

# Migration, Hybridity and Urban Landscape:

A TEMPLATE ON MANAGING URBAN CULTURAL DIVERSITY

An aerial photograph of a river with a bridge, overlaid with a word cloud. The words are in various shades of blue and green, and are arranged in a way that they appear to be floating or flowing along the river. The words include: CULTURE, HYBRID, COSMOPOLITANIZATION, IMMIGRATION, CHA, URBANISM, RESILIENCE, SUSTAINABILITY, URBAN, DIVERSITY, CULTURE, FLOW, URBANISM, DIFFERENCE, GL, CULTURE, HYBRID, IMMIGRATION.

CULTURE HYBRID  
COSMOPOLITANIZATION  
IMMIGRATION CHA  
URBANISM RESILIENCE  
SUSTAINABILITY URBAN  
DIVERSITY CULTURE  
FLOW URBANISM  
DIFFERENCE GL  
CULTURE HYBRID  
IMMIGRATION

# Migration, Hybridity and Urban Landscape:

A TEMPLATE ON MANAGING URBAN CULTURAL DIVERSITY

URBAN DIVERSITY  
MIGRATION FLUX  
CHANGE FUSION  
CULTURAL CHANGES  
URBAN FORM  
HYBRIDITY  
IMMIGRATION  
GLOBALIZATION  
DIVERSITY DIVERSITY  
CHANGE FUSION



UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA  
School of Community and Regional Planning  
**SAM MOHAMAD-KHANY**





# **Migration, Hybridity and Urban Landscape: A TEMPLATE ON MANAGING URBAN CULTURAL DIVERSITY**

by  
***Sam Mohamad-Khany***

**BASc., The University of British Columbia, 2008  
BA., The University of British Columbia, 2008**

**A PROJECT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF  
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF**

**MASTER OF SCIENCE (PLANNING)**

**in**

**THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

**School of Community and Regional Planning**

**We accept this project as conforming  
to the required standard**

.....

.....

.....

**THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA**

**November 2011**

**© Sam Mohamad-Khany, 2011**

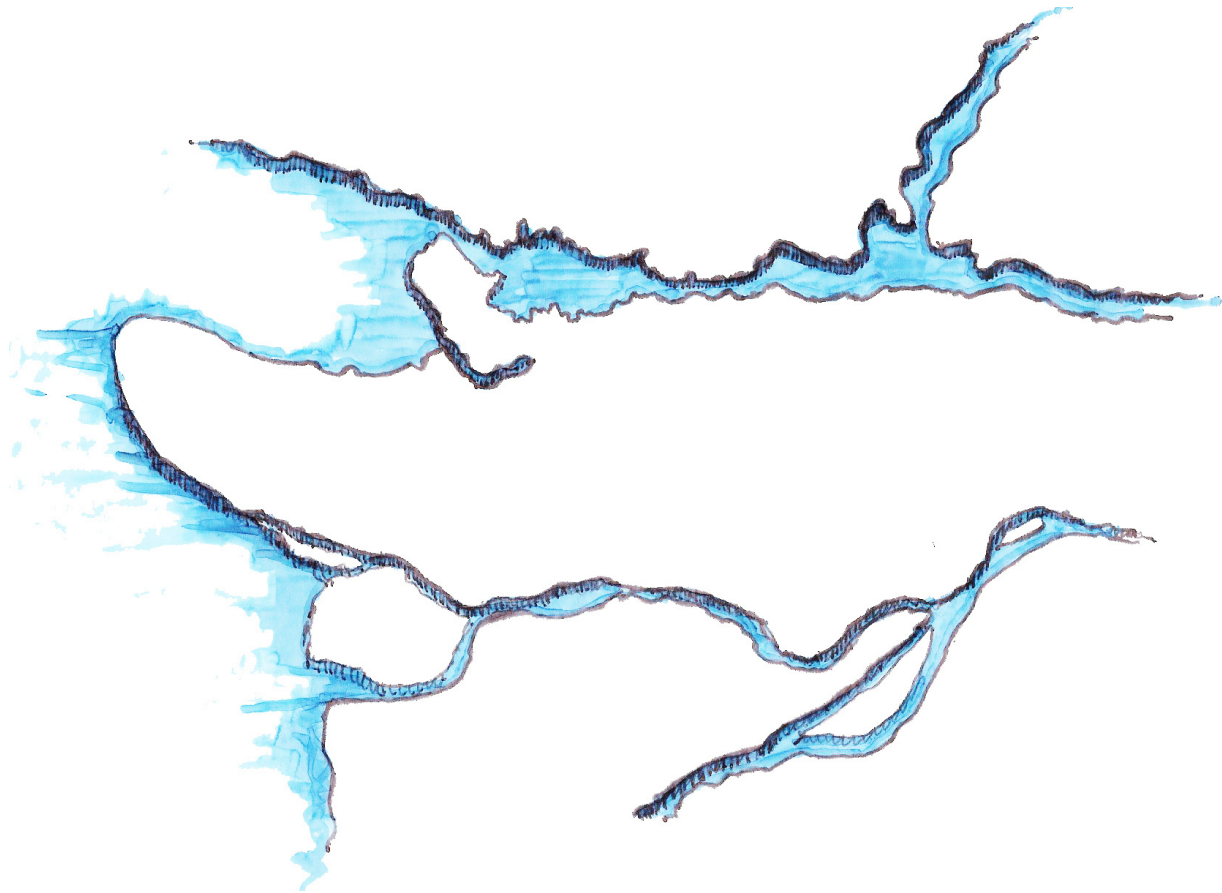


# Acknowledgment:

**This effort has been made possible through the unwavering support and encouragement of Professor Maged Senbel, who gave me an incredible academic freedom and intellectual courage. He truly made my interests those of his own and encouraged me to explore new ideas, turning a series of scattered thoughts into a gratifying endeavor. His sincere and relentless interest in social justice and sustainability has been a constant source of inspiration. I only hope this work is the beginning of a lifelong endeavour and an ongoing relationship with him for the years to come.**

**Similarly, I want to thank Scot Hein for his ongoing assistance and never-ending generosity. I have indeed been lucky to have had unequivocal support of such a great mentor, who I would not be able to thank enough. I also owe some of this work to the countless hours of discussions with the faculty members, fellow students and friends, which were fostered through the great environment of creativity and intellectual engagement provided at the School of Community and Regional Planning at the University of British Columbia.**

**Finally, I dedicate this work to my parents, Dariush and Sorour, who have dedicated much of their own life to me and my sister's success. Their difficult and yet successful journey as immigrants to Canada will remain the ultimate source of courage for me. I will never forget that they left their homeland, and all that was familiar and good in their life, in order to create a better future for me and my sister. Ultimately, the values that influenced this work and much of my life are the values that have been instilled in me by my two heroes. Openness, caring, passion, integrity, adaptability and eternal optimism are some of the virtues I only hope to have acquired from them. I will never be able to repay their unconditional love and therefore only hope that I can pay it forward to my future family and friends.**





# Table of Contents:

<b>1.</b>	<b>PROJECT IMPETUS</b>	Page 2
<b>2.</b>	<b>PHILOSOPHY AND THEORY</b> (LITERATURE REVIEW)	Page 8
<b>3.</b>	<b>DESIGN PRINCIPLES+ FRAMEWORK</b>	Page 20
<b>4.</b>	<b>GLOBAL AND NATIONAL SCALES</b>	Page 38

<b>5.</b>	<b>URBAN AND REGIONAL SCALES</b>	Page 56
<b>6.</b>	<b>DISTRICT SCALE</b> (NEIGHBORHOOD)	Page 82
<b>7.</b>	<b>PARCEL + MICRO SCALES</b>	Page 110
<b>8.</b>	<b>SOCIAL SYSTEMS + TOOL BOX</b>	Page 132



Painting by: Sorour Abdollahi, 2009  
36 X 72, Mixed-media on Canvas

The above painting by my mother is very much reminiscent of what Salman Rushdie calls “a migrant’s-eye view of the world ... the very experience of uprooting, disjuncture and metamorphosis (slow or rapid, painful or pleasurable) that is the migrant condition” (“In Good Faith”, 394). What is depicted here is the constant struggle of adaptation and negotiation. The melting layers of landscapes reveal the conflict between the fading past (memories of the Iranian homeland) and the changing present (living in Vancouver, Canada) - a process that is often incomplete, fragmented, and hybrid in outcome. By the same token, this process could be a source of greater understanding, creativity, resilience and new beginnings.

The immigrant condition, however, is increasingly a universal human condition, as the border between the ‘other’ and the ‘I’, the ‘periphery’ and the ‘center’, ‘developed’ and the ‘developing’, ‘east’ and ‘west’ has been evermore blurred (Binnie, et al. 2006).



**How do cities relate to culture?**  
**How can cities be designed for multiple and changing life-styles?**  
**Does diversity increase urban resilience?**  
**How can conflict among cultures be managed?**  
**What is the role of the process of cosmopolitanization in urban change?**  
**What is a supportive and inclusive intercultural city?**  
**How is the relationship between various cultures mediated by the urban environment and its systems?**  
**How can differences be recognized and celebrated?**  
**In a world of increasing sameness, is difference even relevant?**  
**What are hybrid vernaculars?**  
**How can cities respond to changes in the culture of its citizens?**  
**What is the role of planning in tackling urban cultural change?**

# 1. PROJECT IMPETUS

## **Aim:**

The aim of this project is to develop a cogent framework for planning the contemporary city through an intercultural sustainability lens – with the hope of turning this into an eventual non-profit organization, a think-tank (and/or consultancy) and a life-long academic pursuit. Therefore, through a multidisciplinary literature review, as well as drawing upon my own values and experiences, I crafted a high level normative position, which informs the creation of an intercultural framework and a set of design principles. Of particular interest are the various (physical, social and mental) spaces within the urban fabric that mediate the relationship among multiple cultures, and against the backdrop of a rapidly changing social context. These various threads will be synthesized to form a set of urban ‘sub-systems’ that require relevant tools and techniques for analysis, design strategies, points of community interventions and policy formulation. Together, these urban systems, tools, techniques and its relevant vocabulary will form a toolkit of intercultural planning and urban design framework (with related templates). Parts of this approach are tested through a case-study of Vancouver as well as by drawing from international examples. In the future, and depending on the project, planners and urban designers can expand and adapt this intercultural framework to their specific study area and contextual concerns.

## **Mission:**

The main mission of intercultural planning is peace building, seen as essential to the project of sustainability. Creating understanding, acceptance, recognition and greater social cohesion, while embracing diversity, human creativity and multiplicity which are unleashed by the hybrid nature of our 21st century cities are at the heart of this activity.

## Rationale:

The contemporary city is experiencing accelerated change due to multi-scalar processes, with transformative influence on the urban landscape. Amongst such processes, 'cosmopolitanization' (international migration due to multiple push and pull forces), globalization and urbanization have resulted in noticeable compositional change within cities across the world.

In the planning literature, diversity has often been attributed to a creative and vibrant urbanism, resulting in hybridity and openness. However, unmanaged change could also be a potential source of conflict, misunderstanding, discrimination and segregation –with devastating impact on people and their environment.

The intersection of our ethical responsibility towards each other, with the important role that place plays in creating a shared understanding, serves as

a compelling rationale for researching places that foster diversity. As an immigrant and a minority, the need to gain a better understanding into how such spaces are created, and the role that they play in creating coexistence in a plural society is of supreme importance to me, forming my own normative stance on this subject.

I will attempt to draw upon the diverse array of scholarship in planning, urban studies, geography and urban design literature, among many others, in order to build a toolkit of theoretical and practical formulations of the role of place in creating a sense of belonging and fostering peaceful diversity in the contemporary, with the role of practitioners and designers in mind.

Therefore, I will explore the role that an integrated planning process could play (physical and social) in mediating conflict, fostering coexistence (recognition of difference), inclusion, integration and interaction among groups. Particularly, I will examine the ways through which urban design could possibly elevate the

cross-cultural potential of the public realms, turning borders into '**porous membranes**' or active '**contact zones**', and making the city legible to all its sub-cultures.

## Case Study:

Through an extensive literature review, various theories and approaches to the intercultural city will be assembled (**chapter 2**). Subsequently, an initial set of principles and an intercultural planning framework will be provided based on the literature discussed (**chapter 3**).

After conducting an overview of the multi-scalar forces that influence cultural change at the city level (**chapter 4**), I will turn to the urban and metropolitan scales, in order to further develop the intercultural planning model (**chapter 5**). Concurrently, these ideas will be utilized in order to conduct an initial 'reading' (or analysis) of the case study. Through this first reading, further sub-systems, issues and tools will be identified, requiring specific literature for each sub-topic. Therefore more specific

# 1. PROJECT IMPETUS

literature will be provided and discussed in each specific chapter (**chapter 5, 6, 7,8**).

Throughout this work, Vancouver, British Columbia will be used as the principle location for much of the case study (while at times other examples will be provided). This choice is due to the city's remarkable diversity. Indeed, Vancouver region has around 40% of its population as foreign-born residents, making it the second highest migrant city in North America and Australia combined.

A multiscalar (and possibly temporal) analysis of urban change will be conducted in this research, while further breaking the metropolitan region into relevant systems and scales. The research will

start with a map of Vancouver (and the regional context), analyzing the overall picture and various trends. By better understanding the overall spatial and temporal changes in the urban environment, the hybrid structure of the city is identified. Through demographic analysis and creation of analytical tools, such as diversity index and spatial mapping, various neighborhoods and areas of interests will be identified (such as border zones, distinct neighborhoods, subcultures, etc).

Furthermore, the implication for various subsystems of the city (buildings, urban fabric, zoning, education and community facilities, arts and culture, markets, streets and corridors, parks and green networks, etc) will be explored through an intercultural lens at the smaller scales of the neighborhood and parcel.

While this work will be presented in a linear narrative, in fact the development of the set of principles and the overall framework has been part of an iterative research process. This will not necessarily result in a complete or comprehensive list of possible activities in the cultural realm, rather it will become a selective (and expandable) set of templates, strategies and above all a normative attitude with respect to what might be called intercultural sustainability.

## The Case for Sustainability:

Sustainability is of paramount importance to the vitality and long term viability of urban areas. Social well being of cities both impacts the way society interacts with it's environment, but is also impacted by the environmental context. Globalization and liberalization have increased levels and rates of human

migration, resulting in unprecedented levels of change.

While diversity could result in greater resilience and vitality for urban centers, rapid and un-managed shifts in population could also be a source of greater conflict. Such conflicts could be exasperated, as environmental change (such as climate change resulting in rising sea levels or increased floods associated with environmental degradation) arguably bring greater waves of immigration.

Already, geopolitical pressures (at times linked to environmental pressures such as rising food prices) have contributed to major migration of people and subsequent clashes between the local population and new settlers. Such conflicts, if un-managed, can in turn lead to greater environmental degradation, depletion of resources and further suffering and migration. For example, conflicts over shared resources (such as a river) could result in mismanagement of them

and even overly competitive utilization of natural capital.

Therefore, planning for intercultural cities is of paramount importance to the sustainability agenda, requiring it's own methods of understanding and research. In this project, a multiscalar template for better understanding of social change (in terms of culture) and it's impact on the urban environment (built and social) will be developed. The following sections will form the basis of the type of analysis that an intercultural planning lens will require.

## Research Question:

This research will be emphasizing the linkages that might exist between social and physical spaces of our urban environments in intercultural settings. Thus the overarching concern for this work will be to address the following question:

**How can a coherent mental image of the city be created for different cultural groups in the city, in order to foster intercultural sustainability?**

With the aim to meet the goal of:

## **The city of multiple cultures and a common future.**

However, other relevant questions will also be part of this exploration:

How can the city (and its urban fabric) be made legible to all cultures while recognizing (and celebrating) difference?

How can bridges and connections (physical, social, economical) be fostered in a city of many cultures?

What is a culturally sensitive urban design?

How can vulnerable populations be protected in rapidly changing urban environments?

What ethnographic strategies are required in an intercultural planning approach?



# **1. PROJECT IMPETUS**



**“We couldn’t get in. We couldn’t get out.”**

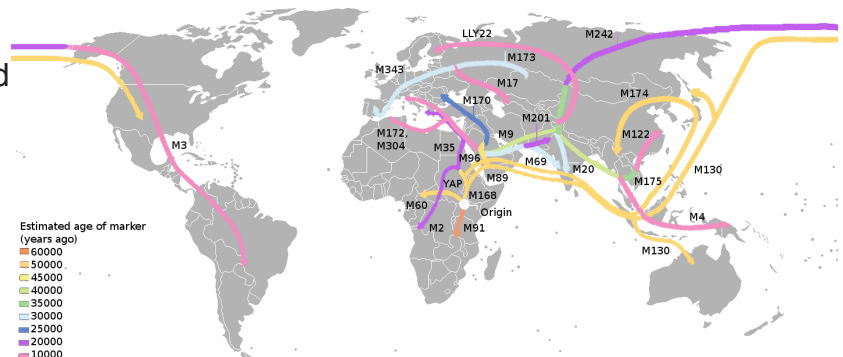
**Lacey Jane Roberts, Hand-woven wire, crank-knit yarn, steel poles,  
assorted hardware. 10’ x30’. 2006-2007**

## 2.

## Background:

Arguably cities from their very inception have been sites of diversity, specialization of labour and convergence of various populations with different characteristics (Madanipour 2004, 268, Aristotle 1992). This is however much more pronounced today, as many global cities have witnessed a tremendous compositional change, with their populations rapidly becoming culturally and ethnically diverse. The immigration induced diversity today is due to numerous multi-scalar push and pull forces, which are often attributed to globalization, liberalisation, and post-colonial world order (Mendieta 2001). Despite the nation-state's concerted efforts to shape these complex processes, and to participate in the global networks, it is the city and the metropolitan region that has been directly impacted by such forces (Castells 2000). Therefore, contemporary cities, as nodes within the global network, have become the center stage for hybridity, diversity and difference, unparalleled in history in terms of extent and velocity (Binnie, et al. 2006, 22; Castells 2000).

Global migration of people is of course not a new phenomenon, as *Homo sapiens* have continually spread and moved around the planet for thousands of years, albeit at considerably different degrees throughout history (**Figure 2.1**). Colonialism and imperialism brought even higher levels of population movement and settlement, which has left a legacy of immigration for many modern nation-states that were former colonies. Therefore, even prior to



**Figure 2.1** The successive waves of humans spreading around the globe, going as far as 60000 years ago  
(Data based on the Genographic Project by the National Geographic  
<<https://genographic.nationalgeographic.com/genographic/atlas.html>>  
Image Source: <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Human\\_spreading\\_over\\_history.png](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Human_spreading_over_history.png)>)

the heightened globalization of recent decades, countries with a history of international migration (such as Canada and Australia) had attempted to deal with their increased ethnic diversity through official policies at their national level.

In the case of Canada, an active governmental policy under the umbrella of “multiculturalism” has been in effect since 1971, enacted at the time by the Liberal government of Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau (Hutton, et al. 2001; Sandercock 2000; Sandercock 2004). This broad national policy attempted to recognize the new emerging Canadian identity as one of a mosaic of cultures, religions and ethnicities, while officially guaranteeing rights of migrants in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms (Citizenship and Immigration Canada n.d.; Sandercock 2004). Similarly, Australia has defined its multicultural policy as one that manages the consequences of cultural diversity in the interest of society and its members (Department of Immigration and Citizenship n.d.; Hutton,

et al. 2001).

Multiculturalism in Canada, as a policy framework and a public philosophy, has evolved and permeated various levels of government (mostly federal and provincial), establishing institutional support and capacity for the acceptance of different ethnic groups, recognizing the language and cultural needs of minorities in the country. Therefore, to this date, Canada’s multicultural policy remains one of the most progressive policy responses adopted at the nation-state level worldwide (Hutton, et al. 2001; Sandercock 2000).

However, these attempts to deal with a diverse immigrant population at the higher levels of government, predate the acceleration of change that has been experienced at the local level due to the forces of globalization. As it will be shown in **chapter 4**, immigration manifests itself most concretely at the urban and metropolitan scales within the landscape of the nation-state, requiring deliberate policy responses from the local and regional governments. Multiculturalism, as a response by the national

governments, has thus left a gap at the local level, where increasingly social meaning is constructed in response to the global processes mentioned earlier (Castells 2000).

Therefore, while “multiculturalism” has been a much needed progressive policy at the higher levels of the government, it has not been effectively translated on the ground, at the city and neighbourhood levels, where majority of people live their daily life and attempt to reconcile their real differences. In fact, while this policy embraces cultural difference and diversity of ethnic identities, it leaves out much of the burden to meet the needs of a diverse population to the local governments. This has left a tremendous pressure on local governments, which have also witnessed the simultaneous withdrawal of government assistance as part of the neoliberal framework (Hutton, et al. 2001; Sandercock 2000; Sandercock 2004). Therefore, ethnic and cultural diversity needs to be addressed at all levels of government, particularly at the urban and metropolitan scales.

## 2. PHILOSOPHY AND THEORY

(Literature Review)

Increased cultural and racial diversity is not a uniquely western scenario, as non-western cities from Dubai and Kuala Lumpur, to the city state of Singapore have witnessed their own unique expressions of diversity within their urban fabric. Additionally, post-colonial cities in Latin America, Asia and Africa have had to mediate between their colonial and pre-colonial cultures, creating a delicate cultural synchronism (and hybridity) omnipresent in their contemporary society.

Border cities such as Ciudad Juárez in Northern Mexico and Spanish exclaves of Melilla and Ceuta, situated in North Africa, have become stepping stones for a diverse group of international migrants attempting to make their

way to the Global North. Therefore, while ethnic and cultural diversity is generally a common thread in the contemporary city, there remains a diversity of outcomes and trajectories in the way population diversity manifests itself in each locale.

Indeed, diversity can be seen as either a positive urban experience or a possible negative source of conflict. Some scholars have argued that population diversity can be an incredible source of urban creativity and vitality, leading to cross-pollination of ideas, greater economic activity, increased resilience and better understanding among cultural groups (Fainstein 2005; Florida 2002; Gaffikin, Mceldowney and Sterrett 2010; Talen 2008; Walker and Salt 2006; Wood and Landry 2008). On the other hand, strong arguments have been made against dangers of increased cultural diversity, pointing towards real

possibilities of conflict, tribalism and segregation (Gaffikin, Mceldowney and Sterrett 2010, Rees 2006, Rapoport 1977; Yiftachel 2008).

In reality, the experience of many cities has demonstrated that diversity does not always imply a peaceful coexistence. Unfortunate episodes of ethnic, racial and sectarian violence of the last several decades, which have marred various regions of the world in Africa, Balkans, Asia and the Middle East, as well as increased tensions in Western Europe and North America, provide real challenges to celebratory framing of the issue.

The arguments for and against diversity, and its implication for urban planning, will be expanded upon in the subsequent sections of this chapter as well as in **chapters 5 and 6**. Indeed, much discussion is needed on the shape, form and type



of diversity, which will be covered in **Chapter 3** and onwards. However, it is important to stress in this introduction that both in situations of conflict, as well as more delicate situations of relative peaceful coexistence, place can and does play a crucial role - in forming social meaning for residents and in mediating among different groups (Arvot 2002, Benton-Short 2006, Elkadi 2006, Mehrhoff 1990, Mendieta 2001, Ouf 2001).

The importance of place has been discussed widely by a variety of disciplines and scholars. The field of environmental psychology has established that 'place attachment' is an integral part of human condition, while arguing that different neighbourhood types can foster unique forms of relationships among their residents (Gifford 1987; Altman and Wandersman 1987). Others have shown that particular vernaculars remain an important part of the immigrant experience, as migrants bring new typologies to their host society (Salazar 1998). In

turn, other scholars have documented the role that aesthetic contestation can play in diverse societies, as new architectural forms are constantly challenged by the dominant culture (Gale 2004; Lu 2000; Yiftachel 2008).

Philosophers and theoreticians such as Ludwig Wittgenstein have argued that place and architectural 'gestures' of a culture have the propensity to become strong symbols of historic grievances and shared memory for a certain group (Elkadi 2006). Therefore, both acts of 'preservation' as well as 'demolition' of architecture, and other urban places, can serve as political gestures, through which any memory of peaceful coexistence in the past can be denied, omitted or deleted from the collective consciousness (Elkadi 2006).

Therefore, place is not only important during times of peace - for the integration of new migrants and refugees into their host society - but in fact it is also critical in more extreme situations of violent conflict and post-conflict reconstruction. The legacy of Balkan wars serves as a sober reminder

of such processes, in which the destruction of buildings becomes as critical as the act of murder, to the mission of destroying all records of a plural society that previously allowed for the possibility of coexistence (Riedlmayr 1994).

The experience of post American invasion of Baghdad - with subsequently intense segregation of neighborhoods along sectarian lines - also attests to the delicate and often fragile nature of coexistence in a previously diverse society. While these are extreme examples of conflict ridden environments, their subsequent reconstruction efforts and the role that place has had, in both mediating conflict as well as promulgating tensions, is valuable to the discussion of place and its mediating role in a diverse society (Gaffikin, Mceldowney and Sterrett 2010). I

There are also ample examples of how place can play a positive role in bringing people together in a more positive and cooperative fashion (**chapter 7**). Morales (2009) has

## 2. PHILOSOPHY AND THEORY

(Literature Review)

argued for the integrative and positive impact that carefully planned and well positioned urban markets can play in fostering collaboration between immigrants of different backgrounds looking for low barrier to entry entrepreneurial opportunities. Similarly, Rishbeth (2004) have stressed the positive potential that urban community gardens can play, while Matsushita, Yoshida and Munemoto (2005) have uncovered the relevance of work place and third-spaces (such as pubs and clubs) in forming positive social ties.

Beyond the physical aspects of place, social dimensions of place in creating sustainable forms of diversity need to also be considered, as shown through social capital literature as well as

strategies such as intercultural festivals and carefully planned social activities (**chapter 8**) (Cheong 2006; Friedmann 2009; Sime 1986; Smets 2011)

Hence, the potential for placement of carefully conceived hybrid typologies at different scales of urban environment, coupled with social strategies and mediation of conflict through public spaces and '**micro-publics**' point towards the real possibility of peaceful coexistence, albeit often in an unbalanced geometry of power (Salazar 1998, Binnie, et al. 2006, Sandercock 2004, Lu 2000).

### Ethics and Philosophy of Intercultural Planning:

Given the important role of place and placemaking in mediating cultural diversity, and the rapidly increasing number of heterogeneous cities globally,

some scholars have argued for a more inclusive city, one which allows for all its members to participate equally in the city's activities. (Sandercock 2004, Sandercock 1998). Immanuel Levinas's philosophy is particularly insightful, as his phenomenological approach to understanding ethics of the 'other' reveals to us an ethical responsibility towards that which is not the narcissistic 'I' (Critchley and Bernasconi 2004).

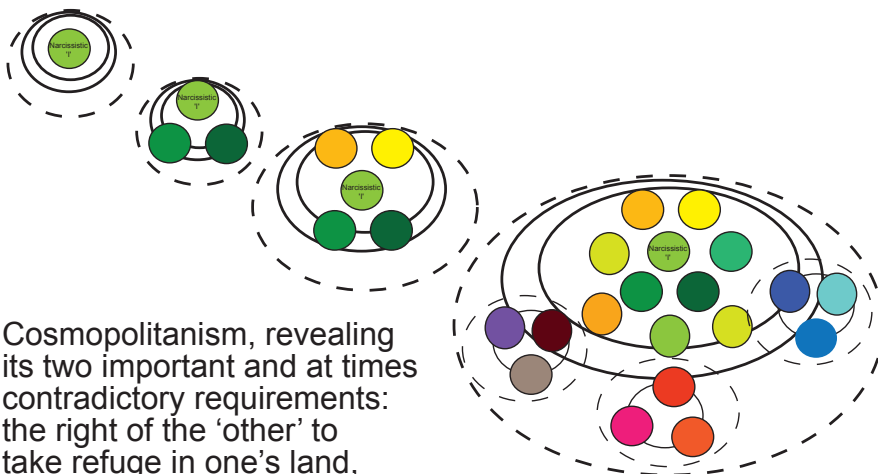
For Levinas, the 'other' is an entity that exceeds the bounds of self's knowledge and therefore demands acknowledgment. In a face-to-face contact with the 'other', the need for such acknowledgment becomes transparently clear and failure to do so results in 'tragedy' (even acts of murder)— such as that of the Nazi Germany (Critchley and Bernasconi 2004). Therefore, the responsibility of one towards the 'other' is a call for

the recognition of the other as completely different than the self, given that its demands on the self are vastly different than those one puts on oneself. Hence, as an individual's social sphere expands during one's lifetime, new entities challenge the previous notion of 'I' and 'us', creating both conflict, but also new forms of acknowledgement and engagement through introduction of multiplicity of connections and differences (**Figure 2.2**).

Contemporary formulations of cosmopolitanism has also emerged as a response to challenges of increased migration. A notable group of sociologist, political scientists and philosophers, such as Ulrich Beck, Martha Nussbaum, Kwame Anthony Appiah have sought to apply progressive cosmopolitanism as a way to solve ethical issues with respect to immigrant/refugee rights and global climate change crises.

On the other hand, poststructuralist philosophers such as Derrida have deconstructed the idea of

## Direct engagement with the 'other':



Cosmopolitanism, revealing its two important and at times contradictory requirements: the right of the 'other' to take refuge in one's land, and the responsibility of the 'other' to the host, hence the conditionality of such a right and therefore an imbalance in the power dynamic of hospitality (Jacques 1997, Fine 2007).

While acknowledging the shortfalls of previous formulations of cosmopolitanism, Leonie Sandercock defines "*Cosmopolitan urbanism as a normative project that is a necessary response to the empirical reality of multicultural cities.*" (Sandercock 2006, 38).

Meanwhile, other scholars have framed the issue

under the wider umbrella of sustainability. Manuel Castells' formulation of sustainability as a form of solidarity (among current generation as well as future generations) is particularly useful. Under the social side of such solidarity, Castells argues for a need to "acknowledge plural identities which will increasingly characterize our cities and bridge them over" (Castells 2009, 119). He stresses the dual role of **acknowledging** and **bridging**, while also calling for **avoidance of social exclusion**. Hence, In addition to social justice, equity, environmental stewardship and economic

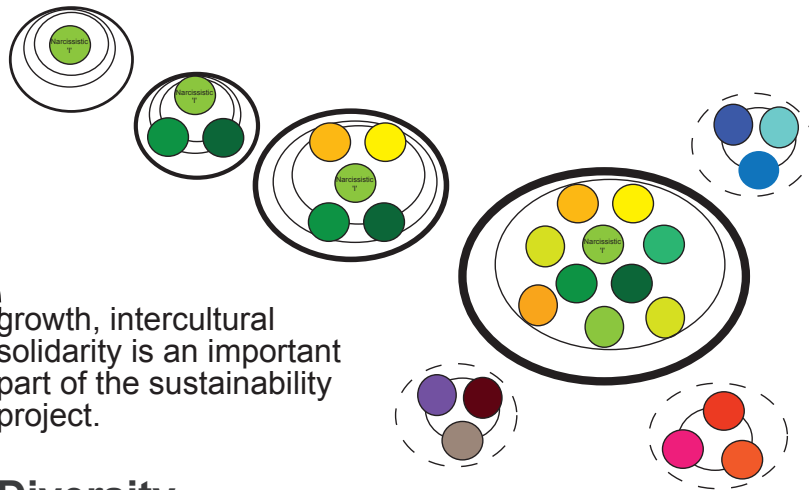
**Figure 2.2 (left) and 2.3 (below)**

*Two possible trajectories of an individual's sense of responsibility and acknowledgement towards the 'other', imposed by engagement/avoidance of new forms of difference and a growing (open) and static (closed) social sphere.*

## 2. PHILOSOPHY AND THEORY

(Literature Review)

### Avoidance of the 'other':



growth, intercultural solidarity is an important part of the sustainability project.

### Diversity, Cosmopolitanism and the Intercultural City:

Indeed, planners and urban theorists have long argued for diversity and social inclusion in the urban environment (Fainstein 2005, 5). The global realities that were

explained earlier attest to an increasingly heterogeneous urban environment in the future, strengthening the normative call for diversity and the 'right to the city' (Lefebvre 1996).

Therefore, it is important to sketch out the importance of (managed) diversity to the wellbeing of the city, as it particularly relates to other

concurrent processes of late modernity and urban change. Jane Jacobs famously stressed the importance of diversity for economic vitality of cities, while arguing for diversity of urban forms and uses in order to foster socioeconomic diversity (Fainstein 2005, 4).

Richard Florida's Creative Class also stresses the importance of place as a principle unit of economic development, while arguing for diversity as a source of creativity, innovation and economic growth (Florida 2002). Such positive formulations of diversity are cogently summarized by the philosopher Iris Marion Young (1990), as she argues for the city as the venue for flourishing of difference:

*"In the ideal of city life freedom leads to group differentiation, to the formation of affinity groups, but this social and spatial differentiation of groups*

*is without exclusion ... The interfusion of groups in the city occurs partly because of the multiuse differentiation of social space. What makes urban spaces interesting, draws people out in public to them, gives people pleasure and excitement, is the diversity of activities they support*" (Young 1990 in Fainstein 2005)

Similarly Sandercock calls for cities with multiplicity of experiences, *"in which there is genuine acceptance of, connection with, and respect and space for the cultural 'other'"* or as what she calls the **"possibility of togetherness in difference"** (Sandercock 2006, 21). She further calls for a pragmatic urbanity, accepting that conflicts are a real part of living with difference and can only be resolved through mundane everyday practices, or as Ash Amin calls **'micro-publics'** – such as community centers, workplaces, schools, and other everyday spaces of interaction and negotiation (*ibid*, 22, 44).

That said, it is also important to recognize that the notions

that have been put forward so far by Amin, Sandercock, Young and some of the cosmopolitanism scholars mentioned earlier, demand a form of active citizenship - or as Sandercock (2004) calls it *becoming* citizen - and participation of different groups that might not be always possible or realistic. That is to say that some of these arguments assume that all cultures (particularly refugees and vulnerable populations) have the ability to, necessary tools for and the initial desire to participate equally in various facets of the city life that other established cultures already occupy - that is if adequately encouraged and supported.

Therefore, while the call for engagement through democratic spaces and 'micro-publics' is a positive ideal to strive for, planners need to also consider that not all members of different groups have the same capacity and willingness to engage in these settings - at least at all times and in the first stages of their settlement. Consequently, in more pragmatic formulations of an intercultural city, perhaps there also needs to be the

room for clusters and areas that shelter vulnerable ethnic groups that might not be well equipped to engage with multiplicities of the urban life.

This raises perhaps a more critical question with regards to the role that planners and urban designers need to play in addressing challenges and opportunities of diversity at the urban realm. In particular, how should planners formulate an agenda of intercultural sustainability vis-à-vis other socioeconomic (and environmental) concerns, if any.

With regards to the involvement of planners in promoting cosmopolitan ethics, Marxists theorists such as David Lay critique middle class sensibilities of cosmopolitanism, arguing that *"it is the residents of gentrified inner-city neighborhoods that have multiple points of openness to cosmopolitanism"* (Binnie, et al. 2006, 14). Therefore, it is through the 'reflexive' and 'conscious' **'production of distinction'** by the middle class and their quest for **'cultural capital'** that enables cosmopolitanism (*ibid*).

## 2. PHILOSOPHY AND THEORY

(Literature Review)

Indeed, it can be argued that formulation of cosmopolitan spaces (where all citizens can be together regardless of their difference) and practices (recognition and celebration of difference) would imply valorization of certain social practices, differences and spaces, and are therefore intertwined with de-valorization of other spaces, practices and differences (Binnie, et al. 2006, 23). Moreover, the terms of reference for what is acceptable form of difference is arguably in the hands of the dominant, cosmopolitan, educated elite who employ cultural capital as means of acceptance of 'the other'. Even Richard Florida acknowledges that it is the elites (or the 'creative class') that seek diversity and have the capacity to deal with it (and benefit

from it) in a positive manner (Florida 2002).

Therefore, one needs to recognize that the experience of cosmopolitanism in practice is entangled with other important factors, such as class, gender, age and power. Furthermore, as some have argued, universalizing forces of modernity have left all citizens in a way as strangers, (and possibly all spaces as similar) making formulation of living with difference ever more challenging, if not even redundant (Binnie, et al. 2006, 23).

Others have argued that state-led recognition of urban neighborhoods as cosmopolitan clusters are nothing short of the re-branding of the post-industrial city, in order to create spaces of consumption in the face of global competition, neo-liberalism and promotion of urban entrepreneurship. Thus, in search of maximizing

economic benefits and urban regeneration, planners can become agents of global capital, sterilizing previously true cosmopolitan spaces and, by overt commodification of immigrant neighborhoods, leading to lack of real diversity, homogenization and staged authenticity (Binnie, et al. 2006, Fainstein 2005).

Finally, many scholars have attempted to show the contradictory nature of state-led creation of cosmopolitan spaces, as it implies the existence of other spaces in the city as 'non-cosmopolitan' space, while serving state's hidden agenda of neutralizing 'unacceptable' differences with 'acceptable' differences – as it has been argued to be the case for Singapore's government-led efforts to mediate nationalism and difference (Binnie, et al. 2006, 27; Gans 1979; Yiftachel 2008).

In light of such pervasive



critiques of this concept, Ulrich Beck introduces the concept of **cosmopolitization**, as being about “*a dialectics of conflict: cosmopolitanization and its enemies*”, and hence cautions against the ‘cosmopolitan fallacy’ that a complete cosmopolitan state is somewhere to be found, or even ever truly reachable. He asserts that forces of nationalism, global capitalism, and democratic authoritarianism form what he calls the enemies of cosmopolitization, and therefore are in conflict with other (and perhaps more progressive) social forces of late modernity that enable this phenomenon (Binnie, et al. 2006, 21).

Moreover, Leonie Sandercock argues that this normative stance is essentially one of a struggle against fundamentalism (nationalism, extremism and cultural purity) and for **interculturalism** (hybridity) (Binnie, et al. 2006). Therefore, perhaps the adoption of interculturalism as a normative term for planners might be more useful, as it embodies both the positive aspects of

cosmopolitanism as well as some of its valid critiques.

Ultimately the process of cosmopolitanization, coupled with other sociological forces of our time, has unique expressions in different contexts and therefore cannot be decoupled from other relevant issues of power, class and sexuality, among others.

In her analysis of urban diversity, Susan Feinstein concludes that

*“Overall the claims for diversity are important. Diversity underlines the appeal of the urban, it fosters creativity, it can encourage tolerance, and it leads city officials to see the value in previously underappreciated lifestyles”* (Feinstein 2005, 13).

She warns that the exposure to the ‘other’ has both the potential to evoke increased understanding on the one hand, and on the other hand it can heighten prejudice and stigma if different lifestyles are too incompatible (*ibid*). Furthermore, she contends that “*Social exclusion and economic exclusion are*

*intertwined, and even if the postmodernist critique of neo-Marxism – that it ignored noneconomic forms of oppression – rings true, failure to focus concern on economic injustice likewise represents a failure”* (Feinstein 2005, 14).

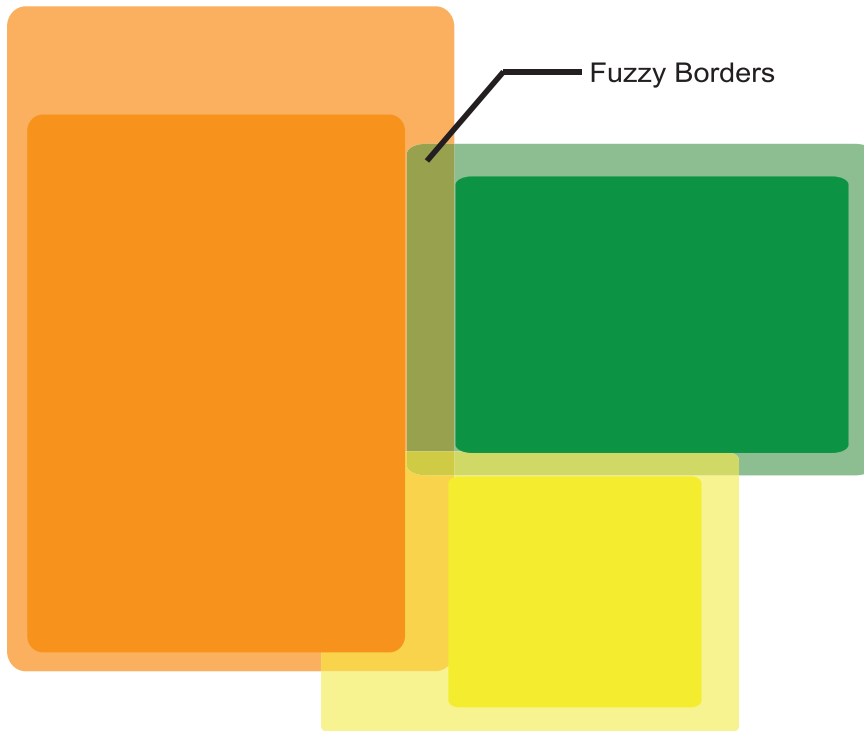
She, therefore, attempts to find a middle ground between all these arguments, and in her formulation of ‘The Just City’ she lists diversity along with equity, democracy as well as sustainability and growth as necessary and at times competing facets of an ideal city. In light of such trade-offs, she points towards the Amsterdam experience as a model in which diversity is accomplished through state provisions of housing and amenities. She argues that by avoiding large projects that isolated groups from the rest of the city and other communities, urban planners can at least create ‘**fuzzy borders**’ by employing careful in-filling, promotion of mixed-use neighborhoods and just distribution of urban resources (**Figure 2.4**).

Therefore, while she does not see urban design approaches promoted by groups such as the New Urbanists as a

## 2. PHILOSOPHY AND THEORY

### (Literature Review)

**Figure 2.4** Fuzzy borders: with careful planning, conflict zones can be turned into mediating porous membranes among distinct groups and neighborhoods, becoming places of engagement.



the diverse needs of multiple ethnic and cultural groups - such as housing forms, parks, public spaces, facilities and services.

It is in fact the multifaceted and intertwined nature of urban diversity that requires careful consideration of planners and urban designers, as it is heavily entangled with social, cultural, economic and even ecological aspects of the urban environment, and its many sub-systems. Therefore, as it has been discussed throughout this chapter, diversity is a common feature of the contemporary city and requires new tools, techniques and approaches for planning and designing our heterogeneous environments. The next chapter attempts to arrive at a set of clear normative principles as well as an overall framework that will be expanded upon in the rest of this paper, in order to establish an intercultural lens for planning practice.

panacea, she does indeed recognize their potential in providing a physical framework for a city that offers a higher quality of life to diverse residents and visitors (Fainstein 2005, 16). For example, certain populations, as

Richard Florida contends, better adapt to populations with visible cultural differences, and are perhaps better positioned to be residing in diverse areas. Leonie Sandercock (2000) similarly raises the critical issue of adaptability of existing built environment in order to meet

*Human beings are members of a whole,  
In creation of one essence and soul.  
If one member is afflicted with pain,  
Other members uneasy will remain.  
If you've no sympathy for human pain,  
The name of human you cannot retain!*

By Persian Poet Saadi 12th C  
Translated by M. Aryanpoor

### 3. DESIGN PRINCIPLES+ FRAMEWORK

## Urban Design in Intercultural City:

This chapter will build on the theoretical arguments of the previous chapter, making the case for a culture sensitive urban design. Once the necessary connections are established between the built environment, place (in its many dimensions), culture and the mediation of diversity through design, a set of normative principles will be suggested for our intercultural planning lens. These design and planning principles will be coupled with an overarching intercultural planning framework that will guide the discussion of the following chapters, as well as possible future analysis that might require such an approach.

In the previous chapter, the important role of place in construction of social meaning for human societies was briefly discussed. Many scholars, however, have downplayed the role of design and physicality of space in its relationship with the social processes that occur within such spaces. Amin's argument for 'micro-publics' as primary units of interaction, and John Friendman's discussion on placemaking as a predominantly social phenomenon are among such examples (Binnie, et al. 2006, 44, Friedmann 2009). While pointing to the fact that *"merely creating spaces where intercultural exchange is encouraged is not enough to guarantee social inclusion"*, Leonie Sandercock (2006) has proposed that *"organizational and discursive strategies are also necessary in order to build voice, to foster a sense of solidarity across differences, to develop confidence among disempowered"*.

Others have warned that planning for diversity can seem 'inauthentic' or even 'staged', and therefore question if a diverse urban fabric can come about through any other means than mere 'spontaneity' (Fainstein 2005). Therefore, the involvement of planners, architects and urban designers in fostering spaces of interaction are either dismissed as problematic interventions, or their role is seen as peripheral or at most a supportive one. However, while one needs to recognize that physical spaces do not directly (in simple and deterministic manner) dictate social processes, also one cannot ignore

the delicate interrelationship that exists between all forms of space, be it mental, social or physical (Lefebvre 1991).

Arguably, there exists an intricate, complex and recursive relationship between society and its multiple environments. Therefore, organization of space is a way for society to organize meaning, making environments culturally specific and congruent with specific **'life-styles'** (Rapoport 1980, 8). Henri Lefebvre, in his seminal book *The Production of Space* makes the case that "every society – and hence every mode of production with its subvariants – produce a space, its own space", emphasizing the importance of dominant socioeconomic structures of any given epoch (Lefebvre 1991, 31).

He further carefully develops a conceptual model, or a triad of the 'perceived', 'conceived' and 'lived' as he calls it, in relation to the 'production of space': (Lefebvre 1991, 33-46):

**1) Spatial Practice, which embraces production**

*and reproduction, and the particular locations and spatial sets characteristic of each social formation. Spatial practice ensures continuity and some degree of cohesion.*

**2) Representations of space:** *which are tied to the relations of production and to the order which those relations impose, and hence to acknowledge, to signs, to codes, and to 'frontal' relations.*

**3) Representational space,** *embodying complex symbolism, sometimes coded, sometimes not, linked to the clandestine or underground side of social life, as also to art.*

It is therefore through our understanding of such a 'process' - production, reproduction and enculturation of societal norms in these spaces - that we can understand the important and intertwined relationship between social practices embodied within space and the representational aspects (and representations) of space (art, architecture, monuments, etc) that embody such practices. Hence, it seems that the separation of

social space from physical space is a problematic approach, given that they inform one another.

Therefore, by extension, planning and design at all scales (seen in the broadest sense possible as systems and methods of organizing space for a particular society) produce habitats that reflect certain values, activities, assumptions, relationships, and ideal images - cultural templates or schemata. Urban planners, designers and architects shape and influence these schemata (representations of space), if their values and sensibilities are themselves shaped by the established spatial logic of their time (Rapoport 1980, 11; Lefebvre 1991).

