AN OPEN GAME FOR DISSENT: TOWARDS CRITICAL TOOLS FOR COLLABORATIVE PROCESSES OF PRODUCTION OF SPACE

Ana Paula Silva de Assis
Instituto Mineiro de Educação e Cultura (UNI-BH) and Escola de Arquitetura da Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais (UFMG)
ap.assis@gmail.com

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Abstract:
This paper presents the conception and application of a game designed for and played by a group of teenagers living in a slum area in Brazil that is currently under structural intervention of the State in a large spatial transformation project. The conception of this game is based on the Corbusian functional segregation of the city. Players have been invited to deconstruct such a proposed spatial logic and encouraged to imagine other forms of occupation and enjoyment of their environment.

Rancière’s account of dissent will be discussed as a counterpoint to the consensual orientation of current participatory policies in an attempt to reveal their limitations regarding its emancipatory potential. Flusser’s concept of open game will also be discussed as an alternative for the development of critical tools for collaborative processes of production of space. The outcome of this game will be presented in order to discuss the capacity of games to overcome social obstacles and enable thinking
beyond the current models used to analyse and produce the city. It concludes by indicating open games as a conceptual framework towards an emancipatory participation.

1. Introduction

The Game of Dissent was an experiment held in May 2013 with a group of teenagers in a social risk situation in the Aglomerado\(^1\) Santa Lúcia. This favela\(^2\) area is currently under a spatial restructuring process promoted by the city of Belo Horizonte with funds from the federal government. In this process, the implementation of interventions as well as the definition of their guidelines through participatory process is delegated to outsourced companies contracted by the municipal government.

In the current context of decentralization of State’s responsibility for the production of space in cities, we propose thinking of fuzzy responsibilities beyond public-private partnerships. This partnership model undermines state’s strategic responsibility for the balance between market and spatial justice. Architecture, when subordinated to the logic of business, becomes a commodity. The production of space as a mere opportunity to produce surplus value excludes the possibility of identity constitution from its process and the formation of autonomous citizens able to appropriate the city in a create way. This model tends to homogenize the sensitivities, under consensual arrangements concerning the production, the use and the appropriation of space.

Using as reference the process of the Aglomerado Santa Lúcia’s restructuring program, we propose to approach the responsibility sharing in the context of production of space through the lens of games. This process will be taken as the basis for a critical review that will be developed in this paper when evaluating the results presented by the Game of Dissent. Then the elements and the game dynamics will be presented. Before proceeding with the evaluation of results from the empirical experience of application of the game, the current institutional framework of social participation will be problematized in face of both the meaning of dissent by Rancière (1996a; 1996b) and the concept of open game according to Flusser (n.d.). The game results will be presented as a support for the critical questioning of the process for spatial restructuring of Aglomerado Santa Lucia. The game's ability to overcome social obstacles will be presented as a possibility for an agonistic model of negotiation between stakeholders. Creative spatial imagination, shown throughout the game by the young favela’s dwellers, will enable to question the participation model used in the spatial restructuring process of the Aglomerado, since the current model does not allow openings to include the vernacular knowledge of the dwellers. The virtual nature of the game will be accessed as a possibility of modifying the structure of the participatory process, suggesting an open source participation. As a conclusion, Flusser's concept of meta-game is presented, by which we intend to emphasize the ability of the open game to expand the current thinking towards an emancipatory practice of architecture and urban planning.

2. The Game of Dissent

The game was designed in the beginning of the formulations that motivated the research of which this study is part. It was applied as part of the activities of a university extension project and it was elaborated in response to an invitation from one of the educators of the ProJovem, a program from the Reference Center for Social Assistance (CRAS), held by the city government. The initial objective of the proposal was to introduce the debate about the city among the teenagers of the program. The Game

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\(^1\) Aglomerado is the term used to refer to the set of slums in the Santa Lucia area. In this paper we chose not to translate the term, considering it the name of the place.

\(^2\) The term favela will also not be translated, since we understand that the favelas in Brazil did not match the image brought by the terms 'slum' or 'shantytown'. A better distinction between the terms is presented by Baltazar & Kapp (2007).
of Dissent was designed to be played by the ProJovem teenagers and by a group of architecture students attending to the extension project.

