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# Cultural Mapping and Urban Regeneration: Analyzing Emergent Narratives about Bilbao

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Résumé de l'article

Le rôle de la culture dans les stratégies de régénération urbaine devrait être étudié à plusieurs niveaux. La pratique de la cartographie culturelle révèle l'importance des processus historiques et des transformations identitaires à l'oeuvre dans les villes où les modèles productifs ont subi d'importantes mutations. Cet article met en évidence le cas de la ville de Bilbao dans le Pays basque espagnol. La première partie de cet article discute des incidences de « l'effet Guggenheim » sur l'ensemble des infrastructures culturelles de la ville. Cette partie met en relief la transformation et les enjeux mémoriels qui en découlent. La seconde partie de cet article discute de la cartographie culturelle de la péninsule de Zorrotzaurre, une partie de la ville en pleine effervescence. Cet article adopte une attitude de responsabilisation démocratique dans son utilisation des nouvelles technologies pour la gestion municipale. Cet aspect est développé dans une réflexion sur l'usage des technologies, sur la participation publique l'impact des industries culturelles et créatives sur les espaces urbains renouvelés.

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# Cultural Mapping and Urban Regeneration: Analyzing Emergent Narratives about Bilbao

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*Abstract:* The role of culture in urban regeneration should be studied at different levels. Cultural mapping gives us a new understanding of the historical processes that have transformed public spaces in cities whose productive models and social relationships have undergone critical changes, affecting how they project their identity inside and outside their boundaries. Our research focuses on the case study of Bilbao (Basque Country, Spain). The first part of the analysis centres on a critical interpretation of the importance granted to cultural infrastructures in areas that were most intensely exposed to the changes which are known as the ‘Guggenheim effect’ on the international scene. This study especially examines the tension between today’s transformations and managing memories from the past. The second part analyses cultural mapping practices developed in emerging areas of the city such as the Zorrotzaurre peninsula, which is the new focus of the metropolitan development scheme. The proposals chosen for this study foster democratic responsibility in city management by using new technologies. They enable us take a closer look at some of the city’s most innovative collaborative cultural mapping practices, methodology and processes, as well as the theoretical frameworks that inspired them. Lastly, a proposal is put forth to implement participatory cultural mapping to identify the spillover effects of the cultural and creative industries located in renewed urban spaces.

*Keywords:* cultural mapping, Bilbao, urban regeneration, social memory, creative cities

*Résumé :* Le rôle de la culture dans les stratégies de régénération urbaine devrait être étudié à plusieurs niveaux. La pratique de la cartographie culturelle révèle l’importance des processus historiques et des transformations identitaires à l’œuvre dans les villes où les modèles productifs ont subi d’importantes mutations. Cet article met en évidence le cas de la ville de Bilbao dans le Pays basque espagnol. La première partie de cet article discute des incidences de « l’effet Guggenheim » sur l’ensemble des infrastructures culturelles de la ville. Cette partie met en relief la transformation et les enjeux mémoriels qui en découlent. La seconde partie de

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cet article discute de la cartographie culturelle de la péninsule de Zorrotzaurre, une partie de la vieille en pleine effervescence. Cet article adopte une attitude de responsabilisation démocratique dans son utilisation des nouvelles technologies pour la gestion municipale. Cet aspect est développé dans une réflexion sur l'usage des technologies, sur la participation publique l'impact des industries culturelles et créatives sur les espaces urbaines renouvelées.

*Mots clé* : cartographie culturelle, Bilbao, régénération urbaine, mémoire sociale, villes créatives

### **From planning to mapping**

Urban spaces are constantly being defined at the crossroads between what has been achieved and openness to the future. Cities are exposed to varying degrees of transformation that broaden and reframe their identity as they respond to operational planning processes over time. To different extents, all cities are subjected to tension between what has been created and what is emerging. Cities are comprised of consolidated spaces and those being formed. Recognizing a city means seeing these two faces at once: as something clearly defined and as something unfinished. When speaking of planning and mapping, we must reflect on the two forces that form this tension in urban spaces. In turn, these two actions – planning and mapping – have two dimensions. Planning is associated with the power to organise and set spaces according to a certain political will and, in this sense, stands for what has been achieved. However, from another point of view, planning pushes spaces towards their future, altering what is given and causing a new order to emerge. Mapping, on the other hand, has traditionally served as a means to represent the established city, a bidimensional mimesis of the given space. However, the mimetic nature of maps has never prevented them from introducing imaginative features, granting users the role of reader. In other words, maps make the reader establish a creative relationship with a space, which is shown in a symbolic manner and must be interpreted (Ortega 2010).

