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Bricolage Planning: Understanding Planning in a Fragmented City

Farah Jihad and Teller Jacques
*Université de Liège, Lema
 Belgium*

1. Introduction

Neither the City nor Planning are what they used to be. Both, in the last decades, faced heavy changes that profoundly destabilized the way the discipline of planning conceived itself and its object, the city.

In the last few decades, mainly under the pressure of urban sprawl, economic globalization, increasing social and ethnic differentiation, the city lost some of the most basic elements that defined it since antiquity: density, centrality, demarcation between urban and rural and functional and economic complementarity between its neighbourhoods. As frequently presented in the work of scholars on urban fragmentation, today's city is a loose agglomerate of quasi-autonomous socio-spatial entities, each evolving "independently" of the others, relying on its own resources and on exchanges within networks involving territories and actors on supra-city levels, like the regional or the global levels¹.

This new "urban condition" was and still is perceived in the intellectual and the political spheres with very different appreciations. For some, in the name of the "right to difference" and "cultural resistance" in the face of homogenization, urban fragmentation is a welcomed situation where new forms of social and political "liberations" could take place (Soja & Hooper, 1993; Ley & Mills, 1993). For others, it is a spectre that haunts the future of urban societies, leading to social reclusion or to balkanization; and in any case to the disruption of what is perceived as the basis of the social and political urban life (Donzelot, 1999; Van Kempen, 1994; Harvey, 1996).

By profoundly marking the realities and the perceptions of the city in its present and future, urban fragmentation is raising a major challenge to urban planning. However, urban

¹ In fact, what is usually considered to be a scientific corpus on urban fragmentation is a quite vast and heterogeneous compilation of studies and essays in various disciplines, and we can find in it different – sometimes contradictory – definitions of urban fragmentation. We choose here to consider a more general definition that presents the essential characteristics of urban fragmentation and demarcates it from other concepts of socio-spatial differentiation like segregation, marginalization and relegation. We do not consider that the modeling this definition offers of the urban reality fits all urban agglomerations; we also believe that different types of socio-spatial dynamics may well be at work simultaneously. However, the dynamics that the archetype of urban fragmentation highlights are definitely the most challenging to urban governance and urban policies and pose the most serious questions for the planning discipline.

planning itself as a discipline, theory and practice has known, for the same period, important changes. In fact, the decades since the late sixties has known a proliferation of competing planning theories. These theories reflect different philosophical, political and practical positions on deep cultural, political and economical changes.

In “deconstructing urban planning” Dear (2000) offers an interesting panorama of the urban planning discipline after World War II, in the United States, Canada and Britain. Boelens (2010) focuses on the Netherlands, however we believe that his conclusions that intersect with those of Dear touch the reality of the situation of the urban planning discipline in a wider scope. In both presentations we see a clear move from the technocratic urban planning of post-war reconstruction to the boom of planning theories in the 1970-1990 decades, to the “pastiche” urban planning and the profound crisis in the planning discipline today.

Urban planning witnessed the rise of what is called ‘new scientism’, a systemic urban planning approach with its technocratic drift towards modelling and rationalization of decision-making. At the same time in the 70s, the rising politicization and demand for larger popular participation in decision-making in politics spilled over in planning leading to different forms of what Dear calls ‘Choice theory’ approaches: citizen participation and mutual learning in the transactive-creative approach, advocacy planning approach, neo-marxist radical critique theory of planning and communicative planning approach.

Boelens (2010) uses the term “post-structuralist” theories of urban planning to describe this category of theories and includes in it other more recent works. These theories are clearly affected by the evolutions in social and philosophical studies : building on Habermas’s theories on communicative action we have “the interactive and collaborative planning” (Healey, 1997; Innes, 1995), on Foucault’s theories “the discursive approach to planning, politics and design in the public realm” (Hajer, 1995, 2001), on Lefebvre’s work “the heterogeneous conception of space and time” (Amin & Thrift, 2002; Massey, 1999; Thrift, 1996), on Lacan, Deleuze and Guattari “the multiplanar approach to planning” (Gunder & Hillier, 2009; Hillier, 2007), but also “the actor-centred institutionalism” (Scharpf, 1997) and “network urbanism and planning” (Dupuy, 1991).

However, these different theories and approaches to planning had the difficulty to assert themselves and conquer the planning practice. *“By the late 1980s, planning theory had become a conflictual Babel of separate languages, almost all of which were voluntarily ignored by practitioners. For its part, planning practice had devolved into a ritualized choreography of routines”* (Dear, 2000, p. 124). By the 1990s, this fragmentation of the discourse on urban planning theory led in practice to the development of “pastiche planning”. We can see a clear move in this decade into an eclecticism in the planning practice where urban planners tend to take “a bit of this, and a bit of that” to formulate and manage their projects.

For Dear (2000) this stresses the deep crisis in planning faced with radical changes in the traditional environment of the planning discipline. In fact, as of the late 1980s, planning became increasingly privatized: *“the growth of planning personnel in private sector positions, the packaging and marketing of planning for sale, and the prominent trend in planning education toward a development-oriented curriculum”* (Dear, 2000, p. 125). The 1980s recession and the political change with the neo-liberal policies as of the 80s, with the Thatcher and Reagan administrations and their attack on the ideologies of planning, contributed also largely to this crisis of this discipline. These changes sent planners increasingly to subordinate

positions. The overarching systemic perspective of traditional land-use planning and the political charge of participatory and advocacy planning that gave the planner a central role in urban development did not fit this era of “privatization planning”. Planners become more or less apolitical mercenaries who use their knowledge to perform three tasks: providing technical documents and expertise in land-use planning, using their negotiation know-how in order to persuade stakeholders of the set project and agenda, and monitoring and evaluating the performance of a project (Dear, 2000).

This depoliticization of the planning practice, however, does not mean the depoliticization of the stakes of the issues the planning agendas are dealing with. Urban planning is more than ever a political question. In the context of urban fragmentation more entities are developing autonomously from their surroundings or even the rest of the city, consequently complexifying issues of access to resources and land control, rendering them more conflictual. Decentralization and market power have attracted more stakeholders in the planning arena with very different and conflicting interests and agendas. This has heavily weakened the legitimacy of “functional” public urban planning. In fact, apolitical land-use planning technicism, dominant in the planning practice, cannot deal with this governance complexity.

The answers and alternatives proposed by the “post-structural” theories of planning revolve on the central question of dealing with this politicization of planning. However, despite their refreshing and invigorating aspect and their occasional appropriation by some urban practitioners and decision makers, as said earlier, they failed to evolve into effective and durable practices. Boelens (2010, p. 30) offers however for that a somehow different explanation than Dear: *“I assume that this might have something to do with the fact that time and time again these alternatives were still formulated within the existing planning framework, from a specific governmental, or at least government-related, view on planning: from the inside-out.”*

In fact, in his “actor-relational approach” (ARA) to planning and by building on works on “associative democracy” (AD) (Cohen & Rogers, 1992; Hirst, 1994; Pierre, 2000 cited in Boelens, 2010), Boelens (2010) urges a somehow radical break from the government-led planning. He defends the rise of an “entrepreneurial style of planning” led by a “planning regime” based in civic society and private actors. In this regime the public actor is a partner but not a leader. The problem here with the public sector *“is the rigidity that surrounds the way it seeks to manage plural interests and the subject role this assigns to the private sector”* (Webb, 2010, p. 3).

Clearly, planning today is a field in reconstruction where new ways of thinking and making the city are experienced. This proposition of Boelens is one among several in planning studies that focus on the need for the development of a localized network of actors that would work together in order to develop “bottom-up” or “outside-inwards” planning agendas and territories. These propositions see themselves as ways to deal with the increasing fragmentation of space and society and the development of multi-scale actors in today’s network society. New tools are put forward, and more importantly, effort is made to charter new ways for gathering resources and organizing actors to act together in a synchronized way on the urban realm.

However, in today’s cities, urban development does not necessarily follow urban planning. Urban development initiatives are booming everywhere: various local authorities, private

developers even civil society actors are leading their own urban development initiatives. These developments, of different scales and kinds, are in their great majority non-state initiatives and do not necessarily fit in a metropolitan urban strategic plan.

This situation poses different central questions to planning theory and to the future of planning. Is planning even necessary in this new context? Can urban development lead to urban planning? What does that mean for planning theory and practice?

We believe that in the age of the fragmented city, planning still has an important role. In fact, as Thévenot (1995) puts it, next to being a “prolongation of intentionality”, a plan is also a communicative space around the semantics of action. And in today’s city shaped of an agglomerate of places under the pressure of unstable global market dynamics and egocentric NIMBY local logics, planning could bring a necessary political dimension. We believe also that planning could be constructed from the bottom-up not necessarily by articulating development initiatives but by building on them.

This chapter aims at investigating these questions by relying on Sociology of Science and Science Studies’ concepts and tools and case studies on Beirut suburbs’ municipal networks. From these case studies we can see that in a fragmented city and on a local level, urban development initiatives are not necessarily a chaotic juxtaposition of autonomous projects. Local networks including different kinds of actors may well be in action. These local networks represent laboratories experimenting governance arrangements, urban planning tools and territory building strategies, without necessarily calling them so. Some of these networks may join at a time or another to face more challenging supra-local issues. They do so by relying on their experience to attempt to engage in a more formal planning at a supra-local level. In this optic, planning and territories seem “condensations” of networks and development initiatives. Finally, the study of these experimentations in the light of the actor-network theory (ANT) may help understand what we call here a “bricolage” approach to planning.

2. Theoretical and methodological framework

Sociology of Science is a field of research in sociology that focuses on the science production’s environment. Science and technology studies (STS) is a more interdisciplinary field of research that concentrates also on the study of science production and its relation to society, its values and politics. Both fields study the actors involved, the organization of work, the social and cognitive motivations, the communication tools, the place of objects in technology development, as other related subjects like the building of legitimacy and the power struggle in the scientific world. Number of theories and concepts sprung out of these works. Here we will be focusing on two of them: the actor-network theory (ANT) and the laboratory concept that will be translated in our field through the notion of “bricolage planning”.

