

Placemaking

exploration, research and reflection on cities , public space, urban design , urban planning and landscape design

Home About me

List

my linked in profile
my twitter page

Placemakingme

Email add Submit

Monday, January 3, 2011

a holistic understanding of public Space and its dimension

I. Public space



Public space consists of outdoor/indoor spaces that come in forms of sidewalks, streets, plazas, parks, city halls, libraries (Madanipour,1992; Calthorpe 1993;.Braza 2003).

The diversity of types and respectively of the activities they foster have been the object of study of different

disciplines (sociology, political theory, urban design, anthropology).In such case , public spaces can be defined from different yet complimentary perspectives. These different definitions can highlight the key characteristics of public space.

One notion is worth noting is that "public space "as a theory usually considered that its supply and definition most critical in the context of urban environments (which extends to adjacent suburban environments) .In rural settings, public space supply is relatively less critical because of cheaper land prices and lower densities.

A. Political Perspective

Political theory distinguished two main characteristics of public space which are its relation with the public life of the city and its embodiment of the public sphere and realm.

Urban public spaces relates to the public life of the city because essentially it was the **"the place of citizenship"** Hartley (1992; 29-30).As Hartley noted (ibid.), citizens bodies, words and actions were on mutual display .So, its openness and accessibility made it possible for action and reactions to take place simultaneously .It was the prime location to view the "Other" (Young, 1990).

Urban public space represents the material location of the public sphere .As represented by public space also represents the material location of the public sphere which is 'the suite of institutions and activities that mediate relations between society and state' (Habermas, 1989).

Public space is deemed as an unconstrained space within which political movements can organize and expand into wider arenas For Mitchell (1992) and Smith (1996). It is the locus of the public realm as satisfying three criteria:

- 1- By outlasting mortal lives, it memorializes and thereby conveys a sense of history and society to individuals (Arendt 1958).
- 2- It is established collectively and is an arena for diverse groups to engage in dialogue, debate and oppositional struggles. Key aspects of public space are its suitability fro gatherings and encounters and an arena in which access and privacy are contested (Arendt 1958, Mitchell 1995).
- 3- It is accessible to and used by all. (Arendt ,1958)It is particularly important, as Fraser (1990) and Hartley (1992) argue, that by claiming that public space as an embodiment of the public realm, it should include and foster interaction in between different groups of the society and offer excluded groups an opportunity to claim their rights of representation within the general community.

B. Socio-Cultural Perspective

Lefebvre (1991) distinguishes between representational space (appropriated, lived) and representations of space (planned, controlled, ordered space). *As representational space, public space is taken and remade by political actors and politicized at its very core tolerating the risks of disorder (including recidivist political movements).*As representations of space, public space is planned, orderly and safe. Users of this space must be made to feel comfortable, and they should not be driven away by unsightly homeless people or unsolicited political activity (ibid: 373).

Also, Public space is conceived as a metaphor of the "urban cosmology" (Da Mata 1984): each public space was distinctive in the sense that it reflects the economic and social processes which its society undergoes. 'Distinctive Design Traditions' are associated

Blog Archive

- ▶ 2014 (4)
- ▶ 2013 (16)
- ▶ 2012 (2)
- ▼ 2011 (30)
 - ▶ November (1)
 - ▶ September (1)
 - ▶ August (2)
 - ▶ July (3)
 - ▶ May (2)
 - ▶ April (1)
 - ▶ March (2)
 - ▶ February (3)
 - ▼ January (15)
 - reflections on ecological de
 - landscape urbanism?new u
 - growth? no-i...
 - Urban Imaginaries in Buen
 - urban farming - new perspe
 - Permeability - shaping how
 - city...
 - So What is Accessibility fo
 - regional boundaries drawn
 - Sustainability Wins Award
 - ...
 - why research on public spa
 - important...
 - urban developments - urban
 - dev...
 - Roundtable -CEO for CITIES
 - Foundat...
 - Development Evolves to En
 - a holistic understanding of
 - ...
 - Review of World Bank PRA
 - TITLING AND...
 - BEST PRACTISES_ LAND
 - REGISTRATION

