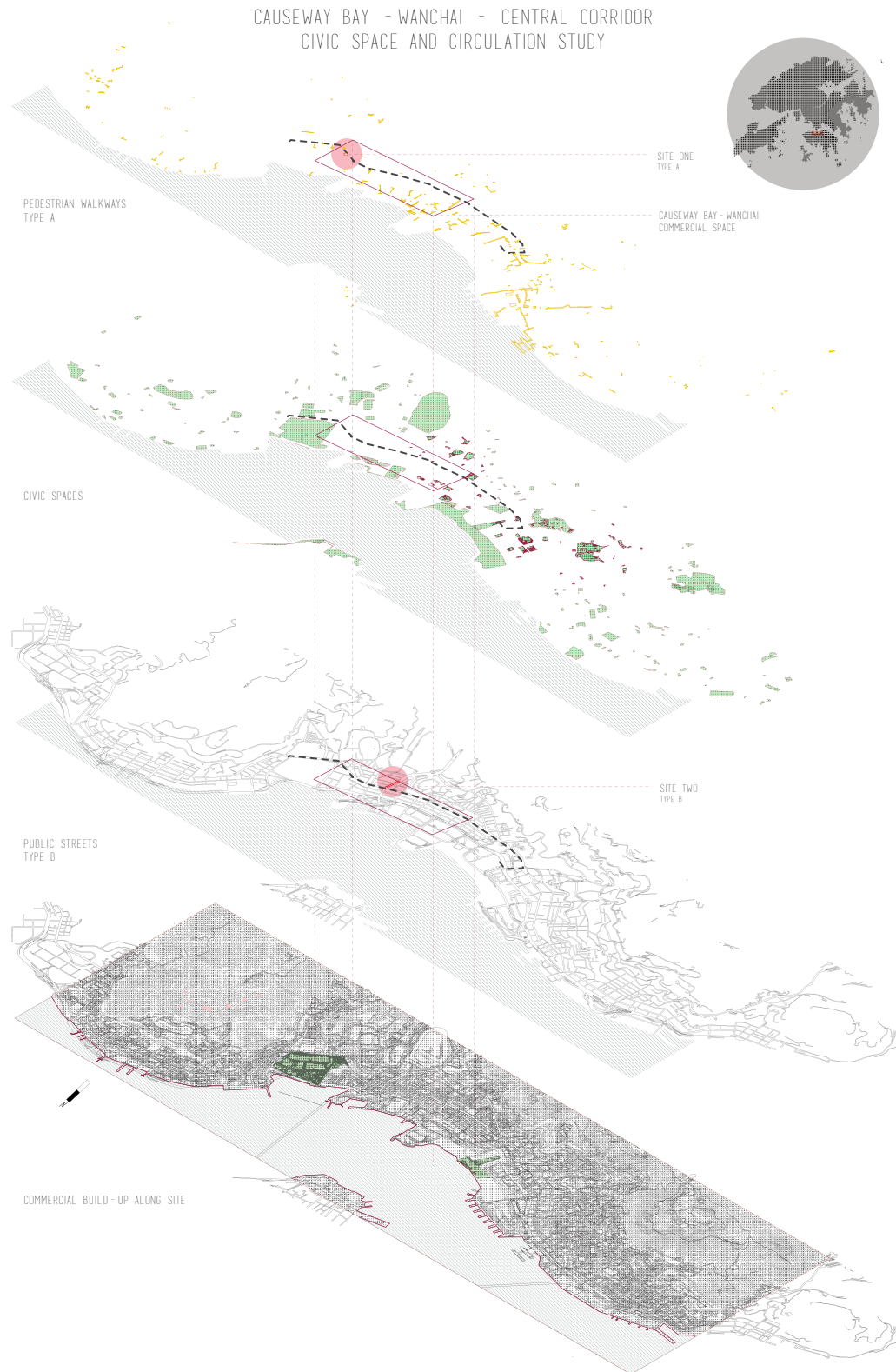
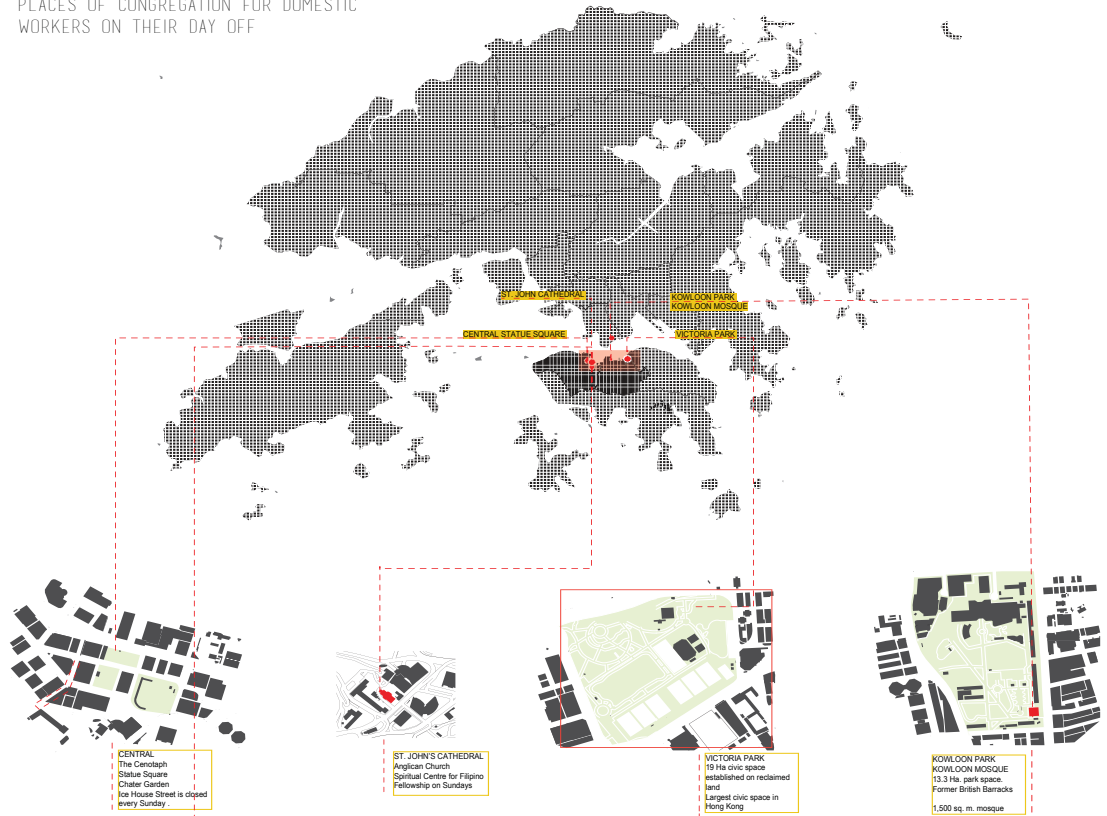


fig. 2.0. North shore of Hong Kong island. There are noticeable absence of pedestrian walkways where there are civic spaces and vice-versa. Base map data from the Survey and Mapping Office of HKSAR.

PLACES OF CONGREGATION FOR DOMESTIC WORKERS ON THEIR DAY OFF



ROUTE OF THE ANNUAL JULY 1ST MARCH
AKA 7-1 ON HONG KONG ISLAND



fig. 3.0. The common formal civic spaces available in Hong Kong for the MDWs to find rest and repose in conjuncture of the annual July 1st demonstration's route. Base maps from Survey and Mapping Office HKSAR.



fig. 4.0. The top image shows the occupation of Hennessy Road with tarp and cardboard during the Umbrella Protests of 2014. Below are the MDW's cardboard shelters set up during Sundays underneath HSBC plaza by Sir Norman Foster. The items are outlined in white. Photos by Echo Xiang through email.

infrastructure. The lack of facilities to comfortably accommodate a wide range of use made the locals dependent on informal organization or understanding of what and when will make use of the shared space. It is an unspoken rule that the foreign domestic workers will find hundreds of their countrymen occupying certain areas in the city for their leisure (see previous page for figure 3.0.). In terms of Eastern society's 'harmonious' relational rules, the people of Hong Kong understand each transformed (ephemeral event) moment is unique to their city infrastructure and will not challenge it. Similarly, political activists will stand on their fold-out platforms on civic grounds to ensure their voices are heard among the throngs of people walking in the streets. This informality does leave the use of a space an open-ended question.

In comparison to other cities, Hong Kong's major mode of transportation is walking. This is one of the positive effects of hyper-density living.⁴⁰ It is a common sight to see locals and the foreign workers sit in the shade of their temporary, crude cardboard shelters (see figure 4.0. and appendix F). It has a transformative (in a spatial sense) effect on the civic spaces in Hong Kong. Aldo Rossi's propelling permanence descriptor for urban artefacts that changes with the city's development, applies to Hong Kong's public spaces. They exist to reflect the past, partially experienced now.⁴¹ Some of its colonial uses are dismantled over night but

40. Peter Rowe, *East Asia*, 27.

41. Rossi, *Architecture of the City*, 57.

kept as symbols of the past (see next chapter on Victoria Park). It is this crudeness that convinced me that space has to be transformative (transitions to different programs) according to the informal and formal events of the city.

Typologies of Public Spaces Along Hennessy Road

With little chance for citizenship and limited space, the migrant workers create their own sanctuaries in civic spaces in Hong Kong. These spaces for the purpose of the thesis, are identified by their characteristics. The first type identified as *Typology 0* are formal public parks. The largest civic space in Hong Kong is Victoria Park at 19 hectares.⁴² Incidentally, it operates as ground zero for many demonstrations and acts as a gathering space due to its proximity to city headquarters and institutions on Hong Kong Island (see appendix G for march route and appendix H for photographs of the march in July 2016).⁴³ Tamar Park, identified as *Typology 0* at the city headquarters is the ending point of the demonstrations. The spaces can accommodate thousands of people at once, a rarity in Hong Kong. It is also the meeting place of domestic workers on their day off, where they can often be seen lining the park with their blankets and picnic wares.⁴⁴ The typologies that this thesis

42. "Victoria Park", *Leisure Cultural Service Department website*. Accessed October 29, 2016. < <http://www.lcsd.gov.hk/en/parks/vp/>>

43. Singh, "Everything you need," *South China Morning Post*.

44. *Justice Centre*, 21.

will focus on are the interstitial spaces found along the street between the two parks. There are pocket spaces along streets such as Hennessy Road stretching from Victoria Park and Tamar park. These pocket spaces are as follows:

Typology I: Covered pedestrian walk ways crisscrossing the main roads.

Typology II: Areas underneath motorized traffic overpasses connecting south and north end of Hong Kong Island.

The typologies are outlined in figure 5.0 on the following page.

The civic space is an equalizer, a tenement of democratic ideals where all individuals have the same footing in civil society. The lack of space for gathering forced those to deviate and open left-over spaces on the pedestrian walkways and underneath the overpasses as pseudo- civic spaces. What we normally see in a public park occurs on the interstitial spaces, MDWs lounging, picnicking and even sleeping on tarp (see appendix F). The pedestrian walkway is identified as *Typology 1* will be a focus site as a prototype of the thesis' intervention (see figure 5.0. and 6.0.). The motorized traffic overpass marked in orange in figure 5.0, is a typical condition of a piece of existing infrastructure with potential to host an intervention. Both of these sites are observed with activity from both the MDWs and demonstrators (see appendix F). Representative figures of the

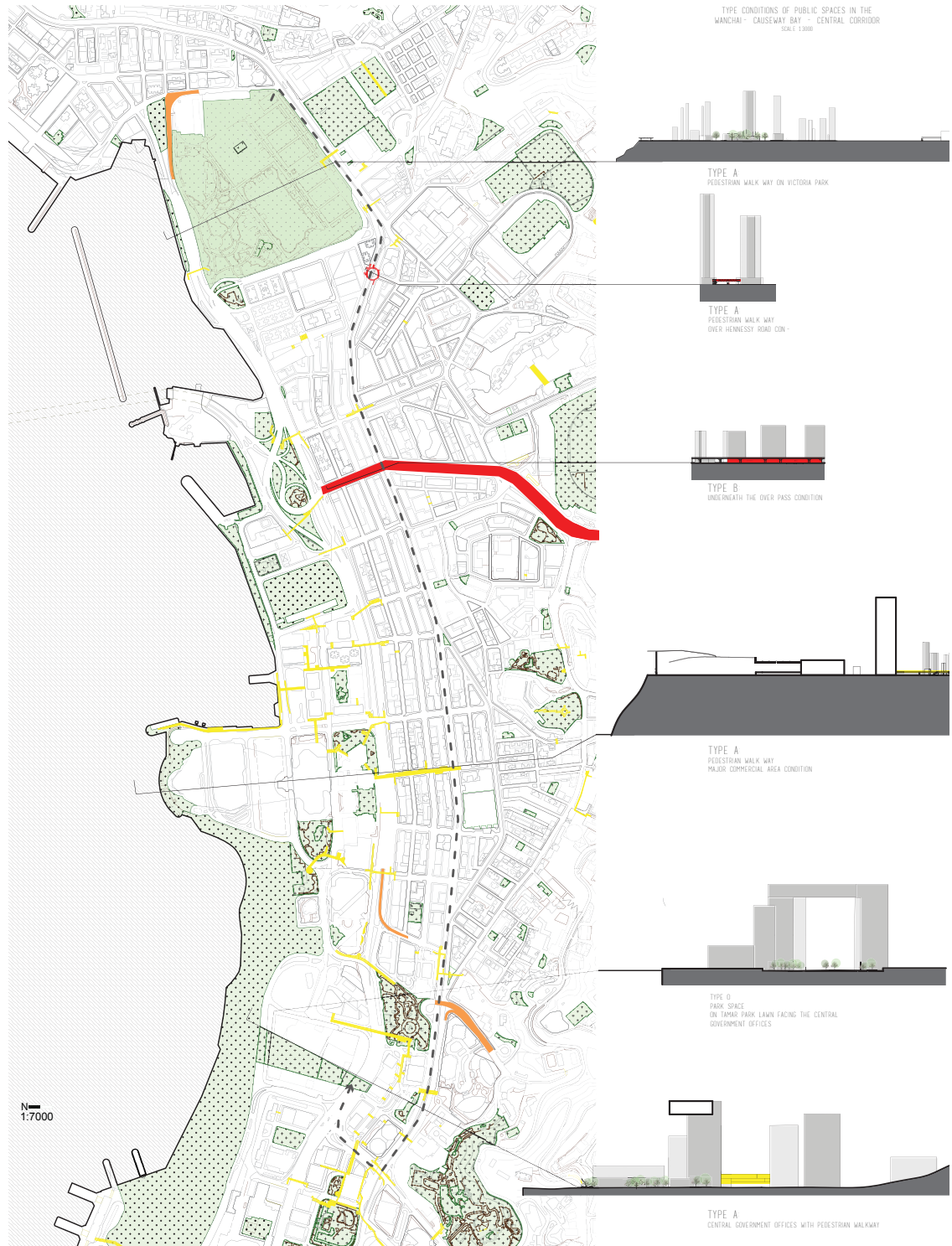


fig. 5.0. The sections of the site along Hennessy road between Victoria Park and Tamar Park. The yellow marks existing pedestrian walk ways. The orange shows existing overpasses and the red is a site of investigation. Base map data from the Survey and Mapping Office of HKSAR. Original Scale- Map at 1:7000, Sections at 1:3000



fig. 6.0. A site triptych of Victoria park and half of Causeway Bay neighbourhood showing the sites of intervention in red. This served as an exercise to understand the scale of the neighbourhood. Base map data from the Survey and Mapping Office of HKSAR. Original model scale 1:2000.

three groups will be referenced throughout this thesis. They serve as caricatures of actual people and their roles and beliefs.

