Images as institution builders: Metropolitan planning in Madrid

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ABSTRACT   *This article chronicles recent changes in planning practice. It documents the rise of strategic planning and the move toward proactive planning centered on strategy, marketing, publicity and images. The author studies two cases. One is sub-regional, of the 'Great South' of metropolitan Madrid. The other is regional, of the program 'Madrid Metropolitan Region'. Planners created physical designs and rhetoric that encapsulated new images for the south and the entire metro area. The planners used the evolving image to craft the strategy, implement it, and build the institutions of regional planning and government. These cases suggest that external images (plans, photos) and internal images (in the mind's eye) are key to understanding how planning processes worked. It reveals the role images played in planning and political discourse, and how discourse was based on the image.*

1. Introduction

This paper is about the use of images in the development of Madrid's new regional planning and governing institutions founded in 1983. It contributes to the growing literature on communicative practice and theory by exploring the link between consensus building processes (collaboration, coordination, negotiation, communicative action) and the images they are based on (Habermas, 1984; Forester, 1989; Healey, 1992; Innes, 1995). It further builds on communicative theories of planning by situating them in an institutional context.

As the hypothesis derived from this study correlates images and institution building, a definition of terms follows. Images portray complex phenomena. They are not separate from their social setting, from which they derive their meaning. The term 'image' as used here refers to several inter-related concepts. There is the external image and the internal one (Boulding, 1956). The external image is an abstraction representing reality. It can be a photo, design, plan, video, symbol and so on. The internal image is one of the mind. This mental image is what the mind's eye sees when it *imagines*. Lynch (1960) examined the image of a place (a city) we have in our mind. There are also social images of a place that can be

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class-based (upper/lower), wealth-based (poor/rich), or can use other sets of classifying criteria. The image is far from a shiny gloss slapped on at the end of a process to cover up defects or sell a product.

'Institution' is a general term that refers to the inter-related set of administrative structures, processes and their content (whether the latter be a policy, strategy, plan; or ideology, philosophy, or set of values) that embody the repeated behaviors and actions that make up an institution. There is a burgeoning literature on the 'new institutionalism' (March & Olsen, 1989; Bellah *et al.*, 1991; Steinmo *et al.*, 1992; Powell & DiMaggio, 1991) that is beginning to creep into planning (Mandelbaum, 1985; Bolan, 1992; Neuman, 1996; Healey *et al.*, 1996).

In this research, the institution of regional planning in Madrid is not just the regional planning agency, nor only the executive branch of regional government. It is all of regional government, municipalities, national agencies involved in regional planning, and interested players such as universities, neighborhood associations, labor unions and the real estate development community. This broader scope expands the institution to include stakeholders vital to the overall regional planning process, thus better reflecting the reality in Madrid.

This paper presents an overview of the current situation in Spain *vis-à-vis* metro planning. Then it presents the two case studies and their analysis. Last, it suggests another basis for communicative action oriented theories of planning and areas for research. This research is based on dozens of interviews (typically 2–3 hours each) with protagonists and scholars in addition to archival research and attendance of meetings and conferences during a 5-month stay in Madrid in 1993 and 1994.

1.1 Territorial Context

Madrid, Spain's capital, is located in the geographical center of Spain and the Iberian peninsula (Spain and Portugal). It is perhaps the most central-city-dominated metropolis in Europe with 3 million (65% of the total metropolis) living in the city of Madrid. The remaining 1.6 million (35%) live in 178 surrounding municipalities, none of which exceeds 200 000 persons.

2. Economy and Society in Spain: A Sketch

Spain has a market economy operating in an interventionist welfare state. Long considered to be peripheral to Europe economically and geographically, it is rapidly gaining parity with European norms according to standard economic measures such as gross product and income per capita. Three of its 17 autonomous regions exceed European averages (MMAMB, 1995, p. 21). Since Spain's entry into the EU in 1986 much social, economic and environmental policy and actual performance has been driven by a concerted effort at full-scale integration into the European scene. Spanish pride and the desire to overcome prior isolation appear to play roles in this catch-up effort. Since 1980 Spain's economy has climbed from 14th to 8th place globally, measured by gross national product.

