



Producción de Espacio Público [X] Participación Ciudadana

El proyecto de espacio público resultado de procesos de participación ciudadana

Samuel Esteban Padilla Llano



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PUBLIC SPACE PRODUCTION [X] CITIZENS PARTICIPATION

The public space project as a result of citizens participation

Author

Samuel Esteban Padilla Llano

Director:

Antonio Remesar Betlloch

FACULTY OF FINE ARTS - UNIVERSITAT BARCELONA

PHD. PROGRAM IN PUBLIC SPACE AND URBAN REGENERATION. ART, THEORY AND
HERITAGE CONSERVATION

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ABSTRACT

Public participation, that concept so frequently elevated and embellished in the rhetoric of urban thinking, has been demanded by some and corrupted by others, that it is difficult to appreciate its real purpose despite the obvious syntactic meaning of the two words.

Public space, an essential element in people's life that, the democratic quality, the social justice, and urban equality conditions in communities and cities through its physical, spatial, symbolic and representative conditions.

In the context of the unstoppable globalization that moves the management and policy making in cities, the production of public space has become a way in which cities can position themselves as references/models, seeking not only outside recognition but also the development in multiple levels and dimensions inside the city. However, the traditional practices of public space production do not result always effective to improve the citizens quality of life and maintain and equilibrium between growth and citizens' expectations, and sometimes result in social and urban conflicts.

Now, Could a city be competitive if designed including citizens participation?, To what extent a "participative city" can be consolidated as attractive without detriment to locals' interest?, In what manner public space projects can consider citizen's participation without falling in superficial exercises of consulting and informing users? How and when is it effective to consider citizen's participation? and to that extent, Is the presumable success of these interventions consistent with the experience and utilization of space? Or instead was it simply part of the collective dialogue of promoting participatory processes and public space projects? Could the participative design of the public space projects be the answer for achieving socially just cities, guaranteeing the right to a city and holding citizens accountable for shaping it.

All the matters revolve around the conceptual basis of a specific way of making the city: The citizen's participation as a foundation of relationships between the institutional framework of the State, the scope of urban professionals and citizens.

In this thesis the production of public space is approached from the perspective of citizen's participation in the design process, starting with the premise that designing public space could become in an unquestionable opportunity to value the role of citizens and assert the guiding principles of democracy in the city. Thus, an opportunity to make the process of making city a collective and inclusive process, in which inclusion is the key to the realization of the projects, and to consolidate the identity with the place and the involvement level of citizens with respect to the space in which their life is shared with others. In short, a assurance for socially sustainable, democratic, equitable and fair cities.

Keywords: *participatory design, project, process, public space, democracy, citizen participation, production city.*

5. CONCLUSIONS: *Towards the improvement of the participatory project.*

Throughout this work, there have been two concepts that have structured the theoretical discussion: citizen participation and public space as place, objective and work object within the participatory processes. Two realities that are often separated, at least in much of urban production processes.

The public space is today one of the elements that contribute to ensuring the quality of urban life. Its public status grants citizens freedom to act and interact democratically with it, in correspondence with other citizens, to decide, promote and safeguard issues related to equity, social justice and the urban balance in all its dimensions. Public space today plays an important role in the citizen's debate, mainly with respect to its political connotations, inasmuch as the exercise of citizenship and the vindication of the right to the city, arise from and for the public space¹.

However, the paradox of the rapid urban development, regeneration and production of representative public spaces in many cities, since the end of the 20th Century and even today, has been precisely that public space emerges fundamentally as a formal and aesthetic problem for the beautification of cities, but in many occasions, decontextualized and distant from the city and community life. And this, despite the fact that since then, most of the documents, "magnas letters" and urban instruments that today still are in use, existed. However these instruments, that are the basis for today's urban thinking, do not ensure the public space as a result of a work in which all stakeholders (mainly population) have been able to influence and intervene in the decision-making. Unfortunately, as we have seen in many examples, these

¹*"The quality of the public space is a fundamental test to assess citizen democracy" (Borja 2013, p. 112). Democracy in the city is much more than to include the citizens' vote, both in political or governmental election scenarios, as in decision scenarios (claiming to be participatory) around any topic of public character. "Is the public space where the advances and setbacks of democracy are expressed, both in its political dimensions as well as the social and cultural ones. (...) in which solidarity weaves it self, and where conflict arises, where demands emerge and aspirations are expressed and contrasted with public policies and private initiatives. And it is in the public space where the exclusion-inclusion effects of the current urban dynamics are visible, both, if present or absent". (Borja 2013, p. 112). The democratic quality of a city is assessed within the system of relationships between urban actors, in order to manage, think and to decide the way to inhabit and live together with others. Public space is in this sense, the key element to examine the system of relations between the different sectors of society involved in the production of the city.*

statements are, to a large extent, in a dimension merely theoretical (conceptual, normative or instrumental).

On the other hand, the citizen participation concept appears, as flattered as it can be, despite its confused and dehumanized use both, in political speeches and promises², as well as in the exercise of many disciplines that play an important role in the production of the city processes.

20 years ago, Marchioni (1994) proposed that participation had become a matter of fashion, but been as used as it has been, is precisely what makes us suspect that it is happening the opposite: a low confidence in the shared work between all stakeholders, institutions of public administration, citizen groups and technical ones (professional, technical or academic) who undertake processes or lead interactive dynamics around the different projects.

Participation should not be understood today, as fashionable way in the management of cities. It has to be seen instead as an everyday life activity, a natural act in the common life in common with others that pursues the collective welfare. Today participation is involved in and for almost everything, but there are actually few times in which there is real citizens participation.

As we have seen through some of the cases and examples developed in this research, there is an inconsistency between what the theory on the city provides for the development of citizenship, under the principles of the citizens' rights (who are by essence, human rights) and between the practices of participation. We see how often, processes that are promoted as inclusive and far-sighted as collective work, end up being, by omission, ignorance, inexperience and even despotism, experiences that hide hierarchies of power to make decisions on public space projects.

