

Urban Futures: A futuristic approach

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Abstract:

The future of a city, the foremost agenda that has engaged all and alarmed the concerned, far and wide. Dealing with the changes sensitively is the demand and need of time. So, the most important job is to identify the derivation of such changes and investigate its effect on community. "Urban Futures, a futuristic approach" is a blend of different texts to expand better understanding of the issues being faced by the world in this age of urbanization, so as to accomplish the objectives.

Introduction:

This paper is a unique research effort that seeks to establish and test alternative future scenarios, providing insights into the potential sustainability impact of today's urban regeneration decisions. The author has taken up few piece of texts (Mobilities, Tourist Gaze, Cultural Consumption) to relate it with the situations that explains the thought and reflects her understanding of the subject concerning the present urban issues within our surroundings.

MOBILITIES

Web of life: We look at life, we look at networks



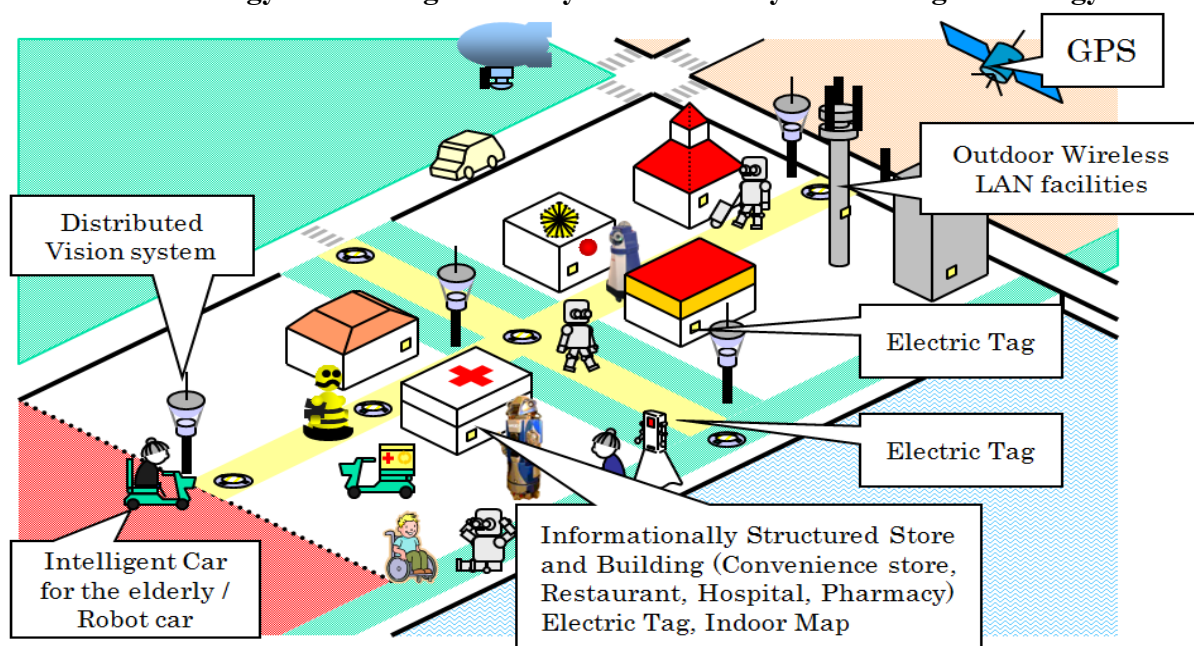
“The small worlds research has tended to discuss the spatial dimension as being too hard to handle but it is now clear that it must be treated in terms of growth of networks... small worlds always exist but, as the networks grows, technologies have to be in place that enable long-distance ties across its span to be realized” – John Urry, British Sociologist

Of late, we have developed a **virtual community** for ourselves where we live online primarily because our relationships are online, our distinctiveness is formed online, and therefore our life is lived online. What the earlier hierarchies and old **local communities**

presented was a physical place to lead one's life and to form the habits and practices that offered a basis for a **sustainable society**. There is a rationale behind why cultures survived centuries, even millennia, sans the modern **technologies** that we boast of today. These cultures of the past were communities ingrained in a particular place, structured around specific traditions that enabled people to know how to live a life of meaning and purpose within that

precise context. Most of the practices and habits that provided sustainability during the pre-modern era have given way to people taking up residence online. Today, all we need is Wi-Fi connection to be connected to a **network** and do a multitude of activities online. The **virtual space** is paving the way for a sustainable future backed by conscious development efforts and sound technology.

