

City image and major international events: A new tool for urban strategy and planning

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City image and major international events: A new tool for urban strategy and planning

"Image is a necessary item for the city. ... the image is helpful to the city because it often becomes a mainspring for local development as an efficient tool for urbanism. Actually, the place of the city is growing more and more in a worldwide life where borders are waning. The image of the city is even becoming a target representative of culture and ideology as a whole, as has just been demonstrated in New York. So, image and mediatization are becoming weapons. This could be a turning point in the running of the image function because the overmediatization of events, as has been shown after 11th September, appears risky for the countries aimed at or for witnesses as well."

Jacqueline Lieutaud

The author, Emeritus Professor at the Picardie-Jules Verne University, Amiens, France, has extended teaching experience also at the universities of Lille, Paris IV (Sorbonne), and at the Conservatoire des Arts et Métiers of Paris. She has undertaken lengthy investigations into Italy, and obtained her Ph.D on the planning of Mezzogiorno and its results on the territory of Puglia, published by the Ecole Française de Rome. Over 80 major publications by her focus on the evolution of the Paris area and North European metropolitan strategies; industry and transport crisis and general technology evolution; Italy especially industrial and regional planning and Mezzogiorno; and Mediterranean cities, traditional urban heritage and new strategies. Her latest important publication is Une Mer entre Trois Continents: La Méditerranée (Paris, Ellipses Ed., December 2001).

Introduction

In the era of the Web and of an economically globalized planet, Image and City are closely linked. But this is in fact a very old phenomenon, that was born before the invention of photography and that remains continuous through time. Globalization and promotion through the media reinforced these links, and nowadays, without an image, a city has no chance to play any economic role and therefore to evolve in a positive way. The awareness of this topic led to strategies by local actors being set up, as Jean Gottmann anticipated. But if strategies became a nearly trite fact owing to their generalization, it is still interesting to show how it has been possible to reach that stage. Actually the Image-City pair altered its links, as is exemplified here by the links between great international events and cities.

For more than a century now, universal fairs and Olympic Games have been closely linked with the image of the European cities where they were born, and where they have attracted many visitors. However the structures that were built for this purpose were ephemeral: in fact the city legend remained almost only associated with the image of these prestige events.

The modern Olympic Games, born in Athens more than a century ago, had an impact akin to these events, but more unequal owing to their specificity. The functional buildings constructed for these events such as stadiums, swimming pools,

visitors' and sportsmen's accommodation halls have survived. But owing to their utilitarian appearance, they were later absorbed in an anonymous way into the spreading of the urban fabric. As for the Winter Games, they unevenly upgraded the mountain ranges where they were held, being conditioned by the presence of snow and technical trails. These Games enhanced the values of some existing resorts, but the difficulties of use of these peculiar sports infrastructures by average skiers, even the difficulties of access to them, kept them in the background of the main international touristic orbits.

During the 20th century, with progress in air transport, these great European events became worldwide events and attracted more and more visitors. Their promotion through the radio, the media, and above all TV, is broadcast through satellites in a almost worldwide manner. The image of the city where the event is held is continuously broadcast during several weeks. On the one hand, if this phenomenon happens again regularly, the gap between the events lasts a sufficiently long time to avoid any saturation effect. On the other hand, every city cannot welcome these events, owing to the number of people attending, and owing to the numerous infrastructures with important technical skills as well as high financing levels required. So, down to the 1990s, the choice favored cities from developed countries, as they were synonymous with modernity, and in a way "rewarded" the social and economic growth of the nation. Therefore, to welcome these events is still significant. The links with the city are as strong as before, but the image of these events has been altered and their impact changed.

There is a wealth of information on this theme of Image, City and Development, so it is impossible to touch on it entirely. We try here to show the evolution in the last 150 years. After considering in the first part the image of universal, cultural and sporting events in the pioneer cities, we analyze in the second part the change of utilization of these events that became a tool of urban planning from the international events of Spain in 1992 onwards, with the Universal Exhibition of Seville in the spring and the Olympic Games of Barcelona in the summer. The third part of this paper displays some further thoughts about the generalization of the use of the City Image notion.

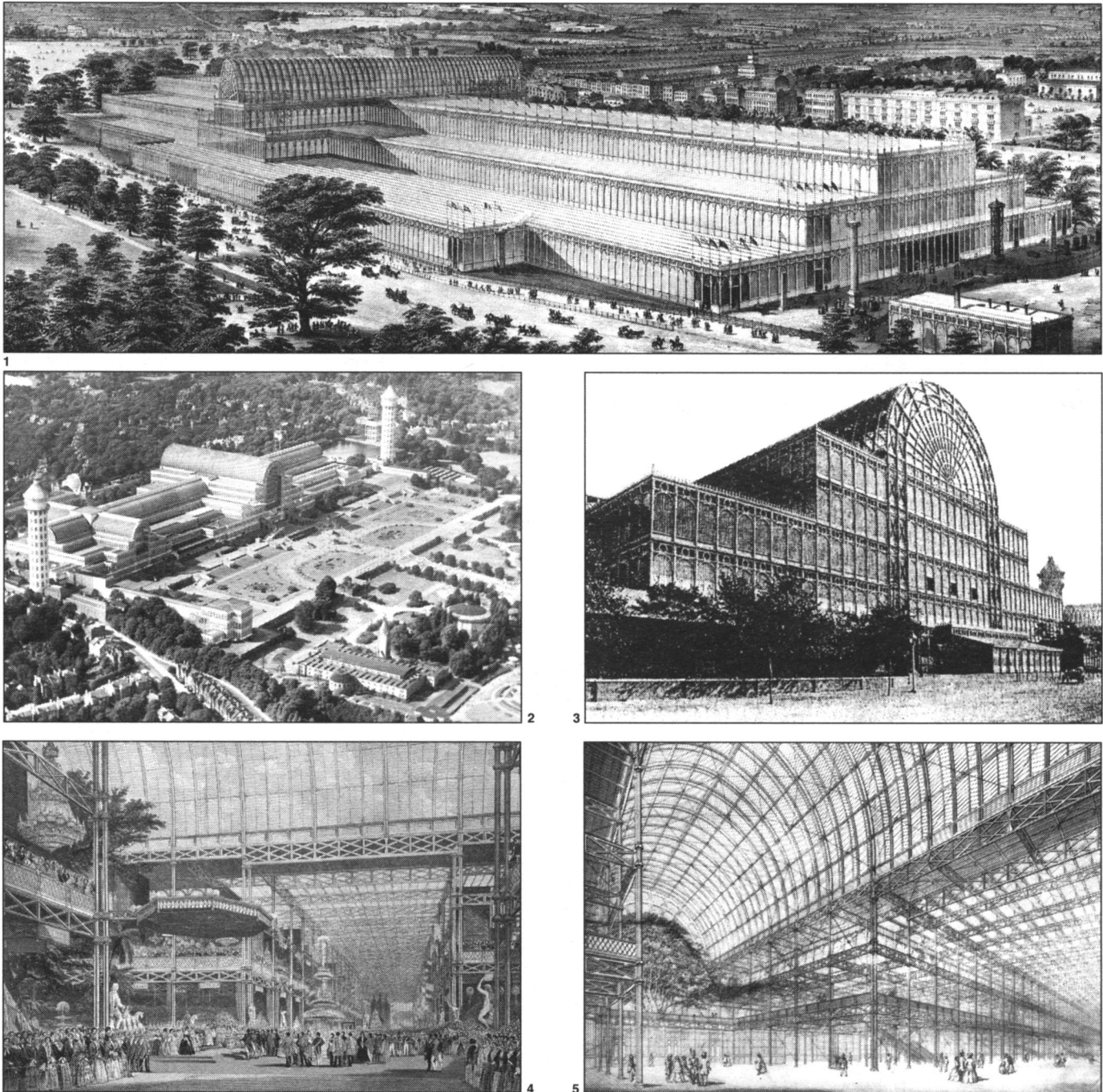
From the Universal Exhibitions in the 19th century only the image remained

The Renaissance allowed the European city to link back with the antique heritage and urbanism, but only a few large cities will be able to spread the inventions of the Industrial Revolution, displaying them during Universal or International Exhibitions. From the beginning in 1851 onwards, just about 30 of them have been held. The trading side, as it was stemming from the great fairs of the Middle Ages, seems to have been strongly hidden by industrialization in the 19th century. As far as these events gather crowds, their aim is obviously to buy,

but even more to marvel at technical innovations and their implementations in the realms of science, Arts and daily life. They appear as the reflection of the will of contemporary societies towards modernity, but their course enhances the prestige of the city where they are held. They exemplify the competitive spirit, ambitions, and even rivalries between organizer countries as well.

Universal Exhibitions

The "Exhibition of Nations," held in London in 1851, was the first of this kind and the only one held in Britain. It was tremendously successful and acted as a "shop window" for Victorian prosperity and imperial grandeur (figs. 1 to 5). The rival city,



Figs. 1-5: The Crystal Palace, built by Joseph Paxton for the Great Exhibition held in London in 1851.

