URBAN POLICIES: CHALLENGES OF UNDERSTANDING CHANGE AND CONTINUITY

De la Fuente, Rosa y Velasco, María

GT 4.3 Innovación en el análisis y la práctica de políticas públicas

Óliver Escobar (Universidad de Edimburgo)

Draft version

Introduction

Urban policies are a set of policies, programs and punctual interventions that are related to the aim of producing a specific city model. Those policies could be analyzed using a sectoral perspective and isolated the rest of the political condition. For example, the role of urbanism in this urban policy mix has been the most studied one, since it is considered the main tool to intervene or transform urban space. However, we consider that urban policies are more than urban planning ones.

In that sense, instead of analyzing partially urban policies, many others researchers have focused on urban policies´ changes and continuities understanding them as a complex and imbricated set. In that sense, declining the use of a sectoral approach to analyze Madrid´s urban policy (Alguacil 2006, Alguacil et. al 2012, de la Fuente & Velasco 2012, de la Fuente 2015, de la Fuente, Velasco & Walliser 2016, Iglesias et. al 2012) we consider urban policy as a whole, not only as the mere sum of sectoral policies trying to understand its continuity or change using an explicit longitudinal perspective.

Using a longitudinal approach to analyze urban policies, let us to identify long stages and turning points (Blanco &Subirats 2012, Ravazzi& Belligni 2016, Subirats 2012, de la Fuente & Velasco 2012, Precedo 2010, Davis & Blanco 2017, de la Fuente & Velasco 2017). Those stages can be also conceptualized as "urban political orders" (Stone 2015), letting us the possibility of understanding change in urban policy analysis (Rast 2015:139).

Therefore, change is considered not only in the political conjuncture or moment of transition from a political order to another but also during the process of agenda setting and policy implementation, attending therefore to the intensity of changes and continuities. In that sense, change in urban political orders are not always produced with

the same intensity (city model, institutional change, agency and advocacy coalitions, government ideology, etc.) and therefore in every context of transition of urban political orders some changes are more relevant than others: external (crisis, new urban international agenda (Habitat III, open government, CLGU, etc.), political leaderships, intellectual vanguard, agenda setting, police mix, ideology, role of civil society, etc.).

Urban political orders

Those urban policy stages or periods are characterized linked to an implicit or explicit "city model", since at every period there is a group of hegemonic mix of urban policies, due to the diffusion of innovative and good practices policies mainly related to a multilevel consensual city model.

Usually, new institutionalism or administrative organization is attached to each political stage as much as a new urban regime: coalitions of non-state actors, civil servants and local state actors supporting these new city model, in order to create power to implement the city model (Stone). In that sense, any urban political order is an ongoing process of sedimentation of changes in institutions, agency coalitions and policy narratives and designs.

Although not always there is a clear and coherent city model, recently, the global city model has been implemented through different policies in different places but pursuing similar objectives (Sassen, Peck, Harvey, etc.) during the last decade. Many authors have already characterized this city model, which was transferred form one city to another winning hegemony, as post political one (Swyngedow 2009, 2011).

The conditions of this post political urban condition, following Swyngedouw 2011 is produced through the combination of: "a) A new urban agenda: from regulatory and distributive considerations towards the promotion of economic growth and competitiveness, entrepreneurship, and creativity, b) Urban development projects (megaprojects) for generating growth and attracting investment capital and consumers, [Burying of the M-30 ring motorway in Madrid or the Big Dig in Boston] c) A new way of governance, the institutional or quasi-institutional organization of governing that takes the form of horizontal associational networks of private, civil society, and state actors (Swyngedouw 2007:5-6), D) The absence of an ideological alternative or counter-power able to unbalance this new urban agenda and E) The neutralization of every claim through a complex of bureaucracy and "efficiency" answer, and the appearance of citizen´s

participation as the way of generating consensus about decisions (technical, concrete, particular…) that cannot generate antagonisms nor even agonisms (Mouffe 2005).

In Madrid from 2003 to 2009, the global city model was progressively implemented producing a consolidated urban political order (Stone) and changing deeply the previous stage. In that case, the appearance of the leadership of the conservative Mayor, Alberto Ruíz Gallardón, was the main reason of the implementation of changes due to his commitment with the transformation of the city. In that sense, his main goal was to convert Madrid into a Global city, attractive to investments, tourism, welcoming and tolerant, with a civic consensus majority (three consecutive absolute electoral majorities). Progressively, under his regulation, Madrid´s government was implementing an urban governance model through a convincing and coherent narrative (Velasco & De la Fuente 2012), based on the incremental inclusion of participatory discourse and formal mechanism of participation, as well as a more efficient and transparent environment for citizenship.

