Historicising design space: Uses of the past in participatory prefiguring
of spatial development
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Abstract
In this article, we argue that an engagement with the uses of the past in the design space can support better situated participatory design approaches in the context of spatial development. We start from a case study where we explored how the redevelopment of a post-industrial site affected the local actors and their existing dynamics. By reflecting on this residency, we investigate how different actors engaged with the past in the design space to design, qualify or challenge the redevelopment project. The article outlines an approach towards redefining the design space by staging it as historical through archival research, document analysis and spatio-temporal mapping, and by using participatory mapping to articulate the tensions between agentive identities.

With its initial interest in democratising the workplace, participatory design (PD) developed in the 1970s with the intention to create settings, methods, and tools to involve workers in the process of designing the spaces and technologies they use. Since then, PD has expanded to a variety of contexts, including spatial development[1], where it focused on the design of urban services, technologies, as well as architectural sites (e.g. Maarttola & Saariluoma, 2002; DiSalvo, Louw, Holstius, Nourbakhsh & Akin, 2012; Dalsgaard, 2012; Luck, 2018; Huybrechts, Dreessen & Hagenaars, 2018). As design researchers interested in conceptualising and configuring participation within projects of spatial transformation, in this article, we propose to explore how the uses of the past can also become relevant for PD in this context. The first author is a PhD student and designer working within an MSCA-ITN research project on critical approaches to heritage studies, while the second author is her supervisor and researcher in PD and design anthropology. By learning from heritage studies, we argue that, to prepare for a more contextualised PD approach, we need to engage critically with the past so that it becomes possible to historicise and challenge developmental agendas in design in a participatory way.

This contribution reflects on the experience of a PD research residency we organised to explore the renewal of a post-industrial area in the city of Leuven. This residency started in 2017, when the De Andere Markt living lab, that the authors are members of, was invited to participate in a student exhibition organised by the LUCA School of Arts in the Keizersberg Abbey. Within this living lab, we work on PD projects responding to site-specific concerns, which led us to propose a short-term research residency for this exhibition, rather than a presentation of our previous work. The living lab is associated with the school that organised the biennial and gathers design researchers and practitioners who work on projects in the contexts of work, sustainability, healthcare, and heritage. Within this lab, the two authors have engaged in projects focusing on development and reuse of historical landscapes, sites and infrastructures. A third member of the lab, a design researcher interested in the topic of work futures, also participated in this project, as well as two architects working with the a2o architectural studio, with whom we collaborated on previous occasions. This studio was interested in joining us as they had been commissioned to design a project for an industrial

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[1] While there is also a long history of participatory work in the fields of architecture and spatial planning (such as communicative planning), this article is mainly interested in the approach of the participatory design field.

plot in the neighbourhood of the Abbey. After connecting over our shared interest to explore the broader landscape of the site, as well as the studio's ambition to support more public potentials of their project, we decided to collaborate in the research process.

In preparing for the residency, we learned about the intense redevelopment that was taking place in the post-industrial neighbourhood of Vaartkom where the Abbey is located. As one of the authors of this article is from Leuven and had lived there for a long period of time, we had a more situated view on how the development was altering the historical landscape. The renewal project, titled Vaartopia, led by Leuven MindGate project (a consortium of knowledge institutions, companies and the city), saw the neighbourhood as a new creative district where to support the growing cultural and creative industry (AGLS, n.d., Leuven MindGate, 2019). This vision was described as strongly embedded in the local industrial history and efforts to preserve its materiality were taken in due account. However, the redevelopment process was perceived as disruptive by local actors and stakeholders we met during our exploratory visits.

In conversation with the curator, we decided to conceptualise the residency around the concern that, as it appeared, the neighbourhood was overtaken by the new Vaartopia vision, while public and informal spaces seemed to be diminishing in favour of luxury housing and more exclusive amenities. We wanted to engage in documenting these changes as they were taking place, by articulating the tensions between the development agenda and existing practices of the local actors. The residency started with formulating a set of questions we wanted to ask the people living and working at the site: *How do the past and existing practices of people and communities relate to the current transformation of the neighbourhood? How is your position in the neighbourhood affected by the ongoing development?* We articulated our objective as one of thinking together with the participants about the disruptive effects of this process, and we wanted to use the exhibition as a platform where these issues could be discussed with spatial planning experts and city representatives.

