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Urban place making in Maputo: an investigation towards a contextually appropriate urban design approach: Place making in Sub-Saharan Africa: an investigation towards a contextually appropriate urban design approach

Olivier, Anja

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CHAPTER 02: THEORETICAL DISCOURSE AND RATIONALE



1. INTRODUCTION

Sir Winston Churchill once said, 'we shape our buildings: thereafter they shape us' (Perkins, 1995: 62). The physical world, encompassing material objects, including our structured built environment around us, appeals to us and structures our being. The relationship between human beings and their environments is a constant active exchange; they enmesh us in their lives as much as we engage with them. As we embody these structures, they exert an influence on us. Consequently, sociality is constructed out of human beings interacting with their environments and artefacts (Hillier, 2005; Norberg-Schulz, 1980; Perkins, 1995 ; Rasmussen, 1962).

The theoretical discourse will discuss the various elements involved in urban place making departing with the broader city-wide scale down to the human dimension.

The primary research question for the thesis is 'What is an appropriate urban design approach in the spatial analysis of (often contested space in) Sub-Saharan Africa peri-urban areas?' with 'What are potentially appropriate urban design approaches?'; and 'How can the concept of appropriation (and place making) be unpacked?' as sub questions. The theoretical discourse and rationale, therefore, includes the following concepts.

CITIES, THEIR VARIOUS DIMENSIONS AND THE PLANNING THEREOF to briefly relate the study to the various dimensions of cities, as located within a city (Maputo). SPATIAL PLANNING AND INFRASTRUCTURE to contextualise the study and its related components as infrastructure remain one of the primary elements in urban life and liveability, it is, therefore, important to understand the challenges even if it is just on a high level.

FROM MASTER PLANNING TO CONTEMPORARY APPROACHES is discussed as it is important to understand where the concept of master planning originated and how and why it can be applied (or not) in the current state of city making. With a look at TRADITIONAL MASTER PLANNING in order to understand the current and proposed approach to planning/urban design as well as THE EFFECTS OF TRADITIONAL MASTER PLANNING to contextualise the proposed approach and aim to improve and learn from previous methods.

This discussion leads to THE SHIFT TOWARDS INTEGRATED AND CONTEXTUALLY APPROPRIATE PLANNING APPROACHES which introduces possible approaches for planning and urban design in response to previous master planning approaches discussed above.

INFORMALITY plays an integral role in the development of African cities and is a key component to interrogate and take into consideration when planning or designing for an African city and that is where the next topic of CITIES, POVERTY AND INFORMAL ECONOMIES is briefly discussed and unpacked leading into concluding remarks on PLANNING'S POSSIBLE WAYS FORWARD.

The next section addresses A HUMANIST APPROACH TO URBAN DESIGN by looking at what OUR ENVIRONMENT entails, and how we approach SPACE, PLACE AND THE HUMAN BEING leading into a brief discussion on the RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ANTHROPOLOGY AND URBAN DESIGN - CREATING PLACE as a possible approach towards understanding the urban environment outside of one's own context.

The theoretical enquiry moves on to explore UTILITY AS PLACEMAKING ELEMENT related to the research question of appropriation with the ELEMENTS OF SCALE and EMBODIED SPACE.

1.1. CITIES, THEIR VARIOUS DIMENSIONS AND THE PLANNING THEREOF

Healthy and sustainable cities require adequate and appropriate infrastructure and social urban facilities to service the daily needs of their inhabitants. (Montgomery, 2013; Todes, 2012; Turok, 2004; UN-Habitat, 2009; Watson, 2009) Transport networks, access to water and electricity, telecommunications networks and functioning sewerage systems are the fundamental components of a city's infrastructure. Urban efficiency is dependent on the functionality and accessibility of these components.

Cities all over the world, especially those in developing countries, are faced with rapid urbanisation and growth which presents a complex range of planning challenges. The scale and magnitude of urbanisation simply exceed the existing planning and housing capacity to address and cope with the demand (for employment opportunities, adequate housing, and access to services such as water and electricity).

'More than one-third of all urban residents in developing countries are currently living in slums, characterised by poor and crowded housing conditions, tenure insecurity, and without access to improved drinking water and sanitation' (UN-Habitat, 2009: 236).

The urban poor not living in inner city slums, live on the urban periphery with limited service provision and often located far from transport networks. This impedes access to employment opportunities and urban facilities such as schools and markets with lengthy commuting and expensive transport costs. This growth pattern resembles low-density urban sprawl on the urban periphery, encroaching on agricultural or environmentally sensitive land (UN-Habitat, 2009; World Bank, 2009).

Urban sprawl or 'growth of peri-urban areas' are key spatial trends in the current city structure where sprawling development surpasses infrastructure provision. Other urban trends are developments along transport corridors and the prevalence of informal development on the urban edges in sub-Saharan-Africa (Kamete et al, 2010;Simone, 2001; UN-Habitat, 2009; World Bank, 2009).

