

Neighbourhoods of Peace; Cities of Hostility: Exploring the socio-spatial dimensions of peace and place in the 21st Century and its implications for future cities

Karina Landman*

Abstract

South Africa is changing and along with this, its cities. Crime, anti-social behaviour, community conflict, segregation and the violation of human rights are some of the challenges the country is currently facing. And while people have to come to terms with political transition and social change, the spatial environment is also transformed, in some cases almost over night. In response, there has been a huge growth of physical boundaries through fences and walls, burglar bars and shutters on building facades and boomed barricades on public roads. Consequently, the urban landscape has become a tapestry of fortified enclaves of various forms and sizes. Do these neighbourhood changes facilitate envisioned socio-spatial change and what are their implications for the city as a whole? This paper is concerned with the relationship between peace and place. It explores how the physical space facilitates or negates the establishment of peace through the manifestation of a specific function and form, as well as its meaning for urban residents. In order to investigate this relationship, it also reviews the concept 'piece of mind' and its connection with the nature and sense of place in cities. It argues for a socio-spatial understanding of peace and place and therefore for a multidimensional approach that would not only include peace making and peacekeeping, but also peace building and eventually conflict prevention.

Introduction

I dream of an Africa which is in peace with itself.
- Nelson Mandela

In 1994 Mandela stood in front of a newly elected parliament. After 27 years in prison and untold hardships, he used the words of Marion Williams in his presidential inaugural lecture to inspire the new democratic nation.

Our fear is not that we are inadequate, but that we are immensely powerful.

Unfortunately, this power is not always utilised for the good of all and to fulfil Mandela's dream of a peaceful Africa. Accepting the Nobel Prize for peace in 1993, he thus reiterated the problem: We speak of the challenge of the dichotomies of war and peace, violence and non-violence, racism and human dignity, oppression and repression and liberty and human rights, poverty and freedom from want (Mandela 1993:1).

* CSIR Built Environment, PO Box 395, Pretoria, South Africa, 0001, Tel: +27 21 841 2084, Fax: +27 21 841 4054, E-mail: klandman@csir.co.za

The 1980s and 1990s were a period of urban crisis across the African continent (Mosha 2001). Consequently, the majority of African cities are currently characterised by seven aspects, namely population explosion and urban expansion, deteriorating infrastructure and services, economic stagnation and poverty, inadequate shelter and inappropriate city form, environmental stress, changing institutional settings and war, conflict and struggles (Landman 2006a). Political conflict and a wide range of power struggles in African cities have undermined their sustainability to a large degree, either by their total destruction of the city, including the physical and social capital, or their impact on the resources of another country's cities. It is also common practice for democratic states to favour some cities over other due to power/party differences and this has a significant impact on development in certain cities in Africa (Adebayo 2002).

South African cities are also changing dramatically. The first-all inclusive elections in 1994 marked the turning point and introduced a new era of democracy. However, the road to democracy is not without challenges. In the aftermath of political transition, the country faces many social and spatial changes, as well as challenges. These challenges are growing urbanisation, poverty, unemployment, large income disparities, high levels of crime and violence, and growing levels of fear of crime (Shaw 2000; Smith 2003; Butler 2004; Gotz et al 2004). It is estimated that more than 50% of the population lives below the poverty line and that 30% of the population is unemployed (May et al 1998). In addition, income disparity has also changed. In 1996, 58.6% of all households fell in the middle-income range of R4 801 – R38 400 per year annum, and collectively earned 35.7% of all income. In 2001, the proportion of households in this middle range had fallen to 43.7% and collectively captured a mere 19.9% of the total income. At the same time, the poorest 36.4% of households earned a mere 1.4% of the income, while the top 1.3% claimed a staggering 26.7% of all income earned (Gotz et al 2004:87). Ironically, the patterns of inequality therefore worsened in the post-apartheid era. In support of this Beal, Crankshaw and Parnell (2002:46) argue that the spatial order of post-apartheid is more unequal than the racial apartheid order of the past. This is a new order in which institutionalised inequality based on race has been uprooted, but inequality based on access to resources has been intensified. In this sense, South Africa has become similar to most other developing countries.

Overall crime levels increased by almost 5% between 1997-98, 7% in 1998-99, and 7.6% in 1999-2000 (Schonteich 2002). There was a slight decrease from 2000 to 2001. In line with this, Masuku (2002) shows a stabilisation of many crime types in 2002, albeit still at a very high level. Despite this stabilisation, perceptions are that crime is very high, especially in metropolitan areas. For example, annual Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) public opinion surveys in South Africa targeted a nationally representative sample of respondents about their feelings of personal safety. In 1994, almost three-quarters of respondents mentioned that they felt safe. At the end of 2000, respondents were almost equally divided with 44% feeling safe and 45% feeling unsafe (cited in Landman and Schönteich 2002). The 2003 National Victims of Crime Survey also shows that although crime levels, as measured by the surveys, have indeed declined from 1998 to 2003, feelings of safety were far worse in 2003 compared to 1998 (Mistry 2003).

In response, there has been a huge growth of physical boundaries through fences and walls, burglar bars and shutters on building facades and boomed barricades on public roads. Consequently, the urban landscape has become a tapestry of fortified enclaves of various forms and sizes. This raises several questions within the context the new democracy. Firstly, do these fortified places contribute to greater peace within South African cities? Secondly, what are the implications of fortification and privatisation for the consolidation of democracy? Thirdly, what is the relationship between peace and place, or in other words the role that the built environment and its design and management plays to enable greater peace?

A recent United Nation's (UN) publications reiterated that "there is a need for a culture of planning that promotes inclusive and peaceful cities" (UN State of the World's Cities Report 2005/2006:2). There has been a large international debate about the need for peace on a global and national scale. This has resulted in many programmes such as the UN's Peace Building Commission and Peace Building Missions in many countries world-wide, which links security and development (including Liden and Enestrom 2005; Gueli et al 2005). However, there has been less of a debate about peace within cities and most of these have been with regards to the impact of national or tribal/ethnic wars in urban areas. On the other hand, there have been debates about peace making within communities, especially related to crime prevention, victim empowerment and reintegration of offenders. This paper focusses on the need for peace within cities and between neighbourhoods and the role that the

built environment can play to facilitate greater conditions for peace. Firstly, it introduces the concepts of 'peace' and 'place' to establish the background and foundation for further discussion. This is followed by a discussion of the nature and impact of fortress neighbourhoods in South Africa and the challenges this presents for peace in these cities⁹. The paper will then explore alternative ways to enable peace through the development of various types of places within cities and finally consider the prospects for peace in future cities.

