

**Wastepickers and *the right to the city*
Forging a New Conceptualization of “The
Public” in Waste Management**

WIEGO research conference
Harvard University
November 10-12, 2017



Let's
talk about
garbage

M.Arq M.Phil. Lucía Fernández (phd candidate),
Research Assistant, *Institute of Theory and Urbanism, Faculty of Architecture, Design and Urbanism*
Lecturer and Instructor, *Social and Solidarity Economy & Cooperatives Academic Unit,*
Universidad de la República, Uruguay
Wastepicker Global Coordinator, **WIEGO.**



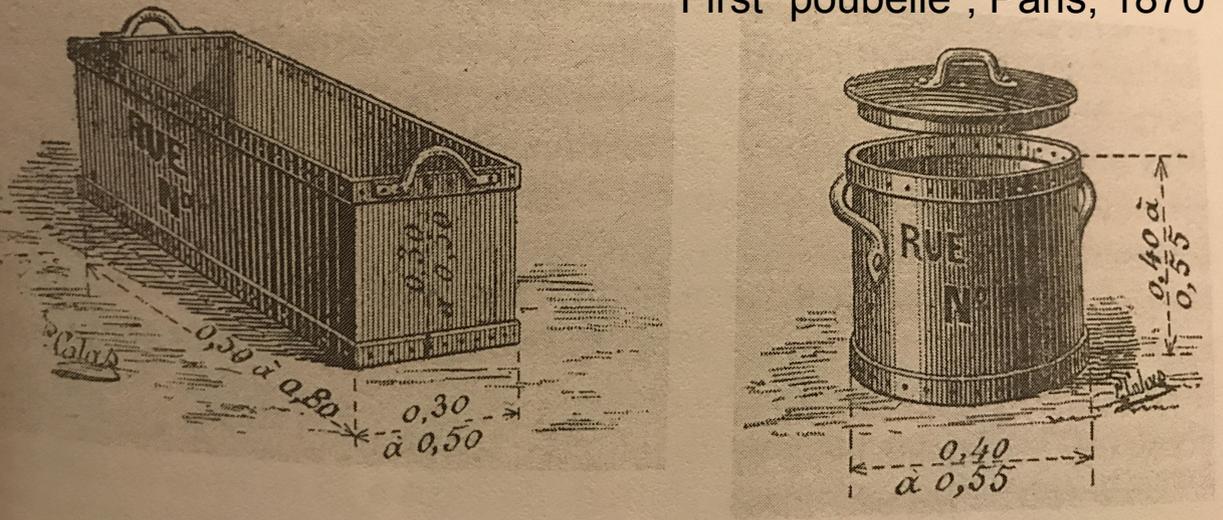
Accumulation by dispossession

*“We were sitting for decades over a pile of gold without really noticing....now they are aware of it and are coming for **our waste**”* Alex Cardoso, brazilian *catador* (waste-picker) during Expocatadores, Brazil, 2013



“We should close all biggest dumpsites in the world”
(conversation between Bill Clinton and Bil Gates, CGI, USA, 2010)

First “poubelle”, Paris, 1870



Waste apparatus

“When technological systems are globalized, we are globalizing a series of *apparatus* with the ability and power to normalize planetary behaviours”.
(Pierron, 2009).

Source : G. Lefebvre. *Voie publique*. Paris, 1896, p. 430.

Containers from OMB, italian based multinational



Rue Royal, Paris (early 1900')



Public space and right to the city

The public sphere is the site where struggles are decided by other means than war.

Alexander Kluge (1972)