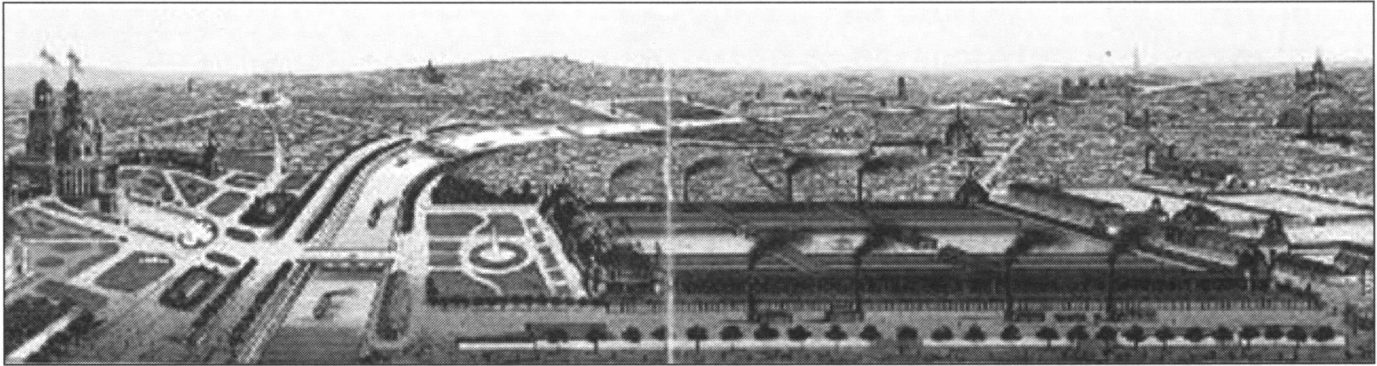


Fig. 6: Paris – Universal Exhibition, 1867 and 1878.¹

Paris, organized six Universal Exhibitions in 1855, 1867, 1878, 1889, 1900 and 1937, as well as an International Colonial Exhibition in 1931 (figs. 6 to 11).

The site of these exhibitions stayed marginal in the city itself for a long time. At the beginning they were installed in a landscape garden. But, owing to their success, they covered a more and more important surface to welcome increasing participation. They were therefore located in large free areas in-

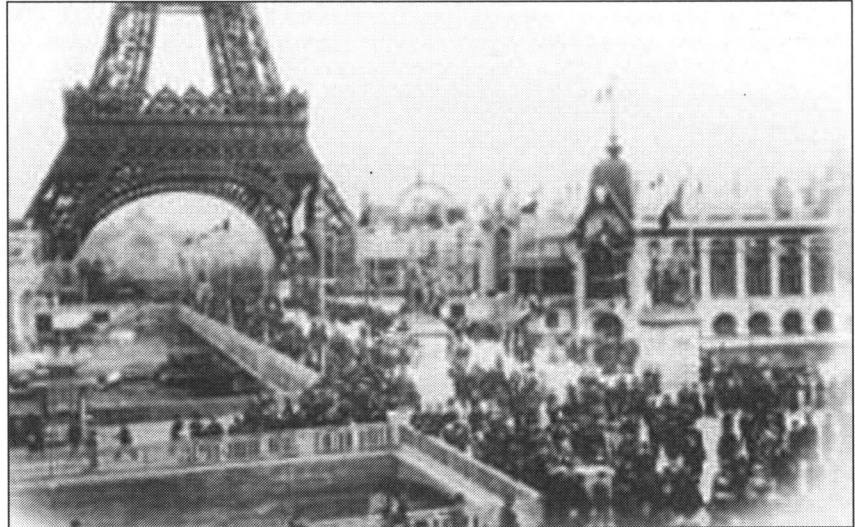
side the urban fabric, and then in the near surroundings. However, no new districts were created because the exhibition halls were intended to be destroyed. Modernity was inside as well as outside, and every pavilion tried to testify the know-how of its country. Some buildings were doomed to show the most modern techniques, and even became an example of modern or avant-garde art. The first one was the Crystal Palace (figs. 1 to 5), built in Hyde Park by the architect Joseph Paxton for



Fig. 7: Paris – The Trocadero Palace and the construction of the Eiffel Tower for the exhibition of 1889. (Source: Durandelle, *Travaux de construction de la Tour Eiffel, 1888*. Paris, Editions Hazan, 1989).



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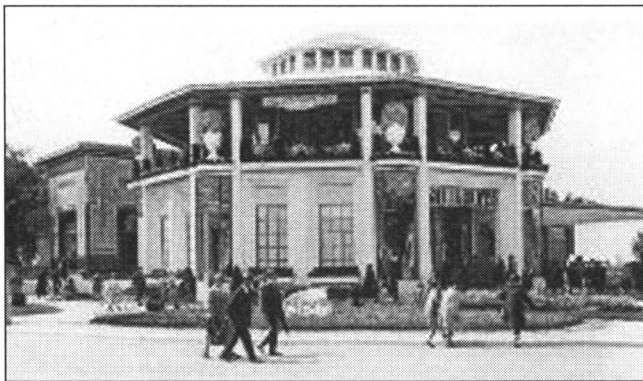
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Fig. 8: Paris – Universal Exhibition, 1889.¹

Fig. 9: Paris – Universal Exhibition, 1900: Pont d'Iéna and Eiffel Tower.¹

Fig. 10: Paris – Exhibition of Modern Decorative Arts, 1925.¹

Fig. 11: Paris – International Exhibition of Arts and Crafts (Arts et Techniques) in Modern Life, 1937.¹



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the 1851 exhibition. The concept of this glass and iron building was so audacious that many people thought it would collapse before its unveiling. It was in fact so successful that it survived the exhibition. It was moved to Sydenham in the southern London suburbs, until it was destroyed in a fire in 1936.

In Paris few buildings of the eight exhibitions survive, because they were destroyed each time to build a more modern work than the former one. Nowadays only the Grand Palais and the Petit Palais remain (figs. 12 and 13), as they were built on the Champs Elysées for the 1900 exhibition, as well as the

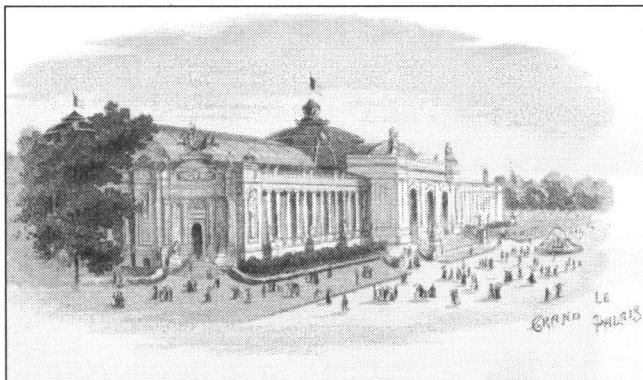


Fig. 12: Paris – the Grand Palais built for the 1900 exhibition.¹



Fig. 13: Paris – the Petit Palais built for the 1900 exhibition.¹

Palais de Chaillot that replaced the Palais du Trocadero already built on the same hill of Chaillot for the 1878 exhibition. One could even mention the building of the Colonial Museum

erected at the Porte Dorée. But the most famous building is still of course the 1,000 feet high tower of Gustav Eiffel (fig. 7) for the 1889 Universal Exhibition, that remains the symbolic

