

# Differential Spaces, Power Hierarchy and Collaborative Planning: A Critique of the Role of Temporary Uses in Shaping and Making Places

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# **Differential spaces, power-hierarchy and collaborative planning: a critique of the role of temporary users in shaping and making places.**

## **Abstract**

Drawing upon the collaborative planning theory (Healey, 1997, 1998) and on the work of Lefebvre (1991) and De Certeau (1994), this paper explores the multi-stage governance arrangements leading to the employment of temporary uses as an instrument for regeneration in a context of economic crisis. It contributes to a thorough understanding of the relations between the power-hierarchy and the strategy/tactics developed through a more or less inclusive collaborative process from place-shaping (weak planning) to place-making (masterplanning). By decrypting the different paths that can be taken by the collaborative process, the paper demonstrates how temporary uses on differential spaces shape space from a use value point of view, influence and challenge the distribution of power and enable (temporary) users to acquire and sometimes sustain a position in the place-making process.

## **1- Introduction**

This paper critically examines the proliferation of temporary uses developments in derelict sites that have developed since the 1970s as a by-product of deindustrialisation and its associated urban and socio-economic transformations. The use of such sites can be defined as a set of practices with short-term return developed in a context of economic, urban or political disorder in a more or less unplanned way. Their life-span varies from a couple of months to several years. While shorter-term uses are common, longer temporary uses are more unique and relate to a blurred vision of redevelopment resulting from set of deadlocks. For example, such uses include Lausanne's Flon development which had a range of artistic, cultural, leisure or commercial activities (Andres, 2008; Andres & Grésillon, 2011). Created in easily transformable former warehouses and garages, temporary users benefited from cheap rents and short

leases; the opportunity resulted from a series of deadlocks in the planning system leading to an alternative transformation of the district for approximately 10 years. Temporary cultural uses also flourished in Marseille during the 1980s and 1990s in former industrial buildings due to the severe crisis in the city's economy and property market (Andres, 2008, 2011). Such cultural developments were facilitated by both an over-supply of abandoned buildings and by financial incentives offered by the municipality. In partnership with experienced artists, a cultural project "La Friche" was developed. It progressively became a well-known flagship facility influencing the cultural landscape of Marseille and its urban regeneration.

To date, interest in temporary uses has been addressed through two main areas of study: cultural spaces and squats (Groth and Corijn, 2005; Chatterton and Hollands, 2003; Pruijt, 2003) or temporary economic and cultural activities in abandoned areas (Haydn and Temel, 2006; Oswald, 2005; Overmeyer, 2007; Urban Unlimited, 2004). Only limited research (primarily in Germany) has questioned the potential contribution of temporary uses in a long lasting process of urban regeneration as in Lausanne or Marseille. Those that did (Urban Catalyst, 2003, 2007; Overmeyer, 2007; BMVBS and BBR, 2008) explored the nature of temporary uses and their mechanisms for establishment. They stressed the technical skills of temporary users as well as their self-initiative and creative spirit (Urban Catalyst, 2007 and Andres, 2011). However the extent to which temporary uses involves specific distribution of power between sets of stakeholders within a collaboration process of transformation hasn't been fully examined. Looking at such temporary uses is increasingly topical in a context of austerity where former models of regeneration and development are challenged due to a changing real estate market and economy. Besides being in-between solutions further to various deadlocks and crisis, temporary uses can also stimulate the economy (i.e. giving spaces to people for free in the hope that they can develop a profitable business and thus employ and pay tax) or renew the urban environment.

This paper fills a gap in the literature by exploring the multi-stage governance arrangements that led to the employment of temporary uses as an instrument for regeneration. From a theoretical point of view it acknowledges the political, dialectic and complex nature of the planning process embedded in the problematic management of actors with distinct powers and interests and stresses the role of power relationships and conflicts in place-making (Healey, 1997, 1998). Drawing upon the collaborative planning theory (Healey, 1997, 1998) and on the work of Lefebvre (1991) and De Certeau (1994) on the political nature of differential spaces and practices of everyday life and its more contemporary interpretations (see Round et al., 2008 & 2010), this work contributes to the reinterpretation of the institutional dynamics of urban change in diverse and conflict-ridden societies. Reflecting on Brand and Graffikin's argument (2007, p.283) that collaborative planning provides an *"inclusive dialogic approach to shaping social space"* while featuring contemporary issues including *"reduced certitudes and predictabilities (...) and (...) new modes of governance that acknowledges the need to involve multiple stakeholder"*, this paper argues that temporary uses take place on singular and differential spaces (different to formal spaces) in a context of weak planning (as opposed to masterplanning) and that a range of tactics and strategies are developed questioning the power distribution alongside the multi-stage transformation and governance process.

