

ON

REPRODUCTION

RE-IMAGINING

THE POLITICAL

ECOLOGY OF

URBANISM

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Department of Architecture and Urban Planning,
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After successful editions in Leuven, Venice, Barcelona, Paris, Delft, Lausanne, the next edition of the PhD seminars in urbanism and urbanization will be hosted in Ghent, Belgium. Like previous editions, the seminar seeks to bring together students writing their PhD thesis in urbanism, working within very different disciplinary traditions, combining historical research, design research and different forms of urban research.

The community supporting this seminar series over the years shares an interest in work that tries to speak across the divide between urban studies and the city-making disciplines, seeking to combine the interpretation of the process of urbanization with the commitment and care for the urban condition in all its manifold manifestations, and bring together urban theory and the theoretical grounding of urbanism.

The seminar welcomes all PhD students working in this mixed field. The call for papers of each edition foregrounds a set of themes that will be given special attention. We invite students to respond to these thematic lines, however, papers addressing other themes and concerns will also be taken into consideration.

On Reproduction¹ : Re-Imagining the Political Ecology of Urbanism

Each period of urbanization comes with its urbanisms. At times these are clearly defined and constitute distinct paradigms that fill handbooks, structure curricula and form schools. At other times they are contested and subject of vigorous debate. Today, urbanism is a field in flux, forced to engage in new urban questions and address pressing social and ecological concerns. As a direct result the contemporary list of epithets qualifying the notion urbanism has become virtually endless.

In this edition of the urbanism and urbanization seminar we want to think the urban question as a matter of political ecology, joining the transdisciplinary efforts to think nature inside the political economy of urbanization and to develop a perspective on urbanism that unites ecological and social justice concerns. In order to do so, we proceed from a notion which has defined urbanism within political economy, namely the question of 'social reproduction'.

Reproduction is a term rooted in Marxist vocabulary that provides an analytic lens to think the ways in which the logics of capitalist production have been socially embedded. Urban questions can be understood as questions of social reproduction, in which typically three concerns intersect: (1) the reproduction of life itself pointing to the bio-political core of urbanism; (2) the reproduction of value, thinking the division of labor, the role of paid and non-paid labor, the split between use and exchange value, internal and external economies, positive and negative externalities, etc.; (3) the reproduction of the institutional and infrastructural arrangements put in place to enable production processes, interrogating the fixed capital and infrastructure cities are made of. Urbanisms are specific propositions regarding the collective arrangements needed in order to address and organize questions of social reproduction in an urbanizing society.

Within the historical Marxist perspective 'social reproduction' has typically served as a critical lens to expose urbanism as an ideological project that provides the social support for capi-

talist production and uneven capital accumulation (Harvey, Castells, Prêteceille, ...). Beyond the ideological critique, starting from questions of social reproduction is also an invitation to think alternative urbanisms and imaginaries to this dominant story of uneven development, dispossession, gentrification and environmental injustice. Can we imagine urbanisms that do not treat social reproduction as an afterthought of production, as a necessary form of compensation. What do such reproductive urbanisms that renders the lives of people living in cities more just, more meaningful and more inclusive look like?

Revisiting the question of 'social reproduction', we find ourselves in the midst of discussions that are both new and old at the same time, discussions regarding the metabolic basis of our cities, the ways cities care for their citizens, keep them healthy or make them sick; the ways we share and distribute resources, both physical resources as well as social opportunities; the ways we feed our cities and fail to give citizens control over what they eat; the ways we make citizens mobile or not, car-dependent or blessed with multiple mobilities. The vigorous yet contested quest for alternative urbanisms makes us aware of the rather limited terms through which the field of urbanism has traditionally addressed questions of social reproduction, placing the emphasis on the reproduction of labor and the concomitant concern for housing and infrastructure. Thinking urbanism in the reproductive nexus is an invitation to think the biopolitical basis of urbanism in its full breath, reaching out to the key discussions that shape the urban agenda in the Anthropocene (or should we say 'capitalocene').

Alternative questions

Track #1

The return to questions such as water, energy, food, the circular use of resources brings back to the field of urbanism subjects that have been rendered absent by dominant urbanist discourse. The political ecology literature foregrounds the various ways in which processes of urbanization are deeply implicated in socio-natural processes. Urbanists are expanding their scope beyond the hard-wired questions of housing, producing an expanded understanding of the urban question. At the same time,

the operational translations that are made today of this new urban question herald a rather troubling reduction of the urban agenda within a functionalist framework. Today the discourse of urbanism is rapidly being taken over by the new-speak of the circular economy, smart use of resources, the shortening of supply chains, the reduction of carbon emissions, the balancing of ecosystem services, etc. Urbanists are making an effort to think the process of urbanization within the food, water, energy nexus, thinking urban services as eco-systems services, meeting the challenges of urbanization by nature-based solutions. These debates bring biopolitical questions back central stage, yet tend to produce a framing of these debates in a rather functionalist, technical and managerial manner.

