Pursuing Authentic City

Create new self-sustaining system of authentic city in Guangzhou historic city centre, China.
1. DEFINE AUTHENTIC CITY

2. AUTHENTIC CITY AS CHANGING PROCESS

3. FIELD STUDY

4. STRATEGY OF CREATING NEW AUTHENTIC CITY

5. DESIGN FUTURE AUTHENTIC CITY
What is authentic city?
1. Define Authentic City

What is the authentic life should be like in historic city centre?

- Real life of people
- Associate with history & culture

Tourists:
- tidy, elegant street, nice souvenir shops
1. Define Authentic City

What is the authentic life should be like in historic city centre?

- Normal people’s daily life
1. Define Authentic City

Authentic life in historic centre of Chinese cities?

- Guangzhou
  National Centre City of China

- Beijing
- Tianjin
- Shanghai
- Chongqing

• Guangzhou National Centre City of China
1. Define Authentic City

Authentic life in historic centre of Chinese cities?

- Historic neighbourhoods for tourist, what happening to the others?

Shanghai

Beijing

Chengdu
1. Define Authentic City

Future of other historic neighbourhoods in China?

Prime minister Li: preserve the history, culture and natural environment to avoid cities of the same image.

Mass media: cities with the same image is the tragedy of Chinese cities.

Authentic life?

- Normal people's daily life
- Associate with history & culture
1. Define Authentic City

Definition of authenticity from Unesco & Nara Document

• Authenticity has always been an essential qualifying criterion for the inclusion of sites on the World Heritage List

• static, original and frozen in time: museum, heritage
1. Define Authentic City

Definition of authenticity from Unesco & Nara Document

- Defining authenticity as a dynamic concept resulting from and reflecting the different historic changes of sites might therefore provide a better understanding of sites’

- Changing process: beautification, tourism

- Commercialisation (consumer culture)
1. Define Authentic City

Authentic city:
The historic environment with old housing, quiet alleys and normal people’s daily life.

- Changing process: towers, might also become historic building one day...........

Globalisation, urbanisation

- Economic
- Social
1. Define Authentic City

Why authentic city?

Sharon Zukin is a professor of sociology

• a city is authentic if it can create the experience of origins.

• “Origins” the city that enables people to put down roots

• Authenticity in this sense is ...a continuous process of living and working, a gradual buildup of everyday experience

A city loses its soul when this continuity is broken...

Authenticity is the root where the city’s culture and identity originate from.
1. Define Authentic City

Understanding authenticity in Guangzhou historic centre

Characters and history of these old buildings?

Physical

authentic city

Driving force behind the new development?

Social

Economic

People’s daily social activities?

• Authenticity as a process
2 Authentic city as changing process
2. Authenticity as Changing Process

**Period 1: till 1938**

- Historic time

**Period 2: from 1949 to 1990**

- Arcade street met modernisation: Renmin Road Arcade Street & flyovers.

**Period 3: from 1990 till now**

- Arcade street met high-density development: Zhongshan Road Arcade Street & towers.

- Urban reconstruction
- Urban renewal
2. Authenticity as Changing Process

Period one: historic time till 1938

- Booming of overseas trading in Qing dynasty
- Tube houses, Xiguan mansion and twisted alleys
2. Authenticity as Changing Process

**Period one: historic time till 1938**

- **Republic of China (1911AD):** first urban planning of Guangzhou.
- **Born of arcade streets.**
- **Conclusion:** structure of historic centre was completed.

From tube house to arcade street buildings
2. Authenticity as Changing Process

Period one: historic time till 1938

- Efficiently used space for economic activities
2. Authenticity as Changing Process

Period one: historic time till 1938

• Retail as main use.
• Handicraft: making clothing, wooden furniture, gold or jade accessories.
2. Authenticity as Changing Process

Period two: urban reconstruction between 1949 to 1990

- Industrilisation, growing population.
- Filling the vacant gap in historic centre with collective workers dwellings.
- Make use of arcade street neighbourhoods as small factories or public housing.
Period two: urban reconstruction between 1949 to 1990

- Similar economic categories assembled at the same location.
- Handicrafts started to be replaced by goods from mass production.
2. Authenticity as Changing Process

Period two: urban renewal from 1990 till now

- Aim to become international city.
- Decreasing historic fabric.
• 80% of wholesale business of Guangzhou is located inside historic city centre.
• Historic fabric replaced by super block for both wholesale and commerce.
Period two: urban renewal from 1990 till now

- Profit + compact city
2. Authenticity as Changing Process

Period two: urban renewal from 1990 till now

- Replacement of historic fabric and residents
2. Authenticity as Changing Process

Disappearing authenticity

- Beautified commercial historic streets do not fully represent people’s daily life
- Historic fabric have been substantially demolished.
Interaction between space & activities
1. Commercial arcade street neighbourhood along Dishipu Road.
2. Wholesale arcade street neighbourhood along Haizhunan Road.
3. Retail arcade street neighbourhood along Enning Road.
• Definition of social activities.