This paper therefore questions the extent to which the relations between the power-hierarchy and the strategy/tactics developed in the temporary use of space shape a long-term collaborative process which can be more or less inclusive. Furthermore it demonstrates how temporary uses impacting urban regeneration includes a subtle shift between a range of coping (or defensive, see Round et al., 2008) space-shaping strategies and tactics to a set of development-led (offensive, see Round et al., 2008) place-making strategies. This shift relies on the transition of power relationships from a context of crisis (weak planning) to a period of stability (masterplanning). Whereas

coping strategies and tactics are developed as a form of resistance to a context of disruptions, offensive strategies are formalised with the purpose of redeveloping the site while ensuring the legacy of temporary uses. The transformation of “Flon” and “La Friche” are employed to support the discussion. Before exploring these examples the paper sets up the conceptual and theoretical framework and concludes with a critical discussion on the lessons raised by both case studies and reflects on the theoretical contribution of the analysis.

The results presented in this paper are based on empirical research from a funded project conducted in France and Switzerland from 2004 and 2008 (Andres, 2008) and regularly updated in the following three years through the participation to seminars, conferences and regular fieldtrips to both cities. This research included the collection and the analysis of both secondary and primary data in the form of documentary reviews (a range of reports published by public bodies, academic papers, laws and acts, planning guidance and frameworks), semi-structured interviews and participant observation. 51 interviews were conducted in Marseille and 44 in Lausanne between 2005 and 2007. 10 additional interviews in each city were added in 2009/2010 to update the results. All interest groups and users were covered in the interviews from current and former policy makers, to planning officers, cultural users, business tenants and residents, representatives from public bodies (e.g Délégation Régionale des Affaires Culturelles in France), community groups, local journalists and academic experts.

## **2- Foundations of the conceptual and theoretical framework**

### ***Urban brownfields: differential spaces for temporary practices***

Healey argues planning, as a governance practice, “*address the difficulties created by the complex colocations of activities and their relations and the impacts these colocations*

*generate across space–time. It is a practice that is not merely concerned with managing existing relations but with imagining and opening up future potentialities*” (Healey 2007, p. cited in Healey 2009). Looking at temporary uses in periods of change is a means of imagining future transformation opportunities. Though temporary uses can settle in a vast range of spaces, those influencing the regeneration agenda are commonly developed in derelict sites. These spaces provide different spatial realities derived from complex urban changes. Temporary appropriations challenge their transformation by questioning the stakeholders’ colocation in the governance process. To stress the distinctiveness of this environment, the concept of “differential space” (Lefebvre, 1991) is used.

Henri Lefebvre (1991) developed his argument on the social and political nature of space in the context of social and economic changes (the 1960s and 1970s) when the “urban issue” was in the core of the political agenda (Dikeç, Garnier, 2008). For Lefebvre space is at the origin of and is leading a transformation process. However, whereas space can be defined for its operational and instrumental role, it also allows some leeway to generate emancipative actions as a place of conflicts and as the central object of political struggle (Brenner, 2000, p. 373). In this context of conflicts, appropriations are possible and challenge the operational, instrumental and controlled nature of space (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 410). From a planning perspective, such conflicts make more complex activities and stakeholders’ colocation as well as question the collaborative governance process.

Developing the argument of conflict and complexity further, the concept of differential space stresses the importance of space’s heterogeneity. Such spaces are opposed to an orderly vision of the city and relate the right to be different (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 64). They sit within a focus on everyday life pointing out the importance of spontaneity, difference and disorder (Madanipour, 1996). This position is concomitant to that of De Certeau (1984, 1993) whose main argument is to concentrate on everyday life, as opposed to an

abstract visualization of the city. As noted by Dikeç & Garnier (2008, p.14), “*re-questioning the spatial dimension of policies and the political dimension of space (...) is still topical to understand the new figures of power on space in the context of a complex contemporary urban environment*”. This period still witnesses “*an even greater intensification of the contradictory processes of globalization, fragmentation and reterritorialization to which Lefebvre drew attention over two decades ago*” (Brenner, 2000).

Derelict areas when hosting temporary uses can be characterized as differential spaces (Ambrosino and Andres, 2008); they allow various appropriations as they are submitted to a transformation trajectory, from the moment their initial activity has been interrupted. During this time-gap these disconnected spaces are different and not ordered by a planning strategy which itself lacks clarity. This period ends with a redevelopment project questioning the future of these initiatives. Looking at these differential spaces allows the questioning of the spatial dimension of everyday power relationships specifically between landowners, local authorities and temporary users as well as the complex colocation of these stakeholders and activities. It stresses the tensions in the more or less collaborative production of space between users who appropriated space and other actors, supposedly controlling the same space. These tensions take place during the transformation trajectory of these derelict spaces from a period of weak planning to a stage of masterplanning.

### ***Weak planning, masterplanning and temporary uses***

Temporary uses are encouraged by a context of weak planning (Urban Catalyst, 2007) or “watching stage” (Andres, 2011) which refers to a period during which the desired future for an area cannot be accomplished. Local authorities and landowners, despite having an ideal vision of redevelopment (particularly from a financial perspective),

cannot achieve it. Whatever the national planning framework is, it relates to the particular circumstances of a neglected space for which the change of uses (through the adoption of a new plan) is not possible due to a set of deadlocks: a weak property market (economic crisis or over-supply of derelict land), the financial non-viability of a redevelopment project (for various reasons including decontamination costs), strong disagreements between stakeholders or planning restrictions particularly towards land use modification. It can be argued that weak planning is a planning sub-system based on its temporary status. It is defined by its complex, fluid, flexible and permissive character typical of a context of crisis and disorder in the economy, in the city and in the land-use and development process. It is characterised by its lack of co-ordination, strategic guidelines, clear objectives and control by any higher authority (Couch et al., 2005).

