Reflection
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Socio-economic and spatial context
Not until I work on the project which locates near my hometown, I realized that it is so difficult to achieve consensus by telling a story. Since I grew up in the Pearl River Delta, some thoughts even the ways of thoughts were fixed in my brain. So many common issues which will not be noticed by local people seems unbelievable to others. It makes me confused that to tell the story, which part of the context should be introduced.

This project focus on the semi-urbanized areas which underwent the process of rural industrialization since 1980s in the Pearl River Delta. This process formed a specific rural-urban pattern not only locally but also regionally. The landscape of the delta has been reshaped. Although the economic and urban development was enormous in the past three decades, it also generated problems. The awareness of seeking for a better living environment and a sustainable way to develop is increasing among people in these areas. There was a trend that people left their home in the countryside for cities which were consider paradises. Recently some “returners” are seen in many small towns and villages. It is a signal that urbanists should not only focus on the cities and urbanized areas. A new paradise, or a returned paradise may be outside of major cities.

Theme of the research group
The theme of the Delta Intervention to some extents emphasizes the role of water in urban development. The approaches used in this research group summarized the experience of practice and research. It provides an insight of relationship between different layers and subsystems. As I consider the relationship between water and people is dynamic and vital to urban development, the delta urbanism theory taught me that delta is a dynamic whole in which the interrelationship between subsystems have to be considered. Flood risk and water management in the Pearl River Delta is not an independent spatial problem. It is a reflection of its socio-economic processes.

Making strategies and designing for an area is not solely a matter of problem solving. In this case, the special characteristics must be taken into account. Before setting spatial strategies, the socio-economic background has to be considered. Working with water is never easy. The connection of water and other issues is spatial and at the same time social and economic.

Drawback and the questions remained
Architect Alejandro Aravena said, "If there is any power in design, that's the power of synthesis." Indeed, the analysis led us to a complex of questions, constraints and opportunities. Designers may have the ability to unite different power to achieve a desirable future.

When I look back to review the designs I have made, one of the drawbacks is that I did not manage to give a solution to HOW to make this happen instead I focus more on WHAT to make. The design I made covers a variety of scales and concerns different social groups and actors. However, the questions remained to answer. Would they be happy if a design touch the formerly private domain? Would they accept the changes proposed to be made? What is the real impact of those impacts? Except for the direct participants, who else may be willing to contribute? These realistic questions did not reflect on the design.

As for the end of the design process, I would rather say it is another beginning of thinking the meaning of design. The purpose of design may rather be the raising correct questions than giving a correct solution.