

STRAATWAARDEN
Atelier#2: Commons

READER



Colofon

Straatwaarden is een project van het Heritage Lab, onderdeel van het *Amsterdam Creative Industries Network*.

Organisatie Straatwaarden

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Redactie

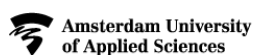
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Installation view of Mary Heilmann: Sunset (Whitney Museum NYC). Photograph by Marco Anelli 2015

Informatie

Meer informatie over de ateliers, workshops, lezingen en eindpresentaties:
www.reinwardtcommunity.nl.



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Inleiding

Het project Straatwaarden onderzoekt crossovers tussen erfgoedpraktijken en de vormgeving van onze stedelijke leefomgeving in een nieuwe maatschappelijke dynamiek. Tussen buurinitiatieven, zelfbouwgroepen en herbestede monumenten. Dit multidisciplinaire project verkent nieuwe issues en het veranderde speelveld voor erfgoed en ruimtelijk ontwerp, onder andere in een serie Ateliers, workshops rond de casus Weesperstraat-Wibautstraat (waaronder de zogeheten Knowledge Mile).

Deze tijd van culturele en maatschappelijke transitie stelt eigen uitdagingen aan ontwerpers en erfgoedprofessionals. Er ontstaan nieuwe praktijken, waarbij het erfgoed domein steeds meer verbindingen vormt met maatschappelijke ontwerpprocessen in de stad. Zo'n veranderende context roept nieuwe vragen op over de relatie tussen 'erfgoed' en 'ruimte', met implicaties voor beide domeinen. Hoe krijgen onze leefomgevingen hun betekenissen? Wat voor nieuwe collectieve plekken en ervaringen ontstaan er? Welke rol spelen erfgoed en ontwerp daarin en hoe vormt erfgoed zich in deze nieuwe maatschappelijke context? En hoe werkt het als je niet uitgaat van reeds gedefinieerde, beschermde monumenten, maar van sociale processen van betekenisgeving in de ruimte die waarden genereren deels op gebied van design, deels erfgoed?

Probleemstelling

Wat zijn de kenmerken van de nieuwe maatschappelijke praktijken en nieuwe relaties tussen erfgoed, gemeenschap en ruimte, wat betekenen deze voor erfgoedprocessen en het ontwerpen van de (publieke) ruimte, en wat is de rol van de erfgoedprofessional in deze nieuwe praktijken?

Aanpak

Straatwaarde is een ontwerponderzoek naar de implicaties die actuele ruimtelijke en maatschappelijke ontwikkelingen in de stad (kunnen) hebben voor professionele erfgoed- en ontwerp praktijken. Daarbij maakt het project gebruik van het sociaal duurzaam 'sustainistisch' perspectief (zoals ontwikkeld door Michiel Schwarz e.a. Cf. *Sustainist Design Guide* en *A Sustainist Lexicon*).

Ateliers

Het onderzoek vindt plaats in de vorm van drie ateliers, ontwerpworkshops rond drie thema's:

Atelier#1: Placemaking | 14-16 maart 2016

Welke factoren en actoren bepalen de bijzondere identiteit van een plek? Onderzoek naar nieuwe praktijken van betekenisgeving in relatie tot erfgoed & ruimte, de stad en de straat. Opgave: komen tot maps of engagement.

Atelier#2: Commons | 18-20 april 2016

Hoe geven gemeenschappen collectief waarde aan een plek? Aan de hand van het begrip 'commons' wordt onderzocht hoe gemeenschappen van een plek een plaats van betekenis maken: 'heritagemaking'.

Atelier#3: Co-design | 14-16 juni 2016

Wat kan co-design betekenen in de concrete context van de Knowledge Mile? Onderzoek naar de ontwerppoging vanuit het perspectief van placemaking en heritagemaking.

De ervaringen en resultaten worden gedeeld in de vorm van artikelen, blogs en een eindpublicatie. De onderzoeksresultaten zijn aanzet voor onderwijsinnovatie en nieuwe (onderzoeks-)vragen.

Achtergrond

Het tweede atelier onderzoekt het thema commons. Hoe kunnen we vanuit het idee van commons kijken naar de veranderende betekenis van 'erfgoedplekken'? Hoe kan bijvoorbeeld de museale wereld inhaken op de maatschappelijke dynamiek van lokale, participatieve en bottom-up praktijken? Ontstaan er dan nieuwe vormen van 'musea-als-commons'? En wat betekent dat voor 'heritagemaking' in het crossover-gebied van 'erfgoed en ruimte'?

Begin dit jaar verscheen *A Sustainist Lexicon* (2016) van cultuuronderzoeker Michiel Schwarz. In dit 'woordenboek' beschrijft Schwarz de relatie tussen ruimtelijke ontwerp, design en erfgoed. Aan de hand van zeven kernbegrippen – *placemaking, connectedness, local, commons, circularity, proportionality* en *co-design* – schetst en duidt Schwarz een maatschappelijke verandering. Elk lemma wordt gevolgd door een veldobservatie door Riemer Knoop. De transformatie die we momenteel doormaken is een ware cultuuromslag: een verandering in onze collectieve percepties en de waarden die onze levensstijl bepalen.

A Sustainist Lexicon is een vervolg op het eerder verschenen *Sustainist Design Guide* (2013) van Schwarz en Diana Krabbedam van The Beach, een netwerkorganisatie gericht op sociale innovatie. De naam 'sustainisme' werd door Michiel Schwarz en Joost Elffers in *Sustainism Is the New Modernism* (2010) aan dit nieuwe tijdperk gegeven, een nieuwe cultuur die meer verbonden, lokaler en ecologisch én sociaal duurzamer is en wordt gekenmerkt door waarden als verbondenheid, nabijheid, delen en menselijke maat.

Van 2013 tot 2015 was Schwarz als artist-in-residency (AIR) verbonden aan de Reinwardt Academie en de Academie van Bouwkunst. In het project *Sustainist (Re)Design* werd verkend wat het sociaal duurzame cultuurperspectief van het sustainisme kan betekenen voor erfgoedvraagstukken en het (ruimtelijk) ontwerpdomein. Onderdeel van de AIR waren een lezingenserie (*capita selecta Sustainist: (Re)Design: How the new culture of sustainism is reshaping our cities, landscape, architecture and heritage*), een workshop i.s.m. The Beach en de publicatie van het lexicon. Het project Straatwaarden is hier een logisch vervolg op. Na het eerste atelier, met het thema placemaking, volgt het tweede atelier met een onderzoek naar commons.

Reader

De reader bevat een introducerende verkenning van het begrip commons aan de hand van *A sustainist lexicon* en een selectie artikelen over het begrip. Eerste artikel is de verwoording en verbeelding van het lemma *Commons* door Schwarz en Knoop overgenomen uit het lexicon.¹ Daarna volgt een selectie van artikelen aansluiten op het thema en programma van het tweede atelier. Tot slot volgt een literatuurlijst voor verder onderzoek.

Commons – From public/private to collaborative commons

Michiel Schwarz

In November 2005, a San Francisco-based urban art and design collective called Rebar liberated a parking space. It started as an experiment: in a downtown street they found an empty parking space, rolled out a patch of grass turf, and set up a park bench and a potted tree. Rebar co-founder John Bela explains, 'We transformed a single metered spot into a temporary public park and called it "Park(ing)".' What began as a local intervention has since expanded into an annual worldwide event, PARK(ing) Day, where parking spaces are turned into temporary community parks and other social spaces. On PARK(ing) Day 2011 nearly one thousand 'micro parks' were created in 160 cities across 35 countries.

The idea is now becoming part of urban practice. Since 2010, the city of San Francisco's Pavement for Parks programme has created more than 50 permanent 'parklets', each occupying one to three street parking spaces.³ The parklets are sponsored by an unusual coalition of local businesses, community organisations, art groups, nonprofits, local residents, and the city's department of transportation. Similar schemes have emerged in cities such as Philadelphia, Chicago, Mexico City and Auckland, where people have literally reclaimed the street.

The PARK(ing) Day movement is bringing a change in the way the urban environment is organised. The original initiators called it 'User-Generated Urbanism' and 'Temporary Tactics for Improving the Public Realm'.⁴ But what's really being created here is a form of urban 'commons' — which is neither public nor private but, rather, a common space.

Here the term 'commons' is a contemporary version of an old word, meaning what is commonly shared. The idea of 'the commons' is experiencing a revival. It goes beyond the conventional dichotomy of private versus publicly-owned, or market versus state. It represents, rather, a third domain based on the ideas of civic community and shared stewardship.

The concept of the commons sits at the core of sustainist culture. It embraces sharing, collaborative management of resources, community governance, and designs that are both socially and environmentally sustainable. Its addition to our vocabulary makes us rethink how sharing and collaborative practices fit into the way we value and create our living environment.

Commons

At first glance, the term 'commons' may appear to be the most esoteric entry in this lexicon. But the more we look at it, the more we realise that the notion of commons is all around us. We can see it in many of the recent initiatives that mark sustainist

² John Bela, 'Hacking Public Space With the Designers Who Invented Park(ing) Day', *Next City*, 14 February 2015. <https://nextcity.org/daily/entry/hacking-public-space-designers-parking-day>.

