Tracing the Democratic Deficit: an Actor-Network Approach to Urban Governance Networks in Madrid and Brussels.

Mathieu Van Criekingen
September 1, 2015

Abstract

Due to the recent disenchantment with democracy, Governance Networks (GN) have become one the most democratically legitimate tools for the implementation of public policies in Europe. When governments wish to make political decisions without facing a challenge to their legitimacy, GNs are enrolled as a public policy tool. From an Actor-Network Theory perspective, Urban Governance Networks can be understood as assemblages brought together to allow a democratically legitimate flow of power to ultimately modify the sociomateriality of city. Since the deployment of a GN is inherently a political process, in the sense that it implies the introduction of a new entity to the political ecosystem of the city (Latour, 2009), it is never uncontroversial. The disruption of a new actor in the daily life of a city also introduces new political issues that the current institutional framework cannot address, giving rise to a *public*, or *community of the affected* (Marres, 2005), a group of actors interested in finding a democratic solution to an emerging problematic. When the actors labelling themselves as *the affected* struggle to identify how the power flows through the network, how its material effects are achieved, and how issues are eventually settled, they make claims for the existence of a Democratic Deficit. *The affected* subsequently implement strategies of political intervention in an attempt to make visible the actors involved in the flow of power through the network and the connections they regard as missing. This process of visibilisation effectively reconfigures the power positions held by the different actors involved in the process, since some of them benefit from the opacity of the flow, which allows them to achieve their objectives, and others from its transparency, which allows them to exert more control. This research develops this argument trough the analysis of two case studies in Madrid and Brussels.

Keywords: Democratic Deficit, Urban Governance Networks, Actor-Network Theory, Brussels, Madrid.

Index

Introduction

The idea that the city is the most appropriate unit for democracy has been part of western political thought for millennia (Dahl, 1967). After relatively brief and intermittent interruptions between the 19th and the 20th centuries, European cities in particular are performing once again a crucial role in the democratic organisation of public life (Corijn, 2009). However, a novel element is that democracy and The City have become co-constituents. This is not to say that there is no democracy without The City or vice versa, but that the performance of democracy is increasingly more mediated by The City, since its materiality is used as support for the (re)politization of certain matters that seemed to be absent from public discussion. Similarly, the production of urban space (Lefebvre, 1991) is also increasingly a matter of democratic discussion. The aim of this thesis is to take a close look at this process of co-production to discover the role that another new and problematic actor is performing in it: the Democratic Deficit (DD).

At a difficult point to determine during the post-war years (Sørensen & Torfin, 2007), Governance emerged as a promising tool to make sense and articulate the large array of values and interests conflicting in the highly diverse western societies. However, after only a few years of practice, it transformed from a tool to strengthen Democracy, to another mean of excluding actors from the decision-making process. This phenomenon of depuration of the public discussion, labelled as the Democratic Deficit, has been described as determinant for the development of some European cities during the past decades (Swyngedouw, 2002; 2005). In reaction to it, dozens of movements of organized citizens around the continent demand *real democracy* by taking the streets, at times for months, asking for a radical change in the mechanisms that produce the rules determining the faith of cities and nations. The radicalness of some these outbursts point to a scenario in which only two alternatives seem possible: the continuation –and probable exacerbation- of an unequal and undemocratic society, or the production of a new and completely different set of political, economic and social rules.

However, facing the unlikeliness of a successful radical change, let alone a revolution, and the grimness of a future of some sort of corporative totalitarianism, one can question if democracy as it empirically exists and is performed through everyday practices can still be used as support for an equitable development of public life. With this inquiry in mind and inspired by Chantal Mouffe's advice to continue trusting in institutions as mechanisms for the articulation of difference (Mouffe, 2005), this research sets out to follow the development of

two Urban Governance Networks (UGN) in two European cities, to find out which of their components push towards a more democratic organization of collective life and which ones pull against. The aim is to identify what are the devices and practices that are set in motion when the presence of the Democratic Deficit in a governance process is denounced by groups of citizens that define their collective identity as *affected* by it. In other words, the aim of this research is to follow the DD as it moves through a Governance Network, identifying what are its material consequences and how they are produced. Therefore, the Deficit is not considered to be the context in which the material production of cities and their political lives occurs, but another actor capable of determining the sociomaterial outcomes of governmental activity, as well as specific distributions of power among the entities involved.

Since the deployment of a Governance Network and the citizens' struggle to control its development do not happen in the void, another objective of this text is to discover how the materiality of the city helps to politicize the issue of the Democratic Deficit of modern European democracies. This implies identifying how urban spaces are used as tools to introduce certain topics to the public political discussion, how they open the possibility to challenge power configurations, and what potentials and restrictions are imposed by the materiality of the city during the process, both for those fighting the Deficit as for those who apparently benefit from it.

The main hypothesis guiding this research is that the DD has become the most important actor in the local dynamics of modern western democracies, at least in two different but interconnected ways: first, it functions as the sociomaterial support for a decision-making process that makes possible for local authorities to produce states of affairs that do not comply with ideal views of democracy and social justice, while nevertheless keeping the *formal* legitimacy of participative democracy. Second, it makes possible for organized groups of citizens to challenge power configurations they judge inappropriate by using the DD as a tool to transport political processes, from the apparently a-political realm of every-day practices, to the public spotlight.

On the basis of recent literature on the subject and two empirical case studies, this research develops a definition of the Democratic Deficit that focuses on the status of visibility of the tools needed to deploy Urban Governance Networks. Hence, as an alternative to other approaches that understand the Deficit as the displacement of political issues to fora unreachable for its interested public (Marres, 2005), or as the displacement of conflicts via the exclusion of those who radically disagree (Swyngedouw, 2008), the DD is presented here as the invisibilisation of the tools needed for the deployment of a Governance Network. The

study is carried out through the analysis of the development of sociomaterial relations established between organized groups of citizens, the Urban Governance Networks they wish to influence and the spaces that ultimately will be the material recipient of political decisions. This research programme is heavily influenced by Actor-Network Theory (ANT), since firstly, it emphasises the idea that no single actor is able to determine any material results on her own, but instead requires the association of many entities to succeed –some of which are not always visible-, and secondly, it pays particular attention to the role played by non-human actors.

The empirical basis of the research are two case studies of Urban Renewal projects involving the deployment of Governance Networks during their attempted planning and execution. The first one is the proposal to turn the Legazpi Fruits and Vegetables Market in Madrid into a gourmet market, sports centre, and a specialized public library. The second case study is the proposal to build a parking lot under the Place du Jeu de Balle, in Brussels, a project that was part of the very controversial renovation of squares and boulevards of Brussels' City Centre. In both cases the local authorities intended to deploy an UGN to perform material changes to the urban form, but were met with the opposition of the citizens, who denounced that the projects had no connection to their interests, but rather pursued the modification of the City to make it more profitable for other actors. The two case studies share some similarities that make them interesting to research and compare. Madrid and Brussels are both dense world-cities (Knox & Taylor, 1995) where space is highly contested, turning the decision-making process of what to do with the City into an intense political discussion. Similarly, both cities are objects of considerable interest for global actors, although for very different reasons; while the presence of the European institutions in Brussels turns the city into an object of desire for other inter and transnational institutions, companies and organisations, Madrid has been for the past decades under an intense process of privatisation of public spaces, something that has turned it into an attractive spot for investors and speculators (Fernández & García). On the other hand, the dissimilarities between the two places are also a productive source of comparison, since there is much to learn from the differences in the participatory cultures of the citizens and the institutional frameworks that articulate them. The extremely complex institutional framework of Brussels and the intense political activism of the neighbourhood organisations in Madrid are good *ideal types* (Weber, 1949) from which to obtain useful knowledge about the complexity of the political life of modern cities.

Due to a personal interest in the strategies of the weakest actors involved in asymmetrical power relationships, the focus of this research is set on the groups of citizens opposing the urban renewal projects, and not in the entirety of the UGNs deployed to achieve them. For the case of Madrid, my analysis is confined to the actions of the Espacio Vecinal Arganzuela (EVA), an umbrella organization gathering around 30 grassroots collectives, born after the eviction of the Occupied Social Centre La Traba, one of the biggest and more active squats in Madrid. During negotiations with the local government to obtain a new space to develop activities that La Traba used to house, EVA discovered an official plan to license the use of the Legazpi Market to a private investor, subsequently developing a campaign to demand its allocation to the neighbours. For the case of Brussels, this analysis is focused in the actions of Platforme Marolles, another umbrella organisation born to oppose the construction of a parking lot under the Place de Jeu de Balle. The strategies deployed by the Plateforme, in collaboration with other actors, were successful in deterring the local authorities from changing the use of a historically and culturally relevant place in Brussels, perceived as endangered had the project of the local government been implemented.

In both cases, the groups of organized citizens struggle to find the institutional mechanisms that allow them to produce a spatial configuration for the city that truly responds to their perceived needs, while other powerful actors seem to have fewer difficulties to achieve the same goal. The choice of using ANT as a framework for this research is related to the possibility of turning it into a source of practical advice for other groups involved in similar processes. ANT has the ability to identify unsuspected and surprising entities within sociomaterial processes, whose presence might help to explain why some actors have fewer difficulties than others accomplishing what they want. In this sense, with this text I wish to contribute to enrich the citizen's toolbox to reduce the power asymmetries still prevailing in modern western democracies.

Methodology

To trace the life of the Democratic Deficit during the development of two Governance Networks, this research analyses empirical data gathered during fieldwork in Madrid and *cyberethnography* (Robinson & Schulz, 2011) in Brussels, through the heuristic toolbox produced by recent ANT-influenced Urban Studies research.

Gathering of Empirical Data

To obtain the empirical material for this research, I joined what Colin McFarlane calls the *learning fora* (McFarlane, 2011) of two groups of citizens involved in the Governance Networks that were my object of study. *Learning fora* are places of encounter used by citizens to make sense of the city and ultimately also to produce it. For the case of the Legazpi Market in Madrid, since the process was still on-going during my fieldwork, I was able to attend for three months the weekly meetings of the Espacio Vecinal Arganzuela, as well as the different activities they organized to make their cause public: open air film projections, the creation of an Urban Garden, interventions in the Urban Debates Club, and meetings with other organisations. These were the spaces where most discussions around the destiny of the Legazpi market were held, and most decisions determining the actions of the organization were taken. Fortunately, EVA has developed a strong communication strategy that includes the production of an important amount of audio-visual material and a constant presence in the local alternative media of Madrid. This material was also used as an important source of empirical information.

The case study in Brussels was approached in a different way, since the opposition to the construction of a parking lot under Place de Jeu de Balle had already succeeded at the time I was able to carry out fieldwork. Therefore, the *learning fora* that I used to obtain the empirical data were the different. The empirical material in this case comes from the *informational utopics* (Juris, 2008) produced by the members of Plateforme Marolles, mainly their website and Facebook group, which are full of discussions and opinions about the actions of the local government and the strategies deployed to contest them. As in the case of EVA, Plateforme Marolles was constantly producing communication material containing their views about the issue.

The motivation for compiling this material was to acquire a wide variety of accounts of the development of the Governance Networks, where I could look for instances in which the DD is described as an element determining the outcome of the actions carried out. The following quote from a live-TV interview with a member of EVA is a good example of this:

What the local government does are polls, and they call it participation. But it has nothing to do with participation, because what the local government does is obtaining information in relation to a particular subject, *but the citizens do not have the possibility to formulate the political questions*. Since that is what they call public participation, what they are doing is a simulation. The promises of a higher degree of political participation for citizens are just empty words. Political power, when aspiring to be political power, will always talk about citizen participation, but that implies sharing power and they really do not like that (…) What local governments do is prioritise the payment of the public debt, which only benefits big banks, in detriment of the citizen's interests (Murgi, emphasis added).

In this quote, the fact that the citizens cannot determine the subject matter of democratic discussion is connected to a perception of an unequal distribution of powers between the actors involved in governance. Although the procedure is presented by the local government as an exercise of distributed decision-making, it ultimately causes the disappearance of the citizens' needs, who have to witness how other powerful actors (i.e., the banks) benefit from the outcomes of the democratic process instead of them. In this particular example, the actors credited with allowing the Democratic Deficit to produce its effects, are polls, a tool that allows the local government to *simulate* a participative process while at the same time preventing the citizens from achieving their goals.

Researchers like Erik Swyngedouw have already been extremely insightful by detecting how instruments such as polls can be used as *managerial practices* (Swyngedouw, 2011) that result in the foreclosure of The Political (Žižek, 2000). However, they often start their research assuming that the political is already missing, overlooking the chance to detect the mechanisms that achieve this disappearance (Grange, 2014). I will argue here that, surprisingly, departing from this point has the effect of contributing to the process of foreclosure, via the *death by conceptualisation* (Truillot, 2001) of the Political. In contrast, ANT's microscopic accounts are more cautious in assuming states of affairs. Therefore, where post-political thought starts by assuming the dimension of *politics* as everyday practices bereft of *The Political*, ANT would set out to find how is it that this disappearance is achieved, which might imply finding conflict again where it has been described absent, since from ANT's ontological position, reality is always conceived as the result of trials of force (Harman, 2009).

In this sense, as useful and insightful as it is, post-politics' approach might not be the best tool to identify practical solutions that allow for something else than a legitimate sense of indignation for the lack of political discussion in modern democratic systems. In contrast, the ANT approach endorsed here, while not capable of producing all-encompassing explanations, sets out for the sisyphean task of producing a list of all the entities –and their

strategies of association- needed to achieve and sustain through time a determinate state of affairs, effectively providing to those who are in discontent, with it all the necessary information to modify it. ANT offers a pragmatic advantage in the sense that it makes evident that what needs to be tackled are specific and situated practices –like polls and the regulations that turns them into sources of democratic legitimacy- and not big enemies like *the post-political condition* (Swyngedouw, 2011b); a gigantic network that would need to be fully dissected before it could be successfully challenged. As a result, ANT visibilises a plethora of small –and very challengeable- enemies, instead of contributing to the empowerment of an abstract and invisible ghoul.

The following sections are dedicated to build the conceptual toolbox necessary to trace the Democratic Deficit through the development of an Urban Governance Network.

Urban Assemblages: Brussels and Madrid as inexhaustible objects of study

There are many things in place Saint-Sulpice (…) A great number, if not the majority of these things have been described, inventoried, photographed, talked about, or registered. My intention in the pages that follow was to describe the rest instead: that which is generally not taken not of, that which is not noticed, that which has no importance: what happens when nothing happens other than the weather, people, cars and clouds.

Georges Perec, *An Attempt at exhausting a place in Paris.*

Perec's attempt at exhausting a place in Paris should be credited as the first ANT-influenced Urban Studies paper, or even the first example of ANT in general, since it precedes Latour, Callon and Law's work for a couple of years (Latour & Woolgar, 2013; Law, Rip & Callon, 1986). Perec's sensitivity when arguing that what structures the reality of a place is not the contingency of human action, but the necessity of the sociomaterial,[1] resonates strongly in ANT literature in general, and in its recent application to the study of cities in particular. The city we find in the works of the French author could be described with the same words Ignacio Farías uses to exemplify an ANT-influenced account of a city: "an object which is relentlessly being assembled at concrete sites of urban practice, or, to put

---

[1] During the first day of his exercise, Perec reflects: *why count the buses? Probably because they're recognizable and regular: they cut up time, they punctuate the background noise; ultimately, they are foreseeable. The rest seems random, improbable, anarchic: the buses pass by because they have to pass by, but nothing requires a car to back up, or a man to have a bag marked with a big "M" of Monoprix or a car to be blue or apple-green, or a customer to order a coffee instead of a beer…)*

it differently, as a multiplicity of processes of becoming, affixing sociotechnical networks, hybrid collectives and alternative topologies" (Farías, & Bender 2010, p. 32). Such perspective diverts significantly from previous conceptualizations that understand the city as a stable object, presenting it instead as a multiple product of multiple enactments that requires a considerable amount of work to put and sustain in place (Farías & Bender, 2010).

To make sense of the diversity and quantity of elements that are involved in the enactment of a city, ANT-Urban Studies scholars have enrolled the deleuzian notion of assemblage; a concept that implies "indeterminacy, emergence, becoming, procesuality, turbulence and the sociomateriality of phenomena" (McFarlane, 2011, pp.24). The consequence of this epistemological decision is that, from this theoretical perspective, "there is no city as a whole, but a multiplicity of processes assembling the city in different ways." (Farías, 2011, pp.369). This brings a complicated methodological challenge to Urban Studies, since cities cannot be anymore the point of departure of urban research, but instead should be looked at as always-in-the-making and unfinished *admirable achievements* (Schouten, 2013) of the association of many heterogeneous elements, whose dynamic is precisely what we need to account for. Urban Studies are therefore performed by re-assembling (Latour, 2005) certain parts of the gigantic entanglements of actors that cities are, which means determining "how many participants are gathered in a thing to make it exist and to maintain its existence" (McFarlane, 2011b, pp. 213). In addition to this, re-assembling also implies finding out what kind of interactions happen between the associated elements, how they develop their connections, and how this connections ultimately become stabilized by acquiring a material form.

When looking at urban assemblages, it is possible to notice that the associated elements share some features, and that they are associated through similar actors performing their associations through similar practices. If we focus our attention in the shared features of the elements that make up an urban assemblage, it is possible to group them into landscapes (Graham & Marvin, 2001), to use a visual metaphor. Each landscape is the result of grouping all the elements that share similar features. For example, all the components that are part in one way or another, of the codified legal infrastructure of the state, can be grouped into a regulatory city-landscape. This specific version of the city is produced by zoning plans, the documents inside the municipal cadastre that specify types of property, and particularly, the regulation that establishes the spatial distribution of competencies for all the authorities needed to organize public life in the city.

Just as the elements of a physical landscape, the components of city-landscapes have relations of distance in time and space. However, the different logic and practices through which the components of the various landscapes are constantly associated result in that even those composed of the same elements have a different topography. To give a concrete example: since most modern cities are regulated by a mixture of local, regional and national norms, the elements in the regulatory city-landscape hold different spatial relations in that layer than they do in the material city-landscape. While from a material perspective parks, roads, schools, libraries and museums might be spatially contiguous, their institutional ascription might not be the same, since different institutions have different competencies. The differences among each landscapes' topography results in that the interaction between them is not always unproblematic, making the involvement of *mediators* (Latour, 2005) necessary, since they are in charge of establishing connections and translating between the different landscapes to allow their communication. Without accounting for the role of mediators, it is not possible to explain how different landscapes develop and sustain ties between them, and how physical, symbolic or epistemological distances can be bridged.

Mediators, understood as any actor that develops and maintains new –and possibly unforeseen- connections between other actors (Latour, 2005), are a particularly important element within ANT's toolbox to understand the world, since no effect in reality is unmediated (Harman, 2009), and therefore, they are primary components of urban assemblages. In this sense, the amount of mediation that is needed to produce reality is immense, and any attempt at explaining how particular subsets of it are sustained through time needs to be compartmentalized. Consequently, the explanations that ANT-influenced Urban Studies can produce about how such a complicated entity as a city can maintain its existence are necessarily microscopic. The aim of this text is to focus on the role of Urban Governance Networks as mediators in the process of producing the city, and more particularly, on how the Democratic Deficit acts as a mediator within the governance process, producing particular interactions and stabilizations of urban assemblages. Brussels, and Madrid, however, are the performance of many more entities than can be accounted with an individual research, and, in this sense, are inexhaustible objects of study.

Governance Networks as mediators

Infrastructure networks, with their complex network architectures, work to bring heterogeneous places, people, buildings and urban elements into dynamic relationships and exchanges which would not otherwise be possible- (…) Through them people, organisations,

*institutions and firms are able to extend their influence in time and space beyond the 'here'
and 'now'; they can, in effect, 'always be in a wide range of places' (...) We must therefore
recognise how the configurations of infrastructure networks are inevitably imbued with
biased struggles for social, economic, ecological and political power to benefit from
connecting with (more or less) distant times and places.*
Steve Graham & Simon Marvin. Splintering Urbanism

What Steve Graham and Simon Marvin state about infrastructure networks in this
quote taken from their book *Splintering Urbanism* can be applied to Governance Networks
almost without any change. Governance Networks also bring together heterogeneous actors,
establish previously inexistent links between them, and allow them to exert influence through
time and space, crucially determining how collective life is organized. It is due to this
capacity that they can be understood as *technologies of democracy* (Laurent, 2011), since the
outcome of the deployment of a Governance Network is –from a formal/ideal perspective- a
democratically legitimate flow of power that changes the organisation of collective life in a
material and immaterial fashion.

As mediators, the role of Governance Networks consists in constantly performing and
securing the links between attempts at exercising power, and democratic legitimacy. The
necessity of enacting these connections in a reiterative fashion comes from the fact that
governmentality (Jessop, 2007) has become a much more complex and diversified process
than it used to be before. This is the result of many macro and micro social changes that have
introduced a plethora of new actors to the process of organising collective life. Among these
changes, governance literature often mentions globalization and democratization, a cultural
shift towards linking political legitimacy with citizen's involvement in government (Chhotray
& Stoker, 2009), the hollowing-out of the state (Jessop, 1994); a demand coming from the
private sector to be involved in public decisions, and, in the particular case of the Europe, the
Europeanization of public policies and the re-emergence of the importance of local politics
(John, 2001). These social changes have produced societies that are fragmented in many
relatively autonomous subsystems in need of articulation, and Governance Networks have
emerged as a popular solution to achieve this goal.

