



Mapping of sexist violence in Valencia (Spain)

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Abstract

This article examines the ways in which issues of women's safety in public spaces might be integrated into artistic practices in art education from an intersectional and queer review of gender in the city. It considers the contributions from human geography, feminism and affect theory, trying to incorporate all of those perspectives into a pedagogical proposal. The first part of the article introduces the main issues to be explored, acknowledging them in the context of recent public debates in Spain that were related to gender and urban safety. The second part presents the results of a participatory, ephemeral, vindictive and artistic action developed with students of a master's degree in Secondary Education Teaching in the specialty of visual arts at the University of Valencia: An action of mapping the sexist violence in Valencia. Lastly, the article concludes with the presentation of emotional and educational profits gained by used practices.

Keywords

Gender; urban safety; public art; sexist violence.

Introduction

There are three key topics that sustain this proposal. Firstly, we explore the importance of women's safety in public space, while considering how this field of study has interested feminist geographers since the 1970s. This field is initially related to safety, then to fear, to surveillance and finally to discrimination and sexual violence. Secondly, we explore the intersectional and queer review of gender in the city, which helps us understand that fears in the city are a complex problem with different implications for each woman. Finally, we explore the need for visibility and denunciation of sexist violence in the urban space to defend human rights. Visibility can be achieved through "young people's arts practice as a mode of civic participation" (Hickey-Moody, 2016, p. 58) with political significance. Based on Hickey-Moody's (2016) concept of little public spheres as well as public and cultural pedagogy, we consider that young communities can mobilize, speak to and perform in the public sphere as part of their learning processes.

This study is focused on public spaces, although private spaces could also be considered because it is difficult to distinguish how structural sexism affect both areas and where the exact borders between them could be established. Sometimes, the problems of the violence that affect women start inside their homes and later continue outside it or vice versa. In certain cases, it is really difficult to distinguish the boundaries between the public and the private space simply because there are no physical limits anywhere and certain private properties are not specifically fenced. In addition, to that, some women may have experienced intimate situations that make them very vulnerable, no matter where they are.

Over the past few years, sexist violence in Spanish cities has become very alarming. Several cases of sexist abuse in public spaces have made their way to civil debates, but the topic has not yet been widely discussed. The public opinion has been compromised by the repercussions in mass media, the publication of informative details about these events, the subsequent legal discussions and finally the penalties granted to the criminals.

The penalties that were assigned to the convicts of various sexual assaults, were often considered insufficient or unfair to the victims in the eyes of the public. The main reason for this was the public opinion about the prison sentences being too low and not rigorous enough for the convicts to pay for the horrific crimes they had committed.

The public response to this wide social problem has manifested itself in various street occupations, protests, and parades in Spanish cities. The manifestations have demonstrated that women's safety in the urban environment is a public issue, but more importantly, they have also uncovered the existence of a shared social struggle that is ready to manifest itself throughout the country.

One of the most famous cases, with international impact, was known as "La manada" (the name is in fact a metaphor for a pack of predator animals attacking their prey together). "La manada" is a rape case that took place on the 7th of July 2016 in Pamplona (Spain) during "San Fermin" festival. The crime was perpetrated by a group of five men assaulting a young woman and filming themselves while performing their atrocity. Initially the assaulters were "just" charged with sexual abuse, but not with sexual aggression. The public disagreed strongly, and the disagreement manifested in various protests in the streets and on social networks with the claim "no means no". Finally, in 2019, the assaulters were charged with sexual aggression-rape and sentenced to 15 years in prison.

It is possible that the distribution of characteristics and the urban landscapes in which outdoor rapes happen are different in each part of the world. They probably are, because they are influenced by cultural issues. Inside the European context, there is a shared background that makes sexist violence look similar. A study developed in Stockholm has demonstrated that:

Rapes are concentrated in the inner-city areas but follow a patchy pattern in some parts of the periphery. Rapes happen in places with poor visibility but that offer an easy escape for the offender. A large share of them happen in the weekends, holidays and hot months of the year, which can be associated with unstructured leisure routine activities of individuals. (Ceccato, 2014, p. 97)

“La manada” is a rape case, an example of a kind of national (micro level) fear spread by media. “At the macro level, fear is understood both as a social phenomenon shaped by media (Gerbner, 1970) and as part of a generalised and diffused anxiety generated by current global and social changes” (Ceccato, 2011, p. 10). Therefore, it is a local problem connected with similar problems all over Europe.

