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Editors' Note

On behalf of the Board of Urbanities, we are pleased to introduce this Special Issue on *The Dreams and Nightmares of City Development*. Guest edited by Olsi Lelaj and Nebi Bardhoshi, it includes 7 articles and an Introduction (pp. 2-106).

Italo Pardo and Jerome Krase

Introduction
The Dreams and Nightmares of City Development:
Urban Planning, Ideologies and Social Movements in Contemporary Cities

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Introductory Remarks

In July 2014 a panel titled 'The Dreams and Nightmares of City Development: Urban Planning, Ideologies and Social Movements in Contemporary City' was part of the Annual Conference of the IUAES Commission on Urban Anthropology (CUA) on *Dreamed/Planned Cities and Experienced Cities* that took place in Saint Etienne-France in collaboration with the Centre Max Weber-Jean Monnet University.[1] Participants in the panel were invited to reflect critically on the relationship between ideology(ies) and city development in the contemporary world. The nine speakers presented solid empirical material and case studies from research in a variety of cities and urban settings such as Lille (Raffin), Naples (Pardo, De Vivo), Marseille (Buslachi), Astana (Bekus), Belgrade (Atanasovski), Austin (Le Guen), Wales (Dicks) and Ramallah (Gasparotto). The papers shed light, problematized and raised questions on the role of the state in contemporary urban planning, development policies and urban reconfigurations. The discussions engaged participants in debate and critical interpretations, each adding to the main theme of the panel: the relationship between cities and ideology(ies). After the conference, we deemed it necessary to collect these ideas and papers in a Special Edition of *Urbanities*,[2] the journal dedicated to urban research.

Much has happened globally and transnationally since the 2014 conference. The Brexit referendum, the Syrian refugee crisis, Russia taking control over Crimea, the USA electing a new (and controversial) president and the eminent crisis of democracy in face of rising populism and nationalistic authoritarian policies in a number of European countries and elsewhere. These are only some of the recent events whose impact exceeds defined geographies. They have sparked a chain of reactions worldwide, bringing forth interpretations that foreshadow the decline of global neo-liberal capitalism at best (Ostry et al. 2016) or the beginning of the WWIII at worst.[3] Perhaps these 'cataclysmic processes' need to be viewed as part and parcel of what Thomas H. Eriksen has recently called an *overheated world* where 'accelerated and intensified contact which is a defining characteristic of globalization leads to tensions, contradictions, conflict and changed opportunities … [where]…change takes place unevenly, but fast and as a result of a peculiar combination of local and transnational processes' (Eriksen 2016: 1).

More than half of the world's population today lives in urban areas, and, according to a 2016 UN report (United Nations 2016), by 2030 urban areas are projected to house 60 per cent globally; and one in every three people will live in cities with at least half a million inhabitants. Never before have people lived so close to each other as they do today in the contemporary urbanized world. For this reason, the problem of urban space, its relations to politics, the role of old and new dominant ideologies in shaping urban life, global dynamics and local fears, migratory flows and demographic pressures, economic fluctuation, crises and hopes, environmental emergencies and consumptions patterns, are only a few of the many challenges that people are facing as they attempt to *manage their existence* (Pardo 1996) in the contemporary cities of a *feverish* planet.

Cities reflect their positions in the grid of a hierarchic and uneven global economic system. Some of them, besides being national capitals, are gravitational centres in a globalized economic world, whereas some others are mere periphery of peripheries.[4] However, the life of city dwellers as it is adumbrated in the narratives of urban studies, seem to share the same fate as the 'primitive man' in the cradle of social and cultural anthropology.[5] Portrayed in the image of 'Janus Faces', cities are perceived and experienced as venues of dreams and nightmares. Although in today's media, visual culture and cinema, contemporary cities are seen as places of chaos, pollution and conflict (Langford 2006), they continue to be a huge magnetic field attracting people in search of a better life. As such, cities continue to represent venues where opportunities, hopes and dreams can be fulfilled. For many people, old and new residents, *the ideal city* is a place for a better life, a place of freedom. The duality that cities represent in people's perceptions and experiences reflects the ambivalent nature of modernity itself.

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[3] See, for example Miller (2016) and the comment by the journalist Robert Kegan (2017).
[4] On this, see for example Wallerstein (1989) and Sassen (1992).
[5] For a critical consideration of the concept, see, for example, Kuper (1997).

The economic character remains one of the key features that determines the 'spirits and gods' of a city (Harvey 2001). However, contemporary urban formations are not spaces and places conceived only in terms of their value in terms of capital. Along with their economic appeal, cities display another equally important factor that operates in the realm of morality. The latter falls outside the capital embodiment of urban space and place, and enters the field of representations, values and prestige. It follows a different logic than that of demand and supply. Its constituency depends on the symbolic representations of places and spaces. This field of action involves several actors varying from individuals to collectivities and institutions.

Considering the size of cities in terms of population, it is a *methodological impossibility* to locate the production of meaning from a purely individual perspective. Even if we could, it would be hard to envisage an individualized worldview on cities, spaces and places that was untouched by ideological influences. A community- or institution-based approach to the production of meaning not only is only one of many layers but needs to take into consideration both the dynamic of structure/agency and the interrelations between communities and institutions, while articulating and imbuing city spaces/places with meaning. Nonetheless, communities and institutions are sites of ideological framing and their existence is defined, situated and articulated within a wider context of competing definitions, actions and productions of meaning for city spaces/places.

In a world of accelerated urbanization, of multimodal urban agglomerations in which new urbanization processes are transforming many cities into 'post-metropolis' (Soja 2000), researchers are faced with old and new methodological riddles while trying to make sense of the trajectories and forms of human conditions in urbanized social spaces.[6] Moreover, regardless of their size, geographical location, history, economic relations, identity *complexities* and rural-urban or global-local dynamics, contemporary urban formations and their inner diversifications, are framed by the borders of the *modern state* and are subject to its laws.

Urban spaces and places are bound to *legal classifications*, which allows the state and its institutions to act authoritatively in shaping city life. The legal sphere is a monopoly of the modern state institutions and subject to ideological articulations. However, it should be regarded also as an instrument that produces a uniformed meaning of urban spaces and places. The legal syntax, vocabulary, morphology and fabric framing the city, to which individuals, collectivities and institutions are subjected, indicates the important role that the state plays (regardless of its ideological foundation) in controlling, regulating and shaping life in/of the cities. Contemporary urban formations from shantytowns to capitals of culture and post-metropolises are, above all, legal classifications, not just static realities. They are framed by a number of legal conceptualizations and ideological articulations of the urban. Their labelling must be recognized as ideological, making urban life subject to policies of homogeneity or diversification. The transformation of modern urban formations themselves should be

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[6] For a recent study on theory and methodology in urban anthropology, see Pardo and Prato (2012).

identified not simply as a mere conception of space and place but as subject to power relations and legal-ideological projections.

The problematization of governance of and in the cities, is not a new topic in urban anthropology (Prato and Pardo 2013). This short Introduction does not attempt to review the whole literature on the question; it aims to draw attention to the role that the state and ideology play in shaping urban life.[7] The latter cannot be fully analysed relying only on economic or cultural approaches. Whether real or imagined — in everyday life or as an ideal type, in rural or urban space — the modern state is one of the main agencies forging and shaping people's lives.[8] An analysis of urban formations that fails to deal with the visible and invisible hands of state power, would lead to *unsatisfactory* conclusions.

The articles collated in this Special Issue of *Urbanities* combine ethnographic evidence on situations, events and institutions with surveys, media reports, official documents and reviews of the relevant literature in order to present the current state of affairs and discuss processes of transformation, framing today's urban reality into tomorrow's projections. The cities and urban spaces in different regions of the world discussed here, also show how the city and urban space continue to be the 'sublime object' of ideology. Change and transformations are legitimated through competing ideological discourses by state institutions, local governments, urban planners, economic actors and citizen movements. The modern state and its legal order constitute the overarching urban context of the case studies presented here. A recurrent theme is how ideologies, embedded either in central/local government urban planning or in citizen's social movements, are shaping and orienting the transformation of contemporary cities and people's everyday experience.

One of the *ideological fluxes* which is pushing forward the urban transformation process in many contemporary European cities seems to be embedded in the idea of European Union (henceforth, EU). Shaped by the principles of environmental awareness, cultural heritage(ism), human rights and market economy that constitute the body of a Democratic order, the very idea of the EU, seems to be corroded by the very principles it beholds. The case studies from four European cities provide insights about the contexts and sets of transformations affecting urban space and life before Britain separated itself from the EU. On the one hand, the studies of Raffin, Buslacchi, De Vivo and Dicks, respectively on Lille (Nord-Pas-de-Calais), Marseilles, Naples and Wales, offer ample examples about the ideological transformation of urban space in the name of neo-liberal EU policies and the legal instruments of the nation-state. On the other hand, they inform us not only about the *unintended consequences* of neo-liberalism and EU policies, but also about the practices and the dependency of the latter on state institutions (national or local) and other actors.

Raffin's case study of Lille's Nord-Pas-de-Calais region, a former mining area that is classified by UNESCO as a world heritage site, shows how the hidden hand of the state has

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[7] For a throughout analytical discussion, see Pardo and Prato (2011).
[8] For a review of the debate on the state, see, among others: Krohn-Hansen and Nustad (2005), Trouillot (2001 and 2003) and Prato and Pardo (2013).

transformed a post-industrial space and place into a 'commodity' in order to increase its competitive capacity on a European and worldwide scale. Raffin and Pollet underline the paradoxes of public policies and discuss how they are put into practice by transforming the urban spaces and places together with people's life. The idea of competitive territory is the main shaping factor behind the urban transformation of Marseille's waterfront discussed by Buslacchi and that of Naples harbour analysed by De Vivo. In both case studies, the authors critically observe the delicate relationship that exists between governance and use of power, the 'cosmology' of neo-liberalism and the principles of democracy, and between private interests and public good. The arguments gravitate towards the commoditizing power of EU policies. The authors study how state institution at the local level negotiates these policies and how the new 'symbolic order' of legal classifications of spaces and places conflicts with the traditional 'symbolic regime' which makes the city meaningful to everyday people.

The issue of the 'symbolic order' and 'materiality' of ideology in urban space is further explored by Bekus and Medeuova in their study of Astana, the capital of Kazakhstan. The detailed account of state-oriented processes and transformations of the urban enables us to reflect on the power of capital cities in shaping, constructing and imposing the idea of the nation on citizens. We are drawn to observe how past ideas and ideologies are 'recycled' to fit the new context of market relations, neo-liberal ideology and geo-political positioning, especially in post-socialist societies. On the other hand, the case studies from Wales (Dicks) and Austin (Le Guen) provide insights about a seemingly bottom-up process of urban planning where citizens are called by the state institutions to participate and be responsible in shaping their own cities. The authors offer detailed analyses of the practice of the ideology of participatory governance, and show how the latter is functional to reinstate the legitimacy of governments in times of crises. Finally, Gasparotto focuses on Ramallah to discuss the process of state-building, the conflict between ideologies and their practice in urban space and the ways in which ordinary people cope with traditional values in the urban reality.

Ideology and the question of state power, problematized in different ways by all the articles of the present edition, strongly influence national and international contemporary politics. They must be included in our research agendas because both variables greatly affect urban life and cities themselves today and promise to do so in the near future.

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Re-interpreting National Ideology
in the Contemporary Urban Space of Astana.

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This article analyses the way in which the Soviet legacy has been combined with practices of public representation of national ideology in the space of the new capital city of Kazakhstan, Astana. It examines how cultural and political elites exploit various archaic elements of the traditional imagery of the nation in the context of modern state-building. Referring to various examples in cityscape the article aims to show how the national ideology handles tradition not as a coherent corpus of 'inheritance', but as a reservoir of potential symbols, which can be used creatively for the fashioning of a national image of the capital city both in the international and in the domestic arena.
Keywords: Ideology, urban space, symbols, capital city.

Introduction

With the advent of the post-socialist transformation in newly established post-socialist countries, cities became essential 'arenas' for socio-political and economic change. At the same time, their changing landscapes have played an important role in modifying people's living environment, as regards both the ideological management of symbolic space and the shifting patterns of daily routine. We shall analyse the way in which the Soviet legacy has been combined with practices of public representation of the national ideology in the space of the new capital city of Kazakhstan, Astana. We shall explore how the various elements of the symbolic landscape of the capital city have been affected by the process of re-invention of national tradition, providing visual and materialised support of the nation-state

We aim to describe various changes occurring in the city space of Astana, since it was designated as the country's capital. We look at these changes in terms of a specific performative logic informed by the nationalizing aspirations of ruling elites that may be said to reflect the general trends characteristic of the capitals of newly independent states. At the same time, the discussion reveals how specific elements and procedures of nationalization were involved in the urban planning of Astana, the purpose being to create a visual image of the city that transmitted an implicit nationalizing message. The analysis addresses a wide range of physical evidence, such as architectural features (both individual buildings and urban areas), monuments and other places of memory, toponymics and, finally, specific elements of urban design including façades, sculptures, arches and other decorative features. All these aspects of the urban fabric are examined here in view of the role they have been ascribed in the formation of the national image of the capital city. We read the cityscape and architecture of Astana as a major field of representation for the society of Kazakhstan in the process of national mythmaking. The dynamics of change in the cityscape reveal both uncertainty and a readiness to experiment conceptually by those responsible for choosing or designing the icons

used to represent tradition, for offering interpretations and for adjusting them to fit the context of national ideology.

In the Kazakh language, Astana means 'capital'. It became the official city name in 1998.[1] Historically, the city had not just had different names, but had also been part of different strategies of economic and political development, such as Stolypin's reforms under the Tsarist Russian empire, Stalin's purges, in the USSR, and later Khruschev's Virgin Land campaign, which gave the city one of its names — *The Linograd*, which can be translated as 'city of virgin land'. No sooner had Astana been designated as the capital than it became the object of study by practitioners in a wide range of disciplines; among them, urbanists, social anthropologists, sociologists, political geographers and historians of architecture. The new capital city has been variously viewed as the result of a radical rethinking of the nation-state by the political elites, as a product of post-Soviet cultural formation and as one of the prominent components of the country's modernisation (Bissenova 2014, Talamini 2011, Alexander et al. 2007, Medeuova 2008, Fauve 2015, Laszczkowski 2011, Koch 2013, Meuser 2010).

Many of the studies in question ascribe particular importance to the role of President Nursultan Nazarbayev (Koch 2013, Schatz 2004, Fauve 2015). Many authors have thus shown a tendency to establish a strong correlation, in various contexts, between specific kinds of urban design and authoritarianism (Adams 2008, Agnew 1994, Wagenaar 2000). In his analysis of the social and political conditions under which capital cities can or cannot be refurbished so as to become showcases for the nation, Michel Wagenaar concludes that authoritarian power plays a crucial role in transforming the urban fabric (Wagenaar 2000: 12). Furthermore, any transfer of a capital city necessarily requires strong political will and highlights expressly the political and administrative function of the capital in the state (Rapoport 1993).

The political environment of Kazakhstan and the explicit involvement of president Nursultan Nazarbayev in the whole process of inventing the new capital city — from making decisions about relocation to deciding upon a name for the capital and promoting it in national and international official discourse — speaks volumes about the importance of the personal relationship between the president and Astana. However, focusing on this aspect of city development makes the process of capital-building tantamount to the ineluctable unfolding of the dictatorial will of an authoritarian leader, as if such a project were simply a part of a 'patronage strategy' (Schatz 2003). This approach imposes a viewpoint that obscures the overall complexity of urban transformation and of the symbolic inventions that accompany urban transformation.

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[1] The name of the city changed several times. At the time of its foundation, in 1863, the city was called Akmolinsk; between 1961 and 1992 it was known as Tselinograd and between 1992 and 1998 as Akmola.

National Representation

The symbolism of the capital of a newly independent state can be decoded not only as a materialized 'quest for national identity' (Vale 1992: 48), but also as a complex product influenced by various actors and agencies. Firstly, it reflects the preferences of the ruling regime and the official articulation of a national idea. To a considerable extent, it can also indirectly display interpretations of the national idea which had been suppressed and excluded from the official narrative. Secondly, it reflects the government's concern to cultivate an international identity through modern architecture, new patterns of planning and so on. The international identity of a capital city carries a twofold symbolic weight. On the one hand, it helps to position the *city* within the international arena. On the other hand, it promotes its role as a symbolic representation of the nation. The international identity of a city is developed partly as a result of the creation of a 'convincing and effective city brand, as one of the most powerful tools in interurban competition' (Lisiak 2010: 79). It is expected to boost that city's chances of attracting international and state investment. At the same time, the production of an urban image for 'external' purposes has also 'internal' political and social significance, helping to counter the sense of alienation that Georg Simmel long ago identified as a troubling aspect of modern urban life. As David Harvey writes, 'The orchestrated production of an urban image can, if successful, also help to create a sense of social solidarity, civic pride and loyalty to place…' (Harvey 1989: 14).

To judge by the case of Astana, these two aspects of urban image formation are closely interrelated: the international identity of a city and the 'geopolitical branding' of newly independent nations help to promote the national vision, which was chosen by the governing elite as the foundation of their strategy of state- and nation-building.

The Meaning of Transferring a Capital

On the one hand, all post-Soviet states, once they had gained their independence, were initially in a similar situation as they needed the attributes of national independence and sovereignty. Newly achieved statehood had to be not only 'performed' but also 'proved' by a corresponding historical narrative of the nation, and it needed to be ideologically sustained by the spatial and symbolic development of their capital cities. On the other hand, Kazakhstan is the only post-Soviet country where independence resulted in the transfer of the capital city to a new site. The peculiarity of Astana, a post-Soviet capital created 'from scratch', can be viewed as a manifestation of radical change occurring in Kazakhstani nationhood.

The idea of relocating the capital was first mooted in 1993. One year later the project was approved by the Kazakhstani Parliament. In 1997 the capital finally moved from Alma-Ata to Astana. In support of the intention of building a new capital, a number of 'official' reasons were given, most of them relating to the problems linked to the geographical location of the previous capital, Almaty. Seismological activity, natural geographical barriers (mountains) that prevented the further expansion of the city, the ecological situation due to airborne contamination were spelled out. Scholars, both at home and abroad, searched for more sophisticated explanations, casting the transfer of the capital as an attractive way of addressing some state- and nation-building dilemmas (Schatz 2004, Bekus and Medeuova

2011). The problems that were most often discussed in this context were related to the ethnopolitical re-mapping of the country and to the need for a fresh start in state-building, at least in symbolic terms.

An important issue addressed by the transfer of the capital is the division between the 'Kazakh south' and 'the Russian north'. In 1991, Slavic groups, including Russians, Ukrainians and Belarusians, represented between 70 and 80 percent of the population in the seven northern regions of the country.[2] The 'North' was viewed by the authorities of the new state as an obstacle to constructing a unitary Kazakh state (Bremmer 1994: 620). From this perspective, Astana became a symbol of the process of ethnic Kazakhization of the region (Peyrouse 2008: 115). In addition to a state policy of 'directed migration' of Kazakhs from the south to northern cities, and particularly to the new capital (Savin and Alekseenko 1998: 113), there was also a natural flow of labour migrants that followed the investment boom in the construction of the new city.

The previous capital of Kazakhstan — Alma-Ata (Almaty) — was established by the Bolshevik government in 1927. It was developed on the site of a small provincial town which had formerly served as an outpost for Russian settlers (*krepost' Vernoye*). Almaty was a typical Soviet capital city, built in accordance with the linear city model that was reproduced in numerous Soviet cities and became almost a synonym for the 'socialist city'.[3] At the same time, in spite of following Soviet uniformity in its strategy of development, during its seven decades as a Kazakh capital, Almaty acquired its own national colour and multi-ethnic flavour, which was associated with the prestige earned during the Soviet period. The ambitious project of national development, economic reform and transition formulated by the Kazakhstani government at a time of uncertainty created a demand for a new symbolic centre, a new capital.

Located in the south of the country, close to the border with China, Almaty seemed to lack the appropriate geopolitical meaning. It was well located 'to link the Central Asian states to each other than to connect the regions of Kazakhstan itself' (Schatz 2004: 123). However, according to the new vision of Kazakhstan articulated in the official discourse, the country has a larger geopolitical context: the strategic location of Astana at the 'Heart of Eurasia' was a way of manifesting and promoting a Eurasian identity project for the new state that transcended the outdated frameworks of 'Central Asia' and 'post-Soviet space' (Koch 2010:

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[2] In 1991, Kazakhstan was the only post-Soviet republic where the titular nation did not constitute the majority. In the last Soviet census in 1989, Kazakhs in Kazakhstan represented 39.7 percent, while Russians living in Kazakhstan represented 37.4 percent, Ukrainians and Belarusians 6.5 percent. In the northern parts of the republic bordering on Russia some 80 percent of the population is non-Kazakh, and many Russians hold that the northern Kazakh steppe and eastern Kazakhstan are by rights part of Russia (Olcott 1997: 554-5).

[3] A 'linear city' model was first developed in the nineteenth century by Arturo Sroia for Madrid. It called for elongated zones of uniform rows of superblock neighbourhood units running parallel to the river or industrial zone in order to minimize transportation to and from work. They were protected by a green belt wedged between the living and production zones. In the U.S.S.R. this idea was promoted by Nikolai Miliutin in the late 1920s.

770). Astana became one of the most significant elements of this ideological nation- and state-building project, which was anti-Soviet in its national orientation, but was also anti-nationalist, because the national idea, which the Kazakhstani government chose to endorse, was in many respects very different from what Kazakh ethno-nationalists wanted. Instead of an enforced nationalizing policy aimed at the consolidation of a monolingual Kazakh ethnic community, purportedly the sole legitimate 'owner' of the state of Kazakhstan, the new national policy combined the promotion of Kazakh ethnic culture and language with the idea of Kazakhstani multiculturalism.

The choice of Astana was determined by its geographical location in the middle of the country, where important arterial highways and trunk roads meet. Located in the North of the Kazakh Uplands (Saryarka), there were almost no geographical limits to the future growth of the new capital city. In addition, it already possessed the required infrastructure — water, electricity, and a transport system, and, not less important, it enjoyed secure seismological conditions.

A Capital City as a Strategy of Self-narration
The transfer of the capital served to symbolize the disruption of a past that had been centred on the old capital city, and the creation of a new order in the geopolitical landscape. These two aspects of the transfer — the completion of an earlier epoch and the inauguration of a new one — provided a conceptual underpinning to the project of creating a new capital.

In its past, Astana had gone through several reincarnations. A former provincial town of the Russian empire located on the traditional trade routes, it grew into a trading centre typical of a region that had assimilated a very mixed population and, with it, certain elements of a nomadic culture. Later, it became a Soviet provincial city that went through socialist modernisation and that, during the Virgin land campaign, attracted settlers from across the USSR. In more recent years, it became a city built on oil revenues, where luxury and the reach of new technologies have been combined with the reappraisal of the nomadic tradition, and where modern urban solutions exist side by side with the bizarre and almost Baroque tastes of private investors. As a result, the city has been transformed into a melting pot in which global processes have been fused with diverse local practices and national aspirations.

