

Digital Biopolitics

Exploring Customer-Product-Marketplace
Relationship within Alibaba's Megastructure

P5 Presentation
Yu Duan 5979099
Mentors: Gregory Bracken, Victor Muñoz Sanz

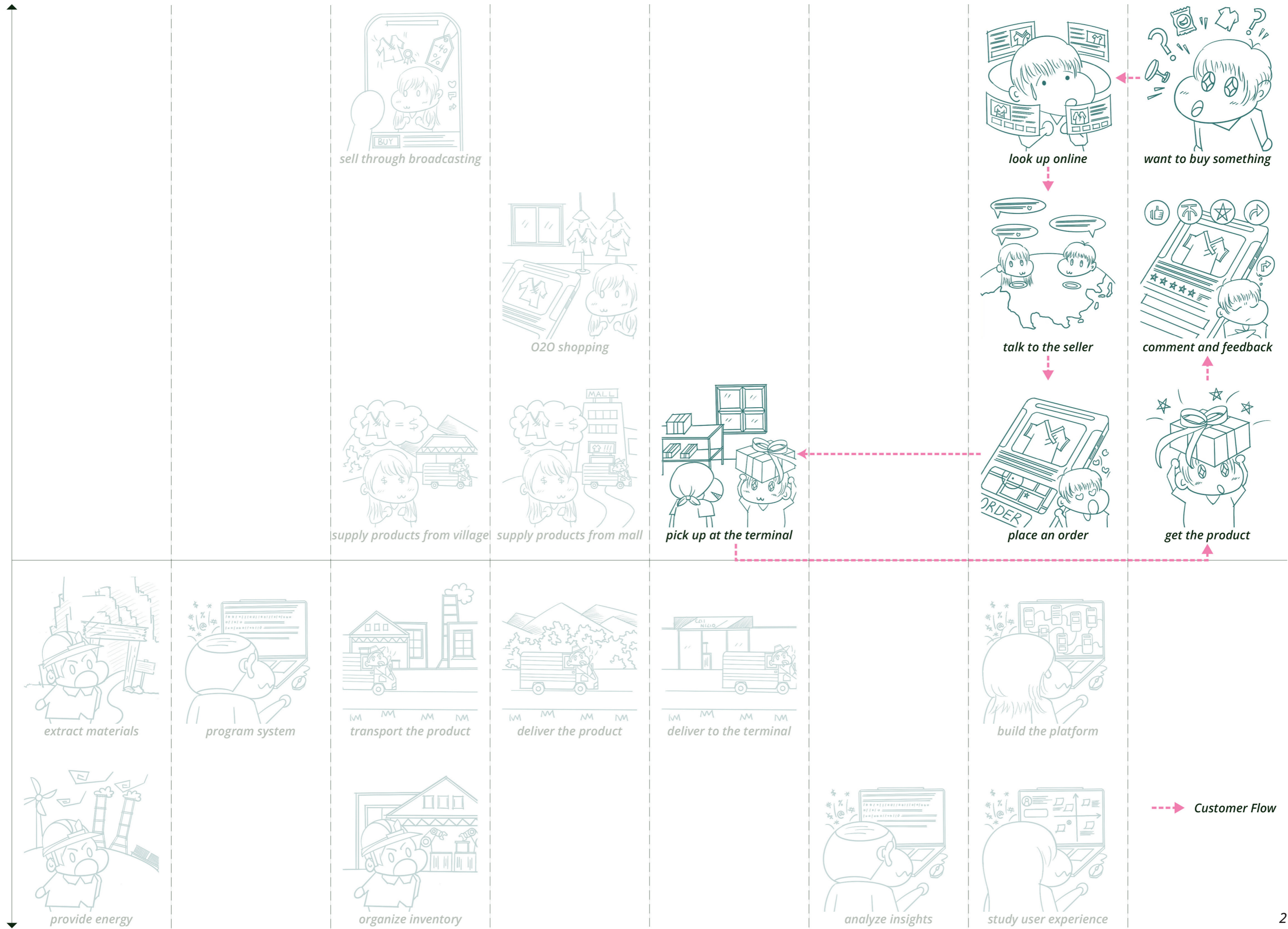




Fig. 3.60, Commodity as Product
 Commodities as products on Alibaba are tangible goods transacted through platform-based retail systems.
 Image source: <https://www.ifanr.com/890279>



Fig. 3.62, User Interaction Habits
 User interaction habits shape how users navigate and utilize digital services.
 Image source: <https://www.gizmodo.jp/2018/10/iphone-xr-haptic-touch-hands-on.html>



Fig. 3.64, User Feedback
 User feedback on Alibaba platforms refers to the evaluations, suggestions, and behavioral signals provided by users.
 Image source: https://www.sohu.com/a/259687161_99982005



Fig. 3.61, Product
 A product on Alibaba is both a commodity and a data node, linking supply chains, customer behavior, and platform intelligence.
 Image source: <https://kan.china.com/read/3588741.html>



Fig. 3.63, Service as Product
 Services on Alibaba function as products when they are standardized, platformized, and delivered with measurable value.
 Image source: <https://www.ifanr.com/890279>



Fig. 3.65, Customer
 A customer on Alibaba platforms is not only a consumer but also a data source shaping personalized services and algorithmic responses.
 Image source: <https://www.alibaba.com/news/alirugugaoxinlingshou-yuoshanglingshoujiruntajituandachengxinlin-gshouzhane/>

22

23

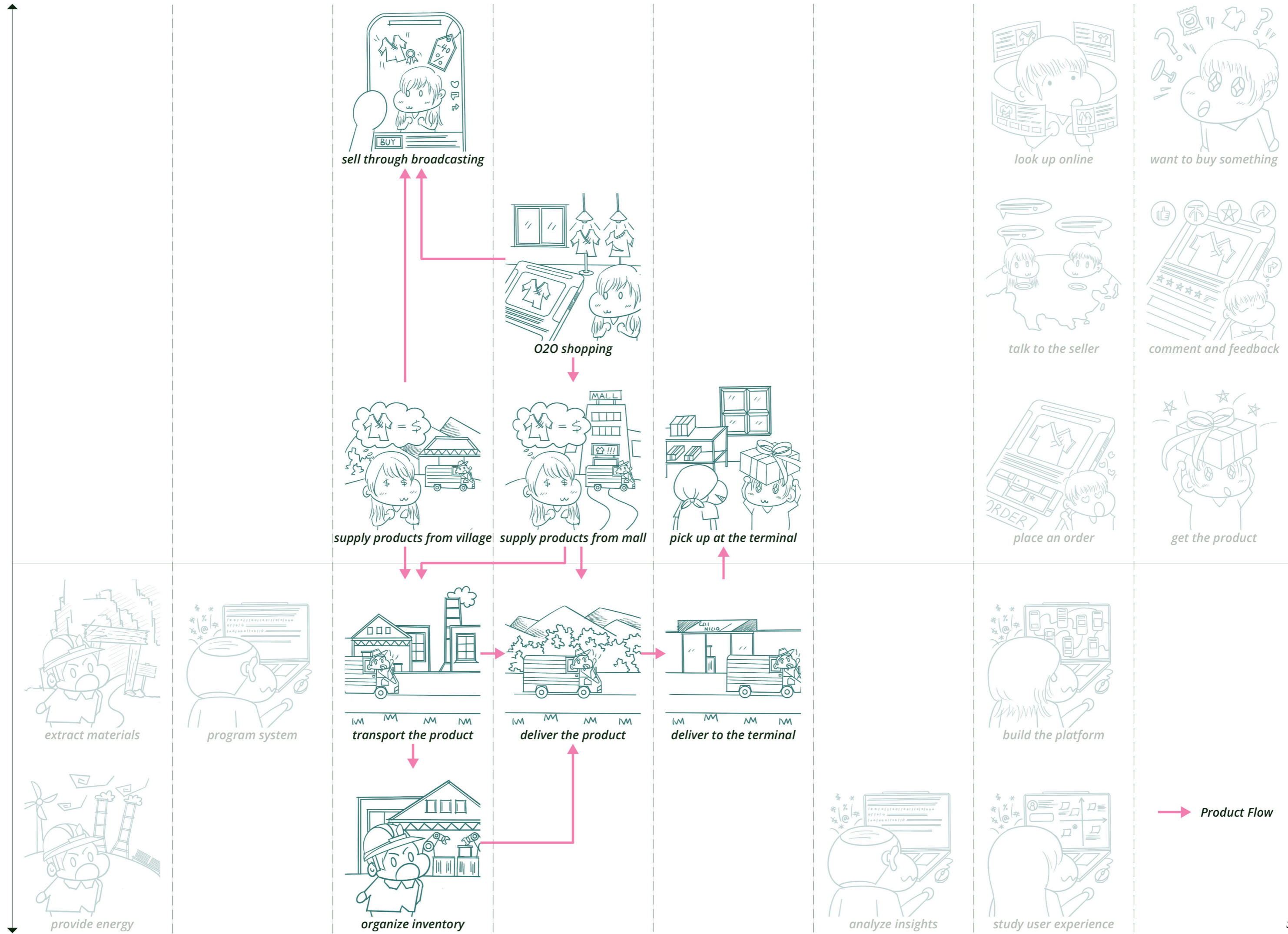




Fig. 3.21, Public-private Partnership
 Alibaba collaborates with local government to promote digital infrastructure, rural development, and smart city initiatives.
 Image source: <https://info.51.ca/articles/765917>

10

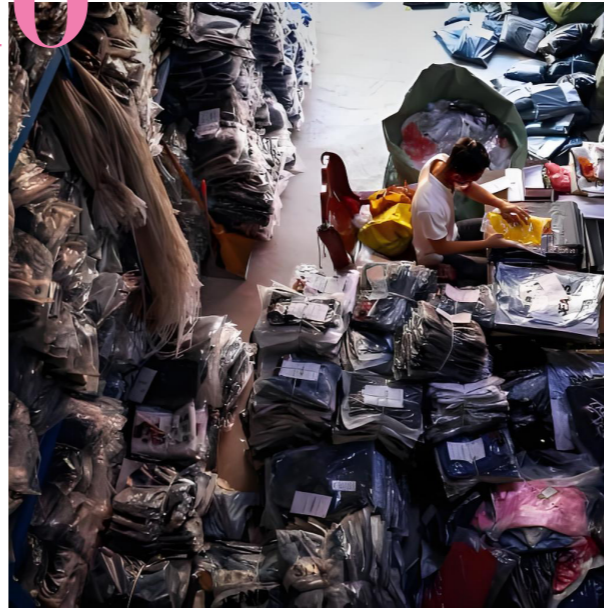


Fig. 3.24, E-commerce at Home
 E-commerce removes the limitations of time and space, and allowing anyone to apply and open a store.
 Image source: https://news.southcn.com/node_54a44f01a2/543f01632e.shtml



Fig. 3.26, Taobao Village
 Rural settlements in China where a significant portion of the population engages in online retail, facilitated by the Taobao e-commerce platform.
 Image source: https://www.sohu.com/a/637625556_362042

09



Fig. 3.22, Alibaba and rural life
 Alibaba and local government encourage a prosperous rural life by promoting inclusivity and economic growth.
 Image source: <https://www.e-flux.com/architecture/urban-village/169786/put-down-the-hoe-pick-up-the-mouse/>

07



Fig. 3.27, Production in the Village
 Rural villages are being transformed into e-commerce production bases driven by Alibaba.
 Image source: <https://rh.gose.most.rnu.edu.tw/article/content/280>

08



Fig. 3.25, Logistics Infrastructure
 Alibaba integrates logistics infrastructure with digital platforms to optimize supply chains and accelerate delivery services across China.
 Image source: <https://techsir.com/a/202505/91017.html>



Fig. 3.23, Parcels
 The Alibaba e-commerce ships millions of parcels daily.
 Image source: https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/bizchina/2014-10/23/content_18788059_6.htm

Fig. 3.28, Livestream E-commerce
 Livestream e-commerce via Alibaba's platforms has become a major sales channel in China.
 Image source: <https://www.cbndata.com/information/271277>





Fig. 3.29, Double 11 Festival
 Double 11 is the largest e-commerce shopping festival hosted by Alibaba in China.
 Image source: <https://techfeng.com/c/7116f939c1URs>



Fig. 3.30, Alibaba Pop-up Stores
 Alibaba's pop-up stores create temporary retail spaces that blend online innovation with offline experience.
 Image source: <https://www.yeeyi.com/news/details/214381/>

Fig. 3.32, O2O Retail
 Online-to-offline retail Freshippo integrates digital platforms with physical stores to create seamless shopping experiences.
 Image source: <https://www.takungpao.com/finance/236137/2024/0307/949146.html>



Fig. 3.34, Digital Bank
 Alipay by Alibaba enables digital payments across all business activities.
 Image source: <https://xinwen.bjd.com.cn/content/s66f496dfe4b0c25b287beff7.html>

Fig. 3.35, Alibaba Search Engine
 Location-based search engine ensures real-time positioning and embeds digital logic into urban life.
 Image source: <https://finance.sina.com.cn/tech/2021-11-18/doc-ikzsoy6353367.shtml>



Fig. 3.31, Taocai Cai Community Store
 Alibaba's community stores integrate digital retail with neighborhood life, offering on-demand shopping services.
 Image source: <https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/8OSDmp4FroWNTARMs3AgE>

Fig. 3.33, Experience Consumption
 Freshippo by Alibaba redefines grocery shopping with an immersive, tech-driven retail experience that blends dining, picking, and delivery.
 Image source: <https://cn.nytimes.com/technology/20180404/retailer-stores-automation-amazon/>



13



Fig. 3.36, Intime Department Store
 Alibaba collaborates with Intime to integrate digital platforms with traditional department stores.
 Image source: <https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/BDPughqKDzSuk13j9rpX7w>



Fig. 3.37, Alibaba Courier
Alibaba's courier network, powered by Cainiao Logistics, ensures efficient parcel delivery across cities and rural regions.
Image source: <https://www.cnbeta.com/tw/articles/tech/1422265.htm>

15



Fig. 3.40, Alibaba Pickup Station on Campus
Cainiao Stations on campuses provide efficient, self-service parcel delivery tailored to student life.
Image source: <https://36kr.com/p/2490857378125703>



Fig. 3.43, Shopping at home
Shopping at home becomes seamless, personalized, and data-driven because of Alibaba.
Image source: https://www.sohu.com/a/839175733_121948385

Fig. 3.38, Alibaba Delivery Worker
Delivery workers in Alibaba's ecosystem provide fast, on-demand services.
Image source: <https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/u7PPy9j8o5u5j0j1CX9Ow>



Fig. 3.41, Autonomous Delivery
Unmanned delivery brings automation to the last mile with robots and AI-powered logistics.
Image source: <https://picture.iczhiku.com/weixin/message1600828879497.html>

16

Fig. 3.44, Alibaba Pickup Station in Countryside
In rural areas, Cainiao Post Stations by Alibaba enhance last-mile logistics while serving as multifunctional community hubs.
Image source: <https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/NDE3tyhsxXdev8Gq9eVaQ>



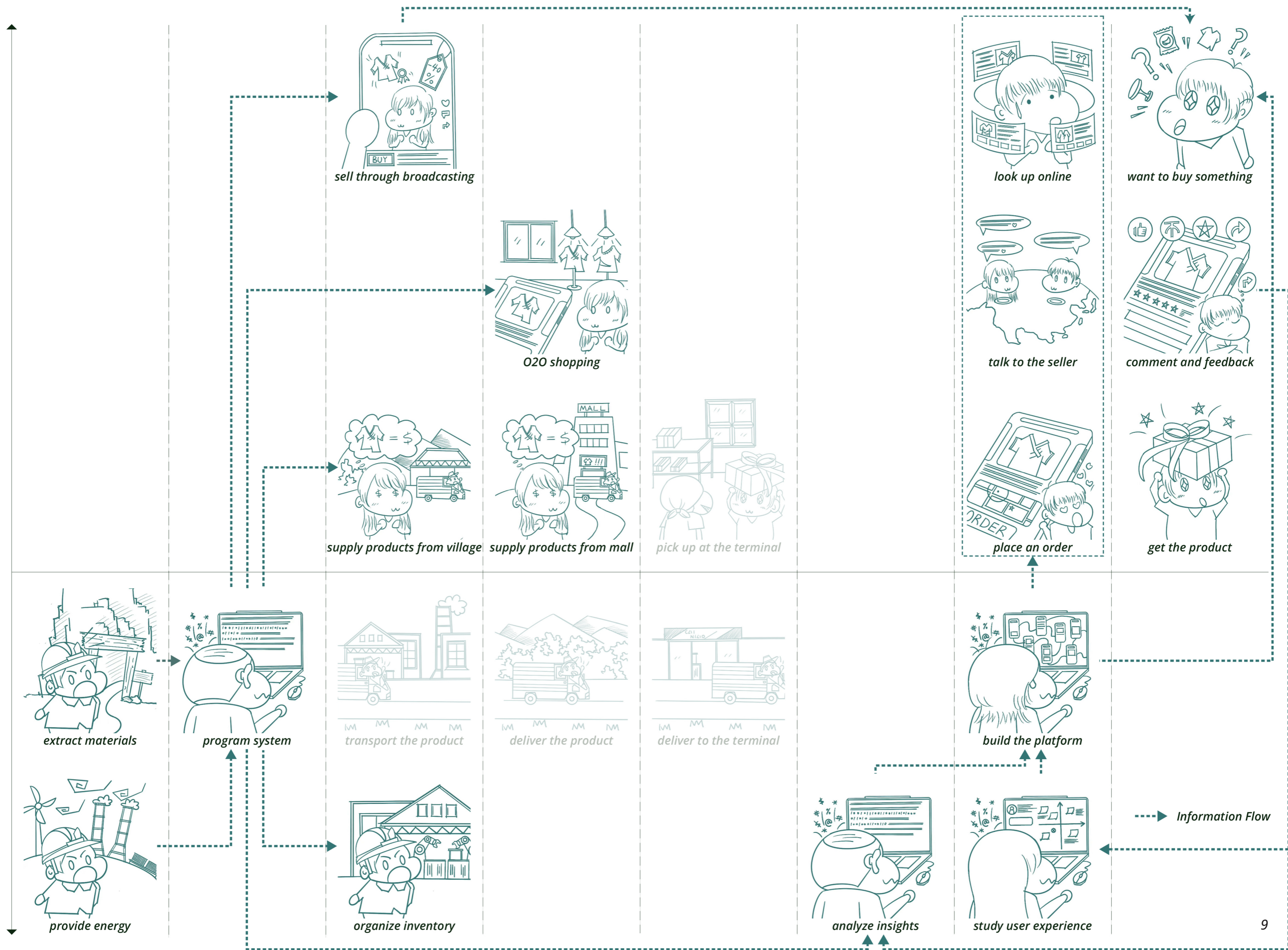
Fig. 3.39, Pickup station in Community
Cainiao Pickup Stations by Alibaba serve as smart community hubs for parcel pickup, delivery, and local services.
Image source: <https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/LDlmmTPGpDm1LzqCXXo8Q>

14



Fig. 3.42, Alibaba Smart Locker
Alibaba's smart lockers provide convenient, contactless parcel pickup as part of its last-mile delivery network.
Image source: <https://leyunpro.com/archives/452530>





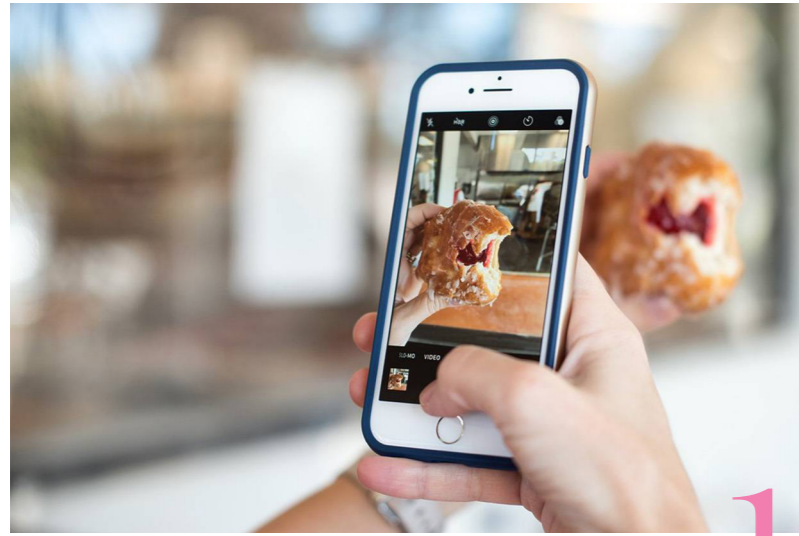


Fig. 3.53, Services Platform
Alibaba provides app-based interfaces to access services such as digital banking, credit systems, and micro-funding platforms like Alipay.
Image source: <https://www.cbndata.com/information/89051>

19

Fig. 3.55, Graphical User Interface, GUI
A Graphical User Interface (GUI) allows users to interact with digital systems through visual elements like icons, buttons, and menus.
Image source: <https://www.woshipm.com/evaluating/6215458.html>

