



## **Sustainable Development in a Diverse World (SUS.DIV)**

### **POSITION PAPER OF RESEARCH TASK 4.3**

**“Cultural dialogue through (im)possible spaces: diversity in the social arena”**

## **Cultural dialogue in localised urban systems**

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## **ONE - preliminary statement**

In some cities/parts of cities diversity leads to public and private benefit, cultural dialogue and sustainable development. In others, its effects are social tension or conflict, segregation and/or economic stagnation. We know that the difference is not a simple matter of population numbers, but have yet to make it intelligible for migration policy, urban planning or intervention at the local level.

With a focus on urban spaces as arenas of population mixture, this task group will address the fact that different urban areas, even within a single city, may have different capacity to incorporate newcomers or deal with diversity. The project in effect will seek to explain variation in the outcome of the population mix. Within designated areas, it will map ethnic, demographic, structural, economic etc diversities and their interaction. And it will situate these areas in the context of [present or past] factors impinging on them from outside – here linking to the “glocalisation” of Theme 2.

**The final product of work** will include:

[a] a list of diversity indicators with more/less numerical values assigned, allowing areas to be compared along a qualitative scale;

[b] a better understanding of the differences that make most difference between ‘good’ and ‘bad’ outcomes of population mix;

[c] a reliable key to classifying localised urban systems as good/bad diversity types; enabling a reliable practitioner - friendly typology.

[d] identification of the implications of each type for inclusion/ exclusion of incomers, for integration/segregation of minorities, and for networks, social capital and cultural dialogue. These dimensions combine to determine the success of intervention at the local level.

**Interim aims achieved in the current phase** include:

[a] selection of relevant themes and review of selected literature;

[b] follow through and consolidation of research into diversity indicators already begun by SUSDIV partners and associates;

[c] refinement of the model and field procedures for general use;

[d] spelling out the terms of collaboration with partners and associates.

## Research Plan

At the SUSDIV kick-off meeting we agreed that it would be useful to identify a set of cities to serve as [partial] common ground for the various projects. This has still to happen. However there are a number of sites in the purview of task team members where urban research on aspects of diversity has been done, is planned, or is on-going. These are noted in the next section. The plan is to piggy-back on this existing work. We justify this both as a necessary economy of cost and personnel and as good scientific procedure: we need a broad base for comparison – in effect the only experimental method available to the social sciences - and SUSDIV resources will not cover wholly new fieldwork.

The project is multi-layered and multi-disciplinary. Research methods and field strategies will vary with the focus, perspective and particular aims of researchers. The separate studies will be designed to collect quantitative as well as qualitative data [the latter in its two senses, anthropological and epidemiological] – i.e. visible material/structural elements that can be enumerated, and non-visible processes and relationships that must be inferred from things seen or heard.

It is clear that material/structural elements – population, housing, economy, topography - form the framework of possibility for actors.<sup>1</sup> Broadly speaking this framework governs the shape and scope of social networks, constrains/enhances options for identity and relationship, and it ‘decides’ the conditions for trust and cultural dialogue.

*How* the material/structural elements shape these non-visible processes is less clear. Current literature acknowledges the need for better understanding of the interaction between visible/material and non-visible/non-material elements of the local system, and of the logic driving the latter. These processes govern the system’s emergent properties and so are essential to predicting the outcome of diversity.

This task group expects to develop new approaches to monitoring the more enigmatic elements of local systems. Two initiatives are in process. The first involves preparing a paper, on the implication of open-/closed-ness of the local system for boundaries and [therefore] for networks; the implication of networks for identity; and the implication of identity for diversity. In the second, we are pursuing analogies between social and biological diversities, and the use of ecological insights in the development of social models. Hypotheses about these connections will be formulated for testing in the field.

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<sup>1</sup> The metaphor of fishtank and fish is helpful : first question, what kind of “fishtank” is this place ? how many kinds of fish live in it...Second question how, does a particular [type of] fish move within it. The two levels imply phases of the field studies: one the area, two individuals in it [Wallman 2005].

