

**Cultural landscape; an approach to build security**

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This paper emphasizes the important role of local governments to build security through a different approach to urban design. Reconsidering the importance of developing public spaces and social capital, local governments may design its policies based on the cultural landscape approach. This approach considers different elements from landscape as a whole instead of designing projects or isolated specific interventions, contributing to create the public spaces and social capital needed to help preventing violence and crime.

**Cultural landscape, urban design, public space, social capital, security**

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**Introduction**

Mexico lives difficult times. The recent events occurred in the city of Iguala, state of Guerrero, put in evidence the severe institutional problems in all different governments. The main issue on public discussion is how to build or achieve security.

In this article we propose a different approach to build security and prevent violence. We pose that cultural landscapes could be a new approach to analyze landscape as a whole, considering its different elements like cultural patrimony, natural resources, the environment and economic activities. This approach may support the design of new policy strategies to build and strengthen public spaces, to incentive and encourage social capital and to inhibit the causes of violence.

Local governments suffer the direct impact of all types of violence and crime. Crime, terrorism, domestic violence or even bullying happens in the cities. We must add the consideration that local government's lack of faculties and resources makes it impossible to respond these expressions of violence and crime. However, local governments have strong capabilities to prevent violence and crime through the formation of social capital or the build of public spaces.

The structure of our article is as follows. In the first part we will present the basic concepts, cultural landscape and security. In the second part, we present the relationship between cities and security and the importance of urban design. In the third part, we introduce the cultural landscape approach to support urban design to create the needed conditions to build social capital and security. Finally, we present our conclusions.

**Basic Concepts****Cultural Landscape**

Cultural landscape is source of richness. Its adequate design, implementation as a mean of production, generates richness and this can also build citizen security. In this work we will discuss the assumption that Cultural Landscape could build safe places using its potential as an important factor of sustainable development, generator of wealth when it's conceived as a resource or territorial capital to promote the different economic sectors.

Thinking the citizen and the city as different subjects, conducts the analysis in a vertical way. Instead, thinking the city and the citizen as a single unit, allows a more democratic and horizontal view. Thinking politics in a vertical, hierarchical way places government with the responsibility to conduct society, understanding government as a director and society in a passive role. Thinking society in a horizontal way opens the opportunity to dialogue, discussion, negotiation and consensus, where government won't be the head of the system but only as a very important member, with money and power (Downs, 1968). In this last case, the public space becomes the union between politics and social action.

Public space relates the citizen with the city and society. In the public space, citizens have the possibilities to participate and collaborate in the definition of public affairs, this is the government's agenda, through dialogue, discussion and consensus (Mouffe; 1999). The importance of public spaces conducts to discuss about the physical spaces where social relations are being built, developed and transformed in social capital or social action.

It is important to discuss briefly the definition of public space. In this way, Jimarez (2008) defines as the place where complexity of urbanity arises and in consequence, becomes sensitive to urban public policies. The author points that the public space supports social relationships, meeting point, the space to build citizenship and social capital. Its importance shows the need of urban areas with adequate infrastructure and urban equipment to develop its role. Due its importance, public space becomes a public or semi-public good.

According to Montero (2008), in public spaces citizen's doesn't have significant regulations to the exercise of civil rights or civil liberties; then, the city becomes the place where social capital is built to allow society exercise political rights. The urban infrastructure of the city encourages or inhibits social action by building or restricting public spaces. For Fajardo (2009), the build of public spaces rests in the creation of incentives for citizens to get out their homes to the public space where they will face each other, met and start new social relationships. In consequence, urban infrastructure shows how healthy society is (Aguilar, 2008; Useem, 1998).

Urban infrastructure articulates the city and defines the way of life of its citizens. A city that privileges building roads for cars over pedestrian zones or efficient public transport systems, also privileges vehicles and the way of life of the high class. Cities that privileges developing roads instead of pedestrian zones, promotes the territorial growth of the cities, getting away social goods excluding consumers that doesn't have resources to reach them, especially those who doesn't have a vehicle (Montero, 2002). Instead of that, cities that invest in building pedestrian zones, especially sidewalks, promotes smaller cities and even strengthen local economies.

Cities are also important for generating wealth and economic growth. Cities are responsible for developing the infrastructure that poses the elements required to be competitive and attract investments, especially international investment, what becomes cities in global competitors (Castells & Borja, 2000). It has to be marked that competitiveness doesn't rest only in the built infrastructure but also in other resources offered like human resources, quality of life, natural resources, and quality of government, among the most important.

