

Juba as an Open Source City : Urban Planning as a Tool for Peace Building

Currently¹, in a state of civil unrest, South Sudan's future remains uncertain and worrisome. South Sudan gained independence just five years ago in July 2011, which makes it the newest country in the world. However, newfound independence did not bring about peace.

Following the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), tensions rose between different tribe leaders' who have constantly battled for power and resources. Just two years after independence, in 2013 a civil war broke out after the president Salva Kiir accused the vice president Riek Machar of planning a failed coup. This complex ethnopolitical conflict has displaced around 2 million people and tens of thousands have been killed, the exact number of casualties has been very difficult to verify. The South Sudanese warring parties, the SPLA represented by the current president of South Sudan, Salva Kiir, and the SPLA-IO represented by Riek Machar signed a peace agreement in 2015 to bring an end to a devastating civil war. The agreement was brokered by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and it was settled under strong external pressure from neighbouring countries, along with the US, China and the UN. However, all this pressure was rapidly reduced once the agreement was signed and South Sudan stopped being on the spotlight. As a result, tensions were not resolved between the two major armed groups sharing power. As rising frictions rose, violence broke out between the two groups on July 7th, 2016, completely beyond the control of the leaders themselves resulting in over 300 casualties. Recently, due to the increased pressure from external entities such as the UN, along with the neighbouring Governments of Sudan and Uganda, violence has been subdued within the city of Juba, and a new peace agreement is being discussed.

Riek Machar has fled to Khartoum and has been replaced by Taban Deng Dai. Tensions remain strong concerning the legitimacy of this new vice presidency, and there is speculation of an internal plan between Taban Deng and president Salva Kiir to force Riek Machar out of South Sudan. UNMISS and local international organizations based in South Sudan are requesting more international military forces for civilian protection. After much resistance, president Salva Kiir has agreed for the entrance of 4000 more UN peacekeepers to help protect civilians. The logistics of the deployment of these third party forces are still ambiguous and imply several challenges, but in the least, the agreement is a valuable and positive step in restoring safety to the civilian population of South Sudan. The hope is that enough stability will be maintained to allow for the drafting and signing of a new peace agreement; one with more structural mechanisms of accountability and compensations. Since the 2015 treaty, the South Sudanese Government and Opposition forces have gained stronger leverage which can signify new challenges in the drafting and signing of a new agreement.

Violent actions are not taking place in an organized manner, nor by an organized group, but small and scattered armed groups are the ones committing terrible acts of violence, including systematic rape which has become a war strategy to induce fear - a minimum of 400 rapes have been reported to the UNMISS. However, these acts of violence are not in the name of a specific leader, but to keep and gain certain resources. Demilitarization is key for the restoration of peace in South Sudan, but the present limitations of the UN to set the guidelines of the peace agreement, and considering that there is a power struggle inside the SPLA-IO with the appointing of a new vice president, the likelihood of an agreement on demilitarization

¹ Current news of Juba and South Sudan as of October 2016 are from Aljazeera.

is low. *Withal, not because it's difficult it means that it cannot be done, a peace agreement should not, mistakenly, be considered the end of the conflict, but as the beginning of a more systematic and regulated management of civil tensions.*

Introduction

Writing about Juba and imagining its future as an urban centre is an exercise in mapping out the social, political and economic dynamics that elusively interact in the ongoing-conflict context in South Sudan. What is Juba today? How is Juba managed/governed? How do the Protection of Civilian sites (PoCs) - isolated spaces, regulated by the UN - presently affect the city of Juba? What future can we imagine where the thousands of IDPs are included in development projects? **What can be the role of urban planning in restoring peace, stability and civil security?** By addressing these questions, this paper hopes to contribute to the challenging task of elucidating the present dynamics in South Sudan and supporting further research and projects in the country.