1.2. SPATIAL PLANNING AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Since the late 19th century up until the mid 20th century, and in some instances still prevalent today, spatial form and development of cities was primarily informed by growth patterns which were made possible through the infrastructure development implemented by the public sector. Traditional master planning approaches involved the prediction and planning of land uses and related densities whereafter infrastructure provision was planned accordingly. The approach was relatively successful in developed countries, but failed to address the needs of the local communities and urban poor in developing countries. (Todes, 2012; UN-Habitat, 2009; Watson, 2009)

Population estimates often ignored the local population and therefore failed to make provision for population growth, especially evident during the post-colonial period. The needs of the local population, both in developed and developing countries were not understood and in turn provided for (Jenkins, 2013). The static end-state of master plans are criticised for failing to address the informality and survivalist approaches of constant growth, unpredictable change and adaptation to local circumstances. The planning process is top-down, and often not part of a cohesive planning process, which hinders the implementation of these plans, as there may be little local buy-in (Watson, 2009) . Watson blames these master plans as 'directly responsible for spatial and social marginalisation' (2009: 178).

After the 1960's, spatial inequality and fragmentation developed as a result of privately developed infrastructure. In many countries, the market-driven approach and collapse of communism initiated the privatisation of services and infrastructure. Small or lack of state subsidies halted the upgrading of infrastructure and provided opportunities for private developers to harness the market. It, therefore, makes economic sense that private developers' primary focus was and often today still is, on profitable developments such as retail developments and middle to high-income residential units rather than investing in marginalised areas (Todes, 2012; UN-Habitat, 2009).

Where service provision is lacking or in some instances non-existent, the privatisation and supply thereof are sometimes contested by the communities as additional costs are imposed on those who can often not afford it. As cities are starting to compete on a global scale, their competitiveness often incentiv-

ises private sector development, turning their focus towards profitable developments rather than providing for the marginalised. These private-sector developments are often in contrast to the proposed spatial development plans and therefore, once again result in sprawling development.

Mega-projects came to the rise during the early 1980's where private-public partnerships have started to develop. These projects can sometimes contribute to urban regeneration in cities, but are often contradictory to the city's spatial development framework. Political motivation and the competitiveness of cities often play a large role in the enablement of these projects which are driven by aspects such as event tourism, industrial development and enclave developments such as gated communities. Projects aligned with political terms in municipalities, however, run the risk of being abandoned when the political term comes to an end (UN-habitat, 2009).

1.3. FROM MASTER PLANNING TO CONTEMPORARY APPROACHES

The World Bank (2009) report indicates that almost two-thirds of the world's cities which have grown more than ten percent in the last century, are in developing countries. Yet, can these cities accommodate this growth, and what impact does conventional master planning approaches have on urban development?

The developing global South has been greatly influenced by planning practices and planning theories which are mainly constructed in the Northern developed countries. These are often limited in relevance, and fail to address the primary urban issues of the 21st century, where planning and policy-making decisions have to be made in a much more diverse and dynamic urban environment of the developing South (Watson, 2009).

Numerous urban areas in the global South adhere to older, outdated and often imported planning approaches that are not necessarily relevant in the current urban environment, which faces very different challenges in the near future such as climate change, rapid growth in urbanisation and the depletion of natural resources.

Many cities in the global South have been developed during the colonial period, and these cities reflect these imported planning approaches based on land use segregation and the 'cleaning up', or ordering the perceived 'wild', 'uncivilised' Africa.

These modernist principles have in many areas, been implemented more than a century ago, yet, it is perhaps only more recently that the spotlight is turning towards these city structures where modernist planning approaches are being blamed for promoting urban poverty and social exclusion. As a lot of these countries have reached independence from their colonial masters, urban development has in many cases happened haphazardly, and new planning approaches to establish modern settlements or cities are being implemented as planning systems to guide urban development. These 'new' planning approaches however set 'unrealistic standards of land and urban development and encourage inappropriate modernist urban forms' (UN-Habitat, 2009: 3; Watson, 2009: 172).

The modern city faces very different challenges compared to the longer established traditional city (often in Europe or the Americas) for which the planning approaches were initially intended and used. With climate change, resource depletion, food insecurity and economic instability, it becomes critical to re-evaluate planning approaches and pre-empt and/or plan for the environmental and social consequences of rapid urbanisation.

Rapid urbanisation is taking place in developing countries, who are least able to deal with the significant growth of the urban population due to the lack of, or limited urban infrastructure, difficulties in collecting taxes to fund these upgrades, and the ability to deal with natural disasters (UN-Habitat, 2009). These impediments contribute to the development of slums as the poor are marginalised and pushed towards the urban periphery.

The challenges these cities are facing require an understanding of the dynamics of the modern economic, institutional, civil as well as socio-cultural context (UN-Habitat, 2009). The socio-cultural context plays an integral role in the shaping and developing of the urban environment and requires appropriate research for integration in the development strategies. Planning approaches should be re-examined, contextualised and appropriately implemented based on the relative context and urban experiences, a meeting point between global (often imported) theory and everyday life (Harrison, 2006), while some planning approaches may not even be applicable at all.

1.4. TRADITIONAL MASTER PLANNING

The 'modern' approach towards urban planning came about at the end of the 19th century, predominantly in response to rapidly developing, chaotic and polluted cities in the western part of Europe (UN-habitat, 2009).

