IDENTITY: PSYCHOLOGICAL RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN PLACE AND OCCUPANT INFORMING BURMESE REFUGEE COMMUNAL DESIGN

by

Shawn Patrick Gould

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

of

Master of Architecture

in

Architecture

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY
Bozeman, Montana

April 2009
APPROVAL

of a thesis submitted by

Shawn Patrick Gould

This thesis has been read by each member of the thesis committee and has been found to be satisfactory regarding content, English usage, format, citation, bibliographic style, and consistency, and is ready for submission to the Division of Graduate Education.

Christopher Livingston

Approved for the Department Architecture

Steven Juroszek

Approved for the Division of Graduate Education

Dr. Carl A. Fox
STATEMENT OF PERMISSION TO USE

In presenting this thesis in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a master’s degree at Montana State University, I agree that the Library shall make it available to borrowers under rules of the Library.

If I have indicated my intention to copyright this thesis by including a copyright notice page, copying is allowable only for scholarly purposes, consistent with “fair use” as prescribed in the U.S. Copyright Law. Requests for permission for extended quotation from or reproduction of this thesis in whole or in parts may be granted only by the copyright holder.

Shawn Patrick Gould

April 2009
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my family, Rich, Kathy, Matthew, and Kelly, who were always a big help, my friends who offered encouragement to keep going, and of course, caffeine.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTENT .................................................................................................................. 1

2. INTRODUCTION ...................................................................................................... 3

3. THEORY .................................................................................................................. 6
   - Understanding Self and Identity ........................................................................... 6
   - Social Identity ...................................................................................................... 8
   - Place Identity ..................................................................................................... 12

4. CREATING SPACE .................................................................................................. 16

5. ANECDOTES ........................................................................................................... 22

6. PRECEDENTS ......................................................................................................... 26
   - Marika-Alderton House ...................................................................................... 29
   - Renaissance Village ............................................................................................ 30
   - Transitional Community ..................................................................................... 32
   - Jean-Marie Tjibaou Cultural Center .................................................................... 34
   - Tbaninajar Refugee Camp .................................................................................... 36

7. OCCUPANTS .......................................................................................................... 38
   - Culture ............................................................................................................... 40
   - Then and Now ..................................................................................................... 42
   - Fleeing Factors ................................................................................................... 44

8. SITE ANALYSIS ..................................................................................................... 46

9. DESIGN PROJECT ................................................................................................. 60
   - Narrative ............................................................................................................. 63
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Needs</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previous Community</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Levels of Intimacy</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master Plan</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Components</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ABSTRACT

Place is an active participant in determining who we are; it becomes part of one’s identity. People use space as a vehicle in which individual and social experiences are carried out and remembered, ultimately shaping who one is. An attachment to place is formed. Place becomes vital to one’s mental being and survival because it is a piece of a whole in how one defines herself/himself and his purpose.

But what happens when place attachment is broken? The consequences can be severe. For example, Burmese refugees responding to political persecution, persistent poverty, and most recently the ramifications of Cyclone Nargis in May 2008, were forced to abandon their homes and communities---- their place. They lost part of their identity. In doing so, the already dire situation they experienced grew more grievous. This continues today.

Now these refugees congregate in camps along the Burmese/Thai border looking for relief. Only tactile issues (food, shelter, water) are addressed by relief agencies, not psychological issues, such as the part of their identity they have lost. Because of this oversight, their recovery and survival lay in jeopardy.

This thesis will seek to demonstrate how architecture can ascribe to various design considerations that acknowledge the importance of fundamental place attachment between occupant and place. I will illustrate these considerations by creating a community for Burmese refugees that recognizes not only the physical but the psychological factors that are imperative to recovery, such as self, social, and place identity. Ultimately this exploration hopes to instill identity back into the refugees by applying a design strategy when developing the community that is informed by the interactions of the aforementioned psychological factors.

These issues of identity are pertinent to design today, when increasingly, many people like the Burmese refugee are in situations that demand thought and action for their recovery and survival.
Exploration of self and modification of identity is determined by the spatial vehicle from which one gathers experience. This thesis will identify the involvement of place and occupant as a reciprocating relationship between the environment and one’s self, and that place can become an extension of one’s identity.
INTRODUCTION

The refugees of Burma have had a false culture perpetrated on them due to misinformation about what is important to their culture by their government, lost part of their families due to warfare and natural disaster, and have lost an important factor of recognizing oneself as a human being when in refugee camps due to despondent conditions. When identity is key to recovery, why is it ignored in relief efforts? Design can help instill identity back into the modern refugee.

This thesis will look at displacement through the Burmese refugee and the situation that predicates the discussion of the importance of identity in the process of recovery to ‘normal’. This thesis will use the Burmese refugee as a subject to explore the considerations on which to design space that enhances identity, recovery, development, and stabilization.

To understand the issue of identity and relation to place, one must first recognize what identity is and look at the components that create identity. Understanding social contexts and baselines for experiences, as well as identity’s relationship to space is imperative to developing strategies that can be productive towards healthful identity development and recovery.
Identity is commonly thought of being informed by self. Self is referred to by McMartin (1995) as being created, or gained, by collecting a psychological profile by identification (baseline) and being constantly reviewed and updated by social interactions (Grauman 1983). One could take these hypotheses and make an educated guess that self is a process of identifying oneself and leads to a conclusion. The psychological baseline resulting from that experience and the status at which one is at a particular time due to interactions with that baseline thereafter is identity.

[Self is a process of identification of a psychological baseline and identity is the constant reshuffling and adjustment of condition afterwards and who one is at an exact moment.]
There are however many other theories regarding identity and self. For this reason it is hard to speculate and explain self without involving other entities that influence it and the reciprocating relationship thereafter. Also, since identity is a virtual entity, it is impossible to state exactly what identity is and the best one can do is speculate as to what it is. For this thesis, identity will be thought of as the end culmination of different experiences that are congregated into a final product resulting from different stimuli (social interaction and environmental stimuli, both built and natural) interacting with a self baseline.

This process of adjustment and the state at which one is in can be called identity. For a very superficial example of what identity is, when one is asked who they are and what they do, one replies, “My name is John and I am an architect.” One can ascertain in this statement that John reflected (process) on the question and broadcasted the necessary parts of who he was at that moment (identity). Of course identity is more than a name and a title. We broadcast our identities not only through visual expressive components (choice of clothes) but also our actions as well (e.g. interaction with different groups).

WHEN DOES THIS PROCESS BEGIN?