What is Peace?

It is difficult to capture a fixed nature or meaning of peace. As with many other words it has various connotations that differs between contexts and people. Given this, it is not always clear what each person means by peace and how it can be obtained (Onah anon). Some of these include:

- A state of quiet or tranquillity; freedom from disturbance or agitation; calm; repose.
- Exemption from, or cessation of, war with public enemies.
- Public quiet, order, and contentment in obedience to law.
- Exemption from, or subjection of, agitating passions; tranquillity of mind or conscience.
- Reconciliation; agreement after variance; harmony; concord.
- To make or become quiet; to be silent; to stop (<http://www.brainyquorate.com>).

To be more context-specific, in traditional African societies, peace is not an abstract poetic concept, but a rather down-to-earth and practical concept. It is conceived in terms of order, harmony and equilibrium. Therefore, combining all of these interpretations, one may argue that the components of peace include harmony, order and balance (see Figure 1). These three components are intrinsically linked to create conditions for peace.

⁹ This is based on a national survey conducted by the CSIR in 2002 (Landman 2003), four in-depth case studies carried out in the municipalities of Johannesburg and Tshwane (including Pretoria) (Landman 2004) and an attendance of and detailed documentation review of the proceedings from the Public Hearings on Security Access Restriction in both the municipalities of Johannesburg and Tshwane (Landman 2006b).

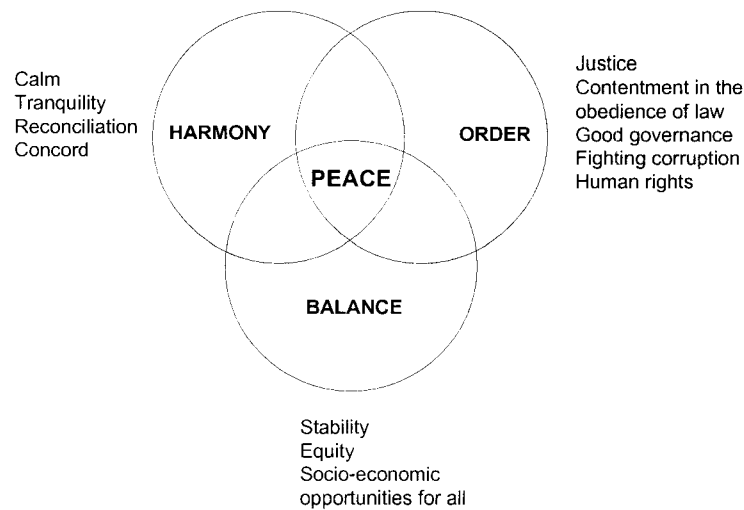


Figure 1: The components of peace

Peace is also often associated with security and both of these are considered the required aims of intervention in conflict-ridden areas. The UN uses four different instruments to respond to conflicts, namely conflict prevention, peacemaking, peacekeeping and peace building. However, it has been shown that peacemaking and peacekeeping through security efforts and military or police operations on their own are not likely to establish sustainable peace (Gueli 2005). “It is as true to say that you cannot hope to achieve development goals without peace and security as to say you cannot hope to achieve peace and security without development” (Hannay 2005). This therefore calls for peace building efforts as well. Peace building refers to the assistance to institutions in creating conditions for restoring security, political stability and reconciliation, building capacity for essential social services, promoting respect for human rights and sustainable democratic as well as economic development. An important aspect of peace building is the creation of democratic societies that are based on the rule of law, able to fight corruption and with strong fiscal management. Peace building also needs to include the promotion of human rights, technical assistance for democratic development, as well as incentives for the commencement of economic activities and employment opportunities. Financial investment and viable economic growth must be stimulated in order to give young people alternatives to carrying arms or engaging in criminal activities. “People need jobs, incentives to lead a productive life, and hope for the future” (Hannay 2005:21).

Therefore, former president F.W. de Klerk, one of South Africa's recipients of the Noble Prize for Peace, stated in his acceptance speech:

Peace does not fare well where poverty and deprivation reign
It does not flourish where there is ignorance and a lack of education and information.
Repression, injustice and exploitation are inimical with peace.
Peace is gravely threatened by inter-group fear and envy and by the unleashing of unrealistic expectations.
Racial, class and religious intolerance and prejudice are its mortal enemies
(De Klerk 1993:2).

It is suggested that peace enforcement, peacekeeping and peace building should not be seen as separate phases or aspects of a linear process, but that these should be combined or integrated in countries or cities to address the nonlinear and interrelated nature of war economies and its close relationship to organised crime within cities (Simone 2004; Gueli et al 2005). A systems perspective¹⁰ highlights that firstly, security and development are mutually interdependent and that the solution lies in combining the symptomatic response (security) and the fundamental solution (development) (Gueli et al 2005). This requires a reconsideration of how we conceive and change places in cities to enable greater peace and security.

What is 'Place'?

The middle to late 20th century focus on place emerged as a reaction to Modernism's form of space, where emotional attachments were discarded in the urban development process. It has also been absorbed as part of Post-modern approaches to design (Ellin

¹⁰ "A system is an entity which maintains its existence through the mutual interaction of its parts" (Von Bertalanffy cited in Bellinger 2004:1). Or in other words, "a system is any structure that exhibits structure and order" (Boulding 1985:7). The key lies in the interaction between the parts, over time, which structures the system¹⁰. As such, a system is different to a heap or collection. Examples of systems are particle, atom, molecule, cell, person, community, state, nation, world, solar system, galaxy and universe. In truth, there is only one system, "the Universe". All other systems are sub-systems of this larger system, depending on where one chooses to draw the boundaries (Bellinger 2004). To understand the sustainability potential of a settlement, one therefore needs to study the system – that is, the interactions of all the multi-dimensional aspects of settlements described above. Studying the parts in isolation will not provide an appropriate understanding (Bellinger 2004).