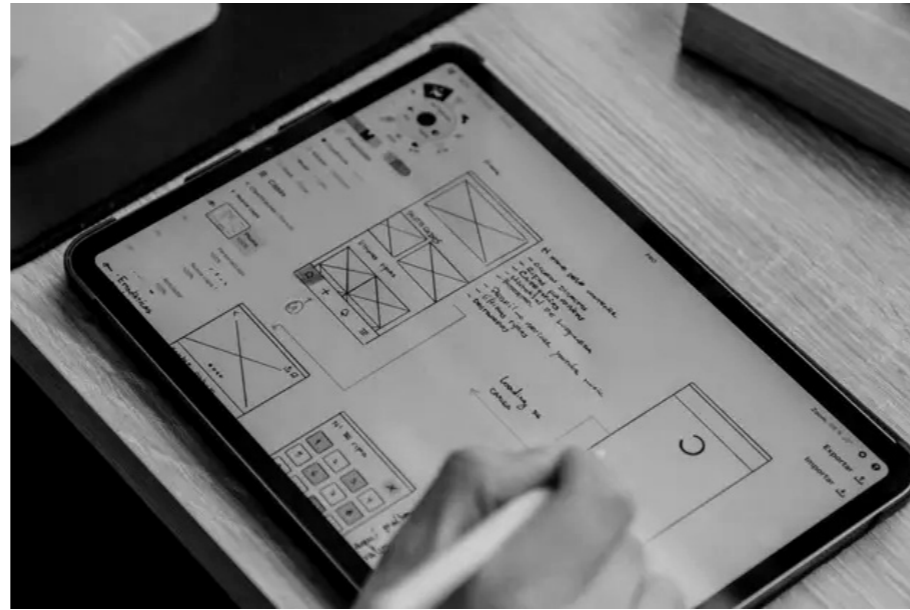


Fig. 3.54, User Journey Design
User journey design maps and shapes the complete experience a user has when interacting with the product and service, from initial awareness to final engagement.
Image source: <https://www.design-hu.com/web-news/user-journey-map.html>

21

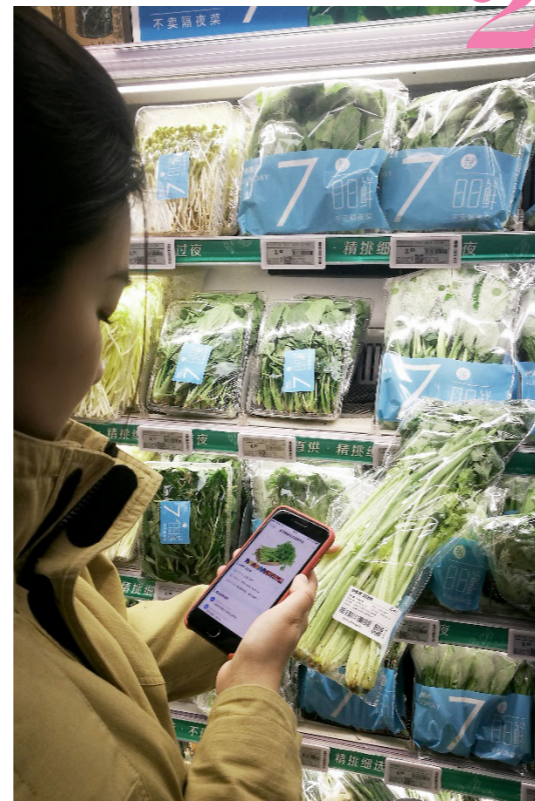


Fig. 3.56, Goods Platform
Goods platforms like Taobao enable users to interact with physical products through seamless digital-physical interfaces.
Image source: <http://news.ikanchai.com/2018/04/08/206163.shtml>



Fig. 3.57, Physical Interface, Self-service Kiosk
Alibaba's self-service kiosks enable customers to browse products, place orders, and complete payments in physical retail spaces.
Image source: <https://www.sunmi.com/cases/hema/>

20



Fig. 3.58, Information Platform
Alibaba's information interfaces translate complex data into intuitive and accessible user experiences.
Image source: <https://i.ifeng.com/c/7x8ShXbvbQc>



Fig. 3.59, Physical Interface, Smartphone
The smartphone acts as a physical interface connecting users to Alibaba's digital services.
Image source: https://www.sohu.com/a/390780255_114819



Fig. 3.45, IP Address
 IP address enables devices to locate and communicate with each other across digital networks.
 Image source: <https://blog.trendmicro.com.tw/?p=70576>



Fig. 3.50, Router
 Router directs data traffic by determining optimal paths, functioning as a key component of the Address Layer's routing system.
 Image source: <https://192-168-1-1.com.cn/howto/2413.html>



Fig. 3.48, QR Code
 QR codes contain product details, location information, and customer data.
 Image source: <https://www.chillfool.com/news/355.html>

18



Fig. 3.51, Real-time Positioning
 Real-time positioning enables Alibaba to locate users, goods, and delivery personnel, facilitating precise routing and efficient platform operations.
 Image source: <https://www.cnbeta.com.tw/articles/tech/1303199.htm>

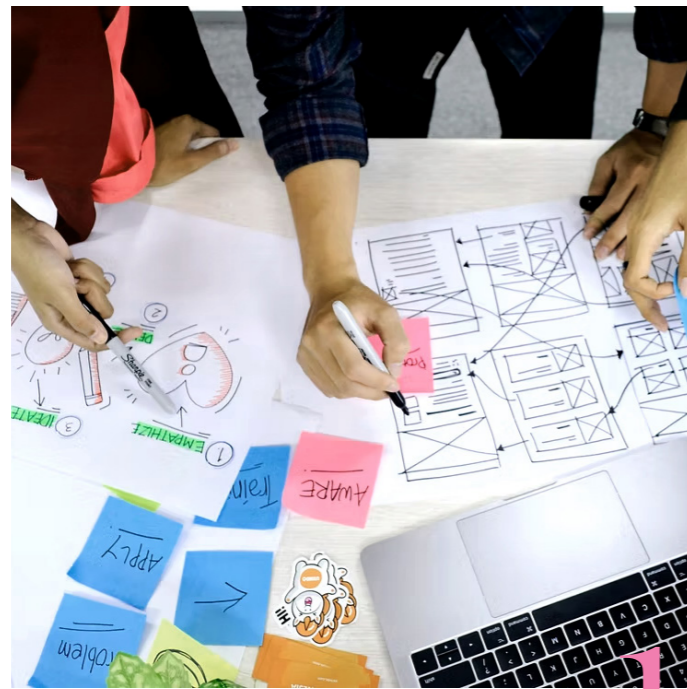


Fig. 3.46, Persona Construction
 Alibaba segments and targets users by constructing detailed personas.
 Image source: <https://www.ungrammary.com/post/ux-workshop-importance-process>

17



Fig. 3.47, Human-Computer Interaction
 Interaction via platforms by Alibaba enables precise identification and localization of users and devices.
 Image source: https://www.sohu.com/a/411820372_114819



Fig. 3.49, Living Environment
 The living environment symbolizes a user's consumption capacity, habits, and values, and can be regarded as valuable data.
 Image source: <https://n.yam.com/Article/20241020755403>

Fig. 3.52, Street Address
 Street addresses link physical locations with digital systems
 Image source: <https://www.jfdaily.com/sgp-detail?id=1458176>





Fig. 3.13, Communication Base Station
Drone-based emergency communication aerial base station
Image source: http://v.china.com.cn/zhuanti/2023-08/03/content_98140444.htm

06



Fig. 3.15, Data Collector
Data like mapping information requires extensive human resources for collection.
Image source: http://www.xinhuanet.com/2021-02/07/c_1127075877.htm



Fig. 3.14, Alibaba Programmers
Programmers rely on the cloud layer to build, deploy, and manage scalable applications and services.
Image source: <https://36kr.com/p/1409631004218757>

04



Fig. 3.17, Alibaba new global headquarters
Alibaba's new global headquarters campus in Hangzhou is slated to open in May 2024
Image source: https://it.gmw.cn/2023-12/21/content_37044121.htm



Fig. 3.16, Cell Tower
Cell towers provide wireless connectivity between users' devices and the broader cloud network.
Image source: <https://bbs.zhyoo.com/zhyoo/208931.html>

05



Fig. 3.18, Data Center
Data centers serve as the main physical hardware infrastructure for the cloud layer.
Image source: https://www.mdac.tw/news_20210706_1



Fig. 3.19, Circumplanetary Satellite
Satellites monitor and collect data that enable planetary-scale computation.
Image source: <https://trh.gase.most.ntnu.edu.tw/tw/article/content/280>



Fig. 3.20, Space Station
Long March-5B completes maiden flight, initiating China's space station construction.
Image source: <https://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1187446.shtml>



Fig. 3.5, Electrical lineworker at height
 Extensive manpower in power grid construction in western China.
 Image source: <https://opinion.caixin.com/2020-06-16/101567851.html>



Fig. 3.6, Wind energy
 Low-carbon energy transition in China.
 Image source: <https://xi.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202204/22/WS62623645a3101c3ee7ad1c9b.html>



Fig. 3.7, Cobalt ore
 Cobalt — a critical material for precision-engineered parts.
 Image source: <https://nai500.com/blog/2025/03/cobalt-prices-surge-a-chess-match-between-china-and-the-us/>



Fig. 3.8, Cobalt Extraction in the DRC
 The Democratic Republic of Congo holds over 70% of the world's cobalt.
 Image source: https://www.linkedin.com/posts/callyedgen_how-this-conflict-mineral-gets-smuggled-into-activity-724866680894707712-ftqy



Fig. 3.9, War for Cobalt
 Global scramble for cobalt resources
 Image source: <https://www.trouw.nl/buitenland/congo-bindt-de-strijd-aan-met-china-vanwege-dubieuze-kobaltwinning-b59ad9474?referrer=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.com%2F>



Fig. 3.10, Soil
 The foundational stage of human alteration of nature, including mining and construction.
 Image source: <https://pxhere.com/nl/photo/859156>

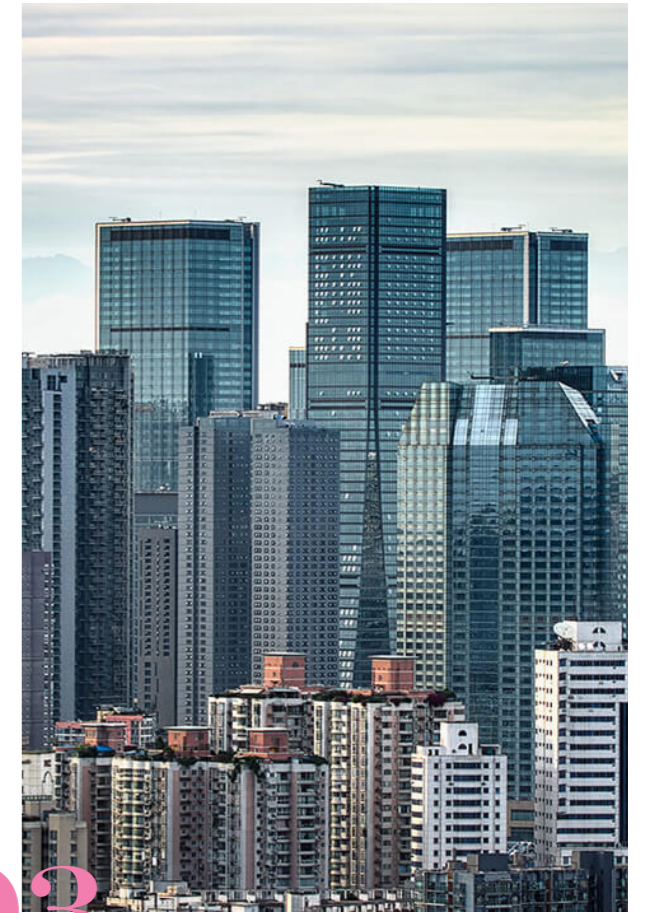
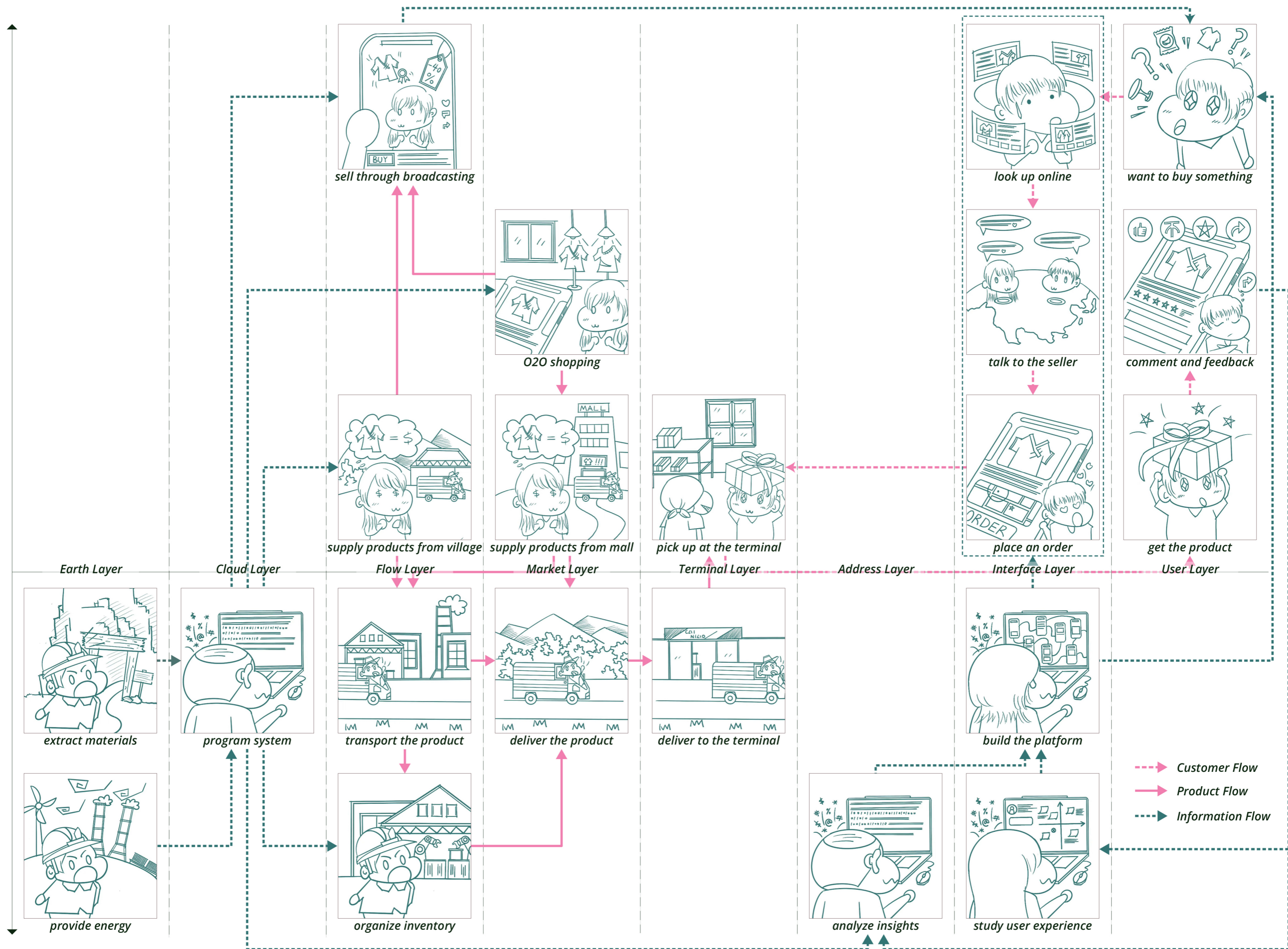


Fig. 3.11, Human Activities
 Human transformation, utilization, and governance of nature
 Image source: <https://www.savills.com/prospects/zh/cities-lowdown-chengdu.html>



Fig. 3.12, Cooling Water Tower
 Water supports the operation and production of these infrastructures.
 Image source: <https://spccooling.com/zh/applications/>

