

Beyond Architectural Forms: Towards an Understanding of the Implicit Meaning of the Placemaking Processes

Mohammed Mashary Alnaim

Department of Architectural Engineering, College of Engineering, University of Hail, Hail, Saudi Arabia

moha.alnaim@gmail.com

(Received 29/8/2022; accepted for publication 24/10/2022.)

Abstract: This study was motivated by the changing landscape of people's interactions and experiences with places. These interactions have a significant impact on who they are, what will become, and how they interact with others. This burgeoning field of study focuses on the experience of place and how it relates to identity formation and evolution through physical objects. Three major themes are investigated and presented in this study: (1) the meaning of place, (2) the role of the physical form, and (3) place identity. Each of these three themes are interrelated. They overlap and intersect each other to encompass the various aspects of placemaking processes. This study examines related theories and relevant literature to conclude that, while architectural form is vital to understanding the nature of places, it is only one part of the larger picture. Other relationship factors can help to clarify the complexities and richness of place and place experience.

Keywords: Placemaking; architectural form; sense of place; place identity; phenomenology of place.

1. Introduction

It is challenging to construct a concept with a precise and operational meaning from a word like 'place,' which is widely used and applied in a variety of contexts (Friedmann, 2010). The academic literature on place (and its related concepts of man-made and placemaking) is rapidly expanding across a range of human sciences and professions, including architecture, geography, social anthropology, environmental psychology, planning, to name just a few. From early cave drawings to the most recent sculptures, humans have always expressed themselves through art and form. Self-representation, as a psychological phenomenon, necessitates that people alter their physical and nonphysical contexts in order to effectively convey and define who they are. According to Christopher Williams (1981), almost every other creature on the planet has a unique place and activity without which it would perish. Mankind does not have

such a constraint, so humanity must build, shape, and design in order to alter the environment and make it habitable. Thus, the physical form is among those structures and objects which were used by humans since the dawn of time as a non-verbal communication tool (Rapoport, 1982).

The German perceptual psychologist Rudolf Arnheim (1975) raised a fundamental question "Are there reasons enough to focus so much attention on the appearance of the buildings?". It is, in fact, very important nowadays to understand our buildings, as we are moving towards sculpture and artifact physical forms in our contemporary architecture. The architectural form in this study is interpreted as a product of a long process that contributed to making the form's final image. The intention behind this image is what we will try to present, argue, and explore the changes that may appear in the making process. It is argued that, for the most part, the designing of an 'artifact' should have a certain logic to it, whether it is material, elemental, or functional (Hillier and Hanson, 1989).

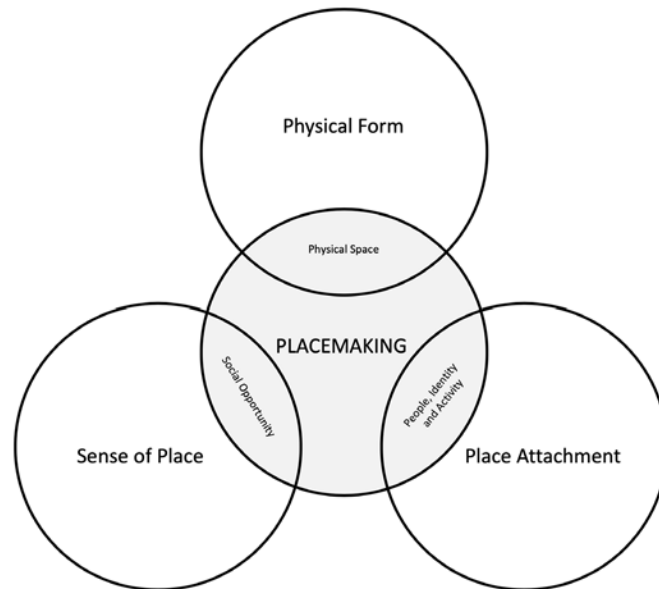


Figure (1). Placemaking processes main traits. Source: Author.

Moreover, the built form is unlike an artifact, as the architectural form mostly expresses human behavioral patterns as well as the surrounding culture and social setting. This results in the form reflecting the values and needs of its makers. However, not every built form fits into this category as there are a number of leading architects who can dispute this notion such as Zaha Hadid (2015). Hadid asserted that the logic behind the form can limit the form's creativity. She stressed: "There are 360 degrees, so why stick to one?". We think flexibility is needed and it is appropriate to have both opinions as long as a justification to every action made in the making process is provided.

Several scholars have attempted to uncover the deeper meanings of the intersections of people, their values, culture and the physical form. Arnheim (1975), for example, argued that the form is part of the whole, and the building is a form that represents time experienced by humans in action. John Habraken (1985), a Dutch architect and theorist, argued that tracing a shape back to its origins is essential to comprehending how it relates to its human users. If the building can be understood through these actions, this will compensate for the lack of image at that particular time, and the form can speak to us about the history of people. We believe that understanding the physical form will not only help us design better built forms in

the future, but it will also help us understand our historical process of making.

The architectural form through its literature seems to be a complex phenomenon. There are several debates and arguments on what the actual form represents: is it a sculpture? ⁽¹⁾ is it an artifact? or is it an object that represents behavioral meaning? In other words, does form contain a meaning specific to a place and culture or is a given form just an object that can be placed anywhere? Answering such a question requires a thorough understanding of what the architectural form represents, in relation to various sources and influential factors and place traits (Figure 1). However, many scholars across diverse fields of study have argued and debated the meaning of the architectural form. They tend to interconnect the explicit and implicit meanings, as they consider culture, place, human behavior, climate, and technology as contributing sources and influential factors that create the final form appearance. This creation of form can either be presented and expressed explicitly (tangible) or implicitly (intangible). In this case, understanding the process of generating the architectural form or the place may help in finding the interconnection of the form's explicit and implicit meanings. The historiography of placemaking, it is argued here, is shared by scholars in intersecting fields.