Governance has turned into the preferred mechanism for decision-making processes
in modern democracies thanks to what, from an ANT perspective, we could understand as a
particularly efficient ability to develop links between previously disconnected elements,
particularly in comparison to other mechanisms involved in the organisation of collective life,
since Governance produces material results while at the same time generating a perception of
democratic legitimacy:

Whereas imperative state regulation aims to translate the substantial political values of the government into detailed laws and regulations that are implemented and enforced by publicly employed bureaucrats, competitive market regulation relies on the invisible hand of the market forces that leads to a Pareto-optimal allocation of goods and services in so far as the rules and procedures ensuring free competition are carefully observed. By contrast, governance networks make decisions and regulate various issues in and through reflexive interaction that involves on-going negotiation between a plurality of actors who build on their interdependencies in order to produce joint decisions and collective solutions in the face of persistent conflicts between diverging interests, conceptions and worldviews. (Sørensen & Torfing, 2007, pp. 12)

Governance Networks have become particularly important for Urban Planning, since it is an act of government whose material effects are especially difficult to vest with legitimacy, at least for two reasons. In the first place, Planning and Democracy are practices that developed in isolation until very recently. Planning is a discipline that had a hard time incorporating public participation, and still today remains a realm dominated by technical experts. In the second place, given the economic importance of urban areas, the production of urban space is a process in which many actors desire to be involved, but more importantly, a space in which in power relations are particularly asymmetric.

Urban Governance Networks, as a subspecies of Governance Networks, can be understood as one of the many mediation mechanisms that make possible the translation between different components of the urban assemblages making up the city. They are constantly used to enable the establishment of connections between apparently disconnected realms, bringing them together. As mediators, UGNs should ideally translate back and forth from the Urban Assemblage resulting from the performance of the institutional framework of the city –the institutional city-landscape-, to the assemblage that results from the articulation of the citizen's interests –that we could call the *public's* city-landscape-, to the assemblage that results from the constant clashing of economic interests and rationality –the economic city-landscape-, and so on. Governance Networks should constantly contribute to the connection between planning and democracy by securing that translations occur in a distributed way, promoting the involvement of participants with different features, some of whom would not have access to the decision making process if it happened through any of the other technologies of democracy.

Therefore, in ideal terms, the result of the translation process carried out by an UGN under a democratic system should be the production of a multi-layered city. The effort of constantly connecting this assemblage of assemblages with the ideals of democracy would imply that all the interests constitutive of different city-landscapes found their way correctly into the materiality of the urban form. However –and this is what is signalled by the actors

approached in this research as the Democratic Deficit of modern urban planning-, what happens very often is that the translation process manages to efficiently establish the *desired* links between certain interests and actors, but is not as successful in establishing the *desired* links between others. For example, while Governance Networks work well translating the interests of businessmen, who manage to produce a city that responds to their economic needs –for example, by securing a connection between its materiality and the idea of economic profit -, they are not so successful in translating the citizens' interests, generating the feeling that their concerns are not contemplated during the process. This asymmetrical translation process has, empirically, produced the perception of a strong connection between Governance Networks and the DD, as if any enactment of the former implied necessarily the latter.

Governance Networks and the Democratic Deficit

Governance has turned into a heavily criticized mechanism for the organisation of collective life due to its capacity to strengthen rather than diminish a perceived Democratic Deficit in modern democracies. Among the different actors denouncing this problematic link, the academia has been particularly active, and in a way, is responsible for most of the effort needed to stabilize the DD as one of the crucial problems of modern political systems. If the connection between Governance and the DD occupies a permanent spot in the contemporary performance of politics, it is in great measure thanks to the work of researchers in the social sciences who have lend their epistemic authority (Ezrahi, 1990) to turn the Deficit into an entity capable of producing effects in the real world.

Although many different arguments have been used by the academia to identify, isolate and stabilize the links between the DD and Governance Networks, I will focus my attention only in two: a) governance has the ultimate effect of erasing political conflict, effectively excluding disagreement from the decision-making process, and b) governance has modified the dynamic of the political process in a way in which discussions around public matters happen in fora that are inaccessible to those directly affected. Nevertheless, these two arguments are not, by far, the only ones connecting the two phenomena. Goverenance is said to produce a DD due to its lack of proper codification (Hajer, 2003), or due to the difficulties in holding accountable those involved in Governance Networks. Some authors even suggest that modern western societies are transitioning towards an indirect model or representative democracy in which the public exercise will consist of electing officials that will supervise the experts in charge of the production of public policies (Levi-Faur, 2011).

Governance as a *managerial* practice

Erik Swyngedouw is probably one of the most active voices denouncing the undemocratic effects of governance. His work has been extremely influential in the analysis of how the Democratic Deficit has turned into one of the main political problems in modern European cities. According to Swyngedouw, one of the reasons why the new technologies of government identified with governance are democratically deficient is because there are no clear sets of commonly produced rules governing decision making processes; policies are manufactured through a horizontal and networked process, but in an *institutional void* (Swyngedouw, 2011). This problem produces two other related ones. The first is that the lack of rules allows for the inclusion of unauthorized actors. Therefore, although opening the opportunity to experiment with newer techniques of decision-making, governance "also opens up a vast terrain of contestation and potential conflict that revolves around the exercise of (or the capacity to exercise) entitlements and institutional power" (Swyngedouw, 2005, pp. 1999). The second problem is related to a change in the way in which legitimacy is ascribed to the actions resulting from governance processes. While previous forms of governmental action involved a relatively simpler legitimation of state power through the idea of political representation, governance has complicated this mechanism, forcing legitimacy to follow a more intricate path than before, and contributing to the notion that some of the actors involved employ opaque decision-making mechanisms.

Some of the most important contributions by Swyngedouw to the debate about the relationship between governance and the DD are his arguments about how this new form of governmentality might work as a tool to displace conflicts and *truly political struggles*, via the implementation of consensus-seeking *managerial practices* of decision-making, in which the most fundamental questions about how to organize society are never addressed. Commenting on how recent literature has identified this problem, Swyngedouw states:

> An emerging body of thought has begun to consider the suturing of 'the political' by a consensual mode of governance that has apparently reduced political conflict and disagreement to either an ultra-politics of radical and violent disavowal, exclusion and containment or to a para-political inclusion of different opinions on anything imaginable (as long as it does not question fundamentally the existing state of the neoliberal political economic configuration) in arrangements of impotent participation and consensual 'good' techno-managerial governance (Swyngedouw, 2011, pp. 1).

The concept of *managerial practices*, and in general the whole discussion in which the DD is conceptualized as the exclusion of conflicts, is based on a deeper and more complex debate related to the concepts of *politics* and *The Political*. Although never really absent from academic works in philosophy and political science, this set of concepts were reintroduced to the mainstream debate mainly by Chantal Mouffe and Ernesto Laclau (2001) through their re-elaboration of Carl Schmitt's original formulation (2008). Within this framework, *the Political* refers to the existence of irreconcilable differences between groups and ultimately individuals, which signal the immanent impossibility to ground society in a set of fundamental shared features. On the other hand, *politics* refers to the everyday tools and frameworks of action that organize public life under a relatively fictional agreement in that a community is possible. However, since politics is always a "contingent, precarious and incomplete attempt to institutionalize, to spacialize the social" (Swyngeodouw, 2010, pp. 1581), certain subjects of discussion, belonging to the dimension of The Political, have to be left out so as to allow society to be stabilized. In that sense, "politics is reduced to institutionalized social management, whereby all problems are dealt with through administrative-organizational-technical means and questioning things as such disappears" (Swyngedouw, 2010, pp. 1581). In politics, therefore, radical disagreement is excluded and those who dare to ask the insertion of truly Political questions in the public discussion forums are silenced, effectively limiting the diversity of interests considered and the actors that are allowed to introduce Political questions.

Since Governance Networks turned into one of the preferred and most effective tools to deploy politics in this sense, some critics have warned about the possibility that they have also turned into a Democratic Deficit-producing machine by means of a "colonization of the space of the Political by forms of consensual depoliticised governance" (Swyngedouw, 2010, pp. 1577). However, through this critique we run the risk of a) turning governance into something *inherently* or *ontologically* deficient, when what is truly wrong is its enactment or performance, and b) missing the chance to analyse *many* Political moments in a Schmittian sense -that is, the moment of the *friend/enemy distinction* (Schmitt, 2008)-, longing instead for an ideal Political moment that never arrives.

To discuss the first risk we can turn to a specific example of research on the post-political in which Oosterlynck and Swyngedouw approach the displacement of conflict performed by managerial practices thorough the case study of Brussel's airport:

> In line with its policy declaration, the government's political task in the DHL debate
> was defined as finding the `right balance' between economy and ecology. Framing the

DHL debate as a delicate balancing act which required careful negotiation, but one which could lead to a consensual and mutually beneficial compromise, reduced the properly political stakes to a question of technomanagerial negotiation. It turned what is a fundamental political disagreement about what kind of economic ecological development is desirable into an issue of technical and organisational management. The `whole' of the economy was defined, and unproblematically accepted, as a capitalist, growth-oriented, and profit-oriented, economy for which no alternative exists and whose dynamics needed to be accepted as a given. Within this capitalist symbolic order, social and ecological interests were assigned their proper and subordinate place in a balancing act in which they were weighed against the profit-driven and growth-driven interests of the just-in-time logic of the new informational economy. The political here is reduced to managing and policing the local consequences, appropriately called ecological `externalities', of an uncontested neoliberal economy. No space is left for invoking ecological equality, that is, the equality of each and everyone in their capacity and ability to coshape democratically what kind of socioecological constellation is produced. (Oosterlynck & Swyngedouw, 2011, pp. 1585).

In this example, the result of the Governance Network deployed to decide whether DHL could fly during the night or not, is, according to the authors, a bad translation. The outcome of the governance process was a shift in the subject of democratic discussion from "we do not want political decisions to be driven by profit", to "what number of flights balances the bad consequences of night flights with the good consequences of having a DHL hub?" As a result, according to Swyngedouw and Oosterlynck, the germen of Political conflict contained in the opposition between two groups was de-politicized through the translation of the discussion into technical terms. However, from an ANT perspective it is possible to provide a different account. An ANT-influenced description of this particular example would probably suggest that the network used to convey the discussion was assembled with the specific aim of excluding a group from the process. In this sense, the exclusion was not the imperfect outcome of a failed democracy, but a *wanted* result of the deployment of a specific –and successful- democratic assemblage. This means that the most powerful actors participating in the network managed to deploy the tools they needed to maintain the discussion confined to the terms they wanted. In contrast, the opposing group did not manage to put their concerns on the discussion table because the network they assembled when joining the process was not strong enough. Consequently, there is no *bad translation,* but instead a successful translation carried out by powerful actors that triumph over alternative assemblages.

Although it is extremely tempting to connect this differential ability to deploy networks with the ideas of democratic inequality and unfairness, this would require the reference to an *ideal* concept of democracy, which is very different from its empirical

enactment. In this sense, Swyngedouw and Oosterlynk's description should not be considered as a source of information of modern democracy's *quality*, but about the asymmetries of power existing in modern democracy. A democracy that allows power asymmetries to determine the outcome of the political discussion is not a malfunctioning democracy in *formal* terms; it is not a *desirable* democracy in *substantive* terms, and particularly from the point of view of the weaker actors, but it works perfectly well for those who manage to deploy strong networks.

Box 1: explaining differences in power between actors from an ANT perspective

The Spaniards triumphed over the Aztecs not through the power of nature liberated from fetish, but instead through a mixed assemblage of priests, soldiers, merchants, princes, scientists, police, slavers.
Bruno Latour (1993)

The process of deploying an Urban Planning Governance Network could be understood similarly to Latour's account of the Spanish conquest over the Aztecs: the material configuration of the city is the result of the deployment of powerful networks that triumphed over other alternative assemblages. This type of description makes evident that the process of enrolling allies to achieve a determined outcome does not happen in a situation in which all the actors involved have an equal share of power. Among all the participants in the material production of the city, some have more resources than others and are capable of building larger and stronger networks that allow them to materialize their particular vision of the city over the others. To say that the production of urban space is a profoundly undemocratic process implies that citizens are incapable of materializing their view of the city, because the assemblage they are able to deploy is smaller and therefore less powerful than the assemblage deployed by other actors. In this sense, to the problem that cities are highly unequal landscapes (Swyngedouw & Baeten, 2001), we can add another one: they are also produced through unequal resource allocations that are, surprisingly, *formal*-democratically legitimate.

The second risk connected to Swyngedouw's critique of Governance Networks –that by assuming governance as a depoliticised process we miss the chance to analyse *many* Political moments and instead focus on one ideal Political moment that never arrives- has to be analysed from a less pragmatic point of view. Swyngedouw's take on the connection

between Governance Networks and the Democratic Deficit is based on the assumption that *the proper political* (Swyngedouw, 2009, Oosterlynck & Swingeouw, 2010), is not addressed during governance processes. *The proper Political* is a substantive concept that post-foundationalist thought presents as an objective reality we can access by acknowledging society's lack of common ground; what is truly political is what ultimately shows there are unsolvable differences between social groups. However, we could question whether by keeping the *lack of common ground* as an abstract concept without any empirical content, post-foundationalist thought manages to avoid an important discussion, namely the possibility that what is *truly political* varies heavily from one actor to another –let alone from one society or group to another-. If *the proper political* is not understood as a stable –yet unidentified- entity, but as a performative phenomena consisting in turning something into a politically relevant entity by associating it with actors that trigger the organisation of *publics*, we might find that political questions are addressed very often during governance processes, even if it is only for *some* publics. It is important to note that this does not equal to say that, since there is no essence to the Political, therefore *everything* can become political, but rather that "although, in practice, the institutional and discursive spaces of a democratic politics will always be circumscribed, in principle, where the limits are set is always open to question" (Barry, 2001, p. 10).

If certain matters are not addressed during governance processes, even if they are related to seemingly crucial subjects such as *ontological* differences, it is not necessarily because governance intrinsically cannot translate these subjects, but rather because some actors work hard to keep them off the forum, while at the same time other actors have not been able to mobilize the necessary resources to bring their concerns to public debate. When this type of critique of Governance puts so much importance in the lack of discussion around *big questions* (such as "do we want capitalism?"), the possibility that the political system they criticize might be sustained, reproduced and enforced by the discussion of small questions disappears. Graham Harman has powerfully summarised this concern in relation to Žižek's work, stating that "by identifying "politics proper" with the egalitarian cries of the oppressed demos, Žižek loses the ability to speak in political terms of situations of more limited importance" (Harman, 2014, pp. 154). From an ANT perspective, these situations of more limited importance are responsible for a big share of what is needed to keep power asymmetries in force.

The reason why Swyngedouw allocates so much importance to the idea of *truly political* matters is that the starting point of his research is the conviction that there "are

conflicts for which no rational solution could ever exist" (Mouffe, 2005b, pp. 10). From an ANT perspective, this starting position can be criticized from two flanks. On the one hand, the existence of conflicts without rational solution should be the conclusion of an inquiry, and not its starting point. Post-foundationalist thought is able to depart from this point because it assumes, echoing Carl Schmitt's interest in the crucial moment of the friend/enemy distinction (Schmitt, 2008), that the identities of two opposing groups are fixed and incompatible; the very existence of one group endangers the existence of the other. However, from ANT's ontological perspective, what implies an extreme danger for one group is not the mere existence of the other, but rather their *enactment,* that is, the deployment of the network that sustains through time its existence, since for ANT actors –hence entities and their identities- are always trajectories; the constant repetition of a set of associations. In this sense, by assuming the stable identities of the opposing groups, we miss the opportunity to look at all the elements that need to be associated to enact them as ontologically incompatible actors at specific moments. Missing this opportunity is almost a guarantee that no rational solution can be achieved in relation to certain conflicts, given that much information about what constitutes the identity of each actor remains unaccounted, making negotiation extremely difficult.

The second flank of the critique about post-foundationalist's starting position is much less philosophical: from a pragmatic point of view there is no need for rational solutions to deeply controversial matters that seem to be beyond settlement. It is enough to produce solutions that *appear* rational through the assemblage of a network that allocates this quality to a decision. A good example of how a coating of rationality can be given to a decision-making process through the deployment of networks is the activity of Supreme Courts (Latour, 2010). Their arguments, which very often are constructed through a mix of formal and substantive premises, draw from the whole legal and political state apparatus a legitimacy that instils to their decisions a halo of rationality lasting until a novel re-assemblage of the whole system produces a different interpretation. In this sense, the strength of an argument or solution, at least in political terms, might not necessarily result from the substantive rationality of its premises, but from the amount of actors enrolled, how stable they are kept through time and how much challenge by other networks they can endure. Focusing on pure rationality –and particularly while understanding rationality as an immanent, and not performative attribute- makes all the actors involved in these processes of legitimation invisible, and therefore, unaccountable. If it is impossible to identify what allows the flow of

power producing a particular outcome, there is no possibility to intervene in the construction of the network that determines it, and therefore no possibility to change the results.

Conceptualising liberalism as incapable of accommodating conflict, whether this critique results from post-foundationalist arguments or follows Schmitt's evaluation (Mouffe, 2005; Schmitt, 2008), makes it difficult to understand why it has managed to survive for so long. Although refusing to embrace with the deep roots of political conflict, liberalism has managed to produce ad-hoc solutions to controversies, presenting them as answers that acknowledge and give proper course to the profound causes of political struggles. Assuming that Liberalism cannot *theoretically* accommodate conflict should not imply that it is also unable to do it *empirically*. Reducing the importance of this difference might imply missing the opportunity to examine a considerable amount of the mechanisms involved in the organisation of collective life, particularly in modern western democracies.

Governance as displacement of issues

A second account of the connection between Governance Networks and the Democratic Deficit can be found in Noortje Marres' work on political issues and the publics that emerge to address them. According to Marres (2005), due to the changes and increasing complexity of modern society, the decisions affecting the organization of collective life have switched location, from the usual discussion sites connected to representative government, to intergovernmental bodies, networks of non-governmental organizations, and, mainly, to the fora where innovations in science and technology are produced. As a consequence, the decisions taken in these spaces, although affecting society as a whole (even beyond regional and national borders), cannot be contained by previous mechanisms developed to guarantee democratic legitimacy and representation. Lacking these traditional means of democratic legitimation, the actors involved in these processes have turned to other sources to justify their actions, relying increasingly on expert and technical knowledge, and particularly, in economic rationality. Marres understands this change as a displacement of politics: "a fundamental shift in the locations of both politics and democracy in post-industrial society, and a related shift in the modes of legitimating political action" (Marres, 2005, pp. 10). Although the displacement of political decisions to new fora is not inherently problematic to democracy, the fact that discussion sites are very often not accessible to all interested parties turns it into a potentially controversial practice. Therefore, according to this approach, every time a political issue is decided in a location inaccessible to some of those who hold a stake

in it, a Democratic Deficit would arise, since the issue is moved away from its democratic settlement.

Just as the idea of the DD as the displacement of conflicts is rooted in a more complex discussion around the concepts of politics and The Political, this other account is also connected to a more complex reflection about the nature of democracy and how recent changes in society might have modified it. Marres is well known for re-introducing the arguments of American pragmatist philosophers John Dewey and Walter Lippmann into the discussion about changes in contemporary democracy (Marres, 2005; 2007), particularly in relation to the governing of science and technology, two fields where some of the most challenging political issues are currently being produced, as world-wide climate, economic and social changes become connected to them. According to Marres,

> Political democracy must now be understood as a set of practices dedicated to the settlement of issues. Perhaps it would then even be said that after the displacement of politics, democracy is no longer primarily about loyalty to a form of democracy, say representative democracy, and no longer requires any strict allegiances of that sort. Nor is it any longer primarily about loyalty to a democratic subject, say the Dutch people. From now on it is about issues. (Marres, 2005, pp. 23)

Evidently, the key concept here is the idea of issues, problems affecting public life that cannot be solved using the framework and tools provided by the current institutions. When democracy turns mainly into an exercise of issue displacement, as Marres states it is the case in modern western societies, special attention needs to be paid to how these movements re-distribute agency among the participants. Democracy turns deficient when the actors involved in the solution of an issue cannot achieve the power status to access the forum in which it will be settled, after it was displaced to that location by the actions of more powerful actors.

According to Marres, the more displacements an issue has to go through during its settling, the more difficult it becomes to connect the solution with the idea of democratic legitimacy. An explanation for this suggestion is that each extra displacement implies the addition of new actors –since they perform the displacements- whose legitimacy status is increasingly harder to determine. A second explanation is that each extra displacement also takes the issue one step farther away from the usual forum where it used to be discussed, meaning that each movement excludes a bigger share of the interested public. However, far from always being the cause of the Deficit, the displacement of issues is, for Marres, constitutive of modern politics, since political agency is derived from them. Given that each

displacement implies the introduction of new actors to the political ecosystem (Marres, 2005), the process can also be understood as the way in which democratic systems expand:

> [T]he failure of existing democratic arrangements to enclose politics is not a big scandal, since issues arise all the time that resist containment in the institutions of political democracy. Yes, public affairs may very well challenge existing routines and procedures of representation and accountability. But such resistance to "institutional containment" should be appreciated as a feature of issues that require public involvement. It is when existing institutions fail to provide a settlement for an affair that a public must organise around the issue so as to ensure that it will be addressed." (Marres, 2005, pp. 140).

