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DRUŽBENI IN PROSTORSKI VIDIK JAVNIH PROSTOROV – SKOZI ANALIZO DEL ALIJA MADANIPOURJA
THE SOCIAL AND SPATIAL ASPECT OF PUBLIC SPACES – THROUGH THE ANALYSIS OF ALI MADANIPOUR'S WORKS

POVZETEK

Po dokončnem zatonu funkcionalizma v šestdesetih letih 20. stoletja se je debata o javnem prostoru mest vrnila v teoretične razprave in praktično delo na področju urbanističnega načrtovanja in oblikovanja. Najprej kot spomin na zgodovinsko vlogo in obliko javnega prostora, nato pa kot razprava o javnem prostoru kot osrednjem orodju za razvoj trajnostnih mest. Med najpomembnejšimi teoretiki na tem področju je arhitekt in profesor Ali Madanipour.

V središču tega prispevka sta družbeni in prostorski vidik javnih prostorov. Analizirani sta dve najpomembnejši deli profesorja Madanipourja, ki sta izšli s precejšnjo časovno razliko, da bi razumeli, ali so se stališča profesorja Madanipourja glede družbeno-prostorskega vidika javnih prostorov sčasoma spremenila oziroma razvila in na kakšen način. Najprej smo analizirali dve deli profesorja Madanipourja, eno iz leta 1996 in drugo iz leta 2020, nato pa smo ti deli kritično primerjali med seboj.

Profesor Madanipour opisuje trenutno stanje javnih prostorov z besedami »od kritike do ortodoksije«. Izzivi in nezadovoljstvo, ki so se pojavljali v preteklosti in jih je omenjal tudi sam, so zdaj postali običajni, torej realnost, ki jo sprejemamo. Njegovo stališče glede javnih prostorov je preprosto, saj zahteva, da so dobro dostopni, vključujoči in odprti za vse brez razlik ter da upoštevajo družbeno-prostorski vidik prostora in vseh področij, ki so z njim povezana. Kot je omenil, je med drugim najmanj zadovoljen s tem, da se javni prostori obravnavajo kot gospodarski generatorji, pri čemer niso ustvarjeni za krepitev družbenega vidika ter vseh telesnih, duševnih in družbenih koristi, ki jih imajo za uporabnike.

KLJUČNE BESEDE

javni prostori, družbeno-prostorski vidik, Ali Madinapour

ABSTRACT

After the final decline of functionalism in the 1960s, the debate regarding public spaces returned to theoretical discussions and practical work in the field of urban planning and design. First as a reminder of the historical role and form of public space and then as a discussion of public space as a central tool for the development of sustainable cities. Among the most important theorists in this field is Professor Madanipour.

The focus of this paper is in the socio-spatial aspect of public spaces. Respectively, in analyzing two of the most important works of Madanipour, with a considerable time difference, for understanding whether and how did his viewpoints regarding public spaces change or develop during time. Initially, the two works are analyzed, one from 1996, the other from 2020. Further, these works are critically compared to each other.

Madanipour describes the current situation of public spaces with the saying "From a critique to an orthodoxy". The challenges and dissatisfactions that were raised in the past, and even mentioned by him, have now become commonplace, a reality we are accepting. For public spaces, his point of view is simple, he requires good access to them, to be inclusive and open to all, and to take into account their social-spatial aspect and all areas related to it. One of his main dissatisfactions is that public spaces are being treated as economic generators. At the end it is talked about nowadays public spaces, and possible directions for their development.

KEY-WORDS

public spaces, socio-spatial aspect, Ali Madinapour

1. INTRODUCTION

Public spaces are "a meeting point and a container for social movements" (Madanipour, 1996).

They play an important role in the public life and enhance the quality of our lives and wellbeing (Carr et al., 1992). If properly planned and maintained, public spaces will promote physical, mental and social health. They will encourage physical activity, social integration, a sense of place, affect the economy, and promote a more sustainable way of living (Carmona et al., 2008) (Carmona et al., 2004).

