

# The catcher in the plan

**Social demands  
and the shaping of metropolitan mobility**

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Master of Science in Urban Planning and Policy Design

Academic Year 2012 - 2013



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## Abstract

The growing mobility of metropolitan territories and populations is the continuously changing result of an ongoing transformation, reflected in individual urban experiences as well as in public planning action. On the one hand, movement variously contribute to the achievement of collective or individual strategies, providing access to urban opportunities; on the other hand, traditional policy approaches to the issues of mobility appear as ineffective, since they difficultly deal with transcalar phenomena. Urban populations and their practices, including mobility patterns, are decisive in shaping what movement is and what it should be to encounter their peculiarities.

The main aim of the research is then to understand which contribute (if any) urban populations and their practices may provide to mobility policy, defining conditions for a common ground where to bring together social demands and political answers for mobility; in particular, specific and varied forms of interactions are explored. Relationships appear thus as a guiding principle to structure the initial questions, exploring them considering interactions promoted by institutions, claims raised by citizens, equal agreements based on reciprocal interests. Concretely, they refer to different approaches of institutions, who are addressed and address different subjects, adopting varied attitudes.

The initial questions are inflected in the Milan setting, focusing on different case studies in the field of movement. An evolving setting has been chosen: the city is in fact developing its Urban Mobility Plan adopting a metropolitan perspectives, while a number of different, even fragmentary experiences provide new opportunities for movement. Taking into account consultation from above, claims from below, and at par encounter, differentiated forms of interaction are discussed, as potential ways to convey populations and practices within transport planning processes. What emerges is the need for mobile forms of involvement: urban populations may improve opportunities for movement, widening traditional policy perspectives and offering relevant contributions, but their engagement needs to be strategically tailored.

**Keywords:** mobility policy; interactions; urban populations; metropolitan planning; public involvement; Milan

## Riassunto

La crescente mobilità di popolazioni urbane e territori metropolitani è il risultato, continuamente in evoluzione, di una trasformazione, direttamente riflessa nelle esperienze urbane di ciascuno così come nell'azione pubblica. Il movimento contribuisce in modi diversi a strategie collettive o individuali, garantendo l'accesso alle opportunità urbane; i tradizionali approcci di policy alle questioni della mobilità sono però inefficaci, date le difficoltà nel trattare problematiche transcalari. Le popolazioni urbane e le loro pratiche, pattern di mobilità inclusi, sono decisivi nel determinare cosa il movimento è e cosa dovrebbe essere in relazione alle loro peculiarità.

Il principale scopo della ricerca è quindi capire (se e) quale contributo le popolazioni urbane e le loro pratiche potrebbero offrire alle politiche per la mobilità, definendo un terreno comune in cui far incontrare domande sociali e risposte politiche; in particolare, vengono esplorate forme di coinvolgimento specifiche e variegate. Le relazioni sono il principio guida che struttura le domande iniziali, esplorandole sulla base di interazioni promosse dalle istituzioni, richieste avanzate da cittadini, accordi paritari basati su interessi reciproci. Concretamente, si fa riferimento a diversi approcci delle istituzioni, che sono interpellate e interpellano soggetti diversi, adottando approcci diversificati.

Le domande iniziali vengono declinate nel contesto milanese, oggi in evoluzione: la città sta infatti sviluppando il proprio Piano Urbano della Mobilità adottando una prospettiva metropolitana, e diverse esperienze – anche frammentariamente – offrono nuove opportunità per il movimento. Analizzando consultazioni dall'alto, richieste dal basso ed incontri alla pari, vengono considerate diverse forme di interazione, per coinvolgere le popolazioni urbane e le loro pratiche nei processi di pianificazione dei trasporti. Emerge la necessità di forme mobili di coinvolgimento: le popolazioni urbane potrebbero migliorare le opportunità per il movimento, ampliando le tradizionali prospettive di policy e offrendo contributi rilevanti, ma il loro coinvolgimento dev'essere strutturato strategicamente.

**Keywords:** politiche della mobilità; interazioni; popolazioni urbane; pianificazione metropolitana; coinvolgimento pubblico; Milano



In modern Athens, the vehicles of mass transportation are called *metaphorai*. To go work or come home, one takes a “metaphor” – a bus or a train. Stories could also take this noble name: every day, they traverse and organise places; they select and link them together; they makes sentences and itineraries out of them. They are spatial trajectories.

Michel De Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*

It is interaction, not place,  
that is the essence of the city and of city life.

Melvin Webber, *The Urban Place and Nonplace Realm*



## **Introduction: what is moving in a society**

A paradox characterises the contemporary urban experience: ‘the paradox of a world where everything can be done without moving and nevertheless we move’ (Augè, 2010: 8). Movement is a pervasive feature of individual lives as well as of collective experiences, exponentially increasing the richness and the complexity of what our life carriers can be. Movement, be it physical or virtual, potential or effective, is crucial in shaping what we do and what we are, leading to lives which are more and more mobile (Elliott and Urry, 2010). The growing mobility of territories and practices is the continuously changing result of an ongoing transformation, directly reflected in individual experiences but also in the public action dealing with mobile post metropolises.

Physical movement, representations, practices and policy have always interacted between each other, but today new features emerge from their overlapping: new exigencies originate from individual and collective strategies which continuously redefine themselves and also challenge previous conceptions of mobility. The multiple movements take place within an increasingly disoriented public policy and a technique-dominated transport planning, mainly shaped by previous (and no more completely suitable) setting conditions and considerations. Aware of this, a potential alternative approach may give more attention to what is moving in a society, directly addressing then urban populations and their practices: movement is in fact still discussed and shaped by different, even fragmentary experiences – be them planning decisions or simply everyday practices.

The interest in the topic is based on the crucial relevance movement has in shaping our lives, as shown from different perspectives. Movement is important for me and also for the others: personal combinations of places and possibilities are the result of individual choices, allowed by available opportunities – a decisive element in shaping what we can be and become. Relevant have been personal experiences, too: the everyday practice of movement, as directly perceived moving within Milan urban region and observing the stories of other subjects, has gone together with an ongoing working experience dealing with mobility – the current construction of the Milan Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan, in charge of Amat – Agenzia Mobilità Ambiente Territorio. A number of suggestions has then pointed at the relevance that movement can have, requiring a more effective treatment of its issues.

Aware of this, the main aim of the research is to understand which contribute (if any) urban populations and their practices may provide to mobility policy, defining

conditions for a common ground where to bring together social demands and political answers for mobility. Dealing with ideas supporting the relevance that movement can have from a social point of view, the core question is to understand whether populations and practices suggest anything useful for mobility, if they help to take more effective decisions, and if they add something different (and valuable) in terms of knowledge and action – making then their suggestion work when planning and implementing mobility policy, increasing its effectiveness. Addressing the question in a transport planning process, a possible guideline is the need for a plan to create conditions, rather than realising purposes: then, the focus is on the conditions that may make these contributions relevant, and consequently on the potential definition of spaces for cooperation with citizens. These hypotheses have been tested taking into account Milan urban region and its mobility: they seem interesting for testing questions, rather than for observing established results, thanks to its vibrant society and its evolving mobility (a mobility plan is currently under construction); in general, these questions seem to require a closer approach to specific places, inflecting general issues in precise settings. Milan appears then as a suitable ground for the initial questions.

The gradual construction of the research moves from two main threads related to movement: social demands (chapter 1), as conveyed by the multiple meanings of movement, and political answers (chapter 2), as expressed by policy more and more disoriented in contemporary urban settings. Demands and answers interact when discussing movement and involvement (chapter 3), as a reference to the traditional ways of technically planning mobility and publicly structuring involvement. The aim of the research and the specific questions inflecting it, as stated in the previous lines, emerge then from these first chapters. Different experiences would provide significant elements to analyse the topics, especially when dealing with established case studies; nevertheless, evolving settings seem to provide the occasion to observe how the discussed issues are gradually shaped. What emerges is in fact the need for a place-based governance (chapter 4), inflecting general questions according to local specificities. In the chosen case of Milan, interactions between policy takers and makers seem crucial, highlighting then different (and differently effective) ways to take these contributions into account. The questions mainly deal with the relationships between decision makers and takers: they exist or should be created; their structure may be different; their contributions to urban mobility may change as well. Relationships may then appear as a guiding principle to structure the initial questions, exploring them by considering interactions promoted by institutions (chapter 5), claims raised by citizens (chapter 6), equal agreements based on a reciprocal interest (chapter 7). Drawing on examples from the Milan metropolitan area, for the three different forms of interaction here recognised (consultation from above, claims from below, at par encounter) specific features could be examined: subjects (that may be) involved, potential contributions of them to mobility policy, existing and potential forms of interaction.

What seems to emerge are the necessarily varied and incomplete contributions coming from different subjects, developing peculiar forms of relationship which provide differentiated forms of public involvement in metropolitan transport planning. Some subjects are already participating, while others should be purposely intercepted: it may

be then interesting to act like “catchers in the plan” and interact with individuals and populations, in order to intercept aspirations and trajectories that cross our cities and continuously reshape the urban. This work wants to suggest threads to follow and directions to explore, rather than established findings, choosing a relevant topic (a relevance drafted in its first chapters) and proposing a possible way to observe it (through a place based approach focused on interactions). Acting as catchers in the plan, on the basis of meaningful purposes and significant contributions, may help to shape and reshape our movements and opportunities.

### **Acknowledgements**

This dissertation is a step of a longer route: a route of meetings, ideas and suggestions; a route meaningful only because it has been shared – and shared with many. Thanks then to:

Prof. Carolina Pacchi, advisor of this thesis, who followed this work through all its wonderings and wanderings.

Prof. Elena Granata, for the fundamental turns and the wider perspectives they opened.

Amat - Agenzia Mobilità Ambiente Territorio has been an opportunity bringing many other opportunities; in particular, thanks to Antonella Pulpito, Veronica Gaiani, Andrea Canevazzi. And with them, Federico Confalonieri and Lorenzo Giorgio, from Comune di Milano.

My family has silently supported what was going on – even when impossible to understand or simply far from home. My friends and their mobile lives have been the most present paradox of movement, and the warmest, when necessary. My planner friends have added taste to our common, unexpectedly evolved route.

The so many stubborn, joyful idealists met between Crescenzago and Caserta are too many to be named, and too much is what they give so that they may all be one. And amongst them, thanks to Associazione Arcobaleno for its enthusiasm for maps which were drawn and changed.

Few are the names, but many have been the explored routes, the intertwined threads, the lost pieces and the unexpected findings: everyone and everything with an idea or a story, and all meaningful in their own way.

Our lives are mobile, and *together* they move.



## I. THREADS IN A MOBILE LABYRINTH

In modern Athens, the vehicles of mass transportation are called *metaphorai*. To go work or come home, one takes a “metaphor” – a bus or a train. Stories could also take this noble name: every day, they traverse and organise places; they select and link them together; they makes sentences and itineraries out of them. They are spatial trajectories.

Michel De Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*





## 1. Explorations through the meanings of movement

### **Prologue: a paradox**

“Se a tarifa não baixar, a cidade vai parar”: if the ticket price doesn't drop, the city is going to stop. In the first months of 2013, the main Brazilian cities have been involved in demonstrations against the increase in the public transport prices. Brazil has a long tradition of urban revolts related to transit, but this time the claims for a cheaper service have expanded, intercepting a broader displeasure for the social inequalities and the unsuccessful development policy promoted by the government. In the spring months, the main cities of the country have seen protests becoming larger and larger: traffic blocks, rock throwings, clashes with police, reaching the peak during the football Confederation Cup, when the arenas involved in the competition were surrounded by the protesters, (successfully) looking for international attention.

The ability of the transport protests in broadening their consensus can be thus explained also referring to the large number of Brazilians directly affected by the decision of increasing transit fares: ‘public transportation in Brazil is expensive, unsafe and poorly managed, especially impacting poor commuters who have no choice but to rely on these systems’ (Romero, 2013). The experience of movement in Brazil, as in many other countries of the world South, strongly reflects the imbalances of a society, and the deriving gap between available opportunities.

The short reference to such a relevant protest, locally arranged and globally discussed also thanks to the media, highlights once more the ‘paradox of a world where everything can be done without moving and nevertheless we move’ (Augè, 2010: 8): the paradox of a necessary and voluntary movement, needed for a living and for leisure, a movement so pervasive that it also defines urban populations and influences personal identities. Mobility appears as a socially relevant issue, acting as a potential catalyst for a wider involvement; movement intercepts a number of dimensions, affecting individual and collective interests or opportunities.

Yet, the influence mobility has on individuals and on community continuously changes according to the fields of opportunities and constraints provided by the cities and their continuous evolution; in particular, planning decisions can play a key role in this sense, especially when public involvement is stressed as a fundamental element to improve urban settings. And, to recover the thought of Marc Augè, movement is paradoxical. In our cities, everyday we – as individuals and as part of collectivities – live this paradox, struggling for moving more and more even when virtual alternatives to

movement are available. From the scholar travelling overseas to present his research, to the employee commuting everyday for a job that could be carried forward at home, the paradox of movement is present in different forms, making necessary to understand its nature and especially its relevance for our societies. Movement is pervasive, but requires that we are equipped to deal with it – a capability fundamental to take advantage of the opportunities available in cities, an instrument necessary also to develop as a person. Mobility and mobilization are related to each other, in ways that the paradoxical nature of movement makes possible to explore through multiple questions.

This exploration on the importance movement may have for anyone of us doesn't simply arises from a number of theoretical questions, but rather is firstly suggested by direct experiences. Various occasions have somehow shown to me the central role of movement in allowing the development of oneself and taking advantage of available opportunities: this could be the case of unrepeatable events, like overseas travels where the simple possession of a document – and the consequent freedom to move – was the key factor to enter a new country, with the infinite possibilities opening in so radically different contexts; or, closer to home, the everyday freedom to move, given by the fact of being a young man living close to a suburban railway node, has been very different from that of people with same interests living in less accessible locations or being less free to move alone at night, differentiating also the opportunities available to everyone of us. To keep it short, experience suggests that movement can be decisive in letting us shape lives of our own, and that consequently a transport planning more open to individual and collective aspirations may do a better work for society. Research provides a number of hints, questions and attempts to test the hypothetical relevance of movement and strengthen what direct experience seems to suggest; in the same time, exploring the various meanings of movement may also provide useful elements to make the action of plans more effective. The possibility that movement has multiple meanings, diverse for anyone, shows some first directions to follow, in order to understand what may contribute to planning decisions and how to deal more effectively with them throughout planning processes.

### **A tool and a skill**

Exploring possibilities for public involvement in transport planning processes, the focus is on the effects that mobility policy and intervention have on urban populations. Still, the relevance that movement may have for individuals and groups is based on the fundamental elements composing mobility. According to Lévy (2000), three are the components: possibility, competence and capital; here the focus is on possible meanings and differences between the first two, since capital represents a basic element that discriminates opportunities and is not specifically related to movement.

#### *Moving in networks, “images of power”*

Movement is practiced between points and within networks. From the perspective of the individual, mobility is practiced within the field of opportunities and constraints provided by networks: movement is the fundamental element to use the connections,

and is the skill that makes possible to recognize and appropriate them. Locations are spread in the space, but the set of linkages between them is never given or casual, appearing instead as a reflection of how actors see and use the territory. In this sense, networks can be shortly defined as “images of power”, in a meaning that can be better understood referring to the work of the geographer Raffestin (1983).

'Every network is an image of power, or, more exactly, an image of the power of ruling actor(s)' (Raffestin, 1983: 162). Circulation of people and goods, as well as the communication of information and data, require linkages that are visible and invisible. Together, links create networks deriving from the interaction of actors located in the space; each subject has a personal understanding of the territory, used to define the field for his action. Starting from this representation, actors distribute surfaces, distinguish nodes and build networks, according to a hierarchical structure that controls what can be distributed or owned; at the same time, it appears as the exterior manifestation of an underlying social structure. Existing power relations (the social structure) generate continuously changing images of the structure, whose basic elements are instead always the same.

The territory sees the overlapping of multiple tangles, related to different powers, scales and fields (economy, politics, religion...), based in the nodes; they always appear as centres, landmarks for several actors, helping each subject to define his position in relative terms. In fact 'space exist only depending on the intentional aims of the actor' (Raffestin, 1983: 153), who moves from an egocentric representation: his location is thus defined according to the position of the others, who can facilitate or obstacle individual strategies. Surfaces, nodes and networks are the essential visible elements for spatial practices, conducted by individuals but always related to the presence of other subjects. 'As places of power, nodes are better defined in relative rather than in absolute terms. What matters is where the Other is, he who may help or obstacle, who owns something or not, who can access a certain resource, etc. Points symbolize the position of actors' (Raffestin, 1983: 161). Networks are thus based on the overlapping of different relationships between actors, moving from very local to broader scales; the relationship with the Other is the first fundamental element to develop a personal image of the territory and of the opportunities it provides for individual strategies.

Every actor is thus located in one point, and the networks between different locations facilitate some relationships while at the same time preventing others: prevailing actors include in their networks only the subjects who can contribute to the pursue of their aims; networks are means, appearing as objectives when they are the exterior manifestation of a peculiar territorial strategy. A specific territorial structure will thus require – almost necessarily – the exclusion of some subjects, without allowing them to take part in the construction of the territory (so that their strategies don't interfere with those of the prevailing actors).

The concept of network as an image of power based on a relational construction can be observed also in some contemporary territories, where the relationships between subjects are effectively developed also through a specific construction of the territory and its networks. A first case in this sense is that of Los Angeles (Soja, 2010), where two

alternative visions for metropolitan transport development opposed for decades: a strategy based on the construction of highways was preferred for long time, in order to effectively connect the central business district and the residential suburbs; the aim was to provide fast connections for the middle and upper classes, facilitating them in travelling by car from their suburban houses to the central workplaces. The strategy neglected for a long time the needs of lower classes, living in peripheral areas badly served by the public transport network. The development based on highways in fact diverted resources from the mass transit management, reducing its quality and its effectiveness in meeting the needs of groups financially unable to own a private mean of transport; only a judgment passed in 1996 recognized the need for a more balanced transport development strategy, devoting higher resources to mass transit. This simplified summary of the Los Angeles case provide an example of the relationship between networks and actors' strategies: for a long period, affluent groups were able to address political and economical decisions focusing on motorway development, thus privileging their interests in connecting residential suburbs and the financial downtown – consequently defining the features of metropolitan networks.

Networks are relevant not only for connections between points, but also for the different possibilities of use that often characterize them. An example is Palestine, where the segregation between Israeli and Palestinian citizens is clearly reflected in their possibilities of moving – involving both private (Visualizing Palestine, 2012a) and public (Visualizing Palestine, 2012b) means of transport. The network involved is the same, but strong restriction of access are present for Palestinian drivers or travellers; for example, according to the colour of the plate – distinguishing Israeli and Palestinian cars – a vehicle may be allowed or not to use a certain road. In a small territory like that of the West Bank, 79 km are reserved to Israelis, while 155 km are restrictedly accessible to Palestinians. Something similar happens with the long distance bus network, whose access is similarly restricted: only some lines can be used by Israelis and Palestinian together, with strong restrictions affecting the services from Jerusalem to Israeli colonies. Two very different cases thus contribute to show how networks – and the movement they allow – are related to individual strategies, representing images of power due to the overlapping of interests that shape them. Nevertheless, networks are mainly the support for movement; a movement that, from both an individual and collective perspective, appears as an instrument and a skill, decisively influencing the range of opportunities available for one's own purposes.

### *Using movement*

The perspective here chosen for describing the relevance of movement privileges people – both individuals and groups; mobility is fundamental also when referring to goods and information, that are exchanged through material and immaterial networks, but the social meaning of movement highlights the opportunities it provides for people. When dealing with networks, any subject has a specific perspective: he has in front of him a system of possibilities and constraints, that can be used for the achievement of specific purposes; he sees what is visible from his specific point of view, according to a

map drawn on his knowledge, and can use the links for pursuing specific objectives.

The short characterization of mobility from the individual point of view distinguishes two elements, the first of which is the pursue of personal aims. In this sense, mobility has an instrumental value: it is the mean to reach resources, opportunities or other linkages, accessible in specific places; it is thus a resource for other resources, working on the key principle of access. Mobility is needed for accessibility. The two concepts are strongly related to each other and will be further discussed more in detail; for now, it will suffice to highlight the instrumental value of mobility (even if movement also has a value in itself, especially from an experiential point of view; see Davico and Staricco, 2006).

Movement conveys the possibility to access opportunities at different scales. Focusing on a metropolitan planning process, the local dimension prevails, involving the everyday transfers needed for a living and for leisure: trips to and from workplaces or schools, periodical movements to commercial activities or club facilities, sporadic trips related to specific occasions... in order to benefit from the opportunities offered by different places, any individual is required to compose his own pattern of movement, combining the trips needed to hold together personal needs and places satisfying them. Nevertheless, movement as an instrument for access is at work also at broader scales – regional, national, transnational... its role can be observed referring to different phenomena, which are expression of opposite needs: from the migrants crossing continents looking for a better living, to the businessmen moving between global cities (Martinotti, 1996).

Nodes, places devoted to movement, collect the opportunities to access. They are not just intersections of links, but for some populations represent the only gate for the possibilities available in cities, assuming the role of “alternative” centre. The central Parisian station of Chatelet – Les Halles, interchange for subways and suburban railway lines, represents the city centre for the youngsters living in the banlieue: 'plural peripheries refer to an imaginary centre, absent and maybe phantasmally imagined' (Augé, 2010: 23), and the station is the only central location directly linked to the peripheral neighbourhoods. At the same time, nodes multiply the number of opportunities available to specific populations, even if this facilitates the potential emergence of conflicts: as Rumiz (2009: 69) refers describing the opening of Naples' subway line, 'when the Vomero was connected to the Secondigliano suburb, the first shouted at the barbaric invasion, instead nothing happened. No graffiti nor devastation. The line remained clean and silent like a Swiss clinic'.

### *Learning movement*

The personal perspective everyone has on mobility implies also a second element, based on the knowledge of networks and on the possibilities for movement it implies. The ability to move thus may be considered as a skill, even if a broader perspective is needed in order to do this: 'Orientation is not much of being able to read a map, to follow a system of coordinates to reach a destination, but consists of interpreting one's own surrounding environment, creating a general reference structure where to act'

(Granata, 2012: 44). Again, from the point of view of the single subject, a specific ability to locate oneself within a broader system of references is required; and it is not just a matter of reading maps, but of creating them, by entering in a relation with the ties characterising the initial setting. Nowadays, contemporary urban settings require a more complex approach than in the past: Kevin Lynch (1960) could describe the basic mechanisms of orientation referring to primitive populations, able to move in Arctic lands or in the South Seas just relying on natural elements traditionally used as references; today instead orientation is just one element of the movement experience, which has to take into account also additional but fundamental elements like rules, regulations, timetables and fares.

The increased complexity of mobility involves thus a dimension definable as motility, 'the capacity of entities to be mobile in social and geographic space, or the way in which entities access and appropriate the capacity for socio-spatial mobility according to their circumstances' (Kaufmann, 2004); from the perspective of the individual, motility expresses the variety of possibilities available for anyone, expressing the diversity of opportunities and implying a certain social commitment for policy (since this perspective requires to take into account the consequences of different mobility potentials). The differences in appropriating movement are evident when considering specific means of transport, like low-cost airlines or mobility sharing services. The access to the mentioned services in fact implies the possibility and the ability to access specific technologies (Internet, smartphones, electronic payment...), which may represent an obstacle to their usage for people unable to make use of these systems: for example, a bikesharing station may be highly accessible from a spatial point of view, but could prevent several people from its use (which is subject to electronic payments or service membership). Specific abilities are required for making use of some mobility opportunities, as well as for recomposing the different experiences that involve each individual.

It is not just a matter of knowledge or economical access, but also other conditions may determine the usability of a certain mean. For example, the 2007 documentary *Il passaggio della linea* shows how Italian night trains use(d) to be the privileged mean for some categories to cross the country from North to South, given for example the cheaper fares and the lower likelihood of undergoing police control. Transport is decisive in order to 'reconciliate scattered spheres' (Kaufmann, 2004), such as the native place and a distant job; in some cases, peculiar starting conditions (income, citizenship, legal status...) can be distinctive factors for the real usability of mobility services.

### **An instrument to access**

Under certain conditions, movement has a value of its own; sometimes movement is a purpose in itself, and generally the experience of mobility carries peculiar meanings, also in the everyday experience. Nevertheless, the basic aim of movement is the possibility to access something, be it a space, a resource, a person. Considering that the social relevance of movement seems to rely on its instrumental value, the meanings it may have for individuals require to question what is mobility for, clarifying differences

and relationships between mobility and accessibility.

### *Distinguishing accessibility and mobility*

The distinction between the ideas of accessibility and mobility is fundamental to guarantee equal possibilities to the inhabitants of a territory, even when mobility and transport may appear as similar words (especially in a social perspective focused on the equitable access to opportunities). In transport planning, mobility – the movement of people and goods – is just one of the instruments available for accessibility (together, for example, with an urban planning stressing the land use – transport connection, or with technologies that reduce the need for movement). Mobility has been traditionally privileged (Litman, 2011), giving priority to the needs of transport means (especially cars) rather than of people: the approach privileged targets like vehicle speed or covered distances, without taking into account alternative modes (for example, cycling and pedestrian paths) or without considering an eventual lower need of movement. Moreover, in some cases mobility may have negative outcomes: for example, in sprawled areas capillary road networks allow a higher mobility, but only for car owners; the same roads fostering urban sprawl and facilitating movements by car make instead impossible to plan any other alternative form of mobility.

Mobility thus should not be the aim of transport planning. Movements in fact are fundamental tools to access the opportunities of a territory, rather than purposes in themselves: accessibility instead should be the main aim, overturning traditional planning approaches. Such a change of perspective doesn't completely overshadow mobility, which remains a fundamental tool to increase accessibility and allowing the transfers of inhabitants (Walker, 2011). Transport can thus improve basic accessibility by guaranteeing personal mobility and influencing urban development, promoting densification along selected axes well served by public transport (with forms of “transport oriented development”). Orienting urban development, mobility systems play a key role: their presence in fact makes attractive those areas where transfer are made easier by high quality services; high frequencies and speeds provide a higher basic access, allowing to cover longer distances. Finally, the role of public transport is fundamental on the short term, intervening in territories with a consolidated structure; instead, only on the medium – long term a relocation of housing, workplaces and services is possible, trying to combine land use and transport. Accessibility may increase by promoting the possibility to move, even recurring to transport means that are usually neglected. Nevertheless, it could be necessary to consider mobility just as a tool, privileging instead accessibility as the aim to achieve.

### *Moving to access*

Accessibility contributes to show how changes in land use and transport influence the functioning of a society. Accessibility in fact can be defined – at least, from the individual point of view – as ‘the extent to which land-use and transport systems enable (groups of) individuals to reach activities or destinations by means of a (combination of) transport mode(s)’ (Geurs and van Wee, 2004). The perspective is double: on the one

hand, the accessibility of a specific site may be evaluated, considering how reachable it is; on the other hand, the possibility an individual has to access specific services is examined. In this sense, the concept of basic access (Litman, 2012) takes into account which basic activities can be reached (using those transfers that are consequently considered as “basic mobility”): health care, education, workplaces, commercial activities... destinations that are fundamental not just to participate in urban life, but also – more simply – in order to survive.

In the accessibility perspective, mobility has an ancillary role, since it is just one of the elements that makes possible to reach the opportunities available in cities (together with their locations, or other specific restrictions affecting their availability); nevertheless, accessibility mainly functions as a (complex) tool required for the development of the self and of a society. The possibility to access is in fact a key element to increase the capability of individual and collective actors, in order to achieve specific purposes: it multiplies available opportunities by making them reachable and consequently usable. A higher capability is the result of an increased freedom (to move, to access): individual freedom becomes thus a social commitment (Sen, 2007). According to his peculiarities, any person chooses between different kinds of life, and his ability to act is as wide as the range of available alternatives. Such a social commitment should help personal attitudes in influencing individual choices, considering freedom both as a leading principle and as a product of social institutions. The presence of groups with contrasting purposes may lead to conflicts: different subjects compete between them to use a territory at its most; such conflicts cannot be eliminated, but should be faced in order to provide equitable solutions, so that individual freedoms are equally distributed and the most deprived subjects may have wider capabilities.

Conflicts and imbalances may seem to invoke a public intervention, as an impartial way to reduce gaps referring to a common interest and using collective resources. Still, public action is often unable (or simply not interested) to do this, leading to a number of informal, bottom-up solutions promoted by individual themselves. This can be observed even in the transport field, where Third World countries have developed a number of informal experiences to satisfy mobility needs and replace missing public transport provisions. These transportation services for the urban poor are so effective that actions are proposed to formalize these experiences and include them within the existing local transport system (Gtz, 2010); in the same time, specific mobility needs combine with elements of local traditions, providing services that address local transport demand and also represent typical elements of Third World urban landscapes.

### **A right**

Individuals can use mobility as a tool, necessary to access; moving instead to a wider perspective, it could be relevant to examine which meaning (if any) movement has in a collective sense. The instrumental value seems to go with a more specific social meaning. As a field shaped by planning practice in fact mobility also involves a certain social commitment: since its origins planning has been conceived as a progressive and reformist activity, ‘aimed at producing a “public good” of one kind or another’



(Yiftachel, 2002: 535). Some planning approaches have specifically adopted a socio-political perspective, focused on the defence of weaker interests (as in the case of advocacy and equity planning), but in general planning practice is recognized to have relevant ethical implications (Moroni, 1997);

Right to the city and urban common goods, two of the main concepts usually orienting socially committed planning, may be useful as references to test the potential collective meaning of movement, having implications even for mobility and its policy.

### *Which right to the city?*

In the last decades, the concept of “right to the city” has been a powerful framework for the social and political commitment of planning activity, both from a theoretical and practical point of view. Movement in urban settings intercepts the concept of right to the city, contributing to its recognition; in the same time, the idea of right represents a desired outcome of planning activity. It can thus be relevant to understand the possible meanings of the concept, starting from its first definition, provided by Henri Lefebvre (1968). The French philosopher claimed that only urban settings can provide places for meeting and exchange (not intended in terms of profit), which are required to satisfy individual and collective needs: such a need for the city and its resources makes necessary to guarantee a right to the city – better defined as a right to urban life. The reflection of Lefebvre originated in a peculiar setting, the progressive Paris of radical political movements; the setting was very close to the traditional image of the modern city, quite different (at that time) from the chaos and multiplicity of contemporary metropolises. This might have fostered the wrong idea of a ‘right to the “ancient” city’ (Pizzo, 2013), but also allowed to take into account more different, complex urban issues in the further theorizations of the right to the city.

Within the amount of research developed around the original Lefebvrian concept, the hints of some scholars are particularly effective in showing the various declinations of the right to the city. Forty years after its first definition, David Harvey describes the concept in the light of post-Fordism and of the neo-liberal turn of globalization: “The right to the city is far more than the individual liberty to access urban resources: it is a right to change ourselves by changing the city. It is, moreover, a common rather than an individual right since this transformation inevitably depends upon the exercise of a collective power to reshape the processes of urbanization. The freedom to make and remake our cities and ourselves is, I want to argue, one of the most precious yet most neglected of our human rights’ (Harvey, 2008). Harvey thus highlights the idea of a connection between city and urban life, which reciprocally influence each other through the action of individuals and groups; but in his perspective central is the role of people and their aspirations, in relationship with the surrounding urban setting.

Peter Marcuse (2009) describes instead the right as a combination of the deprived and the discontented, reformulating the concept of right to the city as ‘an exigent demand by those deprived of basic material and existing legal rights, and an aspiration for the future by those discontented with life as they see it around them, perceived as limiting their own potentials for growth and creativity’; his perspective is based on the

concept of need and on the pursue of individual life careers. The approach of Leonie Sandercock is slightly divergent, since she focus on the right to express differences in urban settings: ‘the work of planners in “managing difference”, is the work of negotiating fears and anxieties, mediating memories and hopes, and facilitating change and transformation’ (Sandercock, 2000). More generally, Susan Fainstein speaks of a just city by relating policy decisions to philosophical principles – in particular, ‘within the Rawlsian tradition, wherein social justice becomes that value that everyone would choose if one did not know where one was going to end up in the social hierarchy’ (Fainstein, 2005).

The few excerpts provide a sketch of what is considered today as “right to the city”, showing some of the conceptual developments that expanded the original Lefebvrian concept. A certain multiplicity is evident, first of all in the various mentioned approaches: while the development of ourselves as persons seems to be central, the specific approaches differ (focusing on material resources, recognition of minorities or adoption of ethical principles); nevertheless, multiplicity is also an element transversal across the various theorizations. The quoted scholars claim for a city where multiplicity can have place, being freely developed by anyone: everyone should thus be granted those basic conditions to choose his own life project and carry it on, actively interacting with the urban settings where he is located. Mainly thanks to Foucault, the concept of power emerged as an antagonist of the idea of right, addressing more strongly the issue of inequality and injustice; still, the concept of right to the city focuses more on the concrete outcomes and elements that can guarantee it (so in this sense appears as more relevant when discussing urban mobility and the referred planning practice). We may also say that the various approaches to the right to the city stress multiplicity even because such multiple additions contribute to something wider. So, considering the right to the city as the multiple possibility to change ourselves by changing the urban, may the city be considered as a common good shaped by multiple contributions?

#### *City as a common good?*

Defining the city as a common good, a recent trend in the public debate (especially the Italian one) is encountered. A number of books have been devoted to the definition of common and its declination in various (Italian, again) participatory experiences of the last years: from the public water referendum in 2011 to the occupation and reuse of symbolic buildings, to the general opposition to new impacting infrastructures. Nevertheless, “commons” risk to become a buzzword with multiple and no meanings; to avoid this risk, it could be relevant to take a step back and explore what commons may be (and, moreover, if cities can be included within them).

‘In many choices – less and less today – the strategy leading to the higher individual result also produces collective wellness. In other – more and more today – there is instead a clash between individual aims and the common good’ (Bruni, 2011): it is not possible to think, as Adam Smith did, that the simple sum of individual utilities lead to the common good, nor – to recall Aristotle – that ‘the higher individual right is the effect of the contribution that everyone, together with the others, sympathetically gives

to the common good' (Bobbio, 1995: 15). In the modern age in fact the rise of the individual and its freedoms leads to an increasing tension between individual and common good.

The need to reduce the tension between two dimensions more and more conflicting derives from the object itself of the dispute: the city. Commons are usually defined as goods whose consumption doesn't make impossible for another individual to consume them at the same time, and from which no one can be excluded. Cities themselves may be considered as such: in fact they can be seen as 'dynamic networks of externalities and commons' (Palermo, 2004: 176) and the same reasoning works with the environment, 'as the joined outcome of the externalities provided by multiple subjects in forms that are not always intentional or controlled' (ibidem). It may be interesting to go beyond, defining the city as a relational good – that is to say, a good that 'can only be "possessed" by mutual agreement that they exist, after appropriate joint actions have been taken by a person and non-arbitrary others' (Uhlener, 1989); for sure, there are many common features: 'these elements of the good life are doomed to be absolutely not self-sufficient' (Nussbaum, 1996) and 'are at the mercy of other people's choices: they are thus more frail and vulnerable, they can't be entirely controlled by me, they are more dangerous' (Bruni, 2005).

Defining the city as a common, a peculiar space emerges at the crossroad between individual and common good: the two dimensions are held together by the weave of 'interdependencies – non voluntary and sometimes unaware – between legitimate individual choices' (Palermo, 2004: 174) and consequent externalities, intertwining both the individual – community relationship and the interactions between different dimensions. The relationships producing commons appear as a key element, and the terms "collective labour" could represent them: "The common is not, therefore, something that existed once upon a time that has since been lost, but something that is, like the urban commons, continuously being produced. The problem is that it is just continuously being enclosed and appropriated by capital in its commodified and monetized form, even as it is being continuously produced by collective labour' (Harvey, 2012: 77).

Yet, the relationships that produce commons appear as more complex: the rise of individual freedoms has been more and more in contrast with the common good; moreover, even if common interests are present, it is difficult to effectively reach a shared aim definable as common good (as shown for example by the tragedy of commons or by the prisoner's dilemma; see Bruni, 2011). The definition of the common space at the intersection between individual and common good is thus not simple, but still research provides useful hints. Discussing commons, Ostrom (1990: 184) considers 'what individuals will do when they have autonomy to craft their own institutions and can affect each other's norms and perceived benefits', taking into account the possibility to change previous situations: the idea is that of a social self-organization, that referring to the community specificities can manage the use of a certain resource according to the features of its users. Starting from rules based on such criteria, subjects can mutually undertake the observance of the established norms, with long-term benefits higher than

those that would derive from traditional strategies. Nevertheless, self-organization might be realized only at specific conditions, different from those granted by present institutions and market conditions.

Discussing city as a common, theoretical reflections come together with concrete examples, showing that cities can be regulated and also shaped by different contributions. Urban coproduction is an example of this multiple, collective effort, able to make a difference in troubled settings; the search for a common ground made of shared purposes and rules leads then to the concrete improvement of urban equipments. For example Ostrom (1996) discusses the case of some Brazilian cities, where the coproduction of water infrastructures was activated among the poorest areas of Recife: ‘A key part of this program is the activation of local citizens to participate from the very start in the planning of their own condominial systems. (...) All of this effort to involve citizens is directed, however, toward facilitating their making real decisions in a process of negotiation among neighbours and with project personnel. (...) The overall performance of these systems has varied from project to project and depends both on the success of the negotiation process to achieve a plan that neighbours can really implement and on the construction of high quality trunk lines arranged for by public agencies’.

#### *...and accessibility?*

The various reported hints on the city as a common don’t provide specific definitions, but rather show ‘the possibility that different subjects collectively build meaningful frameworks able to orientate the action. The commons that may be eventually defined are thus the outcome of a process and not the established aim of an intentional and expert action’ (Attili, 2007: 243). Also mobility may favour this possibility of collective sensemaking by improving accessibility. In the definition of Lefebvre, space can be material, mental and social, implying specific attitudes (perception, conception, life) and involving peculiar rights: the right to access, be and participate in the city; ‘the concept cannot be confined to the right of accessibility – physically, mentally or symbolically – to what pre-exists, but entails a right to change’ (Pugalis and Giddings, 2011).

A focus on mobility privileges probably the first dimensions, even if not just from a spatial point of view. Also the possibility to access transportation is part of the right to urban life, since it is necessary to move in order to reach the various opportunities available in urban settings; moreover, the continuous urban expansion of the last decades has increased the relevance of mobility: to access most of places and services, medium – long transfers are needed. Thanks to faster vehicles and larger infrastructures, also inclination to movement has grown, broadening covered distances. Promoting movement, also the possibility to shape one’s own life setting increases. Any social setting is a space of choices, shaped by individual and collective actions; when others – and not us – determine its shape, it becomes an alien world, being excluded from its construction (Veca, 2010).

The basic idea of access involves spaces and resources, and the possibility of

reaching them; but goods and services are mainly tools, needed to develop as persons and shape realities around us. Providing a mobility that guarantees to different groups equal access to different locations, available opportunities increase, as well as their possibilities of use. Consequently, it is possible to participate in urban life; individuals from different backgrounds may have equal possibilities to access workplaces and services, seen not just as material supports for life but as fundamental tools to freely choose which life to lead. The approach may thus increase the well-being of a society (defined as the availability of beings and doings that implementing the quality of one's own being; see Sen, 1992), expanding the individual choices and reducing obstacles in satisfying personal needs – material and not.

Mobility thus plays a key role: it fosters in fact an indirect appropriation of the space, promoting the possibility to access to the city and its opportunities; it intervenes on the capability of urban populations, making them access urban settings and facilitating their contribution to a shared construction of the city. The initial right to access the city intercepts the possibility to be and participate in the city, bringing together dimensions that really lead to change ourselves by changing the city. Mobility may appear as a potential “right in the right”: a right to mobility could be considered as a key contributor to the wider right to the city. Nevertheless, two clarifications are needed. The first one refers to the fact that rights of citizenship are less and less tied to territory, and rather need to be recognized also to a consistent number of “non – citizens” who are part of mobile populations – leading thus to the adoption of a mobile politics (Amin and Thrift, 2002). The second one instead involves the effective contribution that mobility provides for individual strategies, making necessary to consider its role in fostering personal potentials. In the perspective of the right to the city, movement can act as a vector of social change, providing occasions for different individual life careers and for a different shaping of spatial and social features; practically, the roles of movement and networks may be more varied – even more ambiguous.

### **A system of potentials**

Underlying the potentials related to movement, transport appears as a vector of social change, actively contributing to individual capabilities and, consequently, on the possibility to pursue specific aims and intervene on society. Yet, mobility and its structures can't be simply considered as elements whose presence has automatically positive outcomes on opportunities: mobility opens a number of chances that still have to be appropriated, infrastructures may play ambiguous roles in territorial settings, and the potentials fostered by mobility may clash with each other. Movement is thus a relevant factor whose importance needs to be questioned according to some distinctions rather than taken for granted.