1997). Others have also taken the idea of place and place-making further to be applicable to areas wider than just architecture and urban design. Graham and Healey (1999) highlight the value of an emphasis on place for planning, while a recent collection of papers discusses the “Governance of Place” (Madanipour, Hull and Healey 2001). In addition, the promotion of place has also found increasing value in urban development projects and the promotion of cities, as part of a reaction against globalisation or in an attempt to be globally competitive (Pacioni 2004). If place is finding increasing prominence in the planning and design professions, this raises the questions of what exactly is meant by “place” and how it is created or established.

Norberg-Schultz states that “place is the concrete manifestation of man’s dwelling, and his identity depends on his belonging to places” (1980:6). He therefore, maintains that the question of “place” came from philosophy, from questions concerning the relationship between life and place. However ‘amorphous’ and ‘intangible’ whenever we feel or know space, it is typically associated with the concept of “place” (Carmona et al 2003). Therefore, places are essentially centres of meaning constructed out of lived-experience (Relph 1976). By imbuing them with meaning, individuals, groups or societies change ‘spaces’ into ‘places’: for example Wenceslas Square is particularly meaningful to the citizens of Prague (Carmona et al 2003).

Space is therefore the starting point for understanding place. For Norberg-Schultz (1980) a place is a space that has a distinct character. Tuan (1977) states that place is security and space is freedom: we are attached to one and long for the other. Relph (1976) points out that space provides the context for places, but derives its meaning from particular places. Continuous spatial transformation is a characteristic of any settlement, whether it happens relatively regularly (for example in large cities), or is part of a very slow process (for example in small rural villages) (Madanipour 1996). Massey argues for the simultaneous conceptualisation of spatial as social, and social as spatial. If the dynamism of the concept of space-time is employed, place can be understood as open and porous – “place becomes a moment in the ever-changing social relations at all scales” (Massey in Madanipour 1996:23).

Relph (1976) argues that “physical setting”, “activities”, and “meaning” constitute the three basic elements of the identity of places. Building on his work, Punter and Montgomery located the components of place and a sense of place within urban design thought (see Figure 2). This illustrates how urban design interventions

can contribute to and enhance a sense of place. It also reflects the intricate relationship between society and space. The city, or settlement, is a stage where different actors play out their various roles (Short 1996) or, to be more specific, public space is “the stage upon which the drama of communal life unfolds” (Carr *et al.* in Madanipour 1996:146). These performances or interactions are socio-spatial. “They all *take place* [emphasis in original text]. They occur in a spatial setting. Space is not just a backdrop. Space and place are crucial to what performances are given and how they are received” (Short 1996:252).

Tensions, however, emerge when over-emphasis on individual places leads to the transformation of public spaces into privatised common spaces for only a selected few through, for example, privatisation and access control. Precincts are fortified and privatised in this way as a result of the actions of private business, large corporations, wealthier citizens, and sometimes also those of local authorities (Dillion 1994; Flusty 1995; Madanipour 1996; Oc and Tiesdell 1997; Ellin 1997; Marcuse 2001; Graham and Marvin 2001). Consequently the nature of the public realm has been changed through the privatisation of public space, services and governance. Davis, referring to “Fortress LA”, and the militarisation of public space in Los Angeles, describes a city in which the “defence of luxury has given birth to an arsenal of security systems and an obsession with the policing of social boundaries through architecture” (Davis 1992:154). In this way gated communities contribute to the wide-scale phenomenon referred to as the loss of the public realm in contemporary cities across the world.

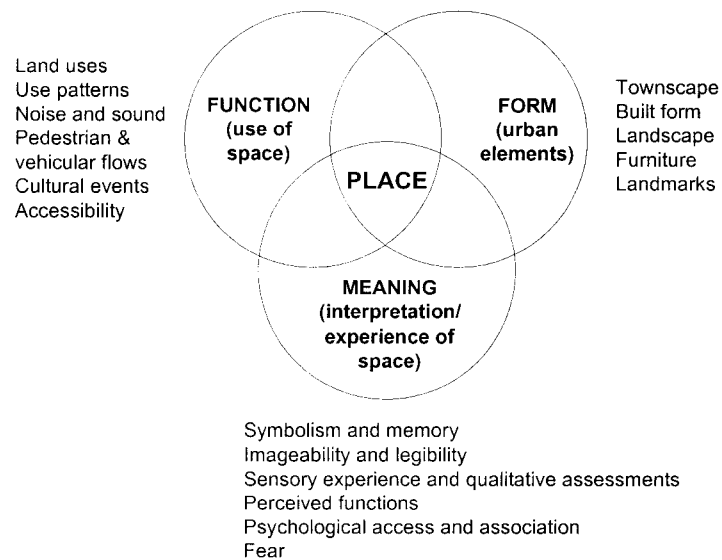


Figure 2: The components of place (adapted from Punter and Montgomery cited in Carmona et al 2003).

The question is whether this poses a problem in cities. In order to address this question one needs to explore the relevance of public space in cities. There are many definitions of public space, highlighting different aspects such as the common ground (Carr et al)¹¹, sharing through contact with strangers and peaceful coexistence (Walzer)¹², or free access (Tibbals)¹³. In essence, public space can be summarised as “... space that allows all the people to have access to it and the activities within it, which is controlled by a public agency, and which is provided and managed by public interest” (Madanipour 1996a:148).

Public space is important because it “expresses and also conditions our public life, civic culture, everyday discourse” (Walzer cited in Madanipour 1996a:146). Tibbals points out that the public realm is “the most important part of our towns and cities. It is where the greatest amount of human contact and interaction takes place” (in Madanipour 1996a:146). It is therefore important that the development of urban

¹¹ For example, one definition considers public space as “the common ground where people carry out the functional and ritual activities that bind a community, whether in the normal routine of daily life or in periodic festivities” (Carr *et al.* 1992, cited in Madanipour 1996a:146).

¹² For Walzer (1986), “Public space is space we share with strangers, people who aren’t our relatives, friends, or work associates. It is space for politics, religion, commerce, sport; space for peaceful coexistence and impersonal encounter” (cited in Madanipour 1996a:146).

¹³ Another definition of the public realm is concerned with access: “all the parts of the urban fabric to which the public have physical and visual access. Thus, it extends from the streets, parks and squares of a town or city into the buildings which enclose and line them” (Tibbals, cited in Madanipour 1996a:146).

public space, as part of a larger public sphere, addresses the tensions inherent in the contemporary transformation of the urban public realm and contributes to the emergence of an urbanism which promotes social integration and tolerance (Madanipour 1999:879).

