CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review provides a summary of literature pertinent to cultural/social values, meanings, and functions related to the built environment. Because the shaping of the built environment throughout the centuries has been and still is linked to the dynamism of culture, it is important to determine if changes in social values results in changes or perceived changes in the built environment.

This chapter begins with an overview of the evolution of plazas in the Philippines, the selected site of the study. Background on government and political framework is discussed as well. Section 2 presents information and studies relevant to cultural values and the built environment. In addition, a background on Filipino values and concepts of space is explained. Section 3 addresses the function and meaning of plazas as public spaces, the relationship of the spatial and temporal aspect of the activities and the achievement of a sense of place. They are described in terms of facilitators of outdoor activities. Section 4 presents the nature of symbolism to a user, how the symbolic environment is processed and what influences the perception of symbolic meaning. Section 5 explains morphology and typomorphology as a method in understanding underlying values and relationships to the built environment. Section 6 is a review of literature pertinent to research methodologies. Section 7 discusses the conclusions for the literature review that determined the appropriate method of research strategy for this study.

Section I: The Evolution of Philippine plaza

The early Spanish conquest of the New World led to the establishment of settlements in South America, Mexico, and Southeast Asia. These early settlements demonstrated a lack of organized town planning because settlements were created based on the "best judgement" of the *conquistadores* (colonizers). After a generation of this practice, the grid plan was eventually used in Mexico City and other towns of New Spain. In 1573 Philip II sent out a comprehensive town planning ordinance similar to the plans

of Vitruvius (Stanislawski 1947, 95-101). The 1573 ordinance was the basis of three centuries of colonial design in the Philippines commonly known as the Law of the Indies.

The failure to establish successful seaports in the southern part of the Philippines allowed Manila to emerge as the colonial capital; the colony's multifunctional nerve center and the site of the Spanish residences was known as the *Intramuros*. This includes the area within bulwarks and fortified walls. The walled city became the ideal Spanish urban model for provincial towns and cities. The urban morphology of these settlements is exemplified by a *plaza mayor*, the grid street pattern, the presence of a Catholic Church, a *convento*, and larger houses of the *principalia* (Filipino or mestizo elite) located on the perimeter of central square; the familiar setting of the marketplace and school within the central area. The rural ambiance of residential *nipa* (roofing material made from coconut palm fronds) houses and adjacent gardens reminded the settlers of their native homes (Reed 1967; 1990).
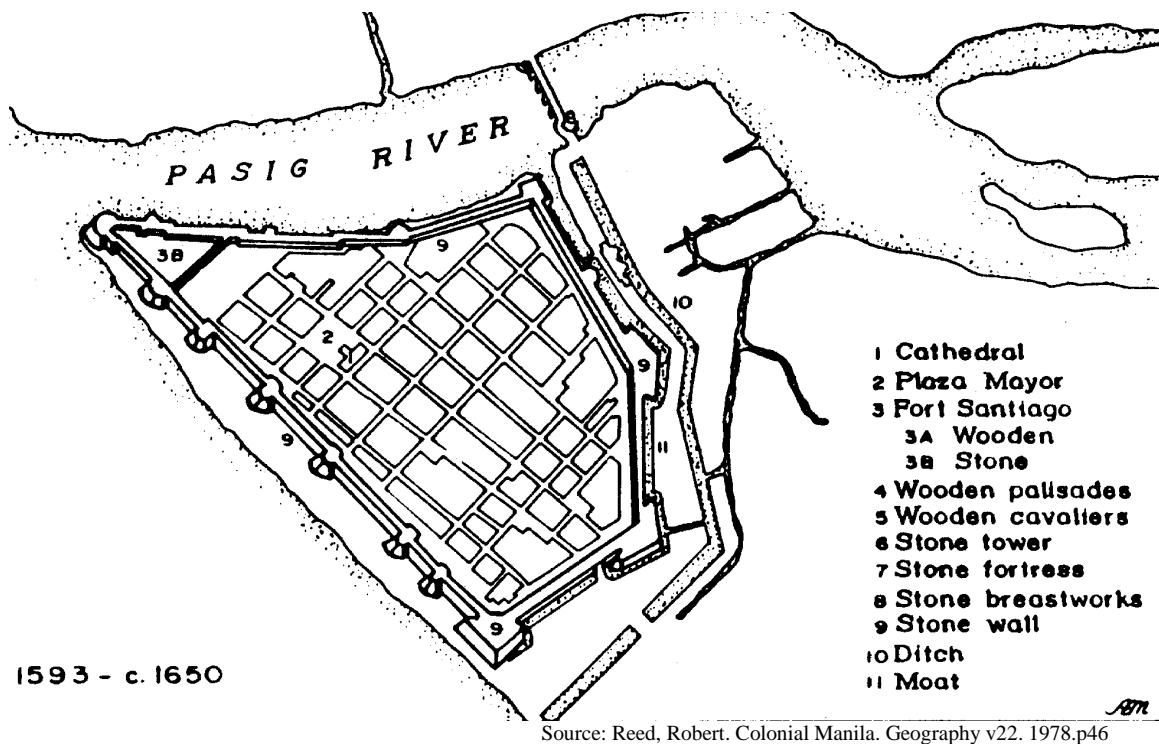

