

The workshop of the city. *Public policy looking for renewed shapes of partnership*, or the example of a few original situations in Dunkirk (France).

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The aim of my paper is twofold. First, I would like to present the dynamics of French urban production so as to fathom its meaning, notably in the light of the changes brought by the laws of decentralization and by the recent, important statutory developments¹. My second aim is to bring out what in these urban situations stands as original models of urban production.

Analysed as it was through several research programmes recently made for the French Ministry for Housing, Planning and Transport², the urban area of Dunkirk (North of France) makes a number of aspects clear. Hence, this paper is an invitation for constant, two-way shifts, not only from local to national levels, but also from micro to macro analyses, and from specific local situations to other particular ones.

The following facts may be observed. In the sixties, there was a strong and direct implication of the central State in the planning of Dunkirk, linked to the development of large-scale industry. The definition of a land use plan transformed the organization of the various local actors, and as time went by, partnerships were routinized and became informal. (Such a process may be largely understood as the rise of a "common culture"). Finally, the Local Group, which was constituted over a strikingly long period, has adopted a particular set up, which could be termed as "collective enunciating" structures.

At a time when studies on the organization and aims of planning and development projects stemming from local groups and "districts" are multiplying (as is shown by the *Porto Alegre effect* and the promotion of the now famous "participative budget"³), the example of Dunkirk is interesting as it offers tools for analysis which could prove relevant when confronted to other urban situations. This is what I have termed "the city workshop".

The French context is characterized by a process of "decentralization" which started at the beginning of the eighties when the jurisdiction of the State in many fields (including urban planning) was transferred to local authorities. This took place in a country in which a powerful central State was traditionally very strong. At the level of the State itself, this context was closely examined, notably when the Urban Plan (Plan Urbain — a research programming board linked to the Ministry for Housing) called for studies in September 1994 on "The intervention of public power in urban production processes", in order to assess the results of decentralization ten years after its implementation.

The analysis of the cases of a dozen local situations, amongst which, for example, were listed Bordeaux, Toulouse or Nîmes, tended to show that local authorities, or more generally the "local structure" (that is to say townhalls but also intermunicipal structures, as well as technical structures such as town planning agencies, and so on) gradually took part in the process and finally became in charge of their new jurisdiction. In short, the studies showed how an "authority" progressively implemented itself. The speed and range of the process varied according to places, thereby revealing the significance and the actual meaning of decentralization.

In this general picture of local conditions, Dunkirk proved to be singular, and very different from most of the other analysed cases. In the study entitled *Dunkirk: an exemplary relationship between the urban area and the State*⁴, the limited impact of the essential shift meant by decentralization was strongly underlined. Strikingly enough, it did not mark a break, contrarily to

¹. Lois Chevènement (intercommunalité), Voynet (développement du territoire) et SRU (solidarité et renouvellement urbain): The Chevènement Act (intermunicipal policy), the Voynet Act (national development policy) and SRU (solidarity and urban renewal).

². The Institut des Mers du Nord was in charge of these research programmes, some of which I conducted in partnership with my colleague Marion Segaud.

³. An urban designer of Dunkirk actually is one of the French translators of the book by the mayor of Porto Alegre (Genro, De Souza, 1998).

⁴. Ratouis O., Segaud M., *Dunkerque: un rapport exemplaire entre agglomération et Etat?*, Institut des Mers du Nord, Plan Urbain, 1996.

what happened in most French cities. Was it because Dunkirk had not grasped yet the important meaning of decentralization? Quite the opposite, actually, for the local actors had for a long time already made this shift effective. Even before the laws of decentralization were implemented, the decisions for the urban production already stemmed from the local field.