We invite papers that reconstruct the intellectual itineraries urbanism has walked in addressing the seemingly new metabolic questions. How do we think key questions of social and environmental reproduction without falling back into a vulgar functionalist reduction of the city and urbanism?

Alternative movements

Track #2

The politics of the urban are defined by groups that join forces in addressing the specific conditions that the process of urbanization subjects them to. The process of urbanization literally moves and manoeuvres people into new positions, subjecting them to new predicaments that move them in turn. Urbanisms are defined by the intellectual mobilities and mental capacities that move people to not simply be subjected to the process of urbanization but rather to become the subject of their shared history. The reproduction of urbanisms is contingent upon the production of concrete experiences that make urban development part and parcel of a divided social consciousness and collective imaginary. This is true for the dominant urbanisms through which the urban condition is shaped, but also holds true for any effort to shape an alternative.

We invite papers that seek to think processes of urban formation and urban change in relationship to the urban movements from which they emerged and which defined their original

motivations. When were urbanisms part of food movements, housing movements, environmental movements, mobility movements, etc.? Which citizen groups, which political constellations, which communities of practice, which schools of thought, which disciplinary formations shape the urban project today?

Alternative sites

Track #3

Specific urbanisms typically define the dividing lines between what is internalized and externalized in the process of urbanization, between what is placed in the centre and what is rendered absent. Urban political ecology questions the social implications of the socio-political consequences of specific ecological choices and thereby forces us to rethink the specific positionalities and geographies that have undergirded the history of urbanism. Questions of social reproduction, questions regarding cooking, food growing, child rearing, education, maintenance and repair have, more often than not, been rendered absent, repressed and treated as secondary. The history of urbanism tends to reproduce the dominant geographies and territorialities of centre and periphery, here and overseas, production and consumption. Taking political ecology seriously requires us to write the history of urbanism from elsewhere. New food geographies invite us to think the urban food metabolism beyond the town-country divide. The metabolic perspective produces new geographies of waste but also new riches and resources previously neglected and undervalued.

We invite papers that move the history of urbanism to neglected historical sites. We welcome papers that actively seek to decolonize the field of urbanism and dismantle the core-periphery relationships, the geographies of uneven development reproduced by the urbanism.

Alternative economies

Track #4

The 2008 sub-prime mortgage crisis might be understood as a crisis of social reproduction, the crisis of the excesses to produce hou-

sing in the commodity form, packaged and repackaged as a financial product. The crisis produces at the same time a heightened awareness of the need to think the economies of cities beyond the market and imagine alternative economies that may save our cities from financial speculation, recover urban value as use value, re-localize the circulation of capital and that undergird the governance of the urban commons. Thinking alternative urbanism requires the construction of an alternative theory of value. The question of social reproduction is the obvious subject to think the transition from efficiency to sufficiency, to think urban development beyond growth.

We invite papers that reflect on the way in which urbanisms have served as the experimental growth for alternative reflections on the economies of cities, from the historical reflections of authors such as Henri Lefebvre, over Jean Remy, André Gorz, Jane Jacobs, Ivan Illich and others to contemporary efforts to think the economy of the commons, the role of community currencies, the sharing economy, the decommodification of housing, the pooling of resources. We invite people to think the role of design in defining the pertinent scales at which these new economies can be articulated, defining the collective units of interventions that articulate virtuous cycles of social reproduction and within the contours of which the balance between the quest for autonomy and the recognition of open logics of exchange can be articulated.

¹ The thematic focus of the 9th edition of the U&U seminars draws upon the collective work of Michiel Dehaene and Chiara Tornaghi and their joint efforts to mount the *International Forum for an Agroecological Urbanism* to be launched at the meeting of the AESOP sustainable food planning group in Coventry, UK, 14-15 November 2017 (<https://aesopsfp.wordpress.com/call-for-papers/>). See also: Tornaghi & Dehaene, Food as an urban question, and the foundations for a reproductive, agroecological, urbanism. (forthcoming). Dehaene, M., Tornaghi, C., and Sage, C. (2016) '5.2 Mending the metabolic rift – placing the 'urban' in Urban Agriculture'. In *Urban Agriculture Europe*. Ed. by Lohrberg, F., Scazzosi, L. Licka, L., and Timpe, A. Berlin: Jovis.

