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Fear and urban planning in ordinary cities: from theory to practice

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Abstract

The paper complements Abu-Orf's theory about violent settings in order to set out a theory of fear in urban planning in ordinary urban contexts around three arguments: spatialization of fear; (modernist) spatialities and the encounter; political economies of urban fear. The three theoretical arguments are used to re-frame the planning history of Chelas, an affordable housing district in Lisbon, Portugal, and debate the way fear shapes, and is shaped in turn by, planning practice. Confirming that (growing) fear in ordinary urban contexts is not just an effect of the contemporary organization of cities, the paper claims for a theorization of fear that would adjoin a global (hegemonic) and a local (discursive/contingent) perspective in the theorization of urban fear, and advocates for the need to put fear, and its capacity to create a crisis in urban policy, at the hearth of planners' agendas.

Introduction

Two main reasons justify the need to explore fear in urban space, nowadays. Firstly, several paradoxes of fear exist. In the last two decades, at the same time as feelings of fear were growing, violent crime and victimisation were steadily dropping in most Western cities (ICPC, 2012; van Dijk, 2007; *Criminology in Europe*, 9[1], 2010). Moreover, the most fearful groups are often not those who are most at risk: some myths – about women and the elderly as victims, about adolescents, the homeless, and ethnic minorities as threats – are often not grounded on actual data (Shirlow & Pain, 2003). Secondly, fear, together with the geopolitics of security, produces exclusion, and the most affected ones are marginalised minority groups (Pain, 2009).

Critical urban studies have explored the paradoxes of contemporary fears from different perspectives: hegemonic geopolitics and fear (*Capital & Class*, 27[2], 2003); urban geographies of fear (*Social & Cultural Geography*, 22[3], 2010); discourses on terror and risk (*Space & Culture*, 15[2], 2012). The same cannot be said for planning research and, although issues of urban security/insecurity have been in the limelight of planning research, few critical debates of the paradoxes of fear exist: ‘the issue of fear is still highly marginal to the main stages of theoretical development in planning theory’ (Abu-Orf, 2013: 159).

Abu-Orf (2013) moves some important steps towards a theorization of fear in planning. Building on Jabareen’s concept of ‘space of risk’ – ‘a lived space that has low levels of trust among different urban groups’ (Jabareen, 2006: 319) –, Abu-Orf outlines a theory of fear in violent urban settings: he presents three geographical models for urban fear (the individual, the feminist geography, the globalised), then debates how fear is capable of creating spaces marked by exclusion, presenting some implications for planning. In doing so, Abu-Orf, rather than ‘outlining a clear definition of fear¹’ (2013: 159), offers a framework which is

¹ Most mainstream approaches to urban fear, in fact, offer ‘clear definitions’ of it. The most prominent

compatible with a critical exploration of fear, that is, a framework capable of emphasizing ‘the politically and ideologically mediated, socially contested and therefore malleable character of urban space’ (Brenner, 2009: 198).

The present paper complements Abu-Orf’s theory in order to set out a theory of urban fear, and of its implications for planning practice and theory, for ordinary urban settings. After a presentation of Abu-Orf’s theory (2013), the paper outlines a theoretical framework around three arguments: spatialization of fear; (modernist) spatialities and the encounter; political economies of urban fear. These three arguments, together, offer a framework for the exploration of fear – i.e. of the way fear is capable of producing spaces marked by exclusion – in urban planning. The paper then applies the theory through case-study research: the history of an affordable housing district (Chelas) is presented and then re-framed using the three theoretical arguments.

To preview the findings, the case confirms that (growing) fear in ordinary urban contexts is not just an effect of the contemporary organization of cities, and that the theory framed is useful for ‘unmasking’ (Abu-Orf, 2013) urban fears. In conclusion, the paper claims for a theorization of fear that would adjoin a global (hegemonic) and a local (discursive/contingent) perspective in the theorization of urban fear, and advocates for the need to put fear, and its capacity to create a crisis in urban policy, at the hearth of planners’ agendas.

1. Abu Orf’s theory of fear in violent urban settings

Abu-Orf (2013) draws on three geographical models of urban fear – the individual, the feminist geography, the globalized –, which, albeit interlinked, respectively emphasize the role of three dimensions: (urban) space, otherness, (geo)politics.

example is probably a special issue of *Urban Studies*, opened by Bannister and Fyfe (2001) with a commentary that offers three explanations for urban fear: fear as the product of victimisation; fear as the ‘consequence of a breakdown in social control’; fear as mediated by the urban environment. In other words, fear as the effect of the characteristics of contemporary cities: (higher?) crime rates; weaker social bonds; spatialities.

The individual model explores spatial perceptions and the encounter in urban space. The encounter mediated by the urban and public space is capable of producing a multiplicity of feelings, ranging from curiosity to anxiety (Epstein, 1998). This is interlinked with the openness of the urban space, and the presence of difference and otherness in it, especially in contemporary societies reshaped by global migrations and mobility (Young, 1990; Sandercock, 2000).

The model of feminist geography thus explores relations to otherness. Otherness is not a neutral concept, because most cultures, and especially the Western ones, ground their self-representation in the categorization of the elements of the social world around the use of crisp sets (Sibley, 1995), that is, they build the 'us' in relation, and in opposition, to the 'other(s)'. This has two implications. Firstly, as far as the real world rejects crisp boundaries, the struggle for discrete categories is contradicted by the existence of liminal spaces where distinguishing 'us' from the 'other(s)' is impossible. This is exemplified by the category of the stranger, which places an oppositional construction in the local space but denies any crisp separation, making the 'us' problematic, if not inconceivable (Kristeva, 1988; Beck, 1998), hence generating anxiety and fear. Secondly, the building of social groups is a cultural practice ruled by the dominant groups, which, thanks to their cultural power, are capable of identifying the deviant groups, around the use of morality as the conceptual realm for the definition of 'proper' behaviours (Williams, 2004: 95). The construction of social groups is not a neutral practice, inasmuch as it can justify exclusion and, at the same time, create anxiety in the opposition between the safety entangled with the realm of the 'us' and the danger entangled in the realm of the 'otherness' (Sibley, 1995).

