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Nelson Mandela Square: Presentation Notes

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- We will look at segregation from macro to micro level in Madrid, finishing with an analysis of Nelson Mandela Square
- This topic is quite fitting as the name of the space is Plaza Nelson Mandela and our topic is segregation

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- Our research objective is to understand how segregation is experienced/manifests in a public square in Madrid
- Asking the questions:
 - Do the large scale patterns of segregation match the micro-level segregation of the Nelson Mandela Square?
 - How do the physical features of the square affect the ways in which it is used? Is segregation encouraged or discouraged by the design of this public space?
- We answer our questions by consulting literature focused on the concepts of segregation, gender, and public space
- As a methodology we are using ethnography and our particular methods included observations, interviews with residents and users, spatial analysis, and comparing statistical data with our observations

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- A 2016 study found that Madrid was the most segregated city in Europe (out of the 13 capitals analysed in Marcińczak et al. 2016).
- Socio-economic spatial divisions of the social 'top' and 'bottom' has become significantly more pronounced in Madrid from 2001 to 2011, due in part to the crisis of 2008.
- The strength of family solidarity networks (networks requiring spatial proximity between different social classes and generations) has also diminished in Madrid.
- Also, gentrification started late in Madrid in comparison to many other European cities, and therefore the initial desegregating effects, which usually can be seen in the early phases of gentrification are not very visible in Madrid.
- A pattern of elite suburban populations and poorer households in the central districts can be found in Madrid, although independent professionals slowly seem to be 'taking over' the central parts of town as well.
- Past studies on ethnic divisions in Europe revealed that the liberal welfare-state correlates with evidently higher levels of segregation, while the corporatist and democratic welfare models are related to the lower scale of spatial disparities (Musterd and Ostendorf 1998).

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- The Mediterranean and unitary housing regimes, especially when accompanied by different subtypes of the corporatist welfare-model, have been argued to result in lower levels of segregation than more market-oriented dual housing regimes (Arbaci 2007).
- The relationship between increasing socio-economic segregation in Europe and situations that are seriously threatening urban social life (such as riots) is an issue that does not yet seem to be fully understood.
- But, it is immediately clear that spatial segregation of rich and poor can become a breeding ground for misunderstanding and social unrest.

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- if we look at the metropolitan scale, there is a clear northwest -- southeast divide in terms of income and unemployment, with the lower socio-economic populations in the southeast half of the city
- Our district of study, Embajadores, stands out of this map as an area within the city center with high unemployment
- unemployment rate for Embajadores is the the 2nd highest within the central district (Centro)

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- to understand these patterns of segregation in Madrid, we can look at population growth
- between 1998-2012, the number of foreign residents multiplied by 6.3 going from 3.2% to 16.5% of the population of Madrid.
- Since old central districts offer affordable rental dwellings and mutual support networks, many immigrants arrive in these areas in their first moments of their trajectory
- you can see a concentration of foreign-born residents in Embajadores (and Lavapiés) neighbourhoods

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- just to situate Embajadores in the context of Madrid, Embajadores is among the top 10 barrios with the most foreign-born residents (out of 128 barrios)
- And within the central district Embajadores ranks 2nd with almost 34% of the population being foreign-born
- The influx of transnational migrants has made Lavapiés the place with the highest foreign-born population in Madrid. 'For example, in Madrid the current foreign population is around 16%, whereas in the central neighbourhoods of the capital such as Lavapiés the percentage reaches 50%' (Blanco & Subirats 2008)

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- 3 largest immigrant groups: Bangladesh, Ecuador, Argentina
- Senegal is not that prevalent within Embajadores (but it is still within the top 10 ethnic minorities)

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- in fact, Lavapiés has always been a neglected part of the city (no interest/investment from the city)
- 1980's : run down area, lots of abandoned buildings, very low rents, lots of squats
- lavapiés became a hub for alternative culture
- 1990's and 2000's : it also became an arrival neighborhood, very diverse population; attracted by the low rents, and the fact that its a central district