“The city is no longer one entity, but one in a chain of many [...] This has immense consequences for architecture and how it imagines the city and its urban futures [...] A migratory architecture or rather an architecture for these migratory times would require that architectural intelligence imagines the city not as a morphological, material arrangement of inside and outside, public and private, but as a thicket of circuits and routes, of delays and vast expanses of space between, of several places simultaneously. It would follow, track, record and map these often invisible flows and then put them to work to imagine and make the city differently”

(Lindsay Bremner, “Imagining the City”, *Writing the City Into Being* 1998 - 2008)

As Lindsay Bremner describes, city and state building are always contingent to local dynamics, therefore, to talk about the urban processes in Juba we need to begin by understanding Juba’s social, political, and economic background. In the context of South Sudan, this includes understanding the different identities that a history of conflict and war have created. Focusing on Juba is of great value as this ancient urban centre has a symbolic power at the country and global level. Considering the scarce available literature on urban development and planning in South Sudan, most of which has been commissioned by the UN and other humanitarian organizations, this study examines the conditions that have driven and currently affect urban development in Juba.

A brief account of Juba’s Urban Context

Juba is the capital of Central Equatoria and the federal capital of South Sudan, this city has experienced a rapid population growth in the past decades: increasing drastically, from 10,600 habitants in 1956, to around 250,000 by the end of the year 2000. In 2011, this number increased to over 600,000 people, making Juba one of the most fast growing cities in the world (Martin and Mosel, 2011) Once the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) was signed in 2005, there were a lot of high hopes for the future of Juba, resulting in the conduction of multiple field research projects to guide the development of the city and the country. Particularly concerning the urbanization of Juba, there was the creation of an Urban Plan² commissioned by the Japanese agency *Jica*, and there was also the drafting of a Land Regulation

² Juba Urban Transport Infrastructure and Capacity Development Study in the Southern Sudan, full document URL : <https://www.jica.go.jp>

and Policy Act³. However, South Sudan's public institutions have not had the human nor financial capacity to implement policies and projects therefore, neither of these documents have had any significant impact. As for more concrete urban progress, construction of roads and public buildings such as schools and hospitals remains very limited, e.g., there's only one main road completely paved⁴. In fact, most of the infrastructure in Juba consists of the various aid complexes built by the UN and other international agencies. This type of architectural landscape has been studied by academics and referred as a process of *'fortification of aid'* characterized by a type of *'walled architecture'*⁵. These studies reveal the complex challenges that are faced in a post-conflict situation, with constant and high levels of insecurity. In this context, people seek safety in the construction of gated buildings, and in consequence, reduce public space which is essential for community building and peacemaking processes. These characteristics of Juba's infrastructure have further contributed to the marginalization and **invisibility** of social and economic issues, impeding progress in a post-conflict environment. Urban studies from the post-signing CPA period indicate that the main type of permanent infrastructure in Juba are structures of colonial-style homes, located in the centre of the city. Moving outwards from the centre of Juba, land continues to be subdivided into rectangular plots, and the buildings are mainly the customary Tukul huts. (Creative Associates International.inc, 2005) Regarding the spatial dynamics and characteristics of the city, there is a drastic spatial division according to economic wealth, where the higher income dwellers are located in the north east area of the city, close to the UN House and the Airport. Whereas it has been the case for other cities with rivers, the Nile River that traverses Juba has not been central for the planning and development of the city. There are some hotels and markets along the river but there has been very little influence of the river in the growth of the city.

Forced displacement and return have been key characteristics of urban development in Juba. In 2011, the majority of the areas in Juba were inhabited by a mix of tribes, encompassing residents and returnees.

"The old IDP camps have been dismantled and their populations have integrated with the town. Neighbourhoods now tend to reflect the socioeconomic status of its inhabitants - with lower income inhabitants residing in densely areas at the outskirts of the city, and the better off in demarcated plots in the centre of town" (Martin and Mosel, 2011 : 6)

At the moment, the recent outbreak of violence has caused the displacement of more groups of people into PoC sites, and some people have also fled to neighbouring countries as refugees. Constant fighting and forced displacement are a direct cause to lagged urban development, infrastructure decay, and poor quality of life in South Sudan. Urban development in Juba presents many challenges, including the need to provide basic services and utilities to the thousands of newcomers that arrive with hopes of new opportunities and safety. The conflict in South Sudan has stagnated development while making living costs extremely expensive as the country depends increasingly on imported goods - extended decades of conflict have made it almost impossible to foster and maintain a formal economy, therefore,

³ Official documents of land regulation in South Sudan: Land Act, 2009, the Local Government Act, 2009 and the Land Policy, 2011.

⁴ For more detailed information regarding urban infrastructure: Juba Assessment Report, 2005.

