Street life
Designing in the Vietnamese context

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‘There is a plague of sameness that is killing human joy’

- Zita Cobb (2013)
Santa Fe, New Mexico, USA

Image: Andreas Praefcke
Space is ‘a bounded or purposeful void with the potential of physically linking things’

- Roger Trancik (1986, p. 112)
Space can only become place ‘when it is given a contextual meaning derived from cultural or regional content’

- Roger Trancik (1986, p. 112)
GENIUS LOCI
TOWARDS A PHENOMENOLOGY OF ARCHITECTURE
CHRISTIAN NORBERG-SCHULZ
RIZZOLI NEW YORK
the plague continues
Huaxi, Jiangsu Province, China
asian epidemic
Splendora, Hanoi, Vietnam
Splendora, Hanoi, Vietnam
Splendora, Hanoi, Vietnam

VINA CONEX JOINT STOCK CORPORATION
Build your values - Inspire your dreams
not quite what you think of when it comes to Vietnam, right?
how did this happen?
GDP growth per sector

Source: General Statistics Office Vietnam
LESS PEOPLE WORK IN AGRICULTURE
HIGHER PRODUCTIVITY
GROWING LABOUR FORCE
Population growth Vietnam

Source: CIA factbook
so what’s wrong?
Genius loci? Sense of place?
‘utopias are sites with no real place’

- Michel Foucault (1984, p. 24)
Utopias ‘present society itself in a perfected form, or else society turned upside down, but in any case these utopias are fundamentally unreal spaces’

- Michel Foucault (1984, p. 24)
Dystopia?

- David Harvey (2000)
Privatopia?

- Evan McKenzie (1996)
Variation on a theme park?

- Michael Sorkin (1992)
Disneyfication?

- Sharon Zukin (1991)
‘designers [need] to create truly unique contextual places, they must more than superficially explore the local history, the feelings and needs of the populace, the traditions of craftsmanship and indigenous materials, and the political and economic realities of the community’

- Roger Trancik (1986, p. 114)
Tradition ‘does not imply that everything should remain as it was. [...] Tradition provides a basis for the manner in which a system can accommodate change without the necessity of forgetting, without “breaking with the past”’

what’s missing?
why are they building like they do then?
GDP growth per sector

Source: General Statistics Office Vietnam
inflation in 2011: 18.7%

Source: CIA World Factbook
소리없이 세상을 움직입니다
www.posco.co.kr
Companies ‘view value creation narrowly, optimizing short-term financial performance in a bubble while missing the most important customer needs’

- Michael Porter & Mark Kramer (2011, p. 4)
mismatch demand and supply

but, what can the Vietnamese actually relate to?
society
Influence of Confucianism

Image: Wu Daozi
‘the law of the emperor stops at the gate’
‘huong uoc’
Local community
culture
‘tam giao dong nguyen’

*English: reduction of influences into the same source*

- John Gillespie (2001)
External influences
space
‘Villages dans la ville’

Human scale
‘Absence of the square’

- Pu Miao (1990, p. 39)
Linear public space
'Hierarchical sequence of spaces'

- Gregory Bracken (2013, p. 5)
Hierarchy + Enclosure = Graduated privacy

- Nelson Ikon Wu (1968)
Graduated privacy
use & form
ok, what have we got?
a new neighbourhood without street life...
...owned by developers and speculators...
...that forms a mismatch between demand and supply.
how to persuade developers and speculators to change?
create profit
Shared value ‘involves creating economic value in a way that also creates value for society by addressing its needs and challenges’

- Michael Porter & Mark Kramer (2011, p. 4)
Shared value ‘recognizes that societal needs, not just conventional economic needs, define markets’

- Michael Porter & Mark Kramer (2011, p. 5)
Shared value is ‘policies and operating practices that enhance the competitiveness of a company while simultaneously advancing the economic and social conditions in the communities in which it operates’

- Michael Porter & Mark Kramer (2011, p. 6)
so, how can we increase the pie of revenue?
right, by attracting inhabitants for Splendora
how do we attract them?
how can we Vietnamize the new development?
or: how can we reduce the external influence into the same source?
Family

External influence

Human scale

Linearity

Graduated privacy
firstly, public space
Current programme

- 50% Car
- 25% Pedestrian
- 25% Left over space
Proposed programme

- 35% Car
- 10% Private spaces
- 4% Parks
- 5% Farming
- 5% Recreation
- 6% Sports
- 5% Communal spaces
- 5% Meeting places
- 5% Water
- 10% Private spaces
- 20% Pedestrian
- 35% Car
what streets should be narrowed down?
busy car street

ordinary public space
busy car street

ordinary public space
busy car street

ordinary public space
what do these streets look like?
what borders these streets?
private properties
Box type 1; 2.90m x 3.20m

Box type 2; 2.20m x 3.90m

Box type 3; 2.15m x 3.20m
Box type 1: bedroom (1:100)

Box type 2: entrance room (1:100)

Box type 3: kitchen (1:100)
Existing floor plan
Two separate apartments
Office
Restaurant and living for restaurateur
what does this add up to?
From a monotonous neighbourhood...
...to a diverse and active environment...
...with both active and quiet public space; a vernacular Vietnamese street life
From an unattractive street corner...
...to a bustling and vibrant place
From dull side street...
...to pedestrian street and bigger private garden...
...or a small shop on a side street...
...or giving back some of the land to the farmers
recommendations for future development in Vietnam
thank you