The Terrain of Interculturalism:

A Reflection on the Potential of Urban Design for the Emergence of Intercultural Spaces

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ABSTRACT

Since the turn of the millennium, *interculturalism* has emerged as a new paradigm for cultural diversity after a growing dissatisfaction with multicultural frameworks of governance. Its most radical proposition is to open western epistemology to the active contribution of different cultures. Moreover, its focus on the daily life of minorities in western cities suggests a shift from multicultural approaches in planning to a closer analysis of urban spaces. Urban design, due to its intrinsic localism and tangible dimension, becomes the terrain to test interculturalism as a grounded phenomenon.

Building on literature from different disciplines, this paper attempts to grapple with the emergence of *intercultural spaces*. It does so by moving beyond a focus on urban and architectural form and aesthetics. More specifically, the argument extracted from the analysis of previous theoretical and empirical works on the subject is that a procedural interpretation of urban space would better assess and assist the engagement of cultural minorities. This approach allows for the definition of a preliminary conceptual framework gathering three pivotal aspects of intercultural spaces, which in turn would favor future developments on the topic.

INTRODUCTION

Since the turn of the millennium, we have witnessed growing dissatisfaction with multiculturalism as a framework of governance, at the same time that populism, right-wing nationalism and religious extremism were spreading in western societies.[1] Opposed reasons founded critiques of multiculturalism in political science, cultural and migration studies, from the poor inclusion of minorities in institutions to the crisis of national security. In reaction, *interculturalism* emerged as a new paradigm and perspective over cultural diversity and was rapidly wielded in both city policies and international agendas.[2] However, as in the case of critiques of multiculturalism, interculturalism has been evoked for visions of governance that are rather difficult to reconcile.[3] The most radical and unattended theoretical proposition, which orients this article, is to open western epistemology to the active contribution of other cultures, by focusing on what A. Amin calls "everyday encounters of difference".[4] Beyond divergent opinions, interculturalists' focus on local contact and dialogue among different, self-identified cultural groups suggests, for what concerns space-focused discipline, a shift from multicultural approaches in planning toward a

closer and more dynamic analysis of urban spaces. Contemporary urban design, given the intrinsic localism, but also the growing interdisciplinary character that scholars in the field highlight, becomes the terrain to test interculturalism as a grounded, everyday phenomenon.[5]

This paper begins with the following questions: even if defining the "intercultural city" continues to be a rather elusive attempt,[6] is it possible to track aspects framing the emergence of "intercultural spaces"? If so, what are the potentials of urban design as a theoretical body and research endeavour to unveil their emergence? As I will contend, the shift from "multicultural planning" to what we may frame—with a healthy level of skepticism—as "intercultural urban design", implies resistance to a spatial bias in defining urban spaces, without them losing their tangibility as subjects of study. Instead, a procedural description—one which is interested in the activities and strategies destabilizing existing frameworks for space (re)production—would better address the theoretical purposes founding interculturalism, and help to identify three aspects for a preliminary, but meaningful, framework portraying intercultural spaces. The argument and reflection proposed here are built on theoretical and empirical works on the topic that, given their origin in different disciplines and bodies of knowledge, will hopefully enable alternative perspectives and productive interactions in the future.

INTERCULTURALISM: A NEW PARADIGM FOR CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Born in the 1970s and still an object of debates worldwide, multiculturalism has been often framed as the most progressive paradigm for the inclusion of cultural diversity in western countries.[7] Among the most cited examples, Canada and Australia have formally built their immigration, education and cultural policies on the respect and integration of heterogeneous communities.[8] In the two countries, political agendas of accepting and valorizing multiple peoples within a single nation have been pursued to repair the colonialist foundations, whose effects still propagate in the present despite new attempts of reconciliation.[9] At the same time, multicultural coexistence has been, historically, a necessary compromise for the economic growth spurred by international immigration.

In spite of the official success of such openness in national policies, multiculturalism—and in particular its satisfaction with "acknowledging" difference—has been accused of achieving only

a partial integration of minorities and, mostly in the European countries that officially embraced this orientation, to only sweeten the hosts-guests divide favouring national groups.[10] Moreover, the tendency to describe and categorize (read "divide") minority communities from the standpoints of ethnicity, religion, and origin—which neither explores their internal nuances nor looks at their common social and political coalitions—has perpetuated, after critics, narrow interpretations of identities.[11] Given these premises, it comes with no surprise that interculturalism emerged as an alternative paradigm for diversity.

Different interpretations falling under the term "interculturalism" have been offered, within and beyond cultural studies. As first common aspects, all proponents seem to share the need for rethinking questions of national identity and citizenship. As Rojas and Torres Barderi argue in discussing Sweden's recent attempts at policies on cultural diversity, to move from a multicultural to an intercultural approach means "[...] dealing with the antiquated picture of who is considered to be Swedish", [12] and the same potentially apply to all western countries. While the recognition of cultural differences—already proposed by multiculturalism—remains at the foundations of an intercultural approach, the interpretation of cultures now fully acknowledges their growing hybridism caused by both transnationalism and local interactions.[13] Therefore, if we take ethnicity as an example—on which populists and right-wing parties continue to base their nationalist rhetoric worldwide—we see how interculturalism challenges western taxonomy and all attempts of defending "original" national identities.

Second—and a more important difference from multiculturalism—interculturalism suggests that processes of identity-making should begin with the *self-identification* of local communities. In this regard, interculturalism "[...] does not recognize cultural boundaries as fixed but as in a state of flux and remaking."[14] Given its interest for their continuous "becoming", interculturalism adds complexity to the definition of identities while reconnecting to a more profound definition of culture.[15] Overall, this adaptable process of self-identification should not be seen as an exercise that is an end in itself, but instead the starting point for communities' emancipation and empowering, with transformative effects across multiple realms: from education to politics, from legal rights to communication.

For researchers, this shift in perspective clearly implies intellectual flexibility and demands a continuous exercise of recording the loose boundaries of self-proclaimed groups, also depending on the specific scope of investigation. Moreover, in order to overcome the rigidity of multiculturalism, it implies embracing intersectionality as a critical research tool. In other words, when single aspects (such as "country of origin"), are selected to define groups, internal hierarchies relating to other factors (such as class and education), should be critically

considered.[16] The contradictory coexistence of inclusionary policies and growing socioeconomic disempowering of some of their recipients, also in the same cities that are commonly praised as multicultural models, offers a clear evidence for the need of intersectional analyses.[17] By learning from contributions in Critical Geography that explore the relationships between gender, sexual orientation, class and ethnicity, interculturalism-inspired studies can meaningfully explain the contextual subordination and dispossession of specific minorities.[18]