In any case, in both planning and mapping, it is important not to focus solely on the objectives but also, and above all, on the processes involved. The *means* matter as much as the *ends*. Regardless of how political authorities are always invoking good governance practices, there is a widespread feeling among citizens that urban planning is a responsibility far from their scope of decision-making and influence. When there is a conflict of interest between political actions and the people's will, the administration often chooses to convey the idea that there is an interplay of decisions which are far too technical and complex to take the average citizen's needs into account except for hearing them. We could say that mapping has gained social force and political relevance as citizens have become increasingly frustrated with urban planning that they view as involving an excessive amount of red tape that does not take their daily lives into account. Citizens are no longer passive consumers of the spaces achieved, but recreate these spaces with interpretations that bring in new meanings emerging from each one's interests, quests, and experiences. These new meanings are then transferred to networks where they are socialized.

In our society, highly mediatized by Web 2.0 technology, maps are no longer closed charts that give us a precise view of the city. They are not even images that are gradually decoded, keeping pace with the transformations of the spaces they represent. Maps have become a very diverse set of

practices with the power to change the city itself into a text. And the format of this text has the same hybrid multi-layered nature as the reality that contemporary citizens move in, the result of a fusion of physical and virtual, analog and digital, subjective and collective aspects. Mapping is simultaneously *reading* and *writing* (De Certeau 2012). It is the *city's handwriting* and forms new ways to interact with urban reality. And at the same time, it is *reading the city* because it gives those types of interaction a unique meaning and value, which can be shared. Unlike planning, mapping is not only developing material content, but becomes an unbeatable tactic to make the intangible visible and valuable (Soja 2011).

In our study, we have centred on the role of culture in regenerating public urban spaces. Culture intervenes in urban transformation at different levels: investment in emblematic cultural infrastructures often boosts other types of investment, granting the city strategic visibility and creating inter-sectoral value chains. In other cases, especially in metropolitan areas that are more exposed to critical changes in their prevalent productive models, small cultural and creative industries (CCIs) located in post-industrial spaces help to revitalize and make the urban fabric more compact. At a different level, cultural events and activities undergo regeneration in keeping with their host city – moving headquarters, campaigns to attract new audiences, and generally implementing more ambitious policies to publicize cultural content, etc. Finally, we must not overlook the fact that culture creators and consumers, above all those that are more active in artistic associations and groups, are constantly subjecting public spaces to critical inspection through interventions, interpretations, and practices that have the capacity to reveal their possibilities and boundaries, riches and dangers.

We find achievements and opportunities at each of these levels of culture intervention. However, we also often find tension and conflict. Cultural mapping invites diverse practices that enable us to interpret the reorganization of public space through its tangible and intangible effects. Cultural mapping not only registers the material impact of space (its arrangement, property, main functions) but also the symbolic values attached to this impact (memories, rituals, languages). In addition to what is tangible and symbolic, cultural mapping registers the invisible: what is not there, but is absent, lacking, and what is proven and asserted (Duxbury, Garrett-Petts & MacLennan 2015). Hence, it has political importance. Cultural mapping serves to replicate what is given, to provide a truthful account of what is there, to realistically check existing practices and infrastructures. However, going beyond its function as a witness, it also serves to detect the gaps between what exists and what is needed, between what is planned and what is suitable. In other words, it is a tool to highlight and share the *décalage* (mismatch) between the citizens' wishes and institutional planning.

The political relevance of cultural mapping is likewise reflected in another sense. In times of economic crisis, public and private administrations feel the pressing need to assess their cultural policy in accordance with criteria that enable them to socially justify their investments. Administrations, perhaps in their search for the greatest possible degree of objectivity, have traditionally chosen assessment criteria for their cultural policy that provided them with economic statistics (Grodach & Silver 2012; Plaza 2006). Thus, any cultural investment was justified if there was evidence that it had somehow contributed to an increase in the economic indicators measuring goods and services that form the country's GDP. However, economic indicators do not reflect all

the tangible benefits of cultural investments. They also exercise a vast array of positive effects in the social sphere – for example, in terms of cohesion and inclusion — which have not usually been considered as important and valuable. This is not to mention the indirect and intangible impacts of cultural investment (*spillover effects*) which, like the ripples on a pond, travel increasing distances from the point where the impact took place, generating uncertainty about their scope and nature. However, the fact that they are vague or difficult to measure does not mean they are less important. Mapping opens up the possibility to develop indicators of spillover effects that serve as a fairer, more practical guide when assessing cultural policy and which involve artists and citizens through collaborative processes.