Many characteristics of nowadays public spaces have their roots in the ancient civilizations. In the ancient Greek civilization, the acropolis and then "agora" were used as gathering spaces for citizens and accommodated social and political activities (Carmona et al., 2008) (Caves, 2005). Access to these public spaces wasn't equal, women, foreigners, and slaves were excluded since they weren't considered citizens (Carmona et al., 2008). Zukin (1995) also argues that cultural symbols can have an impact on the social aspect of a space by excluding or inviting different groups of society.

Carmona et al., (2008) mentions some features of public spaces that we inherited from Greek civilization, which are: public spaces that are multifunctional, democratic, used for economic development and trade, informal spaces that encourage interaction, and also mentions the importance of the aesthetic aspect of public spaces and the limitation of access for different groups of society.

Based on the definitions in the Oxford English Dictionary (1933) and the Concise Oxford Dictionary (1990), public spaces are open to everyone, and are a concern of public authorities to develop and maintain. Public spaces include all parts of the city that users can see and physically access, the streets, squares, sidewalks, and more, up until the boundaries of the private buildings (Madanipour, 1996). They are not semi-public spaces nor private spaces that are developed and managed by private firms or individuals, where access is controlled and not open for all groups of society (Madanipour, 1996).

The aim of the research is to analyze the viewpoints of Professor Madanipour regarding public spaces and whether and how did his viewpoints regarding the social-spatial aspect of public spaces change or develop during time.

2. METHODOLOGY

The theoretical groundwork contains examination and study of literature on public spaces, social-spatial aspect of public spaces, and on the theoretical viewpoint of Professor Madanipour about public spaces. The methods used were analytical, qualitative and comparative.

In order to understand Professor Madanipour viewpoints regarding public spaces, two of his most important works, with a time difference of more than 20 years, were analyzed and compared to each other. The first analyzed work is the book *Design of Urban Space - An Inquiry into a Socio-spatial Process (1996)*, the second is the paper *A critique of public space: between interaction and attraction (2020)*. In addition to these, this article was also based on content from other relevant sources regarding public spaces and their social-spatial aspect, which are listed in the references chapter at the end.

The research was developed in three stages. Initially, the men-

tioned works of Professor Madanipour were analyzed to get an overview of his viewpoints. Further, these works were critically compared with each other to understand if his views regarding public spaces changed over time. At the end, our viewpoints on possible directions for the development of public space in the future are presented.

2.1 First case study: *"Design of Urban Space - An Inquiry into a Socio-spatial Process" - Madanipour (1996)*

The book of Madanipour (1996) elaborates urban design, as a product of urban development process, linking it with other fields such as social sciences, architecture, political sciences, economy, philosophy, real estate and more.

The book is structured in two parts, respectively in eight chapters. In the first part "Perspectives into Urban Space", the author explains the theoretical or philosophical aspect of urban space. This part contains three chapters, related to the meaning of urban space or the philosophical definitions of space, the foundation of urban space as defined by professionals, and the social aspect of the city or how people experience and use the city and space.

From the first part we understand the behavior and definition of urban space, everyday life, social diversity, and the restrictions of access and use of public spaces as a result of external factors, such as crimes in public spaces. This part concludes with Madanipour's viewpoint regarding urban spaces. According to him, in order to understand, to create, and have a balanced structure of urban space, we must take into account different aspects, with emphasis on the social and physical aspects.

The second part of the book is called "The making of Urban Space". This part analyzes the process of urban design and various related fields, such as economics, politics, and more, aiming to understand the role of urban design in the process of urban development. It has five chapters, concerning the analysis of urban design, the process of urban development and urban design, the laws and regulations regarding spaces, and the models and concepts of the 20th century for developing the city. In the second part of the book, Madanipour (1996) talks more about the public spaces. He elaborates topics such as the privatization of public spaces, the restriction of access to them, social diversity, the political and economic impact and more.