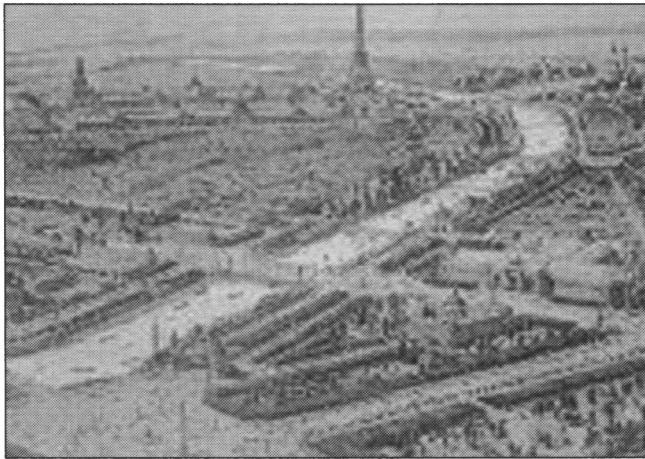


Fig. 14: Paris – General view.¹



Fig. 15: Paris – General view with Pont Alma and foreign pavilion.¹

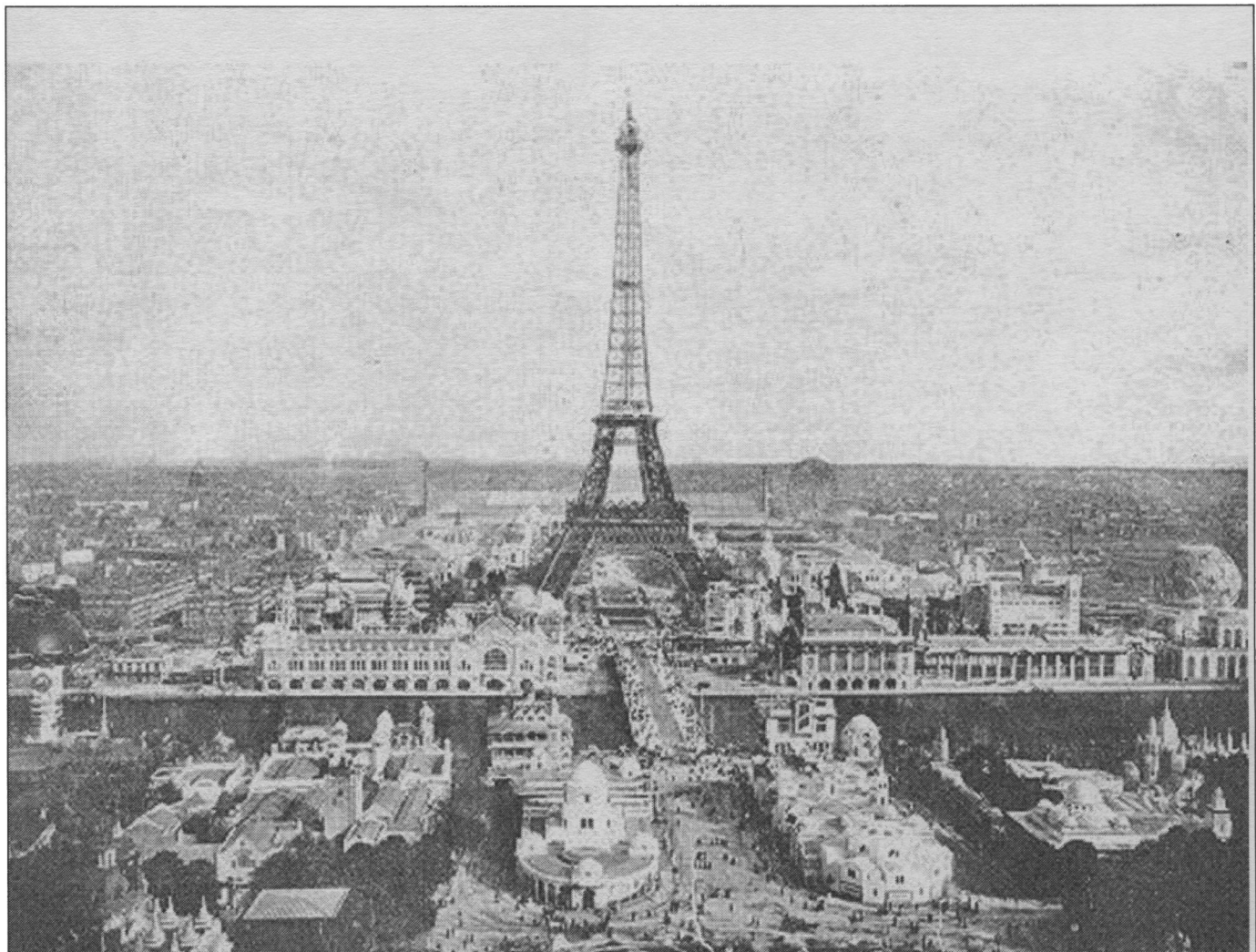


Fig. 16: Paris – View from the Trocadero towards the Eiffel Tower.¹

image of Paris, even overshadowing that of the Royal Squares or of the famous palace of Versailles (figs. 14, 15 and 16).

During these periods the city enjoyed great hustle and bustle and the metropolitan underground was unveiled during the 1900 Universal Exhibition. Its image was spread abroad by the famous "art deco" sculptures of Hector Guimard for its staircase exits on the Grands Boulevards that contributed to popularizing the Modern Style. But, apart from these exceptions, the urban fabric was eventually little altered by the event.

Among the later exhibitions, the buildings had less impact and less survival as well. One can quote however the picture of the Brussels Atomium in 1958, or the monumental fascist style of the "Esposizione Universale di Roma" (EUR) district. This architecture, cancelled by the war in 1942, was rediscovered when this unachieved place became the service releasing zone of the Italian capital.

Olympic Games

The Olympic Games often generated very functional buildings. The construction of a marble stadium in Athens, intended to symbolize in a luxury way the picture of the past *grandeur* of a country too often evoked through the image of archaeological ruins, appears an exception.

Those older shop-windows of modernity survived almost through visitors' tales filled-with-wonder, paper clippings and some photographs yellow with age.

Continuity of progress obliterated the older evidence as time went by. The Eiffel Tower itself should have been destroyed but its handsome and still modern silhouette allowed it to remain. So these events did not upgrade urban planning, but rather crowned the social and economic expansion of the most developed countries of which the city in which they were held was the symbol. The picture of the city was enriched by these temporary exhibitions that rounded off for a short while the variety of its cultural and artistic life. And the city kept above all the memories of these events long after they disappeared.

International promotional events: New stakes for the city

Universal Exhibitions, like the Olympic Games, are becoming planetary events and enjoy growing success for modern transportation systems which allow millions of visitors to attend them. On top of the works linked with the events, circulation and welcoming need new constructions, as the old buildings are insufficient. However the temporary and luxurious aspect is lessened and has become more touristic and lighter. From now on, the cost of fulfilment is carefully considered, avoiding running up colossal debts, even if budgets increase regularly. As an example 8 billion francs were planned for Lille if its candidacy had been retained for the 2004 Olympic Games. From the 1980s onwards, the event progressively implies urban planning, and from the 1988 Vancouver event, the return of investments is systematically strived at.

From temporary district to urban planning

In 1985, the universal exhibition of Tsukuba in Japan introduced a new urban concept because the exhibition site has been used again. Despite the relative distance of the district at about 60 km from Tokyo, this area became a university campus, then a new town embryo, and finally a technopole. However, this State-enforced, *a posteriori* planning proved to be awkward and expensive. That is why from now on the host city anticipates every urban project.

Actually, the gap between these cyclic events being larger than four years, a sufficient lapse of time is allowed to work out

programs and to carry out works in order to get cumulative emergency grants from the different actors concerned, i.e. City, Region and State. Such a phenomenon that we can call a "planning event" appeared as a new planning tool for territorial development. It is triggered by the stakes of the exceptional promotion given by TV broadcasts of the event, because the host city becomes the symbolic shop-window for the country's know-how. So it is in everybody's interest that the image should be a positive one. The threat of any dysfunction being broadcast worldwide puts the city actors in an unusual but temporary position of strength. It is increased by the existence of a target date which is of course the beginning of the Games: this fact does not allow any extension of the date, as is for example usual in Mediterranean countries.

Economic and mediatization globalization have increased the local impact of these events. From now on, they are made out as an exceptional opportunity for the host to further a positive economic and urbanistic impact, even in the most developed countries. Even at this stage, international selection puts into a state of rivalry more than about ten sites and sometimes involves preliminary works to reinforce the strength of a candidacy. As a case study, China, where motorways were non-existent, anticipated a motorway tract between the airport and Beijing, this town being a candidate for the Olympic Games, to reinforce the evidence of its modernity. Geographical localization of such a phenomenon even acquires a moral significance. For China, welcoming the next event is made out as an economic as well as a democratic reconnaissance signal by the international community: this obliterates the unsolved problem of Human Rights in this country.

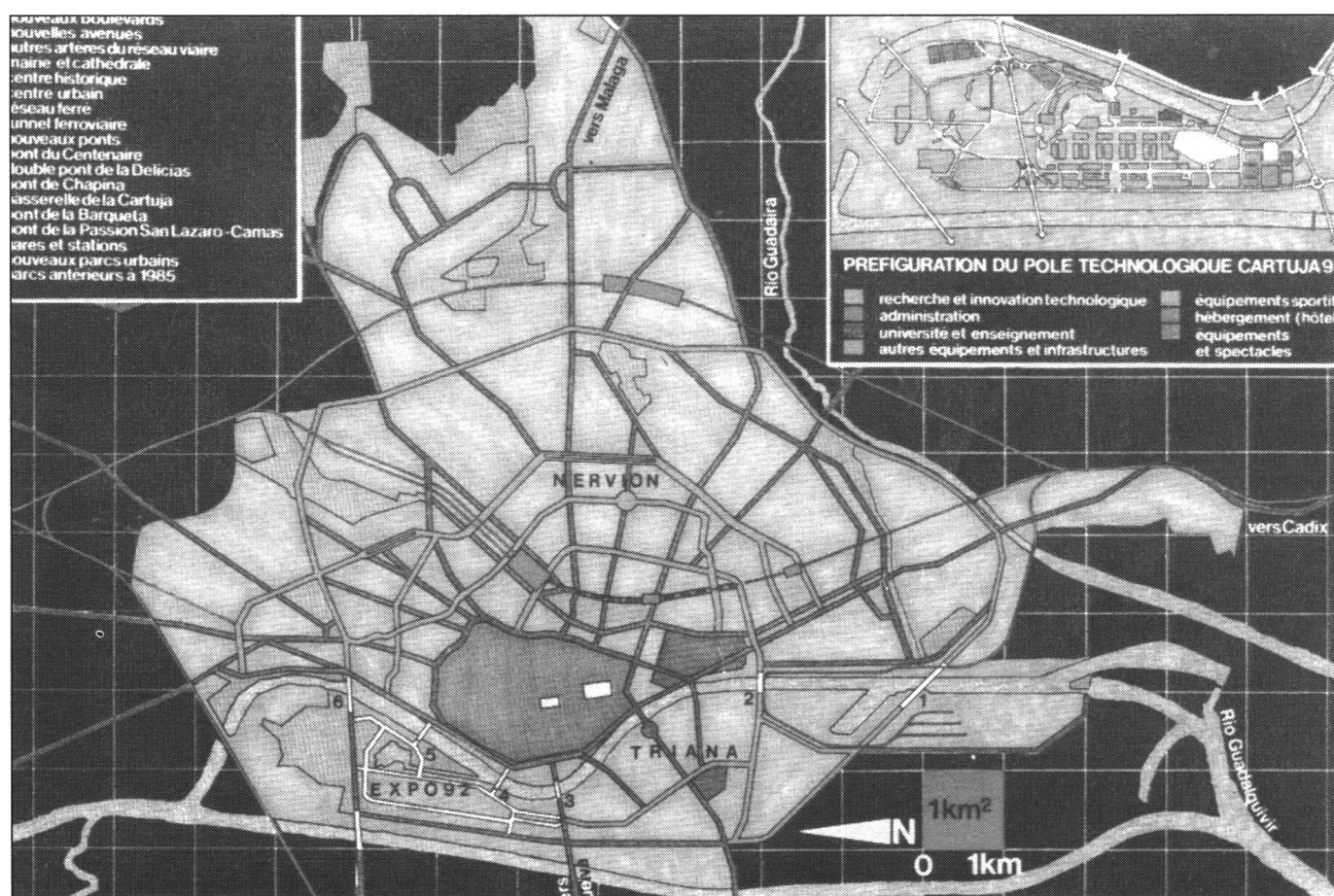
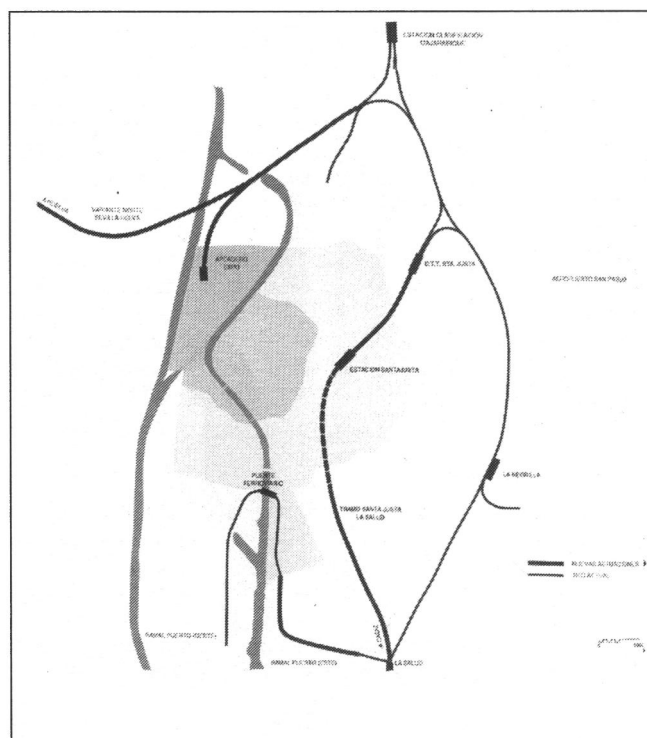
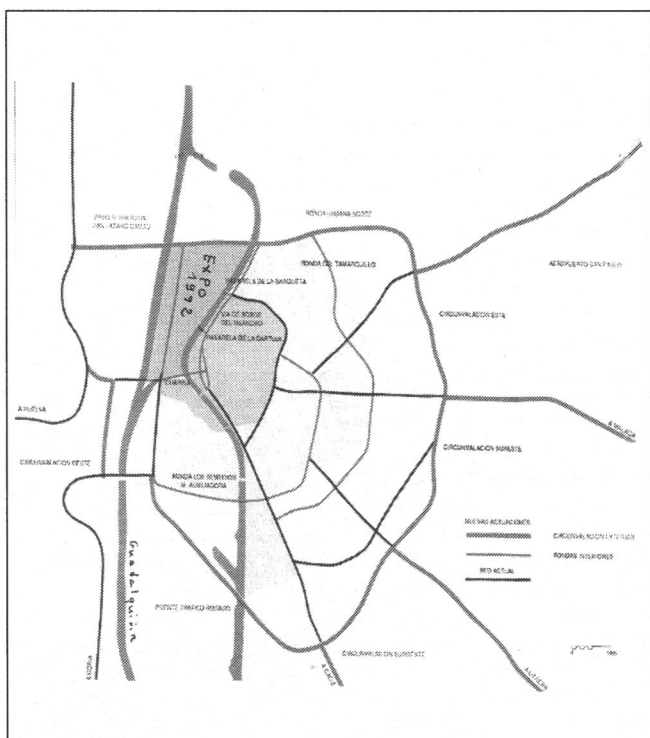
Attraction, stakes and impacts are strengthened, but the success of such an event attracting so many people locally appears like a complex problem, or even a bet. The course of the event must demonstrate a national know-how in a broad sense. Many criteria – festivities, means of access and stay, and the need to be operational on time – will reflect the host country's image. If the event becomes a speculative product, it often appears as a challenge to be overcome for the city and the country as well.

