Universiteit Leiden
The Netherlands

Cities full of symbols : a theory of urban space and culture

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Citation
Nas, P. J. M. (Ed.). (2011). *Cities full of symbols : a theory of urban space and culture*. Leiden University Press. Retrieved from https://hdl.handle.net/1887/21402

Version:	Not Applicable (or Unknown)
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Downloaded from:	https://hdl.handle.net/1887/21402

Note: To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).

Peter J.M. Nas (ed.)

Cities Full of Symbols

A Theory of Urban Space and Culture

Leiden University Press

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A Theory of Urban Space and Culture

Edited by Peter J.M. Nas

Leiden University Press

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Cover design and lay-out: Mulder van Meurs, Amsterdam

ISBN 978 90 8964 125 0
e-ISBN 978 94 0060 044 7
NUR 648 / 758

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1. Introduction

Variety of Symbols

Peter J.M. Nas, Marlies de Groot and Michelle Schut

Introduction

The city is a complex amalgamation of numerous phenomena, based on a multiplicity of dynamic interactions. Due to an increase in density, an almost continuous cooperation between the inhabitants occurs often resulting in socio-economic improvement. Considering the constant development of living standards – infrastructure, production and consumption – the city and urbanization should generally be regarded as something positive without thereby disguising problems of social inequality and violence. This is of importance as in just a few decennia eighty percent of the world's population will be living in urbanized areas resulting in a single, global city: ecumenopolis.

There are various dimensions of the city which can be studied intensively, such as the morphologic, demographic, economic, social-cultural, administrative and planning dimension. The cultural dimension of the city as a whole, which also includes symbols and rituals, has rarely been identified by science. Sociologists and geographers have investigated the city thoroughly and frequently characterized cities as a whole, but they have ignored the symbolic dimension and its interpretation. Anthropologists, on the other hand, have a lot of attention for symbols and rituals, but are hardly concerned with the city and especially not the city as a whole.

During the last decades this situation has improved. Within the general field of urban studies, urban anthropology has attracted more and more attention, especially in the USA and Europe. One of the major contemporary tendencies in urban anthropology is urban symbolic ecology. It pursues the study of the cultural dimension of the city, oriented towards establishing the distribution and meaning of symbols and rituals in relation to the cultivated surroundings (Nas, 1990, 1998). Central to this, is the process of social production and consumption of symbolism and ritual. Rituals are recurrent standardized deeds within the framework of the construction of meaning. A symbol, in contrast to a sign, is something that refers to something else; it bears extrinsic values.

Urban symbolic ecology is rooted in human ecology and especially the research of the Chicago School, which among others focused on the description and analysis of the distribution of social phenomena over urban space. Classic is the study of Burgess on Chicago, projecting a number of concentric circles on this city to specify the differences in status, ethnicity and urbanization characteristics of the population. In urban symbolic ecology, this approach is applied to symbols and rituals and several case studies have resulted in interesting and complex types of urban symbolic patterns.

Urban anthropological studies of symbolism are also indebted to the work of Kevin Lynch in *The Image of the City* (1960). This influence is twofold. Lynch coins three concepts in this study of American towns, namely identity (distinguishing the urban elements from each other), structure (showing the pattern of identified elements) and meaning of urban elements, in order to get to grips with the perceived reality and imageability of cities. He strongly disregards meaning, however, because he considers it too personal and also too diverse to yield systematic results. In contrast to Lynch's opinion, we think that meaning is a crucial concept in the study of urban symbolism. We have provided evidence that the meanings attached to the urban environment may entail clear patterns depending on the social and cultural conditions. In addition to this difference of opinion on the role of the concept of meaning, a strong congruence is found in his technique of research: the use of the so-called mental maps. Lynch combines interviews with the drawing of a map of the city for data collection. These mental maps create the possibility to discuss all sorts of ideas on the city with the informants. Leeke Reinders (pers. comm.) has even introduced the concept of a narrative map, which refers to a dialogue with the respondent on the city layout and built environment, without drawing a concrete map on paper, but instead using a virtual map depicted in words. Many researchers, in the field of urban symbolism, ask their informants to draw a map in combination with an interview about the results of the map for the explanation of its content and meaning. The method has proven to be very productive.

The third root of urban symbolism studies is found in semiotics and the process of signification in the urban setting. The real city and the hypercity are distinguished in this approach. The real city as a whole and its constituting elements are signified and the signifiers, i.e. the configuration of signifiers, form a layer of meanings that sometimes may become stronger than reality and constitute a hyperreality in their own right. The production, consumption and distribution over space of those signifiers in a positive sense (hypercity) and a negative sense (shadow city) make up the core of hypercity research.

So, the hypercity theory proposes that the symbolic side of a city is so compelling that it can be seen as being detached from reality (Nas, Jaffe and Samuels, 2006). The symbolic dimension shapes itself to form a hyperreality or a hypercity, which lives a life of its own and is, to a certain extent, suitable for manipulation. This is implied by the terrain of city marketing and city branding, as cities in competition try vigorously to differentiate from one another.

Inspiration for urban symbolic research is further found in the works of a wide circle of scholars who have contributed to five edited volumes, namely *Urban Symbolism* (Nas, 1993), a special issue of the *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* with the title *Urban Rituals and Symbols* (Nas, 1998), *Urban Symbolism and Rituals* (Jezernik, 1999), *Hypercity: The Symbolic Side of Urbanism* (Nas and Samuels, 2006), and a

special issue of *Stedebouw & Ruimtelijke Ordening* called *Hyper Stad* (Reinders, 2008). Very significant as a general source of ideas on urban symbolism are publications related to the production and consumption of space and place by authors such as De Certeau (1984), Nora (1989), Castells (1996), and Low (2000).

Urban symbolism expresses itself through different phenomena, such as the layout of a city, architecture, statues, street and place names, poems, as well as rituals, festivals and processions; another strand consists of myths, novels, films, poetry, rap, music, songs and websites, all of which can be called symbol bearers. Many cities have multiple symbol bearers, of which one is usually the most dominant. There are four types of symbol bearers so far: material, discursive, iconic and behavioral (Nas, Jaffe and Samuels, 2006). In this introduction, examples of these four types will be presented. After describing material symbolism, which is the traditional terrain of urban symbolic ecology, as indicated by the cases of Jakarta and Cape Town, we will present the discursive symbolism of Tournai and Kortrijk. Discursive symbols reflect urban images and narratives. Iconic symbolism or signifiers consist of people representing cities. These can be either individuals or groups which are sacral or profane in nature, as can be seen in the cases of Kevelaer and Memphis. Subsequently in the section on behavioral symbolism, pertaining to activities such as rituals, festivals and demonstrations, Leiden and Haarlem are illustrated. These four clusters of symbol bearers will be followed by the exploration of emotional aspects of city symbolism within the cases of The Hague and Colombo. After discussing these types of symbol bearers, this introduction will finish with a short presentation of the chapters of the book.

Material symbolism: Jakarta and Cape Town[1]

The symbolic structure of both Jakarta (Hans-Dieter Evers, this volume; Esrih Bakker and Katie Saentaweesook, this volume) and Cape Town indicates a noticeable division between the continuously changing architecture, which is historically bound and can be viewed in tiers, versus nature, a more permanent structure. Nas (1990) puts forward the idea that the symbolic ecology of Jakarta appears schematically as four zones. The city center is marked by the old order of Sukarno, through the presence of monuments such as the National Monument, the Istiqlal mosque as well as the 'Youth' and 'Hanuman' statutes. They form a bridge between the pre- and post-colonial Indonesia, primarily emphasizing the formation of both state and nation. Encircling this is an area denoted by the New Order under Suharto. This is symbolized by the Crocodile Pit monument (Figure 1), which commemorates the murder of high officers in 1965, and the Mini Indonesia Park (Taman Mini Indonesia), within which traditional houses, representative of all the

Figure 1. Crocodile Pit monument, Jakarta, Indonesia (Photograph: Peter J.M. Nas)

provinces, have been rebuilt. The economic growth spurt of the 1980s and 1990s is reflected in the evolvement of a new middle class and the construction of large shopping centers and luxurious apartment compounds. These buildings have slowly started to dominate the city skyline, thereby neutralizing the symbolic layers of previous political periods, including that of the colonial order in the old city area along the Jakarta Bay.

The popularly promoted image of Jakarta displays a modern city with international connections in both the administration and tourism sectors. It is the imagined center of a large nation; an ideal frequently exhibited through advertising and news images. Evers (this volume), however, notes that Jakarta also functions as a 'theatre state'. The symbols create a façade of modernity with the false identity of an international city concealing the hard reality. The river Ciliwung,[2] an important but heavily polluted river, which runs straight through the city, is the main disturber of the 'pretty picture'. It is part of the daily life of many of the inhabitants, providing washing and bathing opportunities; yet it is also an annual threat, as the river floods each year. Bakker and Saentaweesook (this volume), by referring to the numerous poems that mention Ciliwung, see the river as a notion of contra-symbolism, which adds and also counters the official monumental symbolism.

The Indonesian government as well as Jakarta's town administration, in this modern period, aim to secure Jakarta a place on both a national and an international level. They have, however, lacked control on a local level leaving an unstable foundation without a proper

infrastructure. The symbolism within the city is predominantly manipulated by architecture and monuments, but nature in the form of the river remains a powerful counter-symbol.

Cape Town on the other hand, is an example where nature strengthens the positive image and signifies continuity. The most important symbolic carriers here are Table Mountain, Devil's Peak and Lion's Head. These dominant features of the surrounding nature are so conspicuous that they have been added to the city logo design. This is not surprising, considering that they embellish the city's character as being unique. This emphasis on nature is however also partially due to the emotions that are tied to the current architecture. Both the Castle of Good Hope and the layout of the VOC gardens in a checkers formation are remnants of the Dutch colonials. They symbolize 'authority' over 'primitive' people. The division of various ethnic groups due to the apartheid regime still leaves many trails as both District Six and the Cape flats manifest symbols of forced segregation. The symbolic ecology of Cape Town is elaborated by the presence of Robben Island, just off the coast, which was Nelson Mandela's prison. Although murals can be found within Cape Town symbolizing the birth of a rainbow state, there has been little development in the architectural sense since the end of apartheid. The Dutch, the English and the apartheid eras have each left their mark on both the architecture and the symbolism, but the new government's policy primarily aims at the reduction of poverty and crime. This results in the present architecture maintaining its historical connotations, so that nature becomes the symbolic refuge, providing both neutrality and immunity from the past.

In this volume a great variety of cases focusing on material symbolism are presented. They include the cities of Ghent (Belgium) by Rose-Anne Vermeer, Gdańsk (Poland) by Barbara Bossak-Herbst, Buenos Aires (Argentina) by Lars Bakker, Banda Aceh (Indonesia) by Rob van Leeuwen, Albuquerque (USA) by Eveline Dürr and New York (USA) by Georgina Kay. These contributions clearly show the importance of architecture in urban symbolism generally by describing the meaning of the urban material configuration in all its facets, but also by taking one particular element or event as a point of departure.

Discursive symbolism: Tournai (Doornik) and Kortrijk[3]

Websites can nowadays be seen as important symbolic carriers. They are used to present the city's identity and are seen as a strategic manner of illuminating cities for various goals, be it information provision for locals or the attempt to bolster their tourism figures. Through this, websites contribute significantly to the city's image. The websites of Tournai and Kortrijk in Belgium have been investigated intensively by Marvin Stijweg (2007) and both cities show many similarities in origin, population numbers and architecture

(dating back to the Middle Ages), regardless of the fact that Tournai is French speaking and Kortrijk is Flemish.

Tournai has a crystallized, symbolic structure based on a 2000 year-old tradition. Central to this is the maintenance of the historically-bound spatial surroundings, such as the Notre Dame Cathedral, the Belfort and other archaic monuments and buildings. The city, to this extent, is synonymous with tradition, historical heritage and the old city center. The policies concerning the history and celebrations add to the image in a similar manner. A lot of energy goes into the annual reproduction of the historical episodes in all types of events and festivals. Due to preservation of the historical center, city growth and modernization is extended to the suburbs so that Tournai's essence is maintained.

Kortrijk also has a historical heart and is in this sense comparable with the city center in Tournai. However, the presentation of Kortrijk and its administrative policies are entirely different due to a crucial decision that was taken in the 1980s, namely to modernize. This concept led to urban restructuring, new design and modern architecture. Kortrijk is a city in transition, a city undergoing construction, where the old and the new are merged as classical buildings and forms are interfaced with cutting-edge elements within design and innovation. The city is presented as modern, focused on education, creativity and renovation, typifying its symbolic structure as being in development, in transition and therefore not crystallized.

The differences in policy and branding can be identified on both cities' websites, not only through content but also by the layout. Tournai's website is clear and stately. The content emphasizes the history as well as the structure and activities organized by the local government. Information on actualities is less accessible; this in stark contrast to Kortrijk's website, where actual news is the main item. So although both websites generally present similar types of information, each city's composition is distinct. This is also partially reflected in the layout, as design, abstract images and dynamics denote Kortrijk's website whilst Tournai depends on classical, functional imagery and long texts on history, folklore and monuments. The cities each have a particular image which they reflect virtually, construed through website layouts and content formation.

In this volume, the essay by Esrih Bakker and Katie Saentaweesook on the poetry of Jakarta is another clear example of discursive symbolism, while some other contributions partially refer to this type of symbol bearer (Bossak, this volume; Kay, this volume).

Iconic symbolism: Kevelaer and Memphis[4]

Cities may derive their reputation from a certain person or a group of persons and this iconic symbolism may be sacral or profane in nature. The German town of Kevelaer is a

Figure 2. The Chapel of Grace (Photograph: Peter J.M. Nas, 2005)

nice example of a sacral iconic city. With a population of 27,928 in 2004, it is a Catholic pilgrimage center visited by more than 800,000 pilgrims yearly, mainly from Germany and the Benelux.[5] The development of the city as a pilgrimage site is based on the story of Hendrick Busman, who around Christmastime 1641, travelling from Weeze to Geldern, heard a voice saying 'Build me a little chapel on this spot'. He founded a chapel with the portrait of Our Blessed Lady of Luxembourg. It became a pilgrimage place after the miraculous healings of the paralyzed Peter van Volbroek and Eerutgen Dircks, the lady with a wounded leg. In 1643 a pilgrimage church, now known as the Chapel of the Candles, was constructed and in 1654 the original chapel was replaced by a hexagonal one, called the Chapel of Grace (Figure 2). It is a beautifully decorated chapel with a showcase of candles to the left of the entrance and, to the right, kneeling benches directed towards the altar, which features a picture of the last supper. The floor has mosaic tiles and the ceiling is highlighted. The surrounding walls have oval stained-glass windows with coats of arms and other scenes. Behind the altar there is a small corridor with a portrait of Mary framed with gold and pearl necklaces, presumably gifts from faithful visitors. The shutters in the wall can be opened so that the very small, but original picture of Mary can be seen from the outside during the pilgrimage season. The city of Kevelaer is dominated by the Kapellenplatz (Chapel square) where most religious edifices are concen-

trated. After the mass, the tourists and pilgrims can distract themselves in the restaurants (*Konditorei*) and stores in the shopping street nearby.

Memphis, Tennessee in the USA is also an iconic city, but in contrast to Kevelaer not sacral but profane in nature. The white-columned Graceland Mansion in the city is the former house of Elvis Presley, the 'King of Rock and Roll'. It functions as a pilgrimage place for thousands of people who love his music. On the twenty-fifth anniversary of his death as many as 40,000 people gathered at the estate, where he is buried. Graceland functions as a museum containing many artefacts including his awards, gold records, his jet and his car collection. Elvis died in 1977 and the museum was opened in 1982. A radio station located on the Graceland grounds broadcasts Elvis music around the clock.

Olivia Hughes, a Graceland visitor, presents a full picture of the mansion on the Internet.[6] According to Jaffe and Nas (2009) she describes it as a tranquil, elegant and stylish house with a neoclassical façade from white Tishomingo stone and windows shuttered in contrasting green. It has Corinthian columns for the front portico. The dining and living rooms are lavishly decorated in blue, white and gold colors with mirrors to give it a spacious feel. The living room and music room are separated by stained glass. The TV room is decorated in black and gold with mirrored walls. The pool room is very much from the 1970s. She regards the jungle room as probably being the most spectacular environment in the house; it has the big 'monkey chair', a large amount of fake fur, an exotic feathered mirror frame, ornamental animals, and a lot of heavily carved wood. Olivia characterizes much of the room décor as being very tactile. The house also features an indoor waterfall.

Both Kevelaer and Memphis are associated with one particular person and derive their fame from this key figure in religion and music respectively. The countless visits to these places are seen as a form of pilgrimage, sacral or profane; yet they are not devoid of the pleasures of modern mass tourism. In this book the chapter of Pierpaolo De Giosa on two pilgrimage cities in Java clearly falls in this category of iconic cities.

Behavioral symbolism: Leiden and Haarlem[7]

Behavioral symbolism is identified as symbolism that is formed through the use of ritual, mass celebrations and repetitive or structured behavior. Both the cities of Haarlem and Leiden can be explored as examples of such symbolism, although in this day and age, it can only be observed in Leiden, as the legend of Haarlem has diminished in symbolic power over the past couple of centuries.

In the fifteenth century, the Carmelite friar John of Leyden invented a legend to explain the changes in Haarlem's coat of arms. He claimed that during the siege of Dami-

Figure 3. The model ships in the St. Bavo Church, Haarlem, the Netherlands
(Photograph: Marlies de Groot, 2008)

etta in Egypt, as part of the Fifth Crusade, the Haarlem crusaders made use of a large saw attached to the keel of their ship to cut the enormous chain, which closed off the harbor of Damietta. This historical act of courage allowed the formation of a true community within a city prone to religious strife.

This symbolic courage was projected through various ways among different groups. It was partially adhered to by the Haarlem guild of master mariners, who suspended a model ship over the St. Olav altar in the parish church of St. Bavo (Figure 3; two more models were added at a later date) and used it as part of their celebration of mass. Besides this it was also customary, until 1640, for young boys to hold a procession on New Year's Day, each carrying a home-made model ship following two children who carried the Damietta towers and chain as well as the city flag. One of the most important uses was that of the city council, who wielded it as a symbol of power. During the seventeenth century, the Dutch towns were virtually autonomous due to the lack of a sovereign power, resulting in inter-city competition to expand their territories. Haarlem demarked its victories by establishing new or rebuilding churches, each containing stained glass windows, which represented the fall of Damietta. It symbolized Haarlem's age and seafaring business but most importantly its population's physical strength and courage.

However, with the decline of Haarlem's power and size, the symbolic field surrounding the legend has diminished too. Although inhabitants know of the legend, there is no active ritual reference to it and it is only the hourly chiming of the 'Damiaatjes' (the bells of the St. Bavo Church supposedly brought back from Egypt) that reminds the town's people of its glorified history.[8] This in stark contrast to Leiden, where the ritual of Leiden's Relief is still celebrated en masse each year.

In contrast to Haarlem with its declined amorphous rituals and symbolism, the yearly festivities of Leiden's Relief on 3 October are more homogenous and concentrated, and can be seen as a 'total ritual event'. This, according to Nas and Roymans (1998), is the extraordinary creation of time, space and social area that allows the reconstitution of the urban individual and the community. It is a celebration involving various settings, such as a parade, a fun fair, the handing-out of food (white bread and herring, as well as hotchpotch) and gatherings.

Leiden was relieved in 1574 from a Spanish siege by the *Geuzen* or the Beggars. These sea-faring striders brought white bread and herring with them to feed the starving city, and as the legend goes a pot of hotchpotch was found left by the Spanish and was therefore part of the feast. The food reflects the importance of the ritual as a celebration of life; also shown by the setting of the celebrations, which avoids all places associated with death.

The ritual can be identified on three different levels, that of the city, the state and God. It opens with a gathering at the town hall early in the morning, cracking fireworks to disperse the darkness. Although the municipal government has little to do with the celebration (in fact the hierarchy of power is reversed as the common man rules the city during the festivities), the city hall can still be seen as a symbol for the city as a community. Following this there is a choral concert at the foot of the statue of Van der Werff (the personification of an ancestral hero related to the Relief), which symbolizes the state through the tribute that is paid to the ancestors (partially those involved in the Relief, but also those involved in more recent events such as the Second World War). Later in the morning a thanksgiving service is held in the Pieterskerk (Peter's Church), which also partially commemorates St. Peter, Leiden's patron saint. This refers to the more 'sacred' level although it has become increasingly secularized since the church was deconsecrated in 1973.

Although these elements still occur, the ritual has turned into a mass consumption celebration over the course of the past decade. The fair and the parade are now the most popular items, and large amounts of money are spent during the two-day festivities. On the other hand, the popularity has not diminished. This is one of the differences between Leiden and Haarlem. But they also differ in their use of the symbolism: in Haarlem the ritual symbolism was predominantly used by those in power like the powerful

mariners' guild and the ambitious city council, whereas in Leiden the power change is part of symbolism. Another major difference is that the elements pertaining to the legend were celebrated by different groups in a very diffuse manner, whereas in Leiden the celebrations are concentrated, in time and space, and the entire community participates. One specific similarity, however, is the way both rituals and so both narratives, one myth and one true, helped to form a community and to create a strong identity regardless of internal differences (be it religious or social) and, in the case of Leiden, regardless of the passing of time.

In this volume, the essays on Ghent in Belgium by Rose-Anne Vermeer and on Yogyakarta in Indonesia by Pierpaolo De Giosa also clearly refer to behavioral symbolism.

Emotional symbolism: The Hague and Colombo[9]

The above description of the material, discursive, iconic and behavioral symbol bearers is generally based on case studies of cities. The aim is to construct new concepts or theories, on the basis of grounded research. In this research different methods are applied, the most prominent being mental mapping which studies the emic vision of a city's population. As Nas and Sluis (2002: 131) point out, mental maps are 'drawings of informants who are asked to sketch their urban environment and note the items they consider important'. In mental maps, an informant portrays the city as he or she sees it and these maps form the basis for in-depth interviewing on the meanings attached to elements drawn. Nas and Sluis have suggested making 'a distinction between four types of maps' (Nas and Sluis, 2002: 131). These are 'scattered (elements or strings), linked (elements or strings), clustered (a number of separated areas or groups of elements) and patterned (one inter-related whole)'. In the research of Luo on The Hague (2006) and of Schut, Nas and Hettige on Colombo (this volume) a different, more pictorial type of map was distinguished, showing strong emotions concerning the city with a clarification of one particular feeling by the respondent. This category of maps has turned our attention to regard emotion as a new focus in urban symbolism. Symbols can express the feelings about a city and the emotions of its population. The meanings given, such as positive/negative, safe/unsafe or beautiful/ugly, to the particular parts or places in the city by its inhabitants, can be expressed through emotional symbolism.

A number of mental maps of The Hague and Colombo are examples of emotional mental mapping. The different emotions and feelings noticed by the respondents and reflected in symbols can be categorized at different levels. The Hague is a city raising relatively strong emotions, although these feelings are not always expressed conspicuously on many of the mental maps. The importance of The Hague is on local, national and in-

ternational levels and reflects the population's pride. Locally, the casual emotions are the strongest, the reminiscent past, the feeling of being young and care-free identified through the frolicking nature of the beach at Scheveningen (a suburb of The Hague). As for the national level, there is the emotional association with the Dutch royal family in The Hague. Besides this, it is also the administrative center of the Netherlands, with a skyline of government buildings but also the 'holy navel', which includes the Binnenhof, where the Dutch prime minister has his office. The Hague not only represents the local and national levels, but also refers quite adamantly to the international pretension of the city. The Hague is the city of embassies and could be identified as the judicial capital of the world, as the Peace Palace and affiliated institutions are located there. One mental map in Luo (2009) indicates the dichotomy of day and night and of water and land as feelings related to nature form its main focus.

In Colombo the emotional bearers are of various kinds as well, and they too can be categorized at three levels. One significant difference however, is that these emotions about the city were shown explicitly on several mental maps (Schut, Nas and Hettige, this volume). On the local level, fear is one of the main, negatively-charged emotions that came forward in the interviews. Terror has become an eye-catcher in the city predominantly due to the government's intensive protection policy. Due to this policy, there is a high abundance of roadblocks, one way streets and checkpoints. One of the mental maps shows the armed military and their tanks. This figure portrays feelings of insecurity. Terror attacks and bomb blasts have occurred in the past but are still very much a threat. Some of the places, which have been violated by terror, display symbols of their own. There are different ruins of buildings, memorial places commemorating the victims, and other types of personified statues and sculptures, with the name and moment of the attack. Other manifestations are street paintings, placed by peace activists.

Apart from the feelings of trepidation and conflict, many other emotions come to the fore in mental maps and interviews on Colombo. One of these emotions is hope, hope for a better life in the city, hope for more opportunities and hope for peace in the country. Another emotion is ambivalence, namely the feeling of being proud of Colombo as capital, the nation and its independence, as shown in symbols like the Independence Square and Independence Day. These feelings of pride are reflective to those found in The Hague, but in the case of Colombo there are also feelings of shame; the country is in conflict and since Independence Day still not one singular clear Sri Lankan symbol has come to the foreground in the city.

Some of these feelings are clearly drawn in a mental map. One graphic representation highlights emotional symbols of urban ambiance (Schut, Nas and Hettige, this volume). The many facilities and opportunities in the city attend to the positive feelings about the city. Negative feelings are expressed as well: overpopulation, high density con-

struction and heavy traffic. In relation to this crowdedness, other points often indicated are pollution and the lack of nature.

So, in the case of emotional symbolism, the mental maps produced by some informants may become emotional symbol bearers in their own right. These symbol bearers can be of various kinds, are not always that obvious, and express strong sentiments about the city. They can only be obtained through in-depth research on the emic vision and feelings of a city's population.

Cities and symbols

The symbolic structure of a city is of great importance for its identity and image. Urban symbolic ecology is a feature which has not been assessed at its true value. Therefore, this relatively new field within cultural anthropology requires more scientific and practical attention. This volume aims to contribute to this. Urban symbolism forms an extensive and multiple part of urban life as well as the foundation for the attraction of the city. In this introduction, four types of symbol bearers are distinguished: material, discursive, iconic and behavioral symbol bearers. Architecture plays an important role as one of the significant symbol carriers, but urban symbolism is something much larger. The nature in Jakarta and Cape Town and the websites of Tournai and Kortrijk and all sorts of other phenomena are part of urban symbolism. The history of a city can be used to strengthen the economic side by extending the attraction of tourism, as is the case with Tournai and Kortrijk. It can also be connected to events, such as the Relief celebrations in Leiden and the legend of Damietta in Haarlem, or periods, like the apartheid in Cape Town and the colonial era in Jakarta. All in all, history, in multiple layers, plays a significant role within urban symbolism, predominantly because of the juxtaposition that it forms with modernity. The symbolic side of the city is not only historically tiered but can also be identified on different political levels: local, national and international. Various groups can hold very divergent views about the city because they each look at it from a different perspective; in this sense, urban symbolism has to be regarded as poly-form and often nested.

The symbol bearers, be they material, discursive, iconic or behavioral, are perceived and manipulated in different ways. They are connected to emotions, sometimes of extreme relevance, as is shown in the case of Colombo. They can dominate the city's image. Contra-symbolism can help counter official image production and the friction between official and counter-symbolism is often very meaningful. Knowledge of the full symbolic spectrum of a city allows manipulation, which may be in demand for various reasons, such as nation building in Jakarta or for improving tourism in Kortrijk and Tournai. It can also be used for branding. Through the knowledge of urban symbolic ecology

and city branding, the possibility to create a positive image towards the public is, to a certain extent, achievable. Urban symbolism consummates urban identity; it bestows the urban manager, the city planner, the architect and the common man the tools to mold the city into a vivacious piece of art.

The contributions to this volume

Comprehensive case studies of cities have played a decisive role in the development of the theory on urban symbolism. To a more limited extent, more comparative studies of cities as well as research on elements in cities have had their influence. In this volume all three types of studies are present. First, in the seven contributions of Chapters 2 to 8, we present a number of holistic case studies on the cities of Colombo, Ghent, Yogyakarta, Gdańsk, Buenos Aires, Banda Aceh and The Hague. Then, in Chapters 9 and 10, we include two articles of a more comparative nature on Indonesian cities in general and on two pilgrimage cities in Indonesia in particular. In Chapters 11 to 14, these are followed by four contributions focusing on parts of cities, such as an element of nature, a building, a statue and a neighborhood. In Chapter 15, the conclusion of this volume, we will introduce a new approach to urban symbolism based on the concept of social cohesion. In this final chapter we also aim at the codification of research in the field of urban symbolism. Such a codification can function as an instrument for developing future research. It is a tool for researchers planning to undertake a case study in a new context.

The first set of contributions consists of a number of relatively comprehensive case studies. They all take the material symbol bearer into account, often in combination with other symbol bearers, for although, in general, one symbol bearer is dominant, other symbol carriers may also play a role, albeit a more modest one.

Michelle Schut, Peter J.M. Nas and Siri Hettige (Chapter 2) present the symbolic spectrum of Colombo, Sri Lanka. They include the material elements and compare a collective mental map of the inhabitants related to the university with one drawn by persons not related to the university. They sketch Colombo as a historical tiered symbolic system and emphasize its compartmentalized character. Also the interrelations of town, nation and countryside are stressed. Their contribution was discussed earlier in this introduction and their focus on a specific type of mental map depicting an emotion is stimulating. Those informants perceive the city through an emotion and not in the first place by means of a material, discursive, iconic or behavioral symbol bearer. That is why it is proposed to add the emotional symbol bearer to the set of four already distinguished. One of the dominant emotions is fear and Colombo is an example of a city lacking holistic symbols fostering social cohesion.

Rose-Anne Vermeer's study (Chapter 3) on Ghent in Belgium also takes several aspects into account. The natural and built environment including 'squares, water and historic buildings' form the starting point, but the behavioral symbol carriers, by way of all sorts of festivities, play an essential role. This consumer part of the story is, however, complemented by the production side. Vermeer, among others, discusses a crucial discursive symbol bearer, namely the city website, and her analysis ends up with a discussion on the image of the city and the difficulties in handling this image by the local government. Urban marketing appears an interesting applied aspect of urban symbolism research.

Yogyakarta in Indonesia, though being relatively new, is a traditional city in Indonesia. Pierpaolo De Giosa (Chapter 4) shows its unique linear structure as far as spatial formation is concerned. Yogyakarta is built containing a symbolic axis stretching from Mount Merapi through the Tugu Monument and the palace of the sultan, to the beach of south Java where the Goddess of the South Sea resides. History has made this still prevailing linear religious spatial configuration much more complex by addition and splitting up of the axis. This material and spiritual linear aspect is complemented by a circular behavioral and spiritual aspect. Yogyakarta is characterized by an abundance of rituals and ceremonies as behavioral symbol bearers. When they mark the limits around the palace and around the city, this may be considered a circular pattern in its own right. Yogyakarta is a built-up area just as other cities, but its spiritual component is so pervasive that urban space has acquired a very special and deep religious meaning.

When comparing Yogyakarta, Ghent and Colombo, it becomes clear that they have very different expressions of identity. The identity of Yogyakarta is clear, deeply religious and firmly rooted in history and the population. Ghent, as an old university and tourist city, has a pronounced identity but, in competition with other nearby towns, the local government is reflecting on its desired development for the future. In Colombo, no strong and dominant unifying symbols are present and able to neutralize the pervading emotion of fear resulting from the virulent attacks of the Tamil Tigers. The next four studies all exemplify case studies of symbolism in relation to urban planning and renewal.

Gdańsk in Poland has a long, complex past and is the first case study of a wounded city included in this volume. It was a German city that became Polish after World War II when its German inhabitants were replaced by Polish citizens. In 1945 Gdańsk was almost completely destroyed and the myths accompanying the transition from German to Polish, including the reconstruction to a 'newly invented' typical old Polish city, is the topic of the contribution of Barbara Bossak-Herbst (Chapter 5). She focuses in particular on the city landscape as a material symbol bearer and elaborates on this with the image portrayed of the city as well as some of its neighborhoods within literature as an important discursive symbol bearer. In the 1990s, a new myth was born expressing Gdańsk as

a multi-ethnic city. The intertwining of national and local identity, city image and the fate of a destructed city bearing the scars of the twentieth century's atrocities as well as the energy and ideas of reconstruction render this contribution an intricate story of urban symbolism and planning.

The contribution of Lars Bakker on Buenos Aires (Chapter 6) exposes the basic symbolic pattern of the capital of Argentina, which is set in the layout of the city. The history and present role of the Avenida de Mayo main axis and of the Obelisk on the Plaza de la República as well as their contestation by modern developments are analyzed. These material symbols represent political, economic and cultural power in addition to liberty, modernity and white Europeanism. Urban planners aim at the revaluation of the main axis in general and its reinforcement by means of an extension into the harbor area of Puerto Madero. They see the new bridge and park there as crucial in this respect, but these elements of Buenos Aires spatial symbolism are not fully recognized and consumed yet by its inhabitants.

Banda Aceh is the capital of Aceh Province on the island of Sumatra, Indonesia. It was hit hard by the tsunami and Rob van Leeuwen (Chapter 7) has analyzed the symbolism of the place before and after this tragedy. Initially, by means of mental maps, the changes in symbolism appear to be quite limited as the new symbolic elements, such as the ship that was washed ashore by the tsunami wave, and the mass grave in which the bodies of the unknown were collected, are not often mentioned. The old symbols of Banda Aceh, such as the famous Baiturrahman mosque that was hit but not destroyed by the tsunami, remained strong and dominant. Yet during the interviews, it became clear that the new symbols are well-known indeed. The process of commemorating such a disaster in urban society and landscape is intriguing and develops in phases over time. It requires the long-term attention of researchers.

The contribution of Jialing Luo on The Hague (Chapter 8) deals with the image of the city in a historic perspective. It sketches the city in three parts. The 'Sacred Navel' and 'Holy Zone' of the historical section determine the central area of the city with its governmental and political institutions. The resort and embassy area on the coast constitute the green element. The new buildings of the ministries shaping the high-rise skyline represent modern aspirations. This article also recounts the urban planning efforts and the differences in perception of the inhabitants, who experience the city as a village, and the planners, who aim at a sort of New York modernity inspired by Piet Mondriaan's famous painting *Victory Boogie Woogie*. The question remains how long this bifurcated image will hold and whether or not the aims of the local and national government and planners to modernize The Hague and turn it into an international City of Law will be realized and accepted by the local population.

After this selection of comprehensive case studies we will turn to two contribu-

tions of an even more inclusive but also comparative nature. Hans-Dieter Evers (Chapter 9) puts cities in the wider context of urbanization, claiming that for a long time Indonesia may have known large traditional settlements. Nevertheless, when compared to Weber's concept of idealtype of the city, they only reached weak urbanism, indicating a lack of necessary urban institutions and insufficient provision of basic services to their inhabitants. Besides discussing other cities in Asia, he also focuses on Jakarta and even its rapid urbanization phase after Independence is considered 'urbanization without urbanism'. In this framework Evers explains the layers of material symbolism – as discussed earlier in this introduction – as a means of covering this lack of urbanism. It is analyzed as virtual urbanism and urban involution. Only since the 1990s has the situation changed, with Jakarta entering the rank of modern mega-cities. Hans-Dieter Evers concludes that in Jakarta virtual symbolism has come to an end and will be replaced by new symbolisms also characteristic for other world cities.

In Chapter 10, Pierpaolo De Giosa takes the concept of the iconic city as a point of departure and compares the symbolism of the Javanese cities of Kudus and Blitar. These respectively are a sacral and a profane pilgrimage city, i.e. the city of one of the Islamic saints or *wali sanga*, Jafar Shodiq, also called Sunan Kudus, and the burial place of the late President Sukarno. Both iconic cities are quite complete with respect to material and behavioral symbolism, while Kudus sometimes is compared with Jerusalem and Blitar is seen as a patriotic city (*kota patria*). But additional connotations exist as Kudus is also the famous city of kretek cigarette production and Blitar may be interpreted as the last exile of Sukarno. This because his successor, President Suharto, only eight years after his burial, granted Sukarno some sort of 'orchestrated gradual rehabilitation' leading to the sacralization of the secular leader. Kudus and Blitar are iconic and pilgrimage cities and as such also maintain a strong tourist sector rendering their functioning complete in all its components from shrine to ritual and souvenir.

The last set of four contributions focuses on parts of cities, respectively a river, a statue, a building and a neighborhood. Esrih Bakker and Katie Saentaweesook (Chapter 11) develop a fascinating new view on Jakarta based on an analysis of a discursive symbol bearer, namely poetry. Earlier studies of Jakarta as described in the beginning of this introduction and also found in the chapter by Hans-Dieter, concentrate on material symbol bearers and particularly statues and monuments. These are mainly expressions of top-down symbolism. Bottom-up symbolism, as found in the poems on Jakarta, is completely new and a welcome addition to existing studies. The common themes encountered are varied, showing both positive and negative aspects of the 'big city' and the 'governmental city'. But the role of nature as expressed by the River Ciliwung is particularly appealing. This river is considered both a source of life as provider of water for the families, but also a destructive force because of the almost yearly, large-scale flood-

ing. This chapter adds a completely new aspect to the literature on Jakarta and is a good example of the role of nature as a symbol bearer.

The struggle over a statue is prominent in the search for identity in Albuquerque, New Mexico, USA. It is the statue of Don Juan de Oñate, commemorating the conquest of New Mexico in 1598 in which he played a dominant role. However, at that time this Don also ordered that one foot be cut off of more than twenty men in one of the villages; an act that was recently repeated symbolically by the removal of one foot of the statue. Eveline Dürr (Chapter 12) presents a lively account of the tensions around the statue. This exposes the underlying struggle over the presentation of New Mexico's history. It is a story of contested identities in an urban arena revealing the structure of the society in an intense and emotional debate.

Such an intense and emotional debate also took place in New York after the 9/11 destruction of the WTC towers. The attacks were traumatic for the city and the whole of the USA. So, the intended memorial buildings on Ground Zero will certainly turn New York into a pilgrimage city. The proposals for the new WTC buildings are elaborately presented and analyzed by Georgina Kay (Chapter 13). The rules and criteria for the design contest were set by the local government. In the course of time both a top-down and bottom-up process evolved, influencing the final outcome. The designs made by the different architectural companies implied choices about values and outlook. Should the new design refer to the past or the future? Should aesthetics or functionality be emphasized? Should they include reference number symbolism such as 9/11 and should they use the value of (sacred) light and shadow to enforce the commemorative aspect? All these options have been processed in the design proposals and constitute remarkable aspects of the symbolical handling of the 9/11 trauma.

As noted earlier, Peter J.M. Nas and Pierpaolo De Giosa will round up this volume in Chapter 14. They set the task to develop a codification of urban symbolism research and endeavor to formulate a new theoretical approach elaborating the aspect of urban social cohesion.

All chapters in this volume contribute in their own way to the study of urban space and symbolism in general and of the presented cities in particular. They cover the four types of symbol bearers, material, discursive, iconic and behavioral. The studies of Jakarta and Cape Town are a reason to distinguish nature and built environment within the category of material symbol bearers. The study on Colombo has brought the role of emotion to the fore. Many contributions demonstrate the value of mental mapping as a method for data collection. In addition, the chapters in this volume shed light on other related phenomena such as urban history, urbanization and urbanism; wounded and resilient cities; urban identity and image; city branding, promotion and marketing; and urban development and planning. We conclude that the study of urban symbolism is a necessary and in-

triguing complement to classic physical and social urban research, putting urban development and change in a more comprising and evocative framework. The urban symbolism approach may enrich urban studies tremendously and should be an essential part of all studies on individual cities. As such this volume is relevant for urban officials as well as for scholars in different fields of study, such as sociology, anthropology, architecture, city planning, and mass media and literary studies.

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Notes

1 Based on: Hans-Dieter Evers, this volume; Peter J.M. Nas, 1990; Peter J.M. Nas, Margot N. te Velde and Annemarie Samuels, 2006; Esrih Bakker and Katie Saentaweesook, this volume.

2 The c is pronounced as ch in the Indonesian language.

3 Based on: Marvin Stijweg, 2007.

4 Based on: Peter J.M. Nas and Rivke Jaffe, 2009.

5 See www.Kevelaer.de and www.marypages.com/KevelaerEng.htm, accessed 30 November 2005.

6 Source: http://enzinearticles.com/?Other-Peoples-Homes-(2)-Elvis,-Graceland,-Memphis,-Tennessee&id =105377, accessed 5 December 2005.

7 Based on: Frijhoff, 1993; Nas and Roymans, 1998.

8 A small investigation was done by the authors in Haarlem to establish the current state of affairs surrounding the Damietta legend. They found that only the true Haarlem inhabitants as well as some historical specialists knew of the legend but that there were no celebrations which referred to it. Even in the annual St. Bavo celebration, the model ships were ignored, though they can still be found.

9 Based on: Michelle Schut, Peter J.M. Nas and Siri Hettige, this volume; Jialing Luo, this volume.

2. Emotion in the Symbolic Spectrum of Colombo, Sri Lanka

Michelle Schut, Peter J.M. Nas and Siri T. Hettige

Introduction[1]

The cultural character of a city is expressed in a layer of rituals and symbols (Nas, 1993; Nas, Jaffe and Samuels, 2006). The focus of this essay is on the symbolic spectrum of Colombo, the capital of Sri Lanka, and is based on the different views of its population. Sri Lanka's lively history is the crux for a great variety of symbols, as many relics of the different stages ranging from early to modern time, including the different European rulers in the colonial period, can still be found in Colombo. The various stages in history have left both permanent and transient symbols and account for a historically tiered symbolic system. In Colombo the buildings and symbolic elements are situated all over the area, with colonial houses standing in the shadow of modern office buildings, displaying non-linear history. Some of these symbols are top-down, representative of nation and regime, whereas others are bottom-up, such as the places of worship. They can also be a combination, such as changes in street and place names.

Colombo is not only a mix of historically tiered symbols; it is also an amalgamation of different ethnic and religious groups. The population of Colombo exists mainly of Singhalese but there are other ethnicities such as Tamils, Moors and Burghers. The population is mainly Buddhist, whilst other common religions are Hinduism, Christianity and Islam. These differences are visible in the city through the representation of sacred symbols in the form of different religious buildings, rituals and festivals. The city is not only divided into ethnic areas but there is also the aspect of the function per district. In this context the concept of compartmentalized symbolism will be discussed.

Colombo can be seen as the commercial capital of Sri Lanka. There are universities, hospitals and businesses, which attract all kinds of migrants. Further it is seen as a relatively safe place, which attracts Tamil migrants. Although there is no particular symbol expressing Colombo's identity, the migrant citizens are inclined to take over local habits in order to claim indigenous roots. There is a clear distinction between the migrants and those who are born and bred in Colombo.

In relation to the previously mentioned distinctions between heritages, being ethnic or cultural, fear and insecurity also play a role. Colombo is a city full of emotion. This is due to the political context and repeated attacks by the Tigers. These emotions are exposed through a range of occurrences. The military roadblocks and security checks set up by the authorities in order to protect themselves and the other citizens, the avoidance of crowded places and the discrimination of migrant Tigers are all examples. Emotional

symbolism is a concept that can be used to indicate the role of this fear and other feelings that are present in Colombo. These kinds of emotional symbolism are shown in some of the mental maps drawn by informants, as well as in some poems and songs.

In this essay on urban symbolism, the emic view of Colombo's population is explored. Mental mapping as a technique of data collection is introduced and descriptions of Colombo's history and related symbols are presented. Subsequently the relation between ethnicity and religion with respect to the urban landscape is discussed, while rural-urban migration is illustrated in relation to Colombo's identity. Considering the various elements of ethnicity, religion and the rural-urban migration, the focus in the last section is on emotions on both a national (concerning the conflict) and a local scale (concerning urban conditions) and their symbolic reflection within Colombo.

Portraying images

To research the emic vision of Colombo's population, mental mapping is one of the methods that can be used in the field. Mental maps are, as Nas and Sluis (2002: 131) discuss, 'drawings of informants who are asked to sketch their urban environment and note the items they consider important'. As Reinders (2007: 167) argues, 'mental mapping can be used to get an overview of the way people collect, order, summon and manipulate their environment'. It is a way to portray their image of the city. Appleyard (cited in Nas and Sluis, 2002: 131) 'distinguished eight types of maps, namely fragmented, scattered, chain, mosaic, branch and loop, linked, netted and patterned'. Nas and Sluis, in order to reduce data, have suggested making 'a distinction between four types of maps, namely scattered (elements or strings), linked (elements or strings), clustered (a number of separated areas or groups of elements) and patterned (one interrelated whole) maps'. Some of the mental maps drawn from Colombo did not fall into any of these four categories. Excluded from this typology we found two other types. There were the more pictorial maps, defined as emotionally-structured mental maps by Luo (2006) because they express the way people feel about their city. Although all mental maps show emotions about the city, it is this pictorial manner of drawing one particular emotion and the clarification of this feeling by the respondent that make some of the mental maps emotional ones. The other category was mental maps solely showing a small part or a single street in the city. These will be defined as locally-focused mental maps (Figure 1).

The attribution of mental maps to the categories is not always clear, as some maps can adhere to two labels. An example is given in Figure 2, which at first could be viewed as a clustered map, but considering the drawing as a pictorial map and clarification of the respondent ('Every building is different, with a different purpose. From Colombo they con-

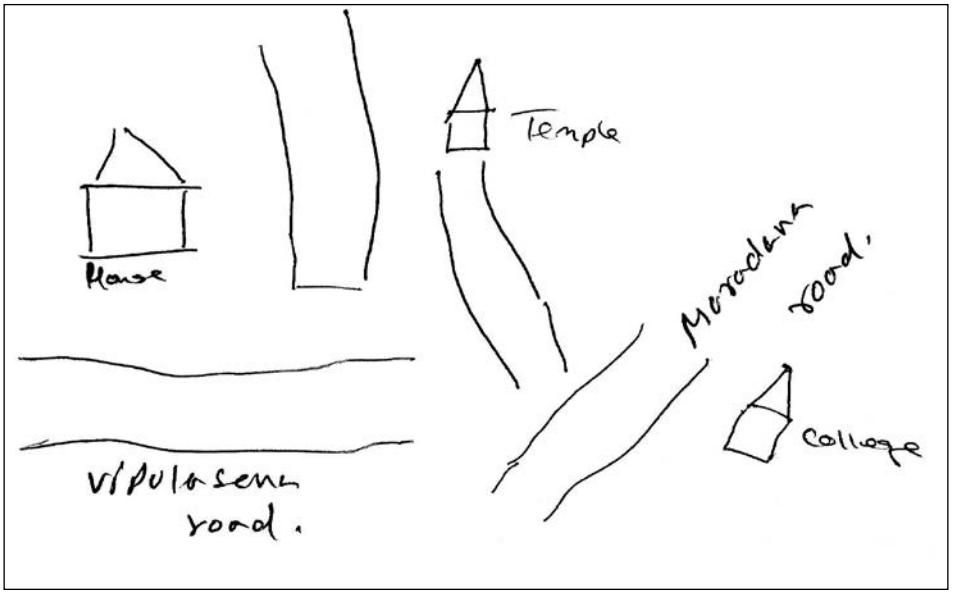

Figure 1. Locally-focused mental map

trol and rule over the country; financial, governmental and the transportation.'), it could probably also be categorized as emotionally-structured. This map shows different buildings, such as the Bank of Ceylon, World Trade Centre, Railway Station and Court complex, in a photographic manner. These buildings are all situated in the old core of Colombo and drawn as a cluster in this center. Some of the infrastructure, like the roads and railways, are marked as an indication of the good transport facilities in Colombo.

Emotionally-structured mental mappings are a representation of the areas which are considered to be positive or negative, beautiful or ugly, or safe or unsafe. Figure 3 is an example of an emotionally-structured mental map, as it is drawn in a very pictorial way with indications of feelings. Most of the buildings have something to do with the different religions in Colombo and feature tolerance. Other buildings are the World Trade Centre with the Hilton Hotel in front. The rest are houses and buildings in general and implicate 'the crowdedness of the city'. Some of these houses, namely the little ones lying close to each other, are shanties. The biggest and highest houses are those of high and middle-class people.

The reason for the drawing of many pictorial mental maps may relate to ways of orientation. A majority of the respondents never use maps themselves; they find their way through town by making use of the landmarks, buildings and infrastructure. Name boards of shops, shop and street names or house numbers are also used for referencing. Many respondents do not remember road names but refer to descriptions of partic-

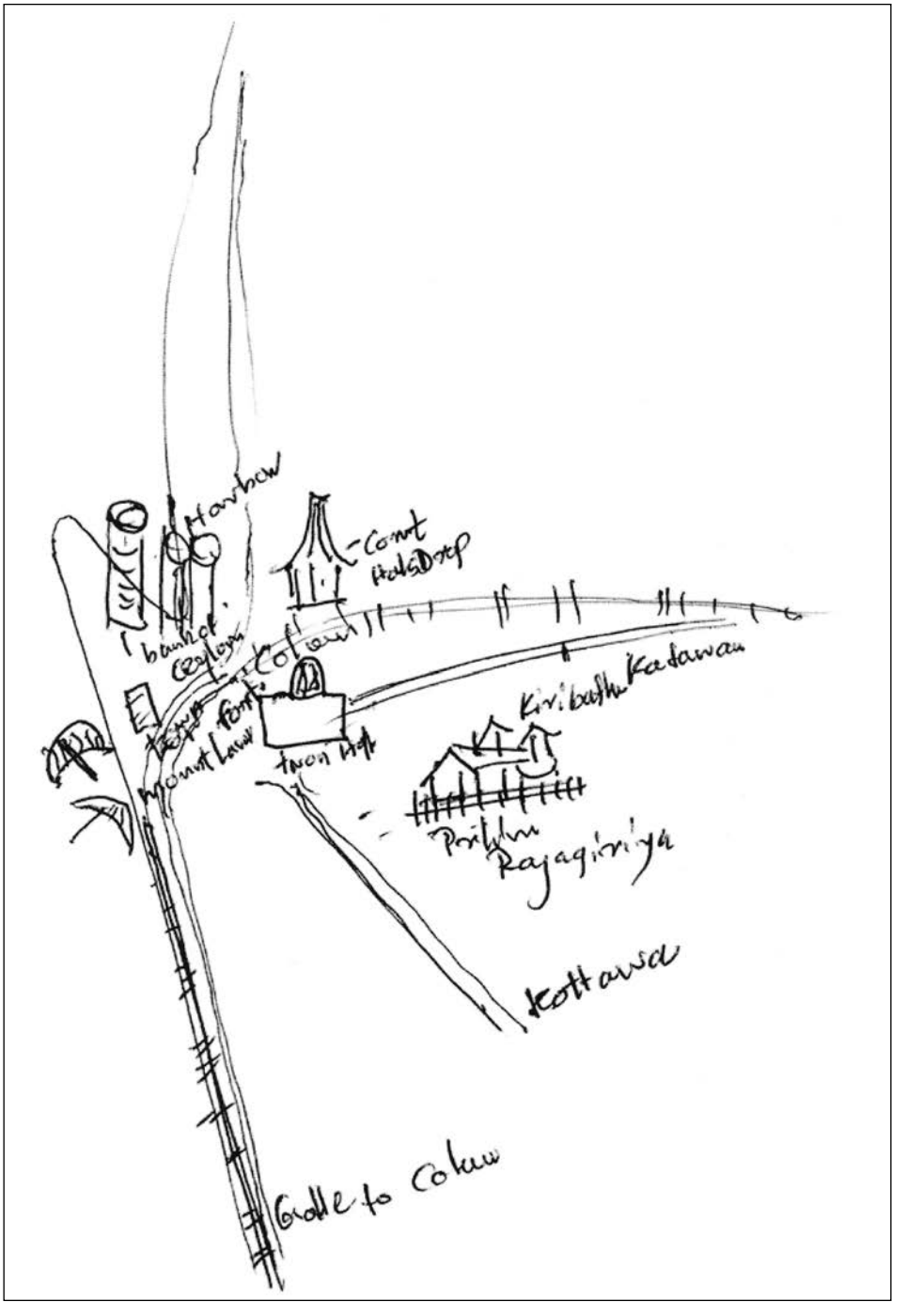

Figure 2. A clustered/emotional mental map expressing content

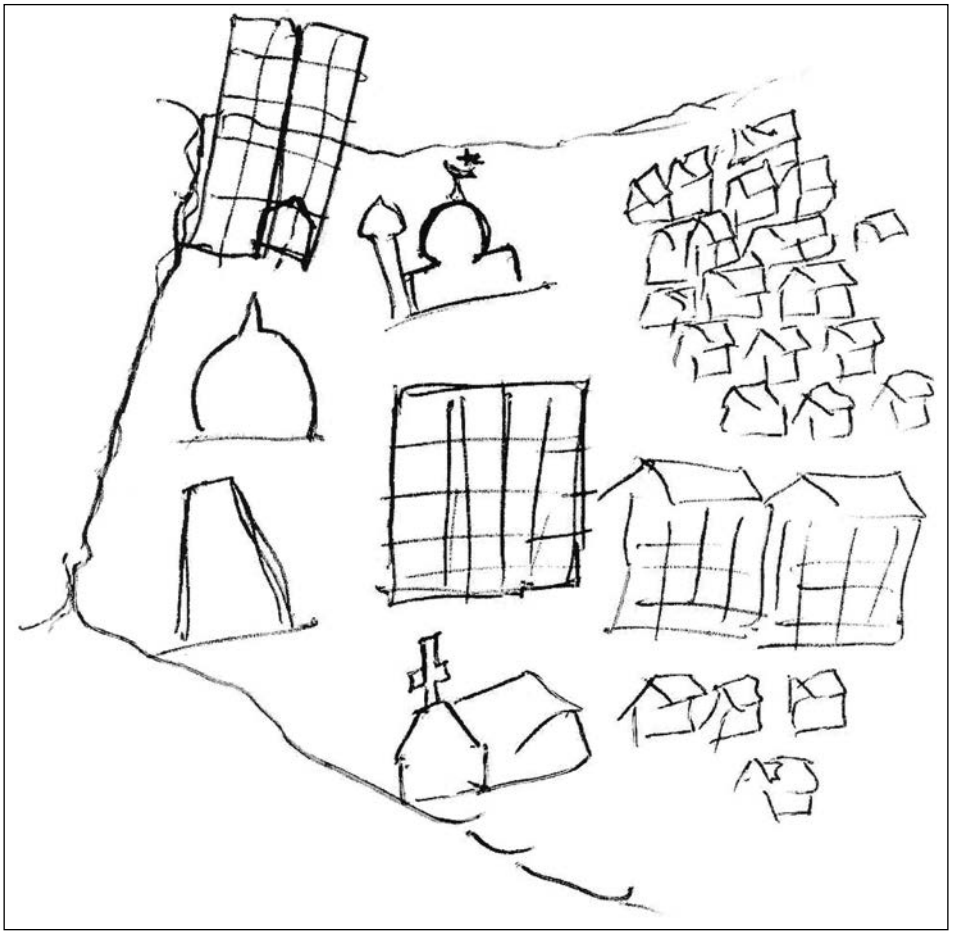

Figure 3. Emotionally-structured mental map indicating tolerance

ular places. For example they say Uni-street. This manner of defining bearings is an explanation for the way they draw particular buildings or for the street naming in their mental maps. None of the respondents has made a patterned map, which is probably also related to ways of orientation.

A collective map (Figure 4) was constructed from the individual mental maps,[2] indicating the importance of the places mentioned most. Galle Road, beginning at Colombo's Galle Face and coursing 115 km south to Galle, is drawn almost consistently. Other places that are often mentioned are Colombo University, the sea, the National Museum, the Fort (Colombo 1) and Colombo Port. The rest of the noted places include some of the Colombo districts, parks, particular road names, and buildings or facilities such as the General Hospital, World Trade Centre, Public Library and Majestic City, a shopping complex.

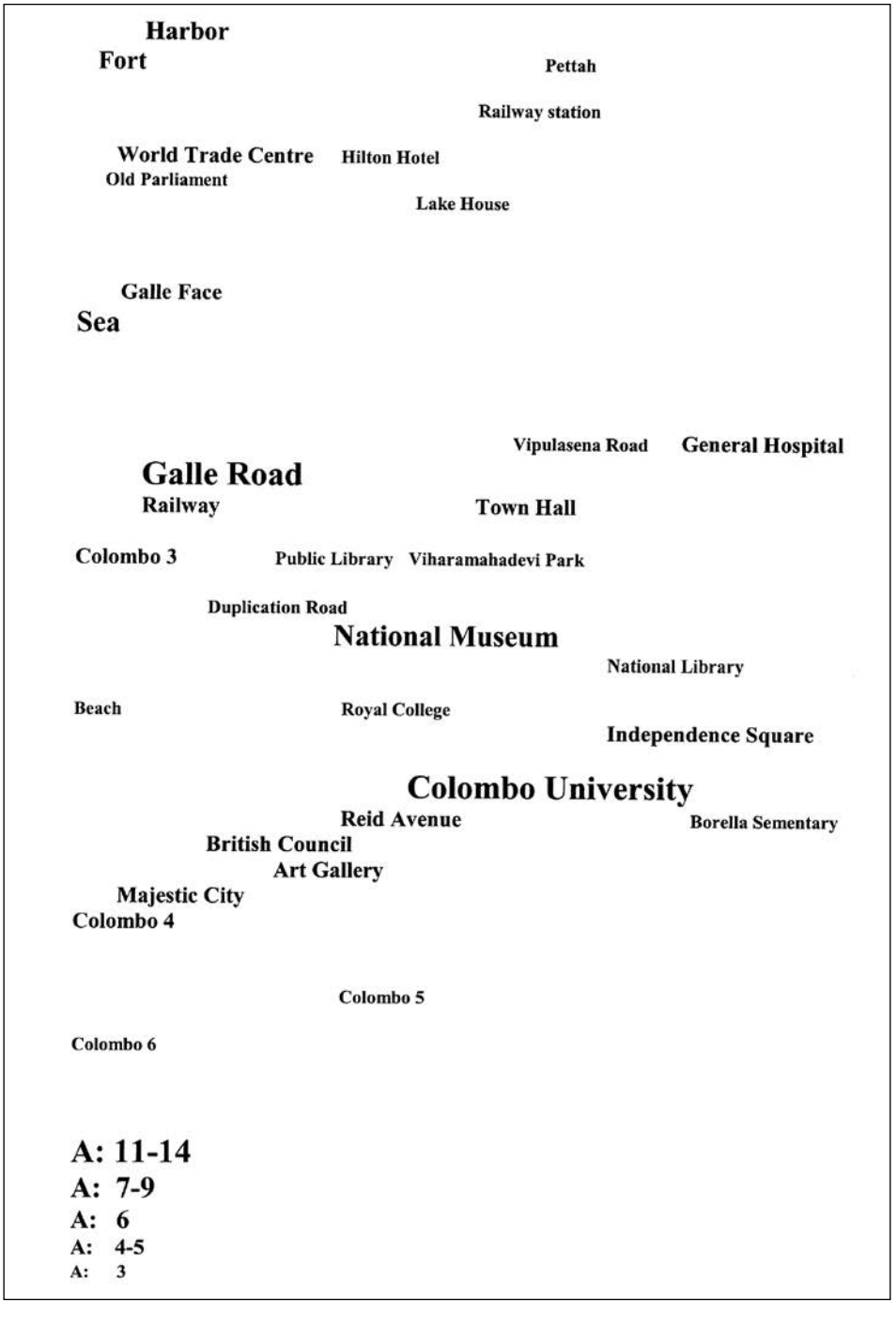

Figure 4. General collective mental map of Colombo based on 32 individual drawings

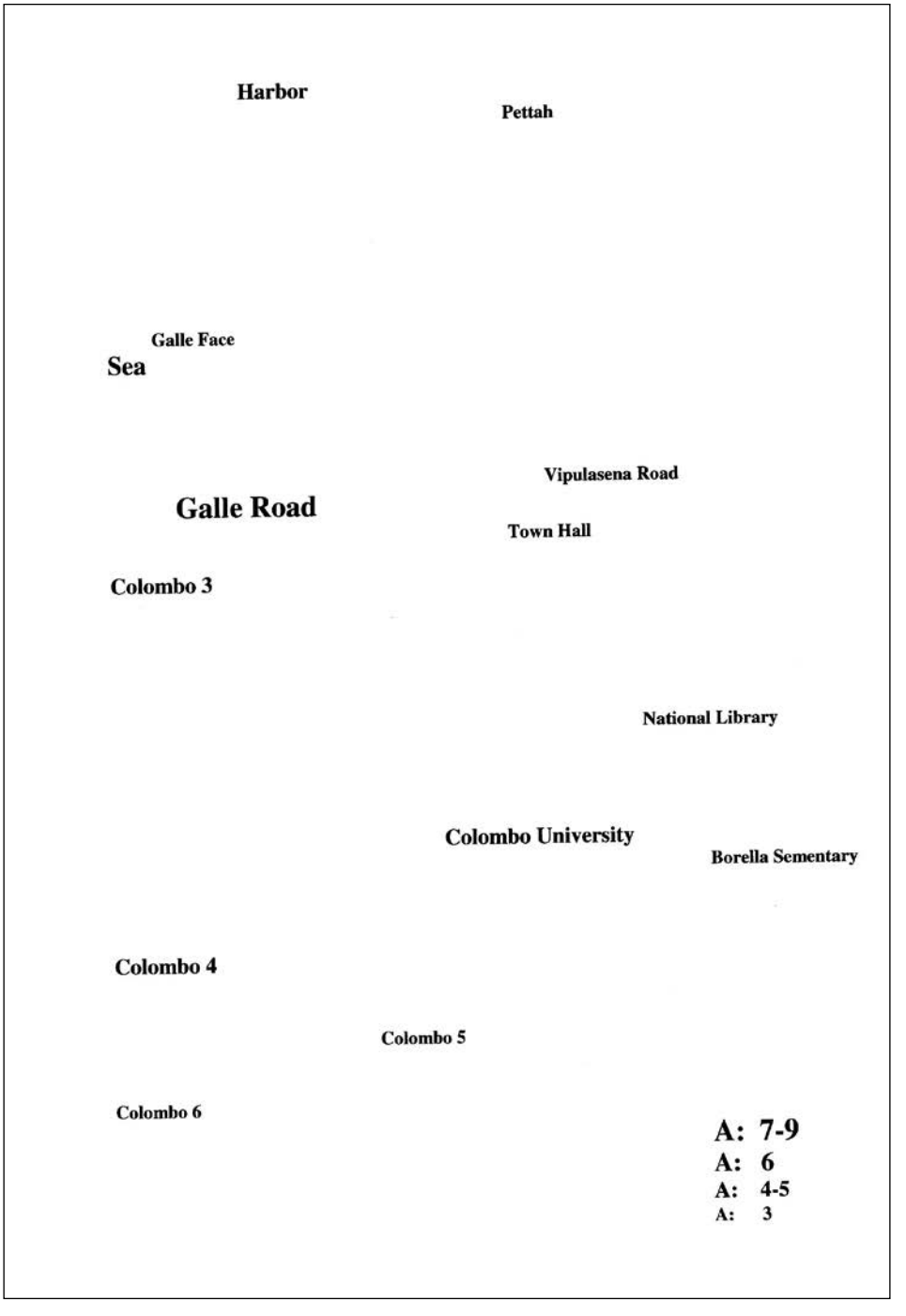

Figure 5. Collective mental map of Colombo based on 18 individual drawings of persons not related to the university

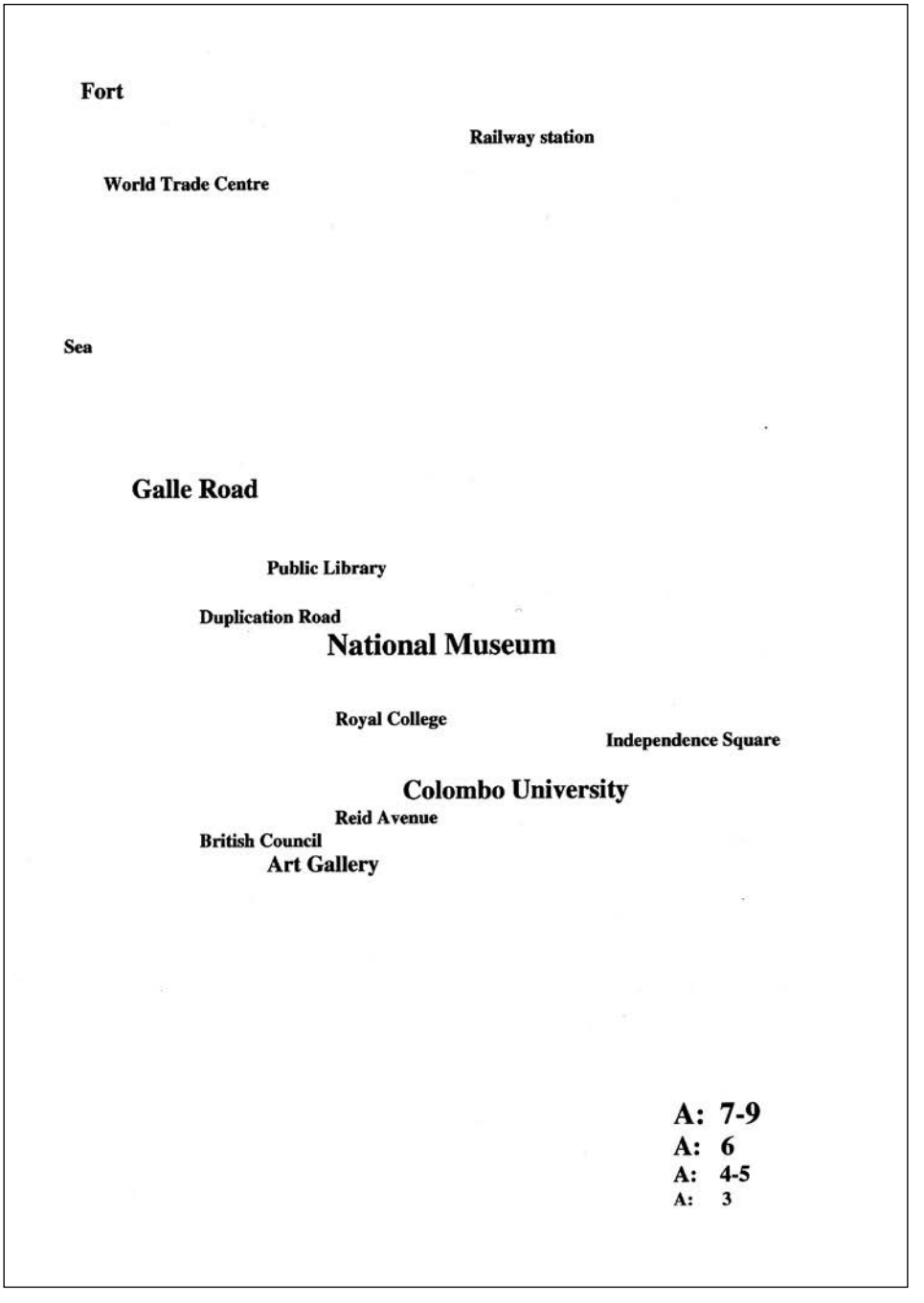

Figure 6. Collective mental map of Colombo based on 18 individual drawings of persons related to, as lecturer or councillor, or studying at the university

Considering the large proportion of respondents having a connection to the university, it was interesting to observe how their collective mental map differed from that of the rest of the respondents. Although the maps still had their similarities in that the sea, Galle Road and Colombo University were all mentioned, it appeared that in the non-university related respondents, the mention of Colombo University was somewhat reduced. Instead these respondents placed more importance on landmarks such as the harbor, the Town Hall and various district names (Figure 5). This in stark contrast with the university-related respondents who primarily mentioned the National Museum, the Art Gallery and the Fort district (Figure 6). It appears that the non-university related respondents attach more value to the governmental and administrative side of the city, whereas the university-related respondents mention places connected to the exchange of knowledge and commercial trade.

As shown, there are different types of mental maps. Mental maps are individual drawings and they can be put in various categories, but each individual mental map is unique. This aspect has to be kept in mind when making a collective mental map, as it can vary for distinct groups.

Historically tiered symbolic systems

Symbolic changes have occurred against the background of political processes related to the colonization and decolonization of Ceylon, now known as Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka's history can be described in five stages, namely early time, Portuguese (1505-1656), Dutch (1656-1796) and British (1796-1948) colonization, and after independence in 1948, the modern period. The various historical phases are characterized by different and sometimes permanent symbols in line with the concept of a historically tiered symbolic system.

Colombo is originally a commercial city, which can be traced back to pre-colonial times. The harbor back then was already in use, but the Portuguese constructed the Fort for security reasons. It had a star-like pattern and this shape is still present in Colombo today, due to the surrounding canal. The streets in Pettah, laid out in a grid pattern, date back to the colonial period too. During the Dutch colonial times there was a lot of rebuilding in the fortification area, once it was captured from the Portuguese. It maintained its original, military purpose until 1869 in the British period. By that time, as Wright points out, only a few guns were 'maintained in position, commanding the approach to the harbour', while the landward fortifications had disappeared altogether (Wright, 1907: 395).

Many colonial structures are still present in Colombo, especially in the Fort area. Examples are the Old Clock Tower (1857) (Figure 7) and Post Office (latter half of the 19th century). Cargills (1896) used to be a department store but is no longer in use. The Old Par-

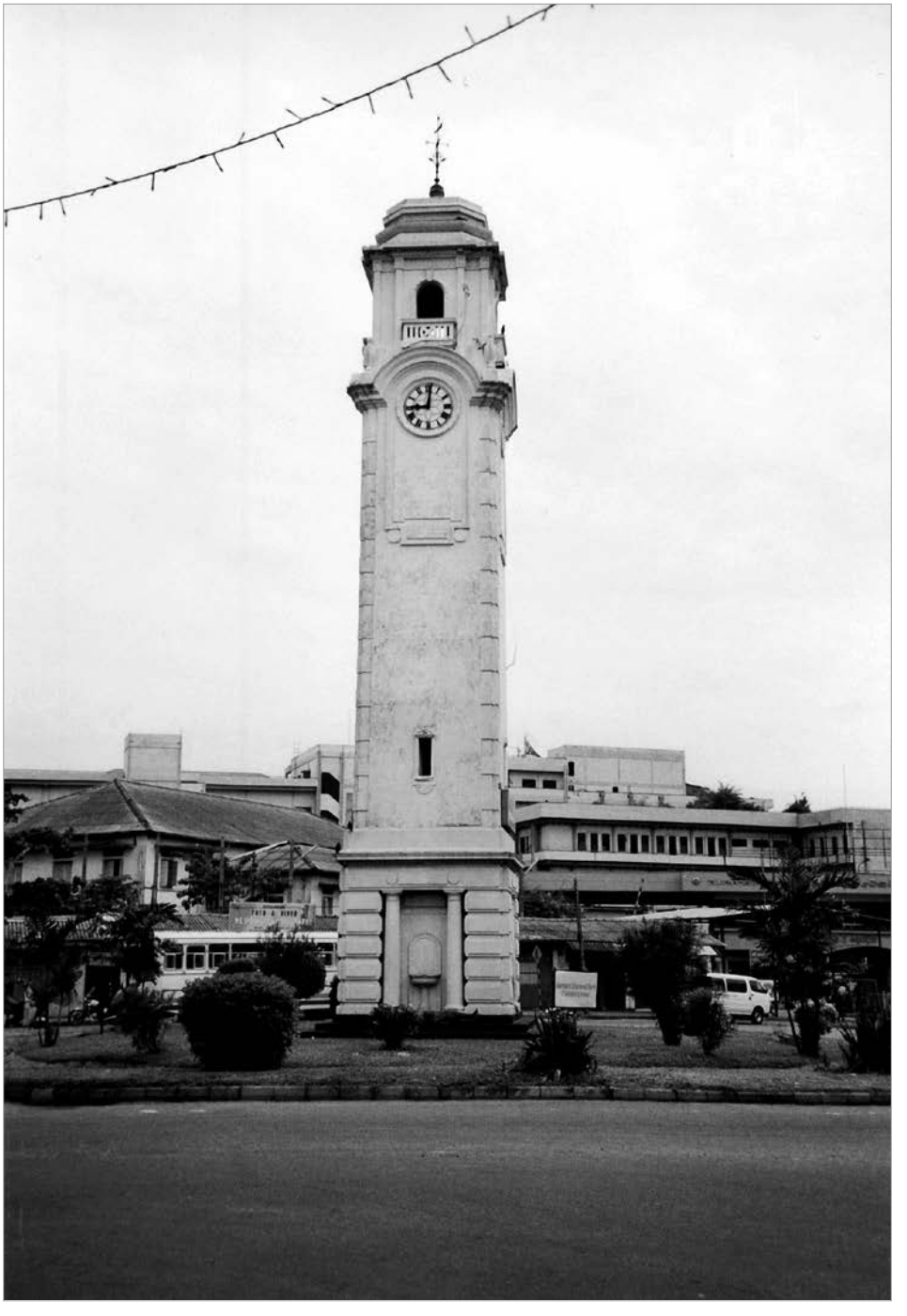

Figure 7. The old Clock Tower at Pettah (Photograph: Michelle Schut, 2007)

Figure 8. The modern World Trade Centre at the Fort (Photograph: Michelle Schut, 2007)

liament (1929) is still an interesting landmark on the edge of the Fort area, but has lost its governmental importance, just like Colombo has lost its function as administrative capital of Sri Lanka, which has been transferred to Sri Jayewardenepura. The President's House, formally Queens' House (18th century) was built by the last Dutch governor of Ceylon and was later rebuilt to now function as the official home of the President of Sri Lanka (Baldwin, 1986). These are just a few examples of the many reminders of the colonial period in the Fort area, of which many more can be found in Colombo and in the rest of Sri Lanka.

