

编者按

城市是文化的聚集地,也是新文化的发源地.城市的变化是文化变化的根本使然,城市的建筑形态亦如此。

——编者按

中国城市的快速发展,给世界各国的建筑师带来了机遇,同时也让中国的城市问题、建筑问题吸引着国际社会的关注,一批批国际知名建筑大师在中国城市留下的地标“作品”所带来的结果是建筑面对的问题,既有功能性的要求,也应该有人们在文化上对它的期待与认可。

中国身处快速发展时期,引人入胜的新城市景观被创造在进程中,大尺度占了绝对控制地位。数量的制造模式被速度过分地强调,住宅、写字楼在加速地进行,各大城市建筑中的“象征主义”“形式主义”心浮气躁的表现,让真正的文化与思考被势弱了。城市持久的元素如能量消耗、垃圾回收、林产、自然发展、旅游等让视线越来越多的甚至丧失理由的建筑单体所占据,太多的单一功能区域,缺乏“编辑”:一种被整体城市生活需要的元素;一种为潜在协调合作所做的编辑;一种为城市空间效率以及潜在的公共基础设施等等。

怎样为城市的计划创造空间?怎样面对这些势不可当的空间消耗进程?怎样的空间能容纳这些物质,让其转化更紧密的空间,融入“都市”文化的潜能?

生于低地之国 Raised in the Low Lands

何新城 (荷兰)
Neville Mars

——译者按

荷兰设计在中国所受到的关注颇让人意外,倒不是说设计的水准不值得称道,而是在中国立足的荷兰设计公司寥寥无几。当然,中国最显要的建筑之一——中央电视台新址——是荷兰设计公司大都会建筑事务所 (OMA) 的设计作品,然而OMA素来都将自己小心翼翼地包装成一家彻底全球化的事务所,尽其所能地打消对其荷兰背景的一切联想。

作为荷兰人,对于如此勉强的身份认同我很难感同身受。事实上,这也是我们文化的基本成分。外露的忧虑和对任何本土事物鲜明的批评都是全民嗜好。没有任何传统是神圣的,也没有任何英雄或明星建筑师能免受批评。

——译者按

而在为中国杂志《Urban Flux》撰文时,我很难对同胞的作品如此挑剔。在中国的五年经历已让我明白,在荷兰被众人所爱的自我贬损常常让这里的朋友和同事误解或皱眉。我想借此机会将这些怪异的行为作个注解。正是这种对教条、潜规则和非理性习俗的不信任,成就了荷兰

的成功。多少有些有悖于直觉的是,文化认同的可塑性才是我们民族自豪感的基本要素。

固执地相信未来

尽管为数不多,但荷兰设计公司在中国的方法论却有显著的不同。总的来说,“荷兰是一个全民皆商的国家”的陈词滥调是不无道理的。当一个社会的中心目标就是赚钱,尤其是通过国际贸易时,任何虚伪的抱负都被淘汰,树立的则是(有时是残酷的)实用主义。而对一个好的设计和建筑来说,这都是相当重要的特点。但是,如我们在中国所见,实用主义本身并不是创新或创造力的驱动力,事实正相反。

另一显著的历史成因是我们对海洋的征服。我们坚定地通过审慎和不懈的科技创新将水域变成了土地,而且适宜人居。除去一定程度的骄傲,用工程的手段对主要国土范围内的自然环境进行改造,这种情况只可见于原来欧洲的皇家园林(在全国范围内操控大自然在当时是欧

城市的进程需要富有洞察的评价,让其成为一种真诚创新的中国都市制造模式的力量,能否想象一个被创造出的城市也许是十年全球进程中的典范,进一步吸引投资的可能性?