The third model for understanding urban fear builds on critical debates of global rhetoric and practices of security. Since the early 1990s, a culture of fear emerges in the Western public, political, and media discourses (Glassner, 1999; Schermans & De Maesschalck, 2010). The reasons for this trend are the fascination with violence which makes a profitable media

product of crime and the interest of politicians in keeping public attention focused on issues capable of shaping consensus. These discourses have managed to boost Western citizens' perceptions of insecurity (Roberts & Stalans, 1998; McClain, 2001) and to create mass anxiety, shaping consensus around policies for, or in the name of, security, particularly since the terrorist attacks of the 2000s (Oza, 2007; Graham, 2010).

In the second part of his work, Abu-Orf (2013) suggests a conceptual frame in order to understand how fear informs planning and, specifically, how fear is capable of producing spaces marked by exclusion. Building on the three aforementioned models, Abu-Orf highlights two dimensions. Firstly, fear is politicized: the State can use fear 'as a cover for an essentially political agenda' (2013: 169) of exclusion. Secondly, 'fear intersects desire and control to exclude fearful "Others" in planning practice in violent settings' (2013: 172). Put in other words, fear is a tool of power in planning in inherently conflictual contexts.

Albeit nuanced and well-grounded, this theory has two limits. Firstly, although the dimension of space is embedded in the implications for planning, the theory does not explore how the spatial characteristics of built environments mediate feelings of fear. Secondly, the theory offers an understanding of violent urban settings, where exclusionary policies are entrenched with the presence of a state of war, which is capable of justifying the establishment of states of normative exception (cf. Agamben, 2003; Petti, 2007), hence of exclusion.

2. Fear and urban planning in ordinary cities

Is fear able to shape the lived space of, and does it inform planning practice in, ordinary urban contexts? Against the background of contemporary paradoxes of security (cf. Introduction), critical geographers have unmasked how the discursive development of

feelings of fear is capable of labelling as revitalization or regeneration – hence justifying – gentrification and evictions (see, amongst others, Smith, 1996; Kern, 2010). There is thus a need to explore how discourses of fear and exclusionary policies are tied together within the micro-practices of planning policy-making.

It is necessary to overcome the two limits of Abu-Orf's theory (2013) in order to take steps in this direction. The term ordinary, here, has two sides to it. Firstly, it refers to the study of cities not in situations of conflict – as opposed to Israelo-Palestine or cities such as the Los Angeles described by Davis (1990/2006) – and where the geopolitics of fear are expected not to be predominant. Exploring fear in planning in ordinary cities therefore means understanding how fear can produce spaces marked by exclusion in contexts characterised by (at least formal) spaces for democratic consensus-building.

Secondly, the concept of ordinary cities recalls recent claims for a theory building that would overcome generalizations grounded on the study of few global cities and look at the specificities of cities at the 'borderlands' of urban theory (Robinson, 2011; Baptista, 2013). Amin and Graham argue, against the dominance of 'partial interpretations concentrating on paradigmatic examples' (1997: 417), that urban life should be explored as 'founded on the "multiplexing" of diverse economic, social, cultural and institutional assets' (ibidem: 412).

A theory of fear in planning practice in ordinary cities, grounded on the multiplexing of the conceptual dimensions embedded in the three geographical models for fear, can be drafted around three arguments: spatialization of fear; modernist spatialities and the encounter; political economies of urban fear.

2.1. Space and (geo)politics: spatialization of fear

At the intersection of space and (geo)politics is the way global discourses about security and terror have been influencing urban production in global cities in recent decades, boosting

fortification, privatization, militarization of urban and public spaces (see, amongst others, Davis, 1990/2006; Sorkin, 1992; Graham & Marvin, 2001; Graham, 2010). The paradoxical dimensions of securization of urban space have been explored: ‘security itself may be insatiable, as more demands more’ (Crawford, 2002: 8; cf. Minton, 2009/2012). Tulumello (2015a) explores the spatialization of urban fear in ordinary cities, around a threefold taxonomy: ‘enclosure’, the spaces of exclusion and seclusion; ‘post-public space’, the fortification of public space; ‘barrier’, the role of infrastructural networks in the fragmentation of urban fabrics. In line with Tulumello’s claims for a more contingent theorization of trends of spatialization of fear, the next two arguments explore how planning practice is capable of mediating urban fear.

2.2. Space and otherness: modernist spatialities and the encounter

Acknowledging that the encounter is something between pleasure and fear, and that the urban space may influence such a balance (Epstein, 1998), it is crucial to understand how urban planning is capable of pushing the encounter towards one side or the other. The answers should come from a critical analysis of the spatialities typical of modernist planning, which shapes the majority of contemporary cities’ spatial configurations (cf. Martinotti, 1993).

In the modernist paradigm, the planning of human settlements is an instrument for the State to perfect the society through top-down, scientific plans (Young, 1990; Scandurra & Krumholz, 1999). The planner’s tool-kit mirrors such an approach: land-use zoning pursues the ideal of the city-machine where each part answers to a functional need; the deterministic model mirrors the ‘valiant search to measure, model, tame, and manipulate the city’ (Banerjee & Verma, 2001: 133); based on the idea that the openness of the architectural form would guarantee the opening of the urban form (Pope, 1996: 91), the core spatial convention is the ideally continuous public space theorized by Le Corbusier. Driven by a desire for certainty,

the modernist planner struggles for establishing order through regulations (Allmendinger & Gunder, 2005; Pløger, 2008; Harris, 2011). However, human beings and societies tend not to passively accept being conformed to the enlightened vision of the planner (Aksoy & Robins, 1997; Davy, 2008): the clash between social engineering and the real desires of people often results in the failure of planning intents.

