

AESTHETIC COMMUNICATION DISCOURSE OF URBAN DESIGN FOR FOURTH ORDER DESIGN IN SUSTAINABLE URBAN REGENERATION

*Tatjana Mrđenović*¹, University of Belgrade, Faculty of Architecture, Belgrade, Serbia

The research examines several aspects of urban design in order to build on its integrative potential for sustainable urban regeneration. It will discuss the concept and definition of urban design to support the claim that process-oriented urban design can foster creative integration, despite opposing urban development paradigms for fourth-order design. Sustainable urban regeneration will be studied via the perspective of aesthetics in communication as the primary integrative instrument of fourth-order design. The paper presents a theoretical and conceptual overview of numerous integrating elements of urban design. Thus, the process of philosophical and theoretical comparisons is utilized within the disciplines of sustainability, communication, and aesthetics.

Key words: urban design, urban regeneration, sustainability, communicology, aesthetics.

INTRODUCTION

The complexity of globalisation has introduced the story of identity as a carrier of socio-economic development, and therefore the focus is changing with regard to the relationship between urban planning and design in the context of urban regeneration. In a global society, the power of local identity has become very strong in the race for the global market. Castells (2000) defines several areas of urban goals that support the preservation and development of local identity:

- realization of urban demands for changed conditions and ways of life;
- affirmation of local cultural identity; and
- political autonomy of the local and citizen participation.

“People must organise around urban movements (which are not extremely revolutionary) through which they will discover and define common interests in places of community and new meaning” (Castells, 2004, p. 64). According to Madanipour (1996), urban design, as a carrier of multidimensional place quality factors, is the backbone in the regeneration and creation of integral space. The artistic dimension of urban design allows re-examination

of its role as the dominant discipline in the process of urban regeneration. Understood as a communicative and collaborative process, it can create a framework for the regeneration and integration of sustainability dimensions.

Numerous theoretical and conceptual perspectives of urban design are integrated throughout the text. Thus, sectors as diverse as sustainability, communication, and aesthetics employ the process of philosophical and theoretical comparisons. Discussion will lead to an examination of urban design’s integrative potential for fostering sustainable community-led urban regeneration. The special scientific contribution of the paper is made in the communicative aspects of urban design, where the aesthetic of communication is researched as an integrative instrument for sustainable places. It is discussed within Habermass’ (1984) theory of communicative action in order to enable Dovey’s (1999) places of power-to rather than power-over. Thus, they support a sustainable harmonisation process based on equity and the right to participation.

The second chapter discusses the subject of urban regeneration and its connection with the process of urban design. In this section, urban regeneration is considered as a process that affirms existing and creates new ambient values through the formation of multidimensional, integral space

¹ Bulevar kralja Aleksandra 73/2, 11000 Belgrade, Serbia
tmdjenovic@arh.bg.ac.rs, mrdenovictatjana@gmail.com

and the creation of a glocal place.² The dominant aspects of the urban design process will be related to different urban paradigms.

The third chapter discusses the communicative and aesthetic aspects of urban design as a factor in the integration of different interests, values, attitudes, and commitments in Buchanan's fourth order of design (Buchanan, 1992), towards designing an integral place of sustainable regeneration. This discussion mostly looks at the integrative dimension of urban design in the fields of creativity, aesthetics, and communication.

SUSTAINABLE URBAN REGENERATION AND URBAN DESIGN PROCESS

This section considers urban regeneration as a process of affirming existing and creating new ambient values through the formation of multidimensional, integral space and the creation of a glocal place. The subject of urban regeneration is the integral affirmation and creation of environmental values. The process of integral formation of ambient values should establish a polygon for the affirmation of existing and the creation of new urban architectural patterns and values into one coherent whole. The main position in the

research is that ambient values are related to the qualitative characteristics of places that, in an integrated approach, establish a holistic relationship with different spatial concepts of urban paradigms: (1) sustainable-global, local, glocal space; (2) collaborative-shared, common space, multidimensional, institutional, social; (3) environmental blue/green spaces, open spaces, protected spaces; (4) social-social space, perceptual space, personal space; (5) physical three-dimensional space; (6) economic space (Reeves, 2005).