These urban artefacts dotting the Hennessy Road corridor are compelling evidence of Aldo Rossi's propelling permanence. For example, Victoria Park is a free civic space with transitional program uses. It is a colonial symbol that has been repurposed for the wider population. The pedestrian walkways built for circulation transitions to civic spaces. The corridor is a high mix-use of commercial, institutional and residential space. This thesis' proposal is for the corridor's urban artefacts to host time-based transformations and interventions to maximize its potential in creating viable public space. These artefacts will be based on flexibility in use.

Hong Kong Stories: Structure of Politics, Dissenting Voices and Domestic Help.

Political Dissent and Demonstration in Hong Kong

The locals

The implementation of democratic processes in Hong Kong is a divisive issue, and its supporting members have no clear, general characteristics. However, full supporters of the democratic cause are often portrayed as members of the younger generation. This can be seen in the Umbrella Revolution of 2014 spearheaded by

students and the local ‘Occupy’ movement.⁴⁵ The Hong Kong Alliance for Democratic Movements in China is the organizing body that arranges the July 1st Marches every year.⁴⁶

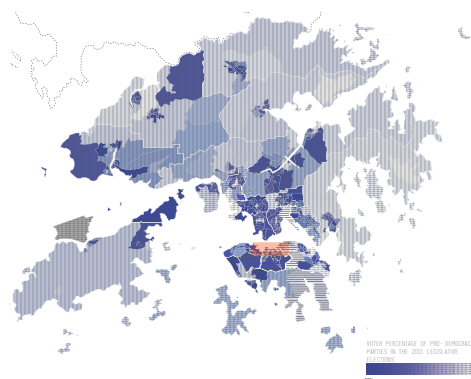


fig. 7.0. The Legislative Council elections of 2011, shows the percentage of votes in dark blue going to pro-democratic parties. Data from Census and Statistics Department of Hong Kong. Base map from the Survey and Mapping Office of HKSAR.

The opposing members such as the Pro-Beijing factions in government seek to uphold the ‘one-country, two-systems’ governance of Hong Kong, where Chinese sovereignty in Hong Kong is irrefutable. The traditional Confucian world view held by many members of the older generations see civil disobedience as an offense to the harmonious laws between ‘man’ and the ‘higher mandate’ (governing body) by encouraging others to incite violence.⁴⁷ They see pro-independence and democratic movements as dangerous populist notions that divide Hong Kong into nationalist lines.⁴⁸

45. Kris Cheng, “HKFP Explainer: Hong Kong’s 2015 District Council Elections.” *Hong Kong Free Press*. Accessed September 29, 2016, <<https://www.hongkongfp.com/2015/10/27/explainer-district-council-election/>>

These movements marked the debut of key figures such as then 17-year-old Joshua Wong, now a figurehead of the newly formed Demosisto political party.

46. Cheung, “Going backwards”, *South China Morning Post*.

The movement is fractious, with numerous counter agendas and no organized leadership. While universal suffrage remains the common goal, opposing views are held on whether Hong Kong can become an independent state.

47. David L. Hall and Roger T. Ames, *Thinking Through Confucius*. (New York: State University of New York Press, 1987), 182.

48. Christine Loh, *Underground Front: The Chinese Communist Party in Hong Kong*. (Hong Kong: University of Hong Kong Press, 2010), 201.

Migrant Domestic Workers in Hong Kong

The Foreign Migrant Workers

The majority of Indonesian and Filipino migrant workers are women. Many workers from the Philippines have tertiary education from home, but as domestic workers they have better pay opportunities in Hong Kong. These women often leave home because their families require income, but equal pay and employment opportunities are scarce in their home country. The duration of their stay in Hong Kong is dependent on their employment contract with their respective families.⁴⁹ Law requires migrant workers to live with their employers, and receive a minimum of HKD \$4210 per month.⁵⁰

The Federation of Asian Domestic Migrant Union is an international non-government and non-profit organization that seeks to protect worker's rights and organizes unions with their respective country of origin. They are based around the world with one office located in Hong

49. *Justice Centre*, 21.

If their contract ends or they are terminated, they are required to return home within two weeks or find a new contract. According to lawmakers, this rule prevents illegal migration, sex trafficking and 'job-hopping' that undermine the locals' ability to find menial work.

50. *Ibid.*, 22.

In contrast, migrant workers in Singapore receive a minimum of HKD \$3,055 per month, making Hong Kong seem more attractive to potential employees.

Kong's Kowloon peninsula.⁵¹ Labour unions often join the July 1st marches in support of labour rights and activism.⁵²

Hong Kong Stories: Characters

To delve into a narrative of daily life in Hong Kong, the following parallel lives and their descriptions were made based on research and experiences coming to contact with these groups whilst living in Hong Kong. These five characters act as representatives of the following groups: activists, localists and migrant workers. This imagined setting would serve as a background for cross programming to take place in the scenarios laid out within the context of the design method.

First Character: Jonathan Y.

A young, idealistic politician seeking democratic rights for people in Hong Kong. He and his like minded-friends created a political party supporting universal suffrage. Jonathan is a 'localist'.

Second Character: Arianna.

A woman from Indonesia hired to work for Jonathan. His grandmother hired her to take care of his family's needs. She decided to work abroad to raise enough money to put her teenage son through school. Arianna would earn more as a domestic servant than as a teacher in Indonesia.

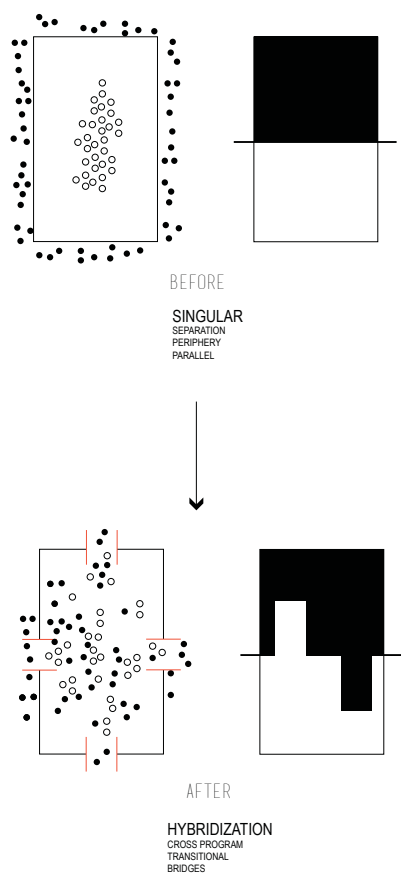


fig. 8.0. An interpretive diagram of the interaction between the interest groups.

51. "About Us", *Federation of Asian Migrant Workers Unions*. Accessed October 30, 2016, <<http://www.fadwu.org/taxonomy/term/33>>

52. Cheung, "Going backwards", *South China Morning Post*.

Third Character: Cecilia.

A chairwoman of the Federation of Asian Domestic Workers Union, Hong Kong chapter. She helps foreign domestic workers by filing cases on abuse suffered at hands of their employers. She hopes that the government in Hong Kong will continuously protect these men and women that come to support the working population of Hong Kong.

Fourth Character: Brother Siu.

An everyman tired of Hong Kong's political sphere. He is upset at the slowness to implement universal suffrage for Hong Kong. He has joined every July 1st march since 2003.

Fifth Character: Uncle Pak

A 75-year-old 'Victoria Park Uncle'⁵³ who has had enough with the younger generations making a fuss over democracy. He believes Hong Kong is a Chinese city and should remain with the Mainland, giving no regard to who is power in Beijing. His views are shaped by his early years, when he lived in poverty and political unrest. China's civil war 58 years ago forced his family to become refugees in Hong Kong.

The vision of these five individuals will collide in Causeway Bay, where Victoria Park sits. Program that can take place are to be looked further in the results. The locals' democratic ideals

53. "Courts cast doubt on 'Victoria Park Uncle' photo", *Radio Television Hong Kong*. Accessed October 2, 2016. <<http://news.rthk.hk/rthk/en/component/k2/1248384-20160314.htm>>

are met with opposition from their own people. They believe all men are equal, but overlook the ones who have become 'props' of their cityscape, the domestic workers. See figure 9.0. for in depth profiles and visualization.

NARRATIVES - CHARACTERS

DEMONSTRATORS

JONATHAN

BROTHER SIU

UNCLE PAK

MIGRANT DOMESTIC WORKERS

ARIANNA

NON - GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATION WORKERS

CECILIA



STATISTICS | JONATHAN IS A YOUNG UP AND COMING POLITICIAN HE BELIEVES HIS PARTY HAVING WON A SEAT OUT OF THE 70 SITTING DISTRICT COUNCIL MEMBERS CAN PUSH FOR A REFERENDUM ONCE THE 2047 DATE PASSES IN THE FUTURE IT IS WHEN IN WHICH HONG KONG HAS ITS AUTONOMY AND BASIC LAW AGREEMENT BETWEEN CHINA AND THE UK EXPIRE

NATIONALITY: | HONG KONG CITIZEN

23 YEAR OLD

POLITICIAN

DISTRICT COUNCIL MEMBER

HE APPEARS ON RADIO TELEVISION HONG KONG'S CITY FORUMS HELD EVERY SUNDAY TO PROMOTE HIS PARTY'S CAUSE

HE CAMPAIGNED WITH HIS STUDENT LED PARTY DURING UNIVERSITY ON JULY 1ST MARCHES

STATISTICS | BROTHER SIU IS HIS NICK - NAME FROM HIS OLD WORK PLACE AT AECOM ENGINEERS HE HAD BEEN WATCHING HONG KONG'S TURMOIL FOR YEARS AND IS CONCERN FOR THE FUTURE OF HIS GRANDCHILDREN

NATIONALITY: | HONG KONG CITIZEN

65 YEAR OLD

RETIRED ENGINEER

FATHER OF TWO GROWN CHILDREN

EVER SINCE THE SAR GOVERNMENT INTRODUCED ARTICLE 23 A LAW THAT MAY UNDERMINE FREEDOM OF SPEECH RIGHTS IN HONG KONG HE JOINED THE JULY 1ST MARCHES EVER SINCE HIS SON IS A LAWYER IN HONG KONG AND TRACKS RTHK CITY FORUMS EVERY SUNDAY

STATISTICS | UNCLE PAK'S HISTORY IS MARRIED WITH HARDSHIPS THAT FOLLOWED AS A YOUNG BOY HIS FAMILY LIVED IN FOSHAN GUANGDONG AND IN 1949 THE YEAR IN WHICH THE COMMUNIST FORCES DROVE THE NATIONALIST OUT OF CHINA AND ESTABLISHED THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC HIS FAMILY BECAME REFUGEES IN BRITISH - HELD HONG KONG

NATIONALITY: | HONG KONG CITIZEN

75 YEAR OLD

RETIRED CONTRACTOR

NICK-NAME | VICTORIA PARK UNCLE

HE DOES NOT UNDERSTAND WHY HONG KONG SHOULD SEEK DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT WHEN THE BRITISH COLONIAL GOVERNMENT NEVER GRANTED THE COLONY REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY

HE IS TIRED OF THE TURMOIL HE SEES IN HIS CITY AND BELIEVES THE CURRENT BATCH OF POLITICIANS ARE TROUBLEMAKERS

STATISTICS | ARIANNA IS AN INDONESIAN NATIONAL FROM JAKARTA SHE HOLDS A POST - SECONDARY DEGREE IN EDUCATION BUT DUE TO THE DIFFICULTY IN OBTAINING A JOB BACK IN HER HOME COUNTRY SHE HEARD FROM WORD OF MOUTH TO SEEK AN EMPLOYMENT AGENCY THAT WILL BE ABLE TO SECURE HER WORK AS A DOMESTIC WORKER IN HONG KONG

NATIONALITY: | INDONESIAN CITIZEN

35 YEAR OLD

MIGRANT DOMESTIC WORKER

EMPLOYER: JONATHAN

MOTHER OF A TEENAGE BOY

SHE WOULD BE EARNING FIVE TIMES THE WAGE PER MONTH THAN AS AN EDUCATOR SHE STARTED WORKING FOR JONATHAN BUT DID NOT DISCLOSED TO HIM HER DEBT TO THE EMPLOYMENT AGENCY FOR HKD 20000

SHE HAS A 13 YEAR OLD SON BACK HOME THAT SHE SENDS MONEY BACK FOR HIS EDUCATION

STATISTICS | CECILIA IS A TAGALOG TRANSLATOR FOR THE FADWU BRANCH IN KOWLOON HONG KONG HER MOTHER HAD WORKED AS A DOMESTIC WORKER IN HONG KONG AND GREW CONCERN ON THE EXPLOITATION PRACTICES EMPLOYMENT AGENCIES ON BOTH ENDS ARE DOING

NATIONALITY: | FILIPPINO CITIZEN

29 YEAR OLD

SOCIAL WORKER

EMPLOYER: FEDERATION OF ASIAN DOMESTIC WORKER UNIONS

SHE IS EMPLOYED AT THE HONG KONG BRANCH OF THE FADWU AS A TRANSLATOR FOR THE WOMEN SHE HOLDS A SOCIOLOGY DEGREE FROM HKU

SHE FIGHTS AGAINST DEBT BONDAGE WOMEN LIKE HER MOTHER HAVE WITH THEIR EMPLOYMENT AGENCIES

fig. 9.0.
The visualization of the five key characters in the narrative will help the design method to understand how one can use such a space as intended. The characters are based on local phenomenons such as the young politician and 'Victoria Park Uncle.