This failure has implications for urban fear. Given the ‘implicit belief that built environments and social interactions can be “made right”, resolved, through “correct” actions’ (Epstein, 1998: 211), the modernist planner avoids reflexivity on the implications for feelings. In an approach that neglects exploring the socio-political construction of it, fear is, at most, a problem to be solved², when not a by-product of spatial conventions: zoning often results in spatial fragmentation and segregation (De Carlo, 1964; Young, 1990); in the quest for the continuous public space, the elimination of activities on the ground floor produces a ‘dead public space’ (Sennett, 1977/2002). Modernist planning, constructing (public) spaces where an encounter with otherness is difficult, has pushed the role of the encounter towards its dark side, contributing to the generation of fear.

2.3. Otherness and (geo)politics: political economies of urban fear

Sandercock (2002) claims the need for research to engage with the political economies of urban fear, that is, to explore the role of fear in the urban realm as a by-product of power relations. This entails an exploration of fear as an instrument (of exclusion) in the contemporary institutional practice of urban planning, restructured by neoliberal trends in urban spaces undergoing major processes of socio-spatial transformation since the 1970s (Martinotti, 1993; Scott, 2011). The connections between global geopolitics of fear and the

² This is the approach of environmental crime prevention, which has been exploring how urban planning may contribute to crime reduction (cf. Kitchen, 2002; Cozens, 2011) – although there exists no big evidence that these approaches actually reduce crime and the fear of it (Day et al., 2007).

local generation of exclusionary fear are entangled in the specificities of neoliberal urban governance. According to Seymour (2014: 7), neoliberalism is ‘an authoritarian reconfiguration of liberalism [...] specifically designed to meet the challenge of mass democracy’. In order to do so, neoliberal governance pursues structures of (perceived) inclusion centred on partnerships and networks, participation and empowerment (Jessop, 2002; Miraftab, 2004; Davoudi and Madanipour 2013).

It is therefore possible to understand how fear – of crime, of ‘otherness’ – can be crucial for consensus-building in a political arena grounded on discursive power relations: fear is powerful, it is able to manipulate social and political discourses (Sandercock, 2002; Shirlow & Pain, 2003). Oppositional categories like ‘we/others’, ‘safe/dangerous’ thus shape neoliberal governmentalities in the local arena too (Hutta, 2009). This suggests that the political economies of fear are capable of building the justification for exclusion, hence pushing planning practice towards its ‘dark side’ (cf. Holston, 2008; Yiftachel, 2009).

These three arguments, taken together, offer a theory of, and framework for the exploration of, the way feelings of fear are capable of shaping, and being shaped by, planning practice in ordinary urban settings. The next sections apply this framework through case-study research: a planning history is told, and then it is re-framed using the three theoretical arguments.

3. Presentation of the case-study and methodology

The case-study is a critical reading of the planning history of Chelas, in Lisbon, an affordable housing district planned and built from scratch across the course of five decades (1960s/2000s). Chelas is located in the Marvila parish, in the western area of Lisbon, and covers around 500 hectares. It is home to around 30,000 inhabitants – out of the total 38,000 living in Marvila parish. Although socio-economic indicators (Table 1) depict this as one of

the most deprived parishes within the metropolitan area, Chelas, is a complex world where poverty and social vulnerability exist alongside spaces of socio-economic vitality (UPC, 2008).

TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE

In line with Flyvbjerg's (2006) insights on how to select a case-study, Chelas (in the context of Lisbon) has been selected as a paradigmatic case, for three reasons.

Firstly, Lisbon is compatible with the dimensions assumed for ordinary urban settings. It is a middle-sized city³ in Southern Europe, a region at the 'borderlands' of urban theory (Baptista, 2013; Tulumello, 2015b), which have experienced with peculiar versions of neoliberal and globalization trends (Malheiros, 2002; Seixas & Albet, 2012): slowness in urban governance innovation, late development of formal planning frames associated with disordered urban patterns, late metropolization and suburbanization. Lisbon is a metropolis in unstable balance between an introverted past marked by centralization and top-down government, and late polarization, gentrification, suburbanization and reurbanization (Oliveira & Pinho, 2010).

Secondly, the paradoxes of urban fear are evident in Lisbon and Chelas. Lisbon shows very low recorded crime and victimisation rates, which make of it one of the most secure metropolises in the world (van Dijk, 2007; Tulumello, 2014). However, relatively high perceptions of insecurity are found, and explained by a general feeling of lack of faith in the future, and the visibility, in public spaces, of criminal or anti-social behaviour not connected with the risk of being victim of crime, such as drug dealing and vandalism (Almeida, 1998; van Dijk, 2007). Similarly, Chelas is a safe area, with victimisation rates and registered crimes significantly lower than municipal averages, as evident from data from early 1990s (Esteves,

³ Lisbon city houses ~550,000 citizens and is the centre of a metropolitan area home to ~3,000,000.

1999), 2002 (Barros & Alves, 2007; Table 2), and 2007 (João, 2009). However, already by the 1990s, Lisboners considered Chelas amongst the most dangerous areas of the city (Esteves, 1999).

TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE

Thirdly, affordable housing and council housing are amongst the favourite targets of commonplaces about crime, fear of difference, stigmatization (see, amongst others, Dikeç, 2007; Garbin & Millington, 2012). At the same time, there exists evidence of higher levels of crime in neighbourhoods with a concentration of affordable housing (Lens, 2013). Thus, exploring the history of a district which almost entirely consists of affordable housing is expected to help in reconsidering pre-existing rhetoric, by looking through the lenses of the framed theory. And, although cases like Chelas are widespread around the globe, some specificities of its history – the construction from scratch, the extremely long and fragmented process – will allow to explore the mutable relations of fear with different paradigms of intervention, political/policy phases and approaches, urban spatialities and architectural typologies.

As far as analytic strategy is concerned, a narrative is framed – a case description in diachronic narration –, and then it is re-considered through the lenses of theoretical assumptions. With the aim to provide evidences for a complex theoretical frame, importance is given to the particular with an approach of ‘thick’ description (cf. Flyvbjerg, 2006). The data collection – carried out between 2011 and 2013 – made use of:

- analysis of documents (plans, projects, municipal deliberations), meetings and

interviews with planners⁴;

- participative observation in several field visits with photographic surveys and informal meetings with residents in Chelas (notes from the meetings in Appendix);
- analysis of news in the newspaper *Correio da Manhã*⁵.

4. The (planning) history of Chelas

In 1959, the Portuguese State launched a 30-year housing programme for 128,000 residents in Lisbon metropolitan area, in response to the growing presence of informal settlements. One of the interventions was located in Chelas, and a masterplan for 55,300 inhabitants (Figure 1) was completed in 1964. Rather than the department of Urban Planning, the municipal office for Housing (Gabinete Técnico de Habitação, GTH) designed the plan, resulting in a technical approach⁶. An infrastructural network, whose central hub hosts a service zone – Zona (zone) O – framed the plan, grounded on modernist conventions: land-use zoning, concentration of high-rise dwellings, separation of vehicular and pedestrian routes – the latter considered the sites for social meeting. A ‘Mediterranean modernism’ (DCH-CML, 1992) for the linear organization of the housing neighbourhoods – Zonas I, J, L, M, N1, N2 – located on the ridges of the hills and surrounded by green areas. Ferreira (1969) highlighted: a population density too sparse for public services and transport to achieve economic sustainability; the difficulty in creating adequate links between Zona O and the residential neighbourhoods; the spatial seclusion due to an oversized road network.

⁴ Chief planner, department Planning and Urban Regeneration; chief planner, division Urban Planning; planner, municipal division Urban Planning; architect, municipal programme “Viver Marvila” for the urban regeneration of Chelas.

⁵ The highest-selling newspaper in Portugal (no local editions of newspapers exist in Lisbon). The 25 articles from 2008 (year characterised by a national campaign about security, cf. Tulumello, 2014), in which the district is mentioned, have been analysed: 8 crime reports, 4 references to Chelas as ‘dangerous’ or ‘degraded’ zone, 7 articles about public works, 6 other articles.

⁶ The GTH itself admitted that the elaboration of urbanization plans was a task outside its competences (GTH-CML, 1965).

FIGURE 1 ABOUT HERE

The first ‘neighbourhood’ of Chelas was the Bairro do Rélogio, a small, precarious settlement made of prefabricated shacks, built in 1966 at the north-western border of the district in order to provide shelter to the populations evicted to allow for the construction of the XXV de Abril bridge. The settlement, which should have been temporary and lacked any services, was demolished in the 1990s only.

Most of the planned dwellings were built between 1970 and 1995. The extended duration of the construction process led to the fragmentation of the plan, evident in the existence of three neighbourhood typologies (Figure 1). In Zonas I (1970s), N1 (1980s) and M (1990s), the linear organization of dwellings creates the pedestrian paths as designed in the masterplan. Zona N2 (late 1970s) was divided into independently designed sections: the pedestrian path disappears in most settlements and the result is a juxtaposition of different designs. The detailed plan for Zona J – built in two phases 1980s-1990s – hybridized a linear organization with orthogonal buildings. The pedestrian path was enclosed and covered, with the aim of creating ‘a “third” intermediate space [...] for the inhabitants to walk through the entire neighbourhood, sheltered by the buildings, in comfortable and safe conditions’ (DP-CML, 1970: 72; my translation).

In 1995, most housing settlements were completed but neither Zona O nor neighbourhood facilities: the district was a discontinuous urbanized area with no harmonic equilibrium between housing, services, and infrastructure (Heitor, 2001). At this stage, a mono-class social fabric characterised Chelas (DCH-CML, 1992), as an (unintended) effect of the democratic revolution of 1974. In the following years, the right to housing was a core struggle of social movements, bringing about squatting movements (Zona I is squatted in 1974) and a change in council housing policy: up until the 1990s, only people evicted from informal settlements – mostly from former Portuguese colonies – were settled. A lack of private investments in the

area was one of the effects of this trend.

Chelas remained spatially secluded even once road infrastructures had been completed in the late 1990s: the road system crosses the area without establishing any relation with neighbourhoods (Figure 2). Ferreira's predictions (1969) about the unsustainability of public transport are confirmed: two underground stations serve Zonas I and O only, whereas the bus network is less dense than in any other part of Lisbon. Pedestrian access is an issue because of natural and infrastructural barriers: along an 8 kilometre perimeter, there exist only a dozen access points to Chelas, along with hundred-meter paths. Pedestrian mobility inside the district is also problematic: the neighbourhoods are separated by long paths, often sloping, along the edges of high-speed roads.

FIGURE 2 ABOUT HERE

The masterplan was revised in 1992 (DCH-CML, 1992). The new plan twisted the original concept⁷: it designed local streets as dual carriageways and monumentalized Zona O as a self-referential entity consisting of a shopping centre and four video-monitored, patrolled, middle-class housing towers (Figure 2). The shopping centre, opened in 2008, strongly affected local retail, most obviously in Zona M where all small shops went bankrupt.