2.1 Actor-Network Theory (ANT)

The actor-network theory (ANT) is a large corpus of research that developed as of the eighties around the work of several authors in the field of the sociology of science and science and technology studies, mainly Michel Callon and Bruno Latour. These works

investigate the ways research networks develop in the fields of science. One of the main ideas of ANT is the consideration of objects (material or ideas) as actors – or actants as they call them – in these networks. Beyond social actors' power game logics, ANT draws the attention to the central role that these objects play in the construction and evolution of these networks.

In an article titled "elements for a sociology of translation", Callon (1986) introduces one of the most interesting applications of ANT. The article uses the metaphor of "translation" and "betrayal" to explain how an innovative idea gets to be systematized after getting different kind of actors and actants to work together for its success. The translation is a four stages process. First there is the problematization the lead actor makes of a certain phenomenon transforming it into an issue that needs to be dealt with by an intervention. This problematization may well get other actors and actants interested and thinking how this may concern them, Callon speaks of interestment. This interestment is the stage where the lead actor will target these actors and actants to get them to participate in the proposed intervention. If this happens and these actors bring in their resources to be part of the intervention. Callon speaks of translation if this is the case, if not he speaks of betrayal and dissolution of the actor-network. A fourth stage is that of mobilization that questions the possible generalization of the intervention to similar phenomena. In this stage the lead actor becomes the spokesman of a certain complex reality to the outer-world.

The basic analytic position that made such a method relevant is what Callons (1986) calls "free association" indiscriminately between elements of Nature and elements of Society. This means that objects and actors are equal members in any network building. They equally can hold the network project by "translating" the project options, or equally can make it fail. They're not only instruments in the hands of the different actors, they have their own logic and *modus operandi*. For actors to enrol them they must "interest" them, even adapt them by extending their capacities to fulfil new tasks.

Here, actor has a somehow different definition than its common understanding. "*Actors are entities, human or otherwise, that happen to act. They are not given, but they emerge in relations*" (Law, 2004, p 102). An actor does not exist outside of an actor-network, he's an actor because he manages to define or alter relations between other actors or actants with whom he gets to form a network. He does so by using intermediaries. "*The intermediary does not serve to merely describe a set of relations, it also manages to order the actions of others. [...] Through translation the identity of actors is defined and negotiated and interaction is managed*" (Tait, 2002, p. 73).

Networks too hold a different meaning. "*For actor-network theory, networks are not stable systems of links and nodes (like a telephone system); instead they are metaphors for associations and connections between entities which may be heterogeneous in character. Furthermore, they do not have scale in the traditional sense, but are simply longer or more intensely connected* (Latour, 1997, p. 3)" (Tait, 2002, p. 73).

Interestingly, urban planning and urban development are both, somehow, processes bringing together different actors (politicians, planners, technicians, economic, associative) and objects (spaces, construction materials and tools, but also a large set of legal, administrative, managerial, conceptual, scientific, literary and negotiation tools) and connecting them in different ways. In the last ten to fifteen years we see a rising interest among urban planning and urban studies scholars in ANT and other STS concepts. In the

light of ANT different authors tried to understand different urban phenomena. Here we present some of these works.

The conception of the City as a technical object is not new², however the new orientations in STS and the development of sociotechnical concepts had an important repercussion on urban studies. One of the main entries developed with the reflections around the impact of new technologies and most importantly the need to adapt the existing infrastructures to new functions and usages. One of the most influential works in this line is the book “splintering urbanism” of Graham & Marvin (2001). It identifies a linkage between infrastructure evolution and social and economical evolution leading to further fragmentation. The theoretical framework of “splintering urbanism” is partially founded on ANT literature. Another interesting insight is that of Hommels (2005) reflecting on urban “obduracy”. In this article the author builds on two concepts of STS, the Social Construction Of Technology theory (SCOT) and ANT³, to explain the stability of sociotechnical systems, mainly infrastructures, despite the rapid change of technological innovation. Other authors apply ANT in the study of the implementation of different technologies in the urban environment or their management (i.e. Bowler (1998) on recycling urban waste, Martin (2000) on the use of GIS and Beckmann (2004) on questions of safety and mobility).

Actor-network theory is also mobilized in global and world cities literature. Smith (2003a, 2003b) uses ANT to rethink and refold space and time and redefines world cities as “bodies without organs” stretching like an actor-network through space and time. Smith’s writings defy the dominant portrayal of world cities as conceived in the political-economy approach through works like those of Saskia Sassen (2001).

On another level, the work of Jonathan Murdoch (1997a, 1997b, 1998, 2006) largely appropriating ANT has been very influential, and represents an interesting reflection on its application in geography, governance and planning. In this regard the traditional split between society and nature, actors and factors is abolished, only networks remain. Space itself is reconfigured : *“there exists no absolute time-space – just as there is neither absolute nature nor absolute society – but only specific time-space configurations, which are conditioned by motives and relations in networks”* (Boelens, 2010 reporting on Murdoch, 1997a).

In planning STS concepts and especially ANT has also had an important impact. For Thévenot (1995)⁴, A plan’s efficacy is proportional to that of the objects he’s mobilizing, objects that give power to the planner over a situation. In the production of a plan, where an

² “In 1979 the Journal of Urban History published the first special issue on the city and technology. A new research agenda emphasized the importance of examining the “intersection between urban processes and the forces of technological change” (Tarr 1979, 275). More precisely, the main purpose of these urban historians was to study the effects of technology on urban form. Researchers studied the role of technologies like street lighting, sewage, or the telegraph in the processes of geographical expansion of cities and of suburbanization. Technology was analyzed as a force that shaped society and the cities, but its own character and development were regarded as rather unproblematic and even autonomous; this new trend in urban history was similar to the early work in technology studies.” (Aibar & Bijker, 1997)

³ To which she adds another entry she develops under the name of persistent traditions to stress the weight of socially interiorized practices

⁴ Thévenot in this article stresses some of the limitations of ANT but overall his “regime of familiarity” concept could well be sought as an STS concept.

intention is projected in time and space, a “detour” by a certain number of objects is necessary. *“This detour is generally associated with the confection of equipment transposable from a situation to another, consequently associated to the notion of investment, by opposition to the direct use of existing instrumental resources”* (Thévenot, 1995)⁵. Consequently, though he acknowledges the crisis of planning as an emanation of a top-down “public intentionality”, he defends planning as a possible and necessary communicative constructive space; and he believes that this other version of planning is feasible by focusing on the objects of the “composite devices of coordination” present in all plans.

Tait (2002) mobilizes ANT to question central-local relations in the British planning system and the room for manoeuvre it leaves for local actors. ANT analysis shows how some actors by their presence in one network – even in an enrolled position – can “draw on network resources to order others and construct their own (albeit limited) room for manoeuvre”. The ability for ANT to take in consideration all groupings even the temporal and informal ones help to understand not only the central and stable but also the local and unstable. Tait’s article shows also how texts can be of central importance since they may define groups and enrol them in an actor-network construction initiated by others. But texts leave also space for interpretation and consequently for manoeuvre and adjustment. They’re central in the construction of power in planning.

Bryson, Crosby & Bryson (2009) use ANT to understanding strategic planning and the implementation of strategic plans as “a way of knowing”. The article builds on the MetroGIS experience, an organization that works on fostering geospatial information sharing and map building in the metropolitan area of the Twin Cities region in Minnesota, USA. The authors come to the conclusion that conventional understanding of strategic planning as “fixed and stabilized category of action”, and strategic plan construction and monitoring as standardized objects and methods, abstract strategic planning and strategic plans from the actor-networks within which they’re enmeshed. They believe that an ANT perspective can allow an understanding of the central role of objects – here maps and map making – in connecting entities with other entities, and as Latour (2005, p.119) puts it, bringing “multiple realities [together so] that may lead to stability and unity”. Here participatory map making where realities are confronted and complemented could help to understand, in an actor-network, the “here-and-now” and point to the “there-and-then.”

Boelens’ (2010) actor-relational approach (ARA) that we mentioned earlier is a bold analytical and action framework that relies heavily on ANT. This approach resorts to ANT because it “sidesteps the stifling duality between macro- and micro-” and “offers a subtle extension to the discursive, entrepreneurial or growth management approaches, by including things and entities as autonomous (not passive) forces or (f)actors of importance.” (Boelens, 2010, p. 38). This gives to the approach the possibility to defend an endogenous (local actors) perspective to development, and at the same time an opening to external investment as long as they’re inscribed in the actor-network that this planning approach helps emerging. ARA also owes much to ANT in the way it operates: Boelens clearly identifies links between his seven steps scheme and Callon’s four stages of translation. However Boelens identifies some “imperfections” in ANT and tries to go by them by resorting to urban regime theory and associative democracy literature.

⁵ Personal translation from French

The main critiques of Boelens to the adoption of ANT as a framework for the analysis of urban planning could be summarized in three points. First, the absence of a normative dimension in ANT while planning is much a discipline where intention has a central place. Second, the secondary role of objects compared to human-actors in planning where objects are always intermediary and rarely actors, which makes a strong focus on objects not always productive. Third, the agnostic – if not cynical position (Webb, 2010) – of ANT towards central values like democracy and sustainability.

Boelens' critiques have received interesting responses from other authors (Rydin, 2010; Webb, 2010). We rally those responses and believe that ANT has much more potential than that assigned to it by Boelens. For instance, as Rydin (2010) argues, the objects we should focus on in applying ANT framework to planning are less the objects of the planning procedures than the objects that make part of sociotechnical systems that planning is trying to affect. In this case we might well find objects "authoring" networks by problematizing a social situation and getting some human groups to take positions and change their relations with other actors and objects. ANT has also a particular relevance in the study of informality and manoeuvring spaces (Tait, 2002). By mapping the actor-networks we can identify the nodes where some actors could hold a position giving them the opportunity to widen the possibilities by enrolling actors and resources in other networks or by forming their own networks. As for Boelens argument about the lack of normative dimension in ANT, we believe effectively that ANT puzzles: it cannot be classified neither as a normative theory nor as a critical theory – the standard two categories of planning theory. However this makes much the point of ANT: *"Planning activity involves a range of actors and actants interacting, engaging with each other (a rather neutral term), enrolling each other (a less neutral term) and producing outcomes which are a mix of the desired and un-desired, the intended and the unintended consequence. Thus ANT itself challenges the simple distinction critical and normative planning theory"* (Rydin, 2010).

