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## **European Public Space Projects with Social Cohesion in mind: Symbolic, Programmatic and Minimalist Approaches.**

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### **Abstract**

The last two decades have witnessed a growing commitment to European public space projects seeking to promote social cohesion. These projects are built on the premise that social cohesion is under threat from the increasing cultural and economic differences in contemporary cities, and that it should be promoted through public spaces.

This paper examines the key commonalities and differences among these new public space projects, in terms of their social, economic and planning policy contexts, social goals, design aims, processes and outcomes, and their diverse representational and use needs. The paper characterizes three distinct open space design approaches – Symbolic, Programmatic and Minimalist – that governments and designers that have been put forward as best practices to enhance social cohesion, which have all been applied in similar socio-cultural and urban contexts: multicultural, low-income neighbourhoods that are experiencing gentrification.

By combining theories and methods from urban design and social science, this paper offers an assessment and comparison of the three case studies and their relative merits and limitations in terms of how they used public space design to support the divergent functional and representational needs of diverse social groups, and the common aim of enhancing cohesion among these groups.

### **1. Introduction**

This paper examines the role of public spaces and their design in supporting opportunities for people to experience, develop and maintain a sense of social cohesion in socially and culturally diverse urban contexts. It does so by focusing on the recent phenomenon of European public space projects that seek to promote social cohesion and intercultural dialogue. These projects are built on the premise that social cohesion is under threat from the increasing cultural and economic differences in contemporary cities, and that it can and should be promoted through public spaces. Many scholars consider public spaces, in their role as key contact and encounter spaces, as key sites and tools to facilitate social cohesion (Putnam 2000; Holland et al. 2007; Lownsbrough, and Beunderman 2007; Mayblin et al. 2015; Piekut and Valentine 2017; Aelbrecht and Stevens 2019). They are places where different groups and individuals come together and where social norms of acknowledgement and interaction are renewed.



A new set of European public space projects have emerged in a context of increasing nationalism and heightened political debates around immigration, local, national and supranational policies in the EU, alongside a heightened commitment to ideals of social cohesion and solidarity, and to recognizing diverse claims about cultural identities and supporting a politics of difference and mutual tolerance (Wood and Landry 2008). Some of these implemented projects have been promoted as best practices in increasing social cohesion and have been replicated in other cultural contexts. This is the case of the three case studies discussed in this paper: Superkilen in Copenhagen, Afrikanderplein in Rotterdam and Gillett Square in London (Academy of Urbanism 2013; Aga Khan Development Network 2016; CoE ICP 2016). All three are much-publicised, award-winning public space designs, and all are located in ethnically diverse, socio-economically-deprived inner-urban neighbourhoods. Their similar policy agendas and comparable urban contexts allow us to focus on comparing their fundamentally different design approaches, which is the key knowledge gap this paper aims to address. Superkilen combines a complex range of symbols, furnishings and activity programs that seek to represent and connect its surrounding communities. Afrikanderplein is designed to facilitate a range of activities that specifically encourage social encounters. Gillett Square is a minimalist design, providing an open setting available for appropriation by diverse users and uses.

To date, there has not been any attempt to examine these different public space approaches, to understand why and how they are all considered best-practice models. Evaluation is difficult, partly because of the limited knowledge among academics, practitioners and policymakers on the experience of social cohesion in the public realm, and how well the public realm design can support it (Aelbrecht and Stevens 2019). The importance of public spaces in the politics of encounter has been extensively researched by social scientists (Sennett 1974; Watson 2006; Piekut and Valentine 2017). What has received far less study is what role the actual design of public spaces can have in supporting and encouraging social encounters, acknowledgement and interaction. Recent research calls for more empirical research to evaluate and guide public space design practices and policymaking in this area (Spierings et al. 2016; Risbeth et al. 2018). This paper responds to those calls by evaluating current open space strategies and design approaches, to understand how these have sought to foster social cohesion. It does so by analysing the design attributes of the three case-study approaches against established dimensions of social cohesion, to contrast their design aspirations and implementation. This spatially-focused assessment can complement the more common analyses of the open spaces' uses and of their specific histories of urban development and demographic contexts (Risbeth et al 2018; Daly 2020).

The paper begins by reviewing the social, cultural and political environment underlying the production of European public space projects designed with social cohesion in mind, to understand their background and rationale. It then examines existing scholarly thinking on the interconnections

between public space, urban design practice, intercultural social encounter and social cohesion, to establish a clear theoretical framework for analysis. The core of the paper examines three key recent European public space projects that use different urban design approaches, to compare if and how their designs meet diverse user needs and enable cohesion. The paper concludes by discussing the implications of the findings for public space design theory, practice and policy.

## **2. European Public Space Projects with Social Cohesion in mind and their rationale**

The European Commission has in recent years increased its focus on urban issues, as a response to an estimate that by 2020 almost 80% of EU citizens will be living in cities. The overall objective of this policy drive is to enhance the sustainability of EU cities (European Commission 2020). The European Commission Environment Directorate General is working on improving the urban environment, with one particular focus being enhancing social cohesion and inclusion of migrants and refugees in cities. This increasing interest reflects dramatic demographic changes within Europe. Since the 1980s European states have witnessed unprecedented ethnic, racial and religious diversification, comparable with countries like the US, Canada and Australia, which were all settled by immigrants (Modood 2007). This context has transformed European politics, ideologies and policies related to diversity, social cohesion and integration, shifting from denial to integration, to welcoming and engaging with migrant populations and with diversity more broadly (Vertovec and Wessendorf 2010). These changing attitudes have also shaped changes in European planning and urban design practice. This is visible in the shift of many city policy agendas from promoting housing segregation until the 1980s towards social mixing such as mixed housing communities initiatives (which despite having been enthusiastically applied since the first industrial towns, garden cities, and inter-war and post-war New Towns, only became common practice later) and town centre's regeneration and inclusive public space practices in the 1990s, leading to an increased recognition that public spaces are essential tools to enhance social cohesion. Since the 1980s a number of academic and government-sponsored research projects have aimed to identify the public spaces that can act as potential contact spaces, and the desirable qualities that support positive social interactions and intercultural dialogue, and since the 1990s these ideas have started to shape public space design interventions (Holland et al. 2007; Lownsbrough and Beunderman 2007). However, most of the gained knowledge to date has been more on the social than the spatial attributes of public spaces (e.g. strategies such as temporary uses and events that can enliven public spaces and contribute to building social bonds). This is not to say that there are not any successful public space design practices because there are. However, the most relevant and ambitious public space programs with social cohesion and

intercultural dialogue in mind only start to emerge when social cohesion becomes a top priority of the European urban policy agendas –evidenced by European social cohesion policies and funding with a focus on urban issues since the 1990s and subsequent Intercultural Cultural Cities Programme (ICCP) initiated in 2000 (Wood 2015). The increasing interest in providing well-designed public spaces that foster social cohesion highlights a number of unresolved issues for practice and theory. Planners and designers are still ill-equipped to deal with this particularly complex design task (Beebejaun 2006; Wood 2015), lacking the skills and intercultural competence to understand the diverse needs of different cultural groups, let alone to discern what constitute good practices. Different practitioners and academics also have different opinions as whether we should follow universal design principles that treat and represent all users equally and keep spaces open and undetermined, or should follow user-specific principles that promote difference and diversity by accommodating different cultural needs (Lownsborough and Beunderman 2007).

