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ID 1490 | CRITICAL DISTANCE IN URBAN PLANNING. WILL SMART, SUSTAINABLE AND RESILIENT NARRATIVES SAVE OUR CITIES? INSIGHTS FROM DELHI METROPOLITAN AREA

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ABSTRACT: New Delhi is the second largest megacity in the world with a population of 26 million inhabitants (United Nations, 2016). Its metropolitan area is under severe vulnerabilities due to the lack of control of planning instruments on urban transformations. Needs in housing, resources (water and energy), infrastructures, transports, public services (health and education) among others are definitely going beyond local and regional government response capacities (Kapuria, 2014). Planning efforts, policies and regulations seem to have been instrumentalized under distinct historical moments, namely colonization, state control over land and nowadays capitalism and globalization. This led to the advent of an unplanned urbanism, with its extreme consequences and risks. It is intended to establish this nexus by revisiting the key planning moments in Delhi along with its different socioeconomic, cultural and political frameworks across time. Finally, we draw conclusions on how contemporary urban development models such as 'sustainability', 'resilience', 'participated governance' or 'smart cities' are being framed, perceived and applied under the context of Delhi urban planning instruments, policies and research. It seems that these narratives are serving as means to achieve specific goals by different drivers and actors. The discourse of sustainability is used to sell gated urbanizations for higher income classes, situated in greened areas, far away from slums and pollution. Resilience and horizontal governance is pursued by the state as a mean to make citizens resistant and accountable to deal with city problems withdrawing public institutions from its own responsibility. Smart Cities Agenda is based on a huge investment on technologic

information systems (Delhi is home to many ICT companies) on the hope to end mobility and pollution problems, leaving aside the fact that 77% of Delhi population live under poverty, in precarious housing or without infrastructure (sewage systems, water distribution and services) (Kushwaha, 2016). It is intended to highlight the importance of this reflection for a deep rethinking on concepts and practices in urban planning field, specially in what concerns its normative generalization without taking into account the influences and consequences of distinct political, social,

1 INTRODUCTION

New Delhi is the capital of the Indian state situated in the North of India between the states of Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan. Its designated metropolitan area, Delhi Capital Region (DCR), extends over 1483 km². Three moments seem to have triggered urban transformation in what concerns its population explosion and urbanization rate. A first moment corresponds to the transference of the administrative capital from Calcutta to Delhi during the colonial period that attracted population by the creation of a new institutional and economic dynamism; a second moment corresponds to the Independence of the country in 1947 and to the partition between Pakistan and India that led to a massive transfer of populations between the two states, with countless Hindu refugees moving to Delhi; finally, its affirmation as an important urban center on a global scale and the polarization of urban-regional development that resulted in the rural exodus and a dramatic growth of the metropolis in the last five decades (Sharma and Joshi, 2015).

From 1.4 million inhabitants in 1950 Delhi population increased up to 18.6 million in 2004 and 25 million in 2011 (Mookherjee et al, 2015). These three historical moments of growth and urban expansion also correspond to specific planning policies, plans, regulations and governance frameworks developed under distinct political social and economic settings, namely colonial planning driven by the interests of the British empire, modernist planning powered by post-independence socialist democracy, and, more recently, what might be defined as a 'neoliberal planning' moved by global economic liberalization. Through consultation of the Delhi Master Plan 2021 (DMP 2021) we found that only 24% of the population lives in considered legal areas, with the remaining 76% of the population living in unauthorized areas. By making a comprehensive reading of planning evolution in Delhi it is possible to establish links between planning options and the proliferation of an informal city (parallel to the planned city) where a network of urban vulnerabilities and 'failures' settled across time (Bhan, 2013). Firstly the paper establishes this nexus by revisiting key urban transformations in Delhi relating them with planning options that have emerged in distinct socioeconomic, cultural and political contexts. Secondly some considerations will be made on how contemporary concepts such as 'sustainability', 'resilience', 'participative governance' or 'smart cities' are being framed, perceived and applied under the current context. Finally, some conclusions will be made on how urban planning practices, policies and regulations can be 'colonized', influenced or distorted by different political, economic, and cultural regimes across time and what is the importance of this reflection nowadays. This preliminary essay resulted from literature review, consultation of planning/policy tools and the analysis of a set of interviews conducted to researchers from several disciplinary fields and to state institutions related to urban planning.