Another recurrent question that poses much of a challenge to the sociology of translation in ANT is its difficulty in analysing stability. In fact, the sociology of translation was developed to understand innovation and the formation of innovation networks. Callon's (1986) identifies a fourth and last step in a translation, the "mobilization of the allies", to get the maximum support to the translation and wider its scope, but Callon does not say anything of the aftermath of the translation, how will this actor-network stabilize itself on the long run. It might be more or less easy to get actors to work together to achieve a certain translation at a certain moment but it is more difficult to maintain this cooperation. Time will bring other problematizations – to use Callon's terminology – causing other actor-networks to emerge and probably hinder the stability of this actor-network.

This distinction between the short-term and long-term is central to our argument. For an urban development to go through, a certain agency between different objects and actors must be stabilized as an outcome of one actor translating others for a certain project very limited in space and time. The will of this "author", as long as he manages to mobilize the necessary resources for his urban development, is the only thing that counts. In the light of ANT, city-level urban planning seems more complex and difficult to achieve than urban developments. In fact, it faces two important challenges. On one hand, urban planning tradition has always been linked to a certain conception of public interest. The authorities in charge of planning, in lot of cities, are still conceiving their role in that perspective.

Consequently, in order for their planning strategy to get through, they're forced to enrol in their actor-network a lot more social actors (in a participatory approach) or technical actants (in a regulatory approach), and most of the cases, both. And they must make a central extra effort to present their case as an emanation of public interest. On the other hand, this actor-network not only needs to secure agencies between different actors and actants at the moment of plan making, it also needs to do it on the long run, and sometimes with actors and actants that are not yet present. It is clear that in this perspective there is wider possibility for "betrayals" than in the case of local urban development initiatives that can be put together by few actors who do not necessarily claim public interest and usually are more delimited in time.

We will address this stabilization issue through the notion of laboratory that will translate, in the field of planning, through the idea of "bricolage planning"

2.2 "Bricolage planning"

Laboratories had been an important field of study in the Sociology of Science and in Science and Technology Studies since the seventies. A large number of authors contributed to their study. There is no single model of what is a laboratory and how it functions. However, since we're in the ANT perspective, we propose here to adapt this broad definition of a laboratory that is relevant to our argument: laboratory *"is a typical form of organization of the 'society of knowledge'. Its capacity to act on the world of objects and its dynamism are related to its know-how and to its capacity to reconfigure the entities of the natural and social world"*⁶ (Vinck, 2007, pp.161).

Laboratories are "unstable environments" in different aspects. On one hand, Vinck (2007) stresses that in the case of the laboratory, organization is somehow different than in traditional bureaucracy or production environments. It is more fluid and open. Researchers of a laboratory come in and out of a laboratory, their contribution may be punctual and they're even not necessarily working in the same physical place. On the other, in a laboratory, researchers work with objects (physical or ideal) whose forms, statuses and boundaries are not stabilized and pose interesting questions to science. The way a laboratory operates is by reconfiguring resources: *"Laboratories fusion and reorient existing sociotechnical entities, disconnect and transform them to set them up in new phenomenological and relational universes"*⁷ (Vinck, 2007, pp. 162).

This experimental aspect of the laboratory is its real strength, it makes it do things (innovations, discoveries) that cannot develop in other types of organizations. However, it is also its major Achilles' heel. This openness and instability can easily lead to the disruption of the laboratory. Good communication and mutual understanding is here central. It is common in laboratories to have people from different disciplinary backgrounds, with different methodologies and sometimes values. To get these researchers working together, there is a great deal of communication issues to be stabilized. That's why in laboratories protocols, classification methodologies, definitions and other conceptual objects are central for its functioning.

In this fragmented world where diversity and disruption render intelligibility more difficult, we believe that the laboratory model – where experimentation and accumulation are the

⁶ Personal translation from French

⁷ Personal translation from French

base of knowledge, protocols the base of meaning and flexible networking a mode of production – could well serve urban planning. It is in this light that we propose here a “bricolage planning”.

Bricolage is a French word that usually designates a “do-it-yourself” activity. We rely here on the definition and conception Claude Levi-Stauss (1962, pp. 26-27) gives to this activity: *“there still exists among ourselves an activity which on the technical plane gives us quite an understanding of what a science, that we prefer to call ‘prior’ than ‘primitive’, could have been on the plane of speculation. This is what is commonly called ‘bricolage’ in French. [...] The ‘bricoleur’ is apt to perform a large number of diverse tasks; but, unlike the engineer, he does not subordinate each of them to the availability of raw materials and tools conceived and procured for the purpose of the project. His universe of instruments is closed and the rules of his game are always to make do with whatever is at hand, that is to say with a set of tools and material which is always finite and is also heterogeneous because what it contains bears no relation to the current project, or indeed to any particular project, but is the contingent result of all occasions that have been to renew or enrich the stock or to maintain it with the residues of anterior constructions and destructions”*⁸.

We borrowed the idea of ‘bricolage planning’ from Rowe & Koetter (1978) in their classic book “Collage city”. In the face of the crisis of planning they defend an approach to urban planning that would not fall into scientism nor surrender in the face of dominant ‘laissez-faire’ ideology. We largely follow their line of thought and believe that a ‘bricoleur’ attitude to planning that gives up the belief in “true answers” and go for “what is at hand” could be a viable alternative. However, we distance ourselves from formalist – design-oriented – ‘bricolage’ they’re defending, and defend a wider actor-network building ‘bricolage’ that try to hold together actors, spaces, development projects and planning tools.

In our discussion of the crisis of urban planning it was clear that this discipline hasn’t managed to build a solid practical alternative to what has been the core of the discipline for decades, urban planning – presented as a “rational” exercise to build a “functional” city. The city that is no more what it was, and rationality is much questioned. The proposed alternatives in the literature are for collaborative participatory planning, advocacy planning or what Boelens (2010) calls an outside-inward approach to planning, giving the initiator role in creating a planning regime to civic society and private sector actors.

The three alternatives mentioned above have different philosophical and political backgrounds in defining what is seen as the best fitting way to articulate public authorities’ will with those of other actors. The collaborative planning approach believes in the role of participation, the advocacy planning believes in the potential of the counter-project to inflect imposed top-down planning, while the actor-relational approach of Boelens (2010) defends an associative democracy of planning giving public authority a secondary role. However, all three approaches are rooted in the need to build a cohesive and comprehensive planning project – focus of the planning activity – before engaging in any action on the ground. It is mainly in that bricolage planning is different.

Bricolage planning based on ANT, at this point puts as ANT the “how” before the “what”. Its main concern is to make actors able to act. In a fragmented world, the capacity to act is a complex exercise, since power and resources are diluted in different structures and places. It

⁸ The translation from French is that of Rowe & Koetter (1978)

needs a great effort of network building and resources' gathering. To do so these actors "problematize" situations, "experiment" with tools and try to "generalize" their experiments by systemizing them. Issues faced in urban settings maybe pretty much similar, each situation remains unique and poses important challenges to models of city planning and management. So the importance of local experimentation and learning processes.

In a fragmented world, problematization helps setting a boundary that is necessary to apprehend any issue. In the structuralist conception a problem will be a malfunction in some aspect of the structure. It is usually resolved by the intervention of the proper responsible actor or administration. In a fragmented and networked world, problems are interrelated to each other; actors implicated in them too. In a Bricolage perspective – that does not claim a higher understanding of the world – problematization helps to understand what exactly to look for, and what and who is concerned. The what and who will define the bricoleur's "world of instruments", to use Levi-Strauss words.

Experimentation is to make trials by testing an idea or a method on a restricted number of resources. The bricoleur takes chances only with a limited amount of his resources. In fact, as Levi-Strauss says, the bricoleur's universe of instruments is closed and its rate of renewal is not stable. In this experimentation, what is at stake is a restricted "reality": does this solution fit the problem at hand? Experimentation does not claim to offer answers of wider strategic nature. But at the same time the results of the experimentation, as in the laboratory, brings in questions on the place of this experimentation in the wider scheme of things.

This is when the generalization takes place. It poses the question of the reproducibility of the experimentation conclusions in variant situation, on one hand, and it leads to thinking how the new instrument that has been produced could serve for wider strategic tasks. It is at this stage, and in response to these challenges, that the question of stabilization of the experience to serve in different context, and that of strategic thinking, come to impose themselves. This is when the bricoleur becomes an engineer, when the "what" reclaims its place next to the "how", in brief, when planning emerges.

Experience here is the key word. It means the knowledge of the existing resources, and a know-how in articulating them. We consider that experience represent a central explanatory variable of the success of a bricolage planning process. This bricoleur's experience is crucial for having a certain control and capacity of action. There are different kinds of experiences. Some are held by different actors and could be mobilized by the actor-network at a certain moment to face a certain challenge, others are constructed through experimentation and generalization. The primary kind of experience is that of familiarity. A regime of familiarity is one where direct contact – even in the literal sense of the word – defines the relation between an actor and an object (Thévenot, 1995). This is usually a relation that results of daily interaction between actors and between actors and objects (tools, ideas and spaces). Local actors have this kind of knowledge concerning their locality, its places, issues and assets. Other actors may have a familiarity with special sectorial issue, this is the case of some NGOs or professionals. But usually the most interesting kind of experience for an actor-network is that constructed in the network through experimentation. This experience is not likely to be lost by the "betrayal" of a certain resourceful actor leaving the network.

Bricolage planning is hence an actor-networks building and stabilizing operation. It relies on small direct operations, mainly urban development operations that could be more or less easily put together by mobilizing ad-hoc resources. At the same time it has long-term ambitions in dealing with an issue, a community or a territory. These ambitions are not necessarily clearly stated, and the way to reach them hardly obvious. This makes the analogy with the laboratory very interesting. The actors are there, but they may come and go in the network depending on projects' availability. It is from the accumulation of different experiences that a general scheme, a larger vision – a “theory” in the laboratory's world – could emerge and be defended as a strategic option guiding the actor-network activity. This is how different autonomous urban development initiatives could lead to an urban planning strategy, which in turn guides the orchestration of other urban development actions. As in a laboratory, it is communication that is at the core of the bricolage planning actor-network's activity and stability.

