

人行道或大型商场

Sidewalk Versus Mall

——受到威胁的公共空间和社区

Public Space and Community Under Threat

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作为一个来自荷兰，常常到访中国，近来又居住在中国的城市规划师，就公共空间的使用以及私人 and 公共空间的界定方面，我发现我们两国有许多有趣的差异与相似之处。最关键的相同点是那些不断增长的围栏，大型商场和高层建筑，它们对两国的街边生活构成了威胁。

在中国，公共空间在形式和使用上的巨大快速变化是显而易见的。10年前在马路上行走和骑车是很安全的。现在，即使在人行道上行走也是危险的，因为越来越多的人会在人行道上的行人中间，穿梭着他们的自行车或机动脚踏车。只有一些勇敢的骑手敢冒生命危险在大马路上骑车。这似乎也是进步的代价。

荷兰的街道生活

与大多数中国城市相比，荷兰城市的都市结构规模要小得多。人们可以步行或骑车到任何地方。然而，大多数荷兰的街道是空空的，只有单一的功能，它们缺乏在中国城市才能见到的活力。荷兰的都市规划以其紧凑和正式的构造著名。这个国家不大的尺度和居住者的商人特性，衍生出其每一块可用之地都能得到有效使用的宽敞布局。大多数房屋整齐地排列成一条线，每座房屋后带一个花园，有时在前门的一边有一个更小的花园，用于摆放鲜花和其它装饰物。较

小的人行道连接着汽车可泊在街边的荷兰的排房。由于荷兰运行的是严格的规划和功能分离，街道的设计是根据汽车通行度或者停车位尺寸精确计算的，结果多数街道看起来有些乏味。作为一个功能场所，街道应被设计为一个人们能在那儿闲步、玩耍和与人会面的地方。只有在古老的，具有历史遗迹的中心，人们才能看到带有阶地变化、充满活力的场所，在那儿行人可以休息、吃、喝，享受快乐时光。

几十年来，荷兰人变得非常个体。与中国相反，许多荷兰居民过着离群索居的生活。他们认为这给了他们自由，不必非要与他人接触，这常常显得有些浅薄。荷兰人也很好迁移，尽管眼下的栖居地很重要，这仍使他们在减少与自己的城市或自己邻居的交往。许多居民想操控他们自己的街区，因为他们害怕较低素质的街坊会降低他们住房的品质。结果荷兰的街区常常看上去单一，有时甚至有点乏味。

中国的街道生活

中国城市最有吸引力的一个方面是其传统的，非正式的街道生活。我非常喜欢在街边，把人行道用作小规模商业而延伸出的那些小的商店和餐馆，它们充满了令人兴奋的活力。人行道的功能变成了他们的厨房、他们的车间或他们的展厅！

信步在中国城市古老的街道上，徜徉在所有那些开敞的，车库式样的小商区中，人们看到了城市的魅力和斑斓。尤其是与出售商品的人直接，甚至于身体近距离的碰撞，给人一种联系和社团的感受。

但是，自从中国的住房变得越来越大，小的商区就被大型的购物中心所取代，需要将人行道当作日常生活延伸的功用就蒸发掉了。正如在荷兰一样，越来越多的房屋装满了奢侈品，再也没有必要外出了。相反，人们在网上或商场中见面。

曾经满是骑车人和行人的大街，现在被汽车主宰。这是对城市生活的巨大威胁，因为城市曾经是贸易和与人相见的场所。就这一点来说，人行道触及到了城市的核心。

而在中国，大都市的街道似乎变成了交通的空间而不是购物或会友的地方。对老外来说，看见混乱的、自我调节的交通在大街上如何不停地穿梭是惊奇的。但是道路边越来越多的隔离栏阻止了人们跨越街道。汽车有不受限制的自由。行人和骑车人似乎被忽视了。