Table 1 shows the relationship between urban paradigms, the concept of space and place in which it is theoretically and practically applied, the subject of urban regeneration in relation to the understanding of well-being, and the type of urban regeneration that emerges from the previous factors. The content of the table indicates that the domain of urban regeneration has expanded over time from the economic and physical understanding of improvement, through social, to an integral understanding. An integral or sustainable approach to urban regeneration encompasses spatial and theoretical conceptions of previous paradigms. Also, the table is a starting point for discussing the integrative

Table 1. The subject of urban regeneration in relation to the urban paradigm and concept of space
(Source: Mrđenović, 2011; 2013)

Paradigm	Concept of space	Subject of urban regeneration	Type of created place
Economic	Economic space	Economic variables of space	Large scale reconstructed places
Social	Social space	Social and environmental healing	Places for healing and preventing diseases (open public spaces)
Physical	Physical (Euclid/s) space	Healing through physical artefacts	Beautiful, iconic places
Public administration	Bureaucratic space or planning agencies	Coordination of different sectors and levels of government in solving urban problems and 'healing'	Technicist, functionalist
Environmental	Biospaces, natural spaces	Betterment through greening	Blue-green places, as places that are led by natural resources of water and greenery
Collaborative	Shared places	Healing through common sense	Integration of different relativized values and types of rationality
Sustainable	Integrated space	Unification of previous conceptions of space as a principle of betterment	Integration of different paradigms, development sectors, levels of government, development agencies and actors, understanding of improvement, objectification and argumentation of different values.
Transitional	Transitional glocal space	Developmental holism	Developmental attachment, transitional glocal place

² There is a significant distinction between the two forms of design for sustainability and their relation to creating place: transitional and integrative. While transitional design, according to Kossoff, should lead to community in line with the Max-Next concept within a transitional initiative (Kossoff, 2015; Kossoff et al., 2015; Max-Neef, 2010), that kind of society can be isolated in global society. Thus, they are both protected from its dark sides and cut off from the benefits globalisation brings to localities. Despite the fact that Kossoff (2019) speaks of cosmopolitan globalism, the author advocates for the notion of glocalism, which symbolises Castells' project identity (Castells, 2004). Creating a glocal place requires the use of mimicry of the past over the present towards a future consensual identity of place. Therefore, a glocal place integrates local identities into the framework of global standards of the place towards a higher harmonisation process.

dimension of urban design in the process of sustainable urban regeneration.

The concept of urban design, i.e., its definition, is very vague, so the research will focus on assessment-oriented urban design, as defined by Madanipour (1996). According to Madanipour (1996), definitions of urban design can be classified into several arenas that determine aspects of its perception: (1) the spatial dimension to which it refers; (2) visual or volumetric accentuation of urban design; (3) physical or social aspects; (4) the relationship between the process and the product of urban design; (5) the relationship between different professionals and participants in the process; (6) the public or private domain of urban design; and (7) the objective-rational or subjective-expressive process. According to this author, the multidimensional nature of the definition of urban design should be distinguished from the complexity of its subject matter, i.e., the shaping of urban space.

Dominant aspects of the urban design process can be related to different urban paradigms. Consequently, the approach and understanding of urban design has the same relation to paradigmatic positions as urban regeneration. This means that urban design can be related to the spatial concept of the dominant urban paradigm. Then the spatial concept becomes the common denominator of urban regeneration and urban design. Therefore, urban design is inseparable from socio-spatial relations and favoured paradigmatic positions. "Current theoretical thought in the field of architectural and urban design [...] unites the physical and social dimension of space" (Bazik, 1996, p. 84). Urban design, therefore, can be seen as a process of shaping socio-spatial and visual relationships, using creation and imagination as a method and technique for overcoming differences and establishing new relationships.

Considering urban design as a creative, socio-spatial process, it is important to point out several interdependent dimensions in which it is created. Madanipour (1996) believes that, in the first place, it can be viewed as a space of imagination and creation for urban designers and architects, and in that sense, it manifests itself as a subjective-expressive process. In the context of the social production of space, it is more of an objective-rational or social-communicative process of establishing new spatial relations in space and its visual artefacts. Its third dimension takes place in the interdisciplinary communicative process as a field for consideration and communication of different professional views. Intertwining and networking of the mentioned process dimensions makes urban design an important element in the integration and communication of different ideas, interests, and needs in the process of urban regeneration.