Different forms of these 'ideal', 'modern' plans emerged throughout the world. Ebenezer Howard's Garden City; Le Corbusier's modernist city and Frank Lloyd Wright's approach including low density and dispersed urban forms (UN-habitat, 2009; Watson, 2009).

The characteristics of modern urban planning have a the top-down approach, without the input of key stakeholders, or the community. Master plans, also known as blueprints resemble the final, ideal end-state of the city. The land-use zoning scheme, separating all conflicting land uses, is used as the legal and implementation tool for these blueprints (UN-Habitat, 2009). Other urban characteristics include a concern with the aesthetic appearance of cities, high-rise buildings with large open spaces between them, wide streets to accommodate free-flowing vehicular movement, separation of land uses, the development of the shopping mall as a concentrated retail area surrounded by parking areas, and often urban exclusion of the poor (Watson, 2009).

Zoning regulations and development guidelines specifying building standards and materials, as well as land use restrictions often result in the classification of informal dwellings as 'illegal' (Watson, 2009). Urban modernism, as implemented throughout cities of the South was based on the belief that these city structures would contribute towards 'civilising' the people of the South and they are bound to 'catch up', both economically and culturally with the west (Watson, 2009).

Le Corbusier's master plan for Chandigarh is a good example of the modernist approach towards urban planning. The plan resembles '...a preoccupation with visual forms, symbolism, imagery and aesthetics rather than the basic problems of the Indian population' (Hall, 1988:214) as cited in (Watson, 2009: 174).

It is ironic that Le Corbusier used the analogy of the human being to develop the master plan for Chandigarh when he was severely criticised for being obsessed with the principles of modern planning rather than addressing the problems of the local Indian population for whom the city was designed. These 'foreign' and imported ideas have often been drawn on 'for reasons of political, ethnic or racial domination and exclusion, rather than the interests of good planning' (Watson, 2009: 172).

Cities should be habitable for the people who have to live and work in them. Gotz and Simone (as cited in Harrison, 2006) point towards the importance of "belonging and becoming", the human dimension of urban planning. It has become apparent that there is a need to start adapting and contextualising cities and the planning principles which structured them to create places that are contextually appropriate, both in the global South and global North (Harrison, 2006).

Chandigarh is a classic example of a planning system that is inappropriate for the context to which it has been imported. The poor are marginalised towards the edges of the city, making the centre even less accessible. The city is designed for the car and climatically inappropriate for the everyday user as walking around during summer is described as a torture on the ("Chandigarh and Le Corbusier (I)". My architectural moleskine.). Furthermore, the traditional modernist approach of separating land uses and formalistic approach towards the use of space proved impractical for the local Indian culture who, as with other cities of the South, is dependent on a survivalist and informal economy.

1.5. THE EFFECTS OF TRADITIONAL MASTER PLANNING

As discussed in the case of Chandigarh, urban modernism, master planning and land regulations often disadvantage the poor. The environmental consequences of modernist planning are yet to be fully understood. Turok and McGranahan (2013: 1) raise the question as to 'whether rapid urban population growth can help to raise living standards and reduce poverty without degrading ecosystems on which life depends'. They agree that insufficient attention is given to the various forms and consequences of growth. They argue that the form of urban development is the determining factor against which environmentally sensitive and ecologically appropriate urbanisation is measured. This form is composed of various elements and contributing factors such as 'compactness, mixed land uses, public transport, and design for energy saving and recycling waste, water and other resources' (ibid: 7). The UN-habitat (2009)



Above: Le Corbusier with his master plan for Chandigarh (Source: http://architecturalmoleskine.blogspot.co.za/2012/11/chandigarh-and-le-corbusier-i.html)

report states that current forms of urbanisation are pushing the lowest income people into locations that are prone to natural hazards. Urban modernist approaches to planning are portrayed as environmentally unsustainable as it promotes car based vehicular movement, limited or no pedestrian movement, low densities which increase the cost of infrastructure and encourage urban sprawl while marginalising the urban poor (Watson, 2009).

As evident in Chandigarh, modern cities are large and vast, and as the inner city becomes more expensive, the urban poor is pushed towards the urban peripheries. The cities are designed for the car owner, leaving the poor marginalised and dependent on public transport systems, which are often, yet to be implemented in these cities.

Furthermore, the static end-state of master plans are criticised as they fail to address the informality and survivalist approaches of constant growth, unpredictable change and adaptation to local circumstances. The planning process is top-down, and often not part of a cohesive planning process, which hinders the implementation of these plans, as there may be little local buy-in (Watson, 2009) . These master plans, often accompanied by land use regulations and guidelines, stipulate construction methods, building forms and materials which are unattainable and inappropriate for the bulk of the urban (poor) population which results in the erection of illegal structures and prohibited land use. As noted above, Watson blames these master plans as 'directly responsible for spatial and social marginalisation' (2009: 178).

1.6. THE SHIFT TOWARDS INTEGRATED AND CONTEXTUALLY APPROPRIATE PLANNING APPROACHES

Planning theory and approaches are both, context specific, and universally applicable. There exists opportunity and room for expertise in identifying the meeting point where global ideas can be successfully adapted to the local context, the "border thinking", the prospect of place-making that challenges the theory of the North (in this case, the modernist urban planning approach) rather than simply mimicking it (Harrison, 2006).