According to Madanipour (1996), this book provides an understanding of the social and physical aspects of urban design, which includes the process of creating a space and the results or the products.

To start with, in his book, Madanipour (1996) highlights the impact of modernism on the development of the city, respectively on the development of public spaces, and mentions how the spaces were segregated. Not alone, Carmona et al, (2008) also elaborates the impact of modernism in public spaces and argues that it led to "homogenization of spatial types, ignoring the social and psychological needs of an increasingly diverse city".

Due to the development of segregated settlements, public spaces were difficult to reach and the settlements were hard to access (Madanipour, 1996). This situation brought dissatisfaction, and the citizens sought to restore the role and value of public spaces. In response, Madanipour (1996) states that in order to renew public spaces, they were privatized. Therefore, from a situation where public spaces were neglected, a new situation was created where public spaces were privatized.

The privatization of public spaces brought new challenges, among others, Loukaitou -Sideris and Banerjee (1998) mentions design and public spaces tailor made for groups that bring monetary benefits, emphasized social differences, ad hoc interventions, not taking into account the needs of the general public, and more.

During this period, the public spaces were being developed and managed by private firms, then sold to middle classes in order to profit and attract potential customers. Although this current was initially criticized, now it has become commonplace for public spaces to be developed on the basis of monetary potential (Madanipour, 1996).

The involvement of private firms in developing and managing the public spaces has changed the role of the spaces, by first being treated as commodities, spaces which are initially Accessed in terms of economic benefit (Madanipour, 1996). Similar to this, Madanipour (1996) mentions the increase of competition, the increase of the expectations of the users and the decrease of safety in the city. According to Madanipour (1996), these features represent a starting point for controlling public spaces, and according to him, this created a distinction between spaces controlled or managed by public authorities and private investors.

Seeing public spaces as commodities has influenced how a space is "understood and managed" (Madanipour, 1996). In order to maximize the profit, public spaces should be good enough for the market, therefore, the urban development processes started to be standardized (Madanipour, 1996). This is a characteristic of Modernism, where the spaces were mass produced and the design was standardized, yet as Madanipour (1996) says, "this was, a narrow notion of use value, undermining the diversity of the lifeworld beyond instrumental gains".

Related, Carmona et al. (2003), talks about managing and maintaining public spaces, and considers the "third way" of managing as a way out of the situation created by the privatization. Unlike the practice when only the government was responsible, or the other practice when responsibility was transferred to private firms, the "third way" of managing public spaces is a combination of responsibilities between public authorities and private firms, where the government has control over the influence of market forces (Carmona et al., 2003).

Further, Madanipour (1996) highlights the rising fear of crime in the city. He mentions the book *Defensible Space from* Oscar Newman (1972), where 4 elements are proposed to be applied when developing the city in order to increase its safety. These elements are: carefully choosing the location, the shape of objects, the position of windows to observe the neighborhood, and defining what is private, semi-private and public, even through barriers if needed.

Madanipour (1996) in particular comments on the element of "creating barriers", and describes it as a drawback for public spaces. According to him, barriers can create "restrictions on access, a decline in public space, and a fear of difference". Although the city is diverse, creating barriers and segregating the city is not the right solution to increase its security (Madanipour, 1996).

Related, Madanipour (1996) analyses the economic and social aspects of "controlled" closed shopping malls built and managed by private firms. Initially, the shopping mall in the suburb was built and managed by a private firm, and normally the purpose of its construction was financial gain, next, the "public"

space in this shopping mall was originally used for shopping and not to strengthen social relations, further, the design of the building and the physically controlled space invited specific groups of society best suited for shopping, and, being far from the city made access to it more difficult.

In spite of these, Madanipour (1996) mentions some factors that gave the dimension of "public", such as the attendance of a large number of buyers which made the space dynamic and somehow public, regardless of the fact that it was suitable only for specific groups of society. Madanipour (1996) evaluates these types of shopping malls as semi-public spaces.

