social and spatial dimensions of urban design has been formulated as the relationship between process and product.

Process or product?

The sources of ambiguity between the macro- or micro-scale of urban design and between urban design as visual or spatial management refer to urban design as dealing with its product, the urban space. This leads us to a fundamental source of potential confusion in defining urban design: whether the term refers to a process or a product. Architects have historically been interested in the product of their design and not in the administrative and urban development processes through which designs are implemented. On the other hand, planners have shifted from an interest in the physical fabric of the city to the policies and procedures of change in the environment (Dagenhart and Sawicki, 1992). As urban design stands between architecture and planning, it relates to the paradigms of both, which can create overlaps and reduce clarity of scope. Depending on the commentators' standpoint, they might have a tendency to one or the other of these paradigms, preferring to see urban design as only a product or a process. Yet urban design, as many urban designers have stressed, refers to both a process and a product 'it is defined by what urban designers do as much as it is by what they produce' (Kindsvatter and von Grossmann, 1994, 9).

But how can we say that urban design is both a process and a product? Surely, urban design is not a product, if by product we mean parts of urban space, as this statement appears to mean. Urban design is a process, whose product at the first instance is a set of ideas, policies, and images. Once implemented, they form a new or an altered part of urban space. Urban design, therefore, is a process that is interested in its product, the built environment. A more precise way of putting it may be: urban design is a process which deals with shaping urban space, and as such it is interested in both the process of this shaping and the spaces it helps shape.

In a sense this two-sided nature is reflected in the two component parts of the term, 'urban' and 'design', the former referring to the product and the latter to the process. The ambiguity of the scales of urban design refers to a more fundamental question: what is urban? What parts of the ever-increasing urban areas are addressed by urban design? The dominant trend in Britain seems to address the city

centres as the main urban space (Worpole, 1992), leaving the rest of the cities as mere peripheries where the lower densities of population and activities appear to make them less interesting.

In Britain, there has been a decline in large-scale urban redevelopment or development of new settlements. This explains, to a large degree, why urban design is generally concentrated on the micro-scale of urban space, preoccupied with place making. Large-scale urban development, however, is a major trend in many cities of the developing world, where population growth and higher densities encourage the rise of land prices and press for radical change (Madanipour, 1997, forthcoming). In the United States, where some areas have experienced phenomenal growth pressures, large-scale urban development, as reflected in the 'New Urbanism' movement, has also been a main feature. Parallel with the predominance of retailing in the city centres in Britain and in the national economy as a whole, urban design becomes pressed to concentrate on creating and supporting environments in which shopping, or consumption in general, is the main attraction to pull the crowds, leaving aside other uses and places as of secondary importance. The drive for regeneration of decayed inner-areas of the cities has also led to such concentration on the city centres, taking the attention away from the urban region as an integrated space.

The urban space, however, is more than the city centre. It includes the suburbs, where large numbers of the urban population live. As these suburbs have matured and new nuclei of services and employment have developed on the outskirts of the cities, any engagement with the city which disregards the suburbs is turning a blind eye to a substantial portion of urban space (Gottdiener, 1986). In the case of the larger cities in Britain, multinucleated urban regions have evolved either through development of new shopping and office centres in the suburbs, or have grown by engulfing the older, smaller settlements into the urban whole. The urban space with which design is engaged is therefore the space of an urban region, including the centre and its peripheries. Restricting urban design to the city centres would deprive urban design of a broader perspective, and the urban space from a potentially powerful tool for its transformation.

As for the definition of design, we come across a fairly wide range of meanings. For example, the dictionary definitions of the word refer separately to a sequence of distinguishable moments in a process: from when there is only an intention, to when the ideas are conceived in mind, to when preliminary