⁵ Analysis of the architectural landscape of Juba in Architecture of Peace Magazine Volume #26, 2010 & Murray, 2010.

most of South Sudan remains rural, with people relying on subsistence farming and traditional cattle economy. Due to this, the South Sudanese Government has opted for a national economic framework that prioritizes international large-farm investments. (Martin and Mosel, 2011) Meaning that, in a context where less than 10% of the total land is under-cultivated and under-utilized, the Government has increased dependency on foreign direct investment (FDI) in the land, arguing that this is the best way to promote development. These policies have prioritized foreign investment and interests over the local needs. While policies on Governance have been guided by a decentralized model, one that supports access to services and livelihood opportunities in rural areas and in the city, and which follows the motto “taking towns to the people” the fluctuating economic state of South Sudan, with an economy that relies over 90% on oil, has put South Sudanese people’s needs at a very vulnerable position. The independence of South Sudan implied several transitions: a transition into a globally competitive economy, and into political democracy. This double transition makes development very challenging, where pushing for integrated development projects that support civil society education and participation are not prioritized during the first stages of democratic consolidation, as these do not present immediate economic gains they have not been at the upfront of the development plans of the GoSS.

The urbanization of Juba has been described as a form of ‘pathological urbanism’ an urbanism which consists of a type of urban growth without social integration, and that is a direct response to a post-conflict situation where the countryside has been abandoned and newcomers in the city adapt self-help systems. (Grant, 2013 : 4) Another term that has been used to describe the context of Juba, is that of a ‘wounded city’ which characterizes a city by a social order punctuated by a loss of relevance of the state, with urban dynamics being inextricably linked to the relationship with diaspora networks. (Ibid, 2013) Although these descriptions correctly highlight some of the dynamics in Juba, new contextual situations such as the creation of PoC sites in various areas of the country, add new dimensions to the urban characteristics of Juba. This is why the next section will address the implications of the PoC sites in the features of the urban fabric.

The Protection of Civilians Sites’ (PoC sites) impact on the urban fabric

PoC sites are a new type of displacement settlement that emerged due to the 2013 conflict in South Sudan. The outbreak of violence in Juba in mid-December 2013 rapidly spread to the rest of the country and affected all ten South Sudan states. By February 2015 an estimate of 254,391 IDPs were registered in displacement sites - from this group, around 112,392 settled in PoC sites. The term Protection of Civilians sites came into use after December 2013 to describe the situation of IDPs hosted in the UNMISS base, so the creation of PoC sites at this scale has no precedents in UN history. Even though many humanitarian actors were already operating in South Sudan prior to the conflict of 2013-2015, the humanitarian response has faced serious challenges to cope with the emergency situation, failing to meet the minimum SPHERE⁶ emergency standards. As for the case of refugee camps around the world, the PoC sites are theoretically considered as temporary sites for IDPs, but the reality is very different. When the conflict began UNMISS staff thought that the PoC sites would last for a couple of weeks, therefore, the guidelines and framework to manage the situation, didn't have a long-term logic. Moreover, UNMISS contingency plans for this type of scenario were calculated to about 500 IDPs, not over 10,000 which was

⁶ SPHERE Core Standards and minimum standards cover approaches to programming and four sets of life-saving activities: water supply, sanitation and hygiene promotion; food security and nutrition; shelter, settlement and non-food items; and health action. For more info: <http://www.spherehandbook.org/>

the number of IDPs that fled to UN bases in Juba. Due to this, the PoC sites are under extremely poor living quality conditions with limited ratios of resources, and this has forced IDPs to leave the safety of the sites to go outside and gather wood and food for their daily livelihoods. The mobility inside/outside the PoCs has become more flexible as the conflict becomes more contained, nonetheless, leaving the site is still a life threatening decision and there have been many violent cases where IDPs have been targeted right outside of PoCs.

Refugees in their Own Country

A refugee as defined by the UN *is a person who is outside their country of citizenship because they have well-founded grounds for fear of persecution because of their race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, and is unable to obtain sanctuary from their home country or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail themselves of the protection of that country.* (UNHCR.org)

IDP's are refugees in their own country.