Weak planning is particularly fruitful for the appropriations of differential spaces as boundaries between legal/formal and illegal/informal activities are blurred as are the distribution of powers between the different stakeholders. While local authorities and market operators (landowners and developers) are in a standby position, temporary users for a short period of time are transferred the power and ability to shape the space. Such a temporary transfer is acknowledged most of the time and is often well thought of by decision makers. Weak planning is therefore opposed to masterplanning which relates to the process of designing and implementing a development vision for the site and beyond; it involves an entrepreneurial approach for which power in place-making (Healey, 1998) has been reattributed to key decision makers (particularly developers). The transition from place-shaping to place-making and its implications are indeed fostering tensions.

Whereas top-down masterplanning relies on the idea of permanence, stability, linearity and control and often has no means of developing non-commercially exploitable areas, more unplanned temporary uses can enable flexible, innovative and bottom-top approaches which are not exclusively related to monetary values (Urban Catalyst, 2003).



Temporary uses are connected to a set of restrictions and incentives. Restrictions refer to deadlocks developed above whereas incentives include cheap rents, few constraints in term of maintenance, flexibility of uses and modularity of space (Drake, 2003), as well as dedicated funding and temporary leases. As such, considering and supporting temporary uses is acknowledged as a tool to prevent vandalism and potentially revalorize land value (BMVBS and BBR, 2008); it can also be assumed that it may launch a process of cultural regeneration (Urban Catalyst, 2003 Andres, 2008).

The transition from weak planning to masterplanning not only involves the formal shaping of a regeneration programme but also the setting up of a formal collaborative process. As such tensions and conflicts appear as power shift from temporary place-shaping users to formal place-making decision-makers. This process challenges the distribution of powers between various stakeholders. It raises the need to better recognize local knowledge by "*widening stakeholder involvement beyond traditional power elites*" (Healey, 1998, p 1546). This local knowledge is here in the hand of temporary users. Obviously this shift questions how non-empowered actors manage to express their views and defend their ideas in a context where flexibility and spontaneity are no longer welcome. In this regard the distinction between strategies and tactics developed by De Certeau (1984) provides another dimension to the discussion.

### ***Defensive and offensive strategies and tactics***

Drawing on Gidden's structuration theory, Healey (1997) argues that the iterative, dialectical and reflective nature of the collaborative planning process involves the creation of an arena where all voices can come together. It allows changes while also enabling to "*overcome the gravitational pull of existing powers*" (Brand and Graffikin, 2007, p.286). However while this notes the importance of power relationships, the hierarchy of power in temporary spaces uses is not fully explored, nor is the nature of

the actions they involve. De Certeau's argument (1984) on the difference between tactics and strategies fills this gap.

Whereas strategies are developed within a process of calculation or manipulation of power relationships, tactics are 'calculated actions' which "*play on and with a terrain imposed on it and organized by the law of a foreign power*" (De Certeau, 1984, p.37). In other words, "*a tactic is determined by the absence of power just as a strategy is organized by the postulation of power*" (De Certeau, 1984, p.38). Tactics and strategies differ from each other due to their scopes and the process by which they are formalized and implemented. Strategies are related to determinism and regulation. They have an explicit aim in the production of space and the realisation of a set of objectives and of a specific action plan. Tactics are much more uncoordinated; they have "no proper locus" and are not related to any general strategy. Tactics operate "*in isolated actions, blow by blow*". They "*take advantage of opportunities and depend on them*" (De Certeau, 1984, p.36). The idea of adaptability and flexibility is here central as one of the key features of tactics is to be "*mobile*" (ibid). Additionally whereas a strategy does not need to demonstrate its use and veracity, a tactic needs to prove its efficiency over time.