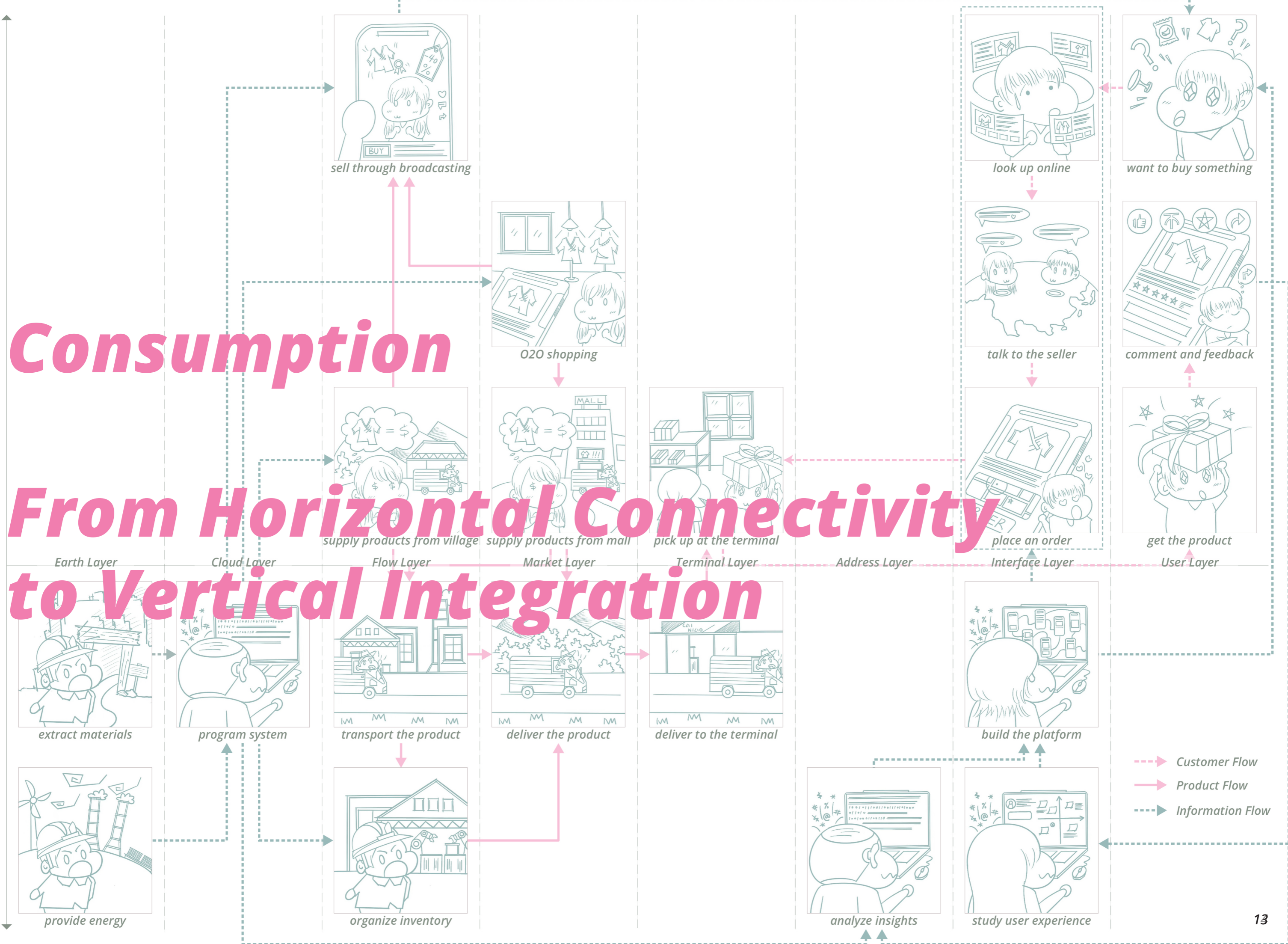


- - - - - Customer Flow
 ———— Product Flow
 - - - - - Information Flow

Consumption

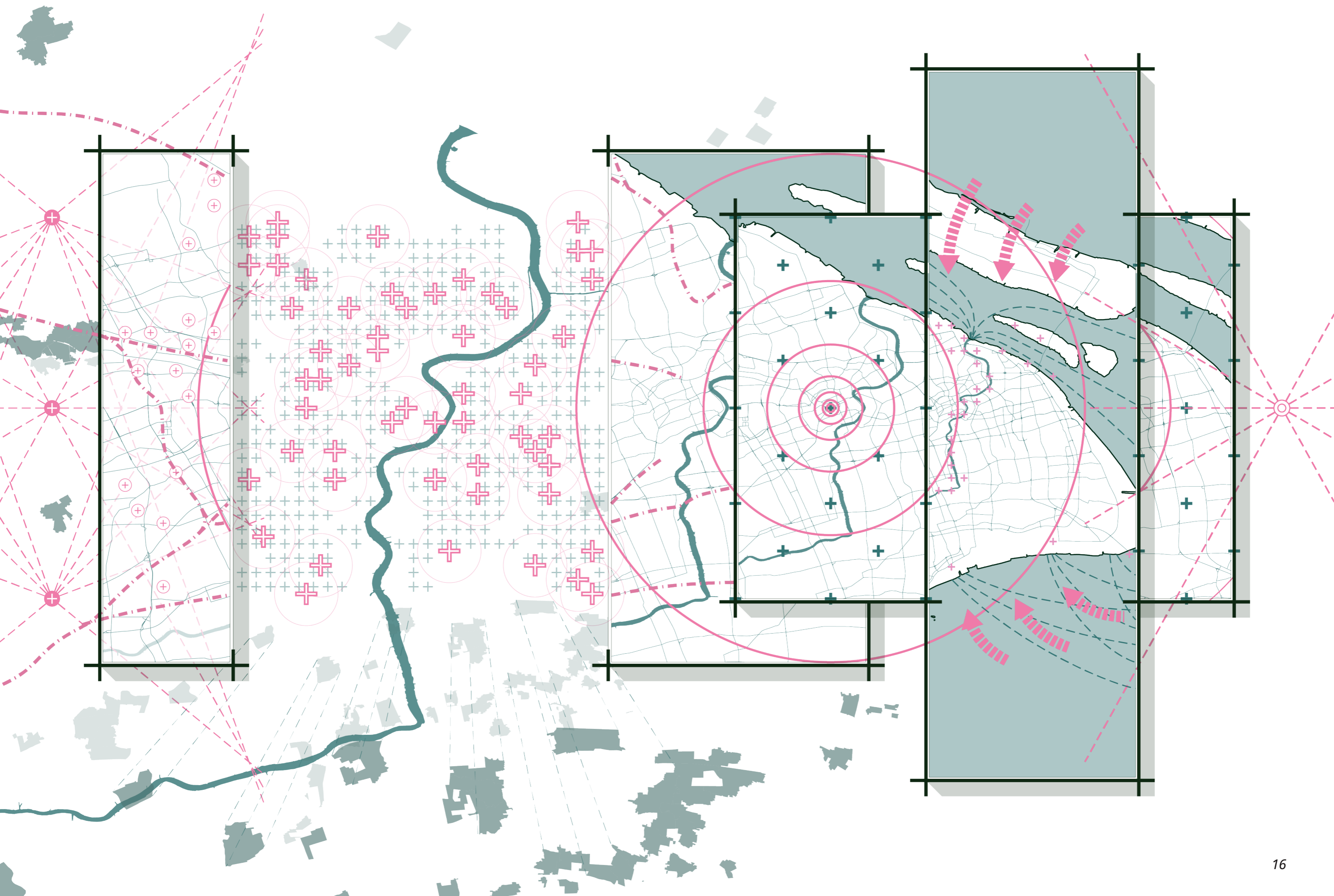
From Horizontal Connectivity

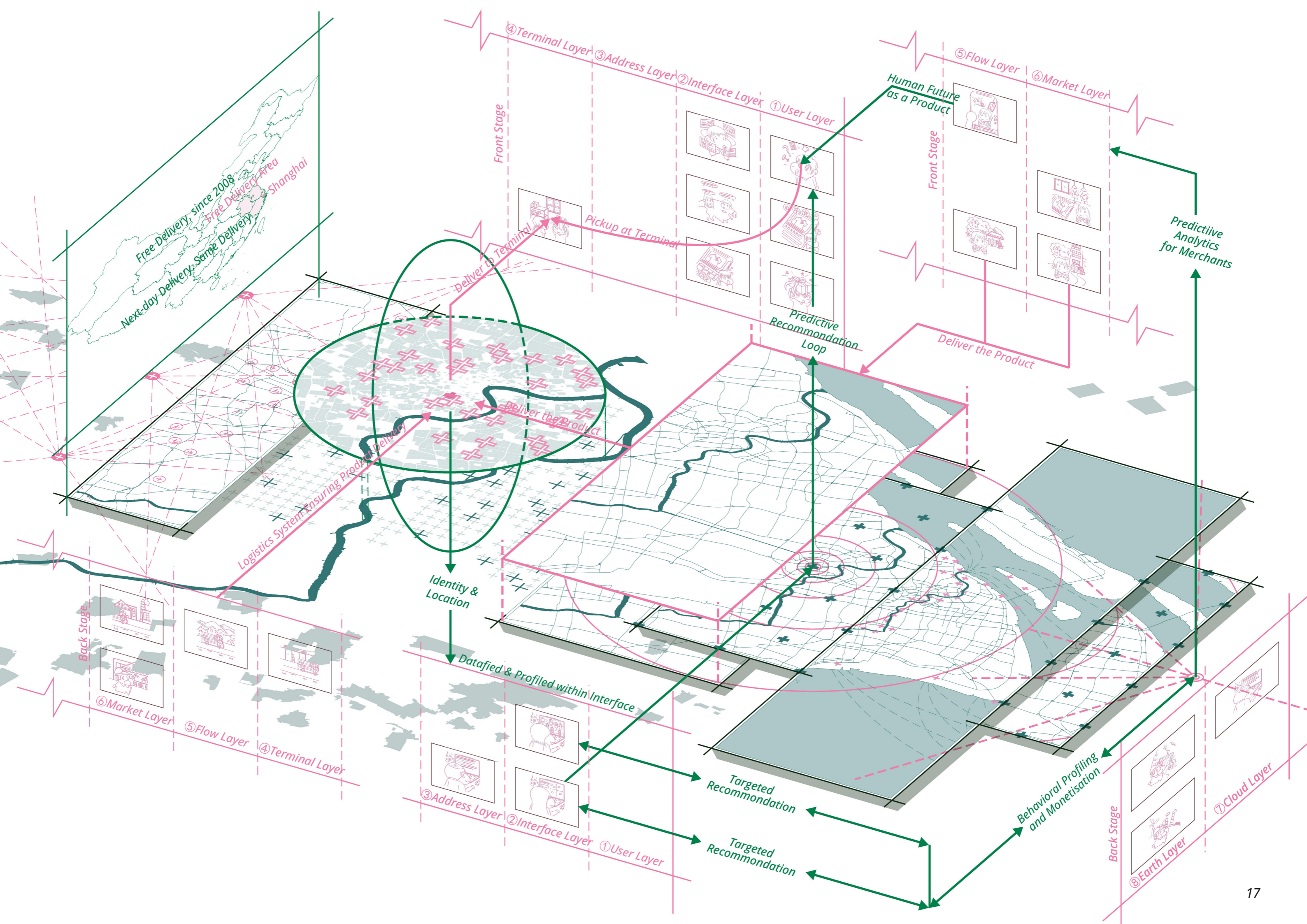
to Vertical Integration





sources: <https://www.worldfinance.com/markets/alibaba-set-to-take-over-the-world>







sources: <https://www.gooood.cn/generic-village-study-of-village-by-rem-koolhaas.htm?lang=cn>

Alibaba

Culture of Consumerism

***Vertical
Integration of***

***Production &
Consumption in***

Spatial - Geodesign

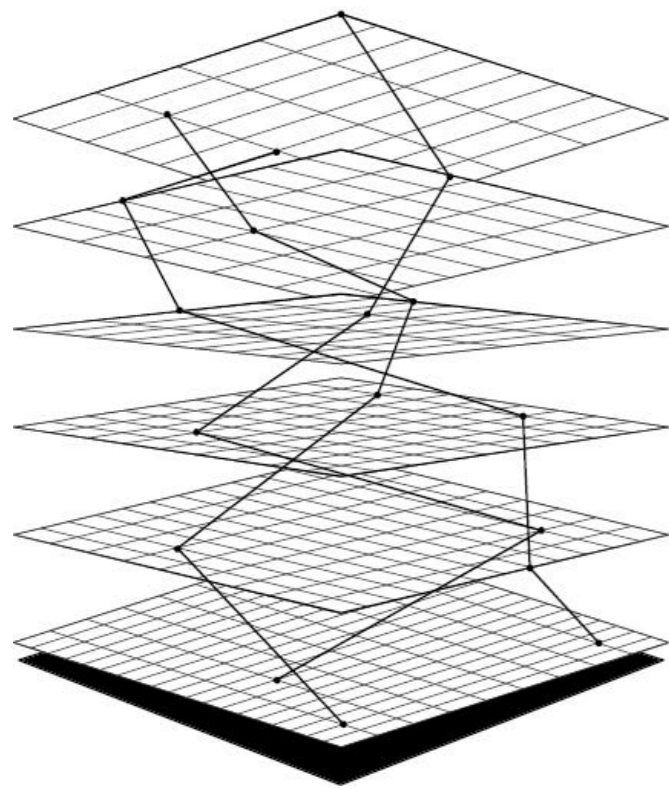
Spatial configuration

Information - Infodesign

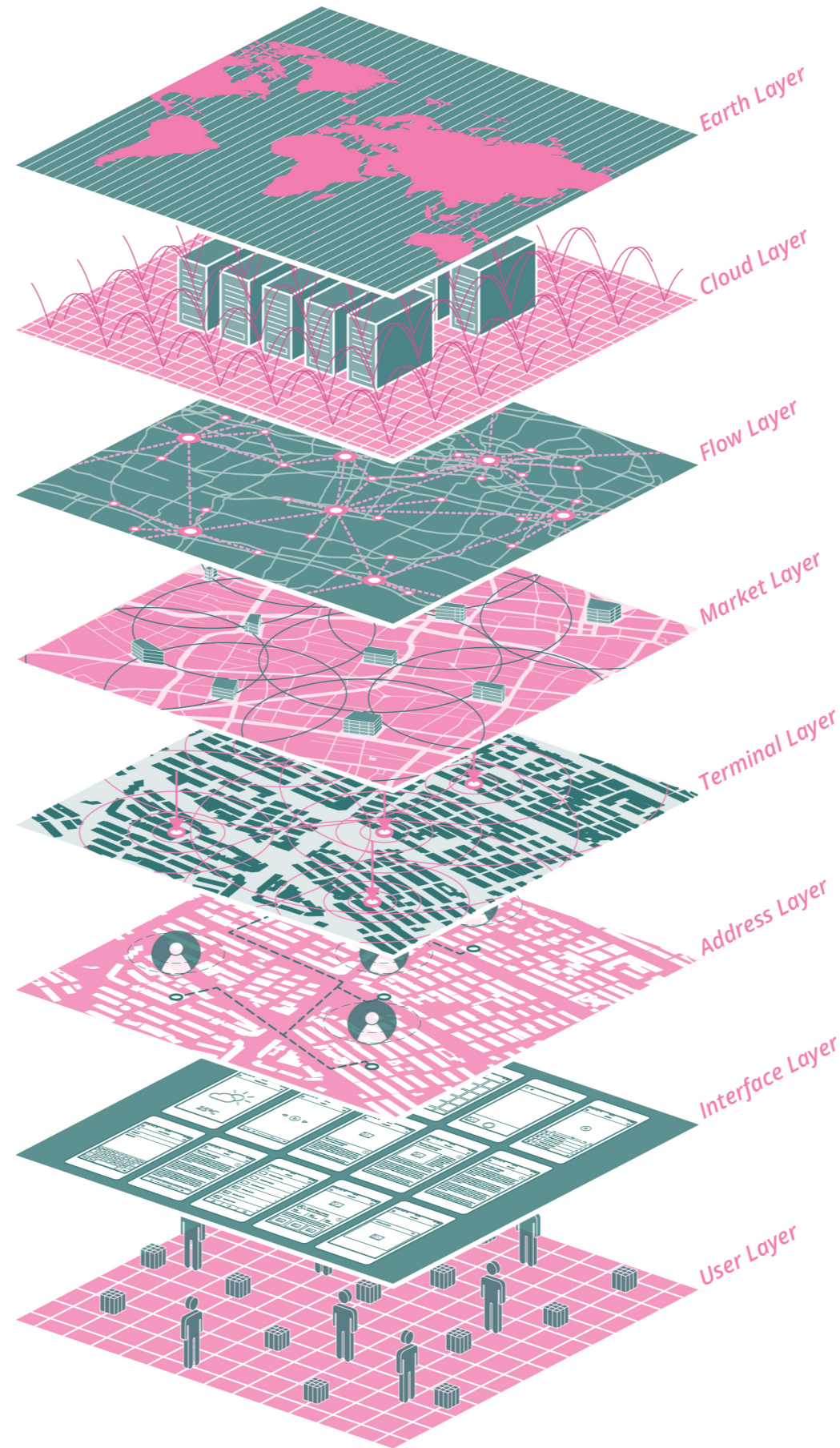
Human-computer interaction

Governance - Sovereignty

Digital governance



User
Interface
Address
City
Cloud
Earth

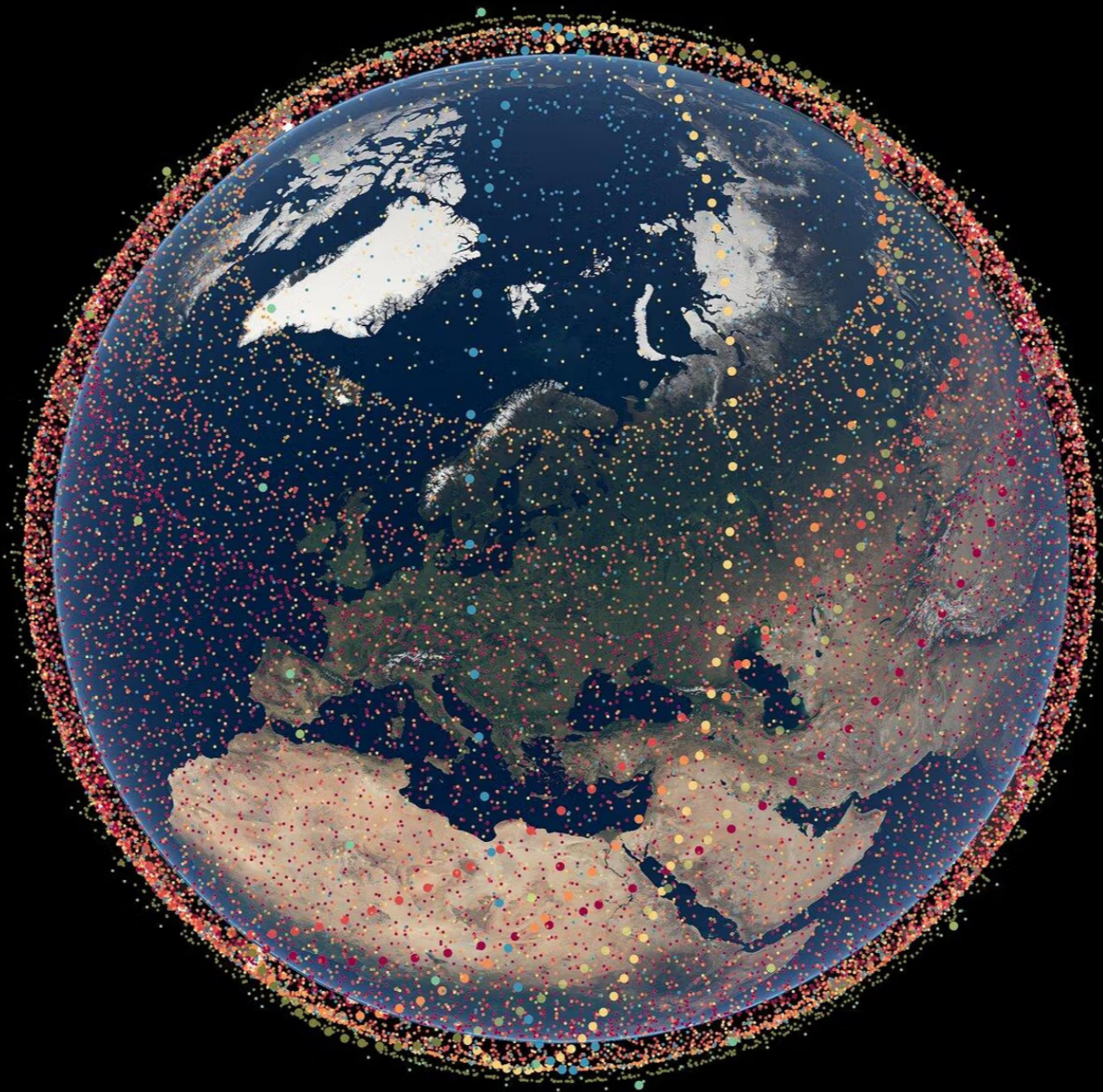


Vertical and Interoperable Stack

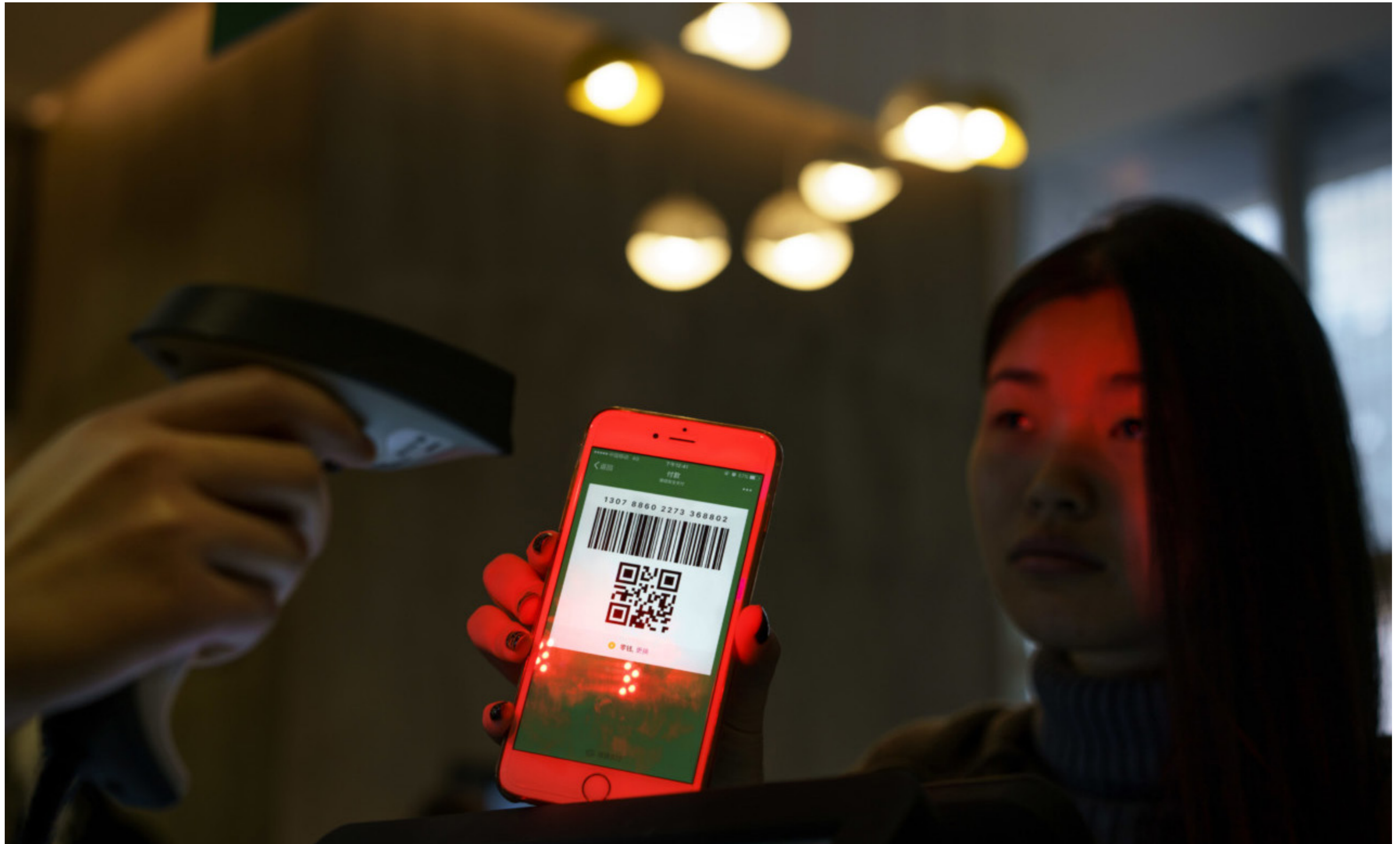
Geodesign

Infodesign

Sovereignty



Sources: <https://research.antikythera.org/>



Jonas Bendiksen, the emerging technology industry in China, Ad Agency Grey London

Affirmative Digital Biopolitics

vs.