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- Now, if we zoom in on the Nelson Mandela square - it is located in the heart of Lavapies
- close many metro stations
- within walking distance from Sol and Atocha
- two main streets running along the square : calle del amparo and calle del meson de paredes ; connecting to Embajadores and Lavapies to the south; and to Tirso de Molina to the North
- it's also close to the Mercado san fernando and the public library (which is an important local hub)

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- about the history of this square:
- we can see (in red) where the Nelson Mandela square is now
- on this plot, there was the convent of Santa Catalina in the 18th and 19th century (with the building occupying one half and the gardens occupying the other half)
- this division of the plot in two is still visible in the Nelson Mandela square today
- in the 1960s-1970s: the city of Madrid bought the site and demolished the building
- only a wall from the front facade was kept, as you can see here
- the wall was demolished in 2007 with the project of redesign of the square, because it was seen as a barrier that caused insecurity for the residents, as it isolated both sides of the space

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- about the redesign project:
- after the planning and design phases, the work was completed in 2007
- the goal of the project was to remove physical barriers, improve pedestrian connection, provide open views, provide a meeting place for the neighbors, all that by respecting the topography of the site
- we can clearly see the two different levels of the square, as it was in the time of the old convent
- the new design includes benches and trees, as well as a play area for kids in the lower part and some water here
- the 2 levels are connected by 2 ramps along both sides
- the project cost a total of 2,9 million euros, because it also includes a big underground parking under the square

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- in december 2013, a few days after the death of Nelson Mandela, a social movement started around the square, under the initiative of a local association called 'the movement against intolerance', whose offices are located just by the square
- they organised outdoor events in honor to M. Mandela and they set up a petition to ask the city of Madrid to change the name of the square from Plaza de Cabestreros to Plaza Nelson Mandela
- they mobilised other associations in the area in support of their request
- the city of madrid accepted the change in january 2014
- the 'movement against intolerance' works in the district to fight against racism and promote cultural, social and religious pluralism
- they claimed that this square was a space of solidarity between residents of different origins

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Our research group conducted observations and interviews in Nel. Man. Sq over a three days between 10.03 and 18.03 are different times of the day and night. To the limitation of time - I will briefly explain our main findings.

- This map we created of New. Man. Sq, explains the space.
- Squat to north and businesses around - Seng. Restaurant - Baobab, and Bangladeshi shop.
- Clear flow of people between Lavapies Metro and Tirso del Molina - more on the Western edge as Calle del Mesón de Paredes is a direct road.
- The Sun is in the square all day - until sunset.
- Three clear areas, A, B and C.
- Main characteristics - A - old area, B - raised, C lower area - play area and water. (Point out arrows). Benches, trees and bike racks.
- New noted clear different spaces in the square as have other research (Lledo 2017) - though it can function as a unified space, . Area B -upper area, Area C- lower area. Connected by slopes (point out) and steps - to connect the flow of people from Calle Amparo with Mesón de Paredes.
- Thus, the architect in trying to solve the unevenness of the site (and to accommodate an underground carpark), created a vertical hierarchy of spaces, and as such certain segregation of users.

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- in order to exhibit our research, we we have mapped on moment of all activist in the square, at 16.31 on Monday.
- Area B is dominated by Male users. However division was seen here as well, between groups of Sen. and North African men that use this area. SEN men (8 standing and 4 seated) on the SW side of Area. There is a railing separating the edge of Area B, to Calle del Mesón de Paredes. The NA men are just on the border of the sun and shade, 2 using the benches, 2 standing.
- It appeared that the SEN are connected to street selling, which has been shown in other research on the square (Lledo 2017).
- Only one women in in this area
- Area C- Lower area at 16.31, mixed two women and men. However, as we observed more - it become dominated with many Bangladeshi women and children once school finished at 17.00.
- in which a clear predominance of the masculine-productive use of the upper square, while the lower square concentrates the uses and practices of care. In addition to the division of these uses, non-consumer leisure and children's play is also visible
- The reason to pick this time is to highlight the police present - Show route. Clearly inspecting both groups of men.