The dichotomy of open vs. closed designs and representational approaches has framed a longstanding debate since the 1960s, most notably among sociologists. Open, ‘loose’ design and planning approaches are argued to allow user adaptation and appropriation, which is believed to enable more democratic, livelier and safer cities (Jacobs 1964; Wood 2015; Sennett and Sendra 2020). Universal design principles have sought to ensure the built environment is accessible to and useable by everyone, regardless of their social differences (Story et al. 1998, Steinfeld and Maisel 2012). Some sociologists suggest this reflects an assimilationist view of society, which may be suitable for countries such as the U.S., but not for officially multi-cultural countries like Australia and Canada (Kumar and Martin 2004; Soufoulis et al. 2008). In stark contrast, environmental determinism, dominant in the 1950-60s but still influential in contemporary design and planning cultures, assumes the built environment is a key determinant of human behaviour. This emphasises the capacity of space and ‘closed’, ‘tight’ designs to control and change behaviour and precisely reflect identity differences (Risbeth 2004; Daly 2020).

The use of symbolism to represent different cultural groups in public spaces faces many critiques and challenges (Parkinson 2009). Low et al. (2005) suggest that different ethnic groups have different assumptions and conventions about the uses and users of public space, and are only likely to use a space if they are culturally represented. Official representations of culture that are produced by governments typically reflect dominant groups’ roles, often focussing on the relation between a white majority and minority ethnic groups, and ignoring other types of difference including age, gender and ability (Parkinson 2009). Recent urban design research indicates that the quality and management of spaces may have more importance for promoting shared use than multi-cultural representation (Risbeth 2004; Daly 2020).



Debates remain about the role and benefit of user representation and design determinism in public space for promoting social cohesion. These debates suggest a paucity of solid empirical data on the respective strengths and limitations of different approaches, both overall and for specific users and contexts. This paper contends that design of open space can benefit social cohesion, but that no one solution is likely to fit diverse users and contexts, and more research is required to understand the potential roles of open space design in promoting social cohesion.

### **3. Public space, urban design, social cohesion and intercultural encounters**

Scholarly understandings of the interplay between conceptualizations of public space, urban design and social cohesion are always evolving and contested. Public space is traditionally understood as open and as belonging to all (Madanipour 2003). Today it is taking new forms, meanings and roles, due to globalization, new technological advances (Sheller and Urry 2003) and increasing social and cultural diversity (Fraser 1990; Loukaitou-Sideris 1995; Low et al. 2005). These changes are creating new needs and demands upon our cities, and changing the ways public life is defined, experienced and negotiated. To understand public space's new and complex nature, more studies are needed that foreground its social and cultural potential.

Urban Design as a discipline is increasingly complex and broad in scope. It embraces how spaces are experienced, and the decision-making environments that enable them, as well as the quality of built outcomes (Carmona 2014).

Social cohesion is an idea that most societies aspire towards, but there are divergent ideas regarding its meaning, value, and how it can be achieved (Friedkin 2004). The recent proliferation of irreconcilable definitions reflects different research and policy agendas (Jenson 1998). We still lack clear and operational definitions and know little about how social cohesion is played out in different cultural contexts, and how it can be achieved in public space. Many built environment researchers draw on the frameworks for understanding social cohesion set out by Jenson (1998) and Kearns and Forrest (2000), applying them to varied cultural contexts. These frameworks provide multidimensional, multilevel understandings of social cohesion (Table 1). Recent applications of these frameworks acknowledge they may require adapting to specific national and local economic, social and cultural contexts (Aelbrecht and Stevens 2019).

The term interculturalism is increasingly evoked when addressing social cohesion in contexts of social and cultural diversity. Interculturalism aims to go beyond multiculturalism's passive recognition of difference, to promote deeper inter-cultural understanding, dialogue and encounters (Landry and Wood 2008). The significance of such intercultural encounters in the public realm has been much debated within the social sciences (Sennett 1974; Young 2002). A key distinction has been drawn between fleeting encounters with otherness, and encounters that

result in more 'meaningful contact', which produce more durable relationships (Piekut and Valentine 2017). Geographers have suggested that public open spaces such as parks and streets have less potential for meaningful contact than other shared settings within the public sphere, such as consumption and socialisation spaces – what Amin (2002) terms 'micro-publics'. Other research affirms their significant social and symbolic role in confirming social and cultural inclusion (Low et al. 2005; Worpole and Knox 2008). Given these differing views on the value of public spaces and their role in meaningful encounters and social cohesion, there is need for thorough empirical assessment, with detailed attention to the material design of spaces, and informed by social science.

Social scientists examining the role of the public realm in social relationships tend to focus on the social context, looking to particular patterns and changes in social life to understand how society holds together. They typically see space as a passive backdrop in their analysis (Goffman 1971; Lofland 1998; Putnam 2000). Urban planners and designers, by contrast, focus on the spatial qualities and production processes of public space, but lack a thorough theorization of social life (Southworth et al. 2012), and are therefore ill-equipped to deal with complex social demographics.

Despite recent attempts to bridge knowledge divides (Cattell et al. 2008; Dempsey 2009; Peters et al. 2010), the links are still weak. The following three significant knowledge gaps remain. Firstly, most research to date has focused on traditional public spaces such as markets and workspaces where everyday interaction and negotiation are compulsory or habitual (Amin 2002; Landry and Wood 2008). There has been little study of open public plazas with a wider diversity of social encounters. Secondly, there is limited empirical knowledge about how social cohesion is individually and collectively experienced in public space, and its dimensions or variants (Askins and Pain 2011; Peterson 2017). To date, most academic and policy work on social cohesion has been driven and defined by concerns over social and economic equity and to determine the key dimensions for measuring it (Jenson 1998). Thirdly, there is little knowledge about how to evaluate the link between intercultural and social encounters in public spaces and people's broader, longer-term perceptions of social cohesion. More work is needed to understand the motives and attitudes underlying people's everyday interactions with difference and to adequately address the materiality of such encounters and what gives them wider meaning and durability (Risbeth 2004; Peters et al. 2010; Mayblin et al 2015; Spierings et al. 2016). These knowledge gaps provide the impetus for this paper.

#### **4. Methodology**

Table 1. Theoretical framework linking four key dimensions of social cohesion to observable physical attributes of public space and social behaviours.

