

Eulàlia Bosch:

Good morning, good morning. This time we will speak in Spanish because our friend Pablo comes from Seville, and that way we can facilitate the dialogue. I would also like to welcome all the schools that are here, and I hope that our dialogue will also be very interesting for you.

Since we are in a sports palace, I will do a little bit what athletes do to begin: I will go a little backwards, so that together with them we can jump further ahead and further away. And I will begin by saying that Barcelona, Roman Barcelona, was protected by a wall. And growing meant building the Eixample, designed by Cerdà, together with Gaudí, Domènech i Montaner, the great names of Catalan architecture and urban planning, and together with the Old City they built the heart of the city, the heart of Barcelona.

Then, under Mayor Pasqual Maragall, the city was opened up to the sea, with new buildings and, above all, with new connections between neighbourhoods. Why on earth am I talking about Barcelona here, in a completely international setting, rather than talking, for example, about Granollers, which also had its city wall?

I am doing so precisely because it was at that time, when the city was opened up to the sea, that Pasqual Maragall, together with Marta Mata, had the idea of creating Educating Cities. They forged the forum in which all of us are here today, young people and adults alike.

At the same time, then, as the International Association of Educating Cities was born, the profile of the city of Barcelona was taking shape, with its facilities and its street-level sculptures. At that point, the Teatre Nacional, the Auditori, the W Hotel, the Agbar Tower appeared, just to mention some of the buildings that became landmarks of the city.

All this, while others continued to campaign for the security of the family. Alongside the sculptures by Gehry, Susana Solano and Pistoletto. And then came the time of hard plazas and parks, and the debate about what we needed more: hard plazas or parks.

This conquest of public space to accommodate and foster civic life placed urban planning at the very centre of the debate, a debate that continues to this day.

From that moment on, the structure of the city became an issue not only for the authorities, but also for the citizens of Barcelona. And the conversation proposed today aims to reflect on the capacity of public space to create citizenship, to create social justice, to create community.

And for this purpose, we have two highly relevant figures from the world not only of architecture, but also of urban planning and, above all, of the philosophy surrounding them.

By now, everyone has had the opportunity to look up on the Internet who Pablo Sendra and Oriol Nel·lo are. And therefore I welcome them here without explaining all their merits, which are infinite.

But I will say why they are here, why they have been invited. They have both been invited because of their contribution to the field of continuous reflection on their profession. Because they do not merely practise a profession; they think about it.

In other words, they are not here as construction technicians, but as philosophers of planning.

And it is in this sense that I would like to guide this conversation. We are not architects either, nor are we urban planners, but we are strongly influenced by what they decide about our cities.

So it has been a pleasure to reread the book *Designing Disorder*, which Pablo wrote together with Richard Sennett, who was supposed to be here and whom I would like to pay tribute to, but who ultimately could not make it.

And it is a good example of this philosophical specificity underpinning his approach to designing urban spaces.

And, at the same time, among all of Oriol Nel·lo's works that we have followed over the years, I would like to highlight residential segregation, social inequality and public policies in large Iberian cities, which connect directly with many of the things we have just heard in John Powell's presentation.

I would like to begin my first question, which is for them and also for you, by saying:

Does stone, architecture, the city, help the spirit, help people's lives? Can the city's public spaces facilitate community among people and cohesion among social groups which, without these public spaces, would remain dispersed or simply invisible?

Over to you.

Pablo Sendra:

Yes, well, I think that, continuing with the talk by John Powell that we have just seen, there are spaces that facilitate encounters between people, or these weak ties, or *thin bonds*, that he was talking about, between people who may not know each other or who might not otherwise have an opportunity to interact.

And so, as urban planners, we also have a responsibility to think about what these spaces are like. But these spaces are not really just about stone; it is not simply a question of materials.

Designing spaces goes far beyond designing the stone. It also means designing what the possible relationships between people within those spaces might be, and what urban policies can be applied so that the barriers preventing people from interacting can eventually be removed.

