

Safety and security in places and managing the effects of “place trauma”

The past 12 months have seen further attacks on public security across Europe and beyond, which have been attributed to terrorism. Without getting drawn into debates regarding the political context for this, it would seem that these acts themselves are intended to divide communities, and raise tensions and animosities between citizens of differing religion, ethnicity and race. Furthermore, it appears that no one living in an urban area can entirely dismiss the terror threat, as it has shown itself to be active in a vast array of places and spaces where people go about their daily lives: airports, a Christmas market, a beach front promenade, a pop concert, bar and restaurant districts, places of worship – the list unfortunately continues.

There is considerable academic literature about how security and safety within places can be improved, as evident in the extensive work on crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED). This has received attention in the Issue 9.2 of this journal. Less appears to be written about how places prevent major public security risks such as terrorist incidents, and then deal with, and manage, the outcome and fallout of these. The former of these issues is not fully within the remit of the *Journal of Place Management and Development (JPMD)*, falling more into the realms of politics and public administration, but the latter most definitely is.

In particular, and aside from the calm and professional work of the emergency services, some of the more recent terrorist incidents in the UK have been marked by a remarkable response from citizens. Events following the Manchester Arena suicide bomb of 22 May 2017 are indicative of this spirit of unity and support. Distressed by the sight of seeing others *in* distress, some members of the public offered a bed for the night to survivors of this attack who were left stranded in central Manchester and in shock, miles from their own homes. Equally, local taxi drivers offered free rides, allowing those caught up in the aftermath to get safely back to their own neighbourhoods (Boult, 2017). Money was also raised for the families of those affected, and the streets of Manchester were full of people keen to show their solidarity with those mourning the loss of family and friends. Social media was obviously key in all this, allowing people to form rapid and collective responses to an unfolding crisis.

These interventions provide a salient reminder that places are made by people. In fact, when residents, tourists and employees of local businesses, respond in a spontaneous and positive way to occurrences of mass violence and tragedy within a given city or town it says a lot about its place identity. This was seen with the Grenfell Tower fire of 14 June 2017 in London, where a significant cross-community effort to supply food, shelter, clothing and money to displaced and distraught victims started to take shape within hours of this disaster unfolding. Meanwhile, the response of local and national government appeared slow in comparison and was heavily criticized by those affected by the disaster as being “too little, too late” (Sanderson and Cornish, 2017).

How quickly government and institutional stakeholders respond to disasters, attacks and other major incidents will inevitably be restricted by the protocols of financial sign-off and legislation. These checks and balances may be understandably in place to help keep vulnerable people in such situations safe from exploitation or further harm. Clearly, immediate grassroots public responses to disaster and crises are not always bound by the same level of accountability and may not be required to create a coherent paper trail for each



and every action. Nevertheless, government authorities and institutions, and place managers, have the chance to work more collaboratively here for the public good. This may involve thinking creatively about how to harness the obvious power and energy of local communities to help try and soften the emotional impact of disasters on a given place in a non-exploitative way. Such an approach may require more sensitivity to the drivers of human emotion and empathy and, in particular, a greater understanding of what moves ordinary people to want to help out in a crisis.

Clearly, the impact and outcome of any atrocity or disaster is not simply about who is affected or not affected. It is also about *where* the occurrence happens, and how this is reflected through the subsequent reactions and actions of local people. This is because they may hold a unique and strong sense of place that engenders feelings of care and protection for their town or city, and all those that have encountered a given traumatic event there. Similar acknowledgement of a sense of place perspective is evidenced in the work of [Chamlee-Wright and Storr \(2009\)](#), following their study of Ninth Ward residents affected by Hurricane Katrina's devastation of New Orleans. When dealing with the effects of a "place trauma", therefore, people's sense of place becomes a valuable resource to be nurtured by place managers. In light of this, the editors of *JPMD* would welcome proposals from colleagues for a special issue around the topic of managing the effects of crises and disasters in places, which seems of particular importance in the current climate.