It is in the last two decades that some private investment occurred. In a first phase, housing cooperatives – supported with municipal funds – contributed to the diversification of the statistical socio-economic composition of Chelas (UPC, 2008) but not to a social mix: cooperative dwellings are segregated when not fortified – one is nick-named 'the bunker'. More recently, some real-estate developments have appeared: the aforementioned Zona O, a golf course, two gated communities, a private school.

Since 2008, the municipal division for Urban Planning has been working on the detailed

⁷ 'Bastardized', in the words of the architect from the 'Viver Marvila' programme.

plan for a large hospital site, conceived around the use of large developments for urban regeneration⁸. Whilst the plan report states that the hospital plant should not constitute a barrier, a huge building, completely shut off from its surroundings⁹, won the design competition – managed by the national department for Health, without the municipality’s participation. In 2009, the detailed plan area was expanded, resulting in a third masterplan for Chelas. The plan increases the density with residential developments beside main roads (Zonas N and J), but once again towers and isolated buildings shape the urban design. The plan report refers to the need to ‘humanize’ the infrastructure system, but it maintains the dual carriageways¹⁰.

5. Re-framing the story: fear, its discourses, space, and planning

This section focuses on the paper’s object of study, urban fear, and ties it to Chelas’ planning history. It is necessary to distinguish two perspectives in the generation of fear: the image that the district projects outwards, and the view from inside it.

As for the image projected, Chelas is feared by Lisboners: albeit showing relatively low crime (cf. Section 3), Chelas is considered a dangerous district, its population deeply stigmatized (Esteves, 1999; Heitor, 2001; UPC, 2008). On the contrary, according to the surveys carried out by the Viver Marvila (2010) programme, in the perceptions of its residents, Chelas is a complex reality¹¹. Indicators of satisfaction depict significant differences amongst the neighbourhoods (Table 3). On average, residents evaluate the quality of dwellings and community life as the strongest features, whereas they consider security and

⁸ Preliminary documents are available at www.cm-lisboa.pt/viver/urbanismo/planeamento-urbano/planos-com-termos-de-referencia-aprovados/plano-de-pormenor-do-parque-hospitalar-oriental (Accessed 01 February 2015).

⁹ Some images available at <http://lx-projectos.blogspot.pt/2011/03/hospital-de-todos-os-santos.html> (Accessed 01 February 2015).

¹⁰ A planner, in an interview, confirms the intention to reduce the carriageways, at least in the main north/south axis, even if this is still not explicit in the design.

¹¹ Although the capacity of quantitative surveys to assess absolute levels fear of crime has been debated (Gray et al., 2008), the survey allows comparing the variability of perceptions amongst neighbourhoods

public facilities as main deficiencies – and public space as average. The average satisfaction rate for security is 5.85 out of ten, within the field of ‘neither satisfied, nor unsatisfied’. Zonas I and N2 show results above the average; J, L and M below; N1 as average. According to the qualitative investigation which complements the survey (Viver Marvila, 2010), residents feel that meaningful achievements have been made in the last decade, through reduction of crime and drug dealing.

Against this background, it is possible to explore how the perceptions of, and within, Chelas have implications for urban planning, around the three arguments outlined (cf. Section 2): spatialization of urban fear; otherness and (modernist) urban spatialities; political economies of fear.

TABLE 3 ABOUT HERE

5.1. Space and (geo)politics

According to Tulumello’s taxonomy (2015a; cf. Section 2.1), the spatialization of fear characterise Chelas at multiple scales, around three typologies of entities. ‘Enclosure’: spaces of auto-seclusion (two gated communities, the Zona O, the fortified cooperative dwellings) and hetero-seclusion (the spatially secluded council housing neighbourhoods) coexist. Secondly, ‘post public spaces’: all the recently built public facilities (some schools, a university institute, the public television headquarters) are walled and fortified – all built entities in Chelas, with the exception of council dwellings, are fortified to some extent. Thirdly, ‘barrier’: the multi-scalar seclusion of Chelas is mainly due to the infrastructure network, which fragments the modernist city and secludes the uncomfortable spaces/issues, allowing ‘secessionary’ entities (Graham & Marvin, 2001; cf. Martinotti, 1993: 174-175) to be connected to the rest of the city without being contaminated by the local context – e.g.

brochures and websites of gated communities do not mention Chelas, whereas they highlight carriageways as the way to reach the centre of the city in few minutes¹².

In short, emergent gated enclaves in Chelas are a late replication of global urban trends, entangled in modernist categories: the new entities are located inside the district thanks to the voids left by the ‘Mediterranean’ modernist design. The next two arguments debate how the spatialization of fear is entrenched with urban planning. Special emphasis need to be put on the local generation of fear, inasmuch as the global rhetoric about security is relatively weak in Portugal, being replaced, in political discourse, by struggles for ‘modernization’ (Frois, 2011).

5.2. Space and otherness

Table 4 compares the results of the survey about the satisfaction of residents (Viver Marvila, 2010) with district averages and some further features of neighbourhoods. This allows discerning some correlations between feelings of security and further dimensions. It is evident that better perceptions of security are correlated with better evaluations of further dimensions, confirming that broader societal factors influence urban fear (Dammert & Malone, 2006; MacKenzie et al., 2010). Four further dimensions can be debated: timing; social mix; seclusion/exclusion; modernist spatialities and control of space.

TABLE 4 ABOUT HERE

Firstly, people feel safer in neighbourhoods built in the earliest phases. This suggests that perceptions of security are connected with the (long) time needed for the consolidation of social fabric in urban areas built from scratch.

