Research and Activism

4th Urban Studies Days
Conference proceedings

Department of Urban Studies
Estonian Academy of Arts

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The following is a compilation of the proceedings of the 4th Urban Studies Days Conference titled "Research and Activism", during 25th and 26th of April 2007 in Tallinn, Estonia.

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Introduction: Acting, reacting, preparing and seeding

Lilia Del Río

Many terrorist events have showed me that acting upon the space is an effective way to capture it and own it. Recently an artist invited me to participate in an international artistic movement against the G8 meeting and its ideology. His invitation raised the questions whether I am concerned about the proceedings of that meeting, and, more fundamentally, what it means to raise your voice against something, what it means to act upon the space. In the end, I decided not to join since I believe reacting and doing something-against-something is not the kind of activism I would like to have on the streets.

This occasion helped me understand the difference between the different kinds of activism. Though most of the activist interventions aim to raise questions of the procedures taking place in the urban life that are either hidden or difficult to reach for most of the population, not all of them imply a real progression, nor they propose solutions that matter. Often, activism is of a revolutionary, opposition. It stands against something, as a reaction, failing to do more than that. Though this is the first step in the activist practices (the emotion, the anger, the passiveness of society, the feeling of not being counted, not having a voice…), the reaction is only the driving force for the real activism. The real activism I believe is not acting *against* something, but taking this further and going beyond the mere emotion, into finding a creative solution by working with the community, organisations and groups of people to get results that benefit themselves as well as the urban environment, communication between each other, and a better quality of life. Good solutions always include creative processes, constant teamwork and motivation, in all stages, as Liisa Horelli and Ritva Harle suggest in their paper:

> *"Creative activism tends to provide new opportunities for individual and collective learning, as well as supportive structures for tacit groups, at least in the context of local planning and development. Activism is a dynamic word that arouses both positive and negative emotions. The positive emotions raised by activism are connected to the betterment of different issues […]"*

Rally Conurbano members mention the word "activate". Under this light, activism can act as the spark that spreads like a fire through the whole forest. Activating and motivating are some of the most positive sides of activism, and of our interest.

Activism is never passive

On April 26th 2007, the riots now named "Pronksiöö" (The Bronze Night)[1] shook the whole centre of Tallinn, Estonia, right after our conferences finished. Not only the physical structure of the centre was damaged, but the mental tranquillity was lost in many of us living here. I consider that the main driving force in the crowd attacking shops and other street-side locations was to speak out, to vent what they kept inside and take it out with some random reason, on some random window. It is unfortunate that neither Estonians nor Russians-Estonians deal further with the issue of integration after this night. Hoping to presence no more riots, I will be waiting for the time when both sides of the population make peace with each other.

Considering such events, the space can be seen as a mirror that reflects the conditions and emotions of the human being and of the community in the urban environment. This is one of the many negative activisms which happen

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[1] The Bronze night in Tallinn was presumably a manifestation of Russian Estonians against the removal of the monument of the Bronze Soldier from its location in the city centre. The monument represents different meanings for Estonians than for Russian Estonians, and this confusion, as part of a lack of integration of the Russian Estonians within society, brought an extraordinary set of riots around the city centre.

every day somewhere in this world. These activisms in some fortunate cases have been transforming into more creative interventions, which may propose solutions to the question they raise. Such positive activisms take a new form, beyond the action-reaction polarity, opening its action into a wide range of possibilities to change the world.

Seeding the future

The 4th Urban Studies Days raised more questions than we had at the beginning. This was a new starting point for us to start acting within our society, to raise the questions in the Estonian context. And it is in the same way that activism is a seed set up in a physical space, which needs to be grown through time and care. Not by the authorities but by those who want to feel the city or environment as their own, not as a no-man's-land.

The activist interventions that are of concern to us, and that sprouted up in the discussions of our conference, were mainly questioning:

- The quality of the urban environment,
- Raising an awareness of the conditions of the urban environment and
- Activism and interventions as a toolbox for changing and improving our cities.

These themes are constantly dealt with in the following pages. The papers presented here are all contributions to the general consciousness of our contemporary world, where activism plays an important role in the creation of city, giving opportunities for integration where planning and policymaking cannot reach. Rasmus Kask in his text about the Urban Laboratory in Tallinn argues "that there is no actual conflict between government officials and social activists: rather a misunderstanding and a different conceptual framework working for similar goals".

As keynote speaker, Volker Eick acknowledged that the decision-making includes not only the state, but many private organizations, companies and foundations. There is no more somebody up there deciding for us what needs to be done, but it is up to each of us to make those decisions and act upon them consciously. The responsibility lies in each of us.

At the end, when we understand the role of each of us in creating awareness, the most important thing remains being prepared. Preparedness is a concept that has been around since the September 11 events, and it can be considered the only thing that we need to train for. To be prepared to act upon the space, to be prepared to help our cities, our communities and our world, at this moment and time. The activisms here are of a positive reflection, bringing consciousness and light into the everyday world of many.

Lilia Del Río
13.07.07
Tallinn, Estonia

Neoliberalism and Urban Space:
Activism, Atavism, and Aspiration

(April 25, 2007)
Volker Eick
Transcription of the Keynote speech

What I am planning to do in my presentation[2] is to introduce the concept of neoliberalism or neoliberalization to you as it has been deployed by the Regulation School within the political economy. I will try to relate this to the urban environment, and more particularly to the changing role and the growing importance of cities. That is a crucial aspect, because ever since the 1980s cities have played an increasingly important role under and for contemporary neoliberal globalization. I will then proceed with some questions regarding activism and the neoliberal glocalization, because I think the term glocalization is a more appropriate term to describe contemporary worldwide processes affecting cities.

OUTLINE
1. Neoliberalism and Neoliberalization/Globalization as Glocalization.
2. Urban Neoliberalization.
3. Some further challenges…
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Neoliberalism & Neoliberalization
- **Based on Liberalism** (17th century and onwards)
  (among others: Smith, Hume, Locke; 20th century: Friedrich Hayek, Milton Friedman)
- Individual autonomy;
- The market as the most effective/efficient instrument for distribution of goods and social wealth;
- A non-interventionist state since the nation state is perceived as *the* obstacle against individual autonomy and market efficiency.

Neoliberalism is not »a hermetically sealed monolithic structure« (Peck/Tickell, 2007) in the sense of an ideology to be applied as a monolithic set of principles but rather should be treated as »actually existing neoliberalism« (Brenner/Theodore, 2002), that is a broad range of actual practices which are producing neoliberalism or even neoliberalism*s.*

Neoliberalization, understood here as a process, describes an ideological and political project against the Keynesian Fordist Welfare State emerging in the early 1950s to the 1960s.
   Slide 2

What is neoliberalism and how does it differ from its predecessor liberalism? Neoliberalism is understood here in a broad sense as a principle, originally derived from the work of the 18th and 19th century classical liberal scholars

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[2] I am more than thankful to Elitza Stanoeva for her support on this paper. The usual disclaimers apply.

Volker Eick works as political scientist and currently finishes his PhD on Neue Sicherheitskonzepte im sich wandelnden Wohlfahrtsstaat. Kriminalpolitik zwischen Kommerz und Community (New security concepts within the changing welfare state. Crime control between commercialization and community). Most recent publications: Preventive Urban Discipline: Rent-a-cops and the Neoliberal Globalization in Germany. In: *Social Justice*, 33/3 (September 2006, in print); Space Patrols. The new peace-keeping functions of nonprofits. Contesting neoliberalization or the urban poor? In: Helga Leitner/Jamie Peck/Eric Sheppard (eds.): *Contesting Neoliberalism. The Urban Frontier*. New York. Guilford Press, 2006 (September, in print).

including Smith, Hume, and Locke among others. Friedrich Hayek and Milton Friedman were the most prominent scholars of the 20th century to revive these ideas in their purest form but it was not until the late 1970s and 1980s that the ideas became guiding principles for the social policy of Western Europe and North America. To better understand neoliberal ideology it would be useful if we first outline the main principles of liberalism adopted later by neoliberalism.

The first principle is that (neo)liberalism is premised on individual autonomy and even though classical liberal theories differ in a number of ways yet they are relatively unified in situating this principle at the core of any liberal society. The second important principle of (neo)liberalism is that the market is enforced as the most efficient and normatively ideal way to distribute goods and to solve social problems. And third, the state is viewed as the potential impediment to both the individual autonomy and the market efficiency and should thus be as non-interventionist as possible. So we have the individual, we have the market, and we have the state – the individual is in the centre, the market is the most efficient thing and the state in this ideology should be non-interventionist as much as possible.

Neoliberalism *in action* is not based on…

o   the vanishing of *the state*…
     ¤ instead it is the practical »hollowing out« of the nation state, i.e. glocalization, and subsequently, the growing importance of scales above and below the nation state;
o   a *non-interventionist* state…
     ¤ instead it involves devolution and decentralization;
o   a *solely* market-led society…
     ¤ instead it is sustained through governance, public-private partnerships, pluralization of stakeholders;
o   a purely *ideological* project…
     ¤ but *in practice*, entails »neo-Schumpeterian« economic policies such as:
        • Supply-side orientation
        • Privatization
        • Competitiveness
        • (Re)Commodification
        • Deregulation
        • Workfare

Slide 3

Nevertheless, neoliberalism does not imply the vanishing of the nation state but rather its »hollowing out« if I refer to the term used by Bob Jessop. This means that the nation state would delegate or transfer some of its responsibilities to the local level – and to the institutions and organizations above the national level such as the IMF, the G8, the European Union, and so forth. At the very same time, neoliberalism does not necessitate a non-interventionist state but instead a state, be it a local state or a national state, which is decentralizing, reorganizing itself into different scales where it then promotes the concept of neoliberalism. And neoliberalism does not suggest a solely market-led society; instead it requires governance, public-private-partnerships, and pluralization which do not necessarily mean that the state is becoming more democratic but that there are more stakeholders than before. And finally, in reality neoliberalism is not a purely ideological project. Instead, it entails the so-called »neo-Schumpeterian« economic policies such as supply-side orientation, competitiveness, deregulation, privatization, (re)commodification and finally workfare, which is currently a very prominent, let's say, »reform« in Germany.

A segment of critical scholarship on neoliberalism is particularly concerned with the understanding of neoliberalism stemming from the shift of focus from its ideology toward its actually existing praxis. In other words, those scholars are interested less in the intellectual lineages of liberal thought than in the way that such ideas filter through theory to practice. Moreover, there are diverse geographical scales on which neoliberalism unfolds and one of these scales is, of course, the urban.

One particularly useful concept in the literature is the notion that the actually existing neoliberalism is more of a highly contingent process than a final product – as it is often framed within the neoliberal ideology. Some colleagues of mine, like Nik Theodore, have described this process as a dialectical one, in a sense that it is constituted by the conflicting tendencies towards destruction of structures already in existence and construction of new ones. Neoliberal destruction discloses in the removal of the so-called Keynesian (referring to John Maynard Keynes) amenities such as public housing, public space and the like, of policies such as redistributed welfare and food stamps in the case of the US, and of institutions such as the labor unions in the UK, the US department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the like. And finally, this process subverts established Keynesian agreements; among them, to name just two, the Fordist labor arrangements enabling continuous negotiations between the unions and the companies that the state would oversee, and second, the federal government's redistributions to the *Länder* in the German case (or states in general), to municipalities and cities. In many countries the amount of money redistributed from the national to the local scale is now decreasing or has become a much more complicated issue. On the other hand, neoliberalization implies the establishment of new institutions and practices or the co-optation of the existing ones with the ultimate goal of reproducing neoliberalism in the future. That might lead to government business consortia, to legislative amendments, for example initiating workfare policies, or to different types of public-private partnerships.

Jamie Peck and Adam Tickell have depicted this evolution in a slightly more, if you will, linear way, arguing that neoliberalism consists of three phases: a proto phase, a roll-back phase and finally, a roll-out phase. Whereas proto neoliberalism refers to the theoretical stage of initiating neoliberalization, the two subsequent phases encompass the development of neoliberalism as praxis. During the roll-back phase that is reactive in its essence, Keynesian policies and formations are dissolved to make way for the second pragmatic phase of the neoliberalization, the roll-out phase that involves proactive neoliberal practices and ideas.

Three Forms of Neoliberalization
(proto, roll-back, roll-out)

PROTO	ROLL-BACK	ROLL-OUT
[destructive/deregulatory]	[creative/re-regulatory]	
Mode of intervention	State withdrawal	Governance
Market regulation	»Deregulation«	Experimental re-regulation
Political style	Ideological conviction	Pragmatic learning
Change agents	Vanguardist politicians	Technopolis
Front line	Economic policy	Institutionally embedded
Taxation	Selective givebacks	Systemic regression
Monetary policy	»Cold-bath« monetarism	Prudence
Public expenditure	Cuts	Fiscal responsibility
Labour-market regime	Mass unemployment	Full employability
Employment relations	De-Unionization	Flexibility
Social policy	Retrenchment	Workfare
Financial regulation	Liberalization	Standards and codes
Development ethos	Structural adjustment	Social capital

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I would like to highlight two of the concepts listed above, the »employment relations« (specific for the proto phase) and the »de-unionization« (occurring in the roll-back phase). If we consider what happened in the 1980s in the UK, then we could clearly discern an aggressive attack against the unions including the use of police mobilization. In that sense, it was not merely a political or ideological fight but moreover, it was a de-unionization campaign with the ultimate goal to destroy the unions altogether, even though that is too strong a statement to which I will come back later. Whereas

in the roll-back phase the power of the unions was destroyed, in the roll-out phase the »flexibility« approach was adopted so that corporations could change working hours, decrease wages, and try to shift any negotiations into dictates.

The second example might be »social policy« in regard to which the roll-back would relate to the decrease of welfare money, whereas the roll-out brought into play a new concept coined in the US as »workfare.« Within its regulatory framework, people were still entitled to unemployment benefits and welfare benefits BUT under the condition they have to work and the work they are forced to accept does not need to correspond to their professional skills or work experiences. The dictate behind this concept is: If you want to be supported by the state because you ran out of work, you ought to take any job we offer you. That is an entirely new concept that was never in operation before; therefore, we can say, it was *rolled out* under neoliberalism.

Globally, scholars like Bob Jessop suggested that this restructuring of the Keynesian urban policy had the aggregate effect of hollowing out the nation state, decreasing its role as an institutional buffer between localities and the global economy. With the reduction of the national interventions, for example in housing, local infrastructure (like water-conduit or sewerage), in welfare, etc., localities are forced to either finance such spheres of action and intervention themselves or abandon them entirely.

Erik Swyngedouw (1997, 2004) deems this larger process as glocalization, as a simultaneous shift – upwards, to the global economy and its institutions and downwards – to the local level. The regulatory power previously held or exercised by the nation state, therefore, vanishes. Given its geographically and temporally contingent nature however, this process affected different national contexts in different ways, so that under neoliberalism cities or countries do not necessarily become identical or even similar. The aggressive roll-back of the welfare state took place first in the US, preceding similar developments in Canada, in the UK, and even in Germany. And in all countries, one can think of examples of the roll-back phase being incomplete within some sectors and relatively complete within others. The roll-back phase, or the destruction of the Keynesian interventions, and the roll-out phase or the implementation of more proactive neoliberal policies are thus highly contingent, incremental, uneven, and to a large extent incomplete. The depicted policy landscape is highly segmented in terms of geography and in terms of social policy and concentrations of remaining Keynesian amenities such as public housing. In the German case public housing still exists alongside roll-out liberal policies such as workfare. This kind of policies might be enforced in some countries and not in others, or even within one country they might be more advanced in one city compared to another.

Thus, while it is useful to suggest that policies in North America and Europe are increasingly dominated by a unified, relatively simple set of ideas concerning the individual autonomy, the role of the state, and the role of the market, the institutional manifestation of neoliberalism as another relatively simple set of ideas is apparently highly uneven between and within countries, mainly due to the different ways through which these ideas are processed into policies.

Yet, Smith (1996) argues that for a better understanding of the neoliberal transformation of cities it would be useful to substitute the term neoliberalism with the more specific term »revanchist urbanism« that he coined. One of the most well known examples of »revanchist urbanism« is the policy of the former mayor of New York, Rudolph Guiliani – the »Mussolini of Manhattan« as he has once been entitled by the *New York Times* – of tracking down the »homeless people who had invaded New York« (his own words). Such policies are worldwide distributed under different headings such as the concept of fixing *Broken Windows* or the so-called *Zero Tolerance* approach.

And finally, David Harvey summarized the nature of the neoliberalization process in the following fashion: »We can interpret neoliberalization either as an utopian project to realize a theoretical design for the reorganization of international capitalism or as a political project to re-establish the conditions for capital accumulation and to restore the power of economic elites. […] I argue that the second of these objectives has in practice dominated.«

»We can [...] interpret neoliberalization either as an utopian project to realize a theoretical design for the reorganization of international capitalism or as a political project to re-establish the conditions for capital accumulation and to restore the power of economic elites. [...] I argue that the second of these objectives has in practice dominated. Neoliberalization has not been very effective in revitalizing global capital accumulation, but it has succeeded remarkably well in restoring, or in some instances (as in Russia and China) creating, the power of an economic elite. The theoretical utopianism of neoliberal argument has [...] primarily worked as a system of justification and legitimation for whatever needed to be done to achieve this goal« (emphasize in original).

David Harvey (2005: 19)

»We can [...] examine the history of neoliberalism either as an utopian project providing a theoretical template for the reorganization of international capitalism or as a political project concerned both to re-establish the conditions for capital accumulation and the restoration of class power. [...] I argue that the last of these objectives has dominated. Neoliberalism has not proven good at revitalizing global capital accumulation but it has succeeded remarkably well in restoring class power. As a consequence, the theoretical utopianism of neoliberal argument has worked more as a system of justification and legitimation for whatever had to be done to restore class power: The principles of neoliberalism are quickly abandoned whenever they conflict with this class project.«

David Harvey (2006: 149)

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So Bob Jessop, in particular, develops the argument that as neoliberalism plays out differently in time and space, one might think about neoliberalism in different forms, all of them attempting to adjust and to sustain capitalism – although the latter may seem a contradiction in itself. Therefore, he came out with four different forms, which should be perceived as idealized forms to be used as analytical tools rather than as indispensably existing forms of neoliberalism.

Before explicating these forms, I will briefly explain what is at stake when we talk about Bob Jessop's term of a »Schumpeterian Workfare Post-National Regime«. Bob Jessop used the term »SWPN« to suggest, first and foremost, that one important feature of neoliberalization was the »creative destruction« that **Schumpeter** mentioned, namely the way capitalism constantly invents itself by destroying its old manifestations and by replacing them with new realms of accumulation, new forms of regulation, new institutions and so forth.

Workfare signalizes a profound change in the employment system characteristic for the welfare state in the sense that it allows for welfare benefits only if those who are unemployed and capable of working, indeed do work, no matter if they do community work, low-wage work or even unpaid work. In the US for example, undertaking community work is even a precondition for having access to public housing, what in Europe would be defined as social housing or subsidized housing, and similar patterns apply for the UK. Within the US system of social welfare even young mothers are obliged to work in order to receive benefits. In addition, if they are younger than 18 they either have to be married or if not they have to stay at their parents' home in order to receive benefits. With this Welfare Reform – into operation since 1996 and popularized by the former US-president, Bill Clinton as »ending welfare as we know it« - another law came into force, limiting the maximum time one is allowed to get welfare benefits to five years. In Germany, and that refers to the unevenness of the worldwide neoliberal project that I have been talking about, the respective workfare regime only started in 2004 when the so-called Hartz laws were passed. Not only did that law introduce the workfare principle stipulating work-readiness as the precondition for receiving welfare benefits but it also endowed employment officers with the power to deny or to grant access to housing based on the apartment size and the monthly rent. That means if you are unemployed you get social benefits from the state but the state also has to pay for your housing; so if the employment office – in this case the so-called *JobCenter* for long-term unemployed – decides that your flat is too large or too expensive it can and will make you move out. In other words, unemployed people could be forced to move into cheaper, hence more remote areas, mainly in the outskirts of the cities. So here again the direct link between neoliberalization and the city becomes apparent.

The term **post-national** refers to the situation in which the nation state is no longer the only decisive entity to rule over the wide range of policy fields but is bound to the decisions or at least suggestions made by the European Union, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the G8, and other global agencies.

And finally, the term »**regime**« instead of »state« clarifies that it is no longer the nation state alone who decides what policy steps need to be taken; instead, various private stakeholders ranging from companies, non-profit organizations, voluntary organizations, special policy bodies (development agencies, foundations, etc.) take part in the decision-making on different scales - supra-national, national, regional, local and even neighborhood levels. One widely known form of decision-making is the public-private partnerships and, referring to the urban in particular, one might think of shopping malls, sports stadiums, railway stations, and the like, all of which are mass private property developments – and want to have a say in urban development and urban management. And one might also think of the concept of Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) that has already been established in the late 1960s in the US and from there transmitted through the UK to continental Europe. BIDs according to Christian Parenti (1999) can be described as »private, self-taxing urban micro states, that do everything from cleaning the streets, to guide tours, to float bonds, and arrest beggars.« BIDs are deployed by the urban business elites and, as Parenti goes on, they »embody all the power and privileges of the state, yet bear none of the responsibilities and limitations of democratic government.« A BID is a body of business members representing the business elite of the city, basically in downtown, and deciding what is to happen in the public space.

So let us go briefly through the four forms of neoliberalism as outlined by Bob Jessop:

Four Forms of Neoliberalism
[in an attempt to »sustain« the neoliberal project]

- **Neoliberalism**
- **Neostatism**
- **Neocorporatism**
- **Neocommunitarianism**
  »Schumpeterian Workfare Post-National Regimes/SWPN«
  (Bob Jessop)
  Slide 6

So neoliberalism in its purest form was first developed in Chile in 1973 under the guidance of the liberal *Chicago Boys* (see Harvey 2005) after the proto-neoliberalizing phase. Currently we can observe the re-emergence of such purest form within the political economy of Iraq where, among other conflicts, due to the struggles for control over the oil resources, for example, unions as well as strikes are not allowed – let alone the mass killings that include »Iraqi residents of Fallujah slaughtered by US marines with globally banned phosphorus bombs and agent orange, Iraqi women raped and killed by the same US units«, as Neil Smith (2007) recently puts it. So the purest form of neoliberalism is very often interlinked to what David Harvey (2006) calls »accumulation by dispossession« and if we look at the US foreign policy we will see that war as well often goes hand in hand with it.

»Adjusting Neoliberalism«

- **Neoliberalism**
  - Liberalization – promoting free competition
  - Deregulation – reducing the role of the law and the state
  - Privatization – selling off the public sector
  - Market proxies in the residual public sector

> - Internationalization – free inward and outward flows
> - Lower direct taxes – increasing consumer choice
> **Slide 7**

One variation of this purest form of neoliberalism is what Bob Jessop defines as neostatism which we might discern in France and once the elections there are over we will know better how it plays out. It probably will stir up a very different kind of neoliberalization processes than those we know by now.

> **»Adjusting Neoliberalism«**
> - **Neostatism**
>   - From state control to regulated competition
>   - Guiding national strategy rather than planning top-down
>   - Auditing the performance of the private and public sectors
>   - Public-Private Partnerships under state guidance
>   - Neo-Mercantilist protection of core economy
>   - Expanding the role of new collective resources
> **Slide 8**

The third form of neoliberalism is neocorporatism which might apply to Germany in some respects but obviously no longer with regards to its last characteristic, the high taxation to finance social investment. This used to be a topic of high importance in Germany but not anymore whereas the rebalancing of competition and cooperation or the widening range of private, public and other »stakeholders« are currently still very important issues in Germany.

> **»Adjusting Neoliberalism«**
> - **Neocorporatism**
>   - Rebalancing competition and cooperation
>   - Decentralized »regulated self-regulation«
>   - Widening the range of private, public, and other »stakeholders«
>   - Expanding the role of Public-Private Partnerships
>   - Protecting the core economic sectors in an open economy
>   - High taxation to finance social investment
> **Slide 9**

And finally, we have neocommunitarianism which from my point of view turns out to be a flanking mechanism within the game of roll-back neoliberalism from the late 1980s up to the early 1990s. And I think that this holds true especially on the city scale, at least in Western Europe where basically every country has programs aiming at social stabilization, social integration, empowerment, self-responsibility, self-reliance and support. The effect of those agendas, especially in the so-called disadvantaged areas, is that urban space is now policed by programs such as the *New Deal for the Communities* in the UK, the *Socially Integrated City* program in Germany, or the *Big Cities* program in The Netherlands.

> **»Adjusting Neoliberalism«**
> - **Neocommunitarianism**
>   - Deliberalization – limiting free competition
>   - Empowerment – enhancing the role of the third sector
>   - Socialization – expanding social economy
>   - Emphasis on social use-value and social cohesion
>   - Fair trade instead of free trade; »think global, act local«
>   - Redirecting taxes – citizen's wage, carer's allowances
> **Slide 10**

Another program that I want to mention in this context, even though it is not focused on the »disadvantaged areas« but on the so-called remote areas, is the *Broedplaatsen* [speak: bru:d-pla:t-sun] program also in The Netherlands. By contrast to the above mentioned programs, it aims at attracting new developers for waterfront development by encouraging the so-called young urban creative class to move in. And what inevitably comes to one's mind here is Richard Florida's book on »The Rise of the Creative Class« which is not even worth the paper it is printed on. So, for a given period of time, land is handed over to the creative class (reduced or even no rent, subsidies by the city of Amsterdam) and once the area becomes attractive due to these pioneers of gentrification, as I would like to call them, it will be taken over either by the state or the city municipality and sold to the urban elites. So in this development process cities are taking advantage of artists, architects, urban planners and generally speaking, of their creativity and making it profitable.

Let us come back now to the global and the local scale.

The Global and the Local

- Growing international, national, inter-regional, inter and inner urban competition
- *Location! Location! Location!*
- Globalization & Localisation = **Glocalization**
  Slide 11

In as much as the nation state loses importance in the decision-making process, it has in the neoliberalizing process evolved responsibilities to the local level, local scale. Today nation states and state policies are increasingly outplayed on this local level due to the intensified competition among cities that unfolds on different scales - in the case of Central European countries, cities like Vienna, Budapest and Berlin are heavily competing with each other to become the locations of big international companies and of the strongest headquarter economies, the chief labor force and so forth. The same struggles take place among the world or the so-called global cities which are competing for hosting the leading companies, channeling capitals through their respective stock exchanges, and introducing the most current technologies, the most suitable examples being obviously London, New York, Los Angeles, Tokyo and São Paolo.

At the very same time, this means that if a city is striving to become a global city as in the case of Berlin, the urban government should make sure that the city centre, being the shop window or the business card of the city, is in good shape and is not stained by the presence of drug-addicts, homeless people, and other »undesirables«. To achieve such a goal the city ought to behave like a company and become highly competitive; this includes the management of all the outcomes or devastations due to the neoliberalization process. Another part of it is aiming at making such outcomes (homelessness, poverty, unemployment, etc.) less noticeable, or even invisible. Which at the very same time means that the urban forms of government have become entrepreneurialized – with a strong emphasis on economic efficiency and low taxes (for the corporations, of course), but also on individual responsibility, morality, and duties (for the working class and the urban poor, of course).

So the most important goal of today's urban policy is to mobilize the city space as an arena of market-oriented economic growth. Roll-out neoliberalism has established some flanking mechanisms and modes of crisis displacement such as local economic development policies and community based programs to elevate social exclusion and it has introduced new forms of coordination and inter-organizational networking among previously distinct spheres of local state intervention, so that ultimately, social, political, and even ecological criteria have become intertwined and at the same time redefined in an attempt to promote economic competitiveness. Social infrastructures, political culture, and ecological foundations of the city are being transformed into an economic asset. Already with the deregulation and the dismantling of the welfare state in the 1980s, the conditions of the urban conflict began to change dramatically. Distributive policies were

increasingly replaced by measures of reinforcing urban competitiveness; as a consequence socio-spatial polarization intensified whereas wealth and economic opportunities became more unevenly distributed.

During the roll-out phase of neoliberalism in the 1990s, new discourses on reforms (dealing with welfare dependency, community regeneration, social capital, and the like) and new institutions and modes of delivery such as integrated area development, civic engagement, public-private-partnerships, urban regeneration, and social welfare emerged. So there are a huge number of non-state actors involved today in all those fields of activity originating from the early 1990s which was determined as the starting point of the roll-out phase of neoliberalism by scholars such as Adam Tickell and Jamie Peck and Nick Theodore. Even though you may find, especially in the more advanced capitalist countries such as the US and the UK, that already in the mid or late 1980s such programs came into existence. These new discourses and partnering programs reinforce but also instrumentalize communities and other social networks and in this sense create and maintain the competitive and revitalized urban growth machine. Moreover, such developments eroded the foundations upon which generalized resistance might be built and as a consequence, spaces of contestation became limited. Borrowing here from my advisor, Prof. Margit Mayer, there are at least four frontiers along which activist mobilization is still concentrated challenging, in one way or another, the neoliberalization of the urban governance process.

According to Mayer (2007), the first frontier challenges the growth politics that have come to dominate the municipal repertoire. In resistance to growth politics various movements emerged that fight the new downtown developments, contest the incongruity patterns of investment and disinvestment transforming city centers, and resist the entrepreneurial ways in which cities market themselves and compete on regional and global scales. A local example that we came across yesterday and now comes to my mind is the »The Bronze Soldier« monument, obviously strongly impregnated with ideology that in the contemporary situation of tensions between the ethnical Estonians and the Russians living in Estonia triggers a clash of interpretations. In my view this monument is constructed to commemorate the defeat of fascist Germany and hence, the Soviet victory which also makes it a powerful symbol of the already rejected Soviet dominance and oppression. From what we learnt yesterday currently there is an ongoing debate whether it should be destroyed or preserved and it is not quite clear what is the rationale behind the project to tear down the monument. Is it meant as an end of history? Is it meant as a symbolic encroachment on Russians? And in my view it may well be the case that such an ideological reading of its destruction is only disguising essentially different motivations. If we relate this to the agenda of redeveloping cities it might turn out that the destruction is not about Russophobia or about ending history but about someone having the economic power to appropriate this inner city space for establishing a shopping mall, a new hotel or some other commercial enterprise. That would ultimately erode or at least substantially redefine its function of a major plaza. And yesterday it looked to me as a vivid public place - it was around 9 o'clock in the evening and there were a lot of people around, some of them bringing flowers, some of them taking pictures – unlike all the other inner city places where basically nobody was around except the police and a private security company's van. So it seems a really interesting place to investigate how activism deals with the restructuring of urban spaces.

The second frontier are poor neighborhoods which have long been the turf of community based or neighborhood orientated activism but, at least on the EU level, it has been increasingly incorporated within, or even absorbed by, the frameworks of territorially oriented programs such as the programs I mentioned – the *New Deal for the Communities* in the UK, the *Socially Integrated City* program in Germany, and the *Big Cities* program in The Netherlands.

The third frontier stirs up mobilization against the neoliberalization of social and labor market policies, against the dismantling of the welfare state and pro social and environmental justice – and all those issues came to the forefront of urban activism over the last decade. Social justice in particular became the realm of many advocacy NGOs and workers' right organizations, many of which in more and more countries appear to converge into a new type of broad coalitions. Through all those social movements the old-style unionizing gets fresh blood but also becomes more open and that is especially promising in the US context but also in some parts of (Western) Europe as it might lead to broader coalitions'

building. One widely known example is the constant negotiation process carried out between *Attac* and parts of the unions which try to confront the new workfare policies and the immense growth of the low wage labor sectors.

And finally, the forth frontier is contested by the so-called anti-globalization movement which in my mind is a very incorrect term because none of those organizations is confronting globalization per se but rather the kind of neoliberal globalization that is taking shape today. The interesting aspect of the anti-neoliberal globalization movements during the last five to ten years is their discovery of the local level as an important ground for their successful operation. So these movements are increasingly focused on localities at the scale where global neoliberalization touches down, to make itself tangible and where global issues become localized. That happens especially in Europe where networks that are part of this trans-national movement are accommodating their repertoires and goals of the global protest to the local issues at stake. And they are often working in collaboration with the social justice alliances characteristic of this fourth frontier.

»Within the Fordist growth model, municipal policies had focused on expanding the urban infrastructure and managing large-scale urban renewal. In contrast, the growth-first approach to urban development, with which many cities reacted to the decline of inner-city middle-class population and business commitment, put social investment and redistribution second. This public sector austerity went hand in hand with a limited urban policy repertoire, emphasizing place promotion, supply side intervention, central-city makeovers, i.e. the rebuilding and expansion of down-towns into up-scale, attractive service centers or world-class conference and hospitality destinations.

