

'Moments of the Future': Imagining the City and Monuments of Pyongyang in 2050

JELENA MANDIĆ PhD Student, Seoul National University

Abstract

The possibility of reconciliation between the two Koreas and a potential change of the political regime in North Korea raises the question of the urban futures of North Korean cities, which at the moment serve as a stage for power consolidation through the monumental propaganda of the present regime. This paper examines an urban design project that imagines urban future of Pyongyang in 2050 and its colossal socialist era monuments after an assumed unification. Instead of erasing the socialist past of the city by removing the existing monuments (which was the practice in other socialist countries), this project proposes adding new layers of monuments that would represent and commemorate the new political and economic realities of 'unification,' and at the same time preserve the identity and legibility of the city. This alternative strategy was made possible by combining design thinking with the scenario technique utilized in Future Studies. Within the framework of the established scenario and politico-economic circumstances it compels, the method of writing *History of the future* was developed as a tool for envisioning an urban reality of 2050 Pyongyang, from which the *Grid of Moments* project would arise. The resulting project, conceived within the fictional story, allows historical and future ideologies, represented by the historical and new monuments, to coexist in Pyongyang through concurrent and respective acknowledgement. In this way, the role of architecture is shifted from serving the political regime towards acting as a social critique, as well as inducing a social transformation. These thought strategies were enabled by approaching design through

scenario and storytelling method developed within it, as it left space for more imagination and creativity, and introduced a degree of objectivity to the design process by allowing different ideologies to be considered.

Keywords: Socialist monuments, urban future, Pyongyang, urban design, urban theory.

Introduction

‘As the past is gathered into the present and the gathering body of experience finds a home in the mind, the present acquires temporal depth—loses its acrid instantaneity, its razorblade quality. One might call this interiorization of the time or time rendered transparent.

It seems to me that past, present and future must be active in the mind’s interior as a continuum. If they are not, the artefact we make will be without temporal depth or associative perspective.’

Aldo Van Eyck

This paper examines an urban project that delved into the urban future of Pyongyang by 2050, questioning the methodology behind the design process and exploring its contribution to the transformative role of architecture in society as well as its relationship with the political regime that the project envisions.¹ With particular regard to Pyongyang, issues concerning future urban development and the role of architecture in society offer a valuable case study. However, approaching the design for the future brings significant methodological problems, as the input information regarding social and urban circumstances within which a design of an urban project commonly departs, is not immediately available. The project presented here, is focused on the urban future of Pyongyang’s colossal monuments, and it was designed within an academic studio,² in which scenario technique was used to approach design looking 35 years into the future—a period of time commonly used by scenario practitioners as an interval that it is possible to grasp in a grounded way in one’s lifetime. Scenarios, however, are not design focused, but intended to give a better understanding of the plausible future. Hence, to be able to approach design within the scenario³ a new method which extends the common design process, and which we discuss in this paper, was created.

Pyongyang is a socialist city, predominantly untouched by global changes, and is commonly referred to as an ‘open-air museum of socialist architecture.’⁴ Apart from providing everyone with a home, any socialist city has important political

brought to another level. Not only were the sculptures of ‘revolutionary’ leaders and revolution inspired monuments placed at key junctures throughout the city, but the central part of Pyongyang also became organized around three main visual and communicational axes (Figure 1) of great political value, albeit achieved rather spontaneously.⁶ The first visual line was formed between Kim Il Sung Square (金日成廣場 *Kimilsŏng Gwangjang*) and the Mansu Hill Grand Monument (萬壽臺大紀念碑 *Mansudae Daeginyŏmbi*, completed in 1972). The second axis was established in 1975 when the Juche Tower (主體思想塔 *Chuch’e Sasang T’ap*) was built on the east bank of the Taedong River (大同江 *Taedonggang*), facing the Square from across the river. The third axis connected the Monument to the Founding of the Party (黨創建紀念塔 *Tangch’ang Gŏn’ginyŏm T’ap*, completed in 1995) with the Mansu Hill Grand Monument and, indeed, extended as far as incorporating the pyramid shaped Ryugyong (*Ryugyŏng*) Hotel.⁷ Important governmental and representational buildings were also built along these three main urban axes, highlighting their political importance and visual effect.⁸

Due to the close ties between these monuments and the governing political regime as well as the socialist history of the country, any vision alluding to an alternate urban future of the city would necessarily raise a question of what to do with these historic landmarks full of political importance when the political ideology they represent no longer exists. When other former socialist states began transitioning to governance of a different political nature, the general practice concerning these kinds of monuments was to have them removed, or collected for display in a historical park, where they lose their original role and meaning but their historical importance remains acknowledged.