## Turning points and change of urban political orders

Turning points, on contrary, are related to global or local crisis (critical junctures) but also to the appearance of social movements claiming for an economic, political and social change. Those political moments sometimes also go together with an electoral overturning, with the appearance or not of new leaderships supported by a more or less new advocacy coalition. In those tipping point moments, city model narratives are changed and consequently there is an attempt process of renewing urban policies´ aims, but also institutional and political conditions. In those cases, political dynamic, institutional path dependency and the role of political actors are the conditions or restraints of possibility of the change in urban policies.

TURNING POINT
- CITY MODEL CHANGE
- DISCOURSIVE & ADVOCACY COALITION – ACTORS [urban regime]
- AGENDA & INSTRUMENTS & ACTIONS

In the study of urban policies in Madrid we have already identified those urban political orders, (de la Fuente & Velasco 2012) and some of the tipping points moments. There are

differences among the intensity of the change and which has been the key explanation of the conditions of possibility. For example, in 1979 the first democratic local governments after the dictatorships was a political stage with intense changes in many areas leaded by a very popular Mayor and a coalition of civil society, social movements and cultural supporting. After it, as we have already underlined the 2003-2009 period was another intense one, as much as the one which is producing nowadays.
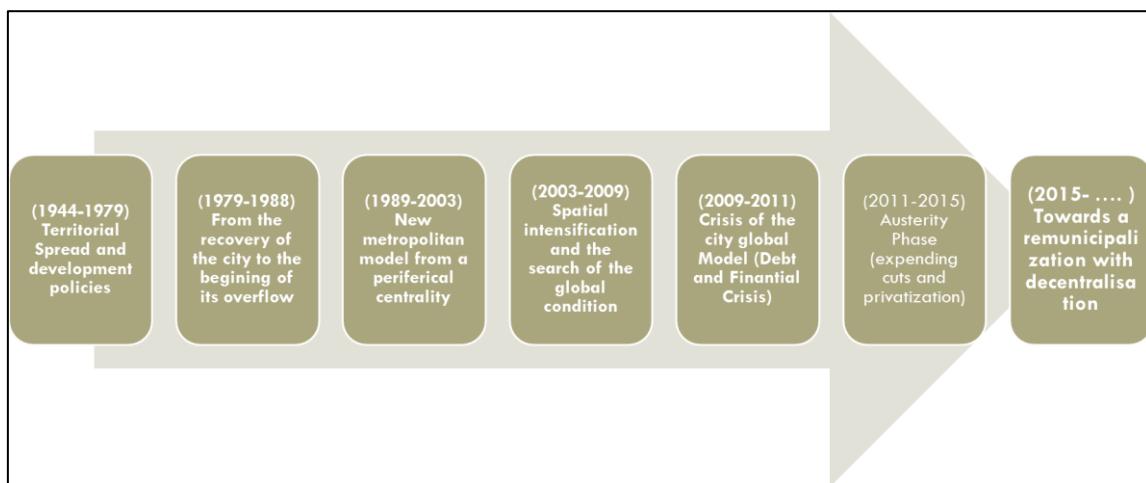
Although, we are aware of the necessity of improving the categories to identify change and continuity but also intensity of change, we decided to understand deeply the condition of possibilities of the last turning point in 2015, since 2011.

The political condition of possibility: the incubation phase

Since 2011, under the crisis and austerity context, the post-political condition in Madrid was starting of being dislocated due to the appearance of new political and contentious actors, the hollowing out of institutional participatory mechanisms, and the politicization of social, material and post-materials demands. New activisms started to be involved in the appropriation of public space in different ways, from short ephemeral appropriation to larger projects as community gardens, open air social centers in public plots, like Plaza de la Cebada, Esto es una Plaza, Mercado de San Idelfonso (…). The Anti-Eviction Movement could politized the problem of housing and evictions, through a people's legislative initiative. Other political strategies were the creating of virtual spaces of

4

antagonistic politics and the use of new technologies to reinforce urban ciberactivism, later on, the municipalism movement appeared, "Municipalism is nothing other than thousands of neighbors coming together in a joint effort to build a new model for their city. In the summer of 2014 a set of initiatives necessary for staging a so-called institutional assault were already appearing in several Spanish cities: the municipalism movements. These processes departed from existing common grounds in their desire to overcome the two-party system, end with corruption, and democratize local councils. "Machuca Prieto & Fernández Cruz 2015) ".