The master plan for Astana was designed by the architect Kisho Kurokawa, winner of the international competition for the master plan and design of the new city of Astana in 1998. Kurokawa was a founding member of Japan's Metabolist movement, which advocated an organic, renewable architecture and claimed that cities should not be seen as eternal structures but rather as living organisms that can evolve and expand over time. He devised a system of linear zoning rather than a radial urban core, and it was his idea to move the new city centre to the left bank of the river. The city's past and its Soviet legacy were thus not within the purview of the new centre.

Moreover, an alternative historical 'justification' was bought on the foreground; it was embodied by a nearby site connected with ancient Kazakh national history. In 1998, an archaeological expedition discovered an ancient settlement named Bosok, tracing back to the 10th-13th Century A.D. Located about three miles from Astana, Bosok is now included in the

list of the historical cultural heritage of Astana and has been officially recognized as a precursor of the modern capital of Kazakhstan (Akishev and Khabdulina 2011). Thus, if the history of the city on the right bank of the river dates back to 1832, when Fiodor Shubin established a steppe fortress called Akmola, and, therefore, implies certain 'Russian roots', the left bank of Astana has pure Kazakh origins and belongs to a centuries-long history of nomadic tradition.

One of the most vexed issues relating to Kazakh discourse on Astana is the possibility of fashioning a national appearance for Astana through the most advanced contemporary architectural means. The use of decorated tiles as ornament in buildings such as the National Academic Library and the New Mosque should be mentioned as one of the various techniques employed in the process of building the capital. One of the central features of the Astana cityscape — the *Baiterek* tower (2002) — was designed as a fusion of modernization and nationhood. The word *Baiterek* is meant to evoke the legend of the 'Tree of Life', a central symbol of Turkic mythology. As this legend features a golden egg, the building is surmounted by a golden orb.[4] The monumental architecture of the 'left bank' provides numerous examples of extravagant high-tech buildings, among them various skyscrapers with glass surfaces and simple geometric forms, exemplifying a wide range of architectural styles. Their architectural originality, their prominence in the Astana skyline and their height became material expressions of various actors producing competing representations and thus vying for status on the symbolic market of Astana.

The main construction work on the left bank of the Ishim started in 2001, for before that date most efforts were focused on the reconstruction of the old cityscape on the right bank. These included changes in the facades of the buildings, alterations to external decorations or additions to them, the renaming of urban locations, and so on. The construction of a new housing settlement on the right bank of the Ishim was among the first strategic projects in the shaping of a new image for the city. It was supposed to represent a new generation of elitist housing, built in the former 'recreation zone'; that is, the area formerly intended for public recreation. This new settlement, the 'micro district Samal', was designed not only to 'visualise' a new order in the capital cityscape; located alongside the right riverbank, it also created a kind of screen that made the old socialist cityscape of Tselinograd practically invisible from the new city centre.

The uniformity of the cityscape and the absence of any reference to a 'national' tradition of construction were among the most challenging characteristics of the socialist city that had to be addressed in the post-Soviet era. While the new capital city Astana on the left bank was being planned and imagined, numerous efforts were made by local architects to 'introduce' a national dimension to the design of the old socialist city. The reconstruction of the one of the central thoroughfares — the Republic Avenue — demonstrates this ideological contradiction between the old and new visions of the city, as well as between the 'non-

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[4] According to a legend, the magical bird of happiness *Samruk* laid its egg between the branches of the tree of life. It is by reference to this aspect of the legend that the *Baiterek* tower is surmounted by a golden orb.

national' and the 'national'. This street is mostly built up with five-storey panel houses (so called *khruschevka*) and some single nine-storey blockhouses from the later socialist period. As it plays a crucial role in the city's communications infrastructure, it could not be closed for the long period of time required for its reconstruction. But it could not preserve its socialist outlook either. The first attempt at a re-design was the 'masking' of the socialist essence of the buildings; the facades of all the blocks on the street were covered in plastic siding panels, which proved ineffectual from both a practical and an aesthetic point of view. The second attempt at reconstruction was aimed not only at concealing the Sovietness behind the meaningless plastic panels, but also at adding 'national' substance to the decorations. The facades of the buildings were covered in curtain walls decorated drawing and fretwork that clearly referred to an unspecified 'ethnic' art; they included a variety of arches, volumetric profiles, relief sculptures, ornamental patterns, columns, cornices, and so on. Sovietness however, did not disappear from these buildings; the original architectural patterns remain 'readable', and the new covers show not so much a new image of the city as the efforts made to conceal its past. All things considered, the avenue can be described 'as an expression of characteristic postcolonial trauma' (Bekus and Medeuova 2011: 145-7). The new appearance of parts of Astana's old city seems to be 'illusory', because many of these colourful facades are literally just facades: the back of the buildings has kept the old Soviet exterior.

Perceiving post-Soviet as 'post-colonial' implies an urgent need for the symbolic emancipation of the capital's cityscape; that is, removing, replacing or redesigning (changing the meaning) old places of memory that used to be the social capital of the colonizer's presence. One of the first official decisions taken by the Kazakh authorities when reconstructing Akmola/Astana was to remove Soviet monuments in the public spaces of the new capital. Together with Soviet monuments such as the Lenin monument (1970) and the memorial dedicated to the fighters for Soviet power (1972), many statues of Russian steppe settlers were also dismantled (Medeuova 2004). The de-Sovietization of the symbolic urban landscape was identified as an important instrument for the nationalization of the capital city. Russian and Soviet monuments, as well as Soviet toponyms and city names, were considered to be not simply the legacy of the Soviet past but also instruments for the promotion of an alien ideological project (Russian or Soviet). Before Astana became the capital, only 180 street names in the city were related to the history of Kazakhstan. The rest of the streets had politically and ideologically loaded names, or names without any cultural or historical meaning (like *Sveltlaya* (Light), *Novaya* (New), *Letnyaya* (Summer), and so on (Mukanova 2008).

For the Kazakh national elite the renaming of streets and the erasure of old places of memory were effective tools for nationalizing the urban space. For example, the new street names in the administrative city centre on the left river bank originated in historical toponyms related to various khanates and autonomous regions that existed in Kazakh history or were part of the lands currently inhabited by Kazakhs. In this way, the contemporary administrative centre of Astana became a true manifestation of the glorious path travelled by the Kazakh people to state independence.

Most recently, Levon Mirzoyan street — originally named after the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan — was renamed Kanysh Satpayev street, after the first President of the Kazakhstan Academy of Sciences. This action was taken after recently discovered and published archives revealed Mirzoyan's involvement in extinguishing 'the enemies of the people'; that is, representatives of the Kazakh intelligentsia.

At the same time, the ideological confrontation between Soviet and post-Soviet elements in Astana has not become absolute. On the city map, as across the country, many names referring to the Soviet or pre-Soviet past — as, for example, in the case of cities like Pavlodar or Petropavlovsk — were left undisturbed. Many streets kept their original names in the old parts of Astana, as did some old symbols of Soviet history. Moreover, in 2008 a new street named after Pushkin appeared on the city map of Astana; the naming is linked to the monument to Pushkin erected in the street, a gift from the Russian Federation. In this area around Gumilyov Eurasian National University many streets have kept their Soviet names; for example, A. Yanushkevich, E. Brusilovski, M. Dubinin, and so on.

On the one hand, the meaning of existing non-Kazakh names and their place in the local cultural and historical memory has been implicitly changed. Instead of being viewed as 'agents' of external influence, they came to be seen as contributions to the formation of Kazakhstani multiculturalism. On the other hand, the macro-strategy of making a radical break with the Soviet legacy that lay at the heart of the ideological premise for the establishment of Astana does allow some degree of tolerance at the micro-level towards the remnants of Sovietness of single elements in the cityscape (Bekus and Medeuova 2011).

Cityscape and Archetypes of National Culture
Among the instruments employed to nationalize the nascent cityscape of Astana there was the idea of filling the urban space with symbolic sculptures that referred to the archetypes of traditional culture. One of the most enduring archetypes of the traditional town is the 'gate'. In Kazakh nomadic culture a similar function was performed by the emblem of the temporary camp: the 'crossed spears'. These two symbols, the gate and the crossed spears, were combined in the sculptural composition *Ush-Naiza* ('Three spears'). In 2002, this composition was installed on the right bank of the river where the old city of Tselinograd used to end. Later, in 2007, this symbol was removed because, due to a new city centre development, 'the gate' was to be located in the heart of the city. Another symbol of a gate was constructed, this time based on the mythological story of the 'divine chariot'; it fulfils the function of an actual entrance to the city park 'Arai'. This park, however, is located some distance away from the city's walking routes and has not become a popular public space. Instead, it has become an experimental zone for the visualization of various traditional folkloristic stories of the Kazakh people. Subsequently, the idea of using folkloristic decoration was extended to the whole city, and major public squares in Astana were decorated with sculptures referring to the folk tradition, such as figures dressed in the national costume and wearing traditional jewellery (rings, bracelets).

A third type of 'gate' exists in Astana: a triumphal arch called *Mangilik Yel*. It was designed in 2011 and inaugurated at the ceremony marking the twentieth anniversary of Kazakhstani independence. The design of Astana's *Arc de Triomphe* was intended to symbolize Kazakh traditional values. The arch is shaped as a 20-metre-high cube with an observation platform on the top. Sculptures installed in niches on the sides carry its main symbolic message. Those entering the city see two traditional figures in these niches: *Aqsaqal*,[5] a symbol of wisdom and spiritual succour, and the sculpture of a mother, a keeper of the hearth. Those leaving the city see two figures of warriors: a warrior nomad and a soldier of the modern Kazakhstani army. These juxtaposed warriors not only symbolise the historical unity of Kazakh's past and present but serve also as symbolic 'border guards' of Kazakhstani independence. In 2014 the idea of *Mangilik Yel* (which translates as 'the eternal people') was declared to be a new patriotic concept intended to symbolise the modern national idea of Kazakhstan and to represent the triumph of Kazakh people's strive for sovereign statehood (Junussova 2014: 1).

In spite of the fact that the introduction of new national symbols has been widely discussed in the media and has indeed been a significant feature in the development of the capital city, some symbols have been dismantled, sometimes without much attention paid to this fact and without plausible explanation or expressions of regret. One of the most popular zoomorphic symbols of Kazakhstan had been the snow leopard, native to Kazakhstan and widely employed in the urban iconography of Astana. It was included in the Astana coat of arms from 1998 to 2008, and was actively exploited by those responsible for the urban design of Astana. In the context of contemporary national imagery snow leopards have a double symbolic connotation. One the one hand, they refer to the ancient mythology of Scythians, perceived as precursors of the Kazakhs. On the other hand, they suggest a positive parallel between Kazakhstan and 'Asian tigers', those countries whose massive economic growth had been fuelled by exports and rapid industrialization. Such an association promised the transformation of Kazakhstan into a 'Central Asian Snow Leopard' that would provide a model for other developing countries.[6]

In Astana, however, the symbolic role of the snow leopard has gradually decreased. The snow leopard sculptures designed by Dosmagambetov in 1998 disappeared from the river bridge after its reconstruction in 2007, despite the fact that emblematic function of snow leopards as 'guards' in the city space was likened to the role played by the famous lions of Saint Petersburg (Uvarov 2011). In 2008, the snow leopard was replaced in the Astana coat of arms by the emblematic image of *Baiterek*, the new architectural icon of the capital. A sculptural ensemble consisting of snow leopards and a wolf, symbols of the Kazakh ancestors, had been erected in 1999 in the Central Square in the old part of Astana but was dismantled in 2011. It is worth noting that while snow leopards and other zoomorphic emblems of tradition disappeared from the official symbolic landscape, replicas the sculptures representing them

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[5] In Turkic cultures *Aqsaqal* literally means 'white beard', metaphorically referring to the male elders, the old and wise of the community in Central Asia and the Caucasus.
[6] See President Nazarbayev's address to the People of Kazakhstan (Nazarbayev 2014).

are located in various peripheral spaces of the city, such as the inner courtyards of office buildings, at the entrance to restaurants, and so on.

The fluctuating dynamics of re-interpretations of the Kazakhstani symbolic landscape in the Astana cityscape is not only related to archaic forms and traditional icons. It applies also to memorial sites dedicated to more recent events. Consider, for example, the Monument to the Victims of Political Repression, which was located at the south-eastern edge of the City Park, at the corner of *Kabanbai Batyr* Avenue and the *Korgalzhyn* Highway. It stood on a rounded hillock, symbolising an ancient burial mound. The hillock was ringed by a wall decorated with symbolic images: a tree withering in a drought-afflicted land, oppressed people with their heads bowed, a list of the Stalinist camps on Kazakhstan's territory and metal birds struggling to free themselves from their traps. A tall metal obelisk rose from the top of the mound. This Monument was inaugurated in 1997; president Nazarbayev took part in the official ceremony. In 2008, the monument vanished from the memorial landscape of Astana, while the meaning of the mound was recast in a new spirit, now surmounted by the national flag.

Conclusion

There is a specific logic behind the described seemingly chaotic dynamics of various national symbols in a cityscape. It reveals how the cultural and political elites explore various archaic elements in the traditional imagery of the nation, seeking to deploy them in the context of modern state-building.

The re-interpretation of various symbols and icons of tradition in the Astana cityscape can be seen as the formation of the specific 'symbolic alphabet' of a national capital where individual symbols have been constructed, deconstructed and re-combined in the search for a viable representation of the national tradition that meets modern conditions. This fuzzy process of nationalistic city-making, as Fauve (2015) called it, reveals the lack of a clear established strategy behind the decision-making. To some extent, the process of exploration of past imagery that we have examined appears to be no less important than the 'outcome' it is designed to produce. It reflects the specific conditions of a capital city created 'from scratch', one intended to evoke in visual form the fresh start of a newly established state (Kazakhstani Way, 50 years).[7] While referring to ancient history and to the past in the visual imagery of Astana, the national ideology handles tradition not so much as a coherent corpus of 'inheritance' and legacy but as a reservoir of potential symbols that can be used creatively for the fashioning of a national image of the capital city both in the international arena and in the domestic one. This approach implicitly produces and confirms the legitimacy of present-day elites, bestowing upon them the authority to reshuffle and re-interpret the icons of the past. As a result, Astana becomes not only an invented city; being at once spectacular and monumental, the city itself becomes an 'added value' of tradition and a massive symbolic investment in the national imaginary of Kazakh society.

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[7] See http://www.akorda.kz/ru/page_215750_poslanie-prezidenta-respubliki-kazakhstan-n-nazarbaeva-narodu-kazakhstana-17-yanvaraya-2014-g

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Urban Transformations, Ideologies of Planning and Actors' Interplay in a Booming City — Austin, Texas

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The city of Austin, state capital of Texas, has been experiencing an impressive process of metropolization, while growing very quickly, since the end of the twentieth century. Its successful adaptation to the economy's global trends and the growth it brings about are destabilizing Austin's planning system, which is already very constrained in Texas' most conservative political framework. Increasing tensions between established groups of actors and the emergence of newer ones prompt several changes in the professional and civic culture of the various actors involved in the urban planning field. These changes arise from the fact that these groups of actors are confronted with urban mutations never seen before. The ideology of planning, its meanings and its practices, are also evolving in this economic and social context, allowing for a larger citizens' participation and putting sustainability on the political agenda.
Keywords: Urban planning, public participation, democracy, sustainable development.

Introduction

Since the end of the twentieth century, Austin, the state capital of Texas, has experienced tremendous population and economic growth, as well as a diversification of its urban functions, which can be condensed into the process called metropolization. Exhibited as a 'creative city' (Florida 2002), Austin embodies a successful adaptation to the global trends. The quick growth, partly resulting from this adaptation, is fuelling urban sprawl, causing environmental degradation, and destabilizing its planning system. Moreover, even in the already urbanized areas, the effects of growth have created an increasing tension in a large part of the society towards the changes taking place in the urban landscape. Within this critical context, the values and practices attached to planning by politicians, professionals and citizens who are involved in the urban planning process appear to change under the influence of demographic pressure and economic change.

As a social construction, planning is embedded in an ideological projection that mirrors a defined relation between economic development and politics. Furthermore, urban planning is based on some abstract representations of the city's past, present and future, while aiming at shaping the city in a more material dimension. Studying planning from an ideological angle seems justified in so far as it develops in the frame of a given ideology. An ideology can be defined as 'an organized set of representations' that expresses 'a certain view of the world' and constitutes 'a framework of reference' (Raymond et al. 2001). Therefore, beyond their regulatory component, planning tools such as comprehensive plans are also 'ideological artefacts, vessels for larger intellectual concepts' (Ryan 2011: 310). Urban planning, however, should be considered also as a social field, an arena where several levels of public administration and political representation, as well as professional practitioners and civic movements, interact. Consequently, planning does not harbour only one ideology. It is rather a battleground among several, often competing ideologies.

An ethnographical understanding of the various actors involved should reveal their planning ideologies, that is to say the organization of their opinions, attitudes and values. Urban planning can be studied as a story of resistance, but also one of collaboration, even of co-

elaboration. Therefore, the actors' dynamics are best understood in action, for instance during a particular planning process such as the making of a comprehensive plan. The process of making and adopting such a planning document requires an understanding of the 'horizontal' dynamics of mobilization, alliance and conflict entwining local actors beyond that of a simple 'vertical' institutional approach.

Within these preliminary considerations, the discussion that follows looks both at the history and at the current state of affairs framing Austin's urban planning process. The data used throughout this text derive from a fieldwork experience that stretched over a period of five years (throughout 2009 to 2013). Alongside participant observation during planning events or political meetings, over sixty in-depth open-ended 'comprehensive' interviews (Pinson and Sala Pala 2007) were conducted with key actors. The interviewees belong to a wide array of roles, categorized according to the nature of their involvement in planning. Their roles are professional (developers, planners, architects, and so on), elective (at the municipal, county and state level) or civic (mainly environmental, neighbourhood or housing advocate). They all are not mere stakeholders. They are real actors in the planning field in the sense that they are trying to influence it according to a specific strategy. The line of questioning was therefore crafted to investigate their conception of what planning should accomplish and how the local field of actors was structured. They were also asked about their standpoint on the challenges faced by Austin and the measures needed in order to address them. We shall see how a detailed picture of the planning field thus emerges from the fieldwork material together with the interviewee's ideological framework, enabling us to draw the necessary comparisons between actors.

The discussion starts with a presentation of Austin's positioning within the general institutional framework structured by the specificities of the state of Texas. Then, touching upon the contemporary context of urban growth, it follows the rise of multiple citizens' movements questioning growth. Next, turning to a specific planning tool, the comprehensive plan, the analysis gradually moves towards an historical perspective of comprehensive plans in order to observe the shift of stakes, goals and means in the city's urban planning ideological framework. This will provide the historical background of the balance of power between the various groups of actors and allow an in-depth analysis of its last instance the 'Imagine Austin' comprehensive plan developed between 2009 and 2012.

A Constrained Planning Framework: A Liberal City in a Conservative State
Although Austin is the seat of the state government, it has an 'anomalous identity within the State' of Texas (Moore 2007: 35). Its progressive politics, attributable in part to the demographic weight and academic culture of the University of Texas, contrast starkly with the most conservative politics of the State of Texas. This opposition is illustrated by one of Austin's nicknames: 'The Blueberry in the Tomato Soup'. Although municipal elections are nonpartisan, all the City Council members were openly Democrats until the last election, but they were then elected at-large. This situation has slightly changed. While there is still a majority of Democrats on the City Council, the last elections held in 2014, now based on single member districts, saw the election of a few Republicans. However, this does not undermine the fact that the political culture is much more liberal in Austin in comparison to the rest of Texas. This appears strikingly

every two years, when the Texan legislators are in session at the capitol, in the heart of what they call disparagingly 'the people's republic of Austin' (Interview with a former city official 2012).

Texas is also a strong property-right State. This impacts the ideology of planning and the tools available to planners. As a representative of the city's staff explained: 'In Texas, if you own property, you almost have a god-like status, and so everything that we do is about protecting your rights as a property owner' (Interview with a member of the city's planning department staff 2013). As a consequence, 'even the notion of zoning, by which the government is going to tell you what you can do with your property, […] becomes a hard sell', and the very idea of planning bears a bad name in Texas (Interview with a member of the city's planning department staff 2013).

Moreover, planning tools are very limited especially in common law small cities and in the counties that have authority over unincorporated areas (Interview with neighbourhood advocate n. 2 2012). Counties cannot use zoning. The only limited authority they do have in Texas falls in the category of storm water, drainage and wastewater management (Interview with a former county official 2014). This is especially problematic in the suburban areas, whose population is growing very fast. According to the interviewees, widening the power of planning for urban and suburban counties could allow Texas urban areas to face the challenges they are confronted with (Interviews with a member of the State's staff 2014 and with a former county official 2014). Nevertheless, the majority at the state Legislature still opposes this solution.

Embedded within the wide context of Texas conservative politics, home-rule cities like Austin have a degree of authority on planning and they can craft their own legislation as long as state law does not forbid it. However, the tools available to planners are limited. For instance, inclusionary zoning, which allows the requirement of a minimum share of affordable housing in new developments, has simply been forbidden by the state Legislature. In other cases — as shown below — when the city adopts new regulations, manoeuvres often take place to undo them at the state level.

The adoption of certain laws and regulations, especially those including environmental protection measures, give rise to 'Austin-bashing' legislation at the following state legislative session. For instance, in the 1970s, a period commonly known as the 'water-quality wars' (Moore 2007: 30), developers appealed regularly to the Legislature to counteract local legislation by adopting an opposing state law. The battle has been especially fierce over the Save Our Springs ordinance that was passed in 1992. An environmentalist group had collected enough signatures to put this ordinance on the municipal ballot with the aim of limiting the amount of impervious water-resistant cover in new developments (*The Austin Chronicle* 2002). Although the Legislature did not succeed in repealing the ordinance, it did manage to delay its adoption and allowed the developers to grandfather their development plans, avoiding thus the water-quality restrictions. In 2013, there were still attempts to undermine this ordinance, together with other environmental laws, such as the single-use plastic bag ban or the heritage tree ordinance (*The Austin American-Statesman* 2013).

According to the opponents of these environmental regulations, the city of Austin has 'severely devalued land by means of its Save Our Springs ordinance'. These land-use

regulations are considered 'severely restrictive' and they are 'seriously stripping land value without compensation to landowners' (Cook cit. in King 2005). In some circles, the prevailing idea about Austin is that of an over-regulated city which holds back new developments. Planning and land-use regulations related thereto are ideologically undermined on the basis of the absolute precedence given to property over general interest. The Save Our Springs ordinance and other similar regulations reflect on the environmental sensibility of Austin's civic culture, showing that environmental protection is 'part and parcel of Austin's culture, although the state legislature can hardly stand it' (Interview with a real-estate developer 2013). This on-going conflict stems from a more general battle between the public good and private profit for which planning policies are the arena *par excellence.*

Thus, it appears that planning in the city of Austin is very specific, producing progressive environmental policies within a constrained state institutional framework that stems from an ideology deeply opposed to planning. Since the middle of the twentieth century the level of urban growth affecting Austin gave birth to a long tradition of civic involvement in the field of planning and to a most vocal citizenry for which Austin is often singled out. As a former City Council member states, Austin is home to 'one of the most involved citizenry I have ever seen' (Betty Dunkerley cited in Long 2010: 32).