Especially after independence things changed completely, although most of the colonial buildings were not demolished. A new liberalization policy, concerned particularly with the economic field, was introduced in 1977. As a result the government began construction activities in the old Fort district. The private sector rose, featuring shopping malls, banks, and so on, creating a collage of both the old and the modern. One striking symbol of this new policy is the World Trade Centre or, as viewed by the inhabitants, the Twin Towers (Figure 8). With its 152m and 40 floors, it is the highest building in Colombo and even Sri Lanka. It deserves the title of the new landmark of Colombo. The World Trade Centre buildings shelter multinational companies; they can be seen as another commercial symbol and of course as a sign of modernity.

Other symbols in Colombo are frequently of a political nature. There are many statues of former presidents, which foster nation building. Another important national

Figure 9. Vihara Maha Devi Park and in the background the Town Hall (Photograph: Michelle Schut, 2007)

symbol is Independence Hall, erected by the government of Ceylon to commemorate the independence of Ceylon on 4 February 1948. As a copy of the last king of Kandy's parliament building, it is a referential symbol and thereby a reminder of the culture of Sri Lanka before the colonial period. A related top-down national symbol is Independence Day: a one-day celebration, which is not a people's event but a large governmental ritual. It is one of the festivities exposing power. Colombo can be seen as a theatre full of these kinds of rituals. The Town Hall of Colombo is sometimes considered a replica of the Whitehouse in America, as was pointed out by many respondents (Figure 9). Another referential symbol, but in this case a general one, is the Bandaranaike Memorial International Conference Hall. The BMICH was a gift from the Republic of China (Taiwan) and was built in 1971. Some of the respondents referred to it as 'the Chinese temple'. All these elements were created after independence and are top-down governmental symbols. But this does not imply that all changes are top-down.

The changing of street names is a mix of top-down and bottom-up symbolism. The English were the first name-givers of Colombo streets, as the Dutch and Portuguese were mainly interested in trade near the coast. President Jawerdena (1977), the first president of Sri Lanka, had the names translated to Singhalese. As was pointed out by Andrew Scott many of the streets in Colombo have names such as Queen's Street, Prince Street, Duke Street, with a royal flavor, eliciting colonial connections. 'Other names take our memories

back to the names of some famous road builders and their names have become immortalized in the nation's history... Captain William Gregory is remembered by Gregory's road in Colombo... Some other road names in Colombo such as Wolvendhall Street, Korteboam Street, Grandpass and Dam Street take us back to the Dutch period... The Portuguese too left behind some interesting place names such as Mattakkuliya and Kollupitiya.' (Scott, 2002). Although some streets still retain their colonial names, quite a number were changed after 1977. The street names now honor generals, presidents and prime-ministers, national heroes, artists, and notably Buddhism (Dhanna, Dharma and Sri are Buddhist signs). Another significant characteristic of the new names is that most of them have Mawatha (Singhalese for street) instead of street, road or lane behind it.

Not only the street names, but other place names are changing. Examples are the Kelani Bridge previously known as the Victoria[3] Bridge, as well as the Vihara Maha Devi Park, which used to be Victoria Park. An illustration of a place name that remained the same is that of the Beira Lake, one of Colombo's most prominent natural landmarks referring to the Dutch engineer Johann de Beer. Other examples are district names, as already mentioned Fort, but also Pettah, Slave Island and Hulftsdorp.

Prior to this investigation it was told that changes were initiated by the government and that the inhabitants had little possibility of participation. During the fieldwork it turned out to be quite the contrary. There were examples of inhabitants living in a street and asking the government to rename it after a person considered important by them. Stephord Lane (British governor), for example, was changed into Vipolasena Road (Buddhist monk), after a request by the head of the Buddhist temple in that street.

According to Andrew Scott there is a preference for old names, which have a history and a charm of their own. Nevertheless, it turned out that most of the respondents use both the old and the new names. Many respondents noticed that they got confused by the new names. When inquiring about preferences, the answer is frequently: 'I do not mind, they can change it if they like'. Despite the proclaimed impartiality, a small test proved that they appropriate the new names in favor of the old ones.[4]

Colombo districts: Different purposes, ethnicities and religions

The word Colombo has different meanings. It is the capital city of Sri Lanka but the name is also used for an administrative district in the Western province of the country. In this research the focus is on Colombo city, but even that is an indistinct term. Colombo city consists of the main city but also the suburbs, which are known together as Greater Colombo. Colombo's city population was 647,100 in 2001 (Department of Census and Statistics – Sri Lanka, 2008).

The compartmentalized symbolism of Colombo city is important for understanding its non-linear history. Compartmentalized symbolism is a concept used for symbolic systems of cities when they consist of two levels, which are so legible that, besides the more general level, strong but subordinate symbolic parts can be distinguished. This compartmentalized symbolism of the districts is related to functionality, ethnicity and religion, but also to history. The city of Colombo has fifteen districts, each with its own name.[5] These districts have their own significant characteristics.

Colombo 1, Fort, is mostly a commercial area as discussed before. It is part of the old core. The concept of non-linear history is essential to this area, as an interesting mix of numerous old, even dilapidated colonial buildings and hypermodern constructions can be found here. Due to its commercial connections, it becomes extremely hectic during rush hours as crowds of middle-class people travel to and from work. The presence of numerous roadblocks is due to the fact that the house of the President is located in this area. The rest of the space is non-residential aside from some illegal housing constructions.

Colombo 11, Pettah, can be seen as a totally different world. Here, although there is a lack of numerous high modern buildings, the level of industriousness is the same. Both areas, Fort and Pettah, are focal points for trade. Pettah is known for the bargains that can be purchased on the streets where the shop owners have installed small markets. Still visible, on the map, is the regular grid pattern from Dutch times. Most of the little shopping streets are narrow, through which only *tuktuks* and pedestrians can make their way. The main train station and bus stations of Colombo are also located here. Pettah is a residential place for the lower-class and has a highly concentrated population. As noted by Arnold Wright (1907), Pettah was formerly known as a 'Black Town' because it functioned as a native quarter. The name Pettah also refers to this area as a residential quarter for the natives. In Tamil *pettai* and Singhalese *pita* means 'outside'; outside the quarters of the Europeans the native traders operated their markets. Present day, the traders are mostly Moors and Tamils. Because of this, the main religious buildings in the district are the Jami-ul-Alfar Mosque, the Old and New Kathiresan Kovil and the Ganesha Kovil.

Colombo 2, Slave Island, is also part of the old colonial town, as is indicated by its name. It is surrounded partially by a canal and partially by the Beira Lake. In the lake there is a little Buddhist temple and meditation island, Seema Malakaya, and on Slave Island, the best-known Buddhist temple of Colombo, to be precise the Gangaramaya Temple, is situated. Considering this, the area of Slave Island closest to the lake is mostly Buddhist (Figure 10).

The differences between this older center and the other districts, as for example Cinnamon Gardens (Colombo 7), are clear. Fort and Pettah are separated from the other districts by the canals from Beira Lake. As opposed to these areas, the roads in the other

Figure 10. Beira Lake with Seema Malakaya buddhist temple and meditation center and in the background the WTC (Photograph: Michelle Schut, 2007)

sectors are wider, there is more greenery and the buildings are of modest height as well as newer. Cinnamon Gardens counts the bulk of the best-known schools of Colombo. It is therefore also the home to Colombo's first private school, the Royal College, and of the University of Colombo.

Over the course of time, the residential areas have shifted from the center of the city towards the periphery. Nowadays the main residential areas in Colombo are the suburbs and the adjacent districts, to which many rich inhabitants have been and still are relocating (ILO, 1979). Bambalapitya (Colombo 4) is a high-class residential area with good schools. Other upper-class residential areas are Havelock Town (Colombo 5) and Kollupitya (Colombo 3), whose history is influenced by the cinnamon trade. Most of the residents in Kollupitya are Singhalese Christians and Burghers.

Wellawatta (Colombo 6) is a residential area too, but completely different from those mentioned before. It is known as a Tamil area. In the other districts, except Wellawatta and Pettah, the Muslims and Tamils form a minority. Although Pettah and Wellawatta both have a majority of Tamil residents, there is a significant functional difference between these areas. Pettah is lower class, which is reflected in the presence of slums. Wellawatta, on the other hand, is the residential place of most of the migrants as well as Tamils, some of which are lower class but the housing suggests middle-class dominance.

Besides commercial and residential functions as the basis of compartmentalization, religion also seems to be important in this respect. Ethnicity and religion are thought to correspond partially, a case exemplified by Pettah, where mainly Hindu *kovils* and Islamic mosques are found. Another specific phenomenon can be examined when analyzing a map, which indicates all the places of worship. It then appears that the larger, religious buildings seem to be concentrated in small clusters, although they need not necessarily be representative of the same religion. Some of these buildings are adjacent to one another, both on a horizontal or vertical axis. The occurrence of only one religious building in an area is seldom seen. In between the clusters, other small places of worship are located. These consist of glass boxes situated at the corners of the road and contain a god, prophet or an image of a holy person. People may burn candles or have a quick pray there.

Colombo versus the rest

Tolerance can be seen as one of the features of Colombo, as all kinds of ethnic and religious groups can be found living together peacefully. Regardless of this apparent acceptance, there does seem to be an underlying fear, continuously present. An important aspect of Colombo identity is the migration of Tamils and rural-urban migration. As mentioned before, the majority of Colombo's population is Singhalese. They are the original inhabitants of Sri Lanka. The other population groups, Moors and Tamils, are migrants. The Tamils are labor migrants from India and the Moors originate from Arabic traders. Since the mid-1980s frictions between the Singhalese and Tamils have escalated. This was the beginning of a civil war.[6] The Tamil population in the north-east of Sri Lanka aims to get their own state. The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam (LTTE) are fighting for independence but are resisted by the government. The fighting has given rise to a lot of migration. Many of these migrants, directly or indirectly affected by the conflict in the north-east, live permanently in Colombo now; in fact they form a majority of the total migrant population.

The confrontation with the Tamil migrants has created an atmosphere of fear amongst the government, both local and national, as well as among the population of Colombo. The Tamil have migrated from the north-east of Sri Lanka to Colombo, scared of being caught in the heat of the war. Most of the migrants already have family or friends living in Colombo. When asked what the most important reason is for living in Colombo, an answer of a Tamil woman was: 'The security you can find here and nowhere else in Sri Lanka.' The motives for the Tamils to migrate to Colombo are the protection against the Tigers and the safety they feel.

Rural-urban migration is quite common in a country like Sri Lanka, not only because of the security aspect but also because the needs of most people can only be ful-

filled in a few big cities. Colombo is one of these. When people are asked what the main importance of their city is or why they are living there, the answers all refer to the needs and services. Examples of answers mainly indicate facilities such as job opportunities, education, economic opportunities, the health system and shopping facilities. Another admirable evaluation by people is the proximity of necessities and the straightforward transport system making it an easy-to-reach destination. All these facilities are the main reasons for rural-urban migration. Rural youth come to Colombo to attend both high schools and university. After their study they hope to find a good job in Colombo, presuming that they have better opportunities of employment in the city than in the rural areas. Rural-urban migration is also partially made up by temporal migration and commuter traffic from outside Colombo, which forms one of the causes of congestion and packed public transport.

Once the migrants are able to appreciate the use of facilities and enjoy the increased opportunities, they develop a yearning to become a real Colombo inhabitant too, aspiring Colombo identity. People do not want to show that they are from the rural area. Some respondents say there is a posh mentality in Colombo; others say they are modern, European or Americanized. People speak English, have Western patterns and behave in an urban manner. Though a clear Colombo identity does not exist, the informants are able to tell who is originally from Colombo or, in other words, who is born a city person and who is a 'wanna-be' from the rural areas. All this relates to urban identity and image.

The motives for migration have to do with the needs of the migrants, whether it is the search for access to facilities and opportunities and finally a Colombo identity, or the cover of protection and safety. The rural area can be seen as a symbol for uncertainty, in opposition to the urban area. The migrants see Colombo as a safe and sympathetic haven. Migration plays a strong role in the emotional structuring of people.

Emotional symbolism

The symbols of emotions in Colombo can be categorized as national, internal and local. The symbols reflecting emotions on a national level are related to the conflict and produced by the government or by its citizens. The international representation of the conflict has to do with the negative side of tourism. Furthermore the local symbolic reflection of emotions will be discussed by feelings the urban conditions generate.

One of the important emotions that came forward in the interviews is fear. This fear takes a different shape among various population groups and the terror has become an eye-catcher in the city, which shows on both national and local levels. An example is the emotionally-structured mental map drawn by one of the respondents. It shows the

armed military and their tanks and the feelings of insecurity caused by the governmental protection policy (Figure 11). Colombo being home to the government, as well as residential home to the officials such as the prime minister, exposes one type of fear. They dread the Tiger attacks and not without reason. During the last century many political leaders have been killed in one of the terror strikes. One example is the death of President Premadasa, killed on the first of May 1993 by an LTTE suicide bomber in Armour Street, where a memorial statue has been erected. Obvious reminders of the attacks on the government and on Colombo in general are found in various streets. Examples are the ruins of buildings that have been attacked and destroyed (Figure 12). Other places which have been violated by attacks and bomb blasts display symbols of their own. These can be seen as memorials, placed as a tribute for the fatalities that occurred at the time. These symbols manifest themselves in the form of personified statues or sculptures with the name and moment of the attack; street paintings are also abundant (Figure 13). One of these exhibits pigeons and the text 'Secure the sanctity of life'. It is painted on Kynsey Road, reminiscent of a suicide bomb, which occurred on 29 July 1999. Dr. Neelan Tirchelvam, a Tamil scholar was killed by this particular incident. Also in 1999, on 18 December, President Chandrika Kumaratunga was wounded by an assassination attempt at the town hall. This was also commemorated by paintings, but these have faded due to lack of maintenance. These paintings are made by peace activists of the Road Painting Movement, whose aim is 'to promote reconciliation and peace by taking the focus away from hatred and revenge' and 'to reclaim public space, encourage non-vindictive memory and transform sites of violence into sites of beauty and healing' (Neelan Organization, 2007). They proclaim that life is very valuable and ask themselves why we are destroying it like this.

Signs of fear are not only found among the population and the government, on the local and national levels, but also among tourists. Tourism in Sri Lanka is in total decline. Nonetheless, some brave the risk, bearing the vision of Sri Lanka being a paradise. This image is disturbed as soon as they arrive at Colombo airport where they immediately encounter signs of fear and conflict. Annoyance and frustrations are shared with the locals when they have to show their passports at roadblocks and other checkpoints. The bewilderment among tourists is common and this differs from the ordinary population of Colombo who are to a certain extent more attuned to the circumstances.

As protection for the government, as well as for Colombo's population, there are many roadblocks, one-way streets and checkpoints. Some of these are at regular places and times, others are at specific moments, and for example when the president leaves the President's House. Another symbol of fear is the abundance of armed military and policemen. Many people living in Colombo consider these symbols like roadblocks, checkpoints and military presence, as power symbols of the government. Although they fear attacks too, they find the measures annoying because they lead to many delays and dif-

ficulties. For instance, as mentioned by one of the respondents: 'The freedom to go is now restricted for the civilians by checkpoints and roadblocks.' In contrast to this view about anti-terror policy, the population themselves take precautions too. These are less visible in Colombo's environment, but not less prominent. A lot of the people regularly listen to the radio or watch TV. They talk about the attacks, expected or executed. They avoid places mentioned in the media as well as crowded places such as the main bus stops and train stations. People who can afford to, avoid using public transport. In general, the inhabitants live and travel with more caution. The fear of attacks is also shown in the way people look at the Tamil population and the public consternation for the increasing population numbers and densities in Colombo city.

In this sense ethnicity remains a tense issue. Persons of Tamil origin are discriminated against in different ways. They have fewer opportunities for education and employment (Stokke, 1998). Another problem is related to Tamil and Singhalese language. The late President S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike proclaimed Singhalese and English as the national languages, negating the Tamil language. It is forbidden to write exams and school tests in Tamil and most of the governmental publications are not in Tamil either.

The power of the government not only emerges from their policy but also through their own media channels. A strong feeling in relation to fear and conflict is the matter of winning or losing. This feeling is expressed in many newspapers and in other media as well. The government has its own media channels and uses these to display their victories and triumphs on a national and an international level. Another example of winning comprises the celebrations that occur whenever an area is regained from the Tigers. These celebrations take place in Colombo's Independence Square and its surroundings with the army, politicians and other important persons. This showcasing of governmental success is not always authentic, as manipulation of the media does happen. This is highlighted by the contradictory broadcasting that occasionally occurs when the government media show them winning, while other media describe the defeat of the governmental forces or the number of casualties outnumbering those of the Tigers.

Apart from trepidation and conflict there are many other emotions visible in Colombo, such as hope: hope for a better life in the city, hope for more opportunities and hope for peace in the country. Another is ambivalence, namely the feeling of being proud of Colombo as capital, the nation and independence, as shown in symbols on Independence Square and during Independence Day, but also the feeling of shame that the country is in conflict and that, since Independence Day, not one clear Sri Lankan symbol has yet come to the fore in the city. When asked, no respondent could point at one particular dominant Sri Lankan building or other symbol in Colombo. In contrast, they mostly mentioned the city of Kandy with its Temple of the Tooth and Perahera. Mostly elderly respondents raised the problem that the Sri Lankan government has

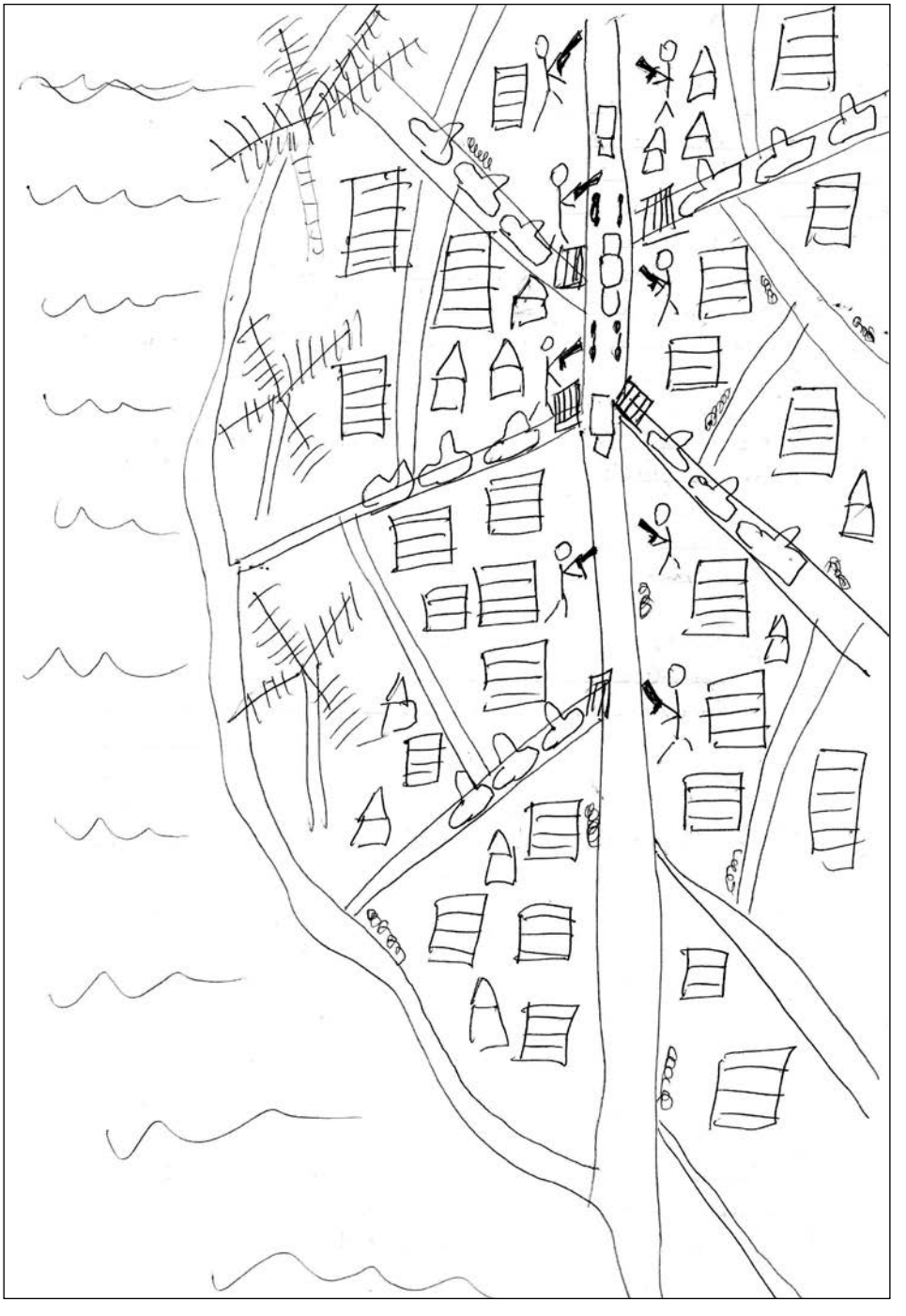

Figure 11. Emotionally-structured mental map showing fear

Figure 12. Remaining after a bomb blast (Photograph: Michelle Schut, 2007)

not attained very much since Independence. Some even said they were better off under the colonial rulers.

Important points, as mentioned before, are the many facilities and opportunities in the city. One respondent refers to 'the good exchange of knowledge, education and the confidence' as main reasons for living in Colombo, that attend to positive feelings about the city. These good opportunities and facilities, as motives for migration and living in Colombo, can be seen as local symbols for modernity. On the other hand, this respondent, like others, points to many negative feelings about the urban conditions as well. Both the positive and the negative feelings about Colombo are exposed in old and new poems and songs. Old poems about Colombo are enthusiastic about the place. An example is 'The Races of 1853' by James de Alwis (Roberts, Raheem and Colin-Thomé, 1989). This poem shows the attractive side of the city, with all the varieties of clothes, restaurants, beautiful houses and mansions and other amazing things. A song 'Colompure shriya' describes its appealing sides as well. These aspects are also seen by many inhabitants and migrants. But in Carl Muller's poem 'No-Sense City' other characteristics come to light. It pictures an alien place with an abundance of temples and churches, its corruption and the haste. It tells the story of how the writer escapes from it (Muller, 2005). Colombo is also portrayed in poems and songs in opposition to the village: urban versus rural, cor-

Figure 13. Street painting as memorial emotional symbol of a bomb blast in Kynsey Road (Photograph: Michelle Schut, 2007)

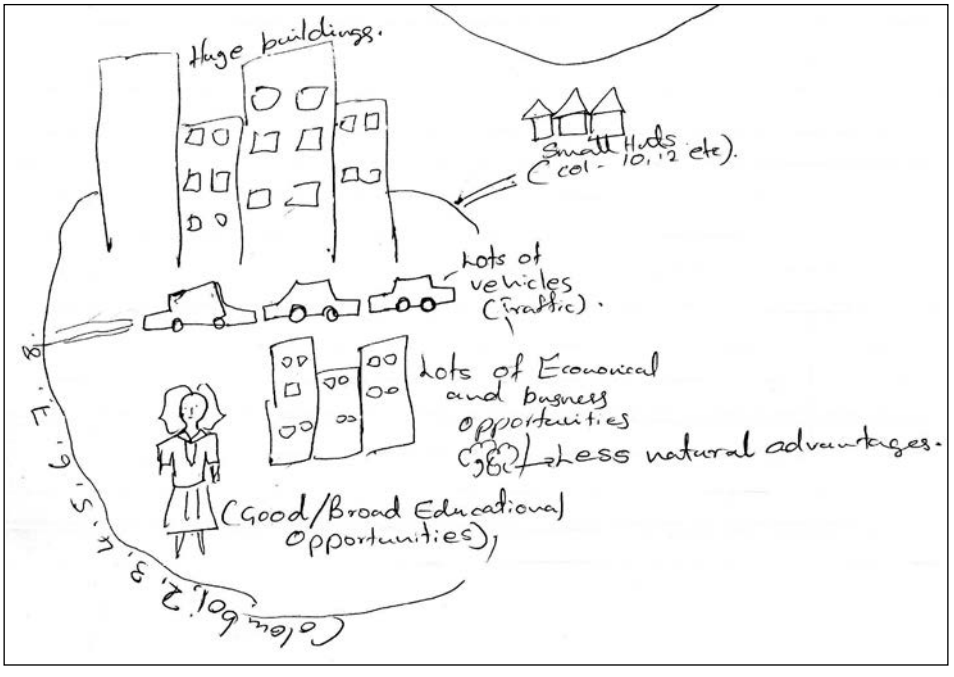

Figure 14. Mental map indicating positive and negative emotions

ruption versus pure, ugly town versus beauty of the village. This is a romanticized vision. The women in the town are thought of as stereotypes, having loose characters and being afraid of relationships. Europeanization, modernization and corruption are seen as the equivalent of the city. An example is the song 'Kolamba gihin igena gatta...', translated as 'Is that what you learned after going to Colombo?' It is about a village girl who went to study in Colombo and changed both her behavior and her dress, which was not appreciated by her boyfriend.

Emotions about Colombo are not only indicated through poems and songs, but also mentioned and discussed in interviews and mental maps. Graphic representations in mental mapping may highlight what is considered safe and unsafe, as the mental maps may also show fear. Other maps, such as Figure 14, indicate what is seen as positive or negative and what is marked as beautiful or ugly.

As indicated before, only a few of the maps show emotional symbols in the urban ambiance. Negative feelings that are expressed in the mental maps relate to pollution, overpopulation, high-density construction and heavy traffic (Figures 15 and 16). In some cases, respondents only see the city through these negative feelings, for instance: 'the whole city is polluted, crowded and everywhere buildings and streets'. The pollution in Colombo is very visible. A particularly large garbage dump is mentioned frequently by re-

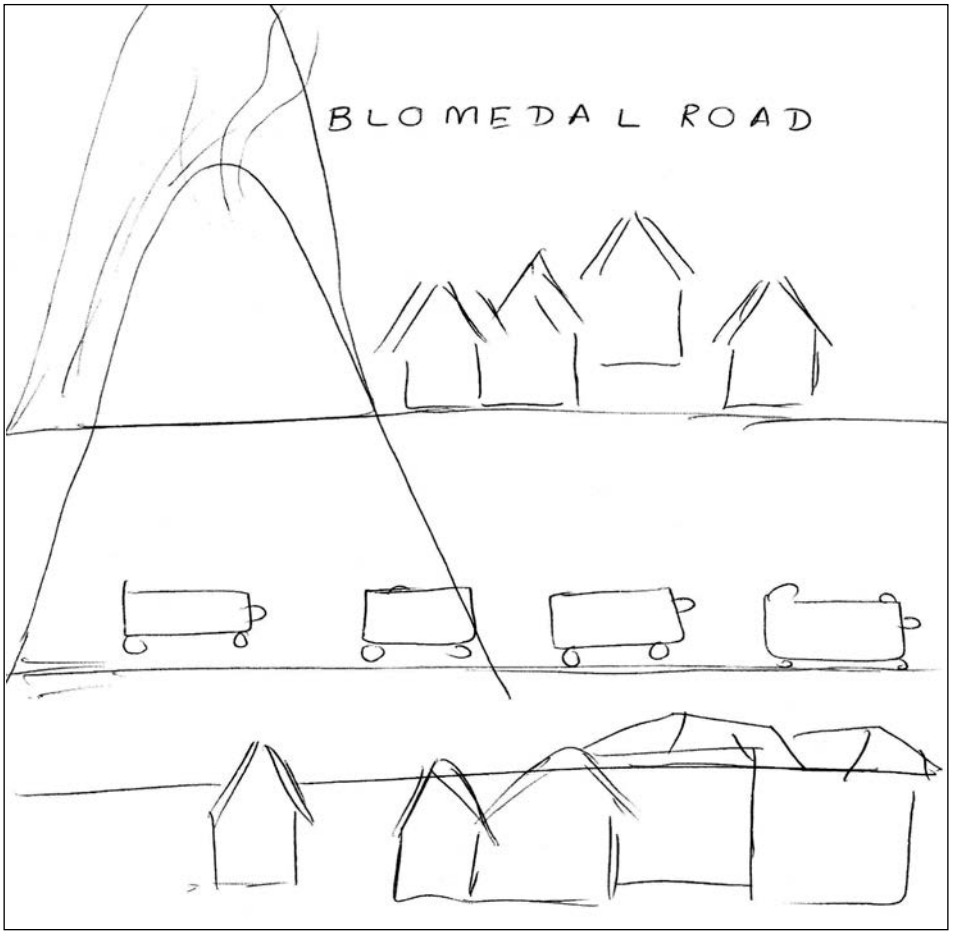

Figure 15. Mental map with the huge garbage belt on Blomedal Road

spondents when discussing Colombo symbols. Although it is not a dump anymore, the piles of pollution are still visible and it haunts memories. Leeke Reinders (2007) claims that social problems of backwardness and exclusion can be undone by physical intervention. But as is shown in the case of the Tamil population, who hope for inclusion, this argument does not apply. Despite physical intervention and signs of tolerance, they are still excluded and discriminated against. Another example is the case of nature flourishing on the garbage dump, many memories and ideas survive physical changes. Those people who live on the dump are still poor and many of the slum dwellers in Colombo do not gain by the various forms of intervention. A final illustration is the intervention by the government through the development of housing schemes for the slum dwellers who were victims of the tsunami. These people are unaccustomed to living in such a manner

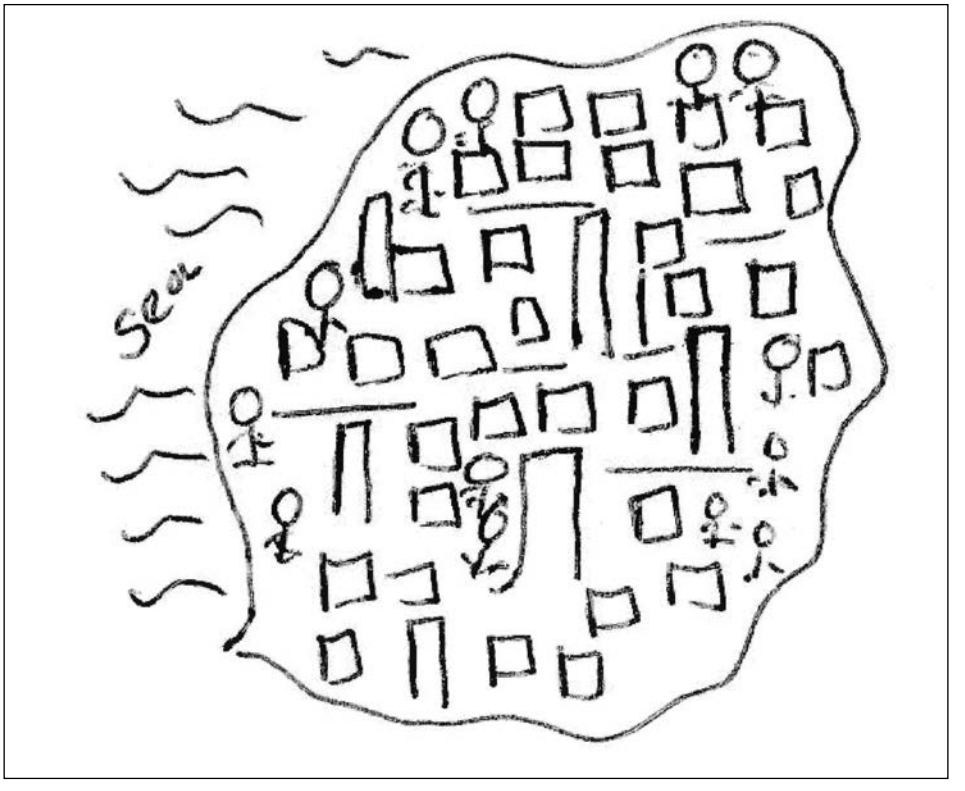

Figure 16. Mental map indicating the business of the city

and reverted to living back on the streets again, allowing popular identification as backward, poor and a helpless class, although they made their own choices. Another prevalent emotion when considering beggars and slums is that of empathy, although this view is not always shared by all people and tourists as many consider them as a problem. This problem is nothing new, however.

In relation to pollution and crowdedness, the huge density, many buildings, traffic jams and the lack of nature are often indicated. In Colombo there are not that many 'green places'. The few that are known are Vihara Maha Dewi Park and Beira Lake. Galle Face Green used to be a place for rest and play as well, but it was closed in the summer of 2007 and there was no grass anymore. Many respondents mark this lack of nature as one of the negative sides of Colombo city and, although it is counterbalanced by the positive sides, one of the plans still aims to make Colombo the green-city of the east again, as it once was during the colonial era. Magnus (2002) fosters the saving or regaining of 'city areas for breathing space for the population... Good space, fresh air, but overcrowded, make Colombo the "Garden City of the East" (Magnus, 2002: 7).

Conclusion

The symbolic spectrum of Colombo city is diverse, just as the meanings given by its population. In this essay the emic vision of the population is explored on account of mental mapping drawn by respondents. Mental maps show what is important for them and sometimes it is a clear illustration of meaning associated with the city. Some of the mental maps drawn of Colombo did not fall into one of the four categories (scattered, linked, clustered and patterned) defined by Nas and Sluis. In addition to this typology we added emotionally-structured maps (Luo, 2006) and locally-focused maps. The emotionally-structured maps are expressions of the feelings about the city and also the meanings given, such as positive/negative, safe/unsafe or beautiful/ugly, to particular parts or places in the city. The emotional symbol bearers are various: feelings of pride and nation-building represented on Independence Day, fear and conflict expressed by the abundance of armed military and memorial statues and paintings after attacks, coupled with other negative feelings about pollution and crowdedness are shown all over the city. Locally-focused mental maps are an expression of class diversity and the distinctive meanings attached to the city given by Colombo's population groups. These meanings do not only vary among different classes, but also among different ethnic groups.

Colombo is divided into districts partially related to ethnicity but also differing in function: residential or commercial. The concept of compartmentalized symbolism is discussed in this context. Religion, in this respect, is deemed to be important too. The compartmentalized symbolism of the Colombo districts is rooted in their past and has shaped Colombo's non-linear urban history. Sri Lanka's lively history is an important basis for Colombo's varied symbolic spectrum. The development of the city gave rise to a historically tiered symbolic system. Some of the symbols are top-down, representatives of nation and regime, others are bottom-up, such as the places of worship, whilst changes in street and place names are both.

The history and meanings characterizing Colombo as a city with lots of facilities, opportunities and safety, are related to another important aspect of Colombo's identity, namely the Tamil and rural-urban migration. Though a palpable Colombo identity does not exist, migrants aspire to become real Colombo inhabitants, adopting urban identity by speaking English and engaging in Western behavior patterns.

The cultural character of Colombo is, as shown, expressed in a layer of rituals and symbols, involving buildings, statues, street names, paintings, festivals and poems as symbol bearers. Other symbol bearers are not that obvious and have to do with sentiments about the city, which influence the representation and use of the city. Examples of sentiments are the urban ambiance of the built environment, crowds of people, the

garbage dump, and feelings of insecurity in relation to Tamil migration and Tiger attacks. These emotions are unveiled through in-depth research on the views and feelings of the city population.

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Notes

1 The field work for this chapter was carried out by Michelle Schut during two months in 2007.

2 During her fieldwork in 2007 Michelle Schut collected 32 mental maps among 18 women and 14 men, among whom

were 20 Buddhists, 2 Hindus, 4 Roman Catholics and 6 Muslims. She conducted 41 interviews among all sorts of inhabitants, especially students and other persons, such as lecturers, who are related to the university (13 respondents) and random contacts in the city, with shopkeepers, shop and bank workers, managers, volunteers and unemployed persons. The question asked for the mental map collection was: 'Can you please draw me a map of the city? But not as it is on a real map, but how it is in your head, with the important places for you.' The interpretation of the mental maps is based on the interviews with the respondents who made them.

3 The former Queen of England.

4 The test, a list with 48 old and new street names next to each other, questioning which name the respondent uses, was completed by nine respondents.

5 These are: Fort (Colombo 1), Slave Island (Colombo 2), Kollupitiya (Colombo 3), Bambalapitiya (Colombo 4), Havelock Town (Colombo 5), Wellawatta (Colombo 6), Cinnamon Gardens (Colombo 7), Borella (Colombo 8), Dematagoda (Colombo 9), Maradana (Colombo 10), Pettah (Colombo 11), Hulftsdorp (Colombo 12), Kotahena (Colombo 13), Grandpass (Colombo 14) and Mattakkul (Colombo 15).

6 In 2009, the government proclaimed victory over the Tamil Tigers after intensive military action.

3. Squares, Water and Historic Buildings

The Transforming Power of City Marketing on Urban Symbolism in Ghent, Belgium

Rose-Anne Vermeer

Introduction[1]

Over the past thirty years, against the background of globalization and deindustrialization, cities have come to deal with new (social) dynamics, which influence the *urban symbolic ecology*, captured within the triangle of urban imagination, city identity and material reality. Cities are no longer a 'space of places', where everyday life takes place, they have become 'hubs' in an international network build up of 'flows' of capital and information. In this world, largely influenced by media, who melt ghetto, elite and mainstream into an ever transforming urban culture, they have to distinguish themselves, sell themselves to the new middle class, as a city of service and consumption, a city beyond industry (Greenberg, 2000: 229-231; Castells, 1996: 378-386; Sluis, 2003: 253-54; Zukin, 1996: 45; Zukin, 1995: 9, 43).

The Belgian city of Ghent, capital of the province of East-Flanders, is the main character in this research of urban symbolic ecology, identity, image and city marketing. Located in the greater urban area which entails Brussels, Antwerp, Leuven and Ghent, also known as the Flemish diamond, the historic University City has about 237,000[2] residents. It is but one example of a city that has left its industrial past behind and is now looking for a new way of imagining.

Ghent originates at the point where the river Leie flows into the river Schelde, the name meaning 'flow together'. Due to its fortunate position between these two rivers, the city had a good starting point for both local and international trade. This did not stay unnoticed for long: amongst others Romans, Teutons, Salian Franks and Vikings, all inhabited the area successively. Around the turn of the first millennium, the city was a great attraction for the rural population, and expanded quickly, owing to the two rich abbeys and its fortification. Around 1100, Ghent received municipal rights, after which a court of aldermen was put in place and ramparts, canals and gates were built. Woollen cloth became the trademark of the city: sixty percent of the households worked in this industry, from 1100 to 1400. The merchandise was spread all over Europe. When the industry collapsed, due to international conflicts, people would earn money through trade and shipping. By the end of the dark ages, in the year 1500, Emperor Charles V was born in Ghent.

As the most ambiguous character in Ghent's hero cult, he caused a deep religious divide and punished the city heavily after the rebellious act of tax evasion. Only in the seventeenth century was the old faith restored, creating silent witnesses in the numerous catholic architectural monuments.

The city may be located in between two rivers, but a direct exit to the sea is not accounted for. Only after the construction of the canal Ghent-Bruges did possibilities in trade with both China and India become available. The mechanization of the industry did not pass Ghent unnoticed either, and the city would become the Manchester of the European mainland. Between 1800 and 1930, Ghent was a real textile city. Even monasteries that were no longer in use were transformed into factories. The harrowing circumstances in which the workers had to live, in the end, led to the founding of unions: Ghent as the birthplace of Belgium socialism. At the beginning of the twentieth century an important event took place, the world exhibition of 1913, which was supposed to put Ghent back on the map and reinstate the allure of the medieval superpower. While workers where living in overcrowded, chaotic and unplanned neighborhoods at the edge of the city, in the center the rediscovery of historic heritage led to the construction of large squares, the three famous towers were being stripped of small buildings and old monuments were restored.

After the Second World War, the textile industry sank even further; in the 1950s, new companies where attracted. Steel, petrochemicals and car assembly were to be new sources of wealth. Industries disappeared from the center and moved to the port, to profit from the widened canal to Terneuzen, an exit to sea. Since the municipal reclassification of 1965 and 1977, the city exists as we now see it, consisting of sixteen localities outside the center. Most of the historic and monumental buildings are found within the old center, spatial residential quarters determine the contemporary image of the localities. Since 2000, the population has been growing at a steady pace, also due to different groups of migrants who are now moving to the city. Ghent now has twenty-one nationalities: the largest migrant group is the Turkish community (Gent, Bruisend Authentiek; Gent in Cijfers 2007; Website Gemeente Gent).

The core of this research lies in determining the *urban symbolic ecology*, an expression introduced by Nas (1993) at the beginning of the 1990s. This study is based on social production, consumption and spatial distribution of symbols and rituals. Given that rituals are also a category of symbol carriers, I have chosen not to further define this concept. The significance of symbolism lies in the relationship between the *signifier*, the word you use to describe something, and the *signified*, the object to which it refers. This relationship and not the object is crucial to the urban symbolic ecology. This concept is inspired by *The Image of the City*, a book in which Lynch studies the impact of urban morphology

and layout on the imageability of cities according to their residents. He uses three different terms to research this: identity,[3] structure[4] and meaning.[5] To look at the whole configuration of urban concepts, Nas uses this three-way division, but contrary to Lynch he puts the emphasis on meaning. Different studies of the urban symbolic ecology prove that meaning is important for urban perception, orientation and symbolism, as pointed out by Nas and Sluis, despite the individual character which Lynch indicates (Nas, Jaffe and Samuels, 2006; Nas and Sluis, 2002; Lynch, 1960).

To determine the urban symbolic ecology of a city, many different imaginations that people have are fused together to create a collective image. Usually these are obtained through semi-structural interviews combined with mental maps. The three earlier-mentioned notions play an important role in the analysis (Nas en Sluis, 2002). Mental maps are a much-used method within urban anthropology. Nas and Sluis describe the collection of new data as a process of selection: what does not fit within the existing frame of reference will soon be forgotten. The construction of mental or cognitive maps is therefore a complex and dynamic process, in which new information can be stored and new maps can be constructed. This process takes a lot of effort. This is why maps are frequently schematic and incomplete, *a deformed reflection of reality*. By not only constructing collective maps of the whole group, but also of all subgroups, more clarity can be given to the influence of different groups within the population and we can also look at group cohesion. Schut, Nas and Hettige (this volume) apply this to Colombo, but for this research I have chosen to take it a bit further and create maps for groups of respondents. While analyzing these mental maps, a few important things can be found, amongst others the types of symbol carriers, symbolic domains and symbolic elements (Nas and Roymans, 1998: 550-51; Nas, Jaffe and Samuels, 2006: 8-9).

Nas and Sluis recognize four different types of mental maps: scattered, linked, clustered and patterned. Schut, Nas and Hettige (this volume) have added a new variation, the emotionally structured map, of which a few have also appeared in this research. Noteworthy is that they show up with most of the migrants, even though all the groups have at least one. In her article about The Hague, Luo has looked at the different types of maps that her respondents drew. As the literature on this topic is very comprehensive I will not discuss it here (Luo, 2006; Nas and Sluis, 2002: 131-32; Schut, Nas and Hettinge, this volume).

According to Lynch, people's social situation influences the way they construct mental maps. Therefore I have chosen to interview different social groups: students, entrepreneurs, 'Gentenaars' i.e. inhabitants from Ghent, and migrants, all categories consisting of both men and women. I made this decision before my fieldwork, but in hindsight it would have been better to choose these categories in the field, to include locally important groups. Besides this, each respondent has many images of the surrounding en-

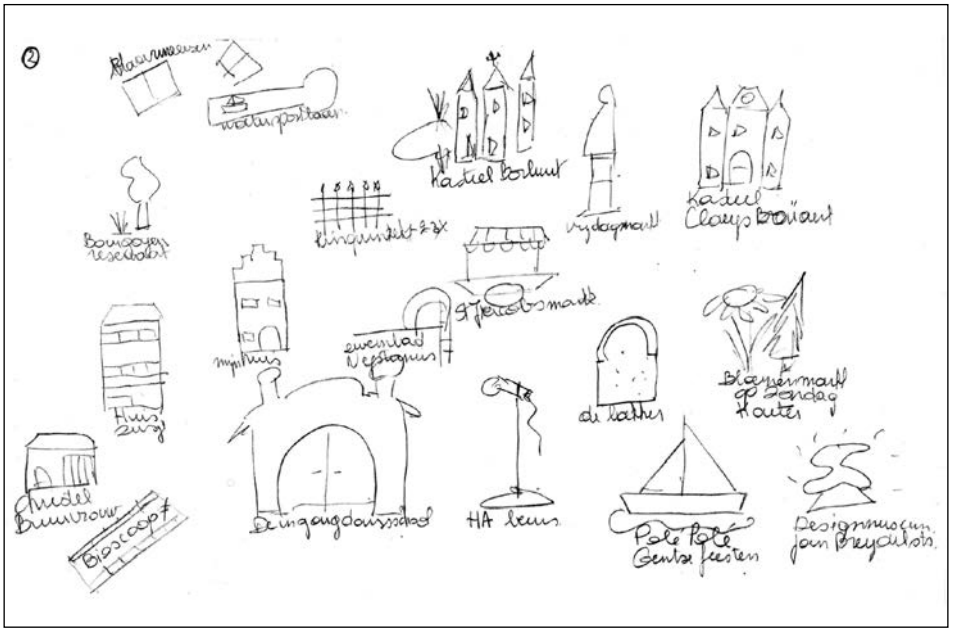

Figure 1. An emotionally structured mental map, structured by content

vironment, although they overlap and are connected to one another. Different images are created in time: years, seasons, day and night. Seeing as the duration of this project cannot pass three months of fieldwork, I have selected the last as my only option: respondents are requested to draw two maps, one of Ghent by day and one of Ghent by night (Lynch, 1960: 85-86).

The challenge of urban symbolic ecology is located in the relationship between the production and consumption of symbols. Anyone can produce and consume, but one is more powerful than the other. In one of my assumptions the local authorities play a vital role as producers. They have both the option of adding and removing symbols to the urban domains and access to capital to make it possible. The producer also has the opportunity to provide the identity, perception of self, of the city. In many cities this is displayed in city marketing (Colombijn, 1993: 59-63; Nas, Jaffe en Samuels, 2006: 2; Zukin, 1995: 1-15; Zukin, 1996: 443-44). City branding, designing a brand concept, including logos and slogans, is a popular gadget for producers at the moment. Unfortunately the distinction and transforming effects of these modern brands have meagre results, according to Noordman (2006), because they are not based on the city's identity but on future goals. This causes a shift in power relationships which have become too crooked. The urban symbolic ecology could be used to determine the city's identity, the interpretation of the city. Consumer symbols will get more attention, which should lead to a stronger marketing

plan. The city can decide to highlight certain symbols and put others in their shadow. A strong urban imageability is needed, new information after all has to fit into the frame of reference to be accepted and included. If these symbols have a stable identity, of which only the coloring is adapted to the latest fashion, one can influence the way in which people imagine the city (Lynch, 1960; Noordman, 2006).

I will start by looking at the different collective maps and their characteristics. The different symbols that play an important role will be discussed, the symbol carriers and meanings of these symbols. The tension between image and identity, and between producers and consumers will follow, and finally the conclusion.

Day, night and time

'Could you please draw two maps of Ghent? One map of the city by day and one of the city by night. Could you please indicate important aspects of the city on these maps? You can think of streets, squares, buildings, places, events, coordination points, etcetera.'[6] Having respondents draw two images of the city is a new deepening of the existing concept of mental maps. This yielded thirty-six drawings of the day and twenty-four of the night, of which two collective maps have been made. I have chosen not to base the collective maps purely on the mental maps, but also to use the elements only mentioned in the accompanying interview. Some strong symbols could only be located in this way, since they either fell off the map or were immaterial in nature. Taking the nature of these elements, these had to be written in the text complementing the collective map, this includes the amount of times they were mentioned.

Generally speaking, the maps of the night not only cover a smaller area, they also show fewer elements. Collective maps, made by different sections of the population, representing the night are smaller than those of the day. For the migrant group it was not even possible to create a night map since there was too little cohesion within the group.

For those familiar with Ghent, there is an obvious disproportionate amount of elements located in the city center. Merely a small number of formally independent municipalities and few other points are mentioned that are outside this area. It is possible to make up a schematic model of the city, based on the mental maps and interviews, from which it becomes clear that the area outside the old town is only split in two, a residential circle and on the extreme outskirts, a green area. The lack of further definition of this residential area is somewhat odd. This is where most of my respondents live, but it is perceived almost as the edge of the earth, the city center being the place-to-be. This is not to say that home life is not accounted for: many references were made to the home,

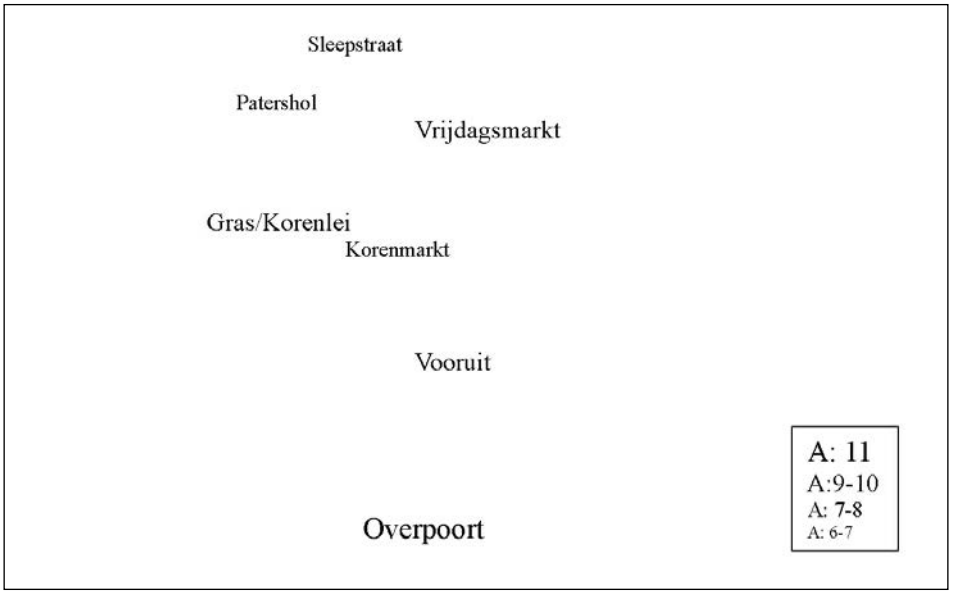

Figure 2. Collective map of Ghent by night. Additional symbols: cafés (7), Ghent Fests (7), homes of friends (8), own home (6)

but more often in words than in pictures. The group of entrepreneurs in particular has a strong affiliation with the outskirts; collective maps of other groups mainly portray the downtown area. Water has a connecting function in this story, drawing nature into the city.

Ghent as a city has a strong center. One could even say the city is associated with its center. The area is mentioned by many as a symbol. The collective map states 'center/de Kuip', while these are not the equivalent of one another. 'De Kuip' is the name of the historic part, the actual center is bigger. In the model, the distinction between inside and outside is made by the ring way. The way of life inside the ring is different from the outside. Inside is a traffic free zone, so people either walk or cycle; it is a place of leisure, not quite of residence, but definitely not of working and most of all not a place of industry.

Something special is going on in the center though; it has two strong cores. On the one hand there is the traditional center, which most groups relate to, on the other there is the student center, only appearing on the map of that specific group. When day and night are compared, the two centers are divided even further, which means many of the intervening elements, with a transitory function, are no longer there. Yet the most obvious border crossing point is still there, 'de Vooruit', located in the building, in eclectic style, of the former 'Samenwerkende Maatschappij Vooruit'. Therefore it is an example of Ghent's socialist history; this cultural center is a place where young and not so young people meet to drink coffee and watch the shows.

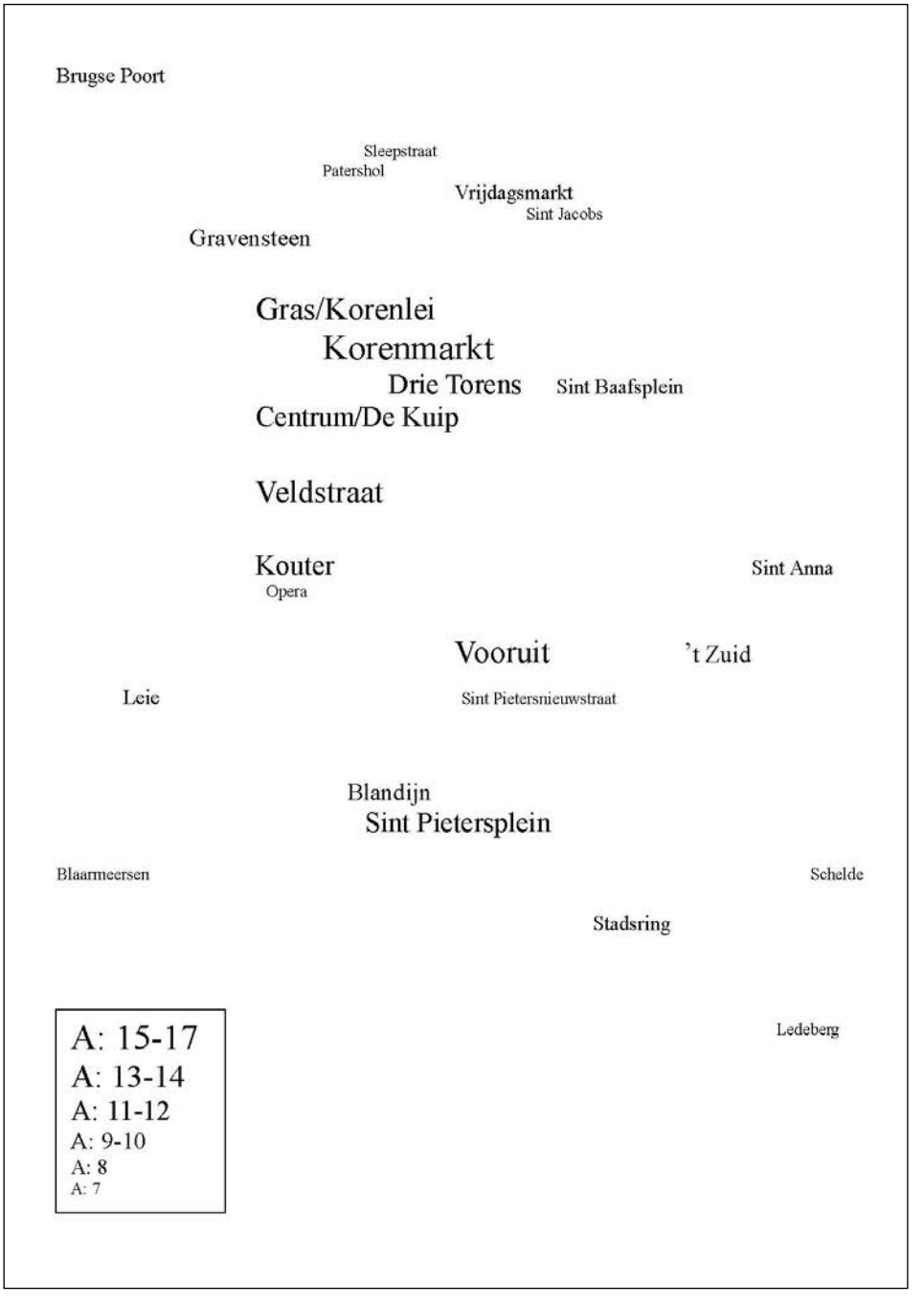

Figure 3. Collective map of Ghent by day. Additional symbols: Ghent Fests (11), own home (8), office (8), cycling (6)

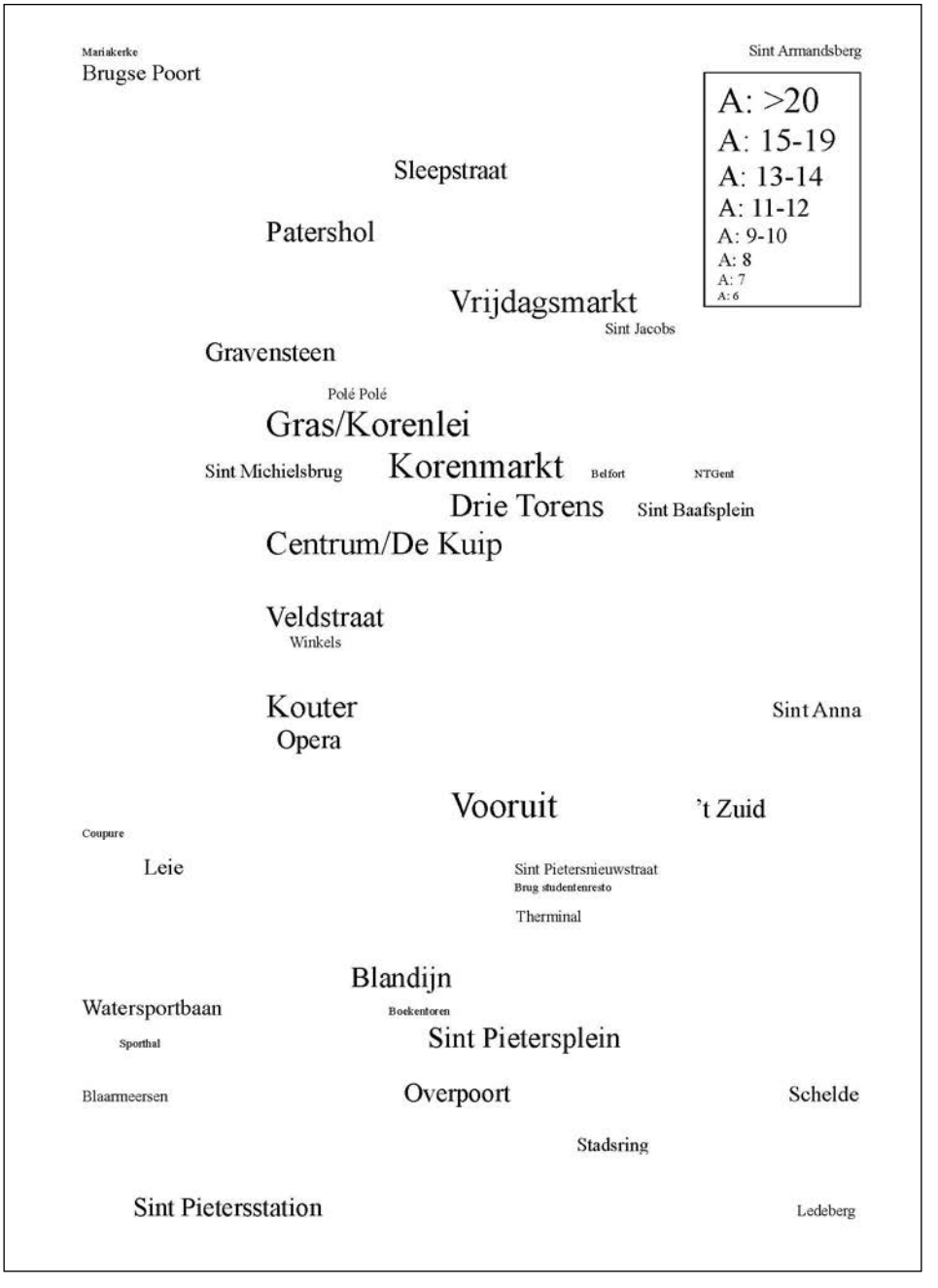

Figure 4. Collective map based on both maps of Ghent by day and by night, and accompanying interviews. A few immaterial points are missing from this map: their own home (22), Ghent Fests (18), houses of friends (13), cafés (10), cycling (9), shops (7), cinema (7), traffic free zones (6), offices (6)

Time plays an important role in the symbolism of Ghent. This research took place in spring, fortunately with quite a few sunny days and warm evenings. Lynch's suspicion concerning the influence of the seasons was nicely affirmed by one of my respondents: '... the "Gras- and Korenlei" are the best places of Ghent, especially when the weather is nice, it is much more pleasant. Yesterday I was there at half past eleven and it was still crowded. It does not depend on the day, it is always very busy.'[7] And: '... The water sport-track is a real summer activity; you can go swimming or visit the gym. In the summer tourists go there as well. I too prefer to go in the summer, just to relax, often with some fellow students.'[8] Nice weather may influence the crowdedness near the river Leie, the composition of the crowd changes greatly on the weekend. Most students prefer to spend the weekends and holidays at their parent's house, and as a result there is an exodus from the student center. During the week it is mainly students who populate the 'Gras- and Korenlei', even though there is a mixed crowd. On the weekend the composition is reversed, city residents share the quay with tourists and a handful of students who stay behind. A strange phenomenon really, a shared space not at the same time but in turn.

Time does not only influence the clock; the city turns from summer into winter, and even the people change: 'I keep looking at the city in a different way; it changes with your network and well-being. If you would have asked me the same question ten, twenty or thirty years ago, the image would be completely different.'[9] Research among diverse age categories, or even research where the same respondents are interviewed at different ages, will give new dimensions to space and place. Urban symbolic research should not only include day and night, weeks and weekends, and seasons, but also various age groups.

Among squares and monumental buildings

Squares are the main symbol carriers of the city, no less than nine of them are amongst the collective symbols. They are a special type of symbol carrier, the symbol of space. The big squares are a welcome variation of the small and narrow streets of Ghent's inner-city. The streets connecting the squares have an evidently inferior role to the open space. Besides this, the squares are a strong point of orientation; in general they were drawn first, subsequently or not, filling the voids with streets.

The 'Korenmarkt', wheat market, is the most central square and accommodates the tram and bus station; this is why the square has a distributing role. The square is often linked to the 'Veldstraat', Ghent's shopping street, to which it provides access. It is a square to travel on, away from home to everything the city has to offer, as a gatekeeper.

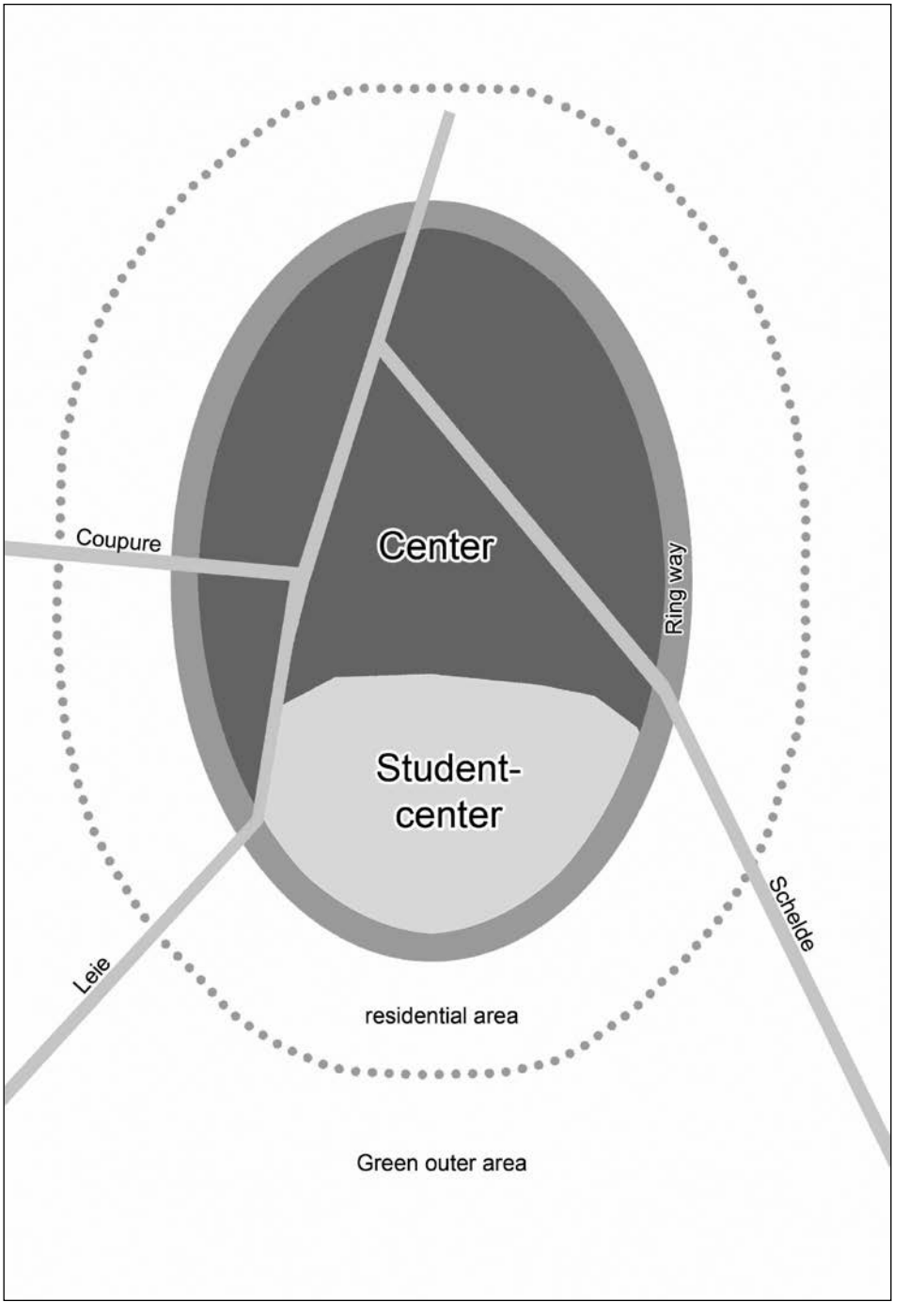

Figure 5. A model of the city of Ghent in reference to the mental maps

The 'Korenmarkt' is one of the squares on which the three towers of Ghent are located, together with the 'Sint Baafsplein', Saint Bavo Square, in between the cathedral and the 'Belfort', Belfry, and the 'Emile Braunplein', named after the Mayor who made them into squares and commissioned their twentieth-century metamorphoses, which is not further specified. The city has made far-reaching plans to restructure the squares, to transform them to be more like actual squares and less of a continuing road. In the past years major changes have been carried out in relationship to squares and traffic. Many that were still used as parking lots in the 1980s and 1990s are now traffic-free zones for pedestrians and cyclists. The squares have gotten a completely new meaning because of this, from square of usage to leisure square.

The 'Vrijdagsmarkt' is another main plaza. The square honors its name, meaning Friday market, by accommodating the weekly market. Right in the middle the statue of Jacob van Artevelde can be found, a famous Flemish leader, merchant and resident of Ghent. Ghent is also known as the 'Arteveldestad', the city of Artevelde. This does not make the man a hero, since he also exploited workers in his factory. He is therefore part of the ambiguous hero cult of Ghent, where every hero has its flaws. A nice example in this case happened during my fieldwork, when an orange cone was placed on the statue's head, not to be taken off before the week was over. Hero or not, the most famous inhabitants of Ghent are definitely not saints. So the square is not known for the presence of this citizen, it is all about the market and the numerous cafés. It is a square for residents to go out on the weekends or drink something at the sidewalk cafés, something the authors Visser and Van den Hilst (2005) call a national sport: 'How do you define a national sport? If it is an activity actively practiced by the vast majority of the citizens of a certain country, over a long period of time, you can say drinking at a sidewalk café is at the top of the list when it comes to Belgian national sports.' They add to this: 'The café has to be the Belgians' second home. We just have a great eye for it.' The mentioning of seventy-four cafés may not come as a surprise, though they seldom made it onto the map because of the lack of harmony. But the café belongs to the square, it just does not matter which one you go to. A café does need a considerable beer menu. The 'Bourgondische Gentenaar' needs to be able to thoroughly enjoy himself (Visser and Van den Hilst, 2005: 58, 75).

On the 'Vrijdagsmarkt's' smaller brother, 'Bij Sint Jacobs', is a flea market at the same time on Friday. The Vrijdagsmarkt is not only bigger but is also a more stylish square, displaying underground parking, fancy cafés, upper-end restaurants and more space. Only during the 'Gentse feesten' does 'Bij Sint Jacobs' prevail and transform into the epicenter of this ten-day street feast.

The Southern 'Kouter' has its own character – no sidewalk bars and activities here. Besides the kiosk the square seems deserted. Only on Sunday morning does it

Figure 6. Jacob van Artevelde on the 'Vrijdagsmarkt', 'Woodrow Wilsonplein', ''t Zuid', and the flea market at 'Bij Sint Jacobs' (Photographs: Rose-Anne Vermeer, 2008)

change into a flower market. The opera, one of the big cultural institutions of the city, is located on the edge of the square and is a major crowd puller. It is remarkable that these squares are not totally filled up with bars, fountains, works of art and trees. They have to provide space above all, even though many people would not mind giving up some space in return for more greenery.

'Sint Anna' is either a small square or a large roundabout, a small park with large trees in the middle. It is situated close to the great white plaza of ''t Zuid', its real name being the 'Woodrow Wilsonplein'. ''t Zuid' is a contraction of the 'Zuidpark' and the square in front, on which the library, shopping mall, provincial administration and city administration are located. There is a wide range of opinions about this square, ranging from quite nice to very ugly. This is also a square of movement as tram and bus stations get countless visitors and the big exit from the freeway also attracts herds of people. During the day a lot goes on here, but at night it quiets down.

The most Southern square is that of Saint Peter, a big plain of cobblestones where students play soccer and Frisbee in the sun. Situated in the middle of the student center it is a true student square. Activities of student organizations and the university all go down here. Life takes place during the day for this square, and at night everyone moves

to the neighboring 'Overpoort', a street filled with student cafés. The difference between the week and weekend is clear-cut, from overcrowded to deadly quiet.

The last square really is no square at all; the 'Gras- and Korenlei', also known as 'Tussenbruggen' (in between bridges), is really two quays along the Leie. Several years ago these were lowered and rebuilt. Now it is one of the most popular legitimate hangouts of Ghent. They may be two quays, but the space is perceived as a square. A square is an open unbuilt space, near or between buildings (Dikke van Dale, version 14). Because of the two bridges and buildings along the other sides that fence off the space, the 'Gras- en Korenlei' feels like a square. Above all, the area has been restructured as a square, with benches and surfaces that vary in height. At night especially, when lights from the lighting plan do their work, it feels like a unified space it even seems to be covered. The cafés along the square often taste defeat over the cheap beer from the night store, the students bring something that is not controlled in any way. A respondent said about this place: '... that part has been rebuilt, closer to the water. When it was still high up no-one would go there, now especially students love to go there.'[10] As is the case with the squares, the meaning of the symbol has changed drastically: once a medieval port, now a popular hangout for twenty-first-century students. The historical façade of the location has a story to tell: 'Many of the nice fronts are fake by the way, just like at the "Korenlei" and the "Graslei". In 1911, just before the world exhibition, they were moved here from other places in Ghent, so they are still real.'[11] Authenticity plays a vital role in many areas in the city.

The three towers of Ghent fit right into this discussion. Together with a number of other historic buildings they make up an important category of symbol carriers. From afar they are visible and guide the citizens of Ghent home. The towers also make up the logo of the city. Two powers, with a major role in the history of the city, can be met here: the worldly power of the rebellious city in the Belfry and the ecclesiastical power in the 'Sint Baafscathedral', displaying the famous painting of the adoration of the mystic lamb by the van Eyck brothers. An absolute favorite of all tourists, who love to continue their stroll around town to the 'Gras- and Korenlei', is the route which will guide them over the 'Sint Michielsbrug'. This bridge 'was never this high, it has been given extra height to create a nice Kodak-moment.'[12] These remodellings have been part of the extended readjustments for the world exhibitions of 1913 and admittedly do create a beautiful sight of the towers.

Ghent is one of the few Belgian cities with a medieval fortress in the old center. It started out on the outskirts but was later embodied in the city. During Ghent's heydays as 'Manchester of the mainland', the city had grown onto the castle's courtyard. The walls were encapsulated with small workers houses and the main building had

Figure 7. Left the 'Gravensteen', right the towers of Ghent as viewed from the 'Sint Michielsbrug' (Photographs: Rose-Anne Vermeer, 2008)

been transformed into a cotton-spinning mill. The historic revaluation, that also incited the clearing of the towers, made the castle rise from its own ashes. This renewal of the 'Gravensteen' resulted in a romantic interpretation of the building. The castle never looked like this before. 'I pass the "Gravensteen" on an almost daily basis. It gives me a feeling of authentic Ghent, a part of the high Middle Ages, but this is not the only building of course.'[13] The renewed appearance does not harm the building's identity as authentically medieval.

The Middle Ages are found in several other places in the city's center. The 'Patershol', a small quarter right next to the 'Gravensteen', is still known for its medieval street pattern. Even though the area is now interlaced with modern restaurants, it is claimed to be Ghent's oldest neighborhood. Now the quarter is primarily known as an entertainment district, filled with nice little streets to stroll around at night, albeit that some complain about the many tourists who manage to find the area. Like numerous other big parts of the city, this quarter has a history of deterioration. 'About twenty-five years ago the "Patershol" was filthy and dead, totally dilapidated. For the last fifteen to twenty years it has been completely renewed, there are nice restaurants and it has almost become a fancy entertainment area.'[14]

Together with the Middle Ages, the industrial revolution presents the greatest period of bloom in Ghent's history. 'De Vooruit' is an example of this period. Another symbol of 'modern' Ghent can be found in the 'Boekentoren', the book tower, situated on the 'Blandijnberg'. This building from 1933, by the architect Van Velde, stands in modernistic style and has become the symbol for Ghent as a 'university city'. This fourth tower dis-

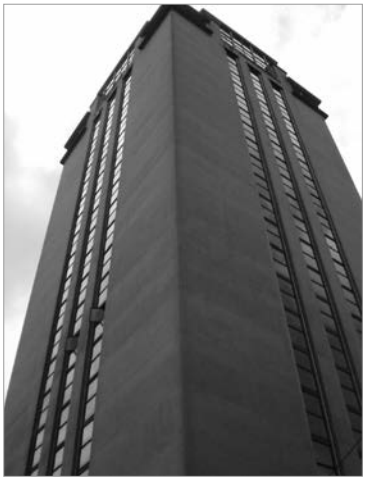

Figure 8. Left the 'Boekentoren', right bikes in front of the 'Sint Pietersstation', students are going home
(Photographs: Rose-Anne Vermeer, 2008)

plays the still existing socialistic take of the city. From afar it sends the message that everyone is welcome to share in its knowledge, which can be found in the three million books that are kept in the library (website University Gent). Together, these historic buildings form a second important group of symbol carriers.