From this perspective, a problem arises if an issue is displaced to a forum to which the interested public has no access, since it implies that democracy will not move forward and progress.

From this point of view, Oosterlynck & Swyngedouw's concern about the de-politicising potential of Governance Networks would be *formally* unjustified. Displacing the subject matter of issues, translating them, reducing their complexity and finding a solution is what democratic institutions are made for. What happened in the case of the Brussels airport is *formally* the natural life of a political issue. However, where Swyngedouw & Oosterlynck's argument is undoubtedly correct is when they suggest that these displacements can occur in a *substantively* inadequate fashion. But here again, bad translations should not be used as sources of information about the *substantive* quality of Governance Networks and Democracy, but about the asymmetries in power within the networks assembled that perform the translations. What Swyngedouw considers an undemocratic reduction is, when disconnected from a particular view of what Politics and Democracy *should* be*,* an account of the success of a network assembled with the purpose of displacing an issue through the fora in which its settlement should be achieved.

The only possibility to prevent what is *supposed* to be a discussion about the advantages and disadvantages of a political life at the service of economic benefit, from turning into a discussion about technicalities, is by raising the number of actors involved in the translation process, so as to prevent the issue from being *reduced*. This is the same solution proposed by Swyngedouw, with a subtle difference in approach: there is no need to radically change anything in modern democratic systems to allow the inclusion of more actors. The rules that impede certain groups from joining discussions are not *formally* undemocratic, since they have ben produced through democratic processes –otherwise they are illegal. From a *substantive* point of view it is clear that these rules need to be changed, since their performance leads to the production of radical power asymmetries, but as long as

the challenge to this rules occurs through mechanisms outside of the institutional framework of the state, all the power of that same framework can –and always is- effectively mobilized by other actors interested in preventing any change.

Although Marres' alternative version of the connection between Governance Network and the Democratic Deficit sheds more light over a complicated issue, it brings a couple of problems that make its application to the case studies approached here slightly difficult. Marres' model originates from a very particular conception of the democratic process, one that sees in the lack of institutional answers to citizen's problems an opportunity to produce participative publics that deal with complications that no one is taking care of. The construction of this occasions as special moments of experimentation is related to Marres' interest in a very specific set of issues: those originated in the governing of science and technology, which very often deal with innovations that put pressure in the organization of public life because they imply the arrival of entities that did not exist before to the political arena, such as climate change and new technologies. However, the kind of Democratic Deficit that EVA and Plateforme Marolles are denouncing is not related only to the institutional neglect of certain topics, but also to the perception that institutional solutions are unsatisfactory in the eyes of organized groups of citizens. Since my main interest is located in the second component, in the following sections I will present a third take on the DD that that allows me to look deeper into this phenomenon.

The Democratic Deficit as an opaque assemblage

In the previous sections I have presented two different accounts of the connection between the Democratic Deficit and Governance Networks. The first one, exemplified by the work of Erik Swyngedouw, understands the Deficit as the exclusion of conflict from the decision making process via what he calls de-politicizing managerial practices. The second one, exemplified by the work of Noortje Marres, conceptualises the DD as the effect of the displacement of issues to fora that drives them away from their settlement due to the associated public's inability it to access the discussion. I have argued that, although both positions manage to shed light on the connection between the Deficit and Governance, they also have some limitations. A shared difficulty between them is related to the fact that the displacement of issues/conflicts, although sometimes having *substantively* perverse effects over the democratic organisation of collective life, is a *formally* legitimate and democratic political process, a qualification that makes it extremely difficult to contest. In addition, I have argued that Swyngedouw's account, representative of the branch of political thought

that has ben labelled as post-foundationalism, might fall short on explanations about social phenomena due to the high importance allocated to *the proper political*. According to this critique, by focusing on the lack of a discussion around controversial subjects, post-foundationalism misses the chance to analyse a considerable amount of social phenomena that might play a big role in the (re)production of power asymmetries and therefore in the process of foreclosing The Political. Moreover, by understanding Political conflicts as the result of one-time clashes between actors with static and already-formed identities, instead of constant repetitions of trials of force between actors in the making (or trajectories), Post-foundationalism tends to assume rather than to prove that The Political has been foreclosed.

In what follows, I will attempt to overcome these two problems by building another definition of the DD based on the two case studies of Governance Networks in Brussels and Madrid.

The democratic deficit as an actor

To say that the Democratic Deficit is not the context in which the organisation of collective life happens, but an actor within the urban assemblages performing The City, implies recognising that its presence in the process is capable of modifying the flow of power, and therefore, the outcomes. Since, from an ANT perspective, actors are not nodal sources of agency, but trajectories, the DD has to be understood as a constant enactment of the associations between material and non-material elements. This means that, to be able to have effects in the real world –which in ANT terms equals to *being real*- the DD needs to develop associations and mobilize other actors, *interesting* them to join forces (Callon, 1986).

The Urban Planning process of modern European cities is a good example of why it is possible to suggest that the DD can be conceptualised in these terms. According to at least one discourse of how urban planning can develop, namely that of EVA in Madrid and Plateforme Marolles in Brussels, the configuration of modern cities is the result of the DD, since for them, urban spaces are described as the product of a process in which only the interests of the "big capital" (EVA-Proyecto) is taken into account, marginalising city dwellers from the decisions. However, it is important to note that the DD is not a natural object that pre-exists the deployment of Governance Networks or the planning process. Instead, it is "the result of numerous prior forces that were lovingly or violently assembled" (Harman, 2009, pp.34), like any other actor conceptualised in ANT terms. Additionally, given that the Deficit's presence can be identified in many occasions of political decision-making, it is also not possible to understand its assemblage as a one-time accidental

happening, but instead, its constant enactment should be related to an interest in achieving the outcomes of its performance. This means that the DD is *intentionally* enrolled in an Urban Governance Planning Network, with the specific interest of producing a particular kind of city.

Until this point, there is nothing that differentiates the DD from other actors involved in the assemblages that are built to perform the city. The Deficit is just another mediator in charge of connecting different city-landscapes to generate the urban spaces that we experience everyday. However, as the examples of EVA and Plateforme Marolles will make evident later, the Deficit is different to other actors involved in the process in that its role in the network is to hide the strategies and materials needed to assemble it. Whenever the DD is said to be acting, the flow of power through the network deployed to produce the city is opaque. As a result, some of the actors involved are incapable of following the development of new connections, which also makes it impossible for them to understand why new entities are associated and gain the ability and formal legitimacy to materially modify the city. Empirically, making the mediation tools invisible produces the feeling that citizens have not decided the use of the tools necessary to achieve the deployment of a network or the displacement of political issues.

As with the other accounts of the Deficit presented so far, it is important to recognize here that the invisibilisation of the strategies and tools needed to assemble certain parts of a Governance Network is not *per se* undemocratic, at least from a formal point of view; transparency is also a relatively newcomer to the political process, and very often the institutional framework of States does not require every aspect of the administrative processes to be transparent. It is only when we endorse a particular discourse of what The City, the Political and democracy *should* be, that we start judging the Deficit, as a mechanism of city-building, substantively inadequate. This differentiation is important for pragmatic reasons: certain actors might waste precious time and material resources fighting against one particular exercise of power, understanding it as illegitimate and using the banner of illegitimacy as a battle tool, when it is actually the outcome of a perfectly legitimate flow, although made possible by mediators that have been rendered invisible.

The account of Urban Development processes produced by EVA, in Madrid, and the Platforms, in Brussels, show that local authorities and economic actors have successfully enrolled the DD as a city-producing tool during the deployment of Governance Networks, since both cities are described as going under a process of commodification that, nevertheless, has been carried out mostly respecting the rules of the democratic process.

However, nothing guarantees that the enrolment of the Deficit will always be fruitful in the same manner. As the case studies will show later, to the *programme* "enrolment of the Deficit as a city-production tool" deployed by local authorities and "the big capital", corresponds the *antiprogramme* (Latour, 1990) "enrolling of the Deficit as a re-politicising tool for non-discussed subjects" deployed by the citizens. This can be understood as a proof of the agency of the Deficit and a confirmation of its status as a full-fledged actor; those who introduce it to the sociotechnical network are not necessarily capable of controlling the translations it will operate during its participation. From the perspective of those interested in its ability to obscure the decision-making process, the Deficit is enrolled with the aim of maintaining the appearance of a *formal* exercise of democracy, while at the same time achieving a democratically questionable production of urban space (in *substantive* terms). On the other hand, the groups opposing this style of urban planning enrol the Deficit to acquire political leverage, since denouncing an inadequate exercise of democracy puts the development of the Network on the spotlight, turning it less opaque. As a consequence, the DD becomes a tool to achieve re-distributions of power, affecting all the actors involved in a Governance Network.

From the standpoint of the citizens opposing current styles of urban planning, enrolling the DD in their *antiprogrammes* of resistance becomes a strategy to reduce the asymmetries of power within a Governance Network. By triggering a discussion about democracy's failure to translate citizen's interests, they manage to challenge the place assigned to them by other actors, along with the scope of their actions and decisions. The next sections will focus on how this potentiality, in conjunction with the materiality of the city, can become an efficient tool to (re)introduce certain topics to the democratic decision-making process.

Material participation

Discussions around the role of materiality in politics are one of the most differentiating features of ANT in relation to other theoretical approaches. Already in the "science is politics by other means" statement, characteristic of early Science, Technology and Society works (Latour, 1993), it is possible to identify the enormous importance attributed to materiality within their descriptions, as a consequence of another famous ANT insight, that "technology is society made durable" (Latour, 1990). In this section I will refer particularly to Noortje Marres' take on the subject, since her work has been crucial to

consolidate the theoretical reflection around the material dimension of participation (Marres, 2012).

According to Marres, material participation is a specific mode of public engagement in which the mediation of objects is a crucial feature, since they become the origin and main support of public action. Therefore, from this perspective, materiality is not only seen as capable of triggering the emergence of publics, something that happens almost every time new and controversial objects enter the political arena, but also helps stabilize them, securing their existence in time and helping them achieve their objectives. The recognition of this role of material objects points to the possible emergence of a new form of citizenship:

> [T]he materialization of participation involves the supplanting of the familiar character of the 'informational citizen' –the one in need of information in order to adequately perform his role of opinionated, decision-making subject– with another figure, which we could call the material public. There are good grounds for such a claim. Material participation has in recent years been explicitly promoted as a way of addressing the 'failure' of literacy as the foundation of an effective participatory regime (Macnaghten and Urry, 1998; Macnaghten, 2003; Nordhaus and Schellenberger, 2007; also Eden et al., 2008). Locating participation in everyday material practices, it has been argued, solves a number of problems associated with informational citizenship – a form of public participation often criticized for making impossible demands on everyday subjects, insisting that they take an interest in complex issues with little or no relevance to their everyday lives. Following this argument, one would say that material participation is being configured today as the successor to informational citizenship. (Marres, 2012, pp.4).

The aim of Marres' inquiry into material participation is to find out how objects acquire the capacity to organize publics and become *participatory objects*. This implies "interrogating the role of specific objects, technologies and settings in the enactment of citizen and public action" (Marres, 2012, p. 6), focusing on the "capacities of things to facilitate, inform and organize citizenship and engagement" (Marres, 2012, pp.7). As a result, objects are conceptualized as necessary tools to assemble the networks through which political discussions are addressed, since they stabilize social relations that otherwise would need to be constantly performed, reducing the efficiency of the democratic process. However, it must be said that the possibility of the exact opposite process should also be acknowledged: things can also have the capacity to prevent and make difficult citizenship and engagement in political discussion.

Material participation has usually focused in the role of small objects in the enactment of the political process, but nothing prevents complex urban assemblages from being looked at as devices of public engagement. Although this research agenda comes with the great challenge that the high material density and diversity of the city is considerably difficult to

account for, it also has the possibility of being extremely fruitful, since these features also imply that the city is a resourceful participation machine. Because the amount of objects that can be used as participatory mechanisms is immense, it is not unreasonable to suggest that the type of participation carried out through urban areas is different to that enacted in other environments. In this sense, using the space of the city to engage in the organisation of collective life might allow citizens to politicize subjects that other spaces would not support. On the other hand, it also means that the objects that make up the city might also organize very particular publics that do not arise in other places. In broader terms, this implies the recognition that the city, as a sociotechnical assemblage, contributes to the organization of public life in a very specific manner.

Using the materiality of the city

Architecture theory has already laid some foundations to the research of the intersection between material participation and the city. According to Rubio and Fogué, for example (forthcoming), to emphasise the performative nature of the city -the idea that it is not a finished object, but a process- implies recognising the capacity of the materiality of the urban landscape to constantly produce new relations among diverse entities, which is inherently a political process. This is what the authors call the *unfolding capacities of design*; the ability of the process of designing the city to enlarge the "the number of bodies, spaces and materials that constitute the cosmos of the political" (Rubio & Fogué, forthcoming)

Although Fernando Rubio and Uriel Fogué's interest is set on the role of architecture as a politicizing strategy, what they say for this discipline can easily be transported to urban planning and, therefore, to the process of producing city space through Urban Governance Networks:

> [D]esign is not simply a rhetorical 'tool' or a 'means' for politics, but a different way of doing politics, one in which power is not exerted against things, sites or bodies, but can circulate through them. Design, in this way, has emerged as a sui generis form of 'material politics', that is, as a form of doing politics through things which offers the possibility, or at least the promise, of rendering power tacit, invisible, and therefore unchallengeable by making it possible to control that vast 'sub-political' world of physical and technological elements that silently shape and condition our actions and thoughts, but which typically remain outside the sphere of formal politics and institutions (Rubio, & Fogué, Forthcoming)

This reflection around *the unfolding capabilities of design,* and its translation to urban planning, helps to shed some light over two components of the citizen's desire to be involved in urban planning processes. The first one is related the first out of two dimensions of the idea

of unfolding identified by Rubio and Fogué, that of inscribing or materializing specific versions of The Political. Citizens not only want their interests represented in the decisions taken by politicians, but now are also interested in attaining the means to produce a material arrangement of the city that fosters a flow of power responding to their needs. This is why their involvement in *light* processes of citizen participation does not satisfy their wishes; they want to become contributors to the design processes leading to the material modification of the city, because previous renovations have made evident that, although having their benefits –i.e., no one will deny the sanitary value of Haussman's renovation of Paris despite his lack of social sensitivity-, respond to the interests of other actors, and therefore have produced socio-spatial arrangements that foster inequality. From this perspective, the Democratic Deficit in Urban Planning Governance Networks appears connected to the perception, within organized group of citizens, that recent socio-spatial rearrangements of the city implemented by local governments only nurture the adequate flow of power of mighty actors, in addition to the perception that access to the process of designing the city occurs in an opaque and exclusive manner.

Another dimension of the citizen's perceived need to participate in the production of the space of the city appears when we focus on the second component of the idea of unfolding, that is, its capacity to produce new connections or adding entities to the cosmos of The Political. The use and production of the space of the city helps organized citizens to re-politicize objects and subjects that for some reason had left the political arena, or to bring to public discussion forums new ones. Rubio and Fogué understand the use of public spaces given by the Occupy movement as a good example of how the materiality of the city can be used to re-politicize inequality, and the case studies of Brussels and Madrid that will be presented in a latter section can be understood similarly. According to the authors, these socio-material processes are successful not because they manage to materialize their vision of the world, making it durable, but because they use the materiality of the city to "make certain visions of order thinkable" (Rubio & Fogué, Forthcoming), that is, introducing new entities into the political agenda.

In this sense, what drives increasingly more groups of organized citizens to demand their inclusion in urban planning and design processes is the possibility of not only producing answers to political issues, but also generating entirely new political questions. This implies that urban planning –which happens through Governance Networks in modern democracies- has changed from being understood as a stabilised and unquestioned exercise, to a tool with the capacity to change the political life of societies. This transformation is part of a wider

process aimed at gaining control of the production of urban space, which due to the high complexity of the urban assemblages that compose the city, requires a considerable effort of learning, an activity analysed in the next section.

Learning the City

In *Learning the City*, Colin McFarlane approaches through ANT the practice of producing and transforming knowledge, which is understood as one of the most important processes involved in the production of they city. McFarlane defines learning as "the specific processes, practices and interactions through which knowledge is created, contested and transformed" (McFarlane, 2011, pp. 3). As any other ANT-influenced research, the concepts of translation and mediation hold a special place in his methodology, since they emphasise the sociomaterial quality of the phenomena; learning implies a constant production, movement and transformation of knowledge that is only possible through the implementation of material means.

McFarlane's emphasis on the material dimension of the process of learning the city makes evident that a differentiated access to the sociomaterial resources needed results in highly differentiated outcomes. For example, cities are learned and produced by planners from documents, by bureaucrats through regulations, by businessmen through economic interests, and so on. In this sense, the learning strategies and materials implemented by each actor contribute to an increase in the overall number of entities associated to produce The City as an assemblage, and in a way, also in the number of cities. McFarlane's take on the learning process is focused on the strategies deployed by urban activists, something that makes his theoretical framework particularly relevant to research the connection between the Democratic Deficit and UGNs.

Among the different devices analysed by McFarlane, there are some that perform a particularly important role: coordination devices. This is a term for tools that bring together and translate different forms of knowledge across different dimensions of the urban assemblage, articulating its construction. I will focus in two of them: documents and *informational utopics* (Juris, 2008). Documents, according to McFarlane, "in both their electronic and physical forms, play a crucial role in organizing, framing, narrating and contesting urban life. While they are often reduced to mere 'supplementary data' or 'background' information in urban research, they are important examples of how urbanism is learnt and being learnt about" (McFarlane, 2011, pp. 77). Informational utopics, on the other

hand, are the necessary tools used to transport the learning process to an increasingly more relevant arena, the cyberspace, which works as a connection-producing device with a far reach that allows actors to rescale their activities.

McFarlane's emphasis on the sociomaterial quality of the learning process manages to show how the materiality of the city is one of the most a crucial elements at play when citizens become entangled in issues. The City, or rather specific versions of the city that the citizens produce through their activism, becomes constitutive of their practice of learning and in general of the practice of assembling urban spaces. My main focus in what follows is to show how, through this process of learning, actors gain new capacities that can be used to re-politicize certain subjects, allowing them to reconfigure power relations between the actors involved in the organisation of public life.

Box 2. The use of all this theory

Governance will not leave the political scenario soon, and despite its problems, its distributed nature turns it into a tool with the potential to reduce power asymmetries between the actors involved in the organisation of collective life. The theoretical reflections outlined here so far have the intention to contribute to overcome Governance Networks' problems to achieve this ideal. Therefore:

- By understanding the Democratic Deficit not as the context of the decision-making processes, but as an actor within them, I have suggested that its enrolment in Governance Networks might be connected to an interest in the production of specific and desired outcomes, hence, the deficit might not be an unwanted element of the democratic game.

- By suggesting that the DD is a tool that can also be used by the weakest actors in the network, I argue in favour of democracy, suggesting that its problems are not *substantive*, but *formal*, and they can be solved through institutional means, although this requires a great amount of time.

- By understanding the process of deploying a Governance Network as an effort of *translating,* in ANT terms, we highlight the need for negotiation between the different actors, an attitude that fosters the production of better solutions.

Case studies: Brussels and Madrid

In the following sections I will analyse the development of two Governance Networks in Madrid and Brussels, through the conceptual framework outlined until now. My aim is to make evident how the Democratic Deficit moves –and is moved- throughout the network, producing specific power configurations in combination with certain material features of both cities. First, I will describe what are the political issues triggered by the deployment of the Governance Networks in each place, followed by a description of the Publics that arise with them. Secondly, I will describe the learning assemblages in which the Publics get involved with the aim of finding a democratic solution to the issue they have identified. Here I will highlight the importance of the coordination devices used by the Publics to counteract or enrol the DD within their programme of action. In addition, I will describe the strategies deployed to render the tools transporting power through the Networks visible or invisible, emphasising the depolitisation/politisation effects achieved and the role of coordinating devices in producing them. The last section describes the development of both Governance Networks through time.

Madrid

Madrid

The issue

The issue around the Legazpi Market has a twofold origin. Its first component can be traced back to the eviction of the Occupied Social Centre *La Traba*, located in the vicinity of the market, that for almost seven years functioned as a gathering spot for many collectives originated in the neighbourhood. *La Traba* offered a wide array of cultural and sports activities to an area of Madrid characterized by the lack of public infrastructure (EVA - Proyecto). During its relatively long life, the Social Centre developed a strong support from the different communities inhabiting the Arganzuela district, traditionally a working class area later turned into an arrival neighbourhood. With the eviction and demolition of *La Traba*, the need for a space that the inhabitants of Arganzuela could use for social activities became pressing, triggering an organisational process in which the collectives involved in the old Centre, plus some new participants, began looking for alternative places to continue their activities. In October 2014, two months after *La Traba* was evicted, the organisations officially gathered under the name of Espacio Vecinal Arganzuela (EVA). Days later they presented the project in an open event, and initiated contact with different local institutions to negotiate the allocation of a publicly owned building to continue with the activities carried out in the previous Social Centre. After a few meetings, the authorities assured EVA that the presentation of a formal proposal would increase the possibilities of having allocated a space for public activities. With this suggestion in mind, the collectives assembled and, with the help of a team of experts composed of sociologists, urban planners, economists, architects and even archaeologists (since the market is located in a zone where ancient relics have been found), produced a formal project for a temporal use of the Legazpi Market that was presented to the authorities in November. The government remained silent for three months, until February 2015, when they officially rejected EVA's proposal under the argument that there was no "infrastructural availability" to assign a publicly owned building to the collectives. In addition, the authorities publicly stated that there was currently no projected use for the market.