——编者按

我们这期的“荷兰建筑师在中国”的报道,主要通过荷兰建筑师如库哈斯、MVRDV、Cie等建筑事务所在中国建设中的角色来阐释他们对中国建筑与都市文化的新型关系的理解。同时我们也介绍“荷兰建筑百年”在中国的展览。20世纪的荷兰建筑设计主要呈现出5种风格流派:传统主义、表现主义、功能主义、理性主义和后现代主义,其发展历程可以认为是国际建筑发展的一个重要缩影和断面,研究荷兰建筑的发展,一定程度上可以帮助我们更好地认识世界建筑发展的脉络和走向,因为建筑思想运动是无法孤立于大的社会发展环境而独立存在的。

从某种角度上认可生产、消费、流动性、物质主义的普遍性,参与当代城市的规划、设计,建筑师驾驭与在建筑中实现的创造新城市的力量,让建筑作为城市总体构思的元素发展演变,让城市非常和谐而清晰,这也许是荷兰建筑师或其他国外建筑师在中国城市建设中面对的问题。

——译者按

洲皇家园林的特权)。对于设计的威力催生出无限的信任。其结果是:全国都是梦想家,这不是奢侈,而是必需。

在此过程中,堤防和沟渠的平滑线条切割自然风景,形成城市框架,亦成为荷兰美学的标志:纯粹而理性地轻松自在。这是实用主义的乌托邦的产物,目的在于安全地为日益流动的中产阶级提供便利,提醒人们每一平方米争夺来自大海的土地。荷兰以高度关联的城市组团悉心容纳了她的商人们,可以说播下了今天紧凑型城市的种子。作为一个拥有众多设计师的小国,这样纯粹的心态已扩散成为在当代建筑、规划和设计界的一股强大的全球化潮流。

然而,人们还是禁不住要问,这个小小的、对秩序有些偏执的国家,与中国这样广袤、繁盛而杂乱的国家有何干系?

基本说来,中国今天必须以荷兰阻止洪水一样的大胆和傲气,来引导都市化的洪流。就更细微的

层面来说,中国必须造就能服务于新兴中产阶级的城市;不仅为工厂的工人,或被动郊区化了的服务业人群,而且为日益个体化的、具有高度创意并具有企业家精神的公民——从某种程度来说,荷兰和当代中国的都市人群颇为相似。

——编者按

但是,不少问题阻碍了这些目标在中国的实现。急功近利的市场实用主义和政治思维模糊了对城市化关键问题的认识。相反——对本文有些讽刺意味的是——中国的规划文化透露出一种对建成后环境拥有绝对调控力的强大信心。对一个几乎在一夜间、以人类历史上前所未有的规模新建城市的国家来说,这是不难理解的,况且其对现有环境的顾忌相当有限。然而,不同于荷兰精心修饰的城市风景,这里完全不是技术研究或战略规划的结果。我们必须承认,如果对真正驱使城市化进程的关键性动力不作评估,那么协调空间的任何尝试都是徒劳。事实上,即使在今天,中国的设计师仍然屡屡被贬为工匠。好的建筑和规划应有的分析阶段丧失了,同样丧失的是在战略层面上解决问题的可能。

于是陷入了两难的境地。为了应对全球化的经济衰退,中国仍需要乘大规模都市化的浪潮,加速建设比以往任何时候都要重要。这似乎解释了“根本没有时间设计”的成因,令人悲哀的是,这很快成为了自我实现的预言。残酷的事实是自从开放政策以来,两个并行的世界以同样的步履生成:亮闪闪的自上而下的城市景观,以及周围的无序组织。标志性的塔楼和大型商场对应的是半都市化的村庄和半工业化的区域。但是,即使是这样明显划分的空间,在近距离审视时,发现它也是含混不清的。这两种都市形态既相互惧怕,又相互滋养。就在本土和外来建筑师都相当乐意为下一个封闭社区作设计的同时,此类项目的集合以更为市场化的无意识开发之形式 (MUD) 扩张了城市的景观。

面对此原生动力,宏观规划与微观生态的融汇,再加上超越规划者记录速度的都市化进程,任何传统的设计概念都变得不再适用了。心急的政策制定者开始莽撞地抄袭西方已然失败的规划模式。事实上,在中国速度的范畴内,即使是经过精心研究的、纯粹的、具有自我批评性的设计,也是不够的。

动态密度

这些是让人害怕、独一无二又令人兴奋的城市化动力,它迫切地需要实用主义的乌托邦。不仅要有关于未来的梦想,还有(允许我说“荷兰式”的)相信设计能实现梦想,并缔造长远未来的信心。