Envisioning the urban reality of Pyongyang in 2050, the urban project presented here proposes an alternative strategy, whereby existing aspects of urban architecture remain utilized, but for purposes different to former ideologies. Through careful staging and positioning of the existing monuments, such as the oversized sculptures of former leaders and symbols of ideology, they became important urban landmarks, carriers of the city’s identity recognizable in city panoramas and the most popular tourist spots. For this reason, instead of erasing the socialist past of the city by removing existing monuments, this project proposes adding new layers of monuments, called *Moments*, that represent and commemorate the new political and economic realities of ‘unification’, whilst blending in with existing structures to form a new architectural reality for Pyongyang.

This paper argues that this kind of approach was made possible by coupling design thinking with the scenario technique used in Future Studies, providing opportunities for architects to investigate alternative political outcomes. Scenarios do not aim to give accurate predictions nor probable future realities but more

so plausible alternatives, open to the unlikely yet possible outcomes.⁹ In order to produce a spectrum of unlikely outcomes, they combine qualitative data and trend analysis with intuitive thinking in the form of writing a fictional narrative.¹⁰ The general approach to predicting future situations and occurrences is based on experience, however scenarios are challenging through compelling us to cope with unfamiliar situations.¹¹ This was the case with created scenarios for *Pyongyang 2050*, within which the project that deals with Pyongyang's monuments, called *Grid of Moments* was conceived.

The challenge of creating a project within the framework of the scenario and unfamiliar political and socio-economic setting, which it envisions, raised methodological issues in the design process. A typical design for an urban project starts with an analysis of current conditions and is directed towards an aspired future, where both of these are given by a plan and a program. In circumstances where both of these were unknown, and the data necessary for the analysis is not immediately available, a method of "storytelling" was created to incorporate the dimension of time by writing *History of the future*. This method extended the common design process by employing the element of imagination through writing in the pre-design phase to compensate for the lack of the input data. It also enabled an approach to the future beyond the mechanical ways trusted by the scientific clock, incorporating subjective time,¹² in which past, present and future make a continuum in the social and spatial development. Thus, the project *Grid of Moments*, which was conceived within this fictional story, is a result of a study not only concerned with the current state of affairs, but one that examines the flow in a city development. It was created as a response to dynamic processes in the city life which the *History of the Future* illuminates through time focused approach. As a consequence, the resulting project values the city's history and continuity, simultaneously shifting the role of architecture from adapting the urban space at the behest of existing political structures toward creating a space of social change by constructing a scene, where opposing ideologies and systems of power coexist.

The Scenario

The principal methodology of the scenario technique consists of selecting and combining two key factors in order to create a spectrum of plausible futures. The two key factors we identified as crucial for the spatial future of Pyongyang were the economic and political systems. These two factors lie at the core of separation of North and South Korea, and their different future development could give extreme opposite end results.

In the scenario within which the *Grid of Moments* project was developed, the two states unite in the form of a federation: the Federal Republic of Korea, in which both states—the Republic of North Korea and Republic of South Korea—have a large degree of economic and political autonomy. A federal government is formed with the equal participation of both states, with the seat of the government and the capital of the Federation located in the former Demilitarized Zone. In the former DPRK, the Korean Worker’s Party (朝鮮勞動黨 *Chosŏllodongdang*) was disbanded and three new political parties were formed. The Kim dynasty still has a large number of supporters among the *conservatives* in the country, but a strong body of opposition is also present, mostly young progressives who want radical changes in the country. Political tensions between the two sides persist long after the unification. Economically, the Republic of North Korea will continue to function as a largely Socialist country, but the economic circumstances are changing as Free Economic Zones (FEZ) are formed within overall limited market economy of the Republic of North Korea.¹³

