

URBAN

contrasts

bulletin

#19

INURA 2000

BRUXEL

IMPRESSIONEN



INTERNATIONAL NETWORK FOR URBAN RESEARCH AND ACTION

inura 2000 bruxel

URBAN contrasts

een samenwerking

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het Brussels
Hoofdstedelijk Gewest
la Région de
Bruxelles-Capitale

inura 2000 bruxel foreword

Dear all,

You are holding Bulletin 19 in your hands, the material proof of its existence. Editing it wasn't easy. It took us a while to comply with this 'burden tradition' put on the shoulders of each organising team. Was it because our club house, Christine's kitchen, got out of use (she took up a new job organising international resident meetings in remote places like Belfast, Liverpool and Dublin)? Was it because of a general burn out after months of preparation and a sleepless week during the conference? Was it because this winter it rained more than ever (it poured record amounts since they started counting raindrops in this country)? Or was it because Mr. Murphy joined the editing team right from the start? We can't tell...

You will not find the traditional conference proceedings in it, but rather short writings which cover the spirit and the points of attention of last years meeting. Before passing the famous INURA torch onto the Firenze/Florence friends -this years meeting: end of september 2001-, we still have a surprise for you. As INURA is also about other ways of communicating experiences and knowledge of urban life, we are preparing a short Brussels 'video bulletin' together with Mark Saunders. We promise you will get a glimpse of it in Florence.

See you there
Ciao

**Christine, Marie-Eve,
Gerben, Mark,
Stef and Tom**

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URBAN contrasts (bruxel =)

FREE MARKETEEER

van onze Londense medewerker
de notre envoyé (spécial) à Londres

Hey you Belgys have got it all wrong again. Around the rest of the world, rents in the middle of towns are very expensive and rents further out are cheap. Just look at my little home village of London. It costs a mere two hundred pounds to rent out my one bedroom flat in suburban west London, complete with cable TV, fridge, cat, pearly king suit, jellied eels, bowler hat and so on. Per week*. But for the same size apartment in the middle of London these days, you have to leave your wife/husband/attractive younger sister as deposit. They can then be used at will, in any manner whatsoever, by all employees of the estate agents who rent you the flat. If you default on the rent they can sell them on to sweatshops in the third world. It's harsh but fair. And of course it's the 'free market', if you don't like it go and live in... er... Cuba.

But not here in Brussels. Oh no. Here it costs 25 bef and an old copy of some Tintin book to rent an entire old warehouse in the centre of town. Meanwhile down in Uccle you need your own personal mining concession in a former colony just to rent a broom cupboard. This can't last.

Having realised that the centre of Brussels is like the centre of London, except about twenty five years ago, I have an announcement to make. I just bought it. Yes, all of it. Well, the pound is strong at the moment and they pay reasonably well at *Maomagazine*. As a result I will now be converting all your derelict downtown properties into flats for NATO executives, politicians, diplomats and corporate PR people. Oh, and tourists. Just like London.

Of course in turn property prices in the centre of Brussels will dramatically inflate. This will hugely benefit those who already own property. In this case, me. Yet, you will love me. Why? Because at one fell swoop I will be able to remove all the undesirables from your lives. Basically speaking anyone who isn't filthy rich or doesn't work for a corporation that is filthy rich will have to move out. Isn't that great?

Then, because I own all your property, I mean my property, I will be able to get huge interest free loans from bankers who want my business. With these free loans I will then buy your transport services. After all they are state run and that means you only need to bribe one minister rather than a whole board of directors. I shall then run the trains, trams and so on into the ground whilst simultaneously undertaking what I like to call the 'free market master stroke'. I will charge all the poor people who have been forced out of the centre huge fares to come back in and stack shelves/work as cleaners/clean toilets for all my friendly corporations and super-rich clientele.

Only after these modernizing economic liberalisations will you Belgys be able to say you have a truly modern capital city. Just like London. I bet you can't wait to thank me.

Adam Porter
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*this isn't a joke

inura 2000 bruxel agenda

short overview

20th may 2000
(welcome)

21st may 2000
(bruxel =)
• **official start + general introduction**

22nd may 2000
(bruxel capital of europe)
• **guided tours**
the european quarters (with inhabitants, users
and other connoisseurs of the neighbourhood)
and the European Parliament
• **debate**
with guest speaker **Ricardo Petrella**
(professor at the 'Université Catholique de
Louvain' and consultant for the European
Commission)
• **inura members present ...**
lectures

23th may 2000
(bruxel at the méditerranée)
• **guided tours**
in Turkish and black neighbourhoods, under-
ground tour, architecture tour
• **debate**
with **Eric Corijn** (prof. dr. at the 'Vrije
Universiteit Brussel', filosofer)
• **inura meets nova**
filmscreenings / discussion at cinema nova

24th may 2000
(bruxel city of contradictions)
• **guided tours**
in 3 deprived neighbourhoods close to the
city center, 'sans papiers' tour
• **debate**
with **Henk Meert** ('Katholieke Univer-
siteit Leuven', faculty of geography)

25th + 26th may 2000
(retreat)

27th + 28th may 2000
(zinneke parade + chill out)

fort europe (bruxel capital of europe)

L'année 1988 est la date de naissance de la Région de Bruxelles-Capitale. Les habitants bruxellois élisent pour la première fois un Conseil régional et acquèrent ainsi leur autonomie politique. C'est au même moment que dans le cadre de la division internationale du travail entre les villes, les cercles économiques et politiques internationaux confèrent à Bruxelles-Capitale le rôle de capitale européenne.

Bien que la fonction internationale de Bruxelles-Capitale génère incontestablement une augmentation et une concentration de richesses et qu'elle joue un rôle moteur pour l'économie régionale et nationale, il est clair que cette richesse ne bénéficie pas de façon égale à tous les groupes et institutions de la société. En effet, on constate d'une part une augmentation frappante du Produit Régional Brut par Bruxellois et d'autre part une diminution relative du Revenu Imposable par habitant et en corrélation une diminution absolue du nombre d'habitants chaque année.

Depuis 35 ans que l'Union Européenne s'est installée à Bruxelles, la réalité quotidienne s'est traduite par une lutte acharnée pour l'acquisition des plus-values que l'Europe provoquera et pour l'acquisition du sol. De ce conflit d'intérêt sortent 'gagnants' les promoteurs immobiliers, petits et grands propriétaires... (bref, les acheteurs et vendeurs d'espace), tandis que le Bruxellois modal ne recueille pas directement les fruits de la présence européenne (ne fût-ce qu'en terme d'emplois), mais a, au contraire, l'impression de la subir.

Tandis que les 19 communes et la Région de Bruxelles-Capitale doivent demander des moyens supplémentaires à l'Etat fédéral pour assumer le rôle et le coût croissants de sa fonction de capitale (régionale, nationale et internationale), de nombreux paramètres semblent indiquer que les communes périphériques résidentielles en Région flamande et wallonne bénéficient des atouts de Bruxelles-Capitale.

Mais soyons clairs, Bruxelles n'a pas attendu l'Europe pour mettre son centre historique en chantier, éventrer ses vieux quartiers et remodeler ses boulevards dans une course essoufflée à la modernité. Le terme 'bruxellisation' est malheureusement trop connu. L'installation européenne aurait dû porter l'espoir d'une rémission; le Livre Vert sur l'Environnement Urbain (écrit par la Commission Européenne elle-même) propose de réaliser l'unité économique dans un environnement habitable, où chaque immeuble possède son propre passé, riche d'enseignement sur l'histoire d'un quartier ou d'une région.

"Ecrasante pour ses plus proches citoyens, l'Europe voit son quartier basculer aux antipodes de la géographie humaniste et généreuse qu'elle défend dans ses cénacles. Au nom de l'utilité publique, des cauchemars immobiliers écrasent peu à peu les rêves de démocratie et de transparence. L'ouverture d'esprit s'efface devant la monumentalité des cubes de béton, de verre et d'acier spéculatifs".

C'est le cri d'alarme que lancent les Bruxellois du quartier de l'Europe, les citoyens les plus proches de l'Union. Ils souhaitent consacrer la présence européenne en l'identifiant par un quartier vivant et habité. Un objectif qu'ils estiment *conciliable* avec le développement administratif, à condition de créer rapidement les structures de cohabitation appropriées.

Pour maîtriser les coûts sociaux, pour valoriser les effets multiplicateurs, pour bien accueillir l'Union Européenne et pour relever le défi de sa fonction internationale, la Région de Bruxelles-Capitale devra tout mettre en œuvre pour développer une politique novatrice et intégrée. La réussite de ce projet ne peut venir que de l'intensification du partenariat entre l'Union Européenne, l'Etat Belge, les Régions flamandes et wallonnes voisines et la Région de Bruxelles-Capitale.