CHAPTER 4: DESIGN

Cross-programming for Two Groups in Convergence

Scenarios depicted in the design phase of this thesis include day interactions based on the time of the event. A weekly cycle will be introduced (Sunday at the park) and then a yearly juncture (Annual July 1st march) (see fig. 10.0. for diagram of activities in Victoria Park). Cross program elements will be introduced in sectional drawings and renderings. They may be in compliment to the existing infrastructure (added-on) or set-up as a stand-alone structure within an open space. They are required to flexibility in accommodating various programs in accordance to the events. Another program addition are making the interventions as wireless network 'hotspots'. This expands the role of civic spaces by incorporating wireless communication. The precedent set by People's Architecture Office (PAO) in Beijing with their 'Tricycle House' (2012) shows a small flexible work and play program. Tricycles are used to move the portable pods to various urban spaces in Beijing.⁵⁴ Shigeru Ban's Paper Studio is used here as a precedent. Ban's structure is used as a teaching tool to introduce his students to simple construction and host seminars and lectures for his classes.⁵⁵ The precedents shown are of interest due to their kit-of-parts assembly and flexibility of set-up. The High Line in New York City is a precedent

54. Taylor, *Time Matters*, 46.

55. Ban, *Volunteer Architect*, 19-20.

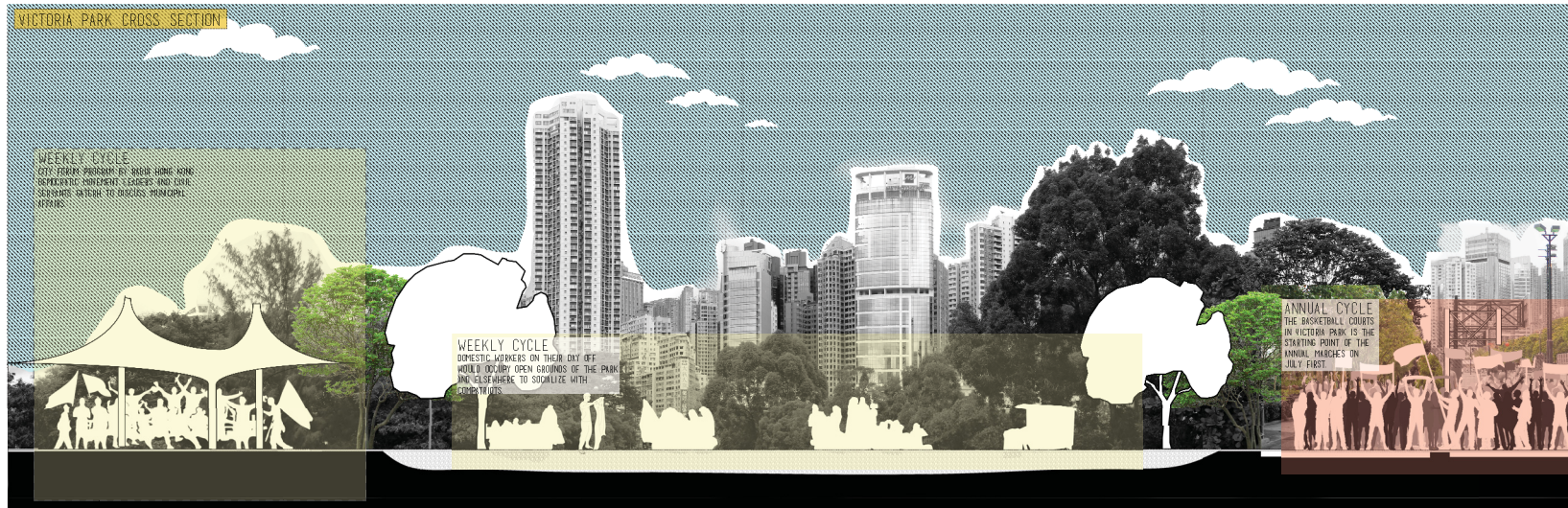


fig. 10.0. How different groups occupy a formal civic space. The civic space of Victoria Park is a successful one as it fits in Peter Rowe's definition of a successful civic space. It is developed with authoritarian and the citizenry efforts. Both the migrant workers, locals and politicians make use of informal urban civic spaces with a similar fashion.

for the use of de-commissioned infrastructure and converted to a walking path with pocket spaces such as the 'urban theatre'.⁵⁶ The use of existing infrastructure such as the pedestrian walkways are a key development in the design phase.

Through research and observation of the July 1st protests and the migrant worker's conditions, I had compiled a list of items that will be beneficial to understanding similarities and differences for the two groups. This can be seen in figure 11.0. on the next page. They show materiality similarities and program differences. John Zeisel's environmental research book *Inquiry by Design*, notes a way to observe behaviour, material traces are public messages to communicate the types of cultural events that takes place in the area.⁵⁷ This suited well for the purposes of investigating behaviour of the MDW and protestors. The materials are spatial-temporal in nature; they occupy a space for a brief moment of time but offer varied programs to their occupants.

56. Diller Scofidio & Renfro, James Corner Field Operations, *The High Line*. (London: Phaidon Press, 2015), 25.

The urban theatre is a seating area with a large window hanging over 10th avenue and 17th street. It gives a theatrical view of the street life below.

57. John Zeisel, *Inquiry by Design: Tools for Environmental-Behaviour Research*. (Belmont: Brooks/Cole Publishing Company, 1981), 108.

fig. 11.0. The materials and forms are from my own observations as I had frequently encountered the Migrant Domestic workers on the streets of Hong Kong. The July 1st protests. The list is compiled based on the frequency they appear in my research photographs and observations.

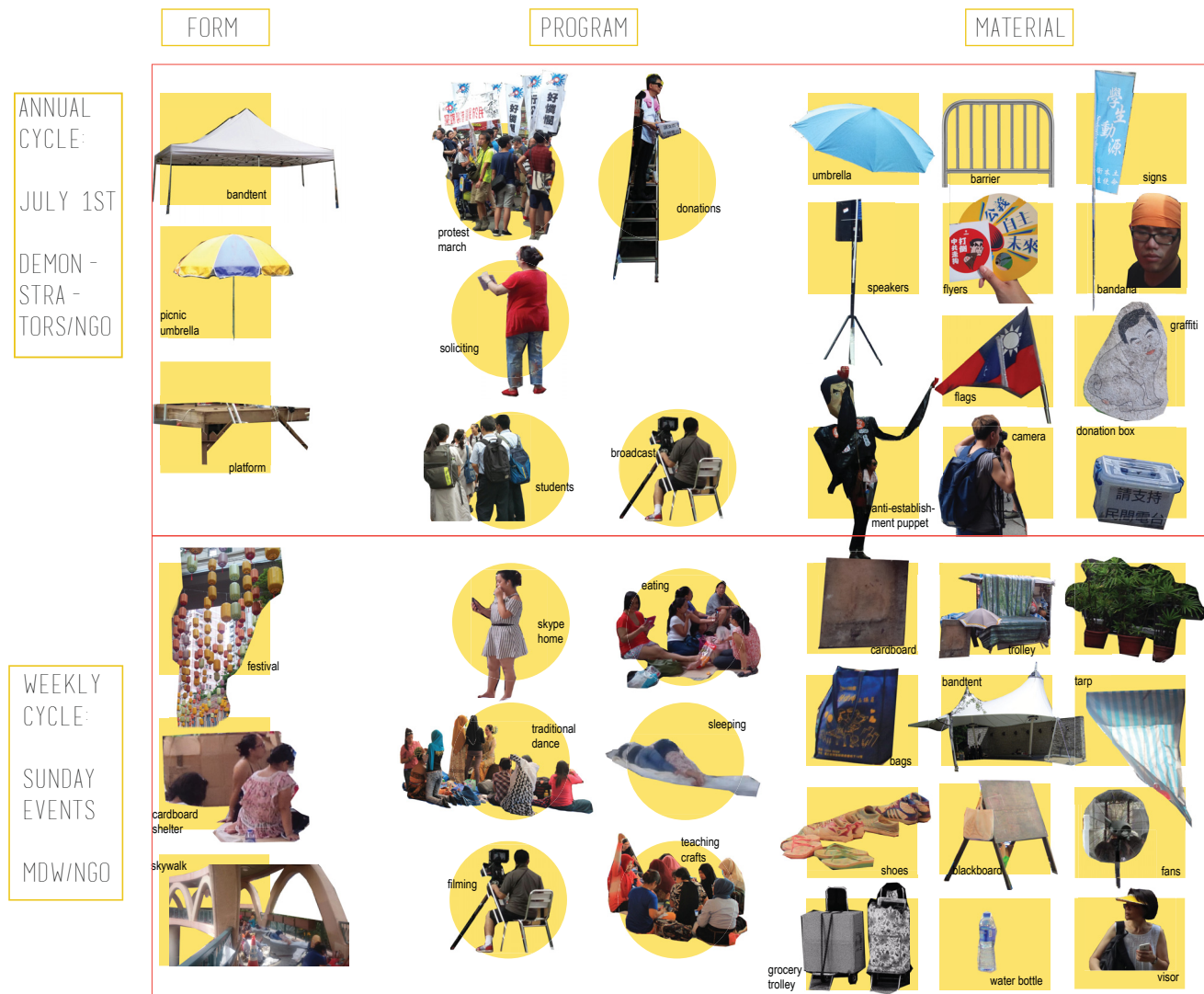




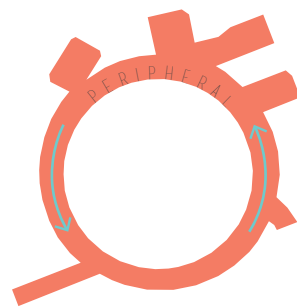
fig. 12.0. An early program diagram of the various activities that can take place on the interventions. This is based on three key programs needs: the need for wireless communication functions, place for rest and repose in dignified comfort, a place to perform and express ideas.

Design and Program

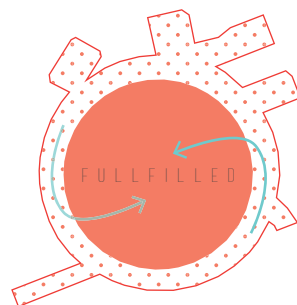
The beginnings of the design came from expanding on existing infrastructure. To ‘create’ space, I studied neglected interstitial spaces, on two sites and examined how we can expand its space. By expanding, I am adding to its existing parameters. The activities of the communities in question inform the design.

Site Condition of Typology I

Typology I is a pedestrian walkway. The site is a quick walk down Hennessy Road, west of Victoria Park (see figure 5.0. for location). This rotunda is a unique form as it services four directions of pedestrian traffic in place of a traffic light at an intersection. Most pedestrian walkways are at a two way street, at most. The MDWs are seen occupying the periphery of the circle, leaving a gap for pedestrians (see Appendix F). During the annual demonstration, this area overlooks the route of the march. It is a perfect perch for observers to view the spectacle over the street (see figure 14.0. on the next page for views).



BEFORE
HIGH DENSITY USE OF
PERIPHERAL SPACES



AFTER
EXPANSION OF
LEFT-OVER SPACES

fig. 13.0. The interpretive diagram of the Typology I site condition in which the periphery occupation expands inwards and above traffic.

Figure 13.0. on the left emphasizes the design moves of bringing the periphery occupation to the centre and expanding the space to increase the quality and quantity of usable public space. The intervention latches onto the walkway, suspended above the street.



fig. 14.0. The pedestrian walkway runs above Hennessy Road. Here the view faces west in the same direction the demonstrators' march. The intervention sits within this space above the tram tracks.



fig. 14.1. View of Hennessy Road facing east from the pedestrian walkway.

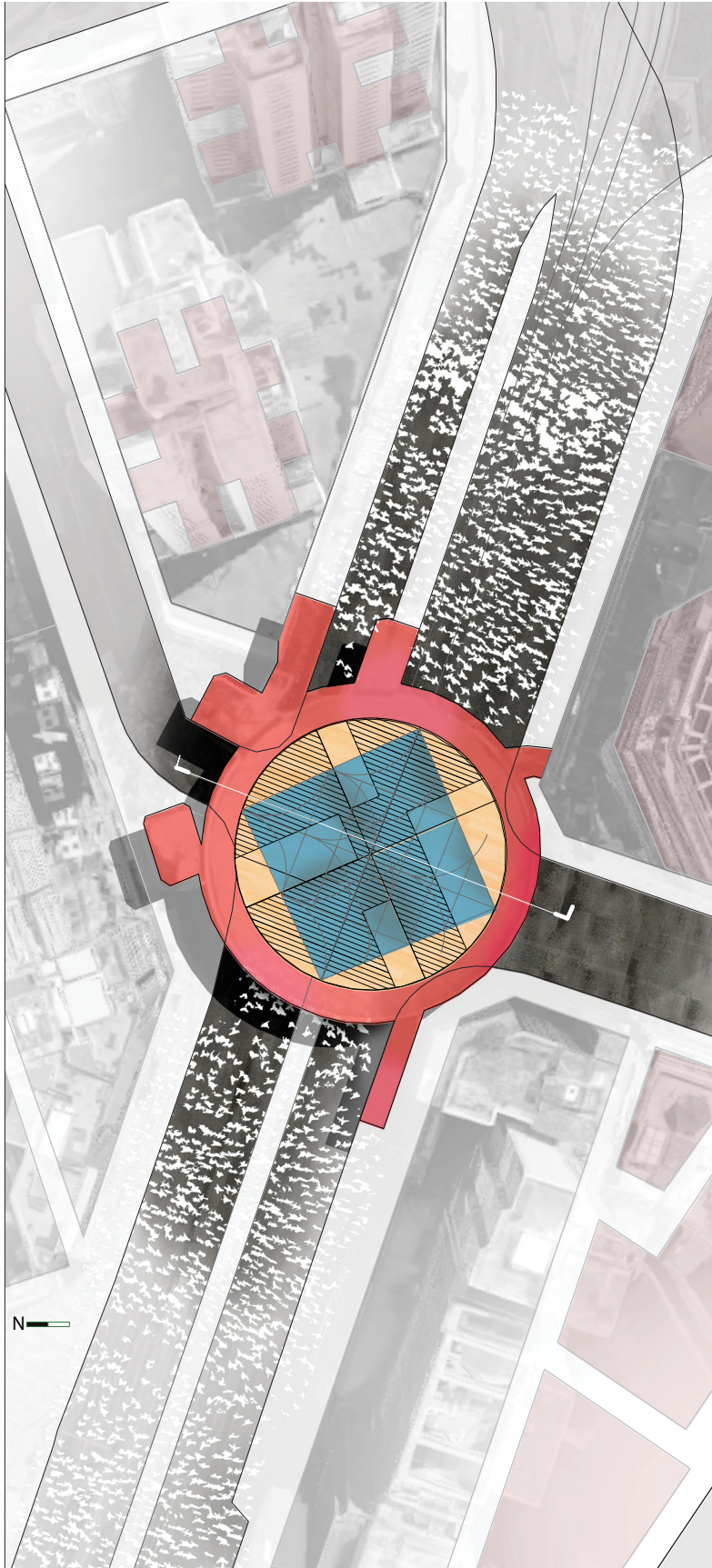


fig. 15.0. The existing pedestrian walkway marked in red on the site plan. The intervention is in the middle with blue tarp suspended over it. The white figures represent the demonstration parade on Hennessy Road. Base map from Survey and Mapping Office HKSAR. Original scale 1:500.

Design Intervention of Typology I

The intervention is sloped towards the west side of Hennessy Road, dipping below the pedestrian walkway's floor level to give an unfettered view of the street. It becomes an urban theatre for onlookers on the intervention.

The user groups can use the space as they see fit. The intervention wants to give the user freedom to interpret how to use the space. See next page for program demarcation on intervention.

The entire structure is suspended on bow trusses attached to the existing structure. The intervention's structure on the roof of the pedestrian walkway creates shade through suspended elements. See figure 18.0. for the cross section of the intervention. A drawing showing the structure supporting the intervention is found on figure 19.0.