Accordingly with all that, what should be the liability that each stakeholder from the participatory process must have, in order to ensure that these processes become valid on leading consistent projects with the desires of the community involved? To answer this question, we should start from an ethical principle within each individual. This means many things at the same time (Brandão, 2005, 2014).

On the one hand, some stakeholders (from the public administration, the private and third sectors, local or not entities and local leaders) frequently assume and incorporated into processes and decisions about projects, aspects that they believe the population requires or need. These lead them to think that it is enough when talking about citizen participation. In this sense, one cannot considered citizen participation for example a door-to-door survey exercise, in which one ask the neighbours about a certain intervention or action. It can be a useful tool in the process, but by itself, does not guarantee full participation by the citizens about what wonders. Citizens' participation requires debate, it feeds on it and it is from the discussion with others, that the proposals, projects and actions, can be build, decide and concretise towards the benefit of all.

² It is fashionable for public administrations, because it allows them a strategy to generate confidence and credibility. Therefore, it is not surprising to appreciate that during election campaigns, the political groups in charge of the city, end up by assigning budgets and invest in projects that come from social demands as well as from civil society (especially the "participatory" ones) that appear to be of rapid implementation and evident impact on the urban context, as effective campaign banners.

As for professionals, that group of citizens with a specific knowledge which approaches, supports, promotes, or coordinates processes of interaction among the community, servicing with their technical or scientific knowledge, they can lose their worth, when they end up using "participatory" methodologies which in essence are covert forms (conscious or unconscious) handling to lead a particular type of result, trying to persuade them of its particularities and of the fact that the community has been taken into account in the decision-making. These results probably being very different to that what the community would conceived in other actual citizen participation scenarios.

In terms of people being benefit in a direct way by the participatory process and the results derived from it, we can point out that in the current context, citizen's demand for participation on issues that are vital to their individual and collective life, but not always find the channels or the institutional/legal support to channel their movements. These issues that move them, become the way to be and feel citizens, trying to impinge on traditional channels that are restrictive and often are only used to make demands, claims, proposals or claims to the public administrations, as those in charge of managing it (Borja, 2013, p.214 - p.274). Those await to be remedied or to be condemned to oblivion by the public administrations.

It is essential to transcend the traditional scheme of representation and achieve an urban resource management and planning of cities (especially the public space), not only from the urban stakeholders liaison systems as top-down relations, but also horizontally, to achieve more comprehensive effects in the processes of urban regeneration, and especially, in the constant search to improve the quality of life within communities through the production of public space, (Remesar, N., et al, 2011).

In many cases, alternatives come by non-institutional actors motivated by solving the problems. Often as volunteers, they assume the leadership of participatory processes and act as mediators facing the institutions involved. We have already mentioned what are flaws and what are the strengths that are present in these work scenarios. Concerning them, we have also expressed the importance of shifting this mediation roll (conflict) that is present in a large sum of cases³, to a facilitation one (processes), (Remesar, A 2015).

It is essential to highlight the importance of the community been always the protagonist of all participatory processes. They will never have to be under shadowed in the conquest of these processes. We have also discussed what happens when local managers that coordinate processes within their own communities, because of the lack of means or technical and methodological resources end up dislocating processes or undermine them, This often happens especially when these actors base their actions on personal liaisons with the institutions or some benefactors (public or private)), and at the end all they want to achieve are particular benefits.

This research has tackled the project of public space from the perspective of citizen participation and has defended the importance that it has been elaborated throughout the

³ The primary role of these actors is to "provide methodological and instrumental resources that make possible a different public space analysis. An analysis that will be the basis for, when deemed appropriate, neighbors to demand or solid arguments for the discussion with technics. It will also be the basis for ideas that may be conducted through different procedures"(Remesar, a., Vidal, T., 2004, p.60).

collective construction of ideas⁴. We have spoken about the “joint action” (Duarte, 2000, p.112), that does not divide or is skewed in favour of any actor in the process⁵. Such common action defined through the participatory design as a working methodology that is effective to raise values such as identity and appropriation, both in the project of public space as in its subsequent materialization and incorporation into the citizens daily life of citizens and their local and community dynamics.

From this perspective, it is compelled to categorically renounce to canonical design (often scope of disciplines such as architecture, design, engineering, art, landscaping, etc.), and locate it in new schemes that depart from the symbiosis between technical knowledge and the invaluable people knowledge from living and using the space in their daily lives. Although often this way to make public space and by extension the city, is accused of being against the traditional vocation of disciplines related to the design of urban projects. An accusation that is justified referring to the apparent absence of rigorosity in formal, aesthetic, spatial and other aspects that define and structure the exercise of designing the project of public space (the same happens in other scales: the urban project and the architectural project), through the implementation of various design manuals that guide the city intervention.

Similarly, these are also accused to be purely sociological or assistance exercises with the local population, subtracting them value to the scope, capabilities and (creative) skills or potential that may exist in these processes both in the field of the formalization and implementation of projects that derive from them, as well as the impact on the urban context in which they emerge. Participative public space projects do not seek sacrificing aesthetics or formal explorations. Traditionally good public space usually aim to appear in design magazines as great formal design, but it is the understanding that public space is much more than a postcard for the citizen what is vital for successful projects. It is the revitalisation of social relations, of community life, which, ultimately, symbolizes what we have understood as good governance in the city as well as the respect for democratic rights.

Assuming the complexity that is the urban project in the city (Busquets, et al., 1999), we also should be clear that this is not the result of the work of just one area of knowledge. The project requires a response resulting from heterogeneity of knowledge to provide solutions to the various issues that are established as objectives of the processes⁶ (Aguas, 2014). As well, the inclusion of a diversified group of population, to ensure the coverage of all perspectives and achieve more appropriate projects to the community.

From this perspective, public space must be the result of a process of what is understood as co-production, involving professional actors and non-professionals (from various disciplines and sectors of society), political actors (public administration), social actors (local community leaders and volunteers), and the population. In this regard, we refer to the co-production of

⁴ When talking about collective work, it is difficult to clarify where are the liability boundaries from all involved. Often these collaborative works have implied a notion of authorship that is not collective. Real citizen participation blurs the idea of individual authorship, i.e. everything is all, therefore made by all, built between all.