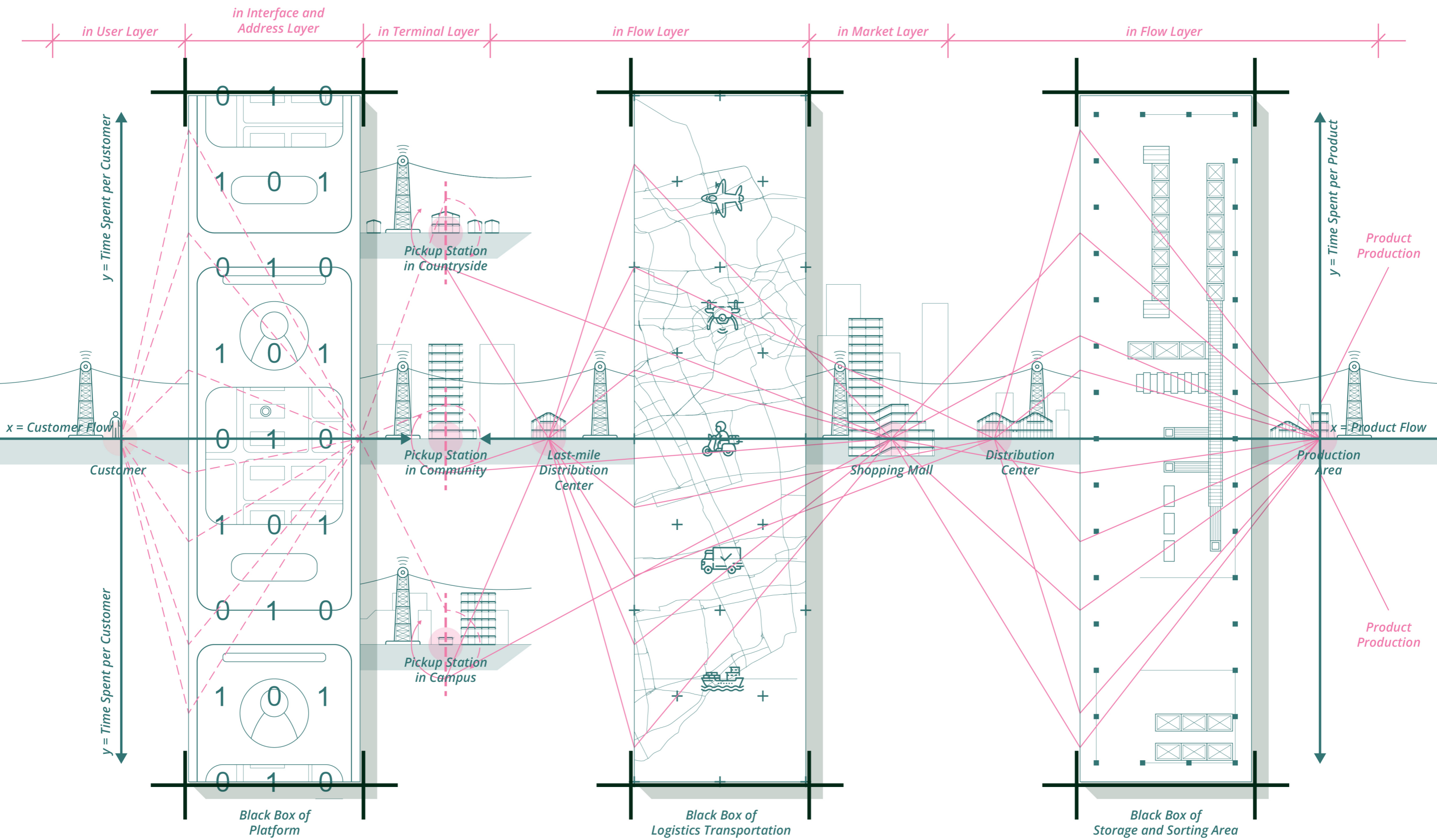
Negative Digital Biopolitics

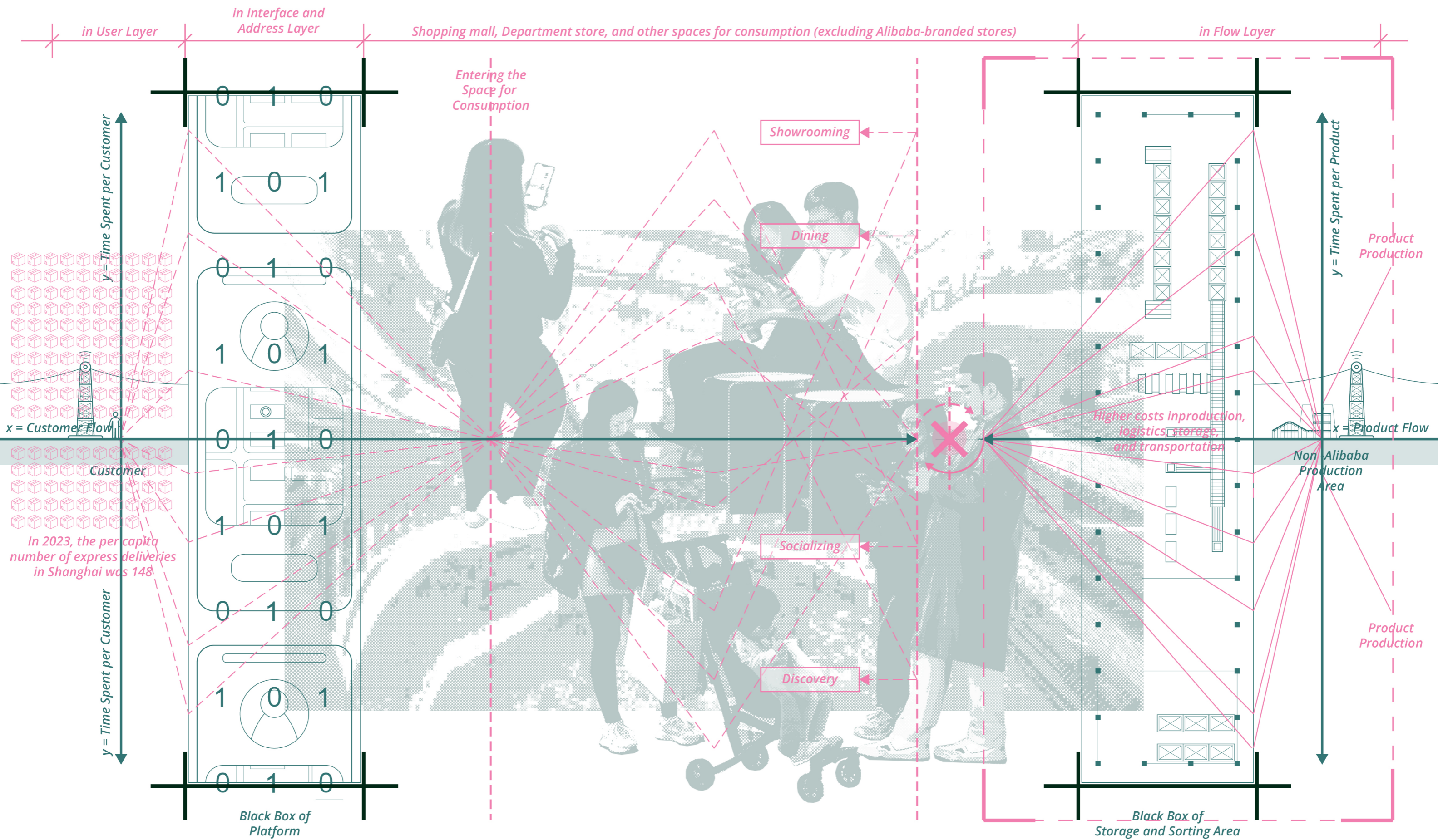
A new governance opportunity aimed at ensuring and safeguarding the value of biological life

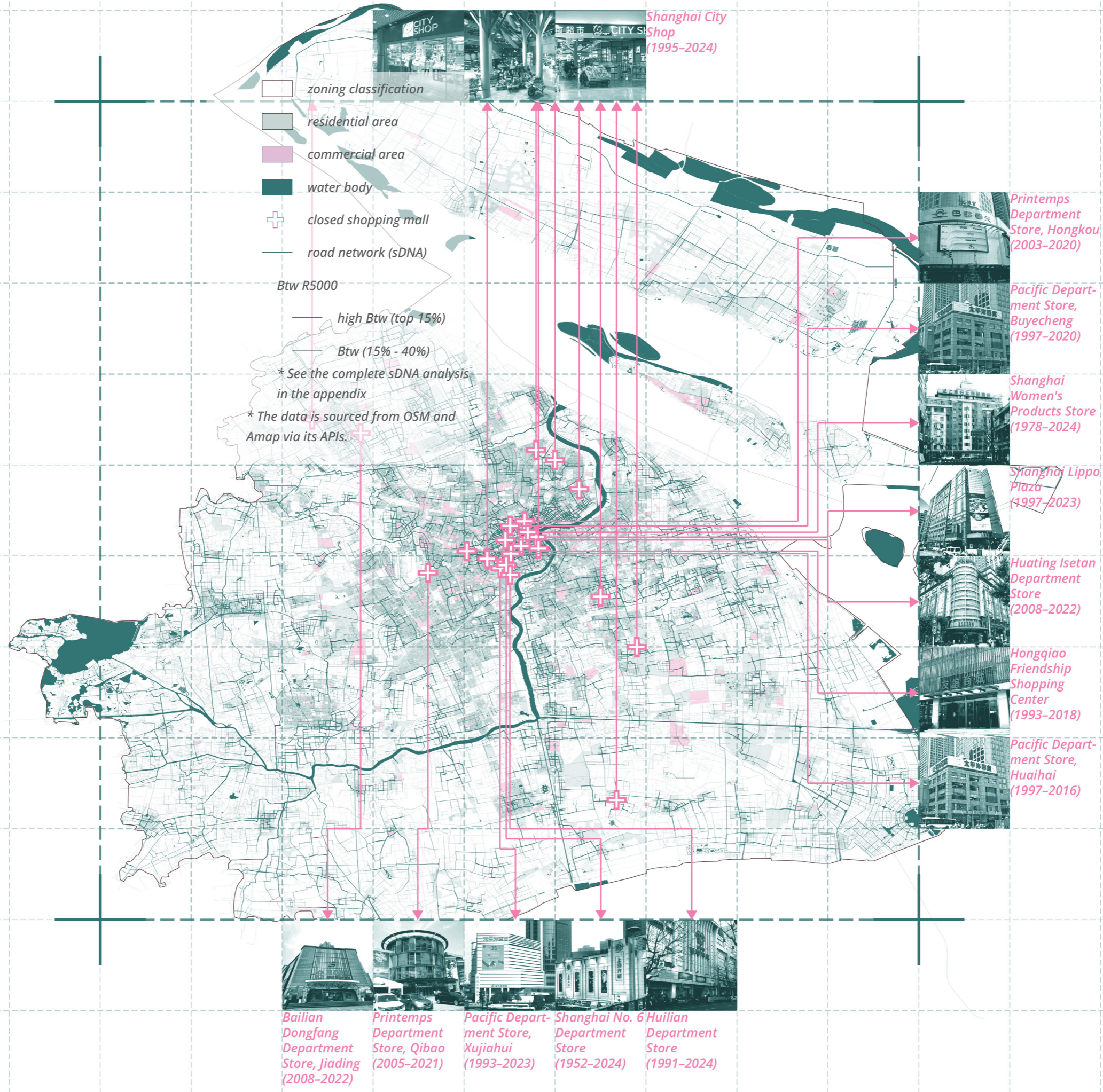
***-- Benjamin Bratton
The Revenge of the Real, 2021***

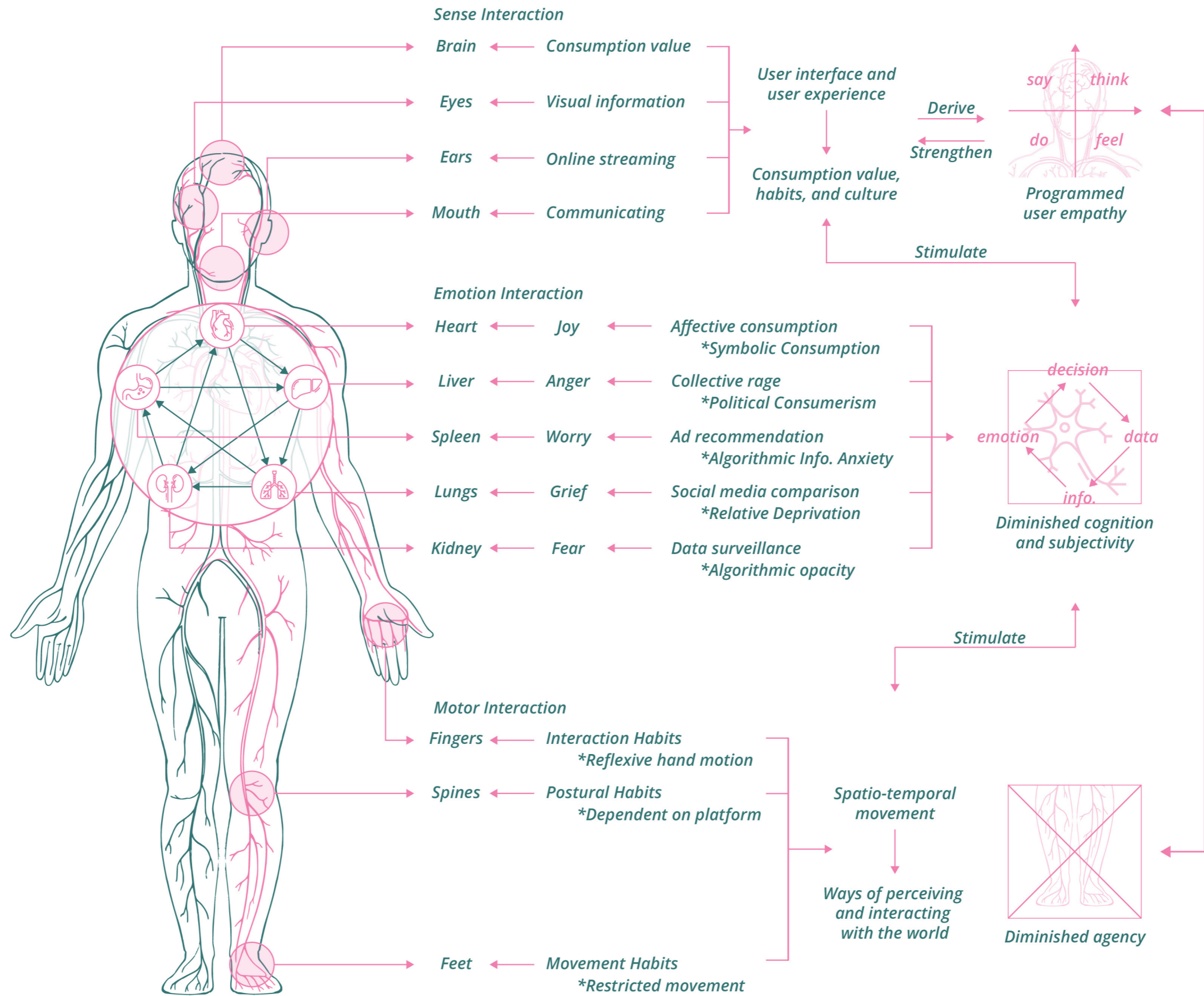
Biopolitics undermines individual freedom and weakens democratic structures

***-- Nick Srnicek
Platform Capitalism, 2016***









Alibaba Deploys Digital Biopolitics to

Planetary Computation

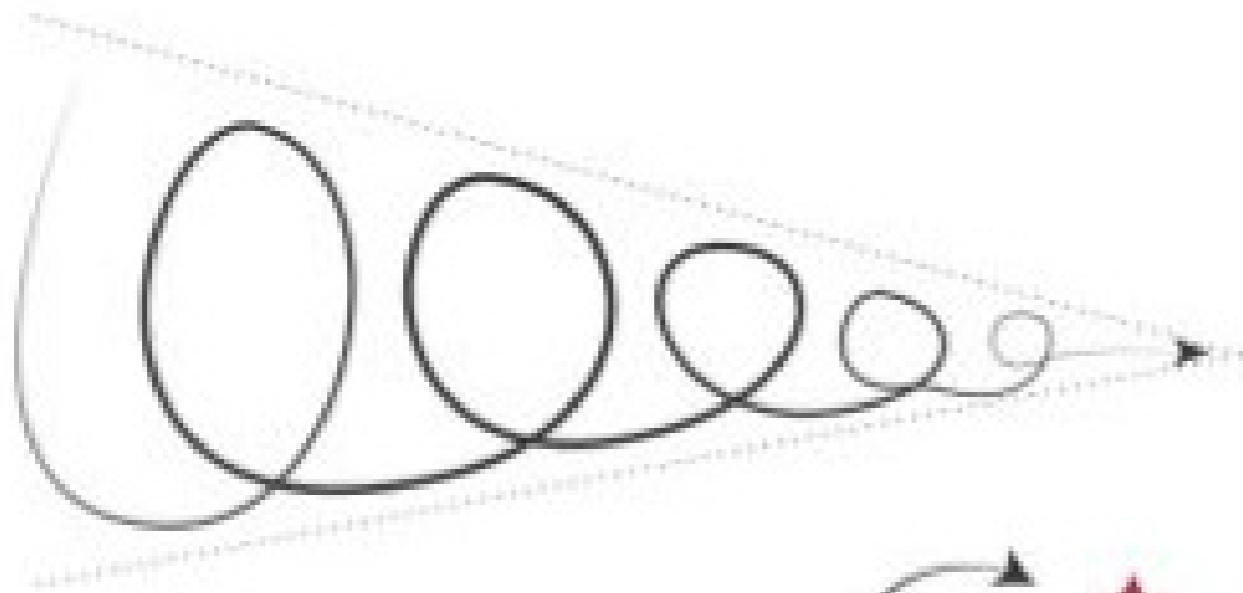
Exploitation

Production

Human Future

Gain of Efficiency

Loss of Subjectivity



*best solution
is missed*

Exploitation

***short-term profits but
filter bubble effect***



*refine
from here*

Exploration

***gradual returns and
user experience enhancement***

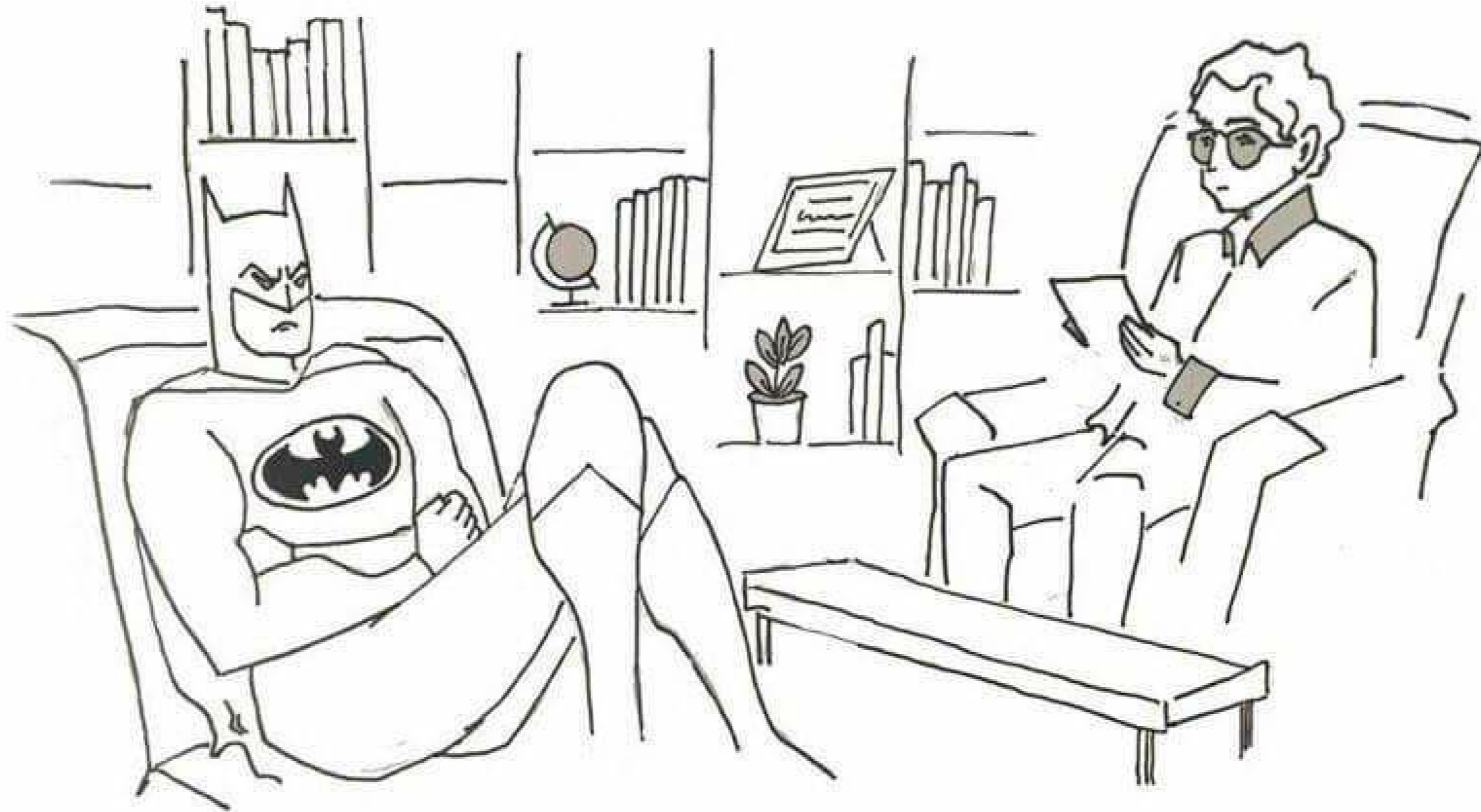
vs.

WHAT IF?