And, so as not to remain in the realm of theory, I will give an example from London.

Lali said that I come from Seville, but I have actually lived in London for 12 years, and that is where I lead my everyday life, where I walk through the squares and interact socially.

I am talking about a square that I experienced a great deal, because during the first years I lived in London I lived in this district, Hackney, in east London.

It is a square called Gillet Square, which I talk about a little in the book.

A square that I experienced very intensely. And I was also interested in finding out how this square had come about, where different cultures, very different from one another, coexist in the same space, recognise one another, interact and even develop relationships.

The most interesting thing is that this square was not always a square.

Initially, in the late 1990s and early 2000s, it was a car park where cars came and went. There was not much there; nothing happened, there were no opportunities for social interaction.

However, at that time London was actually looking very closely at Barcelona.

I remember that at that time the Royal Institute of British Architects gave the National Architecture Award to the city of Barcelona, rather than to an architect, in the early 1990s and early 2000s.

And this square was part of an initiative called *100 Public Spaces in London*.

But what was also interesting was that it was created by a cooperative, rather than by the council or by an institution. It was created by a local cooperative.

And what this local cooperative did was to place a number of kiosks in that car park—I think there were four or five—and rent them out very cheaply, particularly to the Afro-Caribbean community living in the area, who otherwise would not have been able to afford the cost of these kiosks.

So they were installed there: one was a small café, another was a local radio station, and there were various local businesses that began to encourage social interaction.

People began gathering around these kiosks located in the car park.

Suddenly, a car park became a space for social interaction.

And this led to the next step: saying, well, this car park is already becoming a public space; let's remove the cars and pave it.

And the car park was paved. Then, about five or six years later, other architects arrived, in this case a collective of architects, and placed two shipping containers in this square, which was already a hard-paved plaza, very similar to the hard plazas we have in Barcelona.

These two shipping containers that the architects placed there represented a very simple action: simply having two containers. But inside there were different elements: ping-pong tables, audiovisual equipment and screens, structures for skateboarders, games for children...

And there were a number of volunteers who had the keys to these containers and who continuously brought out and stored all these elements.

So every time I went to this square while living in London, it seemed like a completely different space.

One day there would be skateboarders doing their activities; another day there would be an open-air cinema and we would watch documentaries or films; another day there would be a concert in the middle of the square.

Every day it was a completely different square, giving rise to social interaction.

And it is still like that. The square has continued to evolve, there have been further interventions, but it really is a public space in continuous transformation that gives rise to this kind of city.

Is it really the design of the square that produces this?

Yes, but it is not the only factor.

The fact that the square was managed by a cooperative that offered very cheap rents, especially to businesses run by Afro-Caribbean people from the area, helped to promote the square as a space for social interaction.

If, instead, someone had simply arrived and said: "Here is a car park, get rid of the car park, put down some paving and there you have a square", that square would not have been like this.

Even if formally it had been practically identical, it would not have been what it is today.

Eulàlia Bosch:

Thank you, Pablo.

It is something worth applauding, an idea that we must hold on to: knowing that the voice of the people who live in the area can influence a space that might otherwise have been designed in a very similar way, but which would never have been that space born from the wishes of the citizens.

My friend.

Oriol Nel·lo:

Good morning, good morning.

First of all, I would like to thank you for the kind invitation to be here, and also to thank all of you for being here. It is a great pleasure for me.

Lali asks us about the relationship between stone and spirit, if we want to put it that way; between urban form, what the spaces where we live are like, and the organisation of society.

The organisation of our relationships.

I would say that it is not a matter of one thing determining the other, but rather that there is a very profound interrelationship, as Pablo has just explained to us.

What do I mean by this?

That, certainly, the way the city is produced, the way we relate to one another, the property that some people have and the property that others do not have, conditions urban form.

And, on the other hand, urban form causes these social relationships to take one direction or another, as Pablo explained to us with his beautiful example of the London square.

Let me give you another example.

Pablo deals more with fine-grained urban planning issues, architectural issues.

