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Attention, City in the making!

Participatory methods in Architectural
and Urban Design:
Creating public values for urban regeneration

Mar Muñoz Aparici

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abstract

Participation is a commonly used word in planning and architecture nowadays. Nevertheless, it seems that few care to understand the complexities and limitations of participation. Participation has often been misused for political purposes accepting it as mere feedback from citizens, using voting systems and,exhibitions of finished products that did not imply any real and lasting interaction with the will of the public. Many have focused on participation as an "answer" while it should be a process, a continuous question. In my research "Attention city in the making!", I argue that participation is key to urban regeneration and that public buildings designed with the participation of communities can be a paradigm and the central piece of these processes. Supported by in-depth literature review on issues of participation in planning and design, an experimental investigation was undertaken in the deprived neighbourhood of Nazaret in Valencia, Spain, in order to test the hypothesis. This paper aims to first disentangle the democratic role of participation in urban development, which usually implies conflict between the parties – and the potential regenerating power of participatory planning and design processes for urban areas. Second, the experiment illustrates the proposed discussion and finally the design translates the theory into a tangible proposal of an elderly house and kindergarten in the heart of the neighbourhood, which we expect will turn into a new gathering point, will help regenerate the block and then, the area.

keywords

Participation   **Urban Regeneration**   **Public Building**   **Public Values**   **Right to the City**

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How can the participative design of a public
building help urban regeneration through the
creation of public values?

Introduction

Introduction. On the public and the City

The definition and implications of 'the public' have been a relevant aspect of intellectual debate for a very long time. In Latin, 'publicus' means "of the people, of the state, done for the state, public, common" but also "a public place", meaning that the 'public' has an intrinsically spatial aspect.

Since the notion of 'public' originated from the common space between the people and the state, its definition belongs to both; hence public space is political space. In young democracies such as the Spanish, the political aspect of the creation of public space has often been dismissed as it represented a danger for the system's strength. Governments wanted to concentrate power in order to stabilise democracy but also to control society. Power concentration allowed for fast decision-making processes leading to a fast development of "hard infrastructure", as in physical frameworks. However, it did not support "soft infrastructures", as in social structures and its articulations (Rocco de Campos Pereira, 2013). After decades of ignoring citizens as the origin of both public space and politics, in May 15th 2011, a group of people occupied a public square in Madrid asking for changes in Spanish democracy. It is not a coincidence that it was done through the use of public space since public space is the realm of politics (Deutsche, 2012). 'La Puerta del Sol' became then the centre not only of a political protest but also a claim of public space and its free use during its one month of occupation. What started as a spontaneous protest became the biggest change in XXIst century Spanish politics yet, and developed alternative ways of 'governance'.
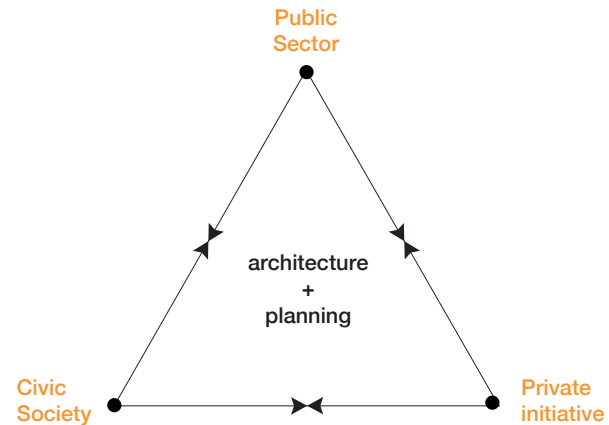
Figure 1 *The triangle of the creation of Public values*

Good governance should empower communication between the parties; therefore citizens could be involved in the construction of the public realm and the administration could "be accountable" for their decisions. As a consequence, governance would make the public sphere more democratic and inclusive. Nowadays, media technologies make this process accessible both for the administration to ask for input as for citizens to get involved which could lead to an improvement of the public sphere through citizen's engagement in the public debate and–in the public realm– to an improvement of our cities (Arnold, 2008).

In an increasingly urbanised world, it is fundamental to promote the development of fair, sustainable and equal cities. Mark H. Moore coined the term *'public value'* as 'the value that an organization contributes to society'. Although it appeared in the field of public management, this concept brings together two highly political terms– in the original Greek sense of *polĩtikós*, where *polis* means city–. As its name suggest, the creation of the 'built environment' usually concerns only the material physical creation of human habitat, "hard infrastruc-

ture" which neglects its social implications "soft infrastructure"(Rocco de Campos Pereira, 2013). It is the role of the designers of the city (architects, urbanists, planners) to stand in the centre of the triangle of the creation of public values between the Public Sector, Private Initiative and Civic Society to engage in the process ensuring that they engage in a fruitful debate that enriches the public realm (Avermaete, 2015).

One could argue, therefore, that public buildings should be the paradigm of the creation of public values. As described before, *public values* in the built environment are the benefit – not necessarily tangible– that a project gives to the surrounding (neighbourhood, city, society), for instance the improvement of minority integration or the addition of a park next to a housing development. This concept should not be confused with *public goods* that is an economic defini-
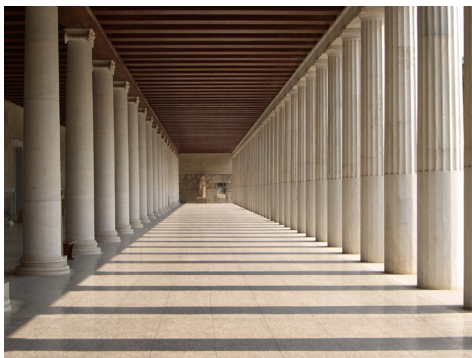
tion of the unlimited public "equipment" that citizens have the non-excludable right to use. The later is required from authorities since it is basic for democratic city living (healthy environment, education, health…) while the former is the desirable effect of a public good in the process of 'making the city' because it is an improvement of living quality. For that reason, public buildings are intrinsically a public good. Nevertheless, and for the sake of our future cities, they should also involve the creation of public values, of common enhancements. A new school is a public good *per se* because is part of the needed public health infrastructure. If that hospital improves–for instance– the integration of disabled

procedural	vs.	objectual
qualitative	vs.	quantitative
collaboration	vs.	competition
network	vs.	centre
action	vs.	inertia

Figure 2 *Key ideas of participation*
Adapted from Paisaje Transversal.

children in the neighbourhood, it will also be creating public value. In fact, there are many examples around the world that prove that public architecture does not always imply any positive contribution to society. One could list many examples of public buildings or spaces that, instead of making places for interaction, equality or freedom, aggravate urban discomfort and a sense of alienation.

While ancient public architecture such as the Greek *agora* had a clear purpose vis-à-vis society, contemporary architecture can lack a real civic purpose other than the mere delight of the politician and/or designer in "vanity projects: empty buildings without program, out-of-the-blue Museums or abandoned parks fill our neighbourhoods like trying to answer a question that was never asked; trying to solve a problem that was never there; creating an inexistent need. An example of this could be the 'Ciudad de las Artes y las Ciencias' an overpriced and over-dimensioned complex of Arts and Sciences which was defined by William Curtis as "visual noise" . This project, as many other projects around the globe, did not raise from a popular need and did not intend to reinforce the "soft infrastructure" of the city. Instead, it managed to increase the gap between the rich

Figure 3 *The Greek Stoa: an example of public architecture.*

and the poor by hosting elitist cultural activities (the opera or the Imax cinema) and by producing major gentrification.

Many failures in the creation of public space could be avoided by involving citizen's knowledge. In order to solve a problem it is important to know what the problem is, and when that involves people, the solution usually requires asking those involved. This has several advantages, including raising awareness about issues, creating support for projects, harvesting the knowledge of the community about issues they are familiar with, and finally, participation increases the value of democracies. (Rocco de Campos Pereira, 2013)(Beyerle, 2013)

Suggesting citizen participation as the "cure" for public architecture sounds like a risk to some architects that consider it a threat to their professional tasks. Certainly, architects do contact building's users for the development of their projects. Unfortunately, that mostly only involves preliminary meetings on some basic information exchange on program and functionalities and does not address the fundamental needs of its users nor the long-term public values that the building and its surroundings will create.

A 21st-century designer should ponder his role in the formation of the public sphere and how the process can evolve so designs not only answer the question asked but also rather create a new variety of more democratic responses.

In order to design more just, inclusive, equal and sustainable cities designers will have to get involved with inhabitants first of all to understand their complexities, then to include them in the decision making process. The power and possibilities of participation will certainly shape the future of our cities and designers should lead this process.

Theoretical Framework

Participation: creating public values.

Participation as a way towards democracy.

"The idea of citizen participation is a little like eating spinach: no one is against it in principle because is good for you".

S. Arnstein

When talking about a word as ambiguous as Participation, a debate about its 'true' meaning invariably follows. Public administration has (mis-)used this word to designate citizen's inputs of any kind: from a vote about new traffic lights to an exhibition of selected building proposals. Nevertheless, participation is more a process than a happening and it implies a sense of belonging 'to a larger whole' (Merriam-Webster, n.d): hence, its definition is as complex as civility itself is.

During the urban consciousness awakening of the sixties, some authors tried to define participation and its social role. Arnstein's 'Ladder of Participation' (1969) has been the most venerated yet revised work on participation. She introduces eight levels of participation grouped by approach, starting at 'mani-

pulation' (fake involvement) and ending at 'citizen control' (total citizen involvement), which is the highest rung. The image of the ladder enhances the hierarchy of the terms and the *effort* necessary to go from one level to another; the model implies thus will and involvement from the user. Furthermore, participation entails a political[1] approach, a sense of social improvement through the involvement of the powerless. In her own words participation is, "the redistribution of power that enables the have-nots citizens, presently excluded from the political and economic processes, to be deliberately included in the future" (Arnstein, 1969, p.216).

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1   Please note political is used in its urban original meaning explained before (See Introduction) and not related to the political game.

" 'Citizen power' is "like coming to the city hall with hatin head instead of in hand": residents are not visitors to their own institutions but they become the institution itself by engaging in decision-making structures."

As indicated by their name, the 'non-participation' level contains two rungs where the have-nots appear as victims of the system who need to be "educated or cured" through 'manipulation or therapy'. Although this attitude is easily recognizable, power-holders around the globe unfortunately still use it to manage their settlers.

The second rung of the ladder is the most popular form, usually considered as 'real participation' by uninformed citizens since they have a voice, albeit only symbolic. Tokenism by means of information, consultation or placation, does not achieve a real change in the power distribution, although yet it could be a good first step towards a deeper involvement. In planning, it usually consists of cold surveys, interviews or meetings with unprepared citizens where the only aim is to gather information as a base for the technicians' work without any further feedback.
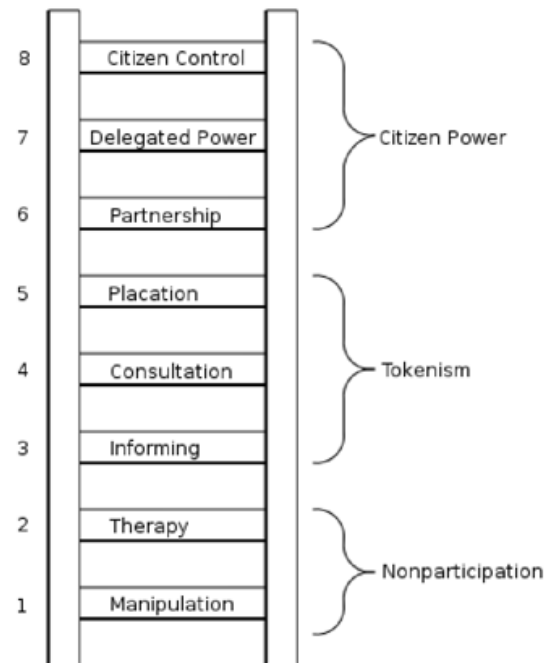
Figure 4 *A Ladder of Citizen Participation*
Sherry R Arnstein (1969)

In Arnstein's text, a civilian says 'citizen power' is "like coming to the city hall with hat in head instead of in hand": residents are not visitors to their own institutions but they become the institution itself by engaging in decision-making structures. Despite citizen control being the highest rung of the ladder, the author objects to it due to its unprofessionalism, separatism and lack of funding. Therefore, total citizen control is also not the most desirable situation but a power compromise between technicians and citizens is. The role of the planner or designer is to unite the professionalism of the power-holders (administration) and the practical knowledge of the inhabitants. While in a shallow participation debate the designer might appear dispensable, his/her role becomes relevant in mediating among the interested parties. By doing this, the designers' work gain an extra layer of consistency because it is based on the people he/she is designing for.