These political and economic developments bring changes to Pyongyang’s cityscape. On the north side of Pyongyang, a special economic zone called *Shindoshi* (The New Town) is built as a centre for international economic relationships. This new city area is characterized by super-modern high-rise office buildings. The south side of the city becomes the place of migration of the poor and unemployed from all regions of North Korea. This settlement of squatters, poor services and low-quality residential buildings is called ‘Newcomers Town’. The sharp contrast between these two new neighbourhoods reflects the continued differences in the social and material status of citizens in the newly formed Republic of North Korea.¹⁴

With the opening of the Republic of North Korea’s borders to tourists and changes in lifestyle for the local population, such as shorter working hours and more leisure time, there is an increased need for public facilities and outdoor activities in the city that was formerly characterized by its empty and deserted streets.¹⁵

History of the future as a Method

The unfamiliar political setting of the scenario has challenged the design process by creating a situation where it is not possible to rely on experience to approach design problems encountered. To imagine how Pyongyang would develop in this scenario, and to design space within it, storytelling as a method in the form of writing *History of the future* was fabricated within the framework of the given scenario. This “history” places a “historian” in the future, writing about the

developments that occurred in the past and at present up until 2050. The story begins as a narrative of the city's history and develops into fiction, following the presumed change of political and economic circumstances after the establishment of the Federation. The fictional narrative further envisions the imaginary protagonists, their personal feelings and attitudes towards the political and economic changes, and how these affected their everyday life. Finally, the project for *Grid of Moments* arose from these envisioned circumstances, as a part of the fictional story, presumably created by the protagonists. Further, unlike the usual design representations, the design of this project was presented inside the fictional story, with design drawings as illustrations together with historical images and maps.

Writing a *History of the future* extended the common design procedure by using imagination to cross the bridge between now and then, what we know, and what will be known at that time, thus creating circumstances grounded on the predictions given by the scenario in a systematic way. By applying this method, we were able to imagine how the city would change and how the actors of the story would behave under this new set of circumstances. This fictive narrative was a way to place ourselves in such a situation in order to develop a sense of empathy with relevant characters living in this new reality, "learning" how these actors might think, act or react under these conditions, rather than merely pushing our own ungrounded ideas forward. Through this approach social circumstances, as well as the urban problems to be solved, which would otherwise be impossible to predict, were brought to light. The project of Moments was a strategic solution for these issues and, therefore, it would not be possible to create such project without the element of imagination employed through storytelling.

In the *History of the future* the project *Grid of Moments* was initiated by planners and designers to address two problems that the fictional development of Pyongyang faced after the unification—how to bring life to the deserted streets of Pyongyang and how to develop a solution for the existing monuments that will represent a past ideology in the future. The former goal was openly brought forward; the latter one was not openly admitted.

Throughout the depiction of this emerging scenario, the monuments of Pyongyang are closely tied to its social past, emerging present and future political system. Any system that has gone through transition dealt with this propaganda by removing it, and in a way erasing part of the city's history. However, within the *History of the future*, the actors decided to keep the monuments for reasons that extend beyond their political and symbolic roles. First, according to the scenario for the project, the political regime they represent still has a large number of supporters among conservatives who hold significant economic power in the country. Their removing would cause political tensions and threat to the peace

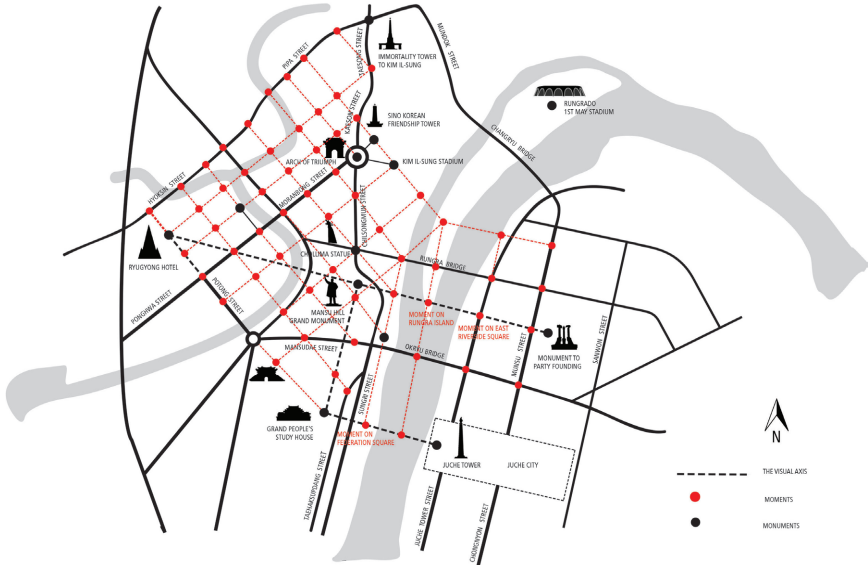


Figure 2 Diagram of the urban core of Pyongyang with the 'Grid of Moments.' By author.