• **Passive Sociability:**
... People seek out places to be alone in public where others are present, even if they do not intend to directly interact with or participate in any active social behavior...

• **Fleeting Sociability**
...small chit-chat and conversation or short-term, low-intensity contacts among neighbours...

• **Enduring Sociability**
Enduring sociability includes intimate relationships and affiliations—both meaningful associations among people. Intimate relationships comprise meetings between close friends or partners.

(Mehta, 2013)

**Latter two that engaged in more than one person: positive social activities.**
Diverse economic activities:

- commercial streets/snack bar alleys: tourists, visitors
- informal market/stores: local residents
3. Field Study

- vibrant neigbourhood centre
- alleys of family activities
3. Field Study

- pedlars preparing food
- vibrant neighbourhood centre
3. Field Study

- passersby, customers, sellers, mainly
- crowded in holidays while not that busy during weekdays.
• Storage instead of living
• full with wholesale business and storage.
3. Field Study

- Storage instead of living. Old residents, young workers.
• Wholesale business continue in the evening.
• Arcade street overwhelm by wholesale business.
3. Field Study

- Crowded in the day time, lifeless after 6pm

South Haizhu arcade street (wholesale)
3. Field Study

- Peaceful & sociable arcade street neighbourhood.

- Long time resident at her 50s. She love the neighbourhood and the location; Also like to chat with young workers; Storage also start appearing in the neighbourhood. She felt happy of the renew of water front.
3. Field Study

- Arcade buildings as part of the neighbourhood.
3. Field Study

- Not vibrant but housing in arcade street buildings enhance the sense of safety.

Enning Road arcade street (retail)
3. Field Study

Summary of field study

- **Intimate distance**
  Distance between people are smaller than 0.5m. Personal and emotional information and also conveys the closeness to others.”

- **Personal distance**
  Distance between people varies from 0.5m to 1.2m from each other, which allow two or more people to see each other’s detail clearly and touch each other when they reach out.

- **Social distance**
  Distance between people are 1.2m and 3.6m. People can recognise each other but still keep privacy without physical contact, while with possibility to scale down to personal distance between each other.

- **Public distance**
  Distance between people are between 3.6 to 7.6m or wider. ‘At these distances, people’s personal space does not overlap and there is no expectation of any active interaction’

(Mehta, p63, 2013)
• Wholesale and commercial activities make use of productive value of arcade streets while reduce their value of being flexible and social: either fully occupied by goods or visitors.
3. Field Study

Summary of field study

the setbacks in front of the private entrances create a sense of place and that the four or five outside stairs down to the sidewalk, and the associated green space, induce activities that increase people’s exposure to each other. A resident living at ground level can quickly step outdoors without leaving the privacy of home.

(Bosselmann, p183, 2008)

- Flexible alleys with sociable streetscape, easily open up to accommodate different activities.
3. Field Study

Summary of field study

- Mix use ground floor space.
• Interrelated economic categories.
• Long time residents as active social actors.
• In commercial and retail arcade streets, young migrants acted as residents of the neighbourhood, while in wholesale arcade street neighbourhoods, they are just short staying workers.
4 Problem Statement
4. Problem statement

Values of authenticity in Guangzhou historic centre

Authentic city

Historic urban fabric & arcade streets network.

Social connection between local residents and the society.

Diverse economic categories.

City Scale

Historic Centre

Social

Economic

Physical

self-sustain system

residents, citizens, tourists & others

Social connection

commerce & logistic

administration

history & culture

tourism & recreation

Diverse economic categories.

Values of authenticity in Guangzhou historic centre

- Historic Centre residents
- Historic Centre economic diversity
- Administration
- Commerce & logistic
- History & culture
- Tourism & recreation

Values of authenticity in Guangzhou historic centre

Authentic city

Social

Economic

Physical

self-sustain system

Historic urban fabric & arcade streets network.

Social connection between local residents and the society.

Diverse economic categories.
4. Problem statement

Values of authenticity in Guangzhou historic centre

Authentic city

Vibrant micro network.

