ASPECT 1. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RESEARCH AND DESIGN

In this graduation thesis, there exists the relationship of co-evolution process between research and design, which means they are in a loop and effects each other. The main aim of the project is to restore the space hierarchies from public space to semi-private space in the historic district and revive vibrant street life happening on specific privacy zones. Firstly, research deals with different perspectives of the background, development and problems of lilong in Shanghai, which gives a comprehensive knowledge to the project. It is conducted based on various scales from the general context of lilong in the whole city, to neighborhood scale and plot scale. The process of research is a process from abstract to solid, from extensive to intensive. Due to the research of morphological typologies, a possibility is provided to narrow down the research to six types of plots for further design which could be applied to other locations. Meanwhile, design on a smaller scale could be seen as a case study contributing to the research to examine the result and conclusion on a specific location. What’s more, during the design process, more questions were raised and the method of research was reconsidered and refined. Pattern language was used as a linkage of design and research which provided solutions for three visions of vibrant street life, liveability in historic area and participation in urban regeneration process.

ASPECT 2. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN YOUR GRADUATION (PROJECT) TOPIC, THE STUDIO TOPIC, YOUR MASTER TRACK, AND YOUR MASTER PROGRAMME.

Studio of History & Heritage gave me a new idea towards how to define heritage preservation. It is not only about preserving the still physical past, but a ‘vector’ perspective to look at heritage through its past, its transition and its future. What’s more, except for the tangible spatial characteristic, social aspects are also vital in the heritage preservation. According to this understanding, my thesis project is closely related with this topic. Heritage value of lilong as a sub question is defined and the loss of socio-spatial value during the transformation of lilong is clarified. The vision of liveability and vibrant street life actually aim at restoring the value of historic lilong and further add some new value to it according to the changing requirements and trends.

ASPECT 3. ELABORATION ON RESEARCH METHOD AND APPROACH CHOSEN BY THE STUDENT IN RELATION TO THE GRADUATION STUDIO METHODOLOGICAL LINE OF INQUIRY, REFLECTING THEREBY UPON THE SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE OF THE WORK.

One of the main concern within the methodical line of History & Heritage studio is to clarify what is the value of lilong as a historic residential typology in contemporary Shanghai. The issue of where heritage value lies is discussed by many researchers, and what is important in this graduation thesis is to identify the unique value system by myself which shows my own position towards the argumentation of ‘why we should value lilong’. In order to answer this question, literature review and location based analysis are chosen to form my heritage value matrix. As a conclusion, six values are identified in abstract and concrete perspective.

What’s more, what I learned a lot from is the practice of social behavior observation and interview to the local residents of my site. Since this graduation put emphasis on the relationship of social outdoor activities with the quality of built environment, in-depth analysis of residence perception and satisfaction is essential to the project. The method of selection of groups of people to be interviewed, the interview questionnaire should have connection with the conclusion for the previous research of social groups and plot typologies.

Furthermore, the approach of quantitative research of morphological types in the neighborhood is also of importance.


To expand the research scale from lilong regeneration to a wider social, professional and scientific picture is discussed at the end of conclusions. Taking lilong regeneration as a case study of urban regeneration in Shanghai or even in China has its empirical meaning. After the process of extensive modernization(demolish and rebuilt neighborhoods by neighborhoods), we are gradually entering a era of considerate urban regeneration. There still exists lack of successful practices in heritage transformation in large scale of historic district. The practice of value evaluation, the process of public participation and how to achieve liveability are all to be explored.

The concept of this graduation project is to preserve the character in urban form(continuous public space hierarchies and privacy zones) of
In order to improve liveability of local inhabitants as well as to revive the vibrant public street life, the research conclusions of activities on specific spatial zones reflect the lifestyles and collective memory of a generation on context and some other value is added within the changing requirements. Sustainable development is also one criteria for the future design, which provides flexibility and adaptability in urban regeneration.

It has to be acknowledged that urban regeneration is a process combing economic, social and environmental issues. In this graduation thesis, spatial character and social structure are mainly focused, and economic value of lilong regeneration such as use value and exchange value need to be explored in empirical practice.

What’s more, patterns applied in the projects are concluded and their transferability are discussed. In terms of street typology, patterns have a higher level of transferability in other historic lilong neighborhood under similar settings of urban streets, main lanes and sub lanes. As to plot typologies, after comparing the variables of GSI, FSI and territorial depth, similar typologies may be figured out as six plot types in the project. The transferability of these patterns are measured through two main ideas, ease and impact. For some patterns, such as green the street, is easy to be achieved and also easy to have improvement in spatial quality. Patterns of this type could be transferred to other places. For some other patterns like public space as a catalyst, is difficult to conduct because it engages many stakeholders like government, developer and landowners. However, considering that these pattern could have effect on a bigger scale and are beneficial in economic and social perspective, it is still worthy to apply these patterns to other places. Under such condition, the decision should be made after serious consideration of balance and context analysis.

ASPECT 5. DISCUSS THE ETHICAL ISSUES AND DILEMMAS YOU MAY HAVE ENCOUNTERED IN DOING THE RESEARCH, THE DESIGN AND POTENTIAL APPLICATIONS OF THE RESULTS IN PRACTICE.

During the whole process of design, two ethical issues and dilemmas are encountered. First dilemma is the attitude towards heritage transformation, to what extent should we preserve, to what extent should we transform. Is a method to keep old look like old, which is a fake indeed, calls preservation or a method to differentiate new from old so that we can easily figure out outcomes of different layers from different age at the meantime calls preservation? What’s more, the phenomenon is that to be identified as heritage is not a good thing in Shanghai actually. Lilong houses which are on the preservation list from the government normally are those we forget. Nobody could touch them without related policies and strategies, even the residents living inside also do not have the power to improve their own house. Therefore, only the research of spatial interventions which could be applied in historic area is not enough, the solution of how to better conduct heritage regeneration process is more urgent.

Second dilemma is about one of the goal of the graduation thesis, which is public participation in the process of lilong regeneration. What I have done is interview on site visit and collecting resident’s opinion in transforming their apartment and neighborhood. However, the shortcoming is that I could not get them involved during the whole process of my design. This is what I intend to achieve in the future work when I go back to Shanghai.