In this study, we use some Beirut suburbs' municipal actor-networks as case studies for developing our 'bricolage' planning approach. We believe that in these suburbs municipal actor-networks have worked for the last twelve years as bricoleur, using their universe of tools to put together number of urban development initiatives, while some of them are moving now to become “engineers” in planning larger scale territories. We'll try to analyse how agencies of local actors, spaces and projects in fragmented cities emerge as actor-networks, how they experiment different actions and put together and coordinate different development initiatives, how capitalization of experiences may lead them to developing larger urban planning strategies.

3. Beirut as a case study for analysing actor networks in urban planning

3.1 Beirut a fragmented city in (re)construction

Beirut, along with Belfast, Nicosia, Sarajevo, is one of the cities of the world that is most associated to the image of division. Fifteen years civil war (1975-1990) largely contributed to this image: division of the city along a demarcation line into two large communitarian hemispheres (Christian communities to the East, Muslim communities to the West), displacement of large numbers of people from all communities and emergence of a mosaic of fiefs controlled by different warring communitarian militias. In these years, the already existing fragmentation (Farah, 2011) reached unprecedented levels. Due to security reasons people's mobility fell sharply making the local neighbourhoods the everyday horizon of most of the population. The pre-war economy, focused on a large service sector in Beirut central areas and industrial activity in the suburbs, was completely destroyed. A new economy of services, largely financed by expatriates and war money, was developing in each militia territory. Pre-war socioeconomic socio-spatial differentiations took an even greater magnitude with special high-end developments booming in the “safer” peripheries of the agglomeration.

In the post-war era, the new central government put on the table an ambitious reconstruction strategy. The strategy aimed at one hand to “reconnect” and open up the territories of the war and, on the other, to turn Beirut into an important business platform of globalization in the Middle East. This strategy was not presented as a whole as one project and debated as such. It was rather a combination of different projects managed by

governmental agencies directly depending of the prime minister: the Council for Development and Reconstruction. The strategy was based on road infrastructures to boost mobility and link the different war territories. It also decreed a number of large urban development projects in the suburbs and the city-centre in order to bring in a new dynamic of investment in the real-estate and service sector.

Even though the government could count on a centralized state structure, the backing of a large business community and the general enthusiasm for reconstruction, the majority of the large urban development fell behind the expectations of their promoters and mobility did not prove to be synonym of openness. Physical barriers that cut Beirut into different sectors in the war were progressively pulled out. Still mobility across the across demarcation lines between communities' territories was kept limited. The communitarian distribution of the population in the post-war era was similar to that of the war. Communitarian political parties or traditional leaders were still very influent in different zones of the city and continued to act on "their" zones of influence through a wide variety of affiliated NGOs offering services to the population – services that came to be more precious with the extensive economic neoliberal policies of the government.

As of the mid-nineties the reconstruction project was in a bottleneck. The peace in the Middle East did not come. The continuing external and even internal confrontation jeopardized the chances of Beirut to emerge as a central business platform for the region. Most developments faced the political resistance of the dominant communitarian parties and leaders in the regions where they were planned to be constructed.

The different communitarian political groups on the national level saw in the "return of the municipalities" a way to break out of this stalemate situation. Municipal elections were organized in 1998 after 35 years of break out. Municipalities were seen as a way to partially compensate the retreat of the central state from a lot of social issues that it had no longer the finances nor the needed structures to deal with.

3.2 Municipal building in Beirut post-war suburbs: Sharing a similar history and facing the same challenges

The agglomeration of Beirut is a large urban continuum covering 468 km², stretching over 60 km along the Mediterranean coastline and reaching 25 km to the east (Faour et al., 2005). It includes around 121 municipalities. The area called the suburbs of Beirut comprises a number of municipalities in the peri-central areas of the agglomeration. This area is where fragmentation dynamics are the most developed. We can see near to each other, however in almost complete autarchy, informal settlements, high-end neighbourhoods, an airport, a large university campus, various large scale public buildings, a golf club, industrial zones, populous communitarian neighbourhoods, hotel resorts and large malls. It is somehow the perfect example of Dear's (2000) chessboard model of a fragmented city.

The localities of the suburbs share practically the same historical path. These suburbs are not the mere extension of the old city-centre of Beirut. They always had their own economical and political development that, though linked with the city-centre, was not dependent of it. Back in the early fifties of the last century, the suburbs were still made of dispersed middle-sized to large localities organized by municipalities where the traditional family clans competed for the municipal council. Each village was separated from the other by large

agricultural fields. This situation was heavily altered by the tremendous urbanization and industrialization of the sixties and seventies and later by the civil war. The urbanization transformed these areas into a dense urban continuum. The municipal limits are no more recognizable. The population also changed due to massive migration and immigration. The civil war further destroyed the old village centres, displaced populations, brought others and set demarcation lines between warring zones. In the aftermath of the war, the suburbs were a heavily fragmented area characterized by an important identity crisis.

On a political level these transformations also had common impacts on the different localities. The suburbs of Beirut have shown ancestral resistance to the extension of the central city on what they considered their territory and refused any kind of political integration to the city. However, the traditional family clans and the municipalities have been shunned aside by centralized communitarian parties and militias who took control of large areas in the suburbs of Beirut during the war and maintained this control politically after the war. On the other hand, immigration – brought by the continuous rural exodus and the displacement of populations during the war – posed another serious problem. The wide majority of the population in the suburbs did not vote in the locality where it was living but in the locality of origin where usually it kept strong social ties. There is hence a strong dissociation between the geography of vote and the geography of residency in these suburbs adding an important layer of complexity to the identity crisis of the localities.

A first challenge for these municipalities are facing in post-war Beirut is, on one hand, how to carve a place for the municipal affairs in the face of large metropolitan projects like the reconstruction strategy of the central government or the communitarian territorialisation of political and religious groups covering large areas in the agglomeration. Another challenge consisted in articulating different dynamics and projects in various neighbourhoods within a single overarching policy.

As of 1998 – date of the first municipal elections after the war, and first elections in 35 years – all the municipalities have proven to be an important actor in the production of urban spaces in the suburbs of Beirut. Despite their lack of means and the heavy control procedures imposed by the central authorities, the municipal actors have frequently succeeded in building large local networks that helped them bring in important resources to engage in substantial urban development activities. Faced with the urge to respond to pressing needs in equipment, infrastructures and services in large populated areas heavily damaged by the civil war, these networks have demonstrated genuine creativity in putting together audacious projects, sometimes in concordance with the central authorities and sometimes, as we will see, in clear defiance to it.

3.3 Local divergences as explicative variables

All municipalities of the suburbs of Beirut have engaged in a certain form of bricolage planning in rebuilding their municipal space. The degree to which they succeeded in doing so is depending on the specificities of each locality. These divergences may well provide some aspects of the “why” next to the “how” that ANT will allow to grasp.

These specificities are the following variables: homogeneity of the population of the locality vs. co-existence of groups with strong identities (community, ethnicity, class), physical state of the locality (in need of urgent and major interventions or not), presence of powerful

partisan structures, nature of the leadership at the head of the actor-network (party or clan affiliated), existence of dynamic entrepreneurial vs. traditional notabilarian leadership, diversity of the core actors in the actor-network, reach of the network horizontally (number of actors) and vertically (number of scales). Needless to say that these variables are not independent. Our analysis is based on a sample of three municipalities: Ghobeiri, Chiyah and Furn AlChebbak. These are three contiguous localities that share practically the same history but at the same time represent these three very different situations. Each case could further be considered an archetype representative of many similar situations in the suburbs of Beirut.

Ghobeiri is a locality with a population dominantly of one community (Shiite). It has large informal settlements covering half of the municipal perimeter, and a neighbourhood that was particularly affected by the war since it is located on the demarcation line. Two large communitarian parties (Hezbollah and Amal) are present in this locality and are very active through their own networks of NGOs. The municipal council is dominated by a communitarian party (Hezbollah). The municipal actor-network leadership has a very entrepreneurial and dynamic attitude with strong experience in social and associative sectors. Its core actors are all directly affiliated to the Hezbollah. Despite its lack of diversity the municipal actor-network, has a large number of members (mainly the NGOs of the party), has access to the national political sphere (again through the party) but also occasionally to development institutions at the international level.

Chiyah is a locality heavily affected by the war. It is cut in two by the war demarcation line with heavy damages in its physical structure. Still today two zones can be identified in its perimeter: an area with a population dominantly of the Christian communities to the east of the demarcation line and an area with a population dominantly of the Shiite community to the south and west of the demarcation line. Until 2005, the only major party structure active on the ground Amal in the neighbourhoods at the west of Chiyah. Registered voters are mainly from the Christian communities. The municipality is held by a family clans' coalition from the Christian communities. The municipal actor-network is characterized by a very entrepreneurial and ambitious leadership coming from the business world. It has a relatively diverse structure of core actors including family clans and a community parish. It has access to a large and diverse number of actors at the local level, but also at other scales, like the minister of interior, the presidency of the Republic and a large part of the business community.

Furn AlChebbak is a locality with a population dominantly of the Christian communities. It was affected by the war, however, far less than in the two other localities. It even developed during the war with the resettlement of a large part of the commercial activity in the south-eastern suburbs in its souk. The municipality is held by a family clans' coalition from the Christian communities. The leadership of the municipal actor-network could be described as traditional notabilarian, cautious and not keen to ambitious projects. Its core actors are notables from the family clans. In fact, the whole actor-network is restrained with only few actors mainly at the local level.

We will not present systematically the different cases. Instead we will use these cases to stress different aspects of the municipal governance, policies and actions in these localities that are directly relevant to our discussion of planning in a fragmented city and more particularly, to bricolage planning.

4. The construction of municipal actor-networks

4.1 Forging a locality's identity

One of the main tools that was mobilized by the leaders in building their municipal actor-networks is the "locality's identity". This was used to problematize municipal issues. As said earlier problematization defines the universe of instruments from which the bricoleur actor-network will pull out the tools it needs for its action.