2.1 The context: Aglomerado Santa Lucia and the Vila Viva program

The Aglomerado Santa Lúcia is an area consisting of four favelas, located in the South Central region of the city of Belo Horizonte. The area is currently going through the urbanization process that is part of the Vila Viva program, held by the city government. The program includes eradication of areas of geological risk, sanitation, restructuring of the most important streets, housing construction and implementation of parks and green areas. An intervention on this scale inevitably breaks a number of bonds established between the community and its everyday space. Despite the improvement of living conditions provided by the program, it is known that the impact of such interventions goes far beyond the removals and the resettlements required for implementation these improvements.

The game application did not intend to solve any direct conflict, since the target group, the ProJovem teenagers, did not participate in the assemblies and negotiations between the municipal government and the community. However, they did experience, along with their families and neighbors, the violence of the removals and the resulting laceration of the social-spatial relationships promoted by the imposition of a new spatial order.

One of the interventions with the highest impact in the program is the enlargement of the existing Main Street and the creation of a new street, called Bicão, which will connect two important city avenues. The main purpose behind the creation of this street, although not announced transparently, is to relieve the already overloaded vehicle traffic of the upper and middle class neighborhoods located around the Aglomerado. This reformulation of the main street in order to adapt it to the circulation standards of the formal city disregards the aggregating role played by the favela streets. Streets and alleys in favelas are usually the place where people meet and exchange experiences. These paths host a wide range of events and represent the plurality of spatial means of appropriation characteristic of favelas.

Many families of the Aglomerado have already been removed from their homes to give place to the construction site of the Vila Viva. Others still live in the area with the imminent threat of removal and uncertainties about their very near future. Some teenagers of the group reported that their homes had been "sealed" (the technical term used to indicate the houses that are to be removed due to the construction work) and that a number of friends and neighbors had been removed and sent to the most different destinations. Some families were relocated to housing units built by the Vila Viva program in the site. These units, which are built by a consortium of private companies, follow the determinations of minimal cost and therefore of minimal area. In addition to that, as part of a business contract, the deadlines for their design and implementation tend to be reduced in order to suit the contractual profit goal set by the companies.

2.2 Elements of the game

The game has in its essence the Le Corbusier (1993) propositions published in 1933 in The Athens Charter, which separates the city functions in residential, leisure, work and circulating areas. Despite all the criticism made over the century that followed its publication, this model still remains in the practical repertoire of technicians and city planners. Therefore, the argument of the game, although the

3 The Aglomerado Santa Lucia is the group formed by the villages Estrela Santa Rita, São Bento and Barragem Santa Lucia. It currently has about 20,000 residents and 3,848 household. Its has has 477,000 m2 area.

4 Belo Horizonte is the capital of Minas Gerais State. The metropolitan region of Belo Horizonte is the third largest in Brazil with nearly 5.7 million inhabitants.
players were not familiar with this theoretical background, was the deconstruction of the ordering separation of functions, blurring the boundaries between them and freely proposing uses for city spaces.

Each of the functions (housing, circulating, working and leisure) was associated with a color and represented by a team of players. Before the game begins, each team has to draw up a mental list of spaces and infrastructure that usually correspond to the functions assigned to them. Therefore, the circulation team indicated streets, bus stops, stations and bike lanes. The housing team indicated houses and apartment buildings. The working team indicated factories, supermarkets, bars, restaurants, schools, hospitals and offices, and the leisure team indicated parks, courts, movie theaters and squares, as well as bars and restaurants.

For each color/function a group of cards was prepared associating everyday situations and activities to the four functions. For instance, the set of green cards from the circulating group indicated circulating modalities such as bicycle, car, bus, roller skates, etc. The set of orange cards representing the housing group suggested actions that take place inside a home, like resting, eating, entertaining friends, working, etc. The set of purple cards suggested actions related to work, like sales, teaching, studying, surveilling, manufacturing, building, managing etc. Finally, the pink card set represented leisure such as playing soccer, flying a kite, going to the movies, walking, dating etc. For each color/set of cards, there were also other cards that had question mark, indicating that if the player was picked, he could freely propose any action related to the corresponding function of the card color.

2.3 Game Dynamics

The game was developed over a large white cardboard, the game board. On it, the groups were supposed to represent, through drawings, solutions for the combination between the action—that is randomly selected from the cards—and one of the spaces previously listed by the team. The dice was only used to set the order of the groups in each round. The group that won in the dice started the round by choosing an action card in a different color from that of their own group. They had to represent the action picked in the cards, which by the very structure of the game was never one of the actions that usually correspond to the prescribed use of the place.