Even I, although I am a geographer, normally think in terms of larger spaces.

I would like to briefly discuss, through one or two examples, how not only the physical form of public space, but also the very distribution of the city, conditions social relationships.

And let me take a somewhat distant example.

Let us take the example of the city of La Paz, the capital of Bolivia.

You may know that the city of La Paz is located at the bottom of a great canyon, a great Andean canyon, at a very high altitude.

In fact, some travellers arriving in La Paz feel unwell when they get off the plane, because the lower areas of the capital are located at around 3,000 metres, which for us would be the summit of the Pica d'Estats, the highest peak in Catalonia, so to speak; well, that is where they have their lower neighbourhoods.

While the plateau, the upper part of the city, what they call "El Alto", is located at 4,000 metres.

What happens?

Well, as you all know, there is less oxygen on the plateau. Why? Because it is at a higher altitude.

Whereas in the lower parts of the city it is easier to breathe.

There is also a lot of wind on the plateau, the climate is less welcoming, it is a worse place to live. The lower part is more protected.

This is the shape of the city.

Well then, social groups have become distributed throughout the city according to their ability to pay for their place of residence.

And what has happened?

Those with greater resources have settled in the lower areas, the more welcoming ones, while those with fewer resources generally live in the upper area.

Now I am generalising.

And from this basic distinction, which we could see in any of our cities—in Barcelona, those who have a view of the sea and those who do not; in Granollers, those who have easy access to the station or to services, etc., and those who have poorer access—the entire road network, services, facilities, even the monuments and symbolic spaces of the Bolivian capital have been structured.

And this obviously closely conditions the way people live.

Why?

Because the organisation of the city not only reflects social inequalities, but also helps to maintain and reproduce them.

Those who live down below, with more oxygen, greater protection, better services and better accessibility, have it easier than those who live up above.

There is something else that happens in the city.

Sorry if I am going on a little too long; you can tell me.

In the city, urban form is not established only on the basis of what we do today, but also of what we inherit from the past.

In *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, Marx said:

“The memory of the dead weighs like a nightmare on the brains of the living.”

In the city it is even more than that, because it is not only the memory of the generations that preceded us that conditions the way we live, but also the physical forms.

We found La Porxada square here in Granollers already built.

And we also found Barcelona's Eixample already built.

And this conditions the way we live.

That's it, right?

Urban form and social relationships clearly interact.

And therefore any transformative project, such as Educating Cities, that seeks social transformation towards greater equity, etc., must consider urban form as a starting point, but also as a limit that cannot simply be accepted, a limit that must be overcome in order to establish forms that allow for greater equity and greater social cohesion.

Eulàlia Bosch:

Magnificent, magnificent.

Pablo, we are learning so much, aren't we?

We should now have some blank spaces to be able to take all this in, but we will carry on.

Let's not stop.

Pablo, in the book you wrote, *Designing Disorder*, you talk about urban disorder, about environments in which architecture has not predetermined their use from the outset, about open systems, multiplicity and even contradiction in the creation of spaces.

To what extent do all these conditions, all these qualities, make the resulting space favourable to social justice?

Because right now it turns out that social justice is not only about the salary you receive at the end of the month, but also about the amount of oxygen available.

We really are at a moment of total educating cities.

Over to you, Pablo.

Pablo Sendra:

Yes, well, in the example I was explaining, I think it was also clear how having a space that allows for improvisation, social interaction and unexpected situations really brings people together and creates the possibility of recognising the other.

But perhaps I will give you another example and take you to another part of London, so that you can picture it.

Although I am sure that many of you have been there, in this part of London, because it is quite famous: Portobello Road.

It is a very well-known market in London, in the west of the city, just north of Notting Hill, which is the neighbourhood that became very famous because of a film that they do not even want to mention there, especially because it also brought a lot of problems of tourism and gentrification to the neighbourhood.

They call it "that film we do not want to mention", like the villain in Harry Potter.