obtained with great effort. Second, monuments represent important landmarks of this socialist city that give Pyongyang its unique character i.e. not only are they main landmarks of the city, but they also are the city's main tourist attraction.

Overall, Pyongyang is an artificial city created by a master plan, shaped by both socialist and modernist ideals.¹⁶ These design schools were continuously criticized after the 1960s as it became obvious that there were missing qualities otherwise present in traditional cities.¹⁷ One of these theories is Kevin Lynch's theory of the legibility of a city. According to Lynch, people in urban surroundings orient themselves by creating mental maps of cities and their urban spaces. Legibility or apparent clarity is an important quality for a city in this process, which allows people to create "positive environmental image" and promotes facilitated orientation which enhances their sense of emotional security.¹⁸ Some of the qualities that Lynch considered important for legibility of a city can be found in the urban matrix of Pyongyang. Unlike ideal modernist plans, such as Le Corbusier's *Plan Voisin*¹⁹ (where there are no clear directions and an observer loses any structured sense of orientation between identical dwellings), Pyongyang's network of monuments and monumental buildings (together with open views) ensures easy orientation and embodies a "positive mental image." Straight paths with clear direction, and landmarks in the shape of monuments, each with individual qualities that

contrast the environment, are visible from different distances and are arranged in continuous sequences that become extremely useful in any perception of the urban environment. Therefore, the socialist monuments of Pyongyang do not only serve the purpose of political propaganda, but also contribute to legibility of the city and play an important role in the city's identity. Without these historical monuments, Pyongyang could revert into being just another city with endless residential blocks lacking notable and apparent character. The protagonists of the *History of the future* are aware of this, and therefore try to find a solution for not only keeping the monuments, but also maintaining their visibility and clarity within Pyongyang's urban corridors. In these circumstances, the *Grid of Moments* (Figure 2) arises as an understated, nonaggressive solution for Pyongyang's urban problems arisen in a post-unification reality.

The Grid Strategy: A New Layer of Memory, Commemoration and Meaning

The design of the *Grid of Moments* was initiated, within the fictional story, to address a lack of public life in Pyongyang, and as an attempt to humanize oversized streets and squares intended for political representation and mass spectacles, which in everyday life became void, little more than deserted urban spaces. The concept for this project was to treat the future Pyongyang as a palimpsest for another layer of monuments called *Moments*, arranged in a grid, which would be added to the framework of the existing monuments. This was a simple strategy of creating nodes of public life in the streets, parks and squares of Pyongyang to encourage social interactions through spatial interventions on different scales. Rather than an authoritative master plan, this project represents merely a policy imposing a finer abstract grid, relating to the view corridors of the existing socialist era monuments, to determine the location of these nodes. Each *Moment* would be designed by a different architect or a designer, and would have a different content. These measures would bring life, tourism and diversity to the city and encourage social interactions through public spaces for public events, festivals, exhibitions etc. The *Moments* would be built slowly over time, and the *Grid* would subsequently expand from the historic centre of Pyongyang towards more remote neighbourhoods and areas. The guidelines developed by the municipal government of Pyongyang had no strict rules for designing these interventions, except not to interfere with the clarity of the city's corridors, paths and staged views, around which the city was organized. For this reason, majority of the *Moments* are designed to be open but submerged interventions.

The open policy of the *Grid* gave an opportunity to architects, artists and urbanites to find new and different approaches to implement changes into the urban landscape of Pyongyang in the way, in which it does not interfere with the positive qualities of the city, nor does it try to erase its history. The value of the *Grid of Moments* as an urban project is twofold: first, it values the political and urban history of the city, and, secondly, it creates greater “walkability” and promotes active public life in the socialist-modernist city. However, as the *History of the future* implies, although not openly admitted, the *Moments* (just like monuments) have hidden meanings and are fabricated as part of a strategy to address issues surrounding socialist monuments in a discrete and diplomatic way. This strategy is purely architectural and it is contained through an opposition between the composition based on grid to the one based on axes, and the opposing nature of architectural approach of monuments and *Moments*.