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- - Surveillance of NEL MAN Sq, and in particular SEN men. As highlighted by just 28 mins of observation in the sq
- - (Point out the maps of routes)
- - 1 - 2 bikes, SEN circled by police.
- - 2 - 2 bikes, Sen and NA men circled by police. (As in last slide. 12 SEN, 4 NA)
- - 3 - Police car, two officer and sirens at speed.
- - 4 - 2 bikes, slow down by SEN men. Now just 2 NA men.
- - 5 - Police car, same two officers, Slow down by SEN men. Just after car, two street sellers passed. The SEN groups redeuces to only 4 men, just by the railing.
- - 6 - 2 bikes., didn't slow down. The group stays at this smaller number.
- - CLEAR targeting of SEN men and street sellers - of course, recent events the nature of this conflict.

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- - Also, when we return to the square 30 mins later, we witnessed two police bike stop and searching a young black male.

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Through an analysis of our observations, interviews and other research carried out by on the square, we have created a general understanding of the male dominated upper level of Area B.

- Western boundary of B - meeting point for Street Vendors, or Assemblies of manteros, an example of a self-organizing structure of migrants engaged in street vending in the center of Madrid.... As Lledo states, "To try and correct the disorder in which some of the manteros live, there has been a popular push to establish the Popular Union of Street Vendors. The plaza, in this sense, is a place of doing, of pragmatic function" The upper area can be defined as a productive space for the SEN men.
- Other points of surveillance are, the CCTV and Bikes.
- Also can see groups of sellers also function as a form of surveillance of the police.
- See the difference areas with different hierarchies and function, it can be useful to use Gehl analysis of public space and the types of actives that take place. Necessary - including going to work, shopping waiting for a bus etc, which are mainly linked to walking. Optional - which are those that followed if there is a wish to do so and time makes and context makes it possible. Like a walk around the park. Social Actives or Resultant - those that depend on the presence of others. These are any social activity and resultant to optional and necessary.
- However, it is can be seen that the square was designed with Optional and social activities in mind, whilst the SEN men, use the space for 'necessary' actives related with work. Which leads to conflicts between other users. The police surveillance is a clear example of displacement pressure by the state.

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Claim in feminist theory, mainly brought up by Linda McDowell and Doreen Massey to consider gender as an influence on the construction and use of space.

Following their analysis, places are constituted by socio-spatial practices and the social relations of power and exclusion played out in places are constituting and maintaining boundaries.

If the social practices are defining place and if gender is influencing and defining social practices then our gender is influencing our use of spaces.

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- Gender has a strong influence on the use of the square
- divided in terms of gender
- "in the evenings, we can't come here"
- gender and built environment - separation in two parts - no view on the other side
- lower space reserved for women - good point: police surveillance - safety
- evening: young people lower part - men and women - upper part - men

As we found out from our observations and interviews on the square, Gender has a strong influence on the use of the Plaza Nelson Mandela. The square is strongly divided in terms of gender. The upper area B was mostly used by men and groups of men. The lower part C is mainly used by mothers, families and women in the late afternoon after school finishes. We met two women in the early afternoon and later many women and children. The women with children would come in the afternoon for the playground for the kids but they stated "in the evenings, we can't come".

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As explained earlier, gender is implicated in the production of space but also in the built environments and in sets of regulations on who should be able to use spaces and who should be excluded.

Here we can also link the gender division to the built environment because the square is separated in two parts, the lower part seems calmer because there is no main traffic street passing by it and the wall of separation from the upper part prevents from seeing what is going on in the other part. In a sense, this lower part can also be seen as a protected area where women and families come together in a space that seems "reserved" for them. Some women we interviewed were also emphasizing the fact that they appreciate the police surveillance because it makes them feel safer.

