

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

“MADRID, NUEVO NORTE”, A PROJECT AGAINST COVID-19: TOURISM AS AN OPPORTUNITY

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The urban history that has given way to the so-called “Madrid, Nuevo Norte” begins at the end of the last century when around the nineties, a comprehensive remodeling that completely transforms its appearance is being studied for the Madrid Chamartín station and its surroundings. Finally, this approach did not achieve, for various reasons, that it had sufficient institutional recognition for an urban plan to be carried out to resolve the situation in which there was some land that occupied about three million square meters, and on soils that comprised the so-called “Specific Planning Area (APE 08.03), Castellana Extension”; and whose operation to be more exact would be commonly known as “Operación Chamartín”; which later would be renamed with the name that currently remains of “Madrid, Nuevo Norte”. Throughout this study we approach As we can see in the variables that make up the Methodology developed and applied, the residual spaces that are part of the Lost spaces (formless and useless antispaces) predominate in this geographic space. It is a no-man’s-land along the edges of the highways, whose conservation nobody cares about, and which nobody uses. Starting point for further research in which the reference should be the tourist activities that will be generated in what we could call the post-Covid-19 stage.

Before the arrival of the summer of 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic, in countries like Spain, had caused a mortality that exceeded, in official figures, twenty-seven thousand deaths; In the run-up to autumn, that figure exceeds thirty-two thousand deaths (in Madrid, more than nine thousand deaths), with a total of eight hundred thousand cases of coronavirus diagnosed. After several months of confinement, the consequences on the economy in general, and on the tourism sector in particular, are catastrophic. Already in the month of March, the arrival of foreign tourists to Spain fell by sixty-five percent, approaching only one and a half million foreign tourists who arrived in our country, in the first quarter of

the year (INE), generating real havoc in the Community of Madrid, breaking a historical series that supposed a true record of arrivals of foreign tourists to the region, for five years. Reversing this trend is currently a real challenge with local and regional consequences. From this perspective, looking to the future brings us closer to a reality that goes through various urban projects, among which the so-called “Madrid Nuevo Norte” presents a diachronic reality that takes on new approaches by combining the consequences of Covid-19, reality urban planning and tourist activities, in Madrid, and in Spain.

In Madrid, as in the rest of the Spanish cities, urban growth is shaped by the location of the houses; These not only constitute, as residential land, the main component of land occupation in the urban growth process, but their preponderant role is reinforced by the prominence acquired in recent decades, by massive construction, and their role in the own city growth (in fact, the real estate sector has gained an importance qualifying as exceptional, in its economic system of “late” development, together with the accelerated urban growth that has occurred in cities such as Madrid). All this accompanied by the problems inherent to the need for housing in a model of economic growth that caused and generates a very important and growing demographic concentration in cities like Madrid.

The triad of urban growth-housing policies-transformation of the real estate sector play a leading role in the process described, in direct relation to the idea that the relative profitability of this sector is based on components not always linked to the production of the product (that is to say, starting from the financial conditions, they are based, above all on the possibilities of the incomes that come from the “ground”). In consideration of this action by the public powers (in conjunction also with the action and projection of the private initiative), we find ourselves at the moment, with the so-called “Madrid, Nuevo Norte”. This project is framed within the examples of those economic, social, political and cultural relationships mentioned above, which assume that at the present time (an issue that has been forged for a few years), one of the largest urban development operations in the world is underway (take an example of urban initiatives such as the Hudson Yards neighborhood in New York City, the business complex developed in the City of London known as Canary Wharf, the significant public square and traffic intersection in the city center of Berlin known as the Postdamer Platz in Berlin, or the business district located in the western part of the French city of Paris known as La Defense). Urban development that of the “Madrid, Nuevo Norte”, which arises from the intention of making visible the effort of the city of Madrid to build, erect and later develop an urban space that is adapted and molded to the demands of citizenship, of living in a competitive, modern and contemporary city (despite the fact that this, how could it be otherwise, brings with it a large number of impacts on the city of Madrid, and generates processes inherent to speculative property).