## TWO - antecedents

A succession of field studies in different cities and parts of cities has indicated a systematic logic which broadly accounts for the better or worse outcome of population mix.. As local systems, some areas are relatively more open and more heterogeneous than others. These are routinely more adaptable in the face of change or incursion, with more fluid boundaries and easier inter-cultural communication.

The foundation study compared two London boroughs<sup>2</sup> [*Resource options for Economy and Identity in the Inner City* “]. It gave rise to the basic ideal type model which opposes open/heterogeneous and closed/homogeneous urban systems.

The second study, based in Kampala, Uganda, found men and women to be embedded in different local systems and with different relation to the same urban village<sup>3</sup> [*The Informal Economy of Health in African Cities*” ] The finding that men largely operate in an open: heterogeneous local system while co-resident women operate in one which is relatively closed: homogeneous, demonstrates that sub-systems within the whole may vary in their relation to the parent system, and that they may differ from it in style.<sup>4</sup>

The third study compares the way numerically important ethnic minorities relate to each other and to the host community in two different areas within the old city of Turin. [*Host: Migrant Options in the Informal Economy*”]. An initial piece of work in the central market area was designed as a pilot; the full plan of study will follow with systematic comparison with a second area nearby<sup>5</sup>. The two areas have different histories and are differently affected by current efforts to regenerate the old city. The work planned will take forward the result of the comparison made in London: i.e. that the local system’s resilience to change varies with its degree of open: closedness. Further, timed to monitor change as it happens, it may test the possibility that emergent properties as well as present structures are/must be defining features of the local urban system.

In this position paper, however, only the market study appears. It is used to demonstrate problems of classification which led to the revision of the basic model {see Section 6}.

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<sup>2</sup> Wallman 1982 *Living in South London*; 1984 *Eight London Households*; 1985 *Town & Country Planning*,

<sup>3</sup> Wallman 1996a *Kampala Women Getting By :: wellbeing in the time of AIDS* and following.

<sup>4</sup> This project is not reported here. It is compared with the London material in Wallman 1996b.

<sup>5</sup> This area is the subject of the anthropology PhD of Patrick Hazard at University College London.

### **THREE– analytic perspectives**

At its core, the work of Task 4.3, builds on the model proposed by Wallman [FEEM Working Paper 76.2003], testing and adapting it in dialogue with other models, against empirical evidence, and with input from other disciplines in the SUSDIV stable. At this stage of reasoning, four perspectives are explicit: *space*; *urban anthropology*; *networks*; and *systems*. They are discussed here in separate sections, but necessarily integrated in the research.

#### **[a] Space.**

The spatial perspective has two aspects. One is an empirical question: How far does *the local* extend ? The concept of glocalisation complicates – confuses – the answer. Furthermore: How is the local *system* to be mapped onto the empirical *space* which we call a research *site* ?

The other aspect of urban space concerns the typing of it. The phrase “[im]possible spaces”, proposed for the title of Task 4.3 by the then SUSDIV Convenor, states a basic opposition between [socially] good and bad spaces -spaces which are or are not good for cultural dialogue. The same opposition is echoed in a distinction drawn between *spaces* [as ‘abstract ideas, empty and dead, at best marked by relations with absent others’], and *places* [which are ‘the focus of memory, identity and people-place relations’]. Marc Auge [1995] coined the word ‘non-place’ for the empty-and-dead slot. His ‘place’ is recognisable: it has a history, an identity, people relating to it and to each other within it. ‘Non-place’ has none of these. Airports, shopping malls, motorways, computer terminals are quintessential non-places.

This classification is only the starting point of a rich analysis of ‘supermodernity’ which is not relevant here. The value of the place/non-place dichotomy in this context is in underlining the possibility that people who share a space do not invariably interrelate - specifically, similar *amounts* of population mixture can lead to very different *kinds* of diversity.

We should note also the variable definition and use of urban spaces by diverse population groups and individuals. Do all agree on the public: private distinction ? that the space is [should be] shared or individual ? Public and private refer to the ownership or accessibility of places, while shared and individual refer to the ways in which those spaces are occupied. Both these aspects make the cultural and social identity of parts of the city and will affect the dynamic of each local system.