As a subjectively-expressive or individually-expressive process, urban design emerges in the space of the imagination of architects and urban designers and is viewed in relation to art and artistic attitude, taste, and expression. The talent of experts, their education, the power of imagination, technical skills, experience, and a sense of spatial-visual relations are becoming the dominant factors in this process. This dimension of urban design can be

purely artistic and utopian in its extreme. Here, it is possible to distance oneself from engaged art and view it as a process of creating aesthetic values through the harmonisation of compositional elements into a coherent whole.

In that sense, the art of architects and urban designers becomes the bearer of ambient values. The urban designer, as a builder of the architecture of hierarchical value factors, uses art as a unifying factor in the multidimensionality of urban space. Bazik (1996) writes about the knowledge-intuition interaction: "It is a common understanding that design, in general, is an intuitive decision-making process based on talent, imagination, experience and feeling, or skill. In contrast, the rational/scientific decision-making process is based on relevant facts and proven indicators, i.e., knowledge. A special quality is given by the knowledge-intuition relationship" (Bazik, 1996, p. 85). The artistic dimension of urban design best corresponds to the approaches to urban regeneration that Hall (2002) called *The City Beautiful Movement, 1900-1945*, and *Cities of Imagination (1880-1887)*. Although the author connects them to a period in the past, these approaches are still present today, as artistic expressions and expressions of imagination in urban design. The artistic side of urban design relates to Forester's idea that design and art can give common meaning (Forester, 1989, p. 121) in a society with many different kinds of people.

The story of the plurality of interests and development paradigms positions urban design more as an objective-rational or social-communicative process. This dimension expands the domain of urban design from the individual-creative process of architects and urban designers, to a broader, socially engaged process. For the social-communicative process, the type of rationality favoured in a certain social context is important. As follows, urban design, at one extreme, is a process of positivist and technical production of space (such as in the functionalist approach), which is practised in the paradigms of public administration, economic planning, and sustainable development. Rational paradigms look at urban development from the outside or from top to bottom, and their values are universally defined. This approach would best fit Hall's categorization: *Cities of towers, City of theory, City on a Highway* (Hall, 2002).

On the other hand, urban design is a social-communicative, internal process that is practised through social communication, including, according to Lazarević (1988, p. 67), "social imagination". In this position, ambient values are built from the inside or from the bottom up. It encompasses the paradigms of social, communicative, environmental, and sustainable development. This position implies wide participation in the negotiation of environmental values.

The position of the research is that this type of negotiation should be understood conditionally and dynamically. This approach has its parallels in Hall's (2002) categories: *Unpleasant city, City in the Garden, Regional city, The City of Sweat Equity*.

The third dimension of urban design takes place in an interdisciplinary framework of different professional views, which is very important for the realization of the concept of sustainability and the integration of different development

sectors. In that sense, its role in achieving rationality through the argumentative approach of horizontal relations of experts is emphasised. The complexity of the urban environment is a field of interdisciplinary action in which environmental values are built on the foundations of art, socio-economic and technical-technological relations. Interdisciplinarity is a rationality that is broader than the subjective rationality of urban designers, but also narrower than social-communicative rationality. Here, it is important to outline the communicative dimension of the interdisciplinary process, which, unlike the social-communicative one, is more positivist than collaborative.

Authors Tošković and Petrić (2006) emphasise different theoretical orientations (dimensions) of urban design – functionalist, systemic, humanistic, and formalistic – which are mutually exclusive. The authors open up inspiring questions in the search for an integrative instrument of positive aspects of different orientations.

COMMUNICATION AND AESTHETIC DIMENSIONS OF URBAN DESIGN

Urban design as a communicative process

The social-communicative dimension of urban design has established its connection with urban planning. Urban planning, according to Bajić-Brković, is a “decision-making process” of urban development (Bajić-Brković, 1992). Agenda 21 characterizes this process as participatory and communicative. According to Agenda 21, urban planning is a socio-communicative, thus wide participatory, process of decision making (UN, 1992). The basic question is: what communication procedure is carried out in this design-planning process? From the point of view of Habermas’ (1984) theory of communicative action and urban development paradigms, this section will talk about the results of different communication processes.