Which I much prefer to that film.

Oriol Nel·lo:

Well, absolutely. I must have seen it three or four times; it is the quintessential romantic story, after all.

It is, it is. A great Julia Roberts, what can I say?

Pablo Sendra:

Well, in this neighbourhood, in the 1950s and 1960s, it was a fairly poor neighbourhood, with a lot of immigration, but also with a great deal of social contrast.

It was not really so much a poor neighbourhood as a neighbourhood where a great deal of poverty and wealth existed side by side.

The Kensington and Chelsea area is one of the wealthiest areas in the country, but at the same time it has certain areas with poverty.

In London, the social segregation that Oriol was talking about occurs much more on a small scale than on a large scale.

Especially if we compare it with North American cities, where there is much clearer social segregation.

In London it is much more from one street to the next, practically.

And the point is that in the 1960s thousands of homes in this area of Portobello Road were demolished to build an elevated motorway.

An elevated motorway that was supposed to form part of a kind of ring road that would go all the way around London, but only this section was built, because social pressure subsequently led to the rest of the project being cancelled. But this section was built.

This displaced thousands of families, especially the most disadvantaged families.

But what was most interesting was that a group of local activists, a group of parents who wanted play spaces for children, began occupying the spaces beneath the motorway, which was still under construction, to create self-built playgrounds, such as swings that they built themselves.

This is what is known there as an *Adventure Playground*, self-built adventure play spaces.

And then people began occupying this space beneath the motorway, which was initially a completely inhospitable space, but which suddenly became a social space.

This led this group of local activists to claim the nine hectares of space beneath the motorway, which was, after all, a covered public space, because it was public space through which practically no roads passed.

So it was a completely covered public space.

They claimed it as a community space and a kind of cooperative, like a foundation, was created to manage these nine hectares of land for the community.

And sports centres, skate parks, artists' studios, offices for NGOs, citizen support spaces, such as a legal centre for migrants, different kinds of spaces, places to facilitate access to housing, and so on, began to appear there.

And it became this space for the community, which is now 53 years old and which I have also worked with.

The most interesting thing is that around 2015–2016, when I met several local activists, these activists were already rebelling against the foundation that managed that land.

A foundation that was initially supposed to be community-based, but which was already promoting the gentrification of the area.

Gentrification means the displacement of the local population in order to turn that area, which had been a community space, into essentially a shopping centre, a space much more focused on expensive shops and spaces that were no longer for the community.

And so they began opposing this foundation, to the point that these local activists managed to take over part of the foundation's management and change its direction.

The first project they carried out, partly to change the direction of the foundation, was a project in which I conducted the entire participatory process, called *Community Street*.

It was a very interesting project.

The challenge was how to transform this space, which had originated from bringing people into a covered public space, into a space that could evolve.

What we did was organise a series of workshops with people from the community to understand the different cultures that used the area and how each culture also interacted with public space.

We began to understand the space and also to co-create with them the kind of city they imagined.

One of the exercises we did was:

“Write yourself a postcard from the future.”

And so each person wrote a postcard from the future to imagine the space they wanted.

That was one of the many exercises we did with them.

And, in the end, the most interesting thing was that they really imagined a space that was built upon what already existed.

They did not want to start from scratch, but rather to imagine how that space could be improved and how encounters between people could be improved.

In the end, that space was built.

It was mainly about opening up public spaces, public spaces that had traditionally been more closed, and opening them up to all citizens.

And the other day some architects and urban planners from Berlin—no, from Munich—came and said to me:

“Show me some of the projects you have done.”

And I took them to these already-built spaces.

And I explained to them:

“Here we did this, here...”

I explained a little about how the project had started, and they said to me:

“Of course, the people there are already living in all these spaces; each of them is making them their own...”

And they asked me:

“But when did you do this project?”

And I said:

“Well, this was completed two years ago.”

And they replied:

“This looks as though it has existed for 50 years.”

It was because people were experiencing the spaces as if they belonged to them.