Thus some possible combinations were a space to play ball in a circulating structure (like a street where you can play football or a basketball hoop at a bus stop); a place for commerce or services in...
one of the housing structures (such as houses with bars and shops at the front or houses with a manicure/pedicure signs); a place to study in a park; a space to rest in the supermarket. As the game progressed a city was designed over the white cardboard. Challenged by the combinations of cards, the players imagined other possible spatial assemblages to the city. Some solutions were a clear reference to the everyday spaces of the favela, others were the interpretations of the formal city repertoire, presented in creative combinations. Along the two hours in which the game was played, the white cardboard was filled by the spatial imagination of the players, who formulated a city which they called Bem Vinda (Welcome).

3. Participation, dissent and the open game

In an attempt to relate games to the production of city space, a look back to the rise of the modern city enables us to observe the effects of the consolidation of the process of production on the leisure spaces. The regulation of free time, understood as a condition for the reproduction of labor force, finds its spatial equivalent in the production of specific spaces for recreational sports and tourism. As a consequence, there is the abandonment of the street as a territory of play, of exchange and negotiation. The counterculture and the contestatory movements of the second half of the twentieth century stress the political importance of games as a means of resistance. The Situationist International considers the city a territory open to playful imagination, an expanded playground that calls for the reappropriation of the streets, a strategy for what Arendt (2005) calls the resumption of the public sphere.

The very argument of the resumption of the public sphere is one of many that support participatory discourse and public policies that attempt to promote social engagement. From an institutional point of view, participation is called upon to balance social inequalities, as it presupposes a fairer distribution of decision-making power. However, the institutionalisation of participatory practices brings to itself the responsibility for social mobilization. Therefore, tends to eliminate the antagonism between State and civil society, creating an illusion of consensus that instrumentalizes the participation as a means of legitimizing decisions that have actually already been made.

Participatory policies follow bureaucratic models that tend to undermine its emancipatory potential. The fragmentary questions posed when society is called to make decisions eliminate the possibility of a broader critical debate. On the other hand, the model of deliberative democracy, which currently guides politics, bases its central idea on the assumption that, in a full democracy, political decisions should be reached through a process of deliberation among free and equal citizens. This model, strongly influenced by Habermas’ idea of communicative rationality, presupposes the existence of symmetrical conditions for argumentation and knowledge. However, such symmetry does not exist and this fact is neglected in the structure of participation.

Rancière’s account on dissent (1996a; 1996b) points to the structural incompatibility between communicative rationality and democracy. Accepting the dissensual nature of democracy currently implies reinventing forms of communication between State and civil society. If social participation is presented as the main communication channel between these two instances, it is extremely important to rethink the parameters for an effective communication, beyond institutional boundaries.

In Brazil, although popular participation is recognized as a key component in spatial restructuring processes that present themselves as policies for social transformation, one might observe the lack of balance between the available legislation and the actual production of space. For instance, the Statute of the City, the Federal Law that regulates urban policy in Brazil, has in its repertoire instruments for citizen participation and democratization of urban management. These instruments contemplate citizen participation in various stages of the urban planning process, such as urban development council, consultations and public hearings, plebiscite, neighborhood impact studies and participatory budgeting. Although the City Statute has meant a great legal democratic achievement for regulating a
number of instruments to enable social participation and a more democratic use of the city, when it comes to its impact on the city’s space, the emancipatory promise that dominated the discourse behind it is clearly lost. Looking at participatory policies, it is possible to point out two structural aspects that have contributed to this failure.

The first concerns the institutional context. Because they relegate the pedagogical possibilities of critical debate, participatory processes become fragile and are easily captured by any dispositif of power. They become mere instruments to legitimize decisions made by technicians authorized by the State, reproducing the same “top down” model they are trying to fight off. The second aspect relates to the informal production of space. Although they represent a significant portion of spatial production in cities—it is estimated that an average of 25% of the population of large Brazilian cities live in informal settlements—the illegal condition excludes them from institutional policies for improvement in both private and public space.