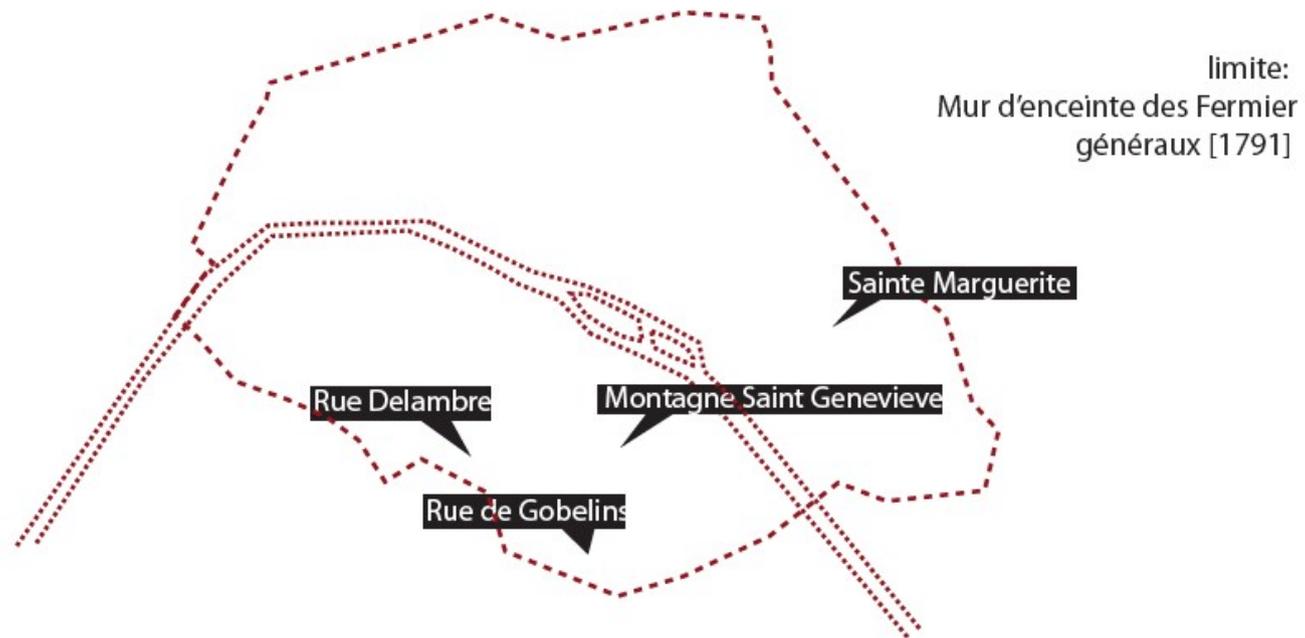
18 de Julio, Montevideo (2005)

Space is not conceived as an abstraction, an scenario, but as an environment full of opportunities, people, objects, which has to be constantly rebuilt.

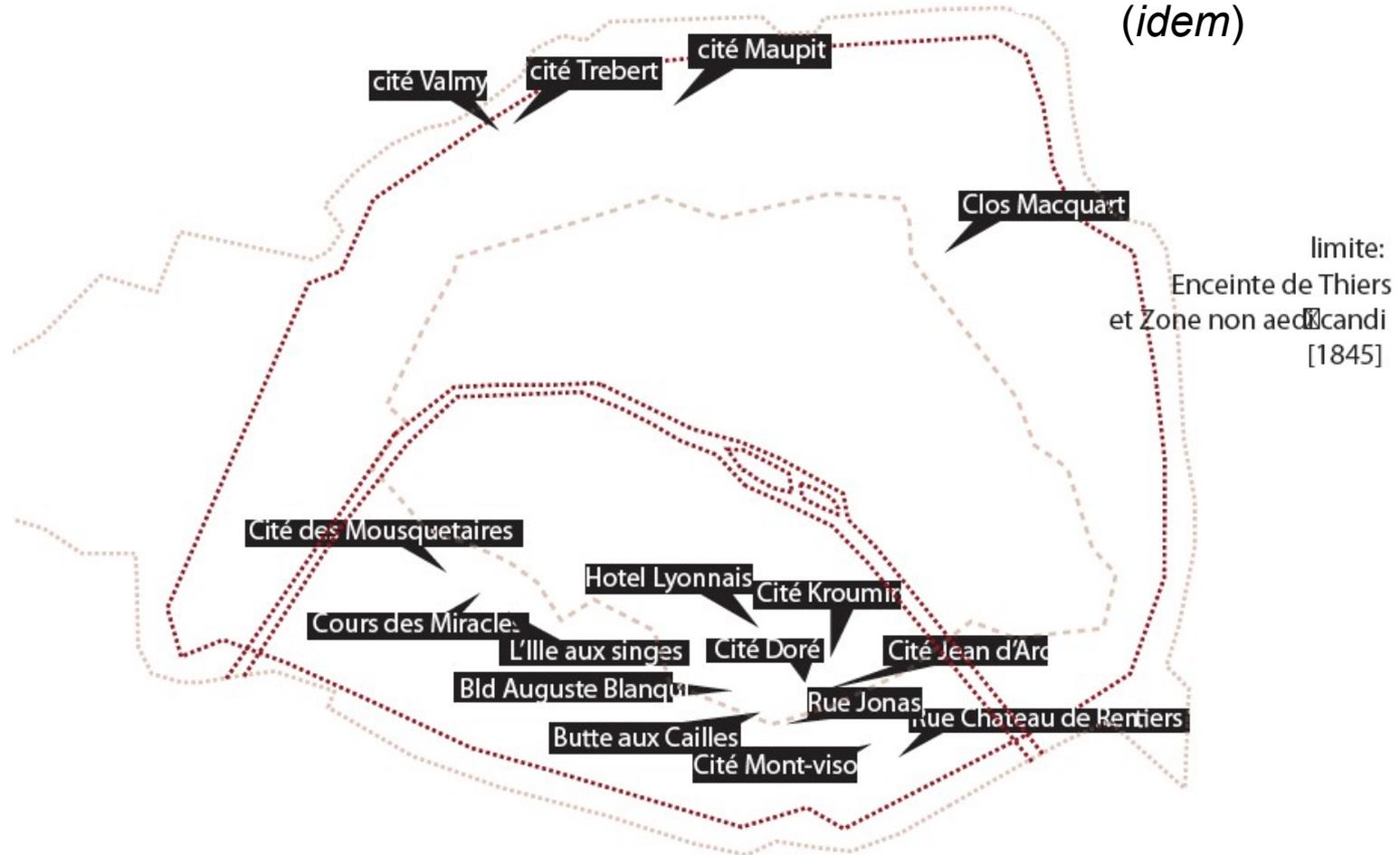
The *right to the city* then becomes the right to centrality, to use and appropriate public space, to not be excluded from the urban form.