For the leaders of the actor-networks, reviving – or even constructing – a sort of local identity is crucial for bringing in other local actors to support their actions and gaining legitimacy of representation in the population's eyes. It is also important to problematize the municipal perimeter and redefine the centralities in it and with the rest of the agglomeration. In fact, asserting a locality's identity is a claim of emergence of a new centrality in the Beirut agglomeration; it is a way to warn the central government and its metropolitan reconstruction project that there is a local dynamic that should be taken into consideration. It is also a way to affirm the need to recompose the urban structure according to other normative values.

History's reconstruction has an important role here. Those whose history is linked to that of the locality are the "legitimate" representatives of this locality while the others are often stigmatised as intruders and usurpers. The same goes for geography. Places do not have the same "weight": some places hold a certain symbolic or strategic importance for the population or more specific groups. Focusing on the importance of these places in the identity of the locality and the need to protect it and develop it, through conservation or projects, is a way to get new actors involved in the municipal actors-network.

If we look at the municipal discourse in Chiyah, we see a thoroughly constructed locality's identity. In the municipal publications, Chiyah's history is that of the traditional clans. The historic notables are presented as a pantheon of great leaders. The heavy antagonism that marked the relations between the family clans is here absent. Next to these notables a large place is given to the religious institutions and mainly the priests of the Maronite parish of Chiyah. However there were also a lot of absentees in this discourse, especially the war years. It is only presented as a dark period that brought destruction to the locality and which memory should be shunned away. The parties, the displaced and the squatters of the war are all absent. All these groups may contest in a way or the other the legitimacy and relevance of the municipal discourse by providing different versions of the "history" the core members of the actor-network are trying to impose on Chiyah.

The Chiyah's actor-network provides also his own version of the geography of Chiyah. Chiyah West and Ain AlRemeneh are names given during the war to the neighbourhood controlled by the parties. These names are totally absent from the official municipal discourse. The leadership of the network resuscitates old names of these areas, names that are particularly relevant to the family clans whose own histories are affiliated to these toponymies. These toponymies were a way to reclaim these areas. In any case, the central message is clear: Chiyah is indivisible and all neighbourhoods in its municipal perimeter represent a one and single unity that should be reunited again despite the war scars around the traditional elements of historical and geographical centrality.

The construction of the locality's identity in Ghobeiri is at the extreme opposite of that of Chiyah. The history of the locality is that of the resistance. A resistance that goes beyond Hezbollah's fight against Israeli occupation, to be "that of the oppressed, against any occupation". This discourse allows to aggregate a large majority of the population of Ghobeiri while at the same time ridicules the claims of the family clans opposition that seem reactive and egocentric in front of such a national and noble cause. Two other aspects of Ghobeiri history are emphasized. On one hand, the "religious piety" of its population and the number of clerics and religious scholars born here, to emphasize a continuity with the conservatism and religiosity of the party. On the other hand, the picturesque village and green areas before the massive urbanization of the 60s and the "irresponsible urban policies" of the central authorities that destroyed this "haven of peace".

This last point, emphasizing a geographical reading of the historical identity of Ghobeiri, is linked to the central challenge for the municipal actor-network: the Elyssar project. Elyssar is a large urban development project in the suburbs of Beirut, one of the development projects of the metropolitan reconstruction strategy of the central government. It is put under the jurisdiction of a special public agency specially created for this purpose. The political stalemate on the national level in the late nineties gave a stop to the project but kept the project zone under the authority of Elyssar public agency. However, this zone includes very large areas of Ghobeiri, its main real-estates reserves and the seashore. It is also composed of large informal settlements. The municipal actor-network depicts this as in the continuity of "irresponsible policies" of the national authorities, especially since it leaves the informal settlements with no assistance and deprives the municipality from intervening in this strategic sector.

In Furn AlChebbak, the locality's identity is constructed pretty much as that of Chiyah: family clans' history, a prominent place for the Maronite parish and a resuscitation of the old toponymies. Here too the toponymy is a way for local actors to reclaim the different neighbourhoods. However, the actor-network core actors have gone a step further than Chiyah's actor-network, by changing the name of the locality in order that the three large neighbourhoods that form Furn AlChebbak find their place in it. This would be anecdotic if it wasn't one of the first measures of this municipality. This is related to the fact that family clans are much linked to one or the other neighbourhoods. Those family clans, at the centre of the actor-network want to stress this linkage and to confirm symbolically the geography they're promoting. This "federalization" of the geography of the locality had then its rationale in the structure of the municipal actor-network and its governance. However, it had its impact on the way this actor-network will construct its urban planning agenda.

In fact, the new geographies promoted by the three actor-networks have a similar impact on urban planning. They aim to transform the municipal perimeter that lost all significance in the war into a territory. This situation is different from the first historical development of the municipalities in Lebanon at the turn of the twentieth century. Back then, the family clans were the only political actors in the localities and their claim on the municipal perimeter was unquestioned. The new municipal actor-networks in these suburbs faced a multitude of conflictual appropriations and actors contesting their representativeness. Negating the existing territorialisations and imposing a new top-down territorialisation is here much in the continuity of the normative physical planning that modernizing nation-states tried to impose on their national territory. This implicates a holistic vision of the territory and a large systemic project to develop it.

It can be seen in the case of the three municipalities that the issue of local identity develops before any vision is proposed to the territory. It seems as an initiator for building a network that could then be mobilized to imagine and defend a project. The fight for defining a locality's identity could best be understood in a governance perspective. Asserting the legitimate representativeness of the municipal actor-networks and mobilising local actors into coalition building to compensate the shortcomings and limitations of the municipal institution and assemble the needed resources for action. These actor-networks, in 1998, tended to reclaim their "rights" on all their municipal perimeters. Instrumentally speaking they knew that they lacked the usual urban planning tools to back these claims. Even more importantly, they were incapable of imposing such projects on the different local actors.

4.2 The municipal vision: Positioning the municipal actor-network strategy

The three municipal actor-networks have opted to three different positions in the way to overcome the resistances to their claims over their municipal perimeters. The municipal vision is central in this positioning. The municipal vision is, after the locality's identity, the "second half" of the municipal discourse. What we call here a municipal vision is a number of statements that could represent a more or less cohesive body of ideas of what are the major objectives this municipal actor-network is defending and what he hopes to achieve for the locality. Each municipal vision could be decomposed in a series of projects and actions. These projects and actions are of various kinds. Some are development projects including construction or restoration of public – sometimes private – buildings, public spaces, facilities and monuments. It may well be autonomous projects restricted to one or the other of these actions. In addition to these projects, we can also consider a diversity of actions in the governance, social and cultural fields. What brings all these projects and actions together and inscribe them in a vision are the more or less clear objectives they answer to.

4.2.1 Place-making urban planning

In the case of Chiyah, though the municipal actor-network had a strong implementation in the Aïn AlRemeneh neighbourhood, it was practically disconnected from the actors and actants of Chiyah West. In this area, the Shiite communitarian party Amal had strong support and was well present. The municipal actor-network was in no position to impose a top-down project on this party, neither on the population of Shiite community in Chiyah West. Consequently, the municipal actor-network of Chiyah chose to go down the road of the compromise. The municipal vision it presented was a way to seal this compromise.

The municipal actor-network in Chiyah first concern was to overcome the stigmas of the war and its consequences, mainly the tension on the demarcation line. Turning this area of tension into a place of encounter and openness between the southern and the south-eastern suburbs seemed the only reasonable way to provide sustainable peace and chances for development. To do so, the municipal actor-network had to enrol significant actors from Chiyah West. The municipal vision had precisely this role. This vision proposed the rise of an economic and functional centrality on the demarcation line. The main tool here was a large scale development project and included: the restoration of the old village centre neighbourhood destroyed by the war and cut by the demarcation line, the construction of different public facilities and of a public housing project, and the backing of the development of an existing dynamic souk in Chiyah West near the demarcation line. Next to

the public initiative, the development project bets on private sector initiatives. The project of the Maronite parish – an important landlord in this neighbourhood – to build several residential, offices and retail units in this area, was in this sense.

However, this project necessitated first the resolution of the displaced and squatters issues, by restoring their rights in this neighbourhood to the first, and providing indemnities to the latter. This will later show a critical issue that will hinder the whole development project the municipal actor-network was counting on. The development project was never officialised in any document. It was a set of projects and actions put together conjointly and in complementarity by different actors. We will elaborate on the project in the next section. But we can say here that in urban planning terms and for pragmatic reasons, we have a smooth slide from the normative physical planning perspective of the locality's identity to an "urban project" perspective.

The urban project is a plurivocal term that encompasses very different situations (Toussaint & Zimmermann, 1998; Mangin & Panerai, 1999; Ingallina, 2001, Pinson, 2009). Its main characteristic is a strong anchorage in the local, a place, that is seen as the starting point of the project. The urban project is a return to the materiality of the urban. It is a counter-movement to the resolute abstraction of earlier urban planning to found planning on material reality. But it also has a communicative dimension where the project becomes a *"mediation apt to make emerge a form of collective life since it articulates a mental representation to a significant appropriation of the material world"* (Rémy in Toussaint & Zimmermann, 1998). Consequently, it is usually an open to public-private complementarity and partnerships. All these dimensions are present in the urban development project of the municipal actor-network of Chiyah. Through this project the municipal actor-network hopes to make emerge from the local a centrality that could position the locality on the metropolitan level and at the same time federate its different actors together.

4.2.2 Guerilla urban planning

The case of Ghobeiri is largely different. The municipal actor-network chose the confrontation path. In fact, there was no room for compromise. The negotiations between the central government, Amal and Hezbollah around the Elyssar project arrived to a dead-end in the nineties, and the positions of the different stakeholders were still the same. On the other hand, it was not acceptable to have a negotiation between a central government and a municipality on this issue after the stalemate of the project. The municipal actor-network who wanted to "conquer back" its municipal perimeter had opted to two strategies. The first is what we call here a "guerrilla urban planning" in order to change, bit by bit, facts on the ground. The second is what we can call the "modernizing path".