(1) Includes culture, human behavior, and social aspects of daily life.

The thoughts, knowledge, arguments, and claims presented in this study are not primarily to compete, but they are seen more as collaborative scholarly work that drives appreciation for the implicit meanings of the architectural form process.

The central theme that runs through this study is the exploration and understanding of how and why physical forms appeared in different ways, and how the architectural form is embedded within the placemaking process. The objective is to examine several factors such as human behavior, climate, technology and symbolic meanings that contributed to form creation, where we believe they have a direct influence on form creation. This does not mean they are the only influential factors, however, for the purposes of this study we are only focusing on what we believe are fundamental to form creation. There are three questions this study explores: How and why is place a source that generates the physical form? What are the factors that may influence the form making process? and what are the changes of views that took place over time in the notion of placemaking?

Starting with the origin of architectural form, we present the concept of placemaking to understand and explore the history of the subject. Afterwards, the placemaking will be discussed from three different perspectives to help understand its complexity: the meaning of place, the role of the physical form and the place identity. The interrelationships, overlaps and intersections of the perspectives are explored to simplify and concentrate analysis on the various aspects of placemaking processes to understand the complexity of the subjects presented.

2. Origin of Form: Sources and Influences

Although it is difficult to define precisely how form has been created as the sum of many forces, the search for the origin of the architectural form can be best achieved through understanding the interaction between people, culture and their surrounding physical and non-physical environments. The issue with this approach is that not everything we try to seek is apparent, but it can help explain most of the implicit layers of the physical image. The architect, Christopher Williams, in his book *Origin of Forms* (1981) suggested that pre-tool making may have brought the idea that forms are distinguished from one another, but he emphasized that they are mostly different from inside rather than visually outside. Similarly, the anthropologist professor Edward

Bruner (1994), argued that there is no such a thing as 'original' by which he means that each architectural work is an interpretation of some earlier work, but each 'new' work is 'original' of the new ways of interpreting the earliest one (Burner, 1994). This means that the originality of the architectural form is a continual process over the decades, and it changes according to time and need. What both arguments try to elucidate is what Arnheim identified as the importance of understanding beyond the shapes, lines, colors, and structures of the architectural form (Arnheim, 1975).

For example, Arnheim explains that the space in between the objects can influence the degree of reliance or individuality of other objects within the radius of the space. How close or how far apart elements are can affect people's daily interaction with each other. Mashary Alnaim (2006), also argued that open spaces in the traditionally built environment have an impact on the social behavior of the built form; thus, the physical form functions to support the socio-cultural behavioral pattern of its context. Both scholars contended that the origin of form is not only the created tangible form, but also the influenced embedded processes that become encoded from the inhabitant's daily life. To appreciate its effect and appearance, we must first understand its implicit 'hidden' layers. The physical form is not only a representational image, but more of a boundary of social inspiration; thus, form appreciation can vary from appreciation of style, construction technology, etc., all of which are acceptable and depend on the kind of processed information we are trying to seek and understand.

In the discussion of seeing beyond the physical form, it is important to reflect on what John Habraken (1985) highlighted the importance of understanding the implicit layers of the image. According to Habraken, the form is not an object to be filled with spaces; it is a system that clusters and tethers various aspects of life together, and the form can change over time depending on how people use it. He highlighted four stages in the emergence of an architectural form: sharing, designing, seeing, and controlling (Habraken, 1985). Habraken discussed the factors that can contribute to the creative mechanism of producing the physical form at each stage, as the living environment can only be sustained by accepting changes and adapting. He claimed that "in growing and changing through time, the built environment resembles an organism more than artifact" (Habraken, 2000). This claim

means that the form is not stuck or frozen in time, but it is undergoing continuing alteration and adapting according to human needs. Burner's argument about 'originality' and how the original can be seen as a new way of interpreting other past forms is similar to what Habraken asserted.

The form is a product of different sources, and it is a cultural indicator (Rapoport, 1969). Why is it critical to comprehend the sources? As architectural historian Chris Abel (1997) stated, 'style' can be defined as the result of understanding contextual culture and social forces. Therefore, style is the "distinctive structuring of human action," and form changes over time in a specific location to reflect human needs and actions at the time. This necessitates expanding one's understanding beyond style and form in order to grasp the forces driving embedded changes.

Lynda Schneekloth and Robert Shibley (2000) asserted that "exploring...places, and the practices by which we make them...contribute[s] to larger social and cultural discourses." The result is to say that the form does not have only one force acting upon it, there are multiple forces that effect the process of making. The concept of placemaking is one and is relative to this creative process as understanding the process of making places may help to appreciate the sources and influential factors related to the form mechanism, and to understand the changes that may occur over time.

3.Placemaking

The outward importance of places in geography has not been analyzed primarily by examining and understanding physical form roles in the place. What has been emphasized, rather, is the significance of human actions within the place. According to the geographer, Tim Cresswell, before the 1970s, the idea of humans in a place was more about treating them as objects or simply rational beings, more than beings with actions and influences (Cresswell, 2008). Geographers only began to debate and be more aware of habitation and the notion of experiencing the place in the late 1970s. Other environmental disciplines also started to theorize in a dualistic way, pitting humanity against the natural world. This pair was described by Sprout and Sprout (1965) in terms of three theoretical frameworks: (1) environmental determinism, the view that humans actively shape their physical environment, rendering all human

efforts "possible;" (2) the view of possibilism, which states that all human endeavors are possible because humans actively shape their physical environment; (3) an ecological perspective, which holds that humans and their natural surroundings are inextricably intertwined and that destructive human actions can have long-term effects on both nonhuman and human ecosystems.