The actualization of self starts with given roles. From when one is born, roles and identities are imposed on him/her vis-à-vis gender roles, birthed from culture. Initial family value roles one is taught at a very young age and even how one’s parents define how one expresses themselves through wear, play, and speech are imposed roles.
Shrauger & Osberg (1982) states that perhaps the most accurate way to define identity is to view it as “the ability to translate one’s self knowledge into accurate predictions about one’s future behavior.” Very early on, social interaction is important, however, it doesn’t directly influence self. Feelings of safety with the mother figure—cries for help, food, and dependence, are common and are socially rudimentary. Later, society impacts immensely on one’s identity. The interesting thing about self reflection and awareness is its influence on behavior. At a cathartic point in one’s existence, one can self project and sympathize with other beings. When one does this, the factor of realizing one is a social object in a community of other beings changes identity influences from a rudimentary social interactions to a highly complex networks. This is monu-
mental in altering one’s identity. One’s identity helps predict behavior that would take place in a hypothetical situation. By having a self awareness that one knows how he would react without surprise offers stability. There is awareness of what one would do alone. This awareness gives rise to other identity altering factors such as self projection and judgment.

When one starts to notice and make judgments about another’s actions and reciprocates this observation into a concern about what others think of him, the social norms of the other group and sociability of what they think directly affects one’s behaviors. To calculate and incorporate these norms, one analyzes and adopts these socialisms into his or her identity to become a part of the society around him.

Humans in general tend to congregate en masse. Perhaps this is for safety reasons. More oft than not, we try to associate with groups that have the same intricacies of identity (interests, views, appearance) as we do and help broadcast that. We can summate the idea of the aforementioned as Tajfel (Tajfel, 1982) stated in social identity “is the individual’s knowledge of belonging to certain groups, as well as the emotions and values this conveys to him or her.”3 The fact that one can find common ground with another group and is at ease with the group is relative. These familiar groups are an extension of oneself and what is normal. One can predict what will happen with reason, and ergo one is safe. This is a refuge for what is necessary. However, problems do arise however when one is put in a situation where adopting social norms are in direct conflict with a previous social identity. Such conflicts are manifested in a process called assimilation, which literally means “to make similar”. Identifying with groups (loosely defined) is key for a healthful psychological profile and very certainly survival. On a larger scale in relation to interests, one identifies (respectively) to his country, religion, family, academia, sports team. All associations do offer a rootedness in the world—stability.

**How do these associations influence behavior?**

There are associations that some reflect upon and use as a baseline, such as learning social interaction through observation of social norms. Influences of one’s identity can be affected by who that one spends time with, or organizations one identifies with, either on a intimate scale, such as friends, or on a large scale, a sports team.

First, let us define what is an
adequate title for an association that would be applicable to the study of identity in social relation. According to Tajef “group formation and intergroup’s behavior cannot be explained by the similarity of group members.”4 In this respect, we must define a person’s association in two different categorizations, as class and group. Class deals primarily with similarity of individuals and does not have an effect on the formation of groups, which are concrete in nature. Class is the relationship between these individuals that make up the group in terms of a common ground. Group is defined by Bornewasser & Bober (1987), as “two persons with completely different motives and values.” Groups are singular in their purpose and concrete in nature, thus one cannot say that similarity alone brought all members together. One cannot say that each individual in a class incorporates the same experiences and preferences in the decision process into what classes to congregate into. On the contrary groups have an agenda and are brought together by a single or even several specific purposes. They act on consensus and are structured, whereas class is a loose association of individuals. A class broadcasts one’s identity and reinforces it as being a norm. When these levels of self prediction and self esteem are elevated, they produce a higher, more stable environ-

ment. Even the idea of purpose and survival are inherent to these organizations. The fact that a groups and classes can reinforce a changing ideal is key. We all are constantly changing our identity in relation to our baseline. Take for example times of extreme trial, like an environmental disaster. When challenged in this situation, our identity changes to survival state. Since that need to survive is broadcasted and received among others (self projection) and a class does not make an agenda, per se, of survival but reinforces the association among others, survival becomes the social norm. The social norm thus is am-
plified and the importance of the behavior and given credence. These congregations and amplifications are not only important but they are vital for survival. The addition of oneself into an 'organizational' membership highly depends on the situation and the environmental factors that allow the observation and procedure of making these loose associations that result in the joining into a class. The fact that we do modify our identity constantly confirms that the influences of social aspects on our identity is dependent upon predicates related to a personal role in classes and the dictation of norms that reinforce identity. How do we lay our hand into presenting an environment that allows these social relationships to form, flourish, and die in a manner which is productive in promoting healthful psychological states of one's identity.
place identity

After discussing the relationship of self and social influences, one has to look to the idea of place as being a third dimension that affects one’s identity. The trouble about discussing the environment, both built and natural, to be an influence in our psychological profile is that there are many theories and relatively little research versus other facets of the psychology/sociology universe. There is an innumerous amount of aspects relating to environmental psychology. Other theories, for example, ‘environmental determinism’ seek to explain how colors, shapes, and other physical aspects have a direct effect on how one feels. This thesis will identify the relationship of space as a reciprocating relationship between the environment and one’s self and that place can become an extension of one’s identity, constantly informing upon one’s self and one
to it. Canter (1977) described our relationship with the environment as transactional and that the interface between humans and the environment is important in how environment is formed and perceived. Not only does the environment inform on how events, experiences, and interaction occurs between individuals but individuals themselves inform upon the environment by shaping, creating, and allowing the environment into their own needs, which can become an extension of themselves. The fact that we have the ability to create an environment based on logic and creativity to our preferences is a paramount in the argument that place is an extension of identity. This ability to create to our own preferences eludes to the idea that environments are best responded to by the occupant when in the context of his or her respective, familiar settings.

How the environment becomes part of one’s identity and the relation of it as territory is complex. For example, the defending of one’s territory, or place, say in a social class, takes root if an intruder is challenging or violating that refuge. Familiarity is one’s extension of oneself by way of space becoming a vehicle for memorable, predictable experiences. Perhaps, the environment can become a vehicle for identity by one associating with some feature, like recognition of lights on in the building. Realizing that each unit has a light, one can identify familiar and unifying qualities with a nonhuman subject because he knows when a light is on, an occupant resides there. This thesis acknowledges the environment as a vehicle for the enhancement, hindrance, and facilitation for experiences to take place that influences one’s identity. For example, the way a person chooses to express himself is a way of broadcasting his identity and strengthening it. The built environment that one has created is now refuge. Refuge where one can be around the familiar and centralize and develop himself. Defined by Speller (2000), space is a place that has acquired meaning as a result of a person’s interaction with the space. Just as a class’ actions can influence one’s identity by feedback and norms, so can space. In this facilitation is the philosophy that place is important to development of identity.

Taking in the discussion of self, social, and place identity, how does one start to design for space that will facilitate growth of identity?
self + social place
Space is built by many elements. In short, place is where individuals share recurring patterns of activity and experience. Because of the transactional view of the relationship between individual and place mentioned earlier, one recognizes that place is a product not only of the behaviors that are associated with each space but also is a tangible and symbolic product of the behavior that does take place within each space. There is process in creating space for those that have none. And in this process, space that recognizes the needs and goals (both tactile and symbolic) of the fractured occupant becomes a way of repairing identity of hardshiped individuals.
1. IDENTIFY FUNCTION, FREQUENCY OF USE, OCCUPANT AND ASSOCIATIONS.