与此同时，大多数的中国城市是稠密的、齿状排列的建造，似乎缺乏能让人坐下来小憩一下的广场和公园。既然建筑的蓬勃增长正在放缓，人

们应该考虑对日常生活的品质进行投资,建造更加悦目的公共空间。景观建筑师在规划的过程中变得越来越重要。

大型商场如同一种威胁

荷兰政府想通过权力下放和私有化来节省资金。第一个有害的变化是由于没有政府的足够关注所带来的负面影响:越来越多的公共空间被私有化,许多半公共空间被限制了穿越,就如同从前在数个美国城市所发生的那样,完全没有了人行道。最糟糕的案例场景是所剩下的唯一的“公共”空间只能是在大型商场里,而且前往许多商场的通道还只面向富人社区。这意味着“开敞城市”的终结。

我喜欢上海,上海架高了能使城市持续发展的马路。这种方式能减少片区。尽管北京也一样,但是,地面日益增长的、拥挤的快速路已把都市的布局分成为若干块状的小岛。由于中国城市不断增长的土地价格,许多古老的传统结构被抹掉了,取而代之的是“干净、安全”的大型商场、高层公寓、办公室或饭店。大部分高耸的建筑都拒绝与城市的内涵发生任何关系,其结果是缺少愉悦的公共都市空间。高耸物的确需要有能让城市介入的、可以穿行的地面层。

高层建筑和大型商场是扼杀城市的耗能建筑。在现代社会,需要更加小巧的结构。不然人们会有与外面的街区完全隔绝的危险,正如从前在许多美国和欧洲城市所经历的那样,人行道的功能再也不是日常生活的延伸了。在欧洲和美国,大多数街道的功能仅是纯粹的交通空间:巨大的车流,从你舒适的家,开着私家车到一个雷同的大型商场地下一个舒适且雷同的车库里,逛一逛,买上你的东西,享受某些娱乐,又快速地开车回家,坐在你的电脑后面。我们用这种方式创造着死气沉沉的城市。大型商场同样形成了等级区分和隔离的危险。

私用街道如同一种威胁

这是一个令人恐惧的图像:富人正被拉向奢侈

(封闭)的社区或度假胜地,而其他人在不得不在犯罪率高、污染和不安全的城市求生存。比利时哲学家利芬·德·考特在他的书《囊文明》中,描述了欧洲人和美国人在后工业的网状社会中,如何分离瓦解,从“无序、不安全和无政府的海洋变成那些有序、安全和有人管理的岛屿”。那些岛屿,不管是商场、高层住宅还是豪华的度假胜地,都是私人的封闭围合。同样,大型商场、工业园区,甚至大自然也落入到私有社团的手中。那些私有社团通常不关心公众的趣味,他们只在乎他们自己的经济利益。

根据美国经济学家杰瑞米·里夫金的意思,我们生活在“出入的时代”:出入并能成为一个社区的一员是基础。这甚至比个人财富更重要。好像有价值的惟一财产是家:“一个可以藏匿的茧”。在战后,美国的建筑进入鼎盛,大约50年前,诞生了一种建造房屋的趋势,即所谓“大众利益的开发”。由于共有的奢华,这在以前是不可企及的,以及可以作为退休储备而进行的经济投资,那些拥有小别墅和公寓楼的度假胜地在中产阶级中迅速普及。另一个居住在这类综合体中的重要动机是,认为这里也许会更安全一些。生活在看似社区一样的大型居住综合区里,人们可以加入到某个特殊的群体,或拥有特殊的生活方式,享有不同的体验或社会地位。

自那以后,相当多的美国人自愿地生活在围栏之后。户外空间,如花园、庭院、游泳池或高尔夫练习场,是居民集体拥有和集体管理的。这些小区是自给自足的;它的内部是一个包括超市、健身俱乐部和餐馆的“完整的世界”。在这种情况下,这些空间是可以出入的,但是,那是有限的。

公共的功能已被私有化,在美国,为公众的服务甚至常常能得到税的豁免。由于这种疯狂的私有化,现在的美国,私人保安一定比警察多。

美国和欧洲的例子说明了不同的私有化管理结构。在较早的时候,市政府仍是基础设施和绿地的部分业主。最近,私营项目被业主协会统筹起来,居民共同拥有户外的空间。

这种集体的管理好像与中国的单位制很相似,

但是由于动机不同而大相径庭。往往巨大而奢侈的居住综合体是开发者的创意,而并非是新居民的有意选择。居民是因为一些实际的原因,比如“安全”、免开车的生活或孩子有安全的玩耍场地而被吸引。