L'avenir du quartier européen et la réussite de l'intégration des institutions européennes dans la ville, réussira ou échouera en fonction de l'intention qu'auront les pouvoirs publics de réellement mettre en œuvre plans et promesses.

source
"L'Europe à Bruxelles"
Etienne Christiaens

suite jourdan suite (bruxel capital of europe)

En 1981, nous avons acheté notre maison dans le quartier Jourdan. Volaitier, chemisier, tailleur, boucher, grainetier, légumier, fromager, boulanger-pâtissier... on trouvait de tout sur la place Jourdan. La population du quartier était très variée de toutes cultures et de tous niveaux sociaux. Vingt ans plus tard, beaucoup de choses ont changé. L'Europe et ses lobbies envahissent de plus en plus les quartiers dits européens. La spéculation va bon train et les bureaux se multiplient. De nombreux habitants ont fui cette avalanche de bureaux, de pollution, de circulation... De nouveaux cancrs en ont été le résultat. Les commerces de proximité ont cédé leur place à l'horeca et aux commerces de luxe traiteur, antiquités, ensemblier, agence de voyage...

Les maisons unifamiliales ont été divisées en appartements et flats. Les voitures se sont multipliées. Les habitants se sont regroupés en associations pour défendre la qualité de vie dans leur quartier : refuser la spéculation immobilière et la prolifération de bureaux, l'envahissement de l'espace public par la voiture...

Aujourd'hui, certaines rues sont encore habitées par des familles qui établissent des relations de bon voisinage avec les nouveaux venus souvent fonctionnaires européens eux aussi victimes de cet urbanisme anarchique. La lutte commune des habitants a parfois abouti à des résultats. Malgré l'image négative que l'on associe aux quartiers européens, il y a encore de l'espoir. Une zone 30 a été installée dans les rues avoisinantes de la place Jourdan, sous la pression des habitants la Commission Européenne a décidé de ne pas poursuivre l'extension de son centre de conférence, le parc 'anonyme' objet de toutes les spéculations immobilières a été affecté en espace public par la ville de Bruxelles. Le marché du dimanche matin est toujours aussi animé et attire les habitants des quartiers avoisinants.

En 2001, nous organiserons pour la 4^{ème} fois 'Suite Jourdan Suite' pour démontrer à travers le langage universel de la musique que des habitants et des fonctionnaires vivent et travaillent malgré l'ombre grandissante et menaçante des bâtiments administratifs. Car d'abord il y a la ville qu'on aime et le quartier qu'on habite, dont on veut défendre la qualité de vie. Ensuite, ou plutôt en même temps, il y a la musique qu'on écoute et qu'on joue. Pour relier les deux: Suite Jourdan Suite.

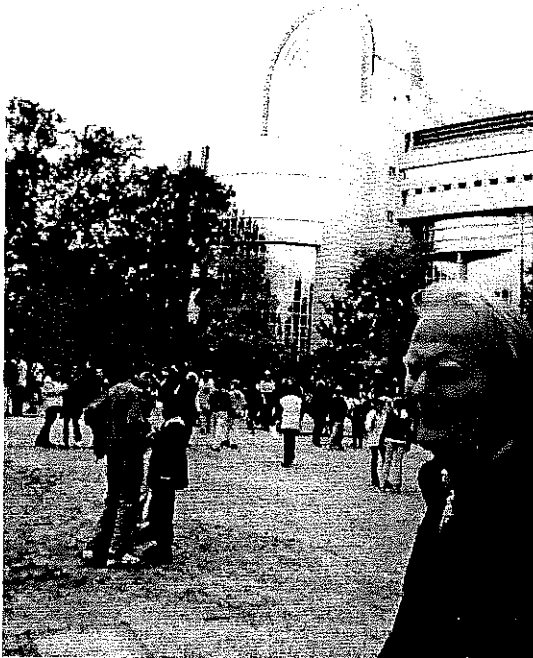


foto genomen door een van de deelnemers aan INURA 2000 bruxel
toutes les photos dans ce Bulletin 19 (sauf une; devinez laquelle) ont été
prises par des participants à la conférence

melting pot (bruxel at the méditerranée)

When building a society, the building of a cultural identity is a struggle. Brussels' residents live that reality everyday: they see the multi-ethnic reality around them. At the same time however, they receive extreme-right political advertisements in their mail opposing the multicultural society. Also, they experience every day how difficult and vivid the discussions are and how hard it is to really understand the "others".

We can say that culture is one of the most difficult things there is to understand. On the one hand, it is about values, attitudes and understanding what we share with everybody around us. On the other hand we use the same word ('culture') to divide people into groups: high and low culturally educated, more or less civilized, dominant culture, subculture, elite and popular culture...

Building a cultural identity in a multi-ethnic society, where we can perceive not only different notions of what is culture, but also of different social standards for the meaning of culture, is therefore very complex.

The common term 'culture' is very often based on nations; it has an historical reason. In 19th century Europe, nation-states saw to the unification of the nations cultural identity. Since then of course, a lot has changed (migrations, transport, globalisation...) and it becomes harder and harder to capture a nation's cultural identity without sliding off into stereotypes. In Brussels, it is almost impossible to name what is typical Flemish, French or German. In the city, the multi-national reality and the differences in lifestyles and consumption behaviour are more outspoken than the difference between the Flemish and the French. Tradition plays a minor part, changes happen quicker and new forms of 'métissage' appear in the city first.

This is why nationalists are opposed to this urban reality. Nationalists often see culture as something that separates their nation from other nations. That's probably why they want a capital full of national monuments but hate the new urban movements and cultural melting pot in urban surroundings. And this is what culture is all about. Making an identity of your own, taking into account your "roots" as well as the social reality in which you live.

We could look at culture as something consisting of many layers. Culture is the basis for our social life. In every day life, we are influenced by our cultural background, reactions and feelings. It structures our emotions and our interactions, which we experience as normal and evident.

Therefore we can not always value the consciences of culture on our daily life. Except, and this is most important, when the cultural expressions, reactions and characteristics are documented. This forms a second level. Parts of daily life and society inspire artists to create paintings, objects of use, stories...

These documents capture the times spirit but are on the other hand already filtered by the cultural standards of society, by personal emotions and, in many cases, by cultural institutions. They are filtered by cultural inequality and exclusion. Even if the cultural workers are willing and able to do so, they have little or no access to the images that capture and show this everyday life of minority groups. That's why many of the new initiatives, forms of métissages and less structured cultural expressions don't reach into our new-made cultural heritage (yet). The tradition stays selected, also because everyone has their ideal image of culture, and excludes in that way other influences. Also the people that have to grant subsidies, that run cultural centres, but also educational, economic and political concerns make out what becomes "selected" in the cultural tradition.

The difference between what is happening and what is "captured" gets even bigger if we make a distinction in live patterns, forms of (cultural) education, language barriers...

In Brussels it becomes even more complex because 5 different governments have their say in the fragmented cultural field. It is a democratic challenge to ensure every (sub)culture equal opportunities. In urban surroundings this is also a major challenge in the fight for a better city.

To be able to do so, to have a social and cultural mix in the city and the lives of its inhabitants is indispensable.

It is often said that by attracting large cultural institutions or by forcing different cultural groups² to neighbourhoods that normally don't make part of the "cultural standard", we might obtain this necessary mix. However, this is the ideal scenario. If these institutions could show an overview (or a cross section) of the society as a whole, the local shops, pubs, restaurants... are able to attract new clients, it could create new jobs and it could de-stigmatise poor neighbourhoods. In practice we find that it isn't easy to obtain these results. The socio-cultural gap sometimes gets wider, just by the lack of integration of the cultural centre and its visitors in the surrounding neighbourhoods and of other nuisance it creates (traffic...).

To obtain new cultural documents which contain elements of new cultures that can grow by the métissages in these urban surroundings, it is necessary to start off at an equal level between different cultural groups. If not we risk enlarging the incomprehension amongst these different groups.

For example, we saw during the 'underground tour' (see next page) how the collective that works at the Saint-Josse unemployment office take the dole drawers as basis for their work. They want to implicate the neighbourhood in their activities and work with them to enlarge the understanding between different groups of people and different cultures.