Facing Growth: Planning and the Rise of Civic Movements

From a 'sleepy state capital and university town' (Oden 2008) to the present 'creative boomtown' (McCann 2003), Austin has experienced 'hothouse growth' while its population quadrupled in 50 years, between 1960 and 2010, reaching 865.000 inhabitants in 2014. In the same period, the Metropolitan Statistical Area, which includes adjacent suburbs that have a high degree of economic and social integration with the core city, went from 300,000 inhabitants to almost 2 million. From an environmental point of view, this growth has caused the extension of the urban areas, evocatively called sprawl, and the subsequent loss of natural spaces.

This steady growth has become a crucial issue in the last decade of the twentieth century, leading to the rise of numerous citizens' movements. However, in order to understand the nature of contemporary citizens' involvement in city planning strategy, we need to contextualize it in the wider culture of Austin's citizen involvement in urban affairs, which dates back to the 1960s.

Austin's Tradition of Civic Involvement

The intervention of lay persons in Austin's politics was first stirred up by environmental ideas. A number of wealthy and well-educated citizens, in which women were well represented, fought the administration and pressed their political representatives to create preserves, greenbelts and parks. They were successful in creating the country's first hike-and-bike trails in Austin's countryside (Swearingen 2010). Preserving nature in the heart of the city was considered to be a matter of common interest. From the turn of the 1930s, master plans looked upon parkways and green spaces as means to attract new people in Austin. Contrary to the writers of these master plans, early environmentalists sought to retain a certain spirit of the city

through the conservation of its natural assets. Thus, they vested planning with the mission of preserving part of Austin's identity against the changes induced by growth.

In the 1970s, neighbourhoods offered another local basis for civic involvement, parallel to that of environmentalism, and they often fought the same development projects. Numerous neighbourhood associations were then formed and tried to protect themselves from the threats posed by growth to the environment in general and to their living environment in particular. In 1973, the Austin Neighbourhoods Council (ANC) was founded to unite neighbourhoods under its umbrella. It educated citizens on planning procedures and tools and formed many new civic leaders.

Growth brought together environmental issues, such as pollution and reduction of green spaces, with issues related to the quality of life in general, such as higher and denser buildings, or the juxtaposition of uses deemed incompatible. A new idea, almost an ideal, linking together quality of life, neighbourhoods and the environment took hold in the political arena and shaped the 'environmental meaning of Austin' which still today stands at the roots of the local civic involvement (Swearingen 2010: 107).

Following Logan and Molotch's analysis of urban politics dominated by a pro-growth agenda and groups of actors forming coalitions, developers and the politicians supporting them in Austin came to be called a growth coalition or growth machine (Logan and Molotch 1987, *The Austin Chronicle* 1996; Tretter 2013). The protracted conflict opposing the growth machine to environmentalists and neighbourhood advocates has thus been distorted and exaggerated into an antagonism between a 'growth machine' and 'no-growth advocates'. However, the analysis of Austin's civic movements shows that, although growth is a common factor, citizen's involvement is not anti-growth per se. Even the ANC — almost always referred to as no-growth — is, in fact, 'not against growth; one that is planned and programmed', as its founder Joan Bartz said (Carrington 1974). Uncontrolled growth certainly is, however, the reason why planning appeared to the citizenry as a domain to get involved into and as a process to master.

New Movements Questioning Growth

Towards the end of the twentieth century, emerging movements have been renewing the long-established 'quality of life vs. growth/big city' conflict that has long been framing city politics in Austin (Swearingen 2010). They show the extension and diversification of the concerns related to growth. For example, in 2000 the 'Keep Austin Weird' movement emerged as a grassroots expression of place attachment and anti-commercialization, supporting local businesses against chain retailers and big-box stores (Long 2010). Although some battles to save a number of Austin's original stores and restaurants were lost, this movement expressed a form of resistance against the rapid urban transformation and the loss of city's original businesses that were considered to enshrine part of the city's identity, if not of its soul. It is interesting to note that the slogan 'Keep [whatever city] Weird' has been widely disseminated and transformed into a 'commercialized, copyrighted, and copycatted logo that can be found in literally dozens of cities throughout North America' (Long 2010) for tourism promotion, local business associations and city beautification campaigns. These campaigns mirror the growing importance of place in both planning theory and practice. Favouring place over space, new

approaches are developing in the planning field based on dynamic and relational constructs, in opposition to the previous Euclidean, rather deterministic and one-dimensional treatment of space inherited from the so-called 'scientific' approaches of planning (Graham and Healey 1999).

This new trend in planning is exemplified by some associations of planners that first reacted to the urban sprawl. The Congress for New Urbanism (CNU) is one instance of the renewal of planning concepts and models, although it has been accused of being hinged on past models and fostering social homogeneity. New Urbanism has, nevertheless, brought new ideas and projects into the planning field in Austin. When Austin was chosen to host the CNU annual meeting in 2008, a local CNU chapter was consequently created in Central Texas and it has since been very active in advocating a new model of planning that aims at a more sustainable development. As reported by Black and Steiner (2008), the former mayor Wynn then stated: that the old model for growth could not carry the city forward with the expectation of retaining the unique quality of life that made Austin great. With this new urbanist movement, planning is invested with the mission of building more compactly, close to public transportation and with a mix of uses in order to reduce car dependency and sprawl. Growth is thus accommodated rather than fought, while a sustainable pattern of development is pursued.

However, these new forms of development do not appeal to all and some resistance has arisen, especially from the neighbourhoods mainly composed of single-family housing. It should be underlined that the bulk of Austin's metropolitan growth continues to take place in the outlying areas under the predominant model of single-family houses. But, as the central city landscape began to change, new forms of development have emerged, giving an opportunity to familiarize people with what adding more density could look like and letting them choose between different lifestyles. The new sustainable city paradigm thus created has partly filled the gap between previously opposed groups of actors, especially environmentalists and developers. So, after a long period of paralysis in the planning system, the differences between parties were bridged by the adoption of a much-needed comprehensive city plan in 2012.

Planning for the future of the city of Austin is, in itself, a huge challenge, especially as the process is entangled by competing ideologies that foster different interests and a high level of contentiousness. The following section examines the transformation of Austin's city planning process through the lens of the successive comprehensive planning exercises and shows how the various actors have re-configured around this planning tool throughout history. We will see how planning has also evolved from a master plan written by experts, without much input from the local society, to a civic exercise of co-elaboration.

Figure 1: Timeline of the planning exercises. ECT stands for Envision Central Texas, a regional endeavour to address sprawl and sustainability

Analysis of a Planning Tool: Austin's Comprehensive Plans throughout History

Comprehensive planning, ambitiously defined as 'a brilliant solution for all land-use, transportation, and urban growth issues at once' (Gregor 2010), has been a recurring issue in Austin throughout the twentieth century. A comprehensive plan is also sometimes called a master plan, or combines several master plans together (thoroughfare, public facilities, and land use at a minimum). It has to synthesize several principles guiding the city's future development and to spatialize it on a map. As such, in principle any master plan must bring together a diagnosis of the situation, with a set of objectives and a selection of planning tools applied to different zones of a specific territory.

Comprehensive Planning Faced with Growth: From an Expert Tool to a Civic Process

Austin's comprehensive planning history began with an ethical stain. The first city plan issued in 1928, *A city plan for Austin Texas*, infamously institutionalized racial segregation (Koch and Fowler Consulting Engineers 1928). The 'negro population' was hence moved to the Eastern part of the city, creating an enduring racial and social barrier on each side of East avenue. This barrier was later set in concrete by the Interstate Highway 35 constructed in its place in the 1950s. In keeping with the practices of the time, this plan was an 'expert' product, written by a specialized firm of engineers without any form of public involvement. Its early adoption, just one year after the Texas Legislature had authorized it, is an indication of the political climate of that time. Progressive reformers wanted to get rid of the political corruption and, instead, run cities like businesses. Therefore, a managerial form of government had just been adopted. Following this reorganization, a comprehensive city plan appeared like the 'natural' way of 'building a modern, efficient city' (Koch and Fowler Consulting Engineers 1928). The goal was to make Austin attractive, but growth was still a cherished dream of the city's leadership and civic boosters, not yet a fact (Orum 1987).

After the taming of the Colorado River by a chain of dams, with the financial support of the New Deal government, Austin began to grow. In 1961, the city adopted a new comprehensive plan called the *Austin Development Plan*. Very brief, synthetic, more technical than comprehensive and lacking links between the various master plans, this new plan, pursued a 'preserve-yet-grow' purpose (Gregor 2010). It was presented as 'a suitable, logical, and timely plan for preserving the unique characteristic and accomplishments with which Austin has already been endowed and for enhancing the future development of the city' (City of Austin 1961). It was, instead, an administrative plan, written by the city's planning commission and its department of planning. Although it gave citizens the opportunity to provide comments, it ignored the citizens' recommendations (Goodspeed 2010).

From the end of the 1960s and throughout the 1970s rising civic movements both on the national and local levels increased citizen's participation and involvement in the process of drawing up new public policies. As such, extensive public participation became the foundation upon which, between 1977 and 1979, a new comprehensive plan, *Austin Tomorrow*, was crafted. Although this new plan was written by city staff, a citizens' committee oversaw it. A total of 3,500 citizens participated in the process (Goodspeed 2010). As the city somewhat

eulogistically recalls in an addendum, the adoption of *Austin Tomorrow* 'followed nearly a decade of intense deliberations by the citizens of Austin regarding critical choices facing the future of the Austin region. [...] Some were excited about the prospect of the Austin Region growing into a premier metropolitan area that offered unparalleled cultural and economic opportunities. Others were concerned that sprawling development patterns lacked identity and were threatening Austin's sense of community, stunning natural environment, and fiscal viability' (City of Austin 2009). Growth, however, was at the heart of this planning endeavour. Public involvement allowed the fears and hopes of a great number of inhabitants to transpire from the document. In contrast, developers did not take the process seriously and were not very involved in it. Some of them were surprised by the impact the plan had. As a real estate attorney puts it: 'The city has all sorts of plans that just sit on the shelf – they're just kind of lofty ideal. But this has become the bible' (David Armbrust cit. in Gregor 2010).

Austin Tomorrow remained the bible for a longer time than foreseen, due to the fact that its 1989 successor, named *AustinPlan*, was voted down. In spite of extensive civic participation (Beatley and Brower 1994), the process of drafting a new plan failed to foster consensus and even produced an important opposition on the subject of target densities that were assigned to each neighbourhood. Opposition came from outlying neighbourhoods, together with the real estate community, businesses and the owners of outlying land that they wished to develop. Their interests did not match the development frame proposed in the new comprehensive plan, which included a growth management programme, as a means to respond to both population growth and rising real estate prices. The diagnosis formulated in this thick document urged new planning tools, but actors benefiting from growth were able to play on the dissensions inside the participatory process and, eventually, to have the plan abandoned.

Shifts in Planning Scales

The failure of the *AustinPlan* oriented the city towards planning on another, more local, scale. A neighbourhood planning process took shape, starting from the mid-1990s (McCann 2003). Participatory decision-making at neighbourhood level revealed itself to be a very long and difficult process. In the East Cesar Chavez neighbourhood, chosen to be a pilot area, some leaders complained of having given up their personal lives for over 18 months while taking part in the planning process (Interview with neighbourhood advocate n. 3 2013). They had to educate themselves on planning matters and had to write the plan with the help of a planner from the city. After a decade, many neighbourhoods still did not have an adopted plan when the comprehensive planning process surfaced again on the agenda in 2006.

Another change of scale was operated through the Envision Central Texas planning endeavour. Business and civic leaders tried to rally public opinion to the need for a planning strategy at a regional level as a mechanism to deal efficiently with the ongoing urban sprawl in Central Texas. The public was asked to choose between scenarios of urban development, from a sprawling 'business as usual' situation to one where new growth would be mainly accommodated within existing urbanized areas. The exercise showed the urgency of establishing a more sustainable pattern of growth and it reconciled part of the citizenry with the need for a denser mode of development. Nonetheless, due to its status and lack of actual

authority, this voluntary planning process did not result in concrete measures and progressively waned.

Given the past failure, returning to planning at a citywide scale appeared particularly challenging. Moreover, the question of compatibility, if not of subsidiarity, between the neighbourhood plans and the citywide plan was raised. The new comprehensive planning process had to take this context into account in order to foil the long ill fate of citywide planning.

How to Re-imagine Austin: Public Participation and the New Comprehensive Plan
Austin's new comprehensive planning process, titled *Imagine Austin*, extended from November 2009 until June 2012. The current context and the past failure required to re-imagine the participatory process. Therefore, the City Council hired a consultant specialized in public engagement who developed an elaborate plan of public involvement. Below, I highlight some elements of this process to consider the progress made in that domain and the remaining challenges.

New Forms of Public Participation in the Planning Process
The new participatory process introduced an exercise called 'meetings in a box', a sort of 'Tupperware Party! Minus the Tupperware' (*The Austin Chronicle* 2009). A kit contained everything needed to host a meeting with a group of friends or co-workers: invitations, script, questions and instructions to create a collaborative vision for Austin's future. The results were then to be forwarded to city staff in order to draw a first 'vision' for Austin. Citizens were asked, for instance, to list four strengths, four weaknesses and four ideas for the future of Austin. City staff then compiled those results to create a vision statement that would guide the rest of the process. The principles thus chosen were broad and very consensual: Austin had to be 'Liveable, Educated, Natural and Sustainable, Mobile and Interconnected, Creative and Prosperous' (City of Austin 2010). Consequently, a common basis of principles was created and presented as the shared values upon which the city had to develop in the future. However, the hardest part of the planning process remained the spatialization of urban development.

To give concrete shape to this vision, citizens were then invited to a public forum to elaborate a map of Austin's future development in small groups. They had to locate where they wanted a given number of new jobs and new residential units to be built in the city. This was called 'the chip exercise' because coloured sticky chips where used to spatialize and localize development projects on a giant map of Austin. Citizens could choose what form of development should accommodate that growth in their opinion, and they had to agree on where to put it. Some chips represented denser forms of development; therefore, less chips were needed to reach the growth target, reducing the extent of new urbanized areas. These maps were sorted and synthesized to produce five scenarios of growth upon which citizens then had to vote. This step reminded much of the Envision Central Texas process, which certainly broke a trail. However, the chip exercise that produced these scenarios was much criticized. According to an ANC representative, 'there was a fallacy in that process […] we felt that people were not given enough information to make an informed choice as where to place those chips. For instance, important watershed, or floodplains were not indicated on the map. So why would we

go to an effort to say oh I think there should be 5000 new residents placed in that area when the reality of that area cannot support 5000 people because it's in a floodplain' (Interview with neighbourhood advocate n. 1 2012). An environmental activist concurs with this view: 'Participants were given too little basic information' but the staff used that 'ridiculous chip exercise' as the basis for the whole plan (Interview with an environmental advocate 2012).

Inhabitants' and Planning Professionals' Expertise in Question

City staff compiled a growth concept map after the results of the vote. The map showed the areas where dense forms of development should be undertaken, mainly targeting the central part of the city and the East side, but its legitimacy was stained. The chip exercise created a lot of distrust between part of the citizens and the city staff. From then on, the ANC objected to the whole comprehensive planning process, arguing that 'from a certain view point the process made sense, because everything's built upon the previous exercise. But if the fundamental exercise was flawed then everything consequently is flawed' (Interview with neighbourhood advocate n. 1 2012). Planners form the city predominantly showed a feeling of weariness and powerlessness over the process. They had to compile public opinion and were unable to use their own expertise, while being accused by some citizens of doing things their way and not taking into account the input citizens were giving at participatory events.

This puts in perspective one of the key problems of public participation: although the importance of inhabitants' knowledge has been gradually recognized, planning still relies on various types of professional expertise. Then, the questions arise, Which aspects of the planning process can be entrusted to the inhabitants' expertise?; Given the inequality of skills in the population, How to educate the public as a whole?; and Up to what level of expertise in the field of planning should the public be educated?

In spite of the fact that shared values had been generated at the beginning of the process, some groups contested the outcome of the planning process, mainly objecting that density had been imposed 'from a bird's eye view', ignoring the existing neighbourhoods' plans. This conflict haunted the process to the end but it did not prevent the adoption of a new comprehensive plan by the City Council in 2012. Nevertheless, some consensual language had to be elaborated in order to overcome the conflict. One of the stated objectives of the plan is to 'strengthen planning processes by recognizing that the Comprehensive plan and small-area plans, such as neighbourhood plans, corridor plans, and station area plans, need to respect, inform, and draw from each other' (City of Austin 2012). Still, this kind of language does not resolve the legal issues of compatibility and subsidiarity between the plans, leaving to the political decision of the City Council the resolution of future conflicts between plans at various levels.

Conclusion

The case of Austin shows the strong civic reactions to the changes affecting a contemporary city faced with rapid growth and the difficulties to plan citywide. Framed by the State of Texas ideological and institutional context, which limits the scope of planning as well as the available tools, the planning process is ridden with contentiousness and lacks ideological legitimacy.

Nevertheless, the absolute necessity of planning for the city's unprecedented growth has legitimized a renewal of the planning efforts. A remarkable level of citizens' mobilization has been stirred up by the impact of growth on Austin's territory and has restored a positive ideology for planning. In parallel, the evolution of the comprehensive planning process has shifted in time from a technical modality involving experts to a more community-based approach including citizens' perspective in envisioning the future of their city.

The historical trajectory of Austin's comprehensive planning manifests the evolution of planning in both form and ideology. As we have seen that planning in Austin went through a temporary renouncement of city-wide planning and had to shift to different levels. This case-study suggests that urban planning is an interesting window on urban changes and the interactions between the various groups of actors that shape public policies. The vagueness of the roles of expert planners and laymen is fostering an ancient mistrust. The question of the various forms of expertise, professionals' and inhabitants', still needs to be addressed and formalized in order to try to avoid part of the mistrust and frustration that plague the participatory process.

The planning strategy contained in *Imagine Austin* greatly relied on political will for its implementation. As Austin adapts to its new big city status and adopts a long-awaited single-member district mode of election, based on geographical precincts, the political balance of power will surely shift. The fear of a revival of parochialism could be counteracted by the geographical anchoring of the city's politics and stimulate the political participation of a larger part of the citizenry, hence re-legitimizing the public intervention in the planning field. Let us remember that elected officials and the planning processes that they lead have to represent the common interest, which cannot be done if hardly ten percent of the citizens show up at the polls. District elections will greatly alter the balance of power, but they might give more legitimacy to the planning legislation. Nevertheless, the fact that growth is happening at the metropolitan level would also require a more regional level of planning, but this level of governance is still very weak and needs to be developed in order to rise to this challenge.

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Interviews

To preserve the interviewees' anonymity, the interviews are designated by the nature of their involvement in Austin's urban planning field:

Member of the city's planning department staff (2013)

Environmental advocate (2012)

Former city official (2012)

Former county official (2014)

Neighbourhood advocate n.1 (2012)

Neighbourhood advocate n.2 (2012)

Neighbourhood advocate n.3 (2013)

Real-estate developer (2013)

Member of the State's staff (2014)

Landscapes of Globalization in Ordinary Towns:
Logistics and Trade Apparatus

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The framework for our discussion is based on the observation of a paradoxical situation: the areas of logistics and of transport, although 'gigantic and spectacular', 'go unseen' and 'are non-controversial'. Little attention has been paid in the social sciences to these areas of logistics and to the 'merchandise' section of transport. Yet, they shape our contemporary urban environments on a large scale and in-depth. This is, to an extent, the initial hypothesis for the study we been carried over the past two years in logistics spaces of the Nord-Pas-de-Calais region of France. More specifically, the study involves the Delta 3 multimodal logistics platform, situated in Dourges, which is part of the 'Communauté d'Agglomération d'Hénin-Carvin' (CAHC — the Hénin-Carvin urban community), on the southern edge of the Lille conurbation.
Keywords: Urban environment, logistics, digital economy, social constructions.

The development of the digital economy is accompanied by the myth that globalized exchanges are de-territorialized. Individuals, alone at their computers, order products online. This act does not directly lead to the idea of a durable, developed urban settlement; instead, it is linked to vague localities, situated in an indeterminate, far-away elsewhere, often in Asia — the region where many consumables are produced.

However, people and merchandise circulate, structured into logistics distribution networks, making use of technical devices and means of transportation.[1] Far from being dematerialized, logistics activities are spatially 'anchored', especially at two stopping points. Firstly, the storage of goods, which requires the development of infrastructures, hangars and warehouses. Secondly, modal transitions; from boat to truck or train, in particular, and also from cargo to barge. The transitions take place in spaces built for long-term duration; mainly ports, platforms, airports and railway stations.

From these points of view, globalized exchanges take place in urbanized zones on a truly local scale, interacting with the entire conurbation and, onward, globally.[2] For the purpose of this study, it is also important to specify that these infrastructures are most often located at the outer limits of urban conurbations, as a result of the interactions of political orientation at local and regional levels.

In the social sciences little attention has been paid to these areas of logistics and to the 'merchandise' section of transport (Ascher 1995).[3] Yet, they shape our contemporary urban

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[1] The work of Alain Tarrius (1992: 210) shows how forms of mobility and their networks work in space, qualify it, are anchored in it and establish it as resources and territory.

[2] The circulation processes of goods and information strongly overlap with situated production-consumption, as analyzed by Michel Savy (2006: 63).

[3] Numerous studies in geography and economics focus on the relationship between infrastructural equipment and the increase in added value of the regional territory These approaches put forward the importance of the transportation network as a contributing factor to development. For more historical approaches, the networks of infrastructures underline the complexity of urban history. The question of the nature of the links between transportation and economic development is raised again in many

environments on a large scale and in-depth[4]. This is, to an extent, the initial hypothesis for the study that we have carried out over the past two years in logistics spaces of the Nord-Pas-de-Calais region of France. More specifically, the study involves the Société d'Economie Mixte (SEM), also called Delta 3, multimodal logistics platform. Located in Dourges, the Delta 3 is part of the 'Communauté d'Agglomération d'Hénin-Carvin' (the Hénin Carvin urban community, henceforth CAHC), on the southern edge of the Lille conurbation.[5]

The framework for our discussion is based on the observation of a paradoxical situation: the areas of logistics and transport, although 'gigantic and spectacular', 'go unseen' and 'are non-controversial'. Our research includes the recent arrival of the Amazon Corporation's 100,000 square metres warehouses located at the Communauté d'Agglomération du Douaisis (henceforth CAD). This event has drawn media attention in terms of the impact on the economy and employment, but not in terms of construction layout or spatial nuisances. Not far from this location, at a distance of just 2.5 kilometres, the multimodal Delta 3 platform covers nearly 300,000 square metres and has never provoked media or political outrage or bad publicity. It only includes warehouses, and the global infrastructure spans more than two square kilometres.