Time plays an important role in the symbolism of the city. Strong symbols point to periods of bloom. Historic symbolic layers can be recognized, featuring the Middle Ages and the industrial revolution as two major layers. However gaps are also found. No symbols of the periods before and in between were mentioned, resulting in 'deficient historic layering'. But how deficient are these layers? A symbol for contemporary Ghent is still missing, but can be found in the 'Sleepstraat'. This street, crossing what is known as the Turkish quarter, filled with restaurants and cheap beaneries, is immensely popular amongst a more and more varied public. 'I love to go to the Sleepstraat for dinner, Turkish pizza, that is good and cheap, it is really good food. When I get visitors from outside Ghent that is where we go, everyone can afford it and everybody likes it.'[15] It is somewhat remarkable that people expect others to be familiar with the Turkish kitchen, but it seems to have become part of the daily diet. The Gravensteen, Vooruit and the Sleepstraat are symbols of their time, but they do not succeed each other, instead they can all be found in the streets of contemporary Ghent, creating a non-linear history.

The final group of symbols consists of those concentrated around water. Both Leie and Schelde play a central role in the origin of the city, but they still hold a strong position today. 'What I establish is that I, unconsciously, like to be close to the water. The marina, the view I have here, the port appealed to me, maybe that is why I took up diving.

Near the water you have a wider view that provides a sense of space and quiet.'[16] Water still plays a vital role in the contemporary city. The water is not yet used by many, only a few possess a boat, but it is the presence that is crucial, cycling and walking along the rivers or having a drink on the quay are extremely popular. 'Ghent is water and everything has to do with it. They are now opening up the "Reep", so that you can sail through Ghent again, at the moment you cannot go around only up and down. The nicest places of the city are seen from the water. The Schelde has also been rediscovered, the busiest cycling path of Flanders is next to it. Even the citizens of Ghent have rediscovered the water: new buildings are erected along it and people invest to renovate old property. This development coincides with the establishment of the traffic free zone; it gives many more opportunities in ways to experience the city. We just have to wait until we get a water tram.'[17] The development of the waterways comes together with the major renovation, which has been going on in Ghent over the past twenty to thirty years. Do people want to go back to the good old times, or move forward? The romantic image of the city's history appeals to many, the urge to be one of the big players again slumbers in the back of minds, but the non-extravagant and modest residents of Ghent would never say that out loud.

That Ghent is obviously not a city of boats is emphasized by the striking absence of the port. This area with major distribution, industrial and production companies provides a large part of the employment in the city (Gent in Cijfers, 2007: 14-16). Yet the city does not feel like a port-city, just like the suburbs it is an area you do not go to unless you have business there. The port does not fit into the modern city of service and consumption: it is a reminder of industrial times. The municipality has organized a design contest to revitalize the area. The famous Dutch architect, Rem Koolhaas, will give a new imagination to the place. This is part of a worldwide trend seen in ports. In London, New York, but also for example in Buenos Aires, industrial buildings and old ports are being remodelled to fashionable living spaces (e.g. Bakker, this volume). Water is a symbol for the future, high expectations come with it, but at the moment this idea is actually not yet used much.

Urban symbols in Ghent can be divided into a number of different groups. First of all the symbol carriers: the squares, historic buildings and the water, all examples of material symbol carriers. The symbols can also be classified according to the period, to which they refer, and the question of authenticity is important here. This discussion is also found in the next case study of one of the strongest symbols of the city, the 'Gentse Feesten', Ghent Fests. Many of the symbols are reinventions of the past years. Only since the urban renewal, at the end of the industrial period, have they acquired their current role, or got their old one back. This is strongly linked to the current trend of re-imagining the city which can be found all over the world; Ghent as a city of service and consumption, as a city past its industrial history.

Figure 9. Left the last undeveloped part of the 'Reep', right the new image of the developed 'Reep' (Photographs: Rose-Anne Vermeer, 2008)

'Gentse Feesten', Ghent Fests

'The Ghent Fests are really the biggest feasts of the world. The whole center zone is blocked off. Everyone in Flanders comes to Ghent for these days. There are tons of liquor, everybody is on the street, even if there is no show in the square at that moment it is busy. There are heaps of artists and the cafés have theme nights. I once quit my summer job to be there. I would not want to miss it for the world. I would rather go to the Ghent Fests than on holiday to the Bahamas at that time.'[18]

Ghent Fests are a *total ritual event*, a concept derived from research conducted by Nas about the third of October celebrations in Leiden. A total ritual event is easy to participate in but is complicated as a ritual: it is a combination of daily behavior, special actions, symbols, myths and existing paradoxes. There has to be a ritual dimension, collective participation, time, space and an exceptional social arena to reconstruct the urban individual and the society in all their controversies. It marks a passage in the life of an individual or a society (Nas and Roymans, 1998: 550-551; Nas, Jaffe and Samuels, 2006: 8-9).

The above quotation portrays the importance of these fests, but this was already indicated in the mental maps. This respondent was not the only one willing to give up a tropical summer holiday to attend this ten-day festival. It is an event in which everyone can take part, which everyone does. This does not mean every person likes it as much as the other, but all parts of society are represented. Even the students, who depart from the city after the final exams, come back just for the event. During this period the city belongs to the people: an inversion of power takes place, from the government to the people. This happens both literally and figuratively, as the entire city's administrative department, apart from the necessary services, is closed. A similar power transforma-

tion takes place in Leiden during the celebration of the relief of Leiden on the third of October, when ordinary Leiden people take the lead, even if it is only for one day (Nas and Roymans, 1998: 555).

Ghent, the city of squares, is emphasized during these fests. One celebrates the party on the squares not in the streets. The event takes place in 'de Kuip', the old center, although it does not use the entire area. The party zone might be limited, but the impression is that the whole city is turned upside down: '...during the Ghent Fests, the complete city is a pandemonium, both throughout the day and the night, I do not think it ever quiets down.'[19] This immediately turns our attention to the day and night. Flipping through the program, it turns out that most activities do not start until the second part of the afternoon. The real party mode only starts at night. The image of the Ghent Fests is, in several areas, larger than life.

Each of the squares has its own ambiance, and during the fests this is underlined more strongly. Every character is laid down by a different 'VZW',[20] of which the city is not the instigator, although it does arrange part of the activities during the day, mainly a number of markets, tea concerts and the Ball 1900, all of which are organized by the 'Stadsbedrijf' and the 'Dienst Feestelijkheden'. The latter also takes care of the coordination and funding. The Ghent Fests are celebrated together with a few smaller, but independent, musical, cultural and theatrical festivals. It was a conscious choice to put them all together: in this way visitors will go everywhere, instead of spreading their attention over the different festivals separately (Van de Velde, 2008).

This folk fest, which is for everyone and which keeps Ghent in its grip for ten days, is a recent development. This year the one-hundred-and-sixty-fifth fests were celebrated, so they spring from the period of the young Belgian state – a time in which the dominant bourgeoisie wanted to display their new power and well-being. Years later a turn came about, from a top-down symbol to a bottom-up variation. The manufacturers wanted to end the sprawl of neighborhood and parish fairs, which caused much work absenteeism, and at the same time wanted to introduce a prestigious annual fest. Until the First World War these fests where linked to horse racing, an elitist event. They would become the first non-religious annual manifestation. Early on the popularity of the horse races was declining and popular amusement started to take on larger proportions, displayed in a fair, which since the second issue was organized by private initiative. Not everyone liked the new take on the fests, which were located in the city center instead of the outskirts like the old fairs, so the income of the taverns was diminished.

A real popularity boost was instigated by making a link between the fests and the state. The first coordinators did not want this, but the later liberal political movement introduced the national flag as an important symbol. The king came for a visit and the celebrations of both the fiftieth and seventy-fifth anniversaries of the country took place

during the Ghent Fests. Yet the biggest advantage was created by changing the date to a national holiday on the 21st of July. This coincided with yet another political change, the socialists' intolerance of the catholic carnival, so the civil servants got their vacation around the national holiday instead of six weeks before Easter. The political influence on symbolizing urban space can be quite strong. Dominant groups often want to undo the symbols of their predecessors and show their own influence, top-down, as can be seen in this example. Short even goes so far as to say that the city is a system of communication, which tells us who is in power and how it is spread. The one deciding on the production and consumption of the city can give it any meaning he or she wants (Nas, Jaffe and Samuels, 2006: 4; Short, 1996: 390).

A large number of elements from the nineteenth century stayed present until the First World War, after which even for the Ghent Fests the twentieth started. Populism, after the war, made the elites lose terrain; a further fragmentation of the fests took place and the Second World War started before they got over the First. The reconstruction after the war was supposed to add new life, but the heydays would not return. Citizens of Ghent could now afford to go on vacation during their holidays, and what were once special activities during the fests now became part of everyday life. The ultimate low followed in the 1960s when serious plans were made to discard what was left of the fest.

The next decade brought about change. There was a revaluation going on in alternative circles, bringing about spontaneous creativity: the Ghent dialect, Ghent street songs and Ghent Fests would be brought back. The first ten-day program took place on 'Bij Sint Jacobs', coordinated by Walter De Buck, and was composed of dance, mime, folk, blues, jazz and of course Flemish and Ghent folk music. Soon tension was created with the city and the old tradition of mocking the authorities was also reintroduced. In the end the city did start organizing activities for the fests again, like the Ball 1900. In 1974 the first 'Rondgang van de Stroppendragers', parade of the carriers of the noose, was planned. This is now an important part of the fests. It would take until the restructuring of the municipalities, '*gemeentelijke herindeling*', before the city would yield to the fests as celebrated on 'Bij Sint Jacobs', old fashion cosiness, '*gezelligheid*', real Ghent, for the people with more space for other art forms and creative depth (Capiteyn, 1993: 23-70).

There is a continuing tension between the power of the city and the power of the people. Who owns the fests? The predominant trend goes to the fests of the people, even though most citizens know the city arranges many things: '...on other stages there are smaller bands and local names. This is also a political choice. The city cannot handle more visitors, so they try to keep it small.'[21] This tension is also noticeable in the 'Rondgang van de Stroppendragers', which remembers the humiliating punishment by Emperor Charles V, the one-time authority. As in 1540, a proportion of the citizens, dressed in no more than a white gown, with a noose around their necks, parade around

the city. It is an ambivalent ritual: on the one hand the humiliation and on the other the strength of the city. 'Stroppendrager', noose carrier, has become a proud name for the citizens of Ghent, a way of showing they are back on top and have come back stronger than they were: the state cannot break the city. According to one of the city guides this is a sign of proud willfulness.

After all these developments within the Ghent Fests, some start proclaiming it has gotten out of hand: '...the authenticity is gone, it has become too commercial. That is a recent development. These are no longer the fests I remember from childhood. Back then it was really old-fashioned, authentic and small scale. That has gone and I find that a shame,'[22] and '...the "Patershol" fests are almost the same but smaller and a few weeks later. They remind me of the Ghent Fests as they used to be years ago. People really travel far to come to the Ghent Fests. "Patershol" fests are more intimate, more visitors from Ghent than tourists.'[23] The Ghent Fests have become a consumer fest. This may coincide more with the first elitist ideas of the fest than with the 1970s version. In contrast to earlier situations, where authenticity of symbols was questioned, lays authenticity of the fests in the 1970s and not, as seen in many other examples, in the Middle Ages. The 'Rondgang van de Stroppendragers' does stem from this, but no questions of authenticity are raised here.

The Ghent Fests are fests of squares. They are for everyone, for all civilians that is. The fests are no longer directed at the elite but at the new middle class, for as far as we can call this everyone. Besides this shift, there is also talk of a reversal in power from the city to the people. This does not mean politics have not influenced the development of the fest. Together with global development, like the increase of wealth after the 1950s, they have largely transformed the fests to the form in which we now know them. Yet many think the fests are based on private initiatives from the 1970s, also the ground for 'authentic' Ghent Fests. The city does have a significant degree of control, but it is invisible, because both city and fest belong to the middle class. The Ghent Fests today are imagined beyond reality, both in time and space. An explanation can be found in its many visitors, who also for a large part are the creators of the consumption fest. The fests are now the ultimate example of a city beyond industry, even though they originate in the industrial revolution. They have transformed with urban culture, have adjusted to time, to become 'authentic', '*gezellig*' and a huge people fest – maybe a bit too huge.

Image and identity

'Ghent has no face, Bruges tells itself and others the tale of the "historic city", Antwerp is a "cosmopolitan port city", Leuven is a "university city". But Ghent does not pick an

Figure 10. Left the statue of the 'Stroppendrager' in the 'Prinsenhof' quarter, right the 'Gras- and Korenlei' during the Ghent Fests of 2008 (Photographs: Rose-Anne Vermeer, 2008)

image in which it can recognize itself with love. It does not identify itself with an image or civilization of itself. Every view of Ghent – "port city", "historic city", "university city" etcetera – is therefore not limited but false. Ghent portraits allow for diversity of "images", but it exists as something that precedes it'[24] (Hendryckx, De Kooning and Verschaffel, 1990).

The relationship between consumption and production of symbols is the real core of the urban symbolic ecology and of this study. The way in which respondents consume the city has now been discussed extensively. It is time to look at the producers' side. A city's symbols and rituals know many producers of symbolism, but my assumption at the start of this research was that the municipality is a strong player in this field. Symbol producers like to use *city branding*, designing a brand concept complete with logos and slogans. Greenberg (2000) describes this as: 'simultaneous marketing and production of a monolithic, consumer-oriented version of the urban imaginary.' In general a niche is looked for in which a city can distinguish itself from others of the same calibre, the competition. Slogans and logos are often committed to create a modern image. Unfortunately these are barely distinctive and are not able to change the image of the city, since they are not based on the city's identity, but on future goals. The power relationship between producer and consumer has grown crooked. The city's identity can be found by defining the

urban symbolic ecology. The interpretation of the city, the consumer side of symbolism, gets more attention. This should lead to better relationships and stronger city marketing. The city of Ghent is also working towards a new city branding plan, but first I would like to look at the influence the current marketing plan has on the 'image' of the city (Berenschot, 2008; Ter Berg, 2006; Noordman, 2006; Reinders, 2008; Shields, 1996: 227-28).

'Gent, *bruisend authentiek'*, 'Ghent, vibrantly authentic', is the current slogan of the tourist leaflet, a way in which the urban symbolism is produced, clarified with photos of a family, the 'Gras- and Korenlei' at night, the towers from the 'Sint Michielsbrug', small boats in the Leie against a historic background and people shopping. The first sentence that catches the eye when opening up the leaflet is '*veelzijdige verrassing*', versatile surprise: '...a unique mix of historic architecture and contemporary events, beautiful museums with an international charisma, a huge gastronomic pallet, perfect facilities to spend the night and a vibrant nightlife'.[25] A bit further, water is also named as a means of recreation. But the city is more than just history: '...for every medieval façade there is a modern counterpart, for every "early Netherlandish painting", there is a Panamarenko or a Fabre. Old and new fade into each other and create a unique, ageless balance'.[26] In a few paragraphs all views on Ghent are called out: 'historic city', 'cosiest city', 'water city', 'tourist city', 'modern city', 'culture city', 'city of fests', 'city of lights', 'party city', 'Burgundian city', and further on in the leaflet a few others can be found.

Which symbolic elements belong, according to the producers, to a vibrant and authentic city? The 'Sint Baafscathedral', with the adoration of the Mystic Lamb, the 'Gravensteen' and the Belfry, together with the art hall 'Sint Pietersabbey' make up a list of things you have to see. The names and pictures connect to the city center of Ghent, and barely any references are made to the suburbs; only after a small search can a few sentences on the 'Blaarmeersen' be found, representing the green outskirts. Happy people enjoying their leisure time: shopping, sightseeing, going out for drinks, all against a historic background, a historic background that people can become a part of, a background that gives them the feeling of being part of something.

Until now this image matches the image of the city's consumers, the emphasis on the center, only circuitously referring to what happens outside this area. The producers' images can fit into the model of Ghent, which is derived from the interviews with consumers. The emphasis of the leaflet is on historic buildings though, not on squares. Cosiness, '*gezelligheid*', leisure time and the lack of any references to working are absolutely recognizable.

Authenticity as a notion is in need of some extra attention. Handler describes it as a cultural construct of the modern western world. We are looking for an authentic cultural experience, something unspoiled, real, untainted and traditional. He connects authenticity to the western notion of individualism, as the individual holds a central

place in our image of reality. Handler has a historical view on the case and describes the process in which the individual position in society became more important than the social one. As a result, people were in need of being authentic, their real selves, without engaging in role-playing. He also talks about the importance of national culture against an ideological background of the possessive individual: 'the existence of a national collectivity depends upon the "possession" of an authentic culture...and an authentic culture is one original to its possessors, one which exists only with them: in other words, an independently existing entity, asserting itself against all other cultures'. Being in contact with these objects is important, as it gives us the opportunity to access our own authenticity, which has to confirm existence of personal experience (Handler, 1986: 2-4).

Handler talks about shaping national authenticity, but this could be translated to the level of cities: gaining authenticity as a way to be distinct from other cities. The quote at the beginning of the paragraph is a nice example, as Bruges and Antwerp in particular, and to a lesser extent Brussels, are often compared to Ghent; they are after all the most direct competition and the most similar. All these cities have a strong notion of who they are, something that seems to be missing in Ghent, but as the authors of the quote say, we are more than an image. In Ghent you can experience all these things and make them a part of your life. Yet Handler does explain the importance of authenticity for producers and consumers, as both want to live in a 'real' city that is independent and shows who they are.

The critical reader will notice this concerns a leaflet for tourists, but Ghent also has an urban vision aimed at its own inhabitants, '*stad van kennis en cultuur voor iedereen*', 'the city of knowledge and culture for everyone'. These elements can be found just as well in the collective map of Ghent: the strong presence of the university on the one side and the historic buildings, the Ghent Fests and the cultural entertainment venues on the other. Nevertheless, people are less familiar with this image of Ghent, which is strange since it is more applicable to the citizens. Both images are recognized, but the choice of words by the respondents indicates a stronger consensus to the tourist phrasing, which is quite odd.

Both produced images show Ghent as a city beyond production, as a city of service and consumption. Knowledge may indirectly point to work, but the association with the university is many times stronger, which falls more into the category of service. The collective image of the city joins this point of view, as the collective map of the city shows, indicating consumption. They more or less match. This would mean there is an effective campaign going on when it comes to city marketing. But what came first, the chicken or the egg? Is the current campaign adjusted to the image of the consumers, or the other way around? Taking into account the way respondents talk about Ghent, I choose the last

option, as a large group used the exact words from the leaflets. One could say in this case that the producer side of the urban symbolic ecology overrules the consumers. The dominant squares may be missing in the policy, but they are easily added into the concept of the vibrant and authentic city. On the other side there is modern Ghent, which shapes up an ageless balance in the city. This is less obviously represented on the map; it is however found in the way the city is defined. Ghent is no open-air museum, an accusation often charged against Bruges, but the city is alive. The authors even seem to claim: 'we do not play the role of a single city', we are who we are, and therefore we are more real, less spoiled and more 'authentic'.

www.gent.be

The city's website is, just like the leaflet, an expression of the identity the producers give to the city itself. 'Ghent, vibrant city' is used as an inspiration for this site. Where the tourist leaflet is filled with authentic historical elements in the city, the key words for the website are vibrant, alive, knowledge and culture, clearly a different side of the city promotion has been chosen here. This page is meant for Gentenaars, and a tourist site is being created at the moment with its own style purely designed to promote Ghent. This currently influences the content and layout of Gent.be. The site is plain and simple: 'we have chosen the powerful line of the city marketing, the feeling it gives is important'.[27] Certain groups within the population already have their own sub-page. Accessible through the current website are pages for students, entrepreneurs and youth. The latter two groups in particular have been adjusted to the target group. The site for students has the same arrangement as the main page. Citizens of different neighborhoods make up their own groups, and every neighborhood has its own page within the website, so relevant information can be found quickly. It is, however, questionable whether residents find their way to these pages, since many neighborhoods and former independent towns are missing from the collective mental maps.

From the users' side of the webpage it becomes clearer that citizens are in fact the target group. The site holds an enormous amount of information, only in exceptional cases is one diverted to pages of a different organization. Every subject has contact information and many offer opportunities to participate in events, or even to organize them. The *e-loket*, e-desk, is especially useful in this sense. In the past, citizens usually had to go to the public administration to pick up certain documents, whereas now these formalities can be handled via the Internet; everything from giving notice of a birth, to filling out tax forms, all you need is your id-card and a card reader. To promote this option even further, information meetings are held to explain the way it works and to give away

card readers. More and more municipalities are introducing similar facilities to provide more accessible services to their customers, the citizens.

A website cannot only be evaluated by its practicality, the way the site looks is also important. The big picture decoration at the top of the screen is the most prominent element on the site. It not only provides a fresh look against the grey and white background, it also offers ways to focus attention on a subject: 'We want to give an image of the character of Ghent, through photos, even though they do not need to be recognizable as a certain part of town. We want everything that is organized by the city to stand out on the page',[28] something that corresponds to the creation of the image of Ghent as being vibrant. The inclusion of recent news reports, which can be found on the opening page, also underlines this.

It was a conscious choice to use part of the city marketing campaign for this page, aimed at the vibrant nature of Ghent, the other side of the city. The webpage has a young and fresh look, functional without being cold or distant, something the use of pictures largely contributes to. The same type of pictures, large and colorful, can be found in the city brochures, especially the tourist versions, even though a more classical theme has been chosen there. Citizens come first. They are what the city is all about, no hidden sales talk on Gent.be. For the city marketing campaign, a classical theme has been chosen for tourists (historic buildings, romantic pictures) and a fresh, vibrant and younger Ghent is portrayed for its citizens. The latter does appeal to the Gentenaar. People do not want to live in a museum, yet they do wish to make the historical heritage part of who they are, to be part of the 'authenticity'. This is something only seldom seen on the site, although it does offer an extended historical overview.

The site is practical, and while service and consumption are nice, someone has to pay for it, so there is also a webpage for entrepreneurs. They are kept separate from the 'normal' residents. The service-oriented site of the city is found in the *e-loket*: the customer has to be able to find what he needs without leaving the comfort of his own home. Consumption in the classical sense of the word is not the main theme here, but the website does encourage citizens to be part of consumption of the city, by constantly pointing to ways to participate in something, or to even become a producer of the city by organizing an event.

Conclusion

Many cities at the moment feel the need to sell themselves to the new middle class, as a city of service and consumption. Nas' theory on urban symbolic ecology gives a very strong foundation for deciphering this problem, since the tension between the produc-

tion and consumption of rituals and symbols is its core. In Ghent this issue plays an important role in finding a new way to imagine the city after a history as an industrial town. During the last twenty-odd years the city has, through major renovation of the city center and matching city marketing concepts aimed at the vibrant and authentic side of the city, been trying to connect to this. This development has taken a very positive turn. Respondents, consumers of urban symbolism, are not only very content with the city, they are even '*fier*', proud, and have taken over many ideas, as can be seen in their drawings filled with squares, water and historic buildings. The producers of symbolism feed the consumers. They have the upper hand in this power relationship. Connections are even made between these symbols and the city's future, mainly in the case of water. In a lesser sense people attach themselves to the vision of the city, 'knowledge and culture for everyone'. The university and student population are strongly represented and events like the Ghent Fests equal culture for everyone. But how to move on? Is city branding the formula to further success for the city?

A few Gentenaars gave their honest opinions about this subject: 'We do not have anything against tourists, or investors and definitely not against new citizens. We just do not like it when Ghent wants to profile itself as a product of which the marketability becomes the main concern. Niche marketing this is called: focus all your efforts on one attractive group of potential clients, even if it costs you your face and business... Advocating the solidarity of the city and active citizenship seems to us much more relevant than all this nonsense talk in terms of consumers and market value. We shiver at the thought of a city marketing logo, with a noose as a prefab symbol and rebelliousness as a commercial trump. But this, no doubt, will be our fault'[29] (Tiens Tiens, 2008: 3).

Presenting solidarity is already one of the goals of the city. It wants to be there for everyone. From the different collective maps it seems as if the migrant group is not well represented, amongst other reasons because of the diversity within this group. But still the 'Sleepstraat' is a strong urban symbol of solidarity and mixing of the different groups in society. Students do live in a separate world, which is reinforced at night, but even they know how to find their way out. Active citizenship is promoted throughout the website that wants to stimulate participation in the consumption of the city.

Authenticity is an important notion. Handler's article provides the insight that there is no need for Ghent to consist solely of medieval buildings, as authenticity relates to 'realness', to be who you are and not play any roles. Ghent as a city of..., does not fit here: the city would then choose to play a part and even emphasize this in every way, at the expense of authenticity. The interaction between the modern and the historical, and between Gentenaars, students and migrants seems to work. They meet each other on the squares where, against the historic background, they drink a Brazilian cocktail or a local Belgian brew, preferably in the sun.

Everyone is a hard notion, students are not official residents of the city and migrants, often without papers, go unnoticed. A way to involve more people in the city is by extending the mental map. This now mainly consists of the center, but there are many beautiful and interesting places outside of this, which are worthy of attention. The city's identity should be used for this mission and the squares could play a major part. Everyone can give his or her own meaning to the space, they are almost everywhere and they are very popular amongst most citizens. When everyone decides not to go to town to have a drink, but to stay in the neighborhood once in a while to go to a sidewalk café, the map can be extended. The city of service and consumption is everywhere, not just in the city center. Together, consumers and producers can create a stronger city as long as their views on the urban symbolic ecology do not widen too much.

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Notes

1 This research has been conducted in cooperation with Gent Cultuurstad and Stad Gent.

2 Numbers from 31 December 2007 (website city of Ghent).

3 Identity: the identification of the object as it exists (Nas and Sluis, 2002).

4 Structure: relationships between the object and other objects (Nas and Sluis, 2002).

5 Meaning: practical or emotional significance (Nas and Sluis, 2002).

6 Zou u twee stadsplannen van Gent willen tekenen? Eén kaart van de stad overdag en één kaart van de stad bij nacht, en zou u hierop die aspecten van de stad willen aangeven die voor u belangrijk zijn? U kunt hierbij denken aan straten, pleinen, gebouwen, plaatsen, evenementen, coördinatiepunten enzovoorts. The way of phrasing one's question is important, since it can influence the results of the research, in this case the mental maps. I have chosen to include examples, as after the first few interviews it became clear that many respondents find it difficult to draw a map. These examples simplified the map making process considerable. However, it did not result in a uniform set of maps, since not everyone used these examples and others made their own selection.

7 '...de Gras- en Korenlei zijn zeker bij warm weer de beste plek van Gent, het is er veel gezelliger. Gisteren was ik er om half twaalf en toen kon je er nog over de koppen lopen. Dat is niet echt afhankelijk van de dag, het is er altijd druk.'

8 '...de watersportbaan dat is een echte zomeractiviteit, je kunt er dan zwemmen en er zijn sportcentra. In de zomer komen er ook wel toeristen. Ik ga er zelf vooral in de zomer heen om te ontspannen, vaak met een paar medestudenten.'

9 'Ik heb steeds anders naar de stad gekeken, dat verandert met je netwerk, je eigen welzijn. Als je me dezelfde vraag had gesteld tien-twintig-dertig jaar geleden dan was dat een heel ander beeld geweest.'

10 '...dat stuk is helemaal heraangelegd, naar het waterpeil toe. Toen het nog veel hoger was zat er nooit iemand, nu zitten vooral de jongeren er erg graag. Studenten veroveren langzaam de stad, het is leuk dat ze uit de studentenbuurt komen.'

11 'Een heleboel mooie gevels zijn trouwens nep, bijvoorbeeld aan de Korenlei en de Graslei. In 1911 net voor de wereldtentoonstelling zijn ze van andere plaatsen in Gent verplaatst, ze zijn dus wel echt.'

12 'De Sint Michielsbrug was nooit zo hoog, hij is opgehoogd om een mooi fotomoment te hebben.'

13 'Het Gravensteen daar passeer ik bijna dagelijks. Het geeft het gevoel van authentiek Gent, een deel van de middeleeuwen, al is het niet het enige gebouw natuurlijk.'

14 'Ongeveer 25 jaar geleden was het Patershol vies en dood, het verkrotte helemaal. Het is al 15-20 jaar helemaal vernieuwd, er zijn leuke restaurants, het is bijna een chic uitgaansbuurt geworden.'

15 'De Sleepstraat daar ga ik graag eten, Turkse pizza, dat is lekker en goedkoop, het is heel goed eten. Wanneer er mensen van buiten Gent komen gaan we daar naartoe, iedereen kan het betalen en iedereen lust het.'

16 'Wat ik vaststel is dat ik onbewust vaak dicht bij het water wil zijn. De jachthaven, het uitzicht dat ik hier heb, de haven trok me als gebied, misschien ben ik daarom ook wel gaan duiken. Bij het water kun je verder kijken, het geeft een gevoel van ruimte en van rust.'

17 'Gent is water, alles heeft er mee te maken. Ze gaan nu de reep open maken, je kunt dan weer door Gent varen, nu kun je niet rond, alleen op en neer. Je kunt de mooiste plekjes van de stad zien vanaf het water. De Schelde is nu ook herontdekt, de drukste fietsroute van Vlaanderen ligt er naast. De Gentenaar heeft het water op zich ook opnieuw ontdekt, er wordt weer langs gebouwd en geïnvesteerd om oude panden op te knappen. Dit loopt ongeveer samen met het autovrij maken van het stadscentrum, het geeft veel meer kans de stad te beleven. Het is wachten tot we dingen als een watertram krijgen.'

18 'De Gentse Feesten zijn echt het grootste feest van de wereld, de hele zone van het centrum is afgezet. Iedereen in Vlaanderen komt dan naar Gent. Er zijn massa's drank, iedereen is op straat, zelfs als er op een plein niks te doen is dan is het nog druk. Er zijn ook veel artiesten en de cafés houden thema avonden. Ik heb eens ontslag genomen van mijn zomerjob om er te zijn. Dat zou ik echt voor geen geld willen missen. Ik ga liever naar de Gentse Feesten dan op vakantie naar de Bahamas op dat moment.'

19 '...tijdens de Gentse Feesten, dan is de stad een heksenketel zowel overdag als 's nachts, ik geloof niet dat het dan ooit stil valt.'

20 VZW, Vereniging Zonder Winstoogmerk, the Flemish equivalent of a foundation.

21 '...op de andere podia staan juist kleinere bands en lokale namen. Het is ook wel een politieke keuze, de stad kan niet meer bezoekers aan, ze houden het dus bewust zo kleinschalig.'

22 'het authentieke is eruit, het is te commercieel geworden. Dat is iets van de laatste jaren, het zijn niet meer de feesten zoals ik ze herinner van toen ik een kind was. Toen was het een ouderwets gebeuren, authentiek en kleinschalig, dat is weg en dat vind ik wel spijtig.'

23 'de Patershol feesten zijn eigenlijk ongeveer hetzelfde maar dan kleiner en een paar weken later. Het doet denken aan de Gentse Feesten van jaren geleden. Voor de Gentse Feesten komt iedereen echt van ver nu. Patersholfeesten zijn intiemer, meer Gentenaars dan toeristen.'

24 'Gent heeft geen gezicht, Brugge houdt zichzelf en anderen het beeld voor van "historische stad", Antwerpen is een "kosmopolitische havenstad", Leuven is een "universiteitsstad." Maar Gent kiest niet een beeld waarin het zichzelf met liefde herkent. Het identificeert zich niet met een beeld of beschaving van zichzelf. Elk zicht op Gent – "havenstad", "historische stad", "universiteitsstad" enzovoorts – is daarom niet eenzijdig maar vals. Gent laat de verstrooiing in "zichten" wel toe, maar bestaat als iets wat daar aan vooraf gaat.'

25 '...een unieke mix van historische architectuur en hedendaagse evenementen, schitterende musea met internationale uitstraling, een enorm gastronomisch palet, perfecte verblijfsfaciliteiten en een sprankelend nachtleven.'

26 '...voor elke middeleeuwse gevel is er een moderne tegenhanger, voor elke Vlaamse Primitief een Panamarenko of een Fabre. Oud en nieuw gaan naadloos in elkaar over en zorgen voor een uniek, tijdloos evenwicht.'

27 Quotes from an interview with two civil servants of the city of Ghent.

28 'We willen ook een sfeerbeeld geven van Gent, via foto's, al hoeven die niet direct heel herkenbaar te zijn. Alles wat door de stad georganiseerd wordt willen we extra op laten vallen.'

29 'Nu hebben we niets tegen toeristen, noch tegen investeerders en al helemaal niets tegen nieuwe inwoners. We houden er gewoon niet van als Gent zich gaat profileren als een product waarvan de verkoopbaarheid moet primeren. Nichemarketing heet zoiets in het jargon: al je inspanningen focussen op één aantrekkelijke groep potentiële klanten, zelfs al gaat dat ten koste van je eigen smoel en klandizie...Pleiten voor een solidaire stad en voor actief burgerschap lijkt ons dan ook een pak relevanter dan al dat loze gepraat in termen van consumeren en merkwaarde. We huiveren van de gedachte aan een citymarketing-logo, met een strop als prefabsymbool en rebelsheid als commerciële troef. Maar dat zal ongetwijfeld aan ons liggen.'

4. Urban Symbolism in Yogyakarta

In Search of the Lost Symbol[1]

Pierpaolo De Giosa

> Environments change. A sudden disaster may destroy a city, farms will be made from wilderness, a loved place is abandoned, or a new settlement is built on an obscure frontier. Slower natural processes may transform an ancient landscape, or social shifts cause bizarre dislocations. In the midst of these events, people remember the past and imagine the future. (Lynch, 1972: 3)

Introduction

In the last few decades urban anthropology has been developed as a new independent field focusing on urban space. A new approach, namely urban symbolism as sub-discipline of urban anthropology (Colombijn, 2006: 115), represents a valuable and flexible way to explore the symbolic side of space in different cities. In 2006, Peter Nas, Rivke Jaffe and Annemarie Samuels discussed the new directions and challenges of urban symbolism studies explaining the role of two complementary approaches: urban symbolic ecology and hypercity. The former represents 'the material approach to urban symbolism' which is concerned with 'the social production and consumption along with the spatial distribution of symbols and rituals' since 'their different locations in the urban centre or periphery and the total spatial configuration are important' (Nas, Jaffe and Samuels, 2006: 2). On the other hand the hypercity, described as 'a new encompassing theoretical framework which regards urban symbolism starting from ideas, images and representations of the city' (Nas, Jaffe and Samuels, 2006: 1), takes as starting point the studies of signs[2] and the consequent process of signification between signifiers and the signified, which is the city per se. Different categories of urban signifiers are produced and consumed within a city or town: material signifiers include both artificial and natural landscapes like statues or architecture; iconic signifiers 'consist of people, whether individuals or groups, who have become representative for certain cities', such as heroes, saints or celebrities; behavioral signifiers include rituals, ceremonies, festivals or parades; and the 'less tangible' discursive signifiers include a wide range of 'urban images and narratives' provided by movies, novels, urban legends, myths and so on (Nas, Jaffe and Samuels, 2006: 7, 8).

This article deals with the urban symbolic side of Yogyakarta and my aim is to explore how its urban space is constructed and perceived. I will pursue my analysis following a three-binary structure with the purpose of investigating a particular city gradually. First of all, I think that observing the evolution of Yogyakarta historically

through distinguished phases may offer an encompassing vision of the city. A general descriptive view is *de rigueur* a useful starting point to present briefly this city since its foundation until now, identifying the main directions, principles and actors that have shaped its spatial configuration and image through the times.

In the second step of this work, based on a more emic approach, I will focus on the imagery of Yogyakarta which is explored by mental mapping: exactly 35 mental maps by 'Yogyanese' inhabitants. Hence a synthesis of those maps reveals the perception of the city by ordinary people showing probably valuable phenomena affecting the urban imagery, obviously being aware of their relative representativeness.

Finally, I will take into consideration such behavioral signifiers as rituals and ceremonies that contribute to the construction and consumption of urban space in this specific context. In this way a secondary aim of this article is a contribution to the study of urban symbolism and also to the comprehension of place-making and space signification in the particular milieu of an Indonesian urban setting.

The spatial configuration of Yogyakarta

Yogyakarta has been founded following specific and meaningful principles and its imagery is rooted in the Javanese pre-colonial spatial distribution based on the centrality of the royal palace (*kraton*). Nowadays the special region of Yogyakarta (DIY, Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta) is the only one in Indonesia still governed by a pre-independence monarchy or sultanate. Undoubtedly the role of the sultan has been crucial, even if at different degrees, in the creation of the urban environment through the centuries. In the entire Archipelago, as well as all over the world, it is possible to identify various kinds of cities; 'every town has a character of its own and people try to form an image of it' (Nas, 1986: 1). In this context an outline of the historical urban development of Yogyakarta consents me to grasp the city as a spatial entity in evolution since its foundation until now: the 'birth and life' of a city through different times, under various political controls, and not rarely under any sort of challenge, including natural disasters (I refer especially to the tragic earthquake of May 2006). In this section I will focus on three distinguished stages of urban development processes in this specific case as identified in the study of the Indonesian city: the early, colonial, and modern cities (Nas and Boender, 2002: 3, 6). Of course this categorization should not be exaggerated because in different case studies there are exceptions, but it represents an efficient starting point for the exploration of the urban evolution.

Yogyakarta was founded in 1755 as the result of the partition of the Mataram kingdom in two new political entities: Yogyakarta and Surakarta. This event, known as the Treaty of Giyanti (Perjanjian Giyanti), was the corollary of the successful *divide et impera*

policy of the Dutch East Indies Company (VOC) in Central Java. Thus, when this city came into existence, the presence of an outsider power was already crucial on the island and it is probably not completely accurate to define the first urban settlement as an example of an early Indonesian city like the previous capitals of indigenous kingdoms in the Archipelago. Since its foundation, Yogyakarta 'was not a purely Javanese town' (Houben and Dahm, 1992: 146) because immediately north of the royal palace the Dutch built a fort, Benteng Vredeburg, to control the sultanate. Nevertheless, because of the strong symbolism attached to Yogyakarta by the first sultan, I consider it (in its first stage) a recent variant of the early Indonesian city where the pre-colonial Javanese Hindu-Buddha-Islam element was still dominant in spite of the Dutch authority. Furthermore, the configuration of the city is evidently shaped on the urban structured space typical in the early Javanese pre-colonial cities: the royal palace with the northern and southern city-squares (*alun-alun*) and the mosque located on the west side of the northern *alun-alun*.

In the study of the early Indonesian cities two distinguished types are recognized: inland/agrarian (also called *kraton* towns) and coastal/trade-oriented cities (Nas, 1986: 5, 6; Nas and Boender, 2002: 4). As reported by Vincent Houben and Bernhard Dahm (1992: 145), Yogyakarta appears as an example of inland/court town and, of course, it could not be considered a coastal town because of its geographical position, but it should not be ignored that elements of inland cities are present in coastal cities and *vice versa*. Further, Peter Nas has defined the early Indonesian city as a 'central point' and 'focus of the state' shaped by 'the marking of power on the basis of control over social relations', conceptualizing the idea of 'focal urbanism' in contraposition with the 'local urbanism' of western mediaeval cities as more or less autonomous and independent (from the state) areas (Nas, 1986: 23; Nas and Boender, 2002: 4). The founding center of Yogyakarta was the royal palace directly designed by the first sultan, Hamengku Buwono I, in the middle of an imaginary axis from north (Merapi Volcano) to south (Indian Ocean). The southern end of this North-South Axis is identified in the village of Parangtritis, exactly in Parangkusumo beach where the 'glittering stone' (*batu gilang*) is located. This stone represents the legendary place where Senopati, King of Mataram, and Loro Kidul (the Queen of the Southern sea) met for the first time.[3]

The city was founded following the principles of a sacred geography common in Southeast Asian kingdoms; the centrality of the royal palace in Southeast Asia has been described by scholars as an essential part of a *mandala*. In his Buddhist studies, focused especially on Thailand, Stanley Tambiah refers to it as model of *galactic* power shaping the kingdom as a 'centre-oriented space rather than bounded-space' (Tambiah, 1987: 40): a cosmological 'centre-oriented concentric-circle view of the polity', which was 'pervasive' in Southeast Asia, representing the 'totality' of the empire and 'the unity of the whole' (Tambiah, 1976: 114). Robert von Heine-Geldern has observed that capital cities like Burma and

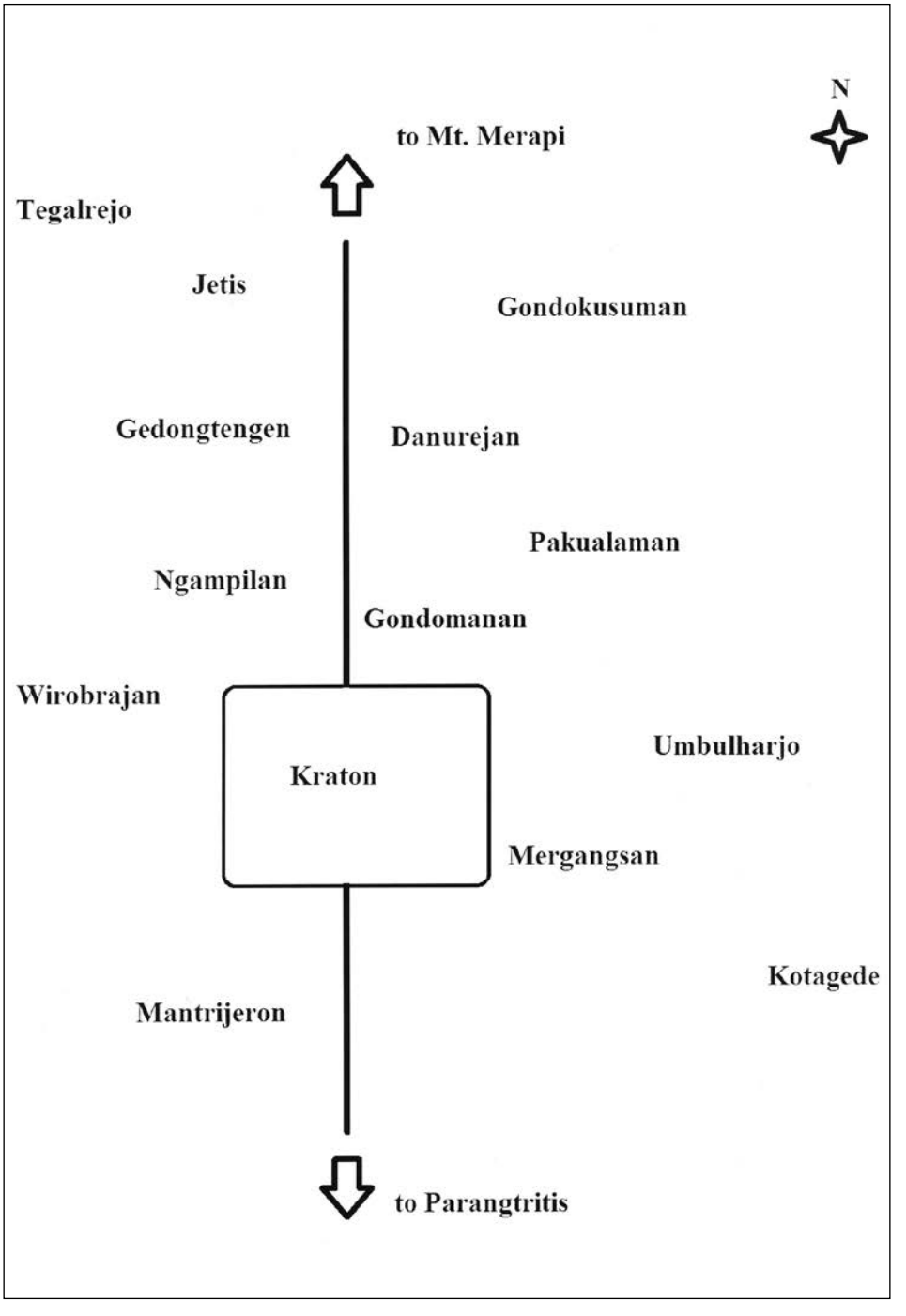

Figure 1. The North-South Axis and urban districts in Yogyakarta

Angkor were representing a smaller microcosm within a macrocosm (the empire), and 'even more than in Europe, the capital stood for the whole country', more than just a simple national political and cultural centre: the capital was the 'magic center of the empire' (Heine-Geldern, 1956: 3). This cosmology has also influenced the spatial configuration of Yogyakarta and its *kraton* represents a microcosm, a sort of *imago mundi* (Lombard, 1996: 113), where the sultan has an intermediary role between the human world (microcosm) and the divine world (macrocosm), between God and his subjects (Moertono, 1985: 42). However, according to Mark Woodward, in the royal palace per se there is not a 'mandala pattern' and it is mainly based on a Javanese variant of Islam and Sufi tradition (Woodward 1989: 199, 200) representing birth, life and death of human beings. Despite this, I would say that even if there is no *mandala* circular configuration in the form of the *kraton*, the latter is still the central part of the total *mandala* which is the city, and the outer world.

This concentric and circular pattern is also visible in the urban spatial distribution of Yogyakarta, where in the early period the royal palace was surrounded by different neighborhoods (*kampung*s) inhabited by ordinary people. The inner city encircled by the wall around the royal palace was the location of the servants' residence (*abdi dalem*), and the extramural early town was populated by the troops of the sultan and other social groups.[4] This spatial stratification in circles remained a constant also during the colonial period, when the northern part of Yogyakarta was divided hierarchically and ethnically in neighborhoods of European, Chinese and Arabic communities. The Dutch sphere, symbolically represented by Benteng Vredeburg, formally replaced the dominant role of the sultanate, whereas the other Asian communities in the northern periphery established a new vital commercial sphere.

During the colonial period, the imaginary North-South Axis was intersected by a new symbolic line, namely the railway connection (with the Tugu train station at the end of Malioboro road located in the north to the *kraton*) which has contributed to the urban development and the growth of Yogyakarta. In any case the founding axis from Merapi to the Indian Ocean has never lost its symbolic value, which was enriched by a white tower (Tugu Jogja) designed by Hamengku Buwono I in 1756 as an integral part of the royal palace (Soemarwoto, 2003: 13). The Tugu monument is still located approximately two kilometers north of the *kraton*, in line with Jalan Malioboro, and in my opinion it is emblematically relevant in this context as a symbolic explanation of the connection God-sultan-subjects. The original form of Tugu was a cone, a cylindrical pillar, topped by a ball, for this reason called Golong-Gilig,[5] symbolizing the leitmotif of the Javanese unity of servant and lord (*menunggaling kawula gusti*) and the unity of the sultan and his subjects in the struggle against the Dutch. In 1867, the Tugu Golong-Gilig was damaged by an earthquake and when it was rebuilt as De Witte Paal in 1889 by the Dutch, as it appears now, its original form and symbolism were lost (Soemarwoto, 2003: 15).

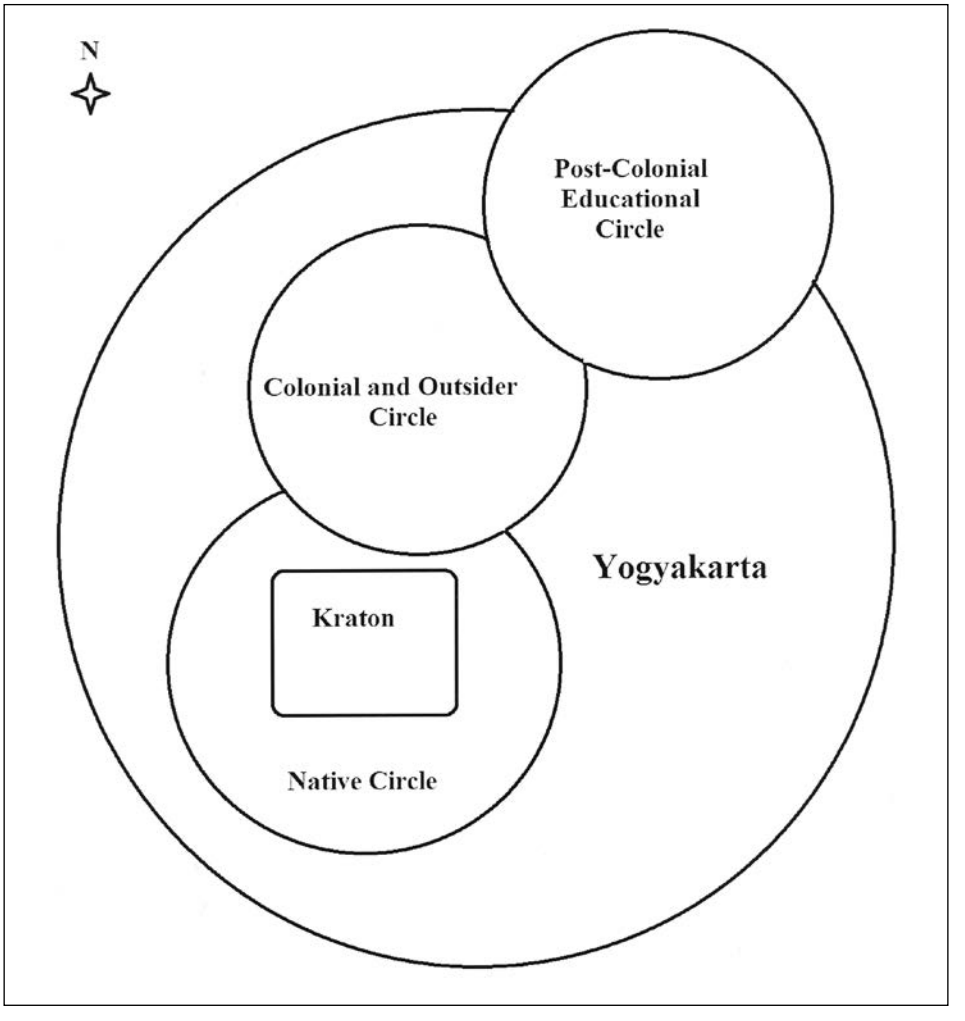

Figure 2. Historical circular pattern of Yogyakarta

I have decided to take into consideration the original form of Tugu as the main (and *lost*) symbol of the connection between ordinary people, sultanate and God, with the intermediary role of the sultan in the harmonious preservation of his subjects' well-being. Indeed, as explained at the beginning of this section, the role of the sultan in the production of urban symbols in Yogyakarta seems to be dominant. Peter Nas, Rivke Jaffe and Annemarie Samuels (2006: 12) have defined the hypercity as 'democratic' because all the social actors are potentially producers and consumers, 'but not all voices are heard with equal clarity'. Somehow in the specific case of Yogyakarta the role of ordinary people in the production and consumption of urban space is essential and their

harmonious well-being, unity and cohesion are the *conditio sine qua non* for the legitimacy of the sultan's power. The centrality of the *kraton* is strongly related to the prosperity of his subjects, and without it the concentric spatial organization of the city has no meaning anymore.

Paradoxically, during the colonial period challenges such as urban development, social change and population growth did not deteriorate the unity and cohesion of the sultanate and its inhabitants, but probably strengthened it and made Yogyakarta the struggle city (*kota perjuangan*) of the Archipelago. But, on the other hand, the modern period since the nation's independence has constituted a new challenging era for the original unity of the city and its dwellers. For some years after independence (1945-1949), because of the chaotic situation in Jakarta (previously called Batavia) and the support given to the nationalist movement by Hamengku Buwono IX, the capital city of the new nation was established in Yogyakarta. Notwithstanding the important role accorded to the latter, initially by Sukarno and later on by Suharto, as well as the special status granted to the region of Yogyakarta, the new established independent nation has been gradually centralized around the capital of the nation, Jakarta. The centrality of the sultan/subjects connection was replaced by a national centralized ideology focusing on the figure of the republic's president.

The post-colonial symbolism in Indonesia is intensely focused on the nationalist struggle in the decolonization process. In Yogyakarta, the main symbols expressing the country's triumph against the Dutch and the Japanese are the monument celebrating the attack of 1 March 1949 and the 'Yogya Kembali' museum. Both monuments are located on the North-South Axis: the former between Jalan Malioboro and northern *alun-alun*; the latter, built in 1985 during the New Order (Orde Baru) government, near to the northern ring road. Furthermore, during Suharto's New Order the names of several streets were replaced by the names of national heroes (*pahlawan*) (Suwarno, 1990: 139). But the primary post-independence symbol, which has influenced the construction of the imagery of Yogyakarta as the national 'educational city' creating a new challenging urban center in contrast to the palace-centered spatial distribution of the city, was Gadjah Mada University (UGM). This first state university was built in 1949, establishing a new pole in the northern modern area of Yogyakarta. Nowadays this Javanese city is well-known as the undisguised educational and student center of the Archipelago with more than sixty universities and other institutions of higher education.[6]

In the modern period, Yogyakarta has experienced a gradual transformation from a 'traditional city' to a 'national city' and also an 'international city' (Suryo, 2005). During the first two decades after independence the city as well as the whole Archipelago had to face economic and political problems: 'the 1950s and 1960s witnessed deteriorating economic and political conditions within the city, that affected *kampung* people' (Guin-

ness, 1991: 87). Patrick Guinness has observed phenomena concerned with the transformation of Yogyakarta after 1945, especially during the New Order, in the particular case of the *kampung* environment. It is his opinion that from the 1960s, in two decades, Suharto's New Order in Yogyakarta has produced a 'very different city', emphasizing the dichotomy between *kampung*/poor people (called in Javanese language *wong cilik*) and streetsiders/'politically and economically powerful people' (Guinness, 1991: 86). In this context, a tension between top-down capitalist state-oriented urban development and bottom-up reaction by the *kampung* communities appears as a deterioration of the original cultural unity of Yogyakarta. On the one hand the state, capitalist enterprises supported by it and the municipal government have tried to create a modern city through private housing, luxurious condominiums and shopping mall construction; on the other hand crime, squatting, prostitution, uncontrolled expansion, water and air pollution, and low hygienic standards have decreased the well-being of poor ordinary people in *kampung* settlements. The improvement of these urban areas has often been carried out as a top-down process marginalizing a conspicuous part of inhabitants in Yogyakarta as well as in all the country. Nevertheless, within a slum in this city, namely Kampung Code, a particular bottom-up development strategy has been carried out by the residents through the support of activists and Gadjah Mada University. Actually, what has been defined a 'total slum' is nowadays a 'leading example of the possibilities of grassroots kampong development'[7] (Nas, Boon, Hladká and Tampubulon, 2008: 651, 655).

Currently, Yogyakarta, with its approximately half million inhabitants is a medium size Indonesian city, known as an educational city, and one of the main touristic destinations of the Archipelago because of its famous local arts and culture that have contributed to the recognition of the city as the 'Javanese cultural capital'. The growth of population through the last few decades has also revealed a dualistic urban development showing a contrast between impoverished neighborhoods, also attracting emigrants from rural areas, and a richer northern area of the city attracting a large number of wealthy 'offspring' from the Indonesian society. A symbolic dualism is also represented by a tension between globalization and localization within Yogyakarta where shopping malls and luxurious condominiums are conquering urban space, while traditional markets (*pasar*) and food-stalls[8] are still proudly surviving as the persisting symbol of local identity and self-consciousness.

The imagery of a city

This section is concerned with the perception of Yogyakarta by its dwellers and aims to a return to a more emic approach.[9]

> Too often, studies are based on 'anthropological tourism' [...]. At worst, the study reflects what the researcher sees in the symbol. At best, the study reproduces the intentions of the creator of a symbol. Both miss the point that the essence of a symbol lies in what people think of it. A symbol is a relationship between an object (statue, flag, building, song, coat of arms, street name) and a meaning outside the object. What matters is not the object, but the meaning that people give to the object. The meaning given to the symbol by both the creator and the receiver of the message is what counts. (Colombijn, 2006: 118)

In order to explore the emic vision of the population of Yogyakarta and their perception of the living urban space I will analyze and synthesize 35 mental maps. Usually people construct detailed images of the urban environment in which they live and their perceptions of it reveal a great variety since different people experience the same city or town in a variety of ways (Nas, 1986: 2; Nas and Sluis, 2002: 131). The perceived layout of a city is the result of a complex cognitive process; mental mapping represents a way of portraying people's image of the city (Schut, Nas and Hettige, this volume). According to Peter Nas and Reynt Sluis (2002: 131), 'the collection of data for mental or cognitive maps is mainly based on the drawings of informants who are asked to sketch their urban environment and note the items they consider important'.

Mental mapping methodology is rooted in the pioneering work by Kevin Lynch published in 1960, *The Image of the City*, which investigates the imageability of three American cities: Boston, Jersey City and Los Angeles. The imageability of a city, defined as a 'construction in space' (Lynch, 1960: 1), is 'that quality in a physical object which gives it a high probability of evoking a strong image in any given observer' (Lynch, 1960: 9). On the basis of the three distinguished components of an environmental image proposed by Lynch, that is identity (the identification of an object as a separable entity), structure (the spatial relation of an object to the observer and other objects) and meaning (practical or emotional meaning of the object for the observer), in the last few decades urban perception studies have been developed in the theoretical framework of urban symbolism. The third component, namely meaning, is the crucial focus in the studies of urban symbolic ecology and the hypercity (Nas and Sluis, 2002: 131).

The collection of data and mental maps of Yogyakarta has been carried out thanks to the precious help offered to me by a small group of 'intermediary informants'; they collected 35 mental maps for me during a period of two months (November and December 2009) in a *warung* located in the northern area of the city regularly frequented by students.[10] Different factors, such as education, duration of residence, ethnicity, religion, and so on, show various perceptions of the urban environment and a different vision of the city. For this reason the data collected here should not be considered representative

of the total population of Yogyakarta, but in my opinion a relatively valuable representativeness should not be excluded a priori since mental mapping could provide interesting phenomena concerning the perception of urban space in this specific case study. Figure 3 presents the collective mental map of 35 ordinary people, as the result of a synthesis of all individual cognitive maps, in which the elements marked one or two times are excluded. I am going to analyze briefly the total configuration of the city, taking as a starting point previous studies based on the analysis of the collective mental maps of other Indonesian cities.[11]

The traditional spatial distribution of the city appears constantly based on the centrality of the royal palace and the North-South Axis. The *kraton* per se is marked in 13 individual maps, while Jalan Malioboro (as the main commercial street of Yogyakarta) is marked 16 times. On the same imaginary line the central train-station and Tugu Monument are marked respectively 11 and 10 times. All other important elements (streets, *alun-alun*, traditional markets, shopping malls and historical buildings) are represented also following a center-oriented spatial system that recalls a mandalic form. This collective cognitive map might suggest the conceptualization of Yogyakarta as completely focused on the traditional city center (as presented in the case of Denpasar by Peter Nas in 1995); however, in the first case the traditional central urban elements seem to be less marked than their counterparts in the provincial capital of the Balinese island. Symbolically speaking, in the case of Yogyakarta perhaps the 'traditional cultural image is the main principle of orientation' as in the case of Denpasar (Nas and Sluis, 2002: 133), but its traditional spatial configuration appears in a sort of decline in the perception of Yogyakarta's population.

The observation and analysis of all individual maps and the collective mental map show that the original unity of the city is less meaningful in the imageability of the city by ordinary people. Several individual mental maps are locally-focused, 'solely showing a small part or a single street in the city' (Schut, Nas and Hettige, this volume). The majority of these locally-focused maps reproduce the north-eastern area of the city, where several higher education institutions are situated. Many examples show a sort of independent modern city focused on Jalan Solo and Jalan Gejayaan and the main shopping mall of the area, namely Ambarrukmo Plaza (Amplaz). The great number of universities and other educational institutions could be considered an important factor for the creation of the modern northern urban center challenging the traditional center. In this context the large number of students coming to Yogyakarta from all over the Archipelago could not be considered authentically 'Yogyanese', and their perception of the city differs significantly from the indigenous dwellers of the city. It is interesting to observe that several universities are marked just one time in various individual mental maps, but only three of them are present in the collective map.[12]

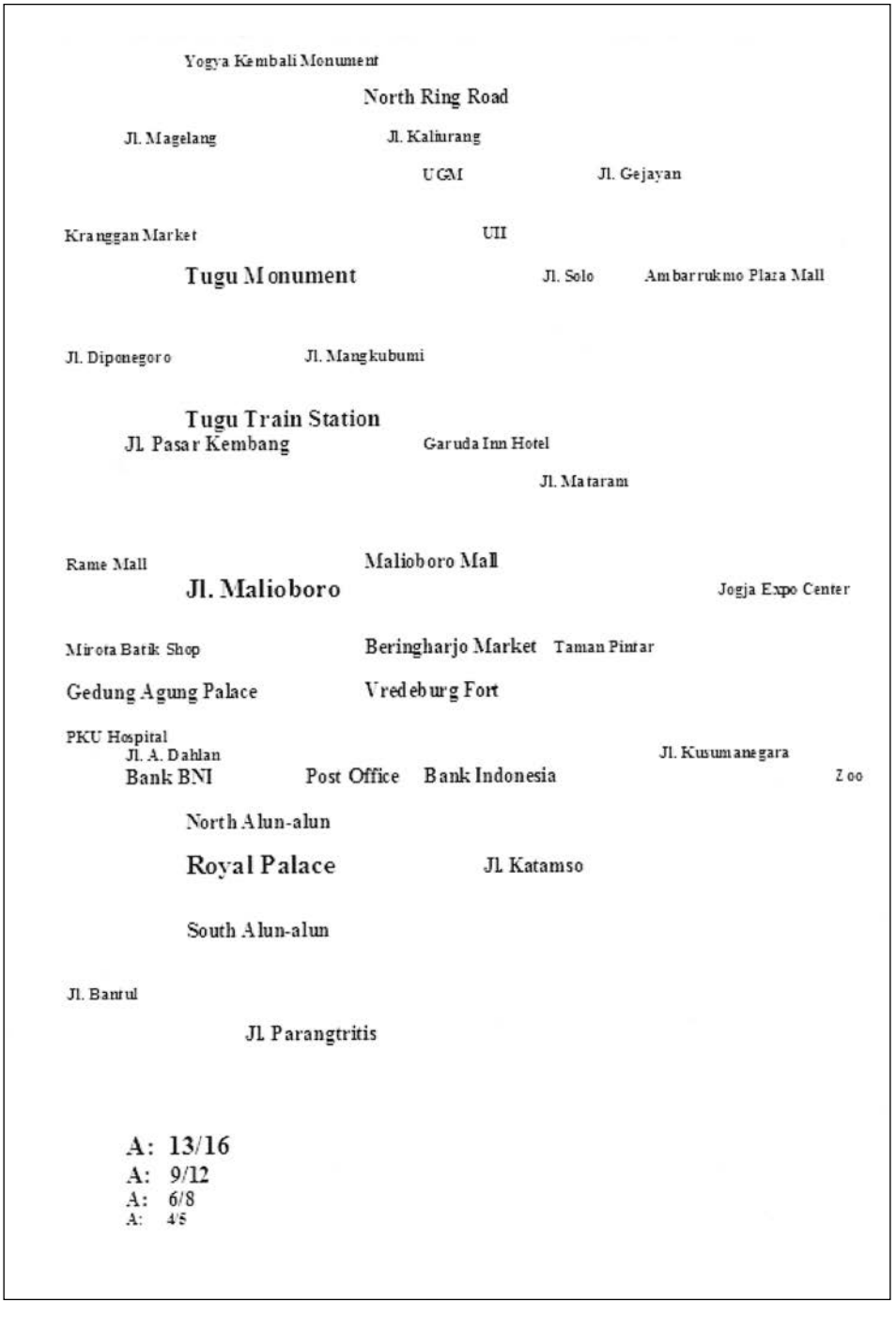

Figure 3. Collective mental map of Yogyakarta based on 35 mental maps

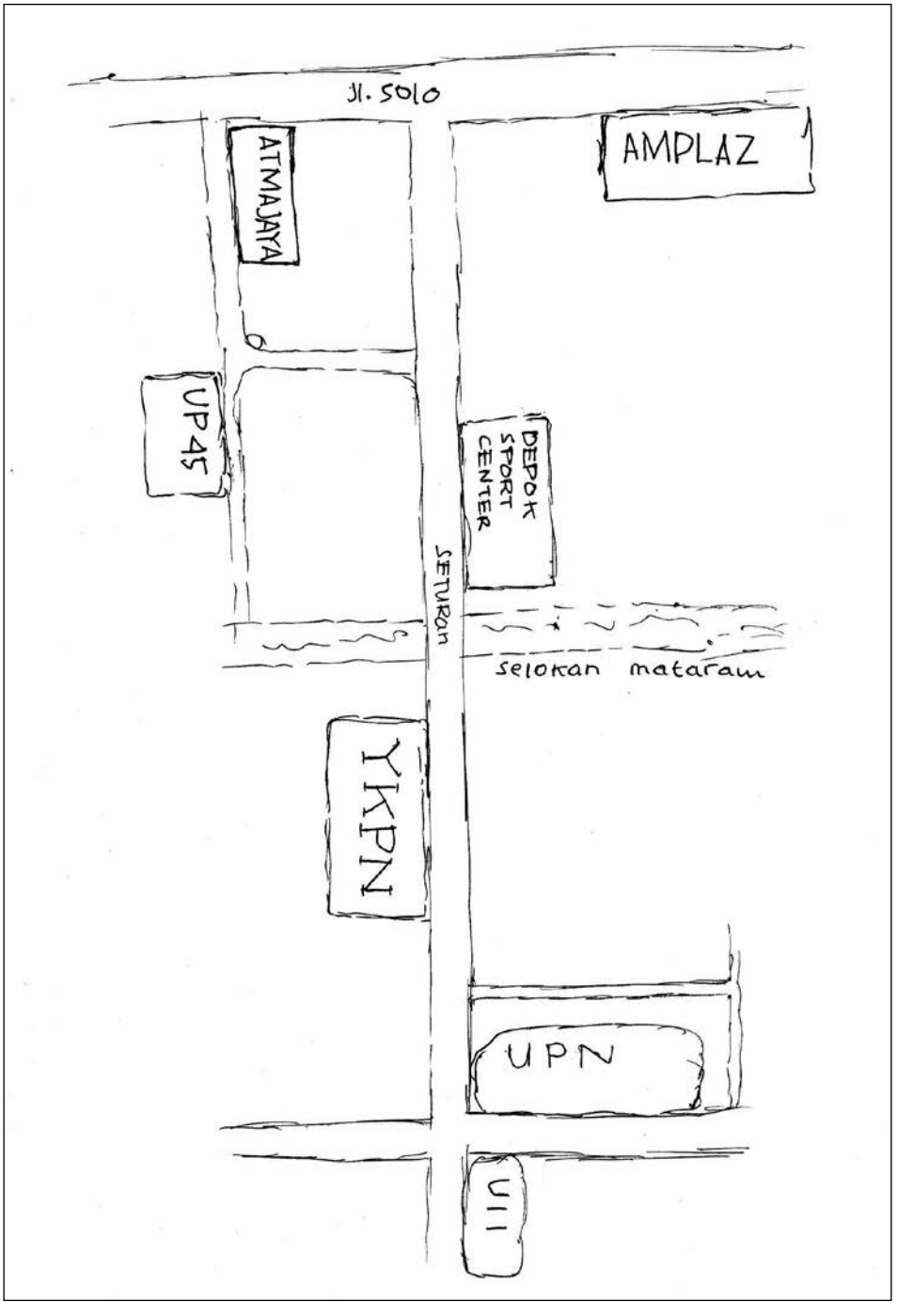

Figure 4. A locally-focused mental map of Yogyakarta

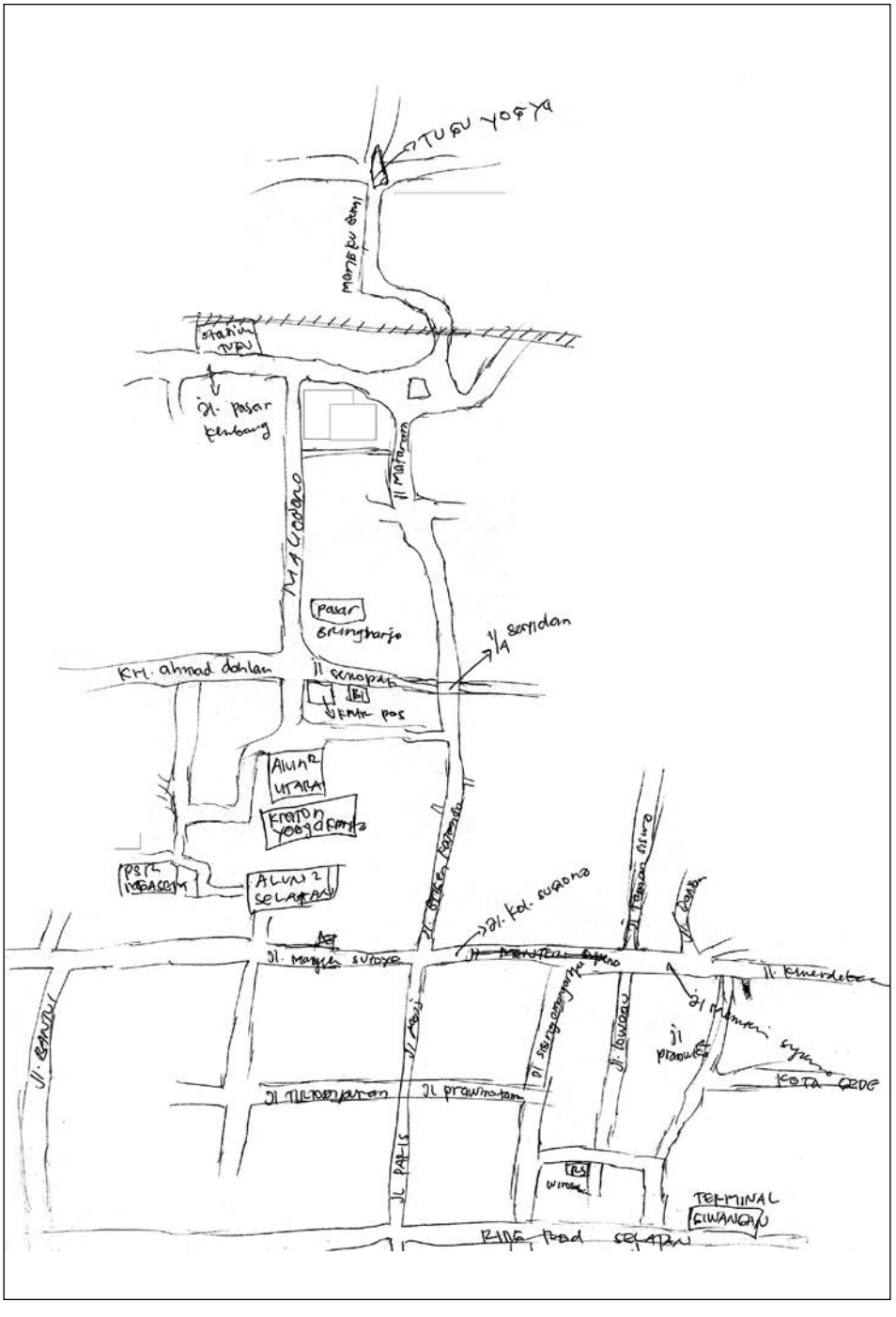

Figure 5. A *kraton*-centered mental map of Yogyakarta

The analysis of cognitive maps in the specific case study of Yogyakarta reveals a process of fragmentation of the total configuration of the urban space. The traditional center focused on the royal palace is still significant in the imageability of this Javanese city, but other symbols in the city are creating a fragmented image of it. In this context I will define the 'multi-centric city' as an urban space, broken up into two or more pieces, in which the center is not identified as one. The results shown in the collective mental map of Yogyakarta are based on cognitive maps by students, many of them not purely 'Yogyanese', collected in the northern area of the city, but it is interesting to remark that the individual maps drawn by two *becak* drivers and an *angkringkan* seller reproduce a compact urban space focused on the traditional centrality of the *kraton* (see Figure 5, as drawn by a *becak* driver).

Behavioral signifiers and urban space

The behavioral signifiers studied in the hypercity approach provide a functional source for the exploration of the social and cultural construction of space. In the case of Yogyakarta, behavioral construction, as well as consumption of urban space, are particularly significant since specific rituals and ceremonies express the constant connection God-sultan-subjects. The material spatial configuration of the city (as analyzed in the first paragraph), representing the unity between the sultanate and people, is revitalized by the shaping of urban space and identity through ceremonies strongly related to the royal palace. The Javanese concept of power has been traditionally focused on the centrality of the ruler, 'who personifies the unity of society' obsessively stressing the oneness between the sultan and his subjects (Anderson, 1972: 22). Benedict Anderson, in *The Idea of Power in Javanese Culture*, conceptualizes the 'centripetality of Javanese political thinking' which is subsequently expressed by a state 'typically defined, not by its perimeter, but by its center' (Anderson, 1972: 28, 29). This unity Sultan-People is not only represented in the material construction of the urban environment and symbolism, but also expressed in several traditional and modern rituals. In order to explain the active role that behavioral signifiers play in the signification process of space in an urban setting, I do identify three distinguished, but not mutually exclusive, categories of behavioral signifiers in Yogyakarta: 'touristic', 'traditional' and 'neo-traditional' rituals. The multitude and variety of ceremonies, rituals, festivals and parades in the city could not be explored in this contribution and it is not my aim, but I will try to explain how some of them are involved with space.