With so-called mega-events, cities began to engage in subsidizing zero-sum competition, not only via large-scale projects (such as waterfront redevelopment schemes, train station make-overs, or efforts to attract expositions, conventions, Olympics, etc.), but also via theme-enhanced urban entertainment centers. Succeeding in this competition depends to a large extent on the packaging and sale of urban place *images*, which have therefore become as important as the measures to keep the downtowns and event spaces clean and free of "undesirables" and "dangerous elements" (such as the youth, homeless, beggars, prostitutes, and other potential "disrupters"). Such "undesirable" groups have not only been relocated to marginal areas, where they could be fenced off as a wild zone, but urban renaissance initiatives have also been ambivalent about urban diversity: where cultural diversity can be marketed for cultural consumption, it may very well be promoted – at the same time as social controls limiting diversity are promoted.«

Margit Mayer (2007, emphasis in original)
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»During high Fordism, neither labor regulation nor welfare provision were regarded as tasks of the third sector, rather, the sphere of civil society was seen as detached from that of the labor market and the institutions regulating it; it was seen as an unpoliticized sphere of associational activity. During the early phase of neoliberalism, urban zones of concentrated poverty and exclusion were ignored, but with its roll-out phase, such areas have become penetrated by a panoply of programs addressing crime, welfare dependency, worklessness, and other manifestations of *social breakdown.* The neoliberal approach to (re)regulating the labor market and the social sphere is through territorializing strategies, which seek to govern in and through "communities". At the same time, neoliberal urban governance seeks to "economize" formerly neglected social zones, turning them into fields for entrepreneurial calculations.«

Margit Mayer (2007, emphasis in original)
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To sum up, I will go back to the question what are the reasons and the incentives for the growing importance of cities? First, the hollowing out of the nation state leads to a transfer of its responsibilities to the local level. A number of scholars describe this shift of responsibilities as a concept of »governing at a distance« that stems out of this so-called process of devolution of the nation state. Of course, this does not leave the city completely independent in its decision-making; its autonomy from the nation state differs in extent from country to country and yet the respective nation state has a say in the urban policies. When it comes to global cities the headquarter economy is the key to their growing importance which is apparent in the data on financial transactions, global distribution of goods and even global distribution of people. If we take an extremely rich and powerful city like Los Angeles the data reveals that it is the third largest economy in the world (to be more precise, this is the case for California) but at the very same time it has a huge amount of urban poor

who make this kind of global city work – so it is one of the poorest cities as well. Such cities are overloaded with new technologies that acknowledge and enable this process and ultimately, facilitate the fine-tuning of the urban economy. So these cities are dominated by profit optimizing economic arenas and business friendly entities supplemented by workfare regimes. This coupling is a decisive factor for the transformation of a city into an entrepreneurial city, for its operation as an entrepreneur. It means that the city policy is no longer conditioned on elections and other kinds of public decision-making but is rather run like a company with a limited number of CEOs who decide on what will be the city policies for the next years or months. That leads to revanchist city politics, *Zero Tolerance*, gentrification, return of the middle classes, pluralization of policing, and emergence of gated communities.

Growing importance of Cities

- due to:
    - »hollowing-out« of the nation state
    - »governing at a distance« by the nation state (devolution)
    - headquarter economy, global cities as »key«
    - new technologies as an enabler
    - fine-tuning of the economies, etc.

- leading to:
- economical arenas, economically efficient, business-friendly entities
- workfare regimes
- the »Entrepreneurial City«/cities as entrepreneurs
- »revanchist« city politics (zero tolerance, gentrification, return of the middle classes
- pluralization of policing)
- gated communities, etc.
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Let us refer to the example of neoliberal crime policies. Never before has crime prevention been such an important topic as it is under neoliberalism. It is no longer the case that the main task of the police is to persecute crime but moreover, it is now to prevent crime in its very possibility. That leads to complicated crime prevention measures such as the *Anti-social Behaviour Orders* (ASBOs) orders in the UK that restricted tremendously the activities allowed in public space. For example, you are no longer allowed to wear sweaters and a hood in some shopping malls in the UK, because it is recognized as a dress code of youngsters who are troublemakers. An example from the US is the so-called »three strikes and you are out« concept: Let's say you are using public transport but you did not buy a ticket, so then if they catch you that will be your first strike. Then you get into trouble with your girlfriend or boyfriend and beat her or him up and got by the police, so this might be the second strike. And because you are so angry that you have been caught for the second time, you forget to buy a ticket again and then if you get caught again this will be your strike number three – which leads to imprisonment with a lifelong sentence. In California, three years ago, that regulation was changed to »one strike and you are out« in regard to people who live in public housing.

The second example of neoliberal crime prevention policies is linked to socio-spatial orientation. In this regard the new development is the introduction of numerous special police units aiming at specific areas and/or targeting specific groups within the city space.

The actors involved in policing are more and more diversified – what Adam Crawford and Stuart Lister (2004) call »the extended policing family« – and include state police, federal police, financial police or customs (that has specific domestic functions in Germany), the so-called civil society kind of policing (civil wardens, militias, neighborhood watch schemes, etc.), commercial police (rent-a-cop, detectives, bodyguards, bouncers, plant security and mercenaries, given

that we still have several on-going wars). And all these employees of the state, »civil society«, and commercial police units are wearing different kinds of uniforms or so-called uniforms (see Eick, 2006a, 2006b, 2007).

The third aspect of neoliberal crime prevention policies is the new penology. Its objectives and effects are evident already in the incredibly high numbers of prisoners today that are rising in parallel with the processes of neoliberalization. There are new forms of cooperation and technological prevention/tracing such as CCTV and Radio Frequency Identification tags (RFID) which were invented initially to facilitate tracing goods all over the world. For those of you who are football fans, it may be interesting to know that in the next international football tournament RFID tags will be placed inside the footballs so that they could know with absolute certainty if the ball stroke a goal or not. Implementation of such RFID tags into human bodies is under way in the US – and some discotheques even offer this as a VIP special guest service.

Neoliberal crime policies

- (crime) prevention
- (socio) spatial orientation
  (special police units aiming at specific spaces and targeting groups of »undesirables«)
- new penology
  (»punitive state«, intensified incarceration rates)
- new forms of cooperation
  (»police-private partnerships« with rent-a-cops, non-profit organizations, »third parties« [e.g. insurances, airline companies], other state entities)
- techno prevention/tracing
  (CCTV, RFID, GIS, GPS, online email surveillance etc.)
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Pluralization of Policing

Selected state and non-state (in)security and (dis)order personnel
(»extended policing family«)

State	»Civil society«	Commercial
State police	Nonprofits	Rent-a-cops
Federal police	Civil wardens	Detectives
Financial police (customs)	Militias	Body-guards
Municipal order service	Neighborhood watch	Bouncers
Security watch	Security partners	Plant security
Order partnerships	Voluntary police service	

German Employees (rounded off):
State police: 265,000; federal police: 40,000; customs: 4,000 (clandestine employment)
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New methods of governance

»[The current neoliberal programs] attempt to "empower" the inhabitants of particular inner-city locales by constituting those who reside in a certain locality as "a" community, by seeking out "community groups" who can claim to speak "in the name of community" and by linking them in new ways into the political apparatus in order to enact programmes which seek to regenerate the economic and human fabric of an area by re-activating in "the community" these

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"natural" virtues which it has temporarily lost.«

Nikolas Rose (1996: 336, accentuation in original)
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Challenges for Research and Activism
Activism, Atavism, Aspiration

- **Proxy persons' politics**
  thereby, treating the »undesirables« as voiceless, helpless
- **Career seeking (for example, of artists through doing political work)**
  artists taking *advantage* out of political work
- **integration, cooptation, assimilation**
  thereby, promoting enhanced neoliberalism; pioneers of gentrification
- **for the sake of a just city** (Iris Marion Young's »unoppressive city«) **fighting against:**
- **Economic exploitation**
- **Marginalization of individuals and social groups**
- **Production of powerlessness**
- **Discrimination and exclusion of »non-norm« individuals and groups**
- **Execution and threat of state violence**
- **Calibration traceability**
- Who understands whom and what
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Challenges for Research and Activism
Activism, Atavism, Aspiration

- **to whom to talk/with whom to work**
- **concrete change and progress, or symbolic politics/the »big critique«**
- **self-referentiality**
- **is the use of vacant/»sleeping« space a meaningful/substantial/material intervention/issue**
- **the (non)anticipated role of arts (and »progressive« politics) in gentrification processes** (Inner!City!Action!Groups!)
- **who is *the neighborhood* and what are *its* wants**
- *to be continued…*
  Slide 19

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Discussion

Panu Lehtovuori: Thank you very much! Does anyone have any questions or comments, we still have time for some questions and things that you would like to discuss.

A member of the audience: I was wondering whether your rather sinister account of neoliberalism, whether there are some aspects that might somehow lead to a circular causality for example the idea that also all of the counter-movements, all the so-called social democratic efforts, for example to try to alleviate problems of neoliberalism that are actually parts of neoliberalism so this basically a question of reformism versus revolutionary theory. How to say, whether everything that comes from the state is neoliberal or not?

Volker Eick: Obviously not.

A member of the audience: Can you perhaps give examples of actions by the state that are not neoliberal, that are not trying to integrate the rest of the society to this new region, if they are like this improvement of education or it could have an effect against neoliberalism, as it cannot be completely controlled, the neoliberal forces.

Volker Eick: Well, somehow yes and somehow no. There is one interesting example that refers to New Zealand which absolutely to the contrary to shifts elsewhere (except Latin America, may be) got a social democratic government in the early 1980s. Wendy Larner who did and still does a lot of research on this topic is stating that there is a way to escape neoliberalism if you really want to and if you have the support of the community, so she goes on, and develops how it emerged in New Zealand and how it played out. But rejecting the neoliberal path would mean that at the very same time you would get rid of the current concept of growth. But if you are referring to the concept of growth then you have to take into consideration the big economic players – which would ultimately mean you can try to redirect the way that neoliberalism emerges, plays out, gets intensified or de-intensified, but you have to fight them. In addition, you cannot escape the logic of the concept of the individual developed already under liberalism. And this is the second point that comes into play, this social Darwinist view or concept of the individual, that the stronger you are the more successful you are. If you are bound to these two concepts – the concept of growth and the concept of the individual instead of the collective – you are trapped.

So let's take the situation in Germany in the early 1990s when a bunch of people from East Germany left their area – indeed, whole cities were (and still are) emptying out – and the government was not really sure how to react. On the one hand, they were not opposing that the East was taken as a huge shopping mall and everything was taken over by western capital but on the other hand, they figured that they do not know what to do with the land. So then, they came up with the idea to redirect investments to the East in order to encourage people to stay over there but this kind of labor force was of no significance for those who could invest there, so it did not play out very successful. Or you can think of schooling – how to give parents the opportunity to have good schooling for their children when the capital forces obviously are not interested in that. So what you can do then for example is bussing as they do in some parts of the US and in some other countries. In that case, they bring Latin-American, African-American children to other places to have mixed schools. Or you could invest some money to make it more attractive for both parents and children and at the very same time for the capital because at the end, business will get highly skilled or at least better skilled labor forces.

And my third example will be Hugo Chavez and what is currently going on in Latin America and in South America which is also a very interesting thing and I always appreciate what is going on there. Even though, one should not ignore the complicated situation in Venezuela which I am not going into now.

A member of the audience: From the University of Helsinki and actually Hugo Chavez brings me to the question that what role do you see that individual cities can have in the overall system? I will give you an example, which I have recently heard; Doreen Massey gave about Chavez and about London, which then is the interesting and impossible case in the heart of global competition and so forth. And she was saying that some policies in London these days are geared not towards competition but cooperation, for instance Ken Livingstone is just doing a deal with Chavez to get cheap oil which will be used for public transport for areas in London and in exchange they are sending expertise for schooling systems and so forth and health care, back to Venezuela. Which is one example and interestingly enough coming from or about London, which is one of the so-called main global cities. So this was my example and my question I guess was that what role do you see that individual cities can have.

Volker Eick: The example that you are giving is not about an individual city, the example that you are giving is about Ken Livingstone being back once he has been *destroyed* by the Thatcher government in the 1980s or in the late 1970s due to the greater London council and stuff like that, and now he is back in the scene. And there is a huge debate going on about this public transport and the so-called dictator Chavez relationship there. So what you can see and what would basically be my answer is that I am not stating that the neoliberal concept and the neoliberal practices are the determinant force,

that you cannot oppose them or that there is no alternative. What I am saying is that there are opportunities for opposition, there are also opportunities for reforming neoliberalism and what you need for this, I think is something like networking. I feel that Ken Livingstone and Hugo Chavez are doing something like networking, it sounds a little bit curious because we are used to think of networking in different terms, but that is what Ken Livingstone is doing and he received a lot of criticism for that. And we will see how this will end up.

A member of the audience: I was just wondering, you are all the time talking about "they" as if neoliberalism is like "they", and I was just wandering as to how far neoliberalism might actually be a reaction to something, middle classes are asking for, whereas there are actually alternatives for people.

Volker Eick: Yes, unfortunately I would agree that there is a bunch of people around favoring neoliberalism – and, of course, the middle class, upper middle class plays an important role in that – one might like to read David Garland (2001) on that. This support for neoliberal (crime) politics does not refer only to the middle classes but also to the former working class who is at least admiring the promises coming with the neoliberal politics. It is a constant struggle on who will lead, who will be the person in power, or the group in power that can oppose, or enhance, or intensify those kinds of neoliberal processes. But you are right, that given it should be investigated or studied why this is the case. And I would agree that of course there are parts of this society that are absolutely in favor of at least certain parts of the neoliberal project. But I would also argue that, for example, if we are talking about security, safety, order, disorder, the media is coming into play and especially security is an issue where the desires that people have can be transformed into very aggressive modes of behavior, or desires that were not at stake before can be stirred up. So that is what we are fighting for and against.

A member of the audience: My name is Liisa Horelli and I also come from the University of Technology in Helsinki. I was surprised to see that in one of your last statements you wrote that the middle classes are sort of returning and I would like to know as to on what is the bases for this statement or what is the evidence for that. Because if I understood right then now in the US even the middle classes are losing ground as their jobs are also going to India and to other cheap labour countries so what is the evidence for that statement of the returning of the middle classes?

Volker Eick: I have just been in San Francisco on the annual conference of the American Association of Geographers and this question was also raised there several times, in several talks: »What do you mean by middle class?« So as a political scientist I would respond that it is not my problem because I am not a sociologist. I am joking… What I mean when I speak of middle class is indeed the upper-middle classes who can acquire jobs, for example, in the FIRE industries [finance, insurance, real estate] and who fled inner-cities in the 1960s and 1970s, especially in the US, or to put it in another way, did not flee but rather took the advantage of their high income and left – creating this huge amount of suburban areas all over the US, and now they have the feeling that it is time for them to come back into the inner-cities. And there are several things at stake and the most obvious one is that especially inner-cities are becoming something like business cards; it is good to live in a city, the face-to-face value is rising again. So cities are no longer in decline; they are a revanchist *playground* for those people who have the money and who have the jobs, so therefore it is now safe and good and admirable to come back to the inner-cities. The second thing which has only started to emerge but yet is quite a challenging development relates to real-estate companies marketing city spaces which just a couple of years ago were regarded dangerous and were basically abandoned and of no interest and so on, and now they are marketing those areas again, so it is part of the thrill to go back into the inner cities. The Bronx, for example, in New York is now under high gentrification pressure due to this attempt to market the area, so condos are popping up and so on. The urban environment changes in an attempt to foster in people the feeling that even though it might be somehow dangerous there, one could also find safe and secure places and moreover, it is interesting to go there. And then there are other reasons as well but I will leave it at this, I will just say that there are various reasons why people are coming back into the city.

Jüri Soolep: I have one question or a remark even. What do you think of neoliberalism and Protestantism, because there is an interesting pattern emerging in the neoliberal understanding that is not just economical but it has a pattern of cultural and religious background. What are your comments about that?

Volker Eick: It is a huge topic! But I totally agree that this protestant ethics of the centrality of work to make yourself a human being is of tremendous importance for bringing the neoliberal project to the fore. The second thing I would say is, and so far especially for the US, that there is a competition or a conflict within the driving forces of neoliberalism which directly relates to religion – there are conservative neoliberals on the one hand, and the comparatively progressive *Neocons* on the other hand. Let me give you an example of a clash between the two groups with regard to the autonomy of the individual which is at stake: The conservatives will never ever allow for abortion, so on the one hand, the individual is free but at the very same time there are religious rules that should not be overruled such as the reproduction of human beings, whereas on the other hand, the *Neocons* say it doesn't matter, we do not care, the important thing is to keep the economy going. So there are conflicts going on that up to now I will say have not really been played out, or we do not know who will succeed and who will be the leading force, and new problems are of course emerging and re-emerging all the time. I do not know whether this answers your question, I am afraid not.

Panu Lehtovuori: Thank you very much!

part 1

RAISING AWARENESS FOR URBAN ACTIVISM:
research, planning tools and debates

City Wrinkles:
Art as an informal device for urban transformation

Silvia Lupini

Abstract

Contemporary city is continuously renovating itself. In its shrinking and expanding it generates "wrinkles", voids ready to be filled with a new meaning. Within the wrinkles time seems temporary suspended, buildings and spaces lost their former use and they don't have jet a new one. Investors are waiting for better time to come. Although they are apparently abandoned, they have the potential for new relationships. Art aims spaces free of codes, rules, and standardized relationships, a dynamic and active space. While architecture is busy with the design of "institutional" spaces of the city, art starts an informal process of change within these spaces. Art acts as an engine able to negotiate its space with the city and to transform it, avoiding often the mediation of architecture. This process becomes stronger in places that are strategic for the image and the identity of the city.

The "wrinkles" seem to be places where an audience can be easily achieved. Here a process of appropriation of such space starts. The perspective of the paper follows a change that has been taking place in some cities in Europe (Helsinki, Marseille, Dublin, Antwerpen, Amsterdam, Rotterdam). Europe is an experimental laboratory where contemporary art is not only distributed through the institutional channels, but more often through an autonomous noninstitutional network. Only sometimes architecture takes part in this process, and, disappearing behind art necessities, produces spaces that better reflect the dynamics of urban change.

From event to town: art as means of transformation

Artists are becoming the new cultural entrepreneurs. For a few decades now, many artists have opened themselves to tackling urban and social problems, generating new forms of capitalism and a creating dialogue between art and society, real and virtual, art, architecture and city. Little by little groups of artists constitute a communication and exchange network that offer a real alternative to institutional structures. These networks do not involve only art, but architecture, sociology, design and other disciplines. The action is performed in public space, in a strategic place of the city where the message can be displayed and recorded in people's minds. People are made part of the action - they are involved and led to think about the surrounding space, it's belonging to the city, and its ongoing transformation. All art groups act within the city seeking out spaces in which to engage people with the city. Institutional public space is shrinking physically, and as a concept, and so art invades non-institutional spaces. Art allows an analysis of an urban phenomenon from a different perspective. Simultaneously, it facilitates the understanding of different social agents and their approach to a site. In this way we can better stress the importance of art in contemporary society's change, and the new role of the architect.

The areas of study are chosen based of their extraordinary potential to become engines of transformation. Once chosen, it is important to focus on a few key factors: the role of art in the transformation of entire districts in general, and of existing buildings in particular; the role of architecture, that in a first glimpse seems to be linked more to the model of institutional museum and not the "alternative" sites for art; the negotiation that art commences with the city, and the process of change (physical and aesthetic) through the occupation of former industrial buildings or sites.

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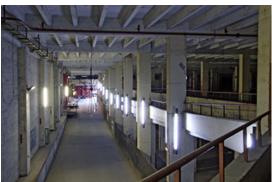
Matrix of the study cases collected
TransEuropeHalles as a network

Artists are not always the first to make a move toward occupation of abandoned buildings. The resultant negotiation does not always lead to the same outcome. In the cases analyzed we can already see how different these relationships can be. In Marseille, for instance, when the artists moved, cooperation quickly started between them, the city and different architects. The key aim of the project was to use art as a tool of place transformation. In this cooperation, the work of architects, among them Jean Nouvel, and artists has always been balanced. The main concern

at the beginning was how to berth to the city. The architect himself believed in the strong role that arts have in this and the intervention on the building and the site reveals this. Again no architect's signature is readable in the intervention, while the building exposes its original structure, stripped to its essentials. One of the principles of la Friche is that the room needs to be free, soft, and open - principles that the architecture tries each time to respect. [3]
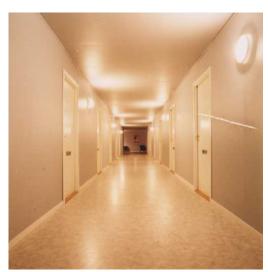

View of one of the buildings of the complex La Friche La Belle de Mai, Marseille
Interior view of one of the open space rooms.

Slightly different is the case of NDSM in the docks of Amsterdam. The town planning in fact applies a strategy where space is donated to allow the development of urban areas from the bottom up. This philosophy had a big importance in the renovation of NDSM wharf. The program was already defined by this previous plan. The plan proposed by Stinchting Kinetisch proposed an association with the squatter scene and was judged to be the best. Kinetisch Noord re-designed the main bodies of these spaces, which are then finished by the resident artists. The hall is can accommodate 5,000 visitors (ideal for house parties and large performances). However, the space can also be partitioned to host smaller productions and events. The hall is offered as a large empty space, without partitions, stages or bars, giving clients full freedom to arrange and fit out the space as they wish.

The method used to choose the study cases seems to be "random": all of them are former industrial harbor sites, and the action artists produce in the sites is more important than the size of the city that houses them. In the end the selection of areas seems to be completely heterogeneous and without any logic bringing them together. Nevertheless this diversity can be an asset, especially if seen from the point of view of the outcome - in this way the choice is no longer completely random. Upon closer inspection, we see all the sites strategically located under two different points of view: local and global. It is important at this point to distinguish the differences. Usually these occupations do not happen in the city centre area. Former industrial areas sit at the border of the city. It is a strategic position for artists as new users because, as repeatedly stated, they have a good connection with the city centre, and can reuse the former infrastructures of these working areas. The other and more important aspect is the virtual infrastructure that they are able to generate. Global relations become more important than local ones. This means that all these sites have no immediate relation to the city that hosts them, making them difficult to find. They do not build a physical network, instead relying on a more important virtual one. An example of this in the case of this research is the TRANSEUROPEHALLES network. It doesn't exist fiscally, but is a European net of non-institutionalised places for art, acting as a connection between artists operating in former industrial buildings. This network makes every single building all over Europe part of a bigger "global gallery", existing and moving, dynamic, but present and explorable. The network, in fact, makes the action of producing and exhibiting art dynamic and exchangeable. Artists often export their art-laboratories, from one place to another making the place itself (and consequently the rest of the network) flexible and changeable according to the latest art work (of music, dance, choreography, visual art, public art, etc).

Interior view of new uses of the Fargfabrik rooms, Stockholm

Once again from the study cases it emerges how all the art activities related to a building, such as the ones belonging to the Transeuropehalle Network or other networks, have a flexibility of space and program. The main room of la Friche in Marseille is completely reduced to its clean structure and can be transformed into different spaces. In Fargfabriken of Stockholm the principle is the same, as in NDSM of Amsterdam. The program (artistic) is very flexible, and architecture must adapt itself to the new program each time. This flexibility is also due to the frequent exchanges between artists and events. All of these buildings in fact needs spaces as residences for guests artist and flexible spaces for temporary performance. This gives to all these interrelated spaces the same set of architectonic principles: former industrial building reduced to its clean structure, open and flexible space, elements that permit the transformation of spaces. In all of this structure the hand of architect is slightly hidden behind the choices of art.

In the study cases analyzed, every event appears to be the beginning of a process of change. Often the physical change of a building or a district is slow, temporary and difficult to diagnose, especially for unknown places. The first step of this process is the invasion and occupation of the building or site itself, for reasons discussed previously in this research. When the investor is the art and the site is a building, a transformation of the building is the usual outcome. The former industrial building offers freedom and large spaces as a base structure for dynamic change. The artist works on this space through his art, and he becomes the architect of his own experimental laboratory.

At a greater scale, the occupation of a building and the starting of such an activity can produce an effect on a greater area or district. The first artistic activity attracts other activities, such as restaurant, bars, ateliers, shops, and later investors. The process is initiated. The role of art in attracting new "life" to a sleeping place can also have a negative implication for the art itself: it can risk being pushed out by new economic forces. This occurred in some of the presented examples: new designed master plans no longer leave a place for artists, who are forced to move away and look for new interesting places to transform. In other cases, especially when a network has built up a strong structure, such as Transeuropehalle, the occupied site (or building in this case) becomes the central dynamic point around which different events rotate, including the reshaping of the space itself.

Art and architecture between city and society: change and relations. Is architecture still needed?

Art in all its expressions and languages gives answers through a double behavior of our uncertainty century: affirming the identity against homologation, and proposing critical models of contemporary urban and suburban realities. Art adopts a strong strategy of communication, capable of capturing a non-specialized, immediate and indirect new public - attracted to the themes belonging to everyday life. Artists choose their place and work in direct contact with the city, changing the surrounding environment and the building itself. The artist increasingly becomes the designer of its building. [4]

Art and architecture become both "performative" and "iconic", where many projects start with an image and continue to be subordinate to it.[5]

Architecture in the past has always attempted to keep its independence from the linguistic heterogeneity of those artists that experimented in braking into it. Nonetheless some architects have always crossed the border between art and architecture, and have kept the dialect alive by focusing on materials and their sensuality, or by cooperating with an artist, with great results. This transforms the character of architecture making materials and form increasingly more important than function, or, at least, giving them a new role in the project. A project appears first as an aesthetic and plastic object, where beauty is image and seduction more than function and efficiency. It becomes easy to sell by media, but is also open to the senses and perception. This leads to a spectacular dimension of architecture that is no longer "integrated" in the landscape, which becomes anonymous, and explodes as an urban icon. The building becomes an object of seduction. At the same time art, photography cinema regards architecture as a subject of their research, because of its "social" role and its dynamic figure.

Most urban regeneration is concentrated on brownfield sites. Once, these sites buzzed with industry and trade activities, which steadily declined until little of its former glory remained. The regeneration programs are intended to revive their fortune, but through a contemporary concept: trade becomes retail and leisure, industry becomes office and multimedia business, storage becomes housing. The architect has a large role in this planned regeneration. The artist instead has the role declaring dead the traditional character of the area, and hailing a new king: the public art work.

The common attitude, developed in previous decades, of producing masterplans for former industrial harbor areas, has become a necessary "move" for the regeneration of the city, for the remake or re-definition of its identity, for the signification that living on the water entails, or just because it is fashionable. For any of these reasons redesigning waterfronts all over Europe and even the world has been a strategic step for harbor cities. The operation generates a new city image - a new layer of identity. Often the whole master plan is based on huge works all over the city and a masterwork that becomes an icon. In a few years none of the former industry trails will be there, and in their place a huge amount of new buildings. The city gains its trendy new image, the economy has its turn over. In this already "traditional" way of redesigning a part of the city, a strategic site, the most important "piece" of the process is the product. In this process the architect has the important responsibility of designing the "masterpiece" the new image of the city, its new

icon. Competition on waterfront is often exclusive for big names of architecture. City, architecture and architect become strongly linked forever. The most obvious example is Bilbao, Guggenheim, Gehry. But instances can be found in Barcelona, Lisbon, Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Oslo, London, Helsinki, Hamburg, and others.

Controversy surrounds every major infrastructure project, because it is bound to destroy, displace and obliterate. Next to this, other operations that are not strongly visible, are developing, often unplanned. The role of architect in this sort of operation has disappeared.

Kapeelitehdas, Helsinki.

Again Kapeelitehdas in Helsinki, La Friche in Marseille, NSDM in Amsterdam Fargfabriken in Stockholm well express this condition. But also SMART project in Amsterdam, NOASS in Riga and BETANOVUSS, Eilandje in Antwerpen all represent this way of transformation of quays: the building keeps its original physical connection with the surroundings, and hosts new space inside, a, where architecture can act in harmony with the needs of art.

In only a few cases, among those considered in this research, the artist asks the architect to redesign a former industrial building, and often they cooperate in this. But in most cases the artist takes over the role of the architect and transforms its space, often in a dynamic way, keeping open the possibility of future changes. It is reliable that the field of art is the most open to dialogue and convergence of multi-disciplines. Experimental research often leads to new visions and risky combinations between different disciplines, but increasingly also to greater possibilities on the borders of art itself. On the other hand it seems difficult for the architect to put aside his traditional way of producing architecture: with its strong relation to the plan and section, and in general to a new image for the city, and as a way to express his brand.

The borderline between architect and artist is now a space of meeting, where the common interests of operating within the city forms the basis of a research and exchange of this work on the borders.

Architecture has different meanings: it is an idea, an activity; it associates with a certain kind of object, space and time, usually the building, the city and the society. In the study cases of this research, architecture is more a certain kind of space or object exploited for use. We can refer again to examples discussed earlier. This is a process that art has already acquired, decreasing the distance between artist and spectator, with the result of changing the scene. The use is a sort of creative activity, with which any user builds his space and where any architect is aware of the creativity of the user. It is architecture of action and appropriation. The role of architect is no longer the same as it was in eighteenth century France. At that time the architect made the icons of architecture and public space in the name of the State. Today's manifestation of the relationship between architect and state is the profession of architecture. In our contemporary society, because of the dynamic and continuous search for new markets, Capitalism needs constantly to destroy and rebuild objects, ideas and states. The architect as a legal professional figure tends to produce models that imply an idle and docile user, not capable of transforming use, space and meaning. The Situationists proposed a hybrid between user and producer, able to design, produce and use a work. It is likely that contemporary society has need for a new incarnation of the architect that invalidates the hierarchical relationship between user and architect. It is a process that builds identity. The liability between art (in the case of the occupant) and architecture is extreme and it would be better to negotiate a new process or strategy than to work in different directions. The cases of la Friche in Marseille, Melkeveg in Amsterdam, Fargfabriken in Stockholm, and others previously described, are examples of this cooperation between architect and artist. It is a process that probably needs to happen collaboratively with the action of the artist. Artists contribute, are part of, enrich and expand cities in all their manifestations and can respond to the complexities of regeneration, without alienating or ignoring the extent of social complexity, history, culture and character of a regenerated district. Art can negotiate on its own terms, bypassing architecture, its space in the city, and its way of producing new meaning for a former room. [6]

The Betanovuss: the stage floating on the city river and the interior.

From ephemeral and temporary to permanent and urban: a negotiation

In the process of space occupation and change, the process itself is central part of the regeneration. The event and the space become part of the creative process. This change in the point of view from final product to process has a "social advantage" for the architect to reduce his disquiet, achieve his goal, and to produce a work that is not only an icon, but has something related to the identity of a place.

The project in all its components becomes hybridized and flexible, ready to adapt to any change in technology or future event. This dynamism is somehow part of the design process. This process doesn't result in a series of conditions, rather a ready product that could at one moment in time and space suggest a future development or change. The same structure of this process begins to consider elements of "controlled uncertainty" [7] and bring the role of the architect back into the process itself.

Architecture and urbanism are increasingly the content of creativity, and are getting closer to this new dynamic way of transforming space: a role that art currently deals with better than architecture.

Cities and buildings are subject to a constant process of construction and decay, the course of which can rarely be anticipated. In the last century architecture was never meant to last forever, not even for the representative buildings of the city, such as museums, cultural centers, etc. Nevertheless, these buildings are supposed to have a reasonably long and representative life. When architects attempt to participate in the mobile, often immaterial, shaping forces of the contemporary city, they must embrace new, dynamic design processes. Understanding the city as a field means accepting its state of continual flux and continuous change. They go deeper into the aesthetic of transformation, and imitate the artist in making the natural informal phenomena part of the design process itself.

The architect must work with spatial structures that are open to various future developments and that thus become spaces of potential. Their specific indeterminacy generates architectonic and urban qualities. Design can also consist in making processes of transformation visible and challenging our perception of permanence.

In the specific case art events, architecture works increasingly in this dynamic field, considering it important motor of transformation. There is little evidence that the discipline is adapting itself to the new field condition. This latter is dynamic and characterized by forces rather than forms.

If we return to the study cases we can indicate some conclusions. The art appears to be more capable of understanding the dynamics of the city and able to make a building more "attractive" and interesting than the work of architect would. The architect sometimes cooperates with the artist to understand the process of change. When this happens he resists viewing the city as a whole where everything can be controlled with one tool (not even designing a iconic building), but instead regards the thousands of dynamic city fragments , and begin considering a "temporary" redefinition, as art does. 'Temporary' means without long term effects. Temporary means starting a process towards a not-completed work: dynamic and flexible. Temporary gives the possibility for a negotiation. Temporary sometimes contains seeds for long term development.

In a way Rotterdam is attempting a new strategy in this direction. Follydock and Unorthodocks in fact are part of a city strategy to experiment with some temporary ideas while the district is being planned. The competitions involved architects and artists and, especially in the case of follydock, asked for a folly on the dock. the city is evidently intent to assign an important role to art, placing it alongside architecture, for the redesign of this area. The temporary experiment suggests instead the idea that it is better to achieve great change through small steps. A temporary experiment could have long term effects.

The occupation of artists initiates a process from the simple point of maintaining good conditions. Soon after that, a new urban feeling emerges in these dismissed former-industrial areas , so that the entire network of public life can be preserved or promoted. The main intention of art is, in the beginning, to find a "temporary place in which to install a laboratory and exhibition. The artist does not begin with an aim toward a long term effect, although automatically through his actions, he starts a process. His relationship with the city is not at urban scale but at a very local scale. Many conditions in the choice of place remain free, once guaranteed a network of connections. Only a few parameters are blocked and planned. His presence there is only temporary.