MUD的概念似乎是城市建造过程中不可缺失的力量,但在中国还有希望。坚守这一内聚力,我们可以对散点式城市组织重拾掌控。研究世界各地的城市,我们会发现极为相似的成长轨迹,无论文化与地理条件多么相异,从小城市到大都市的发展,讲述的都是典型的进化故事。在城

市发展的每一阶段,城市天然的引力似乎总能维系建筑和人口密度相当的比率。简单来说,一个缓慢成熟的市场驱动型城市,会造就健康的租金梯度,从而缔造一个紧凑的城市,而只有外力才能够分解和拆散它。所谓的蔓生则是一个含糊的结果。

在城市发展过程中,蔓生成为一切贬义事物的总称。在现实生活中,以可达性为例,城市组织中断的地点和成因都能被评估。比如在北京,过量的道路建设产生了我们所说的“基础设施蔓生”(城市更多的面积被柏油马路占领,而不能服务于新的城市组织)。无所不在的“单一蔓生”是单一功能区的扩散。这也要归咎于不透明的房地产文化。但在中国最有害的仍是“政策蔓生”和“速度蔓生”。

为了反击明显失控的郊区化,已有政策出台来引导超大城市之外的增长。然而这些政策本身亦混乱并会促成蔓生,它们严重加剧了散点式的城市扩张以及已然稀缺的肥沃耕地的城市化。速度蔓生同样是中国特有的现象。缓慢进化的城市能够长得更为紧凑和有效(就像欧洲的中型城市一样)。在一定的发展速度下,城市的引力将不能够维持陡增的密度曲线。城市化的某些地块远远超出了城市的核心,任意的项目不但超出了城中心设施之所能及,甚至超出了基础设施之所能及。城市先像一个平底锅一样摊开,再被城内的马路切割,并形成城市边缘的碎片区域,紧凑的黏度变成了分散的混乱。

然而,速度也是动态密度的救赎。只有中国能够将此力量大规模使用,至少是在机会之窗关闭之前。那些缓慢的欧洲城市就是城市化的拼凑工程。它们永远在调整以适应最新的要求和技术升级。这使得它们可爱,风景如画。然而它们只能在小范围内运作,因为解决方案不过是在缝缝补补——在像巴黎这样较大的城市,我们能看到同样唐突的双重性:像博物馆一样美丽的核心区被麻烦重重的现代边缘地带所环绕。

受用短期内确定的不间断的速度,可以让设计师(更不用说开发商)对未来的发展保持预期。如通过有战略性的设计,我们就能避免缝补工作,我们就能事先阻止其不断的扩张。中国的速生城市需要对明日的成功抱有期望。那样的话,蔓生将成为“过渡性蔓生”,失衡或功能单一的临时郊区化状态将随时间的推移而被吸收成都市核心区的健康组织。如能相信未来,经济的低谷期则是挣脱闪电式发展的压力之良机,提供喘息的机会。这是中国长久等待的梦想未来的时刻。

当下的城市政策仍然出于恐惧。怕人口众多,怕混乱、惧怕贫民窟,最终也怕大都市。相反,西方的规划师和建筑师则对密度的偏爱久已有之。尤其是荷兰的设计师受益于荷兰是个高密度的国家这一普遍迷思。这也许能解释当我们谈到密度时,仿佛它是品质的同义词;为什么那么多的荷兰工作室花大部分时间来研究城市、

而不是商业建筑。密度被赋予了大都市的光华,它意味着多样性和令人愉悦的复杂性,甚至有问题解决者的功能。然而,居民消费者却鄙视密度。如果负担得起,不管是在荷兰、中国或是别的地方,人们都会成群结队地前往郊区,然而都市的密度将不能再被回避,相反,它应该受到设计师,甚至政策制定者们的拥抱。在一个住宅摩天大楼比比皆是国家,设计师有义务让密度成为舒适度的同义词。

密集而舒适的混居组团让我们能在战略层面来驾驭城市。密度应被当作有形的物质来理解、对待。它有精确的地点、速度、方向和分散度。它受环绕物的影响,也影响环境周遭。就闪电城市化进程而言,亦是完美的调控工具。偶然地区(尤其是中型城市)能在发展后获得新的品质。新的规划区,如能对将来的发展抱有期待,就能在灵活的框架内扩大业已存在的都市核心,竣工后的环境不仅能被接受,而且还能作为动态的体系而繁荣。