Since the politically engaged approach of the sixties, some authors have proposed new models for participation levels assimilating broader complexities. In 1988, D. Connor published 'A new ladder of Citizen Participation' raising
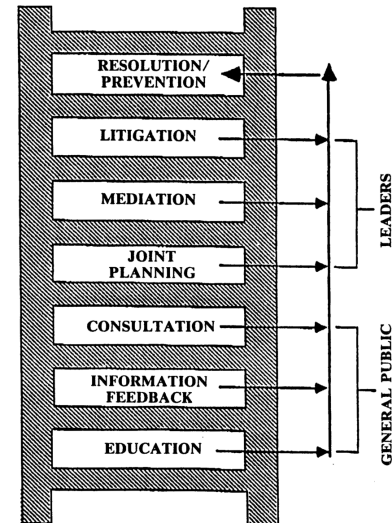

Figure 5 *A New Ladder of Citizen Participation
D. M. Connor (1988)*

doubts about Arnstein's model. His model presents a ladder with non-excluding rungs, thus one can skip some rungs and step faster in the "final" rung. This model does not focus in levels of participation but in steps towards a better public policy leading to a resolution/prevention of conflict. To start with, 'education' –aspect neglected by Arnstein–– is the base for prevention and should work both for the citizens and the power-holders to track their knowledge and understanding about each other. When it comes to the creation of the public policy, Connor supports a model where collaboration increases as the precedent strategy fails. For instance, if inhabitants reject a policy, there should be an 'information feedback' process, a 'consultation', or 'joint planning' (Connor, 1988), hence participation is not a thread towards a more just process of public creation but an antidote for political discomfort dispenses in drops: if they do not accept this project, let them discuss it until they understand it. On the one

"Democratic urban life is about compromise, which sometimes implies acceptance without 'vigorous support'."

hand, it is very true that most urban policies fail because of a lack of communication and not because of their value as technical projects. Nevertheless, participation is a not a temporary solution to civilian opposition but a way of creating communities, of involving the have-nots for the long term (Arnstein, 1969).

Most approaches presents participation usually as dichotomy between the people and the administration where only one can win. In Arnstein's model (Arnstein, 1969) the have-nots had to conquer their power until reaching citizen control In fact, democratic urban life is about compromise, which sometimes implies acceptance without "vigorous support" (Connor, 1988).

More recently, CIMAS (Observatorio Internacional de Ciudadanía y Medio Ambiente Sostenible) proposed a theory using an analogous simile where the ladder is substituted by gradually sloping stairs towards and objective: democratic participation by top-down planning. Furthermore, this model draws a parallel between planning and participation and gives explanations that are more specific to the field itself. CIMAS supports a paradigm where citizens, instead of

representing mere statistics that give the Administration information to produce normative-technical planning, become an auto-managed organized network that initiates democracy through direct participation. Although this model is very clear about its levels and objective, it lacks a deeper explanation of the relation with administration, which disappears at some point in the ladder.

To create a realistic model towards more democratic planning, the administration –which in the end is a group of technicians in different fields ranging from public relations to architecture– needs to be present in order to complement the input of auto-managed organizations. Furthermore, as all three authors –Arnstein, Connor and CIMAS agree, all cases are specific and must emerge as unique chances to find a balance and a procedure towards an inclusive solution.

Figure 6 *Escalera de la planificación y la participación*
CIMAS (2014)

planning

normative- technical
(sectorial)

technical plans
and paperwork

consultive- technical
(sectorial)

Technical/participated
diagnoses
↓
technical proposals

strategic
(sectorial/integral/lineal)

Technical/participated
diagnoses
↓
technical proposals

strategic-situational
(integral/complex)

participated diagnoses
↓
technical proposals

participative
(integral/complex)

auto-diagnoses
↓
co-managed participatory
action plans

initiative democracy

**top-down
planning**

people

as statistics

as an static object

as independent
consultation

as group
engagement

as an active
identified network

as organized
auto-managed
citizenship networks
(workshops, assemblies,
self-learning)

**participative
democratic
oganization**

(subject)
network
shared decision making

Auto/co-management

(actors)
participate
involved interactively

Direct participation
(co-management)

(actors)
respond
the query

Indirect participation
**(people)
+ manage/control (State)**

(agents)
informative
sessions

Consultive
participation **(people)
+ manage/control (State)**

(users)
request and
receive information

State **Management
and direct Control.**

participation

State **Management
and direct Control.**

Redrawn from CIMAS 2014

11

Participation as conflict

"It is not about getting people to agree, it's about getting people to recognize their disagreements"

A. Beyerle

Due to its relatively positive connotations, participation can falsely appear as a way of finding an amicable solution through a smooth and affable process. Although it is true that citizen involvement improves the relations between the parties in the long term, society is defined by conflict, and so is participation. Rosalyn Deutsche upholds " 'the creation of public space' as the institutionalization of conflict". The striking idea of struggle as the maker of public space rises from the belief of space "not being an entity but a relationship" (Deutsche, 2012) which is established by its boundaries. Without limits, there is no space and thus also no conflict. Nonetheless, the limits have to be flexible in order to contribute to democratic development since a pre-established definition of public space could lead to an authoritarian use of it by the principle of the

'common good'. Therefore, the creation of public space becomes a process of discursive co-definition by society. The space where this happens is 'the public sphere', "a discursive space in which individuals and groups associate to discuss matters of mutual interest and, where possible, to reach a common judgment about them" (Hauser, 1999, p.61). Therefore, participation appears as a *sine qua non* condition for its existence: there would not be public sphere without participation, without "being part of a larger whole". It is necessary to participate in debate with others to create the public sphere.

It is a common misconception to consider participation in the built environment as an answer to a question (a commission, a planning project), yet it is the question itself. Engaging in debate does not only entail looking for consensus but also unveiling dissent: finding common ground but also raising the uncomfortable questions that confront individuals. The ultimate goal of participation should not be solving the posed problem but 'place-making' by "developing shared discourse and embodied connections between people in a community" (Beyerle, 2013, p.153). As discussed before, public space is not an object but a
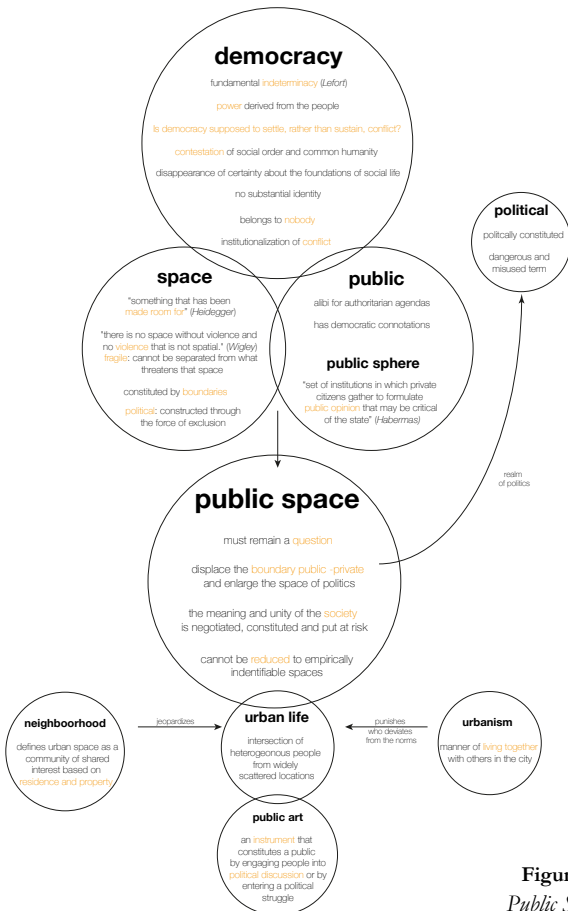
Figure 7 *The question of Public Space by R. Deutsche*

The figure contains the following labeled concepts:

democracy
fundamental indeterminacy (*Lefort*)
power derived from the people
Is democracy supposed to settle, rather than sustain, conflict?
contestation of social order and common humanity
disappearance of certainty about the foundations of social life
no substantial identity
belongs to nobody
institutionalization of conflict

space
"something that has been made room for" (*Heidegger*)
"there is no space without violence and no violence that is not spatial." (*Wigley*)
fragile: cannot be separated from what threatens that space
constituted by boundaries
political: constructed through the force of exclusion

public
alibi for authoritarian agendas
has democratic connotations

public sphere
"set of institutions in which private citizens gather to formulate public opinion that may be critical of the state" (*Habermas*)

political
politically constituted
dangerous and misused term

realm of politics

public space
must remain a question
displace the boundary public -private and enlarge the space of politics
the meaning and unity of the society is negotiated, constituted and put at risk
cannot be reduced to empirically indentifible spaces

neighboorhood
defines urban space as a community of shared interest based on residence and property

jeopardizes

urban life
intersection of heterogenous people from widely scattered locations

punishes who deviates from the norms

urbanism
manner of living together with others in the city

public art
an instrument that constitutes a public by engaging people into political discussion or by entering a political struggle

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discourse, hence designing public space should follow the same principles. The aim of participation is to develop public values such as identity and sense of belonging through bottom-up empowerment that is to develop the Right to the City.

"The right to the city involves two principal rights for urban inhabitants: the right to participation, and the right to appropriation" (Purcell, 2002)
Lefebvre's definition of 'The Right to the city' says "is like a cry and a demand... a transformed and renewed *right to urban life*" (Lefebvre, 1996, p.158), thus is also a conflict between what citizens have and the urban life they would like to have. Being 'The right to the City' a claim, it also implies participation is part of it because it is the means towards a "renewed right urban life" where citizens play a major role in the decision-making process of any aspect related to the construction of both the physical and political scale of the city (Purcell, 2002).

"A fundamental part of Lefebvre's analysis is that the forces of alienation that are active in urban space constantly need to be challenged and contested. The right to the city is not an end

stage in which the urban world is perfect; it is not some unattainable utopia, but the constant and continuing struggle to create urban space that is less alienated from the people who inhabit it."(Aalbers & Gibb, 2014)

According to Darcy and Rogers, "the right to inhabitance should include the right to participate" (Aalbers & Gibb, 2014, p.210), thus participation is also related to the physical condition of 'inhabiting' of dwelling a physical space. This positions the topic directly in the realm of the construction of the Built Environment and, as a consequence, of architecture and urbanism. Participation for the Right to the City places architects and planners as mediators, broadening their role because– apart from contributing with their technical knowledge– they give "spatial representation" to citizen's needs. When representing a community, disagreement occurs. According to Beyerle, the differences in the group

"it is through the process of making a shared understanding of morals and ethics through materialization that we actually arrive at a sense of identity or community- or indeed the social"

should be used in the objective of founding "shared ethics and aesthetics" that is of creating effective public debate.

In the process of "spatial representation" it is difficult to set the limits between the representation and accountability of the designer and those of the user-citizen. What belongs to the technical field of the designer and what should be decided collectively? For Beyerle, "it is through the process of making a shared understanding of morals and ethics through materialization that we actually arrive at a sense of identity or community- or indeed the social". However, the idea of materialization is ambiguous when it comes to architecture because it raises the question of whether participative processes should also define the aesthetics of the building– its physical materialization– or materialization in this context means "the action of materializing or becoming materialized". As proven before, the power of participation rests in its political qualities: developing the public sphere, creating public values, improving public goods… Therefore, participation should be focused in (re)generative processes in both the urban in architectural scale; for instance planning a new residential area or designing the new interior of an office building because they build communities through communication and knowledge.