#### **[b] Urban anthropology.**

Under this rubric three strands stand out. One is the recognition, coined by Ulf Hannerz [1980], that there is/can be anthropology *in* the city and, less commonly, anthropology *of*

the city. This project is unusual in combining the two levels of analysis: data collected in ethnographic fieldwork and other on-the-ground research will be fed into the comparative model, ultimately enabling our classification objective.

The second strand of the urban anthropology braid addresses the dynamics and the outcome of population mix. Here the concepts of *creolisation* [ref. Hannerz] and *cultural compression* [ref. Paine] are germane, both referring to the effects of cultures-up-against-each-other. Paine's *compression* model is especially useful to this enquiry, allowing that cultures may 'borrow' from each other without 'withering on the vine'; and that they may interrelate – i.e the actors assigned to various cultures may affect one another – without being in the same physical space: in the modern era culture contact, cultural dialogue, cultural compression can take place at a distance, in virtual space or by long distance media.

The final strand enters some more empirical time/space elements. Our Slovakian and Czech partners both underline the legacy of the Soviet era, pre-1989. One effect of its demise has been a 'boom of diversity' following years in which the official line encouraged homogeneity and celebrated the ideology of 'equality' and 'egalitarianism'. Working further back in history, our partners in Ancona have documented physical traces left by different minorities in the European city of the early modern age<sup>6</sup>

On the specific matter of migration, there are many studies exploring the motivation and strategies of both trans-national and rural-urban migrants. Comparative empirical study of the characteristics of in-migrants and their local hosts in different cities/ countries may begin to explain differences in the success of their settlement – and of diversity itself. This adds a particularly anthropological dimension to the question of global-local connections.  
**[REFS ??]**

#### **[c] Networks**

The social network concept was developed by social anthropologists working in cities and provides a useful link to the systems' perspective [following], and to questions of trust and social capital [See Wallman 2005]. Both are crucial to the outcome of diversity in cities, and both are built on social networks. Social capital, however, takes analytic priority. While current definitions of it vary, sometimes in important ways, all would allow that it refers to resources – importantly also non-visible, *relational* resources - which constitute the links between individuals. A note on anthropological approaches to social network mapping and analysis therefore offers a useful contribution to Theme 4 as a whole.

In the 1950's anthropology extended its remit to the study of cities and inevitably began asking questions about rural-urban links and the nature of social relationships among diverse populations in towns. This led to the development of strategies for mapping the *extent* and the *content* of individuals' social networks. Initially in their focus on African cities they wanted to understand how migrants negotiated relationships within cities and

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<sup>6</sup> Donatella Calabi n.d. Foreigners and the city: an historiographical exploration

became part of life there; and the conditions allowing or requiring them to maintain relationships with the rural 'home' area.

While the terminology of network analysis and social capital theory are different, there is conceptual overlap. We note the parallels between Putnam's distinction between *bridging* social capital which facilitates relationships beyond the group, and *bonding* social capital which strengthens group identity and secures the boundaries around it, with Wallman's notion of open and closed systems (see above); and Philip Mayer's (1961, 1962 and 1964 in Mitchell 1966) questions about the differences between *economic* migrants<sup>7</sup> and *school* migrants who were living in a South African town. The former maintained a narrow and very tight network of relationships which extended into the rural areas from which they came. This "protected" them from creating urban based social relationships and reinforced their rural connections. "School migrants" by contrast created loose knit urban networks which allowed them to participate in town life without having an affect on their rural connections. As in Wallman's Kampala study, two different groups [although here of the same cultural origins] experience the same social arena in very different ways (Mayer 1964 in Mitchell 1966).

For SUSDIV purposes, the usefulness of the anthropological perspective on networks lies in its ability to provide in-depth descriptions of the nature of the links between individuals and groups. Working in localized urban areas, the anthropologist's concern is not simply how many links a person has with how many categories of people within and outside the neighbourhood, but the quality of the connections between them. This is inferred from a range of indicators: Is the connection with the place and with other people expected to be temporary or lasting? Is it single or multi-stranded? How much do the various social arenas – work, locality, kinship etc – overlap? How and where is the network bounded; where does identity sit – i.e. where is the line drawn between [each set of] 'us' and 'them'.