The same approach would facilitate the understanding of extra-territorial networks and connections of those groups, and shed light on their position in society more broadly. However, in order to grapple with the complexity of identity-formation and empowering, interculturalism also demands a shift of focus from the national to the local level,[19] where the exchange and relationship between identities can be effectively assessed.[20] In order to move beyond multicultural thinking, interculturalists stress that a local perspective reveals the ways through which communities engage, and these can be very different depending on the case: from mutual support to voluntary indifference (the "parallel lives" effect discussed by T. Cantle),[21] from pacific coexistence to episodes of conflict.[22] Perhaps, the acceptance of conflict, not to be treated just as distortion from "normality"—but rather as a symptom of need for deeper social transformation—is a major aspect distinguishing interculturalism from other diversity-focused approaches, as it implies a departure from the reconciling attempts of "common good" as we found them in formulations of deliberative democracy.[23]

Despite the four common points highlighted above, orientating normative responses to intercultural relations has also meant internal divergences among proponents of interculturalism. On the one hand, we find the use of the term, mostly in cultural studies, as a synonym of "post-multiculturalism": an attempt to reach "community cohesion" through the implementation of social capital benefitting more groups at the same time.[24] On the other hand, some contributions in critical geography prefer adhering to C. Mouffe's formulation of "agonistic pluralism" to better frame intercultural divergences and question the possibility for alternatives.[25] Whilst conservative elitism would dismiss this second perspective as an anarchist push towards chaos and unrest, Ash Amin well articulates its potentials:

> In a democratic multiethnic society, if community cohesion remains elusive, the key challenge is to strike a balance between cultural autonomy and social solidarity, so that the former does not lapse into separatist and essentialised identities and so that the latter does not slide into minority cultural assimilation and Western conformity.[26]

This perspective seems to better adapt to the volatile and complex nature of identity formation,

and to the empowering of dispossessed individuals through subcultural coalitions. In addition, it offers a robust alternative to tranquillizing intentions for universal "common good" that run the risk of reinforcing the passive tolerance of inequality as multicultural frameworks already did. As the next section will show, this has important theoretical and practical implications for planning and other space-focused disciplines, which are presently urged to rethink their epistemological foundations in engaging with the growing cultural diversity of western cities.

THE CONFINED NATURE OF MULTICULTURAL PLANNING

Internationally, but mostly in North America, planning theory has embraced multiculturalism since its consolidation as a paradigm of governance. From C. Fischer's "subcultural theory"[27] to M. Burayidi's *Urban Planning in a Multicultural Society*[28] and M. Qadeer's *Multicultural Cities*,[29] growing multiethnic urban contexts have been increasingly studied and used as positive examples for the future orientation of planning practice. These works abandon the universal intentions of modernism to propose sensibility in accommodating and representing diversity, two core values of multiculturalism. There is a particular concern over the geography and integration of minorities, which census-based data—informing about employment ratio, income level and housing tenure—and existing policies of inclusion in public institutions are supposed to describe.[30] Such quantitative analyses privilege ethnicity, country of origin, and immigration status as rigid categories over more detailed intersectional approaches describing coalitions and politically engaged groups.

After studying multi-ethnic urban areas, some scholars have dismissed claims for a radical reconsideration of planning epistemology to deal with diversity, as data confirmed positive trends in the complex processes of minorities' inclusion.[31] In particular, frameworks from multicultural cities, in their argument, already include inclusionary policies that enable multiple ways of cultural expression and provide services at the community level, such as language classes. Additionally, an evolving discourse over spatial segregation is often used as a factor for these positive claims: in describing ethnic concentration in Canadian cities, there is a growing understanding of ethnic enclaves as voluntary socio-spatial formations, and as contexts for immigrants' mutual support in adapting to the host society.[32] Moreover, when we narrow the focus on land use, current literature uses newly introduced functions as examples of successful accommodation: as an example, through religious buildings and ethnic malls, "ethno-cultural diversity is expressed in the physical form of the city".[33]

My objective is not to dismiss the importance of these achievements, or the effectiveness of these measures for the inclusion of diversity. Similarly, I do not aim to discuss the benefits and disadvantages of spatial segregation, as I am convinced that only detailed and contextual analyses can attest to them. However, in building on critical intercultural thinking, I contend that until the discourse around difference is left at the planning level, and based on western epistemology as the discipline inherited it from the social sciences, the radical objective of intercultural dialogue cannot be met. First, because multicultural planning theory proposes to assess inclusion without real feedback from the ground, while it frames cultural identities in rather static terms. Second, because accommodation and representation in land use—as a direct translation from multicultural policies—still do not assure the effective engagement of communities in orienting the transformation of urban space outside localized territories.

Certainly, interculturalism needs to be framed by overarching human rights promoting equal opportunities, which encompass different identities to promote common social, environmental, ecological and economic justice.[34] In this sense, policies can certainly help concretize transversal social inclusion. However, a nuanced approach towards difference poses a clear challenge to policies both in cases they are universal and specifically addressed to certain groups. In particular, it has been suggested that their prescribing character complicates responsiveness toward contextual dimensions and transitional dynamics.[35] Whereas multicultural planning can help in the challenge of active diversity inclusion, its full achievement would require a integration of existing knowldge and revision of current methods. At the end of the century, a cultural turn in the discipline started this journey.

FROM PLANNING FOR DIVERSITY TO PLANNING DIFFERENTLY

Leonie Sandercock offered one of the most radical contributions to planning theory, research methods, and practice addressing the question of difference. In *Towards Cosmopolis: Planning for Multicultural Cities* and the sequel *Cosmopolis II: Mongrel Cities of the 21st century*[36] the author moves from a critique of modernism (built on the legacies of J. Friedman, D. Schön and J. Forester, as well as feminist and postcolonial scholars) to propose a radical "epistemology of multiplicity", whose pillars are *local knowledge and experience, dialogue, symbolism, contemplation* and *action planning*.[37] This perspective introduces us to a very different understanding of diversity in planning, at least compared to more abstract contributions on multiculturalism. Sandercock's vision has been criticized for being somehow naïve in the purpose of enhancing "togetherness in difference",[38] a tendency which aligns with ones for "community cohesion" professed by some post-multicultural cultural scholars. Similarly, *hybridism* (of subjects, practices, processes and forms of knowledge), a core concept of Sandercock's theory, preserves the risk of homogenizing differences with only a moderate transformation of urban practices. However, for the purpose of this paper, her legacy is particularly inspirational for the active

engagement of minorities in knowledge-production and decision-making concerning urban spaces and territories: their empowering is a necessity to properly enhance multiple right(s) to the city and to establish the terrain for their negotiation.[39]

Before outlining the implication of this legacy for practice, it is important to briefly frame Sandercock's work within the ongoing debate around the restructuring of planning education. Building on the work of two active proponents of interculturalism such as P. Wood and C. Landry,[40] J. Agyeman and J. Erickson recently proposed the integration of "cultural competency" into the curricula of planning schools.[41] The objective is to form students toward *awareness/beliefs*, *knowledge*, *skills* and *behaviours/professional practice* and enable them to study and operate in contexts with increasing cultural diversity, and of unbalanced power distribution among groups. An intercultural perspective helps future planners to build dialogue between communities and flexibly adapt to local circumstances so to discern, critically question and elaborate an answer to competitive claims. As such, future professionals are asked to move beyond the *mediation* of different points of view—a requirement of any initiative of community consultation—to understand their cultural bias, an aspect that resonates well with Sandercock's argument for alternative ways of learning.