³ Claire Martin, 'When the Parking Space Becomes a Park', *The New York Times*, 10 January 2015.

⁴ Rebar Group, 'The Park(ing) Day Manifesto: User-Generated Urbanism and Temporary Tactics for Improving the Public Realm', San Francisco, 2011. http://parkingday.org/src/Parking_Day_Manifesto_Booklet.pdf.

¹ Schwarz, Michiel, *A Sustainist Lexicon: Seven entries to recast the future — Rethinking design and heritage. With field notes by Riemer Knoop and sustainist symbols by Joost Elffers*. (Amsterdam: Architectura & Natura Press, 2016), 70-91. [Creative Commons licentie by-nc-nd]

culture. Most if not all examples in this publication — from community gardens and bottom-up city making to shared

neighbourhood platforms and open source museum collections — reflect the idea of ‘commons’ in one form or another. They all depend in some ways on ideas of common resources, communal values, and collaborative practices.

The commons, however, is far from a contemporary idea. It has a long and rich history — the common areas in traditional villages are an example, or the way indigenous communities have dealt with the natural environment and natural resources such as water. Commons are what belongs to all of us, and what we look after communally. It is ‘all that we share’, as American writer Jay Walljasper captures it succinctly in the title of his field guide to the commons.⁵

When we think of the commons, we can think of natural commons such as oceans and rivers, or cultural commons such as the village well, the park, lending libraries, scientific knowledge and much of what we call ‘cultural heritage’.

A locally-run neighbourhood park is a simple but good example of a contemporary urban commons, in that it is looked after collectively by members of a local community. The keyword here is a community, whose members become the ‘stewards’ of the commons.

Under today’s commons we can include a diversity of communally managed things, ranging from urban gardens and historical landscapes to online sharing platforms and Wikipedia. Perhaps the largest contemporary commons is the internet — that is, as long as it is not privatised and remains ‘open access’. The current debates about ‘net equality’ and intellectual property are in essence about the digital commons.

In its various manifestations, the idea of ‘commons’ underpins many community-based sustainist practices. It also shifts our focus onto questions of common responsibility and governance in relation to the natural environment and communal places. The commons marks a concept that is central to sustainist culture, both in how we view the living environment and in the values by which we shape its future.

The language of the commons

Over the last decade or so the commons idea has gained new recognition, both in practice and in social and economic theory.⁶ It is being reinvented in the context of contemporary debates over community ownership, environmental stewardship and sustainable livelihoods. The word ‘commons’ is re-entering our vocabulary — we speak of ‘urban commons’, ‘creative commons’, ‘digital commons’, ‘commons movement’.⁷

Etymologically the word ‘commons’, like ‘community’ and

⁵ Jay Walljasper, *All That We Share: A Field Guide to the Commons* (New York: The New Press, 2010).

⁶ After many decades of near neglect by the academic community, the concept of commons gained worldwide recognition when the political scientist Elinor Ostrom received the 2009 Nobel Prize in economics for her lifelong work on the commons.

⁷ See for example the ‘On the Commons’ network. <http://www.onthecommons.org>.

‘communal’, has its roots in the Latin ‘com’, meaning together, and ‘munus’, meaning some form of obligation. Today ‘commons’ stands for a particular way of seeing and doing. It has become a kind of ‘umbrella term’ for taking communal responsibility for whatever is held in common — from the living places and cultural resources we share to the water we drink and the natural environment.

In the sustainist era, a commons discourse is developing. It includes the concept of ‘the commons’ — a generic term, which marks an organising principle for looking after things communally. It can be contrasted with the generic concept of ‘the market’, as in the phrase ‘the market economy’ — but more about that later.⁸ Along the way, other commons-based words have re-entered the vocabulary, most notably the verb ‘commoning’. It refers to the act of creating and sustaining a commons, thereby turning the commons idea into action. I have chosen to fit all such meanings under this heading, as it is the depth and breadth of the revival of the commons idea which underpins its cultural significance.

There are many ways to understand and apply the idea of commons in different contexts. So if you’re looking for an exact and universal definition, you will not find one here. And let’s remind ourselves once more that this lexicon is not a dictionary of definitions. Rather, it’s a way to explore an emerging vocabulary in our changing times, whereby meanings evolve as products of culture. We can take the term ‘commons’ as an entry point for recognising the fact that our collective perceptions and our practices are changing. The very fact that the term commons is increasingly entering our vocabulary is in itself a sign of an emerging sustainist culture.

Beyond private and public

Behind the commons concept lies the idea that sharing and collaboration, rather than ownership and competition, provide a valid way to manage resources in a community. As such, the commons offers a radically different paradigm from the familiar domains of private and public that have long dominated how we manage resources and organise society.

What makes the commons concept so relevant today is that it enables us to re-imagine collective resources in ways that surpass the old dichotomy of public versus private. In the ‘modern development’ of the 20th century, economic and social matters have been addressed almost exclusively in terms of just two forms of governance: private and public — or, as political scientists would say, the market and the state. Regardless of whether we look at our natural resources, city development, technology, the economy, or cultural institutions, the private/public paradigm has dominated our thinking and our designs.

But now we are beginning to see that there is — and has been historically — an alternative tried-and-tested way for communities to manage resources equitably and sustainably: by way of the commons. The commons, in other words, represents a ‘third domain’, not private, not public. The commons furnishes us with an alternative organising framework to deal with nature, places, goods, information and heritage. It is based on stewarding resources for the good of a community. Sometimes that community is an urban neighbourhood or a

⁸ And just to complicate things, the word ‘commons’ is both singular and plural: we can speak of a community park as a single commons, but equally about the commons of forest and rivers in the plural.

cooperative, other times it may be the entire planet.

Community

Using the term commons is much more than simply naming what is commonly shared — or what economists call ‘collective resources’. It also represents a community-based approach to looking after those resources. As the leading commons scholar and activist David Bollier reminds us, a commons arises ‘whenever a given community decides it wishes to manage a resource in a collective manner, with special regard for equitable access and sustainability’.⁹ In sum, commons are what we choose to share together, and how we share what is held in common.

In urban planning we can clearly see a longstanding disregard for the commons in the way most debates have been framed in terms of ‘public space’ versus ‘private space’. Communal places — for instance community-run neighbourhood gardens — which don’t fit easily in the commercial or governmental domains, have long been ignored or misunderstood. In essence these are commons, but they are regularly taken for public space. However, public spaces and commons are not the same thing.¹⁰ The former take us into the domain of public authorities, the latter a matter of community. And it is community which underpins the commons.

Collaborative commons

The commons idea is alive and kicking. Whether we actually use the term or not, the commons is very much visible in the current plethora of bottom-up community-driven initiatives, which often goes by the name of the ‘civic economy’.¹¹ The rise of the commons can also be seen in the growing number of land trusts and cooperatives, as well as in the upsurge of online peer-to-peer platforms.

We can see a commons ethos taking hold in society. It is based not on competition and market values, but rather on sharing and social qualities. American economist and social thinker Jeremy Rifkin has called it the ‘collaborative commons’.¹² He argues that we are at the beginning of a shift from markets toward commons, whereby access — to goods, services, experiences and resources — is valued over ownership. He marks the rise of a ‘collaborative era’, as increasing numbers of people value collaboration over competition.

What drives the collaborative commons is the willingness and ability of people to share things for a common cause. In Rifkin’s

⁹ David Bollier, *Think Like a Commoner: A Short Introduction to the Life of the Commons* (Gabriola Island BC, Canada: New Society Publishers, 2014).

¹⁰ The Commons Strategies Group, David Bollier and Silke Helfrich (eds), *The Wealth of the Commons: A World Beyond Market and State* (Amherst, MA: Levellers Press, 2012).

¹¹ OO:/, *Compendium for the Civic Economy: What our cities, towns and neighbourhoods can learn from 25 trailblazers* (Haarlem, Netherlands: Valiz/Trancity, 2012).

¹² Jeremy Rifkin, *The Zero Marginal Cost Society: The Internet of Things, The Collaborative Commons and the Eclipse of Capitalism* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

words, ‘sharing culture is what the commons is all about’. Indeed, the rise of the commons goes hand in hand with another main feature of sustainism, the rise of the so-called ‘sharing economy’. Today’s growing culture of sharing can be seen to arise out of two contemporary developments: a shift in society toward collaboration, and a shift in technology and social media that makes collaborative platforms possible. Together they are creating the fertile ground for the commons to flourish.

Design for commoning

Sharing and collaborative practices are essential ingredients in creating commons. And conversely, the idea of the commoning — the active mode for managing our places and resources sustainably and equitably — prompts us to explore explicitly how ‘shareability’ could become part of the way we design our living environments and much else.

Hence in the *Sustainist Design Guide* we asked: ‘What might it mean to design for shareability?’¹³ It sounds like a simple question, but it is not. The practice of so-called ‘value-driven design’, the idea of including values such as ‘sharing’ in our design briefs, is relatively new. Similarly, we need to explore new ways to design and re-design for commons. Also here, current practice in civic initiatives may be a better starting point than theory. There are ample stories of new citizen-initiated, collectively managed places from which we can learn. Looking at the success and failures in creating commons in the new civic economy will give us pointers to develop models for commoning.