Similar to Lefebvre's claim that "if space is a product, our knowledge of it must be expected to reproduce and expound the process of production", the exploration here attempts to increase such an understanding with a hope for the formulation of an "appropriate space" in response to the process of cosmopolitanization and the 'right to the city' for 'the other' (Lefebvre 1991, 37; Lefebvre



### 3. DESIGN PRINCIPLES+ FRAMEWORK

1996). Thus it is helpful to stress Lefebvre's summery of this interrelation:

*"It is reasonable to assume that spatial practice, representations of space and representational space contribute in different ways to the production of space according to their qualities and attributes, according to the society or mode of production in question, and according to the historical period. Relations between the three moments of the perceived, the conceived and the lived are never simple or stable..."* (Lefebvre 1991, 37, 49).

#### Environmental Legibility and Intercultural City:

As it was discussed in the first chapter, above all, this research is primarily concerned with the

challenge of environmental legibility in an intercultural context. Therefore, before any further discussion is given to other relevant issues of cultural diversity vis-a-vis our normative framework, it is helpful to better understand the role that place and physical environment play in the creation of people's mental images, particularly in diverse communities.

As Kevin Lynch (1992) has argued, environmental legibility (clarity of the mental image that citizens hold of their city) is highly important to the overall quality of the built environment. These environmental images are due to reciprocal relationship between the urban dweller and the environment (Lynch 1992; 6). At smaller scales, in particular, encoded cues help guide social behavior and are therefore decoded by the individual and groups through signs and arrangements. Consequently, misunderstanding of such

schemata can lead to conflict amongst groups and cultures. Organization of space is necessary, in order to facilitate communication amongst members of society (shaping interaction, avoidance, dominance and behavior). As challenging as such an understanding of environmental cure might be for designers, it is even more challenging when urban dwellers do not share a common culture, not to mention situations in which cultural composition of the city is in rapid flux.

Thus, understanding the role that culture plays in shaping urban environments, and in turn fostering coherent mental images for citizens, is a critical part of the design process, particularly in an intercultural context. One could simply define culture as *"a way of life, typical of a group"* (Rapoport 1980, 9). However, culture could also be seen as *"a set of adaptive strategies for*

*survival related to ecology and resources". Moreover, culture can be defined as "a system of symbols, meanings, and cognitive schemata transmitted through symbolic codes" (Rapoport 1980, 9).*

All three definitions explain some aspect of culture and are therefore compatible. Taken together, culture can be seen as a set of values and beliefs shared by a group of people, and further transmitted to new members through **'enculturation'**, resulting in particular **'world-views'**. These world-views reflect a unique way of looking at the world and result in unique ways of shaping (or designing) the environment, through applying rules that lead to systematic and consistent choices in creating a life-style, a building style, a landscape or a settlement.

It is worth noting that while human environments are produced through actions of many individuals and actors, over a long period of time, yet they reflect a certain level of congruence that adds up to a recognizable whole (Rapoport 1980, 10).

Often vernacular architecture and urbanism (such as old fabric of cities in Latin America, Europe, Middle East and the Mediterranean) are instantly recognizable landscapes for this very reason. Cultural clusters in contemporary cities (Little Italy, Chinatown, Punjabi Town) arguably reflect some of the same qualities.

These legible and coherent environments become highly influential in a cultural group's overall sense of identity, as reflected through the resilience of cultural vernaculars and typologies in migrant communities, particularly in the face of aesthetic contestation by the dominant culture (Salazar 1998; Gale 2004). In fact, despite possible push backs by some members of the host culture, the differentiation of the 'other' through environmental codes and signs (such as ethnic clusters) are often perceived as less threatening by some purists than an un-managed fusion of these elements into the dominant vernacular (Lu 2000). Finally, as Emily Talen's work has showed, areas with historical levels of diversity form their own

overall image and logic, which become recognizable and celebrated areas - at least by the creative class and cosmopolites if not most average urban dwellers (Talen 2008; Florida 2002)

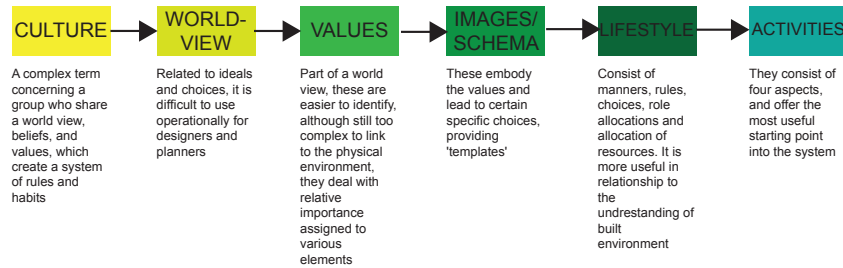
Therefore, while cultures are too complex to be easily identified in the urban environment at first glance, the values that are embodied in their resulting world-view are easier to identify, as they directly influence the images (templates) that are produced in urban environments. These images (with corresponding life-styles) can be studied (often analyzed by marketing and advertising industry), through the corresponding activities of the members of the culture. Hence, activities become the starting point for gaining access to culture's relationship to the built-environment and its systems (**Figure 3.1**).

Activities, in turn, can be analyzed through four components (Rapoport 1977, 19):

**1) The activity:** eating, shopping, drinking, walking.

**2) The specific way of doing**

**Figure 3.1** 'Choice model of design' conceptualizes the relationship between cultures and human environments (Rapoport 1977, 20).



**an activity and where it is done:** shopping in a bazaar, drinking in a bar, walking in the street, sitting on the floor, eating with other men.

**3) Additional, adjacent or associated activities which become part of the activity system:** exchanging gossip while shopping, courting while strolling.

**4) symbolic aspects and meaning of the activity:** shopping as conspicuous consumption, cooking as ritual, a way of establishing social identity.

For planners and designers, it is useful to research a particular urban environment through a cultural lens (ethnographic study), analyzing what activities, settings and lifestyles, and in turn what assumptions and values

are embedded and fostered through the physical and social environments. In an intercultural city, this approach is even more critical due to real possibilities of misunderstanding, conflict and even domination. In many contemporary cities, despite the diversity of their population, the environment (and the mental image that it fosters) might have been developed for a dominant culture, leaving other minorities at odds with their environment (Yiftachel 2008; Gaffikin, Mceldowney and Sterrett 2010).

For example, semi-private spaces (such as the North American mall) might require a type of behavior that is not expected by migrant youths who might have had a different experience in the public spaces of their original country. This might be simply due to a misunderstanding of the semi-private nature of these spaces that might have not existed as such in their homeland. Similarly, environments

that were previously sites of conflict, could be still encoded with signs and cues (such as slogans and graffiti) that actually prove divisive and harmful to a community that is in process of healing, requiring a careful inspection by designers and planners.

It is, thus, useful to study what creates a legible environment for each culture. Lynch (1992) defines **Imageability** as “*that quality in a physical object which gives it a high probability of evoking a strong image in any given observer*” such as “*shape, color, or arrangement which facilitates the making of vividly identified, powerfully structures, highly useful mental images of the environment*”. Perhaps, then, an intercultural city requires its own structure, order and arrangement that can be open and identifiable by a multiplicity of cultures.

## 3. DESIGN PRINCIPLES+ FRAMEWORK

In essence, environment is a set of relationships, such as the relationship between things and things, things and people, people and people (Rapoport 1980, 10). Such relationships are orderly and have patterns, and as discussed earlier follow a predictable and replicable template or schema, at least for the dominant culture. Therefore environments are spatial phenomenon that are constantly 'designed', in a broad sense, by the cultural context. The design of human environments organizes four elements:

- 1) Space
- 2) Meaning
- 3) Communication
- 4) Time

Hence, lack of understanding of such carefully managed relationships in space by designers and planners can lead to disruption of livelihoods. For example, attempts in Mexico to 'clean' the streets from informal vendors, and replacing them by shops, have had unintended and disruptive consequence, given that these informal markets also function as places of



**Figure 3.2** Chahar Shanbeh Suri Celebrations - last Wednesday before the Persian New Year, revealing a very different use of environment for cultural festivities, Ambleside Park, West Vancouver.

<<http://eslyouth.wordpress.com/2011/03/12/fire-festival-iranian-festival/>>

**Space:** Public space/parks, with multiple bonfires at equal intervals.

**Meaning:** "Giving one's sickness to fire/nature and in turn receiving good health" - symbolic celebration of nature and elements.

**Communication:** Public celebration and gathering, okay to create public fire and excessive noise.

**Time:** Last Wednesday before start of Spring, from 8 pm to 2 am.





### 3. DESIGN PRINCIPLES+ FRAMEWORK

neighborhood information gathering, distribution and communication (Rapoport 1980, 11).

In an intercultural city, where there are many more cultural (and sub-cultural) groups - each with their own unique assumptions about their environment - an ethnographic design process will attempt to uncover these unique cultural requirements, not overriding them universal assumption propagated through the dominant cultural logic. For example time management of space is highly important in intercultural relationships, as simple differences in temporal engagement with space can produce conflict if not managed or understood by regulators, designers and the wider public comprehensively.

Different groups might have different temporal signature, or '**tempos**', which give rhythm to unique practices and human activities, such as festivals and different uses of space through time (Rapoport 1980, 14). Christian new year in the winter, with the ritual of New Year Countdown at midnight is very different than the Persian New Year (Nourouz) at the Spring Equinox, and at a variable time of the day, depending on the year and position of the earth with respect to the sun.

Furthermore, each culture celebrates the new year in a unique way, leading to certain differences in the use of both private and public spaces. Consequently, quiet time for one group might be festive time for another group, and in a multicultural city, such differences need to be recognized and ideally reconciled (**Figure 3.2**). Moreover, temporal differences are also pronounced between

multiple generations of the same assumed culture - leading to conflict between younger and older generations, that is if spaces are not designed appropriately. For example in some North American downtowns, where the youth have traditionally been used to enjoying late-night activities such as clubbing, the revival of urban living by suburban families and seniors could pose challenges. This is particularly the case if new residents are accommodated in mis-appropriately placed condominiums close to established entertainment districts.

Such overlapping of different settings (resting place and sites of entertainment) could cause conflict among life-styles of these distinct groups - a situation that to some extent has already happened in Vancouver, requiring changes to the condo noise-bylaws and some pressure

by condominium owners to push 'incompatible' life-styles elsewhere. Such situations could have been arguably avoided, if designers and planners were more aware of possible life-style conflicts, and therefore arranged spaces accordingly. Additionally, if planners and designers had a better sense of what user groups would be attracted to particular housing types and units, then the internal arrangement of the units within high-rises could possibly mitigate some of these complaints.

Consequently, there needs to be a greater awareness of how different cultures both perceive space, use it and (re)produce it. Different neighborhoods within the city, with noticeable physical distinctions often demarcate different life-styles and activities, communicating proper behavior within these sub-areas. If such distinctions are not legible to other cultures and users, then stability of the human-environment relationship and the human-human relationship could be jeopardized (Rapoport 1980, 19). Transition between

distinct areas (border zones) could also produce legibility problems. This is particularly heightened in areas facing rapid cultural change, requiring careful management and planning. Also as the planning profession embraces more mixed-use typologies, it is even more critical to establish necessary signs and codes to make mixed-use areas legible to their users.

Similarly, in a multicultural society, notions of environmental design quality, design guidelines and standards require careful ethnographic studies of sub-cultures, rather than a priori assumptions of norms, values, life-styles and activities (Rapoport 1980, 23). In such situations, the task of the urban designer is to help groups and people develop appropriate subjective (mental/perceived) images of the urban environment, making various urban areas legible and congruent to multiple groups (Rapoport 1980, 24). In turn, new and changing areas require careful study of the population surrounding the area, encoding within these spaces signs and images that promote compatible activities,

rather than conflicting ones.

Finally, cultures themselves cannot necessarily be assumed a priori in a multicultural society, and are therefore part of the process of discovery for the designer and researcher of the urban environment - called here ethnographic approaches to design. Hence, while Turkish, Korean, Mexican or Egyptian communities might provide a starting point for such analysis, multiple sub-cultures and groups within these abstract entities need be discovered from the ground up and through careful consideration of activities, life-styles and values, and through engagement with the multiple publics.

Rapoport (1980, 23) concludes that the *"built environment thus provides a spatiotemporal framework for occasions and activities, and remind people what these activities are. But they only do all these things if they are legible, i.e. if the meaning is appropriate to the culture and its activities"*. Therefore, the urban environment could be both the site that facilitates, fosters and encourages certain activities and life-



### 3. DESIGN PRINCIPLES+ FRAMEWORK

styles, while discouraging, inhibiting and preventing other activities and cultural values (Rapoport 1980, 27). In a changing cultural context of cities, designers need to be at least aware of the assumptions that are embedded in their regulated spaces, if not actively incorporating a cultural lens into their design process.

#### Principles and Design Framework for the Intercultural City:

At this juncture, a set of normative principles for an intercultural planning lens will be provided. These principles were arrived at through some of the literature that has already been discussed, as well as the more in depth discussions that will ensue

in the upcoming chapters. It is, however, important to stress that these principles fall under the following overarching question:

**How can a coherent mental image of the city be created for different cultural groups in the city, in order to foster intercultural sustainability?**

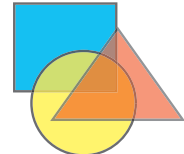
With the aim to meet the goal of:

**The city of multiple cultures and a common future**

However, as discussed earlier, given the close interrelationship between social processes, environmental factors, culture, and place, a culture sensitive approach needs to incorporate other concerns as well. Hence, in conjunction with the above question, the following ten (overlapping) principles form the normative angle of the intercultural design approach that is suggested by this work:

**1) Hybrid Vernaculars:**  
Recognize hybridity of urban environments and cultures at all scales, by responding to the fine grained cultural mix of citizens as well as respecting the boundary crossing historical and ecological vernacular of the local region.

(CH 5, Page 63)



**Justification:**

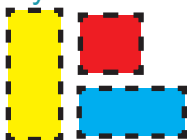
As have been argued by many theorists, cultures are never as pure or as static as often assumed by the purists, and as a result, so aren't the built environments that embody these dynamic and changing 'life-styles' and processes. However, the historical and ecological features of any given environment change at a much slower pace than the other more transient aspect of cities and hence need to be adequately acknowledged in the emergent hybrid forms, providing a much needed

common thread (Gaffikin et al 2010; Sandercock 2004; Young 1990; Rapoport 1980).

## 2) Integral Neighbourhood with Porous Membranes:

Identify, foster and celebrate unique cultural neighbourhoods with distinct cores that also encourage osmosis through their boundary zones and carefully planned connections to the rest of the city, while also respecting expressions of individual creativity and freedom.

(CH 5, Page 65)  
(CH 6, Page 91)



### Justification:

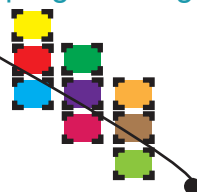
While neighbourhoods need to be legible to their immediate population - supporting their cultural activities - they are also part of a greater whole and need to interact with the wider urban environment. Therefore, through careful management of edge conditions and transition zones (porous membranes), environments can be both distinct and open, avoiding 'gated clusters' on the one hand, and 'anomic

placelessness' on the other hand (Altman and Wandersman 1987; Fainstein 2005; Castells 2009).

## 3) Diverse Places and Activities:

Identify and strengthen culturally mixed areas, where multiple cultures peacefully coexist, as important mediating places (fuzzy borders) that support diversity of uses and activities, serving as meeting grounds and intercultural contact zones through provision of carefully planned amenities and intercultural programming strategies.

(CH 5, Page 74)



### Justification:

Urban theorists, philosophers, scholars and average connoisseurs of city life all agree that the basic appeal of urbanism is its diversity, hybridity, multiplicity and infinite possibility for differentiation. Arguably, once cities embrace their diversity, they can foster creativity, growth and cross-pollination of ideas. Such mixing can emerge in certain public spaces that have had historic diversity, as well as micro-publics that encourage cooperation and

active engagement with the 'other'. Such diverse places are often accompanied by diversity of activities and uses and therefore embody urban vitality and togetherness (Talen 2008; Young 1990; Florida 2002; Project for Public Spaces n.d.).

## 4) Cosmopolitan Spaces:

designate some areas as universal civic spaces where all existing cultural groups in the city as well as possible future migrants feel safe, identify with and can perform civic activities such as forming general assemblies and public demonstrations for local and global issues (central plaza, city hall, police stations, fire hall, central transit hub, etc).

(CH 5, Page 64)



### Justification:

Due to the ever changing composition of the city, certain areas need to remain open to all existing cultures, as well as towards the world at large, as the ethics of hospitality would call for. An intercultural city will encourage democratic use of central public spaces for a variety of issues that concern urban citizens of all backgrounds. Many first generation migrants might still engage with political concerns

### 3. DESIGN PRINCIPLES+ FRAMEWORK

of their 'home-land', while others might choose to protest local or global issues. Beyond certain designated public spaces, public institutions on which all urban citizens depend on need to be open, welcoming and transparent to all cultural groups (Yiftachel 2008; Binnie, et al. 2006; Sandercock 2000; Gaffikin, et al 2010; Cheong 2006).

**5) Cultural Equity and Social Justice:** provide equal and fair access to necessary services and facilities for all cultural groups, treating each culture as its own central area, while recognizing that different cultures might require distinct types of such provisions.



(CH 5, Page 78)

#### Justification:

Supporting diversity and intercultural urbanism would not be very

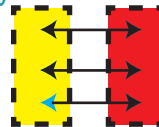
meaningful if unique cultural needs are ignored, or if services and facilities are not provided equitably. Therefore, rather than assuming a universal urban center, in this approach, there is a constant attempt to treat peripheries as their own centers. Thus each culture will be treated as its own center and have access to most vital provisions. (Castells 2009; Fainstein 2005).

**6) Bridging Social Capital and interconnected places:** couple design strategies with economic and social strategies that foster cooperation and formation of positive new connections/ linkages amongst different groups and cultures, while providing physical connections to all areas of the city.

(CH 8, page 144)

#### Justification:

With the acknowledgment of different cultures comes the responsibility to also



foster connections (social, economic and physical), bridging differences and avoiding exclusion. Active strategies such as urban markets, community gardens and children's playing ground have the potential to both bridge cultures, as well as empower marginalized groups through economical and social participation (Castells 2009; Gaffikin, et al 2010; Cheong 2006; Morales 2009; Rishbeth 2004; Loukaitou-Sideris 1995; Smets 2011).

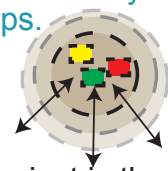
#### 7) Right to the City:

Acknowledge the possibility for conflict and tension amongst groups, by paying particular attention to areas with multiple vulnerable populations (such as low income population and refugees) and their critical needs, while creating stepping stones in the city as sanctuary areas for these groups.

(CH 5, Page 65)

#### Justification:

At the heart of this project is the normative call for the universal



‘right to the city’, where differences are recognized and protected. However, this also means a responsibility towards the most vulnerable and marginalized populations, who lack the necessary defensive capacities to adapt to changing conditions. Amongst the possible problems that vulnerable populations experience are inhibited social bonding, lower social capital, disruption of economic activity and networks, and reduced conflict resolution mechanisms. Such problems are increased as rates of change are accelerated, resulting in reduced legibility of environment by communities that lack adaptive capacity. These groups often experience such changes from external forces that are beyond their control (such as global and national markets, climate change and demographics shifts), creating a perception of reduced choice and freedom. This perhaps can explain some of the conflict and resentment that often ensues between vulnerable local population and new arrivals. By helping with

the basic needs of these groups, possibility for conflict is diminished and potential for peaceful coexistence is enhanced (Lefebvre 1996; Rapoport 1977; Rapoport 1980).

### 8) Sustainability:

Strategically align intercultural sustainability actions to support other pillars of sustainability, such as economic, environmental and social sustainability.

(CH 7, Page 125)



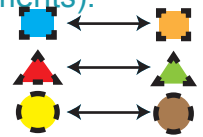
#### Justification:

As it has been argued both in this work as well as by others, sustainability (if seen as a project of solidarity) is an integrative project that encompasses many overlapping initiatives and causes. Intercultural solidarity is indeed both essential to urban social wellbeing, as well as its long term economic and ecological health. So for example, if increased proximity of a cultural group to certain facilities would also mean less emissions, then it should be prioritized given its multiple benefits (Castells 2009; Beck, Giddens and Lash 1994, Friedmann 2009; Smets 2011).

### 10) Flexible and Adaptable

**Design (personalization of space):** Encourage a degree of openness and informality in the design of public realm, by allowing users to engage and personalize their environment through making changes to the software of space (semi-fixed and non-fixed elements), while meeting high design quality standards and best practices in the hardware of space (fixed elements).

(CH 7, Page 121)

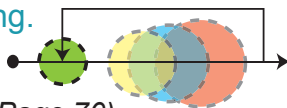


#### Justification:

The dynamic nature of urban culture means that design and planning professionals need to accept a certain level of informality and openness, so that urban environments can be adapted to the current cultural needs of residence, while also open to changes in the future. Indeed, overall environmental legibility itself requires it, or as Lynch argues “the image should preferably be open-ended, adaptable to change, allowing the individual to continue to investigate and organize reality. However, more fixed elements of the built environment need to also meet important and well established design requirements (Lynch 1992; Rapoport 1977; Rapoport 1980).

### 10) Ethnographic Urban Design:

Incorporate ethnographic, phenomenological and co-design methods in the design process, where cultures, lifestyles and their systems of activities are discovered on the ground rather than assumed – creating legible and culture supportive environments through organization of space, time, communication and meaning.



(CH 5, Page 70)

#### Justification:

If other principles are more concerned with some end goal, this principle is concerned with methodological issues (process) of planning and design for intercultural environments, and is thus an essential part of this

approach. In order to build, regulate, provide and foster more culturally supportive environments, designers and planners need to gain access into the life-styles and values of various cultures, by incorporating creative ethnographic tools and methods in their design process. Patterns (ideal images) and activities are the simplest way to begin this enquiry. In doing so, planners and designers need to particularly uncover core elements of cultures that prove most important to the livelihood of groups. Such core elements cannot be assumed and need to be uncovered through engagement with groups and their daily activities. Finally, users of urban environments need to be an integral part of the design process, as they are most familiar with their 'life-styles' and environment (Rapoport 1977; Rapoport 1980; Loukaitou-Sideris 1995; Sandercock 2000; Fernando 2004).

In conjunction with the above principles, our intercultural lens

## 3. DESIGN PRINCIPLES+ FRAMEWORK

will be guided by a multi-scalar framework, which should serve as a flexible structure that can be either applied in its entirety or only through application of certain elements within it, depending on the project requirements. In fact, not all design analysis and tasks suggested here are covered in this work. Therefore, this framework should be treated as a flexible structure, as each planning site and problem would merit its own unique set of methods.

### GLOBAL AND NATIONAL SCALES

*(Discussed in chapter 4)*

#### 1) Global Processes and Local Change (argument for intercultural planning):

- Unpack relevant macro-processes (late modernity, globalization,

cosmopolitanization, climate change, risk society)

- How do these processes influence immigration at the national and sub-national scales?

- What is the composition of immigrant population and where do they come from?

- What are the national and provincial settlement patterns of migrants?

- How is the immigrant settlement pattern changing and what spatial, social, political, historical dynamics influence these changes and their settlement preferences?

- What are the national and provincial policies on migration?

- What are current problem areas – such as perception of local people towards migrants?

- What are forecasted levels of migration?

- What does the literature reveal about possible urban responses towards these macro processes?

## URBAN AND REGIONAL SCALES

*(Discussed in chapter 5)*

## 2) Geographies of Intercultural City (spatiality of culture and temporal change):

- Identify and map boundary crossing, fixed elements

- (historical vernacular and ecological features)

- Map distinct cultural groups based on broad categories of ethnicity, age, religion and income

- Construct maps of ethnic diversity (using a diversity index)

- Map existing assets (community organizations, facilities and services)

- Gather current planning policy base that could be relevant (such as design guidelines to social planning policies)

- Identify certain central, civic and cosmopolitan areas that can be open to all groups, as well as to the world and future changes (cosmopolitan spaces)

## 3) City of many cultural neighbourhoods (macro analysis of spatial coexistence and contestation):

- Establish a hierarchy of neighbourhoods based on maps from urban scale

- Identify stable

neighbourhoods and changing neighbourhoods

- Identify cultural clusters (homogenous along one or several dimension) and homogenous areas

- Identify historical neighbourhoods (little Italy, Little India, China Town, Greek Town, Hipster area, Yuppie, etc)

- Identify gaps in provision of services and facilities to the above cultural neighbourhoods

- Identify critical areas where multiple vulnerable populations of different cultures are pushed into the same space (possibility for conflict)

- Analyse current policy base against best practices in intercultural planning and identify changes to policy to make it more open to intercultural practices

## DISTRICT SCALE (NEIGHBORHOOD)

*(Discussed in chapter 6)*

## 4) Neighbourhood Dynamics (micro analysis of existing neighbourhood typologies):



### 3. DESIGN PRINCIPLES+ FRAMEWORK

- Identify the neighbourhood type: static or dynamic, homogenous or diverse, etc (observations, research and surveying residents)
- What are the characteristics of this neighbourhood: Integral, Parochial, Anomic, Stepping Stone, Transitory
- Identify neighbourhood core with greatest intensity of a particular cultural mix and their activities (listing and documenting items that are unique about an area – categorized in terms of fixed, semi-fixed and non-fixed elements)
- Identify Border Zones and Transition Areas (listing 10 things that show hybridity and cultural contact [positive/negative] in the area – categorize in terms of fixed, semi-fixed and non-fixed elements)
- Conduct ethnographic research on neighbourhood core and

boundary zone

- Use existing research on the identified/predicted behaviour of different groups and test them against existing context (using interviews, ethnography, etc)
- Identify barriers in the border zones, level of porosity, possibility for conflict and level of interaction
- Identify elements within the neighbourhood core that might be challenged
- Conduct Asset Mapping and Network Mapping
- Identify the relationship of this neighbourhood (and its population) to the outside world such as the rest of the city
- Identify (and map) 'LIFE-STYLES', ACTIVITIES and SETTINGS that are unique to this area (existing market research, ethnography, interviews)
- Identify different life-style's tempos and possible conflicts

#### 5) Fostering Integral Neighbourhoods (macro Design Strategies):

- Identify strategies that will help this neighbourhood to be both legible and imageable to its residents (celebrating their culture) while also connected and porous to the rest of the city (providing both sanctuary as well as connections)
- Establish a two tier system hierarchy of facilities and services (those for intercultural contact [open/porous/fuzzy] and those for specific cultural needs [celebrating one unique culture])
- Identify connections (both physical as well as social) between/among these facilities and the outside
- Identify/suggest strategies for the border zone (such as markets, community gardens, children's playing grounds) that fosters connections and active cooperation
- Identify/suggest additions to the neighbourhood core in order to celebrate distinct nature of this particular neighbourhood
- Increase connections to the

rest of the city (physical and social) to foster an open and integral neighbourhood

## PARCEL + MICRO SCALES

*(Discussed in chapter 7)*

### 6) Fostering Culture Supportive Places (micro design strategies for public realm, hybrid typologies and cultural vernaculars):

- Identify if the particular site is in a boundary zone/ connecting facility) or a cultural core (meeting a particular group's need)
- Identify ACTORS (user groups) and ACTIVITIES that occur in this space (time, space, meaning of activity/space, rituals, activity systems, manner activities are done and with whom)
- Identify fixed, semi-fixed and non-fixed elements
- Identify the level that this space meet users' cultural needs
- Identify areas within the site that act as cultural contact zones and areas

that could be problematic overlap of activities

- Identify the level of adaptability and openness of this site to change during the day, month, year and due to different types of uses
- Identify barriers and gaps
- Suggest strategies that will help the site to better reflect the cultural needs of its user within its 5, 10, 20 min catchment (such as changes to non-fixed elements) -> Listing ten elements that can make it culturally supportive

## SOCIAL SYSTEMS + TOOL BOX

*(Discussed in chapter 8)*

### 5) Ethnographic Urban Design (social systems, co-design, engagement Toolbox):

- Create appropriate methods and tools to engage with existing cultural groups and uncover life-styles (with relevant activities and settings)
- Adopt co-design strategies to tackle project problems
- Develop surveys, maps, questioners, co-design, community mapping, digital

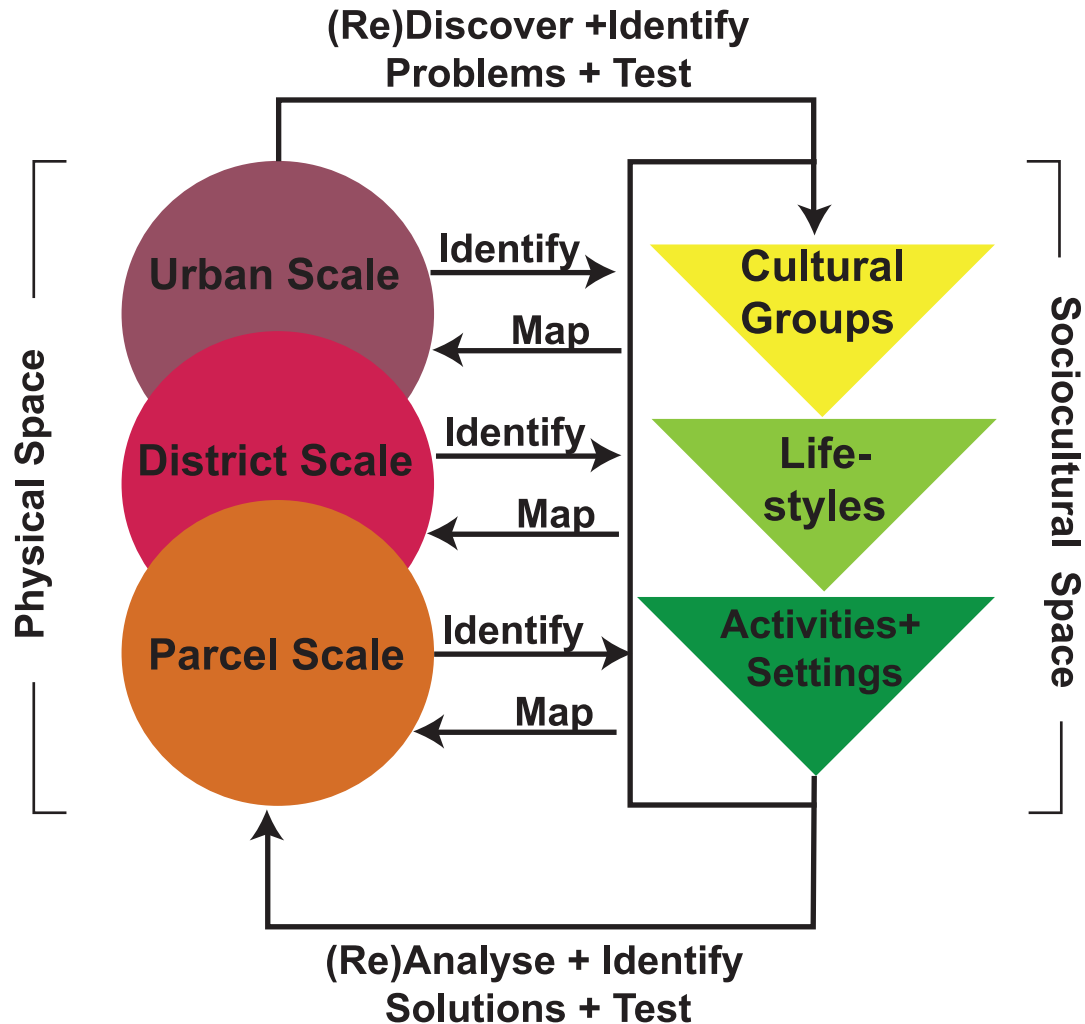
tools (Google pins), etc

The above framework can be summarized in an iterative and recursive design process diagram - suggesting a frequent movement between different scales and categories (**Figure 3.3**).

The following chapters will provide a more in depth discussion of relevant issues for culture sensitive urban design. Each chapter will expand on the literature that has already been touched upon, and then showcase some of these analytical methods on the Vancouver case-study.

### 3. DESIGN PRINCIPLES+ FRAMEWORK

**Figure 3.3** Our intercultural planning lens is an iterative process, in which as a discovery is made in one scale (or a social process), then this discovery needs to be tested, analyzed and lead to adjustments at other scales.





## WORLD MAP

Öyvind Fahlström, Acrylic and indian ink on vinyl mounted on wood. 92 cm x 183 cm. 1972

## 4. GLOBAL AND NATIONAL SCALES

### Global Processes and Local Change (argument for intercultural planning):

The importance of various macro-processes of our time to the contemporary urban condition, and its influence on the emergence of hybrid, diverse and culturally mixed cities, was briefly discussed in the previous chapters. However, a more in depth interrogation of these processes and trends (under the umbrella of 'late-modernity') is merited, as it can arguably serve as the basis of the justification for an intercultural approach to urbanism. This is in recognition of the fact that it is the very nature of our global reordering that has left its mark on the dynamics of urban life, and thus one cannot divorce the understanding of cities (as nodes within the network) from the overall global structure itself (Castells 2000). This chapter will overview the current global immigration levels and trends, and then narrow in on Canada, illustrating how population movement manifest itself at the national and sub-national scales.

Late modernity (also referred to as the post-traditional order or reflexive-modernization) has been conceptualized as a confluence of multiple and at times contradictory forces operating at different scales and resulting in accelerated levels of change in contemporary society. The juggernaut of individualization, globalization, rapid urbanization, cosmopolitanization and hyper mobility are remaking the urban landscape, creating new sociocultural compositions, interdependencies and newly emerging identities. Despite the global nature of such forces, place-boundedness remains a highly relevant human experience, given that cities - as the center stage of these processes - have become the physical site of contact (coexistence and conflict) with the 'other', and new meaning formation (Smets 2011, ii17, Beck, Giddens and Lash 1994, Friedmann 2009; Castells 2000). Ulrich Beck makes the connection between the local and global processes remarkably clear as he asserts that: *"the modest, familiar, circumscribed and stable, our protective shell is becoming the playground of universal experience; place, whether it be Manhattan or East Prussia, Malmo or Munich, becomes*



*the locus of encounters and interminglings* or, alternatively, of anonymous coexistence and the overlapping of possible worlds and global dangers, all of which require us to rethink the relation between place and world” (Beck 2006, 10).

Indeed, such forces have a spatial expression, with different countries, regions and cities experiencing different outcomes, at different periods, scales and velocities, and resulting in possible imbalances and disparities. Increasing advances in technology and telecommunication, combined with trade liberalization (promoted since the 1980s) has resulted in greater global flows, creating multiple push and pull factors for people and capital alike. The painting by Öyvind Fahlström (on the first page of this chapter) attests to the time-space compression that has resulted in the remaking of the global geography, as continents are shown to have disappeared and oceans and physical barriers shrunk.

Fluidity of global capital is often facilitated by new global institutions and through the involvement of non-state actors, such as multinational corporations (MNCs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Furthermore, environmental, geopolitical and economic problems are often created at the global scale, creating risks that transcend national boundaries, requiring new institutions and cooperative arrangements.

In fact, global exchange of ideas, cultures, life-styles and the growth of solidarity movements (human rights, environmental movement, etc), empowered by new technologies have also been an emerging property of these changes. Thus, these multiple and interlinked emerging facets of contemporary society cannot be adequately expressed as simple offshoots of globalization, often seen as a the logic of the neo-liberal agenda. Although this is not to diminish the role that economic liberalization has had on acceleration of change.

Some sociologists have used the term

***cosmopolitanization***, in contrast to the simple one-dimensionality of economic globalization, which positions economic relations above all other forms of interdependencies. Beck (2006, 9) interprets it as a “*multidimensional process which has irreversibly changed the historical ‘nature’ of social worlds and the standing of states in these worlds*” and it therefore involves the “*development of multiple loyalties as well as the increase in diverse transnational forms of life*”. This is echoed by Anthony Giddens (1994, 109) and Castells (2009, 119) as they underline the positive potential (and in fact absolute necessity) of creation of new social bonds, and in essence an opening out towards the ‘other’, formation of new and multiple solidarities.

## Global Immigration:

International migration has been an important dimension of the cosmopolitanization process, as it has brought people of different cultural backgrounds together into the same space, while also creating bridges to distant

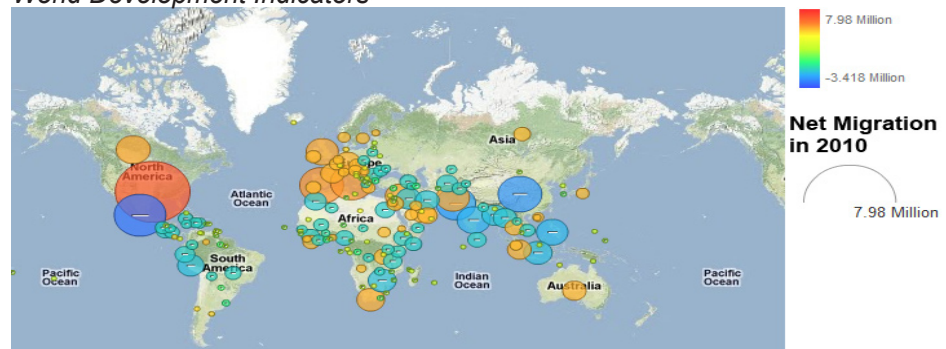


## 4. GLOBAL AND NATIONAL SCALES

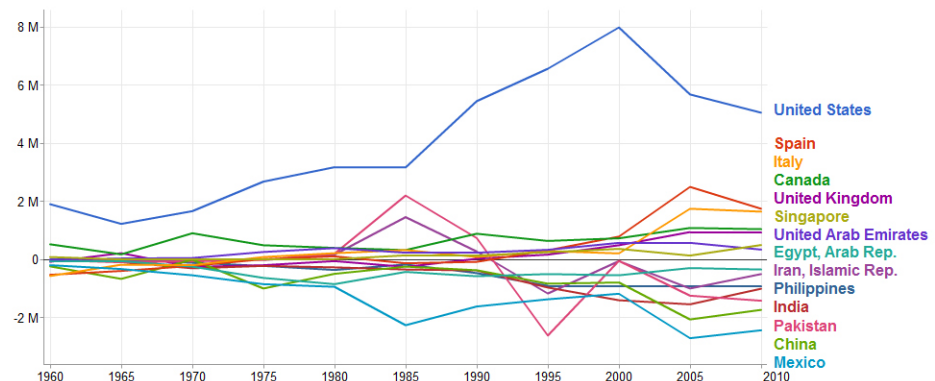
lands, as migrants maintain a level of connection with their relatives and 'home-land'. Increased levels of population movement is therefore both a cause of cosmopolitanization process, as well as influenced by it.

Unlike the more fluid nature of capital movement, the migration of people is often more complex with difficult impediments and pressures facing migrants and vulnerable populations in the host communities alike. **Figure 4.1 to 4.3** illustrate the increase in global migration since 1980s to 2010. These maps show the countries with higher immigration levels as well as those with the largest emigrations levels. It is evident that the developed countries of Europe and North

**Figure 4.1** Net international migration by countries in 2010 <from google public data explorer: <http://www.google.com/publicdata/directory>, World Bank, World Development Indicators>



**Figure 4.2** Net migration by top 5 migrant receiving countries, top 5 migrant sender countries and some middle range countries. <from google public data explorer: <http://www.google.com/publicdata/directory>, World Bank, World Development Indicators>

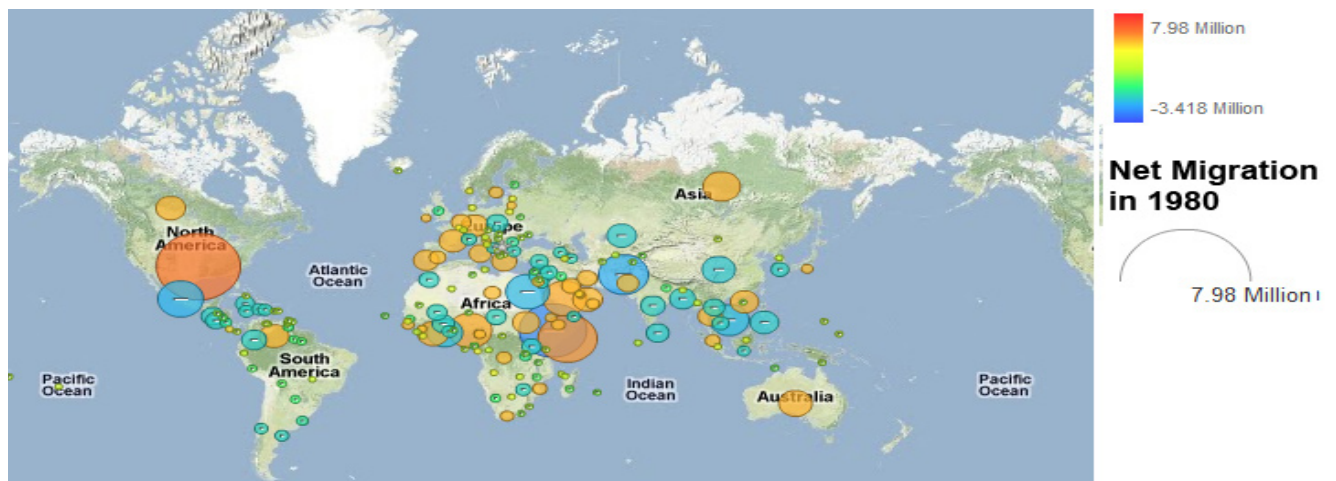
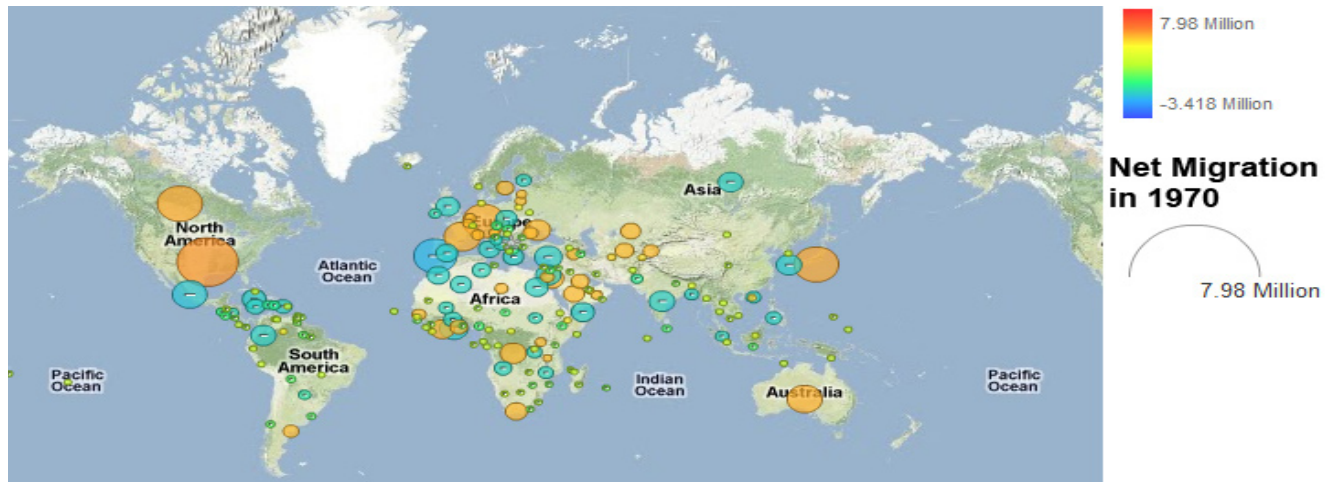


America (the global north) are the big receivers of global population flows, while countries of the periphery and industrializing nations are experiencing the highest outward migration. Most stark example of

these migration patterns is the neighboring countries of United States and Mexico, with the former having the highest immigration levels (5.05 million people) in the world and the latter with highest emigration levels

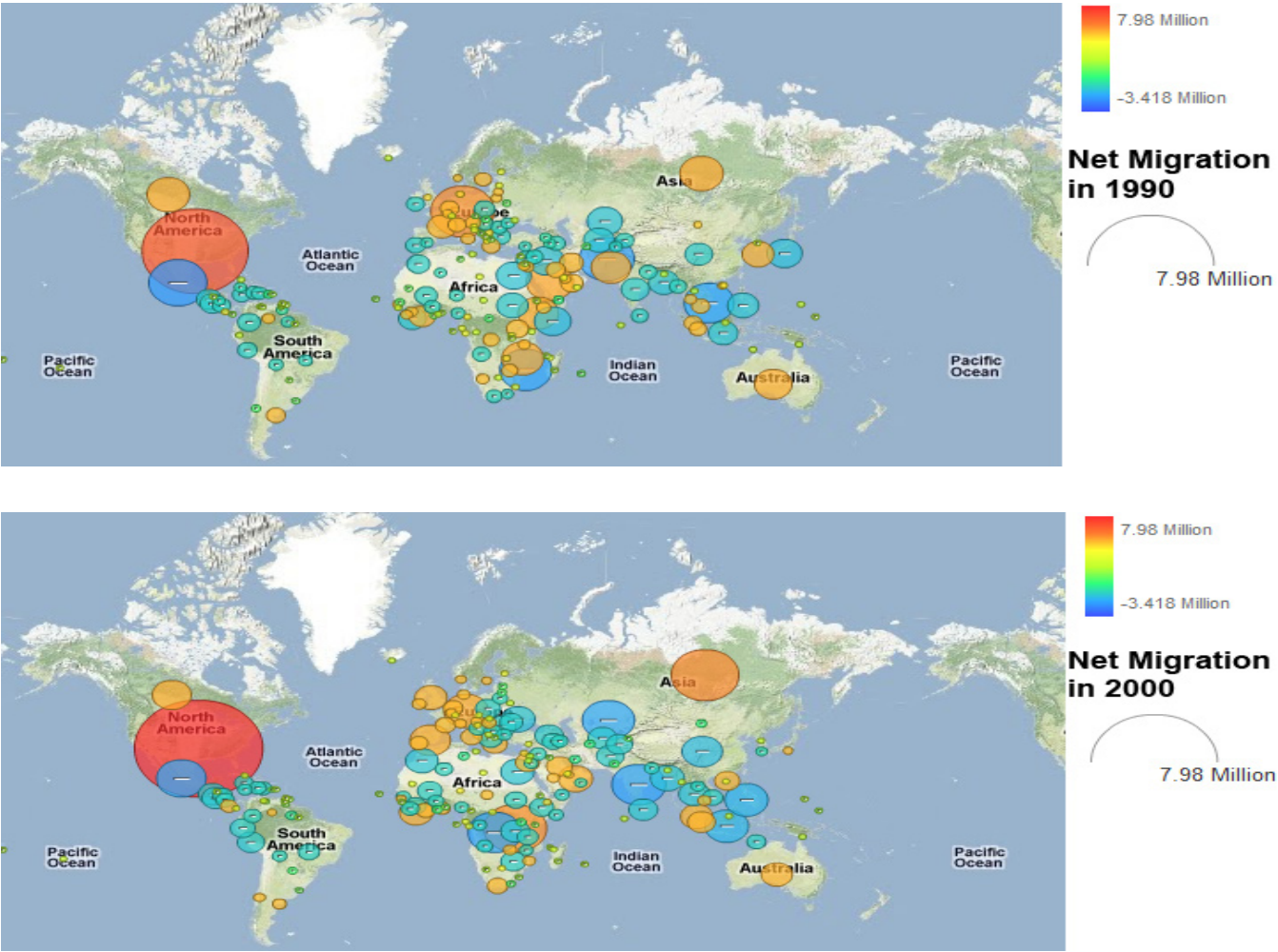
(-2.43 million people).