“La manada” case was a turning point for the Spanish society. From that moment onwards, the cases of sexual violence began to be registered thanks to the creation of a platform called Geo Violencia Sexual¹. The establishment of the platform was a great contribution towards making this serious social problem more visible. Since 2016, Geo Violencia Sexual has denounced 155 cases of multiple sexual assaults in the Spanish territory. One of the most affected regions in Spain is the Valencian Community, where this study was carried out, standing out with 29 registered cases at the time of the study. This indicates that sexist violence is a very serious matter.

Intersectional and queer review of gender in the city

Confronting that several systems of oppression promote discrimination and violence in public spaces, it should be acknowledged that fear in the city area is a complex problem with different implications for each woman. From the view of intersectional theory, the meaning of being a woman is pluralized and particularized (Davis, 2000; La Barbera, 2016). The intersections between gender, sexuality, ethnic origin (instead of race), language, religion, household status, family structure, stage of life cycle, age, disability and social class have been inextricably bound up at the micro-urban level of urban form (Bondi and Rose, 2003; Kallus and Churchman, 2004; Ortiz Escalante, 2017; Peake 2009).

“The urban scale is important because it is at the local level that both crime and fear take shape and form” (Ceccato, 2011, p.3). Nevertheless, we cannot only consider the fears of white women, since multiple origins of fear are deeply connected to several identity factors. But we do recognize that our work is addressed to a population where

¹ Geo Violencia Sexual is an online platform to which people can report sexual assaults that happen in Spain. It was established in 2016 and its mission is to make Spain sexual violence free.

diversity is mostly minimized because the access to the Spanish Public Universities generates a kind of filter that reduces the encounters between some social groups. For example, the number of Romany students, immigrants or students from low-income families at the University is inferior to its presence in primary schools or high schools. Nevertheless, as Truscan and Boruke-Martignoni (2016) assert intra-group differences are as important as those between various groups and it is possible to be oppressed and privileged at the same time. For example, even very intelligent women that might be overly empathic can also become a psychopath's target. Thus, we believe it is important to consider our students as privileged but also vulnerable. The population to which this study is directed (master's students at the University of Valencia) are on one hand privileged people since they are Westerners, mostly belong to a middle social class and have had academic success. But, on the other hand, they continue to be a vulnerable group on the streets due to other features of their identity (e.g. their beauty, sexuality, youth naivety, etc.).

Although the vast bulk of feminist geographers research was centred on women, this started to change given the inroads that were made by LGBTIQ and Masculinity Studies at the beginning of this century (Bondi and Rose, 2003; Peake, 2009). Therefore, the perspective about violence in cities should be intersectional and queer in order to represent how sexism affects mostly women but also certain men. This fact introduces men at risk of suffering sexist attacks, and homophobic brutality in cities, whenever they are seen out of the border of masculinity or heterosexuality from the heteronormative point of view.

Necessary visibility and denunciation of sexist violence in urban space

It is necessary to make a visual presentation of the sexist violence and denounce it in the urban space. It is also important to place fear on the urban scale (Ceccato, 2011). Throughout the process of living under patriarchy we, both women and men, have been blinded to detect sexist injustices. "As the anti-violence movement has been institutionalized and professionalized, the state plays an increasingly dominant role in how we conceptualize and create strategies to minimize violence against women" (Davis, 2000, p. 1). To avoid part of the problem of sexist violence in future

generations, it is absolutely necessary to remark this problem in public spaces since, despite the existence of security institutions in the urban space, women are not as safe as men while moving in it. Even with existing security forces, women still spend a great deal of time without protection. Activist movements have given rise to a sustained feminist critique of urban-planning issues such as safety and creating city-wide movements focused on reducing violence against women (Peake, 2009). As a response to these claims, the planning profession has also paid attention on the relationship between public violence, fear of crime and the urban built environment (Kallus and Churchman, 2004; Ortiz Escalante, 2017).