Peterson (2017) talks about semi-public spaces as spaces that are accessible by the public, but also have a private dimension, due to the activities that take place, which impose our way of acting, e.g. Bookstores, Schoolyards. According to him, in public spaces such as parks, squares, people do not necessarily interact with each other, since they have no reason to interact, however, he sees semi-public spaces as spaces with more diversity and opportunity or motive for interaction. However, Madanipour (1996) argues that semi-public spaces, which are managed by private firms, are an easy solution for the financial aspect, but promote social and spatial segregation.

To summarize, there are two main concerns regarding public spaces that Madanipour (1996) highlights, the standardization of design and the privatization of public spaces.

As a response to the trend of "controlling" public spaces by private individuals or groups, Madanipour (1996) considers public participation a way to get the voice back to the citizens. However, in order for citizens to be properly involved in the process, substantial changes need to be made in the way spaces are produced and managed (Madanipour, 1996). The process of developing the city, should be a combination of both the social aspect and the physical aspect of the space, and all other needed fields, and concentrating one aspect only will affect the process and the product (Madanipour, 1996).

2.2 Second case study: *"A critique of public space: between interaction and attraction" - Madanipour (2020)*

In his paper, Madanipour (2020) analyzes the transition of public spaces, and the impact of the economic, political and cultural aspects on them. Below are described 4 areas that have an impact on public spaces.

"The changing relationship between the public and private spheres"

An important element which had an impact in changing the role of public spaces is the shift of responsibility for developing the built environment from public authorities to private firms.

In his research, Madanipour (2020) describes this transition of responsibility from the period of after the Second World War. He first mentions the existing model of that time for developing the built environment, where the public authorities were responsible for all public relations and for developing and managing the city. In time, public authorities were directed towards the market, respectively towards private firms. Thus, the above mentioned model was followed by the neoliberal model, where the state gave space to the private sector to produce and manage the built environment. This approach continues even today, and Madanipour (2020) considers it a drawback regar-

ding public spaces, since undoubtedly, the goal of the private sector is profit. Therefore, the primary role of public spaces, to be open and accessible to all, changed, and now public spaces are initially seen as economic generators.

Another important element is the change of the character of public authorities, who started to have the same approach as the private firms, initially having in mind the economic benefit that (Madanipour, 2020).

"The prevalence of economic considerations"

The second area that Madanipour (2020) addresses is the impact of the economic development on the city. He emphasizes that this impact is seen in both the broad aspect, urban development, also in the narrow aspect, through activities offered by a space.

Gehl (2011) describes the types of activities that occur in public spaces, and how their use is affected by their physical condition. He groups activities into: necessary activities, optional activities, and social activities. According to him, regardless of the condition of the public spaces that enable the necessary activities to be carried out, their usability remains the same, therefore people go to work or school, wait for the bus, and more. The same cannot be said for optional activities, if the physical condition of public spaces is not good, it will have a direct impact on the development of activities, such as enjoying a walk, going to the park, and more. As for social activities, Gehl (2011) highlights that they are related to the above two activities, and favoring the development of those activities also increases social activities.

Public spaces are now being developed to make cities more attractive and competitive, in order to stand out from other cities, thus to increase tourism and investment (Madanipour, 2020).They also effect the real estate, the value of the properties increases if there is a genuine public space in the vicinity. More, at a micro level, the activities that take place in public spaces are selected to encourage investment, even the simplest activities like shopping. (Madanipour, 2020)

"Technological change and dispersing cities"

The development of different types of transport helped in "urban spatial fragmentation and dispersion" (Madanipour, 2020). Different types of transportation enabled people to work and live in different places, therefore, some groups of society prefer to live private and quiet lives in the suburbs. These settlements enabled the desired privacy, but influenced public spaces. Often in these settlements, public spaces are for a certain group of society, sometimes controlled by ramps or guards, and create a physical and mental barrier for outside users. Next, the connection between these settlements is not always good, disadvantaging socialization and shared use of space.