Neighbourhoods of Peace

Gated communities in South Africa, including enclosed neighbourhoods¹⁴ and security estates¹⁵, have grown significantly in the past five years. They occur in various forms across the country and contribute to a significant transformation of the urban landscape (Landman 2003). Recent studies also confirmed that the desire for safety and security is the main driver behind their growth, although not the only one (Landman 2004). Other influencing factors include a sense of community and identity, a search for a particular lifestyle and a desire for places that would fulfil these needs.

Jenny (all names changed) lives in an enclosed neighbourhood in Pretoria east. The enclosed neighbourhood officially came into existence on 1 September 2001. The case-study area comprises one enclosed neighbourhood with 122 plots that are accessed from inside the enclosed area. Three roads are closed off to restrict access into the neighbourhood. At present, two of the three entrances are closed off by electronic gates, while Elizabeth Grove has a controlled-access point through the use of booms and gates manned by private security officers. There are no pedestrian gates next to these gates, and pedestrians are required to use the main entrance at Elizabeth Grove Avenue. Before the closure, Protea Avenue could be accessed from two sides out of Kings Highway, on both sides of a small triangular park situated at this intersection. As part of the road closure, the left entrance and south boundary of the park have been fenced off. This small park now falls within the closed-off area. This is therefore also a case of privatisation not only of roads but also of other public spaces. Indeed, the concern over congregation in this park seems to have been a key

¹⁴ *Enclosed neighbourhoods* refer to existing neighbourhoods that have been fenced or walled in and where access is controlled or prohibited by means of gates or booms that have been erected across existing public roads.

¹⁵ *Large security estates* in South Africa are mostly located on the urban periphery. They offer an entire lifestyle package, including a secure environment; a range of services (garden services, refuse removal, etc.); and a variety of facilities and amenities such as golf courses, squash courts, cycle routes, hiking routes, equestrian routes and water activities. These are private developments where the entire area is developed by a private developer. These areas/buildings are physically walled or fenced off and usually have a security gate or controlled access point, with or without a security guard.

reason for the action in the first place. The side gates have a sign informing pedestrians to make use of the main entrance further down the road.

When she was asked about the impact on her feelings of safety in the area, Jenny commented on her peace of mind when going on holiday, and on the absence of any suspicious-looking characters in the street. She felt that there was no doubt that the gates and fences had added to the sense of security. She added:

I think especially when one goes away on holiday you always have that anxious feeling. Let's park at the back of the garage, so that no one will see that you are going away. You didn't park outside, because the street was full of people. Now, with the street closures, there is a minimum of people walking around. Those that you watch are your neighbour's people that you almost trust, who work here – so, definitely, it makes a big difference.

All residents interviewed agreed that the neighbourhood closure had reduced crime significantly. They also all felt safer now, to varying degrees. One of the interviewees, a mother of three, was very excited about the impact of the gates on the reduction of crime and said that, as a result, she was no longer concerned if her two smaller daughters (in primary school) wanted to go outside her property to play or ride their bicycles as this was now a peaceful neighbourhood. As long as they remained inside the neighbourhood enclosure, she felt they were safe.

Susan lives in a large luxury estate on the outskirts of Pretoria. Security was used very effectively to draw potential buyers. The estate prides itself on providing residents with a tranquil atmosphere in a secure environment. The following extract from an estate agent's brochure sums it up:

On entering the Woodhill Residential Estate and Country Club the country atmosphere of the estate takes you back in time. Homes built with open gardens extending onto sprawling fairways or along pretty lanes where family life can be enjoyed unhindered by the insecurities of the modern world, and peace of mind is a prerequisite not a luxury (http://www.egchapman.co.za/body_woodhill.html).

This extract promises a secure lifestyle away from all “the insecurities of the modern world’. The estate therefore offers an escape from insecurity, worry and the

city. The location of the estate offers a connection to the tranquillity of the countryside as it was in the past, expressed by the phrase “the estate takes you back in time”.

The estate comprises 709 residential stands, of which 313 have golf-course frontages. The design of the estate features curvilinear roads around the golf course. Plot shapes and sizes vary, depending on their position within the larger development. The design makes provision for a variety of options and tastes. The land use promotes the lifestyle concept. Land uses include residential areas, the golf course, roads, pedestrian walkways and cycle routes, the area for the clubhouse and sports facilities, and an area for the development of the school. Security plays a major role in the design of Woodhill. Features such as guardhouses, entrance gates or booms, fences and walls become characteristic architectural and urban design elements. Security is not an add-on; it is an essential part of the design and layout of this estate. The estate has two very prominent entrance gates displaying the name and reflecting an image of architectural elegance, security and an upmarket lifestyle.

All the residents agreed that they felt much safer living in a security estate. Susan’s husband pointed out that moving into the area had had a huge impact on his and his wife’s sense of security.

A huge impact. I mean, if you look at the number of incidents. Don't get me wrong – there have been one or two incidents but they are very isolated and you certainly feel much safer – sometimes you forget to lock your door – don't worry too much about it.

This couple does not have a fence around their house. The garden is part of the common garden, flowing into the golf course.

It is amazing – there are probably about 17 houses but we have got about 50 kids in this small street. They are all friends. They play. You have to actually grab them back. The girls are in Woodhill College, which is just there. Very, very convenient. It is close, it is safe, there is no traffic. If I've got a problem they walk home. It is very secure.

Therefore, the common spaces (outside space within the estate) become an extension of the home and peace inside, allowing the members of this community to

gather in a peaceful environment. This reflects the feeling of peace within the neighbourhood, created through strict control of access and use of resources inside.

Cities of Hostility

These 'peaceful' neighbourhoods, however, does not guarantee peace for everyone inside or for those outside these areas. The research findings have identified several levels of conflict related to gated communities in South Africa, including conflict between residents inside, as well as conflict between those inside and outside. This includes conflict between gated communities residents and those from surrounding neighbourhoods, as well as conflict with the local council.