In fact, as in the case of Chiyah, the municipal actor-network of Ghobeiri, even with the backing of the party, had no enough power to impose its will on a government led project. On the other hand, even if the Resistance based discourse on the locality's identity was well received in the informal settlements of Elyssar, these neighbourhoods are traditional Amal influence zones. The political goal of the "guerrilla urban planning" strategy is to gain support of the population and render the application of the project more difficult. This "guerrilla urban planning" in its applications could be in a way assimilated to Davidoff's (1965) advocacy planning. As in advocacy planning a certain technical expertise was

provided to groups “with no voice” in order for them to have a greater control on their environment. However, to the difference of the advocacy planning approach, what was provided was punctual interventions and not alternatives to the Elyssar project. On the other hand, these interventions are done in clear contravention to the law that forbids the municipality from intervening in the Elyssar project’s area.

This is why we chose to give it the “guerrilla” character.

The “modernizing path”, though it aims at regaining Elyssar, had a larger ambition. “Modernizing” the locality was in a way challenging the adversaries of Hezbollah who saw in its access to the municipal council a dangerous drift of conservatism. In fact, this party was never member of any government and its partisans were rarely present in state administrations. Though, the party had strong and well reputed NGOs with very professional administrators, the 1998 elections was the first implication of the party in a leading governance position. Consequently, the municipal governance was seen as a test to the party, but also as an opportunity to present a model. The municipality of Ghobeiri, one of the rare large municipalities where the party succeeded in having the mayor to be one of the party prominent figures, was seen as one of the places where Hezbollah hoped to set the example. “Modernizing” meant, first and foremost, providing adequate and quality facilities this densely inhabited locality was lacking.

The municipal actor-network in Ghobeiri main message in its municipal vision was that the marginalization and the backward image the locality was facing could be turned around by a solid strategy of investment in public spaces and facilities and by an ambitious and dedicated local authority. Ghobeiri was a relatively large locality in the Beirut suburbs with an important number of large private enterprises, hotels and public institutions, which meant a high annual tax income for the municipality. However, Ghobeiri had also large informal settlements, a deteriorated public realm and a very large population constituted mainly of low-income households, bringing important challenges to the municipality action, and expected large spending.

Though it chose to experiment other types of planning and never used the traditional tools of normative physical planning (like Master plans and regulations), and always refused to acknowledge the presence of a well structured municipal vision, it is clear that the municipal actor-network of Ghobeiri kept moving with no concessions towards direct control of its municipal perimeter. The “guerrilla urban planning” expressed by the implementation of infrastructures and facilities served this goal by proceeding in a long term one-step-at-a-time approach.

4.2.3 Reactive urban planning

The municipal actor-network of Furn AlChebbak had a notabilarian and conservative leadership that didn’t saw much need to invest in large network building. It was content with its own family clans and notables’ networks, and these networks were sufficient for winning the municipal elections. This municipal actor-network of Furn AlChebbak saw the role of the municipality in the most traditional way. In fact, Furn AlChebbak has a somehow different situation than Chiyah or Ghobeiri. It didn’t suffer the displacement and the demarcation line as did Chiyah, nor did it find itself in harsh opposition to the central authorities over the fate of informal settlements in its municipal perimeter. Furn AlChebbak

saw an important redeployment of retail activity in its souk during the war, and the concentration of a large number of public administrations and important road infrastructures in its municipal perimeter after the war making it one important centrality in the suburbs of Beirut. Consequently, the municipal actor-network positioned itself in a rather indifferent attitude vis-à-vis the reconstruction metropolitan project of the central government, and was not tempted to engage itself in large development projects.

The “federalization” of the municipal perimeter is a prompt indicator that the main concern here was to affirm a conservation of existing actor-network. Consequently, there’s no project to approach the development of the municipal perimeter in a holistic way. We could say that the urban planning approach of Furn ALChebbak is that of an “ad-hoc” urban planning that deals with issues separately in a very reactive way. This situation became to change in the three or four last years with the abrupt boom in construction in Beirut and the impressive rise in real-estate value. We’ll be presenting these changes and their implications in the next section.

Through the locality’s identity and the municipal vision the municipal actor-network have problematized the municipal issue in a way to construct their own “reality” in the Beirut fragmented city and society. This problematization have also brought to them the actors and the actants that will form their universe of instruments. It is this universe of instruments that they’ll be using to engage in number of experimentations that will characterize their bricolage planning.

5. Facing fragmentation: Experimenting new tools of municipal action

5.1 A “revolution” of communication strategies

The most visible change introduced in municipal action in post-war Beirut is surely the communication trend. Traditionally, municipal governance and municipal projects were dealt with in closed circles between the notables and the technicians of the municipality. Word of mouth was the main way of informing the population about policies and projects. In today’s municipalities, we can see a serious concern of the municipal actors to mobilize new tools of communications.

In all three cases we’ve studied, we can see the creation of websites, municipal publications, posters and municipal billboards in the public space, publicity for events and frequent interviews in local and national media. Special attention is given to municipal projects. The use of 3D simulations is also frequent. To these media tools, we see also changes in the municipal practice itself towards more openness and transparency. The minutes of meetings are published on the websites or are displayed in the hall of the municipal building. Regular meetings are organized to present to the population the achievements and the projects of the municipality and receive comment. Some municipalities even worked on the training of their employees, who are most in touch with the population, for better communication. These tools have been undoubtedly successful. They’ve been used on and on in new editions since 1998. We can even see a professionalization of this activity with design studios coming in and the work on the “visual identity” of the municipality (logos, colour palette...).

These tools are part of what is usually called “city marketing”. It has two goals. One is directly related to governance and the need to transcend fragmentation and get in touch with

the population and the different local groups. The other is more strategic and related to the overall development of a city or a locality. It is based on the assumption that a positive vivid image of the locality could boost dynamic of private initiatives in the locality and attract new investments to it. It is urban planning without planners, a setting where image building will suffice for the development of a city or a locality. Governance and management on the other hand become central. However, this should not be confounded with the collaborative urban planning approach (Healey, 1997) based on Habermas communicative theory. We can see here a genuine effort to include local actors in the municipal actor-network dynamic, but only in an enrolled position. Though municipal actor-network leaderships may refer to these activities as participation, as in the three sample cases, they are more likely top-down information displays. There's no room for debate in these strategies. As propaganda and legitimization tools, these marketing tools are effective. They've positioned the municipalities in the local representations as major dynamic actors in the localities. However, they don't seem really to serve in getting local actors into the municipal actor-network. This is done through other "incentive schemes" and usually through direct contact.

5.2 Private public partnerships opportunities and limitations

As said earlier, the municipal vision was to be achieved mainly by a large development project on the war demarcation line at the heart of the old locality central neighbourhood. However, only a few actions were executed. The fact is an essential prerequisite to the project was the resolution of the displaced and squatters issue in the area where the project was to be developed. But the resolution of this issue lagged to different political and technical administrative reasons. This provoked a large crisis for the development project that was aborted aggravating an already existing trust issue⁹. So, as of 2000, the municipal actor-network decided to redeploy its project elsewhere in Chiyah. And it chose to do so on the far east of Chiyah, "deep" in Aïn AlRemeneh.

Here, we saw the development of a large continuum of public spaces, gardens, sport terrains and a large socio-cultural and sports centre in construction. These projects developed by the municipality in this area articulated with other projects, like the different facilities of a parish church, other private sport terrains, some restaurants with kids' playgrounds. In this area the municipality worked in close collaboration with the Maronite parish and its coalition of associations, as with a local shop owners' association. The main cooperation was on the complementarity of activities and the boosting of the attractiveness of this area through the organization of several festivals and other manifestations.

It is the incapacity of the municipal actor-network to "interest" and "enrol" Chiyah West that blocked the first municipal development project in Chiyah. Only, in the case of the souk in Chiyah West, a strong collaboration with the shop owners' association of the souk allowed a partial integration of the place in the municipal project. In opposition, the second development project, the area to the east of Aïn AlRemeneh was still in construction and attracted a large number of dense apartment buildings projects aiming for middle-class buyers. This new population, interested in the promise of green public spaces, as the nearby shops, local investors and the coalition of the Maronite parish associations, interested in the activities and the clientele such spaces would attract, all backed the project.

⁹ As the deputy mayor confirmed to us in an interview (2006): "nobody wants to live on a demarcation line".

Analysing actor-networks is most interesting for understanding urban planning opportunities and limitations. On one hand, it shows that setting urban development projects is more complex than just a question of grasping opportunities and engineering complex coordination between different actors. It is first and foremost a reconfiguration of the existing relations and the definition of new ones, and that is a case-specific issue. In the case of Chiyah, early projects were an opportunity to develop different types of experiences that give the municipal actor-network a clearer idea of what it could or could not do. On the other hand, the case of Chiyah got us to concur with Rydin (2010) that it is by focusing on the sociotechnical objects of the systems urban planning aims to change that we can get the best grasp urban planning processes. In fact, sadly, the demarcation line issue seems clearly to be tenacious and difficult to enrol in a municipal actor-network. It even is itself capable to enrol different socio-spatial entities and powerful actors “profiting” from the demarcation line’s actual state, in what we can call here the demarcation line actor-network¹⁰.

5.3 Urban infrastructures as a controversial issue

The fate of the population of the informal settlements was the main issue in the controversy around the Elyssar development project in the west of the southern suburbs of Beirut. Though the project considered the construction of social housing for 3000 persons, this number was far below the actual number of inhabitants of these settlements. In the mid-nineties, the Shiite parties, Hezbollah and Amal, engaged in long negotiations with the prime minister, in order to introduce changes to the project mainly including more social housing, but with no success. In fact, the issue was treated in the frame of larger negotiations between these actors implicating other projects and political understandings. The confrontation led to a standstill of the project. This however had important consequences on the life of the population of these informal settlements who were not only facing economic and social tenuousness but also harsh environmental conditions. It was the latter that seemed to provoke the most serious problems pushing the municipality to intervene to unblock dangerous and untenable situation.