Another shortcoming related to transportation, is the change in the character of roads, sidewalks, squares, and more, from public spaces that promote the social aspect, to functional spaces that allow us to move from one point to another.

Madanipour (2020) also mentions the technological devices that enable us to access information and communicate. He highlights that they were estimated to have a negative effect on public spaces and make the concept of the city and public spaces disappear, but on the contrary, they made the city even more " vibrant" and increased the motivation of tourists to visit them.

"Social diversification and inequality"

The development of the city increases the number of citizens that will live in it and use it. This creates social diversion which raises the possibility that there will be no equality between different users of the space (Madanipour, 2020).

During time, the city and public spaces were and are still designed to meet the needs of the most dominant groups of users. In this way, intentionally or not, certain groups of society are favored. Madanipour (2020) illustrates this by mentioning women (safety), people with limited mobility and children, and emphasizes that access to public spaces for these groups, and not only, is sometimes or usually limited.

According to Farr et. al (2013), the main reason for the decline of public spaces is the way public spaces are produced. In order to create all-inclusiveness and public spaces that offer equal opportunities for all, a repeated system must be created by planners so that the knowledge gained after analyzing how functional and comfortable a space is after it is used for some time, to be involved in planning stages (Farr et. al, 2013).

Further, Madanipour (2020) talks about the importance of access to public spaces. He considers good access as an essential element for public spaces. According to him, "The more accessible a place, the more public it becomes".

Related, Lynch (1981) highlights that access is "one fundamental advantage of an urban settlement". He mentions three important dimensions of access, it is important what we give access to, the equality of access for different groups of citizens and to control the system of access. Lynch (1981) also argues that access can have an influence in the economical aspect, social aspect and in the psychology of the city.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

By analyzing the two case studies, we note that in general, the viewpoint of Madanipour regarding public spaces changed a little.

According to him, for a genuine design process and a genuine public space, the social-spatial aspect of a space, and of all areas related to it, must be taken into account.

While, as far as public spaces are concerned, his point of view is simple, he requires good access to them and to be inclusive and open to all without distinction.

There are many similarities between the two above presented works. Initially, in both cases Madanipour emphasizes the shift of developing and managing public spaces from public authorities to private individuals or groups.

In both cases, this shift is considered a drawback because in principle, public spaces are not being created to strengthen the social aspect and all the physical, mental and social benefits that they bring to the user, but are being created for monetary benefits. Other drawback mentioned are the competition between cities to make the space more attractive to tourists, the increasing the value of property in parallel with increasing the quality of public spaces, the increasing demand of citizens, the tendency to create various activities in spaces all in order to invite as many users as possible and have as many monetary benefits as possible.

A noted difference between the first and the second case study,

regarding the privatization of spaces, is the change of the author's approach to public authorities. In the first case study, Madanipour (1996) says that there is a difference between spaces created and managed by public authorities, and those by private firms, as in the case where he compares the shopping malls mentioned above in the paper. He leans towards public spaces that are under the responsibility of public authorities, since according to him, they promote spaces tailored for the users and not for economic benefit. However, in the second case study, he criticizes public authorities on the grounds that they have changed their character, becoming more and more like private firms, having in mind primary the economic benefit a space can bring. According to him, when the character of public authorities' changes, when public authorities begin to act and think like private firms, then the nature of public spaces changes.

Another reason that the role of public spaces changed, is the segregation of settlements. Among others, a factor that has helped this segregation is the development of technology, respectively of different types of transport, which enabled housing and work to take place in different locations (Madanipour, 1996, 2020).

Regarding technology, Madanipour (2020) in the second case study adds the role of technological devices that enable us to communicate and access information without being present. Despite that some criticize these devices to have a negative impact for public spaces, Madanipour (2020) says they have made the city more "vibrant".

In both cases presented above, he addresses other concerns regarding public spaces, such as social diversity, the inability of the city to respond to all groups, lack of security in spaces, control of public spaces, physical barriers and more.