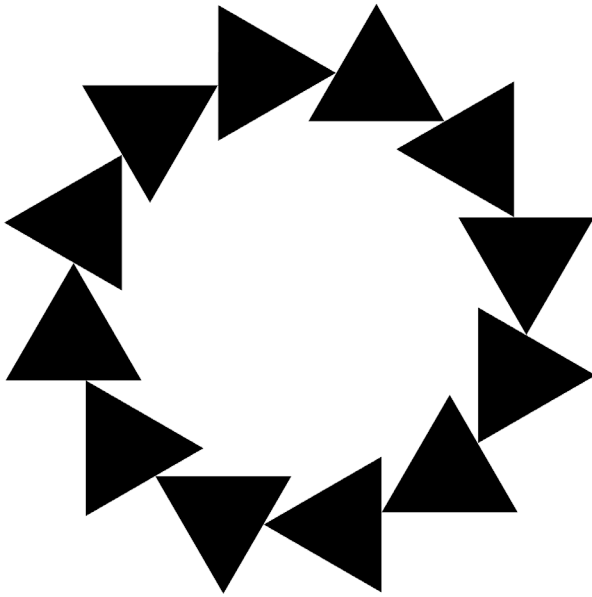
Once again, to follow such a path requires shifting our perspective and recasting issues, in urban design as well as in the domain of cultural heritage and beyond. How can we re-imagine our cities and neighbourhoods as places for commoning? What design principles would we need for that? Or equally: How can we conceive of a museum in terms of sharing? When and how does a museum or a historical site become a commons, and when not?

Such questions have no easy answers. But idea of the commons, and the active process of commoning that goes with it, give us a direction. Now that we have marked the commons in the landscape, we can be more observant in recognising that commons and commoning is much more present in contemporary life nowadays than it appeared to be at first sight. The plethora of urban community-driven initiatives involving some kind of collaborative sharing and commoning gives us a starting point. Now that we can see the commons for what it is, we can chart current practice, and begin to develop models and tools for the future.

¹³ Michiel Schwarz and Diana Krabbendam, with The Beach network, *Sustainist Design Guide: How Sharing, Localism, Connectedness and Proportionality Are Creating a New Agenda for Social Design* (Amsterdam: BIS Publishers, 2013).

Commons - Field note

Riemer Knoop



At the heart of the 'commons' idea is to communally look after a common good or purpose. The COMMONS symbol visualises the commons as a circle, creating a shared area in the middle. Any commons can only survive when it has a community around it. The complete circle, as visualised in this symbol, gives the commons its strength and sustainability. Once broken — for example when it is turned into a private space — its common qualities vanish. *Symbol designed by Joost Elffers* (Creative Commons by-nc-nd).

There are sites of great historical interest from which government has retreated and private parties have turned away. Rione Sanità is one such place. A poor area in Naples, situated just below the Palace of Capodimonte, it is utterly poverty ridden. The volcanic subsoil is home to miles of age-old catacombs, property of the church, which has let it degrade. But a decade ago, the neighbourhood community turned the tables. A group of local youths, a *cooperativa* of students, volunteers and the unemployed, took the initiative to revitalise the area. Investing their own time and entrepreneurship, they succeeded in convincing the authorities to give them access to the early-Christian catacombs and bring them to life once again.* The result of their efforts, supported by successful fundraising: ten thousand square metres of heritage trails, guided tours, bookshops and coffee shops, all run by the *cooperativa*. The intervention was highly successful. The site now receives more than 40,000 visitors per year, resulting in a score of paid jobs and creating the foundation for a sustainable future. The key to the success of the *Catacombe* is the cooperative nature of the community effort.

The point of this famed endeavour in participatory heritage is *not* the restoration of some cultural monument or complex. Rather, it is this community's engaged approach and their cooperative stewardship of the site. Their communal way of revitalising enabled them to confer meaning to the neighbourhood's 'history, its art, its culture, its kitchen and, last but not least, its faith' — to quote them directly. It is 'the beginning of a process of recovery.... a revival of a highly deprived area'. Initially opposed by both the city government and the church authorities, the *cooperativa* gradually has been gaining respect alongside success. Their achievement is no less than the creation of a commons. This opens a new road to heritage preservation. The lesson: Do not focus on historical monuments per se. Focus on contexts, people and their commons, and heritage values will be embraced.

* <http://www.catacombedinapoli.it/en/about>.

Build the city. Perspectives on Commons and Culture

Krytyka Polityczna

European Cultural Foundation

This publication is a special collaboration between Krytyka Polityczna, the European Cultural Foundation and ECF Labs, Subtopia (Sweden), Les Têtes de l'Art (France), Oberliht (Moldova), CulturezCommons (Croatia) and Platoniq (Spain), partners in our action-research network: Connected Action for the Commons. Together, we strive for a new understanding of what the commons means to us in different areas of Europe, in our cities and in our cultural practices.

Much has been recently about the phenomenon of the 'Commons', and from many different angles. But culture's contribution to the civic notion of collaborative practices for the common goods in and of our cities requires further exploration.

While this publication cannot fully show how the concepts of culture, communities, democracy and the city are it does rediscover, reframe and reconsider previously published historical, artistic, participatory and theoretical perspectives on the subject by a wide variety of authors from different geographical and professional backgrounds. We believe that it is important to share and explore methods, solutions and technologies that can help to build more humane and environmentally friendly cities and communities, where people not only co-exist but truly live together.

Through our research we found many interesting texts, studies, views and cultural examples of what we see happening in our cities and their wider regions across Europe: a powerful bottom-up movement led by citizens themselves, developing new participatory democratic practices that shape our cities and empower us to govern them in a different collaborative way.

It is inspiring and motivating to witness and support the growing number of local cultural-social centres, cooperatives, neighbourhood communities - that experiment with new models and challenge existing structures and habits. Urban movements are becoming legitimate agents for change and challenge the status quo on a larger scale. They show the urgent need for a paradigm shift in city policies.

Here we present articles, interviews and visual materials that focus on the commons from different viewpoints, discuss the relationships between commons and peer-to-peer production or transition towns, examine the class divisions in relation to commons and test political possibilities opened up by mobilising people in support of the commons. Most importantly we present examples of the ways in which citizens organise themselves and act to bring about a new reality that can mirror their attempts to deepen democracy and freedom for everything that we hold in common.

We believe in culture as an innovative terrain for new forms of democratic, institutional, social, political and existential experimentations, and believe it is important to underline and further explore its central role in ongoing struggles over the commons against the backdrop of an ever-changing city landscape. 'Build the City' is about people coming together

through culture to reclaim their cities and take control of the decisions that affect their surroundings, their neighbourhoods and their lives. With this publication we aim to fuel further debate among citizens, cultural practitioners, city developers and all those interested in the commons, culture and the future of our cities.

A note from the editors

This publication draws heavily on texts, links and images posted in ECF Labs (ecflabs.org)—the online community platform developed by the European Cultural Foundation. Several articles in the reader were posted by the community in ECF Labs, or linked to a post in one of the labs (e.g. From Lamp Posts to Phone Booths by Noel Hatch, R-Urban on how to produce a resilient city—Doina Petrescu and Constantin Petcou). Some contributors also moderate labs, the public spaces open to everybody (e.g. Charlie Tims—Occupolitics!, Carmen Lozano-Bright—p2p Square!). ECF Labs is an 'engine for communities' and an important knowledge resource for the Connected Action or the Commons network.

"The freedom to make and remake our cities and ourselves is one of the most precious yet most neglected of our human rights"

- David Harvey *The Right to the City*

Freindship is a Commons (excerpt) By Dougald Hine

Dougald Hine is a social thinker, writer and former BBC journalist. He has been responsible for starting a series of innovative organisations, including the web startup School of Everything, the Spacemakers urban regeneration bureau and The dark Mountain Project.

I want to draw attention to two different ways of speaking about commons. These two ways of speaking coexist and often get muddled up, in a way that is problematic. So if I could make a contribution to the growing conversation that is taking place under the banner of the commons, it would be to invite us to notice this difference within our ways of speaking.

The first way of speaking about the commons is to talk about it as a Pool of resources to be managed. A typical example is found in a summary of Elinor Ostrom's *Governing the Commons*. This is offered as a definition:

The commons is a general term for shared resources in which each stakeholder has an equal interest.

The second way of speaking about commons is as an alternative to treating the world as if it is made up of resources. In *Silence is a Commons*,¹⁴ Ivan Illich says that he wants to make "the distinction between the *commons* within which people's subsistence activities are embedded, and *resources* that serve for the economic production of those commodities on which modern survival depends". Instead of the commons being a pool of resources and a particular approach of managing them, Illich defines the commons as the opposite of the resource.

¹⁴ This article is from Ivan Illich's remarks at the "Asahi Symposium Science and Man. The computer managed Society". Tokyo Japan 21 March 1982. See <http://www.presevent.com/theory/Illich/Silence.html>

He talks about the history of the commons in Europe, the commons that were enclosed: as part of the entry into modern industrial capitalist society, the land was taken away from people. He talks about how these commons were governed by an 'unwritten law', a fabric of interweaving customs by which different people within a community had different relationships by which it was understood that they could make use of particular areas of land for hunting and fishing, for grazing or collecting wood or medicinal plants to meet their own needs, along with different obligations to that land. "It was an unwritten law" says Illich, "not only because people did not care to write it down but because what it protected was a reality much too complex to fit into paragraphs".