To the occupant of space, it is important to provide stability. By identifying the predictable patterns of activity in a setting, either spaces are regularly occupied (e.g., parks, workplaces) or spaces are sporadically occupied (e.g., abandoned areas, derelict buildings), one can plan for ‘predictable’ behavior patterns. One must also examine and design for the space affordance, or rather the potential functions of the space that are iterated by the spaces physical attributes. Being able to predict these patterns evokes the socio-connectivity that refers to the functional, motivational, and evaluative significance that is fundamental to identification with place.

Not only is the frequency of space important to obtain, but the number of persons occupying the space, as well as the type of associating individuals using the space, are important to identify. When there is more than one person, one takes social clues from others, as previously discussed, and that influences behavior. Knowing what the overlapping frequency of uses are, the number and types of individuals occupying the space, and what associations these individuals are part of (e.g., soccer team, strangers, individual) is paramount to the following design process in recognizing needs of space.

By knowing these basic parameters one can begin to identify the desired function of the space, the desired goals seeking to be obtained by individuals or associations with the space, and the ensuing evaluation criteria of the associations afterwards. The three aforementioned criteria (function, goals/associations, evaluation) are critical per Stokols & Shumaker’s (1981) discussion for place attachment which creates an environment that promotes stability/refuge and identity.
2. DESIGN FOR EVALUATIVE SPECIFICS ASSOCIATED WITH PLACE

Stokols and Shumaker (1981) stated a specific place has six means that are associated with place. The desired content, complexity, clarity, heterogeneity, distortions, and contradictions of space should be parameters to best design ideally for a functional space (even though the space will become its own set of evaluative specifics through social interaction). Complexity (number of shared meanings that emerge from different users) and distortions (unrecognized discrepancies between socio-cultural images of place) cannot be determined previous to construction but only recognized after use of the space between different occupants occurs. Only then, the interaction with place brings different meanings to fruition. Before the space is interacted with, possible meanings can only be speculated. Content (representative sample of function, motivation, and evaluation), clarity (clarity of meaning that is highly or less of a place), heterogeneity (number of subgroups within a place whom distinguishable patterns of meaning can be discerned), and contradictions (consistency of preferences), however, can be identified early on in the design process and be carefully estimated for design. This criterion also informs one that it is important to take design cues from social normatives. This is important to the overall salience of the meaning of a space and the effectiveness of its use more so than strict, tactile functionality.

By analyzing the desired performance of space in relationship to the occupants is key. Using these six evaluative criteria as parameters for design will allow one to understand how the space is ultimately desired in function/experience/symbolism relating to place and occupant, thus relating back to attachment and healthful identity development as a result of high user acceptance of the space.
Previously discussed was the acknowledgment of the importance of frequency quantification of place. In turn, the idea of a place specific factor of endurance and frequency have been suggested in earlier studies of relationship between occupant and space. Summated, the idea of endurance is an intense investment and attachment to a specific place, and frequency is a much lesser iteration of the former.

An example of frequency can be described as the way the user identifies with a classroom he has been in for one year and then leaves the space. Whereas, endurance can be exemplified in a school that a professor helped start, develop and teach at for over thirty years. With endurance much more investment in the space reciprocates into a stronger attachment and could be considered an extension of identity.

Taking the idea of endurance and applying it to the development of space for persons that have lost space and their previous associations with it (possibly intense investments in previous space) suggests that the design should allow for direct, occupant input. This idea of occupant input reveals such design strategies as allowing the space having to be continually maintained e.g., garden space for food or designing for space that can be constructed by the occupants themselves. These strategies promote the overall users connection with place, and in turn promotes the reinstillment of place attachment.

3. DESIGN WITH INTENT OF NOT ONLY HAVING SPACE BE STRICTLY PHYSICALLY FUNCTIONAL BUT ALSO ACTING AS AN EXTENSION OF THE OCCUPANT
“The concept of the social field subsumes only those social affordances that become associated with specific places. At the same time, imageability of a place is determined not only by the social affordances it subsumes, but also by those that precludes it.” Stokols & Shumaker, People in Place: A Transactional View of Settings, 1981

“Periods of abrupt environmental change, relocation, and very pleasant or unpleasant experiences with places area all circumstances that could bring issues of place dependence to the fore” Stokols & Shumaker, People in Place: A Transactional View of Settings, 1981
The experiences that the occupants have encountered previously create factors that are dependent on the quality of the space and the quality of other spaces that could be considered comparable. According to Michelson (1977), place attachment becomes relevant when circumstances occur that heighten the occupants’ awareness of their association to places. The ability of space to achieve desired goals that a space provides or the blockage of those is important to understand. As the expectations of the occupant are met or not, the user compares these with possible outcomes and goal obtainment and develops a comparison level.

This comparison is influenced by the occupant’s knowledge of different options that are pertinent in a dialogue of comparison with the space and other existing spaces. The ability of the space to achieve the goals of what the occupant’s comparison expects is key to producing a space which the user can become attached with and identify with. Issues such as mobility of space and the obtainment of sufficient resources for the space to be effective are examples of what issues could possibly be resolved in relation to other comparable spaces.

These observations of what is pertinent to designing space for persons who have relocated dictates that one must look at precedents and allow these previous experiences to inform the current design. Whether it is the occupant’s culture or their previous occupied spaces (or at least comparable typology knowledge), it is imperative when designing space to understand what the occupant will expect of a space (as a result of previous experiences), not of comparisons of wants, but comparisons of needs that will make the space functional.
Saw Eh Gay Moo

My daily life in Karen refugee camp is a simple life because I don’t have any base to stand by my feet. It is boring. I don’t have the new hope and general knowledge interesting in life.

I get up early in the morning and pray to God to give me strength for a day. Starting my chore, I wash my face, carry the water and cook for breakfast. And I take a bath in the bath room, change my clothes. Then I take breakfast and take a rest for a moment. As the time is near, I start to go to school. Our school starts at 9 and finishes at 4. On weekend, Saturday [ I visit my friends and talk together why we have to become refugees and live in the barbed camp like the animals in the zoo that longing for their original habitations but they can do nothing with it.] And it is also like the prisoners who did the very big and extremely crimes until they have to remain in the large prison in all the days of their lives. I don’t understand this happening. Of course, as my instinct sends me, the prison belongs to the guilty men not the nation. But I don’t know what guilt did our parents or we the children do. I have nothing to do to get some pocket money to spend it for some drink or cookie when I want to try it. But thank God, we were provided with foods, educations, health care and many thing else.

I know that my daily life in Karen refugee camp is to do the best in my schooling so that one day I can help my beloved people anyway certainly.

Saw Eh Gay Moo
ESP Mae La Camp
18 March 2007
My daily life in Karen refugee camp is easy, especially no work no money. Therefore I do not have money to buy meat or vegetable for my daily food. My life in the camp is very poor but I am not sad in my life to stay in the camp because I have a happy God to help me and provide me my daily food.