The use, new and temporary, settles there, spontaneously and without bureaucracy. Only later the process begins that allows the use to continue, for different reasons. At this stage he tries to extend the lifetime of the "temporary" use, and the next step of the process, the negotiation, can make the space permanent, although dynamic. The negotiation is the way to make this space institutional, to make it recognizable. Nevertheless, this doesn't happen in every case. An occupancy time window is always set: if there are interesting offers then the temporary user must move out and find a new place. How can we link this process to a new methodology or tool of design? Can the city make the temporary permanent review of its design tools?

A lot of different conditions make possible the process of transition from temporary art invasion to permanent and institutional place for art. Good transportation connections, relations with the neighborhood, the art network, and basic financial arrangements are all crucial in the process, the property and financial conditions.

Art that infiltrates these spaces for a similar temporary use leads easily to a negotiation of this space. This is something that architecture is not able to do, probably because it faces the question from a different starting point and aim. Art can negotiate the space it occupies through simple rules: agreement between owner and city: temporary change of ownership, by means of a use agreement. The main effect is to draw attention to residual spaces, to experiment with new uses, to stimulate and activate artistic invasions, creative potential, and to awake the value of left over sites in the city. Sometimes this action generates a feedback as a new urban quality for the city, as in different ways we can observe in the study cases.

Antwerpen: interior view of the former factory colonized with a new use

Conclusions

Art moves from interstitial spaces, into urban territories. The old quays have the same characteristic: empty spaces where present and past meet, constantly undergoing dynamic transition. Nothing stands still or remains unchanged. An area fallen into disuse maintains relationship with the past, even when it cannot make a connection to the present, [7] this unsteady condition attracts contemporary art. On the other hand, "sleeping areas" possess a certain resistance to change, due to their history and identity. Sometimes a creative and spontaneous art project is successful.

What is art doing that architecture is not longer able to do? What kind of new relationships can it generate? What kind of new space? In the beginning art is the instrument for communicating (also indirectly) the complex identity of a space. The space itself gradually re-conquers its role as a stage, especially in areas historically and strategically linked to the image of the city (such as docklands). It configures relations between the built fabric in terms of continuity, both in time and space, and, considering their public dimensions, it is the appropriate place to establish an interface between city and sea.

We began by investigating the power of actors and agents in the transformation of small sites or in former harbor buildings. Art approaches these spaces from a different starting point than architecture; it does not pretend to redesign or transform everything, instead begins to understand the space, to measure it with new parameters, to negotiate it with the city. The empty space of former industrial buildings offers the possibility to rethink a striking landscape or simply to occupy it with other activities in a process that re-shapes it. Old and new coexist in modified spaces with new uses.

In the public urban scene creators and consumers of art interrelate, creating an interesting new form of architectonic space. The presence of "artists in residence" working in a grass-roots art project in contact with locals can assure some success. The existence of artists' studios, or the mere presence of artists in the cafés, shops, and even just in the streets of an urban area, is a stimulus for its revitalization.

The contemporary city is composed of enclaves linked more closely to each other by 24-hour information super-highways than to adjacent geographical neighborhoods, which they construct as margins. The enclaves of post-industrial cities are linked by less formal networks, through assumptions of cultural capital and the internationalism of affluence. This is one important aspect that makes the action of art more powerful.

Port cities have a special cosmopolitan charm which makes them particularly attractive to artists and, of course, no less interesting for researchers devoted to urban studies. Many traditional port cities are suffering from heavy unemployment and redundant maritime facilities since the generalization, in the 1970s, of the modern roll-on/roll-off loading and unloading of containers, which required brand new ports in deeper waters. So in the contemporary city, harbor front activities shrink, but thanks to its image, which links to the identity of the city, the harbor becomes a catalyst for events.

Recent art exhibitions and events suggest more about the architectonic future of the space, the context, the network and the flows it produces, than the architecture itself. The research investigates the role of architecture in the informal processes of transformation that awakens sleeping areas, and where it seems that art has replaced more traditional tools of change.

Art acts in a space by reading the site as it is: simultaneously a construction site and a ruin, where inside and outside, old and new are in permanent exchange with one another. The artistic treatment demands no eternal value of its own, but is to subject itself to dissolution. The same art work requires different places in which to be exhibited. It changes in time and space, size, accessibility and materiality, in relation with its context. More than architecture, art can negotiate its own space within the city and acquire, as its own, the spontaneous phenomena of city transformation. The atelier AVL in Rotterdam produces it own housing, mobile, and transforms a part of the harbor in a urban room. AVL creates as connections with the city centre its own bus that uses the existing infrastructure of the dock. Just in the beginning was possible a sort of negotiation with the city. Nowadays AVL is an area in the port of Rotterdam which virtual network is more important that its impact to the city. For these reasons art looks for new spaces where relationships can be free and automatically skips the mediations of architecture and negotiate and transform its space within the city.

Architecture works in a different way. When it acts as "architecture of the temporary" it works out its "disappearance", considering itself as event in permanent transition, it works within the contexts of ambivalent relation of

renewal and decay, and then it is a success. It has the way of working on the open and indefinite space (or building), on the strategy of use and on the undefined border between art, city, architecture, landscape. Most of the time architecture does not find this way: is cut off from this relationship between art and place. It is the result of the longing for permanence typical of architecture. Is mainly art, for instance in the cases introduced, that takes over this role, in a spontaneous or conscious way. Art transforms fragments of the city. It starts a process where decay and entropy are main characters that reflect the characters of the city. The spaces for art refuse the concept of stability, wholeness, unity. These notions are as well the principal reason that brings art to invade the sleeping places of the city. Arts acts as a parasite invading the sleeping building and changes them little a little. The challenge is to let artists and architects cooperate into this change of use (program) and physical, as it happens already in the cases analyzed.

The green Parasite in Rotterdam

Even if every case is a single case, they have few character in common: art has a direct role in the transformation of the spaces, not depending on the size or other factors, operating in crucial spaces of the contemporary metropolis, avoiding institutional places and the mediation of architecture, they are places for experiment of new contemporary art and laboratory for regeneration of cities. The access of these reshaped places is indeed different for every case: art needs an audience and a global network. Art operating within the city and using its tools act as an engine.

Their heterogeneity leads also to another conclusion: it is not possible to put all these spaces in a category regarding their specific architectonic character, mainly because architecture if wants to have a function in the redesigning of them needs to let itself disappear to appear again with new characteristics, in a fusion with the art and the landscape using new instruments. Heterogeneity is a positive character emerging from the comparison of the cases. Art actions are random projects, bottom up not planned actions, and act as a planning instrument, that contribute to the complexity of the city, permit an "open experimental" approach that allows errors. The process of change (physical) is made of little steps that leave open the possibility of a step back for a different way. A method from within the city that architecture should learn: district that is result of master plan cannot regenerate in later phases. AVL-ville was an experiment that the city allowed in the beginning. The effects of the experiment were not really having a big impact in the regeneration of the district, and later on the city of Rotterdam did not allowed anymore the existence of the village. Also in Rotterdam Follydock is now building some of the projects winner of the competition. The idea behind the experiment is to try to learn form the informal transformation that are going on in crucial areas of the city and bring them into new parameter for reading and re design the district itself. Not all the follies will be temporary, but this is a decision that the city will take later, following the effects of the intervention on the area, and keeping the plan open to step back.

Another scheme is also possible, where museums arrive first as a consequence of a political decision to bring derelict landmarks of city heritage into new life, then in a knock-on domino-effect other derelict buildings in the district

become cultural centers or art galleries, and finally also artists move their studios in creating a lively atmosphere in what used to be a no-go area.

The process entail the formations of monoculture islands: the location is out of the city centre, in a well delimited space or in a building which only relations with the surroundings or the city centre is the use of existing infrastructures. The global network is more important than a conceptual and physical continuity with the local. The intensity of action is important, its visibility or perceptibility in spaces (that becomes public or semi public because of the action itself). There is not designed continuity with the surrounding. These conditions are sparks for a process of negotiation. The space is little a little determined in various ways. Often these spaces are private but trough the negotiation they become semi-public, or better, they stays private spaces for a public use. This led as well to a physic change. The space is then open to the planning. Art does it in little steps as we have seen, the program is interchangeable, it determines every time the spaces. The space or building become part of the program itself and it changes with it. Architecture would consider it as image or status symbol. So then boundary, negotiation, and program relate to spaces occupied from the art.

The architect needs to see such space or the building for art in is indeterminate character that suggests an enigmatic emptiness. A space that is waiting for something to happen, that attracts different uses and change of use. It has in its basic condition similarities with a stage, many scenarios can be acted out of it: the program is not fixed, the space follows it. The potential of being modified increases with the capacity of basic service structures. In fact the space functions as a specific and indeterminate structure at one time. The design of these spaces cannot be described as general, non specific. In their heterogeneity every of these spaces have their own specificity, mainly given from the place. In different ways the action or art gives attention and specificity to the space keeping dynamic its character: making new connections within an existing place, proposing a safe balance in between danger and excitement, reviling lost information.

The new perspective given to the space generates also a sense of beauty at the eyes of an observer who is contemplating a place that is usually considered to be necessary bad. Or the action simply open up to a different view inside outside, making the observer aware of the sky, the sun, the clouds, or even works with the wheatear.

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[2] Zukin,S., The Cultures of Cities, Oxford 1995
[3]http://www.lafriche.org/friche/zdyn1/sommaire.php3
[4] After 1960, with the advent of pop art and conceptual movements the concepts of limit and territory of art and architecture broke into each other's fields. Architecture stepped back into a fantastical creative dimension where the fabulous mattered. Archigram and Archizoom, Isozaki and Hollein, Superstudio and Morphosis were producing surreal visions, while artists like Dali' or van Doesbourg turned to the tradition of Malevick and Tatlin. Eventually, the dialogue between architects and artists became relatively common. Gehry kept this kind of dialogue with Serra, Judd, Olenburg and van Bruggen: Botta with Enzo Cucchi: Holl with Nonas and Highstein; artists such as Mis, Oppenheim, and Graham built bridges and pavilions. At the same time Vito Acconci was changing the course of his career from performing studio to studio of architecture. In Europe this happened even earlier, with architects welcomed in art circles. The next generation of architects assumes this as a fact, they no longer worry about the border between art and architecture: architects such as Diller and Scofidio, and Asymptote draw no distinction at all.
[5] [Celant, Germano, "Dell'Arte" in Domus 873, Milano, settembre 2004]
[6]Actiegroup is a group of artists working in this way. They move in all that constitutes the landscape of the residual. They invade and colonize former industrial buildings, giving them a new use and life, using materials and sounds, and rediscovering the potential of the place. Their action is to "awaken the sleeping beauty with a kiss". In this way the action of taping is a way of reading the city and the projection is the means to involve its citizens. The site itself, once sleeping, is awakened and remade part of the city. This action describes how the quality of a space can be rediscovered by an event. This attitude carefully examining a site, collecting clues, traces and signs, makes it possible to rediscover and study the possibilities, meanings and potentialities of a space through its small and weak signs. http://www.architectsonline.it/actiegroep.htm
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re_EMPTY
Gestione del presente nella città

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CONTEXT/europe
(interpretation of the general context)

<< [...] the only Europe that exists is the result of dynamic processes set-off by people [...] >>[4]

Europe and the European city are not only a territory in physical terms, defined by political borders. They undoubtedly describe a more abstract and dynamic concept, a spatial layer that is composed of connections and nodes, FLOWS and points of magnetic attraction. For centuries Europe has changed, transformed and grown as a result of conflicts or economic plans. Change and migration are keywords for reading contemporary Europe. As a result of this acquired, flexible structure, the EU supports and collects a density of relationships, exchanges, transfers and flows that currently move at great speed.

As of 2004, 454.9 million people were free to move as they chose; another 91.6 million have been added in 2007, without considering the millions of people who migrate from one continent to another, passing through or settling in Europe.

What spaces are designed by the flows within the European landscape? The dynamic configuration of contemporary Europe can undoubtedly be read in its CITIES, which become points of accumulation.

The graphic representations of studies of the global population from 1800 to the present and forecast to 2050 underline how the percentage of the population that lives in cities is in constant growth from the industrial revolution onwards.

Between 1800 and 1950 in Europe this percentage grew from 2% to 30%.
Between 1950 and 2000 it grew by another 17% and the forecasts speak of a further increase in two years to 50%: half of the world's population will be concentrated in urban centres.
In parallel with important phenomena of de-population, the number of people living in cities is destined to reach 80% by 2030.

How does the European city respond to such dense and sudden injections of flows?
How does it react to such sudden processes of development?
The European city must adapt itself to the era of mobility, the brevity of cycles and the temporariness of things.

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[4] Robert Broesi, Euroscapes, Must publishers, Amsterdam, 2003

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TRANSFORMISM, which has always characterised European cities, is now a keyword for describing them. The city must improvise rules and strategies for every change in needs .[5]

Juxtaposition, overlapping, reconversion that occur too quickly and rigid urban fabrics generate a new layer within the city that can be read in the negative, composed of leftover spaces that, excluded from the dynamics of transformation taking place and subtracted from the previous context, no longer have any meaning.

<<*Each rational organisation of a territory produces residue.*>>[6]

These gaps belong to a frozen temporal and spatial window that is suspended in the period of time between planned functional cycles. In these spaces we find concentrations of innovative micro-processes, induced and managed by flows in transit.

gaps forms an incredibly thin sub-stratum that is nurtured by urban flows, though it is either ignored or even refused by the city itself.

<< [...] It is evident that the city cannot be a unitary work of art, or a marvellous object (...) and it is for this reason that it is so difficult to find its exact equivalent amongst the artefacts … the city, like its inhabitants, is a mixture of the good and the bad [...]>>[7]

TRANSFORMISM AND RESIDUES ARE THUS TWO SIDES OF THE SAME COIN.

The contemporary European city is a sum of positive and negative elements, of functional parts and residual areas, of light and shadow [8] within which the third fundamental and active component moves in an indifferent manner: the inhabitants, or those flows that spontaneously or rationally produce changes.

0 - CONTEXT/theme

0.1 VOID[9], *EMPTY*[10], *EMPTINESS*[11],*RESIDUE*[12]

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5 "The Greeks called the city "polis", though they also used the same term to describe a game of dice based on the interaction between rules and specific cases. The player's skill lies in their ability to improvise the rules after each throw of the dice.

By analogy, the result is that for anything that regards cities, the inhabitant is both an active and passive subject".

(Plato, The Republic, IV, 422)

6 *De Pieri F. (a cura di), Gilles Clément "Manifesto del Terzo paesaggio" Editore Quodlibet, Macerata, 2005.*

7 *Joseph Rykwert, La seduzione del luogo, storia e futuro della città, Einaudi, Grezze sul Brenta (VI), 2003.*

[Original Title: The Seduction of Place. The History and Future of the City, Oxford University Press, 2000]

8 *De Pieri F. (a cura di), Gilles Clément "Manifesto del Terzo paesaggio" Editore Quodlibet, Macerata, 2005.*

9 VOID- *n.:*

1a: not occupied; b: not inhabited; c: containing nothing; 2a: being without something specified.

It can be said of a figure that is only represented by an outline.

www.m-w.com/cgi-bin/dictionary VOID-*adj:*

Containing no matter.; Not occupied; unfilled.; Completely lacking; devoid

VOID- *n.:*

An empty space; a vacuum.; an open space or a break in continuity; a gap.;

A feeling or state of emptiness, loneliness, or loss.

www.thefreedictionary.com/

10 EMPTY:

Holding or containing nothing; Mathematics Having no elements or members, null; Having no occupants or inhabitants; vacant; Lacking force or power; Lacking purpose or substance; meaningless; Not put to use; idle.

11 EMPTINESS:

This adjective means without contents that could or should be present. Applies to what is wholly lacking contents or substance

12 RESIDUE:

something that remains after a part is taken, separated, or designated or after the completion of a process : REMNANT, REMAINDER:
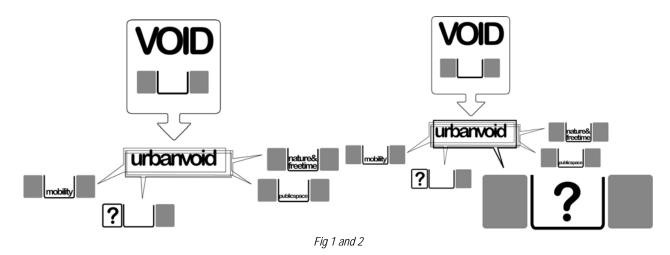
www.m-w.com/dictionary/residue

Towards what form are the changes to the contemporary European city moving?

When we talk about voids it is necessary to specify the form and function of the spaces that belong to this category because not all voids within a city can host change.

A public square, a street, an airport, a golf course or a garden can all be considered to be voids in the built environment, but if we assign the world "void" with a meaning that is tied to function or use, rather than using it in purely physical terms, then the category of voids cannot contain public squares, streets, parks or airports (fig.1)

Fig 1 and 2

There is a typology of "void" that does not belong directly to any categories, that has no designed function, that declares no specific value, remnant of urban reorganisation, new land divisions, the residue of urban processes that have been completed or simply abandoned.

When a large urban project begins to transform the city, many spaces are cut out and excluded from the process that is taking place, becoming RESIDUES[13] (fig. 2).

The physical limits that the fates of these areas define are obviously administrative limits, decided on paper.

The collection of residual voids, of those awaiting change and those that have been momentarily set aside become the relief valve for urban creativity, they are the refuge of diversity and they suggest alternatives to urban spaces that have not yet been considered.

They are a unique opportunity for the contemporary city to renew itself.

They are the object of research.

0.2 EMPTINESS in contemporary cities

RESIDUE:

<<Residue is the result of a method of management, though it is derived, more in general, from the principle of the rational organisation of space, as abandoned space … In the urban environment this corresponds to terrains that are awaiting use or awaiting the completion of projects that have been suspended for financial or political reasons.>>

(Filippo de Pieri (editor) Gilles Clément, manifesto del terzo paesaggio, Quodlibet, Macerata 2005)

[13] << If we stop looking at the landscape as the object of human activity, we quickly discover a quantity of undecided spaces, devoid of any function and difficult to name. This grouping does not belong to either the territory of shadow or that of light, it is situated along the margins. >>

(Filippo De Pieri (a cura di), Gilles Clément, manifesto del terzo paesaggio, Quodlibet, Macerata 2005)

Empty spaces are the spaces that for some reason that it has set aside: these are the spaces in which the city catches its breath. Rem Koolhaas has said

<<Where there is nothing, everything is possible, where there is architecture, nothing (else) is possible>> [14]

Yet even if these residual spaces are not considered "useful" until they attract the attention of an investor, they effectively represent an OPEN SLOT in the city to be filled.

We often observe processes of appropriation that are independent of property rights, rules and projects, daily or seasonal practices that, in any case, make these spaces places/sites. The attitude of quickly responding to the necessities and needs of those who decide to cross these spaces, live within them and use them represents the strongest potential of "voids" in the contemporary European city (where the term void is associated with the meaning of the term "Empty").

<[...]Emptiness in the metropolis is not EMPTY, each void can be used for programs whose insertion into the existing texture is a procrustean effort leading to mutilation of both activity and texture.>>[15]

The specific condition of being available for any use, expectation or destiny, even for a limited time, makes these urban "voids" essential to the city that no longer appears to be capable of offering diversity.

<< By its very nature the third landscape (residual) constitutes a territory for many species that cannot find room elsewhere [...]the third landscape is like a refuge, a passive situation or the site of possible invention, an active situation.>>[16]

Urban "voids" can offer all of the requested configurations with the minimum effort and the maximum profit. They can offer an active role to the citizen who must now 'suffer' this new space.

0.3 EMPTINESS : a gap in space or a gap in time

It is necessary to make a precise definition: The "voids" in the city remain as such until the point when someone decides to fill them, until an investor, property owner or the city decides to give them a function within the official structure of the city.

Often between the phase of planning, design and construction a great deal of time passes, and the periods of abandonment of a space are aggravated by bureaucratic schedules related to transformations. Thus the state of the "void" can also be considered to be a temporal and "temporary" concept.

These spaces represent an interval in continuity, in both spatial terms as they remain unbuilt, and in temporal terms as they remain unused for a limited period of time. They are "GAPS"[17] in the city: gaps in time and "gaps" in space.

0.4 TEMPORARY[18], INTERIM[19], PROVISIONAL[20]

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[14] Koolhaas R., Mau B., S,M,L,XL, 010 Publishers, Rotterdam, 1995.

[15] Koolhaas R., Mau B., S,M,L,XL, 010 Publishers, Rotterdam, 1995.

[16] Filippo de Pieri (a cura di) Gilles Clément, manifesto del terzo paesaggio, Quodlibet, Macerata 2005

[17] GAP:

An opening in a solid structure or surface; a cleft or breach; a break in a line of defence.

A space between objects or points; an aperture; an interruption of continuity.

www.thefreedictionary.com

[18] TEMPORARY:

Lasting, used, serving, or enjoyed for a limited time

Temporary is thus another keyword, together with "void" and "flows", which is useful in understanding how the city changes and to what resources it makes reference. The word "temporary" is associated with other synonyms: provisional, interim and ephemeral. They are representative of a transitory, momentary and non-definitive state, inserting themselves in the period of time (short or long) between one "active" state of space and the next[21].

The city often relates with the temporary in contingencies that often are tied to a state of emergency (nomad camps, illegal parking lots, storage areas, squatting etc.) while awaiting a definitive solution. Often this phenomenon has in turn led to effective processes of transformation and requalification that have been propaedeutic to the phase of definitive transformation, supported by official planning structures.

Currently some forms of temporary occupation are independent of a state of emergency and offer solutions to more individual necessities, proposing new urban spaces and new methods of transforming and governing the city.

1 - CONTEXT: Berlin city of voids and temporary

1.1 why Berlin

CHANGE

> *<< Berlin is a different city, characterised at the most by the presence of testimonials to every architectural and urban planning experiment. Berlin is the site of modern urban planning paradigms, all of the experiences of urban management that have taken place since the creation of the discipline are represented here.>>[22]*

VOIDS

The non-organic nature with which these phase have followed one another, incomplete programmes and interrupted projects[23] and the war have left us with the inheritance of a contemporary city of unresolved spaces, gaps and disconnections, consistent "residual elements", forcing it to repeatedly deal with the theme of the "void" and use it as an operative element in the transformation of the city.

The "voids" currently seem to have disappeared. In reality they have been fragmented and hidden by new buildings, drowned inside the heart of the city, though undoubtedly still present (fig.3).

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www.thefreedictionary.com

[19] INTERIM:

An interval of time between one event, process, or period and another.

adj.

Belonging to, serving during, or taking place during an intermediate interval of time; temporary

www.thefreedictionary.com

[20] PROVISIONAL:

Provided or serving only for the time being

www.thefreedictionary.com

[21] <<INTERIM uses take advantage of interruptions in use that take place when a building remains empty for a while or when a space remains unused. This is the case, for example, when an investor is not able to complete a project for a specific use because deadlines, legal disputes, etc. make it impossible. The interim use is always seen as a provisional measure, rather than a solution, though it can also be a method for demonstrating the success of a concept in order to convince an investor that the use chosen and experimented with can provide a permanent solution.>>

(Haydin F. Temel R., Temporary urban spaces, Concept for the use of city Spaces, Birkhaeuser, Basel, 2006.)

[22] Scarpa L., "Potsdamer Platz a Berlino"-archivio di studi urbani e regionali n.37, Venezia, 1990.

[23] P.Oswalt-R.Steger,Berlin: Stadt ohne Form, Strategien ainer anderen Architektur Munchen-New York 2000)

Fig 3 and 4

<< While moving through the city-by bike or on foot-our impression have often been determined by desolation, emptiness, and discontinuity, features that seem to characterise Berlin than any other city..>>[24]

Amongst the various causes, the most considerable of the large lacerations in the centre of the city was precisely the border between the East and West. The "void" left by this urban border is, in absolute terms, the most significant as a result of its semantic and historical value and its spatial character. The path of the Wall is still legible today in the sequence of empty areas between the new buildings along the Innen Stadt .

TEMPORARY (fig.4).

<<...the history of Berlin, more than that of any other German city, has and continues to be characterized by temporary uses of improvised spaces. The city has an enormous amount of vacant buildings and open land at its disposal Whilst these are potentially of interest in the long-term as urban development sites, their currently undetermined and provisional nature is precisely what makes them fertile ground for a wide range of creative uses in the here and now. [...]>>[25]

The presence of these gaps in a city undergoing reconfiguration, and in a constant state of ferment, makes Berlin an ideal case study for examining the processes of transformation of the contemporary city. The culture of temporary interventions[26] in the city, the frequent relationships with the shadowy areas of the city, the push towards experimentation with lifestyles and means of living the city, are surely a peculiarity of Berlin and a further motivation that pushes the study of this city as a site of urban experimentation and transformations.[27]

2. The Former Frontier Used as a GLASS SLIDE.

Of the gaps that characterise the urban landscape in Berlin, the largest is without a doubt the one that was inherited from the division of Germany and the city itself: the frontier between East and West Berlin that ran through the urban centre (fig.5). Maintained for almost 25 years, it was returned to the city in one night (a city starved for land and anxious to cancel the dark years of its history) and reabsorbed in a relatively short period of time: 15 years.

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[24] *Cuipers K., Miessen M., Spaces of un*
certainty, Verlag Mueller+Busmann, Wuppertal 2002

[25] http://www.studio-uc.de/raumpioniere_berlin.php?lang=en

[26] A well-known example is the temporary installation of the Berlin INFOBOX, a "luxury container" located in the Potsdamer Platz during construction and sponsored by BEWAG, DB, DBA and the Senate. It was located in the centre of the square for 5 years so that the general public could follow the largest construction site in all of Europe.

[27] << the city has become something like e prism through which we can focus issues of contemporary urbanism and architecture[...]>>
Rosemann J.), Read S.n, van Eldijk J., Future city, Routledge (UK), 2005), 75-76

In terms of its size and the time and methods of its creation, conservation and reaction, and for the diversity of the contexts through which it passed, this space can be considered like a "glass slide", a litmus paper for the observation and analysis of the relationship between the "void and the city" in Berlin, the greatest example of a European city in transformation.

Fig 5 and 6

2.1 THE void in WAITING

Amongst many big interventions, spread along the path of the wall, there are still many open areas, invaded by nature awaiting their role in the process of re-stitching. They continue to represent frozen areas, those that are shown on maps as a simple outline28. The only way to have a complete panorama of the situation is to observe, from up-close, what the maps do not show. The only way is to actually cross29 the space in order to observe if an outline is truly enough to describe these voids, if it is true that "voids contain nothing".

2.2 un-designed spaces: TEMPORARILY VOIDS

In the shadow of the volumes built after the War, as can be seen on the map, there are still 78.4 km2 of unused land, the 39,8% of the entire length of the former urban frontier . In the dense Mitte neighbourhood they are perfectly recognisable and, for the local office of urban development, they will not change in the near future.

In the centre of the city the "voids" left by the collapse of the wall are still numerous and perfectly visible it is not difficult, in a context made of "solids" such as the Mitte, to observe the presence of a void, a "gap" filled by nature (fig.6),: tall grass and young trees. The dimensions of these residual spaces naturally varies and they depend upon their location in the city, like G. Clèment in his "manifesto on the third landscape" says:

*<<The more sparse the fabric of the city, the more residual spaces it produces. Residual spaces are scarce and small in the heart of the city and vast and numerous in the periphery.>>*30

If we carefully read the map of Berlin we note that it is filled with areas represented exclusively by an outline, without any hatch, without any text. Only a few of these outlines are the result of their specific function, because they

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28 Void: see definition page 7

29 The crossing of spaces is the methodology of investigation and analysis adopted by the group "Stalker": the object of their studies are residual and interstitial spaces, urban margins, abandoned sites and those being transformed. They call them "Actual Territories". Crossing them is the only way to understand them, to capture their dynamic nature and power.

(Stalker, Attraverso i territori attuali, Jean-Michel Place édition, Wuppertal, 2000.)

30 De Pieri F. (a cura di), Gilles Clément "Manifesto del Terzo paesaggio" Editore Quodlibet, Macerata, 2005

belong to a clear context or because they are characterised by a particular form. I observed that many of the "uncertain" areas that had previously been indicated on paper effectively corresponded with empty and abandoned spaces: nature has entirely taken over the area, creating a fragment of Clèment's "third landscape". The fences, wrapping around the edges and dividing up the parcels inside the lot, are the only artificial element .

The paths are the signs of repeated though "spontaneous" crossing; the traces are not rectilinear, but directly join one point with another. Signs of permanence can be found beneath a grove of trees where someone has set up a bench and two chairs: the availability of such a large, natural space has led local residents to inhabit this void, using it as a park.

In the northern part of the city, in the neighbourhood of Prenzlauerberg, there is another lengthy portion of the former frontier that the operation of densification and restructuring has left waiting. If we walk through this area and along the asphalt way, still visible, we come across episodes of spontaneous occupation of the site (evidently available for use): small, open-air dumps of building materials, parking lots, a flea market, a circus and a fenced-off area with rows of panels that once made up the wall (fig.7-8).

Fig 7 and 8

2.3 COLONIZED31 VOIDS: temporary uses32 of temporary33 voids34

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31 COLONY

A group of people with the same interests or ethnic origin concentrated in a particular area; The area occupied by such a group.; A group of people who have been institutionalized in a relatively remote area: an island penal colony.

http://www.thefreedictionary.com/

32 TEMPORARY USE:

<<Temporary uses are those that are planned from the outset to be impermanent. We understand the idea of temporality to be determined not, as it's literal meaning would suggest, by the duration of use: temporary uses are those that seek to derive unique qualities from the idea of temporality. That is why they differ from lasting uses, not because they have fewer resources available or because they want to prepare their location for something other that will last longer>>

(Haydin F. Temel R., Temporary urban spaces, Concept for the use of city Spaces, Birkhaeuser, Basel, 2006.

33 TEMPORARY:

something that exists for a time, though there are different concepts of such temporariness: 'ephemeral' is a term from biology that refers to creatures that live for only a day. Ephemerality is thus an existential temporality; the ephemeral has a short life, its existence cannot be extended. This contrasts with the 'provisional' which begins as something with a short life but then, not infrequently, remains for very long periods. 'Provisional' refers to a facility that is conceived as a mere substitute for the 'real thing', the lasting, an interim measure when something is needed but the quality one would truly like can not yet be achieved, but will perhaps be possible at a later point. The temporary stands between these two positions. It is on the hand, short-lived like the ephemeral but unlike the latter it can certainly exist for a longer period than was initially intended. It is possible to extend its life.

(Haydin F. Temel R., Temporary urban spaces, Concept for the use of city Spaces, Birkhaeuser, Basel, 2006.

34 TEMPORARY VOID:

This refers to those sties that remain unused, non-productive or inactive during one use and the next. The cycles of use are usually defined by official plans.

Walking along the "wall" the difference between one "empty" area and another is simply the level of interaction between users and the area in question: each of these sites is affected by the structure created by flows that, more or less intensely, cross them (fig.9).

Fig 9

Instead we can speak of different degrees of intensity with which the urban voids react to stimuli and the different levels of intensity with which these voids are activated: the colonization by different species of "pioneers" who now inhabit and configure the temporarily forgotten spaces of the planned city.

In some cases the process of activation and the use of space has taken place over such a lengthy period of time that it has continually changed their function and structure, until it reached a point of balance[35]. In other cases spontaneous gestures or one individual's specific needs have guided the behaviour of others, setting off small transformations and proposing a temporary use. The permanence over time of this use and its recognition by the city gives it an identity and a structure, even if it remains un-codified by the planned city. The rules of the process of interaction, activation and finally recognition cannot be generalized, except in very broad terms.

Like the examples described below, in Berlin almost all of the residual areas identified demonstrate phenomena of spontaneous occupation and temporary uses that last for one season, one week or one event. While they are not deeply investigated, they merit consideration because they can help to clarify the dynamics of interaction between residual spaces and the city. Among them I will describe shortly one example that present a processes of temporary occupation, organization and transformation.

<<Temporary uses are uses for which a society does not usually provide space that, for whatever reason, stand vacant, and hence lie in the shadow of social or private attention. Temporary uses observe social relations and exploit gaps and niches>> [36]

2.4. - Ostbahnhof Area: "moving "

In Berlin, one of the more important projects for the transformation of Berlin is the Mediaspree: an operation of urban reconversion that involves the 4 neighbourhoods of Mitte, Friedrichshain, Kreuzberg and Treptow. Covering a total

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[35] << il terzo paesaggio, teatro di forti dinamiche, cambia la propria configurazione nel corso del tempo…il trasformismo è una proprietà del terzo paesaggio>>
(Pieri F. (a cura di), Gilles Clément "Manifesto del Terzo paesaggio" Editore Quodlibet, Macerata, 2005)
[36] Haydin F. Temel R., Temporary urban spaces, Concept for the use of city Spaces, Birkhaeuser, Basel, 2006.

of 180 hectares and extend along both banks of the Spree River for 3.7 km, from Jannovitz to Elsenbrucke, straddling the former frontier between East and West. The project includes the transformation of the entire area into a tertiary services centre oriented towards new media and other technologies, creating a new gate to the city in the east.