Interestingly, international migration seems to have peaked around the turn of the millennium, with a noticeable drop around 2010. This change in the overall trend



# 4. GLOBAL AND NATIONAL SCALES

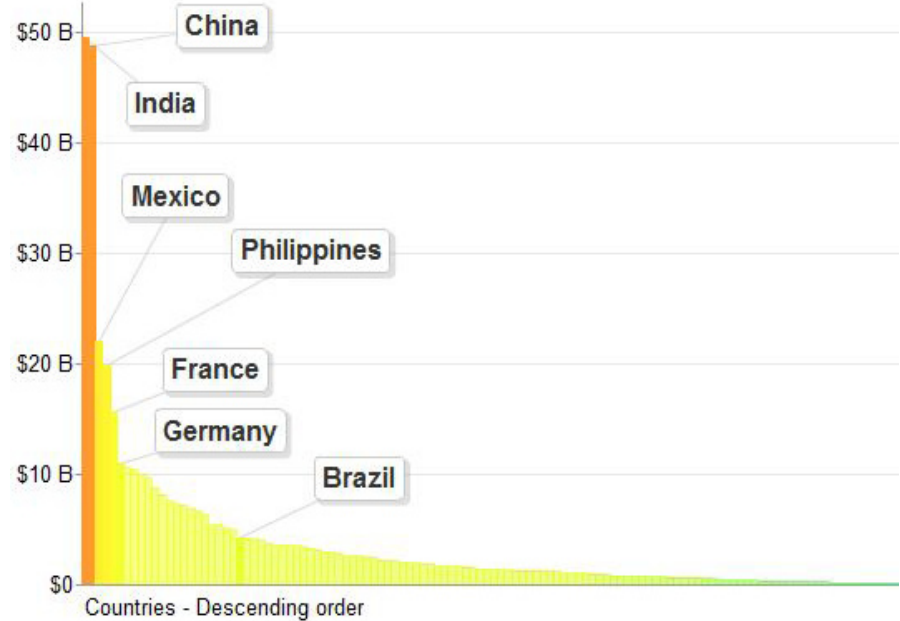
Figure 4.3 (left and below) Net international migration by countries, every decade from 1970 to 2000.



can be possibly attributed to the global financial crises, multiple recessions and an increased backlash against immigration in the last decade.

There is indeed a strong relationship between economic forces and global migration. Worker remittances often reveal the economic impetus behind the voluntary and involuntary migration. **Figure 4.4** and **4.5** reveal the heavy concentration of remittance receptions by countries of global south, such as **Figure 4.4** 2009 Worker remittance and compensation received by counties in US \$

**Figure 4.5** 2009 Worker remittance and compensation received by counties in US \$. <from google public data, World Bank, World Development Indicators>





## 4. GLOBAL AND NATIONAL SCALES

China, India and Mexico. European countries also exhibit high rates of remittance reception, which can be attributed to the integration of the continent into a unified trading zone, increasing inter-country trade and workforce flow.

forces influence the local context, by changing political, environmental and cultural dynamics. Presently, geopolitical and regional conflicts contribute to considerable levels of migration from places such as Middle East, North Africa and Latin America into the global North.

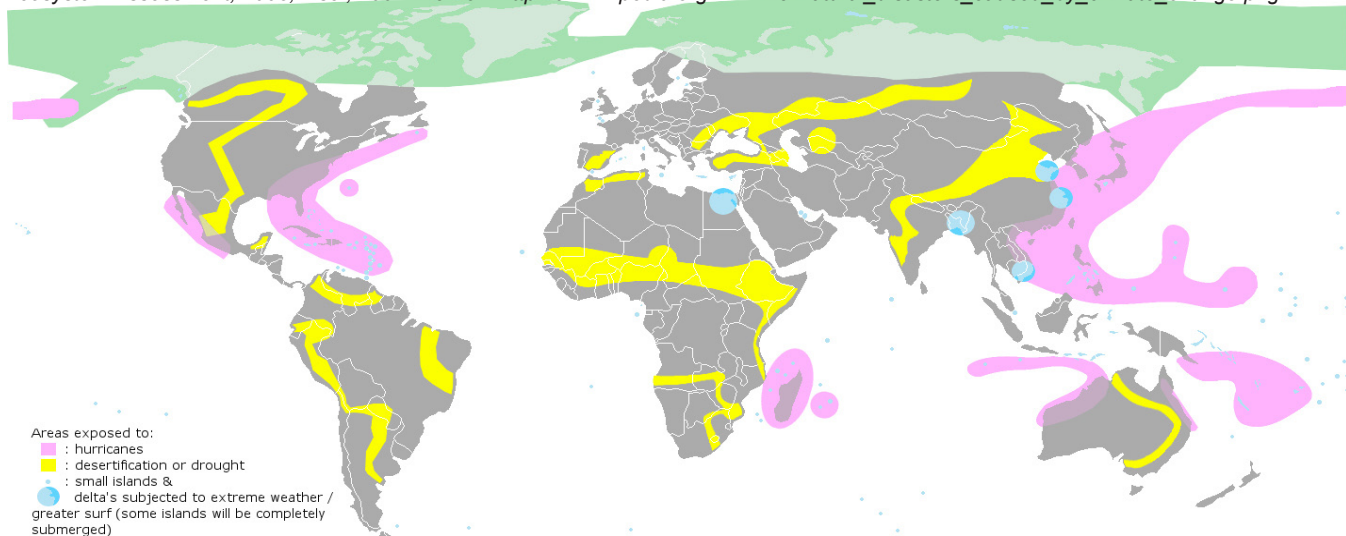
to the future of cities is the predicted impact of climate change and environmental degradation, which is seen to produce higher rates of international migration at unprecedented levels. 200 million climate migrants have been predicted by 2050, with as much as 500 to 600 million people (or 10% of world population) at extreme risk due

The same economic

Perhaps even more important

**Figure 4.6** Regions where natural disasters will possibly occur due to climate change.

<Norman Mayers, "Environmental Refugees, An emergent Security issue", 13. Economic forum, Prague, OSCE, May 2005; Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, 2005; Liser, 2007 File from [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Natural\\_disasters\\_caused\\_by\\_climate\\_change.png](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Natural_disasters_caused_by_climate_change.png)>



natural hazards (Becklumb 2010). Low lying countries, such as the Maldives, are already becoming uninhabitable due to rising sea levels with more such cases in the horizon (Becklumb 2010).

Hence, at the urban and regional level, the ethical imperative to shelter newcomers pushed (and pulled) by economic and environmental necessity, coupled with challenges of cultural change and population integration, makes a compelling case for more planning in the area of immigrant and refugee settlements in urban areas.

## National Boundaries and Immigration:

Despite the increased fluidity and velocity of international flows, due to the macro-processes that were covered in the previous section, immigration between national and regional boundaries remains a perilous task for much of the world population that does not have access to the privileges of the international

elite, and yet have no choice but to make this difficult journey.

Curiously, as international trade ballooned since the 1980s due to liberalized policies on trade, international borders were exceedingly fortified for movement of people. Domestic population, facing economic and other pressures at home, have lobbied their governments to erect barriers to keep 'illegals' out of their country. The construction of high-tech border fences between the United States and Mexico is a prime example of such barriers erected between geographies that were previously porous if not contiguous.

Similarly, European Union member countries have separated themselves from their poorer neighbors in North Africa and Middle East - with the erection of the notorious six-metre-tall double fence border wall in the Spanish exclave of Melilla in North of Morocco serving as the literal expression of such separation. Furthermore, outright walls have been erected in conflict zones, such as that between the

Palestinian territories and Israel by the Israeli state, bringing back memories of the Iron-curtain.

Of course, erecting walls (imagined and real) to separate geographies and boundaries - demarcating the inside from the outside and the private from the public - have always been part of human sense of territoriality, with perhaps the Great Wall of China as the paramount expression of such activity (Rapoport 1977). However, in an epoch when world seems to be evermore connected, the increased barrier for movement of vulnerable populations is arguably unjust and probably unsustainable (**Figure 4.7**).

Migration process does not end once refugees and migrants make their way into the inner boundaries of the nation-state. The search for a home, new opportunities and the possibility for integration into a supportive community are also part of this journey. Thus our focus will turn to the national boundaries and physical geographies of immigration, particularly settlement patterns of immigrants in Canada.



## 4. GLOBAL AND NATIONAL SCALES

**Figure 4.7** A figurative image of a “globalized” world, where an evermore infinite levels of capital, goods and commodity flows, creating massive regional trading blocks, is coupled with the walling off of the vulnerable and poor population.



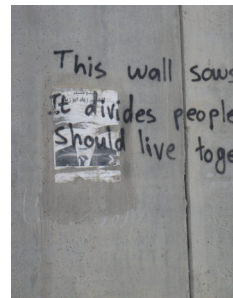
1



2



3



5

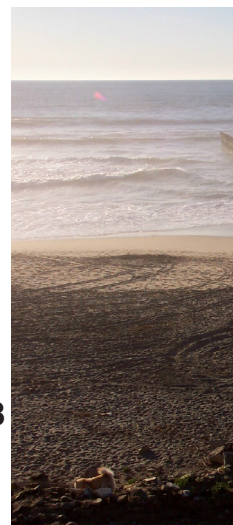


6



7

8



#### Sources:

- 1) Mexican border wall installation: <[maneeggee.blogspot.com](http://maneeggee.blogspot.com)>
- 2) The border fence Melilla, Spain: <<http://www.flickr.com/photos/razowsky/2630979891/in/set-72157605940340658>>
- 3) Graffiti on the Israel Palestine wall <[nonviolentweapons.com](http://nonviolentweapons.com)>
- 4) Spanish border wall in Melilla: <[http://upagainstthewall2011.files.wordpress.com/2011/03/1\\_border\\_fence\\_spain\\_cemetery\\_melilla\\_1207\\_bw\\_large.jpg](http://upagainstthewall2011.files.wordpress.com/2011/03/1_border_fence_spain_cemetery_melilla_1207_bw_large.jpg)>
- 5) The US border fence in Nogales <<http://moblog.net/view/926276/the-us-border-fence-in-nogales>>
- 6) The fall of Berlin Wall <[www.thekidswindow.co.uk](http://www.thekidswindow.co.uk)>
- 7) Israel Palestine Wall <[mariposa.yosemite.net](http://mariposa.yosemite.net)>
- 8) US/Mexico border fence <[viainternational.org](http://viainternational.org)>
- 9) Family separation by US/Mexico border fence <unknown>
- 10) US/Mexico border fence <[http://www.upi.com/News\\_Photos/view/8f9fc3eade2fc67e92683d98fb646676/US-MEXICO-BORDER-FENCE-SECURITY/](http://www.upi.com/News_Photos/view/8f9fc3eade2fc67e92683d98fb646676/US-MEXICO-BORDER-FENCE-SECURITY/)>

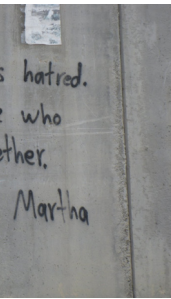


**Figure 4.8** International borders have been increasingly turned into walls that separate communities and people, keeping vulnerable populations away.

4.

GLOBAL AND NATIONAL SCALES

4



10



9

## Immigration Landscape in Canada:

Canada in the 21st century is firmly a metropolitan country, with more than half of its population residing in its top four city-regions (Lightbody 2006, 26). Additionally, while Canada has always been a country of immigrants with the exception of its Aboriginal population, the nature of immigration to Canada has dramatically changed, making it predominantly metropolitan and multi-ethnic (*ibid*, 51,534). This shift in immigration dynamics - due to domestic policies as well

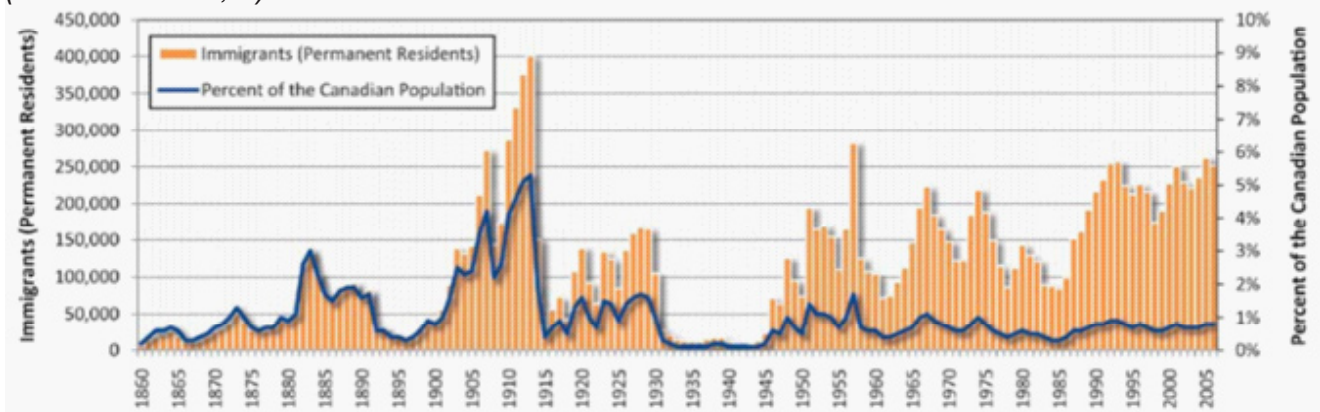
as international processes - is rapidly changing the composition of urban areas in the country (Urban Futures 2004).

Indeed, immigration is having a profound influence on the way Canada is urbanizing. With an aging population and a stagnant natural population increase due low birthrates, international immigration is one of the few mechanisms through which the federal government maintains a steady stream of tax-base and population growth . However, while immigration policy is generally a federal policy, the settlement patterns of immigrants is a multiscalar and spatial phenomenon that is largely outside the

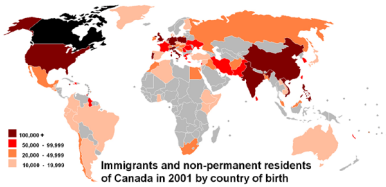
influence of the federal government once settlers land in the country. On the other hand, the most pronounced impact of this process is felt metropolitan regions who have the least influence on the original policy directions (Lightbody 2006, 32).

Canada has undergone cycles of immigration throughout its history, with the highest peak occurring in the early half of the 1900s (*ibid*, 534) (**Figure 4.9**). The first waves of immigration were linked with westward expansion of the country towards the prairies and the west coast, creating a distinctly “rural” settlement pattern (*ibid*, 57). However, the second wave of immigration has been

**Figure 4.9** Immigration to Canada, 1860 - 2006, from *Citizenship and Immigration Canada* (MURDIE 2008, 1).



## 4. GLOBAL AND NATIONAL SCALES



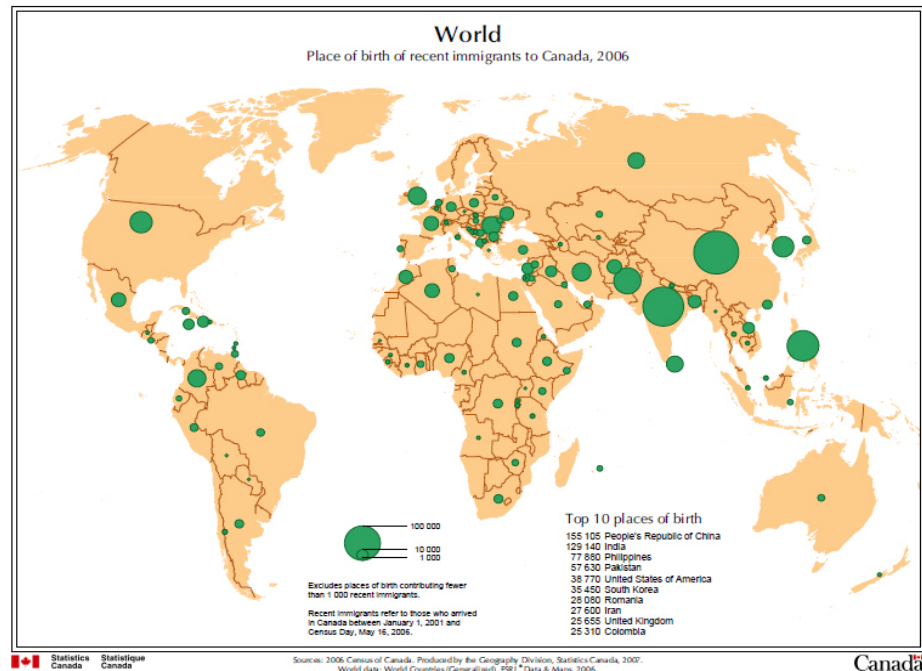
**Figure 4.10** Birth Place of Immigrants, in 2001 (left) and 2006 (below).

<Statistics Canada, 2011: [http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2006/as-sa/97-557/maps-cartes/world/World\\_RecentImmig\\_ec.pdf](http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2006/as-sa/97-557/maps-cartes/world/World_RecentImmig_ec.pdf)>

decidedly urban in nature, increasing the population in larger metropolitan regions.

As Robert Murdie explains (2008), while in 1971 the top ten Canadian census metropolitan areas (CMAs) accounted for 53% of the immigrant population to Canada (44% of the total population), by 2006 they accounted for 90% of the country's newcomers (54% of the total population). Additionally, after the removal of the discriminatory immigration policies towards non-white migrants in 1960s, the ethno-cultural composition of immigration has drastically changed from one of European origin to one from many regions of the world (**Figure 4.10**).

Interestingly, one can observe the difference that exists in the composition of

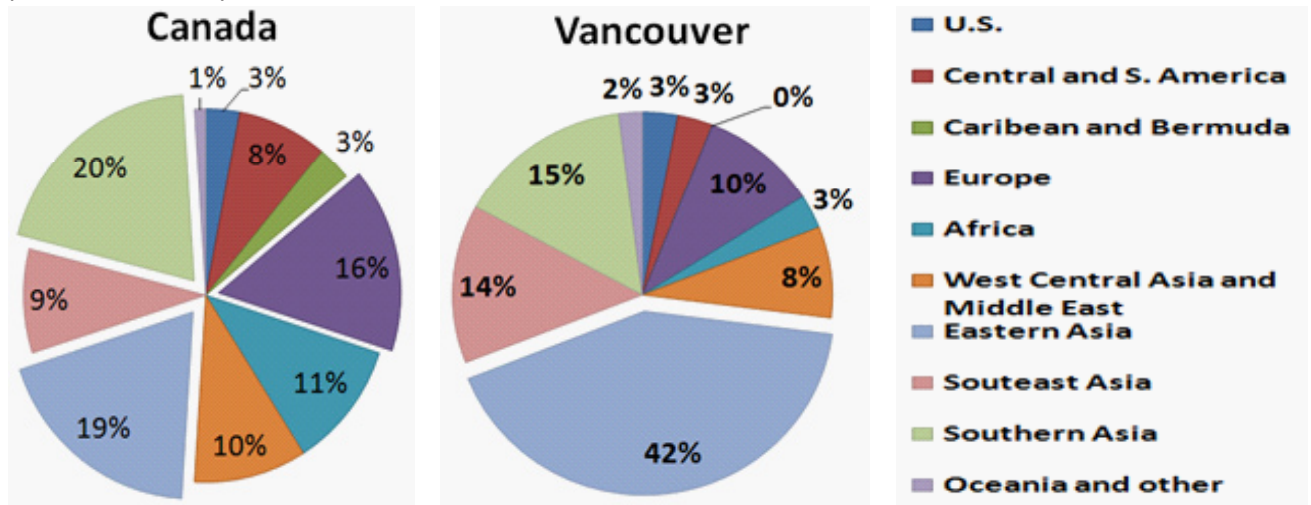


Vancouver immigrants and that of the entire country, revealing variations in the settlement patterns and preferences of different ethnic minorities across the country (**Figure 4.11**). That said, the overall trend in terms of diversification of the sources of immigration is clear, with Asian and other non-

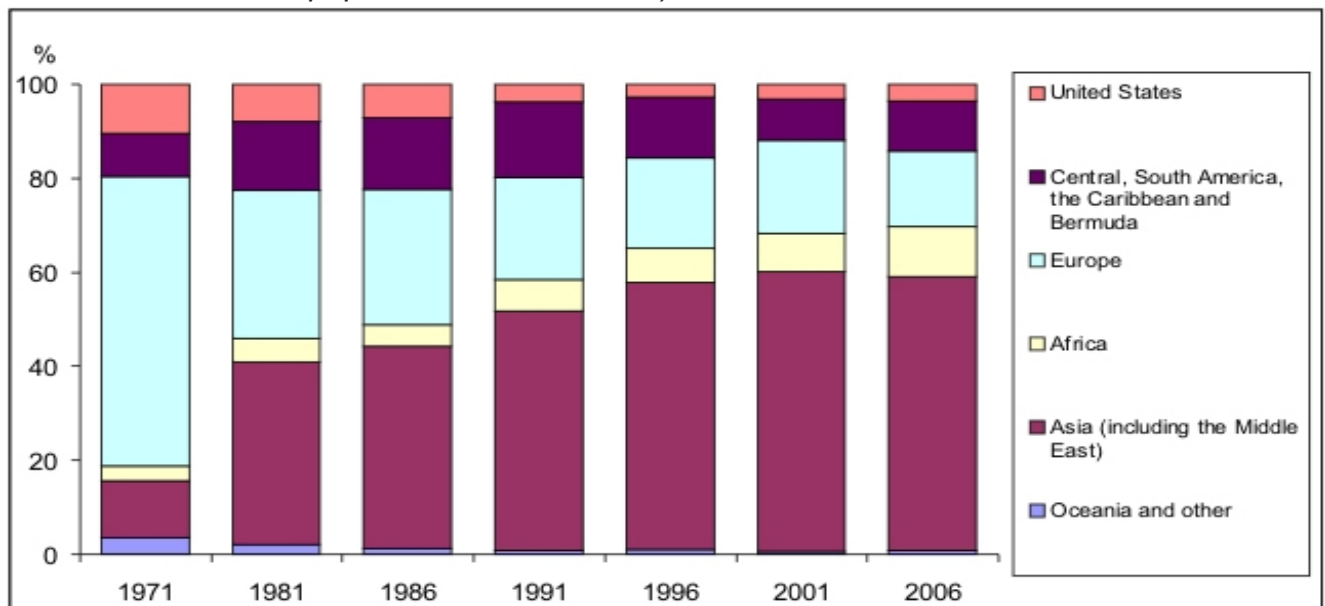
European countries increasing their share of immigrant population from 1970s to present (**Figure 4.12**). Such diversity, and change, in the composition of the country of origin has undoubtedly altered the urban cultural landscape of Canada's largest metropolitan regions.



**Figure 4.11** Birth Place of Immigrants, 2001 - 2006, Canada and Vancouver CMA (MURDIE 2008).



**Figure 4.12** Region of origin of recent immigrants to Canada, 1971 to 2006 (Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 1971 to 2006).

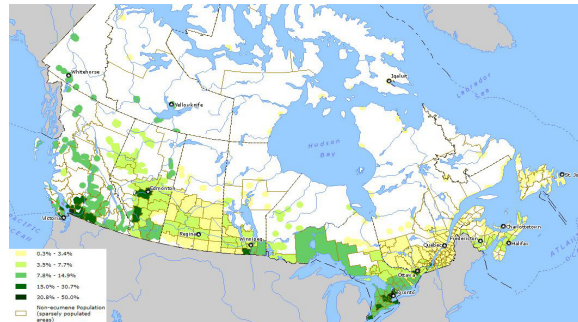




## 4. GLOBAL AND NATIONAL SCALES

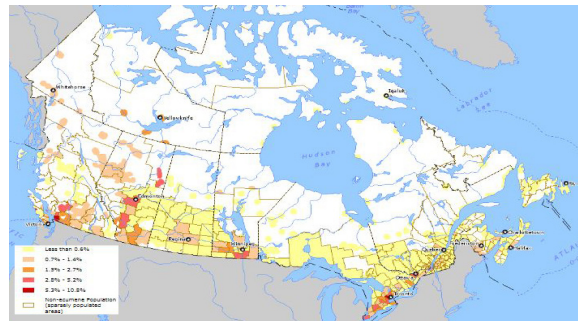
Once inside the country, either as refugees or landed immigrants, newcomers choose different regions and cities for their settlement due to previous ties and possibility for new connections and opportunities. Therefore, the spatial settlement pattern of immigrants across the country is not uniform and depends many factors including the ethnicity of the immigrant group. Moreover, larger urban regions with an already large immigrant population tend to attract the largest number of immigrants (**Figure 4.13 to 4.15**).

Moving down a scale to the provincial level, the spatial settlement pattern of immigrants in the province of British Columbia is similar to that of the rest of Canada, with

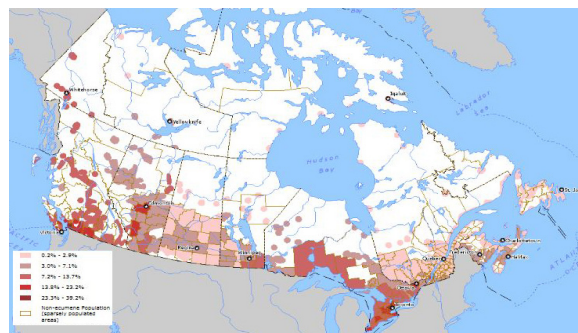


**Figure 4.13**  
2006 foreign born population (Atlas of Canada, 2006 NRCAN)

<<http://atlas.nrcan.gc.ca/auth/english/maps/peopleandsociety/immigration>>



**Figure 4.14**  
Population immigrated between 2001 and 2006 (ibid)



**Figure 4.15**  
Population immigrated before 2006 (ibid)

urban metropolitan regions (such as that of Victoria and Vancouver) having the highest percentage of their population as immigrants (**Figure 4.16**). According to the 2006 census, 39.6% of the Greater Vancouver region's population consists of immigrants.

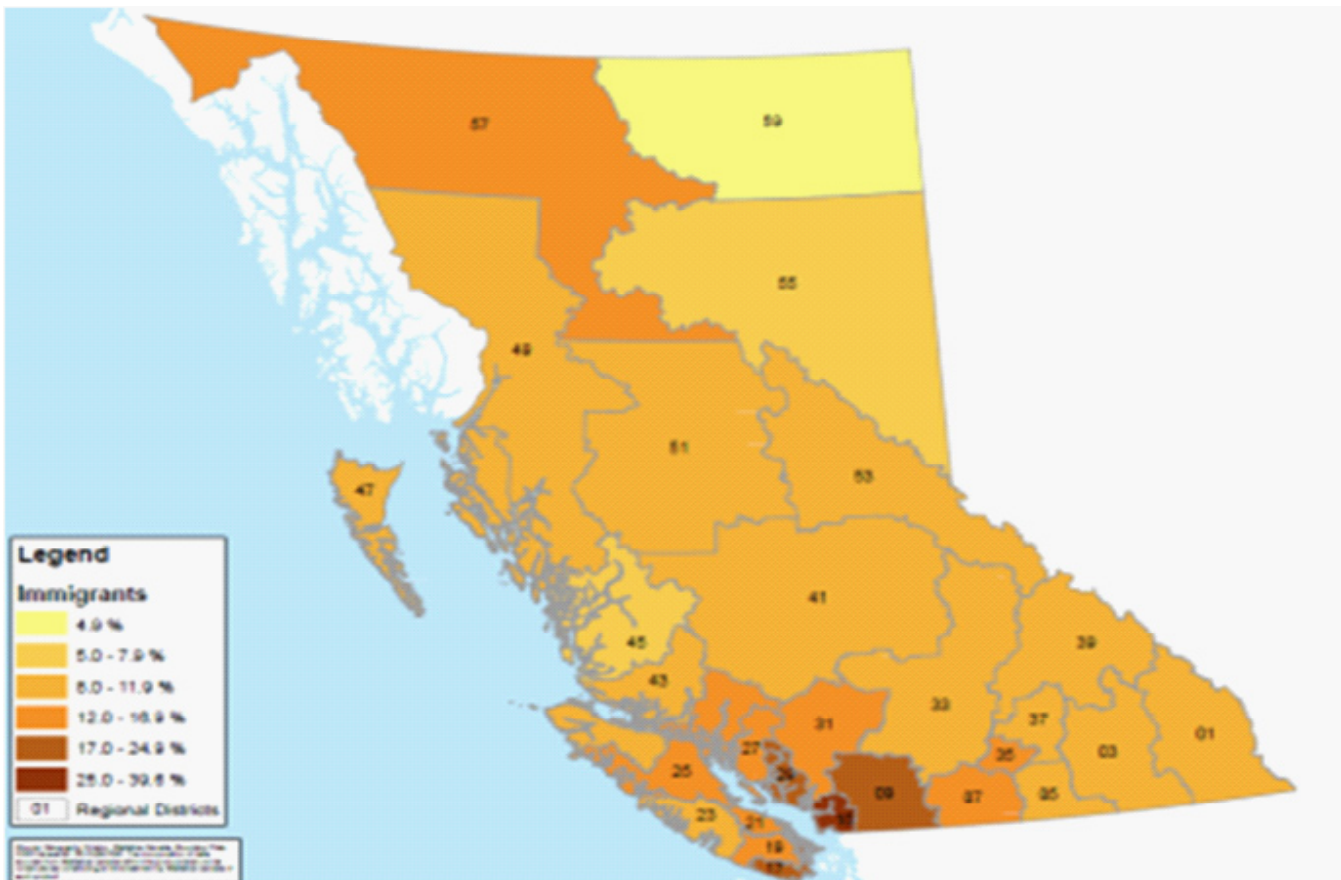
It is worth noting that while majority of the population increase, as well as majority of the immigration, occurs in these urban areas, current distribution of electoral power still favors rural areas over urban areas, a phenomenon often referred to as the 'rural angst' (Lightbody 2006). This imbalance if not corrected could be a greater source of conflict in the future, as urban areas continue to grow and immigration to urban regions becomes the only source of positive population growth in a country of close to negative birthrates (Ramlo, Berlin and Baxter 2009).

In conclusion, for an intercultural planning lens, it is important to understand the larger forces that impact population movement and immigration into

the urban environments. A better understanding of the settlement patterns of immigrants, once they are inside the national and provincial (or state) boundaries, allows for planners to unpack the reasons behind particular settlement choices of different ethnic and cultural (and class) groups across the national boundaries, anticipating their needs and better provision of services. Indeed, planners can and need to better understand why certain groups prefer their region over other regions, in order to better anticipate, plan for and manage new populations, as the international flows create new sites of diversity at the urban and regional scales.

## 4. GLOBAL AND NATIONAL SCALES

**Figure 4.16** Percentage population of immigrants in BC  
(Spatial Analysis Branch 2006)





*“The capacity to live  
with difference, (as)  
the coming question  
of the 21st century”*

*- Sir Peter Hall  
(Smets 2011, ii16).*

**wind-catcher**

Sorour Abdollahi, mixed media on  
canvas 48 cm x 48 cm. 2010

## 5. URBAN AND REGIONAL SCALES

### Geographies of Intercultural City (spatiality of culture and temporal change):

At this juncture we turn to an exploration of the spatial implication of cosmopolitanization (and other relevant processes discussed in depth in last chapter), and its expression on the contemporary city, at the urban and metropolitan scales. From this chapter onwards, there will also be a more detailed explanation of what planners and designers can do, in order to manage these changes, making the case for ***intercultural urbanism*** in response to these macro processes. Therefore, at this scale and subsequent scales, the theoretical understanding of the important systems and processes under the study will be followed by suggested methods and templates of analysis, and some possible planning and design strategies, while primarily drawing upon the Vancouver context.

Cities are inherently contested spaces with distinct geographical boundaries, limited resources and bounded spatial extent (Gaffikin, Mceldowney and Sterrett 2010, 494). Therefore, with the addition of multiple 'others' to the contested space of the city, potential for conflict is heightened, resulting in what scholars have called 'gated city', 'fortress city' and 'polarized city'. Consequently, conflict in cities has a 'spatial expressions' that should interest planners and urban designers given their instrumental role in shaping the spatial form of the city (Gaffikin, Mceldowney and Sterrett 2010). However, as one might expect, spatial manifestation of both conflict and coexistence are often complicated and multifaceted. For example, hybrid forms of architecture and space might both indicate mediation of conflict, while also attest to asymmetrical geometry of power.

Optimistic views of cosmopolitan culture often point to the introduction of people and spatial practices that are open minded and adaptive, resulting in ***cross-pollination***, hybridity and fluidity of identity and cultures and ultimately greater understanding (Gaffikin, Mceldowney and Sterrett 2010, 497).



Concepts such as ‘**fuzzy borders**’ and ‘**porous membranes**’ are seen by the likes of Ulrich Beck as means through which conflict will be dissolved over time (ibid). However, others have warned of a more pessimistic scenario, the ‘tower of Babel’ phenomena, pointing out the human tendency for tribal affiliation, separatism and segregation (Gaffikin, Mceldowney and Sterrett 2010, Rees 2006).

In response to those with a more pessimistic view towards the possibility of coexistence in human societies, one can point to their very criticism as the reason for a normative stance on the issue of diversity. It is important to point out that a formulation of an ideal intercultural city needs to build on the concept of **recognition** rather than **tolerance**, given that the latter implies disapproval while the former embodies within it affirmative endorsement of the different culture (Gaffikin, Mceldowney and Sterrett 2010). That said, it is imperative to recognize that a complete

recognition of all practices is not feasible since it might imply indifference and even relativism.

Consequently, it is prudent to explore some concrete expressions of difference in the built environment, untangling some of the positive and negative threads in the cosmopolitanization process. Before doing so, however, it is prudent to unpack ethnicity as the main generator of urban difference. This is particularly important as ethnicity and territoriality have been historically associated with one another.

The etymological understanding of ethnicity is revealing, as its root is in the Greek term ‘ethnos’ meaning ‘blood connection’, and in contrast with ‘demos’, which implies a territorial-civil association. However, overtime the term has changed meaning, creating a malleable term that encompasses everything from blood/territorial belonging to tribal, religious, national and language associations (Yiftachel 2008). Moreover, identification with ethnicity seems to be context sensitive, as such associations gain

importance during times of conflict or increased environmental stress (Yiftachel 2008; Rapoport 1980). For this analysis, a broad formulation of ethnicity is adopted, as a form of group identity based on a perceived common history, shared cultural experiences and ties to a specific place (Yiftachel 2008).

With the process of immigration, new forms of ethnicity (and spatiality) are created, with group association based on a distance from a common ‘homeland’ and difference from the established local culture. Interestingly, if immigrant groups have had a long period of distance from their original homeland, their established (and emerging) ethnicity is also noticeably different from that of their original home country, as the immigrant group is influenced by the shared experience of migration and adaptation to the new host society - for example the African-American community in the U.S., the Italian community in Canada, Bangali community in England, Fijian Indians, Parsi community in Singapore and Kurdish community in Turkey.



## 5. URBAN AND REGIONAL SCALES

Therefore, common struggles of fighting for allocation of resources and services in the host society, establishment of new communities and social ties, distance from homeland and even political grievances towards their original nation-state might be inherent to their new ethnic identity (Yiftachel 2008).

Due to the assimilative efforts of the host country, as well as the possible desire of some immigrant groups to fit in within their new society, such ethnic forms can eventually transform, or perhaps dampen themselves, into what sociologist Herbert Gans termed '**symbolic ethnicity**' (Gans 1979). This would result in a hybrid form of identity, where the migrant group would maintain certain nonthreatening (even

tokenistic) cultural practices such as religion, food, music and festival, while shedding (or de-emphasizing) practices that might be perceived threatening towards to established/ dominant socioeconomic systems, institutions and spatial practices of the host country, with its own mode of production (Gans 1979; Yiftachel 2008; Lefebvre 1991).

In extreme situations, urban environments are the battle ground of visible ethnic and national conflict - as is the case in cities such as Nicosia, Belfast and Jerusalem. On the other hand, more subtle conflicts can persist in seemingly peaceful global cities such as London and Los Angeles. In such situations, while the more affluent segments of ethnic minorities can adapt quickly and perhaps only maintain a symbolic level of ethnicity, the more vulnerable and impoverished groups can face exclusion and 'othering',

which in turn results in greater self-segregation and animosity towards the mainstream (Yiftachel 2008; Rapoport 1977).

Such cities, if not planned actively through an intercultural lens, are therefore divided into 'ethno-classes' (combination of ethnic identity and class affiliations) that are alienated from the mainstream society, and due to the lack of economic opportunity and inability to choose their own desirable neighborhoods, can ultimately result in greater conflict and contestation of space (Rapoport 1977; Gaffikin, Mceldowney and Sterrett 2010). Perhaps the 2011 London riots, as well as previous clashes in Paris and Los Angeles can be partially expressed in these terms, as these episodes exhibit sings marginalization, be it ethnic, class, generational, gender, sex and combinations of it.

Therefore, while the more

affluent immigrants have an easier time to both choose their own environment, with adequate provision of services, the vulnerable populations are forced into areas that do not meet their unique cultural needs, while also separating them from the rest of the city. This problem can be exasperated, if the vulnerable ethnic population is also housed near the vulnerable local population from the dominant culture, as both groups might have a harder time adjusting to the changing environment (*Rapport 1977, 19*).

Duanfang Lu's (2000) historical examination of hybridity in the built form of Vancouver, as a result of Chinese (and other Eastern) migration, is valuable to this discussion. Particularly that the two successive waves of Chinese migration, one at the onset of the 20th century and the next wave at the end of the century, each with its own unique forms of spatial expressions, have resulted in different (if also interrelated) cross-cultural relationships (Lu 2000).

The first wave, according to

Lu, at the beginning of the last century, resulted in a hybrid form of urbanism in which it constituted "a boundary-crossing mixture", where China Town and other migrant neighborhoods were clearly and geographically separate from other neighborhoods. In contrast the emergence of the second form of hybridity, at the end of the century, has been characterized by the 'other' asserting itself at the 'core', or as she argues the "invasion of a previously privileged 'white' landscape by an alien 'other'" (Lu 2000, 20). Therefore the much contested 'tower forms' of the downtown and 'monster housing' in the rest of the city, while clear expressions of hybridity, have brought about resistance and animosity from the local – or 'host' – population.

In the case of the monster housing in particular, the resulting hybrid form is perhaps symptomatic of a wider lack of adequate cultural planning, given that it reflects a need for a more diverse housing type for minority groups with different needs and family structures, while also upsetting the image of Vancouver's established neighborhoods with their own

unique regional characters. Therefore, unplanned hybrid forms can arguably result in a worst case outcome for the minority and majority population alike, making the case for a more proactive engagement with the issue and the adoption of an intercultural planning lens.

In reference to this new hybrid typologies, Lu asserts that *"although such houses appear stylistically 'Western', they also shared certain features that enunciate a readable 'Hong-Kong Chinese taste'"* making them clearly a hybrid (Lu 2000, 22). She contrasts the two waves of immigration, arguing that the first wave of poor immigrants (both Asian as well as Southern and Eastern European) were mostly seen as in competition with the local low waged blue-collar workers, while the second wave of richer migrants had an impact on the elite, white neighborhoods of Shaughnessy and Kerrisdale, producing more complex narratives.

Therefore, while price increases have been a clear source of contention by residents across the city, notions such as 'Canadian

## 5. URBAN AND REGIONAL SCALES

identity' are also often brought up by opposing elite neighbors and the media. In these debates, people allude to the impact, scale and form of monster houses, seeing them as 'unacceptable, in 'bad' taste and 'unneighborly' (*ibid*). However, while Lu's critique of the existence of a fixed Canadian identity (propagated by the privileged dominant culture) has strong merit, it is also important to recognize that environmental changes could indeed also create legibility problems (disturbing existing mental images) if not managed and mediated appropriately.

That said, her analysis indeed reveals the instability, and therefore insecurity of one's identity. The first hybrid form of

urbanism is not seen by the local population as problematic as the newer form of such hybridity, given the geographic boundedness of the 'other' in the first wave, which allowed for the dominant population to see itself as separate and 'intact'. On the other hand, the blurriness of boundaries, which has resulted from the insertion of the 'other' into the white neighborhoods, has a destabilizing influence and can possibly lead to a crisis of identity at the 'center', not to mention conflict and misunderstanding between the two cultures.

However, as it was argued by Beck, such blurriness might itself result in a more open society, overtime, as conflicts are resolved and better forms emerge. That said, by examining the creation of these hybrid forms (a combination of 'sameness' and 'otherness'), we can understand that "*such a dynamic hybridity embodies*

*an inherently imbalanced cultural exchange, in which the margin always mimics the center, seeking to make itself into a copy of the stronger culture*", while "*such mimicry is never complete, however, and whatever traces of difference there are become crucially important for the center*" (Lu 2000, 25). Therefore, even residents with the symbolic forms of ethnicity are 'othered', while they themselves might increasingly disengaged from the local discussion and keep stronger ties with their abandoned homeland, through social media, communication technologies and international travel (Yiftachel 2008).

This example clearly reveals the interconnected mesh of race, ethnicity and class as cosmopolitanization is overlaid on top of other structures of society and played out through spatial and temporal dimensions. Lu argues that despite the wealthier position

of these global migrants, with access to *“the universal global grid designed to facilitate capital mobility”*, these migrants *“as members of an ethnic minority with a long history of discrimination in the region have been forced to camouflage their difference”* (Lu 2000, 26).

While Lu does not necessarily disagree with Edward Soja's hypothesis of 'Third Space', which calls hybridity as “thirding-as-othering” and a “trialectics”, or Bahbha's assertion that *“all forms of culture are continually in a process of hybridity”*, she does worry about ignoring the politics of location and its implication for the processes discussed here. Hence, by ignoring the temporal dimension, one might naively overlook power imbalances in a situation of coexistence.

Lu reject's Soja's call for a postmodern - and purely spatial formulation of geography - alluding to Fredric Jameson's warning that *“disappearance of sense of history, manifested by a pervasive denial of various ‘depth models’ as the ‘supreme formal*

*feature’ of post modernism .... cognitive mapping of past, present and future can link contemporary ideological positions with contemporary imagination”*. She warns that the lack of historicity in analysis of hybridity can result in *“a new kind of superficiality”* (Lu 2000, 27).

The importance of temporal change is also echoed, albeit somewhat differently, by Lefebvre in his seminal book, the Production of Space (Lefebvre 1991, 46). Therefore, while spatial understanding of diversity at all scale is very critical to the task of intercultural planning, a temporal understanding of change, adaptation and contestation is also important for a better grasp of urban cultural interplays.

### City of many cultural neighbourhoods (macro analysis of spatial coexistence and contestation):

Thus far it has been attempted to explore hybridity, diversity and cosmopolitanization through a more theoretical lens. However, as we narrow

down to the urban and even smaller units of analysis, the discussion will shift to a more applied set of methods, as the opportunity for appropriate community and planning intervention measures increases at these smaller scales, expanding upon the framework and set of principles that were developed in chapter 2 and 3.

As discussed earlier, and regardless of one's attitude towards it, urban hybridity (along ethnic, class and age groupings) is a reality for many large urban areas. Therefore, the first task for urban planning with a cultural lens would be to better understand the spatial and temporal dimensions of such hybridity. That said, the social dimension of urban environment is also tied with the physical environment, which contain and shape the structure of cities.

At the larger metropolitan scales, certain features of the city are shaped by long standing historical/ cultural factors, as well as environmental features of the geographical setting of the city. Such features are often called **boundary crossing**

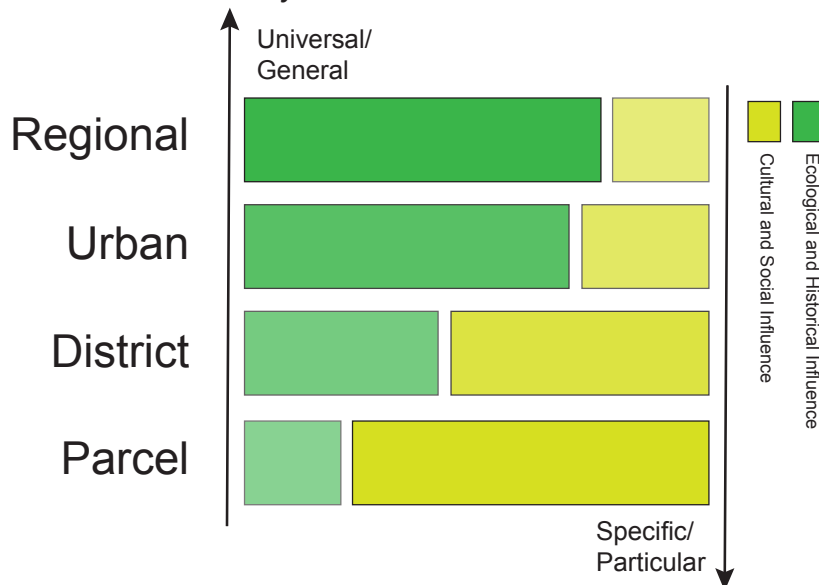
## 5. URBAN AND REGIONAL SCALES

features and form repeated patterns over a large geography (Rapoport 1977). Moreover, given the ecological and historical underpinnings of such features, they can serve as unifying elements in the design of the urban fabric

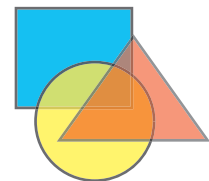
for an entire region, creating a distinct regional vernacular that performs better ecologically, while also enhancing the overall **'imageability'** of the urban landscape for all citizens - even in today's multicultural cities, (Lynch 1992). At the urban and regional scales, therefore,

planners and designers need to both understand the broader composition, and trajectory of change in social systems, as well as comprehend the more constant features that are shaped by history and geography of the place.

**Figure 5.1** The degree and composition of hybridity (between universal systems and particularities of cultures) at different scales of analysis and levels of urban intervention.



Consequently, at this scale, there exists a set of universal (and perhaps neutral) systems that respond to the local ecology, while also contain the more complex sociocultural forces that lead to specificity and uniqueness at smaller sub-areas (**Figure 5.1**). Perhaps then, the task of planning is to discover, encourage and foster hybrid typologies (at all levels and scales) that mediate between unique needs of the immediate population, while also respect the longer standing, boundary crossing aspects of the local landscape - **Hybrid Vernaculars Principle**.



While this approach suggests that at the larger metropolitan and city scales, the planning strategies would be guided more by natural systems and universal needs of the entire urban population, rather than specific needs of a segment of society or a particular neighborhood, it also suggests that the overall hybrid form of the urban landscape (spatially and temporally) can be sketched out at the larger scales. Therefore, the process of discovery of multiple cultures, and their settlement patterns, can start at this level and lead to greater investigation at the smaller scales.

In summary, at this scale the following strategies of analysis shall be utilized:

1) Establishing the universal, boundary crossing systems: such as the road network, terrain, green infrastructure, water bodies, overall structure of the urban fabric and the historical vernacular of the region, etc.