Our approach therefore consists of 'considering the unconsidered' in the sector of logistics localities, and in the two cases examined in our research, their capacity 'to not create controversy and go unseen', or at least to not become the focus of a passionate public debate on the infrastructure and the construction layout that they embody.

This article analyses, first of all, the process whereby logistics infrastructures emerge on the outer limits of urban environments. By expanding our analysis to the practice of consumption linked to the global economy, we proceed to describe the urban use incurred by this construction, the territorial transformations that result from such construction,[6] as well as

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works with the objective to question the structuring of economic development by infrastructure equipment. We also notice the existence of studies on logistics developed by management sciences from the point of observation of logistic methods and processes. In fact, apart from few publications from the points of view of geography and urban planning, few studies take a spatial approach to logistics or question the repercussions of the sector from the angles of organization, development and territorial balance. It turns out to be a recent problem and is beginning to develop in France, especially in the works of Raimbault et al. (2013) and Savy (2006). Several reasons can explain the absence of questioning the spatial and urban stakes of logistics. Among these, the hitherto unseen character and the rapidity of the development of their construction come into play, of which the catalyzing effect on the territories continue to be under-evaluated because of lack of data. In addition, opacity and the fact that many of the players in the construction chain of the sites devoted to transport and storage of merchandise are in the private sector is an element to take into account. As noted by Charles Goldblum and Manuelle Franck, 'The selective, hierarchical integration of urban territories into the world economy produces new urban scales, going from the town or city to the urban region, new forms at the urban scale, and new polycentric configurations at the regional scale' (2007: 230).

[5] In the geographical sense of the term, since the Lille conurbation and the CAHC are separate in terms of administration (Roncayolo 1990).

[6]The notion of 'territory' applied in this research can be political, economic or geographical, especially when we contextualize certain areas studied. Nevertheless, from a methodological point of view, we

the emergence of globalized landscapes. The idea is not that the processes of layout linked to logistics function in the same manner in all urban peripheral areas, but that these processes are the driving force of large zones. At the same time, on other sites beyond the urban limits, other processes may be in action, based on real estate, heritage and culture that alongside other economic activities (energy generation, industrial production, finance, and so on) have an impact on the spaces. These overlapping processes require us to stand back from the traditional opposition between centre and periphery in order to understand fully the dynamics of urban sprawl.

The Investigation

One of the characteristics of this research on the logistic activities and facilities is that it has brought together a team of landscape architects and a team of sociologists. A principle shared by the two teams is that the landscape can serve as a framework for integrating reflection and action and thereby become a tool for the emergence of a coherent and durable territorial action. The research group shared a consensual definition of landscape and territory as a 'social construction'[7] that the participative process and the tools of the landscape architects are able to deconstruct and objectivize. To this definition, the sociologists added the concept of the diversity of the developers beyond the image offered by the public institutions and the institutionally-approved developers of a territory, on the one hand, and the idea of the privatization of urban spaces for the sole profit of the all-powerful economic actors, on the other hand.[8] There was no debarment of planning *a priori* in our approach, but we did take a close look at the plurality of the actors and of their logic, as well as at the dynamics that drive competition, conflicts, tensions, cooperation, adaption, and even indifference and lack of knowledge. The objective was to characterize the processes of implementation of a process of economic and environmental recovery of a given territory by identifying the actors, the scales of deployment and the origins of the process of recovery within a contemporary and historical time frame.

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associate it to an anthropological definition of place as an interpersonal space of identity and history. We also add the notions of exchange and mobility from Tarrius (1997).

[7] Retracing the contours of the space that landscape occupies today in institutions, teaching, urban planning, research at different levels, from local to international, Luginbühl underlines that 'landscape as a social construct, a perceptible product of the interactions between social processes and biophysical processes, on the one hand, and between the material and immaterial dimensions of nature, on the other […] is born relatively early in the recent history of landscape but is only taken into consideration recently'(Luginbühl 2013b: 80)

[8] See especially the work of Thierry Paquot (2015) on 'the obliteration' of public space and 'urban disasters'. In his work, this expression refers to structures that, claiming to be modern, end-up by generating the unhappiness of their occupants; that is, a situation that increases isolation and subjugation.

Carried out in 2012, our approach is ethnographic in the framework of two research programs ITTECOP[9] (MEDDE-ADEME) et Villes ordinaires (Ordinary cities) (MEDDE-PUCA).[10] Several weeks of fieldwork were completed, providing the opportunity for *in-situ* observation, statistical and documentary data collection and the completion of nearly one hundred interviews with ordinary people, land developers and other key players. We also collaborated with *Passeurs*, a team of landscapers from Bordeaux led by Yves Luginbühl (2013a).

The junction between the production and the analysis of the material collected has taken place through a process that is characteristic of qualitative research, as it takes into account the unpredictable nature of the dynamics of the study — a constant relationship between problems and the data evidence collected, between interpretation and results. The generation of empirical material modifies the issues, which in turn modify the generation of data, which in turn modify the issues. The stage of generation of data thus functions like 'a constant restructuring of the issues when confronted with the data and as a permanent readjustment of the framework of interpretation as the empiric elements accumulate' (Delaporte 1995: 26-27).

While the notions of representativeness and comprehensiveness are not at the core of our ethnographic study, we base the scientific nature of our analysis on the 'principle of saturation point' that is specific to the social sciences (Delaporte 1995). That is to say, an observation of the facts until their replication stabilizes, accompanied by the systematic recurrence of observed facts and speeches. A 'saturation point' is reached when the researcher is obliged to diversify his informants to the greatest possible extent and feels that there is nothing new to learn, at least as far as the sociological objective of the study is concerned.[11]

From Logistics to Supplying Merchandise

Initially, our observations concerned two spaces linked to logistics and the transportation of merchandise in the Lille conurbation: the Delta 3 multimodal platform and the logistics site of the Amazon warehouses. Then, we broadened the scope to cover all spaces linked to transportation and logistics, including road, rail and maritime navigation networks. These infrastructures attract analysts' attention because of the surface area that they cover. We argue that they must be seen as part of the local urban dynamics, and that we need to understand how they generate new territorial uses as producers of a city, as opposed to municipalities along the outskirts of Lille.

Our field of research quickly brought out the link between these spaces and their urban use, and also pointed to other directly-linked spaces of consumption. Less than one kilometre away from the Delta 3 platform, there is an immense shopping complex: 'Auchan–Noyelles-

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[9] ITTECOP - (Infrastructures de Land Transport, ECOsystèmesetPaysages) is a research program of the French Ministry for Ecology and Sustainable Development, (MEDDE), in coordination with l'ADEME Agency for Energy.

[10] MEDDE- PUCA (Plan Urbanisme Construction Architecture).

[11] See, for example, Demazière and Dubar (1997), Beaud (1996) and De Sardan (1995).

Godault'.[12] There, the juxtaposition of logistics and consumption facilities is evident, as is the coherent ensemble of territorial uses, structured around worldwide merchandise arrivals and their transportation, storage and consumption.

By considering the way these territorial systems intertwine, one territorial element of the logistics world becomes clear; that is, the interconnection through mobility networks. The infrastructures of multimodal services and storage are always connected in transportation networks, including roadways, railways and train stations, waterways, ports and airports. These networks also territorialize the logistics infrastructures in the urban environment.

The Status Afforded by Multiple Transportation Infrastructures

> Cahc's website reads, 'Ideally situated at the crossroads of large cities such as Lille, Arras, and Paris and accessible by several major communication links (toll roads A1 et A21, North European TGV [fast train], Lille-Lesquin Airport) the territory of Hénin-Carvin is exceptional due to its exceptional cultural and mining heritage, its vast organized natural areas, the dynamics of its economy, sports, and associations and the agreeable and sought-after quality of living and working conditions that should be maintained.'[13]

In every development of space, such as the urban space of the metropolitan outskirts considered here, the challenges of today and tomorrow are at play, as well as those of past history (Tarrius 1997).

The process that has lead to the important presence of logistics and transport infrastructures in the territory under study involves multiple approaches: economic and contemporary-social, but also inherited situations and constructions that have developed over varying lengths of time.

At the urban and regional level logistics infrastructures build upon recent or pre-existing transport infrastructures interlock and allow for the previously mentioned transitions towards the global scale. In this way, the CAHC and the CAD appear as multimodal knots of communication channels:

- From the oldest means of communication, such as navigable waterways, rivers and streams, but also canals that began to be dug in the 13th century — for example, the Deûle Canal, which crosses the Delta 3 logistics infrastructure and which has today been widened to allow the passage of large barges;

- To the means inherited from the industrial revolution — that is, the railways — along with today's rolling motorway system for freight, from Great-Britain, Belgium and Germany to France and Italy;

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[12] The retail zone is composed of an Auchan 'Big Box' supermarket with a surrounding shopping mall, containing more than 80 name-brand shops, all surrounded by around 50 independent retailers.
[13] See Cahc's website http://www.agglo-henincarvin.fr.

- To the more recent means that began with the automobile industry; in particular, the A1 motorway built in 1954, which crosses the A21 motorway, also called the 'rocade minière' (a sort of 'ring road' encircling the mining area), which replaced the RN455 road in 1971.

On a continental scale, these communication channels have been built along the economic axes established during the industrial revolution, and which draw on an exchange process that began in the Middle Ages. The Nord-Pas-de-Calais region is at the heart of the northern European range of major ports: Ostend, Zeebrugge, Anvers (the second-ranked port in Europe), Amsterdam (ranked 5th) and Rotterdam (number one in Europe). Three other major ports are also located along the coast of this region: the great maritime port of Dunkerque (200,000 TEU containers per year), the Calais port (flows of both passengers and merchandise), and the port of Boulogne-sur-Mer (the premier fishing port in France). Together, these three ports represent the leading port complex in France, with the regional maritime port activity accounting for 50,000 jobs.

If transportation infrastructures allow understanding of the logistics development process, historically other more political elements also converge here to make the CAHC and the CAD what they are. The past processes that brought about the development of logistics structures and construction not only involves the history of transportation but also economic history, which in this case is also political history.

From this point of view, an abstract perspective would cast the urban area of Lille as one homogenous territory, even including the coal mining area: the gateway to a territory engaged in a common development. Nevertheless, this perspective would clash with the historic distinction, cooperation, competition and dependence between the city of Lille and the coal mining area, which is located along the southern edge of the Lille urban environment (in the geographical sense). In the interviews that we carried out, the hegemony of Lille came into play in the domain of logistics and transport. For the people of Lille, the stigmatization of the mining territory is similar to a 'natural' expulsion and is considered harmful for the city of Lille.

Indeed, the establishment of the logistics platform in the 1990s was meant to anchor infrastructural development to both the mining site and the regional economic fabric, which was greatly impacted by industrial restructuring. The site's selection was equally justified by the need to relocate the Saint Sauveur terminal, which was completely enclosed within urban Lille and considered to be no longer sufficient. Increasing property prices and the difficulty in finding space in Lille drove developers to invest in the mining zone, where property was abundant and less expensive. The main criteria for choosing this site, an industrial wasteland situated in the territory of Dourges, a town 20 kilometres south of Lille, included: top-quality service by rail, road and river networks, a location near the barycentre of flows originating from or arriving to the Nord-Pas-de-Calais region and, lastly, a space that was vast enough to establish a terminal capable of handling the three modes of transportation and the associated logistics areas.

As noted by Raimbault et al. (2013), the establishment of the Delta 3 platform reveals that property cost and road accessibility compensate for the increased distance from urban markets. Historically, this coal mining area was strongly dependent on Lille and, notably, the textile industry. As it was a supplier of raw materials for energy (coal) engaged in a single industry (mining), the relationship of dependency took on hierarchical aspects of servitude between the elite of Lille and the working-class mining community. This relationship strongly marked the interactions among local people and is perpetuated today in a relationship between 'us' and 'them' based on the ever-stigmatized representations of the mining area population.

On yet another scale, the coal mining area is not homogenous. Although the Delta 3 Platform and the Amazon site are situated less than five kilometres away from the mining area, they are surprisingly and absolutely not the result of an inter-communal dialogue, or of a common municipality. The builders of Douai (CAD) and Hénin-Carvin (CAHC) took an economic approach similar to that that made the logistics and transport sector a major element of territorial development in economic terms and in terms of building and layout. Nevertheless, the communities in the mining area appear to be in a competition that does not stop at Hénin-Carvin and Douai, since the urban areas of Valencienne and, to a lesser extent, Lens are also trying to attract logistics business services, such as loading, storage and transport.

The southern edge of the Lille urban area thus appears increasingly like a storage and merchandise redistribution area, with the task of supplying the city of Lille (now rid of the nuisance of the presence of this type of activity in the city centre) and the rest of France, from the region of Paris to the Rhône-Alpes region, by means of traditional transportation channels — mainly railways and roadways — that date to the industrial revolution.

An Innovative, Mixed Political and Economic Model

The coal mining territory was strongly impacted by the industrial crisis and experienced many social and environmental consequences. Local authorities had to try to erase the past in search of new economic perspectives. Beginning in the 1990s, the implementation of a post-mining plan began to accelerate. The response of key players in territorial development was the result of a program for urban, social, environmental and economic restructuration in the mining area. The best solution seemed to be a focus on logistics and transport, especially concerning the pre-established infrastructures and the recent major expansion of international trade. Thus, this declining territory looking to rebuild its economic activity was a perfect match for Lille's need to remove harmful activities from the city centre. The local authorities recognized this opportunity.

The establishment of the Delta 3 platform was a successful example of how public powers could be involved in the development and implementation of public policy in territorial layout and construction. Taking this into consideration, the process of implementing this infrastructure appears as though imposed from outside. Although the main developers come from the city of Lille (Mayor Pierre Maurois, for one), the legal and administrative organization resists all attempts at simplification and illustrates the complexity in the chain of those who contribute to building logistics territories (Raimbault et al. 2013). In addition, the

influence of economic heavy-weights — among others, the Mulliez family, who own the worldwide group Auchan — came to bear in this political interplay. The Auchan commercial centre, near Delta 3, is ready to open. Thus, the pattern is reproduced of the domination of Lille and the mining district's dependence on it; a pattern that can be projected into the future.

Project ownership is ensured by regional governments. A mixed group of actors handles the platform. It is made up by the Nord-Pas-de-Calais region, the Pas-de-Calais department, the urban community surrounding the Lille municipality, the CAHC, the CAD and Lens-Liévin, which includes the community of the south Pévelois township. In the framework of the development agreement, the project's completion is the responsibility of a semi-public company — the Delta 3 — with investors including the mixed group, public and private bank investors and the French national railway network (SNCF). The terminal is operated by a special purpose entity, which was established in December 2000 and transformed into a local public development company in 2011. It must be noted that one of the aims of this semi-public company is to sell the warehouses built on the site. This point raises questions, since it includes the expropriation of agricultural workers in the interest of public land development, and the resale to the private sector of spaces containing newly constructed warehouses. Between public actors and semi-public companies, public requisition and privatization, we find evidence of the argument (Raimbault et al. 2013) that the sector of logistics land development is not legally well-defined. In this field, key players must constantly innovate and question the boundaries between the public and private economic sectors.

In this externally imposed model, the local government is faced with Lille' hegemony as they search for socio-economic development solutions. From this point of view, the problem of environmental recovery is also at the heart of land development logistics.

It is noteworthy that, in the 1990s, logistics activities were not presented as a route to economic development for the Nord-Pas-de-Calais region. It is a result of the end of mining and steel industries and the catastrophic unemployment that this view has changed.[14] The logistics economy is not the only one under consideration in the region. Elected officials attempt several approaches, especially regarding tourism and heritage, as is demonstrated by the classification of the Mining Basin as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2012 or the building of the Louvre branch in Lens in 2012. Nevertheless, observation suggests that the logistics activity is identified increasingly strongly as the unique *serious* means of development of the Mining Bassin.[15] The alliances between the public and the private sectors, between municipalities, greater metropolitan areas, the Nord-Pas-de-Calais Region, the French State are not linear. They but form and dissolve depending on how the different interests are assembled or opposed.

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[14] The closing of the Metaleurop plant on the Cach in 2003 in Courcelles with the suppression of 830 jobs is, from this point of view, both a real and a symbolic termination.

[15] Other avenues are under consideration, such as the 'green' economy of recycling. But in fact, the most substantial investments in infrastructures today are those of transportation of merchandise and sale thereof. Especially, interviews with elected officials reveal that the choice of logistics is the only one seriously considered to be a 'true' economic activity due to job creation.

There exist other paths for the development of the urban conglomeration of Lille than the logistic economy: tourism, heritage, recycling. However, 25 years after the onset of the decisions favouring the development of the logistics activity, this area appears to be a priority in the choices for future development for the region and is dominant simply in terms of existing infrastructures. Not all the urban conglomeration is affected. We are not dealing with a binary model with an historical centre on the one hand and a logistics rim on the other. Instead, we could talk about logistics zoning since large zones are concerned by this activity, notably along historical travel routes that have become toll roads or train lines.

From Grey to Green: Environmental Recovery
and Non-Problematic Development Situations

The specificity and intensity of the past problems in the coal mining area make it a territory of special attention concerning the reclassification of industrial wastelands. The regional policy for 'reclassifying damaged spaces' is characterized by the progressive shift from a 'scar'-repairing policy to a finalized policy. In December 1998, the Inter- Comité Interministériel d'Aménagement et de Développement du Territoire (Ministerial Committee of Territorial Building and Development — CIADT) ratified previously acquired knowledge in a White Paper titled *Une Ambition Partagée Pour l'Après-Charbon* (A Shared Post-Coal Ambition), which is found in the 'Post-Mining' ('après-mines') section of the State-Region Plan Contract 2000-2006. To complement the general endowment provided by the Plan Contract, this Post-Mining section provided financial assistance and technical engineering to the area's programme of urban, environmental, social and cultural restructuration.

Since the nineteenth century, the combined growth of different industrial activities has proved detrimental to the natural environment of the zone, and there have been numerous consequences in the aftermath of these negative influences, the kind defined by Guy Chautard and Bertrand Zuindeau (2001) as 'non-sustainable' development. The former coal mining area seeks to reverse the trend with determination.

Aiming to ensure proper integration with the landscape and global coherence among the various structures, building the Delta 3 platform led to the implementation of a bill of architectural and landscape recommendations focused on the logistics zones, the service centre and the combined transportation terminal. The general networking of the platform was organized around the axis of the Deûle canal, which cuts across the site. The important structures are set parallel or perpendicular to this axis, with manoeuvring and parking areas also organized in the same direction.

The landscaping concern at the heart of the redevelopment of the former mining site involved heritage and the environment. Consequently, it resulted in the reclassification of the entire zone into green spaces. This 'green' dimension of reclassification permeates the new representations of the site and brings energy to public debate regarding the land development. The Delta 3 platform is thus classified by key figures in the territory as 'a major asset to the region and to ecology', 'a beautiful result, not too badly integrated into the landscape', or even as 'a big breath of fresh air'. This paradox originates in the fact that this space was originally confiscated when it was politically convenient to do so and was then returned to a

population that was experiencing economic hardship, for their own leisure and regulated landscape enjoyment.

The redevelopment operation is therefore presented in a positive light, in terms of new jobs, we were told. It is also represented in terms of 'natural' reclassification, as it moves from being a grey zone to being a place of leisure with a landscape that highlights heritage and biodiversity. The logistics spaces — trans-shipment, train tracks and containers — are hidden at the residents' request, which they expressed when Delta 3 organized a consultation on the land layout (landscaped mounds and dikes) in the early stages of construction. It is also important to note that the large green spaces are filled with plants and grass, with a visual opening onto the former mine's slagheap (number 116/117). Neighbouring the infrastructure, this feature is valued as a strong element in the landscape, both by the platform's builders and developers and by the elected officials and local stakeholders. The dimension of heritage is also stressed as an element of conservation, represented by the mine entrance (number 9/9bis), which has been converted into a cultural centre for concerts, performances and exhibits. The overall mining area, composed of the entrance, slagheap number 110, and the garden city of De Clercq, is one of the five greatest mining history sites.

As the logistics and transport spaces remain hidden, the pacification relative to this type of development is largely based on a combination of two dynamics. On the one hand, there are new perspectives for economic development, essentially related to changes in the service sector and to the quality of the territory's geographical position. On the other hand, there is a political will to anchor territorial development to the project of environmental reclassification. This was encouraged in the decade following the year 2000 through the 'Green and Blue Framework' policy (*Trame verte et bleue*), which aimed at preserving natural habitats and valuing the tourism and landscape potential of former industrial wastelands, mining heaps and piles of rubble.

We observe a non-problematic situation of development, because people who are not concerned with the project do not debate the stakes involved in development and because the people directly concerned (residents, political and economic key players and others) hardly ever come forward. Certain agricultural workers would have the power to criticize the project, but they do not have the sufficient publicizing capacities to denounce the land development problem. The absence of external opposition to a project that appears largely consensual, the weak participation of the public during the dialoguing campaigns staged by the Delta 3 operators and, more broadly, the fact that these logistics spaces do not generate problems, must be situated in the visible context of 'greening'. This can be interpreted as the highly positive perception of landscapes and industrial wastelands moving from 'grey to green'.[16] In other terms, it is trees themselves, here rolled out as a fence, that function as a screen. The 'greening' of the coal slagheaps also hides the contradiction that spans public policy, from the

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[16] Also, note the environmental paradox that does not provoke observable mobilization in other regions: under the guise of ecological arguments to reduce CO_2 emissions, the Delta 3 platform would benefit from prioritizing transportation by barge and train. Instead, we witness an increase in heavy transport truck traffic in the CAHC.

concern to increase the competitiveness of the ITT-irrigated territories on the one hand, to the attention given to major environmental harm on the other (Villalba 2013). However, between landscape camouflage and the hope for an economic restart, this development plan of orthogonal, rationalized inspiration has consequences on the use and representations of this territory, at the level of local communities and beyond.

Logistics and Trade Apparatus – Landscapes of Globalization

> Apparatus: 'a thoroughly heterogeneous ensemble consisting of discourses, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral and philanthropic propositions — in short, the said as much as the unsaid' (Foucault 1977: 194).

At the heart of our working hypothesis is the idea that there is a certain correlation between the presence of Delta 3 and Amazon in this area, as it lies simultaneously on the outskirts of the metropolitan territory and within the vast spaces of 'mass distribution' in the CAHC. The notion of a logistics and trade apparatus imposes a functional point of view but also, perhaps above all, a point of view linked with anthropology and urban development.

Concerning accessibility to mobile structures, the process of setting up the Auchan shopping centre in Noyelles-Godault can be analysed along lines similar to those used in the analysis of the Delta 3 in Dourges and the new French Amazon logistics platform in the industrial zone of Lauwin-Planque (Douaisis). Located in a communications hub composed of the motorways A1 and A21, railways, waterways and airways, the shopping centre is halfway between Lens and Douai and less than thirty minutes from the centre of Lille, in the municipality of Hénin-Beaumont. The shopping mall benefits from merchandise supply facilities and 'optimal' accessibility, expanding its 'consumer base' much further than the CAHC. It is easy to access from Lille and beyond. There are many potential consumers among the population of three million inhabitants in the area (Bonjour and Capot 2012), including Lille and its suburbs.