Tides of rural immigration to the industrial metropolises fueled the growth boom in the 1960s. This boom was induced by favorable economic development policies and opening the economy to international markets. In-migration to the cities barely eased during the economic crisis of the 1970s. In the 1980s rural-urban movement decreased significantly, even during the economic boom of the last half of the decade. During the latter boom and into the first half of the 1990s the cities' populations declined or remained steady while their metropolitan areas grew. Rapid unordered growth in the suburban and exurban periphery was the result.

Local planning and infrastructure could not keep up, continuing the pattern of service-deficient development of the 1960s and 1970s. Huge infrastructure, community facilities and social services deficits, along with *chabolas* (shanty towns), plagued the metropolitan fringes. Facilities and social services were also lacking in the inner city neighborhoods.

Metropolitan Madrid's economy is consolidating as the economic, financial, political and service (tertiary) capital of the nation. Up to and in the 1980s most of this activity was located in the city center. Since, the tendency has moved toward the outskirts, particularly near the airport (east) and to the north and west. It still cedes industrial leadership to Barcelona and Bilbao. Since the 1960s two related phenomena have been occurring. Heavy industry has located in the poor immigrant areas to the south and east, and high technology industry has been attracted to Madrid metropolis-wide. It is no longer just an administrative economy dependent on the product of the rest of the nation.

Spanish society has also changed, from a rural one—as recently as the middle of this century—to an urban one. Each region, and in some cases each province, has its own identity, culture and cuisine. This diversity, along with four languages and unique local histories, make defining a single Spanish culture or national character difficult. Ortega y Gasset's 'Spain is a thing made in Castile' reflects a centralist attempt to create Spain and impose unity on this diversity. An attempt that has led to civil wars and revolutions that still mark centre-periphery and inter-regional relations.

As Spain modernizes many traditions and societal characteristics are changing. The nuclear family, still important, is no longer the only important household type. The church's influence is waning, not just in individuals' lives but as a civic force too. Civil rights and individualism play more important roles. The private sector is taking initiative away from government. Unions are losing their once powerful authority. Privatization and public-private partnerships are reshaping the economic landscape.

3. Politics and Institutions

A constitutional monarchy, Spain is enjoying its longest period of democracy. This period started with Franco's death in 1975 and the first democratic elections in 1977. Earlier stints of democracy in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries each lasted just a few years. Monarchy or dictatorship had been the norm until 1975. The socialist party, in power nationally since 1982 after a centre-led transition period, is steadily losing ground at all levels of government to the conservative Popular Party.

The socialists, proponents of a welfare state, held the Madrid regional government from 1983 until the conservatives were elected in 1995. In the Madrid metro area, socialists and other left parties rule the towns of the poor, industrial south and east. The conservatives tend to dominate the wealthier west and north, and since 1989 the city of Madrid.

While Franco lessened his grip after 1960, Spanish government at all levels remained autarchic and centralized. A center-periphery mentality prevailed and Madrid was the beneficiary of state investment which built up the capital as the economic and financial center of the country.

Before the 1979 Constitution the three tiers of government were national, provincial and municipal. The provinces were under direct control of the state. Between 1979 and 1983 17 regional governments were formed on a quasi-federal basis. The regions have been gaining authority and resources steadily, due to state decentralization and taking over responsibilities from the provinces. The provinces now have little power in land use and territorial planning.

The autonomous regions wield significant statutory power and in 15 years built up competent governments providing a full range of services.

3.1 The Madrid Region

In the past because of its role as capital, its size and proportional weight in the region, the city of Madrid played a vital role in metropolitan planning. This position is less prominent now due to the emergence of a strong regional planning department and the fact that Madrid city (conservative party) and region (leftist party) were governed from 1989 to 1995 by opposing political signs. This opposition usually resulted in stalemate, with the entity exercising statutory authority or having greater resources affecting the outcome being decisive in resolving a given issue.