### **Cultural mapping practices in regenerated urban spaces: The case of Bilbao**

Our study selected the city of Bilbao (Basque Country, Spain) as the case study to analyse all the different levels that cultural mapping affects. The city's urban spaces have undergone major transformation in the last twenty years, as documented by Arantxa Rodríguez (2002) or Michael Keating and Monika de Frantz (2004). An example of a thriving medium-sized port city distinctive for its basic industry and iron and steel industries, Bilbao's social fabric was severely affected by industrial restructuring and the need to find alternatives to its productive sectors. Although the majority of the active population continued to work in the depressed secondary sector, the public administration posed alternatives for the new Bilbao which envisaged strengthening a powerful ring of technology parks engaged in advanced services with large investments in R&D+I, including companies from the automotive industry, IT, biosciences, energy, and the environment. Other plans included gradually dismantling the remains of the industrial city and using newly created spaces for activities that had nothing to do with producing consumer goods or equipment (tertiarization). The map of the city underwent major changes.

Culture was one of the pillars of this urban regeneration. We could say that it was one of the main characters in the story of Bilbao's transformation. In fact, the radical changes affecting the city have become widely known in international literature as 'the Guggenheim effect', which has helped to identify a spectacular contemporary art museum as the key agent of change in the area. However, in this story that helps to position the new Bilbao on the world market of cities we often fail to read a chapter which, although not as easy reading, is ultimately key to underpinning the structure of the narrative: the integral plan for cleaning up the Nervion River, which began to materialize in the 1980s, long before anyone had the idea of the Guggenheim Museum. This is the invisible key to the strategy to revitalize Bilbao, particularly following the floods that devastated the area in 1983, which cleared the way for the removal of port-related activities to another area, changing the shape of the city forever.

#### ***'Evocative transformations': The city achieved***

The Guggenheim Museum is located at the centre of the map of Bilbao's regeneration. We can choose it as the midway point along the route – much frequented by today's residents and visitors – which would take us from the City Hall to the Euskalduna Performing Arts and Congress Centre designed by architects Soriano and Palacios and inaugurated in 1999.

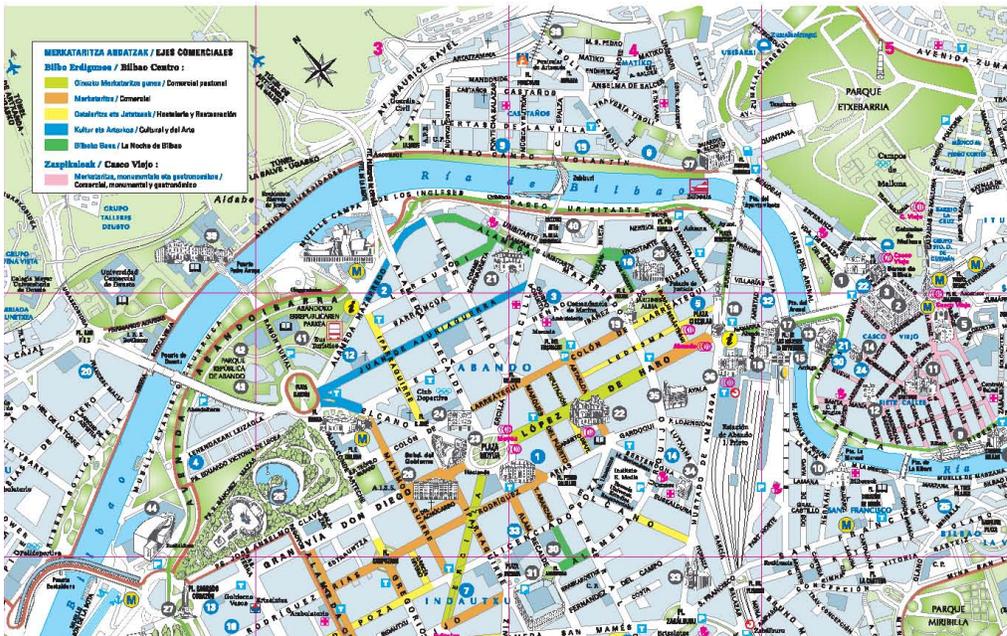


Figure 1. Bilbao Map (Guggenheim Museum: second left-upper quadrant). Source: www.bilbao.net

In the first stretch, which goes from the City Hall, the medieval city transitions to the modern urban expanse of the Ensanche (where the main calls for tenders from architects date back to 1862 and 1904) to reach the Guggenheim Museum, opened in 1997.