Regulation, privatization and dispossession: territorial analysis

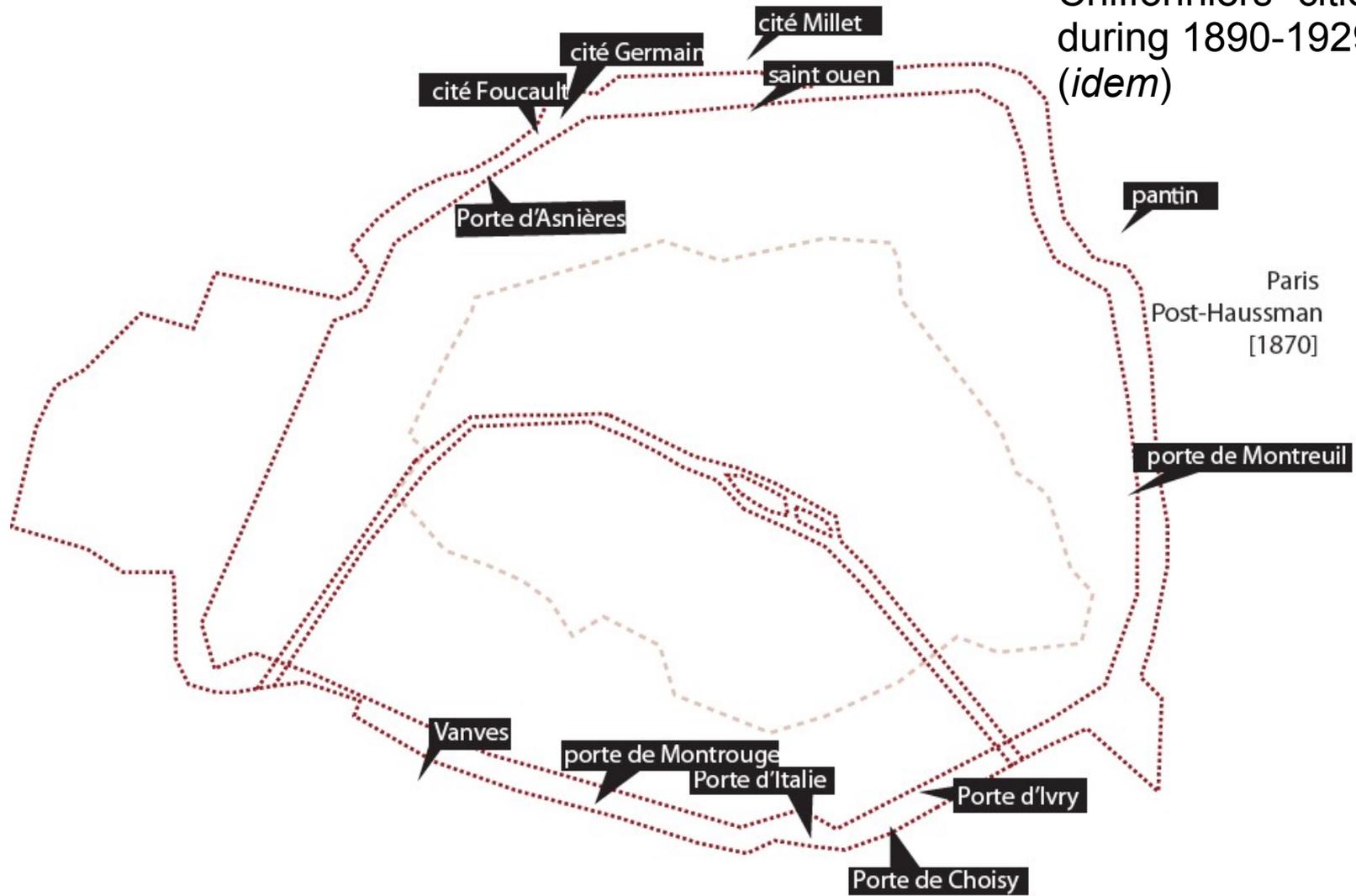
Chiffonniers “cities”
during 1800-1860
(Fernandez, 2010)