The "Mediaspree" building, in the area between the Oberdaum Brücke and Schillingbrück also includes the area that is currently known as the East Side Gallery, where are conserved and protected over 1.3 km of the Berlin Wall, used by famous artists from around the globe as a canvas. The area in question is one of the portions of the void, the residue of no man's land created by the fall of the wall. This area is not visible from the street, except through small openings between one panel of the wall and another.

During the summer, this opening is used by people and bicycles, music can be heard and the air is filled with smells and voices; during the winter it is closed by a fence and only frames a portion of the void space, covered by sand and vegetation. The configuration of the area, hidden by the wall, changes according to the seasons, the temperature and from one year to the next. It has always changed and continues to change, in step with the phases of transformation of the adjacent areas). During the summer months this area, once empty and abandoned, is transformed into one of the liveliest areas in the city, frequented day and night by Berliners and tourists, offering a wide range of recreational activities (that grows year by year) for every type of public.

The current structure is the result of a lengthy process of spontaneous occupation of the site, emptied after the construction of the wall, and immediately reoccupied after the fall. Each of the various configurations, all of the uses that have taken place in this area have a common denominator: they were all suggested by the intrinsic potential of the site. Its location along the river, the physical and visual protection afforded by the wall from the street and the city, the vast open space, its proximity to the centre and the presence of numerous connections (railway stations, various subway stations, road arteries).

After the reunification of Berlin, this area underwent substantial changes: the wall that has remained standing and the area was abandoned, untended and forgotten by the city that was busy concentrating its energies in the centre. It became a refuge for colonies of nomads and homeless people who parked their trailer homes amongst the refuse and detritus (pioneers)[37] (fig.10).

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[37] PIONEER:

who explore unhinabitet terrains in order to estalish new settlements and to exploit the resources.

http://www.garzantilinguistica.it/

One who ventures into unknown or unclaimed territory to settle; One who opens up new areas of thought, research, or development: a pioneer in aviation;

-Ecology An animal or plant species that establishes itself in a previously barren environment.

-Leading the way; trailblazing: a pioneer treatment for cancer.

v.tr.To open up (an area) or prepare (a way): rockets that pioneered outer space; To settle (a region); To initiate or participate in the development of: surgeons who pioneered organ transplants.

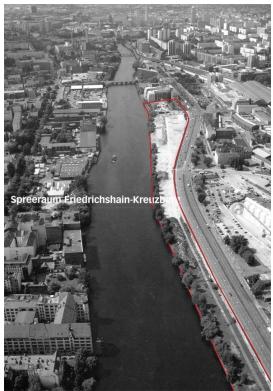*http://www.thefreedictionary.com*

Fig 10, 11 and 12

After that for many years, up until the closure of the cement factory, the empty area of the former frontier remained a sand storage site (fig.11).: alongside the river, navigated by barges transporting building materials during the boom of the 1990′s, hidden from the view of citizens and tourists (who only visited the street-side of the former wall!)

In 2002 the entire area of the Ostbanhof was involved in a spontaneous process of transformation that attracted many young and creative talents. Empty buildings were occupied , the creative climate, the network of contacts that was created and the large amount of sand resulting from the previous use of the site all contributed to the temporary conversion of the former storage depot into the location of a sand sculpture festival (fig.12).. The users of the East Side Gallery were able to DISCOVER the area behind the wall as well. From this moment onwards, the (legally) occupied area never managed to reach this level, but continued to become more extensive and fragmented into tiny environments by the addition of various colonisers, up until last summer when every square metre of land was "inhabited".
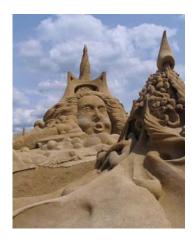
Fig 12 – 15 clockwise from top left

Christian Schulz, the promoter "Sandstation" invested in the potential of the area, organising his second "Strandbar" (beach bar) (fig.13).

The summer of 2003 was witness to the first season of the Ostrand (East Beach) and the same sand that was used for the sculptures the year before was now covered with beach umbrellas, lounge chairs, sofas, benches and tables (fig.14).

Since 2003 the entire area has attracted and hosted, year after year, an increasing number of visitors and activities (capable of creating an economy), becoming a network of super equipped bars, even for only one season. Mobility and flexibility are at the base of temporary spaces[38] as they are subject to nomadism. Any object that temporarily occupies the voids must guarantee mobility and flexibility. For this reason what organises these spaces is almost always the pieces of furniture, moveable elements that are lightweight, inexpensive and easy to store (fig.15).

> <<When one speaks of temporary urbanism, it is only a small step to concepts of social space, whether in the form of situational spaces for action, institutionalized regulations or normative territorialisations. [...] one might thing of the social space of temporary use as an instrument to dissolve or at least transform the other social space traditionally shaped by the urban planning perspective [...]. temporary spaces in this sense would be a location where they can take control, if only for a short time and with a restricted scope of activity. The goal is a do-it-yourself attitude, rather than waiting for planners.>>[39]

The frequentation of a vast public and the recognition by the city has made this area an effective piece of public space, of metropolitan interest, launching spores of activations on the other side of the river where small bars have popped up like mushrooms [40].

2.5. – check

Moving away from the layout of the wall that guided the research, is it possible to find confirmation in the rest of the city? If we consider only the neighbourhood of Mitte, there are numerous examples of void lots, temporarily occupied by seasonal or continuative activities that configure and valorize a space that would otherwise be left in a state of stand-

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[38] TEMPORARY SPACES

<< are spaces opened up by temporary projects, whether they are produced by economic or aesthetic urban planning, cultural reasons, or simply by a desire to use something >>

Haydin F. Temel R., Temporary urban spaces, Concept for the use of city Spaces, Birkhaeuser, Basel, 2006.

[39] Haydin F. Temel R., Temporary urban spaces, Concept for the use of city Spaces, Birkhaeuser, Basel, 2006.

[40] <<Lo statuto (non scritto ma accertato) del terzo paesaggio è di ordine planetario. Il mantenimento della sua esistenza non dipende da esperti ma da una coscienza collettiva>>

(Haydin F. Temel R., Temporary urban spaces, Concept for the use of city Spaces, Birkhaeuser, Basel, 2006)

by. While that something happens, a series of "low cost" relax areas are created each year, mostly during the summer, with solariums, bars and play areas for children. Often the spatial solutions are the result of temporary agreements between the promoter of the "activity" and the owner of the lot, usually with the payment of a small sum as rent; (the relationship between the property owner and the temporary user is one of tolerance, in those cases when the space is the result of the combined gesture of a group individuals.)

The phase of verification has made use of well-known examples of the temporary occupation of empty sites "randomly" spread across the city in the Mitte neighbourhood, where the residential density is the highest in the city. The Strandbar-Mitte (fig.16) (inaugurated in 2002); the Volxgolf (fig.17), inserted between the stops of Philipp Oswalt's itinerary in his "Berlin City Without Form"[41] ; and the last example, the Trailerpark (fig.18)., inaugurated in 2006 for the World Cup Soccer Championship.

Fig 16 and 17

For each of the three examples, the modality according to which the void was created is the result of diverse processes. The "Volxgolf" is located into an area remains unbuilt untill now although many project was proposed for its recovery. While the projects were cancelled for political reasons, sports lovers in Mitte transformed the area into a suggestive, urban golf course, attracting sponsors and sport associations.

The area currently known as the Strandbar-Mitte is located along the Spree River in a marginal and difficult to access of the Monbijou Park occupied since 2002 by a Theatre and a bar. The company found in that area left empty after the demolition of a building, the niche in which stay.

The theatre was followed by a bar, and the bar by the Strandbar.

The "Trailerpark", along the Linienstrasse and in a very central position has been open to the public for a little less than a year for the football word chanpionship (since spring 2006). The "Trailerpark" is a space that borrows from the concept of the "Campground" to create an exterior space outside an abandoned warehouse, with play areas for children. The very original spatial result is the idea of a bar tender and an artist.

2 - ATTAINMENTS

2.1 Dynamic MAPPING

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[41] (Oswalt P. , Berlino: Città senza forma, Meltemi, Roma, 2006)

Temporary uses observed, both during the phase of reading and that of verification are inserted within the life of the city for a short period of time. Taking advantage of a moment of uncertainty in urban life to propose new spatial, social and economic models. The temporary nature of their permanence on a site provides the alibi for experimentation: nothing can be definitive, everything must be MOBILE[42], removable, flexible to change, adaptation and the improvement of the space proposed, up until the moment of eviction (which, in some cases, never occurs). None of the objects will disappear entirely from the life of the city and the moment of their MIGRATION often represents the confirmation of the model and the AFFIRMATION[43] of its success.

MIGRATION[44] is thus another key concept, together with FLEXIBILITY[45] and TRANSFORMISM[46] for describing the actual phenomenon of the temporary occupation of urban voids in the city. The awareness of the temporary condition reduces the fear of risk and pushes for experimentation[47].

If flexibility and transformism support the phase of "colonisation" and "rooting" of the temporary use, the phase of incubation, migration represents the phase in which it affirms itself within the city as a recognised and shared urban space. Migration represents the phase during which the proposed model affirms its urbanity and confirms its validity The example of the Ostrand, where migration has taken place twice, at two different periods of time, allows us to understand how important this factor is in the processes of spontaneous transformation.

In the case of the Volxgolf area, the availability of the empty lot and the spirit of initiative of a few individuals led to the creation the BeachMitte that, after years of incubation and consolidation (supported by minor sponsors and Nike) migrated definitively from one area to another improving the model and the economy (fig.19).

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[42] MOBILITY:

"Mobility did not affect every zone equally; rather it divided the population into one group that tended to be settled and another that was highly mobile, liberated by the redistribution of land, which strengthened bourgeoisie relative to the nobility. In the cities, it resulted in a parallelism of relative fixed uses of space on the basis of long term, stable property relations-distributed among the various social classes. For the lower classes, the changing jobs offerings and repeated rent increases led to frequent changes of residence at a rate scarcely imaginable today, often quarterly, so that moves were a common sight on public street. For a large portion of the urban population, "normal use" of an apartment proved to be relatively temporary.

(Rudolf kohoutet, Christa Kamleithner-Haydin F. Temel R., Temporary urban spaces, Concept for the use of city Spaces, Birkhaeuser, Basel, 2006)

[43] AFFIRMATION:

Whereas long-lasting interventions necessarily have a certain degree of affirmation, temporary projects have more latitude: the motive force is more likely to be activism than politics.

(Haydin F. Temel R., Temporary urban spaces, Concept for the use of city Spaces, Birkhaeuser, Basel, 2006)

[44] MIGRATION:

To migrate, temporary or definitive move from a place to another of ethnic or social groups.

www.thefreedictionary.com/

[45] FLEXIBLE:

Capable of being bent or flexed; pliable; b. Capable of being bent repeatedly without injury or damage; Susceptible to influence or persuasion; tractable; Responsive to change; adaptable.

www.thefreedictionary.com/

[46] TRANSFORMISM:

The hypothesis, or doctrine, that living beings have originated by the modification of some other previously existing forms of living matter.

www.thefreedictionary.com/

[47] <<Temporary activities create a maximum level of intensity with a minimum amount of substance. Infrastructures, buildings and empty existing surfaces are activated using minimum local resources. This ease allows actors without capital to organise the city and its spaces. The basic rules of capitalism in these spaces do not apply: even without financial means it is possible to make cultural and urban experiments that, notwithstanding the lack of funds, have an enormous impact.>>

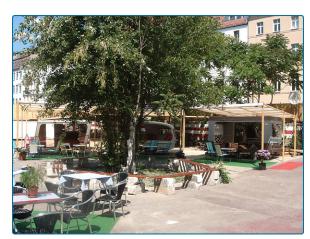(Oswalt P. , Berlino: Città senza forma, Meltemi, Roma, 2006)
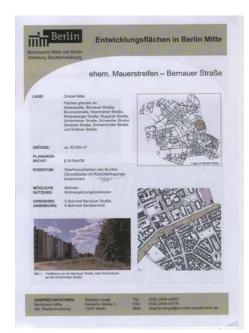
Fig 18 and 19

2.2 An instrument for the MANAGMENT of the urban void[48]

The temporary use of an abandoned area contributes to the maintenance of the area itself, prevents the decay of any systems, keeps it clean and, not lastly, valorizes the area both as a socially active space but also as a site that generates an economy. In the case of the Trailerpark, the decision to occupy this area was followed by small works of renovation. In the case of Platoon, the agreement between the owner and the users clearly stated that the latter were responsible for keeping the site clean and functioning in exchange for the rent-free use of the land.

In all of the case, the output offered to the city and the owner of the land by the temporary use represented, and continues to represent in some cases, both a fragment of urban life and of the economic and cultural life of the city. The temporary use thus represents an instrument for the management and maintenance of the site during the period of passage from the past to its designated future.

In order that there be more immediate contact between the area and the investor (who decides its future), the area and its hypothetical user (who designs the present), the owner and the City Government, who remains the supervisor of all urban transformations, the offices, (regional and of each district) have created instruments for the cataloguing of the available areas that are left in Berlin (fig.20-21).

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[48] <<[…] Vacancies are continually being recorded-and are increasing- and the city urgently needs any kind of revitalization and innovation in their policies regarding locational competition. It remains to be seen whether temporary uses present a solution to this problem or could lead to anew way of thinking about urban planning.>> *(Rudolf kohoutet, Christa Kamleithner-Haydin F. Temel R., Temporary urban spaces, Concept for the use of city Spaces, Birkhaeuser, Basel, 2006)*
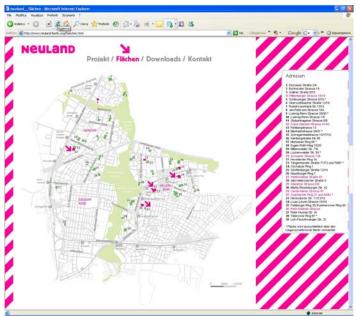
Fig 20 and 21

As a confirmation of the relevance acquired by the phenomenon of the "temporary use" or "ZWISCHENNUTZUNG"[49] of unused areas or buildings there now exist virtual, on-line platforms that act as a point of contact between the owners of unused areas and potential users. One of these is the Berlin based "Zwischennutzungsagentur"[50] , which distributes the Zwischennutzung[51] and acts as a real connection between interested actors, the property owner and the possible user, publishing a catalogue of the unused spaces[52] , acting as a mediator in the search for these areas and helping both sides to understand the advantages and risks .

2.3 designing (WITH) THE temporary[53]

In recent years temporary projects, architectural and urban projects that exist for a limited and finite period of time, are more and more frequent: often this time is necessary required to incube more complex programmes[54]. In fact they require a solid base, represented by the development of local resources, to work.

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[49] The literal translation of Zwischennutsung means "use between", provisional use.

[50] http://www zwischennutzungsagentur.de/

[51] <<Unbuilt lots or buildings have a price – unused talent: Temporary use is a strategy for the reactivation of void spaces of those in stand-by. The Zwischennutzungsagentur - The Agency for Temporary Uses – acts as a platform of connection, discussion and consultation for property owners and those who are interested in making use of these areas.>>
http://www.zwischennutzungsagentur.de/

[52] << For property owners and administrators of sites, the theme of "Zwischennutzung" or provisional use is still very new. Furthermore no one is sure what objects and what forms are suitable for this use. With a joint effort by the private and public property owners, politicians and administrations we create catalogues of the areas that are currently empty. A special and internal databank that is part of the CMS System, using a specific function of connection, offers the possibility to all project partners to access this data about the areas that are of potential interest for some use. >>
http://www.zwischennutzungsagentur.de/arbeitsfelder.html

[53] http://www.zwischennutzungsagentur.de/arbeitsfelder.html

[54] STRATEGY
Strategy is a term from military context, where it refers to long-term war planning, in contrast to short term, more flexible battle planning. "Strategy means an approach that emerges from the planning desk and the sand table; it works from a position of power that is in a position to force its opponents to accept its conditions and to ignore limitations imposed by circumstances. Strategy plans for its own space, and that is a space of autonomy, where the objects can be manoeuvred at will. The urban planning equivalent of strategy is the master plan.
Haydin F. Temel R., Temporary urban spaces, Concept for the use of city Spaces, Birkhaeuser, Basel, 2006)

In temporal terms "designing" the temporary means coming up with a "TACTIC"[55], something with an immediate response that is capable of activating the present, seen here as the period between the past (former use of the site) and the future (planned and designed).

The present is the period of time (often not considered for the development of the future) that offers the city the chance to experiment, to optimise services and increase the quality of life (urban voids are capable, as a result of their flexibility, of immediately responding to the needs of the city and its inhabitants). Given the interchangeability of uses in these spaces, the present can be composed of as many frames as there are uses for the same site. The future, the urban plan, continues to fulfill the role of programming the comprehensive and organic development of the city.

> *<<Temporary use is the opposite of the master plan: it starts out from the context and the current condition, not from a distant goal; it seeks to use what already exists rather than inventing everything anew; it is concerned with small places and brief spans of time as well as the conditions at various points in time.>>*[56]

The diffusion of the professional and cultural environments of the practices described, temporary use as a process of transformation of the contemporary city, documented by the quantity of websites and links that deal with the issue.[57]

3 - CONCLUSIONS

Managing the present state of cities

> *<< Master plans whose implementation dates are set far in the future because of legal proceedings and court battles opens up a window of opportunity for temporary uses in their sites. When it is possible to produce long-term effects by means of such projects, then they are more than just provisional. >>*[58]

The planning processes that are entrusted with the role of managing and deigning the future of the city falls out of step and leaves spatial frames temporarily unresolved: they constitute a reserve, from which local resources can draw and temporary use becomes the instrument.

Temporary use takes advantage of something that is missing, the momentary lack of "government" or "rules" in order to insert itself within a space and time that are not considered: the moment that separates the past (defined by a function that no longer exists) and the planned future of a site (not always certain, close at hand and efficient). Temporary use takes advantage of the "present" and the available local resources and re-inserts the space in question within the city's active system.

The Senate for Planning and Development in the City of Berlin seems to have learned from these suggestions and, in 2006, organised a competition for the "Temporary Organisation of the Area near the Castle" for the period between the demolition of the Palast der Republik and the reconstruction, in its place, of the new "ancient" baroque castle.

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[55] TACTIC

Tactic is a term from a military context, where it refers to short term battle planning in contrast to long term, less flexible war planning. "tactic" means an approach from the weaker place, which is not in the position to dictate conditions to an opponent but is compelled to try to exploit relationships to its advantage, by waiting for an opportunity and exploiting its flexibily and and quickly. Tacticians have to work in other locations. The urban planning equivalent of tactics is temporary-use.
Haydin F. Temel R., Temporary urban spaces, Concept for the use of city Spaces, Birkhaeuser, Basel, 2006)

[56] Haydin F. Temel R., Temporary urban spaces, Concept for the use of city Spaces, Birkhaeuser, Basel, 2006.150 - http://www.europastrand.de/

[57] http://urbandrift.org/[57]

, http://template.com

www.zwischennutzung.net, *http://urbandrift.org/*

[58] Till K., La The new Berlin, university of Minnesota press, Minnesota, 2005.

<<Temporäre Freiraumgestaltung Schlossareal Berlin-Mitte, Berlin (D)>>[59]

The competition represents the epilogue of a lengthy debate regarding conservation and demotion, after many phases of "ZWISCHENPALASTNUTZUNG" before the demolishment, the latest attempt to recover the site and, above all, the manifesto of contact between "temporary uses" and traditional planning (fig.22-23).

<<Alternative planning methods are in great demand. The cause of this is not an increasing dissatisfaction with traditional planning tool. Among new methods are approaches like participation, cooperation between public and private actors, but also the use of temporary space, especially in an urban context.>>[60]

Fig 22 and 23

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[59] AA.VV., Lotus n.81, Electa, MIlano, 1994.

[60] *Haydin F. Temel R., Temporary urban spaces, Concept for the use of city Spaces, Birkhaeuser, Basel, 2006.*

Creating A Creative City?
Critical Perspective On The Creative City Discourse

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Since the 1990s, innovation, culture and creativity have become new catchwords in urban development as a growing number of cities started promoting and marketing themselves with a wide array of concepts ranging from culture, cultural tourism, heritage preservation and art to technological innovation and urban regeneration, urban design and architecture. Cultural values and economic activity based on culture were brought into the forefront of urban development policy in many European cities and culture became an increasingly important element in many cities' development strategies and plans (Kulonpalo 2005, 257). While it can certainly be questioned whether much has actually changed in the contents of cities' marketing and image-polishing campaigns and strategies, this paper argues that along with the paradigmatic transformation of urban development policies emerged a new discourse about the creative city. Some of the building blocks of this new discourse are a number of rather vague notions of creativity and innovation based on local urban culture, cultural diversity and new technologies. At least on rhetoric level the particularity of the place, the local urbanity and the cities themselves started to matter in a positive and new way.

This paper presents and discusses urban studies debate and research literature on changes in post-fordist cities' development strategies as consequence of the increasing role of culture in urban policy as well as some of the wider transformations in cities political economy in globalizing economy and some of their consequences. The concluding part of the paper presents some further critical remarks on the cultural paradigm in urban development.

Urban Development Policy in the Era Of Globalization

During two last decades urban theorists have been quite unanimous about the growing importance of places in globalizing world economy (see for example Aglietta 1979; Sassen 1998; Castells 2000). In this discourse four main issues have been raised: urban regions and cities in particular gaining power and importance, national governments are loosing their capacity to respond to economic changes and challenges from global level through traditional policy measures and instruments, and finally growing importance of sub-national level decision-making where urban development measures become more and more important for local decision-makers in both public and private sectors (Le Galès 1998). The de-centralization of political power from central government to regional and local levels and governing bodies, the fragmentation of power at the local level, and a shift of local planning policy priorities from more welfare-oriented policies towards fostering economic growth, have been some of the big tendencies visible in Europe (Harding 1997).

In connection with wide transformations in the global economy the recent history of European urban policy-making can be divided roughly into three phases associated with three different policy-fields. During the 1980s new urban-related activities aimed primarily at the environmental policy. In the 1990s urban issues became part of the social cohesion and integration policies, which included also the cultural policy. While currently in the 2000s the urban policy

formally still remains in the latter, its contents have been increasingly moving towards economic development policies and strategies. While culture and local cultural activities had an important role in the policies aiming at improving social cohesion, the way culture is seen currently in the policy context seems to have been radically transformed. The urban policy does obviously still contain strong elements of the two previous phases but the general argument is that especially culture is becoming a mere commodity in the neo-liberal urban politics and development policy.

On the level of urban policy, politics and governance, the changing focus also implicitly suggests a transformation of cities' economic base from industrial production to services and towards a service-oriented economy base. These developments match what has been suggested in the discussion about of the post-fordist mode of production and post-fordist cities more generally. Consequently it has been argued that the contemporary city has become a stage and a prime site for consumption-related activities related to tourism, sports, culture and entertainment (Hannigan 2003, 352).

Culture, Urban Economies, City Images and Inter-City Competition

As cities constitute increasingly the nodes of global networks of marketing, directionality, finance, competence and culture, maintaining the health of urban economies is considered increasingly connected to their capability of participating in the 'Castellian' networks of global flows (finance, ideas, knowledge, human capital) (see Castells 2000). Consequently cities and urban regions compete strongly as every urban community is concerned with securing its own collective interests. In this way each community has a strong interest in securing new inward investments, widening external markets for its products, and attracting visitors from outside (Camagni 2002, 2395). Amin and Graham (1997), Thrift (2000) and Amin and Thrift (2002) have based large part of their work around the argument that in our times the urban economy increasingly operates as a discursive construction of blending economy and culture. In this context the projected image of a city often plays a greater role than the reality in shaping the views of visitors, investors and even residents. This has advanced to a point where the idea of cultural city and the use of arts and entertainment as tools in urban regeneration and economic development can be considered already as almost universal phenomenon (Evans 2003, 417). Consequently, in order to secure the future economic development, many major metropolitan areas around the world are drawn to a developmental formula that combines a focus on the new economy, investments in cultural resources, and an attempt to create a vibrant sense of place (Scott 2006b, 11).

Local culture and creativity have been considered as important competitiveness factors that would attract companies, educated people and capital to a certain locale by many authors (Scott 1997; Bianchini and Parkinson 1993; Florida 2002a; Hannigan 2003; Fainstein et al. 2004). It has been often argued that some of the most significant effects of the post-industrial shift are reflected in the sector of economy linked with culture and cultural production, often roughly put together without much consideration on their actual contents and labeled as the new cultural economy (Scott 1997, 324). Scott (2006b, 14) argues that the leading edges of growth and innovation in the contemporary economy are largely made up of certain specific sectors such as high-technology industry, neo-artisanal manufacturing, business and financial services, cultural-products industries and the media. These sectors constitute what is often labeled as new economy, or the new cultural economy. Following this line of reasoning the new economy is the latest step of evolution in times of globalizing world in which prior stages have been labeled as the postindustrial society (Bell 1973), regime of flexible accumulation (Harvey 1989b), and post-fordism (Albertsen 1988).

In the new climate of increasing global and more importantly inter-urban competition and the trend of city marketing, cultural regeneration and massive flagship projects became everyday things for entrepreneurial city regimes. Philo and Kearns (1993) claim that as re-imaging and branding of places, usually cities, is increasingly being resorted to by policymakers as a tool for attracting flows of tourists, for generating new inward investments, and for raising local

economic expectations generally, the cities that have strong existing historical and cultural associations clearly have a marked advantage in the game of place-making and place-promotion.

However, when high-pressure marketing and sales techniques are used to help troubled cities in their transition to post-industrial centers of tourism, culture and reinvestment, all of these developments are not without their inherent problems and contradictions. Harvey (1989a, 10) noted early on that rapidly growing inter-city competition exerts an external coercive power over individual cities to conform to the rules and logic of capitalist economy and accumulation. And although the consequence of this can be a forced uniformity of cities, all in the provision of a good business climate, the orchestrated production of urban image for a city can also help to create a sense of social solidarity, civic pride and loyalty to place (Harvey 1989a, 14). Harvey has also argued that the concentration on spectacle and image rather than on the substance of economic and social problems can also prove to be harmful in the long run.

In the context of cultural production and new cultural economies in cities, many academic critics believe that small-scale cultural producers tend to be excluded from the new entertainment economy and they may be forced to move because they can no longer afford the rents, Zukin's book 'Loft Living Culture and Capital in Urban Change' (1989) being one of the first and most famous works on this much debated subject. The counter-criticism to that argument goes that conversely, that for example tourism offers increased opportunities for local people who are involved in the production of culture and providing culture-related consumption opportunities (Hannigan 2003, 352). Zukin (1995, 282-4) voiced her concern by noting that greater attention should be paid to the material inequalities that are at stake in cultural strategies of economic growth and community revitalization. The question '*who the city is for*' and '*who is it (effectively) marketed to*' by using culture and cultural aspects has implications for cities (Kulonpalo 2005, 256).

Questioning Urban Creativity Discourse In Urban Policy

Without going into the debate concerning Florida's (2002b) notion of creative classes, according to Florida and Tinagli (2005, 17) what they categorize as the creative class in the society makes up of more than 25% of the work force in seven out of 14 European nations, and comprises nearly 30% of the workforce in three – The Netherlands, Belgium and Finland. Whether one agrees with Florida and Tinagli's calculations, it is hard to deny that fact that an increasing amount of the working population in post-fordist cities and urban regions are employed in what could be labeled as creative professions. Artists, designers, university professors, researchers and teachers, writers, performers, but also journalists and reporters, consultants and engineers are all in 'creative' jobs. The importance of openness, tolerance, diversity and a positive attitude towards social and technological change and deviation from prevailing societal standards and norms, as proposed by Florida (2002b), are emphasized in many cities strategies and policies concerning their future development. Accordingly these elements are increasingly projected upon the character of urban environments as well. In theory only open, tolerant, diverse cities that welcome change and new ideas, attitudes and action that contest the prevailing status quo of societal values can be creative and attract more creative people, which will in turn then create more creativity and striving and vital urban culture. However, this equation is often much more difficult to realize in reality than how it appears in seminar speeches given to or by city-administrators. The rather vague idea and discourse of a future of western cities as creative cities is based, more than anything else, on a vision of an ideal type of economically successful post-industrial city, where the economy and social well-being is heavily based on new kinds or service industries, innovation, information and production based increasingly on culture as a commodity and new ICT -technologies rather than old-fashioned large-scale industrial production.

Following this line of reasoning, the most central issue is not whether an interesting and lively local arts and music scene, active local gay or other sub-cultural and minority groups, high profile flagship project buildings, cultural spaces such as art museum or any types of marginal attractions have beneficial effects on the development of a place as it is very hard to anyone with any social consciousness to deny that existence of these phenomena are beneficial for a locality, city or region. These phenomena are all integral elements urban culture and life and they form undeniably the

very fabric of our modern cities. The real accountable effect on the developing of the local economy of the city is altogether different question, which should be answered by studies based on hard empirical evidence. Scott (2006a, 15) argues that the idea of the creative city provides at best a overly simple view of trends and possibilities in urban development patterns because while many large modern cities may harbor unprecedented creative capabilities but they at the same time they are also places where strong social, cultural, and economic inequalities often exist, all of which counter-act the city's flourishing in different ways.

In basic principle public agencies and political decision-making system and can play a positive role in enhancing the effects urban externalities on local creativity (Scott 2006b, 3; Scott and Leriche 2005). But whether city government officials, policymakers and public sector organizations manage to come up with policies and plans and implement concrete programs helping to encourage creativity in all its forms and especially so that it would lead to economic development is yet again another question.

It is argued that cultural attributes of cities and creativity in general tend to be something much more intangible and spontaneous than economic development policies. Most often they are not product of public authorities' planning efforts, even if there always exists examples of that just as well. Without playing down the importance of public sector agencies, subsidies, services and amenities such as education and cultural services, whether we are talking about ICT-companies and other kinds of technological advancements, or individual artists', musicians' and bands' success, vibrant nightlife economies or immigrants' businesses, creativity and innovation leading to economic success is more often result of work of innovative and hard-working individuals with often limited private or public sector investment and backing. Flagship buildings and major investment in urban regeneration, public infrastructure and public transport, sports stadiums and convention centers, heritage and preservation, city-marketing campaigns targeting tourism and international investment are all equally important in their own rights and can most likely sometimes make a real difference in competition between cities but whether they will make a city creative is again altogether different question.

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Urban environment and health –
global and Estonian perspectives

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Abstract

Urban health studies health risks in cities and promotes well-being of people living there. It is driven by more than 20 determinants, which include environmental, social, economical, policy and other factors. Environmental health focuses on air, water, soil and food quality. In Estonian bigger towns the most critical of them is air quality. Due to rapid traffic increase, the trend of the pollution level is slightly increasing. The concentration of most important pollutant PM10 (from the point of public health) in centre town of Tallinn is near the limit value. However, as scientists have found the negative health effects appear in lower concentrations (like we have in residential areas of Tallinn) as well. For instance it is shown that during the last 15 years the traffic increase in Tartu (second biggest town in Estonia) has been more 3 times in centre town and up to 6 times in residential area. It is mostly driven by urban sprawl, ineffective public transportation, and poor bicycle and pedestrian road development. The pollution level in Tartu will reflect in about 1000 years of life lost in whole population in a year. Other symptoms as morbidity to respiratory and cardiovascular diseases, cough, annoyance, and irritation of eyes etc. will appear in addition. The pressure due fast economic development to decrease public spaces like green areas in Estonia is strong. This will amplify the negative consequences of air pollution even more. As poor environmental health will directly decrease the urban life quality, these questions should be taken into account already in planning processes.

Introduction

Nowadays half of the world's population is living in urban areas, yet only two centuries ago it was 5 per cent and in 1900 15 per cent. Term urbanization stands for the increasing concentration of people and economic activities in towns and cities. This overview article will focus on urbanization, its effect on different populations within cities and how cities might be designed for the optimal health of their inhabitants.

High-income countries have tended to have the highest proportion of people living in cities. This trend is changing, though. Especially in countries with a rapidly accelerating pace of economic growth; 90 per cent of urban growth in the next 20 years is predicted to occur in low and middle-income countries (Landon, 2006). It is predicted that in future, most of the world's population growth will occur in cities and towns of poor countries.

Even while population growth rates for instance in Asia are falling dramatically, it is predicted that the region will see an absolute increase of nearly a billion people over the next three decades –growth concentrated mostly in urban

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areas (Montgomery et al., 2004). One of the consequences being that population influx into cities may occur at a faster rate than the infrastructure development can cope with, and new migrants may experience new health hazards both from the urban environment and from inadequately controlled health and safety conditions of employment in new industries (Landon, 2006).

Estonia has experienced major urban sprawl in recent decade. Up to 80% of the people are living in urban areas nowadays. About 1/3 of the population of 1.35 million is living in capital Tallinn and about 40% in its service area.

As urban populations grow, the quality of the urban environment, will play an increasingly important role in terms of public health with respect to issues ranging from waste disposal, drinking water quality and sanitation, and injury prevention, to the interface between urban poverty, environment and health. The concept of driving forces that influence health and the environment is particularly appropriate in the concentrated human exposure situation. The human health is affected by more than 20 determinants, which include environmental, social, economical, policy and other factors. This article is taking an environmental health focus, concentrating on air, water quality and socio-economic health predictors in urban areas on global level as well as in Estonian scene.