In 1992 in Spain, both the Universal Exhibition of Seville and the Summer Olympic Games of Barcelona took place. These exhibitions happened after the Gulf War, in an uncertain economic and touristic climate. Moreover these two cities had already welcomed such an exhibition and the citizens of Seville have had to pay huge taxes for a long time to soak up their debts. In Andalusia, profitability of the deal has been *a priori* looked for, but this event soon became for Seville the main hub of local development. The same year in Barcelona, hosting the Summer Olympic Games became a local strategy of metropolitan advancement. These two cities will not remain isolated occurrences. They are the forerunners of a great urban planning development that will become widespread later.

The Universal Exhibition and the Seville urban project

In order to take advantage of this event, the space reserved by the city for the Seville Universal Exhibition was located by the town council on an island in the Guadalquivir river. This voluntary localization, in an almost virgin and unfavorable site, ought to allow the city later to spread southwards, over the river. This choice required the competent administrations to carry out infrastructure works, particularly fluvial ones, that were always being postponed for later, owing to their high costs.

The planning interventions scheduled for the event largely extend beyond the exhibition site and are meant to restructure the urban fabric as a whole. The coming of the high speed train



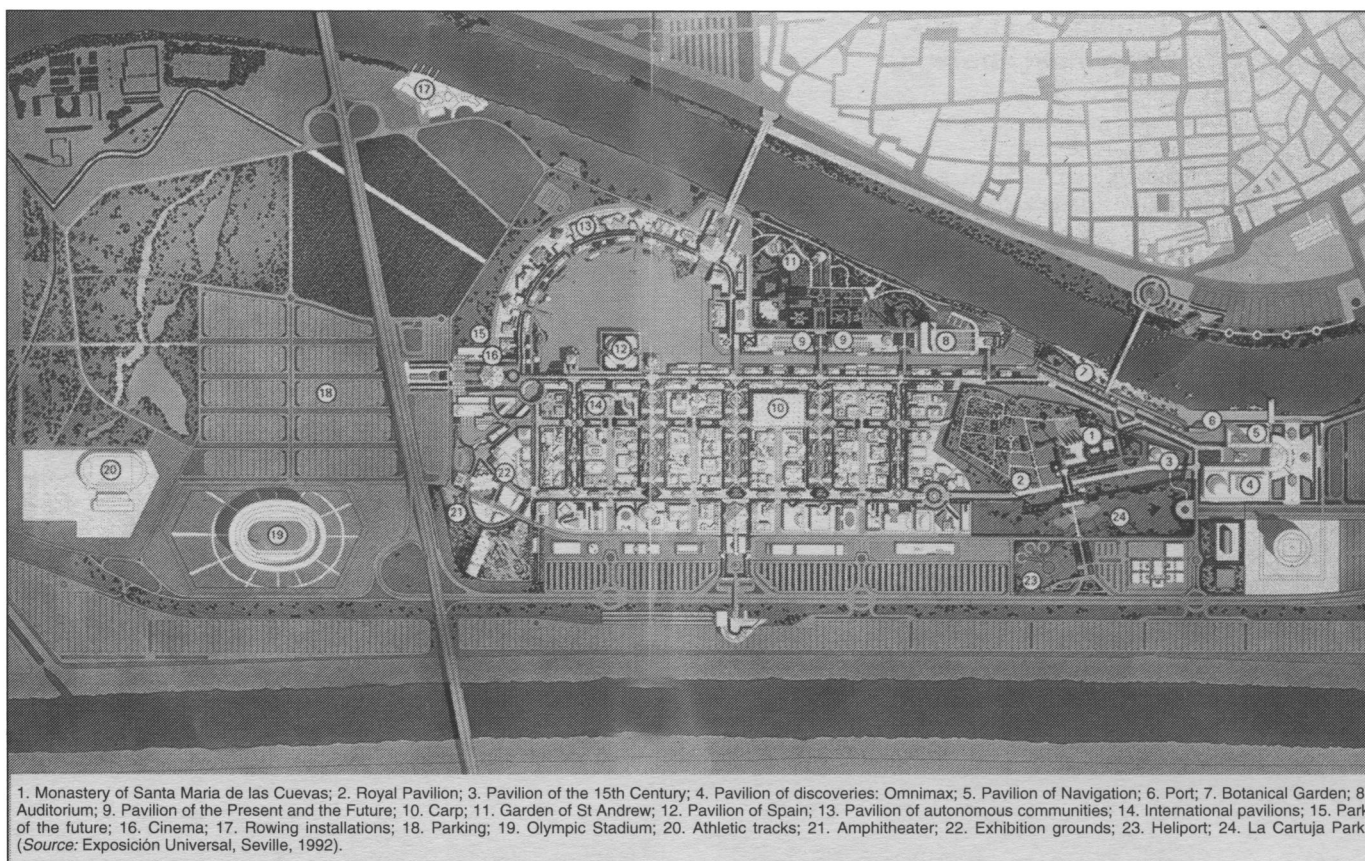


Fig. 20: Seville – The site of the Exhibition. (Source: Seville Universal Exhibition *Isla de la Cartuja*, 1992).

with its modern technology led to the creation of a new station, modifying centrality and opening up the city. Regional airports were upgraded and numerous private investments developed hotel facilities (figs. 17 to 21).

As a whole, the city enjoyed a very positive image, even if the works had trouble being finished in time. The cost of the Universal Exhibition was 10.9 billion pesetas and was balanced by the revenues of entrance tickets and mainly the TV licence fee. The citizens of Seville did not pay any tax bills, even if the town council was not able to commit new projects during the next years. But the exhibition budget represents only 10 percent of all the commitments of the administrations in the city and 1 percent of public investment for this event, because Spain unveiled on this occasion the Madrid-Seville section of the future high-speed railway system, the AVE.

However the local urban project is here centered round the general infrastructure works. These allowed a later possible extension, although not planned, of the built-up area. In spite of an important local need, the project did not foresee social facilities or dwellings. From the beginning it was only planned to preserve a small part of the development built for the exhibition. Their aim was to offer the city an urban garden landscape and cable television buildings in order to create a regional-scale technopole, that did not exist in southern Spain.