4. Key Agencies

La Communidad de Madrid (regional government) plays an important role in regional development. Spatial planning, housing, transport and other regional infrastructure take up the majority of the regional budget. The *Consejería de Política Territorial* (Department of Territorial Policy) is responsible for regional (metropolitan) planning. In the mid and late 1980s it included the now separate Department of Transportation, the regional public transportation consortium, and the Environmental Agency. It still houses the Regional Housing Institute which develops policy and public housing, and Arpegio, S.A. which is a public development corporation that initiates, coordinates, and funds large-scale economic development projects. The *Consejería* is responsible for preparing the *Plan Regional de Estrategia Territorial* (Regional Plan for Territorial Strategy), for preparing standards for municipal planning and approving local plans, and for planning and developing regional facilities and public housing.

In relation to the overall planning system in Spain, planning in both the city of Madrid and its regional government follows the guidelines of the national Land Use and City Planning Law. In fact, all three editions of the law (1956, 1976, 1992) were written or influenced in large part by Madrid's planning directors and prominent practitioners from the city. The decisive influence of each of Madrid's city and metropolitan plans (of 1946, 1963, 1985) that preceded these three editions of the law is easily discerned from comparing the legal texts with the previous plan.

The national planning law sets up the administrative processes and structures of planning in an authoritarian and centralized manner. It specifies a hierarchy of local plans—general plans, partial plans, special plans, action programs, projects, and detail studies—and of land use categories—urban land, urbanizable land (programmed and non-programmed), and non-urbanizable land, which all municipalities nationwide must adhere to.

Local plans are approved by the regional government. Regions can usurp local planning powers if in the former's opinion the towns are not complying with the law or fulfilling their own obligations. Planning relations among levels of government are by and large top-down and one-way. This is changing to a more negotiated multi-lateral system now being pioneered in Madrid, as detailed in this paper.

Over time, Madrid and Spain's statutory approaches to planning have become more detailed and regulatory, the above shift notwithstanding. This is a response to widespread abuse and sidestepping of the law and corruption as regards the cession of building permission. At the same time, urban planning is becoming more entrepreneurial, with local and regional entities spearheading planning and development projects based on large-scale, multi-modal transportation and communication infrastructure.

5. The Cases

These cases are about the change in planning practice in metropolitan Madrid in the 1980s. They document the move away from top-down, centralized, and directive planning to a more negotiated and horizontal approach. They highlight the use of images in paving the way for these changes and in their use in building Madrid's new regional institutions. In the first case, the regional planning department used a new image for the southern part of the metropolis to launch and bring to life a multi-jurisdictional development scheme. This new image, called the *Gran Sur* or the Great South, not only replaced the old image of a poor, backward, and dirty stepchild of the region, it aided sub-regional collaboration and action where none existed before. Most importantly, it was the cornerstone in establishing the regional planning department as a viable and potent actor on the regional stage after 5 years of regional planning failures.

The second case documents the use of another image, of a new conception of Madrid as a metropolitan region rather than just the city itself, to build its fledgling regional government. This second image, called *Madrid Región Metropolitana*, served as the socialist party's platform for their 1987 re-election to regional government. The image was created and pertinent sections of the re-election campaign documents were written by the regional planning director and several staff colleagues.

Both the *Gran Sur* and *Madrid Región Metropolitana* are now common currency in everyday life. That is, people use these terms and they see the south as resurging and Madrid as a metropolitan region. The success of these images is the fruit of an intentional political strategy of the new regional government. The strategy: use spatial planning to build the new institution of regional government.

6. Key Issues for Regional Government

These cases focus on metropolitan planning in Madrid since 1983. It is in part a story of institutional evolution, that is, the reorganization of institutional relations, of both the regional planning institution and regional government itself. A key issue from the point of view of the protagonists themselves was their political survival. Another key issue faced by the planning department: what is the best way to plan? Is it using pre-determined, top-down and directive processes or inventing new, partly collaborative processes as the need arose? A further issue in the minds of the planners: what are the most effective planning instruments available? Are they static and legally mandated plans with a fixed conception of the future that specifies land uses, or a dynamic strategic image specifying a framework which is flexibly realized as time passes? The planners and politicians were afforded the luxury of time to reflect on the nature of planning and their region given the political stability at the regional and national levels.