If we do not begin from what is existing and start up an entirely different dynamic, we risk creating an "island" in the urban and social texture. That is what would have happened if the plans for 'Music City'³ on the edge of Old Molenbeek would have been executed. That is what is happening in the municipality of Anderlecht, the Cureghem neighbourhood, where different groups of users of the Bara square, near the South Station, are not interacting. This makes different urban areas become either underused urban deserts or "places of struggle". In this last case, let's ensure there will be not to any innocent victims...



foto genomen door een van de deelnemers aan INURA 2000 bruxel
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¹ métissage (culturel): production culturelle résultant de l'influence mutuelle de civilisations en contact

² there is an important difference between "cultural" and "ethnic" groups: culture is obviously made up of a much broader background than just ethnicity

³ plans to rebuild the old 'Thurn und Taxis' site (which has great architectural and industrial-archaeological value and which is situated next to the popular 'quartier maritime') into an elite "Music City"; the plans contain a huge concert hall, studio's, hotel and shops, there was never a social return plan made up for the surrounding neighbourhood and so far no plan for the linking of the huge site with its surroundings

based on the text
"Cultuur, multicultuur en
stadscultuur"
Eric Corijn
in "Crossing Brussels" (VUB press 2000)

underground

(bruxel at the méditerranée)

'Underground in Bruxel' refers not to the subway system, but to a wide range of creative, vivid, inspiring, hybrid and eclectic, often politically engaged and small scale initiatives. Some prefer to call them 'new urban initiatives'. During the underground tour this name became clearer....

PTTL: plus tôt te laat

A collective of artists and unemployed people (most of them both) installed themselves in the dole office of Saint-Josse (one of the 19 Brussels municipalities) to undertake actions in which the notions 'work' (what is considered work? what is activity? what does it mean to be without work? is it the same as being without activity?) and 'public space' (the unemployment office as public space) are important. They invent new social practices by the use of video, stencil, posters... By these means they try to discourse the issues of work, being artist and the notion of public space.

One of the most important actions is to start a platform of artists to claim a valuable statute for artists. Another action is to communicate with the local habitants about the regeneration of the neighbourhood, to reach a true participation. This happens by video workshops, screenings and debates.

skaters and the meaning of public space

Young skaters gather at the 'Mont des Arts' (Kunstberg/Mountain of Arts: a would be connection between up and downtown, but an urban and architectural example of public space that is inefficiently planned and dysfunctional in its use). The city council tries to ban the skaters by forbidding these 'dangerous' activities on the Mont des Arts. Skaters don't form a claiming group who defend their interests, but their skating is a good example of what makes an urban space public. Skaters give the Mont des Arts the colour it so desperately needs.

Because the skaters don't form a claiming group, City Mine(d) contacted some of these skaters to do a big action (Skate Of The Art) on a sunny Saturday afternoon. The aim was to bring together skaters and professionals (architects, urban planners and politicians) responsible for the reconstruction

of the Mont des Arts. During this meeting, the skaters could explain and show the joy of skating and the real meaning of public space: a space that can be claimed by everyone, including skaters.

The action was a failure in that none of the invited responsible people showed up, but also a big success: 250 skaters occupied the Mont des Arts.

By the way, since the action, skaters are on the local political agenda of Brussels... an unforeseen spin off.

magazines: filling the gap between art and empty shops

'Magazines'(Fr) means 'shops'(E). "Magazines" is a small group of artists/creators who ask(ed) owners of empty shops to use their spaces and shopwindows. Two aims: the neighbourhood is less empty and more colourful by using these spaces, and the (mostly young and unknown) artists have a free platform outside the official regular art circuit. All kinds of artists are tempted by this challenge: photographers, designers, video-artists, and even dancers/performers.

By this work Magazines fulfils two purposes. One is to give (temporarily) usage to empty spaces. Empty shops are a problem in this particular neighbourhood (formally known as the gay quarter, in full regeneration, with nice cafés), as they create a feeling of disinterest and desolation. The other gap they fill is for young artists in search of a platform and an audience. Installing their art in a display window gives the largest, most mixed audience you can imagine: the (accidental) passer by.

les bains : connective

A group of artists and creative people from diverse disciplines, got permission from the owner of an empty swimming pool, to use it as a workspace in exchange for renovation. Their work form is "connective": non-hierarchical, side to side connected in 'pools'. Everyone is a volunteer and anyone can join 'Les Bains / Baden', as long as there is a form of exchange and solidarity to construct and to continue the project.

Les Bains has nothing to do with a program based cultural centre, but everything with an open workspace where exchange on all levels is possible. They try to be as open as possible to community which is not evident in this poor area. The municipal swimming pool of Forest/Vorst stood empty for years, after being used as an expensive discothèque, a cynical fact in this poor neighbourhood. After the artists got in, the local youth (who used to be refused at the discothèque) still kept this negative image of the building. This a priori plus the fact that artistic work in a deprived neighbourhood is never simple, doesn't make easy the work they want to do. Also, in this deprived neighbourhood the artist is often seen as a replacement for failing social work and absent mechanisms of participation on all levels....

Some places we did not visit (lack of time) but are interesting however:

la Perrucquerie

'La Perrucquerie' is a squatted house used as a meeting and exhibition place. The house is a former wig factory occupied by a collective of (mainly) photographers. It's a well known and cosy meeting place. Every Friday evening there's a little event and a 'table d'hôte' which means something like guest table: it's about food of course, but other than a restaurant it's non formal and not commercial (and sometimes you have to wait very long before you have your ordered meal...). Interesting about La Perrucquerie is that it's a squat, but they don't promote the place like this, because they want to accentuate the creativity. This is different in other, more politically orientated Brussels squats.

PS: At the moment this bulletin is edited, 'La Perrucquerie' does not exist anymore. The owner showed up after years of absence... and sold the house.

Cinema Nova

Cinema Nova is an alternative, non commercial cinema, entirely managed by volunteers. Nova started 5 years ago as an experiment to create a place where undistributed films could be seen.

The cinema is situated in a former (film)theatre. They obtained a contract with the owner to use the space for free for one year. Meanwhile the project turned out to be useful (there's definitely an audience for such cinematography discoveries) and became a longer term project. The programs are presented by themes, going from more abstract themes like 'work' to social/political engaged themes: a program around the former Soviet states, around the Berber culture and so on.

Meanwhile, Cinema Nova has reached a large audience, but the different levels of government in Brussels don't follow. There still is no structural support. The reasons are manifold: the project is too political, the profile is not clear enough (Nova is more than just a cinema, it's also a place for meeting, debate, concerts etc), and the language profile is neither Flemish, nor Francophone (which is -unhappily- important in Brussels).



foto genomen door een van de deelnemers aan INURA 2000 bruxel
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mind the gap (bruxel city of contradictions)

During the INURA 2000 bruxel conference, we visited deprived neighbourhoods in the core of the city. The "19th century belt", around the city's economic and tourist centre, is the place where the socio-economic and ethnic diversities and contrast are most outspoken. Molenbeek, where we stayed, Saint-Josse, Cureghem and Matongé are all in a similar situation.

In all the above mentioned (and visited) neighbourhoods we can see more or less the same phenomena. Not surprisingly, they share a great deal of the same history: the very chaotic and poorly planned Brussels urban changes of the last decades, the growth of transport possibilities, change of economic structures and new processes of economic development, sub-urbanisation and immigration...

These neighbourhoods are often situated right next to the city centre, and yet seem disconnected from it. The urban motorways and office building are not only separating commuter workers and Brussels' residents, they are also isolating a lot of Brussels neighbourhoods from the rest of the city.

If we take the example of the Saint-Josse tour, where we visited the mainly Moroccan and Turkish shopping street 'rue de Brabant', the isolation was alarmingly obvious. It is literally cut off from the city centre and the 'quartier Nord' by the railroad. Too little (and too gloomy) exits. Of course, this sentiment is strengthened by the huge difference with the adjacent neighbourhoods (remember the tunnel between the rue de Brabant and the business district around the North station, showing its back to this popular neighbourhood so commuter workers don't have to look at it).

We must not only see this separation in terms of physical isolation, but also in terms of the urban socio-economic dynamic. To reconnect deprived neighbourhoods it is indispensable to make them feel part of that dynamic. A physical connection is an important condition psychologically to connect with more positive urban processes.

Although the polarisation of the city is growing, and it seems very hard to turn the tide, residents of the neighbourhoods we visited all told positive tales. The "urban narratives" they gave us, showed that firm engagement and belief in positive, cultural, artistic, humorous and humanistic resistance can nourish the possibility of change. They will create new impulses and dynamics between people and neighbourhoods which are essential for positive urban development.

Ilias in Saint-Josse, Toria, Catherine and Abdelatif in Cureghem or the 'comité the quartier' in the 'quartier Maritime' in old Molenbeek, are all proof that a good and positive resistance can break barriers and prejudices. More, it will create new urban dynamics, better knowledge, understanding and appreciation, new cultural and urban identities. By keeping on turning the errors of the past into 'hotbeds' for new ideas and constructive actions for an evenly balanced urban society, those people believe that the richness of the urban life will contribute to the closing of the gap. So do we.



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the retreat (grandhan =)

A romantic farmhouse (or should we call it a castle) at the countryside... a pleasant environment for a walk... a tennis court... culinary 'tour de force'... One might think this is a luxury holiday, but no, it's the INURA retreat.