Hence, Dunkirk seems to embody the confrontation of two actors, or two groups of actors. On the one hand, there was a strong public State power which literally shaped the urban area, not only through such interventions as the reconstruction of the town after the second world war, but also with the setting up of an iron and steel industry (Usinor), or with the development of the port activity through the creation of the "West Port" (Port Ouest). More acutely than in many other towns, Dunkirk was administered from the centre. On the other hand, it is an urban area in which, soon enough, the local actors learned to manage its relation to the centre, by developing strategies that make use of organizations — such as the Urban Intermunicipality (Communauté Urbaine), the Town Planning and Development Agency (Agence d'Urbanisme et de développement), and so on) — or of flexible tools adapted to changes (Contracts, charters, and so forth).

In fact, Dunkirk is more the symbol of a transfer than of a confrontation. It represents the shift from a national planning policy (aménagement du territoire), stemming from the central power of the State, to a local territorial development (développement du territoire). What is the meaning of such a shift? What lessons may be drawn from it?

Dunkirk: a laboratory for post-war State planning policies

Historically speaking, Dunkirk has always swarmed with urban interventions and numerous experimentations: it offers an ideal field of inquiry for urban research. The work of the researchers, who were particularly prolific in the seventies, contributed to transforming Dunkirk into a kind of urban laboratory, which it still is today.

The rather well-known origins of this phenomenon can easily be traced. As the town and the port had largely been wiped out between 1940 and 1945, a vast rebuilding project was launched after the war. For over fifteen years, Dunkirk was a vast construction site (Ratouis, 1997). This programme was part of a general administrative and economic reform implemented in the aftermath of the war by the French State, which created both the Board for Reconstruction (ministère de la Reconstruction) and the National Planning Commission (Commissariat général au Plan) (Voldman, 1997). The change was deep for in such a centrally controlled country as France, town planning and the managing of economy still fell within the competence of municipalities or stemmed from private incentives (Kuisel, 1981). It was notably because the State established that such local urban planning processes had not met their goals between 1918 and 1939 that it decided to intervene (Claude, 1990).

During the sixties, the change was confirmed so much so that higher civil servants retrospectively described the Reconstruction as a "testing bench" for town planning in France (Ratouis, 2000). Indeed the State expanded its policy which, from then on, was generally termed as the "national planning policy" (aménagement du territoire). Dunkirk was the chosen site for one of its leading operations, the iron and steel plant Usinor, for which colossal building works were achieved: the port was spread out by reclaiming land from dunes and sea areas, a motorway was built, a large gauge canal was created as well as a power station and other developments.

The 1945-1970 period, which was one of extensive urban expansion and gigantic industrial and port development, was therefore marked by a strong State-controlled urban policy.

The resulting urban production is the focus of the famous urban sociology study *Monopolville. L'Entreprise, l'Etat, l'urbain* by Castells and Godard (1974). Its impulse came, in this case too, from the State's will to examine its production. After having achieved in the fifties and sixties several hundred thousand dwellings, notably in zones with priority for urbanization (ZUP) (Vayssière, 1988), the State was now financing appraisal research studies on its production.

This was an opportunity for France to develop urban research, supported by the prevalent marxist doctrine at the time. Its inevitable theoretical jargon set aside, this critical study mainly underlines the role of the State in bearing large-scale industry, and makes its case against State Capitalism and Monopoly (Capitalisme Monopoliste d'Etat- CME) that brands the marks of its domination on space. And in actual facts, even though it was not officially implied in urban planning decisions, Usinor did impose the location of residential zones to urban designers, as well as the type of housing to social housing offices.

This criticism has several, notable results. It marks a paradigmatic and theoretical break in the scientific discourse on the urban phenomenon. There is a shift from "gaullist" interpretations, to quote Lorrain⁵, based on notions like demography, employment and so on (that is to say those specific to a State-controlled national planning policy), to interpretations that focus on notions such as domination, social regulation, repression, power, social classes, and so forth.