¹² See www.duedomani.com/localizacao.html (Accessed 01 February 2015).

Secondly, what is the role of social mix? On the one hand, the dimension of ethnic differences appears weakly relevant – this confirms further studies (Pan Ké Shon, 2012). Although the overall presence of non-native Portuguese is low (3,26% of the residents, compared with 5,81% in Lisbon, 2011 census), the neighbourhoods where, during 1980s, most people originating from the former colonies were settled do not show coherent results: in Zona J feelings of security are below averages, whereas in Zona N1 they are average. The absence of ethnic conflict is a characteristic of Lisbon metropolitan area, after all (Malheiros & Mendes, 2007). On the other hand, social mix is relevant to perceptions of security in relation to the changes of housing policy: the neighbourhoods where both cooperative and council housing exists (Zonas J, L, and M) show the lowest feelings of security. This confirms doubts about *mixité* as a panacea against segregation (cf. Arbaci & Malheiros, 2010). Evidences of a lack of integration between council housing residents and cooperative tenants exist: the introversion/fortification of cooperative dwellings; the occasions on which, during the participative surveys, long-term residents were heard complaining about the failure by ‘newcomers’ to participate in neighbourhood life. This also helps to explain why satisfaction with community life is the only dimension not coherent with feelings of security (cf. Table 4), suggesting that the two communities live separate lives in spaces alongside one another.

Thirdly, the coexistence of communities that don’t interact is one dimension of the way social exclusion mirrors spatial seclusion. During the participative observation, I could sense how this particularly affects younger generations. Stigmatization of the district is mirrored by feelings of inadequacy with regards to the ‘outside’ world and a strong mistrust of institutions – during the field trips, complains about institutions were a constant. The relation between socio-spatial seclusion/exclusion and feelings of fear is more evident from their inversion: Zona I, which shows greater satisfaction with security, is the best served by public transport and is felt to be livelier and less spatially secluded (Viver Marvila, 2010: qualitative enquiry).

Forthly, the modernist urban spatialities are amongst the causes of socio-spatial seclusion

and feelings of insecurity, according to Heitor's analysis (2001) about the levels of control on space. Heitor defines control on space as the degree of relevance that a space has in relation to those which are contiguous as a place of transit. From this perspective, two spatial configurations are opposite: the regular grid of enclosed blocks creates a space in which each visible place is a point of transit; within the continuous public space of modernist planning, on the contrary, everything is visible but most spaces are not used for transit. The neighbourhoods analysed by Heitor (I, J, N1, N2) show no clear hierarchy of public spaces and the places where more control is achieved prove to be those least accessible, and therefore chosen by youths and/or for illegal activity. As a result, the visitor does not feel safe on inner pedestrian paths, creating a dichotomy between the spaces lived in by residents and those used by visitors (vehicular streets and their pavements). As far as perceptions of security are concerned, the neighbourhoods where the highest degrees of control are found show very different outputs: in Zona J, a low sense of security is mirrored by the fact that the space with the most control was the 'sheltered' pedestrian path, a perfect location for illegal activities – it was nicknamed 'corredor da morte' (death passage); in Zona I, the high degree of control produced by an open pedestrian path, where several commercial activities exist, is mirrored by higher feelings of security.

Otherness and (geo)politics

Two reasons can explain the perception of Chelas as a 'dangerous' place, even if it is not, in fact, more dangerous than other parts of the city.

Firstly, the image arose in relation to two specific situations delimited in space and time, then spread to the whole district. On the one hand, the presence of drug dealing and prostitution earned to the Bairro do Rélogio, until its demolition, a marginal image and the nickname 'Cambodia'. On the other hand, during the 1980s, Zona J became 'synonymous

with the dangerous and marginal area that all big cities “must” have’ (Alves et al., 2001: 24), because of the presence of drug dealing – beyond the presence of the perfect environment for illegal activities (the ‘corredor da morte’, see above), the reason should be found in the settlement of socio-economically weak populations from former colonies.

Secondly, Chelas is stigmatized by media discourses. Malheiros and Mendes (2007) depict, in Lisbon metropolitan area, an overrepresentation of crimes committed in, and by residents of, ‘problematic’ neighbourhoods. Accordingly, during the 1990s Chelas is within the districts most referenced in news on crime (Esteves, 1999). This is confirmed by the analysis of the *Correio da Manhã*’s production in recent times: most articles about Chelas refer to crime facts or mention the district as dangerous and criminogenic in pieces about crimes committed in other places.

In summary, Chelas is feared because the discourse about the district confuses dangerousness with ‘marginality’: socio-economic deprivation, a presence of visible illegal activities (in the past and in some places), images of poverty and of a place where criminals inhabit (Esteves, 1999: 144) – the latter confirmed by the high number of detentions (Table 2).

The stigmatization of Chelas, and fears surrounding that, influenced urban policy and planning recently, with paradoxical outputs. During the 1990s, the municipal government, taking the neighbourhood’s technical names (Zonas I, J, L, M, N1, N2) as the source of its stigma, decided to replace them with the names of former agricultural estates, as a way of contributing to identity building. However, the new names have not replaced the former ones in popular usage so far, resulting in a two-tier toponymical regime: the older technical names popularized by use, the new, ‘attractive’ ones mentioned in official documents only. A second case concerns Zona J: in the early 2000s, the architect Taveira, designer of the neighbourhood, suggested painting the housing blocks with intense colours in order to build self-identification and social control. The result was just a new nickname for Zona J: ‘United Colours of Benetton’. Finally, the planners interviewed referred that, in the procedures for two recent

detailed plans, debates about how planning could contribute to social demands for security were held, but no actual measures taken (Tulumello, 2014).