Our first field investigation suggested that the *logistics and trade apparatus* consists of three dimensions:

- Infrastructures linked directly to logistics: platforms, warehouses, wharfs, and spaces for the related services;

- 'Cosmetic' infrastructures: landscaped areas (embankments, hedges, dikes, 'natural' fences or barriers, seeding and planting), parks, paths, 'green and blue framework';

- Infrastructures of trade and service linked to these flows ('big box' mass-merchandisers, hotels, restaurants, various equipment).

These three dimensions work together simultaneously and in-depth on the qualities, use and territorial balance of the urban outskirts. Entering this zone is to enter 'another world', in the sense of a specific culture built around globalized trade, producing an in-depth territorial realignment at the local scale. The small towns at the urban outskirts are characterized by the

developments described here, but socio-cultural aspect are also important in order to develop a multidimensional understanding of this setting.

Urban Use and the Territorial Balance of the Logistics and Trade Apparatus
The logistics and trade apparatus involves technical assembly, as well as social assembly (Hennion and Latour 1993). We are interested in showing how it shapes and characterizes the urban world at the metropolitan outskirts.

From a landscaping point of view, at the level of the CAHC these developments characterize the spaces and urban limits at the edge of the Lille conurbation. These infrastructures and the landscape they compose directly reflect the evolution of urban use and territorial balance. An ethnographic analysis of these spaces allows us to identify the visible material qualities of these specific developments, the inhabitants' representations and the constraints and utilization opportunities that they offer.

Concerning logistics spaces, we note that one of the principle characteristics of these developments is their spatial segmentation. Around the Delta 3 and Amazon sites, the spaces are often inaccessible, protected by fences, barriers or embankments, and they are under video surveillance. The logical way to move around is to bypass the infrastructures, be they storage hangars or trans-shipment zones. The roads can be at right angles in the open country, with successive roundabouts often leading to dead-end roads awaiting future development projects. On the one hand, it is impossible to go from one place to another in a straight line; one must constantly weave around fenced-off plots of land. On the other hand, one must constantly climb bridges and road ramps to cross from one lane to the next. The roads are superposed on a tangle of bridges, ramps, roundabouts and underground passages. The distances travelled are considerably long.

The private car is the vehicular unit of reference. Urban spaces are rectilinear, and the logistics and trade corridors, parking and access roads are all dedicated to automobile use. There are very few pedestrians and other immediate proximity users. Life in the urban outskirts requires an automobile; indispensable for travel, it encapsulates life in an air-conditioned compartment, cut off from the outside. In this context, following Gibout (1998), it could be said that cars also acquire the character of a symbol of urban modernity and the achievement of individual driving freedom. One individual freedom is that automobiles allow people to cross the centre of the CAHC. This barrier, impassable on foot and more than 100 meters wide, is the major north-south axis of European industrial development. It allows the movement of people and merchandise alongside the A1 6-8 lane motorway and the rail tracks for the local, regional, high-speed and freight trains (*TGV, Intercités, TER, convois de fret*).

This logic applies to the spaces dedicated to commerce that surround the Auchan shopping centre in Noyelles-Godault. Only automobiles have access, passing through winding roads, bridges, tunnels and roundabouts. The technical logistics and trade apparatus dictates the order of transit. The segmentation of space around the logistics platforms continues around the retail area of the Auchan shopping centre. The difficult access results from the intertwining of successive developments. On leaving the A1 motorway, one realizes that the Auchan shopping centre is much broader than tall; it is no higher than a three-story building.

It is surrounded by dozens of smaller retail shops, restaurants and cinemas. The Holy Grail of consumption, it soon appears nearly unattainable because of the winding, tangled access road — there it is, barely 200 meters from A1 exit 26, but it takes one more than twenty minutes to enter it, pushing a gigantic shopping cart.

The buildings and their flashy logos may be eye-catching, but in terms of surface area most of the shopping complex consists of a vast parking space. White paint contrasts with the black tar (asphalt) in mathematical, orthogonal rationality. Paradoxically, once parked, the automobile world is transformed into a world of long-distance walking, excluding of course those with limited mobility. The world of 'big box' shopping is a world for people in good physical health.

The Aesthetic of Globalized Landscapes: A 'Standard' World
As this fragmented landscape continues to expand over cultivated fields, the farmlands begin to look like anomalies: spaces that are not built over are surrounded by new, tightly built suburbia. Older neighbourhoods persist here and there, the houses lining the roads like post-war anachronisms. The aesthetic qualities of the landscape are totally artificial. Compared to existing models, we are now dealing with an additional degree of standardized anthropization.

Incidentally, an ethnographic study of this world could begin from the interior of a hotel room in this area, where one finds a plastic bathroom moulded from one individual block and placed next to the standardized bed. Situated in the area surrounding the Noyelles-Gaudault Auchan mass retail zone, the Cerise hotel hosts the early-morning ethnographer, waking up in a custom-sized world. The layout of the austere room is visibly rationalized to the millimetre, at the lowest possible cost. With one step, a guest can cross from one side of the room to the other. The only signs of irrationally dangerous behaviour that could possibly disrupt the sterilized atmosphere include a plastic toilet tank melted by cigarette butts and a mixed smell of stale smoke and cleaning products. But this could also be interpreted as an intentional mark of violence and disgust, inflicted against this kind of room layout. Soap, shampoo and standard-format towels are provided for the shower. No need to hurry, coffee is served 24/7 by a machine in the lobby.

After a brief discussion with the man behind the reception desk, we learn that we can eat at the Poivre Rouge restaurant across the street. He specifies that we can have 'standard' food. 'If you want fresh products', he continues, 'there's another restaurant in the centre, but it's expensive!'

However, once outside the hotel, among the parked cars, we can appreciate the establishment's soundproofing; here, our senses are no longer spared the aggressive sounds of globalization. Cars and trucks speed non-stop behind a sound-proofing wall placed less than 15 meters away. A little further the TGV train flies by at top speed. If observing landscapes requires all five senses, the landscape of the logistics world demands them to be on full alert.

In this landscape, the prefab, plastic, PVC and other cheap, standardized materials reign. It is also the world of raucous lights — neon or coloured LEDs. There is a continuity between these facades and interior decor. The senses are constantly stimulated as, for

example, the dull roar of road and rail traffic outdoors gives way to ambient music and promotional announcements inside the local establishments.

As we enter the shopping mall surrounding Auchan, we note that it is organized like a street in the city centre, with squares, benches, café terraces and signs (street names, directions, and so on). As we stop to eat, the waiter asks if we want to sit 'inside or out'. We do not really understand. All evidence shows that we are already inside, but for him, the terrace is outside, even if the glass roof protects us from any climatic disturbance.

The first time we arrived in the city centre of Hénin-Beaumont, we were slightly in despair over finding nearly no cafés or restaurants. The streets were nearly empty, and the activity seemed to 'move in slow-motion'. The contrast is high with the abundant activity in the shopping mall, the swarming multitudes of people there and a sort of effervescence deriving from the colourful atmosphere and cheerful children playing in the central square. Downtown Hénin-Beaumont seems to have been transported here, along with all its commerce. Around these retail spaces, representations of an attractive, consumerist modernity are at play, like on a stage where big names in the agri-business industry boast their 'authentic', 'traditional' and 'natural' qualities that look like a nose-thumbing at the downtown heritage that the inhabitants have turned their backs on.

However, the anthropological sense of the downtown public space often goes beyond the urban function of commerce. The identity function is at the heart of urban representations. As Tarrius (1997) argued, in the city centre we live together as urban beings; meetings give a sense of freedom, and the markers of citizenship — the city hall, prefecture and museums — are there. If the supply of provisions is now situated in the outer retail areas, social interaction, cultural fun and leisure activities are also widespread.[17] Going to the movies, eating in a restaurant as a family, having a drink with friends, letting the children ride a carousel— all this is conceivable and possible in the mass-merchandising retail zone. It remains to be seen whether the 'markers of citizenship', also markers of belonging and identity, can be found here as well? From this point of view, a visible difference between these shopping malls and the downtown area is the absence of 'politics' and its symbols.

Territorial Evolution and Recomposing Urban Centralities

The territorial balance of the CAHC has been profoundly affected by the structural developments of logistics and commerce. Our working hypothesis is now that there has been a shift in activity from the former city centre to the Noyelles-Godault Auchan shopping mall. A reconstruction of urban centrality, the centres of small suburban towns seem to have been snatched away by these colossal shopping complexes, in terms of activities, representations and use.

Faced with large-scale commercial developments, artisans and small business owners cannot survive and close their shops one after the other; they either join the shopping zone or disappear. In the old, economically bleak centres, the price of real estate follows this decline.

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[17] On the importance of shopping districts and the diversity of practices in these spaces, see Bordreuil (2002).

These newly abandoned areas present opportunities for those with low investment capacity, such as immigrants. By means of a sales proposition not included in mass-market retailing (including but not limited to Kebab restaurants), they can develop a viable, ethnically based business that also satisfies other members of the population.

Concerning these springboard neighbourhoods,[18] we need to ask to what extent they bring out the link between evolution at the metropolitan level and the reclassification of former city centres at their outer limits not only in economic terms, but also in terms of socio-demographic development. At least this is a hypothesis that we will follow in the work that we will be carrying out.

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[18] Thus they are described in *La Ville Ordinaire*. Published in 2012 by French Ministère de l'Ecologie PUCA. Research Program*ITTECOP* (Infrastructures de Transports Terrrestres EcOsystèmes et Paysages), ADEME.

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Transforming Places, Changing Deities:
Spatial and Symbolic Negotiation in Marseille

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Marseille has undergone a deep transformation since the *Euroméditerranée* national action that started in 1995. When Marseille was crowned the European Capital of Culture in 2013, local *élites* applauded it as the finalization of a process that aimed to internationalize its image in order to attract tourism and investments. Nevertheless, the *urban regeneration* led by the state and enforced by local administrators was widely contested. The inhabitants' complex system of practices reveals that attachment to the old representations of the urban space of Marseille is still very strong and can be identified in the use of the public space. I explore the symbolic production of space in the case of Marseilles' urban regeneration process and observe how different grassroot social groups appropriate, negotiate and resist the new symbolic regime proposed and asymmetrically imposed by powerholders at international, national and local levels. Moreover, the conflicting use of space is a result of a dialectical negotiation between forms of instrumental power masked by the labels of legality, formality and order, as opposed to the values of solidarity, spontaneity and informality.
Keywords: Urban regeneration, symbolic representations, urban spaces and places, Marseille.

Urban Marketing as a Contemporary Production of the *Genius Loci*

In classical mythology, the Latin expression *genius locus* refers to the protective spirit of a place. It is a guardian that watches over a part of the world and imbues it with a special character. As an embodied symbol, it brings together all the qualities that the place is supposed to have, endowing it with a sort of magical protection. Thus, the *genius locus* keeps a place out of reach and save it from the practices of negotiation among human beings. It is thought to be a natural, prior existence been born out of the place itself. Its legitimacy lies in its sacred nature. However, although the *genius locus* is a human creation, regardless of its sacred nature, sooner or later it is inevitably critically and secularly redefined for more down to earth purposes. While in the past people imagined the *genius* of a place, today people create *images* of a place. These images are used as tool to frame, understand, brand and even sell spaces and places. As these deal with people's ordinary representations and plural customary practices, through the study of the case of Marseille we will find out that they are, more than we thought, a matter of recognition (Taylor 1992) and, lastly but most importantly, a matter of social justice.

Marseille has undergone a deep transformation since the *Euroméditerranée* national action that started in 1995. When Marseille was crowned the European Capital of Culture in 2013, local *élites* applauded the award as the finalization of a process that aimed to internationalize Maresille's image in order to attract tourism and investment. Nevertheless, the efforts to bring about an *urban regeneration* led by the state and enforced by local administrators were far from being uncontested. A complex system of practices by the inhabitants reveal that attachment to the old representations of the urban space of Marseille is still very strong and can be identified in certain uses of the public space.

Here, I explore the symbolic production of space in the case of Marseille's urban regeneration. During my fieldwork in Marseille-Provence, under the collective research project titled *Publics et practiques culturelles de Marseille-Provence 2013* carried out between 2012

and 2014, I focused on the practices, values, lifestyles and life projects of ordinary people, especially in relation to the urban space. The material that I gathered helped me to reconstruct the way *Genii* — or images — evolve and drive human spatial practices. I observed places both by standing aside and by participating, interacting intensively with people while using those spaces. I used visual instruments to register the use of space. I also asked people to draw the space for me in the form of maps and landscapes, in order to obtain a graphic trace of their cognitive representations. I compared these drawings with the official graphic representations produced by the Tourist Office or published in the media.

While focusing on the process of urban *renewal* and *touristification* of Marseille, the present discussion aims to explore how multi-level governance affects social dynamics and people in relation to urban space. I will focus on some contested places; that is, those seats of micro-conflicts among different social groups that are part of and subject to the effects of the regeneration process. The case studies will show how the traditional model of tourism development (Miossec 1977) has been substantially turned upside down, as city-marketing no longer exploits a traditional image of a given area but creates, instead, a distinctly new form which promotes specific interests (Appadurai 1990). An intentional, deliberate action is enforced at a symbolic level by powerholders in order to channel the management of the territory while transforming it for specific ends.

However, changing the image of a place is neither easy nor without consequences. Like changing deities, it is a delicate process that cannot be quickly and successfully imposed from one-side only. In my analysis I will observe how different grassroots social groups appropriate, negotiate and resist the new symbolic regime asymmetrically imposed by powerholders at international, national and local levels. Moreover, the (often) conflicting use of space is a result of a dialectical negotiation between forms of instrumental power masked under the label of legality, formality and order in opposition to values of solidarity, spontaneity and often informality.

On the Change of Marseille
According to its leading *élite,* for a long time the image of Marseille conveyed by the film *The French Connection* and episodes of violence in the *Quartiers Nord* has needed a symbolic and material reinvention at both national and international level. The need for a deep transformation was raised as a public issue and attracted a number of actors. In the economic sphere, a group of local prominent entrepreneurs gathered in 2006 under the umbrella denomination, *Ambition Top 20 Club;* their aim was to place Marseille among the twenty most important European cities in terms of economic activities.

The quarrelsome local political class was determined to collaborate with the Club and to participate in the realization of this project, the finalization of which could produce a great political capital for them. On the other hand, the central government under Sarkozy saw it as an extraordinary opportunity to enhance the presence and influence of the French state in the Mediterranean World. The first substantial visual transformation of Marseille, which initially started under the *Euroméditerranée* national action, worked on changing its image rather than

providing or improving services for its inhabitants.[1] This 'cosmetic' operation started in 1995, under the supervision of the major, Jean-Claude Gaudin, who was also Minister for the Management of the Territory, City and Integration in Alain Juppe's Second Cabinet. The operation was presented as a state action to solve the problems of the city. This state-led action focused on the redevelopment of a rather large area in the Northern districts of the city, commonly reputed as the most problematic one. It involved three main public institution at the local level: the Region, the Department and the Municipality. These local players, despite their opposing views, agreed on the project to renovate both the national and the international reputation of the city by creating new icons. Within the same framework, each institution engaged in further initiatives. For example, alongside the involvement in the *Euroméditerranée* project, the Municipality planned a deep renewal of the Old Port (*Vieux Port*) which was projected to host a prominent landmark: Norman Foster's *ombrière*.[2] This *growth machine* (Molotch 1976) became even stronger in the following years. As an official at the Conseil Général des Bouches-du-Rhône explained, 'Independent of the political creed, we were not used to collaborate nor to work together with other institutions (*collectivités*), but we learnt to do that under a common goal'.[3] Moreover, the group of entrepreneurs of *Ambition Top 20 Club* gathered several private funded institutions and influential local stakeholders around the idea of regeneration. And it was not by chance that the Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie de Marseille-Provence (CCIMP) became the leader of the bid of 2013 European Capital of Culture: a target which was good enough to achieve the end of these *élites* — the change of city image. The prospect of hosting such a *mega event*, and the preparation for it, transformed the issue of *city image* into a public concern. As an external player to, and distant from, local political rivalries, the State engaged in communication campaigns that not only affirmed but also projected the change of Marseille's image as a *necessity* along with its urban transformation. Icons of modernity, such as Zaha Hadid's CMA -CGM tower and the MuCEM (Museum of the European and Mediterranean Civilizations) became the main symbols of the regenerated and renewed image of Marseille. Region PACA placed its auditorium Villa Méditerranée on the *esplanade* J4.[4] These buildings, together with new or renewed buildings of the 'old' Marseille, were part of the *showcase* promoted by public institutions, which also included the old Docks (mainly used for offices), the Silo (an old granary, converted into a stage), the Archives, the malls *Les terrasses du Port* and *Les Voûtes*.

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[1] This also happened in previous cases like, for example, the social housing project of 1960s and 1970s.

[2] Norman Foster's *ombrière* raised objections because it was chosen by the Municipality after a public contest which favoured Corinne Vezzoni's project.

[3] Interview with the Author, Marseille, July 2013.

[4] The Villa Méditerranée, the project of the PACA Region and the national museum MuCEM are in the words of François De Boisgelin, manager of the Villa, 'fully complementary. (…) There are things that States, busy in their diplomatic affairs, cannot achieve, while regions can develop relationships, imagine networks among scholars, businessmen, organizations... Michel Vauzelle (president of PACA region in 2013) has a Mediterranean hyper-trophism: in order to develop collaborations, it is often easier to by-pass Ministries' (Agnès Freschel and Cloarec in *Zibeline,* a popular magazine in Marseille, November 2012).

Challenging the usual perception of the urban space, these symbols of the *new Marseille* are printed on postcards, tourist brochures and in the publications produced by the institutional urban marketing. They are used as tools for 'cleaning the image of the city' (*laver l'image de Marseille*), as explicitly expressed by an official of the city Municipality. This *aesthetic turn* was part of a larger and across-the-board strategy aiming to attract a new middle-class,[5] capital and investment in order to make Marseille visible and a potential participant in the global *competition of territories* (Harvey 1989, Lloyd 2006), in which several public institutions feel involved worldwide (Prato 2016, Vicari Haddock 2010, Kavaratzis 2004). The urban projects in the *Euroméditerranée* perimeter of Marseille, are often characterized by an unusual architectural language. The colours, shapes and proportions of the new buildings are very different from the traditional architecture of the rest of the city and, according to many people, they seem to be inspired by the style of North-European cities. The local *élites* wanted to lower the risk of being reputed as not open enough internationally. In their bid to make their territory internationally accepted and recognized as a good place for investment, the local favoured foreign and assertive canons of architecture over the traditional ones,

Input to Change

The change contemplated in framework of *Euroméditerranée* was limited only to a specific area which was supposed to be transformed from a peripheral and almost empty space into a new centre and *showcase* of the city. The project envisaged the creation of new residential areas and business zones, together with the development of the necessary infrastructures to support them, the construction of new buildings and the rehabilitation of old ones. All this was headed by a number of marketing actions aiming 'to make Marseille attractive; recruit businesses, investors and international organizations, as well as create new jobs'.[6]

As I have mentioned, in order to achieve its goal, the *Euroméditerranée* project was presented in contrast with the 'old' city, an approach that fuelled several forms of resistance. Within this framework, the implementing bodies were authorized to:

> 'Carry out its development and facilities projects or projects on behalf of local authorities and institutions; acquire, if needed by expropriation, any already built or yet-to-be built buildings located within the project area; tear down the structures acquired through expropriation; exercise the 'right of pre-emption' when allowed by law' (from the *Euroméditerranée* website, see n. 6).

In the view of the inhabitants and the local committees that opposed the project, this meant 'erasing an entire section of the city from the map in order to build up another one' (*écraser un*

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[5] Jean-Louis Russac, from the Economic Development Service of the Urban Community, says that 'Our goal is to attract in Marseille a real estate clientele who does not yet live here but can be potentially interested in leisure purchase' (*Marseille l'Hebdo*, November 2009).
[6] From the *Euroméditerranée* website, http://www.euromediterranee.fr/districts/introduction.html?L=1; accessed on 16/3/2014.

quartier en entier pour en faire un autre).[7] This deep and somehow traumatic *regeneration* was regarded as an organized and, to a certain extent, radical effort by the public institutions to change the *genius locus* of the city. As such, the whole process cannot fully be understood outside the power relations that affect the conception of space itself. Thus, some areas which were considered by public bodies as 'empty spaces' and, on this premise, were used as a starting point to build the new image of the city, were, in fact, neither symbolically nor materially empty. Represented in the public institutional discourse as *friches*, the former industrial areas and the port, to which the public did not have access, were actually used daily by many inhabitants as their first point of access to the sea. The field data show that these places were viewed by local people as leisure areas for picnics, swimming and sunbathing near the sea. The former dock J4 was seen by the inhabitants of the nearby neighbourhood, in their words, as a *cour* (courtyard): a space for socialisation which worked for more than just leisure time. Emile, a man in his sixties, all tanned and smiling, told me in the summer of 2014, 'I always came here when I did not have work'; he added, 'it is simply the best place for playing *pétanque* near here. It's free, there is a nice view, you always meet someone and you can find some labour if you meet people, I have worked thousands of times in painting walls and in relocations thanks to people who asked me for my services while I was playing *pétanque*: that is not just a way of spending my time, it is a way to go out and not to stay alone and it is a way to feel good when you have nothing'. Emile comes to the Esplanade everyday (even after its renovation) and can disappear for months, when he has a job. 'I do not have very close friends, but I have instead many… many mates that do the same as me and we always try to help each other. One of them taught me how to use a mobile phone when I needed to stay in contact with the hospital for my mother and after a while we went together to visit her'.

Historical images and postcards from the beginning of the twentieth century portray these same images of leisure and socialisation,[8] and can be usefully compared with the images produced today. During the good season, many students come to Esplande after school or during their days off, dressed in t-shirts and swimming suits, often bringing with them some music player and spending their time either on the dock or on the ancient walls of Fort Saint-Jean. Regardless of the new tourist groups visiting the place, they ceaselessly jump in the water and climb back up. 'I come here just because we meet here', said a 14-year-old boy from the *cité* La Viste, in September of 2013. He went on to say, 'When you are looking for me, either I am at home, either at school or here. Where should I go? There is nothing where I live, nothing to do, nor a place where to … where to meet, nor a place where to have a beer, to spend my time'. La Viste is one of the first *cités* we encounter on the way to the North, a town with a relatively good quality of life compared with several other towns. And when I asked a guy at the Esplanade to draw me the place we were in, he drew it in relation to the Northern part of the city, while completely excluding the Old Port (and, more obviously, the South). The mixed residential and

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[7] From my interview with a member of a local organized movement against *Euroméditerranée*, August 2013.