However, barely two weeks after rejecting EVA's proposal to turn the market into a social centre, the municipality of Madrid announced the start of the period of public discussion of the proposal to license the building to a private investor. This decision became the second trigger of the issue around the market, since the nature of the private concession caused uproar in the neighbourhood. The project contemplated a 40 years license and a

private investment of 54 million Euros for the construction of a gourmet market (16 thousand square meters), a commercial zone (8 thousand square meters) a municipal sports centre (7 thousand square meters), a public library also with a gourmet theme (1.7 thousand square meters), and a four storey subterranean parking lot. As compensation, the benefited company would pay 60 thousand euros a year to the municipality. According to local media, this quantity is 45 times lower than the usual value per square meter in the area, and considerably less than the amount asked to other social organisations interested in obtaining the use of public buildings to develop social activities. (Rejón).

However, the attempt of turning a space destined for the provision of public services into a commercial centre was not the only cause of citizen's anger. According to EVA's descriptions acquired during fieldwork, the renovation project was developed by a suspicious and very new small company, whose capital –as recorded in public registries- is much smaller than what would be expected for an urban development of the size of the Legazpi Market. In addition, EVA's discourse often highlighted that the public head of the company is the relative of a well-known Spanish businessman, prosecuted in the previous decade for tax fraud (Moreno). These elements contributed to an overall perception in the activist circle that ADRIPABEL, the urban developer, is actually a decoy, and the purportedly social nature of the project, a screen to hide the disposal of a public space to private profit.

The simultaneity of the announcement of the possible concession and the rejection of EVA's proposal gave birth to the *issue* of the future of the Legazpi Market in services-deprived Arganzuela, and a *public*; a collective of social organisations that identified a potential political conflict in the fact that, while they felt the need for a Social Centre, the local authorities attempted to allocate an available and publicly owned building to an obscure private investor. The struggle for the market is, however, not the only battle that EVA, the local authorities and the private investor are fighting. The battle for the materiality of the market can also be seen as an opportunity to stabilize different visions of what a city should be, as this quote from an interview with Ignacio Murgui, referring to the rejection of EVA's proposal, makes evident:

> What the government offers is not a real alternative to the proposal generated within EVA. What the government offers is, once again, to continue developing a model of The City based in the constant, continuous and unilateral imposition of the interests of business groups, and also of a style of understanding The City at the service of those interests. What EVA proposes is exactly the opposite. We do not want to deploy a market rationality to achieve private benefits. And we do not propose to use public resources to benefit just a few. (Murgi).

It is in this sense we can say the market has the capacity of organizing a public around itself, since its materiality becomes an instrument to introduce, to the political cosmos of Madrid, the possibility to contest a style of making political decisions that the members of EVA consider undemocratic. This endeavour is carried through the establishment and stabilisation of links between other subjects, also described as absent from public discussion since many years ago, the market, and the Democratic Deficit. In the following sections I will analyse how this subjects are identified by the members of EVA, which I will characterise as a process of urban learning in McFarlane's terms, and how they develop strategies of visibilisation of the connection between the subjects, the DD and the market, which becomes the material support for the whole process. The establishment of these connections changes the power configuration within the Governance Network, creating a scenario in which the DD and the Market turn into an Obligatory Passage Point (Callon, 1986), in the sense that any action carried out by any of the actors is mediated by the Deficit and the materiality of the market, two elements that, if absent, would make impossible the stabilisation of the Governance Network.

Box 3: The Legazpi Fruits and Vegetables Market

The Legazpi fruits and vegetables market,[2] inaugurated in 1936, used to be part of the network of main supply centres for perishable products in the Madrid area. It is a 25 thousand square meters building located to the south of Madrid, in the Arganzuela district, close to the river Manzanares, right next to an important public cultural centre, the Matadero. Starting the 70s, the construction of Merca-madrid, an enormous centre that has since concentrated most of the food-supply function for the city, reduced the logistic importance of big markets around Madrid, eventually turning them unnecessary. The Legazpi Market was abandoned at the beginning of the 20th century, and has since remained without use, with only two guards inhabiting, day and night, its potential 42 thousand square meters of maximum building area.

Due to its role as a bomb shelter during the Spanish Civil War (and an unconfirmed process of collectivization during the same period), supporters of the ideals of the Spanish Republic hold the market in particular regard. In addition, parts of the structure are considered heritage due to their status as one of the first examples of Industrial

---

[2] A map with the location of the market within Madrid can be found in the Annex.

Architecture in Madrid. This feature has turned the market into an object that *resists* attempts of renovation and changes of use (Guggenheim, 2010). Before ADRIPABEL developed the project that is currently opposed by some of the inhabitants of Arganzuela, other uses were contemplated and even implemented at different stages. The market was previously announced as the new seat of the Urban Development division of the municipality of Madrid, a new modal exchange centre for public transportation, and a huge sports complex (Sanpakú).

The Public

The public linked to the issue around the destiny of the Legazpi Market is the umbrella organisation Espacio Vecinal Arganzuela (EVA). This actor is the product of a meeting, during September 2014, between many collectives active within the borders of the Arganzuela district, brought together by the eviction of the *La Traba* social centre. The list of members is long and includes organisations with many aims, from old and experienced neighbourhood associations, to platforms of families affected by the real-estate bubble, including collectives of youngsters against fascism and groups of folkloric dances. Although this particular public was initially generated by the lack of municipal places to develop social activities within the neighbourhood, the announcement of the initial approval for the concession of the market to a private investor opened the scope of its interests. After this administrative decision, the issue related to EVA became not only about fighting for a place to gather, but also an opportunity to question the way in which the whole city is produced. This is another example of the ability of materiality (in this case the materiality of a whole Madrid district) to organize publics around them. EVA comes together due to the fact that, in a district inhabited by around 160,000 people (EVA-Proyecto), there is only one public library, a few parks and, since the eviction of *La Traba*, not a single space for the neighbours to build a sense of community. When the opportunity to change this spatial configuration arrives, the space of the city attracts the attention of actors that are interested in modifying it to fulfil their needs. However, the space is not only the trigger; it makes possible the quest, since it is within the neighbourhood that citizens will gather to question the current configuration of power among the actors involved in the process. Similarly, the tools they can mobilize to achieve their aims come with possibilities and restrictions; joining the UGN the

municipality of Madrid needs to deploy to coat its political actions with democratic legitimacy gives EVA the possibility to participate in the decision-making process, but also comes with some disadvantages. For example, that this assemblage has its own institutional and regulatory logic, considerably different to the logic that characterizes EVA's dynamics. This means that some of the activist's objectives need to be translated into the logic proper of administration, something that requires much work. Before describing how this process occurs, it is necessary to refer to the nature of the Network they need to join.

The Governance Network

Although a unitary and relatively centralized state, Spain is composed of different levels of government, generating a complex regulation of public matters. The country is organized in 17 Autonomous Communities, which are divided in 50 Provinces, subsequently composed of 8,122 Municipalities (INE, 2015). Since all these entities have a special catalogue of attributions, such an organization creates a regulatory landscape that is difficult to navigate without a high degree of technical knowledge. The subject of Public Participation in particular holds a rather high hierarchal position within the National legal framework, since it is the national Constitution that establishes as a duty for public powers to "facilitate the participation of all citizens in the public, economic, cultural and social life" (Article 9.1, CNE). However, this command remains in abstract terms within the constitutional text, as it requires secondary legislation to establish the means of participation. Most of this regulation is to be produced at the level of Autonomous Communities, whose competencies include most maters related to urbanism (Article 25, LRBRL). The Comunidad de Madrid, however, has a particular way of operating, since the *Juntas Distritales*, the most local level of government, consist predominantly of organisms dedicated to channel public participation (Article 1 RODCM), and therefore it is at the level of the Autonomous Community in which most matters affecting public life are decided.

The most powerful instrument of Urban Planning at the level of the Autonomous Community is the Plan General de Ordenación Urbana (General Land Use Plan). Its formulation is divided in three different stages: preparatory actions, elaboration, processing and approval. Public involvement is only contemplated during the elaboration and processing stages, and it is confined to submitting suggestions to the Town Hall, which turns them to the commission in charge of the technical development of the Plan, composed of experts (urban planners, sociologist and economists). Public participation during the elaboration stage is

focused on integrating proposals from the citizens, while during the processing stage it is mostly related to the presentation of allegations, in case the plan affects citizens in specific ways. The General Land Use Plan of Madrid of 1997 is the current Plan in force, although since 2013 a Revision process with similar mechanisms for public involvement has been in the making.

Although the General Land Use Plan and the Revision to the Plan are the two main instruments influencing the institutional production of the city, the local authorities have other tools at their disposition to carry out minor modifications. The Legazpi Market has been the object of two of them. The first is a Modificación Puntual al Plan General de Ordenación Urbana (Punctual Modification to the General Land Use Plan) carried out in 2009, which created an Area of Specific Planning encompassing the whole terrain of the Market. This modification opened the possibility to change the use of the area, something not possible under the previous plan. The second tool is the Contract of Public Works Concession, whose initial approval ignited EVA's antagonism. Since these other two administrative tools have a different institutional nature to the process of creating or revising a General Land Use Plan, the participation process is also different. These types of public-private contracts, as administrative actions, are subject to the Common Administrative Process Law (LRJAPPAC). This law only contemplates as participation mechanisms the definition of a period of public information in which all the material related to the administrative process is publicly available, and a further period of allegations, in which those interested can present specific complaints.

Since the aim of a Contract of Public Works Concession is to promote the involvement of private investors in the development of infrastructure in Spain (LRCCOP), and, as every administrative act, it implies the opportunity for the interested public to participate during the public information and allegations periods, the UGN deployed by the local authorities in Madrid to modify the materiality of the Legazpi market includes three actor-networks: citizens, government and private investors. In ideal terms, the role of the network should be to mobilize the three actors in conditions of equality, with the final aim of achieving a spatial configuration of the city that materialized their interests with fairness. However, the differences in the resources available to each actor to build their own networks when joining the Governance process, and the lack of an institutional framework that acknowledges such differences to balance them, implies that this is not the case. The perceived power asymmetries between the citizens and the investors are often represented by their conviction that, since the local authorities prioritize the reduction of public debt, private

actors have leverage over political decisions. According to EVA, this has produced a very particular style of Urban Development in Madrid, in which the local authorities obtain a big share of their budget by selling public property. On the other hand, the availability of resources for institutional actors is also perceived as an origin of power asymmetries:

> …we are forced to fight regulation or new urban developments that have been planned for months or even years by the local administration. In comparison, the amount of time that the citizens have to be involved is minimal. We fight administrations that are much stronger than us, and that have had much more time to think their ruses. Therefore, it is very difficult for us to react as fast as we would like to. What we usually do is taking them to Court, which is always extremely expensive, but sometimes we win. (Cordoba).

Time, money and manpower are particularly important elements configuring the power structures within the Governance Networks, since activists are not full-time activists in the same way that public officials and investors are full-time workers; citizens have to divide their time between their *productive* activities, and their political activities. This leaves them with fewer resources to allocate to the construction of a network that allows them to transport their interests, from their own places of discussion, to official discussion fora, translating them, and enrolling the necessary actors to back them up. While institutions are able to join the network with a stock of waged workers that professionally perform activities related to the spatial modification of the city (architects, urban planners and economists), who are also endowed with the necessary material means (computers, cars and technical equipment), and a fair amount of economic resources, activists enter the process with a smaller arsenal and therefore are able to deploy a less complex network. This asymmetrical relation is not a small matter. *State effects* (Harvey, 2005) are the consequence of the mobilisation of very complex institutional machineries that involve the activity of a gigantic amount of actors deriving their legitimacy from a similarly diverse array of sources. If a specific course of action is backed up by the mobilisation of such an impressive army, to disagree is a considerably difficult matter.

A similar thing can be said about the resources that private investors are able to mobilise, including not only their economic power, but also their social networks. According to EVA, among private investor's resources, corruption and nepotism play an important role in helping them achieve their aims. However, it is important to point out that, just as the Democratic Deficit, corruption and nepotism are not the *systemic context* in which the political decisions are taken within the walls of the Town Hall, but sociomaterial assemblages

that are composed of specific actors and situated practices, many of which are *formally* legitimate.

Box 4. Opening the black-box[3] of *corruption* in the initial approval for the concession of the Legazpi Market

A quick view to the strategy developed by ADRIPABEL in relation to the Legazpi market might be of use to illustrate the point mentioned in previous paragraphs. The municipality of Madrid decides, through an administrative action, to make the market available as an object of a Public Works Concession, and produces an open call to all the interested public to present projects for its development. The open call states no particular requisites in relation to the nature of the actors who are able to participate in the competition, and the criteria to select a winner is mostly related to the economic rationality of their proposal; the best one will be that which represents the highest economic benefit for the municipality. The lack of specific requirements for the participants allows ADRIPABEL, a newly constituted company with a minor capital, to present a winning project. However, the actual implementation of the renewal of the market is not the object of the open call, but the Public Works Concession Contract, hence, a second open call has to be produced to select a developer that offers, again, the highest economical benefit to the municipality. If the case were that ADRIPABEL is not selected to implement the project, they are entitled to an economic compensation for the use of the project they developed. In this sense, the company always wins, effectively making money from the administrative process, whether it is successful or not in having allocated the concession.

Does this process equal to *corruption,* as EVA members assure? The norms that determine the participation requirements in a governance network –which have been produced through a *formal*, although maybe not *substantive*, democratic process- very often leave out of the process many of the actors who want to be involved. In this case, the mechanism used to license the market does not *technically* prevent the neighbours of Arganzuela from getting the concession. However, they would need to be able to produce a huge economic compensation to obtain the license. Contesting the concession by qualifying it as a

---

[3] Black-box is a term used in the sociology of science to describe an actor-network that has been perfectly stabilized, meaning that its functioning is regular and therefore every time it acts, one can expect the same results. Their regularity becomes so important, that eventually their components are obscured and the fact that the actor is composed by a wide array of smaller actors constantly developing links between them is forgotten. (Latour, 1998) In this sense, opening a black-box implies questioning the composition of an actor, producing a list of its elements and describing the way in which it produces links with other actors.

product of corruption obscures that, what is *substantively* –and not *formally*- incorrect, is the rule that allows the authorities to base the decision of giving the license in terms of the economic benefits for the municipality, and not in terms of the social benefit obtained by the concession. Therefore, as long as the members of EVA and other concerned citizens remain focused on denouncing a *formally* legitimate process, as fostered by corruption, their strategy will not prosper, since the authorities in charge of the process will always be able to produce proofs supporting the *formal correctness* of the process. A much more effective strategy would consist in getting involved in the process to change the administrative procedure that regulates public concessions. However, the role of this actor remains hidden when we only focus our attention in the usual suspects of undemocratic planning, removing all political agency from seemingly neutral administrative matters.

The Learning Assemblage

EVA's main strategy to counteract the power asymmetries within the Governance Network has been, since the beginning of 2015, to create and sustain a *centre of calculation* (Latour, 1987) at the premises of the Matadero, one block away from the Legazpi Market. Centres of calculation are places where knowledge is produced and processed, which equals to say, for the case of EVA, the place where the process of learning the city takes place through a sociomaterial assemble of people and objects. The collective holds regular general assemblies every Tuesday night at 19:30, often chaired by Angel, a member of a neighbourhood organisation called Nudo Sur. He leads and moderates the discussion along a constant group of more or less 20 people, among whom 5 or 6 are present almost every time. The location of the discussion is the result of collaboration between some of the members of EVA and an experimental area of the cultural department of the Comunidad de Madrid: Intermediae. The mission of this institutional office is to develop ties between the citizens of the Comunidad Autonoma and the authorities, with a focus in the process of citizenship building through cultural activities. EVA was selected as one of the projects that would get the support of Intermediae and therefore has been granted the use of the Terrario space in Matadero for its reunions and *open days*.

Although the main aim of the general assemblies is to decide the actions that will be labelled as EVA's actions, the most important activity carried out during the meetings is the *making-sense* of the urban assemblages related to the issue of the Legazpi market. During their reunions, EVA's members help each other to understand why the process of producing

the city seems to be out of their control, developing strategies to regain it during the exercise. This dynamic benefits greatly from the diversity of EVA's members: a former member of La Traba constantly tries to put on the table the radical *okupas'* account of the lack of a social centre; a school teacher emphasises the need to translate the meagre technical information made available by the government into a discourse the parents of her pupils can understand; a couple of architects explain the technicalities of renovating a structure like the Legazpi Market; a group of economists shed light over the financial rationale of the government's decisions; a lawyer explains the administrative process to license the market to the investor. Each of the members of EVA is capable of de-constructing and making sense of a small bit of the urban assemblage that the market is, which has two important effects. First, it makes evident that the Legazpi market is not only its material structure, but also a multidimensional object composed of the diverse elements that EVA's members have been able to isolate through their individual expertise and collective action. Second, it strengthens the capacity of the group to convey their interest to other discussion fora, since by becoming aware of the multidimensionality of the market, they increase the amount of translations they can perform, and therefore the amount of actors they can enrol. For example, understanding the market through its historical importance allows EVA to mobilize heritage arguments against its material modification; to think about it from an architectural perspective allows them to produce arguments against the technical proposals of the private developer; focusing on its economic importance makes them able to deploy arguments in relation to the difference between its use of value and its exchange value, and so on. Each of these versions of the market adds up to strengthen the network they will deploy to oppose ADRIPABEL's and the municipality's programmes of action.

Through these different constructions of the market, EVA's members can imagine new configurations that divert from the initial material structure whose use they want to obtain. The exercise of assembling and disassembling the different possible settings makes evident the actors they would need to enrol to materialize them. Establishing connections between their activities and those of the Democratic Deficit is one of the main strategies they can implement to trigger a process of reconfiguration of power positions, since the quest for legitimacy of modern European democracies has turned the Deficit into a sensitive subject that attracts the attention of a wide audience, effectively impacting the access to power of political groups. EVA develops this activity via two strategies: first, by making visible the connections between ADRIPABEL's project and *objectionable* actors like inequality, market rationality, lack of democratic legitimacy, corruption, etc., and, second, by developing

connections between their vision of the market and *desirable* actors, like community building, citizen empowerment, social benefits, etc. These connections are achieved through the use of many coordination devices: the Terrario space in Matadero, were they gather every Tuesday night, the Urban Garden *La Sanchita*, that has proven to be extremely successful in attracting new supporters, a monthly open-air cinema, their very active Facebook group, and their online blog. All these mixtures of practices, spaces and materials sustain EVA's existence and identity through time, therefore making them possible to pursue their *antiprogramme* of action.

However, the most important coordination devices are the documents produced by the collective, since it is there where most of the new associations performed by the group happen. They also make possible to circulate around the city, and even internationally, EVA's vision of the market. By inscribing their vision in the documents disseminated, they abstract the market from its context; their descriptions of what the Legazpi market *could* be, if allocated to the collective, becomes an *immutable mobile* (Latour, 1986), and therefore cannot be made dependant on another context but the one identified by EVA, namely the lack of public infrastructure in Arganzuela. The more documents EVA produces and circulates, the more the Legazpi market becomes that *possible* place for gathering, and the more difficult it becomes for the other actors to contest that possible reality. This process of black-boxing a particular version of the market is important because it will be used to contest the black-boxing attempts of the municipality, who tries to produce an alternative version that benefits them politically. The investor's black-boxing attempt is also at odds with EVA's version, since ADRIPABEL is trying to turn the market into a private profit-producing machine. To strengthen the particular black-box that EVA is trying to produce, they need to establish as many connections with other actors as they can, for example, linking their particular vision of the market with the ideas of social equality, fairness and community building. At the same time, they need to develop strategies to establish and make public the connections between the other versions of the market, and actors that reduce the power share of the municipality and the private investor. Table 1 presents some examples of EVA's strategy to link their vision of the market with *desirable* actors, while at the same time connecting ADRIPABEL's proposal with *inadequate* actors. The texts in the two middle columns are taken from interviews with EVA's members available online, fieldwork and their public documents.

Apart from producing knowledge, the learning assemblage deployed by EVA also dedicates a great amount of effort to the translation of technical knowledge that forms part of ADRIPABEL and the municipality's programme of action. McFarlane's suggestion that

learning the city implies a process of achieving technocratic knowledge is particularly evident in this activity. During their meetings at Matadero, a recurrent subject of discussion was how the information produced by EVA, along with its strategies of opposition and the project of the local authorities, could be translated into a language that appealed to citizens who had no technical knowledge or interest in joining political processes. EVA's aim when *translating* this information was to make it susceptible of being transported to discussion fora where technical language is out of place. This process is extremely relevant as a mechanism of empowerment since, as critics of the post-political condition have made evident, the *making things technical* is a common strategy to reduce the political importance of issues and objects. As a consequence, things whose presence in the public sphere was no longer associated to the emergence of *publics* seeking their democratic settlement, suddenly become part of the political cosmos again. Such an exercise, which was constantly referred to as *hacer barrio –building community-* implies not only translating information, but also pushing outwards the boundary of the public, making it bigger by including more individuals who become linked to the deployment of the learning assemblage. Due to its ability to reintroduce objects and subjects to the public discussion fora, this process can also be understood as one of re-politisation of matters that were abandoned by the institutions.