According to the existing legislation in the Cities of Johannesburg and Tshwane, at least 80 % of all the residents staying within a neighbourhood have to be in favour of the closure before an application can be submitted and considered. This means that up to 20% can oppose the application. While there is room for formal objections, these often do not carry enough weight and in many cases neighbourhoods are granted approval. This has given rise to conflict between those in favour and those against, creating conflict between neighbours, leading to statements such as:

My direct neighbour is one of those who decided she did not want to be a part ... but now she leaves her gate open. Those who are not in must also have an ID card like the black domestic workers. They don't sign in or anything else. But one feels that they should sign in and out every day if they don't want to be part of the group.

This extract clearly indicates hostility towards the neighbour. This particular resident, however, fails to consider that the person may not agree to the closure in principle and that it may in fact restrict her personal choice to a free and open neighbourhood.

Neighbourhood closures also create conflict between residents inside and outside enclosed neighbourhoods, as became evident from the responses at the Public Hearings in both Tshwane and Johannesburg. Those on the outside often accused residents inside, for example in relation to using crime as a justification:

"I have lived in this house for 22 years and my family and visitors have never experienced a single criminal act or threat thereof to our property or persons. I seriously question the allegations of rampant criminality in the area and also suspect

that criminality is being used as smokescreen for other selfish and self-serving motives (Roodt, City of Tshwane Public Hearings Proceedings 2003).

Others feel that those inside are benefiting at their expense, as Mr Gouws indicated:

The first negative impact is that all pedestrians and vehicular traffic now have to move around the exclusive area, therefore increasing the use of my street. I cannot walk freely with my dog on routes as previously; I must now keep to the routes that are still open. I cannot ride on my bicycle through the area any more, as the closed gates block me. I must now make use of a steep hill next to the area as this is the only remaining open road. I am however still better off than my garden worker. He does not have a bicycle and has to walk around the exclusive area to reach me. Previously he walked through the area with much less effort. (Gouws, Public Hearings Proceedings 2003).

In this way gated communities cause great discomfort and inconvenience for those outside, leading to frustration and resentment. This is also exacerbated in cases where some residents are denied access to public spaces inside enclosed neighbourhoods. As pointed out by the Human Rights Commission, this contributes to a violation of human rights related to the constitutional right to freedom of access to public spaces¹⁶. This highlights the tensions and emerging hostility between residents and groups inside and outside the gated neighbourhoods related to the loss and privatisation of urban space and resources.

Gating also creates conflict between local councils and residents associations. While one neighbourhood closure may not have such a significant impact on the city, problems start to escalate when increasing numbers of neighbourhoods close off roads, especially if they are not suited for road closure or are located on major routes. A traffic engineer responsible for many traffic impact studies for applicants of neighbourhood closures in Johannesburg explained the problem:

Well, if you take an area in isolation ... you could close those in such a way that you don't create significant impacts. But there will be obviously a local impact. Now

¹⁶ The Human Rights Commission in South Africa found that the use of road closures / boom gates has the potential to and does indeed in practice violate a number of rights. They also pointed out that these measures cause social division, dysfunctional cities and lead to further polarisation of the city. The Commission therefore does not support the use of boom gates and gated communities (Human Rights Commission Report on Road Closures / Boom Gates 2005).

you do another one close by. Now those impacts [are] ... like two stones being thrown into a pond – the ripples start to overlap and interfere with one another. Now you add two or three more, and you have got overlapping influences which can create problems ... That is why I actually said I don't want to do any more of these individual ones, because we are building up a problem like a rush. In fact, I was involved in one and said absolutely no problem whatsoever because of the street layout and the access. And then a group literally half a kilometre down the road said, we want to apply for ours now and I actually had to say ... I'm sorry, that one won't work, because of this and because of that. And of course the group said that was not fair. They were allowed to do theirs and we are not allowed to do ours. I said that is part of the problem ... theirs does not create a problem but unfortunately yours does, because you are a slightly different part of the street network. And then I got ... more and more ... I never realised so many of these would happen. So actually I went back to the council and said, you know, this is wrong. This is the wrong approach. What we should be doing at the metropolitan level is actually maybe split the metro up into regions and say, okay, you need to actually look at this region and see if we do this and that, whether that can be managed, and then look at the relationships between regions.

This illustrates the tension and conflicts emerging as a result of applications that are denied and also starts to highlight the cumulative impact of a large number of gated communities, which also creates many problems for urban management and maintenance. Many road closures also cause problems for the functioning of emergency services. Both municipalities, Johannesburg and Tshwane, expressed concern about damage to service vehicles, problems with waste removal and the reading of water and electricity meters. The rapid response times of police and other emergency services, including fire-trucks and ambulances are also compromised by a large number of road closures.

Security estates also pose problems in some cases regarding efficient service delivery and the maintenance of infrastructure, for example in the case of Woodhill Estate. Residents from the surrounding area complained to the council regarding the extensive use of St Bernard Street on the way to the Woodhill entrance. They maintained that this contributed to an increase in crime in this area, as well as to loitering and increased traffic congestion. The Woodhill Residents' Association had prohibited all construction vehicles or workers involved in the development of sites in the estate, as well as domestic workers, from entering at the Garstfontein entrance. This caused extreme frustration, inconvenience, traffic friction and illegal activity

along St Bernard Street, and major resentment on the part of property owners along this street and from the surrounding area. The council informed the Woodhill Residents' Association and board of directors of the complaints, who did not respond. Consequently the Tshwane City Council took the case to the Pretoria High Court. The Court ordered that both entrances serve as access to the estate, and that the public and domestic workers (in taxis and buses) could enter the estate at any time. In addition, the judge ordered that another entrance from De Villebois Mareuil Avenue be opened temporarily for construction vehicles. This incident does, however, indicate that actions taken by the people inside the estate can lead to tension in, and even conflict with, the surrounding areas. They can even involve the local council and the High Court. Therefore, rules imposed within the estate also have an impact on social relations and other people's perceptions.