This paper seeks to develop an improved understanding of how real-world public space design and planning approaches connect to established ideas about social cohesion. To do so, it draws upon a theoretical framework that links the most relevant recognised dimensions of cohesion with existing literature's understandings of the physical attributes of public spaces and embodied experiences and social interactions that are considered key to achieve them (Table 1). This framework provides the basis for examining and comparing if, and how, three different approaches to public space design (their design aims, processes and outcomes) serve to enhance social cohesion. It seeks to answer the following questions: how do these specific design solutions express and enact the various dimensions of social cohesion, what cultural groups do their designs' represent? What uses are provided and for whom? and where and how the spaces seek to promote intercultural encounter and social cohesion? The analysis examines how each design approach meets the four dimensions of cohesion, by assessing its design aims, design processes and spatial outcomes.

An initial scoping exercise identified and examined 15 examples of European public spaces that were ostensibly designed with social cohesion and intercultural dialogue in mind (Table 2). These projects were selected using the following criteria: being located in a multicultural community, publicly accessible, recognized as best practice through design awards, research or policy documents, follow high quality urban design standards or principles, and be funded or shaped by policy programs that promote social mixing, diversity, intercultural dialogue and/or cohesion. Those 15 examples were categorized according to context, location, design process, typology, ownership and management, size and social aims. Among these examples, 13 were situated in ethnically-diverse and deprived inner-city neighbourhoods, 13 were top-down (government-led) projects, 14 were publicly owned and managed, and 13 had similar social aims, followed social policies that promote social mixing, diversity and/or cohesion (for projects from 2001-2008) or intercultural policies (after 2008). Analysis of the 13 projects that shared all these characteristics sought to identify distinct design approaches. Five of these spaces were urban parks and eight were plazas. Analysis of this sample of 13 open space schemes evidenced three distinct approaches to public space design that have been used to promote social cohesion: *Symbolic*, *Programmatic* and *Minimalist*. These categories could be identified on the basis of the spaces' fundamentally different ways of supporting and representing the cultural identities, uses and needs of their neighbourhoods' culturally-varied user groups, and facilitating connections and interactions between them (see Table 2). These distinct approaches follow the established literature at the



intersection of public space design and socio-cultural diversity particularly from anthropology, landscape architecture and art history.

The *Symbolic* approach is informed by anthropological thinking that suggests that imprinting cultural representation of the diverse community of users, their identities and histories into spatial design is the most effective approach for creating inclusive public spaces and educational resources from which to learn about other cultures (Lawrence and Low 1990; Low et al. 2005). This approach typically uses symbolism in space, objects and/or uses to represent users' different cultural groups. It is popular among designers but has proven controversial because it can result in very fixed and selective designs in terms of cultural representation (Rishbeth 2004; Parkinson 2009). Among the 13 surveyed projects, Superkillen in Copenhagen, Denmark (2012) was identified as the strongest illustration of the *Symbolic* approach. While most examples of symbolic spaces subtly represent and connect their diverse communities through plant selections and pavement inscriptions, Superkillen does so by deploying culturally-specific everyday objects.

The *Programmatic* approach focuses on the operational characteristics of the site, creating overlapping programs that stimulate interactions between different individuals and with their environment (Miljacki et al. 2006; Dovey and Dickson 2002). First conceptualized in the 1970s through architectural theories of indeterminacy and excess (Grosz 2001), today this approach has been largely driven by contemporary experimental architectural practices (Tschumi 1996; Koolhaas and Mau 1998), and has become a preferred approach of landscape architects who seek to balance attention to the design process and its outcomes (Risbeth 2004). Afrikaanderplein in Rotterdam, the Netherlands (2005) is paradigmatic of the *Programmatic* approach, being one of its earliest implementations and the most award-winning. Its design began from a programme of activities, rather than from space and form.

The *Minimalist* approach is well known in the arts and design disciplines for its reductive approach to design and a search for the essential nature of space. It developed within Modernism in the 1920s, and its aesthetics endure today (Macarthur 2002). In recent years, it has been recognized by urban planners and designers as the approach that is sociologically more open and accommodating to difference, and the most affordable and easiest to implement (Risbeth 2004). It also aligns to the open, 'loose', appropriation-focused approaches to urban space advocated by recent texts such as *Loose Space* (Franck and Stevens 2007) and *Insurgent Public Space* (Hou 2010). Gillett Square in London, UK, is the recent European open space design that best typifies this *Minimalist* approach (Carmona and Wunderlich 2013). Its design has no program or symbolism; it is an empty canvas left open for appropriation by various users and uses.

The three public space cases identified above were subject to a detailed analysis of their social, planning and policy contexts, based on national and international news articles, city reports and Census data, followed by an assessment and comparison of their design approaches, strategies and outcomes, based on the theoretical framework outlined above and in Table 1, and drawing upon the designers' and developers' briefs.

Table 2. Scoping exercise of European public spaces with social cohesion in mind.

## **5. Three public space approaches, three implemented projects**

The three open space projects examined here were all largely financed by their national governments, although local governments were the central actors in the development and implementation of relevant planning policies addressing urban diversity. Being located in countries with different histories of immigration, the projects have been influenced by fundamentally different national discourses on social integration, cohesion and diversity. The UK and Netherlands have long histories of immigration, and this is reflected in their relative tolerance towards other cultures and religions, although they only introduced integration policies in the 1970s. In contrast, Denmark has not traditionally been a country of immigration, but of emigration. Its immigration rate only rose in the mid-1980s, due to labour market demand, and its political commitments to accommodating asylum seekers and refugees and towards the reunification of families.

All three public spaces are within neighbourhoods that are low-income, multicultural, 'super-diverse' (Vertovec 2007), and now experiencing gentrification, that were deemed socially challenging and unsafe before the design intervention. They were recently redesigned, using distinctive, contrasting design approaches that draw upon different assumptions and intentions regarding social dynamics of encounter to respond to increasing intercultural tensions between locals and minorities of ethnic immigrants, particularly from Muslim countries, and more recently refugees.

### ***5.1 Superkilen in Copenhagen, Denmark***

Superkilen is a linear park in Copenhagen's inner-northern district Nørrebro, in a formerly-derelict 750m-long wedge of land wedged between two residential neighbourhoods (Figures 1 and 2). Nørrebro is Copenhagen's most ethnically-diverse and socially challenging area. Since its origins, it has been associated with immigration, first in the 1960s with the arrival of 'guest workers' from Pakistan and Morocco, followed in the 1980s with new arrivals from the Middle East. Currently

15% of its residents come from Muslim countries in the Balkans, Middle East and North Africa (Statistics Denmark 2020). Nørrebro has been marked by conflict and deprivation and was long considered a 'no-go zone' by the media and authorities. Its intercultural tensions escalated over recent decades with rapidly increasing immigration and, subsequently, gentrification (Schmidt 2017).

To bridge cultural divides and regenerate Nørrebro, in 2004 the city council partnered with Danish foundation Realdania to develop an urban renewal program consisting of three major urban social infrastructure projects with social integration and cohesion in mind: two parks – Superkilen and Mimersparken - and a community centre (Stanfield and Riemsdijk 2019). Superkilen was a key strategic project that aimed to make Nørrebro the centre of innovative urban spaces of international standard (Ibid). A high-profile international competition in 2007 was won by internationally-renowned Danish firm BIG Architects in collaboration with Dutch artists Superflex and German landscape architects Topotek1. Superkilen's design narrative deploys BIG's ideology 'yes is more' alongside Superflex's vision of participatory public art amidst the neighbourhoods' living room (Ingels 2009).