#### *Motility: mobility helping capability*

Seen from a social perspective, movement provides occasions that are not completely available for anyone: any person has a different capacity to be mobile. The concept of

motility attempts to take into account such differences, describing ‘the way in which an individual appropriates what is possible in the domain of mobility and puts this potential to use for his or her activities’ (Kaufmann, 2002: 37). The system of potentials involves intentions, strategies and choices, establishing a relationship between given transport networks and effective mobility: motility represents thus the social possibility of mobility, showing how people can use movements and the wider networks where they are located for specific purposes. Potentials ‘can be transformed into movement according to aspirations and circumstances’ (Kaufmann, 2002: 38), relying on the various factors that define the capacity to be mobile: these refer to access, skills and appropriation, but are partially related to the individual (as for physical attitude, aspirations and knowledge) and partially to the territorial setting (existing transport systems, general accessibility, space – time constraints).

Appropriation in particular holds together individual and more general aspects: this can be defined as the interpretation of access and skills made by anyone, according to their aspirations and plans; taking access into account, or evaluating the usefulness of skills, this individual analytical construct is a needed reference. A first relevant ambiguity appears when adopting such a perspective. Transport provides speed potentials which facilitate movement and increase the access to specific locations, but individuals aim at pursuing personal strategies that are different between each other. Mobility can thus be understood (and improved) if individual intentions are associated to the specific reasons that make people mobile or leave them immobile; instead, a dominant value system tends to take mobility into account referring to ‘a simple equation summed up thus: mobility is good, because it equals open-mindedness, discovery, and experience, and an effort must be made for individuals to maximise mobility for this reason’ (Kaufmann, 2002: 37). Even if the experience of movement has values of its own, from a social perspective the most relevant aspect is the indirect relevance of mobility, that is decisive according to the role it plays in accomplishing individual aspirations and purposes.

Following Kaufmann and his empirical analysis in four Swiss cities, we may ask “Mobile, therefore free?”. The increase in individual opportunities in fact appears as directly related to the possibility of moving, but another ambiguous aspect emerges: ‘nothing shows that the most spatially mobile people have more freedom in the way they conduct their lives’ (Kaufmann, 2002: 58). Once more, mobility appears as relevant only for certain life strategies; others instead may attribute more importance to a sedentary tactic. Mobility is higher in the cases of those who associate their individual freedom to their mobility (rather than to something else), and even in that occurrence mobility ‘is used to reconcile more constraints rather than to obtain more freedom’ (ibidem). Therefore, the relevance of the individual and its aspirations is highlighted: mobility is not fundamental on its own, but according to the various strategies taking place in territorial settings, its importance may change – as well as its contribution to social change.

#### *Ambiguous artefacts*

Motility associates the opportunities for movement with a number of factors, even if

a peculiar role is played by transport infrastructures and services, the concrete hardware and software for mobility. Services usually are a consequence of the presence of infrastructures, which thus appear as the fundamental precondition for movement. Public discourses – especially in the political debate – frame them as neutral and necessary elements, without which no territorial development is possible; the territorial infrastructural equipment should grow, often in order to compensate the gaps with more developed areas and make regions more competitive (Palermo, 2008). The emphasis is on the presence of infrastructures, without considering the effective role they may play in an area: instead, they appear as ambiguous artefacts, that according to their own features and to the peculiarities of the setting may have radically different meanings.

Often seen as a catalyst for development, infrastructures convey more complex meanings, creating territorial palimpsest where ‘different stories overlap, oppose or elide each other’ (Secchi, 2012); social, political and economical dynamics interact with a number of smaller individual stories, that use the infrastructures as empowering tools, see them as obstacles, live around them. The presence of infrastructures – not just from the physical point of view, but also from the moment in which a possible construction is discussed – can have powerful consequences on the territory, determining the trajectories of their development but also influencing their perceptions; in the same time, their reciprocal relationship is complex, depending on a wide range of factors swinging between technical features, political programs and social peculiarities. Infrastructures thus work as a palimpsest, that conveys opportunities and perceptions but in the same time is the starting tool to develop different possibilities and visions, allowing different uses and creating variable interactions with the surrounding settings. Such a complex process can be observed for example in contexts where the creation of new infrastructures has been used as the flywheel for the development of depressed areas, trying to improve their opportunities and modify the collective perception of the places; some examples in this sense are provided – within the others – by Rio de Janeiro.

Rio, like other Brazilian cities, has recently developed a massive program of urban regeneration, focusing especially on favelas; between the various interventions, those related to mobility are relevant (Tessari, 2012), aiming not only at providing better connections with the other neighbourhoods, but also at improving the quality of public spaces and, in general, the overall perceived image of these areas, working as catalysts for their development. Between the several Carioca experiences, that of the cableway in the Complexo do Alemão favela appears as quite significant: it is inspired to a successful, paradigmatic South-American experience (that of Medellín’s cableway system), and has outcomes which are somehow ambiguous. The infrastructure aims at providing better connections between the favela and the near subway network, increasing the accessibility to central areas and requalifying public spaces around the new cableway stations; concrete results also convey a strong symbolical message, focusing on development (thanks to the modern technology used) and redemption (the periphery becomes central).

Yet, the infrastructure is bringing positive but unexpected results. Looking at the users of the cableway, tourists coming to visit the favela surpass local inhabitants going

for work reasons to central areas; locals tend to remain in the neighbourhood, where their economic opportunities concentrate, but many more people are now enjoying the so called “favela tourism”. The regeneration programs, defined as an operation of pacification, have undoubtedly improved the image of these areas, making them touristic destinations (and consequently favouring their economic development); still, these new infrastructures shadowed other, relevant interventions. The described outcomes and the shadowing of priorities suggest the ambiguous effects that similar development programs may have (Phillips, 2013).

### *Conflicting potentials*

Around the infrastructures, individual life trajectories overlap and create palimpsests; but a palimpsest is never the result of an agreed action: instead, it is shaped by the continuous confrontation between different ideas and aims. Individual purposes may clash or have common traits, and continuously interact with each other; also movement is part of this dialectic, especially if considered from the motility point of view: it is the expression of different movement potentials, which interact (and often clash) with each other.

Migration flows, moving at a transnational scale throughout the world, are the most visible case of conflicting movement: populations cross borders and borders searching for better life conditions, but their movement is often hindered (as well as their temporary or definitive permanence in a territory); in order to prevent conflicts, various devices (patrols, walls, expatriations, detention centres... all of them related to movement and to the possibility of stopping it) are used even to prevent migrant mobility. Moving back to a closer urban scale, the otherness is still a powerful element of conflict, often potential and sometimes bursting: ‘in the subway, the signs of the immediate otherness are many, often provoking and even aggressive’ (Augè, 1992: 33). In the mobility field, various explicit confrontations between different presences appear throughout urban settings. Public transport has rules that are easily broken, especially when the needs of deprived groups lead to unauthorized uses of public services: large shares of transport users tend not to pay tickets when travelling by public transport (be it because of lacking money or just as a sign of rebellion, as sometimes is in the case of youth not paying fares), while others use vehicles as places for begging; some of these presences make otherness explicit and may be perceived as troublesome in themselves, while others create conflicts given the failure to comply with rules.

A different kind of otherness affects instead spaces and routes that are necessary for different groups in order to cover different trajectories, with various mobility needs that sometimes clash with each other. Some initiatives explicitly seek a confrontation with other movement needs: it is the case of Critical Masses, events in which periodically cyclists occupy urban roads by cycling on them at night with a reduced speed in order to stress the relevance of mobility practices alternative to the use of car. Nevertheless, most of the contrasts derive from the co-presence of different trajectories in the same – insufficient – spaces: be it the mass of tourists moving through narrow downtown streets, or car commuters responsible for most of the urban congestion (as in the case



of Milan, where the 75% of car trips is related to interchange mobility; see Amat, 2013), these forced coexistences foster conflicts, since different exigencies overlap. Something similar appears also in strictly regulated systems, like railways: service hierarchy privileges high speed, long distance links over local connections; because of this, even in case of delays local services have to give way to faster trains, with the risk of reducing speed and accumulating delays. In general, mobility in urban settings is another field that highlights the presence of the difference: ‘it is thus natural that the common space of transport is – as shown by its name – a contractual space where a daily cohabitation is practiced with different opinions that, even if not authorized for posting, nevertheless don’t have to hide’ (Augè, 1992: 71).

Several concrete conflicts between mobility needs and strategies continuously appear in urban settings, but the underlying dynamics can refer to a common paradigm, one based on shapes and strengths (in a Deleuzian sense; see Pasqui, 2008). Shapes include the features of movement, their declination in time and space that originates trajectories and associates them in patterns (made of combined movements that may be regular or not); still, shapes are not ended in themselves, since they originate from specific strengths: any individual or collective intention is reflected in strategies, which lead to movements that may share trajectories. Shapes and strengths continuously interact with each other, almost without the possibility of existing autonomously. Strengths are invisible, but when they are named, they already are shapes; nevertheless, the shapes of movement are subject to the changing action of strengths, that continuously modify and redefine established trajectories.

Trying to decline this theoretical perspective in the field of movement, ‘it is in this fluctuation between shapes and strengths that we can read the movement trajectories of urban populations. These are multiple trajectories, sometimes continuous and sometimes discontinuous, that show a plurality of patterns but that change according to solicitations, encounters, clashes’ (Pasqui, 2008: 77). As concrete declinations of intentions and strategies, movements imply the presence of conflict, which obstacles and redefines trajectories; nevertheless, clashes in movement are relevant both for the consequences on opportunities and from an experiential point of view, bringing different meanings to an individual and collective everyday experience.

### **An everyday experience**

The ways in which mobility can contribute to individual aspirations are multiple and intercept a number of urban dimensions; yet, even while playing an instrumental role, mobility has a value of its own, especially related to the experience of movement and to the reflections it has everyday on individual and collective urban practices. Several are the suggestions to describe the experience of movement, and even more are the available sources: here, it will be sufficient to show few hints, suggestions to understand what is perceived and subsequently used to plan tactics and trajectories.

#### *Mobile perceptions*

Multiple are the possible gazes on the city: from the superficial look of the tourist to

the complex analysis of the scholar, from the wandering mind of the flaneur to the focused, ground – based perspective of the urban poor. Different is the awareness characterising them, but same is the possibility of getting a specific knowledge of the urban; the everyday city is legible (Amin and Thrift, 2002), through the lines of its flows and practices. The urban experience brings a specific kind of knowledge, based on personal geographies of sense that in the same time provide also hints for everyday individual tactics (and that sometimes is superior to the formal knowledge provided by education, as stated by Jane Jacobs, 1963).

Tools like maps and descriptions are available to describe a static urban condition, but are instead lacking when it is necessary to grasp transitivity and mutability in the city. A direct interaction between the individual and the urban appears as a more powerful learning process, able to engage the whole personal sphere with a living experience of the city in its everyday shape; but who is entitled to such an experience (and, consequently, knowledge)? The urban expansion of the Nineteenth century provided a first answer with ‘the reflexive walker, the flaneur, who, through sensory, emotional and perceptual immersion in the passages of the city, engages in a two way encounter between mind and the city, resulting in a knowledge that cannot be separated from this interactive process’ (Amin and Thrift, 2002: 10 – 11); the experience of flânerie is the first directly addressing the new urban settings derived from industrialization, relating it to a specific individual condition (that of the Baudelairian spleen) and trying to make sense of the many small details caught in long vagrancies all around the cities.

Yet, this wandering – wondering experience has a limited perspective, affected by the privileged condition of the flaneur and the increased complexity of urban settings. The everyday movements, from regular commuting to scattered travels, ‘can mark the city’s spaces in quite distinctive ways, and with equally telling effects’ (Amin and Thrift, 2002: 15): anyone observes what is moving beyond car or train windows, overlapping external images with inner thoughts, catching different details and associating them in a broader picture of the city as lived and perceived everyday. As already stated, this is not just a question of portraying all the various (better: infinite) possible perspective on cities, but rather consider how this form of interactive knowledge contributes to the accomplishment of individual strategies and purposes. Everyday geographies, as shaped also by the experience of movement, identify the city, associating personal experiences and relating opportunities; multiple perspectives linger on different details and grasp varied bits of the urban complexity.

Still, this broader form of knowledge may be useful for the individual (and collective) action in the city; given its nature, it can’t be equalized by definition, even if some approaches may help to improve it. It could be the case of the sequence design proposed by Kevin Lynch, which ‘focus on the journey by which people actually experience cities’ (Lynch, 1984). The aim is to guide and improve an experience that already takes place during journeys, working on sequences that enhance those elements surrounding mobility infrastructures; few elements may be chosen, or wider areas could be the object of such work: in general, ‘one shapes the road to reveal what is latent on the surrounding fabric’ (ibidem). While some design approaches work on infrastructures and their surroundings in order to facilitate their use (for example, orienting the driver’s

look during long highway trips by using curves, vegetations) or to reduce their impact (with walls or acoustic barriers), here the intention is to “let the surroundings show themselves”, providing more opportunities for individual glances that still remain free to visually move around the city. The mobile perceptions contribute to the experience of movement involving what surrounds the movement; in the same time, the places of mobility may have a value of their own.

### *A place inbetween places*

Differently from many others everyday experiences, movement is characterized by the peculiarity of connecting spaces by the use of specific spaces: for example, describing the heterogeneous spaces in which we live and the set of relations crossing them, Foucault (1984) states that ‘a train is an extraordinary bundle of relations because it is something through which one goes, it is also something by means of which one can go from one point to another, and then it is also something that goes by’. The various dimensions that transport means involve underline the fact that ‘our epoch is one in which space takes for us the form of relations among sites’ (ibidem); the statement is here developed from a strictly philosophical point of view, but can be easily found also in two very different works from the last part of the Twentieth century: the first one, by the architectural critic Banham, describes Los Angeles and its four ecologies, while the second, by the ethnographer Augè, examines Paris’ subway system.

Between the four ecologies that Banham (2009) uses to describe the structure of Los Angeles in the Seventies, one, Autopia, is entirely based on the huge freeway network that covers the whole metropolitan area. Throughout the book, Los Angeles is often described from the point of view offered by the car: according to the author, driving is necessary to acquire a direct knowledge of the city, as learning Italian is necessary for a direct reading of Dante; but the car and its infrastructures are more than a simple tool for a richer approach to the city: ‘the freeway system in its totality is now a single comprehensible place, a coherent state of mind, a complete way of life, the fourth ecology of the Angeleno’ (Banham, 2009: 195). The presence of the infrastructure thus can’t be divided from what takes place over the freeway, and rather becomes a real place where any individual can knowingly stay and (inter)act. The freeway is thus perceived as a peculiar outdoor, where all the usual rules for social interaction (for example, taking care of oneself’s appearance, respecting common rules or sharing rituals – like listening to the radio) have to be accomplished.

Augè (1992) describes instead an experience very different from that of Banham: he depicts a public transport system in a traditional European metropolis, approaching its ethnographic and anthropological implications; nevertheless, several are the features of a peculiar urban experience related to this form of mobility. The subway continuously offer occasions for a different approach to the urban: it shows the city from perspectives that are different from the usual ones, as in the case of the elevated subway branches crossing Paris from above; it engages the users with a continuous diversity (and the author meets the enemy par excellence – the invader, a German soldier in his case – in the subway for the first time); it also has peculiar elements that directly affect

individual perceptions, working on an interior dimension (as for the names of the stops, echoing with their musical sounds) or a physical one (like the entry through the turnstiles). The fact itself of travelling by subway implies a number of solicitations which shape in a peculiar way the everyday experience of the traveller, in a transitive way that continuously changes.

As a place between places, the space of movement directly involves the individual in a process of appropriation and transformation of the reality he lives. On the one hand, mobility provides the occasion for a reinvention of the everyday, which may follow multiple directions; on the other hand, society can be directly transformed also taking advantage of those occasions solely provided by movement. Some works by the French writer Raymond Queneau offers examples of the everyday transformation facilitated when dealing with movement: his *Exercises in Style* explores a number of potential different descriptions (and related perspectives on the same experience) moving from a simple altercation taking place on a bus; *Zazie in the Metro* instead starts from the (failed) attempt to use the Parisian subway for the first time and covers the wide range of adventures taking place around it, portraying a peculiar urban experience (that of the little country girl coming to the city for the first time) that also influences oneself's identity ("I grew old", *Zazie* says of herself at the end of the adventure). The everyday reinvention goes beyond the simple individual sphere, involving broader social outcomes – at least potentially. The possible contribution to social change provided by the places of movement can be observed for example in Bogotá, a metropolis characterized by strong imbalances that attempted to challenge social inequalities by promoting public transport. The city has focused on the creation of transport corridors in order to provide a more reliable transportation service, serving central and peripheral areas (as well as different social groups); nevertheless, the aim of the initiative was broader: not just improving a service, but – as stated by Peñalosa, the promoting mayor – create 'the place where the vice-president of a large corporation or the doorman of a building would feel good. A place where they would meet as equals in an environment that respected human dignity' (Ardila-Gómez, 2004: 332).

The case of Bogotá, interesting in its principles and successful in its outcomes, highlights the role that the places of movement can play in the urban experience, suggesting a peculiar relevance related to the mobility environments (Bertolini and Djst, 2003). Even if the modes for the fruition of spaces are changing, and both territories and society are acquiring a reticular shape influenced by the virtual sphere, still spaces are relevant: the need for space where to experiment a direct, physical contact with other people remains and becomes even stronger; different populations, sharing the most various features or practices, create virtual cities of their own, overlapping and sometimes interacting with each other. Spaces become thus nodes of networks and may work as attractors of flows. Mobility environments influence the presence of people, working both as nodes and places – spaces that can be accessed and provide a wide range of possible practices. 'Whether any interaction will actually occur, and what sort of interaction will occur – ranging from just acknowledging each other's presence to deep personal engagement – will of course depend on more factors. The potential for interaction, however, will be there, and with it a quintessential urban quality' (Bertolini

and Djist, 2003). Places are thus relevant also as fields for the presence and the action of populations, according to the various grasps and resistances (Pasqui, 2008) that they provide.

### *Urban rhythms*

What urban populations do takes place not only in space, but also in time. Practices recur according to specific frequencies, that structure the actions of groups and arrange the interconnections between different activities; the reciprocal arrangements also influences urban settings, relating certain uses to peculiar spaces and moments (on a daily, weekly but also wider basis). To keep it short, practices have specific rhythms, that determine the occurrence of a specific activity and all together shape the features of urban life. Everyday mobility through the city show rhythms, linking to each other different movements; the same happens with practices, which assembled together define the rhythms of populations and, reciprocally interacting, shape the polyrhythmia of the city. Such a plurality is significant, as a sign of the multiplicity that characterises the possible uses of the urban, and a source of fragmentation between rhythms which may thus clash with each other.

Different patterns of space and time are often defined by movements, that are arranged into peculiar combinations. The reference to rhythms can be useful for a better understanding of them, and at the same may provide an useful perspective to approach (movement) practices in general: following Lefebvre (2004) and his rhythmanalysis in fact a general analysis of the everyday interrelation between time and space is offered, as well as a focus on what is seen when taking urban phenomena into account. The analyzed rhythms are first of all the rhythm existing between the present and the presence, which may roughly described as what is perceived and what instead lies behind (similarly to the shapes and strengths previously described). The two elements substitute each other, and the analytical approach of rhythmanalysis ‘transforms everything into presences, including the present, grasped as such’ (Lefebvre, 2004: 23); the observer is thus able to see what is next to the visible present, going beyond the simple perception of facts or rhythms and rather combining them ‘in a dramatic becoming, in an ensemble full of meaning, transforming them no longer into diverse things, but into presences’ (ibidem). The analysis proposed by Lefebvre involves all the senses of the observer and requires to be attentive to the various hints visible in the world – whatever can be “seen from the window”. Rhythmanalysis seems to suggest a careful observation of the visible – the present – that doesn’t simply provide descriptions of what can be grasped thanks to the senses, but rather understand the underlying elements (call them strengths, aspirations, strategies...) that originate urban phenomena and structure the rhythms of the city.

### **The social relevance of movement**

I’m writing these last, still introductory lines while travelling by train to France; few ideas came to my mind when wandering around Istanbul, other notes were written

down while commuting on the Milan suburban rail network. The exploration of the world – be it the everyday one, or a special destination visited once in a lifetime – went together with the explorations of possible research paths, which reflected in the same time the exploration of specific life paths. The combination of places and ideas is in this case the result of individual choices, allowed by a surprisingly wide range of available opportunities. Movement has been important for me; but, recovering the explorative threads from the previous pages, is it relevant also for the others?

Personal experiences, caught across the everyday urban practice, seem to confirm this, especially when movement is hindered. I think of the deprived people met in charities, who only thanks to public transport can reach the place where they can weekly have a shower and some clean clothes; I recall the elderly trapped in peripheral social housing neighbourhoods, victims of transport decay preventing them from reaching farther, more central parts of the city; or again, the workers on night shifts in logistic companies, who have to invent long bike or foot trips to go home. Individual, randomly met stories are the concrete expression of general underlying mechanisms that the previous paragraphs attempt to point out. Movement, and the way in which planning and policy structure it, intercepts a number of dimension and moves between various plans: from the individual to the collective; from the technical to the political; from interior perceptions to explicit outcomes.

Still, the possible meanings of movement suggested in any paragraph do not provide definitive answers, but rather suggest questions that may cross the whole research. First of all, what is questioned is in what sense movement is relevant, and at which extent it is significant for the community or the individuals; more importantly, outcomes involving planning practice are required to transform ideas into gestures, giving them more concreteness. Dealing with ideas supporting the relevance that movement can have from a social point of view, the core question is to understand whether they help to take more effective decisions, and if they add something different (and valuable) in terms of knowledge.

Such questions have concrete declinations, which return in the next parts of this work. Hints provided by movement need to deal with the changing approaches of urban policy, as well as with the presence of urban populations (and the specific attention they ask from public action); some on-field experiences instead provide hints on how these issues emerge in different settings, also showing different possible approaches to them. Finally, the focus on interaction proposed in the last part aims at addressing a metropolitan setting with relevant mobility issues, observing if varied forms of involvement can more effectively contribute to mobility planning by taking into consideration urban populations and the meanings they tribute to movement.

Recovering Lefebvre and his triadic definition of urban space, it could be possible to discuss the existence (or the provision) of representational spaces of movement: spaces where to access, be and participate, using and even shaping them; spaces whose peculiarity is the relationship with the movement and the possibilities it allows. The suggestions observed insofar indicate some aspects to consider, such as the instrumental function of movement in facilitating access, the capabilities it involves and at the same time fosters, or the experiential features that influence the possibilities of mobility. Even

if practices promote peculiar forms of space appropriation and production, planning processes can try to recognise them more widely, as shapes reflecting strengths – as presents reflecting presences.

In the novel *The Catcher in the Rye*, by J. D. Salinger, the protagonist describes what he would like to do in his life depicting himself as someone staying at the cliff of a hill, while many children are running down through rye fields, risking to fall if he doesn't catch them. 'What I have to do, I have to catch everybody if they start to go over the cliff - I mean if they're running and they don't look where they're going I have to come out from somewhere and catch them. That's all I'd do all day. I'd just be the catcher in the rye and all. I know it's crazy, but that's the only thing I'd really like to be. I know it's crazy'. The social relevance of movement, involving any individual and the community in multiform ways, suggests the possibility of acting as “catcher in the plans”: try to interact with individuals and populations as much as possible, not to prevent them from falling, but rather, to intercept aspirations and trajectories that cross our cities and continuously reshape the urban.





## 2. The disoriented action

### **Prologue: City of glass**

A city of glass: this is the image that Paul Auster attributes to New York, the city to which he devotes a trilogy of uncommon detective stories. The novels share the central presence of (unsolved) investigations and are dominated by the metropolis, a confused and indifferent background on which everything may be confused or replaced with something else. The loss of identity that afflicts the protagonists is not the simple consequence of a chaotic urban setting: it is instead the sign of a growing disorientation, that influences personal identities, defines possibilities of actions and intertwines different stories. The first novel, *City of Glass*, opens with the description of long wanderings through the city, at the end of which Daniel Quinn, the protagonist, feels lost not only in the city, but also in himself; increasingly, the displacement grows when the character is required to start an investigation, which will lead him to follow an unknown man through the regular grid of Manhattan: trapped in a mission with no sense and in a city that increases the confusion of roles and identities, the protagonist gives up his entire life and loses any reference. 'Quinn was nowhere now. He had nothing, he knew nothing, he already knew nothing. Not only had he been sent back to the beginning; he was now before beginning, and so far before beginning where it was worse than any arrive he could imagine' (Auster, 1996: 109).

The sense of displacement is much stronger in the trilogy, where characters exchange their identities and move on a background that is precisely New York and at the same time no defined place: no references are available, and rather the wandering through different places and experiences is encouraged. In this sense, the definition of "city of glass" is quite precise. The meaning of the image can suggest not only an additional value to a postmodern piece of literature, but can also provide a suitable opening for a discussion of the settings in which contemporary planning practice is required to act. A city of glass in fact is a structured ensemble, with well defined borders, supporting elements and so on; but in the same time, its constituting material makes it difficult to recognize any visible scheme. Glass is transparent, but also very present with its physical dimension: it can be a strong border, though its transparency may suggest tricky schemes different from the real ones, present and at the same time invisible. A city of glass is delimited, but its borders are difficult to see. The possibilities for action are available, but conditioned by the confused setting.

The same metaphor may describe the contemporary city and the disoriented action taking place in it. The evolution of urban settings has made increasingly difficult to

distinguish borders; limits that were evident before are now more similar to shadow lines, which are present but fuzzy (Pucci, 2013), continuously questioned and redefined. The difficulty in reading and understanding contemporary cities has obviously relevant consequences also for the action in them, influencing the planning practice. Approaches that were previously agreed appear as increasingly ineffective, suggesting the opportunity for a change of perspective that may overcome borders and move to another approach, like that of urban populations. A changing setting probably requires changing approaches: it is not a question of lost identity, but rather of disappearing borders, with the consequent weakening of the possibilities and constraints they used to provide for action. Some issues directly pose similar questions; mobility is one of them, with flows that are difficult to grasp, involve multiple territorial scales and, more importantly, are not contained into any given border.

Contemporary cities call thus for new approaches, moving from the understanding of their current evolution to the exploration of potentially effective orientations. To quote Auster, 'the story is not in the words; it's in the struggle' (Auster, 1996: 201): the proposed exploration begins with a story – that of the borders, describing them as shadow lines which are present but whose meaning is continuously questioned – and goes on with the description of a struggle, that of prevailing policy approaches that repeatedly face the challenges of everchanging settings. The actual inflection of ordinary approaches, here defined as attempts of governance for islands, is sided with a different possible attitude, expressed in a policy for populations. The hints provided by contemporary settings and modes of action try to deal with the present disorientation of policy, trying to understand if any different suitable orientation is available. The issues of movement and the presence of urban populations make the field more complex, but still give space for the use of potential compasses.

### **Shadow lines**

Territory is both the support and the result of social practices developing in space (Pasqui, 2005). Any social action has a spatial dimension, which necessarily involves borders defining its operational field. For a long time, borders have been clear, but the urban evolution of the last decades has challenged this fact; we may say that the limits today structuring urban settings are different from the past ones: less and less administrative, more and more (generally) social, making traditional borders blur. Still, these shadow lines are the main guiding reference for spatial policy.

Practices declined in space firstly face the presence of borders, which mark the fields available for action. Traditional geographies of power (Raffestin, 1983) used them to structure territories and reflect power domains, but their relevance is today questioned by the features of many territorial phenomena, tending to cross – and ignore – established divisions. From an administrative point of view, borders tend not to be crossed, clearly defining the field of action for one or another institution: in some cases this is an obstacle, since it contains the possibilities for intervention within a limited area, but in others this is seen as an opportunity, that reduces responsibilities and allows not to take into account those issues which go beyond the mere area of one's own power.

Borders are ‘a way to manage the world and its contradictions’ (Granata, 2012: 50). They work as contingent phenomena that are social institutions and condition spatial practices, but also orient behaviour (Pucci, 2013): policy has to delimit its field of action, too.

Contemporary urban settings challenge the notion itself of border: they are less and less visible, and tend to blur, as no more valid divisions overcome by flows and practices. The approach to space is relevant for the reflections it has on strategies and actions, affecting also their effectiveness: borders have been gradually exceeded by the urban evolution of the last century, characterised by expansion and dissolution (Secchi, 2005). In the last decades, expansion intertwined with the globalizing trend of economy; material and immaterial flows crossed the global space, referring to cities as nodes of broader networks and no more as self-contained systems. Urban settings, less and less clearly recognizable, began to be dominated by movement, fragmentation and networking (Balducci, 2011). Amongst the several research descriptions of contemporary urban settings, the definition of post – metropolis appears as an effective concept, referring to a city which is renewed (traditional issues have new meanings) and incomplete (the political agenda is still not able to frame them), calling then for new readings and approaches (Fedeli, 2013). Consequently, urban issues have been more and more defined by the multiple contributions of global and local phenomena, with the consequent difficulties in effectively grasping them. To tackle a problem implies to deal with a number of dimensions, often out of any control: the peripheral uneasiness is located in public neighbourhoods populated by migration flows; the crisis of productive districts reflects a loss of competitiveness on a global scale but questions the development of a territory. The difficulties in defining effective actions are strongly related to the possibility to frame them, identifying issues and fieldworks (Cassano, 1996).

Borders appear thus as shadow lines, that do not disappear, but continuously transform, evolve, varying according to the dimensions taken into account. Soft spaces and fuzzy boundaries define contingent territories: urban settings are fluid and differently defined according to the practices taken into account. Space and society are today undergoing a disjunction, that strongly challenges previous equilibriums and awaits to define new balances; traditional aims, like welfare, require renewed declinations. While no general successful solution has been found yet – not even a shared description of the ongoing separation, two approaches are somehow being tested when dealing with spatial policy. The first one is based on the “creative” re-adaptation of existing policy tools to the new needs of metropolitan settings (Balducci et al, 2004), while the second attempts to face urban issues from different perspectives, like that of urban populations (Pasqui, 2008).

### **Governance for islands**

Territory, sovereignty and citizenship have matched for a long time; their increasing detachment challenges the basis of modern politics and its practical tools. In general, public action is questioned in its effectiveness by problems of legitimacy and available

resources, but the new dimensions involved in urban issues require to deal with interpretations and actions using new, different tactics (Balducci and Fedeli, 2007). The prevalent attitude maintains welfare as the main aim of planning practice and inflects it according to the traditional administrative divisions, preserving the existing distribution of competences. But the continuous territorial dimensions of most urban issues today questions the relevance of local borders, overcome by this supralocal nature: administrative bodies appear thus as islands, closed in a traditional geography of political individualism and consequently unable to discuss decisions that cross borders (Pileri and Granata, 2012). Traditional policy approaches seem to address islands that don't dialogue, unaware of being together an archipelago. Because of this, an update of them appears as necessary in order to take new phenomena into account and deal with the difficult grasping of changing territories.

### *Questioning the existing*

According to Secchi (2005), the contemporary city has been shaped by the attempt to give a physical dimension to an individual and collective welfare. The attention to the relationship between cities, individuals and society has produced a number of physical elements, like public housing, services, leisure spaces and infrastructures; nevertheless, despite the several physical inflections of welfare and the differences throughout the world, the modern welfare approach has reflected a similar mechanism: that of authorities with a political power, spatially declined over a limited territory, entitled to rule over a community according to a specific mandate. It is not our intention to discuss the several artifacts that contributed to public welfare (in more or less effective ways). Different are their features, as well as the societies in which they were developed: from market economies to socialist regimes, involving developing countries even today, the most diverse settings have been involved in the collective improvement of social conditions, definable as an increase of the available spatial capital (Calafati, 2013). Nowadays, the traditional welfare approach is instead questioned by many evident, structural crises: not just the increasing disjunction between space and society, but also the dramatic scarcity of available economic resources and the growing segregation of cities.

A turn is characterizing the present life of cities, heavily affecting also the tools and techniques traditionally used to intervene in them; planning practice is challenged, especially when dealing with large scale issues. The discrepancy between old approaches and new urban forms has different causes, which question planning at different levels (Balducci, 2011). A first aspect is the broken link between political authorities (with their planning powers) and geographical areas. The separation between these two dimensions is made more evident by the expansion that cities have undergone, creating huge urban systems that nevertheless are still crossed by borders defined decades – if not centuries – ago. The increase in the urban dimensions hasn't produced any revision of administrative geographies, and it is quite difficult to define borders for the new urban regions. The issue is quite complex, since all the administrative levels within an urban region are involved: it is difficult to delimit the urban area, but it is also hard to find

more actual (and effective) roles even for the fragmented local authorities composing these metropolitan systems. An example in this sense is provided by Milan itself, that is transforming its former province into a metropolitan government and is also trying to redefine roles and borders for its local boroughs (Comune di Milano, 2013).

A second aspect is related to the physical forms that urban settings have acquired. Fragmentation and polycentrism are just two of the many features that make territories more complex, chaotic settings without clear organizing principles. This absence restricts the potential knowledge of an area and, consequently, the possibility to effectively intervene in it. A third aspect instead is the dichotomy between flows and places, both evidently present in contemporary metropolitan areas. Fragmentation, dilatation of distances and virtual dimensions seem to reduce the role of physical space, which is instead remarked by the relevance that places maintain. The network of flows lay on nodes, the places. The new geographies that frame also planning practice need to deal with this double nature of the space.

Not only the actions, but also the actors are questioned. The fragmentation of space comes together with the increasing complexity of socio-political arenas, characterised by a growing number of actors: public institutions are thus no more the only subjects entitled to act. Rather, they appear as “intermediate spaces” (Fedeli, 2008), inbetween different subjects and multiple dimensions. Institutions are devices conceived in order to face specific issues: thus, when the nature of the issues is not clear, the institutional purposes are not clear, too. A crucial dimension in this sense is the territorial one, which needs to be redefined according to the emerging issues of a certain setting; as a consequence, often the territorial scale of action must be defined differently, with a specific focus on wider areas (reflected in a number of European strategic plans). A renowned attention to territorial planning is thus necessary; but it is not sufficient. Action at a broader scale requires to define in new ways the field of intervention, consequently revisiting also practical approaches. In settings composed by islands, it is crucial to recognise the existence of archipelagos, searching for the common threads between them.

### *Creative adaptations*

Even in a moment of growing disjunction, there have been attempts to update traditional ways of intervention usually related to territories with well defined borders. The families of experiences here described have in common some basic traits, while they differ much for what is about the periods they were introduced or for the features they acquired; even privileging European settings, experiences are quite different. Here it will suffice to briefly recover the main attempts for a creative adaptation of traditional approaches, referring to them and to the limits that may suggest to use a different perspective, that of populations.

If contemporary territories are composed of not dialoguing islands, then an opportunity to tackle their issues may be that of recognizing the existence of archipelagos. The metaphor is somehow reflected in the creation of supralocal authorities and agreements that aim at bringing together local institutions, in order to

face more easily some large scale issues. Various have been the cases: the creation of metropolitan authorities around the main cities, like in Italy; the promotion of voluntary forms of territorial cooperation, as in France; the reduction in the number of local authorities, pursued in the United Kingdom amongst the others; and even transnational programs of collaboration on specific topics, like in Central Europe (involving Germany in particular). The issues tackled in these initiatives are several, too: new authorities often focus on the general government of a wide area, especially dealing with land use and shared services; cooperative projects are built around strategies for the development of a territory, privileging local performances; collaboration programs may focus on precise problems, like the issues of mobility on the two sides of a border. Some of these attempts are based on a voluntary participation, while others are forced by the introduction of new laws; at the same time, some initiatives have been working for years, while others still have to start.

It is almost impossible to draw a complete summary of the experiences that define new, larger territories where to act in an unitary way: multiple are their stages of maturation, as well as the purposes that lead them. Nevertheless, crucial aspects that influences their performance can be observed (Janssen-Jansen and Hutton, 2011). A first factor is the involvement of local subjects, that differently affects the general results if it is required by specific legislation or based on a voluntary participation. A second crucial aspect is the definition of the borders delimiting the chosen area: it can be crucial to bravely distinguish new areas, while the simple following of existing limitations may make little sense (Milan provides an example in this sense: its incoming metropolitan area includes far country villages, while the big town of Monza – just 15 kilometres from the central city and strongly related to it – is part of another province). Finally, the attribution of competences is a key element to be considered, since some issues can be more effectively managed at an intermediate, supralocal level; the absence of them (amongst the others: land use planning, mobility, public services...) may negatively affect the effectiveness of such initiatives.

The creation or redefinition of supralocal authorities is the first step in the recognition of exigencies involving large scale territories. In order to deal with the problems of metropolitan territories, it becomes necessary to develop specific strategies; they may generally aim at the development of an area, or focus only on some fields. The family of instruments definable as strategic plans is quite wide, including those 'supralocal plans with socio – economical guidelines and territorial overview, projected in a middle – long term temporal perspective' (Gibelli, 1996: 15): many are the experiences in this field developed from the Sixties, on the two shores of the Atlantic Ocean. Here, what is relevant is their adaptive nature, aiming at updating traditional instruments (the plans) to the needs and exigencies of new territories, adopting a strategic approach. According to these, the core of strategic plans is the development of visions, which provide new and more coherent logics for the development of metropolitan area: in changing settings, visions provide new guiding images that lead their reposition in national and supranational settings, while fostering movements to recompose governance relationships (Albrechts et al, 2003). Strategies are the result of specific processes and have been quite successful in the last decades, in which they

spread in quite different contexts – from huge transnational conurbations to secondary local settings; their importance relies on the relevance they have for new settings: institutional experiences may border new territories, but strategies conceive them as coherent fields, developing unitary visions of development.

Nevertheless, a further step is needed. Metropolitan areas, polycentric networks and generally new urban figures are associated to images, discourses and visions: but these need to lead to action, giving a concrete declination to imaginative efforts (Albrechts, 2001). The passage from strategy to its application is often portrayed as a crucial one, since actions could be arranged in ways that are ineffective and don't completely convey the innovative attitude of the guiding visions. The definition of actions may be too vague or too precise, becoming strict; strategies may be still related to a traditional course of action, without any effective involvement of other actors in the setting that may play a crucial role for the success of the initiatives; resources may be scarce and prejudice the desired outcomes; planning processes may fail as occasions for a further diffused learning. These are just few of the dimensions involved in strategic planning processes, whose positive results depend both on the obtained results and on the steps that led to them. A creative approach (Balducci et al, 2004) may provide a flexible adaptation of the guiding visions to the concrete conditions of the involved settings: this attitude requires thus to adapt general principles for action to the precise needs of the field of intervention (which explains the wide, different range of experiences included in the category of strategic planning).

Compared to the vast amount of research and practice related to strategic metropolitan planning, the previous lines just provide a summary of how ordinary public policy has evolved in order to face new, unprecedented urban issues. Plans and strategies have very different features, according to the peculiarities of the settings and to the various planning traditions; nevertheless, they share common threats and also weaknesses. Generally speaking, plans and practices become more and more 'transformative devices that we can't control, as we can't control the shape we would like to give to the future' (Fedeli, 2008: 130): their most profound sense is thus questioned, as tools that in a transforming setting have limited meanings. Practical issues, such as effectiveness and available resources, come together with structural problems, like legitimation and complex dynamics. A number of trajectories intersect with each other: short term goals, conveyed through devoted plans, contribute to longer term strategies, in the continuous interaction of contrasting tactics and evolution of global processes (Hillier, 2011). Summarising, what is questioned is the sense of traditional tools, that even with adaptive efforts are not able to tackle contemporary, ever changing issues.

### **Policy for populations**

The crisis of public action previously described involves several dimensions, suggesting the need for different ways to investigate the urban and inflect the action. Abandoning established certainties that have led public policy in the last decades, a multiform – and even elusive – approach may result as more effective in tackling the

issues affecting urban settings nowadays (Pasqui, 2008). The search for a change derives from the mentioned critical transformations, that do not eliminate the guiding purposes of public action – definable as the production of welfare – but require them to acquire new forms. The traditional planning approach, ‘based on an assumption of static, (...) can’t take into account the fragmentation and the contingency that characterize social practices, neither can deal with a way of living more and more marked by instability’ (Pezzoni, 2013: 34). The image of the city becomes multiple, as generated by a potentially infinite range of aspirations and practices; at the same time, multiple are the inflections that welfare may assume in each of these different perspectives, with changing relevant consequences on the everyday life. Referring to urban populations, it may be possible to provide more punctual descriptions to grasp ambiguous phenomena and develop new policy responses to them, pursuing public aims with newly fertile modes.

#### *A phenomenological perspective*

At the crossroad between different disciplines, the concept of urban populations has emerged in the last years as a popular construct to interpret emerging phenomena in the contemporary city; in the definition provided by Pasqui (2008: 148), they are ‘body of individuals who temporarily and intermittently share everyday practices, constituting subjects of these practices and generating peculiar spatial-temporal geographies (...)’. The approach attempts to grasp the multiplicity expressed in the varied practices hosted everyday in the urban spaces, considering them as a decisive factor shaping the city thanks to their spatial dimension and to their political nature (which will be described more precisely in the next paragraphs). The definition already provides some hints on the relevance that the concept may have: it deals with a collective dimension (that of the groups of individuals), continuously (on a daily basis) engaged in some actions, aware of their meanings and reflected in the structure of the city and its activities (affecting both urban spaces and times). Populations are related to practices, to “what they do”, and these can be relevant for the public action, as the expression of individual and collective strategies.

