



THE URBAN GAME

Social aspects on sustainable urban
development and citizen participation in
Nanjing, the People's Republic of China



Swedish University of
Agricultural Sciences

Final thesis in landscape planning 30 ECTS
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in Nanjing, the People's Republic of China.*

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March 2009

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Minor Field Study (MFS)

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DET URBANA SPELET

*Sociala aspekter inom hållbar stadsbyggnad och medborgarmedverkan
i Nanjing, Folkrepubliken Kina.*

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SUMMARY

This report is the result of a study of Chinese urban planning. Nanjing, in the People's Republic of China (PRC), is the city in focus, but the study also includes a comparison with the situation in Sweden. The study aims at describing prevailing, as well as lacking, features in the striving for a sustainable urban development. The main topic is the social dimension of sustainable urban planning, together with citizen participation during the planning process. By defining the extent of the social dimension of Nanjing's development, towards a sustainable urban environment, and the existing conditions for urban citizens to participate in the planning process of their own neighborhood, the study aims to come up with suggestions on how to improve the current situation in Nanjing. The methods used, were interviews and literature studies, as well as observations in Nanjing and Sweden. UN-HABITAT's definition of sustainable urban development has served as a tool for the study. The main finding of the study is that Nanjing is on the front edge among cities in developing countries, regarding sustainability, which is also confirmed in the city's master plan. It is evident that some aspects of sustainability are yet to be developed, which makes living a worthy life difficult for a great number of Nanjing citizens. The essence of the conclusion is the realization of the importance of reflection, to take a step back once in a while, in order to put the urban planning situation in a perspective, to scan, not only prevailing needs, but also the available resources.

Keywords: Urban planning, sustainable urban development, sustainable urban planning, social sustainable development, citizen participation, Nanjing, the People's Republic of China.

SAMMANDRAG

Denna rapport är en undersökning av kinesisk stadsplanering. I fokus står staden Nanjing i Folkrepubliken Kina, vilken avslutningsvis jämförs med situationen i Sverige. Studien syftar till att beskriva de resurser som finns, liksom brister, i strävan efter ett hållbart stadsbyggnade. Det är den sociala dimensionen inom hållbar stadsplanering som står i fokus, liksom medborgardeltagande under planeringsprocessen. Genom att definiera utsträckningen av den sociala dimensionen i Nanjings utveckling mot en hållbar stadsmiljö, samt förutsättningarna som finns för stadsmedborgare att delta i planeringsskedet av sina egna grannskap, når studien fram till förslag på hur man kan förbättra den nuvarande situationen i Nanjing. Studien har genomförts med hjälp av intervjuer och litteraturstudier, liksom observationer på plats i Nanjing och Linköping. UN-HABITAT:s definition av hållbar stadsutveckling har fungerat som verktyg i undersökningen.

Studien visade att Nanjing ligger i framkant bland många städer i utvecklingsländer, vad gäller hållbart tänkande, vilket även stadens översiktsplan antyder. Det finns dock brister i stadens struktur, och även i planeringsprocessen, som i nuläget försvårar en fullvärdig vardag för ett stort antal invånare. Slutsatsen pekar på vikten av att då och då ta ett steg tillbaka för att sätta stadsplaneringssituationen i perspektiv, och på så sätt utröna vilka tillgångar och behov som finns.

Nyckelord: Stadsplanering, hållbar stadsutveckling, hållbar stadsplanering, social hållbar utveckling, medborgardeltagande, Nanjing, Folkrepubliken Kina.

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PROLOGUE

2008 was the year when the People's Republic of China (PRC), was the country in focus. Most of the attention pointed at Beijing, the capital hosting the summer Olympic Games. We saw ambitious efforts to show the country at its best. The magnificent piece of architecture, the Olympic arena known as the *Bird's Nest*, designed by the architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron, constituted the centre of the happening. The country was tidied up and as the Olympic torch reached China's boarder, cheerful citizens lined the streets to greet the eagerly awaited symbol. The People's Republic of China had finally been recognized as a country worthy of hosting the Olympic Games.

But critical eyes viewed the PRC and people all over the world could read article after article in newspapers unveiling unworthy working and living conditions. Beijing was running short on water supplies to cover the demands for new Olympic villages and traffic had to be limited to a mere half in an attempt to fight the appalling air pollution. It was after reading an article in the Swedish newspaper *Dagens Nyheter*, on eviction of Beijing citizens from their houses, for the sake of new construction sites, for the Olympic village, that I decided to take a closer look at this issue. Writing a thesis on the subject was an opportunity for me to devote my time to personal interests in human rights, urban planning, sustainable development, the People's Republic of China and the Mandarin language.

I started out by writing a program on the social dimension of sustainable development within the frames of landscape planning and carried on with the project. The more I understood about sustainable development and urban planning, the more I knew I had to redefine the issues at hand. The social dimension of sustainable development has a complexity that spans over several aspects, such as the structural, cultural and social ones.

I, myself, grew up in a social democratic society, and have been influenced by

the Swedish social democratic model. Although I am trying to be objective when studying alternative realities and other cultures, I cannot deny the Swedish model as being my basis. My interest in the society - locally and world wide - has been nourished by friends and family involved in urban development, social sciences and architecture. The fundamental fact that *all humans are born free and equal in dignity and rights* as it is formulated in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) is a motto I live by. Furthermore, my way of viewing the world around me has most likely been influenced by living a few years in Laos, one of the world's poorest countries, during my early teens.

This study has been carried out as a Minor Field Study (MFS), a grant financed by the Swedish International Development Association, Sida. The MFS made it possible for me to visit Nanjing for doing the investigation and getting in touch with many helpful individuals.

In an attempt to learn more about interviewing techniques and sustainable development, I attended two courses. Firstly, the course *Interviewing for Research* at SLU before the field visit in the PRC, and what I learnt there turned out to be very useful in the interview situations. Returning from the field trip, I realized I needed further knowledge on sustainable development and therefore took the course Sustainable Development and Environmental Policies. This course opened my eyes for different ways of viewing sustainable development as well as the many perspectives and ways of defining the concept. This course also brought to me adequate literature.

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Last, but not least, thank you - citizens of Nanjing - for open-heartedly showing me your lives. This study is for you all.

OUTLINE

The thesis follows the traditional structure of an academic report; an introduction presents the background for the entire thesis idea, the background chapter provides the reader with definitions and relevant previous research results used, as well as a description of the sites. The following chapters deal with my survey and analysis hereby. The report is eventually concluded in a discussion and an epilogue.

My aim has been to, within the framework of an academic report, introduce the reader to Nanjing and its inhabitants with the help of a narrative. I believe the understanding of a different culture enhances when one is served depicted descriptions. Hence, everyday anecdotes have been pictured in a few short stories throughout the report.



Exercise equipment in a park.



Afternoon activities in one of Nanjing's parks.



Entrance green, by a narrow street in Mei Yuan.



Noon, and time for games.



Flourishing, yet people-empty, pathways along the Qinghai River.



Urban green. Plate trees, like these, line almost all avenues of Nanjing.



Mixed use, graded density, old-fashioned and modern.



Claiming one's urban space.



Elder residents of Mei Yuan.



A shared kitchen in Mei Yuan.



Concerned faces, during the 'gàtur' evaluation tour in Mei Yuan.



Information charts displaying future renovation plans.

Karaoke by the wall

I hear it from a distance. I have just entered one of the western openings of the old city wall, the remains of it. Most of the wall was torn down during the visit of Japanese soldiers in the 1930's.

The entrance is dark, a long tunnel of large bricks, covered with dense vines. The distant sound is suddenly interrupted by a violinist playing tunes in minor. I make a short stop to listen to it but my curiosity soon drives me further, to the initiating sound. As I proceed the sound becomes clearer, I now hear that it comes from high-pitched speakers of bad quality, making the sound squeak in my ears. I see a crowd of around twenty people, all middle-aged, lit up by the light of a television. Realizing I have reached a park karaoke hang-around, I squeeze myself into the crowd, to get closer to the centre. One by one, in the order of some kind of a queue system, they enter the stage defined by the circling audience, grabbing the microphone to sing their song. There is not much of joy to find here. These singers are not here to perform, or to suddenly find themselves discovered by a talent scout. No, they are here to practice their voices. It is just another kind of exercise.

INTRODUCTION

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Sustainable development has been a recurrent element along my path of studies at the landscape architect program. It has been generally discussed from time to time during the landscape architecture education. Specific courses at the University of Copenhagen, Denmark, as well as at SLU, have given me a deeper insight in the topic. During my internships at two different Swedish municipality offices I have dealt with questions concerning sustainable urban planning and the influence of citizens. It has become evident to me that very few landscape planning projects can be carried out without taking the issues of sustainable development into account.

The purpose for doing this study is to learn more about the concept of urban sustainable development in general. All information gathered during this study will be presented in one document. I chose this outline in order to make the information more accessible, something that I consider to be one of the corner stones in a soundly open society. This brings me to yet another objective, which is to spread the word; to inform fellow landscape architects and students about the sustainable urban development in the PRC.

The reason for focusing on the People's Republic of China is primarily my personal interest in the country. The PRC has growing problems regarding a rapidly growing population, reaching 1.3 billion in 2005 (ADB, 2006), a large on-going industrialization with exploitations and a multitude of construction sites as a consequence of it. The problems come with the country's sudden economic strength and the rapid urbanization, and it is necessary to find a way to combine the economical interests with a sustainable development.

The search for an external supervisor in the PRC brought me to Nanjing, a former capital of the PRC in the Jiangsu province, where I found a professor of urban planning at the Southeast University who was willing to help me.

Nanjing as a city was new to me, but turned out to be an excellent example to study, because of its rapid growth, its long history and for serving as the host of UN Habitat's 4th World Urban Forum in November 2008.

The focus is set on the urban development of Nanjing, but by comparing Chinese features to corresponding features in a city of Sweden, the Nanjing situation will be put in a perspective. My intention with doing this is enabling to achieve results useful in a Swedish context. For this purpose I decided to focus on Linköping, Sweden's fifth largest city, population-wise, where I spent six months at an internship at the municipality's planning bureau. I believe my insight into Linköping city is good after having dealt with various planning issues. My experiences from Linköping will be displayed in the concluding discussion of the research.

ISSUES AT HAND

What I am curious about, and therefore trying to find out with this study, is what urban planning looks like in Nanjing, the PRC, today, with focus on social aspects and citizen participation. The investigation, together with contemporary theories, aims to discuss what the conditions are for the social dimension on sustainable development in Nanjing, the PRC.