Source: Reed, Robert. Colonial Manila. Geography v22. 1978.p46

Figure 2. **Intramuros, Manila (1593-1650)**

The Spaniards and their settlements become powerful instruments of cultural transformation resulting in their being the only predominant Christian nation represented in Asia. In addition, Spanish authorities fully intended to achieve the socio-cultural transformation of the native population through the powerful instrument of colonial towns and cities. The Spaniards preserved their traditional political framework prior to colonization by assigning administrative positions to the indigenous class of Philippine leaders such as the *datus* (chieftains). In turn, the Filipino *barangay* (a small kinship group of families) was transformed into the unit of local administration (Reed 1967, 1990; Doeppers 1976).

After the defeat of Spain in 1989 by the US forces, the Philippines was ceded to the United States of America. The pre-war and post war American occupation (1896 – 1942) focused on the provision of transportation and modern utilities and allowed the rest to the free play of market forces. Likewise, patterns of land holdings and the political life in the country was not altered, thus maintaining the traditional power and land ownership of businesses, religious bodies and *caciques* (regional strongmen*)* (Fischer 1964; Dungo 1998).

The brief Japanese occupation during WWII (1942-1945) was succeeded by the Philippines becoming a Republic. The Republic of the Philippines was formed in 1948 and was politically divided into 50 provinces. The political structure was very similar to American states where each province has an elected governor and various administrative agencies. Each province was subdivided into municipalities that are run by a mayor and municipal council. Every municipality comprises of barrios or *barangays* and each municipality has a *poblacion[1]*" where the *munisipyo* (municipal hall) is located (Molina 1961; Hart 1955).

According to Hart (1955), the plazas during this period, were usually situated in the center of the *poblacion*. The "plaza" that the rural Filipino refers to is similar to what

---

[1]Poblacion is the "administrative seat and generally the largest city or town in a Philippine municipality" (Reed 1967, 211).

North Americans refer to as the downtown, an area similar the main town square. In the Philippines, the Catholic Church serves as the center of the town and is usually built in front of the open plaza. The municipal hall, the school, and the church are the dominant structures around the plazas. Larger communities may have a bandstand and a statue of Jose Rizal, the national hero, or other revolutionary leaders such as Andres Bonifacio and Apolinario Mabini. Wells are found in some plazas. Many plazas include a baseball diamond, tennis court, and basketball or volleyball courts right in the middle or adjacent to it. Exclusively male groups use courts in certain plazas, but they are never used by women or any mixed groups. Because the plaza is centrally located, it is the hub of community affairs and events. Cultural, social, and political events such as gossiping, fiestas, *zarzuelas* (Spanish comedies)*, moro-moros* (plays of religious conflict between Muslims and Catholics), and speeches are held here. It was also observed that the *principalias, or cacique,* seldom utilize the plazas' social or non-festive functions (Hart 1955).