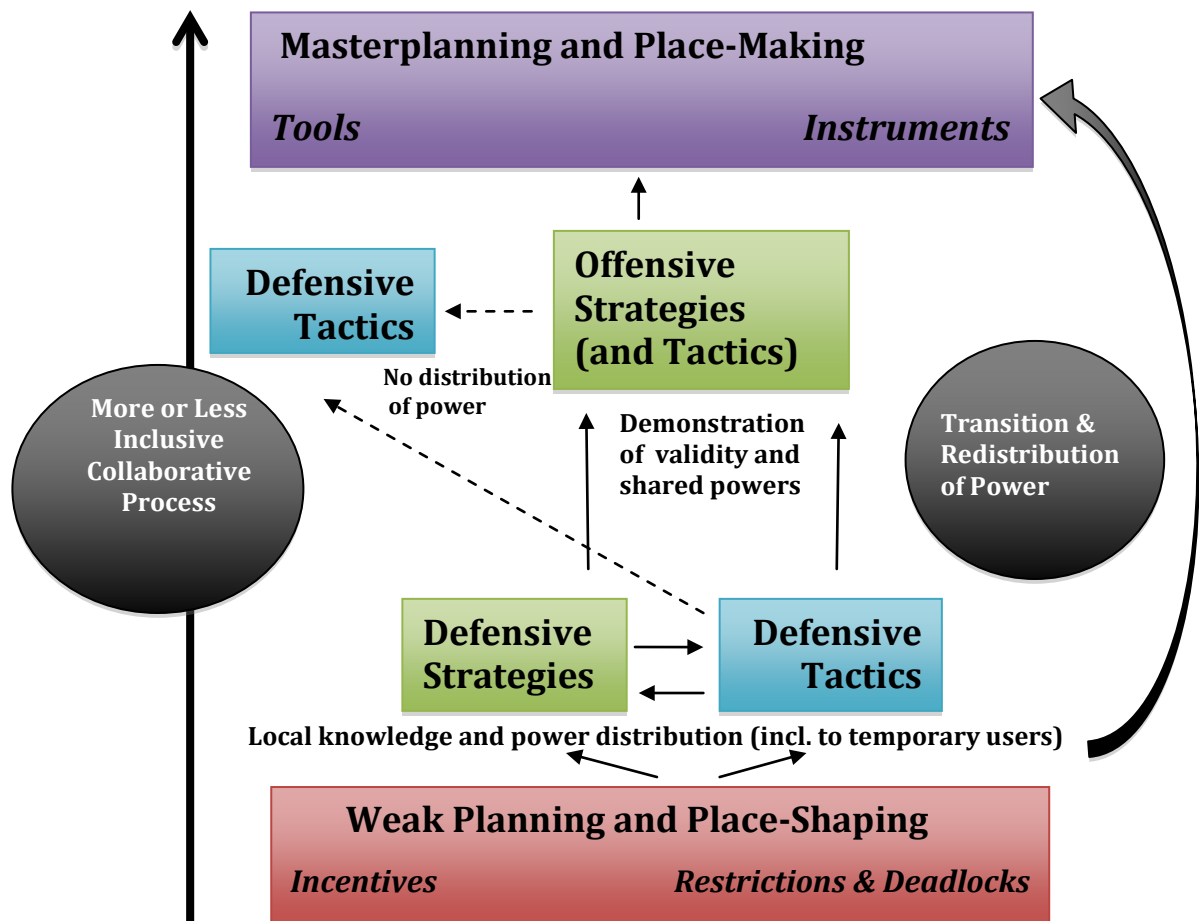
Various researchers have used the work of De Certeau to question strategies and tactics particularly in relation to the analysis of everyday informal practices and power relationships. Round et al. (2008 and 2010) drawing on the work of Allen (2004 & 2008) have noticed that people can be simultaneously operating a range of tactics and strategies. Discussing the informal economy in Ukraine and particularly the wide range of tactics developed in response to the country economic marginalisation since the collapse of the Soviet Union, Round et al. (2008, p.175) demonstrated that two forms of strategies can be noted: "*defensive strategies employed to ensure that tactics can be maintained and offensive strategies which aim to expand the control of economic spaces*".

Following De Certeau's arguments this paper argues that strategies are a synonym for conformity, rationality and interventionism. By producing a vision with a set of

objectives on a space, it creates an action-plan for space transformation. Strategies are put forwards by stakeholders who have a landownership power and a decision-making power on the development process and on place-making. On the other hand tactics are much more spontaneous and un-determinist (with a fuzzy or absence of locus). They are based on re-use and on non-possession of space whose regulation and control is ensured by other stakeholders. Tactics don't imply a long-term vision as they are based on evolving and opportunist practices. They are intrinsically temporary, mobile and flexible. They need to demonstrate their validity and their use to be acknowledged as such. However, in a similar fashion to Round et al.'s (2008) findings, this paper considers that these tactics can evolve towards strategies if power is given with regard to the future and long-term development of the space.

Strategies and tactics are not automatically attributed to the two main sides of the transformation process: decision markers versus temporary users. The complex interaction between these actors and their impact in shaping and re-shaping spaces is noticeable in the iterative characteristic of collaborative planning. Strategies and tactics performed as such evolve and can be developed by the same actors in the arenas that are consequently constructed. This distinction can be explored further in a context of transition between weak planning and masterplanning. It can be argued that the context of weak planning favours defensive strategies and tactics. These coping practices are questioned during a transition process; they lead to further offensive strategies and in some cases defensive tactics. Such power relationships are concomitant to the interactions between the actors and the political, social, economic and urban context. Drawing from this discussion, figure 1 summarizes the conceptual framework used to discuss the transformation of temporary uses.