Figure 2. Bilbao. Ortophoto, aerial view of the river. Source: www.geobilbao.net

On this route, travellers witness how the old Ripa and Uribitarte quays, with their moorings and freight railways, have become broad promenades boasting leisure facilities. This first part of the route takes us from the seat of the city's political power to the more emblematic headquarters of the new Bilbao's 'tourism power' – a connection that has almost become a metaphor for the city (Plaza 1999, 2000). What takes us from one place to another is the memory of how this eminently industrial and commercial port city was dismantled and replaced by another where economic activities are now based on the service industries.



**Figure 3.** Historical views of the Uribitarte Quay. **Figure 4.** The Uribitarte Promenade at present. **Figure 5.** The Guggenheim Museum on Abandoibarra Avenue. Source: Photos by authors

The second stretch of the route, which takes us from the Guggenheim Museum to the Euskalduna Congress and Performing Arts Centre, tells us even more about the role that culture has played in the city's urban regeneration. The route along the riverside in Abandoibarra is actually named 'Memory Promenade' and features numerous public art works (pieces by Anish Kapoor, Anthony Caro, Markus Lüpertz, Richard Serra, and others). One work from the *Begirari* series by Eduardo Chillida (*Begirari IV*, installed in 2003) is outstanding for its strategic location. This totem-shaped monolith made of corten steel has a space or Polyphemus' eye in the upper part which 'watches' times and paths crossing (*begirari* means 'watch' in the Basque language). We are highlighting this piece in particular because of the material it is made of. Corten steel is the material most often used for large ships and has a distinctive rusty patina. This same material was used for the impressive façade of the Euskalduna Congress and Performing Arts Centre auditorium. This box-like shape rises over one end of the river promenade like a huge ship run aground on today's urban beach. Its location was the Euskalduna Shipyard docks from 1900 to 1985, and today all that is left are museum-related vestiges of the past: a pump house and a much loved crane given the name of a woman, Carola. Both structures form part of the Bilbao Maritime Museum.

Culture peeps out at every step along this route of Bilbao's urban regeneration. And it does so by offering visitors spectacular containers for its practices and content that reach out to visitors and residents lending overwhelming prestige to the new spaces, thanks to the value-added of big names from the world of sculpture and architecture, from Frank Gehry to Alvaro Siza, Cesar Pelli, or Rafael Moneo (Rodríguez, Vicario & Martínez 2005). However, cultural mapping a city is quite different from identifying famous signatures and costly artwork. Three interventions that establish a critical dialogue with the present and future of Bilbao's regenerated urban spaces were selected for our study. The three also open cultural mapping processes to the past by rescuing the collective memory and its symbols, enabling them to interact with the city's present experience. They achieve this in a different way from the art that we have mentioned. Like so many other European cities, Bilbao's regeneration meant dismantling the industrial past and later evoking it through urban

equipment, buildings, and structures that were built on what were once its most emblematic industrial production spaces. Where there were cargo ships there is now a congress centre whose façade replicates that of the old vessels. Where there were once cranes in the harbour, there are now streetlights that mimic the shapes of the tower cranes and hooks over the river, although these are now flanked by palm trees to underline the area's new leisure ambience. At the dikes where raw materials from the surrounding mines were piled in towering heaps, there are now sculptures that bring them to mind. It might seem that urban regeneration moves forward by physically eradicating the past and then evoking it through infrastructure that takes the place of what was erased. These items – dikes, cranes, etc. – formed part of a system of production relationships that have now been dismantled. Yet they are preserved as souvenirs sold over the counter in buildings whose functions and services are related to a very different economic model. Taken to the extreme, it is as if the city said to the past: “As long as you are here, I can't remember you.” The past made into a performance is always more profitable than the past which is merely rehabilitated. This can be called ‘evocative transformation’ and it pervades the urban philosophy of many European metropolises that have regenerated their public spaces.



