Moving beyond conflict in planning: 
Towards a critical consensus politics?

RMIT Centre for Urban Research Critical Urban Governance Program
AESOP Association of European Schools of Planning
Moving beyond conflict in planning: Towards a critical consensus politics?

Planning decisions are often the artefact of locally situated political struggles to attract, resist or prepare for the impact of change (Gualini et al., 2015; Gualini, 2015).

These decision processes shape the physical city, but can unsettle normative framings of citizenship and belonging, values and ethics, and also expose a democratic paradox of planning praxis. Dominant economic growth imperatives and urban austerity strategies combined with global challenges related to climate change and urbanisation serve to intensify the political in planning. Yet, there is a concern that city planning has transitioned into what has been described as a postpolitical urban condition tempering episodes of conflict and undermining critical discourse (Metzger et al., 2015; Legacy, 2015; Blühdorn, 2013; Bylund, 2012; Oosterlynck and Swyngedouw, 2010).

Critics argue that by managing conflict out of planning and prioritising consensus-generating processes, the political is suppressed preventing citizens from questioning and challenging planning orthodoxy. The processes that do remain may offer opportunities for limited citizen engagement however still placing considerable demands on citizens as political subjects (Inch, 2014).

Conflict that does mount is displaced elsewhere positioning conflict and consensus into a dichotomous relationship (Bylund, 2012; Purcell, 2013). This binary, while useful as an analytical tool, is highly problematic and overly simplistic as a normative framing, removing the conflict/consensus nexus from nuanced analysis and critical engagement (Bond, 2010).

This symposium, co-hosted by the AESOP Planning/Conflict Thematic Group and the Critical Urban Governance program at the Centre for Urban Research, RMIT University, Melbourne, will bring together early, mid and late career planning academics to interrogate, reimagine and critically engage with the idea that planning is political.

The aim of the symposium will be to develop a more nuanced understanding of how planning processes interact with moments of conflict and consensus and the spaces ‘in between’.

In particular, the symposium will invite papers that offer responses to the following questions:

- How can planning/urban theory relate a more nuanced analytical understanding of conflict dynamics in planning processes?
- In what ways can we move beyond treating ‘consensus’ or ‘conflict’ as transcendent ideals and instead work towards engendering a more immanent evaluation of always situated conflict dynamics?
- What pathways of transformation may emerge from the dialectics of conflict/consensus in terms of either innovative social practices or new policing and disciplining orders?
- How are ideas about conflict/consensus (e.g. from agonistic political theory for instance) transforming planning practice? Are we seeing a move from the “engineering of consent” towards the choreography of carefully curated conflict? Or is that too cynical an approach?
- Which contemporary theoretical contributions/strands of theoretical research can inform and support further research on this line of inquiry?
- Which possible shifts in research questions does this imply and what kind of research programs can be developed in order to pursue them?

The symposium invites papers that respond to questions that engage critically with the conflict/consensus nexus and interrogate how this incites new and different ways of thinking about planning as a contested domain across space and time.

Partners:
The Critical Urban Governance program at the Centre for Urban Research at RMIT University and the AESOP Planning/Conflict thematic group
# Research Symposium Schedule