The current situation regarding public spaces, unlike from the first case study, Madanipour (2019) now describes it with the phrase "from a critique to an orthodoxy". Meaning that the challenges and dissatisfactions that were raised in the past, and

even mentioned by him, have now become commonplace, a reality that we are accepting.

He argues that public spaces have become a place of attraction, a tool to be sold under the reasoning that they are well-designed and qualitative public spaces. However, to end in a positive note, Madanipour (2020) emphasizes the role of citizens, and as a hope for returning public spaces to people he considers the involvement of citizens in the process of developing the city.

Since the city can be seen as an ongoing experiment (Roggema, R., 2018) or as a permanent transformation (Keiner, 2012), Madanipour (2019) highlights that we have not lost the game, but constant work is needed to make the spaces "open, inclusive and accessible".

In the Table 1 are presented the two works of Madanipour roughly summarized in four areas that are chapters in Madanipour (2020).

5. CONCLUSION

The viewpoints of Professor Ali Madanipour regarding public spaces are simple. He highlights that public spaces should be open for everybody, should be accessible and inclusive. This is noted in both analyzed case studies. Other similarities between two works are, his dissatisfaction that public spaces are managed by private firms, his dissatisfaction that public spaces are initially considered commodities, the negative impact of the standardization of design, the negative impact of the segregated settlements, and more.

The difference is noticed in the approach he has regarding public authorities, where in the second case study he criticizes public authorities for thinking and acting like private firms regarding public spaces. Another difference is that he considers the current situation "from a critique to an orthodoxy", we are now accepting the things we once criticized. Another change

Table 1: The two summarized works of Ali Madanipour.

	Madanipour (1996)	Madanipour (2020)
The changing relationship between the public and private spheres	The shift of responsibility to build and manage public spaces from public authorities to private firms is considered a drawback, since public spaces are seen as economic generators, this promotes social and spatial segregation. He favors public spaces created by public authorities because they better understand and manage them.	The shift of responsibility is again considered a drawback. He now highlights the changed character of public authorities, having the same approach as private firms, developing public spaces based on monetary benefits.
The prevalence of economic considerations	The dominance of the economic aspect has come as a result of, and not only, the involvment of private firms in building public spaces, the increase of competition, the increase of the expectations of the users and the decrease of safety in the city. He considers these as starting points for creating "controlled" spaces.	The economic aspect has again a big role in the development of public spaces. He highlights that, public spaces are being developed to increase tourism, increase value of real estate, bring opportunities for investments, and more.
Technological change and dispersing cities	He relates the development of different types of transportation with the segregation of settlements, which bought new challenges, public spaces were difficult to reach, neglected of privatized.	He again highlights the segregation brought by transportation. He further talks about technological tools that enable us to communicate and provide information, and considers them as positive tools that make the city more "vibrant".
Social diversification and inequality	The standardized design of public spaces brought challenges, such as, the city/public spaces being suitable for the dominant group of users, rising crime, physical barriers for accessing spaces, and more.	Public spaces are still designed to meet the needs of the most dominant groups. He highlights that public spaces should constantly be improved while involving the users in the process.

from the first caste study, is the added the role of technology in public spaces.

All these mentioned elements by Madanipour (1996), (2020), are an indisputable reality. However, the course of development of public spaces has had an unpredictable shift from the situation created by Covid-19 pandemic.

Due to the measures to prevent the spread of the virus, many activities stopped, especially indoor activities, therefore, public spaces provided the opportunity for developing activities, without compromising the health of others. As a result, the role of public spaces returned, from spaces that were primary considered as economic generators (Madanipour, 1996, 2020) to spaces that promote physical, mental and social health. "Towards a healthier, more humane and active city" (Broudehoux, 2021).

However, now more than ever in the last years, the role of public spaces returned, as "a meeting point and a container for social movements" (Madanipour, 1996). Therefore, cities should reclaim public spaces, and maintain this character of public spaces, through putting the citizens first, by including them in the process of developing the city, and by improving spaces to be more "open, inclusive and accessible" for all people, based on their needs.

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