2 A REVIEW OF PLANNING PRACTICE IN DELHI METROPOLITAN AREA

2.1 THE COLONIAL CITY - THE GARDEN CITY OF THE POWERFUL

In its origins, Delhi corresponds to a set of fortified nuclei or 'cities' founded by the Mughal Empire with the capital city in Shahjahanabad (Old Delhi). It was already possible to observe a social hierarchy 'embedded' in its physical structure; in the citadels, at the top, would live the clerics or administrators and in the outskirts, or outside the walls, in densely built areas, the remaining inhabitants (Blake, 2002). British occupation did not invert this tendency to urban stratification, on the contrary, it deepened even more. First established in Old Delhi (1803), the British soon started to develop areas outside the walls, such as the Cantonments (areas with military functions) and the Civil Lines (residential areas) initiating a path of physical and social demarcation from the Indian population (Guerrieri, 2014). A crucial moment in Delhi history was the decision to transfer the colonial capital from Calcutta to Delhi (1912), due to the partition of Bengal and the rise of nationalist attitude against the British occupation in Calcutta. It became necessary to design a new city, able to 'perform as a political symbol' and strategically respond to imperial interests of stabilization, a city that would be able to confirm its importance near the old capital of the Mughal Empire (Ridley, 1998). 'New Delhi' Lutyens plan was the first planning instrument that addressed the new capital, embodying the hierarchies of the colonial system and India own cast culture, in what appears to be a transference of Ebenezer Howard's city-garden movement into the Indian urban context (Sudjic, 2006). In contrast to the densely-occupied 'Old Delhi', where mixed land use coexisted with a large cultural diversity, New Delhi was planned as its opposite, a low density city with wide avenues to accommodate car traffic,

green areas to combat the extreme climate and a new urban order based on the spatial division of its social structure according to "race, occupational rank, and socio-economic status" (Hall, 1880, p.217 ; Stamp, 2017). Designed as a representation of the colonial power, the plan clearly demarcated three distinct areas: the government complex, the commercial district and the bungalow zone. The first typologies constitute institutional and economic enclaves, the last typology currently called Lutyens Bungalow Zone (LBZ) being a residential area exclusively for white members of the colonial government (Jalil, 2011). Colonies were another important typology introduced by the British. Corresponding to the definition of 'neighbourhoods', first served the purpose of housing English settlers but their model has been replicated over time, filling the interstices between a colonial and a post-colonial era. They are simultaneously a physical aggregator of the metropolis and a way of housing segregation (Guerrieri, 2014). It is important to note how the Garden-City model based on principles of social progress and environmental concerns that emerge under a scenario of precarious working and living conditions in British industrial cities was appropriated and transfigured into an urban model based on social segregation and the representation of colonial power (Choay, 1983, pp. 339). In the 30's (XX Century), the bipolar nature of the city becomes clear, with the imperial, comfortable and planned New Delhi on one side, and the congested Old Delhi on the other side, where informal mixed-use occupations proliferated (dwellings, shops and small industrial units), but also diseases (tuberculosis, malaria) leading to a high infant mortality rate (Mehra, 2013). Over population and urban densification coupled with insufficient sanitation structures end up compromising public health. In 1937, Arthur Parke Hume was made responsible for the first attempt to solve the accelerated city growth through the development of Delhi Improvement Trust (DIT) (Priya, 1993). This instrument was intended to improve road infrastructure, sanitation and waste treatment systems, but above all to eliminate slums by building new neighbourhoods to meet the needs of a homeless population expected to rise up to 200 000 in a fifteen year projection (Mehra, 2013). Hume was influenced by the principles of Patrick Geddes and advocated a technique of 'conservative surgery' - what may be called today 'tactical urbanism' -, defending rehousing before demolition, the controlled removal of degraded housing and the organized extension of informal zones. British Central Government resisted the idea of addressing informal areas through the planning system by opting for an alternative scheme, based on developing new neighbourhoods for high-income classes, in order to finance housing for the poor in a later phase (Legg, 2008). This strategy failed to meet its objectives, not only due to continuous delays, but mainly as a consequence of succeeding events, independence and partition between India and Pakistan (1947), that led to a huge population influx. Overall in the colonial period the urban development model was based on the interests of the British Empire. Indian people had minimum influence in policy or decision making across administration scales, western city models as garden-city movement were used exclusively under aesthetics of power and environmental concerns, aggravating social discrimination processes and generating a bi-polar city, New Delhi (planned for government and administrators) and Old Delhi (not addressed by planning systems).