Table of Contents

Ethnographies of design practices

Urbanism of temporality. Tracing the impact of food and shelter rehabilitation networks on the production and reproduction of urban realities in Marka camp, Jordan
Dina Dahood 13

A critical look at regional planning: Jean Rémy and the concept of urban externalities
Martin Dumont 21

Unveiling Latin American territories; The Travesías of the Valparaíso School as a critical practice of the planetary urbanization
Alvaro Mercado Jara 29

Live to understand: reflection on an ethnography of a high rise social housing estate in Brussels
Jeanne Mosseray 35

Sites & Strategies

Re-imagining the collective space
Valentin Bourdon 41

Spontaneity in everyday space: Linking Social and Spatial through an Urban Design Perspective
Duygu Cihanger 47

Governing the air: knowledge, infrastructures, contestation
Nicola da Schio 57

Construction and its contrary. The role of demolition in the project of the city
Anna Livia Friel 63

Territorial Systems

Limits and inevitabilities of dams in the North American machine-territory
Luca Iuorio 67

The Italy of the factories. Narrations, representations, images
Luis Antonio Martín Sanchez 77

The Northbothnian technological megasystem: Urbanization, territorial metabolism and political ecologies
Berta Morata 87

The strategies of territorial development in the test of coastal dynamics. From the mobility of the coastline to the spatio-temporal depth of the coastal area
Thomas Beillouin 103

Land for food. The Interaction of Urban Planning and Regional Food Planning
Ivonne Weichold 113

Metabolism

Waste space and recycling practices: the case of the Abattoirs in Brussels <i>Andrea Bortolotti</i>	117
Energy transition in the nebular city: a socio-spatial perspective on the case of heat in Roeselare Griet Juwet	127
Reinterpreting the territory's resourcefulness <i>Julie Marin</i>	141
From Pipeline to Landscape: a Landscape-Driven Design for Stormwater Management <i>Elisabeth Sjodahl</i>	157
Brussels. (De)construction of a productive narrative <i>Marine Declève</i>	167

Production

The Post-Growth City: Towards an Urban Research Agenda for the Post-Growth Society <i>Giorgos Koukoufikis</i>	179
Re-emerging landscapes: militarised territories from the Cold War period <i>Mladen Stiljinovic</i>	181
The industrialization and the construction of the Alpine city-territory <i>Roberto Segal</i>	191
The Congenital Defective Impetuses and Postnatal Distorted Development. Research on the Impetuses and Problems in the New Towns' Development of China <i>Cai Xiaoxiao</i>	203
Waterscapes in transformation in the 'Uitkerkse Polder'. Water as a protagonist for changing accessibility in landscapes challenged by infrastructures for climate resilience <i>Sis Pillen</i>	213
Reviewing post-mining procedures in view of the potential incursion of landscape urbanism in resource extraction <i>Margarita Macera</i>	227

Movements (part I)

Suburban place-making: 'place distinctiveness' as manifestation of political-economic coalitions : Antwerp, c.1860-c.1940 <i>Laura May</i>	239
Spatial fragmentation and self-organisation: a negative relation in Brazilian metropolises <i>Igor Moreno Pessoa</i>	249
(E)valuating the production of social space: A critical atlas of a residential subdivision in Zolder <i>Barbara Roosen</i>	259

Urban(ism) Movements: Occupying Central São Paulo <i>Jeroen Stevens</i>	269
Another Geography of the Belgian Dispersed Settlements <i>Guillaume Vanneste</i>	277
Commons / Alternative economies	
Neighbourhood as a socio-spatial common. A neo-Nolli map of Wrangelkiez, Berlin-Kreuzberg <i>Dagmar Pelger</i>	289
The garden cities of the 21st century <i>Anna Ternon</i>	299
Slow builders in accelerating urbanity. The underwhelming radicality of La Poudrière, Brussels <i>Philippe De Clerck</i>	309
Thermae as commons. Guide lines for the project of thermal landscapes <i>Eleonora Fiorentino</i>	323
Socio-ecological systems	
Re-designing the incremental city in times of climate change: design investigations into the consolidated riverbank settlements of Guayaquil, Ecuador <i>Olga Peek</i>	331
Historicizing Ecological Urbanism: Paul Duvigneaud, the Brussels Agglomeration and the influence of ecology on urbanism (1970-2016) <i>Koenraad Danneels</i>	343
The place given to and the place taken by Tionghoa in the postcolonial Indonesia. A case study on Semarang <i>Kezia Dewi</i>	357
Movements (part II)	
From dissensus to modernist consensus. On the irruption and reproduction of spatial orders in 20th century Guadalajara. <i>Luis Angel Flores Hernandez</i>	369
De-hierarchizing Belo Horizonte's foundational plan, building theory from off the map <i>Patricia Capanema Alvares Fernandes</i>	381
Death and life of citizen initiatives through participatory public policies in Madrid: towards an open source urbanism or towards the end of it? <i>Cristina Braschi</i>	395
Challenging the capitalist cityscape? The inclusion of citizens in vacant space reuses in Barcelona and Budapest <i>Luca Sara Brody</i>	401