In the UN-HABITAT agenda (UNCHS, 1996) sustainability in human habitats is about managing physical, biological, social, economical, structural and cultural aspects.

The social issue has caught my interest and specifically the influence of citizens in the urban planning. I began to wonder to what extent the Chinese citizens can make their opinions heard in a centrally controlled country like the PRC (Starr, 2001).

There are theories, such as the UN-HABITAT definition on sustainable development, with concrete ideas of what a well-planned urban environment is about. My intention is to use these definitions in order to pinpoint existing and lacking

features in urban planning in the PRC and eventually come up with suggestions for improving the current situation. The focus is set on social aspects and citizens participation in the planning processes in the PRC.

These reflections lead me to following issues at hand:

- **To what extent is the social dimension of sustainable urban planning in focus in Nanjing?**
- **What are the conditions for urban citizens to participate in the planning process of their own neighborhood in Nanjing?**

DELINEATIONS

This thesis deals with questions on sustainable urban development which is a broad concept that involves a multitude of issues. Therefore, certain delineations had to be made.

First of all, the PRC covers a large area, which is divided into provinces and autonomous regions, where each one is the size of, or larger than any country of Europe (Starr, 2001). So in order to make the study results comparable to Linköping in Sweden, the focus lies on the political order of the Jiangsu province, with its provincial capital Nanjing. The population of Nanjing was 6.4 million in 2006 (ADB, 2006).

Secondly, UN-HABITAT has categorized sustainable development in terms of economical, physical, biological, cultural, social and organizational resources. These have been narrowed down and the first three mentioned above (economical, physical and biological resources) will not be covered.

This thesis deals with contemporary situations. I.e., the focus lies on current aspects. Where necessary, and in order to understand current situations, historical events as well as future plans, has been included.

DEFINITIONS

A report dealing with topics like urbanism and sustainability meets challenges because of the multitude of various definitions of the concepts. I find it important to state which definitions I have chosen to use in this report. *Urban, urbanization* and *sustainable development* are words that are frequently used when describing phenomena in developing countries, which is why it is necessary to define them here. In addition, social aspects and citizen participation, which are concepts in focus in this study, needs to be explained.

The following concepts are central for this study:

URBAN

In the report *More Urban Less Poor* (Tannerfeldt, Ljung, 2006), for the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Sida, co-authors Göran Tannerfeldt and Per Ljung defined the word *urban* as a "...city, town or other settlements where a majority of the population has an income from activity in the urban economy, which means activities other than agriculture, forestry, hunting and fishing..." (Tannerfeldt, Ljung, 2006-180). Urban, as opposed to rural, planning is the investigated issue in this report.

URBANIZATION

Mark Roseland (2005-137) refers to urbanization as "the creation of urban landscapes in formerly rural areas". This definition does not explicitly involve people. However, according to Brian Roberts and Trevor Kanaley, at ADB (ADB, 2006), urbanization is the "spatial concentration of people and economic activity". Urbanization is predominantly a phenomenon in developing countries. Only in Asia, some 44 million people are added to the urban population every year (ADB, 2006). It should be kept in mind when studying features of a developing country that urbanization involves a massive relocation of people and that this has impacts on the city development and the planning hereby.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

There are many interpretations of the concept *sustainable development* and the vari-

ous definitions are useful for the discourse. One of the first definitions was that: "Sustainable development is the development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (WECD, 1987). A report about sustainable development could not be written without acknowledging this definition, stated by the World Commission on Environment and Development in Oslo 1987. Since then, the definition has been questioned in terms of, for example, what are really the needs of the present? And what do we know about the future? How much can we plan for? What creatures will inhabit the world in, say, two thousand years? To what extent can we know something about them? We can only assume, or guess. The discourse about sustainable development becomes general and wide. However, when we reach the level of sustainable *urban* development, it is somewhat easier to point out concrete aims, and measures to achieve this. According to UN-HABITAT, it is important to recognize the needs and assets of several aspects that are involved in the development of urban societies, in terms of sustainability (UNCHS, 1996). Per G Berg (2009) interprets the UN-HABITAT definition of sustainable development as categorized into physical, economical, aesthetical, social, structural, cultural and biological aspects. This report takes benchmark in UN-HABITAT's definition of sustainable development as interpreted by Per G Berg (Ibid).

SOCIAL ASPECTS OF SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT

This report deals with social, cultural and organizational aspects on sustainable development. The common feature of these three aspects is that they involve resources that can be organized so as for the citizens to live worthy and rich lives. In many descriptions, the definitions of social, cultural and structural aspects tend to blend into each other. In the best of cases, a flourishing culture and a vivid street life bring citizens to a stronger sense of belonging and well-being. The structural aspect is about the overall city structure, e.g. the artery of culture and people, and contributes therefore to the social aspects on sustainable urban development.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

In this report, the term *citizen participation* is about actively involving residents, which will be affected by a change in their own neighborhood or home district,

into the planning process. Urban planners can, for example, enable citizens to follow the process through different ways of information, create ways for communication and open the planning process up for discussions and consultations with the residents. The citizens have an influencing role in the process. Theories on citizen participation will be further dealt with in the background chapter.

BACKGROUND

RELEVANT RESEARCH RESULTS ON SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT

In order to understand the investigation, it is necessary to get a picture of certain previous research results that play a part in the way of interpreting the current situation in Nanjing city. This chapter will deal with contemporary research regarding sustainable urban development. A short introduction of the scholars behind the topical theories initiates the section.

Mark Roseland is the director of the Centre for Sustainable Community Development at Simon Fraser University in British Columbia, Canada (Roseland, 2005), and a professor at the department of geography at the same university (Simon Fraser University, 2009).

Per G. Berg is a professor of Sustainable Community Development in Urban and Rural areas at the department of urban planning at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, SLU, (SLU, 2009).

*Kevin Twhaite*s is the director of Learning and Teaching at the University of Sheffield, where he researches and teaches landscape architecture and urban design (Twhaite, 2007).

Below follows the contemporary topics of discussions on social aspects on sustainable urban planning with focus on social, structural and cultural resources. The research results on sustainable development mirrors a perspective as seen in the Western World.

SOCIAL RESOURCES

A city with positive social resources is a city with a well-balanced composition of social aspects; a city where citizens can maintain mental and physical health, provide themselves with shelter, have opportunities for meaningful and gainful employments and improve their understanding and knowledge about the world around them (Roseland, 2005). They should be able to find their identity through heritage, art and culture, enjoy a sense of belonging and find comfort in the support and security of a community free from discrimination (ibid). A good society also involves the participation of citizens in civic affairs (ibid). In order to lift the voices of the people it is necessary for them to form democratic organizations (Tannerfeldt & Ljung, 2006) and preferably by the help of a local community center.

Per G. Berg (2009) discusses the different views on what a socially sustainable community can be. For some, the individual issues in a community are of the highest importance; communities where the personal choice matters the most. As opposed to the individualistic view, other researchers and practitioners suggest that citizens need to be included in a larger social network. Our human needs are to interrelate with family members, neighbors, friends and colleagues, and a socially sustainable community is therefore where these relations are facilitated through for example community societies (Ibid). Berg (Ibid) continues by stating that both views are important issues for an urban planner. Just like the different scales of green spaces (see below; *The Flourishing of City Life*), a society should provide citizens with different scales of individuality. Citizens need their privacy as well as the sense of being a part of a larger context. We need parks for just a few people, as well as larger squares with space enough to carry many people. The suggestion is that urban planning provides citizens with a good combination of private and public spaces, through helping local communities to develop their spaces into all gradients, from private, via half-private and half-public spaces, to public spaces (Ibid).

STRUCTURAL RESOURCES

The structural aspect of sustainable urban development deals with the overall structure of the city that will help citizens live sustainable everyday lives. Per G Berg (2009) prefers to define this aspect as “organizational”. However, due to the delineations of this report, the focus is rather set on concrete structural aspects, and not explicitly administrative organisational issues.

Easy access to services like schools, working places, recreation, health care, is necessary because it makes everyday life practical and simple (Berg, In press). The improvement of transportation facilities, telecommunication and local services will enhance the feeling of living in a well-planned society (Ibid). Theoretically, if jobs, housing, shops, and recreational facilities are closely located, citizens will be less dependent of their cars, thus leading to a more vivid street life and livable neighborhoods (Wheeler, 2004). Thwaites (2007, Berg, 2009) notices a shift in the planning trends, where the former ‘modern city’ planning that focused on the suburban centers has been replaced by the planning for the ‘compact sustainable city’, which concept is best described by Thwaites’ list (2007-15, 16):

A mixed-use city

The mixed-use city cannot really be planned. The mixed-used city develops itself if given the opportunity and ability. The citizens themselves are the ones that mix the use of the outdoor spaces. To give the opportunities for various usages, planners can focus on the visibility of spaces, the scales and the location of them.

Graded density

The level of density should vary from place to place. Not only in terms of housing but other urban activities as well. E.g. areas in central parts of the city should have a higher density than places in the city outskirts.

Compact communities

Compact communities have to do with density issues, but it also deals with the content of the density. Communities should provide most of the social facilities

within a walking distance; such as schools, hospitals, working places, grocery stores etc.

Representation and participation

Residents and users of a community should be given a voice in the future of their urban environment. Information should be easily communicated and there should be tools for the residents to participate.

Local identity

The housing design in itself might not help citizens to build a community. However, by involving citizens in the design process and development of the neighborhood, it is more likely to achieve a feeling of identity and belonging, through the reuse of existing buildings and structures.

The flourishing of city life

Nature design in a city is important. It is necessary to provide green spaces that are carefully located, shaped, connected in the city life. A poorly planned green structure can lead to unwelcome barriers, anti-social behaviors etc. (Thwaites, 2007) The green structure of the city is also discussed by Berg (2009) where he suggests that the urban environment should offer four different *levels* of green types (Berg, Florgård, 2005). Urban citizens need access to other kinds of green than the everyday experienced one (Ibid). The idea of the four levels of green is the following; the first level is just outside our houses, the entrance greenery, which we often take for granted as we enter a house or look at it from inside. The second level is the green in the block, the little pocket park we might pass by on our way to work, the grocery store or school. It is commonly a private or semi-private space. Just like the first green scale, we expect it to be there. The third level is usually larger in size, characterized by city parks, green corridors or even small-scaled forests. The fourth level is where green space is conceived as wilderness, the large green areas. Not only are they important for us human beings, but also for eco-systems, especially in connection with the three other green scales. (Ibid).

Buildings should form closed blocks

Buildings of three to five floors should be located around an open space, positioned in a way that makes the best use of sunlight, provides wind shelter, and maintains a sound humidity and comfort. They should not interrupt the overall neighborhood structure. This way, the highest volume of accommodation in the lowest number of floors can be achieved.