Patrick Geddes' (Haworth, 2000) concept of 'conservative surgery' is built on the notion that the existing context (physical, social as well as symbolic landscape) all play a defining role in the future development of a place. He regarded the built environment as part of 'civic evolution', an integrated system. He believed that only buildings that are past saving should be demolished and the rest of the built environment forms part of the built ecological network and should be preserved. This meant that urban interventions were approached in a very sensitive

manner and had to contribute to the greater well being of the community and built environment. Geddes firmly believed in the process of survey, consultation, participation, co-operation, planning and then action to allow places to evolve on a human scale and in a humane manner.

Similar to Geddes' but in a different way, Nabeel Hamdi (2004) focuses on 'bottom-up' projects. He firmly believes in participatory action planning and innovative practical and implementable solutions. These small innovations such as a bus stop, a shared water pipe or recycling waste centre has already made significant changes in the communities where they have been implemented. Hamdi's work prove that small interventions with minimal budgets can have a life changing effect and in turn produces places out of these spaces where people meet.

From the above, it becomes evident that the approach towards planning in the global South needs to make a shift towards new approaches which are locally and contextually relevant. There is a 'call for new forms of urban planning and urban design interventions which can address issues of urbanisation, poverty and sustainability, particularly in that part of the world where the bulk of future urban growth will be concentrating (the global South)' (Watson, 2009: 186).

'The essentialist, Euclidean, view of space, based on the assumption of space as abstract (as independent of the objects that inhabit it), and as having a determining effect on objects (spatial determinism), allows spatial ideas to be seen as the same, regardless of location' (Watson 2009: 186-187). As Watson (2009) and Gehl (2010) maintain, the approach to city building should be based on how, as part of everyday life, and why, we all have to use the city. The proposed shift in planning approaches requires an understanding of the local context and the everyday practice of survival in these informal economies. Watson (2009: 172) affirms that this shift 'requires an understanding of the relationships between representations of space and the material practices which create space'. Modern cities should make provision for the informal, providing for the survivalist - 'in Latin America and the Caribbean, four out of every five new jobs are in the informal sector' (UN-habitat, 2009: 6).

The aim of this approach is to endeavour to integrate various socio-cultural and spatial informants through research, a concept of urban stitching, or conservative surgery as referred to by Patrick Geddes (Haworth, 2000).

Development represents the ideals for a better and fairer world strived for in society, and a sense of hope for the poor majority throughout the world. Development is a form of organising the world, arranging it in a specific way. This form of organisation requires, as Hamdi (2004, xvii) states, 'designed structure with rules and routines that provide continuity and stability and that offer a shared context of meaning and a shared sense of purpose and justice.'

This organising structure demands a fine balance between developing a vision (plan) without the typical ascendancy of planning. This vision should be effective for the present while being tactical and strategic about the future. It is about finding a sense of balance between top-down planning, with its formal and designed laws and structures, and bottom-up self-organizing collectivism.

Christopher Alexander distinguishes between natural cities and artificial cities in his paper 'The City is not a tree' (1966). African cities, and in this case Maputo, specifically the Bullring site, can be classified as a natural 'city' where it has risen more or less spontaneously over many years. Artificial cities, on the other hand, are defined as those created deliberately by designers and planners.

The question becomes, how much structure will be needed before the structure itself restrains spontaneity, natural growth and personal freedom. Hamdi's approach is to start with something small but significant that in turn becomes something big (has a big effect) - making the ordinary special and the special more widely accessible – (2004 ; xix).

The approach is based on Jan Gehl's (2010) principle of putting life first, then space, followed by buildings when constructing the urban environment. The process starts by determining the character and extent of anticipated life and activities and then developing a concept around city spaces and structure based on the desired connections, activities and movement routes. Once the city spaces and connections are established, buildings can follow to ensure the optimal co-existence and balance between life, space and buildings.

City life is composed of a collection of many small systems, interconnected networks and linkages all working together to make up one large and complex system - the city. Each system is in turn composed of a set of elements.

New approaches towards planning for the global

South are still experimental, and will require evaluation to determine the social, spatial and environmental outcomes over time. These approaches however, have common elements which can be used to give some form of direction for future planning initiatives which include strategic spatial planning, the integration of government as part of the spatial planning process, different approaches towards land regularisation and management, participatory and partnership processes, new forms of master planning and planning towards new spatial forms (UN-habitat, 2009).

The role of informality and contribution towards the local community may require different approaches towards land regularisation and management. Perhaps there exists an opportunity to differentiate planning approaches in the global South by deepening an understanding of the "culture of make-do" (Enwezor, 2003: 116). A deeper appreciation and investigation of the peripheries which AbdouMaliq Simone refers to as - the "interstitial zone between urban and rural" (2010: 45).

Harrison (2006) highlights the importance of communication and interaction between various role players in the planning process. The level of success in the implementation of the plans are undoubtedly dependent on the community's acceptance of the plan and 'planners have come to recognise that planning implementation is more likely to be effective if it can secure 'community support'' (UN-habitat, 2009: 7). As Watson states '(I)f urban regulations were supportive rather than exclusive, more achievable by poor people, and developed in consultation with communities, it may also be easier to achieve compliance and hence basic health and safety levels, and social protection of the vulnerable' (2009: 176).