Although the three partners were in full agreement about Superkilen's design approach, they had divergent ideas about its aesthetics (Ciuffi 2013). BIG and Superflex shared ideas of pragmatism and out-of-control aesthetics. Topotek 1 preferred a contemporary version of the English romantic park, incorporating calculated surprises like a Chinese pagoda or Greek ruins. The collaborators agreed that today's globalised society needs new mechanisms that bring people together to experience the rich complexities of society's diversity. To pursue this, they used 'extreme participation', an experimental form of direct community involvement, as "the driving force of the design leading towards the maximum freedom of expression" (BIG 2012). This involved a range of direct and informal mechanisms of involvement such as newspapers, radio, emails and social media and a 'yes approach' towards participation. The collaborators asked Nørrebro's inhabitants to suggest urban furnishings for the future park, from their country of origin or other meaningful places, and sought to say yes to as many suggestions as possible. Following BIG's motto of 'yes is more', the project had "no fear of crowding and overlap" and was willing to "contrast completely dissonant symbols and meanings" (Ciuffi 2013).

Superkilen's design is usually advertised as a stellar example of participatory design. However, in practice the project's concept of multicultural-themed spaces was already determined in the competition entry, as public participation was limited to helping select cultural objects. Most of the identified artefacts were ordinary, un-meaningful functional objects such as trash cans and sewers lids, showing little effort to empower the communities. Superkilen's symbolic overload and its random selection, location and juxtaposition of objects has been criticized for causing visual disorientation (Stanfield and Riemsdijk 2019). Superkilen's designers had determined its



multicultural-themed concept of “three zones, three colours – one neighbourhood”, which framed three distinct types of public spaces and functional programs: a large ‘Red Square’ dedicated to sports, culture and temporary events (which contained a range of objects representing Nørrebro residents’ various nationalities), a ‘Black Market’ plaza serving as an ‘urban living room’ and a more traditional ‘Green Park’ (BIG 2012) (Figures 3-7). The three spaces’s colours were selected to match their intended usage and frame Superkilen’s place identity on a symbolic level as a dynamic landscape of ‘global urban diversity’ (Akšamija 2016).

Since Superkilen’s completion in 2012, it has won innumerable design awards, being praised for transforming Nørrebro into a much safer and more attractive neighbourhood and becoming one of Copenhagen’s top ten tourist destinations (VisitCopenhagen no date).

Figure 1. Superkilen context map (Source: Google Imagery, 2020).

Figure 2. Superkilen site plan (Source: BIG 2012).

Figure 3. Superkilen’s Red Square, aerial view (Source: BIG 2012).

Figure 4. Superkilen’s Black Market, aerial view (Source: BIG 2012).

Figure 5. Superkilen’s Green Park, aerial view (Source: BIG 2012).

Figure 6. Superkilen’s Red Square (Source: BIG 2012).

Figure 7. Superkilen’s Black Market (Source: BIG 2012).

## ***5.2 Afrikaanderplein in Rotterdam, The Netherlands***

Afrikaanderplein is a public square of 5.6 hectares in the south of Rotterdam in Feijenoord, a neighbourhood famous for its ethnic diversity and vibrant culture (Figures 8-12). Feijenoord has been one of Rotterdam’s poorest areas since its beginnings around 1895. It started receiving immigrants in the 1970s and is currently home to residents from 127 nationalities, with primary representation of the following ethnic groups: 34% Dutch, 19% Turkish, 11% Surinamese, 10% Moroccan and 5% Aruban (StatLine 2020). It is characterized by its high unemployment and social housing. This area was subject to various state-led urban renewal initiatives, including a neighbourhood renewal in the 1980s focused on improving housing conditions, a major regeneration initiative in 2003 funded by the EU, Rotterdam’s city council and a nation-wide park development programme, to reimagine Feijenoord as a multicultural residential area, and a state-led gentrification initiative in 2007 – rebranded as a social mixing strategy not to explicitly stated it as

gentrification (Bridge et al 2012) – focused on poor neighbourhoods to achieve a more balanced city.

Against this backdrop, Afrikaanderplein is seen as “the square that is never finished” (Dehaene and Vervloesem 2011). Since the early twentieth century, it has witnessed various changes of uses. Until the 1960s it was a football field. In the 1960s-1980s it became an event square, with an open-air fair and a twice-weekly market which became one of Rotterdam’s largest. The square then started to fall into disrepair, due to disputes between different ethnic groups over its use. The 2003 regeneration initiative enabled the redesign of Afrikaanderplein through an open and interactive participatory project, which was unprecedented at that time (Bagwell et al. 2012). The commissioned landscape architects, OKRA, were well known for their socially and culturally sensitive approach to public space design. To address the needs of Afrikaanderplein’s diverse community, they initiated a community engagement strategy involving the local resident’s organisation Afrikaanderwijk (BOA), 20 user and interest groups, the borough of Feijenoord, neighbourhood’s local businesses, local government departments and other local stakeholders. To ensure a truly participatory project, all local residents and community groups were also invited to be involved in the square’s management and activities, in collaboration with the local authority. This objective proved hard to achieve. For some communities, particularly the large numbers of Turkish, there was unease with the overall neighbourhood renewal which brought many white middle-class Dutch inhabitants to what was once Rotterdam’s poorest neighbourhood with its highest concentration of non-Western residents (Doucet, 2009; Doucet and Koenders 2018). For other groups, gentrification brought a sense of hope; more investment meant more employment. The square’s character had been shaped by local uses, city-wide initiatives, and ethnic conflicts. To minimise these tensions, the 2003 design concept focused on clear zones catering the needs of different users and a central area to encourage intercultural dialogue between them (Divisare 2008), though according to some, this was also a strategy to keep the space free from strong claims of the Turkish community (Buijs, 1998). As a result, a central, flexible-use green area criss-crossed by oblique paths was created, surrounded by an outer raised area bordered by natural stone, seating and trees, consisting of several sub-spaces dedicated to a diverse programme of uses, representing the diverse community of users. It accommodates activity spaces for the weekly market, a sports centre, playground and poultry farm, and a quiet area separated by a large water feature, which includes a botanical gardens and mosque. To address safety and maintenance concerns, the park’s central green area is surrounded by a specially-designed fence. Only one of its four sides (thirty metres length) slides open during the day, although this has been criticised for restricting access and many informal uses (Dehaene and Vervloesem 2011).

Figure 8. Afrikaanderplein context map (Source: Google Imagery, 2015).

Figure 9. Afrikaanderplein site plan (Source: OKRA, 1999).

Figure 10. Afrikaanderplein view (Source: VONRO2IJ, 2019).

Figure 11. Afrikaanderplein's central area (Source: OKRA, 1999).

Figure 12. Afrikaanderplein's outer edge spaces (Source: OKRA, 1999).