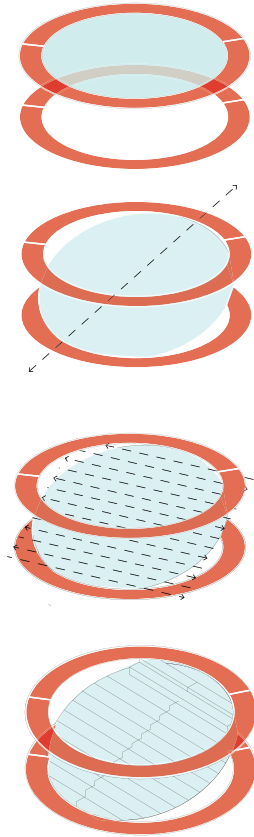
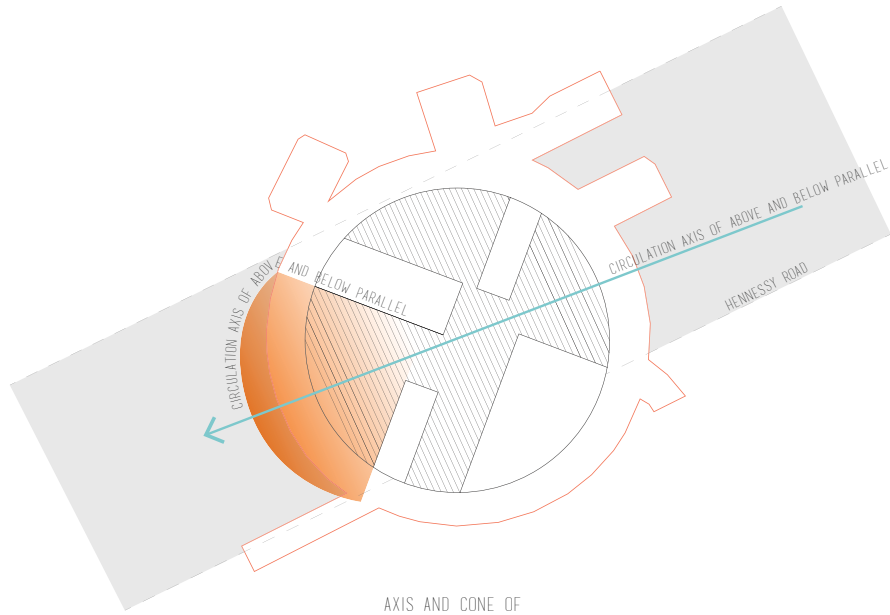
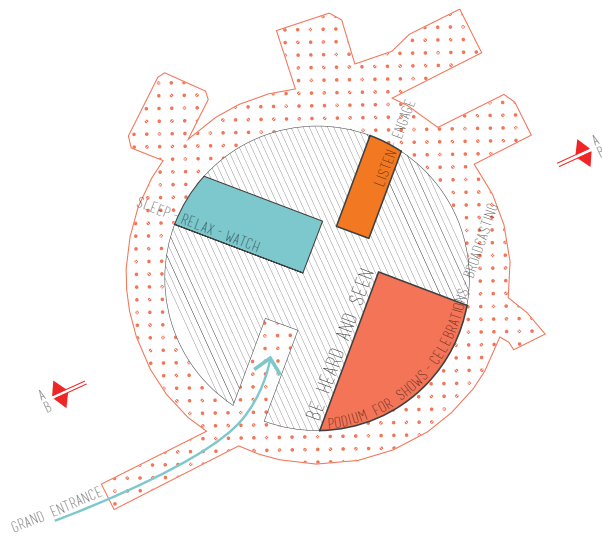


fig. 16.0. The design moves of the intervention on the pedestrian walkway.



AXIS AND CONE OF VISION



APPROPRIATION OF THE VOLUMES

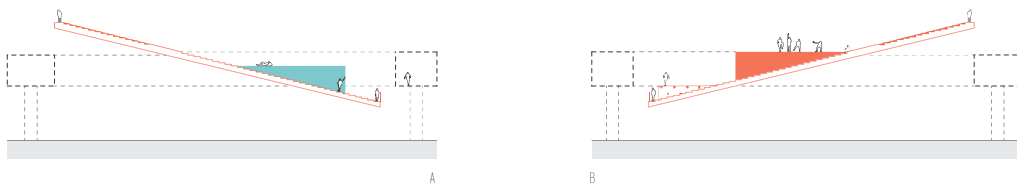


fig. 17.0. Diagram of the programs and function of Typology I intervention, the pedestrian walkway.

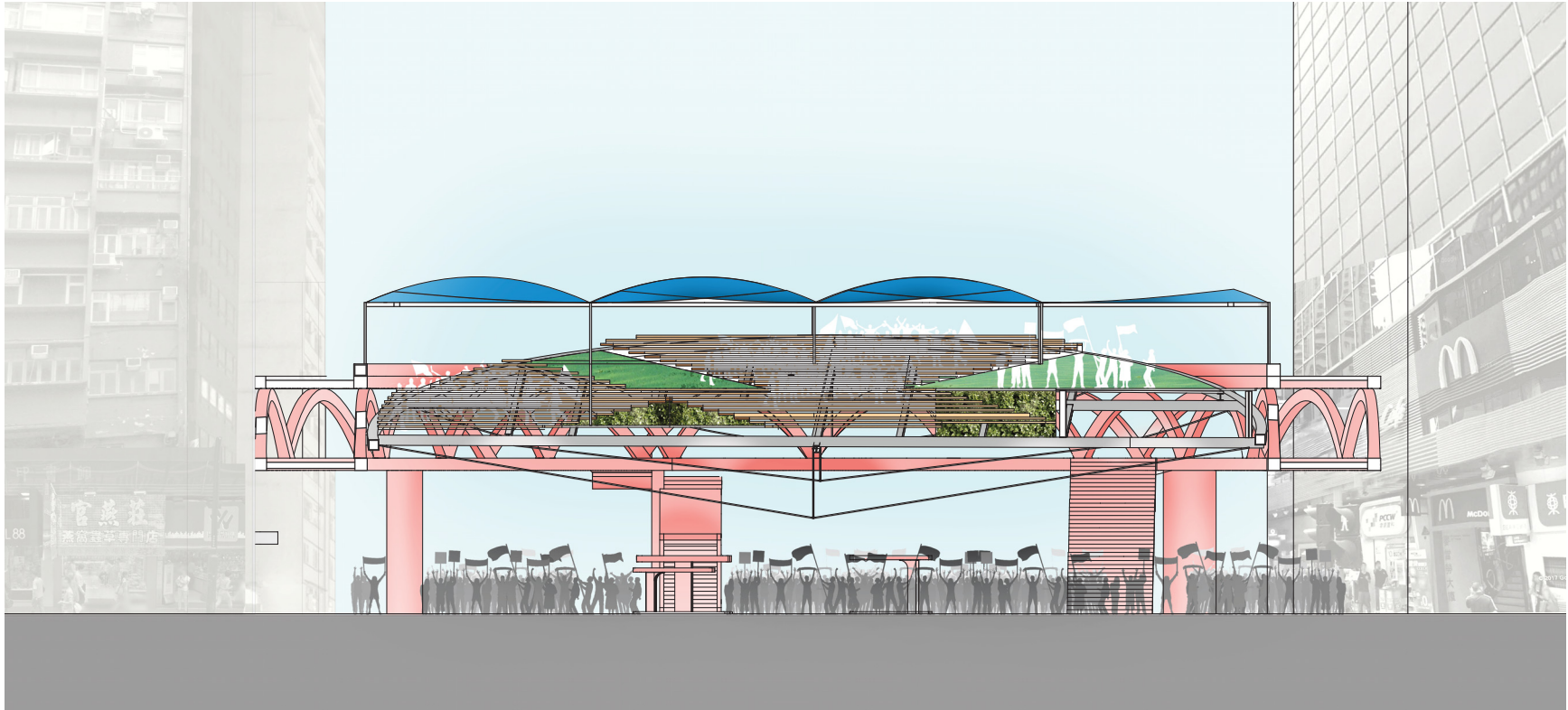


fig. 18.0. Cross section of Typology I, the pedestrian walkway. Each of these pedestrian walkways have a unique condition. This circular intervention is made to fit specifically on this site condition. Bow trusses hold up the structure.

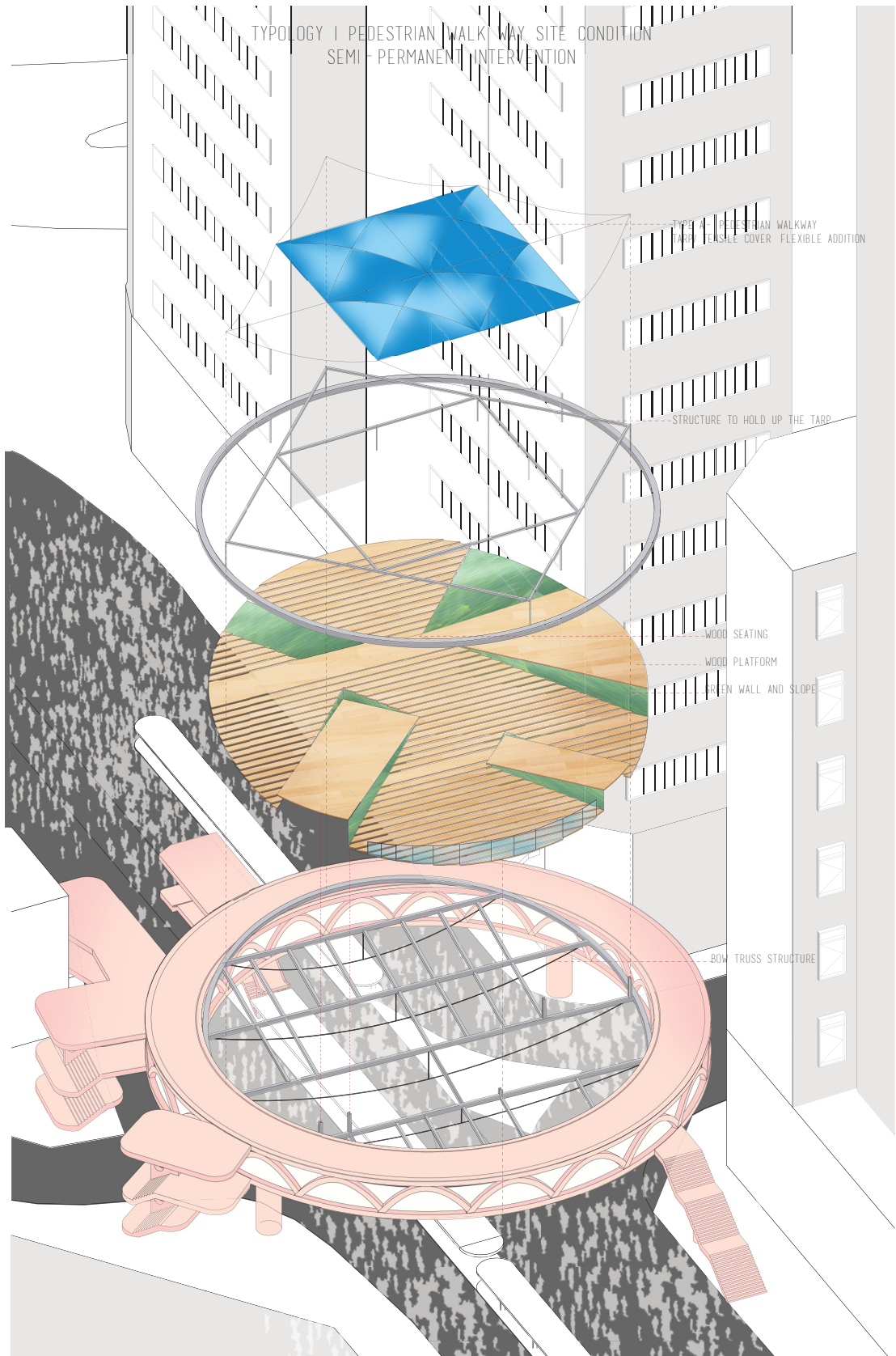


fig. 19.0. Axonometric diagram of the structure.

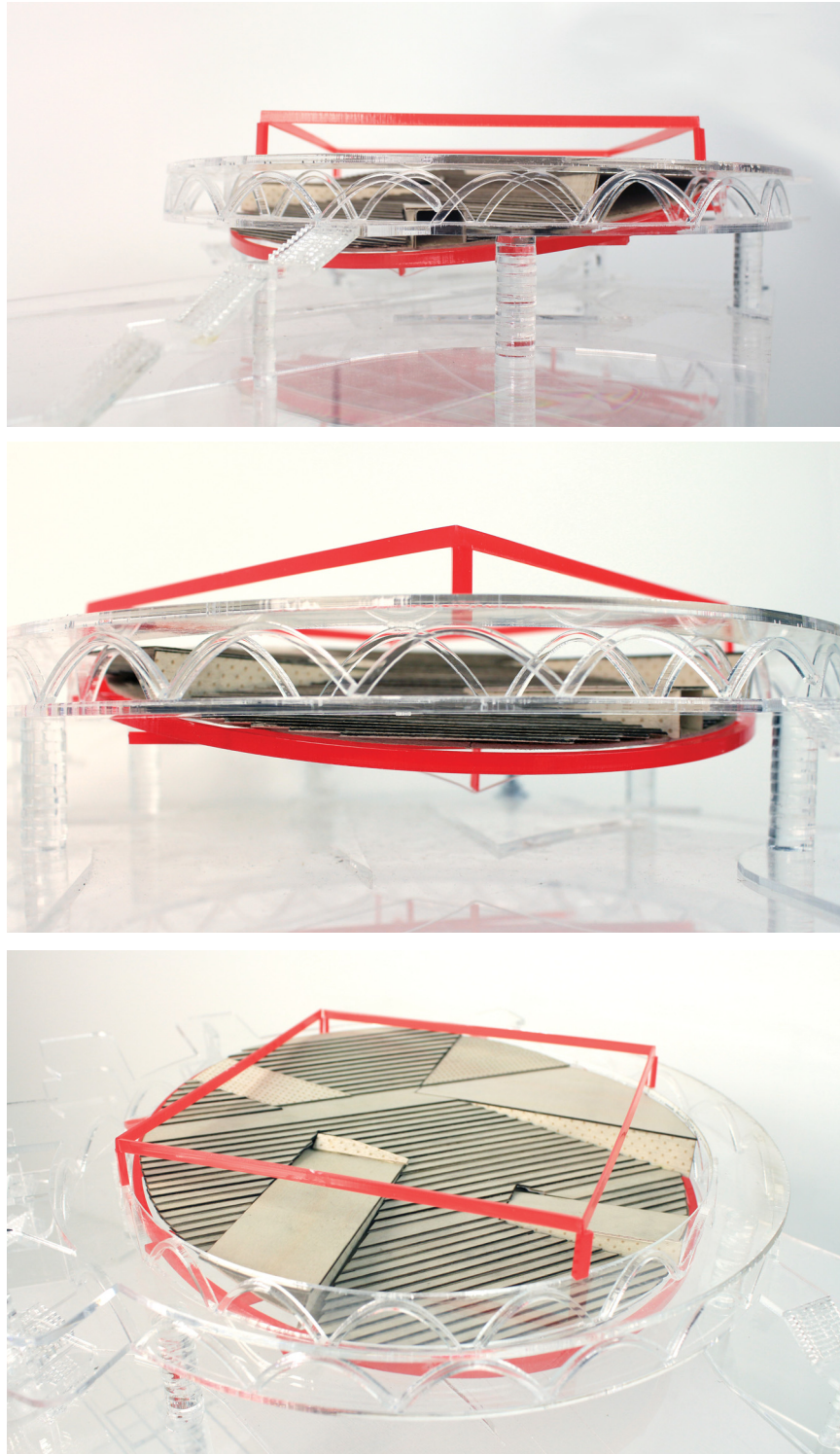


fig.20.0. Each intervention is modelled with representational plywood veneer for the main object of the intervention. The site's original infrastructure is modelled in clear acrylic. The red acrylic is the intervention's supporting body.
Original model scale is 1:200.



fig. 21.0. Each intervention have a paper piece. The stepped form of the intervention is cut in layers. The piece is made of 136 sheets of paper stacked to emphasize its sloped form. There are 36 unique plates of the intervention.