Brussels is often seen as a grey and boring city. INURA bruxel wanted to get its chance to prove the contrary. Alas, it rained cat and dogs. So we left with all these pets (but in a super de luxe charter car) to Grandhan. Somewhere on the 'campagne wallon', in a beautiful renovated farmhouse from the 17th or something-like-that century. Not 'par hasard' the parental headquarter of one of the Belgian INURA members and Chiffon (the dog).

Time is on our side ... at the country side. Time to present papers. Time also to wander around, to chat, to flash on the free mason content of the environment (the millennium turn can now officially be considered as The Year that free masonry invaded INURA) and to enjoy Judiths innovative culinary 'tour de forces'.

Last but not least we had the traditional social event. This time there was no old t-shirt filled with foam rubber to play an international football contest. No, we went for the big do: original decoration (Christines parents signalled us they were desperately seeking the Christmas lights afterwards), a disc jockey (the one and only Thibaut) and even a VJ especially flown over from Italy.

Excesses, alcohol abuse and other acts of boisterousness we had to do without. To the full regret of the local brewer. And what about the wine? We managed to consume that ourselves (of course).



inura 2000 bruxel participants

in order of appearance (not)

Ahmed Allahwala, Berlin
Alexis Lebreton, Caen
Andreas Schneider, Baden
Anna Lisa Pecoriello, Firenze
Arie van Wijngaarden, Amsterdam
Beatriz Garcia Peralta, México
Benoît Raoulx, Caen
Bob Colenut, London
Camilla Perrone, Firenze
Chiara Wolter, Milano
Christian Schmidt, Zürich
Christine Goyens, Brussel
Claudia Schwarz, Berlin
Connie Carr, Berlin
David Frantz, Caen
Dragan Zivancevic, Novi Sad
Erik Swyngedouw, Oxford (heel efkes)
Fred Robinson, Durham
Gene Desfor, Toronto
Geraint Ellis, Belfast
Gerben Van den Abbeele, Brussel
Giancarlo Paba, Firenze
Gil Doron, London

Grand merci à tous les Bruxellois qui ont collaboré à INURA 2000 bruxel. Special thanks to all the 'Brusselaars' who were involved in the different city tours. Dikke kus.

Giovanni Allegretti, Firenze
Glenn Jenkins, Luton
Jens Sambale, Berlin
Karen Wirsig, Toronto
Karl-Otto Richter, Rostock
Laurent Mori, Firenze
Lorenzo Tripodi, Firenze
Louanne Tranchell, London
Luca Bertolini, Amsterdam
Marie-Eve Cosemans, Brussel
Mark Saunders, London
Mark Trullemans, Brussel
Marvi Maggio, Torino
Musefiu Olatundi Lamidi, Ota
Philipp Klaus, Hinteregg
Raffaele Paloscia, Firenze
Richard Milgrom, Toronto
Richard Wolff, Zürich
Roger Keil, Toronto
Sandra Brieger, Rostock
Stef De Corte, Brussel
Stefan Kipfer, Toronto
Tom Dumez, Brussel
Ute Lehrer, Toronto

Bruxel onder het mes

Stadsbewoners die hard nadenken over de stad, ze bestaan. En het hoeven niet altijd academici of filosofen te zijn. Ze hebben zichzelf nu ook op Internationaal niveau verzameld in het International Network for Urban Research and Action. Bedoeling is dat professoren (zoals bijvoorbeeld VUB-prof Stefan De Corte) en actievoerders (genre City Mined) actie en research naast elkaar leggen en zo uit elkaars ervaringen leren en oplossingen zoeken voor stedenbouwkundige problemen, knelpunten in de mobiliteit of milieuverontreiniging. Dit jaar vindt de conferentie in Brussel plaats (vorig jaar in Glasgow). En dat is voor de organisatoren meteen een ideale gelegenheid om aan de buitenlandse gasten (uit Europa, Canada, Mexico, ...) Brussel in al haar diversiteit te laten zien en er-discussies over-los te weken. Ook de Brusselaar kan er wat aan hebben want op 22, 23 en 24 mei houden drie experts een lezing over Brussel, telkens om 15u30. Eerst komt Riccardo Petrella (UCL) aan de beurt met 'Bruxel, Capital of Europe', dinsdag volgt Eric Corijn (VUB) met 'Bruxel at the méditerranée' en woensdag spreekt Henk Meert (KUL) over 'Bruxel, City of contradictions.' Overigens: dat Brussel zo geschreven wordt, is meer dan een gimmick. Het is een samensmelting van Bruxelles en Brussel en het spaart plaats in tweetalige teksten, zo leggen de organisatoren ons uit. *Groovy!* In de marge van de conferentie kan je van 11 tot 28 mei in Cinema Nova doorlopend terecht voor videofilmpjes en documentaires over de grootstad, geheel en al gratis.

'Inura2000 Bruxel: Urban Contrasts' van 20 mei tot 28 mei. Info bij Brusselse Raad voor het Leefmilieu: 217.56.33

Des experts mondiaux découvrent, ébahis, un quartier européen dévasté. Et plongent, cette semaine, au cœur d'une question: Bruxelles?



C'est étonnant que vingt ans plus tard, les leçons du quartier Nord n'aient pas été tirées! Sur la mer de béton que surplombe le Caprice des Dieux, à l'arrière de la gare décrépie du Quartier Léopold, le vent fouette les dernières illusions d'Arie van Wijngaarden. En charge de la politique de l'habitat à Amsterdam, l'affable Hollandais a retrouvé Bruxelles après dix années d'absence. Arie arpente le pavé européen en compagnie de ses nombreux collègues. Médusé: *Chez nous, ce genre de temple de verre arrogant au centre-ville serait tout simplement inconcevable.* Philipp Klaus, urbaniste zurichois, n'en revient pas non plus: *C'est la première fois que je viens ici comme spécialiste. Quel chaos! Est-ce un hommage à René Magritte?*

L'Europe et ses quartiers dévastés par la spéculation foncière, l'Europe et son trio d'institutions plantées comme d'immenses cerises sur un gâteau immobilier où les dents creuses aiguisent les appétits les plus fous, tel était le cadre du premier parcours décoiffant organisé hier matin à l'occasion du congrès mondial du Réseau international de recherche et d'action urbaines (Inura). Venus des quatre coins de la planète pour sentir les palpitations de Bruxelles, ces profs mâtinés de culture underground semblaient sous le choc:

Je n'aimerais pas vivre ici, remarque Dragan Zivacic, de l'université de Novi Sad (Serbie). *Ces quartiers se sont développés au travers des désirs des institutions sans tenir compte des habitants. Il n'y a nulle part, dans ce que je viens de parcourir, une échelle humaine.* Dragan traverse la rue Belliard, pénètre avec ses congénères dans le Parc Léopold. *Au début du siècle, c'était un zoo,* précise le guide. *Oui, s'esclaffe Dragan,*

c'est pour ça qu'ils ont y ont mis le Parlement européen!

En tête de cortège, Christine Goyens, membre du Bral (Brusselse raad voor het leefmilieu) dessine du doigt la rue Godecharle, rasée. Elle retisse la mémoire de ce «Bruxelles Requiem»: *Rodin venait travailler dans un des nombreux ateliers d'artistes. Ils ont tous été détruits. Et on attend depuis dix ans les logements promis en compensation. Les milliards investis dans les bureaux ne sont jamais un problème. Les millions devant être réalisés en logements en sont toujours un...*

Chercheur au CNRS de Caen, le Français Benoît Raoulx n'a pas besoin d'un long discours pour comprendre un des fondements de la crise urbaine bruxelloise: *La fragmentation des pouvoirs et des institutions qui intervient dans la décision favorise le marché immobilier et a pour conséquence d'augmenter les inégalités sociales,* note-t-il. *Il y a tellement d'acteurs publics que l'action semble impossible pour mener une politique digne de ce nom. Heureusement que vous avez un tissu associatif riche pour s'ériger contre cela.*

Face au «mail» qui s'échoue rue de Trèves, un patchwork de slogans collés sur les palissades fait écho au constat de Benoît Raoulx. Mille et une signatures anonymes tentent de redonner une dignité à une cité atteinte de cécité. Au hasard, cette interrogation belle comme l'amour qui fleurit sous le soleil printanier: «Ma ville en chantier me donne-t-elle encore envie de chanter?»