In relation to different planning paradigms, there is a dilemma about the role of urban design in the process-product relationship. This further raises the question of the relationship between the rationalist (positivist) and the collaborative paradigm. The determining factor in this dilemma is the process of rationality that is carried out in a social context, i.e., a favoured planning tradition. As a product, urban design treats space as a realization of rationality defined at higher structural levels through a top-down approach, while in process orientation, urban design is situated in the field of collaborative paradigm and implies a bottom-up approach. “The social and physical environment is produced and reproduced in the interaction of agencies and structures, objects and contexts” (Madanipour, 1996, p. 133). In that sense, this research believes that the process of urban design should be placed somewhere between Lindblom’s (1959) incremental theory of “muddling through” and Simon’s (in Lindblom, 1959) rationally comprehensive approach to development. The position of urban design varies according to the type of problems it faces. For simple problems, urban design is more in the first and second orders of design, while in managing wicked problems, urban design is in the third and fourth order of design: “The fourth order of design is the design

of the environments and systems within which all the other orders of design exist. Understanding how these systems work, what core ideas hold them together, what ideas and values – that’s a fourth order problem” (Buchanan, 2015).

Although seemingly opposed, both the rational and the collaborative urban paradigms are unique in their emancipatory spirit. They differ only in the procedures for achieving rationality. Paradigms can be considered through the communication outcomes and the type of social capital that the process produces. Vujošević (2002), thus, connects the types of rationality, development paradigm and planning theory. It is interesting to note that this author mentions the parallel existence of many rationalities, but singles out instrumental, limited instrumental, communication, limited communication, and other types of rationality (such as political, ecological, market, etc.) as important for the planning process.

Communication and limited communication rationalities are important for this research. According to Vujošević’s (2002) categorization and according to Habermas’ (1984) theory of communicative action, they are, at their paradigmatic core, based on the development of democracy and the self-realization of the individual through unfettered and open communication. Open communication has limitations in the distortions of the communicative process. According to Vujošević (2002), the focus of this paradigmatic core is on transactional planning, dialogic incrementalism, advocacy planning, question-planning, and collaborative planning.

The fundamental dilemma in this planning theory is the ethics of communication, that is, the formation of the intersubjectivity field and Habermas’ (1984) decentralisation of the subject. According to Habermas (1988), the decentralisation of the subject implies the establishment of a field of intersubjectivity for a dialogically unrestrained process and communicative action. It implies that actors and subjects are emancipated individuals and groups. Emancipated individuals can create a field for ethical communication through an argumentative dialogue process.

In that sense, the research will consider the different communication strategies of Habermas’ (1984) theory of communicative action and discuss the solutions that are generated in different communication procedures. The assumption is that the process of urban design should enable unfettered communication using its imaginative and artistic characteristics. Unrestrained communication leads to communicative action, described in Habermas’ (2002) theory, and to developmental social capital, which is important for the protection, affirmation, and creation of environmental values in urban space.

Habermas (2002) defines different types of communication in relation to motives and outcomes. In general, they can be reduced to two types: strategic and communicative sharing. A speaker who uses a strategic communicative act is in a position of teleological action, through which he realises his interest or intention and programmes and directs his actions based on predicting the behaviour of actors in a given situation. At the heart of teleological action is classical game theory. It is based on using different kinds of power to

get information and keep it from other people involved in the communication process.

In normative action, according to Habermas (2002), the relations between the participants are determined by the existing social norms, and although it seems that this type of communicative act is consensual, it actually reproduces the existing systems and relations in a certain social group. The solutions achieved in this way reflect a well-coordinated way of solving problematic situations and may be inadequate in situations that require a more creative approach. "Observed from the point of view of sociologists, there is a continuity between mere factual relations of power and those relations of power that have turned into normative authority. But from the point of view of participants in communication, as long as their worlds are sufficiently networked, all imperatives, against the background of such an intersubjective common context of the world of life, are understood according to the pattern of normatively authorised requirements." (Habermas, 2002, p. 145).