After this first analysis we propose to take on dissent as a counterpoint to the current consensual orientation of participatory policies. The game is brought to the debate on participation because of its ability to transcend the communicative rationality and because of its openness to creative imagination. The communicative properties of games are closer to learning through experience than learning through speech. Thus we will take the concept of open game proposed by Flusser (n.d.), as a paradigm for thinking about participatory processes that are capable of accepting the dissent in its structure.

Flusser considers an open game the one in which the repertoire of the thought can be increased and whose structure can be modified. In the open game the totality of possible combinations within the structure of the game can never be used up. The game can always expand its repertoire. "Open games enable increase or decrease of repertoire, and structural change [...] repertoires are increased by processing noise into game elements" (Flusser, n.d, p.3). This research argues for the opening of participatory processes in order to recover the emancipatory aspects of social participation. In this context, games may represent a key in shifting the emphasis from learning by speech to learning by experience. Open games could help stakeholders interfere in the structure of participation. Therefore, thinking social participation through the lens of games may represent a step forward in the emancipatory role of participatory processes, towards overcoming the mere reproduction of current models for the production of space.

4. Results, observations and considerations

The main occurrences perceived during the application of the Game of Dissent will be presented as a support for a broader discussion that goes beyond the game itself. We will take the Game of Dissent as a reference for a critical review of the spatial restructuring process in the Aglomerado Santa Lúcia. This review is directed to the instances of social participation and to the lack of those instances.

4.1 Overcoming social obstacles

Among the many features common to games, we emphasize their ability to overcome obstacles that foster antagonisms and strengthen social structures. In the application of the Game of Dissent, we can see how the game facilitates the relationship between the ProJovem group and the college students. The application of the game happened at the second meeting between the two groups. The first meeting had happened two weeks before, during the course of a workshop held at the same location. In this first approach, the group of college students had been received with some hostility and suspicion by the ProJovem teenagers, which made it very difficult to hold the workshop. On the other hand, at the second meeting, as soon as it was announced that the activity of that day would be a game, no more sign of resistance was seen. The teams were quickly formed with participants from both
groups, and within minutes they were calling themselves by their names and supporting each other in the game preparation task.

The Game of Dissent features some of the elements described by Caillois (1990) in his analysis of games. The Mimicri and Agôn elements are the ones of relevance to this argument. As a simulation game (Mimicri), the Game of Dissent differs from traditional role-playing games (RPG). In the context of Serious Games, the RPG’s basic structure usually puts players in the role of a character that is quite different from their reality. When one analyses other role-playing games, one realizes that these characters are usually stereotypes, which tend to become caricatural by the limitation of simulation chances in the structure of each game. In the Game of Dissent the simulation happens even if the player is not supposed to be anyone but himself. However, in the game, he is invited to act as a freethinker of the urban issues. This role that has been denied to him by the urban restructuring program of the Aglomerado is thus restored by the game.

4.2 Transforming antagonism into agonism

Considering the Agôn element, that represents competition, it is verified that in the Game of Dissent this element plays a merely symbolic role. In close observation we realize that there is no explicit competition in the dynamic of the game, and its structure doesn’t include any type of performance measurement, such as accumulation of points, or any breakthrough system that would allow teams to achieve a certain goal, which could mean a victory over the other teams. The groups do not compete against the board or against their own luck either, which would characterize the Alea element described by Caillois. It is precisely the lack of such structures, however, that reveals another relevant dimension to the analysis of the game. How can one explain the competitive atmosphere created during the game, if the competition was not even one of the game’s premises? One possible interpretation is that, in the game, the players competed with themselves, as they were challenged to overcome their own imagination. Another answer would refer to the symbolic role played by the dynamics and the playful elements of the game. Dice, game board, cards and teams are direct references to competitive games.

In attempt to introduce the game into a political debate, we propose to establish a dialogue between the principles of Agôn, formulated by Caillois (1990) and the agonistic model of democracy proposed by Chantal Mouffe (2000). For this author, the ‘political’ dimension consists of the antagonism inherent to human relations, which can be expressed in many ways. She criticizes Habermas' deliberative model, as it seeks to eliminate the antagonism through the construction of a rational consensus. Mouffe alerts us to the hegemonic nature of every form of consensus. For her, “What is at a given moment considered as the ‘natural’ order - jointly with the ‘common sense’ which accompanies it - is the result of sedimented hegemonic practices” (Mouffe, 2007, p.2). Based on the understanding that power is not an external relation of two already constituted identities, but a constitutive part of them, the consensual orientation of the current politics will inevitably lead to depoliticisation of society. Mouffe therefore proposes to transform the antagonism that exists in social relations into agonism. That means not facing a contrary position as an enemy but as an adversary. Recognizing the opponent and knowing their point of view enables a space for negotiation and for the establishment of mutual commitments, even if the potential conflict has not ceased to exist.