Conclusions

The paper has built on Abu-Orf's insights into fear in violent settings (2013) to complement these with a theory for planning practice in ordinary urban contexts, outlining a framework around three arguments: spatialization of fear; modernist spatialities and the encounter; political economies of urban fear. These three arguments have then been used for exploring fear, and its embeddedness in planning practice, in the history of an affordable housing district of Lisbon, Chelas.

The history of Chelas is, to some extent, a well-known one, made of three phases, the phases of investment, disinvestment, and re-investment typical of capitalist urban accumulation (Beauregard, 2005). Firstly, modernist urban planning: fragmentation of the urban fabric into mono-functional parts; a design that seeks to establish the 'proper' conditions for social relationships; separation from surroundings. Secondly, failure of the planning intentions: the oversized operation lasts decades and a prioritisation of answering housing needs – rather than of providing urban quality – delays the late implementation of public services; the district is spatially secluded at several levels; poor economic development and rhetoric discourses about marginality and danger contribute towards the social exclusion of Chelas. Thirdly, neoliberal, global trends in planning and urban production.

However, the history has its contingent specificities, which are especially relevant in the generation of urban fear and its spatialization. Fear, in Chelas, is the result of the multiplexing of several dimensions. The fear that Chelas project is interlinked with media discourses, which depict the population of an entire district based on some specific instances. Fear inside Chelas is connected to several dimensions: the temporal one, together with different phases of

policy/politics; issues of social cohesion; modernist urban spatialities, that is, an urban design that denies the enclosed block/street pairing, together with the hierarchization of unbuilt spaces, functional mix, and proximity relations between the spaces for residents and visitors it is able to create.

The theory framed was thus useful in ‘unmasking’ (Abu-Orf, 2013) urban fears. It confirmed that fear can produce spaces marked by exclusion in ordinary cities, in the triangulation of (global) discourses about security, (modernist) urban spatialities, and (neoliberal) political economies of fear. At the same time, the empirical exploration confirmed Tulumello’s claims (2015a) for adjoining a global (hegemonic) and a local (discursive/contingent) perspective in the theorization of urban fear, insofar as paradoxes of fear emerge even in contexts where global discourses are less powerful. Evidences were given that urban fear is a complex issue without easy or technical solutions – and urban fear can be an unintended effect of the more well-meaning intentions, for instance when a social cohesion and integration are pursued via a simple change in housing policy. Finally, whether the production of fear, and of its paradoxes, is an effect of planning conventions or of discursive relations, the case suggested that it must be addressed for its capacity to provoke a crisis in urban policy – as evident in the attempts to mitigate fear through toponymy or coloured façades.

In conclusion, the theory framed and the case explored show how a critical approach should inform planning practice and research as a way to understand urban fear. At the same time, evidences suggest that urban planning is an appropriate arena for engaging with fear in ordinary urban settings: it is time for the planners that yearn to create a just and cohesive city to put fear, and its paradoxes, right to the heart of their agenda.

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Appendix. Notes from the informal meetings with people resident in Chelas

<p><i>Zona J</i> <i>Elderly woman</i></p>	<p>The woman lives right in front of a recently built, fortified dwelling – it is not a gated community, I will find out later, but a cooperative dwelling. While I am taking some photos of the building, she approaches saying ‘this is the bunker!’. She complains that the building is fortified, that the newcomers do not take part in neighbourhood’s social activities, and the fact that, under their request, the garbage cans were moved to the other side of the street, next to her dwelling. I ask if she feels safe in the neighbourhood. She answers affirmatively, despite of some crime events like an attempted robbery to a neighbour of her. However, she says she is considering buying a pepper spray. She refers to the care of public spaces by long-term residents: she and some neighbours take care of the flowerbeds in the courtyard of their building. She complains that youths are less respectful of public spaces and throw garbage on the flowerbeds.</p>
<p><i>Zona J</i> <i>A group of male adults and young adults</i></p>	<p>Grouped at the margin of the roadway, a couple of them are extracting metal components from electronic wastes, one is making a barbeque. One of them (probably original from a Lusophone African country) comes out of the group and asks me what I am doing. After having explained I am a researcher, he tells he has been living in the Zona J during 14 years. A Portuguese men from the group says: ‘why don’t you go back to your country and stop robbing us [referring to unemployment subsidies]?’ The Lusophone African answers: ‘it’s your guilt! You came and screwed my land!’ and, speaking to me, ‘I was used to work, I have built several dwellings, here in Portugal, in the Expo, in Campo Pequeno square. When I was working, the pneumatic drill was never standing!’. The Portuguese men insists, but they are not talking seriously, they are making fun of the former builder and of another guy (original from a Lusophone African country as well). They all agree on the physical decay of their neighbourhood, the need for the rehabilitation of the dwellings.</p>
<p><i>Zona N1</i> <i>A group youths</i></p>	<p>The youths are chatting and relaxing at the margins of one of the pedestrian paths enclosed between the belts of dwellings. While I am taking some photos, one of them asks me what I am doing. Once I have answered, he replies that I should figure out how to make their neighbourhood better. In the meanwhile, he and some other guys get up and approach me. The guy who first talked to me (he looks like the leader of the group) makes further questions, he wants to be sure I am not working for the municipality. I feel uncomfortable, like I had entered a space I am not desired into: thus I go away, refraining from taking more photos.</p>
<p><i>Zona N1,</i> <i>DueDomani gated community</i> <i>An elderly couple</i></p>	<p>The couple come out from the community and look askance at me. I approach and explain I am a researcher. She keeps gazing me as a danger, he says they are in a rush. They come out of the fence and she asks him ‘aren’t you going to lock the gate?’. He answers he is not (the fence is less than 1 meter tall, it is simply a not trespassing sign, because the security is ensured by video-surveillance and 24/7 patrolling) and they walk away.</p>
<p><i>Zona M</i> <i>Two women</i></p>	<p>The women are sitting on a bench in the pedestrian zone between dwellings. I am taking photos and they ask me why. Once I have answered, they ask me to report the decay of public spaces, especially the flooring. They say that nobody takes care of public spaces since the shops have closed (the ground floor of dwellings is pinpointed off closed shops, a butcher, a fish shop, a fruit shop, a bar). They affirm they went bankrupt after the shopping mall in Zona O had been opened. I ask them why people of the neighbourhood stopped buying from local shops: ‘in the hypermarket you can find everything in the same place’, they say. I ask whether the retailers had tried to associate to face the crisis but the answer is negative. One of the retailers had asked the municipal company owner of the commercial spaces to lower rents (around 400 euros per month, 80% of Portuguese minimum wage), but was unsuccessful. They complain how hard is to go shopping to the mall in Zona O, walking back home for hundred meters in slope, carrying shopping bags.</p>
<p><i>Zona I</i> <i>A bartender and her daughter</i></p>	<p>I am in the bar for a coffee. The bartender is talking with an acquaintance of her, complaining about the municipality and ‘the architects’. I laugh, she asks me whether I am an architect. I answer I am, and that I am studying about Chelas. The daughter intervenes with a disparaging comment about the district. The mother becomes animated: she says she prefers living here, where people have social relationships, rather than in Arrentela (a district of Seixal, a city in the southern part of Lisbon metropolitan area), a ‘dormitory town’ (in her words). There, she says, ‘if you feel sick in the street, they would let you die’. In Chelas, on the contrary, people know each other, she says. They speak ill of the Zona J, terming it ‘Benetton’, making fun of the architect who suggested painting the dwellings in intense colours.</p>

