

P5

PERSONAL REFLECTION

1. Relationship between research and design

The motivation for my master's thesis "Delhi - Great city... Terrible Place...., liberating the potential of automotive technology, as an instrument to create a liveable public realm and creating a socio economic equilibrated city" comes from the urgent state of conditions, that the city of Delhi is going through. From toxic environmental, to unsafe streets for pedestrians/commuters, to poorly accessible public realm and an inequitable transit system that has become the status quo. Years of development based on transport planning prioritising car as main mode of transit and an exaggerated road infrastructure has led to fractured development of public transit, further exacerbating socio-spatial segregation from the city. Introduction of Delhi Metro (subway) to change the model towards more public transit and bridge the gap has not yielded that result. The lack of 1st and last mile connectivity dependant on bus which is high investment driven and paratransit service that is out of the planning gambit. With the new technological advancement on the horizon in autonomous vehicle and the need for a new efficient, cleaner and smarter mobility system. Could this system work with Delhi Metro and create a coherent network of autonomous public transit system? What could be the spatial consequence of this development? Could we facilitate the spatial condition to reduce the spatial segregation and make the city more accessible and liveable for the urban poor in Delhi?

These questions became core concepts to my research work, where the methodology of the project was based on 3 main framework, Theory, Analysis and Design. Research by design was going to drive this thesis, and exploring whether such exercise can be undertaken in a challenging socio-spatial environment like Delhi.

The core understanding of theoretical knowledge, through literature studies and city policies sets up a field for issues, goals and future principles which are desirable for the city. This became the starting point to understand the city on analytical ground. For a project that is driven on need for design solutions, the need to analyse the physical components of neighbourhoods, desirable commuter patterns of people is quite essential. Through Interviews of daily commuters of selected neighbourhood case study and the respective governing agencies, data collection and site visits. I formulated the necessary elements for design that are needed to be in check, for example the pattern of mobility that needs adaptation or the spatial condition that would require a different spatial configuration. This understanding of analytical framework makes the implementation for new way of movement and living much coherent and further the principles guided by the theory, helped my work in reaching initial aim of the project.

As a conclusion, through this methodology the thesis aims to bring the Research and design together and add to the active discussion in the field with more knowledge and solution for future. In some cases, even start a new discussion for future planning in India and other developing nations.

2. Relationship between the theme of the graduation lab and the subject/case study chosen by the student within this framework

“One of the core philosophy of urban fabrics studio is to understand the existing urban fabrics as a performative base and question its suitability or the alternatives towards newer urban layout to acclimatise the changes that can be triggered by various drivers of the city and make cities more liveable” - Design of the urban fabric manifesto. This core understanding allowed me to build up a new or adapted design toolkit, which helped me create an analytic base for a spatial exercise to understand the complex relation between the public realm and future technologies. A change that deems to have an immense effect on future patterns in cities, resulting in direct impact on human condition. Such is the case in Delhi, where the city has not adapted towards the change in mobility systems as it has progressed, resulting in issues transpiring on social, economic and environmental level. The city also seems reluctant on adapting towards the future technologies that can help resolve the current problems. One of the premise of this technology is the automotive mobility, showcasing the potentials. However, this has been dealt as a technical exercise and far less emphasis has been paid towards its spatial impact. The theme of the studio “Technology” precisely helped me revisit the studio research base and specialist, to predominantly focus on the future impacts of technology, on our public realm and its challenges to create a liveable and socially equilibrated transit system.

3. Elaboration on research method and approach chosen by the student in relation to the graduation studio methodical line of inquiry, reflecting thereby upon the scientific relevance of the work

The methodological understanding of the studio is towards the evidence based design, grained in scientific line of inquiry through approaches that could add to field of technology and urban design. My initial theoretical framework helped in coming up with set of definitions and early hypothesis, through further input of mentors and the following graduation studio methods of design research such as mapping, site analysis, site interviews and scenario development. It shaped my approach to create my own way of evidence based work, I was able to research the problem at first hand and put that evidence in my work and design accordingly. Through course of a year and several stages in Presentation, The project was able to formulate a discourse amongst the group and add onto the developing knowledge of the research group. The project thrived to create a fresh eye on the subject matter, showcasing the potential and negative impacts of the technology on the future built environment.

4. Elaboration on the relationship between the graduation project and the wider social framework

Mobility in the city has always influenced the urban fabric and its conditioning over the years, but it so much more pertinent in today case. The pressure of rapid urbanisation and image making of city to become a global city, puts extraneous stress on the infrastructure and patterns of mobility, which has a crippling effect on the living conditions of the cities. Often there is certain demographic that end up losing the right for a fair share and get further expelled from the city. This rapid urbanisation often handled by the technocratic policy maker, that based on a utilitarian ideas keep on counteracting towards this development by over-increasing capacity of the mobility system, rather than a holistic longer vision and creating egalitarian base for development that have potential to adapt to this crises

and serve that ignored community. These development often have an irreprehensible effect on the environment and socio - economic conditions. As we know, these factors are often interlinked and over the time reduce the standard of living for all and have further impact on a global scale, regardless of demographic, class and religion.

Over course of this thesis, I have tried to tackle same plaguing issues of Delhi and its state of policy and planning from a purely utilitarian vision towards a more spatial design vision, which looks to bring the socio-economic conditions towards the front and become the base for development. This strategy has the potential to bring the segregated community of the city into centre of conversation and further propagate the importance of inclusive development. As without it, the idea for sustainable way of living can never be achieved.