Chaudhuri (2017, p. 156) uses placemaking to examine social processes through which various events, individual attachments and experiences are integrated into a physical space to create a shared sense of identity for the living space. Thomas (2016) says that networked urban areas are not new. Instead, they reveal contemporary planning practices in cities that rely on unique and concerted placemaking activities, social interactions and digital technologies to create public and plural places (Foth 2017a, 2017b; Friedmann, 2010; Houghton et al., 2015).

The anthropological framings imagine places far less as a material or physical form, but rather as an intangible and heterogeneous cultural landscape that forms a historical cultural contingent with a shared approach and view (Gieryn, 2000). In this line of thought, placemaking can address many of the critical dynamics in current urban thinking and can be defined as “how diverse, and disparate practices, meanings and ideologies are used to create a collective identity for a place” (Murphy et al., 2019; Sen & Nagendra, 2019).

Sometimes placemaking is about making new acquaintances in public places, perhaps to be considered safe for older people and children, or vibrant and engaging social spaces with children playing and visitors engaging in various activities, eventually ideal places to combat loneliness, and places without economic or social barriers, etc. Social bonding and emplacement lead to community management approaches where groups ensure the appropriateness of spaces through inclusivity.

The ongoing transformation of collaborative making poses new challenges to the frameworks within which urban planning in general and placemaking in particular operate. The processes of placemaking, amid increasing digitalization, serve to develop urban strategies and to activate communities in pre-planning contexts (Sandercock & Cavers, 2009). The targeted engagement of communities is a common strategy to negotiate a change in the built environment, and now exponentially, through the use of technology (Giaccardi, 2012).

Metzger (2014) refers to the need to engage communities to understand cultural complexities in contemporary planning contexts. This is based on the assertion that placemaking informs other kinds of knowledge, perhaps more
subjective and communal, that constitute place (Rogers & Anastasiadou, 2011). In this regard, there is an emerging literature on placemaking for locals and visitors that has begun to analyse this phenomenon (Bailey, 2010). But there is still little understanding of the role of placemaking in creating sites of interest to tourists where interests may clash when dealing with community habitation objectives.

1 Placemaking and Planning

Placemaking and collaborative planning provide a more democratic way of decision-making, establishing the partnership between citizens, community and local government and building mutual respect between them. According to Innes and Booher’s (2004) theory of collaborative rationality, the preconditions for the successful process of collaborative planning are diversity, interdependence and authentic dialogue (DIAD). In other words, the participants should represent the full diversity of interests, follow interests that could not be achieved independently and should be engaged in true dialogue (Innes & Booher, 2004).

The design process in which citizens are active participants and co-creators is not straightforward, but more cycled. It requires ongoing two-way communication between all stakeholders, including members of local government (Innes & Booher, 2004). It is usually a more successful process when bottom-up and up-to-bottom approaches are overlapping. Involvement of citizens in placemaking gives them the sense of ownership and responsibility towards their community, thus improving the overall quality of life (Eden & Ackermann, 1996; Lipietz, 2008). Involvement of different stakeholders and citizens from vulnerable groups in the planning process can take various forms. They can be traditional or more innovative, direct or indirect (through various NGOs and other organizations), encouraged “from below” or “from above”, or formal or informal (Cvetinovic & Bolay, 2017). Stakeholders participate in all phases of urban design and planning, and before the completion the key stages of joint solutions are re-examined through additional interaction (iterative process).

The incorporation of information and communications technology (ICT) in the collaborative planning process provides fruitful coordination between local government, professionals and citizens, resulting in a higher degree of collaboration (Henman, 2010). Essentially, the digitalization is intended to create more efficient service for the government and at the same time easier encounters for citizens and stakeholders (Lindgren et al., 2019). Although some public e-services are designed to be similar with analogue or “traditional” services, the
number of digital tools that are different from traditional or known ones for collaborative planning and participation is increasing (including augmented reality, virtual reality and applications). They help non-professional stakeholders to have a better visualization of the urban design or urban plan.