[8] See for example *Marseille, la baignade aux Pierres-Plates, 1er quart du XX siècle* in the Musée national des Arts et Traditions Populaires, Direction des Musées de France.

commercial area of *Quartiers Nord*, generally poor in services and economic activities, is characterized by informal economic activities upon which a large part of the local population depends (Mattina 2003). The focus of the *Euroméditerranée* programme is organized around a mix of trade and exchange of goods that oscillates between formality and informality and depends on the international commercial flows of goods exchange. The *Marché aux Puces*, is the main place where these practices — *partage* — take place. It operates as the centre of the local economy in which the local population partakes. While sustaining a communitarian type of economy based on self-subsistence, this marketplace, like a Mediterranean bazar or *souk*, interacts with the economy of the whole city and region. It is defined not only by trade but also as a place for production and consumption where retailers do not just sell their merchandise but also, as for example in the case of clothes, transform it into items which are specifically suitable for their customers. Moreover, here stolen goods or objects commonly defined in Marseille as *tombé du camion* (fallen from a truck) are 'laundered'. According to the *Euroméditerranée* project, the future of this *Marché* is uncertain. However, within the general aims of the urban regeneration, the area is foreseen as 'normalized' in terms of legality. The shift towards fully formal economic activities worries many inhabitants who are involved in informal exchanges. Some feel that such 'qualitative' leap towards formalized trade would drastically lower their living standard due to taxation. For some others it means going out of business altogether.

Alongside the projected change on the *Marché aux Puces,* part of the residential area of the *Quartiers Nord*, also considered among the poorest in France, is to be transformed through the creation of an '*Ecocité*'. This ecologically compatible complex of residential buildings will replace the 'unhealthy' and otherwise poor houses that currently 'blemish' the landscape of the place and that will be demolished. The blueprint for the new neighbourhood includes the latest generation of apartments constructed with innovative materials, including photo-voltaic systems and solar panels. Instead of feeling happy about this total 'makeover', the current inhabitants are rather worried about rent hikes. Officially unemployed, most of them address their situation of official poverty by actively engaging in informal economic activities in the community. As indicated by Emile's words, this grants them a relative and temporary condition of comfort. With the 'normalisation' and the development of a new, 'cleaner' and undoubtedly more expensive way of life, most of them fear expulsion from the neighbourhood where they have always lived.

The idea of 'expulsion' was not foreign to the implementers of the project. According to the manager of *Marseille-Amenagement*, 'renewal entails a rise in the prices because of the enhancement of services. We do not want to exclude people who live in these neighbourhoods. They will be moved in nearby buildings. It is true that only people who can afford the increase in the rents will be able to enjoy *this* accommodation'.[9] Nonetheless, grassroots local committees such as *Comités de Quartier* organized to protect the inhabitants from the effects of the renewal process. They demanded from the authorities a period of welfare deflation as a measure deigned to ease the burden of these changes. To date, it seems that the measures indicated in these

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[9]   Quoted   by   Erwan   Blanchard   in   *La   Marseillaise*,   15   May   2001 (http://boulesteix.blog.lemonde.fr/2008/02/04/citations-assassines-mais-dactualite/).

requests and recommendations have not been implemented. Instead, a mixed public-private system of investments is favoured in order to bear the high costs of the whole operation.[10] However, I note, *Les Crottes*, the poorest part of the neighbourhood, is not included within the ZAC system (*Zones d'aménagement concerté*) and will not be affected by the project until 2020.

Changing deities? Adhesion, Resistance and Attachment

The project of *urban regeneration*, driven by the alliance of the State with the local public institutions,[11] introduced new values and *genii* into the urban space. Legality, ecology and order were the new values, while the old ones were defined by solidarity, proximity and a sense of informality. These new values were encouraged by international and European protocols, and were enmeshed in state decrees and formalized in laws. They disqualified the old values that were embedded in the customs of the people who lived in the areas under transformation. The new hierarchy of values is instrumentally used by the public institutions to legitimize change as a 'necessity' of globalization and modernity. The idea of change embedded in this new set of values was approached in different ways by the city inhabitants, who share rather conflicting perspectives in relation to the renewal process. The ethnography suggests that the difference in perspectives seems to be not only a product of the plurality of value systems that urban life encapsulates, but to be triggered also by the different values engendered by the symbolic and strategic negotiations in which people engage in the urban space. The categories discussed below highlight the main conflicting positions of the inhabitants of Marseille on the regeneration and renewal of their city.

The first category includes the inhabitants who share a sense of commitment to change. From their point of view, the new look of the city is just fine. They accepted the *international* place-branding that was strongly encouraged by the local public institutions. They felt that the city had an unexpressed potential which needed to be shown worldwide *(à faire connaître au monde entier)*. Proud of the symbols of the 'new image', especially of the MuCEM and the Villa Méditerranée, these people shared the same belief as the public institutions involved in implementing the change, that Marseille needed to improve its image (*il faut ameliorer l'image de Marseille*). The way they talk about the city is very similar to the way the institutional city-branding strategy represents it to potential tourists and investors. The 'positive' aspects of the city are highlighted whereas the 'negative' ones are avoided in the conversation. When talking to them, the observer has the feeling of being part of one of the video clips produced by *Espace*

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[10] As part of the ZAC system, they mix private and public interests in order to sustain the development of the project: for example, a 15-year rent was established with CCIMP for the creation of a 'Provence business skylounge' on the last two floors of Jean Nouvel's Marseillaise skyscraper in Arenc that has yet been constructed.

[11] The public budget for *Euroméditerranée* 2 is about 120 million, provided by the State (33.3 percent), the Municipality of Marseille (21.4 percent), the PACA Region (15.1 percent), the Departement of Bouches-du-Rhône (15.1 percent) and the Urban Community of Marseille Provence Métropole (15.1 percent). See *Euroméditerranée 2 à Marseille : extension du plus grand projet urbain d'Europe du Sud*, September 2012.

Hyperion. As a music studio located in Marseille, since 2013 *Espace* has produced a series of video clips aiming to show worldwide a fully positive image of the city. Musicians were brought together to create an original composition and a film clip was produced that involved inhabitants; it highlighted the relaxed life style, the sunshine and the naturalistic, artistic and cultural elements of the city. The images in these video clips are very close to those used by the *growth machine* as place-branding tools to attract tourists and businesses.

However, I observed, the regeneration project was not welcomed by everyone. Concerned with the input and consequences of change, part of the population explicitly opposed it. They did not express their opposition through a united movement but, rather, through groups of concerned citizens who contested specific issues in the Marseille's plan renewal. There were organized protests focusing on distributive justice and targeting the cost of the project. The organizers' concern was not the change as such; they questioned the allocation of important resources that could help to ease, or even solve current social problems, but were being used, instead, to restyle buildings and promote their image. For example, in 2013 concerned citizens criticized the expenditure of public money to stage ephemeral events, while problems related to healthcare, education and social housing remained unsolved. In other cases, the inhabitants of specific areas that were being renewed protested against the *touristification* of the area. The case of the Panier neighbourhood is one worth describing in detail.

When at the beginning of the 1990s, the Municipality of Marseille started to implement urban regeneration in the Panier area,[12] the neighbourhood was meant to be transformed into a tourist hub and as such it was included in the touristic tours. The inhabitants who opposed this move reacted by throwing vegetables at the little sightseeing tourist trains that crossed the area and insulting the passengers. This event, described by Girel (2008), took place on 14 July 1994 and it was led by the artist Marc Boucherot, who tried to express in an artistic form the social awkwardness of this regeneration process. Tourism in Panier brought out a clash not only between legality and custom and between public and private bodies, but also between representations of the urban space: since the inhabitants considered the streets and squares as collectively shared spaces, they saw the tourists as foreigners to be kept out of their community.

Today, twenty years after this event, the flows of tourists moving through the streets of Panier are seen as something that cannot be successfully opposed, and as a source of income. As the presence of tourism in the area became stronger, the protests lost momentum and the inhabitants channelled their energies into various ways of exploiting the economic potential generated by the tourists. They opened boutiques and souvenirs shops, rented their rooms to the tourists and provided other services in order to make more agreeable their stay in the neighbourhood.

So, in the case of the Panier neighbourhood, at first the inhabitants felt that because of tourism they lost some privileges, but they quickly found a way to negotiate and compensate their loss benefiting from the economy generated by tourism. However, in some cases, as in *Les Crottes* quartier, the situation was more conflictual as the renewal project developed under the

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[12] This process started with the first 'Urban pilot project', financed by the EU in 1990-1995.

Euroméditerranée framework was received as a form of expulsion and strongly opposed by the local population. Most inhabitants felt that they were forced to move out of the area due to the rise in living costs and rents. Resistance, as in the case of the Panier area took the form of an explicit protest, expressed in demonstrations, fliers, stickers and graffiti. The *Euroméditerranée* project managers proposed to involve the local community in public hearings and participatory actions. However, in the local people's view these meetings were more explanatory sessions than proper and sincere consultations aiming to listen to their views and include them in the plans for the development of the area. Believing that the State had undermined their right to dwell in the area, they lost confidence in their local officials, who, they felt, would not defend them in this matter.[13] They saw the *Euroméditerranée* project as an invader (*envahisseur*) that must be fought off. The struggle took place on a spatial basis under the motto *Euroméditerranée go away* (*Euroméditerranée dégage*). For some people, changing deities meant to be expelled from their homes.

Another kind of response to change developed by the inhabitants of Marseille is underlined by a lack of recognition of the transformation, as if everything was the same. This attitude was not expressed publicly; rather, it surfaced in everyday practices. Such instances are particularly interesting because they show how the status and meaning of a given practice can change without altering the form of the practice itself: the 'normalization' (Foucault 1975) process of the areas within the *Euroméditerranée* framework, aimed to develop a 'new image' of the city, explicitly set forth the illegitimacy of the traditional local use of public space. During and after the intervention, the practices by which the inhabitants appropriated public areas for specific uses were overtly stressed under the rules implementing the new image. Practices such as occupying public areas with chairs and tables, selling food without a license or swimming in the sea, which seemed to be allowed by the invisibility and the distance of the existing laws, are now explicitly banned. In these public areas — a world which appeared to be driven by different and very local rules, governed by their specific *genius* — notice boards and signs citing rules embedded in French law now alert people not to engage in such activities. Nonetheless, these practices are considered by a large part of the population to encapsulate the true character of the city. Many interviewees have listed these social practices among the reasons why they love living in Marseille. Emile explained, 'It is a Southern city and this means that you do not live here in the same way you live in Avignon or Paris because here people do not hurry to go to work, do not hurry to come back home. Here people just like to spend their time together and to enjoy (*faire la fête*) and that is why people who are searching for a job go to the North and join a company, people who just want to enjoy their lives stay here, even if you cannot easily find a job, but you always find a way to sort out your life (*t'en sortir*)'. Paradoxically, they claim this informality to be an element of their quality of life, while there is something missing in the better quality of life that *Euroméditerranée* wants to achieve for the place. Others, who used to look at

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[13] Local administrators often agreed with the projects of expulsion. For example, in 2003 the town planning councillor, Claude Vallette stated in *Le Figaro* that in Marseille 'We need people who can produce wealth. We should get rid of half of our population. The heart of the city is worthy of someone else' (Eric Zemmour, *Le Figaro*, 18 November 2003).

Marseille and France as two distinct worlds, regarded these practices as an embodiment of the 'Mediterranean spirit to the city' and wondered how they could be banned by a project that paradoxically takes the Mediterranean Sea as the main symbolic and cultural point of reference.

The field material suggest that regardless of the new operating rules the attachment of the inhabitants of Marseille to a peculiar conception and use of the urban space continues to find expression in their daily practices. It is worth noting that the new supposed *genius locus* failed to suppress them; instead it somehow negotiated their existence by tolerating them in the landscape of the new image of the city. For example, regardless of the big sign that clearly prohibits diving and swimming at the J4 dock area, the guards patrolling the area do not usually rebuke those who swim there unless they interfere with the nautical traffic. Similarly, even though the inhabitants were informed through public notices that selling food was forbidden without a specific workplace hygiene certificate and restaurateur qualification, during the Festival of Panier (*Fête du Panier*) in 2013, no fines where issued to the unauthorized food stands. This tolerance is a basic form of negotiated permissibility that can be also regarded as a mechanism of recognition by the authorities of people's attachment to a customary use of public space that works as well as a means to accommodate such practices within the new image of Marseille.

Here, the resistance to change is not explicit but implicit and it is embedded in the customary use of space which the new city ethos specifically forbids publicly. The ethnography suggests that sometimes people purposely resort to the customary use of space as a mechanism to challenge the new rules and the authority of those who imposed them, while at other times the practice takes place by force of habit. The articulation of old practices, particularly regarding the use of space, in the new context produced by the *Euroméditerranée* project of Marseille can be regarded both as an expression of resistance to new *genius locus* and as a form of hybridization of it.

Conclusions

In this article I have explored the first phase of reaction to the change promoted in Marseille by the *growth machine* through the *Euroméditerranée* project and the European Capital of Culture. My main aim was to offer an overview of the articulated forms of empowerment and endorsement involved in the process of changing the image of a city, such as Marseille. The ethos of the new Marseille proposed and implemented by several public institutions, led by the State and pursued through the ephemeral actions envisaged by *Euroméditerranée* project of urban regeneration and European Capital of Culture, was contested and it generated different reactions among local people. The inhabitants not only showed their disagreement by protesting, but persisted in using the spaces as they conceived them. In the process, they made explicit their attachment to the places which were being transformed as to make Marseille more attractive for investment and tourism. The inhabitants exercised their right to *use* the urban space not as projected by the institutions but as they *frame* it. The case studies that I have discussed show that every form of governance of the urban space (by the State, the local institutions, the private sector or the media) is likely to having to be negotiated with the symbolic *attachment* people have to places. Thus, while the symbolic order encapsulated by places in the urban settings

produces behavioural rules and relational codes for their users, their meaning, which is articulated in the representation of a given place and the ways in which it is used, demands negotiation among the agencies that compete in defining it. Therefore, when we speak about 'images' of the city, we need to recognize the relevant contexts of power, whether these images are the results of operations of urban marketing that brand and exploit cities as *mediascapes* (Appadurai 1990) to influence people's imagined world or emerge from people's customary spatial practices that embody their resistance to rules and regulations imposed by the authorities on the symbolic order. Failure to do so would impair our understanding of urban life and space.

In the case of Marseille, we have seen that the pretence to change 'the' image of the city through a top-down action involving the introduction of new symbols was confronted with the actions of a variety of players, whose cognitive representations of the place could not be easily erased or replaced. The explicit and implicit forms of resistance do not tell us only something about the collision between conflicting views and value systems regarding the nature of space usage, they also show how a negotiated representation of urban space emerges while these conflicting perspectives are negotiated in a coherent frame. Therefore, customary forms of behaviour and activities that are regarded by the public authorities of Marseille as no longer permissible in the public space, are in fact tolerated as long as they become useful for the new image of the city. Such activities not only express an implicit form of resistance by the inhabitants, who claim the right to use the urban space in a way that is meaningful to them, they also contribute to giving consistency to the new image tailored by the authorities while retaining the *picturesque* character and Mediterranean flavour of the city. Moreover, as the case of the Panier neighbourhood suggests, the new image of the city proposed by the institutions can be appropriated and transformed into fruitful practices by the inhabitants who once explicitly opposed it.

Changing the *genius locus* of a place, is neither easy nor free of consequences, especially when it is articulated through asymmetrical relations. As the case that I have discussed shows, regardless of their legality, changes imposed by institutional powers that seriously affect people's everyday practices of space are subject to being morally challenged, particularly when those affected by them feel powerless and see them as unjust. If change cannot be avoided, it should still be studied and treated as a social issue, regardless of the difference between formal legality, substantive ethics and subjective morality. In short, the social practices about urban space that have developed during the decade of urban regeneration in Marseille tell us a great deal not only about people's continuous *struggle for recognition* (Taylor 1992), but also about how space, especially when it is 'sacralised' by social practices, is inevitably a matter of justice.

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Institutional Actors in Action: Building Governance in the City

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I study the process of renovation of the Naples sea port as a good example to study changes in urban planning. In Italy, the up-grading of port facilities is generally funded by European, national and regional resources and involves public and private actors in their planning and management. Here, I look at the relationships between public bodies and private businesses in the context of the liberalisation process introduced by the Government's Reform in the management of public services. The analysis addresses issues that often arise in the literature on public policies, such as the emergence of interest groups, the role played by key actors who influence the decision-making processes and the way in which their actions may be relevant in finding solutions to collective problem. I examine their strategies, interests and motivations and reflect on how certain actions are defined by the context in which they take form and are amplified by the meaning the actors give to the rules – formal and informal – that govern their field of action.
Keywords: Ports, governance, private and public bodies, legitimacy.

Territorial Governance in Action

This article addresses Port Reform in Italy, looking particularly at the situation in Naples. As in other world cities, Naples sea port renovation is a good example to study and understand changes in urban planning, stimulating an analysis of the way in which the public institutions involved in the process of change have learned to construct a new vision of the city through the rhetoric of renewal (Monge 2011, 2012).

In Italy, the up-grading of port facilities is generally funded by European, national and regional resources and involves public and private actors in their planning and management. As part of a wider reform on the liberalisation of public sector, the Law 84/1994, calls for the involvement and engagement of a number of actors in port activities that vary from public institutions to private investors. In this essay, I discuss the initial findings of a research that investigates the interaction among private and public actors in building a new model of territorial governance in accordance with current legislation.[1] The focus will be on a group of private actors who have specific economic interests in the Naples port and on their attempt to counteract the liberalisation process introduce by the Reform in the management of public services.

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[1] The data used in this work derive from a research project that started in 2008 and ended in 2010. However, the investigation process still continues in order to endorse actual events. From a methodological point of view, the data were generated by the combination of statistical sources, official documents and written media publication, with 24 in-depth interviews carried out with key actors. For clarity, I analyse the three presidential terms (1996 to 2000; 2000 to 2004 and 2004 to 2008) that followed the implementation of the Reform. During this period, two Presidents run the Port Authority. As we shall see, their actions were influenced by several internal and external factors and by the actors with whom they had to interact. These were the ship-owners, the dealers, a consulting firm and various subcontractors. For the public administration, the Regional, Provincial and Municipal authorities and the central government came into play. Finally, there were the trade unions and the associations of industrialists.

In the discussion that follows, I look at current events against the background of what has occurred during the reform process. The analysis of the fieldwork material addresses issues that often arise in the literature on public policies, such as the emergence of interest groups, the role played by key actors who influence the decision-making processes and the way in which the actions of these actors may be relevant in finding solutions to collective problems (Capano 1996, 2009; Regonini 2001). In order to understand the role of the key actors in Naples sea port reform, I focus on their strategies, interests and motivations and explore how certain actions are defined by the context in which they take form and are amplified by the meaning the actors give to the rules – formal and informal – that govern their field of action.

My working hypothesis is that, instead of leading to more transparency, public action demanding forms of governance characterized by greater flexibility, unpredictability and uncertainty can facilitate the private interests of some actors and strengthen their personal networks at the expense of other parties and of public interest generally (Pardo 2004; Pardo and Prato 2011; Cooper and Brady 1981; De Vivo 2004, 2013; Doig and Hargrove 1987; Sinclair 1999). From this analytical perspective, further implications of the implementation of public policies emerge. Public administration has often experienced profound changes during the transition from centralized coordination to hybrid and complex organizational forms (Capano and Lippi 2010, Donolo ed. 2006) involving new models of governance in the city (and for the city) that have further complicated the connections among different levels of government and between public and private sectors, making it necessary to use specific tools to facilitate their cooperation (Bifulco and De Leonardis 1997; De Vivo ed. 2006, 2013; Le Galès 2011; Mayntz 1999). Thus, key actors become relevant in the integration of multilevel governance and so do the ways used for establishing coordination among the actors involved.

The Ports Strategy in EU Policies

The regeneration of ports is a crucial policy area in European development strategies. The persistence of a logistic gap that affects mainly the southern regions has motivated the European Union (EU) to devise a specific strategy targeted to improve their economies. These regions enjoy excellent geographical locations but fail to exploit fully this advantage. As with other important policy areas, the European Commission is working on a political and economic project aimed at strengthening international trade through a better port policy. The objective is to facilitate transport connections among European territories in order to encourage the growth of a large commercial area, potentially capable of competing with the Asian 'giants'.

A document produced by the European Commission encourages national governments to review their maritime laws and regulations in more competitive terms (Caruso and Scaglione 2002). The content of this document is influenced by the theoretical approach of the New Public Management. In the wake of the liberalization and privatization processes that are taking place across the world, also in Italy there are attempts to reform the public administration (Avolio 2006, Cerase ed. 1999, D'Albergo and Vaselli 1997, Meneguzzo

2001, Rebora 1999). A 'wind' of change blowing from Anglo-Saxon countries brought about the belief that market principles should be injected in the public system as a means to cope with the State's inefficiency and 'failure' to provide services. Thus, the idea of 'marketization' and 'management' (Cerase 2006) became fashionable in addressing the problems of the public sector (Czarniaskwa and Joerges 1995a and 1995b).

The conditions of the international ports are critical. In Italy, the modernization of port facilities is on the national government agenda. This is particularly significant to South Italy where ports are geographically well placed but suffer structural weaknesses that limit their potential, making them incapable of playing a role in the growing world-wide trade system.

Prior to the 1994 Reform, the Italian legislation ruled that the national ports should be regulated by the Code of Navigation entrusted to the so-called Maritime Authority. This Reform initiated the decentralization process of port management activities from state-centred bodies to locally-based ones. One of the most important aims was to concentrate in one public body functions and tasks that were previously dispersed among many administrative bodies of the state. As the Maritime Authority proved rather ineffective in fulfilling such expectations, these difficulties led to the 1994 Reform and to the birth of the Port Authorities, which brought about a radical shift in the management of port activities, especially as private actors and investors were introduced as key players in the field. To recap, the Reform introduced the following innovations: 1) the establishment of Port Authorities; 2) new rules in the classification of ports, based on size (big, medium or small); 3) the separation between political decisions and public management; 4) the liberalization of port services and activities (now managed by private companies); 5) a change in labour relations, with new rules that draw on the private sector in regulating the employment of public personnel; 6) a three-year planning protocol for the development of the ports (based on the analysis of a port's targets, and human and financial resources).

The Implementation of the Port Reform in Naples

In the scenario that I have outlined, the construction of territorial governance began with a rather complex interaction among many actors who were directly or indirectly involved in port activities. In Naples, the Reform offered an important opportunity for the upgrading and modernization of the port. However, the upgrading process was marked by several problems. To list a few, there was a weak control over the commodities transiting in the port;[2] a reduction in public and private investment; and the appointment of a Commissioner to supervise and regulate the financial debt that had been generated under the previous management. Various obstacles emerged during the implementation of the Reform; in particular, the opposition of the dealers and ship-owners, who were the local players most interested in maintaining the status quo.

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[2]In the present discussion, I do not examine the illegal traffic in the port. I shall only mention that, as documented by judicial proceedings and by several scientific and journalistic works (see, for example, Saviano 2006), the illegal exchange system has created a sort of 'parallel world'.