## Day One

**Thursday 16 June 2016**

**VENUE:** RMIT Europe, Platypus Room (top floor), C/Minerva 2. 08006 Barcelona, Spain

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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Presenter(s)</th>
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<tr>
<td>9.00-9.45</td>
<td>Welcome and Opening key note</td>
<td>Enrico Gualini, Chair of Planning Theory and Urban-Regional Policy Analysis and Technische Universität Berlin</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.45-10.25</td>
<td>Participation between consensus and conflict – About theoretical ideals and every-day practices</td>
<td>Meike Levin-Keitel, Leibniz Universität Hannover and Christine Schwarz, Leibniz Universität Hannover</td>
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<td>10.25-11.05</td>
<td>The (good) community: articulating virtue and planning ethics</td>
<td>Katie McClymont, University of the West of England</td>
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<td>11.05-11.45</td>
<td>Governing Our Neighbours: inclusivity, deliberation and agonistic debate in statutory neighbourhood plan-making</td>
<td>Geoff Vigar Newcastle University and Elizabeth Brooks, Newcastle University</td>
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<td>11.50-12.25</td>
<td>‘Who goes public?’: On the role of planners and the public in furthering democracy</td>
<td>Sherif Zahour</td>
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<td>12.25</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.30-2.10</td>
<td>Embracing conflict: extending the analytical frame of conflict planning</td>
<td>Juergen Kufner, London School of Economics and Political Science</td>
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<td>2.10-2.50</td>
<td>(Un)settling planning practice: Lessons from the experiences of Indigenous peoples</td>
<td>Janice Barry, University of Manitoba and Libby Porter, RMIT RMIT Centre for Urban Research</td>
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<td>2.50-3.30</td>
<td>Exploring a relational approach to ‘the political difference’: Universalising &amp; particularising strategies in contesting urban development</td>
<td>Elisabet Van Wymeersch, University of Antwerp and Stijn Oosterlynck, University of Antwerp</td>
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<td>3.30</td>
<td>Coffee Break</td>
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<td>3.50-4.30</td>
<td>From the backyard to the city council: Towards the role of grassroots in Czech urban policies</td>
<td>Martin Vesely, Museum of Decorative Arts in Prague, Michaela Pixova, Univerzita Karlova v Praze, and Nuno Martins, University of Lisbon</td>
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<td>4.30-5.00</td>
<td>The postpolitical evolution of the concept of the commons: the regulation of the urban commons in Bologna</td>
<td>Iolanda Bianchi, Università Iuav di Venezia</td>
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<td>5.00-5.30</td>
<td>Day One wrap-up</td>
<td>Wendy Steele, RMIT Centre for Urban Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>8.45-9.30</td>
<td>Welcome and Opening key note presentation</td>
<td>Jonathan Metzger</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.30-10.10</td>
<td>I don’t want to have to deal with this horseshit. It makes me ill: Learning about social suffering and the limits of agonism from reluctant citizen activists in Scotland</td>
<td>Andy Inch, University of Sheffield</td>
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<td>10.10-10.50</td>
<td>Life of project: why feelings matter</td>
<td>Helèna Gütmane, Latvian University/University of Leuven and Jan Schreurs, University of Leuven</td>
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<td>10.50</td>
<td>Coffee Break</td>
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<td>11.10-11.50</td>
<td>Losing faith in planning: planning circumventions, the Israeli case</td>
<td>Nurit Alfasi, Ben Gurion University of the Negev</td>
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<td>11.50-12.30</td>
<td>All roads lead to governance - and then what?</td>
<td>Jonas Bylund, JPI Urban Europe</td>
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<td>12.30</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
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<td>2:10-2:50</td>
<td>Fostering the Waste-Responsible Citizen: Bio-Politics and Post-Political Planning</td>
<td>Richard Ek, Lund University, Maria Jose Zapata Campos, University of Gothenburg, Patrik Zapata, University of Gothenburg, and Herve Corvellec, Lund University</td>
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<td>2:50-3:30</td>
<td>Planning appeal-systems of Britain and France and territorial disparities in contentious conflicts between urban, suburban and rural authorities: A comparative analysis</td>
<td>Océane Peiffer-Smadja, Institute for Sustainable Development and International Relations, and Romain Melot, INRA</td>
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<td>10.50</td>
<td>Coffee Break</td>
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<td>3:50-4:30</td>
<td>Transport infrastructure battles in Western cities: Adversarial and consensual approaches to planning and their impacts on urban accessibility and liveability</td>
<td>Jan Scheurer, Curtin University/RMIT Centre for Urban Research, Crystal Legacy, RMIT Centre for Urban Research, Crystal Legacy, Carey Curtis, Carey Curtis, Curtin University</td>
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<td>4:30</td>
<td>Closing remarks</td>
<td>Crystal Legacy, RMIT Centre for Urban Research</td>
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Visitors Information
RMIT Europe Headquarters

C/Minerva 2. 08006 Barcelona, Spain
+34 93 547 77 00 (Reception)
Office Hours:
Monday to Thursday 9:00-18:00
Friday 9:00-16:00

Public Transport
Subway: L3 Diagonal
Railway: Gracia
Train: Passeig de Gracia
Bus: 6,7,15,27,33,15

RMIT Europe staff welcome you to RMIT Europe and wishes you a a successful stay. Please read this document we have provided to assist your visit.

Instructions on how to arrive for visitors
RMIT EUROPE is located in the centre on Barcelona and is well connected by train, underground, and bus. The closest underground stations are Diagonal, Gracia, for Railway and Passeig de Gracia for train.

For more information about tickets go to: http://www.tmb.cat/en/bitllets-i-tarifes.

Please find more information about the city in the provided visitors information envelope.

Registration and white card
You must contact us prior to your visit sending an email to: nuria.vidal@rmit.edu.au. Once we receive your email, we will send you a visitor’s form which you must complete and send back to us.

Upon arrival you will be asked to complete a registration form to obtain a white access card. Working hours at the Barcelona office are between 9.00 and 18.00 Monday to Thursday and 9.00 and 16.00 on Friday. Outside this hours the building is alarmed.

You can check Spanish public holiday days via this link: http://www.calendariolaborales.com/calendario-laboral-barcelona-2015.htm

Please return the white card to us at the end of your stay.

