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composition
Implementation Strategies for Mobility Oriented Development in Bandung, Indonesia

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This project was firstly developed based on my curiosity on densification in Bandung City, Indonesia. However, the initial problem analysis has shown that density might not be the core problem of the city. Instead, the unsustainable model of development might be. Thus the project shifted to a more fundamental question of sustainability and urban development. As mobility emerged as one of the most apparent challenges in urban development in Bandung City, Indonesia, the project has then developing around three main issues: sustainability, mobility, and centrality.

At the very beginning of the graduation year, I chose Complex Cities as the main research group. I see my project as a multidimensional project which will affect and involve numbers of different stakeholders at different scales. Moreover, I would like to delve into the planning process and the planning instruments in order to be able to deliver a different perspective in planning the urban development in Bandung, Indonesia. I notice that the current planning instrument tend to be reactive than proactive to the development. On the other hand, it also provides too many normative indications than directive or visionary attributes, which leads to redundancy in different scale of planning documents. In addition, these excessive detailed regulations which was formulated in ambiguous
terms (for example: minor exceptions, specifications, and categorisation in land use plan, zoning regulation, and urban design guidelines) leads to manipulation and malfunction of the regulation itself.

I would like to develop this project as an alternative planning instrument which methodology can be used and replicated in other cities. I intended to develop a strategy and development guidelines for the city which go together with visualization of the implementation possibilities in smaller scale. In order to do so, I was considering that I would need both strategic planning and urban design insights, which later became the main rationale in choosing my mentors for this graduation project. Although this is not my first multi-scalar project, I am still facing some difficulties in switching between the scaled, most possibly because I tend to avoid too many assumptions to base my design on.

Along the process, I realized that I am not a very methodological person when it comes to structured thinking. I tend to make leaps when I am thinking – having the thoughts about series of actions (or events, or questions) inside my head and suddenly jump off to a conclusion as if it comes from out of nowhere – which leads to, in the academic environment, questionable assumptions. I have a tendency in thinking back and forth, which might be seen as a normal iterative design thinking process. However, it often left me with several unsolved questions and new questions at the same time. In the end, keeping a journal, log book, and scribbles helps me to structure my thoughts. On the other hand, reading a book like “Thinking Fast and Slow” (Kahneman, 2013) has helped
me a lot in comprehending my way of thinking as well.

At this point, I have managed to summarize my thinking process into one methodology diagram shown on the following illustration. Nevertheless, the clarity of this line of thoughts did not come up at the earlier stage of my research and design process. As a matter of fact, I
was quite struggling in finding correlation between my initial research, which is mainly literature study, and the existing on-site condition that I perceived as “reality”. The overwhelming information and experience as an architect / urbanist and a citizen that has been living in the city the whole my life have made me took things for granted. Moreover, the more I dug into the problems, the more overwhelmed I was with the complexity of the city.

I found that the “Layer Approach” – where the city is seen as a stack of different entities such as natural features, network, socio-cultural, economy, and built environment – to be very helpful in understanding the complexity of the city. By using this approach, it is possible to choose layers which are relevant to my project and to analyze them separately. There are numbers of personal assumptions and premises that has been proved to be valid by performing this analysis. For example, the low accessibility of the southern part of the city compared to other areas, the development potential along Soekarno Hatta Avenue, and the need of green public space within the city. However, I think it is highly important to be selective when it comes to choosing relevant layers. Although there are a lot of things which might seems to be relevant, not all of them are important and at the same priority level when it comes to analysis. The governance layer, for example, is relevant to the implementation strategy and helpful in understanding the planning process, but might not be as important as the network and activities layers when it comes to determine potential location for Transit Oriented Development nodes.
Settlement
- built environment
- concentration of population
- housing cluster

Urban Centre
- higher education
- offices
- industries
- commercial
- ‘horeca’

Urban Network
- highway
- railway
- streets
- stations
- terminals
- accessibility

Governance
- governance units
- administrative border
- planning units

First Nature
- topography
- water bodies
- green area
Although I have been experiencing Bandung City for approximately thirty years, I still have certain hesitations to believe my own judgement about the city. Yet, trained as an architect and worked as an urbanist, I am professionally capable to do so. It is possible that my understanding about the city, which I see as an active complex unpredictable organism with a lot of different interests, is the one that stopping me to believe my own judgement. So, in order to comprehend the urban processes, I sought for evidences. The evident based research based on questionnaire, statistical data, surveys, and interviews have helped me to formulate more objective point of view to an issue. However, as much as I rely on the idea that an urbanist should plan in an objective manner, I also strongly believe that design and research is always subjective. It depends to us to determine the focus of the research and, thus, the design itself. Accordingly, in evident based research, data selection is also inevitable.