Death and life of citizen initiatives through participatory public policies in Madrid: towards an *open source* urbanism or towards the end of it?

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After 15 years-long participant observation of Madrid's self-managed spaces, witnessing their struggles and transformation, we acknowledge now, since the arrival in June 2015 of the leftist party to the Local Government, the launch and development of a series of participatory practices within the public policy. In fact, the leftist coalition has expressed the need to change the way urbanism is developed in Madrid: towards a more open and participatory model, fighting against big projects and those made without public inquiry. The new Mayor has also recognized the work of organized citizens (mediated by some groups of architects) in the making of alternatives to the old non-participative policies. Whether these official statements are only a discursive change, or a real change in the public procedures, has yet to be determined. The paper is a discussion chapter in the making for the PhD Research. It exposes to discussion the methods used in the Research to analyse the projects that have been formalized and transformed by the public administration. Exploring the proposals made by the Mayor to adapt citizen initiatives, the paper questions the extended critic of these activities as a mere entertainment for citizens, not managing to change the status quo.

City making and social unrest: the response of Architect Collectives

During the period of 1996 to 2007, the Spanish economy grew more than any other economy in Europe. In those years, the surface of Madrid doubled. The public powers were, with the help of European funds, building mobility infrastructures and housing to fulfil the modernization of Spain. This process rapidly extended the limits of the city but was severely criticized (Observatorio Metropolitano 2007) due to its lack of global vision, letting the private stakeholders make the city in a non-transparent procedure. According to the critics coming from neighbourhood associations, the inner city and the new neighbourhoods where lacking the public, social and health infrastructures that should follow up with the urban growth.

Throughout the nineties, the neighbourhood associations born during the last years of the dictatorship (60s to 75) continued fighting for more social infrastructures. But in the same time another group appeared. Some young architects grouped themselves into collectives, in order to come off from the more hierarchic architecture studios. These architectural collectives were born to contest the official way of making the city, considering it was non-transparent thus closed to citizen participation. The first collective in Spain that proposed another manner in which architects can work in the city making, was created in Seville in 1996 by Santiago Cirugeda. This collective still exists today, and it is called Recetas Urbanas (urban recipes). Their proposal for young architects willing to give more (social) sense to their work is to create a series of DIY tools for the empowerment of the ordinary people. Following these *urban recipes*, anybody could make the city according to his desires. In this way, the collectives put Architecture knowledge to the service of the people. In the next years, other collectives appeared in Madrid: Basurama (Love for the trash), Todo Por la Praxis (Giving Everything for the Hands-on) and Laboratorio Urbano (Urban Laboratory). Following Recetas Urbanas' critical theory, they develop citizen tools for the improvement of public spaces, in a hands-on attitude (Basurama, 2006, 2011). Few years later, several architectural collectives all over Spain joined the existing ones, continuing, completing, and diversifying the work of the pioneers.

The work of these collectives is not limited to the criticism of the status quo, it is instead more proactive, and it is developed through 3 main elements: first, they advocate for occupying empty plots and buildings, as examples of self-management of public spaces. Second, they organize debates and public assemblies for the discussion about methods for civic empowerment. And third, they contribute to build a network between different citizen initiatives.

The Architects Collectives consider the urbanism model of the late nineties as closed (to spontaneous uses and to self-management of public spaces and plots), totalitarian (regulated with restrictive use of public space), nor without public inquiry or participatory processes. What they propose instead is an urbanism that is: transparent (in its practices and also its leaders), evolutionary (open to change the rules of use at any moment of evaluation) and inclusive (of deprived and dispossessed but also including offbeat practices and self-management). What they call a new *open source* model for urban practices is interpreted by the different collectives in several manners and put in practice through the three fields: hands-on action, debates and networking. The term *open source* is borrowed to the computer science, where the openness is intended as experimental, collaborative and shared hands-on infrastructure. Their projects follow the *learning-by-doing* culture: not formulating the principles beforehand, but doing it in the making. In their learning approach, many of the collectives establish links with urban struggles and citizen associations, overcoming the local demand (for the occupation of an empty plot or building) in order to fight for a greater good: the use of public spaces and facilities in a non-commercial perspective. This way, many of the collectives' projects establish places where self-management of its activities is not only allowed but also fostered. The mediation activities developed by the collectives are partially dedicated to the demands of support to the local

government (through permits of occupation, funding, and discussion about the future use of the place). In this sense, the collectives express their detachment in regard to the *temporary-use* urbanism, which proposes the use of empty spaces or buildings during a limited period of time, but does not always fight for what happens once the space is rebuilt or the building sold (Zuloark 2014).