It was not a new shopping centre that had just been installed, but spaces that people were genuinely using in their everyday lives.

And I think these are the spaces that foster this social interaction.

How do we build these spaces for the everyday experience of meeting one another?

Eulàlia Bosch:

Fantastic, fantastic.

Oriol, I would like to ask you about this dispersed city that we have all experienced, seeing how kilometres of detached houses in residential developments appear around cities, where you always have to take the car to go and buy bread and where it is unusual to bump into someone unexpectedly, because you almost never walk.

What happens to all of us when this happens?

Oriol Nel·lo:

In fact, this is the result of the combination of two trends. The first is the tendency of our cities to expand across the territory, to incorporate more and more space, so that we live in one municipality, work in another, shop in a third, take our children to school in a fourth, and so on. That is one trend.

And the other is related to the phenomenon we were talking about at the beginning, which is the tendency of social groups to separate themselves across space, what we call residential segregation, which is the main enemy of living in the city and of building a sense of “we”.

What is residential segregation? We all know. The tendency, as we said, of social groups to separate themselves across space.

This is a historical trend. Pablo comes from England, and he could explain Friedrich Engels’s story better than I can. For the young people in the room who may not know it, Engels was a young German born in the Rhineland into a well-off family of textile industrialists, and when he was 20 he started going astray.

He associated with socialist groups, and so on. His family said: “This boy needs to get his feet back on the ground,” and they sent him to Manchester to see if he would learn the trade and become a good businessman, etc.

Instead of doing that, Engels fell in love with an illiterate Irish factory worker who would later become his lifelong partner, Mary Burns.

And she, taking him by the hand, so to speak, introduced him to a Manchester he would never have known in his life as a young businessman.

And the Manchester Engels tells us about is a Manchester in which the workers of the Industrial Revolution lived in certain neighbourhoods, the business owners in others, and they practically never saw one another.

That is segregation: in other words, the tendency of social groups to separate themselves across space.

How does segregation work?

It essentially works on the basis of our differing ability to choose where we live. What does this ability to choose where we live depend on? On our income, on the one hand, and on the price of land and housing, on the other.

Clearly, those with greater resources have a greater ability to choose.

And those with fewer resources? Well, those with fewer resources are confined, if we want to put it that way, to wherever prices are lower.

Why are prices lower in some parts of the city and not in others? Because they are less accessible, because there are fewer services, because they are more polluted, because there is less clean air, in the case of La Paz.

And so we see how the most vulnerable groups become concentrated in certain neighbourhoods.

And what do those with greater resources do?

And here I come to your question. Well, they also group together among themselves.

Why? To enjoy the privileges of living among their peers and to enjoy certain services without having to share them with others.

And this, to a large extent, explains why the city is dispersed into low-density residential developments, detached houses, and so on. It is the result of the departure of these middle- and upper-income groups from the city towards the metropolitan area.

What effects does this have?

Let us return to form and spirit, to the form of the city and to social relationships.

Look, so as not to talk about Granollers, let me talk about Sabadell, which is just next door.

In Sabadell, traditionally, the wealthier social groups had lived in the centre. Whereas immigration, especially Spanish immigration, during the 1960s and 1970s had settled in the surrounding neighbourhoods.

Espronceda, Campoamor, Torre-romeu, Can Puiggener, and so on.

This distinction still exists today. But now, when we look at it, we realise that there is a group of municipalities around Sabadell where incomes are very high.

Castellar, Sant Quirze.

What are these municipalities?

They are Sabadell's wealthy neighbourhoods.

And if we look at Terrassa, we see the same thing.

High incomes in the centre, low incomes around the two streams, the Riera de les Arenes, the Torrent de la Maurina, and the neighbouring municipality, Matadepera, with a very high income level.

What consequences does this have?

Well, because those with greater resources live in another municipality, they pay their taxes in that other municipality and have more resources to provide themselves with services, which, on the other hand, they need less than others in that municipality.