Since the end of 2014, the municipalism[1] incipient movement was going to activate progressively a corpus of critical urban narratives, through which also they were defining a new city model possibility. Classical and new urban activisms (Walliser 2013) were involved in the collaborative process of defining the institutionalization of those new citizen candidatures or confluences but also defining their programmatic solutions, using sectorial and neighborhood assemblies, but also new digital and participatory tools as Reddit, Agora Voting, and Loomio. The project was to foster "a new urban collective intelligence"[2]. According with the urban regime theory, this process could be considered the "incubation phase" (Ravazzi and Belligni 2016) through which common purposes of urban change are shaped, framing new political possibilities and design of public policies.

In May 2015, in several cities in Spain, the so-called "municipal or citizen confluences inspired by the new municipalist ideas, "and back up in some cases by the new party Podemos, won municipal elections[3]. After it, Madrid, Barcelona, Zaragoza, A Coruña,

---

[1] The municipalist movement is related to the idea of the autonomy of cities and citizens to rule their own future. In May 2014, the Foundation of the Commons and the coop. editorial called "Traficantes de Sueños", (Dealers of dreams") published; *The municipalist Bet. Democracy starts in the nearest place,* resuming the main characteristic of this movement and their most relevant discursive collective frames. Those main frame ideas were: good governance and transparency in the managing of the city, new democratic institutionalism through political and economic autonomy, participatory processes and transparency, support of communitarian initiatives and social economy, and dismantling of the privatization of public services and the neoliberal city model.

[2] This is a new *mantra* during the pre-electoral phase but also it was used many times after winning municipal election by those new urban activists, as a narrative to legitimate participatory processes and the potential of citizens of becoming political actors.

[3] Those civic platforms were created from bottom assemblies' experiences as Ganemos Madrid (Let´s win) in Madrid, or Ganemos Sevilla, and Guayem,(Let´s win) in Barcelona, but once in some cases, they got the support of different parties they also changed they electoral candidature names, as Ahora Madrid (Now Madrid), Barcelona in Comù, (Barcelona in common).

Santiago de Compostela, Badalona, Cádiz -among others- were going to be ruled by non-expert politicians, with the aim of fostering a new *municipalism*, able to act against the "old way of doing politics"[4]. One of the members of Ganemos platform in Madrid, reflect about it: "at the beginning we though if you create a social idea, the government is going to hear you, but it is not true", "we went for election to change public to common" (ES1: 2016). In that sense, they were calling themselves, "the cities of change", motto used due to the omnipresent idea of changing in their programmatic discourses[5]. The change was focused on introducing a new way of doing politics, specifically a more ethical and transparent way to avoid corruption, more participative and inclusive and more oriented to satisfy the necessities of the inhabitants, through endogenous and communitarian policies, in sum, a more radical democracy.

All these ideas were related to the main goal of transforming the city model from one oriented to growth and private profit (neoliberal one), to a redistributive one, to reduce inequalities and solve social "real" problems like evictions, absence of social housing, high prices of supplies (gas, electricity, heating, internet…) etc. For example, the idea of changing the city model was described programmatically in Barcelona as follows: "A part from the measures to guarantee the basic rights to citizens, it is necessary to change the city model. And therefore, it is necessary to restrain privatization processes, and those *precarisation* and segregation effects in the city, fostering new social, cultural and economic practices, more collective and sustainable "(Barcelona en Comù Programme 2015).

In that sense, they underlined the possibility of improving the access and the quality of public services through re-municipalization, and changing the austerity measures

---

[4]Other European examples of cities struggling against austerity and fostering radical democracy procedures through social innovation are among others Lublin and Gdańsk, in Poland (Ultratel 2017), Messina, Naples, and Bologna in Italy (Cillero 2017), and Amersfoort in Holand.

[5]For example, in Ahora Madrid´s political programme, the idea of the change was all over the document, and they explained: « a change which should be start with the management and organization of the city. Building a democratic city model in which all citizenship could participate in the definition, manage, and development of relevant policies » (Ahora Madrid Political Programme 2015). In Barcelona, in Comú´s political programme, the idea of change was also included, since the first page, where they consider even the programme was a relevant change considering traditional programmes, since it was made by the citizens, « not with the support of lobbies, or made in offices in a non-transparent way» (Barcelona en Comú Political Programme 2015: 1).

implemented under the context of public spending rationalization implemented by the national government[6].

