Towards Socially Restorative Urbanism: Exploring Social and Spatial Implications for Urban Restorative Experience

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This paper explores ideas that might help to stimulate new avenues of inquiry into how those involved in shaping the urban environment might begin to restore a better balance of human benefit and urban form in approaches to urban regeneration and design. At present, growing evidence suggests that our capability to create socially sustainable urban regeneration and design may be compromised by over-privileging economic interests and rapid delivery over social relevance. Particularly in mixed-use residential development, an important consequence may be that people experience less of a sense of control over their homes and neighbourhoods, which diminishes opportunities for territorial expressions important to life quality and social cohesion.

The paper begins by discussing the concept of restorative environments and asserts that there are important social dimensions to human restorative experience, not yet widely investigated, that can be related to the form of towns and cities. We suggest that a better understanding of these environments can be found in phenomenological perspectives on human–environment relations. These perspectives provide foundations for more evolutionary approaches to urban morphology that raise questions around the balance of control between professional processes and user-modification in urban place making. Specifically identified and discussed are social processes that connect territorial expression with opportunities people have to develop and sustain self-esteem.

The paper concludes by suggesting that new research directions in urbanism might productively explore the interface where the need to establish structurally stable infrastructure may gradually give way to more indeterminate and evolutionary processes of occupation and territorial negotiation.

INTRODUCTION

> We live in cities where things happen without warning and without our participation. It is an alien world for most people. It is little surprise that most withdraw from community involvement to enjoy their own private and limited worlds (Jacobs and Appleyard, 1987, p 115).

Urban regeneration has increased significantly in recent years guided in the United Kingdom by the Urban Task Force report under the chairmanship of Lord Rogers of Riverside (Urban Task Force, 1999), but evident across Europe and beyond. In response to growing concern about the damaging social consequences of decades of neglect and decline in many urban areas, political will has stimulated growth in urban development and renewal to ensure towns and cities are not simply fit to live in, but should become thriving centres of human activity. The resulting changes to

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physical and spatial infrastructure continue to benefit towns and cities to an extent that some aspects of the prevailing approach are becoming adopted as the model for how things should be done, more or less everywhere. Despite the benefits, there are concerns this may not address elements of urban living experience necessary to achieve the aspired socially sustainable outcomes.

There are many facets to this concern, among which include: international architectural styling, which is undermining local identity; a tendency to intentionally appeal to and cater for a relatively narrow demographic and by extension, restrict possibilities for family life and community development; the drive for short-term commercial gain and visual appeal over long-term social sustainability; the limited potential of buildings and public spaces to adapt to unknown future circumstances (Thwaites, et al, 2007). Jacobs and Appleyard associate this with a professional culture focused on the quick fix. 'In too many cases, we design for places and people we do not know and grant them very little power or acknowledgement … This floating professional culture has only the most superficial conception of particular place. Rootless, it is more susceptible to changes in professional fashion and theory than to local events' (Jacobs and Appleyard, 1987, p 115). Do urban inhabitants need to be allowed more freedom to experience the consequences and rewards of shaping and adapting where and what they are: more a process of communication with the environment than a receiving of it?

This paper offers thoughts that we hope may contribute to shaping new research and practice agendas in urbanism to shift the balance from determination of physical fabric toward consideration of how we might restore a better balance of human benefit and urban form. If this restoration of balance is accepted as a desirable goal, then what are the implications for the way we shape and reshape our urban surroundings?

MATERIAL FABRIC VERSUS SOCIAL RESTORATION

The paper considers the concept of a restorative environment and how this might inform planning and design decisions in the urban environment. Restorative environments research has formative roots in environmental psychology and is concerned with developing an understanding of environments that promote the restoration of depleted psychological, physiological and social resources. Rachel and Stephen Kaplan (1989), and others (Ulrich, 1979, 1984; Hartig, et al, 1991; Hartig, 2004), show that people, particularly in urban environments, can suffer mental fatigue and decreased attention span as a consequence of the stresses associated with the continuous stimulation and decision making that urban living often demands. Escape from urban stress has been a principal factor in encouraging people to migrate from cities to peaceful green suburbs as soon as their economic and social mobility allows. Making cities places that can, in some way, 'restore' must be an important part of encouraging people to return to city living and, perhaps importantly, to stay and raise families there.

