POLITECNICO DI TORINO SECOND SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE Master of Science in Sustainable Architecture *Honors theses*

Mega[Seoul] slum in megacity: a proposal for the district Baeksa-maeul

by Sangeun Lee

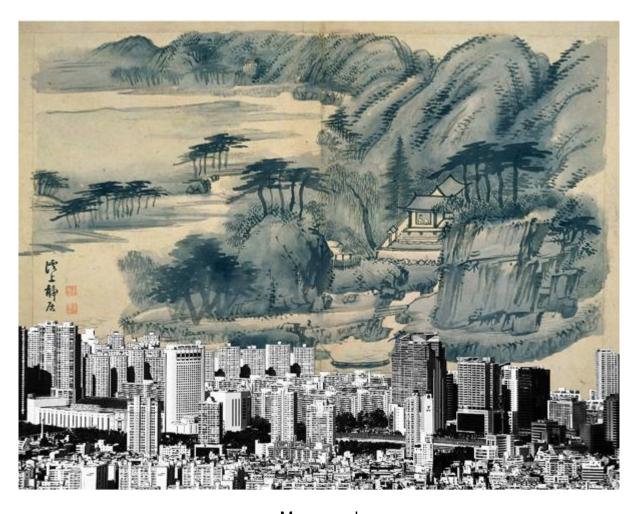
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Megaseoul

Since 1952 Seoul has started an unstoppable run towards an extraordinary urban and economic development; in fact it resulted one of the four largest city with the highest GDP in the world with a value of 774 billion dollars in 2012. From the architectural point of view, the city has suffered several changes that have radically transformed its appearance. A famous and recent example is the DDP (Dongdaemun Design Plaza), recently opened and defined as the largest irregular three-dimensional architecture of the world. Or the Lotte World Tower which will be completed in 2016 which will become the tallest skyscraper in the OECD. These are just some examples of a number of new buildings built by foreign architects that have few things in common to share with the traditional culture of the country. I certainly do not claim that every project necessarily has to maintain a link with the past but this kind of "Western style" could be the reason of a possible losing point of reference with the tradition and history of Korea.

From this reasoning came the idea of this thesis and starting from this problem I wondered what had been the causes of this sprawl. In which direction and what developments are going to affect the city of Seoul?

This thesis is a close-up of the Korean urbanism and in particular of Seoul, bringing out the history of its development, analyzing the conditions that led to its formation and expansion to become a mega city. Finally is also analyzed the case study of a slum district named "Baeksa-Maeul."



Megaseoul

Small village

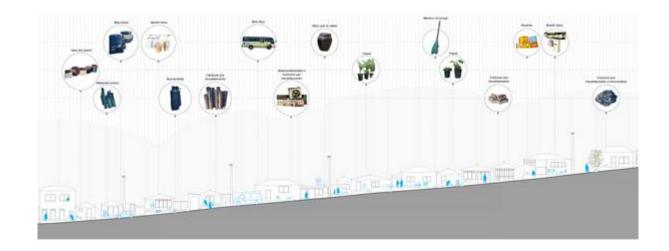
Until 1960 Baeksa-Maeul was a rural village and only in a second period the migrants from other slums. Began to transfer to this place, causing the increase of its population. In 1969 there were about 7.000 inhabitants.

Since the 1980s the area underwent to redevelop all around except the Baeksa-Maeul and in the present day from the satellite's images you can immediately notice the difference between the districts and the retrained Baeksa-Maeul

Today the quality of life is extremely low. The public transportation only arrives to the entrance of the district, health services and other essential services such as hospitals, supermarkets and commercial activities are located away from the neighborhood.

The inhabitants are missing spaces and therefore they occupy public space, the street.

A solt of occupation does not mean just leaving the stuff on the road but to build a private space of fundamental importance for social relations. For example is possible to find a chair on the way where people can stop for a rest, or to put a blanket on the floor and everyone brings some food so the street becomes their restaurant. All of these uses of the <u>neighborhood</u> fit as part of the landscape.



Smallvillage

Small architecture

The spaces of the public land (abandoned houses, parking lots ..) will be reused according to the needs of the neighborhood with the introduction of new and diversified services for the community and with the prospect of a new enlargement of the university.

So the new low-cost houses can be rented from both university students, associations and young entrepreneurs.

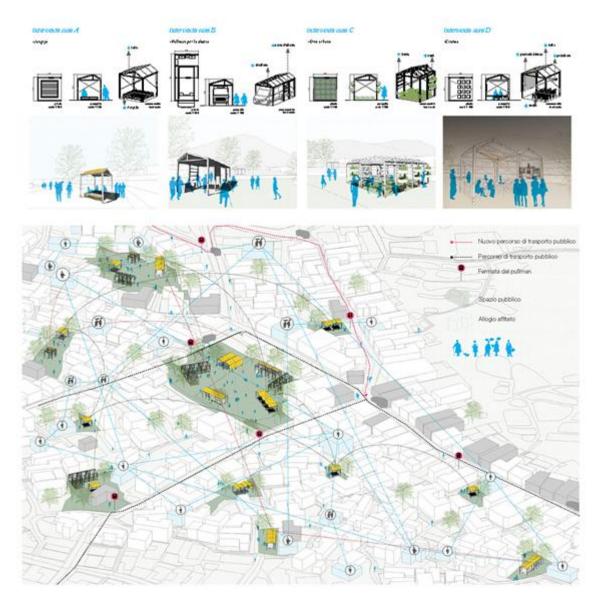
This solution may help to get lower the average age of the population and to change the appearance of the neighborhood.

The project 'Small Architecture' based on the system of "Self-Help-Way will help people and the future of the neighborhood in favor of new players to define their ideas independently and individually. The city hall of Baeksa Maeul can help them with a manual book and some volunteers to assist them.

The main idea is to start managing unused public space, allowing the citizens to maintain the current use made of it (parking lot), and slowly begin to organize it as they want. In the manual book you will learn how to build starting from the examples taken from everyday life: a rest area, parking the shower bus, urban gardens, cinema.

So this will form a micro-network of public spaces and will increase the quality of life of the neighborhood.

It is assumed that adapthing the preexisting structure is more suitable to the lives of the people rather than razing them to the ground and building a new skyscraper on a new out of nothing.



Smallarchitecture

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