CHRISTOPHE SCHOUNE



Le berceau d'une nouvelle

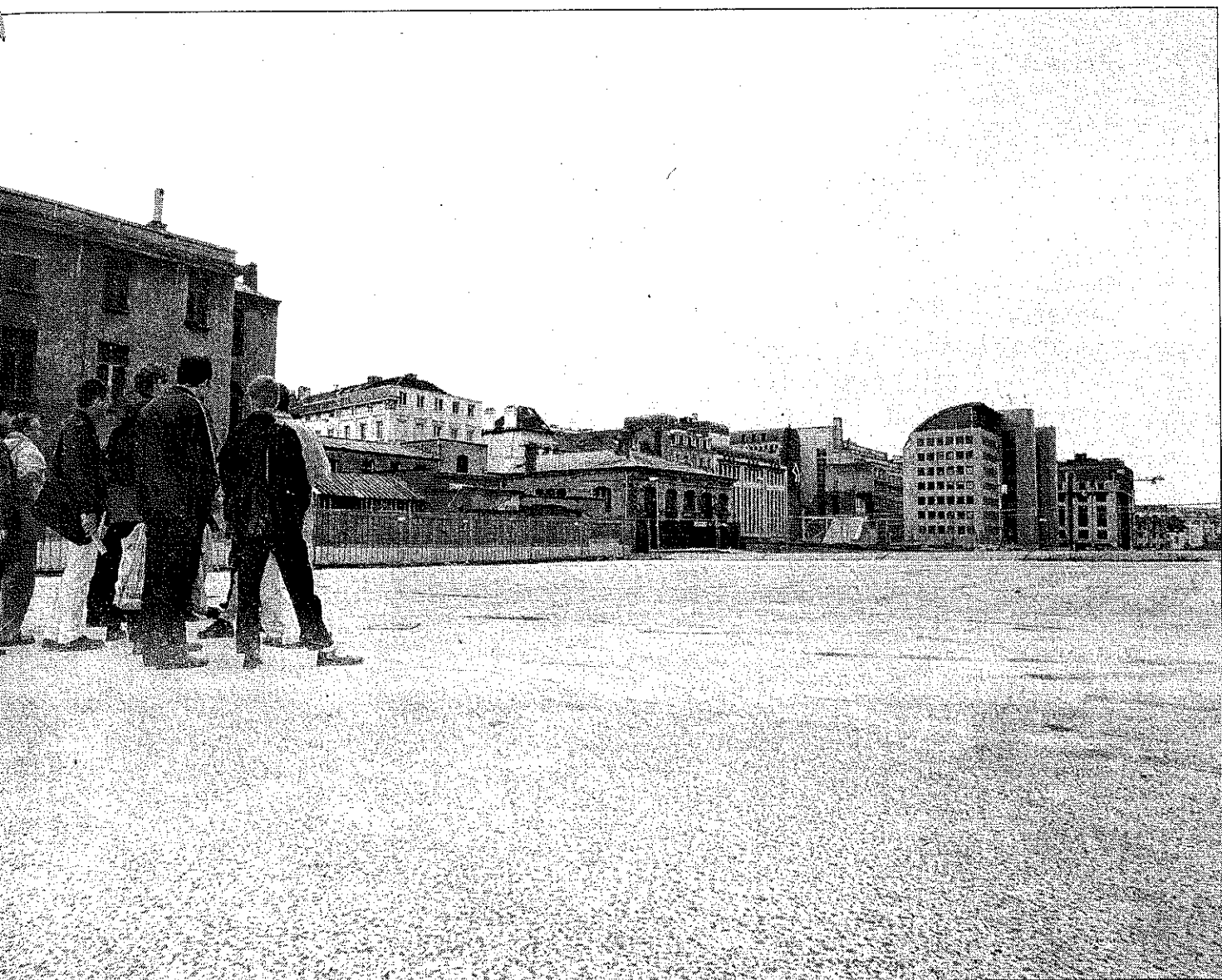
Urbanistes militants, académiciens ou artistes... Le Réseau international de recherche et d'action urbaine (Inura), basé dans neuf pays, se singularise tant par sa diversité que sa méthode d'action: une approche vivante du terreau dans lequel s'enracine les problèmes analysés, à des années-lumière des congrès soporifiques. Organisé dans le cadre de Bruxelles 2000, qui a pour thème la ville, Urban contrasts affiche cette maxime presque réaliste: «Ceci n'est pas une ville.»

Nous ne menons pas un combat contre Bruxelles, mais, pour Bruxelles, nuance Stefan de Corte, cheville ouvrière du réseau en Belgique et chercheur à l'institut de géographie de la VUB (Vrije universiteit Brussel). *Notre travail vise à créer des visions fortes et diversifiées de la vie urbaine future. C'est pourquoi nous accordons autant*

d'importance au travail et qu'aux productions médiatiques, expériences vécues sur le terrain, les congressistes. Chaque est guidée par des habitants des quartiers. Après engageons des débats.

Ce qui frappe le spécialiste? C'est d'abord le contour d'une des capitales les plus mondiales où près de 14% de la population vit en-dessous du seuil de pauvreté dans les communes. *La concentration spatiale importante de la population est encore plus spectaculaire. On tient compte du fait que la population est étrangère, et de Corte. Cette population du droit de vote. De large. l'anneau étroit qui entoure la ville proprement dit sont habi-*

apant sur une ville plurielle



Le Soir du mardi 23 mai 2000

Face au Parlement européen, à l'arrière du Quartier-Léopold, les congressistes ont « apprécié » la mer de béton. Photo Dominique Duchesnes.

lle culture urbaine

il académique
diatiques et aux
le terrain avec
que expédition
habitants et usa-
rès quoi, nous

aliste à Bruxel-
Contraste entre
plus riches du
% de la popula-
seuil de pauvre-
centrales:

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culaire lorsque
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arges zones de
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habitées par 50

à 60% d'immigrés. Cela signifie que près de 70% de la population n'ont pas voix au chapitre politique.

Contrairement aux actions d'autres comités, les associations d'habitants de ces quartiers n'ont pu faire en sorte que leurs problèmes soient remis à l'ordre du jour, constate Stefan de Corte. C'est pourquoi Inura inscrit cette question prioritairement à son agenda: L'objectif de notre congrès est de montrer que ces quartiers sont très vivants, pleins d'humour et comportent des chances d'avenir bien plus grandes qu'on aimerait nous le faire croire. Aucune ville comparable à Bruxelles ne compte autant d'habitants d'origine étrangère. Bruxelles est donc le berceau idéal pour de nouvelles cultures et initiatives urbaines.

Ch. Sc.

Une cité très contrastée

Organisé conjointement par le Bral (Brusselse raad voor het leefmilieu), par l'association City Mine(d) et par le département de géographie de la VUB, le congrès «Urban Contrasts» a jeté ses bases dans une ancienne usine de la rue de l'Atelier, à Molenbeek, remise à neuf par des chômeurs. Outre les nombreuses visites de terrains réservées aux congressistes tout au long de cette semaine, trois moments sont ouverts au public. Le premier, en présence de Ricardo Petrella, professeur à l'UCL et expert à la Commission, a eu lieu hier après-midi. Il reste donc deux rendez-vous gratuits:

«Bruxelles à la Méditerranée.» Ce mardi 23 mai, à 15 h 30, rue de l'Ecuyer, 5, 1000 Bruxelles (bâtiment

de Bruxelles 2000). Débat public sur le thème de la multiculturalité bruxelloise avec Eric Corijn, professeur de philosophie à la VUB.

A 20 heures, présentation de documents sur des projets alternatifs dans plusieurs villes du monde (Turin, Londres,...) au cinéma Nova, rue d'Arenberg, 3, 1000 Bruxelles. Ces documents sont visibles en continu jusqu'au 28 mai.

«Bruxelles, ville de contradictions.» Débat public à 15 h 30 avec Henk Meert, chercheur au Fond de la recherche scientifique à KUL, à l'auditoire de l'Institut Chomé-Wijns, rue Chomé-Wijns, 5, 1070 Bruxelles.

Renseignements:
Bral, 02/717.56.33.
e-mail: inur2000@vub.ac.be

la habana

(inura members present...)

urban regeneration and community development a project for La Habana, Cuba

Within the Laboratory of Ecological Designing of Settlements (LAPEI) of the University of Florence there exists an operating department, the aim of which is to back up the theoretical and methodological research work with some planning experiences in specific contexts in developing countries. Through them an attempt is made at putting into practice and experimenting the territorialist approach towards ecological transformation. This approach is based on the idea of sustainability and articulated on various levels, from the production of environmental quality to the giving of true value to the local identity and resources to be brought into action through revised forms of self-government on the part of the inhabitants and the settled community.

One experience which is presently under way is the La Habana/ Ecopolis project. It has been inserted into the problematic transition phase which Cuba is at present going through.

This project has been promoted by a consortium made up of three Italian NGOs (CRIC, COSPE and Terra Nuova), Legambiente and LAPEI and by numerous Cuban partners coordinated by the Grupo para el Desarrollo Integral de la Capital. Its aim is to sustain from an economic, technical and managerial point of view, a number of initiatives put forward by local institutions and grass roots groups working towards an ecological transformation of Habana.