Building cultural competency, and testing it, is way more demanding than cross-cultural experiences, where experts from different contexts and backgrounds collaborate in time-restricted projects abroad. More radically, intercultural "encounters" imply uncomfortable displacements in the tangible complexity of multicultural environments. There, competing intentions over space interconnect different communities in physical, but often transitory way. As such, the local dimension of the encounter poses a challenge to the comprehensive nature of policy frameworks—one of the first tasks of planners—but also offers experimental opportunities. In narrowing the scale of the operation and engaging with, borrowing again from Amin, the everyday life of "microcultures",[42] the project proposed by Sandercock requires the evasion of planning in the theoretical and professional terrain of urban design.

SHIFTING FOCUS, NEW SENSIBILITIES:
URBAN DESIGN AS A TERRAIN FOR
INTERCULTURALISM

In spite of different perspectives, there is a general agreement that contemporary urban design is something quite different from the "glorious" early years of its North American foundation, when "the pioneers" (as E. Birch called them),[43] centered their theoretical contribution on the "good city" as a comprehensively designed space and as a setting where to achieve broader social objectives. Architects and planners in the 1950s and 1960s wanted urban design to be a rather autonomous discipline, specifically confined by the task of bridging plans and

architectural projects.[44] In North America, urban designers have historically operated in a rather vast array of cases, from "slums" clearances to suburban developments, from the spatial design of neighbourhood to the construction of new Central Business Districts. However, what J. Lang would categorize as "total" urban design, in order to describe such large-scale interventions[45]—and D. Harvey would generally blame as examples of "spatial fix" in his postmodern critique—[46] is today a rather marginal way through which urban design happens. In fact, what I propose to look as "endeavor" concerning the urban has transitioned, similar to planning, toward different paradigms, sensibilities and scales.

In particular, M. Biddulph clarified that the ever-changing qualitative dimension of urban spaces dismisses an explanation and implementation of urban design from a social science perspective, in other words, one through binary relations between analysis and solutions.[47] Obviously, given its focus on the physicality of built forms, connections and access to space, "measuring" physical elements remains a necessary analytical and communicative tool for space reproduction. However, "thinking for" and not just "about" urban design[48] also implies a more open-ended interrelation between theory and the complexity of practice, one based on the acknowledgment of uncertainty and evolving contextual conditions. Contemporary urban design hence promotes the continuous recording of urban environments, critically questions their frameworks, acknowledges the limits of theoretical interpretation and promotes the retesting of discerned concepts. Similar to the intercultural city, contemporary urban design is a constantly on-going project, and this fact has radical implications for the purpose of understanding spaces of difference.

But before exploring the spatial dimension of interculturalism, it is important to relate Biddulph's aim for "ideas about procedures and processes for involving people or embracing vested interests"[49] to what R.V. George had already proposed as a "procedural explanation" of urban design.[50] In fact, while George confirms the intermediate scale of the field between architecture and planning—as it was at its modern incipit—in framing urban design as a "second-order endeavor", he also suggests stepping back from an evaluation of its final "products". Instead, the focus should rather be on the processes used to achieve them, which often reveal "turbulent decision environments" and, therefore, should seek strategies open to future contamination. In acknowledging this precariousness in the field, some scholars and practitioners have seen a "dead end".[51] However, I contend that this epistemological shift, from outcomes to processes, relocates urban design at a new meaningful nexus between space production and cultural encounters. This happens for, at least, three key factors.

The first is urban design's focus on the *local scale*, simply put from the plot to the urban systems that are potentially accessible to residents in their

everyday life (e.g. neighborhoods, trails, corridors). In studying an Australian suburb changed by new Asian immigration, A. Wise uses the concept of "place-sharing multiculturalism" to highlight how "[...] it is the very fact of locality that provides the possibility for non-state, neighbourhood relations of care".[52] Proponents of "everyday urbanism" had already suggested a similar focus in advocating for the close study of communities' real life and the soft transformations of the public realm after new spatial norms.[53] However, it is unfortunate that, since their contribution, there has been a tendency to portray communities' intervention on urban space as a rather marginal fact, in dialectical opposition to official planning, or happening mostly in "loose" spaces.[54] While this tendency is reasonable for a critique of planning as an authoritarian gesture, it nonetheless perpetuates—as multiculturalism does—the subordination and fragmentation of minorities as agents of change. By contrast, the local scale, being an aspect of urban design from a historical perspective, theoretically offers many more opportunities than spatial interstices for "countercultures". Indeed, a focus on localities should not suggest the spatial confinement of cultural groups, as terms like "enclaves" do. By contrast, as A. Madanipour argues in elaborating on the concept of "inclusive urbanism" after assemblage theory, focused analyses should question physical boundaries (as dictated by, for example, built form and infrastructure), and look at the horizontal relations feeding urban transformation.[55] Therefore, a grounded perspective on difference can still be open to extensive and dynamic interconnections.

Second, as the previous perspectives suggest, urban design as a *participatory event* promotes consultations, workshops, *charrettes*, collaborative experiences where a variety of stakeholders can orient decision-making on familiar spaces. Obviously, the focus on consultations has been a pillar of the cultural turn of urban planning, but information sessions where experts interface with communities within a strict project timeline do not allow, per se, for a radical shift in rethinking the production of everyday spaces.[56] Differently, the process that Biddulph and George have in mind addresses alternative ways of intending consultation.[57] In this regard, thanks to the pragmatism that urban design embodies, interculturalism can emerge in the active contribution of cultural groups when they are given room in rewriting the *rules* sustaining space production. J. Mack precisely clarifies on this point by showing that, in the case of Syriac immigrants in Sweden, "as newcomers interact with the restrictive urban landscapes and regimes to which they arrive [...] they also initiate new sites of negotiation over the future of cities and of nation-states."[58] Participation, when used for rewriting of norms that are taken for granted, retains a much larger potential in the short and long term.

Finally, a third element justifying the match between contemporary urban design and interculturalism is a common attention for *adaptability*. In particular,

the acknowledgment of uncertainty and unpredictability as unavoidable components for space reproduction/organization theoretically keeps the door open for further elaboration, appropriation and contamination by local residents. Contributions on the concept of "experimentalism" confirm how urban planning still struggles to reach this goal.[59] Differently, in contemporary urban design, adaptability is supposed to inform the entire design process. It operates in the adjustment to contextual factors, in recalibrating strategies after the disruptive insurgence of unforeseen events, and in suggesting solutions that are "easy" to be reinterpreted without complicating long-term orientations.[60] This last aspect emphasizes the respect of *time* when reflecting on space, and welcomes the intercultural perspective over identities as temporary assemblages that are continuously rewritten via autonomous engagement of individuals.