In this article, we reflect on our residency's experience to discuss how different actors mobilised the past as a resource to design, qualify and also challenge the renewal project. We draw on critical heritage studies, where discussions on how the past is used in the context of the built environment mainly start from the understanding of heritage as 'contemporary uses of the past' (Graham, Ashworth and Tunbridge, 2000, p. 2). The past is here seen as always constructed (and only accessible) in the present (Ashworth, Graham & Tunbridge, 2007, p. 35-39) as a response to the needs of the future that are anticipated in the present. Within these discussions, Ashworth (2014) proposes that heritage does not stand in opposition to development, as commonly assumed due to its focus on preservation. Quite the opposite, he argues that heritage is compatible with development as it "has an inherent economic dimension" that competes with its social, political and cultural uses (Ashworth, 2014). This competition is often waged in favour of finding a new economic livelihood for heritage sites, overshadowing the care for the cultural life and plurality of urban values inscribed in the historical landscape (Hayden, 1995; Nasser, 2014; De Cesari & Dimova, 2018). In our first conversations with people living and working in Vaartkom, we learned about their impressions of how the neighbourhood was changing quickly, as people, organisations and amenities from the recent past have now relocated elsewhere.

In this article, and in exploring the renewal's interference into the site's dynamics, we are interested in critically addressing how the industrial past has been used "as heritage commodities for tourists and affluent consumers of upscale urban living" (Stinshoff, 2016, p. 165). Further, we are also interested in how this development-oriented use of the past was countered by other ways of engaging with the historical landscape of Vaartkom. We focus on how such dynamics occur within the design space, where different actors use the past to construct their visions for the future of Vaartkom. We start from the design space as the key concept, understood in participatory design as a conceptual landscape of a future design constructed by these different actors (Westerlund, 2009; Binder et al., 2011, p. 107-108). Our assumption is that we can think of the design space of the renewal project as historical and, by doing so, learn more about how tensions between different positions in the redevelopment of Vaartkom were historically shaped. To do so, we reflect on the methodological approach of the residency which included the staging of the design space through archival research, document analysis, and spatio-temporal mapping, as well as the use of participatory mapping to articulate confrontations between different actors within this design space. We analyse the potentials of these methods in supporting participants' engagement with the past in the design space, to investigate how historicising this space can support us in challenging development agendas in a participatory way. It follows that the main contribution of this article is in the redefinition of the design space as a conceptual space which is historical - shaped through historical processes, as well as contemporary dynamics, which are also conditioned by the past. Thus, by historicising the design space, we mean to make visible and account for how the past has shaped and continues to shape the new visions for the site. In this specific case study, this means to pay attention to the legacies of the industrial site, as well its different afterlives, and re-establish those links between the past and the present that have been erased - first by discontinuing the industrial production and later by constructing a specific version of the past in the redevelopment vision.

1. Expanding PD trajectories and the design space by engaging with the past

Situating PD research in the spatial development context is a difficult task that requires grasping a complexity of ongoing relations on different scales. In this context, because of distributed participation (DiSalvo, Clement & Pipek, 2013) and heterogeneous stakeholders (Dalsgaard, 2012), we face the challenge to represent the plurality of the different positions involved. In our living lab projects, we usually start by mapping the ongoing and existing practices of people and communities at the sites of planned spatial transformation. In doing so, we follow the trajectory of PD interested in the more distributed and situated participation in the public sphere outlined by DiSalvo et al. (2013), who focus on community-based practices to position PD approaches within ongoing dynamics. This trajectory draws on earlier work by Lucy Suchman (1994) and is further explored in proposals for situating PD by establishing long-term networks through infrastructuring (Karasti & Syrjänen, 2004; Hillgren, Seravalli & Emilson, 2011). In line with this understanding of PD as embedded in long-term processes, we see participation as configured by myriad ways in which people and communities already engage with historical sites and their transformation. Ultimately, the goal of shifting the focus towards the past is that it can help us situate both our approach and the dynamics at play within the design space.

One of the key notions in PD remains the "design space", which is defined as a complex conceptual space containing "all the possible design solutions that would work" (Westerlund, 2009, p. 35), created through interactions of different actors in the design process. Following Binder et al., we counter the assertion that designers arrive at an "empty space" (2011, p. 142). Rather, we understand the design

space as a landscape which emerges through the engagement with the context, as well as a "space of potentials that the available circumstances afford for the emergence of new designs" (Botero, Kommonen & Marttila, 2010, p. 188). We build upon these reflections to reconceptualise the design space as historical and we do so by exploring the past as a resource that is constitutive to the designing of spatial development in this space. Temporally expanding the design space can help us challenge teleological perspectives of development (Huybrechts, Hendriks & Maartens, 2017): seeing it as a space that has a past, and not only a space of constructing the future, allows us to trace tensions between different development agendas through time. By reflecting on the case study, we will outline suggestions for practical ways in which historicising the design space could work as a step towards better situated participatory design approaches.

3. Case study and methods

After the initial fieldwork in Vaartkom (figure 1), the neighbourhood at the bottom of the Keizersberg Abbey hill (figure 2), we designed the residency as a combination of qualitative research (archival and document analysis), with design research (participatory mapping and design scenario-making).