The meanings populations may have for policy will be discussed later; right now, the quoted definition suggests at which relevant elements the population approach should look. The underlying perspective is in fact a phenomenological one. Recovering a condition of disinterested contemplation to catch the essence of phenomena, the approach – started with the inquiries of Edmund Husserl – aims at “coming back to the things”, with a direct observation of what is visible and can be interpreted by the subject; the approach with phenomena should be built on a direct interaction not influenced by previous interpretative schemes. Within the others, one of the possible inflections of this approach in the urban field states thus that ‘a relevant key to interpret the “territories of the transforming city” seem to observe/describe/interpret movements and stops, times and places, identities and actions of the multiple populations who inhabit, use and build the cities and the territories’ (Pasqui, 2007: 124). Differences appearing in urban settings, expressed in the multiple forms of inhabiting, become



consequently the focus of an attitude that tries to grasp the change by considering its visible manifestations. Recovering the philosopher Emmanuel Levinas, the radical alterity expressed in exteriority (that is to say, in this case, in visible phenomena) requires to establish a relationship with it, recognizing its existence and then addressing the diversity it expresses (Bauman, 2011); the first aspect is an epistemological one, referring to knowledge, while the second is an ethical one, taking into account the existence of a difference and the needs it conveys. Such an abstract approach may have concrete references in the planning discipline too, firstly addressing the analytical work needed to know a setting and then influencing the action that transform territories.

The phenomenology of populations relies on the practices they share; their observation is the first step to define populations, referring to the experiences from which they originate. Potentially infinite are the observable practices: everyday commuting, (un)expected uses of spaces like informal trade in transport nodes, Critical Masses with cyclists occupying the roads... and these are just few references in the mobility field, with a relationship between populations and practices that will be discussed more in detail in the next paragraphs. Some cautions are anyway needed, since not everything is relevant as a practice and not necessarily a collective dimension is present: practices are 'our routines, what we do (and how we do) in relationship with a background of meaning thanks to which, first of all, we know how to do it (as everyone does)' (Pasqui, 2007: 136). The intertwining of multiple dimensions – individual and collective, concrete and abstract – should avoid the risk of an excessive fragmentation, that, instead of recognizing the significant common traits of potential populations, may see any individual as an unique mix of strategies and practices (making thus impossible to develop any policy response). It is in fact necessary to recognize the relevant aspects, instead of developing 'a kind of iperrealistic aesthetics active in investigating the everyday in its slightest aspects. A true passion for diversity has led, in some cases, to a depoliticisation of the problem, reducing inhabiting to forms that, in their differences, all weigh the same' (Bianchetti, 2012).

Using urban populations as a guiding concept, new readings of the disorienting urban transformations become possible; but the cost is the abandon of previous interpretative schemes, replaced by a focus on the visible urban phenomena. As an expression of the ongoing transformations, urban populations allow to follow changes and address them, even if referring to new paradigms. It is not our intention to contrast old and new attitudes, describing the first as ruinous and the latter as amazing heuristic constructs, full of unexpected but obvious solutions. In fact, the perspective of urban populations, and the phenomenological attitude that follows it, can suggest a potentially useful approach to issues for which any treatment (and even description) seems difficult; nevertheless, before describing the steps forward that a population approach may help, a cautious warning is needed. The knowledge shaped by observation and the consequent action need to 'recognise the precariousness of theories and of the foundations, the contingencies of the outcomes, the need for doubt and experimentation (...). Irony as the availability to discuss in public one's own decisive beliefs (Palermo, 2004: 332). Beyond the simple theoretical weaknesses of one or another idea, an approach based on irony and responsibility - 'finding reasons or feeling of solidarity with the subjects of the

interactions needed to understand and act' (Palermo, 2009: 156), abandons any radical adherence to this or that idea and can help to find new orientations within displacing fields.

### *Inhabiting the everyday*

'Inhabiting practices build territories and constitute populations' (Crosta, 2010: 121). The short sentence summarises the elements involved in this analytical construct and their reciprocal relationships, according to which urban settings can be differently interpreted. Practices and populations are the two key terms in this perspective, whose definition can give directions for the knowledge (and, later on, for the consequent action).

Populations have already been defined as groups sharing practices, which define them and are at the same time expression of peculiar strategies. Still, the concept of population has also features of its own, summarised in three words: ambiguity, identity and plurality (Pasqui, 2007; 2008). As a social construct, the definition of population is ambiguous: it is strongly related to the specific environment that allows the life of the individuals associated in groups, but in the same time places and populations evolve together and shape each other. Populations appear as an interpretative category that can help the understanding of emerging practices, even if working as a new – and partial – tool, whose meanings are at the crossroad between various disciplines and definitions.

Identity instead reflects features of the contemporary individual experience like multiplicity and fragmentation. Any individual in fact is part of many populations, that according to the moment and the place provide different systems of relationships and (self)representations; these groups may be based on temporary or permanent features (the experience of commuting, versus the ethnic origin), but never uniquely define individuals. Belonging to one or another population is thus related to specific spatial and temporal features; their everchanging composition defines the individual identity. Plurality comes then almost as a consequence: plural are the practices, plural are the identities, plural are even the populations. Groups of individuals in fact defines only partially life experiences, with different mechanisms. In some cases in fact belonging is the result of a voluntary choice (political or social engagement, adoption of a lifestyle...), in others it is instead forced (ethnicity, modes of transport...); results are different, too: from shared construction of common identities to obliged arrangements of time and space. Nevertheless, the growing everyday plurality defines identity as the result of practices rather than as a precondition to take part in them.

Referring to populations, practices are the way(s) in which they inhabit everyday life. Practices are actions, intentional or not, taking place within structured frameworks; they decline individual strategies and tactics, marking the action of individuals and groups who are, at the same time, subjects and effects of practices: the actor is defined and defines his actions, which in turn are weaves of practices. The simplest definition may define practices as 'what people do' (Crosta, 2010), even if the presence of already described finalities and of specific routine patterns restricts the field: practices are collective, intentional and repeated tools for the achievement of precise purposes. The

range of potential practices is still wide; again, three words may help to understand their features, discussing combination, location and composition.

Every practice is a weave of practices, the result of their combination into threads that are always different. No pure practice exist, but rather they appear in specific moments, when they are examined as the outcome of various skills shaping a specific attitude. The nature of a practice is given by the action composing it, but also by the setting in which it is shaped: as a shared attitude, repeatedly acted by a group of individuals, also the social context in which a practice takes place is relevant, involving specific purposes and consequent behaviours.

Also a spatial dimension is involved, implying a specific location where practices take place. Practices in fact have concrete, observable features, influenced by the space where they happen – a space that is never neutral, but rather present with its concrete material features. Any location provides stands influencing opportunities and constraints of a certain setting: space is thus more than a background, it becomes a field of possibilities that concretely determines which features practices may assume. From this point of view, a place may be more or less fertile for the inflection of practices, becoming a differently suitable habitat for one or another urban population. The instrumental nature of practices – as waves of actions contributing to specific strategies – is visible in their contribution to everyday life: practices in fact don't stand alone, but rather are composed into specific routines, and these routines may conflict with each other. As already described in the first chapter when referring to urban rhythms, there is a plurality of rhythms in which practices are arranged together: it is a sign of the multiplicity that characterize the possible uses of the urban, and a potential element of contrast.

The several dimensions that practices involve are reflected in the phenomena appearing through the city, also in the case of Milan and its mobility; different groups, pursuing specific aims that have reflections also in peculiar geographies, can be found when dealing with the same stands. For example, the mezzanine floors of some subway station (like Porta Venezia) are not just spaces of passage for thousands of commuters, but are often used by Latin American and South East Asian youth who practice breakdance and crew choreographies in the empty corridors; interchange nodes, as Cascina Gobba, have seen the growth of national markets (in particular, for Romanian and Moldavian people) there where long distance bus lines to Eastern Europe depart; moving to downtown, the fast flows of workers moving from their offices to the subway often collide with the slower, much relaxed wanderings of tourists visiting the city centre. Any of these contrasting uses of space are related to individual and collective strategies, whose contribution to the specific identity of a certain population is decisive: youngsters need spaces to practice a hobby which is also part of one's own image; migrants displaced in a foreign metropolis find a landmark reminding origins and habits; tourists live the experience of travel by visiting a different place with an attitude different from the everyday one. These different practices thus distinguish urban populations, and express their specific claims, suggesting the presence of a political dimension that directly address also the planning practice.

### *Intercepting the political*

Practices define the main traits of urban populations and are often a claim for a better socio-political representation: what individuals do in fact provides a representation of the self on the urban stages, fostering their identity also in relation to other groups; besides, actions go beyond the simple affirmation of a presence, allowing also an appropriation of urban space which continuously changes its forms, functions and structures. Intervening in the production of space, practices necessarily intercept – and challenge – some policy dimensions: they originate in the framework of opportunities and constraints provided by policy, but appropriate space showing that alternative forms of spatial production are possible (and sometimes necessary). The political dimension of practices is the one that directly addresses the nature of policy, suggesting aspects to take into account and possible guidelines for a “policy of/for populations” (Pasqui, 2008); even in this case, focusing on three elements may help to find a way through the complexity of populations and practices. The politicity of practices, their relation with the production of commons and possible principles for a specific policy could work as waymarks.

Questioning if practices could have a political voice, Crosta (2010) states that everyday practices are political. Their nature is in fact shaped by intentionality, as collective actions that are finalised and put in action. This mechanism is then the result of a reciprocal recognition between subjects, who are engaged in mutual relationships and intertwine their actions: this leads to a practical cooperation, pursuing shared (but not explicitly stated) aims. The engagement in a collective dimension built around common aims also influences the necessary adaptations of the action, a fact that according to Crosta marks the politicisation of practices. In fact, it may be necessary to provide a reorientation of the action in order to make it more effective; nevertheless, sometimes the redefinition is so radical that also the original collective relationships must be redefined. The evolution of actions and the restructuring of the originating relationships are relevant since practices are not mere survival tactics, but also work as expressions of diversity.

A political nature is shared both by the reasons and the outcomes of practices, as a reference to urban commons may show. Commons can be the eventual outcome of processes (Attili, 2007) that may be intentional or unaware, direct or indirect (Pasqui, 2008); not every action can be defined like this, but still many practices have as a consequence the production and the maintenance of commons – be it the reuse of abandoned spaces or the regeneration of degraded places, working on physical or more abstract dimensions. There is a direct contribution provided by populations that thus break the traditional dichotomy between policy makers and policy takers, proposing instead a “third way”, that of the everyday makers (Crosta, 2010): a subject who intervenes in policy processes pursuing aims of his own, with an attitude which is autonomous and different instead from that of the expert citizen (who instead tries to – more or less formally - intervene from the bottom in policy arenas). Their presence, and the relevance of their action, suggest the need to promote them: policy may thus adopt a different perspective from the traditional one, creating the conditions to promote the action of everyday makers.

The political dimensions intercepted by the practices of population inevitably interact with public action, as inflected in policy approaches. Practices originate from the fields of opportunities and constraints shaped by policy, and at the same time challenge it. An approach addressing the practices and promoting their relevant outcomes may lead to the development of policy for populations, at the same time promoting their actions and being shaped by them. Compared with the traditional approaches based on well defined needs and solutions, a policy for populations is more ambiguous, dealing with dimensions that are tricky and haven't promoted yet a shared range of solutions for public action. Guiding principles are different: the pluralisation of lifestyles and identities for example focus on variety, rather than privileging the universalism that has led for decades the production of welfare; the same pluralism also requires to be considered when dealing with representation, moving from the simple political delegation (with a direct involvement in planning decisions, and sometimes even in their implementation) to the portrayal of what happens in urban settings, being aware of populations and practices and taking them into account when planning. Also the practical inflections of action change, privileging the small scales of everyday life and practice rather the structural interventions that have often proved to be ineffective; the change of scale also marks the shift from the reproduction of an established welfare model to the creation of opportunities of freedom, expanding the choices to develop individual and collective identities. Policy for populations should be able to inflect into concrete dimensions the findings of research showing a change in contemporary urban settings, considering the growing relationships between individual and collective welfare (Bianchetti, 2011)

### **Populations moving beyond territories**

The city of glass that dominates contemporary urban settings generates a displacement reflected also in the disoriented public action: an action that tries to adapt traditional policy approaches in continuously changing settings, dealing with post-metropolitan territories for which even the updated versions of plans often appear as ineffective. Recovering Donald Schön, a change of perspective may be necessary, since 'we name the things to which we will attend and frame the context in which we will attend to them' (Schön, 1991: 40); the planning practitioner thus 'may construct a new way of setting the problem – a new frame which (...) he tries to impose on the situation' (Schön, 1991, p. 63). Reframing is an attempt to refer a situation to issues a practitioner is used to, so that it is possible to contrive a solution looking at common and known problems. In this sense, referring to populations and their practices may provide an alternative approach, that still has to be tested and refined in its precarious definitions.

Both contemporary urban settings and specific fields, like that of movement discussed in this work, may receive significant innovations from the population approach. 'Practices receive exactly from their intertwining – which is conjunctural and unexpected – their meaning, which is diverse and different from the one usually attributed to each of them, separately' (Crosta, 2007: 132); in the same time, the interconnection of practices and the interaction between them (and between their

outcomes) are decisive in shaping contemporary cities, defining their crucial features that often are difficult to interpret according to traditional categories.

Seen from this perspective, movement is central. It is a decisive dimension in urban settings more and more ignoring traditional borders, crossed by flows moving at different scales; the mobility demand is increasing, asking for specific policy. The evolution of movement is also characterized by a growth of complexity, as the results of differentiated mobility patterns expressed by different populations according to their specific strategies (as already described in the first chapter). Movement becomes thus a key dimension to understand urban settings and direct the interventions in them, at scales that are different - from the local actions in neighbourhoods to the transnational strategies for more effective connections between nodes. What cities are today, inflected on a spatial and temporal perspective, is strongly shaped by movement, in the varied forms shaped by collective and individual mobility patterns; this importance influence the urban agenda, too, posing specific priorities. An inductive approach may recognise ongoing processes and deal with the fragmentation they provoke, analysing practices in order to provide relational definitions of what a specific territory is; their spatial inflection in fact deforms existing borders, but may also generate 'new models of public involvement and actions able to intercept and more effectively tackle emerging social issues read from the practices' (Pucci, 2013). Observing mobility, it would be possible to distinguish populations and their claims: they may be then a potentially privileged point of view on urban issues and on their possible treatments, suggesting a new way to move within a disorienting city of glass.

Reading the city and acting in it through the perspective of populations appear as suitable theoretical solutions: giving them also a concrete dimension is a challenge that the next parts will try to face at least in part. The potential effectiveness of a policy for populations has to deal with the main existing procedures, regarding in this case transport planning and its decisional processes; moreover, it has to manage a quote of ambiguity that characterises the notion of populations and can't be removed, affecting descriptions and consequent prescriptions for the action. The multiplicity conveyed by populations reflects the multiple meanings of movement, addressing specific features as a way to grasp wider trajectories of trends and strategies.

In a disorienting setting, it is however a risk to change perspectives, drawing new maps. In his book *I barbari*, where a supposed ongoing social mutation is discussed, the essayist Alessandro Baricco (2008) describes this transformation as a barbarian invasion. A big change, described through a military metaphor, is taking place: the mutation is not conquering the strategic places described in the traditional maps, but rather is changing the maps themselves. A change in the perspective is probably relevant also for planning. In this approach, a switch from a traditional attitude to a population approach may have sense, considering the new points of view together with possible advantages, latent ambiguities, and practical inflections still to define.

### 3. Movement and involvement

#### **Prologue: the mobile game of the plan**

Multiple meanings characterise movement, and multiple practices shape it. Life is mobile, influencing experiences and perceptions, and generates portable identities: ‘identity is not simply “adapted” to new forms of transport and transfer, but basically rearticulated in terms of movement ability. In other words, the globalisation of mobility reaches out to the fulcrum of everyone’s individuality’ (Elliott and Urry, 2010: 16). The meanings of movement and the potential interventions on transport define then a political dimension of mobility, inbetween public action and individual – collective strategies; a dimension which highlights the possible contribution of public involvement, explained in terms of knowledge and participation. In the population approach previously described for policy, interaction with individuals and groups appears as a necessary first step for their representation, providing a direct knowledge of their mobility practices; then, their contribution may help to shape policy decisions, participating to their definition. Participation is not a new concept in planning theory and practice, being instead a wide, risky field crossed by the most diverse approaches – seeing participatory initiatives as an inevitable legal requirement or as the panacea for any practice. Its definition is often ambiguous, but in order to test its potential meaning for a mobility policy of populations, its basics and practices may be considered. In this sense, a first hint for exploration is provided by Patrick Geddes, one of the “noble fathers” of planning.

Why should we go back to Geddes and his Indian planning experience (Ferraro, 1998), one century after its beginning? The experience is probably outdated and its outcomes can’t be evaluated; what may matter to us is rather the approach to planning and public involvement, as expressed in various writings. Geddes arrived in India as a foreigner, new to a reality completely different from the European one. His patient attitude, expressed in the survey approach, made possible to him to gradually descend into the Indian urban reality, grasping some guiding principles but behaving as a player (rather than a ruler) in the game of the plan. The same unfamiliarity derives from the continuously changing features of contemporary metropolitan settings, for which traditional interpretative schemes are not suitable and that suggest then a gradual descent into their issues, ready to play with them. The possibility to approach a radically different context with an open approach is also reflected in the relevance Geddes gave to the involvement of local inhabitants – an involvement framed as cooperation to the

making, rather than as participation to the decisions.

Geddes in fact considered planning as the aware education of ‘the present, confused dream of the future to the sane and neat preparation of it’ (Ferraro, 1998: 79), forecasting the result of individual interdependent actions. The direct involvement of citizens is crucial to shape the destiny of a city, but ‘a citizenry express itself only in its action, exists – we should say – just because it acts and only in the moment when it acts, and only in that case it becomes aware of itself and its interests’ (Ferraro, 1998: 252): the plan has thus to define spaces for cooperation, involving citizens and persuading them to cooperate thanks to its contents; the effectiveness of a plan should then be measured according to its persuasiveness, according to its ability in involving inhabitants. A reasonable hope has to encourage them to play the game of the plan and actively shape the city.

Coming back to our days, the outdated approach of Geddes to the game of the plan indicates an interesting path to follow: a plan has to create conditions, rather than realising purposes. Conditions that may stimulate the intervention of urban populations, addressing them as the effective makers of the plan, who shape the urban through their practices. An approach open to the interaction with populations and interested in giving them conditions to act seems coherent with the policy for populations previously described, but has to deal with two aspects: the first one are the concepts of participation and representation, already introduced and relevant in orienting the involvement of urban populations; the second are the practices of transport planning, characterised by an efficiency oriented approach and by the presence of evolving participatory initiatives. Life is more and more mobile, and finds in urban populations multiple expressions: this chapter can then explore the relationship between movement and involvement, aiming at approaching policy through populations.

### **Approaching policy through populations**

Approaching policy through populations, a relationship between the subjects entitled to develop policy and the populations themselves becomes necessary; even if the distinction between policy maker and policy taker appears as reductive (Crosta, 2010), still policy and practices interact, with a reciprocal influence and an everchanging reciprocal attitude. Participation in planning processes has been widely promoted in the last years, including a wide range of experiences very different according to their nature, purposes and outcomes. Establishing a relationship with populations, the tricky concept of participation has to be taken into account; it may contribute to the definition of the representation needed when approaching urban populations and their practices, with meanings that are multiple and need to be refined.

#### *Involving for a public interest*

A foray in the vast field of participation risks to be too dispersive, considering the huge debate around participative initiatives and their outcomes. Planning practice – particularly in the field of mobility, as shown in the first chapter – always interact with one or another idea of public interest, whose definition is never given but rather is



differently conceptualised according to consequentialist or deontological approaches (Campbell and Marshall, 2002). The two families are relevant for the consequences they have on planning processes and are directly involved in transport planning (a discipline with relevant public consequences but strongly led by efficientist technical approaches), so that a discussion of them may provide useful elements for a better understanding of which forms of public involvement may be more relevant in the development of a mobility plan. Within the various approaches focused on outcomes, an unitary public interest emerges moving from a mere utilitarian approach and adopting an objective evaluation of what is relevant (being thus aware of inequalities, potential mistaken interests and collective values). In a neo-contractualist approach, inspired to the theory of justice developed by John Rawls, there is ‘the moral need to model the distribution of certain social goods in order to advantage the most disfavoured groups of a population’ (Moroni, 1997: 128). In the case of planning, such an attitude recognize ‘that claims to values conflict and that politics is the means by which we settle those claims and in that process we recognize collective values and interests which individuals cannot achieve by themselves’ (Campbell and Marshall, 2002: 177). A celebrated example in this sense is the Cleveland experience, promoted by Norman Krumholz (1996): an active and interventionist style of planning has promoted values leading local planning activity for over a decade, pursuing equity through precise guidelines and concrete inflections referring to issues such as income, housing, mobility and development. The guiding idea of a public interest has been externally defined by the knowledge of planners, who have established a leading approach (equity focused on the increase of available opportunities) and the concrete steps to achieve it, without any specific interaction with local stakeholders.

Very different are instead deontological approaches, which privilege procedures that discover what public interest is through the engagement of participants. It is in fact an open dialogue that stimulates the definition of shared solutions, according to a communicative action like that defined by Habermas: ‘a form of rationality seeking harmony between autonomous and responsible individuals through forms of public argumentation that enable the verification and possible revision of the original proposals of the single subjects’ (Palermo and Ponzini, 2010: 72). Participation in debates is thus central, appearing as a way to convey the contemporary pluralism in the planning activity; without any special focus on the results, the main aim is to provide a transparent dialogical process in order to define together shared interests. More precisely, it may be possible to state that findings are not even relevant: Healey (1997) in facts calls for a “collaborative planning” that in fragmented societies has to seek the future – rather than defining it; ‘responses are invented by people collectively learning about the issues, the context, each other and what they can do’ (Healey, 1997: 70). The planning process is a central occasion for interaction, from which public interest will receive every time a different definition.

From the overview of consequentialist and deontological approaches appear two very different attitudes to planning, which may contribute also to the mobility field. Considering the meanings of movement and the issues of public action previously described, it appears that the decisions related to mobility are crucial in determining

more or less possibilities of action for different urban populations: any decision taken has a specific influence on the opportunities available in the reference setting. At the same time, the features of contemporary urban phenomena often require a kind of knowledge different from the traditional one, more related to the interaction with the actors of practices that are difficult to grasp with the usual tools: the description of practices and of the underlying strategies can more effectively highlight issues and potential solutions. In general, the two approaches have strengths and weaknesses in relation to the practice of planning; in the field of mobility, considering outcomes and involved subjects, there is a crossroad between different approaches, requiring a specific definition of which public involvement may be relevant. Leaving aside the many, fundamental participatory experiences in planning, the aim here is to understand which guiding approaches may be relevant for a mobility planning process that has to deal with urban populations: in this sense, the meanings of participation and representation are crucial. As for participation, Barca (2011) marks the difference between a communitarian and a place-based approach to development, going beyond the simple idea that most knowledge already exists (and is embedded in local actors) and focusing instead on a peculiar knowledge developed in the decisional process; a specific governance is needed, since the notions emerging from interaction require then a specific inflection of their own: they need to be transformed into actions. The different meaning participation may have is directly reflected in the concept of representation, a crucial factor for orienting public involvement.

#### *The manifold representation*

The public involvement in decisional processes depends on the meanings given to the concept of representation, with differences that reflect diverse attitudes towards contemporary issues and potential solutions. As previously stated, contemporary urban policy has to do with representation in two senses (Pasqui, 2008): the first one is political delegation, that directly involves in planning decisions, and sometimes even in their implementation; the second instead is more general and consists in the portrayal of what happens in urban settings, focusing on populations and practices that are taken into account when planning.

Representation as political delegation is the basic mechanism of modern democracy, that recognise the possibility to debate and decide to the representatives chosen by a certain community. Something quite similar happens in planning processes, in which any individual is entitled to intervene (for example, making his remarks to the decisions of a plan) but usually the main contributions come from selected representatives – be them the delegates who approve or reject a plan, or the stakeholders asked to give their opinion on the main discussed issues. Despite the specific features of a planning process, the mechanism is then similar to that of traditional decisional occasions: representatives take part in a structured process, on behalf of specific groups and interests, orienting the final decisions through arguing and bargaining (Elster, 2000); the contribution of such representative forms is similar, even if the discussed object may change, swinging from the simple approval of a given plan to the gradual shaping of its contents.

The forms of representation that in democracies delegate political powers share similar basic features, according to which delegation is legitimate and effectively representative of a given setting; discussing them, it also appears that contemporary urban settings question their relevance. A first key aspect is identification, that is the recognition that someone exists and is entitled to take part in a decisional process. Usually it is based on a territorial division or on the presence of specific categories: the two founding assemblies described by Elster, the American Federal Convention and French *Assemblée Constituante*, respectively adopted the first (representation by State) and the second principle (representation by class). Nevertheless, the nature of metropolitan settings and of the practices they host makes difficult to recognise populations, that sometimes are not visible and whose composition is anyway differentiated (as for commuters, who share the same practice of movement at different scales – from the suburban to the transregional). A second aspect, closely related to this, is stability. A recognised entity may be involved in decisional processes according to the interests it represents, that are considered as a permanent expression of a part of the population. Be it majority or minorities, democracy has an interest in taking into account the various components of its reference community. Yet, nowadays the claims that an entity expresses are never static: issues, interests and strategies reflect the continuous changes of urban populations, whose structures and strategies are never the same. The pluralism of urban populations complicates a setting characterised by multiple subjects, which in addition are continuously changing in their founding features (identity, strategies) and in the consequent behaviour on the urban scene (practices, tactics). A third critical element affects instead sovereignty, the basic political mechanism according to which a subject is entitled to take decisions and apply them within a given space: it is now challenged by the growing disjunction with the territory. Cities are no more autonomous political spaces (Amin and Thrift, 2002), expanding traditional urban arenas and continuously interacting with wider territorial levels – dealing then with transcalar phenomena and strategies that move from the local to the transnational scale.

Identification, stability and sovereignty are basic features of the traditional democratic representation that are questioned even in their concrete expressions. A reductive update of traditional forms and a forced representational attitude appear as signs of the crisis affecting representation as political delegation, an approach ineffective when treating contemporary urban phenomena (Pasqui, 2008). For example, in order to tackle policy issues affecting (relatively) new fields, like metropolitan mobility, local development, ethnic presences, often new special bodies are started: they may be assemblies or boards that aim at providing a direct confrontation between institutions and new issues – through the representatives of them. Consequently, commuters committees, ethnic communities or neighbourhood associations are addressed in relation to specific issues, as new collective subjects who simply represent new issues in traditional ways; but, given the plural and volatile nature of urban populations, they often lack the stability or the representativeness for an effective political delegation. More importantly, their relevance is questioned by the same deliberative mechanism, since the presence of populations and their practices doesn't necessarily requires the

adoption of specific decisions: ‘simply, there is nothing to decide, since policy rather have to offer conditions for “representation” (that is, for a visible presence on the urban scene through the realisation of physical and institutional spaces for freedom)’ (Pasqui, 2008: 159).

The weaknesses of the traditional political delegation, still present in a context where often no decisions have to be discussed, lead to an alternative possible meaning of representation, intended as portrayal of what happens on the urban scene thanks to the practices expressing populations. Guiding aim of the approach is the creation of opportunities for freedom, expanding the choices to develop individual and collective identities. Such an open approach is also much less defined and stable compared to traditional attitudes, so that no precise guidelines are available but rather it is necessary to highlight some waymarks – useful to orient policy for populations. The approach to urban populations appears as a gradual one. A phenomenological attitude privileges visible hints as elements to recognise populations, defining them according to what is seen: the recognition of populations and of their strategies moves thus from the articulation of their actions in the urban settings, defining them with an inductive approach deprived of any previous categorisation. The direct observation of practices delineates subjects and communities active in the urban field, whose behaviour is significant in shaping territories and even in producing commons; it is then the relevance of their action – which is never individual, but is always reflected in the surrounding setting and in the intersections with other practices – that promotes a direct confrontation with policy. In fact, according to the collective importance that these practices have, policy (inflected according to the recognised populations) defines specific opportunities for them, delineating fields of opportunities.

A free, flexible and even precarious approach like this will then have different applications according to the specific spatial and temporal setting considered. The underlying attitude instead may be considered as a specific form of cooperation, orienting then the concrete choices of a population policy. Cooperation in fact has to be intended as a broader form of relationship, rather than as a form of mandate: according to Sennett (2012), it is based on a mutual awareness, which recognizes the existence and the value of the other subject. The traditional approach of institutions imposing more or less negotiated decisions over a territory may be then replaced with a multiform attitude, differently shaped according to the issue and the subjects, but characterised by the recognition of certain specificities referred to populations and practices. The space for action left by the withdrawal of public action would be filled by the voluntary or involuntary outcomes of practices, making them act in collaboration with more ordinary policy approaches: a potential advantage is the expected adoption of new, more effective forms of intervention related to what populations already do rather than to institutional interventions. In a quite idealistic perspective, we may say that the mutual recognition of actors can be the first step for a city intended as a common good, where the relationships between subjects allow the presence and the overlapping of different contributions shaping the urban.

Representation as portrayal then moves from the limitations of the traditional participation (which can’t include every actor in every choice) trying to understand,

decision by decision, which are the relevant actors to involve. Nevertheless, the perspective raise issues such as the effectiveness of representation as phenomenological portrayal (since no real evaluation of its effectiveness or completeness is possible) and its relationship to the plan (which can arbitrarily decide what to ignore or to take into account); moreover, the cooperative perspective risks to be simply hortatory, while concrete forms of cooperation are difficult to define even for officially constituted subjects (like local authorities; see Fedele and Moini, 2006) or could hide a vague mandate to volunteer interventions, hopefully replacing public action (as in the English proposal for a Big Society; see Pugalis and Giddings, 2011).

Considering then representation as a form of portrayal that takes into account practices, individuates populations and address them establishing potential forms of cooperation, public involvement acquires a more punctual attitude: it addresses any relevant practice in urban contexts, but involves them in deliberative or policy processes only when significant. The approach may have a peculiar meaning also for transport planning, considering what mobility already allows and what it should favours. Movement already provides a field of constraints and opportunities that frame populations practices and at the same time may be challenged by them; an attitude led by a representation inspired to cooperation should then create systems of possibilities that take into account the various subjects and populations acting in a territorial setting. The recognition of practices and of the strategies to which they contribute may then differently orientate transport planning, abandoning comprehensive deliberative processes that try to include the widest possible range of actors; representation may be instead the first step to take into account movement practices usually difficult to grasp.

### **Public transport and public involvement**

Forms of representation updated to the issues of contemporary urban settings may thus focus on portraying practices and addressing populations when their direct involvement in decisions and actions may be relevant. Still, the slippery field of participation and the wider interest in representing populations and their practices has to deal with the peculiarities of transport planning, a discipline usually driven by efficiency-oriented approaches; the possible reference to principles of social justice has then to face the concrete applications of participative procedures. Transport planning is in fact a field with structured procedures, making necessary to define concrete applications for representative approaches.

#### *An efficiency-oriented transport planning*

Like any other discipline with a strong (but not exclusive) technical component, also planning has been influenced by the Positivist approach criticised by Donald Schön (1981): an attitude summarised in the concept of problem solving, according to which any given problem has its own solution, specified by technical standards and technology. The approach has characterised a rational form of planning partially abandoned only in the last decades, but is instead still present in the transport field. The planning activity dealing with mobility in fact is oriented by efficiency, with the purpose of favouring

existing mobility trends as observed in the given setting. The search for an efficient mobility is reflected in the prevalence of technical tools, like transport modelling and cost – benefit analysis, while policy guidelines are often missing (Wilkinson, 2001). The efficient approach to transport planning mainly relies on two technical instruments, somehow complementary to each other. Transport modelling is ‘a tool to forecast future demand for transport with the goal of generating information concerning the future performance of the existing or expanded transport system’ (Martens, 2006: 3): it delineates the field of action and the most relevant issues for which specific interventions may provide solutions. Cost – benefit analysis instead ‘is a procedure of identifying, measuring, and comparing the benefits and costs related to an investment project or program’ (Martens, 2006: 9): it thus evaluates the outcomes of one or another decision, proving from a technical perspective if it is supported by effective positive consequences on the mobility field of intervention. The two technical tools play a key role in transport planning, since they describe settings, highlight issues, suggest solutions and evaluate their impact on the examined area.

Since their first uses in the Fifties, these technical tools have shaped the action of transport planners, providing the bases for the construction of the infrastructures that represent “the architecture of the world” (Ferlenga et al., 2012); nevertheless, they are characterised by some critical aspects that affect their effectiveness. Transport modelling is in fact based on demand patterns influenced by past decisions, creating feedback loops that continuously reflect the existing motility – without improving conditions for a wider and more free choice. ‘As the activity-based approach rightfully stresses, current travel demand is as much the result of constraint as it is of choice. This assertion implies that transport modelling that starts from current travel patterns may actually reinforce the existing differences in mobility and accessibility between various population groups’ (Martens, 2006: 5). This structural weakness of predictive tools is worsened by the difficulty in taking into account emerging issues, like that of sustainability; technical tools have been able to introduce factors representing the environmental impact of transport decisions, but haven’t succeeded in considering also consequences for social justice deriving from the structure of mobility. The structural weaknesses of the described tools also have to face the changing features of contemporary urban settings, which differently shape mobility practices and questions than the effectiveness of predicting tools; their usefulness is not discussed, but their previous prominence is less justified. The multiple and varied mobility practices that can be observed today are quite difficult to represent with traditional instruments: forecasts and analyses are based on representations like that of origin/destination surveys, matrixes with information on travel and transportation made between different zones of a region; yet, their definition is more and more difficult, because of difficulties in finding the needed data, impossibility to model some mobility modes (for example, pedestrians and cyclists) and elusiveness of some mobility practices, difficult to grasp and then to represent within a formal model. The changing nature of urban phenomena and the prominent role mobility has in this transformation lead thus to a more radical discussion of established approaches. A growing distance between transport demand and offer is observed, calling for a new realism when planning mobility (Goodwin et al, 2012).

Efficiency as the guiding principle of transport planning appears then as a partial reference for an activity that has to deal with changing setting conditions and wider consequences of its decisions. In this sense, the introduction of environmental evaluations is a first step toward a more complete consideration of the dimensions influenced by mobility; still, aspects of social justice remains uncovered (Martens, 2006). Taking them into account, a change in the focus of demand should take place: instead of considering the distributive principles that privilege the most mobile groups, like car drivers, it is possible to consider the mobility need, as a tool to access the opportunities available in urban settings (be them basic services or higher functions); in this way, there would be a shared minimal level of transport services rather than the simple repetition of existing movement patterns. Transport modelling and cost-benefit analysis would then move from a mobility to an accessibility approach, dealing with the various meanings of movement that contribute to the development of individuals and communities. This would be the technical inflections of the principles already described when referring to the dimensions involved in mobility, trying then to consider movement as a tool that contributes to access and defines specific potentials for action, appearing then as a suitable right for urban populations. Nevertheless, this would require a deeper change of approaches mainly related to the provision of missing services or to the prevention of potential weaknesses in mobility networks: in fact, it would become necessary to define populations and their specific needs, focusing first on their representation and then on concrete interventions.

The need for a different representation is related to the forms of involvement previously described, and directly involves two dimensions, intertwined in the mobile nature of urban populations. A first element is movement itself, the act of moving, as a fundamental urban practice that shapes populations patterns across a given metropolitan setting. It is a tool, but also implies experiential features, so that a “movement for its own sake” can be observed: mobility doesn’t simply derive from the need to undergo certain activities, but may be an end in itself, especially for leisure reasons; in this sense, the role of the consumers becomes more relevant, thanks to their varied choices on how to use leisure time (Banister, 2008). The multiplicity typical of urban populations is then relevant also for mobility patterns, in addition to the pluralism that can be observed also in the decisional arena: ‘the marketisation and politicisation of transport; the democratic turn in public policy; the complex nature of the public interest; the emerging social exclusion agenda; and the culture of opposition in transport planning’ (Booth and Richardson, 2001: 142) introduce in the decisions concerning mobility a more complex range of actors, strategies and practices to be taken into account, requiring approaches that go beyond the simple, dominant technical procedures. Specific planning tools, like the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans, or participatory initiatives may provide contributions in this sense.

#### *Participation in transport planning: underlying principles*

Even in transport planning, participation counts on a wide range of different experiences, based on the most diverse purposes – from the shared construction of

decisions to the cosmetic validation of decisions already taken. The debate around public involvement has been inflected also in relation to the peculiarities of the mobility field, so that the emerging issues previously described can face both structured guiding principles and varied concrete occasions for participation. Considering what is already at work for participation in transport planning, it is possible to pick up those elements useful in defining new forms of involvement, more able to engage with the new meanings of movement in continuously changing urban settings.

Reflecting the distinction between consequentialist and deontological approaches to planning, also the forms of participation in transport planning may concentrate on the contents of decisions or on the features of decisional processes. The procedural aspect is dominant and has some implicit references to the concrete elements of choice, moving anyway from general principles that should characterise planning processes. In this sense, four are the key dimensions to consider: inclusivity, transparency, interactivity and continuity (Bickerstaff et al., 2002). Inclusivity considers the range of subjects involved and at what temporal stage of the process they participate, claiming for the widest involvement possible (in the most idealistic view, any actor should take part in the process since its very beginning); transparency refers to the degree at which contents and outputs of a process are made public, available for the subjects interested in the ongoing plan – considering not only the punctuality, but also the forms of publication; interactivity points at the interaction between policy makers and takers, looking at its forms and intensity; continuity instead refers to the role of participation in the whole process, seeing if this involve the elaboration – and even the implementation – of the plan. These principles should characterise participatory transport planning processes, marking the degree of public involvement effectively conveyed in the decisions. The reasons for their application relies on the representation of preferences, the involvement of local knowledge, as well as on the potential legitimation they provide, guarantying that decisions are agreed throughout the range of stakeholders involved in the given plan. In a moment characterised by oppositional culture, participation allows to make conflicts explicit, promoting a confrontation over them and their possible solutions; the ideal aim would be to provide ‘a more constructive environment where different interests can work to define integrated transport planning’ (Booth and Richardson, 2001: 143), even if the vision implies a shared idea of community and cooperative behaviour that often are not at work in contemporary urban democracies (Booth, 2010). Moreover, participation appears in general as an ambivalent practice, ambiguous in its principles and concrete applications, which often ‘not only do not meet most basic goals for public participation, but they are also counterproductive, causing anger and mistrust’ (Inner and Booher, 2004: 419).

Participation in transport planning also deals with specific issues, whose contents may receive a different treatment according to the opinions expressed in public involvement processes; in particular, participatory processes can raise the awareness on sustainability, increasing the engagement in actions supporting sustainable mobility (Banister, 2008). Acceptability for example plays a key role in the introduction of measures potentially restricting individual mobility, like congestion charges or traffic reduction projects (as with home zones): these increase the economic or temporal cost



of movement, but may be more acceptable in a sustainability perspective. Another aspect is health, to which the use of active transport modalities (like walking or cycling) can contribute if the people's feeling for change is met. Finally, sustainable transport alternative may receive higher attention thanks to participative initiatives, which may demonstrate their positive effects or provide more detailed information for the potential users. Participation appears thus as an occasion to communicate more effectively specific contents, whose public relevance strongly depends on the perception of them.

Underlying principles shape varied forms of participation, which intervene at different stages of the planning process; despite the differences of the settings of intervention, these procedures are quite common, without any specific adaptation to the exigencies of changing cities. In the field of local transport planning, they provide different degrees of interaction and inclusion of the public (Bickerstaff et al., 2002). Most traditional tools are meant to provide information, making public (and available) the discussed policy contents. This diffused form of involvement is especially based on consultation documents and public meetings, aimed at presenting contents rather than promoting interaction: policy is made public, without any occasion for intervening and shaping it. Another strong initiative is the collection of opinions on the existing transport service, based on surveys, polls and gatherings of complaints: the contribution refers mainly to the (marginal) improvements of existing services, focusing on small scale interventions (involving especially quality of vehicles and spaces, or punctual adjustments to timetables). Forms of public consultation instead allow the public to express opinions in a wider sense, bringing into the debate more complex points of view. It is the case of panels, focus groups and even interactive websites, that favour the discussion of more elaborated ideas and promote confrontation between them; interaction is higher and interventions provide differentiated opinions, using discursive techniques that stimulates qualitative outcomes – even if this doesn't necessarily implies that they will be taken into account when planning. Considering this, public deliberation initiatives are more relevant, directly involving citizens in decisions. The range of initiatives is wide: from general exercises of visioning to debates related to specific areas or interests (like cycling or public transport); their outcomes are different and tend to be more effective when the debate focuses on a specific issue, but in general public deliberation occasions provide an effective interaction between policy makers and takers, somehow blurring the border between the two categories.