Through the recognition of 'touristic' behavioral signifiers I intend to explain how tourism, commodification, and sometimes desacralization of spiritual activities, con-

struct and deconstruct urban space. Yogyakarta as Javanese cultural center and touristic destination magnetically attracts local, national and international visitors fascinated by the main features within the urban area, but also nearby.[13] Those 'touristic' behavioral signifiers are not related directly to the 'Yogyanese' ordinary people, but undoubtedly the routes consumed by tourists and produced by local authorities are the result of the promotion of the city to the attention of the rest of the country and the world. Nevertheless, tourism is a precious source for urban economy, but also for the preservation of local identity, not ever without risk, and in some way related to the inhabitants. Unsurprisingly, the *kraton* appears once again as a magnetic center, in this case for touristic itineraries as well as the pre-colonial symbolism survived through the centuries. Tourists have the chance to visit the royal palace, the Water Castle (Taman Sari), the Bird Market (Pasar Ngasem); to buy souvenirs in Jalan Malioboro literally invaded by batik shops and art galleries; to taste the really sweet local cuisine; to watch local performing arts as puppetry, dances or just listening to *gamelan* music; and, last but not least, they can enjoy the city center through mini-tours on *andong* (traditional horse cart) or on the more popular *becak*.

One of the numerous traditions of Yogyakarta, which today has become a cultural attraction for visitors, is the Masangin. This ritual performed in the southern *alun-alun* could be considered a 'touristic' behavioral signifier which, however, also represents for local people a way to preserve traditional culture. People have to try to walk in the middle of the southern city-square through two banyan trees with their eyes covered by some blindfold, which is not so easy, and it is believed that those who do it successfully will receive a blessing. Masangin, in an unpretentious way, constructs and preserves a single part of the whole traditional urban space reinforcing and also enriching the symbolism attached to it: the two banyan trees (*waringin*) are constant elements of the Javanese pre-colonial mysticism representing also the cosmological unity between 'lord' and 'servant'. This kind of game seems to reproduce a ritual performed on the first day of the Javanese New Year (the 1st of Suro): the 'silent fasting' or 'silent march' (*tapa bisu mubeng beteng*) which actually should be included within the 'traditional' behavioral signifiers. This silent march is traditionally led by the *abdi dalem* and guards of the royal palace, albeit nowadays everyone can participate. They walk praying silently around the *kraton* following a circular pattern from north, to west, to south, to east and finally to north again. Through this ascetic ritual it is believed that the sultanate would receive blessing and prosperity. The circular movement around the walls of the royal palace is not a peculiarity of *tapa bisu*, since there are other rituals producing the same pattern or following the same itinerary.

Within the second category of behavioral signifiers, namely 'traditional', the specific case study of Yogyakarta offers a plethora of rituals strongly connected with the

court culture. I will focus on two particular ceremonies that show an evident structural process of creation and construction of urban space around the *kraton*, namely Garebeg and Jumenengan. The Garebeg ceremony, which is fervently linked to Islamic festivities, is held three times a year and performed in the northern *alun-alun* especially around the Great Mosque of Yogyakarta. During this event the sultan, as representative of God, offers a gift to his subjects in the form of Gunungan, a mountain-shaped offering combining rice and other food. The procession brings the Gunungan from the royal palace to the Great Mosque where the gifts are distributed to the people as sign of blessing. The sultan's troops participate in the parade; their names representing the *kampung*s surrounding the royal palace express symbolically the unity of the city and its population around the sultanate.

The Jumenengan is the coronation ceremony held when a new sultan is formally enthroned and it is divided into four rituals: Ziarah Kubur (pilgrimage to the king's burial graves), Jumenengan (proclamation of the new sultan), Upacara Labuhan (offering to the spirits) and Upacara Kirab (first contact of the new sultan with his subjects). Two of these sub-ceremonies are in my opinion significantly valuable for their symbolic spatial construction and preservation of the city and sultanate, namely the Upacara Labuhan and Upacara Kirab. The former, which is rooted in a syncretistic form of local animism, is performed at the four figurative limits of the kingdom where the new sultan offers a gift to the spirits living in those places: Mt. Merapi (north), Parangkusumo (south), Mt. Lawu (west) and Dlepih (east). This spiritual offering symbolically preserves the boundaries of the sultanate placating the spirits in favor of the harmonious prosperity of the kingdom and its population (Marwito, 1995: 72). On the other hand, during the Upacara Kirab the new sultan officially meets his subjects for the first time following a procession itinerary around the *kraton*: from the northern city-square to north, Jalan Senopati, Jalan Katamso, Jalan Sutoyo, Jalan Haryono, Jalan Wahid Hasyim, Jalan Ahmad Dahlan, and finally coming back to the royal palace. In this final ritual, completing the enthronement appears as a clear act of urban space construction, and the route of the procession regenerates and restores the symbolic spatial order around him and among his citizens.

The third category, namely 'neo-traditional' behavioral signifiers, includes all the new manifestations of present-day rituals based on traditional ceremonial practices. Essentially 'traditional' behavioral signifiers in Yogyakarta, as in Garebeg and Jumenengan, are currently performed without any substantial alteration of the local traditional system. Instead, 'neo-traditional' rituals have recently been performed 'casually' in connection to relevant national political events, like the downfall of Suharto in 1998 and the last presidential elections in 2009. Since the independence of the Republic of Indonesia the role of the royal family in the political life of the country has been decisive:

the ninth sultan, Hamengku Buwono IX, had an active role in the resistance movement and the final offensive (1 March 1949) against the Dutch. He has served the country as minister during Sukarno's presidency and also as vice-president under Suharto's Orde Baru without renouncing his position of Yogyakarta's regional governor. However, in 1978, after a repressive action adopted by Suharto against students in Bandung, Hamengku Buwono IX refused the vice-presidency of Indonesia. From the 1980s, for more or less two decades, the role of this Javanese sultanate has been gradually marginalized: in 1989, Hamengku Buwono X, the present-day sultan, replaced his father and he was 'seemingly powerless in the context of the authoritarian New Order regime' (Woodward, 2003: 228). Notwithstanding this long period of silence and isolation of the sultanate in the national political arena, in 1998 the last sultan achieved a crucial role at the end of Orde Baru and democratization of the nation. In fact in 1998, when Hamengku Buwono X asked for the withdrawal of Suharto, a popular acclamation in Yogyakarta demanded his appointment as governor of the special region and consequently as candidate for the republic's presidency.

During the chaotic events that preceded the downfall of Suharto, the sultan 'used the charisma of his throne to preserve peace and order', encouraging a non-violent political change (Reformasi Damai) at a national level (Woodward, 2003: 231, 232). It is in this context that I take into account two emblematic examples of 'neo-traditional' rituals: the Pepe and the Pisowanan Agung. The former should be considered a formally traditional ceremonial performed by a 'petitioner' in white dress (symbolizing the purity of intention) that brings an injustice to the attention of the sultan waiting, for his intervention, between the two banyan trees in the middle of the northern *alun-alun* (Woodward, 2003: 229). But then when Mozes Gatotkaca, a Yogyakartan, was killed during the city riots in the strife between students and army, approximately a million people enacted a symbolic 'massive act of Pepe', as depicted by Mark Woodward. In this way the traditional ritual of Pepe was adapted in a modern and national context representing the people/king harmonious unity. Thus the second step was characterized by the active role of the sultan, who decided to lead a 'long march' from the universities to the royal palace through the Pisowanan Agung (literally the 'Great Meeting'), which regenerated Yogyakarta as 'spiritual center of the nation' expanding the symbolism of the center and the *mandala* vision of the *kraton* from a merely local perspective to a national one (Woodward, 2003: 236, 242).

The Pisowanan Agung of 20 May 1998 has been considered a new, spontaneous, and original event, substantially different from the traditional Pepe, because there are no previous examples in the Javanese court culture (Hendrowinoto, 2003: 9, 11). It has also been considered a unique and singular ritual due to the exceptionality of the national situation leading to the decline of the regime, but in 2008, after exactly ten years

and for the second time in the history of the sultanate, through a Pisowanan Agung, Hamengku Buwono X was acclaimed as candidate for the Indonesian presidential elections of 2009. The 'Great Meeting' was held in the northern *alun-alun*, where the sultan announced his intention to run for the elections, emphasizing his role in the preservation of people's prosperity, as well as in the democratization of the nation, and his effort against poverty.

Concluding remarks

In this article, the urban space of a specific Javanese case has been analyzed through the study of urban symbolism. Applying to this work two related approaches, namely urban symbolic ecology and hypercity (Nas, Jaffe and Samuels, 2006), makes possible a systematic exploration of the symbolic side of Yogyakarta, representing a contribution to the anthropological study of symbolism and construction of space in the urban setting. The urban space of Yogyakarta was founded according to a specific symbolism, but the city is not a static entity. Different periods have influenced it, and today globalization, tourism and other new phenomena are constructing their own symbols. Through the urban symbolic ecology perspective I have tried to identify the leading principles and actors in the material spatial configuration of the city. The role of local culture is significant in the process of place-making, construction, de-construction and perception of urban space; its distinctive nature should not be ignored in relation to westernization and globalization. The image of Yogyakarta as center of the Javanese culture seems to be a coordinated and harmonized action of preservation and promotion of local culture from both top-down and bottom-up forces, albeit, of course, that a growing social differentiation is challenging it. This cohesive spirit has been a vibrant feature also in critical moments of Indonesian history, like, to mention just two, the struggle for independence and the end of the New Order.

Mental mapping, as used here, is a valuable methodological source in the function of an emic approach of the perception of space and orientation in the city by the so-called ordinary people, apparently powerless in spite of local, national and international institutions. Individual and collective cognitive maps reveal a still surviving centrality of the *kraton*, but there are undoubtedly new material symbols that influence the perception and consumption of space in Yogyakarta by its dwellers. Locally-focused maps (Schut, Nas and Hettige, this volume) show a 'fragmentation' of the traditional unity of Yogyakarta, perhaps due to its modern imagery as an educational city which leads to an 'invasion' of students from all over the Archipelago. I have tried in this article to give a 'voice' to ordinary people. I am aware of the relative representativeness of the data collected

here, though I do consider their revealed perception of the city to be a useful starting point for future studies and the development of new concepts also related to the idea of symbolically 'fragmented' and 'multi-centric' urban spaces.

Finally, the particular abundance of behavioral signifiers in Yogyakarta offers a precious chance to investigate how local culture and identity, also in modern times, shape and give definite meanings to some places and to the urban space as a whole. Above all, 'neo-traditional' rituals and ceremonies appear remarkably noteworthy as a reaction to the fragmentation of the city. The relationship Sultan/People/Space was a central principle of urban space construction and cohesion in the city. After an apparent long period of silence, due to some tensions between the New Order government and the royal palace of Yogyakarta, these 'neo-traditional' rituals are conquering their space in the city, in a changing national arena and in a globalized world. The Pisowanan Agung of 2008 materializes the unity of the sultan and his subjects in the urban space proposing the centrality of Yogyakarta in an expanded *mandala*, which encompasses the whole country (and perhaps the whole world) in the specific message against poverty, and regenerates the Javanese idea of the throne to the people. Spatially speaking, it appears as an attempt for a kind of *kratonization* of the country as well as re-*kratonization* of Yogyakarta, despite other phenomena that create a 'multi-centric' and 'fragmented' city, instead of a city unified around the royal palace.

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Notes

1 I have been living in Yogyakarta for one year (2006/2007) thanks to a scholarship offered by the Indonesian government and its embassy in Rome. This article is also partly based on my own experience in this 'great' city. I am grateful, for their help in collecting mental maps in Yogyakarta for me, to Bagong, Eni, Lala and Ari. Thanks to their precious help I had the opportunity to develop the second part of this work. I would like also to thank Peter Nas for the opportunity that I had to discover the study of urban symbolism during his classes.

2 The terminology adopted derives directly from the linguistics studies by Ferdinand de Saussure and the postmodernist concept of 'hyperreality' as developed by Jean Baudrillard and Umberto Eco (Nas, Jaffe and Samuels, 2006: 7).

3 Loro Kidul is actually venerated in Central Java and is considered the mythical sacred 'lover' of Mataram's kings. Her blessing was a symbolic support for the harmony and prosperity of the kingdom, thus, for her, ceremonies were held in the area of Parangkusumo. After the Treaty of Giyanti this tradition was continued by the sultanate of Yogyakarta to protect the kingdom and its subjects (Murniatmo et al., 2003: 13, 16).

4 See for example the names of the *kampung*s surrounding, until now, the royal palace: Wirobrajan, Patangpuluhan, Daengan, Jokokaryan, Prawirotaman, Ketanggungan, Mantrijeron, Nytraan, Surakarsan and Bugisan. They represent the relative sultan troops living in each neighborhood. Djoko Suryo (2005: 36) has also reported some examples of neighborhoods following a social distribution in profession groups like Pajeksan for the prosecutors, Dagen for the carpenters and Jlagran for the bricklayers, but also in ethnic groups like Menduran for the Madurese.

5 In Javanese language *golong* means literally 'group', while *gilig* means 'cylindrical'.

6 According to the 25th edition of 'The World List Universities and other Institutions of Higher Education' in Yogyakarta there are approximately 70 educational institutions including three public universities, 19 private universities (*swasta*), and 46 other private institutions.

7 The successful grassroots development of Kampung Code has been accomplished through an energetic coordination between its residents and activists supported by the catholic priest and the architect Romo Mangun, and Willy Prasetyo from UGM. This case has been reported in the article 'The Kampong' (Peter Nas et al., 2008).

8 *Warung* is the popular Indonesian food-stall whereas in Yogyakarta *lesehan* is the local version of it and *angkringkan* is the typical mobile version of it.

9 Freek Colombijn (2006) suggests a return to a more emic approach avoiding studies based on merely 'anthropological tourism'.

10 Exactly 31 mental maps collected in this work are drawn by students (20 to 30 years old), two maps by *becak* (pedicab) drivers, one from a furniture seller, and another one by an *angkringkan* seller. The analysis of mental maps has been an experimental experience for me since it is the first time that I have utilized this methodology. Furthermore I did not collect the data myself because actually in that period I was in Leiden.

11 I refer to the mental mapping studies on Jakarta, Denpasar and Bukittinggi as discussed by Peter Nas and Reynt Sluis (2002).

12 UGM (marked 5 times); UII (4); UTY (3); UNY and UIN (2); UMY, UPN, UAD, UST, UP45, YKPN, Atmajaya and Sanata Dharma (marked only one time).

13 See for example the well-known temples of Borobudur and Prambanan located 40 and 20 km respectively from the urban area of Yogyakarta.

5. The Changing Image of Gdańsk, Poland
From Regained Homeland to Multicultural City

Barbara Bossak-Herbst

In this contribution I will focus on the shift of meaning encapsulated in the material culture of the city landscape – not the official monuments but those places mentioned by inhabitants when they talk about 'their city'. My example is Gdańsk in diachronic perspective. I will sketch the influence of social memory on the perception of monuments and vice-versa; examining the roles monuments can play in maintaining, restoring and creating social memory in service of local identity.

Nowadays in Gdańsk, as in many post-socialist cities, increasingly visible signs of change are conspicuous. Transition also touches upon the symbolic dimension of the city. One striking feature of Gdańsk since 1989 is that the enormous interest of local associations and the inhabitants themselves in the appearance of their city is palpable. Care for historical spaces often leads to lively discussions about their past and future and ways in which new and values oppressed during the communist period should be exposed in the city's iconosphere.

My fascination with those processes has led me to the following questions: What were the main modes of perceiving the historic landscape of Gdańsk espoused by the new inhabitants and Polish authorities after World War II? And subsequent to this: What are the main symbolic roles played by the Gdańsk landscape today, when the local communities have regained their status; when, as the country is decentralized and the democratization of life is progressing, people are searching for new symbols of their local identity. In other words I will look at the interplay between material and semiotic layers of the city.

The title definitions of Gdańsk, 'regained homeland' and 'multicultural city', convey the essence of two social images of that city. The first prevailed after World War II, the latter one in the 1990s. However, one may ask, why speak about Gdańsk in the context of return migrations if the overwhelming majority of its new post-war inhabitants have never lived in this part of the country? Of course, I refer here to the post-war myth of the city.

The symbolic dimension of Gdańsk after World War II

After World War II under the terms of the Potsdam Treaty made by the Allies, Gdańsk became a Polish city which its Germans inhabitants, who were the decisive majority at that time, were required to leave. For a long period of its history, this historic city was indeed

connected with Poland, but since 1793 it had been a part of Prussia and later of Rzesza (Reich), interspersed with relatively short periods of being a formally autonomous Free City. After World War II, on the basis of Allied decisions, Gdańsk and the territories to the Odra border were incorporated into Polish territory. This was deemed a kind of compensation for the annexation of huge eastern territories. During the next few years it was gradually settled by Poles – some were returning from the expulsion to which they were subjected during the period of Free City of Gdańsk, but most of them were coming from devastated central Poland and from the eastern territories which had now been subsumed into Lithuania, Belarus and Ukraine. As a consequence of World War II and the post-war decisions, millions of people lost both their native country and their local homelands. The Gdańsk population was almost completely 'recreated'. More than two years after World War II according to the official data, Gdańsk had a total number of 165,500 inhabitants: 61.5 percent was constituted by emigrants from central Poland, 16 percent repatriates from USSR, 3 percent repatriates and re-emigrants from other countries, 9 percent natives, and 10.3 percent children under four were counted separately (Stryczyński, 1981). Gdańsk quickly attracted people both as a place perceived as originally Polish and as a port with high potential.

The new communist authorities proclaimed that these territories had now been returned to the homeland. Dislocations of population were partly spontaneous, but to a large extent they were organized on the basis of the agreement between the Soviet Union and Poland. The exercise was called 'repatriation' because it allowed people who had had Polish citizenship before the war and claimed that they were Polish, to leave the new republics in the East. The USSR regarded these migrations as the solution to the problem of Polish communities in these countries and moreover dubbing them repatriation gave the impression that this process was what was desired by Polish people. Broadly speaking, paradoxically, Polish people were coming from their own land which turned out to be foreign beyond the Bug River, to a foreign country which it transpired was their own. A decisive factor which had already prompted many people to head north and west before the end of the war was the threat of plunder, collectivization and repression. This situation explains why there is in Gdańsk a community who feel Belorussian for example.

Nowadays, it is often explicitly stated that those migrations and resettlements were forced. The post-war myth of coming back to the homeland, as well as other ideological aspects of the Polish People's Republic, are now being widely deconstructed by historians, social activists, intellectuals and politicians. For many, the myth explaining the Polish presence in Gdańsk is understood as sheer propaganda. Nonetheless, the city and its identity were reconstructed on the basis of the idea of the regained own, clearly Polish, city. Thanks to it, Gdańsk got a chance for social and material rebirth, whereas

many other post-German cities, although having preserved their urban layer, lost their social, economic and administrative position.

Sociologists dealing with return migration usually focus directly on the migrating groups and pay less attention to social representations and the meaning of the places of return. Yet the culturally determined understanding of space – their own place on earth, a homeland, a native land, a fatherland or motherland – is an essential issue for return migrants. There is a wealth of controversy about whether or not a particular migration is return migration, repatriation is born precisely from these different ways of interpreting a place, its cultural identity and its symbolic affiliation. The objective definition of migration as a movement from one country to another is inadequate and omits problems of border change. The idea of return migration is based on the assumption of strong, permanent relations between humans and particular countries. Coming back home means restoring the right order of belonging. The idea of this order may be derived from the territorial dimension of national, ethnic, local or family identity which sometimes goes back for centuries. In this case, the reference was fixed in the deep Polish past in Gdańsk.

In 1945, the destruction of Gdańsk was perpetrated by Rokossowski's army as an act of revenge on an imagined enemy: in their eyes the city was 'German'. During the next few months, Gdańsk was dealt a crushing blow from storm winds and was transformed into a sea of ruins. After World War II, the extent of devastation in Poland was enormous: almost 90 percent of Gdańsk was demolished. At first spontaneous clearance of debris within the month was becoming organized by the Gdańska Dyrekcja Odbudowy (Gdańsk Direction of Reconstruction) founded by the Ministry of Reconstruction. Although work was very hard and repaid only in food, volunteer social engagement was very high.

It was under such circumstances that this ambiguous Polish historical city became a space of free creation for new authorities, town planners and architects. In addition to the age-long armed conflicts around Gdańsk, especially during the last two hundred years, the city was also a symbolic Polish-German battleground – where conflict was waged by politicians, historians, school-teachers, architects, novelists and so on. This battle continued also into the twentieth century nourished on both sides by reciprocal painful post-war memories. The idea of 'hypercity' (Nas and Samuels, 2006), where the symbolic image of the city precedes and prevails over its material carriers, was fully represented here.

Let me cite two very different excerpts from the press in which the subject is the same, but the attitudes toward it are completely different. Both quotations are derived from the press published immediately after the war (April and May 1945). The first one is from 'Dziennik Baltycki' ('The Baltic Daily'):

> Downtown Gdańsk lies in debris, ruins and ashes. However, despite the demolition, the city has not lost any of its monumental character. Broken and deformed, it proudly displays the remnants of its great splendour (...). Delicate silhouettes of the burnt-out houses, the partially preserved beautiful fragments of architecture appear as a strange stage decoration. The terror is no longer remembered, because the streets have been cleared of debris, and the trees are turning green, as it is spring. (Zalewska, 1945)

The admiration for the foundations of the city and its independent spirit is so strong that it leaves no room for questions regarding its former and new national identity. The city is a stage set ready for a new performance.

However, from time to time some reluctant opinions about Gdańsk resulting from uni-national thinking were also appearing. How different is the tone of the article written even earlier, in April 1945:

> Here in Gdańsk [unlike in Warsaw], I sum up the losses coolly. Perhaps I am a barbarian, but when Professor Jan Kilarski, a merited historian of the Polish roots of Gdańsk, speaks of the inability to reconstruct the Marienkirche, I feel bitter happiness. If all of the alleys of old Gdańsk, as well as all of the downtown have been burnt and ruined, if the granaries have been destroyed by bombs – the Gdańsk cranes, if all things which were imbued with the spirit of Teutonic power at the mouth of Vistula River have been lost, we are not going to reconstruct them or to cry over the ashes. (...) We will build Gdańsk on our own, in the Polish way, and it will have nothing to do with the Teutonic insolence. (Osmańczyk, 1945)

Directly after World War II such voices were not common. More representative was the opinion of the vice-president of the town who was also the author of the first reconstruction plan, Wladyslaw Czerny. In his opinion, Polish buildings should be rebuilt precisely and their German counterparts ignored as hostile to the culture of humankind. But it was not just an example of selective memory. He also said: 'Gdańsk will be rebuilt even more beautiful than it has ever been!' So, for him and many others, the reconstruction of the Main Town was a fulfilment of the urban utopia of a great and powerful Polish city.

In the symbolic dimension, Gdańsk belonged to common images important to Polish post-war society. For example, besides Warsaw and Krakow, Gdańsk was the only city depicted on a series of postage stamps and on the banknote. The myth of the eternal German city was substituted by the myth of the eternal Polishness of Gdańsk. The numbers of people pouring into Gdańsk and Sopot shows how appealing that image was.

But, in the material dimension it lay in ruins, a desert – a space which theoretically could be filled with any forms and symbols. Hence, it could become the fulfilment of an urban utopia – the materialization of the idea of the historic Polish city. But what could this mean in practice?

Anthropologists usually identify the medium of social memory with a linguistic message, often a verbal one. It is true that only words, spoken and listened to willingly and with commitment, are undoubtedly carriers of values and memories which are still alive. Other media, although more durable and objective but detached from the sender and the recipient, may become an illegible testimony of thought about the past, ownerless or imposed. However, from the social perspective, often the most significant carriers of memories are material objects and places. They seem to exist beyond the thoughts and will of individuals. It is they, not transitory nor locked in books, which enable the reification of collective memory.

After World War II, the attitude to monuments inspired by patriotic Polish sentiments was accepted by the authorities because it helped to legitimize them. As Stanisław Ossowski argued:

> The democratization of culture has been accompanied by the democratization of homeland. Possession of homeland has no longer been one of the class privileges. (Ossowski, 1984)

Within post-war discourse the ideology accompanying urban reconstructions was united with national identity. During the reconstruction of the city, the slogans of official propaganda – on the one hand, laying bare all the signs of the Polish presence in Gdańsk and, on the other, omitting the influence of Germans on the development of the city in the past – were convincing for the newcomers from central Poland, Vilnius, Lvov and Pomerania. The criterion of homeliness, identified with Polish character, was important to the assessment of monuments, both for the representatives of the intellectual elites of the time and for the post-war Polish authorities.

After World War II, Jan Zachwatowicz was appointed Chief Conservator of Monuments in Poland. In 1947, he finally accepted the huge project of rebuilding Gdańsk (the Main Town) in its 'historic form'. Conceptions of building the city in modern forms as well as leaving ruins as monuments were rejected. It is fascinating how in the thoughts of Zachwatowicz and other architects and decision-makers historic values were transformed into architectural plans in order to evoke a sense of patriotism. Zachwatowicz was convinced that the extraordinary scale of destruction posed a threat to the image of Polish culture, so the fundamental postulate and goal was saving the face of Polish culture. In order to do so, conservation was not enough. He wrote:

Figure 1. Reconstructed houses on Mariacka Street and at the background the reconstructed church N.M.P.

> Even if we are not able to restore some objects of art, we may and we have to recreate documents of the past because they are indispensable links to understanding the development of Polish culture. (Zachwatowicz, 1948)

Thanks to him and many others, the 'creative reconstruction' of Gdańsk began. His conception of recreating all the historical developments of the big quarters, especially the

Figure 2. Example of a historic scene on a reconstructed façade in the Main Town

Warsaw Old Town and Main Town of Gdańsk, was a withdrawal from a fundamental dogma of modern conservatory doctrine (which in general rejects reconstructions as false). Many years later, Zachwatowicz admitted that his decisions were a kind of regression but, from his point of view, at that time it was the only possible solution. He considered a wide reconstruction of these two cities as a duty towards future generations of Poles.

The main public buildings, churches and the city halls, were reconstructed as precisely as possible. But the reconstruction could not be exact in the case of less significant buildings. These 'documents of the past' have a mainly visual and superficial character – in most cases they are just objects which evoke historic connotations. The interiors of the houses are the realization of another utopia – the idea of a good socialist city. The façade sections do not cover the inside. The Main Town is a socialistic settlement with small, standardized but sunny flats as modernist planning doctrine demanded.

This 'creative reconstruction' resembles the bunch of phenomena labeled by Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983) 'the invention of tradition'. Buildings which claimed to be ancient are in fact modern and shaped in order to adjust to contemporary symbolic social demands. What kind of symbolic repertoire were they to convey? The classic concept of Stanisław Ossowski contained a scientific study of social ideas of homeland of the then elites; con-

Figure 3. Artistic whim on the 'historic' façade

sequently I think it is helpful to look at the post-war vision of Gdańsk in terms formulated by Ossowski. This may give some insights into the symbolic function of the Main Town in post-war Gdańsk and at the same time raise the question of whether it is up-to-date or not. Furthermore, Ossowski was interested in town-planning and some elements in his visions about properly organized settlement can be found in the Main Town houses which from the outside are tenant houses and from the inside are modest socialist flats.

Voices and memories of the many people engaged in the rebuilding of the Main Town show that the attitude described by Ossowski enjoyed enormous popularity (Trojanowska, 1978). He called it a moral duty of loving one's own private homeland, because it represented a common ideological homeland. It seemed to work with the rebuilt Main Town – it is one of the most impressive city reconstructions in Europe. The myth of the city which 'returned to Poland' and to which Polish people 'were returning' fulfilled its symbolic and integration functions to a large extent.

As a result of conflating historic and patriotic utopia with modern and socialist utopia something extraordinary emerged. In his analysis of the notion of homeland, Ossowski stated that with the exception of its habitual bonds with a particular territory – a small private homeland – its landscape is a metonymic representation of the ideological

Figure 4. Example of a renaissance arcade, absent in pre-war Gdańsk

homeland. Particular, well-known landscapes represent embodiments of the ideological homeland to individuals. But what should be done with a city which was known to only a few of its new inhabitants and was mainly a pile of debris? In the case of the Main Town in Gdańsk, decision-makers and architects made an extraordinary effort to make something opposite – to express the generalized Polishness in this particular landscape. Therefore, they tried to convey a landscape which was supposed to be the direct representation not only of historical Gdańsk (whatever that means exactly), but also of Polishness.

So, in this case this particular area was supposed to evoke patriotic feelings not on the grounds of social or habitual bonds, but to be an ideological homeland by itself. Others refer to Polish history, for example the Polish theatre, or present more or less generalized 'historic scenes'.

Those façades are more like sceneries, or museums of the past and imagined affiliations of old Gdańsk. Artists engaged in the reconstruction were often very young and had a free hand in preparing decorations. Many of the at-first-gaze historical looking buildings have modern, quite fanciful decorations. They are eye-catching and hide the oversimplified character of those blocks. Nevertheless the intention of the Gdańsk rebuilders was successful – the Main Town was commonly perceived as old.

Figure 5. Modernist spatial courtyard in a 'medieval city'

In post-war construction, the renaissance and baroque styles prevailed. For example, some renaissance arcades appeared which had previously been absent from this city but were more strongly associated with Polish culture than, for example, with neo-gothic. The new Main Town also has spacious courtyards as a result of the socialist view on habitation and ownership. The concern for authenticity of substance had to yield to common convictions about the socio-ideological role of historic monuments. At that time, the nineteenth-century eclectic buildings were considered to be of no value and were additionally viewed as German. So the total or partial ruins were replaced by objects of earlier forms.

Let us stick for a moment to the expressions 'heritage of the Polish nation', often used by the post-war authorities. This expression is ambivalent. On the one hand, it is inclusive because it embraces everything on the Polish territory. On the other, it is exclusive because either it makes all remains Polish or leaves them behind the category of shared heritage. The Gdańsk Main Town, although having more or less a historic shape, was in fact the outcome and expression of a very modern idea of uni-nationalism within one state. It reflects the understanding of the nation as described by Ossowski as an ideological community integrated by shared images of the homeland, but not necessarily by

Figure 6. One of the dreamy streets of Oliwa district

common ancestors or blood ties. But the reconstruction of Gdańsk or Warsaw was also based on the assumption, implicit in Ossowski's concept, that the ideological homeland is identifiable to all.

For decades this reconstructed landscape of the Main Town was almost the only one presented in albums, postcards, history books and literature – in the symbolic dimension this was Gdańsk itself. This was the symbolic, tangible arena reconstructed and popularized as a bearer of socially conscious, Polish identity. But after World War II, when the center of Gdańsk consisted of a pile of rubble, many of the villas and tenements built at the beginning of the twentieth century with almost fully equipped flats in the residential districts of Oliwa and Wrzeszcz were deserted by pre-war inhabitants. And that was the place where the newcomers mainly moved in during the first few years. For years those parts of the city were put in symbolic oblivion.

Although today nobody questions the necessity of rebuilding the Main Town in its historic form, the number of voices discussing and criticizing the way it was realized has been increasing. Most architects reject the idea of any further development of the Main Town in 'historic style'. The homogeneous idea of history imposed on Gdańsk is likewise considered crushing. Public discourse in the local press and on Internet and the radio re-

veals an attitude which rejects the national meaning of this city as a 'place of return', or 'returning place'. Nowadays plenty of the people writing more or less professionally about Gdańsk dismiss the Main Town as chilly and prefer to discuss their views of Oliwa and Wrzeszcz, those pre-war quarters of old tenement houses and villas mentioned above.

The Main Town as a place of scenic interest is also omitted in contemporary literature devoted to post-war Gdańsk. If the most popular writers like Pawel Huelle and Stefan Chwin or popular essayists mention this central area of the city, they do it with reluctance or at least condescendingly. They are convinced that the present-day Old Town is an artificial 'stylization'. In their opinion the houses are not exact reconstructions of old buildings; instead they are merely the suggestions of their previous appearance. They yearn for the real 'city', of which the picture is captured only on old photographs from Gdańsk's Free City period (Tusk, 1999). It is striking that these authors, as well as most present-day inhabitants of Gdańsk, were born after the war and in fact cannot remember the Gdańsk of those photographs and postcards. So they are talking about some kind of *post-memory* based on the interpretation of the images, not on their own experience.

The birth of the new Gdańsk myth after 1989

At present, many writers, journalists, historians and architects accuse the Main Town of Gdańsk of a lack of historic authenticity, of frontage and false appeal. It is fascinating, but almost never currently mentioned, that those shortcomings were widely known during the time of reconstruction. So, my impression is that most of these comments, as quoted above, are tinged with an ideological character and refer mainly to the utopia on which this development was founded. The main problem is that the goal of reviving Gdańsk as a common Polish city for all seems to sit uncomfortably as a heritage of communist authority. The Main Town is in the process of being perceived as a petrified monument of the socialist imagination of the ideological homeland.

Today the idea of an ideological homeland, uniform and one for all – as Ossowski wrote – seems artificial, imposed and unattractive. It is excluding for those who do not accept or fit into the uni-national ideology of the post-war period. What is more, contemporary Gdańsk prefers to be perceived by its local authorities as a town of the Solidarity Movement which has led to political transformation and the overthrowing of communism. In this respect, it is obvious that the majority of the local elites do not identify themselves with communist Poland or anything relating to it. Therefore, beyond particular discussions about the advantages and disadvantages of post-war rebuilding and further plans for this area, looms the problem that the Main Town in its contemporary guise is a legacy of a certain authority and epoch. It stirs up controversies because it was

built not only as a model reconstruction but also as a housing settlement for the working class. All this does not meet today's needs and expectations. The center of the city is expected to be attractive to tourists and investors, in other words vivid and profitable.

Additionally, in the 1990s, a new founding myth of Gdańsk achieved prominence: the myth of multi-cultural and multi-ethnic Gdańsk which existed until World War II. Many people became interested in pre-war Gdańsk and the architecture from the turn of the nineteenth century, which until recently was treated by many people as well as historians and municipals as a rather unimportant, unfamiliar heritage. Its strangeness has become interesting now – original pre-war buildings are transformed from being odd to being mysterious and original in stark contrast to the Main Town. The city from this period is being rediscovered and often idealized. It seems solid and beautiful, unique and adjusted to more than sophisticated human needs. Also, private websites devoted to Gdańsk are mainly concerned with areas and objects which originated in the nineteenth century.

Publication of documents, literary works and albums with pictures of pre-war Gdańsk in the 1990s triggered a social debate on the identity of Gdańsk and further developments at the Main Town. The chairman of the Association 'Dar Gdańska' writes about the time of the emergence of the idea to publish an album with pictures of pre-war Gdańsk in these words:

> The great Gdańsk revolts of the 1970s and the 1980s strengthened the conviction of uniqueness of this place in many inhabitants of the city. Probably this return to great history to the banks of the Motlawa River allowed the representatives of my generation to discard their complexes and resentments and to look back to the past of Gdańsk with courage. The freer we felt, the deeper our roots grew and the more we strove for continuity. (Tusk, 1996)

This kind of statement shows that the second and third generation of new inhabitants feels at home in Gdańsk on the grounds of habituation and contemporary history. From their point of view, the Main Town seems strange and a little bit detached from the feelings of its inhabitants. As a symbol of Polishness it is perceived by many intellectuals as false and unsuitable to contemporary needs, of which being different compared to other Polish cities is one of the most important. Instead, the important field of interest became a pre-war, hardly known past and the houses of those who had left Gdańsk during and after the World War II.

The new symbolic myth of Gdańsk is devoid of the idea of stable relations between a particular national group and the city. Consequently, it can be a city of return for anybody who feels a connection with it. The First (2002) and the Second (2006) World-Wide Congress of Gdańsk People, organized by the municipal authorities, were prominent ex-

amples of this trend. It was a manifestation of the fact that the present-day identification with Gdańsk is not necessarily an expression of the national identity and it does not have to be tied to permanent residence in the city. Gdańsk is instead a complex of valuable ideas and symbols rather than a specific, palpable place.

The flourishing of Gdańsk recollection literature in the 1990s

In the second half of the twentieth century, the most popular author to write about Gdańsk in a different manner and about districts other than the central one was Gunter Grass – he was an outstanding exception describing reality from the beginning of the twentieth century in more complex, not purely black or white, German or Polish colors. His stories are deeply embedded in the Wrzeszcz district and have had a huge influence upon the perception of the Gdańsk history and landscape among Poles – they were revealing and began a process of filling in the vacuum in Polish social memory about the pre-war life of this city. They have also created a basis for the phenomenon called 'Gdańsk literature' which flourished in the last decade of the twentieth century.

Gdańsk for sure belongs to the literary cities and its symbolic character is strongly co- created by books. For this article, I have chosen Stefan Chwin and Pawel Huelle, who are the most popular authors of this genre on the edge of fiction and memorials and also enjoy a name outside Poland. So I will focus on their books, because if you wish you may have a chance to read them in English, German or Spanish.

The recent interpretative turn in social anthropology has led to the examination of narratives hitherto the preserve of literary criticism. Books are an important part of our culture and there is no reason to omit them and focus only on, for example, oral history or pictures. Fiction and rhetorical figures are treated here as a key to social experience and hidden cultural patterns. This perspective seems especially valid in reference to the literature in which I am interested – literature of 'small homelands', which hovers on the edge between official documents and fiction and is usually created by intellectuals, often engaged in public life or with academic affiliations. In this case, Stefan Chwin is a professor of literature and Pawel Huelle is a philologist and philosopher, both from Gdańsk University. Both are also well known for their press articles and involvement in local matters.

The flourishing of this genre in the 1990s was apparently the result of the democratization of Polish discourse about the past and empowerment of the regions and communities. I think that these books can be seen as a way of regaining power over public spaces by the people, leading to their subsequent redefinition.

A first striking feature of contemporary Gdańsk literature is the abundance, indeed profusion of descriptions of Gdańsk – its landscapes and the sensory experiences which

permeate them. They raise questions about the reasons and functions of those omnipresent descriptions in passing of – to the first circle of audience – well-known streets, houses and parks or indeed furniture. Among those rediscovering the city-images, it is possible to discern certain regularity.

If the Main Town is ever present in novels, these refer to the period when it was no more than a pile of debris and social life was caught up in a chaotic transition, and everybody, Germans and Poles alike, were unsure of their fate and everyday existence. Those descriptions resemble descriptions of nature or geological sections in which layers are visually distinguishable but convey no particular message to the novice observers. If narrators or protagonists in latter periods ever mention the Old Town situated in the 1980s, it is perceived as similar to movie or theatre decoration or Disneyland. As Chwin notices:

> Gdańsk? It is interesting but my imagination has never been captured by the picturesque Gdańsk of the Golden Age of the Hanza, baroque, city centre, Main Town and port. These were not my home sites. My authentic home is the XIXth and XXth century outskirts, the residential areas of Oliwa, Langfurh and Sopot rescued by a miracle from the fires in the suburbs. (Chwin, 2004)

Apparently, in the imaginations of narrators and characters in these books, these more or less accurately rebuilt objects are devoid of the value of historic truth and authenticity. The recently compiled canon of seeing Gdańsk is rejected.

The true city as well as childhood and family life seem to lie beyond this central area. Old residential peripheries are becoming the center of real experience. Pawel Huelle's protagonists mainly roam in Wrzeszcz and sometimes drop into Oliwa, which is the domain of the Chwin heroes. Both districts are adjacent to each other and have much in common. In contrast to the so-called Old Town and other districts of Gdańsk mainly covered by huge, monotonous blocks, their buildings are substantially old – usually they have stood for a century and were built mainly by Prussian burghers. Wrzeszcz, also known from Grass' books, is mainly a tenement district; Oliwa is more residential and is also graced by a very old monastery, a cathedral and mansions.

In the Huelle novels, wandering among them is the most constant element of childhood and youth. Reading his novels, we can discover that Gdańsk itself and the values associated with it are the most important topics pervading his works. The on postcards or albums rarely shown and often dilapidated houses, old cemeteries and forgotten railway tracks covered in undergrowth, are turned into cultural artefacts, of greater interest than just a functional surrounding. For example, the same shop occupying the site of an old store, the same forgotten evangelical cemetery, or the house in

Figure 7. Example of a dilapidated old house in the Oliwa district

which Schopenhauer was supposed to have spent his childhood appear and re-appear in various stories.

In Huelle's books, such as *Weiser Dawidek*, frequent but more concise and cartographic accounts than those in Chwin's books, convey a false impression of realistic descriptions of scenery. However, they are always seen through someone's eyes, usually those of children and young people, whose vision of their city is not yet fixed as they are still in the process of discovering their surroundings. In contrast, adults have a stereotypical vision, dominated by utilitarian and national categories, of houses in Oliwa and Wrzeszcz. They use post-German houses and furniture but they do not particularly like it or are not interested in their past. Judging them, we must remember that they lost or had to leave their own belongings for which they have a nostalgic yearning.

However, for children this material culture is familiar in a habitual dimension although odd culturally, so they are intrigued by their difference to new Polish material culture as well as to the Old Town. Consequently, children brought up in Gdańsk are becoming acquainted with their vicinity in their own way. No social institution, such as family, school or books, helps them on their path to discovery. They roam around alone, sometimes meeting people, usually old German inhabitants, who remember pre-war Gdańsk or mysterious characters who are also trying to discover the city, learning about its history. In the second instance, they usually get lost in the world which consists of a merging of the pre-war past and post-war realm. New inhabitants are a little like tourists without a travel guide.

The informal guides also show maps and photographs from pre-war times often found by accident in their own old home. But again these are misleading, they are often hard to read; they reveal not only the similarities but also the difference between the pre-war and present-day conditions. So they are fascinating but puzzling.

At least Huelle's books give an impression that each person remembers and knows the other Gdańsk as a result of their own experiences. In this we find the influence of Gdańsk philosopher, Arthur Schopenhauer. As he once wrote that as forms of human eyewitness time and space are deceptive, all these pictures from different moments and perspectives create at the very most an elusive image of the city. But subjects, in some special moments in their lives, are able to journey through the axis of time and look back into the past, and some stories are also about those moments of encounter with the past Gdańsk and its forgotten, pre-war inhabitants. As a result, the Huelle protagonists discover that their city is like a picture created by superimposing many layouts on a matrix.

In Stefan Chwin's books, getting to know the closest surrounding is an even more individualized experience. Visiting the own town is an exciting experience, because it is similar to a book written in a forgotten language. Sometimes it is the direct contact with German inscriptions – on buildings, porcelain, newspaper left in the attic which not many

of the young protagonists can read. Not school, nor parents, nor Polish books help them in this. The medium of discovery is via the material objects themselves, of which the meaning has to be interpreted or recreated in the light of changing life experiences.

In books written by Gdańsk authors, the fortune of these houses and their interiors reflects both: the untold experiences of migrants who had to leave these houses in 1945 and of those who had to familiarize themselves with this heritage. In these books, the hitherto marginalized, pre-war face of the city peeps through, as memories about inhabitants of pre-war Gdańsk were forced out of Polish consciousness. Children discover strange books or newspapers under the wallpaper in their rooms or in the cellar. Going there is a visualization of stepping into the layers of social unconsciousness. Contact with material objects from these districts also carries the similitude of their former owners. It is an imperfect substitute for social interaction with absent people who are represented and acknowledged only by their property. Like tables, gardens are objects used by individuals and families, and consequently they enable the second and third generations of Gdańsk inhabitants to look at Germans as persons with a similar destiny, not as a once aggressive nation.

In Chwin's books, we encounter a discussion mediated by things about the past – group responsibility and individual faith. Chwin often refers to his youthful reflections as:

> What did these beautiful, eternal gardens and old houses have in common with polished high boots, pistols, parabellum, whip and barbed wire… yet they also built them – those in breeches and caps with crests, they created them or their fathers did.

These kinds of reflections are changing with time – in these books the material culture of Wrzeszcz and Oliwa is losing its German-state character and is turning into a product of the private, intimate middle class saved from the public life of pre-war Germany.

Finally, Chwin often points out that the bourgeois house was born of the 'wisdom of sheltering from the flood'. Comfortable, individualized houses belonged to the private sphere of German society, a society which as a whole wanted to preserve its peaceful, affluent life as far from politics and war as possible. These solid, original, individualized houses inspire a positive emotion in contrast to the new, standardized modern houses and cheap furniture. In Chwin novels, they turn out to be a symbol of well-being and an affluent lifestyle, while the new buildings and their accoutrements lead to constraints, no choice, leveling to a lowest common denominator. These old, post-Prussian houses have nowadays been transformed into an asylum for Poles, a haven from the communist realm.

Gdańsk: The multi-cultural city

After World War II, Wrzeszcz and Oliwa were mostly turned into communal housing. At that time, crucial basic physical needs could be partly appeased thanks to these furnished houses. Feelings of alienation were suppressed in the face of lack of choice and the usually high quality of the items and buildings. During the next decades, in contrast to the narrow and rubbishy offers in communist Poland this solid stuff survived longer than anybody could have ever supposed.

On the one hand, the post-Prussian origin of this material culture became the guarantee of good quality, yet, on the other hand, it was still not familiar. As a result, for decades its meaning was mainly technical. In many flats an abundance of post-German goods and furniture survived not only thanks to careful conservation but also thanks to the oblivion or lack of either the knowledge or the possibilities to use them.

Some people did not know the purposes of particular equipment – for instance in many old Gdańsk flats, the stoves for heating rooms have an inside shelf on which to keep food warm, which is very useful when you do not have a microwave, but not many new inhabitants of Gdańsk used it. Often the second and third generation is more interested in them, but now of course not for practical purposes but to become acquainted with pre-war Gdańsk culture which they treat as part of their own past.

This long-term oblivion – the absence in albums, novels or museum exhibitions and scientific reflection referring to those common goods and their role in contemporary Poland during the twentieth century – gives the younger generation a chance to feel like a discoverer or explorer in their own homes. Ordinary houses and objects of everyday life originated in pre-war times are now substituting those old, public historic symbols. With reference to the James Clifford essay *The Predicament with Culture*, these houses and items of furniture are shifting from the category of ordinary objects to the category of art of everyday life, and from non-authentic, non-Polish to authentic and old. In contrast, the historical objects in the city landscape which belonged to the public and central areas and were symbols of Gdańsk are being eased out of the category of art and authenticity towards the status of non-authentic artefacts, mainly now appropriated by tourism or investors. Discovering the family stories of pre-war and post-war inhabitants of Gdańsk and their biographies embedded in the same city space in Oliwa and Wrzeszcz is a visible counter-reaction to the dominant perception of the history of the city in the categories of the history of states and nations. This tendency deepens the individualization of the perception of things. It is also a counter-reaction to communist times when people had little to say about what they wanted in the public space and when everything was politicized. The hypercity is changing more rapidly than the material one.

But why does the Gdańsk literature trigger this abundance of descriptions of the

landscape? My thesis is that in the diverse landscape of Gdańsk, this exceptional interest results from the tension arising from the intersection of three pairs of categories related with the different types of Gdańsk landscapes – The Old Town, Oliwa and Wrzeszcz. Nowadays the Old Town is perceived to be a Polish but an artificial, communist-created heritage, whereas districts as Oliwa and Wrzeszcz are thought to be German, liberal and authentic. This makes both types of places a less obvious reference for contemporary local identity; an identity which constitutes a process referring to different types of symbolic sources and post memories in search of new, individualized meaning.

The main problem with buildings, which have a status of symbolic dominants because of their past, location or functions, is that they last longer than the needs, intentions and socially shared images which have created life. Apart from their primary meaning, they are transformed into elements wanted or not, as monuments representing those who built them. The people of Gdańsk have to find new ways of interpreting their Main Town. The myth of the multi-cultural city seems to help in overcoming the problem of the long, complex past of this town, but is it sufficient to create a feeling of belonging? Over the last few years that feeling seems to be weakening. What will be next? That is a subject for another discussion.

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6. Obelisk and Axis

Urban Symbolism of Buenos Aires

Lars Bakker

Introduction

In this article the urban symbolism of the city of Buenos Aires is discussed from a material approach. Urban symbolism reflects the historically formed socio-cultural state of the urban community and functions as her common memory (Nas, 1993). Studies in urban symbolism have provided insight that some cities have one or a few symbol carriers that not only refer to certain historical events, layers or stages, but have accumulated defining meanings for the city throughout history. Buenos Aires is such a city, with two symbol carriers representing the city: the civic historical axis of the Avenida de Mayo and the Obelisk.

For this article, *porteños* (citizens of Buenos Aires) from diverse socio-cultural backgrounds have been qualitatively interviewed about the representative material elements of the city and the city's signification. They include taxi-drivers, women doing shopping – in indoor malls as well as lower-income areas – local government professionals, students and university professors.[1] To illustrate their stories, some were asked to draw a mental map[2] of the material symbols (see for example Figure 1). These qualitative interviews and mental maps bring forth a coherent story, despite the socio-economic and cultural differences among the interviewees. This indicates the existence of a hypercity: the whole of identified urban symbols, creating a reality that can become more real than the city itself (Nas, Jaffe and Samuels, 2006). *Porteños* see a clear difference between the inside and outside, between city and inland, the physical limits of the city,[3] but represented by the two symbol carriers. Important parts of the hypercity also come to the fore in three studies from diverse academic disciplines concerning Buenos Aires. Combined, these studies reciprocally sustain the results from the qualitative interviews. One of these studies is the quantitative study of Lacarrieu (2007) among *porteños*, which captured the material elements symbolizing the city, also acknowledging the importance of a strong difference between the inside and outside. She found that the Obelisk is *the* material element symbolizing the city. Furthermore she discovered that the Plaza de Mayo and the Plaza de los Dos Congresos are very meaningful squares and that the political buildings on those squares are found to be the most beautiful buildings of the city. All these elements, except for the Obelisk, are connected by the Avenida de Mayo. The connected elements together form the axis. The other two studies, by Vogel (1993) and Romero (2007), support the symbolic importance of this axis. These two studies respectively enumerate the ma-

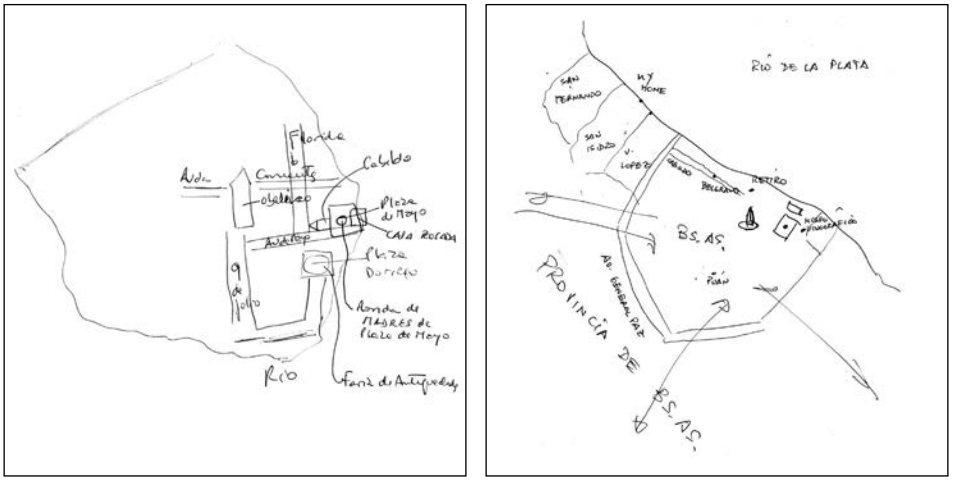


Figure 1. Mental maps of two scholars. The left map was drawn by a scholar living and working in the city of Buenos Aires. The scholar of the right map was living in the agglomeration of Gran Buenos Aires outside the city to the north but working in the city. Both have drawn the Obelisk, the Plaza de Mayo and Casa Rosada. Also, the city limits clearly differentiate the city from the agglomeration and inland

terial symbols of Buenos Aires from 1806 until 1910 and explain powerfully the political history of the city.

This study seeks to explain what the axis and the Obelisk signify. To define a city, or to give it meaning, it has to contrast itself with its surroundings. It will be demonstrated that Buenos Aires has defined itself in opposition not only to the inland of Argentina but even to the rest of South America. This study also takes a chronological approach from the colonial period, the independent period and the golden age, to the modern period and today. It combines political historical events with the developments in worldwide urban planning and architecture. The axis of the Avenida de Mayo was a sovereign material symbol of the city until 1930. In this article it is argued that hereafter the axis was contested by modern infrastructure developments and the construction of the Obelisk. Since 1990 the most important material development in Buenos Aires has been realized in the revitalized district of Puerto Madero. The axis has been extended in this district, although interruptedly.

The article is concluded with the summary of the image of Buenos Aires by the *porteños* through the meaning of the axis and the Obelisk. Furthermore, differences between symbolic production and consumption of both symbol carriers, including the extensions of the axis in Puerto Madero, are conceptually mapped. Finally, it is recommended that the 'symbolic legibility' of the axis be improved in the light of city marketing.

Chronological development of the axis 1580-1913

After the first foundation of Buenos Aires by the Spaniards in 1536[4] had soon been left behind,[5] a new, second foundation in 1580 was protected by the construction of a colonial fortress. The fortress was located on the shore of the Río de la Plata and would be accessible through a central arch (Figure 2) from its side at the Plaza Mayor. The village was planned around the Plaza Mayor over a rigid grid pattern with a fixed width for the streets.[6] This was obligatory according to the Spanish colonial law for city foundations and planning ('Leyes de las Indias'). The Plaza Mayor was an important trading place within the city (Cutolo, 1994). Buenos Aires grew through its port function as a city trading between its inland and foreign markets. Initially it was the center of a flourishing contraband trade, because the shore of the Río de la Plata[7] near the Plaza Mayor was too shallow for the boarding of ships. South of the city at the mouth of the river Riachuelo in the Río de la Plata was the port of La Boca. This port was therefore in use and became important by the eighteenth century. In 1776, the Spaniards appointed Buenos Aires as the capital of the new Viceroyalty of Buenos Aires and the Spanish Viceroy ruled from the Cabildo at the Plaza Mayor (comprising Paraguay, Uruguay, Bolivia and Argentina). An important reason for being appointed the capital of the new Viceroyalty was the threat of an invasion by Portugal and England. With its new status Buenos Aires achieved military reinforcements. The city came under attack by English troops but won the battle. Hereafter the Plaza Mayor was renamed Plaza de la Victoria in 1808. The new status of the city also encompassed a Customs facility to tax imports and exports and so contributed to the political economic strength of the city. Until the city became capital of the new Viceroyalty it had counted only 40,000 inhabitants, but with its new position it really started to grow. A revolution in the Cabildo put an end to Spanish colonial power over Buenos Aires on 25 May 1810 (Vigil, 1968). After the independence of Buenos Aires and the other Argentinean provinces, the relations between the city and the inland were hampered by civil war and political difficulties over the authority over the Customs located in Buenos Aires.

During the nineteenth century, several piers were constructed in the Río de la Plata to overcome its shallowness at its shore in order to have ships board at the city (Figure 3). In 1859, a pier of 300 meters was constructed behind the fortress in order to facilitate access to the city center of the Plaza de la Victoria. At its intersection with the shore a new Customs building was constructed in 1857, the Aduana Nueva.[8] Part of the fortress had to be demolished, but the arch of the fortress was conserved (Figure 2). One of the former buildings of the interior of the fortress was reconstructed and became the Government House. The Customs was the first building in the city of grand dimensions and had a lighthouse that became a symbol for the city. The Customs would become a symbol of the economic power of Buenos Aires.

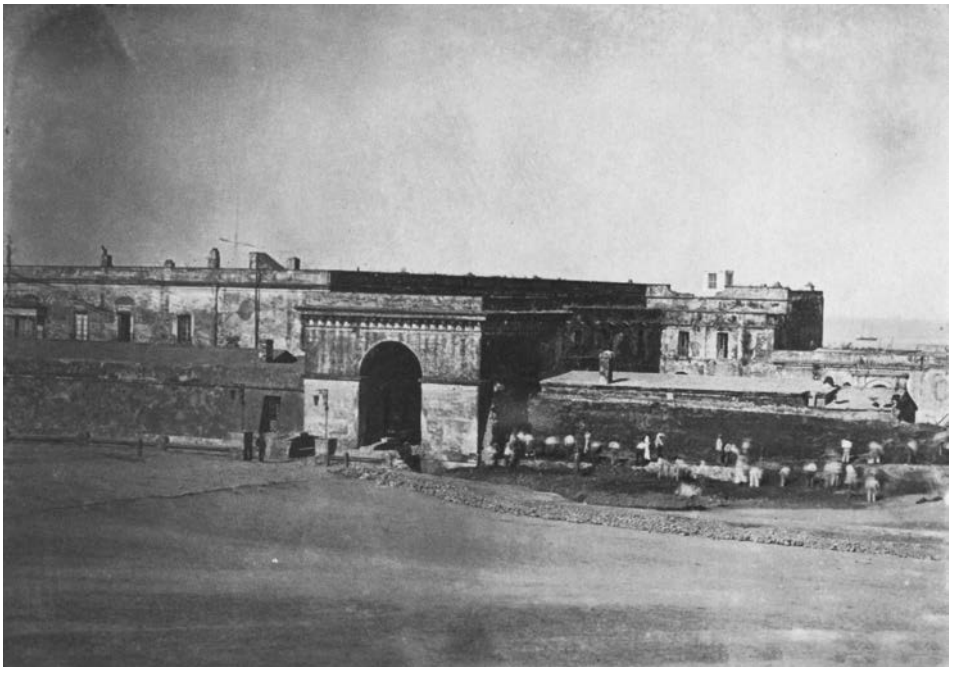


Figure 2. Picture from around 1850 of what was left of the fortress. In front the arch

This struggle over the Customs was resolved when Buenos Aires was made a federal district in 1880. The federalization cleared the way for an unprecedented growth. The city expanded quickly between 1880 and 1929 due to an increase in the demand for Argentinean wool and grain from industrializing Europe. A booming economy[9] provided for a massive influx of European immigrants looking for work in Argentina, mostly positioning themselves in Buenos Aires and its surroundings. Nowadays, the city is still considered an exclave of ethnic Europeans by the inland of Argentina and the rest of Latin America. City planning was taken into a new direction after the federalization. The Plaza de la Victoria was given a socio-civic function while its trade function was displaced to other areas of the city. It was renamed Plaza de Mayo in 1884[10] remembering the revolution in the month of May of 1810. In 1894, the Customs building and the piers were demolished for the construction of a new port called Puerto Madero. The port consisted of four docks parallel with the shore by the city center. The demolished Customs building was marked out by the new, semi-circular Parque Colón.[11]

Traffic increased and there was a need for more open space in the dense grid system. This motivated the planning of the first avenue of the city, characteristically broader than the streets, the Avenida de Mayo. *Porteños*, most of European descent, and due to the economic boom a rich minority frequently travelling to Europe, were inspired by the

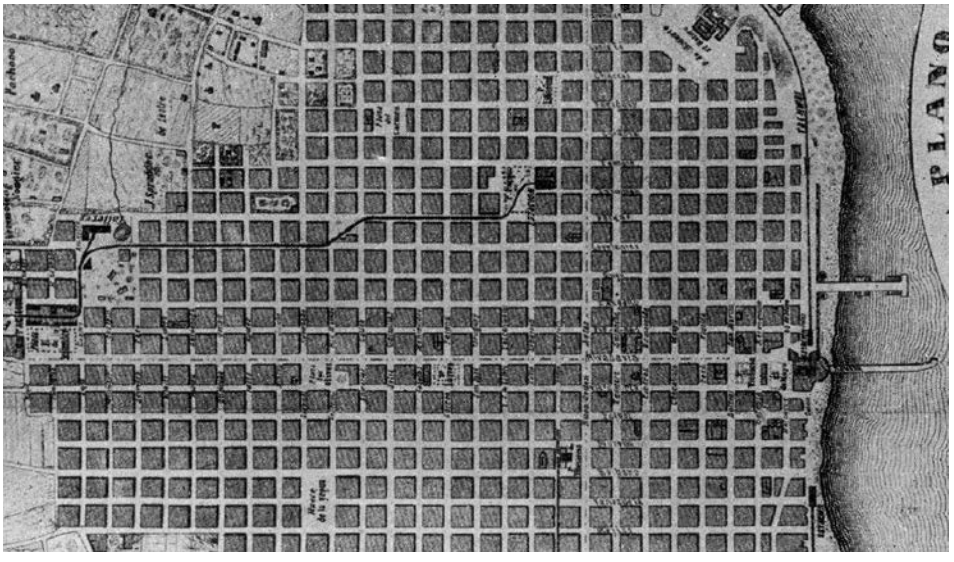


Figure 3: Cut from a map of Buenos Aires of 1866, designed by Engineer Aymes to provide insight into the existing and projected railways of the city. West of the 300-meter southern pier are clearly discernible the semi-circular Customs building and the city's central square (Source: http://ssplan.buenosaires.gov.ar/media/gallery/jalbum/flashmapasantiguos/index.html)

planning model of Haussmann for Paris. Herein, harmony, unity and coherence of program were important factors. The *porteño* avenue had to resemble the Rue Rivoli in Paris and the Gran Vía in Madrid (Vogel, 1993: 93). The avenue was planned from the middle of the western end of the Plaza de Mayo ten blocks in westerly direction. This resulted in the demolition of the middle of the row of ten city blocks and consequently the creation of two smaller city blocks by the avenue. For this grand intervention in the built environment, a part of the Cabildo, the location of the revolution, had to be sacrificed. At the western end of the Avenida de Mayo, the Plaza de los dos Congresos was constructed. The National Congress was built there and nowadays the Senate is also located at the square, uniting the legislative powers in that location. The new Avenida de Mayo was inaugurated in 1894 and increased the esthetic balance of the urban planning within a grid system and dominant central square. Art deco and art nouveau style buildings were constructed to board the Avenida de Mayo as well as many other streets of the city up to the current day, effectively copying European architecture and city planning: 'The city became Europeanised in its taste and its fashion' (Romero, 2007: 107). A post office was built next to the Government House in the same style and added to the Government House (Casa Rosada) in 1898, united through the construction of a large arch (Figure 4). This arch resembled the arch of the colonial fortress. In 1910, the city had the airs of important world

Figure 4. The Government House, or Casa Rosada, with its central arch. In front the Pyramid

capitals. In the salons of the Avenida de Mayo one could encounter the cosmopolitan lifestyle, like in the salons of Paris. Nowadays cultural tourists are being entertained by visiting these locals and specific buildings. The avenue was the center of the golden epoch of Argentina. In 1913, the first metro line of South America was inaugurated under the Avenida de Mayo and in the same year the construction of the Diagonals Norte and Sur was also started, again following the Haussmannian model,[12] departing from the western part of the Plaza de Mayo in a north western and south western direction. Below both diagonals a metro line was constructed, and the Avenida de Mayo was in the middle of these diagonals.

It became the principal road of the city. H. Vogel (1993) quotes A. Jauretche, 'a very shrewd observer and analyst of Buenos Aires' that the Avenida de Mayo used to be the symbol of the entire city. According to Jauretche, during the first quarter of the twentieth century all Argentines and *porteños* passed through it. The material culture of the city was dominated by the axis: the material elements from the National Congress to the Government House (Figure 5). The axis also was and is the material symbol for national politics. At the Plaza de Mayo stands the seat of the executive power (Government House or Casa Rosada) and at the Plaza de los dos Congresos the legislative power (National

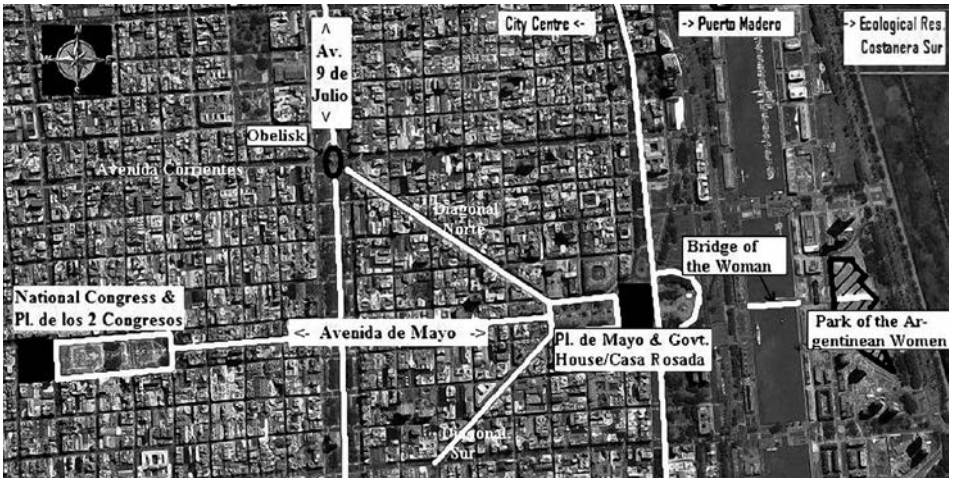


Figure 5. Map of the center of Buenos Aires with indications of central material elements (Source: Google maps). Clearly visible is the grid pattern with narrow streets and the broader avenidas. The historical axis of the Avenida de Mayo runs west-east from the National Congress to the Government House and former Customs building, nowadays Plaza Colón, represented by the semi-circle. The two diagonals departing from the Plaza de Mayo increase the central importance of the axis of the Avenida de Mayo. East of the Government House is the former shoreline of the Río de la Plata, represented by the right white line. From north to south runs the Avenida 9 de Julio with its Obelisk at the intersection with Avenida Corrientes. Recent extensions of the axis in Puerto Madero are the Bridge and Park

Congress and Senate). The main entrances of the National Congress and the Casa Rosada are situated along one line. Up to today, on the day of the inauguration of the president of the nation, the new president is transported during a special ceremony from the Congress to the Presidential Palace over the Avenida de Mayo (Figure 6). At the Plaza de Mayo are also located the Ministry of Economic Affairs, the AFIP (taxes), the city government building, the metropolitan cathedral[13] and the National Bank of Argentina. A national civic – political – axis has effectively been created. The axis is as such also a symbol for the dominance of Buenos Aires over the rest of Argentina. This is mentally mapped by the administrative limits, demonstrated by Figure 1.[14]

Contesting the principality of the axis after the 1930s

Important modernizations of and additions to material culture occurred outside the axis in the city in the twentieth century. The huge expansion of the population between 1880 and 1929 had mainly been accommodated by extending the city within the same grid pat-

Figure 6. Avenido de Mayo seen from the Plaza de Mayo on 'Dia de la Patria', May 25

tern. This grid pattern was not seen anymore as apt for modern society. In the transport and circulation plans from 1925 (Plan Noël) until 2000,[15] emphasis was put on modern planning and the automobile (Domínguez Roca, 2005). Predominantly radial avenues between the city center and the larger metropolitan area were constructed, more than transversal connections, in fact contesting the dominance of the (axis of the) Avenida de Mayo. One of those radial avenues was the Avenida Corrientes, completed in 1936. In the same period, new symbol carriers have risen to (partly) symbolize what the city is about. The Plaza de la República was created in 1936, encompassing an entire city block. It was the beginning of the construction in parts of the Avenida Norte-Sur (planned in 1912) and intersected with Avenida Corrientes. On the Plaza de la República, the landmark of the Obelisk was built in 1937.[16] It was not a unique construction; cities like Washington and Paris also possessed an obelisk. The *porteño* Obelisk commemorates the first foundation of the city 400 years before and the first flying of the Argentinean flag at the former church at that location. This is inscribed in the Obelisk. Popularly, the landmark symbolizes a place of happiness and partying (especially over soccer victories). It is also a place for various cultural activities (Lacarrieu, 2007).[17] Its central location on the intersection of two important avenues (Figure 5) and above a node of metro lines has cer-

Figure 7. The Obelisk on the Plaza de la República, in the middle of the high modern Avenida 9 de Julio

tainly contributed to its imageability and symbolic relevance. It has come to be the symbol of the city (Figure 7).

For the Avenida Norte-Sur 33 densely built city blocks were to be completely demolished (Clarín.com, 2005). In 1937 this Avenida was renamed Avenida 9 de Julio[18] and counted five blocks. The last part was completed in 1980. The Avenida 9 de Julio is one of the widest urban roads in the world. It cut the Avenida de Mayo in two halves (Figure 5), effectively decreasing the imageability (term by Lynch, 1960) of the Avenida de Mayo. The Avenida General Paz was built in 1941, a transversal highway over the western administrative limit of the city.[19] In 1938-1940, Le Corbusier and Pierre Jeanneret proposed the functionalist rationalist planning of a financial center, the Cité des Affairs (www.puertomadero.com). It would contain five skyscrapers on an artificial island in the Río de la Plata, connected to the urban infrastructure by an extension of the Avenida de Mayo. Puerto Madero, by that time fallen into decay, therefore had to be demolished (Figure 8). Le Corbusier also intended with this plan to re-establish the connection of the city to the river, lost in the last century. The plan, however, was never executed (Corporación Antiguo Puerto Madero S.A., 2006). Instead the financial center (Microcentro) mostly developed north of the axis. The most prosperous districts had become situated to the north

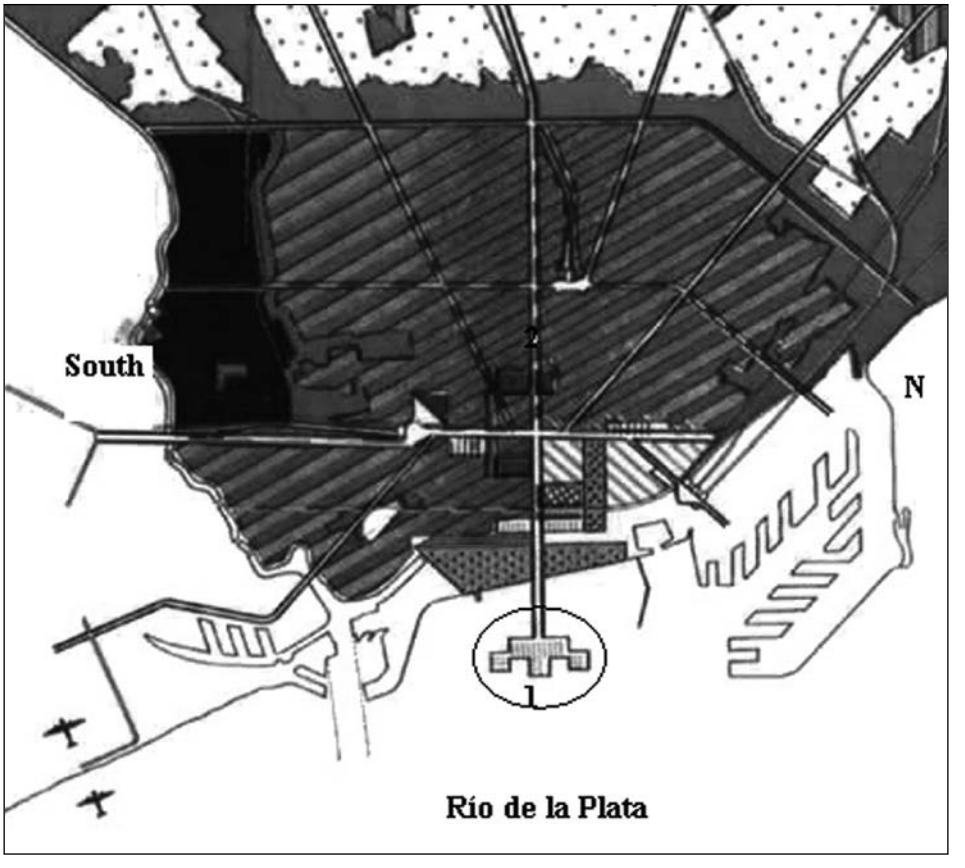


Figure 8. Cut from the plan by Le Corbusier and Pierre Jeanneret 1938/1940 to modernize Buenos Aires: 1. in the circle the plan for a 'Cité des Affairs' in the Río de la Plata, 2. the axis of the Avenida de Mayo. The plan was never executed (Gobierno de la Provincia de Buenos Aires, 2008 and www.puertomadero.com/plans 1923-1990)

of the axis.[20] The Avenida Santa Fé passing through these districts had become a strong commercial street by the 1950s. The southern districts, delineated to the north by the axis, would become poorer and have fewer investments in infrastructure (Domínguez Roca, 2005), related to processes of in- and exclusion, although the southern district of San Telmo, adjacent to the axis shows gentrification. The center of the city shifted north of the Avenida de Mayo. The avenue itself declined into an area of Spanish social organization and a quiet avenue after working hours. Buildings or its façades were demolished and the Avenida lost most of its cosmopolitan charm.

Political developments on the plazas of the axis may also have partially caused the axis its loss of imageability. Although today the National Congress and Government House

Figure 9. Symbol of the political-economic dependency of Argentina. The Avenida Independencia has unofficially been renamed Avenida Dependencia in front of the Argentinean University of the Enterprise (UADE; see background). Crossing with Avenida 9 de Julio

buildings are still considered the most beautiful buildings of the city by 31 percent and 15 percent of the *porteños* respectively, the Plaza de Mayo and Plaza de los dos Congresos symbolize places of crying and protesting (Lacarrieu, 2007). Among the many protests a few stand out. The Mothers and Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo became known worldwide as they walked around the Pyramid in front of the Government House (Figure 4). They demanded justice for the military regime of 1976-1983 who made their (grand)children disappear. In total, 30,000 civilians disappeared in the so-called 'dirty war'. Memorials have recently been erected in many places of the city.[21] Furthermore, in the 1990s, Argentinean companies were sold to foreign companies under neo-liberal president, Ménem. Violence erupted on the Plaza de Mayo when weak economic and financial policies culminated in the financial crisis of 2001 and subsequent protests. Many Argentines saw their savings devalued. Poverty increased and a feeling of insecurity has risen in the streets.[22] Maintenance of buildings and infrastructure is very restricted due to restricted government means.[23] Cynical *porteños* renamed Avenida Independencia the Avenida Dependencia (Figure 9). The large socio-economic differences in the country and

city also evoke regular protests. Finally, corruption among politicians and government employees is widespread[24] and may be a reason for protesting.