Chiffonniers "cities" during 1860-1890 (idem)



Chiffonniers “cities”
during 1890-1929
(idem)



Montevideo waste governmentality



2004: New OMB containers

2009: Resolution No. 4663
Packaging Law

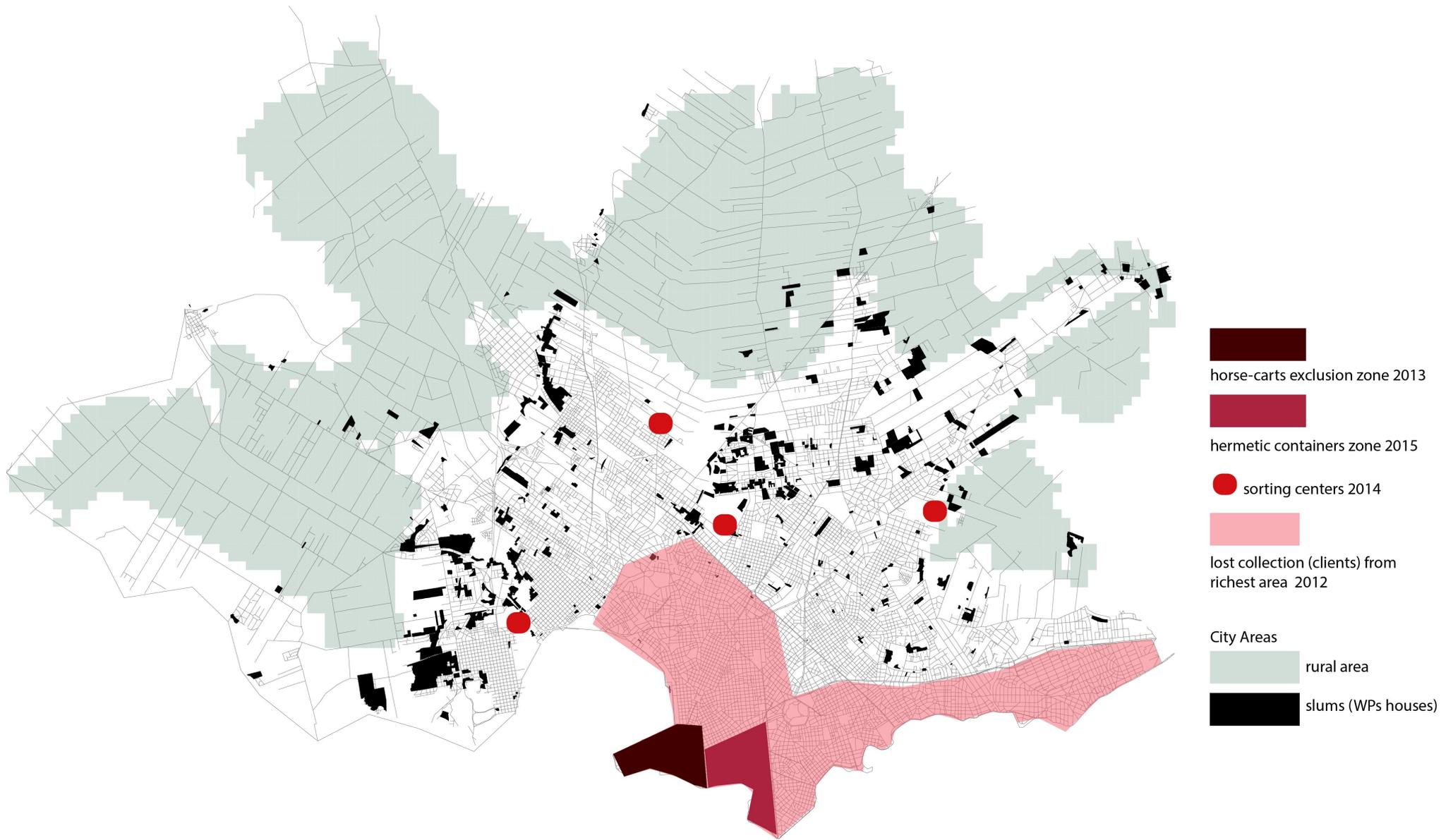
2012: Resolution No. 5383 for
large generators collection