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5 Roger Caillois identifies four elements in games, due to their essential nature. The author holds that in any game at least one of the four elements can be found: Agôn (competition games), Alea (games of chance), Mimicry (simulation games) and Ilix (vertigo games)

6 Mouffe distinguishes between "politics" and "political". The first concerns the set of practices, discourses and institutions that seek to organize human coexistence in scenarios often conflicting. "Political" in its turn consists of the antagonism inherent in human relationships, which eventually is expressed violently. (Mouffe, 2000)
In the Game of Dissent the agonistic model of negotiation can be translated into spatial terms. It is not about identifying the antagonism between the players involved in the symbolic competition brought by the game. The actual agonism behind the Game of Dissent involves, on one hand, the hegemonic spatial model based on rational consensus about the means of production and use of space, and on the other hand, the statement of other possibilities of production, appropriation and enjoyment of spaces.

4.3. Revealing the ‘epistemicides’ of pseudo-participation

In his reasoning in defense of an epistemological diversity of the world, Santos (2005) introduces the concept of epistemicide, referring to the death of popular knowledge on behalf of technical-scientific statements.

The spatial arrangements formulated as answers to the challenges of the Game of Dissent report us the imaginative richness of space repertoire shown by the young people from the Aglomerado Santa Lucia. The solutions are mostly very close to the creative diversity characteristic of the spaces of favelas. Some answers provided by the players were houses that are also workplaces and vice versa, and streets thought of as a space of permanent negotiation between cars, playing and neighborhood meetings. In the same way, the self-produced space made by favela’s dwellers tends to be a direct representation of their daily needs. It is a dynamic space in a state of permanent transformation, reflecting a continuous creative negotiation between individual needs and collective space.

When discussing the intervention models that are usually adopted in the favelas by institutional means (government, academia and NGOs), Baltazar and Kapp (2007) point out that these models, designed by architects and urban planners, frequently ignore the dynamics and the autonomous logic of the favela’s spaces. The opposite of autonomous logic developed by Cornelius Castoriadis, is described by Souza (2013) as heteronomy.

"The opposite of autonomy is heteronomy: here the laws [...] that govern the life of a community are imposed to some [...] by a minority, on the marks of a structural power asymmetry, i.e. from an institutionalized separation between rulers and ruled." (Souza, 2013, p.174)

The heteronomous mode of intervention is unable to include the vernacular spatial means of production, which in the context of the favela, are much more reasonable when one considers the everyday dynamics that represent that way of life. According to Baltazar and Kapp:

These initiatives completely ignore the dynamic of the spaces of ‘favelas’ and their self-production processes. They are indiscriminately done from top-down, following the same corporate logic of the legal city. If this is a problem in the formal city, it takes another dimension in ‘favelas’ as besides leading to alienation of users, the spaces designed (and built) are minimum in cost and consequently in size, with no flexibility at all. This leads to a recurrent process since, by becoming alienated, users lose any chance of political articulation and then they receive Governmental interventions with no criticism. (Baltazar & Kapp, 2007, p.3)

This alienation identified by the authors is in general terms the condition for the epistemicides performed by the Vila Viva program. A critique of this operative mode should not be confused with an exaltation of poverty or with the denial of the many possibilities of improvement that an urban intervention, with the aid of the state’s funding, could bring to this community. What is meant here is to highlight the inefficiency of participatory processes that should enable the exchange between technical planning and popular knowledge in the spatial restructuring of favelas.