Public Building as urban regenerator

"A building is more than the sum of it's functions; architecture has to facilitate human activity and promote social interaction"
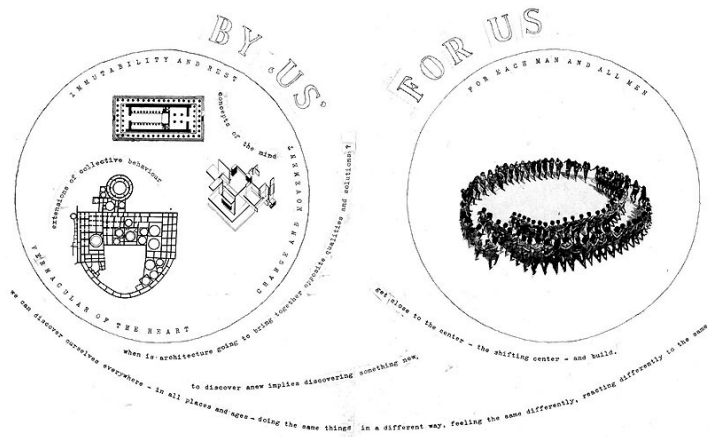
Aldo van Eyck

Although participation is key for real democracy, it is especially useful in the urban scale due to the complexity of the design processes involving state, market and civil society. Being public buildings the most evident public good, they influence the city as a whole– and the neighbourhood in particular– so In order to contribute to 'making the city', a public building design has to be part of a spatial strategy taking under consideration its effects in different scales and particularly in the creation of public values. Designing through participation is a well-known strategy in fields such a product design or cooperative private housing whereas participation can have a major impact in urban regeneration both in its purely physical implications –infrastructure and public space improvement– and in its architectural qualities –a building or intervention. All things being said, marking off a boundary between the building and its environment is not only a lost chance to improve our cities but a counterproductive strategy

for urban comfort: if buildings are not rooted in their environment and their citizens-users, they will not contribute to the creation of public values nor become part of the public sphere. Consequently, any design willing to improve its surroundings should incorporate participation as a reliable way towards a long-lasting, sustainable, trustworthy, inclusive and democratic solution.

Throughout the second half of the XXth century there was abundant research on participation for public policing and planning, for instance in the ladders described previously. In the Netherlands during the 70's, "in the space that had been left by capital and had not been colonized by the state", the movement of 'bouwen voor de buurt' requested a different way of planning and development. (Uitermark, 2011). Although it mainly focused in developing a more just housing market in the growing urban environments, their ultimate goal was to regenerate the city ('de buurt' = the neighbourhood) through not only physical interventions but also non-physical such social programs or the support to local enterprises (Hui, 2013, p.424). The international relevance of 'bouwen voor de buurt' bears on the creation of a network where professionals helped

non-professionals creating the city they sought. Thus, this movement already acknowledged the importance of processes versus actions, of networks versus hierarchies, of renovation versus demolition, of regeneration ultimately.

Figure 8 *Concept scheme: "by us - for us". Reciprocity for architectural design*
Aldo van Eyck, Otterlo Circles (1959)

Designing cities as networks is a radical change from the previous model of physical public goods (buildings, infrastructure, developments) as unique interventions where there was a commission and a technical team trying to solve the posed problem. In modern cities, realities are far more complex and comprise technology as another relevant actor. As reported by A. Corsín, new urbanism should be open source that is the city is an eternal beta experiment where users can not only interact but also "make code". As explained before, the occupy movements sought for a more inclusive democracy though physical occupation of public space. Nevertheless, they were able to do it thanks to technology: meetings convened through Twitter, documentation of demonstrations through Youtube… It is undeniable that contemporary urbanism should not neglect the reality of virtual urban life which nowadays mean continuous connection, development and improvement. Given the fact that the limit between urbanism and public buildings is practical but not theoretical, the design of the later should also be 'open source' allowing the users to become 'developers' both in the sense of software– computer coding– and hardware–city development. As a consequence, cities become "infrastructure of co-learning" where citizens

share what they know and learn from others in a continuous process. Although the existing examples of these processes have generally been outside of the administration's reach. Nonetheless, ultimately these actions need institutional support in order to be fully developed. For instance, in 'El campo de Cebada' (Madrid, Spain), citizens occupied an empty plot and develop a broad range of social and ludic activities parallel to the administration, while –in the end– the administration had the competency to normalize them or criminalize their actions (Corsín Jiménez, 2014).

While it is true that in a true democracy participation is necessary, it should not be forgotten that democracy is about representativeness and that ultimately, the administration is politically accountable for urban development hence they have to be involved in the process. In other words, true citizen participation does not

"New urbanism should be open source that is the city is an eternal beta experiment where users can not only interact but also 'make code'."

mean disregarding the legitimate role of public representatives but to incorporate all parties in a fruitful democratic debate, as summarized by Fernando Gaja:

Neighbors are the first recipients of urban interventions. Their opinions, their options are critical [...] but not necessarily decisive. For two reasons: a) because in a democratic system political representatives hold the power; b) And more important, if anything: it often happens that planning decisions face the public interest with particular interest, the one of the neighbors immediately affected with the one of the population as a whole. It is a difficult balance that does not allow universal rules: the conflict of interests between the local and the global can only be driven by debate, participation, clarity. […] Ultimately planning decisions must be taken by those entitled to it. And be accountable for their actions. […] But it is an bolivion (or worse) to think that decisions are inevitably controversial , which affect all citizens and not just those directly affected, can be left to the "victims" . The temptation of 'assamblearism', the permanent referendum only leads to participation's exhaustion, to its rejection by ineffective, impractical, to the disappearance of all fruitful and effective citizen participation.

The case: Nazaret

Experimenting with Urban Regeneration

Context

Nazaret

Nazaret is a historical neighbourhood situated besides the outfall of the Turia's river, within agricultural land and the port of Valencia. The transfer of the riverbed to a southern location and the growth of the port left the area isolated, destitute and set aside from the great perspectives around it such as the Arts and Sciences City (North-West of Nazaret), the Formula 1 circuits (North) or the Port activities (East and blocking its access to the sea). Administration continuously looking down on this community worsened the consequences of its slow deterioration: poverty, unemployment, mobility issues, insecurity, drug dealing, and prostitution.

The citizens or Nazaret deserve to become a part of the city, to have a saying in their role in the city, to define themselves. Participation will give them the tools to position themselves vis-à-vis the public realm and to raise awareness of its importance in urban life.

Figure 9 *Location of Nazaret | Valencia | Spain*

The previous chapters on participation in architecture and urbanism served as the basis for the development of a participation process realized in the context of Nazaret through action-research. In the process, the ideas developed in the theoretical part were used to plan activities leading to a participatory design with the local community. As discussed in the theoretical part, a good public building design should be part of a spatial strategy in order to take root. That is why, the goal was to achieve a community sensitive design in which citizens participate in the creation process. By doing this, I expect to achieve two types of results:

1. A more locally sensitive project more effective because it responds to the community's needs.
2. Empowerment of the local community who, through the co-design of a project, will develop ideas about local democracy, participation, rights, and citizenship.

Research on this topic helped understanding the roles of the different parties in the process of design in the design of the built environment and to analyse how they relate to civic society and its needs. Furthermore various methods on

Figure 10 *Plan of Nazaret: Urban Scale*

citizen participation were inquired and some bringing up the voids to be solved to be answered by this research project and to be developed in the design.

The context of Nazaret's area in Valencia emerged as an excellent site to try out the findings of the research and test the design process. Traditionally it was a fishermen and farming neighbourhood that was isolated from its leitmotiv - the sea and the farming land- by the growth of the port of Valencia and was left out of the city planning for decades. Poverty, criminality and desperation come together in this piece of land where citizens feel left out of the powerful metropolis provoking the disappearance of the neighbourhood identity feeling. On top of that, cheap housing developments during XXth century's second half, worsen its image and identity because of the destruction of traditional living units. Nazaret was then a blank page where the method produced by the research could be tested by a master plan, and eventually, by the design of a Public Building as catalyst of the civic participation.

Figure 12 *Pictures of the edges of Nazaret*

Figure 11 *Plan of Nazaret immediate surroundings*
Threats and isolcating elements

Royal America's Cup Marina

Formula 1 Circuit (abandoned)

City or Arts and Sciences

New urban developments (semi-abandoned)

Industrial area (semi-abandoned)

NA ZA RET

Port

Logistic area (abandoned)
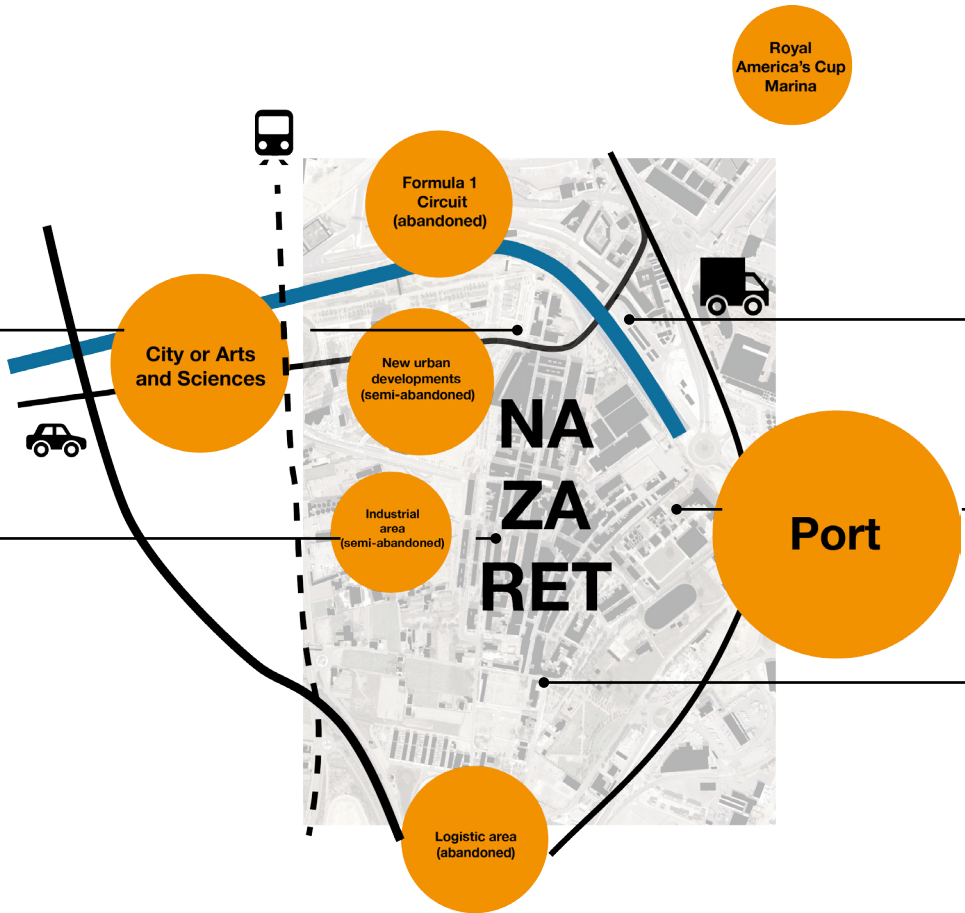
History of planning

Far from being related to the biblical Nazareth, the settlement of Nazaret originated in 1720 with the establishment of a 'lazareto', an isolation hospital where patients suffering from infectious diseases– especially sailors– where kept before being allowed to approach the city of Valencia.