In the process, this criticism has brought out the contradictions of space production, by resorting to the notion of a "system of actors" and analysing the conflicts which characterize it. Let us turn to Castel and Godard's conception of the role of urban planning: "Above all, making plans seems to be finding a "place" for the mediated expression of negotiation and expression"; the urban designer has the function of a mediator "more akin to a middleman than to a technician".

In fact, these conflicts also appear within some State structures, a phenomenon which marxists in the seventies named the "State apparatus". And from the historian's perspective, the State proves to be "plural".

In 1975, Jérôme Monod, a delegate working for the Datar⁶, a national and regional planning office, wrote in a report for Mr Poniatowsky, the junior minister, that by comparison to the "extraordinary" port and industrial development of Dunkirk, its urban development was "appalling", without mentioning however the fact that the setting up of Usinor was directly responsible for the urban planning of the zones with priority for urbanization (ZUP) (Veltz, 1977). The State was hereby preparing its withdrawal from the urban area of Dunkirk. More importantly, the bitter sweet nature of this assessment echoes the conflict which, at the beginning of the sixties, opposed two public administration services: the national planning office linked to the Board for construction (le Service de l'aménagement du territoire du Ministère de la construction) and the National Planning Commission (le Commissariat Général au Plan). Let us add that this conflict also echoes a larger one that opposes spatial planning (aménagement spatial) to economic planification (planification économique).

Therefore, the specific role of these studies was to break the uniformed discourse on national urban planning. Yet, they were still part of its context. This may be perceived, for instance, in the way the authors don't question the industrialization processes themselves. This respect for the production principle rises from what may be seen as a "postulate for industrialism".

⁵. Presentation given by D. Lorrain in May 1997 in C. Topalov's seminar at the EHESS (Paris).

⁶. Direction à l'aménagement du territoire et à l'action régionale.

In correlation, the central structure still bears on the local structure where the national policies are implemented. As in the sociology of organizations, according to Gaudin (1987), from 1965 to 1970, the local structure is thought in terms of a "periphery". For Grémion, "*the necessary, founding relationship between local and central structures is that the former must implement State policies it had no part in defining*" (1976). The local structure is wiped off, for it is conceived as the mere carbon copy, or the prosthesis of the central structure.

The seventies, a period of reversal. Local authorities and the emergence of a project culture.

In the nineties the situation is just the opposite. Urban production is controlled by local authorities whose action is supported, completed... and approved by the State. When and how has this radical reversal taken place?

In fact, far from marking the conclusion of a process (the establishment of large-scale industry resulted from a long historical development of monopolist capitalism), the theoretical construction of *Monopolville* was, from the historian's point of view, built at a time of transition. Indeed, it was a period when local actors became gradually autonomous, a visible process which heralded an overall phenomenon.

In Dunkirk, this change was triggered off by the working out of the land use plan (Schéma directeur d'aménagement et d'urbanisme, SDAU)⁷. This document — a Plan — was finally ratified in 1974 after a period of conflict with the State. This success suggests a surge in local expertise, which topped State expertise (Ratouis, 2000). It also indicates that the local actors successfully carried out the State-impulsed trend of creating reliable local poles capable of taking over and complementing its planning policies. The 1967 Land Policy Act (loi d'orientation foncière) drew up the framework needed for such a metamorphosis. For instance, the fact that zones for concerted development (ZAC) were substituted for zones with priority for urbanization (ZUP) enabled local debates (through the idea of *concerted action*) to focus on planning operations and even to include the inhabitants for the very first time.

The actors in Dunkirk decided to make the most out of the statutory possibilities. With the creation of the Urban Intermunicipality (Communauté Urbaine, CUD) in 1969, their aim was to join local capacities together and to make of urban planning a means for acting on economic policy.

The creation of the Urban Intermunicipality (CUD) and the working out of the land use plan (SDAU) were the foundation acts of a local Group. Its self-given purpose is to formulate the local project. A new town planning agency (AGUR) is created to undertake this mission. Various forms of Local Groups had been attempted in the sixties (Oddone, 1988; Ratouis, 1997), bringing together trade unionists, catholics, local politicians and so on. Maybe their failure was due to the absence of an object enabling compromise such as the SDAU.