2) Identifying unique and distinct sub-areas contained within the universal systems:

unique sociocultural groups and their settlement patterns, differences in urban fabric (such as rhythm, density, height, etc), historical cultural clusters, etc.

3) Identify areas that are stable and areas that are dynamic and entropic.

4) Identifying border zones, and the nature of mixing and diversity in these boundaries, and possible sources of conflict (such as established blue-collar neighborhood mixing with new refugee arrivals), etc.

5) Discovering the pattern and hierarchy of clusters and neighborhoods, from distinct homogenous areas to cosmopolitan and civic areas.

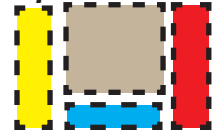
6) Establishing an overall picture of the temporal and spatial patterns of the hybrid urban form, with identification of sub-areas that might be further analyzed at smaller scales.

**Figure 5.2** provides an abstract system diagram for the resulting urban-cultural fabric that is encouraged in this work. Here, overall diversity is mediated through

careful planning of sub-areas, while establishing one or more centers of cosmopolitan (universal/neutral) contact zones for civic engagement (and right to public assembly) for the entire public -

### ***Cosmopolitan Spaces Principle.***

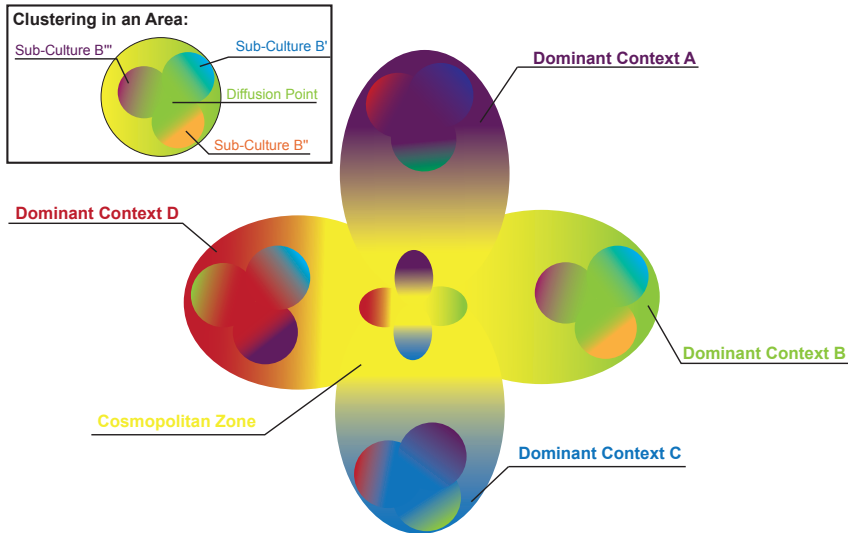
These spaces should not only be open to existing cultures and groups, but also welcome new populations and the world at large. Sub-areas themselves can be diverse along one or more dimension (class, ethnicity, religion, age, etc), but such diversity forms its own overall dominant context, as 'complete' (or perfect) diversity is never entirely possible, nor easily definable, not to mention undesirable at smaller scales.



In sub-areas, cultural clusters are formed and encouraged, as new migrants and vulnerable populations might require a '**stepping stone**' for eventual adaptation to the local context. These areas give migrants, refugees and marginalized local residents the chance and opportunity to establish necessary support networks (social capital formation), while creating the



## 5. URBAN AND REGIONAL SCALES



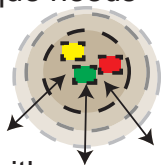
**Figure 5.2** Conceptualizing intercultural city, with distinct areas, supporting cultural clusters and points of diffusion, as well as central cosmopolitan spaces that are open to existing cultures and all new cultures.

**Table 5.1** Borad Approaches to ethnic and minority spaces (SQ= Status Quo) (Yiftachel 2008)

<b>Ethnic Space:</b>	<b>Policy Approaches</b>		
	<b>Oppressive</b>	<b>SQ</b>	<b>Accommodation</b>
Body	forbid/marginalize	apathetic	facilitate
Home	demolish/confine	confine	facilitate
Property	reduce value	'market forces'	develop
Neighborhood	undermine/confine	restrict control	indifference
Ghetto/enclave	create/preserve	preserve	protect/open boundary
Turf	undermine	restrict	facilitate
Sacred Sites	minimize	condone	expand
Shanty town	criminalize	ignore	selectively legalize
City	majority hegemony	maj.control	power-sharing
Land	expropriate/ restrict use	little change	proport. allocation/ restitut'n/compent'n
Region	deny, undermine	restrict	facilitate
Territory/homeland	deny	deny	autonomy
Diaspora	sever links	restrict links	indifference

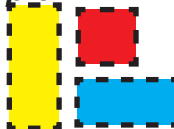
critical mass required for provision of specific services and facilities catering towards their unique needs - **Right to the City Principle**.

At the same time, these areas are open (with permeable membranes), allowing for slow diffusion of newcomers into the wider society, as they establish the necessary mechanisms required for adoption to their new home. Arguably,



such a model allows for the greatest choice and the least possibility of conflict in the urban environment, while establishing a hierarchy of diversity levels - **Porous Membrane Principle** (Rapoport 1980).

Finally, beyond gaining an understanding of the overall urban dynamic, it is also important to uncover various policy approaches towards different ethnic groups and their spaces. Doing so will

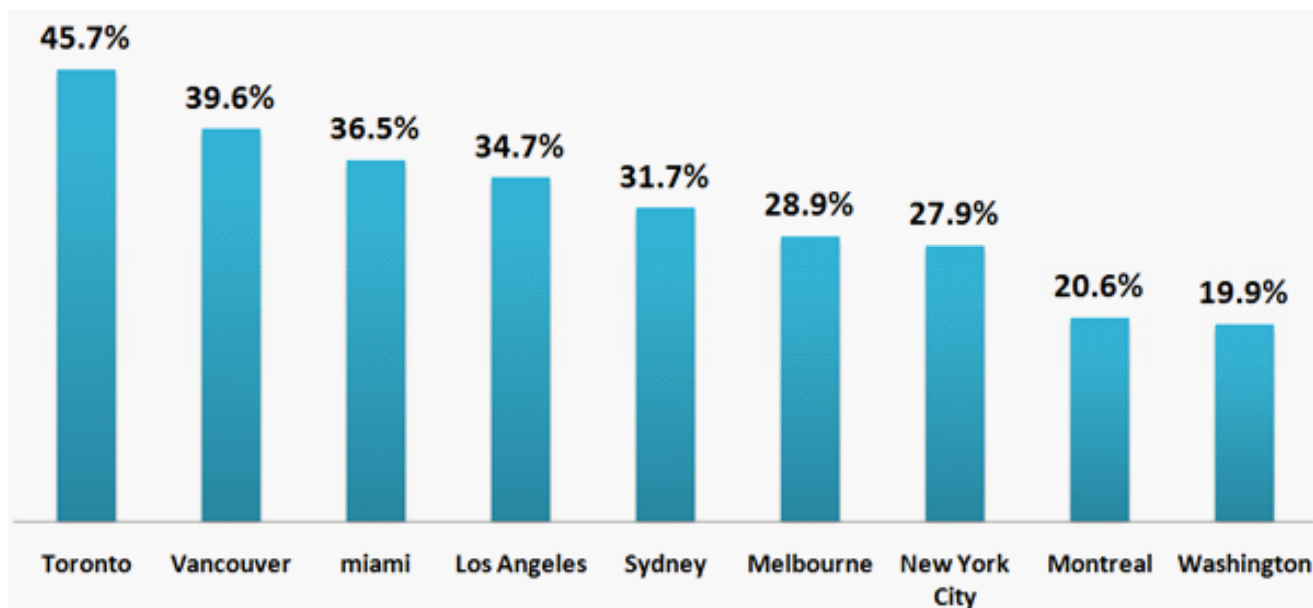


allow for the development of a more inclusive and culture sensitive policy base. **Table 5.1** by Yiftachel provides a good broad summary of possible attitudes towards ethnic diversity at the urban level.

## Spatial and Temporal Patterns of Immigration in Vancouver:

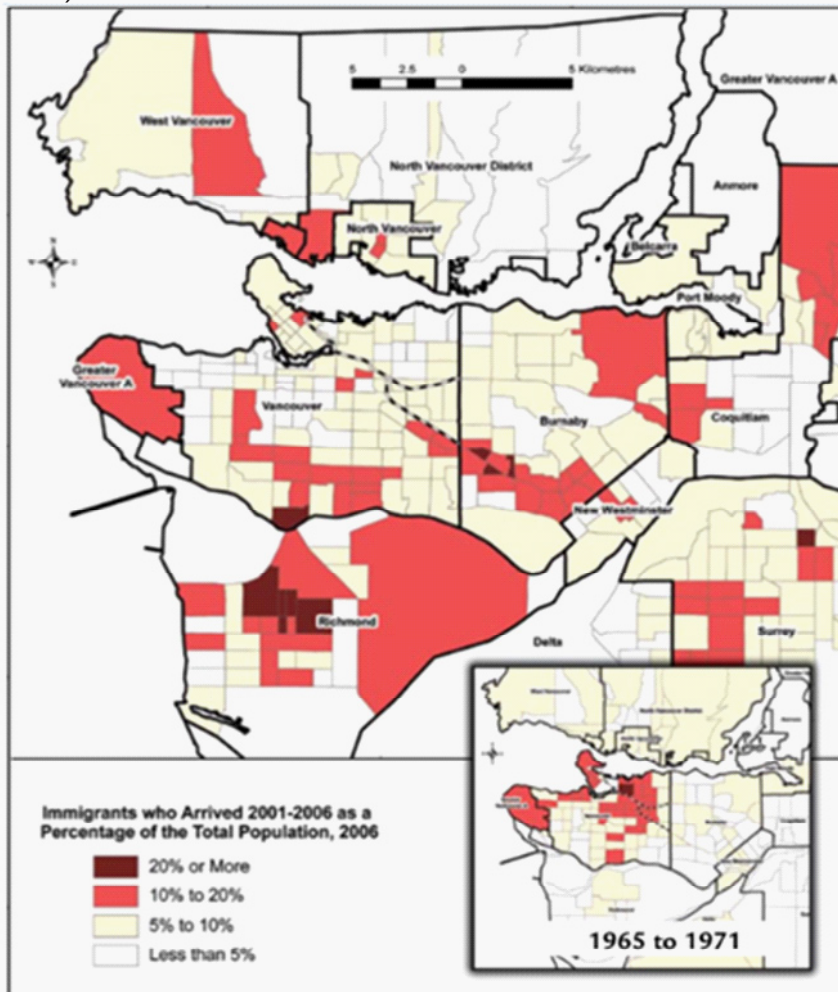
Vancouver region is one of the highest immigrant destinations

**Figure 5.3** Foreign-born as a percentage of metropolitan population, 2006 (Statistics Canada, 2006).



## 5. URBAN AND REGIONAL SCALES

**Figure 5.4** Comparison of the spatial settlement pattern of immigrants between 2001-2006 and 1965 to 1971 (Murdie 2008)



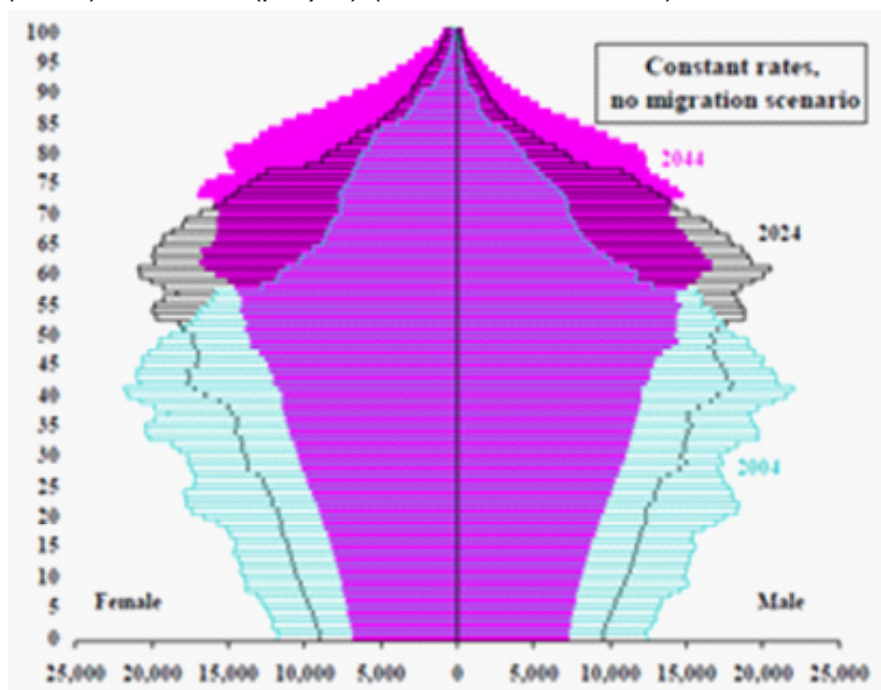
in Canada. In fact, amongst North American and Australian cities, Vancouver has the second highest percentage of its population as foreign-born residents (**Figure 5.3**). Given the city's status as the pacific gateway to Canada, by far the largest ethnic group settling in the region has been Eastern Asians, while Southern Asians and South East Asians also form a considerable share of this overall picture.

The settlement pattern of immigrants has changed over the decades, calling for a temporal understanding of this process. While historically, immigrants have settled in the inner city and inner ring suburbs, there has been an outward push towards outer suburbs in the region (**Figure 5.4**). This has been coupled with the outward migration of older generation of migrants, creating a new suburban generation of migrants (Murdie 2008).

According to Statistics Canada (2006) almost 75% of immigrants in Vancouver region chose to live in one of the four largest municipalities: City of Vancouver, Surrey, Burnaby or Richmond, while only 57% of Canadian-born residents of the region choose to live in these centers. Moreover, despite the recent increase in suburban settlement patterns of newcomers, City of Vancouver both houses the highest share of foreign-born residents as well as receives the highest share of immigrants.

Therefore, close to one-third of all foreign-born population of the region reside in the city, and 28.7% of the newcomers within the last 5 years prior to the 2006 census chose the City of Vancouver as their home. On the other hand, in the same time period the city's foreign-born population grew at a more modest rate of 5.3% compared to Surrey, Burnaby and Richmond, which grew at higher rates of 30.9%, 12.5% and 12.3% respectively (Statistics Canada 2006).

**Figure 5.5** Lower-mainland population pyramid forecast scenario without immigration, from 2004 (blue) to 2024 (black) and 2044 (purple) (Urban Futures 2004).

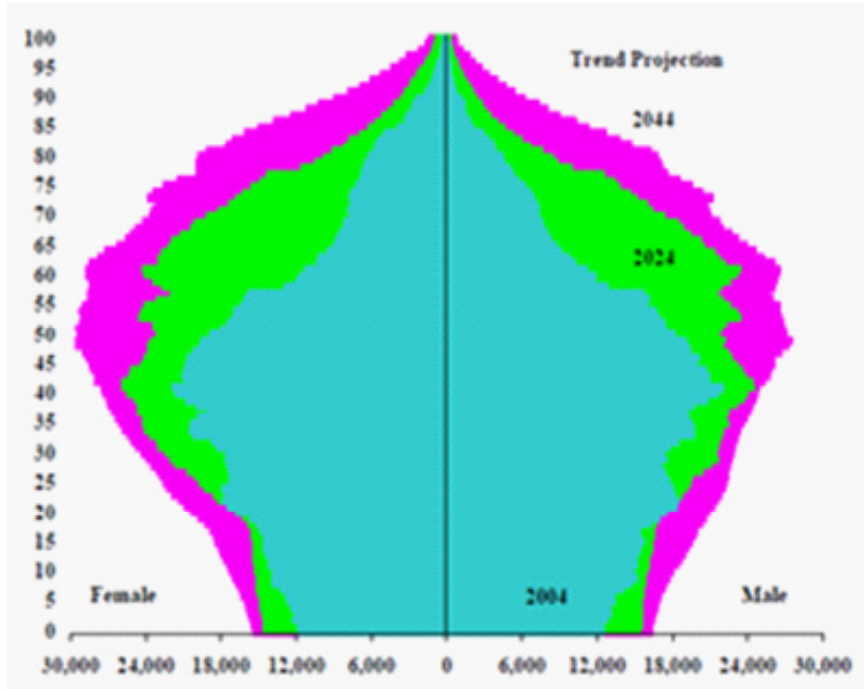


Immigration has implications for the social and the economic sustainability of the region, which needs to be taken into the consideration. The population pyramids shown here, based on projections to the year 2044 for Lower Mainland, illustrate different scenarios for the region – one based on no migration (**Figure 5.5**) and one based on projected levels of migration (**Figure 5.6**) (Urban Futures 2004).

It is evident that in the no migration scenario, the bulge of the pyramid occurs between the 65 to 80 years old age cohort, which creates fiscal and labour imbalances. In the scenario on the right, however, immigration alleviates some of the problems related with the imbalance related to the aging of the baby-boomer population, moving the bulge to a more fiscally balanced scenario of 40 to 60 cohorts.



**Figure 5.6** Lower-mainland population pyramid forecast scenario with immigration, from 2004 (blue) to 2024 (black) and 2044 (purple) (Urban Futures 2004).



In an important report by the Urban Futures (Urban Futures 2004, 47), it is concluded that “In a number of respects, the region’s reliance on the components of migration and general increases in the propensities for individuals of all working-ages to be active in the labour-force will become much more pronounced than they are today. For

one, the significant aging of the population that is expected (virtually guaranteed) to take place over the next four decades will serve to decrease the share of individuals working or looking for work relative to the non-working (retired) population. In this vein, more working age individuals (via increases in participation rates and positive net inflows of working age migrants) will be required to fill the void left

## 5. URBAN AND REGIONAL SCALES

*by the increasing number of people who will have gone from contributing to our social systems to making debits from them once they are no longer in the work force.”*

Therefore, in terms of economic sustainability, immigration plays a vital role for the continued fiscal health of the region. However, this need for younger immigrants (with larger families) needs to be balanced with social and ecological sustainability requirements. Extensive research has identified both positive and negative aspects of immigration vis-à-vis social sustainability (Ley and Murphy 2001).

In a gateway city such as Vancouver, with connections to the global flows of capital and migration, a diverse immigrant population can both provide linkages necessary for the city to compete globally, and also provide intercultural dialogue and learning within the city.



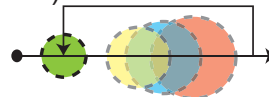
Furthermore, addition of younger families and bigger households to the region can improve the basic needs of an aging population and create inter-generational continuity. However, as it has been argued throughout this paper, lack of proper planning and management can lead to conflict and tension (Murdie 2008).

Therefore, as it has been shown by the numbers, this region can benefit from an intercultural planning lens and policy base, as immigration and population change unfolds overtime. Equipped with a better understanding of immigration in the region, it is important to unpack the unique settlement patterns of different ethno-cultural groups. Other social categories such as age, class, religion and education levels are also important markers of urban culture that are important to be analyzed spatially and temporally, while not tackled deeply here due to limited scope of this project.

**Figure 5.8**, on the next page, illustrates how spatial distribution of ethnic

groups can be visualized for such an analysis. It is important to recognize that such a map is only a first step in the exploration of the spatiality of culture, as it makes generalizations (and aggregations) with regards to culture and ethnicity. In order to produce a readable image only seven broad ethnic categories (White/European, Black/African, Middle Eastern, Asian, South Asian, Latino and other) are assumed, overlooking the very real differences that might exist in any given regional grouping, not to mention cultural, class and religious differences within people of the same nationality.

Hence, after illustrating culture at this level, it is critical to delve into various areas of the city at smaller scales, uncovering unique manifestations of culture, rather than assuming certain cultural categories and practices a priori. Ultimately then, cultures need to be discovered rather than assumed - ***Ethnographic Urban Design Principle*** (Rapoport 1977).



Despite such shortcomings, the map is still revealing at a broad level, showing clear distinctions in the settlement patterns of various migrants. For example, Southern Asian groups (marked as orange dots) are heavily concentrated in the southern parts of the City of Vancouver, as well as southern parts of the region (such as Surrey). Heavy concentration of Asians (red dots) can be seen in Richmond, Burnaby and south east parts of Vancouver. Middle Easterners, on the other hand are concentrated in northern part of the city, as well as the north shore.

Even at this broad level, given the stark arrangement of ethnic groups over the regional landscape, certain policy and design implications emerge. Given that certain cities of the region have different and distinct composition of ethnicity and culture, one could argue that provision of services and facilities in each municipality needs to be also distinctly catered towards these unique population mixtures, rather than having similar types of services and facilities across the entire region. Furthermore, policy makers

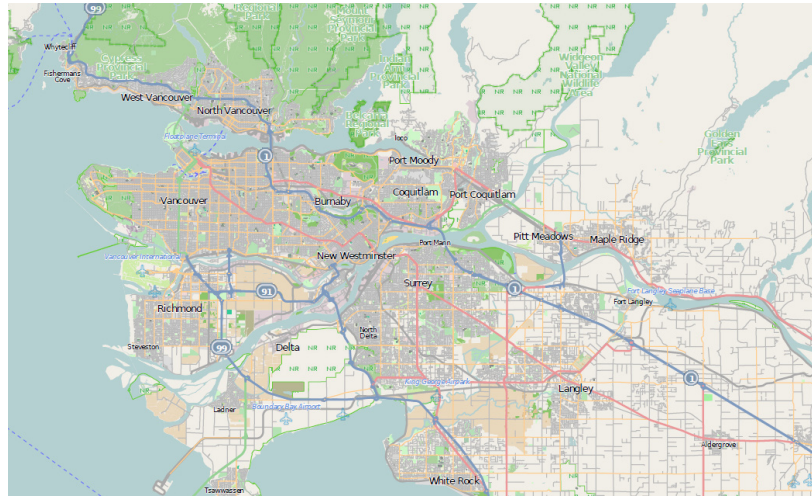
**Figure 5.7** Maps of Vancouver at two very different scales (regional at the top and district at the bottom) reveals the existence of similar boundary crossing features such as a rectilinear grid street pattern and an interconnected water and green networks.

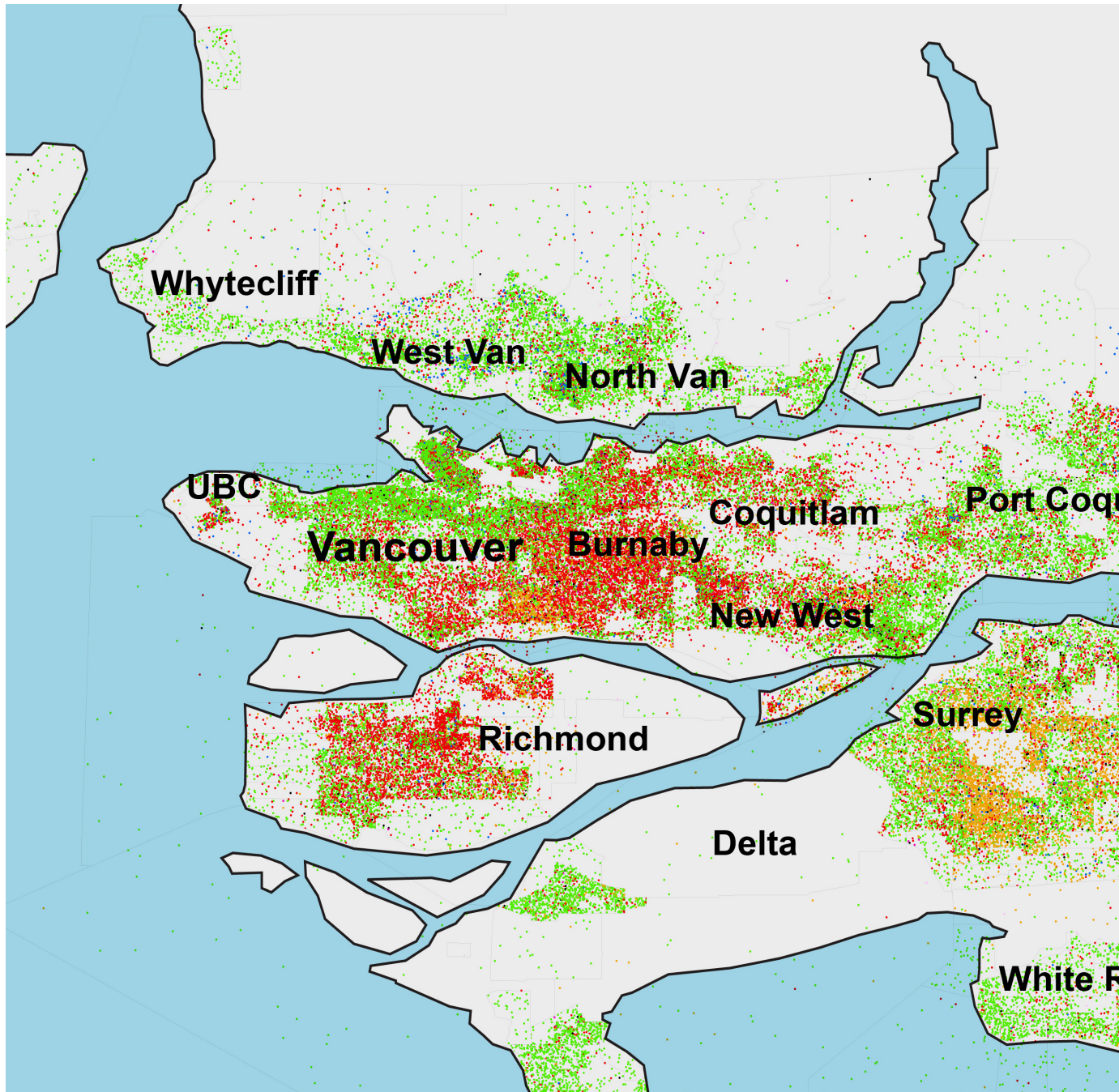
<<http://www.openstreetmap.org>>

## 5. URBAN AND REGIONAL SCALES

who are interested in curbing suburban growth need to better understand what shortcomings in the urban landscape are possibly behind the outward push of certain migrant groups.

As it was suggested in earlier, at this level it is also important to recognize boundary crossing features of the urban landscape, which have historical and environmental underpinnings. In the Vancouver region, a closer look at the regional fabric reveals the existence of an interconnected fabric of green space, series of rivers and water bodies, the surrounding mountainous terrain and finally the urban grid that has shaped the urban morphology of this region and much of the North American fabric (**Figure 5.7**).

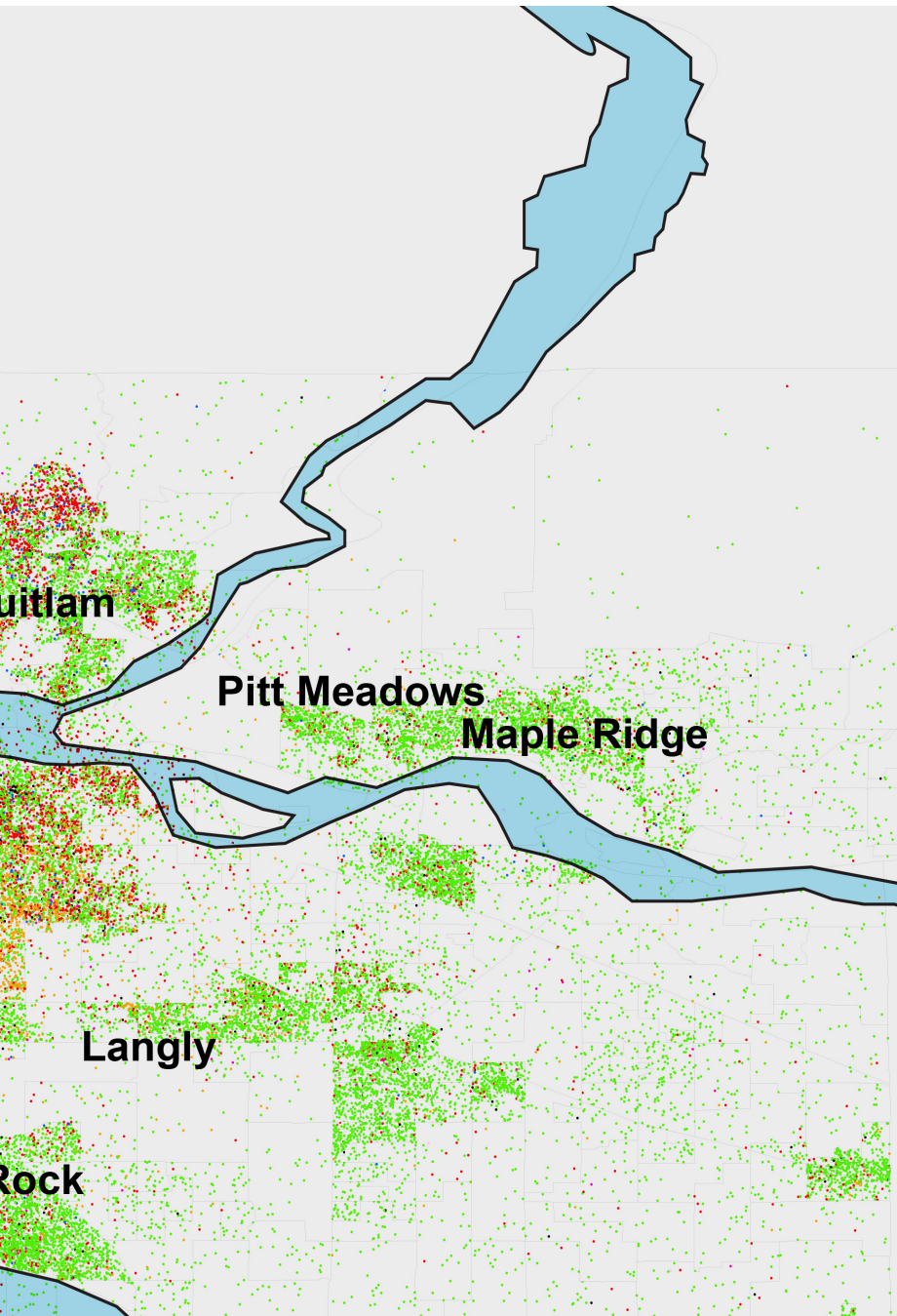




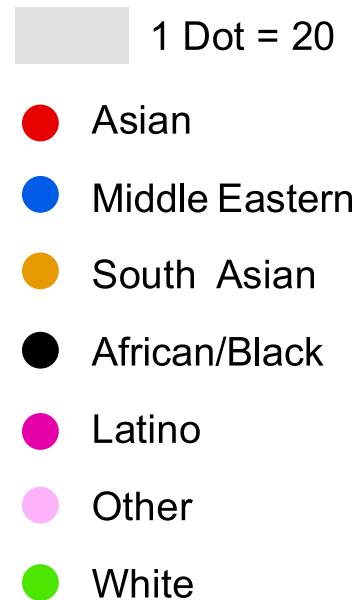


## 5. URBAN AND REGIONAL SCALES

**Figure 5.8** Spatial distribution of ethnic groups (broken into 7 categories) in the Greater Vancouver Region (Data from Census of Canada, 2006 - reproduced by the author).



### Legend



Similarly, at smaller scales, there are certain typologies (such as the Arts and Crafts style) that have formed the architectural vernacular of the region and are perhaps important to the local population. Therefore, while this type of planning is encouraging greater distinction between areas, in creation of mediating hybrid typologies at all scales, these boundary crossing features will serve as universal containers of distinct geographies and typologies.

At the city level, a more fine grain analysis needs to be conducted, keeping in mind the existing neighborhoods and their level of social mixing. Arguably, diversity of neighborhoods, as well as the overall city, leads to greater place vitality, creating opportunities for exchange and interaction, economic resiliency and more interesting and creative urban experience (Talen 2008, 33 - 43). Such diverse neighborhoods can mediate between the more homogenous areas of the city, acting as permeable membranes between more distinct and settled

### areas - **Celebrate Diversity Principle.**

In **Figure 5.9**, Vancouver's neighbourhood diversity is visualized, by constructing an index of diversity derived from calculating the relative diversity of each census tract based on the categories of White, East Asian, South Asian, Middle Eastern, Latino, black and other (from 0 to 1). The bolder shades of blue have higher diversity levels (closer to 1), while places with lighter blue have lower levels of diversity and mixing. It is worth noting that two sectors of the city have higher levels of diversity – namely the downtown area, Coal Harbor, Yaletown, and Business District, as well as South Eastern sectors of the city such as Oakridge, Sunset, Collingwood, Riley Park/Little Mountain and Kensington Cedar Cottage. Literature has often attributes high and persistent levels of neighbourhood diversity to historical factors of an area, socio-economic reasons as well as policy related reasons and design issues (Talen 2008, 24 - 32; Rapoport 1977, 267).



Additionally, the dynamics of the local housing markets play a pivotal role. The existence of the following four conditions have been empirically shown to influence place diversity (Talen 2008, 25; ):

- 1) new housing types that attract younger, more educated white population that are tolerant of diversity and otherness
- 2) multi-family housing
- 3) rental housing
- 4) affordable rental housing

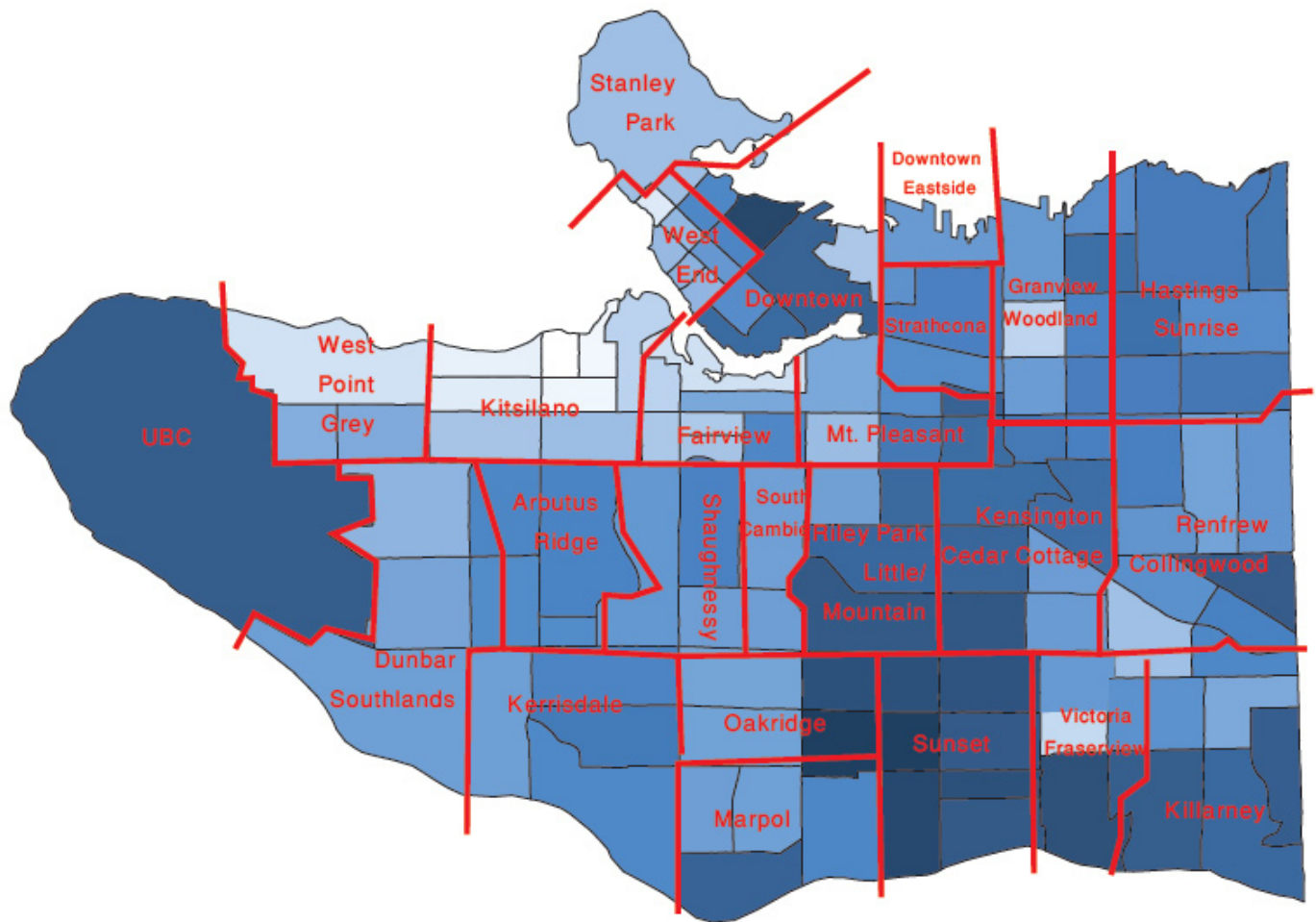
The Vancouver experience, as illustrated here, generally confirms these factors and conditions. The downtown area's diversity is perhaps heavily influenced by the newness of the neighborhoods, allowing for establishment of new cultures and hybridities, while the south-eastern parts of the city also attest to historical as well as typological reasons for neighborhood diversity, not to mention economic and affordability reasons.

Distinct and established neighborhoods are also



## 5. URBAN AND REGIONAL SCALES

**Figure 5.9** City of Vancouver's neighborhood diversity (using Simpson's diversity index) based on the 7 ethnic categories established earlier, with darker shades signifying more mixed areas and lighter shades signifying more homogenous areas (developed by the author, Census 2006).

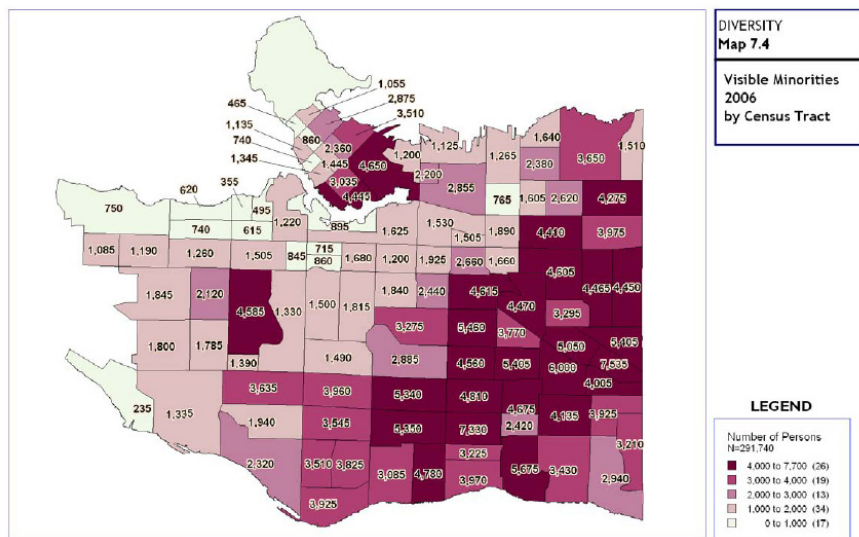


important part of this discussion. Places with seemingly lower diversity could either be more diverse along other dimensions (such as age), and/or attest to existence of an established urban culture, with its own spatial practices ingrained in the neighborhood fabric.

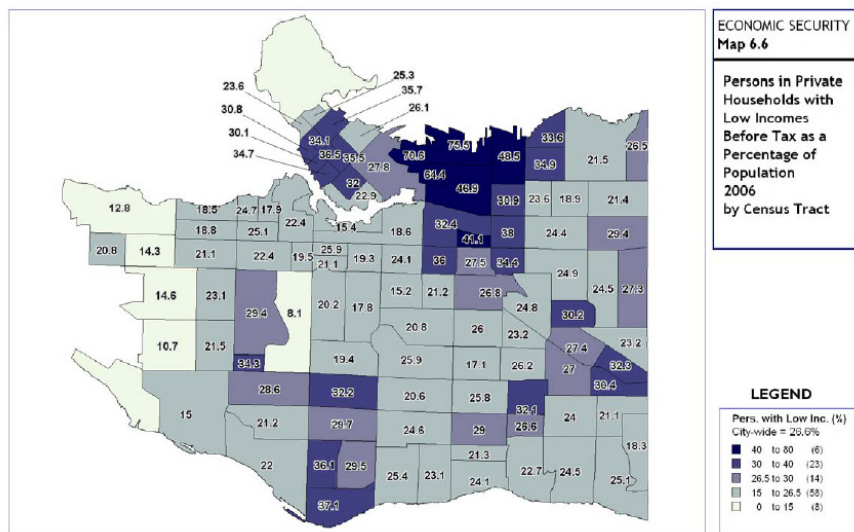
Therefore, places such as China Town (with older Asian population) and Kitsilano (affluent middle class white families) are clusters of developed urban culture, with embedded social networks, participation of the residents in compatible activities and a strong 'imageability' for the users of the area.

Finally, other sociocultural factors (such as income levels) need to be layered into this analysis, in order to better plan for areas that might become potential sites of conflict. An overall look at the configuration of visible minorities in the City of Vancouver reveals a noticeable east-west divide between areas with a high concentration of visible minorities and areas with a low concentration of such

**Figure 5.10** Visible Minorities in Vancouver by Census Tract, 2006 (City of Vancouver, 2009: Social Indicators Report).

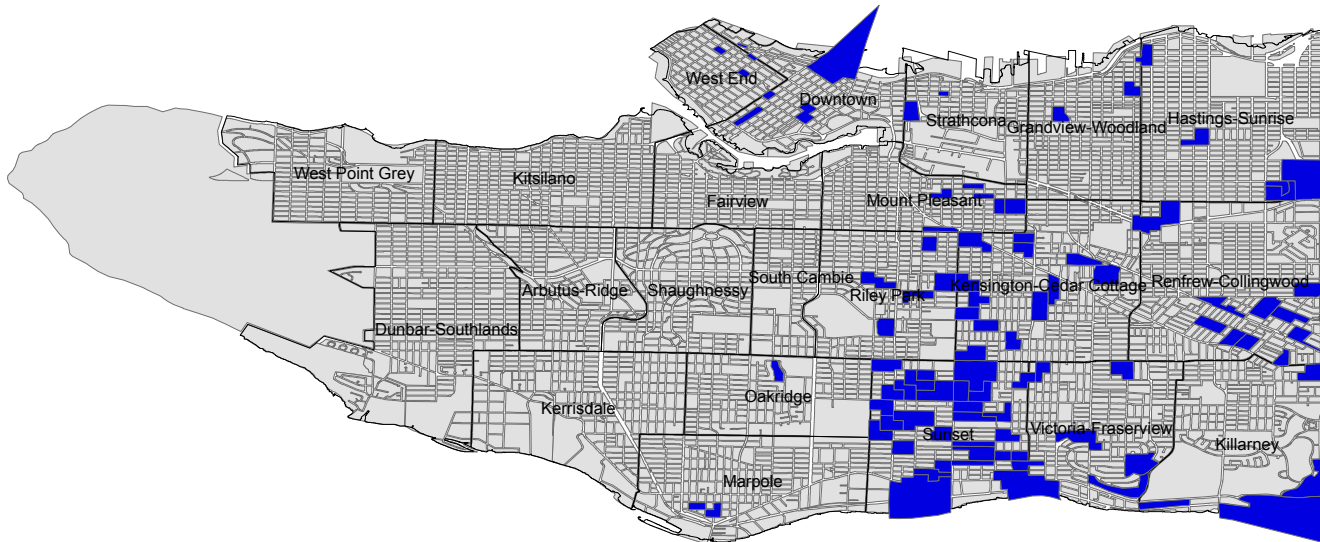


**Figure 5.11** Persons in private households with low incomes before tax as a percentage of population 2006 by census tract (City of Vancouver, 2009: Social Indicators Report).



## 5. URBAN AND REGIONAL SCALES

**Figure 5.12** Identifying vulnerable areas, by highlighting areas that exhibit high level of ethnic diversity ( $>0.6$ ) as well a high concentration low income population ( $<\$3500$  median annual household income) (developed by the author, Census 2006).



groups. Moreover, similar patterns exist with the low-income population, creating an overlap between minority areas and lower income areas (**Figure 5.10 and Figure 5.11**).

As it has been stressed throughout this chapter, conflict can arise when two vulnerable populations with

lower ability to move to new areas, or adapt to changing circumstances are pushed into the same space. In Vancouver, places such as downtown east-side share a stark (or sudden) boundary zone with distinct cultural clusters such as China town, and rapidly changing areas of False Creek, creating great sites of friction and contact (**Chapter 6**). Overlaying diversity data with income

levels can allow planners and designers to identify areas with greatest possible level of vulnerability (**Figure 5.12**). As it is shown in the above map, south-east sectors of the city have a high concentration of areas that are both diverse and lower income in nature.

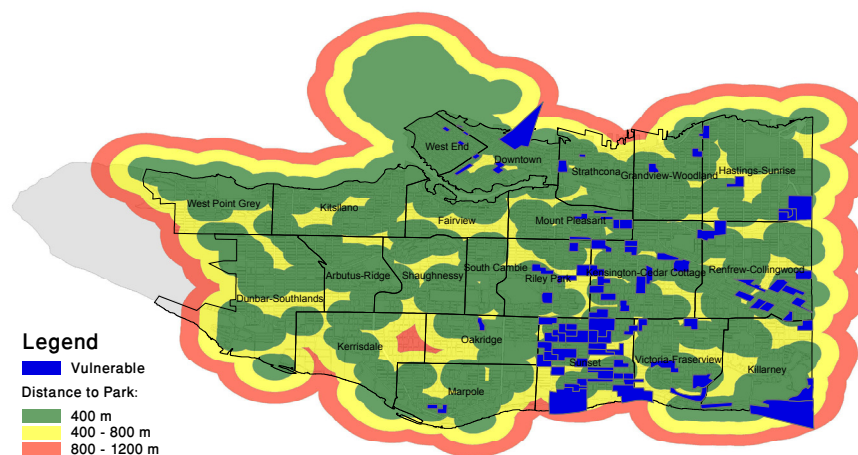
It is very helpful to overlay spatial pattern of vulnerable areas with existing distribution

of facilities and services, as it would allow planners and designers to critically examine access to such services by the most marginal segments of the city (**Figure 5.13 to 5.15**).

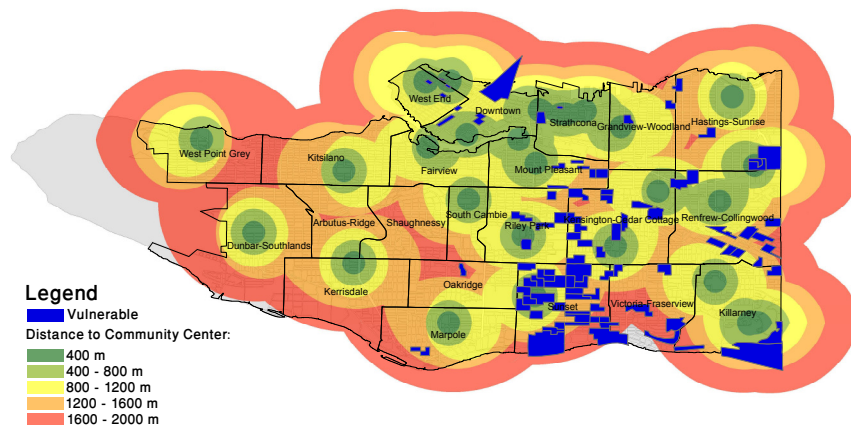
In an intercultural lens, it is also critical to treat each culture as its own centre, analyzing the distribution of facilities and services relative to the spatiality of each cultural community - **Right to the City Principle**. While cultures should not be assumed *a priori*, and therefore should be discovered on the ground, at this stage it is very helpful to develop a separate set of maps for each cultural group (as available through census data such as race/ethnicity, language, income group, religion, age or sex).