Buildings that line the street

Windows facing the street create an intimacy and improves the feeling of comfort and security - self-surveillance. Entrances should open directly on to the street and car-parking should take place along the road.

Community centers must be served by main streets

Being able to reach the community centre by motorized vehicles is necessary because it will increase the number of visitors. A principle street must be close to the community centre, though this suggests well thought out traffic-planning.

Traffic tamed but not forbidden

Places where people meet should provide accessibility for motorized traffic as well as pedestrians, though conviviality between the two types should characterize the places. Some times of day spaces like these should provide traffic-free hours.

Networks of shared streets

The aim is to provide cities with good urban design and easily accessible information in order to minimize unnecessary travel. But where traffic of different types is inevitable, streets should be shared among all types of traffic, as far as possible, except for situations where traffic security issues implies separate fields. The traffic situation should be designed to maintain a good flow, with a good balance between vulnerable and strong road users.

A piecemeal, fine-grained, bottom-up process

A city is an ever-developing organism. One cannot plan the development of a city,

but good city planning can help the city grow, change and evolve properly, through the protection of cultural and natural resources, for example, or creating spaces for communities to evolve.

(Thwaites, 2007)

By taking hold of the different aspects listed above when planning for the structurally sustainable urban area, most of the structural resources can be covered. However, as Berg (2009) states, the difficulty lies in the various situations one can come across as a planner, as cities across the world may vary tremendously in size, structure and population.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

The aspects of cultural resources are multiple. It involves issues like local history, traditions and ceremonies, art and music. What is it that makes these so important for the community? Why is culture an important social factor in the sustainable urban planning?

An answer to this question is to be found in *Timeless Cityland* (Berg, 2009). Here, Berg (2009-Chapter 6) suggests that a “site’s past will contribute to our feeling of context in time“. We learn about the history of our home environment and it gives us a stronger feeling of continuity and participation (Berg, 2009). Ceremonies and traditions that have been performed, generation after another, adds to the place’s atmosphere, and tells the story of earlier inhabitants (Ibid). Archaeological findings and everyday life stories being told about the early days adds even more information to the local history (Ibid). It increases the understanding of the site, and reminds the residents that they are a part of a long chain of inhabitants, thus increasing the sense of context (Ibid). The home neighborhood becomes more than just a place to live, it “becomes a place where you feel rooted, a place you might even care deeply about and take an interest in its future” (Berg, 2009-Chapter 6). The fact that the place has been inhabited for a long time, means that it has been sustainable for just as long (Berg, 2009). This helps citizens realize that a

sustainable community is a good objective, a direction to aim for (Ibid). As Berg (2009-Chapter 6) puts it: “A community spirit can be developed and maintained by the making of common visions for the local area. Participation in common building, cleaning, restoration projects and mobilization to threats to the community also tend to unify the local inhabitants.” Thus, the local history can become a common interest because all residents are affected by it in one way or another and the fight for it will increase the sense of community.

Another aspect of cultural resources is the very location of the area (Berg, 2009). Traditionally, urban societies were established where there was access to water and transportation links (Ibid). Nowadays, resources like these can be artificially obtained and the location of a city is not bound to natural resources in the same way, the development of the cities have evolved around themselves (Ibid). This implies that the inhabitants’ connection with nature and culture is not obvious. A clearer connection between the inhabitants and the surrounding nature and culture, through information and, in some cases, even artificial renovations of the nature and culture, would increase the understanding of context in time, according to Nils Ahlberg at SLU (Berg, 2009).

PARTICIPATION

The common feature for all types of social aspects on sustainable urban planning mentioned above is the participation and citizen involvement. Basically, what make the city are its inhabitants, the people. Therefore, it is essential that city planning evolves side by side with the citizens. Public participation does not necessarily mean that all participants will reach a consensus, but people will most probably find it easier to live with the decisions if they are able to take part in the discussion leading there (Roseland, 2005).

Why is it important to involve residents in the planning process? As Ombretta Romice suggests in the article “The Communities in Action Handbook” in the book *Urban sustainability through environmental design* (Thwaites, 2007), the main aim

with the participation issue is to achieve satisfaction among the residents. Though planners might have good intentions with their proposals, the plans may come out wrongly if they have not been well prepared; preparations that should include planned procedures for how to involve the residents in the process. People in the community may feel left aside and disregarded if they never get the chance to express their views. Romice (Thwaites, 2007) lists four aspects that give weight to the reasons for including participation in the planning process:

- "There is no best solution to a design problem,
- Expert decisions are not necessarily better than 'lay decisions',
- Design and planning tasks can be made transparent,
- The process is continuous and ever changing." (Thwaites, 2007-124)

The participative planning process can also help create a stronger sense of community among the residents, through the act of communicating among themselves.

Romice (Thwaites, 2007) suggests the “multi-method strategy”, MMS, as a tool for encouraging the residents to participate. The MMS is used for site analyses and differs from other methods in that it is a combination of several tools for analysis, where the participation of stakeholders and residents is a great part; i.e. making mental/behavioral maps, awareness walks, photographic surveys etc. The *Charrette* is one way to do it, a method where planners and residents join together for several days, making tours in the area, producing design proposals continuously to get direct criticism (Thwaites, 2007). Problems which normally would have appeared later in the process might be solved instantly and delays can be avoided. The advantages of the *Charrette* is, however, that the participants are deeper involved in the project, not just as consultants for a single meeting. Roseland (2005) suggests a six step group planning process for the community sustainability:

- “Develop a widely shared vision of the type of community the group would like to work towards.
- Develop plans on how to achieve this vision.
- Get city hall onside”, work with – not against – the local government.
- Develop the resources necessary to implement the plans.
- Prepare a strategy for communicating ideas and activities to the community

and

- Evaluate your efforts regularly” (Roseland, 2005:196)

Using this strategy for involving citizens into the process could lead to a greater understanding from the citizens’ perspective; the participants will have time to get familiarized with the plans and even propose alternative solutions if they dislike the plans.

SITE SITUATIONS

This part provides a brief description of the city and the city district that are the focus of the research; Nanjing and Mei Yuan.



Map of the PRC, and the location of Nanjing city.

NANJING CITY

Nanjing is the capital of the Jiangsu province, in the mid-eastern part of the PRC. It takes two hours to travel the approximately 279 km from the PRC’s greatest metropolis Shanghai, by train. Figures from 2006 show that the Nanjing population was 6,4 million at the time, out of which some 91% are urban population (ADB, 2006). By 2050, the urban population is assumed to reach 10 million (Ibid).

Nanjing holds a few of the PRC's most famous universities which attract students from all over the world.

Nanjing is beautifully located on the banks of Yangtze River delta, the land is rather flat except where Purple Mountain and several smaller temple hills rise up. Two lakes are to be found within the city area, Xuanwu and Mochou lakes, as well as the tributary river of Yangtze; Qinhuai River. A look at the map reveals a square net of city streets outside the city wall. Inside, in the old town, streets are narrower and less straight. In an attempt to cool the city down during heating summer days, shading trees have been planted along almost all avenues.

Nanjing city's history dates back to 495 BC and the city has served as capital during 10 dynasties (ADB, 2006). The major structural changes of Nanjing occurred during the times when the city served as capital. In the 13th century, during the Ming dynasty, the city wall was built to protect from external threats and was a magnificent construction project for its time. The wall was partly destroyed during the Japanese attack in the 1930's, a dark episode in the Nanjing history which is also called The Rape of Nanjing. Some 300 000 Nanjing residents were killed, tortured and raped, imprisoned inside the city wall. As of today, the relationship between Nanjing and Japan is still infected (Starr, 2001).

One of Nanjing's periods as a capital was during the republican era from 1912 to 1949 (Starr, 2001). The republican era gave rise to a new type of buildings which is now listed as a cultural heritage (Dong, 2008).

The political leadership in Nanjing is held by The People's Government of Nanjing city, under the authority of the Communist Party. A city mayor - currently Mr. Jiang Hong Kun - , appointed by the government is in charge of the executive parts of the government. (ADB, 2006) The past ten years, since 1998-99, Nanjing has been growing rapidly due to a governmental change in the city policy, a long term policy that controls the urban development, i.e. the scale of big cities (Dong, 2008). Most of the higher building within the city wall was built after 1998 (Ibid).

The master plan of Nanjing displays the goals of development which are to “construct a modern cultural city...//...with an economic vitality...//...and comfortable living environments...//...and serve as an influential historic city for the world” (NAUPD, 2008). Further - and rather dream-like - goals are to have a prosperous economic development, an outstanding nature, beautiful living environments and a harmonious society. The urban planning institute of Nanjing uses three categorization levels when dealing with different kinds of planning; the administrative area, the metropolitan area, and the main city area (Ibid).

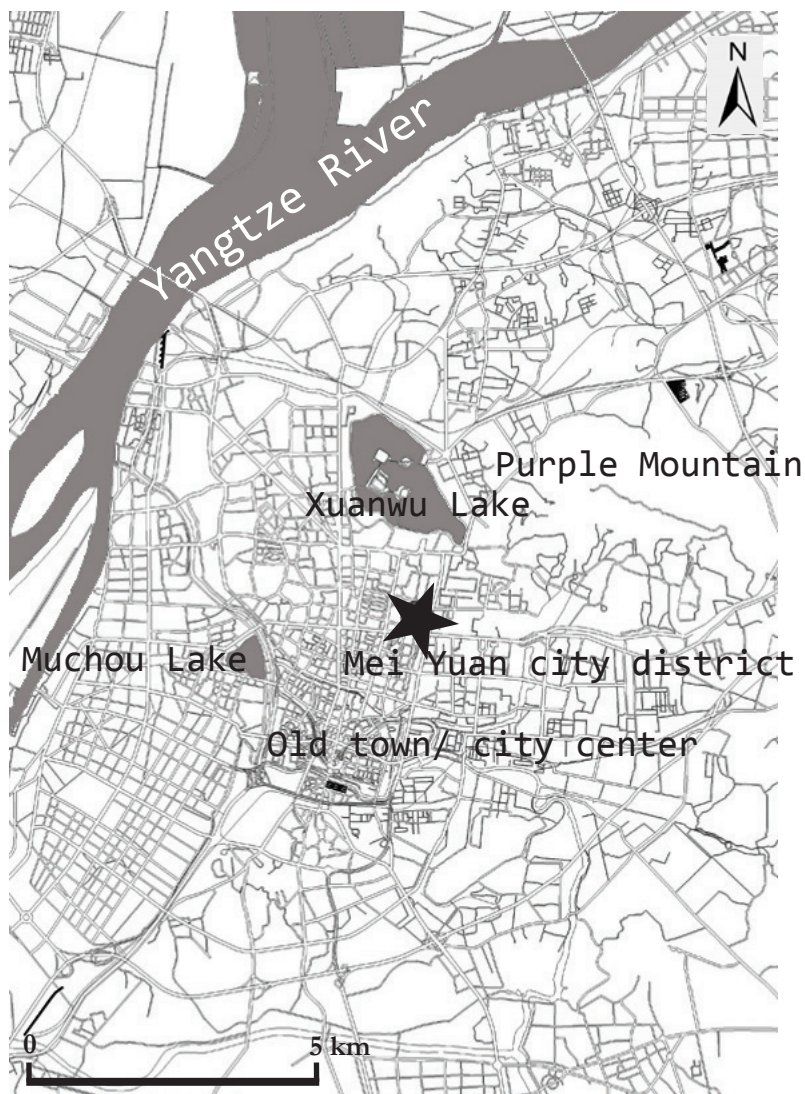
Nanjing is now sprawling in all directions, due to new construction sites for a university town in the east and new residential areas along the Yangtze River (Dong, 2008). Urban planners in general want to keep a high population density within the city wall, an area of 42 sq. km. and try to put a stop to the current sprawling situation (Ibid).