Throughout the history of urban planning, the axis is recognized as a symbol of power and authority, and the compositions based on the axis are associated with social order and hierarchy. In contrast, the composition of *Grid of Moments* is hierarchically neutral and politically democratic. Moreover, unlike modernist urbanism grid plans, which also aimed towards hierarchical neutrality, it did not erase older layers of the city, but conformed to the existing urban tissue instead. Furthermore, the *Grid of Moments* incorporated the main axes and socialist monuments and thus neutralized the political importance of the axes on one level, whilst concurrently allowing it to persist on another.

The point grid as an urban design strategy has precedent in Bernard Tschumi’s project for *Parc de la Villette*. This park, built in Paris in 1987, was a practical application of Tschumi’s architectural theory. The point grid of *La Villette* had a role of downplaying the hierarchy of traditional urban projects and compositions based on the spatial order that mirrors social hierarchy.²⁰ The grid is articulated and activated by the *follies*, autonomous objects without any historical reference or meaning attached, situated in the nodes of the grid.²¹ The system of *follies* is superimposed with two other systems, the system of gardens and the system of paths, which are also designed without traditional hierarchy and historical reference, overall, rendering *Parc de la Villette* as an abstract composition which mediates between the site and a concept.²² In that sense, the political message of an anti-hierarchical grid at *La Villette* is only theoretical. In the case of *Grid of Moments*, the inscription of the grid over the existing urban matrix in Pyongyang works as an unambiguous critique, as it is directly inscribed on a city, which was founded upon the social order that is being criticized by it.

The second strategy of the *Grid of Moments* is contained in the approach to the design of the *Moments*. They are comparable in their role to the *follies*, as they

are designed to connect and involve people with the space. However, the political role of the *Moments* and the way they critique the established social order and hierarchy is dissimilar, with their critique being embedded in the way that they are different from the existing monuments. The understated approach to building *Moments* is indeed the opposite of what was traditionally employed by the North Korean regime—the intimidating oversized sculptures. *Moments* do not impose or dominate; instead they have a subtler strategy and a political message; they are less focused on symbolism and are concerned more with transmitting their message through spatial experiences; they are intended to be approachable and liveable.

In the *History of the future*, the understated spatial strategy and lack of physical impact on the urban setting of this project is interpreted not only as a way to preserve the visual corridors, but also to neutralize the impact of existing monuments. Just like the existing monuments, the *Moments* are also strategically positioned, but with different intentions: not to be visible, but to hide the views, and reduce the impact of the *Juche* (主體 *Chuch'e*) ideology on the space without eradicating it. Citizens of Pyongyang were never free of perceiving this propaganda, poured not only into public spaces, but also into the interior spaces, with pictures of the Leaders present in every public institution and in every home. By hiding the views on monuments, *Moments* provide a setting where one is not compulsively reminded of the ideology. The *Moments* arranged in grid oppose and reverse the system, where the axis (as a tool of power) orientates the people toward a political and/or ideological idea, embodied in the shape of a monument. They achieve this in removing the existing monuments only from constant visual line of sight, not literally. In this way they allow for two opposing ideologies to coexist and compete in the same urban setting inscribed in pathways and public spaces, both telling their own message. In the *History of the future*, this kind of approach is called 'diplomatic' as it shows how architecture plays an important role in changing social circumstances other than aggressive destruction and building anew.

This reinforces the idea behind the approach that the city consists of many cities, and serves as a palimpsest, in which new histories are to be inscribed. In this way the physical structure of the city can remain essentially the same, with a new layer of memory and meaning inscribed in discrete and understated ways. These are not only historical layers of the city's structure that coexist, but also different ideologies. A moment spent inside one of the *Moment* is time spent in an alternate city, which still remains a part of Pyongyang with all its historical layers. The dimension of time in this project is not only employed in the sense of designing for the future or valuing the importance of continuity in the city, but also emphasising individual time, human experience, memories and anticipations.