Many of the actors of the nineties first made their appearance on the urban scene during the seventies. The analysis of their professional and personal evolution from the seventies onward is enlightening for us on the genealogy of the eventually extremely developed practices of concerted action and partnership, an evidence of which may be found in the great objects produced locally.

Indeed, over the past twenty years, most of these actors have gone through a series of local institutions. The various individual trajectories all suggest there is an acting sphere in Dunkirk in which actors take part according to the office they may hold in several significant institutions. Four

⁷. The SDAU sets the urban planning guidelines in a plan.

of these appear to be the places of refuge of the main actors of urban planning: two municipalities, Dunkirk and Grande Synthe (a suburb where the workers from the steel and iron port industry were housed), the Urban Intermunicipality (CUD), and its tool, the town planning agency. Other structures may be fitted in this general outline. Their proximity encourages actors to get to know, to esteem, to size up each other and to associate with each other.

These actors do not only share institutional trajectories. They also work for closely related institutions. Intermunicipal representatives are township representatives first and foremost. The town planning agency was created by the Urban Intermunicipality (CUD) whose spoke of activities covers the whole intercommunal area as the townships transferred its authority to the urban community. The main elect body who is in charge of urban planning is also part of the board of directors of the town planning agency, and so on. Whether they have gone to another institution or not, the actors have still continued to meet and to work together every day for years. The scale of the urban area and the general balance between the main cities have reinforced these relationships⁸.

In this sense, the various institutions tend to be used simply as places where decisions are registered. This is not due to secret dealings, but mainly to the multiplicity of places for exchanges and for regulated, official debates (control and coordinating committees, board meetings, and various meetings for projects, local events, inaugurations and so forth) as well as more informal places, such as cafés, trains or the crucial local carnival.

This para-institutional knowledge that actors have of each other is based on an actual acquaintance and association, built over the twenty reference years. Common basic values, such as public interest, social solidarity, common development, and so forth, constitute the groundwork of this "territorial" partnership. Different characteristics may be numbered. Their addition makes for the specificity of each case. Let us just mention: the arrival of urban designers who were trained to involve inhabitants in their work (as was the case in Grenoble), the local support for the first experiments in implementing the "urban policy" (Grand Synthe and the Housing and Social experiments — Expériences Habitat et Vie Sociale), self-trainings by associating with the group⁹, the promotion by the Local Group of its own methods, the presence of leading political figures (Denvers, Carême, Delebarre), the notion of coproducing skills and of a culture of projects, and so forth. On the whole, these are characteristics which enabled to build a common language and to formalize a co-representation of the territory.

The close acquaintance within the Local Group conditions what may be called a "common culture".

The nineties, or a full-blown local system: the urban area project and the territorial production of Dunkirk.

The "common culture" of the Local Group of actors finds its expression in the urban production, and first and foremost in its general guiding documents.¹⁰ In that sense, this group may be seen as one of the occurrences in France of contractual urban policies. Procedures, institutions and actors multiply in order to form variable-geometry configurations.

⁸. The principal town counts 75,000 inhabitants, it is surrounded by three municipalities of 25,000 inhabitants, all in all a population of 210,000 inhabitants.

⁹. "I have no culture... so I had to make one for myself in the field and through confrontation" (local political representative).

¹⁰. For instance the Urban Project (Projet Urbain) is even defined as "a three-dimensional representation of a sort of "common culture" about the future of the urban area".

Indeed, in the nineties, the territorial production of Dunkirk is written down in charters. If charters and contracts are not new tools in the field of urban planning (the Athenes Charter is a well known example, but it is important to note that it was set up by a group of professionals only; Le Corbusier, 1957), their development in the area of Dunkirk is significant because all the different fields are involved.