Site Condition of Typology II

Typology II are the interstitial spaces underneath a vehicular overpass. There are at least four within the boundaries of the annual demonstration's route along Hennessy Road. I chose the widest of the four (see figure 5.0.) as it provides an ample amount of space underneath. The overpass is lifted 10 metres above ground. These spaces are often overlooked and dirty from collecting traffic pollution and dust (see next page for site photo). The spaces are usually occupied by street hawkers and MDWs during their time off (see figure 23.1.). The space underneath the overpass has two sidewalks, each wide enough for an intervention to manifest in modules.

Unlike the pedestrian overpasses, these spaces are more flexible for a stand-alone intervention. These spaces follow two governing principles: the modular design allows for different arrangements to fit onto the parameters of the site, and the length of the overpass allows multiple modules to fit underneath it. This is to activate the use of interstitial spaces. For a city as densely packed as Hong Kong, making use of left-over spaces identified here as Typology II should be more common. The intervention will activate the site by creating architectural presence in a forgotten space.

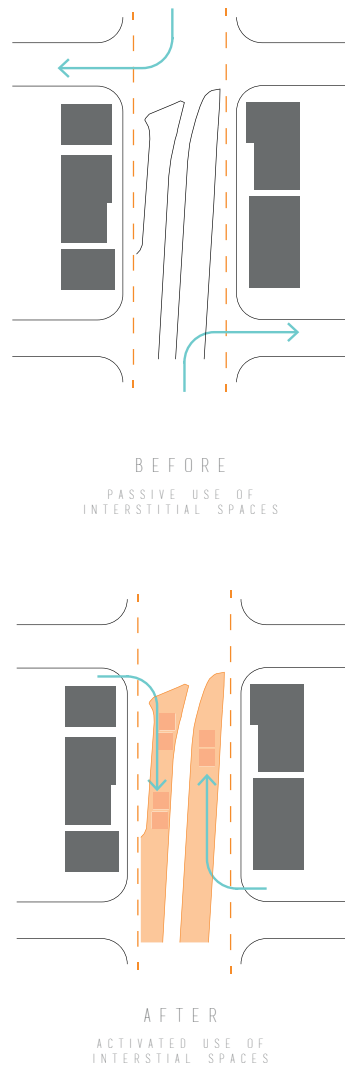


fig. 22.0. The design intent of the intervention underneath the vehicular overpass.



fig. 23.0. Typology II, a vehicular overpass in Causeway Bay. The intervention hopes to lift the user groups off from the sidewalk and away from the ground pollution.



fig. 23.1. MDWs sits on the tarp they bring to the site's sidewalk. In this photo, they are dressing one another in traditional Indonesian dance costumes.

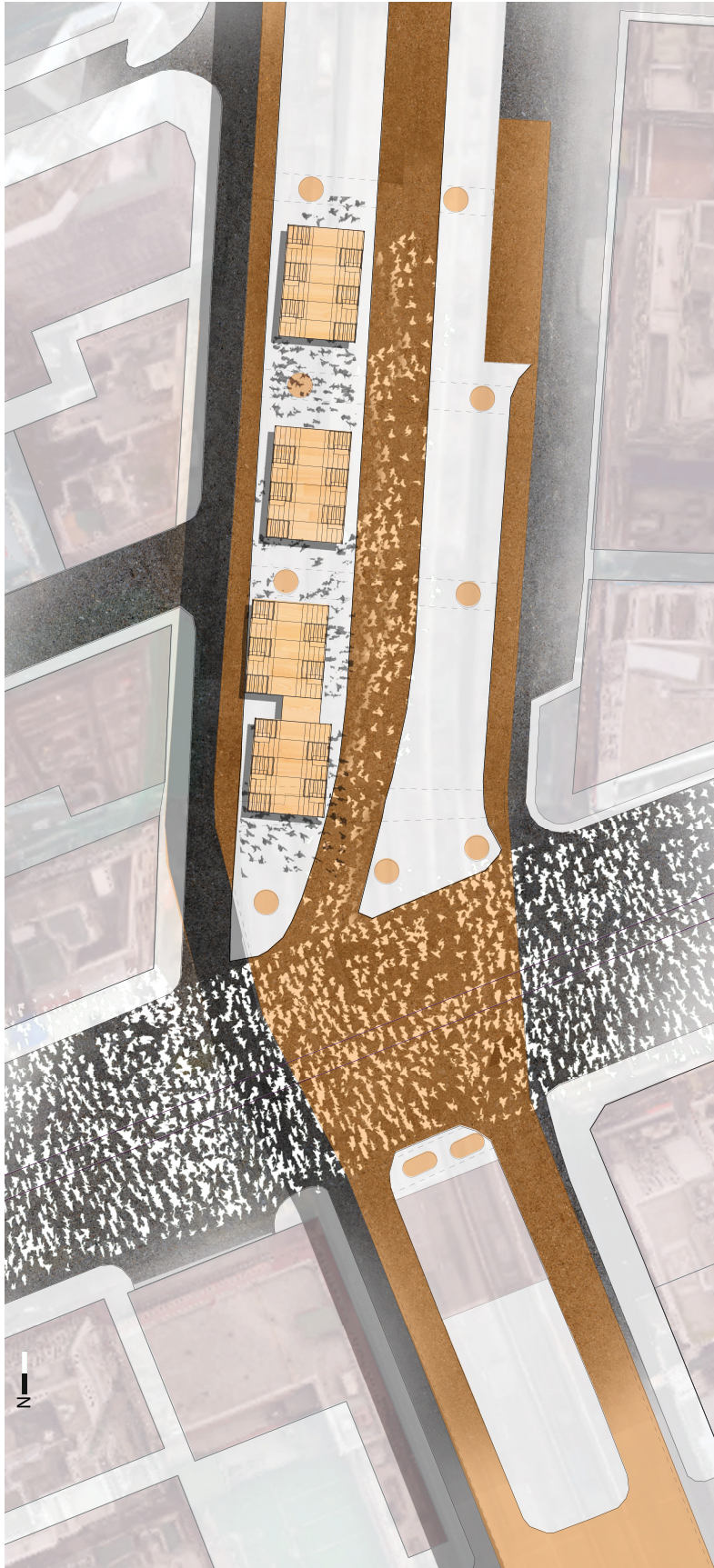


fig. 24.0. The existing vehicular overpass is marked in orange on the site plan. The intervention modules are shown on the sidewalk underneath it. The white figures represent the demonstration parade on Hennessy Road. Base map from Survey and Mapping Office HKSAR. Original scale 1:500.

Design Intervention of Typology II

The intervention is a modular unit. There are four orientations that can be rearranged to fit the needs of the occupants (NGO's campaigns, demonstration forums, etc..). For a diagrammatic detail of the orientations, see figure 26.0. on the next page.

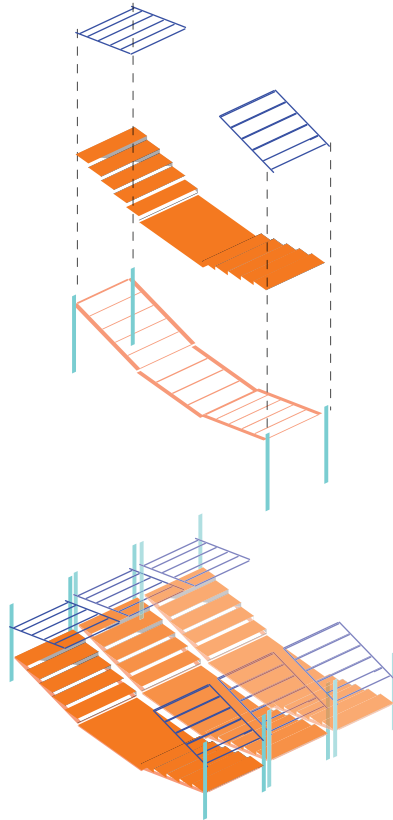


fig. 25.0. The top shows the diagrammatic assembly of one module.

Orientation One: The stepping planks are in a typical arrangement, facing opposite each other and wide enough for the user to sit and converse with others. The awning allows user groups to hang up their tarp for extra shading.

Orientation Two: Table condition. The table extends to cover three seats from the top steps. It is about 180 cm long and enough to accommodate a person laying down.

Orientation Three: The fold-out table is part of the awning (seen in blue on the left). When deployed, the occupant can sit behind it comfortably. The table is supported by the table in Orientation Two.

Orientation Four: The awning rotates down and rests on the seating and boxes can fit onto the slates between the awnings. These are intended for hawkers and other groups to place their wares for sale.

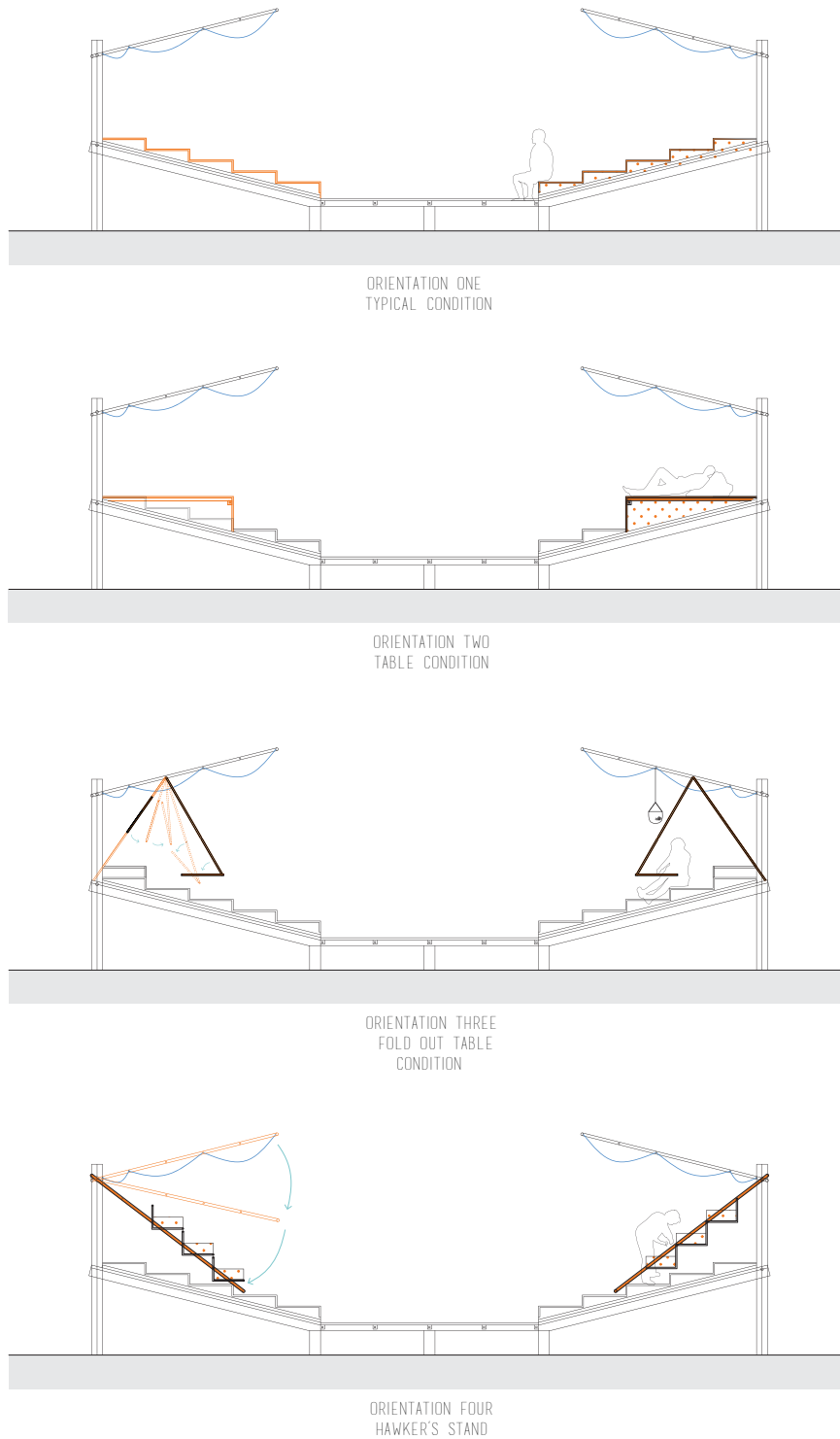


fig. 26.0. The four orientations of the modules. The middle platform is a space intended to mimic street traffic, where the users will move through to reach a stepped bench they want to sit on.