Maps on the next page attempt to show cultural groups (for the purposes of this discussion Asian, Latin American, Middle Eastern and South Asian groups are shown), and their relative access to each type of facility (in this case parks, community centers and public art) (**Figure 5.16**).

**Figure 5.13** Access to parks and vulnerable populations - revealing a relatively good coverage for most areas with vulnerable population (developed by the author, Census 2006, CoV GIS data).



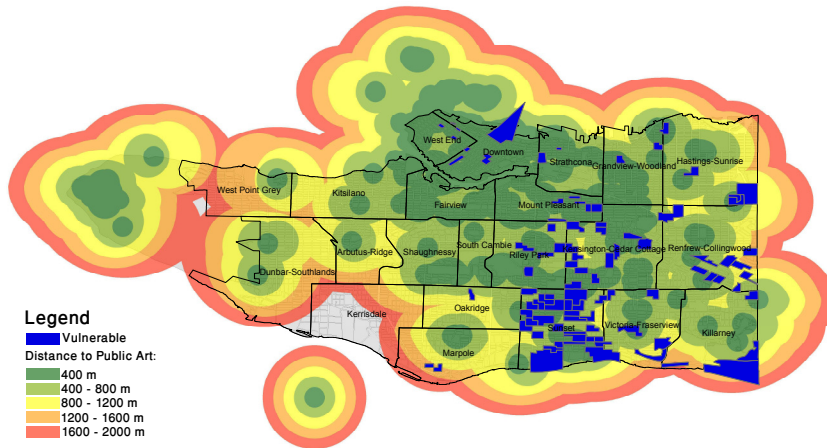
**Figure 5.14** Access to community centers and vulnerable populations - revealing many vulnerable areas falling out of the immediate catchment areas in the south and east sections (developed by the author, Census 2006, CoV GIS data).





## 5. URBAN AND REGIONAL SCALES

**Figure 5.15** Access to public art and vulnerable populations - revealing a relative good coverage for vulnerable areas (developed by the author, Census 2006, CoV GIS data).



At first glance it becomes clearly evident that the unique spatiality of each culture, as compared to the distribution of facilities and services, produces unique gaps and uneven provisions of some amenities for each culture. Therefore, some groups might have an abundance of one type of amenity, and lack of access to another provision, based on their neighbourhood and

settlement pattern.

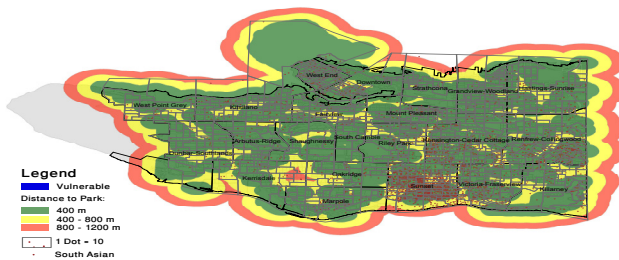
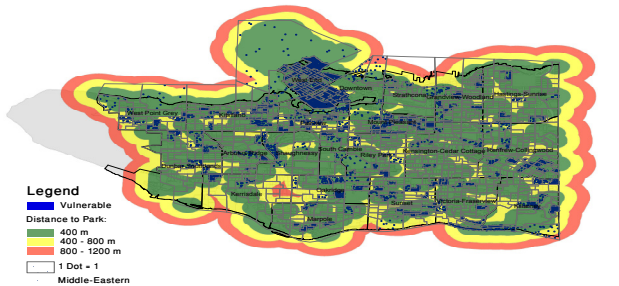
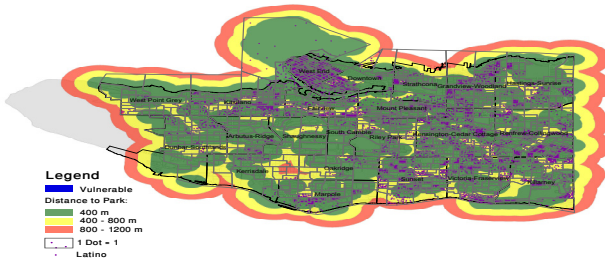
The issue of uneven distribution of services become even more pronounced, if we get away from universal assumptions that all public amenities perform in the same fashion for all cultures, regardless of their 'life-styles' and unique requirements. Thus if we categorise each facility, based on its unique programming and design features, then a much more nuanced picture would

emerge, perhaps showing a mismatch between facilities that are provided and the local needs of the immediate population. There are also implications beyond culture in such design lapses, as it would for example impact walkability of an area, if the appropriate facilities are provided somewhere else (for example a park without playing ground in a family neighbourhood or a community center without prayer room in a religious community).

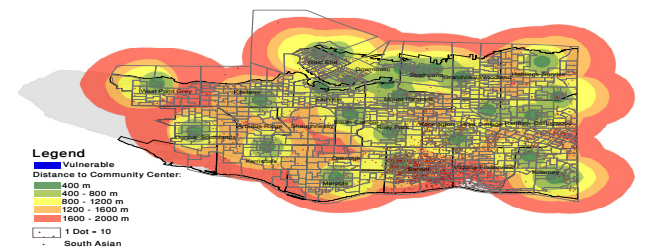
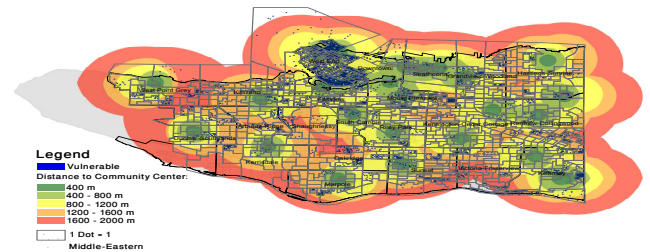
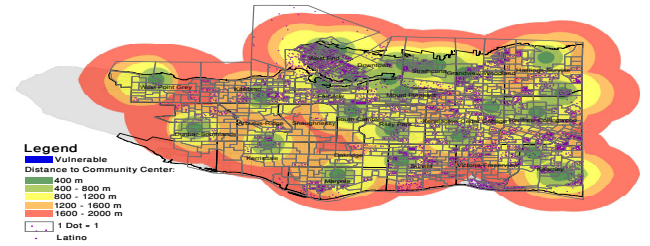
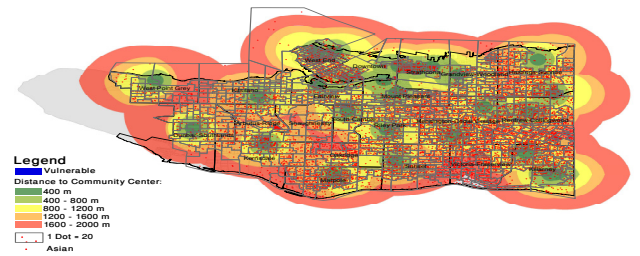
As we proceed to smaller scales of district and parcel level, it is important to overlay this macro analysis of culture with on the ground discovery of life-styles, activities and settings. This will allow for the intercultural city to not only recognize differences, but to also treat each culture as a core element of the urban whole, rather than peripheries within an assumed dominant society.



## Access to: Parks



## Community Centers

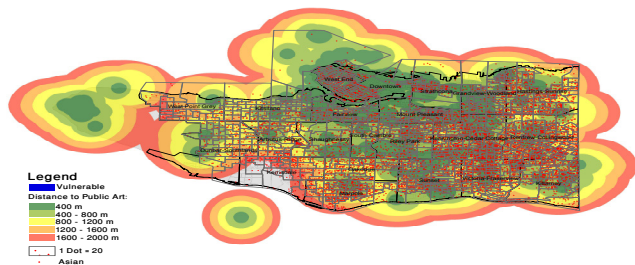


## Public Art

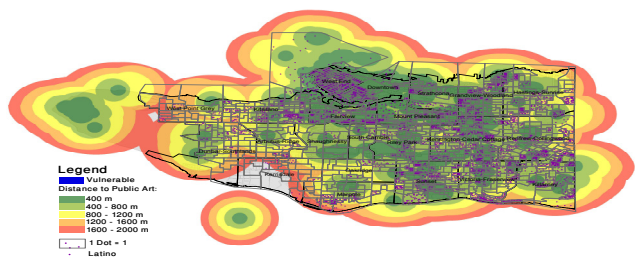
## Population Groups:

# 5. URBAN AND REGIONAL SCALES

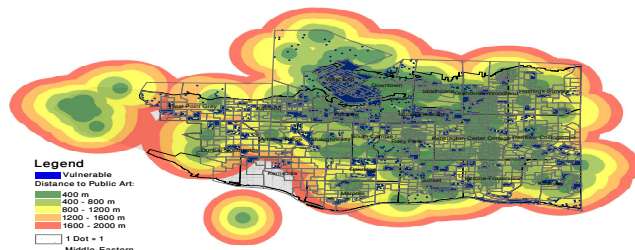
### East Asian



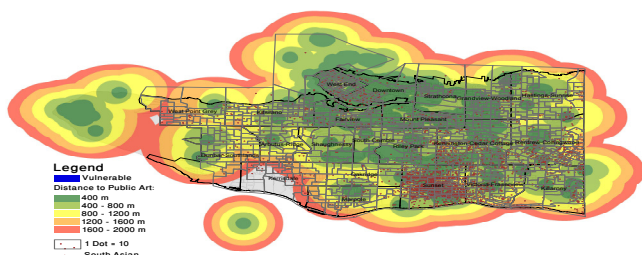
### Latin American



### Middle-Eastern



### South Asian



**Figure 5.16** Spatiality of each cultural group with respect to the distribution of facilities and services, showing gaps and 'unevenness' in access to some amenities by certain cultures:

For example it is observable that the South Asian population, with their heavy concentration in the southern section of the city (Sunset, Victoria-Fraserview and Collingwood), is underserved by community centers, while the Latin American population has lower access to similar facilities in the center east of the city (between Mount Pleasant and Kensington-Cedar).

Middle Eastern population is arguably underserved in the west quadrant (Dunbar, Kerrisdale and West Point Gray) by public art, while the Asian community might be slightly underserved by provision of parks in the center west sections (Kerrisdale, Oakridge and Marpole).

(developed by the author, Census 2006, CoV GIS data).



**Layered Walls**  
Sorour Abdollahi, mixed media on canvas, 18 cm x 36 cm, 2010



## 6. DISTRICT SCALE (NEIGHBORHOOD)

### **Neighbourhood Dynamics (micro analysis of existing neighbourhood typologies):**

The previous chapter made the case for the creation of an overall image of the urban social landscape, with particular settlement pattern of sociocultural groups (ethno-classes), in order to identify relative access of each group to the provision of public amenities. It was thus illustrated that these different groups form clusters with unique compositions at smaller scales, while being contained within the universal (to their region) boundary crossing structures. This chapter will continue this discussion at the smaller, and much more important, levels of district and neighborhood scales, exploring the appropriate strategies that need to be formulated to manage urban cultural change and hybridity in a diverse society.

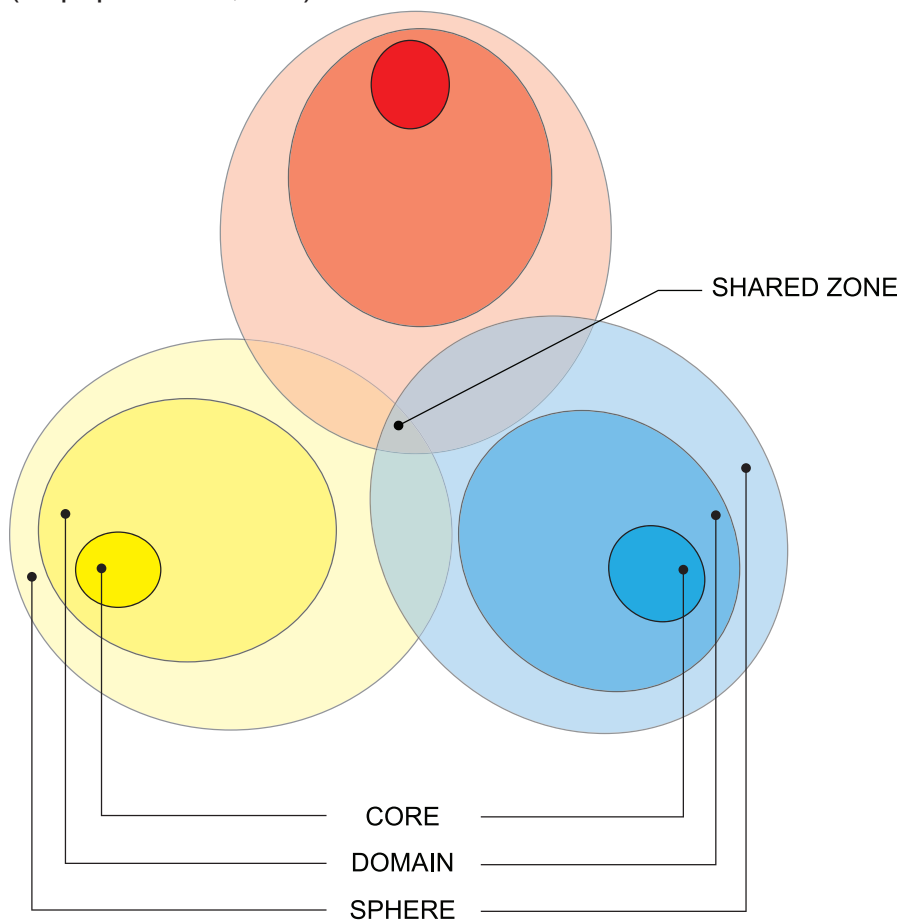
It is worth noting that while the larger urban scale analysis (using aggregated sociological and statistical methods) is an effective strategy to sketch out urban culture at a broader level, it is only a starting point for an intercultural planning lens with a limited explanatory potential for action. This is due to the fine grain nature of urban cultural arrangements on the ground, requiring much more ethnographic ways of understanding 'difference', something that could be overlooked through the more broader quantitative methods. Therefore, while the sociological methods are much better at showing averages, the ethnographic methods are necessary at the smaller and more important neighborhood and parcel scales, revealing more subtle manifestations of culture (Rapoport 1977). This is particularly paramount to our formulation of an intercultural urbanism, given the normative imperative to be cognisant of difference.

The broader image obtained in the previous section already attested to a city of many neighborhoods - areas with unique social configurations. However, it is important not to assume the existence of such

cultures (or neighborhoods) a priori, but to actually do the work of uncovering them through public engagement, observation, on-the-ground research, phenomenology and ethnography. Therefore, planners and designers need to narrow in on the different neighborhoods that were highlighted previously, while particularly paying attention to the areas that exhibited signs of cultural difference with possibility of conflict and/or friction among vulnerable populations. At this scale, therefore, confirmation of the assumed cultures and in fact expansion upon the ethno-class categories that were previously quantified is necessary.

This is important due to the varieties that exist within an assumed broader culture. For example, in the Iranian community in Vancouver, various age, class, religion and education levels can produce distinct sub-cultures that form different relationships with the wider urban context. Furthermore, unique expressions of culture might exist due to other values, world-views and tastes that are not

**Figure 6.1** Cultural groups footprint in space can be conceptualized as three realms of core, domain and sphere (Rapoport 1977, 267).



easily definable in statistical categories but are culminated in commonly known urban life-styles. Groupings such as cosmopolites, yuppies, hipsters, bohemians and soccer moms attest to the multiplicity of urban cultural landscape.

Once cultures are discovered and understood, in terms of their spatial settlement patterns, then the inter-neighborhood and intercultural relationships in the urban context become important at this level, helping to mediate



## 6. DISTRICT SCALE (NEIGHBORHOOD)

the relationship among different communities. The first task, thus is to conceptualize the spatial nature of these distinct cultural groups (each possibly hybrid in some way, and yet homogenous in other ways).

The assumption here is that groups have the tendency to form clusters along various sociocultural preferences. These groupings are formed around such categories as race, ethnicity, class, occupation, religion, clan, stage of family cycle, life-style, generations and other forms of distinction. As mentioned in the last chapter, local history of areas, as well as design and affordability issues also influence the settlement pattern of sociocultural groups (Rapoport 1977, 267; Talen 2008).

Rapoport (1977) asserts that cultural groups have three distinct realms over the urban landscape:

**Core:** *the area with the greatest concentration and density of a particular group, exhibiting an intensity of organization and relative homogeneity of cultural traits. People in such an area exhibit the greatest congruence in their mental image of their area. In the core areas, due to their critical mass, these groups have established necessary or desired services, facilities and sacred institutions such as church, grocery stores, restaurants, spiritual places, community centers, clubs, shops and unique hangout areas.*

**Domain:** *the area where the culture might be still the dominant group but with noticeably lower intensity and density, compared to the core. Therefore, the culture specific services and institutions are*

*not as prominent and people show a lower environmental congruence.*

**Sphere:** *is the area where the concentration of the group drops to the minority status, as compared to other groups, resulting in the least environmental image congruence with other populations.*

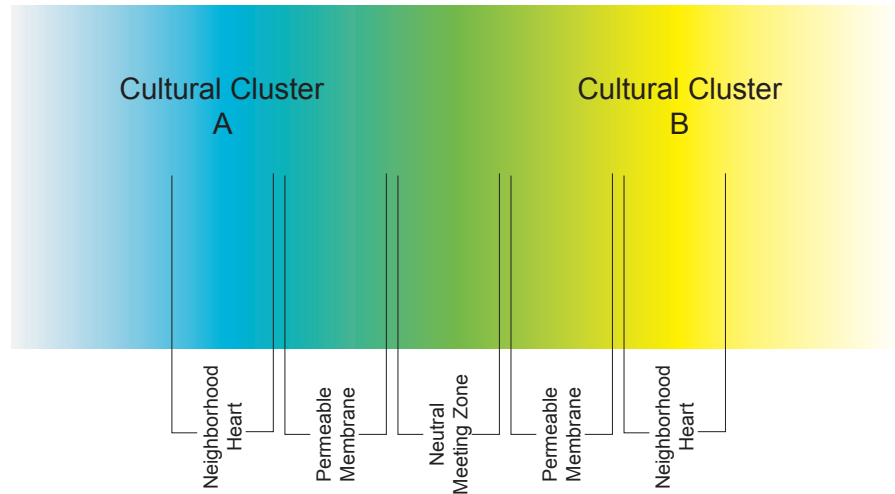
In such a formulation of cultural clusters, various groups tend to favour greatest privacy in their cultural core, while social mixing is favoured in the more neutral grounds at the realm of cultural sphere. Therefore, while diversity at the urban level is arguably sign of vitality and creativity, at the smaller scales it needs to be weighed against the benefits of clustering, given that grouping similar cultures produces the critical mass necessary for groups to lobby (and access) appropriate services close to home, while establishing congruent image of

the area with encoded signs mediating their relationships in space.

If our task is to both support and recognise different cultures, providing them with supportive amenities and services, while also foster interaction and mutual support at the larger urban scale, we need to arrive at a urban model that celebrates multiple and overlapping villages across the urban landscape. These neighborhoods form internal cohesion and voluntary associations, while being permeable and open to one another and the wider city (**Figure 6.3**). Also, opportunity for civic engagement and interaction at the city (and metropolitan) levels need to be facilitated by provision of cosmopolitan or neutral areas for all citizens - such as downtown area, university campuses, municipal halls, regional natural amenities and even airports.

As it was stressed in the previous sections, different groups deal with diversity and cultural change in unique ways, with some (such as Richard Florida's

**Figure 6.2** Different strategies are required for different areas of the neighborhood, as both the neighborhood center as well as the boundary zone require careful planning.



'creative class') more open/adaptive towards the 'other', while those with less adaptive capacity threatened by noticeable and sudden differences. Hence, by providing areas of contact as well as areas of sacredness, refuge and privacy, planners and designers can achieve diversity as well as inclusivity, while providing democratic choice to all citizens. Consequently, planners and policy makers need to both emphasise neighborhoods cores, celebrating their uniqueness and sacred nature to individual groups, while also celebrating boundary

zones that result in creative contact and intercultural engagement amongst multiple groups (**Figure 6.2**).

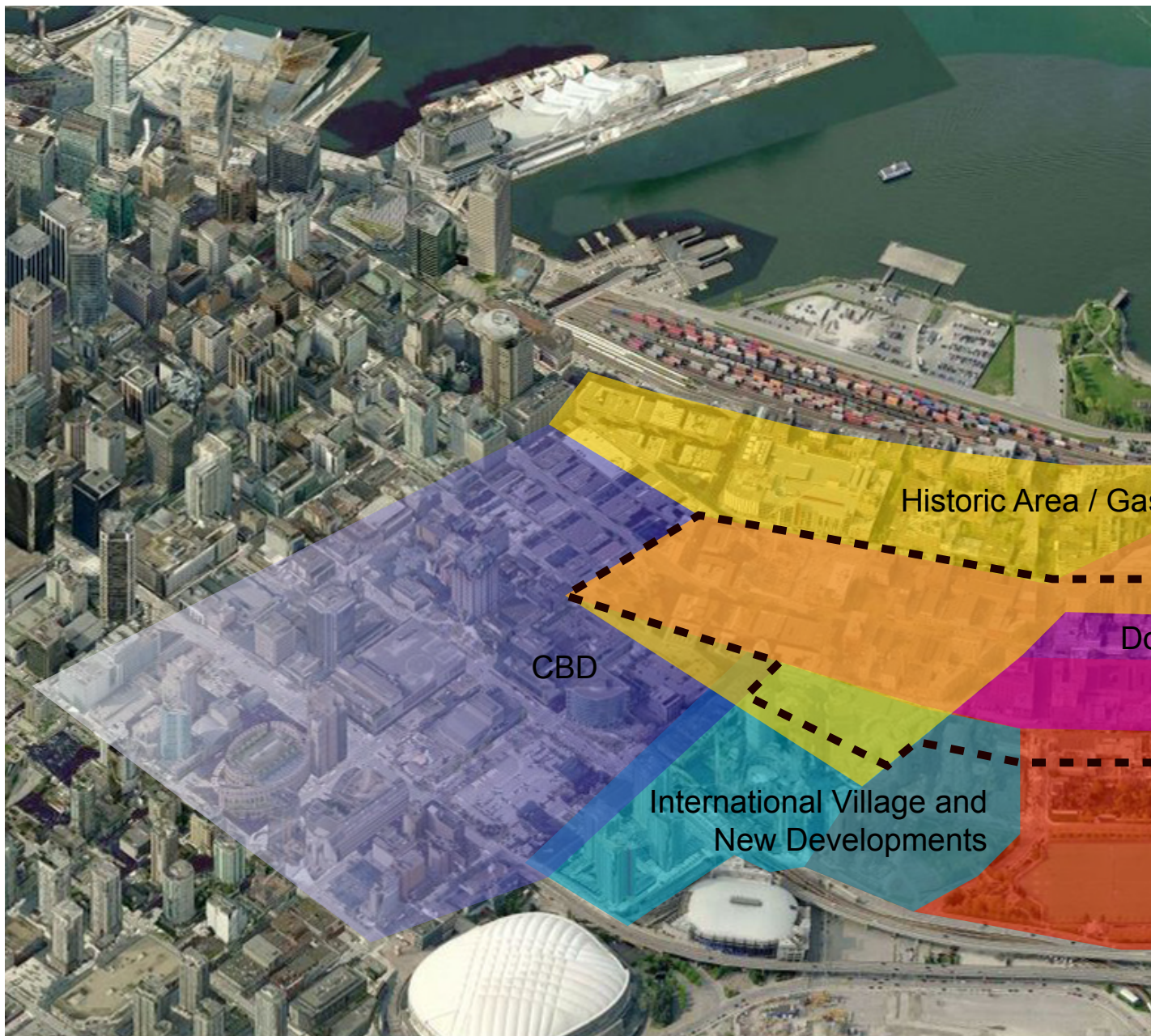
What is thus argued here is strengthening distinct areas, with marked and open boundaries that are carefully managed and programmed. These more uniform clusters (along certain dimensions preferred by the local population) would be very small and fine-grained in nature, resulting in actual diversity over the larger scale. Also, undoubtedly there would be overlaps between each group's spheres,

## 6. DISTRICT SCALE (NEIGHBORHOOD)

**Figure 6.3** *Conceiving Vancouver as a city of open villages, discovering distinct neighborhood clusters with unique life-styles and cultures, while providing meeting opportunity on the neutral grounds and boundary zones.*









## 6. DISTRICT SCALE (NEIGHBORHOOD)

**Figure 6.4** In reality, similar to most cities, the City of Vancouver consists of many overlapping and competing cultural groups, in which their boundary zones are often not clearly defined nor completely neutral (identified by the dashed-lined area), potentially creating perceived and real sites of conflict and contestation of space.

The area marked by the dashed lines (particularly from Pender st to Cordova st) is a boundary zone that is claimed and used by multiple groups - such as the low income, marginalized population of Downtown Eastside, older Chinese population of Chinatown, young 'Hipster' population of the Historic Gastown Area and 'Yuppie' residents of new developments and many other types of ethno-class-cultural groups. This area has both fostered urban vitality - as many creative firms and institutions are located here - as well as misunderstanding due to rapid change, conflicting norms and signs, as codified in the space and the activities of its users.





providing areas of mixing and hybridity. If we establish such a conceptual model on Vancouver, we can arrive at many small neighborhoods that contain clusters of life-styles, activities, unique configurations of ethno-classes, and families of different ages and life-cycles (**Figure 6.2**).

Once again, the argument here is that such neighborhoods and clusters need to be discovered rather than assumed. While **Figure 6.3** illustrates an idealized model, in reality there would be many blurry lines and overlapping areas. Indeed, those areas that are not as clearly defined are the areas that might either serve as neutral zones of contact among different groups, or perhaps experience the highest level of friction/conflict due to un-managed entropy.

## Neighborhood Typologies:

In mapping and uncovering these neighborhood clusters, it is also critical to understand the way such areas function and

interact with the wider urban environment as well as towards their own internal matters. Neighborhoods can be systematically categorized in terms of their level of **interaction, identity and connections**, producing distinct typologies that perform differently (Altman and Wandersman 1987).

In the environmental psychology literature, the following neighborhood categories have been identified, in terms of their relationship to the rest of the city (Gifford 1987, 267; Altman and Wandersman 1987, 4):

**1) Integral neighborhood:** *exhibiting ample face-to-face interaction, cohesiveness and interdependency, with support of local interests and values as well as considerable participation in organizations both within the neighborhood and outside the local area.*

**2) Parochial:** *similar to the integral neighborhood, except much more insular with fewer ties to the outside. Such a neighborhood is inward facing, discouraging participation on outside concerns, and 'filters-out' values that conflict with its*

*own.*

**3) Anomic:** *exhibit very little face-to-face contact, as well as little commitment to outside organizations and concerns. Population in such a neighborhood is highly atomized and disorganized, lacking participation and identification with inside community as well as outside of their sphere (apathy).*

**4) Stepping stone:** *consists of residents with very little commitment to the local area, as they maintain strong ties to the outside.*

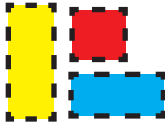
**5) Transitory:** *with a considerably high population turnover and entropy, the residents exhibit low interaction, participation and identity.*

In the context of immigration, and the absorption of migrants into their new society, different neighborhoods possibly foster different types of responses from the immigrant group, and consequently result in different outcomes and relationships. Given the normative framework that has been argued for thus far, the 'integral neighborhood' seems to be the most

## 6. DISTRICT SCALE (NEIGHBORHOOD)

intercultural place for fostering communities that are attached and involved with the local context as well as the wider world, accommodating newcomers and change - ***Integral neighbourhood Principle***

(Altman and Wandersman 1987, 3; Rapoport 1980).



However, due to the forces of modernization, the transitory and stepping stone neighborhoods are increasingly the reality, of much of the urban realm, if not the anomic type with large number of the population showing apathy towards local and global concerns, as geographies of sameness become the norm.

Of course, 'place-attachment' plays a considerable role in the

way people perceive and interact with their neighborhood/ sphere, making it an important consideration for an immigrant society. The following sources of place attachment are often outlined (Gifford 1987, 272-273):

**1) genealogy:** *tracing back one's roots to a place.*

**2) Loss and destruction:** *mourning a loss in a place or trauma associated with a place.*

**3) ownership:** *owning property and assets in an area for a long time.*

**4) cosmological:** cultures mythological and religious views on person-place attachment.

**5) pilgrimage:** *memory of the experience of movement and migration, at times for spiritual reasons.*

**6) narrative:** *stories about people-place interaction.*

Indeed, certain features of place-attachment can become points of contention amongst groups contesting space - such as loss and destruction of bodies and sacred places), which was a common experience of the Balkan wars. However, other types of attachments can be used by the community and its planners to create new forms of narratives and myths that is open towards the immigration process, accepting newcomers into the host society. Furthermore, public art, carnivals, festivals and place-making can play an important role with these more constructive forms of place-attachment, in a diverse society.

### Planning Strategies for Neighborhood Core:

The intercultural framework developed thus far has emphasized planning two

distinct areas with respect to neighborhood clusters at the district level: core areas and boundary zones. Here, an overview of important elements and strategies within a core area is given, while reiterating that much of such elements should be discovered on-the-ground and with the help of the community under study.

As mentioned previously, core areas provide a sanctuary for any given cultural group. Therefore, in order for such areas to perform optimally, they need to at least meet the basic needs of the population in that particular cluster. Rapoport (1980, 33) has identified the following elements as signs of the 'core' area of a cultural group:

- 1) *Group's sociocultural characteristics such as ethnicity, language and religion.*
- 2) *Family and kinship structures and child-rearing practices.*
- 3) *Residence patterns, land divisions, land-owning and tenure systems.*

4) *Food habits.*

5) *Ritual and symbolic systems*

6) *Ways of establishing and indicating status and social identity.*

7) *Manners and nonverbal communication*

8) *Cognitive schemata*

9) *Privacy, density and territoriality*

10) *Home range behavior and networks*

11) *Various institutions, such as ways of working, cooperating, praying and trading.*

Therefore, through ethnographic methods and community engagement (**chapter 8**), an intercultural planning lens would allow for the discovery of 'core' areas and practices for the multiple cultures in a hybrid urban environment. This is done, in order to create supportive environments for the very core elements of acceptable groups. In order to achieve this task, the following elements should be

considered when designing and planning these distinct areas (Rapoport 1980):

1) *The nature of the group identified through an understanding of life-style, values, environmental images, etc.*

2) *Symbols and signs that have personalized the dwelling, neighborhood and businesses of the group.*

3) *The nature of activities of members of the area, expressed in terms of distribution in time and space, particularly related to the notion of 'home-range' and territory.*

4) *Communication and privacy needs, the unique mechanisms and defenses employed, textures, colors, materials, artifacts and other sensory items incorporated in their life-world.*

5) *Social organization, relations, and networks and their relation to the neighborhood structure and movement patterns, interaction rates and settings for interaction.*

If a core is identified from

## 6. DISTRICT SCALE (NEIGHBORHOOD)

above items, and in turn supported and strengthened, then a more supportive environment is created for the local population. Indeed, such core elements are fused with the universal systems of the local region, forming hybrid typologies that mediate the need of the local people and the wider ecological and historical context.

In the case of vulnerable (migrant or local) populations, this activity becomes even more important, as these populations don't have the political and financial ability to choose and define their own sacred territory. Therefore, in a culturally supportive environment, spatial organization of neighborhood, with its key services and facilities, should cater towards these marginal groups, their

dwelling location, temporal and spatial practices, etc.

By the same token, the size of the core areas need to be such that it provides critical mass for certain services (Rapoport 1977). So for example, in an area with a considerable senior population, certain health facilities might be needed, and can only be provided if enough of a noticeable core is created. Similarly, for a Muslim population, creation of mosque and community centers might require a certain population size.

Additionally, it is important to recognize that certain core elements are more important to some groups, while other groups might perceive other core elements as essential. Therefore, the relative importance of such core elements needs to be discussed with the members of the group. That said, child bearing and child raising aspects of

different ethno-classes have been identified as a key feature for most groups. This is due to the fact that the systems and places that facilitate in this process also mediate the important process of 'enculturation' - or continuation of the group's cultural practices (Rapoport 1980).

Another crucial aspect is privacy, often facilitated through arrangement and regulation of public and private areas. Proper arrangement of dwellings and spaces can either facilitate desired levels of privacy, allowing for appropriate levels of interaction and avoidance, or diminish it (Rapoport 1980).

It has also been shown that failure to understand such requirements result in conflict or under-utilization of spaces and facilities. For example, in certain neighborhoods in the United States, inappropriate arrangement of park facilities with respect to their proximity



to schools have resulted in kids who want to impress their peers to abandon parks, playing games on the streets closer to their school (Rapoport 1977; Loukaitou-Sideris 1995; Byrne and Wolch 2009). Such seemingly trivial problems can result in outright conflict, if vulnerable and very different populations are inappropriately accommodated in built environments that were designed with universal assumptions.

Lastly, given that many physical aspects of the urban environment remain constant for a considerable period of time, while the social systems embodying these spaces change much more rapidly, it is important to allow for organic and informal signs of human activity and personalization of space (**Figure 6.5**). Therefore, while the 'hardware' of these neighborhoods would not change much over time, the software of these places (signs, graffiti, decoration, furniture arrangement, other programming) shall be flexible enough to change and embody local needs

**Figure 6.5** Signs of human activity and personalization of space by cultures: Little Italy (left) and China Town (right), New York, New York.



(Image by the Author)



<<http://architessica.files.wordpress.com/2011/03/littleitaly1.jpg>>



Both above images from: <<http://www.cityprofile.com/new-york/chinatown.html>>

and practices, as they evolve over time.

## 6. DISTRICT SCALE (NEIGHBORHOOD)

### Planning Strategies for Boundary Zones:

As important as neighborhood cores are in meeting the needs of particular groups, in a hybrid urban environment different groups need to be able to meet, interact, share ideas and create a common future. Particularly if planners and community members embrace the ideal of an 'integral neighborhood' - one that is both involved with local issues as much as the wider concerns of all citizens. Therefore, careful planning and management of neutral meeting grounds are an essential part of the intercultural planning lens developed here.

If our model helps to foster small clusters (possibly homogenous along a

certain social dimension), it also requires clear and yet open boundary zones that are permeable for multiple cultural groups, mediated through neutral meeting grounds. As it was shown in the previous chapter, there are also areas of the city that have either historically or due to some new factors maintained a level of mixing and diversity that is above the average for the rest of the city. Such areas can indeed both teach us something about properly planned neutral zones, as well as act as mixing grounds for multiple communities (Talen 2008; Rapoport 1977)

Hence it is important to discover what activities, institutions and spaces are most appropriate as points of interaction and commonality, given that this might be different for various groups and situations. Arguably, if the dwelling is the most personal and private area, work place and children's school

provide the most appropriate places for common interaction and diversity (Rapoport 1977; Matsushita, Yoshida and Munemoto 2005; Morales 2009; Rishbeth 2004).

Moreover, facilities that are common to the entire city (such as park systems, community centers, schools, health facilities, transportation hubs and urban markets) can be strategically placed in these areas to bring multiple groups from their inner areas into common grounds. However, it is important to once again emphasise that such neutral grounds and possible appropriate activities within them need to be discovered rather than assumed a priori. Therefore, through public engagement and ethnographic research, planners and designers need to better understand what possible places are perceived as neutral by different people, and what elements influence the degree

of neutrality of such spaces.

Furthermore, these areas can provide complimentary 'supplements' to what is already available in the inner neighborhoods (Rapoport 1977). Therefore, if two adjacent neighborhoods are lacking in a service or facility that can be shared or provided in a complimentary fashion, then the border zones can be a great place to provide such a supplement. It is also important to remember that different groups perceive 'home-range' and 'work-range' differently, leading to the uses of semi-public places as third-places for either work related activity or leisure. Such places can also be used for interaction and enhancement of neutral grounds.

Certain religious, cultural and community facilities that might be perceived at the first sight as symbols of difference, if not divisive, if designed/programmed with an intention to bring understanding and sharing of ideas, can be opened to the other groups, creating an environment of learning and interaction. Therefore,

churches, synagogues, mosques and temples can have occasional community programs that are open to the wider public beyond the local community. This will be even more effective if such institutions form interfaith and intercultural networks with each other, encouraging mutual and reciprocal relationships.

In fact, by allowing for certain cultural, spiritual and ritual activities to occur at times on the neutral city grounds, it can arguably facilitate engagement with the 'other' on the common public realms of the city, while also publicly recognizing the practices of the minorities as that which belongs to the hybrid city (**Figure 6.5**). Finally, It has also been shown that certain activities, such as tending multi-cultural community gardens by kids have the capacity to serve as the micro-public environment necessary for learning of other culture's customs (chapter 7).

In conclusion, in a heterogeneous context, the public realm can serve as a border between different districts. These borders can act as 'porous membranes',

serving as places of exchange and contact between different groups, or as 'guarded territory' by providing enclosure (Gaffikin, Mceldowney and Sterrett 2010). In order to foster a city of 'shared future', designers therefore need to work with community members to create places of contact and understanding.

## Strategies for a Divided City and Contested Neighborhoods:

Some urban environments have undergone traumatic experiences that result in outright segregation, animosity and conflict, beyond the normal frictions that were discussed above. In post conflict situations, planning and urban design might be able to play a constructive role (or even a destructive role) in tackling some of the built in tensions that actively separate and divide the public.

Frank Gaffikin et al (2010), in their examination of contested and divided cities of Belfast (Ireland) and Nicosia (Cyprus) - with the efforts





## 6. DISTRICT SCALE (NEIGHBORHOOD)



**Figure 6.6** Friday Muslim Prayer on the streets of New York City, temporarily transforming the public realm. Multiple cultural groups, public officials and members of the New York Police and Fire department joined the prayer and the post-prayer rally, showing support and unity in a post-9/11 world.

<Images by the author, 2010>



by their local authorities to ameliorate urban divisions - have shown the importance of physical planning in such fractured environments and post-conflict rehabilitation processes

It is critical for planners and designers to be aware of negative possibilities that can be promulgated through the physical environment. For example, erection, destruction and alteration of certain key landmarks (even if not purposefully done so) could incite renewed violence and tensions. Semi-fixed elements such as racially charged graffiti and posters could also keep deep wounds open, while “defensible spaces” could produce fragmented and highly territorialized urban landscapes (Gaffikin, Mceldowney and Sterrett 2010, 509-511).

A culture sensitive urban planning system can respond positively to such situations, by producing shared spaces for peaceful engagement, use of carefully selected public art in order to facilitate the healing process, as well as the slow removal

of barriers and defensive structures. Furthermore, planners can strategically prioritize projects that actively integrate a divided city, rather than tackling more divisive elements (*ibid*). In the next chapter, a more detailed account of possible integrative urban elements and strategies will be provided.

### Fostering Integral Neighbourhoods (macro design strategies):

By applying the established framework on the Vancouver model (**Figure 6.3**), we arrive at a conceptual multi-layered hierarchy of community facilities, as well as neighborhood realms (**Figure 6.7 to 6.11**).

While most such facilities, and even the neighborhoods themselves, are a hybrid of the local culture and the regional historical/ecological context, the guiding principle would be to distinguish between the inner core areas and the boundary zones. By doing so, the design, planning and programming of these facilities can be catered to

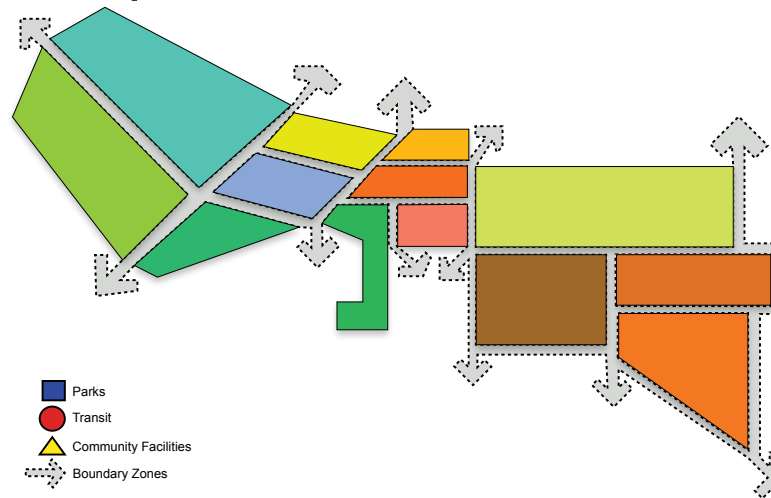
their locational hierarchy. As a system, all these facilities should ideally meet the basic standards of good design and form an interconnected web of urban institutions. However, the design and function of the inner amenities would be influenced by the concerns of local culture/life-styles, while the ones in the boundary zones would be influenced by their ability to provide neutral meeting grounds.

These neighbourhoods can be identified initially through the local planning knowledge, city’s existing neighbourhood categories and census data (using general cultural groups) as illustrated by the maps presented in the previous chapter. Furthermore, local Business Improvement Agencies and real-estate marketing groups also often have useful information with regards to life-styles and different neighbourhood categories (**Figure 6.12**). However, this arrangement can be subsequently turned into a more fine grained set of areas, based on ethnographic methods and other observational techniques (**Figure 6.13 to Figure 6.16**).

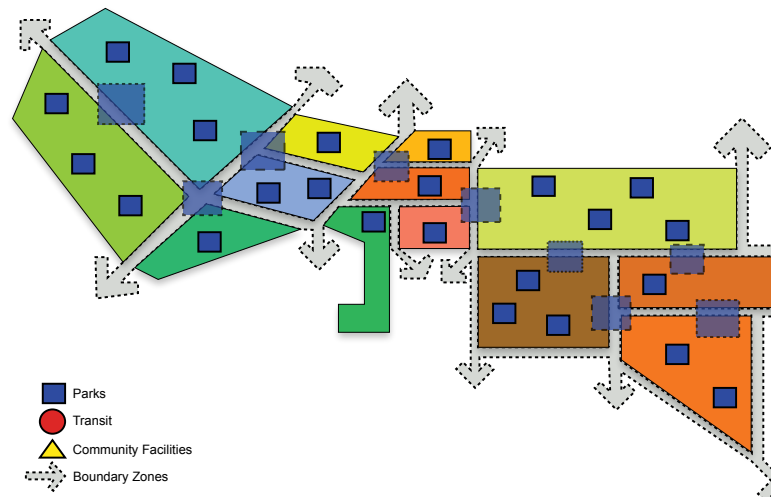
For example, while China



**Figure 6.7** Conceptual diagram of 'discovered' neighborhood clusters with clearly identified boundary zones acting as permeable membranes.



**Figure 6.8** Establishing a hierarchy of urban park system, with smaller solid squares signifying inner neighborhood parks that cater to specific local cultural context and the bigger, blurry squares signifying neutral cosmopolitan parks, serving as meeting grounds.



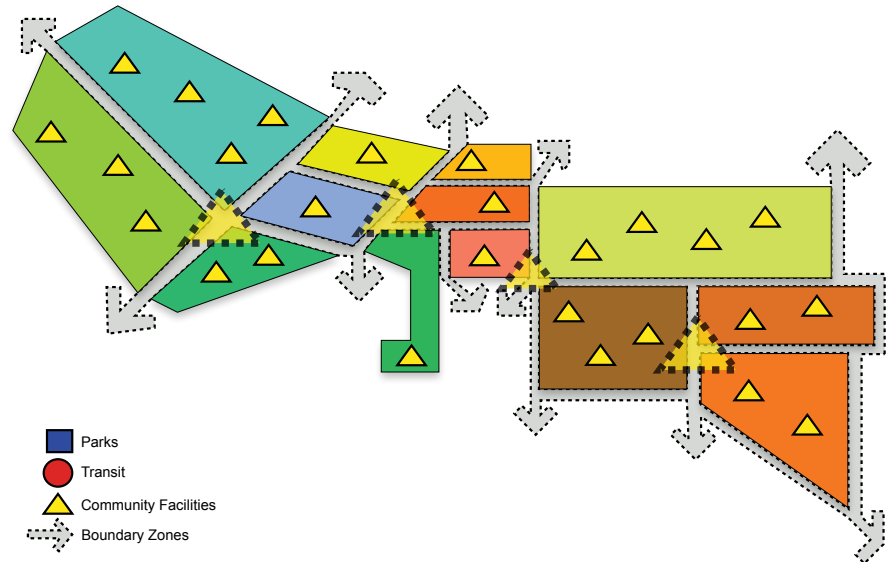
## 6. DISTRICT SCALE (NEIGHBORHOOD)

Town is not identified as an official Vancouver neighbourhood, it is a widely recognized district within the Downtown neighbourhood. In turn, China Town can be further broken down into sub-areas, depending on activities and settings that are contained within it.

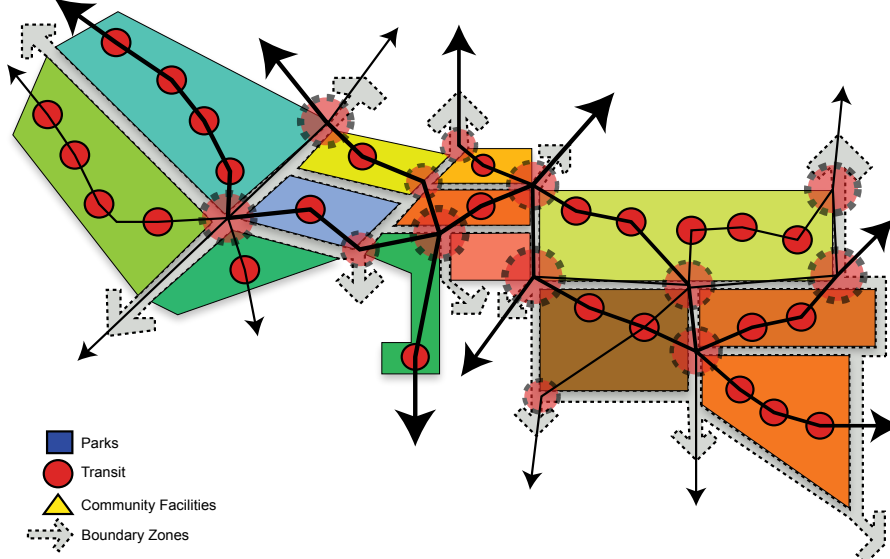
In a more realistic scenario, most neighbourhoods would themselves be somewhat heterogeneous, while still having a level of cultural identity that can guide the design process. In fact, the heterogeneous nature of some areas could become their *de facto* cultural marker. Additionally, in situations that cultures are not readily distinct in their settlement pattern, by individually mapping each culture with respect to the provision of amenities, we can at least make sure the basic requirements of each culture are met - affirming the centrality of each group.