Table 1. New associations performed by EVA

Subject	Desirable connections	Inadequate connections	Actors enrolled
Democratic Legitimacy	EVA is a project in which more than 30 collectives are involved, plus thousands of Madrileños mobilised by the need for a citizen's space in the area. Therefore we demand the cession of the Market to develop non-profit open activities. To achieve this goal we have worked hardly and efficiently during months; we have designed and published projects; we have gathered the neighbours and small commerce of the area, to invite them to dwell their common space with their interest and through a process of knowledge exchange (…) (EVA – Algo Maravilloso).	Definitively, what the local government proposes is a "seen but not seen" badly documented and backed up deficiently. A decision with its back turned to the citizens but carried out with their resources, without even enquiring the neighbours represented (Nueva Tribuna)	**Desirable**: Madrid Neighbours, non-profit philosophy, technical knowledge, small commerce **Inadequate:** technical inadequacies, lack of representation
Type of benefits achieved	(…) a proposal that represents practically zero costs to the municipality, but implies free solutions based in programs of *women empowerment, family*	To understand the official proposal, we advise you to substitute the following terms of the previous paragraph	**Desirable:** everything in italics (emphasis in the original)

	conciliation, alphabetization and memory, cultural integration, academic support, intergenerational programs aiming at battling the digital divide, neighbourhood empowerment, urban gardening, consumer groups, solidarity networks and specific programs for the support of small commerce, abundant around the neighbourhood (sic). (EVA – Algo Maravilloso)	(in reference to the paragraph to the left): where it says "women's empowerment", substitute it for "mercado gourmet"; where it says "intergenerational programs" or "support for small commerce", substitute it for "Commercial Centre". (EVA - Alegaciones)	**Inadequate:** market rationality, private profit
Economic motivation	We pretend to liberate the Legazpi Fruits and Vegetables Market from economic uncertainty via the materialisation within its premises of a stable institution, immune to financial swings, that guards the memory of the neighbourhood and the building itself; and from which it is possible to manage and promote the growth of the social fabric. (EVA – Algo Maravilloso)	Definetively, we can state that the totality (of ADRIPABEL's project) departs from a false premise, from a legal fraud through which a publicly owned space is destined to private profit. (EVA - Alegaciones)	**Desirable:** social fabric, social benefit, memory **Inadequate:** illegality, private profit
Susta inability	We will offer an infrastructure for the meetings and activities of the groups around the neighbourhood that work to promote better ecologic and sustainable practices of urban life, through consumer groups, urban gardening, recycling workshops, composting, ecological gardening, seed banks and bioconstruction, amongst others. (EVA -Proyecto)	Although ADRIPABEL's proposal contains a chapter dedicated to the "environmental impact and corrective and preventative measures", it is clearly insufficient due to lack of reference to, among others: (…) increase of pollutant emissions due to the increase in automobile traffic (…) sound pollution (…) environmental impact	**Desirable:** sustainable practices **Inadequate:** pollution, traffic congestion

The document that contains EVA's allegations to ADRIPABEL's plan is one of the best examples of translations and re-politisations performed by the learning assemblage. The activists produced this text after gathering to analyse the proposal of the private investor, judging it not only from their perspective as *community of the affected*, but also from their own varied fields of expertise. Therefore, the architects and engineers discussed the technical qualities of the plan, the lawyers identified if its discourse was compatible with the relevant legal framework, and the economist dissected ADRIPABEL's management project. During

the meetings, this technical knowledge was translated to allow the participation of those members who lacked the tools to interpret it properly. Posteriorly, the same expertise was used to translate EVA's position into the same technical language used by ADRIPABEL, resulting in a document of allegations that is as long and as technical as it needs to appear backed up by the disciplines of all the activists that participated in its writing: architecture, engineering, sociology, etc.

The document includes discussions about the meaning of juridical terms used both by the administration and the private investor, relying on formal sources to question the use that the latter actors are giving to concepts like "public benefit" or "tertiary activities". EVA's allegations are also full of references to the relevant legal framework, including the General Land Use Plan and the different laws that regulate the process of modifying public infrastructure. These technical and juridical references help EVA back up alternative interpretations of what is *possible* to do with the materiality of the market, making evident at the same time how their project can derive democratic legitimation from more sources than ADRIPABEL's proposal, which clearly falls short in that regard. For Example, EVA states:

> "The uses proposed by ADRIPABEL's project are not justified from the point of view of the needs of the neighbourhood (local infrastructure) or even the city (general infrastructure), therefore ignoring current citizen's demands motivated by the lack of public infrastructure in the Arganzuela District (gathering space of the neighbours, social centre, general use public library, school). There is also an evident lack of coherence with other strategic guides established for the development of the area in other documents (such as the General Land Use Plan). The fact that the uses proposed by ADRIPABEl are not specifically prohibited by law does not automatically mean or justify that they are the most adequate or beneficial for the city and the citizens". (EVA - Alegaciones, p.3)

In addition to building connections between their vision of the market, the legal framework and formal, technical, juridical and economic reasons, EVA also devotes an important part of the allegations document to dissolve the links that ADRIPABEL created between its own course of action and similar sources of legitimacy. The experts of EVA signal inconsistencies and weaknesses in the investor's arguments and point to mistakes in their economic valuations of the financial success of the project. Surprisingly, they even identify that parts of ADRIPABEL's proposal were plagiarised from other texts easily found on the Internet.

Each criticism towards ADRIPABEL's project helps to reduce the power of the network it had deployed. An explanation for this phenomenon is that, while the investor's proposal makes sense from the standpoint of pure market rationality or when the project is

considered only as a mechanism for private profit, when EVA translates it to the specific city-landscape it has developed through the enrolment of the ideas of social benefit, democracy and equality, the project seems absolutely inadequate. This strategy is further developed by producing a press release distributed throughout the Spanish media, which includes a selection of EVA's allegations and a summary of their democratic vision of the market. This document includes what are probably the most powerful arguments to question the municipality's decision to give an initial approval to the project:

> (The allegations) make evident that the project is plagued with technical mistakes, incoherencies, contradictions, and economic inconsistencies, and ignores fundamental aspects such as the environmental, social, historical and archaeological impact of the transformation of the market. (…)

> (The neighbours) denounce that the municipal administration has made the allegation process extremely difficult, making practically impossible the elaboration of allegations to the citizens and collectives interested in joining this part of the process. (…)

> Due to the gravity of what the experts have detected in the proposal, and the brevity of the period given to analyse it, the neighbours are convinced that there is enough data to motivate further allegations; the lack of transparency and guarantees for civic involvement during the process are, on themselves, enough motivations for the rejection of ADRIPABEL's project by the municipality. (EVA - Alegaciones)

The press release closes with a powerful challenge to the decision of approving the private investor's project, making evident that the municipality never gave any reasons to justify its selection. Moreover, it also makes visible the disconnection between the authority's decision and the will of the citizens, and shows in a very explicit way how, in comparison, EVA's proposal is much more beneficial for the neighbours of Arganzuela. Table 2 shows some of the elements that sustain EVA's *adequateness* with the idea of a proper democratic production of space, achieved through the re-politisation of subjects that the citizens consider necessary to discuss, but cannot be transported to the political fora provided by the authorities. Therefore, these topics are discussed in and *through* the public spaces around the market. The information was obtained from fieldwork, interviews with EVA members carried out by local Spanish media, and the collective's documents.

This process of visibilisation of the inadequacies of ADRIPABEL's proposal and the lack of justification of the government's decision is a reaction to the attempt to develop the project without properly enrolling the citizens in the process. EVA's course of action consists in implementing strategies to a) make evident the tools that the other actors are using to achieve their objectives, subsequently connecting them with *undesirable* entities, and b) stabilising EVA's identity by connecting their activities to *desirable* actors that turn the

collective into a solution to most of the citizen's needs. Since this process is mostly carried out by the inscription and circulation of EVA's documents, they can also be understood as participatory objects, given that they are, along with the market itself, the materials in which their vision of the place becomes fixed. The technical document that EVA produces after its analysis of the project presented by ADRIPABEL is probably the best example. Thanks to the legal provision that allows the interested public to present allegations to the project before it is effectively turned into a Public Works Concession, the knowledge that EVA infused in its allegations travels from their city-landscape, to the regulatory city-landscape, linking them. As a consequence, the citizen's interest is no longer an expression of private individuals, but becomes a matter of institutional action, forcing the municipality to consider its content.

In the next section I will describe how the processes of knowledge production and translation, and the re-politisations that occur as a consequence, impact the development of the Governance Network.

Table 2. EVA's repolitisation strategies

Subject	Connection to the Market	Re-politisations	Actors
Undemocratic planning in Madrid	The project wasn't thought for the neighbours of Arganzuela or for the normal inhabitants of the city. It was thought to be reached only by car, so one can arrive, consume and then leave by car. The project contemplates 900 parking places, and in the shopping mall they are building right in front of it, the developers are asking for another 1700 places, so people can arrive by car, consume and leave. What they want is to turn the city into some kind of amusement park for tourist (Ángel Lomas)	**Strategy:** Jane's Walk in Arganzuela: collaboration between EVA and Architects Without Borders Madrid. The collective walked the streets around the market describing what components of the built environment fostered process of community building and which ones did not, trying to produce recommendations for a redesign of the inadequate elements. **Result:** The urban planning of the Arganzuela district was put into question due to its lack of community spaces.	**Desirable:** Jane Jacobs, sense of community **Inadequate:** alienation, privatisation of public space
Market-Oriented City	What we want is to move from the model of the mercantilist city, to a more cooperative model. We are citizens who have woken up, that have become conscious that we need to stop delegating. We have discovered with horror that the people we have delegated (the production of) our most immediate environment have very deficient creative processes and their only proposal is the creation of Shopping Malls (Santiago López)	**Strategy:** The *autogestiva* nature of EVA's activities. The production of a project for the management of the market with an emphasis on community building the citizens themselves will carry out. **Result:** the municipality's version of social function of public space is put into question.	**Desirable:** Direct democracy, economy of the commons, hands on urbanism **Inadequate:** mercantilist city, bureaucracy, shopping malls
Political	We should have a social and political	**Strategy:** Bringing to wider	**Desirable:**

representation	fabric that, rather than closing doors and ignoring proposals coming from people who are interested in participating…., well, actually did their job. The first thing they did was not listening, turning us into a ping-pong ball, ignoring us. In the end we were forced to put a bit of pressure to get them to pay attention. We managed to get a meeting with them but they hadn't even read our document, which is a very well formed and complete document, supported by experts. I think that is very painful. They are more worried about their own political process than about doing their job with the citizens. (Santiago López)	attention the impossibility of finding a solution to EVA's demands by using the space of the market/around the market to develop tactical urbanism projects materialising the collective's ideas. **Result:** an urban garden, an open-air cinema and several public events in which the interaction between citizens and institutions are subject of debate. The whole process of political representation is put into question.	political participation, civic empowerment, social fabric **Inadequate:** democratic deficit, bureaucracy
Privatisation of public spaces	The citizens, we are begging for spaces. The ones we've found are not public: we have to pay for them. This space (the market) is already ours. It belongs to the Arganzuela neighbours and all the inhabitants of Madrid. It doesn't belong to private actors. (Sacri García)	**Strategy:** informal appropriation of public spaces through different activities by the collective (open-air cinema, gatherings outside the market). **Result:** by showing how their activities are compatible with ideals of community building and a just city, the legitimacy of the municipality's version of urban planning becomes questioned.	**Desirable:** gathering places, inhabitants of Madrid **Inadequate:** privatisation, private developers
Demise of the welfare State	What we try to solve are the problems that come from *up there*. These are problems that the State, through its bureaucracy, is creating. We are not creating these problems ourselves. (Sacri García)	**Strategy:** Using the spaces around the market to develop social assistance projects, like the solidary pantry. **Result:** visibilising the state's preference for private actors, rather than the citizens	**Desirable:** solidarity **Inadequate:** *up there*, bureaucratic inefficiency.
Lack of Transparency	We analysed the new General Land Use Plan for Madrid, and we decided that we didn't wanted it, because it revives many historical conflicts. The first thing we did was to gather all the information produced by all the associations regarding the problems of the city, and putting it in a single place. We have produced with it the "Maps of the Urban Horrors", were all the urban developments that citizen's do not like are made evident. (Guillermo Martínez)	**Strategy:** Visibilising the undemocratic nature of urban planning in Madrid through electronic tools. **Result:** The modifications to the General Land Use Plan are put into question. EVA forces institutions to be transparent against their will	**Desirable:** Democratic urban planning, participation, transparency **Inadequate:** opaqueness, historical conflicts, bad urban development
Institutional ineffectiveness	The municipal offices are little more than registration offices. They are good for nothing. Particularly when the closest institution doesn't even have the competencies to fix a pothole in front of your door. And	**Strategy:** hands-on urbanism. Active involvement in public matters. **Result:** EVA's activities appear as a better mode of democratic	**Desirable:** civic involvement, direct democracy

even more if the person that is working for that institution hasn't been elected by the citizens, but someone else pointed his finger and put him there. Then he responds to whoever appointed him within the municipality, and not to the inhabitants of the neighbourhood. (Antonio Abueitah)	exercise than the official channels	**Inadequate:** democratic deficit, bureaucratic inefficiency

The deployment of the Governance Network

Figure 1 describes in a visual fashion the deployment of a Governance Network and the influence of the Democratic Deficit in its development. Four different urban assemblages –producing four city-landscapes- involved in the material production of the city are located on the vertical axis. The horizontal axis represents time. Movements between the different city-landscapes require a process of translation, which can only be achieved by the enrolment of the necessary tools. The origin of the Governance Network is located to the extreme left, in the State's decision to produce an open call of proposals for a Public Works Concession Contract. In the particular case of the Legazpi Market, there is a parallel occurrence: the birth of a *public* related to the lack of a place to host the activities carried out in *La Traba*, after it was demolished. Shortly after these two incidents, a Public-private Partnership is created, when the municipality of Madrid designs ADRIPABEL as the winner of the call for proposals for the concession of the market. The translation necessary to move from the city-landscape of the market-rationality to the institutional city-landscape of State's regulation is operated through technical documents, namely the project proposal developed by ADRIPABEL, in which the company describes the modifications to the market and the details of its administration during the 40 years concession, allowing the municipality to make a decision based on the rationality of economic benefit.

Fig. 1. Deployment of an Urban Governance Network in Madrid
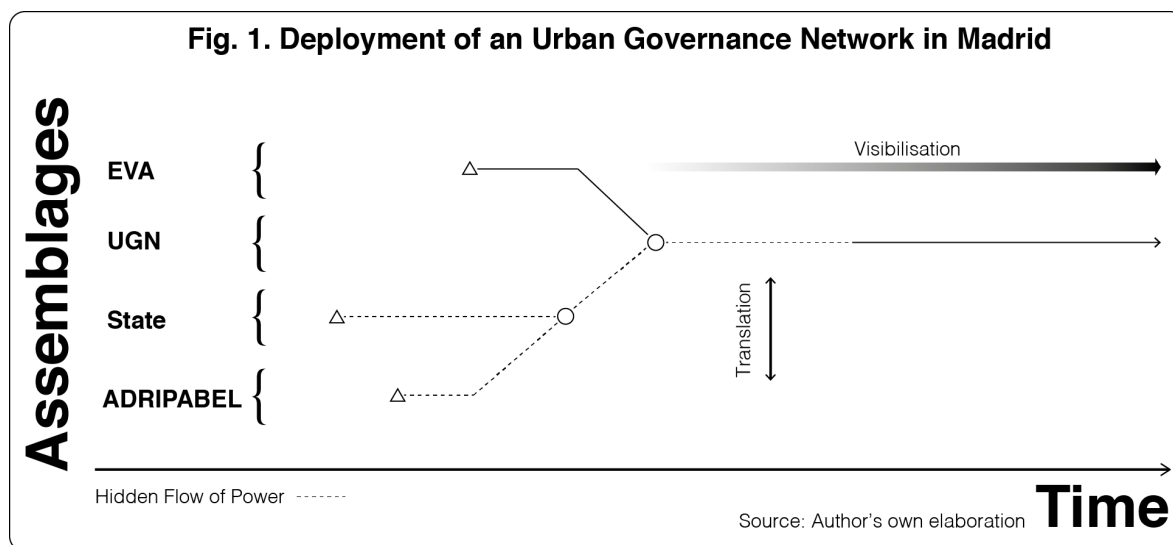
Before the three assemblages meet and a Governance Network is effectively deployed, each of them performs a series of activities aimed at strengthening their capacity to materialize their interests in urban space: citizens gather under the EVA label, becoming a critical mass demanding their right to produce a spatial configuration that responds to their needs. They produce a series of materials to stabilize the links between the collectives, for example their manifesto *Something Marvellous is Happening in Madrid, despite Madrid,* in which the vision of the umbrella organisation is outlined.

EVA, the Institutions and the Private Investor, along with the socio-material network that transports and stabilises their interests come together at a later stage, when, as a part of the administrative process, ADRIPABEL's proposal is subject to public scrutiny. This is the point in which a *proper* Governance Network –in the sense of a distributed decision-making process (Chhotray, Vasudha, & Stoker, 2009), is created, and EVA obtains –potentially- the possibility to materially modify The City. Throughout the deployment of the Network, the identity of the market is enacted in different modes, depending on the associations in which it gets involved by the activities of EVA, the investor and the authorities. Therefore, its reality becomes a function of different trajectories: a) the private endeavour "how can I, the investor, profit from this space?", b) the citizens' programme "how can we turn it into a social centre?", and c) the state's interest "how can this space be given in concession under a context of democratic legitimacy?". To turn these different trajectories into a unified democratically legitimate flow of power, a wide variety of objects should be involved, their job consisting in translating opposing interests into a single discourse. However, the tools

employed by the municipality (administrative processes without proper mechanisms for citizen participation) and the investor (a privately developed project focused on achieving private economic profit), are incapable of accommodating EVA's interests. There are two reasons for this. The first one is that these instruments are intended to guarantee an efficient flow of power for homogenous actors (only the municipality or only the investor). The second one is that both mechanisms can be deployed without making their assemblage processes transparent to other participants. This results in the perception that the decisions are being taken "with the back turned to the citizens" (Nueva Tribuna).

EVA joins the network in disadvantage, since their attempt to get a hold of the necessary information to analyse ADRIPABEL's project is truncated by the denial of the authorities to share it. It is in this moment that EVA's suspicion that the approval of the project lacks democratic legitimacy becomes clearer. Within the group, there are talks about the existence of a Democratic Deficit, since they are incapable of understanding how the decisions of the authorities that, supposedly represent Arganzuela's citizens, have been taken, and therefore that particular proposal approved. As a reaction, EVA enrols lawyers and the necessary legal framework to force the authorities to make the project public, succeeding barely a couple of days before they are kicked out of the network via *formal* arguments. Once ADRIPABEL's project has been analysed, EVA produces another document in which their vision of the market is contrasted to that of the private investor, attempting through their arguments, as it has been described before, to strengthen their vision of public space while at the same time reducing the power of ADRIPABEL's. When they publish this document, along with their concerns about why the administration was not willing to share the approved project with them, the Democratic Deficit stops being contained within EVA's forum and is transported to the public realm, via articles published both in digital and in printed media. At this point, the DD becomes visible all over Madrid, turning EVA into a city-wide actor. The contacts with universities, other collectives or individual citizens that want to know more about EVA's struggle multiply, and the group grows significantly.

Once the Urban Governance Network is deployed, the actors involved are constantly monitoring each other's enrolment of resources. Each new actor associated falls under scrutiny, since its inclusion in the network might become a determinant of its outcome. Therefore, the fact that some of the tools used by the municipality and the investor remain hidden becomes a focal point of EVA's attention. The group of activists finds a powerful reason to question the democratic legitimacy of governmental decisions in the lack of publicly accessible data about the project, and by making visible the inadequacy of

ADRIPABEL's project, the disconnection between the goals of the company and the will of the citizens becomes evident. This is the process of visibilisation of the tools used both by the investor and the government to modify the market in a particular way. The fact that EVA managed to make them public reduces their power. When hidden, ADRIPABEL's sociomaterial network is powerful enough to get the local government to approve its proposal. However, once the links between the project and objectionable actors such as undemocratic urban planning, market rationality, inequality, gentrification, etc., are exposed and made visible, the assemblage loses a considerable amount of force.

The Democratic Deficit here can be identified as two different trajectories: a) The invisibilisation of some of the tools needed for the development of the UGN performed by the municipality and the private investor (for example, by denying EVA access to the approved project), and b) the connections between the project, the market and objectionable actors, performed and sustained by EVA. While the network assembled by authorities and investor had a considerable amount of power before, EVA's enrolment of the DD changes the configuration of the positions of power, turning the implementation of ADRIPABEL's project highly unlikely despite the assurance from Madrid's major Ana Botella that the concession of the market would be implemented *si o si* (Nueva Tribuna).[4]

Given the closeness of the municipal elections, and the possibility (later turned into reality) of a change in the party holding the local office of Madrid, the issue around the Legazpi market became dormant after the public information period, at least in relation to the institutional and private actors, although EVA continued developing visibilisation and re-politisation strategies. With the arrival of Ahora Madrid, a left wing party, to the government of the City, the possibility of the concession of the market to ADRIPABEL became less likely. EVA was able to carry out its first public event within the walls of the market in late July, 2015, to commemorate almost one year of its origin. However, their demand for a social centre has not been met.