Fichter (1957) adds a further useful, analytic dimension to the understanding of social networks. According to Fichter, social networks are made up of individuals involved in many dyadic (two-way) relationships with multiple other persons, but no one person will be directly related to everyone else in the network.<sup>8</sup> In his framework networks do not share common property or organize themselves. The links are only *potential* until activated for a common purpose. As soon as they are, they become "action sets". Action sets are created for a purpose and will dissolve when it has been achieved or abandoned (Fichter 1957 in Layton 1997:39. Hannerz, Mitchell Boissevain In this project we will seek to understand how action sets are created and used by migrants and, given an ethnically mixed population, how homogeneous/ heterogeneous they are.

Epstein [1961] offers another dimension. He argues that within the general ['extended']

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<sup>7</sup> In the local idiom this was the 'red' category – referring to the red dust of the road which adhered to their skin as they walked to town in the heat.

<sup>8</sup> The distinction between direct and indirect links is spelt out in Boissevain 1962??, as implied in the book's title *Friends of Friends*.

network there are separate sub-groups of people ['effective networks'] who are more tightly connected. The most prestigious, effective group clarifies, defines and affirms social norms. These social norms then permeate the rest of the group through the extended network. Compared to Fichter, whose *action sets* are relatively temporary groups, Epstein's effective networks are more stable configurations. Importantly, Epstein also brings in issues of power and prestige which are crucial to understanding the nature of social capital.

In terms of method, anthropological approaches to network mapping offer rich research frameworks, from Wallman's [1982] uses of network charts to Epstein's mapping of a gossip network [in Mitchell]. They can reveal non-visible, relational elements as well as visible and categorical dimensions.

#### [d] Systems

A systems' perspective underpins the project. In this work it has its origins in the holistic models of social anthropology, but is informed by applications in other disciplines. The common general element is a distinction between more and less complex systems. Peter Senge, the management guru,<sup>9</sup> distinguishes the *detail complexity* of so many variables that "all rational explanations are inherently incomplete"; and *dynamic complexity*, recognisable "when cause and effect are not close in time and space ...[when] obvious interventions do not produce expected outcomes". We need, he says, to look for underlying structures and patterns of behaviour - "the dynamics of the system that are obscured in the mass of detail".

In the classic essay "The kind of problem a city is"<sup>10</sup>, Jane Jacobs explores the same complexity point but, as an urban planner with cities in central focus, comes to a more directly relevant conclusion. She begins by distinguishing three kinds of scientific problem: First, *problems of simplicity* - involving only two variables, but leading to theories of light, sound, heat, electricity, then the car, the phone, the plane etc. Later, with probability theory and statistical mechanics [and computers !] it became technically possible to handle two billion variables, and so to consider *problems of disorganised complexity*. Because science can now manage near infinite detail, we can [apparently] solve problems of prediction, thermo-dynamics, communication [*sic* !] - even "the theory of knowledge itself".

But not, she says, the problems of the city. These are commonly defined either as *simple*, dependent: independent duos, or as *disorganised complex* problems "to which statistical methods hold the key". Correctly, urban problems are neither. They are *problems of organised complexity*. Key to them is not that the number of variables is 'moderate' - more than two, less than two million - but that they are *interrelated*. As are the facts and factors of city life. These relational effects cannot be enumerated, even after the fact, and are not

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<sup>9</sup> Peter Senge [1990] *The Fifth Discipline* London: Century Business

<sup>10</sup> Jane Jacobs [1961] *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*.

normally anticipated in the planning. Most often they stay in a black box of unintended consequences defined out of the planners' frame.

By contrast, in social anthropology there are strong precedents for dealing with relational effects. Notably, the formal: informal difference echoes the distinction between categorical and relational data - specifically, between survey and case study.<sup>11</sup> The interdependence of categorical/ quantifiable and relational/ non-quantifiable data is essential to the holistic tradition of the discipline. Moreover it confirms the importance of the invisible bits which the figures cannot count.