Buenos Aires, delineated by the Avenida General Paz[25] and rivers, is imagined by its citizens as distinct from its inland and other Latin American places. The image of Buenos Aires 'is a story of origin, that synthesizes the order and progress and arrives until the present time, in its updated version, from where they recreate a civilizing mould to put in order the urban experience' (Lacarrieu, 2007: 38). A hypercity has developed, the whole of urban symbols creating a reality that can become more real than the city itself. The city signifies political-economic power (also compared to GBA),[26] modernity, European (white) ethnicity,[27] cultural power[28] and liberalism.[29]

Extension of the axis into Puerto Madero after 1990

In 1990, Puerto Madero, fallen into decay, was assigned to become a high quality urban district (Moreno, 2008). Herewith international investments were expected which had to revert the economic recession of the end of the 1980s. The aim was also to reinforce the centrality of the city center within the larger metropolitan area. The port was located adjacent to the city center and redevelopment of Puerto Madero effectively enlarged the city center. Urban planners of the public organization CAPMSA[30] had the mandate to develop the area. Integration of the city center with Puerto Madero provided an opportunity for them to recognize the historical importance of the axis of the Avenida de Mayo. This was firstly illustrated by the fact that CAPMSA supported renovations and reconstructions of façades of the Avenida de Mayo outside Puerto Madero by providing subsidies to property owners. This became a success: about 20 façades were renovated or reconstructed. Moreover, the organization developed the Parque de las Mujeres Argentinas (Park of the Argentinean Women; Figure 10) in East Puerto Madero, effectively creating an interrupted extension to the existing axis. In 2001, the privately financed Puente de la Mujer (Bridge of the Woman, Figures 11 and 12), connecting the eastern and western part of dock 3 of Puerto Madero, became another element of the extension of the axis. The location of the Park and Bridge are visible on the map of Figure 5.

The Parque de las Mujeres Argentinas has a central pavement exactly in line with the axis.[31] Also, the high, pointing walls of the Park directed at the Río de la Plata resemble the former colonial fortress (Figure 2). Furthermore it is to refer to the former Aduana Nueva, the Customs building constructed in 1857, and symbol of the economic power of the city (Joselevich, 1996). The proposal also encompassed building the judicial power next to the Park. This would bring the *trias politica*[32] on the axis in one line but was not executed. On the north and south side of the Park clusters of apartment and office

Figure 10. The Park of the Argentinean Women is a void behind these silos between the southern (visible) and northern tower cluster on the East side of Puerto Madero. Picture taken from west-side of Puerto Madero. The axis goes virtually straight through the silos and is materialized in the Park through a central pavement from west to east (not visible). The grain silo does still inhibit straight passage from the Bridge to the Park although plans exist to create a connecting porch 'through' the silos

towers have been developed. 'In this way, the Park presents itself in the skyline as a void' (Joselevich, 1996: 22). This is to reinforce the Avenida de Mayo and the Plazas, which are also a void in between high-rise buildings. Unlike most facilities of Puerto Madero, the developers of the Park intended to invite all *porteños* (Garay, 2002). Skate boarders in particular visit the Park because of the gradually descending space with paths around the central pavement. It is open to the port side like an amphitheatre and designed to accommodate open-air concerts. The Park is still not well known by the general public and few will recognize its produced symbolic meaning.

The Puente de la Mujer is a footbridge with a single white mast. The private investor of a hotel and conference complex[33] near dock 3 at East Puerto Madero ordered the promotion of the zone by the construction of an emblematic bridge. Entrepreneurs

Figure 11. The Bridge (and silos) photographed from a few meters south of the western end of the bridge, observed in north-eastern direction. In front, a 'Cornedor Comunitario', a communitarian snack bar and socialist foothold that protests simultaneously against inequality and poverty. It forms a striking statement in Puerto Madero's privatized, redeveloped area. The billboard says: 'Luchamos por una Argentina donde los perros de los ricos dejen de erstar major alimentados que los hijos de los pobres' (We strive for an Argentina where the dogs of the rich stop being better fed than the children of the poor)

link business activities with cultural symbols because city people have become cultural consumers (Zukin, 1995). Effectively these cultural symbols[34] promote the business activities, thereby performing as promotional symbols as well. The architect (Calatrava Valls) assigned meaning to the bridge, stating that 'the bridge has been projected with the aim of defining an emblematic element in a city with an urban development conceptually modern, accentuating the relevance of the place at national as well as international level, within a city as Buenos Aires, compulsory point of reference for all economic, cultural and social activity of Argentina. (...) The issue is connecting both sides of the dock through both squares at both sides, continuing in a straight line, the axis formed through the Cabildo (former town hall) of Buenos Aires, the Plaza de Mayo and the Casa Rosada' (Calatrava Valls, 2000: 30). Some urban planners have criticized the construction of the bridge because it does not respect the different geometry between the docks

and the grid pattern in the city centre, in fact breaking dock 3 into two unequal parts.[35] For *porteños* and visitors it generally seems to mean an aesthetically attractive piece of architecture and is therefore used by lovers and friends who take pictures of themselves with the bridge in the background. Besides promoting the hotel and the convention centre, it has come to promote the district and even the city to tourists and businesses. On tourism and business fairs, the entrance of the Buenos Aires stand has been decorated by a scaled-down model of the bridge.

The Bridge and Park (and streets of Puerto Madero) were given names of outstanding females from Argentina and America by the city council in 1995, following a claim by women in the framework of the International Conference of the Women.[36] Argentina is considered a relatively male chauvinist country.[37] Until 1995, of the almost 2,200 streets of Buenos Aires only 23 had the name of a woman, of which the majority were nothing more than passages and narrow streets (Anonymus, 1995). The planning design for the Park is also feminine. It is a void between two tower clusters. This concept can be extended to the Government House. The relatively low building of the executive power, only counting three floors, assumes femininity, reinforced by its pink color.

The axis, including its extensions in Puerto Madero, is interrupted twice. First, by three parallel roads (two avenues and a street) and a parking lot between the Plaza Colón (behind the Government House) and the Puente de la Mujer. Plans to change this situation go about a half century back. One plan is to tunnel the three roads under a Park with a central pavement from the arch of the Government House to the bridge. Financing and height differences between the Plaza Colón and the dock are among the main problems. The second interruption of the extended axis is by grain silos between the Bridge and the Park. The grain silo is a symbol of the booming exports from 1880 to 1929 and as such adds to the historical importance of the axis. Therefore urban planners have proposed to renovate the silos and construct a passage on the main floor. But a plan in which no passage is designed is also still an option. The symbolic connection of the Park and the Bridge to the axis is mostly produced and hardly consumed. Only those *porteños* who have been educated about it know about its symbolic location. This is illustrated by Figure 12.

The interrupted extension of the axis is located in Puerto Madero. From this district four images can be extracted. Firstly, it is a successful example of urban renewal. Higher-end apartments, offices, shops and leisure facilities have been developed. It is safe, with clean, wide pavements and a distinct lack of black discharge of exhaust by buses[38] and trucks, quite distinct from the rest of the city. The connection of the city with the Río de la Plata has also effectively been restored. People enjoy strolling along the docks and have access to the ecological reserve Costanera Sur at the shore of the Río de la Plata (Figure 5). International tourists visit the district (only the city center is more

Figure 12. View from the Puente de la Mujer to the Government House (Casa Rosada), semi hidden behind the trees and the statue of Columbus at the Plaza Colón. Few people recognize the Government House from the bridge, nor being on the extended (historical) axis

popular) and 79 percent of these international tourists qualify the district as good to excellent (Gobierno de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires, 2008). The newspaper *La Nación* has concluded that Puerto Madero is the new postcard of Buenos Aires (Lacarrieu, 2007). Sportive, ambitious people and companies affiliate themselves with the district and the Bridge (Figure 13). It is also from an architectural perspective very different from the rest of the city. It has a late modernist architecture on a grand scale of towers and skyscrapers, comparable to nowhere else in the city. But besides the glamorous image, there is also an image of the district as a symbol of the divide between rich and poor. An argument against the thesis that Puerto Madero symbolizes the Argentinean social class divide is that there are other affluent districts as well, that are almost gated communities. To the contrary, Puerto Madero openly allows *porteños* from all classes to stroll along the boards of the docks and ecological reserve.[39] That its image as a symbol of socio-economic divide remains persistent may have something to do with the fact that some corrupt government officials have been involved in illegally selling city blocks, which has strengthened the idea that the selected few trade off at the expense of others.[40]

Finally, many *porteños* do not imagine this district when asked to draw a mental map of the city (Figure 1). A research for this contribution demonstrated that the Obelisk and the Río de la Plata were always drawn; this was almost true for the Avenida General Paz or administrative limit of the city. The Plaza de Mayo was also drawn by a majority. The Avenida de Mayo was not.

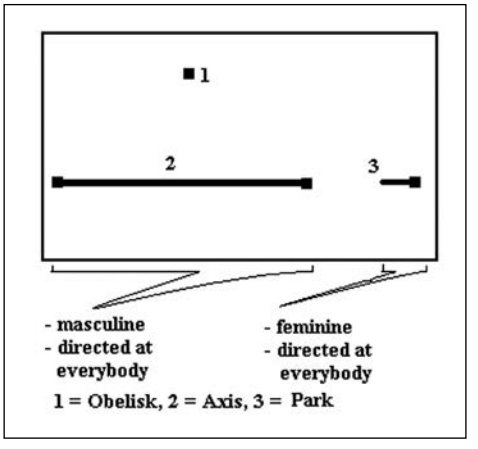
Figure 13. Adidas sponsors of the semi marathon of Buenos Aires of 21 September 2008. The slogan of an advertisement poster of Adidas in the right upper corner says 'nothing is impossible'. In the left upper corner it says: 'many think about arriving, I think of keeping on running. 21 K. Accept the challenge'. In the background are clearly visible Puerto Madero and the skyline around it, with the Bridge of the Woman in the middle

Conclusion

The city signifies political-economic power (also compared to GBA), modernity, European (white) ethnicity, cultural power and liberalism. This article has explained how the axis and Obelisk together represent these characteristics.

The Obelisk symbolizes this city for many reasons. The choice of an architecturally high modernist landmark on a high modern square as a city-wide symbol has fit the sentiment of the modern period. The infrastructure and architecture from the 1930s to the 1990s have made Buenos Aires into a conceptually modern capital. The city-wide modern urban planning has to a certain extent installed the belief in progress and the automobile in the minds of the inhabitants, putting farther away the collective memory of a former colonial (1580-1810), independent village (1816-1879) and world city (1880-1929). Also, it is perhaps the main intersection of busy avenues of the city, in its financial heart. To the masses it is a symbol of partying in large numbers (e.g. over soccer victories). Though less popularly known, it has the most important historical references to the earlier periods of the city, namely the two foundations of the city, the independence (flag) and the important law of 1880 which led to it becoming a federal capital, clearing the way for the golden epoch of the city. This combination of historical references and mass popularity makes the Obelisk an acceptable symbol for most audiences. It is continuously promoted as representation of the city in television broadcasts, tourist advertisements and socio-cultural policies. Moreover, the landmark is highly imaginable. It has a powerful, masculine form. It is a distinct, clearly delineated orientation point. It is located on a busy intersection, and new sensuous impacts are absorbed without interrupting its basic image.

The axis has been the center of developments through all periods except the modern period, from 1580 to 1929. The axis does represent the founding, colonial period, the independent period (following the revolution) up to becoming a world city due to its strength in an economic (Aduana Nueva) and political sense (the national political avenue). The axis has been contested by modern developments like the Obelisk. Nonetheless, *porteños* are aware of being at the center of political and economic power in Argentina and of the legislative and executive power on their plazas. The plazas are symbolically consumed places for crying and protesting and the political buildings signify what *porteños* are capable of in architecture. The obvious symbolic connection of these powers by the Avenida de Mayo is restrictedly valued by the porteños. In a current city of many avenues, the division of this avenue by the Avenida 9 de Julio has decreased its imageability like the subsequent developments in the Avenida itself, included among which are the demolition of façades (after 1990 some have been renovated) and a loss of higher-end functions.



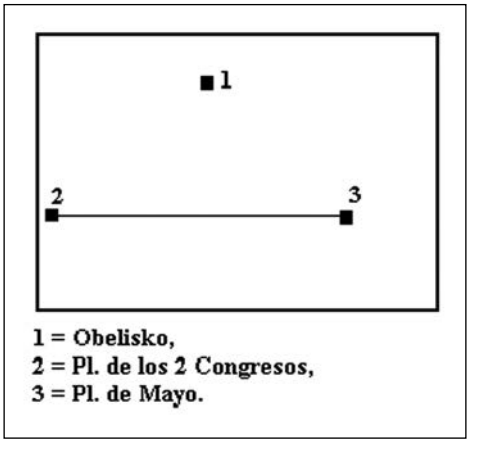


Figure 14. Left: Material symbolic production of Buenos Aires

Figure 15. Right: Material symbolic consumption of Buenos Aires

The interrupted extensions to the axis since the 1990s represent a revaluing by urban planners of the main axis and the meaning of the axis. The planners of the Park used a central planning motive for urban redevelopments. The architect of the Bridge wanted a design that would fit the modern concept and political economic strength of the city. But the extensions, too, achieved new produced meanings like a monument to the colonial fortress and Customs, femininity (through names), the relationship between public and private, a leisure function, higher economic levels and international capital in a global economy. Except for the Park signifying the fortress and Customs, the extensions do not symbolize the axis but only Puerto Madero's style of living, working and leisure. In fact, these significations of the extensions in Puerto Madero oppose the symbolism of the axis: feminine versus masculine, public-private developments versus public, pleasure/leisure versus protesting/politics and finally directed at higher economic levels versus directed at everybody. As such, only the historical reference of the Park is produced to symbolize the city. That the Bridge and Park are not easily accessible from a city in which poverty, social-economic divide and a masculine environment are characteristics, demonstrates best that the material elements were generally not produced to represent the city. But the Park is meant to also represent the foundation and economic strength of the city and is as such an important element in the symbolic production of the city. It complements the monuments to the colonial, independent and golden epoch era of the main axis. In Figure 14 the material symbolic production of Buenos Aires is conceptually mapped and it includes the Park. Generally, *porteños* do not relate the Park to the former Customs and fortress nor relate the Bridge and Park to the axis. As a consequence, the symbolic connection between both extensions is also unknown. To

them, these are independent material elements signifying leisure functions and femininity (due to their names). They are not emblematic for the city but only for the district and are as such not part of the material symbolic consumption of the city (Figure 15). It can be concluded from figures 15 and 16 that the symbolic consumption and production of the Obelisk, the axis and the extensions differ. Firstly, the Avenida de Mayo is an important produced symbol but less so consumed, since it has fallen into decay which has not yet been totally restored, notwithstanding efforts to do so. Secondly, the extensions of the axis are not consumed as a symbol for the city. In some way, however, they do possess a produced symbolism for the city.

Finally, an infrastructure construction of the missing parts between the extensions and the main axis of the Avenida de Mayo is recommended. Two arguments for this investment are city marketing[41] and developing the myth of the city. Firstly, because of the increase in leisure time, people look for places to satisfy their culture consumption needs, because, according to S. Zukin (1995), people living in the city today are consumers of culture. Thus the culture industry (spectacles, artistic expositions, mass media communication and entertainment) searches for places in the city to connect their cultural activity to, and the cultural heritage of cities is very apt for that. The metropolis uses all elements, accumulated throughout history. The city converts itself as such in an object to be consumed. In Puerto Madero for instance, the old abandoned red brick warehouses have been redeveloped for commercial use (Bertoncello, 1996).[42] Museums have opened, like the Museum Fortabat and the Frigate President Sarmiento Museum. Spectacular new skyscrapers and the Puente de la Mujer complement this. Tourists find Puerto Madero the most attractive district after the city center (Gobierno de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires, 2006). Tourism in Buenos Aires is a growing sector and one of the most important industries of the city. The city government wants to increase the revenues through tourism (Gobierno de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires, 2007). [43] Connecting the city center and Puerto Madero, the two most important districts, to tourists in a pedestrian friendly way is making the city more tourists friendly. In this context developing the missing parts between the axis and its extensions is the most imaginable way. It furthermore adds a new attraction to the city, effectively increasing the city's attractiveness for tourists. The symbol carriers of both districts would become quickly accessible. As such, the success story of Puerto Madero could be extrapolated to the axis of the Avenida de Mayo. The gentrification of the district of San Telmo, south of the axis, increases the potential economic success hereof. A comparison could perhaps be made with the Parisian Champs Elysées. This avenue also connects different Parisian symbol carriers with each other. The façades of the Avenida de Mayo need to be further improved.

Secondly, by visualizing urban symbolism or making it accessible, *porteños* and tourists can inform themselves about the symbolic world around them and herewith

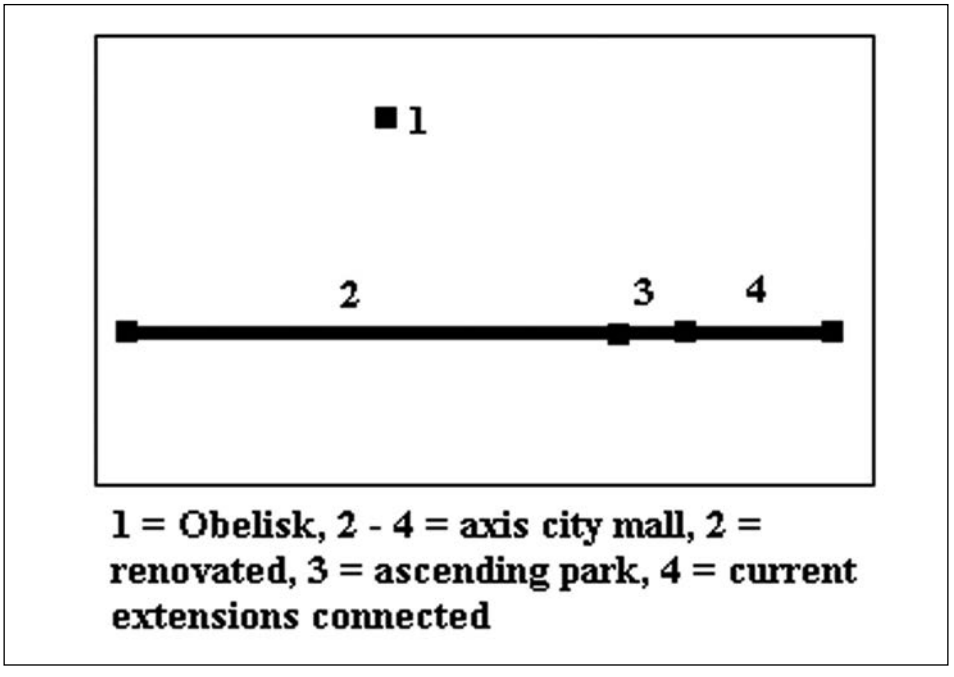


Figure 16. Sketch of a harmonic urban symbolic production and consumption model in which significations of the extensions can flow into the main axis and reverse

broaden their horizons. Some produced symbols are relatively unfamiliar to them, which could be said to reinforce rather than weaken Lacarrieu's myth of the city. Developing a clear, 'legible' material symbolism enables one to also add new or changed meanings to these symbols. A positive incidental circumstance is that Puerto Madero's symbolism (leisure functions and international capital)[44] can spread to the adjacent city center. Also, the axis with its extensions will develop to be symbolically consumed. Figure 16 demonstrates that situation.

A practical plan should provide for a tunnel for the three roads between the Government House and the Bridge and a walking boulevard between these buildings and symmetrically around the Government House to the Plaza de Mayo. Similarly, a connection should be made between the Park and the Bridge. Research on the politics and economics of this development could give more insight into the possibilities of this recommendation. A bird's eye view of the long axis of the Avenida de Mayo, from the Ecological Reserve to the National Congress could be the next postcard or city promotion image, a kind of Champs Elysées. It can become a reference to its European historical connections.

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Notes

1 The following scholars of the University of Buenos Aires (UBA) have been interviewed: Mr. A. Otamendi (anthropology of tourism), Prof. M. Lacarrieu (anthropology of Buenos Aires and author of *Buenos Aires Imagined*, 2007), Dr. P. Wright (symbolic systems), Prof. Schlüter (director of the Centre for Research and Studies on Tourism, C.I.E.T.) and Prof. J. García Cano (morphology of architecture). Prof. A. Garay (architect, director of the public corporation developing the district of Puerto Madero, CAPMSA) and Prof. G. Brandariz (history of architecture) were each willing to give a couple of interviews.

2 Particularly interesting are six scholars in the fields of anthropology, symbolism and architecture, all having studied in Buenos Aires, who paid much attention to drawing a mental map. Except for the administrative limits, the most drawn elements in these six maps were the Obelisk (located at five city blocks from the axis) and Government House (also called Casa Rosada) (both drawn three times), the Avenida de Mayo and the Plaza de Mayo (both two times), the districts of Belgrano (two times, one interviewee lived there and noted it) and Puerto Madero (also two times). Many avenues were drawn once. Two of the six mental maps have been depicted in Figure 1. The administrative limits of the city were basically drawn by all scholars.

3 The Avenida General Paz is the land limit of the city. The other city limits are natural: the Rio de la Plata in the east and north, the narrow rivers of the Riachuelo and Arroyo Raggio in the south.

4 Pedro de Mendoza was the first founder of Buenos Aires and is reminded by a statue in the district of San Telmo.

5 One of the main reasons was the attacks by Indians.

6 In the old districts the street horizon can be seen amidst the buildings due to the straight grid lines.

7 The shore was located at the current Avenida Leandro N. Alem and the Avenida Paseo Colón.

8 The Customs building was constructed in between the fortress and the Río de la Plata. It was partly constructed on land won from the Río de la Plata and partly on land for which parts of the fortress had to be demolished. The neo-classical Aduana Nueva was semi circular, had a *portica* at the river side and consisted of 51 warehouses. The central entrance to the pier was 'arch of triumph' like.

9 Argentina became one of the ten richest countries in the world.

10 A gallery, the 'Recova Vieja', had separated the square into two parts since 1803. With its demolition in 1884 the square was unified and renamed Plaza de Mayo.

11 The foundations of the Customs are still partly visible in the Parque Colón behind the Casa Rosada.

12 J. Bouvard of the municipality of Paris was contracted to develop these *avenidas*.

13 The tomb of the hero of the Independence General San Martín can be found in the metropolitan cathedral.

14 The agglomeration of Gran Buenos Aires accounts for ten million people, the city itself three. Together it is one third of the total Argentinean population today. It is the third largest urban center of Latin America after Mexico City and Sao Paulo.

15 Domínguez Roca (2005) divides the history of urban planning of Buenos Aires after 1958 in four periods: (1) Functionalist planning in an instable context (1958-1976), (2) The 'Process of National Reorganization' and the urban policies (1976-1983), (3) The planning critique: from the resistance to privatization (1983-1996), (4) The autonomy of the City and the return to planning (1996-2004).

16 The construction of the Obelisk took four weeks and was designed by architect Prebisch.

17 According to some, the phallus form refers to the Latin American male chauvinist society.

18 The avenue has been named in honor of the Day of the Declaration of Independence of Argentina, 9 July 1816.

19 Since 1887, Buenos Aires was marked out by this administrative limit. The Avenida General Paz (1941) is the land limit of the city. The other city limits are the Río de la Plata and the Río Riachuelo.

20 In 1871, during the yellow fever epidemic thriving in the district of San Telmo, south of the Avenida de Mayo, more affluent citizens fled and moved to the northern districts of Palermo and Recoleta.

21 Examples of memorials to missing (*desaparecidos*) students or university personnel of the University of Buenos Aires are the monument in front of the Faculty of Medicine and the memorial park in the University District facing the Río de la Plata. Many victims drowned when they were dropped out of airplanes. Many bodies were never recovered.

22 Although there has undoubtedly been an increase in the insecurity in the streets, television programs like Police in Action (Policias en Acción) on channel 13 (Artear) may also nurture this sentiment. Buenos Aires is slowly developing into a shadow city (term by Nas, Jaffe and Samuels, 2006): that part of the city that is becoming more real than real (the hypercity), which not only conflicts with formal, institutionalized images of the city, but actively seeks to challenge, invert or subvert them.

23 Pavements are in general filthy and badly maintained, even in a busy middle to higher-end shopping street like Avenida Santa Fé.

24 Argentina ranks 105th of 177 most transparent countries (Transparency International, 2007).

25 Remarkably, at some locations the Avenida General Paz can be crossed without noticing. This is due to comparable architecture and urban planning at both sides of the Avenida General Paz.

26 In the city, the economic and political power is concentrated, making for extremely grand flows of commuters from Gran Buenos Aires to the city in the morning and back in the afternoon.

27 Although the city has recently seen immigration from its interior and countries like Paraguay, Bolivia and Peru, of whom many are of indigenous ethnicity, the myth of the European 'white' city continues.

28 The city is the cultural center of the country and its cultural force is to a large extent acknowledged throughout Latin America and beyond (e.g. the tango).

29 The liberal smuggler's town was geographically far away from its then Spanish colonial catholic capital of Lima and had through its port access to modern liberal European ideas.

30 Corporation of the Old Port of Madero (Corporación Antiguo de Puerto Madero S.A.) was installed by the state and city government in 1990: the state because it owned the railways and port facilities and the city because it was within its boundaries.

31 According to the designers 'an urbanization project tends to reproduce the parameters of a central area, having to integrate this fabric' (Joselevich, 1996: 22).

32 Executive, legislative and judicial power.

33 Hotel Hilton of A.L. Gonzalez, director of the company Real Estate Enterprises Arenales. His daughters (Gonzalez died at the day of the finalization of the bridge) donated the bridge as a present to the city. The authorities have had to meet costs for repairs of the bridge hereafter.

34 The red brick historical warehouses, silos, and cranes have also been reused as restaurants, offices and monuments. There are plans to prolong the metro system into Puerto Madero.

35 The bridge has been criticized for not respecting the different geometry between the docks and the city center's infrastructure system of which the Avenida de Mayo is a part. As a result the bridge lies very close to the Frigate President Sarmiento Museum, making the whole picture appear out of balance.

36 One of the streets in Puerto Madero has been named Azucena Villaflor, one of the founders and ex-president of the Mothers (Madres) of the Plaza de Mayo, who was killed by the military regime of Argentina of 1976-1983. Pigna (2008) puts forward that, 'what these women had in common is the courage, the cheering up, in a world of men, in order to do what they knew they had to do.'

37 According to one of the designers and current director of the CAPMSA, architect Garay.

38 To illustrate the importance of buses in the city: in *Buenos Aires Imagined* (Lacarrieu, 2007) a picture is shown of the view that a passenger has when sitting in the back of a bus.

39 The image of an upper-class area comes from its high-end services and functions. As Harbor (2008) put it: 'Puerto Madero is a controversial area, located just a stone's throw away from La Boca (southern poorer working class neighbourhood), many porteños see it as emblematic of the social problems in Argentina: the huge gap between the rich and the poor'.

40 An example of corruption is the apartment tower complex 'Torres del Faro' in Puerto Madero, inaugurated in 2008. It is the highest tower of Argentina and as such may symbolize the consolidation of the city's dominance over the country. In the same year the Repsol-YPF corporate tower was finished, one of the most daring architectural designs of Puerto Madero. Both towers have been associated with corruption scandals. The national and municipal government were working together in the CAPMSA, founded under Argentinean president Ménem. In the case of the Torres del Faro, government officials under Ménem have illegally allowed the speculation of the city block on which the tower has been built. With regard to the Repsol-YPF tower, government officials have been accused of assigning the city block to the tower, whereas it was supposed to be a green area.

41 Kotler, Haider and Rein (1993) address the many aspects of city marketing and Ward (1998) touches upon its history.

42 That the location in the city for these redevelopments is an old port is not surprising. Many ports all over the world have been left abandoned because of technological developments in relations between port and city. Hoyle's (1988) interface model names the 'redevelopment of the waterfront by way of the reintegration of the city and its port for leisure and business activities' the latest stage of a port.

43 From 12 April to 18 May 2008, the tourism department ('Ente de Turismo') of the Government of Buenos Aires organized 'La Gran Vía de Mayo'. Theatre on the Plaza de Mayo, 'travelling 200 years back' to the then called Plaza de la Victoria, tango in the Casa de la Cultura, an architectural symbol of Buenos Aires and in other 'salons' of hotels and guided tours on the Avenida de Mayo, the civil axis of Buenos Aires from the Casa Rosada to the Congress. This shows that Buenos Aires is working its history, using it, trying to show the historical and current importance of the street.

44 *Porteños* pride themselves on their law enforcement and personal ambition, which is demonstrated in Puerto Madero. This is used but more could be done in this respect to help the district integrate into the city and help to positively change the attitude.

7. A Touch of Tragedy

Pre- and Post-Tsunami Symbolism in Banda Aceh, Indonesia

Rob van Leeuwen

***T**uhan **S**udah **U**ji **N**amun **A**ku **M**asih **I**ngkar*
God has tested, nevertheless I am still denied
Ibu Joni, Banda Aceh, June 2007

Introduction

It is Sunday 26 December, 2004. Local Western Indonesian Time is 07:58:53 a.m. All over the world, people are either fast asleep after celebrating Christmas Day or are awake celebrating the next feast of Boxing Day. However, this particular date will now be remembered for something rather different than as a day of celebration. For, at this exact moment, 160 kilometers outside the mainland of Sumatra, the earth starts to quake severely. Its magnitude is about 9.3: one of the highest in the history of all earthquakes. This sudden trembling of the earth and the following tsunami have been felt in the whole of Southeast Asia. With waves up to ten meters high, the sea hit the Southeast Asian coasts within an hour of the occurrence of the earthquake. The northern part of Sumatra, being the closest mainland from the epicenter, is struck first and damaged the most. The highest number of casualties was registered in the coastal areas of the Sumatran province of Aceh and its surrounding islands. For Indonesia, the final count of the UN Office of the Special Envoy for Tsunami Recovery amounted to 130,736 fatalities and 37,000 missing persons (UN Office of the Special Envoy for Tsunami Recovery, 2006). The total of this human toll in combination with the hundreds of thousands of homeless or injured reveals the horrifying impact of this natural disaster.

When the news about the severity of the devastation caused by the tsunami spread over the world, NGOs, transnational organizations, individuals and governments immediately started to help in the damaged areas in as many ways as possible. This did not only mean financial assistance, but also the provision of relief goods and personnel. The (international) aid programs initiated reconstruction in order to provide the minimal necessities. In this way the various affected areas recovered from the tragedy and daily life gradually returned to normal. One of these places is Banda Aceh, the capital of the province of Aceh in Northern Sumatra, Indonesia. The 'Port of Aceh' is the economic center closest to the epicenter of the earthquake. About 60 percent of the city was damaged in December 2004 and reports showed that 60,000 people did not survive the catastro-

phe (UN Office of the Special Envoy for Tsunami Recovery, 2006). In the two-and-a-half years after the earthquake and its concomitant tsunami, Banda Aceh confronted the enormous challenge of recovery from the disaster.

In this chapter, Banda Aceh will be the central location and it will be related to the central theme of urban symbolism. More specifically, the purpose of this contribution will be to study the changes of symbols since Banda Aceh was transformed by the tsunami. A comparison will be made between the memory of the images perceived by the original inhabitants before and the images after the tsunami. The central question that will guide us is as follows: how did the tsunami influence the symbolism of the city of Banda Aceh?

There are several points of importance in this topic. Firstly, I share the idea that more anthropological research should be conducted in urban places. For several decades the cities have been relatively neglected and much study is still needed to make up for these arrears. Secondly, the recent popularity of studies on urban symbolism is an improvement, but still more studies are needed to cover all aspects of the field. Examples of studies on symbolism in relation to disasters are scarce. Furthermore, with the present research I aim to achieve a more thorough understanding of the relation between natural disasters and their effects on the symbolic atmosphere of a city. Finally, a personal reason for this research is that the devastation of the tsunami in Southeast Asia made an enormous impression on me and so I was very eager to study the catastrophe in more detail. I realized that the symbolic aspect is perhaps minor in relation to all the consequences of the tsunami and some people may regard this topic therefore as less important. I hope to make clear in the following text that the symbolic aspects of daily life in cities are on the contrary really important for the inhabitants of those cities. These aspects are necessary for the people to give meaning to their own life and surroundings.

In the next sections I will describe some theories on urban symbolism, which have been developed in the last two decades. What ideas about urban symbolism have been proposed and what aspects are incorporated in these studies? The second part on theory presents a brief review of studies on urban and natural disasters. The main component of this chapter is the fieldwork on Banda Aceh. First, an analysis of the mental maps that describe the memory of Banda Aceh before the tsunami will be given, followed by the mental maps of the present-day city (in 2007). Then I will analyze the most important locations and transformations and compare between the points of view of the inhabitants themselves and the outsiders, i.e. the foreigners and Indonesians from other areas in Indonesia that came to Banda Aceh after the tsunami. Finally, I will present some new concepts to comprehend the developments in Banda Aceh since the tsunami.

Theoretical background

Cities are an interesting main topic in several disciplines for many reasons. First of all, half of the world's population inhabits urban places and this percentage is rapidly growing. Secondly, cities are well-known places and many outsiders have specific images that correspond to a specific city. Also the heterogeneous character of the composition of the city's inhabitants and cultures are an important topic of interest. How do the different ethnic or cultural groups live together and what kinds of conflicts or problems may arise? Another interesting point is that cities share many aspects, but at the same time harbor some unique features. Making generalizations between cities is therefore difficult (Amin and Thrift, 2002: 1-3).

Recently, the study of the symbolic side of cities became the focus of research in cultural anthropology. These urban symbolic research studies proceed on Kevin Lynch's study of cities. In his book *The Image of the City*, Lynch focused on the image of the city through the eyes of its inhabitants. They attach an image to the city that can also play a social role in which symbols and collective memories can be created. Lynch stated that 'the environment suggests distinctions and relations, and the observer ... selects, organises, and endows with meaning what he sees'. By images, Lynch meant in particular the public images, for he chose to leave individual differences out of the discussion. By focusing on identity and structure, Lynch left the third component of environmental images, namely meaning, underexposed (Lynch, 1960: 1-13).

Meaning became a more central topic of research during the 1990s. According to Nas, the subject of symbolism and ritual structure in cities had been underexposed up to that time. Social anthropologists dealt with symbolism extensively, but mostly in relation to small local communities and not so much in relation to urban spaces. And although the sociologists paid much attention to the urban environment, they mostly ignored the symbolic firmament. Nas' book *Urban Symbolism* was the starting point for many diverse studies on the symbolic side of cities (Nas, 1993: 1-11). A second book, *Hypercity*, summarized the various studies in order to develop more aspects that are related to urban symbolism. Two related approaches were used to achieve a strong fundament for the studies on urban symbolism: the urban symbolic ecology and the hypercity. The former deals with urban material culture, the latter takes ideas, images and representations as its starting point. The urban symbolic ecology focuses on the third concept proposed by Kevin Lynch: meaning. Other important concepts are identity (self-perception), image (perception by others) and collective memory in relation to places of generation, trauma and memory. Stages in change patterns and several other concepts are central in this study as well. The second approach, the hypercity, has sprung from the field of semiotics. This hyperreality as applied to the city is obtained when the urban

symbols create a reality that becomes more real than the city itself. There are four different types of symbolic carriers. Iconic signifiers are (groups of) persons who represent the city. Secondly, there are discursive signifiers consisting of urban narratives. These signifiers can be found in songs, poems, maps, street names and urban planning policy. The third type of signifier deals with behavior, such as rituals, ceremonies and parades. The last kind of signifier consists of the material domain, with statues, architecture and natural landscapes as examples (Nas, Jaffe and Samuels, 2006: 1-18).

Together, these two main approaches are used in the research of Banda Aceh. I will attempt to reveal the symbolic level of the capital city of Aceh. From the field of urban symbolic ecology, the meaning behind the symbols, the idea of self-perception and identity and the transformation of the city by the tsunami will be addressed. The study of hypercity will additionally describe the way in which a hyper reality is created in the city and what kinds of signifiers are brought forward in the aftermath of the tsunami. In particular, the material and the discursive signifiers will be specific points of interest.

This chapter is also related to the emerging interest in anthropology about (natural) disaster. Schneider and Susser (2003: 1-15) described the urban problems, which arise during the period of globalization. These problems can be the direct result of a process of globalization or they can be an outcome of the response to this global process. The cities, which are harmed in this powerful process of transformation, are called wounded cities. Here the authors discuss several case studies. Although they paid some attention to natural disasters, the main focus was on the political side of the story. Hoffman and Oliver-Smith (1999: 1-16) took the social-cultural and behavioral side of the study of disasters as their main interest. This study dealt with the population, its organization and the invisible constructs that are shared by communities. People shape perceptions and make up explanations in order to handle disasters. A special focus is on the way people respond to the calamity or the potential for a calamity. Additionally, cultural interpretation of risk and disaster and post-disaster social and cultural changes are main topics in this field.

Different authors have completed several case studies on the relation between natural disasters and cultural behavior in Asia. Zaman's description of three case studies in Bangladesh shows that many people are willing to take a risk by living in vulnerable areas. Others do not have a choice and cannot do much more than stay in these areas. Also, many people do not want to change their living surroundings, due to a lack of space and they have a desire to live near their own community (Zaman, 1999). Yoneyama (1998) demonstrates in the case of the Kobe earthquake that the disaster resulted in an emphasis on communal relations and communication, while individuality decreased. Bankoff (2003: 162-178) points out that people in The Philippines are used to disasters and they change their architecture, agricultural techniques and cultural mechanisms in such a

way as to be least affected by disasters. He uses the concept of 'cultures of disaster' to characterize these communities. Laksono (1988: 183-197) describes a Javanese village near mount Merapi, where the people disregard the scientific way of explaining volcanic eruption: they have a different idea of what is an acceptable risk and how to minimize this. Davies (2002: 28-41) describes the inhabitants of Papua New Guinea, who tried to find a way to explain the tsunami that struck their coast in 1998. They did not understand what was going on, because they had never experienced something like that before. When time passes, people tend to settle back in their former surroundings again.

These case studies show that the interest in this subject has grown considerably in recent years. However, studies focusing on symbolism and natural disaster are not yet available. Moreover, many studies take rural areas as their focus. With this contribution on Banda Aceh, I would like to examine the influence of natural disaster on the urban symbolism.

The awareness of tsunami symbols

The first part of the research is a comparison between mental maps of the inhabitants of Banda Aceh. Mental maps have been used before in the studies on urban symbolism (see for example Nas and Sluis, 2002). In this research, twenty-four respondents, both male and female, coming from all ages and living in different areas in Banda Aceh, individually drew two maps of their city: one describing the memory of the pre-tsunami situation of the city and another one dealing with the situation in May 2007, when the research took place. The maps contain the respondent's perspective on the most important locations of Banda Aceh. The categories of the four types of mental maps, as Nas and Sluis proposed, come forward, but mainly patterned maps were made (see Figure 1), in which the city is described as an interrelated whole.

Most of these respondents used only (main) streets of the city, added with particular locations, which are spread among the whole city. Quite a large group drew the locations literally. If the object is a mosque or other building, they also drew a building in it and this also applies to trees for example. Others just drew empty blocks for buildings and other locations, such as fields, squares and gardens. Two respondents used symbols to describe the locations, like a big gun for a military complex, a cross for the church and a fish for the fish market. Rivers were added with a single line or a small beam, depending on the size of the entire map. The larger the area one describes, the smaller the rivers become, as is the case for streets too. Details, such as trees and local houses, were omitted in the maps that show a large area of the city. Only a few people drew some areas that are outside the city's borders.

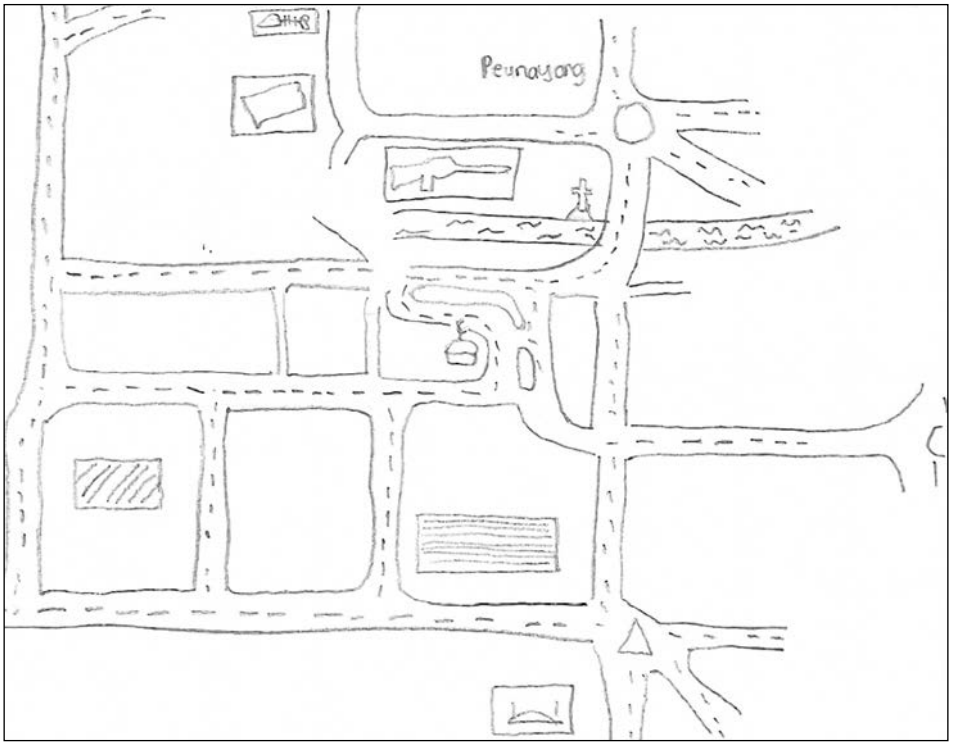

Figure 1. Patterned type of mental map

The maps dealing with the situation of the city of Banda Aceh in 2003 showed an enormous variety of locations. The twenty-four respondents mentioned a total of 251 locations, of which 133 are different. Twenty-four locations were named three times or more and a high number of 91 locations received only a single mention. The Great Mosque of Baiturrahman is the location that was mentioned most: seventeen times. All the other locations were indicated only ten times or less, with Simpang 5, a roundabout where five major roads come together, as the second most given location. The Pendopo, the house of the governor of Aceh, is listed nine times, just two more than the Aceh Museum, Blang Padang Square and a local park called Taman Sari.

This leads to the following categories present in 2003. Firstly, the most important location is religious: the Great Mosque of Baiturrahman. Another religious object is Hati Kudus Catholic Church (Holy Hart Catholic Church). Also several historical sites were named, in which the mosque can be included again. Others in this category are the Pendopo, Rumoh Aceh (the original Acehnese house), the Dutch cemetery Kherkhoff and Gunongan (the Royal Garden of the sultan). A third category is related to markets and shopping areas, such as Pasar Aceh (the Acehnese market) and Pante Pirak Supermar-

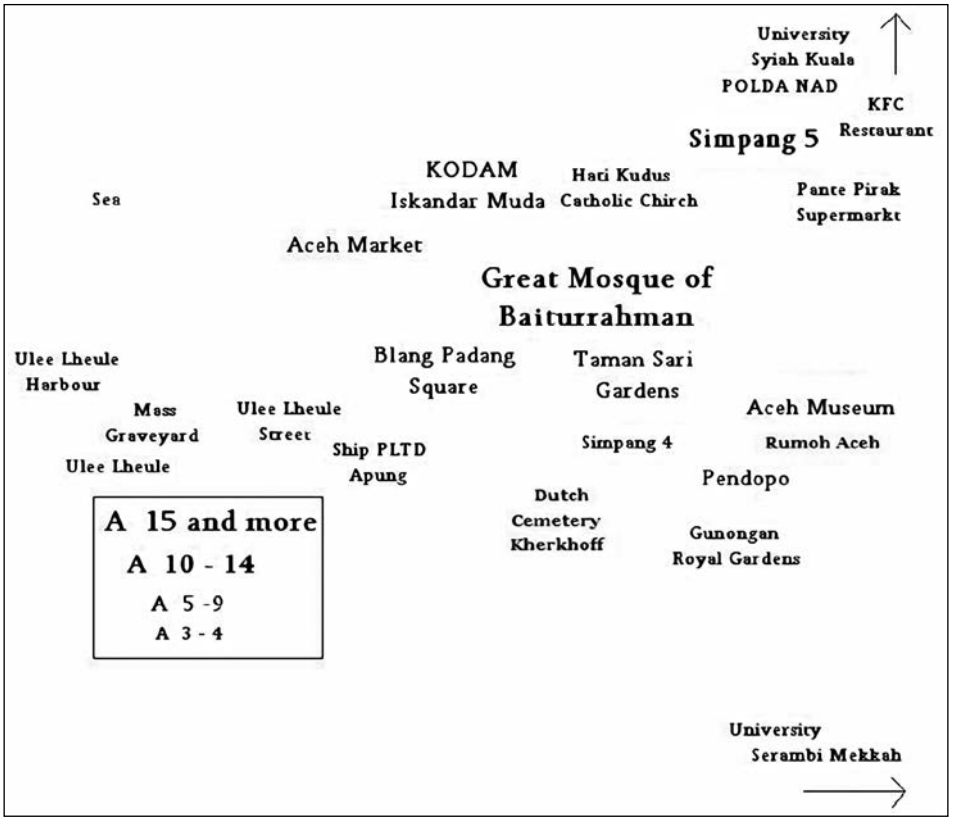

Figure 2. Collective map of the post-tsunami situation in Banda Aceh

ket. Some streets and other infrastructural locations were mentioned as well, such as the roundabouts Simpang 5, Simpang 4/Simpang Jam (Clock Junction) and Simpang Surabaya, the road from Banda Aceh to Medan (not by its official name), Ulee Lheule Street and Teuku Umar Street. The fifth category relates to the police and military matters, like POLDA NAD (Head Office of the Police of Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam) and KODAM Iskandar Muda (Regional Military Commando). A final minor category is related to education and includes the universities Serambi Mekkah (Mekkah's Veranda) and Syiah Kuala. Some interesting locations were not mentioned or only rarely. The graveyard of the most famous sultan, Iskandar Muda, which is also located in the city center, was mentioned by two respondents only. Pinto Khob (Gate Khob), which is located in the same area as Gunongan, is not listed by any respondent. The same is true for Taman Makam Pahlawan, the field of Hero's Graveyard. Only one of the present monuments is included once in the maps, and this is Tugu Pelajar (Student Monument). Therefore, the conclusion may be drawn that the awareness of the monuments is not high, and that they appear to be unimportant.

Figure 3. Boat on top of a House in Lampulo (Photograph: Rob van Leeuwen)

The maps of 2007 showed 254 locations of which 141 are different. Here as well, 24 locations are named three times or more, and 98 only once. Figure 2 shows a collective mental map, made out of maps drawn by respondents. The Great Mosque of Baiturrahman was still mentioned most often, followed by Simpang 5, the Pendopo, Taman Sari Gardens and Blang Padang Square. This leads to the conclusion that in the mental maps the most important locations are still the same.

Moreover, I conclude that a few important locations come to the forefront after the tsunami and no major old locations have been totally destroyed by it. Only three minor locations are not included anymore in the collective map of 2007 and just a small number of new locations are included in the maps describing the situation after the tsunami. Two totally new locations are mentioned three times or more: the Mass Graveyard with victims of the tsunami in Ulee Lheule and the big ship PLTD Apung that is left behind by the tsunami in Punge, a small sub-district not far from Blang Padang Square. These two locations were indicated four and three times respectively. This means that at least twenty out of the twenty-four respondents did not include these new locations in their post-tsunami maps. The awareness of tsunami-related locations might thus be seen as being quite low. One other location is newly included in Figure 2, because it is seen three

times in the maps of 2007. This location, however, is not completely new since the tsunami: it was already mentioned once in the maps of 2003. This location is the KFC Restaurant near the roundabout Simpang 5. Overall, it can be seen that these kinds of Western chain restaurants came up in the images of the city presented by the inhabitants of Banda Aceh only after the tsunami.

The maps describing the city's contemporary situation left out some interesting locations too. Not one of the respondents mentioned the arrival of the new headquarters of international NGOs, like the Red Cross, UNDP, ILO or other UN departments. The city landscape has been changed by almost all newly constructed buildings for these organizations, though some of them are situated outside the city center and sometimes even outside the borders of Banda Aceh. The latter may be a reason why no one drew any of these locations, but still they could be recognized as an important aspect of the city. Also some remains of the tsunami were not named. In Lampulo, an area north of the city center, there is a fishermen's boat on the roof of a house (Figure 3). Some other newly-created mass graveyards were not included by any of the respondents. Also, no respondents mentioned anything about the new housing projects in many parts of the city.

One might argue that the inhabitants' image of the city has not been modified severely over time. The Great Mosque of Baiturrahman keeps its importance, receiving the most hits by far in both maps. In general, locations and objects keep the same awareness. No major objects are totally removed by the tsunami. In the next section, the further analysis of important locations will show that though the awareness seems low, important meanings behind the changes are there. The number of emerging locations since the tsunami is limited and focuses mainly on the big ship, a mass graveyard and the increased number of Western chain restaurants.

The meaning of important locations

The locations mentioned the most in both maps are the Great Mosque of Baiturrahman, the governor's house Pendopo, Taman Sari Park and Blang Padang Square. The newly mentioned locations in the 2007 maps are the PLTD Apung in Punge, the Mass Graveyard in Ulee Lheule and the new Western chain restaurants. These two types of elements will be central in this analysis on the meaning of the important locations. During the interviews, photos of these locations were shown to nine respondents from Banda Aceh and eight foreigners or Indonesians originally from outside Banda Aceh, who came to the city after the tsunami. Characteristics such as recognizability, meaning, importance, age, functions and definition were discussed and the respondents were also allowed to put forward anything they would like to add in order to lay bare the local way of reasoning.

Figure 4 and 5. The Great Mosque (left) and the Pendopo (right) (Photographs: Rob van Leeuwen)

All the respondents knew the Great Mosque (Figure 4) and think it is very important in the city. This building represents the house of God, the house of all Muslims and especially of Acehnese Muslims. People visit this central mosque several times a month; some men try to visit it every Friday afternoon for the weekly prayer. Other reasons to visit the mosque are to meet friends, to talk with other Muslims, to meditate on personal issues, and to relax because the place is cool and peaceful. In the immediate neighborhood there are many shops, a big field and street sellers. The building itself is important to the city and to its inhabitants. It is the most characteristic object of the city and lends identity to it. Others even say that it characterizes the whole province. The Great Mosque is a place where history and religion meet each other. There are many stories related to the mosque in the past, dealing with the struggle against the Dutch and also related to its recent role during the tsunami. Many people could survive the tsunami because they were able to reach the roof of the mosque in order to save themselves against the force of the wave. One story tells that some Chinese people were saved by means of the mosque and therefore became Muslims after the tsunami. Many people found safety in the mosque, because this was one of the few buildings that did not collapse during the tsunami. People interpreted this as the strength of God's house. In the days after the natural disaster, the mosque functioned as the place to meet others and to pray together.

Another important building, the Pendopo (Figure 5), is known by all respondents by its correct name. The function of this building is, if I compare the answers of the respondents, not completely clear. Some believe that, for centuries, the governors of Aceh have been living there, whereas others think that the present governor does not stay there permanently. This last group pointed out that the building is only used for official meetings with special guests, as a relaxing area for the governor, and for meetings with the town's community. Many people are of the opinion that this is a beautiful building. The style is very old and while some point out the Dutch influence, others note the ethnic in-

fluence in parts of the building. In particular the windows and shutters, the used timber, and the architectural style reveal its old age. The building is seen as very important, mainly for the activities that take place, such as official meetings, dinners and invitation of special guests. Thereby, it contributes to the identity of Banda Aceh, it is part of the cultural heritage and all sorts of information can be found there.

Taman Sari Park is another important location. This park contains a small building, some trees and bushes, two small pools, grass lawns and a paved square. The official monument for the Declaration of Indonesian Independence can be found here as well. None of the respondents described this monument when we were talking about this location. The significance attached to Taman Sari differs. Some people see it as a central location only for other families and children to visit and some express their personal fondness as well. Some others believe its importance to be minimal, because they do not make use of the area themselves. The park has multifunctional use: relaxing, playing sports, walking around, refreshments, looking around, dating, meeting people or friends as well as entertaining whole families. People can eat there and there are also some specific organized activities. Especially during the late afternoon, evening and in the weekends, the park is very crowded. In general, respondents agree that there are not many locations like this and therefore it is quite unique to the city. The rather old park was damaged severely by the tsunami. After the tsunami, streets and pools were repaired and a new building arose.

The final location that was important in both the pre- and the post-tsunami maps is Blang Padang Square. All the respondents are familiar with this field and they know its official name too. Many visit it several times a month and the main purposes for these visits are playing sports, attending official ceremonies, bird contests, cultural events, concerts, refreshments or dating. The big open field in the city center is multifunctional, but during the day there are not many people. Blang Padang is valued differently in terms of importance by different respondents. Most of the younger people really appreciate this place, because of the sports and the dating in the evening. The older people see an importance as well, but it is related to the general function for the whole society. Two respondents mentioned an important monument on Blang Padang, which is the first Indonesian airplane (Figure 6). This plane was sponsored by the Acehnese community. Some pointed out that the whole community collected money, gold and even eggs to finance the building of this plane and others believed that a small group of rich Acehnese put up the money. The respondents attributed different functions to the airplane: it was used by President Sukarno to go abroad, by the Acehnese community to travel, or for the struggle for independence. The respondents are especially proud that the Acehnese financed this plane together, which shows that there is a significant sense of community. It is a characteristic object for Aceh and important in Indonesian history.

Figure 6 and 7. Monument Perjuangan RI-001 (left) and the PLTD Apung (right) (Photographs: Rob van Leeuwen)

The next three objects and locations arose after the tsunami. In general, respondents recognize the relatively limited number of new locations and objects. Because there are few remains of the tsunami anymore, those still available receive much importance. Although nowadays there are still some present, in the first months after the tsunami there were many more. Most of these objects were taken away during the process of the city's rehabilitation. The cleaning and rebuilding received more emphasis than keeping some of the remains of the tsunami.

The first is a big ship, the PLTD Apung (Figure 7), which had been shifted with the wave into the city and is now a major direct remain of the tsunami. All the respondents know this place, which is about three kilometers away from the coast. The respondents went there several times, for themselves, but also to show it to friends visiting Banda Aceh. People experience many kinds of emotions when they see the ship: the power of the tsunami, of nature or of God, how gigantic the tsunami was, an anxious feeling because one knows people who lived there or because one remembers the day that this ship came into the city with a loud noise. All the respondents perceive this ship as extremely important. This importance comes forward for several reasons. First of all, it reminds one of the tsunami and of its power. Many people would like the ship to stay there, because it can function as a remembrance of the important historical event, which should not be forgotten by future generations. Some of them want it to become the monument for the tsunami, because it shows how incredible the intensity of the tsunami was. Secondly, some respondents speak of its practical function, as it is generating electricity. The ship itself is in good condition and therefore it can still be used in a city that suffers a lack of electricity. Other respondents also give more practical reasons to keep the boat in this place, such as the difficulty in taking it away and the high costs of removing it.

The second direct result of the tsunami is the Mass Graveyard, or Kuburan Mas-

sal, in Ulee Lheule, in the western part of Banda Aceh. The general feeling people have about this location is one of sadness; it also scares people, especially because of the idea that all the unknown people were brought here to their final resting place. People visit the location to remember the victims and to join in religious activities. Several respondents still wonder if relatives or friends of theirs were brought there. As well as the PLTD Apung, the Mass Graveyard gives an indication of the severity of the tsunami, which killed thousands of people. In coastal areas, entire communities were lost. It is another memorial of the tsunami, which can give a sense of the disaster's impact, and which reminds people to never forget it. It also shows the cooperative feeling that arose in Banda Aceh in the period following the tsunami, during which many people worked hard together to make the graveyards.

The third location, or more adequate category of locations, totally differs from the other two described above: the Western fast food restaurants. Almost all respondents knew some new restaurants in the city, mostly launched after the tsunami. Some of the respondents had certain ideas about them. They believe that Western businessmen want to eat there, because they do not like Acehnese food and prefer their own type of food. Some others see these restaurants as a result of the peace treaty that led to more foreign investments. For most of the respondents the food offered is not very special, but they go there to relax and hang out with friends in an air-conditioned area. The younger respondents in particular say that they go to this kind of place regularly. The importance of these restaurants is not very great, because not all people like it, the food is not very appealing and is also quite expensive, and it is just a location to have fun.

The results of the interviews with the inhabitants of Banda Aceh were compared with the point of view of the foreigners and Indonesians from other areas, like Medan, Jakarta and other parts of Java. Many similarities can be observed, such as the central function of the Great Mosque, the importance of the PLTD Apung, the importance of historical locations and the lack of knowledge of the various monuments. Besides these similarities, there were some differences. Examples were the lower awareness of monuments among the outsiders and the restricted knowledge of official street names and names of objects. Many foreigners only know their way to their work and not much more. If it comes to attaching importance to an object, the inhabitants of Banda Aceh tend to give more weight to locations, even if they do not know the object well, such as the real meaning of the monument. For the outsiders, the big ship PLTD Apung is more important than the Mass Graveyard, because the former shows the result of the tsunami in a more impressive way. The inhabitants have more personal feeling for the mass graveyards and therefore they believe that this location is more important. The views on the Western chain restaurants show an interesting difference, too. According to many inhabitants, and also to the Indonesians from other parts of the country, these restaurants

were especially made for the foreigners. However, the foreigners believe that the restaurants are mainly interesting for the Acehnese and especially as part of the new modern Indonesian youth culture. Moreover, the foreigners see these locations as a symbol of economic development, the consumer society or the creation of identity for the local youth, while most of the inhabitants just see it as a place to eat or have fun. Another difference in the interpretation of the tsunami emerges from narratives. Many inhabitants of Banda Aceh use their religious background to describe the tsunami: the tsunami shows God's power and the survival of the mosque is God's strength as well. God's role is also demonstrated in the quote on the first page of this chapter and it indicates that the time on earth for the people that survived the tsunami has not ended yet and therefore they must live on. This essential role of God in the way of describing the tsunami fits well with the central role of God's house, the Great Mosque of Baiturrahman. Most of the outsiders do not include this religious aspect when they describe the tsunami.

A final difference appears from the idea of some non-Acehnese respondents, who believed that some more official tsunami-monuments were present in the city. In fact, the monuments that were in their views dealing with the tsunami, like the monument at the entrance of Queen Safiatuddin Park, had a totally different meaning. In this entertainment park, people can see different traditional houses of various Acehnese regions. Some other monuments mentioned have already been in the city for several years and were even made before the tsunami, such as a stone monument in the north of the city. These different points of view of the inhabitants lead to several conclusions. First of all, they show that official monuments can transmit another meaning in the eyes of the consumers than was meant by the producers. The meaning of monuments is dynamic, an aspect that has already been pointed out in theory. Secondly, these symbols or monuments do create a feeling that in some way they are related to the tsunami. The shapes, the colors, the materials, the location or any other aspect of the monuments seems, in the eyes of the respondent, connected to the tsunami. The conclusion can be drawn that these respondents feel a strong need for a monument or symbol. That is why in their minds such a symbol seems to exist already. Also, the people who described the non-tsunami monuments as being a tsunami-monument attached more importance to this monument than the people who knew the real meaning of that specific monument.

Disaster symbolism and changes in the urban symbolic spectrum

Before I come back to the main question about the influence of the tsunami on the urban symbolism, I would like to propose some categories of disaster symbols in order to comprehend the differences. These symbols may be natural or cultural and they may have

BEFORE AFTER	NATURAL	CULTURAL
NATURAL	Natural Symbol	Cultural Symbol Transformed by Nature
CULTURAL	Natural Symbol Transformed by Culture	Man-made/Cultural Symbol

Figure 8. Different categories of disaster symbols

been transformed during the natural disaster or not. In this way four categories can be distinguished, as shown in Figure 8.

Firstly, there are the natural elements transformed by natural disaster into a situation that is not changed anymore after the disaster. Though people give meaning to these objects, as they are symbols, there are no modifications. These are natural symbols, such as a rock, a tree, or water brought in by natural disaster.

Secondly, natural elements may be used as symbols or as a monument, which then becomes culturally made. The natural symbols that are adjusted culturally are included here as well. These symbols are the so-called natural symbols transformed by culture. Examples are rocks that have been used and changed into monuments.

Thirdly, the other way around is also possible. All man-made objects that are taken or changed by natural disaster, and that are still kept in the way they were left behind, are part of this category. These symbols may be called cultural symbols transformed by nature, such as broken houses, buildings, vehicles or streets. In the case of Banda Aceh, the ship that was taken into the city can be placed in this category.

A fourth and final category is the man-made monument or symbol that is composed of cultural elements. This can be a poster, a sign or, for example, an iron monument, but the mass graveyards in Banda Aceh are also part of this category, as they are culturally shaped by the use of Arabic signs, an iron entrance gate and several cement posts.

From the results of the mental maps, it seems that the tsunami did not influence the symbolic situation of Banda Aceh drastically. The interviews, however, show that this is definitely not the case. In fact, the Banda Acehnese still suffer from the impact of the tsunami and this is shown by some locations. This turns up in their narratives and stories, which are important for the interpretation of the meaning of the symbols. During the interviews it became clear that the meaning of the ship is connected to the stories about

the tsunami. This object symbolizes a whole set of memories, which should be kept in mind. In other words, when people see the ship their imagination of how all this has happened is triggered. This and other locations have meaning if they are kept the way they were left behind by the tsunami. If adjustments are made or if the ship is taken to another location, the message will be lost and the symbol becomes meaningless in the eyes of the respondents. The power of the symbols lies in the fact that nature has created them. If people make adjustments, if they are changed by culture, then their power will be taken away. Man-made locations are different, because they were not created by a natural event. Still these locations can be very meaningful to the people, if the story behind them is well known for them.

So, if on the one hand the awareness of disaster symbols is low, but their importance at the same time high, what is the reason for this discrepancy? One suggestion is related to the interpretation of how to go on after the tsunami. Although many respondents think that disaster symbols are important in order to remember what happened in the past and that especially direct remains such as the big ship and the mass graveyard are part of this remembrance, some of them also have directed their outlook towards the future. The idea is alive that people have to continue with their lives and that they cannot always keep on thinking about what happened in the past. Those that are still alive should go on and be good Muslims. This idea comes forward in the opening sentence of this chapter by Ibu Joni. Another suggestion is that the Acehnese do appreciate locations and symbols connected to the tsunami, but the religious activities (which come forward through the narratives too) receive in general more emphasis. Many people talk about the locations that have arisen since the tsunami, but, more specifically, they describe the activities that are held there. Finally, some man-made monuments are not yet strongly connected to the story of the tsunami. In the small sub-district Lambung, located in the west of Banda Aceh, I found a local man-made symbol (Figure 9). This monument had the shape of a boat; it was painted in the national colors of red and white and the date of the tsunami was written on it. Because new buildings had to be constructed there, the monument was removed. At the time of the research in June 2007, many people of Lambung did not even remember the monument. It was almost completely forgotten and had been put away against a small house. This example shows that other aspects of the aftermath of the tsunami, namely the building of new houses, received more attention than the raising of a monument.

A final comment in this contribution deals with the general symbolic character of Banda Aceh. Which location, object or aspect of the city is in the inhabitants' view the most characteristic of the city? As mentioned before, the Great Mosque of Baiturrahman is for many respondents the most important location in Banda Aceh and also of the whole province of Aceh. If one wishes to select an object of the city to represent it as a whole,

Figure 9. The Lost Tsunami-Monument: on the left the official monument in Lambung in November 2005 and on the right how the monument is situated in June 2007 (Photographs: left, Rob van Leeuwen; right, M. Hamzah)

the mosque will be the best one to use. The Acehnese believe that if you show a picture of the mosque to Indonesians from Bali, Jakarta, Medan or anywhere else, they will understand that it denotes (Banda) Aceh. Other pictures will not have this direct connection. The Great Mosque stands for history, religion, cohesion, culture, recovery, support and survival. During the tsunami the importance of the Great Mosque increased further. People, who survived because of it, saw the survival of the mosque as God's strength and in the first days after the tsunami it was the center of the city, which had to be cleared and rebuilt as soon as possible. This central symbol bridges the city before and after the tsunami. The main symbol of the city also became the main tsunami symbol.

In addition to this ongoing central position of the Great Mosque, has the urban symbolic spectrum in Banda Aceh changed since the tsunami? Has there been any change in the distribution of the symbol(s) over the city. If the city is taken as a whole and the various symbols are compared, the following four categories may be distinguished. One particular symbol may be present in only one location in the city. This is called a local symbol. Another possibility is that one symbol is seen in many locations in the city; that is a logo. A third type is one location with several related symbols enforcing each other. This I call embedded symbolism. A final category is a symbolic font. This means that a number of symbols pertain to a particular category and may be found throughout the whole city.

In the case of Banda Aceh, a new Tsunami font has come into being, but it is not the only and main one. There are three symbolic fonts in total: an Islamic font, a Tsunami font and an Independence font. The first can be recognized throughout the whole city, with the mosques, monuments without human figures, such as the Stone Monument, and the use of the religious Arabic language and Islamic symbols. Although the Tsunami

font is less present, it can still be found in the shipwrecks and mass graveyards. The third symbolic font – independence – is exemplified through several monuments, like the Airplane Monument and the Declaration Monument in the Taman Sari Gardens. The other three categories of the urban symbolic spectrum are mostly pre-tsunami symbols still existing after the tsunami. An example of a local symbol is the monument at Queen Safiatuddin Park. This monument is not related to other symbols in the city and it has just one symbolic function in its location: it stands for the cultural side of the province of Aceh. In Banda Aceh there are also some logos which are used in several locations. The first is the head of the elephant, which is associated with the most famous sultan Iskandar Muda. This logo can be seen on posters throughout the city, as well as on the sign for the KODAM, the Regional Military Command Office. Another logo is the use of the traditional multiple roofs. Some old and new buildings, advertisements and bus stops use this kind of roof. Embedded symbolism is available in the Mass Graveyard in Ulee Lheule, where religious symbols and symbols related to the tsunami unite.

Conclusion

The first day after I came back home from Banda Aceh, I heard surprising news about the official opening of a tsunami monument. In the summer of 2007, in the Netherlands, about 10,000 kilometers away from the epicenter of the earthquake, a monument had been made to commemorate the Dutch victims of the tsunami. This means that a country that was not harmed directly by the disaster erected an official monument and the country that was harmed most severely did not yet have one. This difference is a very clear example of the distinct meanings behind disaster symbols. In Banda Aceh the awareness of new tsunami symbols is low in general. The existing symbols kept their importance or even received more attention, such as the Great Mosque, and the importance of some tsunami symbols, like the cultural symbols transformed by nature and some embedded symbols is high. A new symbolic font came forward in the city's symbolic spectrum, together with some others. But in the beginning it seemed less important to develop a man-made monument. At the time of writing, in 2010, Banda Aceh also has an official tsunami monument. This means that the development of disaster symbols is an ongoing process and research could be carried out in different stages after a disaster. Moreover, it could be helpful if other aftermaths of natural disasters in cities are studied, in order to compare case studies and to develop the concept of 'disaster symbol'.

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8. Imagining Modernity

Memory, Space and Symbolism of The Hague

Jialing Luo

Introduction

It is not unusual for the perceptions of a city by local people to be very different from those of urban planners, and The Hague is a case in point. My fieldwork in The Hague between June and December 2005 found that many residents tended to describe The Hague as a village, characterized by places of memory, stained in shades of orange because of its historical associations. The national color of the Netherlands is orange, deriving from the surname of the Royal House of Orange-Nassau. Situated in the city are many buildings, statues and other landmarks relating to the history of The Hague as well as to the Dutch royal family. Therefore, shades of orange refer to the different degrees of royal entanglement with this history reflected in the urban visual experience that the residents have as part of their daily life. Conversely, the government views the modernist painting of *Victory Boogie Woogie* (1944) by the Dutch painter Piet Mondriaan as an expression of The Hague.[1] Through some drastic urban renewal projects, creating environments contrasting with the historical center, the government endeavors to present a metropolitan image of The Hague. This offers an intriguing site for the anthropological analysis of the city and its memory, space and symbolism in terms of modernity.

A brief history of The Hague[2]

Though being home to the royal family and seat of the government of the Netherlands, The Hague 'never got recognized as its capital and the old Palace Hall never got Royal' (Mekking, 2004: 263).[3] These facts would not be explained without a brief review of the short history of The Hague. Officially known as 's-Gravenhage (the Count's Hedge), The Hague was founded in the thirteenth century, when Count Floris IV built a hunting lodge by a dune pond (present-day Hofvijver) at the edge of hunting land (present-day Hague). The Hague grew around this site (present-day Binnenhof) and gradually achieved prosperity. Taking the shape and reality of a vital administrative center not long after its establishment, The Hague intermittently accommodated generations of Counts and stadtholder in the expanding Binnenhof complex, gradually becoming a symbol of authority. However, threatened by The Hague's increasing strength, older Dutch cities managed to

prohibit it from building any city walls, and thus officially becoming a city. When The Hague finally got an opportunity to build walls, money was spent on constructing a beautiful Town Hall[4] instead.

Without walls and a city charter, The Hague remained a very physically and politically accessible village. Its undefined structure increased vulnerability to war, plunder, flood, plague and other disasters throughout its history. The Hague particularly suffered during the Eighty Years War (1568-1648) due to its lack of defensive fortifications. Seized by 'Sea Beggars, Spaniards and William the Silent's troops in turn' and heavily looted during the dark period between 1562 and 1575 (Weightman, 1978: 57), the whole town was left in ruins and only part of the Binnenhof, the Town Hall and the Grote Kerk (Great Church) survived these catastrophes.

Although the States General had gathered at the Binnenhof since its establishment in 1464,[5] it was not until 1806 that The Hague was officially granted city status and named a 'place of royal residence' by Louis Napoleon, the French King of Holland (Weightman, 1978: 113). This was much later than many other Dutch cities such as Dordrecht, Delft and Leiden had received their city rights.

However, most Hagenaars whom I interviewed did not express any regret over the long delay in achieving the city status that The Hague clearly merited due to its prosperity, and function as the earliest seat of the government-to-be. Instead, there was an element of pride in The Hague's determined and honorable resistance to the Spanish, despite its openness making defense extremely difficult, by contrast with Amsterdam, which though possessing both walls and city status, had shamefully sided with the invaders. A few local people said to me that The Hague has every reason to boast of its tradition of being open and, therefore, neutral under all circumstances. It seems to be still doing so today, with 'openness' introduced as a slogan by the city government to draw worldwide attention, and promote their ambitions for The Hague to become the international capital of peace and justice. Meanwhile, the city's coat of arms, on which a stork is holding a small eel in its beak, reinforces the urban legend of being a village, rather than a city. It serves as a strong reminder of a village with a humble past.

'Sacred Navel'

When being asked which part of the city they felt to be most representative of The Hague, almost all of my informants spoke of the historical center comprising the Binnenhof, which houses the Dutch Parliament, and its neighborhood. According to them, The Hague is living with its past both physically and spiritually. The established spatial and architectural environment, as well as its underpinning social and cultural discourses can be

traced back to particular moments and events in history. The array of places, reminiscent of evolution of the city, either concentrated in the historical center or scattered over the entire city, communicates memories of a vanished past inextricably linked to the Royal House.

Mekking (2004) employs religious terminology to discuss the crucial role that architecture plays in history and politics. He views the Binnenhof as the 'Sacred Navel', and the wider area surrounding the Binnenhof, the former enclosure of the Counts, as the 'Holy Zone'. Conveniently located within walking distance of around ten minutes from the bustling Central Station, the dignified historical center of 'Sacred Navel' and 'Holy Zone' embraces the picturesque royal lake of Hofvijver (court pond). The neighborhood showcases many monumental buildings, statues and works of art associated with the 760-year history of the city.

The past is clearly apparent when one strolls around the district. Built during the time of Count Floris V (1256-1296), the imposing Ridderzaal (the Knights' Hall) has witnessed the many vicissitudes of the Ages of the Counts, the Republic and the Monarchy, surviving as the oldest example of the Gothic architectural style. The Ridderzaal was originally designed as a place to entertain guests, and was subsequently used for other purposes as well. The famous meeting of the legendary knights of the Golden Fleece was held here in the 15th century. It functioned as residence for Charles the Bold, a member of the House of Burgundy. In French times, it was even used as an 'exercise hall' for military purposes.[6] The Gothic Ridderzaal continues to be of ceremonial and administrative value today. On the annual Prinsjesdag (Prince Day), held on the third Tuesday in September, the Queen would ride in her golden coach through the city to the Ridderzaal. Then, from her throne in the Grand Hall, she would announce the government's agenda for the coming parliamentary year to the assembled representatives of the Upper and Lower Houses of the Dutch Parliament.