Contributors like the Kaplans, Roger Ulrich and Terry Hartig show that people experience tangible benefits to physical and mental well-being through contact

with certain kinds of open space. Their research contributes to growing evidence that contact with, or even simply awareness of, natural elements such as water and vegetation can deliver restorative experiences. Important though this is in helping to shape public parks and gardens (Kaplan, et al, 1998) and in highlighting the importance of informal natural settings in urban environments (Jorgenson and Keenan, 2008), it tells us relatively little about the ordinary streetscapes and built-up places that we live and work in everyday. As Jacobs (1961), Whyte (1980), Gehl (1996), and others show, people gravitate to places where there are people and seem intuitively to recognise that urban settings can offer benefits regardless of predominance or even necessarily the presence of natural elements. May there be, then, other dimensions to human restorative experience particularly relevant in urban settings that warrant inquiry?

In this paper we suggest there may be important social dimensions that could contribute to human restorative experience, but in different ways. Restorative environments have become understood as those that have non-demanding content: generally, features that engage the mind without the need for directed concentration. Rooted in 'Attention Restoration Theory' (Kaplan and Kaplan, 1989), the central premise is that people can be restored to better levels of concentration when they spend time within and also looking at natural places that offer opportunities for effortless attention. This instinctively seems the antithesis of most of what built environments deliver, yet increasingly people choose certain kinds of urban settings for leisure and recreation, social interaction and dwelling, and from this they derive experiences that contribute positively to their quality of life. Whilst these benefits may not necessarily be restorative, in the sense understood in the mainstream of restorative environments research, it might be argued that a person's sense of self-worth and self-esteem could be regularly restored through opportunities that urban life may offer: experiencing social acceptance, making choices and mastering challenges, for example. These positive effects on well-being may not be delivered by non-demanding settings but may instead require contact with more dynamic environments offering social interaction and challenge. It could be hypothesised that human restorativeness, especially in the urban realm, may have two sides. One side relates to recovery from mental fatigue, currently well established and pointing towards natural, non-demanding environments. The other relates to achieving and sustaining self-worth and self-esteem, pointing towards much more active participation within dynamic and socially oriented environments. In support there is now a growing interest in expanding the exploration of restorative environments to include the spatial, aesthetic and physical attributes of urban spaces (Hagerhall, et al, 2006; Nenci, et al, 2006; Tenngart and Hagerhall, 2008), and social and experiential dimensions (Thwaites and Simkins, 2007).

Relevant is increasing evidence that social activity not only has spatial implications (Hillier and Hanson, 1984; Day, 2004; Alexander, 2002), but also implications for the balance of control between what specialist practitioners provide and the empowerment of people to influence the environment they use (Habraken, 1998; Thwaites, et al, 2007). Perhaps, because of a gradual over-professionalisation of

urban place-making in certain instances, people may have become effectively shorn of participative opportunities having found their control over the form of places they use significantly restricted. This exposes a fundamental philosophical obstacle underpinning an assumption of people as recipients of, rather than participants in, the development of places they use. We suggest that a shift in mental orientation towards more phenomenological perspectives on human–environment relations may offer a way forward, moving from a predominant focus on the content of the built environment to one on social value.

PHENOMENOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES ON HUMAN–ENVIRONMENT RELATIONS

> Social space tends to be translated, with more or less distortion, into physical space (Dovey, 2005, p 285).

Phenomenology presents a holistic view of human–environment relations where human experience and its spatial context are integrated. That human experience can be thought to have spatial dimensions has philosophical roots in the work of phenomenologist Maurice Merleau-Ponty who drew conclusions about the inter-related nature of human existence and the spaces within which it is played out. 'We have said that space is existential; we might just as well have said that existence is spatial' (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p 293). Merleau-Ponty points to a spatial dimension at the heart of what it is to be human, which has profound implications for the way that space is understood. 'Space is not the setting (real or logical) in which things are arranged, but the means whereby the positing of things becomes possible' (ibid, 1962, p 243). This implies that people and their settings create a kind of totality where different contexts activate different habits and thus become a part of the way those habits are expressed. For Merleau-Ponty, this kind of fit between bodily action and its environment is crucial to our ability to make sense of our actions and the world around us. From a phenomenological perspective, our surroundings are experienced as a projection of our sense of self: its condition is our condition. This perspective brings about a substantial shift of awareness from geometric space as a finite, static container, to a lived space as a more elastic phenomenon: a pliable and dynamic entity that bends, stretches and moulds at different scales in response to action (Dovey, 1993, 2005).