An Emerging Urban 'Civil' War

From the previous discussion, it has become clear that the establishment and operations of gated communities can lead to a number of tensions and conflicts related to the fortification and privatisation of public spaces and the impact and implications of these actions. Discontent with these developments has therefore created a growing resistance, threatening peace within the city as a whole. It was perceived by many outside gated communities that those inside are getting or enhancing control over local resources inside, including former public spaces such as roads, sidewalks and parks, as well as a range of facilities and amenities. It also included the privatisation of natural resources such as dams and rivers or access to these. Many saw their own role as that of stopping these actions as a civil duty to all the residents in the city and towards greater freedom of movement as advocated by the post apartheid ideology. These protestors questioned the moral implications of physical interventions and maintained that the levels of crime have been exaggerated to justify physical enclosure. This also gave rise to many questions regarding the implementation of democratic governance and fair taxation. Given this, transforming urban space through gated communities was perceived as "social injustice", "land grabbing", "a new form of apartheid", and "images of anarchy" (Proceedings from the Public Hearings in Johannesburg, 2003 and Tshwane, 2004). In this way the response to gated communities in South Africa reflects a divided city and contributed to further

division as different groups lobbied either for or against them, which signals the emergence of an urban civil war.

This division is further enhanced through the various responses of different political parties. In general, a political distinction was found between the responses, with the more right-wing approach praising the gated places, for example the New National Party and Freedom Front, and a more left/liberal approach resisting them, for example the African National Congress, Pan African Congress and Inkatha Freedom Party.

The tensions and conflict between the different opposing groups become so heated that local authorities were forced to intervene. This was the case in both municipalities studied and as a result, they convened the Public Hearings to find suitable solutions. According to Short (1996) planning authorities can respond to conflicting pressures in five ways: resistance to growth, deflection of development, deflection of blame, control and planning gain. In both cases, the municipalities responded through a combination of these approaches. In the initial phases there was a deflection of the developments and blame, as municipalities recognised the need for safety and almost turned a blind eye to these developments. In the cases of security estates, some officials acknowledged the benefits for the council related to private infrastructure development and a large tax base. However, as time passes and the impact and implications become more apparent, the local authorities are taking a stronger stance, revising their policies and enforcing stronger regulations and control. These actions have not managed to address the issues of conflict sufficiently and needs to be complemented and gradually replaced with alternative interventions to enable the creation of places of peace.

Peace of Mind: Reconciliation and Peaceful Resolution

Peace is not an absence of war, it is a virtue, a state of mind, a disposition for benevolence, confidence, justice.

- Baruch Spinoza

The first step in creating places of peace is to acknowledge the need for an alternative state of mind that would enable this. In his Nobel lecture, De Klerk (1993) mentioned that peace is a frame of mind.

It is a frame of mind in which countries, communities, parties and individuals seek to resolve their differences through agreements, through negotiation and compromise, instead of threats, compulsion and violence (De Klerk 1993:2).

He continues to note that in our quest for peace we should constantly ask ourselves what we should do to create conditions in which peace can prosper (De Klerk 1993). Therefore, we should search for ways to transcend 'gated minds' (Brunn 1994) and work towards reconciliation that will enable us to start moving towards the components of peace, namely harmony, order and balance. This would necessarily involve initiatives of peace making, peace keeping and peace building.

With regards to peace making, South Africa already has a great example of a peace process, namely the process initiated and carried out by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). The TRC was set up by the Government of National Unity to help deal with what happened under apartheid. The conflict during this period gave rise to violence and human rights abuses from all sides. No section of society escaped these abuses* (). The TRC's hearings reached beyond the limitations of secular law and explored new potentials for forgiveness and national reconciliation. Nowhere else has secular legislation produced such an unsecular and almost scriptural understanding of what it takes to heal a nation (Storey 1999). The lesson seems to be in the opportunity given to people to voice their concerns and explore alternatives. This also relates to the African idea of peace, that one has to talk about it (Onah anon.). A similar process within cities, although obviously on a much smaller scale within cities, that would involve different communities could start to initiate the process of peace making. This is indeed what organisations such as the PeaceJam Foundation are engaged with.

De Klerk (1993) also pointed out that peace is a framework:

It is a framework consisting of rules, laws, agreements and conventions – a framework providing mechanisms for the peaceful resolution of the inevitable clashes of interest between countries, communities, parties and individuals. It is a framework within which the irresistible and dynamic processes of social, economic and political development can be regulated and accommodated (De Klerk 1993:2).

* <http://www.doj.gov.za/trc/> Retrieved 06.23..2006

The question is however, how this framework is enforced: through draconic measures and exclusionary practices, that may give rise to many side effects and unintended consequences, such as gated communities, or through alternative approaches to crime prevention and security. Through community participation and crime prevention partnerships within cities, neighbourhoods can start to explore alternative mechanisms of peace keeping. Some alternatives have been attempted. Saxonworld, a neighbourhood in northern Johannesburg has opted not to physically enclose its area. Instead, it has established a vibrant community organisation that initiates and manages a range of projects. These include safety patrols, regular neighbourhood clean-ups, sharing information and monthly newsletters to the community. The residents work closely with the local authority and police to ensure that the maximum impact is achieved through their efforts. Other communities have established neighbourhood patrols (foot patrols) and have reported success in terms of crime reduction. Through these efforts committed communities are achieving results, without physical barriers. As discussed earlier, peace making and peace keeping approaches alone is not likely to achieve sustainable peace within cities. These need to combine peace building efforts as well.

Place of Peace: A New Urban Function and Form

Peace building is all about development and in this case would include all the various dimensions of urban development. Infrastructure development is a crucial dimension and often establishes the preconditions for social and economic development. It is therefore an important part of urban reconstruction and one of the crucial components of peace building. This starts to link the concepts of peace and place. As was discussed, spaces can become places in the true sense if the function and forms starts to merge with the meaning. Given this, it is important to also explore the role of 'peace landscapes' in cities. The generic label 'peace landscape' is often randomly applied to very different symbolic and political spaces. For example, during 1998, the term was equally applied to a nature reserve on the Israeli West Bank and to the Lady Diana memorial garden intended for Kensington, London. Gardens, parks and other physical interventions can fulfil a variety of political and symbolic functions, from contemplation, through protest, to recreation (Gough 1999). It therefore depends on the meaning of a place within a specific context, which in terms of this paper is South Africa.