Healey (2004: 64–65) sees a relational understanding as important for capturing the real, material experiences of people and firms. If planning 'rules' do not acknowledge these, she suggests, there will be a constant struggle between rules and the demands and needs of people, leading to a decline in the legitimacy of the planning system (Watson, 2009: 187). Planning approaches need to be integrated as part of the local institutional structures (and cultures), acknowledging and understanding the survivalist approach of the poor in order to make a constructive contribution. These inclusive and participatory processes, in turn, provide a framework, along with the existing city structure, to produce and plan for the near and far future, an alternate form of master planning.

New spatial forms such as the compact city promote densification, pedestrian friendly movement networks, and the integration of public transport systems. Mixed land uses and good public spaces are advocated. In 'The Good City', Ash Amin (2006) suggests that public spaces in cities become important in structuring a place for gathering, a place for interacting with various inhabitants of the city. The meaning of any object (person or place) consists for Norberg-Schultz (1980) in its relationship to other objects (persons or places), i.e. it consists in what the object (person or places) 'gathers'. Public spaces become these communal places of gathering and the potential sites for urban solidarity in a multicultural urban environment.

The complexity of the African city has various layers, an 'assemblage of various global theories' (Mabin, 2004: 17). These layers, the physical city, the experience of the city as well as the political structures, economic drivers, the 'underneath' of the city is far more than meets the eye (Mbembe and Nuttall, 2004). The unpacking of these layers, the cities' in-between spaces become a unique contribution to the understanding of global urban theory and potentially altered approach towards planning in the global South (Mabin, 2013).

1.7. INFORMALITY

Rapid urbanisation is taking place in developing countries, which are least able to deal with the significant growth of the urban population due to the lack of, or limited urban infrastructure, difficulties in collecting taxes to fund these upgrades, and the ability to deal with natural disasters (UN-Habitat, 2009). The scale and magnitude of urbanisation simply exceed the existing planning and housing capacity to address and cope with the demand (for employment opportunities, adequate housing, and access to services such as water and electricity). These impediments contribute to the development of slums as the poor are marginalised and pushed towards the urban periphery. The challenges these cities are facing require an understanding of the dynamics of the modern economic, institutional, civil as well as social context (UN-Habitat, 2009).

Informality is generally associated with the perceived violation of rules and regulations as these practices (such as informal trading and informal settlements) are usually operated outside of the regulatory systems. (Kamete, 2010; Simone, 2001) It is, however, important to draw a distinction between the informal

sector and criminal activities. The informal is not necessarily in rebellion against the formal, but is simply faced with no alternative when planning regulations and policies are not appropriate for the processes and circumstances associated with the informal sector, which is often regarded as a separate self-regulating sphere where self-governance prevails as a survival strategy (where access to formal employment, public transport and social services among other are restricted). As the UN-Habitat (2009) report explains, these informal practices are usually linked to the formal sector in one way or another.

The informal often have their own set of rules and regulations which are contextually appropriate to their circumstances. As illustrated in a case study of Maputo (Kamete & Lindell, 2010), the market association, working as a representative of the informal sector in dealing with the city's governing officials, provided a more suitable and reasonably successful solution to the challenge of beautifying the city as well as retaining (most) of the informal market to avoid relocation and the marginalising of the informal traders. Warwick Junction in Ethekwini is another successful example of accommodating the informal in a formalised approach without being restrictive in such a way that these individuals are marginalised (Dobson et al, 2009).

The informal sector can be described as organised complexity, with systems which are adapted to the challenges and the opportunities which it is faced with, to quote Simone (2001: 111), 'an uneasy mix of calculation and desperation'. The lack of adequate infrastructure and restricted access to formal employment opportunities are two key determinants of an informal survivalist approach (Simone, 2001 ; Un-Habitat. 2009). One of the major challenges in addressing informality and the upgrading of these areas may be from a financial perspective where municipal revenue generation is limited as the urban poor do not, and cannot necessarily contribute to these funds.

It is invaluable to acknowledge the role of the informal sector in the survival of the urban poor and their self-governance where the state has failed to provide opportunities or frameworks within which these communities can make a living and have access to basic services and employment opportunities.

To follow Simone (2001: 113), 'it is crucial to look at the interweaving of potentials and constraints which activate and delimit specific initiatives'. With the global economic challenges that the world is recently facing, valuable lessons might be learned from the informal sector.

Planning approaches should be re-examined, contextualised and appropriately implemented based on the relative context and urban experiences, a meeting point between global (often imported) theory and everyday life (Harrison, 2006).

1.8. CITIES, POVERTY AND INFORMAL ECONOMIES

Richard Dowden (2008) explains Africa's position after independence from colonialism in his book, Africa - Altered States, Ordinary Miracles, as 'somehow stranded between tradition and Western Modernity' (emphasis added) (Dowden, 2008: 55). Africa along with other cities of the South has developed unique, innovative and extraordinary ways to bounce back from a tortured past and challenging circumstances. The informal economy developed in many cases as a survival measure for what the formal could not provide. A system developed from the circumstances of their everyday lives.