Therefore, urban design as a *local*, *participatory* and *adaptable* endeavour can meaningfully work as terrain for interculturalism to unfold. However, what was discussed above also suggested that, from such a perspective, intercultural spaces transcend a purely formal definition, notwithstanding their tangibility. As a result, in order to track them, we are compelled to stand "one step before" their physical concretization, and resist the pitfalls of visual and sensorial urban experience.

INTERCULTURAL SPACES BEYOND A SPATIAL BIAS

I propose to deconstruct a form-based reading of intercultural spaces by building on C. Rishbeth's work on *inclusive landscapes*, for even though the author focuses on landscape architecture as a medium for minorities' integration in British cities, her framework applies to urban design as well.[61] Rishbeth highlights the shortcomings of understanding diversity through what she calls *symbolic references*. Using the example of a public garden in Birmingham Chinatown—where oriental statues, signage and ornamental apparatus were introduced in a contested project of retrofitting—she makes clear how the "[...] use of ethnic forms can portray a caricature of a complex reality".[62] As scholars have pointed out—but not all proponents of multicultural planning would agree on—, the entrapment of culture into form can lead to pure commodification and tourism-oriented consumption.[63] The condition that Rishbeth describes can be easily transposed in urban design terms, specifically in the cases where the integration of diversity is understood through "exotic" formal alternatives in replacing of "standard" solutions. My aim is not to defend standardization in space production as operational method, but to question discourses on cultural integration in urban space that mainly focus on the visual representation of culture. R. King proposes a similar perspective when, in elaborating on the emancipatory nature of deconstructive architecture and urbanism, she argues for "abandoning the view" in assessing and producing design.[64]

Rishbeth continues her analysis by showing the *experiential dimension* of diversity via the multi-sensorial engagement of visitors of a botanic garden, where exotic plants produce a "heterotopian" effect and enhance a "pluralistic viewpoint".[65] However, when translated in urban design terms, also such an active perception seems to hardly meet, per se, the expectations of dialogue, exchange and political engagement at the foundation of intercultural living. Indeed, an array of spaces in western multi-ethnic cities—from housing developments based on foreign typologies to religious buildings, from small-scale commercial activities to ethnic malls—enable the experience of difference on an everyday base. Do these moments also enable meaningful, money-free interactions among a variety of cultural actors? Are people in these spaces encouraged to debate on pressing societal issues, to freely express their opinions and to form coalitions?

These open questions suggest that *facilities provision*, the last strategy illustrated by Rishbeth to enhance intercultural contact would be a more rewarding option.[66] Given their open and collective character, facilities can generate spaces of encounter and dialogue, mostly in cases where activities include citizens' voluntary engagement. Attention to the programmatic dimension, beyond symbols and forms, leads us toward the question of freedom to access and move through space.[67] Engaging with the wide debate on the privatization of public space, which interconnects several disciplines, would lead us out of focus. For our purpose, sufficient is to reaffirm the potential of transversal accessibility and contact that publicness encourages. However, there is also a need to critically question the binary distinction between public and private spheres. Works in multicultural planning literature avoid doing this when they dialectically oppose, in describing successful situations, "single identities" to "common ground". The former is accepted, occasionally celebrated, but normally relegated to the domestic sphere. By contrast, the latter is positively invoked to consolidate a unitary vision for public space.[68]

This is not to dismiss positions from "intercultural planning", as P. Wood's, which focuses on the creative opportunities offered by "open, safe, attractive" public spaces, mostly when these show an intersection of micro-economies and ecologies beyond design.[69] However, the clear-cut distinction between private and public realms remains highly unsatisfactory for more radical purposes of interculturalism. In particular, intercultural exchanges and dialogues, as invoked, problematize land use categories and entitlement. Instead, intercultural encounters seem rather to unfold in a more fluid Lefebvrian "space of practice" that transgresses formal labels and boundaries.[70] This is reflected in a recent comparative study of residents' social behaviour in three Los Angeles multiethnic neighbourhoods.[71] In studying several ethnic groups living there, F. Chan describes the three living environments as continuums of "public-parochial realms", hence suggesting the limitations of bounding intercultural relationships

from a property standpoint. In interacting across different realms, different cultural groups affirm their identity while they challenge land regimes.

As a result, moving beyond a sensorial experience of diversity, and the constraints of the public/private divide, preserves us from a spatial bias in studying intercultural spaces, in other words, from considering them as objects that professionals in space-focused disciplines can study from a purely formal perspective and as such directly reproduce in design. Instead, and more productively, I contend, the considerations above readdress our focus toward the unfolding of interculturalism in time. Similar to "subaltern spaces" as conceptualized by A. Roy,[72] intercultural spaces emerge in the effective opportunities that self-defined cultural groups have to form coalitions, speak and inform the reassembling of the urban. From this awareness, it is possible to track three preliminary aspects from existing scholarly works.

ORDINARY, EXTRA-IDENTITARIAN
AND CONTESTED:
A FRAMEWORK FOR UNDERSTANDING
INTERCULTURAL SPACES IN URBAN
DESIGN TERMS

Ordinary

A. Amin suggested that intercultural spaces unfold when "prosaic negotiations are compulsory".[73] If this is true, our focus should primarily turn toward urban open spaces, beyond and across their distinction between private and public realms. M. Balbo suggests a similar need, by arguing that "the presence of different cultures demands a redefinition of what *collective* space is" (my italics).[74] The search for collectivity implies that urban design analysis should tie together open urban spaces (e.g. streets and squares, but also urban fields, infrastructural corridors, gardens, and other more or less accessible private and public outdoors) to daily shared destinations, what Amin calls "micropublics": workplaces, schools, colleges, youth centres, sports clubs, and other spaces of collective associations.[75] These spatial stretches allow communities to enter in contact by satisfying daily needs (as employment and mandatory education), while they also fulfill emancipatory social, intellectual and physical objectives. Therefore, we can argue that intercultural spaces are foremost *ordinary*, always include a collective vocation and are accessible beyond differences. Amin's description in programmatic terms, beyond formal aspects, addresses the relevance of communities' demands and prioritizes planning/design strategies enhancing and correcting the offer of facilities. As such, his view resonates with Rishbeth's third expression of inclusive landscapes.[76]

Moreover, Amin's functional preoccupations suggest that, if human practices have primacy in the emergence of intercultural spaces, there exists a challenge to analyses that stick to the prescriptive character of land use zoning. In fact, activities in

urban environments can contradict authorized uses and slowly reformulate social norms, temporarily or in the long term, and across more or less extensive geographies. Therefore, investigating everyday interculturalism requires a critical perspective over land regulation, and to call into question, as post-structuralist geographers do, conventional relations between signifiers (in our case buildings or places, from typology to materiality) and signifieds (as officially asigned uses and meanings).[77]