Thus, in the first decade of the years 2000, Architects Collectives proliferated all over Spain, acting locally in their territory but starting to think globally as a network. In Madrid, several collectives worked together on a regular basis. Between the years 2004 and 2007 diverse collectives emerged in Madrid: PKMN (read as Pac-Man), Zuloark and Vivero de Iniciativas Ciudadanas (Citizen Initiatives Incubator). In 2007 the informal existing network of collaboration between the different collectives was given the name Arquitecturas Colectivas (collective architectures), gathering every year since, in a different city, for local projects, networking and knowledge production. Some of their reflections and interviews with urban specialists such as Saskia Sassen, are compiled in the publication 'Arquitecturas Colectivas. Camiones, Contenedores, Colectivos', appeared in 2011.

The opportunity of the economic and political crisis

The crisis in 2008 had a considerable effect in the making of the city of Madrid, with the stoppage of many of the big building projects. Somehow, it had a special effect in the work of the collectives, who found in the crisis the opportunity to reformulate an adaptive and resilient methodology for urban development, open to changes and to citizen expertise. One of the results of this reorientation led to the research of new modes of representation of their work. Helping to establish a network between the different collectives/associations/struggles/squatters, the collectives found themselves useful in the development of cartographies to classify the different approaches. These cartographies aimed not only to strengthen the collaboration between the different struggles, but as a tool to show the local government another way of making and managing the city. After a series of political events during the years after the crisis, such as the Occupy Madrid movement in May 2011, the work of the collectives became more related to political issues (Estalella 2012). One of the results of the results of this momentum was the opportunity to legally occupy one of the public plots, symbol of the ravages of the crisis, with the Campo de Cebada: a self-managed semi-public space of 4000 m². During its 6 years of operation, the place has become a symbol of the non-commercial use of public space and of the negotiations with the local government in order to impeach the rebuilt of the place in any other way than a public space.

During the years 2011 to 2015, the Collectives worked in different cartographies as to reinforce their (political) presence. The collaboration between the Collectives and the urban struggles, such as the Plataforma de Afectados por la Hipoteca (a platform that gives support to those threatened by housing evictions due to the mortgage crisis) has shown the need to aim for a bigger goal, overcoming the differences among the groups, and working as a network. After a phase of unrest, where several of the collectives have seen their self-managed space endangered, the collective Basurama wrote an open letter in the form of a Manifesto for the safeguard of these spaces their hands-on methodology (Periodico Diagonal, 17/03/2015). The text, moved around the collectives, expanding the demand for support of the self-managing initiatives. The occupants and improvised managers of Campo de Cebada were also fed up with the lack of political and financial supports, as with the slovenliness of some of its users that neglect the space and even tarnish Campo's public image. To show their discontent, they also published, in March 2015, an open letter and pasted a manifesto on the public tabloid that serves as outside communication for the assemblies (on the enclosure of the plot, near the entrance gate). In this general atmosphere of discontent and distress, but hoping to obtain political support, the network Red de Espacios Ciudadanos (Network of Civic Spaces) was created. With this name, the network wanted to give a positive message, putting the accent in a series of spaces that already existed in Madrid, rewarding their experience in the offer of non-commercial leisure and learning activities, social encounter, and even civic empowerment.

Following this proactive attitude, a group formed by 4 Architects Collectives and the Federation of Neighbour Associations, gathered the information for creating a map of all the citizen initiatives, occupied empty plots, and squats. The cartography publicly presented in September 2015 was called Los Madriles and compiled more than a hundred initiatives. The map was also presented in a series of public encounters (September to December 2015) in order to discuss the methods, in a debate formula, in which the existing and the missing initiatives could collaborate to foster citizen empowerment. The recently elected leftist Local Government, originating from the Occupy movement, has acknowledged the work of the collectives and has incorporated their discourse to theirs.