Nanjing’s ancient history has resulted in numerous archaeological sites. The findings are so massive that “we cannot build enough museums to show them all”, according to professor Dong Wei. The ancient history has become one of Nanjing’s utmost characteristics. Citizens of Nanjing take pride in their long history which has resulted in an understanding for the conservation of traditional buildings and areas (Dong, 2008).

THE MEI YUAN CITY DISTRICT

District Mei Yuan was built during the republican era. It covers an area of 38 hectares and provides housing for 8654 residents (Urban Circle, 2009). The population spans over all classes of society, which is apparent when seeing the living standards of different blocks within the district. Residents with a higher income live in renovated houses along the main street, but just behind them, on the inner streets, live the poor, sharing outdoor kitchens between large families. Mei Yuan obviously holds a brief spectrum of people.

A community service centre with local caretakers, as well as an employment office,



Map of Nanjing City

is centrally situated along the main street. There is a high school in the neighborhood. Mei Yuan has now been declared a cultural heritage to protect its historical importance. In practice, this means that all plans for reconstruction takes longer time than expected. All private renovations need to be applied for, even for replacing a window. These procedures can be expensive and might leave the less wealthy

residents in a tough situation.

Half a kilometer away from Mei Yuan there is a similar neighborhood, which was recently renovated and successfully turned into a shopping and bar area, under the name “1912”, which was also the year when the Republic of China was established. Plans on turning Mei Yuan into a commercial area have come up (Dong, 2008), and would imply a mass relocation of current residents. The normal procedure when relocating people this way due to renovations or reconstructions is that they will be compensated with a place to live, normally outside the city centre, in newly built houses with higher rents (Ibid).

Morning exercise

It is Saturday and I am up early. The streets haven't been filled up with cars and busses and bicycles and pedestrians yet. Just a few elders, walking their dogs. Some of them carry a thermos. The air is reasonably fresh from pollution, and the sun has not yet heated the ground up. I stop by a breakfast stand to by myself a steam boiled dumpling and a little bag of warm soy milk. I am close to my goal now - the Xuan Wu gate, opening itself for the lake. People are crowding up and already outside the gates I spot a group of ladies practicing a sun fan dance. They look focused. I continue my walk just to reach another group, this time both ladies and gentlemen, I hear music, and they are dancing two-and-two. On the concrete path along the lake I see a man doing his morning exercise. He is clapping his hands. He doesn't seem to be disturbed by the woman a few meters behind him, the woman who is practicing her vocal chords, singing a song. There is no doubt anything will do here. As I enjoy my breakfast and rest my legs by the side of the lake I watch the sun rise and carps splashing around. I wonder what will happen to this tradition in the future. I see no young people around me. Will my generation rely on the gyms? Will they miss out on this beautiful way to start the day? No equipment is necessary. Bring your body, a thermos of tea and your exercise is fixed.

METHOD

The report is based on a case study of Nanjing and the results do not speak for the situation in other cities of the PRC (Johansson, 2005). The two main methods through which I gathered the information for this study are interviews and literature studies. In addition, I made field observations, walking the areas that especially attracted my interest, in terms of my study, attempting the *gâtur* method (English translation: walk-through evaluation), chatting with people in the streets, photographing and in some cases trusting my sketching skills, when the other alternatives were insufficient.

The geographical selection that is central for this study is, firstly, the People's Republic of China. The PRC was chosen because it is a country that is currently experiencing a rapid development and attracts attention from the rest of the world. Nanjing city serves as a good example on urban planning within the PRC and was also the host of World Urban Forum in 2008. I assumed this would create an information openness, which would help me obtain the information needed. Finally, the city district, Mei Yuan, was chosen with the help of Professor Dong Wei's degree students, who had been studying this area earlier and, therefore, knew where to search for information. Mei Yuan was also interesting for being a culturally protected area, with residents from a wide range of income classes.

PRIMARY METHODS

THE INTERVIEWS

Interviewing was the natural choice of method for this qualitative study. I wanted to obtain the information that was not written in books; the qualitative information that was based on personal experiences, as opposed to theoretical facts. I wrote an interview guide based on the issues at hand, formulated so as for the respondents to be able to speak freely on the topic; a formal unstructured interview technique (Devereux, Hoddinott, 1992).

I made three sets of interviews. The first set took place at two municipality offices in Sweden, where I decided with two landscape architects and two urban planners to meet them for three separate interviews, one of which included the two urban planners. The aim of the first set of interviews was to get background information on Swedish planning procedures before the field visit in Nanjing. Three of these respondents had been working at the municipalities for 8 years or more. One of the urban planners had been working at the municipality for a year at that time. The second set of interviews took place during my field visit in Nanjing. The purpose of this set was to obtain information on the Nanjing planning procedures. With the help of Professor Dong Wei, I was recommended to interview a Professor of Landscape Architecture, Mr. Cheng Yu Ning, and the chief planner of the Nanjing Academy of Urban Planning & Designing Co, Ltd, Mrs. Tong Ben Qing. When my time in Nanjing was running out and I still had a few unanswered questions, I turned to Mr. Dong Wei, who is a Professor of Urban Planning, to straighten out the question marks.

The third set of interviews was the interviews I made with people I randomly met in the streets of the Mei Yuan district, all residents of the area. I talked to about 10 persons, men and women, aged from 24-81 years. The *gatur* evaluation tour described below was part of this set.

Interviewing turned out to be a successful method to the point where the translating situation interrupted the conversation, making follow-up questions complicated. In one case I had been told that my respondent spoke English well, a fact that turned out to be not-so-true. This led to a situation where my respondent avoided answering the questions.

When interviewing the professors and the chief planner, I was allowed to use a tape recorder, after asking for permission. However, in the street interview situations, people consequently tended to oppose recorded interviews, which unfortunately had the effect that many of these interviews remained un-recorded.

When making spontaneous interviews with people on the street, I used the same technique, the formal semi-structured interviews. In this case, however, my ques-

tions were more direct (what age.., how long.., how many.., etc), and together with the translation situation, again, the results were quite poor.

The use of a translator, which was due to my insufficient skills in the Mandarin language, not only interrupted the conversation, but might also have caused an information loss. This is a difficult obstacle which I could only keep in mind during the interviews.

I realized after some time that the interview situation made the respondents answer my questions formally and politically correct. This became clear to me after some off-the-record and informal conversations where people told me their actual opinions about Chinese governance and bureaucracy. I see no reason to exclude these opinions from the report. Instead, I let the respondents be anonymous, when they so wished.

THE LITERATURE STUDIES

Trying to find literature on the Chinese planning system and sustainable development turned out to be a difficult project. The Chinese government maintains control over every written word, and even Internet was a disappointment, until I was told that the internet users in the PRC can download a program that will redirect information in order to bypass the internet control. Another problem is that when one has managed to get passed the controls, statistic figures are often limited to cover upper income classes, where registrations are more thoroughly investigated. Figures regarding lower income classes are poor, if not non-existing.

The difficulty of finding literature in the PRC implied further search for Chinese literature after returning to Sweden. On the other hand, some of the interviewees supplied folders and simple literature that came in handy for the investigation. Literature on the Swedish planning system, and also on sustainable development, was found through searches at libraries in Sweden, as well as online. The key words I searched for - online, as well as at libraries- were: 'Sustainable', 'development', 'urban', 'the PRC/China' and 'planning' in various constellations. This directed me to organizations like UN-HABITAT and Asian Development Bank, where I found

a lot of useful information. Some of the literature studied was recommended to me, by my supervisor and other persons that I talked to.

SECONDARY METHODS

THE 'GÅTUR' EVALUATION TOUR

As the results of my interviews with residents in the streets turned out to provide insufficient information, a need for alternatives grew. I got the advice to try the *gåtur method*, a method developed by the Dane Ivor Ambrose (Ambrose, 1990), and agreed this might be interesting to try out. Ambrose (1990) describes the method as a way to collect indicators at a place. The results of a *gåtur* with the participation of residents and administrative staff are different from those of experts. The results differ regarding the level of details in the evaluation.

The idea is to make a tour in an area which is planned to undergo changes, make around ten stops and ask the participants to write down positive and negative impressions of the place. The ten places are chosen in advance to cover places like entrances, a square, a playground, a yard, an exit, a parking lot or a backyard. Through consequently organizing the evaluation tour, the idea is to achieve a coming change in the area where all participants - residents and experts - feel involved and satisfied with the outcome. The goals are to a) improve the knowledge of the area, b) test the expectations on the planned environment and c) acquire new impressions through experiences at the tour (Ambrose, 1990).

Together with my translator, I paid a visit at the Community Service Centre of the Mei Yuan district. The choice of doing the *gåtur* evaluation in this area was decided after considering what background facts could be found; there was access to digitalized charts and population data. Knowing that Mei Yuan is a cultural heritage with a large population and ongoing plans for renovation, it was interesting to hear the opinions of the residents here; what was their perception of the neighborhood?

The day we came to Mei Yuan to meet the staff at the community service cen-

ter, we met two women who were very glad to receive us there, asking questions about my project out of curiosity. We requested them to gather a group of people, around 8-10 persons, preferably from all social classes present in the area in order to get a nuanced picture from respondents with various backgrounds.