The German philosopher, Martin Heidegger (1962), in his groundbreaking book, "Time and Being" and in his article "Building Dwelling Thinking," was among the first to write about and explore the concepts of place, identity, and the impact of human experience. This holistic relationship was described by Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1962, 1968) using phenomenological terms such as body-subject, chiasm, and flesh. These authors shed light on the inherent interconnectedness of the human-place relationship by highlighting the ways in which humans are always joined, entangled, and immersed in their environment. Their efforts have contributed to the general consensus that reducing the human-environment relationship to a simple cause-and-effect relationship is a mistake. In other words, what appears to be two "people/environment" relationships is actually experienced as a single "people/environment intertwinement."

The humanistic geographer, Edward Relph (1976) stated, "To be human is to live in a world that is filled with significant places: to be human is to have and know your place." We believe that the meaning of place is fundamental to the physical form's identification, and to understand its representational image. Pual Dourish and Steve Harrison (1996) argued that place is a fundamental concept of architecture and urban design. They also suggested how we can use these disciplines to understand the role of place in collaborative systems. According to a phenomenological perspective, the place can also be defined as "a point from which we experience the meaningful events in our existence" (1980 Norberg-Schulz). This means that understanding the place on its own may not fully clarify the understanding and concerns related to the process of making the architectural form, but it may acknowledge how the form reacted to the place (Figure 2). Rappaport, for example, explained that climate and technology play major roles in shaping the physical form; however, other forces contribute to this creative process which need to be taken into consideration to understand the embedded processes. Therefore, to

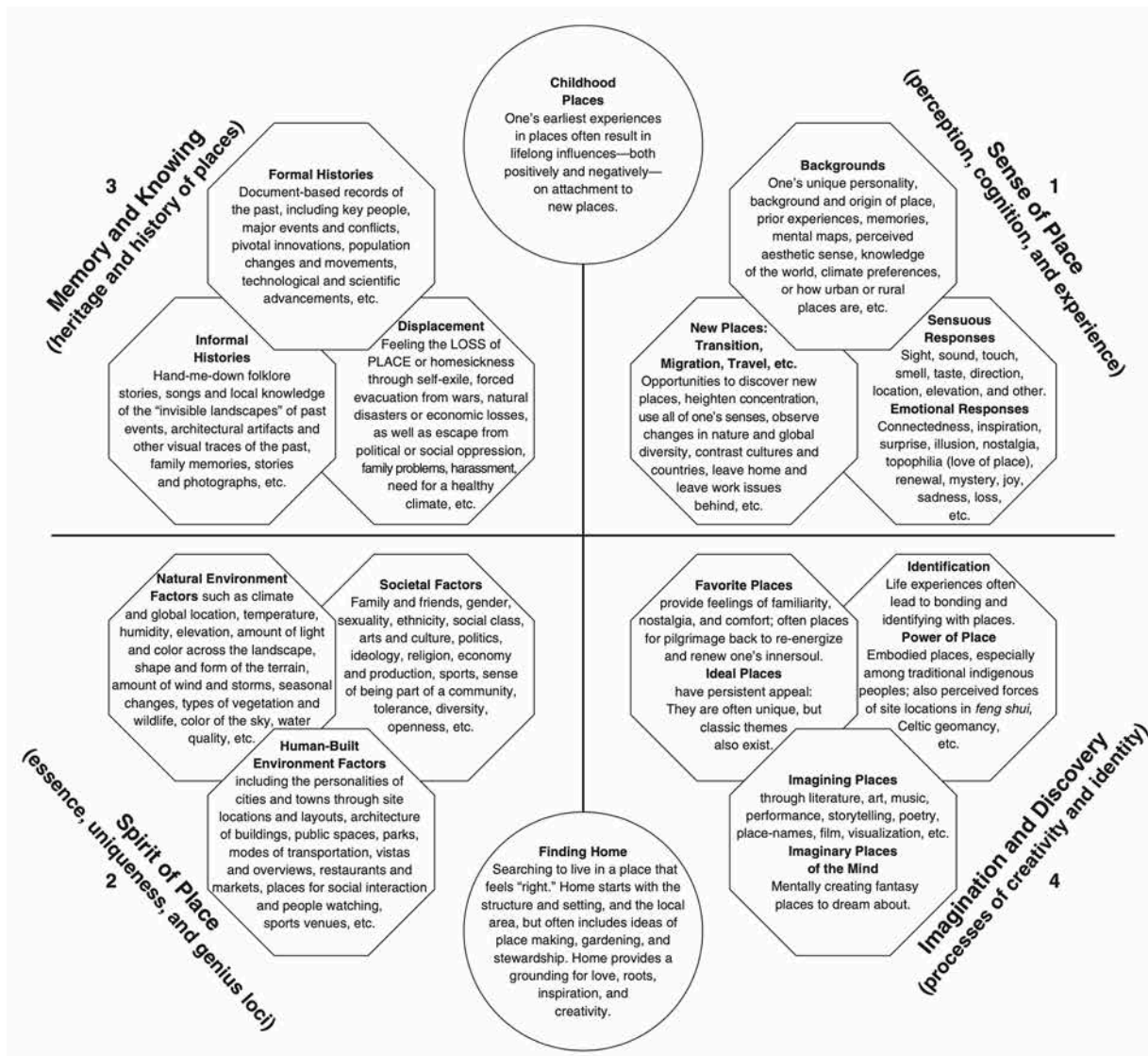


Figure (2). The major themes included in the placemaking process. Source: (Wilkie, 2012).

be able to understand beyond the architectural form a combination of interrelated factors must be strung together to fully encapsulate the form process of making. That said, it is not possible for this study to address each factor related to the physical form's process of making; however, we will consider them briefly, in order to clarify important points and ideas for understanding.