This conception of lived space may appear alien and challenging from within the mainstream planning and design fraternity, yet it has strong foundations in other discipline areas, especially anthropology. Concepts developed by Edward Hall in the 1960s (1959, 1966) give rigorous intellectual foundations to an idea of space as an entity capable of growing, changing and declining along with the way people give different meanings to it or choose to ignore it (Tuan, 1977, 1980; Proshansky, et al, 1983). This concept prompted Relph (1976) to see places as indeterminate wholes, territories of social activity and meaning projected onto entire assemblages of buildings and spaces. Places should be viewed, according to Relph, with the clear understanding that it is not possible to design everything about them. Design

action has to be recast as the generation of conditions under which places will flourish rather than the prescription of finite form.

A phenomenological perspective, then, not only embraces human functioning in its view of the environment, it actually requires it to bring a full definition. If we choose to adopt a more phenomenological mindset how can this relate to urban order? A starting point is to understand urban order as something intimately connected to human lived experience, rather than something rationally generated from specialist professional practices. Jane Jacobs provides a place to begin.

EVOLUTIONARY URBAN MORPHOLOGY

> This order is all composed of movement and change, and although it is life, not art, we may fancifully call it the art form of the city and liken it to the dance – not to a simple-minded precision dance with everyone kicking up at the same time, twirling in unison and bowing off en-masse, but to an intricate ballet in which the individual dancers and ensembles all have distinctive parts which miraculously reinforce each other and compose an orderly whole (Jacobs, 1961, p 50).

Jacobs's vision of urban order arises from the activities of people in ordinary daily life as they interact with one another and their physical surroundings. In so doing they change themselves, others in their community and their structural fabric continuously, yet somehow manage to retain a recognisable and enduring sense of order. This order is an indeterminate manifestation of underlying social forces. It is a dance of social association made from what different kinds of people do and think, individually and together, and how this becomes projected into the material fabric of the community and lives lived within it.

That social functioning can be understood as a generator of the urban order we experience is central to John Habraken's (1998) exploration of the structural characteristics of the ordinary built environment. What Habraken means by 'ordinary' in this context is the wide fabric of the built environment of human habitation, where the routine of daily life occurs, which until relatively recently managed to evolve and be sustained without the sort of professional attention it receives today. 'For thousands of years, built environments of great richness and complexity arose informally and endured. Knowledge about how to make ordinary environment was ubiquitous, innately manifest in the everyday interactions of builders, patrons and users. Built environment arose from implicit structures based on common understanding' (Habraken, 1998, p 2). Habraken points to an expansion of architectural influence during the modern era that now sees almost every part of the built environment as a design problem to be solved. 'Ordinary growth processes that had been innate and self-sustaining, shared throughout society, have been recast as problems requiring professional solution' (ibid, 1998, p 3).

Resonant with Jacobs, Habraken sees the ordinary built environment as something evolutionary in character: that which occurs where human habitation and material form interact. It is the nature of the interaction that generates the form

and, for this reason, Habraken says, environment cannot be invented, in the sense that it can be predetermined in all its parts and then made. Habraken describes how urban order evolves out of an inter-relationship of three levels of control he calls form, place and understanding. Form is what establishes an organising, structurally stable infrastructure that can then be occupied. Particular spaces within infrastructures become controlled as occupants determine what and who comes in and stays out. In Habraken's view, occupation transforms space into place and therefore has an explicitly territorial meaning related to the human impulse to control our surroundings by identifying and defining territory. Habraken's third level of control is that of understanding. This means the general desire in humans to relate to one another via common structures or shared meanings, for example, cultural, ideological, aesthetic and so on. If place is driven by territorial factors, understanding is essentially social in nature. What appears visible results from the resolution of tensions between the biological need for people to assert their individuality through territorial expression and the wider need for personal assertions to remain within commonly accepted norms.

Habraken argues that the structure of the ordinary is essentially a visible manifestation of the way people act as social beings in exercising control in the built environment. The overlapping relationships between levels of control create active and continuously shifting patterns of occupation and expression, creating a kind of margin at an indeterminable boundary where the control necessarily exerted by specialists gradually gives way to the social forces of occupants. Although such margins retain a form of stability and coherence over time, they may in fact be in continual change as the patterns of occupation and control ebb and flow with objects placed for short or longer periods according to local custom, practicality and negotiation between neighbours. The accumulation of many such small adaptations over time makes these marginal areas highly dynamic, places where territory may be implied by the physical fabric of buildings, but may actually move about in response to ongoing acts of occupation. Habraken is clear that special professional know-how is necessary to make gravity-resistant structures, especially at large scales, but says such know-how has to include a realisation that space and time must be left for innate territorial and social processes to find their own expression. Urban regeneration based on large-scale spatial interventions and compressed timescales squeezes such opportunities.