2013: Resolution No.12.089
for exclusion zones

2014: New set of containers,
now anti-wps access



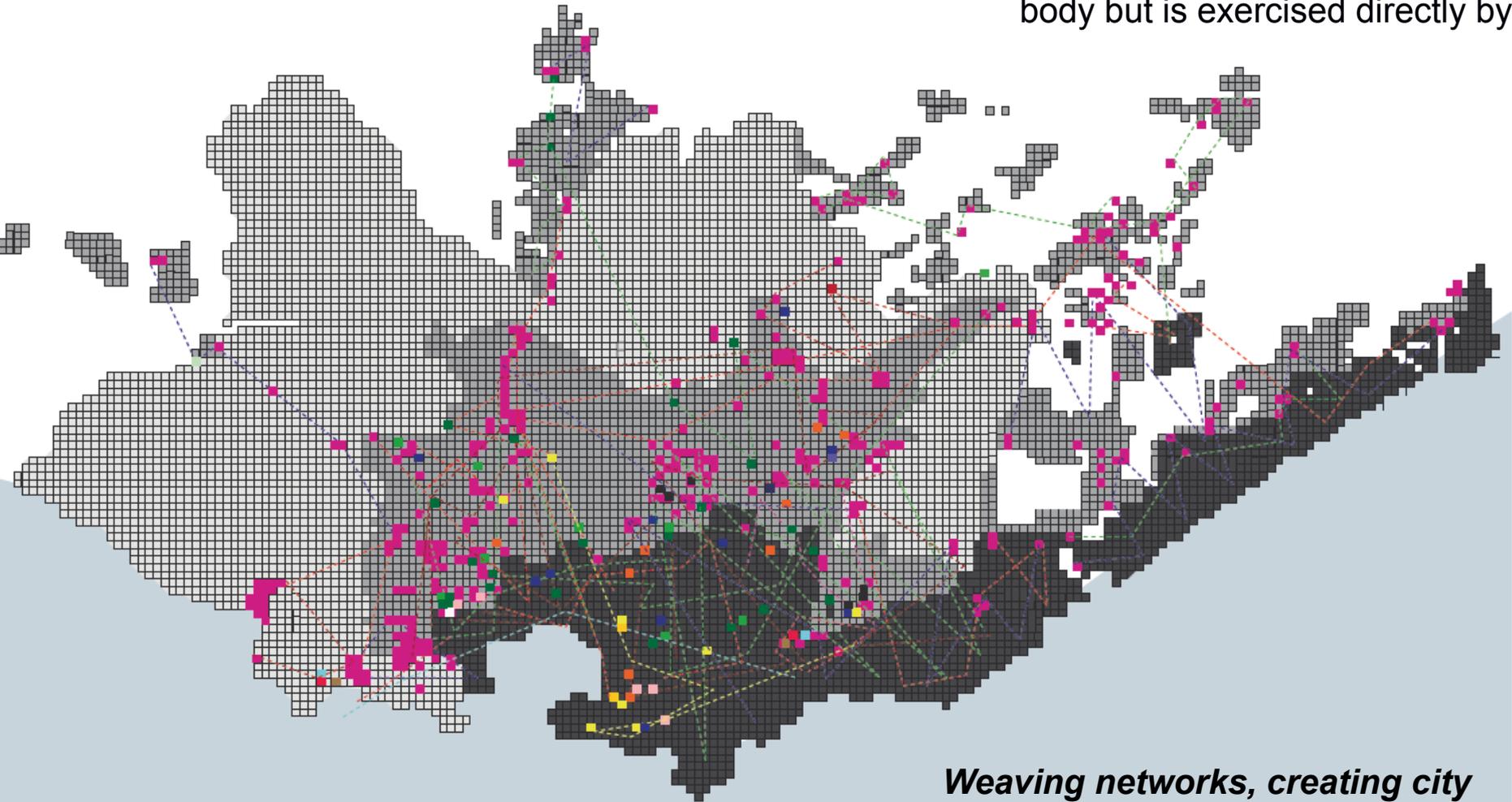
New spatial configuration



(Fernandez 2017)

Expanding the commons

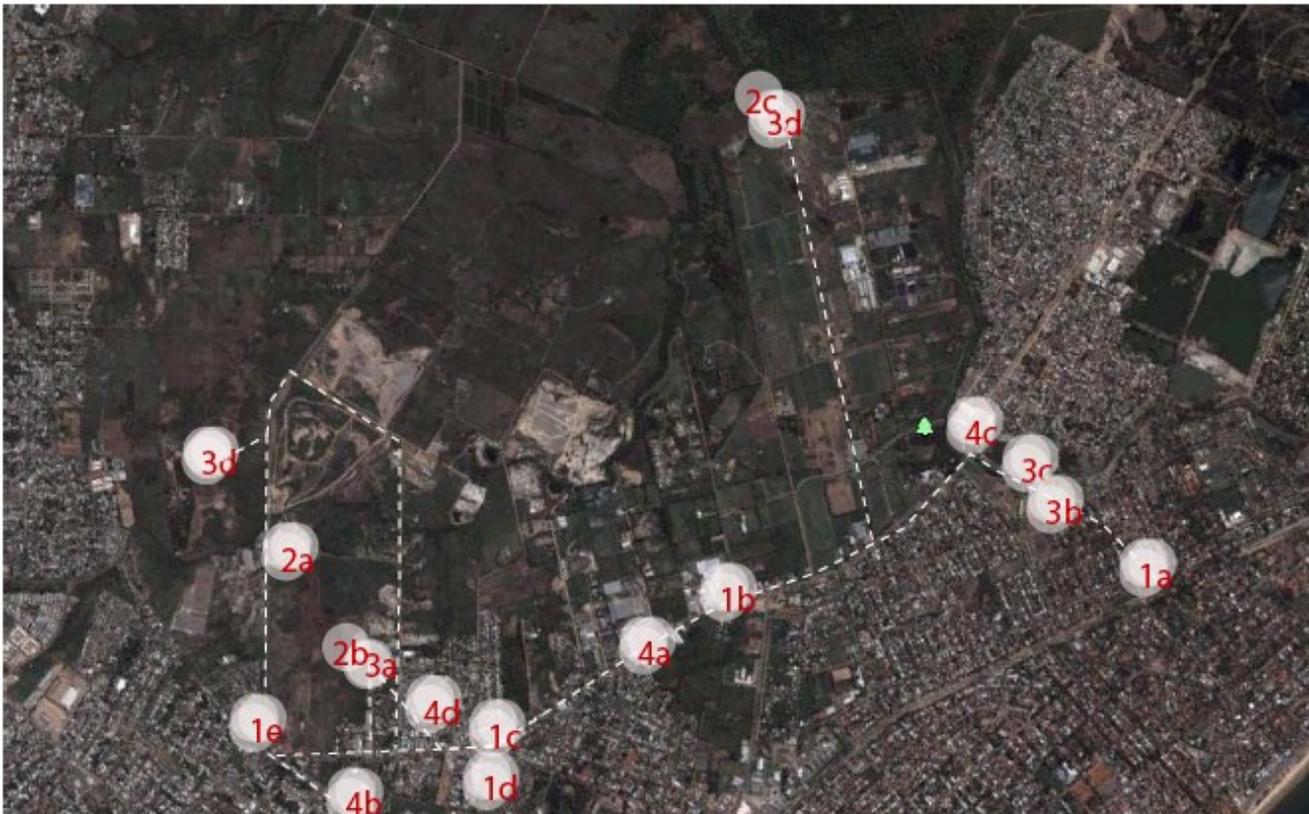
The concept of **commons** should then be framed not as an object but as what is produced collectively (Federici 2012; Heller, 2012), over which control or management is not delegated to an outside social body but is exercised directly by those who produce it.