The municipal actor-network of Ghobeiri engaged in four other types of interventions in this zone, always under the banner: dealing with unacceptable situation. This is how it came to install a water infrastructure network to numerous households in an informal settlement, build a breakwater made of sandbags to protect another from high sea waves, organize an informal souk in a neighbourhood and launch a pilot waste sorting project in another. There is a gradual evolution in the cases. In the latter projects, urgency seems less pressing, and we see less unilateralism from the part of the municipal actor-network, other actors – like international development institutions – are getting involved.

¹⁰ Among these actors we can identify political parties that built strong influence for themselves in the neighbourhoods along the demarcation line by claiming to defend these neighbourhoods. We can also identify a squatter population that fear displacement in the event of the resolution of the issue. And more importantly we have the central state that refused to engage in a project of large restructuring of the demarcation line – the study being offered by the Urban planning agency of the French region of Ile-de-France – because the demarcation line is considered too much of a complex political issue!

Despite the harsh attack of the Ghobeiri municipality on the Elyssar project, and behind it the central government, that shows that a “guerrilla urban planning” is not a confrontation approach through and through. There is room for conciliatory manoeuvre (Tait, 2002)¹¹. The shrewd political diplomacy of the mayor of Ghobeiri made the central government intervene for improving urban services in an informal settlements, and the enrolment of the latter in the municipal actor-network of Ghobeiri¹². It further created a precedent for more intervention by the municipality in Elyssar area.

In fact, the capitalization on experiment and generalization is done here through a track that includes different elements. The first is acceptance and recognition of the positive impact of these interventions by the local actors but also but also other actors on the national and international level. This is how international development agencies got implicated in assisting in some of these interventions. The second, is the gradual slide from a “guerrilla urban planning” oriented against Elyssar, towards an “informal settlement upgrading approach” (Abbott, 2002a, 2002b). This means that the confrontation with Elyssar was becoming less the dominant angle of approach, it was replaced by the construction of a bolder project: making a territory of an area in the southern suburbs of Beirut or what is usually called The Suburb.

The Suburb is Hezbollah’s area of influence in the southern suburbs of Beirut. Hezbollah has a long implementation in this area and a very large and successful network of NGOs that has assured it large support. Hezbollah has also a long tradition of intervention as a construction and public works actor in this area. However, it is only recently – in the aftermath of the 2006 war with Israel – that the party got involved in urban planning per se with the project for reconstructing the southern suburbs. But even in the case of this project, we do not see an overall planning strategy for The Suburb, instead, a large series of buildings’ reconstruction projects. In fact, the party has always maintained the absence of such a strategy and justified his interventions by the urgency of intolerable situations while condemning the withdrawal of the state institutions from their role.

The question of urban infrastructures is probably one of the most ancient and central tools in urban planning. Back in the 19th century, Haussmann used road infrastructures, mainly the tracing of the boulevards as a way of restructuring the whole city of Paris. In the case of Ghobeiri, this is particularly appealing: the project of metropolisation and reconstruction executed large road infrastructures contributing clearly to the separation of Elyssar from the rest of Ghobeiri. Through other types of infrastructures, lacking in the informal settlements neighbourhoods, the municipal actor-network of Ghobeiri tried to physically and socially connect these neighbourhoods with the rest of the locality, but at the same time slowly restructure the whole area. The infrastructures of inclusion could be seen as a vector of this strategy, the development of public facilities is another.

¹¹ However, in an interesting reverse of the example of the urban planning officers of Tait’s (2000) case study where they create a room of manoeuvre in executing urban planning directives, the mayor of Ghobeiri creates for himself a room of manoeuvre in contesting central government. He uses his statute of political player at the national level – as a former member of the leadership of Hezbollah – to access the political apparatus of the state and diffuse the confrontation.

¹² It is also appealing that the municipal publications do not mention the CDR project, presenting the resolution of the issue as the consequence of the municipality’s involvement.

5.3.1 Creating facilities through a public led strategy for real-estates stock constitution

The question of “modernizing” the locality was central to Ghobeiri’s municipal vision. “Modernization” in the representation of the municipal actor-network of Ghobeiri was mainly linked to the production of quality public facilities accessible to the population. Though Ghobeiri is a large locality with a population of more than 100.000 inhabitants, the aim of the municipal actor-network was to produce facilities that could serve at the level of the whole southern suburbs. The main obstacle in the face of this objective was clearly financial: where to get the money for such large projects? The municipal actor-network seems to have developed over the years a very successful strategy in this regard.

All these projects necessitated first the availability of land owned by the municipality. But, trying to purchase a suitable terrain for a predefined project would surely get the sellers to raise the price. The municipality tried to get around this problem by creating its own real-estates’ stock. No particular project was linked to any purchase. At the same time, a portfolio of projects that the municipality believed representative of the priorities of Ghobeiri was defined and, sometimes, preliminary studies were commissioned to identify scenarios and costs. It was only at this moment that the municipality turned to different donors to finance one or the other project. These donors are usually keener to finance a project whose land and study are available, diminishing sharply the amount of their contribution. It was in this logic that the municipality managed to execute different facilities with the intervention of different donors.

The availability of land and its price have guided the constitution of the real-estates’ stock. It made the whole process – as the municipality claims – quite an ad-hoc one. However, the municipality gradually became to identify more accurately the needs of the locality and the possible locations where these facilities should be constructed. In fact, it conducted a number of surveys to map the physical, economical and social situation of the locality. Consequently, it evolved from an ad-hoc planning approach to a more systematized one. Though we’re in front of a project that do not speak its name: no such holistic strategy was acknowledged by the municipal actor-network and no documents referring to it were ever produced.

The question of real-estate has always been central in urban planning. Speculation, in fact, could represent an important complement to infrastructures development, by financing retrospectively their execution through taxes – much of the urban development since Haussmann has relied on this logic. It can be also a major source of socio-spatial segregation. A lot of tools have been experienced in developed countries to control real-estate speculation (Lacaze, 1995). Real-estates’ stock building is a most common one. The wit in the municipal actor-network of Ghobeiri resides in combining this tactic with discreetness an active donor financing. It is a way to compensate the need of formal or informal private-public partnerships.

These experimentations of the municipality of Ghobeiri represent a corner stone for the generalization of the bricolage planning approach of the municipal actor-network if it was to be deployed on a larger level.

5.4 Negotiating urban extensions through orientation schemes

In the north of the municipal perimeter of Furn AlChebbak we can find a very large green area that is still exploited as an agricultural area due to zoning regulations that protect it against urbanization. This area is one of the rare large real-estates stocks in the central areas of the Beirut agglomeration. Clearly it is keen to attract developers who are pressing for a change in its zoning regulations. The municipal actor-network is facing a more serious challenge in dealing with this issue. The leadership of the municipal actor-network had always maintained the need to protect this area as a green lung in a very densely urbanized zone. Today, a reflection on the future of this area was initiated in order to face the pressures. As the municipality lacks powerful leadership and control over its territory, these discussions have been oriented towards the adoption of a master plan.

Thévenot's (1995) defence of the Plan as an important communicative tool makes sense here. What a master plan tool offers is less a prospective perspective but a large contribution to the stabilization of a complex and fragile governance. The actors around the table do not represent a common front and have different agendas, however, none could get to implement his one by himself. Negotiations are here central, the approval of all the actors around the table is necessary for the development of the project. Orientation schemes are excellent tools in this sense; they're general enough to gain the largest adhesion from the actors and flexible enough to evolve through the negotiations.

In our sample case, the future of this area is crucial for the Furn AlChebbak municipal actor-network. On one hand, a number of notables at the centre of the actor network are landowners in this area. On the other hand, whatever development is put on rails in this area will have tremendous impact on the rest of the locality. For investors, the development of the area represents lucrative but also important long-term investments. As for the central government authorities, this area holds strategic importance. Whatever the compromise that gets out of these negotiations, all actors around the table want assurance that their concerns will be taken in consideration and that all the parties will respect their engagements. The role of the master plan is to provide some guarantees for all actors. Market is pushing towards an important intervention of the municipality and the directorate of urban planning to allow greater development, but, the issue implicates number of notables and family clans in Furn AlChebbak and might destabilize established alliances holding the municipal actor-network together.

6. Scaling up networks to foster their stabilization

All three municipal actor-networks are facing important political challenges imposed by changes on the higher levels of government. The political situation on the national level that led to the municipal elections of 1998 is no longer what it was. As of 2005, the high political polarization on the national level has its consequences on the local level, where parties chose to move towards more aggressive local strategies to enrol municipalities and NGOs in their own networks. This pressure is destabilizing some of the municipal actor-networks, and local actors acknowledge the limits of municipal action. Some major issues, mainly economic issues, could not be dealt with on the local level. Scaling up begins to seem as a way to stabilize the municipal actor-networks and capitalize on decade-long experimentations.

The creation of Unions of Municipalities is the main instrument for such a stabilization through up-scaling. Two unions in these suburbs were created as of 2007, one including the municipalities of the southern suburbs and the other that of the south-eastern suburbs. The unions represent an important (re)problematization of the municipal issue. The definition of a new spatial perimeter for municipal action poses the question of territorialisation.

In the case of the southern suburbs, there was an existing territorialisation going on through Hezbollah's construction of The Suburb. Though the municipal actor-networks of the southern suburbs – controlled by the same party – defended a claim on their municipal perimeters, they didn't have the same attachment to it as in the case of Chiyah or Furn AlChebbak's municipal actor-networks. Their territorial reference was always The Suburb. The creation of the union here was then in the continuity of the municipal actor-networks efforts of the last decade. It built on their experimentations. The creation of the union is an effort to fusion the different actor-networks in a larger one working at the scale of the southern suburbs and responding to issues that the municipal level is incapable to tackle; one of these issues being the place of these suburbs in the larger metropolitan development.