Institutional visit report template
In order to make sure that RMIT Europe can effectively support you during your stay in Europe, if you are visiting key business contacts whilst you are here, please ask for the Institutional Visit Report Template and return it to the reception desk.

Receiving or sending packets
Please note that RMIT Europe is not responsible for any shipping related issues. Visitors using the RMIT Europe address for receiving or sending packages must ensure that they comply with Spanish customs requirements.
Internet
The RMIT Europe internet can be used without limits during office hours. Please contact the reception
desk for your username and password.

Username: PRS    Password: practica

Printing
The printer is located on the ground floor. Following RMIT printing policy, only RMIT staff with an e-number
may print. If printing, please print in black and white and both sided if possible.

Instructions on how to print will be provided by Nuria at the reception desk

Telephones
The landline phones work just like in RMIT Melbourne, use the same extension as you would there. To call
an external number dial 0 in front of the number.

Theft
Please be careful with your possessions when walking in Barcelona as pickpockets operate across the
city, mainly in touristy areas.

How to get to and from the airport

Bus
Aerobus is the bus service that connects the Airport with the center of Barcelona (plaza Catalunya) and in
the route covers strategic stops in the city. Every day of the year, in approximately 35 minutes.

The Aerobus A1 goes to terminal T1 and Aerobus A2 to terminal T2. At the airport, the Aerobus A2 has 3
stops at terminal T2 (T2A, T2B and T2C) and the Aerobus A1 one in terminal T1.

www.aerobusbcn.com

Underground
From plaza Cataluña to RMIT Europe office you can take the metro L3 green Line to Diagonal. RMIT office
is 5 minute walking distance from diagonal subway station.

www.tmb.cat

Train
R2 line of Rodalies (Cercanias Renfe) is currently the line that arrives from the airport to different places of
the city.

If your flight arrives at terminal T1, use the shuttle bus Bustransit T1-T2 to get from one terminal to
another. Stops at the terminal T2 are located opposite the intermodal building in T2B and in the T2C.

The shuttle bus schedule is from 5.30 to 00:00h every 7 minutes approximately, and from 00:00 to 05:30
every 20 or 25 minutes. This shuttle in between terminals takes about 10 minutes and is free.

Once you are in the train are two possible stops to get to the office:

• Passeig de Gracia: 25 ' Journey, and then 15 minutes walking distance to the office ( or 1 green line
  subway )

• Barcelona Sants Estacio: 20’ Journey, and then transfer to the green line subway , 9 stops until
  Daigonal).
Frequency: Every 30 minutes  
Price: 4,10€

Airport-Barcelona: From 05.42 am to 23.38 pm every day
Barcelona P. Gracia-Airport: From 5.08 am to 23.07pm every day

www.renfe.com

By Taxi
Barcelona Airport is just over 20km from downtown so the ride should be about 25 minutes depending on traffic. Estimated price is 35€.

Taxi Class: +34 933 07 07 07
Radio Taxi 033: +34 933 033 033

http://radiotaxi033.com

Other useful pages
www.aena-aeropuertos.es
www.barcelonaturisme.com
www.bcn.cat

Nearby accommodation
Hotel Praktik Rambla 3*
Set on a tree-lined street, a block from the Passeig de Gràcia metro station, this stylish townhouse hotel with a Gothic facade retains original features such as mosaic floors and molded ceilings. It is located five minutes on foot from Gaudi’s Casa Batlló museum.

The bright rooms with high ceilings and a blend of traditional and modern accents offer free Wi-Fi, flat-screen TVs and air-conditioning. Some have mosaic floors and/or floor-to-ceiling windows.

There’s a bright lounge and a terrace with a modernist fountain, sun loungers and sofas, plus outdoor showers. Breakfast and bike rentals are available for a surcharge.

Address: Rambla de Catalunya 27, 08007 Barcelona. Phone: 93 3436690
Price: 90-150€ depending on season and availability.
www.hotelpraktikrambla.com

Praktik Bakery 3*
Four minute walk from Diagonal metro station, this modern hotel and bakery is 1.3 km from both Sagrada Familia church and Plaça de Catalunya square.

The bright, streamlined rooms come with free Wi-Fi and flat-screen TVs. Bathrooms feature custom mosaic tiles and rainfall showerheads.

The hotel bakery serves breakfast and offers baked goods for sale throughout the day. There’s also a guest lounge and a terrace.

Address: Carrer de Provença, 279, 08037 Barcelona. Phone: 93 4880061
Price: 90-150€ depending on season and availability.
www.praktikbakery.com

Hotel Omm 5*
In an ultra-modern building a minute’s walk from Diagonal metro station, this hip hotel is within 1.5 km of both the Plaça de Catalunya square and La Sagrada Familia.
Slick rooms with parquet flooring and hand-woven rugs come with flat-screen TVs, free Wi-Fi and minibars. Suites add lounge areas and canopy beds.