The singularity of the urban area of Dunkirk largely stems from the specificity of the objects produced locally since the end of the eighties and which represent the most visible element of its urban production (mainly the Urban Contract (Contrat d'agglomération) and the Urban Project (Projet urbain), as well as others such as the Port Development Contract (Contrat de développement portuaire) linked to the Industrial Environment Plan (Schéma d'Environnement Industriel), the first documents of this kind ever to be made in France). They are indeed visible products that enable to structure the urban fabric and to bring out all the social and political aspects of the urban area (charters imply a limited number of participants only, as opposed to laws which concern everyone). But they are also urban products that have been implemented extremely quickly, compared to the rest of the country, to the point sometimes of being pioneer products. They may be called by the generic term of *charter*, from which stem the different planning operations.

These objects stage all of actors involved in the urban planning of Dunkirk, whether public or private structures, as well as the State (local and regional) and the local authorities, the technicians and the elect body (intermunicipal and municipal representatives). The framework of State intervention is thereby clearly defined.

Firmly constituted as it is by its history and its foundation act of setting up the SDAU — finally ratified in 1974— *in opposition to* the project defended by the State, the Local Group tends to deal with its interlocutor *on the basis of* its own project. It could even be said that the decentralized local authorities of the State tend to fall within the local Group's sphere of influence, that is to say they tend to acknowledge that the value of their own projects is more relevant than the State's, especially when the latter offers no value and no formulated project.

The originality of Dunkirk lies in the Urban Contract (Contrat d'Agglomération) signed in October 1991, which is an example of a complex assemblage linking and involving all the actors.

"As opposed to traditional practices, characterized by an excessive centralization that often imposed to local authorities a rigid framework in which to present their projects, the procedure introduced by the Representatives of Dunkirk aimed at conveying actual needs, that had been closely identified in the field, through a careful analysis of people's everyday living conditions.

The partners who were approached all went through their own tools, procedures and fundings in order to determine which were most adapted to carry out the programmes of action that were part of a coherent global, economic, social, urban development project and so on, answering for all the absolutely necessary complement matchings.

Respectful of local political decisions, this procedure has from the start worked within the vast decentralization procedure introduced by the State, particularly in the field of urban development."

If the process of decentralization is explicitly mentioned, it is done so within a firmly established situation. Moreover, the charters do not only form an elaborate series of objects created through partnership, they also answer the requirement to manage in the best possible way the highly complex funding procedures which Dunkirk may benefit from (FEDER, PACT urbain

axe arc Nord-Est, City contracts procedures, Xth National Plan, and so on). Therefore, these new objects are, above all, management tools.

One of the main principles for the working out of the urban planning project postulates the end of heavy programmatic planification, and promotes a more flexible urban management, that is defined as a "strategic" development, liable to make the most out of various opportunities (the main one being the transformation of the relative distress caused by the closing down of the Normed shipbuilding yard (Chantiers Navals de la Normed) into the extraordinary opportunity of extending the city centre) and to progressively implement well-defined aims¹¹.

What conclusion may be drawn? The "traditional" tools of urban planning (such as the land use plan) which were defined by the State through its regulations are now directly shaped by the guidelines written down in the planning project defined by the Local Group. They are meant to serve new objects, which fall into two categories:

- most of them are not pure products of the Local Group. In this case, they are called simple "tools among others for the redevelopment of the Dunkirk area"¹². These are tools recently implemented by the State which the Local Group has taken up and transformed, and whose specificity is that they are more flexible than those elaborated during the seventies;

- some have been "invented" by the Local Groups that produces *locally generated tools*, in opposition to *State-created tools*.

Furthermore, in terms of tools, these charters seems to be the actual means to produce urban structures that effect an urban policy. These charters may be seen as narratives elaborated by the Local Group. As for Castells and Godard, they interpreted urban plans and documents as urbanistic discourses.