---

[4] *Si o si* is a spanish expression that implies the certainty of an outcome in a relatively aggressive fashion, indicating also a lack of remorse from taking a strict decision.

Brussels

Brussels

The issue

The controversy around the construction of a parking lot under the Place de Jeu de Balle is connected to a more complex struggle between local authorities and organized groups of citizens of the City of Brussels. The origin of the confrontation is the decision taken by the government headed by Yvan Mayeur to renovate the squares and boulevards of the city centre, a project that includes the creation of a large pedestrian area and modifications in the function of multiple streets through the implementation of a New Mobility Plan. The renewal project was announced in early 2014, advertised as a the creation of a *new heart for Brussels* with the aim of triggering a process of economic development in the area:

> The objective pursued by the College is, above all, a voluntary response to the social, economic, commercial, environmental and cultural challenges faced by the city. Actually, the unemployment rate of Brussels is, at present, 22%, and it even exceeds 30% in some districts. Taking this situation into account, and to tackle as soon as possible these challenges without sacrificing entire generations, the College has enquired about the means available to the city. The goal: to support the creation of jobs adapted to the profile of the job seekers of Brussels. How? Through the economic revitalisation of the City (Ville de Bruxelles).

Although the project in general was controversial since its inception, the strongest civic reactions emerged in early November, after the local authorities announced the renewal would be accompanied by the creation of four parking lots in different parts of the city centre. One of them in particular, to be built under the Place de Jeu de Balle, became the focus of citizen unrest. Given the complexity of the whole renovation plan, this case study is restricted to this particular source of controversy. Place de Jeu de Balle is located in an area well known for having a very strong sense of identity within Brussels, Les Marolles, and is also house to one of the oldest open-air markets of the city. The proposal to build a parking lot under it was interpreted by the citizens, and in particular the inhabitants of Les Marolles, as a new attempt at fostering the on-going gentrification process of the neighbourhood and Brussels in general. The rationale behind this fear was that, since the square would be closed to the public during the construction, the market would need to be relocated to a different place, causing irreversible economic damage not only to the dealers, but also to the established bars and cafés that rely on the attractiveness of the market to develop their business, eventually leading to their disappearance. This would open the door to the settlement of new neighbours

and businesses with higher economic power, a goal pursued by the local government due to a feature of the Belgian tax system that gives incentives to municipalities to constantly try to attract inhabitants with higher incomes. Shortly after the announcement, a group of citizens created a Facebook page denominated *No to the parking at Jeu de Balle,* that due to its strong success, later turned into Plateforme Marolles, a loosely organised collective gathering inhabitants and workers from Les Marolles.

On the 1st of December, a session of the local council was set to discuss the project. During the meeting, the opposition parties signalled that the entire project was immature, and needed more time for public consultation (Le Soir). However, despite this official opposition, the presence of around 300 citizens showing their discontent, and the fact that an online petition had, by the time, gathered around 15,000 signatures to stop the project, the Municipal Council approved the new mobility plan, including the construction of the new parking lots. The whole session was described in local media as a particularly difficult one (even highlighting an incident in which one public employee was taken to the hospital due to a hand injury), with accusations of ideological manipulation and violent provocations attributed the organized citizens.

On the media, the authorities assured that, despite the approval of the project, Place de Jeu de Balle in particular would remain accessible even during the construction works, since only parts of it would need to be closed to allow the excavations. Due to strong opposition to the parking and the citizen's accusation that the whole project had been decided behind close doors, the local authorities announced a series of extraordinary public events in which public officials would talk with the concerned citizens. These reunions consisted mostly of encounters in which Else Ampe, Brussels' deputy mayor for Mobility, would assure the Marolliens that the parking lot implied no important changes to the area, while at the same time committing discursive mistakes that, according to the Plateforme, made evident the real goals of the project. For example, mentioning as an important benefit of the renovation that the better accessibility of the area would make things easier for "older people coming to the hotel and casino" (Facebook – David Courier), both services that are non existent in Place de Jeu de Balle for the moment. During this same period, information about a II World War Bunker located under the square started to circulate around the city, strengthening the opposition to the construction of the parking, which would imply the destruction of the war relic.

The 20th of January, Platforme Marolles, in conjunction with the association Pétitions-Patrimoine, filed a petition to assign heritage status to the Place du Jeu de Balle. The

organisations used the Brussels Code of Land Management as a juridical base, since it was identified during discussions in the Facebook group as the fastest way of allocating that status to the square, which would have also been susceptible of being declared cultural heritage by an international body, although after a long process. As a consequence of the filing of the petition, no construction license could be issued by the authorities until the appeal was accepted or denied –at least according to the law-, which could take anywhere between a couple of months and a couple of years. In any case, the petition effectively blocked the development of the project, at least in the terms of its original timeframe (Gonze). Public officials connected to the renewal project complained about this strategy, accusing the citizens of instrumentalizing heritage, even if it was a juridically legitimate action to protect a space considered culturally relevant.

In this context of struggle, the renovation plan for Brussels' city centre was presented in a big event at the Ancienne Belgique concert hall, on the 22nd of January. The aim was to make public the project and the results of the *Working Groups*, a participatory tool deployed by the local government to allow citizens to exert minor influence over the development of the renovation of the centre. The event was heavily criticized in the media due to Yvan Mayeur's denial to present the project himself and face the probable criticism of some of the attendants. However, both the local authorities and the opposition called the event a success and stated that their goals had been met, whether they were presenting or protesting.

Around the beginning of the next month, three organisations of experts, ARAU (Atelier de Recherche et d'Action Urbaines), IEB (Inter-Environnement Bruxelles) and BRAL (Brusselse Raad voor het Leefmilieu), along other neighbourhood associations that had been critically following Mayeur's project closely, announced they were presenting a legal recourse to demand the annulation of the council's decision to approve the mobility plan, including the construction of the parking under Jeu de Balle. The document contains an extensive list of local, regional, national and international legal tools that give citizens grounds to demand a say in the process, arguing that, since the project was developed behind close doors, it should be annulated and redeveloped. This legal procedure was still on going by the end of July 2015, although parts of the Plan had already been implemented.

In a parallel process, a few days later after the publication of this new strategy of opposition, Yvan Myteur announced, although without any official declaration, that the project of building a parking lot under Place de Jeu de Balle was cancelled. Platform Marolles linked this decision to its capacity to deploy a quick organisation process and to the weak democratic legitimacy of the whole project. After this good news, the Plateforme

warned that the concerned citizens should remain vigilant of the local authority's actions and continue to pursue the attribution of heritage value to the square. However, since only the project of building that particular parking lot was abandoned, but not the rest of the new mobility plan, including the implementation of a very problematic new traffic scheme and three other parking lots, widespread opposition did not stop. Furthermore, a week after Mayeur's announcement, the guidelines for another underground parking lot were made public.

Throughout its development, the issue around the Place de Jeu de Balle became connected to a much deeper on-going problem in Brussels: the citizen's perception that the spatial planning of the city is oriented to attract higher income inhabitants, and not to benefit its current population by improving its quality of life. Through the defence of the materiality of the square, Plateforme Marolles found a way to force a public discussion about the democratic legitimacy of this version of urban development, creating a forum in which it became the subject of political discussion by a more diverse list of actors than those originally involved by Yvan Mayeur's programme.

Box 5. The Place de Jeu de Balle

The history of Place de Jeu de Balle begins in 1854,[5] when its planning as the centre of the extremely dense and populated Marolles neighbourhood was decided. The main interest behind its creation was to relieve overcrowding, since 25,000 inhabitants lived in 1,800 houses. The construction of the square was completed in 1863, once the city acquired the land of a bankrupt train factory. According to Platform Marolles' documents, the heritage relevance of Place de Jeu de Balle is related to the fact that it has suffered few changes since then, in comparison to other areas of the city. The daily Market that makes it one of the most well known spots in Brussels, arrived 10 years after the construction was finished, in 1873, as a result of the local authority's decision to move the second-hand dealers from the Old Market in the city centre following *beautification* criteria. It is the only market of its nature in Brussels that opens every day of the year. (Plateforme Marolles)

The Public

Plateforme Marolles originated as the Facebook group "No parking Jeu de Balle", eventually gathering almost 3,500 people. What started as a discussion forum around the

---

[5] A map with the localisation of Place de Jeu de Balle within Brussels can be found on the Annex.

project announced by the local authorities, turned after a couple of months of activity into an informal collective organising information sessions and meetings to develop strategies to contest the construction of the parking. The Café CHAFF, located in the Place de Jeu de Balle, became a focal point of the organisation process, since most of the activities, including concerts and theatre, occurred in its premises. The first activity of the Plateforme consisted in launching a petition to stop the construction of the Parking lot under the square. The public organised to protect different aspects of the area, arguing that the construction would alter its spatial configuration (unchanged since its inception), modify the original materials (cobble stones from the 19th century) and change the social use of the square (constant since 1873). Therefore, although the Plateforme opposed in general terms the implementation of the mobility plan, their main activities between its origin and February, 2015, were directed to defend the integrity of Place de Jeu de Balle. In this sense, the possibility of a spatial intervention in the square turned what already was a loose community of users and supporters, into a *public* organized to preserve the qualities of the area, and also into a group in search for the institutional and political means to achieve this goal.

The biggest concern of the collective was the various negative effects the construction of the parking lot would have over the dynamic of the square. They were particularly afraid of a decrease in the diversity of dealers within the market, if it were to be temporarily relocated to a smaller Square (the renovation would have taken around 3 years, starting on August 2015). According to the Plateforme, this process could trigger a selective mechanism, since only the most successful sellers would be able to survive the move (i.e., those who sell the most expensive things). Other concerns were related to the intense activity of the area, which would inevitably be reduced significantly during the works, having a direct impact over the businesses. On the other hand, the Plateforme was also concerned about the fact that the redesign of the square would be in the hands of the company benefiting from the concession, something they understood as a result of the implementation of a deficient participatory process and a lost opportunity to modify the space of the square according to their needs. They feared that, as a result of the expulsion of the market and the beautification of the square, the on-going gentrification process of Les Marolles would aggravate:

> "Building a parking is a practice to "clean" a popular place. One says "during the construction period you'll have to go somewhere else", but the works last for many years. And then the sellers and the visitors are gone, never to come back. For example in Michel Bordeaux Square, where there use to be a flea market and now there are only BoBo's". (Facebook – David Votre Chazam)

This possibility was understood as profoundly unfair, since it would mean that the renovation of the area, apart from attracting new population by displacing the locals, would be made possible through the investment of public resources. Those paying taxes and living around Jeu de Balle would be in this sense paying for their expulsion. All of these concerns were exacerbated by the fact that the local authorities never made public the studies they referred to every time they assured that none of the negative effects denounced by Plateforme Marolles would actually come true.

The Governance Network

Urban Planning in Brussels is an extremely complicated matter due to the intricate structure of the Belgian State. The development of urban projects is competency of the Regional and Municipal levels of government, since Brussels has no provinces. Nevertheless, this still means articulating many different actors, given that the Capital Region is divided into 19 municipalities, each of them with officials in charge of planning. All the actors involved have at their disposition a variety of planning tools that involve in different degrees public participation. The project for the renewal of the Squares and Boulevards of Brussels' City Centre is a good example of how an urban intervention in Brussels implies the mobilisation of multiple planning tools and actors, since although the area is entirely within the competence of the Brussels commune government, other bodies like the Region, the Brussels Intercommunal Transport Company (STIB), and the neighbouring municipalities are involved, in addition to the interaction with smaller scale planning tools like the neighbourhood contracts. However, the analysis developed here is confined to only one of the aspects most closely connected to the attempt of building a parking lot under the Place de Jeu de Balle, namely the New Mobility Plan for Brussels. Mobility Plans are a municipal-level tool to improve the mobility, accessibility, road safety and quality of life for the inhabitants of the municipality (Ville de Bruxelles-b), goals that have to be met taken into account what is established in the Regional Mobility Plan for Brussels.

Although the *Ordonnance de la Région de Bruxelles-Capitale du 26 juillet 2013* establishes that, before the approval of a new Mobility Plan, a project draft has to be the subject of public scrutiny for 60 days, it seems that this was not the case for the New Mobility Plan produced by Mayeur. The whole renovation project, however, included other forms of citizen involvement, although the influence that they could exert over the project

was rather limited. The website describing the participatory process is very telling in this regard:

> The participatory process is not about the basis of the pedestrianisation of the squares and boulevards –which has already been decided- but about future uses of these areas. For example, creating green spaces, playground areas? Or how to integrate a work of art, a fountain, rest areas? (Ville de Bruxeles-c)

The participatory process is officially described as composed of two phases. Phase one, carried between the 29th of September and December 1st, 2014, was dedicated to "collecting input and comments on the project" (Ville de Bruxelles-c). The second phase ran between January and June 2015, and focused on informing the public and preparing a public consultation process (which should have happened before the approval of the Plan, in December, 2015.

During the first phase, a series of workshops with the aim of "meeting the locals" who are "the experts in the field", were carried out with the aim of collecting the ideas of the participants. 626 people participated in them (Ville de Bruxelles-d). The mechanism of participation was focused on collecting opinions from passers-by about the current state of the boulevards and squares, as well as their future configuration under the plan. In contrast, there was no opportunity to analyse the whole project by looking at the technical documents in which it was described or the ones that justified the spatial modifications to the area. These proposals were collected, systematised and subject again to the opinion of passers-by:

> "The proposals were transcribed in a questionnaire given to passers-by, so they could externalise their opinions about them. This allows testing the results of the working groups on a wide range of inhabitants and users of the boulevards. To develop this activity, a stand was placed at different places of the boulevards between November 12 and November 15 (From 10 to 18). A questionnaire is distributed to any person approaching the stand. In the questionnaire, the passers-by have the option to "check" the proposals that look interesting, and write any comments they might have about them and about the project in general. " (Ville de Bruxelles(d)).

The second phase of the participation process included the creation of working groups composed of all the interested parties, organised around five main subjects: mobility, urban furniture and lighting, green spaces, culture and economy and art in public space. The results of these workshops were made public during the general presentation of the Plan, including the long awaited publication of the feasibility study carried out by Technum architects, during February, 2015.

Taking this into account, the Governance Network deployed to materially modify Place de Jeu de Balle can be described as composed of, at least, the following sociomaterial

assemblages: Plateforme Marolles and its supporters, the local government headed by Yvan Mayeur, the potential company in charge of the construction of the parking lot (informally, Interparking, a powerful company with a bad reputation, at least in the Plateforme's view) and Technum. An additional actor is the quasi-public enrolled by the municipality during the second stage of the participatory process, which included many citizens who became connected to the issue accidentally, passing by the public forum in which it was discussed, namely the stands set by the authorities, where they were asked their opinion about the renewal process.

Each of this assemblages enrols the materiality of the square in a particular way according to its specific goals: the Plateforme tries to recruit Place de Jeu de Balle to fight a democratically illegitimate decision that would result in gentrification, the authorities try to enrol it to attract more public resources, and the company in charge of modifying it, to produce private benefits. The following section takes a closer look at the strategies deployed by the Plateforme during their involvement in the UGN.

The learning assemblage

Plateforme Marolle's process of making sense of the city, the authority's plan and their strategies to defend Place de Jeu de Balle, was carried out almost entirely through a Facebook group that became their most important coordination device. The main function of this tool was to share the information each member of the Plateform could gather from the few institutional sources available, and media, since official documents were made public much later –and incompletely. This strategy also compensated the fact that, facing an important opposition, politicians did not appear very often on public to explain the details of the project. Therefore, Plateforme Marolles solved this deficit of information –that was technically public- by collecting all the news about the Mobility Plan, subsequently analysing and debating them within the group. This activity was carried out through a digital version of a general assembly: after one member of the Plateforme *posted* a link in the Facebook wall of the group, the rest of the participants discussed the information included, identifying the elements they considered problematic and the resources they needed to counteract the official arguments. Following this collective effort, Plateforme Marolles developed a strategy of producing and distributing materials that could be used to counteract the municipality's programme of presenting the Mobility Plan as a project that would bring all kinds of benefits to the inhabitants of the areas affected. The main tool to achieve this goal was the production

of documents circulated electronically around the supporters and the media. These *informational utopics* (Juris 2008) –inscribed imaginaries about alternative assemblages of the city- in which the authority's version of urban planning was contrasted with that of the members of the Plateform, were disseminated in public, in what, from an ANT perspective, can be understood as an attempt at dissolving the links established between the official programme of action (urban renewal for economic development), and the materiality of the Place de Jeu de Balle. This strategy reduced the authority's capacity to *act at a distance* over the materiality of the square, since the network deployed to materialise their interests lost strength by losing components. Plateform Marolles pursued this goal in two different ways: in the first place, the collective established and strengthened connections between the square and the actors they considered *desirable*. In the second place, they attacked the assemblage built by the local authorities to stabilise the democratic legitimacy of their own programme, while at the same time, connecting it with *inadequate* actors. Both strategies are analysed in the following paragraphs.

Connections and repolitisations

By developing new connections between the materiality of the Place de Jeu de Balle, the issue at stake and subjects Plateforme Marolles considered absent from the debate, the latter entities are reintroduced to the political ecosystem of the city. The association of these new actors implied that their relation to urban space and its inhabitants became a subject of public discussion, a feature they did not have prior to their connection to the issue of the new parking lot and the new Mobility Plan. The two most important actors enrolled by the Plateforme to contest the use of space proposed by the local authorities were the history and local culture of the square. From the collective's point of view, the struggle against the whole pedestrianisation of the city centre (of which the issue around the Place de Jeu de Balle was understood as a symbol) represented an effort to preserve *modes de vie populaire*, under attack by the authority's intention to transform the spaces into places for consumption with the ultimate aim to attract new types of city dwellers. Consequently, Plateforme Marolles referred constantly to the historical past of the square and the market, to stabilise its identity as a desirable feature at risk of disappearing if the project of the municipality were to succeed. For example:

> The opponents love the place as it is. They don't want to see it disfigured by hoppers (…) they know that the flea market that is held here every day since 1873 is unique and deserves to be classified as heritage. What they find here are is not only objects

that are found nowhere else, but an atmosphere, a unique social mix, an abundant activity, a lively place and a very particular neighbourhood. In other words: cultural, economic, social, heritage. Something invaluable. In their eyes, this is part of the soul of Brussels (Facebook – Dominique Page)

The battle of the Marolles, after which Brussels' authorities had to backtrack, for the first time in its planning history, an urban planning project (Martens, 2009), became a reference point infusing this new struggle with a sense of historical legitimacy. The rebellious nature of the Marolliens was therefore identified by the Plateforme as one of the reasons motivating the renovation of the area, since beautifying the neighbourhood would have the ultimate outcome of expelling what was left of the politically active population. The construction of the parking lot and the renovation of the Place were presented, within the Plateforme's discourse, as a justification to achieve another political project that the authorities pursued since the 60's but had no democratically legitimate tool to achieve: displacing the Marolliens. The urban renewal process was characterised as a convenient strategy for the local government, since it would allow it to achieve this goal without a political struggle, recurring to the supposedly a-political nature of market laws to voluntarily trigger a process of gentrification in the area.

The links between history, culture and the square were stabilized and translated from the city-landscape of the citizen's interest, to the regulatory city-landscape by filing a petition to assign heritage status to the area. This process was the result of a collective effort of knowledge production during which the members of Plateforme Marolles achieved the necessary technical means to translate the subjective importance each of them allocated to the place, to a juridically relevant matter susceptible of institutional protection. The arguments in support of allocating this type of protection were various, but most importantly, the fact that the square preserves almost without any change its historical configuration, a rare case within Brussels. The buildings around the square were also enrolled to create a heritage city-landscape composed of the Immaculate Conception Church, the old fire station, and the now-famous air-raid shelter in the basement (Plateforme Marolles). To be able to perform this translation, the Platforme Marolles produced a technical document in which the heritage value of the square is described almost with clinical precision. The text also refers to old documents produced by the council to prove the original status of the materials that still today make up the place.

The strategy of turning Place de Jeu de Balle into a institutionally protected site had the aim of cutting all ties between the place and the city-landscape of private profit or economic rationality, securing instead links with history and culture. The stabilisation and

citywide circulation of the newly established links removed the square from a logic that jeopardized a use the citizens considered important. In this sense, whereas the authority's programme involved a superficial discussion about very restricted elements of the renovation, the citizens forced the authorities to engage politically with subjects considered missing from the discussion by connecting them to the materiality of the Square. This was achieved by identifying institutional tools (i.e., the application of heritage status) that could translate their interests from private Facebook discussions, to public matters.

Plateforme Marolles also deployed its *antiprogramme* of action by turning against the authorities some of the tools used to characterise their Mobility Plan as a beneficial urban intervention. Mayeur's argument that the parking lots were necessary due to a congestion problem in Les Marolles was fought giving examples of the low occupancy rate of the existing parking areas in and around the neighbourhood, which were obtained from official sources. This allowed the Plateforme to show that an important amount of the parking places were empty most of the time (40%), and therefore, the predicted reduction of cars within the pentagon (30%) would not represent a real problem. Other numerical arguments were aimed directly at Mayeur's legitimacy as a public servant. For example, comparing the results of the election with the number of supporters of the Plateforme's actions:

> Between the online petition and the paper petition, there are 15,000 signatures. That's 5.83 times more than the number of votes for Mayeur and 9.33 times more the votes for Els Ampe. (Facebook – Isabelle Marchal).