**Figure 1: conceptual framework for the trajectory of transformation of temporary uses on differential spaces**



#### 4- The transformation of Flon: from marginalisation to gentrification

Le Flon is a derelict industrial district in the city centre of Lausanne located 150m from the historic core. This private property of 5.5 hectares was initially erected as a storage yard in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It started to be under-used from the 1950's (Racine, 1999; Andres, 2008, 2010) before finally being redeveloped during the 2000's. The figure below points out the key dates of its transformation. Following the rejection of a 1<sup>st</sup> masterplan in 1986 (Ville de Lausanne, 1986) in a local referendum, the city council, in

consultation with the owner launched an architectural competition leading to a new masterplan (Ville de Lausanne, 1993). This time the proposal was not supported by the owner or the tenants. In order to avoid any further popular rejection, the municipality decided to reject the plan. Six more years passed before the current project of redevelopment began.

**Key dates of Flon transformation**

- 1950: Decline of industrial activities
- 1986: First masterplan rejected by local referendum
- 1993: Second masterplan not examined by the council board
- 1999: "Plan Partiel d'Affectation" (current masterplan) approved
- 1999-2004: Flon Vision 1 (first stage of the development strategy)
- 2004 -: Flon Vision 2 (second stage of the development strategy)

***Planning deadlocks, conflicts of power and opportunities for temporary uses***

Flon denotes an unusual situation of weak planning which existed until 1999 and is typical of Lefevre’s space of political struggle. Despite a constant demand for developable land, its redevelopment was on hold for almost 50 years because of ongoing planning disputes between the private owner (LO Holding) and the City Council. The district was classified as an industrial area; a change of land use into a mixed-use neighbourhood required a consensual agreement formalised in a masterplan ( known as “*Plan Partiel d’Affectation*”). Until the end of 1990s, opposing visions towards the economic outcomes of the development and its general design between LO, the municipality and the tenants/civil society<sup>1</sup> blocked any formal redevelopment (Racine,

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<sup>1</sup> Switzerland is a direct democracy. Plan proposals can be submitted to local referenda to secure and validate civil consent. In addition citizens under certain circumstances can require a referenda

1999; Andres, 2008, Ville de Lausanne, 1999). The respective powers of land-ownership and decision-making were cancelled out.

In this context temporary activities were considered by the landowner as an interim solution to draw short-term incomes. These activities significantly challenged the operational, instrumental and controlled nature (Lefebvre, 1991) of the district which was significantly different from any other parts of the cities. Its differential status as defined by Lefebvre (1991) was perceived as un-ordered and provocatively “*non-Swiss*”<sup>2</sup> by the tenants. At that time incentives for temporary uses were economic (cheap rent and favourable central location) and legal (flexible leases with no restrictions towards changes made to warehouses). Interviews have demonstrated that plans towards the potential outcomes of these uses were not formalised by LO Holding when authorizing these leases. This tactic was aimed exclusively at securing incomes. A wide range of temporary tenants settled (cloth and shoe shops, bars, nightclubs, art galleries). In this weak planning context deprived from any entrepreneurial approach or power in place-making (Healey, 1998) the owner didn’t exercise any control or restrictions on the appropriations. As described by one of these temporary users, “*the landowner was ok to rent some units at very interesting prices as long as people agreed to do up their spaces (installing heating...).* We had the authorisation to paint the facades, to organize barbecues...”<sup>3</sup>.

The city council on the other had no power to interfere in the development of these temporary uses. In this environment favouring what De Certeau (1984) refers to a process of taking advantage of opportunities, temporary users quickly developed a set of tactics leading to organic community-led regeneration. As the negative image of the site shifted towards a more positive representation of Flon, the temporary tenants driven by their feeling of being part of an innovative and alternative experimentation, started to

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<sup>2</sup> Interview March 2006 with a tenant that settled in the district in 1989

<sup>3</sup> Interview January 2006 with a tenant of a unit since 1990

build a “village in the city” named the “Flon-Flon”. Local events (e.g. open cinema see figure 2) were organized and a set of communication tools were used to promote Flon (e.g. the creation of a local gazette). The attraction for the district grew. It became well-known for its alternative character as the “little Soho of Lausanne” (Peclet, 1994).

Insert figure 2

### ***Dilemmas of individual tactics versus a consensual regeneration strategy***

The success of temporary uses in re-branding the area was a catalyst for transition. In 1998 LO Holding and the city council started to acknowledge the outcomes of temporary uses and made a point of ending the area’s marginalisation (with its associated illegal activities notably drug dealing and use). LO holding shifted its vision from a tactic with financial outcomes to an offensive strategy of redevelopment collaboratively discussed with the municipality. The outcome of its “postulation of power” (De Certeau, 1984) and regulated vision was a development plan (PPA) (Ville de Lausanne, 1999) approved in 1999. The municipality and the landowner agreed to take benefit of the temporary uses’ outcomes to foster a long-term profitable regeneration (Groupe Lo, 1998; Ville de Lausanne, 1999). In contrast to previous periods, there were no leadership conflicts and power was more clearly distributed. The city council approved the general development features and provided the landowner with leeway to fulfil their economic objectives: *“the credo was not to be directive”*. This satisfied LO as the PPA was *“a good plan with a very good flexibility of development”*<sup>5</sup>.