豪华的度假胜地大多出现在贫富之间差异巨大的国家里。他们包含着具有共同的身份认证,不同的职责和在自己手中进行管理的,社会经济趋同的居民群。内在的动机还源于对浪漫的渴求、身份认证和社会地位的需要,或对外部世界夸张的惧怕。沿马路的广告牌上并列着这样的口号,“一个结交脸庞光鲜、亮丽、幸福的好友的美好场所”。

大门后对天堂般生活的高期望常常难以兑现。因为那些以实用或经济目的为基础建造的社区对现实的社区形成了一个虚弱的基础。豪华的度假胜地以各式各样的限制和局限把不需要的元素隔绝,从而摒弃了真实的世界。但是,摒弃那些元素,避免与不同的人打交道,日常生活会变得非常空虚和孤独。而此时此刻这一过程正在中国发生。

与中国令人惊奇的经济增长并行的是私人开发商正在建造同样多的豪华小区。在中国的马路上,大型广告牌许诺着在安全的社区中过奢侈、舒适的生活。这种对豪华居住区的需求,在过去的几年里,增长迅猛。

由于更富有的人迁移到那些私有住宅区,贫富间的差距增大,并令人痛心地显现。在美国的城市中——近来也在欧洲的城市里——许多公共设施每况愈下,这带来了不断增长的社会隔阂。尤其是市中心和老的社区承受着那些新的豪华围合,不管是商场还是居住综合区,所带来的不便引起了巨大的社会压力,也表现出西方社会的缺陷:公共空间的匮乏是私有化和萎缩政府间的空间转换。

中国不应该犯同样的错误,他们应该尊重自己宝贵的、传统的都市格局。在许多中国城市,看见源于单位制的都市布局非常有趣。一些社区形成了“都市里的村庄”,强化了和谐与共有的户外空间的功用。

住宅区的围合、巨大超市和购物中心的增长,均对传统街区生活的魅力构成了威胁。中国人在人行道上吃饭、刷牙或打台球的那些吸引人的场景正在越来越多地消失殆尽。

那些古老结构的消失,也许会为新生物创造出一些空间,但是它丢掉了街道上的亲切感,对作为整体的城市来说是一个无法弥补的损失。因此,对过去有价值的东西进行崭新的,更加明智的重新布局是可取的。正因为如此,像上海田子坊这样的聪明创意应该得到珍惜。

(中央美术学院,董冀平 译)



As a frequent visitor and current inhabitant of China, originated from the Netherlands, I found many interesting differences and similarities between both countries regarding the use of public spaces and regarding the borders between private and public. The most critical analogy is the rise of enclaves, malls and towers that threaten street-life in both countries.

The tremendous fast change of China is clearly visible in the forms and uses of public space. Ten years ago it was quite safe to walk or cycle on the middle of the road. Nowadays it is even dangerous to walk on the sidewalks since more and more people ride their bicycle or moped between the pedestrians on the sidewalk. Only some brave cyclists dare to ride on the main roads, risking their lives. This seems to be the price for progress.

Street-life in the Netherlands

Compared with most Chinese cities, the urban fabrics of Dutch cities have a much smaller scale. By walking or cycling one can go everywhere. Nevertheless most Dutch streets are empty and mono-functional, they miss the liveliness as seen in Chinese cities. Urban planning in The Netherlands is famous for its tight and formal organization. The small size of this country and the mercantilism of its inhabitants resulted in a spatial planning that effectively uses every bit of available ground. Most houses are linked to another in rows with a small garden at the backside, and sometimes an even smaller garden besides the front door, used to expose flowers and other decorative elements. Small sidewalks connect the Dutch row houses with the cars parked beside the street. As a result of the Dutch practice of strict planning and the separation of functions most streets look rather dull and seem to be reduced to traffic spaces or parking. Streets should be designed as a functional place where you could walk around, play and meet others. Only in the old historical centers one can find liveliness with terraces where pedestrians can rest, drink, eat and enjoy.