3.1 The Meaning of Place and Space

Edward Relph (1976) argued that while the contexts in which things and actions take place are important, the meanings we attribute to those locations ultimately come from our own intentions and perceptions. Relph made it quite clear that he

values the people of a place more than the objects found in the place. When people are present, he argued, meaning becomes apparent. When people move into a place, they alter it to some degree so that it better suits their needs; this alteration gives the place new significance. Moving on to the process of identifying a specific place, we must first establish what terms like "place" and "space" mean in disciplines like architecture and geography.

Amos Rapoport (1977) described place as a complex interconnectedness of many things, relationships and distances between people. Place encompasses a wide range of behavioral processes, including the need for seclusion, personal space, and territoriality (Altman and Chemers, 1984). What

Rappaport considered ‘many things’ in his place description is what Altman and Low (1992) argued when they stated it is as ‘behavioral process,’ where the behavior is considered as a variable factor of human needs in the place that varies depending on the cultural settings (Altman and Low, 1992). Both see humans as a factor in the creative process of placemaking, which is similar to what Relph contended: that humans create a significant place when they inhabit and experience it. In this case, agreement on the fact that human contribution to a place is what makes it significant and unique, leading to the generation and communication of embedded meanings.

The planner and urbanist, John Montgomery (1998) added another aspect to the meaning of place. He explained places as a construction of the physical form, activity, behavior and meanings. Even if people are involved in the place which they are they still need to express the significance of the place to themselves and others by participating in the process of making. Thus, while meanings are shared, they are never fixed once and for all, and are always open to encounter change in meaning produced through other representations and developments over time (Seamon, 2012). A place’s meaning is complex and develops according to the ever-changing needs of the people interacting with it. For instance, in his (1970) article *The Study of Spatial Quality*, Amos Rappaport argued that “place” is a complex idea, and so he

presented several subtopics within “place” and the environmental dimension. Symbolic, cognitive/cultural, and social spaces are all mentioned, each of which can have its own unique significance, as is the case with place itself. This leads us to the conclusion that the significance of a given place is fluid, depending on the actions and perspectives of the people who inhabit it. The fundamental variety and complexity of each individual aspect approaching the meaning of place has been described by scholars. For example, geographer, Relph’s description emphasized humans and location, whereas Rapoport and Altman emphasized humans and symbolic representation. Thus, it is a matter of different interest and perspective contributing to describing the meaning of place. However, we can safely say that they all complete and complement one another and agree that humans start expressing meanings when they find an appropriate place. Later, they strive to assign intangible meanings to tangible symbolic forms (Figure 3).

The meaning of a place can be highlighted by the significance of its inhabitants, their needs, their social interactions, and cultural expression. Later, scholars have debated the ambiguity of place, as globalization has affected place, causing places to look alike all over the world (Lawrence, and Low, 1990; Speller et al., 2002; Reicher, 2007; Lewicka, 2008). The ability of locals to express themselves as unique individuals is severely curtailed by the introduction of new planning, regulations,

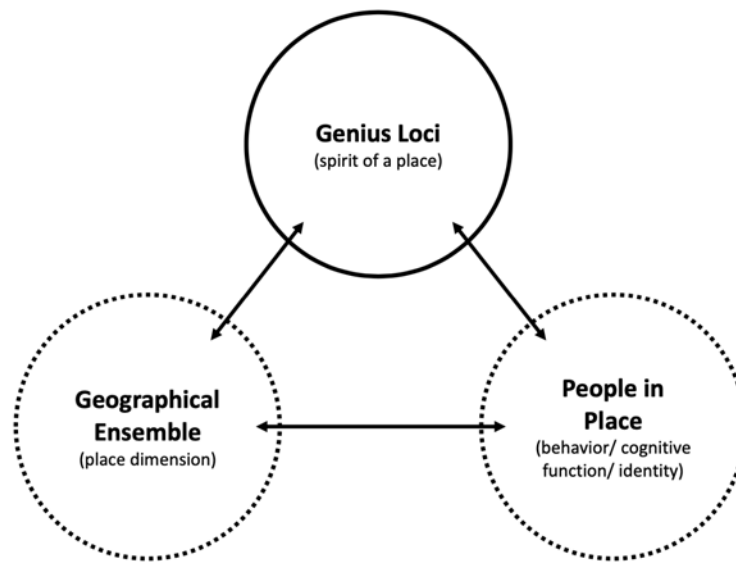


Figure (3). The people-place relationship triad of placemaking process. Source: Redeveloped from (Seamon, 2012).

and zoning. Negative spatial and social effects have resulted from the separation of norms and values, argued Emily Talen (2012). Consequently, the space does not accommodate for personal expression or control (cited in Caladrice, 2014). This prompted scholars to focus on placemaking processes from a political standpoint, emphasizing the local characteristics of places that inform certain regulations to motivate activism in a place (Elwood 2006; Martin 2003).

Therefore, the study of the cultural process and the concept of placemaking- as well as the ways in which people's values were made manifest through the activities that took place in those places, are essential to a complete comprehension of the construction of the built environment. Because of their close connection to the people who use them, places embody local meaning and take on the form of people's activities. Consequently, the built environment is not a static thing but rather something that changes over time in response to the requirements of its inhabitants and their actions (Proshansky, 2014). Thus, we are prompted to think about not only the significance of the place, but also its connections to other things that make the place.

3.2 The role of physical form

Physical forms and their shapes are not a result of coincidence, but are a result of a framework of many people expressing their individual and collective behavior. The masses of buildings and the distance between them as well as their shapes, boundaries and axes," organize both the exterior and interior spaces where people live. The idea that space exists independently of our subjective experience is not merely a mental construct; rather, it is grounded in the laws of physics (Arnheim, 1975). What Arnheim is saying is that the 'conscious' and 'perceptual setting' that a group agreed on is what shaped their built environment and helped them to express and convey meanings to their place. Seeing the place from this perspective, we can hypothesize that understanding and grasping the 'conscious' and 'perceptual setting' may help us to better understand a place. As inhabitants evaluate their environmental settings more frequently rather than the physical objects, as the object itself is changeable due to lifestyle, technology, climate, and generations, these combine to make the place more significant (Alnaim, 2015).

