

BORROWED PAST

REEXAMINING HIGH-DENSITY HOUSING IN SOUTH KOREA



“HOW CAN ARCHITECTURE HELP RECONNECT US WITH OUR PAST?”



PROBLEM

South Korea has made a lot of progress in the last 6 decades; from being one of the poorest countries to having the 11th largest economy in the world. The country transformed rapidly after the Korean War and today represents one of the most technological and modern countries on earth. However, this transformation did not happen without sacrifices. The rapid economic growth and urbanization led to a shortage in housing within the cities.

To accommodate the influx of new residents, traditional Korean homes, called Hanoks, were leveled, along with thousands of years of history, to make room for faceless apartment blocks that do nothing to respect and honor their culture. For decades, this approach went largely unopposed because it was seen as the fastest way to modernize. Today Koreans have woken up and realized that centuries of tradition have been destroyed in the name of progress. The housing blocks that replaced many of the traditional neighborhoods are not meeting the needs of residents.



HAEUNDAE

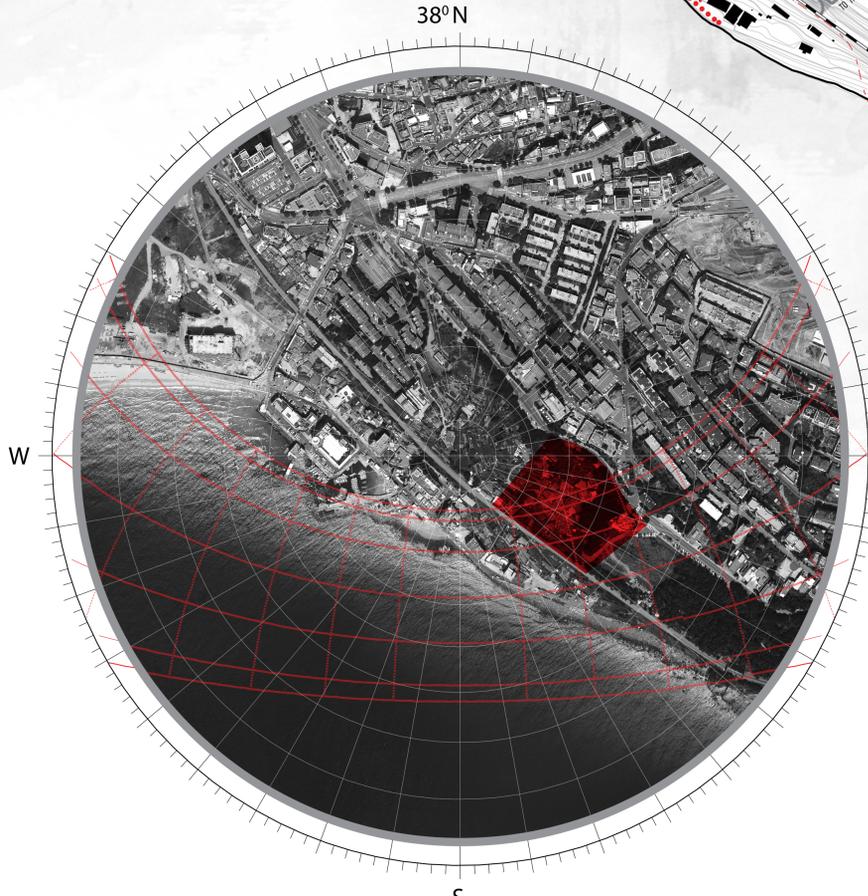
Haeundae is one of the newest and most modern neighborhoods in Busan. The beach draws everyone from the very young to the very old to this area making it lively at any time of the year. The boardwalk is always filled with performers and musicians playing music for all ages and crowds gather for the many festivals that take place there throughout the year.



DALMAJI HILL

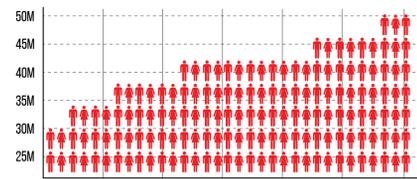
Every year, residents gather here on the first full moon of the year to make wishes of good fortune as the moon rises above the horizon. In spring visitors flock to the area to view the cherry blossoms before they fall like rain and welcome the summer. During the warm summer weekends local artists sell their goods at an outdoor marketplace ensuring that the area remains busy.

The ocean stretches out from the south all the way to the horizon. Looking west from the neighborhood you are guaranteed to see Haeundae Beach and the shimmering skyline of the city beyond. The area is filled with short concrete buildings that were built in the late 1980s. They line the streets and are separated by narrow alleyways, which created a maze-like network that cuts through the neighborhoods and connect the main roads.



MASS MIGRATION TO URBAN AREAS

2010 Estimates



POPULATION GROWTH IN SOUTH KOREA