The interior design and decoration of the Ridderzaal arouses a strong sense of belonging. The arched medieval oak roof, the coats of arms of the old Dutch cities, the traditional flags of the twelve provinces, as well as the throne carved with the letter 'B' (the initial of Queen Beatrix), all seem to be 'materially real and temporally stable' (Till, 2005: 9) and contribute to a distinctively Dutch feel. The items displayed in the hall, 'small, scattered ...bits of the past' as Douglas (1980: 5) described, evoke memories of the origins of the Netherlands and the Dutch people. Halbwachs, according to Douglas, considered remembering to be a process of piecing together 'vague and piecemeal impressions' 'under suitable stimuli'. In this case, the medieval roof, the coats of arms, the traditional flags, as well as the throne, all serve as stimuli giving a 'spatial "fix" to time' (Till, 2005: 9), creating historical continuity and strengthening national self-image.

'Holy Zone'

In *Urban Symbolism*, Nas (1993) points out that historical buildings, statues, songs, etc. are symbol carriers. Together with his two co-authors, he further argues in *Urban Symbolic Ecology and Hypercity* (2006: 11) that 'the city's man-made urban symbolism reflects social change in its layering, as the various population groups in power during the different periods leave their consecutive marks on the urban landscape'. This contention seems to apply to the 'Holy Zone', where many symbol carriers portray a stormy past.

The statue of William of Orange (1533-1584), also known as William the Silent, Father of the Netherlands, stands in the centre of Het Plein (the Square) adjoining the Binnenhof and surrounded on four sides by historical buildings, built at different times. The National Anthem of the Netherlands tells the story of William, founder of the royal House of Orange-Nassau. He led the Dutch Revolt against Spanish rule (1568-1648, also called Eighty Years' War), fighting for the independence of the country. Since then the fate of The Hague and The Netherlands and that of the House of Orange have been closely interwoven. The National Flag of three horizontal strips of red, white, and blue originated from William of Orange's coat of arms. Orange, the name of the Royal House has become the national color of the Netherlands.

Situated at the Buitenhof is another statue, commemorating King William II (Frederick William) who 'fought in the Peninsular wars' and 'commanded Dutch-Belgian brigades at Quatre Bras and Waterloo' (Weightman, 1978: 117). He is on a horse, facing the Binnenhof with his hat in hand, understood as the King embracing government and democracy.

These statues were raised to glorify members of the royal family and national heroes, celebrating the triumph of the Royal House and the nation-to-be. There are also statues involving dreadful memories, which are supposed to be either 'buried deep in the past' or 'presented as an aesthetic sight' (Zukin and Kasinitz, 1995: 81). The two statues of Johan van Oldebarnevelt (1547-1619) and Johan de Witt (1625-1672) located around the Hofvijver bring together themes of personal and national tragedy. Van Oldebarnevelt was a great statesman who had served his country for more than forty years, but was executed at the age of seventy-two to enable Prince Maurits to gain more power (Weightman, 1978: 67-69). Standing near the Prison Gate where the event occurred, the statue of Johan de Witt, reminds of another murder, that of the De Witt brothers in 1672, known as the Ramp Jaar (Year of Disaster). The murder resulted from another Royal power struggle, which led to 'widespread horror in Europe' (Weightman, 1978: 93-95). It was not until the 20th century that the statues were erected, signifying that the Royal House had finally come to terms with its history of extreme political violence. In an increasingly open social structure of the modern age's 'space of flows and timeless time'

(Castells, 2000: 507), reminders of past moments and events serve as powerful permanent reference points, educating a nation and people of a pain that never vanishes where memory lingers.

Lynch (1960: 81) writes: 'historical associations, or other meanings, are powerful reinforcements... Once a history, a sign, or a meaning attaches to an object, its value as a landmark rises'. These pieces of silent, dull stones, when placed in context, come to life with much to remember and to forget.

At the same time, the elaborate monumental buildings along the Hofvijver are a rich legacy of architecture. Among them are the Mauritshuis (the Royal Gallery) and the Haags Historisch Museum (the Historical Museum of The Hague). Both built in the 17th century by Pieter Post and Jacob van Campen, they are classical with restrained elegance, featuring solid lines and shape, somber column-like pilasters, decorative scrolls and temple roofs. Together with the Noordeinde Palace and Huis ten Bosh Palace located outside the city center, constructed in the same period and of similar style, these four buildings bear striking architectural resemblances promoting royal identity. Turning to ancient Greek and Roman designs for ideas, architecture at the time had to be of the grand manner to emphasize the owners' social status. The architectural achievements during the Dutch Golden Age strengthened the image of The Hague as a world power. At the time business and arts flourished, and the Royal House played a central role in Dutch and global politics.

In her book *The New Berlin*, Till (2005: 9) perceives that 'places are not only continuously interpreted; they are haunted by past structures of meaning and material presences from other times and lives'. One step further, Halbwachs (1980:133) analyzed how spatial images generate collective memory through developing in-group habits associated to 'a specific physical setting'. Referring to Comte, Halbwachs further argued that physical surroundings have enormous power to produce an image, perpetuating individual and group experience and sentiments that eventually form 'local tradition'. He compared this tradition, a stable long-term relationship between group and the material structure, with stone, which will not be easily moved as the city transforms.

The heritage of sacredness and holiness of the historical center derives from conflicts and tragedies represented by the statues, as well as the dominant sobriety of the classical architecture of the Dutch Golden Age. Through this physical embodiment, the narratives of The Hague express dignity and create an imagined community, whose citizens continually relive its history and experience without necessarily paying it conscious attention. The Hague is a city where 'nothing is forgotten' (Halbwachs, 1980: 5[7]), and where reminders, symbols, in Nas' term, help bring back distant memory.

The Hague's new center: Modern aspirations

Once again, Lynch commented that

> Not only is the city an object which is perceived (and perhaps enjoyed) by millions of people of widely diverse class and character, but it is the product of many builders who are constantly modifying the structure for reasons of their own. While it may be stable in general outlines for some time, it is ever changing in detail. Only partial control can be exercised over its growth and form. There is no final result, only a continuous succession of phases. (Lynch, 1960: 2)

In saying this, Lynch foresaw in 1960 what has happened in The Hague from the 1980s until the present.

Friedmann (1961: 89) pointed out that a modern downtown district is considered to represent 'whatever is uniquely urban about the local environment'. As the host city of the first two World Peace Conferences in 1899 and 1907 respectively, The Hague was intended by both the local and national governments to develop into the capital of international law. The first thing they planned was modernization of the center of The Hague, the focus of attention and, as argued above by Friedmann, an important representational space. In order to turn its traditional village look into the stunning appearance of a great metropolis, a wave of restructuring took place in the central development zone, extending roughly from the Spui across Central Station to the Utrechtsebaan.

Since the New City Hall was built between 1986 and 1995 in the development zone, a cluster of high-rises has been constructed, forming a modernist environment contrasting sharply with the neighboring historical center. This intense government-led urban renewal program, comprising sub-projects of De Resident, Hoftoren, Wijnhavenkwartier, Spuimarkt, Het Beatrixkwartier, the Utrechtsebaan and the Grotiusplaats,[8] was meticulously planned and executed to yield a state-of-the-art image, and to realize an integrated functionality of combined offices, shops, residential buildings and entertainment facilities. The Hague entered a new era of development.

Typical of Richard Meier's[9] work, the New City Hall initiated this inner-city regeneration and ushered in Modernism to The Hague. Following in the tradition of Le Corbusier, one of the founders of modern architecture, the pilotis, the strip windows, and the white stucco of the New City Hall speak of functionalism and uniformity, exemplifying most of Meier's architectural style throughout the world. Covering an area of 120,000 m^2 and containing approximately 2,300 civil servants, the New City Hall was designed to be a 'white swan' rising above the medieval roofs. However, it was nicknamed the 'ice

palace' soon after its completion, being accused of indifference to and incompatibility with the historical center in its immediate vicinity.

Shunning ornaments and detailed decoration while prioritizing high concentration and mass production, Modernism was criticized for being 'too inflexible and too uncommunicative' (Kostof, 1995: 746). It created isolated self-sustaining spaces, destroying the connectivity of traditional urban territory and fragmenting the social fabric. Critics also questioned its arrogant assumption that one type of architecture universally applies to all landscapes. Gradually, Postmodernism replaced Modernism, renewing attention to historical associations and the individual psyche (Kostof, 1995).

Changes in city environment can be 'emotionally disturbing', and may 'disorganize' the 'perceptual image' of the residents (Lynch, 1960: 112). The transformed new center was criticized by many of my interviewees for lacking character and pleasing aesthetics, and for being incongruent with the familiar, representational image of the adjacent 'Holy Zone', the city's center of gravity. It was also criticized for bad taste. For instance, the two pointed towers of *Castalia* and the dome-topped round tower of *Zurichtoren* were vulgarly nicknamed 'the tits and cock' for obvious reasons. Though the towers are identifiable on the skyline, their bases usually remain invisible.

Victory Boogie Woogie and the new skyline

My informants described the modern quarter's extreme proximity to the historical center as a strange visual experience. After getting out of the chaotic Central Station and traveling down the blocks of shapeless multi-storied buildings, one would suddenly emerge into an unexpected medieval settlement. Rather than a pleasant surprise, it evokes an uncomfortable feeling caused by the abrupt physical changes within easy walking distance.

According to many of my informants, viewed from the Plein, The Hague is a disordered mixture of old and new. The statue of William of Orange stands against a backdrop of layers of dense structures clashing with each other; causing enormous ambiguity and tension (see Figure 1). However, urban planners see meanings in the contrast between old and new reflected in Mondriaan's painting, *Victory Boogie Woogie*. The colors of red, yellow, blue, white, and black are interwoven over the entire canvas, seemingly randomly interrupting and separating each other into square or rectangular fragments to create a vivid and rhythmic visual effect. The Hague can be made to take on the illusion of such segmentation and rhythmic dynamism when a city map is covered with a copy of *Victory Boogie Woogie*, as shown in the picture hung on the wall of the office of the Municipal Urban Development Department.

Figure 1. The statue of William of Orange stands in the Plein, surrounded by a mix of old and new buildings
(Photograph: Jialing Luo, December 2005)

The Hague's city architect regards Mondriaan's abstract painting as one of the most appropriate metaphors for The Hague. Its colors represent the different functions of the city, its pattern resembles the urban geomorphology, and the unboundedness of the matrix symbolizes the traditional openness of the city. I was told that the principal objective is to create a pluralistic and diverse Hague through placing similar architecture styles in the same neighborhood, regardless of the number of neighborhoods. Modernism is seen as the solution in The Hague, on the condition that new designs do not intrude upon the historically protected areas. A handbook PPW (Praktijk Pocket Welstand Den Haag) was compiled to set down rules for heritage protection and to guide urban planning and design.

The construction of modern buildings is not permitted within a historical zone. However, they are encouraged and deemed valid, provided they create or fit into their own local ecological niche without having to maintain any familiar reference points. The city architect understands The Hague as a liberal physical environment welcoming any taste and variation, each different in color, size and texture. In other words, everyone is free to articulate his/her ideas and creations as long as they justify themselves and respond to their immediate context. This in a sense exemplifies the remark of the major

contemporary architectural theorist, Peter Eisenman, that, 'architecture is made by architects for themselves' (Kostof, 1995: 759). It describes the intention of The Hague's planners. The government's vision is to establish, in a Team X fashion, 'a network of connected slabs typically arrayed in a loose polygonal pattern' (Kostof, 1995: 747), reminiscent of a Mondriaanic field of fragments.

Lynch (1960: 9) believes that the very 'shape', 'color', or 'arrangement' contributes to 'the making of vividly identified, powerfully structured, highly useful mental images of the environment'. He also thinks that landmarks stand out well if they 'contrast with their background' (Lynch, 1960: 78), and 'the contrast and proximity of each area...heightens the thematic strength of each' (Lynch, 1960: 72). It seems to provide a theoretical framework supporting the urban planners' imagined disposition of The Hague center. In the meantime, the local government considers the combination of old and new to be a socio-cultural activity – a dialogue between history and modernity. They assert that architecture and urban planning need to respond to social progress, reflecting an up-to-date space, movement, and ideology. However, as an extension of Neo-Classicism, the modernist motifs of disjunction, incoherence and subjective experience are deemed to evoke a new Utopian age of freedom and creativity, which unfortunately does not appear to be consistent with the sustaining background of shades of orange in The Hague. Although, as we know, modern architecture itself, usually adopting building materials such as concrete, steel and glass which favor functionalism and mass production, does not often produce representational images.

In addition, the high-rise buildings that currently dominate their surroundings are thought to be squeezed in between the Central Station and the historical center by many Hagenaars whom I interviewed. Though filled with rich heritage of architecture and statues, and protected from modernism's invasion, the historical center becomes increasingly weak in the skyline. Why did the government not consider introducing similar low-rises to maintain physical unity in the area? The answer from the city architect was a practical one. The multi-functioning high-rises would most effectively address the land shortage problem and would keep the city compact. He used the ministerial buildings as an example. Due to lack of space in The Hague, they were relocated to the neighboring town of Zoetermeer according to the urban development planning in the 1970s and 1980s. However, all of them managed to move back into the center in the 1990s, when tall buildings became necessary and available. The Ministries would like to stay close to each other for convenience, while occupying as little public space as possible. In this sense, the high-rises seem to be the only way out. Unavoidably, after experiencing horizontal expansion in the 19th century, the public buildings became vertical in the 20th century.

The city architect of The Hague sees power symbolism in high-rises and churches. He expressed the view that as opposed to the churches that controlled the skyline in the

Middle Ages, it now is the towering office buildings of government and enterprises. This shows an ongoing power-shifting process. Likewise, Short (1996: 393) argues:

> From the spires of Gothic cathedrals to the flat tops of modernist blocks, the vertical form of the city tells us as much about human aspirations as about building technologies. From cathedrals of God to cathedrals of commerce, the urban skyline in its individual buildings, as in its ensemble of buildings, indicates the recurring concerns of a society. The small urban setting with its dramatic Gothic spire tells us about the power of the Church, while the tall towers of a business district reveal the power of capital and business.

The tall buildings do not go up without any limitations though. Restrictions are made on height according to height of the old churches. There are three levels of height restriction (70 m, 100 m, and 140 m), to which all the architecture must conform. Concentrating in both the Central Station and Station HS, the high-rises fight to tower above The Hague, where the spire of the Grote Kerk used to be the only distinctive sight against an open village scene. Kostof (Short, 1996: 391) saw skyline as the shorthand of urban identity. In this sense, The Hague would not suggest itself as a special city, despite the fact that it clearly is a place of fascinating texture. Maintaining continuity amidst changes remains challenging.

Conclusion

The city that inspired Mondriaan's *Victory Boogie Woogie* was New York in the 1940s, a time when its extraordinary Empire State Building, Art Deco Rockefeller Center, and monumental Statue of Liberty impressed the whole world. Mondriaan's passion for jazz immensely contributed to the work of art. The term 'Boogie Woogie' itself meant a new trend in jazz, short-paced, rhythmical, and forceful. Through writing a jazz score on a canvas of abstract city pattern, the painting expressively brought the urban dynamic of New York into perspective.

The attempt to metaphorically link The Hague to *Victory Boogie Woogie* does not appear to be very convincing for the simple reason that the present Hague and the 1940s' New York are hardly comparable. More importantly, except the new center, the rest of The Hague does not feel to have much connection to Modernism and its methods of urban planning. The bold but arrogant gesture of modeling urban development on the superimposition of a painter's orchestration of fragments in an abstract spatial field, masks the real architectural task of addressing the depth and complexity of the everyday city. A

stroll away from the center would quickly expose a laid-back village atmosphere. What characterizes the overall physical setting is the flood of factors associated with history and memory, with a rather small portion of newly emerged architecture remaining in the margin. The Hague is not yet visually modern. Ignorance by planners of the true nature of the city as a complex environment of possible depths of temporal experience would result in impoverishment rather than improvement of its fabric.

The new center is therefore a misleading façade, veiling the city sitting behind it. It reminds me of the Duomo of Verona. Its plain Romanesque appearance conceals an extravagant Rococo interior decoration, exemplifying another case of façade symbolism. Also identifiable is a tripartite morphology of The Hague, characterized by three highly distinctive scenes comprising the new center/hyper-city zone, the historical center/holy zone and the Scheveningen sea resort/mundane zone. The geographical intimacy of the new center and the historical center constitutes the core of the inner city, which is loosely linked by an idyllic transitional passage of grass tram rail to Scheveningen. The spatial composition of The Hague finds its matching colors in the National Flag of the Netherlands. The three colors of red, white, and blue in a top-down order could refer to the dynamism of the new center, the elegance of the historical center and the charm of Scheveningen respectively. This tripartite symbolism offers an alternative to *Victory Boogie Woogie*.

As mentioned at the beginning, urban planners (representing the government) and ordinary people have very different perceptions of The Hague. The government's ambition to establish a world city finds inspiration in *Victory Boogie Woogie*, whose rhythm, pattern, and openness are what a metropolis is supposed to have. More importantly, it is a masterpiece of genuine modern art by a Dutch painter. Going modern is understood to be the premise of going global. Driven by this mission and conception, the planners' design for change has led to massive reconstruction in the city center. The lack of cohesion in rebuilding seems to have disrupted the existing spatial structure, where memories of the past underpin an exterior urban setting. However, 'the ongoing stream of life does not wait for planners to give it direction' (Friedmann 1967: 229). Ordinary people, on the other hand, unconcerned with the international status of The Hague, attach themselves to the Ridderzaal, the Binnenhof, the statues, and the many historical buildings around the Hofvijver, as well as other habitual images of the external world that they encounter in their everyday life.

Purchased at an expensive price of thirty-five million Euros, the unfinished painting of *Victory Boogie Woogie* is displayed in the Gemeentemuseum (the Municipal Museum) of The Hague. It distinctively represents the high culture that captured the imagination of the planners. However, modernism is more than a piece of painting or architecture, or way of urban planning. Modernism is an attitude, involving the readiness to rupture continuity between past and present, to lose memory and to re-construct an entirely new system.

It is not something to think of, but something to think with. The Hague has never been modern in this sense, given that its people still continue to define where they live as a village that they adore; it did not become a city until the nineteenth century, and it has never enjoyed the title of national capital even while housing the government. The modernity of The Hague rests largely in the imagination of the planners and government.

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Notes

1 See http://www.gemeentemuseum.nl/index.php?id=031845.

2 Part of the information in this section is from Weightman (1978), various official tourist and government promotion pamphlets and websites, as well as my own intensive fieldwork.

3 The old Palace Hall refers to the Ridderzaal.

4 It was built in 1565.

5 From the website of the Dutch House of Representatives.

6 This information is from the handout provided by the Binnenhof Visitors' Centre.

7 Leibnitz in Douglas (1980).

8 The Beatrixkwartier and the Grotiusplaats lie on the right-hand side of the Central Station, and are either close to or alongside the Utrechtsebaan.

9 Richard Meier (1935-), American modernist architect.

9. Urban Symbolism and the New Urbanism of Indonesia

Hans-Dieter Evers

Weak Nusantara urbanism

In contrast to China, Japan, Vietnam or Thailand, which had strong traditions of urban centers, Indonesia and the Malay World have a weak base in urbanism. In fact it has been argued that the Nusantara cultural area had no cultural concept of the city before the arrival of the Dutch (Yeung and Lo, 1976; Evers, 1984a). Going back to the earlier Nusantara empires it can be shown that the center of the realm was a palace (*kraton, istana*) rather than a town. Unlike Beijing or Ayuthia, which were surrounded by a wall and a moat, the capital of Majapahit or later on Yogyakarta had none of these attributes of urbanism. Linguistically there was no concept of a city with a bourgeoisie, as found in mediaeval Europe. *Bandar* or port and *kota* or fort had to be used to designate places which during the colonial days became cities with a city government.

Peter Nas, in accordance with my earlier arguments (Evers, 1984a) that there were no urban institutions and no conceptions of an urban area, uses the term 'focal urbanism' to stress the importance of the palace (kraton or *istana*) surrounded by retainers, craftsmen and peasants (Nas and Boender, 2002: 4). These areas surrounding the palace could hardly be called cities in the Weberian sense. They lacked most institutions of urbanism. Whatever the terminology, after the interlude of Dutch colonial urbanization, the first phase of urbanization occurred after Indonesian independence. It was, and this is my thesis, 'urbanization without urbanism'. What was the case for the larger cities of Jakarta, Surabaya, Bandung and Medan until the early 1990s still holds true for many of the small provincial or district capitals of Indonesia today.

This weak concept of urbanism and the city was reflected in the administrative setup of independent Indonesia after 1945. Though settlements could be elevated to the status of *kota raya*, *kota madya* or *kota administratif*, the head of the city administration, the *wali kota*, had more or less the same rights and obligations as a *bupati* or district head. Up to now there is no Lord Mayor of Jakarta, but a Governor as in any other province with five *wali kota*, or heads of the five districts making up the special capital region (or actually province) of DKI Jakarta.

Urban involution

'Weak Nusantara urbanism' was further weakened by 'urban involution' (Evers, 2007) when during the 1960s and 1970s intricate patterns of an informal urban economy developed without leading to the modernization of built structures, modes of transport, industries and occupations. Involution – in contrast to evolution – designates a process in which structures, patterns and forms become more and more intricate and complex without reaching a new stage of evolution. According to Geertz, involution, an 'inward overelaboration of detail' (Geertz, 1963) leads to stagnation and underdevelopment. For most towns and cities in Indonesia the growing bureaucracy (Evers, 1987) and informal sector trade have been the major driving forces of urbanization rather than industrialization or the development of a modern service sector. Involution has also hampered the development of a clearly demarcated social structure. Gavin Jones alleges that despite urban sprawl and the growth of mega-cities, no 'real urban proletariat' has developed (Jones, 2002) and Solvay Gerke shows that the emerging middle class in Indonesia was based on middle-class symbols rather than on solid wage incomes or accumulated wealth (Gerke, 2000).

Ethnicity constitutes another element of involution. Ethnic diversity has increased with urbanization, funneled by in-migration. Though rural areas can also have an ethnically diverse population, ethnic groups tend to claim distinct territories. In cities we can also observe tendencies towards segregation into ethnic quarters, like 'China Town' or 'Little India'. There appears to be a tendency that a city has more ethnic groups within its limits than surrounding rural areas. Segregated areas are reproducing elements of each group, creating an involuted ethnic mosaic of distinct, but similarly patterned areas, organized by speech group, ethnicity, occupation and district or even village of origin. As Bruner (1961) has shown in his classic study of Medan, North Sumatra, there has even been intensification of Batak *adat* and of the sense of Batak ethnic identity in the city during the Sukarno period.

With the end of involution ethnic and regional separatism declines, larger areas evolve and class may become more important than ethnicity as a principle of structuring urban areas, as was shown earlier (Evers, 1984b).

Today for Jakarta, Surabaya, Bandung and Medan and some of the other larger provincial capitals, the process of involution has come to an end and – in the early words of Terry McGee a 'true urban revolution' is under way (McGee, 1967). Less than half of the Indonesian population makes a living from agriculture and an urban middle class, following global patterns of consumption, changes the cityscape (Evers and Gerke, 1997; Gerke, 2000; Clammer, 2003). Open markets are still there, but shopping centers and malls have been constructed to cater for the new consumers and high-rise buildings mark the new CBD (Central Business District) with an ICT (Information and Communi-

cation Technology) infrastructure that enables world-wide networking. This process has far-reaching consequences, which we shall explore.

The cultural construction of urbanism

This chapter deals with the relationship between material and symbolic culture, between the forces of globalization and the reaction of urban actors. It is preoccupied with the 'disappearance of the real and its replacement by simulation, hyper-reality and models' (Gottdiener, 1995). Urbanization and the construction of virtual urbanism are reflected in buildings, monuments, places, street names and other architectural artefacts. Only some have meaning for the urban population or its rulers. These artefacts often remain even during urban renewal when the process of urbanization moves on. Looking back we have, therefore, to engage in a sort of 'archaeology of meaning'.

The legacy of weak Nusantara (island Southeast Asia) urbanism, urban involution, the post-colonial state and the general decline of economic conditions after independence prevented the growth of genuine urbanism. Quite detached from the reality of shared poverty, stagnation and underdevelopment the capital city of Jakarta was symbolically created as an exemplary center of culture, national identity and power. A unitary post-colonial nation state had to have an 'exemplary center', a capital. It was therefore necessary to develop a central capital city at least as a symbolic representation. 'Virtual urbanism' was essential to gloss over the harsh reality of a large urban sprawl of squatters and semi-rural *kampung*s. It had to be demonstrated to the world that Indonesia was a unified nation and a leader of the 'newly emerging forces' of the Third World. Jakarta developed for the 'imagined community' of the Indonesian nation state a symbolic universe of meaning, a virtual world of monuments, parade grounds and significant buildings following a pattern of cultural, rather than material urbanization.

Faced with the task of nation building and with capturing the leadership of the non-aligned movement, President Sukarno needed an urban center of power, a capital city of the new independent centralized state. It was plainly unthinkable to have a capital city without urbanism, without the institution of a world city! Failing the knowledge and economic resources to physically construct a new capital, Sukarno and his political elite opted for a 'theatre state'[1] solution, building what Peter Nas (1993) has called a 'city full of symbols'. As Abeyasekere (1987) puts it in her history of Jakarta, the Sukarno government was good at symbolism but rather poor in providing the facilities necessary to run a world-class city.

Jakarta became a 'city without urbanism'. By placing monuments at significant intersections or places, 'virtual urbanism' was created. The capital of Indonesia was sym-

Figure 1. National Monument, Jakarta

bolically constructed by huge monuments, like the freedom fighter, carrying the flame of liberating Irian from colonial rule, or a tall tower with a golden flame (National Monument, MONAS, see Figure 1), housing a museum at its base (MacDonald, 1995; Nas, 2004).

Urban anthropologists have speculated that this depiction in the basement of the sacrifice of national heroes during the independence struggle could be linked to ancestor worship, or to the world axis (*paku alam*) of Hindu-Javanese mythology (Nas, 1993). A more far-fetched argument might suggest a connection to the sacrifice of a slave under the town pole (*lak muang*) in Bangkok through which the city was established and safeguarded against otherworldly attacks.

Later a pleasure garden (Taman Mini), depicting the whole of Indonesia, was built by Suharto's wife to symbolize the unity of culturally diverse Indonesia. The details of this process have been aptly documented by Peter Nas (1993, 1995), who studied the urban symbolic ecology of Jakarta and other Indonesian towns. He showed, among other things, that the nationally most significant monument (MONAS) was put in the center, the next line of monuments of national significance are found in a circle around MONAS and the Medan Merdeka (Freedom Square), while lesser symbols formed an outer ring. This pattern resembles the concentric model of the classical Javanese state. In other words the symbolic ecology of Jakarta was a sign or indicator, linking the new centralized state of Indonesia with the glorious pre-colonial state of Majapahit. Other cities constructed similar meaningful monuments, ranging from pistol waving national heroes to urban monuments connected to local incidences during the struggle for independence.

The end of involution and the growth of urbanism

During the 1980s the four large Indonesian cities started to change together with many other cities in Asia (Marcotullio, 2003). Industrialization got slowly under way in Jakarta, Bandung, Surabaya and Medan. The fruits of New Order capitalism became visible in new housing estates for the emerging middle strata of Indonesian society (Gerke, 2000), elite quarters with heavily guarded enclaves (so-called gated communities) and shopping centers, malls and department stores catering for the new tastes of the upper and middle classes and their demand for upmarket local and international goods. In Jakarta a new shopping belt extended from the old Chinese area of Glodok to Blok M in Kebayoran Baru. International Hotels and new business towers created the new CBD (central business district) of Jakarta.

During the very early stages of this globalization, the new urbanism was glossed over by a symbolism of the pre-colonial past, as if the elite were afraid to face the challenges of globalization whilst losing the connection to the Javanese past that had hith-

erto been the source of their aspiration. Modern buildings were given names derived from Sanskrit or old Javanese: Arthaloka, Bina Graha, Ariyaduta, Graha Purna Yudha, Devi Ruji are some examples of building names found in 'neo-classical' Jakarta (Evers and Korff, 2004). Actually the change of name from Batavia to Jakarta, derived from Jayakarta was the beginning of the 'Sanscritization' of the Indonesian capital. The last Hindu-Javanese monument that was built in Jakarta was a large figure of Arjuna riding in a chariot and obstructing traffic on the eastern side of Jakarta's Medan Merdeka (Freedom Square).

In the provincial capitals this symbolic return to local traditions created a strange marriage between modern architecture and traditional forms of art. A modern looking cone houses a museum to commemorate the capture of Yogyakarta by the revolutionary troops under General Sudirman (Monumen Yogya Kembali). Suharto, a rather insignificant officer, is given a major role in the museum, which in turn is locally interpreted as a modern version of mount Meru, the global mountain of Hindu-Javanese mythology, surrounded by the oceans in the guise of several ponds. Furthermore the museum building stands in line with mythical volcano Merapi, the Tugu (end of the ritual road of procession) and the palace of the Sultan of Yogyakarta (see Nas and Sluis, 2002). After all, Yogyakarta was the first short-lived capital of independent Indonesia and is, like Jakarta, a 'special region' (*daerah istimewa*).

In Padang, capital of West-Sumatra, modern buildings were topped with rural Minangkabau roofs (Colombijn, 1994; Evers, 1993, Evers and Korff, 2004). In Denpasar a new administrative district (Renon) was constructed in modernized Balinese architecture, including a huge multi-purpose building in the form of a Hindu-Balinese temple. In Yogyakarta street names were written in Javanese exciting and baffling international tourists, and in Jakarta the Governor promoted the 'Betawiness of the local population' (Knorr, 2002). This 'manipulated symbolism' (Macdonald, 1995), this marriage of modernity and localism created a 'hybrid space' in many urban areas of Indonesia and elsewhere in Southeast Asia. The Malay Middle Eastern Symbolism of the new administrative capital of Putrajaya located in the modern Multimedia Super Corridor of Malaysia's emerging knowledge society provides a vivid example of this trend (Menkhoff, Evers and Chay, 2005).

After the breakthrough of urbanism, the construction of monuments more or less ceased. With a CBD, international banks, theatres, cocktail lounges and shopping malls, the newly gained urbanism was sufficiently documented and symbolized. Instead of a withdrawal from reality and a virtual construction of a capital city, Jakarta had now joined the league of world cities (Sassen, 1991). A recent event demonstrates the new role of Jakarta as a global city. On July 23, 2005 MONAS (the national monument), the once powerful symbol of nationalism and national unity on Jakarta's Medan Merdeka (Freedom

Square) was changed into a symbol of a global city. The event was reported in the *Jakarta Post* (24-07-05) as follows:

> A touch of glamour has been lent to the National Monument (Monas) park – already home to deer and coloured pigeons – with the opening on Saturday night of a fountain that emulates the Las Vegas Bellagio fountains. With music and choreographed laser beams, the Rp. 26 billion fountain... accompanies Monas, the city's principal landmark, a 132-meter-high column topped with a glittering flame.

It was further reported that the fountain uses German technology and features 14 different songs of mainly Betawi origin, like *Kopi Dandut*, *Lenggak-lenggok Jakarta* and *Ampar-ampar Pisang* – rather than the national anthem, *Padamu Negri* or other nationalist songs. Betawi songs, German technology, American-style fountain together symbolize the global city with a local touch, rather than the national capital of a struggling postcolonial nation.

Conclusion and outlook

Urbanism has arrived in Indonesia and is slowly pervading the urban hierarchy. Some provincial cities still have a long way to go. They are still *kotadesa* (urban villages) rather than cities in their own right. Decentralization is bringing local culture the forefront and defunct *raja*s and their nobility may re-emerge, demanding symbolic representation.

In the mega-cities the *virtual* construction of urbanism and with it the *actual* construction of large symbolic urban monuments has come to an end. Of course urban symbolism will be continued, but in a different form. Multi-storeyed shopping centers and office blocks, high-rise office towers (like the twin towers in Kuala Lumpur) and post-modern laser shows will suffice as symbols of 'real urbanism'.

By instituting a policy of administrative and fiscal decentralization, the Indonesian government has changed Jakarta from a symbol of national unity to a mere capital of a democratizing state. Foreign investment is flowing in, multinational corporations set up their offices and urban planning starts to structure urban space. Jakarta has joined the rank of world cities whose CBDs are knowledge hubs connected worldwide by ICT. It shares the glory and the dark side of similar cities in Asia: the slums, insufficient infrastructure, rapid population growth and, as some observers claim, ungovernability.

The analysis presented in this chapter may also be relevant in respect of a very practical, economic aspect of urban development. The age of globalization has created a number of processes which implied increasingly complex roles for Asian city, regional

and national governments. With foreign investments and the resulting inter-city competition, local governments of large Asian cities have increasingly understood the need to remain competitive by putting in place policies and projects to enhance the attractiveness of cities for potential investors. In order to attract foreign investment and integrate a city into the global economy, the image of a city has to be polished. As the case of Singapore proves it was deemed necessary to build a concert hall, improve tourist spots like the zoo or the bird park, market its culinary delights, build world-class research institutes and universities and enable gambling in two state-of-the-art casinos. The government of Singapore, as those of other large Asian cities, have realized that nobody is eager to live and invest in a city without urbanism. Urbanism and the image of a city are essential selling points for city development. Building on earlier work on urban symbolism, particularly by Peter Nas and others, the changes between various symbolic regimes of Indonesia has been discussed in the context of globalization and political change. The strong interrelation between political and economic developments with urban symbolism should not be overlooked as an important dimension in the study of urban governance in Indonesia and elsewhere in Southeast Asia.

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Note

1 Clifford Geertz used the term to describe the pre-colonial Balinese state. Other authors have used the term to refer to Old Order Indonesia.

10. Kudus and Blitar

A Tale of Two Javanese Iconic Cities[1]

Pierpaolo De Giosa

Introduction

Certain places are, even in their noisy silence, always crowded. The custodian of Jafar Shodiq's graveyard in Kudus said that there are always visitors and devotees in this holy place.[2] It is not just a slogan, as I have observed this phenomenon in other pilgrimage sites in my hometown in Italy as well as in other countries, especially Indonesia. The fact that graveyards are always visited emphasizes the nature of a pilgrimage center: a charismatic magnet attracting visitors. Pilgrimages have been a topic of anthropological and sociological studies for several decades, but the aim of this article is not the exploration of the journey per se, since my attempt is to focus specifically on pilgrimage sites in an urban context. Soheila Shahshahani's *Cities of Pilgrimage* (2009) deals with particular pilgrimage sites within cities. In one of the articles, *Iconic Cities: A Hypercity Perspective on Pilgrimage Sites*, Peter Nas and Rivke Jaffe have proposed to apply the hypercity lens to the analysis of pilgrimage cities.

The hypercity, as explained by Nas, Jaffe and Samuels (2006: 1), 'is a new encompassing theoretical framework which regards urban symbolism starting from ideas, images and representations of the city'. In the last few years, this approach has offered a valuable, organizational understanding of a plethora of 'urban signifiers or symbol carriers that combine in a dynamic process of signification to represent the city, both to its inhabitants and to the rest of the nation-state, the region, and the world' (Nas and Jaffe, 2009: 47). Applying the hypercity perspective to pilgrimage cities helps to discover all the material, iconic, behavioral, and discursive signifiers that shape the spatial and symbolic image of a city. Hence in pilgrimage cities, baptized 'Iconic Cities' by Peter Nas and Rivke Jaffe, iconic signifiers[3] have an important role in the process of urban signification. This work will contribute to the understanding of the dynamics affecting the production and consumption of urban signifiers around pilgrimage sites in Indonesia, particularly Java.

During the fifteenth century the northern coast of Java, *pesisir*, had a crucial role in the Islamization process of the island. According to tradition the so-called nine saints of Islam, *wali sanga*, have been the key figures in the transitional period which led to the definitive collapse of the Majapahit kingdom and decline of its Hindu-Buddhist religious influence in the Archipelago. Initially the pivotal centers in the establishment of Islam were Gresik and Surabaya in Eastern Java, and consequently in the sixteenth century the kingdom of Demak. Now the cities or villages where *wali sanga* are buried are still the journey's end for Muslim pilgrims from Java as well as from other islands. Looking at the

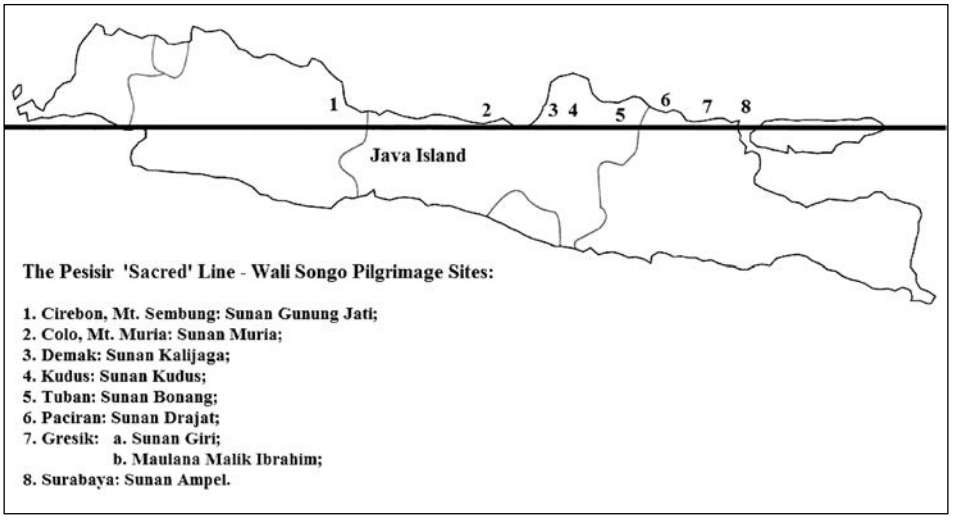

Figure 1. The imaginary wali sanga axis (P. De Giosa)

distribution of these Islamic missionaries' graves, one can recognize an imaginary axis from west to east, from Cirebon to Surabaya.

Hence if Mecca, as destination of the Hajj, is considered an international pilgrimage city within Islam, these pilgrimage cities and sites in Indonesia have a regional and local status. In the Muslim world, pilgrimages to holy sites are called *ziyaras*. Notwithstanding the main position of *wali sanga* graves in the sacred geography of the Indonesian Muslim community, all over the Archipelago and especially in Java other 'secondary' saints are still attracting pilgrims to their final resting places. The *ziarah wali* has reached a national importance in Indonesia, whereas all the other hundreds of sacred sites in and outside Java are places of local devotion. Not all Muslims, however, accept the practice of pilgrimage to holy sites outside Mecca: on the one hand the modernist Islamic association of Muhammadiyah considers it a kind of idolatry, on the other hand Nahdatul Ulama is tolerant of Javanese practice.

According to Huub de Jonge there are two distinguished 'but not mutually exclusive' categories of sacred places: 'places which are considered sacred because of a natural peculiarity, and places where holy persons are buried' (De Jonge, 1998: 6). In the context of the second category I will explore the symbolic systems of Kudus and Blitar. Those Javanese cities are two examples of pilgrimage centers: the former associated with Sunan Kudus and the latter with the first president of Indonesia, Sukarno. In the first part of this work I will focus on these two case studies, one related to a religious leader and the other one to a secular leader. Applying the Hypercity perspective to Kudus and Blitar, I will analyze the signifiers that contribute to the construction of their urban

imageries as iconic cities. The comparison will be helpful to explore the significant connection between pilgrimage and tourism within the urban context of these particular cases, the relations between different types of signifiers, the role of iconic signifiers, and to what extent it is possible to speak about competition between different symbols and images in a single city.

Kudus: A Javanese *Jerusalem*?

Kudus is a city of Central Java, capital of the homonymous regency (*kabupaten*). According to statistics this small city, situated in the east of Semarang, had 91,588 inhabitants in 2007. Kudus is one of the *wali sanga* pilgrimage destinations where Jafar Shodiq, also known as Sunan Kudus, is buried. He is recognized as the founder of the city, even if according to some traditions there was already a settlement in the area called Tajug identified as 'holy city' (Sjamsuddin, 1992: 46). Indeed this city is the only one in Indonesia with a name of Arabic origin, Al Quds ('the holy'), which is also the ancient name of Jerusalem.[4] Kudus is situated in the middle of the imaginary *wali sanga* axis, 25 km from Demak and almost 20 from Mt. Muria, Colo. In the sixteenth century, because of its strategic position, the city had an important role in the diffusion of the Islamic faith throughout Java and the decline of Majapahit, supporting the first emerging Islamic kingdom, Demak (Salam, 1988: 18). Nowadays Kudus is still known as *wali* city (*kota wali*), but is also celebrated as capital of kretek (*kota kretek*) where in 1905 cloves cigarettes were invented for the first time by H. Jamhari and mass-produced by M. Nitisemito (both Kudus residents).

Notwithstanding the centrality of Sunan Kudus as an iconic signifier in the imagery of the city as pilgrimage center, his grave is not the only one mentioned as a sacred place. In Sunggingan village, located in the south-west to the *alun-alun*, there is a small mosque where Kyai Telingsing is buried.[5] These two personalities are associated together in urban folk tales. However, even though Telingsing is often considered the *guru* of Sunan Kudus, paradoxically his grave is not as crowded as his pupil's (Lombard, 2007: 367, 374). Another holy person linked with the sacred imagery of Kudus is the *wali sanga* Sunan Muria, buried in Colo, but here I will not consider his grave, an influential one in the urban symbolic system of Kudus, as I am primarily concerned with the *urban* area of Kudus.

As reported by Peter Nas and Rivke Jaffe (2009: 52) 'the town centre tends to be the locus of arrival, accommodation and tourist purposes, while veneration takes place in a peripheral part of town', revealing a dualistic appeal of the city. Yet in small cities or towns, pilgrimage sites are of primary importance. It could be argued that also in big cities a peripheral pilgrimage site is the focal point for pilgrims, but in this particular

case the grave of Sunan Kudus seems to be central also for the local community. For example, during the commemoration of Kudus' foundation, as reported by the official website of Kudus regency government, festivals, ceremonies and religious sermons are set up around Al-Aqsa mosque, also called Al-Manar because of its minaret which is well known as the main symbol of the city.

The urban configuration of Kudus reproduces a common pattern in Javanese and Indonesian urbanism: the center corresponds to the city square which in this case is intersected by seven main roads (*alun-alun simpang tujuh*). The mosque Agung, founded by Sunan Kudus in 1830 is standing in the west side of it, displaying the urban distribution of the early Indonesian cities. The main material symbol of Kudus is undoubtedly the minaret in the complex of Al-Aqsa mosque and Sunan Kudus' tomb. He founded the building in 1549, one year before his death (Sjamsuddin, 1992: 46). The character of this Islamic missionary is not separated from the history of the city and its urban symbolic system. The famous minaret of Kudus is located approximately two km from the *alun-alun*, in the ancient Arabic village of the city (*Kauman*). *Menara* Kudus is well known for its syncretistic architecture symbolizing the combination of early Javanese Hindu principles and Islam. The area where it is located can be divided in three parts: the mosque on the right side, the minaret, the graveyard at the back-side, and in close proximity there is a small museum and a library. The main entrance is a typical example of Majapahit heritage as well as the minaret. Indeed paradoxically in this case, a symbol of Islam is shaped by a pre-Islamic classic design, atypically representing the architecture of the 'enemy'. The gate (*gapura*), called Lawang Kembar (Sjamsuddin, 1992: 47), and the minaret were erected with red bricks as an evident reproduction of temples found in eastern Java like Jago and Singosari temples (Salam, 1988: 18). Nonetheless, I believe that there is a similarity between the latter and Menara Kudus, but in my opinion a more valuable comparison might focus on the correspondences with the main gate Wringin Lawang and Brahu or Bajang Ratu temples in Trowulan, capital of Majapahit kingdom. Perhaps it is not just a coincidence that the gate of Al-Aqsa mosque is denominated 'the twin gate'.

The sources about the erection of the minaret complex are historically weak,[6] mostly based on folklore, and with my unpretentious tools the aim of this article is not a historical investigation of its origin, but a kind of urban mythology that offers a relevant base for the analysis of discursive signifiers. According to a legend, the place where the minaret is located was already considered a sacred site by the local community before the propagation of Islam. This site was a holy spring called *air penghidupan*, which means 'water of life' (Salam, 1988: 19). In accordance with another folk tale, the founding stone of the Al-Aqsa mosque was brought to Java from Palestine by Sunan Kudus (Sjamsuddin, 1992: 47).

The primary discursive signifier of Kudus is the myth of its foundation which is chronologically connected with the history of Demak, the Islamization of Java, and the collapse of the great kingdom of Majapahit. Once again the figure of Jafar Shodiq is dominant as the acclaimed founder of Kudus, political leader of Demak kingdom, and the undisguised religious leader of the area.

It is interesting to observe his role in the animal sacrifice for the ceremony of Idul Adha;[7] as sign of respect to Hindu believers and their reverence for cows, he had decided to slaughter only water buffalos or goats (Ruslan, 2007: 93). According to a local legend his tolerance was the corollary of good relationships between Muslims and Hindus: one day when Sunan Kudus was thirsty a Hindu priest gave him milk (Salam, 1988: 19). Those urban myths or ethnohistory as a whole have contributed to make Menara Kudus a multicultural symbol emphasizing the *wali sanga*'s motto: *menang tanpo ngasorake*, literally 'winning without conquering' (Salam, 1988: 20). Its form is also imitated in the monument Tugu Identitas Kudus built in the second half of 1980s, a stylized reproduction of the minaret symbolizing the struggle against the Dutch and also the Indonesian independence.[8]

Every day the grave of Sunan Kudus is visited by pilgrims, especially on Friday as the day of public worship for Muslims. However, the ceremony that continues to attract thousands of pilgrims from all over the Archipelago is the Buka Luwur on the tenth of the first Islamic month (Muharram), when annually the curtains adorning the grave are replaced by new ones. During this event different religious activities are concentrated in the Al-Aqsa mosque's complex; after the substitution of the curtains both pilgrims and locals have a banquet with rice and meat. As reported in an article published in *Sinergi Indonesia* on March 2007, 23,300 pieces of wrapped rice in teak leaves, six tons of rice, nine water buffalos and 64 goats were consumed. It is also believed that taking a little bit of rice and a piece of the curtains will bring blessing (MAM, 2007: 44). Notwithstanding the iconic dominance of Sunan Kudus in the urban symbolism of the city, the kretek industry is also an essential part of it. As it is possible to see in the schematic map of Kudus, in the southern part of Kudus the Museum of Kretek is found, which symbolizes the economic and touristic potential of this manufacturing sector, but I will focus on its role in the urban context later on.

As shown in this brief description of the first case study, the interconnection between the city and its primary icon, Sunan Kudus, has promoted the increasing vision of Kudus as a pilgrimage city, contributing to its image as a Muslim sacred site and symbol of multicultural harmony. Nevertheless, it is also important to notice the active role that Jafar Shodiq had in this process; he has pointed to a specific direction in the signification of urban imagery, building mosques, the minaret, and disseminating Islamic faith in the region.

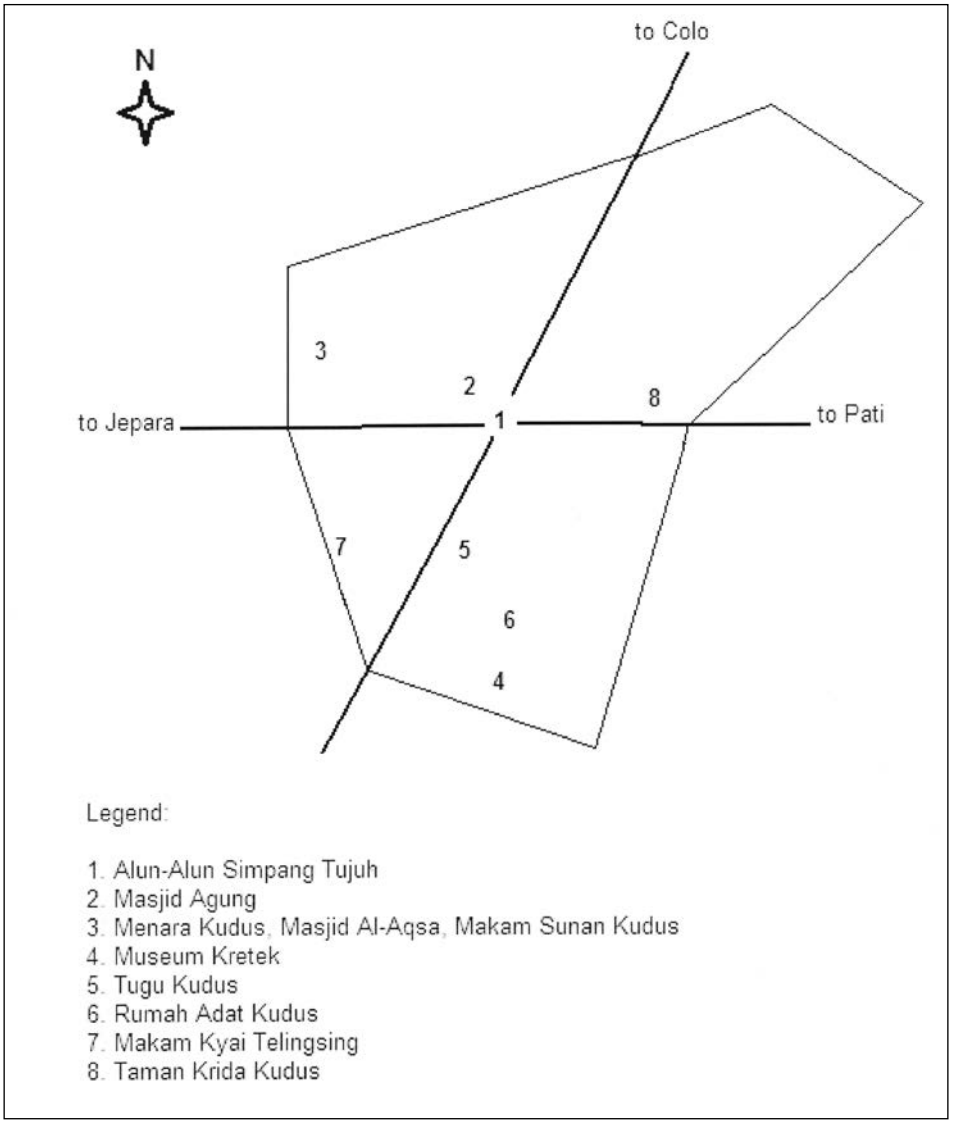

Figure 2. Schematic map of Kudus

In an article published in *Archipel* in 2002 Claude Guillot and Ludvik Kalus have tried to construct parallelisms between Kudus and Jerusalem as sacred cities, as well as between Sunan Kudus and Prophet David. In their opinion, it is unfortunately impossible to state that Jafar Shodiq, as a new David or Solomon, had a tangible intention to establish a new Jerusalem in Java; although it is indisputable that Kudus is the only city on the island that has dared to take the name of the third holy city in the Islamic world

(Guillot and Kalus, 2002: 54, 56). If it is true on the one hand that Kudus shares its name with the ancient one of Jerusalem emphasizing an individual attempt to make the city an important spiritual center of a new Muslim community, it is unlikely to state that it was the *Javanese Jerusalem*; perhaps Kudus has to share this status with other cities on the island, as for example Cirebon, Gresik, Demak or Surabaya.

Blitar: A patriotic iconic city

Blitar is a regency capital of East Java province with a total population of 132,106 people in 2007. The foundation of this small city is relatively recent: it was officially established as Gemeente Blitar in 1906 by the colonial government of the Dutch East Indies. Now Blitar is known as the motherland city (*kota patria*), well known as the place where the first president of Indonesia is buried, which attracts thousands of pilgrims from all over the Archipelago. Sukarno's graveyard has become an important place of devotion (De Jonge, 1998: 6). In spite of this, the city is also famous for the unsuccessful PETA[9] rebellion against the Japanese occupation guided by Sudanco Supriyadi in 1945. This event seems to be the main factor that provides the legitimacy for Blitar to acclaim its centrality in the decolonization process of the entire nation. Many other cities in Indonesia have contributed to the struggle against foreign occupations in several ways, and in various aspects cities from different islands express their own effort in the struggle against both the Dutch and the Japanese. However, there are no other cities that have tried to make any effort to 'challenge' the powerful central nationalist symbolism of Jakarta or Yogyakarta, which was the capital of the republic for three years during the decolonization process. The PETA episode is evidently not a sufficient reason to legitimize the adoption of status of *kota patria* by Blitar. Additionally, the monument of Supriyadi does not reveal any hegemony in the urban symbolic system of the city. The monument commemorating the PETA rebellion is part of it, but it is not dominant in the patriotic imagery of Blitar, whereas another icon, Sukarno, has achieved a special status and symbolic supremacy, particularly in the last decade.

The grave of Sukarno is one of the most visited places in Indonesia today – a national pilgrimage destination which offers a peripheral small Javanese city the chance to turn into an emblematic center for the nation. As observed by Huub de Jonge (2008: 100) in his article *Patriotism and Religion: Pilgrimages to Soekarno's Grave*, many Indonesians erroneously believe that Sukarno grew up in Blitar. In addition, many others believe that Blitar was his hometown; in fact Sukarno was born in Surabaya on 6 June 1901, but many internet sources will show a contrary conviction.[10] In his autobiography published in 1965, he explicitly said that in 1917 his father was transferred to Blitar and he only vis-

ited his parents for two months in 1918 (Adams, 1965: 35, 37). Thus he mentions Blitar again only in the context of the PETA rebellion, when its leader Supriyadi asked for his support from Jakarta; he did not help them in order to avoid problems with the Japanese authorities (Adams, 1965: 191).

So why did Suharto decide to bury his predecessor in Blitar? In his autobiography, Suharto has framed this choice as an attempt to conciliate the divergent opinions of Sukarno's wives, daughters and son; irrevocably he decided to bury the first Indonesian president nearby his beloved mother in Blitar (Soeharto, 1989: 246). The only thing clear in this dispute is the final wish of Sukarno expressed with these words:

> I've cautioned my friends not to bury me à la Gandhi. My good friend, Nehru, enriched Gandhi's tomb with all kinds of decorations. It is too fancy. [...] I yearn to rest under a leafy tree, surrounded by beautiful landscape, beside a river with fresh air and a lovely view. [...] Just the beauty of my beloved country and the simplicity from which I come. And I wish my final home to be the cool, mountainous, fertile Priangan area of Bandung where I first met Farmer Marhaen. [...] I do not wish all my titles on my tombstone [...]. Please, no big imposing monument for me. If I have accomplished something in this world, it is because of my people. Without them I am nothing. When I die, bury Bapak in accordance with the Islam religion, and on a plain little stone write simply: Here lies Bung Karno, the mouthpiece of the Indonesian people. (Adams, 1965: 312)

It seems that Suharto has followed in detail Sukarno's wishes to be buried in a simple way; in fact until 1978 his grave was an anonymous tomb of a cemetery in the northern part of the city. I interpret it as the last exile of Sukarno, so far from the Indonesian capital, from the Priangan area of Bandung, and from his hometown, but in spite of everything so close to his parents.

In 1978, exactly eight years after Sukarno's death, an 'orchestrated gradual rehabilitation' (De Jonge, 2008: 102, 103) by Suharto's Orde Baru granted the first president of the country a worthy mausoleum, officially inaugurated on 21 June 1979 as 'Grave of Brother Karno' (Makam Bung Karno) located in Bendogerit, a northern ward of Blitar. The Makam Bung Karno area was divided into three levels following Javanese adaptations of Hindu-Buddhist and Islamic principles: the courtyard, the terrace, and the mausoleum symbolizing the Javanese mystic vision of the life as Alam Purwo (prenatal period), Alam Madyo (life on earth), and Alam Wasono (after death). In this case, in the same way as the area of Sunan Kudus burial place, a magnificent reproduction of a Majapahit gate (*gapura*), sited in the south of the courtyard, indicates the boundaries and the access to a revered space. Pilgrims have to pass through the main gate and between two

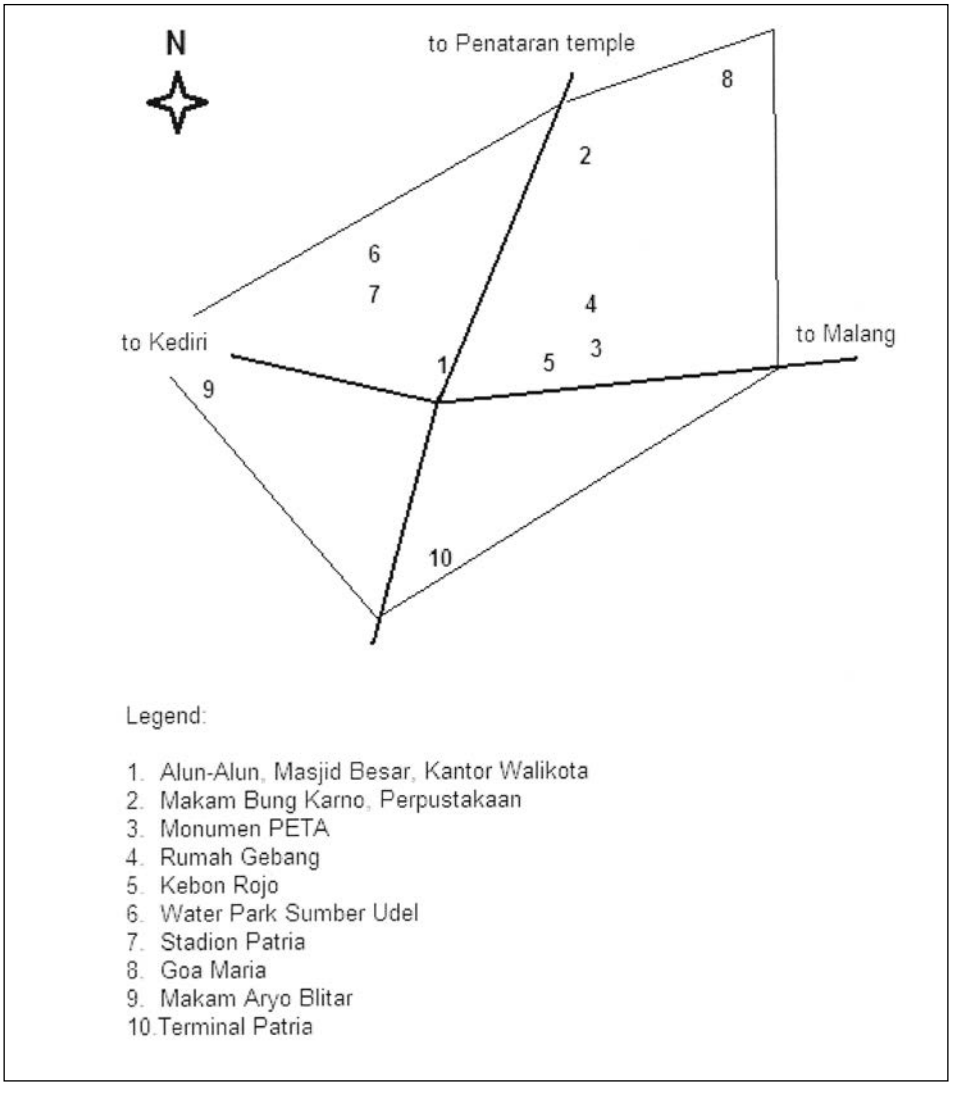

Figure 3. Schematic map of Blitar

banyan trees[11] afore the large open pavilion (*pendopo*), a refined copy of a Javanese traditional Joglo house, where Sukarno is buried side by side with his parents. Behind the grave of Sukarno, where usually pilgrims leave flowers, there is a dark marble tombstone showing a simple epitaph commemorating Sukarno as the proclaimer of independence, first president of Indonesia and mouthpiece of the people.

Notwithstanding this preamble in the rehabilitation of Sukarno's memorial, during the Suharto's New Order Makam Bung Karno was in reality far from a genuine pil-

Figure 4. Makam Bung Karno: Graveyard Pavilion (Photograph: P. De Giosa, 2008)

grimage site open to people because of obstacles such as glass partitions and wooden fences, 'which kept the pilgrims literally, but also spiritually, at a distance' (De Jonge, 2008: 105). Only with the end of Suharto's government and the beginning of the Reformasi was Sukarno made available physically to his people, when under the presidency of Abdurrahman Wahid the fence was pulled down. The apogee in the creation of this pilgrimage center was triumphantly accomplished when his daughter, the president Megawati Sukarnoputri, opened a library and museum in the south side of the graveyard. These two buildings are a clear modern reproduction of Panataran temple,[12] situated approximately ten km to the north of Blitar. Between the library and the museum stands a statue of Sukarno sitting with a book in his hands and behind him 21 pillars, a long pond, and a wall adorned by bronze reliefs of significant moments of Sukarno's life as a man and political leader (since his birth until his death including political events like the proclamation of independence and the Asian-African conference of Bandung). Thus the majesty of Sukarno's mausoleum in Blitar is a relatively recent achievement, influenced also by the current political change in the country; in 2006, the municipality changed the name of the road flanking the site in Jalan Ir. Sukarno and 'from an unpretentious grave, Soekarno's burial place has finally become a national site that befits a man of his stature' (De Jonge, 2008: 107).

Figure 5. Makam Bung Karno: Gapura Agung and high relief wall (Photograph: P. De Giosa, 2008)

I visited *Makam Bung Karno* on 28 December 2008, a Sunday (not a working day), and the whole area from the museum to the graveyard was overcrowded by hundreds of pilgrims and visitors. However, every day, even during the week, the regenerated *Father of Indonesia* is never abandoned. June is the month which shows all the potential of Blitar as a pilgrimage and tourist center, when visitors coming from all over the Archipelago join in the celebrations of Sukarno's birth (6 June) and death (21 June). On the other hand, every 1st of June for the anniversary of *Pancasila* (the five basic principles of the Indonesian Republic) a procession marches around Blitar, with Sukarno's mausoleum as final destination, bringing a sacred offering in the form of Gunungan (the typical mountain-shaped gift of rice and vegetables used during the Javanese court ceremonies). The name of the ceremony is Garebeg Pancasila, derived from the still surviving traditional rituals of Yogyakarta and Surakarta royal palaces.

The sacralization of a political and secular leader is not a surprising phenomenon in Java, Indonesia and other countries in the world, and of course I am not the first one to notice it. All the studies concerning Javanese philosophy, cosmology, mysticism and vision of power call attention to the centrality of the ruler as an intermediary entity between God and human beings as well as the unity of society. 'In traditional Muslim circles, Soekarno is sometimes seen as the tenth *wali*' (De Jonge, 2008: 109), but the

peculiarity in this case is that *Makam Bung Karno* represents an epicenter which attracts both secular and religious pilgrims from the entire country, with different social statuses and faiths. The grave of Sukarno gives the opportunity to each and every visitor to experience the 'pilgrimage' in different ways, emphasizing that 'unity in diversity' (*Bhinneka tunggal ika*), is the essence of the Indonesian political, social and cultural mindset.

Has a peripheral city of the country turned into the patriotic center of the nation? And if so, how has this 'miracle' changed the imagery of Blitar? In the Indonesian urban hierarchy, Blitar is still a small and peripheral municipality of East Java, but at least recently it has achieved a central status in the country as the place where the first president is buried. It is neither relevant if initially the attempt of Suharto was aimed to marginalize the strong personality of his predecessor and keep him far away from the political center, nor if his intention was truly to bury Sukarno with his family, because Blitar finally had the chance to promote itself as the motherland city. Sukarno's mausoleum is nowadays a focal point and destination for the whole country, and Blitar did not let the opportunity to be illustriously significant as a celebrity slip (at least in a national context). The previous urban symbolism of the city was perhaps not strong enough to be in competition with such a dominant icon as Sukarno. The case study of Blitar shows us clearly how in a relatively recent and short period material and behavioral signifiers were produced in support of a unique iconic signifier. Trying to summarize it in a humorous way I would say that this is the lovely story of a periphery which has become center. Sukarno is definitively resting as a king in the middle of a third millennium temple, in some way still guiding his people from a modern royal palace (*kraton*).

Shrines and souvenirs

Immediately out of Makam Bung Karno the visitors are forced to follow a crowded footpath full of small shops and souvenir sellers: a chaotic labyrinth encompassed by Sukarno's pictures and slogans. That is materially the end of the pilgrimage, the apex of the commercialization of an icon: in the area all around the mausoleum, especially Jalan Ir. Sukarno, the words of the independence proclaimer are vibrantly marked on t-shirts. Visitors can buy any kind of souvenir to keep a little bit of Sukarno with them and to remember their pilgrimage to his grave. This passage was for me emblematic, because if on the one hand in the burial complex it is not difficult to distinguish between a pilgrim and a tourist, and also between pilgrims with a different religious background, on the other hand a moment later the dichotomy between a pilgrim and a tourist is almost, if not totally, imperceptible.

If we look at a development pattern shared by Kudus and Blitar it is possible to identify a common end point: tourism economy. Initially, these two pilgrimage cities were

political centers, even if in different periods, for various reasons and to diverse degrees, whereas in a second moment the cities shaped their image toward a sacred aura. In Java, as well as in other areas of Southeast Asia, sacred and secular spheres are not conflicting poles as in western countries, where the political and religious domains have been historically divided. Sunan Kudus was a political and religious leader and Sukarno was the icon of Indonesian decolonization, often behaving as a sort of spiritual guide for the country. Furthermore, people consider both of them extraordinary persons with supernatural powers. Now, Kudus and Blitar are undoubtedly considered two pilgrimage cities and consequently also touristic centers in the country: the former has an ancient background and the latter has been successful in promoting itself in the last few decades as *kota patria*.

In Indonesia, the pilgrim/tourist has the opportunity to visit those shrines benefiting from packet-tours, such as *zyarah wali*, made available by several travel companies and Blitar is often included. Nelly van Doorn-Harder and Kees de Jong have observed that recently pilgrims are choosing 'places that are nearby and easy to reach' delineating a sort of decline of *zyarah* 'with high degree of endurance and ascetism' (Doorn-Harder and De Jong, 2001: 327, 328). In all the Archipelago 'large mosques and Muslim centers began to organize pilgrimages to the Muslim holy places in order to Islamize what is syncretistic and "nationalize" what used to be local' (Doorn-Harder and De Jong, 2001: 329). An analogous phenomenon is noticeable all over the world in pilgrimage sites of different religions, as for example Lourdes or Fatima in Europe.

As written by David Gladstone (2005: 213), 'in most places in the early twenty-first century, pilgrimage centers have become de facto tourist centers' because 'both tourists and pilgrims avail themselves of tourism related goods and services: hotels, hostels, travel agents, restaurants, cafés, buses, trains, planes, and other parts of tourism infrastructure' (Gladstone, 2005: 172). In this way a pilgrimage city has to deal with different types of visitors, from religious pilgrims to secular tourists, providing an efficient touristic infrastructure able to greet and receive its guests as a well-mannered host does the honors of the house. The absence of a functional system will not grant a constant flux of visitors and consequently a substantial income for the whole urban economy and well-being. Thus municipal and religious institutions as well as local ordinary people make an effort to promote the total image of their cities. In some ways they are selling themselves for economic reasons. A successful 'Iconic city' is the result of a communal and coherent determination to express itself as a hospitable and cordial place able to leave a jovial sign in the memory of its guests. It is not only the pilgrimage site in itself that has to give a good impression, but the whole city (including material bearers and touristic services) that plays an active role in this attraction process.

Mary Lee and Sidney Nolan conceptualize the 'attraction base' in the particular case of Christian pilgrimage in western Europe proposing three overlapping categories:

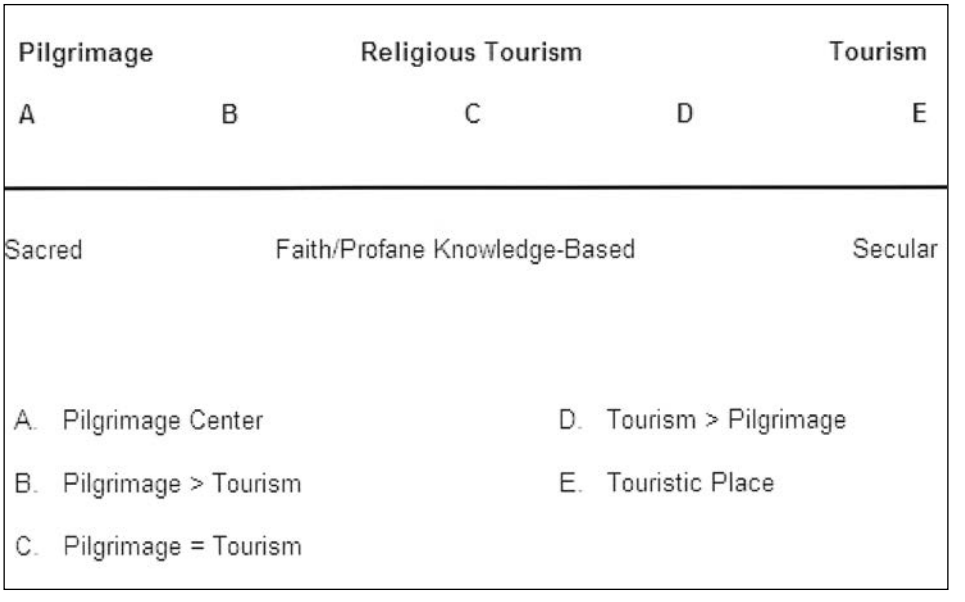

Figure 6. The Pilgrim-Tourist Path by Valene Smith (1992) applied to the Iconic City (De Giosa)

'pilgrimage shrines, defined as places that serve as the goals of religiously motivated journeys from beyond the immediate locality; religious tourist attractions, in the form of structures or sites of religious significance with historic and/or artistic importance; and festivals with religious associations' (Nolan and Nolan, 1992: 69). In the case studies analyzed in this article, the attraction base is complete in all its components: if on the one hand in Kudus we can identify the shrine of Sunan Kudus, the minaret as religious tourist attraction and the Buka Luwur – on the other hand in Blitar there are, respectively, Sukarno's shrine, the Makam Bung Karno complex and Garebeg Pancasila, albeit this second case has a more secular character.

After the visit to the shrine, the pilgrim/tourist can enjoy the whole city through mini-tours on *becak* (pedicab) to places of particular interest in the urban area at fixed tariffs usually under the control of local authorities.[13] It is in this moment that the visitor plays a more touristic role, going around Kudus to visit the traditional houses (*rumah adat Kudus*), the Museum Kretek, the Telingsing's shrine (see Figure 2), or in Blitar visiting the PETA monument, the house of Sukarno's parents (Rumah Gebang) or Aryo Blitar shrine (see Figure 3); and last but not least appreciating local typical food as an Indonesian constant part of the so-called culinary tourism (*wisata kuliner*).

In those small cities the primary pilgrimage[14] site is the symbolic and economic center of the city, as journey's end for pilgrims and often starting point for a merely profane pleasure. Hence if we try to apply to iconic cities the diagram of the continuum in the

Pilgrim-Tourist path as developed by Valene Smith (1992: 3, 4), I think that it is possible to identify a common pattern shared by these two case studies. In Kudus as well as in Blitar, the centrality of the pilgrimage site is completed and supported by other secondary and recreational sites that entertain the visitors during their stay, and of course all the services, facilities and the touristic infrastructure are part of it. The visitor as a guest has the opportunity to shift from a pilgrimage site to a less sacred place enjoying touristic services. As we can see in the schematic maps of Kudus and Blitar, some recreational parks represent a sort of complementary ingredient of iconic cities promoting themselves as touristic destinations; with the latter providing successfully a wide range of recreational centers like the water park or the zoological and botanical garden of Kebon Rojo, whereas in Kudus we can find the *Taman Krida* recreational park.

On signifiers and competition

As observed by Peter Nas and Rivkfe Jaffe (2009: 54) 'pilgrims' iconic signifiers, which generally characterize such cities, must be able to compete with, and probably dominate other signifiers'. I hope to paraphrase the concept correctly by saying that it is their concerted promotion and predominance that creates a coherent and successful iconic city like Kudus and Blitar. I do not believe that in these two case studies there is any rivalry or conflict between different iconic signifiers; they are therefore cooperatively granting their mutual survival and symbolic coexistence. It would be nonsense for these small cities to engage in internal competitions, since their imageries would negatively impress visitors. A negative image would progressively decrease the incomes deriving from pilgrimage and tourism. As remarked by George Quinn, 'money and pilgrimage go together', and this money not only represents a valuable economic source for the whole community, but also 'sustains the educational and charitable functions' of these sites (Quinn, 2008: 64, 68).

The image of Blitar is mostly shaped around Sukarno, with all the other signifiers gravitating in function of it. Notwithstanding the presence of other pilgrimage sites within the same city (for example the shrine of Aryo Blitar and the more recent Maria's cave), the mausoleum of Sukarno is indisputably the dominant pilgrimage site representing the whole city (it is not just a case that other urban buildings are called Patria). The case of Kudus is more complicated because it is involved in a sort of manifold symbolic competition at a global level as secondary Muslim pilgrimage site, at a national level representing just a piece of the *wali sanga* pilgrimages, and at a local level under 'challenge' by another native icon economically closer to the normal life of ordinary people (Jamhari, Nitisemito and the beloved Indonesian clove cigarettes). I think that the competing image of Kudus as *kota kretek* should not be underestimated, especially for the role that the

kretek industrial sector has in the nation and in the local economy.[15] Nevertheless, this kind of symbolic competition within the city appears as a kind of genuine coexistence of different icons with a common purpose: the promotion of the whole Kudus as an attractive destination.

In the two cases analyzed in this article, the main pilgrimage site reveals its centrality in the total configuration of the city contributing to the construction of the iconic city as a 'concentric' pilgrimage center, but also potentially peripheral, 'eccentric', in relation to other iconic cities. The nature of an iconic city is that a charismatic and magnetic pilgrimage site in it, if dominant, influences all the urban context 'colonizing' the imagery of the city like wildfire, in contraposition to the fundamental idea of the pilgrimage centers 'out there'[16] typically far from populated areas.