The first thing I want to say about that complex reality is that its complexity was not a problem for people. It may have been a problem for landlords and for governments, because a way of living that is unwritten is, by definition, illegible. In *Seeing Like a State*¹⁵, James C. Scott presents the story of the way in which states and other top-down systems have a problem with complex, illegible social realities, which is not necessarily a problem for the people who live and make their life work inside those complex, illegible social realities.

Illich also frames this opposition in terms of industrial society, the industrial production of commodities, and something he calls 'the vernacular'. He draws this axis on a graph, but an axis that is not a straight line: at one end it rises straight to a single point, but at the other it branches out like a root system in a thousand directions. The industrial society is the end where it becomes a straight line: development provides us a model by which the human needs of everyone on earth are identical, defined in the same way and to be met by deploying the same systems of flush toilets, regardless of the local context. At the other end from this homogeneous industrial society of resources and commodities, you have the proliferation of the vernacular. The vernacular corresponds to what, in a Marxian vocabulary, would be distinguished as production for use value rather than for exchange value, but Illich's intention was to frame this more broadly. Going back to its Latin roots, the vernacular refers to the home-made, the home-brewed, the home-spun.

Another important distinction is introduced by Iain Boal, who points out that a commons is not the same thing as a public space. A public space is a modern phenomenon, conceived in terms of atomized economic individuals dealing with each other within this realm that we call the public. He points out something fascinating in relation to Garret Hardin's 'The Tragedy of the Commons'¹⁶ which is one of the most influential and problematic texts on the commons. Hardin argues that commons inevitably collapse because one person takes more than their share and this damages it, until over time the existence of the commons as a whole is compromised. This is an argument that says: we have to privatize things, we have to marketise things, because otherwise the free riders will eventually erode the commons. What Boal points out is that Hardin was writing this in San Francisco in 1968, when the front pages of the newspapers were reporting the collapse into a Hobbesian nightmare of the first wave of hippie communes. So if you want to understand sympathetically, rather than only critically – which is the first way I would invite you to understand it – Hardin's Tragedy of the Commons myth, is really the

tragedy of the *Communes*. Boal's argument is that communes failed because they were based on a utopian ideal that they were creating a public, universal space that anyone could turn up to and access equally, and that this is quite different to the commons, in any historical sense. A commons is a fabric of relations that is built and rebuilt and renegotiated over generations.

So, we have these two ways of speaking: commons as a pool of resources to be managed, and commons as an alternative to treating the world as made up of resources. Of these two ways of speaking, people who talk about the commons in terms of resources have been historically always been *against* the commons and for enclosure, rationalization and increased production. Because once you look at the commons as a pool of resources, you don't see that complex, unwritten, illegible reality; what you see is the two or three things that you enter into a spread sheet to describe this forest, and then you seek to improve the productivity of the forest, and you drive out the people who have had a right to graze their pigs there for centuries, you start planting trees in straight line, the process that Scott describes has been set in motion.

So, as Anthony McCann has pointed out, it is a peculiar feature of the wave of enthusiasm for the new commons that a lot of those who speak in favour of the commons today do so in the language of resource management, rather than in terms of social relations. It is by no means clear that we have escaped the tendency of resource management approaches to serve the interests of economic rationalization as against human sociability.

We live in a heavily enclosed world. The commons were taken away from us. In England, it started in the fifteenth century and was more or less over by the nineteenth century. Laws were passed that over-wrote the unwritten laws that had endured and evolved for centuries, that granted new, simple and total forms of ownership to the few, and disenfranchised the rest. Like the industrial revolution that followed it, this process spread from England, in one form or another, to most corners of the world and it continues today. At the height of the English enclosures, it was known as 'improvement'; today it is more likely to be known as 'development'.

The result is that what was once seen as misery is now taken for granted. In 1330 a rich merchant in Florence died and left his wealth to be distributed amongst the destitute, the people who had fallen through the bottom of society. The people to whom the money was doled out were drawn from five categories: the widows, the orphans, those who had recently suffered an act of God, those who had to pay rent for the roof under which they slept and the heads of the household dependent on wage work. In other words, in the medieval world, to be dependent on having to sell your labor for money as your primary means of staying alive or to have to pay money in order to have somewhere to call home, these things were seen as abject misery. To be a member of a society was to be part of a household and even if you were the lowliest member of a very humble household, even with the feudal obligations you were under, you had a security unknown to the wage worker.

No one is saying that this was a beautiful utopia. The point is to recognize that the modern world in which we find ourselves came about not least through the normalization of people not having access to the means of subsistence, because land and commoning rights had been taken away from them, forcing them into a position where all of their needs had to be met

¹⁵ James C. Scott, *Seeing like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (Yale University Press 1999)

¹⁶ Garret Hardin 'The Tragedy of the Commons', originally published in the journal *Science*, 1968. See http://www.mcleland.org/Class_reading/Hardin_Tragedy_of_the_Commons.pdf

through selling their labor to factory owners and their equivalents. Many will argue that, on a cost-benefit analysis, industrialization and modernity have given us so much that it ends up being more than worth the deal. I am not wanting to make the argument one way or another, only to be clear that this was the nature of the trade-off, and that it was frequently made against the will of the erstwhile commoner.

Yet the risk of such stories is that they erect a golden age, to be mourned or scorned, but irrelevant to the fallen condition in which we find ourselves. In place of this, I would rather we remind ourselves that, even within this heavily enclosed world, the process of enclosure is never complete: there are still things that we do not treat as resources. The clearest case of this, perhaps, is what we do not think it acceptable to treat our friends as resources. In English, we have an everyday expression for someone who does that: if you find yourself treated as a resource, you say, "I've been used". And everyone knows what you mean, without any need to elaborate a theory to make sense of it.

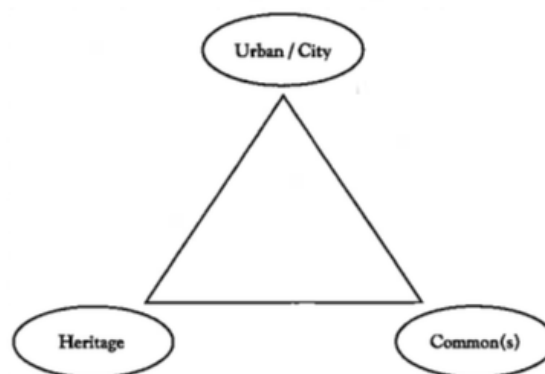
For this reason, then friendship may well be a good starting point from which to explore what it means to be part of a commons that is not merely a resource management exercise, but an alternative to treating the world as made up of resources.

Urban Commons and Urban Heritage

Sybille Frank

Input for the Urban Heritage Seminar Seies
University of Gothenburg, 23rd August 2013

My paper will deal with the complex relation between Cities, Commons, and Heritage. I arranged these terms in a triangle and I will dwell on the three sides of the triangle that each connects two of these terms. I will start with "Urban Commons", I will then move onto "Common Heritage", and I will close with a reflection on "Urban Heritage".



In recent times we have witnessed a rising societal and academic interest in the idea of "the Commons" (For research overview cf. van Learhoven/Ostrom 2007, for recent publications on the topic ct. e.g. Hardt/Negri 2009, Ried/Taylor 2010, Helfrich, Heinrich-Boll-Stifting 2009, 2010) Public and academic discourse have culminated in diverse social movements around the globe which, as US-American geographer David Harvey put it, voiced a growing discomfort with the conjunction of deregulated capitalism, neoliberal politics, marketization and privatization of common public goods on a global scale. The perceived loss of commonalities has been articulated most often and most aloud in cities. According to Harvey, cities have experienced several waves of privatization, of enclosures, of spatial controls and surveillance in the past years (cf. Harvey 2012:67). It is widely felt that these developments have been motivated by capitalist class interests, flanked by neoliberal politics. These politics have diminished the financing of public goods, led to a decline in state-supplied public goods, and turned public goods into vehicles for private capital accumulation (cf. Hardt/Negri 2009). At the end of this process stands a run short availability of urban common(s). These processes gave birth to the right-to-the city movement which claims that the only possible response for populations to the above described developments is to protest and to self organize in order to provide for their own commons cf. Harvey 2012:87, Jeffrey/MacFarlane/Vasudevan 2012).

But what is Commons?

In his recent book on "Rebel Cities", David Harvey defines the commons as an "unstable and malleable social relation between a particular self defined social groups and/or physical environment deemed crucial to its life and livelihood" (Harvey 2012:73). This definition entails several important points: First, the group is socially defined, second, the resources are socially defined, and third, there is a social practice of communing that links the social group to a specific resource that this group

regards as their common(s). (cf. Helfrich/Haas 2009). Harvey goes on to argue that "(a)t the heart of the practice of communing lies the principle that the relation between the social group and that aspect of the environment being treated as a common shall be both collective and non-commodified – off-limits to the logic of market exchange and Market evaluations" (Harvey 2012:73). Commons therefore denote a social relation beyond capitalization and marketization. They may take different form: While intellectual and cultural commons such as languages and knowledge do not fall under the logic of scarcity since they are in principle open to all, natural resources such as water are exclusionary resources in the they will be exhausted if consumed and not cared for.