Table 1. Main socio-economic indicators, Portugal, Lisbon, Marvila parish (source: National Institute for Statistic censuses).

	2001			2011		
	Portugal	Lisbon	Marvila	Portugal	Lisbon	Marvila
<i>Unemployment rate</i>	6.7%	7.3%	10.1%	13.18%	11.84%	16.77%
<i>Ageing index*</i>	102.2	203.3	88.8	128.6	187.3	136.9
<i>Illiteracy rate</i>	9.03%	6.01%	10.17%	5.23%	3.23%	6.89%
<i>School drop-out rate</i>	2.79%	2.22%	3.36%	1.58%	1.71%	2.00%

* Elderly persons (aged 65 and over) each 100 young persons (from 0 to 14).

Table 2. Crimes in Chelas police precincts in 2002 (source: Barros and Alves, 2007: 327).

<i>Precinct</i>	<i>Robberies/Population</i>	<i>Assaults/Population</i>	<i>Detainees/Numbers of Police Members in the Precinct</i>
14 th (Zona I)	0.002	0.015	1.431
16 th (Zonas J, L, M)	0.002	0.018	3.700
38 th (Zonas N1, N2)	0.002	0.038	3.316
Lisbon	0.007	0.036	1.936

Table 3. Indicators of satisfaction (1-4: not satisfied; 5-6: neither satisfied nor unsatisfied; 7-10: satisfied) (source: Viver Marvila, 2010).

	<i>I</i>	<i>J*</i>	<i>L*</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>NI</i>	<i>N2</i>	<i>Chelas</i>
<i>Satisfaction about security</i>	6.43	5.12	5.12	5.40	5.80	6.45	5.85
<i>Satisfaction about dwellings</i>	6.55	6.45	6.45	6.50	5.94	6.54	6.44
<i>Satisfaction about public space</i>	5.93	5.66	5.66	6.40	5.86	6.82	6.13
<i>Satisfaction with community</i>	6.33	6.54	6.54	6.97	5.84	6.75	6.46
<i>Satisfaction with public facilities</i>	5.20	4.30	4.30	5.11	5.58	5.28	5.08
<i>General satisfaction with neighbourhood</i>	7.26	6.65	6.65	6.78	6.49	7.18	6.88

* The survey considered Zonas J and L together following the most recent toponymy (Bairro do Condado).

Table 4. Indicators of satisfaction compared with district averages and further neighbourhoods' features (elaboration of the author).

	<i>I</i>	<i>J</i>	<i>L</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>NI</i>	<i>N2</i>
<i>Construction</i>	70s	80s-90s	00s	90s	80s	Late 70s
<i>Housing ownership</i>	Council	Council + Coop	Council + Coop	Council + Coop	Council	Council
<i>Satisfaction with security*</i>	1.10	0.88	0.88	0.92	0.99	1.10
<i>Satisfaction with dwellings*</i>	1.02	1.00	1.00	1.01	0.92	1.02
<i>Satisfaction with public space*</i>	0.97	0.92	0.92	1.04	0.96	1.11
<i>Satisfaction with community*</i>	0.98	1.01	1.01	1.08	0.90	1.04
<i>Satisfaction with public facilities*</i>	1.02	0.85	0.85	1.01	1.10	1.04
<i>General satisfaction with neighbourhood*</i>	1.06	0.97	0.97	0.99	0.94	1.04
<i>Control on space**</i>	+	+	N.A.	N.A.	-	-

* Ratio to district average. Elaborated from Viver Marvila, 2010 (cf. Table 3).

** Elaborated from Heitor, 2001. See main text for definition of 'control of space'. Zonas L and M had not been constructed at the time of the analysis.

Image captions

1. Chelas, the masterplan and the reality (sources: plan; Google Earth).
2. Chelas, the north-south road axis and the Zona O (photo: author).