Participatory processes in the Barcelona’s waterfront development

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- Poble Nou, the old industrial district of Barcelona, is and will be in the next years, the area to develop the new Barcelona’s Waterfront.
In 1854, when I. Cerdà started his work to plan the development of the walled city of Barcelona, the Poble Nou was a neighbourhood of the industrial city of Sant Martí de Provensals.

The main road and train infrastructures that linked Barcelona with the north of Catalonia, crossed the Poble Nou.

That has been one of the reasons of the relatively isolation of this area respect to the city.

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Both, in his original version 1859, and in the revision of the plan (1862) Cerdà has the clear idea of the importance of the Poble Nou development:

1. Because its vicinity to the Port
2. Because its natural characteristic: an area rich in water very useful for the industry
3. Because its proximity to the main transport infrastructures in the area
Later developments like the proposals by Le Corbusier and GATCPAC, insisted in the idea to considerer Poble Nou like an industrial district.

The Master Plan in 1953 recognised this idea and too, the Cerdà’s plan to build a big park in the Besòs’ shoreline.
- Early in the 60's a new territorial strategy, related to the growth of the Port and the development of road infrastructures, promotes the development of the Zona Franca Industrial State, near the new port and the airport.

- 1965 Plan de la Ribera

- Popular actions and demonstrations stopped this plan

- Then, the big industrial companies sited in the Poble Nou, move to the new industrial states.
Francoist popular housing policy since the 50's to the 70's produced a dense concentration of “residential housing schemes” in the area of Poble Nou and Besòs River.
The recovery of civil rights and democracy, the nomination for the Olympic Games 92 and the adhesion to the European Union, represented 3 key points in the development of the city and, too, for the plans for Poble Nou.
The creation of 3 Olympic sites (Valle Hebrón, Montjuïc and Poble Nou) were key issues in the development of the "New Barcelona" and of the "Barcelona’s Model".

A model whose main elements are:

1. Descentralization
2. Recovery of the Central City
3. Monumentalisation of the outskirts
4. Creation of New Centrality Areas
1. To end the Diagonal Avne.
2. To reconvert Poble Nou in a new industrial district 22@.
3. To end the waterfront development.
4. To develop the “Park” in the Besòs River.
5. To shift the tendency of urban development to the North-east.

“Diagonal Mar” is one of the biggest developments in the area. Managed by the Hynes Corporation it represents a new “way of creating city”, more proxy to the American operations than to the normal ones developed in Barcelona in the last 30 years.
City’s neighbourhood associations have denounced that Diagonal Mar’s Operation represents the failure of the “consensus policy”, introducing a lack of public control in the speculative “background” of this important multifunctional operation.

Diagonal Mar solo es para rikos.

Diagonal Mar is only for rich people.
Last May, Diagonal Mar set up a "Participative Process". The neighbours, specially the young ones through the schools, were called to express their ideas about the new "public space" that is the core of the operation.

In your neighbourhood,
The life makes way
The new big park
Of Barcelona
This Saturday come to the party
Big Participation Party
Of the New Park Diagonal Mar

Animation
Games for the youngest
Popular “tapas”
And

A LOT OF PARTICIPATION