Along the gamut of social research, invisibility has had most attention in studies of those parts of the economic system that cannot be enumerated – i.e. of the 'informal' economy.<sup>12</sup> But we need to be clear that the informal is invisible not because it is not there – nor even because the economic establishment believes it is not there - but because, not being visible, it is not susceptible to regular quantitative measurement. It is left out of government analyses, local planning and policy assessment only because it will not fit into hard-edged categories. The same applies to cross-cultural relations in modern cities. Put into fuzzy<sup>13</sup> perspective however, non-formal, non-visible sub-systems can be made intelligible. The same applies to cultural dialogue in modern cities.

Our assumption is that sub-systems which cannot be enumerated acquire another kind of intelligibility when the relationships characteristic of the parent local system are exposed. These relationships make the crucial difference between one local system and another: the *type* of system in view is decided by the nature of relationships holding it together<sup>14</sup>. Like the economic scope for migrant/host groups in any local system, the potential for cultural dialogue among them depends on the sort and scope of connections within the system and amongst its parts.

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<sup>11</sup> Leach makes the point only about people; here it is applied also to places. The parallel is vital given that this project is about relations between the two.

<sup>12</sup> This use of informality was coined by Keith Hart in 1973. See further Gershuny 1983; Archambault & Greffe 1984; Harding & Jenkins 1989; Gregory & Altman 1989. Gershuny's model is useful in that it itemises parts *within* the unenumerated system. This allows him to examine their interrelationship.

<sup>13</sup> Kosko's [1994:14] contrast between hard-edged and fuzzy-edged categories is apt. The former classification is binary: something is *either* A *or* it is not-A. The latter is multivalent: A *and* not-A.

<sup>14</sup> Wallman 1985, 2000, 2001a, b.

## FOUR – the model

### *Caveat...*

*When the anthropologist attempts to describe a social system he necessarily describes only a model of the social reality. The model represents in effect the anthropologist's hypothesis about 'how the social system works'. The different parts of the model system therefore...form a coherent whole – [the model represents] a system in equilibrium. But this does not imply that the social reality forms a coherent whole; on the contrary the reality situation is in most cases full of inconsistencies; and it is precisely these inconsistencies which can provide us with an understanding of the processes of social change.*<sup>15</sup>

### **the London project**

The ideal type model is abstracted, as ideals are, from 'a mass of detail'. It is a second level abstraction; the first involved identifying dimensions of one local system [here Battersea in south London] and comparing them with the same dimensions in another [Bow in east London].

The procedure, from successive field studies to abstract model, is complicated but logical, involving a series of classifications. Bateson describes his experience of a similar effort: he *"proceeded from a classification or typology to a study of the processes that generated the differences summarised in the typology... and having put a label on the processes, ...went on to a classification of them.."* After all, *"the very act of perception is an act of logical typing."*<sup>16</sup>

Even before the first level work began, observation of inner London showed that similarly mixed, low income areas can have different styles of livelihood. This was perceived [even] by ordinary people. Popular distinctions made between Battersea and Bow at that time were likely, if specified, to include reference to race relations or to the effects of economic recession, both 'better' in the first than in the second case.

The areas nevertheless are similar in superficial ways<sup>17</sup>: both are dominantly working-class, low income areas with a growing sprinkling of 'gentry' and a visible ethnic mix. But on the basis of historic and economic review of the two boroughs, and the ethnographic study of one neighbourhood in each, we found them to have very different economic patterns, different ways of defining 'outsiders' – ultimately different styles of diversity. The differences were focused around ten indicators, ten points of contrast between the two areas. The indicators are: industrial structure, industrial type; employment opportunities;

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<sup>15</sup> Leach 1954, p. 6.

<sup>17</sup> Bateson XXXX pp 192, 190

<sup>17</sup> The ethnographic present here is late 1970s - early 1980s. It is likely that details of number and proportion have changed since then, but our expectation is that the characteristic styles of each area and the systematic differences between them have not. We hope to check this by follow up.

travel to work patterns; travel facilities; labour movement; housing options; gatekeepers; criteria for membership; political traditions.<sup>18</sup>

The style of each area is consistent throughout: all indicators for Bow are homogeneous and closed, all indicators for Battersea are [*relatively*] heterogeneous and open. From this evidence, inference can be drawn for an ideal type model, placing the two systems at either end of an open: closed continuum.