The substantive issues at stake were several. The first, the overall model of the territory, the form of the region as it actually exists and as it should exist, was called into question. Is the most appropriate form of a contemporary metropolis competing in a global economy one in which the vast majority of its wealth-producing resources are concentrated in the downtown of its central city? Or is a polycentric metropolis with networked nodes more effective, with fewer negative 'externalities'? This issue was resolved on more or less technical merits by planning professionals and agreed to by the politicians.[1]

Another substantive issue on the policy agenda was more political, more ideological. A governing principle behind both the regeneration of the south and the new identity as a metro region was equity. More balance in allocating wealth between the centre and the northwest, the usual locations of quality growth, and the south and east. This was clearly an economic and social equity issue in line with the socialists' redistribution policy. This issue stemmed from

the citizens movement in the 1970s that protested against sub-standard living conditions. It also turned out to be an environmental equity issue because it was soon realized that to attract high quality growth a high quality environment was needed. The Great South and the eastern sector strategy called the *Corredor de Henares* (Henares Corridor) were the policy responses designed to attain this political goal.

The main institutional issue on the policy agenda was forming new institutions of regional planning and regional government. This meant a restructuring of institutional relations by dissolving COPLACO, the metropolitan planning agency created in 1963 by the central government. COPLACO was dominated by central government until its dissolution in 1983. It was abolished because its premise of central control over local planning was no longer tenable after the collapse of the dictatorship.

Another institutional issue was supplanting statutory plans, programs, and processes with new strategies, projects and processes which were developed in the face of the failure of the prescribed ones. The 1983 regional planning law for Madrid specified three planning instruments. They were the *Directrices de Ordenación Territorial* (Regional Planning Guidelines—meant to guide both local and regional planning), *Programas Coordinados de Actuación* (Coordinated Action Programs—short-term capital programs to coordinate capital budgeting at the regional level), and *Planes de Ordenación del Medio Físico* (Physical Environment Management Plans).

None of these three were ever adopted, despite two attempts at the Regional Planning Guidelines in 1985 and 1988 and one at the capital programs. The guidelines were never adopted because of the general distrust towards comprehensive planning imposed from above. This legacy came from the urban social movement's reaction to the dictatorship. The capital program was never adopted due to the fear that the other departments in regional government had in ceding power to a program (and therefore a rival department) that was prepared outside of their own department.

The new instruments that were innovated after these failures were four sub-regional strategies (of which the *Gran Sur* was one) and the *Plan Regional de Estrategia Territorial*. The sub-regional strategies were prepared in the late 1980s and the regional plan is being prepared now. Both are encoded in the new regional planning law (replacing the 1983 law) under consideration in 1995 by the regional legislature.

Procedural issues revolve around replacing the statutory processes with a new collaborative model called *concertación*. *Concertación* involves new stakeholders (local politicians and planners) as well as opening up participation, in a very limited way, to key economic interests and community groups. The outcomes of these processes are called *convenios*—signed agreements with legal force that specify obligations of the parties to fulfill the planning 'contract'. *Concertación* and *convenios* became the *modus operandi* for the regional planning department and are prominently featured in the new regional planning law under consideration *(Proyecto de la Ley de Medidas de Política Territorial, Suelo y Urbanismo*—Draft Law of Regional Policy, Land Use and City Planning Measures).

7. Madrid Región Metropolitana

Madrid is a leader in Spanish planning.[2] The culture of leadership coupled with being at the center of power places an extraordinary demand for effectiveness. Yet since the late 1960s until the late 1980s regional planning has been long on analysis and short on action.

COPLACO (*La Comisión de Planeamiento y Coordinación del Area Metropolitana de Madrid*—The Madrid Metropolitan Area Planning and Coordinating Commission), the predecessor to the *Consejería de Política Territorial*, produced scores of reports and no plans in the last 15 years of its existence, to 1983. The *Consejería de Política Territorial* itself was unable to implement any

of the three figures of regional planning as called for in its enabling legislation. The *Consejería* needed an achievement to legitimate its role in regional affairs, or else suffer the same fate as COPLACO.

8. Policy Agendas

In 1987 regional planning director Eduardo Mangada and several colleagues devised a political strategy called *Madrid Región Metropolitana* with four aims: serving as a political election strategy, conferring regional identity, building the institution of regional government, and crafting a regional planning policy to govern land use and public intervention. The strategy was adopted as the centerpiece of the socialist party's regional re-election campaign platform and slogan. Its rhetoric reflects the globalization of the world economy, the incorporation of Spain into the European economy, the desire Madrid has to assert itself as a great European capital and the drive to compete economically on the international level.