TERRITORIALITY AND THE ACHIEVEMENT OF SELF-ESTEEM

> The urban environment should be an environment that encourages people to express themselves, to become involved, to decide what they want and act on it (Jacobs and Appleyard, 1987, p 169).

Territorial impulses are fundamental to human experience. The necessity to be able to distinguish what is 'my own', whether this is an object or place, an idea, belief or expression, what is someone else's and what is shared is, arguably, one of the most powerful driving forces behind human action. This kind of territorial

awareness can be related to human psychological health in terms of the need to achieve self-esteem.

Through their mental and physical actions, individuals make their ideas into something permanent and thereby become aware that they have a mind of their own. Furthermore, through having their actions recognised by others, individuals are able to enjoy self-esteem. These ideas are central to the work of Axel Honneth (1995) who identifies the importance of recognition as a vital human need. Honneth (1995) considers that self-identity depends on developing self-confidence, self-respect and self-esteem. Achieving these requires the recognition of others who share common concerns within a mutually supporting community where individuals experience themselves as having status either as a focus of concern, a responsible agent, or as a valued contributor in a shared project. Ordinary human activity underpins human fulfilment, but achieving it extends to a requirement for recognition that the act has value within a particular cultural context.

Here, then, we find evidence of something similar to the overlapping relationship between Habraken's second and third levels of control: biological impulses drive people to control territory, whilst the social need to belong tends to control extremes of territorial expression through awareness and recognition of a common understanding. The framework of common understanding is what, for Honneth, provides the context of recognition that is central to the achievement of self-esteem. Another way to talk about Habraken's concept of common understanding, effectively Honneth's context of recognition, is to relate it to the experience of a sense of 'ours'. When we experience 'ours' we are subconsciously acknowledging a sense of belonging to something, or somewhere, to which others may also feel similarly. A sense of 'ours' also helps us to define what is mine and what is not. A sense of mine is an important component of self-identity and integral to the recognition that others have 'their' identity too. The sense of 'ours' is vital to overcome extremes of possessiveness and self-centred introspection by providing a territorial (mental and physical) realm that encourages communication, negotiation and reconciliation of differences.

Something like this can be illustrated in a built environment context with Michael Martin's discussion about the potential of the back alley as a community landscape (Martin, 1997). Martin discusses the way different configurations of boundary treatment affect social potential in American residential development. When boundaries are configured to achieve a balance of what Martin describes as 'hidden-ness' and 'revealing-ness', the back alleys can be transformed from being merely functional conduits into settings rich in social potential, capable of encouraging and sustaining neighbourly behaviour in residents. Hidden-ness and revealing-ness reflect that people, depending on mood and circumstance, sometimes wish to preserve privacy whilst at other times choose to be more openly available to contact with neighbours. Martin links the development of community spirit in residential settings with the extent to which the built environment allows individuals to control when they wish to hide or reveal themselves as they move about in daily life. Boundaries of different heights and degrees of transparency, gate

orientation, location of outbuildings and bin storage, places for car maintenance, children's play and so on, can become strategically arranged to optimise such control, allowing inhabitants to position themselves according to how sociable or otherwise they may feel. Again, there is a question of balance. Infrastructures that facilitate too much hidden-ness may obstruct the sort of spontaneous social encounters from which good neighbourly relations often develop, whilst infrastructures that are too revealing can lead people to feel themselves oppressively overlooked.

The kind of back alley community landscape that Martin advocates represents the 'ours' of that specific community of people. What is right for them in how they come to sort out levels of overlap between their 'ours' and their 'mines' may not be right elsewhere. Consequently, it is hard to imagine that this sort of fine-grain tuning of features to achieve just the right balance of hide and reveal for the inhabitants of a particular neighbourhood could ever be successfully specified by an outside specialist. The correct configuration of objects seems to be so intimately woven into the personal life-patterns of individuals that to get it right 'by design' would require super-human insight from even the most socially sensitive professional (Figure 1).