To clarify, the concept of privacy settings in a location may have a significant impact on how the architectural form manifests itself in a space. Private sphere definition is a type of social boundary regulation in which an individual or a group controls how much information they share with others. Privacy is frequently referred to as a basic need by architects, despite the fact that it is a complex and varied phenomenon. Accordingly, there are levels of interaction or shared spaces among people or a group, and any changes that occur to these shared spaces may affect how the physical form behaves in a particularly built environment setting. Rappaport (1977) in his book, *Human Aspect of Urban Form*, argued that in Muslim culture, inhabitants use an 'inside-view' which leads to the creation of the central courtyard. This also leads buildings to become compacted. The compacted urban form creates a defensive setting by using the buildings themselves. However, this compactness is not only for defense and privacy purposes, but it also supports cultural values and a way of life choices that combined with other factors to create this kind of physical form. Contrary to this, the Western culture is more oriented to the outside than inside which makes the object appear individual and connected with the outside view.

The contrast in how privacy is managed and how humans express their self-identity not only shapes the architectural form, but it also introduces different ways of creating urban settings, which eventually contribute to placemaking. From the presented example, understanding one factor which influences privacy has led to understanding other factors (i.e., culture, environment) providing an understanding of the logic and meaning embedded in a place. It is always a string of factors and forces, all collaborating implicitly to introduce a product (physical form), which is not the important element. What is important is its function and role in the place.

Form emplacement in its setting is significant as the physical form is one of the ways inhabitant's express identity, social settings, economy, individuality and collectiveness. Thus, a debate on how physical forms is expressed throughout the post-modern era was noticed by the modernist architect, Kenneth Frampton (1982) in his article related to 'critical regionalism'. Frampton pointed out the struggle of resistance of place/form and claimed that we are unable to sustain our urban

settings due to the fading ‘discipline’ factor, as a result of exposure to world culture. To demonstrate ‘discipline’, according to Rapoport, is to accept, respect and obey the tradition that gives collective control and continuity to the form’s identity and role (Rapoport, 2005).

The regional architecture in Frampton’s definition means architecture that borrows from local traditional elements to combat universalization. The suggestion of ‘critical regionalism’ is that globalization is an inevitable impact, and we have to compensate for its inevitable influence. Regionalism is not a new concept developed solely by Frampton, but the acceleration of modern-postmodern architecture with the lack of attachment to place revived the concept in the early 1980s (See Odum and Moore, 1938; Lefaivre and Tzonis, 2003). According to historian, Pietro Belluschi (1955), if you look beyond the physical relationship between buildings in a specific region, the meanings of the term seem to reach all that humanity is and what it believes in. As a tangible manifestation of regional beliefs, we can see what “regional architecture” truly is.

However, architectural historicism is a school of thought that combines or adds new elements to pre-existing styles in order to create forms that looks like it was made by skilled craftspeople from the past (Lucie-Smith, 1988). To achieve this, historicists set out to develop novel aesthetics that break with the past. Historicists claimed that any

modern improvement to or imitation of historical structures or design motifs is an example of “false history” (Semes, 2009). Historicists also claimed that the traditional and historical buildings should be used as museums and artifacts instead of continuing to play a part of our living world. This claim stands in contrast to what regional architecture offers, which borrows from the past. Both points of view have validity; and we can only argue that the physical form is lacking and suffering from local meanings, as the universal impact influences the physical image.

Thus, borrowing without clearly understanding the implicit layering of the place will result in an obscure image that has no relation to its urban setting. Rather than imposing predetermined forms and convincing ourselves of their legitimacy, we must first understand ourselves and the forces at work in our society. One’s sense of self should come from within, informed by their observations of and engagement with the world around them. Steven Semes (2009), for example, sees architects as more interested in artifact work than interested in imposing buildings that help and improve the environmental setting, while historicists argue that historical places should be seen as historic spaces for informative sources regarding the past and not more than that. A decision must be made: the form presented involves judgment on the importance of culture, religious stress, location, orientation and climate. The representational image of the physical



Figure (4). An example of the Najdi architectural ‘furjah’ element development. Source: Author.

form may be less crucial than the manner in which these values are dealt with in relation to the built form. Each of these values has a relative impact on the displayed form, and adjusting even one of them can rearrange and introduce an entirely new form.

Paul Oliver (1977) described the form in the traditional community as an appropriate structure to support the community's intentions. The place, he explained, takes the form that is seen appropriate to the nature, organization, family structure and aesthetic aspect of a society. The individual in a tribal or folk culture does not become the society's form giver; instead, he uses the forms that are essential to the society, constructing within determinants that are as much symbolic as physical or climatic. This concept can be seen, for example, in the Central Region (Najd) architecture in Saudi Arabia, where the element of triangle 'furjah' development by local inhabitants to be a utilitarian environmental element to improve the thermal comfort of traditional internal dwelling spaces that was later enhanced to be a façade decorative element with a variety of symbolic formations (Figure 4).

As a result, the changes in the physical form's role or any of its elements in a place through the course of time are noticeable, as the objects pass through several stages to reach its symbolic significance and become landmarks to the place rather than responding to and supporting the community in which they are located. Cresswell used the term 'material forms' where the form becomes more as a representation material for the nation rather than the place it is in and becomes a landmark through a process of legal forces. He used the Twin Towers in New York City to support his argument, where after the Twin Towers collapsed, the meaning of the place was lost, or changed significantly, not necessarily due to the incident, but rather more due to the loss of the two tower objects. Cresswell also confirmed that after the construction of the new tower and the establishment of the Ground Zero Memorial, the meaning of the place has altered and changed significantly. Furthermore, Ujang and Dola (2007) discussed that sense of place as the point at which physical activity and meaning are intertwined in people's experiences of a place. The concept of place is determined by how individuals perceive the world around them. What the researchers argued not only raises the importance of understanding the physical form, but also recognizes the sense of place that we might lose or the sense of place that might change due to

being attached to the physical form rather than the place itself.