The use of described tools is different according to the process. Not only the presence of these tools changes, but also their effective contribution to the plan: participatory occasions may just consult citizens, or could take their suggestions into account; moreover, the presence and the frequency of public involvement occasions change, too, moving from concrete occasions of confrontation to the simple fulfilment of legal requirements. In general, what appears is the partial contribution that public involvement can play for a field strongly influenced by technical approaches. The large use of engineering tools for modelling the present and evaluating the future in fact leaves a reduced spaces for public debate, making necessary to clearly establish the parts of the decisions that may be open for discussion and change (Quick, 2014). The actual debate on participation in transport planning then highlights the relevance of a (public)

choice when dealing with public involvement, somehow requiring to define reciprocal borders between technical and participative contributions to the planning decisions.

The features of participation and their specific inflections in transport planning also intercept representation, as previously discussed, providing a limited contribution to its portraying function. In the perspective here assumed, the classical political delegation is no more suitable in contemporary metropolitan democracies, calling instead for a punctual involvement in relevant decisions; participation should be then intended as a starting portrayal of practices taking place in urban settings. Nevertheless, ongoing participatory initiatives are related to a generic idea of political involvement and consensus, consulting citizens on small scale issues mainly dealing with inefficiencies and the consequent complaints. The hints coming from these processes provide then only partial contributions for a representation of mobility practices, making difficult also to plan more specific forms of involvement. Another relevant aspect is the effective relationship between plans and participatory occasions. The contribution of stakeholders is often part of a “parallel process” that doesn’t shape the final decisions of the plan, just collecting opinions but without making use of them; other cases are instead characterised by more radical, collaborative approaches that effectively influence the final outcomes of a planning process (Innes and Booher, 2004). An interesting example is that of Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans, recently promoted in Europe as planning tools with a specific focus on sustainability and participation.

#### *The case for Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans*

Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (Sump) are part of an European Action Plan on Urban Mobility, started in 2010 to promote a more efficient and sustainable approach to mobility (focusing on good practices like land use – transport coordination, reduction of emissions, fostering of public transport...). As an action promoted amongst the European countries, the practice of Sump changes according to the various countries, so that its general definition has to fit with an European-wide promotion of these plans: Sump is then a ‘strategic plan designed to satisfy the mobility needs of people and businesses in cities and their surroundings for a better quality of life. It builds on existing planning practices and takes due consideration of integration, participation, and evaluation principles’ (Eltis, 2014: 8); Sump ‘has as its central goal improving accessibility of urban areas and providing high-quality and sustainable mobility and transport to, through and within the urban area. It regards the needs of the ‘functioning city’ and its hinterland rather than a municipal administrative region’ (European Commission, 2013). Communitarian guidelines summarise this approach in the slogan “Planning for people”, which also implies a specific focus on a participatory approach (‘involving citizens and stakeholders from the outset and throughout the process of decision making, implementation and evaluation, building local capacities for handling complex planning issues, and ensuring gender equity’; Eltis, 2011: 11); if traditional plans have a limited involvement of operators and local partners, Sump should instead be based on a high citizen and stakeholders involvement.

Two elements characterising Sump are relevant in the perspective adopted up to now

on movement in contemporary metropolitan settings. A first aspect is the focus on the functioning city, that tries to adapt planning action to the new scales of urban phenomena; a second, key element is the relevance given to public involvement, whose importance has been gradually refined by the evolution of Sump practices throughout European countries. Participation is described in a conventional and instrumental way. It is seen as a procedure adding new perspectives on mobility planning, thanks to the involvement of different groups expressing their mobility needs and providing an integration with more traditional, technical planning techniques. Then, it is also seen as an opportunity to improve a city's competitiveness, access to funding and provide a competitive advantage to the plan itself: 'a city government that shows that it cares about what its citizens need and want and that involves its stakeholders appropriately is in a much better position to obtain a high level of "public legitimacy" it reduces the risk of opposition to the implementation of ambitious policies' (Eltis, 2014: 11). The advantages of a participatory approach, here described in a general sense, are still quite abstract and represent almost a motivational element, that has to be inflected differently according to the setting and the concrete procedures of the planning process.

In general participation, as described in the Sump guidelines, requires a greater public involvement than that promoted in traditional mobility plans. The planning cycle that structures the development of Sump is articulated in steps and actions, some of which are specifically devoted to participation – three of them in particular (Eltis, 2014). In the preparatory phase, key actors and stakeholders are identified, with a strategic approach focused on the success of the planning process. The purpose is to preliminarily individuate the subjects who can provide an effective representation of the given urban setting, as expressions of different interests, but also to understand their strategies and the consequent potential roles in the planning process; in particular, primary stakeholders, key actors and intermediaries are defined, observing the intensity of their stake and of their influence. After this actor analysis, guidelines include in the preparatory phase also a definition of stakeholders involvement, defining an involvement strategy and a communication plan. The action is a legal requirement of planning processes, here intended as an opportunity to actively shape the decisions and stimulate a wider public participation. Beyond the rhetoric of a participation considered as good whatever form it takes, some relevant distinctions are introduced, saying that 'working with stakeholders is generally considered common practice – but often only certain stakeholders actually have a say in planning' (Eltis, 2014: 34) and distinguishing between more or less advanced cities (with reference to their public involvement tradition). As a third factor, in the planning process an active information of the public is required when setting goals, communicating the common vision developed by a representative group responsible for it. The aim is to create a shared public ownership of the plan, informing on its contents and intercepting possible dissatisfaction with it; the concrete forms of involvement vary then according to the setting and the contents of the plan.

The interest of Sump is in the attempt to deal with changing settings and action conditions by recognising and addressing them; a format for an instrument focused on metropolitan areas and participated processes is provided at an European level, but its

application change from city to city. At least in its principles, the instrument is then relevant for the issues of movement and policy previously described. For the metropolitan area of Milan, which is actually developing its Sump, the process may provide the occasion to treat a specific planning field with a different – but not new – perspective.

### **Towards mobile fields of involvement**

The contemporary city may appear as a mobile labyrinth, disorienting and influenced by movement, but some threads to follow are still visible. These first chapters have tried to follow them, considering suggested questions, examining established research, pointing out some directions for possible further explorations. Starting point has been the relevance of movement, an activity that may seem paradoxical today but that still has a number of meanings for the everyday individual and collective urban experience; it works as a multiple tool, that according to settings and strategies can acquire various inflections and provide different contributions. Its relevance suggests that policy may intervene to foster its opportunities, but contemporary urban settings somehow disorient public action; the post-metropolis, renewed and incomplete, appears as a city of glass that questions traditional policy approaches and requires instead a change of perspective, proposing to move towards a policy for populations. Yet, populations – defined according to their spatial practices – have to be represented, so that it becomes necessary to involve them; nevertheless, it is difficult to establish a relationship with them, especially when moving between the constraints of a structured technical field like transport planning.

Considering these three threads, the focus of this research is defined: how to involve and represent urban populations when dealing with mobility in a post-metropolitan setting; how to construct a common ground for cooperation, bringing together social demands and political answers for mobility. Given the multiple nature of contemporary movement, involvement is a necessary innovation for both analysis and policy, giving different perspectives to the urban mobility (Pucci, 2007). A direct relationship with the practices of movement is necessary, but it is difficult to delimit its field and, more importantly, to put it into practice. More specific questions are relevant, concerning forms and approaches; at least, the contribution that involvement may provide seems significant: in the crisis of urban democracy, participation – framed as social activation of populations directly referred – can help the relationship between public policy and social practices (Laino, 2012). General orientations seem more suitable than precise guidelines, ‘as if public happiness, which is the happiness to take part to collective decisions, was instinctively refractory to any forced formalization’ (Pileri and Granata, 2012: 65 - 66), referring to attitudes, tools and objects.

The approach of representation and involvement should be an enabling one, considering two dimensions. On the one hand, the capabilities that movement is able to foster, providing occasions to shape experiences and identities; this is a background aspect, bringing social justice principles in the practice of transport planning. On the other hand, mobility policy should provide the spaces of cooperation Geddes focused

on, giving conditions to act in the light of a transformative idea of the city – changing ourselves by changing the city. The underlying aim of involvement in planning decisions seems then not to change people, but rather represent and organise them toward change (Ciafaloni, 2009). Dealing with tools, any definition necessarily has to deal with the specific setting considered; the second part of the work will be relevant in this sense, showing a field in evolution – Milan and its metropolitan area – rather than established metropolitan transport planning experiences. The object of representation are populations and their practices, but the perspective they provide to policy implies the involvement of multiple dimensions. A gradual “representative escalation” should be present: some populations and the claims they provide, also for movement, are marginal and invisible, requiring a specific portrayal; others may need a peculiar involvement in mobility transformations, promoting the activation of alternative – innovative – mobility practices; others instead should enter a cooperative relationship to put effectively at work original claims and alternative solutions. The range of involvement forms is wide and enlarges a field still structured with traditional forms of partial participation. What emerges from most contemporary processes is the prominence of established actors and stakes, so that only already represented interests face each others; the involvement of other subjects instead is more difficult. Moreover, the participation of the most active subjects is confined to consultative initiatives, without testing deeper forms of cooperation related to specific issues or innovative proposals.

Margins appear then between what already is and what could be. According to Attili (2007), planning is hastening to focus on margins, expanding and approaching closer its field of study; but margins may have different values. Margins may affect those portrayals of post-metropolitan mobility that are missing relevant – anyway assuming that no complete or definitive knowledge of the urban is possible, since the field is mutable by definition. Margins may also appear in the roles that actors have on the urban stage, showing possibilities for further involvements based on cooperative approaches – imagining then to exploit the innovative potential of urban practices and favouring their production of urban commons. It seems then that ‘to be marginal doesn’t mean to condemn oneself to insignificance. Quite the opposite: staying in the margins it is possible to test a different perspective; it means to choose to face an issue attacking it from the edges; it means to adopt a liminal look being aware that it is strategically fertile’ (Calvaresi, 2013).

Different forms of representation could improve the encounter between demands conveyed by the various social meanings of movement and potential answers of a presently disoriented policy action. It is necessary to catch in the plans, making populations enter cooperative relationships. In this sense, mobile fields of involvement are required, with different forms that depend on settings, actors and ongoing relationships; the underlying strategy should be instead the same, to foster the creation of common grounds where claims may intercept each other: where to really represent and organise toward urban change.



## **II. INTERACTIONS SHAPING ACTIONS FOR MILAN MOBILITY**

It is interaction, not place, that is the essence of the city  
and of city life.

Melvin Webber, *The Urban Place and Nonplace Realm*





## 4. A place-based governance for mobility

### Defining mobile fields of involvement

#### *Frames for a politics of mobility*

A politics of mobility (Cresswell, 2011) emerges in the background of the previous chapters. Physical movement, representations, practices and policy have always interacted between each other, but acquire today new features originating from transforming post-metropolitan settings and from lives which are more and more mobile. From their overlapping, a peculiar field emerges, combining the questions they pose in a policy perspective: new exigencies originate from individual and collective strategies which continuously redefine themselves and also challenge previous conceptions of mobility. The crucial role that movement plays and the changing conditions it deals with suggest to take into account what a politics for mobility could be, framing it on the base of its already described dimensions.

Considering the threads of multiple movements, disoriented policy and technique-dominated transport planning, the main aim of the research is then to understand which contribute (if any) urban populations and their practices may provide to mobility policy, defining conditions for a common ground where to bring together social demands and political answers for mobility. Dealing with ideas supporting the relevance that movement can have from a social point of view, the core question is to understand whether populations and practices suggest anything useful for mobility, if they help to take more effective decisions, and if they add something different (and valuable) in terms of knowledge and action – making then their suggestion work when planning and implementing mobility policy, increasing its effectiveness. Addressing the question in a transport planning process, a possible guideline is the need for a plan to create conditions, rather than realising purposes: then, the focus is on the conditions that may make these contributions relevant, and consequently on the potential definition of spaces for cooperation with citizens.

The interest in this potential involvement relies on the opportunity it provides to match the demand deriving from the multiple meanings of movement and the answers provide by a more and more disoriented policy. On the one hand, this would allow to intercept aspirations and trajectories that cross our cities and continuously reshape the urban, while on the other hand this would give space (according to Ostrom, 1996) to

‘what individuals will do when they have autonomy to craft their own institutions and can affect each other’s norms and perceived benefits’, taking into account the possibility to change previous situations. Multiplicity of movement and disoriented policy suggest to explore more complex relationships – various ways to govern movement and manage the relationship with mobile subjects – moving from the awareness that movement can be decisive in letting us shape lives of our own and then that it is differently experienced by different individuals and communities.

More precisely, the initial question has to focus on subjects who may potentially provide contributions for mobility, recognising them and their different interventions. Probably, forms to involve them are different and require a different treatment. In particular, the relationship between practices and policy seems reciprocal: on the one hand, practices may contribute to the definition of mobility policy, but on the other hand, decisions may foster these practices, helping the strategies of the subjects involved in them. Often, ‘simply, there is nothing to decide, since policy rather have to offer conditions for “representation” (that is, for a visible presence on the urban scene through the realisation of physical and institutional spaces for freedom)’ (Pasqui, 2008: 159), and practices may have a relevant role for social innovation: new ideas that encounter social needs and at the same time generate social relationships, being good for society and also increasing its possibilities of action.

The meanings of movement and the potential interventions on transport define in fact a political dimension of mobility, between public action and individual – collective strategies; a dimension which highlights the possible contribution of public involvement, explained in terms of knowledge and participation. In this sense, mobile fields of involvement are required, with different forms that depend on settings, actors and ongoing relationships; the underlying strategy should be instead the same, to foster the creation of common grounds where claims may intercept each other: where to really represent and organise toward urban change. It is then possible to understand which subjects may be involved, the relevant ways to interact with them and more importantly the contribute they may provide for mobility policy, potentially defining then different forms of involvement to be activated in different occasions of mobility governance.

A first aspect that appears as relevant is the approach to the issue. Involving populations and practices in mobility policy derives from a shared feature – the fact that ‘all mobilities are carefully and meticulously designed and planned “from above” and acted out, performed and lived, “from below”’ (Jensen, 2013: 5); nevertheless, successful case studies show very different styles of mobility governance. A place-based approach may be necessary, leading to a specific overview of the Milan case (interesting also for its ongoing mobility planning process): in fact, abandoning established certainties that have led public policy in the last decades, a multiform – and even elusive – approach may result as more effective in tackling the issues affecting urban settings nowadays.

The initial focus on a specific place requires then to inflect the starting questions in the peculiar setting here chosen. The questions mainly deal with the relationships between decision makers and takers: they exist or should be created; their structure may be different; their contributions to urban mobility may change as well. Relationships

may then appear as a guiding principle to structure the initial questions, exploring them by considering interactions promoted by institutions, claims raised by citizens, equal agreements based on a reciprocal interest. Concretely, they refer to different approaches of institutions, who are addressed and address different subjects, adopting various attitudes according to their exigencies. These varied stakes then may differently contribute to the shaping of urban mobility and its policy.

### *Place-based styles for governance*

The pervasive presence of movement and the changing features of urban policy inspire the previously stated questions. These issues intercept social, political and administrative spheres, highlighting questions of social justice and technical efficiency that can be found in different places all around the world. The same issues have specific local inflections, but are visible in very different settings; successful solutions dealing with them are then differently shaped, too. These effective experiences mainly deal with the same topic: how to guarantee wider opportunities for movement in settings where individual and collective mobility is growing, questioning previous policy approaches. What is relevant is that the same issue is treated in different ways, fostering peculiar styles for the governance of mobility that highlight different features. A brief description of some, very diverging successful case studies can show the presence of these elements, suggesting that similar issues may require peculiar treatments.

Participation is often considered as a key for more just, effective and acceptable urban policy, also when dealing with movement. In the case of Dresden (Landeshaupstat Dresden, 2010a; 2010b; 2012a; 2012b; 2013), a shrinking city has been able to tackle its crisis and redirect its development, also thanks to a shared vision for mobility developed with a strong public involvement. The German city has a long tradition of structured participation in planning processes, which also characterises the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan started in 2009: here, the structural change manifested also in shrinkage is considered as an enduring condition, requiring to efficiently use scarce resources to promote varied opportunities for movement in sustainable ways. The traditional participation of institutions, technicians and citizens is more formalised and acquires a double nature – urban and metropolitan. The presence of these bodies is then constant throughout the process, continuously intervening in the definition of analysis and proposals. The analytical part and the development of strategies (as well as their inflections through packages of measures) are always subject to a public discussion, that anticipates the public debate over the plan. Finally, the political discussion of the Sump leads to its adoption, but the participatory process continues by evaluating the previous involvement and monitoring the plan results. Dresden mobility plan is then characterised by the continuous presence of moments for a shared definition of guidelines and actions, leading to a collectively defined plan; the relevance of such an approach can be seen in the public support to controversial decisions, like the construction of a new bridge over the Elbe river – which led to the removal of the city from the Unesco register for World Heritage Sites.

The Île de France (Certu, 2012; 2013; Iau Île-de-France, 2010; Stif, 2012a; 2012b)

instead deals with mobility issues inflecting participatory attitudes in different ways, more suitable in a large metropolitan setting like the Paris metropolitan area. The focus is on implementation and management of transport decisions, rather than on their definition: an ambitious vision for the region is centrally defined, while the small elements composing it provide more space for debate and confrontation. The concept of Grand Paris, promoted in a recent planning competition, is reflected also in the main strategies for the metropolitan mobility, structured along a fast public transport ring line that innervates radial links. The Urban Mobility Plan simply takes note of the strategy and doesn't discuss it, but provides a strong public involvement in the implementation phase – focusing thus on participation as a privileged way to pursue the aims of the plan. Three are the elements for which citizen involvement appears as crucial: an increased awareness, making inhabitants responsible actors in the mobility field (probably the most vague aspect, even if interestingly focusing on individual attitudes); approval of local projects, through which the plan is effectively pursued; management of the existing, with regular interactions between managing authorities and users. Local projects for example have to undergo a structured preliminary consultation, which discusses critical aspects at various scales: for example, the many tramways currently under construction are debated considering possible route variants, small project details (like the impacts in specific streets) and wider consequences (local economic performances, changes in the mobility network...); the outcomes of the interaction between planners and citizens are reported and taken into account in the projects (Stif, 2011). The management is instead in charge of “line committees”, which examine the performances of specific public transport services on a regular basis – for example, evaluating a specific railway line by its regularity, comfort and safety (Stif, 2013). The relevance of the Île de France case relies then on its peculiar inflection of public involvement, which plays a relevant role for mobility but mainly focus on its step-by-step becoming.

On the contrary, Bogotá (Ardila-Gómez, 2004; 2005; Rojas Parra and Mello Garcias, 2005) has been able to promote a revolution in urban mobility responding to the social issues of movement but without any relevant role for public involvement. In the Nineties, the Colombian capital had an ineffective service, with more than 600 public transport lines without any coordination between them. Institutions were weak, both from a technical and a political point of view, so that managing authorities shaped the service: then, public transport was slow (many lines caused congestion), confused (routes and fares were not integrated) and uncomfortable (fares were decreased in order to compete with other services, but this led to poor comfort and maintenance). The daily average trip lasted two hours. In this chaotic setting, mayor Peñalosa promoted the creation of a bus rapid transit network (called Transmilenio), trying also to coordinate urban development and transport policy. The project had a clear social aim, aiming at improving the possibility to access the city by providing places where to ‘meet as equals in an environment that respected human dignity’ (Ardila-Gómez, 2004: 332). The decision is the result of a reformist authority, which has a precise purpose but promotes it without any public involvement and rather going against the opposition of established interests; the plan itself starts working on one of the main central roads, in order to make the decision to improve public transport irreversible. Since the first phases of the

project, results were noticeable: public transport usage rates are the highest in the whole Latin America; public transport promotion has also fostered the regeneration of public spaces; the network evolution has also promoted a general revision of the existing routes, increasing their effectiveness. The case of Bogotá has become an internationally admired case study for public transport promotion and urban regeneration, but has interestingly brought together the already described social issues of movement and questions of policy effectiveness without any specific form of public involvement: a social issue has been treated with a social approach to technical decisions, but without giving a central role to participation.

The three, differently successful case studies here briefly recalled show different ways to achieve positive results when dealing with metropolitan transport issues; more importantly, they share also a specific social attention, differently inflected according to the setting – privileging then participatory planning, involvement in implementation, or simply having most deprived groups as references for planning decisions. The three cases appear as generally successful cases of public transport planning, but they also provide specific forms of interaction with citizens and, more importantly, a peculiar treatment of claims coming from social reasons and policy needs. The different answers to similar issues suggest the potential relevance of a place-based approach, that inflects general issues according to local specificities.

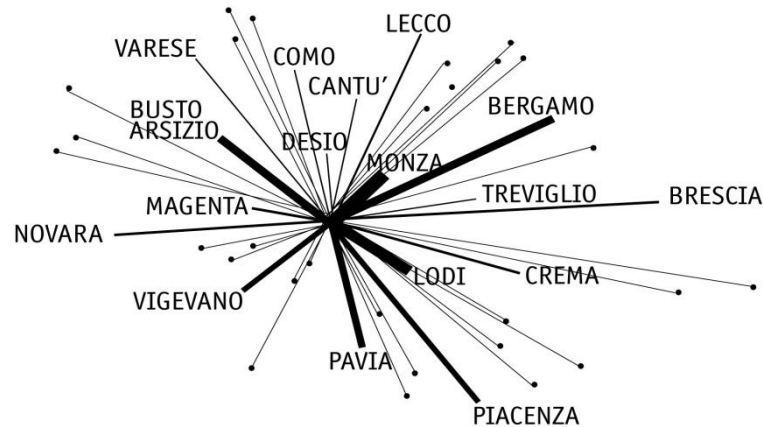
The focus on a specific place provides a preliminary orientation for the analysis, maintaining questions which are general and considering them within a given setting. This can explain the choice of a precise urban context as the field for the proposed analysis, but can also suggest more general considerations. The debate on territorial development has often focused on the necessarily local dimension of these processes, as a key for the effective implementation of plans and programs: territories are not neutral supports nor objectified subjects, but rather provide peculiar resources which are differently shaped according to the place taken into account (Pasqui, 2005). Barca (2011) adopts a similar perspective when discussing participation, a fact interesting for two reasons. The first one is the emphasis on the local specificities, which avoids any generalisation and rather focuses on the given setting; the second one is its aim, the promotion of innovation: it is considered as a central element for development and is seen as an interactive knowledge which can then direct a multilevel governance. This aspect is interesting not just for its criticism of previous schematisations of participation and local development (Calvaresi, 2013), but also for its innovative approach. The involvement of subjects is intended to increase the effectiveness of policy approaches, providing them with new tools and perspectives when dealing with complex (and often difficult to treat) topics.

Consequently, the attention to a specific place may provide findings more relevant also for general questions – at least, this is the hope of this work. The choice to focus on Milan is then explained by the interest in investigating general questions in a setting which is redefining its relationship with mobility and its issues. The previous case studies, briefly discussed, refer to successful experiences that many international programs describe as examples to follow; an analysis of Milan instead aims at inflecting similar questions while movement is still discussed and shaped by different, even

fragmentary experiences. The follow pages try to provide some elements of interest for the Milan case.

## Mobility in Milan

### Milan / where commuters come from?



*Fig. 1 Clusters of daily commuting in Milan*

The questions deriving from the initial reflections are put to work in the Milan metropolitan area. The interest in this specific setting is described in the next paragraphs, which try to outline the main features of mobility and of its policy, providing multiple occasions to test the potential contributions from multiple subjects. In particular, the ongoing development of a Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan appears as an occasion to bring together some framework elements – like mobility figures, practices and political perspectives – and more specific issues – like public involvement and contributions to the decisions influencing mobility. The issues of movement in Milan have a peculiar metropolitan perspective: what happens on the two sides of Milan municipal border is in fact strictly related and requires common descriptions – and treatments, too. Two aspects in fact appear as decisive: what are the features of movement (Amat, 2007; 2013a) and what is the policy approach to mobility issues.

### *Practicing movement*

Milan is characterised by relevant flows coming everyday from the metropolitan area – two millions commuters for a city with slightly more than one million inhabitants. Milan in fact has a stable population, while the metropolitan inhabitants are increasing; in the same time, polarities are more and more located in the surrounding provinces, spreading attractive activities on a wider area. These territorial dynamics are sided by peculiar demographic trends, which define different mobility profiles according to age, work condition and socio-economical features: Milan population in fact is decreasing and its average age is growing, determining a lower inclination to movement.

In the last decade, mobility volumes haven't relevantly changed, as well as the distribution of internal and exchange movements between the central city and its metropolitan area (57% and 43% respectively). The apparently static mobility demand shows instead a very different modal split, characterised by a growing use of public transport: it covers the 48% of trips (57% for the internal trips), while the car covers the 43%. For the first time from the Sixties, public transport prevails the car – showing also that most of exchange trips use the car, becoming then the main responsible for urban traffic congestion. Especially in the most central areas (where a congestion charge was introduced) the use of car has decreased and has instead promoted a higher use of public transport in the last decade; as for commuting, also the use of suburban and regional railways has grown.

The growing predominance of public transport services has been made possible also by the increase of available services. Nevertheless, these improvements seem to run after changing mobility trends, rather than determining them: in fact, trips are no more concentrated in rush hours – when commuting takes place, but rather are more equally distributed among the other hours of the day. This aspect introduces the relevance that mobility practices have in shaping movement and, consequently, on their potential contributions to mobility policy. Commuting is the basic everyday movement in the metropolitan area, shared by thousands of inhabitants, but it just represents the basis for more complex and individualized mobility practices. It is usually the main institutional landmark when dealing with transport planning, a perspective that mobility practices often subvert: the everyday movement to the workplace in fact is just a small element in more complex mobility patterns, that rarely show the simple movement between two points, but more often define spirals, circles, areas and networks in the metropolitan space (Moro, 2008). Each movement is the sign of a specific mobility style, that draws peculiar patterns and requires devoted tools.

Data and figures of mobility trends in fact don't convey the practices of movement related to them, portraying flows but failing to understand the underlying reasons for movement. In this sense, research has attempted to convey richer representations of movement practices using different tools, like new data sources, narratives and maps (for Milan, see Moro, 2008; Pezzoni, 2013; Pucci, 2013; Vendemmia and Minucci, 2013). Flows are in fact related to the infrastructure network, with a strong radial structure connecting the urban core and the surrounding metropolitan area; movement patterns instead combine different trips, using available links and replacing them with private means in order to connect places without any direct relationship. According to the subjects, movements change: they focus on precise locations or move indifferently within the metropolitan area; they combine various means of transport or privilege only a mode; their trips are concentrated in specific hours or are more distributed during the day. Specific mobility practices can be referred to specific urban populations, but any individual belongs to them in a multiple way, leading to multiple combinations. For example, a commuter is not just a commuter: he may share with other people the everyday movement to and from the workplace, but also has very differentiated mobility habits shaping leisure, family care and personal activities; in the same time, some of his habits may be in common also with other populations. To grasp this rich variety,

narratives and maps can provide necessarily incomplete – and yet interesting – accounts from very different perspectives.

The multiplicity of patterns is interesting since it challenges the present structure of mobility services, privileging certain links and neglecting others. Narratives and maps make possible to represent this multiplicity and to put it in relation to individual and collective strategies, portraying mobile lives that are composed by joining together different places and activities. The representation provided by narrative tools is partial by definition, since it focuses on individual stories that represent a current trend but don't provide any possible general finding: maps, stories and patterns reflect a growing multiplicity of movements and strategies, describing what inspires movement rather than providing precise suggestions to improve it. Nevertheless, these tools are able to convey the multiple meanings that movement has, showing how the increasingly complicated mobility practices are reflections of more and more mobile lives.

### *Urban agenda and movement*

As a central feature in the everyday experiences of its inhabitants, mobility is a constant presence also in the political agenda for Milan, its metropolitan area and in general for Lombardy region. The issues of movement are central, as perceived in the everyday practices (congestion and slowness in particular affect daily trips) and also in the performance of local economy: accessibility and fast movements are seen as a key element for competitiveness in global markets. It is in particular this second aspect that dominates a political rhetoric focused on the construction of new infrastructures (Palermo, 2008): the introduction of new highways and railways is seen as a crucial requirement to improve accessibility to and from the Milan urban region, increasing the opportunities of movement for people and goods. New infrastructures seem relevant in themselves, without any specific consideration of their role in metropolitan territories; because of this, even when discussing new constructions related to public transport, the focus is on their presence rather than on their effective role, shadowing any specific discourse on the services they may help to provide. The partial perspective from which infrastructures are considered goes together with the effective difficulties of implementation: new key railways and highways, like the Passante railway in Milan or the Pedemontana highway in the northern part of the metropolitan area, have been discussed for decades, but their construction lasted for decades (as in the first case) or is still ongoing (as in the second one). The incoming Expo, the universal exhibition of 2015, is unfortunately a good summary of these issues: seen as an occasion to boost mobility infrastructures considered as crucial (in particular, highways and subways), many of its projects classified as “fundamental” will be concluded after the end of the exhibition.

Also plans recognise a central role to movement and its infrastructures, but with different perspectives. Some documents, like the current Milan urban development plan and the provincial territorial plan, associate the presence of public transport infrastructures to the promotion of urban development: the higher the accessibility, the higher the allowed building volumes. This approach doesn't refer simply to existing



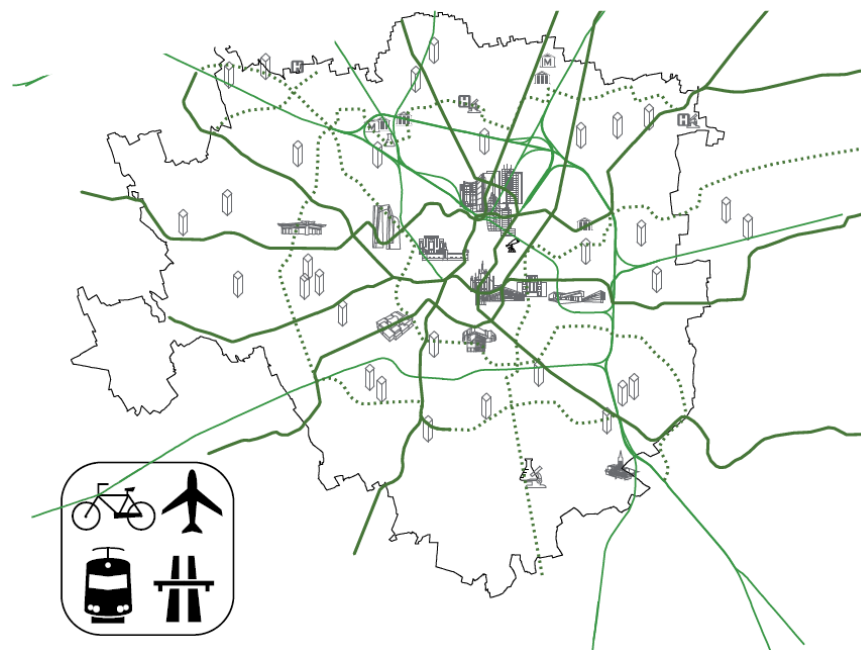
services, but rather promotes the unbalanced introduction of new lines. The Milan urban development plan projects six new subway lines, justified by the intention to connect urban regeneration areas rather than to satisfy an absent mobility demand. From a different perspective, other plans – like the Città di Città provincial strategic plan, promoted in 2006 – focus on mobility as a key factor to improve the quality of life in the metropolitan area, increasing its habitability by increasing the facility in accessing a wider set of opportunities. Nevertheless, this qualitative perspective is shadowed by the prevalence of a quantitative approach focused on the expansion of the local infrastructure set, privileging the number of projects rather than the opportunities they increase.

Growth appears as the leading principle for urban development strategies, leaving aside more complex conceptions of development: the search for a generic bigness prevails over unsolved strategic questions (Palermo, 2011). In this perspective, some issues considered as crucial for urban and transport planning are absent, or underrepresented, in the current Milan planning practice. General principles, like sustainability, are mainly present as compulsory requirements, usually discussed in plans when providing their Strategic Environmental Assessments. The ongoing Urban Mobility Plan is defined as “sustainable”, drawing on a number of European experiences which focus on the reduction of environmental impacts and on the promotion of varied forms for public involvement; nevertheless, the only shy claim for a stronger environmental attention can be found in the plan guidelines, which call for a reduction of pollution and energetic consumption – as a way to act locally while thinking globally (Amat, 2012).

A closer view to mobility shows that also more peculiar issues of movement are absent from the current planning documents. On the one hand, generally critical aspects – for example, the metropolitan governance of mobility, which is strongly fragmented and consequently reduces service quality – are just mentioned, but tend to elude a more systematic treatment and are then absent from plans (especially those acting at the right scale – for example, at a metropolitan level in the case of these managing issues). On the other hand, the general approach to movement seems to lack relevant considerations. No attention is usually provided to mobility practices, privileging flow analysis and general – yet, particular – strategies, such as the reduction of traffic congestion and of the motorisation rate: no attention is then provided to what movement is for, seeing movement as an action in itself rather than as a practice fostering other practices. Guidelines and strategies provided for the ongoing mobility plan don't convey explicitly any of the meanings of movement initially described: accessibility, motility and their eventual production of commons are missing in the first statements of the plan, which vaguely recalls them when treating quite specific issues (for example, accessibility for disable people, or forms of environmental awareness as promoters of changes in the modal split).

The discussed approaches have gradually become choices and policy decisions, giving a specific inflection to the Milan urban agenda. The various levels of government insisting over the city have contributed in different ways: for example, regional and

provincial institutions have developed generic plans without punctual strategies or precise actions for the central city and its metropolitan area; their territorial plans have in fact a quite generic nature, just providing a framework for local development decisions. More relevant has been their influence on mobility infrastructures and policy, especially considering regional interventions. Regione Lombardia in fact has promoted on the one hand the construction of new infrastructures, as previously discussed (fostering mainly highways and a few crucial railways), while on the other hand mass rail services have been introduced. This is the case for the suburban rail service, conceived in 1982 and started in 2004: its relevance relies both on its background (services and infrastructures have been conceived together, developing a broader strategy for metropolitan rail services) and on its outcomes (since its introduction, all the local branches coming to Milan have seen a relevant growth in the number of passengers; see Amat, 2013a).



*Fig. 2 The future infrastructural network in Milan PGT*

Supralocal institutions haven't provided other relevant contributions to metropolitan mobility, in terms of approaches or specific proposals. In the last decades, most of the crucial policy decisions affecting mobility have been shaped by municipal initiatives; interestingly, many of them have been defined autonomously and have been included later in the appropriate plans, which have been developed without observing a precise temporal sequence (as it will be discussed later, the last Urban Mobility Plan was approved in 2001; the present Urban Development Plan has been introduced in 2011, after decades of specific changes to obsolete plans; the Urban Traffic Plan was issued in 2012, after a specific administrative judgment). Some new approaches have been introduced, as for measures orienting mobility demand: among them, the introduction of a congestion charge was crucial in reducing the car presence in the city centre, discouraging the use of private vehicles – especially the most polluting; together with

national incentives, the measure has been able to modernise circulating vehicles. New alternatives for urban and metropolitan trips have been promoted, too: a network of cycle routes called “green rays” has been developed in Milan, covering the main directions and connecting them with bordering municipalities; interestingly, a broader vision for cycling has been developed. Unfortunately, these routes have acquired mainly a leisure function, providing safe connections between parks rather than fast links within the city; because of this, the initial network of rays has been almost abandoned in the following municipal plans.

New approaches to mobility issues have mainly focused on alternative modes and on restrictive policy; in the same time, traditional actions focusing on heavy infrastructures have been carried on, often as a legacy of previous plans. Highways and motorways have played a crucial role in this sense, providing new connections at the urban and metropolitan scale. In some cases, key junctions have been improved through massive interventions, while in others huge corridors have been proposed as strategic bypasses for fast urban links; interestingly, many of them (like a peripheral road in the north part of the city, or a tunnel connecting the urban airport to the fair pavilions) have been strongly contested and blocked, while others have been realised but still lay unused (as for a tunnel in the area of the former Fair). Another relevant intervention is the extension of the subway network, thanks to new lines and branches: some of them were initially proposed in plans dating from the Seventies, while others have been introduced by more recent documents (as for the five new lines of the last development plan). A number of different links have been proposed, including highly used corridors as well as minor connections; many of them seemed to be justified more by diffused expectations about them rather than by their real effectiveness. They appear as the relicts of old decisions and approaches, which are easy to communicate (and somehow irreversible, given the difficulty to change public opinion), but often not essential in themselves.

The initial general attitudes show then specific issues when turning into choices and policy decisions. Plans, especially when dealing with mobility, appear as “documents of their own”, which don’t provide a general framework for subsequent decisions and have scarce relationships with other actions or policy approaches. The guiding perspective appears as a critical element: municipal plans prevail, failing to provide a wider, metropolitan point of view on transcalar issues like those of movement; strategies are missing, since the focus is on punctual, isolated actions; and many of these initiatives are related to obsolete paradigms for mobility planning, focusing on huge infrastructural interventions. Plans maintain this paradigm, proposing decisions coming from previous documents and mainly providing a collection of different interventions. A strategy is then missing since the chosen perspective is partial (confined to municipal borders) and interventions are not combined to increase their impact on mobility issues. Then, a number of actions which are positive in themselves (charges, alternative transport modes, punctual infrastructural improvement) are less effective than they could potentially be. In this sense, a broader interaction with metropolitan actors involved in the arenas of mobility may provide differentiated inputs, giving a broader meaning to isolated interventions or suggesting new solutions; the scarce interaction occurring in planning processes reduces opportunities for wider contributions.

In this perspective, the starting questions refined in the beginning of the chapter acquires a specific meaning. The Milan setting in fact is characterised by an ongoing planning activity which considers movement mainly as an activity in itself, without any deeper analysis of the underlying practices and strategies that it allows for individuals and communities. Mobility and accessibility are relevant, as features that influence the everyday experiences of citizens and that also contribute to the competitiveness of a territory; nevertheless, it is difficult to find any explicit interaction between options for movement and allowed opportunities. In this sense, specific forms of public involvement may more effectively convey practices and subjects within transport planning processes. The interactions between policy takers and makers are crucial, highlighting then different (and differently effective) ways to take these contributions into account.

### **Evolving involvements**

From the short overview of Milan planning and its approach to mobility, the meanings of movement initially explored appear in a fragmented way, tangentially touched by some of the guiding principles or by specific policy issues. These elements contribute to the activities of individuals and groups, but still the demanders – the subjects moving and using movement for their specific purposes – need to be considered. Recalling the opening questions, the potential contributors to mobility policy have to be taken into account, describing the social setting and the political attitude to public involvement.

#### *Social vibrancy and the urban agenda*

Milan is a fertile field for potential contributions, characterised by relevant elements of vitality which represent a local specificity. The distinctive vivacity doesn't appear in other Italian settings, leading to peculiar forms of local development and interactions between actors. As a part of the Italian "industrial triangle", Milan has been a forerunner of the national industrial development, hosting the first big productive companies established in the country; their presence has been soon followed by a myriad of small and medium enterprises, which formed one of the strongest productive areas in Europe. The economic activism has been reflected also in civil society, where many voluntary subjects emerged from the productive background of the region, establishing a varied tradition of intervention - especially focused on welfare. Despite this, the economic dimension has always prevailed, so that 'for years, Milan hasn't been recognised as a social territory, but rather as a system of individuals' (Ranci, 2007: 8).

The individual interventions coming from a vibrant society become even more relevant with the turn in economy and politics which marked the Nineties: a generic trend of deindustrialisation and a strong political crisis at the international and local levels (the fall of the Soviet block on the one hand, the violent delegitimation of the traditional national parties on the other) appeared, but haven't had ruinous consequences for Milan. A soft passage from industry to service economy took place, without compromising the vibrancy of the local economy. Such a vitality was also

reflected in ‘the growth of a very vital civil society and voluntary sector’, which ‘changed the way in which the social services, a traditional strong point of the Milanese area, were managed’ (Dente et al, 2005). We may say that the most of the innovations – be them implemented projects or just proposals – took and take place thanks to this active society, made of subjects acting out of specific frameworks provided by institutions.

The attitude of institutions is in fact a crucial aspect, with a rigid attitude incapable of innovations. The relevant change in the Nineties didn’t question usual institutional approaches to new, emerging issues, as instead it happened in other Italian cities; rather, Milanese institutions maintained a short-term perspective, avoiding any strategic experimentation. In this sense, ‘the agenda remained more or less the same and the vision or the mission of the city was not really altered’ (Dente et al., 2005), maintaining a focus on competition rather than on other issues, like social cohesion and urban quality. The dependency on traditional ways to set the agenda can be observed in the continuous presence of similar interventions, mainly based on economic growth and infrastructural development, without any recognition of ongoing transformations. The political agenda then reflects the difficult relationship with change: ‘while Milan was transformed from inside - in an incremental but deep way – by demographic and cultural processes, by changes in the entrepreneurial structure, in the urban economic base and in the job market, by the drastic weakening of the opportunities for local public action which put into crisis the Milanese tradition of material and immaterial welfare, by a process of emptying of the central city with an often uncontrolled growth of settlements in the urban region, the local agenda stagnated, and with it the ability to strategically govern transformations’ (Bolocan Goldstein and Pasqui, 2011: 274 – 275).