A threefold phenomenon may be observed:

- the charters are urban mediation tools that bring actors together around a common object and which allow to organize the group; they localize conflicts. The urban designer no longer is a Demiurge. His main task consists in bringing out the contradictions at work.

- through the charters, the actors develop their ability to develop projects¹³; they have become urban business men and managers. Verpraet's survey (1988) made in the urban designing trade in France reveals a dialectic between expertise and mediation; this double role puts urban designers at the centre of the transactions made between the local authorities and the State, between main developpers and elected representatives.

- traditionally, the urban mediation tool used to be the urban plan. A shift has taken place from the plan to the text. In that sense, aren't the charters a brand new urban mediation tool, more adapted to constant evolutions (*work in progress*)¹⁴?

While reinforcing them, these charters are the expression of elaborate partnerships that have been established through time. It has to face a double obstacle: first of all the career cycle of individuals, for whom Dunkirk often is only a strategic stage in their careers as technocrats, and secondly the diversity of the institutions' purposes (the Port Autonome is a State corporation that hardly has any concern for local stakes).

On the other hand, the charters allow for a flexible urban production which classic planning tools, such as the SDAU, made impossible; they make it possible to better manage conflicts through time. More than anything else, they integrate a potential inner dynamics.

¹¹. A more comprehensive study on the role of charters and on their interpretation as the narrative of the common culture of actors, see Ratouis, Segaud, 1997.

¹². ID., p. 1 (Albert Denvers, Introduction: "La nécessaire révision du schéma Directeur").

¹³. the AGUR renamed itself the town planning and development agency.

¹⁴. The planning project Neptune resorts to a mixed tool: there is a master plan but no layout plan.

Therefore the charters seem to be an actual *method of working*, simply by bringing together and coordinating numerous and various actors around a common agenda. These work groups allow the various actors to share their views; for some (the Port or the chamber of commerce), it is the occasion to venture out of their closed fields by communicating and explaining. These work groups make themselves known, organize events, in a word they act as stimulators of local and far-away circles, in order to convince people and gain their support. This is a classic procedure, but it has rather rarely been implemented in France in the field of urban planning...

The Urban Contract (contrat d'agglomération), the urban project (projet urbain), the industrial environment plan (le schéma d'environnement industriel) may be considered as actual transcriptions of the project in space, in the lay of the territory. In that sense, they have the double characteristic of being both objects (to be achieved) and (superior) tools, the *organon of the project*.

By involving heterogeneous actors who are differently implied in urban action, does urbanistic stimulation (in which the charters take part) necessarily lead to more direct democracy, and therefore towards a "progress" for townsmen and citizens? Do these new local procedures of partnership renew the involvement of the inhabitants, or are they only, as always, places of debate for experts only?

It is therefore necessary to analyse the deeper meaning of these new modes of action, and their novelty, if any. The contracts stage different institutions (whose "logic of action" and purposes are different and often contradictory). As stress is laid on the procedure and on the interaction of the various actors, these are expected to commit themselves to the links shared by their respective fields. Between partners (the local structure and the State, for instance), a new form of public action (through the contract) is developed, which Donzelot (1993) names a "*contractual involvement*".

However, isn't there the risk not only of a growing rift between the "actors" (in the restrictive sense of direct actors of urban production) but also of a break between a closed public power (within which the contractual involvement would take place) and the citizens who, for their own part, are confronted to "solitary contractual" situations which are characteristics of a period in which nonsuits are generalized (Augé, 1992)?

Are "collective enunciating" structures models of or experiments in territorial production?

Compared to the general organization of urban production, some of the structures set up in Dunkirk and its urban area are well worth noticing. Their main interest lies precisely in the forms of continuous partnerships which they create between development and construction before any operation is launched. Because of their number and significance, these structures (such as control and coordinating committees, *workshops*¹⁵, urban workshops and so on) make for a more complex and dense system of local authorities for all the implied parties are integrated in an open fashion.