At the time of writing the project is composed of a set of initiatives on the part of the Provincia Ciudad of La Habana, which have sprung from differing realities. 5 of the 15 municipalities of Habana are involved, each of which, through aiming at replying to the specific needs expressed on the spot in different areas of action has thus become an important element in that overall vision of urban re-qualification which is being pursued.

In order to unfurl the innovative potential of the project, it was decided to run, alongside these initiatives, a integrated pilot project of urban regeneration.

The aim of this was to start up a general process of sustainable ecological transformation in a specified context and to form in the short-middling term, a point of reference for other initiatives heading in the same direction.

The barrio Colón was chosen because of its many extremely serious problems (very high density of population, serious building decay, very precarious conditions of the infrastructures, lack of green areas) but also because of its high potential: it is situated adjacent to La Habana Vieja, the ancient core of the city, which is an important tourist attraction; the buildings are of high historical quality and architectural interest; the population is made up of many different cultures and many different religions; there is a presence of spontaneous grass roots groups, of busy commercial routes and numerous empty spaces which could be re-utilised for collective use.

The elements which characterise the pilot project should be:

- the integrated approach towards urban re-qualification aimed at experimenting, in one single territorial reference situation, the practicability of the set of objectives laid down in the general project: the development of community participation on various levels and at various stages in the project; the recuperation and the functional reorganisation of the physical structures, the re-establishment of environmental balance; the apportioning of the true value of local identity and culture, the boosting of the economy of the local community based on the available human resources; the safeguarding of a dignified level of existence for the entire population especially for the most vulnerable;
- the dual character of the action dedicated to tackling the present emergency situation but which, at the same time, does not however fail to look towards the future and beyond its own existence: on one hand experimental, aimed at going more deeply into the themes which are relevant to research into new and innovative methods of action, in a process of ecological transformation articulated in phases of short and middling periods; on the other hand operational, designed to give even minimal results, but which are immediately practicable in situations in which specific action would seem urgent and indispensable.

Raffaele Paloscia
LAPEI
Università di Firenze

porto alegre (inura members present...)

a lesson of urban democracy from the southern world

Porto Alegre is an almost 1 and half million town in the Southern Brazil. At the same time it's a conventional and special town within the general frame of the 9 Brazilian metropolis. The processes of urbanisation in the latest century are really typical, with a strong gap between formal and informal town, and a metropolisation phase that destroyed a big part of the territory. On the other hand Porto Alegre is strongly characterized. First by its geo-morphological structure, that generated a fragmented *puzzle-town* with artificial 'urban fabrics', second by its political history and *social heritage*. Since the XIX Century it was the see of independentist riots, a privileged place in the fight against slavery, a strong attractive pole for immigrants coming (especially from Italy and Germany); and it was always a town swimming 'against the stream current', electing mayors and governors distant from the 'centre' of country-based politics. During the beginning of Twentieth Century there was a 40 years period of stability in political choices, and this gave the opportunity to a 'positivist administration' to create the first global Town Master Plan of Brazil (in 1914), that was able to draw the main strategic choices to all the planning system till now.

In Porto Alegre since 1955 there had been many mixed councils and popular committees participating to the municipal life; but often "community" members were nominated by government authorities or, at best, NGOS, trade unions, universities, and businesses associations. The history of managing Porto Alegre appears that of a progressive 'refilling of meaning' of a large series of democratic institutions, often created as an empty façade by technocratic or dictatorial regimes, and taken with time on a substantive importance until the creation of an entirely "bottom-up" system of participatory governing in which openly elected forums have a great deal of deliberative power over an expanding number of policy arenas.

Along the century, the Societies of Neighbourhood Friends (usually founded by poor inhabitants of the informal town) arose, generally choosing the street of negotiation and compromises with the political class through the work of aggressive local leaders part of the typical Brazilian paternalistic and clientelar system. During and soon after the 1964 military Push, one of the centre of riots was the opposition to the articulate eviction program *Eradicating for promoting*. A significant change of name transformed the old Societies of Neighbourhoods' Friends in *Associations of Inhabitants* that joined in 1983 in the UAMPA, an umbrella organisation that tried to promote the formation of new groups of women, the new educational politics and the development of cooperative enterprises. Throughout 3 city congresses, UAMPA moved alternative proposals of public politics, influencing the leftist political parties during the new democratic electoral campaigns in 1985 and 1988, and proposing a bottom-up divisions of the town territory in districts linked to their 'insurgent' articulation. In 1986 purposed also a still undefined idea of a radical change giving a concrete role to the popular organisations in decision making about distribution of financial resources. Here intervened the strong political will of the PT Workers Party (winner of the 1988 elections) whose essential mottos were: *popular participation* to decision making and *inverting priorities* for the advantage of citizens till then substantially ignored by political powers, such as the 400.000 leaving in slums in the slopes and hillsides.

PT was able to support a widespread citizen participation and de-ideologise it, not thinking it was a realistic goal only after social inequality and political alienation have been already eliminated, but using participation as an 'engine' to diminish these inequalities 'in progress' and facing the contradictions between utopian aspirations and present day conditions. The idea was 'rebuilding active citizens with full rights' before rebuilding the town. Together with the popular movements, the new City Council created a new democratic process of decision making that could represent the chain-ring to join the bottom-up work of the grassroots organizations and the top-down reformist movement that in the same 1988 gave birth to the new Brazilian democratic Constitution and to his interesting chapter of 'Urban reform'.

(1.)

So took shape the 'Participatory Budget' (OP), with a structure focusing on including as beneficiaries not only the organized workingclass sectors, but also the unorganised, informally employed poor and the middle class, whose votes were necessary for any alliance that could guarantee an electoral survival.

Today OP is a system of decision-making that gives power over public resource allocation to forums elected at neighbourhood level assemblies and at open thematic meetings. It runs in parallel with the official electoral system foreseen by national laws, but in the 'praxis' is quite stronger than it. It's not a process with a pyramidal structure, but a sort of web structure linked to different levels of local and thematic arenas. At the top of the participatory scheme there is a Municipal Budget Council, elected in open assemblies, which has final say over the entire budget proposal that the mayor sends to the city council for approval, harmonizing popular requests with technicians' proposals. The people representatives called 'neighbourhood delegates' are elected proportionally to the participation of each estate (in order to reward the participation), the 'councillors' are 2 for each of the 16 regions of the town, for a major equity during the phase of distributing resources all over the territory. Alongside the budget forums, most city departments have also formed special councils in areas such as transportation policy, housing, culture and health care; they are all open to the participation of ordinary citizens, requiring neither special technical qualifications.

It is a man-centred system, where the city has been self-divided into 16 regions and 77 official estates by the same inhabitants, according to their ideas on 'urban identities' and 'sense of belonging'; local organisations have no see, but they refer to some elected delegates or to the 'Inhabitants Associations' already existing on the territory. Only 5 Administrative Regional Centres serve as link to the decentralized municipal structures.

This system has grown in scope and power over time, at first largely addressing decisions about community level capital expenditures and eventually gaining through time a real decision-making power also on service and maintenance programs and personnel issues, who were initially kept out from 'popular power' in order to counterbalance decisional powers.

Over the last 11 years that the PT has held office in Porto Alegre, citizen participation has been in constant expansion, arriving in 1999 to over 35,000 people, thanks to the demonstration effect of concrete and visible infrastructuring investments. It succeeded to restudy a new Master Plan together with the citizens, to give more 'sustainability' and a stronger frame to the different emergency actions. Now this system has been applied -with good results- at State level, and 70 towns around the world are trying to emulate it: a European Net (with see in Lille) was also born to try to study its replicability in Europe, and the World Bank and the UN recognized in several occasions the importance of the reached goals.

The intervention at INURA 2000 bruxel focused on different sides and effects of the 'Participatory Budget' process, that demonstrated that building a successful process of large-scale democracy is possible also in a metropolis and not only in small villages or neighbourhoods, and that is possible to train democracy also on complex subjects usually left to the so said 'technicians'. The given paper underlined also the importance to figure out 'virtuous experiences' coming from the Southern World, especially from where local public powers were so humble to give an institutional 'shape' to programmes and project coming from the civil society, the urban movements and the grassroots organisations, without destroying their autonomy and independency, and - what's more important - without 'freezing' their ideas into a bureaucratic frame.

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self managed

(inura members present...)

possible urban world for a self managed development of cities

erased and gated cities

There is a town made of prohibitions, chains, gates, walls, electrified fences, police controls and charges, prisons, video cameras, that are the physical expression of exclusions and hierarchies, of class division and of erasing needs not validated by the establishment. A town that aims to defend privileges and exclusions, a pattern of society and of use of spaces, of land rent and profit. A large number of needs do not find an answer because they have not solvency on the market or because they require to put into practice values contrary to the dominant ones.