金钱万能

我在中国的体验足以让我在脑海深处预见对本土城市批评的喃喃抱怨:如果时间、空间不再是敌人,他们会争辩,至少金钱还是。可以承认,“中国价格”是实用主义最顽强的形式,但是也提供了不承担责任的种种借口。越来越多的事实表明金钱不再是健康发展的大敌,保守主义才是。特别是在我们的规划项目中,我们要费大力来证明可持续发展的解决方案并不需要额外的费用。小观念可以带来大改变。事实上,舒适的、对行人友好的零排放的总体规划的真正障碍是政府的规定和建筑标准——亦是日常政策蔓生的典型例子。仔细的分析表明,在现有的规则体系内,可持续发展的规划无法诞生。在中国,破陈立新规不仅是创造性的行为,也是很重要的责任,这和钱没有干系。

——译者按

我不能不想到伦勃朗,或许是荷兰惟一的真的大师。他最伟大的作品仅仅产生在个人遭遇经济危机的时刻,他摒弃了所有陈规,开拓了新的、相当大胆、自由的表达方式。画面里没有那些为他带来财富、赢得声誉的套路,他内心平静地画着,驱使他的是探索新鲜的、超越金钱回报的迫切。如果要给中国推荐一个荷兰的典范,这是最合适的。(中央美术学院,董冀平译)

——译者按

——译者按

Neville Mars—何新城,动态城市基金会(DCF)创始人

It’s remarkable how much attention Dutch design has received in China. Not so much because the quality of the work doesn’t deserve it, but there are barely a dozen design firms with a decent foothold in the region. Sure, one of China’s most prominent buildings, the CCTV tower by OMA, is a product of a Dutch company, but they make precarious efforts to cast themselves as an entirely global office, minimizing any reference to their Dutch descent.

As a Dutchman I can relate to the reluctance to be identified as such. It is in fact, I want to argue, a quintessential component of our culture. It is a national sport to be outwardly melancholy and explicitly critical of anything homegrown. No tradition is sacred, no hero or star architect spared from critique.

Yet it is hard to be so critical of the work of my fellow countrymen within the context a Chinese magazine. Five years in China have taught me the self-depreciation we love in Holland is often misunderstood and frowned upon by my Chinese friends and colleagues. Let me take this opportunity to put this odd behavior in perspective. It is exactly this sense of distrust for dogmas, society’s unwritten rules and irrational customs that is at the heart of the Dutch success. Counterintuitively, the malleability of our cultural identity is an essential component of our national pride.

A stubborn trust in the future

So, though small in numbers, something quite distinct can be traced in the approach of Dutch design companies in China. In general terms the cliché of ‘Holland nation of traders’ holds some merit. When the central objective of a society is to make money, and particularly through international trade, this can purge any false ambitions and install a (sometimes ruthless) sense of pragmatism. Altogether not an unimportant feature of good design and architecture. However, as we see in China, pragmatism alone is not a driving force behind innovation or creativity; quite the opposite.

The other obvious historic force has been our conquest of the sea. Steadily, through very deliberate and unremitting technical innovation we’ve carved out a land from the water and made it inhabitable. Apart from a decent dose of hubris, this (a nationwide dominance over nature at a time when the carefully engineered landscape could only be found in Europe’s royal gardens) has generated a near infinite trust in the power of design itself. The result: a nation of dreamers, not out of luxury, but out of necessity.

In the process, the sleek technocratic lines of dikes

and ditches cutting through the landscape, framing the cities, have become the basis of what can be considered the trademark Dutch aesthetic: a dry, rationalized light-heartedness. The product of a pragmatic utopia aimed to safely facilitate an increasingly mobile middle-class. Conscious of every single square meter gained from the sea, Holland has meticulously packed its merchants in efficient well-connected urban clusters. Arguably the seed of what today is branded as the compact city model. Being a small country with a high density of designers, this dry mindset has dispersed to become a strong global current in contemporary architecture, planning and design.