There are important differences between PoC sites and refugee camps: PoC sites protect IDPs, people who are seeking protection from their own government **within** their own country. Whereas refugees, are people seeking refuge **outside** their own country. This is an important distinction to the legal status of the people seeking help - considering their vulnerabilities/capabilities and possibilities for movement - as well as the implications of the PoC sites, as neutral/isolated/UN governed spaces, for the sovereignty and territorial control of the South Sudanese Government.

The presence of PoC sites creates parallel agglomerations of people and resources. How does infrastructure and agglomeration of resources in specific locations shape the dynamics of the city? Several businesses have emerged due to the PoC sites since the people residing inside the sites have very few resources, merchants have located close to the sites to supply the people at the sites. This has created markets around the sites and constant trade activities. Since IDPs are legally mobile, meaning they can step out of the PoC sites and come back, PoC sites are considered as a type of 'low-income neighbourhood', the sites have been described as '*other poor areas in South Sudan*', with its own forms of suffering: '*life inside the PoC sites is not the best but quite secure*'⁷

Exit strategies for the dismantling of the PoC sites raise many questions, so far three main exit strategies have been considered since the beginning of the conflict:

- 1) Voluntarily return to their homes or areas of origin
- 2) Voluntarily resettle to another part of South Sudan
- 3) Seek asylum in other countries

All of these plans rely on voluntary actions of the IDPs and do not offer any concrete plan for relocation. 2015 studies by REACH⁸, show that IDPs tend to want to return to the counties they considered as their

⁷ Information gathered from interviews with locals.

⁸ REACH Initiative Informing More Effective Humanitarian action URL: <http://www.reach-initiative.org/>

ancestral homeland. For the PoCs located in Juba, only 26% of the people staying at the UN-House stated the willingness to return to Juba, despite the fact that over 50% had their pre-crisis home there. The main factor that has pushed people to enter the PoC sites is security, and the majority of the IDPs are not confident about going back to their previous homes because these might have already been taken by other people, or because they feel they would put themselves at risk by going back. The other factor that keeps IDPs in the site is the presence of general food distribution, as there is no land available for cultivation inside the PoCs, enabling a transition that continues to provide food and livelihood support to IDPs, independently from the humanitarian aid, is a challenging and a critical factor informing the choices to voluntarily leave or stay in the PoCs.

In 2014 a reallocation of people inside the PoC sites was planned, however, this process was blocked by the GoSS that feared that the men at the PoC sites would join the opposition, and spark violence again. At the end of 2015, the discussion about the future of the PoC sites was focused on three potential solutions: 1) transferring IDPs to another location, 2) encouraging the voluntary movement of IDPs to other places by offering continued distribution services and 3) shifting the location of security support so the IDPs could be located outside. Relocating IDPs to a location managed by civilians and where greater services are offered is largely dependent upon whether the IDPs feel safe enough to voluntarily move outside UNMISS bases, this involves making a decision to move to places where the SOFA⁹ agreement is not applicable, and thus they are at higher risk. As the attempts in 2014 demonstrate, the future of the PoC sites depends strongly on the GoSS's willingness to cooperate in the transition, upholding responsibilities to guarantee the safety of the civilians, as a local South Sudanese remarks: *"the future of the PoC sites is a very politically sensitive issue and presents a dilemma in case there is ever a targeted attack against people of certain ethnicity - land issues are a very common problem and it could depend on who owns the land where the PoC sites are"* Through a political lens, since the security of civilians at PoC sites is UNMISS responsibility, the GoSS can 'escape' direct accountability for the civil conflict. The dismantling of PoC sites shifts responsibilities, where the GoSS has to undertake the responsibility of public safety, this transition is complicated as the Government doesn't seem to be ready. Struggle for power is still strongly present within the Government and there is no cohesion. Moreover, questions of land allocation, security and support for food harvesting and other livelihood services are essential and there is an urgent need of effective policy mechanisms to answer to these challenges.

The future of the PoC sites, including the success of the exit strategies, goes beyond questions of completely withdrawing the humanitarian aid or relocating IDPs, but the continuity of these spaces and their characteristics depends on the solving of the causes for their creation. As long as the political and civil conflict continues, and civilians are not given new places where to settle with a guarantee of their safety, the sites will continue to exist, as they will be needed. The sudden withdrawal of UNMISS forces presents challenges and uncertainties for the welfare of the civil population.