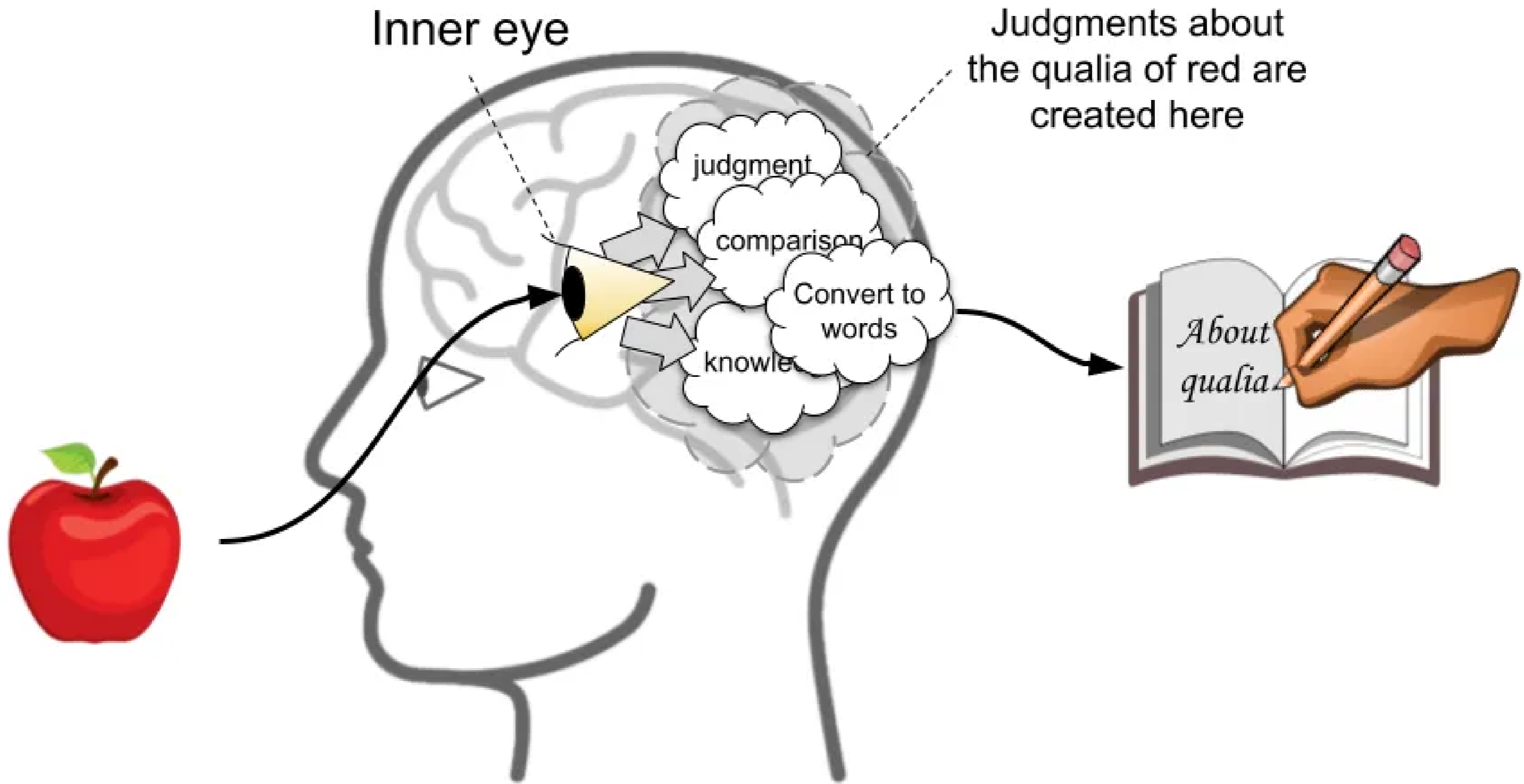
Exploitation >> Exploration

***>> Digital Biopolitics
in a New Paradigm***

How to Achieve Exploration?



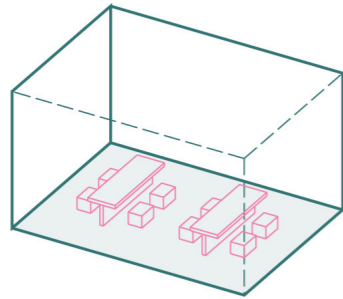
"I mean, I've got the costume, I've got the gadgets... but I just can't shake the feeling that I'll never know what it's like to be a bat."



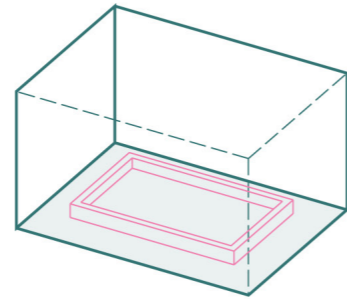
Experience

Becomes a Product

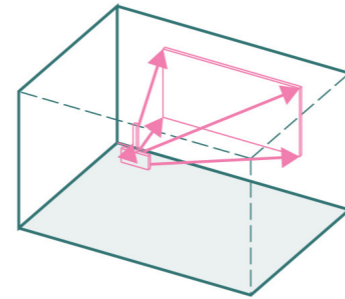
Desire



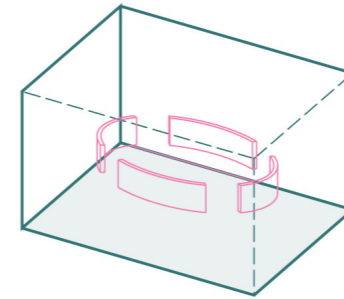
Function



Exposure

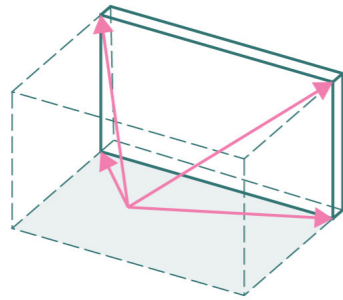


Immersion

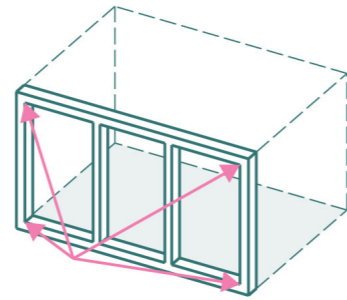


Enhancement

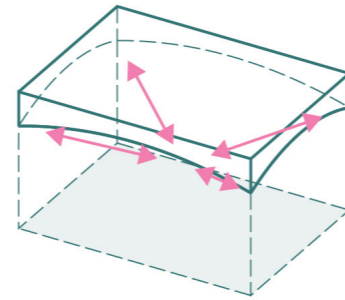
Sensory



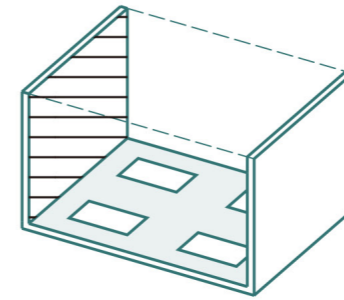
Seeing



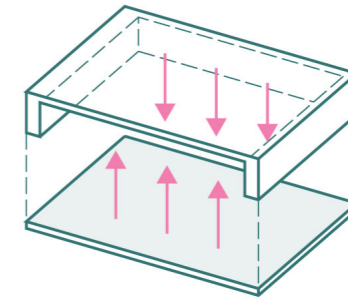
Being Seen



Hearing

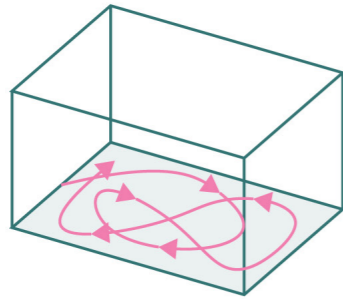


Touching

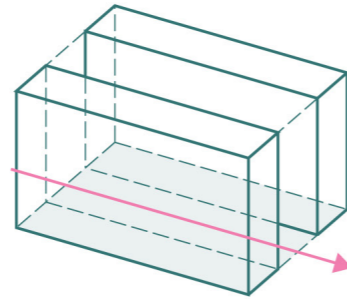


Atmosphere

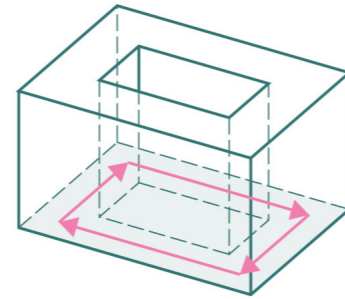
Body



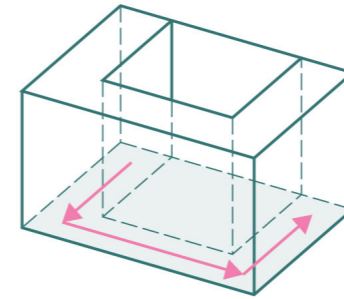
Free Movement



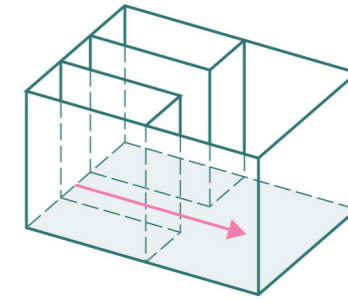
Linear Movement



Indirect Movement

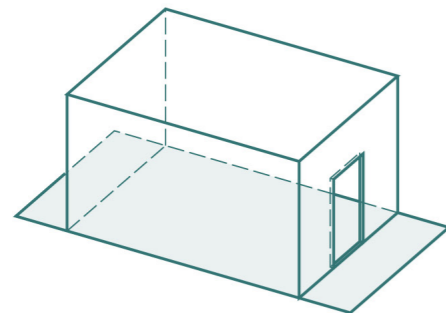


Restricted Movement

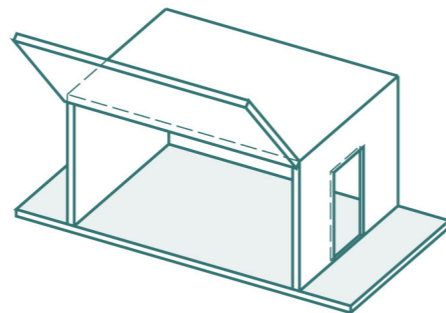


Sudden Change

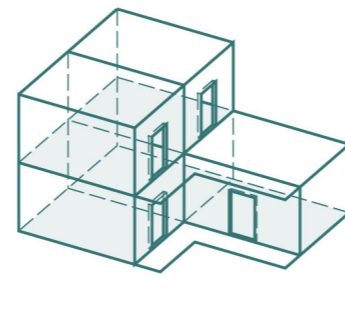
Relationship



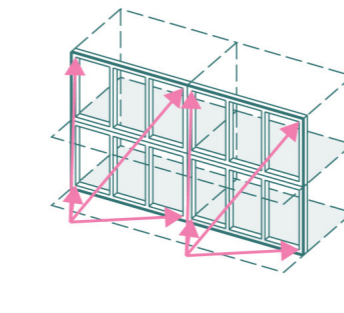
Individual



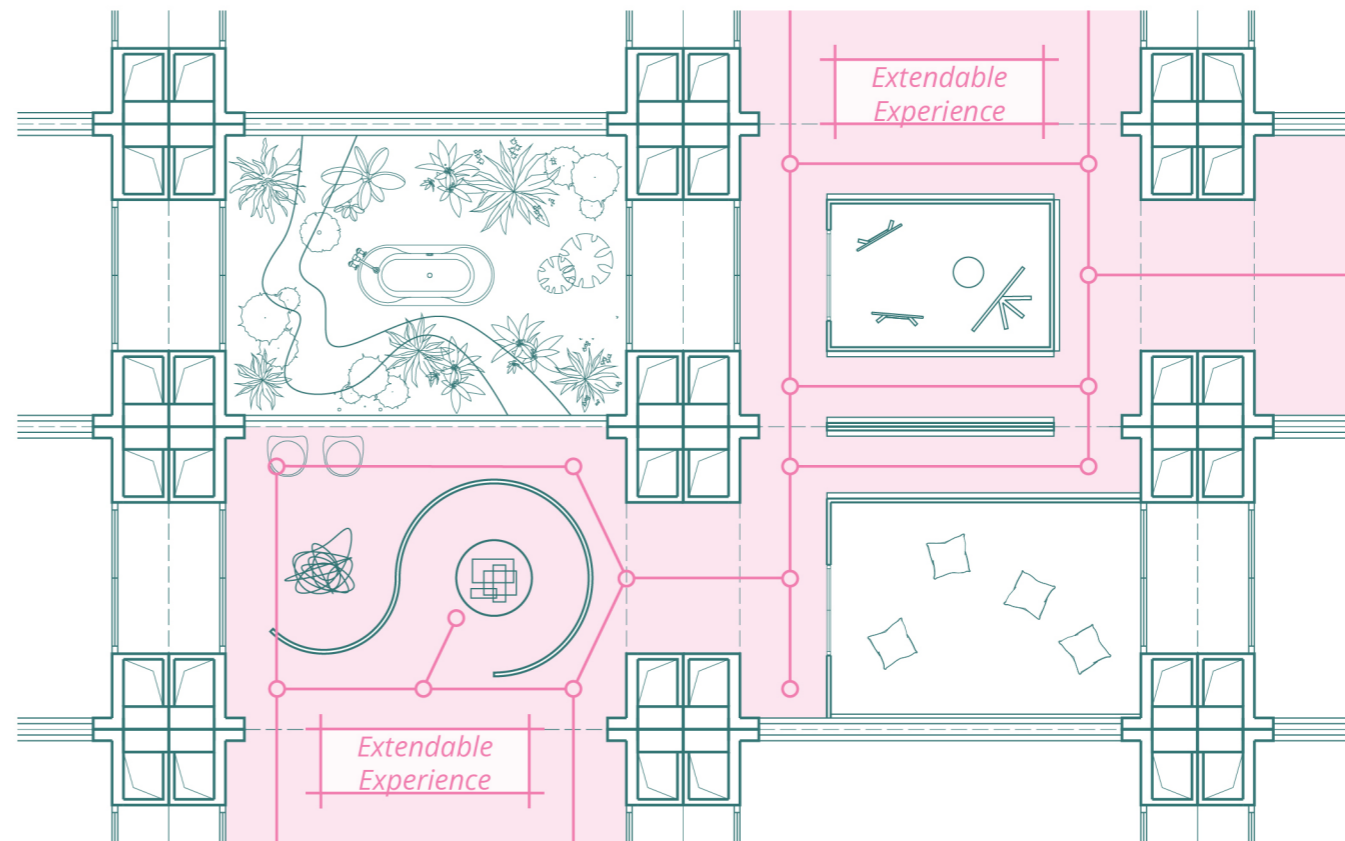
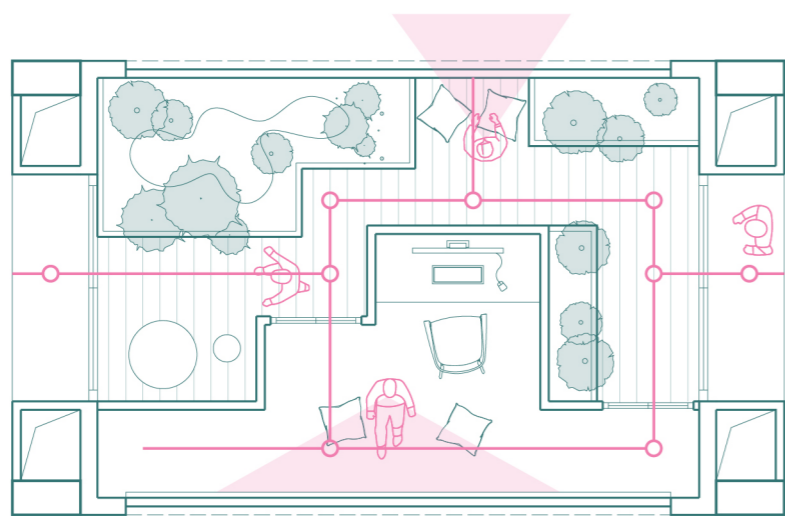
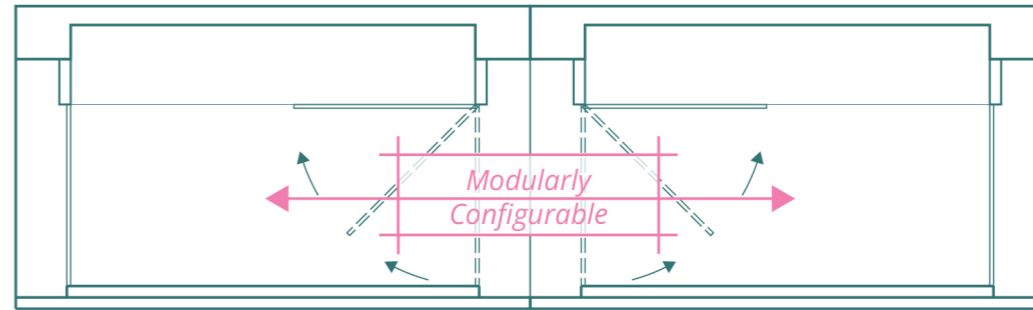
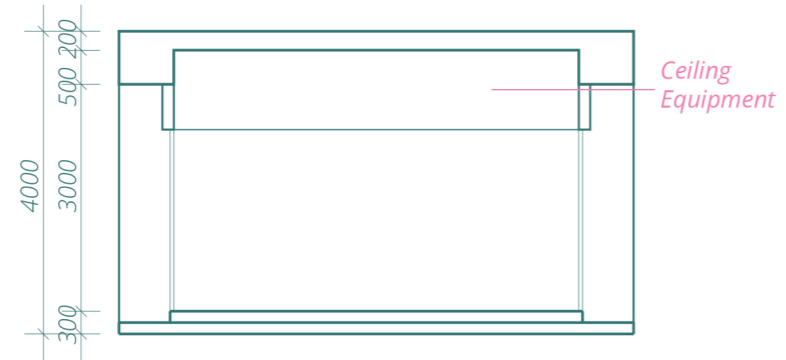
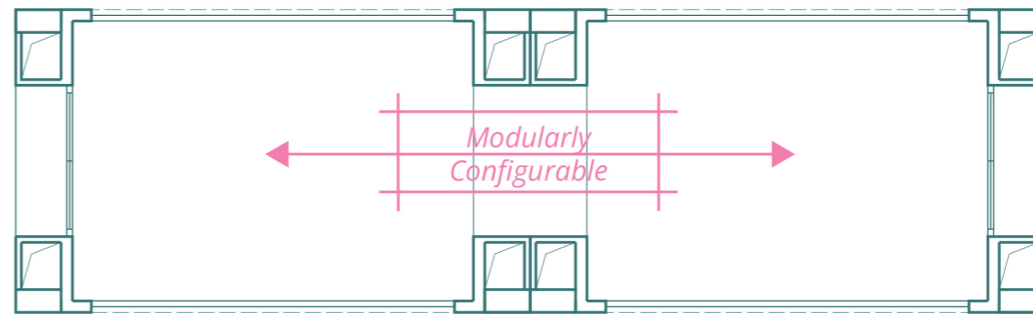
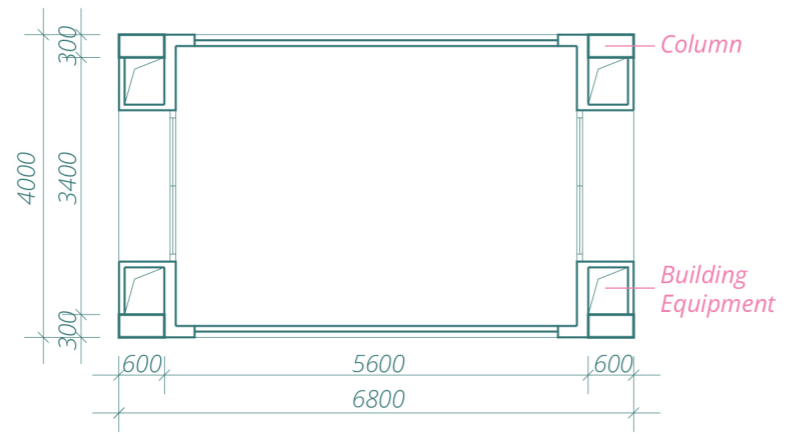
Socialbility