a) Peace gardens

Most peace gardens are tiny in scale and reflective in character, designed for commemoration or remembrance (Gough 1999). However, it can also be implemented to resolve conflict and aid with development and peace building in cities. Examples of such gardens can be found in South Africa. Amalimi Bezekhaya is a NGO working in the Cape Flats in Cape Town, with some of the poorest communities in the city and has won the Peace Gardens Award in 1994. Amalimi means “the people who plant”. One example of a successful project was the Phathisanani (“let’s hold together”) Community Allotment Garden in Phillipi in Nyanga. The garden was started by 12 women who obtained 1 200m² land at the Mzamomhle Primary School. These women, together with two other groups, are now beginning to market their organic vegetables to retailers outside the townships. In 40 hours over 11 days, over R 1 200 worth of produce was sold outside the area. Vegetables that are not sold are consumed or sold to neighbours at home. Any losses are recycled as fertilizers. Organic vegetables are increasingly in demand and have led to the establishment of the first permanent micro-ecological gardening jobs be established (Amalimi Newsletter 2000). Other successful examples have been implemented in Hamanskraal outside Pretoria in the municipality of Tshwane. These gardens assist to create more conducive conditions for peace as it provides spaces of reconciliation and opportunity as previously unemployed people not only find a steady stream of income, but they also assist towards greater food security in the neighbourhood. It also changes hostile environments into soothing environments through vegetation and landscaping.

b) Peace Parks

By comparison to peace gardens, peace parks are often large in scale. Trans-National Peace Parks can span several continents and straddle lengthy national borders (Gough 1999). Africa has a number of these and the most well known in South Africa is located on the borders of South Africa, Swaziland and Mozambique. However, smaller peace parks can also be created inside cities to reconstruct old battlefields or create transition / neutral zones between warring communities, or just to provide a safe place in volatile neighbourhoods.

One such an example is Freedom Park. This park celebrates the road to freedom, from a conflict ridden past to a vision embedded in the African Renaissance.

Comprising a memorial, interactive museum and garden of remembrance, the park strives to accommodate all the country's unfolding experiences and symbols to tell one coherent story of the struggle to freedom in South Africa – the struggle for survival, land, resources and how they shaped the social, economic, political, cultural and historical landscape of the past. Therefore one of the aims is to establish peace through greater understanding of the diversity and differences within the country and city. The garden of remembrance, interspersed with monuments, statues and sculptures – symbolises the final resting place of the fallen heroes of the conflicts which shaped the history of South Africa. In 2003, a series of cleansing, healing and symbolic reparation ceremonies took place in each province across the country, acknowledging the seven main conflicts in South Africa's past – genocide, slavery, the wars of resistance, the Anglo Boer wars, the first and second world wars, and the struggle for liberation from apartheid. Some soil from the site of each ceremony, along with a plant unique to each province, was collected and sent to form part of the garden of remembrance, in honour of those affected by each of the seven conflicts. A role of people who died during the conflicts will also form part of the garden*

However, 'peace parks' can also be less grandiose and located within troubled communities, but through their existence start to symbolise healing from conflict and through development of infrastructure and places for recreation, enrich people's quality of life. The park system along the Jukskei River in Alexandra, northern Johannesburg has been such an example. Through the Alexandra Urban renewal project, the urban spaces along the river has been upgraded and provided with places for recreation of various groups, with new environmentally friendly housing overlooking these spaces, providing safer places in a much traumatised and conflict-ridden community. This has reduced opportunities for crime in these areas through the design of safer spaces and providing recreational opportunities for the youth, as well as gathering spaces for a variety of people, giving vibrancy to a once desolated space.

c) Peace Squares

Peace Squares plays the same role as peace parks within cities, but refer to the design of hard open spaces, instead of predominantly soft open spaces in parks. Significant

* http://www.southafrica.info/ess_info/sa_glance/history/freedompark.htm Retrieved 06.23.2006

squares, sometimes combined with peace memorials, can not only start to act as physical symbols of peace, but also provide important gathering places for people to reaffirm their sense of place and belonging within cities, for example Gandhi and Mary Fitzgerald Squares in Johannesburg.

The Gandhi Square was officially opened in 2003 with the unveiling of a bronze statue of Gandhi in Johannesburg. The tall statue depicts Gandhi as a young lawyer in his gown, with a book under his arm, looking determinately forward. He looks into the centre of the square, and on top of a 5m tall plinth, makes for an imposing figure in space. The plinth has wooden benches positioned around the base, making it people friendly and offering spaces for reflecting or resting. Gandhi practised as an attorney at the Johannesburg Law Courts in what was known as Government Square (now renamed Gandhi Square). The courts were in use until 1911 when the Pritchard Street Supreme Court building was built. They were eventually demolished in 1948 and made way for the city's main bus terminus, which is still functional. Gandhi left the country for India in 1914, after having established his policy of "Satyagraha" or peaceful resistance*. Today the square do not only serve as a vibrant meeting of place a very diverse population, but also as a place of remembrance and reconciliation between different groups within this population.

The Mary Fitzgerald Square was launched by President Thabo Mbeki in 2000. Originally known as Aaron's Ground and later renamed Mary Fitzgerald Square, this former wagon site was used for many striker's meetings at the turn of the century. The Square lies in the heart of Newton, which has also been upgraded significantly in the past few years. The Square was renamed in 1939, in honour of the first woman trade unions who played a key role in the 1910 miners strike. The new square has a capacity for 50 000 people and provides an outdoor space for a wide array of activities, including film festivals, concerts, markets, carnivals and exhibitions. Two sky disks depict the stellar constellation as at the birth of Mary Fitzgerald, and secondly depict the constellation as at the first democratic election of 27 April 1994. There is a third, which can be found at the entrance to the Museum Africa depicting the constellation as at the official launch of the square on 16 December 2001 – Reconciliation Day. The disks use unique fibre optic lights that glow in the dark. The lighting in the square, designed by the French engineer Partrick Rimoux, provides

* http://www.southafrica.info/ess_info/sa_glance/history/gandhistatue.htm Retrieved 06.23.2006

essential street lighting, whilst giving the area a distinct ambience and greater feeling of safety and coherence. The square is also surrounded by a large number of smaller statues, which were manufactured by Newtown artists from disused railway sleepers, depicting the different faces from the African continent. In this way the square becomes a symbol of peace and reconciliation after conflict and a place where the people can start to build greater peace for today and tomorrow in an open and integrated way.