**Figure 6.** *Begirari* by Eduardo Chillida. **Figure 7.** The Memory Promenade with streetlights and palm trees. **Figure 8.** Façade of the Euskalduna Congress and Performing Arts Centre with artwork. **Figure 9.** The crane Carola at the Maritime Museum. Source: Photos by authors.

### *‘Transformative evocations’: The emerging city*

There are other bottom-up interventions, coming from citizens and put forth by different interdisciplinary groups. These are the result of planning guidelines from the city administration that contain participatory planning proposals, developed by artists, architects, and neighbours. Experiences of this type have taken place in Bilbao, although mostly in areas where regeneration is planned for the immediate future rather than in those finished spaces along the Urbitarte and Abandoibarra riverside. Zorrotzaurre is the most outstanding of these areas due to the scope of the regeneration planned. This peninsula, surrounded by a canal and the river in its path to the sea, covers approximately 60 hectares and is relatively isolated from the western boundary of the city. Zorrotzaurre has a post-industrial, deteriorated landscape and a deeply rooted community of around 450 residents whose homes stand beside the workshops and offices of young self-employed professionals who find the area attractive for their businesses and activities. New cultural and creative industries form part of the chaotic structure of the peninsula, which is now being turned into an island: in old industrial pavilions and workshops that have discontinued their businesses, we find multipurpose spaces (*La Hacería*), new platforms for the scenic arts managed by the creators themselves (*Pabellón 6*), and laboratories that are used as versatile spaces for exhibitions and

international residences for art projects (*Zawp*). As a creative quarter, the map of Zorrotzaurre is sprinkled with cultural establishments that share its post-industrial landscape, fostering creativity from the very heart of these urban transformations, and giving the industrial and port properties along the river an innovative meaning which is not erased by a local revitalization process that comes with its challenges and difficulties. In fact, Zorrotzaurre is just beginning to undergo the transformations envisaged in architect Zaha Hadid's ambitious regeneration scheme.

The 2003 masterplan for the district was contested by neighbourhood associations, and others, which obliged the administration to make changes. These participatory actions consisted mainly of district council meetings, discussions with individual neighbourhood associations, and the compulsory public consultative period. The most relevant changes arising from this participation are: the elimination of four out of the original twelve bridges – this was the first change adopted by Zaha Hadid's team; clustering of housing and offices; lowering the height of buildings; including a sports centre; and increasing the amount of green space. Therefore, Hadid's masterplan reorganised the space in compliance with disaggregation and connection models, distributing development between dense and flowing zones, and making common functional distinctions between spaces (tertiary equipment, mixed use-residential, clean industries, etc.). The area's residents quickly questioned the rationale behind the project. During the past decade (2005-2015) other changes related to the aforementioned issues were introduced as a result of the permanent neighborhood associations' interventions, which forced institutions to accommodate a new participatory system. The most relevant achievement was perhaps the "Foro para un Zorrotzaurre sostenible" (Forum for a Sustainable Zorrozaurre), a space for discussion that included the different stakeholders –both private and public – involved in the process.<sup>1</sup>

We would like to focus on a particular initiative that took place in 2010 because of its cultural nature. In a workshop on the relationships between Art, Social Participation, and Urban Regeneration (Diego Soroa, from the Fine Arts Faculty of the University of the Basque Country and Santiago Cirugeda from the "Urban Recipes" studio were among the promoters), a proposal for participatory planning was put forth by artists, architects, and residents. The intervention that resulted from this proposal is an example of cultural mapping: 100 signs were placed on buildings throughout the peninsula. Some contained texts while others showed pictograms, identifying and locating different infrastructure that the neighbourhood wanted in a hypothetical future. Of course, none of the signs ('theatre', 'alternative pub for the elderly', 'time bank', 'botanical garden', 'recreation centre for the elderly', etc.) matched the purpose, use, and content of the spaces where the signs were placed. This was signage that denoted things possible and desired, not what existed or was imposed. They were signs showing what was missing and needed: what was not included in any masterplan. This is a heterotopy<sup>2</sup> in which places – an unused workshop, a closed factory, a house in ruins with rusty gates, an abandoned company headquarters – not only stated what they were not, but what they could be. It is a type of cultural mapping that allows spaces to imagine themselves enjoying a different life.