Since the apparition of the new Local Government in June 2015, the hope of the institutionalization of different collective practices grew up. The new government has started its political agenda with a meeting with several Architects Collectives and talking about a *new model* of urbanism: a series of new public policies, more in line with an *open source* urbanism. The launch of different participatory procedures (such as the ones for the renewal of the Plaza de España square and the pedestrianisation of the Gran Vía) has been greeted with enthusiasm by the supporters of greater transparency in the city making and citizen participation. Complementary with the public policies, public cultural centres such as Medialab and Intermediae, have launched *citizen laboratories* and groups to discuss and make proposals for the cultural agenda.

Understanding the emergence of the participatory imperative in Madrid

The advent of a new kind of city making made by Architects Collectives in Spain has aroused quite interest.

Firstly, in the Collectives themselves: to understand the phenomena, to avoid the danger of becoming a trend and to redefine their work as mediating between the citizens and the local government for establishing co-management agreements for (existing or in the making) civic spaces. This has generated numerous debates between the collectives, not only during the Arquitecturas Colectivas encounters, but also through intertwined publications in blogs and books. In fact, some of the groups are more politically engaged (against the existing government and its behaviour towards the alternative self-managed spaces and squats), while others collaborate with the Public Administration, following its planning and rules. These last ones are criticised as giving an illusion of citizen participation, while in fact imposing their will to the neighbours affected by a so-called participatory initiative.

Secondly, it has awakened the interest of the media: trying to explain the projects of these collectives, while somehow mixing different currents as if the collectives made an indistinct whole. This has generated certain amount of seminal grey literature: an article by the Architecture specialist of the paper *El País*¹, and a special feature dedicated to the Collectives in the journal *Arquitecturas Vivas*². The *El País* article insisted in the idea of the Collectives as a response to the crisis, which has awoken some critics from different Collectives because, as they say, their work started way before the crisis, thus not as a discontent but as an alternative to what was being done in terms of participation (*La Ciudad Viva*, 13/11/2012³). It has also raised the question about the role of the Public Administration that can take advantage of the situation to neglect its role as provider of Social equipment and Cultural activities. The dedicated issue of the journal *AV* aimed to open a new field of action for Architects, but ended up dividing the Collectives, uncovering a controversy between those who felt that they were manipulated and those who agreed with the image the article gave of them.

Thirdly, the phenomenon has raised the interest of the Academia: several anthropology researchers, such as Alberto Corsín and Adolfo Estalella, have based their ethnographic research in the monitoring of several collectives, considering that their approach of *learning-by-doing* could be implemented as a collective learning about the city, while we still learn how to do it. Their work has produced seminal reflections over the *right to infrastructure*⁴ (emulating the Right to the City) and the right to the experimentation⁵. Together with Basurama and Zuloark Collectives, Corsín and Estalella have created the program *Ciudad Escuela*⁶ (School City, different but similar to the Learning Cities movement). This program gives value to the informal learning people involved in citizen initiatives acquire: how to build and manage public spaces, how to negotiate with the Administration for occupying-permits and a better project for the rebuilt of empty spaces, how to create a network to gain support and visibility...

Finally, the clear interest the new Local Government has expressed in its official communications reveals the necessity to study the collectives' work as vector of a new practice of citizen empowerment. The public programmes *Laboratorios Ciudadanos* (citizen laboratories) and *Imagina Madrid* (imagine Madrid), launched during 2016 and driven by the cultural centre Medialab and the City Council's Administration respectively, indicate a possibility that the changes applied to public policies may not be only discursive.

The Doctoral Research retraces the apparent opposition between the official urbanism model, tackled to be executed behind closed doors, and the one proposed as participative and *open source*. In order to study this opposition, the Research defines their differences and similarities, determining their complementarity and possible collaboration. Two years after the implementation of participatory practices in Madrid, the time has come to evaluate to what extent these official practices have learned from informal procedures or still have to learn. The first criticism with the local government's programs has just started.

The Research question explores whether this other way of making and managing the city by its citizens can be complementary to public practices, changing and completing them, or a mere façade to an urban agenda that stays the same. The paper exposes the institutionalization and transformation of citizen practices into new ones, putting into discussion the methods that can be applied to the Research to determine if they are an illusion of change.

Problematisation: can collective practices reformulate participative practices?

As we have seen, the Architects collective practices take place in 3 main domains.

