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The "Project" Approach in Urban: A Response to Uncertainty

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***Abstract*—**In this paper, we will try to demonstrate the importance of the project approach in the urban to deal with uncertainty, the importance of the involvement of all stakeholders in the urban project process and that the absence of an actor can lead to project failure but also the importance of the urban project management.

These points are handled through the following questions: Does the urban adhere to the theory of complexity? Does the project approach bring hope and solution to make urban planning "sustainable"? How converging visions of actors for the same project? Is the management of urban project the solution to support the urban project approach?

***Keywords*—**Strategic planning, project, urban project stakeholders, management.

I. Introduction

SOCIETIES are changing constantly, and have become very unpredictable. It is also the plight of urban and urbanization [1]-[3].

Thus, the uncertainty is one of the characteristics the most apparent in the system of society, it is due to the change which occur constantly and does not cease to occur; these changes and this uncertainty make planning difficult and an approach that can reduce this uncertainty is the well comes.

Knowing that the former planning systems have shown their limits, have become sterile because of these unpredictable [2], [4], [5].

Between urbanization, competitiveness, and attractiveness of cities, grandiose vision, urban crises, and neither insalubrious nor sustainable, cities must always improvise their own evolution for urban sustainability.

The urban project, with the integration of the "project" approach that of "urban planning", has become an instrument for good sound called strategic planning [3], [6].

It is a new form of 'make the city', by adhering to the approach of sustainable development, it is today a topic of debate in the scientific community but also a database of political discourse [3], [7].

The integration of the project approach means planning under uncertainty, integrating the non-linear process, flexibility, reversibility, and concurrent engineering but more importantly the strategy [8], [9]. To implement this approach, the use of multidisciplinary knowledge is a necessity; politicians, professionals, technicians or single inhabitant, everybody is concerned, should be involved and has his place in this process since he has a problem and one part of the solution.

Its approach based on procedures of innovative, creative approaches and a taking into account of the overall vision for local actions, has become a renewal in the urban planning which wants to be strategic and in the manufacture of the city in general.

Complex and non-complicated, the urban project is at once a challenge for cities that want to develop and to make a place in the competitive market, but also an imperative when comes to get out of urban crises and seize opportunities for a sustainable urban development.

This concept has been around the world and in cities, as well, almost every city wants to have its own urban project.

As well, we will examine the question of the project approach that is developing in the urban in response to its complexity.

II. The Urban World and the Theory of Complexity

The theory of complexity emerged in 1970 with Prigogine I [10]. This one has become a topic that has addressed modern management in 1990. This theory highlights the characteristics of a complex system itself. These characteristics are summarized at the opening of the system, its dependencies, self-organization and chaos which means uncertainty in if necessary. It should be noted that the complexity theory differs from one area to another and from one science to another. So can we say that urban obeyed the complexity theory? And if so how do we justify that?

A. The City Is a System

"The city is the result of innumerable micro-actions that are combining so widely random." [11]

Any intervention on the city must be well thought out, since that the components of the city are fitted together and closely related, sometimes conflicting, however, influence on each other. Therefore, intervention on the urban by the project considers the city as an ecosystem where the balance of components is required.

The transposition of the concepts between the urban and ecosystem first started by typology and urban morphology studies.

Almost all the approaches have led to represent the city as a living organism that has a frame, a skin, a consumer system, nervous system, a communication system ... and designate as urban ecosystem. Indeed, we cannot intervene or investigate

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the city without taking a comprehensive and broader context including its environment since the functioning of a city goes well beyond the territory it occupies.

This ecosystem concept, appeared in the early twentieth century, brings together the living communities and their environments as well as the relationships and interactions between them. An ecosystem must keep constantly in balance using control loop (feedback).

The application of the ecosystem concept to the city allows designing, visualizing and understanding the relationship of interactions and influences that may exist in the city as a whole and with its environment. It also allows seeing the impact of all great or small operation on the entire set, which is the urban, but especially predicting these impacts means to manage them in time.