Extra-identitarian

Two clear consequences of suspending taken-for-granted associations between spaces and meanings are openness and adaptability towards unpredictable and multiple interpretations. In studying the complex relationships existing among different cultural communities in a Sydney suburb, A. Wise finds that the most proactive moments of dialogue, which she interestingly frames as instances of "micro-moments of hope", happens in the temporary event of a fair in a suburban town hall, where mutually indifferent groups begin positive interactions.[78] This episode relates to Amin's second category of intercultural spaces: the ones that are *transitory*, in other words, that unfold in people's lives exceptionally and in a "neutral" setting (e.g. youth leisure spaces, urban murals, legislative theatre), almost counterbalancing ordinariness.[79] However, what interests Wise the most, beyond temporality and the positive outcome of encounters, is the "non-ethno-specificity" of their setting: an anonymous location, with neither formal interest nor symbolic connection with any culture, can enable unpredictable connections between previously non-interacting groups.[80] Similar to what works on queer space suggest, interculturalism emerges in the neutrality of anonymous environments, instead of objectifying in settings with explicit reference to specific identities.[81]

This lesson is critical for urban designers, as it challenges them to provide room for identities' self-affirmation, their autonomous interaction and even the possible dissipation of their boundaries with time. The paradox is that "neutrality" has been a clear element of critique against the modern movement's blindness toward differences,[82] so that new strategies for alternative uses should not bring us back to limited discourses on formal arrangements (i.e. the fashion for space "customization"). An alternative approach is possible: one that, after the contributions from urban design theory mentioned above, frames adaptability as a procedural achievement where the rules sustaining space production/organization are affected by different perspectives, and not just their resulting products. The focus is on the entire spectrum, from decision-making to physical and emotional experience. This leads us towards a third critical aspect of intercultural spaces.

Contested

Questioning the relation between space and meaning (or sign and signifier) can also generate contested circumstances, recalling what L. Bennet and A. Crawley Jackson describe as a "difficult and provocative conversation rather than consultation and consensus".[83] In studying the 1990s disputes over building bylaws in a white, upper class, early-20th-century suburb in Vancouver "invaded" by new wealthy immigrants from Hong Kong, K. Mitchell offers a case in point.[84] The "six long agonizing public hearings" organized to control dwelling massing and aesthetics in the neighbourhood—a primary concern of urban designers—became, *in their own,* the space where social norms were rewritten in development guidelines. In the conflict between new immigrants and local residents, "the understanding of what constituted the community good became a major source of contestation".[85] At the same time that the landscape is rewritten, the author's account shows the crisis of defining identities on purely ethnic lines, where Hong Kong immigrants ally with local developers to build their argument for larger dwellings on the recovery of "lost" Canadian values such as "family", "respect for the elderly" and "communal closeness".[86]

The hybridism basing intercultural spaces-as-processes is confirmed by J. Mack's historical investigation of the transformation of Södertälje, a postwar satellite town in Stockholm where Syriac refugees have immigrated since the late 1960s.[87] The construction of a Catholic church in a largely Protestant context, along with new sports facilities and commercial activities in previously mono-functional areas are for the author the material expressions of an alternative "urban design from below". Beyond the effective realizations, the most critical aspect that Mack stresses is that the community negotiation with local institutions—the planning department via building applications in particular—transformed existing praxis. Immigrants did not limit their intervention in the landscape to insurgent episodes, outside official channels, but challenged local zoning and hybridized established processes for the production of ordinary spaces.

Therefore, the mentioned contributions clarify that, for interculturalism to materialize, the issue is not the simplistic accommodation of "diversity" by considering the opinion of communities' spokespersons in decision-making, with which proponents of multicultural planning would probably be satisfied. Instead, the focus should now be on the actual reconsideration of norms and existing apparatuses orienting the settings of everyday life. From the disjunction between established forms and meanings, intercultural spaces as *ordinary, extra-identitarian* and/or *contested* episodes trespass spatial confinement and unfold in the temporality of the urban.

CONCLUSION

The intercultural city cannot be positively described as a static spatial entity, nor can it be exclusively framed in local policies beyond overarching principles of social justice and urban equity, which multicultural models already address. However, while the majority of culture-focused frameworks of governance is rather satisfied with conciliatory approaches on the base of established "common ground" and "social cohesion", interculturalism—given its focus on "local contact"—theoretically promises more emancipatory outcomes for minorities. In fact, communities' active engagement on the ground, for the transformation of both urban space and the processes orienting it, has a clear political dimension and is inscribed in a larger project of postcolonial reconsideration of western culture.

Building on the cultural turn of planning theory, I proposed a shift into urban design as a more fertile theoretical and practical terrain for the concretization of interculturalism in urban space. Considering the discipline's intrinsic *local* focus, *participatory* attitude and interest for *adaptable* strategies, minorities' engagement can be self-rewarding in the long term, and have a direct impact on their everyday life. However, researchers and practitioners in the field who organize and coordinate processes/projects with cultural communities are also encouraged to overcome what I framed as a "spatial bias", meaning the reification of culture into superficial aesthetics and simulative multi-sensorial experiences. Instead, after relevant theoretical and empirical works on the topic, I suggested that *ordinary, extra-identitarian* and *contested* are three more productive aspects for a preliminary research framework, and that their awareness would help to track the insurgence of intercultural spaces. These three aspects do not establish separated subcategories, but overlap with different intensities depending on the context and episode of study. The fact that they lack a direct spatial translation should not discourage researchers in the field, but help them consider alternative configurations that variably stretch in geographic terms, also depending on the social relations sustaining them and their temporalities, as processes.

In conclusion, future contributions are needed to extend and populate with examples of this preliminary framework and perspective, as well as to contradict and reorient them from grounded evidence. Also, new works may better systematize the research methods that allow contributors to document the concretization of interculturalism in urban design terms. Overall, my final hope is that, with growing academic and professional interest on the topic, a more nuanced theoretical and strategical engagement with the spaces of difference will be promoted, and that previously unheard voices will be included to orient the future of the urban.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

ENDNOTES

01. Born as a diversity-focused paradigm in the 1970s, multiculturalism (MC) aimed to include minorities into western societies by respecting their cultural identity. However, intercultural tensions have escalated since the turn of the century, and oriented social discourses toward the difficult reconciliation of western and Islamic cultures. Societal perception influenced the evolution of the post-9/11 debate around MC in political science, cultural studies, immigration studies and human geography. As simplified synthesis, the following four positions can be identified: a long-term progressive proponent of MC such as T. Madood proposes "nationalist" MC to reinforce the responsibility of national states in promoting, through targeted policies, the pacific integration of minorities into majoritarian cultures. A liberal proponent such as W. Kymlicka defends MC's achievements for the self-determination of sub-state national minorities and indigenous communities. On the other hand, he suggests a "prudential and moral risk involved" in the integration of international immigrants. MC's limited results in the integration of immigrants led some former social-democrats supporters, such as T. Cantle and R. Zapata-Barrero, to see its failure. As an alternative, they advocate for a shift into a "post-multicultural" framework, also referred to as interculturalism. Beyond internal difference, these authors stress the need for recentring the discourse on minorities' integration from accommodation to "social cohesion" and common social capital building. Finally, critical leftists scholars such as A. Amin and S. Žižek continue to condemn both multiculturalism's limited focus on state-led diversity inclusion, as well as new positivist "post" instances which, in their view do not challenge nationalist ideologies for their focus on the "management" instead of self-emancipation of diversity. For an updated, but partial, collection of different perspectives, see: Meer, Nasar, Tariq Modood, and Ricard Zapata-Barrero, eds. *Multiculturalism and Interculturalism: Debating the Dividing Lines.* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2018. Another work comparing the two main paradigms of multiculturalism and interculturalism is: Kastoryano R. "Multiculturalism and Interculturalism: Redefining Nationhood and Solidarity." *Comparative Migration Studies* 6, no. 1 (2018): 6–17.