Whereas municipalities such as Sabadell or Terrassa, where a large proportion of a highly vulnerable population is concentrated and where services are needed, have fewer municipal resources per capita than the surrounding municipalities.

That is why it is so important not only to think about urban form—which perhaps we can talk about later as well—but also about urban governance.

In other words, how do we make sure that there are mechanisms that allow us to share the taxes used to pay for services?

Fantastic.

Let us now move on to three questions, because we are going to be strict about time, but we will get to the end.

Three questions that interested me when I was preparing this session.

I remembered George Steiner, who says that the Mediterranean city, such as Barcelona, for example, is one that can be travelled through by going from café to café.

Does this observation seem to you to be pure literature? Does it seem like a metaphor? Do you think it has something to do with the construction of urban space? How do you see it?

The other day I read an article explaining that in France they are closing the *bars-tabac*, the cafés where tobacco used to be sold, which functioned as a kind of social hub in neighbourhoods.

It is true that we have, in our neighbourhoods, in our cities, a large number of places of communion, where we can meet and where we can create community, if we want to put it that way.

For me, perhaps, what is particularly interesting about cities like ours is that you can travel through them not only by going from café to café, but by going from conquered space to conquered space, in the sense that Pedro was talking about earlier.

I was born in the neighbourhood of Font de la Guatlla, which is a somewhat forgotten neighbourhood of Barcelona, at the foot of Montjuïc, on the wrong side of Gran Via.

When I was a child, the mountain was still covered with shantytowns. That was in the Paleolithic Age, obviously, but that is how it was.

If we take a walk through my neighbourhood and start, say, from Plaça Espanya, walk up Tarragona Road, we come across a large park, Joan Miró Park.

What is this park?

It used to be the slaughterhouse.

Why is there a park there?

Because the residents said that those four blocks had to be green space, for the residents and for now.

We continue walking a little further up and reach Sants Station, turn left and enter another park, Espanya Industrial Park.

Why is there a park there?

There, Mr José María España, whom we will not go into now, had planned to build several thousand homes as part of a speculative development in the 1970s.

Why is there a park?

Because the residents defended it.

And we continue a little further and find Vapor Vell.

And at Vapor Vell there is the Sants Library.

Why is there a library at Vapor Vell instead of a shopping centre, as had been planned?

Because the residents made it happen.

And we continue and go to the Sants Cotxeres.

And at the Sants Cotxeres we find a civic centre.

Why?

Because the residents made it happen.

And we continue and find Can Vies.

And at Can Vies we find housing cooperatives.

And so we could continue along the whole route.

Residents, citizens, are not simply people who live in the city.

They are also, and perhaps first and foremost, builders of the city.

And what I like about the city, apart from the bars—which are great for having a coffee and so on—is this possibility of recognising our city through the spaces that have been won.

Eulàlia Bosch:

I live in Gràcia, and from every square you can see another square. You can always see another square.

Would you like to add anything?

Pablo Sendra:

No, I think... I would just say that I completely agree.

I think that just yesterday afternoon I was at Can Vies, which is one of the spaces he was talking about. I was visiting it, and you can really see how this social infrastructure has been built from the bottom up.

Sometimes I say that, going back to London, even though it is not a Mediterranean city, London is really a city that is famous and well known because of how people have built it.

London really became very famous in the 1970s because of its music scene, which came very much from the bottom up, its culture, all of that.

And people really built this.

It did not come from major projects, but from the way people have built it.

Eulàlia Bosch:

Another little question I wanted to put to you is...

In the article that Richard Sennett wrote for the book *Education and Urban Life: 20 Years of Educating Cities*—a little advertising break—the book was published almost 20 years ago and is still enormously relevant, in which many people talked about how they viewed education from the perspective of the city and how they viewed the city from the perspective of education.

In this book, Richard Sennett wrote about and raised an issue that meant thinking about life under the motto of advanced capitalism: “Nothing long-term.”

I would tell you to put this motto of brutal capitalism on your fridge and read it every morning until you become convinced that there is a problem here.