The same evidence seems to ratify the common wisdom. Bow has a [*relatively*] less flexible economy and social style, and [*compared to Battersea*] its local structure is markedly [*more*] closed and homogeneous. It is not that one kind of area has no shortages and the other has many, or that one area is viable and the other is not. Whatever the level of resources, the crucial difference shows in the way they are managed.

Thus, the list of oppositions is '*an attempt to make [the similarities and differences] clear at the level of very superficial ethnography; the degree to which [they] can be distinguished at the level of social structure will only become apparent later on*'.<sup>19</sup>

This point is demonstrated when the two areas are visualised as different types of *boundary system*. In Figure I, suppose that one ring represents housing, another work, and the third, say, something like social life – people I *choose* to spend time with.

The Battersea [Type A] structure is open because there is no neat overlap of the rings or the domains they represent, and incomers need only cross one boundary to enter the local system. In practical terms, access to [say] housing confers the right to local status – and largely without reference to the ethnic etc status of the incomer.

By contrast, in the relatively closed/homogeneous Bow structure [Type B], the domains overlap more tightly and entry is much more difficult. Local residents are<sup>20</sup> likely to work locally in closely bounded groups, and the control of information about jobs will tend also to control access to other resources. The incomer arrow here shows that outsiders only earn local status by breaching all the boundaries together.

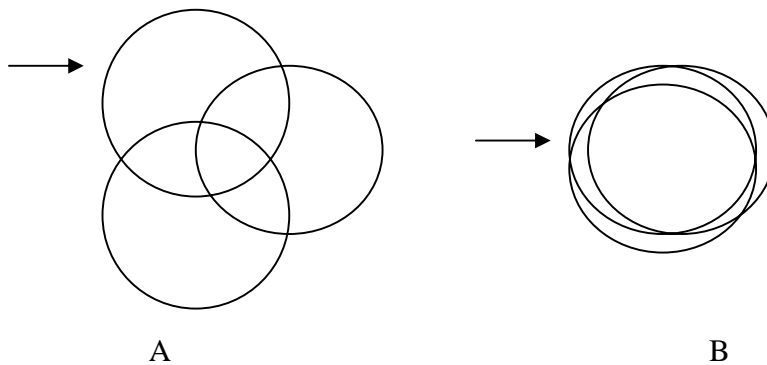
### [Figure I: boundary systems]

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<sup>18</sup> These indicator dimensions and the contrast s inferred are elaborated in Wallman 1985, 2003.

<sup>19</sup> Edmund Leach 1954, p. 29. Anthropological purists may be discomfited by my use of Leach 1954 throughout this paper: Highland Burma is a long way from urban Europe. But there is no better guide to the logic of abstract model systems; and anyway, at this level empirical facts are beside the point.

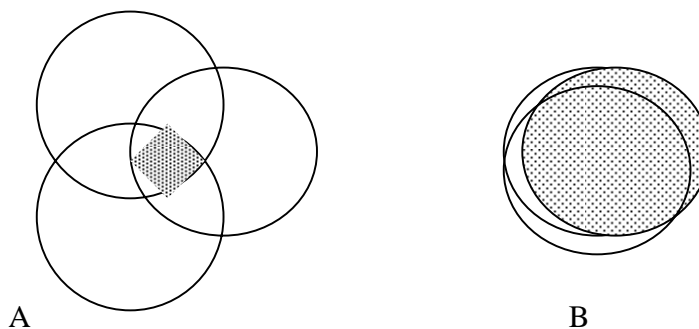
<sup>20</sup> The ethnographic present here is still around 1975. See also note 15 above.



The *network effect* of these boundary patterns brings the contrast down to the level of interaction and [so] communication [Figure II]. Two further essentials of the more open Battersea case [Type A] now show up. One is the core of relationships at the heart of the local system; open-ness notwithstanding, the system has a strong *localist* identity. The other is the fact that most people have connections outside that core. And because their ties spread wider, the friends of their friends reach further and they are more able to pull in resources from other areas when the need arises. Hence the relative resilience of Type A systems in times of drastic change.