Section 2. Values, Culture and Built Environment

Culture is defined as "coming from the Latin *cultura,* cultivation, agricultural field. The idea is that human beliefs (as opposed to the organizations of humans that articulate them in a given social group) form a basis for everyday behavior" (Shaul and Furbee 1998,16). Moreover, culture consists of all socially standardized ways of viewing and judgment about the world, ways of establishing preferences and goals, and rules that generate and guide behavior. Another way of conveying culture is to articulate it through differing perceptions. People have different cultural backgrounds so they may judge the same object or situations differently. Culture encompasses material objects (e.g. tools, weapons, cars and the like) called artifacts and immaterial elements (e.g. ideas and meanings) (Hunt et al 1998).

Value is defined as a culture's criteria for desirability and selection in action. "When explicitly conceptualized, they also become criteria for judgement, preference and choice" (Rokeach 1979, 16). Values are not tangible rules of conduct, but are the basis

for our decisions about our behavior. Human values are the consequence of societal demands and psychological needs. They are learned and determined by culture, society, institutions, and personal experience. Thus, values determined in terms of attitudes and beliefs generate our judgements, choices, attributions, and actions. However, values have the capacity to undergo change due to modification in society, situation, self-conceptions, and self-awareness. This has important consequences for other cognition and social behaviors due to culture's collective quality (Rokeach 1979).

Other definitions of values are associated with attitude, preference, desire, liking, satisfaction, and dissatisfaction. The study of attitudes, preferences, and desires became easy definitions that can be operationalized in the behavioral and social science discipline. This became indispensable to the advertising and marketing industry, to government and political leaders, and other businesses. Satisfying human needs, self esteem, and being accepted by society and its institution is the ultimate function of human values (Rokeach 1979). In short, human values help us to achieve a meaningful life. In this sense, cultural value means the assigned worth on aspects of the "entire way of life which are shared and learned by a group of people" (Hunt et al 1998, 43).

Michelson (1970) reiterated the importance of values in connection with the physical environment because they are part of the cultural web, an abstract goal that people attain through social groupings. Rapoport (1976) suggests that culture is comprised of the following in sequential order: subculture, values, images, lifestyle, and activities. The aspects of culture are expressed on the elements of the built form and people, between spaces and spaces, and people and spaces through constant interaction with the built environment.

Social values and symbolic meaning are embedded within the context of the residents' public and private lifestyle. Carr et al (1992) asserts that the public open space mirrors the private and public value because they are cultural settings of daily life patterns and activities. An example of this is Burgess, Harrison and Limb's (1988) study which reveals different results in how residents perceive and value parks and opens

spaces. On the one hand, the results showed that a mixture of opportunities is a desirable quality of the park. On the other hand, the results also showed that the open space failed to encourage multiple use because of the lack of park security and therefore limit the children's experience of public open space.

Values can be associated with motivations because they identify the attractive and the repulsive elements of the environment. In turn, they affect our needs to achieve particular ends, to acquire particular objects, or to engage in particular social relationships (Lang 1994; Cardinal and Day 1999).

Tuan (1977) asserts that expression of the self in a collective manner can occur in public environmental settings such as the temple, the town hall, or the civic center. This built environment is the extension of the self, which is subconsciously expressed in this environment in order to be visible and tangible.

In comparison, Low's (1993) study of Costa Rican life demonstrates how two urban plazas emulate cultural meaning and exhibit moral contradictions in those meanings. The changes in the plazas became a result of conflicts between socioeconomic problems and an ideal political expression. This notion is useful because it provides a framework significant for making connections between the forces that surrounds change in urban plazas. Costa Rica is both a Hispanic and Catholic country and most social forces that contribute to changes in the built environment are similar to that of the Philippines.