⁵ As we have already mentioned, citizens refer to the population, public administration, organizations of the third sector, private and public sector, professionals, technicians and other actors with an interest in the project.

⁶ However, it is important that this common ground that is generated among different knowledge, does not constitute as a new "closed domain, as a new discipline - nor a human geophysics, nor anthropology of space, nor urban ecology, nor a social ethics or a sociology of identity, nor political theory of equality... (Brandão, 2014, p.66).

the public space as the emergence of a co-idea element, co-designed, co-intervened, co-materialized, or co-managed. The "CO" in this sense, implies a notion of shared work, a distributed workload between the stakeholders linked to the process and decisions making in a compelled collective way⁷

Particularly, Aguas (2014) points out that the co-design allows users, in this case the public space, to participate in the processes of elaboration of the project through direct interaction with the project design team. From this perspective, it is assumed that for these processes, the professional actors place in value the contributions, ideas and creative skills of citizens, in search of the optimal formal alternatives that respond to the problems that the project requires to solve (Aguas, 2014, p.54).

It is not enough to involve the population in the design stage, it is also required from them a positive and creative attitude to ensure the debate at the same level as professionals, technicians (and public administration) as expert users. Therefore, professionals, technicians and others, have to provide the means and tools that let people be able to develop on their own ideas and represent them through the most suitable media and adapted for each particular situation.

It is fundamental the existence of channels, instruments, tools and technicians, at the institutional level -where many of these processes are organised- in order to facilitate scenarios for the decision-making. But, who must generate them? Usually those are the task of public institutions or technical teams. However, it is necessary that they be drawn as a systematized result from the production processes practice, exceeding the regulatory rigor, which often overtakes and determines the collective decisions. They must be flexible (but not without structure) in order to be able to adjust to dissimilar social, economic, cultural, politic situations and contexts. Important is to flexibility so not to convert these processes in fixed instructions or recipes of how to make the city and public space.

All these allusions to the "CO" aim to value the creativity of all stakeholders in the process. The creative process begins with the identification of the problem and the compilation of all proposals and ideas of the stakeholders. Each of them acts as a producer of information (from the research, the manufacture of documents of related issues as well as the social and urban contexts), functioning as basis to undertake the design of the public space project.

For this reason, it is essential to identify as quickly as possible, the abilities and skills of each player in order to represent ideas, promoting the more effective ones for the objectives achievement. What is being sought is to find the full potential of each actor and place all potentials at the service of the creative process of the project. Then, in the discussion and analysis phases and with the entire material base for the project ideas, a program and a guidance strategy for designing the project are developed.

⁷ From this co-production of the public space perspective, is generated automatically a collective value. At the same time, a collective good for all participants produced (Bovaird, 2013). But beyond that, the citizen power to face and promote actions that modify and enhance urban life is established and improved. This translates into empowerment both within the project and the processes by which it becomes a reality (Remesar,A; Salas, 2014), a fact that will maintain and ensure the quality of the results derived from these processes, both in time and in space. In all these citizen participation processes what becomes critical is the empowerment of the population involved in all aspects that concern and contribute to the objectives achievement.

It is essential to understand that the fact that a participatory process results successful, does not mean that the followed strategy can be extrapolated to other contexts or projects. Processes are the response to the context (social, urban, economic, cultural, etc.) in which they emerge. It is also important to be careful with what is normally considered as good urban practices, when they end up being copies of processes and strategies that are imposed, decontextualized and possibly lead to disastrous experiences. This manifest danger, which consists of replicating methodologies and experiences of participation, without taking into account the context in which it is intended to act, is likely to deliver unwanted projects that lack direct benefits to the target population group.

Two groups of methodologies, techniques and tools for participation are important to consider: the first group corresponds to those resulting from experience, the preconceived ones, the ones that already have been evaluated, through real processes, allowing us to build knowledge from them. Its universal use will be effective provided that they are flexible and adapted to the conditions of the local context (including stakeholders). The second group is consisted of those that emerge from the actual process. The ones that act from the local scope, that are, therefore, valid only within the specific dynamics of the project. It is essential, for this matter that participatory processes begin with a process of "self-awareness", both of the actors involved, as well as of the problems and conditions that define the goals to draw and based on that, structuring the process in all the necessary fields.

Throughout this research, we have discussed about the participation processes and the importance that citizen participation has in the production of public space, in particular in the elaboration of the project of public space. We consider as central the cases of: Avenida Diagonal redesign and Baró de Viver participatory process, both the city of Barcelona. Two process, two scales, two types of projects that without a doubt will help us to identify and illustrate all aspects that contribute, sort or disrupt the processes of citizen participation in the field of the production of public space. These two cases are joined by a series of projects and examples of processes in the fields of the production of public space and citizen participation, which have allowed structuring the discussion. We emphasize within all of these examples, the case of Freguesia de Marvila in Lisbon (Portugal), which is presented as an opportunity to incorporate the practice of citizen participation in urban transformation, from interventions that assist the landscape change and urban image improving the place perception both, inside and outside the territory.

Now, from all these cases and examples studied in this thesis arise the following questions: How can we know if a participatory process is or has been suitable? How can we verify if the result of a process is consistent with the process itself and the initial objectives? "A participatory process is a sequence of participatory actions carried out over a period of time, involving social and institutional agents in order to include citizens in the development of public policy" (Parés, et al, 2012, p.12); either for what concerns us, of a public space project. Are these participatory actions correct? How do stakeholders execute their roles? How to improve it? Those are just some of the questions that we could highlight from the structuring, development and outcomes of these processes.

Citizen participation, as a mechanism implemented in the production of public space, can be sorted in three dimensions: structure, process and results. Structure defines organs, channels,

rules and institutions facilitating the participation exercise. Process is a sequence of events in which the different actors intervene to produce a certain result, which includes a methodology, a set of appropriate tools and instruments and involves training and capacity building of the population. Result is a concrete matter in terms of purpose and ultimate goal, measurable, achievable, and something that will help to change the reality on that willing to intervene (Pindado, 2009, p.33). In this order of ideas, evaluation of the project of public space has to deal with these three dimensions: structure, process and result, with each of the variables that compose them.