Figure 1: Vaartkom, view of the new residential and mixed development (source: Wikimedia Commons).
Figure 2: Keizersberg Abbey.

Our involvement in the exhibition was not mandated by the city or any institution involved in the ongoing redevelopment project. Rather, it was a form of an intervention into this redevelopment with the institutional support of the art school organising the exhibition. In understanding participation as something that emerges from the ongoing practices, we aimed to intervene by articulating how these practices were being affected by the redevelopment. In doing so, we tried to recognize the "importance of becoming invested in and accountable to the work of those with whom we design" (Agid, 2018), by entering into alliances with the actors whose spatial interests we aligned with. In its interventional quality, this project is related to Miessen's idea of "uninvited participation" (2010, p. 229), as a way of intervening in the context by acting outside of institutionalised participatory arenas - in this case, those organised by the city and their partners in the redevelopment project. Miessen (2010, p. 229) understands this as proactively taking part: designers can act as outsiders without a mandate, supporting conflictual debates, rather than facilitating bottom-up processes where the outcome is often a priori imagined. In a related manner, Tironi (2018) argues that participation emerges when processes of 'counter-participation' are activated. In Vaartopia, a certain degree of stakeholder inclusion was claimed by the project, as it gathered representatives of the creative and cultural industry, but as we found out during this residency, several actors were excluded in this

process. By engaging with the voices we listened to, both in the past and present of Vaartkom, we looked for the gaps in representation and paid close attention to articulating exclusions in the exhibition space, testing its potential as a counter-participatory platform.

In line with this interventional quality, even though careful preparation for the residency was done, the approach was modified and iterated in relation to the findings and analysis at the site. Most of the activities ran in parallel, as the residency was a short-term engagement with the context - but for the clarity of writing, we will discuss these activities in relation to specific methods as categorised in the overview in figure 3.

	Method	Participants
Staging the design space as historical	1. Archival research (heritage inventory, online archives) 2. Workshop I: Participatory mapping 3. Analysis of spatial development documents	Research team (5 people) Experts (6 people: representatives of the heritage, economic and urban planning department of the City of Leuven, an architect working on the site, a researcher in heritage studies)
Confronting agentive identities in the staged design space	1. Exhibition: Participatory mapping	Participants (42 people, including residents of and people working in Vaartkom, representatives of the abbey, neighbourhood associations and social housing, artists and entrepreneurs connected to the site)
Follow-up analysis	1. Design scenario & Subjective map 2. Feedback session with the city representatives	Research team (5 people) Experts (6 people: representatives of the heritage, economic and urban planning department of the City of Leuven, an architect working on the site, a researcher in heritage studies)

Figure 3: Overview of research activities

4. Uses of the past in the design space

'Uses of the past' as an analytical focus require some clarification before analysing the data collected during the residency. Our interest is in their potential to help us in understanding how the design space has, over time, been constructed by many different actors - not only designers, planners and decision-makers, but also those who have lived and worked there. In doing so, we explore how the past is represented in the historical landscape as "public history" (Hayden, 1995, pp. 3-13), referring firstly to a more in-depth engagement with the social, political, and cultural history "born out of a greater regard for the places and sites through which society engaged with its history" (Wilson, 2016, p. 3). Hebbert and Sonne's (2016), in their exploration on how the past (as history) shapes urbanism and town planning, differentiate three ways of using the past in articulating spatial development: as encyclopaedic, site-specific, and 'the larger narrative' history. In a more specific manner, Ashworth (2013) offers an overview of ways in which the past as heritage can be influential in the framework of spatial planning policies, instruments, and tools for implementing and managing development. He writes about how the past is used for purposes such as creating place identity, preserving from change as an environmental amenity, in marketing as a location factor, in development as an economic resource, as well as an asset in local area regeneration (Ashworth, 2013). While these categorisations

are relevant for our analysis, we want to expand on them by discussing how the uses of the past in the design space are shaped not only by discourses of heritage and spatial planning but also in everyday engagements of people with their historical landscapes.

In searching for ways to reassess and expand the design space by making active use of the past, we find clues in the work of Oak (2006) and Umney and Lloyd (2018). Oak (2006) explores how the past in design contexts is "used in specific ways to give structure and to support persuasion", as participants refer to and particularise the past in valorising current design work, advocating for present design practices and influencing the future. Umney and Lloyd (2018) explore how precedents, as narrative constructions of design projects from the past, provide "potential insights into the direction that stakeholders wish to see the future going." Precedents are used to provide a tangible analogy in contexts where physical prototypes may not be useful, such as large-scale infrastructural designs, and present an example of how the past can be used to shift debates on infrastructural projects in different directions. While these authors analyse the uses of the past by looking at specific groups of expert actors (e.g. urban planners or MPs), in our case, we are interested in how more heterogeneous groups of participants engage with the design space by using the past.