The case of the union of municipalities in the south-eastern suburbs is largely different. Local family clans here control the different municipalities and have strong attachment to their localities and their autonomy. However, as of 2005, they're faced by the imminent danger of destabilization and marginalization by the political parties on the national level. The creation of this union is somehow a formation of a cartel that can give weight to these local actors and put them on the negotiation table for a better articulation of these suburbs with the rest of the agglomeration. The real challenge here is how to give consistency to a body lacking clear leadership and identity. In fact, the union here does not coincide with any significant reference to the municipal actor-networks and remains open to new memberships. This leads to the difficulty of constructing a convergent vision of what the union should be and what it should do, that would mobilize actors and help merge the different municipal actor-networks. Consequently, in opposition to the union of the southern suburbs, no territorial systemic planning approach defining complementarities is actually possible. Building on previous experimentations is also difficult since these experimentations for the majority were case-specific. Nevertheless, these municipal actor-networks are trying to engage in common reflections about issues they identify as priority and that touch them all, like youth and education. Here, paradoxically the union is a space of experimentation to produce tools that will serve at the municipal level.

7. Bricolage planning opportunities and limits

In the light of the three sample cases, we identify here three central elements in the development of bricolage planning: the constitution of the "universe of instruments", the experience and the articulation to larger dynamics; and behind them all, the initial profile of the municipal actor-network as explanatory variable.

The universe of instruments is very important in the capacity of action of a municipal actor-network. The main determinant of this universe of instruments is the problematization of the municipal question by the actor-network through the locality's identity and the municipal vision. Failing to present an inclusive locality's identity nor an ambitious municipal vision may represent an important weakness to any municipal actor-network. It

is through these tools that it can enrol actors and places with substantial resources to allow it to engage in audacious or innovative initiatives. However, problematization could develop in different manners and contextual variables may have an important impact on the universe of instruments of a municipal actor-network. Existing problems, for example, never were a factor leading to proactivity. Nevertheless, it usually presses other actors to take position once an actor makes an issue of it. In fact, urgency may well be a catalyser of municipal actor-network development and the constitution of the universe of instruments. Other important factors are the initial diversity and reach – mainly in terms of scale – of the core actors. The presence at the centre of the municipal actor-network of members with access to other types of actor-networks gives them larger room for manoeuvre, possibly creating ad-hoc coalitions that will enlarge the universe of instruments of municipality.

In the cases we've studied we saw a mobilization of a large variety of tools developed in different "cultures" of planning: communication tools, advocacy tools, physical planning tools and place making tools. As in the "pastiche" trend dominant in planning (Dear, 2000), the municipal actor-networks do not hesitate to cumulate initially contradictory logics. In fact, they themselves are patchworks of actors with different skills and backgrounds. Here, the only concern is the capacity to act, and the dominant state of mind is pragmatism. In today's cities, where decentralization usually translates in an administrative fragmentation of urban agglomerations, we consider that the situation of the municipal actor-networks of Beirut's suburbs is far from being exceptional. Faced with the formidable challenge of articulating local dynamics with larger ones, the urban municipal actor-networks are still trying to find their way, mainly by experimenting different tools. Decentralized cooperation has and still is largely contributing to the travel of tools and experimentations. This tendency will surely grow with the development at the national and international levels of forums and NGOs that work precisely on the dissemination of "good practices" between local actors. However, some tools are keener to be mobilized than others in particular situations, according to variables related to the municipal actor-networks' profiles.

The master plan tool most probably be used when the municipal actor-network core actors lack the needed resources to engage in their project. Its legal power has the advantage of presenting guarantees of stability to the enterprise, consequently, making of it a central tool for enrolling new strategic actors. At the opposite, a resourceful, large and diverse municipal actor-network may well discard the master plan tool. A municipality faced with pressures of providing rapid and effective solutions, will see the master plan track as time-consuming and a door for other "unwelcomed" actors to enter and impose "unnecessary" negotiations. In these cases, an ambitious, but clearly identified vision may well suffice. It defines the frame through which each actor in the actor-network will bring his contribution to the larger project. As for the real-estates' stock building tool it might well be somehow exceptional, requiring in order to be effective a very resourceful municipal actor-network capable of managing a complicated multi-step initiative (buying real-estates, building scenarios' portfolios and negotiating with donors), and discreet enough so not to jeopardize the whole operation. A municipal actor-network with centralized decision-making processes is needed to succeed to do so.

The question of experience is also central in the success of Bricolage planning. Two types of experiences are central here, that of the place and the people, and that of the issues and the

tools. As we said before, the experience of the place and the people is linked to what Thévenot (1995) calls the regime of familiarity, and in our case the local actors. It is central to guide the municipal actor-network's action through the subtleties of the local. An actor-network that didn't succeed to enrol the proper local actors will have tremendous difficulty in acting in a certain place. The least it'll be facing is indifference, the worst, open resistance and sabotage. Knowledge of tools and professional experience is the other type of experience central to the success of municipal action, and it is usually a difficult one to achieve for municipal actor-networks with no reaches on other scales. This is why a municipal actor-network articulated to large partisan actor-networks has an important initial asset compared with other localized ones. However, less formal relations or affiliations in the case of localized networks, like those headed by family clans, could also play an important role. Access to specialized NGOs or development institutions may well provide the needed expertise. Experience is also something that could be constructed over time. Of course, municipal actor-network are faced with the pressure of elections and the need to produce results within municipal terms, which makes time a costly commodity. But, in some cases, where the electoral outcome is not directly dependent of municipal development performance, even marginal municipal actor-networks who can secure long-term in office might well have the time to learn and build their own experience. This explains for example how in Lebanon – where the disjunction of the geography of vote and geography of residence dissociates electoral politics and local development – we can observe, after twelve years of the first post-war municipal elections, a general increase of professionalization of the municipal action.

The articulation to the larger context is the central issue that pushes these actor-networks to pass from ad hoc development to bricolage planning. As we said earlier, the main challenges to the municipalities in building their territory and reclaiming their place as central actors in their localities, are on one hand incorporating the neighbourhoods and local actors' projects and concerns in their territorial construction and at the other articulating it with larger metropolitan and communitarian territorial constructions. It is clear that ad hoc development is a good way to incorporate local actors and places, since it allows the municipal actor-network by initiating development projects with them and in them. It even enables it to resist against larger territorialisation, by providing an alternative to this territorialisation or by mobilizing. However, the municipal actor-network will have to face sooner or later the question of urban planning. That can be the result of a gradual evolution, where success in executing multiple development projects is paving the way for a more integrated perspective. Or it can be the result of abrupt and important changes on other levels that may bring in considerable effects on the local level and impose on the municipal actor-network an overall reflection to deal with these challenges. This is mainly the case with the economic dimension that is not usually at the centre of municipal policy.

This evolution towards a larger strategic perspective does not necessarily mean that a viable municipal planning will consequently emerge on that level. First, planning is a more comprehensive exercise than development. It aims for the long-run; an articulation of different aspects of human life, towards "the greater good of the population". Consequently introducing new dimensions like participation, legitimacy and the articulation to other

territorial scales, all new questions with their own stakes that the accumulated experience in urban development doesn't necessarily help to treat. Secondly, the margin of manoeuvre is limited for a municipal actor-network in dealing with well-established and organized actor-networks on the national level with large resources. In a situation of confrontation, the latter's wills will prevail in the long run, since they're capable of interesting local actors and destabilizing municipal actor-networks. Municipal planning is hardly a guaranteed outcome of ad hoc development.

Bricolage planning could further develop on an intercommunal level. Again here, the experience of the municipalities in Lebanon is interesting in that regard. To get a say on strategic issues, mainly economic ones, municipalities are creating or integrating municipal unions. In fact, in the last three or four years, a number of unions are engaging in studies and strategies for constructing a common territory based on territorial planning schemes where the economic dimension is central. This process is still in its first phases and it is too soon to comment it, but it is clear that it is largely in the continuity of the municipal revival in Lebanon. It builds on its experience, and is here to complement the shortcomings of the municipal actor-networks on the planning dimension. Time will tell of the fate of an intercommunal bricolage planning actor-network approach. This may well just be a headlong rush to escape the limitations of the municipal level, or just a rebound by municipal actor-network leadership seeking by the change of scale to restore stability in a actor-network wary of exhaustion, but that will ultimately be caught up by its structural limitations.

We surely have presented and commented here three sample cases, but in reality, we consider they represent the same central case, that of networks trying to restructure their urban environments and bring in development to their areas. Local divergences are surely important variables leading the municipal actor-networks on different tracks; but at the end we see clearly that the stakes are practically the same: linking a complex governance to a fragmented socio-spatial urban space, while securing the stability of the network and restructuring the urban landscape. All three samples have gone from problematization to generalization differently but, all the same, they all walked this bricolage planning path. In fact, this path is as ANT has shown that of every network trying to move into action and keep its stability.

As presented by different authors, urban planning practice seems largely domesticated by powerful interests ascepticized from any political dimension. Though we concur with the overall impression on the actual trends in the profession of planners, we believe that urban planning practice however, is on the contrary strongly repoliticizing. In fact, planning is more and more thought and developed by other actors than planners, actors that want to use planning to find their place in complex governance landscapes. Fragmentation has led to the multiplication of these actors, especially on the local level. Beirut's experience shows that these actors are capable of networking, experimenting and learning, moving to larger scale perspective even in extreme conflictual conditions. The bricoleurs of Beirut are hardly alone. Urban planning is indeed in reconstruction. Its renaissance may well be through the things that it tried long to escape: embracing politicization, small scale and fragmentation. Bricolage planning is indeed a step in that direction

8. References

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Cities are growing as never before and nowadays, it is estimated that at least 50% of the world's population lives in urban areas. This trend is expected to continue and simultaneously the problems in urban areas are anticipated to have an increase. Urbanization constitutes a complex process involving problems with social, economic, environmental and spatial dimensions that need appropriate solutions. This book highlights some of these problems and discusses possible solutions in terms of organisation, planning and management. The purpose of the book is to present selected chapters, of great importance for understanding the urban development issues, written by renowned authors in this scientific field. All the chapters have been thoroughly reviewed and they cover some basic aspects concerning urban sustainability, urban sprawl, urban planning, urban environment, housing and land uses. The editor gratefully acknowledges the assistance of Dr Marius Minea in reviewing two chapters.

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51000 Rijeka, Croatia
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Unit 405, Office Block, Hotel Equatorial Shanghai
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中国上海市延安西路65号上海国际贵都大饭店办公楼405单元
Phone: +86-21-62489820
Fax: +86-21-62489821

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