But at the same time, a set of practices that are outside the dominant culture, that oppose the capitalistic market and the reduction of everything to commodity, and that support self management, born, start relationships, live together, cooperate, confront each other, clash in the ravine, in the empty spaces, in the territory that the power is not able to control. Sometimes the needs are seen in their immediacy, in other cases there is the ability to place them in the national and international situation and in a comprehensive analysis and proposal.

Let the insurgent city emerge, means highlight its value in foreshadowing possible urban worlds, able to answer to a variety of needs and desires socially widespread.

The possible urban worlds are potentially inside the desires, the needs, the practices of who oppose to the present situation...

insurgent cities: towards possible urban world the research of the university of florence

The research *"Florence Insurgent City @ Micro-histories and cartography of change of the insurgent city"* was proposed and is directed by Giancarlo Paba (INURA and University of Florence¹).

The research describes, interprets, uncovers and brings together the unknown 'insurgent living practices' that could develop (and sometimes have developed) in insurgent planning practices. The research is interpreting the alternative social and territorial 'energies' present in the Florentine territory i.e. the 'thousand of tiny empowerments' that are already in action or that are potential. We are studying, recording and showing on maps the spatial effect that all these alternative places and new social practices perform on the spatial organisation of town and territory. The result of our work will then be available on a website. In this way we want to give visibility to them and to help them network.

The geography of tiny affirmative actions include:

- the network of social centres and alternative places;
- squatted houses and self-renewal projects;
- the "wild zone" and the marginal places in which social relations and practices can develop outside the rule of the capitalistic market and the dominant civic society;
- alternative social practices as active part in urban transformation;
- maps of the urban strategies towards survival and self-affirmation;
- the "other" net: the communication system and the creation of alternative culture in the Florentine area (radios, journals, alternative media, arts, performances, e-magazines).

The practices of the insurgent cities are characterised by being affirmative, by being able to propose alternatives to the current situation. Being aware or not, they presume to adopt 'other' logic and values compared with the one of the dominant society. The needs, the motivations and the desires that are the elements of the insurgent city do not find a satisfactory answer, accessible to all, neither by the capitalist market, nor by the state. They require the practices of empowerment, participation, direct action, self management and self production.

(1)

The character of being alternative to the current situation follows the values practised, sometimes in a selective way by each of them: social equity; observance of the human and social rights without discrimination based on class, gender, culture, age, physical conditions; affirmation of the 'right to the city' and so to the access for everybody to the territorial resources without bar based upon the property right and purchasing power; to go beyond the logic of profit in the production and of the capitalist market in the process of circulation of goods and services; freedom of expression, self affirmation, self management; respect of the territory as research of a sustainability that is at the same time political, social, economic, environmental and territorial.

All these situations and practices have a territorial effect, a place effect.

place effect

The place effects regard dynamic spatio-temporal social relations that imply a weaving and a dialectic relation, unfold in time, between territory and the agents of the insurgent city.

The place effects are at the same time physical, social, economic and symbolic: they have connotations of a certain continuity, as the new uses and the building and urban renewal, and by mobile characters, as the conflict between values or meanings that fight to dominate, justify and stabilise their presence. They are held in building and urban transformations; in territorial phenomena, as the start of new relations between parts of the territory, with attraction effects on flow of persons and activities and the spread of relations network at the local and over local level; in the life histories of individuals, collectivities and social groups; in the changes of the perception of places and of the meanings given to specific areas and so in the innovation of the individual, collective, and social imaginary; in the individual and social geographies and mental maps; in the spaces

of conflicts between use values and exchange values, between urban plan and projects directed from above on one side and participation and self management on the other; in the symbolic and artistic expression and in the urban design chosen.

The spatial category that houses insurgent practices are: empty urban spaces, border (overcoming of), interstice, saturated space, spatial density, temporal density and have to be crossed with indicators of insurgency: values/needs/desires/motivations, relationship, conflict, memory.

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¹ the group consist of Giancarlo Paba (coordinator), Anna Lisa Pecoriello, Daniela Poli, Giovanni Allegretti, Camilla Perrone and Marvi Maggio, Lorenzo Tripodi and Francesca Rispoli (Centro Popolare Autogestito, South Florence) and can be considered an INURA common project, with a mix of activists and researchers

in west africa (the globalisation of inura)

data and information base for sustainable transportation planning and implementation methodologies in west africa

A baseline is essential for defining impact networks and validating models of transportation systems planning and management. This paper evolves scientific strategic that seek to understand the existing complex interactions between transportation and socio-economic factors and land use in promoting human welfare on a sustainable basis. The fundamental problem is a lack of scientific precise data and information, knowledge and understanding, required for effective development of efficient transportation management plans in West Africa. Generally, there is a poor knowledge about the functioning of socio-economic, parameters and transportation management.

Little is known about the interactions and interdependence between their dynamics and responses. Urban transport in particular is being depleted due to lack of up-to-date data necessary for building proper and sustainable management policies. Sound policies and decision making require accurate spatial information. However, information collection, analysis, management, sharing and dissemination are very weak in West Africa's transport planning. Reliable data are further required on the growth rate of the population, labour force, travel needs, available transport modes and modal split, car ownership ratio, car occupancy rate, and land use, trip generation, and attraction. It also aims at setting framework for socio-economic and transport infrastructural/land use data, with the utilisation of the following environmental information. These include, population and its density, related indicators, projected population density, urban and rural populations, economic indicators such as the gross domestic product, land use activities and energy use. Projections of socio-economic and land use conditions will be used as scenarios of future conditions and not treated as predictions.

This paper suggests the application of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and the development of integrated socio-economic and land use change scenarios. The impacts should be put in the context of socio-economic and technological change such as demographic change, land use change, land degradation, pollution, economic, social change, technological development change and poverty. On this basis, integrated assessment will be attempted, which draws together the interactions among sectors and forces of change, and at vertical, horizontal and spatio-temporal dimensions. GIS has potentials for supporting baseline surveys, transport infrastructure resource inventories, impact assessment, analysis of alternatives and land use/environmental monitoring.

Two types of output/results are expected: a collection of data on transport interlinked with GIS socio-economic parameters and enabling transportation planning using GIS data on transport and land use degradation.

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asian cities

(the globalisation of inura)

context of urban research

Today cities both in the North and the South are victims of unsustainable pattern of urban development, with damage to ecology and environment. The 21st century will be an urban century with Asian Megacities dominating - 15 out of 30 largest cities in the world in 2000 and 18 in 2015. In most of Asian cities, squalor and decay are side by side with grandeur and glamour - poverty, population and pollution are in agenda of problems with health, hygiene and housing. Yet a city is an oasis in the desert of rural poverty. Large cities contain most of urban population of the country.

Conventional urban planning doesn't work in Asian Megacity where population increases by 3 to 400,00 per year. Yet the cities are on the path to economic boom often at the cost of ecological doom.

And globalization has come. The French Revolution had a bye product -the rise of bourgeois class and globalization is creating a new elite class- colaberger dot com society with a high level of consumption. City is no more a community but a commodity. How far the ideology of consumerism has affected and replaced other ideologies ? The Chinese leader Deng Xia Ping said 'The colour of the cat is unimportant as long as it catches mice'.

Expensive urban development with high rise towers, flyovers underground transit etc go side by side with sanitation improvement in slums and health programmes. Physical land use planning has no meaning and environmental programmes become essential with participatory development. The culture of ecology becomes pivotol point in the new triangle of physical -technical, socio economic and ecology- environmental paradigms. While fundamental changes are required in urban systems - Asian cities require solar energy, recycling of waste, cybernetics and information technology etc.

Cultural diversity is to be preserved with preservation of character flavor and nature. Urban fringe becomes vulnerable. Very large Asian Cities cannot be considered in isolation - agriculture and rural hinterland become part of it. As the daytime population increases and as electronic information and entertainment go to rural surroundings, the fluidity of communication becomes essential guiding factor of environmental design. Urban research in Asian Cities in the context of above perspective will be different.

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inura matters + news from zürich

In Zürich we are following two paths of INURA work. We are continuing our efforts of setting up a professional INURA office (the INURA Common Office), extending the work we are already doing for the Network's needs. On the other hand we are developing a Zürich-based, local INURA Institute.

The current state of affairs is as follows:

inura common office

The INURA Common Office will continue the work INURA Zürich has been doing for the last ten years.

Tasks which we have fulfilled in the past year include: regular updating of the memberlist • answering questions about the network and specific issues • interconnecting people (networking) • preparation of a new INURA brochure (out in February 2001) • installation of a HomePage • maintaining and updating the HomePage • coordinating the production of an INURA video • consulting INURA conference organisers • correspondence with new members • contacting organisations for collaboration and finances • contacting institutions • writing articles about INURA for the Bulletin and other publications/conferences • INURA book reprint: correspondence with contributors, editing house etc. • representing INURA at conferences (IFHP Rotterdam, Local Heroes 21 and Urban 21 Berlin, Transdisciplinarity Conference 2000 in Zürich) • managing participation of INURA members from low-income countries.