2.1. Philippine Values and Concept of space
Because culture is learned, urban traits and human behavior depend on the context of the environment in which they were raised. Understanding Filipino values assists this study in defining how the built form took shape within the Philippine context. Hunt et al. (1998) explains that the uniqueness of Filipino values among oriental countries lies in the fact that western values and culture have been superimposed over the older indigenous

bayanihan[2] culture. A study by Frank Lynch (1973) describes the prime Filipino value as the maintenance of social acceptance or Smooth Interpersonal Relations (SIR). This means that people are hesitant to take action that may offend their peer group. Some ways to maintain SIR are through euphemism and *pakikisama*. Euphemism is the substitution of an inoffensive expression for a word or phrase, which may otherwise offend or suggest something unpleasant. For instance, saying "yes" may signify that the speaker does not know, wants to impress, or is annoyed. *Pakikisama* is the willingness to be one with the group in its opinions and decisions. For example, it can mean acquiescing to express camaraderie (Lynch 1973).

According to Hunt et al. (1998, 209,103) other superimposed values include "strong family ties, commitment to the conscious past, a fatalistic attitude toward life, a predesposition to authoritarianism, particularistic rather than universal norms of conduct, shame rather than guilt as a reaction to failure, an emphasis on status rather than function, and an assumption of responsibility by females to an unusual extent." The assimilation of these superimposed values to the Filipino culture can provide a general understanding of how Filipinos conduct themselves, and establish social relationships in the built environment of the Philippine setting.

The value of social relationships is asserted by Fajardo (1995) who notes the importance of culture in the concept of the Filipino space. Every inch of space is utilized due to the perceptions that open or available space should not be wasted because of the lack of enough space and that objects within the space provide variety. Furthermore, Fajardo asserts that the aside from places of residences, the function of Filipino space in working environments should provide for the congregation of family groups. De Leon (1995) also acknowledges that Filipinos maximize the use of big and small spaces as a personal expression. Maximizing space connects and links it to his/her movement into various spaces that consequently result in the interaction with other people. While this study is useful because it recognizes the connection between the concept of space and

---

[2] A type of community life in which intimate, traditional, sympathetic, and neighborly relationships prevail and primary-group contacts predominate (Hunt et al 1998).

value of family and social groupings, this study limits itself to the place of residence and working environment. This connection between the value of space in the Philippine culture may extend to public and leisure places.

In addition, Encarnacion - Tan (1993, 1) defines "Filipino space as consisting of a main multi-functional space necessarily relating with a lot of extension space around it." This definition was based on her studies and research applications and interaction with poverty-stricken Filipino communities comprised of different linguistic groups representing seventy percent of the Philippine population. Her research revealed that interaction with these groups gave an appropriate understanding and concept of using space based on the community's economic level. Similarly, Mojares (1998) describes the malleability, negotiability, and looseness of space despite the structure of public or private territory or boundaries.

The use of Filipino space is based on behavioral attitudes, which can be traced from the assimilation of western values into the indigenous Filipino values. The perception of maximizing valuable space for utility, variety, and self-expression are reflections of the need to continuously engage in social relationship.

Section 3. Function of plazas

3.1. Activities

The necessity of public spaces as places to conduct social, political, religious, cultural, and recreational activities is evident throughout history. Ancient civilizations from all parts of the world utilized public spaces in various ways to comply with functional needs that respond to ways of life. For instance, the *Agora* of ancient Greece functioned not merely as a public space for special events, but also as the site of daily social activity. The function of squares and plazas underwent an evolution of use from marketplace for commerce and trading to a place for scared celebrations to a square used for social interaction and so forth. But the main function as a setting for people remained unchanged (Morris 1979; Carr et al. 1992). Similar forms of urban plazas and squares can be found in colonized countries in South America and Southeast Asia.

The use and diversity of activities in public spaces help shape and define these central places into plazas or squares found throughout first world countries such as Europe and North America. Relph (1976, 47) suggests that "the meaning of places may be rooted in the physical setting and objects and activities, but they are not a property of them-rather they are property of human intentions and experiences." This suggests that the built environment in whatever form or structure is a significant indicator of assigned values, meanings and intentions embedded in culture.