I thank God for giving me many friends to help me and give me many thing to eat, oil, bean, sugar, pepper, fish paste, salt and etc… I am a student in Karen refugee camp so every day I go to school and learn education to grow up and to help me in my life. On Saturday and Sunday I stay home and help my mother in cooking food for meal and sometimes I carry water. In my free time I use to go to the library, I read some short stories, and on Sunday I go to church to praise the Lord. But sometimes when I have any holiday I walk with my friends and go to the cinema. We watch the surprising dramas. Sometimes when I meet with my friends we talk about the situation in Karen refugee camp and we are wondering about the oppression of our people and we talk about the malicious operations of Burmese Government do to our people.

Saw Soe Paine
ESP Mae La Camp

Everybody has different life in the world. Everybody improves his or her life almost every day. [So sometimes I think how can I improve my life in the future as I m a refugee?] But to live in the future is to live day by day. And this is daily life in Mae La Karen Refugee Camp. When I get up in the morning at 6 o’clock, I wash my face, brush my teeth (sometimes take some exercise by running along the road), fetch up the water for cooking, help mother necessarily and after breakfast I go to school. Learning, Talking, Joking, working in school and after school I go back home. I play volleyball for a moment. Take a bath, take dinner and then I visit my friend’s house to watch some movies. After that I come back home, study my lessons, and finish my homework then go to sleep.

Saw Soe Paine
ESP Mae La Camp
PRECE
DENTS
WHEN PROVIDING SPACE FOR INDIVIDUAL’S THE CULTURAL CONTEXT TO WHICH THEY ARE IN PROVIDES TEMPLATE FROM WHICH TO DESIGN. Glenn Murcutt’s attention on this aspect is revealed in the house he did for an Aboriginal community in Australia.

Long plagued were the Aborigines after many iterations by the Australian government to provide housing (on land which they took over) for these Australian natives. The housing provided by the government was a complete failure. Made out of brick and corrugated metal, these dwellings were ineffectively inappropriate to the aboriginal way of life. This resulted because, like many relief efforts in practice today, the government didn’t draw from the local customs and philosophies.

Murcutt, however, long time proponent of the Aborigines, took these into account when designing this dwelling. According to aboriginal thought, the whole swelling must be in accordance with nature. Provided with that ideal, Murcutt located the housing on stilts, so that the surge waters of the ocean could not reach there as well as protect the interior from wildlife. The stilts also provide a way of keeping a vantage point to monitor the area.

Other ways the Aboriginal ideology influences design is by keeping everything involved with nature except the bathroom facilities, which are to be deep within the structure and child resting spaces are to the east of the parents (age relating to the sun rise and set).

Murcutt also takes into account the natural landscape and climate. He does not provide a panacea of sort with a mechanically air conditioned structure. He instead chooses to use large panels that fold out along the sides of the structure, opening the space up, as well as a large overhang of the roof to use the shade as an inhibiting agent against the heat.
RENAISSANCE VILLAGE
FEMA, U.S. GOV
BAKER, LA, USA
2005-2009
2,000 OCCUPANTS
AFTER HURRICANE KATRINA DECIMATED THE SOUTHERN UNITED STATES GULF COAST, the relief effort for the hundreds of thousands of came in the form of white trailers issued by the Federal Government. Relief effort has the word ‘relief’ in it to address the alleviation of hardships. Clearly these trailers and the ensuing parks thereafter only continue the needless hardships that the Louisiana natives battle every day.

FEMA, or rather the Federal Emergency Management Agency, provided housing assistance to over 700,000 applicants after the disaster. Besides blatant violations of basic housing parameters, such as insect infestations and formaldehyde laden units, the psychological aspect is daunting.

When programming for emergency and temporary shelter/dwelling it is imperative to take into consideration the culture normatives or cues rather, and incorporate them into sound sublimation realized in design. The FEMA trailer communities have no notion of the sort. Neither the unit, the layout, or parameters for dwelling in one contribute to a healthful recovery.

The park has regulations against any customization of the external part of the unit. This goes against the idea of creating attachment through investment (endurance) as well as shaping the environment to desired function.

The layout in linear rows and columns with little room to maneuver cannot see any landscape minus stretch upon stretch of white trailer. There is no space for congregation which as humans being a gregarious organism, must have. There is no symbolic connection.

‘There is no space for congregation which as humans being a gregarious organism, must have.’
AFTER THE TSUNAMI THAT HIT SRI LANKA’S COAST IN 2004, many families were left with no shelter and the newly imposed ban on building 100 meters from the ocean thereafter as well as cost of materials made it difficult for families to rebuild.

One of the main concerns was to not abandon the occupant’s socio-setting (friends, family, neighborhood). Through the design team working with the victims as well as the government in a constructive dialogue that took into account the needs of the victims, a compromise was met in the placing of the seventeen unit community. This dialogue helps fulfill the occupants’ goals and ultimate assessment of the space.

The idea of a transitional community was proposed by Elizabeth Babister. The idea of transitional instead of temporary was in play. The shelters that were constructed could be dismantled and used for building of permanent housing when the appropriate time arrived. The idea of allowing occupants to change their setting based on their own parameters rather than abruptly and unpredictable circumstances dictating so acts as intermittent connector. This allows families to not detach from their surroundings, per se, but to start identifying with the realization of a part of their identity will not be interacted with completely anymore.

The dismantling of the first iteration of the shelter and reconstruction of it by the families themselves again goes back to endurance and investment in place creates place attachment and identity modification.

‘One of the main concerns was to not abandon the occupant’s socio-setting (friends, family, neighborhood)’
JEAN-MARIE TJIBAOU CULTURAL CENTER
RENZO PIANO NEW CALEDONIA 1991 - 1998
THE CULTURAL CENTER IS A COLLECTION OF 10 PODS, each having its own function and relating size. Piano created the form and concept by interacting with the New Caledonians and recognizing and interpreting the vernacular Kanak culture into form. Piano derived the concept from the traditional huts of a Caledonian village. This is represented in the massing and the form of the pods. Materiality is another area where Piano derives the information from the end-user’s culture. The pods were intentionally given an unfinished appearance to reflect the view of the culture by the Kanak culture leader, Jean-Marie Tjibaou. Tjibaou stated that Kanak culture was still in the process of emergence and that it was unfinished.

What one can gather from this project it is more important, and valid, to iterate through design the cultural philosophies rather than produce a replication of already existing structures.
IN RESPONSE TO REFUGEES OF THE PERSIAN GULF WAR, architect Nader Khalili collaborate with the UNCHR and the UNDO to develop temporary shelters for displaced Iraqis. He created 15 domed shelters using plastic tubes filled with earth and barbed wire. This method of construction he termed ‘Super Adobe’. This process was able to construct domes that had a capacity of 150 ft².

While using materials Khalili called ‘tools of war’, the construction process took a meager two days to see the huts come to fruition. When dealing with im-
mediate shelter needs, a relatively quick completion timeline is desir-
able.