02. For a collection of essays comparing the application of intercultural city policies, see: White, Bob W., (ed.) *Intercultural Cities: Policy and Practice for a New Era.* Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018.

03. As an example, T. Modood exposes the theoretical mismatch between Bouchard and Taylor (2015) majority-minority duality in Quebec interculturalism (which somehow replicates multicultural categorization but adds internal hierarchy) and Zapata-Barrero's "superdiversity" and transnationalism (which problematize grouping in absolute term). Indeed, the Quebecois version of interculturalism is evoked more as a compromise between Canadian "classic" multiculturalism and assimilationist tendencies catering the claims of local Francophone nationalism.

04. Ash Amin, "Land of Strangers." *Identities 20*, no. 1 (2013): 1–8. For the purpose of this article, "interculturalism" is explored outside the policy level discussed by "post-multiculturalist" scholars from political sciences, cultural studies and migration studies. Even if theoretical elements may occasionally overlap, the specific focus is on the theoretical value of the paradigm for minorities' agency in the production and organization of urban space.

05. In the contemporary debate around urban design, there is no final consensus on a comprehensive definition for the field. However, scholars commonly acknowledge the need to move beyond the scope of "designing" in urban settings— as form-based exercise generally performed by professionals with education in planning, architecture and landscape architecture—for the sake of a multi-scalar and interdisciplinary epistemology over urban processes. As editors of one of the most comprehensive theoretical investigations on the field, T. Banerjee and A. Loukaitou-Sideris highlight urban design's interfacing and engaging with policy aspects such as "[...] multiculturalism, healthy cities, environmental justice, economic development, climate change, energy conservation, protection of natural environments, sustainable development, community livability, and the like". This paper builds on this consideration to question how the field of contemporary urban design can help recording interculturalism as grounded emergence. See: Banerjee, Tribid and Anastasia Loukaitou-Sideris, "Introduction— urban design: roots, influences, and trends". In Banerjee, Tridib and Anastasia Loukaitou-Sideris (ed.), *Companion to Urban Design* (New York; London: Routledge, 2011), 1-6.

06. Giovanna Marconi, "Introduction. The intercultural City: Exploring an Elusive Idea" in *The intercultural City: Migration, Minorities and the Management of Diversity*, ed. Giovanna Marconi and Elena Ostanel (London: I. B. Tauris, 2016), 1-24.

07. Stephen Castles and Mark J. Miller, *The age of Migration*, (New York: The Guilford Press, 2nd ed., 1998).

08. Among several contributions, see: Shibau Guo and Lloyd L. Wong, *Revisiting multiculturalism in Canada: theories, policies and debates* (Rotterdam; Boston: Sense Pub., 2015); Michael G. Clyne and James Jupp for the Academy of Social Sciences in Australia, *Multiculturalism and Integration: A Harmonious Relationship* (Acton: ANU E Press, 2011).

09. See: Michelle Daigle, "The spectacle of reconciliation: On (the) unsettling responsibilities to Indigenous peoples", *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space,* (January 2019): 703-721.

10. As examples of critiques, see: Alain G. Gagnon, *Minority nations in the age of uncertainty: new paths to national emancipation and empowerment* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014); Giovanna Marconi, "Introduction. The intercultural City: Exploring an Elusive Idea".

11. On the need for shifting from rigid categories toward flexible and hybrid cultural assemblages, see: Ricard Zapata-Barrero. "Interculturalism in the Post-Multicultural Debate: A Defence." *Comparative Migration Studies 5*, no. 1 (2017): 1–23.

12. See: Helena Rojas and Daniel de Torres Barderi, "Botkyrka: from multiculturalism to interculturalism", in *Intercultural Cities*, ed. Bob W. White (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 165.

13. See: Ricard Zapata-Barrero, "Interculturalism in the Post-Multicultural Debate: A Defence." Comparative Migration Studies 5, no. 1 (2017): 14–36.

14. Bianchini, Franco "A crisis in urban creativity? Reflections on the cultural impacts of globalization, and on the potential of urban cultural policies." Conference paper presented at *The Age of the City: the Challenges for Creative Cites* (Seoul, 7-10 February 2004). Retrieved from: http://www.artfactories.net/A-Crisis-in-Urban-Creativity.html

15. Among the several definitions proposed for "culture", "The ideas, customs, and social behaviour of a particular people, society, or social group" (Oxford Lexico Dictionary, 2019: https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/culture) and "The customs, civilizations, achievements of a particular time or people" (Allen, Robert Edward (ed.), *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English*, 1990 - 8th edition) are, when combined, particularly successful for our purposes in suggesting both the material reflection of culture and its adaptation in time.

16. As an example of an ethnographic study "discovering" the complexity of internal power structures and subgrouping in immigrants from the same country and now residing in the same place, see: Ghosh, Sutama. "Everyday Lives in Vertical Neighbourhoods: Exploring Bangladeshi Residential Spaces in Toronto's Inner Suburbs." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 38, no. 6 (2014): 2008-24.

17. Scholars in urban studies show a strong relationship between housing unaffordability, income levels, ethnicity and immigration status in multicultural Canada. For a comparative portrayal of Canadian cities, see: Daniel Hiebert (main author), *The housing situation and needs of recent immigrants in*

Vancouver CMAs: an overview (prepared for Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation: December 2005). For a more detailed analysis on Toronto: David J. Hulchanski, *The three cities within Toronto: Income polarization among Toronto's neighbourhoods, 1970-2000* (Toronto: Centre for Urban and Community Studies, University of Toronto, CUCS Research Bulletin 41: 2010).

18. Among several contributions in critical geography proposing an intersection approach, see: Kimberle Crenshaw "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color", *Stanford Law Review* 43, no. 6 (July 1991): 1241-1299; Andrea Smith, "Queer Theory and Native Studies: The Heteronormativity of Settler Colonialism", *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 16, no. 1-2 (2010): 42-68; Sharlene Mollett and Caroline Faria, "The spatialities of intersectional thinking: fashioning feminist geographic futures", *Gender, Place and Culture* 25, no. 4 (April 2018): 565-577.

