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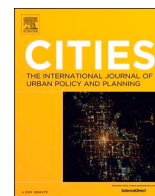
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A B S T R A C T

In post-conflict and divided cities where urban spatial injustice is reinforced by enduring divisions, the frameworks of spatial intersectionality and transformative justice hold significant potential to address inequity through urban planning. All cities can be considered divided in some way and these divisions often represent spatial injustice or inequitable access to resources and space. However, in post-conflict and divided cities these divisions may be entrenched and may transgenerationally maintain conditions of inequity and violence. This paper presents spatial intersectionality and transformative justice as frameworks for urban planning that have the potential to address inequity and divisions in all cities, but particularly in cities catergorised as divided due to violence or conflict. I propose a set of guiding questions for transformative justice informed urban planning.

1. Introduction

In places where conflict and violence have shaped city space, restrictions to movement and divisions typically linger, for example Belfast, Cape Town, Mostar, and Jerusalem, among others. These cities are sometimes referred to as deeply divided cities and in some contexts the damage to city space may be defined as urbicide, the intentional and widespread destruction of the urban environment (for example in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Palestine, Ukraine) (Coward, 2008: 36). Lingering divisions and stalled reconstruction often materialise as inequitable access to space and can be more complex dependent on intersections of oppressions. At the same time, structurally marginalised people are frequently excluded from planning discourse with planning approaches often assuming homogeneity of mobility and replicating economic and social forces (Hidayati et al., 2021: 2; Martino et al., 2020; Awan et al., 2011). The result is that the movement of some is privileged over movement by others (Kristensen et al., 2023; Massey, 1991). While approaches for improving city spaces, such as the concept of 'liveability', have been widely used in an a-political manner but in practice can materialise as gentrification (Tolfo & Doucet, 2022; 8). The emergence of neoliberal governance and increased interaction and movement between the global south and global north spatialities, led to the conceptualisation of radical and insurgent planning approaches as transformative planning approaches (Huq, 2020: 371). I present the frameworks of spatial intersectionality and transformative justice as approaches which build on insurgent planning approaches with a

specific focus on cities after a conflict and deeply divided cities. The use of intersectionality for equity in planning approaches is well established (Williams et al., 2023, 167). I use intersectionality here specifically as spatial intersectionality, to encompass how structures of inequality operate and restrict spatially and how intersections of identity form our experiences in public and private space (Cho et al., 2013: 797). Spatial intersectionality as praxis allows us to identify the ways in which violence is perpetuated in everyday spaces, and the ways in which marginalised groups are often eclipsed in addressing and challenging violence and inequality. While transformative justice, as an abolitionist framework, is concerned with challenging the systemic reproduction of social and structural harms, identifying the linkages, and interactions between these, and exploring how such harms can be addressed (Mingus, 2019; Zehr, 2011). A transformative justice informed approach to urban planning therefore engages in understanding the roots of social and structural inequity to address violence and divisions. Spatial intersectionality and transformative justice are complementary frameworks for engaging in planning that is based on the needs of structurally marginalised groups and holds potential for re-envisaging public space for equitable public usage and divesting from structurally violent urban planning.

2. Divided cities and spatial injustice

In South Africa, urban planning and design has historically been weaponised to divide and separate communities through colonialism,

racialisation, and white supremacy. The racialised system of apartheid, meaning separateness in Afrikaans, resulted in the systematic displacement of people racialised as Black or 'Coloured',[1] to townships and Bantustans or "homelands," and has an enduring spatial legacy which shapes health, mortality, access to public spaces, education, and basic resources. Following the end of apartheid, a restorative-based approach to transitional justice approach was adopted, with social and economic projects promised, including housing projects and financial reparations. However, many of the measures were not fully implemented (Huchzermeyer, 2006; Yates, 2018). Neo-liberalism and gentrification have also reinforced these enduring and racialised spatial divides and over thirty years since the end of apartheid spatial inequality remains a consistent issue in South Africa (Webb, 2021; McFarlane, 2018; Forde, 2022). Townships and informal settlements often have poor infrastructure which exacerbates the vulnerabilities of individuals with intersecting social categorisations, for example, younger people, older people, people with disabilities, and intersections therein. As of 2016, 62.2 % of young people aged 15–24 lived in income poverty in South Africa, 33.1 % live with multidimensional poverty facing wellbeing and health issues (De Lannoy et al., 2018: 2) and poor access to basic utilities (Ndifuna Ukwazi, 2014). One result of this is high levels of survival crime and high levels of gangsterism with young people in communities' which are predominately racialised as Black or 'Coloured', often vulnerable to gang or poacher recruitment and at higher risk of violence, gender-based violence, exploitation, and substance misuse (Anciano & Piper, 2019; Forde, 2022; Harvey et al., 2021: 2; Thando, Interview, 2022; Nate, Interview, 2022; Wandile, Interview, 2020). Such physical and structural violence (Galtung, 1969) can be understood as an injustice which restricts movement and use of space (Ducre, 2018).