Thus, we intend to contribute to the summarised discussions from a PD perspective, in two ways. First, we want to explore how the past is used within the design space beyond the limits of heritage and spatial planning discourses - e.g. through everyday practices or community history projects. Second, we are interested in how the uses of the past allow different actors, and particularly those excluded from the institutional arenas of decision-making, to exert future-making capacities into development agendas. We find that in PD there is still a lack of insights into the multiplicity of ways in which the past is being used in the design space and hope to uncover some of these ways within the context of the case study.

Most importantly, we see it as the designers' task to articulate the tensions between different agencies of using the past in the design space. In doing so, we look to Ton Otto's work on agentive identities which he defines as "the cultural ideas about intentional agency that define who and what can act to realize certain goals" (Otto, 2016, p. 60). Agentive identities configure how the past is used in design processes by different actors in pursuing a future change, as historicity is "involved in the construction of subjectivity and change" (Otto, 2016, p. 59). In our case, these identities form around different perspectives, expectations and concerns related to the redevelopment process. Uses of the past here present the ways in which agentive identities connect specific frames and references of the past to proposals for future change. In doing so, they also construct the past in the image of a desired future (Otto, 2016).

5. Discussion

To consider the design-specific ways in which the past is used in the design space, we start from the agentive identities that we observed as active in the design space during the research residency. All interactions with participants (interviews, statements, workshops) were transcribed and analysed, with the focus on the relations between the agentive identities and the uses of the past. First, we identified specific frames of the past used by different actors in making statements about their relation to the development. Second, we reflect on how different methods helped us observe and analyse

these relations, to propose practical ways towards reconceptualising the design space by historicising it.

5.1 Staging the design space as historical

The preparatory activities included archival research, document analysis and a participatory mapping workshop with experts. We refer to these activities as *staging the design space as historical.* Our goal was to first create a representation of this space as it is constructed by experts and official development documents, that we could then open to counter-participation of actors who challenged these official narratives of development. As Pedersen (2020) writes, the staging metaphor has been used by different authors to articulate how a design process is set in place by designers and "to simplify the complexities involved in the designer's efforts to navigate a landscape of multiple actors, relations, and concerns". In our case, we refer to staging specifically as to how designers can start design processes by articulating how the design space is configured by different actors through time and, in doing so, by historicising it.

5.1.1 Archival research

The initial impulse to explore the archives was guided by the authors' interest in heritage, as well as the designation of the site as rich with industrial heritage. We saw the role of the archival material as what can help us contextualise the redevelopment project within a longer timeline of the neighbourhood transformation. To achieve this in a short time, we decided to limit ourselves to material which was curated by heritage institutions to be accessible online. However, to complement this *official* archival perspective on the history of Vaartkom, we also explored alternative historical records, such as online archives organised by volunteers. We focused on acquiring information on historical figures and places related to how the site changed over time and which actors contributed to its transformation. Through this research, we made a site-specific graphic atlas (figure 4) with drawings of spaces (buildings, places, infrastructural elements) and actors (people, companies, organisations) that we encountered in archives, complemented with site observations. In searching for historical personalities who contributed to the transformation of the site through history, such as abbey monks, industrialists, and politicians, we wanted to expand the design space by representing participants from different temporalities. We saw the importance of including the figures from the past as a way of making the history of the design space more tangible and, in planning the use of atlas in participatory mapping, we wanted to explore how these figures could help us see the current dynamics at the site as shaped through history. What presented as a challenge was how to represent the participation of actors who were not commemorated in the archives as historical personalities - for example, the workers who constructed the industrial canal. For future research, we would propose a more in-depth engagement with the archives that could articulate how the design space was shaped also by collective and everyday practices, rather than mainly through the agency of powerful individuals.

Figure 4: Vaartkom Atlas. Figure 5: Spatio-temporal mapping of Vaartkom.

5.1.2 Participatory mapping workshop

The main method for PD research used in our living lab projects is participatory mapping (Schepers, Dreessen & Huybrechts, 2014; Constantinescu, Devisch & Huybrechts, 2020; Roosen, Huybrechts, Devisch & Van den Broeck, 2020). Our approach aligns with how Roosen et al. (2020) describe participatory mapping as a dialectical and "critical method of confronting maps, perspectives and knowledge", mainly between and involving both professionals and residents. By using the atlas we produced through archival research, we engaged in mapping to juxtapose the renewal vision with other perspectives, such as those of residents and workers at the site. In collaboration with the curator, we organised a workshop where we invited representatives from the city of Leuven and other experts interested in and working at the site. During the workshop, the participants added spaces and actors that they found missing the atlas - equally those from the past and the present. What was particularly important was how to present the relations between these different elements of the atlas across time. For this reason, we explored a spatio-temporal way of constructing the map, by juxtaposing three views (past, present, and future - figure 5) to trace the course of development through history. Participatory mapping in such a way operationalised the archival research in interaction with the participants and helped us observe the agentive identities that were the most influential in the current redevelopment.