4.4 Towards an open source participation
Popular participation happens in a preliminary stage of the process proposed by the Vila Viva, which corresponds to the elaboration of the PGE (specific global plan). Kapp and Baltazar (2012) present, in another paper, a fairly detailed discussion of all stages of the PGE, where decisions are made at macro scale and the guidelines for interventions are set out. In the structure of Vila Viva program, PGE is the only stage open to community involvement. They are represented in participatory assemblies by a reference group that includes, among others, representative members from the dwellers association of the Aglomerado. Community assembly should approve the guidelines set out in the PGE, accompanied by the budget, in order to obtain the necessary resources for interventions. After this stage, all interventions become responsibility of private construction companies, outsourced by the municipal government. Therefore, both the hiring of executive projects and their implementation become responsibility of these companies. The municipal government only monitors the work of the companies on site, to ensure the implementation of the guidelines that have been set out and approved in community assembly. In the stages following the approval of PGE there is no other instance with openness for community involvement. We present below (Figure 2) an interpretation summarized in a diagram of the main stages, their competences and degree of participatory openness involving the spatial restructuring process of Vila Viva.

![Interpretative summary diagram of urban restructuring stages of Vila Viva.](image)

This participatory process tends to instrumentalize the participation due to a number of contradictions in its structure. First one must consider that a discussion placed in very general terms, such as what happens in PGE, inevitably escapes the possibilities of a balanced debate between technicians and community. Unable to understand the real dimension of the issues placed at that stage, the community is led to agree with decisions that are often presented as the only possibilities, eliminating any opening for spatial inventiveness, with which they could contribute. Second, the PGE opens participatory dialogue only when it is related to “what must be done”, and not to “how it should be done”, and so it ignores what would be the greatest contributing potential of the community in this spatial renewal process. Discussing the processes of production, or the “how to do”, would approximate the participatory process to the real scale of understanding of the community, which is the micro scale of the production of everyday space, the scale of the neighborhood relations.

Furthermore, the model of communicative/collaborative participation by which the PGE is structured is not the most appropriate when taking into account the level of social inequality in the favela. In the initial reasoning of this paper, we argue regarding the incompatibility between dissent and deliberative models based on communication. In Brazilian favelas, the balance of the conditions imagined by Habermas for a decision-making based on communicative reason does not exist. Souza (2013) warns about the risks of a communicative/collaborative planning, when under conditions of structural inequality, becoming weak in the face of conservative forces of instrumentalization.

"However, the very existence of deep inequalities make the practice of communicative action difficult. The communicative action can collaborate, thus, for
the achievement of more autonomy, but at the same time, a certain degree of individual and collective autonomy is a prerequisite for the communicative action.” (Souza, 2013, p.150).

We propose to think of games as one of the possible tools to produce this minimum autonomy referred by Souza. We understand that some critical repertoire would be crucial to the balance of the debate between the technicians of the Vila Viva program and the community representatives during PGE assemblies. As a pedagogical tool designed for this first instance of spatial reflection, games could facilitate learning by means of experience, in contrast to other processes based on discursive methods. They could therefore make it easier for the community to approach and understand the spatial issues that will be placed under discussion, besides encouraging community engagement.

In the Dissent Game match, we witness the players in a process of taking into account the spatial qualities of their immediate space. During the session, the teenagers compared the proposed solutions with similar examples known by them. Comments like: "My uncle's house is like this" or "this is the same as in my street" were often heard. At the same time, less common solutions that brought something new to the repertoire known by them were mentioned with exclamation, as in "imagine such a street!", or even questioned, as in "is there a square like that?"

In addition to the previously mentioned PGE problems, Kapp and Baltazar (2012) deepen this discussion by proposing a reflection on how participatory process tends to contradict autonomy.

Autonomy is the ability of individuals and, foremost, collectivities to establish their own means of action and interaction, as long as they do not restrain others. Being autonomous means being ruled by self-defined norms. In contrast, the idea of participation indicates that people are allowed to take part in decision-making without being able to change its norms. (Kapp & Baltazar, 2012, p.1)

This reflection confronts us with the challenge of thinking about the game not only as a pedagogical tool for civic-spatial learning. The greatest leap forward into an indeed emancipatory participation should be thought of in relation to the open game logic. An open participatory process would allow the community to participate in the decision-making process with enough autonomy to question and even interfere with the structure of the process. To "turn noise into game elements" (Flusser, n.d.) is no longer a metaphor from a philosophical abstraction, but a real possibility of opening the participatory listening channels to the contributions of popular spatial knowledge, in order to produce a more adequate space to the lives of their real users.