This will be developed within the framework of what has traditionally come to be called “Operación Chamartín”, in geographic spaces in transformation, with very important changes in functions, after the re-qualification of the land (this approach to growth based on the supply that is generated after urban planning will put the search for demand location factors in crisis, with exogenous variables that condition housing supply playing a preponderant role, in such a way that the project in question considers all of this to be resolved, since it marks how many are going to be built, where, how and what the resulting spaces will be -including the members of the future Third Space. The increasingly

possible materialization of the so-called “Madrid, Nuevo Norte”, with its final approval by the Governing Council of the Community of Madrid on May 25, 2020, will mean the tangible start-up of an “urban regeneration project” that, without a doubt, would transform the city that is the capital of Spain, completely reforming the urban space of that area of the Madrid city. Specifically, the size of this Madrid Nuevo Norte would be glimpsed by the magnitude of a building that would occupy an area of 2.66 million m², distributed in its uses about 1.05 million m² for residential use and another 1.61 million m² for non-residential use, the latter being (and despite not being fully specified) proposed for offices that would be integrated within the so-called “Chamartín Business Center”, and what hypothetically would mean a significantly relevant increase in supply, coincidentally in places with the highest demand for this type of space.

The urban history that has given way to the so-called “Madrid, Nuevo Norte” begins at the end of the last century when, around the nineties, an exhaustive remodeling that completely transforms the city was studied for the Madrid Chamartín station and its surroundings physiognomy of it. Finally, this approach did not achieve, for various reasons, that it had sufficient institutional recognition for an urban plan to be carried out to resolve the situation in which there was some land that occupied about three million square meters, and in some soils that included what was known as the “Specific Planning Area, APE 08.03 Prolongación de la Castellana”; and whose operation to be more exact would be commonly known as “Operación Chamartín”; which would later be renamed with the name that currently remains of “Madrid, Nuevo Norte”, which would mean not so much a change of name but rather a rethinking in the direction for the different planning proposals of this northern area of the city. city of Madrid, which had been previously suggested.

As we can see in the integral variables of the aforementioned Methodology, the residual spaces that are part of the Lost spaces (the antispaces without form and without use), predominate in this geographical space. It is a no-man’s-land along the edges of the highways, whose conservation nobody cares about, and which nobody uses. They are also the abandoned coastal fronts, the railroad beaches, the abandoned military compounds, the industrial complexes that have been moved to the suburbs to have better access and lower taxes. They are vacant land in urban centers, resulting from demolitions that, for various reasons, were never rebuilt. They are the residual areas between districts and the spontaneous commercial strips that emerge without anyone noticing. The lost spaces are also the dilapidated parks and marginal public housing projects that have to be rebuilt because they do not serve their purposes. From this perspective, the development and application, and the methodology developed will contribute to the study and knowledge of the possible consequences emanating from the intervention in the territory, and the treatment of the so-called “third landscape” (the landscape value of the territory in the field of sustainability).

The application of the methodology outlined in this research highlights the need to act in a territory in which the reality generated by a diachronic in which the processes triggered by the actions carried out on the territory, mark the life of a space, in many cases degraded, and in which the third landscape is made up of residual spaces, the recovery of which, in addition to requiring “political” decisions, may find in “post-covid” tourist activities a situation that at the present time we cannot and should not stop studying. In fact, as mere constituent elements of progress and economic growth, the road infrastruc-

tures that structure the territory of Madrid are erected, and connect it with the rest of the Spanish territory. Mere “waste” from the set of economic activities, the railway network and its overhead lines, are complemented by advertising posters that sow vacant spaces, full of residual vegetation, which become a step in the expansion of a large city.

As a result of the expansion processes of the city of Madrid, divergent spaces emerge in which old primitive buildings, one floor, are devoured by higher buildings that crowd one another, leaving empty spaces waiting for urban profit. Places whose aesthetics account for the lack of proportionality given the heterogeneity of the territory and mark new hierarchies of power that emanate from the urban planning itself.

In fact, the process of valuation of the circulating real estate capital, is shown in the present investigation, requires the control of an external condition to it: the buildable land. We must not forget that in each valuation cycle we must start by “freeing up” soil. The ownership of the same in the external areas, and even in some internal ones, of the city, destined to be occupied by urban growth, presents at the beginning of the process, in an intense way, a patrimonial character (this means that the property transfers, possibly, up to that moment were based on inheritances or on rustic land purchase-sale operations; that is, the traffic of the property was not conditioned, yet, by the expectations created by the future urban use). This reality will be completely transformed by the incidence, still uncertain, of the pandemic generated worldwide by Covid-19.