

Graduation Plan

Master of Science Architecture, Urbanism & Building Sciences

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The posed problem,

Hackney shows significant evidence of mixed lifestyles, different groups mixed-living here for a long time, there is rare conflicting or violence event occurs between them. Due Hackney shows high diversity on mixed-living, have good living atmosphere for people who with different background to move in. But the actual (or say deeper) interaction is lacking, most of those ethnic groups have their own invisible territory, which is not overlapping with others. At the other hand, the economic segregation of Hackney is high. Hackney as one part of East End of London, it use to be famous for its low quality housing and gathering of "underclass" group, therefore very different from inner London area, here have an urban form which contains rigid building type and poor designed public places. Though the housing price have witnessed a rapid climb in last decade, 124.3% increased since 2007 to 2017 (Ivey, 2017), together with many urban regeneration project, many people who cannot anymore afford the property there have been drifted out.

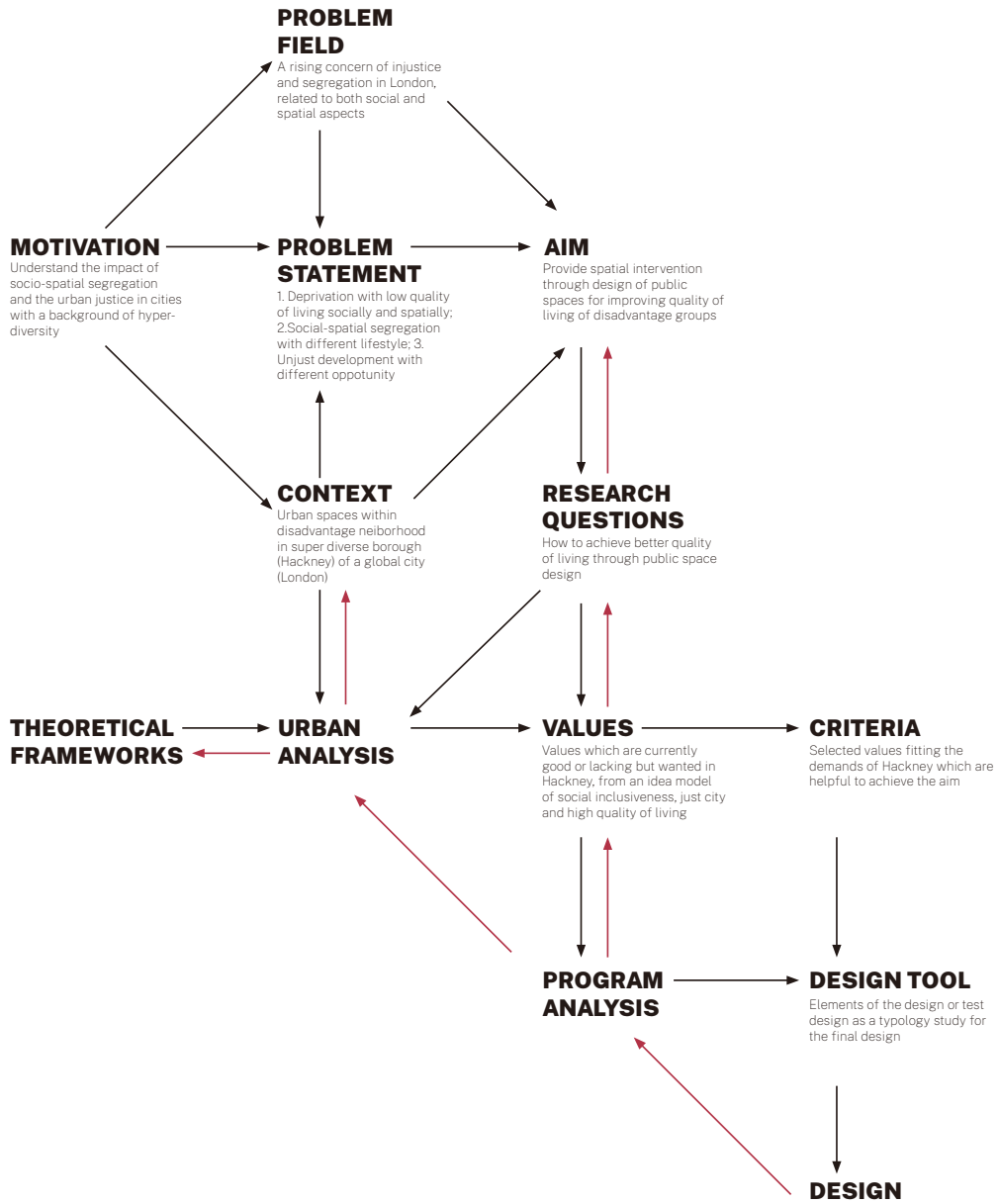
Hackney accommodates diverse lifestyles, not only diverse in ethnic detention but also in age, occupation and income. Normally, in a place, such as Hackney where have very diverse population, the social cohesion level and the satisfaction of life would be high. But actually, Hackney is leading a diverse, but unhappy and unsatisfied lifestyle (Cheshire & Uberti, 2016). Which related to housing price and employment rate, but also Which related to housing price and employment rate, but also have deep bond with public life there. Another phenomenon is interesting in Hackney, instead of classic formal public spaces (like park, square, etc.), there are more informal meeting place contains multi-groups interactions, such as the waiting area of the schools, or pubs around corner. This informality is corresponding the diversity in Hackney, is the current urban form well accommodates the diversity in Hackney? It is a question we need to address in this project.