Still, it’s fair to wonder how this tiny, obsessively organized country is relevant to an immensely vast, booming and chaotic country like China.

On a very basic level, China must today reveal the same bold arrogance in streamlining the flood of its urbanization as the Dutch once did preventing their country from flooding. On a more subtle level, China must produce cities, designed to serve its emerging middle class; not as factory workers or even as passive suburbanized service providers but as an body of increasingly individualized, highly creative, entrepreneurial citizens – in some ways the Dutch and modern Chinese urbanites are very similar.

However, many problems seem to obstruct such goals in China. Simultaneously, both harsh market pragmatism, and politicized reasoning obscure the awareness of key problems facing urbanization. Instead – and that’s not without irony within the context of this article – Chinese planning culture reveals a near infinite trust in the ability to completely orchestrate the built environment. This is understandable for a nation building entire cities practically overnight at a scale unseen in human history, and with at best a moderate regard for the existing setting. However, unlike Holland’s manicured landscape this is by no means the result of technical research or strategic planning. We must acknowledge that without critical assessment of the underlying forces that actually drive the urbanization process, any attempt at spatial orchestration will be in vain. The fact is, even today the role of the Chinese designer is still too often reduced to that of a draftsman. The analytical phase that good architecture and planning should contain is forfeited and with it the potential to solve problems on any serious strategic level.

This introduces a serious quagmire. Warding off the global economic downturn, riding the wave of urbanization China still requires, an accelerated speed of construction seems more important than ever. This explains the general sentiment that ‘there

is simply no time to design’. Sadly this is quickly becoming a self-fulfilling prophecy. The brutal reality is that since the open door policies two parallel worlds have been emerging at an equal pace; the shiny top-down cityscapes and the obscure organic mostly haphazard urbanization that surrounds all the glitter. The iconic tower and the mega-mall versus the semi-urbanized village and the semi-industrial zone. But even this apparent spatial clarity is, at closer inspection, entirely muddled. These two urban conditions both fear each other, yet feed off each other. While architects, local and foreign, happily design the next pristine gated community, aggregated projects expand the urban landscape in the form of more market-driven unintentional development, or MUD*.

Facing such organic force, of the macro-planned merging with the micro-organic, and swarmed by urbanization faster than planners can map, any traditional notion of design will be inadequate. Impatient policy-makers bluntly copy failed Western planning models, while in fact within the context of the Chinese speed even well-researched, dry and self-critical design will no longer suffice.

Dynamic Density*

These are the terrifying, unique and exciting urban dynamics that desperately require a kind of pragmatic utopia. Not just a dream for the future, but a (dare I say Dutch) trust in design to realize this dream and carefully shape the long-term future.

The notion of MUD seems an inevitable force shaping the city, but for China there is hope. Adhering to this same inherent force we can begin to regain control over the scattered urban landscape. Studying cities around the world we’ve found very similar growth patterns. Notwithstanding culture or geography the growth from a small city to a metropolis describes a fairly typical evolution. At each stage of its development the city’s natural urban gravity seems to be able to uphold a distinct ratio of building and population density. Put simply, a slowly maturing market-driven city produces a healthy rent gradient. This in effect is a compact city, only to be dispersed or disrupted by external forces. Then so-called sprawl is the ambiguous outcome.

Sprawl, however has become a catch-all term for anything negative in urban development. In reality, based on accessibility, the specific place and cause of disruptions of the urban tissue can be assessed. For example, in Beijing excessive road building has generated what we’ve coined as ‘infra-sprawl’ (more square meters of the city are consumed

by tarmac, than can serve the new urban fabric). Omnipresent ‘mono-sprawl’ is the proliferation of mono-functional areas. Among others this is caused by a surreptitious real-estate culture and the lingering past of communal land distribution. But most damaging in China are ‘policy-sprawl’ and ‘speed-sprawl’.