Natural environment and urbanization

Urban areas are characterized by high-density population accommodated by the development of extensive road networks, housing schemes, service and production industries and recreational facilities. The changes in the environment that occur as a result of urbanization are described by Gupta and Asher (1998) as related to following:

- water (increased run-off, flood intensity increases, depletion of water sources, problem with waste water);
- climate (increased local temperatures by heat island effect, increased cloudiness and precipitation, reduced humidity, reduced wind speed);
- air (pollution increased, including particulates);
- ecology (reduced vegetation and wildlife, introduction of exotic species);
- physical (changes of water channel, problem of solid waste disposal).

The **climate-related effects** are most evident in low and middle-income countries, many of which have tropical climates that exaggerate environmental changes. Landon (2006) has brought out, that rainfall is heavier in non-tropical regions, causing greater problems with run-off and sedimentation.

Human **land-use** in the urban environment has contributed to the increase in both the magnitude and frequency of floods. In the process of urbanization, raw land is converted and covered with pavement. This causes an increase for runoff after rainfall leading to flash floods. The rate of increase in risk for flash floods is a function of the percentage of the land that is covered with pavement and cement and the percentage of area served by storm sewers.

Urban environments produce **air pollution** that harms the natural environment. Much of air pollution is concentrated in and around urban areas, where automobiles and industry emit massive amounts of pollution. Visible air pollution, known as smog, is present in nearly all urbanized areas. There has been a recent trend to try and describe the **ecological 'footprint'** of a city. In the process of urbanization – turning natural land into cities – valuable habitats of flora and fauna are lost or relocated. This virtually irreversible process contributes to the elimination of economically or recreationally valuable resources. With increasing concentration of population in urban areas, the problem will extend beyond existing boundaries and result in more damage to the natural environment, effects are reaching and potentially damaging. Urban areas rely on importing food, water, energy, minerals and other resources from outside their boundaries. They also produce large quantities of waste that pollute air, water and soil, inside and outside of the physical boundaries

of cities. The land area covered by cities covers about 5 per cent of the planet, but supplying the resources for urban dwellers involves 73 per cent of the habitable land area (Landon, 2006).

There are, however, some **environmental benefits** from urbanization. The large concentration of suitable material makes recycling economically viable. More effective water supply and sewage treatment systems can be established in urban areas. Urban dwellers generally have lower birth rates than rural dwellers and there are more opportunities to educate and mobilize residents on environmental issues. Biodiversity can potentially be preserved by protecting habitats as the population is based in a circumscribed area, although this has been balanced against the damage incurred in providing the cities with resources.

Cities can be more sustainable if re-use, recycling, waste reduction, pollution prevention and efficient use of resources are prioritised. There is a wide scope for urban gardens, both private and communal, to provide fresh food and recreational sites for residents.

Human health effects in urbanised environments

Physical aspects of the urban environment that have an effect upon population health include water supply and quality, sanitation provision, industrial and residential pollution, housing, infrastructure and the city's geographical situation (e.g. on a flood plain or an earthquake belt). These have important role regardless of development stage of society.

Concentrated manufacturing, production and transportation have two important physical influences on health. First, being a source of air pollution, whereas the biggest concern is related to fine particulate matter. Second, motor vehicles cause accidental injuries.

Long-term exposure to particulate matter (PM) is particularly damaging to human health and reduces life expectancy. The WHO Regional Office for Europe has highlighted the impact of air pollution on health and its financial costs (WHO, 2005). It is determined that air pollution with particulate matter claims an average of 8.6 months from the life of every person in the European Union (EU). PM is made of tiny particles, varying in size, composition and origin. Inhaled, the coarse fraction ($PM_{2.5-10}$ – particles with a diameter 10-2.5 μm) may reach the upper part of the airways and lung. Fine particles ($PM_{2.5}$ – with a diameter smaller than 2.5 μm) are more dangerous as they penetrate more deeply into the lung and may reach the alveolar region. Evidence indicates that PM increases deaths from cardiovascular and respiratory diseases. Even a short-term rise in PM concentrations increases the risk of emergency hospital admissions for cardiovascular and respiratory causes.

Tackling air pollution in EU are estimated to save €58-161 billion if deaths from PM pollution were prevented. Additionally, €29 billion need not be spent on diseases attributed to PM.

Indoor air pollution can cause acute respiratory inferiors in children and chronic lung disease in adults. In many cities 30-60 per cent of the population live in over-crowded, poor quality housing with implications for the spread of airborne infections, and exposure to heat or cold and damp

Environmental health factors are evident in Estonian towns. The most critical of environmental health factors in Estonian towns is considered air quality. Due to rapid traffic increase, but use of better techniques, trend of the pollution level is slightly increasing. The concentration of most important pollutant PM_{10} (from the point of public health) in centre town of Tallinn is near the limit value. However, as scientists have found the negative health effects appear in lower concentrations (like we have in residential areas of Tallinn) as well. For instance it is shown that during the last 15 years the traffic increase in Tartu (second biggest town in Estonia) has been more 3 times in centre town and up to 6 times in residential area. It is mostly driven by urban sprawl, ineffective public transportation, and poor bicycle and pedestrian road

development. The pollution level in Tartu will reflect in about 1000 years of life lost in whole population in a year. Other symptoms as morbidity to respiratory and cardiovascular diseases, cough, annoyance, and irritation of eyes etc. will appear in addition. The pressure to decrease public spaces like green areas in Estonian towns is strong due to real estate boom and intensive trade development. This will amplify the negative consequences of air pollution even more.

The positive effects of concentrated population are evident in water supplies in Estonian towns and cities. Especially Tallinn, Tartu, Narva as well as Pärnu region have benefited from large sewage collection systems and greater capacities of water supplies. In contrast to the rural areas, where the drinking water treatment is scattered, the larger cities have been able to unite the treatment systems for more selective use of drinking water resources and cost-effective treatment as well as more frequent monitoring of the quality of drinking waters.

Socio-economic determinants of urban health

Living in urban centres can offer great potential gains, such as access to paid work and health-care facilities. Yet, one of the blights of urban living has been termed **socio-economic stratification**, which points to unequal access to economic resources and differing opportunities for health care according to an individual's standing in the community with respect to their income or occupation.

Landon (2006) has illustrated how urban environment issues are dealt with in cities with different levels of income and how cities with high incomes have the potential to establish healthy environments (Table 1). According to World-Bank, Estonia is upper-middle income country.

Table 1. Urban environmental issues and development (adjusted from Landon, 2006)

Sector of problem area	Low	Lower-middle	Upper-middle	High
Water supply service	Lower coverage, high bacteria, contamination, inadequate hygiene	Low access by residents and informal neighbourhoods	Generally reliable; rising demand causing shortages in supply	Good supply but high consumption; concern with trace pollutants
Sanitation	Very low coverage, open defecation; high risk of diarrhoeal diseases	Better coverage of latrines and public toilets; low sewerage coverage	More access to improved sanitation; most wastewater untreated	Full coverage; most wastewater treated
Drainage	Storm drains very inadequate; high risk of water-related disease vectors	Somewhat better than in low income	Better drainage; occasional flooding	Good drainage; very limited flooding
Water resources	Mixed sewerage and storm water; bacterial pollution and silting	Groundwater contamination from untreated sewage	Private wells drawing down groundwater; pollution from industry etc.	High levels of effluent controls and treatment to reduce pollution
Solid waste management	Little organized collection and recycling; open dumping; exposure to disease vectors	Better collection service, little separation of hazardous waste; uncontrolled landfills	Better organized collection; better hazardous waste management; semi controlled landfills	Recycling and preventing hazardous waste; controlled landfills or incineration
Air pollution	Indoor and ambient air	Growing ambient air	Ambient air pollution	Ambient air pollution

	pollution from low-quality fuels for household uses	pollution from industrial and vehicular emissions	still serious; better control on industrial sources	mainly from vehicles; high amount of vehicles
Greenhouse gas emissions	Very low per capita	Low but growing per capita	Rapidly increasing, mainly due to motorization	Very high per capita
Land management	Uncontrolled development; intense pressure from squatter on open sites	Ineffective land-use controls; continued high population growth	Some environmental zoning	Regular zoning; little population growth; press for more land consumption
Accident risk	In-home and workplace accidents due to crowding, fires	Increased risks of industrial work and traffic accidents	Transport accidents increasing, but some mitigation	Rate of accidents reduced despite increased travel
Disaster management	Natural disasters produce massive loss of life; little capacity for mitigation	Somewhat better, although with increasing risk of industrial disasters	Increasing awareness and capacity for disaster mitigation	Good capacity for mitigation and response

In many cities, particularly in low and middle-income countries, growth in urban populations is synchronous with growth of urban poverty. An increase in the urban population due to **migration** and high fecundity leads to rapid urban growth beyond the service capacity of the urban governments. The cities undergoing most rapid growth are in poor countries and their urban fringe dwellers live in extreme deprivation. Urban migration also occurs between countries; economic migrants move from poor to richer countries.

In low and middle income countries with rapid urbanization there are settlements on unsuitable marginal land, poor housing in settlements or shanty towns, large increases in population density, an uncontrolled increase in pollution (air, water and land) and a lack of basic infrastructure (electricity, water, sewerage, waste disposal, health care, education). However, living on the margins does not necessarily mean a breakdown of social organization; squatter settlements can be stable communities with strong community organization and the provision of cheap or informal labour to support the economy and livelihoods.

These circumstances have meant a rise of communicable diseases, known as the **'diseases of poverty'**. These include malaria and schistomasiasis, Chagas' disease, hookworm and a range of gastric and respiratory diseases, nutritional deficiency and drug-related illnesses. High-density living is also associated with over-crowding which leads to non-communicable diseases - specifically accidents in the home and on the roads.

In high-income societies' urban areas, the problems are very different from the low-income cities. In high-income cities, the stresses of urban life have been linked to an increase in depression, suicide and addictive substance abuse. It is suggested that the breakdown or lack of community relationship caused by over-crowding and migration creates a perception of loss of control, which causes stress and leads to mental health problems.

Estonian urban health specialists have conducted studies on the effect of living conditions on mortality. More specifically, the disability adjusted lost years (DALY) in different counties in Estonia is analysed by Lai et al. (2005). DALYs for a disease are the sum of the years of life lost due to premature mortality (YLL) in the population and the years lost due to disability (YLD) for incident cases of the health condition.

The analyses indicated that in absolute figures Tallinn region has very important role – due to its greater population (Table 2). Look at the relative figures shows that the top counties are rural areas (Võru, Jõgeva, Põlva, Valga).

Ida-Viru is highly industrialised and polluted area, characterised by mostly urban settlement with many socio-economic problems has highest numbers in DALY-s.

Table 2. Absolute and relative health gap in different counties in Estonia in 2003 (adjusted from Lai et al., 2005)

County	DALY	YLL	YLD	DALY per 1000	YLL per 1000	YLD per 1000
Ida-Viru	71178	47571	23607	404	270	134
Võru	13536	7800	5735	345	199	146
Jõgeva	12451	7439	5012	329	196	132
Põlva	10493	5853	4641	327	182	144
Valga	11426	7046	4380	324	200	124
Lääne-Viru	21521	13821	7700	321	206	115
Viljandi	18147	10624	7523	318	186	132
Hiiu	3279	2041	1238	317	197	120
Saare	11027	7128	3900	310	200	110
Pärnu	27740	17136	10604	308	190	118
Lääne	8637	5414	3222	306	192	114
Harju	155824	89070	66754	298	171	128
Rapla	11093	6709	4385	298	180	118
Tartu	43920	23604	20317	295	158	136
Järva	11095	6805	4291	289	177	112
Unknown	815	22	793			
Total	**432182**	**258082**	**174100**	**319**	**194**	**125**

Health protection from better urban planning

Rapid, unplanned and unsustainable patterns of urban development are making developing cities focal points for many emerging environmental and health hazards. Yet, the concentrated population offers opportunities to mobilise the resources and action for creating healthier living conditions and bear sustainable livelihoods (Kushner, 2007).

The WHO is committed to a long-term initiative (WHO, 1999) aimed at improving the health and well-being of those who live and work in cities. If cities are to grow and prosper in a sustainable way, they will have to:

- reduce inequalities in health status and the determinants of health
- develop public policies at the local level to create physical and social environments that support health
- strengthen community action for health
- help people develop new skills for health compatible with these approaches
- reorient health services in accordance with policy.
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Over 1200 cities and towns from more than 30 countries in the WHO European Region are healthy cities. These are linked through national, regional, metropolitan and thematic Healthy Cities networks, as well as the WHO Healthy Cities network for more advanced cities. In Estonia 12 (Elva, Haapsalu, Jõhvi, Kallaste, Keila, Kuressaare, Paide, Paldiski, Põltsamaa, Pärnu, Türi, Võru) cities and Otepää municipality are involved.

WHO Healthy Cities programme suggests governments to establish programmes to engage local governments in health development through a process of political commitment, institutional change, capacity building, partnership-based planning and innovative projects. Promotion of comprehensive and systematic policy and planning with a special emphasis on health inequalities and urban poverty, the needs of vulnerable groups, participatory governance and the social, economic and environmental determinants of health is highlighted.

The effects of urbanization on the environment are permanent and extensive and urban policy must change in order to save what is left in the natural world. Therefore, health considerations should be included in economic, regeneration and urban development efforts. Going with the flow of fast developing economic situation in Estonian cities more socially and ecologically responsible enterprises should be promoted and acknowledged. Also taking an example of more developed companies, benefits for physical activities and occupational health control should be encouraged. For tackling low life expectancy characteristic to post soviet countries, healthy ageing programmes could be more easily organised in urban environments where people with similar special needs are concentrated. Civil society initiated projects on promoting independent coping of aging, disabled or otherwise deprived sections of urban population. It is a common practice in many developed world cities to promote equal opportunities for health benefits, and it is ripe time to support the recently emerging initiatives of this nature also in Estonia.

In order to support healthy urban planning and evidence-based policy making more efforts should be put into health impact assessments and risk analysis. Tackling the determinants of health would be more effective using more inclusive governance techniques involving scientific, entrepreneurial and organised interest groups in Estonian towns. It is time to call to arms to combat the increasingly high cost of public transportation and the unacceptable costs of a deteriorating environment and declining health. Healthy cities can lead to environmental improvement and lowered health costs in a more fulfilling lifestyle in our multifaceted urban areas.

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Popular music and Manchester:
representation, materiality and branding

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Abstract

This paper's claim is that popular music is able to implement places in powerful ways, forming new modalities to conceive and perceive them.

This is the result of a layering: popular music mediates places as 'textscapes', 'soundscapes' and 'landscapes'. Song lyrics referring to places make up a band's textscape. The use of local music tradition, vernacular or typical city noises constitute a band's soundscape. Finally, the landscape consists of all the visual elements (e.g. covers) referring to the same particular locality. Turning to the regeneration level, it seems important to note that music in itself is ethereal, but its production, circulation and fruition rely on material factors located in cities.

This kind of implementation on the representational and regeneration level could be analysed in Manchester. Since the late 1970s, the local popular music scene has adopted a particular 'cultural sensibility'. Bands such as The Smiths, The Fall, and Joy Division were able to root their poetics in the city, offering a chance to re-imagine it. In the same period, the independent music entrepreneur Anthony H. Wilson developed The Haçienda FAC 51, which set the trend for the regeneration of a whole district.

This case represents a convincing example of a cultural innovation, which relies on redefining the symbolic value of the city's architectural and social past.

Pop Music, Cultural Sensibilities and Places: Manchester 1976 – 1997

Popular music is nowadays more and more understood as a symbolic capital. Symbolic capital is here meant as based on products and practices, which are consumed for their emotional or intellectual contents (Scott 2001). This kind of capital has been often taken into account in describing the new and pervasive economic development of post-industrial cities. This phenomenon could be confirmed by analysing the way European cities use successful bands and music scenes in promotion and placing strategies. Their presence is traceable in tourist material, city reports in magazines and newspapers, in biddings (e.g. European Capital of Culture) and in regeneration or preservation projects (e. g. Cavern Club in Liverpool, the Battersea power station in London). Certain municipalities have also started adopting dedicated policies to boost local scenes and to increase their visibility (e.g. rehearsal spaces, training schemes and urban festivals).

These strategies are directly connected to the narratives of the 'creative city', as developed by Charles Landry (2000) and Richard Florida (2002) and adopted by big and small municipalities around the globe. These narratives usually advocate 'urban culture' as an instrument of place re-imagining and regeneration. In addition they are aware that, despite deindustrialisation, cultural industries remained in the city and could be nowhere else than there. Cities are understood as places of consumption and spectacle, where 'urban culture' becomes a tool to boost local economy.

Nonetheless, 'creative' policies towards popular music have often failed or have even been harmful. My claim is that these policies tend to neglect some basic aspects of popular music production, consumption and circulation:

1. popular music has always been deeply involved with places and cities in particular
2. the production of popular music is based on the interaction of individual 'cultural sensibilities' and the industry. This interaction could take different forms, for example it could originate out of conflict
3. circulation modifies the place images produced by popular music
4. popular music is able to reshape both the place image and built environment, without the municipality acting as a negotiator

On the level of production, I would like to refer to the concept of 'cultural sensibility', which is here defined as the subjective reaction to certain social or spatial circumstances with a cultural expression. This could be the expression of an individual subject and then adopted by a wider group or it could originate out of interaction within a scene and then spread to the masses. It is cultural sensibility that asserts a certain aesthetic or emotional value to a place. Peter Hall in his study on historical continuities in urban civilisation distinguishes 'cultural/intellectual', 'technological/productive' and 'technological/organizational' cities (Hall 1998 and Hall in: Verwijnen & Lehtovuori 1999). Within the 'technological/productive' typology, he identifies '*creative*-innovative cities', referring specifically to the birth of cultural industries and mass culture in the US of the 1950s. On the other hand, in reference to 'cultural/intellectual' cities, the author affirms that (they) 'are not likely to be stable or comfortable places; but they must not have surrendered to total disorder either. Rather, almost invariably, they are places in which the established order is under prolonged challenge by the *new creative groups*, whether or not that challenge takes an explicitly political form' (Hall in: Verwijnen & Lehtovuori 1999, italics by me). With this latter typology, Hall unfolds a very important aspect of urban creativity, i.e. the involvement of people. In fact, in the view of many scholars concerned with popular culture, people are not only passively consuming goods, as 'mass'; they are also creatively determining the production of culture (Chambers 1986; Fiske 1989), including the aesthetic choices shaping certain images of the city, which is why I define them as 'cultural sensibilities'.

My thesis is that, today, European 'creative cities' could be analysed combining Hall's 'creative-innovative' city (with its stress on the mass production and the built environment) and the 'creative-cultural' (with its stress on the presence of new groups challenging the established order through the creation of new place-images).

Considering the circulation of places, we must state that products of popular music are not unique, they are reproduced in thousands, millions of copies; they are built upon transitority (Chambers 1986). Record buyers and gig-goers shape their image of particular cities according to the representations they enter in contact with as records or live gigs. Circulation amplifies the creative dimension of a place (the city is perceived merely as the place of a particular scene) and produces new meanings and images. Examples supporting this statement could be Seattle as the capital of grunge, New York and hip-hop, Nashville and country, New Orleans and traditional jazz, Chicago and urban blues, Detroit and the Motown sound.

Manchester between 1976 and 1997 could be considered a place where the cultural sensibility of a few became an instrument to re-imagine the city, its built landscape and its culture. This paper examines the work of new wave and post-punk bands such as Buzzcocks, Joy Division, The Smiths, The Fall and the following *madchester* scene, which spread out of the interaction between the local *indie* music bands and the US imported house music.

The time dimension is based on two events which symbolically started and ended the considered era. In 1976, the infamous London punk band The Sex Pistols played twice at the Lesser Free Trade Hall on 4th of June and on 20th of July. The first gig was attended by fewer than 40 people. The second, after just six weeks, was attended by many more and it was already evident that the audience was composed of the initiators of the developing music scene. This included two members of Buzzcocks (who organized the first gig), Morrissey, the future singer of The Smiths, members of Joy

Division, the future NME journalist Rob Morley and the future Factory Records founder Anthony H. Wilson (Nolan 2006). The presence of such a notable contingent of listeners could be read as a confirmation of the existence of a creative milieu based on higher interaction, which is a basic element for understanding local creativity and innovation (Landry 2000). The individuals listed above, involved in various roles as members of the local popular music scene, were proud, independent, self-determining, aware of the cultural distance from London, and of their own industrial and working class heritage (Milestone 1996 and Haslam 1999). In 1997, The Haçienda FAC 51, a club owned by a local team, including Tony Wilson and New Order (the band which featured the three remaining members of Joy Division) closed, ending in a way the creative parable of this scene. That same year the national political context changed drastically, with the election of Tony Blair as Prime Minister. The people involved in the scene, shifted their interest on the national level (which turned local popular music scenes into the all-encompassing 'Brit pop'); in addition, the internationalization of their success, made them less committed to the local sphere.

Popular music is analysed here because of its ability to implement places in a credible authentic way, forming new modalities to conceive and perceive them. This is the result of layering: popular music products and practices mediate places as *textscapes*, *soundscapes* and *landscapes*. Lyrics and titles of songs referring to places make up a band's *textscape*. The use of local music tradition, local vernacular or typical city noises constitute a band's *soundscape*. Finally, the *landscape* consists of all the visual elements (covers, posters, clothes, photo shootings, videos, stage scenography…) referring to the same particular locality or to its previous representations. The mediation of places through three 'scapes' turns popular music into a powerful tool for re-imagining places and builds alternative images of cities, circulating around the world in millions of copies.

The Manchester scene made significant use of landscapes; nearly all of the considered bands, from Buzzcocks to Joy Division and The Smiths were pictured, especially at the beginning of their career outside, in open space, posing in front of factories. Chimneys, cobblestone streets, red brick buildings have been part of the Manchester imagery since the descriptions of Friedrich Engels and the novels of Charles Dickens (Shields 1991 and Moretti 1998). These bands adopted the considered architectonical elements as symbolic 'authenticity seals' for their local belonging, confirming the narrative that makes everything 'popular', something 'for real'. In addition, two other considerations could be made. First, showing the empty and decaying temples of capitalism can be linked to the gloom expressed by these bands. They exemplify the emptiness of capitalist society and of industrialism, which can be best grasped as, when money stops running in, unemployment grows and whole districts are left in physical and social decay. Second, it could be read as an ironic overtone. In 1985 the Smiths posed in front of the Salford Lads Club (youth leisure club) for a shot by Stephen Wright, which appeared in the gatefold of the band's 'The Queen is Dead' LP (1986). The club was opened in the beginning of the 20th century, to keep the local Salford youth 'off the streets' and educate them to become 'good citizens', as usual for many other philanthropic initiatives of the time (Lindner 2004). The Smiths posing in front of the club, located at the end of the real 'Coronation Street' opens up a series of questions concerning identity, as the band was increasingly getting media attention for its overt subversion of working class values, while celebrating, at first sight, idleness, criminality and social indifference.

With textscape, I refer to the use of localities, toponymies, street names, monuments, districts, more or less recognizable as such. The references to the quite unmistakable built environment are variously present in songs by these bands. The Smiths refer to iron bridges, disused railway lines and cemetery gates. Additionally city's districts are more or less openly referred to, in particular the, at the time, most rundown and disfavoured, like Whalley Range, Cheetham Hill and Ancoats. The band Joy Division relies less on the direct nomination or representation of the built environment and concentrates much more on its subjective psychological effects. In their lyrics the built environment is evoked because of its monotony and desolation, structuring a sinister textscape, which only through circulation goes back to being identified by the listeners with Manchester.

The Soundscape of Manchester is built upon the use of local music tradition, local sound and noises and the vernacular. With 'local music tradition' I refer to the influence of early North American Rock'n'Roll and Soul music (which in the UK is epitomized as *Northern* Soul), widely played in local fairs, workers' clubs and local pubs, the places of the working class. The use of certain sound effects (harmonica, synthetic drums) has often been associated with industrial noises (trains, alarms, heavy industry machineries). In addition, the Mancunian accent is easily recognized and sometimes accentuated by the bands' singers, both in performances and interviews.

Manchester as a place is present on all three levels of representation, which could be adopted in pop music. The city's local music scene was able to deconstruct previous media representation and was able to develop, through individual sensibilities, a different image of the city. Through circulation this image reached millions of people, who were able to make it their own, reshape it again and keep it viable.

Also from the point of view of regeneration, Manchester is a very interesting case study. In fact, as in many other cities around the world, the local independent pop scene developed a fascination for the dilapidated city centre, using run down factories as rehearsal rooms or gig venues. This fascination grew into entrepreneurialism, with The Haçienda FAC 51, a club founded in 1982 by a team of entrepreneurs including the TV journalist Anthony H. Wilson, the members of New Order and their manager, Rob Gretton. The club was located in the Northern Quarter, on the corner between Albion Street and Whitworth Street West, in a former yacht exhibition hall. Thanks to this club the *madchester* scene developed, the first European scene of house music (electronic music based on the performance of DJ and not of a band), connected to the use of ecstasy (an illegal and potentially dangerous drug). An urban cluster formed, as new clubs, record stores, small shops opened in the same area, while the club became famous all over the world. Unfortunately, at the same time criminality rose because of the drug market control.

It could be stated that Manchester music heritage, in terms of popular music, is enormous and its symbolic value is continuously confirmed by new bands and new musical styles paying tribute (e.g. the so-called *nu-rave*, which is deeply indebted to *madchester*). The era has been also commemorated in films such as '24-hour party people' (directed by Michael Winterbottom, 2002) about the career of Tony Wilson and 'Control' (by Dutch director Anton Corbijn, 2007) about the life of Ian Curtis (singer of Joy Division).

At the time of its highest global visibility in the 1990s, the city municipality adopted some minor measures to market itself through popular music, like featuring the pictures of The Haçienda or dancing crowds in tourist brochures and quoting music events in biddings. These last concerned mainly sport events (e.g. Olympics, Commonwealth games). Sport was considered safer, not addressing problems of licensing, opening hours, public control as music was doing.

Nowadays, after more than 20 years from the Sex Pistols gigs in Lesser Free Trade Hall (now a city- hotel), the strategies adopted by Manchester in attracting tourists include popular music, mainly in the form of cultural heritage. In particular, the campaign 'Manchester Music Speaks' (www.visitmanchester.com/podcasts), launched in the internet by the Greater Manchester Tourist Board and sponsored by the low cost airline jet2, seems particularly relevant for our analysis.

The campaign is based on *podcasts*, sort of 'downloadable radio shows' of about 10 minutes each, where 'old stars' of the local music legacy are able to describe contemporary Manchester, the appeal of its contemporary hang-outs and underline the liveliness of the contemporary local music scene. In addition, there are also references to 'back in the days', to the period here taken into consideration (1976-1997) and to the speakers' favourite places. Mike Joyce, formerly drummer of The Smiths, in the first podcast, visits the Dry Bar in the Northern Quarter and the Salford Lads Club. In the bar, he interviews a member of Keith, a contemporary band. In the club, he interviews the club's manager and tells about the picture of The Smiths in front of it and about the 'Smiths' room', set up inside the club with fan pictures and memorabilia. Other podcasts available are by Peter Hook (bass-player in Joy Division and New Order),

The campaign addresses popular music directly, through the witnesses of musicians which made the city famous in the past and which are still living there. They observe the changes in Manchester, both at the representational and at the material level and underline the supposed continuities in the creative dimension of the city. Clearly the aim of this campaign is to attract young tourists to the city, infiltrating through the same media popular music is using nowadays: digital downloading, i-pods and other mp3 players. The fact that a low cost airline sponsors the initiative and that the website is available in English, Spanish, and Italian, seems to confirm the intent to sell Manchester as a 'city brake' destination. This tourist practice consists in the visit of a European city during weekends. Increasingly, young adults have become eager to discover other cities nightlife and popular music has become a clear ingredient of it.

Pop music offers powerful representations of places, which are able to affect the image of a city as a whole and its material design; working on the ethereal level and on the material level. Individual sensibilities and their networking are indispensable for the creativity and authenticity of a music scene. All these elements could lead us to confirm the role of popular music as symbolic capital. The adoption of popular music in urban branding campaigns promoted by the municipality is bond to the recognition of this economic and cultural role and by its use as tourist attraction.

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Urban Laboratory and activism

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The following is more of an essay on Urban Laboratory's way of conceptualizing activism and research than a strict academic article on the main topic of the conference. Understanding (cultural, social, political etc) processes in the city and using them to make Tallinn a better place are both the central goals of our lab. Thus it is crucial to reflect on how we come to think of our ways of activism and how we put theory into practice. Most of the observations and opinions are based in the context of Tallinn, Estonia.

Heidegger has said that the human way of being in the world is dwelling [1]. It is not a mere causal relation of physical objects or mental perceptions of the environment that modify our behaviour, but an active engagement with it in meaningful ways – sense of belongingness, manifold attachment to environment [2] or authentic sense of place [3]. All of the aforementioned concepts vary in their implications and emphasize different aspects of the phenomenon, but they all consider spatiality as a dissoluble part of human essence. Either it is the quality of physical objects and surroundings as behaviouristic studies have implied [4], an emotional category, a mental state or an unconscious transcendental state of Being, relation to ones immediate and distant environment is affecting the well-being – in the most broadest sense – of individuals.

Long before modern nations and architectural offices mankind has tried to improve its well-being through changing, controlling and developing the environment through conscious or unconscious inhabiting – from prehistoric caves and settlements to ultra-modernist city districts planned out to the very last detail. But even if all the factors affecting human-environment interactions could be taken into account by theories and somehow put into practice, there will still remain an infinity of sometimes contradictory or even mutually exclusive individual concepts of what "well-being" is, each of them with their specific presumptions, goals and means to achieve them. While the common practice has been to pick one certain ideal by opinion leaders of some sort according to particular historical circumstances – economical reasons, academic trends, technological reasons etc – and act accordingly, there will always be competing stances. No single such approach can ever make decisions that will do good for absolutely everyone it concerns. But everybody wishes to do well and – in theory at least – they have a right for it.

In his most well known writing "On Liberty" John Stuart Mill sets the standard by which we still (in one way or another) assess the quality of life – freedom of individual development and expression as far as it doesn't inflict damage to others [5]. He went even further and stated that not preventing harm to others is just as devious. On personal level, in my opinion, this can be achieved by tolerance and common sense – thus different ideas of "well-being" can have a ground for negotiations and find reasonable compromises. Even then there is no guarantee for complete consensus and at times it seems that liberty can only be an egoistic personal goal. When Mill starts to talk about the relations between individual and the society, then the notions of "personal" and "damage" start to blur and raise more questions than they answer – who's interests should be protected, what are the ways that international corporations inflict damage to environment or individuals, how could it be assessed etc – and ends in a proposal that state should practice control to assure that there is no control. Another line of critique states that liberal notions are based on pure abstractions and closely related to economical way of thinking (humans as rational *homo oeconomicus*) without considering the multitude of social relations. Regarding cities, this, with many other factors as well, has come down to the idea of conducting for the best of everybody

or for the "common good" in areas like public transportation, social infrastructure, housing and business developments and so on, through some method of (more or less) central planning. All of it is stamped with the implications that what is good for the city is good for all of its citizens. Though in most cases this approach serves it purposes well (who wouldn't like the benefits of public transportation), then there are many situations where individual needs come into conflict with general interests or they are not taken into consideration at all.

This sets the scene for activism that takes a different perspective – what is good for citizens, a single individual, is good for the city. Usually it denotes a wide array of activities from self-expression by drawing graffiti's to throwing Molotov's during G8 meetings. Media footages of youngsters clashing with the police have discredited activism and placed it in opposition with the state and even to the rights most of them stand for. Even if their ideas are innovative and for some greater good, methods of practice reflected on and carried through with careful consideration of the consequences, they might find little acceptance. This is how activism is usually seen, but I argue that there is no actual conflict between government officials and social activists: rather a misunderstanding and a different conceptual framework working for similar goals. Some common qualities associated with activism are usually pro bottom-up approaches, tolerance, non-conformism, direct action, artistic intervention, or on a more negative scale, anarchism, nihilism and even senseless destruction. But in the way that I understand it the most important denoter is attachment to the urban environment in the sense of dwelling.