What makes this case interesting is the involvement of the refugees in the construction process. Khalili realizes that there is limited amount of people in situations that call for emergency shelter to built. By creating a system that can be put together by anyone, he solves the problem of complicating construction process.

Perhaps one the most inviting aspects of the system that is built by the refugee are the input of arrangement and relative design an occupant can have. This ensures to a degree that the initial desired function of the user will be met and the space will be able to accommodate future explorations of its own properties.

Secondly, the prospect of the user creating a relationship seeded in the endurance of the project and the place identification that in turn provides stability by taking direct involvement with the construction process is a component in successful refugee space development.

The camp fails to acknowledge the effects of dust storms and shading. Although these problems were absolved by traditional Persian design through high adobed walls, they are not present in the camp.

‘By creating a system that can be put together by anyone, he solves the problem of complicating construction process.’
OCCU
IN BURMA, THE ROLE OF RELIGION AND ITS VALUES PERMEATE EVERY CORNER OF BURMESE LIFE. From politics to family relations, Buddhism is paramount. Burma adheres closest to Buddhist principles than any of its surrounding neighbors. For example, the four truths of Buddhism speak of the non-value of one’s position in society. Because of this, many Burmese do not seek any betterment in relation to material goods. This outlook is manifest in the lack of economic anxiety and economic growth of Burma.

Another facet of Buddhism is enlightenment. The path to enlightenment lies in doing good deeds for others. The easiest way for rural villagers in Burma to do good for others was to finance and build monasteries that would educate poor children for free. Because of this, Burma at one point had the highest literacy rate in Southeast Asia.

“To a Burman, Buddhist and Burmese are almost interchangeable”

In recognizing this, one is able to program spaces and interaction that meet the goals of a Burmese refugee.
MANY NATIONS ACROSS THE GLOBE ARE VOCALLY OPPOSED TO THE CURRENT SITUATION OF THE LARGEST SOUTHEASTERN ASIAN COUNTRY. A monarchy until 1932, Burma has made it through several military coups. The first, in 1948, broke Burma away from British colonial rule. This military coup in 1948 was a foreshadowing of what the political process would be for many years to come and the end of democracy as we know it in Burma.

In 1962 a military coup effectively ended democracy in modern Burma by setting up the Burmese Socialist party. Protests were held mostly by students about the change and overreaction from the government was assured almost every time in the form of violent submission or sometimes shutting down universities across the nation for years. This repression of free speech has continued to present day, most recently realized in the mass monk protest in 2007 and 2008 where pacifist monks were jailed and brutally tortured afterwards.

The most recent change of government occurred in 1988 when pro-democracy protests led to another military coup. The government solidified its hold on the Southeast Asian country by not acknowledging the results of the first free, demo-
ocratic election in 30 years in 1992. A non–military candidate, Aung San Suu Kyi, won eighty percent of the vote. Rather than on the road to democracy, the junta did not recognize the vote and suppressed the rising of Aung San Suu Kyi. Sixteen years later in 2008, the situation has not improved. Either on the issues of human rights, civil liberties, education, economics, health, or international relations, the country is destitute and the junta is still in power. Among the nations who don’t recognize the government’s legitimacy and still call Myanmar by its former name, Burma, are the U.K. and the U.S.

Governmental paranoia, a highly divided population based on ethnic factions, and increasing poverty levels produced an underlying dissonance in the Burmese society. The strengthening of the government’s actions and the propaganda spread to the public about security has served to control the nation only by fear. The disregard for free speech rights and refusal of international help has garnered Myanmar the most isolated country in the world second only to North Korea. The totalitarian hold on the citizens of Burma has obtained the eyes of the world. Violations of basic human rights, refusal to accept international help in disaster relief & persisting poverty, and a government sanctioned genocide of the Karen population in Southeast Myanmar have made Burma an easy target for criticism.

The situation of the Burmese public is becoming increasingly dire. Factors like persistent poverty, lack of health care, global climate sensitive areas, suppression of free speech, and genocide have forced these people to flee their homeland to nearby countries.
IT IS IRONIC THAT IN A STATE THAT IS IN DESPERATE NEED OF AN ENORMOUS AMOUNT OF FOREIGN ASSISTANCE THAT ITS LEADERS ARE HIGHLY SUSPICIOUS OF OTHER’S INTENTIONS and regulate aid heavily and sometimes blatantly refuse international assistance, even in the most desperate times. The xenophobic policies and constant suspicion has left Burma in a non-governmental organization (NGO) no-man’s land.

The propensity of the government equating any outside entity as dangerous and a persistent greed by the local authorities has created the aforementioned disparity in NGO’s allowed to help refugees. The government wants complete control and demands in many cases to take control of the finances and carry out the work themselves. Of course with a corrupt government, little of that money is seen used productively and is hidden in the pockets of governmental authorities. It has become such a hostile environment for humanitarian efforts that some NGOs pay Burmese civilians across the border to carry out efforts in secret.

What makes the humanitarian effort in Myanmar so complicated, is not only the government does not want many NGOs flooding into their midst but dissonants to the government such as the National League for Democracy (NLD), Myanmar’s main opposition party, does not want help either. Rational among members of the NLD is that the relief effort would give legitimacy to the junta’s regime.

With such barriers as these, it is almost impossible for the citizens of Myanmar to get the relief that they need to sustain a healthy existence, and when a disaster does happen, victims are given very few choices for survival and most are forced to flee to neighboring countries. The humanitarian situation in Burma has been spiraling downward for decades. In 2008, Cyclone Nargis was the coup de grâce to the hope for many Burmese people. The situation is dire.

---

**FLEEING FACTORS**

As of 1999: 17 Intl NGO’s in Burma || NGO’s on the Thai/Burma Border w/ Refugees = 50
ANLYS
MAE SOT WAS SELECTED BECAUSE MULTIPLE FACTORS WERE MANIFEST IN THE AREA THAT COULD PROVIDE SUCCESS TO THE THESIS. For one, the surrounding area contains a high influx of refugees in relation to the native community population. The policies of the Thai government of ‘promising to repatriate the refugees’1 provide a social dynamic that conflicts with idea of stability in the life of the refugees and is an issue that should be addressed.

The site runs parallel to a major transportation thoroughfare. This would allow for a high visibility factor to the public/visitors (awareness, trade). The thoroughfare also provides easier access to the site for delivery and distribution of supplies.

The position of the site in relation to the center of the city can provide transition for the refugees between full emersion into a new community and separation of community.

The surrounding area contains heavily cultivated lands. The relative scarcity of agricultural development on site allows for as little negative impact that can possibly hamper the local’s acceptance of the community.