This arrangement nevertheless involved managing the legacy of temporary uses, particularly the trendy image of the district, while securing civil consent. The plan aimed to respect *“the double vocation of the district: a perfectly central area and a slightly unusual space with a particular cache”* (Groupe LO, 1998, p2). A balance between the

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<sup>4</sup> Interview, February 2007 with the former depute major in charge of planning

<sup>5</sup> Interview June 2007 with LO project director

little Soho and the new Flon was sought out to transform the area as a place for cultural, creative leisure and trendy activities. With this purpose, the strategy of the owner followed a very controlled yet collaborative process including collective and individual meetings aimed to make voices heard whilst limiting conflicts. *“We played the card of the community and the marginalisation of the nasty ones and this worked”*<sup>6</sup>. Apparently collaborative, the process was supposed to widen what Healey (1998) describes as an arena involving more actors than traditional power elites. The negotiation was actually based on *“respect and a bit of pressure if needed. The aim of the struggle was to reach conciliation”*. Through this, the municipality/LO Holding coalition prevented tenants from defeating their scheme as the plan, on paper, appeared as *“respectful of the Flon-Flon while looking at the future”*<sup>8</sup>

However, once the plan was approved, tenants started to face pressures due to the implementation of the *“Flon Vision 1 & 2”* (Groupe Lo, 2005) and the progressive economic gentrification of the district. To keep their voices heard, the remaining tenants<sup>9</sup> used their internal and external networks, as well as substantial press coverage to pursue the promotion of the Flon and consequently their activity. They also used legal pressures (slowing down the development process) to negotiate with the landlord and defend their individual interest through individual defensive coping tactics.

A shift from collective offensive tactics relying on organic community-led regeneration to individual and ad hoc defensive tactics therefore occurred. Yet these tactics failed to shift into strategies. Temporary users failed to be formally empowered as the development locus evolved from one which preserved the alternative image to one

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<sup>6</sup> Interview July 2007 with LO communication consultant

<sup>7</sup> op.cit

<sup>8</sup> Interview January 2007 with a tenant settled in the Flon since 1989. Please note that such view was shared by the majority of interviewees.

<sup>9</sup> A certain number of small businesses left Flon either displaced by the new developments or unable to face the rents increase. In this regard Lo strategically negotiated with the most visible and high-profile tenants in order to maintain on them and preserve accordingly the « alternative » image of the site. However simultaneously LO attracted a set of non independent tenants (e.g La Fnac or Migros).



which fostered a creative and high-spec district. Typically, drawing on Round et al.'s conclusions (2008), their offensive strategy aimed at expanding the control of this highly profitable economic space. As explained by the LO Holding “*we collected enough benefits from the traditional Flon that we can still sell it with this identity which is now more and more declamatory and less a reality*”<sup>10</sup>. This strategic tenants’ re-distribution and displacement and the area gentrification is un-surprisingly criticized but accepted by former temporary tenants: “*I am disappointed about the district. It is becoming a sterilized and a has-been district. However from a commercial point of view, I have no regret*”<sup>11</sup>.

## **5- La Friche: fuzzy boundaries, empowerment and cultural regeneration**

Marseille’s La Friche is a cultural space located in a former tobacco factory whose activity ceased in 1990. Located in an industrial district, the 8 hectares factory is divided in 3 units. Unit 3 (La Friche) gathers some warehouses, a parking and a set of buildings. *La Friche’s* transformation resulted from an initial temporary reuse in 1991 which was quickly sustained by the inclusion of the factory in the 313 hectare regeneration project Euroméditerranée. It progressively evolved within a succession of development strategies as a key cultural facility for Marseille (see table below). On the contrary to Flon, La Friche is not a district as such and its transformation evolved more quickly towards masterplanning through a more collaborative process.

### **Key dates of *La Friche* transformation**

- 1990: Closure of the tobacco manufacture
- 1991: Beginning of the temporary project in the factory
- 1995: Inclusion of <i>La Friche</i> in Euroméditerranée

<sup>10</sup> Interview June 2007 with the LO communication consultant

<sup>11</sup> Interview July 2008 with tenant settled in the Flon since 1990

- 1998: Purchase of the factory by the city council
- 2002: First masterplan
- 2007: La Friche becomes a cooperative enterprise (Société Coopérative d'Intérêt Collectif - SCIC)

***Crisis, brownfields and temporary uses***

During the early 1990s Marseille was unable to cope with the economic, social and urban impacts of its industrial decline leading to a rise of unemployment, a loss of population and a deterioration of its image (Peraldi, Samson, 2005; Donzel, 1998). Likewise the real estate market was unable to respond to the over-supply of brownfield sites. Such a weak planning context was favourable for the development of temporary uses on differential spaces. However unlike other shrinking cities such as Manchester, Liverpool or Berlin (Oswalt, 2005; Couch et al., 2005), the City Council played an active role in supporting temporary uses so to limit the impacts of dereliction (Peraldi, Samson, 2005; Andres, 2008). Contrary to Flon, these spaces were not central objects of political struggle as described by Brenner but provided an alternative to what Lefebvre (1991) describes as an orderly vision of the city. Through this defensive and small-scale strategy, incentives were a freedom to choose the most appropriate differential spaces and indeed a political and financial support. A set of restrictions were also applied particularly with regard to site regulations and constraints (e.g. contamination) as well as land ownership.