Beyond Tribalism : Demystifying Identities of Conflict

War in South Sudan has repeatedly been explained by ethnic/tribal unrest. However, when looking closely at the roots and processes of the conflict, most of the time it is specific groups that commit the

⁹ SOFA is the agreement between the Government of Sudan and the United Nations concerning the status of the United Nations Mission In Sudan. Full Agreement: <https://unmis.unmissions.org/Portals/UNMIS/Documents/General/sofa.pdf>

violence rather than entire tribes. South Sudan has been struggling to find peace for a long time, and the reasons for this constant fighting are not only issues of ethnic resentment. **Ethnicity is only a component of a complex web of political power, marginalization, competition over scarce resources and an unaccountable government structure** (LSE, 2010) Understanding conflict in South Sudan beyond the logic of tribalism is crucial to avoid tribalism being used as political tool. This has proven to be the case during the interim period of the CPA agreement when politicians strengthened ethnic difference to gain electoral support. The politics of differentiation in the building of the CPA government created an unstable ground from which the conflict sparked in 2013 took roots. Moreover, the fact that international bodies acting in South Sudan to contain the conflict and guide the peace-building process, also address and recognize the conflict as merely ethnic based, presents crucial challenges for the solving of the situation and contributes to making ethnicity a new social resource or/and disadvantage.

Vocabulary and categorization are very sensitive aspects of post-conflict situations, and should not be used lightly in the peace-building processes. War shudders power structures, which enhance reluctance in acknowledging new dynamics, new vocabulary and distributed responsibilities, nonetheless, addressing these intrinsic societal changes is crucial for conflict resolution and fostering progress.

Inside/Outside : construction of identities inside PoC sites

Could we say that war, jointly with UN and international intervention has reinforced ethnic identities, contributing to a logic of distinction by feelings of otherness and difference? If this is the case what can be the role of the city as an open space? And what is the impact of PoC sites for identity building?

Michel Agier published a very valuable research paper in 2001 titled *“Between war and City”, an anthropological research on the Dadaab refugee camp in Kenya*” In this paper, Agier argues two things: firstly, the formation of a new global space, the ‘humanitarian’ which consists on the management of ‘undesirable populations’. The camps are the condition created by the coming together of war and humanitarian action. In sum, camps are the creation of isolated spaces that are *‘kept at a distance from the ordinary social and political world’* In broader terms, this process can be considered as the result of a large scale process of segregation. Secondly, and linked to this first argument, is the fact that there is a formation of a novel-spatial form of ‘city-camps’, a space that allows for the construction of new identities and social dynamics. Even though the Dadaab refugee camp has a quite different group of people than the PoC sites in Juba, taking this study into consideration is useful to reflect on the types of social dynamics and organizational patterns that take place inside the PoCs.

Agier explains that the factors that maintain the existence of the refugee camps are contradicting and at the same reinforcing each other. A pull-in factor is the conflict, which maintains refugees inside camps in order to be safe, and a second factor is the means through which aid/resources are distributed, that create new dependencies as these lack appropriate planning to help people create/maintain links with life outside the camps. Refugee camps around the world have proven to not be temporary solutions, but a reality that has become permanent. Permanence has allowed for the camps to develop their own systems of power and social dynamics and this happens through several mechanisms. One is that the camp creates **anonymity**, meaning that refugees inside experience a sort of ‘identity crisis’. Individuals in the camps have one general label ‘victims’, and that’s the identity that matters inside the camps, as the rest is overlooked because aid distribution is not to be dependent on national or ethnic identification. At

the same time, the camps agglomerate a large number of heterogeneous individuals whose encounters allow for the reshaping of new identities. This is why Agier argues that refugee camps produce similar social dynamics to a city, if we understand a city as a space with a *“heterogeneous ensemble of identity resources whose confrontation defines the space of action of city dwellers’ and determines the capacities of the urban”* (Agier, 2005 : 322)

However, PoC sites in Juba are different because they host a group of people from the same country but different ethnic tribes, in most of the sites the majority of IDPs are from the same ethnicity : Nuer. So how can we translate Agier’s analysis to the context of Juba, and to what extent is it relevant? What identities are being created inside de PoC sites? The case of the Tongping PoC site is a good example of the social structures that are created inside the PoCs. Tongping site was one of the first PoC sites in Juba, this UN base was located close to the city center, therefore, it was the first place where civilians went seeking for help. Among the group of the first civilians who arrived to the site there were important political and military individuals. Their social status allowed them to quickly create a social structure where they were in charge of the management of the site. Later on, these elites fled the country creating a power vacuum inside the site. After their departure, people inside the site began to struggle for power, so there was a restructuring of the social dynamics. Currently the Tongping PoC site has been dismantled and people have been reallocated, but the social structures affected the process of relocation as IDPs were very reluctant to leave, since they could lose their positions of power and they were aware that relocation would mean starting from scratch to gain a position inside the new PoC site.