But, what do we mean with evaluate? The following ideas are an attempt to bring clarity to what we mean by evaluation and what is its importance in the production of public space processes.

The evaluation is "a systematic process of information gathering oriented to the making of judgments of value based on an established criteria" (Jorba, L.; Marti, J.; Pairs, M., 2007, p.10), criteria that is determined by the specific type of objectives and the extent expected to achieve with the participatory process. To this extent, the assessment goes beyond a generic value attribution ("I like" or "dislike", "feel good" or "seems wrong"), being, on the one hand, a set of previous criteria from which to conduct this evaluation (avoiding to refer only to the most visible and recent aspects of the process) and, on the other hand, a systematic strategy in order to obtain and analyse the relevant information in each case. So, if we don't only want rating, but to evaluate, it's required a prior planning that orients on what see, where to see and how to see (Jorba, et al, 2007, p.10).⁸

In the field of the public space project the evaluation is a lot more than a mere appreciative exercise. Evaluation must aim to answer a series of questions related to different aspects of the process and the project: concerning structural aspects of the participative dynamics as well as aspects of the spatial project design. Evaluation raises a technical rigor according to an established criteria defined in the planning process. To evaluate all instruments and tools implemented, to assess the processes timing, the correlation between the objectives and the results, the scenarios and the feasible channels, are some examples. Evaluation normally seeks to give an opinion about what is studied, to pose a specific critique, or to qualify what occurs or will occur within the processes.

In this context, evaluate is to evidence the needed to find the best way to city and public space making. We would not be talking of evaluation, if we did not know that it is almost natural that through experience and the development of processes, one can learn and obtain in order to improve and optimize processes. All this, in a constant search for quality in the process, and by extension, in the formal and non-formal results.

Although it is within the evaluation exercise, to value, on the other hand, does not focus in judgements or the quantification of achievements and results; instead, from a qualitative

⁸ This position opens the debate on the difference between value and evaluate. To value is not exactly as to evaluate. Just to clarify terms, it is necessary to understand what the action of value and evaluation is. Value has to do directly with an appreciative exercise and worthy opinion of something or someone, in contrast to evaluate, having to do directly with mark or calculate the value of something under specific criteria and variables. Despite the obvious confusion that can arise between the two terms, we can find the difference between them in how each one is executed. The first one is subjective depending on who makes the assessment, in contrast to the second one, seeking a concrete and precise data that realize the value of something that is evaluated. However, we should be clear on the fact that the valuation is intrinsic to the evaluation.

perspective, it focuses on the situation analysis, describing how the processes are and have been, and questioning certain aspects on what is observed and studied, in order to identified subjects for debate. To valuate is the starting point, or one of the components of the evaluation of any public space project.

That said, the success of participatory processes is based on the effective involvement of each stakeholder and the established liaisons for the decision making and designing of projects. Based on that, it is necessary that the evaluation take into account each of the stakeholders involved, since it will allow to have a global outlook and will contribute to a more transparent and effective evaluation exercise. Stakeholders must be present from the first moment when all aspects of evaluation are defined, as well as the criteria and indicators to take into account. As well, they must be present until the moment for judgments and the definition of improvement strategies, both for the process and the subsequent phases, once the results are ready.

Now, why to evaluate? Why is it important to evaluate participatory processes aiming the production of public space?

Well, when planning processes of citizen participation in the field of urban design as well as in many other areas of life in the cities, is set a series of objectives to obtain results that, in general, are aiming to the transformation of an urban reality and the improvement of the conditions of liveability of common urban spaces. But, as we can see, probably much of these objectives are not always achieved, or in many cases, are replaced by others that have received greater emphasis⁹.

As we have also seen, many of these processes take more time than planned, because of multiple factors, which can be external or internal to the process, resulting in the delay of the expected results. Often this failure is the product of a weak organizational structure, of the improper use of the techniques, methodologies and tools to link to the population, of the lack of coordination among the different actors, of the prioritization of a particular interest over the collective, of the lack of resources (either economic or human), of the lack of means of production, either, of the lack of necessary channels to optimize processes.

There are citizen participation processes that constitute examples of good practice in the field of urban design. The set of elements, tools or methodologies, as well as the dynamics between actors, etc., which have succeeded in the achievement of its objectives and have obtained the expected results, are also important aspects for evaluation.

The above sum leads us to consider the following: the evaluation not only has to do with negative aspects, nor much less is something applicable only to unsuccessful projects or processes. Evaluation in general, can contribute to highlight aspects that are key to the continuity, comprehensiveness, efficiency, and why not, the success, both of processes and outcomes. In this sense, "evaluation, therefore, is not limited to assess whether a participatory

⁹ Changes that are not always well received by the population, since in some cases, the project distorts completely from what was initially wanted. Problems are not always at the time of design and realization of the project, but, although the participatory process reaches a stage of realization of the ideas, it may not represent the collective interests of the population in general or of some of the actors involved in the process. It can also be that the results of the implementation of a participatory tool are not binding, and consequently, stakeholders do not identify with the project.

process has been well or badly done, but it aims to analyse, from a default strategy, the degree of compliance with predetermined criteria" (Parés, et al, 2012, p.12).

According to this, it is important that the coincidence of the urban actors: administration, citizenship and technicians, in these collective construction scenarios, where is also evaluated the conceptual and instrumental ability to managing, pushing and promoting interventions that the city and the inhabitants need to establish a consistent and fair quality of life dimension.

On the other hand, as we have seen, there are many factors that can influence the development of a citizen's participation process, but identifying which aspect has frustrated the process and where, is an obstacle for resuming or saving the processes. In this sense, the evaluation serves to delve into the processes, making an x-ray of them and identifying what has caused such failure and from that decide the alternatives of the process.

Now, who evaluates and at which moment of the processes should be evaluated? To which actors of the process corresponds this work/role? Should it be an actor external or internal to the process?