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<sup>1</sup> For further information, see <http://zorrotzaurre.org/content/view/5/5/lang.english/>; <http://proyectobital.flups.es>; and Alvarez Sainz (2014).

<sup>2</sup> A concept in human geography elaborated by philosopher Michel Foucault to describe places and spaces that function in non-hegemonic conditions.



**Figure 10.** Zorrotzaurre: Park. **Figure 11.** Zorrotzaurre: Theatre. Source: Photos by authors

This intervention made use of irony as well as political intent in the simplest possible manner (in our daily lives, we view signs as having an unquestionable correspondence between the space and its function). It also introduced the concept of open source code regeneration. This is regeneration that includes citizen participation and is receptive to the residents' initiatives. Open source code entails a double requirement: that not only the crucial role of the inhabitants should be taken into account when deciding what to put in spaces (counteracting a widespread complaint that residents are always treated like patients in referendums or the last customers in the queue), but that they should be recognized as players in the planning and change processes (Kotler 2004). Citizens are no longer content to wait until a higher administrative authority *empowers* them to act, and they find new grey areas between what is legal and unregulated to assert their positions in any debate on transforming their spaces (Lefebvre 2000).

This intervention (*Signal Art*) is not an *evocative transformation* like the ones we have analyzed in areas where urban regeneration is already proving to be profitable through a form of tourism that dismantles the past and fills it with tertiary services that evoke past industry and business in an attractive way. This case is more akin to *transformative evocation* because it evokes what is missing, a lack, a wish, a possibility (Sinclair 2003).



**Figure 12.** Zorrotzaurre: Time Bank 13. **Figure 13.** Zorrotzaurre: 'Fresh bread' pictogram. Source: Photos by authors.

A comparable mapping initiative is the one called ‘Museum of the Displaced’, an idea that also came up in 2010 during a workshop entitled “Gentrification is not a lady's name,” organized by the Fine Arts Faculty of the University of the Basque Country. Like all cities, Bilbao has commemorative plaques with the city logo that describe the history of the building, usually including a short legend with important events, profiles of illustrious dwellers, information explaining the heritage property, and so forth. The Museum of the Displaced is an exact imitation of this practice but subverts the content. A group of around 30 people went round Bilbao La Vieja, one of the most severely deteriorated neighbourhoods of the city where old housing, a predominantly Sub-Saharan immigrant population, and most of the street-level drug sales and prostitution in the city are prominent features. The local government has recently tried to turn the neighbourhood into a *new Soho*, generating a pull effect on art producers and dealers in the belief that they are the professionals best equipped to settle in this ‘interracial bohemian’ area. This group of people set about placing plaques to commemorate daily milestones in the lives of persons who have been victims of gentrification. This is a map of the hidden face of urban renewal. It imitates the municipal protocol of designating heritage property, but shows the forced displacement of certain people because of regeneration in the area.

One of the plaques reads: “Joseba Lasuen, homeless and penniless, spent many hours of his life on this pavement until the neighbourhood was gentrified, forcing him to move elsewhere.” After the plaque was placed, the designation concluded with an inauguration, which is a take-off on the ceremony usually organized by the City Council. Creative mapping can reveal the indirect and intangible effects of processes to citizens. They affect all of us, although not in the same way. What this highlights is how urban transformation has very diverse effects and meanings that are silenced. Nor can we overlook that most of the power of an action like the ‘Museum of the Displaced’ lies in the fact that the majority of citizens confuse these plaques with official ones. The fact that they fail to realize the difference clearly indicates that people seldom read them. However, this has not prevented the City Council from removing the ‘fake’ plaques (see Figures 14 and 15).



**Figure 14** (Left). Bilbao La Vieja, commemorative plaque “Museum of the Displaced” in 2014. **Figure 15** (Right). Bilbao La Vieja, commemorative plaque “Museum of the Displaced” in 2015. Source: Photos by authors

### **Walkscapes, transmedia narrative, and multiplatform storytelling in Bilbao**

In addition to these initiatives, cultural mapping finds other expressions in Bilbao which are closely attuned to the proposals of two urban theorists and activists of different intellectual tendencies and generations but whose positions have quite a few points in common: the Canadian Jane Jacobs and the Italian Francesco Careri. The first Jane's Walk was recently held in Bilbao. It is a way of preserving the legacy of an author who established the base for a new type of urban activism with a provocatively humanist approach in her famous book *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (Jacobs 2007). During a time that international modernism and rationalism was still widely embraced by the intellectual elite – Mies van der Rohe and Le Corbusier were alive when her book was first published in 1961 – Jacobs dared to pronounce that contemporary urban design was an act of aggression against public spaces which were rapidly becoming impoverished and emptied of any relational density. In view of the situation, she struggled against the dehumanizing effects of a patronizing, authoritarian, centralized, and extremely hierarchical development process, counterposing a controversial approach that was the search for emerging solutions. She advocated an ideal of urban planning whose solutions stem from the spontaneous intelligence of self-organized networks that are in close contact with problems and act at the neighbourhood level.