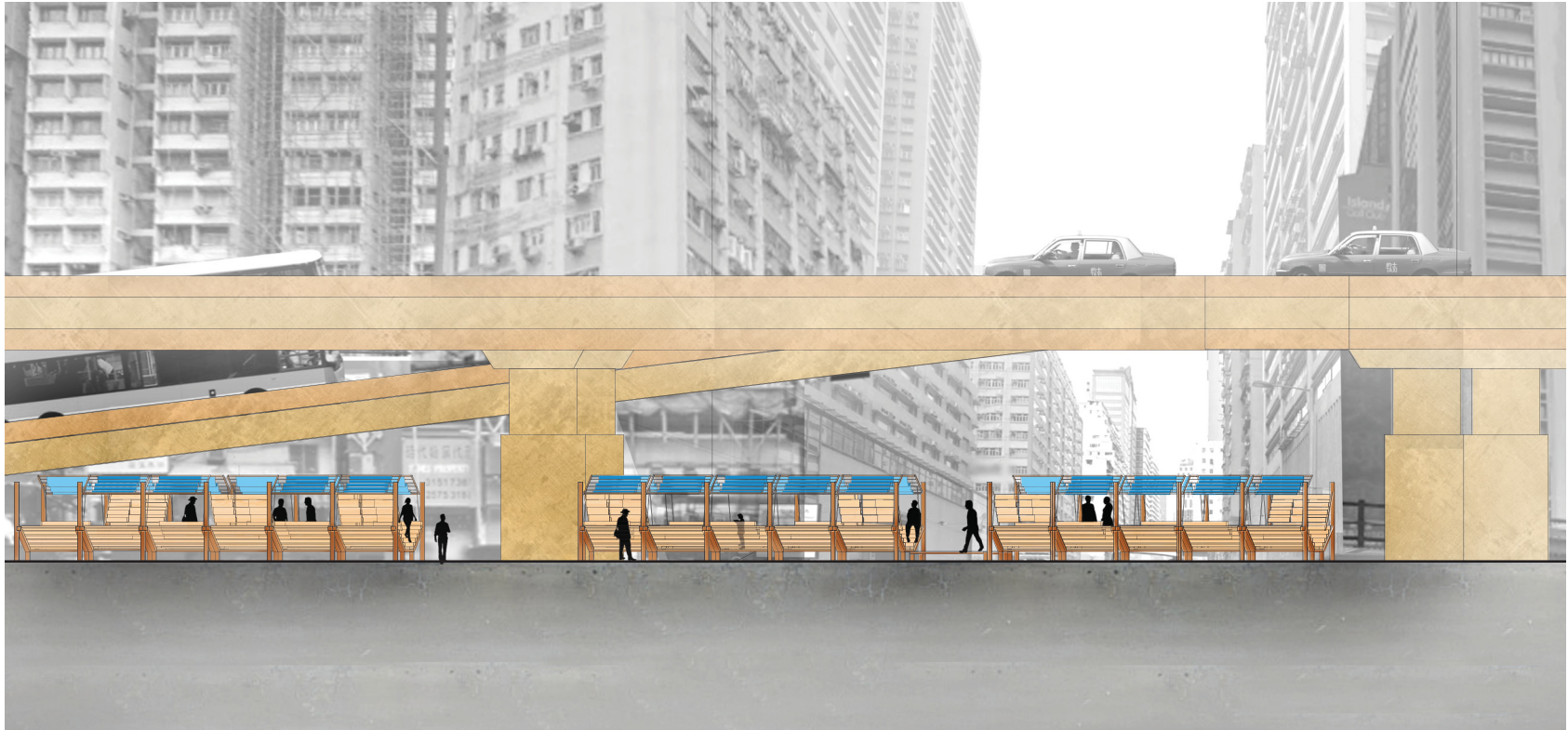


fig. 27.0. East Elevation of Typology II, an intervention below the vehicular overpass. They are arranged typically between four to five module units each to fit between the columns of this particular overpass. Original scale 1:150.



fig. 28.0. Cross-section of a set of modules. The module on the front shows the awning down and a hawker selling house plants. The street corner in which Hennessy Road and Canal Road intersect has many house plants shops.

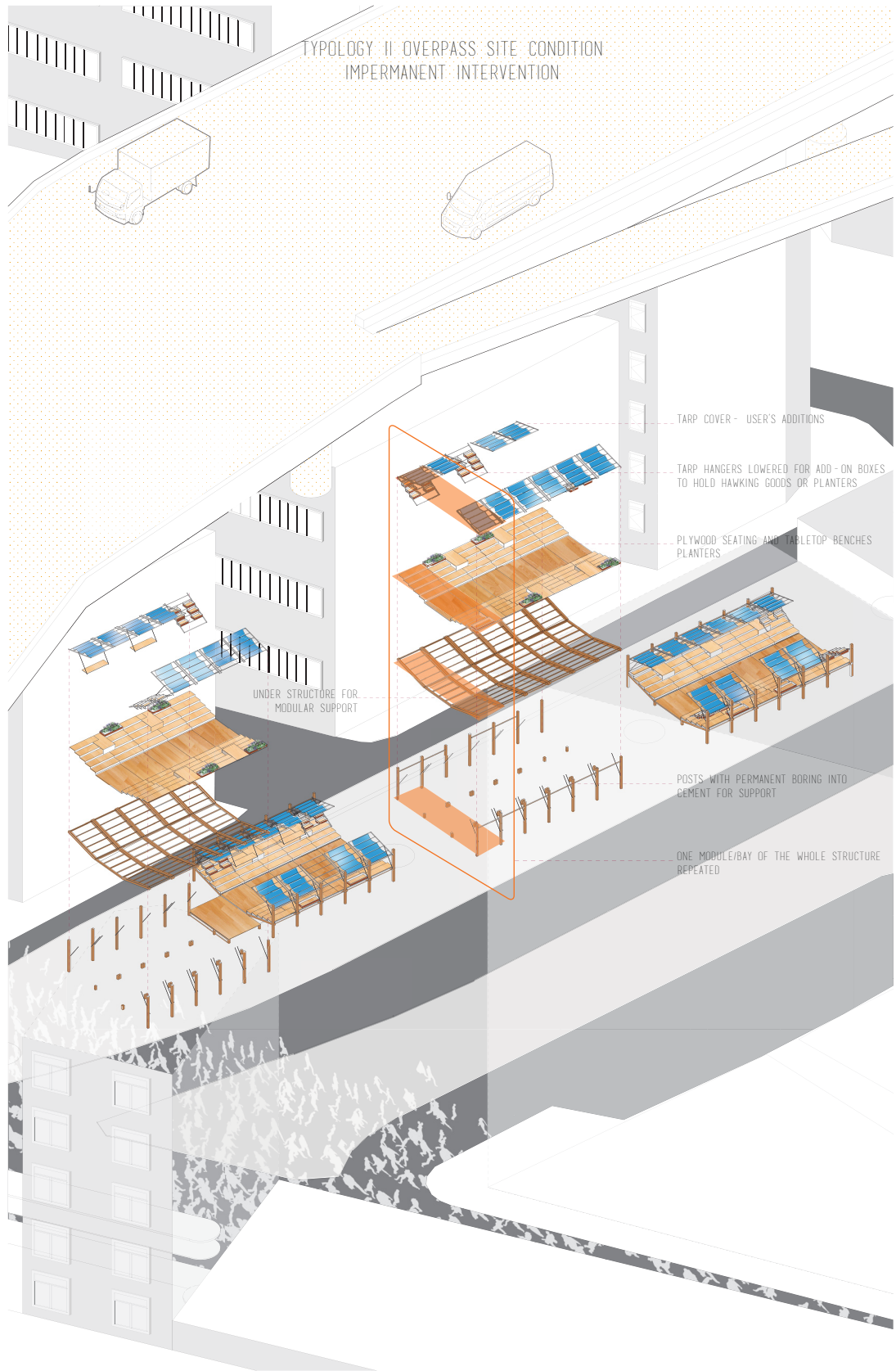


fig. 29.0. Axonometric diagram of the modules.



fig. 30.0. Shot of the multiple modules from Hennessy Road.
Original model scale at 1:200.

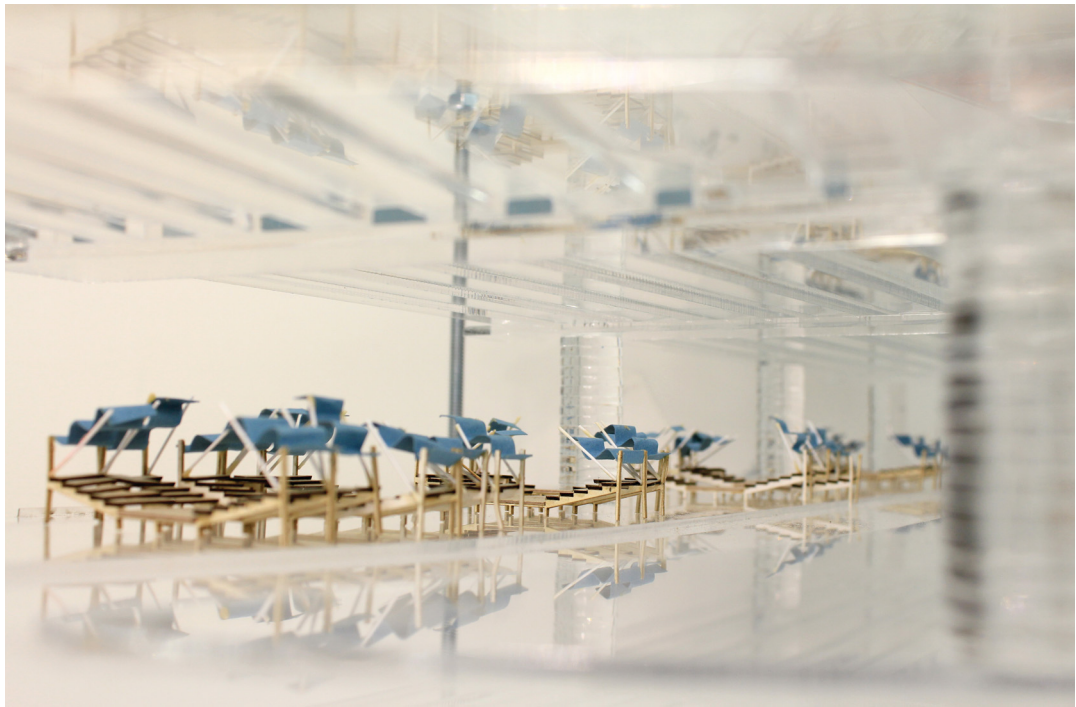


fig. 30.1. View from south side of Hennessy Road of the modules deployed.
Original model scale at 1:200.











fig. 31.0. One module unit. Both awning conditions are shown in model.
Original model scale at 1:50.



fig. 32.0. The paper piece of the second intervention. The box when stacked shows a layered drawing of all four orientations. Original drawing scale at 1:40.

PROGRAM NARRATIVE

-  WIRELESS COMMUNICATION
-  REPOSE - MEDITATION ----- FOR THE DAYS OFF
-  USER GROUP ----- DEMONSTRATORS -
MIGRANT DOMESTIC
WORKERS - NGO GROUPS
-  SOCIALIZE
-  INFORMATION RESOURCE ----- FOR SOCIAL ASSISTANCE,
IMMIGRATION,
ATTORNEY HELP
-  FILMING ----- SPEECHES AND FORUM
DEMONSTRATION
-  BROADCASTING CAPABILITIES ----- SPEECHES AND FORUM
DEMONSTRATION
-  NFC CHECKPOINT ----- WHEN WIRELESS DOES
NOT WORK

The Narrative

The narrative of the characters outlined in figure 9.0. in the previous chapter are brought to the interventions on two junctures. One is the weekly Sunday juncture and the other is the annual juncture. The following diagrams outline their progress through the sites. Their common overlaps are outlined in figure 34.0. on the next page. The main story is told through illustrations of the two junctures in the following pages.

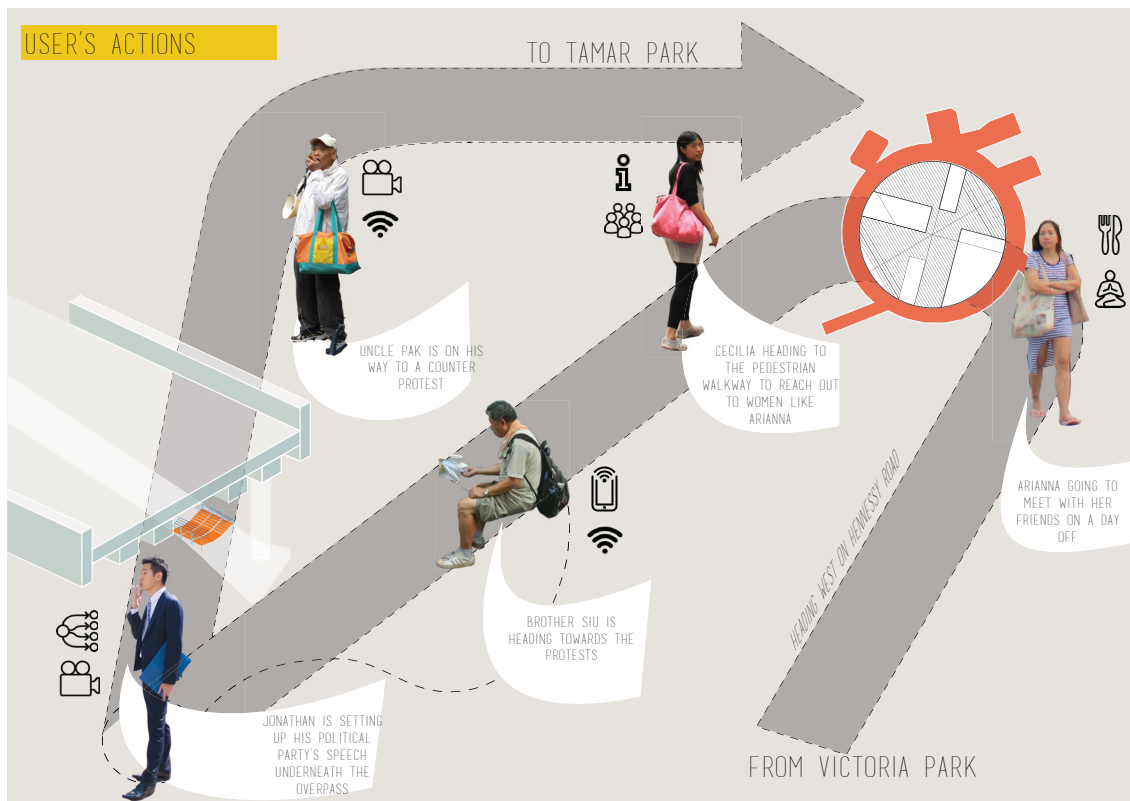


fig. 33.0. The interpretive diagrams of the characters activities along the two investigative sites.



fig. 34.0. The interpretive diagram of the characters' materials, activities and their similarities. This bridges the material and narrative study of the previous chapters together.

On a Regular Sunday

An MDW's Day Off

After another 6-day week for Arianna, she hopped on the street car from North Point towards Victoria Park station to meet up with friends. She heard of new inclusive public spaces with free WiFi services are in operation. With the limited communication opportunities she has while on-call, she is relieved to find a space where she can call her son without raising the ire of her employers.

NGO Campaigns

Cecilia and several volunteers from her NGO group, Foreign Asian Domestic Workers Union, began to gather their pamphlets to begin their community outreach campaign. She hopes that by setting up platforms for FADWU, they can provide union assistance to the resting domestic workers. She heard about the new structures set up underneath the vehicular over-passes. She found space and tables set up for them to open a stand for their cause.

Street Hawkers

Street hawkers start their day early. They line the streets with their wares obtained from a warehouse. They set up along the intervention stands. See next page for illustrations.



fig. 35.0. The migrant workers find shade and a retreat away from the road. Instead of sleeping on the walkway, they rest easy on the intervention, socialize with friends and compatriots from their homelands.