But security in public spaces does not only depend on surveillance, urban planning, security forces or legislation. As Davis (2000) argues it cannot be expected to solve the problem of violence against women. The solutions are closely related to formal and informal education. And as specialists in culture pedagogies, we are committed to the objective of contributing to equality, security, and enjoyment in public spaces. From art education's point of view, activism and public art are considered to be one of the best forms to get students to engage with social justice. But such practices may be empty of meaning if people are not enrolled in a conviction that really affects them at least temporarily. "Affective temporality is a 'feeling moment,' in which a specific period of time engages with and produces feeling that, in turn, engages with and fuels activism" (Chamberlain, 2015, p.7).

As educators, we are interested in training future teachers in art strategies that will allow them to denounce the problems that trouble their lives. Skills for fighting for a better future are necessary for them and other generations, especially for those who will be educated by them. At the same time, the skills, and techniques we teach our students, need to be full of meaning in their actual lives. Most of our students are women because teaching is still a feminized profession in Spain. Therefore, sexist violence in urban space is an issue that affects them particularly. This makes it a topic on which it is convenient to generate reflections and thoughts which should then be made public.

Occupying public spaces by painting murals is one way to resist against the sexist violence we suffer in these same streets. Public art can offer multiple modes of

resistance, from violent actions to pacific understanding of activism. “The new wave of feminist movements operates through diffuse resistance to despotic regimes, the occupation of public spaces and the quest for alternative modes of becoming political subjects” (Braidotti, 2014, pp. 1-2). This proposal uses *Artivism* as artistic awareness-raising actions that influence the political to defend human rights. We can understand a mural as a keeper of knowledge, shared and co-created with the public. It is a process of public making—and associated experiences of citizenship—that are made and affected through youth arts practices, as Hickey-Moody (2016) defined it. In this way, we can “offer ways of better understanding the civic voices of those who might not have the knowledges to participate in more formal civic settings for articulating youth voice” (Hickey-Moody, 2016, p. 64).

There is a tradition of art mapping engagement events as collaborative research projects, mostly developed in museums (Lenz, 2016; Sinker, Giannachi and Carletti, 2013). It is all about exploring the relationships between landscape and other multiple interests; for example, how the public might relate artworks to places. Thus, art mapping is always about visualizing the relationship of some topics with space.

There is a close relationship between space, time, and bodies every time a woman is alone in the streets. Because when we interpret acts of violence, the type of area where a woman walks matters; the time of day or night matters; the type of body (sexualized, childish, attractive, respectable) matters (Ortiz Escalante, 2017). For these same reasons, in our educative and artistic proposal, space and actions are linked to show where sexist violence takes place. We are trying to present them without frightening women, without using fear as a form of control or to submit them to intimate space, not as children's tales and visual culture usually do. Nevertheless, the important questions in this case are not who perpetrated the violence, nor who suffered it. Anonymity is of crucial importance in order to shield the victims from more suffering. On the one hand, the focus is placed in the betweenness of buildings: neighbourhoods, streets, avenues, parks, tunnels, industrial areas. Mapping the riskiest places will help vulnerable collectives to be prevented from violence. On the other hand, problems that have been silenced, that are frequently underestimated or misunderstood, still need to be made visible. “Only one generation separates us from that era of silence” (Davis, 2000, p. 1). We need to be able to distinguish the wide range of risks that haunt us in

the public spaces with physical or psychological damage and it is urgent to attend to even the small damages that occur daily in our lives outside of privacy. Matters that we tend to normalize, but we shouldn't, are for example aggressions, gender discrimination or discrimination based on other intersectional added reasons.

Methodology

The epistemology underlying this research is based on a complex paradigm that contemplates the principles of flow or drift, nonlinearity, randomness, unpredictability, and others (e.g. processes of trust and sharing between intricate and engaged people with free will to participate) that break with modern and postmodern epistemologies. We apply for an affiliation as human beings with the universe, where the random is a central element of reality that transverses the research process through experience, immersion. We understand reality as a flow of processes that affect us and that are affected by all, in permanent movement and not as a given and analysable external object, which forces us to shift our position when investigating (González Abrisketa, 2011).