Working and living both in these neighbourhoods generate a social network of working neighbouring.

Diverse small scale business
4. Problem statement

Values of authenticity in Guangzhou historic centre

Authentic city

Social continuity realized by longtime residents.

Economic vitality

Socially streetscape and elegant historic buildings.
4. Problem statement

Challenge of maintaining authenticity

**Authentic city**

- **Economic**
  - historic value
  - diversity
  - culture
  - value
- **Social**
  - self-sustaining system
- **Physical**

- **City Scale**

- **Neighourhood Scale**

- **Streetscape**

**Modernization** + **Commercialization** + **Planning & Governance**
4. Problem statement

Challenge of maintaining authenticity

• historic city centre needs proper maintained.
4. Problem statement

Challenge of maintaining authenticity

- Long time residents and actors from society was not able to participate.
4. Problem statement

- Large scale infrastructure
- towers, super block
4. Problem statement

Social segregation

Social housing mainly located at city fringe
4. Problem statement

Fragmentation & segregation

Commercialization

Modernization

+ Spatial Conflicts

- Social segregation

Neighborhood Scale

Middle school

residential tower

storage

wholesale offices

private house

semi-public area

Social segregation

Physical

Fragmentation & segregation
4. Problem statement

Weakening self-sustaining system
4. Problem statement

Weakening self-sustaining system

However, being involved in globalization, commercialisation, modernisation and related governance are driving this self-sustain system out of balance by diminishing the system in each scale.

Therefore Guangzhou historic city centre would no longer be self-sustain and eventually would lost the ability to represent various unique values of the city.
Design future authentic city
5. Creating future authentic city

Core value of authenticity

- Economic
  - Interrelated economic diversity
  - Self-sustaining system
- Social
  - Social integration
- Physical
  - Historic layout

Core of authentic city
Upgrade traditional industries and become equipment manufacture park

Future trend of economic development

International hub of intermediate services

International hub of advanced manufacture

International hub of equipment manufacture

International petrochemical industry park

Future authentic city
5. Creating future authentic city

Table 2.1 Principal phases of service industry development within advanced societies, 1950–2000

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Internalization</th>
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Table from Hutton, 2008.

Future trend of economic development

Hutton summed up the situation of economic transformation from 1990s in European city centre: “a putative, technology-driven ‘New Economy’, a ‘knowledge-based economy’ characterized by enhancements of human capital as well as by a technological deepening of production and labour, and a ‘cultural economy of the city’... have been concentrated within the inner city (Hutton, p4, 2008).”

‘Community assets and traditions’, ‘density and patterns of social interaction and exchange’, Symbolic assets and resonance’. Historic layout and social integration of Guangzhou arcade street neighbourhoods therefore proved to be essential for future economic transformation. The base of authentic city are also the base of future economic diversity and vitality.
5. Creating future authentic city

Goals of future authenticity

- New authentic city.
  1. Restore historic city centre with liveability and provide affordable housing to accommodate social diversity.

2. Integrate with arcade streets to create flexible and productive place for transformation of economy.
5. Creating future authentic city

Deal with fragmentation

- COSMERS

- PRODUCERS

- WHOLESALE

Flexible and productive accommodation

- New economy & local business

- Upgrading wholesale

- Public transport

- Cycling as main commuting way

Walking as main commuting way

- Massive storage

- Exhibition

- Small storage

- Drivning as main commuting way

- handcraf and local workshop

- Small storage

- local industries

- Migrants and consumer service

- Massive storage

- Exhibition

- New economy & local business

- Massive storage

- Cheap and productive accomodation

- Massive storage
5. Creating future authentic city

a liveable, walkable and self-sustaining authentic city

- Reorganize road network with tram system. Create pedestrian and cyclists friendly environment.
- Plan of social housing at the edge of centre.
- Restore and complete arcade street network
- Enhance walking connection of historic fabric on opposit site of the river
- Improve fine grid of block by the side of river.
5. Creating future authentic city

A liveable, walkable and self-sustaining authentic city

Improve fine grid of arcade street neighbourhood

Improve neighbourhood liveability with integration of social housing

Reorganize road space with cycle lane, trail, car lanes and green.

Integrate new and old arcade street as for diverse use.