3.3 Identity of place: Sense and Experience

In order to be authentic, one must first and foremost be comfortable in their own place and aware of it, both as an individual and as a member of a group. A sense of belonging, or the idea that the more a space fosters a sense of inwardness, the more of an identified place it becomes (Tuan, 1977). Human significance is what makes a group of people differentiate from each other, where they try to express their uniqueness through the establishment of their self-identity⁽²⁾. Significance also reflects the distinctiveness and the degree of attachment and involvement individuals and groups have between different places, which creates more depth in a place (Hubbard et al., 2008). Identity is an attempt to represent one's image through one's interaction with and attachment to a particular place; the more groups there are involved, the more accurate a representation of that identity will be. In other words, it is more important to highlight shared values and shared history in the built environment than it is to highlight individual traits and accomplishments (Hodder, 1991; Wilkie and Roberson, 2012).

Paul Morgan (2010) argued that an individual's physiological needs for survival and emotional security in a social environment can be shaped during the early stages of attachment. We propose that this shift is the result of people's increased awareness of 'significant places' and attachment structures/symbols in a setting that shares phenotypic similarities with their previous attachment experiences. According to Victor Counted (2016), the nature of this attachment is typically determined and developed gradually by the individual needs that the place quality can meet and provide during the attachment process.

From this perspective, place and identity correspond to one another to create a physical image that represents its attached inhabitants and through time attach meanings and experiences to the place. Therefore, it is through personal

(2) Refers to Ibrahim Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs as a way to understand human psychology, where Maslow suggests and proposes how a group of people can create agreed-upon <settings> or <regulations>. See also the enhancements to the hierarchy made by several scholars as a result of changing lifestyles and circumstances (Bretherton, 1992; Villarica, 2011).

experience that a location acquires its true worth; and it is this very worth that ultimately causes people to form emotional ties to a specific place. People form opinions about the quality of their built environment based on their experiences within it, so it stands to reason that these activities and experiences are what ultimately draw in newcomers (Stea and Turan, 1993). Yi-Fu Tuan (1977) argued that as humans develop and have more experience, the world becomes more organized into systems of places, even if the built environment has changed or evolved, we still can use our past experiences to recognize or associate or attach a sense of place to the new ones. Kevin Lynch (1960) in his book *The Image of the City* suggested that the built environment consists of identity, structure and meaning where all three rely on each other to express experience.

Places are crucial in shaping people's social and personal identities (Dashti, 2016). This makes one of the most crucial objectives of architecture, i.e. to create a sense of place, which develops as a result of people's unique interactions with a place's distinguishing characteristics. Thus, a sense of place is attached to the center of the human perception as humans tend to perceptually create sense and identity for themselves wherever they are. This means that the sense or attachment to a place is not necessarily fixed to a particular place, but rather a perceptual connection between humans and any place that has similar characteristics with their past experiences.

Place identity is a fundamental step on the path toward having a unique place experience, and it becomes even more valuable when it is attached to a cultural group or society as it allows things to be differentiated from other places. It's clear that the sense of identity with a place is fundamental to individuals and groups of people. According to Hull IV et al. (1994), place characteristics are valuable because they serve as symbols for the social groups with which one identifies. Acceptance and rejection of a group's ideals aid in self-definition by indicating "who is on board and who is not." This means that places become significant when we associate with the place we visit, because it embodies unconscious meanings related to an appreciated past experience. Humans have an innate desire to emotionally connect with meaningful places. If we ignore this need and allow forces that promote placelessness to flourish, a future with no meaning is unavoidable (Wyckoff, 2014). Seeing it from this perspective,

means that each individual has a local 'sense of place' where the individual starts to deploy his behavioral settings, life experiences, and begins to deploy his socio-cultural contextual understanding, which all combine to formulate a conception of the individual's-built environment. Later, the individual starts to develop a 'sense of place', an unconscious process that attaches meaning to this built setting. As a result, people's sense of belonging to a place is shaped by the ways in which meaning and attachment affect imageability, which in turn is shaped by culture and experience (Ujang, 2012).

The idea of place through time has surely changed as the new planning interventions and urbanism of cities discouraged the whole system and concept of placemaking. Loss of connection between cities and values caused spatial segregation. As a result, there was a rise in negative social environments due to the effects of codes and building zoning (Cited in Caladrice, 2014). City regulation not only created separation of certain social aspects, but regulation also discouraged the idea of a self-collective image, while also discouraging diversity. It is nearly impossible, now, to express your individuality, and the idea of diversity and interrelation almost fade into nothingness or is very complex to implement due to the regulation implemented by cities. We must consider creating flexible guidelines that incorporate our values and needs. If we compare our cities or places between past and today cultural separation was highly apparent in the past, while today our cities are more redundant and alike everywhere. The researcher believes that human significance and actions in place are very significant because being inside a place means belonging to it and identifying with it, and the more profoundly inside you are, the stronger your identity with the place.

4. Conclusion

Interpretations highlight the significance of both practical and emotional ties in forging a sense of belonging to a specific place. Through the experiences that are practiced, it bonds communities together. The degree to which a place satisfies the emotional and psychological needs of its visitors is directly related to the strength of the connections they form with that place. The significance and meaning of a particular place inspire its development. Positive associations with the place as well as their sense of satisfaction, enjoyment, and

safety, all contribute to the formation of the place's identity. Emotional and practical connections to one's community help to strengthen and sustain a sense of belonging.