Concluding remarks

The comparison between Kudus and Blitar is an interesting contribution to the exploration of pilgrimage cities; the hypercity approach through the conceptualization of the iconic city reveals clearly how the processes of signification, production and consumption of urban symbols participate in the creation of an imagery of the city for the inhabitants as well as the strangers. These two cases have shown how the supremacy of a single iconic signifier is able to attract magnetically not only the attention of pilgrims, devotees and tourists, but also to bring together other signifiers within a whole city. Further investigations in other cities could reveal a very different scenario in which a high level of competition between signifiers leads to the collapse and disintegration of the urban symbolism along with the social cohesion of a city.

It is remarkable to observe that in both cases the pilgrimage site itself is an example of referential symbolism[17] recognizably inspired by the grandeur of the Javanese royal pre-Islamic architecture. The minaret of Kudus reveals the syncretistic continuity and acculturation in a transitional period paradoxically expressing the triumph of Islam through the design of the enemy, the Hindu-Buddhist kingdom of Majapahit. Subsequently its form is also reproduced in *Tugu Identitas Kudus*, a monument with a strong nationalist message. On the other hand, the *Makam Bung Karno* is a modern replica of the early Javanese architecture and the library/museum complex an explicit imitation of the *Panataran* temple.

The role of different actors in the creation of a pilgrimage city's imagery is also important. If on the one hand the influence of national and municipal institutions is more visible in the production of material signifiers, the touristic promotion and administrative control of the city as a whole, on the other hand the role of ordinary people is more active in the production and consumption of behavioral and discursive signifiers. The totality

of urban parades, festivals, ceremonies and ethnohistories contribute to create a strong image of the city and sense of identity, also when sometimes discursive signifiers are distorted to strengthen the idea of iconic city.[18] It is also significant that the role of the icon as actor, for instance Sunan Kudus, should be considered the founder of the city and the main author in the creation of a pilgrimage city, while Sukarno, who has been in his life a strong producer of symbols (e.g. urban symbolism in Jakarta), is paradoxically passive in the process that has transformed Blitar in the Indonesian *kota patria*, and in some way also the victim of it.

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Notes

1 This article is based on literature research, especially the part concerning Kudus, since I have personally not yet visited it. On the other hand, I went to Blitar in December 2008 when I was in eastern Java. I have in mind other pilgrimage centers all over Java that I have visited during my studies in Indonesia, above all Mt. Kawi.

2 As reported by Ruslan, in *Ziarah Wali: Wisata Spiritual Sepanjang Masa*, every day there are pilgrims from all over the Archipelago, as well as from other countries, visiting the graveyard of Sunan Kudus. The custodian of the graveyard said '*makamnya tidak pernah sepi*' ('the grave is never empty').

3 'Iconic signifiers consist of people, whether individuals or groups, who have become representative for certain cities. Heroes, saints, royalty and celebrities are all iconic figures that can shape this category' (Nas and Jaffe, 2009: 47).

4 The name of the mosque, Al-Aqsa, in the burial complex where Sunan Kudus' grave is located is also reminiscent of the Al-Aqsa complex in Jerusalem.

5 Telingsing was a spiritual guide of Chinese origin living in the area of Kudus before the arrival of Jafar Shodiq.

6 Ludvik Kalus and Claude Guillot, for example, have noticed several lacunae and inaccuracies in previous studies on the Arabic transcription in the complex where Sunan Kudus is buried (Kalus and Guillot, 2002: 28).

7 Idul Adha is the sacrifice feast which commemorates Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son for Allah.

8 The lower base of the Tugu in Kudus is formed by 45 layers, the central part by 8, the higher part by 17; thus celebrating the independence day of the country, 17-8-1945. Furthermore, this tower is 27 meters high, symbolizing the nine Indonesian Islamic missionaries (two – because Sunan Kudus and Sunan Muria are buried in the regency of Kudus – plus seven).

9 The PETA (*Pembela Tanah Air*, 'Defender of the Fatherland') was an indigenous army established by the Japanese in 1943 supporting them to prevent a possible invasion by the Allies. In 1945, the battalion of PETA in Blitar, under the command of Supriyadi, attacked the Japanese occupying forces. The insurrection was vanquished and the rebels were condemned.

10 Many Indonesians believe that Sukarno was born in Blitar. In his autobiography, as reported to Cindy Adams, he considered his home to be Blitar because his parents were living there (Adams, 1965: 191), but he was born in Surabaya (Adams, 1965: 21).

11 The banyan trees (*waringin*) constitute recurrent and significant elements of Javanese royal cosmology and an essential part of the Javanese royal palace, identifying respectively the macrocosm (God and the sultan) and the microcosm (humanity).

12 The Panataran temple complex, probably built in the 17th century in the southwest side of Kelud volcano, was a worshipping shrine during the kingdoms of Kediri and Majapahit.

13 For example in 2007 a mini-tour of Blitar from Sukarno's memorial to other locations was available at a fixed fee of Rp. 15,000 (see the article by Duncan Graham in the website of Jakarta Post, *Sukarno Memorabilia Boosts Blitar*).

14 I consider the graves of Sunan Kudus and Sukarno as primary pilgrimage centers, because in these two cities we find other secondary pilgrimage sites, like Telingsing grave in Kudus or the shrine of Aryo Blitar in the second case.

15 In 2003, over 25,000 people work in the kretek manufacture in Kudus (see the article by Jock Paul on the website of *Jakarta Post*, *Kudus: A Lively Blend of Religious Traditions*). It means that more than one quarter of the population in Kudus is working in this sector, especially in conjunction with Djarum, one of the leading international kretek brands.

16 The idea of Victor Turner in the analysis of Christan pilgrimage centers is that they are 'typically *out there*, eccentric to the centers of population, and indeed, to the mundane socio-political centers of society. [...] such centers tend to be peripheral and remote often located beyond a stretch of wilderness or some other uninhabited territory' (Cohen, 1992: 34). The case of the iconic cities shows us a concretely opposite example of pilgrimage sites in an urban context.

17 See the concept of 'referential symbolism' as developed by Nas and Van Bakel, 2003.

18 The confusion about the real hometown of Sukarno is a distinctive example of a distorted discursive signifier.

11. Jakarta through Poetry

Esrih Bakker and Katie Saentaweesook

Introduction[1]

The study of Jakarta's urban symbolism has focused primarily on its 'top-down' elements and material symbols. Accordingly, the built environment of Indonesia's capital after its independence from Dutch occupation (the Sukarno years or 'Old Order', followed by the Suharto era or 'New Order') has been the object of extensive analysis. Hans-Dieter Evers (this volume) has further extended the discourse of Jakartan symbols into the post-Suharto period. However, the discursive nature of its symbolism and the symbolism of the city's nature has been largely unexplored. By analyzing poems on Jakarta this chapter hopes to contribute to the field of urban symbolism by providing a different perspective to the present studies on symbolism in Indonesian cities.

This chapter analyzes the way in which poets present Jakarta through their works during the periods of the 'Old Order' and the 'New Order'. The requirement to select poems that are representative of a period would demand a statistical analysis of the period's poetry, a study of their indicative themes and the selection of a medium or mean; this is naturally outside the aims of this study. Rather, this contribution aims to find poetry that is emblematic of the passage of symbolic annotation of the period and it is satisfactory that they are both revelatory and indicative of the broader historical process. The poems we have selected will thus represent the poets' view of Jakarta during the time they were composed. The initial selection process identified poems with Jakarta in the title and poems related directly to Jakarta.[2] The poems we have chosen are by no means a representation of the genres as a whole and their contents may not reflect the views of all people. Further, the poems are subject to our present interpretation of them.

Table 1 is the framework in which we will analyze the poems. We will first provide a brief history of Indonesia's literature and poetry and compare the two periods relevant to this study. We will then discuss the relationship between the 'directors of urban change'[3] and urban symbolism during those two periods. Then, we shall analyze a number of case studies relating to the periods in question. In the third section we will discuss the symbolism of Jakarta's main artery, the Ciliwung River. Although the inclusion of the Ciliwung was not in our initial plan, whilst researching the poems it became clear that this river was the source of inspiration for a number of poets and hence its significance should not be overlooked.

Politics and philosophy	Post independence and Sukarno's 'Guided Democracy' (1945-1965) Nation-Building	Suharto's New Order (1965-1997) Economic Development
Jakarta's top down symbols	Nationalist/socialist-realist monuments i.e. MONAS, 7up man, Welcome Monument Religious symbol i.e. the great Istiqlal Mosque	Symbolism of emerging middle class e.g. malls condominiums. Symbols of unity in diversity e.g. Taman mini
Economic aspects and urban development	Stagnation, high inflation, Urbanization' 'Virtual 'Urbanism' 'Urban Involution'	Reintegration, partial liberalization, Industrialization, rapid growth and 'Urbanism'
Poetry	*Angkatan 45* First: revolution as inspiration. Later: fascination for conflict between traditional-modern	*Angkatan 66* Battle-poetry; Social upheaval, Student-demonstrations. Loyalty to suffering masses

Table 1. An overview of the two periods

A brief history of Indonesian literature and poetry

The division of Indonesian literature into separate genres or periods has proved difficult; it has been and continues to be a cause for scholarly debate. There is, however, a common consensus amongst academics that the progression of Indonesian literature is often a reflection of its socio-political and economic development. According to Teeuw (1994), modern Indonesian literature can be divided into three periods or generations, namely: the pre-war Pudjangga Baru period, the post-war Angkatan 45 period[4] and the period after 1965.[5] The period which Teeuw identified as the post-1965 period can be further separated into three generations: Angkatan 66, Angkatan 80 and Angkatan Reformasi.

The Pudjangga Baru period was named after a journal (established in 1933) which

was highly influential during this period and played an important role in the further development of modern Indonesian literature. This journal dominated pre-war literature and therefore the period from 1933 till 1942. General cultural problems, interwoven with political issues were dominant during this time (Teeuw, 1994: 29).

The birth of the Republic of Indonesia in 1945 followed the era of Indonesian revolution (1942).[6] The bitter struggle for independence had led to growing self-awareness and self-confidence amongst Indonesians, which in turn impacted upon the field of literature. Most of the writers during this period were embedded in the colonial status quo and eventually they found it difficult to adapt to Indonesia's new, independent status. With their frame of reference removed, this generation could no longer fulfill the needs of the emerging generation of writers. The romantic, sentimental and provincial themes which had characterized this period were no longer appropriate in the age of revolution (Teeuw, 1994: 106). When the journal *Pudjangga Baru* stopped publications in 1942, the literary generation named after it also came to an end.

The new revolutionary writers referred to themselves as the Angkatan 45, the 'Generation of 45', named after the year Indonesia declared its independence. The most prominent figure of this generation was Chairil Anwar (Teeuw, 1994: 106). The Angkatan 45, which proclaimed and introduced the nation's independence, later came to be characterized as the generation with an absence of a clear voice and marked identity. This generation faded with the death of prominent authors (like Chairil Anwar) and the remaining writers views either changed or ceased to gain recognition. As a result, such works no longer fitted the concepts of the generation (Teeuw, 1996: 1). The writers of Angkatan 45 were not defined as a homogeneous group of artists, as the works produced during this period were diffuse and extremely diverse, rather their definition is their differentiation from the preceding period.

With the establishment of the New Order in 1965, a new generation of writers emerged. Parallel with the situation in 1945, political change had again impacted upon the field of literature. In 1966 the literary critic H.B. Jassin published an article entitled '*The Emergence of a New Generation*' where he proclaimed the birth of the Angkatan 66, 'The generation of 66'. This generation was named after the year in which the writers, who had previously experienced several years of repression, could now pick up their pens again and write down their thoughts and feelings (Teeuw, 1996: 42). According to Teeuw, the writers of this period were too young to be inspired by the spirit of the revolution: instead, they formed new ideas and introduced new themes. They were fascinated by the world in which they lived and by the conflict between the traditional and the modern, as symbolized by Jakarta's cosmopolitan way of life (Teeuw, 1996: 9).

Poetry played a distinctive role during the first years of this period. The poems were written by young people actively involved in student resistance groups, for example,

KAMI (Kesatuan Aksi Mahasiswa Indonesia) and KAPPI (Kesatuan Pelajar-Pelajar Indonesia). These poets wrote of situations they witnessed through their own eyes: the fighting against the TNI (Tentara Nasional Indonesia), the demands of the student demonstrators and the problems Indonesian people were faced with. They felt loyal towards the suffering masses.

This is when Teeuw's survey ends, and the different literary generations of Indonesia's recent past and present are yet to receive a label and attention. It is possibly too early to carry out such a task comparable to Teeuw's seminal works, though some preliminary suggestions have been attempted. It is possible for instance to refer to the writers of the 1980s as the Angkatan 80, a period characterized by an increase of love stories and novels, which contain a female protagonist. Other popular themes were conflicts and the West.

It is suggested in the Indonesian literary world that Angkatan 80 was succeeded by the Angkatan Reformasi. The name is representative of the political reforms that began after the fall of Suharto in 1997. Poetry and prose written during this period have socio-political themes and reflect Indonesia's status quo.

Such are the representative periods of poetic change in Indonesia that provide a background for the selection of works represented here. The discussion of these works will be divided into several sections, each containing a case study of poems on Jakarta. The symbol carriers in this context are the poems themselves, they belong in the domain of literature and can be considered as 'counter-symbolism' (Nas, 1993). The question we will focus on presently is to what or whom these symbols are counteracting against. If we consider poems as 'bottom-up' or 'counter-symbols', then it is important to analyze them within the context of 'top-down' symbolism.

Sukarno as a 'director of urban change'

In contrast to the poets of Angkatan 45, who lacked unity in inspiration and vision, Indonesia's 'directors of urban change' during the same period had clear objectives. First and foremost, they worked towards the aim of nation-building. As a 'director of urban change' Sukarno was a powerful visionary whose objective was to unite the diverse inhabitants of a vast archipelago. When Indonesia became independent, it appeared that the only uniting factor the inhabitants shared was their common colonizer. Thus, the task was to create a nation with its own values and principles independent of their colonial past. Jakarta as the capital city was to become the city that epitomized the unity of the newly independent nation. Sukarno's great vision is etched in a bronze plaque in the lobby of Hotel Indonesia with the words:

> 'Clouds that are touched fade through the majesty of work, storms that are faced subside through the majesty of the soul. There is no happiness as great as the soul's and all devotion is for the greatness of the country, and all exhaustion dedicated to the glory of man.' – Inspired and initiated by the President of the Republic of Indonesia and Great Leader of the Revolution Ir. Soekarno.[7]

During his period of 'Guided Democracy' (1957-1965) several monuments and statues were constructed. Hotel Indonesia (discussed later in the chapter) was one of many projects Sukarno instigated. The most famous of them were the National Monument (MONAS) and the Istiqlal Mosque. Sukarno used such symbols as a tool of nation-building. The National Monument, a 137-meter high column towering over Merdeka Square, is Jakarta's principal landmark, a national symbol and the most famous architectural extravagance of Sukarno's period in power. Although the building work commenced in 1961, the monument was not completed until 1975 when it was officially opened by Suharto, thus connecting the two periods of 'top-down' symbolism. This phallic symbol, topped by a gold flame, symbolizes the nation's independence and strength (and, some would say, Sukarno's virility[8]). It was built by a Japanese firm and constructed entirely of Italian marble. Other monuments commissioned by Sukarno, (most of them resembling socialist-realist monuments) include the Semangat Pemuda (Spirit of Youth) statue (commonly known as 'Pizza man' or 'Hot hands Harry') at the end of Jalan Jenderal Sudirman in Kebayoran, the Selamat Datang Monument (Welcome Monument) on Jalan Thamrin built as a symbol of Indonesian friendliness for the 1962 Asian Games, the Free Irian Monument at Benteng Square and the Farmer's Monument near South Gambir Station on Jalan Menteng Raya roundabout. According to Jellinek, the construction boom, which transformed Jalan Thamrin into a main thoroughfare, started during the Sukarno era. Kampungs in the area were 'demolished to make way for one of Sukarno's dreams' (Jellinek, 1991: 15). Thus the idea was formed that, in order to make way for modernity and present Indonesia's capital to the world, the symbols of poverty must be removed. Hans-Dieter Evers argues that 'the pattern of urbanization in Indonesia during the 1960s and 1970s has been described as one of "urban involution" (Evers, this volume), i.e. intricate patterns of an informal urban economy developed without leading to the modernization of built structures, modes of transport, industries and occupations'. Thus creating a 'theatre state' or as Nas calls it 'a city full of symbols', he further argues that Jakarta during the Old Order was a city without urbanism, and it was not until Suharto's New Order that there were signs of urbanism.

Case study 1: *Lagu Jakarta*

One of Indonesia's leading writers who published numerous poems during the *Angkatan 45* period was Ajip Rosidi. In 1972, he compiled an anthology of poems with Jakarta as its theme and included were a number of celebrated poems by Ajip Rosidi himself. His poem *Lagu Djakarta*, 'Jakarta's song' (1954) represents the sorrow and struggle the people of Jakarta have to cope with. The poem denotes life in the city as hard and has a strong negative undertone.

Jakarta's song

there is no song as sad as djakarta
it sticks to dry lips
shivering because of malaria
cursing the musty days

everything has lost its genuineness
powdered by the mud of the tjiliwung
everything has already lost its meaning
coloured by the crimson red sky

what remains is the struggle in work
because blood has to flow
and wishes have thousands of shapes
in the big city life[9]

In the first stanza, Jakarta is described as a city of sorrow and sickness: Jakarta's civilians are suffering. In the second stanza, the poet conveys that everything in life has lost its genuineness and meaning. Life in the city is meaningless, as everybody lives the same life, there is no place for authenticity; when you live in the city you lose your individuality. Losing ones individuality is the toll one pays for modernity. The conflict between the traditional and the modern is a topic Ajip Rosidi and other poets often address in their work: Jakarta representing modernity compared with life in rural areas, which represent tradition.[10] In the second line of the second stanza the river Ciliwung and its mud are mentioned, suggesting that there has been flooding. The mud has remained on the streets and in people's houses and property. We will show in a later section that the Ciliwung is often connected with flooding (*banjir)* and that it plays a distinctive role in poetry on Jakarta. The third and final stanza refers to the struggle of the Jakarta people. After

coming to the city searching for a better life, their hopes are met with disappointment, as living and working in the city is as hard as it was in the rural area. This fits our interpretation of the second stanza: city life is a struggle for survival. The final two lines of the stanza emphasize the fact that people have high expectations when coming to the city. Everybody has his own wishes and people expect a great deal, but eventually many find themselves alone and failing with nothing left but illusions.

This poem is about the sorrow and struggle of cosmopolitan life in Jakarta. It is about illness, flooding of the river, losing your identity and being forced to do hard labor. It is suggested that life in the city has no meaning. The poem shows the negative sides of Jakarta.

Case study 2: *Kepada Jakarta*

Another poem written by Ajip Rosidi called *Kepada Djakarta*, 'To Jakarta' (1955), discusses a negative as well as a more positive side of Jakarta:

To Jakarta

I curse you in the sweaty dust of the city
Because behind the deepest emotion
Peeks malaria

I love you in the twilight
The sun buries its beams on the hills that are the roofs
Dancing on the eyebrows of the houses, stroking the belly of the river
The traffic hurries, the flickerings of pedicab-lamps
Everything is fading, everything is becoming vague
Reborn in the brightness of the night
Black cars hover on the black asphalt

I love you in the nakedness of the night
Full of colors in the shining cheerfulness
Busy in the loneliness
Moving away from the emptiest corner of the soul
Walking stumbling along the river
Looking into the surface of the shiny water
The low moon appears reachable

I love you when it is early dawn
A muffled cough breaks the silence
And the singing of a pedicab rider
Bemoaning his fate to the skies
And the stars that refuse to understand

I love Jakarta
Because you are the city in which I was reborn[11]

The first stanza mentions sweat, dust and malaria. These are things strongly associated with Jakarta and frequently used in poems by the Angkatan 45. The following stanzas all start with 'I love you', but the last stanza starts with 'I love Jakarta'. When the lyric subject[12] refers to 'you', he is in fact referring to Jakarta, as is evident from the title. The poem is a love song with Jakarta as the beloved. At the same time, however, the lyric subject also depicts a more depressing side of Jakarta represented by the reference to the traffic in the second stanza. Although the poet writes of one city, this city has four façades and each façade is represented in each of the four stanzas. We see Jakarta in the sweat and dust of the day, and the realities of the day fade to dusk. The city is brought back to life at night, but as dawn begins to break we are reminded that the cycle of struggle is about to begin all over again.

The lyric subject curses Jakarta during daytime, but as the day draws to an end, in the twilight, during the night and the early morning, those are the moments the lyric subject loves Jakarta. This implies that Jakarta by daytime and Jakarta by night are like two different cities. During the day the city's problems are noticeable and visible. During the night everything becomes vague, including Jakarta's tribulations.

In the last stanza, the lyric subject finally calls Jakarta by its name: *I love you Jakarta*. He also gives his reason for loving Jakarta: he considers it his second hometown. Even though the city has its defects, he is still grateful he lives there.

The poems discussed above are by and large about feelings and emotions attached to Jakarta by the lyric subjects. These feelings are mostly feelings of solitude, loneliness and disappointment. The poems address the immensity of the city and how individuality disappears. In these and other poems written by poets of the Angkatan 45, disease is also a recurring theme: malaria is mentioned several times. As implied in the first stanza of *Kepada Jakarta*, malaria is lurking everywhere. Illness is a common phenomenon that goes together with life in Jakarta.

Suharto's New Order: Up, up and beyond

Sukarno's focus on 'inward-looking' nation-building policies to the neglect of rational economic considerations had led Indonesia's economy to ruin. In 1966, inflation was at 636 percent, the economy had contracted by 16 percent and per capita GDP was US$ 100.[13] Sukarno's period of 'Guided Democracy' (1959-1965) ended abruptly following the coup on the 30th of September and the massacre of 1965. Suharto's ensuing New Order ushered in a new era of reintegration with the world economy and was signified not only by radical political change but also rapid economic development. Jakarta was transformed into a modern urban metropolis and declared a 'special capital city district' (Daerah Khusus Ibukota, DKI) in 1966, thus gaining a status equivalent to that of a state or province.

In the 1970s, the metropolitan region comprised of DKI Jakarta, *kabupaten*s of Bogor, Tangerang and Bekasi, collectively known by the acronym JABOTABEK. According to the latest BPS statistics, the provincial area covers 661 sq km, which is equal to 0.30 percent of the total area of Indonesia. The total area covered by JABOTABEK is 6,800 sq km, with Jakarta covering 10 percent. In 1990, over 8.2 million and 9.7 million inhabitants lived in Jakarta and BOTABAK respectively, continuing the trend that saw Jakarta's population increase thirteen-fold from 500,000 to 6,500,000 between 1930 and 1980 (Jellinek, 1991: 19). The increase in size and number of population can be attributed, amongst other factors, to the city's rapid economic growth. Economic opportunities increased urban employment attracting people from rural areas. Others migrate to Jakarta as they wish to gain access to the city's public goods, i.e. schools, universities and health care. Jakarta's 'pull effect' on the rural population is coupled with the rural 'push effect', i.e. that the economic opportunities for workers have been limited due to a number of socio-economic reasons, thus pushing them to find better employment opportunities in Jakarta. Economic development also had another sticking impact on Jakarta.

During the period between 1982-1994 Jakarta's skyline was transformed. Some 600 high-rise office and residential condominiums were constructed. Indonesia's renewed openness and reintegration with the world economy resulted in a large influx of foreign investment coupled with an increase in domestic investment. As the income rose so did the symbols of the new emerging middle class. Malls, skyscrapers, luxury hotels and condominiums mushroomed. However, the city had grown unequally. Whilst high-rise buildings sprung up in the heart of the city, many people still lived in their inner city kampungs. An example of such a kampung is studied first-hand by Lea Jellinek in *The Wheel of Fortune: The History of a Poor Community in Jakarta*. She conducted her research by living with and interviewing the inhabitants of Kampung Kebun Kacang, thus gaining insight to the changing lives and surroundings of those she was studying. She writes of the difficulties kampong dwellers faced during the 1980s. Although they had initially benefited from the

construction boom, they later found themselves being slowly pushed out as government and private investors scrambled to gain their inner city land[14] (now highly inflated in price due to the urban property boom). Kampung development programs did emerge during this period, but they were largely unsuccessful at re-housing the 'evicted' kampong dwellers. Though some of the residents of Kampung Kebun Kacang benefited, many residents in other inner city kampungs have been evicted without compensation. Thus Jakarta is a city full of contradictions, the old and the new, symbols of modernity and tradition, all existing alongside each other reflecting society's inequalities and diversities.

Jakarta's governors have attempted to deal with the problems of urbanization but have been limited by their lack of funding and autonomy. Nas and Malo (2000) conclude in their article, *View from the Top*, that:

> [t]he performance of the mayors and governors were heavily dependent on the relationship between central and local government... and often in competition with national considerations of prestige, aesthetics, and symbolism, while later on... the emphasis was to a far greater extent on modern bureaucratic efficiency.

One of Jakarta's governors standing out during this period is Lieutenant General Ali Sadikin (1966-1977). He improved roads and bridges, built several hospitals and a great number of new schools, and made changes to the system and administration of tax collection. He also cleared out slum dwellers for new development projects, attempted to eliminate *becak* (rickshaws) and ban petty traders. He began control of migration to the city in order to stem the overcrowding and poverty. As a director of urban change, Sadikin's vision was to improve the image of the city and the living standards of its inhabitants, but inevitably this was to the detriment of the people employed in the informal sector and those living in poverty. This in turn provides the backdrop for the poems of the period.

Case study 3: *Sketsa Jakarta*

Mansur Samin is of the generation described as the battle or protest poets. He wrote and published several poems during the years 1965-1966 and is considered to have experienced his heydays during this period. One of his poems is called *Sketsa Djakarta*, 'Sketch of Jakarta'. As the title indicates, the poem is a sketch of Jakarta, a quick description. It is as if someone has asked the lyric subject the question 'if you had to make a sketch of Jakarta, what would be in it?' His answer is expressed in the following poem:

Sketch of Jakarta

People tell me about Jakarta
about the buildings, monuments and pillars with glorious thrones
in my heart: how wealthy is my motherland Indonesia

This is Jakarta, the place where I gave birth to my children and where I live
filled with dreams, secrets and caves filled with falsehood
how do I have to earn a living here?

Anywhere I am asked to enter the government offices
called in meetings, debates and cost assessments
we split the profits and the digits are uncountable

This is the capital city which is the arena where every individual human being
Aims for a position, status, wealth and provisions for old age
In my heart: how can I create?[15]

In the first stanza we come across symbol bearers of Jakarta: monuments and buildings. The lyric subject states that when people tell him about Jakarta, they talk about things that appeal to them, like the monuments and buildings. But the lyric subject asks himself if Indonesia really is as rich as the buildings and monuments might represent. In the second stanza the lyric subject tells us what Jakarta means to him. Although it is his home, it is very difficult to regard it as such. He feels it is being made impossible to earn an honest living in the city. In the following stanzas he explains why: because of corruption and bureaucracy. He perceives living in the city as living with corruption. His dreams are illusions and he is oppressed by the corruption prevalent at every level of society. As a civilian it feels like you are forced by the city to take care of yourself.

In the poem *Sketsa Jakarta*, Jakarta is portrayed as a city with problems. The people who surround the lyric subject regard Jakarta as a city existing of buildings and monuments. The lyric subject, however, has a more cynical judgment: he looks beyond the buildings and other symbols which represent Jakarta as a pleasant modern city. When he thinks of Jakarta he thinks of corruption and bureaucracy. The question remains, who is represented by the *orang*, 'people'? As the lyric subject represents the lower class, it is to be assumed here that the *orang* represent the upper class. Life in Jakarta is different for the wealthy than it is for the poor, as their problems are not of the same calibre. The lyric subject represents this underprivileged group; he does not share the opinion of the *orang*. Like many poems composed in the period 1965-1966, this poem is a criticism

or protest against the government and president. As Jakarta is often a synonym for the government, the poems are criticisms directed at the government rather than the city. Jakarta in such works is thus represented as a governmental city.[16]

We will now make a small time leap. The pair of poems below was written by Nana Erwati in 1986 and was published in *Tonggak: Antologi Puisi Indonesia Modern 4*. Nana herself was born and educated in Yogyakarta. Although the poems were written about Jakarta in Jakarta, it is unclear whether she was ever a resident there. These two poems written in the third person serve as a dialogue between two lyric subjects, Siti and Maryoso. The first is addressed to Siti whilst the second is addressed to Maryoso. Both present Jakarta according to our present interpretation of their (the poet's) views.

Case study 4: *Jakarta 1 and 2*

Jakarta (1)

Siti's poem to Maryoso

when the train reaches Jatinegara
we must immediately put on masks
so the dust will not cling to our delicate faces
or our breath, and the stale air continually attacks

we must be clever like the others
hiding their true face
we will make a call from the phone box when the train
stops at Gambir and we get off

'Helooo! Yes, I have arrived in Jakarta
Jakarta. Yes, this is Jakarta
I have! Yes, I have put on the mask'

then a sedan will pick us up
We run, first we must pee in the public toilets
we are peeing on Jakarta!!
With the style of a diplomat
and the cunning of a politician
we drive along the glorious Thamrin

> and Ratu Plaza laden with luxuries
> let us ignore the dull Hotel Indonesia
> which is depressed as the other modern hotels have turned their backs to it
>
> 'Helooo! Yes, I have arrived in Jakarta!'[17]

The poem first presents Jakarta as a dusty and polluted city. The lyric subject, Siti, is aware of what to expect as she immediately puts on her mask upon reaching Jatinegara.[18] The mask itself bares two meanings, firstly to prevent pollutants and secondly as a tool for concealing one's face. In light of the latter, the fakeness of the city is conveyed, that the people of Jakarta hide themselves (their faces) behind masks. This implies the lack of sincerity amongst the city's inhabitants. Despite the initial negative image of Jakarta, Siti nevertheless greets Jakarta with great vigor. Her excitement upon arriving in Jakarta (possibly for the first time) can be attributed to her perceived image of Jakarta. She imagines herself as a diplomat or politician, being picked-up by a sedan and driven past Jalan Thamrin, Jakarta's main business area and the 'luxurious' malls and department stores. She further makes the city her own by 'peeing' on it as if to mark her territory. In this poem Jakarta is her 'hypercity', an image that she has created through the synthesis of a selected number of urban symbols, which does not reflect the reality of the city as a whole. Nas, Jaffe and Samuels (2006: 8) explain that:

> [t]he concept of the 'hypercity' applies to the phenomenon of hyper reality to the city: the whole of urban symbols creates a reality that can become more real than the city itself... The mundane gritty reality of the millions of people inhabiting these cities becomes subordinate.

The poem reflects the developments taking place during the time it was composed. The mid-1980s was the high of Suharto's rule and economic development. Department stalls like Ratu Plaza, Pasar Senen and the luxurious hotels were symbols of modernity in a rapidly developing city. A capitalist society had been created and all its symbols are present in Jakarta. The strength of these new symbols was very strong, with equally strong pulling power. Although, those migrating to Jakarta were aware of the problems they faced, 'apparently the symbolic role of Jakarta for a nation seem more dominant and the negative consequences are hardly recognised' (Nas, 1993: 28).

The choice of symbols the poet includes in this poem is indicative of the power of those symbols. In this poem, Nana did not choose to write about the National Monument. As Nas (1993) argues, it is a national symbol rather than an urban symbol. It is located opposite Gambir station and would inevitably have been observed by the subject, but in-

stead the poem references malls and modern hotels. This implies the changing dynamics of the 'top-down' symbols that epitomized the Old Order; the symbols of the New Order are those of the emerging middle class and have caused the symbols of the Old Order to become subordinate in strength. This argument is supported by the poets' later description of Hotel Indonesia (now Hotel Grand Indonesia), that it should be 'ignored' and 'other modern hotels have turned their back to it'. Hotel Indonesia (HI) opened in 1962 to facilitate the Asian Games and was Indonesia's first multi-story hotel built to international standards. It was the result of Sukarno's concept 'to create a little Indonesia in the hotel so that tourists could get a taste of how multicultural the country is'.[19] A quarter of a century later, several modern hotels have been constructed in the vicinity of Hotel Indonesia, most of them with entrances facing the HI roundabout and Welcome Monument. So, it is not that the other modern hotels have physically turned their backs to Hotel Indonesia but rather that it had been surpassed and has become insignificant.

Although, to this poet, Hotel Indonesia appears to have lost its place on Jakarta's map, it is worth noting that Hotel Grand Indonesia regained its significance during the 1997 economic crisis as the site for many student protests. It was from the balconies of Hotel Grand Indonesia that several reporters recorded the protests which took place around the HI roundabout. So, at the point of economic collapse and the fall of Suharto, symbols of the Old Order regained their strength. But why was the HI roundabout the chosen site for protests? What does the roundabout signify? A possible answer is that, after years of living under an authoritarian regime, the popularity of Sukarno had returned.

Jakarta (2)

Maryoso's poem to Siti

after we have become short of breath by the smell of sweat
we must count the cents we have received
So that mom and dad in Java will get their share
so that we can buy a Pierre Cardin shirt
at Pasar Senen

for you I have bought Christian Dior perfume
we can be like rich people, can't we?
counterfeit, imitation and original, what is the difference?
good, bad, honesty and deceit
which is the true one?

we must count the cents we receive
we must improve our lives
although our house is across the railway lines
although rubbish sorting and construction are our functions
we too have the right
to buy shirts
to buy perfumes
wait for me every night in the hut
receive me with your love which remains real
even though all we have are imitations.[20]

The image of Jakarta present in this poem is in contrast to the first. To Maryoso, Jakarta is a city overwhelmed by the smell of sweat, a city of hardship, unattainable wealth and imitations. The themes of poverty, injustices, income inequality and degradation are brought to the fore. The aforementioned problems are set within a consumer/capitalist society where western branded goods are considered as symbols of status, for example the Pierre Cardin shirts and Christian Dior perfume. The high cost of these status symbols excludes a large proportion of society from purchasing them. Thus, like for many impoverished people living in Jakarta, the genuine products are unattainable, and they are reduced to buying imitations. It is notable that for Maryoso the authenticity of the product is not of importance: rather city dwellers have the right to purchase it or at least a representation of it. Instead of purchasing the genuine goods at the 'luxurious' Ratu Plaza, he can obtain imitations at Pasar Senen, a lively shopping area with an indoor market east of Gambir Station. Again the fakeness of Jakarta is reiterated, in this sense Jakarta may well appear modern and developed compared to other cities and rural areas, but below the layer of modernity and the image Jakarta's directors of urban change were trying to present, lies the hardship and reality of many. It is also interesting to note how the poet makes a clear distinction between those in Jakarta (Maryoso and Siti) and those living in Java (mother and father), and that they must save money for their parents living in Java. It is obvious that they are on the same island, yet Jakarta is considered to be so different that it appears to be totally separated from it.

Maryoso's presentation of Jakarta can be seen as a response to Siti's 'hypercity'. It is through the second poem that their 'mundane, gritty reality' is expressed. It is in the last stanza of the poem that their struggle is explained. They live in a hut along the railway track; Siti is a rubbish sorter and Maryoso a construction worker. Nevertheless, they have each other and value their relationship as well as the opportunities (although fairly limited) that Jakarta provides them with. Thus, although they have traded in rural poverty for urban poverty the latter has become far more attractive.

Ciliwung: Friend and foe

The next poem was written by Cunong Nunuk Suraja in 1997 and was published in *Jakarta Dalam Puisi Mutakhir* (2000) by Dinas Kebudayaan Propinsi DKI Jakarta to commemorate Jakarta's 473rd birthday. Cunong was born in Yogyakarta and educated both in his hometown and in Jakarta. He is actively involved in the theatre and his works have been included in other poetry anthologies, such as *Bulaksuma-Malioboro* (1975) and *Antologi Puisi Indonesia 1997* (1997). Of over 100 hundred poems published in this anthology, five have 'Ciliwung' in their titles. This would suggest that the Ciliwung has a fairly strong image and is a source of inspiration for a number of writers. According to the title of this poem it is likely that it was written in response to the flooding of 1996.

Case Study 5: *Ciliwung 1997*

The twists of your waist enclose Menteng Raya
In a dark brown color you flee with the vomit of Bogor's rain
When you lunge at Depok, it is no longer able to stifle in small lakes

Menteng's fortress in a howling sound
Breaks the belly of the Ciliwung in the pockets of Kampung Melayu
A national tragedy recurs every time the rain spits on Bogor

Brown Ciliwung, Rendra's sweet Ciliwung
The Ciliwung's belly bursts causing bloody wounds in the attacked
Jakarta in the clutches of the wet season[21]

This poem expresses the authors' strong discontentment towards the damage caused by flooding in Jakarta. The Ciliwung is anthropomorphized in the poem, i.e. it has been given a human form with human characteristics and human functions. The poet refers to the Ciliwung as 'you', the Ciliwung has a 'waist', a 'burst belly' and has the ability to bleed. The poem presents a polluted and dark brown river; however, the content of the river is separate from the river itself. The river is not the instigator of harm, and only when the river is broken is damage caused to Jakarta. The wet season is seen as the causal factor whilst Bogor is presented as the origins of the rain. 'A national tragedy' is directly related to the rain which 'spits' on Bogor further, Bogor's rain produces the 'vomit' that attacks Depok. The way in which the poet presents Bogor is connected to both Bogor's raised geographical location[22] and also its lower cultural status. Further,

due to the high amount of rainfall, Bogor is famously referred to as 'Kota hujan' or 'Rainy city'. The Ciliwung runs along a line from South (Bogor) to North through Jakarta. The upstream is located in Puncak Mountain; it runs through the cities of Bogor and Depok then on through Jakarta. The downstream is located at Marina Beach in Jakarta Bay. Due Jakarta's geographical conditions, being located in a flat low-lying fan-shaped region intersected by ten rivers[23] originating from the mountains to the south, heavy rains in the upstream and central Jakarta regions have resulted in frequent flooding.

As the poem is first and foremost associated with the flooding in Jakarta, the prime symbol in this poem is the Ciliwung. As in many cities, the river is seen as the city's artery, it is a symbol of transportation and is used and relied upon by many people. In many respects the Ciliwung represents the life of the region as it provides the inhabitants who live along its banks with a source of water. During flooding the Ciliwung is a damaging vessel, either bringing excess effluent from Bogor or becoming a collapsed vein, spilling itself and damaging the more delicate structures of man in Jakarta. The poetic symbolism represents the physiological dependency on the Ciliwung by virtue of its association with the body and the damage which is represented by the sad collapse, overloaded by external circumstance. As we have seen, the poem above presents the causes of flooding as related to geographical and climatologically determined conditions, both of which are 'largely' beyond human control. However, human contributions to the problem can effectively be controlled and rectified. If the amount of rainfall exceeds the amount that can flow through waterways, rivers and water catchment areas, an area becomes flooded. The inadequacy of the refuse collecting system and insufficient measures for removing refuse from the drainage channels by the Jakarta Special Municipal Government has lead to clogged sewage pipes and water ways. Deforestation near rapidly urbanizing Bogor and Depok and the sacrifice of urban greenery for the construction of new buildings has seriously reduced water catchments areas and increased surface runoff. Further, ground water below Jakarta has been pumped out causing the land to subside. The problems above are the products of urbanization and industrialization. If Jakarta is to continue to grow at the present rate, some serious provisions and planning are required to take place in order that the city becomes more habitable. This will require the government to develop suitable plans and most importantly implement those plans. The problems of flooding are not new and, as presented below, demonstrate the government's inability to improve matters.

Case study 6: *Sweet Ciliwung*

The Tjiliwung is flowing
and teases the buildings of Jakarta
because they aren't for that destitute city
it knows who its mother is

The Tjiliwung is like a stuckout tongue
the sweet Tjiliwung shows its sway

And Djakarta's weariness
in its insipid noise
within it hungry faces are struggling with each other
hearts screaming because of its silence
Then all poems
are born out of grief
if not
then out of meaninglessness
or even a meaningful delight because of the destitution

The Tjiliwung is like a stuckout tongue
the sweet Tjiliwung shows its sway

It has a heart inside its womb
it is singing in its life
Hoi, the fluttering of a spoilt child!
And the moon is like an old woman
tired and indifferent
dragging her steps above the city
And when she peers at the Tjiliwung
The sweet river answers her gaze!
Hoi! Hoi!

The Tjiliwung is like a stuckout tongue
the sweet Tjiliwung shows its sway

Its friends are all poor people
surpressed yearning is piling up

not a flower but a flower
That's how the river sings whistling
its buttocks is brushed upon Djakarta[24]

The above poem was written by the famous and influential poet W.S. Rendra in 1955. It is one example of the multiple poems he has written about Jakarta. Again the Ciliwung is anthropomorphized, it has a 'tongue,' 'heart' and 'womb'. The womb implies that the Ciliwung is also a woman, a provider of life. In this case, the poor who live beside the river are the river's friends. But the Ciliwung is also a naughty 'spoilt child' that teases the buildings of Jakarta and mocks the city by sticking its tongue out. Again, the Ciliwung is associated with two themes, first as a source of life and secondly with the theme of flooding. The Ciliwung is a natural symbol as it was not created by man, not consciously produced, thus in its purest, un-polluted form, it may be considered as having a continuous function and neutral features (Nas, Jaffe and Samuels, 2006). However, its function is continuous in time but not in location. For example, according to POP's (Persistent Organic Pollutants) monitoring report (2002) by Land Base: Environmental Monitoring and Governance in the East Asian Hydrosphere, the condition of the Ciliwung is more polluted in heavily populated areas, i.e. where there is a high concentration of residential or business areas. Whereas the Ciliwung in up-stream Bogor was clean in color, the 'downstream of Ciliwung River located in Gunung Sahari Jakarta is crowded by [the] residential and business area' and 'the river is dirty'.[25] Further, the Ciliwung loses its neutral symbolic features as it is affected and contaminated by man. It is not neutral when it is connected with the flooding and the damage it inflicts. The Ciliwung is both the source of water for many and the symbol of disaster. It is the provider of life and bringer of death.

Conclusion

Based upon the poems we have presented, common themes connecting the two periods can be found. Further, these themes possess negative and positive aspects, as summarized below.

Jakarta is presented as a city full of contradictions. It is a city of wealth and poverty, the provider of hope and the bringer of despair, it is modern and traditional. It has become an international megalopolis with strong capitalist symbols existing alongside equally strong nationalist symbols. The poems reflect socio-political and economic events. They reflect the poet's awareness of change and how they are effected by, and react to change. The image of Jakarta as presented and created by the government and the 'directors of urban change' are 'top down' symbols and as we have seen have

	Positive	Negative
'Big city'	Employment Hope Second Home New opportunities Shopping/consumer goods	Sorrow Sickness Disease Loss of identity Poverty Fakeness Traffic Pollution Struggling
Governmental city	Symbols of national unity Symbols of modernity	Corruption Bureaucracy Nepotism
Ciliwung	Source of life and provider of water to many households	Flooding Destruction

Table 2. Themes presented in poems on Jakarta

provided the poets with a source of inspiration in their creation of their 'counter-symbols'. During the period of the Old Order the poems can be considered 'counter-symbols' against the government, its corruption and nepotism; later they included the problems of urbanization. The poems are considered as counter-symbols or symbols of discontentment, not towards the physical symbols themselves but to the interest groups who created them, as the top-down symbols tended only to legitimize the authority and position of those who created them. Urban property development had taken place to the neglect of the fundamental urban problems, i.e. lack of sanitation facilities, adequate housing, poverty, environmental degradation. The 'top down' symbols and the image of Jakarta which is projected to the world and the inhabitants of Jakarta appear to contradict the reality of the city. As Nas (1993: 27) has pointed out:

> The official image of the capital which apparently is consciously or sub-consciously propagated, is innocent of any blemishes and it is amazing that a biased but unequivocally image is diffused in such a systematic way.

Even though cosmopolitan life means a loss of identity and struggle, people are and continue to be drawn towards it. The poems show how Jakarta's man-made symbols have changed, that the symbolic strength of the symbols of the Old Order became subordinate to that of the New Order. They show the socio-political and economic changes that were taking place in Jakarta. The one symbol that remained constant in strength and united the two periods was not made by man and therefore not directly associated with a period or person, but was rather a natural symbol associated with the city.

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Notes

1 The authors wish to thank Prof. dr. Bernard Arps for his advice and critical remarks.

2 See for example Linus Suryadi, n.y.; Korrie Layum Rampam et al., 2002.

3 Directors of urban change are important policy and decision makers, who in their drive to transform the city also create influential representations of urban space. These professional urbanites have visions and ideas about urban form and city life. They negotiate how urban space should be shaped and try to appropriate this space, literally or figuratively (Nas, 2005).

4 *Angkatan* is the Indonesian idiom for 'Generation'.

5 Teeuw's 'Modern Indonesian Literature' surveys the developments of Indonesian literature up to approximately 1978.

6 The Indonesian nationalist movement emerged over two decades beforehand but their freedom was stunted by the Dutch colonial power. It was not until the Second World War and the Japanese occupation that they had the freedom to gather and mobilize the masses.

7 'Mega-mega yang disentuh pudar karena keagungan kerja, badai-badai yang ditentang nyisih karena keagungan jiwa. Tiadalah kebahagiaan sebesar jiwa dan semua pengabdian diuntukkan bagi keagungan bangsa, dan semua kelelahan diuntukkan bagi kemuliaan manusia' – Dijiwai dan diprakarsai oleh Presiden Republik Indonesia Pimpinan Besar Revolusi Ir. Soekarno.

8 *Indonesia Lonely Planet* (1995: 189), Lonely Planet Publications, Colorcraft Ltd, Hong Kong.

9 Lagu Djakarta

tiada njanji seduka Djakarta / menempel pada bibir kering / menggigil oleh malaria / menjumpahi hari pengap-pesing // semua telah hilang asli / dibedaki lumpur tjiliwung / semua telah hilang arti / diwarnai langit lembajung // tinggal pergulatan dalam kerdja / karena darah harus mengalir / dan kehendak beribu rupa / dalam hidup kota berdjuta.

10 As Teeuw mentions in his second volume of 'Modern Indonesian Literature': A second theme which frequently appears in the poetry of Ajip is the contrast between the village and the big city, between rural and metropolitan life, as experienced by (young) people like Ajip himself, who are constantly torn between the two worlds. In many cases they are eventually irresistibly drawn to the city [...] even though they know it will kill them (Teeuw, 1996:106).

11 Kepada Djakarta

Kukutuk kau dalam debu keringat kota / Karena di balik keharuan paling dalam / Mengintip malaria // Kutjintai kau kala sendja / Mentari mengubur sinar menjirat bukit-bukit atap / Menari di kening-kening rumah, membelai perut sungai / Lalulintas bergegas, kelip lampu bétja / Semua makin pudar, semua djadi samar / Lahir kembali dalam ketjerlangan malam / Mengambang mobil-mobil hitam di aspal hitam // Kutjinta kau dalam ketelandjangan malam / Penuh warna dalam keriangan gemilang / Sibuk dalam kelenganan arah / Mendjauhi sudut djiwa paling sepi / Menjaruk-njaruk djalan menjusur kali / Betjermin di permukaan air kemilau / Bulan rendah seolah terdjangkau // Kutjinta kau kalau dinihari / Redam batuk memtjah sunji / Dan mjanian tukang bétja / Mengadukan nasib pada langit / Dan bintang jang tak mau ngerti // Kutjinta Djakarta / Karena kau kotakelahiran kedua.

12 The spokesperson within a poem is called the 'lyric subject'. When this lyric subject identifies itself as 'I' it is often named as a 'lyric I'. It is important to make the distinction between the writer of the poem and the spokesperson

within the poem. The writer is the person who writes the poem, the spokesperson or lyric subject is a functional and textual authority.

13 Singapore's per capita GDP was five times that of Indonesia (US$ 561) for the same year. *Singapore Statistics* http://www.singstat.gov.sg/stats/themes/economy/hist/gdp.html.

14 Kampung Kebun Kacang was located right in the heart of the city and next to Jalan Thamrin, now one of Jakarta's most prestigious boulevards.

15 Sketsa Djakarta

Orang tjeritai aku tentang Djakarta / gedung², monumén dan tugu bertachta megah / di hatiku: alangkah kaja tanahair Indonésia // Ini Djakarta tempatku beranak dan berumah / berisi mimpi, rahasia dan guha segala dusta / bagaimana aku di sini harus tjari napkah? // Di mana sadja aku diadjak masuk lembaga / dipanggil rapat, débat dan hitung biaja / lalu saling bagi rizki nolnja entah berapa // Inilah Ibukota gelanggang tiap pribadi manusia / Membidik kursi, pangkat, harta dan bekal haritua / Di hatiku: bagaimana aku harus bisa mentjipta?

16 For more examples of battle poems see: Taufiq Ismail, 1993, *Benteng dan Tirani*, 'Fortress and Tyranny'.

17 Jakarta (1)

Sajak Siti kepada Maryoso / kalau kereta telah sampai di Jatinegara / kita musti segara kenakan topeng / agar debu tidak menempel di wajah kita yang halus / atau napas dan udara yang pengap menyerbu terus saja // kita harus pandai-pandai seperti yang lainnya / menyembunyikan wajah yang sebenarnya / menelpon dari kotak telepon bila kereta / berhenti di Gambir dan kita turun // 'Halooo! Ya, saya sudah tiba di Jakarta / Jakarta. Ya, ini Jakarta / Sudah. Ya, sudah kupasang topengnya' // lalu sebuah sedan akan menjemput kita / kita lari, kencing dulu di WC umum / kita kungingi Jakarta!! / dengan gaya seorang diplomat, / dan kelicikan seorang politikus / kita lewati Thamrin yang megah / dan Ratu Plaza yang sarat kemewahan / biarkan kita acuhkan Hotel Indonesia / yang suram dipunggungi hotel modern lainnya // 'Halooo! Ya, saya sudah tiba di Jakarta!'

18 Jatinegara lies east of Gambir station which is located in the heart of Jakarta opposite the National Monument. During colonial times the area was developed in 1621 by Meester (Master) Cornelis, and subsequently named after him. The area is now the location of a local produce market, several mosques, Buddhist and Hindu temples, as well as residential kampongs, e.g. Utan Kayu and Kampung Melayu.

19 Chairman of the Indonesian Architecture Association (IAI), Bambang R. Yudawan cited in Yuliandi, Tantri (2005) *Hotel Indonesia, 40 Years* on, www.indonesiaphoto.com/content/view/151/ 44/.

20 Jakarta (2).

Sajak Maryoso kepada Siti / setelah sesak napas kita oleh bau keringat / kita musti menghitung sen yang kita dapat / agar mak dan bapak di Jawa juga kebagian / agar kita bisa beli kemeja Piere Cardin / di pasar Senen // untuk mu aku belikan parfum Christian Dior / kita bisa juga jadi orang kaya, bukan? / palsu, imitasi dan kejujuran serta kecurangan / mana sesungguhnya? // kita musti menghitung sen yang kita dapat / harus kita perbaik hidup kita / walau di seberang rel-rel rumah kita / walau mengais sampah dan kuli bangungan jabatan kita / kita punya hak juga / untuk beli kemeja / untuk beli parfum / tunggulah aku setiap malam di gubuk / sambutlah aku dengan cintamu yang tetap asli / walau segala yang kita miliki imitasi.

21 Ciliwung 1997.

Belitan pinggangmu mengepung Menteng Raya / Dalam warna coklat tua kau bawa lari muntahan huan Bogor /

Menerjang Depok tak lagi mampu beredammu dalam danau-danau kecil // Benteng Menteng Raya dalam deru kemikian paranormal / Memecahkan perut Ciliwung di kantong-kantong Kampung Melayu / Tragedi nasional berulang tiap hujan meludahi kota Bogor // Ciliwung cokelat, Ciliwung manis milik Rendra / Ciliwung pecah perutnya membuat luka berdarah bagi terterpa / Jakarta dalam genggam musim hujan.

22 The elevation is between 190 meters to 350 meters above sea level.

23 We have not found any poems relating Jakarta's other rivers to the flooding in the city.

24 Tjiliwung jang manis

Tjiliwung mengalir / dan menjindir gedung-gedung kota Djakarta / kerna tiada bagai kota jang papa itu / ia tahu siapa bundanja // Tjiliwung bagai lidah terdjulur / Tjiliwung jang manis tundjukkan lenggoknja // Dan Djakarta ketjapaian / dalam bisingnja jang tawar / dalamnja berkeliaran wadjah-wadjah jang lapar / hati jang berteriak karena sunjinja / Maka segala sadjak / adalah terlahir karena nestapa / kalaupun bukan / adalah dari jang sia-sia / ataupun ria jang berarti karena papa // Tjiliwung bagai lidah terdjulur / Tjiliwung jang manis tundjukkan lenggoknja. // Ia ada hati di kandungnja / ia ada njanji di hidupnja. / Hoi, geleparnja anak mandja! / Dan bulan bagai perempuan tua / letih dan tak diindahkan / menjeret langkahnja atas kota. / Dan bila ia lajangkan pandangnja ke Tjiliwung / Kali jang manis membalas menatapnja! / Hoi! Hoi! // Tjiliwung bagai lidah terdjulur / Tjiliwung jang manis tundjukkan lenggoknja // Teman segala orang miskin / timbunan rindu jang terperam / bukan bunga tapi bunga / Begitu kali bernjanji meliuk-liuk / dan Djakarta disinggung dengan pantatnja.

25 Land Base: Environmental Monitoring and Governance in the East Asian Hydrosphere. http://landbase.hq.unu.edu/Sampling%20Plan%202002/Indonesia.htm, accessed 20/11/2007. See also Caljouw, Nas and Pratiwo, 2005.

12. History in Bronze

Competing Memories and Symbolic Representation in Albuquerque, New Mexico

Eveline Dürr

Introduction

One morning during my fieldwork in New Mexico, I read the local newspaper's front page which, I was intrigued to see, showed a photograph of the bronze equestrian statue of Don Juan de Oñate (c. 1550-1626) located at the Visitors' Center near the town of Alcalde (Figure 1). Juan de Oñate had his right foot cut off. This act of 'vandalism' as it was labelled in the *Albuquerque Journal*,[1] was related to the preparations of the four-hundredth anniversary, the *cuarto centenario*, of Juan de Oñate's conquest of New Mexico in 1598. Leaders of the Hispanic community and political activists had suggested to the Public Arts Program of Albuquerque to erect a further memorial of the sixteenth-century conqueror on the city's Civic Plaza. Their aim was to celebrate both the Spanish cultural heritage and the community's age-long presence in New Mexico – and simultaneously challenge the dominant Anglo-centered perspective on the state's colonial history (Dürr, 2003; Seefeldt, 2005; Gonzales, 2006).

This proposal stirred a highly emotional debate over the symbolic representation of history and the authority of interpretation in the urban public of Albuquerque. One way to protest the proposal was to remove the conqueror's right foot. This had a specific relevance: as an act of revenge in the sixteenth century, Oñate had ordered the feet from over twenty men in Acoma Pueblo to be cut off. While the bronze figure of Juan de Oñate is seen by some as provocative, offensive and unreasonable, others perceive it as a key symbol of their cultural identity. The *cuarto centenario* festivities provided the arena for publicly demonstrating these conflicting views on the representation of the past. A range of contested activities celebrated the Spanish era in the Southwest, with a particular focus on the ambivalent figure of Juan de Oñate (Figure 2). In the course of the debate, however, it became obvious that the diverse collective memories competed over contemporary interethnic power balances between the dominant groups in the urban realm and tri-cultural state, namely Anglo-Americans, Hispanics, or more adequately Spanish Americans,[2] and American Indians. The debate was dominated by the voices of Hispano leaders and activists, who struggled discursively against their historical enemies, the Indian Pueblos, who were supported by the Chicanos[3] and Anglo-Americans. It is interest-

Figure 1. The undamaged statue of Juan de Oñate near Alcalde, New Mexico (Photograph: Eveline Dürr)

Figure 2. Celebrating Juan de Oñate's legacy at the cuarto centenario and Founder's Day in Albuquerque
(Photograph: Eveline Dürr)

ing to note that the political leaders of the respective groups tended to portray their communities in public as fairly homogenous and consistent over time, ignoring change and internal fragmentation in terms of class and social characteristics. Many Hispano community members for instance have strong links to the Anglo world, be it by marriage or career, without losing their attachment to the Hispano community. Cultural and ethnic boundaries are far more blurred in an individual's everyday life than is suggested in the official representations.

In this article, I discuss the perception of history, the meaning of collective memory and the formation of cultural identity in Albuquerque and explore the ways they are symbolically expressed, contested and negotiated in the urban environment. Controversies surrounding the representations of the past point always to present politics, perceived urban hierarchies, control over space and interpretation. Drawing on fieldwork[4] and public opinions as expressed in the local press, I will analyze this debate which centered on the statue of Juan de Oñate in its ethno-historical context, that is, I illuminate the dynamic ways history is constructed by diverse groups, simultaneously challenging the collective memory of the other. My aim is to use this controversy over the symbolic representation of history as a lens to provide a social analysis of the urban interethnic relationships. Therefore, I will first discuss the theoretical framework of this research and elucidate the linkages between the production of symbolic representation, collective memory and identity. In order to situate my findings in the city's historical context, I apply a diachronic perspective and sketch out the main lines of the complex and multidimensional colonial past and political present in Albuquerque. I then give voice to the various groups that took part in the debate over the planned statue and carve out their emic views on the symbolic representation of history by analyzing their respective historical narratives in the light of present-day relationships. In conclusion, I weave together the various strands that inform a critical social analysis, that is, the production of collective memory, meaningful historical representations and identity politics.

The power of symbols: Memories and identities in the urban realm

This research is guided by anthropological approaches analyzing both the social production and meanings of urban symbols as sites of contestation and struggle over power and authority of interpretation (Nas, 1993, 1998; Jezernik, 1999; Nas and Samuels, 2006). As cultural expressions, symbols are material or behavioral forms carrying non-inherent meanings (Nas, 1998: 546). Their semiotic nature allows for a wide range of interpretations, which may be even contradictory and changeable over time. As such, symbols are always socially produced and inextricably linked to the dynamics of identity formation, public

memory and politics. Thus, symbols involve intangibles, such as power or conceptions of the past, present and future. They also entail an emotional dimension, revealing and at the same time reinvigorating their significance for individuals and groups (White, 2006).

A group's sense of identity and collective memory is grounded and expressed in a specific set of symbolic representations. An event or an experience can be translated and symbolically recoded in a representation, summarizing a perceived reality (Shields, 1996: 229). As markers of identity and memory, these representations find expression in different material and non-material ways, such as statutes, places and cultural practices.

The complex processes in which these symbolic markers are produced, loaded with meaning and adapted to changing circumstances, however, are often contested and challenged, as the symbolic order of a city is always framed by power and ideology (Colombijn, 1993). Specific actors shape public memory as it provides authority and legitimacy. In other words, the public representation of memory serves as a tool for gaining and perpetuating control and influence. More often than not, competing memories exist simultaneously as they cater to specific needs of groups and individuals (Seefeldt, 2005).

The seminal works of both Halbwachs (1925, 1950) and Warburg (1932) on collective and social memory point to the significance of collective memory for the maintenance and, if required, reconstitution of a groups' self-image and distinctiveness. Memory is understood as bounding groups of people together, stressing commonalities by referring to spaces and events which are crucial for their collective identity.[5] Furthermore, the belief in a shared history and a unique culture as a result of a common historical experience is constitutive for communities and alludes to an unchanged cultural trajectory spanning from the past to the present (Schröder, 2002). Ideologies of common descent and imagined destiny are encoded in historical narratives and symbols, striving to display the legitimate interpretation of the past, and thus, explaining the present social reality.

Collective memory is woven into collective identity and frames of remembrance. The practices of remembrance are myriad, but often include the participation in a commemoration or a ritual, which supports the sharing of memories and entails a bodily appropriation of memories (Nas, 1998; A. Assmann, 2006). These practices bring together the past and present as do particular places which possess certain significance for a group's past (A. Assmann, 2006). These sites of memory, which were first conceptualized by Pierre Nora as *lieu de mémoire*, have a highly symbolical function as they express ideas about the past and concrete shared historical experiences. As such, they are inscribed into and revived through particular places generating a wide range of emotions (Feld and Basso, 1996; White, 2006). Other symbolic markers have a similar function as their evocative nature helps to reproduce specific ideologies about the past and to maintain coherent historical narratives.

In the following analysis of the contestation of Juan de Oñate's statue in Albuquerque, emphasis is placed on both the processes by which symbols become meaningful and the social implications of specific representations. An ethno-historical approach always requires a consideration of the social and economic conditions. Therefore, I first address the historical context and scrutinize the contested figure and cultural legacy of Juan de Oñate. His biography is embedded in the colonial history of New Mexico, which is crucial for the understanding of the present interethnic relationships in Albuquerque.

The historical context: Juan de Oñate's ambivalent legacy

It was the ambitious conquistador Juan de Oñate who claimed New Mexico for the Spanish Crown and Catholic Church in the sixteenth century (Figure 3). Unlike his predecessors who lead expeditions to the North of the Spanish viceroyalty, Juan de Oñate's intention was to establish permanent Spanish settlements. He left Mexico in January 1598 with hundreds of settlers and thousands of animals, crossed the Río Grande near what is today El Paso, which he actually named El Paso de Río del Norte, and founded San Juan de Los Caballeros, the earliest European settlement west of the Mississippi, nine years before the English settlers arrived in Virginia.

However, this did not take place without fierce resistance from American Indians. When his nephew Juan de Zaldívar and a dozen Spanish soldiers were ambushed while seeking food in Acoma Pueblo, Juan de Oñate sought revenge. His troops raided the pueblo in a bloody battle, which lasted for several days, and killed around 800 villagers. The survivors were sentenced by Oñate in a merciless trial. Over a period of several days, he ordered his men to cut off the right foot of each and every man over twenty-five years old, to remove the right hand of two Hopis before setting them free to spread the news of their punishment, condemned others to personal servitude, and sent the children to convents in Mexico City (Simmons, 1991: 145). Furthermore, not only the Indian Pueblos suffered from Oñate's ambitions to conquer the Southwest, but also the settlers, in particular when they tried to desert from hostile New Mexico and flee to Mexico. Eventually, Oñate's behavior alerted the Spanish authorities, who launched an investigation into his activities. Oñate was sentenced by the court and sent to exile in Spain (Simmons, 1991: 188). Later on in his life, he was freed of all charges, but he never returned to New Mexico.

Regardless of his personal history and ambivalent character, Juan de Oñate was the state's first governor and claimed the land for Spain. Thus, he is also the founding father of New Mexico's settler colonies, introducing new plants, animals, modern techniques and Christianity. Simultaneously, he is portrayed as a brutal individual, who misused his authority and was obsessed with power. This contentious evaluation of the

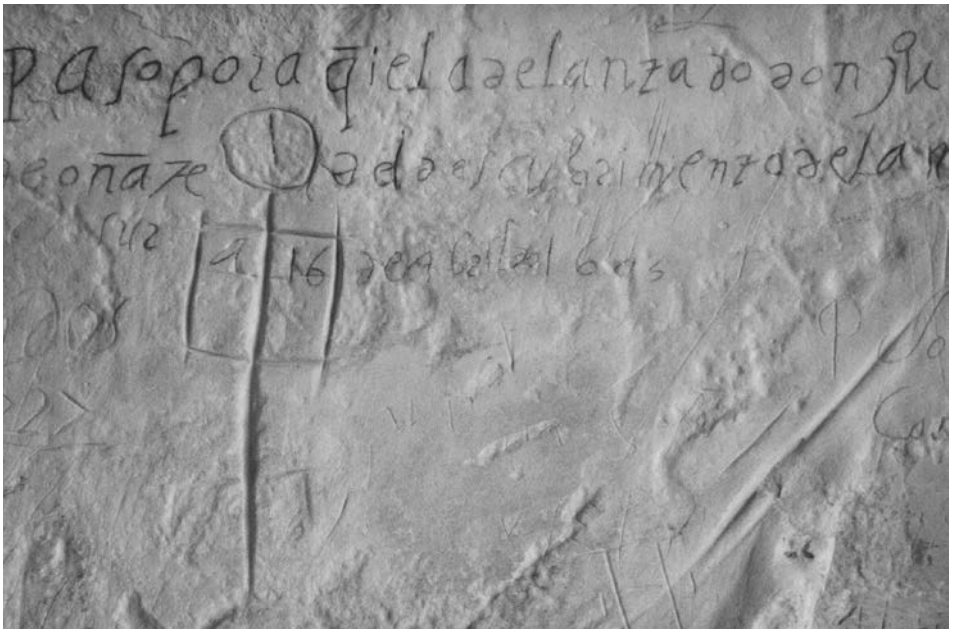

Figure 3. Juan de Oñate's inscription of 1605 at El Morro National Monument, New Mexico (Photograph: Eveline Dürr)

Spanish conqueror is reflected in the controversy over the proposal to raise a statue in his honor. However, this debate does only ostensibly refer to Juan de Oñate and his controversial personality, but is rather tied into current urban power relations, cultural identities and control over representations. In order to situate the dispute in its urban context, it is necessary to shed some light on Albuquerque's historical and present condition.

The urban context: Remodeling social and economic hierarchies

The Spanish conqueror Francisco Cuervo y Valdés founded Albuquerque on the lower Río Grande in 1706 and named it in honor of the 34th viceroy of New Spain, Francisco Fernandez de la Cueva Enríquez, duque de Alburquerque.[6] The settlement was economically poor and socially isolated. The farmers felt under constant threat of Indian attackers, who were plundering their fields, stealing the stock and making off with their women and children (Stanley, 1963). This situation changed only with independence from Spain in 1821 and the subsequent abandonment of the colonial Spanish law excluding foreign trade. For a short period of time, New Mexico fell under the control of the Mexican Republic. Trading possibilities also improved after the Mexican American war,[7] when

New Mexico became an official U.S. territory in 1850. This development caused an influx of Anglo-Americans to the Southwest. Eventually, the U.S. American soldiers offered some protection from the Indian attacks, but the wars went on into the 1870s and land disputes continue until the present (Gonzales, 2006).

The construction of the railroad sparked further Anglo-American and also Mexican migration to Albuquerque. However, the railway line ran at the outskirts of the town, where a new district called 'New Town' began to flourish along the tracks. It soon developed into a commercial and business center, dominated mainly by Anglo-American professionals (Dürr, 2002, 2005). Simultaneously, the migration of Mexican nationals and Mexican Americans seeking jobs along the railway line increased. The original town center, now called the Old Town, became isolated and neglected. This changed only in the 1930s, when the promotion of tourism gained momentum. In this vein, the spatial design of the Old Town was renovated and adapted to a romantic image of the Southwest. However, the actors of this revised urban representation were not the local residents but mainly Anglo-American newcomers, who mystified and romanticized the living conditions in the Southwest and in particular the Pueblo cultures – the former Hispanos' enemies.[8]

As a consequence, the urban hierarchy changed dramatically in both social and economic terms. While the original inhabitants of the Old Town felt discriminated against, patronized and forced to move out of their ancestral quarter, Pueblo Indians successfully took part in the emerging tourist industry, selling arts and crafts in the Old Town (Dürr, 2002). The Hispanos instead lost social prestige and suffered economic losses because of the Old Town's gentrification. In addition, the Anglo-centric interpretation of the past tended to portray the Pueblo Indians as victims of brutal Spanish colonialism. In this vein, the Hispano population became victims of discrimination themselves while they were perceived by others as perpetrators. Thus, narratives of victimization and oppression emerged at the same time, reflecting competing interpretations of the historical circumstances.

This situation impacted immensely on Hispano self-definition and identity formation. In response to Anglo hegemony and in order to reclaim their social position, the Hispano leaders postulated a re-evaluation of the past, emphasizing the Spanish legacy and the contributions of their forefathers to what is today New Mexico. The glorious Spanish past served as point of reference to balance the perceived discrimination in the present (Horton, 2002). They strived to remember in public that they are the descendants of the ones who first conquered and originally colonized the land – the Pilgrims arrived after the Spaniards in the New World – and therefore had the right to control it. Emphasis was also given to their loyalty to Spain and thus to their European descent – rather than to Mexico. Focusing on European bloodlines also helps to dissociate them from other groups that possess Spanish surnames but are of Mexican or Latin American de-

scent. Furthermore, the Spanish heritage classifies them as 'white' in the U.S. American context (Gonzales, 1993).

Today, Albuquerque is the biggest city in New Mexico with a population of nearly half a million. The majority of the residents (72 percent) belong to the racially defined statistical category white, which includes white Hispanics. American Indians, as well as 'Blacks' and the 'Asians' each represent between two and four percent. Forty percent of the total population of the city is defined as 'Hispanic'.[9] In both Albuquerque's and the tri-cultural New Mexican state's official representation the various ethnic and cultural groups are portrayed as living together in peaceful unity and as harmoniously sharing a common past. However, tensions and socio-political problems have continued to mark the relationship between the groups from the period of first contact until the present (Dürr, 2002). This finds prominent expression in the contest over Juan de Oñate's statue and the festivities to commemorate his arrival in New Mexico.

The power of symbolic representation

The damage to the statue near Alcalde was quickly repaired by the original sculptor, Reynaldo Rivera, who attached a new foot to his work (Figure 4). However, a seam remained as a silent witness to the act of protest and a reminder of the foot-mutilating in Acoma four hundred years earlier. The statue's original foot was never found. Nevertheless, the 'vandals', who identified themselves as a group of 'Native Americans' and 'Native New Mexicans' resisting 'European' culture, stated 'we took the liberty of removing Don Juan de Oñate's right foot on behalf of our brothers and sisters at Acoma Pueblo' (*Albuquerque Tribune*, 1998a; *Albuqurque Journal*, 1998), and suggested in their message to the press that the foot should be used to cast medallions for those whose knowledge of history is incomplete (Díaz, 1998).

The mere proposal to commission a further memorial for Juan de Oñate in Albuquerque caused an enormous wave of protest and intense debate on what a morally tolerable representation of history in the urban public might be. This polyphone debate was carried out in the local press, in countless public meetings, protests, prayer vigils and solidarity marches and centered on an assessment of the colonial past, addressing mainly the relationship between the Spanish and the Pueblo. The Hispano and Pueblo voices were the most prominent ones, the latter supported by the Chicanos and some Anglo-Americans. Chicano identity refers to a historical experience of oppression, racism and exploitation in the context of U.S. American imperialism. Conversely to Spanish American identity however, they embrace the Mexican American heritage and take pride in a legacy of mixture (*mestizaje*) rather than purity. This includes the indigenous legacy as it

Figure 4. Juan de Oñate's recast foot (Photograph: Eveline Dürr)

becomes obvious in their imagined homeland Aztlán, which refers also to the mythical origin of the Aztec. This contrasts sharply with Spanish American notions of pure bloodlines dating back to the time of the conquest. Furthermore, the Chicanos reject the 'white' version of history and favor a 'brown' interpretation of the past, privileging the perspective of the 'victims' of colonialism (Gonzales, 2006).

In this context it is interesting to note that the Board of the Public Arts Program of Albuquerque contracted a trio of artists to design the monument. The artists were of Anglo-American, Hispanic and Pueblo descent and should reflect the different views on the past of the groups involved (Dürr, 2003). Nevertheless, their first model was rejected in an emotional public hearing, which intensified the debate.[10] The location of the monument was another point of contention. While the Hispano leaders suggested the Civic Plaza, the Arts Board favored Tiguex Park, named for Pueblos who once lived there. This suggestion was strongly opposed by Pueblo representatives who felt that this location would be most inappropriate for Juan de Oñate's statue.

The public discussion soon oscillated between the colonial past and the present politics. The contenders' arguments revealed their underlying struggle over the public interpretation of history, which should be adjusted to improve their respective positions in the urban hierarchy. It seemed to be a symbolic prolongation of the colonial wars, which was now fought with symbolic figures and vitriolic disputes rather than with gunfire (Gonzales, 2006). The arguments of the Spanish Americans strived to place the activities of

Juan de Oñate in perspective, that is, in the frame of the colonial conditions. They argued that Oñate was just as violent as any other soldier or as the American Indians themselves. The massacre in Acoma was an act of revenge, because the Acoma had killed Oñate's nephew and other Spanish soldiers – and under colonial rule Oñate had replied adequately to this incident. The Acoma had started the war and Oñate's response was not particularly surprising or extreme. They also pointed to the fact that Oñate eventually made the country what it is today by founding the first European settlement, civilizing it by introducing Christianity, new plants, the wheel and other innovations, and by incorporating the area in the Spanish empire. Oñate's achievements should be honored and commemorated with a statue in Albuquerque – and according to their view, there was no need to negotiate this with the Pueblos or any other groups. A political community activist stated that 'we, as Hispanics, want to bring forward the fact that we came here 400 years ago. Acoma has no business in our memorial.' (Santillanes in DellaFora, 1998a, see also Armas, 1997; Hummels, 1998).

Other arguments addressed explicitly the colonial interaction patterns with the Pueblo. Arguing against the Anglo-centered, romantic image of peaceful Indians who were brutally dominated by colonialists, it was emphasized that it was not the Spanish who brought violence and torture into the New World, but that the various indigenous cultures struggled against each other long before the arrival of the conquerors. 'It was not the Spanish who brought slavery, brutality, and inhumanity to this land, it was here well before the Spanish arrived' (Santillanes, 1998; see also Simmons, 1997). The Pueblo benefited from the conquest and their living conditions improved because of the variety in food and tools (Chávez, 1998; Pena, 1998). Finally, the Spanish had treated them better than the Anglo-Americans, of which the Pueblo's mere survival in the Southwest is cited as proof. Unlike in other parts of the U.S., there were no genocidal tendencies under the Spanish colonial rule and the tribes in New Mexico were not exterminated – as happened in other U.S. states.