The site is relatively topographically flat. This characteristic will provide an easier circulation of inhabitants and visitors. Also structure placement becomes easier.
Townships
1 Mueang Tak
2 Ban Tak
3 Sam Ngao
4 Mae Ramat
5 Tha Song Yang
6 Mae Sot
7 Phop Phra
8 Umphang
9 Wang Chao

*indicates diagram on following pages
MAE SOT’S GEOGRAPHICAL CENTER IS LOCATED JUST 3.5 MILES AWAY FROM THE BURMESE BORDER. This makes Mae Sot likely a first stop for refugees fleeing from Burma.

Mae Sot contains a refugee population of over 150,000 people fleeing either from disaster, political persecution, or poverty from nearby Myanmar and a registered native citizenship of 70,000. The province of Tak holds a population of refugees numbering close to 115,000, a fraction of the some 65 million people living in Thailand. A percentage growth of 3.6% annually of Tak’s total population growth is a result of migrants crossing the Burmese border.

Mae Sot has a large population of refugees associated with the ethnic group known as Karen. These Karen refugees are especially discriminated against in Burma and have been subject to genocide that has been partially covered up by the Burmese government. The biggest demographic in Tak though is Karen native to the Thai province.

Ethnic groups are split into 3/4 the population being traditionally Thai while 15 percent are of Chinese influence. A staggering number of 95% of all Thai consider themselves followers of Buddhism while the closest religious competitor, Islam, only claims roughly 4% of the population.

The age structure of Thailand consists of a large ‘working’ population. 70 percent of the citizenship is between 15 and 64. A low percentage of older people exist as only 8.5 percent of the population.
There is an established NGO presence already in Mae Sot, such as the famous Dr. Cynthia’s Clinic. This allows for easier assistance opportunities for the community.
CLIMATE & SKY

MAE SOT’S CLIMATE IS ONE OF HEAT AND STABILITY. Lows rarely fall below 60°F and highs are in the 90s and 80s throughout the year. The temperature lies lowest in the months of June, July, and August with the hottest months being March and April. During the SW monsoon season in August and September, Mae Sot, can experience at a maximum of a foot of rain in the month of August and as little as no precipitation in January. In the months of June, July, and August, Mae Sot experiences 3 out of 4 days with some precipitation. Coupled with heat, humidity is brutal. With the levels of humidity not being less than a level of 60% relative humidity. Highest levels being in the SW monsoon months.
DEVELOPMENT

urbanized
agricultural
FUNCTIONAL ZONING

residential

religious

industrial

market

agriculture

open

confined

mass/inclusive

mass/confining

mass/contained
open area bordering n/ne sides allow for possible expansion in the future

hard boundary to the s/sw hinders growth but provides integration possibilities with the immediate community

ESTABLISHED POINTS OF ENTRY

POROSITY
PRJCT
NARRATIVE

accounts of six residents, the situation that preceded them coming to the M ae Sot community, and their experiences inside.
I’ve seen a great many things. Of course now that I am aging I can’t do as many things as I used to. I only stopped working five years ago because of back problems.

Ever since my wife died three years ago I have been living with my eldest son and his wife and my three grandchildren. I know it is customary in our culture care for one’s parents and am very grateful.

My son and his family ushered us out of our homeland due to increasingly violent interactions with the state authority. We know it is most

After the storm, I have had to take care of my little brother and sister. It’s been hard.

We struggled to find help after the storm. Our parents were gone and home was destroyed. We met a group of survivors that were going across to Thailand to find help. We followed, having no other option. We made it to Mae Sot.

We’ve been living on our own ever since our home and family were destroyed.

We miss our parents badly.

Now that I am the oldest, I have to take

That is who I am. It is my duty to present the facts to the masses. I am a proponent of a free press. I think it is imperative for a country to be free and as a right, have a free press. Unfortunately I have a firsthand account of the opposite.

I participated in the anti government protests in 2007 in Yangon. I defied my family wishes in doing so. They are a non confrontational, complacent people. Some things in life, however, require tough decisions to be made.

I witnessed the junta as they brutally suppressed the demonstrations. I was steadfast in
likely because we are Karen.

For years the military government as discriminated against us and has done terrible injustices to our people. I just accept it now.

When we fled and settled in Mae Sot, we met many families there, not necessarily having the same story but always having the same villain.

I know we have to keep moving and my son doesn’t want to stay, but I am old. I realize that I can only go so many places.

Lately, I am content with staying and accepting that we cannot go back. I know this bothers my son. He is torn between caring for his father and staying in Thailand or going back to where he is from and try to make his and his family’s life back in Burma.

care my brother, Maung, and my sister, Toph. I have to make sure they go to school and not get into trouble. I have to make sure they grow up like my father and mother would have wanted.

I’m only 16. My brother is 14 and my sister is 13. It’s a large responsibility that I have.

I have to work to make money for us (my brother and sister do a little). While working, when can I go to school? How do I begin to make it out of here? I would like to go home someday but being as poor as we are, with nothing to our name, and no parents, how do we go home?

in my support, however I was horrified and fled the area as some officers approached me.

I made it to a safe house in which I hid for 24 hours before fleeing the country. Luckily I made it into Thailand without getting arrested.

Living in the community I see my situation as both a hindrance and an opportunity. An opportunity to tell me story and help gain support for a governmental change in Burma. I believe only through education and widespread knowledge and support for the situation the government has created can Burma know peace.

. Mae Sot is where I reside now, ever hopeful that I will someday be able to return peacefully to Burma.
I have two brothers and my mom and dad. I did chores like all my friends did with their mothers too. My dad and brothers would be outside working in the field.

Because I lived in the country, I went to school, but it wasn’t a fancy one like the other children in the bigger cities go to.

After the cyclone came I had to leave my home that I lived in all my life. I don’t really have a home now at all. Even when we stop somewhere for a long time, I don’t think it is home.

I kind of- but don’t understand really why

I grew up in the foggy and cloudy North Washington coast. I was a loner in high school, by choice, of course.

After high school I attended Correlia University while majoring in International Studies.

After graduating I joined a relief agency hoping to help people and find something that I would be really passionate about. That agency was what I was looking for. I worked mostly helping Haitians after a hurricane disaster.

My agency has most recently sent me to Thailand where I work distributing rations that

I worked at the textile factory a little North of here, well Mae Sot I mean. I worked there for almost ten years. Shortly after, I lost my job. That was hard for me.

I did odd jobs here and there for a living. I was hurt. I couldn’t keep a job for more than a couple of weeks. Different reason each time.

At the time, and even now, I couldn’t help notice all the Burmese refugees. Well, if that’s what you want to call them. They are overtaking our city. First, there was a little, now, after the cyclone, there are hordes. Who do they think they
it is so difficult to get back to our old house.

I know my mom and dad were looking for help from some other people but they said we had to go somewhere else to get help.

Where we live now, I feel shy in. I do have friends though, girls I know I can trust.

I go to school here now. I know there are other people like my family where I live.

Even though my family is all together, I still don’t feel like I’m safe like I was in my last home.

our agency receives.