Maintain sociable alleys and applied same quality in new housing.
5. Creating future authentic city

Phase one: make room for further transformation

- Reorganise transport system: reduce accessibility of motor vehicles
- Relocate & upgrade wholesale business
- Decrease massive storage and population in Guangzhou historic city centre
- Transform wholesale arcade street neighbourhoods

Make room for future transformation
5. Creating future authentic city

STRATEGY (PHASE ONE)

Legend:
- new tram lines
- down grade roads
- new pedestrian bridge
- tram line one
- tram line two
- tram line three
- neighbourhoods for project
- neighbourhoods to be refine in phase one
- metro line
- metro transfer station
- commercial arcade streets
- historic neighbourhood
- heritages
- green
- water
5. Creating future authentic city

Downscale infrastructure with tram system

Current road hierarchy.
Downscale infrastructure with tram system

Downscale road.
Existing metro lines mainly connect south and west of the city. It might be not dense enough for future commuting flows.
5. Creating future authentic city

Downscale infrastructure with tram system

Future public transport system.
5. Creating future authentic city

Downscale infrastructure with tram system

Replace the flyovers by tunnels to create better pedestrian connections.

Multi-level flyovers as barriers between arcade streets and an island with historic buildings.
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Downscale infrastructure with tram system

Future vision: pedestrian bridges on tunnels, bus and tram stop.
5. Creating future authentic city

Pedestrian connection over the river

Haizhu Bridge

1280m

330m

1530m

Large-scale motorway with sidewalk
5. Creating future authentic city

Pedestrian connection over the river

Pedestrian bridges in Rome historic area.

Paris & Rome
New bridges would be placed within distances less than 10 minutes walking (around 500 metres). In the meantime, waste land or parts of road would become green node embed in the linear water front.
5. Creating future authentic city

Transformation of storage
5. Creating future authentic city

Complete arcade street network and fine grid in all neighbourhoods
5. Creating future authentic city

Complete arcade street network
Categorize existing arcade streets
5. Creating future authentic city

Complete arcade street network

Categorize existing arcade streets

- typical historic arcade streets
- ordinary arcade streets
- modern arcade streets
5. Creating future authentic city

Complete arcade street network

Evaluate existing arcade streets.

- valuable arcade street.
- ordinary arcade street
- fragmented arcade street
- new arcade street in phase one
- new arcade street in phase two
5. Creating future authentic city

Complete arcade street network

- Restoration and construction guideline of arcade street network.

Future development or restoration in valuable arcade street will be restrict on materials, height and color.

1. Respect the historic appearance of the building and try to restore as it was before.
2. Grey, white and light yellow are main colors suggest to be applied. Blink bricks or materials are not suggested to use.
3. All new constructions should not be higher than existing arcade streets, details of facade should be similar with the historic arcade buildings.
5. Creating future authentic city

Complete arcade street network

• Restoration and construction guideline of arcade street network.

Main rules of these two types of arcade street buildings are concerned with restoration and new constructions.

1. Respect the historic appearance of the building and try to restore as it was before.
2. Construction within 6 metres distance next to the historic arcade street buildings should not be higher than the historic one, the style and material should also similar. Width between columns should be less than 4 metres.
3. New material should applied with carefully design.
4. New constructions of arcade streets should all based on relevant regulations and applied the same scale as the valuable arcade streets.
5. Creating future authentic city
5. Creating future authentic city

Transformation of arcade street neighbourhood

phase one

- improve micro circulation

- Social housing
- School
- flexible housing
- public space
- small storage

Reorganise public functions.

Dishifu Rd (commercial arcade street)
East Changshou Rd
Metro Station
Baohua Rd
South Wenchang Rd
5. Creating future authentic city

Transformation of arcade street neighbourhood

Prototype of new housing

- Narrow courtyard for daylighting & ventilation
- Semi-public courtyard
- Entrance
- Doorstep for daily social activities
- Sociable alley

apartment units & courtyard: basic elements of new housing
5. Creating future authentic city

Transformation of arcade street neighbourhood

Prototype of social housing
5. Creating future authentic city

Social housing scheme
5. Creating future authentic city

Open market area
5. Creating future authentic city

Transformation of arcade street neighbourhood

Bottom up initiative
Since the old days, affordable property owners restore their own housing.

From 1950s to 1980s.

Lead by government.

Involve in designers, planners, long-time residents, new commers, NGOs and extra.

Middle class

Since the old days, affordable property owners restore their own housing.

Reconstruction by state-owned enterprise

Small plot

Most of old residents move back.

Redevelopment by real-estate.

old residents

Middle class
5. Creating future authentic city

Bottom up initiative
5. Creating future authentic city
Thank you for listening!!

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