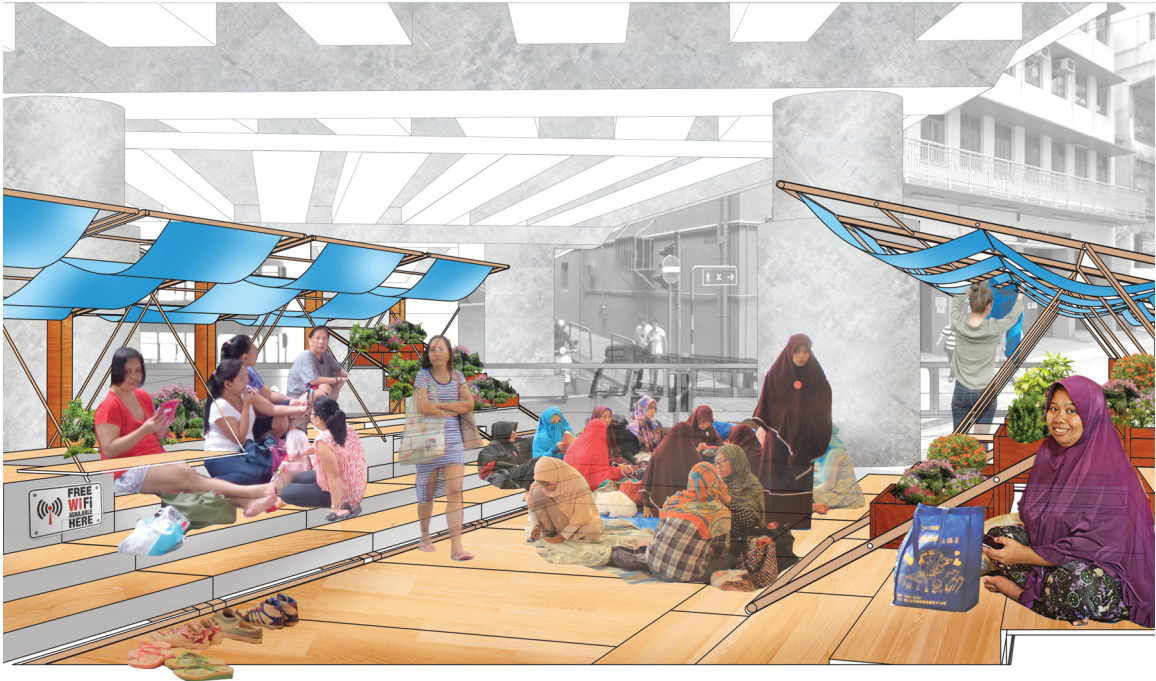


fig. 36.0. Underneath the overpass on Hennessy Road, the modules are deployed for the week and many found themselves taking advantage of the Wifi hot spots to communicate home. The migrant workers hanged their tarp on the awning for shade.



fig. 37.0. An over view of the over pass site from Hennessy Road on a Sunday.

On a Day of Demonstration: A Hot Day in July.

Political Campaigns

Jonathan and his fledgling political party set up on the streets to ensure their voices project towards the crowd. He notices he can either be on the ground facing the street or above in a new structure, allowing him to address the crowd from a pedestrian walkway near the start of the demonstration route. He chooses the latter and his speech was captured by the broadcasters also on the same intervention structure.

NGO Campaigns

Cecilia and her volunteer band decides to bring their donation boxes, signage and pamphlets to raise awareness of the Migrant Workers in Hong Kong to the locals participating in the march. She heads to the intervention underneath the overpass to arrange the modules for their use.

The Demonstrators

The demonstrators Uncle Pak and Brother Siu found a place to sit and listen to the young politician, Jonathan, on the pedestrian walkway intervention. It was a relief from the afternoon sun and they admired the spectacle of the march below them. Many slogans and banners of participating NGOs were hung onto the intervention's structure.

See the next few pages for illustrations.

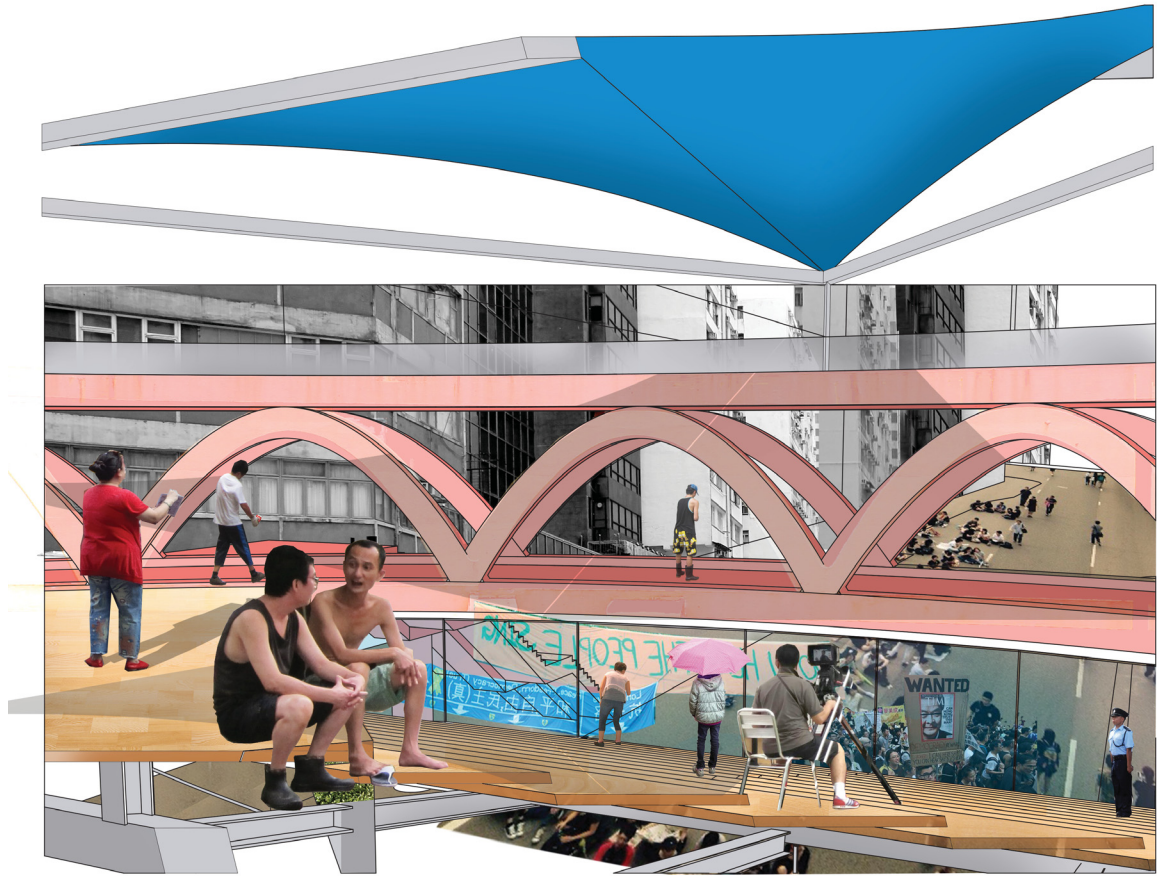


fig. 38.0. The spectators and Hong Kong's media crowd onto the pedestrian walkway's intervention to broadcast the annual march's progress.



fig. 39.0. The demonstrators walk along the overpass intervention with the campaigners handing leaflets and donation boxes to the interested crowd.



fig. 40.0. The east view of the pedestrian intervention from Hennessy Road.

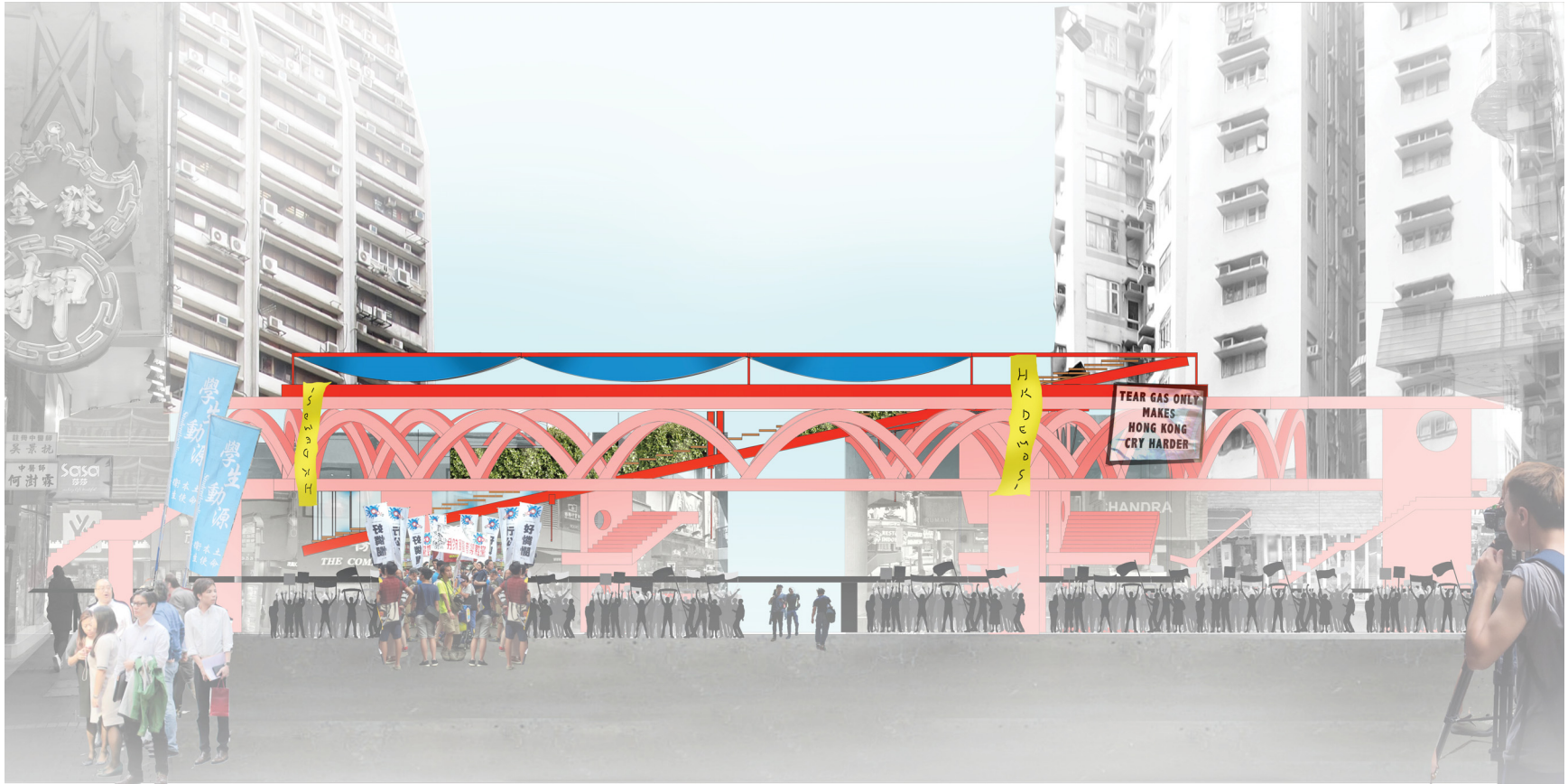


fig. 41.0. The south elevation of the pedestrian intervention.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

This thesis aimed to provide prototypical interventions that can change way we look at interstitial spaces by creating ‘parasitic’ structures that activate these left-over spaces for any public program. I concentrated on the two civic junctures in Hong Kong, a city known for extreme density build-up. Despite the volumetric verticality of its urban fabric, there are overlooked spaces that an urban planner would not immediately perceive as useful. To the characters of the narrative, these spaces are where they thrive. For a migrant domestic worker, the interventions are a place of lively leisure and a break from the drudgery of their work. These places are not their employers’ homes, but a space to safely share with their compatriots. For the demonstrators in the annual march, they can use these spaces to fully express their ideas to the public. Non-government organizations can bring their campaigns to the public, making these interventions a place for activists with a shared cause. Civic spaces can do all these things, but in a place such as Hong Kong where space is scarce, this is a challenge.

I looked at non-traditional public spaces of gathering for inspiration to create an architectural language for civic junctures. The street scape of Hong Kong captured my attention through the study of maps and experiences of walking through the city. It is an experience that is vertical as the building fabric. Many of the streets are elevated

and become pedestrian walkways, bringing the circulation above traffic. The opposite pattern also occurs, with traffic elevated over the pedestrians in the form of vehicular over-passes. The pedestrian street and the over-pass (identified as 'Typologies') create these interstitial spaces. One can find the most curious communities claiming these spaces and using them in ways the original designer would not have imagined. These interventions are manifestations of these communities' activities. Architecture often makes a statement, a lofty aspiration of a client. These interventions want to do the same for the communities' aspirations.

I began this thesis looking at impermanence in architecture as a jumping-off point in creating a design. Impermanence is the virtue of this architectural intervention. Through this process, I discovered that spaces are generated by events. The event's activities are what ultimately inform my design. The tarp and cardboard used by both migrant workers and demonstrators are important materials for temporary shelter. It became part of the shading design in both interventions. The communities find rest and repose on the interventions. Performance activities such as speech making, broadcasting, crafting and dance became the stage areas of the interventions. Each of the investigative sites propose different approaches to the general problem. The pedestrian walkways are unique urban objects and are treated as such.

The investigative site is chosen as a sample of what kind of 'parasitic' intervention can take place on a pedestrian walkway. Since Hong Kong's pedestrian walkways are non-uniform in design, the interventions need to respond to each walkway differently. The rounded figure of the proposed intervention will be unique to that particular walkway. The overpass site has more flexible parameters. The design approach is taking a smaller unit and adding them up to become parts of a larger scale intervention. It became a modular design with four orientations the community groups can manipulate to suit their needs. Depending on the length of the overpass' under belly, many module units can operate at once. In one investigation, there is a juxtaposition of two different approaches to creating civic spaces. It asserts that the presence of informal spaces are as vital to city life as formal public spaces.

The question asked, how can ephemerality be used as a positive characteristic to provide infrastructure that enhances quality of civic junctures in Hong Kong? The ephemerality of events informs the ephemerality of its architecture. Space is generated by events. The activity of the people inhabiting the space shapes the architecture.