A week later we met again. There were 8 persons in total, including the two women from the Community Service Centre, aged 25 and 40. The other participants were two girls, aged 8; a man, aged 45; two male students, aged 21 and 25, and a woman aged 60.

Despite the fact that I had tried to push them to gather residents from different social classes, the group now consisted of people exclusively from the middle social class.

I provided them with papers and pens and we made our way through the area, following the tour I had made up in advance (see appendix for map). I had planned to make 12 stops along the way, but was interrupted after the third by a ringing cell phone belonging to one of the women from the community centre. After a while, she hung up and turned to the others to say that we had to cancel the tour.

Suddenly, the staff of the Community Service Centre had changed their mind, and told me I could proceed only if I showed them the legal documents allowing me to carry out my “research”, which I did not have. We were told that we had to pass several instances in order to get the research permit. One of the reasons for the extra awareness was claimed to be the upcoming Olympic Games in Beijing, one month away. They figured my “research” might be an attempt to hurt the reputation of the PRC. All of a sudden the group was divided in half, and instead my “research” became the focus of everyone’s attention. As I could not follow the Chinese conversation, I observed the argumentation between my translator and the lady from the service department.

It all ended so, that the participants of the group handed back their pens and papers, and left the meeting. Stunned by the outcome of our tour, we suddenly found

ourselves alone, my translator, one student from the area and I. The results of our efforts were not what we had expected. Instead, it was a lesson in the difficulty of getting close to real thoughts and opinions.

THE OBSERVATIONS

I spent plenty of time strolling the streets of Nanjing, sometimes accompanied by a translator, to be able to make interviews with people I randomly met in the street, most of them in the poorer blocks, since that was where people often stayed outdoors. The fancier residential areas were emptier, but I managed to catch up with and speak to some of these residents as well. My strolls resulted in a better understanding of the city, I could feel the atmosphere and the vibrant rhythm. I listened to the sounds that filled the air. I sensed the smells from street kitchens, the traffic, the garbage, the showers and the drip drying laundry. I passed through narrow streets and open crossroads. These experiences could not all be documented, but my sketching utensils were used in some cases, and the camera, in other.

In the book shop

I am fighting the humid heat as I find my way on crowded pavements. The sun is bright, the traffic dense. The map I have in my hands is in Chinese and my mission for the day is to find the foreigners' book store to buy an English version of the same map. A slight misunderstanding leads me to another – Chinese – bookstore, and in the delight of reaching an air-conditioned shop, I decide to make a rest there for a little while. I look around and I see book shelves covering all walls. Books.

Books.

So many books.

On this floor and three more. A little tour around the book store makes me realize, I have come to an indoor park. This is yet another place to hang out. People of all ages are here. Standing up, sitting down on the floor, in the stairs. Everybody is reading. Apparently, there is nothing wrong with reading the un-bought books. There are more people here than in the public library because this is where they have the popular literature. I end up spending an hour in the book store, looking at pictures in books of art. Some people obviously stay longer than that. And I enjoy it.

SURVEY

The investigation of the urban planning in Nanjing focuses on Mei Yuan district. This is where most of the observations took place and the interviewed citizens all live in Mei Yuan. Where Mei Yuan is not particularly mentioned, the descriptions refer to Nanjing in general. Following chapters describe what was found about the urban planning of Nanjing. Furthermore, information that was found through my own observations is not referenced, as opposed to interview and literature material.

STRUCTURAL RESOURCES

MIXED USAGE AND GRADED DENSITY

Nanjing is in many terms a mixed-use city. It might come with the Chinese culture, but anywhere you go, you will see the cheap restaurant on the sidewalk just next to an expensive shopping plaza or a group of elders playing chess on the side walk of the car repair street. Due to the grand and dense population it is hard to find a people-empty spot in the urban areas. The flourishing and ambivalent street life is a characteristic of any Chinese city and Nanjing is not an exception. People from all social classes meet in the street; men and women, children and elders.

The structure of buildings in Nanjing has different characteristics. The old town in the very center of Nanjing is small scaled, with more narrow streets and buildings that do not raise more than around 4 floors. The case is different in newer parts of the inner city, as well as outside the city wall. Here, buildings tend to take skyscraper-like proportions and are combined with large boulevards.

Nanjing's density development is currently under debate. The city's natural growth has led to a sprawling effect, where the amount of suburban - mainly residential - areas are increasing (Dong, 2008). Mr Dong Wei and his fellow urban planners are striving against this development. They are aiming for an opposite direction, a

mixed-use city, in which residential areas blend with business and shopping areas.

TRAFFIC

The traffic situation in Nanjing is somewhat chaotic. It has a rhythm which is not comparable to traffic in Scandinavia, a hierarchy where cars and buses are of the highest rank and humans are at the bottom. But it is just a matter of knowing the cultural codes, because there are traffic regulations which are faithfully complied.

Nanjing's structure of roads allows people to reach any place of the city transported by car. However, Nanjing planners have acknowledged this problem and are currently working on preventing a city decay that is due to a transport policy based on the use of private automobiles (ADB, 2006). A few of the main arteries cross the city center, connect with suburban settlements and with the circumferential roads (ADB, 2006). In the daytime, cars are allowed practically everywhere. At night time, some streets are closed for traffic, to make way for night markets (ADB, 2006). Most of the city traffic lanes are combined with bicycle lanes safely separated with the help of fences.

The metro system is partly under construction. The 17 km south-north bound metro link was opened in 2005 and will be complemented with an east-west bound line in 2010 (ADB, 2006). The bus system can transport citizens to most areas in Nanjing and is well used, despite a large amount of uncomfortable and worn-out vehicles.

SENSE OF BELONGING

Nanjing's city districts are made up of smaller parts with different characteristics, and it seems as if the communication between the different parts is low. Even the districts in themselves are divided into smaller distinctive parts. Mei Yuan is an example of this. The *gåtur* evaluation tour unveiled the fact that some of the residents had never been to the streets we passed, even though it is a neighboring area. Apparently, the sense of belonging is restricted to one's closest neighborhood, and not to Nanjing as a whole. The Community Service Center of Mei Yuan is centrally located in a wealthier block (Urban circle, 2009), which in this case means that the

residents in this part of Mei Yuan have a closer connection to the Community Service Center. This was also manifested in the preparations of the *gatur* evaluation tour, when the Community Service Center staff gathered participants. Exclusively residents from the wealthier area had been invited to join the tour.

THE FLOURISHING CITY LIFE

In the 1920's, trees were planted along the main streets of Nanjing. The intention was to create shady places, and to cool the city down. The trees have been kept healthy through trimming and replanting new ones. Professor Dong Wei mentioned the plane trees as being Nanjing's special characteristic. Several people told me they enjoy the trees. According to the master plan of Nanjing (Tong, 2008), no one should have more than 10-15 minutes to the closest green space. Today, many residents of Nanjing spend their spare time in the green university parks which are evenly distributed over the city. These are the most useful green spaces in the city. The Purple Mountain area offers wilderness-like green areas (ADB, 2006). Metropolitan Nanjing has been successfully planned as an entity where green areas between new nodes have been protected (ADB, 2006). It is very common to create green environments just outside residential entrances, and common pocket parks that have been adorned on the initiative of the residents, are not an unusual sight. It is obvious that the citizens of Nanjing care about their outdoor surroundings.

Channels of the Qinhuai River have been renovated during the last few years (Dong, 2008). There are now prepared walking areas along the river, as well as places to rest in the shade of trees. However, it is rare to see people spending time here. This is because of the highly polluted water with a bad odor, mostly in the summer time, according to both Mr Dong Wei and several residents. The fresher Mochou and Xuanwu lakes are, however, visited on all hours of the day, for the cooling effect of the water, and the shading parks along the shorelines.

Professor in landscape architecture, Mr. Cheng Yu Ning, at the Southeast University, Nanjing, shared his experiences in planning, or rather designing recreational areas. He stressed the importance of combining aspects, like for example environmental

issues and studies in human behavior. He illustrated his way of thinking, by asking me to imagine how you add layers of different elements on top of each other, and he emphasized the importance of incorporating various aspects into the role of urban planning.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

A report on sustainable development in Asian cities, provided by Asian Development Bank, lifts Nanjing as one of the good examples of sustainable urban planning in Asia (ADB, 2006). The reasons for this are for example that Nanjing planners have paid extra attention to the city's long history and its cultural heritage (Ibid). Mr. Dong Wei says that *"the urban conservation is a very heavy task for the city"*, and refers to the difficulty of combining economical interests with social welfare and cultural resources. Despite the difficulties and the management of a rapid expansion, the city of Nanjing has been noted for its successful program of redevelopment of its inner city areas (ADB, 2006). Most of the city wall has been preserved and several memorable monuments have remained intact as a result of 13 demarcated "protected zones" (Ibid). This is also understood in the master plan of Nanjing, which lists the three overall goals in the city development; to achieve a city with a) economic vitality, b) cultural features and c) comfortable inhabitant environment (NAUPD, 2008).

Professor Cheng Yu Ning discussed the importance of taking the culture and customs whenever dealing with populated areas, into consideration. Chief planner Tong Ben Qing, showed me the Nanjing master plan, where much focus is put on conserving the culture and history of Nanjing, and linking historically and culturally interesting sites together in a natural way. This is confirmed also by Mr. Dong Wei, who says that the aim of urban planning is to link separated cultural pieces together into a cultural network. He opposes the governmental idea that residents should be moved out from the old town in order to conserve the history. During the past five years, this is what actually happened, the eviction of poor people

to newly built areas in the outskirts of Nanjing, allowing middle and upper class people who can afford the renovated houses to relocate in the old town (Dong, 2008). According to Mr. Dong, this is unfair. He says: *“To conserve the history is not an excuse to move people out from the old town”*. It leads to a large change in social structure. Urban planners, according to Professor Dong Wei, are trying to convince the government to stop the current policy, and instead encourage the poorer people to stay in the city centre, even though the living standards are low, by offering job opportunities.

SOCIAL RESOURCES

When investigating the social resources, the easiest way to get a picture of the situation was by looking at the small scale. Thus, a look at the Mei Yuan district gave an insight in the everyday social patterns.

The Mei Yuan district is densely built, but here and there one can find little meeting places that give the space necessary for nourishing the mental health through social situations. Most of the encounters happen in the street spaces since many residents occupy themselves here on the way to and from work, or for the mere pleasure of meeting people. The sheltering roofs, with groups of chairs and tables for playing games, which appear here and there, are natural meeting places. The exercise park with workout machines not only has the function of gaining physical strength and health, but serves also as a place for social interactions. Different levels of privacy are visible; there are the afore-mentioned public spaces and the semi-public spaces, usually in the shape of a pocket park in a residential area. Semi-private areas are the areas inside the residential areas, a common inner yard for example. Visiting such an inner yard would feel awkward for an outsider. Residents of the Mei Yuan district see physical closeness to the hospital as one of the greatest assets. Several residents describe this as their main reason for living in Mei Yuan.