New identities are created in everyday life activities, just as places start gaining meaning with daily usage. Daily activities such as food ratio distribution, or in some cases even the spatial organization of the sites, are processes that indirectly create new means of identification. For the case of PoC sites, the settlement of tents is organized according to ethnic identities, to avoid conflict. The sites are divided into different zones and specific sections are allocated to groups. Each section has representatives in an executive committee, and the committee is divided in different positions of responsibility taken by IDPs¹⁰ Nonetheless other activities such as the management of civil disputes sometimes undermine the customary practices of the ethnic identities and prioritizes the internal management of the sites, upholding UN’s rules. Therefore, hybrid systems are being formed, where customs and dynamics from specific ethnicities overlap with UNMISS rules creating a mix-environment, this is how war and exodus creates a new form of social urban. **War is not the absence of social and political relations, but it can produce socio-economical relations and identities that are defined by conflicting agencies.**

Concretely, some examples can elucidate some of the changing dynamics in society due to the war, and the presence of PoCs.

Men and Women in society

In South Sudan the conflict has altered the traditional roles of men and women. One emerging trend is that of young, unskilled or semi-skilled men moving to Juba in search of jobs and an urban lifestyle. Many of young men have been involved in the war since very young ages, so they have many difficulties

¹⁰ UNMISS report “If We leave now” is a detail account of the humanitarian challenges of the different PoC sites in South Sudan, the report narrates the living of internally displaced people in South Sudan and describes the organization, management and quality of life inside the PoC sites, including interviews with local residents of the sites and UNMISS employees.

adapting to the rural life. (HPG commissioned Report : 4) A survey conducted in 2011, showed that many men were fulfilling roles that previous to the conflict were taken by women and women were taking responsibilities harvesting and providing for their families, because they have the skills and knowledge.

Law in a pluri-ethnic environment

The UN has no executive mandate, meaning that it cannot directly implement its own rule of law inside the PoC sites, but has to bind to local customs. Considering that IDPs are coming from different tribes, the management of conflict between people from different tribes is very complex. Conflicts inside PoC sites are dealt in the same way as outside the camps, through a mix of customary law with statutory law where the main chiefs deal with intra-ethnic conflicts. However since most conflicts are solved with monetary or cattle compensations, and people inside the PoC sites do not have access to these capital, solving conflicts is quite complicated and civil unrest is very common inside PoC sites as main chiefs are very limited to impose any monetary sanctions. (If we leave now : 51) This example shows that even inside the PoC sites, ethnic legal customs are preserved but adapt to a new context.

Can the refugee camp become a city in the sense of a space of urban sociability, and in the sense of a political space, a polis ?

“This survival system that is the camp, its organization and above all the fact that it constitutes a ‘relatively large, dense, and permanent settlement of socially heterogeneous individuals’, creates opportunities for encounters, exchanges and reworkings of identity among all who live there. In this sense, the humanitarian device of the camps produces cities” (Agier 2005 : 336)

The PoC sites may not have such a diverse population as the Dadaab refugee camp, but *“PoC sites are diverse because people there have different backgrounds especially political, and intellectual, and they have been brought together by the conflict to the PoC sites” (Interview, 2016)*

The management of the PoC sites makes ethnicity a relational attribute and being inside the site does not necessarily strengthen ethnicities, but, on the contrary, it clashes with these by putting bringing in new contexts where there are other identitarian alternatives.

“The camp engenders experiences of hybrid socialization that are not only multi-ethnic but also plural, in which clan strategies criss-cross ethnic strategies, and the latter overlap with the strategies of the humanitarian organizations of the ‘global’ sphere“(Agier, 2005 : 336)

Relational rules strongly depend on context, availability and ways of distribution of resources. This particular context presents an opportunity to push forward the peace-building process. In the PoC site ethnicity remains an identitarian characteristic that affects relational practices but it is not the only nor the dominant factor over social dynamics and civil encounters.