All these fulfilments improved the position of Seville, the fourth city in Spain and a regional capital. This besides crystallized the displeasure of other cities in Andalusia that got no returns even though they participated, through regional taxes, at a level of 12 percent of the works' finances. Nor did they benefit from the consequences induced by the regional technological project which hardly worked. Seville-Granada rivalry was even stirred up following this Universal Exhibition. Further-

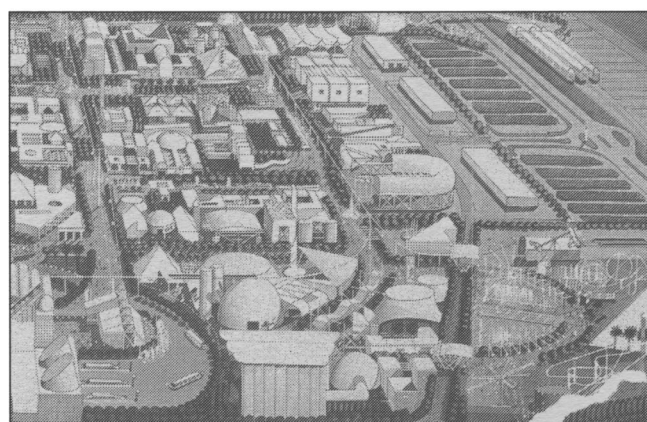


Fig. 21: Seville – Site of the Exhibition (detail).²

more the railway extension of the Spanish high-speed train has been considerably delayed due to implementation costs much greater than estimated.

The Seville case study clearly shows a new vision of international exhibitions. Thanks to their attractivity, they have acquired an autonomous image. On the other hand, many cities were degraded in the course of time, or did not reach an optimal level of development. A reversal of the initial image occurred, to a point where the event became a mainspring for making up for lost time as well as a tool of modernization for the city. The Catalanian example went further in the concern of these links between image and urban impact during the summer of 1992.

The Summer Olympic Games and Barcelona's metropolitan strategy

This use of the temporary welcome of a sort of universal fair in order to develop or to renew a city appears logical when all is said and done. But this factual development contaminated sports-seeking events to the point that it diverted them from their purpose, as was the case with the Barcelona Olympic Games.

This old city, with a very individualistic past, experienced an earlier commercial development that led it to the first financial position in Spain. The well-matched extension of the city was worked out in the 19th century thanks to the "Ensanche," a great anticipation development plan elaborated by the engineer Alfonso Cerdà. But a century later, the Catalan capital was enduring important economic and spatial difficulties. The worldwide crisis of traditional industries increased urban waste land, particularly in the harbor zone.

Downtown is saturated and surrounded by an anarchic up-town lacking in amenities, owing to the increase of often illegal self-construction. Finally, Madrid as a capital has been systematically favored since the government of Franco. It wants to assert itself among European capitals, and tries particularly to reduce the growth and the autonomy of its rival Barcelona, the second city in the country, that took away the strength of its position in the Mediterranean space.

Now, the international context provoked transformations in



Fig. 23: Genoa – The conversion of the old port into a reception area for cruise tourism. (Source: Porto Autonomo di Genova, 1998).



Fig. 22: Genoa –Intermodal traffic decentralized at Voltri. (Source: Porto Autonomo di Genova, 1998).



Figs. 24 and 25: Genova – Cargo activities. (Source: Porto Autonomo di Genova, 1998).

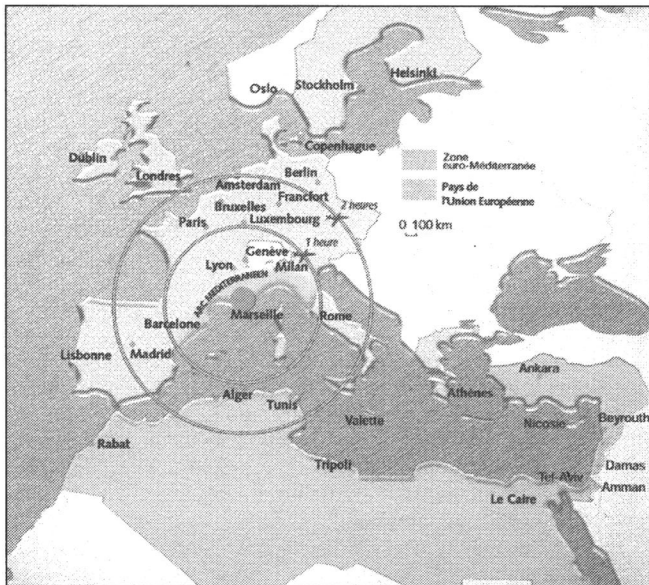


Fig. 26: Position of Marseilles simultaneously in the Euro-Mediterranean zone and in that of the European countries. (Source: Agam, "Comment faire le schéma de cohérence de Marseille 2015," 1997).

the neighboring countries. In Italy, Genoa is the main rival of Barcelona, as Naples plays a secondary role. But Genoa suffers the repercussions of the industrial crisis of the 1970s as well as of the evolution of international transport. The harbor of Genoa had to be broken up geographically, because the free space in the acropolis was unsuitable for the forthcoming container transportation, the major part of which has been decentralized at Voltri (fig. 22). The old harbor has been restructured around a ferry and cruise dock (figs. 23, 24 and 25), and around a cultural and play activity urban site as well. Otherwise the developments of the two other apexes of the economic triangle, Turin and Milan, of which Genoa was the seaboard exit, changed. Development is rather turned towards the Po valley and its delta, blocking Genoa off from its immediate hinterland. Barcelona would like to take advantage of this Italian weakening in the Mediterranean.

On the other hand, the French littoral appears more threatening for the future of the Catalanian city. Marseilles has been declining since the decolonization era, but a great polynuclear region is building up from Montpellier to Avignon and Toulon. This "city-region" surpasses 10 million inhabitants, approximately the population of the Ile-de-France region (figs. 26 and 27). The weight of this whole and of its abilities may well spread further, because it has a tendency to link with the Grasse-Cannes-Sophia Antipolis area.

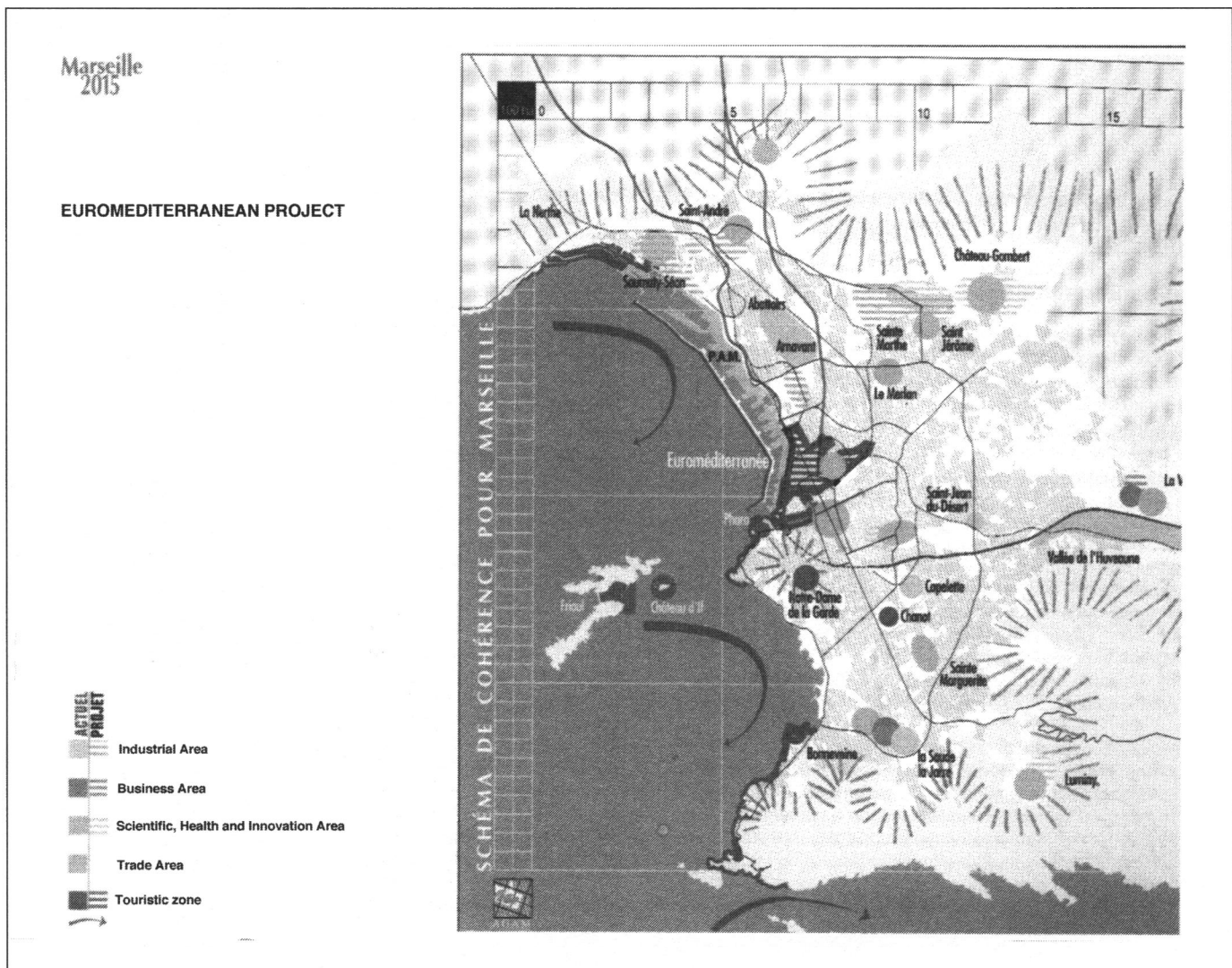


Fig. 27: Marseilles – Euromediterranean Project 2015. (Source: Agam, "Comment faire le schéma de cohérence de Marseille 2015," 1997).