Some patterns and values in the built environment reflect different foci, such as religious structures or market places, which have designated meaning assigned to them or acquire meanings through usage. These places not only represent goods and service, art, and religion, but economic values as well (Lesser 1964; Bonkovsky 1986). For instance, the center in European settlements is the market and the cathedral. The market is the site where it supplies everyday necessities for the demands of daily needs. Therefore, it is an economic generator for goods and services through commerce or trading. On the other hand, the cathedral is the center of religion and society. Because of the European's religiosity, this place consolidates the social and personal life through ritual usage that is related to religious practices (e.g. daily church visits or weekly masses).

In the Philippines specifically, Hart's study of the Philippine plaza complex reveals that because of the functions of these places, they become repositories of urban traits that are both material and behavioral which is a main source of culture change. Social, political, and religious celebrations take place in the plaza area that is the focal point of each town. Inferential data from literary articles, Filipino informants, and field observations were utilized for Hart's descriptive data. Analysis shows that social congregation in the plaza results in the exchange of new ideas, innovations, and attitudes (Hart 1955).

Hart's study, however, does not investigate meanings and values that users attach to the place. Rapoport (1977) argued that meaning and value cannot preclude function,

but are essential aspects of function. In two different but related studies, Rapoport and Gehl (1987) provide categorizations for a specific understanding of the activity system. Rapoport (1977, 19) suggests that "behavior and activities cannot be taken at face value because they match with certain values, perceived in different images and cognitive styles so people can make sense of their surrounding by classifying them into certain categories with attached meanings and expected behavior". These activity systems consist of the manifest and the latent functions. The manifest function is the activity proper which consists of the necessary primary activity that is mandatory to perform certain tasks such as walking, eating, shopping, going to church, work or school, and so forth. On the other hand, latent function is the concealed meaning of the primary activity, which consists of three parts of the activity system:

a) the specific ways of doing the primary activity,

b) the associated activities which are spin off activities or optional activities in which people can get involve if they wish to do so provided time and space permits. which became part of an activity system,

c) and the symbolic aspect or meaning of the activity" (19).

Similarly, Gehl classified activities in public spaces (e.g. streets, plazas, and squares among others) into necessary activities, optional activities, and social activities. These activities are similar to three of Rapoport's category of the manifest and latent functions of the activity system. What is lacking in Gehl's classification is the analysis of the symbolic aspect of the activity.

3.2. Space and Time

Examining the manifest and latent functions of the activity is related to space and time will lead to the understanding of how activities affect the built form. Looking into the town plaza as a public space, Carr et al (1992) and Jacobs (1993) confirm that public spaces such as plazas, squares, streets and sidewalks are predicated by public life. Their studies recognize the existence of other public spaces that are not used for daily public life. However, in this sense, the town center is a specific instance of a public space where diversity of use generates opportunities for other spin-off activities to be experienced by

different user groups who can then attain participation and interaction in a public space. Moreover, these activities occur on a regular day to day basis, and in turn, facilitate the social morphology of public life. An example of this, is Whtye's (1980) study of public plazas in New York. This study reveals that the life of small urban spaces are dependent on the presence of people sharing the space and having the opportunity to use the place for a wide variety of activities.

Connected to the importance of space is its subconscious relationship with the temporal aspect of activities in the built environment (Tuan 1977). First, in Rapoport's study (1977), he discusses that the environment is also temporal, and this can be seen in the organization of time. One of way of looking at this is through the tempos and rhythms of daily human activities, which consist of the number of events per unit time, and the distribution of activities in time. For example, a particular group would regularly go to church, first thing in the morning, before going to market, while another group would go to the same church after going to the same market towards the end of the day. The use of the same space at different time reveals that the organization of time also reflects and influences socio-spatial behavior. Second, the tempos and rhythms of daily human activities are predicated by the allocation of time by the users. Third, distance implies time (Tuan 1977), in which the activities in a particular built environment depend on the proximity and accessibility of the location to the users.

3.3. Sense of Place

In terms of sense of place, Steele (1981) suggests that the way settings are utilized, the settings of special events, exuberant use, choice of location, and use opportunities can facilitate achievement of a sense of place. This is shown in a study by Wooley (1997), who investigated young peoples' use and perception of 22 town centers and cities across the Great Britain. Data gathered from questionnaires and focus groups enabled researchers to understand responses. Results showed that young people attached value to these open spaces, exhibiting concern about safety, environmental issues, and the future of the town center.