After the few definitions of public space, it is possible to sustain that it is a social, democratic meeting point, where social networks are built and transformed in social capital. Then, in the public space can be developed different social objectives, public policies and perform specific activities to accomplish different objectives in matters like education, sports or even the local economy.

Urban development generally has been understood as building roads. In the Mexican case, in the second half of the past century, the most important cities of the country followed that model by building wider and wider streets, always inadequate to face the growth of the population and creating incentives for growing faster (Montero, 2002).

Investing in infrastructure for vehicles is commonly understood as a reaction to the number of vehicles in the cities. However, as it has been said, developing roads will never be enough to solve traffic problems, instead it incentives the demand for new vehicles and to increase traffic problems. New roads incentive the territorial growth of the cities increases the cost of delivering public goods and services.

The growth of the cities destroys the environment to develop new residential areas. In many cases it also sacrifices sport facilities, over all informal ones, to build new industrial or commercial areas.

A different phenomenon to be considered is the expulsion of population suffered by town centers, especially historical ones. This process has led to a gradual abandonment of the historical town centers, their structural deterioration and their occupation by vulnerable social groups that are also considered as excluded and abandoned. New residential and commercial areas absorbed the higher classes, public goods and services, contributing to increase inequality and social tension between social groups in society, which are also clear in the city's design. This new structure of the cities reduce public spaces, which has been absorbed, privatized or replaced by private spaces like malls or sports clubs, accessible only for some social groups determined by income. Then, the city's design contributes to social exclusion, inhibiting social collaboration, encouraging the formation of social groups defined by income. Exclusion and inequality both contribute to set the conditions needed to generate violence.

The main objective to our work is to point the importance of cultural landscape as a way to build public spaces and to contribute to prevent violence. To accomplish our goal, in the next paragraph we will present our approach to the theoretical definition of security.

### **Security**

This is a very wide concept and it may become ambiguous if it's not joint with an adequate adjective. According with liberalism, security is the essence and main duty of the State.

This position understand security as the joint of national security, or the defense of the country against threats posed by other countries, and internal security, which is mainly, but not only, responsibility of police departments.

However, in an historical context where security threats are not posed by other states, where there aren't a clear division between external and internal affairs, where the link between local and global affairs becomes stronger and stronger, where new threats comes from actors that remain hidden within the country they tend to attack, arise new concepts like homeland security, human security, democratic security and citizen security.

According to Foucault (2010, p. 86), security is a concept built with liberalism, referred to a particular way to perform government with the objective of social control, based on health policies (hygiene and deceases), policies against crime and against anti-social behaviors. The liberal definition of security became dominant until the fall of the Berlin Wall. The new geopolitical order encouraged different approaches to the definition of security, including democracy, human rights and development. At the same time, new menaces emerged in the form of terrorism, organized crime among the most important. Then, the new definitions of security looked to combine democracy, human rights in a context where different actors become the new menaces for security.

A different view to define security is to understanding it not as a product of the use of force or the menace to use force, but to understand it as a product of peace. This point of view emphasizes the importance of the rule of law and points that governments have to be capable to respond and satisfy people's demands and needs.

The important difference with the previous definition of security is that the first one considers security as a product of the use of force to reach order and social control; the second one considers peace as the product of the promotion of human rights and development through the rule of law and good governments.

The analysis of the meaning of security implies other concepts that have to be analyzed too, but exceeds the objectives and extension of this article. However, one of the elements we want to underline is that good governments require legitimacy. One element that shows levels of legitimacy is trust. Trust in governments becomes an important matter to govern and then important questions arise when protests increase in a country, as we are seeing in Mexico, or even a subnational level, as we are seeing in the states of Guerrero or Puebla. Another elements that shows the importance of trust, are tracking polls on the work of governments, their social approval or grading, and also in this instruments in Mexico show the distrust in politicians, political parties, governments, judges, etc., and the trust of Mexicans in the army and the navy. In few words, Mexico has a severe problem of legitimacy self evident on the trust of Mexicans on their governors.

## **Cities and security**

### **Location and impact of violence**

In the cities occur and impact all the expressions of violence. Bullying, violence against women, fights, gangs, organized crime and even terrorism develops, occur and impact in the cities. In cities is also build social capital with the capabilities to build or to destroy according to the incentives or opportunities to use it (Ostrom, Ahn & Olivares, 2003).

In this case, it has to be recognized the local governments lack of capabilities to fight terrorism, organized crime, etc., but they do have capabilities to identify the roots of the problems and to fight the origins of violence, this means that local governments have capabilities to prevent violence.