These structures suggest that the local actors do not solely aim at organizing urban production. They actually want to *outstrip* the standard French procedures of urban production, which usually separate development from construction. These structures are not meant to "screen" the decision-making process, but to make it possible for territorial coproduction and compromise to take place openly, by preparing upcoming operations according to the guiding principles or the general philosophy of the local project, while submitting to political decisions. In this sense, they

¹⁵. The English word is used by the French actors.

also work as mediators and stimulators of the Local Group. Naturally enough these procedures meet with difficulties for what is at stake is an actual redefinition of work and a new splitting up of the various local authorities involved. One outstanding consequence seems to be the mutual consideration for each other's skills.¹⁶ These structures oustrip the various forms of control committees that rule the development of territories. They partake of them by playing a role in the unfolding of the project and by being part of the general organization, but they differ from them by allowing all the actors of urban planning and all of those who use the facilities to take part in their elaboration¹⁷.

In the wake of a previous study (Ratouis, Dieudonné, 1997), these structures can be understood as "collective enunciating" structures, following and developing the expression used by Jean-Yves Toussaint which he himself adapted from the concept of "collective enunciating actors" forwarded by Deleuze and Guattari. Toussaint writes: "This project could be defined as an institution whose role would be, within contemporary societies, to transform and manage their territories. In this case the Plan would be a collective enunciation, resulting from the productive activity of a group that formulates space" (Toussaint, 1995).

Three collective enunciating structures appear to be particularly significant in the territorial production of the urban area of Dunkirk (Ratouis, Segaud, 2000): the multi-disciplinary team of the Courghain zone of concerted development (ZAC) of Grande Synthe in the seventies, the Dunkirk public space workshop and the Grande Synthe urban workshop in the nineties. From the point of view of a purely rational territorial production, these collective enunciating structures mainly result in invalidating all the procedures that bind spatial planning to a heavy, production-line stream of decisions. More generally, they bring out how socially and spatially layered planification actually is.

These collective enunciating structures account for the relative continuity of systems and for the changes in urban development procedures. This evolution results from both the context and the nature of production.

In the seventies, the Courghain zone of concerted development (ZAC) was intent on reforming planning practices. A "multi-disciplinary team" was set up to manage the operation. The team was composed of members from various participating institutions (townhalls, urban community, semi-government body, town planning agency and so on), of specialists from various walks of life (sociologist, architect, landscape architect, environment specialists, engineer, and so forth) and of inhabitants from the area. This structure was a break from the usual procedures from the sixties and their heavy forms of planning, which Vayssière termed the "hard French" (in English) or "the statistical planning" of zones with priority for urbanization (ZUP) (Vayssière, 1988). The general facts are well known and the aim was to transform the zoning and introduce "functional mixity", in this case an urban zone located far from the centre of Dunkirk but close to the port in order to house workers from the iron and steel industry.

In the nineties, the aim of the public space workshop and of the Urban workshop (ATU) was not to build new districts anymore, but to intervene in already-existing spaces. The purpose of the first afore-mentioned structure was to upgrade the city centre public spaces within the framework of the Neptune project (re-development of port areas). The example of Barcelona, used as a reference, was adapted to local stakes, and the workshop also gathered officials from all the local authorities involved in the development.

¹⁶. The city agent in charge of parks takes part in the definition of the global project. In return, he agrees to stop planting flowers in pots in the "traditional fashion" and to work in harmony with the more "modernist" designs of the landscape architects (material, treatment, and so on).

¹⁷. Isn't such a separation, combined to the absence of participation from those who are meant to use the facilities, responsible for the defects and failings of so many projects? A typical example of this is the Bibliothèque Nationale de France.

The workshop, whose status was carefully kept flexible, was open to outspoken and collective debates and definitions of the aims.