The first and most visible is the work developed in empty spaces. The occupation of Campo de Cebada and smaller plots has constituted a fruitful field of experimentation to imagine new strategies of action. The everyday conflicts in Cebada were part of the learning about how to communicate with the users of the space to point out the need to collectively take care of the place. The regular assemblies occurring mostly every Monday for 6 years in Cebada were an experiment on how to take collective decisions for the programming of a public space. The evolving relationship with the Public Administration, passing through different stages,

¹ 'Tras el tsunami de la crisis', Anaxu Zabalbeascoa, appeared in 20/10/2012

² https://issuu.com/paisajetransversal/docs/arquitecturaviva_145_colectivos

³ <http://www.laciudadviva.org/blogs/?p=15305> appeared in 13/11/2012

⁴ <http://www.prototyping.es/uncategorized/the-right-to-infrastructure> appeared in 28/10/2013

⁵ http://www.prototyping.es/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Estalella_Derecho-a-la-Experimentacion.pdf appeared in 16-17/11/2013

⁶ <http://ciudad-escuela.org/about/>

has been also a field for learning about the maintenance and reproduction of such self-managed spaces. The Administration initially welcomed the initiative (maintaining the neighbours busy and allowing them to occupy the space, while a rebuilding plan was elaborated), but it became more and more indifferent to the place. The disregard of the Local Government suggested that the occupants of the plot were already condemned to disappear when the new project would be ready (in June 2014 appeared a new construction project featuring a mixed building of housing and shopping mall⁷). Finally, the new government of 2015 has acknowledged the collective advocacy efforts, making a proposal for the rebuilding of the demolished swimming-pool and sports centre, as well as a public square, promising it would be collectively-managed. The opposition parties have raised the question of the real possibilities for this space to be effectively managed by an association or collective. The occupants of the space have still not been informed about the terms of such agreement, which starts to raise doubts about an effective will of supporting any self-managed space.

The Doctoral Research method draws on the participant observation of several Case Studies (the Cebada itself, but also *Esta es una Plaza* and *Espacio Vecinal Arganzuela*). The researchers Estalella and Corsín have based their work in the formulation of several apprenticeships about these self-managed spaces. Thus, to complete the Doctoral analysis, the research develops an extended Academic review (based on journal papers and on an impact assessment study made by researchers for one of Basurama's projects). It also reviews the media (based on interviews available online, articles and blogs) in order to acknowledge the impact of the practices and spaces over the political discourse and agenda.

The second domain of action for the Collectives is the organisation of debates and reflective gatherings. Retracing the evolution of the debates that stack together one upon another, the Research Methods follow the argument line that manages to emerge and produce new projects. In fact, one of the Case Studies, the *Ciudad Escuela* program, comes from a series of informal discussions between the collectives and goes so far as to propose itself as a platform for civic empowerment initiatives. The program *Instituto Do it Yourself* (which promotes the construction of furniture as devices for discussion, learning and sharing) is one of its results. The Research reviews the records of the public encounters, which have deliberately created by the Collectives such as to foster the reproduction of their ideas (in a *creative commons* attitude). The Research is completed by participant observation when possible and semi-direct interviews (before a debate, for its preparation, and afterwards, for the conclusions).

The third main activity of the Collectives is the development of networks for collaboration. Several of these collaborations are difficult to grasp and analyse accurately by the sole combination of interviews and media review. Instead, what is more seizable is the Cartography production, made from the collaboration between collectives and neighbour associations. The Research crosses the different collective maps to find out which spaces or struggles have been transformed, reproduced elsewhere, abandoned or institutionalized. This classification of spaces and struggles between valorised and rejected, would establish the basis used in the Research to determine the conditions for a collective space to be institutionalized, without losing its radical soul or its capacity to really complete the city practices in a more transparent, participative and inclusive process.

The combination of the three domains in which the Collectives work, hands-on action, debating and networking, is probably the key to produce a bigger impact than the solely activity developed on empty spaces which struggle to have their say in the negotiations for a self-management private-public agreement.

Discussion

The analysis of the results of the Doctoral Research results has pointed out a series of self-managed spaces, initially announced as maintained and funded, but which are now in a process of conversion. The results of this conversion are not yet available to analysis. That is the case of the ancient public market of Arganzuela that struggles to become a civic space since several years. Other spaces such as the Campo de Cebada have recently closed the doors (December 2017), finished silently their activities, awaiting the works that will not be starting until the springtime. This final ending, even for a future project that announces to be self-managed, leaves mostly discontent. In the one hand, some neighbours are afraid of who is going to manage the space and in which basis (no agreement with any association has yet been signed). In the other hand, the ones that used to manage the space are afraid that their fight for the management of the space, which included assemblies, negotiations, conflicts and learning-by-doing, will finally not be part of the future space. After some interviews with the association that occupied the Cebada, it appears that they are willing to hand the management to other neighbours. What they would not like to happen is to come back to a full management by the administration, within a law that regulates strictly the use of public space⁸.