What are then urban commons?

One thing that has been discussed prominently under the label of 'urban commons' in the past few years is public space (for an overview of urban commons literature cf. Parker/Johansson 2011, cf. Jeffrey/MacFarlane/Vasudevan 2012). Public space has for long been a crucial concept in academic reasoning about the city since it is closely linked to the notion of "urbanity". As scholars such as Georg Simmel (1903) or Louis Wirth (1938) have pointed out, in urban public space density and heterogeneity may be experienced in an intensity that may not be found elsewhere (cf. Hardt/Negri 2009:249-262). Hence, public urban space has been regarded as the place where modern society as a market-mediated and state protected association of strangers could first be experienced as a new social form.

Public spaces and public goods in the city, however, are not synonymous for 'commons'. Harvey argues that public spaces and public goods contribute to the qualities of the commons. But "it takes political action on the part of the citizens and the people to appropriate them or make them so" (Harvey 2012:73) Public urban space – that has always been administered by the state – needs to be appropriated for common purposes in order to become an urban common (Jeffrey/McFarlane/Vasudevan 2012). He explains that "Syntagma Square in Athens, Tahrir Square and the Plaze de Catalunya in Barcelona were public spaces that become urban commons as people assembled there to express their political views and make demands" (Harvey 209:250). Along these lines Hardt and Negri even regard "the metropolis as a factory for the production of the common" (Hardt/Negri 2009:250)

While public space may be turned into an urban commons by civic action (of Foster 2012, Parker Johansson 2012), urban commons may also be expropriated. The commercial capitalization of neighborhoods by the real estate market is a much-discussed example for the expropriation of city neighborhoods as public spaces collectively produced as urban commons by residents. As soon as real estate agents let or sell apartments for a lot of money by promoting them as being located in a lively, multicultural and cosmopolitan quarter, thereby initiating a process of gentrification, they run the risk of destroying these diversified neighborhoods and everyday neighborhood life in them. So while urban commons are continuously being produced by residents, they are in continuous danger of being appropriated by capital. From this perspective, Harvey argues (Harvey 2012:80), the entire history of urbanization can be interpreted as an ongoing destruction of the city as a social, political and cultural commons by capital.

Common Heritage

If we shift our attention to the lowest side of the triangle, the relation between "common(s)" and "heritage" comes to mind.

The Common heritage of mankind is a concept in international law which follows the idea that specific natural and cultural elements of humanity should be held in trust for future generations and should therefore be protected from exploitation by individuals, nation states and corporations. The principle of a Common Heritage of Mankind was first mentioned in the preamble to the Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict in 1954. Several international convents followed, such as the UNESCO World Heritage Convention in 1972.

The idea of the existence of a Common Heritage of Mankind that should be protected raises urgent questions of "Whose heritage?" is seen as a common heritage and therefore is worthy of protection, and of "how?" this should be done. Harvey argues that enclosure is often seen as the best way to preserve certain kinds of heritage as a valued commons (Harvey 2012:70). Nature reserves are defined and fenced off, with public access restricted. This may lead to situations in which one common (nature) "may be protected at the expense of another" (public access) (Harvey 2012:70). At the same time, it is usually criticized if the rich fence themselves off in gated communities within which an "exclusionary commons" becomes defined (Harvey 2012:71). In contrast, the enclosure of a non-commodified heritage space in a commodifying world is often seen as a good thing (Harvey 2012:70). This shows that some forms of common heritage entail open access, while others may need regulation and public private management, and again others needs to be enclosed to be preserved as a commons for a particular social group or for mankind as such. Therefore questions of how a common heritage is to be produced and protected are highly contradictory and most often contested (cf. Harvey 2012:71)

The same holds true as to the questions of "whose" heritage is seen as a common heritage (cf Helfrich/Haas 2009). To illustrate this, we only need look briefly at the World Heritage list to see how closely the idea of a common heritage is linked to power. Up to this day UNESCO state parties from Western countries are more likely to have 'their' cultural or natural heritage sites inscribed on the list. The reasons for this are manifold: First, the definition of criteria for what qualifies as common heritage build upon Western cultural traditions and schools of thought, second, the process of bidding for being awarded the official seal of world heritage site is bureaucratic and expensive so that well-off state parties with modern bureaucracies and knowledge regimes have a big advantage. Third, the World Heritage center in which Committee decisions are being prepared on whose common interests one seeks to protect is predominately administered by people from Western countries. But also on the local scale, we witness fierce fights for power between different social groups about whose heritage is being represented in public space as common heritage, and whose not.

Summing up, different social groups and various public and private agents can engage in the practice of communing in the field of heritage for many different reasons, and on many different spatial scales. They compete for interpretative supremacy over the past, but with differing powers and differing chances of success. Naturally, it is a most exciting question who is winning through these fights.

Urban Heritage

Finally, on the left side of the triangle, the relationship between Heritage and the City comes into view.

My recent research on heritage has focused on the rise of a heritage industry in Europe (cf. Frank 2009, 2015) Since the late

1980s, the number and influence of commercial and civic private players in the heritage arena has grown to the same extent that the state and municipalities have gradually withdrawn from the public representation of history. I argue that, in the past decades, we have witnessed a considerable diversification of the production and the consumption of heritage. On the production side, public and private views of the past have on the one hand diversified and on the other hand become connected to a globalized leisure and tourism industry. This process has led to democratization and to commercialization of heritage at the same time. On the consumption side, the bourgeois museum has lost its monopole to more popular, experiential forms of representing and consuming the past, such as theme parks and living history, so that more and more social groups have engaged in the consumption of heritage. In addition, the price reductions in and the expansion of travel offers around the globe have broadened the consumer base of heritage since more and more people from different parts of the world now can afford to travel to specific places in order to consume heritage locally (Frank 2012). Accordingly, I understand "heritage" as a contentious field of the production, representation and consumption of a meaningful common past, in which various public and private agents – with differing chances of success- battle for interpretative supremacy over the past, and in which the past is localized in certain place (Frank 2014). This means that heritage is able to grant a common past to places. With this definition, I oppose much of the recent research which has coined heritage as a popular form of social memory. I argue that a social memory only becomes heritage when it is related to a place and when it is presented there as heritage, opening it up to the public debate.

It is obvious that, if one defines heritage as a contentious field in which diverse social groups produce, represent and consume a meaningful common past that becomes localized in certain places, the urban arena springs to mind. As mentioned before, cities are extremely dense and heterogeneous spaces in which many different social groups convene. Accordingly, places in cities are likely to be interpreted in several ways since different groups are present which may locate different heritages in these places. In order to be able to analyze heritage as a complex system of meaning, recent research has placed it in a matrix (cf. Timothy/Boyd 2003). This matrix demonstrates both the dimensions of the significance of heritage and dimensions of the scales of heritage. Overlapping areas of significance of heritage include its economic aspect (generating income), its social function (creating group identities), its political dimension (manipulating the past for political purposes, and finally its scientific (educative) aspect. The dimension of the scales of heritage is separated into the four reference frames of the personal, the local, the national and the global. Accordingly, people may have greatly differing experiences in a place depending on whichever scale of heritage is important to them: "A Medieval cathedral may be an architectural/historical resource, an exhibition, an indoor element in a tourism entertainment package, a restful refuge, or a source of personal religious experience" (Ashworth/Hartman 2005: 247).

If the past is placed as 'heritage' in a public urban space, it is exposed to appropriation by supportive, but also to contradictions by opposing social groups. Each of them may favour the representation of a different area of the significance, and/or of the scales of heritage. And if we consider heritage as an industry in which a diverse set of public and private players seek to make profit, and in which producers and (touristic) consumers often are non-locals, it is even more difficult to create a public consensus on who is legitimized to represent which past as a common heritage, and how.

If the city is seen as a collective product of its citizens, it should also belong to the citizens who created it. Given the diverse layers of potential conflict presented in this short outline, it is all the more incomprehensible that an analysis of the complex and contested conjunction of the urban, the common(s) and heritage to this day faces great hesitancy on the part of science. I am very happy that this analysis is being taken up in the framework of this seminar series.

Production of space through emotional ownership

Eline Hansen

Notes on presentation to Imagine IC

10.11.2015

Notes on film and presentation in relation to Commons

The presentation notes below can be read as an illustration of the previous text by Frank (2015). The South Bank can be thought of as commons because it illustrates how a web of social relations has an unwritten understanding of how the undercroft is appropriated as a common space or resource. Through this appropriation they produce a certain place within the city of London. Once this place comes under threat this web of relations that stretches across the world mobilises to claim the skateboard park as 'skateboarding heritage'. In this respect the case illustrates the finely interwoven connection between how space is produced through social action, the being and doing in a place; how this social action is generated through a web of relations that have an unwritten understanding of how this space should be used; and finally how this web of relations can mobilise to change the status of the space (resource) once it comes under threat or is enclosed.

How do diversifying populations stake a claim on the spaces of the city through the mobilisation of heritage formations and what role does emotion play in this?