This unique 'tradition' in combination with 'Western Modernity' which Dowden refers to above is expanded on by Hart (2010) when he refers to the 'production of culture' as 'the fastest growing sector of world trade' and how this presents an opportunity for the African (informal) economy to excel, 'the cultural production of its cities' (Hart, 2010: 384). This cultural production which Hart refers to consist of five key components namely: 1. The energy of youth and women; 2. The religious revival; 3. The explosion of the modern arts; 4. The communications revolution; 5. The new African Diaspora linked to sub-national identities (ibid).

Wratten (1995) refers to the example of a case study in Tanzania to illustrate that the measurements of poverty play a significant role in the policies and interventions which are intended to eradicate or relieve poverty. If we take the listing of certain possessions as an example - these basic possessions provide indicators for potential strategic interventions which would be culturally and contextually appropriate for those less fortunate, who it is intended for, such as prioritised access to the city via bicycle facilities.

In order to initiate appropriate anti-poverty programmes and plans, an understanding of exactly what needs to be addressed is imperative. Anthropological, interdisciplinary and participatory research

may play an important role towards this understanding - the social production of space.
The informal economy presents a variety of opportunities as discussed by Hart, and the poor in turn makes a valuable contribution towards the city's informal economy which may assist in reducing poverty. From the above, it is inspiring and exciting to view Africa and other cities of the South as societies and cities on the brink of a bright successful future built on unique cultures and innovatively enabled policies.

2. A (POSSIBLE) WAY FORWARD

A shift is required towards integrated and contextually appropriate planning and design approaches. As Watson (2009) and Gehl (2010) highlights, the approach to city building should be based on how, as part of everyday life, and why, we all have to use the city. The proposed shift in planning and design approaches requires an understanding of the local context and the everyday practice of survival in these informal economies.

Inclusive design approaches accommodating the needs and priorities of the entire urban community, providing economic opportunities for investors and property developers along with access to the city and its opportunities for the vulnerable is key to the development of healthy urban communities. Infrastructure development to provide access to services such as drinkable water, electricity and sewerage systems to enhance the quality of life and efficient integrated transport systems accessible to all.

Smart growth and transit-oriented development approaches may slow down urban sprawl, improve connectivity and interfaces between land use and transport and support the implementation of planning approaches but need to be sensitively adapted to the local context it is intended for to ensure implementation, validity and community buy-in.

It is important to consider and understand the input of both those who are willing to invest in the public and private sector as well as those who are affected by the spatial development of the city, enable development and create opportunities. Including all the various stakeholders (young and old, rich and poor, male and female) in order to establish a sustainable integrated community.

In conclusion, the role and responsibility of the urban designer, therefore, comes down to appropriate approaches relevant to the local context, culture and everyday realities to ensure appropriation which signifies a successful urban environment.

3. A HUMANIST APPROACH TO URBAN DESIGN

The urban environment becomes the public domain where people act out their daily public lives, where architecture becomes a building block, one component of urban design. When the significance of architecture as a form of place making is understood, it becomes inevitable to recognise the importance of the urban environment with which people are confronted on a daily basis. There exist different levels of publicness and privacy. The gradient between these becomes the urban designer's responsibility to understand and provide for.

The Research Report, therefore, acknowledges and further stresses the importance of designing with a humanistic approach and proposes various questions for urban design to consider related to the experience of architecture and its significant role in people's lives, and how the urban realm can become place rather than space. The theoretical approach towards space as place and the human body in relation to place are used as a viewpoint to emphasises the importance of urban design and its role and impact on peoples' everyday lives.

3.1. OUR ENVIRONMENT

The shelters we build have become one of the several symbols of our very humanity, in which our vulnerability, sociality, ingenuity, and creativity contend and coalesce and find expression in material form. Our lives and our houses intertwine in a thousand ways.'
(Birdwell-Pheasant et al, 1999: 1)

In The Architecture of Happiness, Alain De Botton (2006) draws attention to the fact that the buildings we walk by, work in, or come home to affect how we feel. They influence our mood, our sensibility, our very character. With the above in mind, it becomes imperative to examine and attempt to understand the relationship between architecture, the urban realm as planned physical environment and the human being.

3.2. SPACE, PLACE AND THE HUMAN BEING

Even in our 'global' epoch, the spirit of place[1] remains a reality. Human identity presupposes the identity of place, and the genius loci , therefore, ought to be understood and preserved. - Christian Norberg-Schulz (Norberg-Schulz, 1985:19)

