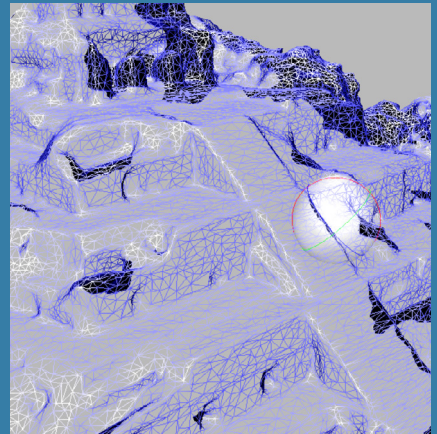


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The social-spatial construction of industrial workers' identity in early New China

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KEYWORDS. — Architectural History; Fieldwork Research; Literature Review; Social-spatial Perspective; China.

SUMMARY. — In 1949, the foundation of New China, the Chinese Communist Party rolled out the socialist system towards a nationwide development. Facing the after-war ruins, industrialization was one of the primary tasks for the new regime. In alliance with the Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, Alliance and Mutual Assistance, the Soviet Union aided China to realize 156 key industrial projects (DONG & WU, 2004). Similar to USSR, factories were not only workplace for production, but the embodiment of the new national identity and political system, and thus were also responsible for the livelihood of the workers. The workers' village – as a Chinese adapted model of the Soviet communal housing – became the most unique social and spatial practice in this period. A workers' village is a residential area close to the factory. Constructed according to communist standards, it was a crucial model for the novel community life in synchronization with the ideology of the new state (YANG, 2009; 2017).

This research focuses on workers' village and their living space, and tries to answer three questions: (1) How was the identity of this worker group constructed/molded, and how was the USSR-typology adapted to the new China? (2) From the socio-spatial perspective, how was the living space collectively regulated and institutionalized? By reviewing the history of that period of time, and fieldwork of the workers' housings, several routes of identity construction and social control approaches of the workers' living space surfaced. (3) In the last part, this paper concludes by looking to the present situation of some workers' villages and the residents. What did the workers' identity and their housings experience since the collapse of state-owned enterprises after the China's opening-up policy in 1978?

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