Transformations are carried forward by dynamics and subjects. While trends are difficult to grasp, they are often reflected in actors and in their adaptive strategies, so that some forms of interaction between the change and attempts for its government are possible. The urban agenda aims at framing issues and arranging possible treatments, but in Milan the chosen perspective hasn’t been able to interpret transformations; in the same time, the institutional interaction with actors has been somehow partial. The city has innovated some processes, for example promoting public private initiatives, fostering privatisations and establishing cooperation between public institutions and the voluntary sector; nevertheless, institutions have had a marginal role in these processes, while the voluntary sector played an increasingly important role in the challenges continuously shaped by the ongoing transformations – be them urban regeneration initiatives, conveyed through urban integrated projects, or welfare production occasions, thanks to the involvement of the third sector (Dente et al, 2005).

Then, ‘there has been much greater social innovation than that generated “via” policies, with the consequence that some of the “excellences” generated in this period have arisen without any public leadership or even in the absence of public policies, on the initiative of economic and social actors’ (Pasqui, 2011: 59). Compared to other Italian cities, Milan is less dependent on the leadership of public institutions, which instead appear as short-sighted when dealing with the issues reflecting wide ongoing transformations. The economic and social actors in the city are more receptive to transformations, adapting new initiatives to tackle emerging issues – even if they often

miss an institutional support which would be helpful. Anyway, they play a decisive role in shaping a transforming city, while remaining outside decisional processes. A new agenda for metropolitan policy should frame new issues and new forms of cooperation between actors, proposing even new forms of involvement in decisions (Bolocan Goldstein and Pasqui, 2011): up to now, the vibrant activity of voluntary subjects hasn't been really able to intercept decisional dynamics.

Mobility and its policy are differently related to institutional subjects acting at the regional, provincial and municipal scale. As previously stated, various plans frame interventions in the transport field, with different levels of details and specific focuses on given issues. Despite the need for a national and transnational framework, State decisions are missing when dealing with territorial strategies, while regional plans provide very general guidelines; regional institutions are more relevant when dealing with specific issues, like the engagement of rail operators or the construction of new heavy infrastructures. Provincial actors are in charge of precise services, like intermunicipal bus lines, but provide planning guidelines which are mainly suggestions requiring regional and municipal supports; given their weak role, and the even weaker planning decisions, their role in shaping metropolitan mobility is limited. Finally, municipalities play a relevant role, especially in the case of the central city: its leading nature, somehow confirmed by the incoming legislation on metropolitan governments, gives a central position when discussing decisions on mobility and its features; such a crucial role has to deal with the asymmetrical position of an institution planning in a metropolitan perspective but still acting just within municipal borders. According to these notes, the next chapters will discuss the action of institutions, without specifying the territorial level of action but mainly considering municipal subjects. When referring to specific issues, like local rail services, other actors are mainly involved (for example, the regional government); nevertheless, the discussed topics and the chosen case studies mainly address local scales and municipal actors, as well as the present occasions for metropolitan planning.

#### *An evolving public involvement*

The vibrancy of Milan society is now interacting with institutions in ways which are different from the past. Multiple are the potential contributions coming from society and the consequent relationships with public action, as will be described in the following chapters, changing then an established framework that has characterised public involvement for a long time. From the urban point of view in fact, in the last years one of the main fields for cooperation between public and private subjects has been urban regeneration, matching on the one hand the need to reuse central derelict areas and on the other one the interest in a flexible framework promoting private initiatives. Involvement has been then conceived as the provision of weak regulations in order to foster the intervention of economic actors, focusing on real estate as a way to transform the city and possibly improve its quality – an approach widely criticised, both for its preconditions and its outcomes (as described for example in Bricocoli and Savoldi, 2010 and Arcidiacono and Pogliani, 2011).

At the crossroads between different potential forms of involvement, the recent evolutions in the urban development planning provide various hints on the possible meanings and consequences of different inclusions in decisional processes (as well as in their implementation). Milan has developed a new urban development plan in 2011, after decades without an established guiding document: the last 1984 plan was a general variant to the 1953 plan, and it had been incrementally transformed by the punctual claims for specific development projects. The absence of an official plan was part of a strategy aiming at providing the wider flexibility for the government of urban transformations, as exemplified in “Rebuilding the Great Milan” – a 2001 strategic document proposing a generic scheme for urban development (densification along the railways, as a way to intercept the main brownfield areas) and a very flexible approach to the bargaining between public and private interests. The urban development plan established in 2011 instead aimed at providing a new vision for the city, but still promoting real estate as the main booster of urban transformation: despite the negative demographic trends, the plan imagined to increase urban inhabitants by increasing housing, providing then occasions for new constructions in the many regeneration areas available in the city (unused railway yards, former productive plants, smaller free areas within the urban tissue). The plan and its institutional development somehow marked a shift in the way to conceive public involvement, showing potential wider meanings for this word. The approach of the plan in fact carried on the usual form of cooperation between public subjects and private interests, providing flexible regulations and wide opportunities for real estate initiatives; but in the same time, the compulsory strategic environmental assessment gave space also to involvement from the bottom, allowing the elaboration of observations and criticism to the plan by varied groups of citizens. The evaluation process took note of these observations, but didn’t take them into account to reshape the plan.

Then, a relevant political change in Milan municipality occurred: in 2011, a centre-left coalition won local elections, replacing the centre-right majority that had uninterruptedly ruled over Milan for eighteen years. A number of associations, especially those with an environmental vocation, actively intervened in the campaign, supporting the centre-left candidate; also, “committees for Milan” were created to actively involve citizens supporting this coalition, developing in the same time a number of punctual proposals often referring to territorial issues (from mobility to regeneration projects). In general, the whole electoral campaign, and the period after the victory, were characterized by slogans like ‘The wind has changed’, explicitly conveying the idea of an ongoing revolution that aimed at changing the city by addressing some of its unresolved issues (D’Alfonso, 2013). A first occasion for discontinuity was the described urban development plan, which was revised (but not replaced) reducing real estate forecasts and taking more deeply into account the observations from citizens and associations.

The key role played by aggregations of active citizens was not a sudden fact, but can be now seen as part of a longer evolution. As the sociologist Aldo Bonomi (2011) explains, the first local committees were promoted in the Eighties by the local bourgeoisie, focusing on law, rules and security; today instead participation is wider, both for the people involved and the topics debated. Larger groups, including

professionals and peripheral inhabitants, create larger aggregations establishing new local communities. Moreover, the “resentfuls” left the floor to a propulsive attitude focusing on the local quality of life: then, the aim is to create collective occasions of active care for the territory, feeling responsible for the neighbourhood and the city. A new activism is thus visible in any part of the city, including its peripheries, and may appear as a sign of the deep crisis which is affecting the traditional political representation.

This changing form of involvement, moving from the simple bargaining with private interests to a wider (at least in the intentions) public involvement has affected also mobility and its policy. The growing intricacy of mobility practices in Milan and its metropolitan area in fact has intercepted political processes, appearing as one of the priorities for local administrators. Mobility was a key field in showing the political new course of the city: a young deputy mayor was chosen; symbolical measures were promoted, as the introduction of a congestion charge (that simply replaced a previous pollution charge, modifying the name and increasing fares); associations were involved in negotiation boards dealing with relevant topics (for example, the promotion of ciclabilità). The first initiatives appeared as attempts to create the image of a renovation in the municipal mobility policy, but were somehow separate between each other: a broader strategy was missing, affecting the effectiveness of these measures (for example, the absence of plans regulating them led to the forced temporary suspension of the congestion charge). In order to provide guidelines for the metropolitan mobility, the process for the elaboration of a Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP) was started in 2012; its guidelines were the first public document released and were published in October 2012, while its ongoing process provides a peculiar perspective on metropolitan transport planning process and on new forms of public involvement.

The Urban Mobility Plan provides a further, formalised occasion to shape metropolitan mobility policy, providing a framework which interacts with differentiated initiatives – as previously described. They represent the ordinary management of mobility, involving a wide range of influential actors – from transport operators to established economic interests. Their presence is crucial in shaping mobility, since they mobilise resources which are fundamental to guarantee specific services or to provide consensus for some initiatives. Because of this, relevant subjects do not simply take part in general occasions for public involvement (like those described in the next paragraph), but also play crucial roles in structured decisional arenas – be them interactions from below (see chapter 6) or encounters at par (see chapter 7).

#### *Modes and procedures of public involvement*

The choice of providing a Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan stresses the relevance of public involvement: the plan addresses a metropolitan scale and aims at involving a wide set of mobility practices through the direct participation in the planning process of the relevant stakeholders. “The planning process will be generated by an open debate with the city. (...) The actors and the exigencies to take into account are different and multiple. Nevertheless, the instruments (charity and associative networks, the web,



mobility tracking technologies...) useful to collect sensibilities, data, contributions are available: users themselves can be sources of information and contribute to the mapping of inefficiencies or to the construction of solutions' (Amat, 2012: p. 44). The planning process thus is structured around different occasions for public involvement, devoted to a generic public (as in the case of public presentations of the plan) or to more specific actors (as for meetings with boroughs, bordering municipalities or transport operators). The general strategies are now established, while their specific content is currently being developed: then, after a first round of meetings with boroughs (in July 2013) and with selected stakeholders (in September 2013), the plan will undergo public discussion in the next months, providing specific occasions for debate together with usual moments of public hearing (for example, after the adoption of the plan and during its evaluation process).

Among the principles of a participatory process (as defined by Bickerstaff et al., 2002: inclusivity, transparency, interactivity, continuity), interactivity seems the decisive one to observe the Milan Sump: in fact the engagement of citizens and their impact on the decisions can be observed a posteriori, while the methods used for public involvement already appeared in the first stages of the participation process. Up to now, the focus has been on traditional methods, in order to communicate information and receive feedbacks. The municipality promoted public meetings, published documents and summoned focus groups, but doesn't mean to provide occasions for public consultation (panels, interactive websites...) or deliberation (forums, visioning...); direct interaction is avoided, since stakeholders sparks are received but autonomously re-elaborated by municipal technicians.

The planning process for the Sump provides an unique occasion for a direct confrontation between official strategies and ongoing practices. But, as seen before, interaction with stakeholders is partial: within the municipal administration, politicians consider it as a key element to communicate the participatory attitude of the municipality, stressing the simple presence of occasions for public debate; technicians instead accept the feedbacks compatible with those decisions whose political or technical feasibility has already been tested, showing a basic scepticism towards public involvement. On the stakeholders side, the attitude is sceptical, without any confidence in the effects of participation: as stated by the president of the Anti-smog Parents association, 'participation is good, but it can't be asked to acquire data or ideas. Data and ideas are already there, and the conclusions, and the ways, are already drawn' (Gerometta, 2013).

The planning process for the Sump is the first occasion in Milan for an unitary treatment of mobility issues, recomposing in one plan a number of different policy approaches. Different institutional attitudes can be once more observed: in some cases, the interventions raise issues for the first time, as for the newly introduced congestion charge; more often, they run after existing problems (or solutions) addressed by other actors, like those promoting ciclability; finally, sometimes successful policy actions are required even in other settings, as for the suburban rail network whose extension is required by commuters spread far beyond Milan. Moving from initial statements to the effective structure of the process, up to now public involvement seem relevant in the

intentions but marginal in the outcomes. When discussing participation, the Sump guidelines quoted earlier (Amat, 2012) somehow recognise the limitations of the single institutional look on mobility and its practices, but the presence of multiple points of view doesn't seem to really influence the contents of the plan.

### **Observing the present**

Each feature describing Milan and its mobility would need much more attention on its own, as rich elements characterised by complexity and local peculiarities; the previous paragraphs provide just an overview of those fields interacting with the initially stated questions. The descriptions show some elements of potential interest for the starting issues in the Milan setting. Movement is characterised by a multiplicity which conveys varied meanings but is difficultly intercepted in planning processes; the current planning activity is dealing in particular with the issues of mobility, developing also new approaches aware of the ongoing transformations in the territory and in the policy treating it; the vibrant Milanese society is particularly active and today is more and more intervening in the planning debate, adopting new attitudes towards public issues.

The usual idea of participation only partially conveys the multiple aspects of varied practices and contributions in the mobility field. Interaction seems to provide a wider perspective, moving from the simple involvement in decisional processes to a broader relationship between subjects, which may shape both existing features of movement and future decisions for its planning. It is interaction that explains 'the functioning of the city – the spontaneous cooperation of the inhabitants and the silent agreement to reach common aims' (Paba, 2010: 56). The simple framework of participation risks to be partial and at the same time to include a wide range of different experiences; experiences that 'usually are positive things, sharing the involvement of citizens in local issues, the exchange of information and knowledge, some forms of interaction to reach common aims: a frail and too general thread to give any descriptive or interpretative utility to such a wide idea of participation' (Paba, 2010: 67). Interaction seems then a more suitable guiding idea, also in order to frame a potential analysis from the perspective of institutions dealing with metropolitan transport planning decisions.

The focus on interaction may open the planning perspective to a wider set of contributions, which do not necessarily intervene in structured involving processes, but may also be intercepted (when significant) in different ways. A more attentive approach to what is moving (in any sense) in the society could be open to a number of claims and proposals that may contribute to the shaping of better opportunities for movement even if not intervening in traditional planning processes. This hypothetical approach has to be tested in its forms and outcomes, considering also its possible meanings in relation to the concept of social innovation: the idea of a "social economy" including 'the intensive use of distributed networks to sustain and manage relationships, helped by broadband, mobile and other means of communication; blurred boundaries between production and consumption; an emphasis on collaboration and on repeated interactions, care and maintenance rather than one-off consumption; a strong role for values and missions' (Murray et al, 2010). The term is popular and yet frail (Busacca,

2013), as a rhetorical concept which may express a liberal – progressive idea of society: social transformations would take place by themselves, without any mediation or vision. Such an approach is quite distant from the idea itself of planning, requiring thus a prudent use aware of the potential opportunities deriving from an open attitude to varied interactions.

These threads show elements of potential interests and define a field that still has to be explored: movement is in fact still discussed and shaped by different, even fragmentary experiences – be them planning decisions or simply everyday practices. Differently from successful case studies, Milan seems interesting for testing questions (especially thanks to the mobility plan currently under construction) rather than for observing established results; moreover, these questions seem to require a closer approach to specific places, inflecting general issues in precise settings. Milan appears then as a suitable ground for the initial questions.

Mobility and accessibility are relevant, as features that influence the everyday experiences of citizens and that also contribute to the competitiveness of a territory; nevertheless, it is difficult to find any explicit interaction between options for movement and allowed opportunities. In this sense, specific forms of public involvement may more effectively convey practices and subjects within transport planning processes. The interactions between policy takers and makers are crucial, highlighting then different (and differently effective) ways to take these contributions into account. The initial focus on a specific place requires thus to inflect the starting questions in the peculiar setting here chosen. The research mainly deals with the relationships between decision makers and takers: they exist or should be created; their structure may be different; their contributions to urban mobility may change as well. Relationships may then appear as a guiding principle to structure the initial questions, exploring them by considering interactions promoted by institutions, claims raised by citizens, equal agreements based on a reciprocal interest. Concretely, they refer to different approaches of institutions, who are addressed and address different subjects, adopting various attitudes according to their exigencies. These varied stakes then may differently contribute to the shaping of urban mobility and its policy.

Considering the initial questions and the different fields of interaction here defined, mobile forms of involvement emerge, depending on the subjects, their specific interests and the contributes they may provide in different phases of policy development. Drawing on examples from the Milan metropolitan area, for the three different forms of interaction here recognised (consultation from above, claims from below, at par encounter) specific features could be examined: subjects (that may be) involved, potential contributions of them to mobility policy, existing and potential forms of interaction. In particular, the focus may be on three approaches, within different relationships. Interaction promoted by institutions is often focused on representation, as a way to portray practices and opinions, using them to construct visions and provide consensus to them; the 2011 referendum and an experimentation with maps are used to examine this form of interaction and its potential contributions. Claims from below instead are promoted by specific practices and populations expressing them, being

aware or not, aiming at proposing or opposing precise decisions; institutions deal with them in different ways, providing different forms of involvement within decisional processes (as shown by purposeful cycling associations and oppositional committees). At par encounters instead originate within threats or opportunities stimulating the interventions of new subjects, who are often able to influence policy decisions; the case of car sharing spreading and its absent relationship with planning decisions highlight the importance of implementation and its potential role as a catalyst of involvement.

Compared to usual approaches, the aim is to recognise potentially relevant subjects and define specific forms of relationship with them – in particular, according to what is directly observed from some examples; the intention is to finally outline some possible guidelines for a more complex approach to public involvement in transport planning, understanding the contributions it can provide and the specific forms to adopt. The challenge is to test general questions in a given setting, trying then to define findings which may be relevant also in other occasions – not just for this precise point in time and space. Observing the present, the attempt is to exploit its potential to imagine – and even design – more relevant forms to involve in the movement.

Privileging interactions as developed by institutional actors, a field of opportunities and risks is defined: policy could be considered as a process of social interaction (Crosta, 2010). Interaction is unpredictable in itself (Paba, 2010), and becomes even more tricky when dealing with complex issues and multiple actors. Nevertheless, understanding the multiple interactions that shape movement may exploit potential, unexpected contributions coming from varied subjects. Outcomes can't be defined in the beginning, but a hope for the possible interest in a reflective interaction could be nurtured. Recovering what Haidt (2012: 243) says about righteous people and their opposite ideas on politics and religion, 'our minds were designed for groupish righteousness. We are deeply intuitive creatures whose gut feelings drive our strategic reasoning. This makes it difficult – but not impossible – to connect with those who live in other matrices, which are often built on different configurations of the available moral foundations'. Moving the reasoning from ethics to planning, the risks and the opportunities of exploring interaction emerge. Different matrices originate different strategies: and their confrontation could lead to unexpected results if brought together towards common challenges and solutions.

## 5. From above: representing practices and opinions

### Searching voices in the city

In his short story *On Exactitude in Science*, Jorge Luis Borges (1975) speaks of an empire where ‘the Art of Cartography attained such perfection that the map of a single province occupied the entirety of a city, and the map of the empire, the entirety of a province. In time, those unconscionable maps no longer satisfied, and the Cartographers Guilds struck a map of the empire whose size was that of the empire, and which coincided point for point with it’. The representation provided was so precise that it created a second copy of reality, reproducing all its features. But ‘the following generations, who were not so fond of the study of cartography as their forebears had been, saw that that vast map was useless, and not without some pitilessness was it, that they delivered it up to the inclemencies of Sun and winters. In the deserts of the West, still today, there are tattered ruins of that map, inhabited by animals and beggars; in all the land there is no other relic of the disciplines of Geography’.

A short story, a sad prologue: an ambitious attempt to represent the variety of the world, precisely reporting any detail, fails and proves also useless. The experimentation reminds of the many initiatives arranged “from above” in order to represent what takes place “below”, also in planning practice. Surveys try to describe evolving spatial practices; debates aim at catching opinions about crucial issues; formalised procedures attempt to bring these elements in the planning decisions. Searching for the potential contributions that urban populations and their practices may provide to mobility policy, the first form of interaction is the one established by institutional and administrative bodies with the various local subjects, addressing them in various ways. This gives a first structure to what Bordieu (1993: 13) defines as the space of the points of view, in which ‘it is not enough to consider any point of view separately taken into account. It is also necessary to contrast them as they are in reality, not to relativise them, letting the game of crossed images infinitely play, but on the contrary to let appear what emerges from the clash of different or antagonist visions of the world, through the simple effect of juxtaposition’.

The first exploration on the potential contributions to mobility policy coming from populations and their practices focus then on the most traditional attitude, that of institutions representing spatial practices and addressing local opinions. Moving between established experiences, compulsory requirements and voluntary experimentations, the intention is to observe at which conditions this usual form of

involvement may provide relevant contributes: which purposes, subjects and tools may initially establish a common ground where to bring together social demands and political answers for mobility. Threads that were already described when discussing representation and participation in planning processes return in the next pages; in these introductory lines, the short description of an unfortunate perfect mapping can introduce these attempts to represent practices and opinions moving through the city, focusing especially on the purposes for this form of portrayal and on the subjects to consider: they may have a decisive role, but a certain conditions; and one of these conditions seems the awareness of the necessarily incomplete representation of the existing that these operations would provide.

### *Representing practices or opinions*

Initiatives that from above address individuals, groups and communities share their relationship with representation. These attempts may be very different, in terms of intentions, tools and outcomes: they may address communities or specific groups; they may aim at building shared decisions or just provide a formal acceptance of them; they may intervene in different phases of the planning process, extending its starting knowledge, shaping its contents or discussing its public acceptance. Representation acquires thus a broader sense, that of reading a setting and taking it into account. The reading involves various levels, according to the moment in which they intervene, to the involved subjects, the procedures and the aims. These meanings nevertheless have in common the support they provide to planning decisions: a multiple contribution, which may extend the underlying knowledge, offer political support, sometimes even shape the decision itself. Initiatives from above are thus occasions for an interactive reading. 'Reading the world – the city, the territory, the landscape – is then building a vision of the world in that field of interaction' (Paba, 1998: 62).

Transport planning, especially at the metropolitan level, acts in a peculiar field, as previously described: technical decisions, territorial issues and volatile urban populations reduce the possibilities for public involvement in decisions often difficult to grasp; it is then quite difficult to imagine completely participatory planning processes, based on the shared framing of issues and the consequent design of solutions. Considering this, from the above position of institutions in charge of planning two main objects could be significant for representation: practices and opinions. Practices include what is going on in the metropolitan space, referring in particular to mobility patterns and their relationships with everyday urban experiences. They shape what takes place in a given setting, determining the concrete features of mobility: the covered trajectories, the rhythms of trips, the modal choices; they intercept the many dimensions described by De Certeau (1984: 115): 'in modern Athens, the vehicles of mass transportation are called metaphorai. To go work or come home, one takes a "metaphor" – a bus or a train. Stories could also take this noble name: every day, they traverse and organize places; they select and link them together; they makes sentences and itineraries out of them. They are spatial trajectories'. These multiple dimensions of movement are intertwined between each other, as initially described, and shape a wide range of mobility practices

only partially represented. Recovering then the phenomenological perspective from which these uses of metropolitan space are observed, forms of interaction from above can extend a lacunous knowledge and increase possibilities for a more effective public action.

Opinions instead include the public attitude towards given issues and solutions to them, determining also consensus or dissent to specific policy decisions. This aspect intervenes during and after the definition of actions to carry on: the public acceptance of decisions is in fact a crucial aspect of public action, since it influences both the feasibility of the action itself and the consensus to its political promoters – which will be reflected in electoral occasions and will determine their possibility to take again public decisions. The relevance of this feature is then able to shape decisions themselves and is thus a crucial aspect for effective policy actions. A previous probing of public opinion can be decisive also when dealing with debated issues, in order to adopt controversial – but consensual – decisions. The public involvement introduced by specific law regulations provides occasions to elaborate observations to plans and decisions, expressing the dissent of individuals and groups which will be necessarily taken into account in the planning process – at least, with a standard negative reply; nevertheless, it could be relevant to develop specific occasions for public hearing, even if simply as an occasion to measure the local consensus or opposition to a certain issue (an example in this sense are the French experiences of *débat public*; see Mansillon, 2006).

#### *Addressing collectivity or groups*

Practices and opinions are two different features which intervene in different (but not fixed) moments of the planning process. An example in this sense will come from the two concrete cases described: the 2011 referendum held in Milan, an occasion to test the public orientation about key urban issues like mobility, pollution and energy, and a mapping experimentation involving migrants, an attempt to expand the knowledge about marginal urban practices. The two examples intercept also two other dimensions, defining different subjects to involve. In the first case in fact the recipients are all the inhabitants of Milan, who are asked to express their opinion about five general questions; to be true, the general involvement is still a limited one, since it includes only subjects entitled to vote in the central city. In the second case instead a peculiar group is defined and approached through a devoted initiative, intended to increase the knowledge about a specific topic (ignored mobility practices) by addressing finite subjects. The two examples reflect the described distinction between universalism and differentialism, which brings to the prevalence of a population approach – as already quoted. The presence of differences seems crucial not just for a deeper understanding of city and society as they currently are: ‘there are much more specific reasons to recognize the intertwining between universalism and differentialism as a background for urban planning. First, the need to rethink the connection between local and supralocal choices is traditionally a central issue (...). More radically, it implies to rethink the self-government of the community in the face of the expropriation of the democratic decision for a relevant number of supralocal collective choices, for which often

emergency logics and depoliticisation cohabit' (Pasqui, 2013).

From the above perspective of institutions, interactions with subjects usually defined as policy takers mix together these two different approaches. The case of Milan, and the public involvement processes related to its plans, seem to demonstrate this dual nature. The attitude of participatory initiatives is usually an universalistic one, aiming at the broadest involvement as an occasion to communicate information and obtain feedbacks – providing then the needed public consensus to the discussed actions. Yet, observing how participation processes are structured, it can be seen that specific groups and subjects are intercepted, concretely repeating an usual structure of involvement. The ongoing Sump process shows something similar, having promoted for the moment a public start of the “ process of elaboration and sharing” (on July 2013) which has been followed by meetings for local boroughs and stakeholders: the main occasions of interaction promoted by municipality have then addressed only specific subjects, usually belonging to established policy arenas (as may be inferred by the minutes of these meetings; see Amat, 2013b).

Universalist or differentialist attitudes may address subjects with the most diverse attitudes towards planning processes: some may want to have their say without any opportunity to do so; others may express their opinions; some others could be unsuccessfully searched; and again other subjects could have no interest in participating and be of no interest for policy makers. These extremes convey the wide range of options which policy decisions may deal with, and seem to mark a difference with the idea of participation. As already stated, and avoiding the wide debate on participation, its meanings and weaknesses, the concept of interaction appears as more suitable for the issues here discussed: it goes beyond the “simple” involvement in decisional processes and refers to a broader relationship between subjects, which may shape both existing features of movement and future decisions for its planning. Policy can be framed as processes of social interaction (Crosta, 2010), a fact that frames them in a broader sense: it is not just a question of searching for significant subjects and bring them in already structured – or at least imagined – processes, but rather to establish a relationship with them and understand which conditions make interaction significant.

Inflecting this approach in relation to subjects and objects as intercepted from above, it seems that both practices and opinions could be represented, contributing to the shaping of planning decisions; at least from a theoretical perspective, they could have a significant role. As for the subjects involved, potentially any individual or group may have something to say, being creators of specific metaphors inflected through spatial trajectories (as described by De Certeau). According to the aims of the processes and to the attitudes of subjects (and depending on their recognisability sometimes), interactions could address them indifferently or privileging some groups. To define the effective forms of interaction, not only the setting conditions, but also the guiding aims are crucial.

### **Voices and decisions**

Different objects and subjects may contribute to evenly different aims, inflected at



changing territorial scales. The potential use of initiatives involving from above in fact may intervene in different settings and contribute in diverse stages of a planning process; in particular, they could contribute to the construction of decisions or to their approval, and may move between local and superior territorial levels.

### *Building visions or consensus*

The main objects involved in the interaction started from policy making actors could contribute to the design of policy or to its support. Considering then the metropolitan scale at which mobility issues are (or should be) mainly discussed, contributions could help to build visions or consensus, shaping decisions or supporting them; it could be imagined that specific issues could be discussed in detail only in some, limited cases: a part from specific niches (for example, logistics), most of the topics would require a deep local knowledge to discuss the details of their implementation. Subjects and objects could anyway be differently arranged according to the intended aims.

Both theoretical categorisations of public involvement in transport planning (like Bickerstaff et al, 2002) and successful case studies (for example, the three cities previously remembered) show a wide range of available approaches and their different contributions to effective policy decisions. Principles like inclusivity, transparency, interactivity and continuity are in fact inflected in public involvement procedures rarely aiming at the production of visions or at public deliberations: more often in fact consultations are compulsory requirements collecting opinions on decisions already taken, or occasions to communicate specific information on mobility and its policy. Public involvement in transport planning can then show a radical or (more often) a minimal involvement, and be variously directed; anyway, more structured and interactive participatory processes are usually established to define shared visions (as in the case of Dresden), while more static and occasional initiatives provide information or focus on specific critical aspects. This distinction could be also challenged by facts: for example, Bogotá promoted a successful transport policy without any previous public involvement, and yet implementing a radical initiative appreciated by its recipients. A key element in this sense seems the guiding vision, that of a city based on a more just access to opportunities thanks to public transport. The principle, initially defined by the mayor in charge, has been gradually appropriated by local inhabitants, contributing to the success of the policy.

The example of Bogotá introduces sensemaking as a decisive factor: be it related to the construction of decisions or to their understanding, a crucial element for institutions seems the creation – or the promotion – of a framework for the ongoing mobility policy. Recovering Weick, sensemaking appears as the possibility to give meaning to experience by considering individual identities, retrospective hints and cues from the present in a continuously ongoing process. Inflecting this approach, the practices of urban populations are effects of tales providing meanings, and at the same time produce meanings of their own (Pasqui, 2008). It could be imagined then a specific contribution of policy to the construction of such an identity, adding elements for the construction of a wider meaning. Policy could in fact produce visions of its own, meaningful

frameworks that may intercept individual and communitarian meanings, being felt as a relevant element contributing to the sensemaking of specific populations; as for consensus, the production of meanings could help the appropriation of already taken decisions, explaining their relevance for the recipients. Differently inflected according to visions to construct or decisions to support, the production of meaning can thus show the significance of a certain policy for individuals and populations, and in the same time can contribute to the elaboration of wider meanings, especially when missing (Attili, 2007).

#### *Metropolitan settings, municipal hearing*

Any interaction from above involving metropolitan transport decisions has to deal with an unavoidable asymmetry: the discussed issues have a transcalar nature, while no specific subjects are entitled to deal with them. The effectiveness and even the significance of public involvement initiatives dealing with mobility in particular are related to three elements (differently mentioned when discussing the disoriented action of institutional actors): the treated issues, the administrative structure and the intercepted populations.

The meanings of movement and its present features involve elusive mobility practices, which swing from very local patterns to long distance trips. No borders can be really recognised to contain movement and develop possible treatments, so that the object itself of public action has to be delimited necessarily excluding relevant elements. The varied territorial scales on which movement is inflected challenge also the current administrative structures: the borders of local and regional authorities in fact are more and more shadow lines, not really meaningful when considering issues that are developed out of traditional territorial subdivisions. In some cases, devoted authorities are established to deal with supralocal issues, and according to their powers can obtain more or less effective results. In the case of Milan, while a metropolitan authority is probably incoming (but without clear competences, right now), the treatment of metropolitan transport issues is in charge of small local authorities or of ineffective superior subjects (as provinces or the region, which develop weak planning decisions). The ongoing Sump process is an example in this sense: the central municipality is developing a mobility plan with metropolitan ambitions, even if its effective applications will just fall within the municipal borders. Consequently, an asymmetry emerges when metropolitan contents are discussed within a municipal hearing process: involved subjects may be representative of wider interests, but still the initiatives for public participation don't address the metropolitan population directly affected by the discussed decisions.

The same definition of metropolitan population could be questioned, recovering the described multiplicity of urban populations and their effective relationship with metropolitan territories. A part from the multiplicity that characterises individual identities and collective belongings, a crucial issue affecting the possibility of an interaction from above with populations is their transitory condition. Cities are in fact inhabited by 'a mobile population continuously expanding' (Pezzoni, 2013: 32),

challenging the traditional connection between urban space and permanence. The transitory condition of the current urban experience challenges then the possibility to define possible subjects to interact with, since the present forms of interaction are mainly able to address the inhabitants of the central city. The approach to knowledge and consensus, through practices and opinions, has thus to face specific limitations.

What emerges is then the limited effectiveness of traditional tools put in action at a wider territorial scale. Rather than developing general approaches, the asymmetry of issues, scales and tools suggest an attentive approach to the specific exigencies for policy, defining then contributions, parts of the process and subjects to involve. The following case studies interact differently with the discussed dimensions: they address a community or specific groups, searching for opinions or information; they only share the municipal setting in which they are applied. Different are the possible approaches and occasions to develop interactions, but common can be their relationship with a broader construction of meaning.

### **Searching general opinions: the 2011 referendum**

In 2011, a municipal referendum was held in Milan, publicly asking the opinion of the locals about specific mobility issues. The consultation provides a case for general hearing outside legal requirements: the referendum was not related to any compulsory participatory occasions, like those evaluating plans; moreover, the hearing of the city was not related to a plan, but was addressing a more general vision of the city.

#### *Reasons and modes for a public consultation*

Describing the referendum as an interaction from above, the “spurious” nature of the initiative emerges. The consultation in fact was held by the municipality, but it had been promoted by the committee “Milano si muove”, transversally including different subjects. On its website, the committee defines itself as a transversal group of citizens with different political, cultural, social, scientific and academic experiences, aiming at making Milan a more healthy and livable city; its varied structure is reflected in the initial promoters (a former deputy mayor for mobility, a radical politician, an environmental activist) and in the supporters, including associations, academics, journalists, politicians and other public figures.

Such a varied support gathered around five specific questions, addressing general and specific issues about mobility, energy and environment. The first question asked the reduction of traffic congestion and smog, through the strengthening of public transport services, the expansion of the already existing pollution charge (called Ecopass) and the pedestrianisation of the city centre. The second and the third questions focused on environmental quality, asking in general to double trees and green surfaces, to reduce the land consumption and, in particular, to preserve the Expo area as a park after the conclusion of the exhibition. The fourth question addressed energetic issues, promoting energy conservation and lower pollutant emissions; finally, the last question – the most visionary one – asked to reopen the inner Navigli, a network of canals bordering the city

centre and covered decades ago. All the questions had specific details on the economic costs and the possible resources to pay them, while the demands concerning mobility inflected prior actions to adopt.

The referendum initiative started in 2010, collecting the needed signatures for the official presentation of the questions. In few months, more than 125.000 signatures were given, largely overcoming the threshold of 15.000 subscribers; this was presented by the promoters as a first, decisive sign of the wide public interest for the discussed topics. The consultation took then place in June 2011, somehow a crucial moment for the local and national politics: on the one hand, in May municipal elections were held; on the other one, in June – on the same date – national referendum were discussed, involving topics like urban water management and nuclear energy. The local consultation became thus part of a key moment involving local politics and civil society, contributing to a decisive local turn. The various electoral occasions of 2011 in fact led to a subversion of established equilibriums: as already remembered, the centre-right majority was replaced by a centre-left one after almost two decades; the national referendum were unexpectedly successful and blocked contested laws, having consequences also on the government in charge; and all these aspects intercepted a peculiar moment of social involvement around issues like commons and participation (Uggiero, 2012).

Coming in the final part of this evolution, the local referendum had in the end successful outcomes. The quorum (30%) was largely overcome (49% of the voters expressed their opinion), and all the questions were largely approved; interestingly, four of them were approved by more than the 90% of the voters, while the first one – concerning traffic – had a much lower share of approvals (79%). As a tool for consultation – without any formal consequence, the referendum provided clear guidelines for some policy fields. More importantly, in the background of the referendum initiative, the involvement of associations proved to be a decisive element; probably, it is the element that makes the initiative relevant also from an institutional point of view. The mobilisation of large groups of citizens has in fact a clear political value, in terms of consensus (and also votes), and the outcomes of the referendum process suggest which potential meanings a general consultation may have for policy.

#### *Outcomes and remnants*

The 2011 consultation provides a case for an interaction from above with the general public, addressing potentially all the citizens. No specific distinctions are made, without then privileging established representations of interests: the traditional stakeholders may play a relevant role, influencing the debate and promoting the involvement of the city, but they are not the only receivers of this peculiar interaction from above. Nevertheless, defining the referendum as a form of interaction from above without specific receivers could be wrong, at least in part. On the one hand, only some subjects are effectively addressed – those residing in the central city and with right to vote: city users and metropolitan inhabitants can't express their opinion, even if the discussed issues may have relevant consequences also for their everyday urban experiences (including

mobility practices); on the other hand, the referendum is the outcome of a specific campaign promoted by various social actors, rather than being an autonomous initiative of the municipality. Institutions in this case have developed an interaction with the whole city, accepting a request from below and appropriating it in an initially neutral way (just implementing it, as required by law). Moreover, the consultation is not binding and rather provides guidelines for the administration.

Orientation is probably the main function played by the referendum, considering its juridical role and the contemporary political turn which took place in Milan. Consultation in fact is not binding and rather indicates a landmark for specific urban issues. The five questions recognise some crucial aspects and define specific claims about them, drawing in general the image of a more sustainable city; despite some details concerning implementation and feasibility, the promoters seem to establish some challenges, making them visible in the local political debate and in the perception of the citizens. This last aspect can be inferred also by the final results, strongly supporting the claims of the referendum: a large number of voters (a relevant part of the municipal population) expressed their agreement with the generic proposals for a more sustainable Milan; they focused on some principles and didn't sustain any specific project (in this sense, the lower consensus to specific proposals like an expansion of the pollution charge is somehow significant). The general consultation provided thus a feedback of the prevailing orientation of the city on issues concerning crucial policy fields, including mobility.

Concretely, the orientation provided by referendum has worked on different levels. Some implemented decisions are a direct reflection of the consultation: the previous pollution charge, *Ecopass*, was transformed into a congestion charge, *Area C*, increasing the categories of vehicles included and consequently its effectiveness in terms of congestion and pollution reduction; moreover, a board for the fulfillment of the referendum was established, monitoring mobility policy and providing evaluations on specific projects (for example, the urban traffic plan, or urban requalification projects like the one for the former docks). A part from these visible results, the main remnants of the consultation are in the approaches to decisions affecting the discussed claims, including mobility (Boitani and Ponti, 2013). Many interventions, at different scales, have been promoted as pieces contributing to the implementation of the urban vision expressed in the referendum – be them cycle routes, empowerment of public transport services or pedestrianisations; urban plans – like the ongoing *Sump* or the revised urban development document – assume the referendum as a background reference (Galuzzi et al, 2012), given its support to a general idea of sustainability. The consultation has somehow an instrumental role: it is differently used to promote some projects (which would follow the guidelines popularly supported) or to criticize too timorous urban initiatives, but its concrete implementation is difficult (given also its generic claims). A key example in this sense is the debate on the reopening of *Navigli*, an operation scarcely feasible but often defended referring to the popular support expressed with the 2011 referendum (Lipparini, 2012).

Crumbs and trawls remaining few years after the consultation suggest hints for an evaluation of this interaction from above addressing the urban community as a whole.

From the referendum initiative, what emerges is a general support to a certain (and generic) vision of the city: its development should be sustainable and privilege those issues which are directly seen as affecting quality of life. The consultation provides then an orientation, inflected through general guidelines for specific fields – in particular, mobility, energy and environment. Summarising, the consultation almost represent the feeling of citizens for their own city, expressing a sensitivity (which could be positive or negative) for certain issues and potential approaches to them. The result of a consultation like this provides thus support to specific actions, but in a quite generic way: it is a preliminary positive attitude to certain policy decisions, which can work as a first persuading element for their adoption. Looking at the Milan case, it is difficult to observe something more than this general support; in particular, two aspects seem improvable. The first one is the effective representativeness of the referendum tool: it addresses the municipal population, but doesn't involve all those subjects who experience the city but are not entitled to vote – be them city users, foreign inhabitants or newcomers; a potential correction could be the adoption of a system with multiple votes, to be used in a metropolitan setting according to one's own interests (Frug, 1999). A second crucial aspect is the generic result deriving from this kind of consultation, which is not binding and generally addressing complex issues. Actually, they convey orientations, almost “feelings” of what the urban population thinks about specific issues. They are a powerful tool for consensus or dissent, recognisable on the public scene and easily usable, but can difficultly provide punctual indications on what to do. Public consultations of this kind seems thus to have an instrumental role, while an interesting aspect could be that of providing more punctual indications on crucial urban issues; this would have to combine the complexity of the discussed topics with the necessary simplicity of an enlarged public debate. In conclusion, general consultations arranged from above can establish an interaction with the citizens directly asking for their net opinion, defining the public orientation about specific issues; the outcomes are inevitably generic, so that other forms of interactions are required to obtain richer results.

### **Looking for specific voices: mapping migrant mobility**

Interaction from above may also address specific groups, as it often happens in public involvement. Yet, many planning processes – including the ongoing one for Milan Sump – focus on specific subjects, who represent specific interests or categories. These actors are easily recognizable and particularly structured: they are then represented and able to represent themselves, intervening in decisional processes and debating with other, similar subjects. This often leads to participatory processes characterised by similar actor arenas, showing established patterns of interaction between the same actors and their proposal; simplifying and adopting a critical approach, public involvement consists in the repetition of usual interactive schemes, without any significant evolution of subjects and objects. Trying to subvert this usual perspective, marginality – actors and subjects without such an established representation – could become the target of an interaction looking for specific voices; an example in this sense

is an experimentation addressing migrants and their everyday movement maps.