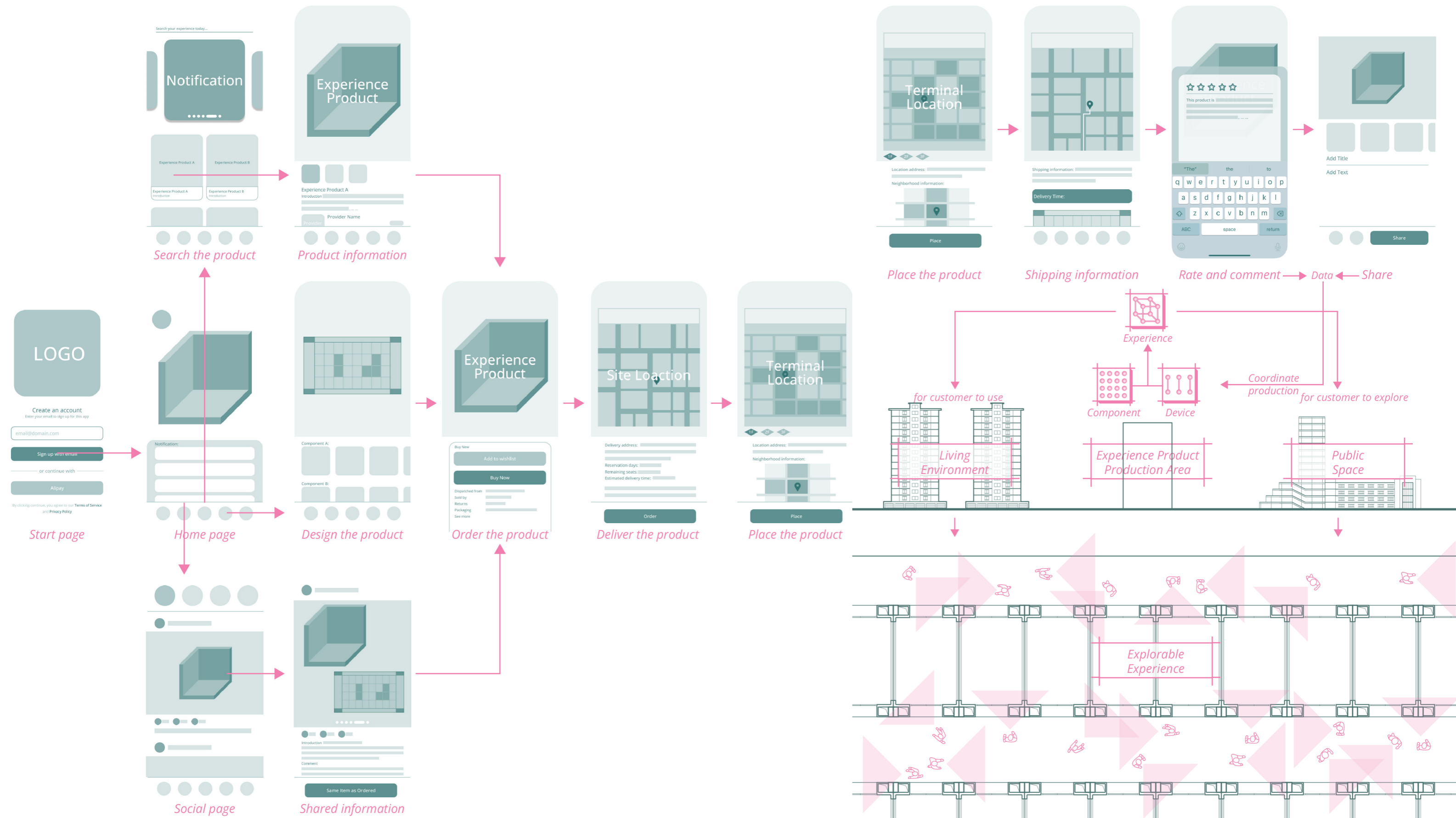


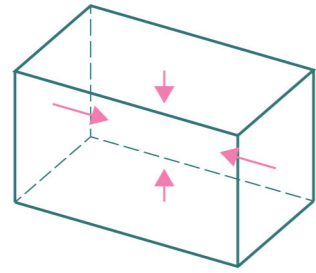
Collective



Exploring

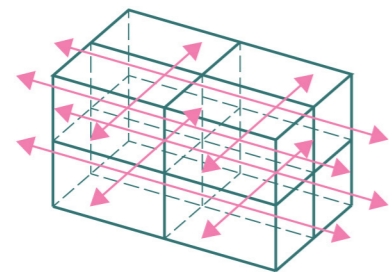
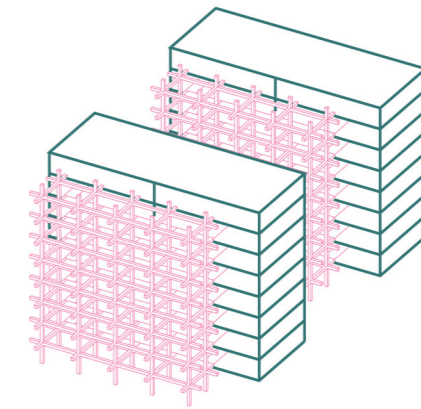
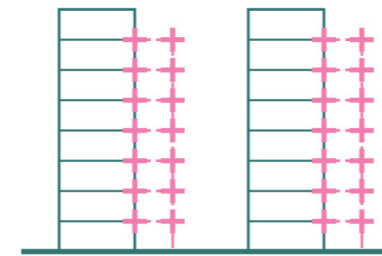
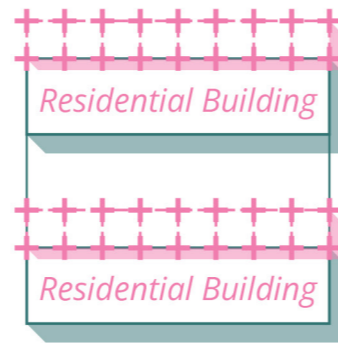






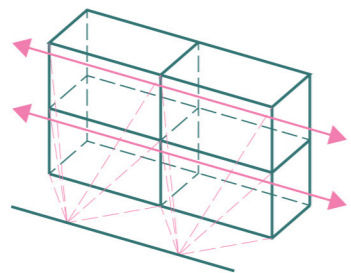
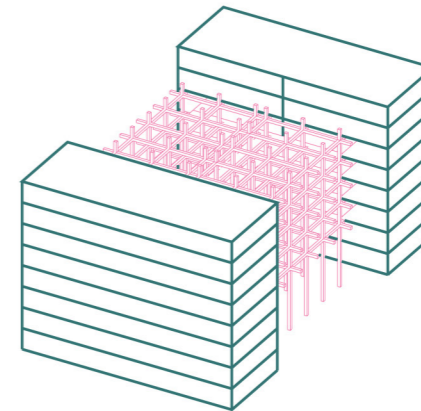
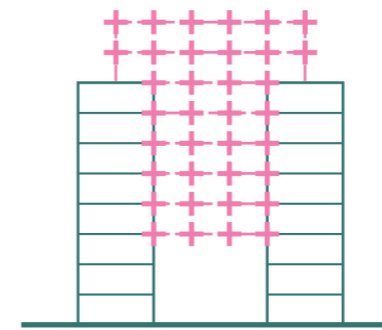
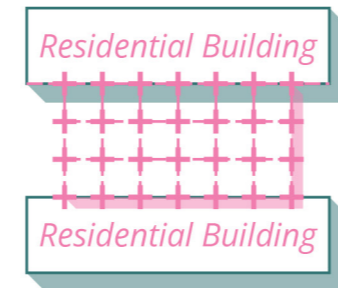
Individual Experience

in Terminal Layer



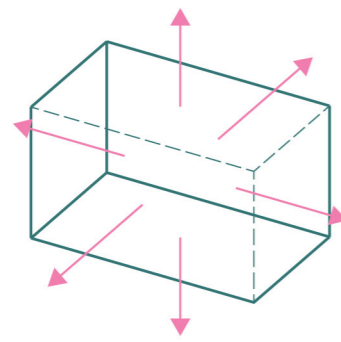
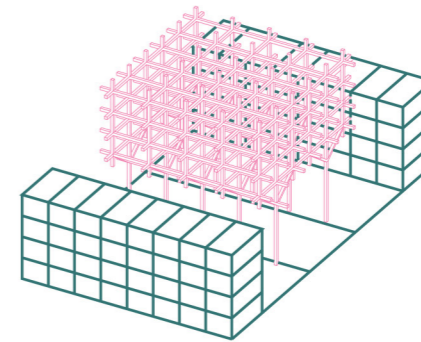
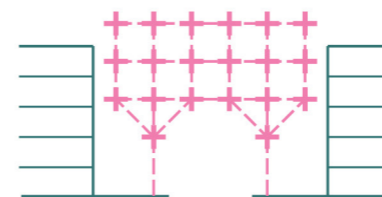
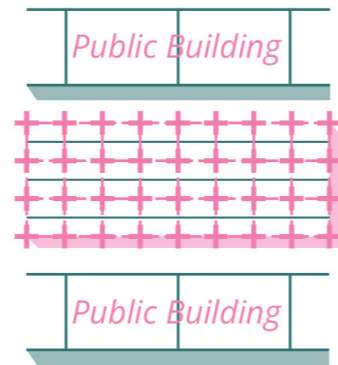
Collective Experience

in Terminal Layer



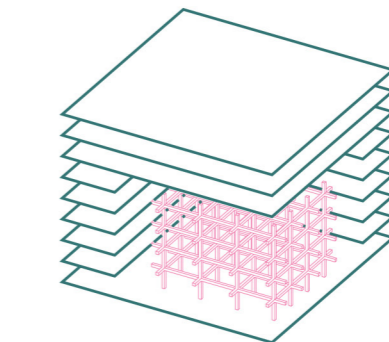
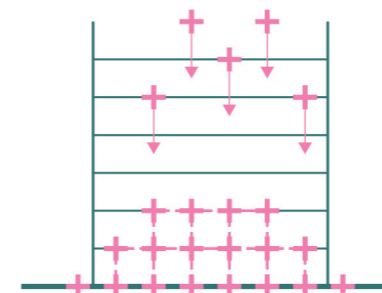
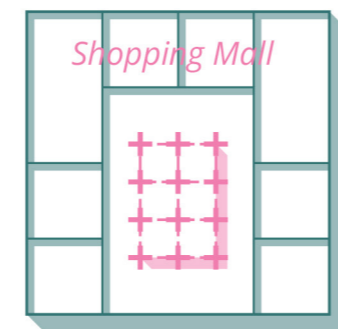
Explorable Experience

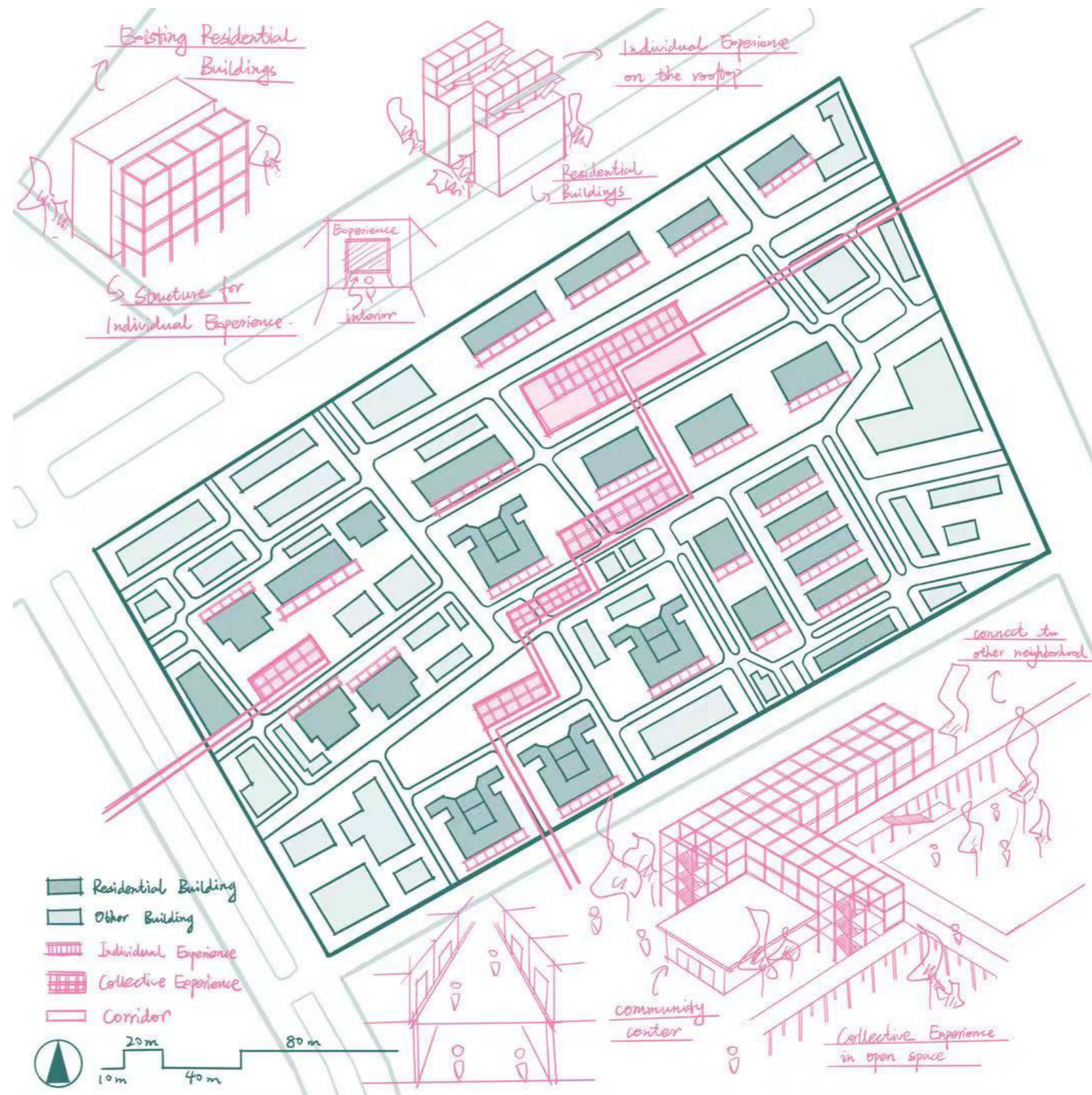
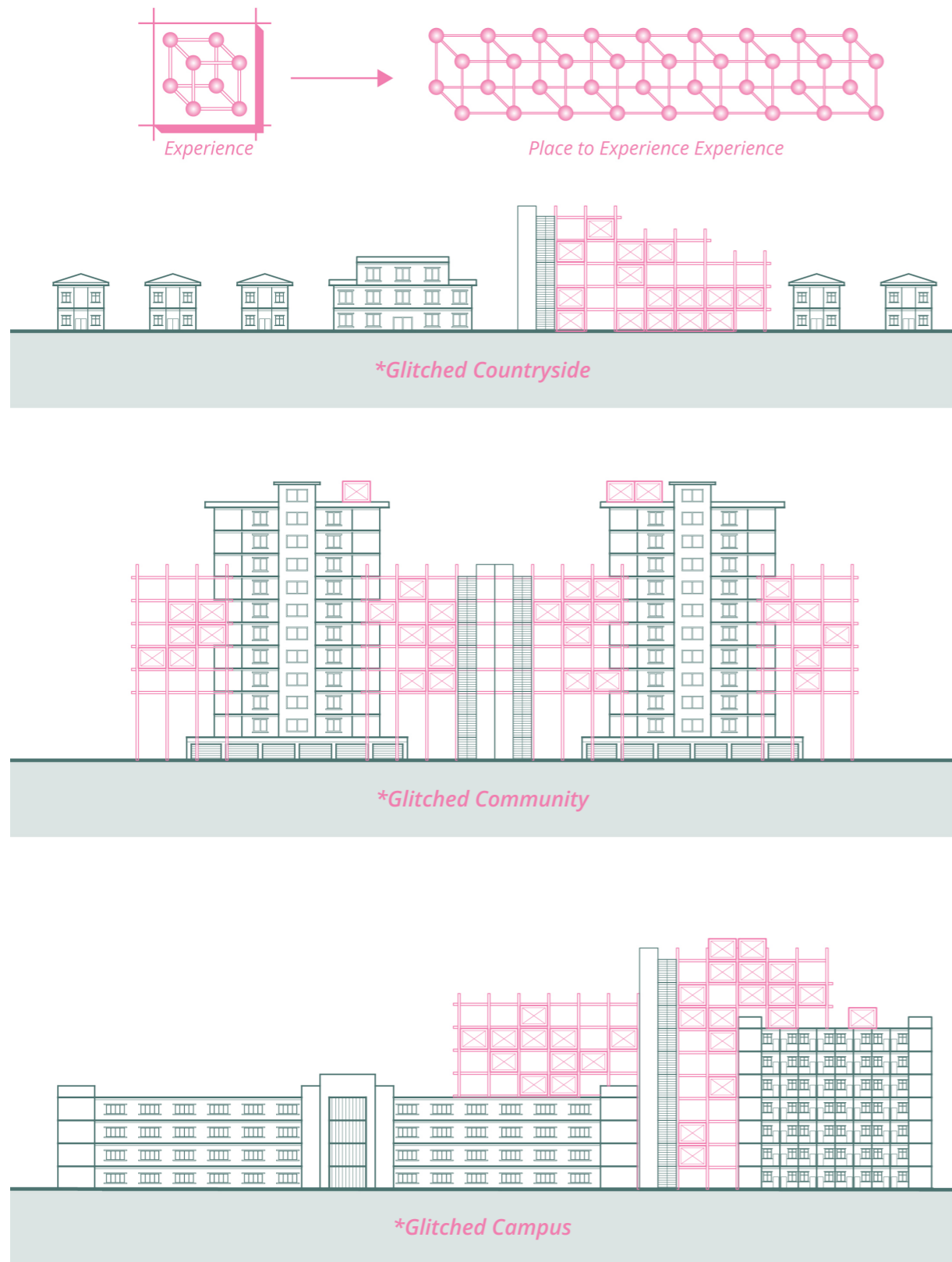
in Market Layer