The settlement's relation with the sea has being a devoted and turbulent one. In the 18th century, fishermen and farmers settled in naturally reclaimed land produced by the river's sediments. Despite being very close to the city, this 'a-legal' colonization became slowly an isolated village for workers and families who had to use boats to cross to "the port" or carriages to visit "the city". In the early 19th century, Nazaret developed into a touristic attraction where Valencia's citizens enjoyed the strategically located beach either from their seaside villas or by using the tram from the city centre. Nevertheless, the cartographies of the time show that, by late 19th century, Nazaret was still quite a remote enclave and did not develop as closely related to the port because of the physical barrier of the Turia's riverbed.
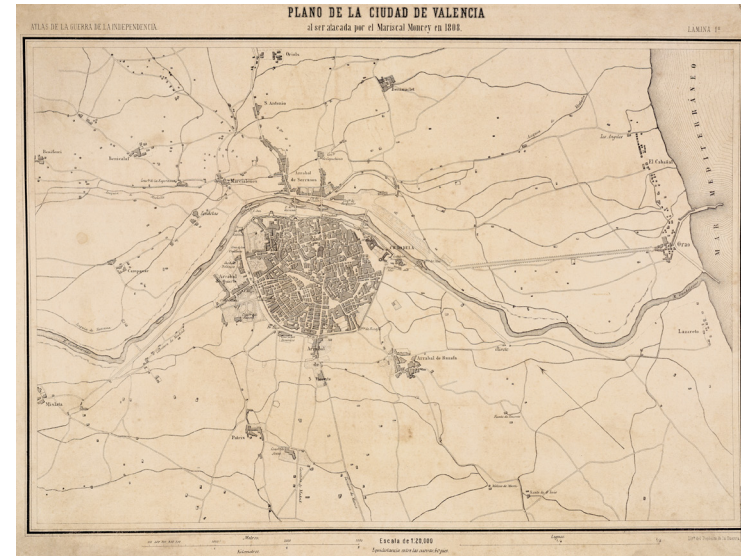
Figure 13 *Origin of the neighboorhood of Nazaret in 1720 Plan of Valencia (1808)*

Figure 14 *Development of Nazaret and other coastal neighbourhoods*
Plan of Valencia (1883)
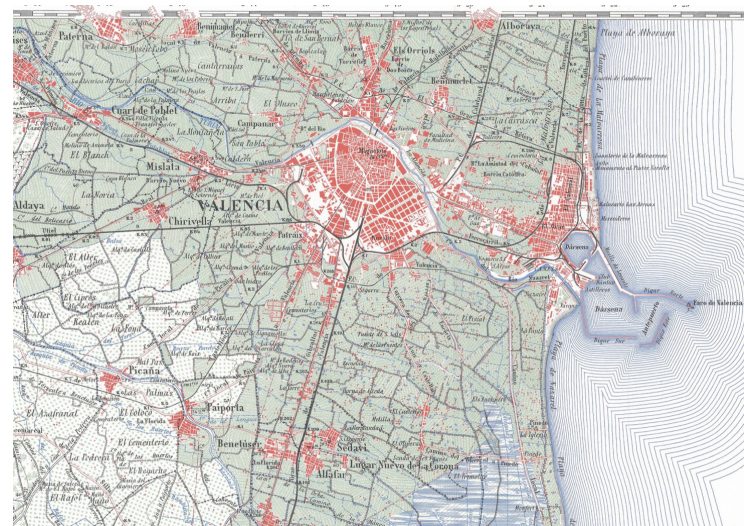
Figure 15 *Development of the port during XXth century*
Plan of Valencia (1944)

The 20th century witnessed Nazaret's heyday and decline: from the lively days of sun and sea to the disappearance of the beach in the second half. After the great flooding of Valencia in 1957 devastated Nazaret's built environment, the neighbourhood had to undergo a major intervention both to reconstruct destructed houses and to relocate people from other areas. A thousand buildings were built during the 60's through a National Social Housing Program. Those constructions were built in low quality materials and poor layouts due to the urge and the low budget having a huge influence in the physical realm of the neighbourhood. On the one hand, the scale of the new housing was way higher than its precedent, which altered the street section and horizontal street life that characterized Mediterranean sea-settlements. On the other hand, its typology switched from a single-family row house with interior patio to multiple storey buildings with little outside space and vertical communications.

Continuous floods in Valencia urged the decision to transfer the riverbed to a different path outside the city. Although that decision should have been positive for Nazaret because it avoided further damaged, the consequences for the neighbourhood were dramatic. Drying the natural river allowed the port to occupy the river mouth and to break the connection of Nazaret with the sea by

Figure 16 *Growth of the Port during the 1980's*
Historical Aerial View (1980)

swallowing the beach. Furthermore, in the later 90's the port's authority decided to create a major logistics activity area in the farming area to the South of Nazaret, called La Punta. Despite major opposition to both happenings, the port got away with it and the reality of Nazaret was irrevocably transformed both physically and emotionally because it lost 'its reason to be: the sea and farming land'.
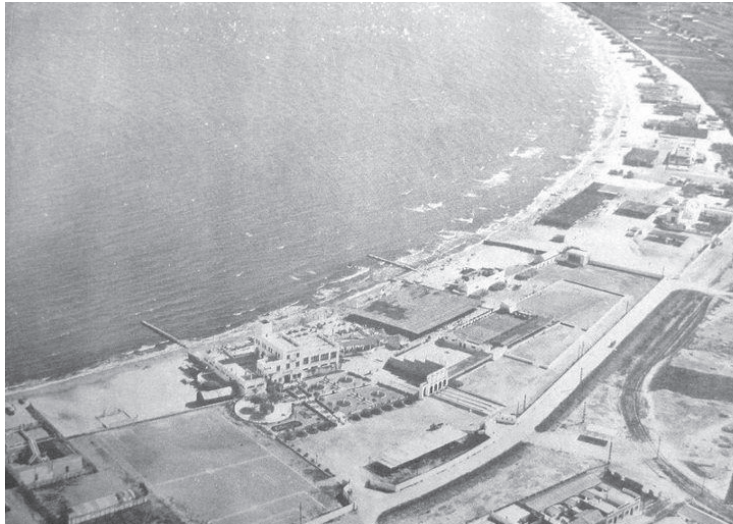
Figure 17 *View of 'beach complex' Benimar*
Historial aerial picture (1955)

1980

Figure 19 *River's mouth*
Aerial view (1980)

2008

Figure 18 *Dried river's mouth*
Aerial view (2006)

Current plans

In order to understand the actual situation of Nazaret, it is important to understand it is located between the 'big jewels' of Valencian tourism development: City of Arts and Sciences (by architect Santiago Calatrava) to the West, the Formula 1 Circuit and the America's cup Marina to the North. During the last decades of the century the city planning focused in large-scale projects to 'put Valencia on the map' which involved millionaire budget focusing in tourism and infrastructure but dismissing citizen's needs. Some of this magnificent projects turned into large scale planning strategies that ignored Nazaret for being less even though bordering it.

The year 2007 was the apogee of Valencia's grandeur; celebrities from around the globe visited the city for one of the many high-class sport events Valencia held (Tennis Open tournament, America's Cup, Formula One). Valencia had historically turned its back on the sea and the whole maritime area needed a new image. Offices from around the globe submitted ambitious proposals for the regeneration of the marina and the sea mouth. The winning proposals by Jean Nouvel and GMP Architekten proposed a monumental intervention with extensive green areas and large scale buildings that mostly ignored Nazaret and left it disconnected from the City.

Figure 20 *Current situation of relation neighboorhood - river's mouth*

Nowadays the port still intends to develop against Nazaret though the aforementioned ZAL area, new access roads though the neighbourhood and claiming the historical buffer zone between both areas (the previous shore). The neighbourhood association, the local government and the port authority are dealing at the moment with a new planning strategy for the whole area.

Figure 21 *Proposal for the internationl competition for the river's mouth*
Jean Nouvel (2007)

Figure 23 *Integrated Action Programme. (PAI) for El Grao*
José Tomás Llavador (2007)

Figure 22 *Proposal for the internationl competition for the river's mouth*
GMP Architekten (2007)

Analysing the social situation of the area through statistics and data brought up the main issues to be tackled within a spatial strategy. On the one hand, the socio-economic situation of Nazaret has gotten worse since the financial crash; the last data on unemployment showed that one third of the neighbours do not have a job and three quarters of its inhabitants have occupations on the services sector. It is surprising that farming is currently not a relevant figure within the area. On the other, Nazaret's citizenship is a heterogeneous racial mix with 17% (official figure) foreign population and a large gypsy population. The integration of these sectors in the project will be a relevant aspect of the project.

Nazaret has been suffering from population loss because of a variety of reasons: development of affordable areas better connected to the city, loss of identity, socio-economical problems or insecurity. Population egression is a determinant factor in the abandon of the built environment, which appears fairly deteriorated: some sections of Nazaret present a poor conservation state, especially on the border with the river and the port.
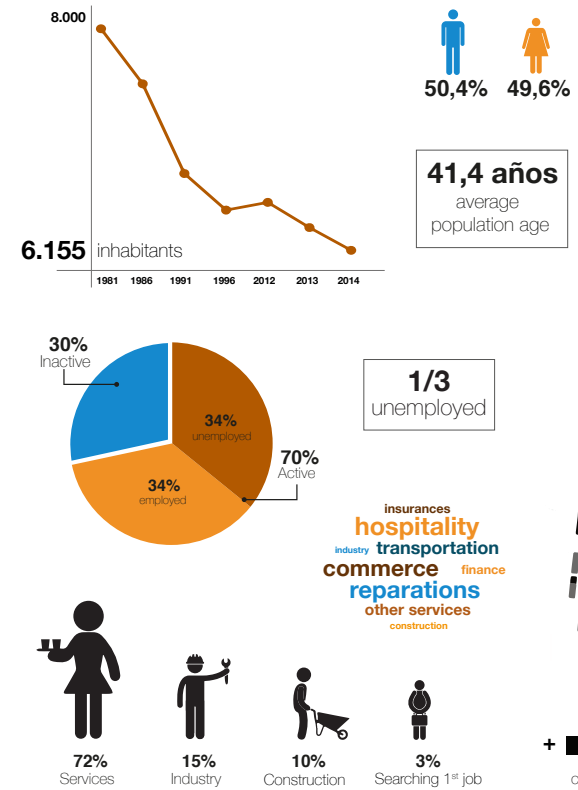
Figure 24 *Nazaret at a glance: infographic on statistics and the built environment (Municipal data from 2014)*