2.2 THE METROPOLIS OF AN INDEPENDENT STATE - THE 'OFF MODERN' CITY

As the efforts for a unified India failed, extreme violence and an unprecedented migration of Sikh and Hindu refugees from Pakistan to the capital occurred. The jump from a city to a metropolis seems to have started here. Between 1941 and 1951 the population increased from 700 000 inhabitants to 1.4 million inhabitants and the area of the city doubled (Dupont, 2011). The spread of slums and informal areas is paralleled by the lack of multiple infrastructures due to a context of weak regulation and control over the urban form. In response, the first Delhi Master Plan (DMP 1962) was developed as a result of a partnership between Delhi Development Authority (DDA) and the American Ford Foundation that was already supporting the country in the process of institutional modernization and policy development. It is not surprising that the Ford Foundation was concerned about the deep inequalities related to cast, religion and ethnic issues, especially if taken into account the role of Communist rule in China and the conflict between Soviet communism and Western democracies in the 50's (Staples, 1992, p.6). According to Ghosh (2013) the main social policies in the Indian context (including food security, education, job creation, health and anti-poverty programs) aimed specific groups with some 'political voice' in order to control possible social conflicts. This did not allow the production of a coherent policy of social and economic development, proving itself susceptible to disputes and disregards of the law (Thynell et al, 2010).

DMP 1962 was therefore influenced by the American school of planning in the 1960s, in domains such as urban regeneration, functional planning or zoning, following also the trends of Indian development policies in the early decades of the independence (1950s and 1960s) based on an interventionist state and social-driven policies able to promote some capital redistribution and economic diversification (Banerjee, 2009). The general trends established by the plan included the development of a green belt and seven satellite towns, called 'Ring-Towns', in order to simultaneously divert and contain urban growth by decentralizing population, housing, commerce and industries to the periphery (Ewing, 1969). Furthermore, a new land policy drove public acquisition of large areas required for houses and other land uses in an attempt to match supply and demand without any private assistance (Srirangan, 1997, p. 37). The plan provided also the resettlement for a part of the population in the so-called resettlement colonies, strategically located near new residential and industrial zones but they lacked infrastructures, quality and appropriate space to accommodate Indian families (Mookherjee, 2015; Thynell et al., 2010). The DDA

purpose, influenced by western modern vision, was to foster 'flow inducing urban forms' capable of reversing the concentration trends which were considered responsible for disease outbreaks alongside with the precarious sanitation network. Within this context, English legislation, known as 'nuisance laws', was perpetuated with the aim of controlling 'Indian behaviour'. Also sanctioning proceedings and regulations were set up in order to control the indigenous form of producing city that was imminently informal, constantly negotiated and where the boundaries between public and private spaces were blurred (Kishore, 2016). Soon the first Master Plan of Delhi became obsolete. In 1971, the growth of the city had already largely surpassed the numbers forecasted. Industries and commercial spaces had spawned and housing needs increased from 150 000 (in the 1960s) to 380 000 (in the 1980s). Approximately 1.5 million people lived in substandard houses or in expanding slums (Priya, 1993). The first master plan, DMP 1962, was the object of multiple criticisms: it was accused of miscalculating the proposed densities (based on American cities), and it was said to idealize a "model city, prosperous, hygienic, and orderly, but failed to recognise that this construction could only be realised by the labours of large numbers of the working poor, for whom no provision had been made in the plans" (Baviskar, 2003, p.91). The American planning team blamed the failure of planning with the overload of bureaucracies, jurisdictions and leadership changes, and also to what they have defined as an Indian 'repulsion to planning'. On the other side, Indian authorities, refer the 'plan maladjustment' to the cultural and social reality of India, its inability to respond to the speed of economic and social transformations that the metropolis was subjected to, including powerful migratory flows (Banerjee, 2009). The monopoly of public control over land led to constraints regarding the proper development of urban land and plan implementation, causing an inflation of urban land prices and resulting in a constant subversion of DMP 1962 (Srirangan, 1997, p. 53). The expansion of informal areas, the eviction of slums during the state of emergency (1975-77), the proliferation of unauthorized private colonies and, more recently, the expulsion of small industries due to court orders, determined the absence of a specific living, economic and industrial centre, giving rise to mobility problems and urban pollution proliferation (Véron, 2006). The second and third planning instruments proposed by the DDA in 1985 (National Capital Region Planning Board Act) and in 2001 (Delhi Master Plan 2001) were mainly acts of revision of the first MPD 1962. Modernist planning based on principles of zoning, urban regeneration and public interest over land was endorsed as a mean to materialize the capital of an Independent India driven by social policies (housing, food security, education, job creation, provision of public services), concerns on capital redistribution in society and the diversification of economy. If modernist views were vastly contested in the west for its homogeneous and simplistic views of society and for not having paid attention to the contexts where they were applied, in Delhi its translation traduced in the general failure of planning. Constraints in the proper development of urban land, maladjustments between the plan and Indian cultural reality, the exclusion of the poorest communities through the displacement of their dwellings, small industries and commerce and the constant subversion of the plan gave rise to an unplanned city parallel to the planned city in response to population needs.