This research uses Art Based Research methodologies (Haywood Rolling, 2018; McGarrigle, 2018; Sullivan, 2005). Specifically, it takes methods from A/R/Tography (Irwin 2006; Irwin, LeBlanc, Yeon Ryu, and Belliveau, 2018), which allows us to face the research problem in our triple role: of artists (A), researchers (R) and teachers (T) in the area of art education. The grounding of a/r/tography in relational theories of art allows us to further understand and complicate notions of invitations to participate in public spaces. "A/r/tographic research provides one mode for further understanding of the complexities of the ways in which participatory practices are encouraged and the ways in which audiences and participants experience these practices" (Lenz, 2016, p. 25).

As a researcher, cartographies have been the result of a *flâneuse* experience in the metropolis. Ambulation as a *flâneuse* is an activity based on the Situationist's walks, *dérives* or urban drifts responding to the city-space and acting as a subversive strategy to resist the dominant systems of movement (Pérez Miles and Libersat, 2016). A

flâneuse is a paradigmatic figure studied by several academics (Elkin, 2016; Hammergren, 1996; Mouton, 2001; Panero, 2013; Peake, 2009; Richards, 2003; Van Nes and Nguyen, 2009; Wilso, 1995; Wolff, 1985). Additionally, the *flâneur* “has been reappropriated by lesbian analysts who have explored how women throughout time have been able to explore the city in ways that are not mediated through men” (Peake, 2009, p. 327). But in the majority of these cases the scholarships focus has been placed on the lack of opportunities for women to walk and socialize in public spaces, causing them to constrain themselves to their private sphere. Besides that, mine, and other exploratory practices (Scalaway, 2006) have been focused on the risks and dangers with which sexist violence threatens women in their drifts and everyday lives.

City cartographies could be seen as a tool to make visible problems related to urban space after exploring the territory. Painted in an artistic way, cartographies could also express emotions, represent conceptual frames or depict attitudes linked to these problems in different neighbourhoods. With this intention mapping has been necessary, to point out the milestones, to establish relations between similar cases or to categorise issues. As an artist and an architect, I have developed some knowledge drifting and designing cartographies in Ljubljana (Slovenia), Paris (France) and some Spanish cities; in addition, I have also worked with pedagogical cartographies. As Braidotti (2014) asserts “we need cartographic, i.e. materialist mappings of contemporary power relations” (p. 19).

As a teacher, it was necessary to transmit this background about disruptive techniques, about poetic ways of awareness to students. And the best way to do it, was painting with them; sharing the artistic practice and letting them go on once they had some skills and expertise, negotiating the results we wanted to have as a group. Because “mapping can open up new territories for art practice and pedagogy and make connections with, on, and about the urban landscape” (Pérez Miles and Libersat, 2016, p. 341).

Results

This paper presents a research process that was developed in October 2019.

It has been carried out in a time that has been considered as a new historical moment in the fight for women's rights. A period known as the fourth feminist wave, marked by mass protests in various countries and in Spain, of course, denouncing violence against women. It can be considered as a specific fourth-wave case study. Because this case study makes "links between the emotions provoked by certain experiences, the activism that emerges from them, and the affective temporality this creates in relation to the fourth wave" (Chamberlain, 2017, p. 85). An activity that is at the same time a pedagogical, artistic, and vindictive action. The research has taken place as part of the programme of the master's degree studies in Secondary education teaching in the specialty of visual arts at the University of Valencia. It is located within the framework of the project "Second Round. Art and fight in high school with *Fallas* and ephemeral actions". This project of teaching innovation has already celebrated four consecutive editions, improving the situation of Art Education, especially focusing on teacher training (Huerta and Gómez-Aguilella, 2019). In each edition we have prioritized a different theme. In October 2019, as part of the ephemeral actions, we proposed to the students of the master to paint cartographies about gender violence in the city of Valencia.