### *Intercepting marginality*

A number of urban populations and practices are part of the so-called insurgent city, made of bottom-up situations that ‘already exists, and not only in the interstices, the cracks on space and time, but in the very face of power’ (Sandercock, 1998: 157). Their presence is relevant even if not directly addressed by institutions and decisions, as an attempt to ‘transform the living territory, marking the signs of one’s own existence and desires, shaping, together with one’s own destiny, a part of the collective destiny’ (Paba, 2003: 53). For the moment, the antagonist nature of these practices is not central, while relevant is the marginal role they have in the institutional perspective of decisions. Marginal groups are seldom included in planning processes, and sometimes simply not considered; nevertheless, as previously quoted, ‘to be marginal doesn’t mean to condemn oneself to insignificance. Quite the opposite: staying in the margins it is possible to test a different perspective; it means to choose to face an issue attacking it from the edges; it means to adopt a liminal look being aware that it is strategically fertile’ (Calvaresi, 2013).

The potential interest in the involvement of groups which don’t generally take part in planning processes has led to an experimentation addressing, in particular, migrants: a group of them was asked to describe its mobility practices through words and maps; in the beginning, the initiative was intended as a contribution to the ongoing Sump process, but the proposal wasn’t able to be involved in the public involvement programme already structured. Despite this, there may be elements of interest for the initial questions explored by this research.

In the perception of technicians and politicians – and somehow in any attentive everyday urban experience – migrant mobility is difficult to grasp, but has in the same time some distinctive features: the prevailing use of public transport, since private vehicles often are not affordable; the concentration along specific peripheral radial and (more importantly) circular routes; the diffused difficulties in using public transport services, because of their fares and timetables. No relevant data seem to support this perception of what migrant mobility is, so that it is considered as an invisible element sharing features with common mobility practices but also characterised by untreatable peculiarities. The idea of directly involving migrants to represent their mobility practices (and the consequent appropriation of the cities) is then moved by two interests: the first one refers to the current incomplete knowledge about their mobility, an aspect which may contribute to more effective transport planning decisions; the second one is rooted in the social meanings of movement, reflected in the opportunities they provide and particularly visible in the life trajectories of marginal groups, as usually migrants are.

Differently from the other cases here described, this direct address to migrants has been developed as a free experimentation and is not an official initiative promoted by institutions or other recognisable subjects. In particular, the focus has been on some language classes, as a way to define a suitable urban populations: that of migrants who have been present in the city for a stable period (and are not just passing by before

reaching other European destinations), but still maintain a certain extraneousness, marked also by their partial language requirements (differently from second generation migrants). Language is then seen as a potential sign of a distinctive urban experience, based on the partial possession of the tools which are needed to appropriate the city (and then its opportunities, including also the crucial role mobility has in this sense). The definition of the target population is based on some assumptions defining not only the potential appropriation of the city, but also the possible relations with the discussed topic and potential forms of involvement in public debate: these elements are probably missing, imagining the interest in more urgent (material) needs, the ability in finding autonomously alternative solutions and the absent participation in traditional forms of local involvement like committees and associations. In general, the definition itself of migrant can be questioned, since also the extremes of this condition – the newly arrived refugee (Pezzoni, 2013) or the second generation son (Cologna et al, 2009) – move between blurred borders and have very different everyday urban experiences.

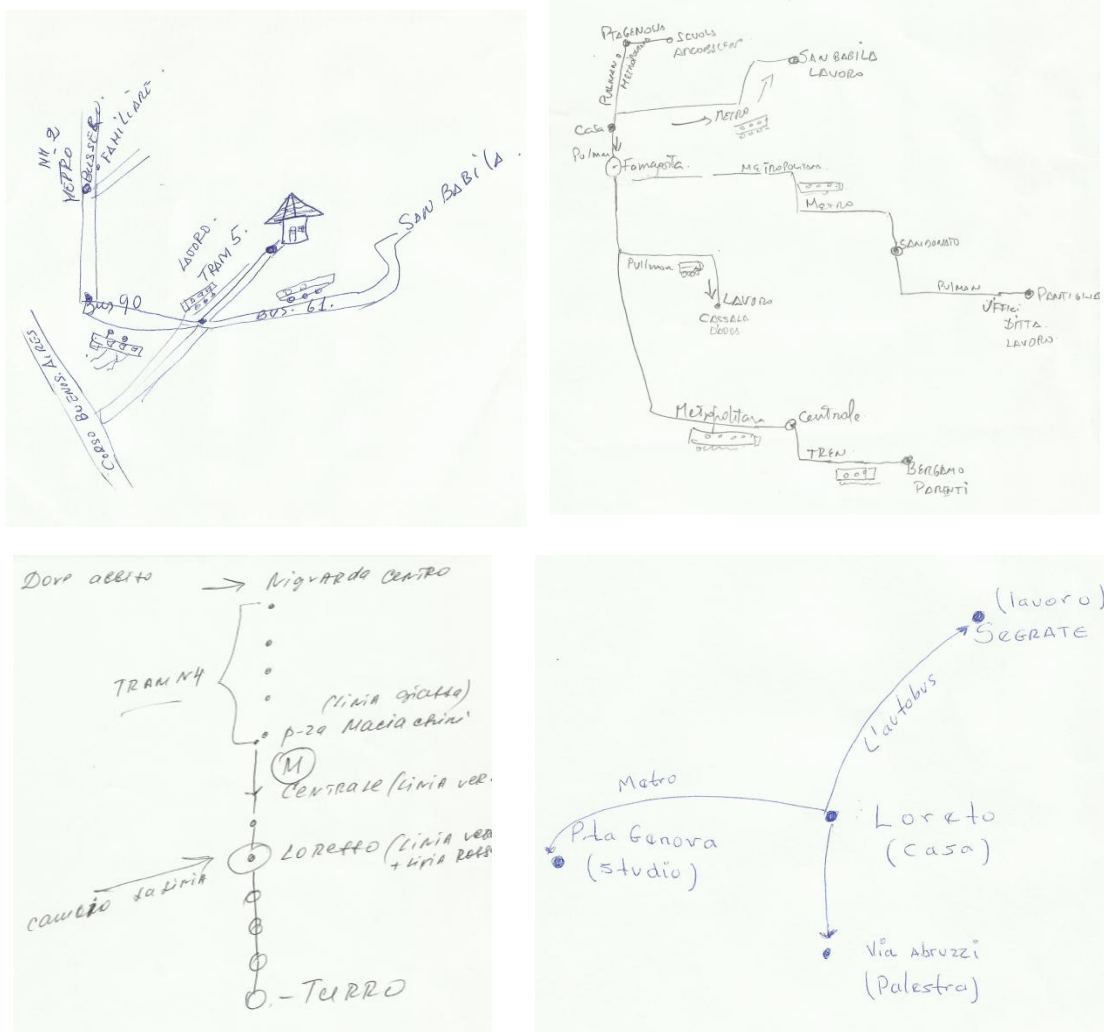
A first experimentation of this approach was personally conducted in a Milan language school, located in the central area of Porta Genova. About 60 people with different language skills (from very beginners to advanced students) were involved and asked to participate in the mapping work during the lessons, working on their own but close to their classmates. The students received a short questionnaire and a white sheet, to describe the everyday movement experience with words and (possibly) drawings. General questions tried to define the subjects (in particular, provenience, age and address), while the location of workplaces, spaces for leisure and the study of language provided hints on the places differently used by the migrants. Finally, questions related to movement focused on means of transport, their easiness of use and on possible suggestions for improving urban mobility in Milan. As for the questionnaire, general questions aimed at obtaining basic information and left space for the free description of issues and experiences; in the same way, the provision of a simple sheet for drawing – without any geographic reference nor guidelines for the work – was intended to favour a spontaneous expression of any individual (as also stated in Pezzoni, 2013). Interestingly, the large majority of the respondents answered to the written questions, while half of them also accepted to draw their own everyday movement maps: among them, the quality of the drawings differs, moving from fast sketches to detailed accounts including every trip, showing also different forms of representation (linear schemes, geographical maps, realistic drawings of places and streets). Expressive languages change according to the age, the provenience and the permanence of the respondents, showing in particular richer results for youth and for people with a longer experience of the city; in the most advanced classes, this was also reflected in the oral discussion that went together with the filling of the questions.

As may be easily inferred, different backgrounds lead to different urban experiences. The adult woman from Middle East almost commute between her house and the language school, while the Latin American warehouseman combines multiple jobs in towns bordering Milan; young people just arrived explore the city gradually moving from the neighbourhood they live in, while others arrived from a long time have complex patterns of movement taking together varied central and peripheral places. The



multiplicity of the backgrounds and the mobility practices they shape provide a partial – yet fascinating – account of what a certain branch of migrant mobility is in Milan. Any tale is different and probably missing some details, but matching the answers of the respondents some common features emerge.

*Comparing official and marginal images of the city*



**Fig. 3 – 6** Some of the drawn maps: the mobility patterns of Ascencia, Liliana, Tatiana, Yoban

The main evidence is the use of public transport, the first (and often the only) transport mean for all the respondents. Compared to their home countries, the service quality is high and within the city provides good links between its areas; in particular, the subway is recognised and appreciated, even if often many interchanges are needed in order to reach the underground stations. Subway is appreciated in particular as a recognisable network, whose links and stations can be easily understood also by “urban beginners”. The structure of the network is a fundamental orientation tool and influences the mobility practices of the respondent, who tend to privilege the use of underground trains for both short and long trips; moreover, the network is so

significant for the recognition of a city that it shapes the migrant image of the city, appearing in many maps as the basic structural element for a representation of individual mobility practices. When crossing the municipal border instead the quality of public transport services is much lower compared to the city, as demonstrated by lack of connections, low frequencies and missing coordination between interchanging services. These elements directly affect migrant mobility patterns, that would require good links at a metropolitan level in order to reach residences and workplaces; the poor quality of the available services influence the opportunities for movement and reduces the possibility to move to the working hours. Usually in fact migrants don't have private vehicles, like cars or motorbikes, or own means (bicycles, for example) which can't be used on long distances: this explains the prevalence of public transport and the consequent restrictions to migrant mobility.

Most of the respondents generally appreciate the quality of public transport, often stating that no improvements are required (or that the system can improve even more); still, some of them indicate general or punctual elements that would require interventions. A crucial aspect is the fare system, discussed for prices and complex structure: several remarks ask not to increase the current fares, probably in the wake of the recent increases in the ticket prices. Fares are crucial also at a metropolitan scale, for which many claims are expressed. Suburban and provincial services are in general a key element for migrant mobility patterns, as means to combine cheaper housing and spread workplaces; their features are particularly critical in the migrant experience. Remarks focus on frequencies and networks: frequencies are low and services are usually suspended soon in the evening or in the weekends; some locations can then be reached only in specific moments. Moreover, different services often lack coordination, having not integrated timetables: because of this, trips requiring interchanges are usually characterised by long waiting times, if not by the impossibility to complete the travel using public transport (when connections are missed). Together with general claims, the respondents also advance more precise observations, concerning urban mobility. A first element involves public transport – and tramways in particular, characterised by slow speed, especially in the city centre. The low attractiveness of public services along specific routes inspire a second element, the claim for more transport alternatives: some of the respondents interestingly cite bicycles as suitable means, if more devoted lanes were available.

Mobility practices and (explicit or implicit) policy suggestions deriving from this mapping experimentation provide a representation of movement in Milan – of course, with partial results and a purposely limited perspective. Choosing a marginal point of view, the aim was to understand if an intended partiality could provide elements for a more complete representation of mobility practices and for a wider involvement in public decisions: the results can thus be observed together with the first outcomes of the ongoing process for Milan mobility plan, considering both its starting survey and the

first initiatives for public involvement.

As for the survey, migrant maps seem to confirm the general perceptions initially described. Public transport prevails over other means and is the main – if not the only – modal choice for the migrants: the capillary network, the recognisable links (in particular, subways and high frequency lines) and the low urban fares promote public services in comparison to other means like cars, motorbikes and bicycles. The clear prevalence of this modal choice fits well in the urban modal split defined by the first surveys for Milan Sump (Amat, 2013a): 57% of the trips within Milan use public transport, covering then the large majority of internal movements. The situation is quite different when referring to interchange trips between Milan and the bordering municipalities: scarce links, not frequent and often difficult to recognise (given the complex fare system and the changing routes) provide bad connection in the Milan metropolitan area, almost disappearing after the rush hours. Public transport doesn't provide reliable connections, making necessary to find alternative solutions. Usually, this leads to the prevalent choice of private vehicles as privileged solution for movement: 43% of the trips to and from Milan are covered by car, but the still prevailing use of public transport (48%) is concentrated along those axes with frequent rail services. Compared to the description of the current metropolitan modal split, the trajectories of migrant mobility reflect the same issue from a different perspective; data describe the general trends, while individual mobility practices describe a part of them: the migrant can't afford private vehicles, so he won't be able to freely move in settings without any alternative to the use of car.

A comparison between the variously expressed suggestions of migrants and the claims reported in the official public involvement occasions (Amat, 2013b) show unexpected convergences between the results. Minutes from the meetings with boroughs and stakeholders have of course a higher level of complexity, involving more established subjects and covering a wider range of fields; yet, even with different language and focus some similar aspects emerge. Also from public involvement, a problem of system legibility is evident: the present transport network could improve its usability, reducing useless complexity and exploiting efficiency. Then, the fare system should be an integrated one, simplifying fares and improving intermodality; continuous connections provided by different operators should be coordinated thanks to a metropolitan transport planning authority; suburban and provincial links should be planned as effective alternatives to private means of transport. Similar issues are observed from different perspectives: from below, they are characterized by the consequent disadvantages for individual mobility; from above, problems are pointed out together with potential solutions. Something similar takes place also with specific issues, like public transport speed in the city centre: while migrants underline the better performances of walking, stakeholders and boroughs indicate those rules (for example, the compulsory distance between trams) which could be changed to solve the issue; the same aspect is thus described using different details. The only radically different element is the overall judgement of the Milan transport system: it is strongly criticised by the locals, who basically see it as a necessary – but not competitive – presence, avoidable when possible; migrants instead generally have a good opinion of the service, so that

often no specific suggestion for improvement are provided in their interviews.

A complementary role for specific representations seems then to emerge from the described experimentation. On the one hand, the specific search for subjects is necessary, since the same technical tools (like origin-destinations surveys) are initially based on individual descriptions of mobility trajectories – which are then treated with analytical models. On the other hand, individual descriptions like those here briefly summarised provide the opportunity for a richer explanation of the ongoing mobility. The mere results deriving from models and matrixes in fact offer general figures of movement, showing the prevailing trips and modal choices; they represent flows, but don't explain what these flows are for individuals. Any subject in fact differently combines trips and modes, depending on his specific needs and opportunities and influencing, according to this, his individual needs and opportunities. Flows are general, but their combination – the consequent mobility patterns – is strictly individual, changing then when the mobile subject change. Specific forms of representation could be devoted to different groups or areas, but the complementary information they provide may seem not necessary: it doesn't add any huge missing piece to the picture of mobility, especially when dealing with wide metropolitan settings; nevertheless, recovering the multiple meanings of movement initially described, mobility is not just a combination of trips between points, but rather define individual opportunities and contributes to the shaping of personal identities. Devoted representations can help to grasp this aspect, for a better understanding of what exists and a more careful planning of what might be.

### **Consulta(c)tion**

The starting questions, here inflected in relationship to interactions promoted from above, intercept a number of cues concerning urban population, mobility practices and their contributions to transport policy. Combining theoretical suggestions and on field outcomes, some findings can be outlined to discuss the relationship between consultation and public action. The first question is the relevance of interactions from above, as institutional initiatives to consult citizens or specific population: they seem to provide contributions to planning decisions and their implementations, at least if interaction focuses on precise elements; then, initiatives that go beyond the simple validation of already taken choices may have a relevance of their own (differently from many compulsory participatory initiatives), even if necessarily incomplete. Crucial seems the adoption of new forms for involvement: rather than proposing fixed schemes, institutional subjects should focus on the construction of significant relationships with these other subjects (Delrio, 2011), to be inflected through devoted initiatives or the use of new tools (Pucci, 2013).

Since this general approach could be potentially applied with any subject, it has been referred to specific categories: inhabitants (via associations) in the referendum, migrants in the mapping experimentation. Everyone in fact could be involved in consultation initiatives, even if it is crucial to define subjects who effectively may have something to say and could be interested in expressing their opinion; an example of this is the

referendum, which addresses the whole municipal population on issues of common interests, but sees only half of the voters effectively taking part in it. Then, on the one hand a crucial aspect is the establishment of a meaningful interaction, which could bring to new contributions for policy; on the other one, also the description of target groups is tricky. For example, it is different to address the entire urban or metropolitan population: this second group is much wider and affected by decisions of the central city, but is difficult to intercept via official occasions; being aware of the two involved scales – the municipal and the metropolitan – specific voting systems could be arranged (Frug, 1999), but it is quite complex (and not necessarily meaningful) to provide multiple votes at multiple territorial levels. Another difficult aspect is the involvement of specific groups – definable as urban populations - whose definition is always based on specific assumptions and could risk to be not significant enough for a policy acting at the metropolitan scale.

Potentially, any individual, community or urban population may then have its say when dealing with territorial planning issues; what could be their say is relevant, too. Interactions from above are usually focused on representation, as a way to portray practices and opinions; the interest concentrates then on knowledge and consensus. From the two described cases, a complementary role of consultation seems to emerge. The referendum represents a clear political guideline, easily usable as a landmark: it provides a clear reference without subverting perceived opinions or giving further details for action; the mapping experimentation (pretending its inclusion in the official mobility planning process) highlights already known issues from a marginal and not explored perspective, giving then a richer representation of a different everyday urban experience (and its mobility patterns). Using a wide range of new tools, forms of consultation seem to have a complementary role when discussing general issues difficult to directly grasp, like mobility in a metropolitan setting: they could probably show surprising results and suggest completely different actions when acting at a local scale (Jacobs, 1963), while in the wide setting discussed they can probably contribute to a better understanding of what exists and what could be. Considering the various meanings of movement and their influence on lives which are more and more mobile (Elliott and Urry, 2010), an increased knowledge, and even awareness, can be relevant for a better metropolitan mobility planning.

The sensibility to a different form of knowledge, richer even if not immediately useful, is crucial in determining the institutional attitude to consultation. In general, a direct address to citizens is seen as a positive and necessary feature, inspiring good experiences of local administration (Delrio, 2011) and appearing as a precondition for effective plans – also in the case of Milan and its Sump (Amat, 2012). The concrete dimension of this interest has to face the dual nature of local institutions, led by politicians but managed by technicians. Their attitude is of course different: at least in the direct experience with Milan mobility planning, politicians consider it as a key element to communicate the participatory attitude of the municipality, stressing the simple presence of occasions for public debate; technicians instead accept the feedbacks compatible with those decisions whose political or technical feasibility has already been tested, showing a basic skepticism towards public involvement (or, at least, a public

involvement not intended as effective confrontation). It is relevant to observe that the two examples previously discussed originate in not institutional fields: forms of interaction more complex than the simple, compulsory participation are inspired by initiatives which are (differently) voluntary. A difference between participation and interaction seems thus to emerge, showing that different forms of involvement (and consequently, different results) can come from different attitudes; the establishment of significant relationships may assume the most diverse forms, but an effective engagement with the other – be it an individual, an urban population, a community – seem to provide more effective results. Crucial are then broader forms of relationship, based on a mutual awareness, which recognise the existence and the value of the other subject (Sennett, 2012).

Interactions from above can then provide a significant contribution to mobility planning in metropolitan settings, increasing the knowledge of what takes place (in term of movement patterns, related practices, and opportunities) and what could be (in term of public general opinions or political acceptability). The attitude to public involvement is significant, too: a specific awareness has to understand the potential meaning of such initiatives, even if it is not immediately tangible; consequently, relevant are also the relationships established with involved subjects. From the described initiatives, it seems that according to aims, subjects and settings, different approaches and tools may be developed: subjects and objects should be previously defined, while the concrete tools to use could change according to the occasion. Consequently, also the relationship between consultation initiatives and planning processes is not defined: a relevant contribution may be provided in different moments, from the initial visioning to the final public discussion of shaped decisions; the quoted case studies of Dresden and Île-de-France are examples of these different arrangements of public involvement. More than tools, attitudes seem crucial: then, a significant interaction between institutions and the varied subjects moving through metropolitan settings should refer to guidelines more than to toolboxes.

## 6. From below: supporting claims and visions

### Claiming by practice

Contributions to the shaping of movement and its policy may come also from below, promoted through the action of individuals and groups aiming for a change. Even the simplest action could have a political meaning – and all practices are political (Crosta, 2010), intercepting and interacting official decisions in the most diverse ways. Going back to Sicily in the Fifties, the grassroots experience of Danilo Dolci provides a clear example in this sense, thanks to famous actions which show the possibility to support claims and visions even from below (Dolci, 2009; 2013). Working as a social animator in the poor village of Partinico, Dolci defined a vision for the development of that underdeveloped area fundamentally neglected by the ongoing public action. Together with an action of sensibilisation through petitions and interventions in the political debate, he ‘arranged a “backward” strike, in which unemployed protested against their condition working. One morning, behold, Dolci and a group of unemployed from Partinico devoted themselves to the repair of a local road – on their own initiative and completely for free. The police duly came over these heterodox benefactors, arresting some of them’ (Huxley, 2013).

This famous backward strike, arranged in 1956, has many features in common also with many practices promoted by urban populations to support their claims from below. It is inspired by a specific vision of what a territory could be, an idea different from the current one conveyed by public action (in that case, completely missing); it is an insurgent action, characterised by a contesting attitude towards ongoing public approaches to local issues; and it also produces commons, both asking for productive investments (like a dam that should make local land more cultivable) and intervening on local shabby infrastructures (like the described road). The initiatives promoted by Dolci in Partinico are an unique example, given their founding awareness and the presence of such a relevant promoter; moreover, it is not specifically related to movement and is active in a setting almost opposite to the contemporary Italian metropolitan areas. Still, such a peculiar case has many features that can be found in the current spatial practices of many urban populations, and is close to them as an example of claims promoted from below – even if these practices are sometimes more difficult to observe.

The search for what is moving in a local society, looking for its practices and opinions, is sometimes helped by its same components: groups, communities and urban

populations may support specific claims, making them visible in the face of power. These cues search for a direct interaction with policy makers, involving different subjects, actions and attitudes toward involvement in the public arena. Their approach may propose or oppose, be aware or not, and have more or less success in the face of power, providing a variety of initiatives difficult to interact with and to consider within mobility policy.

### *Everyday practitioners*

A constellation of subjects is active in local societies on an everyday basis, developing intended initiatives or simply practicing space; their actions also address a collective dimension, even if in different ways. Associations, committees, spontaneous groups, urban populations... these are just few names defining varied forms of activity in the space. Their features are the most diverse, as for purposes, scales of intervention or modes of action (as will be discussed later), but they all intercept public action; these actions, as specific spatial practices, develop in the field of opportunities and constraints provided by policy, even when challenging it (Pasqui, 2008). They have in common 'a conception of citizenship which goes beyond participation in decision making, towards a positive contribution to community and society itself' (Burns, 2000). Different instead are their attitudes towards action in the public realm, showing the presence of diverse subjects.

In this sense, the classical distinction between policy makers and takers is becoming less significant, because of its internal evolution and of the external growth of different figures (Crosta, 2010). The increasing diffusion of participatory occasions, intended both as compulsory parts of structured planning processes and as voluntary, specific initiatives, partially fills the gap between makers and takers, even if it is mainly 'an enlargement of the decisional process which only considers actions arranged within it' (Crosta, 2010: 125). This conceptualisation conveys a traditional idea of interaction, mainly promoted by institutional subjects; intensity may change, according to deeper or more superficial forms of involvement, but still interactions take place within a given framework. Other, more blur subjects instead seem to engage public action in richer forms; this is in particular the case for expert citizens and everyday makers.

The two groups, as defined by Bang (2005), develop peculiar attitudes to participation and public decisions that can be observed also in the Milan case. Expert citizens are activist who don't fight the system, but try to enter it in order to access bargaining processes; the specific knowledge they develop makes their contribution potentially relevant for public decisions. This category resembles the evolution of participation in Milan (as described by Bonomi, 2011) towards the engagement of expert figures locally active, and recovers subjects more established (for example, neighbourhood associations) or related to temporary issues (for example, committees gathered against infrastructural or urban development projects). A critical aspect characterising their nature is the fact that they are willing to engage themselves and make consequently an aware choice, so that the possibility to enter democratic decisions is limited to subjects who accept to enter in a relationship with political authority.



Together with expert citizens, everyday makers can be seen, as citizens shaped by their everyday experiences. They also may enter decisional processes, but their desired presence is seen as a compensation for the activism of expert citizens: makers in fact take part in decisions and projects ‘only if these give them the opportunity to also pursue their own “small” tactics and exercise their creative capacities as “ordinary” citizens’ (Bang, 2005: 162). They are not always active and don’t want to become recognisable subjects, constituted as official groups or communities; rather, they prefer to act on their own, maintaining a grassroots nature which focuses on bottom – up initiatives. Everyday makers move then on a lower and more concrete, keeping close to actions and fields rather than engaging wider arenas or ideological approaches.

These figures of everyday practitioners complicate the presences of actors within policy fields, also because of their peculiar approach to action: democratic government is not the only subject addressed (or opposed) by their activity, since the interest is on a wider contribution to society and its shaping. This attitude affects the possibilities for interaction and sometimes even the recognition of these subjects, who could be elusive when addressed; nevertheless, the potential contributions they could provide intervening in decisional processes and shaping choices stress their relevance. A key aspect is then the establishment of interactions, which need to recognise subjects, define their peculiarities and inflect an attentive approach to them according to their specificities. While observing and addressing the multiple roles included between policy makers and takers, a crucial aspect to consider is the attitude of these subjects to the practices they shape, with different levels of awareness.

#### *Awareness in practices*

Spatial practices and their shapers intercept public action, as actors who inflect strategies and interact with the strategies of other subjects. In the first part of this work, populations and practices have been described as elements reciprocally influencing each other, and characterised by a political dimension. According to Crosta (2010), practices are political, since the engagement in a collective dimension built around common aims also influences the necessary adaptations of the action; from a policy perspective, this should lead instead to the definition of a possible “policy of/for populations” (Pasqui, 2008). The previously described political nature of practices intercept policy decisions on two levels: they can express claims and produce commons, developing public policy from below (Paba, 2010); this can be observed also referring to mobility.

In the first case, the relevance of practices is their own existence: they are the visible inflection of a collective strategy, shaped by a group sharing identity and purposes; as spatial practices, they originate specific forms of spatial appropriation, reflected also in peculiar patterns of mobility. As for movement, it has mainly an instrumental role to guarantee the access to the opportunities available in the city; so that mobility practices are indirect cues of the possibilities and constraints characterising individuals and groups. Then, mobility patterns are vehicles of claims which could be aware or not: public action is addressed, but not necessarily in an explicit way; policy in fact can provide grasps for individual and collective actions, providing opportunities for access in a

general sense. The implicit or explicit claims related to mobility practices may thus underline the need for a wide access to opportunities, a request which could be explicit or not.

The second aspect is the production of commons, already discussed both as a consequence of the action of urban populations and as a wider contribution to the shaping of the city – somehow, a common made of commons. The reference is to ‘the social production of public goods, so to have commons by social practices rather than by policies’ (Donolo, 2005: 37), describing an action from below characterised by a high degree of awareness. A first level of awareness involves the initial inefficiencies characterising services, for which any individual or group develop specific adaptations – trying then to inflect their strategies according to setting conditions. A second level of awareness concern the possibility to provide alternative solutions, knowing that other options are available and could be developed by different, innovative approaches which directly involve subjects; finally, the last stage of awareness puts these cues into action, providing concretely goods and services which are missing or not sufficient. Challenging traditional authorities, commons and policy are produced from below, self-arranging public action: treating specific issues, individuals and groups turn from recipients to co-protagonists, dealing with a precise problem in a certain situation; their action could be unjust, but address wider issues of local justice with an aware attitude (Paba, 2010).

Inflecting this approach in the peculiar field of movement, practices – be they aware or not – may use existing services in unexpected ways, or provide new possibilities for movement with specific solutions (for example, informal ones). Given the different levels of awareness characterising these approaches, the consequent actions could directly address institutions or not; the different figures here described – policy takers, everyday makers, expert citizens – are moved by specific aims and adopt peculiar approaches. These are reflected in diverse actions, that then promote interactions from below of different kinds.

### **Making claims visible**

An interaction between practices and decisions is explicitly established when claims are made visible. Various are the possible subjects active in urban fields, on a more continuous or sporadic basis; and different can be their awareness, even if the concrete inflections of their strategies always intercept the practices of other actors. These different features share then their becoming visible, addressing from below decision makers and public arenas. Their visibility can however come into the urban scene acting at different scales and promoting different kinds of claims.

#### *Different scales for action*

Since various are the territorial scales involved in specific issues, various are also the proveniences of active subjects, who move from neighbourhoods to metropolitan areas. The issues of mobility on which this work is focusing mainly involve a metropolitan dimension, but their concrete inflections is necessarily transcalar: wider strategies are implemented through punctual actions, and their impact may change according to the

setting considered; then, any level – from the transregional to the very local – are directly involved when discussing a multiple mobility like that of contemporary urban settings. Subjects active at different levels are thus involved, and different are their motivations for the action (a constant local activism, the opposition to a specific project, the focus on a given topic...); such a variety also influences the direct addresses to deciders, both when dealing with general strategies and punctual decisions.

An example in this sense is provided by the ongoing public involvement procedures for the Milan Sump, in which a wide range of different subjects – and different territorial scales – are included. From the minutes of the participatory meetings (Amat, 2013b), different groups appear within the participants: some of them are active at a very local scale, concentrating on specific neighbourhoods and sometimes on very precise issues (for example, the use of abandoned spaces under elevated railroads); others are present at the urban scale, as specific forms of political involvement (like the “Committees for Milan”, created to support the centre-left electoral campaign in 2011 and still active); some groups instead are active in the municipality, but rather have a thematic focus (for example, the Antismog Parents, working to protect children from pollution); finally, other recognised subjects have specific interests (defence of the environment, promotion of ciclability...) and are present at different levels, with metropolitan and local branches.

The territorial scales from which these subjects originate are not exclusive fields of action: specific occasions or issues in fact could bring metropolitan subjects into neighbourhood debates, or more general visioning occasions (like those provided by the current mobility planning process) could make local actors interact with broader issues. A significant aspect is the construction of coalitions, which mobilise different subjects (committees and associations acting at different scales) around common claims which could be very local or more general (Pacchi, 2007). The transcalar nature of movement issues leads then to a necessary adaptation of action to multiple scales, as well as an attentive approach to those claims which could influence territorial levels different from those originating them. Once again, interaction seems crucial, as the feature which suggests the potential relevance of such subjects and their claims: especially when considering mobility, local features may have broader outcomes, so that it is relevant to develop devoted, different approaches to subjects and claims; and the issues which originate interactions from below can't be necessarily confined in a single territorial scale, since interests may have different dimensions (Dente, 2011).

### *Opposition or proposition*

At any territorial scale taken into account, interactions from below can intercept public action mainly in two ways: opposing decisions or proposing ideas; sometimes the two attitudes may go together, contesting actions by showing that alternative proposals are available and could be more convenient. From a theoretical point of view, opposition and proposition could exist as single motivations for the action of subjects active in the local society, but a closer approach to what is moving in the Milan setting shows instead the contemporary presence of these two elements; in particular, it appears

from the evolution of participatory experiences (Bonomi, 2011) as well as from the observation of specific cases (Pacchi, 2007).

Recent participatory experiences reflect an activism different from that inspiring the first local committees established in Milan in the Eighties. Initially the focus was on opposition, inflected in different ways – be it the Nimbyism against infrastructures or the securitarian fear addressing newcomers (like migrants) and the consequent perceived insecurity. Today instead activism seems to acquire a wider meaning, providing new occasions to live a local collective dimension: groups of varied citizens gather around specific issues or initiatives, mobilising personal competencies and promoting projects for the active care of the territory; this new, positive form of participation can be observed in central and peripheral areas, and seems to be based on a wider image of what places and communities could be rather than on the refusal of what is perceived as different. This attitude motivates newly born subjects, but also provides opportunities for their cooperation with traditional actors, in particular when coalitions are established.

The field of mobility and its related actions provide various examples in this sense; in particular, the dual presence of opposition and proposition can be observed when dealing with general visions and when considering specific projects. The described case for the 2011 referendum provides a case referred to broad ideas for the city and its movement: a committee made of associations and subjects active in the local society felt the need to express an alternative vision of Milan by mobilising the municipal population around some aspects considered as crucial. Their proposal consisted in a system of guidelines, which contested some ongoing approaches or actions (like excessive soil consumption, or a partially effective pollution charge) and on the contrary proposed general, different attitudes (promotion of public transport, preservation of greenfield lands). As for specific projects, the oppositional coalitions are often able to propose different alternatives to contested projects, bringing together different competencies – from the local knowledge of citizens committees to the technical skills available to more structured associations (Pacchi, 2007). Thanks to the different available notions, projects are often contested in a punctual way, receiving also observations that ask for precise changes; somehow, they are not completely refused, but the attempt is to improve them by reducing their impact. In the most contested cases, alternative solutions could be developed, basing then the opposition on the presence of different actions which could achieve the same purposes with less impacting projects. Amongst the others, the case for the Via d'Acqua – a canal designed for the 2015 Expo – seems significant: a varied coalition of local committees, environmentalist associations and antagonist groups contested the project, mobilising (a part from ideological reasons) both technical criticism for the features of the initiative and alternative solutions less impacting on the involved areas.

Opposition and proposition are often related to mobilisations which are occasional and weak, being more related to specific opposed actions rather than to broader vision of a territory; nevertheless, claims from below provide interesting inputs of different kinds for public action: sometimes they are explicit, through the development of alternative proposals or the promotion of new, unprecedented initiatives; sometimes they just take place without directly addressing decisions takers, intervening then in

fields not considered by public action. They differently intervene in the production of policy from below (Paba, 2010): when alternative projects are designed, they plan the potential implementation of a different public action; when they are put into practice, an alternative course of action for public issues is tested. The presence of propositional elements able to provide alternative solutions suggests then that claims from below could be able to bring significant, unexpected elements into public debates and decisions, but a necessary condition is the establishment of significant relationships – the development of interactions allowing to be seen and heard.

### *Being seen, being heard*

The multiplicity that can characterise claims – as for subjects, objects and attitudes – finds its significance in the effective establishment of interactions with decision makers. Oppositions and propositions, as expressed through debates and practices, can try to shape public decisions only creating relationships with them; unless they remain voices calling in the wilderness, expressing discontent but without any possibility to influence plans and their implementation. According to different cases, the interaction may have a different nature: it could be the simple recognition of an existence, the establishment of a more stable relationship, or even the involvement within the decisional arena.

The rich framework structured in the previous paragraphs has then to be conveyed towards an effective engagement with those subjects and decisions that their existence address. Interactions have to consider the actors to involve, imagining a significant form of relationship based on recognition and consequent redefinition of initial attitudes (in terms of opinions and practices for the achievement of specific strategies). Taking practices as a reference for planning, recognising then the claims they express, ‘practices (...) become the field to build and verify policy and planning actions. (...) The making of the public, as a process of dynamic construction, perpetual re-framing of purposes and common sense, constitution and recognition of the collective actors, summarises in itself an interactive and iterative dimension; incorporates diversities as an active resource of the relationship between society and territory, and recognises the multiple dimension of the public’ (Perrone, 2010: 10 – 11). This theoretical description of what practices could be for policy highlights how contributions from below may provide different orientations for public action, referring to its guiding aims and its concrete inflections. What emerges as relevant is the enrichment of approaches and proposals whose sense could be more effectively shaped by a collective contribution; still, this general (and optimistic) approach needs to be inflected in concrete processes for decisions and their implementation.

Different forms of possible involvement in fact emerge, according to the discussed issue and the involved subjects. Some subjects are included in official decisional arenas, taking part in the shaping of public action (as for the referendum promoters, included in a committee monitoring the implementation of the proposed measures); other actors are included in devoted committees, active when specific issues emerge (as for the rail commuters, whose board interacts with institution when major inconveniences happen); others are mobilised on a permanent basis, creating boards where to discuss main

decisions and developments (as for the cycling policy which will be described in the next paragraph). Even without a specific institutional recognition, actors may establish relationships from below, making themselves visible and sometimes heard (for example, in devoted public meetings or specific confrontations) despite the absence of any role in the shaping of public action.

The manifold forms of interaction which could make visible claims and visions from below share the common relational nature of these practices. Of course this feature is evident in the creation of relationships between those subjects swinging from the extremes of policy making and taking, but it can be observed also in the practices which originate policy from below. On the one hand, these are often based on production and transaction of relational goods, for which individual identities and reciprocal relationships are crucial; on the other one, practices are generated by forms of heedful interaction, thanks to which people conceive themselves as part of a community and generate a reciprocal pattern of actions based on mutual recognition (Paba, 2010). Considering that these practices may express claims and generate urban commons, their contribution to the shaping of a city intended as a relational good is crucial: the city in fact may have a relational nature, as already emerged both in its conceptions (Bruni, 2011) and in some practical outcomes (Ostrom, 1996). In the case of Milan, an overview of the actions that shape the cycling field from below can provide more elements for a concrete grounding of these manifold, ambitious theoretical constructions.

### **Increasingly louder: activism and involvement in the cycling field**

Milan has proved to be a fertile field for cycling claims, as shown by the growing impact that different actors and initiatives have had on local mobility policy in the last years. In the previous pages, various subjects acting from below have been mentioned: environmental activists, committees against infrastructural projects, associations with precise focuses on certain issues, coalitions joining these different actors; but, considering the various features previously discussed from a theoretical perspective, the case of cycling claims provide good occasions to observe them into action.

#### *Different actors with common strategies*

The promotion of cycling in Milan has been able to gather a number of varied actors around this common issue. Amongst the many fields involved in the action of associations, committees and groups of citizens in general, cycling is distinguished first of all by the numbers of actors involved in it: their number and relevance, for example, led to the creation of a devoted board to promote their interaction with the municipality. These subjects share their voluntary and non profit nature, as well as the common aim of making Milan more cyclable (and consequently transform it in a healthier, cleaner, more sustainable city); nevertheless, the same purpose is originated by different reasons and is inflected in manifold inflections. Interestingly, another common feature is the ability to intercept official decisions (even if in different ways of course), a strength that most of these subjects have in common. As for other features, like guiding principles and concrete strategies, the case of Milan provides the most diverse examples.

Traditional associations can be found also in the cycling field. The most visible is probably Ciclobby, a Milanese association member of Fiab – the national federation that brings together local groups promoting the use of bicycle. The association was established in 1986, aiming at the promotion of bicycle both as an everyday transport mean and as an occasion for leisure; in this sense, the Milan setting seems to provide optimal conditions, given its contained dimensions, the very small slopes and the structure of the road network. Various initiatives have been arranged in order to improve cycling, addressing both cyclists and population in general (especially via municipality). The action of associations seems somehow ‘institutional’: on the one hand, it aims at showing that it is possible to use bicycles for urban trips, and that specific rules have to be followed (stressing then the safety of this modal choice); on the other hand, it works as a lobby (a cycling lobby, as recalled in one of their names) that interacts with institutions in formal occasions – and this also contributed to their recognition. Considering the activity of associations from the point of view of interaction, two seem the main actions: interventions in the public debate and participation to formal occasions for public involvement. An example of the first case is the promotion of national initiatives at a local scale, like the Salvaiciclisti campaign: an initiative aiming at the promotion of cycling security, asking for new national regulations and specific local implementations. Apart from the concrete proposals, the campaign is characterised by a peculiar strategic orientation: it is expressed in a “manual for cyclocospiration” (Salvaiciclisti, 2012) explaining how to act from below to obtain cities at a cycling and pedestrian scale. As for participation in formal occasions, it is significant the constant elaboration of observations to adopted planning documents, like the urban development plan and the ongoing Sump; in this sense, crucial is the cooperation with other environmentalist associations (both with general and specific interests, like Legambiente and Antismog



*Figg. 7– 9 Different forms of cycling activism in Milan and their spatial dimensions*

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Parents): observations are jointly elaborated, coalescing different actors around common issues – showing then an inclusive approach towards those subjects active within institutionally structured fields. Consequently, the cycling claims intercept a fluid number of structured actors, whose strategies can be also quite diverse.

Critical Mass appears instead as a practice that conveys awareness and a strong political commitment, but adopts a contestant attitude: it is an event in which periodically cyclists occupies urban roads by cycling on them at night with a reduced speed. The movement is the spontaneous replication of an initiative born in San Francisco in 1992 and started in Milan in 2002; recently, skaters began similar events too. In general, the critical mass shows a clear political attitude: its slogan ‘We don't block the traffic, we are the traffic’ conveys the will to subvert the current perspective on urban mobility, stressing the relevance of mobility practices alternative to the use of car; the movement itself exists to criticise the present prevalence of the car and the consequences it has on the cities. Its radical nature has been able to gather several people around this practice, also thanks to the fact that participation is free: meetings are held on a weekly basis, maintaining the same timetable but always changing the departure place; this recognition has contributed to the popularity of Critical Mass. Interestingly, in the last months its field of action has widened, including also children: at the end of 2013, a “bike to school day” has been arranged (in Milan and other Italian cities), arranging small caravans of pupils reaching their schools by bike. The children were accompanied in this “kid mass” by their parents and by Critical Mass activists, who aimed to increase awareness of relatives and institutions by reproposing the Mass approach to everyday, smaller scale mobility practices.

