

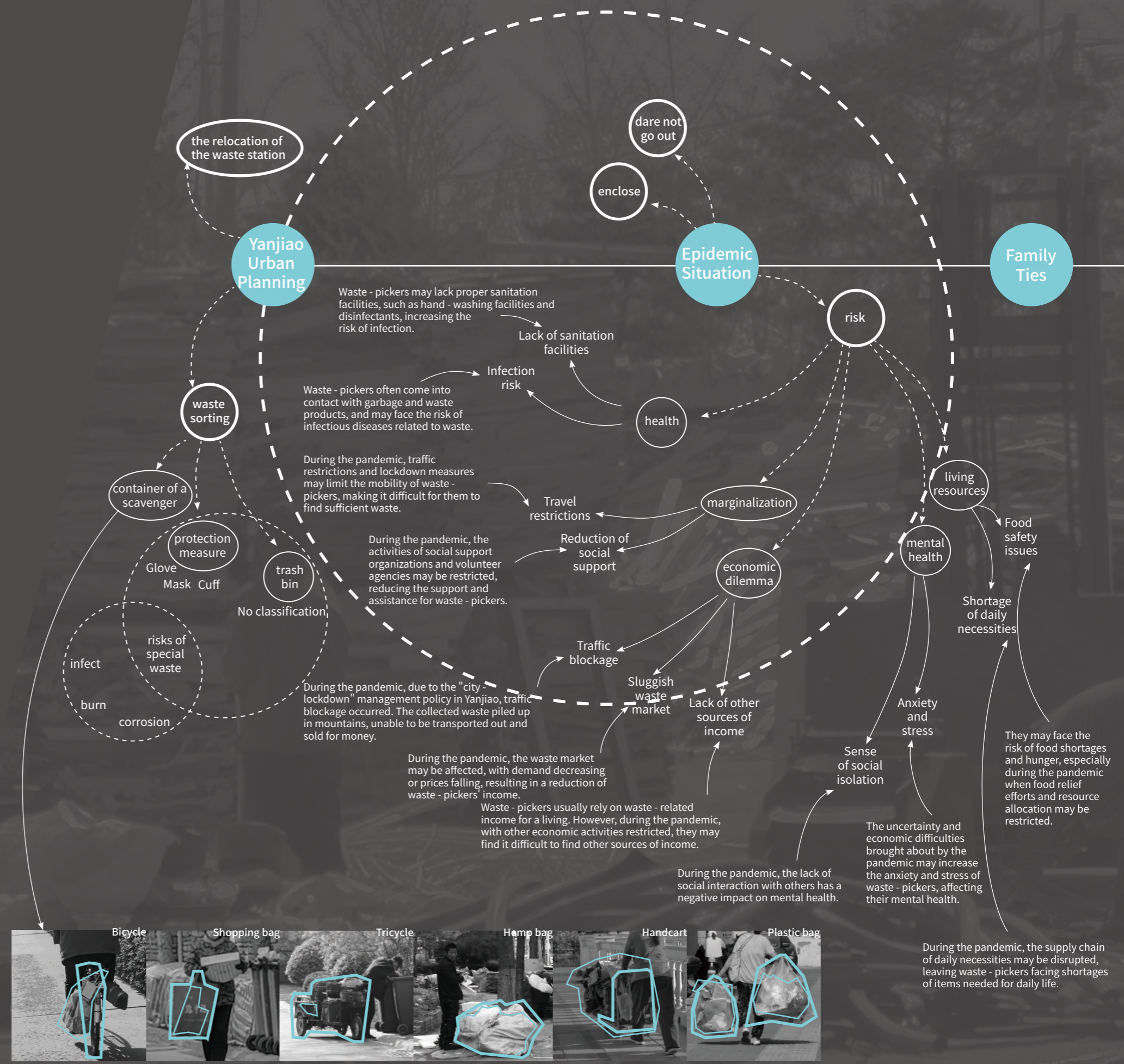
Marginalization of The High and The Low

INFORMAL RECYCLING NETWORKS



Focusing on urban scavengers, this project visualizes informal recycling networks by structuring field research into classification systems and relational maps. The work examines how data visualization can make invisible labor systems legible while addressing ethical concerns of representation and agency.