The experts mapped how the renewal project was initiated by the city's investment and social housing companies, who started the construction of new apartment buildings in the area. Soon they were followed by other developers who invested in more upscale residential projects. As this first group of developers was less interested in redeveloping the industrial buildings, leaving them abandoned, the local creative agencies saw an opportunity to invest in their adaptive reuse. The workshop revealed how the city's role in this process was to respond to the increasing upscale residential development by steering the process - together with the creative and media agencies - away from economic gentrification and towards conserving the mixed value at the site by investing in the reuse of heritage buildings. We confronted this information with data collected in online archives on how, in between the industrial decline and new developments, the area also saw the arrival of diverse residents and activities, from restaurants and sports clubs to artist groups, alternative culture and nightlife spots. The mapping traced how many of these actors from the recent past have left the site due to the new development. This issue emerged as one that we decided to focus on with our research questions: How did the redevelopment affect the existing dynamics at the site? Once the city started intervening with the urban renewal steered around the topic of creativity, who was excluded from the process?

In terms of historicising the design space, spatio-temporal mapping revealed the moment in which the city recognised the past as a resource in the form of heritage that could be used to counterbalance the increasing residential development. It also revealed how an engagement with the past can help in visualising the confrontations between different perspectives and addressing how the transformation conditioned the arrival and departure of different actors across time.

5.1.3 Document analysis

The engagement with the past in the renewal project became clearer when analysing the development documents and promotional material provided by institutions online and by the experts gathered in the workshop. The steering of the development process entailed the formulation of an agentive identity around the idea of creativity. With the goal to redevelop the neighbourhood as a "creative breeding ground" (AGSL, n.d.), the documents describe the support for the new creative industry as in an alignment with the heritage of previous industrial companies. The project brochure claims: "Creatives were traditionally attracted to Vaartkom by the character of the industrial mastodons, the atmosphere, the soul and the history of the area. (...) Vaartkom is a logical choice to develop a creative development pool" (Leuven MindGate, 2019). The vision is presented as a response to the already occurring development of the creative industry and a continuation of the spirit of old industries with the aim "to acknowledge and reinforce this dynamic" (Leuven MindGate, 2019). In this process of designing the future, the past is constructed as an outcome (Oak, 2006; Otto, 2016) - by producing an image of a great industrial past, and the new development as its logical continuity.

The development vision is presented as a coordinated effort of the city and different actors to mediate between different interests in redeveloping this previously "run-down part of the city" as a creative breeding ground (AGSL, n.d.). Primarily, the aim is to give designers, start-ups, artists, production houses, cultural associations and craftsmen more physical and affordable space (AGSL, n.d.). In this way, the new agentive identity also uses the recent past of the site to formulate a vision for change in two ways. On the one hand, this identity acknowledges how the renewal vision stems from the recent history of creative actors taking over the accessible spaces in the site after the industrial decline. On the other hand, this vision is also set against the notion of the recent past framed as the undesirable state of a "run-down" site, mainly attached to the history of squats[2] and the lack of safety in the abandoned buildings.

During the residency, a detailed discourse analysis of development documents was not conducted due to the lack of time. We propose that such an analysis would be very beneficial, as it could help reveal underlying discourses configuring how different actors use the past, as well as the differentiation between the desired and less compatible frames of past.

5.2 Confronting agentive identities in the staged design space

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[2] Some of the abandoned industrial buildings were previously squatted by artists who used them for studios and organisation of music events.