> Or;

> If 23,000 signatures gathered in two weeks do nor represent anything in the eyes of politicians, it means that we no longer live in a democracy. It is not for Yvan Mayeur with his lousy 2,700 votes to decide the life and death of an entire city" (Facebook – Isabelle Marchal).

To compensate for the unavailability of institutional means to contest the mayor's decision, the Plateforme deployed in public discussion forums more arguments to disconnect the Mobility Plan from other sources of democratic legitimacy, for example accusing Mayeur of attempting to tie its name to the spatial modification of the city. However, the most powerful strategy developed by the organisations was probably their attack to the proposal through a legal recourse presented to the Couseil d'Etat, Belgium's supreme administrative court, in which those opposed to the Plan requested the nullification of its approval. This document contests the authority's decision using the same administrative tools needed to produce the proposal, particularly by questioning the use of the concept of *mobility plan*. According to the official project, the changes implemented in Brussel's city centre consisted

in the creation of a New Mobility plan, a tool whose parameters are clearly established within Belgian regulation. However, the recourse prepared by ARAU, BRAL and IEB makes evident that the mobility plan presented by the authorities does not correspond to these criteria, and, moreover, that the project as a whole is at odds with the wider regional planning strategy. Mayeur's project is even characterised as illegal, since its implementation violated the norms that require the performance of incidence studies before approving the project (ARAU et. al.). The document is also particularly emphatic in denouncing that, having signed the Aarhus convention, Belgium's legal framework should provide a considerable number of participative tools to foster citizen's involvement in urban planning, something that definitively never occurred during the early stages of the project's development. In fact, the Marolliens denounced that the lack of transparency during the elaboration and approval of the plan not only made it practically impossible for them to participate, but also very difficult to evaluate if the official project had the power to bring about any benefits. In an open letter to Mayeur, a member of the opposition in the local council stated:

> It is very clear that by not allowing me to access the Technum study, the College, and in particular deputy Ampe, violate the law. In doing so, they made a voluntary retention of critical information resulting in our inability to analyse and verify their statements. This is the study in which she [Ampe] claims that the mobility plan is based, and the fact that it hasn't been disclosed raises serious questions". (Nagy)

To these accusations of *opaqueness*, Mayeur allegedly responded: "Power implies not sharing all information, but keeping some for yourself" (Facebook - Isabel Marchal-b), in an extreme example of how the invisibilisation of the tools needed to achieve his goals was an important component of his initial success. Denouncing the Democratic Deficit that made possible the approval of the project became another crucial strategy deployed by Plateforme Marrolles, as it is evident in most of their documents, in which references to the opaqueness of the process are constant, along with examples of how the *formal* tools of participation implemented by the local authorities did not represent a *substantive* exercise of democracy. For example, the dates for the reunions in which the features of the Mobility Plan were presented and discussed, were set very close to the holiday season. Some members of the Plateform even denounced that the letters inviting them to attend arrived 4 or 5 days before the event took place, but were dated as if they had been sent weeks in advance (Facebook - Brigitte Salmon).

By characterising the whole process as a democratically illegitimate, the Plateforme managed to bring its implementation to the spotlight, adding a new element to the already

highly questioned urban dynamic of Brussels, a city that always seems to be at the verge of either *Brusselisation* (Papadopoulos, 1996) or gentrification (Van Criekingen, 2009):

> Brussels, like all big cities in the world, is put on sale and designed according to the interests of a powerful class. Our living spaces are increasingly sanitized or destroyed, including the installation of a caste of endogamous Eurocrats who sell us ideas of diversity when they behave like an inbred sect. (Facebook – David Marolito).

Gentrification became another subject that, through the Plateforme's documents and online discussions, was incorporated to the political discussion agenda to question the official version of the plan, according to which the renewal aimed to improve the quality of life of current residents. The activists denounced that a goal of the project was to strengthen the links between les Marolles and the upscale neighbourhood Le Sablon. In this sense, the programme of the authorities is similar to that of the Plateforme, although moving in the opposite direction. After the politisation of the renovation of the square, Mayeur and the rest of the officials of the local government cannot change its materiality unless they deploy a sociotechnical network that associates *desirable* actors –those coated with democratic legitimacy-, and dissolves the links between the square and problematic entities –including, unfortunately, the rebellious marollien identity. The interpretation of the Plateforme was that, since the local authorities wanted to change the type of inhabitants in the central areas of Brussels, they implemented strategies to evict them indirectly: renovating the square and getting rid of the market, while increasing car accessibility thanks to the parkin lots, is a way of dissolving the links between this space and a particular way of life (that of the current inhabitants), opening the opportunity of establishing new links with other actors, namely those who would come once the area turned "chic" and "clean. The citizen's fear in relation to the real goals of the project was somewhat reinforced by Else Ampe's constant and not very politically savvy descriptions of the project during the information sessions:

> Flemings and Walloons come less and less to Brussels to shop. We want to attract those people again, to give an economic boost to the city. Public transport is an option, but the supply is different on the weekends and the week. (Coudron)

Surprisingly, the authority's strategy to deploy a legitimate network to modify the square also included direct attacks to the Plateforme's democratic legitimacy, accusing the group of either being composed by "Bobo's and Frenchies that don't even live in the neighbourhood" (Facebook – Gwen Breës) or –particularly after the local council of December the 1st- violent provocateurs. However, their most successful strategy was also the circulation of documents with data. The report produced by the municipality describing the participation process carried out before the approval of the project –although after deciding it

would be implemented- is full of statistics that reinforce their programme by presenting the changes implied by the mobility plan as an answer to a need identified by Brussels' citizens. For example, referring to the results of the interviews carried out during the first part of the participation process, the authorities describe in the following terms the acceptance and awareness of the renovation:

> "The vast majority (81.9%) of the respondents are not satisfied with the current state of the boulevards. Many find the boulevard unattractive, dirty and congested. The boulevards are also considered dangerous because neither cars nor bikes follow the signage and many robberies are committed (mostly around the Place Fontainas). Most people agree that it is time to bring a new dynamic to the city centre. Most respondents are aware of the pedestrianisation process (79%) and generally agree with it (75%) (Ville de Bruxelles-d).

These successive challenges between the actors' legitimacy determined the development of the Governance Network, described in the next section.

The deployment of the Governance Network

Figure 2 represents the development of the Governance Network deployed to build a parking lot under the Place de Jeu de Balle, as a part of the wider project to renovate the Squares and Boulevards of Brussel's City Centre. The assemblages of actors involved are located in the *y*-axis and the sociotechnical networks they deploy to influence the development of the network move through the *x*-axis, which represents time. Although the *issue* that triggers the assemblage of Plateforme Marolles is born early in the x-axis, the apparition of the public is slightly delayed by the facts that the local government decided to formulate the project without public involvement, and commissioned the feasibility study to the consultants from Technum without making it public after it was finished. The Governance Network is born through the inclusion of an unidentified public that becomes involved almost by accident through the superficial participatory processes implemented by the municipality before the construction of the parking lots was announced. This latter event finally triggers the emergence of an interested *public*, composed first only by Plateforme Marolles, who are mainly concerned about the destiny of Place de Jeu de Balle, and later by many other organisations who are battling the renovation in general. Once the public is born, the collective signals the existence of a Democratic Deficit affecting the project since its inception, and forces the authorities to continue participating in the Network with transparency, which makes evident different kinds of weaknesses within their assemblage. These weaknesses are harnessed by the all the actors deploying *antiporgrammes* to the renovation, to reduce its strength. For example, Plateforme Marolles takes the official

programme "renovation of the city centre to foster economic development", and by strengthening connections between Place de Jeu de Balle and the very peculiar history, culture and identity of Les Marolles, translates it into "renovation to reinforce an on-going process of gentrification with the ultimate aim to expel the Marolliens", furthermore inscribing these translations in documents that are circulated around Brussels and Europe. A similar exercise is carried out with other components of the local authority's programme of action. The following table includes some examples:

Table 3. Translations performed by Plateforme Marolles

Programme	Connections/Disconnections	Translation
Democratically legitimate urban renewal	Opaqueness, democratic deficit, private benefit, Brusselisation	Undemocratic process of urban renewal: the interests of the citizens are nowhere to be found.
Technically sound urban renewal	Opaqueness (unavailability of the information), technical inadequacies.	Technically weak urban renewal: the authorities would create more problems by implementing the plan than they would solve.
Urban renewal with economic benefits for all.	Gentrification, Battle of the Marolles, Brusselisation	Elitist urban renewal: the population of Les Marolles will be kicked out by increase of living costs.
Urban renewal as a response to citizen's demands	Superficial participation, attacks to culturally relevant spaces	Culturally insensitive urban renewal: the project would put at risk the *soul* of Brussels.

Fig. 2. Deployment of an Urban Governance Network in Brussels
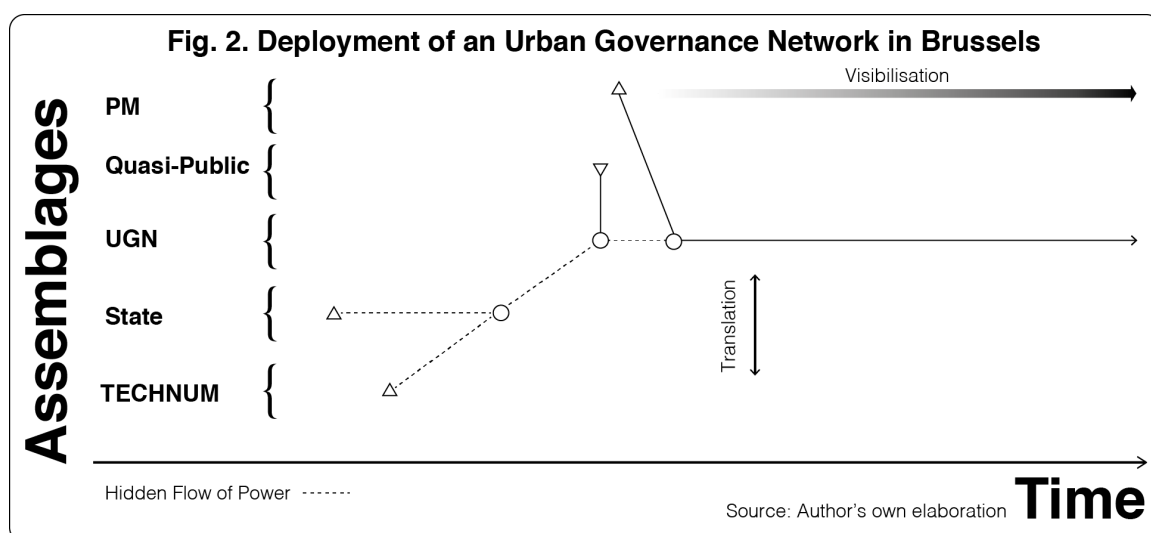
Forced to act transparently, the local authority's programme loses strength and the components that suffer more intensely from a lack democratic legitimacy have to be abandoned, since through Plateforme Marolles' actions they were signalled as important subjects within the democratic game that could not be used to materially modify the city without being previously discussed. Through the collective's activities, certain subjects that were not considered *political* by the local authorities were re-politicised. The authority's

inability to keep them out of the political ecosystem of the city resulted in a defeat when the arguments supporting both programmes were democratically tested. The final hit to the weakest component of the Renovation plan came when Plateforme Marolles brought to the struggle the administrative tool that allowed them to translate, to the regulatory city-landscape, the perception that the cultural importance of Place de Jeu de Balle was more relevant than its economic potentiality. Therefore, the construction of the parking lot was cancelled.

However, other components of the renovation plan still survive the citizen's attempts to contest them, although the legal recourse presented by ARAU, BRAL and IEB to the Conseil d'Etat might also dissolve any trait of democratic legitimacy of Yvan Mayeur's project, given the juridical soundness of their arguments and the high probability that the approval of the plan happened without taking into account the regulations established in the law regarding public hearings and transparency.

A Comparative Perspective

The two case studies outlined in the previous pages exemplified the Democratic Deficit's capacity to influence the development of two Urban Governance Networks. In both cases, the DD was used in a similar fashion: firstly, as a tool to materialize in the space of the city the interests of powerful actors through a process that, although enjoying a high degree of *formal* democratic legitimacy, did not involve any *substantive* democratic discussion. Secondly, it was used by the actors opposing this previous trajectory, to challenge the configuration of power within the network. The goal of the following paragraphs is to make sense of a few similarities and differences.

The Learning Assemblages

Although dealing with similar issues and developing similar strategies, the assemblages of citizens participating in both Governance Networks were quite different. While in Brussels the group was composed mostly of private citizens individually interested in the process –plus three formal organisations professionally dedicated to research related to urbanism and architecture-, in the case of Madrid most of the members of EVA were at the same time representing other neighbourhood organisations with particular agendas. This difference determined the type of discussions within the learning assemblages. While in the case of Brussels deliberations within the FB group constantly developed in a smooth fashion, taking the form of an exchange of shared indignation, in the case of EVA there were more frictions between members. It is very likely that this difference can be explained by the inner diversity of the organisation. For example, the *okupas* of La Traba were particularly radical and often qualified less confrontational attitudes than theirs as *immobilist*. EVA's high inner diversity might even point to a certain degree of Democratic Deficit *within* the organisation, something that at times made the decision-making process long and unarticulated, since one of the main directives of the group was to respect *all sensibilities*, although at times they were clearly at odds.

The dissimilar composition of both groups implies that it is not possible to explain their emergence and sustained existence with the same arguments. This means that, although being involved in similar processes –the struggle against undemocratic urban planning-, Plateforme Marolles and EVA had to develop and maintain in time different kinds of connections between their constitutive actors to be able to stabilise their respective identities. Plateforme Marolles' stability was achieved by referring to the need to preserve a common set of cultural and historic traits, materialized in the space of Place de Jeu de Balle. The

connections between all these elements were constantly enacted through the Facebook group, where the members of the Plateforme were constantly reassuring their association to the square by referring to its importance in their daily life or family history. In contrast, EVA's identity was accomplished by referring to the need to create a lacking common set of cultural and historic traits, a goal that necessarily passed by the materiality of the market, which was understood as crucial to be able to produce the desired associations. EVA developed and preserved the necessary connections by constantly organising events around the market in which its members and supporters could gather, physically connecting them to the space they intend to acquire.

In relation to their learning processes, although both assemblages developed a similar exercise of translating their interests into objects with administrative/bureaucratic/institutional meaning, their differentiated context also required the development of dissimilar strategies. EVA developed most of its learning process within the confines of its centre of calculation, while Plateforme Marolles' lack of regular meetings to make sense of the city required the outsourcing of this activity. Thus, the translation of official documents and the production of technically complex proposals were mostly carried out by organisations of experts, namely ARAU, BRAL and IEB. Their intervention proved crucial to challenge the technical (and therefore also democratic) legitimacy of the official plan through documents in which the official proposal was dissected and proven inadequate.

The strategies

In both cases, the organisations developed strategies to dissolve the links between the urban renewal projects of the authorities and sources of legitimation. A first type of strategy deployed to achieve this goal implied making visible the disconnections between the projects and ideal visions of the city and democracy. A second type involved the visibilisation of the inadequacies between the plans and the legal framework. Strategies of the first type were particularly effective for gaining support and collaboration from other actors. By referring to the Democratic Deficit as a *substantive* failure of modern political systems, both the Plateforme and EVA were able to interest other actants in joining their *antiporgramme* of action, such as neighbourhood and expert organisations, with their respective capacities to deploy sociomaterial assemblages. However, the second type of strategies were even more efficient in counteracting the flow of power of the authorities, as exemplified by EVA's use of the legal framework to force the authorities to make ADRIPABEL's project public, or

ARAU et. al.'s recourse to the Conseil d'Etat. Strategies that implied the translation of the citizens' interest into institutionally relevant entities were more successful because they added the strength of the state apparatus to the list of resources available to counteract the local authorities' decisions. This outcome suggests institutional tools are still effective as control measures of the Democratic Process. Moreover, when these types of tools are combined with arguments charged of technical knowledge, the strength of the network increases, since it is not only the state that gets enrolled within the citizens' *antiprogramme,* but also science, which enjoys a high degree of legitimation.

The differences in the strategies deployed by the Plateforme and EVA might be related to the fact that the space they use to materialise their interests, politicise forgotten subjects and react to the authorities' *programme,* are capable of sustaining different types of associations. For example, the existing connections between Place de Jeu de Balle and history/culture made it easy for Plateforme Marolles to force the political discussion to revolve around those subjects, not considered before by the authorities. In contrast, the difficulties in securing the connections between the Legazpi Market and history resulted in a minor importance given to these factors within EVA's struggle. In this sense, while Place de Jeu de Balle was an *apt* space to stabilise and re-politicise identity, the Legazpi Market was not. Conversely, while Place de Jeu de Balle was not able to foster the production of a new sense of community, EVA's project was organised almost entirely around the Market as a place to trigger the development of communitarianism.

The institutional actors

An important determinant of the development of both Urban Governance Networks was the type of assemblages deployed by the institutional actors, since it was that *programme* that the Plateforme and EVA had to counteract. In this sense, the strategies deployed to resist the construction of the parking lot or the market, where strongly influenced by the goals set by the local governments. Since the renovations in Brussels were immediately linked by the authorities with 6 main topics: urban planning, commerce, tourism, mobility, public space, cleanliness and participation, the Plateforme had to focus its efforts in challenging the connections between the Project and these topics. In this sense, even if the citizens of Brussels denounced that these goals were just a discursive tool, they had to prove that statement. The Plateforme had to contest these connections and make a great deal of effort in dissolving them or evidencing them inexistent. In the Spanish case these connections were
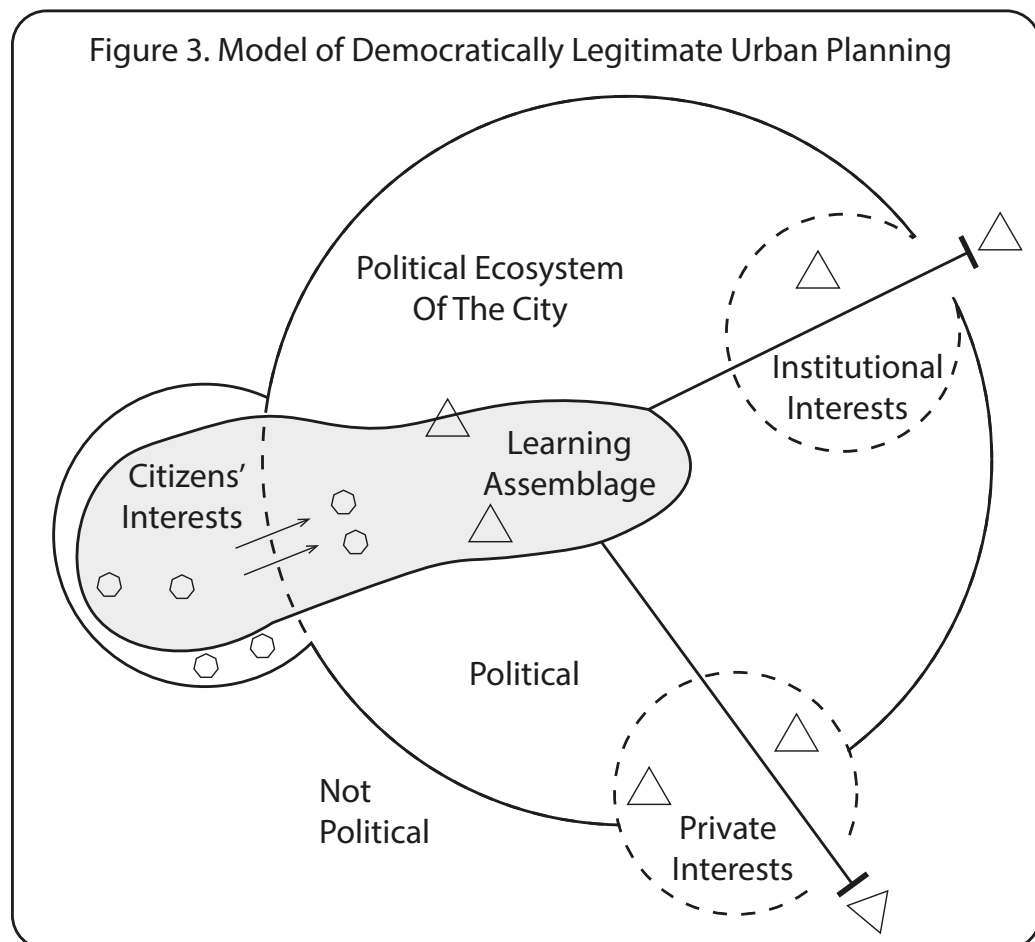
absolutely missing, making it easier for the citizens to contest what they say as the real goals of the projects. This is one of the reasons why those opposing the whole pedestrianisation process (not only the parking at Jeu de Balle) had to produce an important amount of technical documents "debunking" the myths that the local authorities had created around the project, something that was not needed in Madrid with similar urgency.

Conclusions

We will dismantle the Palace of Justice and reassemble the People's House!