Turning to the papers in this issue of *JPMD*, our first academic paper is entitled, *The magic of place branding: regional brand identity in transition*, by Cecilia Cassinger and Jorgen Eksell. This examines the transition of place brand identity from a cultural anthropological perspective. More specifically, the paper analyses the ritual features and magical qualities of the development process of a regional brand in Scandinavia. The study consists of an exploratory, longitudinal single case study of regional branding. Three place branding rituals of re-naming, managing ambiguity and instilling faith are identified as central in the process. The authors assert that these practices generate different forms of magic that facilitate transition and accommodate change. By contrast to the more commonly used linear step-by-step approach to brand planning, the study visualises brand development as overlapping phases in a process. The approach outlined in this paper holds relevance for brand development and planning in that it demonstrates the ritual features and magical qualities of branding.

Participatory Planning in Israel: From Theory to Practice, by Batel Eshkol and Alon Eshkol, investigates the gap between conjecture regarding participatory planning, and its actual implementation in practice within the Israeli spatial planning context. The authors state that participatory spatial planning processes are not often implemented in Israel, as they are not required by law. The paper focuses on three specific participatory spatial planning projects. These involve local spatial plans at the neighbourhood level, but with very different participation modes. One is a national, government-led program, the second is a resident-led opposition to a municipal plan, and the third is a third-sector initiative offering an alternative plan to an existing one. The findings suggest that there is a correlation between the initiating body, its commitment to participation, and the level of success of the participatory planning process.

Fabiana Mariutti's paper, *The Placement of Country Reputation towards Place Management*, focuses on the evolution of the country reputation construct, and its potential alignment with place branding and management. To foster this alignment, the study traces the advance of country branding and nation branding, incorporating place management recommendations from studies on country reputation. The study is based on the common principle in extant literature that a place must first improve itself via development and

management before it can create a positive reputation via communications. The author suggests that the principal theoretical implication of this study is that place management and place reputation can be aligned to develop and improve places (cities, regions and countries) for sustainable prosperity.

Two concepts of community in the Niger Delta: social sense of communality, and a geographical sense of place. Are they compatible? by Nwamaka Okeke-Ogbuafor, Tim Gray and Selina Stead, aims to understand what two apparently contrasting concepts of communality and place attachment say about the quality of community life in the Niger Delta. The authors collect qualitative and quantitative data from oil-rich and oil-poor communities across Ogoniland, a region in the Southeast of Nigeria. The findings suggest that most participants from both oil-rich and oil poor communities strongly reject a social sense of communality – characterised by relationships between people, and strongly endorse a geographical sense of place – characterised by a relationship between individuals and the physical place. The authors interpret these results, essentially a low worth placed on sense of community and a high worth placed on sense of place, to gauge the willingness of the populous to accommodate community development practices. The authors suggest that the originality of the study is twofold: first, it shows the complexity of people’s sense of community, encompassing widely different and possibly contradictory elements. Second, it reveals the strength and persistence of people’s attachment to place, despite the shortcomings the place may have.

Sebastian Zenker and Erik Braun propose that city branding involves much more complexity than is commonly thought in *Questioning a ‘one size fits all’ city brand: developing a branded house strategy for place brand management*. The authors argue that whilst city branding has gained popularity as a governance strategy, the academic underpinning is still poor. The paper provides an insight into the complexity of city brands and acknowledges that perceptions can differ considerably among different target groups. The suggestion is that to be effective, city branding requires a more critical conceptualization, as well as more complex management systems. The paper outlines a strategy for advanced brand management that includes target group-specific sub-brands. The authors believe that this approach will enable urban policy-makers, marketing researchers and (place) marketers alike to better deal with city branding.

Our practitioner paper for this issue is by Hallgeir Gammelsaeter, entitled *Media visibility and place reputation. Does sport make a difference?* Gammelsaeter asks if, by boosting the visibility of places, sport increases the attention paid to other domains of activity at the place, such as culture, politics and business. By using a full text database of newspaper/media reports, the study compares media coverage across cities of similar size in Norway that either do or do not host a premier professional football club. The author takes the original approach of relating media coverage of sport teams to visibility of other activities of a city. The study finds that hosting a top football club largely magnifies the media coverage of a city. However, there is no indication that sport media coverage enhances media exposure of other attributes connected to the place. The author concludes that if places intend to expose their diversity through sport, a deliberate “branding through sport campaign” should be considered.

This issue of *JPMD* ends with a report from the highly successful 4th Corfu Symposium on Managing & Marketing Places, followed by a call for papers for next one on “Changing places: Visions of utopia or dystopia?”, to be held from 16th to 19th April 2018.

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