The first layer of the spatio-temporal mapping was produced by the research team and the group of experts. As a next step, we translated this map into an installation (figure 6) where other participants could confront this staging of the design space. We started from an abstract map of Vaartkom on the floor of the exhibition room (figure 7). On this map, we placed posts with cards presenting the stories and statements gathered through previous research activities. Participants - exhibition visitors and local actors we invited for a conversation - would share a statement by responding to our questions: *How do the past and existing practices of people and organisations relate to the current transformation of the neighbourhood? How is your position in the neighbourhood affected by the development?* They could print their statement on a card and position it on one of the posts in relation to other cards and the map. Through these interactions, their stories were recorded and immediately added to the map. Around 40 people participated during ten days, as the installation evolved to represent a partial landscape of different positions and alignments in the neighbourhood. These included residents of Vaartkom and neighbouring Wilsele village, people working in the area, artists, representatives of the abbey, creative industry, the neighbouring village community, and social housing companies.
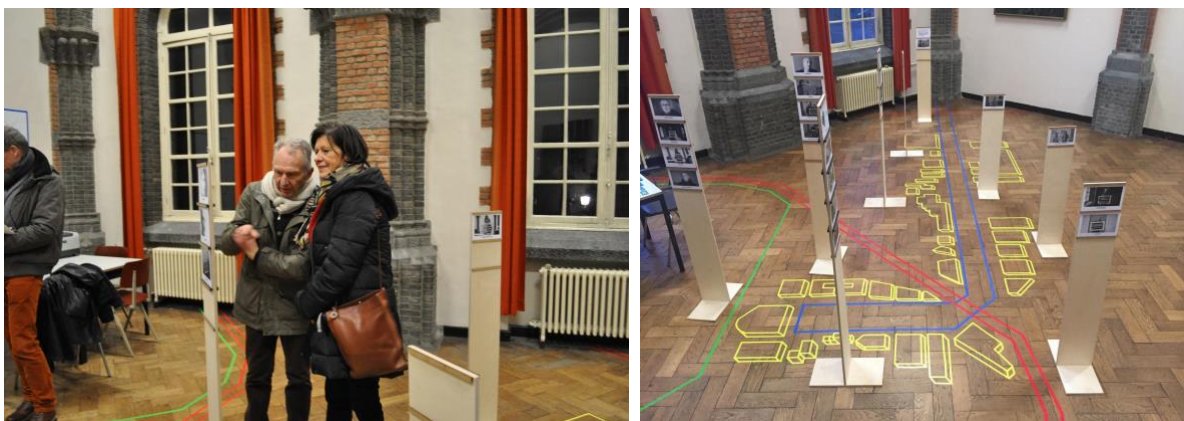

Figure 6 & 7: Exhibition installation

While the spatio-temporal mapping created a linear timeline of development, the design space installation overlapped the different temporalities - actors and places from the past were presented at the same level as contemporary ones. In this way, we could search for connections between actors and spaces across different periods and challenge the renewal project as a linear and 'logical' process. In the analysis of collected statements, we focus on how participants referred to specific frames of the past when elaborating their perspectives on the renewal, to outline the agentive identities formed around specific perspectives.

5.2.1 Using the past that is 'no longer present' to challenge the renewal trajectory of 'creativity'
In interactions with around ten artists and creatives living and working in the area, it became clear how the staged image of Vaartkom as a previously "run-down" area negated the presence of some of the existing creative agencies. Participants pointed out that creativity, a criterium for inclusion in redevelopment, meant something different for different actors. One of the artists, Anna, stated the following:

> The sad thing about Vaartkom is that there were a lot of successful and creative people here but they had to leave because of the development. People have been asking for space for years where to rehearse, play music, organise concerts and there was one such place - the club Silo, but it was closed down. It is like there is a specific, clean type of creativity they want to have here - creativity they can control. You also had a great climbing club with two halls in Hungaria, then the restaurant on top which was one of the most beautiful places in the city. You had a lot of film artists and media productions - it was a pity to lose that.

Gommar, a worker in the creative industry, claimed:
> It has all become cleaner. It was a hub of creativity in the past, especially Hungaria with its artistic acclaim, the climbing halls and the Silo club. Now mainly established values stay, and the young generation is gone. The difficulty is that if they start creating new places for these young people, that will have to be a negotiation with the investors who have little interest in attracting the youth. The new locations are more upmarket, less for young people. My generation had many informal places, but I do not know where young people gather today.

This sentiment that the area has become 'too clean' was shared by many other participants, who stated that the development had an effect of diminishing informal youth spaces. Different participants referred to the building of Hungaria as a reference of the past representing the youth and creative agencies that are no longer present at the site. Hungaria used to be an old mill that was appropriated by different actors after the industrial production stopped - mainly artists and musicians, who also squatted parts of this building to set up studios and a bar. Referencing this building works similarly to a precedent (Umney & Lloyd, 2018) - but as one which marks a counterpoint, rather than an analogue, to the prototyped future. Around the recent past attached to this building, an agentive identity formed that challenged how the development project staged a specific vision of creativity that should be supported. The artists who remained in the few still 'undeveloped' spaces in the area, spoke of their presence as continuing the creative work once promoted by Hungaria, which had become incompatible with the new notion of creativity promoted in Vaartopia. This agentive identity uses the precedent of Hungaria as a historical example to argue that a more accessible approach and care for existing practices are necessary. A question for future research could be: how can we engage with the existing agencies, but also the recent past that they build upon, in the design space?