Region | Yanjiao, Hebei, China
Theme | Informal Economy / Data Ethics / System Mapping



Based on daily observations of waste pickers

FAMILY TIES

Based on daily observations of waste pickers—noting differences in their clothing, modes of transportation, and tools for collecting recyclables—I became intrigued by their backgrounds and conducted field research on waste pickers in Yanjiao. The study found that most engage in this work not out of financial necessity, but due to ample leisure time and ingrained frugal habits.

FIELD RESEARCH

Information about Other Waste Pickers Obtained from Waste - Pickers |

Gender: Male
Age: 75-80
Background: Middle class
Reuse: Habit

Gender: Female
Age: 80-85
Background: Middle class
Reuse: Habit

Gender: Male
Age: 20-25
Background: rich second-generation
Reuse: Earn more

Gender: Female
Age: 90+
Background: Upper Class
Reuse: Habit

Gender: Female
Age: 70-75
Background: Middle class
Reuse: Habit

Character research |

Information on scavengers 2022.4



Aantonomasia: Tiddler
Hometown: Anhui
Age: 26
Work time: 8.00-18.00
Major: Waste paper factory workers
Reuse: Nope
Sales frequency: a month
Income: about ¥3000
Working age: 3 years
Reason: Skint
Background: Small vendors waste station workers
Economic status of children: Nope
Child relationship status: Harmony

Information on scavengers 2022.4



Aantonomasia: Uncle Ge
Hometown: Heibei
Age: 67
Work time: 8.00-18.00
Major: Salvage station
Reuse: Nope
Sales frequency: a month
Income: about ¥4000
Working age: 6 years
Reason: Earn more
Background: truck driver
Economic status of children: Small shop owner
Child relationship status: His son hate them for collecting waste

Information on scavengers 2022.4



Aantonomasia: Uncle Zhang
Hometown: Heibei
Age: 62
Work time: Anytime
Major: Paper shell, Water bottle
Reuse: Yes
Sales frequency: Unfixed
Income: about ¥100
Working age: a year
Reason: conveniently
Background: Unwilling
Economic status of children: Enough
Child relationship status: Not allowed to pick up scrap

Information on scavengers 2022.4



Aantonomasi: Aunt Liu
Hometown: Heibei
Age: 65
Work time: 8.00-18.00
Major: Salvage station
Reuse: Nope
Sales frequency: a month
Income: about ¥4000
Working age: 6 years
Reason: Earn more
Background: Farmer
Economic status of children: Small shop owner
Child relationship status: Her daughter-in-law often delivers food