Even different are community bike shops, known as “ciclofficine”. Their main aim is to provide opportunities to repair bicycles as a way to locally promote their use, with a non profit service guaranteed by the work of voluntary people (small fees may be charged in some cases, as a contribution to the maintenance of these activities). Community bike shops act then at a local scale, working in specific neighbourhoods as recognisable presences; but their action is not just limited to mechanic repairs. A number of specific initiatives are arranged, promoting cycling culture and providing wider occasions for aggregation; moreover, the simple presence of these local shops can play a relevant role at a local scale, recovering unused spaces and giving them a new social function. The promotion of cycling offers then occasions for a wider engagement in the local and urban community: an issue of common interest is discussed and promoted through various initiatives – from the little happening in the shop to the broader manifestation through the streets of the city – which also provide occasions for aggregation. Grassroots initiatives like community bike shops focus then on the local scale, without specific direct addresses to institutions; nevertheless, their alternative vision of a city based on sustainable mobility intercepts initiatives promoted by other actors (like those previously described), so that they often take part in manifestations or campaigns promoted by more structured (and visible) groups. Nevertheless, community bike shops provide a peculiar contribution to the shaping of the city and its mobility, even without a direct political attitude; in particular, they are active in the production of urban commons. First, they use spaces which are often abandoned, revitalising them



and contributing to their creative reuse as places for local communities and their aggregation; moreover, they provide a service which can be considered as a relational good: the simple repair service is accompanied by a deeper interaction, based on the a common sensibility to environmental issues which may lead to a broader involvement in this specific form of activism.

The three cases don't convey all the varied experiences of differentiated activism in the cycling field. Their description provides some of the main features, such as the presence of common aims which are inflected through different strategies, manifold actions and varied approaches to more structured forms of interactions in public arenas; moreover, they all share the development of specific proposals, going beyond the simple opposition to institutional actions. The various subjects – from the national association to the very local shop active in the neighbourhood – belong to a wide and yet specific field, that of environmentalism (in particular, with a progressive approach); their initiatives more easily address specific subjects with similar political sensitivities, but can anyway have a broader impact on the city. In this sense, various attempts for their formal involvement show their different ability to intercept institutional actors and interact with them.

#### *Attempts for formal involvements*

The interactions from below promoted in the cycling field are characterised not only by diverse features, but also by different forms and degrees of formal involvement with institutional subjects. In the same time, a gradual escalation in the ongoing interactions can be observed, from the presentation of generic claims in public processes to the development of common projects. Various initiatives are then able to provide a specific contribution to the metropolitan mobility, contributing to its shaping from different perspectives; nevertheless, a decisive aspect these experiences have in common is the (differently) attentive approach developed towards them by municipal institutions.

Participation in planning processes, and especially in their Strategic Environmental Assessment, provides the occasion for the weakest forms of interaction from below. These open processes in fact allow any subject or group to express their claims in an official form, providing observations that will have to be taken into account in the final evaluation (even with simple, standard negative replies, as it can be often observed). Associations, including those active in the cycling field, use this occasion also to network with other actors and provide complex documents, expressing precise requests and describing an underlying vision for the city. An example in this sense is provided by the ongoing Sea procedure for Milan Sump, in which Ciclobby presented an observation together with Antismog Parents and Legambiente: their observation is quite structured, in comparison with other documents, and is able to develop an alternative view both on punctual interventions and on wider strategies (for example, a different management of policy actions like the present congestion charge). The structured field provided by legal requirements for planning processes gives then an occasion for an official interaction between institutions and associations, even if the openness and the formal nature of the process strongly affect its effectiveness (as well as the occasion of a real interaction with

policy makers).

A further step can be observed in the approach of institutions towards specific initiatives from below; this relational aspect involves both technicians and politicians. Eventual interactions between sensitive civil servants and activists take place, even if they are difficult to explicitly observe: somehow, they are the results of personal interests or relationships originated in specific occasions for cooperation; consequently, using this perspective some instances from below could find space in the public action if presented as feasible or convenient actions from a technical point of view. Politicians instead can play a significant, different role in the recognition of initiatives promoted by social actors: they orientate the institutional attitude towards them, according to political ideas (and sometimes convenience). In particular, these actions provide the occasion to show a certain attitude towards given issues, as well as the opportunity to establish further, deeper relationships based on different forms of cooperation. For example, the “bike to school day” promoted by Critical Mass in Milan originated as an initiative from below, but soon obtained the support of municipality: this was expressed not only in terms of technical help (for example, designing the safest routes to the schools together with traffic cops), but also with the direct participation of the deputy mayor in charge of mobility policy. The direct, visible participation of the municipality in the initiative contributed to its public recognition and also led to other forms of cooperation – as will be described later.

Up to now, the described occasions have described interactions that looks like raids in a foreign field: associations take part in institutional processes, or administration participate in initiatives from below. As an inbetween example, also the creation of a common ground for confrontation has been attempted. In the spring of 2012, Milan municipality established a “permanent board for ciclability”, as an occasion to directly discuss with a number of subjects active in the cycling field: devoted associations, environmentalist groups, economic activities dealing with bicycles. The president of a cycling association described the initiative as an ‘informal and political – rather than technical – board, which during its first year and half promoted every month the confrontation between various subjects active in the cycling field, deputy mayors and technicians (...). In the intention of its promoters, the board hadn’t just a consulting role, but was a propositional occasion to expose ideas, suggest concrete actions and share the real projects of the administration’ (Galli, 2013). The creation of a devoted tool for the confrontation with instances from below can be explained referring to the specific activism in the cycling field, which also played a relevant role in the last electoral campaign as well as in the shaping of the local public opinion. Varied claims, originated from different backgrounds but sharing the main purposes, have been thus able to establish a privileged interaction with the municipality, obtaining a stable field for confrontation on ongoing projects and future strategies. Yet, a board that was created as permanent hasn’t been summoned after one year and half of activity. Its present inactivity is the consequence of a negative evolution, which originated a certain scepticism in its members: for example, Ciclobby summarised the experience saying that ‘civic participation should produce more solutions than problems, generate sharing more than frustrations, and be the true engine for a concrete – and not just imagined –

change' (Galli, 2013). In the suspended condition of the board, it is still relevant to observe an attempt for a common ground where to collect claims and visions from above and below.

Finally, an even closer form of interaction between institutions and association is the development of common projects. These are usually temporary forms of cooperation between recognisable subjects (which sometimes already are in contact, as hinted when referring to the reciprocal attitudes), who establish common strategies and may decide to activate around specific opportunities (for example, calls and competitions). The stability of the relationship may change, focusing on peculiar occasions or developing more stable interactions, but in both cases a reciprocal recognition is visible: the subjects have skills, experiences and knowledge which are often complementary and needed for the success of a project; moreover, sometimes the same competitions require these forms of cooperation. As formalised occasions of intervention, common projects involve established subjects, with a stable structure and a certain degree of recognition. Again, Milan provides examples for this kind of cooperation involving some of the traditional associations previously described. (Since the focus of the work is on forms of interaction effectively established, unfortunately most of those in Milan cycling field involve the same subjects). Recently, two projects have been started to promote the use of bicycles to schools: #bicittadini and Stars, respectively promoted by a bank foundation and by the European Union. Their actions are quite similar, even if with some initial distinction as for purposes (promotion of cycling or reduction of pollution). Involving a number of primary schools, children are led to know the existing cycle routes and use them to reach everyday their classrooms promoting in the same time the use and maintenance of their bicycles through devoted lessons. The projects bring together specific skills of associations like Fiab Ciclobby, which already promotes on its own courses addressing children, and the municipality, which has a direct relationships with territories and schools – and at the same time needs to promote its existing cycling infrastructure, developing an initiative that can reach adults by addressing their children. The two projects are just an example of a potential cooperation that brings together activists and institutions, showing once more the ambivalent attitude that may inspire actions from below moving in and out formalised arenas.

#### *In and out arenas: an ambivalent attitude*

Choosing a specific field like that of cycling, it is possible to observe a wide range of different actors whose strategies have diverse inflections – from formal interventions in processes to everyday practices; different are also their interactions with decision makers, moving on different levels and developing antagonist or cooperative attitudes. The approach these practices from below have towards interaction and involvement in policy actions appears as a crucial aspect to understand which contributions they may provide to shape mobility and its planning actions.

The initial motivations for action are relevant. All the described actors and practices have in common the promotion of cycling as a relevant aspect for a more sustainable city, an interest pursued not for profit. The specific inflections of this starting attitude

are the most diverse, moving from the quiet support to a safe use of bicycle, both as an everyday transport mean and as an occasion for leisure, to the subversive contestation that promotes cycling as a way to contrast capitalism in its urban inflections (interacting with other antagonist activities, often in relationship with social centres). The various practices related to the promotion of cycling share a contestant nature and have a political attitude in themselves (Crosta, 2010), but the gradual evolution previously described draws the partial loss of the original subversive aspect. Then, the individuation of the guiding aims is relevant: some practices maintain the original contestant attitude and just challenge public decisions, while others obtain recognition and interact with decision makers through some necessary compromises. The possibility to interact from below in planning processes and provide any contribution to the shaping of mobility seems to require an open attitude to any form of bargaining or cooperation, even redefining one's own identity in relation with these opportunities; furthermore, a similar open approach to potential interactions is required in institutional actors, whose openness can provide a significant turn in the success of initiatives from below (as demonstrated by the discussed examples of recognition, consultation and cooperation).

The effective role that these practices may have in shaping urban mobility and its policy is then manifold, swinging from the orientation of general visions to the concrete promotion of actions; what they share is the varied attempt to shape decisions, bringing in them a different approach to specific urban issues and wider ideas on what a city could be. They may also be considered as vehicles for social innovation, if the reference is to 'new ideas that work in a more effective way in meeting social goals with the aim of transgressing social rules according to a vision of a different social system' (Busacca, 2013); still, these ideas mainly find concrete applications in occasional actions and initiatives, without developing effective new services or job occasions (elements that other definitions of social innovation, like Foray, 2010, include as fundamental for an effective impact on society). Given their innovative potential, urban planning and its developers should 'intelligently support social innovation, promoting projects and plans able to host these dwelling form through an environmentally and socially sustainable inflection' (Pasqui, 2013); in the reciprocal interactions from above and below, decisive should be the focus on the supported claims, for which an antagonist or cooperative attitude could bring to different outcomes.

### **(Self)Imposing involvement**

Actors and practices move in local societies, making claims visible in the face of power. A wide range of cues intercept from below the action of public subjects, and their multiplicity makes somehow difficult to find general rules for their involvement in policy development. A possible guiding principle could be their significance, in terms of contribution which could be provided to public action. From this perspective, involvement could be pursued, be it imposed through practices or self-imposed by an open attitude of institutions. Before discussing its conditions, the potential relevance of contributions from below should be framed. According to the previous paragraphs, the

practices of associations, groups and urban populations – be them aware or not – can help social innovation: their actions, purposely transgressive (Sandercock, 1998), may provide a different vision of society meeting in the same time specific social goals; a different idea of what a place could be can then be conveyed through actions addressing forgotten issues. A first element of relevance is the promotion of a diverse vision, based on elements important for citizens even if not considered by public action; but the expression of specific claims may move from debate to concrete initiatives, promoting contestant or propositional practices which could also help forms of social innovation. Establishing interactions with subjects moving from below can then have a specific significance and lead to attempts for their involvement, as a way to funnel opinions and sustain alternative approaches to specific urban issues (Paba, 2010).

Considering that cues from below can be relevant, but being aware that they are potentially unlimited, it is important to distinguish subjects who are significant for representation or whose interests intercept those of administration. The approach is facilitated when dealing with contributions from below, since in most cases the subjects want to interact with institutions, and not the contrary. Three steps seem to define subjects who may establish relationships with public actors: the interest is in awareness, interception and interest. Awareness marks a first distinction between practices which all share a political nature: as practices originated within the framework of possibilities and constraints provided by policy (Pasqui, 2008), actions from below question public action, but not necessarily in an explicit way; only some of them search then for a direct interaction with public subjects. In case of aware practices, they may be interested in intercepting institutions, establishing an interaction for which ability is needed: actors have somehow to prove the relevance of their claims, adopting an open or strict attitude (through persuasion or contestation, for example). Even when a contact is established, the contents funneled through practices are significant and should be of interest: this could be the case for oppositional claims (if they gather a wide support) or for specific proposals which may act as vehicles of innovation. It seems then that the suitable subjects for these forms of interactions can be distinguished by considering their initial attitudes towards their own actions and the range of their claims.

The contents of contributions from below may be the most diverse, too: their aims, deliverability and features are difficult to previously define. A first discussed difference involve the guiding purpose, which could be the intention to oppose a project (a vision for the city, and its concrete inflections) or to propose an action; the first case seems somehow weak, since it simply express opinions which must be supported by relevant groups in order to be significant, while the second case offers something to discuss, which could make public action more rich and complete – including different perspectives or developing further concrete actions. The propositional attitude may be conveyed through a number of elements, moving from an abstract to a more concrete level (as also reflected in different public involvement forms; see Bickerstaff et al, 2002): a different vision for the city and its development could be provided; more precise ideas, referring to punctual aspects, could enrich the debate on specific planning choices; their concrete inflections may lead to specific suggestions, expressed for example in formal occasions like the strategic evaluation of plans; specific initiatives could be developed

from below, intercepting the interest of institutional actors and consequently their external support; finally, claims from below may also lead to the development of common initiatives together with public subjects, cooperating in occasional or continued projects. The range of possible contributions is wide, and probably depends on the topic involved and the setting of action – in which involvement and activism from social subjects may strongly vary; what can be observed by this short summary and the previous paragraphs is the presence of manifold potential ways in which metropolitan movement and its policy could be shaped from below and involved in public choices.

As for the concrete ways for involvement, considering the wavering identity of urban populations and practices moving through society, it is difficult to define approaches or interactions which could effectively intercept claims from below. Observing the issue from below, the main focus may be on the ways to “impose” involvement to institutions: how to be taken into account, considered as relevant and then interact with decision makers. The guiding purpose should have elements of interests for public subjects, be them a significant share of consensus in the city or the proposition of innovative ideas addressing tricky social issues: actors from below should then activate resources thanks to which their participation in decisional processes could be interesting and significant; the manipulation of resources is a possible strategic approach to complex decisions and policy issues (Dente, 2011). On the other hand, public actors – those who are addressed by these attempts for interaction – should have an open attitude towards these contributions, sometimes even self-imposing the participation in these relationships; as already discussed, a positive approach can help to intercept claims and ideas from below which may have elements of potential interest.

These attitudinal features are indeed quite general, as general are possible suggestions for their concrete management. Looking at planning processes, a really open approach (like the one previously discussed) can't be confined in specific procedures, but rather has to be a continuous presence, visible in and out plans. No temporal articulations nor forecasts may be defined, since these contributions can't be simply activated from above – but rather are “unexpectedly” produced from below. Plans may probably provide frameworks for taking into account these contributions and eventually include them in decision and implementation processes. These guidelines may define forms of interaction with institutional subjects (especially at a municipal level, there where these interactions are more present) or precise contents which could be interesting for public actors; their specific features should be shaped according to the discussed issues and to the setting of action (taking then into account its social vibrancy, the forms of participation and the features of the treated field: this would somehow orientate potential contributions towards specific, significant issues). Such an approach could change according to the setting in which it is applied, and also according to the exact moment of application, but should aim at stabilise potentially shifting involvements (Hirschman, 1982). Nevertheless, a background element should always be present, as the main guiding principle for these forms of interaction: the awareness that something relevant may always be conveyed by unexpected actors and practices, giving their contributions (for the better) to the shaping of mobility.

## 7. Encountering at par: dealing with opportunities and lacks

### **Between new opportunities and former frames**

The welfare state of the Twentieth century, together with its spatial inflections (Secchi, 2005), has been more and more questioned by gradual and radical transformations occurred in the last decades. Amongst them, the exclusive public intervention in the provision of services has been sided by a number of private initiatives; be them addressing water, education or mobility, private operators have started specific businesses replacing or complementing previous exclusively public actions. Their increasing presence represents a discussed issue, evaluated by public consultations (as in Italy, when in 2011 the private provision of public water was discussed) or criticised in its negative outcomes (as the English railway privatisation, which led to a more expensive and less competitive public transport service). In the same time, the ineffectiveness of former welfare frames and the development of new opportunities has provided new, unexpected occasions to intervene in traditional fields, even that of metropolitan mobility. A number of initiatives have been developed, moved by diverse attitudes and approaches to the issues of movement: an increased range of actors is then contributing to mobility services and shaping transport policy, both in and out of devoted decisional processes.

This chapter aims at describing possible forms of interaction and contribution that may shape mobility out of decisional processes. Interactions from above may support planning decisions, for example providing wider knowledge or strengthening consensus on specific issues; interactions from below may focus on claims which could become part of mobility policy, being included in specific decisions or actions developed by institutions; encounters at par instead deal with strategies and activities of subjects who pursue their own aims but have at the same time a (potential) influence on urban mobility. In particular, these actors intervene in fields previously characterised by the exclusive public intervention, for which the crisis of welfare state opened new opportunities for private initiatives (Zamagni, 2011). The perspective seems to include two different possibilities: the intervention in strategic fields which provide opportunities for profit, and the subsidiary replacement of public action.

Despite their occasional appearance in the next pages, established actors in the mobility field – for example, rail companies or public transport operators – are not central in the perspective of the questions which lead this work. The underlying aim is in fact to discuss potential encounters between social demands and political answers

shaping movement: then, new subjects may appear, or new answers to established needs could be provided; traditional subjects instead are mainly related to the basic provision of massive services, which are not specifically associated to the expression of new demands or the provision of innovative initiatives. Nevertheless, their role in the transport field is crucial, sometimes even more relevant than that of institutional subjects: then, even if not central, the next pages will necessarily take them into account.

### *Playing in strategic issues*

A number of strategic urban issues provides attractive occasions for private interventions, giving the double opportunity to face specific problems and at the same time provide repayment for private subjects: the advantage would then be public (since specific issues would be dealt with) and private (given the potential gain from a specific intervention). This could be the case for regeneration projects including social housing, or providing new public spaces; or, inbetween urban and mobility issues, this is the case for the regeneration of disused railway yards, which can provide the occasion to use part of the deriving earnings to improve local public transport: this is what Milan is trying to do, bargaining the transformations of large railway areas with the provision of new stations, trains and transport services. The possibility to play in strategic issues is often promoted by those subjects who are interested in the potential deriving benefits, asking then to start or take part in these processes. They may be already active in the transport field and be already participating in decisions involving mobility, but in this case they would develop specific, new proposals out of structured processes; for example, the discussed regeneration of unused railway yards involve that national railway company which is also involved in the everyday management and planning of rail services.

Mobility is a typical field of action for public actors, considering its social relevance and its specific economical features (since its services mainly are natural monopolies, affecting the opportunities for private initiatives; see Evans, 1991); nevertheless, from different perspectives a reduced public intervention in the transport sector is asked. A first point of view stresses the opportunity for a minimal influence of planning on some urban development issues, developing plans as an activity of service – if not a duty (Moroni, 2013): a plan should indicate where services and infrastructures will be available, privileging the development of some areas but leaving the possibility for alternative choices of the operators; and these services should be provided in a not prejudicial way. In the case of movement, the focus is on the opportunity for an effective mobility, which seems impeded by a biased aversion to private mobility and new infrastructures; to be sincere, some of the discussed elements – prevalence of private cars, construction of new roads, misuse of public transport and unbalanced modal split (Moroni, 2013) – are central features for sustainable mobility paradigms. Even maintaining a vision for urban mobility based on sustainability, a second point of view emerges, expressing the need for a more open approach to varied contributions from non institutional subjects: given the difficulties for a direct public action (which will be discussed in the next paragraph, when referring to subsidiarity) and the unexpected proposals for concrete initiatives which promote varied forms of social



innovation, public subjects and their actions should be able to include these varied contributions, letting them shape urban mobility in different ways.

In the last years, Milan has provided a number of different examples in this sense, which include small initiatives or huge interventions; diverse are their objects and features, but – at different scales - common is the contribution to the evolution of metropolitan mobility, even with controversial outcomes. The new M5 subway line, partially still under construction, is a good example in this sense: it is being built thanks to project financing, so that funding is in part provided by private subjects rather than by public actors; profits deriving from the first three decades of activity will then go to the financiers, and after this initial period the infrastructure will become public property. The initiative may seem highly functional, since it guarantees both private and public returns (in terms of earnings or services); but it is necessary to consider that the attractiveness of the investment was related to the expectations of use for the M5 line. Because of this, the infrastructure was planned under one of the busiest axes of Milan, on which a renewed high frequency tramway line was already being constructed: planning decisions were then shaped by the specific availability of fundings, obtaining a new infrastructure but weakening in the same time an existing one. The private return deriving from the subway and its attractive service is then (at least, in part) balanced by the public loss related to overlapping tram line.

Strategic opportunities mainly refer to highly relevant interventions: this is mainly the case for massive infrastructures, which are complex realisations needing to mobilise huge resources and often intercepting different territorial levels of administration (even an urban subway requires the involvement of national government bodies). Considering the complexity of these intervention, as well as the impossible replacement of established mechanisms, it is difficult to imagine different subjects or methods to deal with their planning and implementation; they anyway maintain a relevant influence in the shaping of metropolitan mobility. Similarly, also the presence of established subjects is a relevant feature difficult to replace. For example, transport service operators – especially when dealing with massive services – are primary players in decisional arenas concerning mobility, influencing also planning decisions and their implementation; considering their available resources and the relevance of their services, their role in the metropolitan decisional arenas is fundamental (and, often, even more powerful than that of established governmental subjects).

#### *The subsidiary replacement*

A different case for private interventions in the mobility field may be the subsidiary replacement of actions and services provided by public subjects. The opportunity is the outcome of different transformations, which overlap and re-define the role of public actors: the welfare state, as developed in the last century, is no more exclusively effective in meeting social needs; the current financial crisis strongly affects resources available to the public, and consequently their opportunities for action; conversely, a number of actors has emerged in society proposing themselves as potential contributors to the treatment of social issues. The limitations to public action are balanced by the

complementary rise of other subjects – acting for profit or not – who are then directly addressed by institutions: interactions with them in fact may be crucial for the provision of specific services or goods, maintaining specific standards in evolving settings.

A crucial background element is the idea of subsidiarity, intended especially in its horizontal dimension (Moroni, 2013): it works as a central element for welfare and policy, which can be found in European Community guidelines as well as in more local institutional approaches. Subsidiarity refers ‘to the sharing of competences, functions and services between the public and social subjects and recognises the priority of society and intermediate bodies over the state, creating the opportunity to realize new interactions, with different expressions from those typically associated with modern statism. A “public” function does not necessarily need to be carried out by a state person. On the contrary, the reason for being of public bodies is the optimization of society and its ability to provide answers to one’s own needs’ (Irer, 2010: 6). Significantly, a definition of subsidiarity which highlights the possibility a society has to respond to its own needs is developed by Regione Lombardia, maybe the main promoter of subsidiary approaches in policy issues among the various Italian regional governments; more interestingly, up to now some concrete applications of the principle have been observed in the transport field (a regional competence, according to the Italian legislation) mainly in reference to project financing opportunities.

Moving to the concrete inflections of subsidiarity, some specific elements (Moroni, 2013) may suggest how the principle may work also when dealing with mobility policy. Subsidiary interventions are often seen in a solidarity perspective, but may also be intended in a perspective of mutual help: groups of citizens may then establish activities to help others, disadvantaged people or simply decide to address themselves and their needs. Another aspect involves the object of subsidiary actions, which mainly include services usually provided by public subjects: they may also address the production of new rules, at least when dealing with private communities; yet, considering the specific topic here examined, the collective dimension of mobility doesn’t allow (and should discourage) the development of different regulations. More relevant is instead the wider framework in which subsidiary initiatives may develop: ‘the idea is not that privates should be involved in the administration and management of public activities – as keen and hard-working “integrated collaborators” – but rather that the public should leave the widest independent space to private initiatives and activities which (...) do not necessarily need to find their place in a public coordinative framework’ (Moroni, 2013: 107). Before observing these principles in the mobility field, it is anyway important to remember that they imply a profound transformation (and weakening) of the present regulations, subverting current perspectives.

The management of public transport services provide a potential example for the application of the discussed principles (Pullini, 2012). Introducing European regulations, Italian laws provide opportunities to award to not public subjects the management of specific mobility services, dealing in particular with public transport (with bus and railway lines): the main mechanism is that of a competition, choosing winners according to the cheapness of their proposals (which – according to the current regulation - should also be the guiding aim of their activity, rather than profit). Potentially, also

associations or foundations – as non profit subjects – may participate in competitions, but the scarce attractiveness of competitions do not encourage their participation – leading then to compensative solutions, like reduced competitions or the constitution of public – private subjects; in general, the missing ownership of infrastructures and vehicles for public transport services strongly obstacles the potential involvement of new, not public subjects, representing a barrier to their access.

In addition to this, few competitions have been effectively arranged in Italy, and many of them have often proved ineffective – given the barriers to access and the not strategic attitude of the competent institutions towards public transport. Particularly significant is the field of regional railway competitions, and within them one of the few successful experiences – the Lombardy tender for S5 suburban rail line (Stagni, 2008). The competition was held in 2005, involving one of the most serviceable (and then, attractive for private investors) regional rail lines: its frequency was regular, with a train every 30 minutes from 6 to 24, every day of the year. The Region offered the use of the necessary vehicles, as a mean to promote participation in the competition; thanks to this, even if concretely only one subject could take part in the evaluation, the competition was real and brought advantages to the wider public; for example, new trains were available, specific services (like the transport of bicycles) were added, and thanks to the competition the costs remained the same as before.

Discussing subsidiarity and its possible contribution to the provision of services, the intervention of non public subjects appears today as a potential alternative solution to guarantee some services, also in the mobility field. Nevertheless, the concrete applications of the described principles has to face lacking regulations, and the outcomes strongly depend on the setting in which subsidiary initiatives are defined. If the mechanism of subsidiarity works, having precise rules and punctual applications, it may improve the quality of services (like in the discussed case) and sometimes even guarantee the permanence of specific transport services – thanks to an alternative provision that public subjects couldn't afford; in this sense, subsidiary initiatives could compensate absent or lacking interventions by traditional, public actors. The different potential for subsidiary contributions may then differently shape mobility and its policy, widening or restricting possibilities for action – and consequently the opportunity to provide transport services; more importantly, their different presence or absence could have a relevant role in determining effective opportunities for movement, especially if the provision of services depends on their presence (Zamagni, 2011).

### **Where different interests meet**

Initiatives from private subjects and needs from public actors may encounter at par, as approaches originated by different reasons but equally shaping mobility and its features. The guiding purposes of private initiatives may differ, as previously shown; in the same way, also their concrete strategies may change. Be them subsidiary replacements or strategic experimentations, private contributions seem to address mainly actions in the mobility field; nevertheless, also choices and plans are influenced. A common shaping function combines initiatives with different inspiring reasons,

determining the basic features of transport services or altering established frameworks; but, differently from the discussed interactions from below, their impact tends to be much higher, thanks to the mobilised resources and the wider scale of action. Different interests are expressed through actions, but they often have relevant consequences also for policy decisions – leading for example to changes in the regulatory frameworks, or to the official supports recognized to specific initiatives – making them partially recognisable with public actions and actors.

The concrete interventions of private subjects in the mobility field may be originated by individual initiatives or by public needs; similarly, also the specific features of movement addressed by their actions change. In particular, it seems that two attitudes can be observed: on the one hand, these initiatives may try to fill voids in the welfare provision, while on the other hand they may intervene for innovation by promoting new forms of intervention. In both cases, mobility and its choices are shaped by the concrete features of these initiatives, as it can be seen by referring to different examples from the Milan setting.

The first attitude is then the filling of welfare voids, aiming at the compensation of some provisions which are missing or not sufficient. The described concept of subsidiarity seems to emerge in the background: since public action is not effective in meeting specific social needs, not public subjects may intercept them and provide alternative (and potentially more effective) solutions to them; in this perspective, society should be able to satisfy its own needs by itself, without any intervention from above. The attitudes inspiring these initiatives can be the most diverse, and often are solidaristic ones; on the other side of service provision, public subjects have the interest in guaranteeing services which are missing or not sufficient. Subsidiary approaches to mobility are quite difficult to observe, given the features of movement and its particular metropolitan inflections: the high costs of providing transport services, in a condition of natural monopoly, also have to deal with highly varied mobility patterns, which would almost require tailored services. These peculiar features somehow explain the limited space for subsidiarity in transport field, and the significant fact that it can be observed mainly when discussing devoted services (Pullini, 2012): specific connections, like those with schools, or special services, as for people with reduced mobility, may be the object of subsidiary initiatives, appearing often as solidaristic actions which address specifically disadvantaged groups); moreover, they act on a limited scale, moving small groups along short, fixed routes: thanks to this, the needed means are much more affordable than those for any generalized public transport service.

A different attitude is that of innovative interventions, which introduce new elements in the mobility field. They may address market niches, or explore promising opportunities, or promote new solutions for established issues: in any case, what these initiatives share is the development of unprecedented actions, sometimes even directly experimenting them on field. Varied private interests may inspire these initiatives, or encounter the public need for new solutions to traditional issues of movement; in any case, the eventual success of these actions (be it an effective use or the simple experimentation on field) may have reflections on public choices and regulations. Some examples from the Milan case suggest various possible contributions and their

interactions with public choices for movement, dealing with diverse issues.

A first example is that of established opportunities, whose relevance is recognised but hasn't still led to any concrete introduction of specific action: it is the case for bike sharing, a celebrated initiative that, before 2008, could be found in many European cities but not in Milan. The interest of the municipality for the introduction of a bike sharing system met the established action of Clear Channel, a private mass media company active in the outdoor advertising field which introduces bike stations in return of the possibility to exhibit adverts close to them; then, municipality was able to introduce almost 200 stations and manage the related bike sharing system by giving the possibility for advertising management to this company. A second example is instead the opening of established or emerging fields for private initiatives, which may need dedicated public regulations and, in some cases, promoting actions: this is the case for car sharing, which will be discussed more in detail together with the many different actions established in Milan. Finally, private proposals may also introduce new elements, addressing potential market niches: for example, this can be observed with Urban Bike Messengers, a company of couriers using bicycles for urban deliveries; their initiative address the transfer of small goods at the urban scale and doesn't directly address the specific policy approaches to city logistics, but it could interestingly (and unexpectedly) even provide alternative solutions to smaller scale issues, like for example last mile deliveries in central areas. This action then address a small share of the logistic field, but may also contribute to a better evolution of specific policy initiatives.

#### *Public earnings from private interests*

Different may be the attitudes inspiring the described initiatives, and different may be the involved subjects. Yet, some common features can be observed, as for the relationships between public and private strategies. The various private contributions seem to address mainly practical actions in the mobility field, developing new initiatives or replacing previous interventions by other subjects; nevertheless, this practical attitude also intercepts a number of choices developed by public actors. In order to be developed in fact, these actions require new or different regulations, specific supports from institutions, sometimes even negotiation between contrasting interests (this could be the case for car sharing, often explicitly opposed by taxi owners): more in general, these initiatives have a practical dimension but also influence existing and new frameworks for mobility, concretely shaping (and altering) its opportunities and constraints.

A crucial element in this sense are the attitudes of private and public subjects towards their presence in the mobility field. Their approaches may be the most diverse, moving from the need to maintain a generalised mobility provision with scarce means, to the simple opportunities for profit; but their reciprocal interactions are more relevant, since they also determine specific consequences on wider opportunities for movement. In case of public resistance, it may be difficult to develop specific opportunities, delaying or impeding their introduction in a given setting; this may be the case for car sharing, whose effective introduction in Milan took place after a radical change in the existing

regulations (which favoured the previous only, public developer of the service). On the contrary, the complete absence of regulations may lead to chaotic outcomes; a potential example in this sense are logistic activities involving central urban areas, for which restriction of collective alternatives may provide the same delivery services with minor impacts on urban mobility. More often, agreements are developed between public and private subjects, thanks to cooperation or bargaining; in general, these are reflected in the development of regulations which authorise specific activities as to provide both private and public profits, but sometimes even positive examples have some critical features (for example, in the case of Milan the bike sharing system shows a strong imbalance between public returns and private profits deriving from advertising).

Varied initiatives and contributions may then influence mobility, shape its features and determine the framework for opportunities that movement provides; from this perspective, they can then lead to encounters at par, where the public interest in increased movement opportunities is met by varied initiatives, available thanks to private for profit activities. Considering these public outcomes and the manifold possible interactions between public and private interests, it is crucial to maintain a balance between a suitable return for intervening actors and an effective provision of services for a generalised access to urban opportunities. This last feature recovers the various evidences discussing the relevance movement has for individual and collective life opportunities: out of punctual economic proofs, a wide and generalized access should be granted, developing then specific guidelines – and even limitations – for possible private interventions in the mobility field. Such an approach requires thus to develop a public coordinative framework according to which these opportunities are recognized (Zamagni, 2011); in this way, the meaning itself of planning is defined. This attitude, defining a punctual need for some, ineludible regulations, probably obstacles the widest free opportunities for private initiatives: but the aim of these few limitations is to preserve the widest generalized possibilities for movement, as to provide the widest access to manifold opportunities available in the urban space.

### **A shared influence: the irresistible success of car sharing**

Among the varied experiences of private interventions in the mobility field, the case for car sharing initiatives is one of the most significant actions developed in Milan. The dimension and the impact of the initiative, together with the peculiar interactions between actors and their shared influence on the features of movement, make car sharing a relevant example of at par encounters dealing with mobility.

#### *Promotion by competition*

Car sharing is a service of car rental focused on occasional uses of vehicles, which are rent for very short periods (usually, few hours) and are mainly used for urban, short distance trips. The underlying philosophy privileges the use of the car rather than its ownership, providing vehicles that can be available for the multiple use of different subjects. Compared to a traditional car rental, car sharing is based on a more flexible functioning, conceived for urban settings: cars are immediately available in the streets

and can be managed in different forms, from private companies to cooperatives of users – almost a peer to peer mechanism.

The functioning of car sharing systems is similar. A fleet of vehicles is spread through the city, without any fixed location; registered users can access to the nearest available vehicle (usually shown on a website, or on a smartphone application) and freely use it, being charged of a fixed price. The use of the car usually can take place within a given border, often the municipal one; when the use is finished, the car can be left anywhere, remaining available to the next user. These systems usually have fixed prices of use, based on the period of use of the car, as well as specific registration systems, thanks to which only the members of a specific system can access the vehicles. Differently from traditional systems, cars can be left anywhere, without any centralized collecting place – being then more flexible than traditional car rental; if needed, the managing society will move them to more central locations. The cost of the membership and the prices of the service are lower than the cost of a property car used for less than 10000 kilometres in one year; moreover, specific cost reductions are provided for specific kindnesses – like the refueling of the used vehicle.

Such a system seems to provide a wide range of advantages for the various subjects involved (Marchetti Tricamo, 2014). Users have the possibility to use a private vehicle without the need to own it, sometimes even choosing the most convenient kind of car (a city car, a van...), reducing then mobility costs without affecting their possibility to move. Car producers, which are often present in the car sharing field, can use sharing as an occasion to promote specific vehicles, so that the initial sharing may lead to buy the same kind of car; this seems true particularly for vehicles with reduced market shares, like electric cars conceived for urban trips. Collective advantages are related to car sharing systems, too: moving from ownership to use, the motorisation quote is reduced, reducing also the share of public space used for parking; it has been calculated that one shared car eliminates ten private vehicles. At the same time, the prevalence of ecological shared vehicles also has a positive impact on pollution. Collective advantages then explain the interest of public subjects – especially municipalities – towards car sharing initiatives.

Controversial features can be observed, too, especially in relation to other transport means. The effectiveness of car sharing is mainly related to punctual, sporadic trips, especially for those trajectories not well served by alternative services – like those of public transport. The higher efficiency of car sharing would be related to its integration with public transport: on the one hand, insufficient connections may be covered by shared cars, leading to the closest public transport line and providing thus a diffused higher accessibility to the city; on the other hand, since car sharing highlights the effective costs of car trips, the use of public transport would be promoted. Another critical issues is the established presence of other cars providing collective transport, as for taxis: the competition between different uses of private vehicles is critical and still has to be well managed in order to provide efficient services and avoid the deriving conflicts today ongoing (in Milan, too).

The generic features of car sharing have specific Milanese inflections, which also

show the peculiar roles played by private subjects. A first company (Car Sharing Italia) was established in 2001 by the environmentalist association Legambiente, while in 2004 a second society (Guidami) opened in Milan thanks to the municipality and the Ministry for Environment. The two companies worked as car rental activities similar to traditional ones, since no specific technology was used and specific places to rent the vehicles were established; this didn't help the success of these first attempts, so that in 2007 the two companies established a single society – called Guidami again – whose management was in charge of Atm, the municipal public transport company. While Guidami worked at the municipal scale, Evai, a society managed by the regional railway company, was founded in 2004 to provide car sharing opportunities at a regional scale, but its small number of vehicles didn't make it widespread. Another general issue was the absence of technological devices to find a car and easily access to it.

Car sharing moved from being a niche phenomenon to becoming a popular transport alternative in 2013, thanks to a municipal initiative. The deputation for mobility issued a notice concerning the experimentation of new car sharing services, allowing new operators to intervene in Milan and establish new rental opportunities. The experimentation, to be started before the end of 2013, addressed private companies and was intended as a complementary service to the existing public transport links – as explicitly stated in the notice. A number of conditions were listed, as needed requirements for the authorisation of a new company: the twenty elements involved different features, including some important aspects from the service point of view. For example, services were intended as one-way connections, without any obliged return point; the access had to be guaranteed without limitations concerning periods of the day and of the year; the use of car sharing vehicles had to provide forms of integration with public transport titles. On the other hand, the municipality provided some advantages, like the possibility to freely access areas with traffic limitations, the exemption from the congestion charge, the free use of reserved parking.

Four operators responded to the notice, leading to six operating car sharing companies in Milan by the beginning of 2014. Only in one case (Twist) the incoming companies are established to exclusively manage car sharing services, while usually they are branches of bigger societies active in the automotive field (as for Car2Go, by Mercedes) or in the petrochemical sector (as for Enjoy, by Eni); moreover, often forms of partnership are established with other transport operators, such as railway companies (which provide the inclusion of car sharing services in their ticketing system). Similar are also the dimensions of the available fleets (with around 600 hundreds vehicles for each society) and the fares, both for the subscription and the use of the service. Different are instead the vehicles, which may privilege flexibility of use in urban streets (with smaller cars) or comfort (with higher dimensions). A common feature is instead the one way use, meaning the possibility to pick up a vehicle in a location and return it in a different place; this opportunity was a requirement of the public call for operators, and thanks to the higher flexibility it provides it is one of the main reasons for the recent revolution of car sharing in Milan.



The more flexible use of car sharing would have had a reduced impact if simply applied to a small number of vehicles. The arrival of new operators was instead accompanied by a much higher quantity of available vehicles, spreading them throughout the city and making them easier to access. The two initial companies managed around 200 cars; the new societies, with around 600 cars each, will bring the total amount to 2000 shared cars. The simple increased number is in itself a potential element for a wider impact, together with the more user friendly rules governing these new services. Then, this explains also the huge success of the new car sharing initiatives. The two initial services had around 7000 registered users, while today there are more than 100.000 subscribers (but much less effective users). Such a noticeable growth is the result of higher attractiveness for a more usable service, but also of an effective communication campaign (promoted also by the municipality) and of the evolution in some setting conditions (the diffusion of technological devices, as well as the reduced convenience in the ownership of a private car – given its costs and its limited performance in urban settings).



*Figgs. 10– 11 Car sharing and related innovations for mobility*

The initial, sensational success of new car sharing initiatives has to be contrasted with their effective use, to understand their effectiveness in complementing more traditional public transport systems. Up to now, only partial data are available, but some preliminary evaluations are possible – especially considering the two most diffused services, Car2Go and Enjoy. In its first two months, Car2Go registered around 100.000 uses – 2500 each day, while Enjoy counted 115000 uses; in this case, from the first to the second month of activity, the number of uses tripled. Despite the difference between registered and effective users, the two main companies just landed in Milan have had a relevant number of users, especially if compared with other European and worldwide experiences. Nevertheless, the impact of car sharing still appears less significant when considered in the wider framework of Milan mobility (Amat, 2013a): out of around 2.500.000 internal daily trips, car sharing seems to presently cover its 0,5 %; considering instead the effective share of car uses (38% on the total trips) and the positive trends for shared vehicles, the impact of these initiatives becomes increasingly more relevant.

Different operators have different fields of action, too. Most of them are active within Milan metropolitan area, while less diffused is the opportunity for regional,

national and even international trips; diverse are also the permissions they have to access traffic limited areas or to use reserved lanes. In this sense, according to destinations or chosen routes, the use of one or another service may influence the duration of the trip, orienting the client's choice; in general, the different fields of action suggest a complementary nature of the various services, which compete between each other but also maintain specific peculiarities. Relevant is also the potential move from ownership to use of cars, renouncing to private vehicles without any renounce to opportunities for movement. The availability of shared vehicles may promote a reduction in the number of circulating vehicles, and forecasts have imagined that for any shared car, ten private vehicles would not occupy roads and public spaces anymore; nevertheless, the short period of massive car sharing presence in Milan still doesn't allow any evaluation on the effective renunciations to private vehicles.