The Bow version [Type B] shows a tightly bounded local community and/but also the constraints of cosiness. When local resource domains overlap, the likelihood of interaction/communication with the wider outside, and of adapting to change, are more limited. By the same token, social relationships tend to be more multiplex and focused in discrete groups; the person you work with is also your neighbour and very likely a kinsman of some degree. Type B local systems have a [relatively more] *ethnic* flavour.

**[Figure II: network effect]**



Each type of model system engenders a characteristic local style. Ideal Type A is open, heterogeneous, adaptable; ideal Type B is closed, homogeneous, inflexible. The conditions

giving rise to each version may be based in history, industrial structure and/or policy, but whatever their origins, the logic of social boundaries is such that one system is easier for incomers to make a home in than the other.

This approach is comparative rather than predictive, but the constellation of contrasts implies that the same input of government or other resources will have different impact in the two kinds of local system; and that similarly diverse mixes of culture may lead to very different inter-cultural communication patterns.

### **FIVE – the test**

This next step involved testing the explanatory value of the model in another city. The effort to classify Porta Palazzo demonstrates how hard it is to apply model systems to real places:

*At the level of abstraction it is not difficult to distinguish one formal pattern from another. The structures which the anthropologist describes are models which exist only as logical constructions in his own mind. What is much more difficult is to relate such abstractions to the data of empirical fieldwork.<sup>21</sup>*

### **Classifying Porta Palazzo**

Porta Palazzo is described as one of the largest open market spaces in Europe. It is the locus of Turin's vibrant informal economy and has 'always' been the reception area for immigrants to Turin - in the 1950s as main entry point for southerners, lately for *extra-comunitari*.<sup>22</sup> The study involved a full gamut of research methods - from broad brush survey based on simple observation, to personal life history interview - allowed quantifiable /categorical elements and non-quantifiable /relational elements of the local system to be mapped and layered.

In this case the data were mapped along six dimensions - each implicated in the options offered by the place and the outcome of choices made by the people[s] in it. The diversity indicators selected for Porta Palazzo are not the same as those chosen in the London study. Here they are basic architectural forms/ housing options<sup>23</sup>; the economy of the area/ options for work and livelihood; history of the area; livelihood and expectations of (local)<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Leach, op.cit., p.5.

<sup>22</sup> i.e. Migrants from outside the European Community – here from Africa and Eastern Europe.

<sup>23</sup> The architect responsible for the *Periferia* regeneration-by-participation project across Turin takes into account the form and construction of the buildings to be renovated when planning for the kind of people most appropriate to a particular part of town – whether rich/ poor, size of family or no family etc. Architecture limits the 'capability' of each area [Wallman 1997].

<sup>24</sup> National, European and global frames also impinge on the local system. They are not itemised here. In this work it is only dimensions of the local which are unpacked/ integrated [cf. Wallman 2001a ].

hosts; livelihood and expectations of migrants; demography; and the networks/niches/boundaries created by connections within the system.

The data for Porta Palazzo are more chaotic than those for Battersea and Bow. They are not controlled by comparison and perhaps anyway are essentially less systematic. Nevertheless, the indicators in combination suggest open-ness and heterogeneity – an A type [Battersea] system. The fact that the elements mapped to produce it, intuitively the most crucial, are different in more than number from the ten of the original model, need not impede the classification process.

*The same element of social structure may appear in one cultural dress in locality [X] and another...in locality [Y]... [The difference] does not necessarily imply that [the localities] belong to ...different [types of] social system.'*<sup>25</sup>

For some purposes ethnographic facts are less important than the logic of the theory.<sup>26</sup> For our purposes the point is that there are varieties as well as degrees of open- and closed-ness.