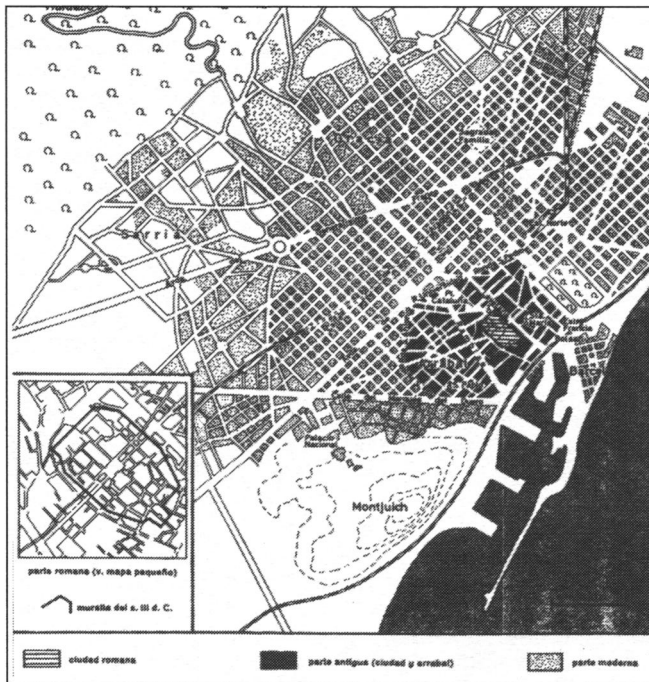


Fig. 28: Barcelona – The town at the beginning of the 20th century after the “Ensanche”. (Source: Documentation Française).

Consequently, hosting the Olympic Games in Barcelona was in a context of national and international rivalry. The city jumped at this exceptional opportunity, in spite of the challenge

of the Seville exhibition in the same year. The Catalan city implemented an urban strategy assuming not only the success of the summer games, but also the setting-up of infrastructure works that will permit the city to anticipate its needs for more than 20 years, and subsequently improve its position in the process of the Mediterranean arc still in formation (figs. 28 and 29).

An urban project was developed in this way by the staff of the architect Oriol Bohigas. To carry out this ambitious project, he did not place the Games in a virgin space, but tried to insert the needed infrastructure works of the Games in the urban fabric itself, while respecting the history and the specificity of the city as well. In order to reduce costs, the Olympic Games were designed as a temporary occupation of buildings admittedly constructed to welcome them, but intended for another purpose. So, it is not a later re-use of premises, but the fulfilment of operations the aim of which is to give rise to the advancement of the economic and cultural aspect of the tertiary metropolis. The games are in fact a mere “pretext” for restructuring the city. The Games themselves will be adjusted to the metropolitan refitting program, and not the contrary.

The scheduled project is a daring one. Under the pretext of facilitating access to the Games, all major communication infrastructure as well as the internal circulation of the city have been thought about again. Two partly buried urban motorways, the first one tangentially in the North, and the other one on the coast, were planned. An optical fiber net was developed from a communications tower. The harbor has been displaced southwards to better meet the new specifications of a container terminal; a modern airport has been built by Ricardo Boffil; an extension of the underground railway has been scheduled, and so on.

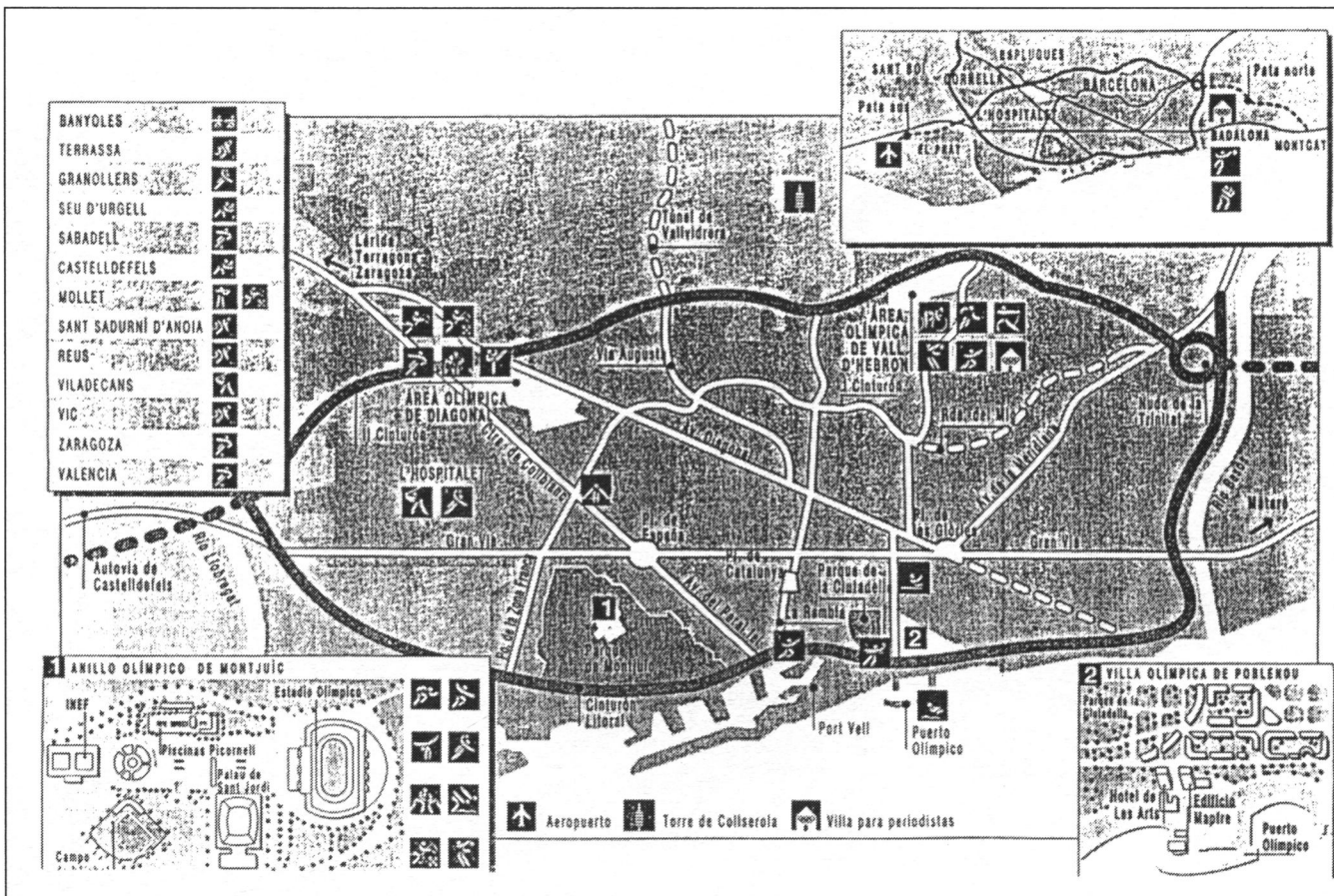


Fig. 29: Site of the Olympic Games within the town of Barcelona, 1992.³

Furthermore, the buildings housing the Games are located in an interstitial way on purpose to stitch up again, to spread and to modernize the city. Finally, Barcelona will see its centrality in a reverse manner in order to favor the touristic continuation of the shore and give back to the city an opening to the sea (figs. 30 to 34).

In spite of the fact that some details in arrangement were scheduled in the whole city, four core sites were chosen to put this project into practice:

- Montjuich Hill is the genuine kernel of the Olympic Games. The 1929 Exhibition Stadium has been enlarged, and the buildings are scattered in a renewed park. Eventually this space was supposed to become a zone for museums and urban walking in the western part of the city.
- The Vall d'Hebron sports facilities, on the north side, are built on waste ground at the boundary between downtown and the outlying underprivileged areas. They have to be re-used as a service center for the spare time of citizens of the periphery.
- The "Diagonal" zone has a new university, sports and accommodation center. A better integration of this area has been programmed in order to extend the urban fabric westwards.
- Finally, the fourth site is in the south, known as the Poble Nou area, with the Olympic Village Nova Icaria. It was a degraded space of industrial waste land, once called the "Catalonian Manchester," separating the city from the commercial harbor. Only a third of this large renewal zone of 130 hectares had to be used as a "container" for the Olympic Village. The village was located in new six-storeyed buildings whose flats were sold as early as 1990, with prices frozen and the occupation by their owners was to take place two years later, after the Olympic

Games. Two 44-storeyed towers housing a hotel and temporarily the Olympic press stand had to symbolize the new opening of the city seawards, as a reminder of the columns ending the Via Appia at Brindisi. The old trading harbor is replaced by a yachting harbor with a *promenade-croisette* of 6 km twinned with artificial sand beaches.

The opportunity offered by the events allowed financial hurdles to be overcome that would never have been accepted within the framework of usual metropolitan management, for the total amount of the works reached one billion pesetas and went together with a tax bill foreseen up to 2009. Rivalry existed between the socialist Lord Mayor and the center right-wing President of the Generalitat. The latter could only reduce the over-expensive scheduled extension of the underground at Montjuich, and thus cancel the VAL (light automatic vehicle) project of the French firm Matra. Above all the city had to struggle against Madrid's rivalry and disagreement between Catalonia and the Spanish State. The intentional inertia of the central government delayed at the very most the construction of motorways which were legally within its competence. However, this masterly project was fulfilled and brought about a true leap forward for the city.