Struggling to counter the obviously rampant suburbanization, policies have been put into place to coax growth away from the expanding mega-cities. In themselves cluttered and sprawling, these policies surprisingly gravely augment the scatter expansion and rural urbanization of China’s scarce fertile lands they aim to protect. Speed-sprawl too, is a particularly Chinese phenomenon. While slowly evolving cities can grow to become both compact and efficient (think mid-sized European cities), it seems at a certain speed of development urban gravity is simply not strong enough to maintain a steep density curve. Patches of urbanization are hurled far beyond the urban core. Random projects land beyond the reach of downtown facilities, even beyond the reach of infrastructure. The city first flattens out like a pancake, is sliced up by inner-city highways, and then fragments around the edges. Compact cohesion becomes scattered chaos.

Yet, speed is also the main redeeming force of Dynamic Density. A force that only China can apply at any serious scale, at least if sets its mind to it before the window of opportunity has shut. Those slow European cities are urban patchworks. They are perpetually adjusting to the latest requirements and technical upgrades. This makes them cute and picturesque, but as patchwork of solutions they only manage to operate at a miniature scale – in a larger city like Paris the familiar blunt duality can be witnessed; beautiful museum-like core surrounded by a troublesome modern periphery.

Enjoying unrelenting speed as near certainty, is a benefit that allows designers (not to mention developers) to anticipate future development. We can bypass the patchwork, if only, through strategic design, we preempt its ongoing expansion. China’s instant cities need merely anticipate tomorrow’s success. In that case sprawl becomes ‘trans-sprawl’, the temporary condition of unbalanced or mono-functional suburbanization that with time is absorbed and integrated as a healthy part of the urban core. Trusting in the future, the economic downturn becomes an opportune breather to break free from the stronghold of pressured flash development. China’s long awaited moment to dream.

Currently urban policies are still mainly based on fear. Fear for crowding, fear for chaos, for slums,

ultimately fear for the metropolis itself. Conversely, Western architects have a long-standing love for density. And particularly the Dutch benefit from a widespread illusion that claims Holland to be a very dense country. This might explain why we talk and write about density almost as if it’s synonymous to quality; why so many Dutch offices spent most of their time on urban research projects as opposed to commercial buildings. Density is granted a metropolitan aura, suggestive of diversity and pleasant complexity, even problem solving qualities. Yet, the residential consumer despises density. When people can afford it, they flock to the suburbs, be it in Holland, China or elsewhere. But metropolitan density is a condition that can no longer be avoided and instead should be embraced, not just by the designer, but by policy-makers. In a country where the residential sky-scraper is the norm, rather than the exception, designers have the task to make density synonymous with comfort.

Dense but comfortable mixed-residential clusters allow us to steer the city on a strategic level. We should understand and treat density as a physical substance. It has a precise location, a speed, a direction and a treat of dispersion. It’s affected by its surrounding mass and in turn affects its surroundings. This makes it the perfect tool within the context of flash urbanization. Haphazard areas (particularly in mid-sized cities) can grow to obtain new quality. While newly planned districts, anticipating ongoing development can expand the existing urban core with flexible frameworks to produce environments that are not just acceptable upon completion, but thrive as dynamic systems.



Money talks...

My experience in China is sufficient enough to hear the mumbling rhetoric of local critics in the back of my mind. If indeed time or even space are no longer the enemy, they would argue, then at least money still is. Admittedly the China price presents the staunchest form of pragmatism, but then again one can always find reasons not take responsibility. It seems to me increasingly evident that money is no longer the cap on healthy progress; conservatism is. Specifically in our urban planning projects we make great effort to prove sustainable solutions don’t necessarily amount to extra costs. Small concepts can have a big impact. For instance, the real obstacles of achieving a comfortable pedestrian friendly zero-emission masterplan are the official regulations and building codes – a case in point of everyday policy-sprawl. Careful analyses shows that within the current regulations real sustainable plans can’t be produced. In China breaking the rules to set a new standard is not just a creative exercise, it’s a crucially important responsibility. And money has little do with it.

I can’t help think of Rembrandt, maybe the only true Dutch master. His greatest work, in which he abandons all common rules to make way for a new, aggressively free expression, came only after financial disaster had knocked at his door. Instead of indulging in the successful formula with which he had made his fame and fortune, he painted on in serenity pushed by a visionary urgency to explore the new, over financial rewards. If there is a Dutch example for China this would be it. **Uf**