Apart from its broader political intentions mentioned previously, from a regional planning point of view the strategy has another objective. "The project 'Madrid Región Metropolitana' has as its basic objective *to make the Communidad of Madrid an integrated, efficient and equitable region. The compatibility of equity and efficiency requires in our context correcting the free functioning of the market with regional planning, economic and social policies*" (emphasis in original).[3] 'Integrated' means forming a coherent unit of the new territory of the region of Madrid. 'Equitable' means balancing the long-standing imbalance between the rich north/west with the poor south/east. 'Efficient' means supporting the proper working of the region's economy.

The strategy took shape in two ways. First, was the overall regional vision, presented in three working documents detailing the specific projects to realize the strategy, and a final document synthesizing it. This vision is being carried forward in more depth in the new regional plan *El Plan Regional de Estrategia Territorial*. Second, were the 'zonal strategies', for the eastern, western and southern sectors of the metro area. The overall and zonal strategies are being implemented via three methods. First, are regional infrastructure investments. Second, are public development projects carried out by ARPEGIO, S.A. Third, are *convenios*—agreements between regional government and local municipalities to coordinate implementation of the zonal strategies.[4] In this way, different policy fields such as transport, housing, land use, environment and others were linked together in specific development projects.

Madrid Región Metroplitana's proposition was to 'govern the region'.[5] Governing the region meant first giving it an identity. Madrid was no longer just the city. All of government, led by the Department of Territorial Policy, strived to create a regional culture—a way of thinking about this new political creature the *Communidad de Madrid*. Jointly, along with regional identity, planning director Mangada sought to establish a 'plan culture' at the regional level. Linking the two occupied the rest of his tenure.

What enabled the *Consejería de Política Territorial* to proceed confidently was its role in the 1987 re-election, the identification of the regional planning program as a 'political program' with full political support, and the long-sought integration of territorial planning with all the other plans and policies of regional government. As partial reward for being a prime mover in the re-election, the *Consejería* was enlarged by the addition of the *Consejería de Obras Públicas y Transportes* (Public Works and Transportation). It was now the largest, with over half the region's budget. The surging real estate and overall economic boom of the go-go years between 1985 and 1992 also played a big part in the new-found confidence.

The *Consejería* gave priority to the zonal strategies because they best fit the new posture of aggressive public intervention the *Consejería* displayed. Realizing them would leave tangible and lasting marks on the region, something unseen in Madrid's planning since the 1940s and 1950s.[6] In contrast to the first years of the new regional government when all the

planning was attempted '*de golpe*' (all at once), now the *Consejería* concentrated on a few important things and strived to do them well.

This tactic paid off. It prepared a strategy for each of the four zones of the metropolitan area (east, south, west and north, excluding the city of Madrid). It negotiated the strategies with the municipalities in the zones with varying degrees of success. If the municipal governments were of the same political party as the region (socialist), there was agreement. This occurred in the east (*Corredor de Henares*) and south. In the north and west there was little political success. The *Consejería* published only three of the strategies (south, east and west). The regional legislature gave its approval to the southern and eastern ones. The strategies had broad interest group support, notably from unions, commerce and industry. Thus, the eastern and southern strategies had green lights, fitting in perfectly with the spatial equity policy.[7]

The zonal strategies were medium term (5–15 years) with an emphasis on physical development via major infrastructure projects and attracting economic development by buying, assembling and offering large parcels of land served by infrastructure and facilities.

9. *Concertación*: Collaborative Consensus Building

The way the *Consejería* created and sold these strategies illustrates its new approach. It was also the vanguard of a new way of doing government business at all levels in Madrid. The code word was *concertación*. Adopted from France, *concertación* is best understood as a back and forth, interactive collaborative consensus building process.

This process, especially in its formative stages, is not open to the general public. It is scarcely open to important stakeholders outside government. It is a technical-political process. It is hard to draw a line between technical and political. Each political work implies a technical one and vice versa. Technicians act with political savvy and politicians act with technical grasp. Endless debate:

• "Two steps back and one step forwards."
• "Everything is always on the table for discussion."
• "The shortest distance between A and B is not always a straight line."
• "A style particular to Madrid."