Based on all these studies of the functions of the public spaces and town plazas, these places are repositories of cultural values and meaning through the creation of public life that facilitates social morphology. The social form and structure takes shape by providing diversity of daily functions and activities, which promotes social engagement and congregations. Another important aspect is the subconscious connection between space and time in the use of the built environment. The result of this constant engagement and congregation in a particular place, is an eventual achievement of a sense of place. Furthermore, one must recognize the manifest and latent functions of a place because they reveal the connections between purpose and meaning. Therefore, the built environment serves as the setting for human activities and interactions, which may inhibit, facilitate, shape, and generate behavior that is defined by a certain culture.

Section 4: Symbolic Meaning of the Built Environment

Lynch (1960) argues that to understand urban environments, we also have to consider the way inhabitants perceive the city because every citizen develops associations with some parts of the built environment, and these images are soaked in memories and meanings. A study by Burgess (1978, 88) reported on perceptions about the urban and regional meaning and images of Kingston and Hull, England. Using social survey methods that emphasized the verbal images of entire cities and experience described by the participants, the results revealed that "the external image of the city is stereo-typical, gaining much of its details from cultural attitudes towards the North of England."

Meanings, which subsume symbolism, are organized, structured, and processed by the observer in images[3] and schema[4] that are stimulated by non-verbal communication in the environment. (i.e. user decoding the coded environment as a symbol). However, noticing cues in the environment is a precondition for the derivation of meaning (Rapoport 1977).

---

[3] Images are' individual's mental representation of the parts of external reality known to him via any kind of experience including indirect experience'(Rapoport 1977,p40).
[4] Schema –" the term stands for the notion, stereotype, plan or map, plan of acton or self concept" (Rapoport 1977,p41)

According to Lang (1994) "symbolic meanings are meanings associated with an object or a phenomenon, or classes of objects or phenomena. A symbol is something that stands for, denotes or represents some idea, whether spiritual or laic, that is immaterial or abstract" (27-28). It is not only the elements of the environment that communicate symbolic meaning but also the people and artifacts.

In human-environment studies human experience of the environment is processed through perception[5], affectual cognition[6], and evaluation[7]. Although these processes are linked, meanings are better articulated in the cognition and affectual process. Through the constant interaction with the environment, the user interprets and perceives the built environment as a rich source of symbolic and associational meanings (Rapoport 1977).

On the other hand, Holgate (1992) reiterates that the language of the built form evokes discernible meanings "which were consciously or unconsciously built into them by their designers" (133). Thus, people respond to the structure by constantly reading the purpose of that structure or an environment thereby establishing association meanings in the appearance of the built forms. A study by Yoshihiro (1995) of a waterfront landscape in Inner Tokyo revealed that the manipulated meaning of the landscape created by planners evolves into different connotative social, cultural, and symbolic meanings to the co-authors who are the users. The study further demonstrated the use of interpretive methodology grounded on semiotic and literary theory as a method of interpreting the meaning of the waterfront landscape as a text.

Other studies suggest that according to the hermeneutic model, the meaning of the built environment can be interpreted as a text. Corner (1991) further stresses that the built landscape is both the text and site of tradition and memories; a dialogue between the language of culture and the present can be restored by interpretation and understanding. Because hermeneutics uses intuitive reasoning, it responds to the open interpretation of intangibles that are imbedded in culture such as meaning, symbolic association, or

---

[5] The active process of obtaining information in the environment (Lang 1994, 26).
[6] "The process of thinking, learning and remembering that involves mostly giving meaning to the world rather than knowing about it" (Lang 1994, 26; Rapoport 1977, 108).

perception of places. Through interpretation we can explore underlying meanings, associations, and symbols that are extracted from our historic culture and recreate them into places in nature and the built landscape.

A similar study by Vranich (1999) of the temple complex in a pre-Columbian city in Bolivia revealed the meaning of ritual spaces. By using an interpretive approach in analyzing the architectural data, the results showed the cosmological meaning that was imbedded in the architecture a well as the temple as a representation of the center of the Andean world.