Rather than talk about the areas of the city that I am currently investigating, seeing as I am the beginning of the research process, I thought it best to talk about a case in which I played a small but professional role last year, and which I feel best illustrates the intrinsic relationship between the production of space through emotional ownership and mobilisations of heritage, including the implications this has for how we come into contact with one another and understand one another within the city.

This is the case of group of like-minded individuals who took on the SouthBank Centre, a world-famous cultural behemoth that sits on the South Bank of the Thames, that includes the National Theatre, the Hayward Gallery and British Film Institute among others,... and who in their own words believes in "drawing on its heritage as a festival site, to encourage everyone to become involved in the arts in new and exciting ways".

Film, first 3 mins, introducing the audience to the case <http://www.llsb.com/homepage/the-bigger-picture-campaign-film/>

The urban built environment, however, is not static, things change due to wider socio-economic, environmental and political dynamics. In this instance, when the Southbank Centre, decided it needed to develop the undercroft for retail units that would help pay for renovation work to one of their buildings, the skateboarders and others mobilised themselves. They pronounced that the undercroft was the home of British skateboarding, and had been so for the last 40 years. At this point the emotional investment that skateboarders and others had invested in this particular space came under threat which triggered not only a group of people, not necessarily geographically bound, to come together as a community, but

also to assert this particular space and their practices within it as heritage. For me this short example illustrates the tightly bound connection between space and heritage production that centres around sense of place, belonging and identity and, equally how space is produced through emotional investment.

1. Production of space through emotional ownership

This space became into being not just because of its physical conception by architects and planners, it also came into being through its appropriation. The smooth undulating surfaces protected from the worst of the British weather provided a perfect place for skateboarders. Equally and additionally, this particular space was appropriated by skaters because skateboarding, especially in its early years, was considered not a sport but an urban nuisance and the undercroft was an underused space and empty space. Away from the eyes of the street.

Through the appropriation over the years, the skateboarders and those linked to the activity asserted their identity and sense of belonging within the space. It became a place to meet, to establish networks of friends and other like-minded individuals. These networks inscribed their own narrative within the space and built its reputation as a "home" for skateboarding in London. And this narrative and identity has been passed on, from one generation to another generation of skateboarders. In this respect they produced a space in the city of London through its emotional ownership, which brings with it a sense of responsibility and care and perhaps even duty (Chevalier 2015)¹⁷.

2. Emotional networks and cultural conflict and moments of mobilisation

The other reason I have chosen this example is because it illustrates the network like character of emotional ownership and that this network is not always consensual. Additionally, I want to ask whether these emotional networks are always present but only come to the fore when something changes.

- a. One thing this case illustrates, and which is also apparent in the short film, is the range of people, including myself, who became emotionally invested in this space. However, everyone is not emotionally invested in the same way because they are not connected to this space in the same way. Emotions invested in space maybe negative as well as positive. For some there maybe emotions of fear attached to the undercroft because of the very people who have appropriated the space, or others may have emotions of irritation because of how the space has been appropriated.

The most obvious emotional investment here is perhaps the opposing attachment to the space of the South Bank Centre. Their emotional investment is an economic one because of their need to refurbish the buildings that they already own and presumably have a greater emotional investment in. This opposition between the two 'heritage producers' played out as a cultural clash between what was valued cultural heritage and what was not, and, of course, to whom. As you can see the language used by

¹⁷ Chevalier. D.A.M, 2015 Playing It by the Rules: Local Bans on the Public Use of Soft Drugs and the Production of Shared Spaces of everyday Life. Academisch Proefschrift Juni 26 2015. Supported by the Faculty of Social and behavioural Sciences and the faculty of Law, University of Amsterdam

both parties became highly emotive, whether it is playing on the heart strings of parents and their children's cultural future or the use of tombstones to signify the death of British skateboarding.

- b. Secondly the case illustrates the network-like nature of emotional investment in space and how these networks are not necessarily predictable and can cut across perceived boundaries of class, ethnicity, age and gender. Take myself for example, I became involved in a professional capacity, not as a heritage professional, I was wearing another hat, that of an urban designer. Not only am I a middle-class female who has never been known to attempt an 'ollie', but I also live in Alkmaar here in the Netherlands. I became emotionally invested in this space not because I felt it was the home of British skateboarding, but for a very different reason, namely the homogenisation of the built environment. Boris Johnson the flamboyant Mayor of London also became involved, and I suspect his involvement had very little to do with skateboarding.

Equally there are many other people who share the same space who may have no emotional connection to it. For many the idea of the mobilisation of skateboarding as part of the heritage of the Southbank may exist as a white noise.

- c. So this brings me to my next line of enquiry when considering mobilisation around heritage formation. Do these emotional networks only form when something changes, are they only temporary in nature? Or do they exist dormant under the surface, only to emerge when something changes? Or perhaps, only the extent or reach of the emotional network changes?

Additionally what do these emotional networks look like? Externally they may appear as "us" and "them" but internally they are complex, not only at times conflictual but also, not necessarily consensual. Does this mean that mobilisations are always adversarial, as in this case, or can they be more nuanced in nature?

3. Implications

While I am still out developing the tools to try examine the network like character of emotional ownership of space, there are the implications for heritage professionals in trying to understand how heritage regimes are mobilised and shaped.

Firstly is the role space itself plays. The built environment shapes what people do, how they do it and how they come into contact with one another. In this respect space plays a role in shaping social networks and the different ways in which they are emotionally invested.

If we consider the shared spaces of every day life here in the Bijlmer with the South bank of the Thames in London, they are very different. Therefore it would be reasonable to expect that the ways in which they are appropriated and by whom would also differ and this has implications how social networks develop as well as the shape and character of their emotional investment.

Secondly, exploring the network-like character emotion and the different ways in which it is emotionally invested challenges

assumptions around the notion of community. My early research in the Dappermarkt is revealing that while those from the outside may view the market holders as a community because they share the same way of working and appropriate the same space. However, the reality is very different. Early interviews in the market reveal very different emotional attachments illustrated by different hopes and dreams for the future of the space.

Lastly, and equally important, once these mobilisations become stabilised as "heritage" how does this shape social relations in spaces of the city especially at a time when city populations are diversifying?

If the skateboarders were to win a stroll along the South bank of the River Thames will be very different experience to stroll down the river if the South Bank Centre were get their way and develop the undercroft into retail units and ubiquitous coffee outlets. They will differ in terms of who you would encounter and what you would see them doing. They will differ in terms of the forms of contact that are made and the social networks that develop in this space. This small case therefore also illustrates how production of cultural heritage plays an intrinsic role in shaping space through who is there, (who is not there), when they are there, (when they are not there), how they belong, (or not belong), perceptions of who they are, (who they are not), and ultimately how they "rub along" together.

4. With this in mind, I leave you with my final question. Who do you think won this particular 'heritage battle'?

Cruquius ontwikkelen – van onderop

Leon Paquay

"Mensen in gesprek laten gaan over de unieke waarde die aanwezig is in deze buurt"

Leon Paquay 'maakt' Cruquius: een nu nog desolaat gebied nabij Zeeburg, dat in de komende jaren flink ontwikkeld moet worden – van onderop. We interviewden hem om te kijken hoe dit gebied zich zal gaan ontwikkelen en waar hij zijn inspiratie vandaan haalt.

Hoe maak jij de stad?

Het Cruquiusgebied heeft een interessante geschiedenis. Vroeger kwamen hier de schepen aan met goederen uit de koloniën en werd kokosolie, thee, cacao en koffie in de pakhuizen opgeslagen. Ook waren er fabrieken waar spoorwagematerieel, asbest en beton werd gemaakt.

Het bedrijventerrein is in een neerwaartse spiraal terecht gekomen en ziet er nu een beetje desolaat uit. Toch werken hier altijd nog zo'n 1500 mensen en er is inmiddels weer veel aandacht voor het gebied. De gemeente heeft het aangewezen als een plek waar wonen en werken samen moeten gaan.

Projectontwikkelaar Amvest en ondernemers met een grondpositie willen bouwen, het liefst veel en hoog. Om de ontwikkeling van het Cruquiusgebied in goede banen te leiden heeft de gemeente een [spelregelkaart](#) gemaakt. Iedere nieuwe ontwikkeling moet passen binnen de spelregels.

Deze manier van werken vraagt van alle partijen dat ze met elkaar in gesprek gaan, zodat ze samen kunnen bepalen hoe het gebied zich verder gaat ontwikkelen. Maar op dit moment zitten de meeste partijen nog teveel in hun eigen groef, zijn mensen te druk met hun eigen bedrijf en hebben zij geen zicht op of vertrouwen in de initiatieven die er in de rest van het Cruquiusgebied ontwikkeld worden.

Daar wilde ik wat aan doen. Als eerste stap heb ik een boekje samengesteld waarin van elk perceel wordt beschreven welk bedrijf of ondernemer hier werkzaam is. Op deze manier kunnen mensen zich oriënteren wie hun burens zijn en hoe ze contact kunnen leggen en met elkaar in gesprek gaan.

In december 2014 hebben we het stadslab [Cruquiusconnects](#) opgericht. Dit is een platform waarin we alle stakeholders in dit gebied aan tafel willen krijgen.