Weaving networks, creating city
Spatial configuration of current recycling dynamics
(Fernandez 2010)

To territorialize these *commons*, to think of them from the urban space perspective, will imply the production of the same from the networks of actors and its bonds related to waste.

“A neighbor from Buceo called me and gave me a 29-inch TV that worked! If they take us off the street, people do not understand that we lose all these opportunities, which are not quantifiable at an economic level, but in our own quality of life and our relationship with our neighbors”. Juan Carlos Silva, wastepicker, president of the Union in Montevideo 30/11/2015



1a Colegio y Liceo Privado Stella Maris (punto de recoleccion selectiva)

1b Empresa Sudy Lever (punto de recoleccion selectiva)

1c Empresa Johnson & Johnson (punto de recoleccion selectiva)

1d et 1e cooperativa de viviendas (punto de recoleccion selectiva)

2b 3a cooperativa de clasificadores Juan Cacharpa
2c 3d territorio espontaneo Bañados de Carrasco
2a cooperativa de clasificadores Ucrus

4a deposito de materiales reciclables y separacion
4b Deposito especifico de papel y carton (uno de los mas grandes de la ciudad)

4c deposito de materiales reciclables y separacion
4d deposito de materiales reciclables (externalidad de 4b)

3b territorio espontaneo Aquiles Lanza
3d realojo de la ex Villa el Chancho
3e territorio espontaneo en Canelones

1- puntos de recoleccion/produccion de residuos

2- puntos de clasificacion/trabajo con residuos

4- puntos de estocaje y venta de materiales reciclables

3- puntos de habitacion/vivienda de los clasificadores



Decentralized communalism

The recognition of the work and the contributions of the waste pickers in the city must be affirmed through a new type of community that manages their urban resources in a sustainable way.

Following the *right to the city* concept and a new understanding of the urban space, these principles and practice of communal ownership will help us frame a potentially radically different city waste governance that will interrogate other configurations of the public.