Michael Martin's community alleys provide an example of territorial behaviour reflected in built environments on a fairly domestic scale, but it is possible to detect the ways that social processes can impact on larger urban settings. Aspects of gradual urban transformation can be detected in the evolution of the Chapel Allerton district of north Leeds, United Kingdom (Figure 2). Chapel Allerton is a well-established, thriving and lively residential community with a diversity of housing type and style, from substantial early Victorian town houses, terraces and semi-detached family houses to recently constructed apartments and low-cost public housing. The residential provision is woven together with shops and other small businesses, churches, community buildings and public open spaces into an eclectic and thriving neighbourhood character, all of which give it the air of an urban village. This makes Chapel Allerton a clearly distinguishable region of the city characterised by a wide range of interwoven leisure, commercial and residential

Figure 1: (left) Nethergreen, Sheffield, United Kingdom. Reminiscent of Michael Martin's balance of hidden-ness and revealing-ness, an evolving residential street characterised by continuous adjustments to boundary walls, gates, planting, parking, private and semi-private spaces.

Figure 2: (right) Chapel Allerton, Leeds, United Kingdom. Urban village characterised by fine-tuning the urban fabric in response to social change over time.

activities. As a whole, Chapel Allerton is a product of an evolutionary system, an urban form that makes visible subtle forces of changing social composition and patterns of use. Like Martin's alleys, Chapel Allerton proudly expresses itself as the 'ours' of its inhabitants, evident in the strong sense of community that draws together resident and business inhabitants. The essence of Chapel Allerton is sensitive to change, but not in a precious, excessively preservationist sense. Chapel Allerton's essence has proven itself robust for centuries: indeed it seems to depend on change to sustain and enrich it, for its form has never been entirely static and is not to this day.

Urban renaissance policies adopted across the European Union have viewed the formation of such a blend of mixed communities and enhanced economic value as essential to the development of sustainable communities. In so doing, however, these policies may have focused attention on the wrong things: the product rather than the processes. Present priorities in urban regeneration, which speed towards commercially oriented solutions at the outset, more often than not simply import blandness and sterility as an intrinsic characteristic. Jacobs and Appleyard (1987) cautioned of the consequences of 'this floating professional culture' (ibid, p 115) over 23 years ago, a warning echoed more recently by Lord Rogers of Riverside. 'Many of the problems in English towns and cities lie with the development professions and businesses, alongside those who regulate them ... We have tolerated a lazy over-use of off-the-peg designs and layouts' (Urban Task Force, 1999, p 50). Yet, despite these well-publicised and debated threats to the achievement of socially responsive and fulfilling towns and cities, we continue to see a widespread proliferation of large-scale, multi-level, block-based solutions to urban dwelling of the type exemplified by the recently unveiled Spinningfields development in Manchester, United Kingdom, and its Sheffield clone (Figures 3 and 4).

Returning briefly to the territorial concepts of 'mine', 'theirs' and 'ours' discussed earlier, it is difficult to imagine how a necessary sense of 'ours' can successfully evolve in this kind of residential development. Stacking people in multi-level apartments above commercial units, more often than not occupied by

Figure 3: (left) The Spinningfields development in Manchester, United Kingdom and, in Figure 4, its Sheffield clone.

Figure 4: (right) West One, Sheffield, United Kingdom.

multi-national retail outlets, divides the private and public realms so abruptly as to reduce territorial experience to a polarisation of 'mine' and 'theirs'. Here, there is little opportunity for the kind of user-modification that seems integral to more socially sustainable built environments.

In these examples, high levels of design control combine with high-density living to inhibit explicit territorial expressions from inhabitants. We acknowledge that encouraging user-modification is easier to achieve in lower-density settings where occupants can manipulate and relocate barriers and edges more freely. Nevertheless, as Martin's (1997) study of back alleys demonstrates, occupants need encouragement and opportunity to make such modifications. Examples like Nethergreen, Sheffield (Figure 1), show that when design control is looser an element of self-organisation can emerge that gradually shapes the aesthetic and social value, replacing the 'mine–theirs' polarity with a more pronounced sense of 'ours': a sense of neighbourly belonging. In contrast, Chimney Pot Park, a recently renewed development of traditional Victorian terraced streets in Manchester, United Kingdom, exhibits quite a different level of 'designer' presence (Figures 5 and 6). Similar in scale to Nethergreen, the result is characterised by high levels of design input throughout. In comparison with Nethergreen, it seems sterile and repetitive, even in the novel private and semi-private back spaces that have been innovatively raised to first floor level making space for car parking beneath. Although it must be acknowledged that Chimney Pot Park is relatively new and has not yet had the benefit of time to age, its appearance seems such an explicit expression of the 'mine' of the design team we are left wondering whether, and over how long, this will become replaced or at least balanced with the 'ours' of its inhabitants (Figures 7 and 8).