The walks named after her seek to vindicate and implement this approach. They are usually organized around the time of her birthday on May 4<sup>th</sup>. *Jane Jacobs' Walks* is a global urban activism movement that organizes events in cities from Sacramento (USA) to West Bengal (India), via Florianopolis (Brazil)... or Bilbao. Neighbours and visitors who are strangers walk together and map their city's problems as a community. This involves recognizing that observation of urban spaces becomes more critical and profound when one is connected and practises as part of a network. A network can multiply its main points through transmedia storytelling. People often share their photographs and stories on the spot by using portable devices and collaborative geolocalization applications (such as *openstreetmap*) as they stroll. This makes the walk itself a hybrid interactive experience that is both physical and virtual, an expression merging the body and digital elements.

The city is a stage where public spaces and the Internet are going hybrid at top social speed under different names (*shareable city*, *nomadic city*, *sentient city*). Physical networks and digital networks interact as P2P (person to person) culture, helping to develop an emerging citizenship model which is self-organized, critical, and, above all, highly interactive. One of the initiatives we have identified in Bilbao came from Domenico di Siena, architect and researcher at the *Urbano Humano* Agency. He was invited to the Architecture and Coexistence Meetings BAT 2013 workshops, organized by the Zaramari urban ecology group (*Ecología Urbana Zaramari*). Di Siena introduced the use of communication technologies to produce new urban stories. The Zaramari group's ultimate aim is to generate a collaborative map of what they call the "microterritory." They aim to boost citizen participation by strolls through the city understood as political events able to uncover the unexpected, or what goes unnoticed in our everyday routine. Walking thus becomes a device to serve urban learning. An atmosphere of exploration and communication is created which arouses a greater feeling of co-responsibility about managing common spaces through simple formulas such as *Tweets + Walks*. By using the resource we call *multiplatform storytelling*, a type of narrative that breaks with the single centralized extremely propagandistic story told by public

administrations, each inhabitant's unique position is recognized, including his/her personal experiences, in the collaborative transformation of the setting.

This initiative brings to mind Francesco Careri's idea of the *nomadic city*, described in his text *Walkscapes: Walking as an Aesthetic Practice* (Careri 2006). One of the merits of Careri's book was that he tracked the historical, political, and artistic background of walking in the city as a cognitive and creative activity. *Walkscapes* took inspiration from the work of Guy Debord, director of the Internationale Situationniste, who designed a map titled *Guide Psychogéographique de Paris* in 1957 (Coverley 2010). The map was initially intended for tourists and could be folded. However, it was expressly designed so that they would get lost. When opening this Dadaist guide, the visitor found a Paris broken into pieces, a city without unity or a centre, in which only fragments of the historic areas could be seen, strewn round empty spaces. The tourist had to make sense of this emptiness by following arrows that can be connected according to each reader's passions, impulses, and interests. The direction vectors on such maps were the temporary result of experimental moods, resulting in a psychogeographical portrait of the city. Careri's idea of a nomadic city was based on walking aimlessly (*à la derive*), to symbolically transform the super-planned city into an indeterminate informal project. Letting oneself walk aimlessly did not mean, as we might think, passively giving in to the currents that occupy our streets. More like design, it meant building a direction, creating an amusing and constructive situation which materializes by paying attention and respect to others' projects (O'Rourke 2013). Although it is undeniable that the world of art and architecture has abused the words *relational* and *participatory* to express what new creative processes in urban spaces should be like, proposals from authors like Careri seek to reveal people's latent desires through ordinary activities such as walking in an effort to wake them up to generating freer spaces. This is somewhat like rethinking the old slogan of the situationists: "inhabiting means being at home everywhere."