These are some of the ways long-time participants put it. Typically it proceeds along these lines, not necessarily in this order: an idea, from politicians, planners, or past plans, becomes important. It is studied by technicians (architects, planners, engineers and lawyers). The technicians agree on a course of action. It is proposed to the politicians. If they agree, the technicians take it to technicians in other agencies and governments. If the other technicians agree, the politicians negotiate among themselves. In the case of the southern zone's strategy, it was negotiated with each of six municipalities individually. After they agreed separately, the final agreement was negotiated collectively and signed.

This process did not work for just any matter. A conjunction of factors had to exist. In the case of the southern zonal strategy, four factors led to its success. First, important issues were at stake. It met a confluence of real social, economic and political needs and demands. Second, there was a continuity of work on it that increased as time passed. The initial idea for a public intervention on a large scale to help the south out of its decline surged from COPLACO's Immediate Action Programs in the late 1970s, was on the neighborhood association and city hall agendas of the seven southern municipalities since then, was picked up in the city of Madrid's 1985 revision of its General Plan, was mentioned in the COPLACO *Directrices* (Guidelines) of 1981, and carried forward in the *Consejería*'s draft *Directrices* in 1985; each time with a greater articulation. Third, a clear diagram representing the strategy planted an image in the minds of the actors, moving them to act. Finally, *concertación*.

Table 1. Population growth in the *Gran Sur* 1970–1991

Municipality	1970	1981	1991
Alcorcon	46 076	140 957	139 662
Fuenlabrada	7 369	78 096	144 723
Getafe	69 396	126 558	139 190
Leganes	56 279	163 910	171 589
Mostoles	17 895	150 259	192 018
Parla	10 317	56 318	69 907
Pinto	9 636	18 761	22 251
Total *Gran Sur*	216 968	734 859	879 340
Total region	3 761 348	4 686 895	4 947 555

Sources: National Censuses of 1970, 1981, 1991; and CPT, 1988, UNA ESTRATEGIA DE LA ZONA SUR, Communidad de Madrid, p. 6.

9.1 The Gran Sur

The southern part of the Madrilenean metropolis was for decades a dormitory suburb for central Madrid and a zone for heavy industry. It was the site of most waste disposal facilities and had few parks. The seven municipalities comprising the great south had grown over 300% between 1971 and 1991, from 216 965 to 879 340 people (see Table 1). During the 1960s and 1970s much of this explosive growth was housed in medium and high rise superblocks, called 'vertical slums' by many due to the lack of adequate infrastructure, community facilities and social services.

Its seven towns were "municipalities adrift" (Arias, 1988, p. 23). The south began to take on a weight of its own, develop its own problematic. Lacking higher level support each town went its own way. The municipalities began to compete with each other for new growth in classic 'fiscal zoning' fashion. The towns were "dominated by the logic of the real estate market" (ibid, p. 23).

The towns began to see that going it alone was making their plight worse. They could see the benefits of working together. The challenge was to unite them. How? There were many forces splitting them. Status was but one. Who wanted to be linked with a maligned industrial zone? The city of Alcorcon, for example, identified itself with the high tech west and not the industrial south. One key to unity was recognizing that "the south has a metropolitan origin" (ibid, p. 23).

The solution was a push from above, from regional government. It crafted a strategy for the south. The *Gran Sur* (Great South) project promised to diversify the economy by adding commerce and services to the heavy industry, converting the dormitory suburbs into more self-sufficient communities, cleaning up the environment, and developing parks.