2.3 THE GLOBAL MEGACITY - THE CITY TO ALL AND TO NONE

The shock in oil prices due to the Gulf war forced the country to request for immediate help in 1990 to the International Monetary Fund (IMF). In exchange for its loan, the Indian government was obliged to make structural and macroeconomic adjustments, easing the inflow of foreign capital through a new legislation and police framework. The investment in rural areas fell from 14.5% (before the reforms) to only 6% of GDP in 1998, which, together with the liberalization and mechanization of agricultural market, resulted in a decrease of agricultural employment and rural nutrition problems, triggering a massive migration of population from rural areas to cities in search for employment (Patnaik, 2004). Almost simultaneously deindustrialization occurred in cities like Delhi due to the growing importance of other Asian countries. Millions of immigrants who arrive everyday in Delhi mainly integrate the low-paid informal economy or see their efforts to obtain a job forged (services sector demand is mainly for graduated workers), thereby increasing the number of slums and worsening the already existing social inequality gap (Ahmad, 2013).

As Mike Davis points out in 'Planet of Slums' "the Third World now contains many examples of capital-intensive countryside and labour-intensive deindustrialized cities where urbanization" is driven by the reproduction of poverty, not by the supply of jobs" (Davis, 2007, p.16). The most recent National Capital Region Plan (NCRP 2021) and Delhi Master Plan (DMP 2021) follow the context of economic liberalization and the aim of including the metropolis in the global economic circuit. Since 1985 to police and legislation changes in India influenced by global institutions as the World Bank and IMF promoted decentralization of urban governance, stimulated multi-sectorial private public partnerships (PPP) in urban management and provided a friendly framework for business (low taxes and relaxed regulations) in order to attract foreign direct investment (FDI) (Dupont, 2011). The most important spatial expression of these changes in Delhi (National Capital Region) was the proliferation of Special Economic Zones (SEZ), business parks, large real-state developments, shopping malls, public space revitalizations and large infrastructures (e.g. tube or highways) financed by private and public budget (Chatterji, 2013). The Asian Games of 1982 and, more recently, the Commonwealth Games of 2010 are paradigmatic examples of a series of World Events that triggered urban large-scale investments and new spatial configurations aiming

to project the city into the global network (Kennedy, 2015). Many of these transformations carried out on the name sustainability, modernization, quality of life or environmental concerns have contributed to the expulsion of a set of urban realities such as informal areas, rural settlements or small polluting industries with enormous social consequences. The small industries considered polluting were relocated or eliminated from the metropolis centre leading to the loss of two million jobs.

Simultaneously 3 million homes were demolished in exchange for resettlement (only for a portion of eligible families) in the city outskirts, far away from employment sources (Ahmed, 2011). Currently 77% of the population in precarious housing or without adequate infrastructure (e.g. sewage system) and only 24% of the population lives in legal areas according to DMP 2021. The rise of economic inequalities are mirrored by increasing social-spatial segregation processes. Public urban investment seems to have been used to attract more investment and to drive new urbanization processes not to solve structural problems. The consideration of cities as 'engines of growth', creating geographic unbalances between urban and rural territories (with associated massive migration fluxes) and intensifying urbanization are leading to disruptive impacts on resources and environment caring capacities. Delhi is considered to be the most polluted city in the world especially regarding PM2.5 particles responsible for the increased incidence of lung cancer, heart disease or bronchitis (Singh, 2016). In what concerns treatment of solid waste, existing landfills are already at their maximum capacity and 'Waste to Energy Plants' do not have technology to control pollutant emissions (Randhawa, 2016). According to Water police for Delhi - Draft (2011) the current need for water supply is roughly similar to the demand and the access to potable water isn't generalized leading to major scarcity events that will be aggravated as population increases. If, on the one hand, overpopulation is often targeted as the main cause of the city's problems, on the other hand, it seems to be what allows the development of large-scale urban investments or mega-projects (e.g. World Events). Migrants labour force was the main builder of the metropolis throughout its history, also providing the necessary services for its operation, namely through the informal sector (the most important in Delhi economy) (Srivastava, 2005).

This is the nexus of the 21st century in urban India, a huge population coming from rural areas, incorporating the informal economy based on low-cost labour and expanding the slums. Simultaneously occurs the spreading of special economic zones, luxurious shopping malls, large real estate developments for the upper and middle class.