Next chapter will cover various intercultural planning issues that are relevant at the level of individual urban element, such as a single park or a community center within a given area.

**Figure 6.9** Similar hierarchy of community facilities for the neighborhood level and boundary zones.



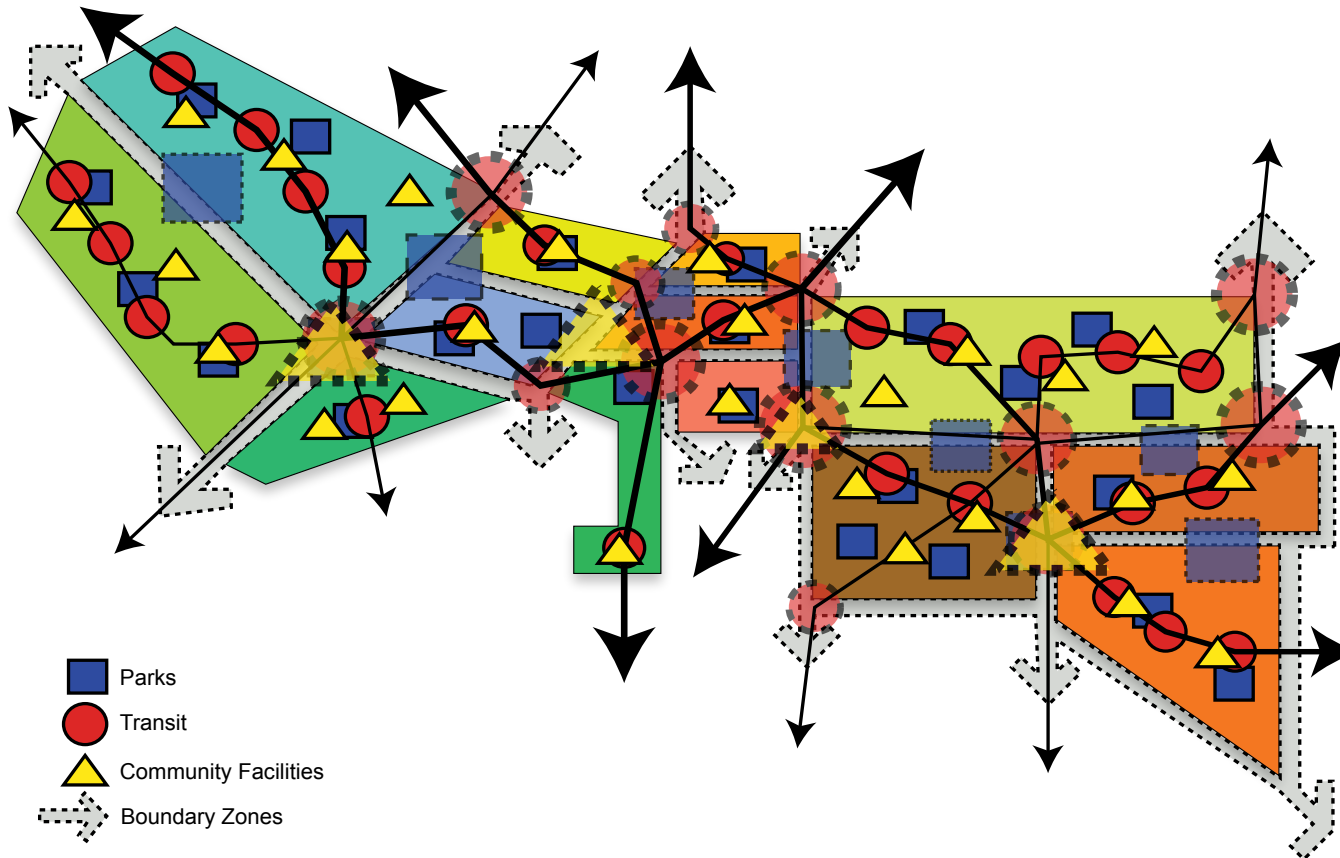
**Figure 6.10** Similar hierarchy of transit facilities, with boundary zones acting as multi-modal hubs for multiple cultures.





**Figure 6.11** An integrated, multi layered and strategic approach to providing facilities and services that both foster local cultural needs, but also foster 'integral' and 'open' neighborhoods that actively connect to one another and form a unified diverse whole.

## 6. DISTRICT SCALE (NEIGHBORHOOD)





## U1 – Urban Elite

### 01 Cosmopolitan Elite



Very affluent middle-aged and older city dwellers.

Wealthy \$472,807  
Middle-Aged & Older  
Ethnic Presence: Medium

### 02 Urbane Villagers



Wealthy middle-aged urban sophisticates

Wealthy \$242,416  
Middle-Aged  
Ethnic Presence: Medium

### 08 Money & Brains



Upscale and educated professionals and their families

Upscale \$123,359  
Older  
Ethnic Presence: Medium

### 09 Furs & Philanthropy

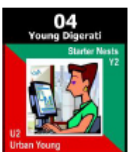


Upscale, middle-aged and older families

Upscale \$123,887  
Middle-aged  
Ethnic Presence: High

## U2 – Urban Upscale Ethnic

### 04 Young Digerati



Younger, upscale urban trendsetters

Upscale \$122,898  
Younger  
Ethnic Presence: Medium

### 15 Electric Avenues

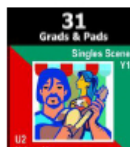


Young, middle-class urban singles and couples

Upper-Middle \$85,464  
Young  
Ethnic Presence: Medium

## U2 – Urban Upscale Ethnic

### 31 Grads and Pads



Young, lower-middle-class urban singles

Middle \$61,246  
Young  
Ethnic Presence: Medium

## U3 – Urban Upscale Ethnic

### 13 Continental Culture



Upper-middle-class, multi-ethnic urban households

Upper-Middle \$98,625  
Younger  
Ethnic Presence: High

### 18 Cluttered Nests



Upper-middle-class urban couples and multigenerational families

Upper-Middle \$88,128  
Older  
Ethnic Presence: High

### 33 New Italy



Established, multi-ethnic metro couples and families

Middle \$70,183  
Older  
Ethnic Presence: High

### 37 Old World Style



Multi-ethnic, middle-aged urban families

Middle \$67,015  
Middle-Aged  
Ethnic Presence: High

## U4 – Urban Mix

### 28 Startups & Seniors



Midscale mix of young and mature singles and couples

Middle \$77,417  
Mature & Young  
Ethnic Presence: Low

### 51 Lunch at Tim's



Lower-middle-class, mature and young in industrial communities

Lower-Middle \$59,337  
Mature & Young  
Ethnic Presence: Low

### 53 Mobility Blues



Young, mobile downscale city dwellers

Downscale \$55,637  
Young  
Ethnic Presence: Low

### 54 Crafting & Curling



Young and mature, blue-collar and service workers

Downscale \$59,900  
Mature & Older  
Ethnic Presence: Low

## U5 – Urban Downscale Ethnic

### 42 Urban Spice

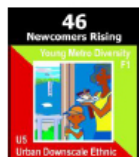


Young multi-ethnic downscale singles

Lower-Middle \$58,626  
Young  
Ethnic Presence: High

## U5 – Urban Downscale Ethnic

### 46 Newcomers Rising



Young, downscale city immigrant

Lower-Middle \$55,777  
Young  
Ethnic Presence: High

### 64 Big City Blues

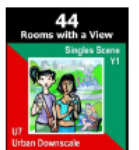


Young and low-income recent immigrants

Downscale \$40,983  
Younger  
Ethnic Presence: High

## U7 – Urban Downscale

### 44 Rooms with a View



Young, ethnic singles in urban high-rises

Downscale \$51,800  
Young  
Ethnic Presence: High

### 49 Day-trippers & Night-owls



Young mobile urban singles and couples

Lower-Middle \$55,786  
Young  
Ethnic Presence: Medium

### 59 Solo Scramble



Young and mature, low-income city dwellers

Downscale \$49,038  
Young and Mature  
Ethnic Presence: Low

**Figure 6.12** Urban profile segmentation by marketing, BIA and real-estate agencies can provide insightful information for neighbourhood “life-style” identification, if often also infused with certain business oriented biases and ideologies. Thus, it is important not to take such abstract groupings as the definitive cultural make up of an area, but rather use them as yet another layer of information for neighbourhood identification and cultural programming. On the left, are a series of urban life-style categories that have been created by the PRIZM C2 Segmentation system, which is used by many of Canada’s local BIA and real-estate agencies (from: <http://www.tetrad.com/pub/documents/candataeachn.pdf>).

## U7 – Urban Downscale

### 60 Single City Renters



Young apartment-dwelling urban singles and couples

Downscale \$44,076  
Young  
Ethnic Presence: Low

### 61 Park Bench Seniors

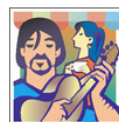


Downscale young singles and single-parents in urban areas

Downscale \$35,237  
Young  
Ethnic Presence: Low

# 6. DISTRICT SCALE (NEIGHBORHOOD)

**Below:** As an example, local real-estate web site Blobktalk.ca has broken down Vancouver’s Downtown neighbourhood population into “life-style” segmentation groups based on their 2006 census data (<http://www.blocktalk.ca/vancouver/downtown>).



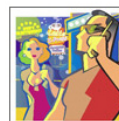
**68.6% GRADS & PADS**  
Young midscale urban singles

A collection of young, ethnically-diverse city dwellers living near universities, Grads & Pads represents the nation’s most liberal lifestyle. Its ... [Read More](#)



**17.0% ROOMS WITH A VIEW**  
Young Multi-ethnic singles in downscale urban high-rises

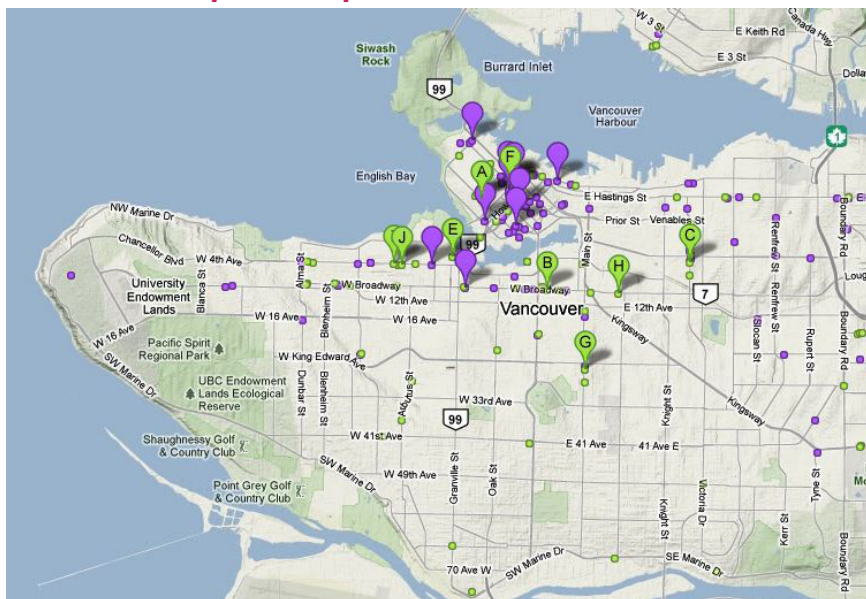
Rooms with a View represents the nation’s high-rise ethnic neighbourhoods, a haven for young single immigrants living in Toronto, Vancouver, ... [Read More](#)



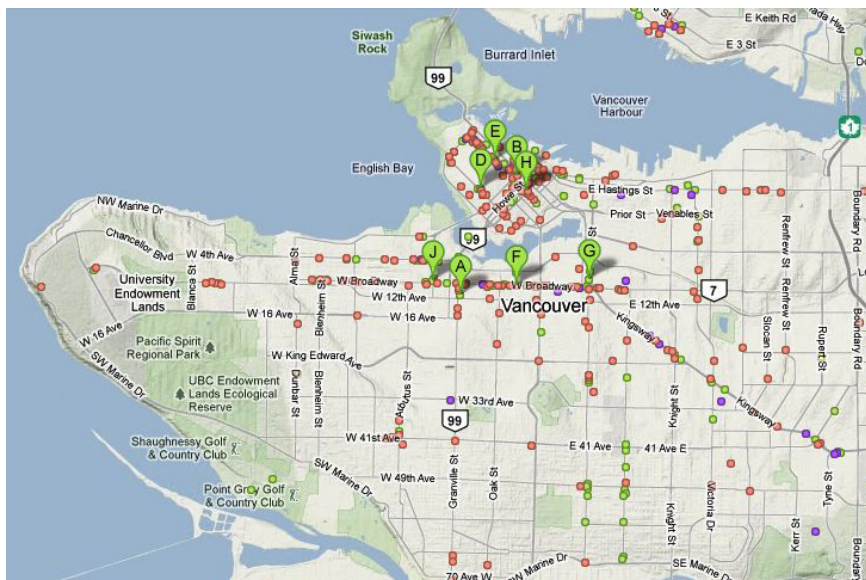
**9.2% ELECTRIC AVENUES**  
Young upper-middle-class urban singles

Urban lifestyles typically attract young singles and couples, and Electric Avenues is no exception. These neighbourhoods - concentrated in Vancouver, ... [Read More](#)

**“Greek” - Green dots/pins,**  
**“Italian” - Purple dots/pins,**



**“Japanese” - Red Dots, “Korean” - Purple Dots,**  
**“Indian” - Green Pins**



**Figure 6.13** As a crude method for initiating an ethnographic study of cultural settings, and their respective urban patterns, designers can use search engines and online mapping tools (such as Google maps and Bing maps). By searching for simple keywords, one can observe the relative spatiality of such search results (note that words in the “quotation” marks are search keywords that were used in these following series of maps.).

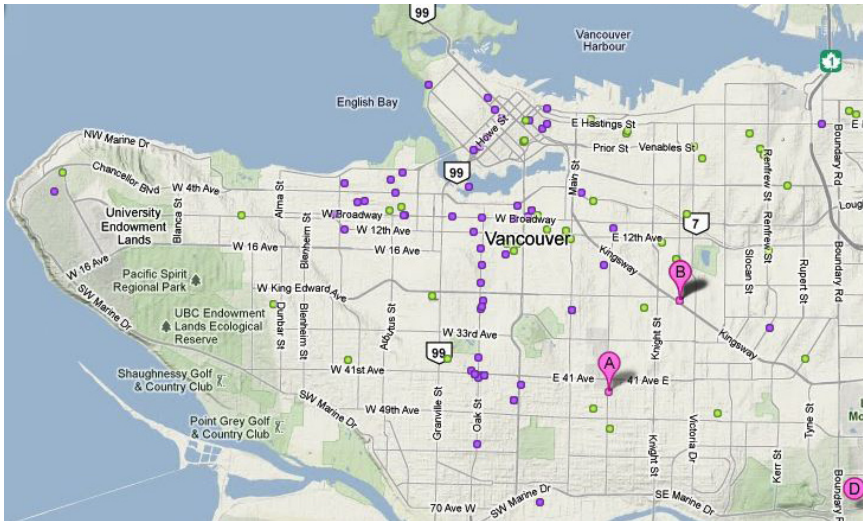
These search results are of course not in any way a complete (or fully accurate) representations of each cultural category. However, they can serve as a preliminary investigation into cultural settings, prior to conducting a far more in depth field observation, and public engagement.

Despite the crude nature of this method, the maps here show that there exists unique spatial patterns for different cultural settings. These can be triangulated with other neighbourhood and statistical information, as well as data gathered from field studies and community involvement (maps.google.com, 2011).



## 6. DISTRICT SCALE (NEIGHBORHOOD)

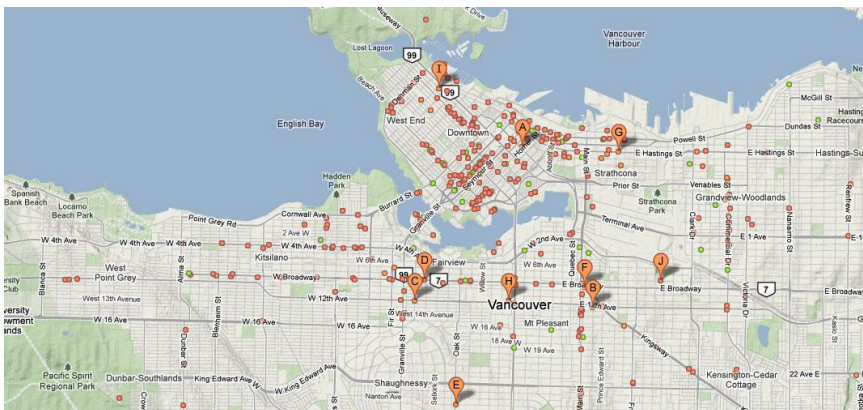
**“Jewish” - Purple Dots, “Catholic” - Green Dots,  
“Muslim” - Purple Pins**



**Figure 6.14** Online search engine and mapping techniques can also be used for identifying other cultural markers and differences.

For example, different sites of religious activity (top image) can be mapped and analyzed.

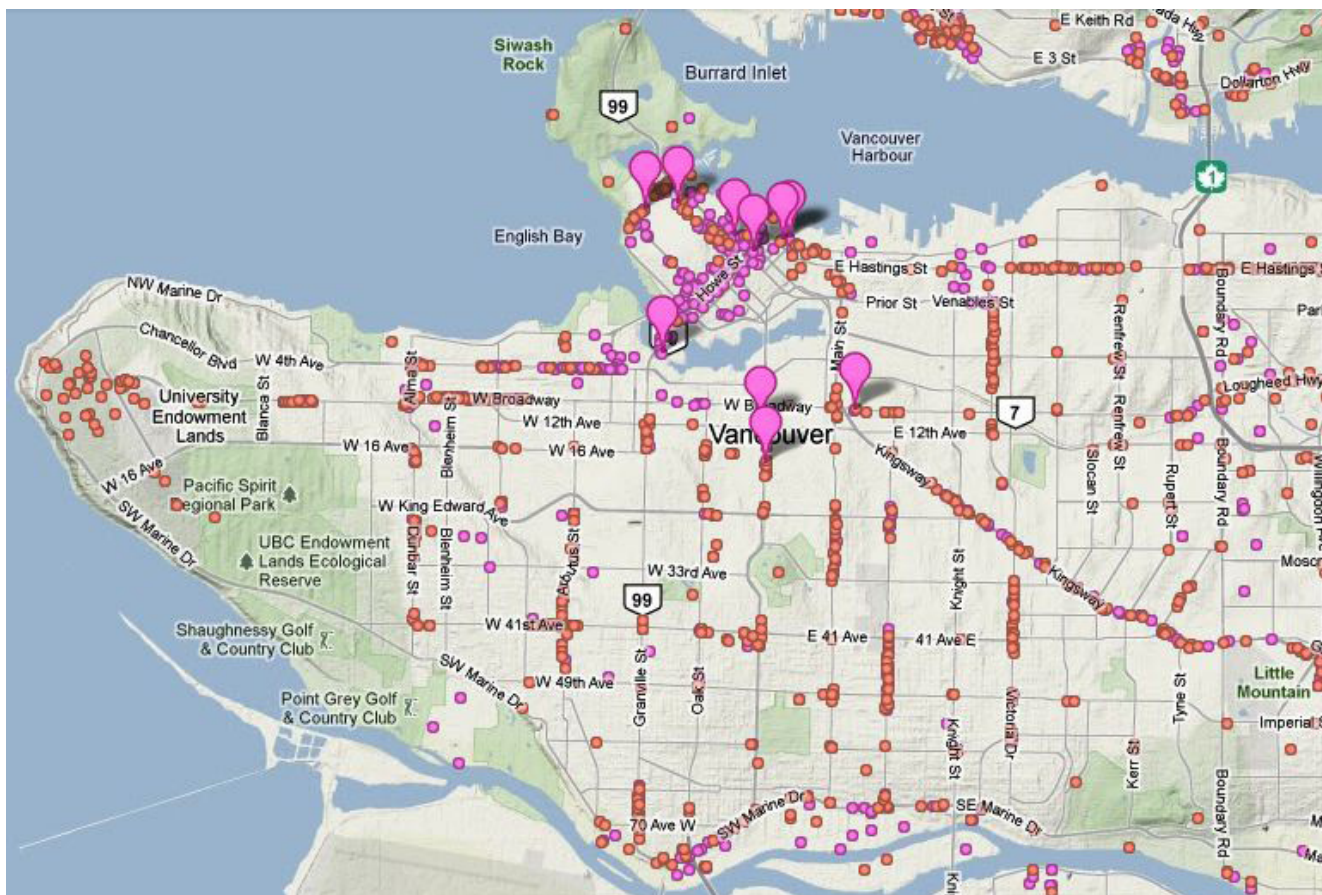
**“Seniors” - Orange Pins, “Night Clubs” - Green Dot,  
“Bars” - Red Dot**



Similarly, possible conflicts in life-styles between the senior population and the youth can be identified, by analyzing their respective settings and possible overlaps (bottom image) (maps.google.com, 2011).

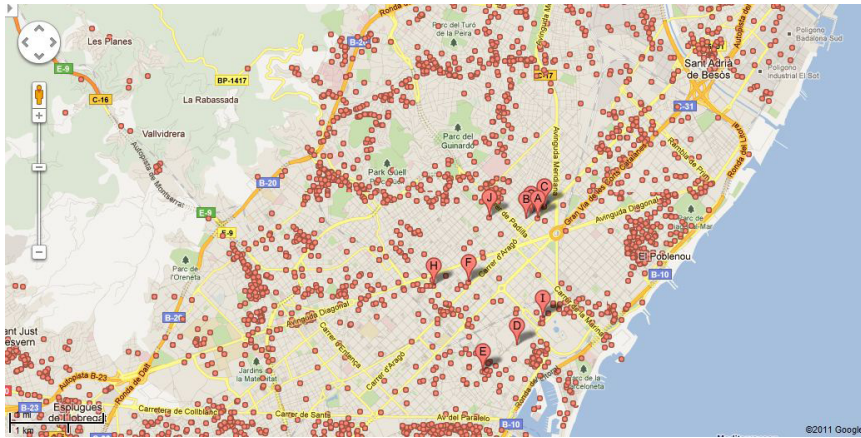


**Vancouver's Commercial Settings:**  
**"Shops" - Purple Pins, "Restaurant" - Orange Dots,**



## 6. DISTRICT SCALE (NEIGHBORHOOD)

### Barcelona's Commercial Settings:

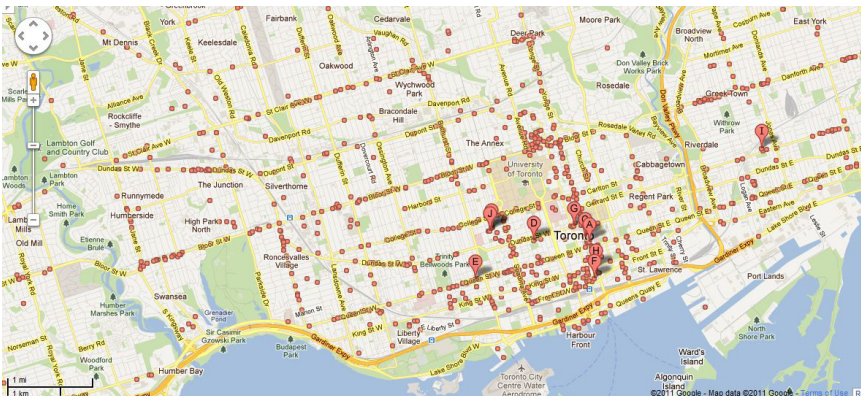


**Figure 6.15** Settings with an intense concentration of shops and commercial activities can identify border zones (if diverse or neutral in nature), and core areas (if homogenous).

Through the identification of such border areas, the nature, shape and form of neighbourhoods in a particular city can be identified. For example, while Vancouver is predominantly a corridor city (with neighbourhoods contained in-between these corridors and intercultural activities along the corridors), Barcelona is a much more nodal city, with the City of Toronto exhibiting a combination of both structures.

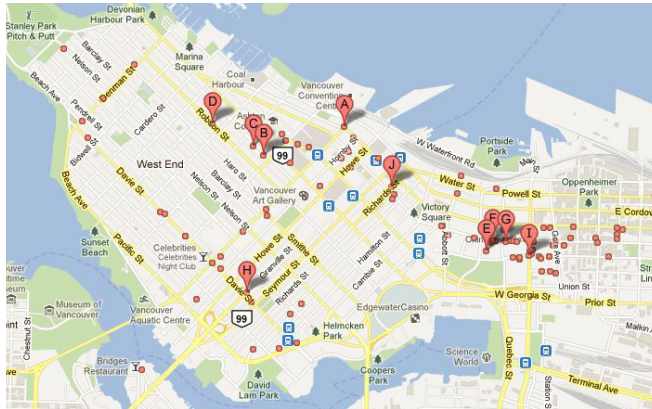
These maps are also highly useful in identifying areas where commerce and daily activity intensify, as well as areas where such activities dissipate. This is in turn helpful in identifying the overall rhythm of activities, as well as possible gaps within it (maps.google.com, 2011).

### Toronto's Commercial Settings:

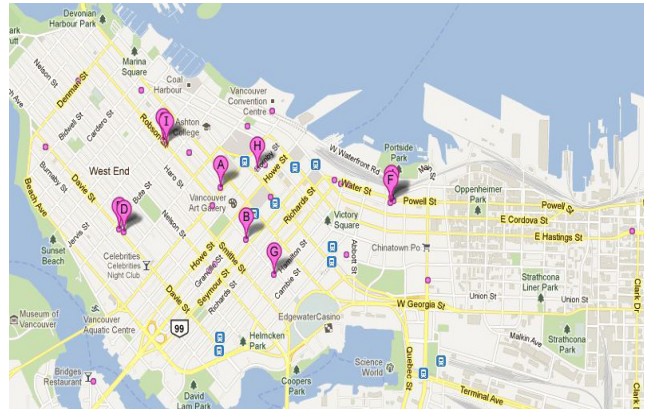




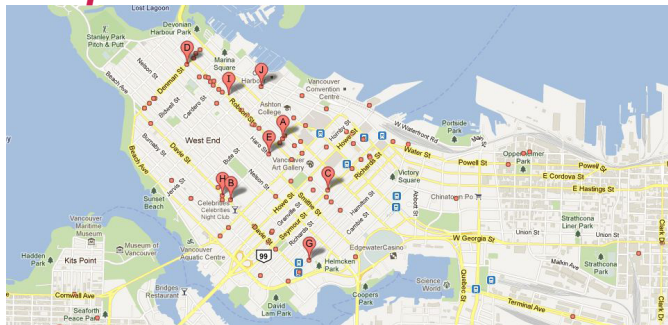
## “Chinese”



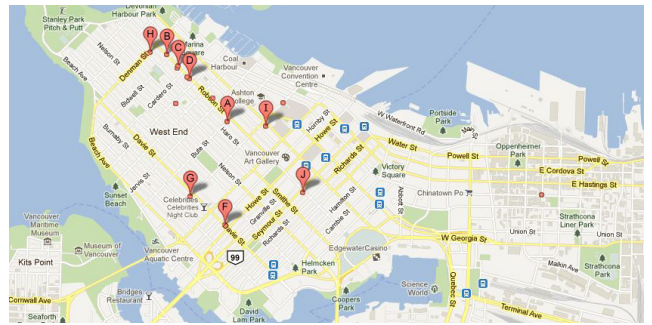
## “Indian”



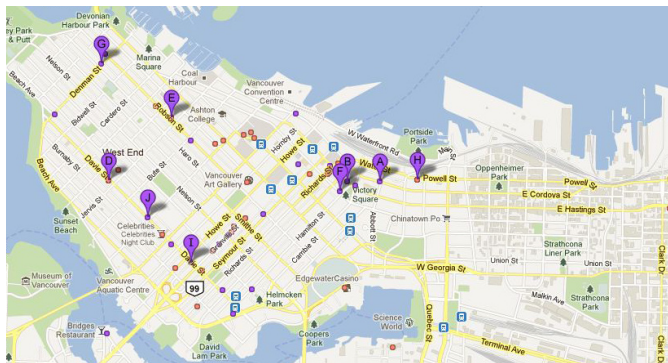
## “Japanese”



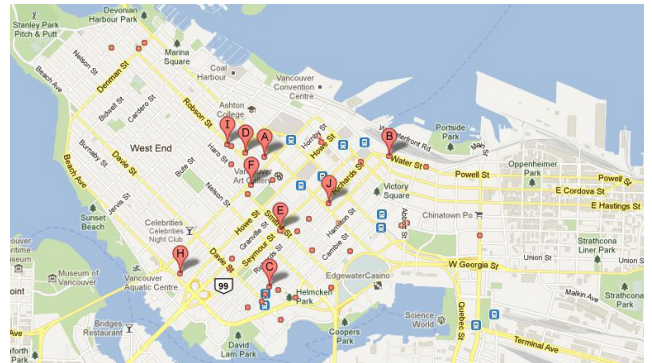
## “Korean”



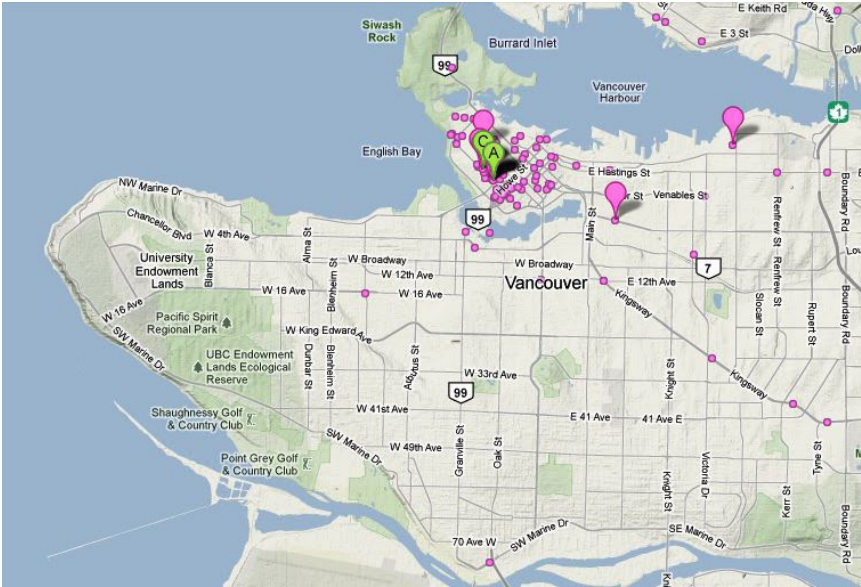
## “Mexican”



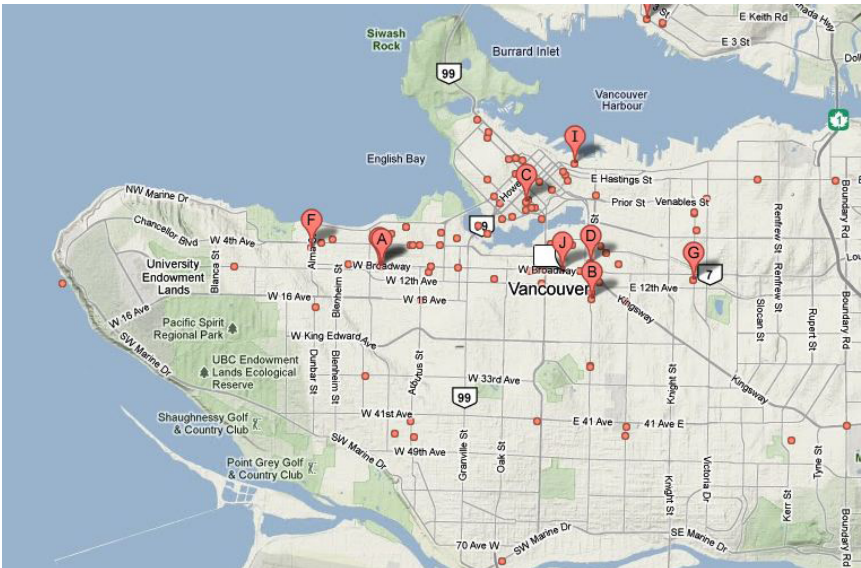
## “Italian”



## “Gay /Lesbian”



## “Yoga”



## 6. DISTRICT SCALE (NEIGHBORHOOD)

**Figure 6.16** A closer look at different key words, signifying different cultural groups - including race, gender and life-style. Some settings and life-styles are more concentrated than others (maps.google.com, 2011).





**Source:** [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plaza\\_de\\_las\\_Tres\\_Culturas](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plaza_de_las_Tres_Culturas)

## Plaza de las Tres Culturas

("Square of the Three Cultures")  
Tlatelolco, Mexico City, by Mexican  
architect and urbanist Mario Pani, 1966.

*An interesting case of celebrating hybridity in the Mexican culture, with the three distinct histories of pre-Columbian, Spanish colonial, and the modern, independent "mestizo" nation of Mexico recognized in the buildings within this site. The square contains the remains of Aztec temples and is flanked by the Santiago de Tlatelolco Catholic church, built in the 16th century, and a modernist massive housing complex built in 1964.*

## 7. PARCEL + MICRO SCALES

### Fostering Culture Supportive Places (micro design strategies for public realm, hybrid typologies and cultural vernaculars):

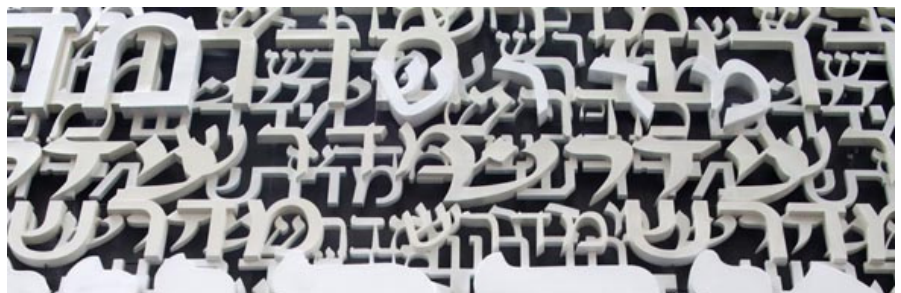
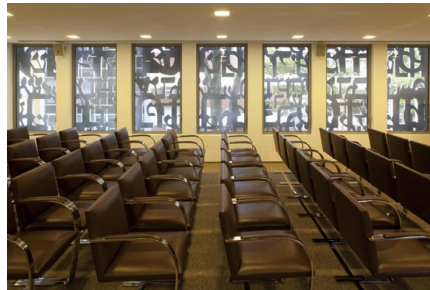
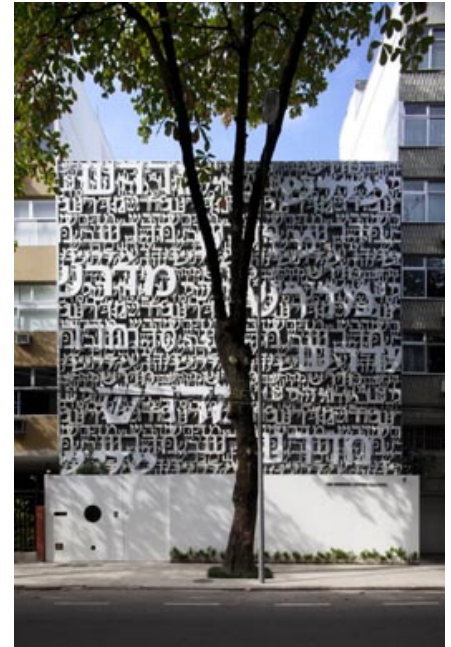
In this section we arrive at the smallest scale of the urban fabric, the parcel - such as individual dwelling units (with the household), streets, parks, community centers, markets, schools, religious institutions, and others. In a hybrid and an intercultural urbanism, such small scale spaces are the actual site of contact, conflict, contestation, belonging, assertion, understanding, recognition, creativity and celebration. Moreover, the very erection, omission, design and shaping of such (cultural) spaces can form an overtly political meaning for the residents and multiple communities of the urban environment. Here, particularly an examination of the role of public realm is conducted, given the potential of public spaces in bridging physical and psychological divides.

As discussed earlier, minorities often assert their existence on the landscape by influencing the built form as much as possible. This is often attributed to the persistence of a particular vernacular as manifested in the socio-cultural practices of the newcomers, revealing the struggle, and even the resilience of the minority's culture in asserting itself into the dominant vernacular, as cases from Turkey, Ireland, Israel, Palestine, Greece and other locations would attest to (Gaffikin, Mceldowney and Sterrett 2010; Salazar 1998). In examining the transformation of the built form by minorities and refugees, Dayana Salazar points out that *"typology itself transcends arbitrary national territorial boundaries, and therefore its application still carries meaning to a variety of builders and users who perpetuate it across borders"* (Salazar 1998, 324). Therefore, as urban design professionals we need to understand the needs and requirements of new cultures (particularly that of vulnerable groups) within the existing landscape, in order to better accommodate new populations, while avoiding negative conflicts and better guiding future development. Thus, the potential for purposeful hybrid vernaculars is stressed here as a way to bridge the gulf between the needs of migrants and the

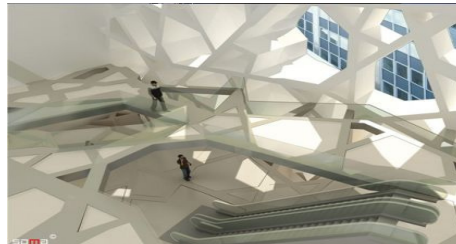
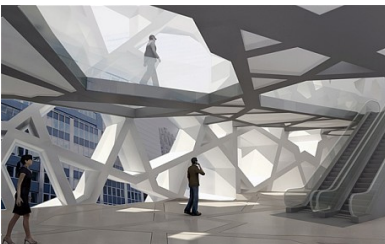
**Figure 7.1** The Midrash Building in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil is an example of hybrid vernacular built for the Jewish Congregation of Brazil. “The center is devoted to the debate, discussion and teaching of various themes around Jewish traditions as in literature, arts, history, psychology, politics, etc., in the search for meaning, connections and references in life.”

Midrash, which in Hebrew means ‘to draw sense’, has a facade with a fiberglass mesh of Hebrew letters in different sizes, layers and tones. It celebrates the Jewish identity while also re-imagining it in a contemporary context and through a hybrid form. Its introduction to the urban fabric creates the possibility for other cultures to engage with this group, while also providing a space for the Jewish community to gather and interact with one another. In terms of scale and massing, this urban in-fill project is very respectful of its surrounding.

< <http://www.morfae.com/0305-isay-weinfeld/>>







## 7. PARCEL + MICRO SCALES

**Figure 7.2** Park 51 community center can be seen as an attempt by some in the New York Muslim community to arrive at a hybrid vernacular, while providing an opportunity for engagement with other cultures in the city. The developer's vision for the site has been to provide "a vibrant and inclusive community center, reflecting the diverse spectrum of cultures and traditions, serving New York City with programs in education, arts, culture and recreation."

While the Park 51 has been framed by its opponents as "the ground zero mosque", giving it negative connotations, the actual attempt here has been to consciously celebrate hybridity, or as stated in its website "Inspired by Islamic values and Muslim heritage, Park51 will weave the Muslim-American identity into the multicultural fabric of the United States". However, the hostility generated by this attempt also shows the sensitive and fragile nature of such intercultural attempts, validating much of Lu's (2000) critical analysis. <http://park51.org/facilities/Park51>



dominant culture (**Figures 7.1 and 7.2**). Moreover, new conceptions of community development need to be formulated in the face of diversity, given that community itself might be a problematic term and in need of reformulation in terms of “difference and unity” within across multiple boundaries and jurisdictions (Checkoway 2011).

Therefore, it seems that planners and urban designers need to come to terms with the required changes to the local practices and processes that might be consciously or unconsciously dis-empowering different groups. By recognizing that hybrid forms, and introduction of new vernaculars, often serve “*as a bridge to restore a severed way of life, providing vehicle to establish a sense of continuity amidst the chaos of resettlement*”, new attitudes might be formed at the local level towards minority groups (Salazar 1998, 317).

Often such changes by the new group would entail both open and

closed characteristics for the structure of the neighbourhood. ‘**Open**’ can be inclusive, sociable, open interaction, and hence be seen as positive aspects of new neighbourhood structures, while ‘**closed**’ could imply exclusive bonds, closure, isolation, confinement and deprivation and therefore imply negative connotations (Salazar 1998, 318).

However, both these forms are needed when accommodating difference. For example, that which might be closed to the outside might give a degree of freedom to the local inhabitants of space, as long as it is accompanied by complimenting open forms. Hence, it is the manner in which such ‘open’ and ‘closed’ elements shape the public realm, mediating the relationship between the private dwelling and the public sphere, that needs to be the main area of concern at this scale.

Salazar provides the example of the role that building facade play in mediation the relationship between the ‘closed’ inside of the building and the ‘open’ outside of a building, through elements

such as balconies, entrances, sidewalks, pavements and other architectural expressions. For example, while in certain cultures, such as in some Middle Eastern countries, the interior of the building belongs to the domain of the woman and therefore the neatness of the inside a reflection of family pride, the outside of the building can serve as a point of interaction with the public and sociability. In such neighborhoods, flexible use of street furniture, such as chairs and tables for community gathering at particular times of the day, can help “bridge the separation between the secluded inner and visible outer areas”, contributing to “a sense of place” (**Figure 7.3 and 7.4**) (Salazar 1998, 319)

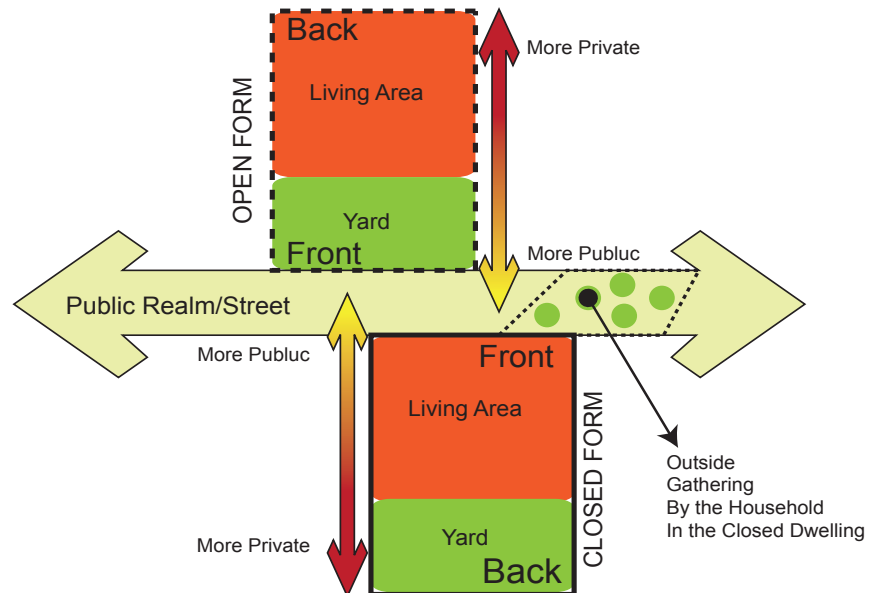
At the this smaller scale, therefore, a certain amount of mutual understanding and coherence in the design and management of public and private spaces through the arrangement of dwelling units (internally and externally) and their relationship to one another and to the public realm allows for a more conflict free environment (Rapoport 1977, 297). This is perhaps easier to achieve

## 7. PARCEL + MICRO SCALES



**Figure 7.3** Picnurbia, Viva Vancouver, turning Robson st into a temporary pocket park, allowing residents to picnic in the middle of a busy downtown street. Many different cultural groups mingled and used this temporary seating area. (Image by the author, 2011)

**Figure 7.4** Comparing two different dwelling units, with different internal arrangement of space. The top dwelling, by locating its yard to the front makes the recreational activities of the household more public (such as barbecuing). The dwelling depicted at the bottom is more 'close', given that it tucks away the yard to the back. However, the household in the bottom dwelling might prefer using the streets for gathering and socialization (Rapoport 1977, 290 - 298).



in cultural clusters, but can also come about through public engagement and community collaboration in more heterogeneous areas, by establishing norms and common grounds.

In the case of publicly used spaces, such as parks, community centers, libraries and hospitals, the design of space often regulates behavior. Such places, by clearly marking areas (such as noise free sections) leave cues for the public, and are therefor **'behavior setting'** (Rapoport 1977, 298). Given the fact that such places are most often visited by more than one type of user group/culture), they indeed benefit from a purposeful management of space.

In a hybrid cultural environment, the design of these spaces would indeed benefit from better understanding of their potential user groups and their activities - particularly time of use, frequency, manner and type of activity, etc. Therefore it would be useful for planners to conduct a survey in a given area and gather detailed profile of different user

groups that were previously discovered at the higher scale of the neighborhood analysis.

These are some of the questions that need to be answered when designing the public realm through a cultural lens (Rapoport 1977):

**- By whom they are used (ethnic, class, age, sex, lifestyle groups)?**

**- Where groups congregate or separate?**

**- When places are used (weekend, weekday, time of day)?**

**- How long is spent in which places?**

**- What is allowed or prohibited in various settings (the rules)?**

**- What are the latent aspects of activities and their cultural meaning?**

**- What are the spatial and temporal relationship among the various places and their relationship to the dwelling of the group?**

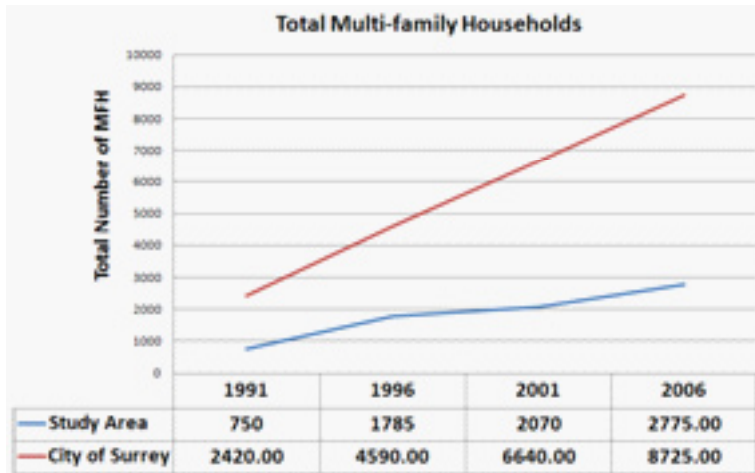
Perhaps when conducting such an analysis, a (visual)

database of the user groups can be created and their activities mapped conceptually over the already existing spaces and tested against observation and community engagement.

