agora_ a community podium | from the "smart city" to the "co-city"

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Trellick Tower 50Th anniversary community festival 2022, Author: Dendrinos,S.

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Portokalia, Karavas Community Festival, Summer 2023, author: Dendrinos,S.

It is high time we started considering ways of collaboration with multiple different agents and stakeholders in the development and management of existing and new "smart" cities of the future. To achieve this goal, we intend to examine different approaches to the contribution of the digital and physical commons of communities and stakeholders, and the use of ICT in developing sustainable, resilient and smart communities of the future. The definition of the smart city, provided by the European Parliament clearly describes that «the idea of smart cities is rooted in the creation and connection of human capital, social capital and ICT infrastructure to generate greater and more sustainable economic development and a better quality of life»(Iglesias 2017). However, a series of examples of existing smart cities and others in the process of construction e.g., Songo, The line, etc., seem to ignore their potential inhabitants and provide a closed ITC infrastructure mechanism detached from any humanitarian or social vision. Richard Sennet questions the vision of the abovementioned closed and prescribed smart city model and encourages us to consider an alternative open, coordinate one (Sennet, 2018). A model, embraced by numerous European initiatives like the UIA Co-City project on collaborative management of urban commons, as a lever for addressing key urban governance issues.

Digital Commons and the democratization of technology may be of much importance regarding the transition from smart cities to co-cities, a transition that would satisfy a wider spectrum of scholars who attempt to highlight the conditions for this transition, like in the "hack-your-city" initiative (Ratti & Claudel, 2016). Since social theorists, philosophers and urban designers from around the globe claim that "the city is a Commons" and that this "suggests that the city is a shared resource—open to, shared with, and belonging to many types of people" (Foster & Laione, 2019), it follows that the transition to co-cities may be desirable and feasible as well (Laione, 2017). A city as a shared resource is a city created collaboratively, and not through top-down, hierarchical and centralized actions (Caprioli, 2015).

On the other hand, according to the political scientist Robert Putnam, Western societies experience low levels of social cohesion and have less trust in institutions and leaders than 30 years ago (Sennet , 2012) and there is also the lack of embodied personal and community presence in cityscapes, leading to a deprivation of social encounters in public spaces. Several attempts to establish embodied presence, knowledge, participation, and community feeling in groups during the last couple of years lead to different paths and attempts to introduce processes that could create a "topos", a place, a common ground, where the physical presence and proximity "suggests an environment in which fractious interests and positions retain their connection to living individuals and groups" "Every individual needs the experience to be challenged by others in order to grow both psychologically and ethically" (Sennett, 1998). A creative debate of nonverbal and verbal communication and an act of redefining places of creative coexistence where participants inhabit collectively through making can provide a similar experience. The process of speculative collective encounters, conversations and design workshops attempt to establish a creative territory of mutuality.(Dendrinos ,Kosma 2017). A territory of mutuality with an "absence of spatial hierarchies that would divide people into active and passive, or ruling and ruled groups" (Sennett, 1998).
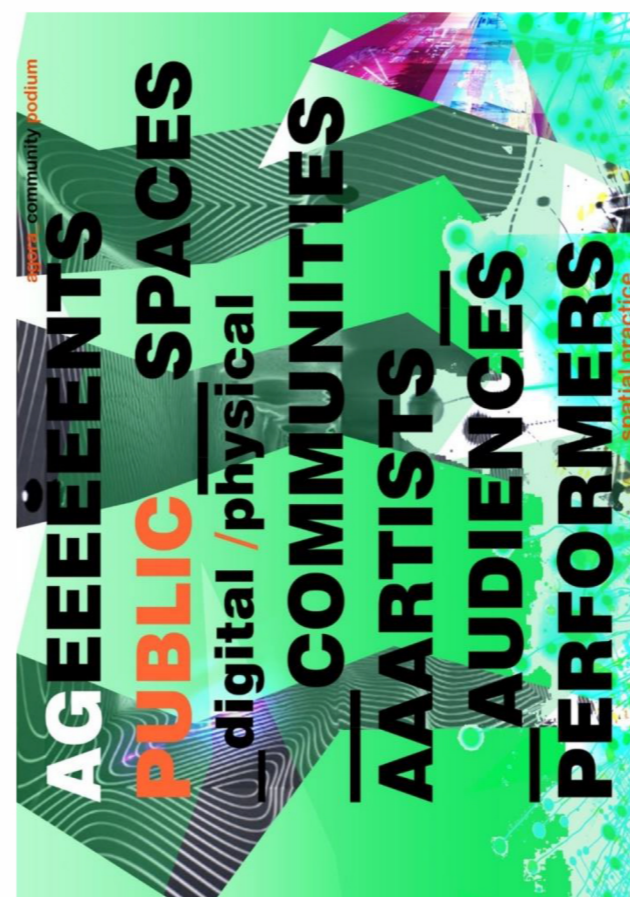
This paper aims to focus on the importance of the basic digital and physical agents, that could provide urban design and the commons with the means to embrace social cohesion, reinvent collaboration, address the issues and respond to the modern challenges of our times (Dendrinos 2020). As outlined in the political theory of William Connolly, in his critique of the normalizing tendencies of liberal democracies: "Since the self is not "designed" to fit perfectly into any way of life" and in to effectively respond to this challenge "we should … endorse the idea of slack, which enhances the process of civic virtue within the space appropriate to it. During this process it is important….." to observe trace but also "… invent and establish spaces of encounter, embracing the ordinary, all the activities of everyday life"(Till,2013).