3 URBAN PLANNING TODAY: CONCEPTUAL APPROPRIATION(S)

Through a comprehensive reading of the salient features of planning instruments (DMP 2021, NCRP 2021) and from going to the narratives resulted from the interviews we may observe that the structure of planning seems to be transiting from a perspective where the state and the 'plan' are the central actors in urban development and on the assurance of public interest (modern planning) to a 'market-driven' perspective based on territorial competitiveness, economic growth and to a standpoint where urban development results mainly of a negotiation between a range of different actors such as institutions, economic agents, communities and NGO'S has expressed by Awadhendra Sharan (Centre for Study of Developing Societies) in this interview excerpt:

"I do not actually see the plan to be a driving force, this idea of long-term planning, this concept of the plan makes no sense, 'that's gone' (...) Notice who is moving the speech? Certain institutions like TERI (The Energy and Resources Institute), CSE (Centre for Science and Environment), Ngo's that weren't present in the 1960s (...) other players that must be taken care of are the economic agents that arrange strategies to raise capital for example from Singapore or elsewhere, the banks, the financial system, these are powerful actors, who decide what projects to bring or not to Delhi. What I am saying is not that planning has disappeared, but the city is much more complex. If we want to look at reality today and try to understand it, the range of agents is much wider and we have to change our analysis in planning."

Following the trend of a broad 'negotiation' in what concerns the city's evolution, new instruments of participative governance have emerged as part of the urban governance reform introduced by 74 Indian Constitutional Amendment. Although this may mean an increased access from population to decision-making processes it's important to analyse the balance of power relations between different actors specially in the Indian context where cast, religion, and class are still determinant factors of social conflict and segregation. Scientific institutions, economic players or political agents may have a higher influence or become 'governmentalizing' than other social groups. This is an important factor in a city that has developed mainly through informal processes, mostly due to social marginalization produced by the exercise of planning itself. Also it seems crucial to question if extreme processes of urban vulnerability and the scope of social segregation can be addressed mainly through bottom-up approaches as expressed by Leon Morenas (School of Planning and Architecture - New Delhi) in this interview excerpt:

“I believed that bottom-up approaches could work but now I think the system is too big for bottom-up approaches to change anything. Having a community to participate does not imply that people accept their ideas. If you have different castes, for example, what will happen? How can we put the poor to participate? In the processes of public participation what is observed is that it has been used for the privatization of services and the transformation of citizens into consumers. If you ask me if I have faith in the decentralization of decision no because the experiences show that the poor in any case have been deceived”

Market-driven instruments as PPP (to reduce public expenditure) and regulatory incentives to attract foreign capital (FDI) are being generalized in development policies across the world and also in Delhi Metropolitan Area. The largest urban development program in India “Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission” (JNNURM) was based on these procedures. The program mainly included four financing axes; (1) Urban infrastructures and governance (UIG), (2) Urban Infrastructural Development Scheme for Small and Medium Towns (UIDSSMT), (3) Basic Services for Urban Poor (BSUP) and (4) Integrated Housing and Slum Development Programme (IHSDP). The (3) and (4) allowed the financing of rehabilitation or rehousing processes, as well as the development of basic infrastructures (water, sanitation and energy). The main allocation of funding (79%) was mainly done in (2) and (3), the ones responsible for the development of large urban infrastructures (e.g. flyovers, tube, roads) able to trigger intensive urbanization processes and capital allocation (Kapur, 2013). In fact this strategy is confirmed in the plans has demonstrated in this excerpt of DMP 2021

“(...) the basic policy of the Regional Plan - 2021 is aimed at accelerated development of the urban and rural areas. For this, infrastructure has to be substantially upgraded at local and regional level (both by the State and Central Government) in order to induce growth in these areas, specifically in identified settlements / Metro Centres. It is felt that this will make them more attractive for locating economic and allied activities and for attracting private sector investment”

In an eminently informal city with severe lack of basic infrastructures, ‘urban regeneration funds’ seems to be assisting private investment and economic growth in the form of new urbanization, while existing urban problems lay somehow forgotten. Rehousing programs are resulting recurrently in the furthering of population constraints has expressed by Debolina Kundu (National Institute of Urban Affairs) in this interview excerpt:

“Basic Services for Urban Poor was a government program that ran from December 2005 - March 2015. It constituted mainly a rehousing program for home provision. But if you go to these cities most of the houses are empty because they were built in the outskirts of the city, which resulted in an economic displacement. These areas do not have jobs and are not provided with public transport, the displacement takes 3-6 hours which creates severe constraints. The problem is that in slums the problems continue, there are epidemics, crises related to water scarcity. The supply of drinking water is only made once a week by tankers. In what concerns urgent urban interventions we need to act in the provision of services, basic amenities and controlling unequal growth, because there are people with a lot of money and there are some who have none and this gap is increasing. Measures must be taken because in the future this will lead to a severe economic and social crisis.”