It is a principle, Sennett says, that goes against trust, against loyalty and against mutual commitment.

And I ask you: can the creation of public spaces that encourage the expression of social complexity be elements that contain, that eventually cancel out, this motto of “nothing long-term”?

Pablo Sendra:

I think that the spaces of resistance that we build, these spaces that Oriol has just talked about as he took us on this journey towards Sants, will inevitably coexist with advanced capitalism.

I was actually talking to Richard Sennett recently. We were having a coffee, and he said to me: “Capitalism leaves a lot of waste behind.”

That is what Richard told me: capitalism is constantly moving so fast that whatever it does not like, it discards.

So, in fact, he often saw an opportunity in making use of what capitalism had almost discarded, or of spaces that were waiting to be used, and in creating resistance from there.

Really, if we want to completely change the system from one day to the next, we will change nothing.

I think what we have to continue doing is building these spaces of resistance that will inevitably coexist with other spaces of capitalism, but which will gradually counterbalance it and demonstrate to other people that living in a much more cooperative and much less competitive way is also the most efficient way of living together.

Capitalism often tries to defend efficiency.

When in reality, for example during the pandemic, it was demonstrated that the way people could receive food, the way they could connect with other people, was through small groups, small associations that worked together and in networks, small mutual-aid associations.

It was not capitalism that solved it.

Capitalism came afterwards to take advantage of other situations and, as always, to try to emerge stronger from every situation.

But in reality, it was these moments of cooperation that allowed many people to get through it.

It is also important to be aware of this: that it is actually much more efficient to live cooperatively than competitively, which is the direction capitalism has almost tried to push us towards.

Capitalism tries to make us ignore this reality.

But also, that same day when I was talking to Richard, he told me that this is really a cloud, a dark cloud that will pass.

He has this somewhat self-optimistic confidence. We would always talk about it: he said that this really has not existed for very long and that this dark cloud will pass.

And people will really realise that it is much more efficient to live cooperatively.

Oriol Nel·lo:

Yes, “nothing long-term” in the city is catastrophic.

What can I say?

For example, here in Catalonia we have tried, as Lali mentioned, and Mayor Maragall did as well, and here in Granollers you have also done so, to implement projects to improve life in the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

In other words, precisely where the mechanism of social segregation, of residential segregation, concentrates the population with the greatest need for services, we put special services there.

We put libraries there, civic centres, with the idea that, if these neighbourhoods need more services, we promote social equity through this action.

What do we have now?

With “nothing long-term”, our residence, the length of time all of us spend in our neighbourhoods, in our cities, is becoming shorter and shorter.

What we call *turnover*, population turnover, is becoming increasingly rapid.

In the same way that we live, reside in one municipality, shop in another, work in a third, etc., over the course of a year we spend a week here, a month there; over the course of our lives we increasingly live in many different places.

And this calls into question the possibility of trying to improve people’s condition, their opportunities, by improving the place where they live.

What is the antidote to this?

What Pablo was saying just now.

If we were able, if we are able, to create spaces for relationships, spaces where people can put down roots, create community, feel integrated and collectively develop projects, we greatly improve the chances that these policies to improve neighbourhoods will ultimately benefit the population as a whole.

Eulàlia Bosch:

This last question is for you.

I am also referring to the reading of Sennett's interpreter's book, because since I thought Sennett was coming, I reread it.

And referring to the musicians he was and to actors, he talks about the performer's non-verbal performance.

And so I ask you:

Do architecture and urban planning have hidden languages?

Do they have a kind of non-verbal language that lies hidden, waiting to be understood or not?

And how would this relate to what you were telling me yesterday, when you are university professors?

Are you talking about some of these hidden languages of architecture and urban planning so that the city you dream of can become possible?

Pablo Sendra:

Yes, here I would almost refer to the idea of educating through the city, which I think is at the heart of this congress.

I teach at a university in London. It is a one-year master's programme, and in this master's programme I have students of every possible nationality.