### **5.3 Gillett Square, London, UK**

Gillett Square (Figures 13-17) is a small 0.25-hectare public square known for its social diversity and public function. It is located in Dalston, a socially and ethnically diverse neighbourhood within the London borough of Hackney. The local ethnic profile includes 24% Black, 10% Asian, 6% Mixed and 5% other minorities. White British are just 33% of the area's demographic (UK Census 2011). Dalston is a high-crime area and has high levels of social deprivation (Bianchi, 2019). It is also known for public riots and violence in the 1960's and 1981, and incidents of unrest as recently as 2011 (Fulcher, 2011).

Gillett Square was the first project to be implemented among the ten pilot projects of the London Mayor's '100 Public Spaces' program. It was a re-imagined public space on a former tarmacked car park inside an urban street block (Greater London Authority, 2002). Its redevelopment was initiated in the 1980s by Gillett Square Partnership, a newly formed local community economic development agency, Hackney Co-operative Developments and the London Borough of Hackney (Bianchi, 2019). The project brief placed the communities' opinions and needs at its core, though participation in the design process was barely limited to consultations, but it followed the local regeneration plan aims to create a public space for pop-up playgrounds for its local community, a place for festivals, art installations, ethnic events and other community-organised activities (Greater London Authority, 2002; Sendra, 2015; Ploger, 2018). It was also meant to enable the local community to set up new businesses and generate services and resources for them (Bianchi, 2019).

The project started in 1999, when GSP the development agency commissioned Hawkins\Brown Architects to design ten award-winning market kiosks to activate the space's southern side. This initiative laid the seeds for the design of the new public square and many of its adjoining buildings including workspaces, public library and residential accommodation.

Minimalism was key to Gillett Square's design approach, and is according to its developers its most valuable asset. The space is minimalist in terms of its furnishings. Its only elements are grey granite paving, raised wooden decking as seating, a small group of trees and a row of kiosks. The settings offers 'a blank canvas' to allow multiple appropriations and interpretation by its users



(Kattein 2018). This minimalism resulted from the limited public funding available for the square's regeneration; this also meant that the retrofitting of the square occurred incrementally and could adapt to changing conditions and needs. It remains an evolving place.

An integral part of Gillett Square's success is the active involvement of local stakeholders, who are responsible for its dynamic programming. This has been fundamental for its evolution as a cohesive place. Hackney Co-operative Developments hosts regular appraisal meetings and collaborations with local stakeholders for monitoring and to identify and manage issues such as security and social enterprise development (Bianchi, 2019). The space was granted a unique Permanent Entertainment License, allowing its users to be responsible for its flexible programming (Bianchi, 2019).

Figure 13. Gillett Square context map (Source: Google Imagery 2018).

Figure 14. Gillett Square site plan (Source: Hawkins\ Brown Architects, BAASO case study group 9-Blogger, 2011).

Figure 15. Gillett Square bird's eye view (Source: Hawkins\ Brown Architects, 2007).

Figure 16. Gillett Square's children events (Source: Gillettsquare.org.uk, 2019, accessed May, 2021).

Figure 17. Gillett Square's kiosks (Source: The Academy of Urbanism, 2011).

## 6. Analysis

Our analysis highlighted how these different design approaches provide different responses to designing for social cohesion in contexts of super diversity. We will now scrutinize how each of the three design approaches and their implementations meet each of the four cohesion dimensions and correspondent physical attributes outlined in the theoretical framework (Table 3).

### *Belonging, place attachment and identity*

In terms of the first dimension, 'belonging, place attachment and identity', all three public spaces were designed to enhance it. All meet at least two of the three physical attributes considered to achieve it, including cultural representation in the design and activities that promote bonding and bridging of cultural divides. However, only Afrikaanderplein and Gillett Square considered appropriations in their design. All three schemes embed cultural representation in the design, though they do so differently. Only Superkilen uses symbolism to achieve cultural representation of its local communities in the design of its spaces and objects. Afrikaanderplein includes cultural

representation in the design process and management of activities, whereas Gillett Square does it through its programme of events. In Superkilen, cultural representation of the 60 nationalities among its local communities is visible in the use of 108 ethno-cultural coded furnishings from around the globe, though their meaningfulness seems questionable (Stanfield and Riemsdijk 2019). Afrikaanderplein engaged its local community throughout the design process, to ensure it responded to their needs and to soften tensions between local and the city's interests. The different user groups expressed stronger feelings to be represented in the programmed activities, rather than in the design of symbolic elements or spaces, raising questions whether symbolic representation is actually important for users and their uses. Gillett Square's minimalist design provides an opportunity for flexible programming for different uses, which is supported by its unique Permanent Entertainment License allowing it to host staged events and mediated by groups such as Gillett Square Action Group to ensure continuous organizational support for cultural exchange, inclusion and local engagement (Sendra, 2015; Ploger, 2018; Bianchi, 2019).

Secondly, all three spaces reflect a common view about the activities that can enhance social and intercultural use. They all frame social and recreational activities that are considered to effectively promote collaboration and exchange within and between different communities (Wood and Landry 2008). Superkilen provides three different zones with different functions, particularly sports and culture. Afrikaanderplein and Gillett Square enhance social interaction by providing spaces that accommodate a wide programme of activities for both fixed and changing programs of social and cultural activities. In all three spaces, activities are primarily concentrated at the edges. They all reassert the importance of edge activities that can spill over to activate the centre of a site (Alexander et al. 1977). Afrikaanderplein and Gillett Square have considered appropriations in their design concepts, by leaving some spaces open or unprogrammed.

#### *Inclusion, social order and control*

The dimension of 'inclusion, social order and control' is also achieved through the three public spaces' designs, but in different ways. All the three spaces meet five of its seven physical attributes: accessibility and connectivity, safety, accommodating social and cultural uses, and providing visibility of local minorities. Only Superkilen considers hybrid identities, and only Afrikaanderplein aims for social inclusion in the design process, though some research questions its success (Dehaene and Vervloesem 2011).

All three spaces were designed to enhance accessibility and connectivity. They are all open and permeable and well-connected by various means of transport. However, Afrikaanderplein's fenced central area at evenings and nights limits its accessibility and use. Safety was also an important consideration in the three schemes, given their histories of anti-social behavior. While Superkilen and Gillett Square adopt natural surveillance measures by designing open, accessible

and visible spaces, Afrikaanderplein has its central area fenced off at certain hours of the day, though this may be perceived as an attempt by the local government to control the space (Dehaene and Vervloesem 2011). The three designs also incorporated a variety of social and cultural uses and values. This was done by defining some fixed spaces for them to occur regularly, as with Superkilen, or dedicating a programme of events that includes them, as with Gillett Square. In this respect, Afrikaanderplein is the space that provides the greatest range of opportunities. It defines permanent spaces at its edge for a multicultural market and religious activities, and an unprogrammed central space for a range of temporary uses, comparable to Gillett Square.