If urban investment seems to be used mainly on the development of big infrastructures and the spread of urbanization, it is possible to observe the increasing entanglement of the ‘private sphere’ in the ‘public sphere’. Main services concerning waste, energy, mobility are being privatized and in some urban areas occurs the ‘complete privatization of planning itself’ where the state simply dismisses its role in urban development or as a public services provider, delivering them to developers.

“By a regulatory quirk, the land around Gurgaon was managed by a single agency, the chief minister’s office in the state of Haryana (...) It meant that developers’ plans in Gurgaon could be approved in a matter of days, not years. The result? Fast-track approvals for office parks, luxury condominiums, five-star hotels and golf courses. Half of the Fortune 500 companies launched satellite offices in the city’s gleaming high-rises (...) If you ask a regular person ‘Would you want to live in a city that doesn’t have a functioning sewage system or garbage disposal or a good network of roads,’ they’d probably say no,” says Rajagopalan. So the developers had to convince potential renters to say yes — by filling in the gaps in the city’s sparse public services themselves. A patchwork of private services emerges, but only within property lines. (Kedmeý, 2016, media article) Going again through the reading of MPD 2021 and NCRP 2021 it is interesting to note that the concept of ‘sustainable development’ constitutes a goal, however is not addressed through a systemic perspective appearing mainly associated with environmental issues and the management of resources such as water and energy. Each dimension has its own specific and pragmatic approach whether it’s the provision of housing, transportation, industry, trade and commerce, informal

sector among others, but the trade-offs between each one are not deeply explored. More than promoting inclusive development (taking into account that the majority of the population is poor, do not have access to basic services such as house, water, electricity) the plans and practices seem to pursue 'an exportable urban image' (similar to those of the western global cities), where concepts are translated more in 'embellishments' and less in solutions. A paradigmatic example is the Indian Smart Cities program. Its mainly technology-based and linked to automation of services such as waste management and mobility. In the case of Delhi Metropolitan Area, it will be implemented mainly in New Delhi, the part of the city that is better served by services and that is occupied by 2% of the population, namely ambassadors, public administration and an economic elite. Pravin Kushwaha (Centre for the Study of Science Policy, JNU) in this interview excerpt draws attention on the need to reflect upon the origins of the environmental discourse in India and how it has contributed for social unrest pointing out the need for addressing sustainability also from the side of social justice:

“The environmental movements were moved by the middle class, focused more on the preservation of nature, excluding people in this process, the discourse was to remove the slums.... There was a large slum on the banks of the Yamuna. 400 000 people were removed and then they built a park on its banks. Development has two faces, the physical transformation of the city and another part of the expulsion (...). The money for smart cities could be to regenerate other areas of the city, but we continue in the game of symbolic urbanism. The discussion on smart cities, has to do with technologies. The speech is that of automation, sensors, but this is not the way to understand sustainability. We have to think about environmental sustainability and social justice. We have to connect the environment issues with poverty issues without that it is impossible to address the issue of sustainability in South Asia and of course policy, politics is important. We have to question the imagination of sustainability in itself we can not see things on one side (...) It takes morality and ethics. We are doing and selling sustainable buildings but what does that matter?”

In what concerns the 'resilience agenda' and also the transition from centralized policies to decentralized community based policies it is possible to observe a certain 'precaution' in some academic circles related to the challenges that these transition of concepts and practices may pose to research and society; The risks of not addressing communities' real problems by imposing pre-defined research topics or the risk of 'state withdrawing' by the transference of its one responsibilities and accountability to communities has pointed out by Suruchi Bhadwal (TERI- The Energy and Resources Institute) and Pravin Kushwaha (Centre for the Study of Science Policy, JNU) respectively:

“There may be some fixed agendas in research and funding. In participatory approaches, when different stakeholders and actors are involved around the topic of resilience, may be the case that researchers have a certain agenda but may not be the same agenda has the community. Therefore, as a researcher or a person who is going to implement a certain project in a certain area, I have the duty to understand how to integrate these problems that are not related to research, these topics can't not be ignored”

“Community-based policies have sprung up against the idea of state domination in the 1970s, questioning central power... but over time we have noticed that this binary idea of the discourse bottom up/top-down in planning was sharpened, and the promoters of the bottom up advocated the disengagement of the state (...). I have to say the role of the state is not irrelevant because communities can not provide its total security, can not plan for more comprehensive social, economic, political and planning aspects.”