Since several decades Dutch people became

very individualistic. Opposite to China many Dutch residents live a lonely live. However, they think this gives freedom. Contact with others is non-committal and often a little bit superficial. Dutch people are also very mobile. So the involvement of people with their own city or with their neighbors is lessening. Though the immediate residential area remains very important; many residents want to control their own neighborhood, cause they are afraid that poorer neighbors might lower the value of their houses. As a result Dutch neighborhoods often look monotonous and sometimes even a little bit dull.

Street-life in China

One of the most attractive aspects of Chinese cities is their traditional informal street-life. I'm very much in love with the exciting liveliness of all those small shops and restaurants beside the streets that use the sidewalk as an extension of their small-scale business. Sidewalks function as their kitchen, their workshop or their showcase! Walking the old streets of Chinese cities and passing by all those open garage-style small-businesses one meets the charms and colors of the city. Especially the direct and often very physical contact with people selling their stuffs gives a sense of connection and community.

But since houses in China also become bigger and bigger, and small-businesses are replaced by huge shopping malls, the need to use the sidewalk as an extension of daily life evaporates. As in the Netherlands more and more houses are filled with luxury, so there is almost no need to go out anymore. Instead people meet each other online or in the mall.

Were cyclists and pedestrians use to fill the streets, nowadays cars dominate. This is a big threat for city life, since cities use to be the place for trading and meeting other people. In this sense the sidewalk touches the essence of a city.

Also in Chinese metropolises streets seem to become a space for traffic instead of a place

for trading goods or meeting other people. For foreigners it is amazing to see how the chaotic self-regulating traffic continuously floats through the streets. But more and more fences are placed besides roads to prevent people to cross the streets. Cars get unlimited freedom. Pedestrians and cyclists seem to be on the losing hand.

Simultaneous, most Chinese cities are intensely dense build, but seem to lack enough squares and parks to sit down for a rest. Since the building boom is slowing down one should consider investing in the quality of daily life and build more pleasant public spaces. Landscape architecture should become more important in the planning process.

Mall as a threat

The Dutch government wants to save money by decentralizing and privatizing its power. The first harmful changes are visible as a negative side effect of inadequate governmental care: more and more public spaces are privatized and many semi-public spaces appear with limited access. Another negative side effect of the decentralization is that the overall view and coexistence between different projects is lacking more and more. The concern is that the famous rational planned Dutch cities become a collection of fragmented islands with limited access, as happened before in several American cities where sidewalks completely disappeared. The worst-case scenario is that the only 'public' space left can be found in the mall, although access to many malls is limited to the wealthy classes. That means an end of the 'open city'.

What I like in Shanghai are the elevated highways that make the city more continuously. This way fragmentation can be reduced. Although, just like Beijing, also an increasing amount of crowded expressways on ground-level split the urban composition into fragmented islands.

Due to the growing land prices in Chinese cities, many old traditional structures are scrapped in favor of 'clean and safe' shopping malls and



towers filled with apartments, offices or hotels. High-rise towers mostly deny any relationship with the urban context, resulting in less pleasant public urban spaces. High-rises do need accessible ground floors to let the city come in.

Towers and malls are energy consuming buildings that kill the city. In a modern society smarter structures are needed. Otherwise man risks that street-life outside is banished completely, as happened before in many American and European cities, where sidewalks function no longer as extensions for daily life. Most streets in Europe and America function purely as traffic space: massive driving in private owned cars from your comfortable home towards an comfortable but anonymous parking under an anonymous mall, getting around to get your stuffs, enjoy some entertainment and driving fast back home to sit behind your computer. This way we create dead cities. Malls also form a risk for class separation or segregation.

