



Figure 28. Family shopping in Warwick Junction

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THEORETICAL DISCOURSE

"A city should express the actions of individuals and collectives...it is a vessel for our actions and desires..."

Bunschoten et al 2001:24

INTRODUCTION

Cities do not only develop based on plans, but are further given form through the continual adjustment and adaptation of the physical environment by individuals and collectives in order to accommodate real city functions. Consequently, the city is an ever-evolving organism which is formed by use over decades. The city is not a goal in itself; it is a multipurpose shifting organism. Its spaces as well as the forms contained therein are tools formed by use and act as vessels for the urban dwellers' actions and desires. The resultant emergent forms and systems have become the physical encounters of individuals in the city (Bunschoten *et al* 2001:24; Gehl 1987:43).

Chora, an urban and architectural research laboratory, highlight that there should be a new way of looking at and practicing architecture in a way that acknowledges emergent systems. As such, they surmise that to build in cities is to manage change, orchestrate action, design programmes and suggest form whilst stimulating self-organisation (Bunschoten *et al* 2001:25). In their view, human actions should inform the generation of architectural form, and become primary and influential as design generators in order to ensure historical and cultural continuity (Kronenburg 1998:7).

INTERIORITY OF THE CITY - FORMS AND SPACES

According to Gehl (1987:131) "The battle for high quality in cities must be won at the very small scale." The design of individual spaces/segments as well as details, down to the smallest component, are factors that determine the qualities of the urban environment, which, when detailed, properly stand a good chance

of being functional and popular (Gehl 1987:131-132). This detailing must be derived from the needs of the individual user (Gehl 1987:85). Public spaces must be attractive to walk, stand and sit in, and if these basic needs are accommodated, a broad spectrum of other activities will also have a basis for good development (Gehl 1987:133).

The actions and activities of the informal street traders as well as pedestrians reveal that there is a particular way in which individuals relate to and make the urban environment useful in order for them to dwell. Reinforcing what Heidegger put forward, that in fact, when one truly dwells, the whole world can become part of our 'inside space', Heidegger also states that, after shelter, architecture needs to identify place, belonging and ownership as well as say something about the individual to whom it belongs (Kronenburg 1998:7).

AESTHETICS AND ATMOSPHERE

An integral part of the experience of the city is the tactile experience of urban spaces. According to Buie (1996:28), the aesthetic nature of the trading environment and objects therein is not actually about the surface appearance of things, but about how the true nature of an undertaking, or an intention is embodied and expressed in form. Informal trading environments respond to the direct intuitive way that we understand what something means and what it is. The market environment therefore expresses in form life's vitality and the necessity of transaction, economic and social for its sustenance.

A SPACE WITH ITS OWN RHYTHMS

'Urban space' and 'real architecture' are always depicted and shaped by inhabitable volumes and their disposition. Historical paradigms have often based their formation of space on the Vitruvian concept of *firmitas* - that which is hard permanent and static (Findlay 2006:18).

The street market environment is a space that is never static but in a state of constant transition, responding to the needs of traders and adapting to the ebb and flow of pedestrian traffic – the continual consumption of merchandise and restocking of stalls and displays. As the pedestrian and trader engage with this space, he or she enters its movement cycle. Walking along the street pavement, spaces fold around the user. Boundaries blur and shift as mobile traders walk about plying their wares whilst other traders establish a selling point for a specific time of day assembling and disassembling devices that aid in claiming a unit of space. Display units and surfaces are restocked and adjusted in response to their inhabitation. 'Walls', 'roofs' and supports are adjusted and physical space is a result (Habraken 1998:58).

The space is dynamic, interactive and flexible with elements that are event-based and others that are process-based. There is a dialogue between the traders and the pedestrians as selling space at once becomes social space. Thus the boundaries between personal spaces are soft-acting like veils imbued with movement, acting and reacting in response to inhabitation (Garcia 2006:18). The street market is a space with its own rhythms and should therefore have the ability to respond to the needs of its users.

According to Buie (1996:25), informal street markets are "first and foremost places of personal exchange. After their first function as a place for the exchange of goods, they also act as places of gathering, in which virtually all aspects of life are at play, they become centres of social life where family and friends meet for socialising - disputes are created and settled, commodities, news, information and gossip are exchanged (Buie 1996:27). Trade in the market environment is about much more than the goods transacted, there is a personal exchange that according to Buie (1996:26), is only a step or two removed from gift exchange and the reciprocity of barter.

Figure: UN/Built store

Project: Un/Built store IDEN

Designer: Hiroi Ariyama and Megumi Mastubara

Sales space delimited by shoe boxes that disappear gradually as sales proceed and boxes are carried away by customers (Marchetti & Quinz 2009:30)