In these particular studies, identification of symbolic meaning places a significant role in understanding the meaning of the built environment through the perception of the users. Not only does each individual member develop different associations to the built form through his/her personal experiences but the designers and planners disseminate their manipulated meaning of the built form they have created. At the same time, the hermeneutic model in which it treats the built environment as a rich text provides a tool to interpret symbolic meaning embedded with the urban fabric.

Section 5: Typology and Morphology as a Tool for Identifying
Cultural Values in the Built Environment

One method of studying the form and structure of cities is urban morphology. "Urban morphology is the systematic study of the form, shape, plan, function, and structure and function of the built fabric of town and cities, and the origin and the way in which this fabric has evolved over time" (Mandanipour 1996, 53). This method analyzes the urban form at three stages of basic components: a) the elements, and b) historical and c) contemporary characteristics. Some critics claim that this approach ignores the economic, political, and cultural context in which buildings have been shaped. Research by Elbow (1983) in secondary cities of Latin America has proven that the changing urban morphological patterns and the changing land uses are influenced by decisions made by institutions through the implementation of transportation routes, market location, and

---

[7] Involving feelings and emotions about the environment, motivations, desires and values (Rapoport 1977, 28).

other factors. Moreover, the public sector's continuous struggle to meet the demand of population growth, migration, housing, and transportation contribute to the changing urban pattern.

Furthermore, Vance (1990) echoed Mandanipour's claims by asserting that social and morphogenetic processes do not synthesize all explanations of the city form and insists on looking at urban morphogenesis[8] to reveal how cities arrive at their forms. Vance's study focuses on how the institutional processes such as land assignment, connection, capital accumulation and transfer, speculation, planning and the mercantile market, segregation, congregation, and junction of institutions all together give shape to the morphology of cities. Furthermore, a case study by Watts and Watts (1986, 249) about Ilorin, Nigeria, revealed that an understanding of morphology is valuable in considering current planning decisions faced by Ilorin and other Nigerian cities in a period of austerity. Results of the morphological analysis from the pre-colonial era through the 1980s indicated the recognized vital sectors of future planning initiatives. They are the following: "the vitality of the small-scale enterprises; the need for farmland for food production; the creation of a healthy environment; and the recognition of street trading as a source of livelihood in future planning."

On a more concrete level, Moudon's (1989, 41; 1994) study explicitly explained the relationship of social and cultural values by using a methodological framework to analyze the elements of the built form. She proposes a combined method of typology and morphology called *typomorphology*, which claims that this "method of analysis describes the layers of the physical forms of cities and further explains the process of the production of human habitat." Jacobson (1996) further explains that this approach unravels the socioeconomic history, technological evolution, and associated cultural values that have shaped a city. Although very few typomophological studies have been made, Moudon's study of San Francisco's Alamo's Square between 1899 –1976 revealed that there was no drastic change in the built environment despite the urban renewal trends and advancement of technology. Furthermore, the technological society influenced the

---

[8] Urban morphogenesis is the creation and subsequent transformation of city forms (Vance 1990,38).

pattern of building abandonment at the turn of the century and metamorphosis of built spaces.

The trends showed that the structures are actually indicators of social behavior for they comprehend culture separately from spatial consideration. So this method is an appropriate means to understand society because it can communicate cultural values, priorities, and conflicts.

Hence, typomorphology provides a working definition of space and building types, and serves as a rich launching ground for studying the nature of building design and its relationship to the city and to the society in which it takes place. The typomorphological method emphasizes that by identifying the differences and similarities of the objects of design we can better understand the underlying processes of the built environment.

The morphological studies of cities demonstrated that changes in the urban fabric influenced by institutional values and a necessary tool to recognize the retention of vital sectors that will affect future planning initiatives. While this research paper does not fully use the entire frame provided by Moudon, because of the limited data available. It uses her method of analysis to describe and analyze the layers of the town center's urban fabric that developed over time.