All three spaces were carefully designed to ensure visibility of the local minorities' social and commercial activities. In Afrikaanderplein and Gillett Square, this visibility is optimized by their extensive programmes of activities and events (in both permanent and temporary formats in Afrikaanderplein, primarily temporary in Gillett Square). In Superkilen, visibility is enabled by the integration symbolic everyday objects into the design which represent minorities, particularly in the Black Square which is mainly dedicated to its Muslim communities – including a Moroccan fountain at its centre and a range of symbols along its perimeter including a lamp post from Qatar and soil from Palestine.

In terms of inclusion in design and management process, Afrikanderplein seems to be the only project which intended residents to have meaningful control. With both Superkilen and Gillett Square, participation was limited to consultation after the design proposal was already finalised for construction approval.

Only Superkilen expresses hybrid identities in built form, through the fusion and juxtaposition of different cultural objects. Afrikaanderplein and Gillett Square instead display hybridity in their culturally-mixed programme of immigrant activities and events, respectively. All these types of hybridity are seen to challenge traditional understandings of place-bounded and uniform communities, and can be therefore considered a first step towards integration and cohesion (Bhabha 1994).

#### *Participation, social networks and social capital*

The dimension of 'participation, social networks and social capital' can only be partially assessed from the designs alone, as two of its three attributes can only be assessed through examining open space uses (Lien and Hou 2019). Only Afrikaanderplein seems to have prioritised broad-based participation in the design process, although not all users, particularly the Turkish community, felt that their interests were taken on board (Buijs, 1998).

Superkilen's participatory design process is internationally lauded, yet residents had very little control over its design decisions (Stanfield and Riemsdijk 2019). They were merely consulted to select objects that represent their cultures, and only some of these objects were actually

incorporated in the design. At Gillett Square, consultations took place late in the design process. According to Arnstein (1969) such consultations are merely tokenistic approaches to participation. While they gather citizen input, the designers retained the power to judge that advice. Gillett Square's community participation related primarily to the programming of events. This scheme is more accommodating of user participation, because the whole site is unprogrammed, while in Afrikaanderplein only the central area is, and its fencing-off at some hours constrains potential uses.

### *Recognition, common values and civic culture*

In spatial design terms, the dimension of 'recognition, common values and civic culture' can only be assessed in terms of how the designs provides public visibility for the spaces and their distinctive symbols, users and uses. All three designs provide good obstacle-free visibility from both outside and within. Superkilen displays the residents' diverse cultural backgrounds through a richly-symbolic palette of everyday public furniture. Afrikaanderplein's and Gillett Square's spatial openness lays visible their diverse users and events.

Table 3. Four key dimensions of social cohesion and three design approaches.

## **7. Conclusion**

Human geographers have long advocated examining how material space structures social relations. This paper seeks to contribute to this body of work. It introduces a focus on public space design in the analysis of social cohesion, interculturalism and geographies of encounter, a perspective largely missing in current research. It does so by focusing on recent European public space programs developed with social cohesion and intercultural dialogue in mind, and by analysing three distinctive public space design approaches. The study yields several new insights for public space design theory and practice.

Each of these three public space approaches have strengths and weaknesses, which should be considered with reference to the distinctive characteristics of local community, site, and policy contexts. These three public space design approaches differ strongly in terms of their symbolism, spatial programming and physical determinism. This has guided our choice to categorise the approaches as Symbolic, Programmatic and Minimalist designs. These approaches offer different potential solutions for designing in complex contexts of diversity and promoting social cohesion and intercultural dialogue.

This analysis indicates which of these three design approaches seems to better serve the four key dimensions of social cohesion, enhancing the sense of belonging, place-attachment,

identity and cultural recognition, and being inclusive and participatory. Afrikaanderplein's programmatic design scores slightly higher than the two other public spaces, meeting all the four broad dimensions of cohesion and 11 of the 15 specific attributes, compared to Gillett Square's minimal design (10 attributes) and Superkilen's multicultural themed approach (9), with Superkilen only meeting 3 broad dimensions of cohesion -participation is considered in the design brief but not achieved in the design process, management or use. These preliminary findings will require substantiation through further in-depth analysis of the designs, in terms of users' actual activities, behaviors and experiences of social cohesion.

The analysis suggests the three projects have more commonalities than differences. They all share fundamental design features that effectively promote high-quality, well-used public spaces, including permeability, variety and legibility. They also all demonstrate social and cultural sensitivity in their emphasis on activities, spaces and elements that promote social interaction and exchange. However, important differences were revealed in the ways these schemes promote cultural representation, inclusion and participation of various user groups in their designs. Their different approaches suggest that there might not be just one right way to design for social cohesion. This calls for empirical research into how, and how well, these different design approaches achieve their social objectives.

This study offers three key takeaways for theory and practice in urban planning and design. Firstly, public space is emerging as an important medium and tool to create opportunities for intercultural interaction and experiences of living together, challenging the perspective of previous researchers (Amin 2002; Worpole and Knox 2008). More research is needed to analyse the uses of such public spaces against their material conditions, to understand the embodied and relational experiences of encounters with difference that they enable. Secondly, practitioners continue to develop new approaches to the complex task of designing for social difference. More work is needed to assess the relevant skills, outcomes, challenges and innovations, to better understand what works well, where new knowledge is needed, and how to enhance its prospects of being applied. Finally, research on the cultural dimensions of design is still in its infancy. There is great scope for improvement in the theorisation of intercultural design, and a great need to develop more socially and culturally sensitive ideas about the planning and design of the public realm.

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## List of Tables

Table 1. Theoretical framework linking four key dimensions of social cohesion to observable physical attributes of public space and social behaviours.

<p><b>1. <i>Belonging (Jenson 1998) + Place Attachment and Identity (Kearns &amp; Forest 2000)</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• cultural representation: represented cultural groups (Low et al 2005) and symbolism in spaces/objects/uses that represents the diverse community of users, their identities and histories (Low et al 2005, Ristic 2019);</li><li>• spaces and elements that are focused on activities of making, collaboration and exchange (Lien and Hou 2019);</li><li>• appropriations of space through daily use and physical transformations of space on specific occasions (Uzzell et al 2002).</li></ul> <p><b>2. <i>Inclusion (Jenson 1998) + Social Order and Control (Kearns &amp; Forest 2000)</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• physical and visual accessibility into and within a space (Low et al 2005, Ristic 2019);</li><li>• good connectivity of public spaces at the city-wide scale (Lien and Hou 2019);</li><li>• safety and user friendly associated with UD dimensions of safety, comfort and pleasurability (Low et al 2005, Mehta 2014);</li><li>• Accommodating the different social and cultural uses and values (Low et al 2005);</li><li>• visibility of minorities' communal and commercial activities (Sezer 2019);</li><li>• expression of hybrid identities in built form (Sezer 2019);</li><li>• social inclusion in the design process for the space (Ristic 2019).</li></ul> <p><b>3. <i>Participation (Jenson 1998) + Social Networks and Social Capital (Kearns &amp; Forest, 2000)</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• participation in the design, use and management; integration of under-programmed, temporary, and loose design elements and characteristics that support collaborative action (Lien and Hou 2019);</li><li>• weak ties (Granovetter 1973, 1982), supportive exchanges and tie-signs (Goffman 1971), contacts of acknowledgement, greeting and helping (Henning and Lieberg 1996);</li><li>• Existence of local social networks for different demographic groups (Henning and Lieberg 1996).</li></ul> <p><b>4. <i>Recognition (Jenson 1998) + Common Values and Civic Culture (Kearns &amp; Forest 2000)</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Visibility to/from the spaces, visibility of the various users they represent (Ristic 2019; Sezer 2019);</li><li>• Expressions of civic culture, through cooperation, civil inattention, restrained helpfulness, civility towards diversity (Goffman 1967).</li></ul>
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Table 2. Scoping exercise of European public spaces with social cohesion in mind.