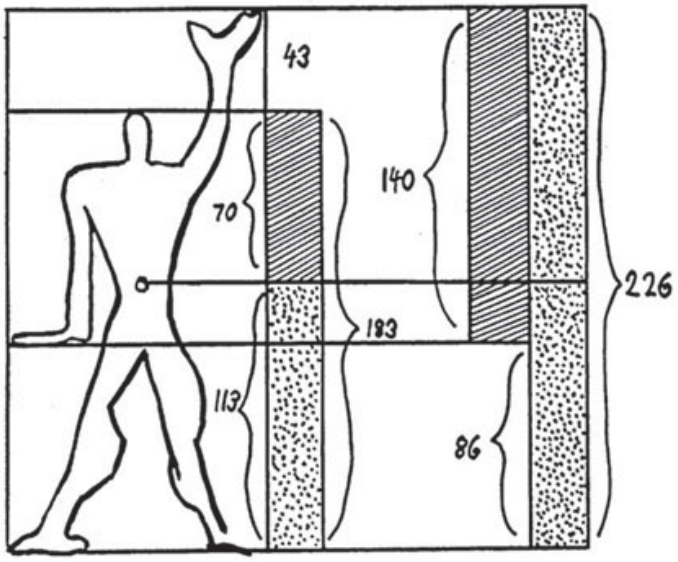
Material objects, and in this case specifically the built environment influences our lives on a daily basis. The way we live, think, dream and act, we are actively involved within our perceived passive environments that shape our very existence. This symbiotic relationship is our sociality, our way of being, and ultimately our life.

The spatial dimensions of culture have shifted to the foreground, rather than being the background against which life takes place. Anthropologists have become increasingly aware of this notion that all behaviour takes place and is constructed in space (Low & Lawrence-Zuniga, 2003:1). Lundberg (2008: 2) similarly exclaims that human action is always a part of the surrounding world, in participation with it. The material world is in a constant network with the immaterial.

'Since life takes place, large and small localities belong to the experience of living, which is the architect's task to render visible.' (Norberg-Schulz, 2000:228)

There are various amounts of theories relating to space as place and vice versa; theoretical explanations such as space only becoming a place once it is inhabited, given meaning through occupation. Christopher Tilley (2006: 14) explicates how 'landscape and place are often experienced as a structure of feeling through activities and performances which crystallise and express group identities to the outside world by passing through and identifying with particular places and particular histories.' These particular places and histories refer to cultural identity and a sense of community that can be associated with 'place'.

Life 'takes place' in the 'in between', where humans live in the world, within time and place. Space becomes a place when it is used, remembered or acknowledged by human beings. Space as place can have a powerful influence on the structuring of behaviours and the values of family members, as well as on the forms and flows of family life across the generations (Birdwell-Pheasant & Lawrence-Zuniga, 1999), in the same sense, Tilley explains that 'places are generative of social relations' (Tilley, 2006:20).



As Churchill (Perkins, 1995: 62) emphasised, people first shape their buildings, whether it be through design or decoration, thereafter, these buildings, in turn, shape the people. So we can comfortably say that place always involves appropriation and the transformation of space and nature that is inseparable from the reproduction and transformation of society in time and space (Low et al, 2003:5). But what does this mean in the urban realm, the public domain? How do we create a sense of belonging and ownership in the public domain, outside the domestic living room?

3.3. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ANTHROPOLOGY AND URBAN DESIGN - CREATING OF PLACE

As Rodman suggests in her paper Empowering Place: Multilocality and Multivocality (Low et al, 2003:207), 'anthropologists need to "empower" place by returning control over meanings of place to the rightful producers, and empower their own analysis of place by attending to the multiplicity of inhabitants' voices found in places about place'. In the time of the global city, it becomes increasingly difficult to define the 'inhabitants' of place as the world has become a melting pot of different cultures.

To better comprehend and achieve insight into "place" as socially and culturally constructed, the objective is to regard the sense of place (or attachment to place) and locale (the setting in which a particular

1 The meaning of place is lost when ideas and interpretations of ideas are mindlessly copied and pasted from alternate places. The interpretation and acknowledgement of the genius loci should inform the urban design which should be contextually appropriate and simultaneously be adaptable over time, as the meaning of a place and the human identity evolves.

social activity occurs, such as a house or the street) as a unified concept. ‘Places are not inert containers. They are politicised, culturally relative, historically specific, local and multiple constructions’ (Low et al, 2003: 205).

In ‘The Good City’, Ash Amin (2006) suggests that public spaces in cities become important in structuring a place for gathering, a place for interacting with various inhabitants of the city. The meaning of any object (person or place) consists for Norberg-Schultz (1980) in its relationship to other objects (persons or places), i.e. it consists in what the object (person or places) ‘gathers’. Public spaces become these communal places of gathering and the potential sites for urban solidarity in a multicultural urban environment.

Architecture and in this case, Urban Design, is, therefore, the art of creating places where human beings can dwell on earth beneath the sky (Norberg-Schulz, 1985:23). Architecture becomes the stage upon which the story of each individual is acted out and the urban environment the stage for the individual as part of the community. It is therefore of fundamental importance as an architect and urban designer to comprehend the influences that the physical and built environment has on users, human beings.

3.4. UTILITY AS PLACEMAKING ELEMENT

Rasmussen (1962) compares the architect’s work with that of the artist, sculpture as an art working with form and mass, and the painter with colour. Yet, the architect’s work is not purely visual but a form of functional art which solves problems. The differentiation being that of utility. In architecture, utility often means shelter, the house becomes in its primary sense a way to protect and enclose the human being in something other than the open, the public. But when these edifices are purposely designed to privatise and focus on the individual’s ‘place’, urban design and the urban environment is there to serve the in-between, the public domain, the link between. The question becomes - what does utility comprise of in the urban realm?