In regard to the difficulty to change the participatory practices with the incorporation of the knowledge developed by Architects Collectives, Saskia Sassen has expressed, in the publication edited by Recetas Urbanas (Cirugeda Parejo 2011), the importance of political engagement as a means to achieve this change.

⁷ <http://www.elmundo.es/madrid/2014/06/26/53ac15f4268c3e53698b4577.html> El Mundo, 26/06/2014

⁸ The Ley Orgánica de Protección Ciudadana (Law for the Protection of the Citizens), approved in 2015 with popular struggle and opposition, and the Ley de Prevención de Drogodependencia y Otros Transtornos Adictivos (the Spanish Alcohol Law), approved in 2002, are the main instruments of control of the deviations and spontaneous/unwanted uses of the public space.

However, what she understands by political, is “not criticising the formal political system, but the possibility to make something known, to voice something” (Alvarez Benítez in Cirugeda Parejo 2011, pg 59). In her conversation with Arquitecturas Colectivas’ members, Sassen values the idea expressed by Cirugeda of a city managed and programmed by its inhabitants, but she cautions against letting this management only to the empowered, not letting it be done by the dispossessed and the distressed. In this sense, the evaluation of the inclusiveness of a project, a debate or a networking activity is crucial to determine its real changing impact. She cautions also against the incapacity to create a management agreement that can be adaptive and flexible in order to evolve with the future needs of the city (op. cit. Page 66).

In another interview made by Madrid’s collective Paisaje Transversal, Sassen is enquired about the term *open source urbanism* she has used in an article about Smart Cities. The term, she explains, refers to the idea of squares and trees as the *hardware* of the city and the practices of the people as its *software*. She continues exposing the idea that one can change the city *hardware* and not to pay attention to its *software*, but it is in this last element, people’s everyday activities and struggles, where considered as a whole, relies the possibility for the city to evolve according to time. The *open source* concept can be used, says Sassen, as a tool that helps the people take ownership of the city and its evolution⁹. In this sense, the term is used as a prototype: not being able to close its definition to something fixed, but allowing it to evolve according to the practices it refers to.

Catherine Neveu, in her article about the *wildling*¹⁰ of the public practices (Neveu 2011), analyses the intricate relationship between official participatory practices and social movements, advocating for an intertwined presentation of their mutual influence, instead of exposing the practices as a binary opposition. In this sense, we have tried to present the collective practices as multiple and diverse, in order to escape of the binary opposition, but also of the mistake of putting all the collective practices in the same box.

Neveu adds also the advice to not to limit the term *participation* to the only institutional practices, as she realizes it is already practiced by social movements deliberately distinguished from the institutions. The form, in which these social movements contribute, is, according to Neveu, the development of political subjectivities, raising the debate about what makes society. In this sense, our distinction of the three main domains in which the collectives develop their activities: hands-on management of space, debating and networking, tries to demonstrate the systemic strategy that starts to produce a form of *open source* urbanism. It is the interaction of the three that raises the debate.

Laurence Bherer, in her article about the ambiguous relationship between participation and public policies (Bherer 2011), she sees a sign of the democratisation of the public practices, but she raises the concern about if her analysed practices constitute just a charade or if they reveal a real change. As she analyses mainly the Administration’s public policies, it is difficult to see the *contamination* of official practices that comes from social movements, as we could observe from Neveu’s work. Thus, it is important to establish a complete panorama of the different participative practices (official and collective ones), and not only a representative panel of them. Even if a selection of Cases of Study, for every of the three domains, should allow to define in depth each one of the themes addressed with the different practices, the comparison or contamination should be done with the whole amount of activities.

In the end, the exploration of other researches in the field of the interaction between collective and participative official practices brings more or less the same family of questions. The first question that arises is whether the collective practices and the official participatory procedures can be complementary or they are condemned to be in a competitive position one from the other. The second, inquiries about the strategies or conditions for adapting an existing civic space or collective to an ideal (open: transparent, inclusive and participatory) official procedure: should they remain separated? Or can be merged? If so, in which conditions? This adaptation or merge should be applied to the actors involved, the spaces used and the programming developed. And finally, how can we formulate a series of reproductive conditions for the merging of citizen initiatives into participatory practices, in order to limit the improvised procedures?

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⁹ Interview of Saskia Sassen by Paisaje Transversal, available in <http://www.paisajetransversal.org/2013/02/entrevista-saskia-sassen-urbanismo-de.html>

¹⁰ My translation from « ensauvagement des pratiques »

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