Moreover, they also introduced the idea of managing the urban commons[7], and how to transit from public services to commons, and the collaborative and commonality design of projects and urban policies[8]. Around the idea of the urban commons many questions arose in the pre-electoral debates. First, how to revert privatizations of services of public interest in a context of austerity constraint defined by the National Government, secondly, how to support from local government social economy backing up, as well, urban communitarian regeneration, thirdly, how to design collaboratively public space abandoned due to the crisis or highly privatized in the city centre, and finally, the most innovative one, how to foster co-production and co-implementation of public policies.

- o A new coalition of parties and citizens won municipal election (2015) – AHORA MADRID
- o New municipal city model: Democratic, redistributive, socially inclusive, participative and oriented to create "commons" not pro-growth.
- o New leadership & urban social movements & new urban activisms
- o Cultural policy: decentralized and participative

Inner core of urban policies

Thanks to a collaborative and creative campaign and the leadership of an emeritus former judge, Manuela Carmena, Ahora Madrid, a coalition of parties (IU; PODEMOS; and EQUO) and the Civil Platform, GANEMOS won the elections. After the municipal

---

[6] In May 2011, the Conservative Party (Popular Party) won the national elections with absolute majority. Then, the President Mariano Rajoy started to accomplish austerity measures mainly through two Royal Decree-Laws. The first one, in 2012, affecting all public administrations spending to maintain macroeconomic and budgetary stability, and later, in 2013, with the Law of the rationalization and sustainability of Local Administration, reducing local autonomy and introducing the expenditure ceiling.

[7] Ana Mendez, former advisor on the Area of Culture in Madrid City Hall, in an interview, underlined the relevance of inventing urban commons resources as political opportunities, material and inmaterial ones (ES1 : 2017).

[8] The urban common ideas are being tested through different Laboratories of democracy and governance where the role of the State in producing local servicies is being challenged, and new relationships about local administration and citizens are being rethought in small pilot experiences and regulations. On urban common experiences in Italy (Iaone 2017), and about the specific regulation in Bologna, (Comune di Bologna 2016, Mendez 2016, Bollier 2015, Comune di Bologna 2016, Iaone 2017).).

elections, a new minority government was formed in the city with the political Socialist Party support, so many institutional and political constraints appeared in the possibilities of introducing changes in Madrid local government, although it was still an incredible window of political opportunity comparing with the previous historical electoral results (Table 3). This was the first time since 1989, that the Popular Party, was not in charge of the city.

So, the new urban regime (Stone 1989) starts to be built since June 2015, with the previous support of a the "new advocacy coalition" (Sabatier and Jenkins 1993) or "discursive coalition[9]" (Zittoun 2009) trying to pursuit a new city model.

From the beginning, the new government tried to develop another trajectory or city model. According to Jessop, it could be a neo-communitarian model, since free competition was going to be limited (social responsibility conditions), the social economy and the role of the third sector was being more supported and the social cohesion and social use-value were also being consider in the design of public policies.

However, it is observable how the possibilities of creating a new symbolic order able to dismantle the ideological bases of the post-political condition, but also the institutional structure in a context of political minority is reducing the possibilities of change.

…

The political constraints

…

Apendix

Table 1. Municipal Election in Madrid. Voter Turnout

---

[9]« In the discursive approach, the study of change focuses on the way in which actors work out a new policy statement a construct a coalition around it" (Zittoun 2009 : 79)

	2015	2011	2007
Voter Turnout	**68.85 %**	67.22%	65.93%

Table 2. Municipal Elections in Madrid. Results

	2015	2011	2007
% PP	34.55% (21)	49.69%	55.65%
% AHORA M.	31.85% (20)	-	-
% PSOE	15.28% (9)	23.93%	30.94%
% C's	11.41% (7)	-	-
% UPYD	1.83% (0)	7.85%	-
% Voto IU	1.71% (0)	10.75%	8.68%

Source: Self-elaboration following official results of the Ministry of the Interior 2015