This strategic vision of the Olympic Games upgraded Barcelona to the rank of a leading metropolis on the "Latin arc" Palma-Valencia-Saragossa-Montpellier-Toulouse. Owing to the dynamism of its financial state, it appears as a rival of Marseilles at the beginning of the third millennium, especially when the projects triggered by the Olympic Games are achieved, that is to say: the rebuilding of a harbor suitable for containers, the

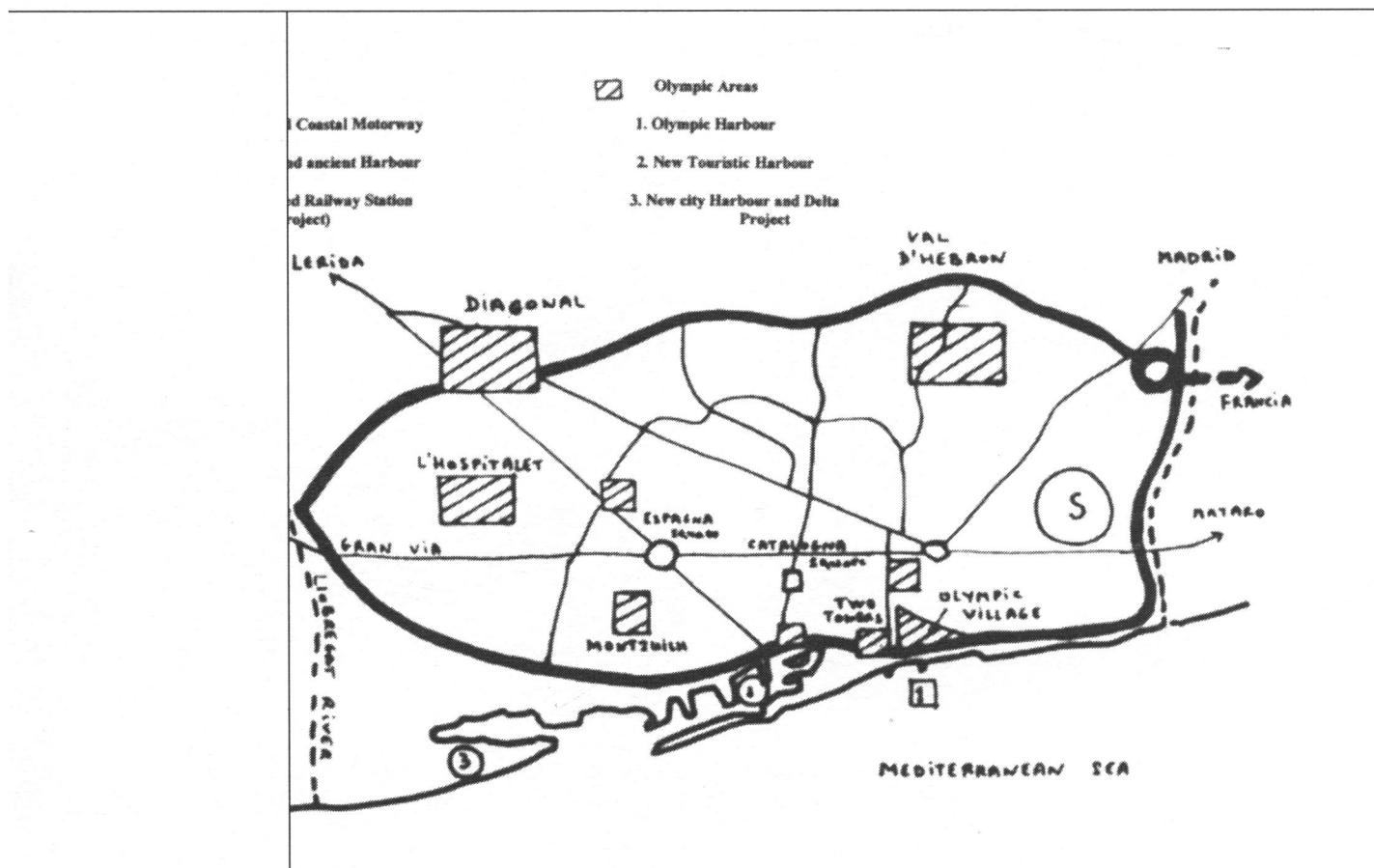


Fig. 29 (cont'd).

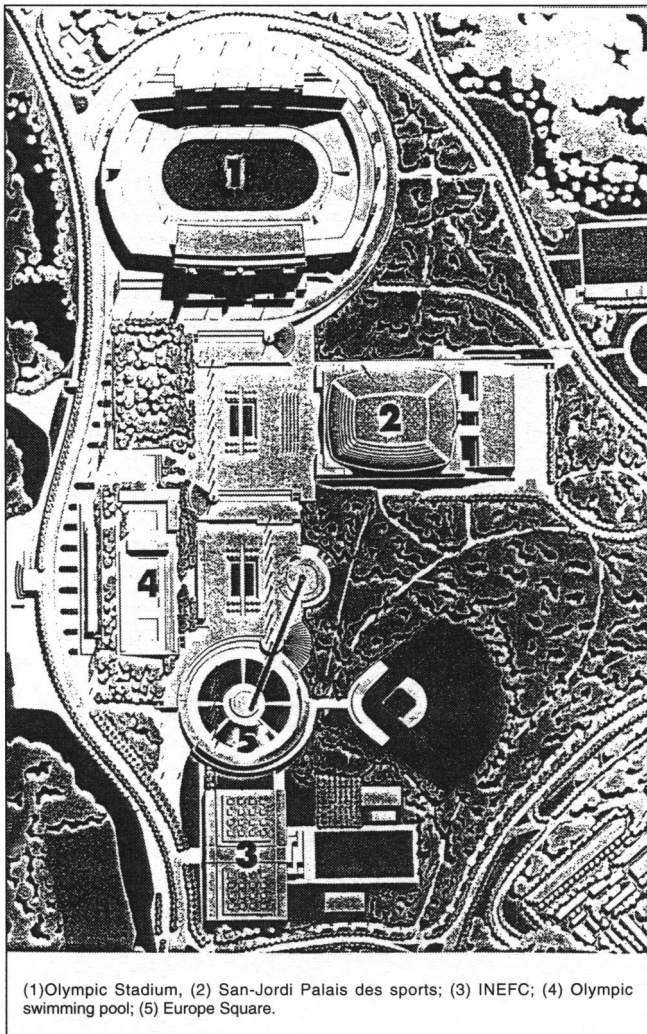


Fig. 30: Barcelona – Plan of the Olympic ring of Montjuich. ³



Fig. 33: The two towers of the 1992 Olympic Games in Barcelona. (Source: The author).

achievement of a logistic rig on the Llobregat delta and the prospective eastern urban district around the Paris-Barcelona-Madrid High Speed Train Station under construction. Considering the reorientation of the Po valley development and the difficulties of Marseilles, Barcelona finds itself as the new southern Europort.

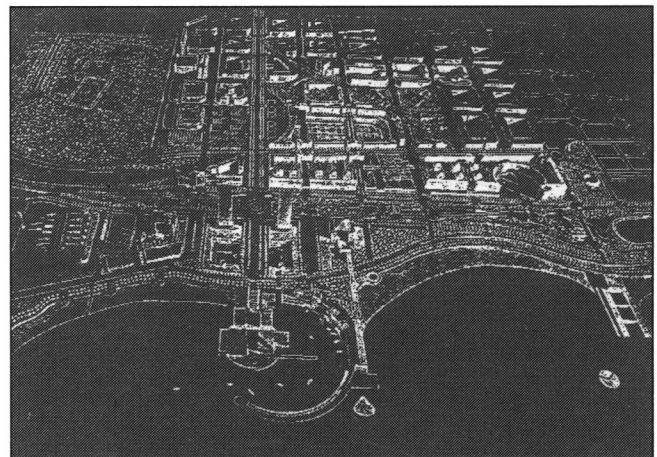


Fig. 31: The new Ramblas and nautical sports: an area developed for the Olympic Games.³

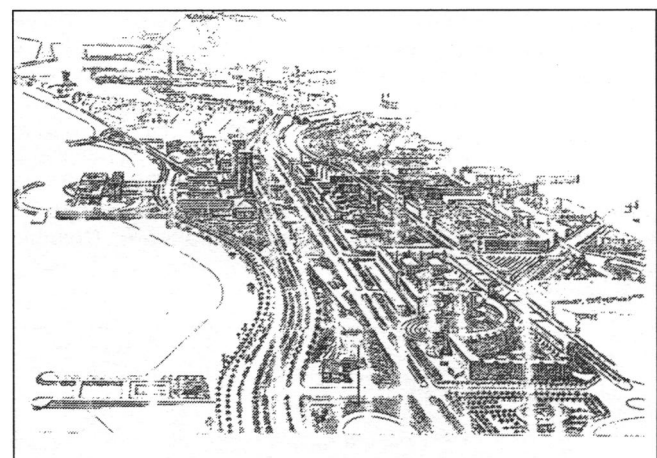


Fig. 32: Barcelona – Graphic representation and maquette of the Olympic Village.³



Fig. 34: Barcelona – Promenade on the new artificial sand beaches. (Source: The author).

Image and city: A required but not riskless tool revealing a differentiated sight

These two examples illustrate the crucial importance of image nowadays. They exemplify as well the richness of this notion

and of its impacts in various topics with a spate of consequences. It appears a double-edged notion according to the item pictured as well as to the photographer: it can be a upgrading means or an urban development tool for local actors, but the stranger's judgment, especially if he is a journalist, gives a review without servility of the "roof tops."