2 Overview of Chapters

The chapters in this section share a broad category related to collaborative processes for placemaking. Among the processes, social inclusiveness in placemaking has become one of the most favoured topics for urban planning and design practices across the globe, reversing the bureaucratic and standardized “top-down” approach. The process of collaborative placemaking involves the citizens in the co-creation processes of various fields in a proactive way, be it in planning, designing, maintenance, regeneration or even representing the places in which they live. However, the extent to which citizen initiatives and involvement are possible depends on improvement of the policies and methodology.

All chapters are concerned with social inclusiveness, equity or vulnerability to ensure stakeholder ownership of processes and settings. These social interactions are analysed from novel empirical data that call for the increased uptake of early-stage stakeholders. In addition, some chapters argue that the use of dialogical exchanges or the analysis of historical events helps settle an image of sites. Accordingly, these forms of intangible heritage, understood as the social values behind sites, is particularly relevant when dealing with youth and the places they construct.

Chapter 9, “Using Dialogical Exchanges and Social Interactions to Evaluate and Improve Placemaking Practices”, by Conor Horan, Bahanur Nasya, Clara Julia Reich and Roland Krebs addresses the density of communication among multiple stakeholders and focuses on three types of dialogical exchange: social interaction between people; interactions between people and objects; and interactions between people and ideas/abstractions. The authors discuss the possibility of improving communications between stakeholders by analysing three case studies: placemaking with high school students in Oslo, Norway; urban regeneration in Vienna, Austria; and a co-operatively led urban regeneration project addressing expanded gentrification in Lisbon, Portugal. They argue that placemaking activities can be improved by taking a more systematic approach to the various types of dialogical exchanges between stakeholders and that increased engagement, inclusion and belonging is strongly linked to improved sustainability.
Chapter 10, “Mega-events and Placemaking: Place Image Construction between Reality and Imagination”, by Erna Husukić, Emina Zejnilović, Dimelli Despina, Ayse Erek and Nika Đuho is concerned with mega-events as complex and transformative activities that vastly impact the significance of sites. The chapter addresses the 1984 Winter Olympics in Sarajevo, the Summer Olympics of Athens between 1896 and 2004 and other sport and music celebrations in Istanbul and Dubrovnik. In particular, this chapter focuses on narrative discourses used to ground identity-construction processes. The authors argue that events have served citizens to recognize modernization and actualization, but they are also inherent in political debates about appropriateness, reuse and memory. Through mega-events, the placemaking analysis has unfolded how realities change according to narratives, branding and identity. Therefore, according to the authors, the aftermath of a mega-event impacting citizens’ perception depends on responsible urban development.

Chapter 11, “Guideline Principles to Accomplish Social Inclusiveness in Placemaking”, by Marluci Menezes, Preben Hansen and Aleksandra Djukic aims to gain knowledge about procedures and methodologies in placemaking. The authors consider that placemaking is a collaborative process, which could have a negative impact on social inclusiveness depending on the approach. The authors bring in case studies from the Old Ghettos, New Centrality Project on the Alagoas neighbourhood in Peso da Régua, Portugal, and the Detelinara Urban Pockets project on Novi Sad in Serbia. The two approaches address the importance of creating action logics: description, explanation, prediction. According to the authors, there is no single, best method, bottom-up or top-down. What emerges from these case studies is a paradoxical finding: on the one hand, the critical role of government in getting local initiatives underway and, on the other hand, the encouragement for multidimensional diagnoses and flexible procedures.

Chapter 12, “Improving the Impact of Placemaking Practices: An Engaged Scholarship Approach”, by Bahanaur Nasya, Conor Horan, Anna Louise Bradley and Laura Martinez-Izquierdo addresses the importance of the early inclusion of stakeholders as long-term partners and dialectically managing conflict and tension (a strategy of arbitrage) as key aspects of successful placemaking. They conducted comparative analyses of four case studies: PlaceCity in Oslo and Vienna (placemaking tools were used to achieve urban regeneration and improvement), Stará tržnica (Old Market Hall) in Bratislava (renovation of a vacant heritage market), and Club Rhijnhuizen in the Netherlands (utilizing placemaking in a strategic way to revitalize a vacant neighbourhood). The authors argue that long-term meaningful engagement of stakeholders and
value creation can bring better results in placemaking than short-term participatory consultations.