I have between 50 and 60 students who come from all over the world, and many of them are coming to London for the first time and do not know the city.

So I always encourage them to really learn from the city, to learn which are the spaces that generate more social interaction, more social justice.

I also encourage them to get to know the people who inhabit these spaces and to investigate both the spaces and the situations that bring these people together.

Every year I teach a course at the university in which we create an alliance with a residents' association and decide with the association what the students will do.

We also invite local residents to enrol in the course and take it together with the students.

In reality, this situation of mutual learning between people who live in a neighbourhood and explain what life in that neighbourhood is like, which spaces are used, means that the students learn much more about the formal theory of urban design.

That theory is also important, and they have other subjects in which to work on it.

But it is very important that they also learn how spaces are experienced.

For example, a local library that, apparently, if you looked at it on a plan, you might say that this space could be removed and apartment blocks could be built there because they are needed in this area...

But when that library is the only space people have to meet, organise themselves and make decisions together, because it is the only community space in the neighbourhood, I think it is very important for students to realise this, to discover these spaces for meeting.

For me, it is also very important to learn from the city, to learn how spaces are used and which spaces enable neighbourhood organisation, for example.

Oriol Nel·lo:

Often, Lali, we refer to the city as if it were a creation of architects.

At the beginning you talked about Cerdà's Barcelona; we also talk about Haussmann's Paris, or sometimes, instead of talking about architects, we talk about princes: the Florence of the Medici, Habsburg Madrid, the Barcelona of Pasqual Maragall.

The truth is that, at every moment, these actors—who certainly have great importance—urban planners, architects, engineers and those in government, have to reckon with citizens.

And organised citizens have interests and rights, and they organise themselves to defend them and, as we were saying, they are often builders of the city.

And here there is an issue that perhaps you will have heard about: the *campamentos* movement in Santiago de Chile.

These are occupations of land through which entire neighbourhoods have been built.

The people who are part of this movement say that we have to do things without the State, against the State and with the State.

We have to do them without the State, following your example of putting ourselves under the motorway and developing our projects there autonomously.

Sometimes we have to do them against the State.

Why?

Because we have to claim our rights wherever they are not recognised.

And we have to do them with the State.

Why?

Because we want the State to end up legitimising, to end up legislating on our rights.

And this also applies to the city.

And doing it with the State also means, in the case of the Educating City, integrating educational policies into urban policies.

Barcelona's Neighbourhoods Plan, for example, this plan for the regeneration of Barcelona's neighbourhoods, has invested one euro out of every four in recent years in educational policies.

And why?

Because, as Xavier Bonal, who has been here these days, said in a recent article, educational equity needs to be incorporated as a guiding principle of urban policies, and social justice as an institutional element of educational policies.

That is the interplay.

Eulàlia Bosch:

I would like to close this session with a question that I am asking them, but I am also asking you, perhaps one of those questions for the fridge, to look at in the morning while you drink your orange juice.

And I would like to refer to a moment of stillness within the urban noise, in all this tangle that urban life is.

I want to focus on the image of the moment when two informal groups of people stop and set off again in order to respect a traffic light.

At that moment, when they are standing still facing one another, there are glances that cross, fragments of conversations that are overheard, an observation of clothing, an awareness of dogs that stop or do not stop at the red light, an attention to wheelchairs, people with different kinds of mobility.

And my question is:

Do you consider the moments of urban life condensed at traffic lights to be elements that humanise the streets?

If you want to answer it, answer it; if not, don't.

You don't want us to answer it?

Do you want us to answer it or not?

If you want to, yes; if not, no.

It has been a great pleasure to have these young people here, to have this whole group of young people over there, the middle-aged people in the middle, and the older ones; we really applaud you.

And to the Educating Cities I would like to say that, I think speaking on behalf of the three of us, we are available for whatever may be needed.

In other words, if we have to continue this discussion, we will continue it and we will go a long way.

Right?

Pablo Sendra and Oriol Nel·lo:

Absolutely.