As for the Urban Workshop (ATU) of Grande Synthe, it aimed at stimulating the involvement of the inhabitants. In this case, the original experiments which took place in Grenoble in the seventies were the founding reference, which the ATU reinterpreted and completed with the same concern for involving members from all the local authorities implied in urban production. The Urban Workshop (ATU) is characterized by a policy based on the idea of neighbourhood management and urban proximity. The workshop operated on two levels: that of the city in its whole and that of each of the five districts that compose Grande Synthe. The so-called "decentralized" meetings (organized on a district basis) were meant to foster systems of conveyance by which the inhabitants transmitted their wishes and suggestions to their elected representatives.

The general policy of these two structures from the nineties was to redevelop spaces from what may be called a "mending" perspective. The stakes are not to mingle functions which are basically considered to be separated (and this was the case with Courghain in the context of the zoning doctrine, still prevalent at the beginning of the seventies) so much as to maintain the coherence of a primarily composite whole. In the same spirit, four "Territorial Projects" were launched in the urban area in April 1996 and aimed at stitching back together territories located on intercommunal zones by working on suggestions made by the inhabitants.

It could be said that these "collective enunciating" structures are the "meaningful forms" of the specific territorial production they give birth to. In other words, there is a direct relationship between the organizing forms of territorial production and that of forms of production itself.

These collective enunciating structures mark a change in practices and offer a second mode, or even model, of territorial production, which takes into account complex structures and enjoins urban mending, after or more often at the same time as so-called "production-line" practices. This may very well be the mark of a shift from national *planning* policy (*aménagement du territoire*) to territorial *development* (*développement*).

One of the main stakes of collective enunciation structures is to create transverse forms that are not submitted to sectorial regulation constraints. At the very least, collective enunciating structures are relatively uncommon tools as well as original modes of organization, mediating means and social transaction devices which enable actors to come to an agreement. They do make for permanent partnerships.

Finally, doesn't the analysis of the urban production of Dunkirk, and more specifically of these "collective enunciating" structures, reveal that functionalism is being questioned?

Different themes may therefore appear to be variations of the same paradigm. From "economic redevelopment" to "urban regeneration", isn't the common idea of a return on the object and of its "mending" expressed? A criticism of functionalism thereby makes itself clear. It questions not only spatial zoning, but also the separation between the treatment of space and the treatment of social issues, as well as the classic splitting up of various administration sectors. It is radically different from a jarring collage, or an urban collage, for instance, such as the kind evoked by Rowe (1978), whose image suggested that any attempts at outstripping functionalism invariably leads to post-modernism. The very implication of the idea of a "planning of the already-planned" (or of an "urban regeneration") which is now currently used by urban planners finds itself modified as a result. Indeed, in the wake of post-war techno-social "utopias" and their permanent promotion of anything new, this approach which manifests a voluntary return into history, could be the expression of a vast movement that both produces and collects

signs and that finds its meaning in positing the project as a space for possibilities and not as the result of production-line procedures¹⁸.

Isn't this the occasion for devising a way out of functionalism which has imposed itself both spatially and mentally but which may very well be only one type of relationship to space, among many other possible ones, established by societies¹⁹? Wouldn't it be possible to find a correlation between the attempts at renewing the involvement of citizens and the criticism of functionalism?

¹⁸. Reinhart Koselleck (1990) defined the project and the expectation period as "what-is-only-as-yet-a-place-that-can-be-planned". The members of the *workshop* refer to public spaces — that are symbols of the new territorial production — as possible spaces, or use Umberto Eco's notion of *open work*. There is also Lefèbvre's expression according to which the urban phenomenon was a place for possibilities (Lefèbvre, 1970)

¹⁹. (Lepetit, 1995). Moreover, administrative planification, which characterized the period covering the reconstruction up to the urban project, seems to be a planning of society from the top authorities just as much as an urban planning, as it was forwarded by Claudius-Petit, the French minister for Reconstruction: "*first and foremost urban planning policy is the planning of society*" (quoted in Gaudin, 1979).

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