ZARET
a glance

2%
44%
9%...
28%
16%

17%
foreign
population

1061
560
754
252
22
101
56 86 64

1900
1920
1940
1960
1970
1980
1990
2000
2006
2011

2946
houses

28%	**32%**	**23%**	**17%**
0-1 storey	2-3 storeys	4-5 storeys	6+ storeys

-
vation state
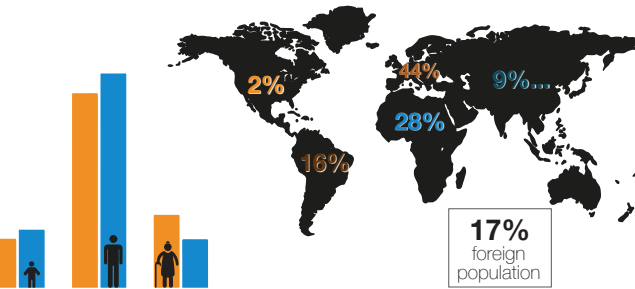
As mentioned before, when it comes to the typology of the built environment, the development since the 60's entails two thirds of the buildings and 40% of constructions have more than 3 stories. This transformation has had major effects in the way people related to each other and to street life. Furthermore, the lack of economic activity has left most ground floors empty worsening the image of the pedestrian experience.
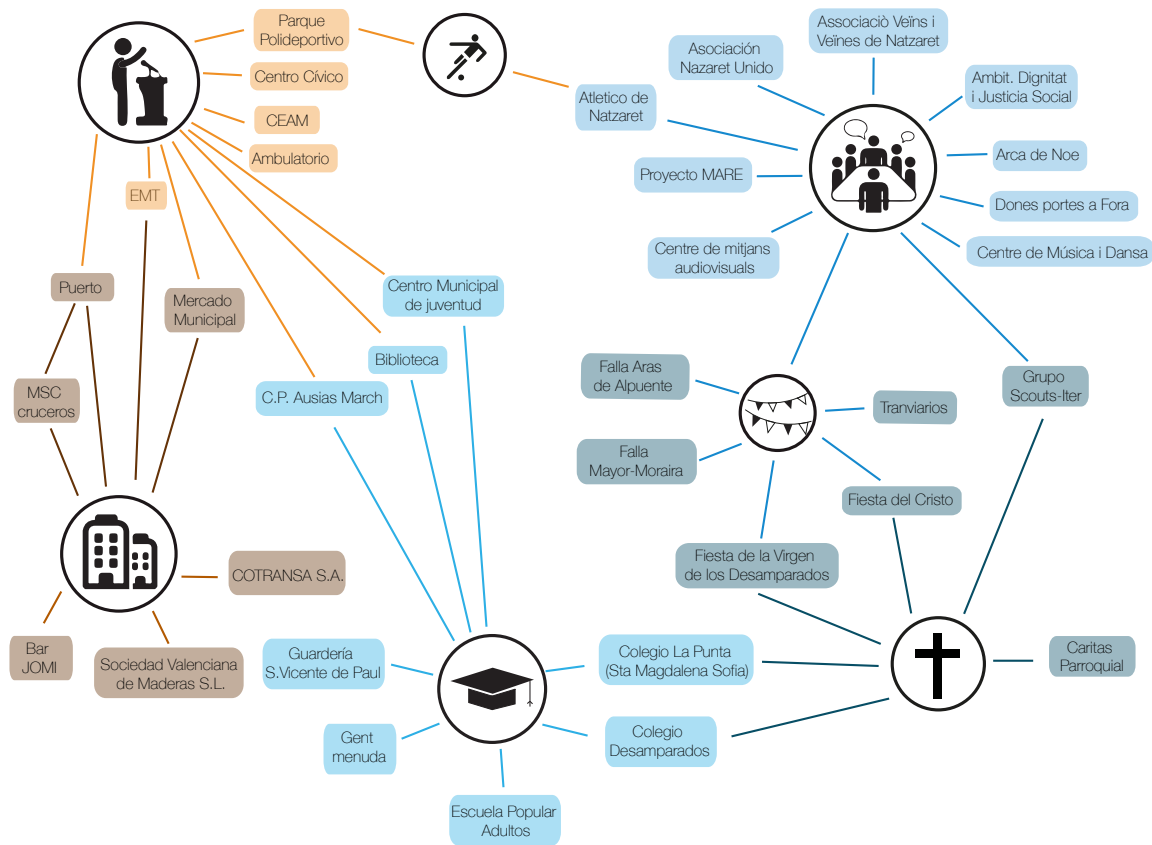
Figure 25 *Networked actor analysis*
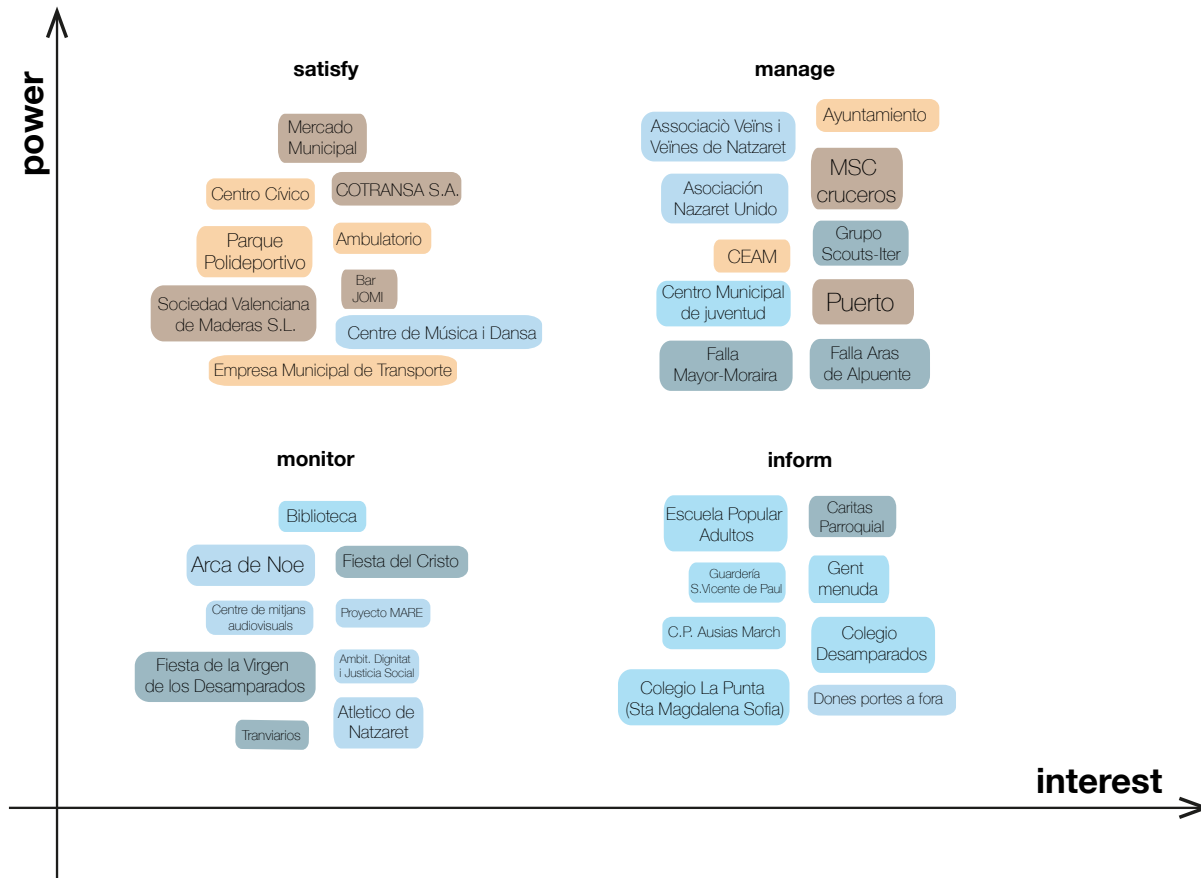
Figure 26 *Actor analysis: Power - Interest*

Research

Continuous misuse of architecture and planning for economic and political purposes has disgraced them as strong social tools and converted them in objects to be possessed rather than tools for human development. Traditionally, public architecture was a social incubator designed for social interaction and the empowerment of the public sphere. For instance the Greek stoa mixed different programs with one purpose: engaging people in public life. During the last decades, public architecture has been used as an objectual envelope with little implications with the immediate surroundings and their socio-spatial consequences. In an increasingly urban world–by 2050 72% of global population will be urban– urban designers should know how to integrate the different city stakeholders into an inclusive, just and sustainable process, that is through participation.

The use of participatory methods in Architectural and Urban Design is a great tool for urban regeneration because of its powerful effect in creating public values (such as identity, integration, empowerment) and therefore should become the future paradigm of urban design processes in different scales (city, building, program).

Nevertheless, participation has often been misused for political purposes when it actually meant simple feedback from citizens (votes, exhibitions) that did not imply any real and lasting interaction. Therefore, what are participatory methods for urban development and design? Are there different levels of participation in design? What are the roles of stakeholders in that process? What is the role of the architect? How can the designer induce debate and awareness within citizens? These questions draw the attention to the topic of participation and their combination with an experimental project in the deprived neighbourhood of Nazaret (Valencia, Spain) will elucidate whether these participatory processes are feasible in the larger scale and if they could methods substitute formal planning and design paradigms.

RESEARCH DESIGN

AIM

Proving the creation of public values for urban regeneration through participatory methods in Architecture and urban Design.

HYPOTHESES

Participation in Architecture and Urban Design improves the Creation of Public Values

Urban regeneration should entail the creation of Public Values

Public Buildings can be the paradigm of the creation of Public Values in a Urban Regeneration process

INPUTS

Literature Review
analysis
+
Descriptive
discussion
+
Experimental
case practice
+
Pilot Study
design

OBJECTIVES

What are **participatory methods** for urban development and design?

What are the **roles** of **stakeholders** in that process?

How can the designer have an influence in the creation of **public values**?

Research question
?
↓
Research action

What is the relation between **public building** and urban regeneration?

Are these processes feasible in the **larger scale**?

Could these methods substitute the formal planning and design **paradigms**?

- literature on participatory methods of design
- references of other projects

- literature on participatory processes
- conversations with practitioners

- workshops with citizens
- conversations with practitioners
- literature on public values

- literature on public building
- examples of urban regeneration

- conversations with practitioners
- theoretical discussion

- theoretical discussion
- thesis formulation

DELIVERABLES

Social Media
+
Research Paper
+
Design of a Public Building
+
Ignition of Participatory Process

OUTPUT

Participation for Urban Regeneration Handbook

This research is integrated in a handbook connecting theory and practice that could be used in future participatory projects conducted by both practitioners and communities by further improving its limitations and developing its strengths. Creating an open study available to all is relevant to the research and its objective because after all, a participation handbook has to be participative itself.

How can the participative design of a public building help urban regeneration through the creation of public values?

Research

Design

Literature
Analysis

Participation
Methodology

*Research
paper*

+

*Experiment
Nazaret*

*Spatial
Strategy*

**Participation
handbook**

**Elderly house
Kindergarden**
public space
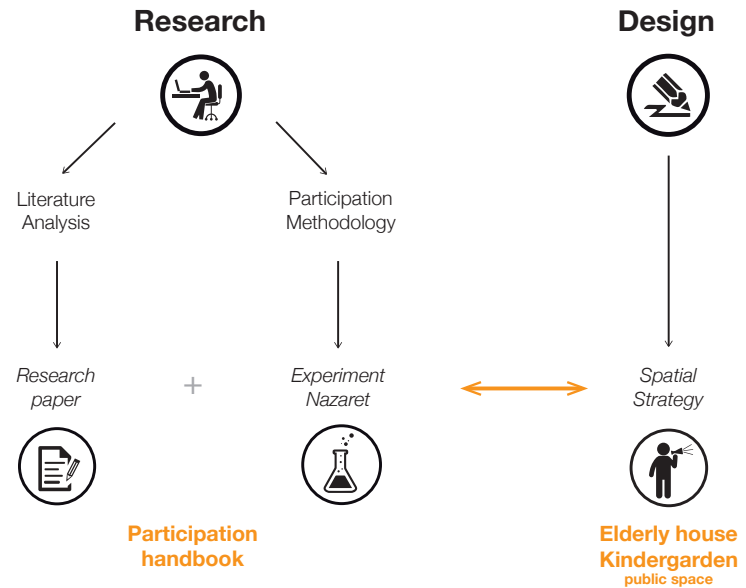
Figure 27 *General concept: relation research and design*

Being participation currently a hot topic, traditional research methods such as literature analysis were combined with more practical ways of retrieving data: conversations with practitioners, presence in conferences and, finally and most importantly, participative activities. These combined approaches formed a broad scoop on the topic and supported the theoretical findings.

During the research period there was continuous contact with the neighbourhood association of Nazaret, planning the activities and defining the terms of the collaboration. Simultaneously, these actions were based on the knowledge acquired through the literature and the practical experiences. The participative workshops became the "tests" of the experiment and the starting point for the following phase in both research and design. In other words, the conclusions of the first workshop became the outline of a spatial strategy developed in the design that was concretized in the idea for a public building in the second workshop. After this last workshop, all conclusions and details were used for the academic project.
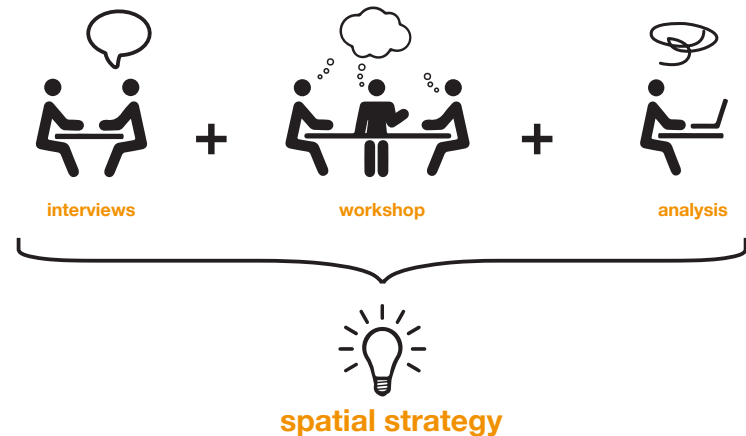
Figure 28 *Spatial Strategy design*

Methodology

Theoretical input

Literature (See Bibliography)

Planning: *Right to the City, Participation Methods, Public Sphere, Urban Regeneration, Public Buildings*

Valencia and Nazaret: *Nazaret y sus calles, Municipal Planning ressources*

Interviews-meetings

Grupo Aranea, Carpe Vía, Amateur Cities, Nelson Mota

Conferences

"The creation of Public values": Design as Politics

"The role of the Architect": Methods and Analysis

"The empathetic turn": ARENA Dr_SOM

As mentioned earlier, current developments in participatory design make it very important to connect research with practice and academics in order to grasp what those 'worlds' had to offer to the debate. On the one hand, any academic research has to be based on a solid literature analysis which in this cased was focused in Planning, Architecture, Participation and literature about the project case–Nazaret. Together with those actions, informal interviews with practitioners showed strengths and weaknesses of participatory processes and discovered new research lines. Finally, attendance to conferences related to the topic highlighted the gaps between research, practice and academics.