How the architectural form plays the role of the physical image is a complex phenomenon because it embodies implicit and explicit meanings that emerge from the influence of various factors. Thus, the architectural form is the explicit physical image; however, the implicit meanings that image embodies are the product of several factors. Therefore, judging the physical form solely without understating the meaning and layers behind its process of making, is inappropriate as the implicit and explicit are interconnected, which means that there is no explicit image if the implicit meaning is not created, or the explicit image is not going to be meaningful if it is not connected with its implicit meaning. This view brings us back to Burner's claim, where he asserted that if the 'original' is implicit, then the 'new' interpretation is explicit. In this case, if the 'new' is interpreted as the 'original', a missing linkage is the process making which may result. The implicit meaning is no longer connected or appropriate. It is a rational representation where the implicit meaning starts to become inconspicuous in terms of its meaning, while the explicit image starts to embody scattered meanings.

Therefore, misguided interventions and regulations will deteriorate both physical places and the emotional connections people have with those places. It is not only the physical elements or the intensity of the activities that distinguish a place, but also the emotional connection with the experience. Government officials and those working in planning and design need to have a deep understanding of the physical, social, and psychological aspects of human experience in order to maintain a sense of place over time.

5. References

- Arnheim, Rudolf.** (1975). *The Dynamics of Architectural Form*. California: University of California Press.
- Abel, Chris.** (1997). *Architecture & Identity: Towards and global eco-culture*. Oxford: Architecture Press.
- Altman, I., and Chemers, M.** (1984). *Culture and Environment*. USA: Cambridge University Press.
- Altman, I., and Low, S. M. (Eds.)** (1992). *Place Attachment*. New York: Plenum.
- Alnaim, M.** (2006). *The Home Environment in Saudi Arabia and Gulf: Growth of identity crises and origin of identity*. Milano: Crissma Working Paper.
- Alnaim, M.** (2015). *Al-Fereej: Rituals and Ceremonies of the Traditional House in Alhasa, Saudi Arabia*. Al-Turath, Saudi Arabia (Arabic).
- Belluschi, P.** (1955). "The Meaning of Regionalism in Architecture." *Architecture Record*, 118(6), 131-139.
- Burner, E.** (1994). "Abraham Lincoln as Authentic Reproduction: A Critique of Postmodernism." *American Anthropologist New Series*, 96(2), pp. 397-415.
- Bretherton, I.** (1992). "The Origins of Attachment Theory: John Bowlby and Mary Ainsworth." *The American Psychological Association, Inc*, 28(5), 759-775.
- Cresswell, T.** (2008). *What is Place*. Elgram: Royal Holloway, University of London.
- Cresswell, T.** (2008). "Place: Encountering Geography as Philosophy." *Geography*, 93, Part 3, 132-139.
- Caladrice, O.** (2014). "City Rule: How Regulations Affect Urban Form by Talen, Emily." *Urban Research & Practice*, Washington, DC: Island Press, xiii, 361-362.
- Counted, V.** (2016). "Making Sense of Place Attachment: Towards a Holistic Understanding of People-place Relationships and Experiences." In T.R.E. Paddock and C.P Heidkamp (Eds.), *Environment, Space, Place*, University of Minnesota Press, 8(1), 7-32.
- Dashti, R.** (2016). "Place Attachment and Female Identity of Traditional Souk Wajif." *Implications for Interior Design*. Retrieved from the University of Minnesota Digital Conservancy, <http://hdl.handle.net/11299/185190>.

- Elwood, S.** (2006). "Beyond cooptation or resistance: Urban spatial politics, community organizations, and GIS-based narratives." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 96, 323–41
- Frampton, K.** (1985). "Towards a Critical Regionalism: Six Points for an Architecture of Resistance." In *Anti-Aesthetic. Essays on Postmodern Culture*, Bay Press, 20-21.
- Friedmann, J.** (2010) "Place and Place-Making in Cities: A Global Perspective." *Planning Theory & Practice*, 11(2), 149-165.
- Heidegger, M.** (1962). *Being and Time*. J. Macquarrie and E. Robinson, trans. New York: Harper & Row.
- Harrison, S., and Dourish, P.** (1980). *Re-Placing Space: The Roles of Place Collaborative Systems*. Cambridge: Rank Xerox Research Centre.
- Hillier, Bill. and Hanson, Julianne.** (1989). *The Social Logic of Space*. London: Cambridge University Press.
- Hodder, I.** (1991). *The Meanings of Things: Material Culture and Symbolic Expression*. London: Harper Collins Academic.
- Hull IV, R., Lam, M., & Vigo, G.** (1994). "Place identity: symbols of self in the urban fabric." *Landscape and Urban Planning*, 28(2-3), 109-120.
- Habraken, J.** (1994). *The Appearance of the Form*. Cambridge: Awater Press.
- Habraken, J.** (2000). *The Structure of the Ordinary: Form and Control in the Built Environment*. Cambridge: The MIT Press.
- Hubbard, P., Kitchin, R. & Valentine, G.** (2008). *Key Texts in Human Geography*. London: SAGE.
- Hadid, Z.** (2015). "AZQuotes.com." Wind and Fly LTD, Retrieved from <http://www.azquotes.com/quote/602102> on June 25, 2022.
- Lynch, K.** (1960). *The Image of the City*. Massachusetts: The M.I.T Press.
- Lucie-Smith, E.** (1988). *The Thames and Hudson Dictionary of Art Terms*. London: Thames & Hudson.
- Lawrence, D., and Low, S.** (1990). "The Built Environment and Spatial Form." *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 19, 453-505
- Lefaivre, L., and Tzonis, A.** (2003). *Critical Regionalism: Architecture and Identity in a Globalized World*. Munich: Prestel.
- Lewicka, M.** (2008). "Place attachment, place identity, and place memory: Restoring the forgotten city past." *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 28, 209–231.
- Maslow, A.H.** (1943). "A Theory of Human Motivation." In *Psychological Review*, 50 (4), 430-437.
- Merleau-Ponty, M.** (1962). *The phenomenology of perception*. New York: Humanities Press.
- Merleau-Ponty, M.** (1968). *The visible and the invisible*. Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press.
- Montgomery, J.** (1998). "Making a city: Urbanity, vitality and urban design." *Journal of Urban Design*, 3(1), 93-116.
- Morgan, P.** (2010). "Towards a developmental theory of place attachment." *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 30(1), 11-22.
- Martin, D.** (2003). "'Place-framing' as place-making: constituting a neighborhood for organizing and activism." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 93, 730– 50
- Norberg-Schulz, C.** (1980). *Genius-loci: Toward a Phenomenology of Architecture*. New York: Rizzoli.
- Odum, H., and Moore, H.** (1938). "American Regionalism: A Cultural-historical Approach to National Integration." *Social Forces*, 17(3), 447–449.
- Oliver, P.** (1997). *Encyclopaedia of Vernacular Architecture of the World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Proshansky, H. M., Fabian, A. K., & Kaminoff, R.** (2014). *The People, Place, and Space Reader*. New York: Routledge.
- Rapoport, A.** (1969). *House Form and Culture*. NJ: Prentice Hall.