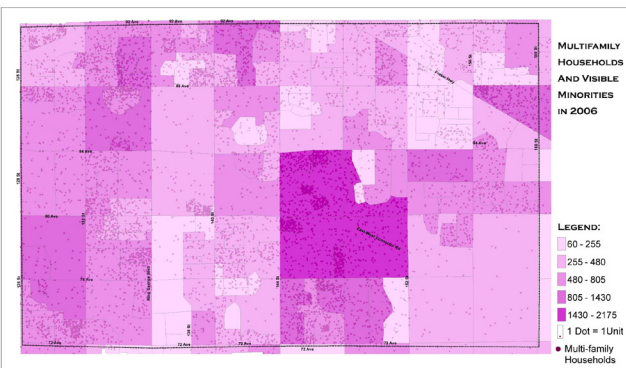
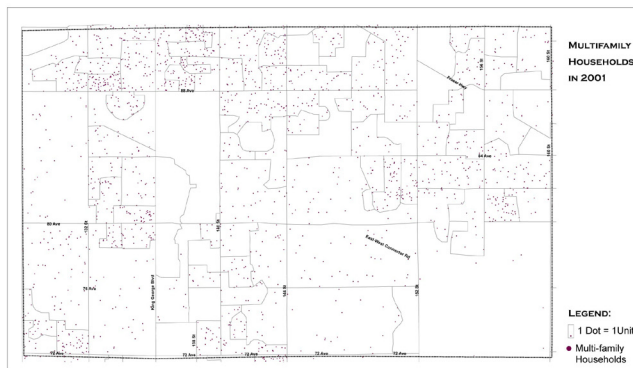
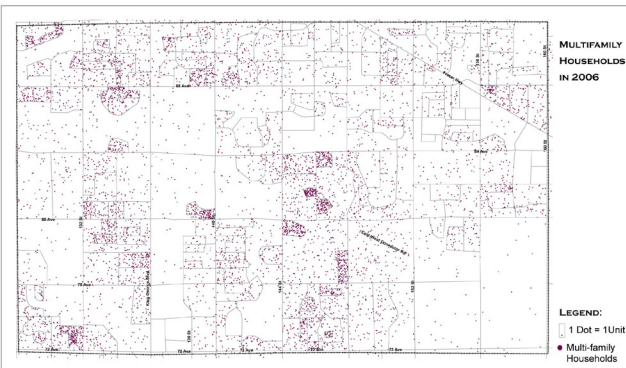
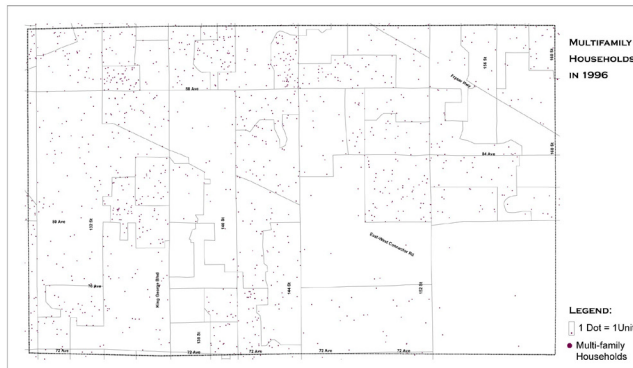
Furthermore, in terms of the dwelling unit itself, a more accurate understanding of the family structure of the cultural group is necessary, as the local housing mix and available typologies might not accommodate these different lifestyles. For example, some cultures have larger households and inter-generational living habits, as they require families of their children to remain in the same physical structure as the rest of the family (**Figure 7.5**).

Therefore, in places such as the City of Surrey, two identical dwelling units (with the same massing and footprint) might perform very differently in terms of population density, as it might house a multi-generational Indian family with six members, or a White family consisting of two retired old couple. In fact, cultural factors and limitations of the built environment in accommodating new user

## 7. PARCEL + MICRO SCALES



**Figure 7.5** Dramatic rise in the number of multifamily households in the City of Surrey, particularly in the areas with a high concentration of visible minorities, such as South Asian population. (Produced by the author for Design Center for Sustainability, 2011)





groups might explain some aspects of subordinations of ethnic groups (alluded to in **chapter 5**). Indeed, some suburban Cul-de-sac have proven useful for immigrant groups with the habit of living close to their extended family network, and with a degree of privacy.

## The Design and Role of Public Spaces in a Hybrid City:

Public space at the city and the neighbourhood level can play a crucial role in mediating urban diversity, while fostering public interaction and communication. As it was illustrated in our model in the previous chapter, careful arrangement of such spaces on the boundary zones can bring multiple communities together in a cooperative fashion, enhancing mutual understanding and reciprocity.

In many urban settings, however, the social regenerative potential of these spaces have been diminished, as a result of

rampant commercialization of the public realm and the privatization of various spaces in the city. Particularly, lack of funding and uneven allocation of resources have resulted in utter decay and dilapidation of public spaces used by the marginal and vulnerable populations in the urban periphery and inner cities (Madanipour 2004; Gaffikin, Mceldowney and Sterrett 2010).

That said, recent trends have shown that policy makers have once again recognized the importance of **central** public spaces for their multiple benefits, and even economic payoffs, such as spurring investments, fostering new creative firm clusters, and the re-branding of the post-industrial cities. However, smaller neighbourhood level spaces still often suffer from lack of attention by the decision makers (Madanipour 2004).

Marginal immigrant populations (such as Latin American communities in Los Angeles or African migrants in Barcelona) are often entrapped in neighborhoods facing decay and limited resources, such as adequate

public spaces and facilities. Consequently, pocket parks, streets, squares, community centers and playgrounds have to accommodate multiple (and at times incompatible) uses in the same space, resulting in conflict and alienation.

This is particularly true if these groups are also sharing such spaces with marginalized and impoverished local population, as it was stressed in the previous chapters (Madanipour 2004, 271). In such situations, space could be monopolized by one group (for example the youth with their own unique forms of expression, such as graffiti), making it perceptually un-welcoming to others and leading to lower communication possibilities between different generations, genders and cultures (*ibid* 2004).

It is useful to make some distinctions on the types of public spaces and their functions here. These spaces can be seen in terms of their **physicality** – as places where one's actions are observable by others – or their **procedural** aspects – as places for discussion of common interests and goals

## 7. PARCEL + MICRO SCALES

(Gaffikin, Mceldowney and Sterrett 2010, 496).

While these two models are not mutually exclusive, they need to also be considered against **'counter-publics'**, where some people are actively excluded from the space (such as gay and lesbians or woman and elderly). In our normative formulation of an intercultural lens, the issue of **'shared future'** is critical in understanding the role of public spaces in mediating difference. This term implies a "significant increase in integrated living and collaborative working across the divide, rooted in principles of inclusion, respect for diversity, equity and inter-dependence" (*ibid*).

Therefore public spaces - including paths, nodes and edges in addition to more obvious squares,

parks and markets – with their capacity to create chance encounters and contact are seen as critical for an urbanism that recognizes difference.

While Amin has argued that public spaces have become 'spaces of transit' and therefore devoid of meaningful contact, Messy's conception of the role of space for 'shared future' is of much more positive in nature (Gaffikin, Mceldowney and Sterrett 2010):

1) *Space is the outcome of interrelations; it is 'constituted through interaction'*

2) *Space is an arena of 'coexisting heterogeneity'; reflecting and changing the multiplicities and pluralities of contemporary society*

3) *Space is forever a work in progress, continuously being remade*

By conceptualizing **space as a**

**site of an event**, ever changing and always open and fluid, we can better understand the need for design of public realms that constitute such characteristics. However, often important trade-

**Figure 7.6** The covered courtyard in the Woodward's complex is often site of multiple events by different groups. (Images by the author)



offs are needed to be made in multicultural societies, in order to keep spaces as both inclusive (for various ethnic identities) and at the same time civic (for shared discussion).

In the rest of this chapter, several spaces, which bare the highest potential in bridging cultural divides at this urban scale, are briefly discussed:

### Urban Parks, Squares, Plazas and Streets:

These spaces are an integral part of the urban fabric, both forming a larger network of boundary crossing universal systems in a region (**chapter 5**), while also creating micro sites of cultural contact at the smaller scale of the parcel (as nodes, edges, paths and corridors). Nisha Fernando (2004, 3) stresses that *“While considerations of macro-scale spaces are indeed very critical for culturally sensitive planning, people perceive spaces in a much smaller scale, such as individual buildings, sidewalks, a single street or*

*the immediate neighborhood. This fact bears direct implications for differences between cultural groups as well.”*

These differences are particularly important given the previously mentioned concern that high quality public realms are often limited and far in between in locations that have a high concentration of marginal populations, turning them into sites of conflict due to competing uses by multiple cultural groups. Therefore, an intercultural understanding of these spaces can reduce negative friction, while also increasing positive contact and encounter.

An ethnographic approach to design of such spaces is highly important, as supported by Sandercock assertion that *“neither parks nor public or open spaces have been designed with the daily and recreational habits of diverse cultures in mind”*, and thus *“there has been little attempt to find out how different communities understand and desire to use public space”* (Sandercock 2000, 7). Park use, for example, is inherently linked to park users and

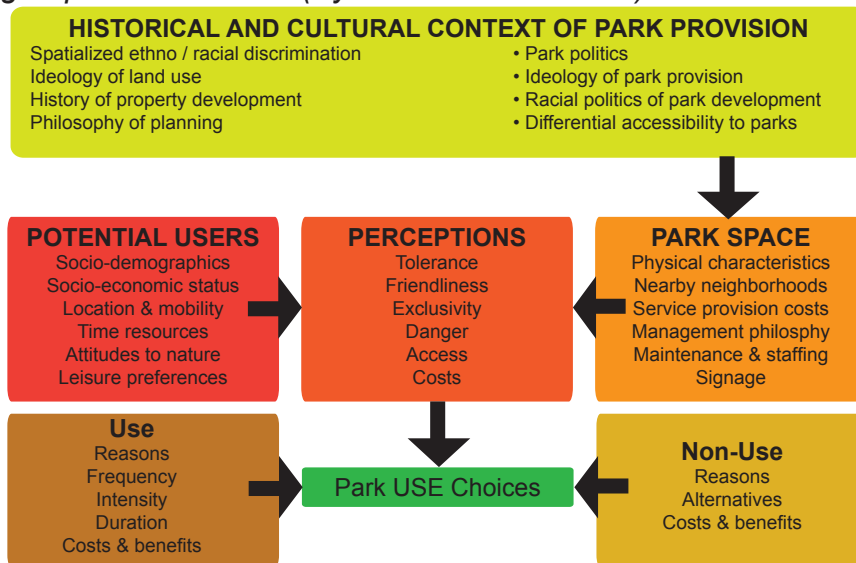
therefore require an in depth understating of the local context (**Figure 7.7**).

It is useful to conceptualise these urban elements as **systems of settings** and **systems of activities** (Fernando, 2004, Rapoport, 1980). These two systems are seen as interdependent, given that certain settings and activities (street vending) results in other types of activities (pedestrian customers). Environmental settings themselves can be broken down to **fixed**, **semi-fixed** and **non-fixed** elements (Fernando 2004).

In a hybrid setting, the human influence on space can be very helpful in creating a public realm that is specific and responsive to the cultural requirements of a group. This is particularly important in contemporary cities that have multiple and changing cultures. While fixed elements are the basic structures of space (buildings, lots, street pavements, etc), and stay constant for a long period of time, the semi-fixed and non-fixed elements can be adapted and shaped by different cultures embodying the space.

## 7. PARCEL + MICRO SCALES

**Figure 7.7** Park USE Choice model provides a comprehensive set of issues that need to be taken into account when designing such spaces for different cultural groups and activities (Byrne and Wolch 2009).

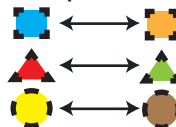


Extensive research into ethnic and racial group's interaction with urban parks have also resulted in formation of some generalizations with regards to cultural preferences of different groups. While it is important to discover actual manifestations of culture (and resulting activities) on the ground, the following summery of variations of different racial groups in the United States could be a useful starting point in moving away from euro-centric assumptions (Loukaitou-Sideris 1995; Byrne and Wolch 2009):

Ethnic enclaves, such as China Towns, can teach us great lessons in flexible design, as the ornamentation on the building facade (such as banners, light fixtures, colors) as well as non-fixed elements of the sidewalks (street vendors, etc) directly meet the needs of the users of the space, without requiring

much change from the physical structures of the area. Hence, in situations of diversity and rapid population change, a certain degree of open-endedness, programmability and informality, through the provision of semi-fixed elements can greatly enhance the quality of space for its multiple cultures

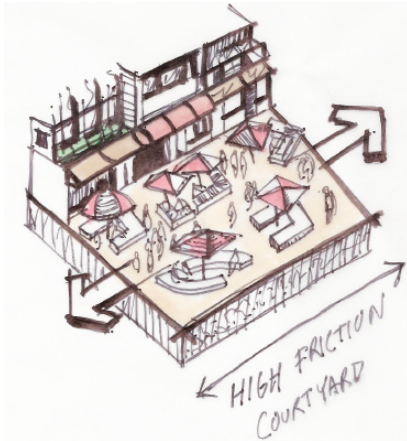
**- Flexible Design Principle (Figure 7.8).**



### **African-Americans:**

*Enjoy more sociable, formal, sports orientated, urban park settings. Look for organized recreation opportunities, such as basketball, but also sitting, talking, and walking. Are often accompanied by peers and friends. Passive users of space, using it as is rather than altering it. Group behavior consisted mostly of animated*





**Above:** Movable elements create settings that encourage certain compatible activities and humanization of urban open spaces such as streets, plazas and courtyards (illustration by the author).



**Above:** Woodward's courtyard, Vancouver is an example of flexible space that is located in a boundary zone, often site of multiple cultures (image by the author).

**Below:** Bryant Park, New York City, New York is a great example of a space programmed through non-fixed and semi-fixed elements that change during the day and night, and by its users. Among some activities observed, were reading, group yoga, movies, ping-pong, dining, sun tanning and many others (images by the author).



## 7. PARCEL + MICRO SCALES

**Figure 7.8** Examples of park activity, park setting and park usage, with different fixed and non-fixed elements.

**Below:** Emery Barnes Park, Vancouver is an example of a layered and zoned, behavior setting park, with marked boundaries identifying appropriate activities. While the park is not very flexible in arrangement, it does provide choice for different groups (images by the author).



*Interaction between two girls with different cultural and age backgrounds.*

*An area dominated by working men on their lunch break.*



*Clearly marked children area is often site of cultural diversity.*

*A couple feeding the birds while enjoying privacy of the edge area.*



*Friends using benches that face each other for discussion.*

*Grass used by sun tanners, mostly younger couples and individuals, as well as children playing soccer.*





*talk (performance like), joking and laughing, and girl watching. Also parenting toddlers by mothers is common.*

**Asians/Chinese:**

*Prefer 'scenic beauty' over recreational functionality, favor park visits with extended family or organized groups, but also visit parks to escape social responsibilities and to exercise (Tai chi). Their ideal park would have gorgeously designed outdoor garden filled with colorful flowers, ponds, pavilions, and tea-houses for passive enjoyment, sightseeing, and relaxation. Are not as familiar with the North American park systems, as sites of sports and picnic.*

**Latinos:**

*See parks as a substitute to the central town plaza. Desire 'a more developed environment' with good access to group facilities such as parking, picnic tables and washrooms. They seek to socialize, typically with extended family groups, and also to enjoy 'fresh air'. In terms of activities, tend to engage in sedentary and informal social activities*

*such as picnicking, but also enjoy soccer, camping, and hiking. Seek active use of space by appropriation and alteration of it. Get involved in gregarious uses including parties, celebrations of birthdays and wedding anniversaries, and picnics. Large groups usually sit in circular configurations having food at the very center.*

**Whites:**

*Tend to focus on individualism and apparently prefer settings that offer secluded nature. May seek solitude and opportunities to exercise, as they have been shown to disproportionately enjoy camping, hiking, hunting, boating, swimming, cycling, and dog-walking. Highly care about the aesthetic qualities of parks, such as greenness, landscaping, and natural elements.*

*There are also variations between different generations of the same racial group as it has been observed that (Byrne and Wolch 2009):*

*Hispanics born in Mexico preferred clean, litter-free areas, whereas the native-born Latinos emphasized the importance of park safety.*

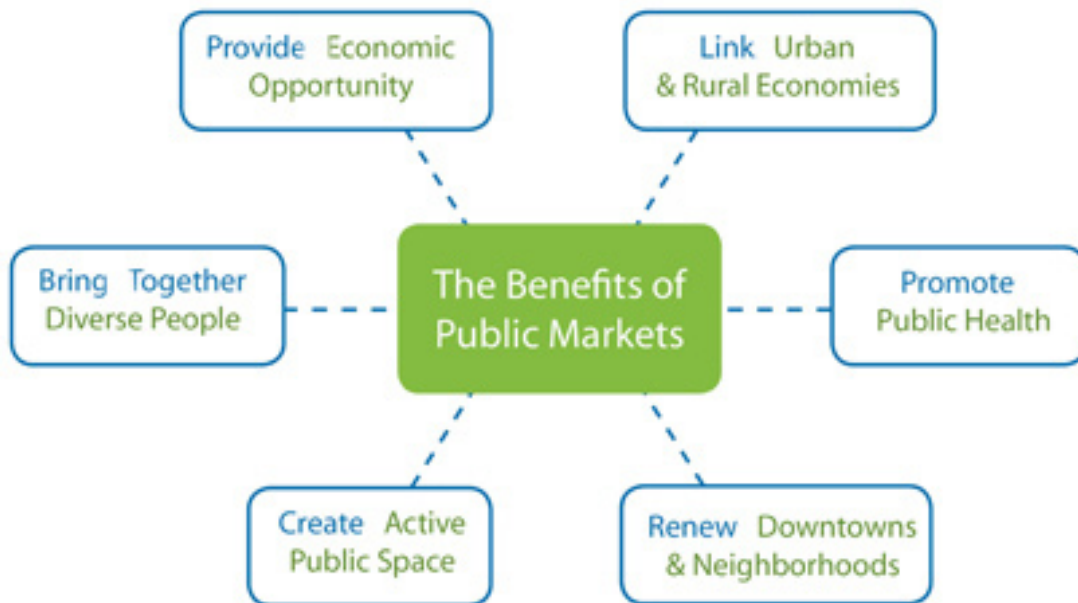
Loukaitou-Sideris (1995) stresses that even in situations of diversity, park users tend to stay separated by activity types and their cultural preferences. However, the children's playing ground has been observed to be the only site of true diversity and interaction, as parents and children find common ground in this vital micro-public.

Given such findings, it is crucial to cater to the unique needs of different groups (also elderly, children, woman, men, dog owners, etc), depending on the location of the public space (in the core of a homogenous neighbourhood versus a diverse boundary zone). In more diverse settings, introduction of flexibility through semi-fixed and non-fixed elements, as well as careful layering and separation, forming time and activity zones, can greatly enhance the civic potential of such spaces (Loukaitou-Sideris 1995; Fernando, 2004).

## 7. PARCEL + MICRO SCALES

**Figure 7.9** Project for Public Spaces outlines the following benefits of urban markets.

<http://www.pps.org/articles/the-benefits-of-public-markets/>



### Urban Markets:

Urban public markets are unique in their ability to integrate multiple activities through their provision of non-fixed and semi-fixed

settings. Therefore, by their very nature, these places are context based and culturally sensitive, albeit if transitory and ever changing. This is precisely why economic development planners and urban designers alike can incorporate markets

as a low cost strategy that addresses social, economical and even environmental issues, while creating new networks and connections among multiple groups.

This of course can be done



**Figure 7.10** Examples of urban markets from around the world.

**Iranian Bazaar** (Zanjan)

< [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Bazaar\\_zanjan.jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Bazaar_zanjan.jpg)>



**Vancouver Chinatown** (image by the author)



**Informal market in Mandalay in central Myanmar**

<<http://christophermartinphotography.com/category/travel/>>



Markets integrated with the local shops (illustration by the author)



**Mexican market** (image by the author)

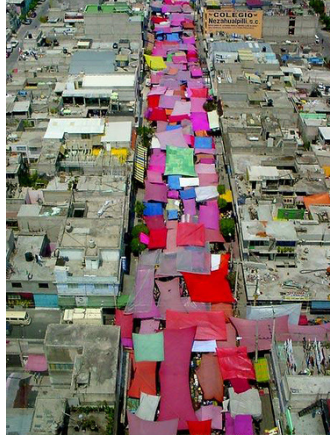


**European Christmas market in a town plaza, Jena** <<http://www.flickr.com/photos/rene-germany/2126809489/>>





**Below:** Citra Niaga Urban Development, Samarinda, Indonesia, nominated for The Aga Khan Award for Architecture, shows how markets can incorporate informal and marginal activities of street vendors with the more formalized shop fronts, providing mutual benefit while creating an inclusive area for all sociocultural classes.



## 7. PARCEL + MICRO SCALES

**Left and Below:** Markets are active urban elements that can create porous membranes between several neighborhoods. These aerial images of linearly laid out informal markets in Mexico City show how these non-fixed structures can transform space and provide settings for human activities. < <http://www.crisisfronts.org/?p=1174>>

both at the neighborhood's core (as an ethnic market celebrating one culture) or at the boundary zones, as a permeable membrane showcasing urban diversity, and creating economic connections among groups. Furthermore, markets are a strategy that can tackle other challenges in a neighborhood, such as lack of economic activity, dangerous and deserted streets, urban food deserts and low social capital, tackling sustainability in multiple and overlapping ways - **Sustainability Principle.**



Many studies and reports have documented the numerous benefits of markets, such as their placemaking potential, ability to serve as sites of employment and business incubation, and providing immigrants with new networks, economic opportunity and increased social capital, not to mention greater access by residents to fresh and sustainable products produced close to home (Project for Public Spaces 2003; Morales 2009).

As cases such as Citra Niaga Urban Development (**Figure 7.10**), in Indonesia, and markets in Chicago illustrate, the careful design, planning and managements of markets not only allows for a more formalized avenue for the informal economy to express itself, but also can create interesting linkages between formal shops and market vendors. Therefore, rather than competing, street vendors can find new customers in local shops, while drawing in people to the area that benefit these formal businesses.

Moreover, certain established businesses (and local farmers) might enjoy setting up temporary shops in these markets, catering to new customers that might have not been exposed to their products in their absence. For the minorities and newcomers, these markets are low barrier to entry platforms, that both give them chance to experiment, while also learn from other local businesses that are part of the market, and gain confidence. These environments have been shown to also enhance intercultural relationships among various cultural

participants in the market area, as they start to form new relationships and interdependencies.

Thus planners and policy makers need to examine the unique situation of migrants,, particularly refugees and marginal groups, in order to address their unique needs through the creation of market space. Morales argues that planners can both address public uses of streets with markets while also utilizing them as *“means of addressing labour market marginalization, particularly by providing women, the handicapped, displace workers and new immigrants with a place to earn a living”* (Morales 2009, 430).

## Other Spaces and Facilities:

Finally, we need to consider all other spaces that are in between the dwelling and the public realm. These include spaces that are more public in nature - such as community centers and libraries - to cultural specific institutions - such as religious buildings and cultural facilities - to the basic everyday life spaces of



## 7. PARCEL + MICRO SCALES

workplace, restaurants, pubs coffee shops and internet cafes, often referred to as third places.

In fact, research has shown that real interaction and friction happens in such spaces more than any other urban setting. In a study of multi-ethnic network formation in the mixed neighbourhood of Wanachai District in Hong Kong, research revealed the importance of several key urban components (Matsushita, Yoshida and Munemoto 2005). It was concluded that the following urban places all contribute to a varying degree to such network formations (listed in order of their level of interaction from highest to lowest):

*1) Entertainment business (tourism) related locations – bars, discos, nightclubs, ethnic restaurants.*

*2) Construction related businesses and creative industry – architects, engineering firms, interior material showrooms.*

*3) Public leisure facilities – open public parks, basketball grounds, playgrounds.*

*4) Public places – streets, market places,*

*5) Place of Residence – self or others.*

Another research has revealed the importance of community places of interaction, such as community gardens, with their introduction of ethnic vernaculars and plants, for knowledge sharing, education and learning amongst various groups (Rishbeth 2004).

Consequently, it is critical to examine how such spaces relate to both one's sense of cultural identity (their level of openness and acceptance

towards difference), as well as how their provision and location can foster an 'integral' urbanism, or a sense of belonging and shared future. According to the model developed in the previous chapters, the spaces that have the highest potential in creating cross-cultural relationships should be strategically located in neighborhood boundary zones, while the more cultural specific facilities and services in the neighborhood core.

Beyond such a hierarchy, it is also prudent to allow and encourage cultural icons that have considerable symbolic value for one culture to be established and celebrated by all residents at prominent/central locations, symbolizing the openness and diversity of the urban environment. This will be strengthened if such places (such as the Greek Community Center or the Muslim Mosque or the Latin Cultural Club) have regional



elements and materials as well as celebrating their own cultural heritage - creating purposeful hybrid forms.

Gale's (2004, 18) detailed account of mosque development in UK, showing that *"applications to develop these buildings have frequently given rise to forms of **aesthetic contestation** that are embedded in processes of identity construction amongst non-Muslims"*, reveal the challenging and important role of planning in a hybrid cultural context.

Gale (2004) stresses the role of planning by asserting that *"urban planning mediates processes of social boundary construction that coalesce around mosque designs and becomes in turn a nexus in which some of the meanings and associations that accrue to such sites are articulated"*.

Thus, given the possibility of aesthetic conflict, the hybrid form can play a strong role in creating a bridge between multiple cultures, as well as past and present (**Figure 7.11**).

Finally, it is important to explore the role that **use** of space and **programming** of space makes in fostering 'bridging' and 'linking' social capital, assisting with economic development of diverse communities, creating social cohesions and greater networking among citizens (**chapter 8**).

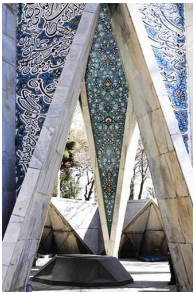
Therefore, an intercultural planning lens needs to look beyond physical design of space, by also emphasise human networks and intercultural relationships. Furthermore, participatory techniques and engagement methods need to be developed that can incorporate different cultural knowledge and viewpoints. The next chapter will attempt to address some of these non-design facets of an intercultural lens.

**Figure 7.11** The hybrid form can serve as a bridge.



**Museo Nacional de Antropología,**  
Mexico City,  
Mexico - bridging  
the Aztec  
past with the  
contemporary  
Mexican culture.

## 7. PARCEL + MICRO SCALES

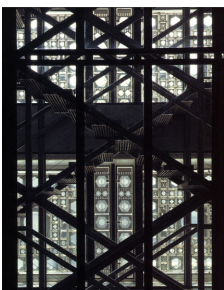


**Tomb of Omar Khayyám,**  
Neishapur,  
Iran - bridging  
contemporary  
Iranian identity, as  
a fusion of Islamic  
identity and Persian  
culture.

**Bridge School,** Xiashi, Fujian Province, China - A school as a real and figurative bridge connecting two villages.



**The Institut du Monde Arabe,** Paris - celebrating the relationship between France and Arab World





**Carnival in the Mountains,**  
Paul Klee, 1924: Watercolor on paper on board. 23.5 x 31.1 cm

## 8. SOCIAL SYSTEMS + TOOL BOX

### **Ethnographic Urban Design (social systems, engagement toolbox and co-design):**

The framework that have been sketched out since the start of this discussion, has traversed from theoretical realms, global processes and higher metropolitan scales down to the smaller scales of the neighbourhood and parcel. In practice, however, an intercultural planning lens would be a much more ground up activity, starting at the local community and even household level, emphasizing people and their involvement with their local environments (physical space) and one another (social space), rather than larger design projects implemented at the urban and metropolitan levels.

While a well developed theoretical and philosophical framework, with a higher understanding of the macro-processes of late modernity, assists planners in better anticipating change at the local level, the real solutions ultimately lie with the public and various cultural groups. In fact, strategic and targeted approaches (urban acupuncture) at the smaller scales can successfully add up to the larger urban levels, if not the world. Given this recognition, the framework developed thus far needs to be seen as open-ended one, and only as a beginning (developing key terms and ideas). On the field, these arguments need to be adapted to the local context and their unique needs, with each community adopting and shaping their own intercultural planning framework. Consequently, in this last chapter, ethnographic tools, participatory techniques and social systems that are integral to a more community oriented approach to intercultural planning will be explored.

As it has been stressed through out the previous chapters, an intercultural planning lens would require an investigation into the livelihood, lifestyle, values and world view of cultural groups



(in the broadest sense of the term). While research into common practices of assumed groups can be a first step strategy, in order to develop a more complete picture a much more on the ground study is required. This can be achieved through direct participation of individuals and groups in the design process (co-design) and ethnographic (observational/interpretational) methods. Both these strategies provide useful knowledge and can be complementary to one another.

In terms of participatory methods, traditional ways of public engagements often fail in reaching diverse groups. Many minority communities (for a variety of reasons, from feelings of anxiety due to language barriers, to lack of proper understanding of local participatory practices) avoid these formal engagement settings and venues (public hearings, open houses, etc). Therefore, participatory planning needs to be much more creative in its engagement with other cultures.

**Figure 8.1** Story telling through photography - Lester's Army's 'shelter project' workshop for seniors at the Lion's Den (design facilitators/consultants: Patrick Chan, Sam Mohamad-Khany).



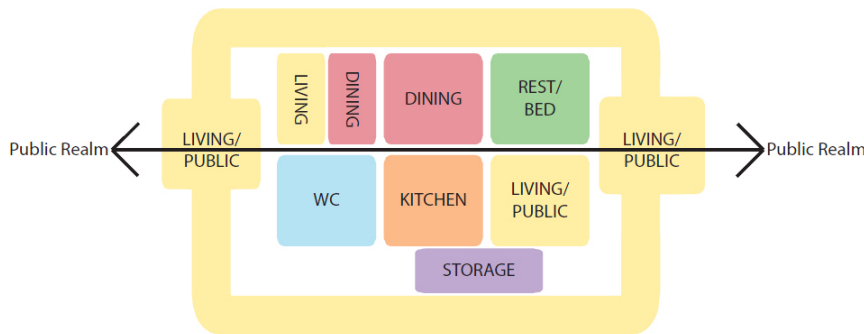
As I explained in the previous chapters, different cultures need be discovered at the urban and neighborhood levels. However, once these cultures are discovered, it is prudent to set up discussion groups and workshops with each identified group (in small formats). Doing so will allow the participants to get involved with the design process, while making new connections with each other and the design team.

In fact, through use of pictures (taken by participants of their settings), story telling, readings, drawings and in depth discussions, as well as use of visualization techniques and computer programs (such as Sketch up, Google Earth, Elements DB), the community group can arrive at appropriate 'hybrid models'.

In such settings, groups will first discuss their ideal environments, their idea

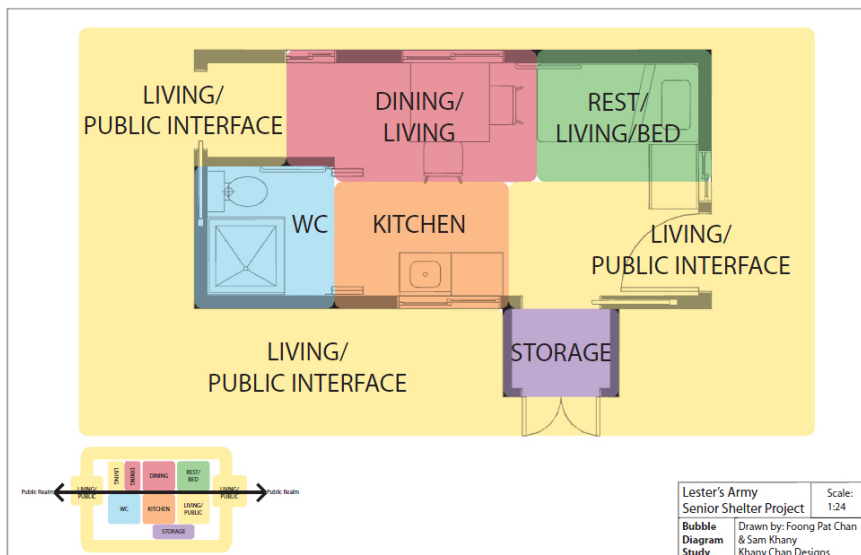
## 8. SOCIAL SYSTEMS + TOOL BOX

**Figure 8.2** Diagramming seniors' ideal living space arrangement in a small dwelling, with the participation of the senior groups from lions den (Patrick Chan, Sam Mohamad-Khany).



of home and homeland, perhaps sharing ideas through photography of their realm (from core to their sphere), showing what they like (colors, textures, patterns, etc) to what they don't like (**Figure 8.1**). Then through the use of cut-out pieces, hand drawn sketches and computer illustrations, and with the assistance of a design facilitator who brings existing typologies and good design practices to the table, the group can arrive at 'hybrids' that both meets the requirements of the region (ecological and historical context), as well as their unique cultural needs (**Figure 8.2**).

Therefore, these models (be it a neighborhood concept plan, a community center, a park, a single dwelling, a market area, economic development strategy or even a festival) will be arrived at through negotiation and constant engagement of the users of the space. During such a process, the group's lifestyles, norms, preferred settings



and activities will also be recorded and used for the design.

This will give cultural groups an active role in the 'production' of their own spaces, as they are ultimately tied up with a particular livelihood contained within the social and physical space under study. Therefore, rather than passively experiencing space, collaborative design methods will allow communities to actively engage with the 'operational' aspect of their environment and transform it.

Perhaps within such methods lie the possibility to act and create better livelihoods, since the creation of these neighborhood solutions at least partially would reflect the creative capacity and values of their own residents rather than outside forces and assumptions. The involvement of the minority groups and marginal populations does not need to alter the structure of urban environment radically, since small changes to the semi-fixed and non-fixed elements of neighborhoods

could go a far way in allowing for the establishment of proper settings that create social, cultural and economic opportunity, and enhancing the overall legibility (mental image) of an area. This, however, requires acceptance of greater urban informality and decreased levels of regulation by the state government.

Beyond the direct involvement of local population, designers need to gain better access to the life-world of cultural communities. Indeed, in any planning project with a cultural lens, a community profile needs to be established that gives detailed account of the cultural context and people who the design will be for - something that marketers often do effectively, albeit for a different reason (**Figure 6.13**). Important elements that need to be recorded are activities (such as eating), system of activities (eating while sitting with friends), settings (outdoors on a bench) and system of settings (in a park, near children's playing area and close to home) (Rapoport 1980).

In doing so, as new cultures and activities are

discovered and recognized, perhaps more inclusive and legible environments can be created, which recognize the differences and similarities of diverse groups - as well as gaps within their environments. It was also previously mentioned that it is important to find out how human environments organize the following elements:

- 1) Space
- 2) Meaning
- 3) Communication
- 4) Time

Finally, it is crucial to better understand various social networks that are formed by each group at the urban and neighborhood levels. These networks have spatial qualities and can assist planners and designers to identify the cultural core, domain and sphere - by merely analyzing the level of intensity/density of such networks and its relationship to the urban fabric. Network mapping will also allow us to identify where overlaps occur, and create solutions that would mediate friction, and decrease conflict. For example, if elementary school students take a particular path on their daily route to school,

## 8. SOCIAL SYSTEMS + TOOL BOX

and this path at some point overlaps with high-school student's path (or more starkly, a local gang), then an understanding of this dynamic could help planners to design safer environments at such unmediated border zones. This, however, requires an in depth knowledge of multiple groups, their networks and the paths and settings people use to get access to their networks.

Rapoport (1977, 267) claims that *"Each individual in the city has a network of relationships with various people and places which vary, but are more similar for members of any group than among groups. The organization of space and how places are related is, therefore, important since they reflect and reinforce orbits and networks. Such social spaces consist of*

*places and paths rather than surfaces"*

Such network analysis (their shape, extent, intensity) would give designers and planners a better sense of differences in tempos, rhythms and manners of behavior/use of space, and allow for a better synchronization among multiple groups. It is also very important not to disrupt essential cultural networks, as changes to the urban environment are conducted (Rapoport 1977).

Indeed, network formations are a complex phenomenon and sometimes carry over in the immigration process (Rapoport 1977). Perhaps, some migrant populations prefer certain suburban settings for the very reason that they can maintain their networks and adapt them to their new setting without completely severing their ties and proximity (hence the use of Cul-de-Sac and multigenerational housing in

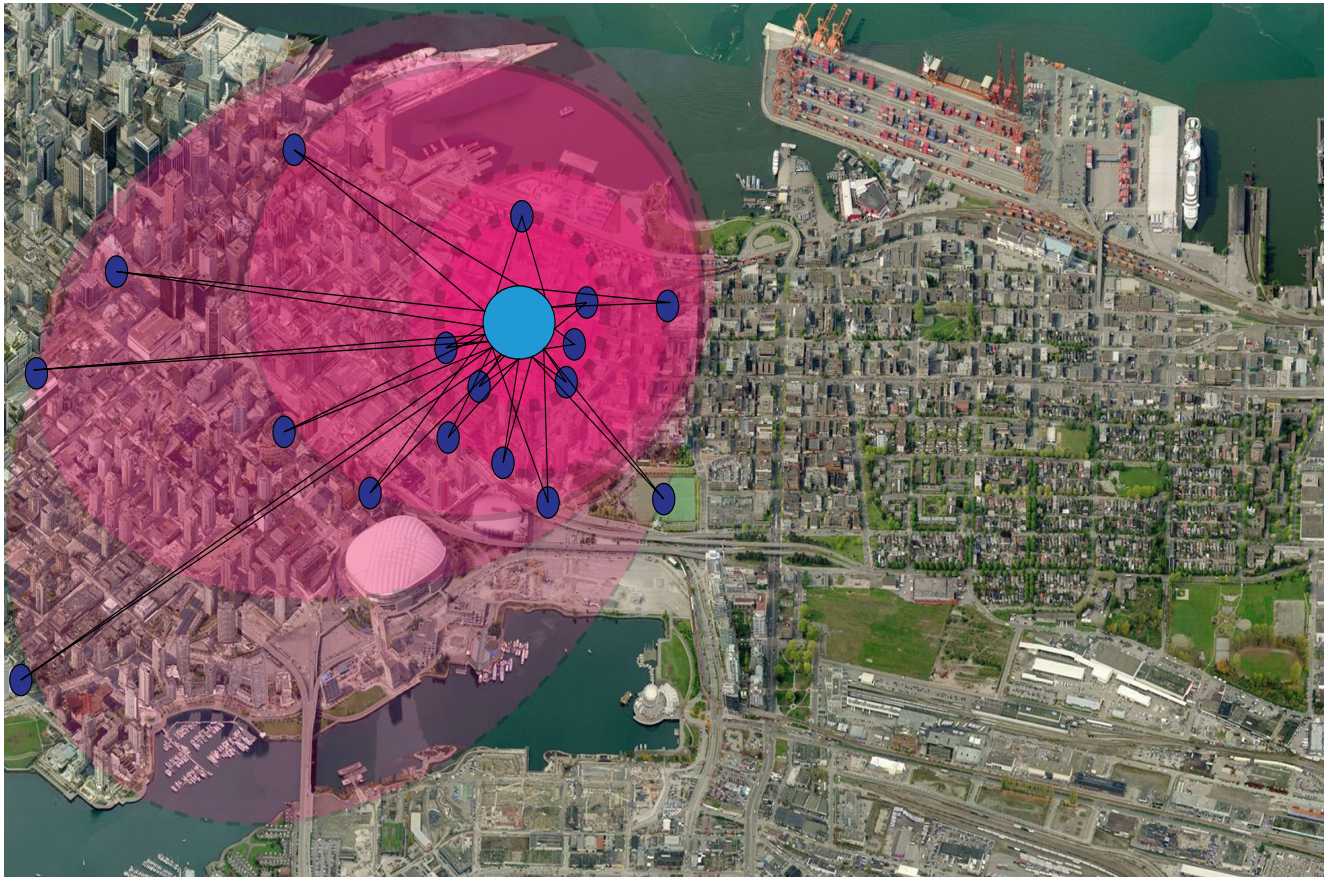
some East Indian enclaves in Surrey). Thus an awareness of these cultural requirements would allow us to create environments that are sensitive to cultural networks, rather than being disruptive to them.

**Figure 8.3** and **8.4** summarize the ideas here, by showing how network mapping and formal cultural profile surveys can be helpful as pre-design tools. Beyond direct engagement, however, ethnographic observations are also helpful in the development of a better understanding of the overall cultural and environmental legibility of an area. Depending on the subject of study, a series of pre-designed and yet open-ended surveying tables can be constructed, which can then be populated by surveyors as they observe people, activities and settings in a particular area.

Such ethnographic data can be creatively overlaid with other data creating a pre-design



**Figure 8.3** An example of network mapping, showing the extent, intensity and spatial form of one's network in the urban setting. As network intensity drops, the cultural realm enters its domain and sphere from the more intense core. Here the big light blue circle represent the dwelling (its extent and range is defined by one's culture), while the smaller dots are the places, people and settings that one would visit most everyday of the week. In engagement with a particular user group, such a map can be rapidly constructed by using pins on a printed map, or perhaps if this survey is being conducted on the field (for example a park), then it can be developed through use of mobile devices and Google map pin function.



8.

SOCIAL  
SYSTEMS +  
TOOL BOX

**Figure 8.4** A sample survey that details one’s cultural profile with respect to urban setting and activities’ proper. It takes into account the time of the day, distance, frequency, duration, setting, and other factors, while also conducting asset mapping and social network analysis with members of the group. The columns in this template can be pre-printed cards that are given to a discussion group, in which members can write-in/discuss their most important daily activities.

Cultural Identifications (sex, age, race, generation, other cultural associations):

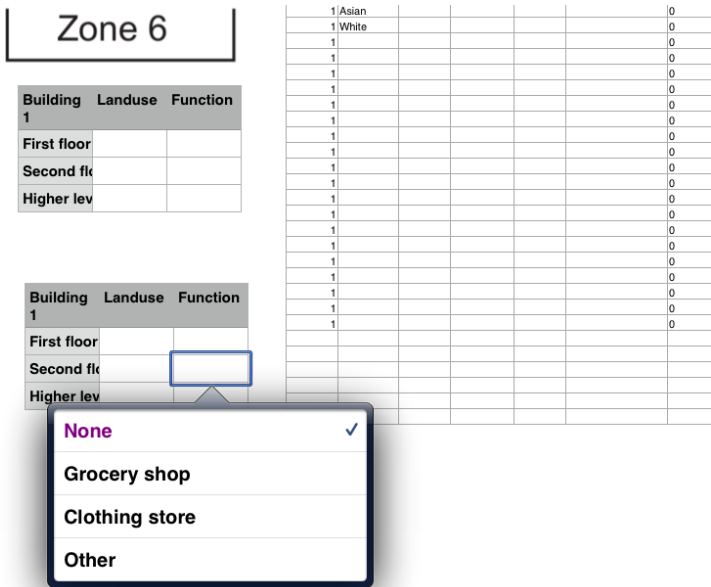
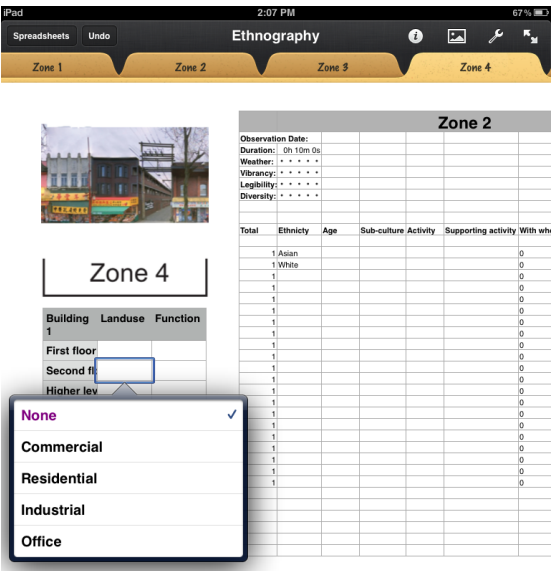
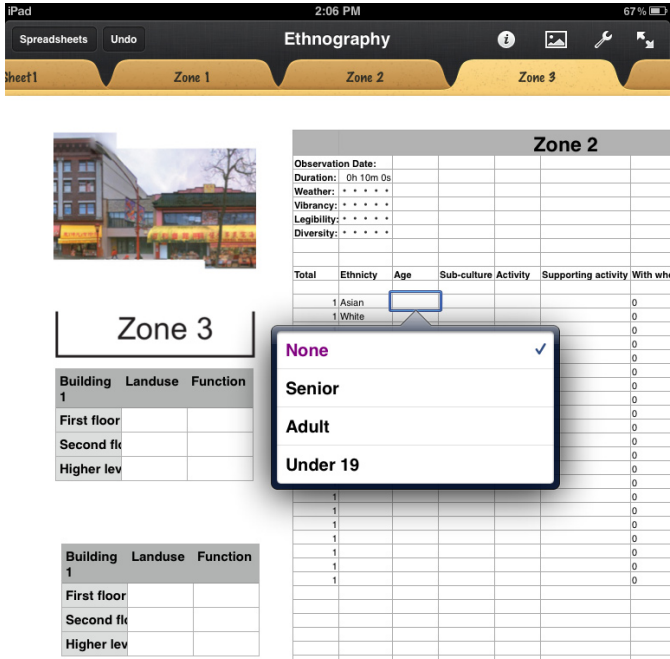
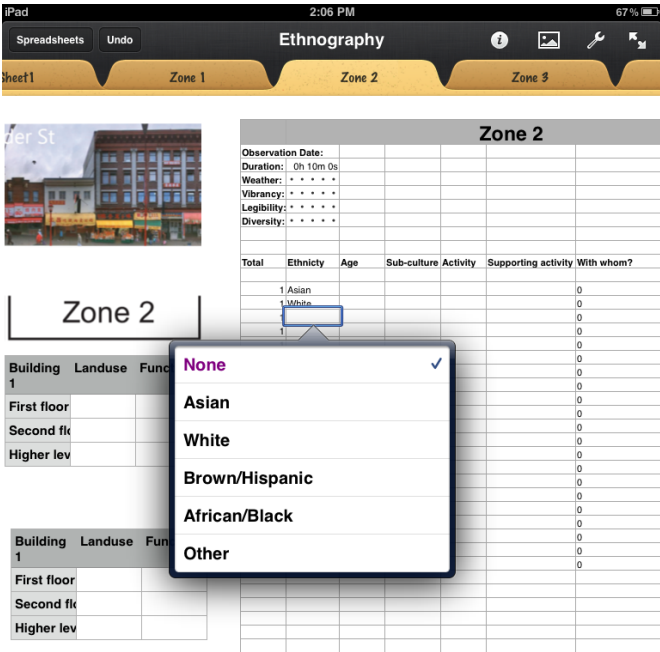
Time:	Time:	Time:	Time:
Activity:	Activity:	Activity:	Activity:
Setting/Location:	Setting/Location:	Setting/Location:	Setting/Location:
With Whom:	With Whom:	With Whom:	With Whom:
Manner/How:	Manner/How:	Manner/How:	Manner/How:
Any Complimentary Activities:	Any Complimentary Activities:	Any Complimentary Activities:	Any Complimentary Activities:
Distance to Dwelling:	Distance to Dwelling:	Distance to Dwelling:	Distance to Dwelling:
Tools involved:	Tools involved:	Tools involved:	Tools involved:

Social Network Analysis:

Time, Frequency, Distance

Asset Mapping:

Significance, Activity, Path:



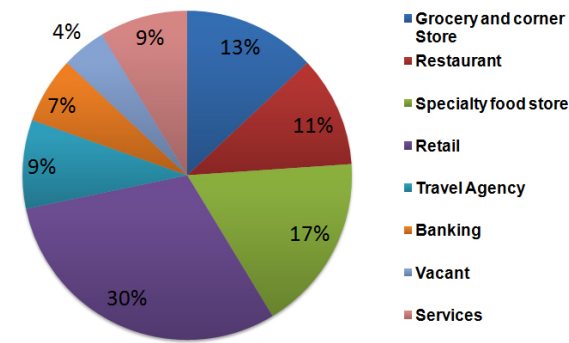
# 8. SOCIAL SYSTEMS + TOOL BOX



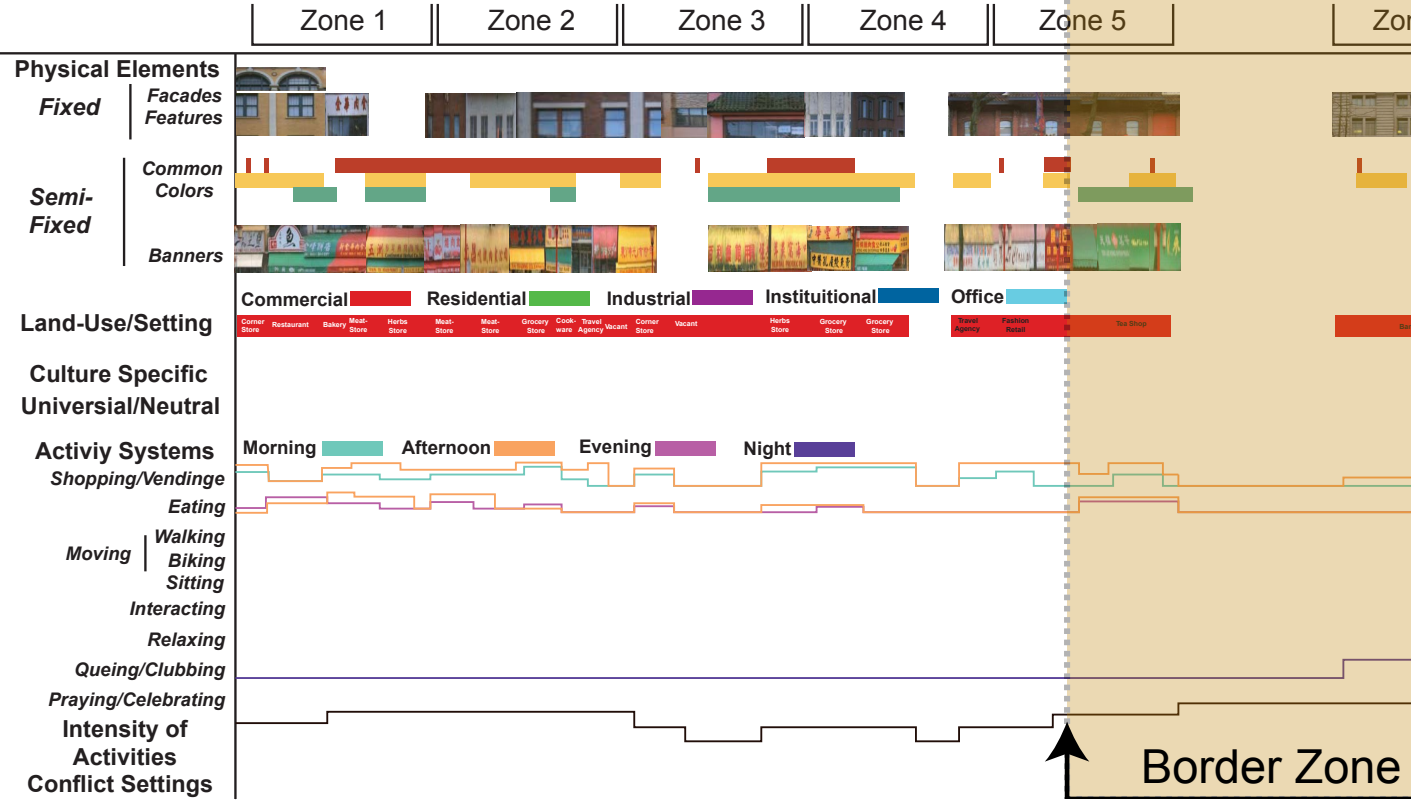
Building	Landuse	Function
First floor	Institutional	
Second floor		
Higher level		

[illegible]





**Figure 8.6 (left)** Diversity of uses: data from business types along the corridor were used to develop this pie-chart, showing diversity of settings and activities. Also the same data was used in a Simpson diversity formula, revealing that in terms of street level commercial activity, the site is 83% (highly) diverse. This is in support of our Celebrate Diversity Principle, which calls for diversity of uses and activities in support of cultural diversity and vitality.