Tools for Peace-building : Juba as an Open Source City

The majority of research on migration trends, the usual media discourse, as well as of the political discussions on topics of migration fluxes and the current ‘refugee crisis’ are constantly framed by the idea that the nation state is the ‘natural’ social form. The term, methodological nationalism, refers to the

understood assumption of nation/state/society as a given. Nation-state processes have strongly shaped the ways immigration has been perceived and received. These perceptions have then significantly framed social science theory and methodology. Stepping away from the nation state lens to think about migration brings up new concepts and methodological strategies such as a shifting towards a study of 'transnational communities', or for the case of South Sudan of multiethnic societies. These terms/concepts can be more helpful to come up with more innovative and suitable solutions to the current ethnic and political conflicts in Juba.

Considering Open Source methodologies and ideals, in the making of Juba, and in the peace-building processes, is an opportunity to capitalize the urban capabilities of the post-conflict context. As Saskia Sassen describes:

"Often it is the urbanity of the subject and of the setting that mark a city, rather than ethnicity, religion or phenotype. But the definition of urbanity through subject and setting does not simply happen; it frequently comes out of hard work and painful trajectories. One question is whether it can also come out of the need for new solidarities in cities confronted by major challenges, such as violent racists or environmental crises. The acuteness and overwhelming character of the major challenges cities confront today can serve to create conditions where the challenges are bigger and more threatening than a city's internal conflicts and hatreds. This might force us into joint responses that emphasize the urban over the individual or group subject and identity, such as those denoted by ethnic or religious classifications." (Sassen : 92)

PoC sites, even under present precarious conditions, are a shelter for active people that want to make a change in their communities. The tragic experience of war has brought people together seeking safety in these secure spaces, this context should be looked and addressed as an opportunity to bring people together, beyond their differences to begin the efforts of building urban subjects. Already, the sites count with various organized groups, including artists and teachers who put their efforts in improving their environment. Harnessing the power of community engaging activities to bring people together is a very promising strategy to start the healing process. An urban setting such as the one present inside PoC sites is a key context where identities are formed and re-shaped.

Nonetheless, it would be naive to neglect that there are also high possibilities for conflict, particularly linked to the lack of protection outside the PoC sites. Insecurity has and will continue to result in the reduction of public space and community building activities are compromised by the creation of walls and borders. These processes are present in almost every city: cities in South Africa such as Johannesburg and Capetown have experienced a proliferation of gated communities, creating margins and segregating the richest in society, without addressing problems of insecurity but only accentuating inequalities and increasing the challenges of integral development by promoting an individualistic and isolationist society. This type of development can be described as the creation of closed-systems, lead by urban planners and political leaders want to control the city through architecture that is singled-purpose and strict land zoning to control social and economic activities. Yet, cities always 'talk back' urban spaces are hybrid spaces and continuously produce disruptive narratives.

The future of Juba as an open city - where urban societies are open to diverse groups and count with flexible mechanisms to resolve differences - where city dwellers are coequal urban subjects, is a more embracing way of thinking of urban development. To allow a city to be a bottom-up place, that belongs to the people, and challenge the present assumptions that favour closure, instead of repeating the same mistakes of most of our modern cities, where the major problems of urbanization are grounded in the inability of institutions and governments to engage with informality, socio-economic inequity and lack of affordable social housing (Teddy Cruz, 2011), is a more creative and constructive lens to think about the future of Juba.

PoC sites can be the laboratories where this openness is introduced, certain mechanisms such as the permeability between the outside and the inside of PoCs are symptoms of the irrefutable permeability of borders. Walls, segregation and isolation will not resolve the civil tension, on the contrary these will be maintained and unaddressed. Programs that allow for mediated encounters, discussions and artistic practices to reflect on the past and the future of Juba and South Sudan as a whole can heal the injuries of war and violence.

Urban planning and the future of the PoC sites are crucial factors in the peacekeeping process. Creating urban commons and urban communities, through an urbanism of inclusion fostered by a collective effort that reconfigures socio-economic relations first and then builds second can be the beginning of Juba as an open city.

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Author

Regina Díaz Salgado

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