## **SIX – the model revised**

*'A ... model version of each ...type is fairly precise, but the application of these categories to actual communities is decidedly flexible. Although the ideal types are distinct, the practical types overlap.'*<sup>27</sup>

This is amply demonstrated by the effort to 'type' Porta Palazzo. We have said that superficial description of the area implies open-ness and heterogeneity – at first sight an A type [Battersea] system [Figure I]. But more detailed modelling reveals a vital mismatch. The conceptual circles representing arenas/groups/sub-systems in the Battersea system overlap in a way that creates a central overlapping core [Figure II]. In Porta Palazzo, using the same logic, they do not. On the ground the separate "circles" do not overlap; the groups [etc] are not interrelated. This disaggregation pushes Porta Palazzo [PP] off the open end of the A/B continuum. Thus, as in Figure III, it can be visualised as a cluster of independent circles to the left of Type A. In this view the system is both A and *not-A*<sup>28</sup> - A because open and heterogeneous, *not-A* because lacking the integrative core. Even layered scoring will not account for the sense of it being off-scale, beyond A and yet very clearly not B. PP, in effect, is a third type.

Figure III represents the model revised to suit. The 'chaos' of Porta Palazzo becomes intelligible as the very open, left hand extreme of the continuum. Bow Type B remains the

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<sup>25</sup> Leach, op.cit. , p. 16.

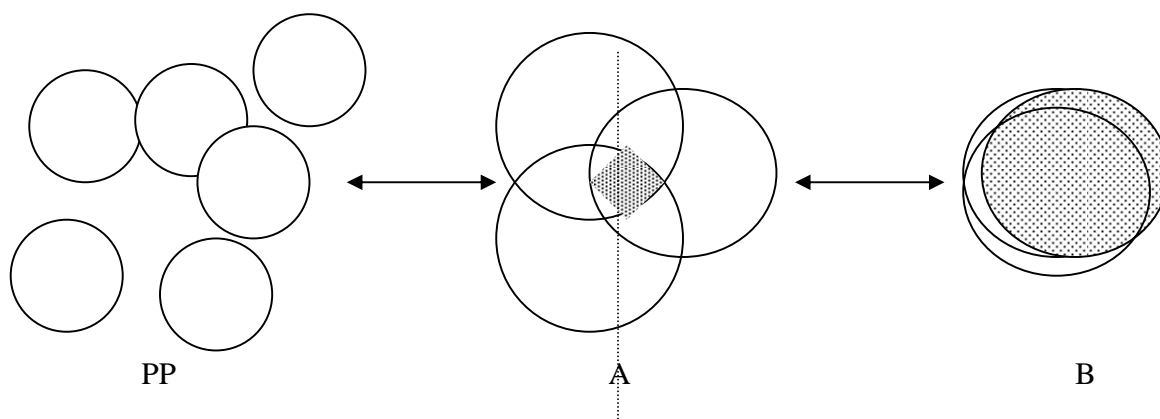
<sup>26</sup> Firth, in Leach, op.cit., p. vii.

<sup>27</sup> Leach, op.cit., p.286.

<sup>28</sup> See again Kosko, footnote 12.

prototype closed, right hand extreme, and Battersea Type A now represents an equilibrium mid-point. In this position the significance of heterogeneity with a localist central core comes into focus.

[Figure III – the model revised]



It is appropriate that classification should begin with intuition: item *X* feels more like this than like that. The real work of typology follows – i.e. the production of a key in which the differences first [only] intuited are conveyed as explicit indicators accessible to other parties. Decisions have to be made about which and how many indicators are necessary for each classification purpose. We struggle with those questions here. The computer of course can handle any number of variables, but decisions about this typology are not problems that computation can solve: urban systems vary as systems of relationships, but not in ways that can be counted.<sup>29</sup>

In the Porta Palazzo study a couple of dozen ‘dimensions’ were mapped, then boiled down to six on the grounds that any more would be hard to manage and harder to grasp. Yet even these six are not right for a general typology; they may represent Porta Palazzo adequately enough, but some of them apply uniquely to *that* local system – just as some of the ten dimensions of the Battersea: Bow contrast are peculiar only to it.

The basic model implies a continuum between open and closed ideals. Suppose it is possible first to score each ‘real’ area as a system closer to/ further away from each end of it, then to reveal the logic of its process up or down the scale. Note that these scores are *qualitative* or *relational* values, answering yes: no, more: less kinds of question.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>29</sup> This point reprises Jane Jacobs 1961, quoted in Section 3.

The cumulated score ranks the system [as though] in equilibrium; the interrelationship of the separate dimensions makes it a system in process. These relationships decide what will happen next – i.e. the system's emergent properties.

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