It is important to ask us who will make this evaluation. One wonders if the processes may need specific actors responsible for the evaluation, or instead, all stakeholders in the process should act as evaluation agents (in this case one should be thinking on evaluation training), or there should be external evaluators. This leads us to consider the role of the evaluator as a concept and as an actor within the project of public space processes.

In this regard, we believe that the evaluation must necessarily be a participatory exercise. Judgments of value on citizen participation processes from a single perspective or look may not be released. Generally, the role of the evaluator is given from a unique perspective that often is exogenous, both from the process as well as from the context of projects and usually focuses on formal (tangible) results. Formal refers to the built environment and must necessarily be contrasted with all the aspects that may only be perceived by belonging to all the scenarios generated by the process: participatory dynamics, interaction and system of liaisons between actors and the decisions and actions that gradually occur (or partially) within the processes timeline.

However, it is important to know what is to be evaluated and how will the process be, defining the means and resources required to do so. If we consider that the evaluation should begin with the participatory process, we must then assume that the evaluation is one of the components that are part of the participatory process planning. When the initial objectives of the process are plotted, the ones related to the evaluation should be included, as well as the way in which this exercise will be gradually feeding the decision-making dynamics among actors. From this perspective, we can ensure the continued collective reflection on both the processes and the decisions concerning the design of the project of public space. This can proceed afterwards, when the project is a real part of the city.

As we see, evaluation as an essential part of the participatory processes must start at the same time as the stakeholders' dynamics, in order to ensure that the resolution of conflicts and adverse situations within the process can be stopped in time and do not destroy the objectives or the search for concrete results. Evaluation during the process, also contributes to check

strategies and examine the positive decisions that can be enhanced in the process to achieve quality results regarding the objectives. Different from the (traditional) ex-post evaluation; where the emphasis is in the correlation between the public space project and the built space. Often when the concrete project starts, it suffers a series of changes due to different factors, either budgetary, technical, or other nature that may be related to the actors' decision-making or are the result of a particular action.

During the process quality is evaluated (as an indicator of success). Through spatial dimension and built environment dimension as well, one can evaluate those aspects (tangibles and intangibles) that represent an improvement in the quality of people's lives. About the question of the scale in the projects, although it determines one or another type of transformation, development or urban regeneration, what actually reverses directly on the quality of life of the population, is the way in which these projects are related to them, from the conception as a problem to solve, to achieve its materialization -passing through its design-.

Public spaces produced through citizen participation, is assumed as a tangible result within the decision-making processes. However, these processes also produce another set of results which are considered as intangible, related the impact that citizen participation has in the urban and social context where they are developed and, in particular, the direct impact on people's lives. Tangible results refer, in the case of the public space project, to constructed project, the built environment. From these two distinctions, evaluation should focus from different criteria. First based on the interaction between actors and the participatory process organization, and second, based on spatial dimension and order, referring to the relation between the designed and materialized project with people's experiential dynamics.

On the other hand, evaluation refers indirectly to the positive and/or negative factors that allow establishing any analysis. It refers to quality, which, in this context, refers directly to the urban design aspects that determine that a space is set up properly in relation to the technical guidelines and the collective interests of the actors involved in the creative process (necessarily participatory); adding as well the analysis of the influence that the project of public space has in the urban life and in the social context in which it arises¹⁰.

From this concept of quality (good design¹¹) and what is understood as good practices in the field of urban design and citizen participation, emerge issues as: How can be evaluated and/or value [participatory] public space project? or what would be those essential criteria for an evaluation of the project, from a processes and results perspective?

We insist that the evaluation contributes to improve the quality of processes, and by extension, the results. It also serves to verify if these results correspond to the initial objectives, to incorporate changes and modifications in the process organizational systems and the liaison system and the type of actors who can engage in a determined phase or phases of the

¹⁰ The question of quality turns out to be "a weak concept and which is not defined properly. Two basic criteria to define it. First, the emotional satisfaction that ensures that it exists when the object or space is capable of transmitting and generating an emotional involvement to its consumer or user. The second focuses on the fulfillment of previously defined requirements (standards), as the audits style. Emotion and standard, contradictory aspects" (Remesar, 2008, p.97).

¹¹ Now well, "by good design of public space one understand that design that serves to its objective, is sustainable, efficient, coherent and flexible, corresponds to the expectations and needs of users and provides suitable spaces to be appropriate, care and use by the communities" (Brandão, 2002, p. 17).

processes. Also, in the built environment, to verify regulatory/technical aspects that makes the spaces suitable for everyone.

And what is important to evaluate? Where the view should be centred? In the project design (co-design) tools, techniques and implemented strategies are evaluated. These in order to training non expert actors in the urban project design, task that the facilitators (as these fields experts) should perform to ensure the debate, discussion and collective construction (co-creation) of ideas and proposals which finally, will lead to the realization of the final public space project.

In the evaluation of tools and techniques for the design of the project, should be taken into account those who may be "unprecedented" and that may have been provided by any of the actors involved in the process, especially the population through their popular knowledge, as an input or as criteria for the design.

Liaisons between stakeholders can also be evaluate as well as the type of activities and dynamics that are more effective with one or another type of liaison, as a contribution to the project design process and as a contribution to its process of decision-making.

Material resources can be evaluated as well, especially in processes that are committed to the projects implementation using local labour. We have seen how in many cases, despite the fact that public space projects are the result of participatory processes (taking collective decisions between local or non-local actors), the material elements for their implementation and the means of production, are not the most efficient or the most appropriate to ensure the success of the interventions both in time and space (and built environment).

Similarly, issues of social order that are not directly related to the design process can be evaluated. Despite their indirect relation, can affect in terms of physical space, use, care, maintenance and appropriation in the long and short terms. We refer, for example, to armed conflicts, crime, vandalism, and/or "terrorism" which, ultimately, can pervert the goals that were generated and created by such projects and, therefore, disrupt social, communal and civic values that are generated within these participatory processes.

So then, if one wants to evaluate if a specific public space contributes to improve the life of a particular community, the only way cannot be the application of customer satisfaction surveys (to users) or the use of other tools of observation, because these in many ways are biased tools that work for specific issues such as to quantify aspects related to citizens perception on space. These should complement the evaluation exercise, but if they are used as the unique evaluation methodology, will hardly have a complete vision of the project and the production process behind it.