5.2.2 Using the past that 'resists' the market-oriented development trajectory
Another agentive identity in tension with the Vaartopia project emerged around the concern that the site was becoming too exclusive and inaccessible to less profitable and more sustainable ways of livelihood. Karel, a resident of the neighbouring village made the connection between the upscale development and the preservation of industrial heritage:
> For example, in the Opek, renting space costs a lot of money. Living in Wilsele has also become expensive and there are a few accessible shops left. It is a nice life here, but there are limitations. We do think that the neighbourhood developed nicely with the new amenities. But it is all very expensive and not so socially inclusive. It is good at the same time because otherwise beautiful buildings would have disappeared.

Some of the participants mapped the old abbey and its park as a site of resistance to development. This was one of the rare spots in the area that stayed public and accessible but also protected as such mainly due to its heritage status. Still, this status has other effects of resisting change and development. The abbey hill is a protected archaeological zone and a public park where lighting is not permitted at night, to preserve biodiversity. This darkness is welcomed by young people who use the park as one of the few left informal spaces in the area. Another aspect of resistance to development is the temporal regime of the abbey, where the reclusive community of monks maintains a slow and quiet daily rhythm of circularity. As Dirk, one of the monks claims:

> The bell rings and it is time for food or prayer. It is a defined, rhythmic and healthy life. Here you are within a fixed pattern that gives you peace and makes you productive. People often forget that a break can be very beneficial (...) We take care of the guest accommodations, the students, the household tasks. We have a place for 80 students. We are having a hard time now because recently a lot of new housing has been built in the city. Student housing formed a significant part of our income.

Recently, the abbey park was also a literal site of resistance when a local politician revealed plans to invest in a vineyard there, grounding his proposal in the medieval history of wine-growing tradition at the hill. Jo, an artist, told us how he initiated a protest that led to the cancellation of these plans:

> I was against the plan of one councilman to turn the abbey garden into a vineyard. This plan required for parts of the old apple orchard to be moved. I did not believe in the image of a "Montmartre" in our city, or in going back to medieval times when there had been a vineyard in that place. A vineyard would affect biodiversity. The reason for my action was not only about reacting to keep this biodiversity but also against the privilege of politicians.

Due to their special status, heritage sites can enable agentive identities that gather the participation of human and non-human actors which might not be obvious at the first sight - as in this example, which gathered the monk community and the park biodiversity with young people and activists. The question we propose towards redefining the design space is: how can this space engage with the potential of heritage to gather different actors around common concerns, such as those of resisting development?

5.2.3 Challenging the uses of the past as a design outcome

What was common in these two agentive identities, was the agency of challenging how the past, as an outcome of the renewal project, was being streamlined into a history favouring celebratory and heroic accounts of the brewing industry in the area. During the workshop, several participants mapped other industries (e.g. canning factory and a bicycle factory) that were less present in the narrative of industrial mastodons. Others - such as Tim, an artist - told stories from the recent past of subcultures that were left out of this historical narrative:

> I don't feel attracted to the brewing history. The buildings in Vaartkom are from the brewery and they are very beautiful, for sure they should stay - it is a nice aesthetic, but I don't think we need to celebrate the brewery. A big reason for the creativity in the area is because the buildings were left abandoned and I think this history is more a selling point for the city. For me, the history of all the people who lived in Hungaria and the area is more interesting and there is a lot to remember - everything that happened there during the last 20-30 years.

While certain narratives are inevitably left out, others are transformed to align with the development project. An example is the rebranding of the Vaart canal as a marina, where the industrial past was moulded into the narrative of upscale waterfront living. As Dirk, the abbey monk, commented:

> Vaartkom with residential units and large stores - that wasn't there before, the area deteriorated. There are now also student residences. It was not a marina in the past. Perhaps it is today because the prices of apartments are high.

The uses of the past in these statements challenged how the trajectory of development is presented as logical, as they pointed to the complexity underlying the streamlined view of the great industrial history. The question we propose is: how can the design space engage with less celebratory pasts to challenge the teleological representations of development?