This type of development helps reveal an Achilles heel in the top-down approach to urban regeneration, where the focus of attention is placed on the master-planning of solutions that are effectively manufactured on site for occupation. The value of relatively fine-grain adjustments over time in response to evolving social processes so central to the quality of Chapel Allerton, for example, plays no part in this approach at all. As Habraken (1998) points out, much of what we see in the

Figures 5 and 6: Chimney Pot Park, Manchester. Sterile 'designer neatness' tends to push territorial expression and personalisation indoors.

Figures 7 and 8: Nethergreen, Sheffield, United Kingdom. Looser edges can invite territorial expression and encourage neighbourly contact and negotiation.

structure of the ordinary built environment has happened under the controlling influence of the people who use and inhabit it. Professional agencies may well be involved in giving structural and indeed aesthetic advice, but of a kind that contributes to the realisation of needs generated from within the existing situation according to developments in patterns of use, rather than externally imposed.

CONCLUSIONS

In this formative attempt to begin to conceptualise a socially restorative urbanism we have offered new directions of inquiry that may contribute to a reconnection of social and spatial dimensions of urban regeneration. We have suggested that such an approach may productively focus on the dynamic interface where the need to determine structurally stable infrastructure gradually gives way to more indeterminate and evolutionary processes of occupation and territorial negotiation.

We recognise, however, that there are challenges. For example, if it is accepted as desirable in certain circumstances to modify professional planning and design in ways to allow occupants of urban infrastructure space and time for greater levels of self-organisation and territorial expression, then what kind of expression can we expect to be unleashed? Looking back in time delivers illuminating insights into the way social forces have influenced the form of pre-modern towns and cities, but this may prove misleading in today's media-driven, globalised society. Self-organisation in past societies tended to be drawn from the immediate surroundings and adapted to localised needs and aspirations. Influences on personal expression were constrained by comparatively limited mobility for most and an absence of today's pervasive media through which we are delivered, almost subliminally, a continuous stream of lifestyle options. In today's developed world especially, do we simply risk replacing the influence of specialist designers with that of media moguls and business people selling lifestyle choices through the media?

Other criticisms frequently levelled at advocates of more participative approaches to environmental improvement lie with how genuinely inclusive they actually are.

Ways will need to be found that can overcome privileging the interests of the active and vocal minority in participative processes. Allied to this is the innate nature of territorial behaviour. If planning and design processes can be found to purposefully create space for localised self-organisation, then how do we deal with the potential for this to degenerate into endless territorial disputes, resulting in the survival of the fittest? Honneth's (1995), perhaps optimistic, response might be to suggest that self-organising social systems will find balance of self-expression and common understanding because the achievement of self-esteem depends on both. The process of creating and sustaining such balance is, however, far from predictable and in densely populated urban environments may even become volatile.

In rising to these challenges we see a beginning in two complementary avenues of inquiry. One directed to aspects of urban morphology and the professional planning and design processes that deliver it, which can enhance, rather than inhibit, the capacity of a local community to adapt its own space by self-organisation (Mehaffy, et al, 2010). If this can be achieved, then another avenue of inquiry, perhaps of a more socially oriented nature, must address the processes that will be required to ensure such self-organisation takes place as inclusively as possible and for the benefit of the many rather than the few (Simkins and Thwaites, 2008; Mathers, 2008). Reminiscent of Habraken's margins that define the indeterminate boundary where professional interventions and social forces meet, urban order here is reconceptualised as what happens when human habitation and material form interact, and not simply as a product of a professional's imagination imposed in finite form. This interaction need not imply that professional planners and designers should simply leave empty spaces, but it does imply the need for a different approach. This approach may usefully begin with recognition from within the professional fraternity that there are aspects of the built environment that must be understood in a looser and more indeterminate way. This recognition should take into account that the role of professionals in these aspects of the built environment may have to change from a type of creativity rooted in their own values, tastes and rationality, to another more facilitating type that allows more space and time for the territorial impulses and social activity of inhabitants to find expression.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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