Information on scavengers 2022.4



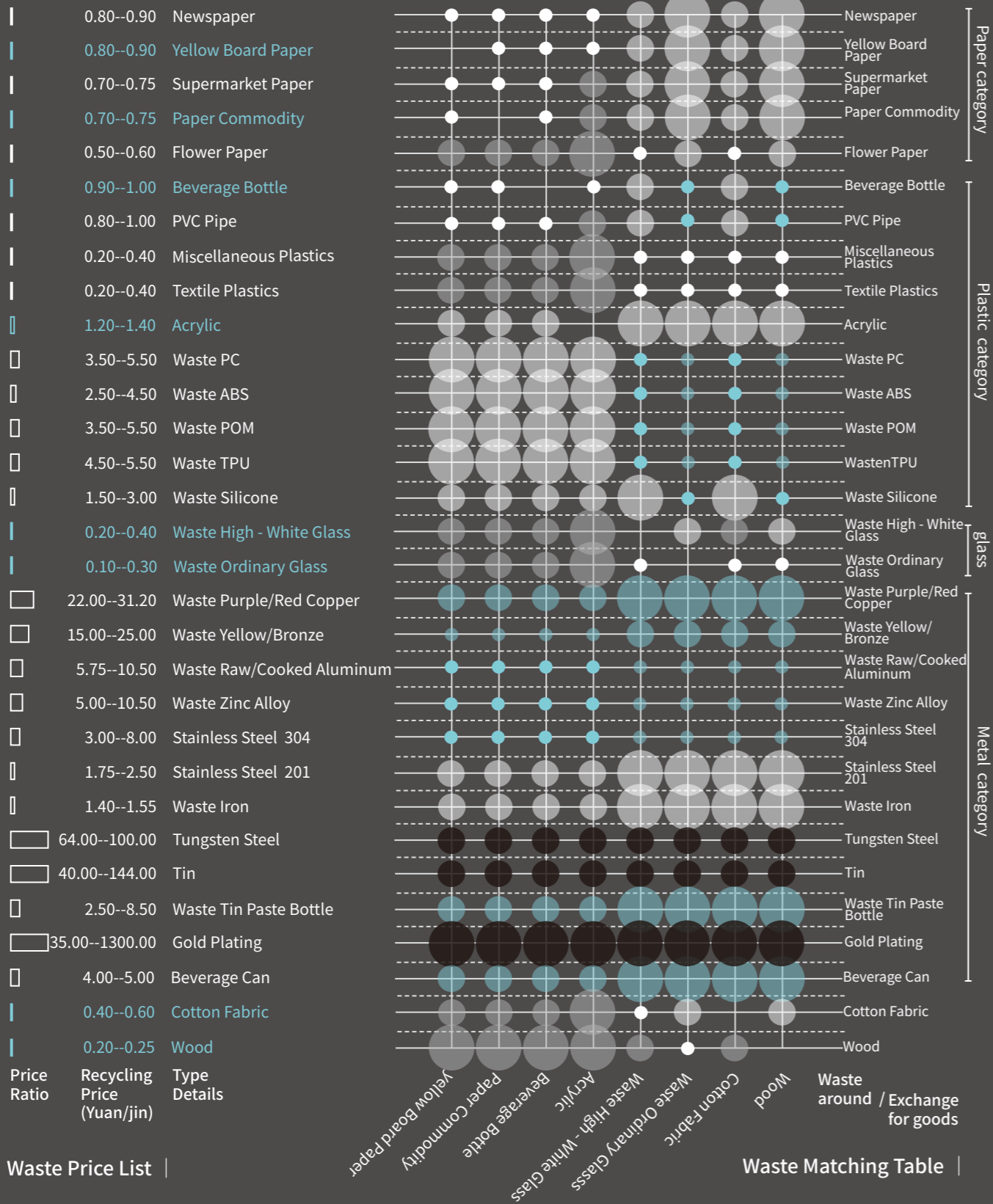
Aantonomasia: Grandma Wang
Hometown: Shandong
Age: 86
Work time: Morning
Major: Cardboard
Reuse: Nope
Sales frequency: The same day
Income: ¥20-40
Working age: over 20 years
Reason: Habit
Background: Housewife
Economic status of children: Living in a villa area
Child relationship status: Great, but they don't allow picking up scrap

Information on scavengers 2022.4



Aantonomasia: Grandma Zhang
Hometown: Shengyang
Age: 62
Work time: 7.00-23.00
Major: Anything
Reuse: Nope
Sales frequency: A week
Income: about ¥1000
Working age: over 40 years
Reason: Cherish items, Habit
Background: Scavenger
Economic status of children: middle class
Child relationship status: well, he still work-study program