APPENDICES

Appendix A

ANNUAL JULY 1ST PROTESTS IN HONG KONG TIME LINE



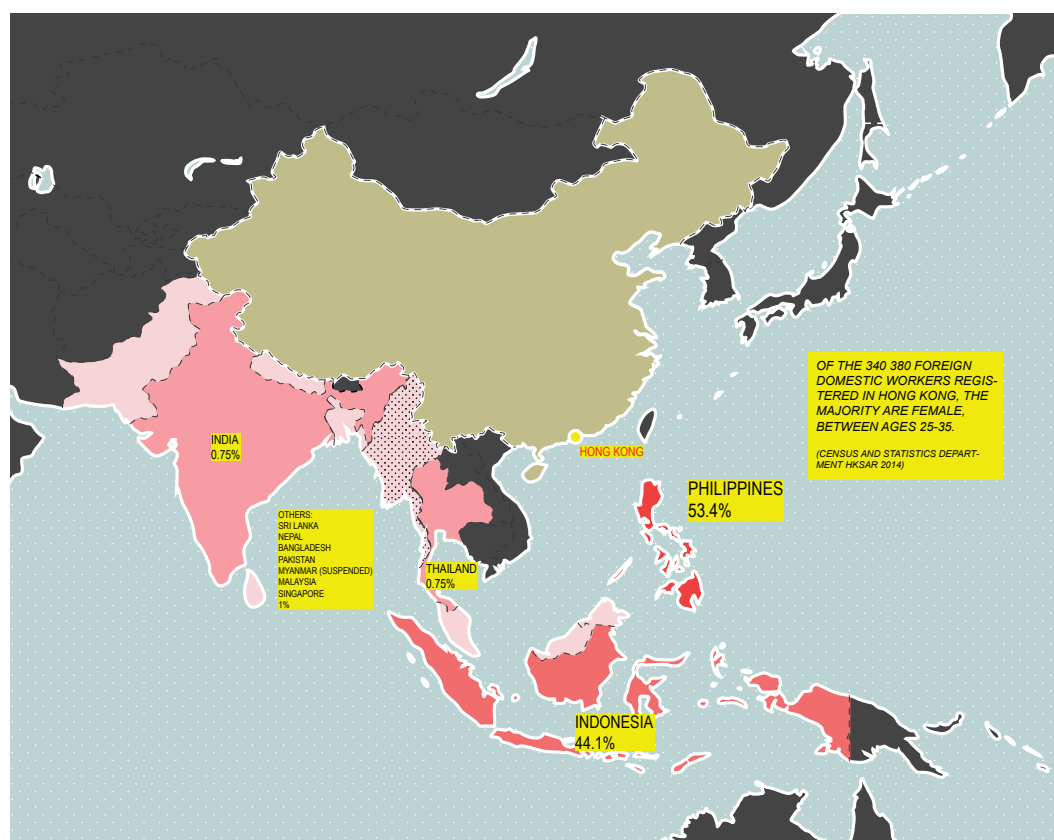
The time line of the annual protests held every July 1st, known formally as Special Administrative Region Establishment Day. Meant to be a celebration of the return of Hong Kong to China since 1997, it became a protest rally started by the Civil Human Rights Front. Information from Harminder Singh, “Everything You Need To Know about Hong Kong’s Return to Chinese Sovereignty”, South China Morning Post newspaper.

Appendix B



The gathering of students and casual spectators under the Victoria Park band-tent every noon on Sunday. They would listen to the debates between politicians and civil servants on the policies of Hong Kong for the hour. (Photo courtesy of Echo Xiang by email).

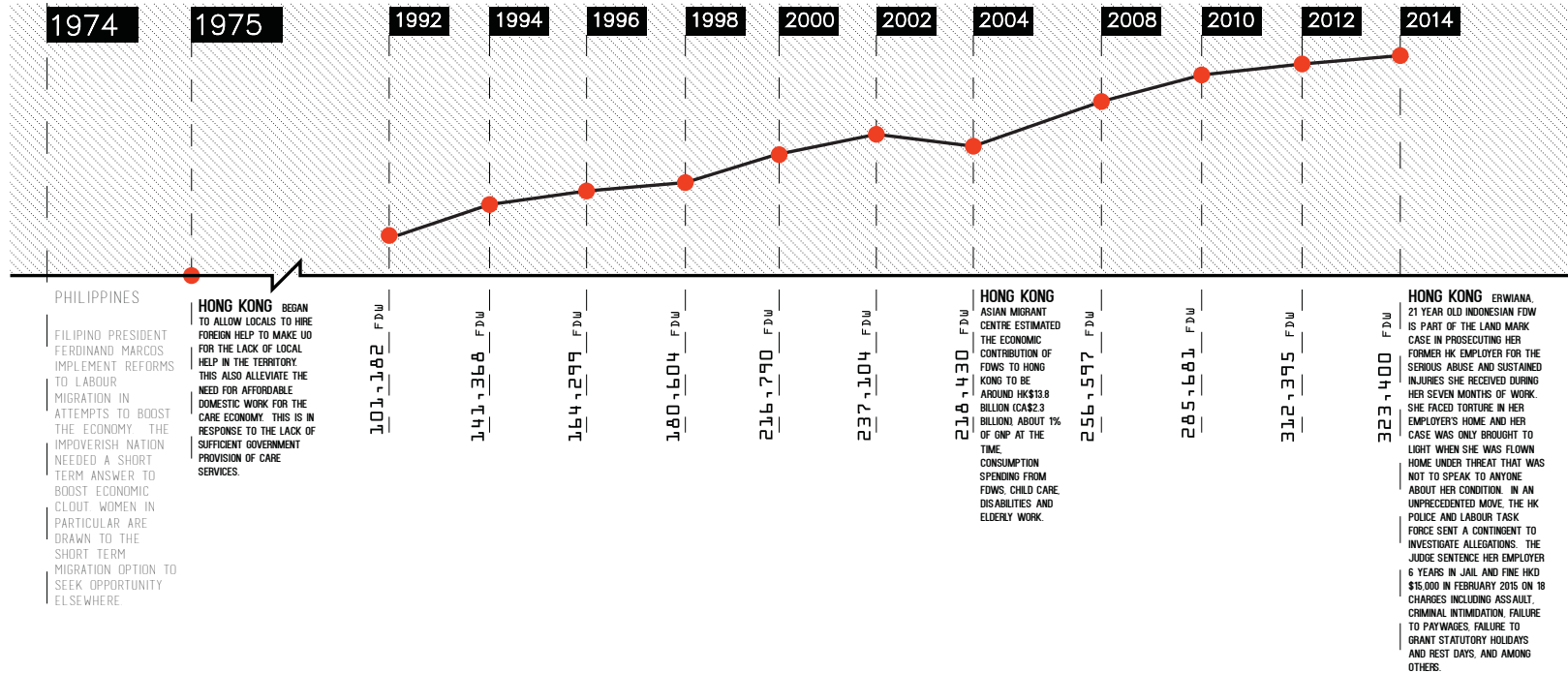
Appendix C



Map of South and South East Asian countries with temporal labour migration schemes for domestic workers with Hong Kong. This began in the 1970's during the colonial period. It does not apply for Mainland China. The Asian Migrant Centre estimated the economic contribution of MDWs to Hong Kong amounts to HKD 13.8 million in 2004, a number most likely higher now. Data from Justice Centre Hong Kong. Base map from Free Vector Maps.

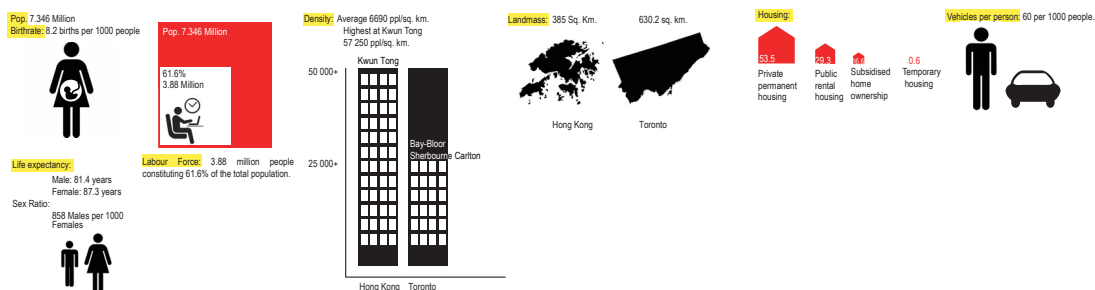
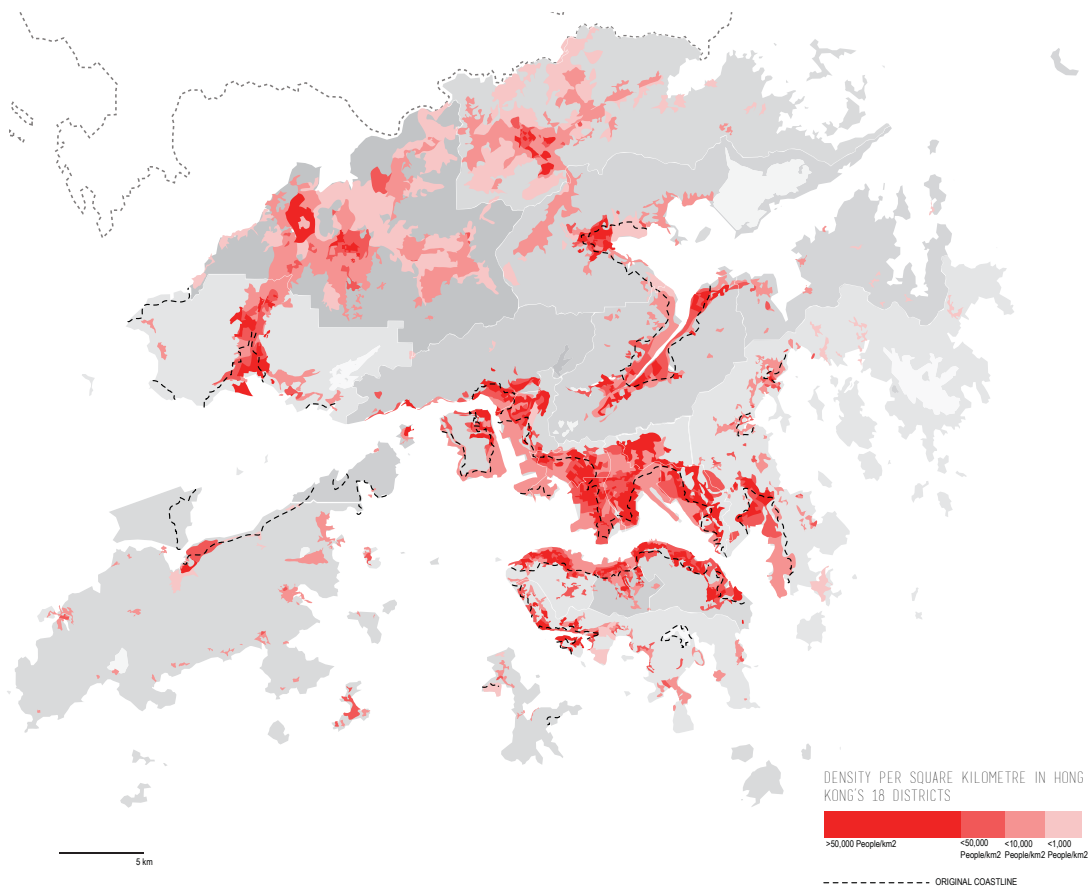
Appendix D

FOREIGN DOMESTIC WORKERS IN HONG KONG TIME LINE



The time of Migrant Domestic Workers and their population in Hong Kong as researched by the Justice Centre located in Kowloon, Hong Kong. The Justice Centre released their findings of forced labour incidents to shed light on the conditions of the migrant women's plight in Hong Kong. Data from Justice Centre Hong Kong.

Appendix E



The density of Hong Kong's population as seen on the map. The original pre-infill coast line is marked with the dash line. Most of Hong Kong's major development and population are on reclaimed land. The current data on Hong Kong is from the Hong Kong Census Bureau. Base map from Survey and Mapping Office HKSAR.

Appendix F

Top: The migrant workers gathering underneath the Hong Kong Shanghai Bank Corporation headquarters by Sir Norman Foster. The freed space underneath the protective canopy of the bank's entry allowed the women to sit without disturbance each Sunday. (Photo courtesy of Echo Xiang by email).



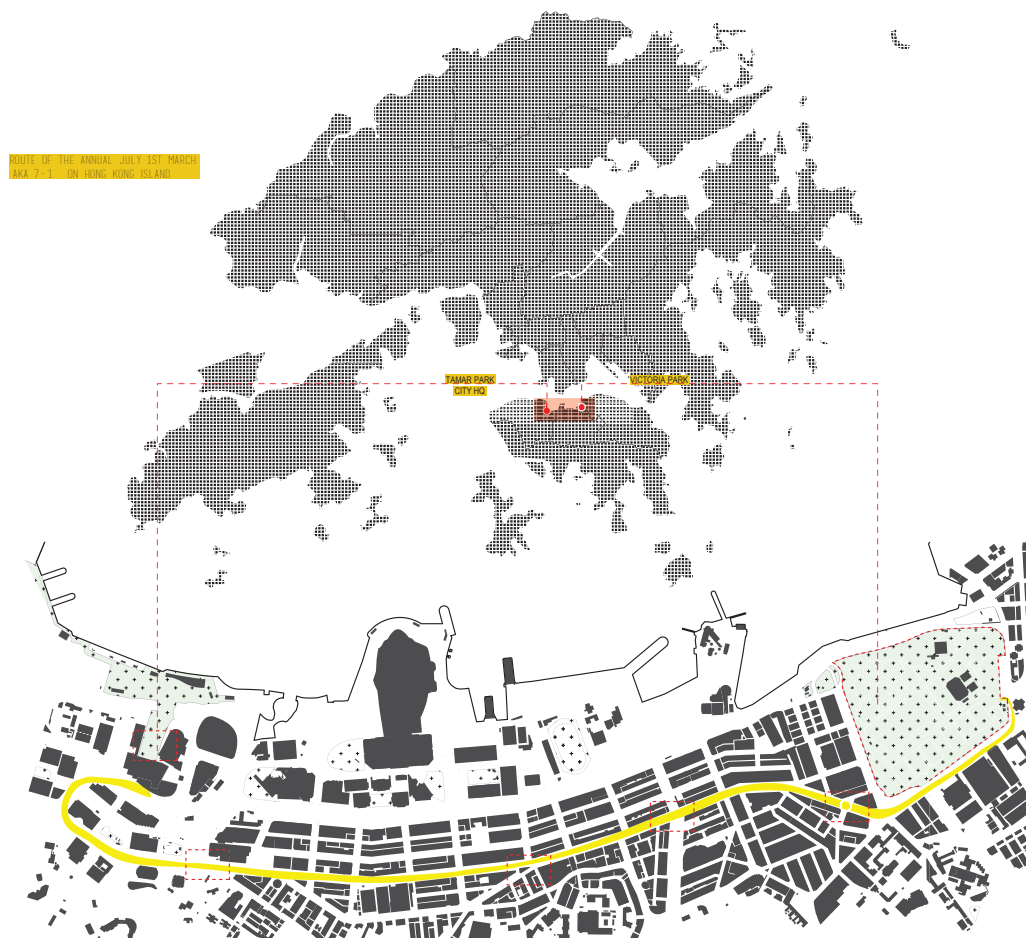
Middle: The cramped conditions of women sitting in the pedestrian walkway (skywalk) sleeping on tarp and cardboard. This particular walk way is of interest to the thesis design.



Bottom: Indonesian women sitting on tarp underneath an expressway ramp. They set up chalkboards for teaching and traditional dancing as part of their leisure.



Appendix G



The map shows the route of the annual protest rally. The route reads right to left. They begin at Victoria Park and end in front of the Central Administrative Offices at Tamar Park. The streets which the rally will go along are closed from 3 pm to 7 pm. Information from South China Morning Post. Base map from Survey and Mapping Office HKSAR.

Appendix H

Top: The beginnings of the July 1st protest march at Victoria Park. Protestors gather on the basketball courts to wait to begin the procession through the street at 3 pm. Speakers and organizers weave through the crowd offering posters and water.



Middle: The march continues onto Hennessy Road. The protestors are heading towards the Central Administrative Offices where the city council is located.



Bottom: Some of the more creative protest props seen. The puppet in the middle represented the current Beijing-appointed Chief Executive. The man on the ladder to the left was collecting donations.



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