Table 3. Typologies of urban policies

POLÍTICAS URBANAS DE EFICIENCIA:
a) Creación de nuevos espacios de terciario avanzado, directivas y de zonas integradas de actividades turísticas, como instrumentos de difusión de la centralidad en el territorio
b) Planeación y producción de suelos industriales y comerciales que posibiliten la diversificación de las bases económicas de la ciudad
c) Infraestructura vial no generadora de segregación población, ni de agresión ambiental y con fuerte presencia pública en el suelo de nueva accesibilidad
POLÍTICAS URBANAS DE LA EQUIDAD:
a) Municipalización del suelo para genera nuevo espacio residencial, incidir sobre los proceso del mercado y debilitar las actitudes especulativas de los agentes privados
b) Políticas universales de viviendas desplegadas en un mínimo de tres dimensiones: programas de garantía de acceso mediante promociones públicas y concertadas, programas de rehabilitación, e iniciativas de diversificación del régimen de ocupación;
c) Equipamientos de servicios personales (centros cívicos) y universales (escuelas y centros de salud) como garantía de la distribución equitativa
d) Transporte público colectivo orientado a su potenciación frente al privado individual, a la mejora de sus tasas de cobertura poblacional e intensidad de servicio y a la integración entre diferentes medios.
POLÍTICAS URBANAS DE REDISTRIBUCIÓN:

a)	Políticas selectivas de viviendas instrumentadas por medio de programas de vivienda adaptada y subsidios en el mercado de alquileres y orientadas a colectivos vulnerables en proceso de exclusión social
b)	Actuación integral en barrios periféricos multidegradados, dirigidas a la mejora de las condiciones generales de residencia pero también a la transformación de espacios monoclasistas y monofuncionales en espacios socialmente equilibrados y de actividades diversas
c)	Regeneración de los tejidos históricos dirigidas a reforzar la heterogeneidad social y funcional de dichos espacios. Las operaciones de vivienda, de equipamiento y de espacio público colectivo deberían articularse con programas de servicios personales y con iniciativas de reactivación económica.

Brugué y Gomá 1998

Table 4. Urban policies, economical activities, planning and governability.

	ACTIVIDADES MOTRICES	**PLANIFICACIÓN**	**POLÍTICA URBANA**	**GOBERNABILIDAD**
FASE INDUSTRIAL	Industrial terciario comercial	Planes de urbanismos	Equidad (zonning, desequilibrios, segregación y sociedad del bienestar)	Tecnoestructura pública
FASE POSTINDUSTRIAL	Terciario avanzado Sistema financiero Comunicaciones	Planificación estratégica	Mercado (gestión público-privado, dirección, competitividad)	Asociacionismo público
GLOBALIZACIÓN	Nueva economía, tiempo libre, cultura, formación, salud, oficinas globales	Marketing urbano	Calidad urbana, atractividad, internacionalización	Control ciudadano y participación social

Elaboración propia, basada en Precedo, Orosa y Míguez (2010: 8)

Table 3. Typologies (ideal types) of administration models.

DIMENSIONES SOBRE / DE	**MODELO BUROCRÁTICO Fase desarrollista (70s)**	**MODELO GERENCIAL Fase post-industrial (80s)**	**MODELO RELACIONAL Fase globalización (2000s)**
LA POLÍTICA	-Estado centralizado -Prestación directa de servicios -Democracia representativa (de oferta)	-Estado mínimo protector -Privatización de servicios -Democracia de mercado (de demanda)	-Estado descentralizado -Comunitarización de servicios -Democracia participativa (reflexiva)
LA GESTIÓN	Directa	Diferida (externalizacion de servicios)	Compartida (co-gestión)
LA CALIDAD	Como prebenda	Como producto	Como proceso

LA PARTICIPACIÓN	Informar - Monólogo	Consultar - Parloteo	Cooperar – Diálogo
LOS INSTRUMENTOS DE PARTICIPACIÓN	-Entrevistas individuales -Normas y reglamentos -Consejos consultivos	-Grupos de discusión -Encuestas de satisfacción -Consejos ciudadanos -Teledemocracia -Planes estratégicos	-Asamblea -I-A P -Presupuestos participativos -Talleres proyectivos -Planes integrales de desarrollo comunitario
LA CULTURA	La burocracia es un instrumento neutral	La empresa privada es el modelo a imitar	Multiculturalidad, interculturalidad. Nueva cultura de lo público

Fuente: Alguacil (2006) a partir de Brugué, Font, Goma (2003) y Ramió, Mas, Santolaria (1999).

Brugué, Q. & Gomá, R. (1998) "Gobierno local, ciudad y política urbana" *Estudios Demográficos y Urbanos* Vol. 13, No. 3 (39) (Sep. - Dec., 1998), pp. 561-583