	Colonialism	Partition and Independence	Globalization
Development model	Colonialist Model by British empire interests. Discrimination based on nationality, race, social status or religion	State interventionism as a way of generating redistribution of capital in society and the diversification of the economy.	Neoliberal adjustments introduced in the 90's by PMU. Crisis as engine of growth, imbalance between rural and urban development
Governance and Public Policies	Colonialist-driven. India had minimal influence in policy or decision making in central or local government. Top-Down	Social-driven policies (food security, education, job creation, provision of public services) focused on specific groups with some 'political voice'. Top-Down with public consultation.	Market-driven policies in several sectors, transportation, water, waste, housing (PPP). Friendly environment to investment through decentralization and deregulation. Top-Down & Bottom up (State withdrawal from public assistance)
Urban Planning	New Delhi Lutyens Plan Planning oriented to the symbolic representation of colonial power. Influence of western city models, 'Garden City Movement' (Ebenezer Howard)- Lutyens Plan for New Delhi.	Master Plan Delhi 1962, National Capital Region Planning Board Act (1984), Master Plan Delhi 2001 Planning oriented through principles of zoning, functionality, urban regeneration and public land ownership. Influence of Ford Foundation, American School of Planning and Indian development policies in the early decades of independence	Master Plan Delhi 2021 Planning oriented to investment and global projections. Preference is given to infrastructures able to follow intensive urbanization processes on behalf of rehabilitation or rehabilitating processes Influence of IMF and World Bank
Urban Vulnerabilities	Socio-spatial discrimination based on nationality, race, social status or religion Bipolar City - New Delhi (Planned for government and administration) vs Old Delhi (not addressed by planning systems). Lack of infrastructures, public services, health issues	Contrast in proper development of urban land, Maladjustment between the plan and the Indian reality. Exclusion of the poorest community's livelihoods through the peripheralization of their dwellings, small industries and commerce. Subversive City- Expansion of an unplanned city parallel to the planned city in response to population needs. Plus- problems, mobility issues	Socio-spatial segregation based on income, education, caste and religion. Exclusionary city - Poverty enclaves social side by side with wealthy exclusionary enclaves Plus- scarcity of resources and environmental threats.

Figure 1- Synthesis of Delhi urban transformations across time

4 CONCLUDING REMARKS

Plans, policies, legislation, governance models and even knowledge (technical and scientific expertise) in Delhi urban planning practices have been always convened to materialize normative views by different political, socio-economic, and cultural regimes throughout history. The colonial period influenced the polarization between a Mughal-city (Old-Delhi) and colonial capital (New-Delhi) promoting a racial and social hierarchy in urban development. The post-independence period was marked by the discrepancy between the rigid modernist plan based on public control over land and the rise of a 'subversive urbanism' emerged from unattended population needs. Finally, the global financial system determined the unbalance between urban-rural development and the uneven spatiality's of the metropolis, where poverty enclaves coexist side by side with wealthy exclusionary enclaves. Successive planning models were influenced by different 'agents', first through colonization processes, after through knowledge exchange processes (e.g. American Ford Foundation) and finally through global market liberalization promoted by global institutions. Planning practice have been at a certain degree 'colonized' by distinct interests, has addressed mainly a small part of the population and ignored a vast majority of the communities and their livelihoods in the urban development process. This triggered an insurgent city (with an associated network of vulnerabilities) with which 'bridges' have never been truly established. In a globalized world, cities are seen more and more as 'engines of growth' and urban planning is increasingly dependent on territorial competitiveness, capital attraction and market-driven strategies. By this reason vulnerabilities, uneven growth processes or social spatial segregation are not exclusive of distant realities but are rising around global cities and territories (Harvey, 2006). Migration is one of the main consequences of unbalanced territories. People who suddenly are surrounded by deprived conditions such as limited access to housing, employment, 'basic goods' or constraints in the possibility to participate in decisions related to their leaving spaces are forced to move: Rural migrants in India are expelled to cities due to the loss of their livelihood, refugees have no other option than cross oceans to enter Europe and escape war (caused most of the times by political and economic interests), the population of de-industrialized cities (due to industry dislocation for more 'competitive' countries) have no other option than to leave in search of employment, leaving behind 'ghost cities' and 'seeds for the spreading of populist movements' that can threaten democratic systems (e.g. Rust Belt Cities in the U.S). Sassen (2015, p.173) refers to the generalization of "social, economic and biospheric expulsions" and to the importance of looking "at the extremes of a system in order to analyse trends that can be revealed in more moderate ways within the system itself." In a global world, the growth of socio-economic inequalities, migratory phenomena, environmental impacts (e.g. climate change) or scarcity of resources are not bounded to national borders. Delhi as an 'extreme' case reminds us about the urgency of critically analysing the growing territorial vulnerabilities or 'geographies of injustice' by first depicting the influence of the current development model in public policies, institutions, spatial planning systems but also in knowledge production. Recent economic and ecological crises have demonstrated that market mechanisms, influencing policy options, have undermined 'sustainable development' and therefore urban planning practices, increasing inequalities and vulnerabilities in territories and cities (Eraydin, A. and Taşan-Kok, 2013). In this context we assist as pointed out by (Ahern, 2013) to the progressive transition from the concept of sustainability, "a fail-safe perspective" to the concept of resilience, a "save to