19. The intercultural emphasis on the local scale and everydayness of minorities have been fully acknowledged as a distinctive aspect of interculturalism in the present debate on cultural diversity even by its detractors. See, for example: Tariq Modood, "Must Interculturalists Misrepresent Multiculturalism?" *Comparative Migration Studies* 5 (1) (2017): 1–17; Riva Kastoryano, "Multiculturalism and Interculturalism: Redefining Nationhood and Solidarity." *Comparative Migration Studies* 6, no. 1 (2018): 6–17.

20. See: Ash Amin, "Ethnicity and the multicultural city: living with diversity", *Environ Plan A* 34 (June 2002): 959-80; Marcello Balbo, "Contemporary Urban Space and the Intercultural City" in *The intercultural City: Migration, Minorities and the Management of Diversity*, ed. Giovanna Marconi and Elena Ostanel.

21. See: Ted Cantle, *Interculturalism: the new era of cohesion and diversity* (Basingstoke; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).

22. It is not by chance that discourses around the "intercultural city" emerged at the turn of the century, in the aftermath of social tensions in three northern British cities where economic recession and the parallel rooted subordination of immigrant communities led to oppositions along ethnic lines. As a compendium of new procedures in planning to respond to these events from a more grounded perspective, see: Comedia & Academy for Sustainable Communities, *Planning and engaging with intercultural communities: building the knowledge and skill base* (2006). For a conciliatory theoretical approach toward the question of diversity after the British Riots, see: Phil Wood and Charles Landry, *The Intercultural City: Planning for Diversity Advantage* (London and Sterling: Earthscan, 2008)

23. Adherence to principles of "deliberative democracy" is shared by liberal thinkers in both multiculturalism and interculturalism debates. As an example, for multiculturalism, see: Andrew M. Robinson, *Multiculturalism and the Foundations of Meaningful Life: Reconciling Autonomy, Identity, and Community* (Vancouver; Toronto: UBC Press, 2007).

24. In response to the 2001 riots in England, Home Office established an interdisciplinary research groups led by Ted Cantle. Its mandate was to analyze the social and economic factors that favoured the events and to outline a series of recommendations for future prevention. The result was: Home Office, *Building Cohesive Communities: A Report of the Ministerial Group on Public Order and Community Cohesion* (self-published, 2001).

25. See: Chantal Mouffe, "Deliberative Democracy or Agonistic Pluralism?", *Social Research* 66, no. 3 (Fall 1999): 745-758.

26. Amin, "Ethnicity and the multicultural city: living with diversity", 974.

27. See: Claude S. Fischer, "The Subcultural Theory of Urbanism: A Twentieth-Year Assessment", *American Journal of Sociology* 101, no. 3 (November 1995): 543-577. In his seminal work, Fischer defines subculture as "a large set of people who share a defining trait, associate with one another, are members of institutions associated with their defining trait, adhere to a distinct set of values, share a set of cultural tool" (544).

28. See: Michael A. Burayidi, *Urban Planning in a Multicultural Society* (Westport: Praeger, 2000).

29. See: Mohammad A. Qadeer, *Multicultural Cities: Toronto, New York and Los Angeles* (Toronto; Buffalo; London: University of Toronto Press, 2016). Qadeer builds on Fischer notion of "subculture" to study – manly through quantitative data – the integration and distribution of minorities in Los Angeles, New York and Toronto. He frames the three cities as "overarching unity both organizational and cultural" in spite of their uneven geographies. For a counterargument on Toronto, see: Roger Keil and Jean-Paul D Addie. "'It's Not Going to Be Suburban, It's Going to Be All Urban': Assembling Post-Suburbia in the Toronto and Chicago Regions." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 39, no. 5 (2015): 892–911.

30. Qadeer, *Multicultural Cities: Toronto, New York and Los Angeles*, 210.

31. See: Mohammad A. Qadeer and Sandeep K. Agrawal, "The practice of multicultural planning in American and Canadian cities", *Canadian Journal of urban research* 20 (December 2010): 132-156.

32. See on this trend: Wei Li, *Ethnoburb: The New Ethnic Community in Urban America* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2009); Daniel Hiebert, "Ethnocultural Minority Enclaves in Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver", *IRPP Study*, no. 52 (August 2015); Mohammad Qadeer, Sandeep K. Agrawal and Alexander Lovell, "Evolution of Ethnic Enclaves in the Toronto Metropolitan Area, 2001-2006", *Int. Migration & Integration*, no. 11 (June 2010): 315-399.

33. Katherine Pestieau and Marcia Wallace, "Challenges and Opportunities for Planning in the Ethno-culturally Diverse City: A Collection of Papers--Introduction" *Planning Theory & Practice* 4, no. 3 (September 2003): 254.

34. See: Kanisha Goonewardena and Stephan Kipfer, "Spaces of Difference: Reflections from Toronto on Multiculturalism, Bourgeois Urbanism and the Possibility of Radical Urban Politics", *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 29, no. 3 (October 2005): 670-678.

35. Marconi, "Introduction. The intercultural City: Exploring an Elusive Idea".

36. See: Leonie Sandercock, *Towards Cosmopolis: Planning for Multicultural Cities* (Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 1998); Leonie Sandercock, *Cosmopolis II: Mongrel Cities of the 21st Century* (London; New York: Continuum, 2003).

37. Sandercock, *Cosmopolis II: Mongrel Cities of the 21st Century*, 76-82.

38. Sandercock, *Towards Cosmopolis: Planning for Multicultural Cities*, 199.

39. See: Henry Lefebvre, "The right to the city." In *Writing on Cities*, ed. Eleonore Kofman and Elizabeth Lebas (Cambridge, Mass, USA: Blackwell, 1996): 147-59.

40. Wood and Landry, *The Intercultural City: Planning for Diversity Advantage*, 264.

41. See: Julian Agyeman and Jennifer S. Erickson, "Culture, recognition and the negotiation of difference: some thoughts on cultural competency in planning education", *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 32, no. 3 (April 2012): 358-366.

42. Amin, "Ethnicity and the multicultural city: living with diversity", 967.

43. See: Eugénie L. Birch, "From CIAM to CNU: The roots and thinkers of modern urban design". In Banerjee, Tridib & Anastasia Loukaitou-Sideris (ed.), *Companion to Urban Design* (New York; London: Routledge, 2011): 9-29

44. See: Alex Krieger, "Where and how does urban design happen?", in *Urban Design*, ed. Alex Krieger and William. S. Saunders (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009): 113-130.

45. See: John Lang, *Urban Design: A Typology of Procedures and Products* (Oxford: Architectural Press/Elsevier, 2005).

46. See: David Harvey, *Spaces of capital: Towards a critical geography* (Edinburgh: Routledge, 2001).

47. See: Mark Biddulph, "The problem with thinking about or for Urban Design", *Journal of Urban Design* 17, no. 1 (February 2012): 1-20.

48. Ibid.

49. Ibid., 2.

50. See: R. Varkki George, "A procedural explanation for contemporary urban design", *Journal of Urban Design* 2, no. 2 (June 1997): 143-161.