As I was browsing through abstracts of the Urban Studies Days conference, I found one theme in common (at least to a certain degree and in an abstract sense) to all of them, namely detachment. Although most researches tried to find its causes from (global) economical or social processes, it is just as important to understand it from the personal level – from the perspective of everyday life. I define detachment as a state of being when and where meaningful engagement with the immediate environment is hindered through (sense of) loss of control over ones living space or movement towards individual goals within this space, leaving an eerie dissatisfaction or limiting possibilities for some types of engagements. In the perspective of history of idea, detachment was termed by Hegel and brought to a more practical ground by Marx's concept of alienation from productive means and work and thus eventually from society in general through placing man on an assemblyline where he repeats a single motion without a direct relation to it [6]. Some further academical discussions lead to consider detachment as a universally urban phenomenon. For instance Simmel sees human adaption to cities psychically problematic [7] and Walter Benjamin tries to show how urban living has changed mankind almost ontologically. This opposition and idealization of rural with urban and romantization of nature has become redundant though it still sometimes serves as a driving factor for suburbanization or greenery projects. There is nothing natural about nature as some geographers have pointed out [8]. For instance, as I was hitchhiking to Tartu once and started to talk with the driver, our chat drifted to living in the countryside. He claimed that he hates cities and has a home in a more pleasant rural site. When I asked what makes him think that, he replied that the forest is 200m from his house and the shop is more than 5 km away, denoting only his urban values where nature has become proximity to trees and quality of life means distance from businesses. By now mankind is essentially urban and has to come in better terms with its artificial environment or at least should consider the possibility of having a "real" life in cities. Although they are still often considered as built for somebody else than their inhabitants, meant for consumption and capital rather than living, humans have an exceptional skill of adaption even to the worst of situations. Henry Lefebvre understood detachment as a result of incompatibility of spatial representations with representational spaces [9], which meant that architects and planners produce conceptual spaces according to their ideals of living, which might not comply with the ones of the actual dweller. But as I run across the Kaarli pst and Pärnu mnt intersection every day under red lights near my home in Tallinn, I don't think about political decisions that affected the production of this site or feel restricted by traffic laws, but instead I wonder how to get to the other side alive during the heat of the rush-hour. In the most fundamental way urban environment is experienced – and should be researched – at the personal level with its non-reducible holistic complexity of knowing, valuating and reasoning about ones surroundings. A more plausible account for this line of thinking is offered by de Certeau, who points out that the frameworks of laws and physical reality are altered by personal needs and ends of each particular situation, when put to use by individuals in their daily activities [10]. Thus according to him there is no

essential opposition between laws, economical forces, and governance and so on with individual goals, but rather a subjective synthesis of what is at hand, what kind of result is desired and how to achieve it. In this context people always manage to relate to their environment one way or the other, but the question concerns their evaluation of the quality (well-being) and possibility (access; choice) of the engagement – of not only detachment but of a possibility for better dwelling. By now academical circles have accumulated a plethora of studies on uneven distribution economical flows, effects of network societies, impacts of globalization on localities, structures of housing markets, competition between city regions and so on, but relatively little about what individuals make all of it, what kind of information and how they use in their daily practices. Even if some studies have turned their attention to these questions, it is rarely seen of any practical value [11].

How to counter detachment; what is "better" in this context? One possibility is to help people understand that they are not only tourists in their environments forced to gaze architectural wonders of business developments in awe and bound to use only the paths laid down by planners. Through raising citizens awareness of their possibilities to take part in creating their daily environment (even through using it differently), countering the taken-for-grantedness of urban practices put forth by planners and even bringing their attention to possible sources of problems might not only help to ground a healthy open discussion, but could eventually lead to a more conscious and positive reflection on their living space. It is not as much about practicing control over their environment as about developing the sense of belonging to it which could lead to take interest and care. When a planning is put on display and no one comes to discuss it then it is usually considered to be as lack of public interest. Coined terms such as NIMBY are just an example of planner's unwillingness to understand other perspectives or can be seen as defence of their monopoly over knowledge and practices. People are always interested in their living space; citizens just might not know how changes affect their daily chores, that they can influence the outcomes or how to do it. Social activism is a method to counter detachment, but it is not essentially about opposition to any types of planning. Conflicting stances that arise from these stances is just a possible outcome that could be resolved by more tolerant views on public and individual opinions. By now it should be obvious that social activism can never be an official method of planning since it offers no solid and uniform prescript for evaluation and implementation though its views can and should be taken into account. Reason behind this problem lays in methodologically different concepts of what is pragmatical and of practically valuable. If pragmatism for the city council means dealing with current and future problems of, for example, homelessness – either by offering municipal housing or banishing them from the centre [12] – then for an individual without a place to stay the tone of the question is different. It is an immediate personal need that must be solved – for some daily – without consulting any sociological studies, but the situation at hand. Thinking about solving social degradation of city center's image *versus* considering the possibility of getting nabbed by the police on the account of breaking an entry offers an example of the difference between the variables used in coming to pragmatical solutions on different levels. Social activism should understand and deal with such problems as homelessness at the personal level using methods that have direct influence. But, as stated already above, no research could ever offer enough information to take into account all the variables. Thus giving more voice to homeless themselves, arising their awareness of their possibilities and/or offering alternative solutions might eventually give better results than indirect social welfare systems [13]. I'm not trying to claim that one approach is more practical than the other: they are both valuable, but on their own levels and this renders any attempts of comparison unfruitful. Bottom line conclusion of this section is that both of these levels – general and personal – must be taken into account, researched and put to practice to make changes as equally important.

To clarify these concepts somewhat I will now bring an example of trying to improve attachment to the natural environment through (more or less) direct action by Urban Laboratory in the beginning of the autumn 2006. The initial problem based on personal observation that parks and other green areas in Tallinn are considered as mere spectacles of passive enjoyment for the citizens and real engagement to them is not taken into account in planning. One example of this perspective reflects in the city mayor's of the time, Jüri Ratas's, plan to make Tallinn a greener city. Everybody likes nature and we couldn't oppose to the ideals of this effort in any way unless they wouldn't solely stress planting more trees and bushes without any consideration of practical value for the citizens and their attachment to vegetation. Besides lending themselves to people as a possibility for passive recreation, parks could serve as an active social space and *loci*

for personal emotional attachment, which could be taken into account as well. Thus we asked what could be the different values of green areas for individuals and made an short-termed art project that we called "Zoo of nature" implying the similarity of looking at nature and plants in urban environment to gazing animals in zoos. The event itself meant putting up sheets of paper on 160 trees, bushes and smaller plants containing information about their lifespan, commercial and medical use. Our goal was to make citizen reflect on the use value of vegetation in the urban settlements and hope that they would come to conclude that it can offer more alternatives for personal activities and attachment than just a pleasant gaze: protection from rain, shade in sunny days, ecological islands for fauna or a place to meet with friends. Project was followed by a mentioning in a national daily newspaper and was cleared out (we took down the last remaining sheets ourselves) within a week.

Though the event was somewhat conceptualized up front and fun to carry through, did it have any sort of direct effect we intended it to have? The information on the sheets consisted only of biological data and some exclamations about the plants economical and medical value, but we hoped for people to see further from that. This brings us to the research: to understand the causal effect of our project and future similar initiatives we should conduct some deeper enquiries. The essential difference between planning and personal levels mentioned above applies to doing research as well – making generalizations by applying methodologies of neoliberalistic socioeconomic macro processes to firsthand experiences and immediate involvements is not plausible on a more personal scale. It calls for studies about perceptions, attitudes, values and mental conduct of individuals with methods compatible with these themes, but not only as a psychological abstraction. One such approach in planning is proposed by Charles Landry in his book "The Creative City" [14]. When "creativity" is usually synonymous to "innovation" and often used as a new buzz word in ecnomical studies, then in his account it has a different quality – practical and sometimes risky solutions to immediate needs. Landry even proposes a method for city planners, that includes openmindedness, flexibility and using (local) concext-oriented interventions. He gives an exaple concerning childcare in Berlin. Traditional conduct would have meant building new kindergardens with the "need" for them conceptualized on the basis of demografical data and theories of regional planning

which in urban areas with constant flux of residents might be totally unpredictable and bind amounts of investments that could be directed elsewhere. Instead a NGO was established to connect elderly singles with mothers in need for the childcare service and organized sort of a "Granny-for-a-rent" movement. Besides enabling mothers go to work it ended up functioning as social glue – elderly people weren't alone any more and children, whose grandparents lived in the countryside, got a connection to the older generation. Changes for the better can be made through developing the physical environment, but if they don't reflect personal expectations or concur with individual day-to-day life experiences, it might turn into a silent or/and invisible problem that is often considered insignificant from the viewpoint of common good. Once again it should be stated that these types of inquiries should be complementary to studies of planning practices and other similar influences on more general scale.

Erich Fromm has made a point that the main "insanities" of the modern world are abstraction, quantification and alienation built into to the capitalist mode of thinking throughout the history of it's development [15]. They are taken for granted and cause deep distress for many. As attachment on the opposite end means to feel at home, to care about and for the environment, to be aware of ones possibilities and ways to make them real – to dwell not only to reside – then seeking tracks leading to them should be the concern of research. Social activism and any scientist taking this standpoint must focus its effort on the individual and consider the multitude of individual perceptions and activities as the starting point of any positive changes in their well-being. This doesn't mean giving ready made solutions or an opposing stance to established practices, but instead opening up discussions, giving alternatives and showing positive examples.

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[11] This serves as a generalization of Estonian planning practices that have a clear-cut understanding of what kind of information a research have to present impliying an ideal of telling how things are and should be (in an utterly objectivist way) instead of deeper inquieries or more abstract insights.

[12] In his book "City of Quartz" Mike Davis gives a short overview of the "cold war on the streets of Downtown" (1992, 234) Los Angeles where official policies and spatial developments are aimed at making less well-doing people feel themselves even less comfortable in the sterile urban environment.

[13] One possible example is an alternative architecture project named *para*SITE, which meant developing plastic "houses" that were inflated by the flow from air-conditioners. Its purpose was mainly to draw attention to the problem not to offer a real solution. Hughes, J. & Sadler, S. (eds) (2000). Michael Rakowits: parasite, pp. 232-234, in *Non-plan: essays on freedom, participation and change in modern architecture and urbanism.*

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part 2

TAKING ACTION!
creative and activist interventions

Activism – Game – Representation
Slight interventions on public speeds in great Buenos Aires

Martin De Peco, Ignacio Queralto
Rally Conurbano

The Spanish term "conurbano" refers to the outskirts of the city and is derived from the words "cono" (cone) and urbano (urban). With one side facing the "River Plate", the urban cone is shaped by the radial relations Buenos Aires stablishes with its suburbs. Roughly metaforically, the conurbano is the base of this socioeconomic cone. This image describes the radial organization from the downtown to the outskirts. Except for the north riverside area the rest of the peripheric cities is mostly low and middle class. Over 12 million people live in G.B.A. (almost one third of Argentina´s total population), of which only 3 million live in B.A. city and over 9 million in the conurbano. Most of its inhabitants work downtown and spend approximately 2 hours a day on public transport. This generates a daily circulation of almost 5 million people on 7 railway lines and over 300 bus lines (1). This important amount of public time daily consumed might be productively spent. The RallyConurbano – fervent defenders of urbanity- gets on the public transport circulating space mainly in the conurbano

Group Activities
Getting started with the Rally

RallyConurbano is the group and project´s name based on exploration and experimentation on sub-urban public times and spaces. The group operates mainly on great Buenos Aires´ periphery scanning geopolitical problems of little (if none) media representation or repercussion. Thus, we might think R.C. is about "activism" through trying to "activate" the visibility of certain suburban problems. We try to produce the presence of certain sites or problems by being present there in a certain way, at a precise time. Rather than on the public space, we attempt to work on public speeds (2). In front of a public space which appears to be available at all times, we question the connections among resources, institutions, organizations and collective knowledge which define what makes a site inhabitable.

Rally Conurbano. In the group's agenda there is a plan to integrate activities into a local and global net of urban thinking, keeping active links with collectives such as M7RED(Buenos Aires), Artists like Jeanne van Heeswik (Ámsterdam) Theoricists as Saskia Sassen (Chicago). The rally's participation in international workshops such as "Ciudades Ocasionales" (Post-it cities) and Urban Krax (Barcelona).
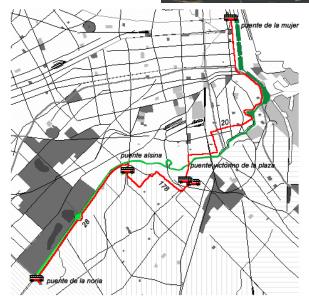
The plan is to work on multiple locations (that can be virtual at times) rather than on a single specific territory. In this way, itineraries vary in each event and thus, the different points of the conurbano are discovered. The group´s main tool is linking socio-territorial actors: the people in the place, experts on the subject and amateurs of the city and its processes. The tour around the conflicted place, the debates generated and reflection produced as a result of the exchange of different knowledge aim at providing tools to generate collective thinking on a site.

Starting a tour around the conurbano might imply an itinerary of the unrest, but it is also a chance to roam around a territory which is at times unexpected and at the same time foreseeable; sordid and familiar; continuos and fragmented. Rallyconurbano is a series of events, interventions on the landscape composed by the act of the ephemeral occupation which at the same time configurates a comprehension and a reading about and in the site. The invitation is then to intervene the landscape resignifying it for a short time, inhabiting it in an ephemeral way. Inhabiting "ordinary" places festively, acting over the landscape to make it particularly visible, generating some sort of space choreography, gathering invasions of boring spaces that are there all the time, but in spite of that, their presence has not been built yet. Each intervention adds up adjectives to the landscape, discovering places of amazing and unexpected singularity.

1. Course of the Matanzas river. "Riachuelo", south Buenos Aires, April 6, 2006
"Surfing" the country´s most polluted shore

In our first rally, we set out at Puente de La Noria (in the province of Buenos Aires) and we arrived at Puente de la Mujer in Puerto Madero (Buenos Aires City). This was a metaphorical journey following the Riachuelo River and the steps of picketer leader Raúl Castells (3).

Born in Villa Albertina he organized a movement for pensioners and unemployed people which cut routes and roads in protest for socio-economic policies in the last governments. Among the leaders of different picketer groups he became popular due to an intense media presence. The latest landmark at the time of the rally was the opening of a "kiosk" in Puerto Madero to function as community restaurant. There was an instant high class reaction. Fear spread that the exclusive area of Puerto Madero might be invaded by beggars, homeless and unemployed people. Castells reacted quickly associating to businessmen of the area and announcing the arrival of urbanity (mixture and heterogeneity) to the area. The kiosk lacks the dimension or capacity to feed hungry pensioners or unemployed people, but that spot helped activate the movement's presence in the media, and consequently in public opinion.(4)
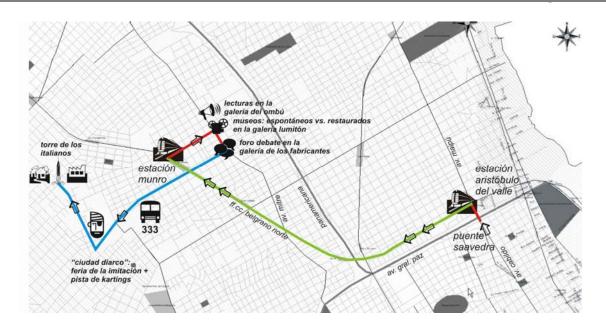
The rally then followed the hypothetical journey Castells might do from his homeland to his place of public exhibition. The journey might have an additional territorial condition. We wanted to verify the connection and disconnections imposed by the Riachuelo, a geographical landmark which joins those two places and separates them at the same time. To follow up the shore we had to change three buses an walk several blocks between bus stops. Connections are almost exclusively in a North-South direction. No one is supposed to live by the Riachuelo due to its high level of contamination. Historically the river has bee used as a "proto" industrial settlement with no municipal control over waste (5). The bridges which cross are the ones picketers have blocked in protest. And that was the way they found to intervene capital fluxes in spite of being ignored by production system. Paradoxically, the place where the kiosk was installed was near a bridge which wasn't intervened by pickets because of its pedestrian and almost ornamental character. We crossed that bridge to join both margins and ate "tortas fritas" (fried pies) after a coffee at the Hilton hotel.

2. "Boom and decline". Munro, may 27, 2006
"Time travel / Back to the 80´s"

In the second rally our intention was to explore the space of commercial arcades which had flourished in the 80`s. The concepts of boom and decline might be conceived as links in a continuous chain of events. But what happens when these complementary times converge on a single enclave? A tour of Munro implies immersion in a new heyday combined with a history of boom and decline. In Munro, there are temporary stalls alongside dummies and structures from the 80s in abandoned stores in remote shopping centers.

To go through these contradictory temporalities, we worked on the "duration" of the experience. Operating on public time rather than on public space. The arcades where there, worn out, deteriorated, semi-abandoned, but still there. That is, public space was available, but noting (or almost nothing) was happening there. We suggested then a round of readings in one of the arcades which had a very old ombú tree in its centre, to manufacture a time, to create time collectively, to really feel the place. The readings had to do with the subject of boom and decline which the event proposed. Thus we read Oliverio Girondo, Sant´Elia, Adolf Loos and John Hejduk: *"Sometimes we enter places and buildings and we leave not knowing their histories or, more profoundly, their spirit. We don't stay long enough. At one event we are already anticipating the next event. We are mobile and free… perhaps?I think speed fixes, makes things static. I think to take one's time opens… expands... makes things flexible"* (6)

In an attempt to go against the monopolist action of the council of Vicente Lopez on territorial policies, we organized this experience to rebuild the presence of the place with the participation of neighbours, who joined action, thus generating a public time in a declining public space. The space can be available there but nothing happens unless actors and public resources are connected.

3. "Utopian micro-societies on rails" Caballito august 26 and Escalada, September 2, 2006
Modeling a territory of sociability.

Caballito

Horacio Tarcus describes utopias from his critic negative dimension, opposing them to "real" society. Speaking about utopia would be then "speaking about alternative modalities of association, exchange, and organization". (7)

In this rally we visited two clubs where people get together to build among other things, train models. The members of one club get together every Saturday after five in Seguí Street, Caballito. How do they question the real world? They are a bunch of enthusiasts gathered in a shed, surrounded by paddle courts, a plant shop and a hut. Which utopia does this micro society, which recreates a system of macro territory domain, shape? Which hospitality laws does it enforce? That afternoon we were welcomed by club members, mostly retired from the public railway company. All their lives they had worked on the railway and, once retired they represented it. So we devised the term "jobby" (job-hobby), a job as a way of employing time and then the representation of that lost time.

On the other hand, their hospitality was also curious. The idea of a railway layout was a very strong concept. The visualisation of a sociability network was provided again by working on the railway. The clubs main activity was to build the model's "real" landscape and the "virtual" social contact among peers. They offer whoever visits them a service of providing that network and that landscape, people could take their own trains, their own model coaches and have them run on the clubs railway layout. That is put information to run in the club's public space. Paradoxically the issue of money

was not very important. To get into the club we had to talk to these people, explain the reason of our visit and why we wanted to be there, our interests, our knowledge and the experiences we might share.

At the time of the rally they were being threatened to move away. Our visit helped them get courage to carry on meeting and nowadays they can use the place.
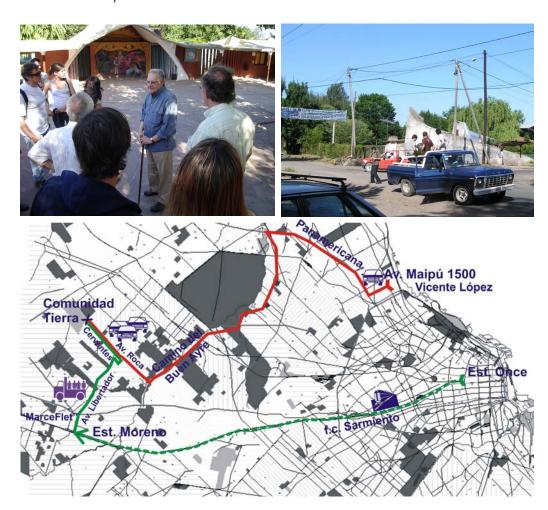

Escalada

The second association we visited was in Remedios de Escalada. Something similar had happened there. The large industrial buildings which had been used to build and repair coaches are now partly used as museums. Restored coaches are there on show and they are at the same time museum containers. However some of them were almost as operative as those running on railways. The concept of "museification", restoration and decadence were also seen in the adjacent neighbourhood. Approximately a century ago British capitals from Southern Railways built housing for the workers of Villa Galindez new industrial area, nowadays Remedios de Escalada. It was a time of progress utopia, full railway labour and a clearly rural environment. The picturesque "colonia ferroviaria" (railway colony) started. *"…it is known that utopian imagination is closely linked to the discovery of the new world, (…) virgin territories where new values and new relationships might be created from the start".* (8) In front of the hypothesis of large scale territorial actions imposed by the railway, the colony was an occasion in which the British imagery worked on the Pampa´s open field in a small scale.

After this first scenario the Peronist planning would later incorporate the colony within the rur-urban fabric. Californian cottages mix up with English cottages but also with an electricity transforming substation, a cycling track, a

university campus, a cinema, a design incubator among other institutions that configure the heterotopic landscape in Escalada

4. "Comunidad Tierra" Moreno, November 11, 2006
Cell phone coordinates to decipher elusive locations in real time

Here we continued to travel in the suburbs to meet (and generating in the same act) experimental communities, experimental affinities, utopian societies which try out territorial hypothesis and create instruments of inhabitability and urbanity

Earth community (comunidad Tierra) was created within the optimism of the 60's fraternities. Years later, the neighbourhood became hostile and fraternity and community life gave way to "conurbanity". We might say urbanity on the periphery operates according to other rules which, through analogue, we could call con-urbanity. If urbanity is what a citizen might have in relation to a stranger, con-urbanity is the discontinuity of this social integration. If urbanity gives rise to interaction among people in a public medium, con-urbanity limits that interaction and creates obstacles to the flow of discourse between peers. Con-urbanity is mistrust of the unknown by default, which fully operates in the moment of transition from public to private space..."

As part of that conurbanity, public transport in the area is scarce. In order to arrive collectively to the place it was necessary to invent some (semi)public suburban means of transport. We hired a freight which carried the group in the back of a moving van.

In order to get there we exchanged uncertain coordinates on the cell phone with Claudio Caveri, the architect who founded the community.

5. Accessible Rally. Buenos Aires downtown, December 3, 2006
Communication/Accessibility/City Hall´s efficiency after Cromagnon (9)

On the Disability International Day we performed an action in the business area (down town). It was both a game, a performance and a protest about public space.

We worked with the N.G.O. "Acceso Ya!"(Access now), a non-governmental organization which defends the rights of people with reduced mobility.

The group of people that gathered that day at the Colegio Nacional de Buenos Aires was divided in 3: each of them with a different starting point, but with common objectives and destination: The Hipotecario Bank at the corner of Reconquista and Mitre streets.

The mission of the game was to perform daily actions in the use of space and public services, but from a different place. The group were invited (handicapped or not) to use the wheelchair as a means of locomotion. That new perspective showed unusual obstacles which forced them to perform acrobatics to carry out actions which we usually take for granted: making a phone call from the public phone box, having a coffee at a bar, using an ATM, buying from a kiosk or even crossing the street.

At the meeting point, a map was collectively drawn with routes and obstacles dodged by each group. A score for each group was kept to determine who the winner of the game was. But this "innocent" piece of paper, was also used as a document handed in to the "COPINE" (local authorities dealing with physical barriers) and the "CGP" (Management Participation Centre) of the area together with an extensive research of Acceso Ya! to try to generate a legal change in our environment.
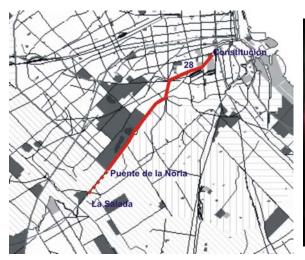
It's disturbing to think that there are about 350.000 people in Great Buenos Aires with motion disabilities and we hardly see them.

This experiment tried to generate a public time of games, debate and exchange; socializing the wheelchair, creating its presence in the city and at the same time making it possible to see the problem of inequality in city access and infrastructure, thanks also to the grat media repercussion the event had. (10)

6. In the way of an epilogue: Rally to "La Salada" Fair
(Post it cities´ work in progress)

Exploring La Salada Fair is a good occasion to think about matters common to previous rallies: permanent and occasional processes in the city, the legal or ruled city and a city which escapes state controls and is organized in a pre-institutional way. Even so, it is not anarchic. In order to trade, a minimum order is required although it may not be obvious. By developing itself, the fair defines its own lawfulness. In La Salada, the state is just one more actor. There is no party to mediate between one and the other, exceeding normal parameters. The state does not decide whether this exists or not. It can only have opinions of it.

La Salada is a group of markets: Punta Mogote, Urkupiña, Ocean and De La Ribera. The first three are carried out within large sheds (partly declared) while De La Ribera is carried out in the open air occupying provincial territories on the Riachuelo shore. These sites are presently being refilled by para-municipal companies in order to get a larger area where to camp and trade.

The names of the sheds are inspired by ocean subjects, because formerly there used to be thermal pools there which closed down in the mid '70s because of contamination. La Salada was originally a municipal resort. But for several years now, this immense site is the place where a huge market is put up and dismantled twice a week, at changing times

but mostly at midnight. This apparent precariousness - a market with no predictable opening and closing times- is however counterbalanced by the fact that it has been held for twelve years so far and moves over 9 million dollars a week.

Sold products are mostly illegal copies of European or North American brands (it has been reported by the EC) Nike shoes, Prada bags, Puma jackets, Kenzo perfumes, at one-fourth its original price. All sorts of pets, household appliances, CD's and other banned goods can be found there. Curiously, suddenly the light goes out for some minutes alternatively in the different sheds and it is then when more expensive or more banned products are offered (such as laptops) Commercial strategy, maybe?

Long distance coaches arrive at the market from various points of the country, to buy whole sale and then sell in the provinces. Close to the fair there are illegal textile workshops where most goods are manufactured. These goods can be found in city or provincial markets at higher prices.

Not long ago there was a local conflict which faced the Bolivian communities to the rest of the markets. Police had to act to stop disorders but could not help the death of one Bolivian trader after being hit by a stone coming from a near shed. The conflict triggered or partly discovered a network of half hidden relationships among political leaders, the province police and even judges. Since then, official controls have become stricter and more goods have been confiscated. The market's new strategy was changing the opening times without warning. Although they have generally kept Wednesdays and Sundays as market days, the opening time varies: It can be midnight, after midnight, or midday till late in the evening.

Advance in investigation can be seen in www.rallyconurbano.multiply.com.Meanwhile, the rally keeps exploring changing scenarios where a rural, dusty background mixes with city life, different speeds according to the location. The look depends on the simultaneous ideas and feelings which beat inside rangers and hosts in each event-excursion.

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Street Television as Spatial Intervention

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INTRODUCTION:
URBAN ITALY, INVISIBLE CITIES AND SITUATIONIST INTERVENTIONS

> '(...)E qui occorre capire una cosa: noi siamo una nazione senza metropoli. (...)
> La televisione è da tempo la nuova piazza (...)'. – Alberto Abruzzese in Antonelli (2006)

This paper (part of my PhD work on media, public space and changing forms of cultural events in the "cultural city) looks at a wide-spread network of Italian neighbourhood televisions as a form of contemporary situationism. The spontaneous network of microtelevision stations, active in various forms and with differing broadcasting patterns, has been active since year 2002. Today, it is not only an interesting experiment in media and democratic communication models, but also a form of spatial practice. The Telestreet movement is an example of important spatial practices that are shaping research and activism in today's urban settings, examples that echo the aims and means of the situationists: it is subversive in respect of the Italian mediascape; mobile and activist in terms of shaping ideas of public space, campaigning for or against actual changes in the built environment and in communicating about the urban experience in Italian (and other cities) cities.

Discussions on the hyper-real aspects of the Italian mediascape and most notoriously Italian television are widely known, but that this strange fantasy world is connected to the essence of Italian cities is an interesting twist in the discourse. Television in Italy took over as media, because Italy lacks a real metropolis, claims sociologist **Alberto Abruzzese** in an interview with the Italian 'Rolling Stone' magazine (Antonelli 2006). Abruzzese argues that all the spectacles, heterogeneities and conflicts which can be found in metropolises such as Berlin, London and New York, have been able to develop in Italy only inside the flat screen of the TV.

Abruzzese's thesis could be used to explain the peculiarities of Italian TV, but it can also give hints towards understanding the equally peculiar paths of Italian cities in the last forty years. As Abruzzese claims, maybe there is *no* metropolis to be analysed. Or at least it is trying to escape rigid definitions : "What does a city mean for us today? I think I have written something of the kind of a last love poem to cities, in a moment when it is increasingly difficult to live cities as cities", said Italo Calvino, author of the classic book *Invisible Cities* (1972), in a conference in New York in 1983. However, a variety of architects, sociologists, planners, film directors and writers provide us with alternative readings and re-imaginings of urban Italy.

One of those re-imaginings takes the form of a "media intervention": it pictures an alternative creative city and that city's public space, within the Italian context what I call "Metrolab". This is the loose network of microscopic street televisions, called Telestreet, and spread around Italy in about 150 cities. It is a specifically Italian phenomena, but yet

connects to wider issues of the social production of space and the alternative visions that are increasingly produced to promote such urbanity. This paper is concerned with the Telestreet movement as such a situationist re-imagining.

The structure of the paper is as follows. First, we will look at "urban media interventions" in general: how is it useful to define an "intervention" in the context of urban research, with particular attention paid to situationism as a form of intervention – and how from interventions we can move to look at the role of media in activist interventions. Second, the article looks at dimensions of what I call the "Italian Metrolab" from general urban development in Italy to the case of Milan and finally, how these have influenced the making of activist discontents in the form of the "Metrolab". Finally, the article looks at the neighbourhood television network Telestreet as such a form of mediated spatial intervention and thus concludes by looking at the street television practice as a situationist intervention in the city.

1 URBAN_MEDIA_INTERVENTIONS

Interventions, situations and situationism

First of all, looking at current urban media practices from the point of view of interventions requires an analytical take on what exactly "interventions" are. The term does imply "modification or hindering" but "requires an object, singular or plural". Similar, but yet different, terms would include subversion, protest, engagement or even management. Depending on how abstract this object is (e.g. the state, market), it becomes hard to make normative statements about who should intervene and to what degree the intervention is practical or purely academic (a dualism which, in itself, will become increasingly muddy during this presentation) (For intervention, see Abram 2007, 2-3.)

A useful and common, albeit with some restrictions, idea is applying the notions of "situationist tactics" to today's urbanities (see e.g. Pinder 2005), a tradition finding its roots in action art, the Fluxus movement and other post-war avant-gardes. The Situationist Internationale (SI) itself was a product of several movements (Lettrist International, COBRA, Imaginist Bauhaus, Psychogeographical Association in London, Congress of Free Artists were all in there somewhere) all of which thought that bourgeois and modernist high culture "eviscerated the city" (ibid. 95). Inspiration was taken from Henri Lefevbre and his "social production of space", but it was the Situationists (and Guy Debord whose urbanism really was "surrealist poetry of the city" (ibid. 110) as their leading figure) who were the "brains and the brawn of the May 1968 revolution" (Merrifield 2002, 8). That year, "for a little while, Paris was theirs" (ibid.). Indeed, here lies the often quoted idea of intervention in art talk: by "artistic intervention", the city became modified, the city that the movement wanted to intervene with became hindered. For the situationists, the important goal was to intervene with the urban fabric, to discover and reveal its hidden qualities, for

> "They were bored with art as they knew it, bored with politicians, bored with the city, and bored in the city. The city had become banal; art had become banal; politics had become banal. Banalization was a mental and material disease afflicting life in general. Everything needed changing: life needed changing, time and space needed changing, cities needed changing." (Merrifield 2002, 94.)

Moreover, the SIers exercised a critique of planning that chops up neighbourhoods into functional units. An exemplifier of the modernist planning was Le Corbusier with his 'battle cry' *Kill the streets!* (quote in Merrifield 2002, 97). For the Swiss-born-French architect, the streets stood for disorder and disharmony: "They were everything that was bad about urbanism, everything that belied a city out of sync in the machine age. They needed 'readjusting'… the city needed a new plan, a total plan, rebuilding anew, with streets in the sky. Sidewalks down below, and café and pavement life, were 'fungi' that required weeding, and flowers – or 'forests of pillars' – needed to be replanted in their stead." (Ibid., 97-98).

They "conjured up all sorts of creative and rambunctious direct action responses to reappropriate their Paris" (Merrifield 2002, 9). The SIers "defended the urban mix, wanted to get beyond the rational city, strove to reassert daring, imagination, and play in social life and urban culture" (ibid., 96). Several tactics were deployed. One was *détournement*,

or hijacking (usually including squatting, street demos, expressionist art, graffiti, and sit-ins). One would playfully put certain sites and elements to other than their intended use, or engage oneself into an activity called "psycho-geography" (where the individual desire is seen as a source of revolutionary energy for the transformation of the city). Squatting, building, and street occupations are classic examples of détournement, as are graffiti and 'free associative' expressionist art. The more extremist the better: all these actions would exaggerate, provoke, contest. They'd turn things around, lampoon, plagiarize and parody, deconstruct and reconstruct ambience, unleash revolts inside one's head as well as out on the street with others. They'd force people to think and rethink what they once thought; often you'd not know whether to laugh or cry. Either way, détournement couldn't be ignored: it was an instrument of propaganda, agitprop, an arousal of indignation, action that stimulated more action." (Ibid., 98-99.)

In employing such "tactics", main questions (Blume 2004, 44) would be:

> "What kind of spatial surroundings do we want to have? Could not today's city be something quite different? Why do we have so many fixed images? Are we not all too willing to be slaves of circumstances that we don't really want and don't make us happy but which we nevertheless accept because their economic, political or material constraints are legitimized by the ideology of technical progress?"