Therefore, it is time to reflect upon the metropolitan condition of urban dwelling and focus on the discovery of new narratives for the city, by interacting with existing urban environments and by mapping, designing, and connecting public spaces, which could generate a common "embodied knowledge" of places. Places where the individual relates to the others freely to reflect and enrich a common knowledge ground towards a communal approach of design and everyday life. Places where the individual relates to the others freely to design, reflect and enrich a common knowledge ground.

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ΠΕΡΙΛΗΨΗ

Σήμερα, είναι πια επιτακτικό, να αναζητήσουμε τρόπους συνεργασίας με πολλαπλούς διαφορετικούς συντελεστές τη δημιουργία, τη διαχείριση και την ανάπτυξη των υφιστάμενων και των νέων "έξυπνων" κοινοτήτων, οι οποίες θα συνδέονται άμεσα με τις έννοιες της κυκλικής οικονομίας και της βιωσιμότητας και θα συνθέτουν τις «έξυπνες πόλεις» του μέλλοντος. Πόλεις που δεν θα εξαρτώνται αποκλειστικά έναν κλειστό μηχανισμό υποδομών ICT, αποκομμένο από κάθε ανθρωπιστικό ή κοινωνικό όραμα και δεν θα αγνοούν τους δυνητικούς κατοίκους τους.

Ο Richard Sennet αμφισβητεί το όραμα του προαναφερθέντος κλειστού και προδιαγεγραμμένου μοντέλου έξυπνης πόλης και μας ενθαρρύνει να εξετάσουμε ένα εναλλακτικό ανοιχτό, συντονισμένο μοντέλο (Sennet, 2018). Ένα μοντέλο για τη συνεργατική διαχείριση των αστικών κοινών, ως μοχλό για την αντιμετώπιση βασικών ζητημάτων αστικής διακυβέρνησης.

Προκειμένου να ανταποκριθούμε αποτελεσματικά σε αυτή την πρόκληση "θα πρέπει ... να υποστηρίξουμε την ιδέα μιας προ των χειρών μας χαλαρότητας, η οποία επιτρέπει την ελεύθερη έκφραση του εαυτού σαν μέρος μιας κοινότητας και ενισχύει την κοινωνική συνοχή διαμορφώνοντας συνθήκες συνεργασίας, κατανόησης των καθημερινών αναγκών μας και επίγνωσης των αναγκών του κοινωνικού συνόλου στο οποίο ανήκουμε. "(Till,2013).

Να προβληματιστούμε και να επανεξετάσουμε συλλογικά τη συνθήκη της αστικής κατοίκησης και να επικεντρωθούμε στην αναβίωση παλιών καθώς και στην ανακάλυψη νέων αφηγήσεων για την πόλη, και μέσω της αλληλεπίδρασης και της συλλογικής συμμετοχής, της χαρτογράφησης, του σχεδιασμού και της σύνδεσης των δημόσιων χώρων, να διαμορφώσουμε μια κοινή "βιωματική ενσώματη γνώση" (Sennet, 2018)των τόπων. Τόπων όπου οι πολίτες σχετίζονται ελεύθερα μεταξύ τους, για να συζητήσουν, να προβληματιστούν και να εμπλουτίσουν ένα κοινό πεδίο γνώσης και συλλογικής δράσης.

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