VALUE MATCHING

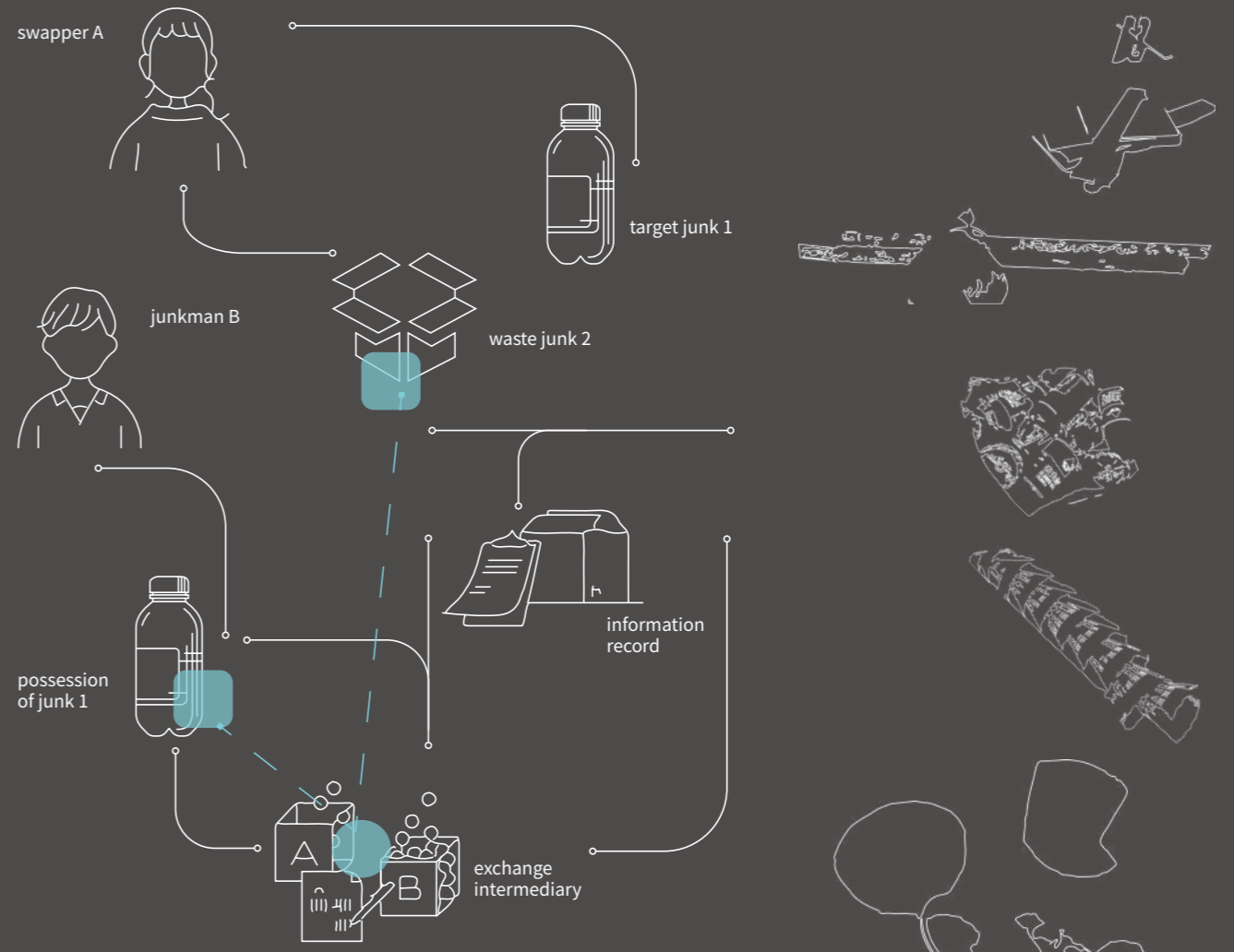


Waste Price List



SWITCHING SYSTEM

Barter |



Set up a waste transfer station based on a value - matching table. At the transfer station, Party A can exchange waste they have for waste they desire. Party A can transform the waste into reusable items during use. Meanwhile, Party B can sell the waste they pick to obtain its corresponding value and also gain a sense of satisfaction from social interaction.



Based on daily observations of waste pickers

Marginalization of The High and The Low

The waste transfer station not only enables the exchange of usable waste. But also, based on the artist community, has established an online community for display and exchange. Entering the waste art community, one can showcase any form of artistic creation made from waste.



If waste - picking elderly people see that the waste they collect is used for artistic creation, will they no longer consider waste - picking a marginalized activity



One can publish their creations under any pseudonym, but must note the creation time, location, materials used, creative thoughts, etc.