Likewise, we have found tools for space and built environment evaluation linked to the diversified civic dynamics that occur in them. Some of these have been implemented and verified in different geographical contexts. In this sense, there are many associations, agencies and collective groups that willing to defend a quality and for all public space with quality, implement, promote and develop assessment exercises, creating documents that can serve as material based on the development of urban projects and community (or participatory) processes. These in order to generating more friendly cities for their communities, for the

environment, for economy, and many other aspects that today focus on the processes of production of cities. But these types of tools have to be contextualized and not be used as a checklist of activities and processes actions.

Now, how should this evaluation be done? In this sense, what variables or criteria are essential to assess?

The difficulty in generating a standard tool/methodology of evaluation for the processes of production of public space [operated by] citizen participation lies in that these processes depend necessarily on the cultural, economic, urban and social contexts where the stakeholders are involved. For this reason, we believe that the evaluation exercise should be flexible and that methodologies should emerge from the same process, although they incorporate universal and common criteria, indicators or variables for the different contexts. These variables, criteria and indicators, can be focused on the organizational dimension of the process, on the actors' liaisons, on the project design, or on the space and the built environment as the processes objective.

The evaluation cannot be a mere checklists or a "cookbook" exercise limited to a yes or no criteria. The following table attempts to collect a large number of criteria, variables and indicators that we could incorporate in an evaluation exercise of a citizen participation process for the production of the public space.

DIMENSIÓN	ORDEN	VARIABLES, CRITERIOS E INDICADORES
Estructura del proceso	Organización	<p>Continuidad: cumplimiento de plazos y cronograma</p> <p>Correspondencia: cumplimiento de compromisos y logro de objetivos</p> <p>Transversalidad: distribución equitativa del poder en la toma de las decisiones (equidad).</p> <p>Corresponsabilidad: compromisos establecidos entre actores</p> <p>Coordinación: ¿liderazgo? ¿Facilitación?</p> <p>Recursos: económicos, humanos, técnicos, en relación a objetivos</p> <p>Temporalidad: los tiempos y ritmos en los que se trazan y deciden los aspectos estructurales del proceso.</p> <p>Empoderamiento (<i>empowerment</i>): la implicación de cada uno de los actores con el nivel organizacional del proceso.</p>
	Medios: Canales, Órganos, Instrumentos facilitados para la información, comunicación, deliberación, debate, consensos, devoluciones, etc.	<p>Transparencia: sobre si lo actores han podido ha podido expresar sus ideas y si estas ha sido claras y abiertas para todos y que además deliberadas y consensuadas.</p> <p>Efectividad: si contribuyen a dinamizar el proceso y la consecución de los objetivos y sobre el grado de profundidad en el debate para la toma de decisiones</p> <p>Implementación de los instrumentos: que los instrumentos que viabilizan el proceso y la ejecución de los resultados son los adecuados y efectivos.</p>

		<p>Legitimidad: de si son usados y reconocidos por todos los actores, como medios por el cual participar en la toma de decisiones del proceso.</p> <p>Temporalidad: verificar la consecución de los objetivos en relación a cada una de las fases programadas para el proceso participativo.</p>
	Herramientas, técnicas y metodologías participativas	<p>Efectividad: sobre si las herramientas, técnicas o metodologías implementadas son las más adecuadas para la elaboración del proyecto</p> <p>Adaptabilidad / Transparencia: sin son cerradas, o son flexibles a los actores, recursos y el contexto en el que se implementen.</p> <p>Formación: sobre si se promueve y se facilita la formación de los actores el uso de herramientas en particular para el diseño del proyecto y formalización de ideas.</p> <p>Vinculación: sobre si son vinculantes con los resultados parciales y definitivos del proceso</p>
	Validación social	<p>Origen del proceso: procedencia del proceso (reivindicaciones, Acciones ciudadanas, proyectos impulsados por particulares y/o Administración)</p> <p>Relevancia: resultados que se prevén obtener del proceso son claros para la ciudadanía y son los importantes para estos.</p> <p>Objetivos: si los objetivos del proceso representan una(s) demanda colectiva de la población local o es externa a ellos.</p> <p>Satisfacción: sobre cuáles son los factores de mejoramiento que percibe la ciudadanía en relación al proceso y en relación a los resultados parciales y definitivos.</p>
Actores: población, facilitadores, administraciones, etc.	Sistema de relaciones/dinámicas e interacción	<p>Extensión: sobre el alcance y el número de personas y de actores que participan en relación a la población general.</p> <p>Diversidad: sobre si los que participan son la totalidad de interesados en la problemática a trabajar</p> <p>Representatividad: sobre si hay representación de actores, si existe flujo de información entre representantes y representados, y si esto, son elegidos democráticamente para la representación.</p> <p>Concurrencia: la presencia de actores en cada una de las fases del proceso</p> <p>Satisfacción: grado de satisfacción de actores en relación a evolución del proceso,</p> <p>Capacitación: los actores tienen potestad, capacidad, competencias para ejecutar y/o legitimar los resultados del proceso. También para el uso de herramientas y recursos. Y si existen falencias, los actores expertos tendrán que potenciar los medios y recursos para lograr que todos puedan debatir y decidir con el mismo nivel y bajo el mismo lenguaje de proyecto.</p> <p>Empoderamiento (empowerment): grados de poder en la toma de decisiones y los efectos sobre la elaboración de los proyectos y sobre el control y coordinación del proceso y de los medios y recursos que se facilitan para ello.</p>