The information gathered during the aforementioned actions was compiled in a mind map underlining connections and important ideas in order to facilitate the compilation of this handbook.

Questions

1. How and when did you come to Nazaret?

2. At this point , love or hate ?

3. What area of the neighborhood you live in?

4. Do you work in Nazaret ?

5. What is your daily routine (Inside or outside Nazaret) ?

6. What are the 4 main problems of the neighborhood ?

7. How do you think that could be improved from architecture ?

8. The goal of my project is to design a public building by participation. What location you think is more suitable?

Benimar   *Plot of the Civil Guard*   *Estacioneta*

9. In a prior vote the following programs were chosen. What would you vote for ?

Residential Care   *Local Police Headquarters*   *Kindergarden*

Results

The most relevant result of the interview became understanding the strengths and weaknesses of this kind of inquiry. On the one hand, closed questions tend to make the interviewee pushed towards a determinate objective and eventually uncomfortable. On the other, most people just want to be heard; they want to tell the interviewer 'their story' and it seems preferable to have some guidelines that bring the talk towards a definite direction.

In the case of the interview in Nazaret, the last questions gave options that were too definite and that narrowed the perspectives of the citizens that otherwise might have proposed different options.

The general conclusions deduced from the conversations were:

- People are very happy to live there. They feel proud to be from there but not to talk about it.
- The loss of the beach damaged the identity of Nazaret's inhabitants even the ones that did not live through its loss.
- There is an enormous segregation feeling between citizens of different origins: Spanish gypsies, Romanian gypsies, African, Muslim… And in many cases, it is accepted as unavoidable.
- Related to the precedent fact, that social heterogeneity provokes problems of urban civility such as public space damage or illegal activities.
- Most of the community, especially the 'old Spanish citizens' have a very close community feeling: everyone knows what is going on. This arose especially with the questions about the problems and possible locations for a project.
- Citizens feel the need of connection to the city both physically and emotionally. The lack of infrastructure linking the neighbourhood with other areas makes them feel isolated and rejected, which lays the foundation of their political demands.
- Most people agreed on the urge to regenerate the plot of the former police headquarters 'el solar del cuartel'. What is difficult to determine is whether that was because of a personal conviction or because of intense campaigning by the neighbourhood association.
- Some participants suggested a building that would combine functions instead of a single purposed one. Some even proposed a public-private building that would bring economic activity to the area.

Online presence

Facebook (page)

Wordpress (blog)

Email (contact)

As outlined before, the image of the neighbourhood is one of the weakest points of its situation; some people feel proud of their heritage but ashamed of its image outside the neighbourhood's boundaries. Furthermore, in the era of communications, the public sphere is not only physical but also electronic; hence to have an actual impact on Nazaret and the public debate on the situation of the built environment it was important to engage on-line with citizens both inside and outside the area. For this reason, online tools were developed both as part of promotion of the project and as a research tool.

Figure 29 *https://www.facebook.com/participaccion.nazaret*

Figure 30 *https://participaccion.wordpress.com*

The chosen platforms were a blog and a Facebook page: one being formal and static and the other being fast and dynamic. In terms of success it is difficult to assess the real impact that both tools had since on Facebook is not possible to track the views of your profile but the likes, and, on the website, the users could be partially identified but they rarely interacted with the platform (comments, emails…). Nevertheless, the project reached very impressive figures of social media impact: 206 likes, or 896 reaches by a post on Facebook and 2.054 visits from 18 different countries.

Online presence entailed, thus, a central piece of the project where activities were promoted, ideas exposed and interaction encouraged. It was the means and the objective of the project's development: understanding and communicating with the community and provoking debate and engagement.

206 likes   **2.054 visits**

896 post reaches   **18 countries**

Figure 31 *Visits to the site by country*
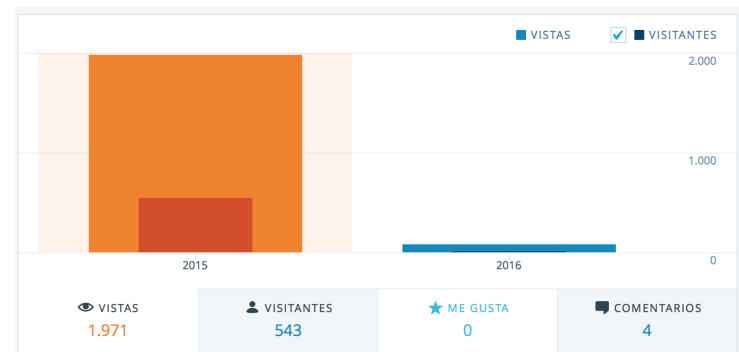
Figure 32 *Visits and visitors to the site*

Workshops

In order to test the power of participation in urban regeneration, as discussed earlier, the neighbourhood of Nazaret in Valencia) served as an empirical experiment. Together with several neighbourhood associations, an action plan for participatory activities was developed upon two axes: urban analysis and urban action.

The book Universal Methods of Design: 100 Ways to Research Complex Problems, Develop Innovative Ideas, and Design Effective Solutions (Martin, Hanington, & Hanington, 2012) provided the theoretical basis for developing activities useful for data collection and creative participant engagement. This book is useful because it presents 'out-of the box' universal ideas for user interaction that can be applied to social sciences, architecture, design or spatial planning. The singularity of these materials lays in the variety of methods supported with abundant previous research and explained in meticulous detail. A thorough study of the proposed methods in comparison with more orthodox methods used by practitioners, conformed the set of activities to be organized in Nazaret as part of the Participatory Process.

Urban Analysis. 17th May 2015

In the first set of activities, the objective was to raise awareness about the challenges and opportunities of the neighbourhood by allowing participants to discuss, detect and agree with each other regarding the area's challenges. Although the activities were minutely planned, working with real people and real entities usually requires adaptations to the plan. In this case, some activities were rejected because of practical reasons and others were adapted in the field.

Proposed activities

From a theoretical perspective, the following activities stimulated a gradual process towards a conscious understanding of the neighbourhood's reality. These activities ranged from interviews to become acquainted with the area while reaching a wide sample of citizens, to a critical wandering through the physical space to explore together with participants the realities discussed in previous activities.

The main objective of these activities was to raise awareness of the built environment within citizens, which also answered one of the research questions: 'How can the designer have an influence in the Creation of Public Values?' Experimenting with participation gave the opportunity to appreciate how the input of the designer could determine the understanding of the built environment empowering citizens to think about it and discuss it in a comfortable but technical setting.

Although measuring the Creation of Public Values is a complicated task due to its intangibility, the strength of this investigation comes from the hypothesis that the results of the experiment can be extrapolated to a larger scale with similar results.

The following activities were planned for an intensive program during the month of May 2015 together with the neighborhood representatives:

¡Pasea Nazaret!

Objective:: Obtaining an overview of the neighborhood and its problems by wandering through the area together with a group of inhabitants

Participants: Members AVV Nazaret + citizens different ages and backgrounds

Product: Critical map

Location: On the streets of Nazaret + a working space

Duration: 1,5 h walk and 0,5 h critical reflection

Material: - Map of urban scale Nazaret

- Markers

- Stickers

- Post-its

- Video and audio recording system

Description: The best way, and probably only way, of understanding a neighbourhood's life is by its inhabitants. In this case, the neighbours of Nazaret will help make the first impression of the neighbourhood during a walk around the area. While walking, the participants will discuss the problems and challenges of Nazaret, which they will represent in an urban scale map of Nazaret together with the designer at the end of the session.

¿Qué le pasa a Nazaret?

Objective: Establishing a map of problems to be tackled in different temporal
terms

Participants: Members AVV Nazaret + citizens different ages and backgrounds

Product: SWOT analysis

Location: Working space (maybe the AVV's office)

Duration: 2 h

Material: - White continuous paper

- Markers

- Post-its

- Image capturing system

Description:As a citizen, we all have an opinion on which problems should be tackled in our urban areas. However, these thoughts might be a bundle of opinions, repetitions, dreams… that should be ordered and shaped in a serious and consistent way to clarify them. In this activity, the participants will first

brainstorm about the main problems of Nazaret (urban, social, political, economical) individually and then group these in groups of affinity. In the second part of the activity, based on those groups, they will interconnect the problems in a concept map showing the subjacent cause-effect, parallel connections, and opposition between those facts, with the help of the designer. As a segue into the next activities, the participants will be asked to propose shortly how those problems could be solved by urban or architectural design.

Un día en la vida de …

Objective: Translate people's daily routines into a behavioural map to understand
           the moving patterns in the area

Participants: Citizens of different ages and backgrounds (elderly from the market,
           school kids…)

Product: Behavioural map

Location: Different locations

Duration: 15 min per interview. Around 8 interviews.

Material: - A4 maps of Nazaret

           - Markers

           - Post-its

           - Video and audio recording system

Description: Actors with different routines understand the public realm differently.
           In order to understand the public ream of Nazaret, the designer will
           interview neighbours and ask them about their daily routines: where

they go, what they see, where they never go, where they do not feel
comfortable and mark these in a map with different colours and lines
to highlight movement and urban patterns. The content of these
interviews will be combined with the product of the first workshop in
order to produce a critical behavioural map.

¿Quién es Nazaret?

Objective: Elucidate the main public and private actors and their interconnections.

Participants: Citizens of different ages and backgrounds.

Product: Actor map

Location: Working space (maybe AVV's office)

Duration: 2 h

Material: - Large white paper sheet

   - Markers

   - Actor 3D figures

   - Video and audio recording system
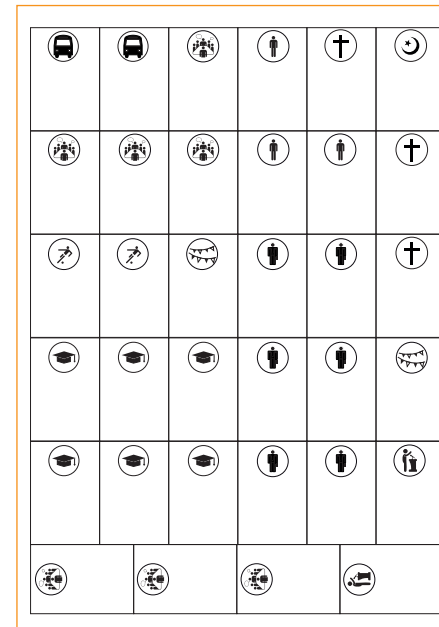
Description: A neighbourhood consists of many people with different interests, occupations and relations, which shape the functioning of the area and its possibilities. This workshop aims to establish collectively what the main actors in Nazaret are specifically in relation to the public realm. In the second part of the activity, the participants will define the connections between the actors and how they could affect an urban plan for Nazaret, either positively or negatively.

Háblame de Nazaret.

Objective: Learn about citizen's conceptions, memories and hopes for the neighborhood.

Participants: Citizens of different ages and backgrounds.