The interventions that we have gathered in this article have given evidence, each of them separately, of a limited efficacy, if by efficacy we understand the ability to reverse the processes of transformation that they reveal. In fact, as we underline, the traces of these interventions on the skin of the city are easily removable, almost as if they had been born to be deleted, blending together with the surface they had an impact on in few years. But the obsolescence of these interventions does not hinder their social efficacy, understood in a deeper critical sense. Because of their weakness and evanescence – or precisely thanks to them – these interventions have the ability to suggest to citizens the blind points in awareness of ordinary life that mark urban transformations. These are consciously fragile interventions, sometimes highly ironical, and are not designed to stop urban transformations but to discuss them from a calculated weak position. However, the political order is revealed every time it tries to remove or alter them.

### **Proposal: Cultural mapping, collaboratively constructing indicators of spillover effects**

Each time urban researchers analyze cultural mapping practices like the ones we have presented, they run into a dilemma. Can these citizen collaboration initiatives, which are alternative, spontaneous, and self-organized to varying degrees, be integrated into strategic intermediations by local institutions without sacrificing their critical potential and emergent nature? If we fail to find

intelligent formulas to mediate between political authorities and civil society, we run the risk of the city turning into a permanent conflict zone between two fronts with an enormous desert separating them. On the one hand, we have numerous citizen initiatives mapping urban spaces and showing symptoms of discontent with their environment, which may sometimes be very creative. On the other hand, we have an increasingly technical, hierarchical, speculative type of urban planning led by institutions which, even in these times of ‘sustainability’ and ‘governance’, only give citizens acceptable treatment when they are pure consumers or ‘excellent’ entrepreneurs.

In this study, we look to open up spaces for discussion between the participatory and the institutional, integrating cultural mapping in collaborative processes to identify the intangible effects of cultural and creative industries located in the city’s regenerated spaces. Today’s cultural and creative industries bring together professionals who are mainly small-scale with limited means but who interact with the city’s economy from these post-industrial spaces and on the fringes of traditional productive industries. These are professionals from the world of art and culture who refuse to be used by local administrations in their all-too-frequent eagerness to turn deteriorated neighbourhoods into new ‘London Sohos’. They will not be pawns in processes to boost property prices and gentrify, resulting in the indirect and forced displacement of the traditional inhabitants in favour of the more acceptable ‘emerging classes’ of young people who are technologically savvy and multicultural in the politically appealing sense of the term.

Cultural and creative industries (CCIs) can be the driver of sustainable dialogue with the urban environment when they transform it at a pace that the rest of the residents and productive industries find acceptable. Investment in cultural policies favouring the establishment of creative industries of this type should generate returns. These returns have traditionally been measured in strictly economic values (employability, growth in the GDP, etc.) which, although important, are not the only benefits coming from CCIs. Some cultural mapping practices may be useful to identify a great deal of information that ordinary statistics miss: what other values, besides economic ones, show the benefits of culture? We need to involve cultural agents themselves – producers, artists, and the public – to discover those other social values, many of which are intangible and indirect. Without their story, we cannot judge the scope of their work fairly. At the same time, creative activity takes place in a certain urban context, which it influences and changes in very different ways, interacting with it at many levels, for instance, with shopkeepers from the area, residents from neighbouring properties, or potential visitors.

Cultural mapping initiatives enable us to register, highlight, and share the voice of each actor in the urban spaces where creative industries are located. We are therefore developing a tool that, taking the openstreetmap platform as the starting point, will make it possible to construct a longitudinal multi-layered narrative and transfer the effects of cultural industries in different media – literary, oral, photographic, and audiovisual. A story that belongs to the artist who has his engraving studio on the ground floor of an old bakery, to the neighbour who has been the tenant in the flat directly above for forty years, to the Moroccan who has a halal butcher shop with cheap prices in premises across the street, to an entrepreneur in advertising and graphic design who wants to set up shop next door to ‘take advantage of the synergies’, to a groups of citizens who have taken early retirement and have recently included the area in the route for their early morning jog. And so

many others. These stories must be traced over time in a map capable of expressing the benefits that each of these actors receives through personal experiences originating in the place itself.

In this way, we are not only contributing to making self-assessment of local institutions' cultural policies more practical by basing them on more democratic, transparent, and fairer indicators derived from collaborative processes. We are also helping to keep citizen participation and urban planning from becoming two opposing fronts governed by resentment and force by fostering them as two dimensions of the same public spaces, which can become spaces of responsible and creative mediation.

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