It was an educational proposal for a total of 80 students from 2 different groups. It prepared them to face teaching from the involvement with emotions, the identification of causes that deserve to be fought because of their relationship with human rights, the coping mechanisms of social conflicts and the way they affect our community. An action was to be developed in 4 sessions of approximately 2 hours per session. Initially we reflected on the sexist violence that affects all people, but especially women; the way in which it so does, according to our condition and identity from an intersectional perspective.

The following classes were dedicated to share the design of one large mural painting by small groups, in two shifts (from 3 p.m. to 5p.m. and from 5p.m. to 7 p.m.); a collaborative work in which the teacher was in the role of A/R/Tographer. Students of this master previously graduated in Architecture, Fine Arts or Restoration. Due to their different backgrounds, several ideas were proposed when we conceived how to draw the Valencian urbanism in a wall. One proposal was to draw a grid on a map and move

the urban framework on a proportional grid drawn on the wall. The second idea was using an OHP projector during the afternoon darkness, to project the map on the wall and draw traces on it. The last idea was using a slide projector to project the map on a white paper inside the classroom where the drawing could be traced. Then transfer it to the wall through perforated points and pigment. The advantage of having several solutions (Figure 1) was the possibility to learn new skills of drawing from partners. Three mixed groups were created to work in three different sides of the wall in order to allow them to work simultaneously. On one of the parts a cartography of each district was painted. Next to it, the south area of the city was painted and closely the north one. Each group had been assigned a different way to solve the problem of drawing and respect the scale of each district and block.

Of course, not all the students had previous experience in painting or painting murals. The activity was not only an opportunity to try and explore the possibilities of this technique, but also to teach others or learn from them (Figure 2), to make mistakes and to solve the problems.



Fig. 1. Process of drawing the cartography. Sample series. Author: own authorship. October 2019, Valencia.



Fig. 2. Process of painting the cartography. Sample series. Author: own authorship. October 2019, Valencia.



Fig. 3. Mural ready to be intervened. Sample series. Author: own authorship. October 2019, Valencia.

Mural painting, as part of the characteristic actions of public art, became vindictive by granting a sense of denunciation. The proposed cartography aimed to make a social problem visible, in this case, the sexist violence that affects women in the urban space. For this, it collected the representation of the urban fabric and the different districts that make up the city on one side. And on the other side it showed, through points of different colours, a range of 8 actions of sexist violence that can take place in the public spaces. These actions were defined based on the declaration of the eradication of violence against women published by the United Nations in 1993 and considering the recent reviewed literature. Thus, for this project they were defined as: rape; physical, sexual, or psychological harm or suffering for women; harm threats; arbitrary deprivation of freedom; sexual harassment; fear of violence; insecurity feeling; feeling of not belonging or fitting in a place. Ordered by the severity of the physical and psychological consequences caused by these violent actions, it seems that the latter are not so harmful. However, micro sexism is precisely the actions to which it is convenient to pay more attention to, especially from the educational point of view. It is disrespectfulness that opens the way to other more aggressive intolerances. And one of the examples of disrespectfulness and micro sexism is that women still don't belong or fit into certain places.

The night has historically been conceptualized as a dangerous and prohibited time and space for women (Wilson, 1991; Hooper, 1998). Consequently, women who transgress this imaginary and use public spaces at night are still seen as out of place in many contexts. (Ortiz Escalante, 2017, p. 57)

In addition, the artistic action became participatory and ephemeral. Participatory artistic practices are one of the best contributions of contemporary art to education.

Because participation provides the opportunity to convert the predictable outcome into a random process. Popular participation introduces many unpredictable variables that artists cannot control. For example, in participatory practice conditions of familiarity, personalisation, enthusiasm, playfulness, narrative, uniqueness, sociability and listening all advance and recede, but not all of them need to be present to foster participation (Lenz, 2016).

When participatory artistic action occurs as a learning process, it conveys the idea of the unpredictable as a value and of the process as something substantial above the result. This project is situated around the experiences of participatory practices in various settings with the intention of understanding how those practices can be utilised in public spaces that are searching for ways to meaningfully engage various audiences. Ephemeral art is another of the great contributions of contemporary art. However, in the popular culture of the Valencian Community, where this study is carried out, it is a characteristic with a wide tradition. One of the ephemeral artistic practices best known in our region is precisely the *Fallas de Valencia* (Ramon, 2017); recognized by UNESCO as Intangible Heritage of Humanity. Knowing that an artistic action takes place in some specific time and space and that its physical properties will be altered in the future until its disappearance also prints value to the execution process.