All together we spent about 200 hours for these tasks in the year 2000.

The INURA network will continue to operate -as usual- as the nerve center of the network. In addition, there are plans to strengthen the network. We have been talking about this issue and possible approaches for many years. We have started to implement some of the ideas for a stronger and more efficient network: the INURA homepage, a new brochure, and the INURA video.

And there are many more ideas for the network: services, information, contacts, support we could and would like to provide. But there is a limit to what unpaid labor can do. Therefore, and to give a somewhat more stable foundation to the network, we are looking for ways of financing the INURA Common Office.

We have already approached various institutions and organizations with a request for financial support. We have talked to EU-officials and representatives of national and international foundations in order to obtain recognition and finances.

inura zurich institute

The INURA Zürich Institute will collaborate with local action groups, it will engage in research, teaching, and consulting, and it will organize events. All of the activities of the INURA Institute will be based on the INURA principles.

Financially and structurally the INURA Institute will be totally independent of the INURA network. The network will continue to operate as it has always done. So, in addition to the network, there will be an institute committed to the INURA principles, working locally on a fully professional base. The INURA Zürich Institute may well be the first one in a series of more such INURA Institutes world wide. To make sure that the label INURA is not misused, the annual INURA conference keeps control over its use.

We will keep the INURA community informed about any future developments of the institute. It will surely be an issue of debate at our next annual conference, September 24 - 28, 2001 in Florence.

**Philipp Klaus +
Richard Wolff
INURA Zürich**

inura video

To introduce and to present our network with all its achievements in the most appropriate way we have designed a new INURA brochure, we have established an INURA website and we are currently editing an INURA video.

The video will explain our network, its principles, its aims, its members, its activities. Thus, the video will serve as a sort of calling card, which can be used in a variety of ways. And it will be available to all INURA members. In November 2000, at a special INURA video meeting in Zürich, the "editing group" (Mark Saunders, Stefan de Corte, Richard Wolff, Philipp Klaus, Christian Schmid, Andreas Hofer, Hansruedi Hitz, with email support from Marvi Maggio) we discussed the raw cut and decided on a final version of the video. As this second phase still requires quite some work, we have agreed to find additional finances for Mark Saunders and Spectacle. With this aim we have written a special letter, asking for financial contributions to the video. We sincerely hope that in the future this video will help us to raise funds for INURA activities.

Richard Wolff
INURA Zürich

inura 2000

The year 2000 was a quite successful year. The culminating event, of course, was the conference in Brussels, Belgium. INURA Brussels made it possible to have a rather intimate insight into the problems and beauties of the EU capital. Very interesting discussions and inputs enriched the stay in Brussels.

We could extend our network to new members in Asia (Calcutta, Hong Kong) and Africa (Nigeria) and we hope that we can involve the South more and more in our network. Welcome to all new members!

INURA was invited to organise and chair two workshops at the IFHP annual conference (International Federation for Housing and Planning) in Rotterdam.

The workshops were entitled: Global Networking Urban Communities and Social Justice / Local Initiatives. Participants from 21 countries discussed these issues on the 11th and 12th september in Rotterdam.

Another conference was held in Berlin called URBAN 21. This conference tried to get UN-Status but did not. The optimistic view of the situation in the world's cities was astonishing. Overpopulation was told to be the main cause for poverty and hunger. Education through computers and internet and the eco-car were two of the remedies the "World commission Urban 21" suggested. Best practices, model cities, new governance and participation were some of the expressions which demonstrate the ruling narrative in urban affairs. The character of the so called "World Report on the Urban Future 21" is very much expressed in the following sentence: " We believe that technological progress and economic globalization will prove to be on balance benign forces, helping resolve the dilemmas of developing cities today".

The gap between the rich and the poor is widening and more efforts are needed to fight the processes leading to it. Local action and networking must go on. Some of our members had good results in 2000 like Exodus in Luton or KraftWerk1 in Zürich (www.kraftwerk1.ch). In the summer of 2001 about 350 people will move in the KraftWerk1 to live, work and spend good times. Also the INURA Common Office will settle in the office/workshop building of the KraftWerk1.

Best wishes to you all

Philipp Klaus
INURA Zürich

(meanwhile in bruxel...) street sharing[©]

now with 50% less cars

After the press conference held by the Brussels Mayor in May 2000 (about the participation of the Brussels City Council in the European Carfree day) every hope of a carfree city centre on the 22nd of September had vanished. Why did the local government not want to participate in this European initiative? Fear of angry reactions by the shopkeepers? Sympathy for the car lobby? Who knows. Anyway, the City Council didn't feel like interrupting (not even for a moment) the daily carflow to Brussels, 2 weeks before the local elections.

In almost 700 cities all over Europe big parts of town were shut down for car traffic in order to fully enjoy less polluting alternatives: strolling, cycling, public transport... A car free zone in the heart of town, an everyday reality in cities like Gent (B), Mechelen (B)... but also Kopenhagen (DK), Strasbourg (F) and München (D), seemed not possible in Brussels, not even for one louzy day. No wonder Brussels keeps on struggling with traffic jams, road unsafety, noise, air pollution and health problems.

Dissatisfied by the very minimalistic official approach of this European initiative, many inhabitants of Brussels felt like putting their shoulders to the wheel. With the slogan "the street can actually be shared in a nice way" (hence the term street sharing) and with the support of over 80 Brussels organisations, pedestrians, cyclists, skaters, skaters (whatever) got together to claim their place on the streets.

Street sharing turned out to be a great success. For the first time in history 2000 two-wheelers and two-footers gathered in a massive and colourful demonstration. In the evening a non motorized pageant through the city centre resulted in a gigantic streetparty until early in the morning, attracting loads of people strolling downtown.

The car was put in its proper place. After the elections some journalists mentioned that the conservative view on mobility of the Mayor was one of the main reasons for the unexpected shift of coalition in City Hall (from Liberal-Labour to Labour-Green).

More and more Brussels residents just had enough of King Car and expect the city to be finally rethought in order to drive back car traffic. The groundstudies exist (for a long time already). It's only a matter of implementing them.

Damn. It's hard writing in English.

(to be followed)

Our video-activist Mark Saunders (and others) recorded the demonstration. The tape (probably) will be shown at the next INURA meeting.

inura 2001

firenze

11th annual inura conference

RIGHTS AND FIGHTS

networking urban communities and actions

Florence, Italy

September 24th - 28th 2001

pre - announcement

A new decade is starting for INURA. Time to evaluate our outcomes and to think about our future common projects.

The key characteristics of INURA have always been connecting research and action and networking people and groups fighting for urban rights i.e. social, cultural, economic and environmental rights.

Networks, aiming to build a multiplicity of alternatives to the present and connecting different urban actions, shall be the issue that will be discussed in this next INURA meeting in Florence.

The meeting will be articulated on the basis of some key urban conflicts and community alternatives:

- exclusion;
- communities;
- urban movements;
- insurgent creativity.

We shall meet representatives of different networks that adopt different practices: from the more institutional ones to ones built up by the alternative urban movements. We shall have also a round table, open to the city, with key theorists to rethink together questions as globalisation, social fights, conflicts and possible alternatives.

We shall spend two and a half days in Florence and two and a half days for the retreat in the countryside. We understand that there is a common will to have time enough to rethink collectively our future common projects and networked actions.

Looking forward to see all of you

INURA Florence

inura membership contribute to the health of the network

Everybody being a member of INURA knows the advantages of being involved in a network like ours. Even though the network is based on a huge amount of non-paid work it needs a certain amount of money to keep a minimal administrative infrastructure running. If you did not yet pay membership fee 1999 and 2000, you still can! And do it for 2001!

You can see on your Bulletin address-label whether you did pay 2000 or not. We keep non-paying persons two years on our addresslist. Afterwards they are removed from it.

membership fees (in Swiss francs)

individuals, informal groups	30,-
institutions	200,-
reduced fee*	20,-

donations welcome

Please choose one of the following modes of payment:

- Bank to Bank payment (any currency) from your account to the account of INURA: Wolff, 3516-8.082824.1, Zürcher Kantonalbank, CH-8037 Zürich, Switzerland;
- Eurocheck (SFr only) to INURA: Nordstr. 151, CH-8037 Zürich, Switzerland;
- Post to Post payment (any currency), from your post office to Postcheck account of INURA: 80-207996-8, CH-8037 Zürich, Switzerland.

Do not send personal checks !
(they are charged with 10 SFr commission)

Thanks

Philipp Klaus
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