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WHAT HAS BEEN DONE AND WHAT IS NEEDED FOR FUTURE TIMES



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EVALUATION AND OUTLOOK

ON

September 20, 2013, exactly after 10 days of intense coexistence in Madrid centred on planning strategies for the post-speculative city, the participants of the EUSS presented the results of their respective workshops. Their proposals for the selected areas - Delicias, Vallecas and Southeast Developments - were the result of the visions and the methodologies that the different working groups had generated in order to articulate coherent planning outcomes in a very short time. And they did it, producing outstanding propositions followed by a fruitful final discussion. And once again I enjoyed the plasticity of those young planners to cope with a given problem all together, no matter the difference of languages, their academic profiles and backgrounds, and even the way of understanding reality.

But at the very end of the session one of the students raised a question which was unanimously supported: the need to understand their professional role in the uncertain context of today's cities, exposed to multidimensional processes in constant change. Two aspects were added that increase the lack of perception of their own role: the difficulty of apprehending these dynamics in a holistic way due to the partial vision derived from their academic degrees, as well as the lack of knowledge of the planning tools needed to address the current urban complexity.

How to respond to this demand from the university, when it is unquestionable that reality moves in a perverse duality between the still dominant urbanism of the modern era, and current urban

planning which operates between opportunity and possibility? This duality between past and present, this schizophrenic transition period that leads to working on uncertain foundations requires the consolidation of technical and conceptual supports of a new kind of urbanism, one that allows young professionals to strengthen their own skills and capacities.

How to teach urban planning in the postmodern context, in which economic, social and political instability does not ensure the development of urban proposals in the long term, managed by 20th century inherited administrative structures? How to deal with complex projects where creativity, new techniques and new knowledge should prevail? How to go beyond regulatory mandates on landownership to promote the participatory processes required for city governance in the sustainable era? These needs imperatively demand new answers from teachers for their students; they need to offer a wider look, more focused on action and management, closer to acquired practice, beyond the current theory and practice.

The EUSS2013 target was to update and to share knowledge with the aim to understand the post-speculative city using the city of Madrid as an example. Our goals were to open new windows of knowledge for our young planners participants, to offer local urban scenarios to think of new possibilities from their respective professional fields, and to give room for the interchange of experiences among them, and with tutors and lecturers.

As the course director, I sincerely hope we have achieved it even minimally, covering the interest of each of the EUSS2013 participants since they will be the ones who surpass this time of uncertainty and will be giving new ideas for the city of the future.