Nevertheless, the application of the concept of an ecosystem to the city has its limits, since the differences between the natural ecosystem and the urban ecosystem are apparent, [12] synthesized 5 points:

- The heterotrophy;
- The dependency on external inputs;
- The inability to efficiently recycle waste;
- A social control and political system present in the urban
- The majority control of this urban ecosystem by a single species "human".

Therefore, the city is considered as an ecosystem but which is not autonomous and non-perfected.

B. The City Is an Open and Interdependent System

An ecosystem is never completely isolated from the outside, it is open, connects with the other ecosystems. This is the urban ecosystem case even in using and consuming energy and substances. So, it becomes fragile because of the immoderate consumption of resources, undermining other ecosystems by pollution and non-renewal of energy and substances it consumes.

Thus, the city is an open system doing exchanges with its environment which is first its area, the countryside, the other cities, regions and metropolises. These exchanges take various forms, economic, social exchanges, knowledge, tourism, etc.

C. The City Obeys the Complexity Theory

To summarize, the city is an open and interdependent ecosystem, affecting other systems and also influencing itself. Thus, it obeys complexity theory and uncertainty. This reality makes urban planning difficult, and any approach that can reduce this complexity is a hope for cities in chaos.

Why chaos? With non-manageable urbanization with environmental concerns that are almost ingestible and the social ills of delinquencies and non-equity that are developing, the city has become more complex than ever and planning is field of challenging and innovation.

III. The Project Approach

In response to this complexity, several approaches have been adopted; from regulated planning to the project approach, urban has generated various experiences.

This regulated planning, that has proven its failure, is called 'functionalism'. It has long been the remedy to cure the city and make it viable after the disasters and destruction caused by the war. It takes its roots in the CIAM approach including the Athens Charter, constituting its principles foundation. He found a great application because of the housing and equipment crisis, with this duplication of requirements; the layout plan was the most adopted answer. However, even if it was from a good faith as specified Le Corbusier "the city is a whirlwind, we must class its impressions, sensations and do recognize its choice of curative methods and beneficent" [13] The layout plan reduces, in fact, something very complex and difficult to understand (the city) to such laws and norms unable to think the city in its physical and social dimensions.

This urban planning layout plan was a strategic mistake [8] since it does not take into account the rapid evolution of society, practices, and issues and had many technical shortcomings face to the problems encountered by the city providing standard solutions and methods to changing situations.

This functionalist approach begins to reveal its hidden face by the years 60, where residential areas were becoming rejected by their inhabitants because of the poor quality of buildings and living space quickly and cheaply built, under the pressure of the emergency but "by dint of sacrificing essential for the emergency, we end up forgetting the urgency of the essential" [14]. Focusing on social criteria is becoming crucial for meeting expectations of the inhabitants of the city. There, planning is called into question since "the true urban job is to know how to distinguish the permanent and the ephemeral, the superficial and artificial." [15], but the questioning did not seek to replace the planning by an alternative, it simply" ... undermined the myth of the scientific objectivity and functionalism" [16].

Around the 70s, the economy is in crisis, it was necessary to review ways of making the city as it was necessary for economic re-launch and the creation of jobs and enterprises; thereby, the city became a market product [1] and then the competition takes place.

So, a new vision and a new way of making the city have become mandatory to address the vision of functionalism, which among other things involved: administrative boundaries through a strict division of space, stiffness of the action where the backtracking is not eligible and where the inhabitant is excluded and remains a bystander with the production of the space where he lives.

This argues for a new planning called strategic, which combines economic planning and spatial planning and coordinates with the social developments and the hopes of the capita to achieve the balance of the territories.

The answer to the questioning of the functionalist urbanism is a new planning which wants to be of quality and none of numbers, which takes into account the needs and expectations of the inhabitants and which is more listening to them, which is involved in considering the context and approaching more concrete reality, bringing together the multitude of competencies for better production of the city and especially

arriving to juggle between long and short term, and between public and private interests.