Image and city: A major consensus tool

The image, as an information tool, is a part of everyday life. Its acuteness is greater during exceptional events. It is particularly the case during great disasters. But, when it is a foreseeable, peaceful, playful, worldwide event, and when it is long-awaited and promoted through the media, its image displays two simultaneous as well as contradictory sides. It is composed of a local tool that can be taken over to broadcast a "positive" vision and so to promote the place itself. It represents at the same time a kind of sword of Damocles with the "negative" development of what the entrants and especially reporters should do. Universal Exhibitions and Summer Olympic Games represent perhaps a particular case, but they clearly exemplify all the mechanisms of this phenomenon, reaching in this way the peak of the image notion, as an actor of urban development.

As a matter of fact, an exhibition lasts several weeks. Its image is not that of a few hours of TV broadcast in a limited place. One has to accommodate, to convey, to feed, to entertain millions of people who are expecting to find there efficiency and the most advanced standards in these topics. The spotlights include access and welcome conditions for entrants, their welfare, safety and mobility, etc. It is a global picture of the functional ability of the place, lasting for a long time, as well as in the smallest detail. The slightest dysfunction would carry some weight on the economic, diplomatic and touristic plan, for the city and for the whole country as well.

Therefore it is very hard to "make up for", or even "to reverse the situation" of a bad image, as its impact is strong and long-lasting as well. Such a heritage would have serious consequences as far as the international and domestic points of view are concerned, even towards rival cities. So it is necessary to create for this purpose a consensus of all who intervene to hatch the event and to secure its progress. Power struggles are exceptionally to the advantage of the city during the preparation of the event. The latter is aware of the fact that to lay out too much money comes down to penalizing citizens: therefore it tries to get the works taken in charge by other contributors according to the national administrative hierarchy, or even to take its revenge on the delays accumulated by the State in this field. All this could not be done in normal times, but faced with the importance of the deal, the actors are compelled to do so. The city knows the consensus will fade with the final event and that it will be impossible to get something from the same representatives for at least ten years. It requires a lot to cover this period of time in advance.

In addition to these fears, and the fact of jumping at the opportunity, the importance of the developments is made possible by conveying crowds endowed with high purchasing power, and the period between the date of the selection of the host city and the opening ceremony is long enough to have time to work out a strategy and to get the urban project fulfilled. This is the true difference between the factual operating of a "normal" use of the city image.

The prestige of the city during the 19th century was a treasury for the great international events; nowadays the latter have succeeded in reinforcing their own image which is autonomous towards the city. In spite of their temporary length their impact is so important through the vision of journalists and tourists that they are no longer – at the very beginning of

the 21st century – a temporary crowning of the city, but can become a true mainspring for economic development and an efficient tool of urban planning. But it is just an opportunity, and a daring gamble. The poor crowds at the recent Hannover exhibition show that nothing is won in advance.

From 1992 on, cultural events and summer games took place downtown. This was the case in Atlanta where the core of the city had to be renewed, but where the positive image was stained by safety problems. In Lisbon, the Exhibition created a residential area, and the new bridge on the Tagus river gave concrete expression to new possibilities of expansion and restructuring of the urban area. However the universal but religious event of the Rome "Jubilee" did not arouse the interest of large-scale enterprises. The Italian state that Massimo d'Alema, an ex-communist, is in charge of, and the city itself which is run by an ecologist and leader of the left wing, claimed that they considered this event a private gathering. The Jubilee law includes poor financial means in order to give a face lift to some buildings in Rome and in stage cities for pilgrims such as Bologna. But no building was planned and most of the funds had to ensure the safety of the pilgrims and to make traffic easier in the city itself. However, owing to the media success of the event, the noisy and traditional march of Italian trade unions on May 1st was banned in order not to overshadow the Catholic exhibitions. To jump at the opportunity of the development is not always understood, but the consequences of the fear of "punishment" by the image are still real.

Image and city: An unmarked strategy

So, the image can be at the service of space, ideology, or religion. Being universal, and open to almost everyone, it is used daily, in the guise of touristic or commercial advertisement. The 1980s and 1990s mark an increase in the image role and the generalization of its use for local development strategies.

However the image of the city displays various conceptions throughout the world. As an example, the "urban marketing" that appeared during the 1980s in Europe often aimed at trying to change a too traditional image of the city, thus attracting new jobs to struggle against endemic unemployment. In fact, the urban fabric takes a long time to be altered, while the image is an efficient, quick, international and actual time vector.

For many small or middle sized historical cities fallen into oblivion, it was important to show modern units as symbols of functionalism. The image is able to claim that any ancient city, up to now considered dormant, became economically dynamic, and that it carried out an attractive social and cultural transformation. The promotion through the media, financed by the town council, throws light on some recent local deals, often isolated in the urban fabric. It often displays a modern style aesthetic architecture intentionally chosen by local actors in order to be recognized easily, even if, owing to its atypism, it runs counter to the old fabric – for example, a new high-tech stadium, a school of university level, a pedestrian street ... intended to convey a "positive local changing effect."

In spite of the modesty of these urban strategies, the aims here fit into each other like a nest of dolls. Indeed the image is first directed to captivating an audience of private investors likely to bring employment thanks to having settled there. To demonstrate the dynamism of the city is to prove too, on a national and international level, that the town council can be an efficient partner for an industrial or tertiary settlement. At the same time it is to reinforce the weight of the city towards rival cities in a regional or international hierarchy. This image is also intended to give back to its inhabitants a sense of pride in their city, the final aim of which is, of course, to satisfy the voters. In this context in Europe, the image used is more and more a popular image, the ancient one usually centered on the cathe-

dral having been dethroned. The latter remains only a reference in the designation of mixed housing development zones (ZAC), called "ZAC Cathédrale," even when this local monument, as in Amiens, is a cultural site registered on the World Heritage List of UNESCO.

In other cases, the aim of the image is to "regenerate" the city through its history and patrimony as well: at the time of a global world it allows a cultural identity to be asserted. Some do it through a symbolic monument, the rehabilitation of an old district, or echoes of an historic event. So, memorial museums of local tradition, war memorials like at Peronne or in Caen, memory tourism, even a call to "memory workings" as in Berlin, grow in number. The modern side then comes from a collective aspect of "agora," from art, from building symbolism, from space regarded as sacred, from the public square, from the place.

In formerly developed countries, many cities are hit by industrial waste land, particularly in the textile and metallurgical industries. The extent and the importance of this phenomenon makes the regeneration of the city essential for its survival. Lacking private investors – as is the case in the US – Northern Europe re-uses these spaces later, for financial means are limited. For the time being, the European Fund for Regional Development (FEDER), diverted from its initial economic role, re-uses these often central lands on which central actors try to re-build the city. In some operations, FEDER can even be led astray with the addition of a small industrial waste land that enables a large-scale urban enterprise without any link with industry to enjoy such funds. In the same way, constraints linked with the use of FEDER can be used as a pretext to compel a local consensus between actors differing on the project to be achieved for fear of not getting this financial godsend.

In Southern Europe, 19th century industrialization was more limited. The same mix between plants and dwellings did not exist and only a few harbor districts had to be restructured. But the cities, being very old, have deteriorated. A few national laws voted on the occasion of natural disasters allow a true evolution, like in Naples or Venice. Mediterranean downtowns are the very opposite of the functional side of Anglo-Saxon cities. Most of them act simultaneously as residential flats and business districts, even if they are unsuited for modern traffic. For its citizens the town is perceived as space they identify with socially first and foremost, in the same manner that, in the eyes of tourists, the old medieval streets are more and more attractive in contrast to the triviality of concrete buildings.

Image and city: A differentiated perception

The image is indissociable from the city in the global promotion through the media. In Europe it displays an internal role as well, and many urbanists are looking for symbolic buildings or worry about improving the aesthetic side of city gates or of the railway station district, that are becoming new symbols of citizen social interaction. Besides these signs of recognition, some cities even use logos, such as "Montpellier, the gifted city."

Therefore the image has numerous connotations that are not always aggressive. It often appears as an efficient antidote against the anonymity of globalization. However it has its limits. The "shop window" side is in fact a "visiting card" side. Like the latter, it points out the name, address, and the enhanced value of the urban framework. But the image is not always open and may hide the genuine content: brakes upon expansion or local problems, even more lack of development as has been the case in Europe with numerous "blank" congress halls built in the 1980s to simulate a technological movement. The image was at that time that of an ephemeral and deceptive

speculation, like in Montpellier, where the great ballyhoo was resting on a void, the technopolis materializing much later.

Finally, the perception of the image varies geographically according to traditions, religions and cultures. In American towns the image of the city emphasises the height record or the architecture of new skyscrapers, while on the contrary in town centers in Europe it is the lack of these that is noticed. In the past, many towns of the Third World, and particularly in South America, proudly pointed to "their" sole concrete building as a symbol of an "American way" of modernism. Very large multimillionaire cities no longer have an image, or it has become a commonplace image due to the generalization of shanty town districts between blocks of skyscrapers. Nevertheless the new concrete town of Shanghai, on the ruins of former dwellings, willing to be the symbol of Chinese economic success, appears as an iconoclastic and frightening device in the eyes of Europeans.

Conclusion

Image is a necessary item for the city. We have already seen that the image is helpful to the city because it often becomes a mainspring for local development as an efficient tool for urbanism. Actually, the place of the city is growing more and more in a worldwide life where borders are waning. The image of the city is even becoming a target representative of culture and ideology as a whole, as has just been demonstrated in New York. So, image and mediatization are becoming weapons. This could be a turning point in the running of the image function because the overmediatization of events, as has been shown after 11th September, appears risky for the countries aimed at or for witnesses as well.

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- The present paper is part of a collection of research works by the author since 1993 with the following publications:
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Notes

1. Source: www.photoart.plus.com/expos.
2. Source: Seville Exhibition's Organization and City Hall Infrastructure Service of Seville.
3. Source: Barcelona Expo.

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