Ook willen we stem geven aan de partijen die in het gebied actief zijn, maar geen grondpositie hebben. In de 'tijdelijkheid' zijn hier namelijk een aantal broedplaatsen neergestreken die met een kortlopend contract van de lege loodsen gebruik mogen maken en erg succesvol zijn; heel belangrijk voor de ontwikkeling van de buurt en de startende ondernemers zelf.

Daarnaast biedt de Openbare Werkplaats werkruimte aan kunstenaars en ZZP-ers die van allerhande gereedschappen en machines gebruik kunnen maken. Betaalbare werkplaatsen is wat een toekomst bestendige wijk nodig heeft.

Maar wanneer de grondeigenaren met nieuwe bouwplannen komen dan bestaat er grote kans dat zij uit de loodsen moeten vertrekken. Door deze partijen met elkaar te verbinden en een stem te geven kan gezamenlijk worden gezocht naar een oplossing waarbij het hele gebied profiteert van elkaars talenten en kwaliteiten. Wij willen waken voor de gentrificatie die in andere wereldsteden al zo desastreus om zich heengrijpt.

Om de ontmoetingen op gang te brengen en iedereen naar buiten krijgen, wordt er vanaf nu maandelijks een Meet & Eat

georganiseerd voor iedereen die iets met het Cruquiusgebied doet of wil doen. Telkens op een andere locatie in het gebied.

Cruquiusconnects coördineert maandelijks een aantal werkgroepen die een aantal concrete issues in de buurt aanpakken. Hierbij kun je denken aan: de inrichting van de openbare ruimte (*placemaking*), het verbeteren van de openbaar vervoersituatie, de buurt bekender maken door verschillende activiteiten, verbingsbruggen met andere buurten of ontwerpwedstrijden voor drijvende moestuinen. Dat alles moet straks resulteren in een wijk waar het contrast tussen industrieel erfgoed en nieuwbouw optimaal is benut en een goede balans in de functies wonen, werken en ontmoeten is gevonden.

Wat inspireert jou?

Iets wat mij erg getriggert heeft, is het project van de Franse kunstenaar Sébastien Renaud. Hij deed mee aan een festival in Kortrijk: [Kortrijk Congé](#). Hij bouwde met zijn team zo'n 50 houten bedden, tafels en zo'n 300 stoelen op pleinen in Kortrijk, en zo creëert hij ontmoetingsplaatsen waarbij mensen met elkaar in contact komen. 'Want', zo stelt hij, 'er zijn in de stad geen plekken meer waar je gratis aan een tafel kunt zitten, terwijl de stad de plek bij uitstek is waar mensen elkaar zouden moeten ontmoeten'.

Iedereen kan aan tafel plaatsnemen; het project van Renaud kent geen grenzen of barrières. En als men elkaar niet echt ontmoet dan kan er ook niet samen aan iets gebouwd worden.

Mensen uitnodigen om elkaar te ontmoeten en verbinden; dat is precies wat we met CruquiusConnects ook proberen te doen.

Wat betekent Nieuw Nederland voor jou?

Je ziet op dit moment enorme ontwikkelingen; steeds meer mensen geloven dat het anders kan en moet. Na de Tweede Wereldoorlog hebben onze ouders een zogenaamde verzorgingsstaat opgebouwd, die in de jaren negentig door verzelfstandiging en marktwerking is ontmanteld – wat geleid heeft tot grote machtsconcentraties bij banken, verzekeringsmaatschappijen, woningbouwcoöperaties en energieleveranciers. Dit gaat veranderen; de burger laat zich niet meer de wet voorschrijven en gaat zelf alternatieven uitbouwen die eerlijker functioneren. Die kans moeten we nu grijpen, anders dreigt het talent van een hele generatie verloren te gaan. Een platform als Nieuw Nederland is daar ideaal voor.

Welke Stadmaker moeten wij nog meer interviewen?

Iemand die interessante gedachten ontwikkeld is Rutger Bregman, historicus en schrijver bij onder andere De Correspondent. In zijn boek [Gratis geld voor iedereen](#) schetst hij hoe we af moeten van de regie van grote marktpartijen en naar een samenleving toe moeten waarin meer ruimte is voor ieders individuele kwaliteiten in synergie en co-creatie. Daar kan de stad alleen maar beter van worden!

doen.

Urban commons have radical potential – it's not just about community gardens

A rise in commonly owned spaces and services hopes to reclaim the city for the public good, providing a participatory alternative to exclusive urban development. But how can it be upscaled from local garden projects?

The Guardian 30.07.2015

It has become fashionable to talk about the “urban commons”, and it's clear why. What we traditionally conceive of as “the public” is in retreat: public services are at the mercy of austerity policies, public housing is being sold off and public space is increasingly no such thing. In a relentlessly neoliberal climate, the commons seems to offer an alternative to the battle between public and private. The idea of land or services that are commonly owned and managed speaks to a 21st-century sensibility of, to use some jargon, participative citizenship and peer-to-peer production. In theory, at least, the commons is full of radical potential.

Why is it, then, that every time the urban commons is mentioned it is in reference to a community garden? How is it that the pioneers of a new urban politics are always planting kale and rhubarb? Can commoning be scaled up to influence the workings of a metropolis – able to tackle questions of housing, energy use, food distribution and clean air? In other words, can the city be reimagined as commons, or is commoning the realm of tiny acts of autarchy and resistance?

England has a particular history of commoning that is still written into the fabric of London. Wimbledon, Clapham, Ealing – they all have commons, where our forebears once had the right to graze their livestock. But the enclosures of the 18th century transferred the majority of common land into private hands, turning it into a marketable resource and creating a landless working class. And the problem of the commons today is that we still tend to think of it as a common resource, whether it be oceans and rivers or fish stocks.

This is a misunderstanding. Because we cannot have a common resource without a common strategy for managing it. Elinor Ostrom argued that the commons requires a set of rules. She won the Nobel prize in economics for proving that these resources need not succumb to the so-called “tragedy of the commons” (exploitation by someone taking more than their share) if a system of checks and balances prevails. And so, rather than a resource, the commons is a process, a set of social relations by which a group of people share responsibility for, yes, a garden or even the governance of their neighbourhood. As historian Peter Linebaugh has said, the commons is best understood as a verb.

The current popularity of the commons as an idea is partially

driven by the internet and the fact that network tools make it so much more feasible for larger groups to self-organise. Open-source software, Wikipedia, the creative commons and social media make commoning possible while affirming the ethos of horizontal organisation. In urban terms, the fact that commoning most often takes the form of gardens in left-over plots or in the interstices is clearly because of the limited availability of land and because gardening presents a low barrier to entry compared to, say, construction. But even these garden initiatives are constantly under threat. In the late 1990s mayor Rudy Giuliani tried to sell off more than 100 community gardens in New York. And in Berlin, there was a struggle recently to protect the allotment gardens on the abandoned airfield of Tempelhof from developers.

In fact, it is often in moments of crisis that the idea of commons asserts itself. The protest movements that took over Tahrir Square in Cairo, Gezi Park in Istanbul and Zuccotti Park in New York transformed public space – state-owned, with the exception of Zuccotti – into a temporary commons through mass self-organisation. Similarly, the economic crisis in Greece has led to a resurgence of commoning in Athens, where parks neglected by the municipality started to be maintained by resident groups. And one could cite numerous examples of commoning in the favelas of Brazil, where many communities take pride in co-creating and self-managing their environment.

The question is whether the commons, with its potent political dimension, can transcend extreme need and symbolic resistance on the one hand and harmless local initiatives on the other. And there are encouraging examples. One commons project that is beginning to achieve an ambitious scale and complexity is in Colombes, in the suburbs of Paris. Since 2012, the Atelier d'Architecture Autogérée has been developing what its co-director, Doina Petrescou, calls “a bottom-up strategy of resilient regeneration” – and it goes beyond your average urban agriculture initiative. It's true that there is a micro-farm for collective use but that is only one of three hubs, the others being a mini recycling plant and cooperative eco-housing.

The project now has 400 citizens co-managing 5000 square metres of land, producing food, energy and housing, while actively reducing waste and water usage. Already, by European standards, it is a fairly large-scale experiment in alternative urban living. But the aim is to add five more hubs over the next five years and to grow into a commons-based civic movement.

This is just one case study in how hundreds of ordinary citizens, not activists, can create an alternative urban economy. However, the question that always arises with the commons is, who is included? In contrast to public space, which is held by an authority for the benefit of all, commons can easily become enclaves. They tend to be determined by limited groups of stakeholders with a geographical attachment to a site. What happens when outsiders want to assert their right to that so-called commons?

Stavros Stavrides, a Greek academic specialising in spatial politics, is clear that for a commons to remain an open community it needs to be able to incorporate newcomers. “Commoning has to do with difference, not commonality, it should always be expanding those who can participate,” he said at a lecture on commons in London last month.

The bigger that community gets, the more complex the social relations. But that is not necessarily an impediment. The greater challenge, it seems, is whether commons can be sustained

without an undue burden on the community. One of the most inspiring community initiatives in recent years has been the Campo de Cebada in Madrid, an abandoned lot that a group of architects and local citizens reactivated into a public square and cultural space. But members of the collective, Zuloark, confessed recently that they are tired. So the system of commoning needs to be sustainable otherwise its idealistic potential falls foul of a romantic underestimation of what it takes.