The urban planners of Nanjing are striving to keep a variety of social classes within

the city center (Tong, 2008). At the same time as this forces many people to live under poor living standards until the economy is strong enough to renovate areas like Mei Yuan, urban planners are pushing the government to offer work opportunities and make it valuable and worthwhile for poor citizens to stay in the city center, as mentioned earlier (Dong, 2008). In Mei Yuan's poor blocks, the streets are empty in the middle of the day. The street vendors have taken their shops-on-wheels to shopping areas for business opportunities, I am told by a couple of housewives. According to the interviewed residents, it is common among Mei Yuan residents to commute to other parts of the city center to work. The local main street is filled with family enterprises of small-scale restaurants and minimarkets.

For a few years, there have been plans on turning the Mei Yuan district into a commercial area, with an identity based on the historical importance of the area (Dong, 2008). The plans have been laid on ice, because of the difficulty of implementing such ideas in this culturally protected area. Upon the question on how the residents would find themselves in such a situation, they often say that they would rather not move to be relocated in a fancy residential area in the city outskirts. The residents like the atmosphere of Mei Yuan. Moreover, the discussions about this relocation has been going on for such a long time, that the residents already are sceptical that the renovations actually will be realized, and are therefore not worrying too much about the effects of it.

Another issue that is worth mentioning is the one-child policy that was implemented in the PRC in 1978 (Starr, 2001). The intention was to slow the rapid population growth down. The only way a positive economic development could occur, is through a population control, it was said (Ibid). The one-child policy has brought with it a change in the social structures, and the family has become a stronger unity in the Chinese society.

PARTICIPATION

When answering the question on how information is communicated to the residents, Professor Cheng Yu Ning explains that the normal procedure is that information is displayed on information charts. This has grown to become the typical way of introducing residents to any kind of re-modulation on their neighborhood. The interviews with the chief planner at the urban planning institute of Nanjing and the two Professors in urban planning and landscape architecture confirmed that quite a few actions are being taken in attempts to attract the residents and listen to their opinions. Mrs. Tong Ben Qing said planners and architects often speak to residents in person, alongside with communication through representatives from the areas. The planning bureau displays its ideas on information boards in the district as well as on the internet, for anyone to see. The urban planning exhibition hall continuously displays ongoing projects, Tong Ben Qing adds. However, there is a general desire to put more emphasis on the opinions of the residents in the process of urban planning (Tong, Dong, 2008). The dream situation is where more original residents are involved in the planning process. In some cases, when the land owner does not make an effort to renovate the buildings, residents renovate without permission and will therefore not be compensated when asked to move because of deconstruction or renovations, according to residents of Mei Yuan. Eventually, the final decision is always taken by the governmental authorities, which is where the power is (Tong, 2008). Nanjing's master plan does not mention citizen participation (NAUPD, 2008). The ADB report (2006) tells us, however, that in cases where residents have to be relocated due to the upgrading of urban settlements, "the resettlement to apartments in the suburbs will be done on a voluntary basis" (Ibid-121). Starr (2001-211) discusses the situation for "political rights (in the PRC that) guarantee the individuals' ability to participate in the political interest", which, at the end of the day, is what the planning process is about. He states that despite this individual right, the actual participation lacks significance (Starr, 2001).

Professor Dong Wei mentions a program at Southeast University that involves speaking to local residents once every semester. However, he has noticed that the residents have different ideas from year to year. Once the residents have had their wishes come true, they find something else to focus on, he says. This would in another situation be a positive outcome, but seems to be a problem in a Chinese perspective.

There seems to be a time issue in the Nanjing planning processes that causes planners to have second thoughts about citizen participation. According to Mr. Dong Wei, the time efficiency leads to urban planning projects that are accomplished within a few weeks after the initiation, which is an obvious strength. However, this does not leave much time for communication between the residents and the planners.

A tour through Mei Yuan

Somehow, I feel I've chosen the least appropriate time of day to pay Mei Yuan a visit. It's 11 am and I've just met Li Li who is there to show me around and help me talk to the people around. We sneak inside the block where most residents are poor, hoping to meet someone to interview. The houses raise two floors high and seem pretty shallow. The streets are empty. Not a single sound. It doesn't take long before we understand why. All workers have taken their "mobile offices" to town to do business. Not missing a chance.

Luckily we run into one of the cross-professional workers. This man, primarily a bicycle mechanic, is 35 years old and shares twelve rented square meters with his wife. He tells us he doesn't really like the block. The living conditions are very poor and he shares an outdoor kitchen with other families, which can be inconvenient from time to time.

The streets are narrow and the all-round material used is concrete, yet many families have made their entrances green and foliaged. A simple flowerbed made of bricks with a sheltering espalier of vines lightens the street up. We continue our walk, moving on to the fancier areas. Buildings here are higher, say five-six floors. Most of them have inner yards but the locks on the gates tell us non-residents should stay outside. Even fancier villas have open, common yards, but we still do not feel welcome strolling around here. We try to make contact, but get refused when proposing a little chat. All areas, the fancy ones and the simple, offer green areas. Plate trees, as are the standard trees of Nanjing, line the streets and not a single place seems deserted or left-over.

ANALYSIS

The analysis of the survey results is based on the SWOT method, which means discussing strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, and the results are displayed in the narrative below.

A LOCAL IDENTITY

Nanjing has a strong identity and is famous for its long history. The quantity of archeological findings confirms a noticeable heritage, and the city's master plan focuses much on the protection of different kinds of cultural reminders. As Roseland (2005) suggests, citizens can find their identity in the identity of their city, and in this case, it is applicable on the aspect of cultural heritage; Nanjing citizens can easily place themselves in the context, through knowing the cities past. The city is also famous for a multitude of universities, which are assets that are often considered to be city advantages. University students are often short time residents of a city. Coming from other cities or countries, many of them return to their home towns or move to another city after their graduation. The city has a comparatively short time to convince its students to become permanent citizens, a fact that emphasizes the importance of a city identity and the sense of belonging.

A SENSE OF BELONGING

Nanjing's ancient history is ever present in everyday life. Physical reminders like the city wall vitalize the history, as well as a deeply rooted understanding of and pride in the ancient Chinese history. This is certainly something that brings the Nanjingers together, consciously and unconsciously, and should be nourished with the help of the city's urban planning. It is also worth mentioning Nanjing's quality of being a university city. University life is not an inclusive world. There are students and scholars, but there are also citizens who have chosen not to be a part of the academic world, or who have not had the opportunity. However, Berg (2009) points out, that citizens need to be included in a larger social network. It does not necessarily mean the network of an entire city, so, as long as you belong to a net-

work, it means you belong somewhere; you share a common ground.

The one child-policy that was implemented in the PRC in 1978 (Starr, 2001) could possibly have changed the sense of community in Chinese society. To an outsider, and according to Chinese citizens of older generations, it seems that younger people grow up to be more individualistic in these days. This course of changes might imply that the need for being part of a larger context has faded out and that we now are looking at new relationship patterns. Could it be that this also means that we need to redefine the concept of community constellations? It might even be the other way around; that the new ways of communication, i.e. the Internet, has replaced the physical community, making the citizen a part of a worldwide community. If so, perhaps the concept of Community Service Centers must be changed or even replaced by a more modern way for communication.

HISTORY AND TRAFFIC

As mentioned earlier, Nanjing has a rich history to take pride in. It is highly prioritized in the city's master plan (NAUPD, 2008). Nanjing encounters a dilemma now that exploiters of the city want to commercialize protected heritage, instead of renovating and let people live normal lives within these areas. To better understand this dilemma, it could be useful to put in a Thwaites (2007) context. As he discusses, the advantages of preserving medieval areas in the city can possibly be compared to the historical settlements of Nanjing. Thwaites (2007) radically suggests that the medieval areas are the only places that still really work in modern cities because of the scale; narrow streets, hardly visible crossings, cobble stone roads etc; features that naturally slow the traffic down.

Nanjing offers a few areas that are closed for all types of traffic. These areas are in general the scenic spots aimed for tourists, such as Fuzimiao (the Confucious temple area) and shopping centers; both of which are highly commercialized areas. Other than that, Nanjing is easily accessible by car, and comparing it to Thwaites' (2007) list it is here stated that city centers must be served by main streets. Nanjing might be taking this accessibility to its extremes, which is an interesting as-

pect of the Chinese culture. Traditionally, the PRC has been known to the world as a bicycle nation because of its many bicycles and bicycle riders. Considering this, it is rather difficult to understand how Chinese citizens so fully accepted the extremely motorized traffic of today. Nanjing would prosper on turning even more streets into pedestrian streets at night time, in favor of street life with markets and other cultural events. If motorized vehicles, in some areas, are prohibited to a greater extent, it might, eventually, have a positive impact on the traffic hierarchy of today.

CITIZENS AND THEIR GREEN URBAN SPACES

The four levels of green spaces explained by Berg (2009) are not clearly applicable into the master plan of Nanjing, where the objectives of green spaces are discussed more in terms of a larger structure scale. The first and second levels of urban green are in most cases taken for granted (Berg, 2009), which might explain why it is not mentioned in the master plan.

According to the chief planner at the Nanjing Academy of Urban Planning & Designing Co, nobody should have more than a 15 minute walk to their closest public green space. This is the case in Nanjing, if we choose to define university parks as public green spaces. Except from a few urban parks in the inner city, most of the green spaces are located in the outskirts of the city, which obviously are more than a 15 minute walk away. Though this might seem like a park scarcity, the counterbalancing feature is that the citizen's nearest home environment is often carefully decorated with plants, where so is possible.

The idea of the four levels of green is based on the presumption that access to green areas is important for urban citizens (Berg, 2009). One of the advantages that come with the access to green areas is the connection between nature and culture. Human settlements were initially located where resources like water, land and forests were rich (Berg, 2009). Today, the dependence on resources for the development of urban areas is not as emphasized, since there are ways to create artificial nature, import pipe-lined water etc. The linkage between the citizens and nature is not obvious anymore, but could meet a renaissance through information,

as well as through renovating and improving existing green areas.

CULTURE AND THE URBAN STRUCTURE

The urban street life is flourishing in Nanjing. Public places have no predetermined function and allow Nanjing residents to occupy themselves with a broad range of various activities. Nanjing's public spaces are frequently used - never empty. A city with a mixture of uses has an advantage when it strives to reach a state of sustainable development (Thwaites, 2007).