I enjoy helping and passing out rations but sometimes I don’t really feel like I connect with the people emotionally. I know maybe the people have other things to worry about but I like to become involved with them and their recovery. I feel like all I do is work at a grocery store and in fact what I really want to do is help rebuild people’s lives not just feed them.

I don’t know how I can become better ingrained in their culture and potentially be of better help to them.

are coming here? We have our own problems. I can’t even get a job.

They’ll work for nothing. They force us to grovel and work for less than we did before.

They’re dirty. You have to watch out too with them being so poor and all. I know I’ve seen them steel and sell drugs. Humph. You know what I think? I think the darker they are, the worse they are.

I mean, yeah, I know there are rumors of little girls taken and used as prostitutes but you know what? I don’t care. It’s their fault. Can’t take of themselves. Taking our jobs. Serves them right.

I just wish- well I mean, I’m frustrated. They think they can just come in here and live. I’m having a hard enough time trying to live without them interfering.
1. Needs Identify

permanent stay
larger accommodations
family considerations
established
political
cultural
centered
identity
transgender
education
acceptance

community

health
shelter
community
current events
education
employment
permanent stay
larger accommodations
assimilation
recognizing culture
elderly access
temporary
transition
religious areas
acceptance
familiarity
separation
areas of rootedness
education

progress

community
support
areas that allow for
play society
temporary

interaction

community
exposure

education

safety

employment


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


education


edge...
>COMMONALITY

nien  zuko  htet  aang  lei  sokka

interactor

>STRATEGIES

1. Porous edge integrating neighbors, services offered to the public rendered inside the community market space
2. Temporary market space
3. Porous boundaries

structures built with as-one-goes community develops rather than appears
allow facilities that create opportunities for others outside of community to come into
promote boundaries

boundaries and barriers created new places of importance to residents closed congregation of residents in
private areas and open areas in public venues

commonplace areas high visibility to greater community possible community functions (e.g. football) take place within area
NGO provides clinics that possibly become a part of the community, not being exclusive to providing wares to community but Mae Sot as well

structures become easily removed or assembled contingency plans for a population spike

distributed near residential area in rural (inverted pyramid) heavy-Buddhist (30% of Thai and Burmese are Buddhist)
multiple areas of high use clustered within close proximity to each other to minimize travel distance, change
in appearance throughout

community elements yet familiarly present among commonly used elements allowing users easy identification.
2 PREVIOUS > ORGANIZATIONAL FACTORS COMMUNITY
PRODOMINATELY MAN MADE INFLUENCE

PRODOMINATELY GEOGRAPHICAL INFLUENCE
1. Two geographical features influence a main circulation. The resovoir and rive create a meandering organization that leads to pockets of very ordered residential. The elevation is relatively flat and the grid is possibly purely influenced by the ease of organization the grid has to offer.

2. Floral appears to be an influence on how an organization is orientated but that is where influences stop. A very ordered system occurs in the community despite observations of other communities with populations comparable mostly use a chaotic tributary system.

3. The nearby river, east of the community, creates geometries of perpendicular paths that bleed out and continue that geometry well past the immediate area. The sharp rise of elevation to the west facilitates the use of a grid, ultimately using it to step up the mountain.
4. Grid is predetermined. Possibly from British rule in the 1800’s. The grid is pre-
dominate and thus negates the river which only influences geometry east of the
‘canal’. Little attention is given to where areas of interest are. No promenade or
revealment of these areas is given.

5. The higher elevated barrier of the mountain and the river appear to work against
each other in the community. Both geographical features influence a chaotic order
west of the river. East of the river however a tributary system with no special conse-
quence is observed.

6. The combination of low lands prefereably used for agriculture and which are
prone flooding as well as the higher elevated land mass produce an ‘acropolis’
effect. Stepping up the hill with major grid is still seen. Both systems lay alongside a
major transportation route that splits the site.
7. Major land feature creates a pattern that is reflected by the organization following parallel to it. Land feature featuring a sharply rising elevation gain frames major transportation. Organization leads to a horizontal approach at high elevations; organization steps up mountain.

8. Major transportation way follows parallel to man made airstrip nearby. Against low elevation areas more suitable for agriculture, a geometry runs tangent to boundary. Organization takes on grid later with no apparent influencer minus greater cultural/city status quo.

9. Although organization of significant transportation routes runs parallel to river, no direct influence on other circulation does the river have. Community celebrates areas where paths converge or intersect, focusing areas of significance there.
10. Higher elevation ridges act as main thoroughfares through community and are the backbone of the circulation. Residential are located away from the main circulation or at least protected through vegetation. Tributaries run down mountain. The river seems to have no effect on the transportation besides acting as a barrier.

11. Minus major routes located on ridges and tributaries running up and down elevated areas no other organization is found. Residential appear to be strung on random occurring pathways.

12. Airstrip takes advantage of a higher elevated flat area. While the base of the geography curves the circulation on the hill does not, only the lower routes do. Grid appears to be purely functional as a device to step up the hill in order to gain elevation. River creates a waterfront geometry but has little other effect.
In contrast to the macro-sized major thoroughfares that were looked at, interaction occurs also in smaller venues: the immediate community.

An investigation into three communities whose difference is superficially population and layout (a layout that is most likely caused by the size of the area) tries to discover an interaction of intimacy. Is there a sub-organization that leads itself to the formation of closer communities? To the formation of territory? Developmental qualities key to identity stabilization?

One can see that in each of the spaces, regardless of population size or organization system, structures are rallied around an immediately available void. This observation leads one to believe the confirmation of an importance and inherency to having a unifying element such as the void in a Burmese neighborhood and at same time, the space’s presence in the neighborhood is imperative to the formation of close knitted classes.
gridded circulation
public space located on outside of housing
public space is segregated from private space
one access point to private area
-gridded circulation offers easy navigation through larger context of the community; monotonous; adds to 'one in a million/numeric' feeling
-one large access controls how secluded private area can be
-passerby from public intrigued by intimate setting
-gridded circulation doesn’t promote large public congregation at crossroads rather at a designated gathering space.

gridded main circulation
public space located on outside of housing
public space is segregated from private space
many small access points to private area
-gridded circulation offers easy navigation through larger context of the community; monotonous; adds to 'one in a million/numeric' feeling
-several small entrances into the private area limit visibility from the public space and create a more isolated, sanctuary feeling.
-this isolation strengthens ties amongst neighboring residents
-knowledge of the passages to get to space heighten the bond between space and occupant b/c of the perception of intimate knowledge between them and space versus another person.
chaotic/tributary circulation
public space located along main estuaries, structures
faced forward towards path
private space is shared with immediate backyards
larger open/green space is shared by nature of
working land
intersections of paths occur randomly
-chaotic circulation offers difficult navigation imme-
diately; however circulation remains remem-
berable b/c of unique intersections and experiences to loc-
ate oneself (comparable to other cues one would
experience in a gridded community)
-private space limited; public workable space stren-
thens community by endurance of the work and the
growth of the surrounds present in that work.