In this particular project, I would take “design” to a larger context and understanding, more than mere urban design in human scale. I am convinced that it is important to set a development framework in a larger scale (metropolitan or city scale) so that the smaller scale interventions could take place accordingly. Hence, in this project, “design” is interpreted in several ways, including the spatial structure, sets of implementation strategies, as well as the visualization of development guidelines.

Even though the formulated line of thought has proven to be effective in leading my research and design project, there are several things that I would like to improve. First of all, I have a feeling that my current line
of work is not yet accommodating the stakeholders, which at the beginning of this project was intended to be one of the central factors in both planning process and implementation. Although it might not be ideal, the stakeholder aspect can still be included to the implementation strategy, especially at the smaller scale. The layer approach got me far especially with the analyses on built environment and network. However, the socio-cultural part of this project remained vague at this stage. The socio-cultural processes of the city are not well documented in any research. Thus, the assumptions on these processes are mainly based solely to my own observation. Despite the fact that the stakeholder’s real interests might not be addressed well in this project, it is possible to reproduce and improve the proposed inclusion strategies to the real life condition.

above: Illustration of the initial idea on the spatial structure in metropolitan context
Secondly, given the fact that I am working on a site 12,000 km away from the university and especially with limited amount of time, there are things that I cannot observe thoroughly during the site visit. The site visit, which was conducted after P2 presentation, was somewhat ineffective in terms of stakeholder analysis. Of course it was very fruitful when it comes to first hand information from the municipality, planning documents, and interview with experts. However, it was only possible to identify several key actors and presume their interests in urban development and mobility infrastructure in Bandung, Indonesia. Furthermore, had I narrow down my focus to a specific site earlier during the analysis phase, I might be able to go more in depth when I went for the site visit. For example, I might be able to determine more precisely of what kind of observation is needed within the selected area, or what kind of specific data I need to look for during my site visit, or even to explore the possibility of organizing a workshop with the stakeholders.

Another thing that turned out to be something I did not expect actually is the case study phase. I initially planned to analyze several cities in the world that have been implementing Transit Oriented Development one way or another. I expected the analysis to be more elaborated, with the investigation of their strategies, transportation modes, and so on. Although I am still attempting to do so, I would like to break down the analysis into several key issues so that it is manageable to be done within the remaining time schedule. The case study will then only focus on the success stories and for specific issues. For example, I will try to see how the structure vision in the Netherlands is presented and what are the efforts
undertaken to promote TOD especially in Randstad Metropolitan Area. On the other hand, I am also going to take a close look at the attempt to put the integration of public transport system into practice, especially in Curitiba, Hong Kong.

The research conducted thus far has proved numbers of personal assumptions, especially on the causality (or effects) or urban development trend in Bandung City,
Indonesia. In several cases, it feels like I am reinventing the wheel because most of the planning documents are not supplemented with adequate information on the rationale of the plan itself. Not that it was not done by the offices who were working on the plan; the fact that the rationale is not published along with the plan is what makes it a little bit difficult to follow the municipality's line of work. Besides, apparently the municipality is currently working towards the same direction with what my research and design project posited, which has made it more challenging to give this project an edge and distinction in order for it to be able to give an added value to the discourse.

So as to continue with the project, I would like to start with posing a preliminary idea for the conceptual design. I have chosen two potential centralities to be developed, with the main focus on Gede Bage area. The conceptual design of this area will be based on the development framework and guideline as well as the strategies proposed beforehand. The programme is derived from the existing condition, local potential, and the municipality's indication. The expected outcome from this design experiment is visualization of plausible development according the research on transit and mobility as well as sustainability.

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