The Hispanos counteracted the defamation of the Spanish history by emphasizing human struggle and hardship, but also victory, success and the achievements of the first settlers. In their view, the historical facts are misrepresented by portraying the Spaniards as plunderers, murderers, butchers, in particular with reference to the American Indians. This biased interpretation of history should be corrected and revised by stressing the positive contributions of the Spanish administration, which effectively laid the foundation of the integration of New Mexico as U.S. American state. All so-called 'fathers of the nation' should be treated equally, as George Washington or Thomas Jefferson, who were involved in slavery or Kit Carson who murdered Pueblos, Spaniards and Mexicans, or even Popé, the famous leader of the Pueblo Revolt in 1680, who killed hundreds of Spaniards but is still honored as an heroic leader (Armas, 1997; R. Rodríguez, 1998).[11]

These arguments reveal the Hispanos' main concern, that is, the promotion of cultural pride and reclamation of social esteem by both re-writing the past and constructing continuity from the past to the present. The positing of a shared past and common colonial experience form the basis of a primordial understanding of a specific Hispano 'culture', which had emerged under these specific conditions. This 'culture' is shaped by the Spanish heritage and notions of pure bloodlines. This imagined trajectory helps to display a homogenous Hispano community in the present and simultaneously dissociates this group in the urban interethnic context. This imagination is also part of the Hispano collective memory which needs to be expressed and materialized in order to initiate and perpetuate the groups' self-image. In this vein, the statue is a public act of remembrance to bring forward their interpretation of history and to moderate the hegemonic perception of the past that disadvantages them. It represents a specific version of public history, which helps the Hispanos to reclaim prestige and dignity in response to perceived discrimination. As such, Oñate's memorial symbolizes a complex reality which is reified and materialized in this statue. The proposal to erect the statue is a practice of remembrance and creates the arena to test contemporary power relations and assert control over representation.

The intensity and emotion of the debate that unfolded over the mere proposal and the various models which were suggested by the artists reflect the significance of the statue's symbolic message. The Pueblo's perception of the historical events contrasts strongly with the Hispano perspective on what is the morally appropriate representation of the past. Pueblo political activists, supported by leaders of the Chicano community, felt insulted by the honoring of Juan de Oñate. They expressed their rejection of the representation of a glorious Spanish past and stressed the perspective of the victims, which corresponds to their collective memory of colonialism as a traumatic common experience. Similar to the Hispano imagination of a continuity of the Spanish colonial culture, they constructed a trajectory of victimization and oppression which ranges from the past to the present. In public, they protested that their history was changed forever because of the conquest and that the impact of colonialism made them suffer until this day. In this vein, their belief in and public display of a common historical experience also homogenizes differences and creates a community through a shared past. In the course of this debate however, this image was distorted because not all Pueblos overtly opposed the memorial for Juan de Oñate. A member of the Jemez Pueblo, for instance, pointed to the innovations and the missions which were brought in by the Spaniards. He also stated that history could not be undone but needed to be dealt with and there should be room for diverse evaluations of the past (Linthicum, 1998; Herrera, 1998).

In the dominant public Pueblo discourse, however, Juan de Oñate was labeled as a butcher and criminal, comparable to Adolf Hitler. Parallels were drawn between the Holo-

caust and Spanish colonial rule, which was referred to as genocide (Stroh, 1998; Laurinao, 1998). These voices also denied that their living circumstances improved because of the Spanish innovations but rather stated the opposite (Beaucage, 1998). Furthermore, they stressed that the Spanish were not the first to settle in this region, because their ancestors had lived here long before the first settlers claimed the land (Linthicum, 1998).

It is interesting to note that the diverse groups used different symbolic figures in the struggle over the 'correct' interpretation of history. Thus, in some Pueblo protest marches, a picture of the Virgen de Guadalupe featured, as she is the patron saint of the indigenous populations of the Americas. Even though she is a Catholic figure and product of Spanish colonialism, she represents in this context the indigenous heritage of the continent. The Chicanos instead referred to César Chávez as representative of their counter-discourse. César Chávez is a central figure in the Chicano movement of the 1960s. His explicit non-violent approach served to juxtapose the 'butchery' against the American Indian population (Ysaura Bernal Enriquez, in DellaFlora, 1998b). In this vein, César Chávez became Juan de Oñate's direct counter-hero. As the Chicanos' collective memory is strongly shaped by the remembrance of U.S. American oppression and imperialism, they used the debate over Juan de Oñate to point to their own political struggle for social justice and equity, in particular with regard to the disadvantaged population segments, such as Mexican Americans and Pueblo (Dürr, 2003; Gonzales 2006). The Chicanos claimed moral righteousness in their fight for social justice by contrasting César Chávez and Juan de Oñate: 'Oñate came to New Mexico 400 years ago, but reaped violence and butchery against native American people, especially at Acoma. César came to New Mexico many times since the 1960s, the last time in 1993, three weeks before his death, always sowing the seeds of struggle for social justice through non-violence' (Ysaura Bernal Enirquez, in DellaFlora, 1998b).

While the incommensurable positions were intensively discussed in public, the City's Arts Board still tried to come to a conclusion about whether to support the memorial for Juan de Oñate or not. Numerous suggestions were brought forward to the Board, amongst them also a counter-statue showing a Pueblo Indian with his right foot cut off, and Juan de Oñate kneeling in front of him (Albuquerque Tribune, 1998b). Eventually, the City Council voted in favor of a memorial for Juan de Oñate, but one commemorating his introduction of settlers, cattle, horses and new agriculture products to New Mexico in 1598. Thus, the focus shifted to the expedition settlers and away from Juan de Oñate as a fearless colonizer and stern ruler. Nevertheless, further discussions arose concerning the appropriate location of this memorial. Under consideration were several options, including the equally contested Hispanic Culture Centre, the Civic Plaza and the Albuquerque Museum, neighboring the Old Town. In the end, the monument, called *La Jornada*, was located on the grounds of the Albuquerque Museum.

This symbolic battle over power and social positioning as a response to specific historical conditions did not just take place in Albuquerque. As a symbol to counteract non-Hispano views on the past, Juan de Oñate also plays an extraordinary role in other cities. After a similar debate in El Paso, an equestrian statue of the Spanish colonizer approximately thirty-four-foot tall, was unveiled in 2007 to memorialize the first European exploration of the area of El Paso del Río del Norte. It is reportedly the biggest bronze equestrian statue in the world. While controversy continues, a documentary entitled 'The Last Conquistador' captures the disputes over the statue prior to its installation and the website for the film provides a platform for further discussion.[12] The website reports John Sherrill Houser, the artist of the statue, whose father was a sculptor who worked on Mount Rushmore, as saying that the colossal size of the bronze reflects the impact of Juan de Oñate's arrival in the Southwest. Located on the border of Mexico and the United States, the conquistador astride a rearing horse is an emphatic symbol of the looming Hispanic presence in the U.S. Southwest and the struggle that marked the history of the New World.

Conclusion

The controversy over the statue of Juan de Oñate in Albuquerque reflects the complexities of urban collective memory production and its social implications, in this case particularly with regard to interethnic relationships. As such, it expresses the contemporary dimension of the city's social affairs. Competing memories made it almost impossible to design an acceptable representation for all city dwellers' imagined pasts. In a symbolic battle, each group strived to communicate their perspective on the same events and implement their subjectivities victoriously as public representation and as part of the city's spatial layout. The highly emotional nature of this controversy points to the significance of symbolic expression which is linked to identity politics, social status and primordial notions of culture. Based on the belief in a common historical experience, which is seen as impacting on the community's contemporary life-worlds, a cultural continuity is postulated and symbolically displayed. This process of producing cultural identity and collective memory by reinvigorating historical narratives is a response to specific social conditions. Thus, the raising of monuments is always linked to politicizing collective memory and identity. It is a meaningful representation of a groups' affiliation and subjective manifestation of both the past and the present which come together in a symbolic form.

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Notes

1 *Albuquerque Journal*, 8 January 1998, 'Foot Cut Off of Oñate's Statue. Celebration may have Sparked Vandalism', by Elvira Díaz.

2 The statistical category 'Hispanic' is vague as it includes individuals from different cultural and national backgrounds ranging from Latin America to Spain. However, in the New Mexican public discourse the term 'Hispano' specifically connotes a cultural heritage related to Spain and is not collectively used to refer to all Spanish-speaking peoples (Gonzales, 1993). Therefore, in this article I refer to 'Hispano' or 'Spanish American' rather than to 'Hispanic' in order to stress the Spanish focused identity of this population segment.

3 The Chicano movement spread in the 1960s and fought against exploitation and degraded working conditions. It emerged from urban Mexican American street life and had political implications, in particular a rejection of U.S. American authority. In New Mexico, however, this movement was not as strong as in the neighboring states of California, Arizona or Texas. New Mexican Hispanos dissociate themselves from Chicanos and feel solidarity only rarely with the political issues of this movement (Gonzales, 1993).

4 Fieldwork was conducted over a period of 13 months in 1997, 1998 and 2003. This was made possible by a research grant from the German National Science Foundation.

5 These approaches resonate in the works of Yates (1966) on mnemonic communities, Hobsbawn and Ranger (1983)

on traditions and Anderson (1983) on imagined communities. See also the detailed works of Aleida Assmann (1999a, b, 2006) and Jan Assmann (1992).

6 With the beginning of the American period in 1846, the 'r' was dropped and the city was named Albuquerque. For more details on the name and founding process of Albuquerque, see Dürr (2005).

7 The expression 'war' does not exactly apply to the incidents in New Mexico. The occupation had been bloodless and the great majority of the inhabitants did not seriously reject American sovereignty. Conversely, the authorities in some cities did not even consider fighting the U.S. Army. In Albuquerque, they rather fired guns from their church to welcome the U.S. soldiers, and in the capital of Santa Fe the governor changed the flag voluntarily and without any resistance to the American army (Johnson, 1980: 15; Jenkins and Schroeder, 1993: 47). The principal reasons were economic advantages, especially the opening of the trade routes.

8 The development of the tourist and artificial image of the U.S. Southwest and its consequences for interethnic relationships is documented in several studies. Wilson (1997) showed the image of the state capital of New Mexico, Santa Fe, as being the creation and celebration of a myth, invented by Anglo-American newcomers about the turn of the century. Rodríguez (1989, 1997, 1998) analyzed various forms of ethnic tourism and cultural exoticism in Taos, New Mexico.

9 U.S. Census Bureau (2000).

10 Their model showed a kneeling Oñate on top of four stone steps, next to a *kiva* (a subterranean ceremonial chamber). Moccasins led from the *kiva*, symbolizing the continuity of the indigenous population. One of the moccasins missed the right counterpart to recall the incident of Acoma.

11 It is interesting to note that in 1993, Pueblo leaders came forward with a proposal of a statue of Popé for Congress' National Statuary Hall. This proposal was opposed by a Hispanic legislator because Popé killed hundreds of Spanish people. In 1997, however, the state legislature designated Popé for Statuary Hall. Much later, in 2005, a marble statue honoring Popé was eventually raised in Statuary Hall (Gonzales, 2006).

12 The Last Conquistador, a documentary by John Valdez and Cristina Ibarra, 2008, see at http://www.pbs.org/pov/pov2008/lastconquistador, accessed 25 September 2008.

13. The Resilient City

New York after 9/11 and the New WTC Designs

Georgina Kay

Introduction

In the early morning of September 11th, 2001, two airplanes flew into the World Trade Center buildings, which were until then the two highest buildings in the world. This attack changed the New York skyline forever. The Towers were not only the two largest in the world, symbolizing American and Western power; they were also two symbolic statues of capitalism, centered in the heart of the New York financial district. This paper is about the reconstruction of New York and the new World Trade Center buildings, after 9/11. The attacks on, and the falling of the twin towers, had enormous symbolic consequences. The reconstruction process and the choices which were made in this framework are very symbolically charged. The WTC buildings symbolized the capitalistic paradigm, which meant that the impact of the disaster differs from 'ordinary' disasters. The reconstruction of these buildings and the choice for the eventual design would each carry their own, new symbolic meaning with them.

Seven different entries made it onto the shortlist put together by the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation. Each entry designed a new World Trade Center site, each with their own meanings attached to the different elements of their designs. The architects who participated in the competition which was held in the year 2003 were given a set of guidelines, a document which was called 'A Vision for Lower Manhattan'. These guidelines not only gave specifications concerning the type of infrastructure which should encircle the new World Trade Center site, but also gave guidelines concerning the types of symbols which should be incorporated into the designs. The analysis presented below shall consider this 'vision', and shall also take a closer look at the symbols used in the various entries which were selected and placed on the shortlist by the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation.

First of all, the city of New York will be placed into context. The city has had to deal with the effect of numerous disasters, which has turned New York into a resilient city. Also the term 'wounded city' can be associated with New York, especially after the attacks of 9/11. The first section of this chapter shall explain how this organic metaphor in relation to 'body politics' is used to contribute to the health and vitality of New York City.

Wounded city[1]

Cities from all over the world have proven throughout history that they have the remarkable capability to quickly restore themselves after tragedy hits them. Throughout the last decennia, many have faced trials and tribulations in the form of burning, flooding, starvation and bombing, yet almost all have proven to be resilient cities. The recovery process for each city is different, but most of them rise out of their ashes stronger and more stable. Some of the cities which are hit by disaster use this to their advantage. The areas that are destroyed transform into something greater and more beautiful, leaving the city changed forever. The same is true for New York that has faced countless disasters. For example in 1776 and 1835, it went up in flames, each time leaving the city with acres of demolished land. In its long history New York City has had a lot to deal with, resulting in a city that is forever developing. After these disasters it had no choice but to react and change.

This process, whereby cities reformat themselves in the hope that they will emerge as stronger and better, is called 'creative destruction'. This process shows certain parallels with economic change connected to the capitalistic paradigm, a form in which the reconstruction process is viewed from a 'gain' perspective. It has become clear that New York City, and certainly Manhattan, dances to the capitalistic imperative whereby they dismantle the old and give birth to the new.

Fitting in with the development paradigm, cities choose to change their appearance and will reconstruct certain forms of infrastructure in order to achieve this change: old buildings are replaced with new, more modern alternatives and new subway lines are laid to improve accessibility. However, due to unforeseen circumstances, cities are not always granted this choice of change: cities which are struck by unforeseen disasters have no choice but to react and they have to reinvent and adjust themselves.

Looking at the case of the World Trade Center more closely, there are strong parallels with New York as a whole. The twin towers symbolized the role of the financial markets in the 1990s, where political and economic development (also referred to as neo-liberalism) was being forced onto the rest of the world. The twin towers highlighted the transition from Fordism to the flexible accumulation model, which symbolized the dominant aspect of the finance capital. Viewing from this perspective, it is clear that the twin towers and New York as a whole fit nicely into the capitalistic thinking of deconstruction and reconstruction. New York is therefore an obvious resilient city (Vale and Campanella, 2005).

So cities can become 'wounded' and these injured systems act as dynamic entities which are able to recover from loss and are able to reconstruct themselves for the future. Urban wound terminology can be considered to be an organic metaphor, a vision which implies collective well-being. The definition of a wounded city is subjective: what I classify as injured, others see as healthy. The metaphor implies that the city has an or-

ganic type of social life that originates in human acts. The city grows, stabilizes or dies. At the same time the city can find itself in various phases: it can be robust, wounded, healthy or sick at the same time. This popular idea of the city as an organic entity originates from 'body politic'.

Karl Popper criticized Plato and his idea that went hand in hand with a utopian tradition: the idea of a perfect, harmonized and organized city. He placed question marks by this utopian tradition that depended on the ideals of an organic, closed social harmony. Popper thought that these ideals could be considered repressive. He even went as far as to say that organic thinking lies at the heart of much authoritarian and even fascist thinking. An example of this could be the will to purify the body politic, where unwanted particles should be removed as they are considered potential polluters of the ideal city: activities which can be compared to 'cleansing'.

It is clear that there are dangers in the idea of 'body politic' as a normative goal. But we cannot completely turn our backs on this idea, because there are also elements in the form of collective action in this 'body politic', organized around mutual interest. The body politic is therefore a contested term: what might serve one set of interests (such as capitalist developers) does not necessarily serve another (such as the affected minorities living in unemployed squalor).

Therefore, returning to the idea of a wounded city, what is seen by some as an injured city, can be seen by someone else as a healthy city. It is important that citizens in times of poverty, criminality, well-being, etc. are connected to one another, through class and ethnical differentiations, where all citizens are valued equally. Following the idea of 'body politic', it is important that in times of trouble cities act as a whole, for a larger benefit. This then falls together with the idea of the 'body politic', where it can be concluded that wounded cities (no matter what type of disaster) should use the concept of 'body politic' to their advantage.

New York City has been wounded by the events that happened on September 11th, 2001. How the city reacted to this event concurs with the ideas of the city as 'body politic'. New Yorkers, who were faced with unspeakable tragedy, for the most part rallied around the ideals of community, togetherness, solidarity and altruism as opposed to beggar-thy-neighbor individualism. The citizens of New York searched for each other, something that is not the norm in the Wall Street and 5th Avenue craze. Therefore the central concept of 'body politic', doing everything for a greater good, played a large role in the reconstruction process in New York.

The mayor of New York at that time, Rudolph Giuliani, also tried to herd the citizens of New York together after the event of 9/11. Certain groups started to demonstrate feelings and acts of hatred towards the Islamic community in New York, something which Giuliani immediately repudiated. He saw that multi-ethnic violence would not be bene-

ficial, and would contradict the concept of togetherness. Giuliani's agenda shows a parallel with the concept of the city through 'body politic'. During the last years of his term, collective identity became central in his policy. Organic metaphors were used in his going away speech to New York: 'That city that used to be the rotting apple ... that city is now a very strong and it's a confident city' (CNN, 2001). Giuliani played a large role in the healing of New York and helped the city create a collective identity. He urged the New York citizens to participate in the rebuilding process of the WTC site. The companies which financed and organized this reconstruction had no choice but to listen to the people of New York.

Vision for Lower Manhattan[2]

Discussions surrounding the possible reconstruction of the World Trade Center site, also known as 'ground zero', arose in the newspapers shortly after the attacks. Questions concerning the type of building which should replace the old ones, if there should be a memorial center, or whether a new building should be constructed, were being discussed by the broad public. According to Rothenberg (2003: 2), New York citizens pressed for immediate retaliation to the terrorist attack by demanding both the construction of a memorial and the restoration of the skyline. The public became an active and inseparable part of the design process to make sure that the new World Trade Center plans would visually and symbolically reinforce American values and appropriately memorialize the victims. The fact that the American people were allowed to help decide in the reconstruction process suggests that normal people have the power to construct any symbolic structure that they can think of. The planning of the new World Trade Center would be the first architectural project where ordinary civilians, thanks to fast communication vehicles such as the Internet, could participate in and help decide the eventual plans for the site. The American public wanted a place where people could reflect on the events of 9/11 and remember the victims of the attack, and also desired a place where American values could be visualized and symbolized. How this would be realized and what 'American values' are, would be partially decided by the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation (hereafter: LMDC) and partially by the American people themselves.

The LMDC took the lead in the reconstruction process. This new corporation was founded after September 11th, with its only goal being the reconstruction of Lower Manhattan. The board of directors consists of 17 people, with various backgrounds. Board meetings are held regularly and are open to public and press. Making these board meetings open stipulates the LMDC's wish to include the involvement of the public. The staff of the LMCD consists of four men and one woman, with various backgrounds, including

experiences in academia, private corporations and the public sector. They advise other staff members on various issues concerning the project plan.

On their website the LMDC describe themselves as being charged with 'assisting New York City in recovering from the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and ensuring the emergence of Lower Manhattan as a strong and vibrant community.' The corporation was also in charge of distributing almost US$ 10 billion, aimed at the reconstruction of the city. This budget would foresee in the plans of the construction of a memorial and the planning and possible construction of memorial-related improvements and a museum to complement the development of commercial office space, retail space, hotel and conference facilities, open space and certain infrastructure improvements.

The first six designs were presented to the general public in the summer of 2002. The people of New York had numerous comments on the suggested designs, proving that the task that was set for the LMDC would be tougher than at first sight. The LMDC quickly realized that the people of New York wanted a say in the initial design process and therefore tried to include their voice when possible. Through the organization of several events, public opinion was gathered on various aspects of the program. Examples of these events include 'Listening to the City' and 'Listening to the City II' organized in July 2002, which had the goal of giving the public a voice in the designs. At these events public and media could comment on the presented designs. The Internet also functioned as a medium for the public to express their views on the matter.

With the help and comments from leading citizens of New York, but also 'ordinary' people, 'A Vision for Lower Manhattan' was published in October 2002. It provided the 'Context and Program for the Innovative Design Study' and was considered as set guidelines for the participating architect groups for an international design competition, the deadline for which would be early 2003. This vision was assembled and based on the unprecedented solicitation of public comment, including seven public meetings in each borough of New York City and New Jersey, numerous Advisory Council meetings, over 700 comment brochures from the Federal Hall exhibit, and thousands of emails and written comments. The premier goal of the vision was to make Lower Manhattan a destination for everybody in the world. Alongside 'A Vision for Lower Manhattan', participating architects received a full account of all public comments received to date.

The program was divided into five sections, each giving exact information and guidelines to the architect groups. Starting with an introductory sketch following 'programmatic requirements', which are lists with specific instructions for their design. The sections are titled 'new life for Lower Manhattan', 'memorial, cultural, and parks and open spaces', 'connecting the World Trade Center site to the world, to the region and to the neighborhoods', 'traveling through Lower Manhattan: Broadway spine and "the Loop", and 'connecting the residential and commercial quarters'.

In the report, different objectives are highlighted. In 'New Life for Lower Manhattan', the stress is laid on the fact that the new World Trade Center site must be redeveloped in a manner that is both respectful of the events that occurred on September 11th and must also be supportive to the broader objectives for the realization of Lower Manhattan.[3] The LMDC wants to make Lower Manhattan a more attractive place to live, work and visit. It is fairly general and therefore has five 'general programmatic requirements'. There has to be a sense of space: a distinctive identity for the site that relates to the urban fabric of Lower Manhattan, including its skyline, street architecture and landscape. The architects have to understand that this project will have to take place over a multi-year period, which means that the completion of each phase should occur at different moments in time to avoid a 'strong negative impact on the existing community', notwithstanding the difficulty of implementation. Also the architectural design must be sensitive to natural environmental conditions at the site. An important requirement for the design was that a distinctive skyline had to be created. New York City lost a critical part of its identity when the World Trade Center towers were destroyed, therefore the LMDC feels that a tall new symbol or structure, that would be recognized around the world, is crucial to restoring the spirit of the city. Finally the security and site access is highlighted. These general requirements were set by the LMDC, who were influenced by the public's comments, in order to give the architects a feel for what the project should look like.

A large and important part of the new WTC site would be the memorial, the parks and open spaces. This can be considered the most important and the most exciting idea of the entire report. Because the call for a memorial space by the general public was so large, this is the part of the new World Trade Center site that will be considered as the most important by the people of New York. The LMDC stated that the 'memorial to those killed must be placed within the context of world history, the ideals of American society and the diversity and prosperity exemplified by the World Trade Center in New York City'. The actual memorial site would be the subject of another international competition, but the overall site plan which would be designed by the architects for this competition had to include the geographic area(s) for the competition and had to situate memorial elements within the broader framework of the urban planning program. In the programmatic requirements more specific wishes are formulated concerning the geographical area of the site. The LMDC had a strong preference for preserving the footprints of the twin towers for a memorial or memorial-related elements. These areas should be kept open, and no retail or commercial development should be situated in this area. Other elements of consideration include 'a symbolic memorial structure(s), a private contemplative area or structure, visitor/information center, related museum, and/or open-air plaza or parks'. The actual list of programmatic requirements is very long, however there are some elements which come to the fore as important, and include large open spaces,

a place where the memorial can be situated (preferably in the footprints of the 'old' WTC) and cultural and civic amenities.

Transportation and communication are two important elements for the sustainability of Lower Manhattan as a 21st-century downtown area and this part of the project is therefore highlighted separately. It focuses on the connection of the World Trade Center site to the world, the region and to the surrounding neighborhoods. The LMDC sees connectivity as the starting point for revitalizing Lower Manhattan. A commuter train, the New York subway, the bus, ferries and the water taxi should all have direct access to the Lower Manhattan region in order to enhance this connectivity. The LMDC therefore wants the design to include a 21st-century train station which will function as the centerpiece of the transportation improvements of the WTC site.

With the falling of the Twin Towers, large surrounding infrastructural areas were damaged. The pedestrian paths and vehicular roads also needed rebuilding. It is therefore important to understand how Lower Manhattan can be better connected to pedestrian and vehicular circulation. 'The Loop', which circles around New York, is meant to ensure easy circulation, is supposed to link a network of important public spaces, and should provide clear orientation in the complex map of the city's street grid. The architects should ensure that this 'Loop' is connected to the WTC site. The LMDC also wishes that one of these linking streets should be lined with trees that are supposed to represent the victims of September 11.

The connection of the residential area to the commercial quarters is also discussed. It covers commercial office space, residential development, retail and an international conference center and hotel. All of the designs have to include these elements.

The document 'A Vision for Lower Manhattan' is extremely specific. Each tiny detail is planned out, and each section of the plan has to concur with the wishes of the LMDC. This leaves little input for the architect groups. Although the LMDC claim that these guidelines have been set up in corporation with public opinion, it is clear that the eventual winning design will have to show exact agreement with the program. The question can then be asked how free the architects will be in designing 'their' WTC site.

Once this vision was distributed among architects from all over the world, the shortlist of seven different teams was announced on December 18th 2002 at the Winter Garden in New York. This exhibit could be visited by the public, and comments could be submitted to the LMDC on the chosen shortlist. The idea was that the comments of the public would be taken into account by the LMDC in their decision concerning the shortlist of the designs. Each submitted design had to concur with the guidelines set by the LMDC, resulting in little variation.

The shortlist[4]

Seven architect groups were selected to be placed on the shortlist of the LMDC out of 406 submissions. These seven were situated all over the world. The firms each prepared a slide show, which can be found on the Internet and would be shown in the Winter Garden in New York, so that the citizens of New York would have the opportunity to comment on each design. In these slide shows, various elements of the proposed designs are visually supported, and they include not only drawings and computer-modified skylines, but also plans for new transportation systems and newly designed streets in the surrounding area. These promotional slide shows were accompanied by an introduction, stipulating the core elements of their design, a section explaining who is part of the team, and finally the 'Individual Elements' of the design. This section consists of three images chosen by the design team, which function as 'eye catchers' for the public. Seeing as these seven finalists were chosen by the LMDC, it can be safely said that each design corresponds with the guidelines that were put onto paper by the LMDC. Each finalist shall be considered and have their designs discussed hereafter.

The first group for consideration is the firm 'Foster and Partners' which is situated in London, England.[5] In the introduction to their proposal, the following quote reflects their ideas on how New York should look: 'New York deserves something great. Something which looks to the future with an enduring and classic quality, which will become a symbol once again for the city itself and the optimism and cohesiveness of the inhabitants of New York City and the American people'. Obviously this is a quote which every respectable design group could have made. It plays into the ideals of the LMDC and tries to highlight the importance of the American people and how they are intrinsically intertwined with this project. Once a closer look is taken at the actual design itself, various ideas with an attached symbolic meaning come to the forefront.

Terms such as healing, repair, rebirth and regeneration are used when Foster and Partners discuss their ideas for the reconstruction of Lower Manhattan. They see this design process as a chance to 'symbolize the rebirth of New York on the skyline' and various elements contribute to this design process. They comply with the LMDC, because they leave the footprints of the old WTC open for the memorial competition. The idea is that within these tranquil spaces only the sky will be visible, no buildings or trees. They wish to create a sanctuary of private remembrance and reflection which corresponds to the LMDC's wishes. They also want to renew the area surrounding the WTC site, by placing retail possibilities and restaurants. The firm uses the exact words out of the 'A Vision for Lower Manhattan' report as they say that their design wants to ensure that the area has 'a life around the clock'. The transport system is also mentioned, but most of the attention goes to the New York skyline.

The Foster and Partners firm proposes to 'celebrate New York's positive spirit', by building new twinned towers which will be intertwined. According to the firm these towers will be the most secure, the greenest and the tallest in the world. The main concept behind their design is safety. They claim that with their 'Crystalline Tower' they will incorporate various symbols such as harmony, wisdom, purity, unity and strength. They believe that the various points where the two towers meet, can not only function as public contact areas, but also carry along with them safety benefits. If the towers would ever fall again, these meeting points will also be able to function as escape routes into the other tower.

The idea that the connecting towers could function as escape routes from one tower to the other is needless to say, farfetched. This concept of safety plays into the insecurities of traumatized New York people. However, whether this is perceived as a reasonable proposal remains to be seen. Also the environmental issue is raised by the firm, as the towers will purify the natural air that will then ventilate through the building, which will avoid energy-wasting air-conditioning, supposedly for up to 80 percent of the year.

The drawings entered into the competition by the firm are almost all handmade. The designs therefore seem complex and unclear, but do give the effect of a bustling and busy street atmosphere. The technical aspects of the design, such as the transportation system, the structure of the towers and the air-conditioning saving system, are, however, computerized.

Looking back at the overall design proposal and sketches suggested by Foster and Partners, certain elements can be distinguished. The environment plays a large role in their design. Most importantly, security is a key element. This plays on the idea of New York as a wounded city which is in need of protection. Before a further analysis can be made, the other six finalists will be discussed, so that a comparison can be made between the finalists.

The second design short-listed by the LMDC is the proposal by 'Richard Meier, Peter Eisenman, Charles Gwathmey, and Steven Holl'. These are four different architect firms, which together form a team. Each of these American firms is associated with major projects.[6] A quote from their proposal, which stipulates their vision of the design process, is as follows: 'We view design as a discovery process that begins with a rigorous inquiry into the particulars of location and program that results in an evolution, transforming problem-solving into art.' The slide show is almost entirely comprised of computerized pictures with their design incorporated into it. Using this method, they are trying to let the viewers visualize what the eventual finished design will look like.

Their proposal centers itself around 'Memorial Square', which would hopefully become a 'great public space' for New York City. The concept surrounding the square is that it is both contained and extended, symbolizing the connections of this place to the

Figure 1. The grid design by Richard Meier and others[7]

city and to the world. At ground level, the buildings form a unique array of gateways, which the designers call 'ceremonial gateways' or 'thresholds of reflection' which open into the square. The footprints of the original Twin Towers again shall remain untouched, following the wishes of the LMDC.

Obviously, a tower is also part of the design, a construction which would be made out of glass. This tower is unusual as it is not a 'simple' construction which is simply 'high', but the firm claims that the construction looks like it has 'fingers' which stretch out over the site. The architects hope that these fingers will function as a reminder to the citizens of New York that the magnitude of what happened on 9/11 was felt far beyond the immediate site. The emotional impact that was created by the attacks influenced all the surrounding areas, and that is what the fingers of the building should represent. Also the team associates the fingers with protective hands, which assume that New York City needs to be safeguarded from the outside, possibly because the city is considered a wounded city.

The designers hope to distinguish themselves from the other design team by trying to create a site where multiple memorials and symbols can be found. In the proposal, there is an entire paragraph dedicated to details concerning the victims of 9/11. This is a tactic used to create a sense of sadness, because the next paragraph in their proposal is dedicated to the symbolic side of their designs.

The third design proposal was made by 'United Architects'. This team consists of six different firms, four of which originate from the USA, one from England and one out of the Netherlands. These firms are: 'Reiser Umemoto' (New York, NY); 'Foreign Office Architects' (London, England); 'Greg Lynn FORM' (Los Angeles, CA); 'Imaginary Forces' (New York, NY and Los Angeles, CA); 'Kevin Kenon Architect' (New York, NY); and 'UN Studio' (Amsterdam, Netherlands).[8] The slide show and introduction provided by this

Figure 2. The enclosed space used in the United design and the light of the protective towers[9]

huge team is an impressive collection of computerized images, accompanied by vast and detailed descriptions of their vision.

The preservation of the original footprints of the WTC is again mentioned in the proposal of United Architects. The difference this time is that there will be five connecting towers (called 'united towers') surrounding the footprints of the WTC. These connecting towers will overshadow the footprints and the eventual memorial, creating the impression that the towers are protecting these open spaces. Furthermore, this interconnection will provide commercial and public space. This idea can also be seen in the design by Foster and Partners. However, the proposal offered by United Architects dedicates an entire paragraph to the commercial opportunities which will be situated within the building, resulting in special attention given to the economic aspect of their design. Another one of the design concepts features an enclosed space that is similar to a cathedral. The light which is used as a symbol is comparable to a cathedral and shows a pro-Christian ideal.

A parallel to the Foster and Partners firm is that United Architects also promote the connection of the buildings as a means to improve safety for the visitors and work-

ers on the floor, seeing as they will be able to move horizontally as well as vertically through the buildings in an escape route. United Architects end their proposal by saying that they want to create 'a connected experience of monumental public infrastructure and the memorial'.

When reading and viewing the proposal by this group of architects, it becomes clear that they spent an enormous amount of time perfecting their slide show. It is precise and gives an effective impression of their vision. Also, the guidelines which were set by the LMDC in the 'A Vision for Lower Manhattan' program have clearly been followed: the United Towers for example were to be built in phases, a point made by the report.

The fourth entry chosen by the LMDC was a design by the team 'THINK'. This is comprised of ten different architect firms from Japan, the USA, England and Germany. The firms that originate from the USA are almost all situated in the city of New York.[10]

The proposal by team THINK sees the rebuilding of ground zero as a moral obligation that they have to fulfill for the city of New York. They envision a global center where cultural diversity is celebrated in a peaceful environment and productive coexistence. A World Cultural Center would replace the World Trade Center. The use of the word 'culture' instead of 'trade' already insinuates that the new WTC site will be more focused upon the public realm. There will be distinctive surrounding buildings designed by different architects who will house the various new cultural museums, theatres and conference centers. Team THINK hope to reconstruct the skyline of New York with 'the icons of the Public Realm'.

The slide show provided focuses a lot on the detailed construction process. Each floor is architecturally supported by a structural analysis. There is also an emphasis on the amount of square feet the building will have available for retail space. This specific choice by the team, to focus more on the construction process instead of a more visual slide show, is obviously deliberate. Thinking that the LMDC would have all the power to decide on the winner, they left out all of the beautiful computer-generated images, knowing that the experts at the LMDC would be more interested in economic retail space than a pretty picture. The last sentence in their proposal is a rather self-assured comment. The team declares that they have fulfilled all the program requirements set by the LMDC according to market demand.

The fifth consideration made by the LMDC is introduced by team 'Peterson/Littenberg Architecture and Urban Design'. This firm comprises two partners, a male and a female, set in New York City.[12] The central idea in this design is that of a 'Public Garden', whose shape and geometry are generated by the WTC tower footprints. It is a walled enclosure, symbolizing peace and reflection, an inner courtyard to the city. The garden contains an amphitheatre with 2,797 seats; this symbolic number is the count of victims who fell on 9/11. Peterson and Littenberg wish to create a garden that will become the new

Figure 3. A computerized image of the New York skyline, featuring the Tower designed by team THINK[11]

center for New York City, so that the rest of Lower Manhattan can develop from this point onwards. They hope to establish a new civic identity by placing a square and this garden in their design.

The firm's creation sees the building of two towers, which will be placed in the same relation to each other as the two 'old' towers. Beacons of light will shine from the top of each tower, to illuminate the district. Looking from the Hudson River up at the fresh skyline, the effect of an improved gateway into the city is created thanks to the two new towers.

The slide show provided is very detailed. Each slide has an explanation, giving the viewer a clear idea of what the design will eventually look like. The pictures are not computer generated, but sketched by hand. This gives a rather 'rustic' feel to the design. Also, on each of the slides, in the top right-hand corner there is a plan of what the new Lower Manhattan will look like. Each time a new slide is shown, a different element is cleverly highlighted on this plan, so that a clear view is given as to where in the Lower Manhattan district the element will be placed. The design team hopes that the combined elements of this plan will form a new public realm for the city of New York. The firm also uses terms such as 'healing' to describe the process which will have to be faced in Lower Manhattan.

Another entry put on the shortlist by the LMDC is that of the Daniel Libeskind Studio situated in Berlin, Germany. Libeskind is an American with Polish-Jewish descent. This studio was the eventual winner of the competition set up by the LMDC. It has completed work such as the Jewish Museum in Berlin, Germany, and the Imperial War Museum in Manchester, England. These two buildings prove that Libeskind is familiar with the designing of memorials and should therefore prove to be a good candidate for the LMDC.[13]

Libeskind's proposal is written from his own point of view. He uses the 'I' format and starts with an introductory tale of how he first saw the New York skyline on his arrival in the country. He then goes on to describe the feeling that he got when first visiting the site, and he continues to say that his design comes forth out of what he 'heard, felt and saw'. All of this is written in a very dramatic way.

Libeskind wants the Slurry walls that remained standing after the attacks of 9/11 to stay where they are. He calls them 'the heroic foundations of democracy', stating that they should be kept untouched in order to protect democracy. Libeskind uses a lot of this kind of symbolism in his design. There will also be a 'wedge of light' marking the exact time of the event that happened on 9/11. Each year on September 11th, between the hours of 8:46 a.m. when the first airplane hit, and 10:28 a.m. when the second tower collapsed, the sun will shine without shadow. He calls this a perpetual tribute to altruism and courage.

The most impressive aspect of his design is the 1,776-foot high 'Freedom Tower' that will dominate the New York skyline.

Again, Libeskind uses excessive amounts of symbolism when describing the tower. He says that 'a skyscraper rises above its predecessors, reasserting the pre-eminence of freedom and beauty, restoring the spiritual peak to the city, creating an icon that speaks of our vitality in the face of danger and our optimism in the aftermath of tragedy'.

Libeskind's proposal is definitely the most dramatic and symbolic contribution to the competition. Throughout his presentation he uses metaphors and symbolic elements to describe his entry.

Finally, the last design to be put on the shortlist by the LMDC withdrew from consideration shortly after nomination, namely the design team of SOM, SANAA, Michael Maltzan Architecture, Field Operations, Tom Leader Studio, Inigo Manglano-Ovalle, Rita McBride, Jessica Stockholder and Elyn Zimmerman. Their proposal suggested a vertical city in New York. The team, however, withdrew from the competition before a winner was announced. The SOM-team eventually helped with the design of the Libeskind Freedom Tower. Speculations as to why they prematurely withdrew from the contest surround the fact they helped with the realization process of the Freedom Tower: withdrawing from the contest gave the Libeskind studio a better chance of winning, but the SOM-team would be involved in the creation of the tower anyway, leaving a win-win situation for both of them. Also, it became clear that the SOM-team were involved with Larry Silver-

Figure 4. A computerized image of the New York skyline, featuring the Freedom Tower, as envisioned by Libeskind [14]

stein, a billion-dollar real estate investor in the city of New York and leaser of the WTC site. Silverstein has a huge influence in the city of New York and is momentarily overseeing the construction of Lower Manhattan, so the withdrawal of the SOM-team could have also been to prevent rumors of favoritism if they were to win.

Each of the six entries – the entry that withdrew from the competition will not be discussed – have elements in which they overlap and elements in which they differ. The similarities that the entries share will first be addressed, followed by short comments on the differences amongst the entries.

The first obvious similarity between the entries is that they have all decided to preserve the footprints of the old WTC buildings. All the general programmatic requirements that were set out by LMDC were followed by all the architects. All of the designs have a distinctive sense of place, talk about the phasing of the construction process, have considered the environmental issues, have designed a distinctive skyline and finally they have all thought about security and site access. In the details of each design is where the architecture teams differ from each other. Once the requirements of the LMDC become more specific, the architects have the opportunity to give more character and identity to their ideas.

When focusing on the differences and the presentation of the concepts, the identities of the designs are created. In the presentation there is a large variation between the teams. The slide show presented by the THINK team, for example, emphasizes the actual construction process and gives a detailed structural analysis, whereas the slide show of the United team was perfected for the public eye. Their presentation was impressive and would make a significant impact on the public. Whereas team THINK decided to appeal to the LMDC, the United team tried to appeal to the viewing public. The Libeskind studio slide show featured enormous amounts of drama. With each point that was made, an underlying story was told, filled with emotion. Also, each element of this design is draped with symbolism, each detail has been considered.

Once the seven designs were presented to the general public, representatives of the LMDC, Port Authority, the State and the City made an analysis of the entries. Whilst doing this they tried to incorporate the public's comments. On 4 February 2003, the LMDC announced that they had narrowed the designs down to two entries: the Daniel Libeskind Studio and the THINK team. The design proposed by THINK was considered by the media as the favorite from the beginning. The LMDC used certain questions as selection criteria when choosing the two designs. Some examples are: how well does it provide an appropriate memorial setting, does the design meet the program requirements, how well does the design establish street, block and development parcel, and what is the public response to the design?

Later that month, on 27 February 2008, the LMDC announced Studio Daniel Libeskind as the winner of the competition for the new WTC site. The main reason that studio Libeskind could call themselves winners of this competition is that the public responded most positively to their proposal: they had designed a dominant skyline and the plan developed the site in the context of the community. New York could stop talking about conceptual and abstract ideas and now had a plan to work with.

New York City today[15]

Five years have passed since the decision was made to select Studio Daniel Libeskind as the winner of the competition to redevelop Lower Manhattan. The plan includes a towering spire of 1,776 feet, the construction of a memorial with waterfalls, an underground museum, a visitor center, retail space, a special transit hub and four office towers spiraling to the height of the Freedom Tower. The Freedom Tower as designed by studio Daniel Libeskind was revised and the new design was revealed in June 2006. The reason for this evolution in the tower plan was because of the involvement by Larry Silverstein. David Childs, one of Silverstein's favorite architects, initially became involved in the

Figure 5. The new tower and its skyline after the alterations that were made by the LMDC[16]

process due to Silverstein's insistence, and developed a proposal for Freedom Tower in collaboration with Libeskind, a design which was revised in May 2005 due to security concerns. The plan underwent four design changes before arriving at the actual concept which is now being built. Because of all the changes that have taken place, the eventual winning project, which is now called 'Memory Foundations' involves the cooperation of various studios and institutions, including Studio Daniel Libeskind, the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation, Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, Foster and Partners, Maki and Associates, Richard Rogers Partnership and Santiago Calatrava. This huge partnership, which includes architects who also originally participated in the competition for the new WTC site, will try and help New York reclaim its famous skyline.

The Freedom Tower is still planned to reach the height of 1,776 feet, marking the year of the signing of the American Declaration of Independence. The tower was originally planned to be the tallest in the world, but this goal will not be achieved due to the Burj Dubai tower in Dubai with an estimated height of 2,684 feet. One of the set goals by the LMDC was to recreate the skyline in New York. This will undoubtedly be the case, but the claim that was made by Libeskind to create the highest tower in the world will not be

achieved. Also the idea that the public had a say in the winning concept of the competition is dubious, because the design was modified several times after it was chosen.

Behind closed doors, contracts are being signed to enable the completion of the building. At the moment, approximately 95 percent of the necessary contracts have been realized, including numerous security contracts to improve safety in and around the building. Also billions of dollars are being spent on the construction process: one billion dollars from insurance money from Silverstein, another 250 million dollars from the state of New York and approximately another one billion dollars from Port Authority towards the completion of the Freedom Tower, through bonds.

The completion date of the tower is set for 2012.

Analysis of WTC designs

The World Trade Center designs that were selected to be on the shortlist all followed the guidelines that were stipulated in the report of the LMDC, 'A vision for Lower Manhattan'. Many choices had to be made by the architects concerning their designs, one of which was about the aesthetic value versus the functionality of the building.

A new infrastructural pathway had to lead through the new WTC site, including access for a new subway line and a railway station. The design had to be beautiful but also functional which meant that the architects had to make important choices. All the firms decided that the new infrastructural elements would be situated underground, pointing to the fact that aesthetics took priority over functionality. The functional items were placed underground so that the beautiful skyline and new street grid would not be clouded by these elements.

The alterations which were eventually made on the Libeskind Freedom Tower point toward another issue, showing that the beauty of a design does not mean that the design can be considered safe. The report shows the need for the reconstruction of a new dominant skyline, a feature that would hopefully represent to the rest of the world that there is a new presence of power in New York City: this request is also overshadowed by the issue of safety. All the designs show a presence in the skyline, but some of the architects have chosen large, interconnecting buildings, planned out as escape routes, showing a concern for the safety of the building and the future occupants of the towers.

This issue of safety over the aesthetic value points to another tension, namely that of the future versus the past. In a lot of the designs, a future connected to fear can be detected, a good example being the design by Richard Meier and others of a vertical grid of escape routes. This unrealistic concept is full of fear for a future attack. The connection with the past and other tragedies comes to the fore with Libeskind and his former design projects. The holocaust monument and various war museums have been designed by

him in earlier decades and the adding of the new WTC site to that list sends out the message that what happened on 9/11 is comparable in scale to the other tragedies.

The symbolic value of light can be found in a lot of the designs, such as in the United design. There light is used in a Christian way, reminiscent of a cathedral. This choice is not necessarily an anti-Muslim stance, but a hint of pro-Christianity can be felt. The wedge of light implemented in Libeskind's design also focuses on light and shadows, or the lack thereof. Also, the tower he originally designed was set to light up at night, again stressing the contrast between day and night, light and darkness. This contrast between light and darkness can be paralleled with life and death.

A lot of the designs deal with numbers or figures. The symbolic height of the Freedom Tower, for example, at 1,776 feet is the year in which America was granted independence. The 2,797 seats in Peterson and Littenberg's design, one for each of the victims of the tragedy, could be found in an open amphitheatre in the North tower footprint. Another contrast is the difference between high (the tower) and low (the memorial). All the firms have kept this distinction in their design.

Returning to Libeskind's design, another contrast can be found: that of round and square. The tall skyscraper buildings are square and solid, but the buildings are placed in a half circle. Other designs have this feature as well, sometimes giving the impression that the towers are protecting the footprints of the original site. This can then again be connected to the security and safety issue.

The choice of hand-drawn proposals and computer-generated designs was also made by the firms. Other influences in their proposals included the use of texts; this ended up playing a significant part in their suggestions. An example of this is clear in the design by Studio Libeskind: their concept for the new WTC site featured long emotional recounts of Libeskind's first impressions of New York City as a child. He could win over the public by using drama draped with symbolism. It can be argued that the use of this drama is partly why Studio Libeskind won the contest. It appears that for the public, the texts were more important than the actual designs made by the studio. The public had been given the opportunity to connect to the concept through the textual support in the proposal. This helped make his proposition more appealing to the people of New York City.

The various choices discussed have all played a role in how the designs entered the shortlist. The firms had to make decisions that would have consequences for the reaction of the public and the board of the LMDC. It can be argued that some of the choices have taken more of a backseat in the process than others; some have been weighed more heavily by the public and the LMDC than others.

The contrast between high (the tower) and low (the memorial), round and square, and functionality versus aesthetics have not played a large role in the outcome of the competition. A reason for this could be that there was a relative agreement on these el-

ements. All the designs had incorporated high and low aspects in their design, the round and square aspect is a matter of taste and every design included functional elements such as a railway station and a subway line, all of which were situated underground, everyone therefore agreeing that aesthetics was more valuable than functionality.

The contrasts that were weighed more heavily include the future versus the past. The past is connected with fear for the future, and is therefore also connected to the safety issue. The reason why this contrast has been considered more than the others has to do with the architect firms. In the report, various elements were selected as important and it was then up to the firms to decide which parts would be more detailed, or receive more focus, in their designs. As written above, the choice of interconnecting towers had to do with fear for future attacks, a fear that not all architects showed in their design. It was then up to the public and the LMDC to decide whether this decision would influence the outcome of the competition.

Other points that would influence the outcome of the contest included the symbolic elements in the design proposals. The use of numbers, the value of light, and the choice between more pictures or text in their suggestions are all elements which influenced the presentation of the design. All these emotionally loaded choices had an impact on the way that the public reacted to each design.

Conclusion

This case study highlights how certain symbols can influence the rebuilding of a wounded city. The discussion concerning the reconstruction of New York City started as soon as the two towers hit the ground in the early morning of September 11th. Plans about how the towers should be rebuilt, or if they even should be rebuilt, were being considered in every New York newspaper shortly after 9/11. Opinions could be distinguished between two responses: on the one hand, to rebuild intensively as both symbol and substance of regeneration and as rejoinder to the terror and, on the other hand, to leave the site free of commercial building, a permanent memorial (Sorkin, 2003: 7).

The choice was made by the then-governor George Pataki and then-mayor Rudolph Giuliani that New York City would rebuild their skyline, and with this decision they set up the LMDC. The process which followed resulted in discussions amongst the public and within the LMDC, and these debates can all be considered as driving forces behind the recovery of the city and behind what makes New York a resilient city. The effects generated by the design process leading up to the reconstruction of Lower Manhattan may be just as important to heal the wounds for recuperation as the actual design itself. Although the LMDC and the media institutions surrounding this corporation hoped to

generate the idea that the public had a large say in the design process, the question can be raised whether this really was the case. The choices which were made by the LMDC in their 'vision for Lower Manhattan' could be commented on by the public, but the actual choice of design was made by the high officials, not the people. Having said this, the perception that ordinary people did have a voice was created and seemed to be enough for the citizens of New York to be content with.

What will eventually be situated within the buildings, whether it will be commercial and retail or office space, will not matter to the American people. The buildings have become memorials, because of the symbolic meaning attached to them. Certain decisions have been made during the design process and by the various entries. The various contrasts such as the past versus the future, aesthetics versus functionality, the choice to implement numbers and the value of light, or not, have all been considered by the architects and the LMDC. All of these choices in this architectural process and the decisions made by the firms have clearly influenced the design of the new WTC site. The design for the new WTC site has been selected, and the ongoing process of decision-making, influencing the site, will continue for years to come in an attempt to heal the resilient city of New York.

What is interesting in this process of the regeneration of New York, are the various contrasts that can be found in the designs of the new buildings. In the analysis of this article the main contrasts, such as safety versus aesthetics, the future versus the past, etc., are highlighted and compared. This being said, the public wanted the new WTC buildings to symbolically reinforce the American values that were attacked on 9/11. However, the powerful architects that contributed to the rebuilding of New York and the WTC buildings projected their own symbolism into their designs. The chosen symbols by the architects will trigger what the public think and consider when looking at the new towers.

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Notes

1 Based on: Harvey, 2003: 25-42; Page, 2005: 75-93; Susser and Schneider, 2003: 1-24; Vale and Campanella, 2005: 3-23.

2 Based on the LMDC website (www.renewnyc.com) and the 'A Vision for Lower Manhattan' report.

3 A small section is dedicated to the community of Lower Manhattan. The report states that these residential areas should be combined with the construction of office conversions to produce new apartments, so that a new vitality will be brought to the area. Whether the community reacts to these changes in a positive or a negative manner remains to be seen.

4 Based on press release made by the LMDC on their website (www.renewyork.com).

5 Previous work completed by this firm includes the New German Parliament 'Reichstag', situated in Berlin, Germany; the 'Commerzbank' Headquarters situated in Frankfurt, Germany; the Swiss Re Headquarters in London, England; and finally the Metro System in Bilbao, Spain. The firm specializes in glass and steel buildings, and is mostly famous for their airports.

6 A few examples of these designs are respectively the Getty center in Los Angeles, California; the Greater Columbus

Convention Center in Columbus, Ohio; the Morgan Stanley and Co. World Headquarters in New York; and finally the New Residential Community at Schiphol, The Netherlands. Their design philosophy can be best described as 'monumental, geometric modernism'.

7 Source: http://www.renewnyc.com/plan_des_dev/wtc_site/new_design_plans/firm_g/indv_elements. asp, accessed 10 October 2008.

8 Previous projects from the firms include the Lehman Brothers Headquarters, 745 Seventh Avenue, New York, which was designed by 'Imaginary Forces'; the Yokohama International Port Terminal, Yokohama, Japan, designed by 'Foreign Office Architects'; and the Transformation of Kleiburg Housing, Bijlmermeer, The Netherlands, designed by 'Gregg Lynn FORM'. The team is inherently interdisciplinary engaging in urban, transportation infrastructure, mixed-use, residential, cultural and commercial design.

9 Source: http://www.renewnyc.com/plan_des_dev/wtc_site/new_design_plans/firm_f/slides/slide5. asp, accessed 10 October 2008.

10 Previous completed work by some of the firms include the Tokyo International Forum in Tokyo, Japan, which was designed by Rafael Vinoly, a New York firm; the Curtain Wall House in Itabashi-Ku, Tokyo, Japan was created by Shigeru Ban, a Japanese firm and also the Whitehall Ferry Terminal and Peter Minuit Plaza, New York, which was completed by Frederic Schwartz, a firm which is also situated in New York City. Team THINK incorporates many different architectural ideas thanks to the cooperation of design teams from all over the world.

11 Source: http://www.renewnyc.com/plan_des_dev/wtc_site/new_design_plans/firm_e/indv_elements. asp, accessed 1st October 2008.

12 This small New York firm has, prior to this competition, never completed any large projects. They are known as industrial engineers and designers.

13 Studio Daniel Libeskind is involved in urban, architectural and cultural projects.

14 Source: http://www.renewnyc.com/plan_des_dev/wtc_site/new_design_plans/firm_d/indv_2.asp, accessed 30 September 2008.

15 Based on The New York Times archives: www.newyorktimes.com, accessed 2 October 2008.

16 Source: http://www.daniel-libeskind.com/projects/show-all/memory-foundations/, accessed 11 November 2008.

14. Conclusion

Feeling at Home in the City and the Codification of Urban Symbolism Research

Peter J.M. Nas and Pierpaolo De Giosa

Introduction

Urban symbolism and rituals are more than a simple reflection of society. They lay bare the bones of society and the relations between its constituent groups of all sorts: class, ethnicity, gender and age. Urban symbolism is much more than any mere reflection, as it is part of society and is used to shape and change social relationships. It may even be utilized strategically for the purposes set by the whole society or by constituent groups or even individuals. This makes the study of urban symbolism intriguing. It focuses on a cultural layer produced and consumed in society that, because of its long persistence, also reflects and shapes the history of the urban community. Urban symbols and rituals comment on daily life in the city and vice-versa society is observing and interpreting them too. They are related to both urban identity and urban image. In our view, the study of urban symbolism has created a new approach to urban studies; one which should no longer be neglected. Current studies of cities focusing on infrastructure, and social and administrative life must be complemented by the cultural symbolic aspect in order to present a proper, balanced picture of urban society. So, in our view, urban anthropologists, sociologists, historians, architects, planners, and geographers have to include this cultural approach to describe and analyze the urban community in its full essence.

This is our first conclusion from the contributions to this and previous volumes frequently mentioned before. But our aim reaches farther. We want to develop a third, new approach to urban symbolism focusing on symbolism and ritual as mechanism for establishing social cohesion. In addition to this third theoretical approach, we think that the time is ripe to create a paradigm of urban symbolism research by means of codification. This will assist (new) researchers in this field by presenting the main questions posed in a systematic way.

Feeling at home in the city: A Third Approach[1]

Cities are 'melting pots' of diverse influences, peoples and interests. Their populations are often extremely heterogeneous and, taking into account that each group of persons has its own values, norms, perceptions and religious thoughts, it is obvious that urban

symbolism is not always inclusive of the (population of the) city as a whole. Many authors, also in the previous contributions to this volume, point out the relationship between urban symbolism and ritual and social cohesion in the city. They indicate that feelings of solidarity, trust and attachment can be fostered by it.

The concept of social cohesion was first formulated at the end of the nineteenth century, when the founding fathers of modern sociology expressed their concerns about the disruptive consequences of the Industrial Revolution (De Hart, 2002). Nowadays social cohesion is often still based on a similar perception of crisis: a decrease in solidarity, the disintegration of communities and social exclusion. The concept is quite complex, because it can cover several dimensions: from the individual to the collective and from attitudes to behavior. It also plays a role on various levels such as the family, neighborhood, city and nation. This complexity contributes to its ambiguity: urban symbols can influence the cohesion of a social system positively as well as negatively. The same urban symbols that enhance the social binding of a specific group on the one hand can also lead to the social exclusion or to the disintegration of certain communities on the other hand.

In the theoretical texts we have consulted, the concept of social cohesion is often elaborated bearing the role of the individual in mind. Schnabel (cited in De Hart, 2002: 12, own translation) defines social cohesion as: 'the extent to which persons express, in behavior and perception, their attachment with social bonds in personal life, as a social citizen and as member of society'. The collective element is mentioned in this definition, but the point of departure is clearly found in the individual. Looking at the city as a complex differentiated group of persons, it seems very appropriate to start from social mechanisms instead of individuals as bearers of cohesion (Friedkin, 2004). It then appears that symbolism and ritual, which are generally neglected in theoretical essays on cohesion, are very important to local identity formation and social attachment. Therefore, urban symbols and rituals are suitable for fostering mental bonding to the city and contribute to feeling at home there. Symbols and rituals have a collective and normative character that, by means of socialization and in more fluctuating groups by means of participation, achieve their effect. Urban symbolism also has a behavioral aspect, by creating a bond through participation in festivities and rituals. Symbolism and rituals are important mechanisms which create 'pressure toward uniformity' (Friedkin, 2004: 419) and in that way lead to identification and social cohesion. In our view, the definition of social cohesion by Festinger (cited in Friedkin, 2004: 411) is very appropriate to our analysis, as he sees social cohesion as 'the "field of forces" of conditions and their direct and indirect effect on persons' membership, attitudes and behaviours'. Urban symbolism and ritual are two of these collective mechanisms in this 'field of forces' that can play a crucial role in fostering social cohesion. Urban individuals in all their heterogeneity in their

daily lives are subjected to the urban symbols and rituals and their effects, but at the same time also shape them.

The role of symbolism and ritual as mechanisms to foster social cohesion can take shape in different ways. Social cohesion is a gradual concept and can be differentiated into bonding when the contradictions are limited and bridging in the event of strong contradictions. Besides these various configurations, it is also possible to find a negative relationship between symbolism and coherence in a city, resulting in more or less 'wounded cities' (Schneider and Susser, 2003). In these cases, one can speak of conflicting cohesions dominating the various urban arenas. The difference between top-down and bottom-up mechanisms in social cohesion is also important and can be found in a number of case studies.

When overseeing the comprehensive case studies presented in this volume on social cohesion, we found two contrasting types of cities. Colombo is lacking in substantial overall symbolism and Yogyakarta reveals a very high degree of social cohesion particularly through rituals. In Colombo, no particular dominant symbol expressing urban identity is present. The city is quite diverse in its ethnic, religious and class groups. Compartmentalized symbolism is stressed and migration from rural areas is strong and stimulated by civil war, leading to fear being a dominant sentiment in the city. In contrast to Colombo, Yogyakarta shows a completely opposite picture. The relationship between sultan and population dominates the social relationships and social cohesion in the city effectuated by means of all sorts of rituals. This does not mean that, as part of a globalizing world, society in this developing country does not change, indeed some rituals become obsolete under the pressure of nation building and urban fragmentation and compartmentalization. But new neo-traditional rituals and ceremonies supporting identity take their place, because 'unity and cohesion are the *conditio sine qua non* for the legitimacy of the sultan's power' (De Giosa, this volume). Another example of a city dominated by a strong symbol, in this case material and religious, is Banda Aceh. Its central Baiturrahman Mosque is well known all over the Archipelago and very much valued by the population as *the* religious symbol of Aceh. Although affected by the scourges of guerrilla warfare and the tsunami, this symbol has bridged the times of suffering, engendering deep feelings of social cohesion. The Baiturrahman Mosque stands for 'history, religion, cohesion, culture, recovery, help and survival' (Van Leeuwen, this volume). The role of disaster and outside threat in social cohesion is intriguing. One of the major wounded cities presented in this volume is New York. As a symbol of capitalism, the WTC was destroyed and the process of creating a new symbol reveals the feelings of social cohesion aroused by the attacks. Both the process and the results are crucial to turning New York into a pilgrimage place and reinforcing the values expressed on the newly constructed site.

So, urban symbolism and ritual are major social mechanisms expressing and fos-

tering social cohesion. Their content can vary and exemplify different levels of social cohesion. Besides their content, their context must not be overlooked. Social harmony and nation building as in Yogyakarta, social conflict and war as in Albuquerque, Colombo, and New York, planned urban change as in The Hague, Gdańsk, and Buenos Aires, and disaster as in Banda Aceh are informative examples of such contexts. In addition to the 'urban symbolic ecology' and the 'hypercity' approach described in the introduction to this volume, we postulate the study of urban symbols and rituals as social mechanisms for social cohesion and feeling at home in the city as a third approach in urban symbolism research.

A paradigm of urban symbolism research

After approximately two decades of studies on urban symbolism, the time has arrived to draw up a path to support and contribute to a clear direction for further research. The focus on the urban setting as completely removed from the 'traditional' promised land of anthropological studies needs to be illuminated. The case studies presented in this book are not concerned with isolated villages, as the majority of them explore a non-exotic scenario such as the city. We propose a codification of research in the field of urban symbolism to excavate this 'jungle' of symbols. Such a codification can be a valid apparatus for researchers, fieldworkers and, last but not least, novices. Our endeavor is by no means an attempt to manipulate the background of the researcher in search of the soul(s) of a particular urban setting. It is, however, a substantial contribution towards making sense of previous studies and, at the same time, a direction indicated for the future of urban fieldwork and research dealing with the symbolic side of cities.

The diversity of urban settlements all over the world and the internal stratification within cities is obviously a challenge for ethnographic fieldwork, but they should not be considered a drawback for research itself. The field of urban research could shift from capital cities to provincial cities or from the megalopolis to small towns or 'big villages', but the internal heterogeneity and poli-vocality remain its main essence. The city, as a field of research, is the tower of Babel in which the anthropologist encounters various symbols and rituals. The trick is to understand that often within the same city a single symbol can be interpreted in various ways by different people, or is even ignored altogether. It is in this context that the researcher wears the multi-dress/multi-layered apparel of the quick-change artist, meeting various people, speaking different languages, living in very diverse worlds but sharing the same urban space. In our opinion, this is a challenge not a problem; no less romantic and intriguing than the exotic and remote village.

Along these lines, we shall introduce five leading questions to codify the urban symbolism approach; five 'pillars' that are important to building up the basis for the exploration of urban symbols and rituals. The fundamental questions 'What am I going to study and how?' beg this tentative effort in the direction of an inspiring codified guide, although its nature is not exhaustive because it has to be flexible in response to the personal focus and interest of the researcher's investigation. Nevertheless, we suggest that the codified guide proposed here is applicable to different case studies throughout the approach of urban symbolism.

1. *What are the main urban symbol bearers within the city?*

To be familiar with a city involves the understanding of its total configuration and the main symbols and rituals within its urban space. As reported in the introduction to this book, in the last few decades, as a consequence of urban symbolic ecology and hypercity, a new path has been opened in urban anthropology and urban studies to discover the symbolic side of cities all over the world. Thanks to the development of this theoretical framework, not only are material bearers, such as landmarks and architecture, important as they have been in previous explorations of the production and consumption of urban space, but there are other urban symbol bearers, namely iconic, behavioral, and discursive signifiers that now reveal their crucial symbolic role; aspects that for years have been focused in traditional settings. The construction and deconstruction of material space within cities are directly involved in a process of signification which gives meaning to specific symbols. In this context, urban symbolism has provided a valuable and systematic method by which to identify different signifiers and to observe how they form the image of the city. Hence, the urban symbolism approach helps crucially to answer to a relevant sub-question: '*What kind of urban symbol bearers?*'

The observation of these urban symbol bearers and how people are involved with them can tell more about the meaning beyond their visible form. When the researcher becomes familiar with a particular urban setting, the more veiled meanings will gradually be noticed. There are different forces and influences involved in the shaping of urban space and in the signification of urban symbols and rituals. Obviously, the more powerful these actors are the more successful is their 'hand' revealed in these dialectics. But, on the other hand, power relations change over time and dominant actors will be replaced by others. This dynamic balance of power is based on manifold interactions between actors exerting their influences from international, national, and local levels. Top-down processes of signification often communicate their messages as the result of a meticulous monologue (at least in their initial inclination), but even the strongest actors are finally involved in a dialogic co-ordination during the creation of meaning for symbols and rituals within the city. Conversely, it is not rare to find examples of bottom-

up symbols produced and consumed directly from apparently powerless actors as the so-called ordinary people. We underline the need for particular and renewed attention to be paid to these actors and their implicit roles within urban space.

As far as the total symbolic configuration is explored, another sub-question can be posed: '*What is/are the dominant urban symbol bearer/s?*' As shown throughout this volume, some symbols are stronger than others and their centrality within the city contributes to shape its urban space. A crucial mission of urban symbolism research is to identify them in order to grasp their leading role in the production and consumption of urban space as well as the construction of the urban imagery and social cohesion. Some case studies reveal that some urban symbol bearers are more visible and perceptible than others, and their supremacy is explicitly expressed. Other urban symbol bearers, however, are hidden and convey a meaning which is articulated latently. Only through profound observation and familiarization with a particular city can the researcher find them, since the same urban dwellers might be unconscious of their existence although these symbols play a crucial part in their lives positively or negatively. There might also be a case in which more symbols share an oligarchic dominion within the urban setting bringing correspondingly divergent meanings.

The urban symbol bearers of a city are the guardian of its soul and are simultaneously the custodian of its meanings. The focus of urban symbolism gives a revitalized centrality to the symbolic domain of cities and leads intriguingly to the discovery of the dimension of meanings; a dimension which has been ignored for years, but is fascinatingly relevant to cultural anthropology applied to an urban setting. These urban symbol bearers and their configuration can be considered the totems that represent the urban community shaping and supporting a sense of identity within the city. Different types and configurations might be revealed by examining existing concepts such as referential symbolism, nested symbolism, imposing symbolism, compartmentalized symbolism and so on.

2. *How does the city change historically?*

This second question is directly linked to the first, since it represents the attempt to contextualize the city in space and time. If the exploration of urban symbol bearers in the present is the initial result of a synchronic analysis, a more accurate understanding of a city is also derived from a diachronic perspective. It is through this second step that the researcher wears the suggestive glasses of the historian. Cities are not static entities and they change just as the seasons vary. Any change within the urban setting could be very evident and familiarity with a particular city represents a constructive *conditio sine qua non* for the identification of its historical pattern. Even the erection of new material symbolic elements or the alteration of previous physical entities can be noted with the passing of time.

A focus on the 'life' of urban settlements clarifies the directions and the development of a particular city. If, as shown before, the urban symbol bearers are significant elements for the observation and analysis of the 'life in the city', an investigation through a historical lens is a necessary step to be able to dig up the 'life of the city' in the past. Such a perspective helps to understand the 'how' and 'why' of the present as well as the future, which is constantly and imminently nearby because of the high rate of acceleration and projection characterizing urban contexts in contrast to their rural counterparts. It is now the moment for the researcher to focus on historical documentation and literary sources as the 'museum studies' branch of urban symbolism. Old pictures, ethno-histories or urban myths, reports of historical events, old maps, and statistics are all crucial analytical elements.

When the urban development path of a particular case study is defined, a periodization of a city will also be possible. This classification and division of the city into distinct and identifiable historical systems is intriguingly involved with the understanding of its spatial configuration as well as its function. Therefore, a study of the historical pattern of the city will lead to the identification of its function, which is encapsulated in the role assigned to a specific urban settlement and its consequent spatial design. The function, nevertheless, is also related to the existing interaction of a particular city with its environment and countryside, the national administrative system as well as the international system. Hence functions also change and are profoundly influenced both by internal and external forces.

In conjunction with the urban development and function of the city, this historical perspective will reveal the additional changes in symbolic systems. Symbols and rituals are produced and consumed throughout time and transmitted to the next generations. The symbolic side of the city is constantly shaped and reshaped, imagined and created in space and time. If it is true as reported earlier that a single symbol could reflect very diverse meanings to different people, it is equally true that the meaning attached to it can change down the years. What urban dwellers think of symbols and rituals is not static and independent of the passing of the time. Moreover, this diachronic approach offers the opportunity to make a wide range of comparisons within a single case study as well as between more urban contexts: between changing meanings of the same symbol or ritual, between different historical symbolic configurations of the same city, between two or more cities and so on.

3. *Is there any conflict within the symbolism of the city?*

Urban symbols and rituals carry their own meanings designated by people, and cities communicate their souls showing images of themselves. The challenge of urban symbolism is to interpret them in their varieties and similarities all over the world. However,

the urban context displays a mixture of identities based not merely on differences of class and ethnicity. The various sub-cultures populating the same urban space create an extremely variegated environment.

Through the exploration of urban symbols and rituals, the researcher has the opportunity to observe how social cohesion is materialized and acted out in the daily life of communities with a high degree of internal diversity. The question of how conflict, tension and contradiction are acted out in the production and consumption of urban space, urban symbols and urban rituals helps the researcher to answer a crucial sub-question: '*What is the degree of social cohesion of the city?*' The dynamics of social cohesion in cities might reveal a plethora of phenomena related to the creation of their own images and identities. The interaction between official and informal symbolic configurations, or top-down and bottom-up symbols, social solidarity as well as conflict and competition, city branding and city marketing, are all important elements for the understanding of urban social cohesion which is the focus of the new approach proposed earlier in this conclusion.

4. *What is the image of the city?*

The exploration of urban symbols and rituals and the interpretation of their meanings and roles for the lives of people will lead to the more enigmatic scrutiny of the image that the city communicates to its own inhabitants, as well as to newcomers and outsiders. These images constructed by the cities of and for themselves are evocatively influential in their own development. City branding and city marketing are now of crucial importance to the survival of a local economy and tourism because of the new challenges of international competition in a globalized arena. Hence, all the municipal institutions are necessarily absorbed by brand management and promotion, but their efforts do not always yield successful results. Institutional actors often have to share their power with other actors and different interests, and to be successful the co-operation of the urban dwellers is necessary.

The image of a city is also the long-term and multifaceted outcome of its residents and dwellers; it is the mirror image of how people live in urban space, how they behave, and what they do. The image that they shape of their city can significantly influence non-domestic forces and visitors positively or negatively. In economic terms, a positive image of the city will undoubtedly support the prosperity of its community, especially through a beneficial touristic effect. Furthermore, a positive image has the potential to break down the walls and fences produced by diversity between different groups of people, creating more satisfactory living conditions. A higher degree of social cohesion within the city will reveal a greater, more harmonized image and perception of urban space both by insiders and outsiders. Conversely, a lack of social cohesion will draw a very dif-

ferent image, contributing to increased internal tensions and fractures and pushing away visitors or investors.

5. *How does the researcher set about his or her work?*

After the explanation of what research in urban symbolism focuses on and on which elements observation and analysis are based, we shall briefly introduce the *modus operandi* of this approach. This methodology has been the result of previous studies and negotiated experiences in cultural anthropology. Our purpose is to give a form to urban symbolic research encouraging contributions from future studies. How will the researcher grasp the symbolic side of the city?

a. The first step is related to the keystone of *familiarization*. If the researcher is an outsider, he or she needs to become familiar with the new urban settlement which will provide the fieldwork data. During this initial period, as an explorer the researcher has to discover the city, the new world of investigation. Only through familiarization will it be possible to understand local life, urban spatial configuration, and to feel at ease with people. It is the time for *observation*, paying attention to both visual contours and urban languages. The more the researcher becomes familiar with the urban environment, the more he or she will be aware of the main urban symbols and rituals.

b. Relevant and complementary to fieldwork familiarization is the study of secondary literary sources, such as historical reports, municipal documents, urban mythologies and, if extant, previous studies of the specific city where the research is carried out. Local newspapers, websites, television and radio are also crucially important as a daily documentation of the city. Of course, these kind of sources need to be interpreted through a critical lens, aware that powerful actors have a more influential control on mass media. A focus limited only on the communications media will deeply obscure other relevant messages not involved in these practices of power.

c. Collection of local maps (also historical), municipal statistics, and personal pictures of the urban environment and its dwellers are a valuable support for research, as well as a cultural contribution to local heritage. Last but not least, souvenirs, local products and other objects could be implicitly meaningful in terms of the messages captured in them.

d. The core of fieldwork is reached when the researcher starts to meet people. The gathering of interviews can be carried out at different levels from the higher municipal authority to the more powerless actors within the city; of course, the choice of informants is related to specific topics. A particular source of frustration in urban symbolic studies

may be the very different and accelerated rhythm that influences the lives of urban residents rather than villagers as well as the higher degree of individualism. But it is only a relative limitation, since it can help the fieldworker become used to the *modus vivendi* of urban dwellers, perhaps sharing their common anxieties. Collection of *mental maps* along with interviews is also relevant to the understanding of urban space and how people live it. Mental maps as drawn by informants, narrative maps as proposed by Reinders (pers. comm.), imaginary city tours, and the sequencing of photographs of urban symbols reveal their potential for storytelling about how urban space is constructed, deconstructed, produced, consumed and perceived along with the urban symbols and rituals.

e. The last step is based on the hermeneutical exercise, the *interpretation* of and reflection on the data collected and the phenomena observed. Through interpretation the researcher is absorbed into a decodification and deconstruction of both explicit and implicit meanings communicated via the observed urban symbols and rituals and their configuration. Particular attention should be paid to the point of view of the people living in the urban space and to their own interpretations of symbols and rituals. The investigation of how people unconsciously shape, produce and consume urban space, urban symbols and urban rituals is considerable. The search for meaning and cohesion within cities is the promising focus of research in urban symbolism.

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Note

1 We are grateful to Rosalie de Bruijn for her assistance in our reflection on social cohesion.

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