Students of more than 20 specialities of the master were invited especially for the occasion of the "PASTWOMEN Conference". Among other invitees there were also the conference assistants and the administrative and service staff of the university. "PASTWOMEN Conference" was a meeting to reflect about research for coeducation, organized by Paula Jardón, member of PastWomen research group about women material culture. The participation on the cartography consisted of painting according to the legend of the 8 mentioned actions, coloured dots and in turn to voluntarily writing the events in a testimonial book. As a part of the conference, an event scheduled for December 12th, 2019 was dedicated to Laura Luelmo. She was one of our students some years ago. She was kidnapped, sexually assaulted, and murdered in El Campillo (Huelva, Andalusia, Spain) in 2018. This event was organised in her memory because a trauma such as kidnap and rape submerged us all into a wider culture of everyday experiences of sexism. It was possible to develop this action

because affect “stick political subjects together, creating a specific form of public feeling that sustains itself for a limited period of time” (Chamberlain, 2017, p. 73). During the day people were participating with their dots and conversations around the cartography (Figure 4).



Fig. 4. Participatory process of painting dotting over the cartography. Sample series. Author: own authorship. October 2019, Valencia.

The idea is to offer this mural as a work in progress, as an action open to participation of everyone who also want to intervene painting in the future. In this way the action becomes a plural situated perspective when it is painted by a group of people and at the same time it is still full of singular interventions. A wall that can give more and more voice and visibility about gender violence with the passing of time. It is not relevant to show our repudiation or disagreement only when dramatic events happen, we should work towards expressing it more often. It is also necessary to stop minimising or normalising micro sexism every time it happens.

Results

Different levels of implications during the process

The experience mobilized the youth group. This happening helped them to realise a problem that affects not only everyone living in Valencia but also the inhabitants of other cities in the world. Participation by mapping their experiences in a shared way placed and positioned them in front of the reflection of what happens especially to women and their bodies in a specific place and time. Even so, the proposal was open to everyone, trying to take “into account a multiplicity of experiences of inequality and oppression” (Truscan and Boruke-Martignoni, 2016, p. 106). On one side, we recognise

that multiple forms of feelings responded to this forceful political action. Thus, women and men had different levels of implications during the process. While everybody started the work process very implicated, in the last sessions, less and less men participated in comparison to women. It seems to be logical that the sympathy with the cause felt by women was higher, nevertheless, it would be desirable that it wasn't so, and that all the population was equally affected. But identities are the result of multiple characteristics and experiences, so as teachers we cannot control the implication and of course we cannot force anyone to participate from a sincere feeling. On the other side, the affections are not always positive, we could say that strong feelings such as anger, rage, indignation, and sadness possibly mobilize, speed up actions with greater probability on the part of those who feel them.

The word affect can be understood in two senses, the verb sense, and the noun sense. Affect in the noun sense is understood as an emotion or strong feeling that goes on to influence our behaviour. This kind of expression emphasises the movement and does not purely encapsulate a feeling or a desire but also realisations that manifest themselves in resultant behaviour (Chamberlain, 2017). Probably those who have not suffered sexist violence, were not affected so deeply, and did not have so many touching feelings or were not moved emotionally. Therefore, their commitment was smaller in comparison to those who did. Another interpretation could be that some people did not desire to participate because they were trying to avoid being retraumatised by the affective intervention.

Sharing instead of silencing

Another sense of movement was detected, one related less with the body and more with the mind. The movements that happened were also mental, not just physical. The participants started to talk with each other, shared their ideas, experiences and even secrets about the sexist violence that they have gone through. Rabaté (2015) asserts that one of the recurrent questions when one discusses 'affects' is whether these 'emotions' concern the body or merely the mental or psychic parts of subjectivity. What we discovered is that tiding to one another, students realised that also small sexist actions against them had a high impact on their fears and lives. An issue that

has been silenced during a lot of time, a taboo that was emerging for a personal and social consciousness. That way the personal experience in everyday life was verbalized during those days by people affected while affecting others. Students were engaged in the social act of becoming aligned with the feminist social movement. But the force that united people through reciprocity was the political context of painting a mural in public spaces with a hope and desire of social change.