Furthermore, dramaturgical action by Habermas (2002) can also be described as hidden and teleological. In this type, the actors are in a dynamic position in relation to the existing social circles: they are neither soloists nor belong to any of them. In the dramaturgical action, instead of spontaneous communication, the actors wear masks with which they hide their true intentions. This action has a latently strategic character, because it is not based on argumentative action. "This is how a speaker behaves, for example, when he wants to convince his audience of something, probably because he lacks convincing arguments in a given situation." (Habermas, 2002, p. 144).

Habermas (1984) advocates a communicative action in which the actors in the process want to understand the intentions of others in order to direct their engagement towards joint action. In this procedure, the outcome of the communicative process is a consensus-type agreement, generated by the participants. The precondition is that the actors are willing to come to a solution in an open way and through argumentation. Communicative action is based on quality argumentation and rationalisation of the situation, so the argumentation procedure is the backbone of this type. The difference between behaviour in a communication situation is determined by the ultimate initial intention: orientation towards success or realization of personal or group interest, or orientation towards understanding and agreement. In this sense, Habermas (1984) distinguishes between the sociability of strategic and communication action.

Creativity and imagination may foster open communication and transform the utopia of communicative action into an active vision of our deeds. Creativity in art should overcome current power relations in specific urban contexts in which weaker groups are unable to communicate their thoughts and opinions about place regeneration. Using artistic methods of communicating views, such as images, slogans, drawings, and sketches, provides a foundation for further dialogue and clarification. Putting disparate visions of the future into a unified whole is a further step in aesthetic contemplation. The initial process of invoking creativity in the urban design

process is a powerful tool of empowerment, i.e., establishing places that are more power-to than power-over.

Urban design as a creative process

The creative process of urban design can be viewed from two angles. The first is described as a subjective-creative process of architects and urban designers. The second represents the social-cognitive process that is most often associated with the collaborative paradigm. The collaborative paradigm assumes that each individual is a bearer of creativity. This attitude is related to the concept of social knowledge and creativity, which is a product of the socio-communicative process. According to Prendeville and Koria (2022), this discourse of design is mostly related to a-priori emergent modes of design, where, in the author's opinion, integration of social creativity as an emergent mode of creativity, i.e., Buchanan's fourth order of design with normative modes of first and second order of design, is needed (Buchanan, 1992).

In that sense, social creativity is in the complexity of knowledge and experience that each individual brings with them. In relation to urban paradigms, this process is outside the space of public agencies and institutions. As such, it is formed through Healey's soft infrastructure of social arenas (Healey, 1997). Participants in the creative process are actors and stakeholders from the public, private, and civil sectors. During this process, an integrated space is created in which the conditions are set for the global place to come to life in a specific urban setting.

It is misleading to associate the creative process of urban design solely with the prevalent collaborative paradigm. Creativity can be achieved in the positivist process of objective knowledge, where the objective-rational procedure leads to new ways of solving existing problems. In this sense, it can be exclusively disciplinary or primarily interdisciplinary, and both are very important for sustainable urban regeneration. The collaborative paradigm in the creative process has its limitations related to the equal treatment of different views of reality. If we understand these different views of reality as a source of creativity, we can easily fall into the traps of Baudrillard's (2001, p. 184) "simulations" and "simulacra": "We now live in a minimum of real sociability and a maximum of simulation. The simulation neutralises the poles that regulated the perspective space of the real and the law, exhausting the potential energy that still nourished the space of the law and the social game strategy governs most of our exchanges".

Under the guise of the social game of creativity and sustainability, the research believes that these traps lead us into the labyrinths of perversion of objective reality. It is clear that in this case, sustainability is treated from an extremely egocentric position, which does not advocate smart growth and can absurdly lead to locally unsustainable solutions. As such, it is not in the line of Castells' creation of subjects, but in the manipulative creative process of the "postmodern game" (Harvey, 2007) in which certain interests are most often favoured. The functional classification of the game is stated by Baudrillard (2001) as follows: game as a crime; game as learning; game as catharsis; game as creativity, spontaneity, dream; sports; electronic games. "This atomistic manipulation inherent in games is no different

from computer-based forms of control in the process of work" (Baudrillard, 2001, p. 186).