The SIers sought for a 'living critique' of this kind of existing urbanism, a critique that took the form of 'unitary urbanism' (or more famously, of the 'naked city', a Dadaist collage for which Debord and fellow-SIer Asger Jorn cut up and rearranged the bits of the map of Paris). This unitary city would be "disruptive and playful, reuniting physical and social separations. It would emphasize forgotten and beleaguered nooks and crannies, mysterious corners, quiet squares, teeming neighbourhoods, sidewalks brimming with strollers, curves, bends, and old-timers with berets sitting on park benches. The only things predictable here would be its unpredictability, its random intensity, its unity of 'ambience'. (Merrifield 2002, 98.) For the SIErs, the *streets* became "staging for spectacular 'counterspectacles', sites for the construction of new participatory situations. 'To be free in 1968', read one wall graffito of the time, is to participate." (Ibid. 106)

Space, urban media and activism

This "situationist city" operates between ideas of historical situationism (see below) and current forms of activism. One of them is architectural activism, as a lot of planning literature notes. As for the situationists, the stage and locus of action is the street. The mode of action is participation. Blume (2004) notes the rise of architects and planners who mix "artistic interventions" and "the generation of communicative processes" (ibid., 40). He sites, for instance, a Berlin-based group rude_architecture for whom (their project Urban Diary in 2002 at Alexanderplatz Underground station; see (http://www.urban-diary.de) the aim of its work is "the transformation of the use of urban spaces". Blume goes on (ibid., 40) to list the characteristics of such architecture and town planning practice:

"They take part in art competitions, open their offices for use as exhibition halls, occupy various places with temporary actions or installations, publish periodicals and in general do a lot of things that are very reminiscent of action, performance or media art. Still, they continue to insist that their cultural origins are in architecture and town planning and they refuse to abandon their claim that these actions have something to do with architecture."

This type of activity is not new as such, as also Blume agrees. Art leaves a degree of freedom outside the established professional paradigms. What is striking for Blume is the "reluctance to be confined to the classical role of the professional architect and an emphasis on the structuring of space as process: "The spaces offered by the city are seen in 'open' terms as a structured product of social, political and economic processes. Open spaces, whether public or private, are thus fields of action that are given life as result of actions, field in which countless spatial patterns – material and immaterial – overlap." (Ibid. 40.) "The aim is to achieve to achieve a more optimistic, more experimental style of urban living, starting by redefining and transforming barren and empty sites in the city, first of all for oneself."

The tactic employed involves, more and more often, various forms of media (see: tactical media): "For some time now a kind of media activism has been developing among younger architects and planners, in particular." This is a "specifically urban practice" and defines and "extended concept of architecture" (Blume, introduction, p. 14). Here I am interested in this production of urban cultural space from the viewpoint of media. From artistic practices of "locative media" to site-specific penetration into public space, media in its various forms is seen as developing new ways of re-imagining and creating urban space.

As urban media is increasingly engaged in re-inventing and constantly re-working, using and abusing the civic or public sphere, they are also more inter-twined in questions of ambient and pervasive media. Media has become ambient. Although we tend to think of television itself primarily as a household fixture, TV monitors outside the home are widespread and contain a variety of forms of conflict, commerce, and community generated outside the home (McCarthy 2001). Simultaneously, urbanists and artists alike are expressing concerns for the growing infrastructure of large digital moving displays increasingly influencing the visual sphere of our public spaces. Practitioners are investigating how to broaden and develop the dominating commercial use of these screens into elements contributing to and creating a lively and participative urban society.

Some of the current transformations of "urban media" are more connected to broader openings towards "community". Many have been looking into various modes of introducing so-called "civic tvs". The concept of community is a problematic one, often ridden with rhetorical or nostalgic ideas, or with definitions that divide between the inside and the outside. Going back to the principle of "locality", the street, also in defining the urban itself and the public sphere of communication, it has been asked whether it may be more useful to speak of collectivities instead of communities as identities become re-temporalized and re-spatialized. (See e.g. Cupers 2005.) However, the idea of community has "successfully" (although I'd like to carefully use this word) been promoted and re-worked upon in the context of "urban media" in some Nordic countries, similarly as some British examples have had their share of claim. These examples are useful here for us to further understand the main concepts and re-workings behind the idea of street TV:

Tenantspin, UK
http://www.tenantspin.org/
Tenantspin is the LIVERPOOL HIGH RISE TENANTS' INTERNET TV CHANNEL mainly for the elderly. It was initiated in 2001 based on the Superchannel experience by Superflex artist group, and is currently co-managed by the Liverpool Housing Action Trust, The High Rise Tenants Group and FACT, the Foundation for Art & Creative Technology. It would initially encompass 67 of the city's high rise blocks and operate as an innovative forum in which to debate, compare, express and contrast experiences of primarily elderly tenants from acoss the city of Liverpool.

TVTV, Denmark
http://www.copenhagenfreeuniversity.dk/freeutv.html
"tv-tv is publicness. We see tv as an active part of the public sphere in which society is mediated. tv-tv is an effort to produce another public sphere."
"tv-tv is tv of the everyday. With tv-tv we will create a public based on everyday experience in Copenhagen and around the world. tv-tv will be a station with a short distance between being on the street and being on the air. We shall attempt a direct and diverse mode of address, taking its point of view in the passions we encounter and the abilities we establish."
M2HZ, Finland

http://www.m2hz.net/
M2HZ is a Helsinki-based multi-channel television project, initiated in a workshop in September 2005. The channel concept is being collaboratively developed by artists, developers and civil society activists. A group of people and organisations who wish to imagine what channels could be like in the current media environment, and what types of

contents could be delivered through collaborative and distributed production. The working title M2HZ measures space and frequency: the interest is in the spaces and paces of the various media platfoms and how they are intertwined with urban environments

Here the focus is on street television as a locative process of re-imagining cities. By "street television", I mean media practices, including community television, web-based "channels" and various forms of single and multi-channel audio-visual media activism, which take the street as their starting point. The street as the surrounding urban fabric is both the object of the screen-based output of the work and the environment with which the social process of making television actively engages.

2. THE ITALIAN "METROLAB"

"Milano è come la punta di un iceberg.
Sotto, immensa, c'è la sua storia. Ogni tanto un'onda ne scopre un frammento, prima che le acque, nell'opera di corrosione inarrestabile che questa città si è proposta per esistere sempre presente a se stessa, nel presente, lo riportino sotto.
Millenni underground.
Per conoscerla, bisogna avere la pazienza di ascoltarla.
Con lo stetoscopio.
Come pulsa dentro.
Bisogna saperla sentire.
Suo malgrado.
Dove rivela la sua memoria. Diceva Nietzsche che la vitalità non trae giovamento dalla storia. Chi vive, se vuole andare avanti, deve dimenticare.
Il suo passato.
E Milano si dimentica. […]
Per sopravvivere a se stessa."
Aldo Nove (2005), *Milano non è Milano*, p. 144

Mapping the Italian city

Italian cities grew into modernity with slight delay, if compared to other countries in central and southern Europe. Their industrialisation is attached to the economic boom of the 1950s and 1960s, which saw enormous migratory movements from the south to the northern factories located in Milan and Turin. The increase of population developed these cities' industrial profile, suburbanisation and the creation of metropolitan areas and "belts".

Simultaneously, a body of both sociological and architectural theories were being developed to the study of the city. First important contributions came from sociologists such as Enzo Mingione (urban social conflicts) and architects such as Aldo Rossi (architecture of the city). Since, Italian urban thinkers have been active in exploring the connections of architecture and planning to other design and humanities disciplines.

Among contemporaries one thinks of architect Stefano Boeri (with his arms stretching to Domus magazine and the Multiplicity group) or "new" sociologists Giandomenico Amendola (postmodern city), Eleonora Fiorani (contemporary urban panoramas) or Guido Martinotti (morpohologies of city users). Narratives emerging in post-millennium Italy have underlined, not surprisingly, on the one hand, the dissolution of the Fordist city and on the other hand the possibilities offered by innovation and creativity within the global competition between cities. In Italy, these theories have been mainly used instrumentally in reference to Milan, increasingly also to Genova (with its efforts of culture-led urban renewal in the aftermath of the European Capital of Culture year in 2004 and large-scale urban design plans around the waterfront), Turin (a city re-inventing itself after the industrial Fiat era, most recently through the winter Olympics of 2006 and an extensive cultural programme) and Venice (already strongly present in the architectural discourse).

Milan, brands and infinities

Sociologist **Aldo Bonomi** has forged the concept of *città infinita*, infinite city, in particular reference to Milan in order to describe the vast Lombard conurbation which starts between Bergamo and Varese, with Milan as the lower corner of a triangle expanding more and more towards Novara and Biella. The città infinita is delimited by the "non-lieux" of Malpensa and Orio al Serio airports, and constitutes "a succession of places" where 4 million people live and a daily volume of 3.7 million cars drive through.

Besides being widely used in the media discourse about the new Milan, in 2004 "città infinita" also became the title of an exhibition that took place in the Triennale di Milano and an adherent book comprising of essays by Bonomi, Abruzzese and Massimo Cacciari. It represents the first attempt to brand Milan and its huge metropolitan area with hypermodernity, more or less over-simplifying and localizing the Los Angeles school in Lombardy. Nevertheless, it provides a theoretical apparatus able to sustain the enormous development and regeneration which are taking place, started with the fair area by **Massimiliano Fuksas** and which will continue with *Milano Santa Giulia*, the new council house, the *Pirellone bis* (headquarter of the regional council) by Pei Cobb Freed & Partners, the *Museo del Design* and the *Città della Moda* (fashion city) with the three towers by **Zaha Hadid**, **Arata Isozaki** and **Daniel Libeskind**.

This architectural **focus on large-scale buildings of entertainment, design and consumption** is no coincidence. Italian cities, and mainly Milan again, have brought their own contribution to the "creative city" discourse. Milan, wishing to bran itself as a capital of fashion and design, is investing in **infrastructures** (at least in terms of buildings; social support networks are not equally developed for instance in the Milanese fashion industry). Several publications devoted to examining the special "Made in Italy" touch of local creative centres (Bovone & Mazzette & Rovati 2005; Bovone 2005; Amadasi & Salvemini 2005) have been popping up during the last years. Especially Laura Bovone has entered international circuits with translated texts on the Milanese neighbourhoods such as the fashionable Ticinese and colourful Isola, and how they mix local craftsmanship, family businesses, Italian style icons and global competition.

The discontents of the città or making of the "Metrolab"

These attempts to ride on the "creative hubs", sometimes without listening to the neighbourhood's specific needs, attempts to imagine the new metropolis, have left something to desire for. The new Italy - the metropolis of the primetime TV screen, of a large body of Italian writers, on the ground of Milanese creative megaprojects – has yearned for another creative city.

Italy has produced a significant body of critical, even radical thinking and practices. The global setting in which Italian cities with somewhat of an amaze find themselves has been critically analysed by thinkers such as **Antonio Negri** (2000) with his concepts of the "empire" (referring to a new form of global sovereignty) and "multitude". Multitude, earlier used already by Spinoza, is a term applied by Negri in opposition to the concept of "people" to define the revolutionary potential of democratic forces involved in re-appropriation and self-organisation. Interestingly for us now, this more political philosophy has counterparts in Italian cultural and social activist movements.

On the more day-to-day level of making and managing cities, many feel that Milano (and many other Italian cities) is being suffocated by consumerist plans, leaving no space for creating a livable, interesting metropolis. First, there is the radical tradition of the *centri sociali*, places of creative resistance, and of the related precarian movements (Il movimento), and often Milanese or Bologna –based metropolitan alternative labs and phenomena (such as the current claims on multicultural Paolo Sarpi district in Milan). Second, there are public initiatives trying to forster alternative official politics. For instance, during the communal elections of 2006 a number of alternative voices rose to "bring back smiles to Milano" and to "save the city". Among them were the play writer **Dario Fo** (supported by e.g. London's **Ken Livingstone**)

and a coalition formed by an active cultural group Esterni (Questa e una citta) devoted to developing creative uses of public space in the city.

Paolo Sarpi – multicultural Italy

Questa è una città (*this is a city*)

> *"It seems like everyone already knows who is going to win the local elections in Milan, it seems like the citizens will just have to decide between "him and her", it seems like it is not much of a choice. At this very point, 46 people present an independent list to run for mayors in the city. All together.*
>
> *The point is that things can still change, even though many people - mistakenly - think that the dice is cast and nothing can be done about it. The point is that politics affects everyone, it concerns each and every citizen, and it is up to the citizens to decide what is going to happen.*
>
> *From these ideas stems questa è una città ("this is a city"), a list that has not been artificially thrown together for these elections, but is instead the potential and literally political continuation of Esterni's 11-year-experience in utopian activities in Milan." (from http://www.questaeunacitta.it/ website 17.4.2007)*

Third, one finds many independent urban communication strategies, such as street television, connected to both radical strands and to other cultural initiatives. All of these, in many varying ways, are contributing to alternative envisioning of Italian cities. We shall now take a closer look at the third group of street media.

3 TELESTREET: SPATIAL ACTIVISM

Television Seeking the Street

The Italian microTV movement, Telestreet, started as a loose group of TV micro-broadcasters that first went to air in Italy in 2002 in a neighbourhood station based in Bologna. After video-activism and net-activism some consider this a new kind of tv-activism in the belly of the beast (Pasquinelli 2003), an activism where "the horizontality of the net must meet the 'socializing' power of television." The street movement was essentially born from two principles: at the intersection of a certain Italian urban (as seen above in the "Metrolab") and "mediascape" (to use Arjun Appadurai's term to describe Italy's situation where Silvio Berlusconi has been in charge of most mainstream tv channels) and of a tactical movement of networked localities (thus engaging in what was previously described as "intervention").

The televisions themselves are polymorphic, content is often sourced from the independent content archives such as V2V and the Italian viral video distribution project NGV. Contents range "from the "how-to-build" a street TV to an introduction to the free software's movement, from urban situationist demonstrations against war to journalistic investigations on housing and immigration, from anthropological perspectives of pre-industrial jobs and traditions to the G8 days in Geneva, from video art performances to gender topics" etc. (Meta7-Medium; OrfeoTV)

For instance in the region of Lombardia, the neighbourhood television experiences of the last decades have been hundreds, with focus points of each station varying. In Milano alone, several different local Telestreet channels have existed: e.g. IsolaTV (Isola, the Garibaldi zone), Mosaico TV (Palestro, Porta Venezia), NoMade TV (Milano2, C.so Sempione) and SperimentiTV (San Siro).

Screening Milan

In Milano, especially Isola and SperimentiTV have emphasized the questions of space and neighbourhood in their actions. In some cases, what has been produced manifests in changes in the built environment; in some cases what is under negotiation is the very idea of public space. Isola is one of the most traditional of the Milanese neighbourhoods, but nowadays threatened by an economic and consumerist logic wiping over the city. The community project Garibaldi-Repubblica is changing and menacing the services available. IsolaTV, by its actions, has aimed at developing neighbourhood integration, offering neighbourhood services and creating cultural stimuli, especially at the Stecca venue.

From the other end of the spectrum, TAZ TV has promoted fast, mobile, temporary situationist actions in the urban space, re-appropriation of forgotten urban areas, interventions into urban events, DIY nomad antennas. One could say, that Isola TV locates itself in **rooted** or **fixed space**, whereas TAZ Tv creates a **mobile** and **temporary space.**

But for the entire Telestreet movement, the glory days of the enthusiasm of 2002-2003 is changing. For instance, currently none of the Milanese tvs are broadcasting. Some indeed say that the movement is dying, while some say it is finding new grammars. Within the past three years, stations have been opened and shut, and some have been through court cases as Disco Volante in Senigallia. Simultaneously, foreign recognition is growing (as recently has been demonstrated at the Exploding Television event during the Rotterdam film festival or by the Community award granted to Telestreet and NGV distribution platform at Ars Electronica in fall 2005). Telestreet hit upon a specific Italian political context, but did it by embedding that frustration into the urban soil, into the networked neighbourhoods scattered around Italy. Currently, an urban grammar is being written and read out loud within the DIY_tv networks.

From media interventions to spatial interventions

Kenny Cupers in a recent article titled "*Towards a Nomadic Geography*" (2005) offers us a reading of current "ambiguities of the contemporary city", ambiguities that contradict the notion of the "public sphere" as it has been addressed: "where mobile urban lifestyles are dispersed over a globalizing landscape and localisms reappear in the core of the city, where migration flows and their hybridization of ethnicities contradict those entities of exclusion whose gates are to keep 'others' out, and where a cosmopolitan multiculturalism momentarily lights up in an atmosphere of xenophobia" (ibid., 729). Thus, he asks, what are the potentials of global and local alternative spheres to reinvigorate a politics of participation, to serve as a starting point for an alternative geography that situates spaces for what he calls "progressive politics"?

Essentially, the Telestreet microTV movement is (or at least wishes to be) such a global-local sphere offering an do-it-yourself reading of the city, pumping into various layers of alternative geographies. These geographies then create a nomadic local-global network of that "something called a public sphere" which not only offers *readings* but *interventions* into space.

Already in the early days of Telestreet, these urban distinctions, denunciations of public spheres, were addressed in a special urban manifesto. The Urban TV initiative (also from Bologna) spoke about "rootedness in city life" and even "urban programming": "Independent communication must discover the city again as a new dimension of action, because *the city is the first and elective ground of making society*. A public access city television can root easily into any sector of civil, cultural and economical life. Urban Television turns out to be a precious means and a model of participative municipalism". The aim is to produce and conquest everyday life spaces and to thus to transform an international innovation movement into a movement that actually builds up the urban society starting from urban neighbourhoods. (Pasquinelli 2003.)

The question of integration and its embeddedness in a certain neighbourhood's (or state's) political and cultural context counteracts a certain "landscape of power" (Zukin 1991) and simultaneously the activities proposed impose another landscape, both local and global. This mediated landscape becomes a visual, often mobile and always contested

space of DIY creativity and neighbourhood participation. For finally, street television is immersed into the production of a **do-it-yourself urban environment**. This environment consists of layers of time-space continuums, augmented narratives and interplays of superimposed private experiences and collective memories:

"By means of the hybrid nature of the street television – located at the confluence of the "familiar" and the "unheimlich" –, urban space can be seen as a space-time-relationship continuum and become the subject of "augmented narratives" affecting perception of the very physical reality and relational patterns. The "outcome" is the rising of a community made by not-passive actors of communication." (Meta7-Medium; OrfeoTV, Bologna)

4 FINAL SHOT: URBAN MEDIA INTERVENTIONS AND THE CITY

Situationism may still be a relevant critique for town planning or for progressive politics (Blume 2004, 44). But, situationist acts may be harder to perform today. In today's media-city (including monitors, screens and video displays opening up corridors of time; surveillance images; urban images reproduced in media; mobile phones linking up public places with private affairs etc.), "the danger is that existing patterns and attitudes will only be confirmed and perceived as mere entertainment" (Blume 2004, 46). And "the more natural it becomes to perceive reality not directly but as a technically projected image, the less hope there is… for reanimation of immediacy" when the "art of moving through urban space must be re-examined as both physical and a media activity" (ibid. 46). Blume, in reference to the activist architectural practices discussed earlier, talks of "**new Situationism**" (2004, 50-52):

"Unlike its historical predecessors.. this variant lacks a grand political and social programme and is less inclined to the intellectual construction of alternative worlds. It is more realistic and pragmatic. The freedom of art is used to practise architecture in a more generalized sense. But the protagonists of the new 'extended architecture' steer clear of universal visions. They intervene without claiming to possess the one true solution to a certain problem. They generally demand and promote the consideration of several options, more communication, more transparency and more participation. These architects want to be seen more as initiators and designers of processes, they do not want architecture to eb reduced to the aestheticization of space. With such an expanded notion of architecture they practise it as an interdisciplinary approach to urban and cultural space."

As such, urban media interventionists engage in important forms of urban change performed by the "urban avant-garde" (Miles 2004). Their actions provide for tactical moves against or "interruptions" to the prevailing creativity city rhetoric (Miles 2005) that is shaping Italian and other cities. They may even be calling for the "real creative city to stand up" (Chatterton 2003) next to the "creative city" they are performing their tactics on. Thus, the practice of street tv engaging with its environment in both very practical and idealistic terms, builds a new, "third", layer to urban space. It build upon a metropolis ": attached to flexible and shifting ideas, events, meanings and appearances. As such it reminds of Edward Soja's (1996): "real-and imagined Thirdspace". This is "a lived space of radical openness and unlimited scope, where all histories and geographies, all times and places are immanently presented and represented." For Soja, Thirdspace produces a "community of resistance" and a way to progressive cultural politics.

For ultimately, the critique of strategies that suffocate the potentiality of that Italian metropolis, an intervention into its urban space, is a search for the metropolis, a metropolis that exists in various forms and glories out in the piazzas. A city that is real-and-imagined visible-and-invisible:

"I have also thought of a model city from which I deduce all the others, " Marco answered. "It is a city made only of exceptions, exclusions, incongruities, contradictions. If such a city is the most improbable, by reducing the number of abnormal elements, we increase the probability that the city really exists. So I have only to subtract exceptions from my model, and in whatever direction I proceed, I will arrive at one of the cities

which, always as an exception, exist. But I cannot force my operation beyond a certain limit: I would achieve
cities too probable to be real."
- Italo Calvino (1972), Invisible Cities, p. 69

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Counterspaces

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Abstract

I will present a model for understanding a global network of local federations (Slum Dwellers International, SDI), by drawing on Edward Soja's reading of Henry Lefebvre in the concept Thirdspace. The SDI network takes space as it's bounding force in the struggle to transform the living conditions of slum dwellers in what use to be called the third world. My goal is to bring together the problem of slums with socio-political art movements of the 60's and recent urban studies.

The urgent problem of slums, that follow on the rapid urbanisation process worldwide is taken as a point of departure, using Thirdspace to see how the SDI network resolves the two conflicting scales to view the city – as pointed out by Lefebvre and Soja – the macro and the micro, by making the individual slum dweller an actor in a peer to peer exchange, while at the same time creating a social space for political struggle (in the city and globally). Through this process power is shifted from governments, international organisations and professionals to the lived space of the inhabitants.

The paper is built on a case study from a slum upgrading effort in an informal settlement in Nairobi, Kenya that I undertook in 2003.
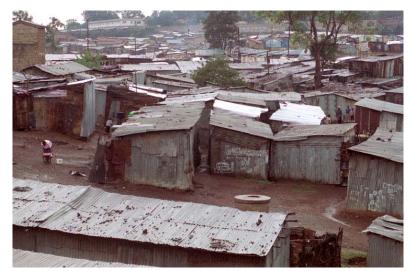
I.

In the rapid urbanization process worldwide the locus of global poverty is moving to the cities in a process recognized as the "urbanisation of poverty". Slums, together with their antithesis – gated communities – are said to be the most successful, that is the fastest growing, living environments in the cities.[1] According to UN statistics almost 1 billion people live in slums. "And if no serious action is taken, the number of slum dwellers worldwide is projected to rise over the next 30 years to about 2 billion." (UN Habitat 2003, foreword)

The Kenyan capital Nairobi boasts one of the highest disparities of wealth in the world. (Davies 2006, 95) 60% of the population are crowded in slums, housed in shacks made out of iron sheets that lack basic facilities like water and sanitation. This has made "flying toilets" (plastic bags with human excrements) into a common feature of the everyday life to many of the citizens. Trapped in unemployment the slum dwellers are producing "a permanent urban underclass."[2] Close by, but in what seems to be a different world, the rich segment of the population live comfortably in spacious bungalows. 80% of the land in the city is owned by only 20% of the people. (Syagga, 2001, 28)

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[1] What they have in common is that, while geographically being part of the city, they are (in different ways) separated from the rest of the city, creating a both physical and social space of their own – a city within the city. The Slovenian artist Marjetica Potrc describes this as a process of privatisation of the public space where the public parks are transformed into golf courses – "for members only". (Potrc 2003)

[2] I'm aware that this concept (from Soja 2000, 271) doesn't totally apply to the situation in Nairobi, as it refers to a welfare-dependent urban underclass, and the welfare system is strikingly lacking in Kenya. By using the term I want to stress the exclusion from the formal market of employment of a large segment of the population.

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Kibera Slum

This uneven distribution of land can be traced back to the settling of Nairobi in the late 19th century and to the introduction of racial segregation in the first city plans. While the official planning became an instrument for the ideology of the English colonial government, executed against the subordinated African population, (Nevanlinna 1996, 125) the informal settlements played a double function. They were the marginalized, leftover spaces, "a blot on the urban landscape," (Government of Kenya 2001, 2) in relation to the colonial city plans. At the same time they also functioned as a social space where African ways of life could live on and thus became a *counterspace* for resistance against the colonial power. This later function is supported by the role the informal settlements are claimed to have played in the formation of the Mau Mau resistance of the 1950s. (Nevanlinna 1996, 138, 194)

In this paper I will take this historical reading of the informal settlements as a point of departure to present a model for understanding how power can be resolved through a global network of local federations – Shack/Slum Dwellers International (SDI) – that takes space as it's bounding force in the struggle to transform the living conditions of slum dwellers in the third world. My reading is informed by the American geographer Edward Soja's notion of a spatial turn in cultural politics, where *Thirdspace* becomes an extended and highly politicised way to look at space.

II.

In his 1996 book *Thirdspace – Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined places* Soja takes on a journey into Thirdspace, following the French sociologist and philosopher Henri Lefebvre. To Lefebvre all binary thinking is reductive. Drawing from Lefebvre Soja introduces a *Thirding-as-Othering*, a third term that is "the first and most important step in transforming the categorical closed logic of either/or to the dialectically open logic of both/and also." (Soja 1996, 60-61) Space is not to be seen as a stage for historical and social processes, but as something that is shaping our thoughts and actions. Space is a social and political product and "power is contextualised and made concrete …in the (social) production of (social) space." (Soja 1996, 87) As a spatial mode Thirdspace is the lived space that includes and goes beyond the material *Firstspace* and the mental *Secondspace*. (Soja 2000, 10-11)

Slums are both a problem – "the worst of urban poverty and inequality" (UN Habitat 2003, foreword) – and a possibility – "a proactive, bottom up solution to urban poverty and rural immigration" (Rubbo 2003, 4) – at the same time. Through Soja's Thirdspace slums can be understood as both "the dominated spaces, the spaces of the peripheries, the margins and the marginalized" and also as "the chosen spaces for struggle, liberation and emancipation". (Soja 1996, 68) This points forward to the upgrading initiative. Design, within the SDI network, starts with a *dream process* where the architect and the community sit together and work out the design. In the beginning of this process the community members come up with the most expensive houses they can think of – the upmarket houses in Nairobi – but this dream

have to meet with their physical and economic realities. "To dialogize design in the city," writes architecture theoretician Margaret Crawford, "challenges the conceptual hierarchy under which most design professionals operate." She continues: "Everyday life provides a good starting point for this shift because it is grounded in the commonplace rather than the canonical, the many rather than the few…and it is uniquely comprehensive to ordinary people." Crawford develops the concept *everyday spaces* from Lefebvre's *everyday life*: "Temporally, everyday spaces exist in between past and future uses, often with a no-longer-but-not-yet-their-own status, in a holding pattern of real-estate values that might one day rise." (Crawford 1999, p. 29) [3] Conceptually she identifies these everyday spaces with Soja's Thirdspace, "a space activated through social action and the social imagination" that represents "a bottom-up rather than top-down restructuring of urban space." (Crawford 1999, 28-29) The small informal settlement of Kambi Moto on the eastern part of Nairobi – where I undertook a field study in 2003 – was originally planned to be a parking lot for the neighbouring site-and-service housing estate. As there were no cars parked in the area people began to settle. (Tecta Consultants, 2003)

Railway line

Slums are *transit zones* in-between the *conceived space* of the planner and the *perceived space* of the physical environment. An important factor behind the formation of informal settlements is the rapid rural to urban migration. Many people still have their belonging in a rural home and "tend to take Nairobi like another place where you go to work," says the young local architect Joseph Muketu (2003). They still have their "chamba", a small plot for farming, either in Nairobi or in their rural home. Lars Reuterswärd (2003), Director of UN Habitat Global Division, describes a double process where, at the same time as the world is being urbanized, the cities are being ruralized. The slum dwellers become *urban nomads* [4] occupying a transitory space in between the city and the country, between earning a living and belonging. In this respect they parallel the large international community of Nairobi.

III.

The colonial order had created its own panoptical harmony in Nairobi, with a certain balance achieved under a repressive colonial regime, due to the separation and control of the different racial groups. After independence in 1963 this "harmony" broke down. When the restrictions on travel were lifted this resulted in an accelerated rate of rural to urban

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[3] This is putting the highest pressure on inner city slums dwellers that occupy prime locations for development. (UN Habitat 2003, 130)

[4] Andreas Ruby (2002, 26) describes the *urban nomads* (writing from a European perspective); The *jetset nomads* spend most of their nights in hotels; the *commuter nomads*, due to long journey to and from work spend several hours everyday in traffic, while the home becomes an expanded bedroom; the *tourist nomads* "exist in such large numbers that they easily acquire the status of a transitory population…" The other type of urban nomads according to Ruby are the *homeless nomads*: the local homeless and "the floods of political and economic immigrants".

migration. (Weru, not dated, 2-3) [5] The floodgates were opened and the city could not cope. The informal settlements grew beyond control. The new independent government reacted in the same way as the colonialists had done in trying to protect the city against the informal developments. Demolitions where reinstalled. (Nevanlinna 1996, 218)

The process continued in the 70s and as the economic regression accelerated in the 80s, it created increasing poverty and lack of housing. The unplanned developments broke through the segregation barriers and informal settlements and kiosks mushroomed in all parts of the city. (Weru, not dated, 2-3) In 1996, before the second multiparty election in Kenya, president Moi gave out a lot of land to his opponents, either to silence them or to bring them on his side. A lot of people faced eviction threats. The communities responded to the eviction treats and fought back, but the magnitude became so big that they were overwhelmed. (Apiyo 2003)

The same year, 1996, Muungano wa Wanavijiji was formed to organize the resistance against these massive evictions. (Muungano 2003, 1) Community organizer Lawrence Apiyo remembers the struggle in those early days:

The community was protesting on the day that the local administrator came to force them to move to the new land. In the struggle this old 'mama' hit the administrator with the walking stick. Then the police fired. She was killed instantly and another woman was badly injured. It was the first time that we dumped a body in front of the provincial commissioners office. And we left the body there. We wanted the killers to be arrested. The following day we were joined by five members of parliament, who helped us to recover the body. We held a prayer and went for the burial at Langata. (Apiyo 2003)

With the reduction of – almost stop to – slum evictions in 2000 Muungano could change from prevention into dealing with a more constructive focus on issues of development within slums, as part of the global network SDI. (Muungano, 2003, 1)

Kambi Moto informal settlement

IV.

The saving schemes are the foundation in the SDI process. The SDI homepage states that: "Whenever a Federation enters a community…the first thing it does is to form saving and credit groups," and continues: "When a…savings collective in an area is strong, then [the] entire federation is strong." (www.sdinet.org) While the savings are

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[5] Two parallel developments pushed on this development: industrialisation and the change from food crops to exportable cash crops. The first attracting people to the city and the second making them leave the country. (Weru, not dated, 2-3)

aimed at raising deposits for affordable housing financing,[6] they are circulated as micro finance for business and welfare purposes in the shorter term.[7] The highly decentralized credit program maximises participation from the community, bringing it together and making it look at the money as their own. (www.sdinet.org) The individual saving is financing 10% of the house, 10 % comes from the local savings group and 80% comes from Akiba Mashinani Trust, a trust set up by Muungano and it's supportive NGO (Non Governmental Organisation) Pamoja Trust, to provide credit directly to slum communities. (Community house, Kambi Moto, 2003)

The other community-building base is *enumeration*: the collecting of information by the community about themselves and their environment. This information then can be used to negotiate with the officials for the right to the land. While the enumeration is building towards this external power relation, it also brings forward the contradictions within the community as the enumeration threatens a lot of different interests within the community. The SDI homepage states that:

> *"This is usually when the worms come out of the woodwork. The enumeration process forces the contradictions around internal power relations and resource allocation to the fore. These internal dynamics are normally dependent on power relations in the broader society and are a reflection of the contradictions created and sustained by the state and the market." (www.sdi.net)*

Spending time in Kambi Moto it become clear that power is not only to be sorted out in relation to the Government and other external interests but also within the community. The slum dwellers are not a homogeneous group and as Jane Weru, Executive Director of Pamoja Trust, expressed it: "The more you go with the process the deeper down on the power ladder you get." People that, out of different reasons, can't or will not partake in the process risk ending up in another slum as the process moves forward.

Kambi Moto

But it might be the richest segment in the slum that has the most to loose from upgrading. The main conflict is between structure owners and tenants. The structure owners are either absent structure owners – often wealthy individuals – that live elsewhere, or resident structure owners, who themselves live in the slum. Since the land belongs to the city council it's only the structure, the shack, which can be owned. In the process of upgrading the relation between tenants and structure owners have to be sorted out. The SDI stresses the importance of these conflicting interests to be solved internally within the community. Since Kambi Moto has managed to do this and move forward to construction it has become a showcase for other communities in Nairobi.

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[6] The starter house in Kambi Moto costs 60.000 Ksh. It is paid back by a daily payment of 57 Ksh, including an interest of 15 Ksh (The interest of 9% was decided jointly by members from different informal settlements in Nairobi). Figures taken from the wall of the community house in Kambi Moto, December 2003.

[7] As the urban poor are excluded from the formal financial market they need access to cheap credit, not to end up in the hands of moneylenders and being "caught in vicious cycles of depth." (www.sdinet.org 2006).