In a simple definition, according to the dictionary, violence is an unnatural action and effect of action. In Mexico, right now are different expressions of violence, strongly related with the action of local governments, especially in the town of Iguala, state of Guerrero, where the local police delivered a group of students to the organized crime. This is a strong and visible type of violence, that has led Mexico to a complex political situation, but there are also other types of violence, less visible but more extended like domestic violence, violence against women and other crimes, that exploit government's weakness to enforce the law and social distrust on governments.

Reducing violence is not a responsibility of police. It is true that violence is a complex problem, and when it occurs requires the violent action of government to face it, reduce it and repress it, but before it happens local governments have strong responsibilities to prevent violence.

### **Measures against violence: modern city as medieval city**

To face violence local governments implement the same traditional response: to repress the crime through police action instead of spending resources to prevent it. Violence is still being understood as a responsibility of police institutions, discrediting efforts to implement public policies to prevent violence.

It is common that local governments respond to the social demand of security with announcements of more policemen, more police vehicles, more and more powerful armament, increasing vigilance through security cameras, etc. Society also responds to violence with similar measures like building fences to specific residential areas, placing video cameras, building fences and other types of security infrastructure that locks citizens in their homes and exclusive residential areas, excluding themselves from society.

Here is where the city design and urban development show their contribution to promote and to prevent violence in a similar way as the medieval cities that built “burgos” but now called “clusters”, understood as a model, almost infinite, of a polygon defined and protected with a perimeter wall that protects the residential zones, sport facilities, playgrounds and the control system. This model is associated with the idea of confinement and exclusiveness that really becomes exclusion, because these kinds of places are not accessible for all citizens.

The architecture that does not belong to this groups design its own security components. The wall still being one of the most useful elements, facades made of massif concrete with only one access door, lattices in fences, doors and windows, special security door locks, special security doors with remote controls, security cameras, they all become part of this model.

This model of urban and architectural design does not allow coexistence between neighbors and citizens; instead they become elements of social exclusion.

Within this residential areas neighbors doesn't know each other and can't know if some one could need some kind of help, in consequence confinement doesn't builds security but may transform in the isolation needed for criminals to act free, with the confidence that no one will find out that a crime could be happening. In few words, this model destroys the possibility to build public spaces.

Instead of this model, developing public spaces is a way to build security. When neighbors know each other, where access are visible for everyone, becomes difficult for a stranger to damage someone in the community. When we talk about public spaces we talk about building communities, but when we talk about exclusive residential areas, we talk of individuals believing that exclusiveness will give them security when it's really giving them isolation and they are constructing social exclusion.

### **Cultural landscape**

This is an important natural resource that has being increasingly recognized for its ecological significance (as an external expression of ecosystems functionalities) and its social demand (tourism, quality of life, culture and as an innovation source). Society has become used to see degraded and trivialized landscapes as a consequence of the lack of interest. Instead, it is necessary to recover, transform and build new quality landscapes as an inseparable expression of good landscape management and organization of the city's territory. In this way, landscape has become an important part of social interest as an important element for the everyday life, welfare and security.

Cultural Landscape contributes building security and reducing violence developing public spaces. To develop the cultural landscape it is needed to know the different elements of the landscape, to enumerate the types, categories, processes, systems and subsystems in its context or territory.

The common way to study landscapes is through separate and disintegrated processes. For example, the architecture is studied and analyzed separately, as a unit, in some cases incorporating its environment; in the same direction, historical patrimony is analyzed from different specific approaches, like the efforts to restore very specific damages in certain types of patrimony that required developing some certain special techniques. However, over time the concepts have evolved and new ways to analyze patrimony had been developed through the concept of cultural landscape.

It is very important to define and identify the landscape's processes. This is a developing work on this subject, which has conducted to hypothetical and even intuitive examples, but it is needed to strengthen the efforts to develop new levels of knowledge.

Within the built landscape is a special component: the cultural patrimony rarely conceived as a part of the landscape. One important consideration about cultural landscape is to define if it is a social patrimony or if only a few special social groups are capable to use it or get benefits from it, which is a discussion strongly related with the role of the city's design that contributes to social exclusion/inclusion and to incentive or inhibit violence. This is an important discussion. As we have seen, public spaces are supposed to be owned by society and then, it becomes the main patrimony for citizens to exercise citizenship and democracy.

In consequence, this type of patrimony has to be occupied, used, preserved, defended and increased by citizens. If not, these spaces will become part of the private sphere, with all the goods and benefits that this patrimony could generate.