Proyecto [participativo] de espacio público	Diseño del proyecto: Esquemas básicos, Anteproyecto, Proyecto ejecutivo	<p>Elementos del diseño urbano: aspectos formales espaciales técnicos, normativos, etc. que han influido y configuran el espacio proyectado.</p> <p>Coherencia formal: evaluación y valoración sobre los ideales, imaginarios, en contraste con aspectos conceptuales (el discurso que fundamenta y justifica las decisiones dentro del proyecto) y técnicos dentro y fuera del proyecto, y que se reflejan sobre lo proyectado y diseñado.</p> <p>Formación: aportes de naturaleza creativa de parte todos los actores no profesionales (de lo urbano) reflejados en el diseño.</p>
	Otros perceptivos	<p>Satisfacción: del resultado (formal) en relación los objetivos e ideales.</p> <p>Correspondencia: entre la problemática, necesidad o demanda y la formalización colectiva de las ideas (codiseño).</p> <p>Empoderamiento (<i>empowerment</i>): de los actores con la configuración del diseño del proyecto y de las decisiones de orden técnico decididas de manera participativa o no.</p>
	Espacio construido /Entorno construido	<p>Diseño urbano:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accesibilidad / Movilidad Continuidad / legibilidad / Permeabilidad Diversidad / Adaptabilidad / Flexibilidad Durabilidad / resistencia La imagen / paisaje Identidad Confort / Seguridad Sostenibilidad Usos y apropiación del espacio <p>Percepción: espacio imaginado, espacio construido, espacio vivido y sentido.</p>

Tabla 1. Algunas variables, criterios e indicadores para la evaluación de la producción de espacio público [x] participación ciudadana. Estos elementos surgen de la abstracción sobre los casos y ejemplos que de procesos participativos y proyectos de espacio público que hemos revisado en la presente investigación, al igual que diversas metodologías y guías existentes para la evaluación tanto de los proyectos urbanos, como de la participación ciudadana. Un buen ejemplo de guía o para el ejercicio de la evaluación del proyecto de espacio público y del espacios y entorno construido lo encontramos en Brandão (2002) y Brandão (2005). Fuente: Elaboración propia.

From all these elements, and probably others not reported in this table, one can build methodologies and develop strategies to evaluate the production of public space processes [operated by] citizen participation, adequate to each situation and context in particular. Similarly, the challenge facing us from the above mentioned, is if it is possible to perceive from the <<resulted>> project (materialized or not), the participatory process that took place.

Probably it is difficult to perceive the former participatory process if one only observes use of the constructed public space project. However, what can be perceived on a public space is the attachment and citizen's identification with it. From that point of view, one can also consider the level of success of a public space.

Finally and as a conclusion, the following chart explains what has been discussed so far, around the production of public space processes [x] citizen participation.

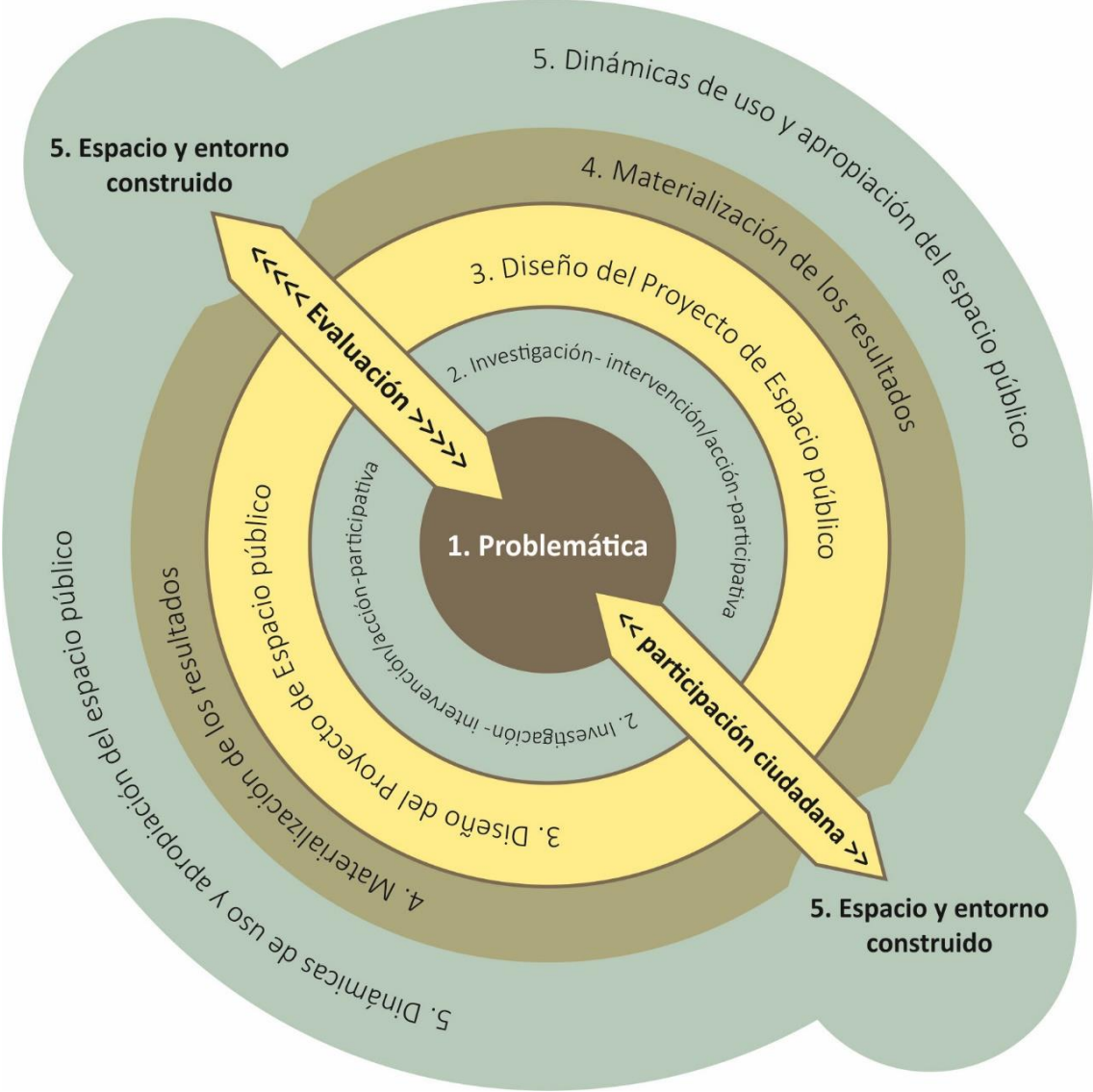


Fig. 1. Esquema a manera de conclusión sobre lo que hemos expuesto hasta el momento, en torno a los procesos de producción de espacio público [x] participación ciudadana. Fuente: Elaboración propia.