Chapter 13, “Young People and Placemaking: The Provision of Public Spaces for and by Youth”, by Carlos Smaniotto Costa, Marluci Menezes, Tatiana Ruchinskaya, Monica Bocci, Matej Nikšič, Nina Goršič and Mastoureh Fathi explores the potential involvement of young people in placemaking. As a vulnerable group, they could play a more active role in the process, considering the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. The authors discuss possible ways of encouraging young people to play a role in placemaking, but also their involvement and empowerment in planning and decision-making processes. Case studies from Cork, Lisbon, Ljubljana, Stockholm and Volos describe the possible solutions for changing the urban environment into a more inclusive and responsive environment for young people using placemaking as a tool.

Chapter 14, “How People Change Public Parks by Using: Notes on Before and After the Covid-19 Outbreak”, by Kinga Kimic, Carlos Smaniotto Costa, Monica Bocci, and Nagayamma Tavares Aragão highlights the relevance of parks in the green infrastructure of cities. Through observation, media sources, government communications and ethnographic analysis, researchers analysed the socio-spatial practices of citizens in parks. The authors state that pre- and post-pandemic periods have revealed inequalities never seen before in cities. The parks under assessment are Pole Mokotowskie in Warsaw, Poland; Quinta das Conchas in Lisbon, Portugal; and Parco della Pace in Senigallia, Italy. Despite vulnerabilities, the three parks continue to provide essential services to their users, particularly in stressful times when recreation opportunities are limited.

Chapter 15, “The Perception of Personal Security in Urban Parks: A Comparative Analysis of Research Methods”, by Miloslav Šerý, Lucia Brisudová, David Buil-Gil, Kinga Kimic, Paulina Polko and Reka Solymosi deals with methods dedicated to the perceptions of security and the environmental factors associated with it. The case studies discussed are from the Czech Republic, Poland and the United Kingdom. Participatory methods based on residents’ knowledge, primary data gathering, and digitization are used in all the case studies and as such they offer practical tools for placemaking. As the authors reveal, the exploration of these methods brings new insights into the relationship between knowledge production and placemaking processes.

Chapter 16, “Digitalizing Trauma: Virtual Re/Presentations in Central Europe”, by Juli Székely, Nevena Dakovič and Tim Mavrič explores the importance of complexity behind memory narratives attached to places while planning their future transformations. The authors state that the layers of meaning
created by different collectivities are active features that shape the relationship between a community and the space it inhabits, a relationship that must be thoroughly explored to enhance the living environment. In this chapter, digital tools served curation and moderation, quality of archiving information, level of interactivity and size and structure of target groups.

Each chapter in Section 2: Collaborative Processes for Placemaking offers new insights for placemaking and relates to multiple European cities and citizens assessing and experiencing urban public spaces. All chapters, one way or another, address the relevance of digitization and new technologies in the assessment of and knowledge production about urban public spaces. Chapter 9 refers to dialogical exchanges as a method to improve placemaking practices and contribute to knowledge production. To do so, authors discuss the density of communications and how cases address them. Chapter 10 uses a review of narratives as a form of legacy from multiple stakeholders. This approach intends to address social and cultural values to create responsible plans that are attuned with forms of integration and appropriation. Chapter 11 emphasizes ways to include people in placemaking processes and does it through a wide range of methods that include surveys, discussions, expositions and competitions. Chapter 12, working within an engaged scholarship approach, argues that the theory-practice divide is narrowed not only by knowledge transfer alone but by meaningful engagement. Mapping, observations and multiple stakeholder chats are at the centre of these practices. Chapter 13 does it by reviewing data and information through a review of the literature and then by experimenting with technology through education modules, focus groups, living labs, field visits and interviews grounded each case method. Chapter 14 uses media to inform behavioural changes of stakeholders using outdoor public facilities during the period of the Covid-19 pandemic. Chapter 15 gathers participation data digitally to collect urban residents’ knowledge about their living environment. And, finally, Chapter 16 proposes tailor-made applications and platforms as the best medium for knowledge-making in the field of collective traumas.

In all, the chapters of Section 2 largely contribute to exposing methods for approaching a more democratic placemaking in the urban realm.

References


Foth, M. (2017a). Lessons from urban guerrilla placemaking for smart city commons. In M. Rohde et al. (Eds.), *Proceedings of the 8th International Conference on Communities and Technologies* (pp. 32–35). Association for Computing Machinery.