When cultural landscape also joins with an environment with natural resources, the elements of the landscape increase their complexity by adding economic value to the exploitation, use and trade of the goods. In consequence, if these spaces become private it doesn't just become a loss for democracy but also for the environment. Then, citizens have more responsibility to protect and preserve these spaces. To explain our considerations, we'll present two examples.

The complexity for cultural landscape arises in the primary sector where the value of natural resources incentives production and sales of agricultural products, poultry and livestock, preserving an agricultural landscape integrated by ranches, towns, farmlands, etc., and their instruments, infrastructure and accessories. In this type of landscape, configured as place, live the farmers (and those people part of the economic chain to supply or provide different services required), which material and immaterial expressions arises around their everyday economic activities. Then, all this expressions are job habits and recreation, manners, family and society, believes (religious or empirical), gastronomy, etc. There can be no other place in the world with all the same cultural qualities together with its environment and even its weather, what makes a unique landscape.

In this first example is noticed how landscape and its ecologic value contributes to point the importance to preserve the quality of the rural environment and the adequate performance of the environment.

This type of landscape, when preserved, contributes functionally and productively, guarantees resources and profits, encourages historical value and identity. Its scenic and spiritual values evoke positive feelings because in the agricultural landscape develops productive areas, jobs to generate income and consumption. Then, the natural environment, its ecosystems, its biodiversity, becomes a natural capital to the local development.

In a second example we may consider one activity from the secondary economic sector. Craft production is an activity that requires special inputs provided by its environment and special techniques developed over time in specific regions and cultures. For example, basketry commonly requires reed and Tule as specific inputs that are only grown in aquatic environments like lakes, lagoons, natural water dams and ponds. When these kinds of environments disappear, craft production tends to disappear with them. In consequence, to recover this craft it becomes necessary to recover the water resources, which will benefit the craftsmen, the environment and also will recover the natural and cultural landscape where men had become an important element.

In a third example we may consider in the tertiary economic sector the cultural tourism, even when in the previous examples different activities related with this sector occur within the production chain. Cultural tourism is based on the built landscape: indigenous towns, historical downtowns, but also agricultural and natural landscapes in countrysides, traditional roads, and also gastronomy, monuments, traditional markets or traditional town celebrations.

The previous examples show the value of cultural landscape that has to be considered as an important resource for production, and for generating economic growth and wealth. In consequence, in the public policy's design, policy instruments, actions, mechanisms, techniques, etc., should be considered the purpose to build and strengthen public spaces, to contribute in the construction of social capital, incorporating and engaging communities in managing their natural resources and cultural patrimony (Ostrom, 2000). These considerations will contribute to build public spaces adequate for sharing and coexistence (Andalucía; 2012).

Cultural landscape may constitute a strong element to build security through developing strong communities with their natural resources and cultural patrimony. To achieve this goal, it's necessary to implement governance methods involving government and as most stakeholders as possible, establishing their effort in a Management of the Cultural Landscape Plan, that becomes the cornerstone for the governance of the landscape. There are different options for urban projects to involve stakeholders. Cultural landscape offers different options because cultural processes are more complex and diverse than the specific interventions. These projects should promote human development through encouraging governance mechanisms, the building and strengthening public spaces and social capital, setting conditions to allow the community to design and implement public policies for other subjects like economy, employment, urban development, etc.

The implementation of cultural landscape contributes to rebuild cultural systems, involving different stakeholders and different elements of landscape disregarded by specific projects or isolated public policies.



This approach contributes to strengthen the local culture, the build and recovery of public spaces, promotes the build of social capital and, in consequence, society retakes its own cultural expressions, recognizes the value of their natural resources and cultural patrimony, building the social capital and public spaces needed to inhibit the conditions needed to generate violence.

### Conclusions

Local government's lack of capabilities to combat crime and violence gets balanced with the recognition of their capabilities to prevent violence and crime.

These capabilities are based on the formation of social capital and the construction of public spaces. To realize their capabilities, local governments require new policies related to urban design. In that direction, cultural landscape becomes an accurate approach to consider as most elements as possible to elaborate public policies.

This approach is different at considering different elements of the landscape as a whole instead of only considering specific projects or spaces. It is recognized the importance of the cultural patrimony, the environment, the value of natural resources, the economic activities, among the most important. If landscapes include all this elements, the approaches needed to design policies have to try to consider all the elements to design adequate policies.

Considering this approach to prevent crime and violence becomes an alternative for local governments in Mexico to recover their capabilities to construct social capital, public spaces and contribute to prevent crime and violence.

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