There’s a renowned regional restaurant, a hip bar, and a chic night club, as well as a city-view roof terrace with a pool, a hot tub, a sushi bar and regular yoga classes. Other amenities include a spa with an indoor pool and treatments.

**Address:** Carrer del Rosselló 265, 08008 Barcelona  
**Phone:** 93 4454000  
**Price:** 295 €  
[www.hotelommm.com](http://www.hotelommm.com)

**Hotel Casa Fuster 5***
Set in a grand, Catalan modernist-style building on Plaça de Nicolas Salmeron square, this luxe hotel is a three minute walk from Diagonal metro station and 1.6 km from Sagrada Familia church.

Plush rooms and suites mix traditional and modern furnishings, and feature free Wi-Fi, iPod docks and flat-screen TVs, along with minibars and armchairs. Upgraded rooms add whirlpool tubs and/or balconies. All suites have living areas; some offer private saunas. Amenities include a sleek Mediterranean restaurant, and a contemporary cafe and jazz bar, plus a pair of terrace bars, including one with a pool. There’s also a gym, a library and a business center.

**Address:** Passeig de Gràcia, 132, 08008 Barcelona  
**Phone:** 93 2553000  
**Price:** 290 €  
[www.hotelcasafuster.com](http://www.hotelcasafuster.com)

**Hotel Alma 5***
The contemporary rooms come with free Wi-Fi, flat-screen TVs and minibars. Upgraded rooms with city views are individually decorated. Suites add separate living areas, and there’s 1 with a balcony. Room service is available.

The hotel has a chic restaurant, a cafe/bar and a garden terrace. A spa area features an indoor pool and an exercise room.

**Address:** Carrer de Mallorca 271, 08008 Barcelona  
**Phone:** 93 2164490  
**Price:** 250 €  
[www.almabarcelona.com](http://www.almabarcelona.com)

**Hotel Majestic 5***
Landmark luxury hotel with more refined classical rooms inspired spa and conference facilities.

**Address:** Passeig de Gràcia 68, 08007 Barcelona  
**Phone:** 93 4881717  
**Price:** 250 €  
[www.hotelmajestic.es](http://www.hotelmajestic.es)

**Condes de Barcelona 4***
Renowned Basque bistro and bar-terrace s palace hotel. XIX rehabilitated with swimming pool and solarium.

**Address:** Passeig de Gràcia 73, 08008 Barcelona  
**Phone:** 93 4450000  
**Price:** 290 €  
[www.condesdebarcelona.com](http://www.condesdebarcelona.com)
The Mirror Hotel 4*
Singular bar and luxurious rooms with bath mirrors edgy boutique hotel with sauna and swimming pool.

Address: Carrer de Corsega 255, 08036 Barcelona. Phone: 93 2028686
Price: 150-200€ depending on season and availability
www.themirrorbarcelona.com

Nearby Restaurants
La Pubilla
Catalan homemade tapas and seasonal recipes in an open simple family restaurant since 1912.

Address: Plaça de la llibertat 23, 08012 Barcelona. Phone: 93 2182994
Monday 8:30-17:00, Tuesday to Friday 8:30-24:00, Saturday 9:00-24:00, Sunday closed.

Santa Gula
Local small and warm with a terrace serving breakfast, tapas and traditional recipes market.

Address: Plaça de Narcís Oller 3, 08006 Barcelona. Phone: 93 1857649
Monday to Sunday 13:00-16:00 and 20:00-23:00
www.santagula.es

Somodo
Creative Mediterranean cuisine with Japanese touch in an intimate and cozy lounge dishes served by the chef.

Address: Calle Ros de Olano 11, 08012 Barcelona. Phone: 93 4156548
Sunday and Monday closed. Thursday to Saturday 13:30-15:15 and 21:00-23:00
www.somodo.es

La pepita
A lively tapas restaurant with very wide choice and flavours. Also nice as a bar.

Address: Carrer Corsega 343, 08037 Barcelona. Phone: 93 2384893
Monday: 20:00-1:30 (only night), Thursday to Saturday 9:00-1:30 (all day)
Cooking time: 13:00-16:30 and 19:30-00:00
www.lapepitabcn.com

Mordisco
Mediterranean dishes in a cozy place with sunroom, living room with fireplace and a grocery.

Address: Passatge de la Concepcio 10, 08008 Barcelona. Phone: 93 4879656
Monday to Sunday 12:30 to 00:30

Bar Mut
Cozy tapas bar, decorated with bottles of their wine cellar with bar, marble tables and deck-barrel.

Address: Carrer Pau Claris 192, 08037 Barcelona. Phone: 93 217438
Monday to Saturday 9:00-24:00h. Sunday closed