Nolli’s map (The Nolli Map Website) weaves the buildings in as intricate parts of the city’s fabric. The acknowledgement of the accessible places for the public rather than focussing on the buildings, which would be represented by a figure ground study (losing an element of the publicly accessible spaces, utility on an urban level). Urban design becomes important where utility is influenced by quality, character and the appearance of places, including buildings and the spaces between them.



Photo by Mariano Silva (National Geographic, Your Shot)

3.5. ELEMENTS OF SCALE

‘Seen from an aeroplane high in the air, even the most gigantic skyscraper is only a tall stone block, a mere sculptural form, not a real building in which people can live. But as the aeroplane descends from the great heights there will be a moment when the buildings change character completely. Suddenly they take on human-scale, become houses for human beings like ourselves, not the tiny dolls observed from the heights. This strange transformation takes place at the instant when the contours of the buildings begin to rise above the horizon so that we get a side view of them instead of looking down on them...’ (Rasmussen, 1962:10).

Urban designers, even architects often work with the view from above, the plan. The plan is important because it represents the ‘whole’, the vision for the site. But the urban designer should remember that the plan will never be important to the man walking down the street in any other way than him being able to walk down the street. The success of urban design, therefore, lies in the enablement of life on the most intimate human scale, the scale of utility. The way in which this ‘plan’ is arranged becomes the construction of innumerable possibilities to take place.

Scale is significant on a physical level but also in time, the scale of time is different for the urban environment, the life cycle of the city is different to that of a building.

It is also important to differentiate between what the urban designer can and can’t do. The task at hand starts by recognising what the utility of these spaces and places will be and providing opportunities for these happenings. It is, however, important to realise that over time these change, and as we change our buildings to accommodate our needs, we are also adapting to the structures. Urban design is about enabling, enabling life, and this life may include change, change in the way we see ourselves and what we require from our places. If the urban realm is compared to a stage upon which life as a play is acted out, architecture is often expected to last a lifetime, while the urban play is rather a long, slow moving performance which is required to be adaptable enough to accommodate unforeseen improvisations throughout various lifetimes.

3.6. EMBODIED SPACE

Experience is never limited, and it is never complete; it is an immense sensibility, a kind of huge spider-web of the finest silken threads suspended in the chamber of consciousness, and catching every airborne particle in its tissue.’ – Henry James (Perkins, 1995: 64).



Extract of Nolli’s map (https://dabrownstein.com/2016/04/20/rome-again-and-again/)

The body in space is an often neglected topic of analyses due to its complicated duality of the subjective and objective. The concept of embodied space, however, addresses the notion of ‘lived experience’, the intertwining of the material and immaterial. Embodiment refers to presence, the engagement with the surrounding world. ‘Embodied space is the location where human experience and consciousness take on material and spatial form’ (Low et al, 2003: 2).

Irving Hallowell identified cultural factors in spatial orientation in 1955. This affirmed the fact that human orientation (within space), goes beyond personal experience. Edward Hall instituted the field of proxemics, the study of people’s use of space as an aspect

of culture (Low et al, 2003:4). The concept proposes four different levels of personal space that range from intimate to public. These boundaries are implied rather than constructed, which means it will be different for individuals, and is also only established once violated. Hall also questions the assumption of universally shared phenomenological experience. Spaces all over the world are structured and inhabited differently. Proxemics, therefore, plays upon the idea that the body is a vessel of spatial orientation with varied levels of interaction with other people and the environment. On an urban level, it becomes significant to understand the aspects of private life in order to understand what constitutes public life.

3.7. CONCLUSION AND THE SIGNIFICANCE FOR DESIGN

The theoretical discourse briefly looked into various topics related to planning and designing the urban realm as well as the life that takes place in the public space and which should be enabled. The Global South is a different context from the Global North where urban design and planning theories often come from. A sensitive approach in this developing context is therefore imperative such as those advocated by Patrick Geddes and Nabeel Hamdi.

The theory looked at the relationship between human beings and their environment, from the broader city wide scale down to the human dimension. The urban designer's role in shaping this environment without imposing foreign concepts of master planning and a top-down approach. The bottom-up approach is however not always as simple. Hence the research questions interrogating what a possible appropriate approach to urban design could be, leading to the sub questions looking into forms of appropriation. The built environment is after all for those who will use it.

Urban design is about place-making, place making for the human being. Space becomes place through appropriation and appropriation highlights aspects of the genius loci of a place and the meanings associated with it. Good urban design realises that these meanings change and adapt over time, and so will the forms of appropriation. A successful urban environment is one which provides various opportunities for life to take place, enabling rather than restricting.

The next chapter unpacks the context within which this specific project is located, but is representative of a typical city in a developing country (the general context for which this project was initiated). Some of the challenges in these cities and what designers should be cautious of was discussed in this chapter when the notion of traditional masterplanning was discussed. The context analysis further interrogates what these forms of appropriation are and what the context for this approach looks like.

The design proposal follows as a case study interrogating what a typical approach for a specific site in a developing context could be. The theoretical concepts discussed in this chapter inform these interventions and aim to provide a theoretical foundation for the rationale behind the proposal.