c-type*/organic grid
public space located on paths of circulation
private space not created through voids between
structures.
smaller paths originate between structures haphaz-
dardly.
-semi-chaotic circulation offers difficult navigation
immediately, however circulation remains remem-
berable b/c of unique intersections and experiences to loc-
ate oneself (comparable to other cues one would
experience in a gridded community)
-exterior private space limited
-green space is not planned, only undeveloped land
-vegetation used as dividers/barriers
grid work offers regularity while the skewed angles of the main thoroughfares provide dynamic opportunities with creating spaces of both private and public nature.

grid work offers regularity while lower hierarchal paths that break the status quo of 'normal' circulation. This creates rememberal and an intimate dialogue with occupant.

breaking apart main circulatory paths break up monotony and offer at their turns landmarks for orientation of occupant. Parallel minor paths offer order and easy navigation through community.
three levels of the hierarchal circulation provides different levels of navigation depending on user. Minor paths frame possible public gathering or private areas.

framing each block with regular geometry provides easily navigable but less engaging circulation. Minor paths between blocks offer entry into private areas and benefit mainly the long time occupant no visitor.

angled geometries provide no sense of rhythm or understandment to the occasional visitor. The intersections between the geometries however provide opportunity for interaction among users
MASTER PLAN
major path
minor path
intimate path
landmark/node
minor node
intimate space
4 Community components

MAE SOT, THAILAND

DWELLING STRUCTURE
[END NOTES]

1. "Identity and Place: A Critical Comparison of Three Identity Theories." 
   Architectural Science Record 1.March (2007) p.4

2. Stets, Jan, and Chris Biga. "Bringing Identity Theory into Environmental 

3. "Identity and Place: A Critical Comparison of Three Identity Theories." 

4. "Identity and Place: A Critical Comparison of Three Identity Theories." 
   Architectural Science Record 1.March (2007) p.4

5. "Identity and Place: A Critical Comparison of Three Identity Theories." 

6. Stets, Jan, and Chris Biga. "Bringing Identity Theory into Environmental 

7. Stets, Jan, and Chris Biga. "Bringing Identity Theory into Environmental 

   New York: see notes for publisher info, 1981.

9. Stokols and Shumaker. “People in places: A transactional view of 
   settings.” 1981 p.447

10. Stokols and Shumaker. “People in places: A transactional view of 
    settings.” 1981 p. 443


12. Maung, Mya. "Cultural Value and Economic Change in Burma." Asian 

[BIBLIOGRAPHY]

Bornewasser, Manfred, and Johannes Bober. "Individual, social group and 

"Cyclone Nargis Facts - The Storm Surges in Myanmar." Weather Articles -


"Democracy Now! | FEMA's Dirty Little Secret: A Rare Look Inside the Renaissance Village Trailer Park, Home to Over 2,000 Hurricane Katrina Evacuees." Democracy Now! | Radio and TV News.  


**[IMAGES]**

All Aerial Photographs Provided by Google Earth


IDENTITY:

PSYCHOLOGICAL RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN PLACE AND OCCUPANT
INFORMING BURMESE REFUGEE COMMUNAL DESIGN

by

Shawn Patrick Gould

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree

of

Master of Architecture

in

Architecture

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY
Bozeman, Montana

April 2009
APPROVAL

of a thesis submitted by

Shawn Patrick Gould

This thesis has been read by each member of the thesis committee and has been found to be satisfactory regarding content, English usage, format, citation, bibliographic style, and consistency, and is ready for submission to the Division of Graduate Education.

Christopher Livingston

Approved for the Department Architecture

Steven Juroszek

Approved for the Division of Graduate Education

Dr. Carl A. Fox
STATEMENT OF PERMISSION TO USE

In presenting this thesis in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a master’s degree at Montana State University, I agree that the Library shall make it available to borrowers under rules of the Library.

If I have indicated my intention to copyright this thesis by including a copyright notice page, copying is allowable only for scholarly purposes, consistent with “fair use” as prescribed in the U.S. Copyright Law. Requests for permission for extended quotation from or reproduction of this thesis in whole or in parts may be granted only by the copyright holder.

Shawn Patrick Gould

April 2009
ACKNOLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my family, Rich, Kathy, Matthew, and Kelly, who were always a big help, my friends who offered encouragement to keep going, and of course caffeine.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTENT ........................................................................................................... 1

2. INTRODUCTION .............................................................................................. 3

3. THEORY ............................................................................................................ 6
   - Understanding Self and Identity ................................................................. 6
   - Social Identity .............................................................................................. 8
   - Place Identity ............................................................................................. 12

4. CREATING SPACE .......................................................................................... 16

5. ANECDOTES .................................................................................................. 22

6. PRECEDENTS ................................................................................................ 26
   - Marika-Alderton House ............................................................................ 29
   - Renaissance Village .................................................................................. 30
   - Transitional Community .......................................................................... 32
   - Jean-Marie Tjibaou Cultural Center ....................................................... 34
   - Tbaninajar Refugee Camp ........................................................................... 36

7. OCCUPANTS .................................................................................................... 38
   - Culture ....................................................................................................... 40
   - Then and Now ............................................................................................ 42
   - Fleeing Factors .......................................................................................... 44

8. SITE ANALYSIS ............................................................................................... 46

9. DESIGN PROJECT .......................................................................................... 60
   - Narrative .................................................................................................... 63
TABLE OF CONTENTS – CONTINUED

Needs .................................................................68
Previous Community .............................................70
Levels of Intimacy .................................................80
Master Plan .......................................................88
Community Components .................................92
ABSTRACT

Place is an active participant in determining who we are; it becomes part of one’s identity. People use space as a vehicle in which individual and social experiences are carried out and remembered, ultimately shaping who one is. An attachment to place is formed. Place becomes vital to one’s mental being and survival because it is a piece of a whole in how one defines herself/himself and his purpose.

But what happens when place attachment is broken? The consequences can be severe. For example, Burmese refugees responding to political persecution, persistent poverty, and most recently the ramifications of Cyclone Nargis in May 2008, were forced to abandon their homes and communities---- their place. They lost part of their identity. In doing so, the already dire situation they experienced grew more grievous. This continues today.

Now these refugees congregate in camps along the Burmese/Thai border looking for relief. Only tactile issues (food, shelter, water) are addressed by relief agencies, not psychological issues, such as the part of their identity they have lost. Because of this oversight, their recovery and survival lay in jeopardy.

This thesis will seek to demonstrate how architecture can ascribe to various design considerations that acknowledge the importance of fundamental place attachment between occupant and place. I will illustrate these considerations by creating a community for Burmese refugees that recognizes not only the physical but the psychological factors that are imperative to recovery, such as self, social, and place identity. Ultimately this exploration hopes to instill identity back into the refugees by applying a design strategy when developing the community that is informed by the interactions of the aforementioned psychological factors.

These issues of identity are pertinent to design today, when increasingly, many people like the Burmese refugee are in situations that demand thought and action for their recovery and survival.