In general, the evolving car sharing experience of Milan shows a better performance of the system when competition exists between different operators. On the one hand, multiple actors have to face each other, competing thanks to the attractiveness and the effectiveness of their services: then, they are led to improve their performances and reduce costs, potentially providing wider opportunities for mobility and accessibility (transport costs are reduced and more modal alternatives are available). On the other hand, forms of reciprocal compensations can be observed: the ranges in which the services work are different, as well as the rules governing their use; then, in some cases a service may be more attractive (for example, for its lower costs), while in others another company may be more suitable (thanks to the wider distances allowed). More in general, the private (but publicly promoted) initiatives for car sharing are positive in themselves, given their potential advantages – as already discussed; rather than replacing existing services, they may play a complementary function, providing connections with less accessible areas or intervening in not served hours (especially at night or during the weekend, when public transport services are suspended or significantly reduced). Another aspect to consider are the conflicts with more traditional (and somehow restricted) shared uses of private vehicles, like taxis: drivers contrast the introduction of car sharing systems, often more efficient than them, but the experimentation of “collective taxi” initiatives could similarly improve their efficiency without threatening opportunities for their work.

#### *Unexpected initiatives in a planned framework*

The car sharing experience of Milan is still evolving, so that only few cues are available for a possible evaluation. In particular, the most relevant outcomes deriving from a massive use of shared vehicles may be observed on a middle – long term perspective, comparing expectations with concrete results: for example, crucial aspects are a reduced motorization rate, reflected also in a lower rate of road occupation for parking; car ownership should then decrease, while not necessarily the number of trips by car should significantly change. In this sense, the relationship with public transport services will be crucial for an evaluation of car sharing experiences: criticism on shared vehicles underlines their competition with traditional public transport links, while in its

principles (as well as in the requirements developed, for example, by Milan municipality) sharing should have a complementary role, providing those connections not covered by tram or bus lines. These various elements may suggest an evaluation of the effective role of car sharing in transforming (possibly for the better) metropolitan mobility, but require a wider perspective to be considered. Right now, the visible impacts of new car sharing experiences can be taken into account, starting with its unexpected success. Also thanks to institutional promotion and effective advertising, and together with some hinted setting conditions, the gradual arrival of new companies has been welcomed by a huge number of subscriptions; even the effective uses of cars have been noticeable, despite being much lower than the initial registrations to the services. Car sharing companies have been active in Milan since 2001, but only recently this opportunity for movement has become an established, recognizable solution: in this sense, more flexible rules, higher accessibility and increased availability of vehicles have played a crucial role. In order to test the expected outcomes of car sharing spreading, longer periods are required; few months after this massive diffusion of shared vehicles, its unexpected impact may be considered. New car sharing companies in fact impacted Milan mobility influencing especially visibility and awareness: visibility of shared vehicles, seen everywhere in the city and perceived then as an effective, usable solution; and on the awareness that a shared (and not private) use of cars is possible, especially when it is limited to short urban trips.

The evolution of technological solutions, together with its large spreading, has been mentioned as a favourable element for the success of car sharing initiatives. Other setting conditions can be observed, together with the significant contribution they provided to the present diffusion of shared vehicles. Sharing in fact has peculiar cultural and economic groundings, based on conceptual and material evolutions: the current economic crisis seems to be determining a change both in the affordance of traditional modal choices and in the underlying general economic paradigms. The ownership of a car, which requires to sustain relevant fixed costs (as for maintenance and legal requirements), is less attractive when the purchasing power of individual and families is lower; a change in individual modal choice can take place there where traditional modes are less economically convenient and other suitable transport alternatives are available (be them transport services or shared vehicles). Car sharing has then an attractiveness of its own, which can be significant in the metropolitan settings where private cars are not the only suitable modal alternative. Cultural conditions intervene, too: sharing economy is an increasingly popular paradigm, intercepting a different economical and ethical model appreciated in particular by specific social groups (those which Richard Florida would define as creative classes, referring to precise urban populations dealing with creative professions). As private companies providing services, car service operators mainly offer a service under a different name: there is no cooperation between them and their clients, so that the reference to sharing economy is mainly a market innovation; nevertheless, they have in common with sharing experiences features like an efficient use of resources, the introduction of technological innovations and the focus on use rather than ownership (Maineri, 2014).

The unprecedented success is somehow the result of unexpected initiatives

intervening in a planned framework: new car sharing companies were of course bound to the regulation introduced by the municipality, but the choice to promote car sharing systems is a punctual decision inspired by ongoing transformations (in Milan urban mobility and in the available technologies) rather than being included in previous, general mobility strategies. A general attitude to urban mobility management is inflected according to a specific opportunity and in relation to the effective presence of other (not public) subjects) ready to take part in it; a public intention finds then concrete application thanks to the intervention of private actors, who innovate existing technologies (making sharing more attractive) and exploit an occasion for further profits. The example shows the presence of an encounter at par and its concrete outcomes on urban mobility: the choice of providing new alternatives for metropolitan trips is implemented by private initiatives, who pursue a public aim producing in the same time specific earnings; this interaction also shapes the available opportunities, since it determines regulations which influence the service, its range of activity and the potential accessibility. It is difficult to imagine the simple provision of free opportunities for private initiatives, without any other regulation or public intervention, since the operators themselves ask for a cooperation with institutional subjects; the focus is in particular on policy and its support to car sharing. For example, the English operator ZipCar recognises that car clubs are a significant solution to mobility issues, and that policy can maximize this contribution; consequently, some actions on policy and strategies are required: for example, integration through marketing, integration through systems, behavioural incentives, stronger guidance and leadership on car club strategy, and development planning (Fergusson, 2014).

In the described Milanese experience, no established outcomes are evaluable, but rather the initial impact of car sharing – as well as its initial evolution – can be taken into account. The contributions from private subjects have subverted the previous condition of shared vehicles, extending their market niche and noticeably increasing their popularity – at least in the public perception, if not in the concrete use. Their action has been crucial, but has been made possible only thanks to an initial public initiative. Then, a simple intervention from above, or a completely free private action, wouldn't be able to provide innovative and efficient mobility initiatives exclusively by themselves. These initiatives, which are not (or are just partially) planned, seem to require a wide framework for their development, in order to receive the needed supports to be useful and successful, but also to be balanced by taking into account varied elements of environmental, economic and social sustainability.

### **(Un)aware influences on policy**

Encounters at par are probably the main kind of interaction shaping urban mobility. The patterns of movement for urban populations in fact are formed through the alternative assemblage of different available links, which are often part of collective transport services: and their availability depends on the presence of subjects providing them, acting within the regulative framework of constraints and opportunities established by institutions. Direct interactions are then crucial to guarantee

opportunities for movement, and their relevance is particularly evident for local administrations: different initiatives providing transport links may take place anyway, but an interaction with institutions may orientate their activity towards specific standards. As shown in many Third World cities, many informal initiatives are visible in this sense, spontaneously providing transport links there where public action is missing; in that case, public subjects may try to direct them towards more regulated and recognisable services, arranging more efficient networks by the inclusion of the services they provide – as attempted in Bogotá (Ardila-Gómez, 2004). Moving back to developed countries, a similar need appears: manifold initiatives related to movement (be them more traditional, like collective bus links, or more innovative, like vehicle clubs) may be intercepted and oriented towards public interests, exploiting opportunities for social innovation or balancing potential externalities; public interests in this case could be the increased possibilities deriving from the introduction of these initiatives.

A question of scale emerges from the hinted examples, as well as from the various Milanese practices shortly discussed: new subjects and innovative practices are mainly active at a local scale, developing small actions. Their intervention seems more suitable within specific niches, rather than in structured fields, because of their nature and dimensions. Traditional actions, like the provision of public transport services or the construction of new infrastructures, are mainly accessible to established subjects: they act at a large scale, require huge resources to mobilise and even need a certain visibility – as demonstrated by competitions for public services, in which recognised national and international operators compete. Instead, the innovative actions which provide new opportunities for movement and differently shape metropolitan mobility act within new niches; rather than replacing established subjects, they side them with new initiatives, finding then new spaces for their actions. In different ways, the discussed encounters at par share an innovative nature, reflected also in the somehow precarious nature of these initiatives: they need to develop a specific recognisability and consequently their available resources are reduced; the examples in this sense can be different, moving from the car clubs still under experimentation to the bike messengers slowly (but constantly) increasing their range of activity. Even if acting at a small scale and lacking the recognisability of stronger, more established initiatives, interactions at par can provide significant contributions to wider opportunities for movement.

Given the relevance of those initiatives interacting at par with institutions, their features take in the subjects who may be potentially intercepted by institutional subjects. The definition of subjects to involve is crucial but also tricky, since it mainly address those actors with enough resources to be active in urban mobility initiatives – mainly devoted to the provision of transport services, be them new or existing; their involvement may focus on existing operators or on new subjects. In the first case, subjects who are already operating in a given setting play a crucial role: they are easy to recognise, also thanks to their established role, but difficult to bargain with, since they provide fundamental basic services and their replacement may be very difficult – if not impossible (especially when dealing with services in metropolitan settings). Their negotiating power is high, thanks to their resources and know-how that are fundamental for a city – especially when resources are scarce and services difficult to maintain.

Different is instead the case for new experiences, which often also involve subjects not yet present in a given setting: it may be more difficult to recognize their relevance and the potential role for urban mobility, but can be decisive as complementary providers of transport services. In this sense, institutional subjects should act strategically, going beyond the simple management of existing services and developing instead a strategic attitude, able to recognize new actors and tactics to guarantee the widest opportunities for movement. In this sense, their focus may be on the development of stronger frameworks for mobility initiatives, providing a higher negotiating power for institutional subjects and also recognising the necessary spaces for new solutions – even for their experimentation; promoting complementary forms of movement, and creating then competitive alternatives to traditional solutions, not only wider opportunities are available, but also the indispensable role of some subjects is reduced, moving then from disadvantaged to more balanced interactions. This strategic intervention of new subjects may anyway have a reduced impact, considering the established subjects it would deal with: apart from their acquired power, these actors provide massive services and huge infrastructural works, whose dimension can't be managed by smallest subjects with less resources. Established interests can then rely on wider available resources, so that their role within the transport field (and in the related decisional arenas) could be changed but not discussed; moreover, new interventions may mainly focus on the provision of innovative features rather than on the replacement of traditional services.

The forms of encounter at *pars* mainly discuss transport services and (less often) infrastructures, shaping structures and opportunities for mobility. Be them new subways built thanks to project financing, experimental initiatives like vehicle sharing, or traditional actions like massive transport networks, the objects discussed in these relationships are crucial to guarantee basic urban mobility, defining the framework of constraints and opportunities for movement; consequently, their influence on transport policy is fundamental. According to the subjects and the discussed services, the contributions play a different role for urban mobility (Pullini, 2012): some of them are its backbones, as for public transport networks; others instead play an additional role, providing opportunities which complement, improve or increase the current provision of mobility services. Basically, objects of these interactions are all those initiatives which provide collective opportunities for movement, addressing individuals or groups. According to the nature of the initiative (from private profit activities to public services) and to its purposes (addressing marginal, small scale mobility practices or intercepting huge flows), also the ways to shape these objects will change: mass transit may require negotiation to discuss the services provided, their features and their collective costs (both as fares and subsidies, given the peculiar economic nature of transport services); smaller scale initiatives instead may need frameworks regulating them, also as a way to negotiate potential conflicts (as for different forms of vehicle hire, such as taxicabs, car sharing and ride sharing). As described for car sharing in Milan, also specific setting conditions – from local features to ongoing social trends – can be significant in determining the success of new initiatives. In this sense, both institutions and promoter subjects should be able to recognise and take advantage of these opportunities; they should somehow strategically act also being aware of more favourable conditions for

innovative actions. A peculiar case may be that of voluntary initiatives from the bottom, which could influence opportunities for movement providing innovative solutions or introducing established best practices (Murray et al, 2010): they can provide occasions for creative innovation in the mobility field. In the structure here adopted, their nature is somehow ambiguous: they may appear as encounters at par, given the (potential) reciprocal interest between voluntary proposers and institutional takers, but also as interactions from below, considering the initial source of the discussed initiatives. For example, using open data about transport, apps providing information or trip planning may be developed; or, reproducing the walking wayfinding system adopted in many Northern European cities, a devoted system addressing trips by feet may be developed. These examples, which effectively took place in Milan, show varied opportunities to improve movement thanks to the adoption of small projects started on a voluntary base and meeting potential collective needs. In this sense, institutions – especially at a municipal level, given the small scale of these initiatives – may provide occasions to foster this creative innovation, for example making open data available and calling competitions for projects using them, or establishing a devoted desk to take into account similar potential proposals.

More difficult are instead potential suggestions for encounters at par in the mobility field. It seems in fact that politics, rather than policy, have a crucial role in shaping the main opportunities for movement in metropolitan settings: institutional actors have to face other subjects, strategically interacting with them. As a basic condition, openness seems fundamental, since it provides the opportunity to interact with significant subjects and further opportunities for movement; then, a specific ability for bargaining seems necessary. Their presence provides in fact alternative resources to guarantee new opportunities for collective movement, and public action is often lacking in this sense – making necessary, if not fundamental, interventions from other subjects. The ability to bargain may have different inflections according to the issues and the actors involved (Ponti, 2012; Boitani, 2013): in some cases, renegotiations of established balances may be required (as for public transport services: the introduction of competitions between different operators is often prevented or weak); in others, frameworks balancing different interests may be necessary (as for the discussed forms of vehicle hire). Relationships with traditional planning are not immediate to define, since the relevance of these interactions often comes before planning decisions (Moroni, 2007): they may establish setting conditions, as well as shape the contents of the plan during its elaborative process; they have then an influence of mobility policy, which could be directed with awareness or simply endured. Given the dimensions of the discussed issues and the involved interests, interactions should take place at the most suitable territorial level, involving at least metropolitan subjects – as well as provincial, regional and national institutions (Camagni et al, 2002). The definition of the correct territorial scale to establish interactions at par in the transport field seems crucial for a better framing of the debated issues; and probably it is another strategic skill required to practice effective politics for mobility.





## Conclusions: towards policies for mobile involvement

A vibrant society like the Milanese one has provided a number of examples for interactions in the mobility field, filling the previous chapters with diverse experiences broadly discussed or simply hinted at. Car clubs, critical masses, public consultations, oppositional committees... these are just some experiences, animated by specific social subjects and urban populations, which can be found when considering what movement is today in the Milan urban region. A first approach may be that of the admired gaze wandering through a mobile labyrinth, where the multiplicity of mobility practices is fascinating in itself even if difficult to grasp. Yet, all the various experiences – and the varied interactions between subjects that they imply – suggest the need for threads connecting them, suggesting new ways to observe (and intervene in) known settings and established issues. In particular, a focus on interactions has emerged. Rather than providing specific guidelines, it has moved the attention on a potentially decisive elements, requiring to be framed in innovative ways (questioning then established paradigms, like those of participation).

Two threads have led the whole research, combining the multiple meanings of movement together with interactions shaping its policy. De Certeau (1984) referred to transport as a metaphor, telling stories reflected in spatial trajectories: nowadays, the contemporary experience of metropolitan spaces - as perceived by urban populations and inflected in their practices – is characterised by multiplicity, affecting strategies and outcomes. The multiplicity of movement and the decreasing legibility of metropolitan settings has disoriented an established policy approach to mobility, requiring to explore new perspectives for public action. In this sense, the second main thread – that of interaction – seems decisive in the perspective of Webber (1964): ‘It is interaction, not place, that is the essence of the city and of city life’. Interaction appears as a relevant element to address the discussed multiplicity; in order to deal with changing settings and disoriented actions, a first move is the establishment of significant relationships with change and its territorial inflections.

Intertwining the two threads, which seem particularly significant for the individual urban experience as well as for collective interests in a metropolitan perspective, the research has tried to understand which contribute (if any) urban populations and their practices may provide to mobility policy, defining conditions for a common ground where to bring together social demands and political answers for mobility. Any of the hinted topics would deserve specific further research, deepening the discussion of some established points or exploring more in detail some emerging issues; some waymarks have anyway emerged from the previous discussions, showing elements of relevance

possibly emerging from different, significant interactions.

### **A varied relevance**

Interaction and movement are somehow intimately related: movement is a form of interaction, taking place between subjects and places, dealing with setting opportunities and constraints, shaping opportunities and identities. Even from the perspective of individuals and urban populations, interaction seems to provide a wider perspective on mobility, moving from the simple involvement in decisional processes to a broader relationship between subjects, which may shape both existing features of movement and future decisions for its planning. It is interaction that explains ‘the functioning of the city – the spontaneous cooperation of the inhabitants and the silent agreement to reach common aims’ (Paba, 2010: 56). Such a broader relationship has a manifold nature, according to which the relevance of interaction is defined and refined continuously.

A first element of distinction is the object itself: mobility and its features. The multiplicity of movement practices make it difficult to understand mobility in its entirety, given their manifold and continuously changing nature; the description of some trends is then necessarily partial, being often based on forecasts and analytical models, and some practices necessarily remain unknown. The limited understanding allows then to portray mainly the most visible features of movement, and also influences the effective opportunities for mobility management, delimiting the potential field of the actions shaping movement and its opportunities. Multiplicity is increased by the territorial scales on which mobility is inflected. Its practices take place at a very local as well as a transregional scale, involving then a varied set of practices and crossing those borders traditionally delimiting territorial phenomena. In particular, the metropolitan perspective adopted in the work when discussing mobility in the Milan urban region has to deal with multiple elements and with the limited effectiveness of traditional policy tools. Multiplicity emerges then as a crucial element influencing opportunities for understanding and action in the field of movement. Consequently, the conditions for the potential relevance of interactions are multiple, too. In general, the focus on interaction may open to a wider set of contributions, which do not necessarily intervene in structured involving processes, but may also be intercepted (when significant) in different ways; in this sense, it is important to distinguish various forms of interactions, promoted from above, from below or developed at par.

As for interactions from above (which are mainly institutional initiatives to consult citizens or specific populations), their contribution is significant when focused on precise elements. Given the wide scale of issues concerning metropolitan mobility, and the simple validation aim of many compulsory participatory initiatives, interactions from above seem relevant when focused on precise subjects and questions. They are necessarily incomplete and instable, requiring then new forms for involvement grounded in the construction of significant relationships (Sennett, 2012); even if partial, their contributions may play a complementary role for the knowledge of metropolitan mobility (Pucci, 2013) as well as for the consensus to the discussed policy decisions (Delrio, 2011). Amongst the discussed examples, the referendum held in 2011 on

specific urban issues is particularly relevant, since it fixed clear waymarks for some following planning decisions; significantly, the precise statements (concerning for example a traffic charge, or the reopening of Navigli) have had a wider influence than more generic claims (asking for lower pollutant emissions or more sustainable policy decisions).

Approaches from below instead make claims visible in the face of power, as expressed by a wide range of actors and practices moving in local societies. Since they develop in the framework of opportunities and constraints provided by policy (Pasqui, 2008), these claims intercept public action in multiple ways, supporting general ideas or promoting specific actions. Their significance can thus be defined according to the contribution which could be provided to public action: from this perspective, involvement could be pursued, be it imposed through practices or self-imposed by an open attitude of institutions. A crucial element of relevance is the promotion of a diverse vision, based on elements important for citizens even if not considered by public action (Paba, 2003); the expression of specific claims may move from debate to concrete initiatives, promoting contestant or propositional practices which could also be directly involved in the shaping of public action. For example, the joint arrangement of critical masses for children going to school promotes cycling as a suitable mobility alternative, and it has been made possible thanks to the cooperation between municipal institutions and activist associations.

Encounters at par are probably the main kind of interaction shaping urban mobility. Direct interactions are in fact fundamental to guarantee opportunities for movement, providing collective transport services that, alternatively assembled, shape the patterns of movement for urban populations. The availability of these services, be them established or innovative, depends on the presence of subjects providing them, acting within the regulative framework of constraints and opportunities established by institutions – which may be orientated towards specific standards (Zamagni, 2011). The relevance of these interaction relies then on the increased possibilities for movement deriving from the intervention of service providers, who necessarily have to interact with institutional subjects. In this sense, the introduction of new services like bike sharing systems is founded on the meeting between the public interest in providing a sustainable (and politically rewarding) modal choice, and the private aim to expand its commercial presence thanks to bike sharing stations.

The relevance here discussed is then a varied one, changing according to the form of interaction, the involved subjects and the scale of intervention. Public action in the field of mobility is differently intercepted, confirming the multiple features of this importance. In particular in fact two different perspectives – a technical and a political one – give their own meaning to these contributions. From a technical point of view, interactions may support more effective mobility planning by providing a wider setting knowledge or suggesting alternative solutions to established issues; from a political perspective instead the focus is on the legitimation of specific choices and the support to them making actions meaningful for a wider range of subjects. In both cases, decisions concerning transport field are better associated to urban populations and their consequent spatial practices – be them related to movement or not. A specific attention

to interactions seems then significant, if not decisive for a more effective mobility planning; rather than adopting generic approaches, issues and subjects should be framed according to their peculiarities, even choosing liminal perspectives strategically fertile (Calvaresi, 2013).

### **Mobile fields of involvement**

These warnings frame the significance of interactions between urban populations and policy makers: relationships can be relevant, but according to specific (and different) conditions. The meaning of interactions seems then to emerge when going beyond traditional paradigms for participation: it is not a question of a generic collaborative planning, in which responses to any issue are invented by people collectively (Healey, 1997), but different approaches need to be developed and their contributions are limited by definition. The presence of differences seem crucial not just for a deeper understanding of city and society as they currently are, but also ‘to rethink the self-government of the community in the face of the expropriation of the democratic decision for a relevant number of supralocal collective choices’ (Pasqui, 2013): a closer approach to settings and their acting subjects can provide a better framing of issues related to mobility, refusing universalist approaches and attempting significant involvements.

Interactions can then contribute to a more effective metropolitan mobility planning if they are established within mobile fields of involvement. Their mobility is not just a pun referring to the discussed issue, but a reference to their changing nature and adaptive attitude: according to the subjects, different are the needed requirements for an effective engagement. Defining these opportunities as fields, possible spaces of cooperation – rather than fixed schemes – are proposed, providing favourable conditions for action and interaction: in fact, ‘a citizenry expresses itself only in its action, exists – we should say – just because it acts and only in the moment when it acts, and only in that case it becomes aware of itself and its interests’ (Ferraro, 1998: 252). Involvement is the guiding principle orienting the construction of interactions: relevant subjects are directly addressed, to provide differentiated contributions to the shaping of mobility and its opportunities in metropolitan settings.

Subjects and objects to consider for these forms of involvement are intimately intertwined, and in particular they share an inner incompleteness. The focus of this work has been on metropolitan mobility planning, dealing with a setting characterised by multiple movement patterns and similarly multiple actors and populations active in the local society. The complexity of metropolitan movement is the result of many (smaller or bigger) pieces composing the features of mobility at different scales, from the very local to the transnational: the treatment of the issue is necessarily partial, as described when dealing with transport planning tools, and the engagement of subjects should be different, too. The knowledge developed in the everyday urban experience by urban populations may refer to local contexts, as in the Antismog Parents’ requests for safer roads to schools; the technical notions could shape answers to massive transport needs, as for traditional planning based on models and evaluations; unexpected

resources may be mobilised in favour of precise share of the mobility demand, for example applying technologies that extend the availability of shared vehicles. But no one of them may be exclusively in charge of shaping what opportunities for movement in metropolitan settings should be. What a setting is and what it could become is necessarily the result of the combined actions of multiple actors, each one providing a specific contribution referring to precise scales and issues.

The limits characterising each potential interaction require then to define differentiated forms of involvement, focused on specific subjects and objects. As discussed in the previous chapters, interactions from above may provide complementary contributions to the shaping of mobility, increasing knowledge or gathering specific political consensus around the chosen action; interactions from below may improve the intervention in the field of movement by highlighting neglected issues and even proposing alternative solutions to them, both contesting or cooperating with institutional subjects; encounters at par may mainly refer to the concrete opportunities for movement, maintaining traditional services or providing new initiatives in this sense. Each of these features then defines potential subjects to be involved, as well as privileged objects to be considered: transport modelling would represent wide flows rather than punctual practices, just as a local committee may be more effective if addressed when discussing neighbourhood actions.

Interaction is then the basic mechanism to involve diverse subjects on different objects, acquiring differentiated features according to specific needs: this is then the meaning of mobile fields of involvement, which share the engagement of individuals and populations but differently inflect this common attitude. In this perspective, different networks can be imagined. 'Every network is an image of power, or, more exactly, an image of the power of ruling actor(s)' (Raffestin, 1983: 162), and together links create networks deriving from the interaction of actors located in the space. Varied networks may then differently deal with different subjects: more than a question of power, it would become a question of openness, that needs to be built also with differentiated forms of interaction.

### **Significant interactions**

Addressing urban populations, potential contributions may emerge for the shaping of metropolitan mobility. No univocal definitions are possible, given the varied relevance that they may have and the consequent changing forms of involvement which are required. Interactions appear then as forms of relationships, establishing contacts between policy makers and a wide range of subjects – not simply definable as policy takers. The relational nature of interactions involves cues from some quoted scholars, as suggestions for the establishment of significant interactions.

A first significant element is mutual awareness, which recognizes the existence and the value of the other subject; Sennett (2012) discusses it as a crucial condition for cooperation, a skill needed to sustain everyday life and get things done. In the field of public action, and in particular for planning, this can be reflected in the recognition of certain specificities referred to populations and practices: for example, the experimented

mapping of migrant mobility practices – recognised as peculiar ways to move in a territory – has provided elements for a wider understanding of an often ignored mobility. A difference between participation and interaction seems thus to emerge, showing that different forms of involvement (and consequently, different results) can come from different attitudes; the establishment of significant relationships may assume the most diverse forms, but an effective engagement with the other – be it an individual, an urban population, a community – seem to provide more effective results. Awareness leads then to recognition, defining subjects to interact with.

Interactions are then shaped by the attitudes of the involved subjects, initially based on the confrontation of different strategies. Discussing the usual opposition between radically different ideas (especially in ethical fields), Haidt (2012: 243) states that ‘our minds were designed for groupish righteousness. We are deeply intuitive creatures whose gut feelings drive our strategic reasoning. This makes it difficult - but not impossible - to connect with those who live in other matrices, which are often built on different configurations of the available moral foundations’. Interactions provide then a confrontation between different matrices, as inflected in specific strategies. In the face of common challenges, a more open attitude may attempt to reshape the starting matrices, adapting them to the development of shared solutions: this may be the case for the cycling board, developing municipal strategies jointly with associations promoting the use of bicycles. The initial recognition has then to be followed by an attitude open to confrontation, even when dealing with radically different opinions.

The engagement has to be measured on the treatment of the involved issues, and significant may be a reference to problem framing – as defined by Schön: ‘we name the things to which we will attend and frame the context in which we will attend to them’ (Schön, 1991: 40); the subject dealing with issues thus ‘may construct a new way of setting the problem – a new frame which (...) he tries to impose on the situation’ (Schön, 1991, p. 63). Reframing is an attempt to refer a situation to usual issues, operating a definition of its relevant elements and developing possible solutions; it then grounds an interaction on the concrete features of given questions. This could be the case for car sharing, an initiative which maintains the freedom of movement typical of single vehicles but within the framework of their use – rather than in that of ownership. Interaction is thus significant if the initial recognition and confrontation effectively face the discussed issues, providing a specific framing of them.

These conditions for significance, as emerging from the previous case studies descriptions, have in common a quite generic nature as well as a certain prominence of the public actors, who often emerge as references with pivotal roles in decisional processes. Difficult is the precise definition of subjects to involve and the individuation of precise conditions for their engagement; their varied relevance and the mobile nature of their involvement may then be reflected in diverse initiatives – as described or hinted in the previous chapters. Significant relationships may be started by a new, more direct address to specific groups which are not addressed today: this could be the case for urban populations to involve by using sociological, ethnographic and anthropological tools (Attili, 2007). Even subjects who are traditionally involved should be engaged in more complex forms of representation dealing with the metropolitan dimension and the

manifold features of their urban experience: in this sense, consultations based on multiple voting systems could be arranged (Frug, 1999). Approaches and mechanisms are specific expression of a wider openness, to be newly introduced in the development of policy responses: an open approach to the contributions coming from varied social subjects may establish boards devoted to the evaluation and possible adoption of these proposals (Murray et al, 2010).

The significance of relationships is explained in the light of their meaning in the shaping of urban settings. Establishing interactions in fact allows to intercept aspirations and trajectories that cross our cities, and this would also give space (according to Ostrom, 1996) to ‘what individuals will do when they have autonomy to craft their own institutions and can affect each other’s norms and perceived benefits’, taking into account the possibility to change previous situations. The definition of frameworks where to provide opportunities for a direct engagement relies then on the effective contributions provided to movement: mobility patterns, broader visions, concrete proposals and innovative initiatives define and redefine what movement can be in metropolitan settings, consequently influencing also the opportunities it provides.

### **A shared shaping of transport policy**

Significant interactions established within mobile fields of involvement may provide differently relevant to the shaping of metropolitan mobility, addressing especially policy actions dealing with movement. The transformation of post-metropolitan settings and the more and more mobile nature of lives overlap and pose specific questions for policy, new exigencies originate from individual and collective strategies which continuously redefine themselves and also challenge previous conceptions of mobility. The crucial role that movement plays and the changing conditions it deals with make necessary to consider a politics for mobility (Cresswell, 2010). The concept is related some of the focal points of the research: institutions, especially at a municipal level, have a crucial role in shaping opportunities for movement; they necessarily deal with a number of other actors who influence mobility and may be directed towards a shared shaping of transport policy; and their not exclusive influence in the mobility field leads to a focus on interactions.

The definition of a politics for mobility requires to specify which attitude institutions should have. Discussing a wide range of contributions, institutional subjects always play a crucial role in the shaping of opportunities for movement: they are addressed or address many different actors, encountering them at par or not; but they always play a pivotal role, being crucial to construct interactions and direct them towards the achievement of shared goals. In this sense, institutional subjects should develop a strategic attitude, considering mobility as a political issue with relevant technical elements. The guiding purposes should have of course elements of interests for public subjects, be them a significant share of consensus in the city or the proposition of innovative ideas addressing tricky social issues; and they should activate those actors (and those resources) which could be significant for decisional processes, even manipulating resources – as a possible strategic approach to complex decisions and

policy issues (Dente, 2011). This could refer to the consensus mobilised in initiatives like public consultation, a crucial waymark to push controversial initiatives or maintain a certain policy attitude; in Milan, this allowed the empowerment of an existing – but weak – congestion charge. Another example may be also the introduction of new actors within established arenas, to foster competition and increase the opportunities available for movement: in the car sharing field, competing subjects transformed a previously not relevant alternative into a suitable modal choice. Or this could be the case for the involvement of cycling associations within decisional boards, as a way to secure their political support to the municipal government.

Public actors would be then asked to actively intervene in the field of debate and decision, but their contribution would focus on strategic frameworks, intended to coordinate initiatives and bring together different approaches. This would go beyond the simple provision of regulation, leading instead to the development of a political attitude to mobility; this not neutral role could be questioned (Moroni, 2013), but should be intended as a strategic approach aiming at the increase of collectively available opportunities. A politics for mobility would then be inflected in the direct engagement with social subjects, in the construction of interactions and in the strategic approach dealing with potential contributions to public action in the mobility field. This would develop an alternative policy approach to evolving mobility issues, probably offering new occasions to move in difficult territorial settings – more and more characterised by the disappearance of borders, by the disorientation of public action and, more in general, by the challenging of established democratic forms of territorial government. A wider openness and varied policy approach may then adapt public action to changing territorial settings. Still, the guiding aim should be the promotion of varied opportunities for movement, as a way to improve the access to the manifold opportunities available in urban settings – especially at a (post)metropolitan scale.

### **Policy intercepting populations**

The strategic attitude required for institutions needs more concrete inflections: the politics for mobility should then have policy reflections. Public action could intercept social demands developing an attentive attitude to them, and providing devoted occasions for confrontation. As shown in the previous chapters, occasions for differentiated interactions needs to be designed according to the specific features of settings and actors, considering that traditional forms of involvement are able to convey only a limited range of contributions. In this sense, the relationship with plans and their development processes is significant: interactions in fact take place in and out planning processes, since only partial occasions for confrontation are provided; moreover – at least in Italian settings, the irregular succession of plans doesn't provide visible occasions for interactions within structured processes. Then, considering that the discussed contributions may intercept public action in and out planning processes, it could be significant to provide general frameworks for interaction. Even ignoring the specific objects and features of differentiated contributions, the development of plans could be the occasion to discuss occasions to intercept these contributions, as will be



discussed later. The definition of potential framework could be relevant since it would expand the plan range of action, not only framing mobility decisions, but also understanding how to accept differentiated – and unexpected – contributions to them; some examples in this sense will be suggested in the next lines. Practical proposals should also take into account the multiplicity characterising institutions: public subjects have been treated as unitary actors, just distinguishing their territorial field of action; but an important distinction should be made between their political and technical components, as well as within the various administrative branches and their behaviours (Simon, 1947).

Interactions from above have mainly show potential complementary contributions to the shaping of mobility policy, providing a wider knowledge and a specific consensus for planning decisions. Analytical groundings for the planning activity appear as relevant, considering the current multiplicity of mobility patterns and the strong difficulties in catching them; still, two directions may guide concrete experimentations. On the one hand, the massive use of technological devices could provide huge, more precise data concerning the main mobility flows: this could be the case for tracking features related to smartphones and other technological tools, which have proved to provide significant representation of mobility flows (Pucci, 2013); because of the related privacy issues, this would require specific authorisations or controversial changes in the current regulations. On the other hand, a more precise representation could use ethnographic tools, directly approaching urban populations and their mobility practices. This would propose initiatives similar to the mapping experimentation previously described, which could represent movement patterns and relate them to specific strategies (including available opportunities, constraints, etc); still, considering the complex nature of such an action and the difficulties in treating information, approaches through mapping should be carefully focused on specific groups and issues – as a way to relate movement opportunities to the pursuit of individual and collective life careers. As for consensus instead, this could be measured not only when discussing general strategies for urban development, but also when referring to the current provision of transport services: in this sense, the introduction of “line committees” (inspired to similar French initiatives) could be significant. A continuous monitoring of the service quality could directly involve its users and provide immediate feedbacks on the current services as well as on suitable forms of improvement and development; then, citizens would be involved not just when discussing broad issues, but also when dealing with the everyday management of basic services.

Interactions from below instead are characterized by a high variety, swinging from mild oppositional committees to structured, skilled associations; according to their features, also their ability to intercept institutions change, as well as the probability to develop common projects. Social activism is differentiated and, in Milan, is moving towards initiatives based on cooperation and proposition (Bonomi, 2011): the development of contributions and the diffused creation of local initiatives make thus necessary for institutions to take advantage of these presences, providing occasions to intercept them. In this sense, two aspects seem relevant: the reception of incoming proposals and their exploitation. As for the reception, it could be interesting to provide

recognisable subjects or places to receive potential proposals; this could be arranged in various ways: providing websites (like the French experience of Carticipe, a Strasbourg-based institutional mapping site where anyone can represent his proposals to improve public transport and receive votes from other supporters), arranging devoted offices or attributing this task to specific civil servants in the various branches of the administration. Considering the different attitudes and skills of the proposing subjects, institutions may intervene supporting them and their proposals. Even in this case, two are the suitable solutions, aiming at strengthening internal contents and external relationships. Institutional subjects may in fact provide forms of advocacy, supporting incoming proposals by refining them in order to improve their technical and political feasibility; they could then make available their skills to refine suggestions and make them more suitable (if not effective), offering their know-how to subjects which are often voluntary and then beginners in the field of urban policy. More interestingly, institutions could promote relationships between different subjects with similar aims: those with higher levels of expertise may then offer their skills to subjects with affine purposes but lower abilities. It is a kind of “at par advocacy”, that is already at work between established subjects (as for the recalled observations to plans developed by different environmentalist, cycling and children associations) but could also be extended to newer, more local and less recognised actors. This could also provide a transmission of knowledge out of decisional processes, in which more effective are those ideas better communicated. Then, considering the relationships already developed by institutions, public actors could also work as intermediaries between actors, so that more elaborated (and also more effective and feasible, too) proposals can be taken into account by institutions.

Finally, encounters at par may be treated trying to catalyse and sustain them, trying to stimulate new innovative contributions and sustain the increased opportunities they potentially provide. From the discussed cases, a required starting condition is the provision of opportunities to introduce and test new initiatives. In the case of car sharing, the call for new operators acted as catalyst for new subjects, while more generally forms of exhibition and competition could be imagined. Something similar already took place in Milan, where in 2012 a “Traffic Camp” gave the opportunity to present variously innovative projects concerning urban mobility; some of them have been implemented or discussed, while others just received an occasion of public visibility. In this case, a form of competition could work interestingly, providing the opportunity to compare various proposals, choose a favourite one and grant its effective development. This public exhibition and (eventual) competition may act as a catalyst, working in particular for those proposals not supported by financially strong subjects. Then, it becomes relevant to sustain the outcomes deriving from encounters at par – be them economically sustained or not. In this sense, incentives could be introduced to foster innovative initiatives and sustain their spreading between individuals and communities moving everyday. For example, the abandonment of private vehicles and/or the adoption of more sustainable forms of sharing may be supported with economic incentives, like contributions or tax cuts. This would represent not only a direct economic sustain, but also a direct expression of reduced collective costs: for

example, the use – rather than the ownership – of a car allows to occupy less public space for parking, leading then to a generalised public profit in terms of available spaces. The interaction with subjects encountered at par should then provide occasions to catalyse and sustain their initiatives.

### **Catchers in the plan**

Movement is manifold, as manifold are the urban populations shaping it through their practices. Traditional policy approaches to the issues of mobility appear as ineffective, while forms of interactions between social demands and political answers may contribute to a more effective mobility planning. The recalled image of the “catcher in the plan” aims then at intercepting what is moving in a society and could contribute to better, wider possibilities for movement (and, consequently, for a better access to urban opportunities). The discussed interactions are significant when relevant are the subjects involved, and significant the relationships established with them. Similarly, their meaning is not universal, but according to their peculiarities different could also be their contribution: from the proposal of new solutions to the extension of established knowledge, diverse are the opportunities to improve public action in the field of movement. This multiplicity requires what could be defined as a politics of mobile involvement: the awareness that urban populations may improve opportunities for movement, widening traditional policy perspectives and offering relevant contributions, but providing that their engagement is strategically tailored.

In changing metropolitan settings, the territorial inflections of public action is challenged, but also its democratic basis is continuously questioned. The issues of mobility play a crucial role, given their role in the evolution of what territories are and their relevant characterisation of what individual and collective life experiences can be. In this sense, a focus on subjects and their opportunities – summarised in approaches focused on urban populations (Pasqui, 2008) – may provide a different perspective on these issues, both to understand and intervene in them. In particular, crucial seems the establishment of interactions: they need to recognise subjects, define their peculiarities and inflect an attentive approach to them according to their specificities. Multiple roles are included between the traditional figures of policy makers and takers, requiring to observe and address them.

While the pervasive nature of movement and the evolution of post-metropolitan settings define the background for territorial interventions, interactions appear as potentially decisive elements to combine social demands and political answers, especially when dealing with mobility and its policy at a metropolitan scale. The discussed findings share somehow an incomplete nature, since they are related to the evolving Milanese setting and tend to focus on multiplicity: varied are their contributions and their concrete inflections, as well as the conditions for significance and effectiveness. The evolution of theoretical explorations and on field observations may add elements to these observations; in particular, the effective implementation of new forms for the discussed relationships could be significant, as well as an observation of them in different territorial settings. Moreover, the same initial theoretical framework could be

deepened, discussing not just elements of interest but also its meanings for individual experiences and collective actions. More in general, these further explorations have to deal with the discussed multiplicity, which necessarily seems to require an incomplete analytical treatment.

The described partiality has to be faced and somehow accepted, at least in the light of the guiding questions: interactions with individuals and communities seem in fact significant for the shaping of metropolitan opportunities for movement, especially if contributing to a richer public action. The crucial role that interactions may have is the reflection of a wider contribution, since the city itself can be considered as ‘the joined outcome of the externalities provided by multiple subjects in forms that are not always intentional or controlled’ (Palermo, 2004: 176); on the background, a fascinating potential definition of the city as a relational good (Ostrom, 1990; Bruni, 2011) would again highlight the significant meaning of interactions. Given its primary role in individual and collective urban experiences, as well as its influence on available opportunities, movement is a crucial field to show the potential meanings of interactions. Decisional processes to inflect public action in territorial settings, especially when dealing with mobility issues, should then face the relevance interactions may have: not only in providing unexpected punctual contributions, but also in the general shaping of what a city is. Then, recalling Melvin Webber (1964) and adapting his words, it is interaction, and place, that is the essence of the city and of city life.

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