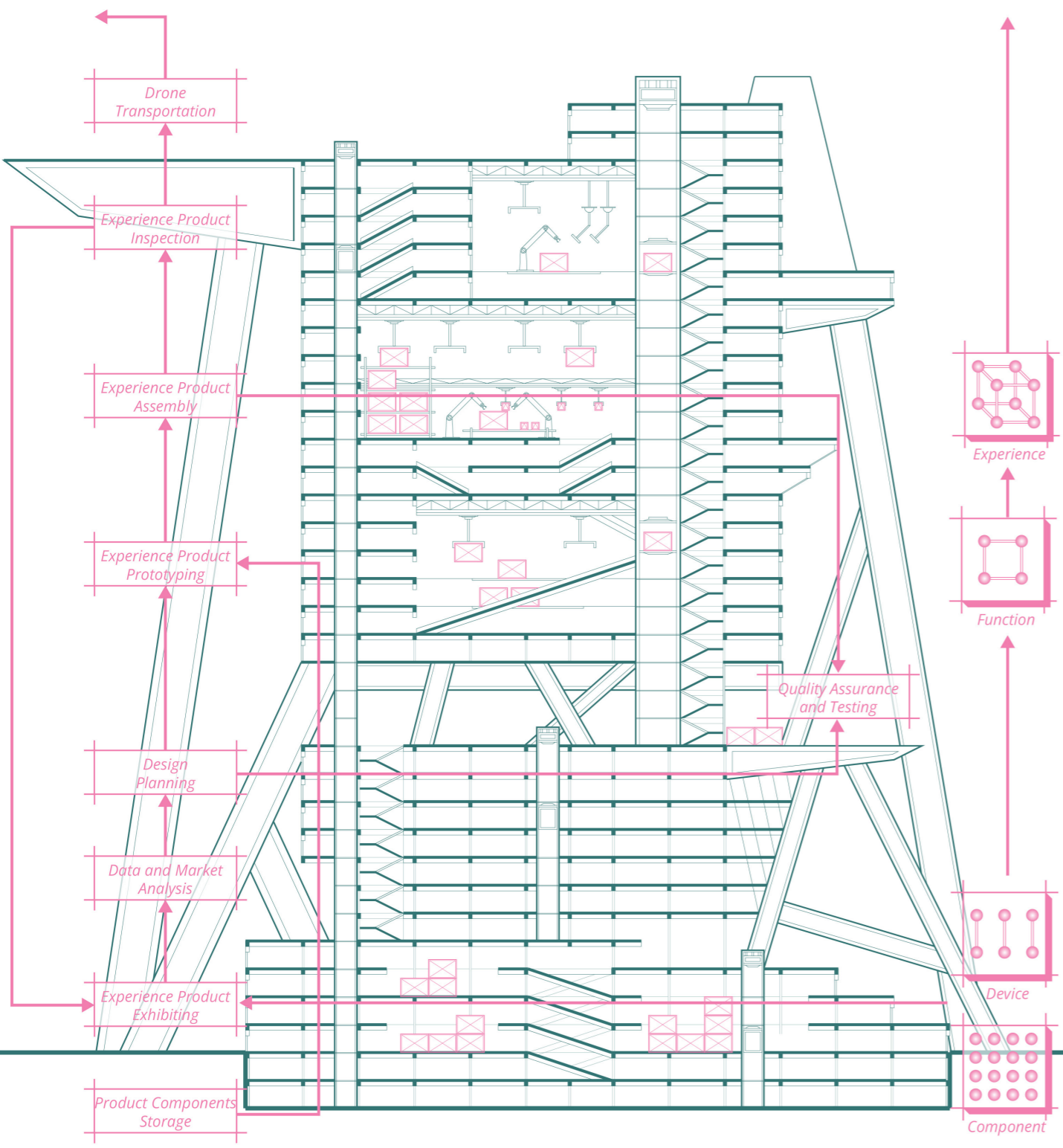


Experimental Experience

in Market Layer

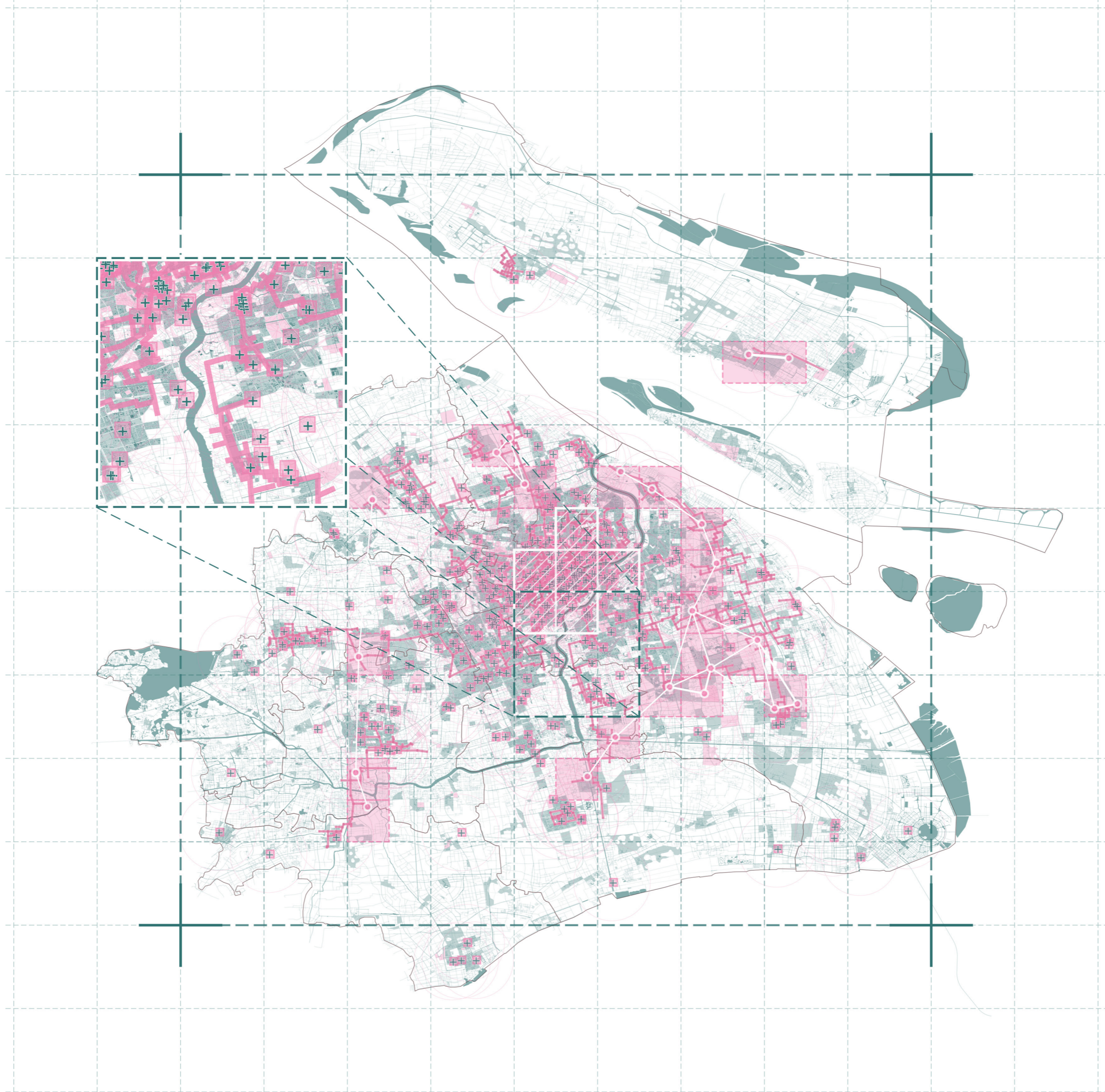


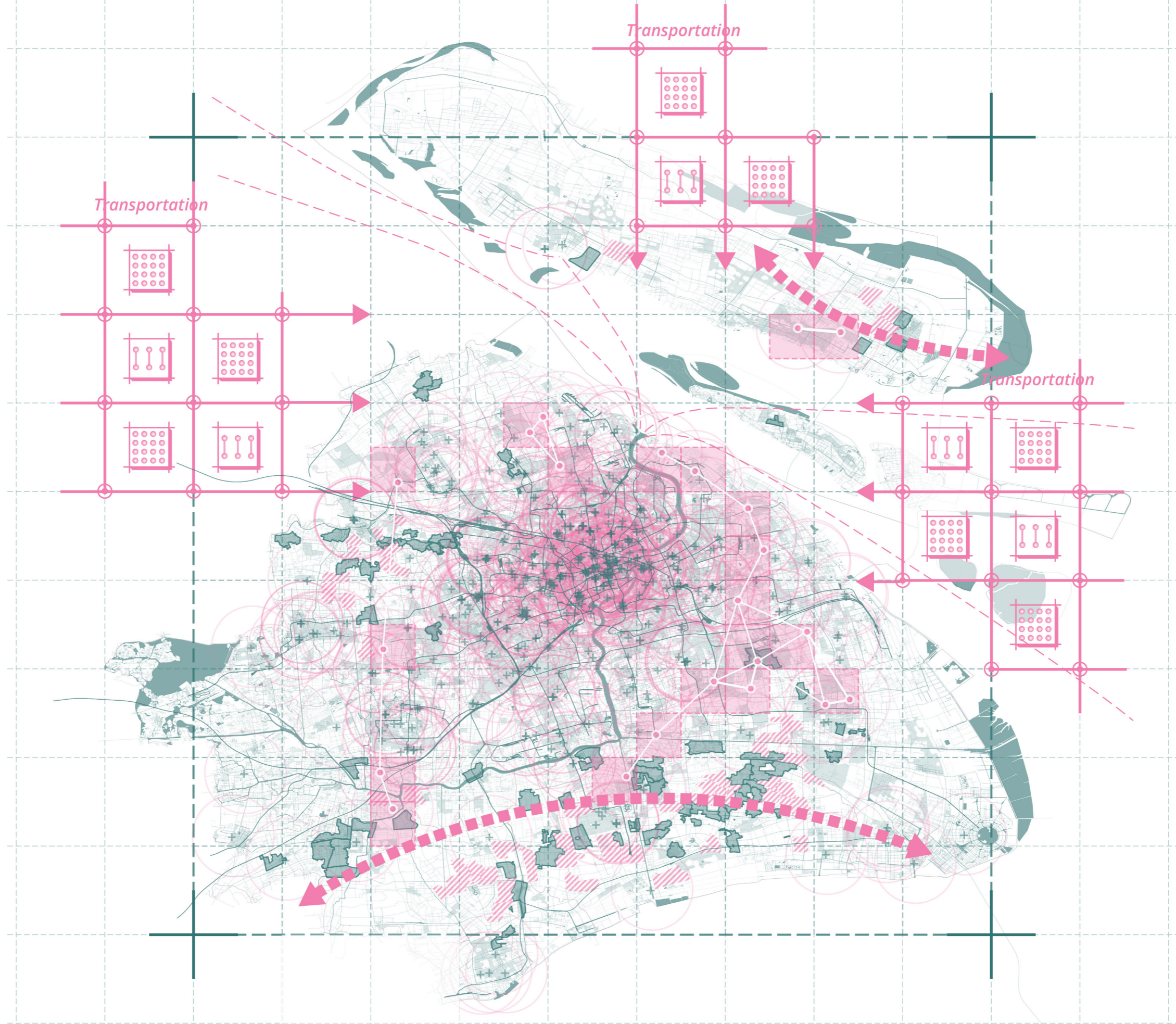




***Towards an
Affirmative Digital Biopolitics
in the Paradigm of Exploration***

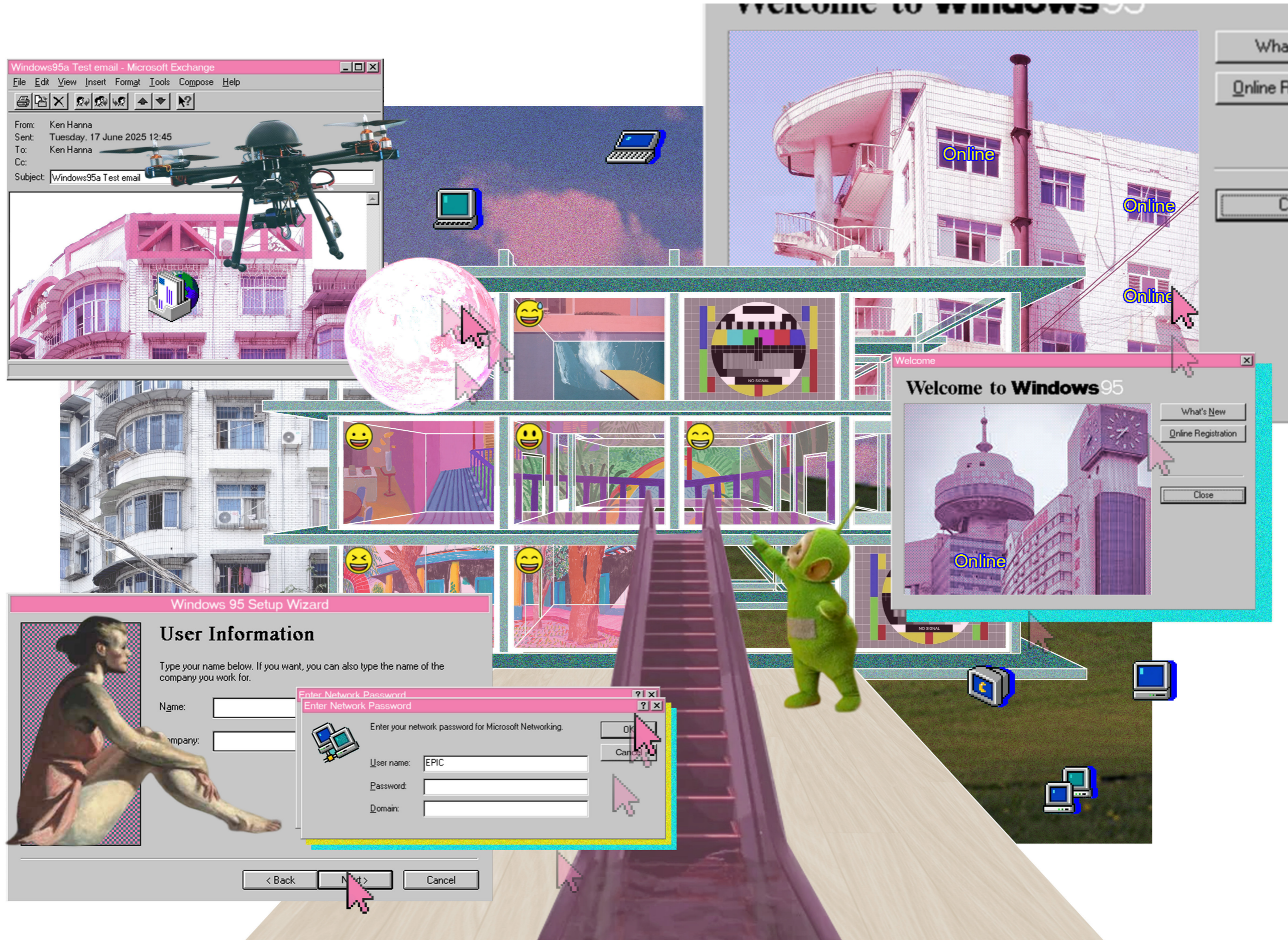
Geodesign





Infodesign







Would you like some...

```
FOR each User IN Community:  
bodyData ← ScanUserBody (User)  
emotion ← DetectEmotion (User)  
context ← GetLocationContext (User)  
experience ← GenerateExperience(bodyData, emotion, context)
```

Mine Sweeper

0:10 [Smiley Face] 023

[Warning Icon]

Regional Settings Properties

Regional Settings | Number | Currency | Time | Date

programs support international settings. Changing the Regional affects the way these programs display and sort dates, times, numbers.

Xuhui District (Shanghai)

[Map]

Cancel Apply

My Computer

File Edit View

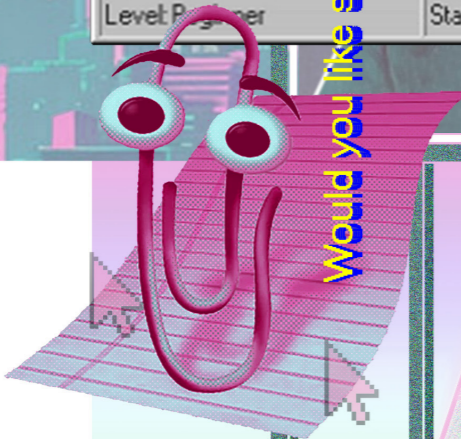
[Bust Image]

18 object(s)
1 to 18 object(s)

Select Card

[Stack of Cards]

OK Cancel





... 81%

Distance Left: 17
From: Glitched Mall
To: Glitched Self
Status: In Battle

Map _ Glitched Mall

Status

Health
48 / 54

Magic
12 / 17

Experience / Next Level

My Bag

Potion Key VR Gla... Sword Potion Hea Bomb

Prosth... Gold Bomb Arm Book

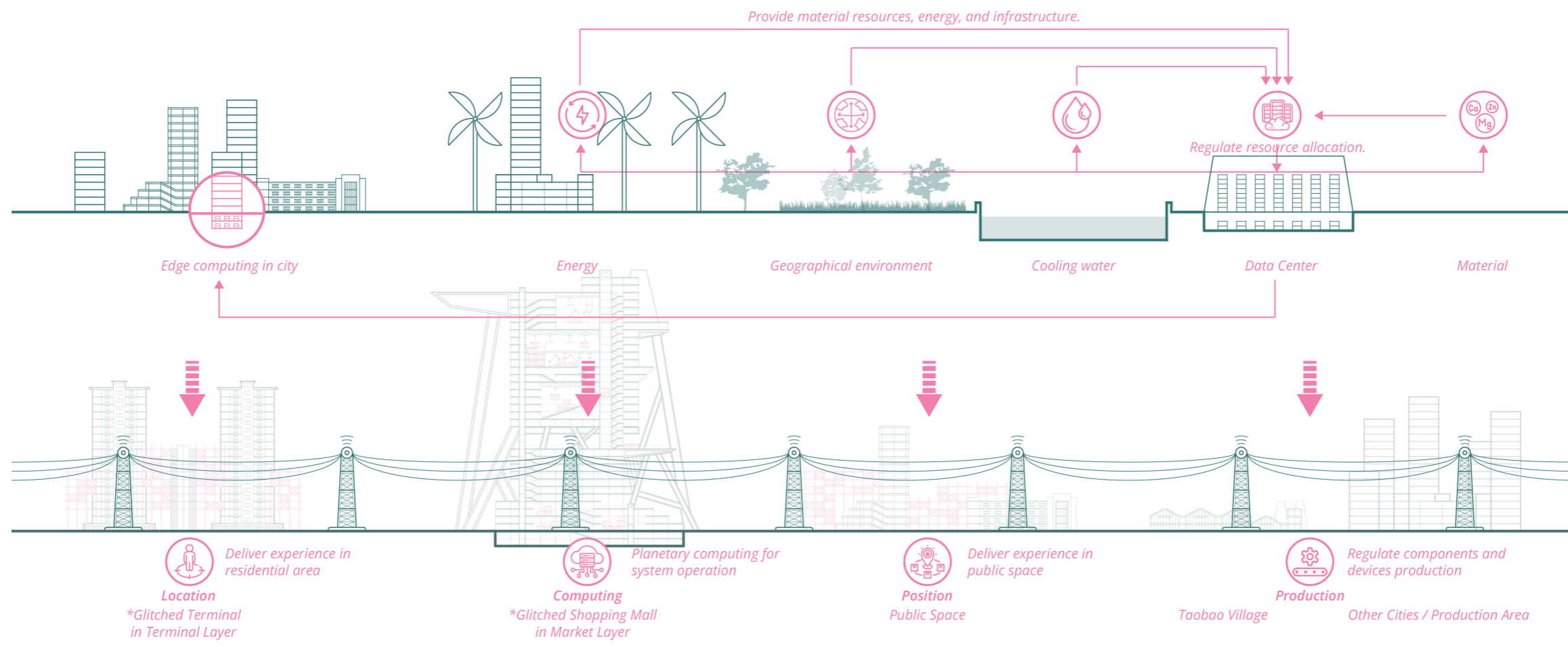
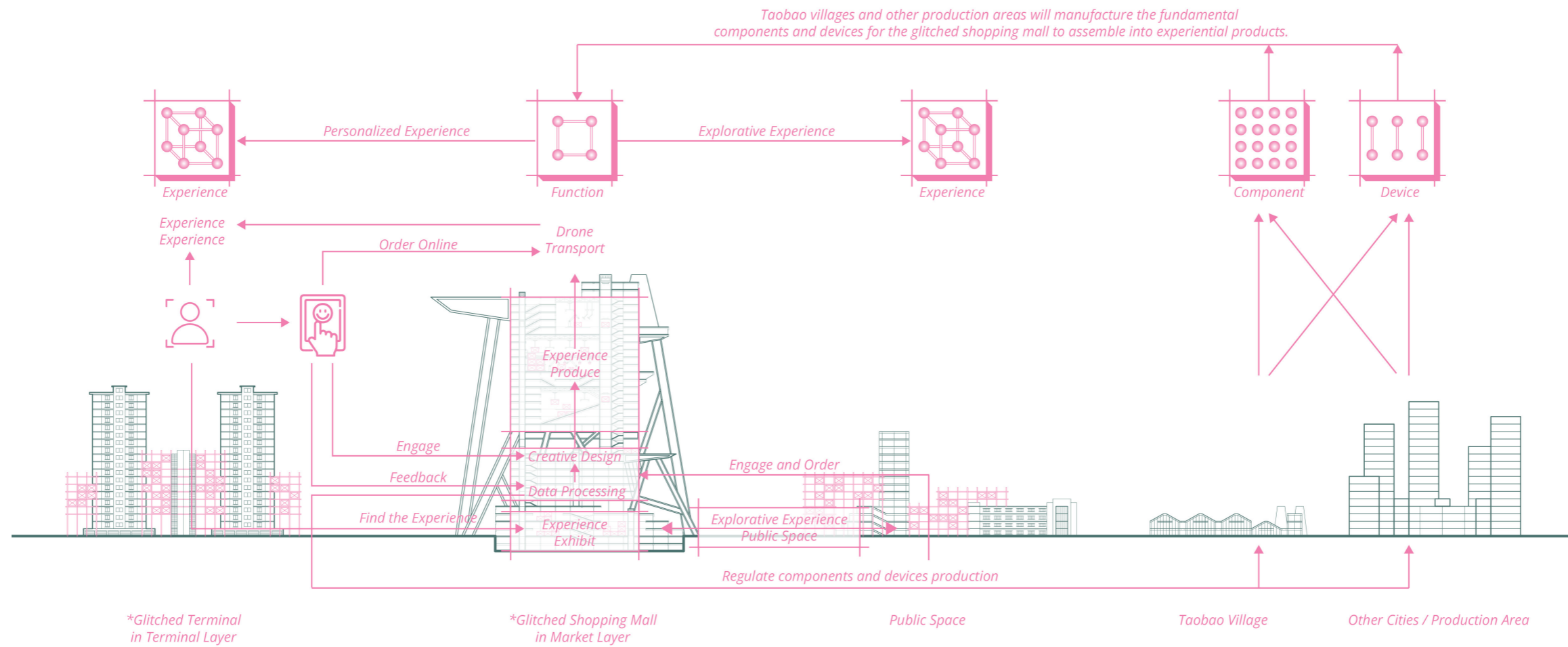
Weight: 19.9 / 30