Moments

The political role of *Moments* and the impact that they attempt to have on the observer is most apparent in the first few *Moments* that were built. From these individual spatial interventions, the idea of the grid emerged. The first one, called *Moment of Unification* (Figure 3), was built on the Rungra Island (綾羅島 *Rüngrado*) in the Taedong River to commemorate the reconciliation of the two countries, cutting into the southern tip of this island along the axis formed between the Mansu Hill Grand Monument and the Monument to Party Founding. The symbolic form of this *Moment* represents separated individual histories of North and South Korea, which are eventually reconciled. The cut into the island forms a zigzag line of two walls with different curvatures. Each of these walls commemorates the history of one of the countries: the South Wall has inscriptions about the most important events in South Korea's history, and the North Wall—about the history of North Korea. Along each of the walls runs a path—the North Path and the South Path—separated by the river. These paths connect in the end symbolically representing the unification of two separated histories. On each of the two sides of the wall, a small exhibition space is located, with a staircase that leads outside to the grass fields on the island. Even though this *Moment* is aligned with one of the main visual axes in the city, one can momentarily escape this dominant view

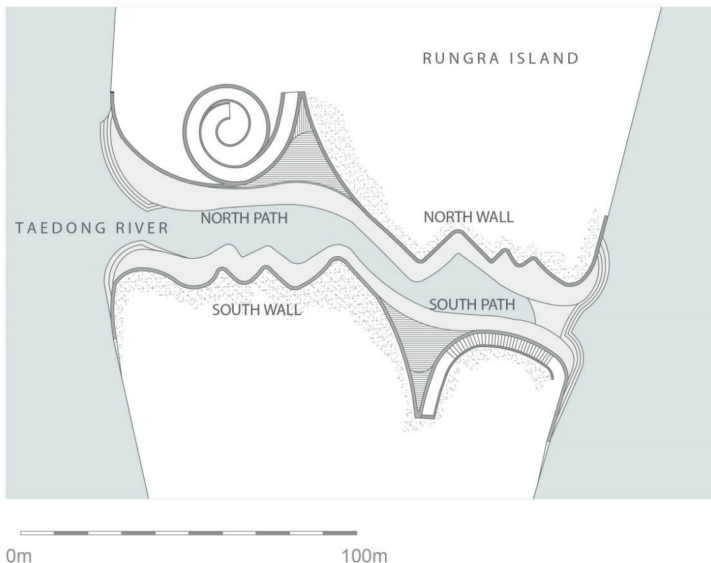


Figure 3 Moment on Rungra Island. By author.

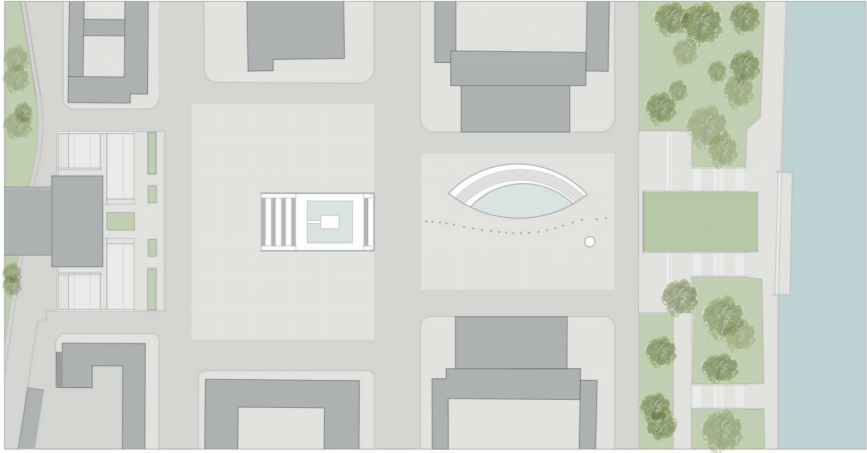


Figure 4 Moment on Kim Il-Sung Square. By author.