In 1991, the site offered a favourable environment for the development of temporary uses. The landowner strategically considered temporary leases as a cheap way to guard the area and speculate about its possible purchase by the city council by postponing his entrepreneurial approach. Supported by the municipality and the owner, who both then delegated their power of place-shaping, temporary users created the association

“Systeme Friche Theatre” (SFT). From 1992, they developed a set of offensive tactics which soon became a formal strategy built on the idea of “*alternative economic culture*”<sup>12</sup>. From this period, SFT demonstrated its “postulation of power” (De Certeau, 1984) in place-shaping and making. Its key objective was to transform the temporary experimentation into a sustainable project and then to pursue its growth and recognition. In less than 3 year La Friche gained a local, national and international visibility (Mission de prefiguration Euroméditerranée, 1995; Ville de Marseille, 1997). The shift from tactic to strategy was operated through the use of local, national and international networks, as well as key well-known personalities (e.g. the architect Jean Nouvel became president of La Friche from 1995 to 2002) which sustained the place-shaping power delegation (Andres, 2011).

### **La Friche: a flagship project sustained through a long-term collaborative process**

The transition from place-shaping to place-making was concomitant to the integration of La Friche in *Euroméditerranée*. In response to this SFT developed a wide strategy of development: “*a cultural project for an urban project*” (SFT, 1996). However, this strategy essentially tackled the development of the cultural project rather than of the area as a whole. The transition towards masterplanning involved a progressive power redistribution between the municipality, Euroméditerranée and the landowner (until the sale of the unit in 1998). Whereas SFT remained a key interlocutor, the market operators regained their role in redeveloping the two other units of the factory with new facilities dedicated to cultural and creative industries. The creation of this new arena typically contributed to what Brand and Graffikin (2007) referred as an overcoming process of gravitational pulling powers in a collaborative perspective.

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<sup>12</sup> Interview September 2007 with the former director of SFT/La Friche

Such a sustained collaborative process based on a shared distribution of power between stakeholders with distinct objectives is unique. It rests on the use of La Friche as a flagship project for Marseille as well as the success of the project in being a leading “cultural brownfield” in France and in Europe (Andres, Grésillon, 2011). However, the collaborative process has not been straight forward and SFT was forced to constantly demonstrate the outcome of their project and to re-postulate their power in place-making. This was made through a set of initiatives (first cyber café for example) and some various cultural events and local partnerships (eg with schools) (Andres, 2011). La Friche’s voice was therefore heard widely in the arena of cultural and urban development (Ville de Marseille, 1999, 2001). The juxtaposition of these actions in addition to the project’s growing visibility was finally acknowledged by the municipality: “*La Friche has produced an overall project that is not only a bohemian artistic project: it contributed to the urban and economic renaissance of the city*”<sup>13</sup>. The unit was bought in 1998 by the City Council. Whilst power in place-making became shared between the City Council and SFT, the nature and components of the collaboration and of the overall strategy of re-development were not. The first step was the adoption of a local masterplan (*l’Air de ne pas y toucher*”, Bouchain, Système Friche Théâtre, 2002, 2005) aimed at preserving the unique character of La Friche (literally meaning in French “brownfield”). The second consisted of the transformation of the association SFT in a cooperative enterprise in 2007. A 40 years lease was signed with the municipality who therefore transferred all powers to the ex-temporary users (Ville de Marseille, 2007a, 2007b, 2008).

This evolution was the final outcome in the recognition of the value of the project and its utility for the city council. “*It ensures a sustainable development to the project with more*

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<sup>13</sup> Interview May 2009 with the former deputy major in charge of cultural policy

*reliable legal guaranties and a viable economic functioning*<sup>14</sup>. Furthermore, *“even if the City Council is still involved in the project, it gives much more opportunities to La Friche to access to further funding opportunities and be more free to finance her project of development*<sup>15”</sup>. On the other hand, the city as a whole continues to benefit from the recognition of La Friche which, for example, is one the key cultural facility of Marseille Provence 2013 European Capital of Culture. It is *“a hub of creativity representing an urban community whilst still maintaining its status as a cultural incubator”* (Marseille Provence 2013, 2008). Therefore despite the fact that this (initially) temporary experience has had few effects on the local redevelopment of the district, it has highly impacted the cultural and urban development of Marseille though a long collaborative (Healey, 1998) and offensive (Round et al., 1998) process of shared power and strategies from place-shaping to place-making.