- Rapoport, A.** (1970). *The Study of Spatial Quality*. *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, 4(4), 81-95.
- Rapoport, A.** (1977). *Human Aspect of Urban Form: Towards a Man Environment*. USA: Pergamon Press.
- Rapoport, A.** (1982). *The Meaning of Built Environment*. Tucson: The University of Arizona Press.
- Rapoport, A.** (2005). *Culture, Architecture, and Design*. Chicago: Lock Science Publishing Company, Inc.
- Relph, E.** (1976). *Place and Placelessness*. London: Pion Press.
- Reicher, S. D.** (2007). "The psychology of space, place, and identity." Paper presented at ESRC Symposium on Identity and Design, Royal Institute of British Architects, London.
- Stea, D., and Turan, M.** (1993). *Placemaking: Production of Built Environment in Two Cultures*. England: Aldershot.
- Schneekloth, L. and Shibley, R.** (2000). "Implacing Architecture into the Practice of Placemaking." *Journal of architectural education*, 53(3), 130-140.
- Speller, G., Lyons, E., and Twigger-Ross, C.** (2002). "A community in transition: The relationship between spatial change and identity processes." *Social Psychological Review*, 4(2), 39-58.
- Semes, S.** (2009). *The Future of the Past: The Institute of Classical Architecture and Classical America*. USA: W. W. Norton & Company.
- Seamon, D.** (2012). "Place, Place Identity, and Phenomenology: A Triadic Interpretation Based on J.G. Bennett's Systematics." *The Role of Place Identity in the Perception, Understanding, and Design of Built Environments*, 3-21.
- Tuan, Y.** (1977). *Space and Place: The Prespective of Experince*. Minnepolis: Unversity of Minnesota Press.
- Ujang, N., and Dola, K.** (2007). "Linking Activity and Place Attachment Dimensions in Enhancing the Sense of Place." *International Journal on Sustainable Tropical Design Research & Practice*, 2 (1), 59-67.
- Ujang, N.** (2012). "Place attachment and continuity of urban place identity." *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 49, 156-167.
- Villarica, H.** (2011), "Maslow 2.0: A new and improved recipe for happiness." Retrieved from <https://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2011/08/maslow-20-a-new-and-improved-recipe-for-happiness/243486/> on June 25, 2022
- Williams, C.** (1981). *Origins Of Form: The Shape Of Natural And Man Made Things*. Connecticut: Architectural Book Publishing Company.
- Wilkie, R., and Roberson, G.** (2012). "Attachment to Place." In *21st Century Geography: A Reference Handbook*, J Stoltman, ed. Thousand Oaks, SAGE, 135-48.
- Wyckoff, M.A.** (2014). "Definition of placemaking: Four different types." *Planning & Zoning News*, 32(3), 1-10.

ما وراء الشكل المعماري: نحو فهم المعنى الضمني لعمليات صناعة المكان

محمد مشاري النعيم

قسم الهندسة المعمارية - جامعة حائل - المملكة العربية السعودية

moha.alnaim@gmail.com

قدم للنشر في ٢/٢ / ١٤٤٤ هـ؛ وقبل للنشر في ٢٨/٣ / ١٤٤٤ هـ.

ملخص البحث. هذه الدراسة مدفوعة بالمشهد المتغير لتفاعلات الأفراد مع الأماكن وتجاربهم فيها، ولما لهذه التفاعلات من الأثر الكبير على أولئك الأفراد، وكيف سيصبحون، وكيفية تفاعلهم مع الآخرين. تركز دراسة هذا المجال المزدهر على تجربة الأفراد بالمكان وكيفية ارتباطهم بتكوين الهوية وتطورها من خلال الأشياء المادية. في هذه الدراسة تم التحقيق في ثلاثة محاور رئيسية: (١) معنى المكان، (٢) دور الشكل المادي، (٣) هوية المكان. هذه المواضيع الثلاثة مترابطة، فهي تتداخل ويتقاطع بعضها مع بعضها الآخر لتشمل الجوانب المختلفة لعمليات صناعة المكان. تبحث هذه الدراسة في النظريات والأدبيات ذات الصلة لاستنتاج أنه على الرغم من أن الشكل المعماري حيوي لفهم طبيعة الأماكن، إلا أنه ليس سوى جزء واحد من الصورة الأكبر. يمكن أن تساعد عوامل العلاقة الأخرى في توضيح التعقيدات المتعلقة وثراء المكان وتجربته.

الكلمات المفتاحية: صناعة المكان، الشكل المعماري، الشعور الحسي بالمكان، هوية المكان، ظواهر الأمكنة.