Private streets as a threat

It is a terrifying image: the rich are pulling back in luxury (gated) communities or resorts, and the others have to survive in criminal, polluted and unsafe cities. The Flemish philosopher Lieven De Cauter describes in his book 'The Capsular Civilization' how the European and American post-industrial network society disintegrates into "islands of order, security and control in a sea of disorder, insecurity and anarchy". Those islands, whether it be a mall, a tower or a luxury resort are private enclaves. Also shopping malls, industrial parks and even nature falls in the hands of private parties. Those private parties often don't care about public interest; they only care about their own economic benefits.

According to the American economist Jeremy Rifkin we live in the 'Age of Access': it is essential to have access and be a part of a network. This is even more important than personal possession. The only property that seems to be valuable is home: 'a cocoon to hide'.

During the postwar building boom in the United States, about five decades ago, a trend was born to build houses within so-called 'common interest developments'. Those resorts with villas or apartment buildings quickly became popular by the middle class, because the shared luxury, which was previously unavailable, and the possibility of a financial investment as a retirement provision. Another important motive to live in this kind of complexes is the idea that it might be safer. By living in a residential complex that looks like a community, one can join a particular group or lifestyle and share experiences or status.

Since then a significant proportion of Americans live voluntarily behind a fence. Outdoor spaces,

for example a garden, a courtyard, a swimming pool or a golf course, are in collective ownership by the residents and collectively managed. These resort are self-sufficient; a 'complete world' is inside, including a supermarket, health-club and restaurants. In cases those spaces are still accessible, but limited.

Public functions have been privatized and in the United States there often even are tax exemptions for public services. Nowadays there sure are more private security guards than police officers in America, because of this insane privatization.

Examples in America or Europe show various private management structures. In the early cases the municipality is still partly owner of the infrastructure and green. More recently private-managed projects are organized by a homeowners association; residents that collectively own the outdoor spaces.

This collective management seems to be analogous to the Chinese Danwei-system, but is very different since the motives differ. In luxury residential complexes it is a developer's choice rather than a deliberate choice of new residents. Residents are attracted with practical reasons, for example the 'safety', the car-free living or safe playing grounds for children.

Luxury resorts are mostly found in countries with huge gaps between poor and rich. They contain socio-economically homogeneous groups of residents with a collective identity, different obligations and with management in their own hands. Underlying motives usually arise from a need for romance, a need for identity and prestige or exaggerated fear of the outside world. Billboards along highways parade with slogans like 'A great place to make new friends with a polished shining happy faces.

Often the high expectations of the heavenly life behind the gates are not realized. Cause those communities are based on practical or financial motives, which form a weak base for real community. Luxury resorts deny the real world outside with all kind of restriction and limitations to exclude unwanted elements. But by excluding these elements and avoiding contacts with different people, daily life will become very empty and lonely. And this same process is happening in China right now.

Parallel with the astonishing economic growth in China also many luxury resorts are being built by private developers. Along Chinese highways big billboards promise luxury and comfortable living in safe communities. This demand for residential enclaves increased rapidly last few years.



Because of the migration from the more wealthy people into those privatized settlements the gap between poor and rich increases and becomes painfully visible. In American cities – and more recently also in European cities – many public facilities are downgraded. This resulted in an increasing social segregation. Especially downtowns and older neighborhoods suffer from those new luxury enclaves, be it a mall or a residential complex. This causes big social pressures and shows a deficiency of western society: the downfall of public space is the spatial translation of privatization and a withdrawing government.

China shouldn't make the same mistake and esteem their valuable traditional urban patterns. It is very interesting to see the urban structure in many Chinese cities, which originates from the Danwei system. Small communities form 'villages in the city', and strengthen the functioning of a pleasant communal outdoor space.

The rise of residential enclaves, huge supermarkets and shopping malls threaten these charms of traditional street-life. Attractive scenes of Chinese people on the sidewalk eating, brushing their teeth or billiard playing are disappearing more and more.

A disappearance of those old structures might create some space for renewal but it is a loss of intimacy in the street and a big unrecoverable loss for the city as a whole. So a new and wiser implementation of old values could be useful. For this reason smart initiatives like Tianzifang in Shanghai should be cherished. **uf**