1. The Problem: it refers to the problem of spatial nature (specific dimension) and also to problems of social order (overall dimension), in urban contexts where the participatory processes emerge. 2. Research, Intervention/ Participatory Action: refers to the research on the problem as on all essential or tangential aspects, that could influence the decisions during the process, and in the same sense it also refers to the participatory intervention-action (community activities, interaction between actors, and in the public space). 3. Public Space

Project Design: refers to the design of public space, which in this case, because it is inherent to the processes of citizen participation, it refers to co-design of the project (decisions, form and content). 4. Results Materialization: has to do with the execution of projects, results of participatory processes and the whole of the technical decisions that revolve around this concrete realization of the public space. 5. Use Dynamics and Public Space Appropriation: deals with the space and the built environment, is everything that happens in the everyday life of citizens and the relationships that space generates and sets between users of co-produced public space.

FINAL CONSIDERATION, that how professionals from the urban field, can change the way to face designing the public space project



Fig. 2. El espacio público de los ciudadanos. Fuente: Emilio Reyes ©

The need to integrate knowledge and find the "right" way to city making, has resulted from the emergence of new strategies or methods (which presents the stakeholders performance in an interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary way), which are based on the conviction of having the key to intervene the urban space, in order to generate more friendly, inclusive and equitable cities.

We are talking about slogans such as "social urbanism"; "tactical urbanism"; "educational urbanism"; "inclusive urbanism"; "participatory urbanism"; "do-it-yourself urban planning"; "place making"; "the space makers", "civic design"; "civic urbanism"; "urban initiatives bottom-up", "collective architectures", among many other emerging ways of thinking about the city and public space. Constant allegories to a better and ideal city that sometimes result utopic experiments. While it is undeniable that many of the strategies are successful experiences on the way to the democratization of the production of the city in general and of the public space in particular, it is also suspicious the frequent invention and proliferation of adjectives for urban practices. Suspicious, because most of the time they show a grandiloquent rhetoric, where citizenship is always protagonist, where in contrast to this *lexis*, there is a *praxis* that finally checks out to be a hidden form of "XXI century despotism".

Traditional practices that follow many professionals around urban design and specifically around the public space projects, most of the time, are "hours" of computer work dedicated to

the formal exploration, aesthetic, image, use of standards, etc.¹². Then, these exercises and resolutions (virtual) are accompanied by speeches and concepts that apparently emerge from the social economic and urban context, in order to justify them and each criteria and composite element of the drawing. Despite all the justifications these projects are distant from the citizenship imaginary. Then, from these drawings (projects), debate spaces are created (nothing more than information and communication) as a "guarantee" of processes in which the population was allowed to participate.

These would lead one to assume that the urban project and public space design in particular, is a problem that parametric drawing programs, (AutoCAD, 3DMax, Rhinoceros and Sketch up, among thousands...) can solve by themselves as urban science and technology. It is misguided to reduce decisions of projects that determine, influence and changed the life of the people, to the conjugation of technical drawing variables, which are subjective and out of context when the final project depends only on these to become a reality. These tools can help, but cannot universally found the projects design.

Although, in contrast, for its novelty, for its good design, for the deficit or absence, or for whatever motive, many of these public spaces can also end up being accepted, used, appropriated by the local population which is direct consumer of them. However, this sort of success in NON participative projects, is a certainty in the projects that are completed, designed materialized and, ultimately, produced through citizen participation, directly influencing the quality of urban life, local development, the democratic vision/perception of the city, social justice and the urban equity in all its possible dimensions.

Urban professionals must change the way of facing public space projects. We believe that we must first identify, meet and dive into the problems with other actors to whom the project affects or interest. It is only in this scenario in which one should constitute and establish the project team: professionals, public administration, economic, political, private or third sector groups, but primarily, the population that lives and is expert in the space in where they develop their daily life. As in all projects team, each member has a specific knowledge of different orders and natures; the delivery of this knowledge, to the service of the project and the community is precisely the key to participation.

It is not enough to demand professionals to change the way of tackling the project. It is important that this should be a process starting in the field of training professional/technical/academic, within all urban disciplines. Today, the pedagogical practices and training in schools in urban design, architecture, etc., insist on training professionals who intend to be protagonists of the projects in which they are involved. Where implicitly (or unconsciously) promote the configuration of a "character" or "Star" and not the citizen, who also inhabits the city and space, and in these cases in addition, has the opportunity

¹² Form, spatial quality (from urban design with all it's technical/formal elements) by them selves, does not guarantee the improvement of the living conditions from a determined social and urban context. It requires of other things that a big part of them be facilitated by the citizen participation exercise.

to be involved in the design of this life canvas common with others that we call the city. (Padilla, et al, 2014).¹³

Finally, it is important to end with the following reflection: we are before anything in the city, citizen and, as such, we have the duty, responsibility and the right to imagine, think, conceive, promote and live space in which our public life develops, that is, our life in common with other citizens. We must therefore be authors, co-authors and beneficiaries at the same time, of produced public space, but our authorship, co-authorship, and benefit, (which translates to our duty, responsibility and right) end just exactly where the other citizens (duties, responsibilities and rights) begin.



Fig. 3. French Student Poster ("I participate, you participate, he participates, we participate, you participate... the benefits". source: Arnstein (1969).

¹³ About these aspects one can look into: Brandão, A.; Castillo, M.; Esparza, D.; Padilla, S.; Paz, L.; Pinto, A.; Ríos, M.; Salas, X.; Sasa, Z.; (2014), Interdisciplina: La Enseñanza / Aprendizaje En Proyectos de diseño urbano. Revista On the w@terfront > 2014: Núm.: 29 Interdisciplina en diseño urbano y arte público. [en línea]; Disponible en: <http://goo.gl/2Dtd4y>