The taking into account of the inhabitant and of developing society, environmental and ecological concerns and the economy which is never stable, led to the balance of sustainable development spheres. So could we argue that strategic planning is an essential tool for sustainable development?

Regarding the urban scale in this planning, a new urbanism arose the "Neo Urbanism" [1], that intends to be reflective, iterative, favoring quality, flexible, responsive, supporting the diverse needs of the individualistic and differentiated society, acting through negotiation and compromise, not by the majority rules, favoring the contract with respect to the law and the ad hoc solution compared to the standard and then careful and taking into account the principles of sustainable development [1].

IV. The Urban Project: A Non-Controlled Approach

The principles that the urban project endeavors to observe are as follows:

- Context is the real deal that must be the source of the urban project (realism);
- This context is not just a spatial reality, it extends to the social, economic, political, environmental, etc. the project must have a global vision on all the components of the city (the overall vision);
- This vision must extend also on time, with the strategic vision on the urban multi-temporality (the strategic vision);
- The actors of the city are all concerned by the urban project, they should be integrated: residents through participation, the private sector through partnership, professionals by pluridisciplinarity, and all this under a good urban governance device (the participation, partnership, multidisciplinary and good urban governance);
- The approach of the urban project must be iterative allowing action improvement and reversibility, creating an open and adaptable approach (the iterative process and reversibility of the action);
- Adapt the institutional and the legal to projects and not the contrary (mutations).

However, these principles are not easy to implement and complexity of urban projects makes their planning and implementation difficult achieve. Indeed, essential problem in the majority of sustainable urban projects is the inability to ensure continuity of political conveyance because of the short duration of mandates (elected), coupled with the difficulty of setting up a participation, which is often conducted randomly because of lack of strategy.

Thus, urban project black points can be summarized as follows:

- The non-continuity of political conveyance;
- The difficulty of cooperation and the establishment of participation;
- The complexity of convergence of visions and goals.

Thus, the question that arises is: how to reduce the complexity of the urban project?

V. Is management The solution?

The management of the urban project, which brings together project management skills and the layout must "embrace in the most comprehensive way possible all the components of the complexity of the urban project" [9]. The urban project manager must be able to converge the interests of all actors and stakeholders of the project and give them the same vision of the objectives of it ensuring that the respective interests are respected; it is both a "negotiator" and a "trustee" [9].

Project management has moved from an industrial dimension within enterprises to that of building. It is looking for a place in the city, it becomes strategic and seeks to settle in those who have the power to transform the city, to the point that the big City Mayors' affirm manage their cities as enterprises thanks to governance and project management.

Project management is the key link to give effectiveness to the urban project, through the connection between the different project phases that involve different actors. It creates an interaction of these phases by placing the actors of the downstream to upstream and ensures the creation of partnerships for the same purposes.

With the integration of management in urban projects we ensure the effectiveness of each phase. During the study, the management of urban projects ensure the acceptability of the project, studies the risks to which they may be exposed, it provides good programming that puts the recipient, and the one who "lives in the city " in the heart of the project concerns. In other words, the "dreamed city" [17] corresponds to the "programmed city" [17].

In strategic thinking, management urban projects becomes the decision support tool through participation, the establishment of the city actor and master of urban work, after the desirability and impact studies, in other words, "the programmed city" becomes the "possible city" [17], after confrontation with the "lived city" [17]. Finally during the operational implementation, management of urban projects ensures the proper conduct of the project and ensures that the final product corresponds to what was wanted, in short, the "city made" is the one "desired"

IV. Conclusion

Through the presented reflections within this articles, it seems obvious that the project approach is a source of hope for a better planning of the urban fabric and a best apprehension of its development .However, even if this approach is beneficial, it remains complex, since with the change of the society, the multiplication of actors, and the difficulty of participation amplify over time.

The management can reduce this complexity, but it needs to be introduced in the urban world, to be developed and develop new effective methods and operational tools that can serve as a basis for this new "management of urban project".

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