The contact between participants was also very important. As the action took place in the beginning of the course, the relationship between students didn't yet exist. But it helped them to meet each other and to establish confidence. One of the most important qualities of affect is its capacity to adhere subjects.

Affect is the touching of feelings, which are activated by this form of contact.

In the same way that moments of intense activism require a strong awareness of past formulations, future aspirations and engagement with the contemporary, feelings too can converge and touch one another.

(Chamberlain 2017, p. 75)

Sexual assaults can be perpetrated with or without penetration. In any case a huge damage is inflicted to the victim. In cases with penetration, women feel most ashamed, they also fear about contagious diseases or possible pregnancy which increases their panic and their need to stay silent. Due to these reasons, we did not expect to get many public complaints from the victims of such cases. However, in this cartography, during the first moments of participation, up to three rape mappings painted with black dots (Figure 5) were located on the map. On one hand this is heart-breaking, on the other hand, we are satisfied that art can give way to the expression of such painful situations.

While the audience was participating, women started to talk to each other, sharing narratives and stories. It was amazing that there was no shame, only desire to share experiences. We often do not find a place to tell events that have affected us bodily and emotionally. Perhaps for fear of feeling judged, being blamed or overly victimized. Observing that other women also painted coloured dots created a sorority among all the participants. It gave them a feeling of security to unveil their attacks and also to write about them. The happening gave women the possibility to unblock some stuck

feelings. “Feelings can get stuck to certain bodies in the very way we describe spaces, situations, dramas” (Ahmed, 2010, p. 39). Bodies that have suffered violence in a specific space need to remember the existing risks in order to survive in the near future. But forgetting the events won’t help them or others to avoid new attacks. It is necessary to let go of the pain but maintaining awareness of the occurrence of the event is also very important. It is necessary to remember the details, such as when it happened, which kind of people were there, what time it was, which kind of feelings were produced, which strategies were used to overpass it, etc. “These histories have not gone; we would be letting go of that which persist in the present. To let go would be to keep those histories present” (Ahmed, 2010, p. 50). This is the main reason to make visible the exact point where those attacks happened and add some narratives in the case needed to establish a sort of memories for the future.

Black narratives

Participants wrote only about the most serious cases of violence. Those that were painted as black dots in the cartography. A woman, wrote about a rape that happened in Sueca Street in this way:

“I was 14 years old, returning home alone, because I got ahead of my father. A man chased me. In the portal of my house he attacked me, hit me, threatened me with a razor, forced me to lower my pants and panties, penetrated me with his fingers and when he was going to introduce his penis my father arrived.

I'm 56 years old and I'm still afraid when I come home alone at night.²”

As Cecatto (2011) asserts “at the individual level, fear of crime is largely the result of personal experience of crime” (p. 10). Therefore, no matter the years that have passed since an assault, it remains in the memory and fear of the victim, who somehow continues being damaged for all her life.

According to the protocol trials, rape happens when the victim is on the move, on the way from or to places, often to the victim's residence (Ceccato, 2014), like this 14-year-old girl. Another of these examples about rape when returning home was

² The original testimonies have been translated into English by the author.

reported. It was suffered by a friend in a street perpendicular to Blasco Ibañez Avenue, and was written as follows:

"Returning home one night she was assaulted by a boy with a knife. He raped her on the portal. He was arrested after committing half a dozen other violations. So, he returned to jail, from which he had left a few months earlier".

Two other girls asked me, when I was energizing the action, if they could write about a rape they suffered outside the city of Valencia. One of them in a Valencian town, the other in Madrid. Of course, I considered at this time that it was most important to prioritize the need to express and communicate what happened over the decision to narrow the proposal to the mapped city. Because art can be therapeutic and channel the expression of emotions that have not yet been assimilated or even shared out loud. The girl talking about the incident in a Valencian town wrote the following:

"I will only "speak" of the strongest and traumatic, and briefly because I have not yet shared it with a professional: rape.