Product: General understanding of the situation and the personas

Location: Different locations

Duration: 30 min per interview

Material: - Note taking material

- Video and audio recording system

Description: Talking is the best way to understand each other. Through a series of interviews with a selection of neighbors, the designer will comprehend a broad range of visions from old historical memories, spatial conceptions or ideas for improvement.

Due to the practicalities involved, the program required some adaptation leading to fewer activities with different characteristics:

- First, the interviews became less formal and the questions were used as topic orientations because interviewees felt uncomfortable in a strict question scheme. When it comes to topics that are close to their daily lives, mostly people just want to talk, to express their opinion and feel more relaxed with this 'open' system.

- The walk and problem mapping together formed a combined activity that made participants turn their discontent into a constructive talk and finally summarize it in necessary midterm interventions. The actor map was not realized during the activity due to a lack of time, yet the associations committed to contribute in its creation.

- The activity "un día en la vida de…" –the behavioural map– appeared to be slightly intrusive and unpractical during a street interview thus it was not completed.

- The workshop comprised the following activities:
    1. Walk through the area
    2. Urban scale. Problem mapping (results following page)
    3. Local scale. Spatial strategy

Results and conclusions

Doing research with real people is a challenging but also highly rewarding task. The performance of these activities helped create a new perspective on the neighbourhood challenges and opportunities and –what is even more important– new perspectives for its future development for both the participants and the organization team.

The general results were:

- By organizing "technical activities" from an outsider point of view, it became easier to make different parties to agree since they did not see the workshop organizer as an enemy but as someone who is trying to help. Even the eternally confronted neighbourhood associations were able to integrate their proposals in the deliverables.

- The immaterial output from the activities was a better understanding of the physical and social situation and the stakeholders through the interviews and walk through the neighbourhood. On the other hand

- Using visual tools for the SWOT analysis produced a highly valuable output in two scaled-maps because it facilitated the absorption of proposals from citizens. One of the maps tackles the large-scale connections (or disconnections) with the city where the citizens proposed major interventions. The second map focused on the closer

scale where specific areas of the neighbourhood were pointed as urgent for mid-term intervention.

- Despite a miscalculation in the coordination led to the impossibility to record and transcript all interviews and activities, that did not affect the project development because of the workshop's outcome recurrence– most people shared diagnosis and opinion.

The conclusions from the first set of workshops were a great basis for the development of the project since– although they differed from the expectations– they confirmed the hypothesis and offered plenty of material to work with.

Figure 33 *2. Result Workshop. Urban scale. Problem mapping*

Figure 34 *Result Workshop. Local scale. Spatial strategy*

Figure 35 *Results of workshop turned into a design Spatial Strategy*

Conexión Jardín del Túria
- extensión del ajardinamiento, cami bici y senda peatonal.
- paseo maritimo bordeando el cauce que conecte con Pinedo y Saler.

Restauración 'Estacioneta'
- restauración colaborativa (administración: técnica, privado: capital, sociedad: trabajo e ideas)
- propuesta de programas públicos-privados.

Reducir la brecha del puente
- empoderar a peatones y ciclistas en detrimento de los carriles del coche.
- difuminar con programa público el muro físico de la baranda.

Rediseño manzana del cuartel
- introducir programa público y espacio ajardinado.
- combinar residencia de ancianos con escuela infantil.
- abrir la calle Estrella y conectarla con el jardín del interior de la manzana.
- parque infantil y jardín

Re-Programación de Marazul
- búsqueda de nuevas programas para el uso más intensivo del espacio.
- propuesta de modelos para mejorar su viabilidad.

Estrategia Espacial
Propuesta de intervenciones en la escala urbana

Urban Action. 27th June 2015

The second series of activities had a different objective; instead of analysing the reality, the workshop intended to make proposals for new realities. In a festive atmosphere, Nazaret's inhabitants of all ages would play and dream about the physical public realm of the area.

Proposed activities

For an architect-designer, thinking globally– both in analytical and spatial terms– is an easy task, however, for a citizen that is considerably difficult. The intention of this set of activities was first facilitating contrasted data through a 'quiz' as a basis for a collaborative design proposal realized in the second part.

Concerning the research, the Urban Action workshop elaborated on the answer to the research question about the power of the designer in the creation of

public values while trying to demonstrate the importance of public buildings as urban regenerators.

The following activities were planned and promoted to take place in the last weekend of June 2015 in an outside space where everyone could participate and they could be a demonstration for urban regeneration in itself.

'¡Gánate el Solar!'

Objective: Improve the urban understanding of the participants over the area

Participants: Citizens of different ages and backgrounds. Around 10 people

Product: -

Location: Outdoors space to facilitate participation.

Duration: 15 min

Material: - Prepared questions

  - Contrasted data materials

Description: We, citizens, tend to have an opinion on urban matters usually based on subjective perceptions and not real data. When participants are asked to take part in a quiz about the statistics, practicalities and use of their area they might discover unexpected matters. For instance, who do you have to ask the key of the community centre if I want to use it? What is the population aging?

¡Proyecta Nazaret!

Objective: Get the participants to experience the position of the designer and propose solutions.

Participants: Citizens of different ages and backgrounds. Around 12 people

Product: Spatial and design strategies

Location: Outdoors space to facilitate participation.

Duration: 2 h

Material: - Pieces for model

      - Volumes for model

      - Image capturing system

Description: Architects, as well as other people involved in the design of our cities, tend to picture space from above, as in models or plans. Nevertheless, for non-designers it becomes difficult to picture space, voids, sections, and proportions. In this activity participants will get the chance to be the architects and propose collectively an intervention on the chosen site. The designer will guide the process and capture the proposals for further analysis and as an input for its own proposal.

¡Imagina Nazaret!

Objective: Produce imaginative proposals for the site.

Participants: Citizens of different ages and backgrounds. Especially children, women, elderly (max 30)

Product: Design proposals for the site

Location: Outdoors space to facilitate participation. (In front of the site if possible)

Duration: 4 h

Material: - Template of a defined view of the site

    - Colour markers and pencils

    - Image capturing system

Description: Participants in this activity will propose creative ideas for the building and surrounding through drawing. Liberating them from the realistic approach, this activity will work as psychoanalysis of the dreams and hopes of citizen's for the site. Together with the model proposals, this will be used as guidelines for the final design produced by the designer.

Final venue

The final planning of the event was designed together with the representatives of the main neighbourhood associations in order to attract as many participants as possible. First, it was decided to call for a popular 'merienda' (afternoon snack), partially provided by the organization. Then, the children drawing activity started and ran simultaneously to the other activities for 'grown-ups'. Opening the workshop with the quiz awoke interest in the area, the statistics and the 'objective reality'.

Some of the questions were asked as open and, when very precise, by giving options to motivate thinking and debate. Some of the answers surprised assistants, which engaged in debate on this data especially after distribution of the infographic of 'Nazaret at a glance' illustrating this data. The last two questions were designed to make people think of the size of the proposed elderly house and kindergarten in relation to the local needs.

TRIVIAL NAZARET

1. ¿Cuándo nació Nazaret?
   a.   1720
   b.   1850
   c.   1900

2. ¿De dónde viene el nombre de Nazaret?
   a.   De Jesús de Nazaret.
   b.   Del Lazareto.
   c.   De la católica devoción del barrio.

3. ¿Qué significa Lazareto?
   Recinto sanitario que se dedica a la observación y tratamiento de desinfección de personas que pueden ser portadoras de una enfermedad contagiosa antes de admitirlas en un lugar determinado.

4. ¿Cuántos habitantes tiene Nazaret?
   a.   10.000
   b.   6.000 (6155)
   c.   8.000

5. ¿Cuál es la edad media?
   a. 20
   b. 30
   b. 40
   c. 50

6. ¿Más mujeres o hombres?
   a. Mujeres 49,6
   b. Hombres 50,4

7. ¿Cuál es la ocupación principal?
   a.   construcción
   b.   agricultura
   c.   servicios (72%)

8. ¿De qué época son la mayoría de las viviendas?
   a.   antes de 1920
   b.   1960s
   c.   desde 1980

9. ¿Qué altura tienen la mayoría de los edificios?
   a.   hasta 3 plantas
   b.   4-5 plantas
   c.   6 o más

10. ¿Cuántos coches por plaza?
    a. 1
    b. 2,5
    b. 4

11. ¿Si quieres organizar una actividad con tu colectivo, dónde vas, a quién te diriges? ABIERTA
    a.   Marazul
    b.   Asociaciones de Vecinos
    c.   Centro social.

12. ¿Cuántos mayores hay en Nazaret?
    a. 1000 (1170)
    b. 200
    c. 500

13. ¿Cuántos niños 0-4?
    a. 50
    b. 100
    c. 300 (313)

Figure 36 *'Trivial de Nazaret' Quiz about the neighbourhood.*

Figure 37 *Poster for the Action Workshop*

As explained before, working with a pre-made physical model was highly relevant to improve the understanding of the location's qualities. During the activity 'Proyecta Nazaret', adults played with foam modules proposing possible building compositions. Nevertheless, it became very clear that people feel more comfortable writing than building since most participants preferred to write down ideas on sticky notes rather than represent them. Halfway through the activity, some neighbours had questions regarding the plot because of it being closed to the public, which resulted in the president of one neighbourhood association leading a visit to the site. The possibility of visiting the 'the object of desire' thrilled both young and old and became the climax of the workshop.

After the great input of the 'site visit', ideas started to flow leading to a overwhelming interaction specially with the younger ones that can we appreciated in the drawings, sticky notes and desires they expressed.

Results and conclusions

Despite practical limitations reduced the scope and reach of the research – the fact that there was only one person involved in the research, the budget was minimal and the researcher had to travel–the results of these activities can be considered relevant for the research objectives. The aim was to show the importance of participation for urban planning and architecture and this was largely proven by the results of the workshop in terms of involvement, production of ideas and usability for the designer.

The general specific results of the Action Workshops were:

    - The playful activity raised awareness about the situation of the neighbourhood and their demands both within its inhabitants and the rest of the city since the activities were featured in local newspapers both online and printed. Furthermore, it raised awareness about the project itself and its relevance

- Exposing the results of the previous workshop reinforced the feeling of process rather than the activity just being happening and encouraged people to participate as a part of a larger scale project. It also raised more debate about the decisions taken and how to tackle previous proposals.

- Using physical creative tools allowed very different participants to present their views in concrete solutions either by writing them, drawing them, talking about them or making them in the model. The preferred mean of expression by kids was drawing and writing and by adults mostly talking and writing, which shows adult's difficulties with the use of creative tools. Nevertheless, the possibility of thinking spatially with a model broadened the perception of participants by adding a scale variable that gave a sense of space and proportion that usually non-designers lack.

- Organizing the activity outdoors was a great success in terms of transparency and visibility and it also created a more inclusive scenario were citizens that do not participate in other activities, felt empowered to do so because it was in public space, the space for all.

- Collaborating with both associations instead of only with the one closest in ideology to the project– which is common practice in similar projects– enriched the project by showing a 'hidden perspective', a different angle that allows the project to be more inclusive, fair therefore enriching the public sphere hence having a positive effect on the spatial regeneration. There is no real participation process that can be segregating, exclusive or partial because that would make it automatically non-representative.