Learning about the local history and traditions as well as the every-day typical actions of the city gives an increased feeling of continuity and participation, as Berg (2009) suggests. The Chinese culture is one of the oldest, globally, and Chinese citizens take pride in this fact. It shapes a large part of the Chinese context and a condition, by which they often define themselves.

The everyday culture can also be characterized by the urban structure, in the small scale, as well as in the larger scale. The older parts of Nanjing are densely built, with buildings forming closed blocks, while new residential areas are often made up of houses in line with each other, which create a straggly openness, and obstructs the feeling of community and belonging. The conditions for a citizen to feel comfortable and safe in urban areas are improved when the proportions are set according to the human size.

THE PARTICIPATING CITIZEN

Nanjing city planners aim for involving citizens in the process of urban planning. Although, there are several aspects in the process, that need to be improved. Urban planners and citizens have both expressed their dissatisfaction towards the alternatives for communication and participation (Dong, 2008). In order to achieve the openness that is necessary for possible participants to actually feel invited to join, some parts of the procedure have to be changed. For example, one of the obstacles is the time pressure in Chinese planning projects and it causes a series of further problems. There is, in the current situation, not enough time to implement a Roseland (2005) strategy in the process, in which citizens are able to participate

from the very initiation of the project (Roseland, 2005-196), and be involved in evaluations and discussions throughout the whole project. The actual participation today is rather a one-way communication, where efforts are made to *inform* to the residents about the changes that are about to occur, but where *dealing with remarks and opinions* is of lower priority. From an outsider's perspective, it appears to be a false show, where citizens are convinced that they have opportunities to participate, but in the end, the outcome lacks the influence of their opinions. A fresh restart for the urban planning processes of Nanjing would be to open up grandly, with honest efforts to try methods, like the "Charrette" (Thwaites, 2007), for example. Urban planners of Nanjing will have to try different methods, in order to find the one that best suits the Chinese culture.

Moreover, considering the fact that urban planners are struggling with the heavy task of combining economical interests with the protection of cultural heritage and social welfare, a slower planning process could possibly have more benefits than that of citizen participation. If stake holders are forced to let construction projects take more time, because of an ongoing planning procedure that actively involves citizens, there will simultaneously be more time to thoroughly plan for a sustainable urban development.

Park life

I zigzag my way through the crowd. I am currently in a park text to one of the most popular shopping streets, Hunan Lu. The sky is grayish white. The clouds keep the city warm and humid. I am exhausted and my feet sore after a long walk so I sit down on a bench. For a Swede like me, the mere being amidst all the people demands a lot of energy. When I sit down and observe, the crowd suddenly dissolves into groups of people in various constellations and activities. For instance, I realize I've sat down just in front of a skateboarding class. Teenage teachers and their 7-8-year-old pupils. I follow their moves; watch them as they race each other and as someone falls on the tiled ground. Then my eyes fall upon a family of three passing by. They are all smiling, spending time together. In the very middle of the park - close to the fountain with a grotesquely large World expo 2010 mascot - an old lady is exercising Taiji. Other women get curious; some make a stop for an immediate learning opportunity. All over, groups of students are forming up; letting their personalities out after another formal day in school. All benches are occupied. Elderly people, mostly men with their cigarettes and women with their bags of vegetables and meat, have found their spots for doing the same thing as I; observing. And I like this park. In fact, I like most of the parks in Nanjing, because they serve as meeting places for everyone at all times of day, and they are so full of life.

DISCUSSION

The results from the survey and analysis chapters are discussed in the following section. First, answers to the issues at hand, followed by suggestions on how the situation can be improved, as well as a discussion on how this report can be used in the future. The chapter is concluded with my personal reflections.

ANSWERS TO THE ISSUES AT HAND

TO WHAT EXTENT IS THE SOCIAL DIMENSION OF SUSTAINABLE URBAN PLANNING IN FOCUS IN NANJING?

According to what was found in the investigation and observations of Nanjing city, there occurs to be an unbalanced development of the social dimension. The master plan suggests strong efforts to increase the sense of belonging, through prioritizing cultural features and comfortable inhabitant environments. However, there is a clash between restoring historical settlement and supporting its residents' staying there. The historical settlements are often characterized by worn out buildings, poor service facilities and infrastructure, and are often inhabited by citizens of lower income classes. As the area is improved with better living standards the rents are raised, forcing the residents to relocate in new habitations in the city outskirts. This leads to a change in the social structures; a change, which in practice implies an inner city with strong cultural characteristics inhabited by upper social classes and impersonal suburban areas populated by the lower social classes. The solution to this problem would be to offer the residents economical support to be able to stay in the area, as well as creating additional work opportunities.

In other inner city areas where buildings and urban areas lack the explicit features of a local history, the situation is different. This is where people from different social classes are mixed to a greater extent. The Chinese culture is a culture where people spend much of their time outdoors. In areas like these, parks, squares and streets provide opportunities for meetings across the class borders (Thwaites,

2007). Nanjing offers many places like these; where people can spend time with each other outdoors. The difficulty for urban designers and planners in Nanjing is not how to attract people to the public spaces, but how to make their stay there even better. They should be easily and safely accessible with the help of public transportations and bicycle lanes, and they should provide services like toilets, seats etc (Thwaites, 2007).

One of the aspects that have to be considered in order to preserve the local identity and remember the place's history is to make sure the citizens have access to the city's past (Berg, 2009). In other words, information about the city should be displayed in a way that will make the citizens interested in knowing more, learning about the history and pass the story on to coming generations. Nanjing has many museums that tell the stories of yesterday and the archeological findings in the area are so many that there cannot be built museums enough to show it all. However, the museums are rather worn-out and are in need of renovations. Intergrating these kinds of cultural reminders into everyday life, in the street environment, for example, can be a way to make the culture a natural part of the local identity. Among the people I met during my stay in Nanjing, most of them happened to know much about the history of the country and the city. It seems that schools put history in high priority, probably because the PRC is one of the oldest settlements in the world and that this is something for the Chinese citizens to take pride in.

The city district in Nanjing that I took a closer look at – Mei Yuan – has a community service center. This center is not only in charge of the local maintenance, but also offers employment services, for example. The Community Service Center is a short step into a connecting context (Berg, 2009); you get a feeling of belonging to the area where you live. The Community Service Centers are some of the greater advantages of Nanjing city and should be supported as far as possible, at the same time as alternative ways of community building should be considered; Internet forums is one possible option.

Issues regarding tamed – but not forbidden – traffic, and community centers that

should be served by main streets, as Thwaites (2007) argues, unveils a way of thinking that takes its starting point in a world where motorized traffic is essential. Perhaps urban planning should provide more possible solutions for alternative transportation types, or a major make-over of the traffic hierarchy, where pedestrians and cyclists become the top layer. The situation in Nanjing is unsustainable in the sense that the traffic is heavy, and the street structure facilitates cars as the main transportation, rather than more environmentally friendly means of transportations. The new metro system will be an asset for Nanjing, and hopefully it will take the place of many of the old buses that carry most of the Nanjing commuters today.

The green structure of Nanjing is rather good, although not fully developed. The master plan displays the intentions of connecting green areas with each other, but as of today, the green structure consists of the trees lining all avenues, detached pocket parks and larger parks. There is no clear connection between them in the current situation, but as soon as - and if - the green structure of the master plan is implemented, the city will enjoy a more accessible harmonious green life. The green structure will become an entity that connects different city districts with one another, which is positive for the social wellbeing of the urban residents (Thwaites, 2007, Berg, Florgård, 2005).

WHAT ARE THE CONDITIONS FOR THE URBAN CITIZENS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PLANNING PROCESS OF THEIR OWN NEIGHBORHOOD IN NANJING?

As one would have assumed, citizens are generally interested in participating in the planning process when the issue concerns their direct surroundings. However, the participation of urban citizens in Nanjing planning procedures fails in many aspects. One reason is that citizens often presume their opinions will not be taken into consideration, and because of this they are reluctant to even make the effort. Nanjing citizens and the urban planners answer the same way, when asked about ongoing planning projects and how they can communicate with each other; the information is displayed in charts in the area, as well as at the Internet, and anyone

can feel free to raise questions and have opinions, with the help of neighborhood representatives. And as urban planners say they do take incoming remarks into consideration, the source of the failure cannot be the communication issue. It seems to me, like part of the problem is to do with a time pressure. Projects have to be realized in such a short time, that there is no time to create a relationship with interested citizens. No time for the residents to familiarize themselves with the project, no time for evaluation meetings (Roseland, 2005). Another reason the procedure fails is that urban planners in many cases seem to think participating citizens become greedy if their opinions are raised. Citizens who are asked, one year, how their neighborhood could be improved answer the question in a different way, they have new ideas, when asked the same question a year after. It should be obvious that opinions change from year to year, especially if the grants were fulfilled the last time. It is risky to have this way of thinking, since it might imply that urban planners are reluctant to let the habitants participate.

Another obstacle in the participation issue is the lack of openness and insight in the planning process that is necessary in order for the residents to feel invited and welcome in the process (Thwaites, 2007). The information charts are set up at an early stage in the process. The short time before the project will be realized, admits no time for updating the charts. Other than this way of communication, it is difficult to get a look inside the governmental urban planning. The mere investigation behind this report displayed the difficulties in getting close to inside information. Having the role of an investigating student, it seemed to be a *what you see is what you get*-situation. Despite my neutral curiosity in the Chinese planning procedures, I found it quite difficult to get hold of data, statistics, information about planning procedures etc.

IMPROVING THE CURRENT SITUATION

Through this study it has become evident that there are some features that need to be improved in order for Nanjing to develop sustainably. The high growth rate

due to the massive urbanization causes urban planners to carefully consider every move they make. The results of the study have led to following suggestions for improving the current situation in Nanjing. In general, the concept of sustainable development, as we know it in the Western World, needs to be more thoroughly integrated in the planning processes and politics in the PRC.

In order to maintain a city with a mixture of social classes, where no citizen will feel excluded from the inner city, it is necessary to *strengthen the collaboration* between different governmental institutions. Urban planners should push the government to support residents living in historical settlements that are undergoing renovations with economical means and by creating work opportunities in the area.

The *accessibility to public urban spaces should be reviewed*. Bus stops and metro stations should coincide with popular places to meet and provide safe surroundings for pedestrians and bicyclists. Many people will occupy themselves in these areas at the same time which is why it is important to offer services like toilets, places to eat, benches etc.