I was 13 years old. They drugged me, they raped me in front of more people.

I know I was screaming but I don't remember if he finally finished or if others pulled him away.

Suddenly images come to my mind, in daily life, without me thinking about it or deciding. They fill me with rage, anger and disgust."

Luckily, sometimes the rapes are not consummated. In any case, the harm for the victim is already done, and she can't ever forget about it. Normally accompanied by harm threats, arbitrary deprivation of freedom, sexual harassment, fear of violence and insecurity feeling. These were all damages suffered on Primat Reig Avenue as reported by one of the participants. In addition, she related:

"I was walking down the street at dawn with heels. A young man of my age, Erasmus, when crossing with me decided to follow me and rebuke me. There was no one, no traffic. He was trying to force me to a darker street, just before fortunately a taxi passing by chance stopped".

Less people wrote about happenings considered less damaging, such as those painted as green dots over the map: fear of violence and insecurity feeling. But these are the ones that perfectly express the type of thoughts that still remain in our society:

"A man in his 60s or 65s began to follow my steps wherever I went. And I was going to the opposite side. Then he started telling me out loud that young girls like me would always have to wear small skirts and show the body and that we deserved it. He also looked at me with faces of desire. He caused disgust, fear and anxiety in me. As well as the desire to flee from there and seek help".

The collection of narratives in this action is important because it adds to the drama of what happened the emotional details of the victims and the seriousness of the events. We ruled out the possibility of participants writing these narratives directly on the murals. We preferred they would write on sheets of paper so that we could check out the respect of privacy of the third parties affected, we couldn't let it be violated. The sensitive topics written in this data required a prior filtering process due to ethical reasons.

The final result of the mural is aesthetically attractive, it is paradoxically beautiful. A student said something similar: "the lower levels of violence have happened so many times to each one of us, that we could fill the whole map with green dots, and it would be impossible to see the streets. But it would be so horrible that there were no streets to walk safely". It is the artistic and aesthetic result which generates this critical and poetic thinking at the same time.



Fig. 5. Black points, related to rape, painted over the cartography in the beginnings of the participatory action. Sample series.

Author: own authorship. October 2019, Valencia.

Conclusions

Public art through cartography painted murals can make social problems visible when participatory mapping is used. It has been demonstrated that participatory mapping is really useful to vindicate the sexist violence that affects women in the urban space and contributes to engage people.

By involving emotions and reliving traumas we could run the risk of taking the participant back to the trauma, therefore, participation in the action was voluntary and previously explained in depth. We gave the participants the option of not participating if they did not desire to, we saw this as the best option not to expose them to trauma again.

Others that were less engaged, could probably have a lack of touching feelings that could move them to act against sexist violence. Through those who decided to be implicated, it has been proven that by participating in a sexist violence mapping of a city, the audience can unblock some stuck feelings, so the action can help them let go of the pain. Finally, the cartography will maintain public awareness of what happened.

Another important contribution which has derived from this research is, that the movement, the educative movement, is equally important related to the body or to the mind. The social act gives opportunities to be mentally aligned with a shared cause.

By sharing this experience, we hope that this kind of pacific, participatory, ephemeral, vindicate and artistic action could be considered for its applicability. The approach developed in a place like the University of Valencia could be adapted to another context to make similar problems about gender violence in public spaces visible. Nevertheless, we must consider that the transferability of any experience always needs some adaptations to the new context. Art education can be a way of responding to the urgency of breaking the silence that has normally accompanied the problems of sexist violence in the public and private spaces.

Educators and students may consider artistic mapping as a disruptive technique, a vindictive strategy, a form of pedagogical cartography to develop creative and pacific resistance. Artistic mapping can also reveal plural situated perspectives and singular

interventions related to experiences in various cities at the same time. And lastly artistic mapping can contribute to the representation of a more complex, situated, affective, queer, and intersectional understanding of social problems, like women's safety for example, as it was presented in this article.

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