Is technology influencing humanity or is humanity influencing technology?



Humanity is defined as the quality or condition of being human. In consonance with the concept of humanity is **human nature** governed by a set of inherent distinctive characteristics, including ways of thinking, feeling and acting, which all humans tend to have. In an age where technology surrounds and influences humanity, one must consider whether **technology** is changing how we think, feel and act.

physically be in daily contact with the members of our **social network**. But today, with virtually disappearing boundaries, families and friends are strewn. We are constantly on the go, spending most of our time travelling to and from work either alone and isolated in our vehicles or among strangers on trains and buses.

The emergence of the network as a place of virtual habitation

Earlier, we used to live in small, close-knit tribes or communities where we would

The world map of social networks



Social Media Landscape



Before the advent of mobile phones, nothing could compare the frequent passing exchanges in the regular brief and cheerful encounters in a village or small community which ensured that everyone felt connected to and an integral part of their social and support network. Today, human beings are being reconfigured as pieces of scattered information spread across various spatial dimensions of which most are ignorant. Individuals consequently exist beyond their private bodies, leaving specks of their selves in spaces. As immense number of people are continuously on the move, so these specks facilitate them to be subject to systems of intrusive regulation.

THE TOURIST GAZE

A multitude of developments are taking **tourism** to new levels with dramatic increases in the number of tourists emanating from different countries. **Globalization** has brought about a change in the tourism landscape that we see today. The result is that in the quest for new places to visit, what is formed is a set of hotels and tourist sites that is insipid and lacking challenge, a small droning world that everywhere shows us our own image and sadly, the search of the exotic and diverse ends in uniformity



Space/ places - SPACE is an almost conceptual notion encompassing universe which is nothing but an infinite stretch of space comprising objects that go from cosmic void to black holes to mountains and trees. PLACE is a concept unswervingly derived from how humans experience their surroundings. A place is in essence a 'here' or 'there' you can label and identify; a place tells you have arrived 'there' (or in actual experience 'here').

A shift in the nature of travel – I travel to see, not to study



It is important to distinguish a tourist from a traveler to gain insights and to delve deeper into the decision process that guides the choices that a traveler makes. A **tourist** wants to see all the sights while a **traveler** wants to explore and not see some of the sights so as to find something interesting that isn't in the travel book. Also, a tourist captures photos of all the famous stuff while a traveler captures images ordinary people and things and is in turn rewarded by the locals with gratitude or puzzlement. Another thing to note is that tourists tend to travel in large groups or families while in contrast; travelers tend to travel alone, or with one other person.

Lastly, “Tourists go on a holiday; Travelers go travelling”

Therefore, the gaze of a traveler is much more intuitive and inquisitive than the gaze of a tourist. Such gazes cannot be left to prospection. People have to learn how, when and where to ‘gaze’. The gaze of the tourist can be astonishingly vacillating, looking out or anticipating something new or something different.

Tourism results from the basic distinction between the ordinary and the extraordinary. Tourist experiences involve some facet or constituent that includes enjoyable experiences which, by contrast with the everyday, are out of the ordinary or extraordinary as we call it.

Tourism more often than not, involves daydreaming or a desire to witness new experiences different from those usually encountered in daily life. But such day dreams are not self-sufficient; they involve working over advertising and other media-generated sets of signs, many of which relate very clearly to multifarious processes of social emulation.