3. Planning, intersectionality, and transformative justice in post-conflict and divided cities

The application of spatial intersectionality and transformative justice in urban planning offers a framework to extend the work and approach of radical and insurgent planning and conceptualisations of the 'just city' with a necessary focus on the intersections of oppression (Fainstein, 2009; Song, 2015: 155; Thomas, 2008). Spatial intersectionality and transformative justice are complementary frameworks that retain a politicisation of engagement with space and are informed by historical consciousness with a focus on transgressing hegemonic state centric processes, similar to the aims of insurgent planning (Miraftab, 2009: 44; Morris, 2000). Spatial intersectionality can be used to identify how overlapping social categorisations such as racialisation, gender, disability, sexual orientation, age, class, and 'colour' (Crenshaw, 1991: 1245) interact with, and are impacted by spatial planning (Morrell & Blackwell, 2022: 3; Irazábal & Huerta, 2016) and influence access to geographical spaces or resources (Jang & Kim, 2018). Intersectionality can be argued as integral for exploring what Massey refers to as the 'power-geometry of space-time compression' and 'the politics of mobility and access' (Massey, 1991: 25–26) which is intricately tied to 'space/power/identity' (Massey, 1995: 285). Transformative justice further supports this focus, due to its intersectional 'kitchen table' origins led by 'Queer, Black, Brown, and Indigenous womxn' (Brazzell, 2020). As a process, transformative justice focuses on the social circumstances that has led to or promoted harmful behaviour (Zehr, 2011) this can be applied to questions of urban planning in dismantling obstacles to peace and justice (Protonentis et al., 2021). Kaba (2021: 149) frames transformative justice as a way of 'trying to figure out how we respond to violence and harm in a way that doesn't cause more violence and harm'. This framing also provides an important direction in approaching post-conflict reconstruction and in addressing divisions,

Table 1
Extending questions of transformative justice for urban planning.

Transformative justice guiding questions (Mingus, 2019)	Transformative justice informed urban planning questions
"What kinds of community infrastructure can we create to support more safety, transparency, sustainability, care and connection (e.g., a network of community safe houses that those in danger can use, an abundance of community members who are skilled at leading interventions to violence)?	Are there community and public spaces that are safe, inclusive, easy to access via public transport, and allow for access and use of space without spending money? Is there adequate affordable housing? Is the community served by sufficient amenities such as water, electricity, internet, refuse collection? Are there local schools and accessible leisure spaces?
What are the skills we need to be able to prevent, respond to, heal from, and take accountability for harmful, violent, and abusive behaviors? What do survivors and people who have caused harm need?	Does the current infrastructure support the local environment? What spaces are available for community work and support? What barriers are there for involvement in planning processes, how can different ways of engagement in such processes be better facilitated?
Why do survivors and people who have caused harm have so few options in our community?	How may current urban planning processes perpetuate violence and structural inequalities?
What are some of the harmful ways that we treat each other that help set the stage for violence and abuse, and how can we change this?"	How may the current infrastructure create the conditions for violence and divisions? What types of infrastructure are prioritised over others, does this serve the needs of the community?

violence, and harm, especially when post-conflict urban governance can be co-opted and may reinforce divisions and inequalities (Bollens, 2006: 111). Transformative justice as a process of addressing harms, is not something that can be applied, but rather a process that involves challenging 'violent reactions and ideologies' (Mingus, 2019) and 'meaningful praxis' alongside new approaches and new values (Hooks, 1994; Daly, 2001-2002: 83). The frameworks of spatial intersectionality and transformative justice can be used by a range of potential planners working between invited and invented spaces (Miraftab, 2009: 39–41; Sandercock, 1998: 204) to address issues of material redistribution and spatial reparations (Forde et al., 2021). Moving beyond neoliberal framed modes of participation is essential for re-imagining future spaces and for the acknowledgement of the spatial agency of a wide range of actors (Miraftab, 2009; McGill, 2019). This is particularly true for deeply divided cities such as Cape Town as detailed above. For urban planning to address inequity in divided cities and post-conflict spaces there is a necessity to adopt frameworks that acknowledge and work to deconstruct the systems that increase the risk of violence for structurally marginalised people (van der Heijden et al., 2019). In Table 1, I present a set of guiding questions of transformative justice in urban planning as an extension of Mingus' (2019) guiding questions of transformative justice. These questions have been formed around research reflections from interviews with people working and living in Cape Town, South Africa.

4. Spatial intersectionality and transformative justice for equitable cities

Spatial intersectionality and transformative justice are potential frameworks for addressing spatial injustice and inequity, across the full spectrum of potential planners and through numerous insurgent spaces (Miraftab, 2009: 39–41; Sandercock, 1998: 204). In some suggested forms of usage, spatial intersectionality can evidence barriers to

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[1] 'Coloured' was used by the apartheid government in South Africa and is used in acknowledgement of this classification.

participation in planning and urban activism. This is of relevance in post-conflict and divided cities; where infrastructure or cultural heritage spaces may be destroyed through urbicide, or where there is long-standing unequitable access to city space and resources. Applying the framework of transformative justice to urban planning prompts spatial activists to consider the socio-spatial context of planning and explore alternative place making processes that address violence and divisions. These complementary frameworks have the potential to broaden the scope of urban planning to address inequity, violence, and division, and can support alternative modes of engagement with planning and reconstruction.

CRediT authorship contribution statement

Susan Forde: Conceptualization, Funding acquisition, Investigation, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing.

Declaration of competing interest

The author declares that they have no competing interests.

Data availability

No data was used for the research described in the article.

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