This reform attempted to undermine the dominance of the few companies that over time had consolidated their profits drawing on the support of their economic and political relations.[3] These companies felt that by allowing access to new players (their competitors) in decisions crucial to the life of the port they could lose their influence and privileged position.[4] These dynamics became visible with the appointment of first President of the Port Authority. The Reform emphasized the strong relevance of the managerial role of the president. This means that the president must hold a maximum level of experience and must have proven skills in key areas of the economy and in the dynamics of transport and port management. These requirements were meant to be a barrier against political interference. In addition to these professional criteria, a key aspect of the reform concerns the use of power of the president in the exercise of administrative tasks, as it allows more freedom in administrative action for the purpose of implementing liberalization. Under the new rules, the president can suspend existing rights in the use of port facilities, amend existing licenses or permits and establish new ones. He or she can also set fixed fees to be paid by the licensed users of state-owned assets.

Aware of the substantial changes these new rules could bring about in the way in which the life of the port was governed, the local ship-owners and other port dealers paid particular attention to what was going on. They knew that, although public bodies other than the president were in charge of certain *mechanisms* of control, the Reform would give the president great power in decision-making and in operational choices. For these reasons, at the time of the election of the first president, local actors rallied around Lauro, one of the candidates and a member of a large and powerful family of local ship-owners.[5] For them, he represented continuity with the past.

The election of the first President of the Port Authority was marked by numerous delays and prolonged conflict between the central government and the local government. During the statutory electoral procedure, the different, often conflicting interests of non-governmental national and local actors surfaced, halting the process several times.

According to the Reform, three candidates should be selected through a process of negotiation between the national government and a plurality of local institutions, such as the local governing bodies (Regional, Provincial and Municipal), the Chamber of Commerce, the Association of Industrialists and the trade unions. The names of the three selected candidates must then be submitted to a Parliamentary Commission appointed by the Secretary of State for Transport and Navigation, who chooses the successful candidate. Often local actors try to reach an agreement on a single candidate, whose name will then be submitted to the

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[3] On this kind of networking, see Pardo (2012)

[4] Licensing rules allows the holding company to use specific facilities for a long period of time (up to thirty years).

[5] This man is a descendant of Achille Lauro, who was one of the most powerful ship-owners in Italy and who became Mayor of Naples after World War II. Achille Lauro's personal and family vicissitudes were strictly intertwined with those of the city. For a historical reconstruction of the rise and decline of his financial and political empire, see Allum (1979).

Parliamentary Commission. Of course, this strategy was meant to influence the final decision at national level, reducing the Commission's scope for choice (Taccogna 2000, Vermiglio 2002).

In the Naples case, the Commission rejected the locally proposed candidates three times. On the first of these three occasions, the proposed candidate was a centre-right militant who enjoyed good relations with the President of the Regional government.[6] A complaint was subsequently submitted to the Regional Administrative Court on his behalf because he claimed that his run for the Presidency had been blocked on political grounds by the centre-left parties that ruled the city.[7] After this first negative outcome, the attempts to agree locally on specific candidates collided also with a wall of mutual distrust among conflicting territorial actors. The ship-owners and the dealers insisted on electing someone who knew the port reality well and enjoyed good relations with the Association of Industrialists. The local governing bodies, supported by political parties, aimed at occupying powerful positions in public sectors deemed strategic for the economy. The candidates canvassed for support in their social, political and family networks. At the end of a long process of negotiation, the member of the Lauro family became President of the Port Authority. He prevailed, benefiting from his powerful background in the shipping industry and the support of a network of MPs in the centre-right coalition government and of some trade-union representatives. So, finally, about two years after the Reform law was passed, a territorial agreement was reached between the regional and municipal government (respectively run by the centre-right and the centre-left) and was approved by the Minister of Public Infrastructure. While so much time was spent on reaching this result, a new national election was won by a left-centre coalition.[8]

The Construction of Local Governance: The First Phase
The establishment of the Port Authority marked the real start of the process of implementation of the Reform. The President was called to play a strategic role in the governance of the port system, which prior to the Reform was characterized by fragmentation and dispersion in the decision-making process. The President's main task was to find a way to integrate public and private principles while efficiently improving the management of processes and resources related to port affairs.

Many wondered whether the new President would behave as an innovator capable of taking the risk of breaking with the past or would, instead, uphold the status quo. He faced many constraints rooted in a combination of adverse factors, such as an inadequate regulatory framework that produced uncertainty in the administrative action; obsolete rules that were still in force and that overlapped with the new rules, which generated ambiguities in their interpretation; and a shortage of the financial and human resources needed for the

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[6] In 1995 Antonio Rastrelli was elected to lead the Regione Campania, having previously been Undersecretary of the Treasury in the centre-right government led by Silvio Berlusconi in 1994.
[7] In 1993, with the new electoral law, the centre-left won the elections and Antonio Bassolino became Mayor of Naples.
[8] Romano Prodi became Prime Minister.

implementation of the Reform. Moreover, despite being a managerial body with a budget, the Port Authority did not have full financial autonomy.

Once again, the change required by the Reform relied above all on a rhetorical and symbolic discourse (Battistelli ed. 2002, Czarniaskwa and Joerges 1995b, Morgan 1991) that supported the contents of the Reform. Arguing that the critical condition of port facilities excluded the city from the international trade system, the President persuaded local actors to participate in it and presented the idea of modernisation, liberation and change embedded within the Reform not only as necessary but also as a way out of the current situation. However, this was only part of his task.

The lack of financial resources needed to work on the regeneration of the port area was the first obstacle that the President encountered in trying to implement the Reform. The question was, 'How to find funds'? For this purpose, Law 413/98 became crucial, for it regulated public investment. Through this law the President found the resources for the regeneration of port area (mainly to renew the piers and jetties run by the largest ship-owners). Above all, given the intensification of international trade, the ship-owners felt more than any other port operators the need to modernise the infrastructure. While the key local actors initially saw the Reform as a restriction on their actions, they slowly changed their view as they came to see it as an economic opportunity to be grasped. They saw that a good use of the Reform could meet their interests as it would help to increase the efficiency of the port facilities and therefore their profits. There was one thing that they, however, did not underestimate.

They knew that they might not be the only beneficiaries of the modernisation programme. Once the programme was completed, other private actors could benefit from it, as they would be attracted by the liberalization. In other words, it was true that the local ship-owners and dealers were licensed the use of the port facilities, but it was equally true that such a license had a deadline and that the liberalization process would facilitate the entry of new players lured in by the regeneration of the port. Caught in this dilemma — that is, be part of the change or suffer it — the private actors sought informal agreements with the President through a process of mutual adaptation that led to unexpected forms of change as these actors became actively involved in the intervention programme run by the Port Authority. Why did they get thus involved? In order to clarify this important issue, it is necessary to point to the fact that the work was to be carried out in areas that were licensed to the 'older' ship-owners, who used the port facilities on payment of a fixed fee. Moreover, in order to obtain a license to use the facilities or to have license renewed, the beneficiaries had to increase trade and the productivity of the port — in essence, the private sector could finance part of the public work aimed at improving the existing facilities. An explanation is needed to clarify this point.

In order to gain access to national funds through the Law 413/98, the Port Authority is required to submit to the Ministry of Transport a project specifying the interventions that it plans to implement, and the project must include a feasibility study. At the time under consideration, this task was made difficult by the lack of specific skills in the Port Authority and by the lack of the funds needed to have the project drafted externally. As it became clear

to private actors that there was a serious risk to lose access to the funds needed for the development of the port, they decided to finance part of the feasibility study drawing on a legislative tool called 'Replacement Agreement' that allows some forms of cooperation between public and private spheres.

The point to stress is that these actors invested their own money in return for an extension of the length of their licenses. According to this informal agreement, on completion of the work, the ship-owners who had financed the feasibility study would be granted an extension on their use of the renovated facilities. A 'coalition' of various actors was thus formed, which would play a determining role throughout the implementation of the Reform. This coalition developed professional relations with the President and the larger ship-owners and included civil servants who had worked in the Naples port in the past and private consultants employed by a company specializing in the maritime industry that had gravitated around the port for a long time, bidding for public contracts. Following formal controls, the Ministry of Transportation approved the programme submitted by the Naples Port Authority, thus allowing the President to proceed.

As we have seen, the agreement with the private actors was strategic for reaching this territorial result. But what were the collective consequences of this cooperation between public and private actors? On reflection, it could be suggested that the aforementioned informal agreement potentially undermined the economic interests of small operators, who also held licenses but were excluded from the benefits of the Reform because they could not afford to invest in its implementation. Other operators who were potentially interested in applying for an ex-novo license were similarly excluded. Basically, the trade-off among public and private interests in addressing the dearth of public financial resources raises questions on this unintended effect of the Reform.

The Second President of the Port Authority: An Interrupted Term
So far, we have seen that the work of the first President, who could be seen as pioneering the Reform, concluded with the approval of the projects submitted to the Ministry. We have seen that during his tenure the first steps for the application of the Reform were taken in a context marked by regulatory shortcomings and weaknesses in the organisational structure. He devised an operational strategy drawing on the law 84/94, in the process offering a new vision on the role of the port facilities and reaffirming the need to develop a closer relationship between the port area and the inner city. Moreover, he improved the port performance regarding certain areas of activity, such as containers traffic and sea cruises. However, these initial steps in the application of the Reform were not received well by the City Government and the Association of Industrialists. Both accused the President of being incapable of challenging the entrenched system of social and economic interests in the management of the port, which continued to be in a critical condition.

The election of a new president represented a break with the previous management. The Association of Industrialists, the trade unions and the Regional and City Councils — both led

by the centre-left[9] — wanted an innovator as candidate for president. They were looking for someone who would be capable of integrating, as opposed to excluding, other private actors in the process of negotiation of local interests. They also wanted to give greater impetus to the principles of private management in the public sphere. Their search led, in 2000, to choosing a man who had shown significant organizational and managerial skills in his previous job and had contributed in drafting the 1994 Reform law.

In doing his job, the new President benefited from the extensive solid skills and competence that he had acquired throughout his professional career. He had been a remarkably successful president of another important Port Authority, attracting new investors and strengthening the cooperation between public and private actors. From this point of view, his appointment reflected a managerial turn in public administration. Choosing him meant choosing a person who possessed excellent managerial skills and had proved to be able to make good use of them. Moreover, he was born and had lived in places other than Naples; so, he was not entangled in a web of connections — at times, 'opaque' — with the local actors whose interests were heavily at stake in the restructuration of the port. Furthermore, his previous professional and political appointments — such as Chair of the Association of Italian Ports, consultant of several committees on public work and member of the Italian Parliament (he belongs to the largest party of the left) — strengthened his reputation both as a competent manager and as someone capable of interacting directly with the centres of political power.

While abiding to the formal authority attached to his role, in line with the new prescriptions on Public Management, he exercised an effective managerial approach to decision-making and to organizational matters. At the same time, he appeared ready to combine such an approach with a personal ability to relate to other actors involved in the proceedings, listen to their point of view and employ persuasive tactics in negotiating their demands. Moreover, from the very beginning he showed an awareness of the difficulty in managing contrasting, often openly conflicting interests and pressures. He was also well aware of the challenge posed by governing effectively the restructuration process, which mostly depended on how the president would meet private actors' demands and harmonize them with the pursuit of public interest.

Basically, three principles seemed to guide the President's managerial approach: a) promoting a public action that would serve as an attraction to and a guideline for private actors and investors; b) improving the productivity and performance of the port administration; c) encouraging competition among private actors in order to improve the quality of offered services and possibly reducing the cost of these services to the public. The courses of action demanded by these principles were, however, far from concurrent. Above all, it became clear that any kind of liberalization of the port activities that he would try to implement with the aim of attracting new investors would be fiercely opposed by entrenched interests in keeping the status quo. In a way, the drive to bring about liberalization had to be faced with these vested interests, and in order to do so the president had to find allies and be

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[9] In 2000, Antonio Bassolino was elected President of the Campania Region. The following year, Rosa Russo Iervolino became Mayor of Naples.

willing to compromise. He seemed to be aware that, unless he succeeded in securing the cooperation of the most influential private actors, his efforts to implement certain actions would be futile. Under these circumstances, he sought the support of the President of the Consulting Firm, despite the compromises that this move would entail.

Because of his long experience in dealing with port facilities, the President of the Consulting Firm was well placed to understand the interests and viewpoint of the private players and interact with them. His firm had been in charge of several infrastructural works in the Naples port and had won many contracts for the construction of piers and docks. He was personally acquainted with the most prominent shipping companies licensed businesses operating in the port. As I have described earlier, these assets enabled him to negotiate with them a deal whereby they would co-finance part of the projects of restructuration. The intertwining of their interests and those of the consulting firm came clearly to light when the construction work began.

In 2001, the first yard was opened. Of the seven projects that were funded, two were completed in 2003, three in 2004 and the remaining two respectively in 2006 and 2007. This was quite fast, considering the procedures with which the contractors must comply and the new actors (companies) that participated in the process. The network of public and private actors that sponsored this public work resulted from a peculiar combination of relationships that the second President had developed locally and nationally. Among the companies that won the public competition to carry out the work, there were cooperatives that operated at national level and were politically close to the leftist party of the President. These cooperatives sub-contracted part of the work to local companies that were sympathetic to the centre-left or that had previously executed similar jobs and had a stake in the public work that was needed for the port. Only one company specializing in the construction of maritime buildings had no political or commercial ties with the Naples port. The distribution of the work among the companies that won the contracts or sub-contracts suggests a delicate balance of economic and political interests. But it is during the execution of the work that the problem of adapting to the context arose. For example, in five of the seven construction projects that got started, the consulting firm was also entrusted with the supervision of the work. The Port Authority presented this decision as a way to 'facilitate' the execution of work and to allow the necessary 'fluidity' in the complex interactions with the private interests involved in the management of the port activities.

Inevitably, at the end, the action of the President of the Port Authority became locked in the web of relations outlined above. The compromises that marked this situation conditioned considerably the liberalization of the port activities. Suffice to say that the professional rise and the prestige of the second President came to an end before he completed his second term in office. As he was investigated in connection with illicit funds given to his political party in support of the electoral campaign, he resigned in December 2008, cutting short his second term, scheduled to end in February 2009. He was replaced by a special Commissioner. Later, an Admiral was elected President.

Unexpected Effects of the Reform

The dynamics underlining the implementation of the Port Reform show the significant role played by individual actors. The main questions to be asked are whether the community's interests have been legitimately protected and, if so, how. Notably, the attempt to build a new urban governance in a context dominated by uncertainty and ambiguity in the interpretation of the rules and populated by a plurality of stakeholders that co-determine the decisions ends up being conditioned by the individual actors that are driving the process of change (McGuire 2011).

As we have seen, the specific interactions among territorial actors who belong to strongly interdependent networks can indeed lead to the birth of opportunistic coalitions, as opposed to inclusive ones (Bobbio 2006, Pardo and Prato 2012). With the reduction of the State's hierarchical power, the centralised formal forms of control become increasingly weak. In the case that we have examined this process generated subtle boundaries between the public and private spheres. At the same time, the progressive construction of local networks as a mechanism to increase the degree and complexity of public policies led to a reduction in the State's ability to impose organizational rules and provide answers to common problems (Bevir 2011).

A number of authors focusing on changes in the Italian public administration have demonstrated how a variety of institutional models generated by the experiments on governance can lead to different outcomes, even when similar public policies are implemented (Bevir ed. 2011, Burroni et al. 2005, Capano and Lippi 2010). As we have seen, an interpretation of these institutional changes can be found partly in the action performed by individual actors. In our case study, the implementation of the Reform was conditioned by the macro-economic scenario, by the redefinition of the European and national policies and, above all, by the way in which the reform process was driven by the professional and relational assets of two key actors, the first and the second President. As some researchers in the field of public policy argue (Adam 1998, Capano 2009, Pollitt 2008), the key actors' management of time is crucial. For the first President, it was important to establish a continuity with the past from the beginning of its mandate; for the second, the intention was to break with the way his predecessor operated.

There is a continuity in the way in which the first and the second President executed their mandate. None of them can be identified as a leader. Their actions suggest that for them taking a risk was never an option. Both influenced the Reform's path through their actions. One question to ask is, 'How different the work of the second President would have been if the first President had not interpreted the Reform in a very conservative way?'

The literature on governance often highlights the relevance of transparency for the achievement of a better quality of consensus in public decisions. At the same time, as the study offered here suggests, the ability of key actors to guide the negotiation of social, economic and political interests and solve conflict is crucial to the process of change (Fontana and Sacco eds 2011, La Spina 2006) and should be taken into account in our analysis. Alongside neutrality and transparency in public action, the discretional power of whoever

holds administrative responsibility can play a decisive strategic role in situations of conflict. Therefore, in our study of the relations enabled by different modes of governance, we need to consider that 'however imperfect the democratic model of government may be [...] key principles are not negotiable. One such principle is that the legislative process must not obey selective interests; equally critical are the principles that the power to rule needs authority for the relationship between citizenship and governance to work and that the establishment of authority *depends* on the achievement and recognition of legitimacy at the grassroots. The crucial condition is that authority must be based, and be seen to be based, on fair, responsible and accountable exercise of the power.' (Pardo 2012: 65)

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Youth in Ramallah: Internal Fragmentation under Occupation

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This article analyses the urban perceptions of youths who live, study, work and spend time in Ramallah. The first part, provides an overview of urban changes that have taken place since the 1993 Oslo Agreements, as this ersatz capital has been transformed from a small town into the political, economic and cultural hub of the Palestinian non-State. I will argue that such transformation has been the consequence of both external and internal factors. Externally, the Israeli occupation has prevented the development of Palestinian cities and villages, affecting urban and economic growth especially in areas surrounded by Israeli settlements. Internally, the arrival of Palestinians from abroad or from other parts of the Palestinian territories since the 1990s has caused important changes and an urban fragmentation amplified especially by the lack of a planning programme from the Palestinian governing institutions. On the one hand, Ramallah exemplifies different aspects of Israeli occupation and, on the other, it reveals fractures in Palestinian society. From the perspective of the young, the analysis addresses the conflicting practices, ideals and values that shape and challenge urban changes and life in contemporary Ramallah. I observe that Ramallah is intertwined with global dynamics and, as such, it is directly affected by neo-liberal and security practices which are generating important shifts in the inhabitants' ways of living, consuming and acting.
Keywords: Ramallah, youth, urban development, social conflict, internal hierarchy.

Introduction

Ramallah is a city located in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT). After the Oslo Agreements of 1993 it has served as the makeshift capital of the Palestinian non-State.[1] Since the Agreement, what was a small town has been significantly transformed by institutional actions and people's practices into what a 30-year-old woman, resident and filmmaker, described as a 'cosmopolitan capital'.[2] In our conversation, she described Ramallah as the symbol of a very special urban development that was partially a product of the Palestinian élite in power. In sharp contrast with the picture given by the municipality spokesperson, who during an interview enthusiastically referred to Ramallah as the cultural, administrative and financial hub of the West Bank,[3] for this young educated Palestinian woman, the city is nothing more than a laboratory for the creation of a new Palestinian subject, docile and imbued with an individualistic ideology, distant from politics and the national liberation struggle.[4] During my fieldwork, I came across this view in many other conversations with young Palestinians.

This article is based on my doctoral research on young Palestinians who study, work or spend time in Ramallah, and on their socialization practices in this urban context. The ethnography was collected during two fieldwork periods, respectively between August and November 2012 and between July 2013 and June 2014. During the first period, I was enrolled at the University of Birzeit, a village located a few kilometres from Ramallah. There, I met students from different parts of the historical Palestine and with different backgrounds. For

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[1] The Oslo Agreements comprise the Declaration of Principles (1993), the Paris Protocol (1994) and Oslo II (1995).

[2] Interview in Ramallah, September 2013.

[3] Interview in Ramallah, November 2012.

[4] Interview in Ramallah, September 2013.

them, university was both a route to improve their social and economic status and an opportunity to emancipate themselves from family ties and networks. A student from Jenin told me once that during the summer vacation, she preferred to attend summer courses rather than go home. For her, being at university offered an opportunity to spend time with friends, enjoy herself and daydream about her future.[5] During my second period of fieldwork, I was employed in a coffee shop in Ramallah, which allowed me to observe and exchange views with costumers and colleagues from different social and economic backgrounds. I also met young migrants from Palestinian villages and cities. They talked about their dreams and expectations and I followed them during their trajectories and daily life in this ersatz capital. Students', artists' and workers' daily practices in Ramallah said much about individuals' effort to 'belong' to the city and to be part of its political and social life. I observed the way of life of individuals in their twenties, who came to the city from across historical Palestine, paying specific attention to youth's social norms, political commitment, family life and future projects.

The Context: Ramallah after the *Nakba*

Ramallah is the 'product of the turbulent developments ushered in by the *Nakba*,[6] the dispossession of 1948 and its aftermath' (Taraki and Giacaman 2006: 4). It is essential to take into account the changes fostered by the *Nakba* in order to understand the current dynamics in Palestinian cities. Some sociologists suggest that the loss of Palestinian coastal cities produced an 'abortion of Palestine's urban modernity' (Taraki and Giacaman 2006: 1) and enhanced the persistence of a sort of 'urban ruralism' (Tamari 2009: 38).

In 1948, the Western part of Jerusalem was occupied by Israeli forces, while East Jerusalem depended on Amman. Coastal cities like Jaffa and Haifa were occupied and annexed to the newly founded Israeli State, and part of local Palestinian residents left their homes and land.[7] At the same time, the West Bank was incorporated by the Jordanian Administration, while Egyptian rule presided over the Gaza Strip. Ramallah was nothing but a small town before

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[5] Interview conducted in Birzeit, October 2012.

[6] The word *Nakba* refers to the Palestinian exodus of 1948. This Arabic word literally means 'disaster', 'catastrophe', and refers to Palestinians' mass migration in the aftermath of the 1948 War. The exact number of Palestinian refugees is still a matter of dispute. However, the Israeli historian Ilan Pappé (2006) maintains that around 720,000 Palestinians fled or were expelled from their homes because of the war and the establishment of the Israeli State.

[7] This question is still disputed among historians. Walid Khalidi (2004-2005) uses Arab Higher Committee and Arab League archival material, Arab and Palestinian press releases and reports, Arab and Haganah radio broadcasts and other Arab and Israeli sources to argue that population exodus was a direct consequence of Haganah military offensive. Taking distance from official Israeli historiography, 'new historians', such as Ilan Pappé (2006), have re-analyzed the establishment of the Israeli State using Israeli and English archives of that period. They assert that Palestinians were hunted and expelled from their native homes.

the *Nakba*.[8] In 1948, under Jordanian administration, it experienced an important demographic growth.[9] A large number of Christian Palestinians from the coastal areas of Jaffa, Ramle and Haifa moved to the city centre, while Muslims from the hinterland relocated mainly to the suburbs, particularly in the areas near the municipality of Al-Bireh. Others fled to the refugee camps created by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (henceforth UNRWA).

The *Nakba* impacted and changed Ramallah's architectural and urban structure in two ways.[10] On the one hand, the neighbourhood of *Ramallah Tahta* (Ramallah the lower) developed around the old city. *Ramallah Tahta* was originally a Christian area which, over time, became religiously mixed. Today, it hosts groceries and pubs selling alcohol alongside traditional *moqha* (coffee shops that are frequented mainly by men and where alcohol is forbidden), and Muslim calls for prayers can be heard just before Christian church bells ring. On the other hand, the creation of the al-Amari, Qalandia, Jalazoone and Qaddura refugee camps expanded the city's borders.[11] Although these camps were initially intended to be a temporary solution, they have remained in place and continue to be part of the urban context. People living there usually go to the city centre for work or leisure, while only very few of my interviewees living in Ramallah visit friends in refugee camps on a regular basis.