CITIES AND CONSUMPTION

Dynamics of Modern and post-modern city

Cities and consumption is linked to the intense change that has been characterized by the decline of the heavy and manufacturing industries that dominated the modern city and a rise in the significance of post-industrial service industries such as financial services, banking, advertising, marketing, public relations and retail sector.

There has also been an escalating growth in the value of cultural industries, and the production and consumption of cultures rather than the production and consumption of goods. The significance of culture is linked to the rise of a figurative economy troubled with making and distributing images. In the Postmodern city, the projection of image lies at the centre of the attractiveness of style in the city. In contrast to modern cities, where utility formed appearance and where products and buildings were mass-produced and mostly standardized, in the postmodern city style, design and facade rule.



Identity of a city

Societies live by myths which offer ways of conceptualizing, accepting and understanding the world, and therefore are vital to a society's efforts to create and maintain a sense of **self-identity**

Generative nodes - Commodities & Urban space

Culture, like capital, can be reproduced and like identity, it is produced consciously and unconsciously. For example: CCD, a place to relax, to be alone, to read, to gossip, to meet people, to plan, to organize, think, hide, chew over, swallowed, digest and ruminate



The consumption/ Global Exchange of Culture

Culture is ever-flowing but culture as an asset is inert, easily imbibed, and easily imitated. The visually appealing cultural differences between the Western travelers and locals are vigorously fantasized and built.

Nevertheless, in many instances, culture becomes a tool of markets and ideologies of power. Orientalism was an ideology that masked the ‘enormously systematic discipline by which European culture was able to manage—and even produce—the Orient politically, sociologically militarily, ideologically, scientifically, and imaginatively during the post-enlightenment era.’ The Orientalism marketed by Incredible India is not destructive in the same sense as British imperialism, but it remains a big business that has its roots in the commodification and exploitation of geography and culture.

The citizen is perpetually becoming-a-subject and geographic space is perpetually becoming an

identifiably place. ‘People, actively and imaginatively, construct a spatial dimension around themselves making use of trans-cultural symbolic resources. Because of its potential and possibility, Culture is marketable. It grows under the modern acceptance of identity as fundamental and incomplete. If capitalism fosters greater self-identity through a practice of creating working associations with material goods than it is unavoidable that culture becomes a instrument of global capitalism.

India won the award for best international tourism campaign in the year 2009. **Incredible India**, a national marketing campaign launched in 2002, resulted in a 16 percent tourism increase in the first year. The campaign stressed exclusively on ‘spiritual travel,’ such as yoga and Ayurvedic massage in its second year of launch, both of which are exceptionally popular in Goa.

Today, fetishism is widespread. Goa has a GDP almost three times higher than the rest of the country. The question remains whether travelers are able to find what they look for or if they unknowingly overlook the alarming difference between themselves and those living in the surrounding villages (being so indoctrinated with *Namaste* culture)



Conclusion:

A human being has developed his society and environment in intriguing manner above all animal species. once journeys that took months are currently achieved in minutes. Alphabetical communications in form of poster letters that formerly took ages are currently achieved in milliseconds. The author has explored the fascinating and resounding development in present-day forms and purpose of mobility, unseen massive human networks and a combination of technological development that has lead to the drifting of human species from reality.

The mount of networks traffic along virtual travel through the internet, imaginative travel through the phone, radio, TV, and corporeal travel along the infrastructures of the global travel industry has dramatically increased over the last decades. Virtual travel is fast surpassing the corporeal travel.

It encapsulates the complex processes of tourist production and consumption. To be able to illustrate these processes of tourist production and consumption with such clarity of vision has provided a greater understanding of the tourist gaze and a great influence on those engaged with the tourism industries. Though this study, author has critically analyzed the ways in which urban consumption has been conceptualized. It depicts the correlation between consumption, the development of the modern and post-modern city and associated archetypal spaces, identities, lifestyles and forms of sociability. Along with both ordinary and spectacular consumption, she has examined how cities are consumed through representations in popular cultural forms and official discourses and how cities themselves are consumed.

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