Consequently, the research connects the creative process of urban design to both a positivist and a collaborative perspective. Together, they form an integrative and iterative creative process. This provides objective rationalisation and equally treats different dimensions of sustainability by directing and facilitating creativity towards finding new ways to achieve rational sustainability goals. In fact, the creativity of the process is inseparable from its communicative dimension and the communicative procedure that is favoured in the process. Thus, Landry (2005) believes that the challenge for creative initiatives is to establish narrative qualities in communication and to deepen the principles of symbolic communication. Without these principles and the combined action of narrative and symbolic creativity, creativity can only be a testing ground for "systemic and organised mobilisation of bias" (Vujošević and Petovar, 2006, p. 306). Also, one of the borderline assumptions of the collaborative paradigm, according to which each individual carries the same level of creativity, is debatable. The research claims that everyone who takes part in the creative process should contribute to finding new solutions based on how creative they are and how much knowledge and experience they have.

Therefore, in the creative process of urban design, the factors and carriers of the process should be considered. The bearers of the process are individuals who possess a high level of creativity, i.e., the ability to imagine, visualise, argue, and objectify; while the bearers of the process are individuals and actors who have an interest in participating in urban regeneration. As bearers, the research recognizes urban designers who, through their imagination, can see and combine areas of different paradigms while employing appropriate methodologies and approaches for guiding and facilitating the process. Here, it is essential to distinguish between creativity and art. Creativity in the process of urban design refers to a new way of solving complex problems, those that cannot be solved by established, routine procedures. This requires the participation of all actors and stakeholders in order to activate social knowledge. Open communication is the precondition for this activation, which could be achieved in the artistic and creative milieu. In this sense, art can contribute to the integration into the "new universality" that is accepted and understood by the participants in the process.

Artistic aspects of the creative process in connection to the difficulties of locating aesthetics in the contemporary view of art will be further discussed. Šuvaković (2006) views aesthetics in relation to two poles: the aestheticization of art and the avant-garde aestheticization of art. The first is related to art for the sake of art, while the second is related to the concepts of utopian translation of culture, society, and even nature into concepts and programmes (Šuvaković, 2006). According to this author, the first pole of aesthetics is seen through "beautiful art", implying universal standards and criteria of the beautiful. In that case, aesthetics is a science that, with its rules and protocols, establishes the presence of the beautiful, and it happens that in the postmodern it is re-examined through a relativizing attitude towards the

world in general. It is important to emphasise that in the posthistory of aesthetics, aesthetics is not rejected, but it is shown that there are completely different theoretical options in the game, and that this game cannot be resolved in favour of one possibility (Šuvaković, 2006).

It is this "game of difference" in positioning postmodern aesthetics that is the basis for the author's view that the diversity in the level of creativity that individuals as talented artists possess is the reason why aesthetics itself cannot be drowned in the philosophy of art. "The continuation of the project of modernity" through the "new universality" is possible if aesthetics is respected as an independent scientific discipline. In this way, aesthetics becomes one of the carriers of emancipation of individuals and groups in the communication process, because, as Baudrillard (2001, p. 135) says: "Ethics is always resolved in aesthetics". In this sense, aesthetics has its protocols, which according to Šuvaković (2006) are classified into: (a) empirical aesthetics (in which the data of sensory cognition are studied); (b) aesthetics as epistemology (in which aesthetics studies the protocols of describing and interpreting sensory cognition); and (c) aesthetics as a cognitive science and philosophy (which studies the bearers of sensory cognition).

According to this author, the subject of aesthetics remains the study of beautiful, which can be discussed through mathematical models (proportions, relationships, symmetries), models of communication aesthetics (within the theory of communication text aesthetics), and models of semiotics (aesthetics of non-linguistic, artificial languages), which produce symbolism of meaning. Also, in order for the notion of beautiful to be interpreted in all its forms, according to Šuvaković (2006), it must be shaped in such a way that theoretical protocols of all sciences can be applied to it. This multidimensionality of the study of beauty elevates aesthetics above the game of postmodern relativity, allowing the study of beauty to continue in an integrative relationship according to many scientific procedures. Thus, Mako (2009, p. 44) believes: "Essentially, the aspect of duality in the aesthetic interpretation of the creative process, as well as the principles of aesthetic judgment as its consequences, points to the problem of objective recognition of values achieved through subjective creation." According to this author, the renunciation of universal aesthetic principles raises the question of the possibility of objective judgement of individual aesthetic values (Mako, 2009).