51. See: Michael Sorkin, "The End(s) of Urban Design." In *Urban Design*, ed. Alex Krieger and William. S. Saunders (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009): 155−82.

52. Amanda Wise, "Hope and Belonging in a Multicultural Suburb", *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 26, no. 1-2 (May 2005), 184.

53. See: John Chase, Margaret Crawford and John Kaliski, *Everyday urbanism*. (New York: The Monacelli Press, 1999).

54. The edited collection *Loose Space, Possibility and Diversity in Urban Life*, ed. Franck A. Karen and Quentin Stevens (New York: Routledge, 2007) offers a heterogeneous portrait on the concept of urban looseness. For a more direct declination for minorities' intervention, see: Hanns Lownsbrough and Joost Beunderman, *Equally Spaced? Public space and interaction between diverse communities* (Demos, self-published, 2007).

55. For a critique of spatial clustering from an urban design perspective, see: Ali Madanipour. *Urban Design, Space and Society*. Planning, Environment, Cities. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014, 127-54.

56. For an example of the failure of including vulnerable minorities in processes of participatory planning, see: Poppe, Will, and Douglas Young, "The Politics of Place: Place-Making Versus Densification in Toronto's Tower Neighbourhoods." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 39, no. (2015): 613−21.

57. Two remarkably positive examples of the effectiveness of participation in spatial planning exercises are explosed by: Ann Forsyth, Gretechen Nicholls and Barbara Raye, "Higher density and affordable housing: lessons from the Corridor Housing Initiative", *Journal of Urban Design* 15, no. 2 (March 2010): 269-284; Antti Wallin, Helena Leino, Ari Jokinen, Markus Laine, Johanna Tuomisaari, and Pia Bäcklund. "A Polyphonic Story of Urban Densification." *Urban Planning* 3, no. 3 (2018): 40−51.

58. See: Jennifer Mack, "Urban Design from Below: Immigration and the Spatial Practice of Urbanism", *Public Culture* 26, no. 1 (Spring 2014), 181.

59. See: Jordi Honey-Rosés and Mark Stevens, "Commentary on the absence of experiments in planning", *Journal of Planning Education and Research* (November 2017): 1-6.

60. As an example of new works on the concept of flexibility in urban design strategies (i.e. beyond buildings), see: Tom Bergevoet and Maarten van Tuijl. *The Flexible City: Sustainable Solutions for a Europe in Transition*. Rotterdam: Nai010, 2016.

61. See: Clare Rishbeth, "Ethnic Minority Groups and the Design on Public Open Space: an Inclusive Landscape?", *Landscape Research* 26, no. 4 (September 2001): 351-366.

62. Rishbeth, "Ethnic Minority Groups and the Design on Public Open Space: an Inclusive Landscape?", 359.

63. See, for example: Goonewardena & Kipfer 2005; Julie-Anne Boudreau, Roger Keil and Douglas Young, *Changing Toronto: governing neoliberalism*. (Toronto; Tonawanda: University of Toronto Press, 2009).

64. Ross King. *Emancipating Space: Geography, Architecture, and Urban Design*. Mappings. New York: Guilford Press, 1996, 248.

65. Rishbeth, "Ethnic Minority Groups and the Design on Public Open Space: an Inclusive Landscape?", 359-60.

66. Ibid., 361.

67. Preoccupations about the nature of contemporary public space emerge throughout the contributions on the intercultural city. These are legitimated by the ongoing retreat of welfare state models under neoliberalism, the privatization of services, and the growing reliance of privately owned venues for social entertainment, such as sports arenas, concert halls, and theme parks. As an example, see: Hanns Lownsbrough and Joost Beunderman, 2; Wood, Phil. "Meet me on the corner? Shaping the conditions for cross-cultural interaction in urban public space." In *Interculturalism in cities: concept, policy and implementation*, 53−75. Edited by Ricard Zapata-Barrero. Cheltenham: Edward-Elgar Publishing, 2015.

68. See: Qadeer, *Multicultural Cities: Toronto, New York and Los Angeles*, 35. A clear political consequence exploiting the private vs. public space divide is the ban on face-covering in Quebec, which applies citizen receiving and offering a selection of *public* services. The static distinction following property regimes can be read, as scholars in critical geography do, in direct connection with colonialism, and in contrast with different epistemologies on land use from indigenous communities. See, for example: Nicholas K. Blomley, "The territory of property." *Progress in Human Geography* 40, no. 5 (December 2016), 593-609.

69. Wood defines "intercultural public space" as an inclusive environment showing the following three aspects: "Firstly, that it was a place within easy reach of a population of wide diversity; secondly, that there were not barriers (physical, financial, legal, psychological or cultural) that would prevent or discourage some from entering; and thirdly, that it offered a variety of potential functions, meanings or experiences to a diverse selection of people." The radical openness suggested by this definition, as well as the call for communities' agency in place-making, is contradicted by the author's implicit position on what "good" and "bad" design means from the perspective of places' quality. See: Wood, 2015.

70. See: Henri Lefebvre, *The production of space*. (Oxford; Cambridge: Blackwell, 1991).

71. Felicity H.-H. Chan, "Intercultural climate and belonging in the globalizing multi-ethnic neighborhoods of Los Angeles", *Open urban studies journal* 6, special issue no. 1, (2013), 31.

72. See: Ananya Roy "Subaltern urbanism", *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 35, no. 2 (March 2011): 223-238.

73. Amin, "Ethnicity and the multicultural city: living with diversity", 969.

74. Balbo, "Contemporary Urban Space and the Intercultural City", 34.

75. Amin, "Ethnicity and the multicultural city: living with diversity", 960.

76. Rishbeth, "Ethnic Minority Groups and the Design on Public Open Space: an Inclusive Landscape?", 361.

77. For a synthesis and example of post-structural unpacking of sign-signifier relations, see: Julie and Katherine Gibson-Graham, "Poststructural Interventions." In *A Companion to Economic Geography*, 95-109. Edited by Eric S. Sheppard and Trevor J. Barnes. Oxford: Blackwell, 2003.

78. Wise, "Hope and Belonging in a Multicultural Suburb", 183.

79. Amin, "Ethnicity and the multicultural city: living with diversity", 976.

80. Wise, "Hope and Belonging in a Multicultural Suburb", 182.

81. See: Natalie Oswin, "Critical geographies and the use of sexuality: Deconstructing queer space", *Progress in Human Geography* 32, no. 1 (February 2008): 89-103.

82. See: Sandercock, 1998.

83. See: Luke Bennett and Amanda Crawley Jackson, "Making common ground with strangers at Furnace Park", *Social & Cultural Geography* 18, no.1 (2017), 96.

84. Katharyne Mitchell, "Conflicting landscapes of dwelling and democracy in Canada", *Drifting: Architecture and Migrancy*, ed. Stephen Cairns (London; New York: Routledge), 155.

85. Ibid., 154.

86. Ibid., 155.

87. See: Mack, 2014.

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