**Figure 8.7 (below)** Post-observation template: after a field study, data gathered on the spreadsheets templates were aggregated. Additionally, a careful analysis of available images from the site was conducted (looking at facades, fixed/semi-fixed/non-fixed elements), trying to identify common threads. These information were synthesized in the bottom template, in which an overall image of the environment emerges - showing diversity, intensity, gaps in legibility, etc. (note that activity graphs here are not based on detailed observations and are only for demonstration purposes).

8.

SOCIAL  
SYSTEMS +  
TOOL BOX



ethnographic “image” of an environment.

**Figure 8.5, 8.6 and 8.7** show an example of such techniques on a corridor in the Chinatown area, where the site also intersects the lower income community of Downtown Eastside, on the intersection of Main and Pender st. While the data in these tables are not all based on extensive observation, even in a short period of note-taking, a border zone was clearly identified **Figure 8.7**.

## Social Capital, Knowledge Sharing, Urban Resilience and Community Preparedness:

Although the importance of social networks was briefly emphasized above and in the last chapter, it is prudent to conclude this entire discussion by further elaborating on social systems in a diverse society. While cultures often form networks within their own groups, in a hybrid urban environment the relationship between multiple groups is

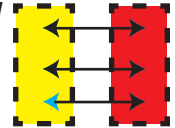
as important as the internal relationships of these communities. This is not only important for the daily functioning of the city, but also extremely important in situations of stress - such as excessive and rapid change and disaster situations.

Therefore, the role of planning in fostering the conditions necessary for the formation of social capital (bonding, bridging and linking) is an integral part of an intercultural framework. It has been argued that neighborhoods with high income disparity and ethno-class diversity can particularly suffer from lack of social cohesion and lower social capital (Mason 2010; Rapoport 1980; Rapoport 1977). This problem is further amplified in a rapidly changing environment (such as massive immigration, economic stress and disaster context), as decreased social capital and inequality can lead to increased vulnerability of a particular population, and in turn the entire social system.

However, an intercultural community planning process poses a unique opportunity to bring multiple communities together to foster social

ties, as well as increased economic relationships and urban resiliency. Similar to the rest of this text, here the physical space and social space are not seen as independent of one another, and rather as mutually supportive systems. Hence, social capital is both fostered through social space as well as the built environment and greater economic activity

- **Bridging Social Capital Principle.**



It is important to stress that social capital here is not seen as a silver-bullet panacea that becomes an end to itself, rather a tool through which an overall system resiliency is achieved in a diverse and changing context (Castells 2009; Gaffikin, et al 2010; Cheong 2006; Smets 2011).

It has been suggested that diversity is integral to the overall system resiliency (Walker and Salt 2006; Talen 2008). Greater diversity (social, economic, landscape, biological) offers multiple options and increase system capacity to grow, respond to change and withstand shock, particularly in the face of disaster (social or physical).

## 8. SOCIAL SYSTEMS + TOOL BOX

However, the system's overall resilience is also contingent upon principles of social capital and innovation (Walker and Salt 2006). Social capital is particularly important for human systems that would require various actors and institutions to have the capacity to "respond together and effectively, to change any disturbance".

That said, Walker et al (2006) recognize that social networks alone would not create an agile system (and even might obstruct change) and therefore emphasize the need for a system to have 'learning capacity' and 'experimentation' at its core. Such innovation can be both part of the design process as well as built into the activities of the community and their relationships with one another (use of festivals

will be covered shortly).

In terms of physical design, research has shown that well designed streets, sidewalks, parks and gathering spaces such as markets can lead to interaction amongst neighbourhood residents and increased community trust (Mason 2010; Morales 2009). Mixed used neighborhoods that encourage walking and therefore interaction amongst residents can lead to both perceived and real social ties to the community. Interestingly, cul-de-sac design has been positively correlated with 'trust', something that is attributed to the repeat trips that are created through the single entrance/exit to the cul-de-sac. Such attribute of the cul-de-sac design can be captured in other types of public spaces - such as pedestrian only streets, squares and pocket parks - encouraging face to face interaction and engagement (Mason 2010).

Beyond strategic design practices, however, place-making potential of urban design needs to be stressed as a more holistic approach towards fostering community ties in a particular neighbourhood with unique natural features. Relph posits that, *"a place is a whole phenomenon, consisting of the three intertwined elements of a **specific landscape** with both built and natural elements, a **pattern of social activities** that should be adapted to the advantages or virtues of a particular location and a **set of personal and shared meanings**"* (Sime 1986).

Therefore, an intercultural planning lens can encourage a sense of place for multiple groups and integral neighbourhoods that share a common future in their urban environment. That said, and as argued previously, a place cannot be externally designed for people or superficially



imposed on a population by outsiders.

Stressing this very same point, Jonathan Simme argues that *“it is often important for people to be involved in the production, decoration, furnishing and maintenance of their environment”* (Sime 1986, 57). In light of this assertion, participatory design practices become important to the production of place, and in return greater social ties.

It is worth noting that social capital needs to be utilized in a specific social and physical context of a particular neighbourhood, with its own internal dynamics and challenges, in a contextualized fashion. Based on the findings from a study of diverse Hispanic neighbourhoods of Los Angeles, Pauline Cheong (2006) emphasizes that

*“the potential impact of social capital on social cohesion will vary depending on the ways in which its effects are enhanced or diminished by the context of local neighborhoods and the **communication***

***environment in which families are embedded”.***

Therefore, in order for social capital to be effective and not force hegemony or conflict amongst sub-groups, we need to address what Cheong calls **“neighbourhood communication action context”** in the participatory design process (**Figure 8.5**).

This model illustrates important elements of a neighbourhood context that need to be addressed in a participatory design process, in order for the bonding, bridging and linking facets amongst multiple groups to be forged in a constructive manner. Cheong stresses the role of physical features (design of streets, schools, amenities, parks) in bringing people together, but she also highlights the importance of **psychological features** that would determine if groups feel free and welcome to engage one another (Sime 1986).

Moreover, the neighbourhood context model shows the importance of community stakeholders, such as local institution, law enforcement, residents, and community organizations in developing

the necessary conditions in which trust and bonding can emerge. One could posit that only through a true and engaged community oriented participatory process we can create the genesis of a resilient community design.

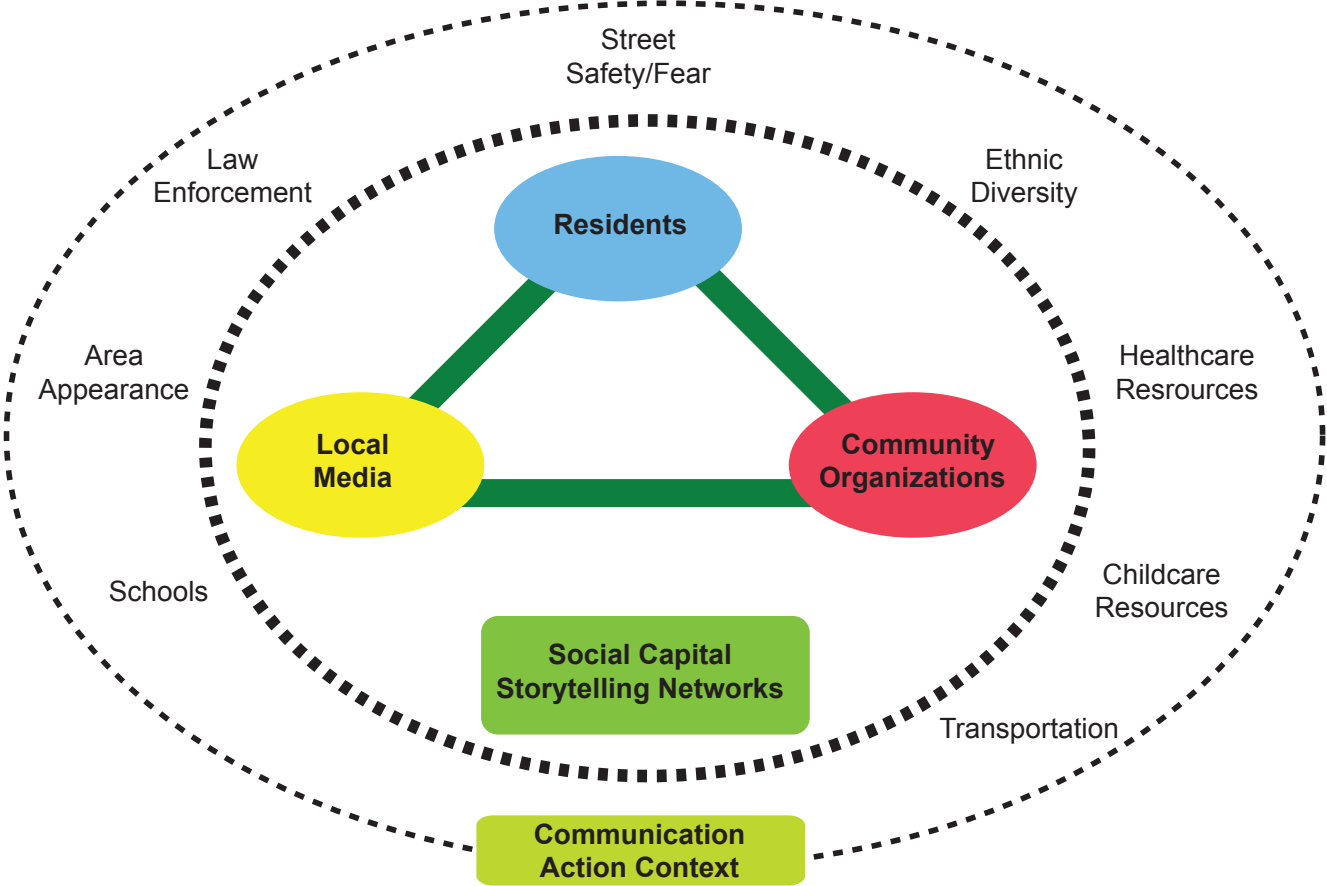
Therefore, Co-design and (community oriented design) other culturally aware participatory techniques would be an effective mechanism that allows for various actors to get together and bring their knowledge and understanding of their environment into the design process. This model states that local media and communication amongst various actors are key in creating the underlying conditions for greater social ties. Through this direct engagement processes, the act of knowledge sharing and learning becomes a bridging and linking strategy.

The important role of key urban elements, such as markets, third-places, urban gardens and community centers in providing active links and bridges between cultures and life-styles should also be stressed. These “micro-publics” clearly show that not only we can enhance

**Figure 8.8** Social capital in neighbourhood communication action context, showing important elements that influence trust in the neighborhoods and amongst residents. It is worth noting that urban design (area appearance) is one element among many others. An intercultural planning lens needs to tackle all these elements with the involvement of residents from all cultural groups and institutions (Cheong 2006).

8.

SOCIAL  
SYSTEMS +  
TOOL BOX



economic and environmental sustainability of diverse cultural groups, but also help in the formation of new linkages (social capital) amongst various existing and new sociocultural groups (Morales 2009; Gaffikin, et al 2010; Morales 2009; Rishbeth 2004; Loukaitou-Sideris 1995; Smets 2011).

Beyond such participatory methods and physical environments, use of community events and cultural festivals can play an integral role in creating mutual understanding and greater social network formation (**Figure 8.6**). Arguably, a hybrid urban environment would require its own unique rituals, myths, stories and festivals.

While creation of activities that celebrate the hybridity of urban environment require time and effort, in order to authentically grow roots, existing cultural festivals can also be opened up to other cultures. Doing so would allow all citizens to gain a deeper understanding into a particular cultural practice, celebrating its contribution to the greater

cultural mosaic of the city.

## Critiques of Social Capital, Community Formation, Cultural Difference and Placemaking:

This discussion will conclude with some cautionary remarks about the concepts mentioned above. It is imperative to recognize that not all forms of social capital are conducive to resiliency and cultural integration. In fact, in the absence of a proper context with open and inclusive participatory processes, a community could face increased fragmentation along ethnic, racial, cultural and class lines.

Also misapplication of this concept can lead to decreased individual freedom, and hegemony of place and the collective over the uniqueness of the individual. Yuko Nakagawa and Rajib Shaw underlined what they call the '**dark side**' of social capital by stating that,

*"The very elements of trust and networks could be a cause of exclusion of others,*

*restriction on individuals of a particular group or community, and the fostering of socially unwanted groups such as gangs and mafia"* (Nakagawa and Shaw 2004).

Hence, it is useful to pay attention to the internal structure of social capital, rather than applying the wider concept as a blunt instrument. In fact, in a diverse and fragmented context, the bonding social capital (ties to immediate family, friends and associations with similar demographic characteristics) can counteract with the bridging (ties among people of different racial, cultural, economic and social groups) and linking (vertical ties among people in position of power/influence and others within the community) aspects of social capital, and consequently create an internally inconsistent dynamic with un-sustainable outcomes (Nakagawa and Shaw 2004).

Perhaps we also need to recognize that the very formation of bonding, bridging and linking social ties involves the concerted act of creating perceptual boundaries that have the potential to exclude



## 8. SOCIAL SYSTEMS + TOOL BOX



1

**Figure 8.9** Cultural festivals can be an integral part of urban experience, while bringing greater understanding towards different practices and norms.



2

3



4



6



7



8



9



10

- 1) Indigenous Dance, Zocalo, Mexico <author's own image>
- 2) Festival in India <chestnuthilllocal.com>
- 3) Matsuri in Kishiwada, Japan <anenglishmaninosaka.blogspot.com>
- 4) Chinese new year festival, NYC <<http://www.flickr.com/photos/global-jet/2256338278/>>
- 5) Venice Regatta <planetoddity.com>
- 6) La Tomatina, Spain <funis2cool.com>
- 7) Iranian festival <payvand.com>
- 8) Carnival, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil <discoverblackheritage.com>
- 9) Dance festival, Guanajuato, Mexico <author's own image>
- 10) Dia de los muertos, Mexico <journeymexico.com>



others absent in the present context. Therefore, such social ties need to be constantly reformulated and re-imagined, as the very context they were built upon transforms itself through time and space. As Walker et al have cogently argued, this tension between the changing context (diversity) and social capital are resolved through innovation and constant learning in a complex system dynamic.

Peer Smets' research into community development strategies in the Netherlands affirms the above findings, while also emphasizing the role of 'micro-publics' and bottom-up social programs. He introduced the Snel and Boonstra's concept of '**bonding ladder**' where:

- 1) *people meet*
- 2) *develop (positive) knowledge about the other*
- 3) *this knowledge could be the basis for cooperation*
- 4) *development of relations of mutual help (trust relations), which is dependent on reciprocal exchange (feelings of*

*gratitude and obligation) and emphasize the role of positive contact for mutual understanding – something that depends on the quality of the contact* (Smets 2011, ii20).

While he critically examines several failed strategies at creating bridging social capital, he does at the end stress the importance of finding modern means that allow for the people to interact with each other and between groups (such as markets and volunteering groups). These strategies could lead to familiarity, exchange and mutual empathy.

However, he attributes the success of various neighbourhood led social programs to their emphasis on issues that transcended ethnic and cultural differences, and instead focus on community needs and interests. Therefore, an over-emphasis on cultural differences can actually be seen as counterproductive, fostering new divisions.

He concludes that the creation of social networks is "*a gradual and cumulative process*" and "*is dependent on dedicated social leaders and*

*the creation of new places where people can meet and recognize each other, talk and enter into relationships*" (Smets 2011, ii26-ii29).

With regards to placemaking and community formation, it is equally worth being cautious, as 'place' and 'community' can take disjunctive qualities. Clearly, place can imply an authentic and rooted connection between people and their social and lived space, while community can positively connote social ties and cohesion. Yet, these terms can also become part of an exclusionary practice that overtly territorializes spaces which were once in transition and change, making new immigrants a transient population that are un-welcomed in the established 'community', and consequently rendering them 'placeless'. Therefore, one needs to embrace the type of placemaking, and community formation, that is inclusive and ever changing, and therefore results in production of spaces (mental, social and physical) that can allow for the 'other' to be welcomed and invited.

Indeed, embracing a changing, open and accepting

**Figure 8.10** 'Red Bridge' by Paul Klee



intercultural society is deeply engrained in much of the intercultural design framework, and the set of principles, that I have put forward in this body of work. Anthony Giddens' polemical description of our contemporary condition perhaps best captures my attempt in this work to produce a positive response towards our changing condition:

*"The post-traditional society is an ending; but it is also a beginning, a genuinely new social universe of action and experience. ... a global society, not in the sense of a world society but as one of 'indefinite space'. It is one where social bonds have effectively to be made, rather than inherited from the past - on the personal and more collective levels this is a fraught and difficult*

*enterprise, but one also that holds out the **promise of great rewards**. It is decentred in terms of authorities, but recentred in terms of opportunities and dilemmas, because focused upon **new forms of interdependence**. To regard narcissism, or even individualism, as at the core of the post-traditional order is a mistake - certainly in terms of potentials for the future that it contains"* (Beck, Giddens and Lash 1994, 106-107).

He concludes by expressing that *"in the domain of interpersonal life, **opening out to the other is the condition of social solidarity**; on the larger scale a proffering of the 'hand of friendship' within a global cosmopolitan order is ethically implicit in the new agenda"* (ibid).

In such a society, the city is arguably the only place with the capacity to provide a sense of meaning and a possible refuge

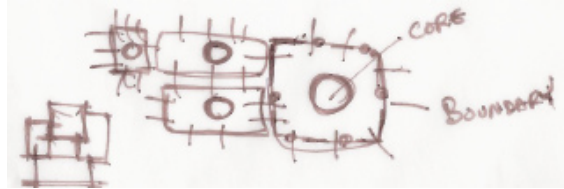
## 8. SOCIAL SYSTEMS + TOOL BOX

from an increasingly fragmented universe. The intercultural city is a place where cultures can be celebrated, differences recognized, and effective bridges formed - as the city is the space that provides all cultures a common future.

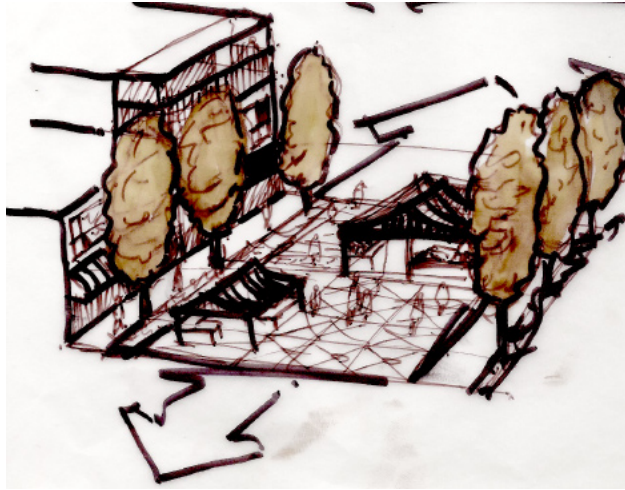
Such a city provides the necessary space for what Giddens (1994, 106) calls *"**dialogic democracy** - **recognition of the authenticity of the other**, whose views and ideas one is prepared to listen to and debate, as a mutual process"*. This form of democracy, and in many ways the pursuit of an intercultural urbanism is *"the only alternative to violence in the many areas of the social order where disengagement is no longer a feasible option"* (ibid). Thus above all, the intercultural city will be the city of multiple solidarities, and in return the space for human creativity and cultural vitality.

# Appendix:

**Diagramming** cultural realms: Core vs. Boundaries



**Use of semi-fixed and non-fixed elements in turning a path into a node of engagement**



**Nature can be a universal boundary crossing element, as well as an intercultural bridge**



**Intercultural**  
**gar**

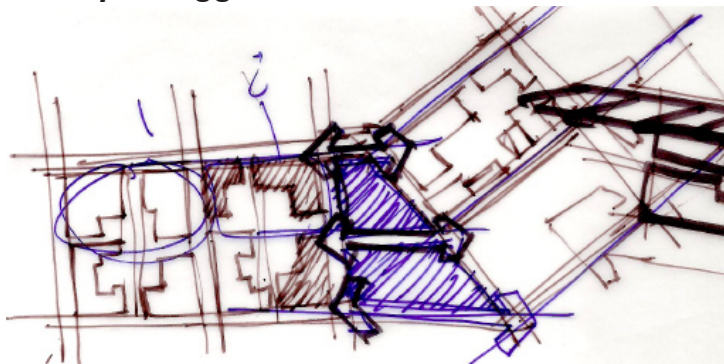




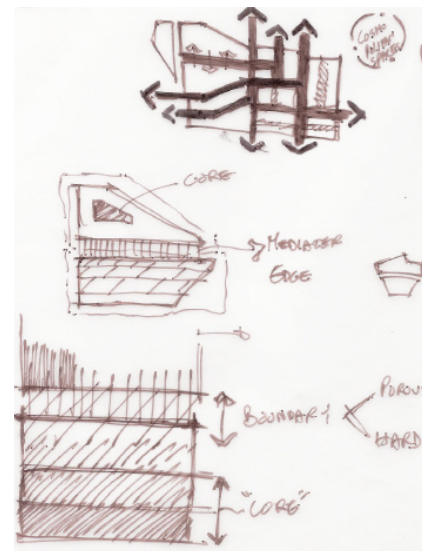
Learning through  
denying



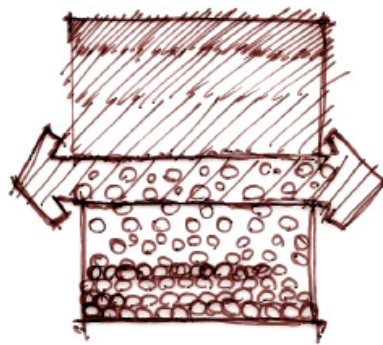
*Here are some of the rough concept diagrams and sketches that were drawn while initially exploring the ideas in this work. Sketching can be a powerful tool in interacting with the cultural groups in a neighborhood, allowing planners and the public to hash out strategies to tackle local issues, while exploring and adapting concepts suggested here for the local context.*



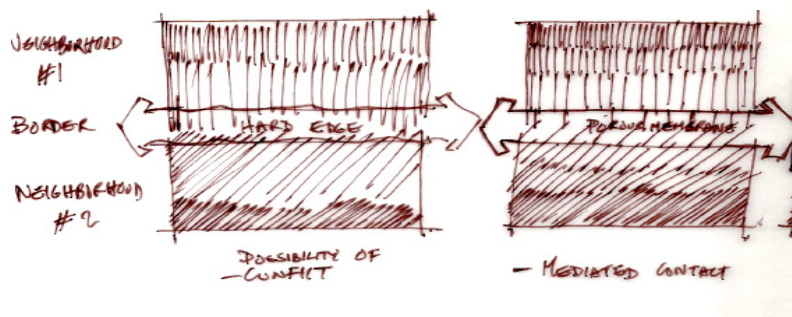
Creating physical,  
social and programming  
connections



Public furniture and seating  
arrangements need to be discussed, as  
they are particular to each culture

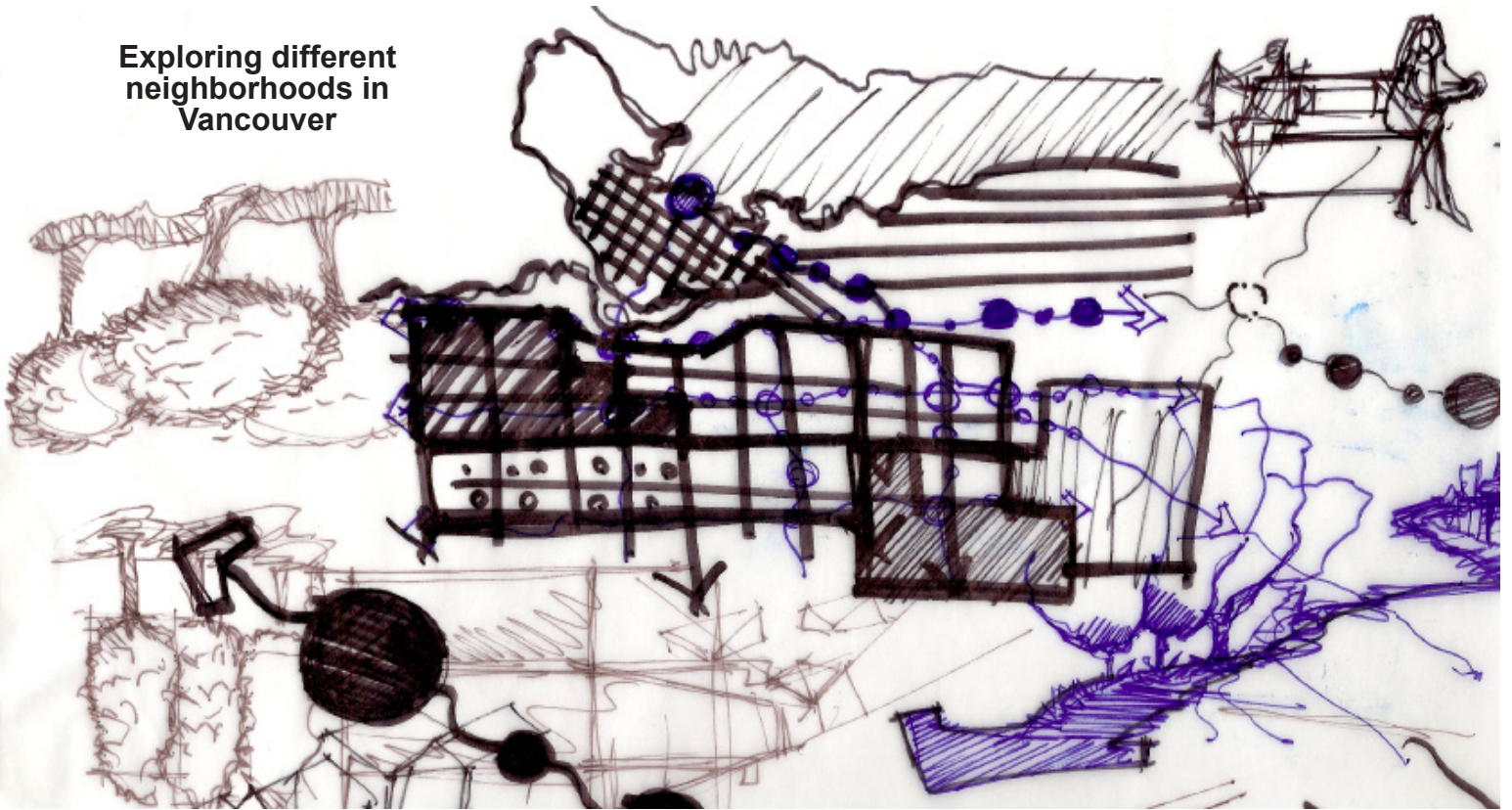


Conceptualizing boundary zones

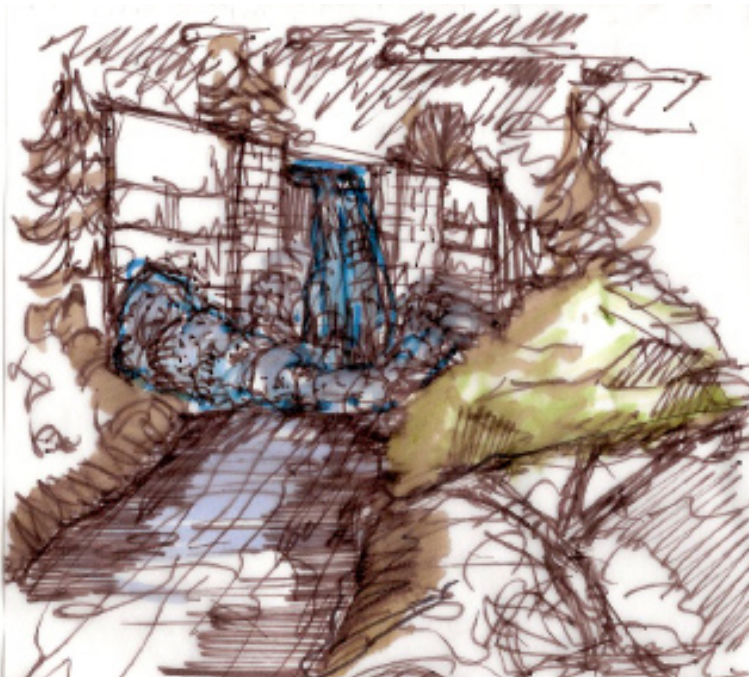




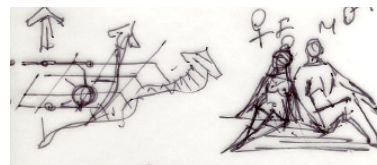
Exploring different  
neighborhoods in  
Vancouver



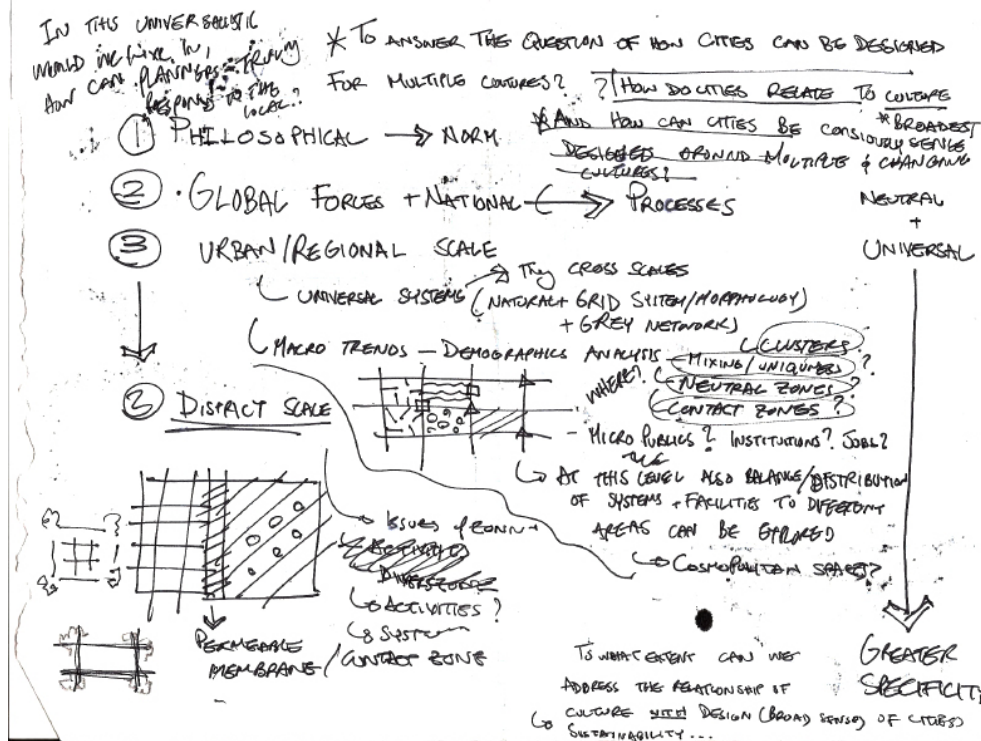
Managing transitions between vernaculars



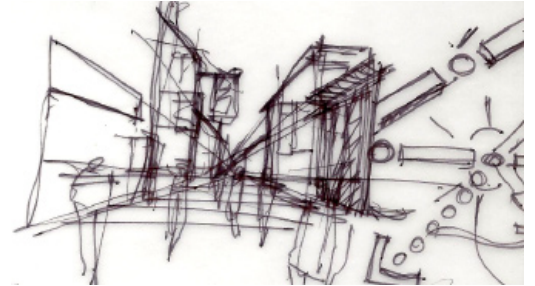
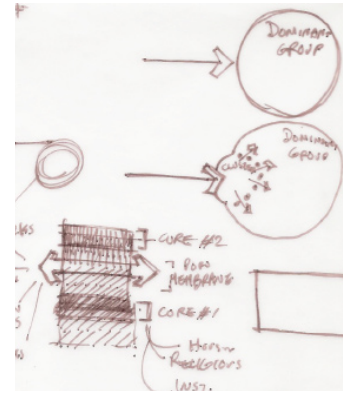
Use of outdoors and nature could be  
culture specific.







## Exploring various strategies for the intercultural city



## Exploring urban markets as a strategy in a boundary zone



# Bibliography:

- Altman, Irwin, and Abraham Wandersman. Neighborhood and community environments. Vol. Volume 9 of Human behavior and environment. Springer, 1987.
- Aristotle. The Politics. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1992.
- Arvot, Iris. "Back to Phenomenological Placemaking." Journal of Urban Design 7, no. 2 (2002): 201 — 212.
- Beck, Ulrich. The cosmopolitan vision. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2006.
- Beck, Ulrich, Anthony Giddens, and Scott Lash. Reflexive Modernization: Politics, Tradition and Aesthetics in the Modern Social Order. Stanford University Press, 1994.
- Becklumb, Penny. "Climate Change and Forced Migration: Canada's Role." Parliament of Canada. Feb 9, 2010. <http://www.parl.gc.ca/Content/LOP/ResearchPublications/2010-04-e.htm> (accessed August 2011).
- Benton-Short, Lisa. "Rethinking Urban Parks: Public Space and Cultural Diversity." Annals of the Association of American Geographers 96, no. 4 (2006): 853 — 855.
- Binnie, Jon, Julian Holloway, Steve Millington, and Craig Young. Cosmopolitan Urbanism. Abingdon: Routledge, 2006.
- Byrne, Jason, and Jennifer Wolch. "Nature, race, and parks: past research and future directions for geographic research." Progress in Human Geography 33, no. 6 (2009): 743–765.
- Castells, Manuel. The Rise of the Network Society: the information age - economy, society and culture . Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2000.
- . "Urban Sustainability in the Information Age." Sustainability and the Information City. London: University College, 2009. 118-122.
- Checkoway, Barry. "Community development, social diversity, and the new metropolis." Community Development Journal 46, no. S2 (2011): ii5-ii14.
- Cheong, Pauline Hope. "COMMUNICATION CONTEXT, SOCIAL COHESION AND SOCIAL CAPITAL BUILDING AMONG HISPANIC IMMIGRANT FAMILIES." Community, Work and Family, 2006: 367-387.

Citizenship and Immigration Canada. Canadian Government's policy on Multiculturalism. <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/multiculturalism/index.asp>.

City of Vancouver. Social Indicators Report. City: City of Vancouver, 2009.

Condon, Patrick M. Seven Rules for Sustainable Communities. Washington D.C.: Island Press, 2010.  
Critchley, Simon, and Robert Bernasconi. The Cambridge Companion to Levinas. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Department of Immigration and Citizenship. Australian Governments policy on Multiculturalism. <http://www.immi.gov.au/media/publications/multicultural/agenda/agenda89/whatismu.htm>.

Elkadi, Hisham. Valuing Local Built Heritage in a Global Setting Identity & Visual Perceptions of Cultural Built Heritage in Northern Ireland. Belfast, August 2006.

Fainstein, Susan S. "Cities and Diversity: Should We Want it? Can We Plan For It?" Urban Affairs Review, September 2005: 41-43.

Fernando, Nisha A. "Learning From An Urban Enclave: Lessons For Flexibility in a Multicultural City." University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 2004.

Fine, Robert. Cosmopolitanism. London and New York: Routledge, 2007.

Florida, Richard. The rise of the creative class: and how it's transforming work, leisure, community and everyday life. New York: Basic Books, 2002.

Friedmann, John. "Place and Place-Making in Cities: A Global Perspective." Planning Theory & Practice, 2010.

Gaffikin, Frank, Malachy Mceldowney, and Ken Sterrett. "Creating Shared Public Space in the Contested City: The Role of Urban Design." Journal of Urban Design 15, no. 4 (2010): 493-513.

Gale, Richard. "The Multicultural City and the Politics of Religious Architecture: Urban Planning, Mosques and Meaning-making in Birmingham, UK." BUILT ENVIRONMENT 30, no. 1 (2004): 18 - 32.

Gans, Herbert. "Symbolic ethnicity: The future of ethnic groups and cultures in America." Ethnic and Racial Studies 2, no. 1 (1979): 1-20.



# Bibliography:

Gifford, Robert. Environmental psychology: principles and practice. the University of Virginia: Allyn and Bacon, 1987.

Hutton, Thomas, David W. Edgington, Bronwyn Hanna, and Susan Thompson. Urban Governance, Multiculturalism and Citizenship in Sydney and Vancouver. Working Paper Series, Vancouver: Research on Immigration and Intergration in the Metropolis, 2001.

Jacques, Derrida. Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness. London and New York: Routledge, 1997.

Lefebvre, Henri. The Production of Space. Oxford : Blackwell Publishing, 1991.

—. Writings on Cities. London: Blackwell, 1996.

Ley, David, and P. Murphy. "Immigration in gateway cities: Sydney and Vancouver in comparative perspective." Progress in Planning, 2001: 119-194.

Lightbody, James. City politics, Canada. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006.

Loukaitou-Sideris. "Urban Form and Social Context: Cultural Differentiation in the Uses of Urban Parks." Journal of Planning Education and Research 14 (1995): 89-102.

Lu, duanfang. "The Changing Landscape of Hybridity: A Reading of Ethnic Identity and Urban Form in Vancouver." TDSR XI, no. II (2000): 19-28.

Lynch, Kevin. The image of the city. MIT Press, 1992.

Madanipour, Ali. "Marginal Public Spaces in European Cities." Journal of Urban Design 9, no. 3 (2004): 267-286.

Mason, Susan G. "Can community design build trust? A comparative study of design factors in Boise, Idaho neighborhoods." Cities, 2010: 456–465.

Matsushita, Po-Fung, Tetsu Yoshida, and Junzo Munemoto. "Research on the Formation Process of a Multi-ethnic Network in Urban Mixed-use District by Ethnic Minorities Living in Mexed-use Buildings, Wanachai, Hong Kong." Journal of Asian Architecture and Building Engineering, 2005: 383-390.

Mehrhoff, Arthur W. "The Phenomenology of Place." Humanities Education, 1990.

Mendieta, Eduardo. "Invisible cities: A phenomenology of globalization from below." *City* (5) 1 (2001): 7 - 26.

Morales, Alfonso. "Public Markets as Community Development Tools." *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, 2009: 426-440.

Murdie, Robert A. *Diversity and Concentration in Canadian Immigration, Trends in Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver , 1971 - 2006*. Research bulletin 42, Toronto: Center for Urban and Community Studies, 2008.

Nakagawa, Yuko, and Rajib Shaw. "Social Capital: A Missing Link to Disaster Recovery." *International Journal of Mass Emergencies and Disasters* 22, no. 1 (2004): 5-34.

Ouf, Ahmed M. Salah. "Authenticity and the Sense of Place in Urban Design." *Journal of Urban Design* 6, no. 1 (2001): 73 — 86.

Project for Public Spaces. *Power of Ten*. <http://www.pps.org/articles/the-power-of-10/> (accessed 2011).

Project for Public Spaces. *Public Markets as a Vehicle for Social Integration and Upward Mobility*. New York: PPS, 2003.

Ramlo, Andrew, Ryan Berlin, and David Baxter. *Canada to 2058: Projections of Demographic Growth & Change for Canada and its Regions*. The Urban Futures Institute, 2009.

Rapoport, Amos. "Cross-cultural Aspects of Environmental Design." In *Human Behaviour and Environment: Advances in Theory and Research*, by Irwin Altman, Amos Rapoport and Joachim F. Wohlwill, 7 - 42. New York: Plenum Press, 1980.

—. *Human Aspects of Urban Form: Towards a Man-Environment Approach to Urban Form and Design*. New York: Pergamon Press Ltd, 1977.

Rees, William E. "Globalization, trade and migration: Undermining sustainability." *Ecological Economics* 59 (2006): 220-225.

Riedlmayer, A. "The War on People and the War on Culture." *The New Combat*, 1994: 1619.

Rishbeth, Clare. "Ethno-cultural Representation in the Urban Landscape." *Journal of Urban Design* 9, no. 3 (2004): 311-333.

# Bibliography:

Salazar, Dayana. "Persistence of the vernacular: A minority shaping urban form." *Journal of Urban Design* 3, no. 3 (1998): 303-330.

Sandercock, Leonie. "Cities of (In)Difference and the Challenge for Planning." *DISP*, 2000: 7-15.  
—. *Cosmopolis II*. New York: Continuum, 2004.

Sandercock, Leonie. "Cosmopolitan urbanism: a love song to our mongrel cities." In *Cosmopolitan Urbanism*, by Jon Binnie, Julian Holloway, Steve Millington and Craig Young, 37-52. Abingdon: Routledge, 2006.

—. *Making the Invisible Visible: A Multicultural Planning History*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998.

—. "Sustaining Canada's Multicultural Cities: Learning from the Local." *Breakfast on the Hill Seminar Series*. Ottawa: Canadian Federation for the Humanities and Social, 2004. 1-21.

Seamon, David, and Jacob Sowers. "Place and Placelessness, Edward Relph." In *Key Texts in Human Geography*, by P. Hubbard, R. Kitchen, G. Vallentine and eds., 43 - 51. London: Sage, 2008.  
Sime, Jonathan D. "CREATING PLACES OR DESIGNING SPACES?" *Journal of Environmental Psychology* 6 (1986): 49-63.

Smets, Peer. "Community development in contemporary ethnic-pluriform neighbourhoods: a critical look at social mixing." *Community Development Journal* 46, no. 52 (April 2011): ii15 - ii32.

Statistics Canada. *Foreignborn as a percentage of population*. 2006. <http://www12.statcan.ca/census-recensement/2006/as-sa/97-557/figures/c4-eng.cfm>.

Talen, Emily. *Design For Diversity: Exploring Socially Mixed Neighborhoods*. Oxford: Architectural Press, 2008.

Urban Futures. "The Context for Change: Demographics, Life Cycles, Economics, and the Lower Mainland of British Columbia Over the Next Four Decades." 2004.

Walker, Brian, and David Salt. *Resilience Thinking: Sustaining Ecosystems and People in a Changing World*. Washington DC: Island Press, 2006.

Wood, Phil, and Charles Landry. *The intercultural city: planning for diversity advantage*. London: Earthscan, 2008.

Yiftachel, Oren. "SPACES OF ETHNIC CONFLICT." International Encyclopedia of Human Geography, 2008.

Young, Marion. Justice and the politics of difference. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990.