Before the construction can start, the community has to go to the city council to negotiate for land titles. Security of tenure is regarded as an over-arching problem that affects all informal settlements in the city. Therefore land tenure regulation becomes the entry point for any upgrading activity as security of tenure is the foundation on which all other developments may be carried out. (Huruma 2001, 4)

To be sustainable the involvement of the people affected by the upgrading effort has to be involved right from the outset in formulating of the laws and the regulations. Apiyo (2003) says that:
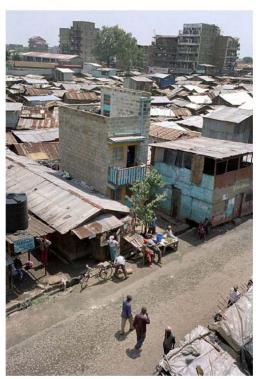
Until the people are involved in deciding the landownership, the ownership of the structures, then we are not going to solve anything. "People are going to be allocated land, they will sell, create more slums but by involving them and charring past experiences they will be able even to propose what laws or regulations should be put in place so that nobody is able to sell the housing unit or land and move to form another settlement.

This is true also for the construction process: "There is one thing to do the upgrading. It's another thing to do the right upgrading," says the local architect Joseph Muketu, and continues: "The community has a better understanding of the problems they have which they would like to see resolved in their new houses." The physical environment is just one part of the problems of the slum dwellers and housing is just one part of the physical environment. They have other overwhelming problems as lack of security and lack of employment or other income generating activities.

Upgraded Kambi Moto

When looking at the actual construction process in Kambi Moto it lives up to the accepted best practice of today, known as participatory slum upgrading and described in the UN Habitat Global Report on Human Settlements 2003 as a holistic in situ approach where the community is involved right from the outset. The built environment after upgrading will also fit the new paradigm of upgrading as lined out by for example Charles Correa (1989). It will be a low-rise, multi-story neighbourhood; with high densities and mixed land uses; built through self-construction and with the use of local materials.

Ghetto sample house

Not to disregard the practical outcome I want to stress that it's not the building process, nor the built environment, that is the crucial point when it comes to empowerment in slum upgrading. No UN report however ambitious (and "correct") it might be can escape the fact that the inhabitants feel disempowered in relation to the UN system.

V.

To answer the question of empowerment in slum upgrading I first want to turn to the two main models in the history of slum improvement to make a reading of their failure from a Thirdspace perspective. The first model – an inheritance from the colonial days – was the construction of heavily subsidized low-cost housing according to minimum standards (following on demolitions). But as it only covered 10% of the needed housing in Nairobi it privileged the wealthy and well connected at the expense of the poor. In the 80s this failure made way for self-built housing (going back to the anarchist architect William Turner in the 60s). But also this model would fail the poor since it – among other reasons – placed too much belief in the individual low-income households' ability to pay for the housing, while being top down and over dimensioned in the planning, making gentrification the exception rather than the rule. (Syagga 2001, 18)

These interventions can be understood as different scales to view the city, as outlined by Soja in *Thirdspace*: *The view from above* sees the city as a whole on a *macrospatial* scale and *the view from below* is engaged in the *microgeographies* of everyday life and the local view from the city streets. (Soja 1996, 310) While the modernistic model was overemphasising the view from above, the self-help model can be said to overemphasize the view from below. While increased self-help by the residents represents the empowerment of the individual slum dweller from a *micro*-perspective it might stand for the failure of the state to fulfil its obligations to the poor from a *macro*-perspective. Marxist interpreters have argued that the self-builder is one of the "attempts of capitalism to palliate the housing shortage in ways that do not interfere with the effective operation of these interests." (Hall 2003, 277) Peter Hall, writing about Britain during the Thatcher government in the 80s, points to the irony involved:

It seemed that Howard, Geddes, Turner, and the anarchist tradition in planning had achieved ultimate respectability at last. Few, seemingly, noticed the irony: that the accolade had come under a radical right-wing

government, which now …made common cause with the anarchists against the spirit of bureaucratic socialism. (Hall 2003, 293)

Soja claims that the contrasting scales to view the city have to be resolved in Lefebvre's alternative and politicized way of looking at cityspace that combines both the macro and micro perspective. Lefebvre describes this as "the (social) production of (social) space" and Soja has reformulated this "third process" as Thirdspace. (Soja 2000, 10) I will show how this can be done on the practical level by looking at the SDI network of *local* federation*s* that organizes the urban poor on a *global* scale.

VI.

Kibera informal settlement

In 1988 "about 800.000 people were forcefully evicted from their homes in Seoul to 'beautify' the city for the Olympic games."(www.sdinet.org) The responses to these massive evictions led to the creation of a network in Asia, called the *Asian Coalition of Housing Rights*. In 1991 exchanges started between Asia and Africa out of an initial dialog with South Africa and as more federations and communities from different countries became interested the process was formalised in 1996 in the SDI network. (www.sparcindia.org and Patel 2003)

Today SDI has grown to a network of people's organizations from more than twenty countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America, who are committed to a shared process of grassroots organization, problem solving and solution sharing in the struggle for land and housing of the urban poor. (www.sdinet.org) The SDI legacy is grounded in a consciousness that land is a political issue and that it's only through a political process that the slum dwellers can get the right to the land. But the route taken by the SDI is distinct both from that taken by *rights-based social movements* – like the women's movement and the animal-right's movement – and that of *micro finance* organizations. (www.sdinet.org) The rights-based social movements are too focused on one *separate question*. Soja describes them as "separate channels of resistance and struggle" that "have fragmented modernist equality politics." (Soja 2000, 281) The micro finance organizations on the other hand are too focused on *separate individuals* and miss out on the political macro perspective.

SDI describes itself as an attempt to move away from these sporadic impulses to a sustained, long-term investment in local federations of the urban poor. (www.sdinet.org) This alternative route of the SDI can be understood through Soja's notion of a *spatial turn* in cultural politics, "a collective struggle to *take greater control over the 'making of geography – the social production of human spatiality,*" where a "shared consciousness and practice of an explicitly

spatial politics" provide the bounding force. "This involvement in producing and in already produced spaces and places is what all those who are oppressed, subordinated, and exploited share." (Soja 2000, 281)

Seen from the *macro* perspective the global network gives the urban poor a defining role in the way "Governments and multi-laterals discharge their obligations to the poor." (www.sdinet.org) The organizing in ever-expanding networks helps the slum dwellers to put pressure on the state and to constantly remind it of its obligations.

From the *micro* perspective of the individual slum dweller or community, the network offers a new way of learning where they are not consumers and beneficiaries but where they are partners in a peer-to-peer exchange. This new way of sharing knowledge between communities also brings the questions "down" from the conceptual realm of the professionals to the lived experience of the "inhabitants" and "users". (Patel 2003)

The conflict between the macro and micro perspectives are resolved in the process of one community federation training another community federation: The individual gets empowered in becoming an actor in the process (taking control over his/her own destiny) and at the same time a political awareness is transmitted.

By being rooted in the local, as "a voluntary association of like-minded people's organizations" focusing on "a shared process of grassroots organization" (www.sdinet.org), and at the same time exciding the local and self becoming a global actor the SDI can become a Thirdspace that offers a counterspace in today's globalized world.

*All photos in Counterspaces by Magnus Rosshagen, except aerial Kibera.

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Introducing Urban Mediator: concept and work in progress

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Abstract

This paper is a case presentation of the Urban Mediator concept and the development work being undertaken for its production as a working prototype. Urban Mediator is defined as a framework and specific online tools for building connections between citizens and city administrations, making both people's everyday knowledge and the administrative structured knowledge of the city, mutually accessible.

Urban Mediator is being developed by the ARKI research group at the University of Art and Design Helsinki in the context of Icing, a EU-funded project focusing on multi-modal and multi-access concepts of e-Government. The design and development work of Urban Mediator is carried out following a co-design approach, involving various stakeholders such as residents, communities, organizations, and city office workers, in the project's Helsinki test-bed area of Arabianranta.

The work on Urban Mediator has started in June 2006 and is scheduled to continue within the Icing context until the end of the year 2007. This paper introduces the concept of Urban Mediator as well as various iterations of the software as it is being developed.

Introduction

Urban Mediator is currently being developed into a working prototype within the framework of the ICING project. ICING, an acronym for Innovative Cities for the Next Generation, is a 6th framework programme EU funded IST (Information Society Technologies) project. According to the project's official description of work, ICING's goal is to "research concepts of e-Government based on a multimodal, multi-access approach to a 'thin-skinned City' that is sensitive to the citizen and to the environment, using mobile devices, universal access gateways, social software and environmental sensors." (ICING DoW 2005) The project partners include city councils, universities and telecom operators from Barcelona, Dublin and Helsinki. [1]

Urban Mediator is the key concept to be developed in Helsinki's test-bed of Arabianranta. Within the ICING framework, Urban Mediator will act as one subsystem of the ICING platform. This platform's role will be to provide services and information that better connect the city with its constituency. Urban Mediator's role within the ICING platform would be to facilitate the citizen-driven possibilities for action. Urban Mediator is also an independent system that can exist in various other frameworks.

Urban Mediator concept

Joanna Saad-Sulonen is currently working as a researcher at the Media Lab of the University of Art and Design Helsinki (UIAH). She received her Bachelor's Degree in Architecture from the American University of Beirut in 1997 and her Master's Degree in New Media from UIAH in 2005. She has started her doctoral studies also at UIAH in 2006 and the working title of her research proposal is *Everyday Life in the Interactive City: Exploring potentials of Information and Communication Technologies in physical urban context for facilitating public participation and citizen involvement in urban issues* Joanna's main interest lies in exploring the interplay between the physical and digital dimension in urban public spaces, taking the lived space and social practices of everyday life as a starting point for investigation.

Joanna was born in Beirut in 1974 and has lived and worked both in Lebanon, her father's country, and in Finland, her mother's country. She now lives permanently in Hakaniemi, Helsinki, loves cooking, discovering cities, and swimming in the sea.

The Urban Mediator concept is based on existing design research and a proposal for addressing the possibilities presented by the interweaving of new digital technologies and urban space, for encouraging various forms of public participation on urban issues (Saad-Sulonen 2005). The idea is not to create yet another interaction channel, like the various websites, portals or discussion forums, but rather come up with a system that would help citizens know of the existing channels and services and help them organize themselves, in the way social software works, in bringing up issues to the attention of city administrations.

The concept of Urban Mediator is that of a system that aims at increasing the level of democratic involvement, in particular eParticipation, by providing a "mediator" environment where different kinds of knowledge about the city are mutually accessible, making it possible for citizens to interact with each other as well as with city authorities. Urban Mediator, as a software infrastructure, makes this possible by allowing for different existing systems and information sources, such as community websites, discussion forums, personal blogs, official city websites, to plug into it. Urban Mediator therefore provides interfaces for combining this various information. Furthermore, linking to that the possibilities for computer-mediated interaction in the space of the city itself (mobile technologies, Wi-Fi, GPS etc.) expands possibilities for information sharing and taking action into the street, the everyday context of the experience of the city.

Moreover, the essence of a system such as Urban Mediator is its open nature: it presents opportunities for mediation between various producers and seekers of information related to life in the city, citizens and officials alike. Urban Mediator would make it possible for people to send information, questions, complaints, and remarks regarding their neighborhood, linking them to existing interaction channels, official and non-official. Citizens, residents associations as well as various city administrations can freely use Urban Mediator, making it easier for them to reach the information they need regarding the city, when they want it and where they want it, adapting the system through time, to their needs.

Urban Mediator development

Urban Mediator has three main areas of development, which are the following: in-situ interaction possibilities, harvesting of information, and tools for citizen-driven action.

The development of the system is being done iteratively, by building lightweight prototypes that are used by volunteers and can be quickly modified according to new insight gathered by both test-users and designers (Saad-Sulonen & Susi 2007). This co-design approach for software development makes it possible to gather citizen generated content all through the process of software development, contributing to the content that would also populate the final prototype version of Urban Mediator.

Fig.1 shows the three main areas of development of Urban Mediator

1) In-situ interaction possibilities

The first prototype, Urban Mediator Stage 1, was ready in December 2006 and addressed the first area of development. It allowed users to annotate points on a map of the area of Arabianranta. Points could be commented and were accessible through different navigation strategies. The views provided were a map view with points, a most recent comments view, a "tag cloud" view to navigate with keywords and other views.

Urban Mediator Stage 1 software has client-server architecture. Any graphical web-browser can serve as a client, making it possible to test using not only computers, but also 3G mobile phones. Mobile clients with GPS device can make use of the special Python (S60) application to provide UM with geographical coordinates. A Geofeed from UM allows the use the map server of the City of Helsinki for map portrayal.
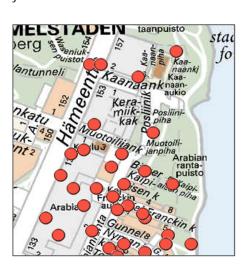

Fig. 2 shows two screenshots of Urban Mediator Stage I prototype. The user interface, the same for mobile and desktop use, is still very rough.

Urban Mediator Stage I was developed iteratively by providing volunteer citizens in Arabianranta the possibility to start themselves building content for Urban Mediator through the proposed rough interface. A working prototype was first developed after preparatory meetings and workshops with Arabianranta communities and city officials. Then, in October 2006, four residents of Arabianranta were asked to act as citizen-reporters. They were given Symbian S 60 mobile phones with Internet access and Bluetooth-enabled GPS receivers. A small mobile application made it possible for them to launch the web browser where a clickable map centered on the spot they were in would appear. They were asked to mark on this map points to which they would link any kind of comments they feel relevant. At that point, the information gathered also contained the geographical coordinates of the location to which they were referring to (via the GPS or the map), the time of creation, and the username freely chosen by the participants.

Other trials were also carried later, in May 2007, with schoolchildren. They were presented with an improved interface, and were asked to mark points related to crossroads and bus stops they use, as well as buildings they find interesting.

2) Harvesting of information

Work on harvesting, which is a process of gathering existing relevant online information and linking them to Urban Mediator, started in January 2007.

The harvesting mechanisms of Urban Mediator make it possible to leverage on the information available from numerous sources. It is quite common today for various websites and blogs to publish their news and events in the form of web feeds such as RSS feeds. Urban Mediator may incorporate that information and present it in connection with given place and time. Particular feeds that contain geographical data can also automatically find their way on the Urban Mediator map. Gathered data, which is available for viewing and browsing, can be further refined by more accurate tagging, summarizing, moderation, recommendation, etc. The idea is that Urban Mediator would have regular feeds, like an official feed from the city council's web-portal or various city offices departments, as well as feeds from neighborhood and community websites. Therefore, both information coming from feeds and information "manually" added by users make up the content of Urban Mediator.

Work on developing the harvesting features of Urban Mediator has been initiated using geotagged pictures on Flickr (www.flickr.com). Geotagging is the practice of adding geographical information, such as longitude and latitude coordinates, as metadata to all kinds of digital media. Links to pictures that were geotagged and taken in Arabianranta find their way to Urban Mediator and appear at the correct location on the map. The Flickr example was an easy starting point as Flickr provides the possibility to add geographic metadata to pictures. Urban Mediator in that sense is very much inspired by mashups: websites or application that gathers content from different sources but appears as a seamless entity (Mills 2005).

Further work on harvesting has been done by involving the Art and Design Company [2], an important stakeholder in Arabianranta that is responsible of maintaining the local web portal of the area called Helsinki Virtual Village (www.helsinkivirtualvillage.fi). Helsinki Virtual Village for example publishes a calendar of events happening in Arabianranta. This same information now appears on Urban Mediator. If the event information has a particular street address associated to it, geocoding conversion makes it possible for this event information to also appear on the Urban Mediator map. (see Fig 3)

Fig.3 shows Events information from Helsinki Virtual Village appearing as green points on Urban Mediator

3) Tools for citizen-driven action

The third area of development of Urban Mediator involves the creation of a set of tools that would make it possible for users to use the information available on or via Urban Mediator in order to organize themselves around issues of interest that can range from setting up a collection of information related to the best restaurants in Arabianranta to trying to bring people together to debate on the best location for a new local community center.

At the time of writing this paper work is still ongoing with initial workshops with active residents of Arabianranta being planned in order to further elaborate the idea and understand what kind of features would be needed for Urban Mediator.

Further plans

Urban Mediator's development within the Icing project will continue until the end of 2007. A Beta version is planned for autumn 2007 and will be advertised on Helsinki Virtual Village to be tested by residents of Arabianranta. The release of Urban Mediator as an open source software is planned for the end of December 2007.

It is important to note that building Urban Mediator through a co-design approach also means designing it as a system that allows users to continue their (co-)design of the system, through use (Ficher & Giaccardi 2004). This ties closely to Henderson and Kyng's understanding of "design as a process that is tightly coupled to use and that continues during the use of a system" (Henderson and Kyng 1991). From a software design perspective, this means that co-design approach sets the ground for flexibility and openness. This is very relevant for Urban Mediator as it helps address the possibility of creating tools for users rather than fixed solutions for encouraging public participation in urban issues. This means that Urban Mediator is easily adaptable to particular contexts (different cities and communities) and to changing needs.

Notes

[1] For more information about the Icing project please refer to http://www.fp6-project-icing.eu/. The ARKI research group website also hosts a section dedicated to information on Urban Mediator development: http://arki.uiah.fi/icing

[2] The Art and Design Compagny serves the area of Arabianranta in Helsinki and is owned by the City of Helsinki, Ministry of Trade and Industry, University of Art and Design, University of Helsinki, Arcada Polytechnic, Pop and Jazz conservatory, the Arabianpalvelu (Arabia services) company and the Iittala glass manufacturing company.

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Environmental performance –
A tool for creative activism in the context of planning and development

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Abstract

Activism is often seen as performance, due to the short duration and carnivalistic nature of the social global movements. The aim of this article is to present a method, called environmental performance that enables the mobilisation of "tacit" groups, such as children and youth, unemployed, drunkards, local residents and immigrant women, to participate in the co-creation of their settings. Environmental performance is guided by an integrative framework consisting of environment art, environmental psychology and participatory planning. The method applies art as a tool in the service of creative activism during planning and development. The application of the method requires careful temporal and spatial orchestration of different stakeholders, resources and activities that enhance the emergence of an actor network with potential outcomes. The impact can be seen as a catalyst or amplifier of the development process.

Key words: environmental performance, creative activism, communicative planning, environmental psychology, environment art

CREATIVE ACTIVISM

A variety of activisms exists, such as the critical global movement (Lindholm 2005) or the various kinds of feminist movements (Harcourt and Escobar 2005), just to name a few. Activism is a dynamic word that arouses both positive and negative emotions. The positive emotions raised by activism are connected to the betterment of different issues, such as the balance of land rights, protection of wild life or the appropriation of vital spaces of cities and their neighbourhoods. We are interested in the so called creative activism which means the application of some form of art in the process and measures of activism. Creative activism tends to provide new opportunities for individual and collective learning, as well as supportive structures for tacit groups, at least in the context of local planning and development.

During the 1990s and early 2000s several experiments of creative activism have been conducted in the context of community development, especially in the suburbs around the capital region in Finland (Harle 2007). In response to the extremely rapid industrialisation and urbanisation that occurred in the 1960s and 1970s, suburban residential neighbourhoods with basic services and recreational areas were built near larger cities in Finland, inspired by the

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Clarence Perry, s (1939) neighbourhood unit concept. These suburbs have had, and some of them still have problems of social and physical degradation which have been tried to cure, among other things through creative activism. Some of the examples are described in Figures 1-4.

Figure 1. Children' s ideal view of Pihlajisto (5,000 inhabitants), which is a lower-middle class neighbourhood about 10 km north from the centre of Helsinki. In 1992 Pihlajisto was the scene of a huge "open museum of modern art", as several hundred metres of its streets and many walls of the 4-7 storey apartment buildings were painted by the residents. Also children from the local day-care centre contributed to the exhibition. This started a process of improvement that lasted several years.
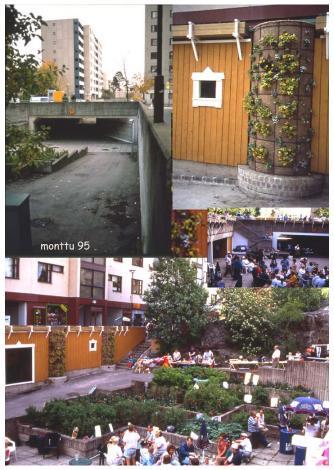

Figure 2. Monttu (Lacuna) of Pihlajisto was planned and built in 1994-1995. The most popular bar of Pihlajisto opened to an ugly hole-like terrace made of concrete. During the winter, Ritva Harle showed the clients of the bar slides of the current situation, as well as inspiring pictures from other

renovated places. The clients participated in the planning by making improvements to the pictures that were hung on the walls. The design was completed in the spring and a working group consisting of a dozen drunkards implemented the project in the summer. The endeavour was financed by the near-by housing companies and the City of Helsinki. The project not only changed the landscape but also the atmosphere, as "the most drunken men created the most beautiful spot in the neighbourhood".

Figure 3. The forest stories of Vesala (7.500 residents), a lower-middle class neighbourhood, north-east of Helsinki. The popular central forest of Vesala was cut down in September 2001. A few months later, Ritva Harle organised a funeral in which a mourning artist sang songs the lyrics of which were based on the experiences of the residents. The songs also described the future of the forest which would comprise new sports fields and playgrounds. During several evenings some 50 residents – children and old people included – gathered in the former forest telling each other stories that helped to process the emotions that the change in the environment had raised.

Figure 4. The noise barrier on the road to the Helsinki-Vantaa airport. Visitors arriving to Helsinki from the international airport can see on the right hand side a peculiar noise barrier piled of old stocks. It was designed and constructed by Ritva Harle with a group of unemployed, asocial men and a social worker, who worked with her for three months in the autumn 2000. The picture is from the opening of the barrier. The men were very proud of their work and stayed sober at least during the time they were working with the project.

The examples described above have in common a special method that we call environmental performance. It can be defined at this stage as "a goal-directed artful event developed for a certain planning and development context".

We argue that environmental performance as a method can play a seminal role in creative activism. The aim of this chapter is to present and discuss environmental performance as a method that enables the mobilization of "tacit" groups, such as children and youth, unemployed, drunkards, local residents and immigrant women, to participate in the co-creation of their settings. We will first present the integrative framework that guides the application of the method, then a case study after which we discuss the nature and scope of environmental performance and its contribution to creative activism.

AN INTEGRATIVE FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The framework that guides the application of environmental performances is based on the integration of environment art (community art included), environmental psychology and participatory planning and development.

Environmental community art does not have one specific formula, but it applies many different methods, tools, forms and materials of art. It is situated in the borders of art, ecology, politics, social work, as well as anthropological or ethnographic research (Kantonen, 2006; Johansson, 2006). Environment art continues the criticism of traditional institutional art and strives to deconstruct the concept of artist as an individual creative genius. In fact, it emerges as the result of a certain group in action. Environment art has some reason to be in the specific environment in which it interacts. According to Ossi Naukkarinen (2003, 68), it is often a public statement to the ethical and aesthetic issues of the environment One of its tasks is to provide multi-sensory three-dimensional glocal narratives that sensitise ones relationship with the environment and thus enhance the understanding and appropriation of the world. Environment art takes place in the local context of everyday life, but it is connected to wider spheres through the work's multiple meanings.

Change is characteristic of environment art. The change can be quick or slow, temporary or long lasting depending on the context and the materials (see www.yts.fi).

Environmental psychology (EP) studies the meanings, transactions and their consequences of people with their settings. EP can be regarded as a subdiscipline within psychology or social psychology (Bonnes and Secchiaroli 1995), as part of the multidisciplinary field of environment-behaviour (EB) or even design research. The foci of studies cover the psycho-social and behavioural processes of different individuals and groups of people in diverse settings, in the varying phases of the cycle of research, policy planning, design, implementation, and evaluation (Moore 1987). The individual regulation of the person-environment relationship can be seen as the subjective appropriation of the milieu and the processing of the experience in which the setting and its cues are used as a means of psychic self-regulation (Horelli 1993; 1995). The latter comprises the construction and maintenance of Self through psychic work (mental operations with images, intentions, thoughts and dreams), the use of the body, and through the behaviour or activities in the social and the built environment as well as in nature. Environmental transactions can be examined both as verbal and non-verbal communication (Rapoport, 1982). Environmental transactions are psychologically processed but culturally and societally mediated. The striving to balance the dialectical tensions of stability and change, autonomy (privacy) and dependence (community) is one of the main tasks in the mastering of the person-environment relationship.

Planning and design are regarded in this framework as supporters of environmental transactions that can enhance the fit or congruence between the needs and intentions of the users and their settings.

Participatory planning and development, may in its ideal form bring forth both individual and collective fit. Participatory planning can be defined as "a social, ethical, and political practice in which women and men, young and elderly people take part in varying degrees, in the overlapping phases of the planning and decision-making cycle" (Horelli 2002, 611). If the endeavour is fairly organised, it may bring forth outcomes that support the participants´ needs, interests, and goals (see Figure 5; Horelli 2006). Fair organisation means that the purpose of planning is to support the communicative transactions of the participants in a specific environmental, organisational, economic, cultural, and temporal context. Figure 5 describes the methodological schema of participatory or collaborative planning (Healey 1997) that has been developed on the basis of projects with children and youth and tried out with various adult groups. The purpose of planning is then to enhance the communicative transactions of the participants. Therefore, the transactions are enhanced by a variety of culture-sensitive enabling tools during the overlapping and iterative phases of the planning and development process – initiation, planning or design, implementation, evaluation, and maintenance. The tools are both enabling methods (art, consensus building instruments and other heuristics), as well as traditional research methods. An on-going monitoring and self-evaluation provides the participants with feedback on the quality of the change process and its results.
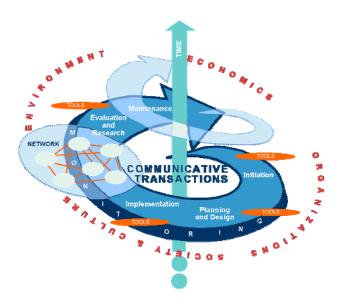
Figure 5. A schema of the methodological approach to participatory planning which might support, with a set of culture-sensitive enabling tools, the communicative transactions of different stakeholders.

The procedural theories of planning that provide most space for the voice of the participants are the culture-sensitive network approaches to planning (Umemoto 2001; Booher and Innes 2002; Horelli 2006). These approaches also set new requirements for the quality of the planning content. In addition, the culture-sensitive network approach implies a demand for methods that enhance the communicative nature of the planning process. The latter means that the procedural theories of planning should explain, how participation can be organized in such a way that the planning cycle becomes an arena for the learning and capacity building of the participants.

The integrative framework of environment art, environmental psychology and culture-sensitive participatory planning that applies environmental performance as a method forms a change theory that might enhance the understanding of the process of creative activism and the emerging multidimensional outcomes that can be tapped on different levels.

The interesting research questions are then:
1.   What are the nature and scope of environmental performance as a method?
2.   What are the roles of different stakeholders – the artist, environmental psychologist, residents, municipal workers – in the process?
3.   How does environmental performance contribute to creative activism?

The questions will be discussed after the presentation of a case study that will be described in the following section.

APPLICATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE IN THE CASE HAKUNILA

Hakunila, built in the 1970s, is a working class suburb of Vantaa, just behind the border of Helsinki. It was chosen as one of the EU-funded Urban project areas, due to the many social problems in the neighbourhood. Also the percentage of immigrants in Hakunila is quite high (10%). An acute problem in the early 2000s was that the immigrant women had no gathering place for themselves, nor a way to meet local women in a secure setting. Two architect students, who were working with the Urban project, had found a vacant lot, which could be developed into a multi-cultural park and eventually into a place for the house of culture. When the Urban project workers presented, in spring 2002, their vision to the Association Housing and Building on Women′s Terms, which was looking for a mobilisation project to

celebrate its twentieth anniversary, it was decided to conduct an environmental performance in Hakunila, on the theme of Spatial occupation.

The planning phase of the environmental performance lasted two months. It started by the meeting of the core group consisting of the two project workers, a community artist, an environmental psychologist and a landscape architect. The Urban project had the resources to hire the community artist to coordinate the process. She made the preliminary plans, took care of the acquisition of necessary permits, and started to network with scores of different people and local associations. The planning work took place through the internet and face to face meetings in the neighbourhood, also on the place, called Ravurinaukio that was to be occupied. The landscape architects made preliminary schemata that the residents commented. Children of the near-by day-care centre drew also their visions. Somali, Kurd and Russian women promised to show up with their food and songs. The final draft and the visual form of the event were created in a meeting with the local NGOs just two weeks before the event.

The implementation of the performance took place on 7th of May 2002 on a cold, but fairly sunny day. Around 50 people were involved in the preparation of the event comprising the lighting of the fire in the centre of the park, putting up the huge colourful cloth and children′s drawings, building the stage for a speech competition and arranging benches to sit around the fire (see Figure 6). The H-moment (H-hetki) was at five o′clock PM, when the Mayor gave the opening speech and the singing and dancing started, and the food was served. There were over hundred persons: children, youth, elderly, politicians, local activists, journalists and many residents from different ethnic backgrounds. All the stakeholders thought that this would be an excellent place for a real park.

Figure 6.   A collage of the environmental performance at the occupied Ravurinaukio, opposite the shopping centre of Hakunila, in May 2002.

The assessment of the environmental performance took place a couple of weeks later when ten key persons that had been involved with the endeavour from the beginning, assessed the process by answering a questionnaire and discussing the results in a focus-group meeting. Due to the dual character of the environmental performance, it was assessed by using both artistic and planning criteria. The former were aesthetic (the visual composition, spatial dynamics), psycho-social (multi-sensory arousal, feelings of empowerment), cultural (meeting of cultures), ecological (care for the nature) and political (the meeting of different political powers). The planning criteria were the results and impact (enhancement of the realisation of the park and the house of culture), participation (the amount and intensity of participants), organisation of the performance (fluency, duration and satisfaction of the event).

The focus group found that artistically the performance was satisfactory. It was very vivid and empowering, both emotionally, ecologically and politically, but the aesthetics could have been more refined. In terms of planning, it succeeded extremely well. It resulted in a real design for the park which was constructed two years later (see Figure 7). The new master plan of the area has also a reservation for the house of culture at the corner of the park.

Figure 7. The new Ravurinaukio park of Hakunila, in 2005.

DISCUSSION

We will discuss the research questions on the basis of the illustrations, the frame of reference and the Hakunila case study. As for the nature and scope of environmental performance, it can be regarded as a special method, a hybrid that comprises both art and planning techniques. As artistic activity, it is close to community, environment and performance art. However, it differs from them in the sense that, in addition to the task of raising questions and intensifying experiences, environmental performance also encourages action. As a device in the service of planning and development, environmental performance is instrumental and teleological, due to its dependence on the purpose and

stage of the planning process. In fact, environmental performance can be applied in different projects in varying stages: at the beginning, for the mobilisation of the process, like in Hakunila, during a special collective process to alleviate and deal with intensive feelings, like in the case of Vesala Forest stories (Figure 3), or to produce a concrete end-result, like in the case of Pihlajisto Lacuna (Figure 2) and the noise barrier (Figure 4).

Environmental performance seems to have the following characteristics:

- Application of multiple senses (sight, sound, taste, smell, touch, movement)
- Recognition of ecological, aesthetic, ethical, psychosocial, cultural and political factors
- Simultaneous accentuation of both cognition and emotion
- Handling of the basic elements – fire, air, water, soil
- Respect for multiple times (linear, cyclical, mythical)
- Networking with various stakeholders
- Flexible applicability in terms of the different stages or cycles of planning and development

However, environmental performance is not a method in the traditional sense[2], but rather an expressive and organisational enabling tool that aims at the mobilisation of various groups, particularly the so called tacit stakeholders with a weak voice, in a certain planning context (see Figure 5; Horelli 2002).

Environmental performance usually involves a large network of people with varying backgrounds. The core group and the leader might be either the community artist, a community/social worker or an action researcher. The application of environmental performance requires team work, but somebody must be in charge of the coordination, as well as of the artistic gestalt of the performance. However, environmental performance is a multi-task endeavour that can involve tens or even hundreds of people.

Environmental performance contributes to creative activism, as it enhances the guiding of the planning and development process towards a desired direction. In this task, environmental performance emerges as practical or instrumental art in the service of creative activism. It requires careful orchestration of a complex network of people and artefacts. When the latter is successfully done, its outcomes are catalytic and they reach many levels and take various forms.

If creative activism described above is compared to critical global movements, it can also be examined through the perspective of the political opportunities and constraints and the framing of the problem (patterns of solutions; Snow 2001). According to Arto Lindholm (2005, 196-2006), the social movements in the first years of 2000 can be characterised by their network structure and mode of functioning, temporary or occasional nature, individualisation of activism, tendency to be reactive or proactive depending on the context and ideology, tensions between emotions and rationality, and holism. Creative activism shares all the other characteristics except the last one, the striving towards a holistic cultural change. However, its contribution to the local culture might be prolific.

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[2] A method refers to the general mode of gathering or analysing data the choice of which is dependent on the research problem, questions and applied methodology. Methodology refers to the aims, concepts, research strategy and mode of inquiry of the scientific discipline or field of study. A technique is the means to implement a certain method, for instance the questionnaire is a survey technique.

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