## **Discussion and conclusion**

The transformation of Flon and La Friche are typical of two distinct trajectories of regeneration that can overall be considered as successful even if not without their downsides. In both cases, temporary uses have been a project-proof tool (Urban Catalyst, 2007) to develop a strategy of economic and cultural development. However, though criticized for its economic gentrification, the benefits of Flon regeneration on the overall city-centre are noticeable. These outcomes are far less explicit in La Friche. The cultural regeneration even created a stronger division between the former factory and the industrial district (Andres, 2011; Bertoncello, 2006). However, the role of La Friche in the cultural development of Marseille has been significant.

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<sup>14</sup> Interview April 2009 with a member of SFT involved in the process of creating the SCIC

<sup>15</sup> Interview May 2009 with a planning officer (City Council)

Indeed the legacy of temporary uses and the footprint of the differential spaces in both cities have been singularly different due to a set of factors. Firstly, the different localisation (central versus peri-central) and the nature of the ownership (private versus public) have of course impacted the trajectory taken by both cities. Flon has followed a common path of economic gentrification<sup>16</sup> typical of central and upper-middle class areas with a bohemian character and initial low rents properties (see Lee, 1996, Hackworth & Smith, 2001; Lees, 2000 and 2003; Ley, 1996 and 2003; Smith, 2002; Wyly & Hammel 2001; Cameron and Coaffee, 2005). It is exemplary of the third wave of gentrification “*that pioneers a comprehensive class-inflected urban re-make (...) including “recreation, consumption, production and pleasure as well as residence”*” (Smith, 2002, p. 443). In comparison, the transformation of La Friche has generated a raising gap between the former factory highly subsidised by public/private funding and the working-class district left outside of urban policies funding till 1999 (AGAM, 2003). Gentrification, though not impossible, will take much more time (Bertoncello, 2006; Andres, 2011).

Secondly, the distribution and balance of power in the shift from place-shaping to place-making in Marseille and the way SFT has been able to develop and implement a development strategy (on the contrary to a tactic of organic-led regeneration) has impacted the nature of the collaborative masterplanning process. Both differential spaces have been spaces of contrasting frictions and conflicts: very limited in Marseille yet overwhelming in Lausanne. In both spaces, power distribution was channelled by a small number of empowered stakeholders in a strategically-constructed but collaborative process. La Friche’s voice and its local knowledge have rapidly been acknowledged as an asset leading to a progressive transfer of place-making power. In Flon, there have never been any intentions to empower tenants. On the contrary, the strategy of attracting new tenants (e.g. La Fnac) was a way to build a counter-group of

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<sup>16</sup> There are no residents except for a couple of lofts included in one of the latest development

non-conflictual tenants. Referring back to De Certeau's theory (1994) both La Friche and Flon transformations have been guided by the calculation and manipulation of power relationships. Whereas calculation has been central in Marseille, manipulation and control has been crucial in Lausanne.

The paper therefore brought another theoretical framework to the analysis of the process of empowerment and the explanation of the way power is used and exploited by stakeholders in different public policy arenas; as such this is not so innovative as developing new frameworks has been "*a key and common aspect of the debate of participation and collaboration in planning*" (Bailey, 2010, p. 317). However, much of the previous work on partnership, empowerment and participation in planning (see for example Atkinson, 1999, Brownill and Carpenter, 2007, Bailey, 2010) has focused on the end-point of the collaborative process; it has questioned public participation and participatory democracy once a matter was already set up in the agenda of public policies. By looking at temporary uses and arguing that the weak planning context interfere in the transformation of the differential spaces by a) starting to shape the space particularly from a use value point of view; b) influencing and challenging the distribution of power; c) enabling (temporary) users to acquire and sometimes sustain a position in the place-making process, the paper has informed the different paths that can be taken by the collaborative process.

The evolution of La Friche denotes a position of inclusivity (Ansell and Gash, 2007; Andres and Chapain, forthcoming) towards the former temporary users and a co-construction of the cultural regeneration project based on the local knowledge of these actors and their ability to demonstrate the relevancy of their place-shaping actions and place-making strategy (and be empowered as such in both cases). The transformation of Flon on the other hand arises from the common use of temporary activities in regeneration and gentrification within a far less collaborative process. Tenants' voices

were heard but not listened to and they were barely empowered within the process except in the short period at the beginning when they catalysed the change and had the freedom to use and shape the district and warehouses to their own will.

The inputs of the everyday life theory and the social and political nature of space therefore bring to the collaborative theory insights to grasp the complexity of actors' hierarchy and powers distribution when evolving in a context of non-conformity and flexibility. It informs the participatory planning debate but through the analysis of end-users who have already been active in shaping the transformation of such differential spaces from the beginning of their transformation trajectory. Bridging these theories while looking at temporary uses enriches the everyday analysis of how, in the current economic context, ideas of setting up "pop up" or "meanwhile"<sup>17</sup> projects and activities (e.g temporary shops and cafes in British shopping malls or high streets) are opportunities worth exploring. Such initiatives typically point out how temporary uses legacy has been acknowledged when defensive tactics shift to offensive strategies once tactics' cultural capital is noted and meanwhile ideas used as a transformation catalyst.

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<sup>17</sup> See <http://www.meanwhile.org.uk/>



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