Figure 38 *Sticky notes result of the workshop*
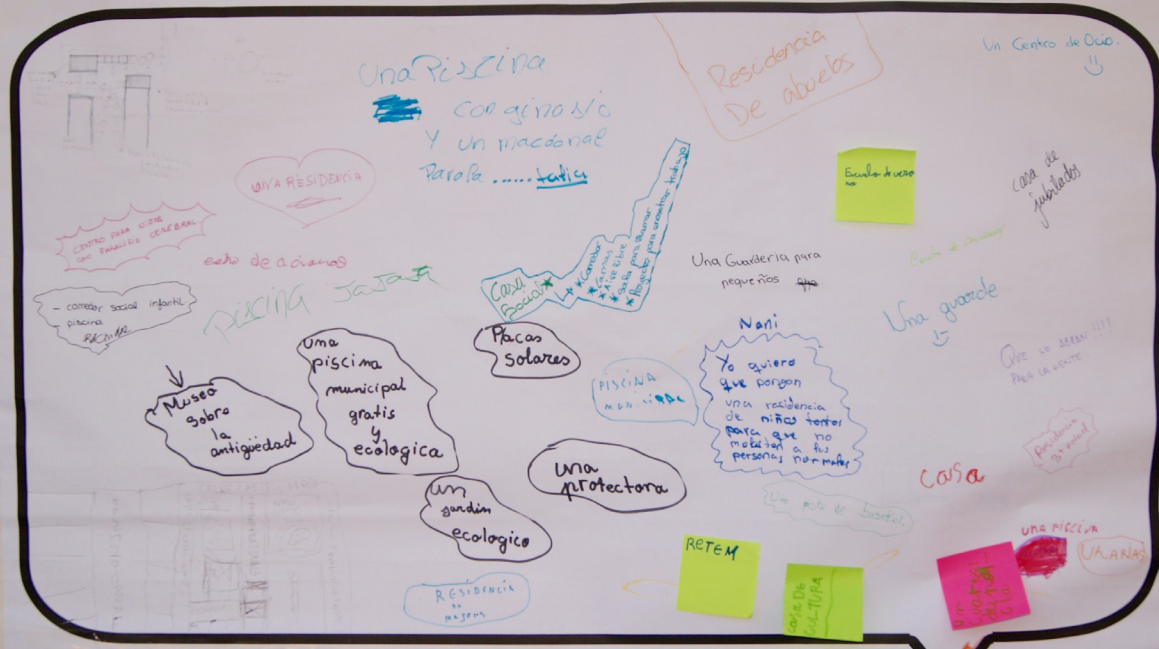
Figure 39 *Collective mural ' in the plot, I would put...'*
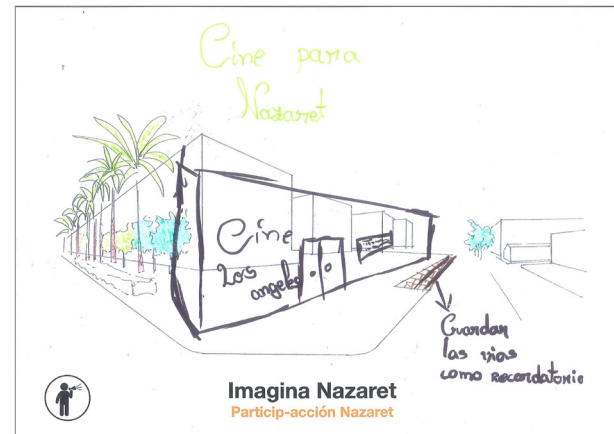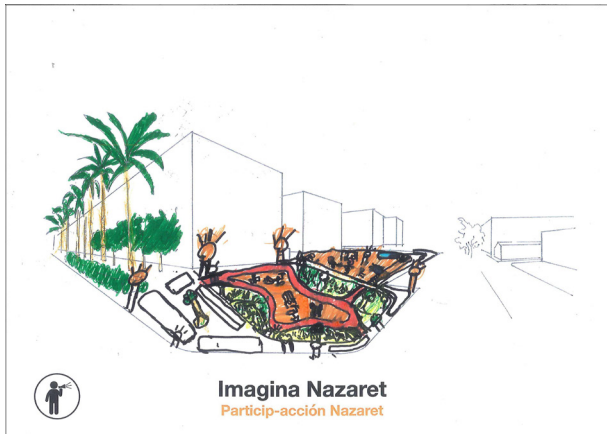
Figure 40 *Collages result of the activity 'Imagina Nazaret'*

Figure 41 *Fig.*   *Appearance in the local newspaper 'El Levante' 30/06/15*

Figure 42 *Appearance in the local newspaper 'El Levante' 29/06/15*

Research Conclusions

In general terms, the outcome of the workshops was very positive, very intense in quantity and quality and very rewarding personally. The success may reside on the fact that the activities and outcomes shaped the project and not vice versa so everything was adapted through the process in order to facilitate the best outcome instead of having a very strict perspective of how things were supposed to develop. Being a designer in a participatory process is about mediating and helping the discursive process, not about stubborn about the result.

Indeed, the participatory process started with an idea of what the neighbourhood what and what it needed that was completely transformed by the collaborative work. For instance, the first design idea was to restore an old station in the edge of the area while–during the first workshop– it became clear that was not the most relevant action.

Being an academic student project, there were difficulties in organization that were reduced with dedication and voluntary help from external individuals. The singularity of the project made the stakeholders empathise with the development even more and engaged easier because they did not feel constrained with 'official' administration. In other words, their scepticism about the effect of the project had a positive influence.

Time and academic constraints obliged to scale down a process that in real life would have taken years involving a complex spectrum of stakeholders. Nevertheless, it opened up contacts between citizens, practitioners and institutions that could grow into further development.

Nonetheless, the significance of these kinds of procedures is constrained by the citizen sample that participates in these activities. In the workshop, kids from different backgrounds interacted (such as gypsies or African), however,

the adult participants were people already committed to the public sphere in the neighbourhood through the associations. Reaching the 'invisibles' the 'silent majority' remains the challenge of participation procedures and raises doubts about its liability for the larger scale. In any case, the engagement in the public debate through voting or participating in a workshop is a personal decision in a democratic society; it is a right and cannot become an obligation hence it will always remain a choice.

The results

Participatory methods in Architectural Design: creating public values for urban regeneration.

Discussion

"The learning process is a constant exchange process. Understanding that this process can be multidirectional and continuous brings value to the educational system. Education supported by community and collective intelligence amplifies its potential."
Carpe Vía, The City is our Lab.

Despite this being the closing chapter of the book, the project 'Attention city in the making' did not finish, yet it just started. Participative processes are not a destination but the way towards a more democratic planning, which implies multidirectional and continuous processes. Nonetheless, the project responded to the posed questions and also raised further research topics.

The definition of participatory methods is a contradiction in itself: participation is a process defined by many variables (location, community, resources…) adapted to a specific situation, hence, there is no general definition of which

methods are convenient. Nevertheless, it is important to clarify that participation is synonym of partnership and it implies action, interconnection and collective intelligence in a setting where actors have to be actively involved in the process. To be considered an actual participative process, a process needs to engage stakeholders in a process aiming at defining common objectives which not necessarily means agreeing yet usually involves constructive confrontation.

Determining the role of the stakeholders in a participative process appears closely related to the purpose of the project. In general terms, it is important to re-define the way the three main stakeholders of the built environment– public sector, private initiative and civic society– act and interact. On the one hand, the public administration is ultimately accountable for urban planning and so it should be. Citizen participation does not substitute the role of public institutions in policy-making but collaborates actively in order to approach the administration to their urban reality. On the other hand, private interest

must engage in the process of making the city constantly and not only related to profit. Cities should be designed for people, not for profit and therefore, private investment should be associated to the creation of public values on top of public goods. Finally, in a participative planning paradigm, society must be aware of its rights and empowered to be critical, engaged and creative within its urban environment. In this triangle, the technician (architect, urban planner, sociologist, psychologist) is responsible for guiding the process and compensating the tension between the interests of the three parties from the basis of its technical and social knowledge. The technician is the mediator within a process of collaborative learning and discovering that can have many different ultimate aims but a common purpose: making cities more liveable, just, sustainable and inclusive.

The influence of the designer in the creation of public values is limited among others by the limitations of its field of expertise. In order to create public values, participative processes must include different technicians with relevant knowledge in areas related to social and spatial creation: sociologist, geographers, designers, artists, urban planners, architects or policy-makers. Despite public values being difficult to measure, they must be desirable long-term goals within urban regeneration practices.

Other than a public good, public buildings can be the paradigm of the creation of public values when designed within a socio-spatial strategy, which should be developed through participatory methods. Public buildings have the representative power to create new centralities within a larger spatial design. They can become the icon of change and also contribute to the creation of public values such as integration or freedom. In the design of the public building resulting from this project, the conjunction of the programmes of assisted elderly housing together with kindergarten is a good example of how public buildings can go beyond simply answering needs but incorporate bigger goals

such as designing a place for intergenerational interaction that also strengthens the urban fabric by incorporating circulation through it.

According to the results of the research and design of this project, scaling up participatory processes to a larger scale is not only desirable but also required for the current and future challenges of urban life. For instance, there are widespread examples of participatory budgeting whose next step could be participatory activities to design the public goods out of that budget. Practicing participation in policy-making would make the procedures more transparent and therefore increase the accountability of public representatives for the decisions made.

In conclusion, participatory methods in architectural design could substitute the formal planning and design paradigms because of its powerful effects in the creation of public values especially in cases of need for urban regeneration. A more inclusive paradigm of city making would also establish a more transparent, responsible and sustainable city development, which is much needed in the current situation of urban development.

Reflection

On the Project

A graduation project is the culmination of a phase, the pinnacle of the learning process that will not only be the end but also the beginning of future interests and paths. In my case, the opportunity that the Explorelab studio gave me to explore my fascination on participation broadened my perspective on human interaction with and within buildings and had a major influence in my position as an architect.

Although my real interest did not seem evident in my first proposals for the graduation project, now looking back, it appears as obvious to me: the reason why I became an architect and why I chose this graduation project is because I deeply believe in the power of architecture in politics, in the life of the city. The project 'Attention, City in the making!' proves that making the city is a continuous process that should involve interaction from the main stakeholders: civic society, public sector and private interest. Specifically, the research focu-

ses on how participatory methods in Architectural and Urban Design can help creating public values for urban regeneration, understanding that urban regeneration is a way of continuously making the city.

On the methods

The project was divided in two parts–the research and the design– connected by an experimental case. The first would give the theoretical background and raise the questions that would be answered by the experiment and finalised in the design of a building.

Together with the literature analysis of relevant publications on participation, urban regeneration, public buildings and other related topics, the development of a participatory process gave coherence to the argument for citizen inclusion

in the creation of the built environment, given that it would not make sense to advocate for such a topic from a merely theoretical approach.

The location chosen for the case experiment was Nazaret, a deprived neighbourhood of Valencia (Spain) presenting major challenges in terms of economical, social and spatial exclusion. Together with the two antagonist neighbourhood associations, a series of activities and meetings were scheduled to develop a project for a mid-term strategy and public building which, of course, would be decided by citizen participation.

Interacting with real actors while doing an academic project was a great chance to discover the real challenges and opportunities of the architect as a mediator and also gave freedom to engage with the community in a non-institutional way creating trust bonds while managing expectations.

Using the conclusions of the workshops undertaken in May and June 2015, a spatial strategy and the design of a public building were designed. The first one, dealt with the large urban scale in the mid-term and proposed interventions to improve the general situation of the area that would develop together with a new centrality, the designed public building. During the first set of activities, it became clear through interviews and workshops what the program and location of the project should be: a kindergarten and/or elderly house in the plot of the former military police house.

On the effects

Besides being very enriching for the project to count with real citizen interaction, it was also very enriching personally to realize how much the architect can do for the city without laying a single brick, just by discussing, managing, collaborating with the people. The project also showed alternative ways of designing from the traditional commission-proposal scheme.

When it comes to the academic outcome, the 'Attention, City in the making!' project demonstrated how empirical research projects can be feasible in architecture education working with real agents and real needs. Research conclusions also suggest that more integration of participative design methods in spatial

planning should be implemented as the new development paradigm, which eventually should also be reflected in education curriculum.

Saying that participation should become the new paradigm for spatial planning might sound bold yet participation in different ways is already a reality and architecture and urbanism should adapt to it.

On the relevance

Nowadays, participation is a commonly used word in political and urban discourse. On the one hand, interactive technologies turned users into individuals that want to be heard and interact with their environment and make decisions about it. Platforms such as 'airbnb' or 'uber' make clear that individuals now advocate for platforms regulated by interactive feedback (ratings) or collaborative creation (open source).

Nevertheless, the actual definition and possibilities of participation in architecture and urban design are largely unknown. Therefore, the study of participatory methods is now more relevant than ever. Future research should pay special attention technology, the creation of image and urban discomfort related to the precedent.

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