<http://www.wiego.org/resources/video-right-city-and-privatization>



Bibliography

- ABBUSAFY, R. 2013. O Lixo e a conduta humana: gestão dos insuportáveis na vida urbana, phd Thesis.
- AGAMBEN G. 2007. *Qu'est-ce qu'un dispositif?* éd. Payot & Rivages. (traducción propia)
- BARRENECHEA, and GONZALEZ. 2003. *Estudio de Mercado: materiales reciclables de residuos solidos urbanos.*
- BARLES S., 2005. L'invention des déchets Urbains, France:1790-1970, Collection Champ Vallon, France.
- BOOKCHIN, M., 2006. Social Ecology and Communalism, Published by AK Press.
- CASTRO-COMA, M., MARTI-COSTA, Marc. 2016. Comunes urbanos: de la gestión colectiva al derecho a la ciudad
- CAVE J. 2015. La ruée vers l'ordure: conflits dans les mines urbaines de déchets, Presses Universitaires de Rennes, France.
- _____ 2012. Urban solid waste in southern countries: from a blurred object to common pool resources
- CHIKARMANE, P. 2016. Public Space, Public Waste, and the Right to the City, SOLUTIONS: A Journal of Environmental and Occupational Health Policy, Vol. 26(2) 289–300
- DEMARIA, F. 2007. Social metabolism, cost-shifting and conflicts The struggles and services of informal waste recyclers, PhD Thesis.
- DIAS S. And CIDRIN F. 2008. *“Integration of the Informal Recycling Sector in Solid Waste Management in Brazil. Study Prepared for the Sector Project Promotion of Concepts for Pro-Poor and Environmentally Friendly Closed-Loop Approaches in Solid Waste Management (SWM). PN 03.2144.8”GTZ.*
- FEDERICI, S. 2012. *Feminism and the politics of the commons.* En: Bollier, D. & Helfrich, S (Eds) *The wealth of the commons: A world beyond market and state.* Masachussets. Levellers
- FERNANDES E. 2003. *Del código civil al estatuto de la ciudad: algunas notas sobre la trayectoria del derecho urbanístico en Brasil, en Revista Eure (Vol.xxix, N¼ 87), pp. 63-78.*
- FERNANDEZ L., 2010, *Dynamiques du recyclage spontané : regards croisés sur les villes de Montevideo et Paris au XIX siècle, Mémoire de Master*
- FOUCAULT M. 1977 in *The Foucault effect: studies in governmentality*, edited by Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon, and Peter Miller. 1991. The University of Chicago Press
- HARPET C. 1997. *Le déchet, une horloge chaotique, série sémantique des termes de la déchéance*, dans J.P.Beauman (op.cit.) d'Architecture, Ecole Supérieure National d'Architecture de Grenoble, 2010.
- HARVEY D. 2004. *El nuevo imperialismo. Colección Cuestiones de Antagonismo, 26. Madrid: Akal.*
- _____ 2008a *Paris capital de la modernidad, ed. Akal, p458.*
- _____ 2008b *The Right to the City. In: New Left Review. 2008, Vol. 53, pp: 23-40. (traducción propia)*
- HELLER, M. A. 2012. *The tragedy of the anticommmons.* En: Bollier, D. & Helfrich, S. (Eds) *The wealth of the commons: A world beyond market and state.* Masachussets. Levellers Press.
- LEFEBVRE H. 1968. *Le droit à la ville, Paris, Éditions Anthropos. (traducción propia)*
- MARTINEZ ALIER J. et al. 2010. Social Metabolism, Ecological Distribution Conflicts, and Valuation Languages
- NAVARRO, L. 2014. Salvem el Cabanyal: Urban movements and their claim for the “Right to the City” in Valencia”. *VLC arquitectura*, Vol. 1(2): 47-61. ISSN: 2341-3050. DOI:
- NEGT, O. And KLUGE A., 1993. *Public Sphere and Experience Toward an Analysis of the Bourgeois and Proletarian Public Sphere, University of Minnesota Press Minneapolis, London.*
- O'HAREO P., 2017, 'Commoning at the *Cantera* and Beyond: Hygienic Enclosure and Montevideo's Waste Commons', phd thesis, University of Cambridge. Forthcoming
- PIERRON, J. 2009. *Penser le dŹveloppement durable*, Źd. Ellipses.
- PURCELL M., 2003, Excavating Lefebvre: The right to the city and its urban politics of the inhabitant
- SAMSON, M. 2009. *“Wasted Citizenship? Waste pickers and the Privatized Expansion of the Public Sphere.”Africa Development 34 (3-4), pp. 1–25.*
- _____ 2013. *“Accumulation by Dispossession and the Contested Enclosure of Waste – Struggles Over the Production of Knowledge, Meanings and Identities at a Johannesburg Garbage Dump.” Paper presented at the American Association of Geographers Annual Meeting, April 9-13, 2014, Los Angeles, USA.*
- _____ 2015. *“Forging a New Conceptualization of “The Public” in Waste Management”, WIEGO Working Paper 32.*
- VERONESI, M. 2016. Mumbai's urban metabolism and the role of waste management through informality.
- WORLD BANK. 2012. What a Waste, A Global Review of Solid. Waste Management, by Daniel Hoornweg and Perinaz Bhada-Tata. No. 15.
- ZAPATA, M. and ZAPATA, P. 2015. Producing, appropriating and recreating the myth of the urban commons