If we wanna transform Hackney to a better form, in order to achieve better living quality, then we are exposed to a danger of new gentrification, and this happens to be what we want to avoid. Hackney have situated many urban regeneration in past decades. The stark lack of integration between the regenerated communities and old communities is perceived (Malakai Sargeant, 2019). Many new public services are establishing for the new dwellers, trendy cafe and expensive bar, instead of cheap McDonald and street pub. There is a paradox between our willing to bring Hackney into better living quality and the danger of being gentrified, which is becoming the biggest challenge for this project, how to balance these two thing in the design? Therefore, a new narrative of public space design should be introduced.

research questions and	How to improve quality of living socially and spatially in Hackney by promoting the inclusive spatial intervention of public spaces?
design assignment in which these result.	<p>This project is aiming at finding a design solution to improve the the quality of public spaces in disadvantage neighborhoods, where containing diverse public life, in order to enhance local social vitality and activity, from bottom-up, tackle on the challenge raised by the unjust urban development.</p> <p>For achieving this goal, a series of outcomes are expected:</p> <p>Theoretical frameworks with critical perspective on segregation topic, shifting from simple-layered discourse to a new narrative of urban regeneration in a city with hyper-diversity, translating current theories to a scope of DiverCity (which means living with hyper-diverse social and spatial context) and JustCity in this thesis. A set of values related to DiverCity and JustCity are extracted from current knowledge system, which are forming a new criteria for understanding public life and spaces in Hackney. Later on a series of analyses are focusing on the character of public spaces in Hackney, in both borough and neighborhood level, which will be a hint for continuing designs. The final designs will land on public space regeneration in neighborhood scale, by creating new public space, or transforming current public spaces, such as squares, parks, playgrounds, etc., to enlarging the capability of public spaces for multi groups and public lives.</p>

Process

Method description



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Reflection

1. Among the literatures of the topic "urban segregation", "just city" and "public space making", there are a large amount of researches have done in the 3 domains, but there is rare discussion linked three of them together. Just city and public place making have been discussed vaguely and generally by Niksic & Sezer (2107), and some linkage of urban segregation and urban justice have been shown in both side literatures (Fainstein, 2010; Harvey, 2013). Though a well defined common place in-between them is lacking. This project trying to address the urban problem caused by segregation and injustice, it will focus on the researches and practices of public space design, which as a method bridge the knowledge of urban segregation and urban justice, contribute knowledge to the discussion on "segregation" and "just city", and practices to "public space making". In the theoretical frameworks, the diversity as a character in Hackney is highlighted. Which consist of both the diversity of population as well as the diversity of urban forms and activities. It as a alignment, connected two parts of the theories, urban segregation and urban justice. It also give a principal to the further practices (urban design on public space making) by contributing and extending the context of Fainstein's framework (2010). By investigating a lifestyle in Hackney, this project will ground the theoretical frameworks in a local level. Which is also lacking in the current knowledge system, researches and spatial analysis from the local perspective, through this project, an empirical method will link for supporting the theory part. Moreover, certain method will introduced in this project, in order to contribute quantitative analysis to these domains, instead of the pure classic qualitative analysis. Design as an end product of this graduation project, it is also a tool to test the theories, which could review the concepts in this project as a assessment, contributing an practical idea back to the whole framework.
2. Have an eye on western civilization, many great ideas and efforts have been bred for defending justice, existing with the whole human history, becoming a long- lasting philosophy debate in which many thinker try to contribute their own answer solve the question "what is justice". For a city, justice could be understood in many ways by many people, but urbanists are always pursuing a utopian dream, in which there are no segregation, poverty and conflict in the city. It is of course ideal to all of us, but at the meantime we all know the city consist of divisions and conflicts. "Agora", an existed prototype which most close to the ideal just city model, which gave people a nearly equal right to access, but even this ideal urban form, excluding certain groups, for example woman. Therefore a critic scope to understand the topic "just city" in the contemporary context is needed. Understanding the urban justice in a contemporary context, we could already gained knowledge that, the urban justice is a complex concept, it consist of segregation, division, conflict, etc. It have a diverse contents. Therefore any concept related to just city have either positive meaning or negative, that depends on how we judge it. Thus, the question "how to understand justice in Hackney's context", "how to evaluate the justice in the city" and "how to transfer Hackney's diversity to social cohesion through urban design" becoming first vital question in this project. The researches and designs involved in this graduation project is intended to deconstruct the social structure of Hackney, in order to understand its diversity and divisions, as well as the reasons behind it. This project would also connect

the knowledge of justice and segregation with design practices of public spaces. The result of this graduation project is expected to be two part: a elaborated knowledge framework to understand segregation and justice in Hackney, and a design practices which reinforce its diversity and contribute to promote the social cohesion in Hackney.