4.5 ‘The virtual’ as a possibility for dialogue and cooperation

The Game of Dissent was proposed as an alternative activity that would allow introducing the spatial reflection among young people from the Aglomerado, moving it from the personal anguish of their immediate. A shift from the real problems into a virtual platform. For Huizinga (2011) one of the features of the games in general is that they are "not everyday life or real life. On the contrary, it is an escape from real life to a temporary sphere of activity with its own orientation.” (Huizinga, 2001, p.11).

Considering the virtual nature of the games, we associate the "escape from real life" mentioned by Huizinga with the virtualization scheme proposed by Lévy (1996). In it, the displacement of the actual (real) to the virtual consists of an "inventive return" of a given solution to its problematization. Therefore, virtualizing the territory through the game is an attempt to shift the spatial constraints to a platform where the problematization would become possible. On the virtual plan of the game board, an oriented dialogue to critical reflection about the changes in everyday space could happen in an easier way.
Also according to Lévy (1996), the opposite movement, the return from virtual to actual/real, is what allows "other operations to emerge, unleashes conflicts, unlocks situations, introduces a new dynamic of collaboration "(Levy, 1996, p.6). In this regard it is interesting to think about the relationship between the Game of Dissent and reality. The game board consisted of a white cardboard, so the spatial representation formulated during the game came from an abstract support and was updated as players, oriented by the dynamics of the cards, contributed with spatial solutions imagined by them. As this process occurred, we realized the effects of collaboration between the young group from the favela and the architecture students. The space represented on the board revealed a similarity with the everyday space of the favelas, and it also absorbed the contributions of students, already familiar, in some degree, to the codes of architecture and urbanism.

The virtualization of the process of spatial design via the game turned out to be a possibility of disruption in a consolidated cycle of architectural production process, which is summarized by the sequence: multidisciplinary team of project, design, and implementation/construction. In this model, a multidisciplinary project team, usually composed of architects, urban planners and engineers, assumes the centralization of responsibility for the production of space. Nevertheless it is important to keep in mind that even this multidisciplinary team is subjected to heteronomous logic of the market and the profits of construction companies. As a counter-model to this process, we propose a change in the previous cycle, considering the virtualization through the open game both in the design phase and in the implementation/construction phase, according to the proposed diagram in Figure 3.

![Figure 3. Propositive diagram for the collective production of space](image-url)

In this other cycle a horizontal design process and a collaborative architectural agency would replace the centralizing role of the multidisciplinary project team, usually justified by its technical-scientific knowledge. This step back consisting of the collective problematization of the space, facilitated by virtualization, is what is meant here as an emancipatory participative process. This is what enables the dissensual actualization of space, that is, an indeed collective production of space.

5. Conclusion or the “meta-game”

To conclude this paper, we would like to return to the initial proposal, that is, to think about the sharing of responsibility for the production of space through the lens of games. In order to do that, we will use Flusser’s proposition of relating every game to a meta-game. Flusser affirms that “games occur in games” (Flusser, n.d., p.2) and therefore, that “every game opens a competence for its meta-
game” (Flusser, n.d., p.3). Through these statements, we will conclude with two considerations that go in different directions.

The first one refers to the emancipatory role that we claim for social participation. Participation must be understood as more than decision-making process. Participating also represents the learning of autonomy, empowerment and the increase of imaginative repertoire. In the open game framework, the emancipated player is the one who is able to propose changes on the game structure. However, by stating that "games occur in games," Flusser (n.d.) invites us to think about participation and emancipation in a dialectic way. To play (to participate) would be a means to emancipation and, at the same time, emancipation would be a way to propose other games.

The second consideration arises from the statement that every game opens a competence for its metagame. The experience of the Game of Dissent, described in this paper, enabled us to indicate several competences that allowed us to establish a critique of the urban restructuring process on the Aglomerado Santa Lucia and also to reflect on the structure of the current participatory processes of consensual orientation. However, another competence was outlined in the last section, and if it is not the case of developing it in depth in this paper, we would suggest it to be a subject for further reflections. An open source participation, as in the open games, emerges as a possibility of emancipation also for the fields of architecture and urban planning. When it comes to the production of space, replacing the centralizing role of the architect/planner by the collaborative agency enables us to break up the architectural mode of production driven by real estate market, and also to change the conception of production of space, currently thought of as the production of surplus value. In this sense, this would represent the opening of the architectural field to reinvention and redefinition of its limits and possibilities.

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