6. Follow-up analysis

The findings were printed in a collaged magazine (figure 8 & 9), made of A3 papers that could be assembled into a subjective map of the neighbourhood. This map also included a design scenario with a discussion on the tensions we mapped between different actors and their proposals for the future. The participants helped in compiling and revising this output, and we distributed the final version to them with the hope that they could use it as a tool in their negotiations with the city and developers. The subjective map of the neighbourhood articulated the stories of participants as design inputs, to propose specific design interventions into the ongoing development process. For example, we proposed more care for informal youth spaces and marked the possible areas where the emergence of such spaces could be supported. Further, we articulated the participants' complaints about the lack of connections between Vaartkom and the neighbouring village of Wilsele. We drew green paths that connect between the abbey hill, the village and the waterside paths. In our follow-up discussion with the city representatives, we learned that these connections were kept as a focus in the new mobility plan for the area. Further, in their new development project for one of the industrial buildings in the area, the city issued a call for participants to contribute their memories and oral history of the site. We see these outcomes as something that the research residency, as an intervention into ongoing processes, actively contributed to.
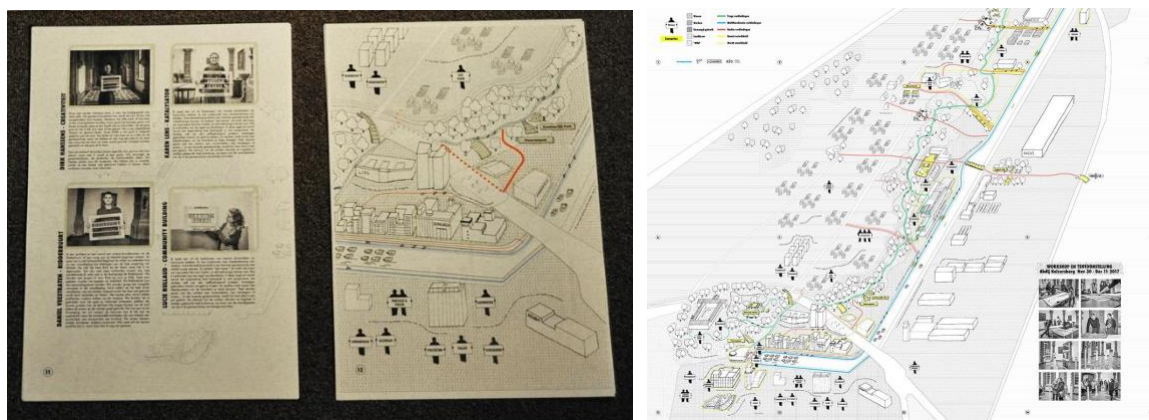

Figure 8 & 9: Magazine and the assembled map

7. Towards historicising design space

Based on the discussion of this project's experience and findings, we can outline an approach towards historicising the design space, as a participatory engagement with how the past is used within this space. Analysing the uses of the past is the first step in staging the design space as historical, while agentive identities are a helpful concept in articulating the confrontations between how different actors use the past to advocate for specific futures. In figure 10, we outline this approach following the questions we discussed in previous sections.

STAGING THE DESIGN SPACE AS HISTORICAL

Archival Research
Contextualising within a longer timeline
Including participants from the past

Spatio-temporal Mapping
Juxtaposing temporal views
Tracing movement across time

Document analysis
Discourse analysis: staging of development
and the past as its outcome

DESIGN SPACE

Frames of ← Agentive ← Future
the Past → Identity → Agendas

USES OF THE PAST

CONFRONTING THE AGENTIVE IDENTITIES

Participatory Mapping
Challenging the staged design space by
articulating tensions between agentive identities

Engaging with the existing agencies, but
also the recent past they build upon

Exploring heritage and its potential in
gathering actors around common concerns

Bringing forward the less celebratory pasts to
challenge the staging of linear development

Figure 10: Historicising design space

8. Conclusion

In this article, we explored the question of how we can engage with the past as a resource in situating PD projects within and in relation to the long-term spatial transformation processes. We argued that, for a situated approach, a critical look at how the past is used in development projects and their design space is required first. We expanded on the previous literature on PD as a situated practice, by learning from discussions on the uses of the past in the context of heritage, design studies, and PD. In particular, we engaged with Otto's (2016) concept of agentive identity to explore how people use the past to gather around a shared intention for a future change.

We proposed an approach of reconceptualising the design space that starts from staging this space as historical through archival research, spatio-temporal mapping, and document analysis. We argued that these methods can support a better situated PD approach by: (1) contextualising and visualising the development within a longer timeline, (2) including the participants from the past, (3) tracing the movement of participants across time and (4) discourse analysis of how the development (and its past) is staged in documents. Then, we proposed how the staging of the design space should enable the confrontation of different agentive identities. This is based on our experience with participatory mapping and we argue that this method helps by (1) engaging with the existing agencies but also their past, (2) exploring the potential of heritage to gather different participants around common concerns and (3) bringing forward less celebratory pasts to challenge teleological trajectories of development.

We argued that, by reconceptualising the design space as historical, we could learn more about how tensions between different agentive identities in the development process were historically shaped. Overall, this article proposes that an engagement with the past that is participatory, and that historicises the design space, can support a step towards better situated participatory design approaches - as well as ones that can challenge prescribed and teleological models of spatial development.

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