After the Six Days War in 1967 and the occupation of Palestinian territory, Israeli military practices prevented Palestinian urban expansion and the inhabitants were not allowed to build viable structures for themselves. Land was confiscated and, as elsewhere in the territory, Jewish settlements started to surround Ramallah: Beit El in the North, Psagon in the East and Dolev in the West. As a consequence of the expropriation policy, Palestinians were unable to construct new houses, resulting in the vertical development of buildings (Harker 2014). Nevertheless, despite the civilian population's critical economic and social conditions, in people's memories Ramallah before *Nabka* was a beautiful, culturally active town. It was a holiday centre for artists coming from the Arab Word, a place where people interacted with each other and where residents were honest and cleaner than today because they *belonged* to the city.[12]

Due to the joint actions of lectures at the Birzeit University and students' activities, Ramallah became one of the main centres of the first Intifada, the popular uprising that started in 1987 (Baramki 2009). Many of my informants from working and middle-class backgrounds took part in the mass revolt. People in their thirties and forties recounted to me how they threw

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[8] Lisa Taraki and Rita Giacaman suggest that, in the early part of the twentieth century, the city became a centre of services and commercial activities in the region. It was known for his 'openness' toward commodities and people (Taraki and Giacaman 2006).

[9] Rasem Khamaisi (2006) relates that, in 1945 5080 people lived in Ramallah, while in 1952 the total population was estimated to be 17145.

[10] For an overview of changing architectural and urban identity across Ottoman, British, Israeli and Palestinian eras, see Yasser (2009).

[11] Located just outside downtown Ramallah, the Qaddura camp was established in 1948 but is not recognized as an official UNRWA camp.

[12] Interview conducted in Ramallah with a bookseller, January 2014.

stones at Israeli soldiers, while younger residents remember taking classes in public areas because of the imposed closure of schools. A young sound technician from Ramallah told me that, in those years, residents assisted each other by sharing food and information, and hosting or hiding fugitives. He also described the energy generated by this particular context which, according to him, enclosed a sort of '*élan vital*', like 'coming down from the air'.[13] Likewise, a friend of his also working in film production highlighted that 'when the soldiers ran after us, we would find refuge in the houses of people we did not know and who would just leave their doors open'.[14] A high school biology teacher similarly recounted being chased by soldiers and running into a group of women, who 'grabbed me by the sleeves and started tugging at me from both sides, saying "My son, my son!" … How could the soldiers throw me in jail?! [...] At that time, Ramallah was a beautiful place and, inside this town, people dreamed of a free Palestine [...] People used to know each other, feel safe when they walked the streets because, all we needed to do was to look into each other's eyes to know whom you were the son of'.[15]

The Post-Oslo Period or the Emergence of a Triple Occupation
The most important changes in the city took place in the aftermath of the peace negotiations of the early 1990s between the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and the Israeli government (Oslo Agreements). Once the Fatah leadership was established, the great joy and expectations from Palestinian liberation and independence were replaced by bitter disappointment. People saw the dreams nourished by the first Intifada shattered by the peace agreements and the establishment of the Palestinian Authority (henceforth PA).[16] A restaurant manager who was very active in the opposition front stressed, during a conversation, this feeling of disappointment: 'We soon understood that nothing had changed; the *sulta* (government) is devoid of real powers and it represents the guardian of the occupation'.[17] During the interim phase, Israel kept military law over Palestine. According to Roy (1999), to this day, Israeli authorities hold control over land, water, labour and capital, leading to military supervision of the circulation of goods and people through Palestinian borders.

Ramallah was chosen alongside Gaza city as the administrative and political centre of the PA. As a consequence, part of Fatah's *nomenklatura,* which was mostly based in Tunis, moved to Ramallah. A number of Palestinian-Americans also moved to the city and started to invest consistently in new upmarket condominiums and city-blocks.[18] Ramallah Municipality, acting with the Local Planning Committee, issued permits to build residential, commercial and administrative buildings (Khamaisi 2006). Until 1999, the Municipality had no general plan to

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[13] Interview held in Ramallah, September 2013.

[14] Interview conducted in Ramallah, September 2013.

[15] Interview conducted in Ramallah, September 2013.

[16] For an analysis of people's expectations and disillusion, see Bucaille (2003). For an historical perspective on the post-Oslo period, see Salingue (2014).

[17] Interview conducted in Ramallah, January 2014.

[18] Palestinian-Americans and so-called 'Tunisians' (Fatah leadership) are frequently called 'returnees'. This word is problematic because some of them never lived in (or visited) Palestine before.

deal with increasing building permit applications. Moreover, there were no formal criteria for accepting or rejecting applications and there were no guidelines for regulating local public and private development. The city started growing at a breakneck pace. New residential areas like the al-Tireh, al-Massyoun and al-Rihan neighbourhoods were built in order to host the rich newcomers and provide for their needs. Shaped as gated communities, with skyscrapers like buildings and private villas, these neighbourhoods host NGOs workers, politicians and university lectures and offer services to meet a cosmopolitan way of life. There, one can jog in well-groomed gardens, go to the gym, swim in hotel pools or hang out in fancy coffee shops and restaurants where the 'hungry one' can choose between pizzas and sushi, Mexican and French food, Chinese and Spanish dishes. Moreover, both neighbourhoods offer leisure areas where residents relax and spend their nights drinking beers at bars, dance or play ten-pin bowling. For some, having a 'normal way of life' becomes a 'way to survive and resist' to political occupation.[19] For others, as a 30-year-old painter underlined during a conversation, the new coffee shops, multinational branches and malls that have mushroomed in the city symbolise the defeat of the Oslo Agreements and the triumph of capitalism.[20]

Since the 1994 Interim Peace Agreements, Ramallah was part of the A area and the PA was to hold complete control over the city.[21] In spite of this, the city was occupied by Israeli military forces during the Second Intifada and former Prime Minister Yasser Arafat was besieged at the Moqataa on several occasions.[22] In the 2000s, youths in Ramallah and elsewhere in Palestine went through the trauma of suicide bombings, curfews, internal blockades and the systematic destruction of most towns and villages. Land was confiscated and people's daily circulation was severely limited. Due to border closure, food and other basic commodities were in great shortage, leading to increasing poverty and insecurity (Bocco et al. 2003). However, despite all this, residents still considered Ramallah as the safest place to live, which is why many families chose it as their primary residence.

For some, this period corresponded to a double fracture because the new conflict not only deteriorated the living conditions of the Palestinian population but also created an internal split within Palestinian society. As a 28-year-old salesperson remarked once, 'During the second

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[19] Interview conducted in Ramallah, December 2013.
[20] Conversation held in Ramallah, January 2014.
[21] On 28 September 1995, the Israeli Prime Minister, Yitzhak Rabin, and the PLO Chairman, Yasser Arafat, signed the Oslo II Accords. Interim Agreements divided Palestinian Territory in three areas: A, B and C. *Area A* is civil zone and its security is controlled by the PA. It includes eight Palestinian cities and their surrounding areas (Nablus, Jenin, Tulkarem, Qalqilya, Ramallah, Bethlehem, Jericho and 80 percent of Hebron), with no Israeli settlements. In the *Area B*, Palestinians have civil control, while there is a joint Israeli-Palestinian security control over some 440 Palestinian villages and their surrounding lands; there are no Israeli settlements in this Area. *Area C* is under full Israeli civil and security control
[22] Between 29 March and 2 May 2002, during the Operation 'Defensive Shield', the Israeli army occupied the Moqataa, the Palestinian administrative centre. On 6 June, the headquarters were again under siege. From September 2002, Yasser Arafat was under attack. Only in October 2004 he was allowed to leave his governmental offices and was transported to Paris to receive medical care.

Intifada, people would shut the door in the face of those asking for refuge'.[23] In the opinion of a Birzeit University journalism student, the year 2000 brought distrust and individualism, elitism and social divisions. For some educated young Palestinians, social fractures and individualism are a direct consequence of Israeli occupation: 'it is because we are not free that we have become individualistic'.[24] Back to the curfew months, upper- and upper-middle-class young people recall challenging existing morals, norms and institutions of Palestinians society through 'sex, drugs and rock n' roll'.[25] As an artist from Ramallah put it, Israeli repression from outside was met by an internal challenging of the rules which forbade men and women from mixing and the consumption of drugs and alcohol.[26] The new Ramallah seems not to be welcome by everyone, especially by young people who hold on to traditional values such as solidarity and community support. According to a young waiter, 'people don't know each other anymore, they do not look out for each other, and life in the town has become wearisome, hard, and sometimes even dangerous'.[27]

Moreover, after the construction of the separation wall in 2003, Ramallah grew further because inhabitants were cut off from Jerusalem, the historical capital of the Palestinian territory.[28] As a result, a great number of national and international organizations and firms have been located in Ramallah. People from historical Palestine and from abroad are continuously moving in Ramallah and making it their home. The movement of goods, money and human capital is received with contradictory attitudes from old residents. For a 20-year-old Ramallah-born student, the expansion of the city and the increased attention to economic well-being, is happening at the expense of the ideals of national struggle. 'They are selling us a dream. The dream of having money, the dream of having a big sports car on your wedding day, the dream of having a well-paid job. They do this so we don't notice that, all around us, everything is burning. The government is selling us out to the Israelis, to the United States and to the international NGOs that leave without having accomplished anything'.[29] From many other young people, Ramallah is under a triple occupation: by the Israeli; by the corrupt Fatah authorities, whose rule goes against people's aspirations; and by the NGOs and 'foreigners' who live there.[30] According to a 28-year-old photographer, the town does not belong to the

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[23] Interview conducted in Ramallah, February 2014.

[24] Conversation held in Ramallah, October 2014.

[25] As in the case of the first Intifada, the beginning of the second one is also known as a period of criticism of norms and patriarchy (Bucaille 2002).

[26] Interview conducted in Ramallah.

[27] Conversation held in Ramallah, March 2014.

[28] Since then, Palestinians living in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip need a permission to cross over to the other side, a time-consuming procedure which is rarely successful.

[29] Interview conducted in Ramallah, December 2013.

[30] The word 'Tunisians' (see n.18) implies a symbolic distance between civil society and government members. A young paediatrician added that politicians take advantage, among other things, of the benefits created by the government for them to buy cars or gas at cheaper prices (Interview conducted in Ramallah, October 2013).

Palestinian people anymore; it has grown imbued with the values and mores of the Westerners who reside there temporarily or permanently.

The End of the Intifada: Social Polarization during the New Liberal Turning Point
At the end of the second Intifada a new political era began which found expression in important urban and social changes. The man who best represents this period is Salam Fayyad, a former International Monetary Fund economist and Minister of Finance, who was chosen as Prime Minister (2007-2013) by the then president of the PA, Mahmud Abbas. Fayyad's leadership was supported by a group of Palestinian and foreign businessmen who focused their attention on security, economic institutions and infrastructure, while emphasizing the importance of 'Stopping the occupation despite the occupation' (Barthe 2011: 75), which meant accomplishing things on the ground as a strategy to impose the reality of a Palestinian State.

The new leadership paid special attention to investment from the private sector. Salam Fayyad based his success on focusing on security issues and the revitalization of the economy. In his public appearances, he would often praise the government's work, such as paving the streets destroyed during the Intifada and the improvement of computer science teaching in primary schools. In the economic sector, he encouraged the private projects of investors such as Sam Bahour, a Palestinian-American businessman who established PalTel (Palestinian Telecommunication Group) and, then, in 2003, founded the Plaza Mall, the first Palestinian shopping centre located in Ramallah. In November 2010, a five-star Mövempick Hotel opened its doors in an upper-class area of the city. At the same time, Ibrahim Abushkadim built in the presidential palace area the Palestine Trade Tower, a 29-story high luxury building with a three-floor shopping mall, commercial offices, restaurants, a cinema and a luxury hotel.

The city and its hinterland are at the centre of this economical and infrastructural project. Thanks to the presence of international and local NGOs, Ramallah maintains some economic life, while over the years other cities have experienced an economic decline. The city is at the core of an urban development marked by the luxury-oriented way of life of an emerging middle class 'determined to become more socially visible' (Abourahme 2009: 505), which is embodied in monumental governmental buildings, iconic office towers and leisure spaces and services (Aruri 2013). In Ramallah, more than anywhere else in Palestine, people appear to be detached from the political agenda and focused on globalized commodities and ways of life; in the words of Abourahme, the new emerging class show 'little interest in "old" politics or national projects (… and are) largely preoccupied with social distinction' (2009: 505). The houses that a few years ago were covered in political graffiti have been replaced by banks, telecommunication establishments, fast-food outlets and advertisement panels. Residents' political commitment is less visible and appears to have been replaced by economic and neo-liberal values. Around 2008-2009, a small group of Palestinian financial actors started to have buildings constructed outside the municipality to overcome the bureaucratic limitations set for the Ramallah city area. Today, their main project is the building of Rowabi, a new centre in the suburbs. This well-conceived and organized new urban centre is planned to include 5000 houses and to provide for residents' needs in an area equipped with shops, banks, a cinema, a theatre, coffee shops, restaurants and offices.

Some Palestinian intellectuals, such as Raja Khalidi and Sobhi Samour, disapprove of Fayyad's policy and argue that the growth and prosperity supported by the élite is devoid of a 'strategy for resistance or a challenge to the parameters of occupation' (Khalidi and Samour 2011: 8). They assert that Westernization is nothing more than an illusion of freedom and a normalization of the occupation.[31] Mazen As'as, a former member of Fayyad team, has noted that the current policy has improved service industries without building institutions or establishing a State. The government cannot take decisions at a national level because it needs to have an Israeli permit. Hospitals, for instance, are inefficient and Palestinians continue to be nursed in Israeli or Jordanian medical centres (Barthe 2011: 76-77).

Moreover, such a lifestyle is unaffordable for a large part of the Ramallah population; as a result, it has fostered economic polarization in the local communities to the extent that the city appears divided, fragmented and conflictual. Social resentment is exacerbated by the arrival of a large number of Palestinians from other areas of historical Palestine. This internal migration has strengthened tensions and fractures within Palestinian society. The newcomers are generally searching for a job or are trying to improve their education. This internal mobility has accelerated construction in the suburbs, mainly in the Umm al-Shara'et and Beitounia areas, which have been described by some commentators as 'sprawling settlement housing a hodgepodge of badly kept apartment buildings' (Taraki 2008: 15).

Today, migrants represent the majority of Ramallah's population, to the extent that some of my interviewees describe it as a 'hotel city'. As elsewhere, they are the paradigmatic 'other'; the outsider, or even the intruder. Historical residents routinely label Palestinians from the north as *Thailandi*, comparing them to work migrants from Thailand, while people from Hebron are called *peasants*, because their way of life is looked down as 'backward' and 'conservative'.[32] A photographer stated that migrants are responsible for crimes and insecurity and that the city has been made unrecognizable by the construction boom, the reduction of working opportunities and the increase in the cost of living.[33] An architect from Ramallah feels that, although they are Palestinians like himself, 'migrants have their own life-style and it becomes difficult to mix with them'.[34]

A sociology student who moved to the city in 2012 told me that for her, at the beginning, Ramallah was a dream. Born in a refugee camp near Nablus, she imagined she would build her future in the city pursuing her expectations and projects. Her attention is focused on private life, work and family. She feels a certain distance from the notion of collective happiness corresponding to the liberation of Palestine. During our conversations, she said that, for now, her efforts were to increase her education in order to 'be ready' for the future and invest her energy and time in political issues.[35]

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[31] For example, the online publication *Designing Civic Encounter* (www.artterritories.net) describes some effects of these dynamics on public spaces and the public experience.
[32] Conversation held Ramallah, August 2013.
[33] Interview conducted in Ramallah, April 2014.
[34] Conversation held Ramallah, November 2013
[35] Interview conducted in Ramallah, April 2014.

With reference to Ramallah, a painter in his late thirties explained to me that, 'At the beginning, youths are full of dreams, they laugh all the time, and they smile at a certain idea of progress. Moving there, they think about making money; they want to celebrate this new situation by drinking alcohol, hanging out with women at night until morning because, there, life is easy. After a while, you can see them at coffee shops playing cards all day-long; there no one talks. ... They've lost their shining eyes, they've stopped joking ... there's no work, they don't have friends, they are far from home and family. They have realized that the imagined change does not exist. So, they go back home, in order to start their real life'.[36]

From this perspective, Ramallah appears to be a sort of 'transitional place', a liminal space where people live temporarily before starting a family. Coming from a refugee camp, the above-quoted painter lived in Ramallah before getting married to a former neighbour and moving back to the camp. As it appears from his account, young people who move to Ramallah have the impression of attaining a certain social standing, thanks to the prestige of skilled jobs and salaries higher than those available in villages. Some artists come to the city expecting to become celebrities and meeting a cosmopolitan audience who would buy their paintings or help them to show their artworks in Ramallah galleries and abroad.[37]

Far away from their families, some of my interviewees experience a certain freedom in the city. They can escape from the social pressures on personal behaviour, dress, friendship and marriage. For example, a 31-year-old journalist says that he does not visit his family's village anymore because of his relatives' insistence on finding a 'real job' and starting a family.[38] On the other hand, in Ramallah youths can go to coffee shops, dance, drink alcohol and have friendship or love relationships without having to explain themselves to their relatives.[39] Nevertheless, reminiscent of Sayad's concept of a sense of absence (1999), after a while, the city appears disappointing and comes to be described in a negative way. This resentment is mirrored in a word-play: Ramallah becomes *D-Ramallah* or *Rahma Allah* (Pity of God). Migrants from rural Palestine moving to the city often experience a very difficult and hostile reality characterized by deep socio-economic divisions and an extremely individualistic and uncaring (Simmel 1971) way of life. A kitchen assistant told me once that the city is suffocating (*makhnuqa),* fake (*mazkhara)* and tiring (*muta'bi*).[40] In spite of his efforts to change his rural accent, he still felt marginalized there, excluded by its trends, way of life and social norms and, despite his backbreaking work, he could not afford to rent a flat and the restaurant's basement was the only place where he could have a few hours' sleep.

Limits of the Palestinian Agency

Urban transformations induced by neo-liberal policies have brought about significant changes in inhabitants' consumption patterns. A 24-year-old NGO worker remarked that 'before, people

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[36] Interview conducted in Bethlehem, March 2014

[37] Discussion held with a group of artists in Ramallah in November 2013.

[38] Conversation held in Ramallah, May 2014.

[39] Interview with a graphic designer in Ramallah, March 2014.

[40] Interview conducted in Ramallah, January 2014.

were more connected to the city; now, we are all running after work, construction and property'.[41]

Most of my interviewees from both lower and upper classes feel detached from the traditional political parties because of the internal fragmentation and a disillusionment with PA policy. A 25-year-old waiter from the outskirt of Ramallah felt 'tired of thinking about the political situation'. He explained that part of his family spent years in Israeli jails, while others were injured by Israeli soldiers. Moreover, a large number of his friends are in Palestinian jails because of their public disapproval of Palestinian government's choices. Some were beaten by Palestinian police during demonstrations; others left the country because of social and political oppression. 'We do not know any more who is the enemy … Why, or how, could we be activists? Why should we take the risk to see our life destroyed for nothing? Why should we be fighters when we don't want to fight any more?'[42]

The ethnography suggests that a consumerism way of life seems to have triggered internal social tensions, which are reflected in a decline of people's political commitment. According to a 24-year-old dancer, due to this 'super-American thinking', people are losing their social and political identity, to the point that 'they are no longer aware of the meaning of Israeli colonization ... there are a stack of businessmen, rich Palestinian families, Palestinian with US identity cards … what does occupation mean to them? They are not buried in debts. They all have their own cars. They have a house in USA or in Europe. They travel ... Sure, they are obliged as we are to pass by Allenby Bridge, but nothing else... They have money. They even have their KFC here. They have crazy things. They do not care about norms or original inhabitants...' Indeed, due to the Israeli occupation, the government's agency is limited as is people's freedom of action: 'We all want the last IPad model to get connected with the world far from us, but we do not have 3G communications technology in the West Bank and we cannot visit our new E-friends because we do not get the permit to fly abroad to see them ... We all drool over big new cars, but we are prevented from driving to the beaches in Haifa ...'.[43]

In this political landscape, Ramallah is a space where particular moral codes different from those found in other Palestinian towns and cities seem to guide everyday life. Some interviewees see cafes as the symbol of a will to remove politics and community feeling from society. At the same time, the new neighbourhoods and buildings are seen as a representative of a lifestyle which has become detached from traditional social norms and 'Palestinian identity'.

Conclusion

Some aspects of the urban processes taking place in Ramallah are translatable to other cosmopolitan urban contexts. On the one hand, they remind us that cities are places where people migrate to fulfil their dreams or to savour a sense of freedom. On the other hand, they exemplify the kind 'feeling of absence' (Sayad 1999) that a new context produces for many.

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[41] Interview conducted in Ramallah November 2013.

[42] Interview conducted in Ramallah, December 2014.

[43] Interview conducted in Ramallah, May2014.

Migrants' strong sense of disappointment meets this second aspect and is transported back home when they return to their native towns or villages.

It has been argued that metropolises can be seen as individualistic places where inhabitants are less concerned and less caring about others (Simmel 1971), and as expressions of a capitalistic order, representing divided, fragmented and conflictual spaces. As contemporary Ramallah seems to embody both features, our analysis must address the link between the everyday effects of neo-liberalism and the experience of Israeli practices in generating widespread poverty, humiliation, restriction of movement and violence. Palestinians are subjected to a routinized crisis marked by physical barriers (separation wall, check-points and roadblocks) and administrative measures.[44] However, as I have argued throughout this article, local political decisions are not just a consequence of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; they also mirror the socio-economic hierarchies and conflict of power internal to Palestinian society.

The ethnography suggests that Ramallah is torn between rich and westernized areas and poor, more conservative areas that follow different norms and ways of life. In such a polarized space, financial and social barriers persist. City dwellers experience separation from each another. Inhabitants of the same age relate to the town in different ways and describe it in contradictory terms. For some, the city represents a place of opportunities; for others, it is the symbol of broken dreams, of persistent fragmentation and tensions with political implications.

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[44] These measures include curfews, house demolitions, arrests, expropriations and limitations on movement (Bocco, cited in Latte-Abdallah and Parizot 2011: 286).

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Cities and the Ideology of Cultural Participation:
A Discussion with Reference to the 'Opening-up' of Museums

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This article has been withdrawn, on request of the author. Some imprecisions need to be corrected. A revised version will appear in a future issue of the Journal.

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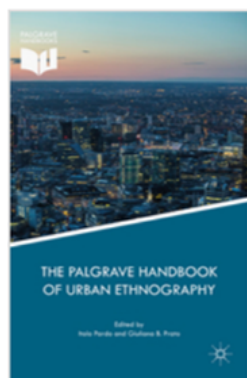
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