failperspective”, which somehow assumes the disturbances of the world and its consequences as a given (Pizzo, 2013). We can question if accepting resilience as a normative concept is not a risk in itself. In what concerns territorial governance attention must be taken in what concerns “informal institutions and opaque nebulous networks of territorial governance” that “may pose a grave challenge to democracy and direct risk to the democratic representation, accountability and transparency of decision processes of fundamental relevance to large groups of citizens” (Metzger et al, 2014, p. 2-3). Concluding there is a need to increase ‘epistemological criticism’, considering planning domain not only solution-driven (or a technical or neutral instrument) but an instrument that also deals with the social construction of urban problems, identifying planning failures and depicting trends within knowledge production in what concerns ‘normative and hegemonic colonization’ of concepts (conceptual normalization) and practices (Public Policies and Planning Instruments) that can lead to increase vulnerabilities (Sandercock, 1998, p. 4-5). Today, more than ever, only by addressing the real impact of the hegemonic and unbalanced ‘flux of capital’ in the physical, social, environmental, economic, institutional, political and scientific domains that ‘build cities and territories’ will be possible to create ‘Spaces of Dialog for Places of Dignity’.

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ID 1494 | DECIPHERING PLANNING CONCEPTS FROM A PERSPECTIVE OF LACAN'S FOUR DISCOURSES - A CASE STUDY OF URBAN VILLAGE IN BRITISH PLANNING POLICY

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1 INTRODUCTION

With the explosion of available information in the contemporary age, numerous new planning concepts are being invented in pursuit of better urban environments. When we read books about future cities, listen to the speeches of renowned architects and urbanists, browse edge-cutting urban design projects or audit discussion of urban development, countless new concepts pop up in texts along with models, drawings and videos such as eco-village, smart city and numerous -isms.

Many concepts in planning are notoriously difficult to define. If we are asked to give a definition of smart city, the answers are often curtailed to individual perception. What is the 'smartness' of cities? Optimal transport, efficient energy consumption, data networking, social networking or even all the above-mentioned characteristics? Many planning scholars and practitioners doubt the validity and effectiveness of some planning concepts, such as public interest (Campbell & Marshall, 2002), smart growth (Downs, 2005) and sustainable development (Marcuse, 1998).

It raises a question for this research: how much can contested planning concepts influence urban planning policies and future urban development? This paper tries to open up a new perspective to view this question with the help of Lacan's Four Discourses theory, focusing on a particular planning concept - urban village - in the context of British planning policies.

2 LACAN'S SOCIAL THEORY AND ITS APPLICATIONS

2.1 WHY LACAN'S FOUR DISCOURSES?

The primary reason that this research employs Lacan's Four Discourses theory is that "planning is a form of social action, or a social practice...intervening in the world to protect or change" (Taylor, 1998, p.167). Therefore, the complex social effects behind urban policies and urban development can be decoded with the tangible analytical tools of the Four Discourses schemata (Lacan, 2007). Lacan's theory offers an insight into the process of how ideology shapes social reality (Glynos, 2001), and provides scholars in other fields with "a cautionary portrait of thinking-as-it-happens" (Bowie, 1988, p. 133).

The second reason is the comparability between names of planning concepts and master signifiers. Saussure's semiotics divided signs into two components: the signifiers and the signified (de Saussure, 1983[1916]). The signifier is the form of a sign, while the signified is the concept which the sign aims to denote. In the boom of the planning concepts, the signs and their meanings do not match each other perfectly since the signifiers are always assigned with different interpretations. Therefore, I argue that the names of planning concepts are equivalent to the signifiers in Saussure's theory.

Furthermore, they can be regarded as master signifiers due to their importance in the knowledge building of the planning discipline. Master signifiers, or S1 as Lacan labelled, are the primary points to gather all different kinds of knowledge and organise them with a loose but necessary structure (Lacan, 1993), and "complex aggregates of ordered words constituting diverse narratives of contestable sets of knowledges and beliefs" (Bracher, 1988, p. 45). Master signifiers are values and ideals, playing a crucial