Section 6: Literature on Research Methodology

The purpose of this literature review is to determine the appropriate research method for study. Presenting the advantages and disadvantages of the research methodologies helps to narrow down appropriate choices for research strategy.

Qualitative research is a method that emphasizes observations, interviews, or case studies that are personally described and recorded by a researcher/interviewer (Sommer and Sommer 1991). Commonly used in field research, it relies more on parametric or inferential statistics. Qualitative studies use inductive reasoning and it suggests the nature of knowledge as cyclical. It dwells on interpretivism, constructivism, grounded theory,

and phenomenological theories. Analysis of data is often the narratives. The purposes of the inquiry are to discover the subjects' experiences and understand their lives and their meanings. The main weaknesses of qualitative research pertain to reliability. First of all, its descriptive nature and emphasis on behavioral aspects such as human beliefs, attitudes, and opinions, make it a very subjective process. The problem stems from the avoidance of any predefined constructs because it is mostly dependent on the researcher's interpretation. Predefined constructs are put in the background thus giving rise to a rigorous search for acceptable definitions. Qualitative research quantifies a lot more in terms of ordinal and nominal data and less ratio data. In addition, because of the nature of qualitative research, sample sizes are often too small to attain reliability or generalizable results. Also, the Hawthorne effect may arise because of the subject's awareness of being observed which can lead to changes in behavior. (Babbie 1998 ; Denzin & Lincoln 1994).

Quantitative research, on the other hand, is a method which relies on numerical observation through the use of statistics which are made to consolidate and summarize. It attempts to find facts that are generalizable and works within a premise and hypothesis. The process of the studies is usually linear and uses deductive reasoning, specifies causation, and makes predictions. It dwells on the positivist/post-positivist theories. Analysis of data depends on the statistical significance of data (Babbie 1998; Sommer & Sommer, 1991; Denzin & Lincoln 1994).

The purposes of inquiry in quantitative research are to explain relationships, causation or comparisons about the groups in any selected study. The strengths of a quantitative study are the possibility to have a large sample size, and stronger internal/external validity and reliability due to objectivity. However, one weakness of this method is its reliance on a preconceived set of questions, which limits the inquiry. Another is that the researcher is always a third person (Babbie 1998 ; Denzin & Lincoln 1994).

Section 7: Conclusion

The literature shows that cultural values shape public spaces in the built environment. Values are attitudes and beliefs indicated by lifestyles, behavior, experiences, motives, and social relationships taking place in the built environment. Values are defined in the activity system in which the users participate.

The different types of activities taking place in public spaces identify the function of the built environment such as the plaza. Diversity of use, opportunities for other activities, and safety, are some principal measures to ensure vitality of the built environment's public life. Moreover, there is a subconscious relationship between space and the temporal aspect of activities in the built environment. This is seen in the organization of time, the tempos and rhythms of the activities which are predicated by the user's allocation of time, and the relationship of distance to time.

The underlying meaning of function should be taken into account because frequent usage acquires value and meaning and the sense of place. The symbolic meaning of the built environment is a process of non-verbal communication in the built environment acquired through personal experiences, memories, meanings, or association to an object or phenomenon. On the other hand, morphology and typomorphology studies analyze the evolution of the form and structure of towns, cities, and building types, and demonstrate that they can be tools for understanding the underlying process of the built form and its relationship to the society for which it serves.

Based on the studies discussed in the previous sections and the comparison of the two types of research methodology, I argue that a qualitative approach is a more suitable method to understand values and meaning because cultural values are abstract and arbitrary concepts influenced by societal conventions. Moreover, this type of research can reveal individual perception and preferences that are reflective of the users' value in the context of their lifestyles. The methods utilized in these aforementioned studies are personal interviews, focus groups, questionnaire, field observations, and interpretations.

Morphological studies have demonstrated that understanding the underlying cultural values, the relationship of society to the built environment, and of cities provides a basis for future planning initiatives and development appropriate to the lives of people. Through this study, it is the author's intention to bridge the understanding between the physical elements of the built environment and by using morphological analysis and the concepts of values/meaning by investigating attitudes, desires, and motives concerning the use of the built environment.