List of public spaces projects examined.	Symbolic approach	Programmatic approach	Minimalist approach
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Superkillen, Copenhagen, Denmark (2010 -12)</li> <li>2. Queen Elisabeth Park London, UK (2008-12)</li> <li>3. Gillett Square, London, UK (2002-2006)</li> <li>4. "Passage 56": Paris, France (2006-09)</li> <li>5. Parc Central de Nou Barris, Barcelona, Spain (1997-2007)</li> <li>6. Teleki Square, Budapest, Hungary (2013/2014)</li> <li>7. Solidarność Square, Szczecin, Poland (2009-15)</li> <li>8. Afrikaanderplein, Rotterdam, Netherlands (1999-2005)</li> <li>9. Makassarplein, Amsterdam, Netherlands (2012-2015)</li> <li>10. Schouwburg plein, Rotterdam, Netherlands (1991-1996) – excluded different context</li> <li>11. Place Flagey/ Flageyplein, Helsen, Brussels, Belgium (2005-2009) - excluded different context</li> <li>12. Multipurpose canopy, Molenbeek, Brussels, Belgium (2012-2015)</li> <li>13. Redesign of Place Communale, Molenbeek, Brussels, Belgium</li> <li>14. ParckFarm, Molenbeek, Brussels, Belgium 2014-Ongoing</li> <li>15. Heavenly hundred garden, Kyiv, Ukania (2007-2014)</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Superkillen, Copenhagen, Denmark (2010 -12) – multicultural symbols.</li> <li>• Queen Elisabeth Park London, UK (2008-12) – symbols as plants, thematic spaces related with Olympics.</li> <li>• Parc Central de Nou Barris, Barcelona, Spain (1997-2007) – thematic spaces associated with nationalism.</li> <li>• Heavenly hundred garden, Kyiv, Ukania (2007-2014) – memorial garden for the EuroMaidan victims,</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teleki Square, Budapest, Hungary (2013/2014)</li> <li>• Afrikaanderplein, Rotterdam, Netherlands (1999-2005)</li> <li>• Makassarplein, Amsterdam, Netherlands (2012-2015)</li> <li>• "Passage 56": Paris, France (2006-09)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solidarność Square, Szczecin, Poland (2009-15)</li> <li>• Multipurpose canopy, Molenbeek, Brussels, Belgium (2012-2015)</li> <li>• Redesign of Place Communale, Molenbeek, Brussels, Belgium</li> <li>• ParckFarm, Molenbeek, Brussels, Belgium 2014-Ongoing</li> <li>• Gillett Square, London, UK (2002-2006)</li> </ul>

Table 3. Four key dimensions of social cohesion and three design approaches.

Four dimensions and their cohesion supporting design attributes.	Superkilen's Symbolic approach	Afrikaanderplein's Programmatic approach	Gillett Square's Minimalist approach
<b>1. Belonging (Jenson 1998) + Place Attachment and Identity (Kearns &amp; Forest 2000):</b> 1. <i>cultural representation: represented cultural groups (Low et al 2005) and symbolism in spaces/objects/uses that represents the diverse community of users, their identities and histories (Low et al 2005, Ristic 2019);</i> 2. <i>spaces and elements that are focused on activities of making, collaboration and exchange (Lien and Hou 2019);</i> 3. <i>appropriations of space through daily use and physical transformations of space on specific occasions (Uzzell et al 2002).</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meets 2 of 3 attributes.</li> <li><b>Uses symbolism</b> to achieve cultural representation.</li> <li><b>Spatially deterministic:</b> closed design (fixed spaces for specific functions), no consideration for appropriations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meets all 3 attributes.</li> <li>cultural representation is embedded in the design and management processes.</li> <li><b>Intercultural spatial programming visible in the programme of activities.</b></li> <li><b>partially an open design to allow appropriations.</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meets all 3 attributes.</li> <li>cultural representation is embedded in the events.</li> <li>Intercultural programme of events.</li> <li><b>fully an open design to allow appropriations.</b></li> </ul>
<b>2. Inclusion (Jenson 1998) + Social Order and Control (Kearns &amp; Forest 2000):</b> 1. <i>physical and visual accessibility into and within a space (Low et al 2005, Ristic 2019);</i> 2. <i>good connectivity of public spaces at the city-wide scale (Lien and Hou 2019);</i> 3. <i>safety and user friendly associated with UD dimensions of safety, comfort and pleasurable (Low et al 2005, Mehta 2014);</i> 4. <i>Accommodating the different social and cultural uses and values (Low et al 2005);</i> 5. <i>visibility of minorities' communal and commercial activities (Sezer 2019);</i> 6. <i>expression of hybrid identities in built form (Sezer 2019);</i> 7. <i>Social inclusion in the design process for the space (Ristic 2019).</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meets 6 of 7 attributes.</li> <li><b>Visibility achieved with the symbolism.</b></li> <li><b>Only one that considers hybrid identities</b> through juxtaposition and fusion symbols.</li> <li>It doesn't achieve inclusion in the design process.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meets 6 of 7 attributes.</li> <li><b>Visibility achieved with the activities.</b></li> <li><b>The only one that achieves social inclusion in the design process.</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meets 5 of 7 attributes.</li> <li><b>Visibility achieved with the events.</b></li> <li>It doesn't achieve inclusion in the design process.</li> </ul>
<b>3. Participation (Jenson 1998) + Social Networks and Social Capital (Kearns &amp; Forest, 2000):</b> 1. <i>participation in the design, use and management; integration under-programmed, temporary, and loose design elements and characteristics that support collaborative action (Lien and Hou 2019);</i> 2. <i>weak ties (Granovetter 1973, 1982), supportive exchanges and tie-signs (Goffman 1971), contacts of acknowledgement, greeting and helping (Henning and Lieberg 1996);</i> 3. <i>Existence of local social networks for different demographic groups (Henning and Lieberg 1996).</i> (Only the 1 <sup>st</sup> attribute can be assessed by the design).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It considers it but it doesn't meet any attribute.</li> <li><b>Participation limited to consultation in the final stages of design process.</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meets 1 of 3 attributes, and only design attribute.</li> <li><b>It's fully participatory in its design, management and use.</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meets 1 of 3 attributes, and only design attribute.</li> <li><b>Participation limited to consultation in the final stages of design process.</b></li> <li><b>But its open design allows participation in its use.</b></li> </ul>
<b>4. Recognition (Jenson 1998) + Common Values and Civic Culture (Kearns &amp; Forest 2000):</b> 1. <i>Visibility to/from the spaces, visibility of the various users they represent (Ristic 2019; Sezer 2019);</i> 2. <i>Expressions of civic culture, through cooperation, civil inattention, restrained helpfulness, civility towards diversity (Goffman 1967).</i> (Only the 1 <sup>st</sup> attribute can be assessed by the design).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meets 1 of 2 attributes, and only design attribute.</li> <li><b>Visibility achieved by its symbolism.</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meets 1 of 3 attributes, and only design attribute.</li> <li><b>Visibility by its openness and programme of activities.</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meets 1 of 3 attributes, and only design attribute.</li> <li><b>Visibility by its openness and programme of events.</b></li> </ul>
<b>Key findings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Strong design focused approach.</b></li> <li>Assertive symbolism and spatial determinism.</li> <li>Typical approach of anthropologists, ethnicity theorists and designers who believe in spatial determinism.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Moderate design approach.</b></li> <li>Focus on spatial programming and design and management processes.</li> <li>Typical approach of landscape designers and other designers equally interested in design process and outcomes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Minor or minimal design approach.</b></li> <li>Affordable and easy to implement.</li> <li>Focus on post design: management processes, uses and events.</li> <li>Preferred approach of a wider range of practitioners.</li> </ul>