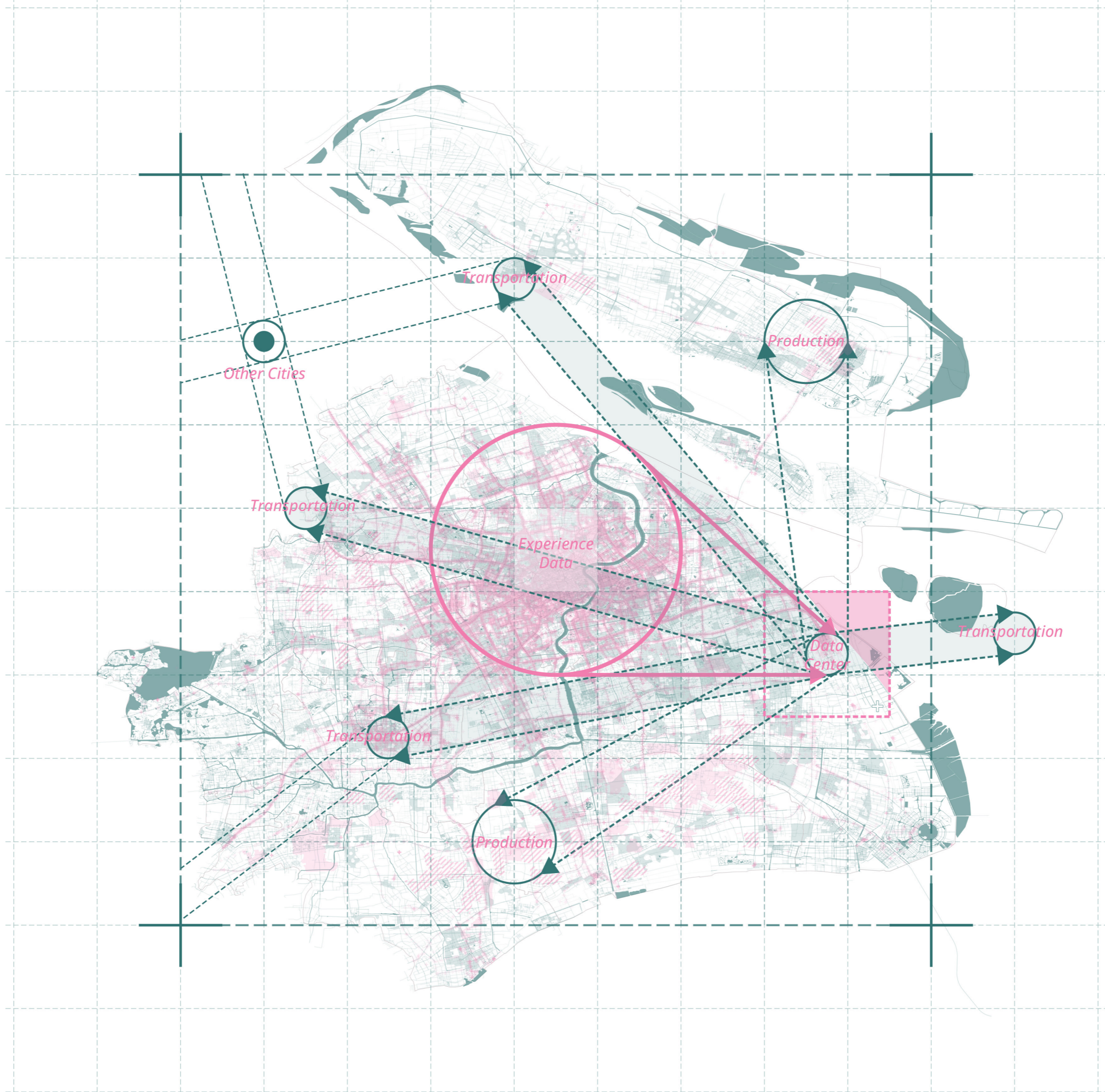
Glitched Mall .EXE

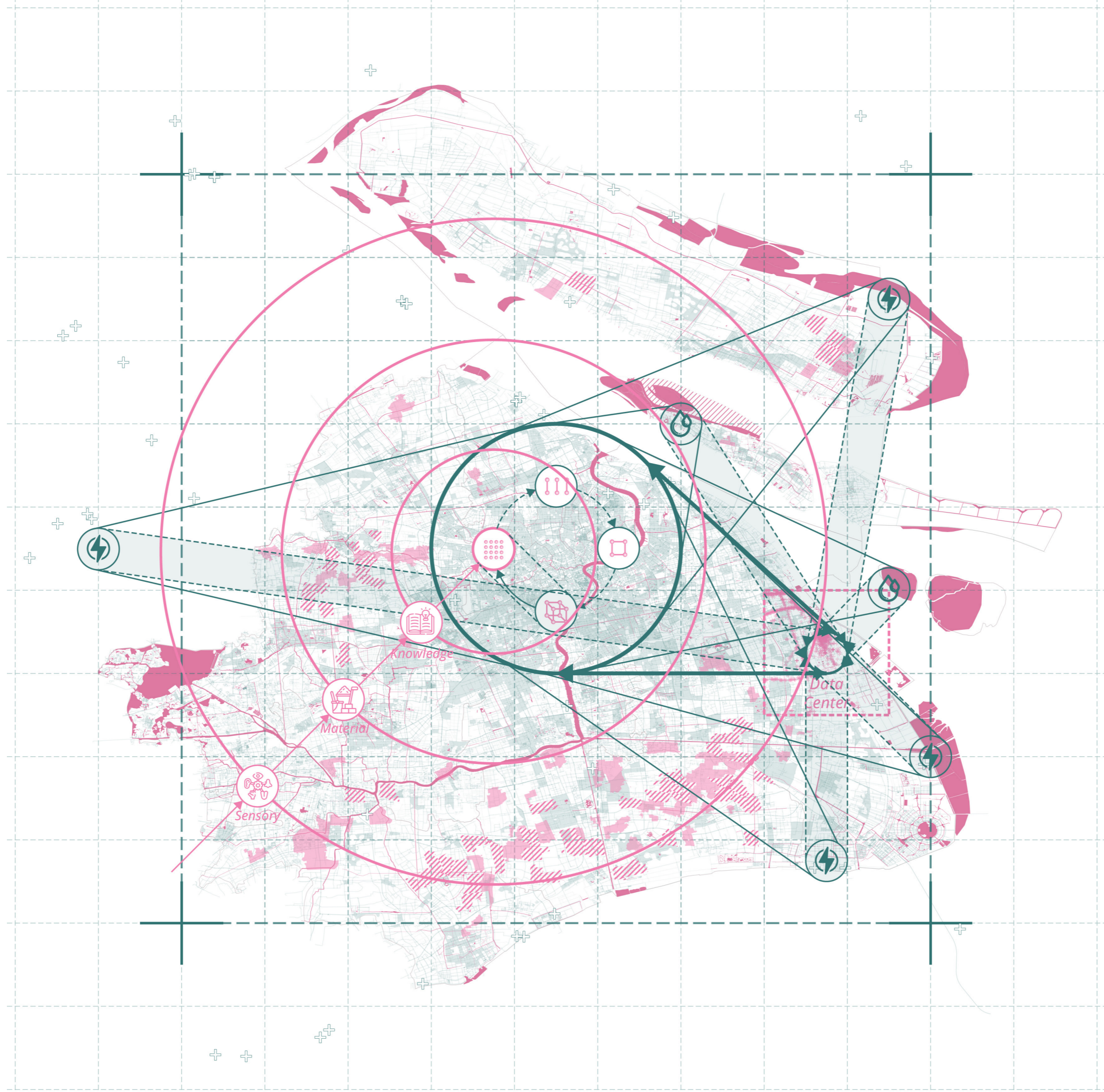
Immersive EX_07

7/7

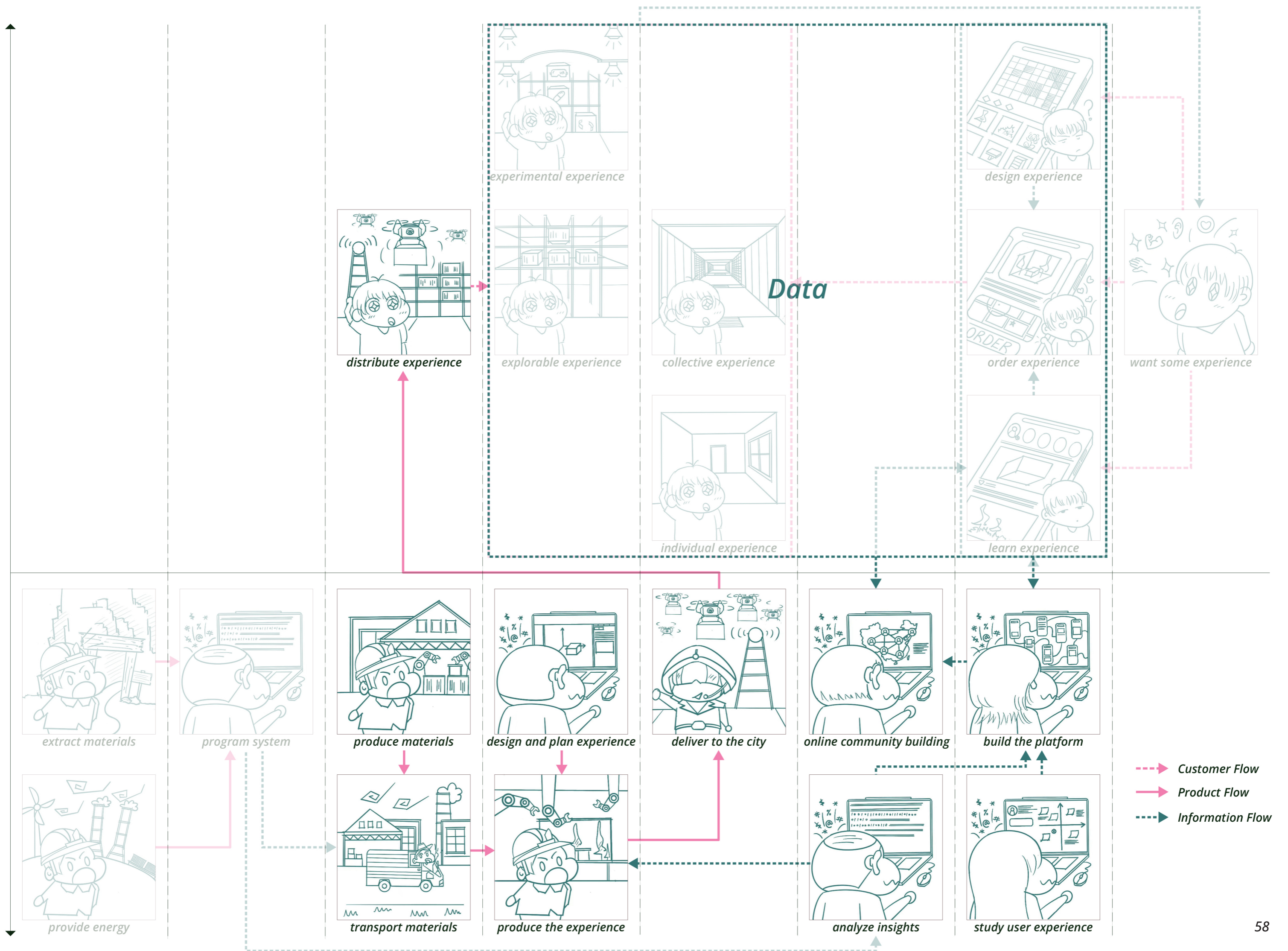
Sovereignty

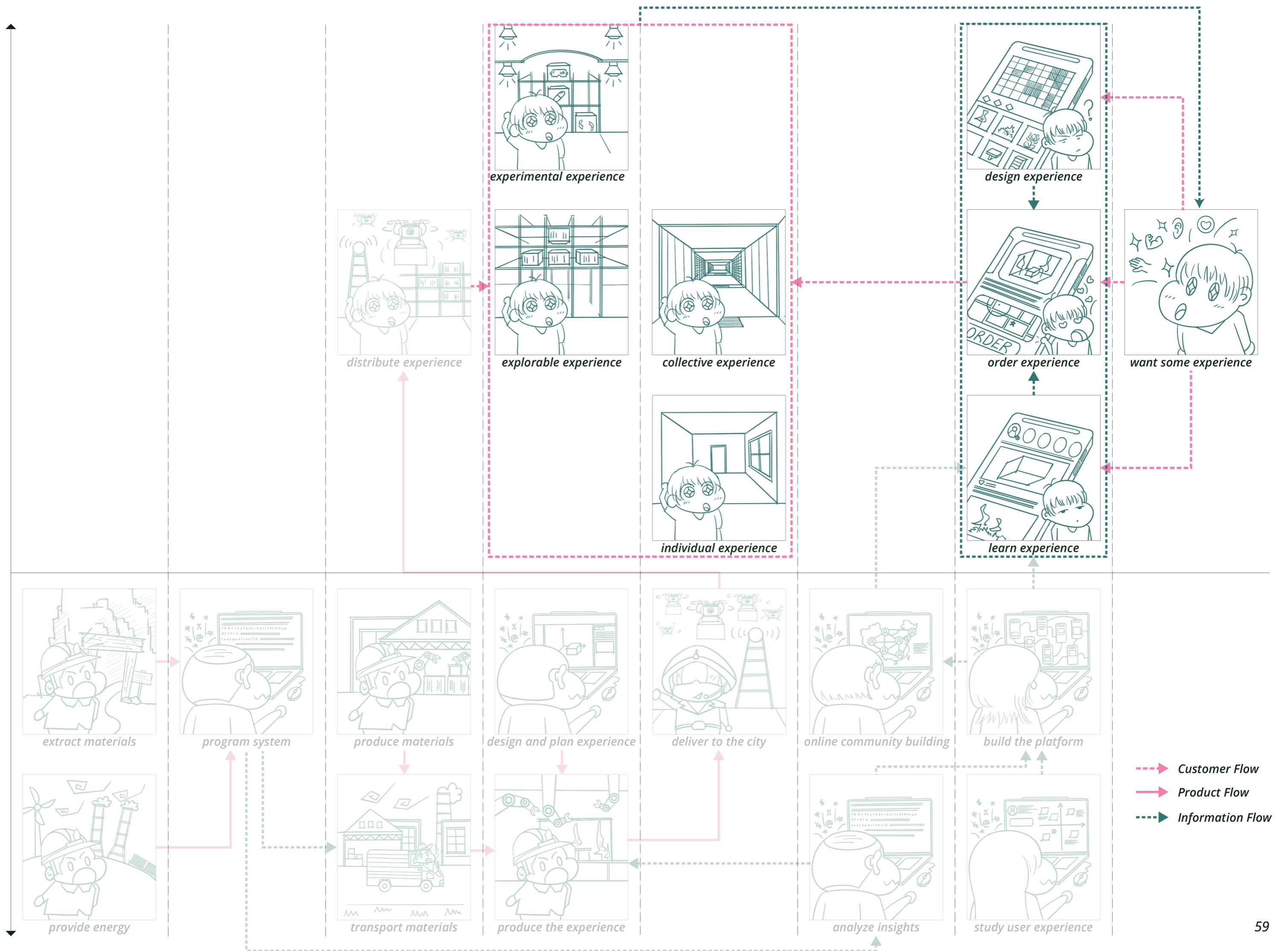




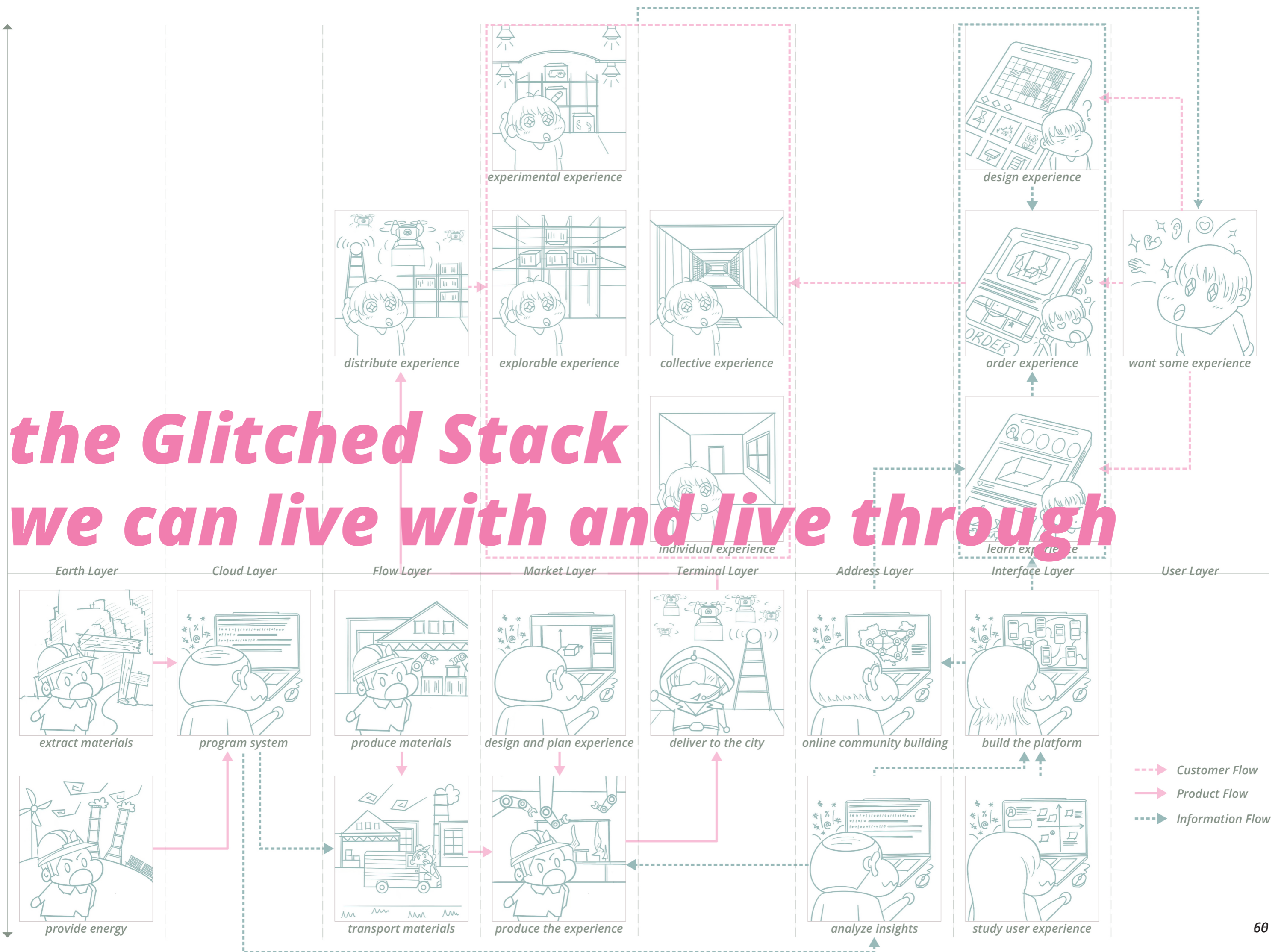


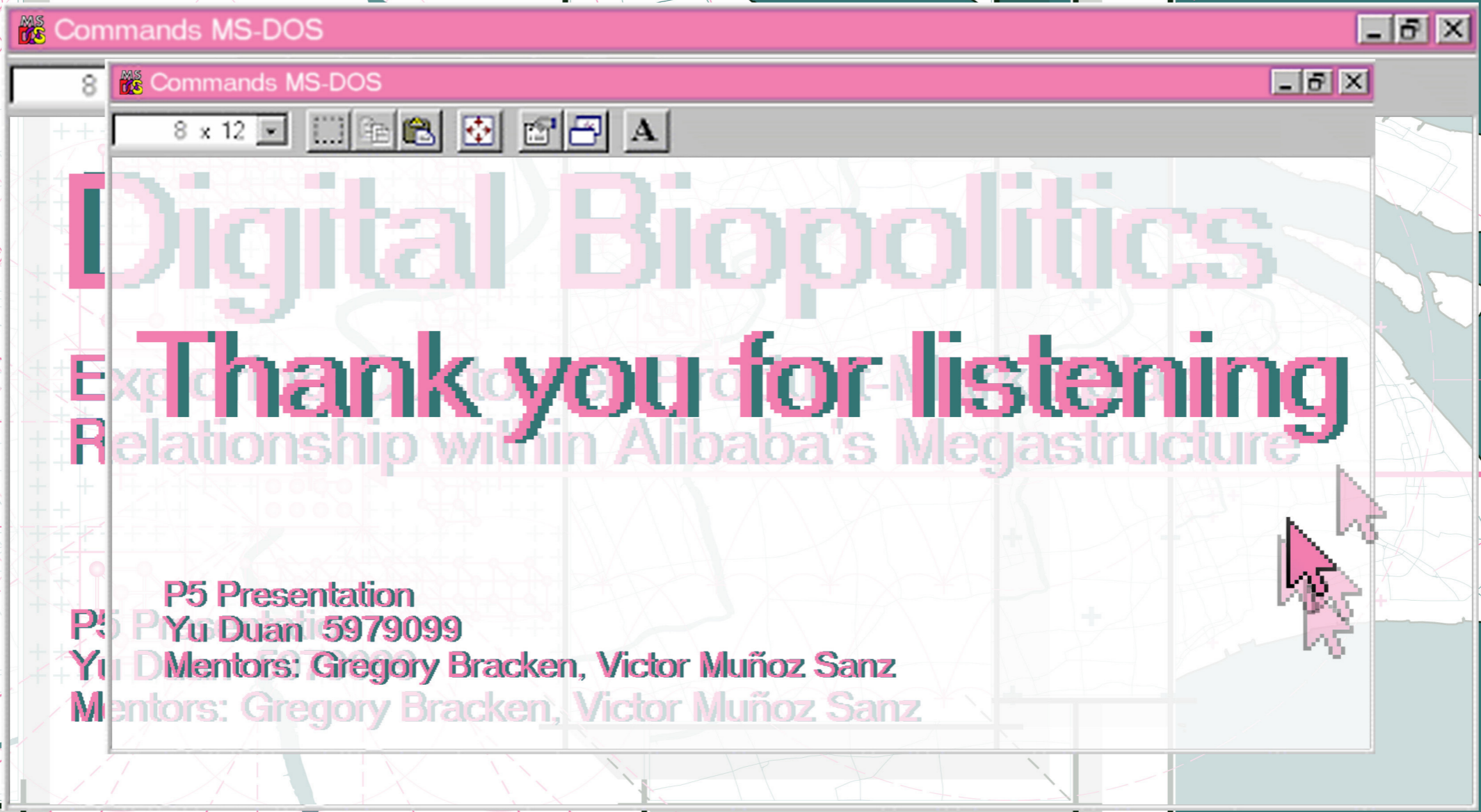
Culture of Consumerism





the Glitched Stack *we can live with and live through*





Digital Biopolitics

Thank you for listening

P5 Presentation
P5 P Yu Duan 5979099
Yu D Mentors: Gregory Bracken, Victor Muñoz Sanz
Mentors: Gregory Bracken, Victor Muñoz Sanz