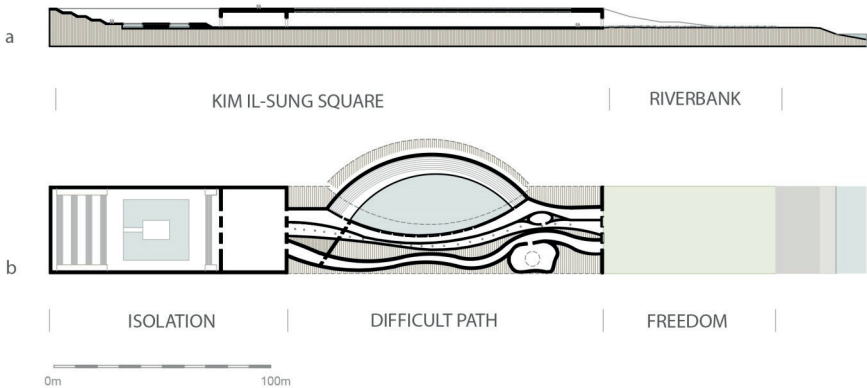


Figure 5 Moment on Kim Il-Sung Square; a. section; b. underground level plan. By author.

whilst inside. Similarly, the *Moment* itself is not visible from the city, but only when inside the cut, where one is visually ‘cut out’ of the city landscape.

The second *Moment* is constructed in Kim Il-Sung Square (Figures 4–5). This square is the spiritual and political centre of Pyongyang, and the spot where the reconstruction of the city started after the Korean War.²³ Settled between important buildings and overlooking the Juche Tower, this square has an important political role to fulfil: 75,000 square meters in size, and with the capacity to host 100,000 people, it is intended for mass performances and military

parades. However, on regular days it is a large, deserted public space with little relationship to the surrounding buildings. In redesigning it into an inhabitable public space, the predominant challenge was the sheer size of the square, and its position against existing monuments and representational buildings. Similar to the *Moment of Unification*, this *Moment* is dug into the ground in a way that does not change the visual qualities of the square and relationship of the buildings. It is designed as a series of alternative submerged paths that run from the entrance situated in the middle of the square, under the monumental square, and lead to an open green field at the end towards the Taedong River. The main path consists of three parts: “isolation,” “difficult path” and “freedom.” Each of these paths is not only named as a commemoration but it is meant to produce the feelings of isolation, difficulty and freedom. Comparatively to the previous *Moment*, it is focused on the experience and the feelings of the visitors. The *Moment* is a living monument where memory and symbolism are transmitted through the atmosphere, experience and immanent feelings. In this particular scenario’s context, the political role of this kind of *Moment* is twofold: one symbolic interpretation of this *Moment* is that it represents the suffering of the North Korean people, which ends in freedom; another is that it prevents large public gatherings and performances that were characteristic of the pre-reconciliation era. Just as is the case with the *Moment of Unification*, it gives the visitors chance to escape the open city museum for an instant.

In the *History of the future*, after these first two interventions, a number of smaller and less symbolic *Moments* were built on the main streets of the city centre before gradually expanding outwards toward peripheral areas in the composition of the grid visible only from the air.

Scenarios as Method: Toward Architecture as a Tool of Social Transformation

The Project of *Grid of Moment* conceived within the fictive future of Pyongyang with a dual role of each *Moment* in a way achieves Tschumi’s idea of space as “a peaceful instrument of social transformation.”²⁴ Tschumi’s theoretical work was concerned with design methods that could alter the role of architecture from attuning the space to existing socio-economic political structures toward becoming a catalyst for social and political change. This would also mean that architects, instead of merely serving state powers, become intellectual critics who use their environmental knowledge (‘understanding of cities and the mechanisms of architecture’) to contribute to emerging new urban and social structures.²⁵ Tschumi’s work was not focused on the formal aspect of architecture but the

importance of programs and events, whereby he saw the interaction between spaces and activities as a way to provide an alternative route for bypassing the issues regarding social and political role of architecture.²⁶

The project of *Moments* explores similar concepts, but through different strategies. In the *History of the future*, it is implied that young authors were familiar with these theories from 20th century, and that they used this knowledge of mechanisms of the cities and architecture, not to serve any political power but to act as social critics. Architecture does not change society but can, through spatial interventions, create ground for the negotiation within a new society, where what once was a stage for the dominant power becomes the stage of inner struggles of transition. The *Moments* are focused on events rather than form—their aesthetics and shape are rather understated, which aligns with Tschumi's ideas. However, their altering role lies not in their program but critical and nonaggressive attitude, with which they treat the historical values of the city, and shifting focus from the aesthetic of abstract symbols of ideology toward people and their experiences.