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Figure 1. Superkilen context map (Source: Google Imagery, 2020).

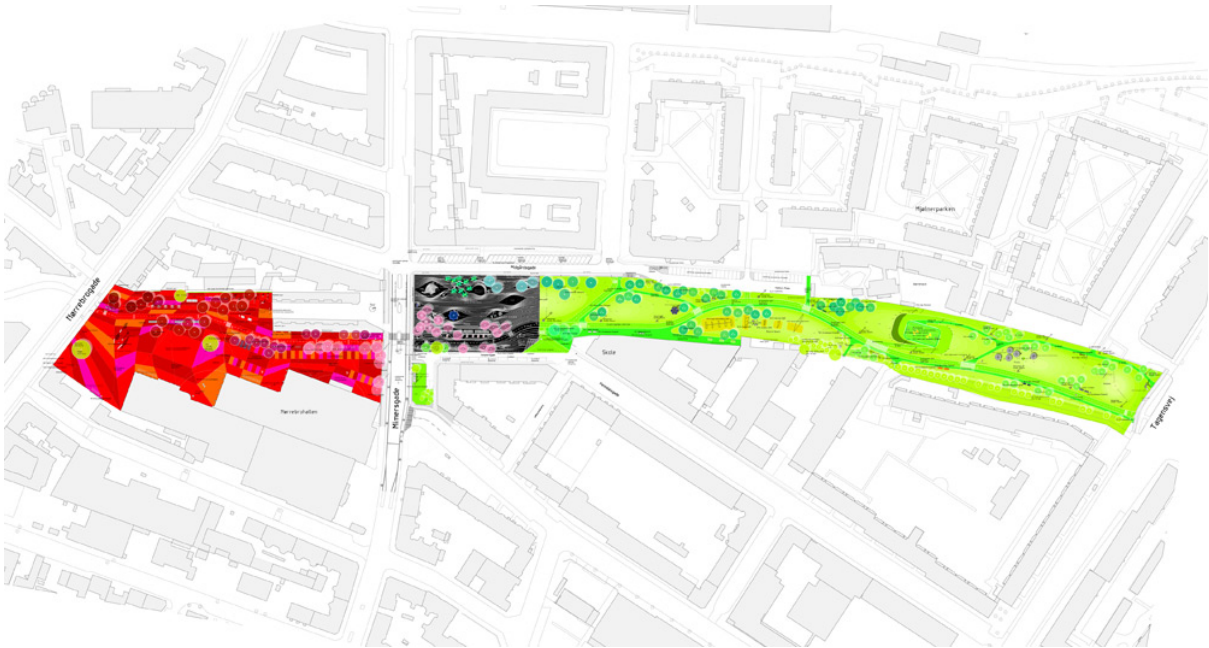


Figure 2. Superkilen site plan (Source: BIG 2012).





Figure 3. Superkilen's Red Square, aerial view (Source: BIG 2012).



Figure 4. Superkilen's Black Market, aerial view (Source: BIG 2012).





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Figure 6. Superkilen's Red Square (Source: BIG 2012).





Figure 7. Superkilen's Black Market (Source: BIG 2012).



Figure 8. Afrikaanderplein context map (Source: Google Imagery, 2015).





Figure 9. Afrikaanderplein site plan (Source: OKRA, 1999).



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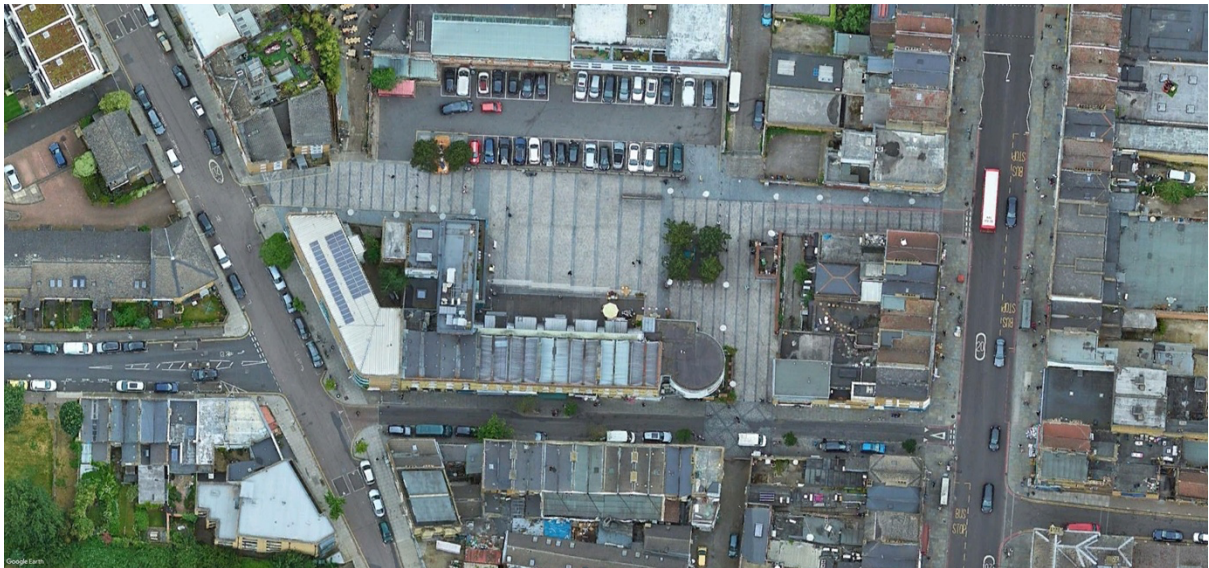


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