

of a city – their landscape architecture – have been designed by a wide variety of people and during the second half of the twentieth century they went through several fashion cycles within different cultural contexts. It is clear that the quality of the landscape architecture is both the essential ingredient of the case studies included in this chapter. Can it all, or any of it, be claimed to be urban design? Of all the schemes presented in this chapter, the most urban, Pershing Square, is the one that can least be called urban design. Both the SITE and the Legoretta/Olin design focused on the surface of the square. Maybe in the long run the Square will become a true urban place integrated with its enclosing elements. It is not one yet.

Important though the quality of their landscape architecture is, well-designed cityscapes and parks are not the panacea for the ills of cities. They cannot solve social or economic problems on their own. The authorities in Oak Park found that out. Parks and other landscaped areas need to be well located and well designed for specific functions in terms of people's lives as they are lived and also in terms of how the natural world works. These functions need to be understood. Urban design schemes everywhere need to be cared for after completion as well as they are in Singapore. Often the nature of maintenance required is a question avoided in design thinking. As a result many spaces when built soon deteriorate and have a negative impact on their surroundings and a people's self-esteem.

What have not been at all included in this chapter are examples of designing public/open spaces in arid climates. 'Greening the city' is an unfortunate slogan for improving the biogenic quality of cities. Greening cities in arid zones, such as Phoenix, Arizona or Tehran needs to be considered very carefully. Such cities need to be 'brownd' as much as 'greened'. Much can be learnt from traditional human settlement patterns in different climatic zones (see, e.g. Rudofsky, 1969). Those settlements, however, were not designed with automobile usage in mind. We need new paradigms addressing the opportunities and problems of our contemporary world.

The products described in this chapter are varied and typically landscape architecture in cities. Where the projects included the framing elements of open spaces and/or contain significant buildings as an essential part of the scheme they surely are urban design. If not they are important landscape architecture projects in cities. Many landscape architects would claim that this distinction is pedantic. The distinction is certainly often blurred. Riverwalk in San Antonio (see Chapter 10) is included in this book under the rubric of plug-in urban design. It could be argued that it is primarily concerned with only the design of the horizontal surfaces between buildings and so is a product of landscape architecture. It did, however, consciously set out to change the three-dimensional world around it and it succeeded in doing so. Whether redesigning elements of the public realm is urban design in its purest sense or not remains an undecided issue. Landscape architects claim it is. If it is then what is landscape architecture?