And recent political discourse has routinely, even cynically, made that mistake. The Tories' aborted Big Society agenda invoked a vague volunteerism to paper over local authority budget cuts. With UK employees working the longest hours in Europe, when are we supposed to serve our communities? For commons-style thinking to take hold, we would need to move beyond quaint notions of the gift economy and engage in systemic restructuring.

Stavrides argues that for commoning to become more mainstream would require new kinds of institutions, specifically political ones. Thus far, political inspiration has come from outside Europe: from the water commons system in Cochabamba, Bolivia, or the Zapatistas in Chiapas, Mexico, or most recently the Syrian Kurds in Kobane. But that may be changing. With the election of Ada Colau of the Barcelona en Comú (Barcelona in Common) movement as mayor of Barcelona last month, commons-based governance finally has a foothold in a major European city. If movements like Barcelona en Comú can even begin to institutionalise a participative politics, then the commons may begin to reshape our understanding of citizenship and sustainability – and move the conversation beyond gardening.

Twelve Commons Dispatches for These Times

Alexa Bradley

Julie Ristau

Drawing from our work with the commons, we offer the following ideas and observations that we believe can help us constructively and creatively make the most out of this movement moment

1. **The commons and the creation of a commons-based society is a radical yet practical and necessary proposition for our times.**
2. **Commons exist all around us.** We can learn from them. People everywhere for centuries have created both formal and informal systems to use shared resource and make collaborative decisions. Commons come in many forms—from communal fishing arrangements to libraries, and from the rules governing waterways to the partnerships that define open source software, cooperatives, musical sampling and community gardens. While some of these forms are new, they have their roots in long standing indigenous traditions and survival strategies.
3. **The commons is a way of naming a set of relationships and understandings.** The existence of a commons is only possible within the context of collaborative, reciprocal and equitable relationships. These relationships hold a commons intact and ensure its fair use and continued health. The commons also calls forth a set of relationships that extend in ways that the market suppresses—to include future generations, other living beings with whom we share the planet, and the very resources on which we depend.
4. Commons are central to the life and vitality of a community, offering a **system of meaning and value that is not simply transactional or narrowly based on the market.** Resources in a commons are part of the totality of a community—its economic survival, its history, its ecological health, its beauty, its identity, its resilience, the relationships among its people, its life blood.
5. The commons expresses an understanding that **communities have a fundamental and equitable claim to our common inheritance** of natural and created abundance, and play a critical role in the stewardship of those resources. A commons is what we share and how we share it.
6. **The commons, then, begins with a claim.** This claim is a collective one made by a community on the natural or social resources that are shared and belong to them all. It is a claim for equitable benefit whose history stretches back in time. Communal resource arrangements have always existed in indigenous communities around the planet. In Europe, peasants asserted hunting and gathering rights that predated the legal authority of kings and landowners and were recognized in social charters. This is a radical and liberating history.
7. The commons carry responsibility. The community entrusted with those resources must ensure their equitable and just use as well as their preservation for

the future. **Equity and stewardship are intertwined at the center of a commons** with community members acting as the protectors, co-creators and beneficiaries.

8. The commons—as both an idea and practical arrangement—reminds us of the vital difference between petitioning for access and benefit or having real authority in regard to the use and stewardship of commons resources. **Commons governance draws its legitimacy from a direct relationship between commoners and a commons resource**, and a decision making structure that gives standing and power to the communities most directly affected.
9. There is a link between the material erosion of the commons and the erosion of the idea of the commons. **As the ability to think in terms of the commons diminishes (to even be able to conceive of such a thing), the actual commons of our society are left vulnerable** to appropriation, destruction and neglect. As we have lost much of our commons, we have unconsciously relinquished a sense of the commons. The same is true for the regeneration of the commons: we need to animate both commons thinking and the reclaiming or creation of actual commons.
10. **We have all lived the commons** in some manner, even if that word was never used. While the term “commons” comes from European history and the specific struggles of commoners to claim their rights, other cultures have similar and often more enduring traditions of communal ownership, interdependence, resource sharing and stewardship. Across these traditions and in our own memories there is great wisdom and practical experience to draw on as we forge the modern day commons.
11. The idea and language of the commons has been misused. Powerful colonizers and corporations and colonizers have used the language of the commons (as well as common good, common heritage, public interest and so on) to justify the appropriation of resources and dislocation of communities, particularly indigenous people. Resistance to this kind of co-optation and abuse is critical. **We must actively work to link commons work to the struggles for equity, racial justice and human dignity.**
12. We need a commons revival. Fostering, supporting and animating any kind of commons begins by asking a different set of questions that engage a broader set of people’s experiences and help a community break out of constrained thinking. The goal is to equip communities with the ability to participate in and manage the communities in which they live. This in turn depends on people being able to see and claim resources in new or renewed ways. Because so much works against this possibility in our present society, **we must pursue intentional strategies to animate and bolster commons work.**

The Commons, short and sweet

David Bollier

David Bollier, the founding editor of On The Commons, thinks and writes about the commons at Bollier.org, where this post originally appeared under a Creative Commons Attribution license. Bollier’s commons activism is focused on [The Commons Law Project](#) and [The Commons Strategy Group](#)

I am always trying to figure out how to explain the idea of the commons to newcomers who find it hard to grasp. In preparation for a talk that I gave at the Caux Forum for Human Security, near Montreux, Switzerland, I came up with a fairly short overview, which I think it gets to the nub of things.

The commons is...

*A social system for the long-term stewardship of resources that preserves shared values and community identity.

*A self-organized system by which communities manage resources (both depletable and replenishable) with minimal or no reliance on the Market or State. The wealth that we inherit or create together and must pass on, undiminished or enhanced, to our children. Our collective wealth includes the gifts of nature, civic infrastructure, cultural works and traditions, and knowledge.

*A sector of the economy (and life!) that generates value in ways that are often taken for granted – and often jeopardized by the Market-State.

There is no master inventory of commons because a commons arises whenever a given community decides it wishes to manage a resource in a collective manner, with special regard for equitable access, use and sustainability.

The commons is not a resource.* It is a resource plus a defined community and the protocols, values and norms devised by the community to manage its resources. Many resources urgently need to be managed as commons, such as the atmosphere, oceans, genetic knowledge and biodiversity.

There is no commons without commoning – the social practices and norms for managing a resource for collective benefit. Forms of commoning naturally vary from one commons to another because humanity itself is so varied. And so there is no “standard template” for commons; merely “fractal affinities” or shared patterns and principles among commons. The commons must be understood, then, as a verb as much as a noun. A commons must be animated by bottom-up participation, personal responsibility, transparency and self-policing accountability.

One of the great unacknowledged problems of our time is the enclosure of the commons, the expropriation and commercialization of shared resources, usually for private market gain. Enclosure can be seen in the patenting of genes and lifeforms, the use of copyrights to lock up creativity and culture, the privatization of water and land, and attempts to transform the open Internet into a closed, proprietary marketplace, among many other enclosures.

Enclosure is about dispossession. It privatizes and commodifies resources that belong to a community or to everyone, and dismantles a commons-based culture (egalitarian co-production and co-governance) with a market order (money-based producer/consumer relationships and hierarchies). Markets tend to have thin commitments to localities, cultures and ways of life; for any commons, however, these are indispensable.

The classic commons are small-scale and focused on natural resources; an estimated two billion people depend upon commons of forests, fisheries, water, wildlife and other natural resources for their everyday subsistence. But the contemporary struggle of commoners is to find new structures of law, institutional form and social practice that can enable diverse sorts of commons to work at larger scales and to protect their resources from market enclosure.

New commons forms and practices are needed at all levels— local, regional, national and global – and there is a need for new types of federation among commoners and linkages between different tiers of commons. Trans-national commons are especially needed to help align governance with ecological realities and serve as a force for reconciliation across political boundaries. Thus to actualize the commons and deter market enclosures, we need innovations in law, public policy, commons-based governance, social practice and culture. All of these will manifest a very different worldview than now prevails in established governance systems, particularly those of the State and Market.

A word about the Caux Forum

It's a wonderful venue for people from dozens of countries to explore the conscience-based, humanitarian and humanistic aspects of international politics and policy. The Forum attracts diplomats, officials from various UN agencies, humanitarian relief workers, human rights activists, conflict-resolution experts and peacemakers, and many others. The event is held in a beautiful castle from the turn of the (19th) century that overlooks the valley below with sweeping vistas.

The conference persuaded me that the commons has a lot to do with "human security" in its broadest sense – subsistence, safety, cultural traditions and knowledge, personal identity. One need only think of the international land grab that is now displacing so millions of commoners from their customary commons of forests, fisheries, farming and other natural resources. People are being pushed from land they have used for centuries, so that foreign investors and national governments can buy up their land, sometimes for speculative purposes.

And what happens to these commoners? Deprived of access to their means of subsistence, they become landless refugees. Many are forced into nearby cities to try to make their way as beggars, hustlers and wage- slaves, introducing a whole new set of problems not only for themselves but for the swollen cities that have little room for them. Finally, the displaced commoners lose their cultural identity and way of life, which is not only a great personal loss but also a loss to humanity in terms of the knowledge and way-of-being that enabled people to live in harmony with the land in a particular location.

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