The multidimensionality of beauty and the integration of its interpretations according to the protocols of all sciences support the position of this research that the possibility of the truth of beauty becomes the basis for a new universality. It is created in the aesthetic communicative process of the bearers and factors of creativity in Habermas' field of intersubjectivity. Speaking about the relationship between art, aesthetics, and the communicative process, it is important to emphasise the importance of cognitive aesthetics. In that sense, Šuvaković's definition represents the relationship of the individual (a factor of creativity) towards "[...] the process of creating a work (conceiving, making, performing, writing, documenting), then the appearance (regardless of the individual) and the appearance (in relation to the individual) of the work of art, and the reception of the work

[...]” (Šuvaković, 2006, p. 165).

This is a key argument for the position of this research in the categorization of carriers and factors of creativity, i.e., which in the process of urban design, not everyone is equal in terms of creative contribution. On the other hand, everyone has the right to express their creativity by harmonising it with the aesthetic and holistic criteria of beauty. In that way, it is possible to bring relativized images of reality, the future, and even values and interests into a coherent relationship and artistic harmony. Additionally, the veracity of art in association with aesthetics as a scientific discipline enables the objectification of multiple rationalities and identities and their ethical integration where the artistic process of urban design encourages creativity and personal development. In such a space, a dialogue opens for a two-way exchange of knowledge, impressions, opinions, etc. and their objectification, which gives urban design the quality of integration.

CONCLUDING REMARKS – AESTHETICS OF COMMUNICATION IN THE INTEGRATIVENESS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PROCESS

In sustainable urban regeneration, the urban design process, through communicative consensus, combines a positivist, artistic, and communicative-collaborative approach in an open game of designing a common future. The first involves the research of past and present facts and conditions, as well as the valorisation of variant solutions through estimation and monitoring of their effects on the environment. Here, urban design is artistically engaged in a creative search for unifying, integral values, using imagination and incorporating the existing state of things to create new value. Collaborative communication relies on social knowledge, social imagination, and a sense of community, in order to enrich positivist knowledge and emancipate individuals and groups in the creative process of the game of open communication. Furthermore, the fourth order of design according to Buchanan (1992) is integrating previous orders into coherent design of symbols, products, and systems, so we can say sustainable (urban) environments.


In this way, art and creativity become integrative factors of conflicting interests and different views of reality, and they lead to the delineation of the image of a common future reality. This image is in a coherent relationship with local and global values because it enables the development of a global identity. Landry (2005) defines the concept of the “urban cycle of creativity” as a growing urban energy leading to urban revival, based on the flow of ideas, participation, gathering places, and the development of “civic creativity”. Integral urban design should make this cycle possible and lead to Forester’s (1989) common meaning, which brings together people with interests that seem to be at odds with each other.

As a result, aesthetics in communication becomes a key instrument for integration in the fourth order of design. Urban design in the fourth order is a process of empowering individuals and groups by evoking their creativity using design tools of the first order of design, like symbols, sketches, slogans, etc., to overcome barriers in communication, enabling the flow of ideas and thoughts.

Here, urban design becomes Kant’s “play of thoughts” (Derek Lomas and Xue, 2022) using overall aesthetic procedures of harmony, believing that dissonance and consonance contribute equally to integration. In this process, the game becomes a learning process of communication play instead of manipulation.

To construct a sufficiently complex and coherent common picture, players must engage in open play, that is, become active participants in the process of urban design. Urban designers stand out as bearers of creativity in the artistic dimension of the urban design process, directing and facilitating the communicative process of urban regeneration with a collaborative and instrumentally rational approach, relying on intuition, visualisation power, and creating a coherent composition. To make the image’s parts fit together well in terms of size, proportion, colour, tone, light, and shadow, rationalisation is needed.

ORCID

Tatjana Mrđenović  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6266-385X>

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