David Marollito (Plateforme Marolles)

David Marolllito's battle cry summarises the two case studies presented in a very ANT-like fashion. The experiences of Plateforme Marolles and Espacio Vecinal Arganzuela can indeed be looked at as efforts to dismantle the connections between the space of the city and particular versions of Urbanism and Democracy implemented from top to bottom by formal institutions. Figure 3 represents that process in a visual manner.

Figure 3. Model of Democratically Legitimate Urban Planning

Political Ecosystem Of The City

Institutional Interests

Citizens' Interests

Learning Assemblage

Political

Not Political

Private Interests

This research attempted to locate the role of the Democratic Deficit during the interaction between the institutional *programme* of assembling the city through a Governance Network, and an *antiprogramme* built through the association between alternative versions of spaces, situated urban issues, and citizens. Four main conclusions can be derived from this analysis:

a) Political processes are the result of a very complex effort in which the actors involved participate by deploying intricate sociotechnical networks to achieve their goals. These *programmes* are, more often than not, contested by other actors with conflictive goals deploying networks in the opposite direction. In this sense, conflict is never absent from the organisation of collective life, however some actors are not able to assemble networks with the sufficient strength to convey their interest to the institutionally designed fora. Nevertheless, this is not a *substantive* problem of modern Democracy, but a *formal* one, which might be solved by either recurring to the already existing institutional tools, or deploying strategies to shift the configuration of asymmetric power relations. The branch of political thought that understands modern politics as bereft of conflict overlooks this possibility, rendering invisible the components of both the assemblages that win and the ones who loose, and making very difficult to explain such results without referring to the failure of ideal notions of Democracy and Politics.

b) The enrolment of the Democratic Deficit within the *antiporgramme* of those who disagree with particular political decisions affecting the city can be understood as a power reconfiguration strategy. I have defined the DD as the invisibilisation of the necessary tools to achieve political goals, resulting in the perception that a *formally* legitimate democratic process lacks *substantive* democratic legitimacy. I have suggested that local authorities can enrol the DD as an effective tool to produce a specific kind of City, namely one that works particularly well to allow the flow/fixation of capital to benefit current powerful actors. Conversely, for some groups of organised citizens the DD can become a tool that allows them to force their way into fora to which issues of their interest have been displaced. Furthermore, it also allows the interested public to bring new elements to the decision making process. This strategy effectively counteracts a popular trend in the political dynamic of European local governments in which citizens are not allowed to join certain discussions, in addition to some subjects not being discussed at all. In both cases, the presence of the DD is not accidental, but the result of a strategic decision.

c) Since it is in the space of the city that powerful actors materialise the tools they need to continue sustaining in time their economic, political and symbolic power, it is also

this materiality that is used by other actors to contest the asymmetries. Some urban struggles (such as the ones presented on the case studies) can be understood as attempts at dissolving the connections between the materiality of the city and capitalism, inequality, social injustice and exploitation, by developing instead connections with the ideas of communitarianism, equality and fairness. Even though political processes in western Europe are described as de-politicised by managerial practices, the city seems to retain the capacity to organise public discussions around its materiality, becoming a tool to reintroduce conflict were it seemed to be absent, and opening the doors of discussion fora that seemed to be unreachable. Gentrification, the mercantilisation of space, spatial justice and urban planning in general cannot be successfully discussed in public fora without being previously connected to situated political struggles that are organised around specific urban spaces.

d) As the cases of Madrid and Brussels show, the strategies to contest asymmetries of power in the process of organising public life seem to be more efficient when at least part of the struggle occurs within the realm of institutions. Despite the superficial nature of the participatory mechanisms available in both cities, Plateforme Marolles and Espacio Vecinal Arganzuela managed to politicise, via their use of urban space and their participation in institutional dynamics of civic involvement, subjects that had been previously absent from the political discussion in both cities. This finding appears to substantiate Chantal Mouffe's advice to continue trusting in democratic institutions, despite their recurrent failures.

Due to the microscopic focus of this research, the previous conclusions are limited in two ways. In the first place, the role of the Democratic Deficit was only accounted in relation to one of the many possible democratic tools involved in the performance of modern democratic politics, namely Urban Governance Networks. However, the DD is considered to be a burden in many other areas of Democracy. Several emergent phenomena like the consolidation of the European Union, the empowerment of transnational companies and the influence of organised crime, are complicating the panorama even more. In the second place, the critique of some of post-foundationalism's premises, articulating a considerable part of the theoretical component of this research, is confined to one of its versions: Erik Swyngedouw's work around Urban Planning. In this sense, the project of approaching other dimensions of the *post-political condition*'s influence over the organisation of collective life, with a much wider scope, remains open.

References

Books and Journal Articles

Barry, Andrew. *Political machines: Governing a technological society*. A&C Black, 2001.

Bekkers, Victor JJM, ed. *Governance and the democratic deficit: assessing the democratic legitimacy of governance practices*. Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2007.

Callon, Michel. "Some elements of a sociology of translation: domestication of the scallops and the fishermen of St. Brieuc Bay." *Power, action, and belief: A new sociology of knowledge* 32 (1986): 196-223.

Callon, Michel. "Techno-economic networks and irreversibility." *The Sociological Review* 38.S1 (1990): 132-161.

Corijn, Eric. "Urbanity as a political project: Towards post-national European cities." *Creative Economies, Creative Cities*. Springer Netherlands, 2009. 197-206.

Chhotray, Vasudha, and Gerry Stoker. "Governance theory and practice." *A Cross-Disciplinary Approach. Houndsmills: Palgrave Macmillan* (2009).

Dahl, Robert A. "The city in the future of democracy." *American Political Science Review* 61.04 (1967): 953-970.

Rubio, Fernando Domínguez, and Uriel Fogué. "Unfolding the political capacities of design."Forthcoming   in Yaneva, Albena & Zaera Polo Alejandro (eds.)+ *What is Cosmopolitcal Design?*, Ashgate: London. Forthcoming.

Ezrahi. Yaron, *The descent of Icarus : science and the transformation of contemporary democracy*. Harvard University Press, 1990.

Farias, Ignacio, and Thomas Bender, eds. *Urban assemblages: How actor-network theory changes urban studies*. Routledge, 2010.

Farías, Ignacio. "The politics of urban assemblages." *City* 15.3-4 (2011): 365-374.

Fernández, Cristina and Eva García. "Urbanismo inmobiliario, la especulación como forma hegemónica de hacer ciudad". XIII Coloquio Internacional de Geocrítica. El control del espacio y los espacios de control. Barcelona, 5-10.may.2014. Web, 7.Aug.2015.

Graham, Stephen, and Simon Marvin. *Splintering urbanism: networked infrastructures, technological mobilities and the urban condition*. Psychology Press, 2001.

Grange, K. "In search of the irreducible political moment: Or why planning shouldn't be too hung up on conflictuality". In Metzger J, Allmendinger, P. & Oosterlynck, S., (eds) *Planning Against the Political: Democratic Deficits in European Territorial Governance*. Routledge, 2015. p. 54-68.

Guggenheim, M. "Mutable immobiles: Building conversion as a problem of quasitechnologies". *Urban assemblages: How actor-network theory changes urban studies*, 2010. 161-178.

Hajer, Maarten. "Policy without polity? Policy analysis and the institutional void." *Policy sciences* 36.2 (2003): 175-195.

Harman, Graham. *Prince of networks: Bruno Latour and metaphysics*. Prahran, Vic.: Re. press, 2009., 2009.

Harman, Graham. *Bruno Latour: Reassembling the Political*. London: Pluto Press, 2014.

Harvey, Penelope "The materiality of state-effects: an ethnography of a road in the Peruvian Andes." en *State formation,* ed. Krohn-Hansen C et al. (London: Pluto. 2005).

Juris, Jeffrey S. *Networking futures: The movements against corporate globalization*. Duke University Press, 2008.

Jessop, B., "Post-Fordism and the State", in *Post-Fordism: A Reader* (ed A. Amin), Blackwell Publishers Ltd, Oxford, UK, 1994.

Jessop, Bob. "From micro-powers to governmentality: Foucault's work on statehood, state formation, statecraft and state power." *Political geography* 26.1 (2007): 34-40.

John, Peter. *Local Governance in Western Europe*. SAGE, 2001.

Knox, Paul L., and Peter J. Taylor. *World cities in a world-system*. Cambridge University Press, 1995.

Laclau, Ernesto, and Chantal Mouffe. *Hegemony and socialist strategy: Towards a radical democratic politics*. Verso, 2001.

Latour, B. Visualization and cognition. Knowledge and society, 6, (1986): 1-40.

Latour, Bruno. *Science in action: How to follow scientists and engineers through society*. Harvard university press, 1987.

Latour, Bruno. "Technology is society made durable." *The Sociological Review,* 38.S1 (1990): 103-131.

Latour, Bruno. *The pasteurization of France*. Harvard University Press, 1993.

Latour, Bruno. *Pandora's hope: essays on the reality of science studies*. Harvard University Press, 1999.

Latour, Bruno. *Reassembling the Social-An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory.* Oxford University Press, 2005.

Latour, Bruno. *Politics of nature*. Harvard University Press, 2009.

Latour, Bruno. *The making of law: an ethnography of the Conseil d'État*. Polity, 2010.

Latour, Bruno, and Steve Woolgar. *Laboratory life: The construction of scientific facts*. Princeton University Press, 2013.

Law, John, Arie Rip, and Michael Callon, eds. *Mapping the Dynamics of Science and Technology: Sociology Of Science in the Real World*. Macmillan, 1986.

Laurent, Brice. "Technologies of democracy: Experiments and demonstrations." *Science and engineering ethics* 17.4 (2011): 649-666.

Lefebvre, Henri. *The production of space*. Vol. 142. Blackwell: Oxford, 1991.

Levi-Faur, David. "Regulation and regulatory governance." *Handbook on the Politics of Regulation* (2011): 1-25.

Mouffe, Chantal. *The return of the political*. Vol. 8. Verso, 2005.

Mouffe, Chantal. *On the political*. Psychology Press, 2005b.

Mouffe, Chantal. *Agonistics: Thinking the world politically*. Verso Books, 2013.

Marres, Noortje Suzanne. "No issue, no public: Democratic deficits after the displacement of politics." Diss. Universiteit Van Amsterdam, 2005. UvA-DARE, Amsterdam, Web. 07.Aug.15.

Marres, Noortje. "The issues deserve more credit pragmatist contributions to the study of public involvement in controversy." *Social Studies of Science* 37.5 (2007): 759-780.

Marres, Noortje. *Material participation: technology, the environment and everyday publics*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.

Martens, Albert. "Ten years of expropriations and evictions in the Brussels North Quarter (1965-1975): what are the legacies today?." *Brussels Studies* 29.5 (2009): 1-16.

McFarlane, Colin. *Learning the city: knowledge and translocal assemblage*. Vol. 101. John Wiley & Sons, 2011.

McFarlane, Colin. "Assemblage and critical urbanism." *City* 15.2 (2011b): 204-224.

Metzger, Jonathan, Phil Allmendinger, and Stijn Oosterlynck. "The contested terrain of european territorial governance." *Planning Against the Political: Democratic Deficits in European Territorial Governance*, Routledge, 2015, p. 1 28.

Oosterlynck, Stijn, and Erik Swyngedouw. "Noise reduction: the postpolitical quandary of night flights at Brussels airport." *Environment and planning. A* 42.7 (2010): 1577.

Papadopoulos, Alex G. *Urban regimes and strategies: building Europe's central executive district in Brussels*. Vol. 239. University of Chicago Press, 1996.

Perec, Georges. *An attempt at Exhausting a place in Paris*. Wakefield Press, 2010.

Schmitt, Carl. *The concept of the political: Expanded edition*. University of Chicago Press, 2008.

Robinson, Laura, and Jeremy Schulz. "New field sites, new methods: new ethnographic opportunities." *The Handbook of Emergent Technologies in Social Research. Oxford University Press, Oxford* (2011): 180-198.

Schouten, Peer. "The materiality of state failure: Social contract theory, infrastructure and governmental power in Congo." *Millennium-Journal of International Studies* 41.3 (2013): 553-574.

Swyngedouw, Erik, and Guy Baeten. "Scaling the city: the political economy of'glocal'development-Brussels' conundrum." *European Planning Studies* 9.7 (2001): 827-849.

Swyngedouw, Erik, Frank Moulaert, and Arantxa Rodriguez. "Neoliberal urbanization in Europe: large-scale urban development projects and the new urban policy." *Antipode* 34.3 (2002): 542-577.

Swyngedouw, Erik. "Governance innovation and the citizen: the Janus face of governance-beyond-the-state." *Urban studies* 42.11 (2005): 1991-2006.

Swyngedouw, Erik. "Interrogating post-democratization: Reclaiming egalitarian political spaces." *Political Geography* 30.7 (2011): 370-380.

Swyngedouw, Erik. "The antinomies of the postpolitical city: in search of a democratic politics of environmental production." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 33.3 (2009): 601-620.

Swyngedouw, Erik. "Depoliticized environments: the end of nature, climate change and the post-political condition." *Royal Institute of Philosophy Supplement* 69 (2011b): 253-274.

Sørensen, Eva, and Jacob Torfing. *Theories of democratic network governance*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.

Truillot, Michel-Rolph. "The Anthropology of the State in the Age of Globalization." *Current Anthropology* 42.1 (2001): 137-139.

Van Criekingen, Mathieu. "Moving in/out of Brussels' historical core in the early 2000s: migration and the effects of gentrification." *Urban studies* 46.4 (2009): 825-848.

Weber, Max. *The Methodology of the Social Sciences*, ed. E. A. Shils and H. A. Finch, New York: Free Press. (1949)

Žižek, Slavoj. *The ticklish subject: The absent centre of political ontology.* Verso, 2000.

Online newspapers

Coudron, Yves "Goedkoop weekendparkeren in garages vanaf 2018". Nieuwsblad.be, 08 Nov. 2014. Web. August 2015.

Gonze, Nathan "Le parking Jeu de Balle a du plomb dans l'aile". La Libre. 21 Jan. 2015. Web. August 2015.

Le Soir "Le plan de mobilité à la Ville de Bruxelles a été adopté dans le chahut". Le Soir, 1 Dec. 2014. Web. August 2015

Moreno, Marisu "Pelotazo en Madrid: un macrocentro comercial al módico precio de 60,000 euros anuales". ElPlural.com, 23 Mar. 2015. Web. August 2015.

Nueva Tribuna "El Mercado de Legapi: "Una decision a espaldas de la ciudadanía, pero a costa de sus bolsillos". *España*. Nueva Tribuna, 31 Mar. 2015. Web. August 2015.

Rejón, Raul "Ana Botella rebaja 45 veces el alquiler de suelo público para un proyecto de centro comercial". *Actualidad.* ElDiario.es, 09 Apr. 2015. Web. Agust 2015.

Sanpakú, Vicente "El Ayuntamiento no quiere el EVA en el Mercado de Legazpi". *Diagonal Movimientos*. Diagonal, 25 Feb. 2015. Web. August 2015.

Documents

ARAU, BRAL, IEB. "Plan de mobilité du Pentagone: la Ville de Bruxelles doit respecter la loi." Bruxelles, 2015. Web. 24 August 2015.

< http://www.arau.org/au/8fbc45cc298a733be405fbd1e8aa48388d22bc4b.pdf>

INE. "Registro de Entidades Locales". Web. August 2015-08-25

< http://ssweb.seap.minhap.es/REL/frontend/inicio/municipios/all/all>

EVA. "Proyecto EVA". Madrid, 2015. Web. 24 August 2015.

<https://drive.google.com/folderview?id=0B3zVPJY9P257Sl9lMEJxdU1YQTQ&usp=drive_web>

EVA. "Algo maravilloso está sucediendo en Madrid, a pesar de Madrid". Madrid, 2015. Web. 24 August 2015.

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1mntg3ukg5mW9xj-F6GFimiUpa5I5oGUke2i15N4Eq0I/edit>

EVA. "Alegaciones". Madrid, 2015. Web. 24 August 2015.

< https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B3zVPJY9P257RkhJREJ1Q3NXU2M/view>

Plateforme Marolles "Pétition de classement" Bruxelles, 2015. Web. August 2015.

<http://www.plateforme-marolles.be/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/dossier-de-classement.pdf>

Ville de Bruxelles. *Un nouveau Coeur pour Bruxelles*. Bruxelles, Belgium. Web. 24 August 2015.

<http://www.bruxelles.be/dwnld/95183420/140131%20-%20Un%20nouveau%20coeur%20pour%20Bruxelles.pdf>

Ville de Bruxelles-b. *Plans communaux de Mobilité*. Bruxelles, Belgium. Web. 24 August 2015.

<http://www.bruxellesmobilite.irisnet.be/articles/la-mobilite-de-demain/plan-communaux-de-mobilite>

Ville de Bruxelles(b). *Plans communaux de Mobilité*. Bruxelles, Belgium. Web. 24 August 2015.

Ville de Bruxelles-c. *Participer au réaménagement des places et boulevards du centre*. Bruxelles, Belgium. Web. 25 August 2015.

< http://www.bruxelles.be/artdet.cfm?id=8435>

Ville de Bruxelles-d. *Participation dans le cadre du project de réaménagement des boulevards du centre de la Ville de Bruxelles*. Bruxelles, Belgium. Web. 25 August 2015.

<http://www.bruxelles.be/dwnld/13813186/2015-01-15%20Boulevards%20Centre%20-%20Rapport%201re%20phase.pdf>

Media Interviews

Ángel Lomas, Santiago López, Sacri García:

Unión de Radios Libres y Comunitarias de Madrid. "Retransmisión de la jornada de puertas abiertas de EVA (Espacio Vecinal Arganzuela). Online Audio Resource. *URCM*. 14 Mar. 2015. Web. August 2015

Ignacio Murgi, Antonio Abueitah:

Canal 33. "Buscamos alcalde, tertulia en llamas y Federación regional". Online Videoclip. *YouTube*. 12 Nov. 2014. Web. 24 August 2015.

Rafael Córdoba, Guillermo Martínez:

Espacio Vecinal Arganzuela. "¿Quién hace la ciudad?". Online Videoclip. *YouTube*. 29 Mar. 2015. Web. 24 August 2015.

Facebook

Nagy, Marie. "Lettre au Ministre-Président pour excercer mon droit de contrôle au Conseil Communal de la Ville de Bruxelles". 3 Mar. 2015. 31 August 2015.

<https://www..com/notes/marie-nagy/lettre-au-ministre-pr%C3%A9sident-pour-excercer-mon-droit-de-contr%C3%B4le-au-conseil-comm/10153077300679675>

No Parking Jeu de Balle!!!!! 31 August 2015.

< https://www.facebook.com/groups/platformarollen/>

David Votre Chazam. 20 November 2014. Web. 31 August 2015.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/platformarollen/permalink/752514678163490>

Gwen Breës. 28 November 2014. Web. 31 August 2015.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/platformarollen/757494900998801/>

Dominique Page. 2 December 2014. Web. 31 August 2015.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/platformarollen/permalink/759628297452128/>

Isabelle Marchal. 2 December 2014. Web. 31 August 2015.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/platformarollen/permalink/759791064102518/>

David Courier. 9 December 2014. Web. 31 August 2015

< https://www.facebook.com/david.courier/posts/10152836181843467>

David Marolito. 9 December 2014. Web. 31 August 2015.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/platformarollen/permalink/810582522356705/>

Briggitte Salmon. 22 December 2014. Web. 31 August 2015.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/platformarollen/permalink/810582522356705/>

Isabelle Marchal-b. 24 February 2015. Web. 31 August 2015.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/platformarollen/permalink/810582522356705/>

Laws

Constitución Española. Web. August 2015.

< http://www.senado.es/web/conocersenado/normas/constitucion/index.html>

Ley 7/1985, de 2 de abril, reguladora de las bases del régimen local (LRBRL). Web. August 2015.

< http://noticias.juridicas.com/base_datos/Admin/l7-1985.html>

Ley 30/1992, de 26 de Noviembre, de Régimen Jurídico de las Administraciones Públicas y del Procedimiento Administrativo Común (LRJAPPAC). Web. August 2015.

< http://www.boe.es/buscar/act.php?id=BOE-A-1992-26318>

Ley 13/2003, de 23 de Mayo, Reguladora del Contrato de Concesión de Obras Públicas (LRCCOP). Web. August 2015.

< http://noticias.juridicas.com/base_datos/Admin/l13-2003.html>

Ordonnance Instituant un Cadre en Matière de planfication de la mobilité et modifiant diverses dispositions ayant un impact en matière de mobilité. Web. August 2015.

<http://www.ejustice.just.fgov.be/cgi_loi/loi_a1.pl?sql=(text%20contains%20(%27%27))&language=fr&rech=1&tri=dd%20AS%20RANK&value=&table_name=loi&F=&cn=2013072605&caller=image_a1&fromtab=loi&la=F>

Reglamento Orgánico de los Municipios de la Comunidad de Madrid (ROMCM). Web. August 2015.

<http://www.madrid.es/UnidadesDescentralizadas/PerfilContratante/Contenidos/Fase1/Ficheros/ANM2005_8.pdf>

Maps from Madrid and Brussels from **maps.stamen.com**

No actant was harmed during the writing of this thesis.

Annex: Maps of Madrid and Brussels

Location of the Legazpi Market in Madrid

Location of Place du Jeu de Balle in Brussels