Prospects for Peace in Future Cities: A Nightmare or a Dream

Gallopin et. al. (1997) investigated the current situation and developed six possible scenarios that can influence the future sustainability of cities. The first group is *Conventional Worlds*, which two variants, *Reference* and *Policy Reform*, which is based on no or minimal changes, including typical technological change or in other words 'business as usual'. The second class is *Barbarisation*, which is based on the grim possibility that the social, economic and moral underpinnings of civilization deteriorate, as emerging problems overwhelm the coping capacity of both markets and policy reforms. The result is either a Fortress World or complete Breakdown. The *Fortress World* variant features an authoritarian response to the threat of societal problems and breakdown. Ensnared in protective enclaves, elites safeguard their privilege by controlling an impoverished majority through force and managing critical resources, while outside the fortress there is repression, environmental destruction, and misery. This will, however, eventually lead to a breakdown. The *Breakdown* variant leads to a complete collapse of the system, influencing everyone and everything. It is characterised by unbridled conflict, institutional disintegration and economic collapse (Gallopin et al 1997:vii). Fortunately the situation is not completely lost. The *Great Transitions* explore visionary solutions to the sustainability challenge, including innovative socio-economic arrangements and fundamental changes in values. In this event, the transition will be to a society that preserves natural systems, provides high levels of welfare through material sufficiency and equitable distribution, and enjoys a strong sense of social solidarity.

The signs of moving to a Fortress World and its concomitant nightmares are very eminent. According to Gallopin et al (1997) we are now at a branching point. Unless there is significant intervention towards eco-communalism, with an increased focus on 'open' sustainable neighbourhoods and cities and eventually to a new

sustainability paradigm, the world's cities may in fact be transformed into a Fortress Cities. Fortunately, South Africa is also a place of great forgiveness and hope. It is the only country where those in power went to the ballot box and, with no way of predicting the consequences, voted to give up their power. The oppressed then formed a government of national unity with their previous oppressor – choosing reconciliation over retribution. South Africa also produced four Nobel Peace Laureates and gave the World the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (Du Plessis 2002). Therefore, despite the barriers that are still remaining, the country tries to create a society in which people will start building bridges towards greater peace. Integrated urban development and the creation of places of peace can go along way to break the barriers and facilitate greater peace building.

Conclusion: Building Bridges Rather than Barriers

Peace cannot be kept by force; it can only be achieved by understanding.

- Albert Einstein

In the light of this, there is a need to understand what is necessary to achieve greater peace in cities. This paper has shown that in order to work towards sustainable peace within cities and communities it is necessary to follow a socio-spatial approach and consider both the components of place and peace in the process. Only focussing on peace, may create the pre-conditions for peace, but limited spaces to express or experience this in cities. Focussing only on place may lead to the creation of exclusionary spaces for only a selective few without understanding the negative implications this has for peace between communities and the city as a whole, not only in terms of urban functioning, but also in terms of the consolidation of democracy.

Democracy is not only dependent on political democracy. Although the first step towards a more balanced democracy is clearly political democracy, it can only be a first step. Thus democracy cannot only be political, but should also be institutional, socio-economic and spatial. Given this, there is a need for democracy on a spatial level as well. This can be interpreted in two ways:

- *Spatial democracy*

Spatial democracy refers to the democratic distribution of facilities and services, such as infrastructure, adequate housing, sanitation and water to all urban areas. This is

very closely related to socio-economic transformation. Spatial democracy also requires a paradigm shift institutionally in the form of constructive institutional reforms and strategies to guide urban development practices in such a way that these do not raise the needs of one group above those of another. Such an approach also necessitates the careful evaluation of all types of urban development according to the principles set out in the main urban development policies, such as the White Paper on Spatial Planning and Land Use Management (2001), promoting aspects of spatial democracy.

▪ *Democratic space*

Democratic space refers to open, secure and well-developed public urban spaces for all urban residents where people should be able to mix with various groups and experience the benefits of urban environments. Again, the local authority has a major role to play in promoting and supporting the development of democratic urban spaces throughout the city. It is also needful to reconsider the contribution of security agents and private management bodies to democracy within these spaces, as well as the role of public private partnerships in promoting democratic space.

In many aspects, South Africa has reached a respectable level of political democracy, where all people can vote and where there is a focus on addressing discrimination and promoting human rights. However, the danger is that increased crime, together with physical responses to crime, may in fact start to undermine the political achievements of the past seven years and undermine existing policies pointing towards spatial democracy and the development of democratic spaces. Are gated communities likely to produce democratic spaces and will they contribute to spatial democracy? Signs from initial research and comparisons with similar countries raise serious concerns, pointing to a preliminary conclusion that many types of gated communities (at least in their present form) in South Africa are building barriers to democracy on many levels, especially on a city-wide scale.

One therefore has to understand the close relationships between peace and place to start formulating programmes and projects that may assist towards greater peace in future cities. This begs us to take consider four actions:

1. Tolerance and sharing

This calls for a process towards healing the wounds of the past and creating a common ground for negotiation and reconciliation, starting to build bridges between warring communities and initiate dialogue beyond the barriers. Such a process would aim to establish greater harmony between communities, providing the foundation for future peace efforts through peace making.

2. Finding alternatives

Given the realities of high crime levels and the fear of crime, it would also necessitate finding and implementing alternative methods of crime prevention in the built environment, beyond the walls and the gates. These could include safety patrols, regular neighbourhood clean-ups, sharing information, domestic watch-groups and monthly newsletters to the community. Residents should work closely with the local authority and police to ensure that the maximum impact is achieved through their efforts. Through law enforcement and appropriate intervention in the built environment, peace keeping efforts can contribute to ensure greater order and justice, including the provision for human rights for all citizens.

3. Greater flexibility

This refers to flexibility in the design and use of urban spaces in cities. In this regard city planners, urban designers and architects also have a significant role to play towards more peaceful cities. As shown, there is an intricate relationship between the nature and sense of place in cities and the possibility to enhance peace. Designers need to be aware of this, focussing on the creation of vibrant and accessible public spaces for all residents, including peace gardens, parks and squares. In this way, peace building could be combined with peace making and peace keeping through a focus on sustainable urban development that would create opportunities for everyone in the city and start preventing opportunities for crime and conflict at the same time.

4. Hope for the future

However, the most important aspect is to never lose hope in times of great conflict and violence. As Mandela noted, we are immensely powerful and these strengths should be used to start creating a more peaceful future for all. In this way we could also dream of an Africa and world that is in peace with itself.

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