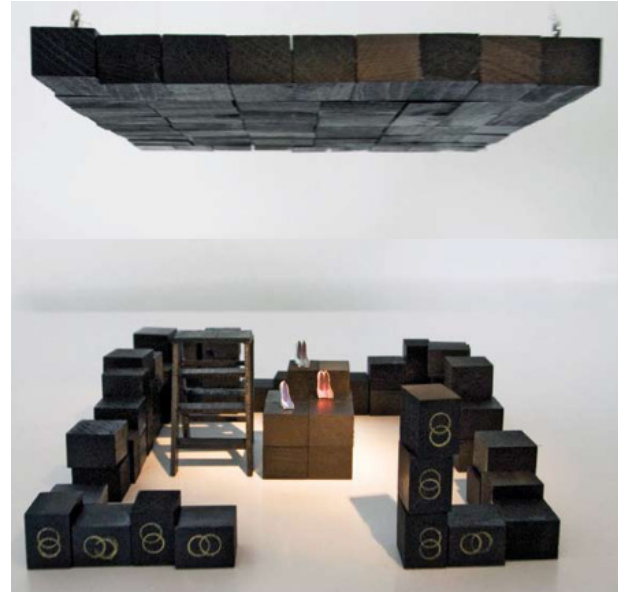


Figure 29. Built UN/Built store

INTERDEPENDENCE AS PEOPLE - A PLACE OF INTEGRATION

Street markets vividly express our genuine interdependence as city dwellers. This interdependence is translated aesthetically into physical experiences such as spaces on a human scale that create intimacy, contact, interaction and responsiveness; spaces that express and create a sense of place, gathering, excitement and possibility. Spaces where various activities and categories of people are permitted to function together side by side, able to stimulate and inspire one another (Gehl 1987:103).



Figure 30. Street market in Venice, Italy

"...in Venice the pedestrian system still functions as the city's primary traffic network. Here life and traffic exist side by side in the same space, which functions simultaneously as a space for outdoor stays and a connecting link. In this context traffic presents no security problems, no exhaust fumes, noise, and dirt, and therefore it has never been necessary to separate work, rest, meals, play, entertainment, and transit." Gehl 1987:111

CONNECTION WITH PRODUCTS – THE ACT OF EXCHANGE

In contrast with supermarkets and department stores, sellers in street markets, are often closely connected to the products and goods they sell. Often they have grown or made them themselves or they know the producer. At times they have personally spent time selecting each and every product that is to be sold.

“Colourful, tactile, fragrant produce and wares, organised with care and abundantly displayed, create a wide range of sensory pleasures and heighten the satisfaction of making a transaction. The economic exchange is coupled with a sensual one as well.” Buie 1996:26



Figure 31. Money exchange

“...in marketplaces...exchange is an art and a dance, and both parties are respectful of each other’s intelligence, wile and stamina. There is often an artistry and ritual to the measuring of goods for purchase, such that the buyer will feel that he or she is receiving ampleness that is in fact not there... measuring goods and spill out over the top, there are generous sweeping gestures made of the topping off of the package with something additional not paid for. All this is part of the play and the dance of exchange. And sometimes with more expensive merchandise, showing what’s for sale can also become an extraordinary ritual, with the customer seated on little stools, served tea or soft drinks, and regaled with a display of finely woven saris, or every possible black flowered cotton print currently available.” Buie 1996:26

GIVING FORM

According to Kevin Lynch (Lynch 1992:46) we all have five basic public space rights:

- presence
- use and action
- appropriation
- modification
- disposition.

Which, simply stated, means:

...people should not only have access to public space, but also freedom of use, change, and even claim the space, as well as transfer their rights of use and modification to other individuals (Francis 1987:28-29).

According to Francis, Lynch's spatial rights provide an effective measurement of a street's 'publicness' and democracy (Francis 1987:28-29).

In the station precinct, the streets have become multifunctional public spaces. According to Lynch (1992:91-92), multifunctional spaces should be noncommittal and plastic to the purposes and perceptions of citizens in order to allow each user to inform the forms with meanings and associations whilst still being expressive of the language of the greater whole.

"Space may be primordially given, but the organisation, use, and meaning of space is a product of social translation, transformation and experience. Socially produced space is a created structure comparable to other social constructions resulting from the transformation of given conditions inherent in life on earth..."
Soja 1980:210

"The more responsibility users have for an area – and consequently the more influence they can exert of it – the more care and love they will be prepared to invest in it. And the more suitable the area is for their own specific uses the more they will appropriate it. Thus the users become inhabitants. Strong affective relationships may thus arise, which help to turn a space into a more friendly environment." Hertzberger 1991:46

COLLAGE AND DEMOCRATIC PLURALISM

Rowe and Koetter (1996:267) suggest collage as a method to approach issues of emergent city functions having to be accommodated and integrated into the urban built environment in order to achieve 'a democratic pluralism'.

Collage is a method in which all parts, established and emergent are allowed their own legitimate expression (Rowe & Koetter 1996:266). It pays attention to the leftovers of the world, preserves their integrity and gives them dignity (Rowe & Koetter 1996:287). It acknowledges that the way in which individuals and collectives organise disparate objects gives an indication of their real needs and requirements as well as their preferred way of doing things (Rowe & Koetter 1996:290). This method acknowledges that the city is perceived and enjoyed by a wide range of people of diverse class and character and that whilst it is relatively stable - its details are constantly being modified by its inhabitants. As a result, only partial control can be exercised over the city's growth and form, and essentially, in the making of the city, there is no final result, only a continuous succession of phases (Lynch 1992:2).

Thus, this method advocates 'an anti totalitarian' way of thinking and reasoning, allowing for the accommodation and coexistence of both order and disorder, resulting in a multiplicity of readings (Rowe & Koetter 1996:269).

CONCLUSION

In order for a street to be truly democratic, room should be left for the individual to infuse the space with some of their own identity – allowing for the coexistence of both order and disorder (Rowe & Koetter 1996:283). The more users can influence an area, the more care they will be prepared to invest in it. The more suitable it is for their specific uses, the more they will appropriate it, resulting in a friendlier environment (Hertzberger 1991:46).

"...a distinctive and legible environment not only offers security but also heightens the potential depth and intensity of human experience" (Lynch 1992:5).



Figure 32. Venice street market with crates



Figure 33. Venice fruit display