The originality of the project for Pyongyang's urban future was achieved by approaching design through the scenario technique. The fictive setting of the scenario created room for writing *History of the future* that addresses the issues within the scenario. *History of the future* as a method is process-oriented; it is a design procedure, which does not aim toward a specific outcome but to give a clearer idea of what could be done for the 2050 Pyongyang. Writing of a fictional story allowed the incorporation in an urban project not only a temporal dimension, but also many other factors such as economic system, political struggles and different ideologies, which are normally taken for granted by architects and designers, and rarely considered when approaching city design and urban planning. It did not aim toward a specific project but, by employing imagination in the process of writing, helped to illuminate possible issues to be solved in this plausible future given by the scenario. Having these urban and social issues postulated, it was possible to create a strategy, a plan of action specifically designed to address these issues through urban design. Thus this method of writing prevented us from creating the future we ourselves aspire and from imposing our own sense of wilfulness as architects often do. On the contrary, it compelled the problem to be approached with objectivity and imagination to explore possibilities even if they seem unreachable.

This strategy was executed out by building a system of Moments which through design (hiding views) and positioning (grid system) directly address the issues raised within the *History*—the problem of the lack of the public facilities and life on the streets, and the problem of the socialist monuments. The project of the *Grid of Moments*, where each *Moment* fulfils a dual role, would not be possible

to design without envisioning the political struggle and the and specific social circumstances that the *History of the future* describes. The *Moments* arranged in the grid, and the changed role of architecture they assume, could have been designed only in that context. Therefore, we do not argue that the *History of the future* is the method in design that contributed directly to creating a project that transforms the role of architecture in the city, but it does it by allowing imagination to play important role in the process.

The scenarios are one of many and not the only plausible option for the spatial future of Pyongyang after reconciliation. They provide us with settings that are not based on historical experience, and challenge us to find a solution beyond what we already know is feasible. The answer to the given problem is, by necessity, new and innovative, and, in this way, scenarios allow for more imagination and creativity. This exercise on imagination could serve to create some compelling options, where a theoretical work does not serve only as a critique or commentary on the past, but can also contribute to more creative future.

Notes

1. See the project in Jelena Mandić, “City, Monuments and Moments”, in 평양 2050: 미래공간 = *Pyongyang 2050: Spatial Futures*, ed. Annie Pedret (Seoul, Damdi Publishing Co., 2018), 104–129.
2. The project was designed within Professor Annie Pedret’s Design Studio 21, Seoul National University, fall semester 2015.
3. For the process of the scenario see Annie Pedret, “Designing Futures”, in 평양 2050: 미래공간 = *Pyongyang 2050: Spatial Futures*, ed. Annie Pedret (Seoul, Damdi Publishing Co., 2018), 12–23.
4. Philipp Meuser. “An Architectural Cabinet of Curiosities. A Stroll through Pyongyang”, in *Architectural and Cultural Guide Pyongyang*, ed. Philipp Meuser (Berlin: DOM publishers, 2012), 41.
5. Roger Mateos Miret and Jelena Prokopljević. *Corea del Norte: utopía de hormigón; arquitectura y urbanismo al servicio de una ideología* (Brenes: Muñoz Moya, 2011), 26–27.
6. Miret and Prokopljević, *Corea del Norte*, 149–151.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.
9. Johannes Tschapka. “Scenario Technique”, in 평양 2050: 미래공간 = *Pyongyang 2050: Spatial Futures*, ed. Annie Pedret (Seoul: Damdi Publishing Co., 2018), 32–35.
10. Ibid. 32–33.
11. Ibid. 32–33.
12. Bergson’s notion of *durée*.
13. See Klara Lucilla Romigioli and Jelena Mandić. “Scenario,” in 평양 2050: 미래공간 = *Pyongyang 2050: Spatial Futures*, ed. Annie Pedret (Seoul, Damdi Publishing Co., 2018), 104–129.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid.
16. Philipp Meuser. “An Architectural Cabinet of Curiosities”, 44–51.

17. For differences between artificial and natural cities see Christopher Alexander. "A City Is Not a Tree." *Design* 206 (1966): 44–55.
18. Kevin Lynch. *The Image of the City* (Nachdr. Publication of the Joint Center for Urban Studies. Cambridge, Mass: MIT PRESS, 2005), 2–4.
19. An urban redevelopment plan for central Paris designed in 1925 by Le Corbusier.
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