The traffic situation is generally not sustainable in Nanjing. As hinted previously, the private car use is high and the city structure allows car users to access any place. Urban planners should take into consideration a *traffic make-over*, through intentionally making the car accessibility restrained in favor of public transportation routes and bicycle paths.

The planning process obviously has several disadvantages concerning the issue of participation. The ancient Chinese tradition of central control has left traces in the way of treating citizens' influence in governmental issues. A fundamental change is needed in this case. Nanjing's urban planners need to see the advantages that come from involving citizens in the process. Construction projects are time-effective, but often to the cost of unsatisfied citizens. A sustainable urban development implies that urban citizens feel comfortable in their neighborhood. The combination of citizens that are reluctant to participate because they are skeptic towards their

opinions actual importance, and urban planners view that citizens become greedy after fulfilled earlier grant, is a negative development. The solution to this problem is to *emphasize the weight of residents' remarks and opinions*; to pay more attention to them in the planning process. The opinions and remarks of the citizens can and should be seen as an asset in the urban development. It might come to the cost of longer project processes, but will lead to satisfied citizens and a socially sustainable urban development, in the long run.

NANJING PUT IN PERSPECTIVE

What can Swedish urban planners learn from this? The People's Republic of China and Sweden are two very different countries in terms of size, population, politics, economics and culture. One of Nanjing's greatest assets is how public urban spaces are planned and used. There is no predetermined function for most of the spaces. Nanjing's urban planners provide the citizens with the space, and the citizens use it however they want. Of course, Swedish citizens, can feel free to use an urban space, but the difference is that their space often has a function. Public urban spaces in Sweden often have names, like "the multi-sport court", "the market square" or "the botanical garden". Swedish urban planners should allow the function of some spaces to remain unspoken, and, instead, let the users – the citizens – decide the function.

The democratic model for urban planning processes that we have in Sweden is also an issue that can be discussed. The Swedish model for involving citizens in the planning process has many advantages, but the current situation is that the compulsory meetings with residents and other stake holders slow the process down. Perhaps Sweden should find alternative solutions for communication with the citizens. Perhaps the increased use of the Internet is an advantage even in Sweden? Sweden could learn something from the Chinese effectivity. The PRC has for a long time dealt with a large population, which assumably is the reason behind the Chinese ability to organize themselves and be time effective. Surely, time would be

saved, if Swedish urban planners could avoid the massive paper work and let communication flow easily online? A majority of the Swedish cities are modern, with innovative and modern thinking, but could learn from the Chinese citizens in how they deal with the urban development. Their belief in the future is what pushes the city forward, with innovative solutions.

This report tells the story of the sustainable urban planning in a large country far away, the People's Republic of China. It is difficult to match the situation with a small country like Sweden, but it helps us view the Swedish planning procedures from a perspective. Taking a step back will give us a broader picture of our situation, which helps us to see our assets, as well as the lacking features. It is crucial, for the landscape architect that deals with issues like urban planning and sustainable development, to see the advantages of dealing with the social issues.

EPILOGUE

The study of the Chinese planning system turned out to be a difficult project. I went to Nanjing with the ambition to speak to as many citizens as possible, as well as to experts that could provide me with information about the procedures, legislation etc. One of the problems that I encountered was the translation issue. I needed an interpreter in order to talk to citizens I met in the street, so the interviews felt unnatural, as they were interrupted after each question. I lost control of the discussions. An unsuccessful attempt to tape an interview with a tape recorder made me understand how reluctant citizens are to give me their honest opinions. I got the feeling that the actual frankness appeared first when I put my notebook away and had a face-to-face conversation. The *gatur* evaluation tour in Mei Yuan gave me the same feeling.

However, one of the most valuable moments occurred just after the evaluation tour, when the participants from the richer parts of Mei Yuan had left us, my interpreter, a student from the area and I. We went back to the spot in the poorer blocks, where the tour was interrupted, and spoke with the residents there. They seemed to understand my well-intentioned study and now spoke freely on the topic. This was a good learning experience for me as an investigating student and I was stunned by the outcome of the tour. I kept thinking: what is the use of intense display of information and offering channels for communication, when there is no one on the other side to hear your opinions? And if I was frustrated for not being able to carry on with my research, what did the Beijing citizens feel? They, who had to leave their homes because Beijing city decided to turn the land into Olympic villages.

The difficulty of getting hold of literature about the Chinese planning procedures was another obstacle. Most of the literature studies were therefore made after returning to Sweden. The investigation could not be done as I had planned for, which I carry with me as yet a result.

The fact that my study could not, by any means, be completed the way I had planned for, was a very important lesson for me, in understanding the conditions for professionals in my future work field. And I consider this insight a crucial result of my study and a very valuable knowledge for my future research projects.

Despite the difficulties I met, I travelled back to Sweden after my field study feeling rather uncomfortable. I had come to Nanjing with a picture of the PRC as having a corrupt government which uncautiously violates the human rights. That is the picture served to us in the Western World through media. And yes, there are aspects in Chinese politics and planning processes that are questionable from my point of view.

But I think it is important to support the positive pictures of the People's Republic of China, because they exist and are multiple. For example, the optimistic belief in the future that colors much of the Chinese culture. Chinese citizens of the younger generations are working hard to learn English to be able to travel abroad for education and eventually return to the PRC and make their own country better.

I find it important to understand that Chinese citizens do not feel as suppressed as Western media tries to portray them. The Western World should not see the Chinese people as victims of a centrally controlled country, but a people full of hope and energy, in a country with an increasing influence on the rest of the world.

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APPENDIX

INTERVIEW SCRIPTS

Questions for Professors Dong Wei and Cheng Yu Ning:

- Can you tell me a little about what you know about the urban development of Nanjing?
- What are the major differences between now and then?
- Which are the major happenings in Nanjing's urban development?
- What are your predictions about the future urban development? What is expected to happen?
- What is your overall opinion about Nanjing as a city?
- Is sustainability a concept that is well incorporated in the urban planning in Nanjing?
- How could it be incorporated to a larger extent?
- How are people today able to participate in the planning process of their neighborhoods?
- To what extent are they willing to participate?
- In the urban planning, how much of your work is about issues like waste systems, clean water, public transportation, etc?

Questions for Chief planner Tong Ben Qing:

- What is your function in this department?
- Can you, please, describe for me the Chinese process of urban planning?
- Who are involved in the process?
- What do the routines look like?
- What ways of communication are there for the residents to express their views?
- How do you deal with incoming opinions from the residents within an area which is undergoing a planning process?
- Is sustainability an incorporated issue?

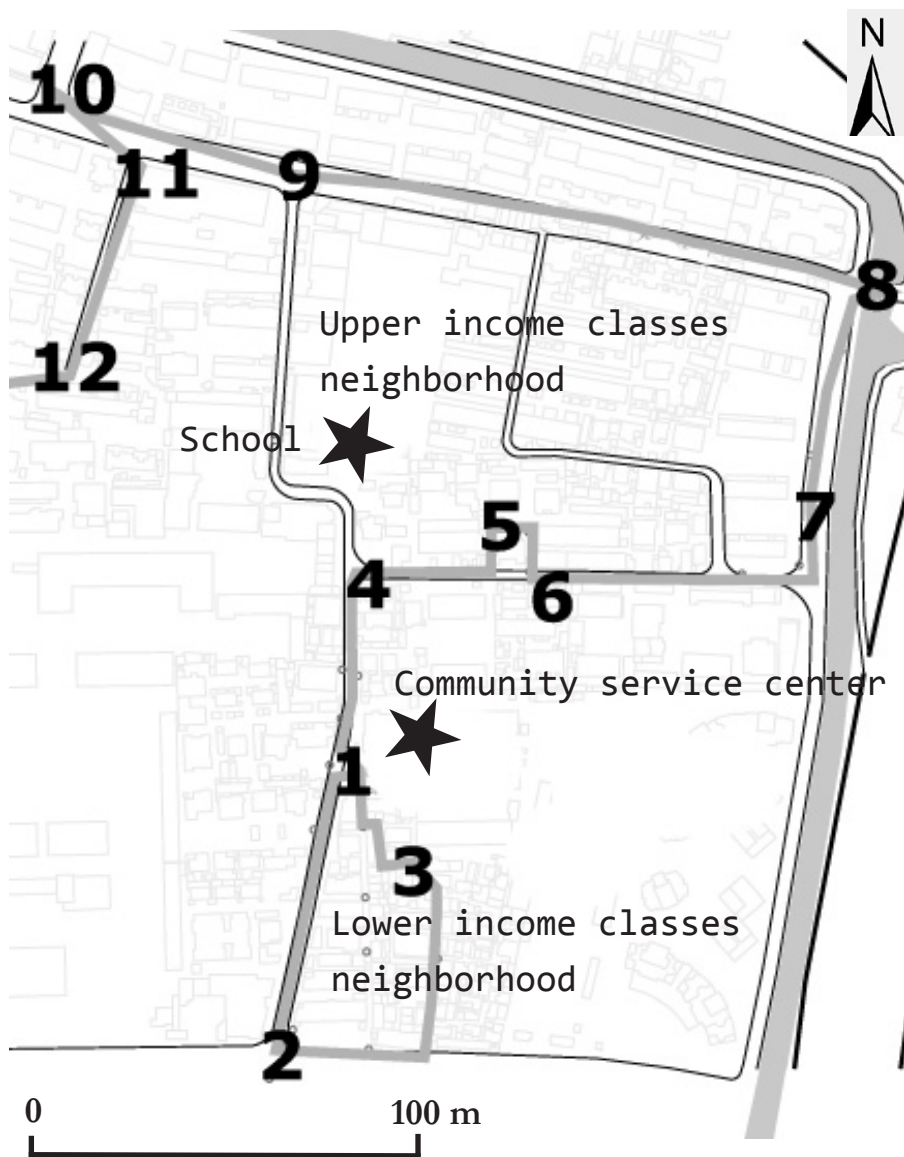
Questions for the residents of Mei Yuan:

- How old are you?
- For how long have you been living here?
- How much do you pay in rent?
- What is your occupation?
- What is your relation to your neighbors?
- Do you know about the plans on renovating this area?
- How were you told?
- Will you be able to stay in this area?
- Do you know whether you will be compensated in any way if you have to move?
- Are you satisfied with this decision?
- How do you like the neighborhood?

THE GÅTUR EVALUATION TOUR

(See p. 84 for map)

1. Meeting point
2. Main entrance to area
3. Building entrance
4. Critical traffic situation
5. Building entrance
6. Court yard
7. Building entrance
8. Main entrance to area
9. Meeting point
10. Critical traffic situation
11. Meeting point
12. Critical traffic situation



Map showing the route of the 'gatur' evaluation tour.