▶ 2010 (3)

Labels

- sustainability (12)
- urban planning (10)
- planning (7)
- public space (7)
- best practises (4)
- urbanism (4)
- globalisation (3)
- information te
- Education (2)
- Social (2)
- cities (2)
- o
- (2) land registration (2)
- philosophy
- (1) Happy (1)
- Housing (1)
- awards (1)
- eco
- gratitude (1)
- guidelines (1)
- internal (1)
- j
- (1) patience (1)
- self esteem (1)
- spiritualit
- (1) urban (1)
- urban agriculture (1)

LINKS

- real estate and urban planning or
- web magazine on urbanism
- GREG CLARK-
- masterplanning ,urban space and
- ABC of urbanism
- podcasts on urban design
- new study on sense of place

with the cultural values and practices of various ethnic groups and social class strata either by the adoption of specific architectural style or by the mixture of its uses and activities (Hayden , 1995). **In fact, Age, sex, social class and ethnic identity affect the way in which urban life is perceived (Ramon, 2004).**

There was an error in this gadget

Public spaces are defined in terms of the social encounter and exchange "where groups interest converge "(Borja and Muxi ,2001;Glazer and Lilla 1987;Vernez Moodar 1992;Sorkin 1992;Tibbalds 1992;Worpole 1992).It reinforces the collective identity of the community (Valle Del, 1997; Franck and Paxson, 1989;Gehl, 1987;Lynch 960;Whyte, 1980;Kenstler 1993;Ruddock 1996). Reinforcing residents' feelings of belonging to the city is attributed to the actions that can be carried out in public space and which reflects an opportunity to urban justice (Borja, 2000).

However, **Redesigning can not solve by itself social tension and inequalities (Gans 2000)**.Two social factors were essential to assist in any urban interventions in the public space context. Studies of successful urban interventions in public space in Barcelona and India revealed that **a level of social awareness have existed in the society at the specific time and place which permitted closer collaboration and understanding of the needs of the users (Ramon 2004)**. The other criteria is **its responsiveness to the cultural characteristics of the society it serves: the concepts of privacy/publicness that are tested in the western context do not always correspond to eastern cultures or other ethnicities** (Arefi 2003).

C. Psychological Perspective (behavior)

Urban public spaces reinforce a sense of a psychological comfort by the affiliation with others (Lang 1984). *In fact, once people satisfy their basic needs of survival and security, people feel the need to become a member of a group which will provide affection, support and identity for them(Lang 1984).*

D. Legal and Economic Perspective

In urban area, public space was considered as main criteria for raising property values. It also boost the commercial trading and its life cycle by offering night and day activities (CABE 2000).The economic perspective focus on public space in the sense that it looks on it's the value of its attractiveness rather than at its role in the daily life of its inhabitants and users.

This increasingly important economic role of public space has lead to the formation of public private partnerships in terms of the supply and maintenance of public spaces. The case of New York an particularly Battery City is renown as this involvement of public capital in the supply and management of public space has transformed its nature (Zukin 1991).

Posted by [nadine bitar chahine](#) at 2:46 PM

[feedback](#) [interesting \(0\)](#) [insightfull \(0\)](#) [more on this topic \(0\)](#)



Recommend this on Google

Labels: [public space](#), [sustainability](#), [urban planning](#)

No comments:

Post a Comment

Enter your comment...

Comment as: [nadine bitar ch](#) ▼ [Sign out](#)

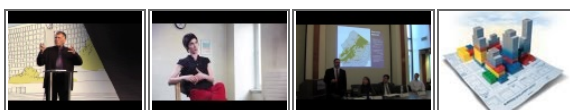
[Publish](#) [Preview](#) Notify me

[Newer Post](#)

[Home](#)

[Older Post](#)

Subscribe to: [Post Comments \(Atom\)](#)



powered by