The upper part, where mostly men and groups of men were located, is facing a street with more traffic. In the evening, the division by gender seemed less obvious, young adults, men and women, gathered in the lower part. The upper part was still predominantly use by groups of men.

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The square can be easily divided between the upper and lower part, with the latter one scoring much better than the former. Although it doesn't seem so apparent when looking at the table of scores based on a purely analytical approach suggested by Gehl, there are a lot of nuances that are further deepening the discrepancy between two parts of the square. It's also important to note that the scale adopted for the table is based solely on the example of Nelson Mandela Sq., it doesn't compare this space to other public spaces, so it's somewhat overly positive.

In general, the space of Nelson Mandela Sq. is not perfect and lacks a lot, especially in terms of attractiveness of the materials and overall quality of the design. Still, the lower part seems to be much better organized as it is adapted to the needs of more diversified group of users. It's features, namely the playground and colorful benches, provide adequate space for children. The presence of children triggers the presence of other groups such as parents (including women and elderly people). To some extent it can be said that the lower part of Nelson Mandela Sq. acts as a safe space, whereas the upper part is left behind serving purely as a meeting space for the other types of users. With the vicinity of the African bar Baobab, the upper space is a hotspot for Senegalese men who, apparently, tend to use the space (including the bar) as a socio-cultural node.

The lower part also seems to better reflect the stratification of the local population that we've observed analyzing the statistical data – Bangladeshi women, more diversity. When combined with Niall's observations of the police patrolling the area, the upper level of the square can be defined as a spatially confined area of activity of marginalized and disenfranchised group of the Senegalese (and African) men. Recent events seem to support this observation.

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- The forces that contribute to spatial segregation are many and varied. The apartheid laws of South Africa were one extreme case of large-scale, government-sanctioned spatial segregation. Ironic that the individual who helped bring an end to that racist regime shares his name with the square...
- Spatial segregation is both a reflection of the existing social structure and a mechanism to enforce that structure, thus raising the question of how and when segregation should be addressed.
- Segregation has both negative and positive effects on city life; whilst it leads to exclusion making social and labour market integration difficult for immigrants, it also allows a concentration of cultural identity contributing to city diversity and vitality
- So is it necessary to change anything?
- segregation - not necessarily a bad thing, We observed a variety of different groups using different areas of the square -- there seems to be a place for everyone and consensus between

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groups which makes segregation in space largely functional. Therefore we don't see any reason for physical interventions to the space or try to reduce the segregation of groups

- The idea of functional segregation was outlined in Howard's Garden City Movement and Le Corbusier's Ville Radieuse, however functional segregation does have a history of implementation for 'racial means'
- The biggest issue is police surveillance. While most of the women we spoke to appreciated the presence of the police, it created tension and conflict among the users of the upper part of the square, particularly street vendors.
- Perhaps a recommendation we would encourage in the space is an alternative to formal police patrol. Less formal, more informal surveillance. Rather, we would suggest a Jane Jacob's inspired "eyes on the street" approach, mostly by involving nearby businesses, associations, and neighbours to be more involved in activities in the square (Movement against intolerance). Have a social/cultural program of activities and use the resources that already exist to animate the space (instead of police)
- Especially for the squat on the north edge of the square, there is an opportunity to make that border more permeable. Since it is located just above the playground, the squat could facilitate a more family-oriented environment.
- Essentially, any improvement to the square would benefit from a community-led approach. Not that it is the sole responsibility for the residents to bear the burden of managing the space, but a top-down approach will not change attitudes and strengthen social relations in the area.

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- In the context of last week's events, we can see that Mandela is a place of protest and a focal point for community mobilization. This is particularly important for the local Senegalese population who have staked claim to Mandela square as an important social, cultural, and economic node, especially as they are expelled from other public spaces around the city
- By encouraging a desegregation of people and activities to make a more "inclusive" spaces, it may lead to the "designing out" of this already marginalized and disenfranchised group