10. The Strategy

The *Gran Sur* is a sub-regional piece of the general metropolitan strategy *Madrid Región Metropolitana*. It tries to organize within a single framework all future development. The *Gran Sur* encompasses seven municipalities whose areas total 36 700 hectares—142 square miles (see Figure 1). It proposes five key spatial elements. First is the existing town centers, for which it strives to 'consolidate' and improve their urban quality (see Figure 2). Second is the M-50 Linear Park, creating an east-west axis (part of the circumferential freeway M-50) for large-scale mixed use development totalling 13 million square metres. Third is the Southern Forest Park, intended to give the south a major environmental face lift. Fourth are Protected
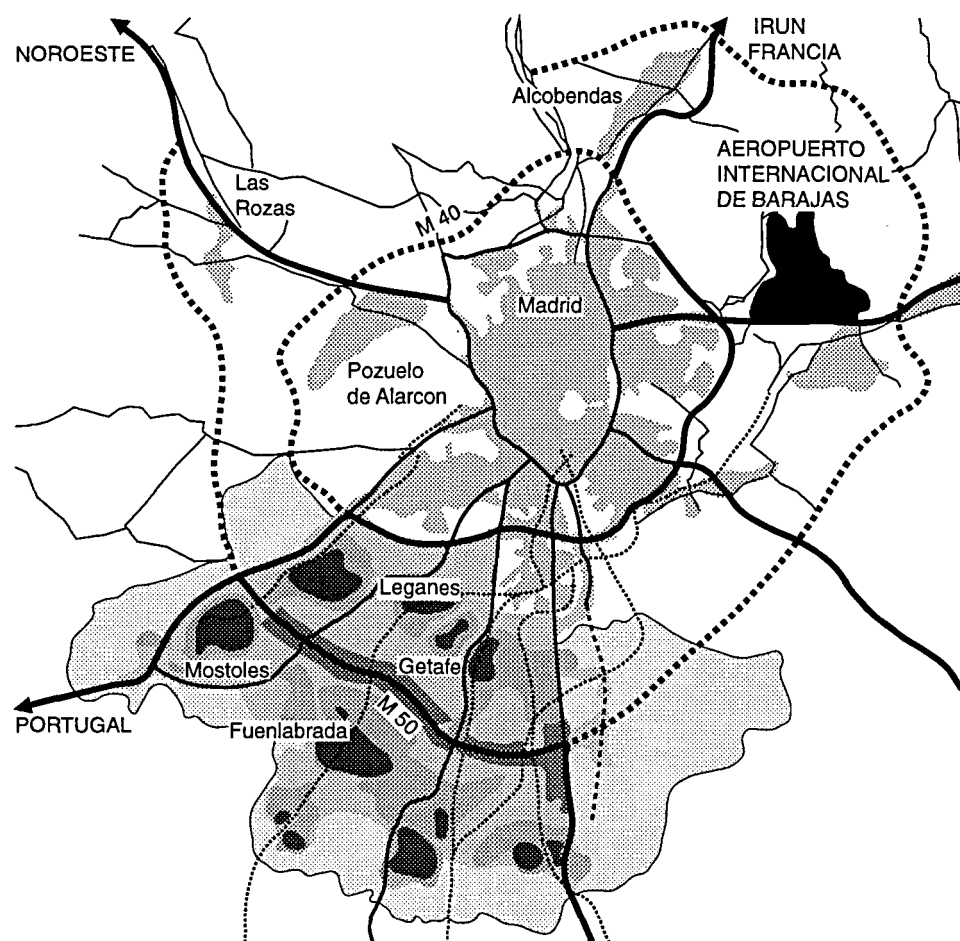
Figure 1. Madrid metropolitan area, highlighting the *Gran Sur*.

Agricultural and Ranching Zones, with the multiple purposes of protecting farmland, maintaining environmental quality, and managing growth. Finally, it proposes regional and local infrastructure to fully serve projected growth. The total public investment needed is 125 billion pesetas, about $1 billion at 1995 exchange rates.[8]

Most of all, the project gives hope to the residents by placing the area in the spotlight and giving it a new image. It was easy for the planners to sell the idea to the *Consejo de Gobierno* (regional government cabinet), the *Asemblea* (regional legislature), and planners, mayors, and councils in the seven towns because it satisfied many real needs and because it gave a positive image. What are these images? Where are they from?

The design presented by the planners (Figure 3) contrasts sharply with the negative social image of the south that prevailed until recently. Dependent on Madrid for work, pleasure and culture, "the dominant image of the southern region by its inhabitants continues...with the most stereotypical archetype about the south: poor, uncivilized, conflictive". Yet residents also see themselves and their sub-region as improving, and generally support the *Gran Sur* project.[9] The new design image was effective in persuading the *Consejería de Política Territorial*'s constituency by replacing the negative social image with one perceived to be better.
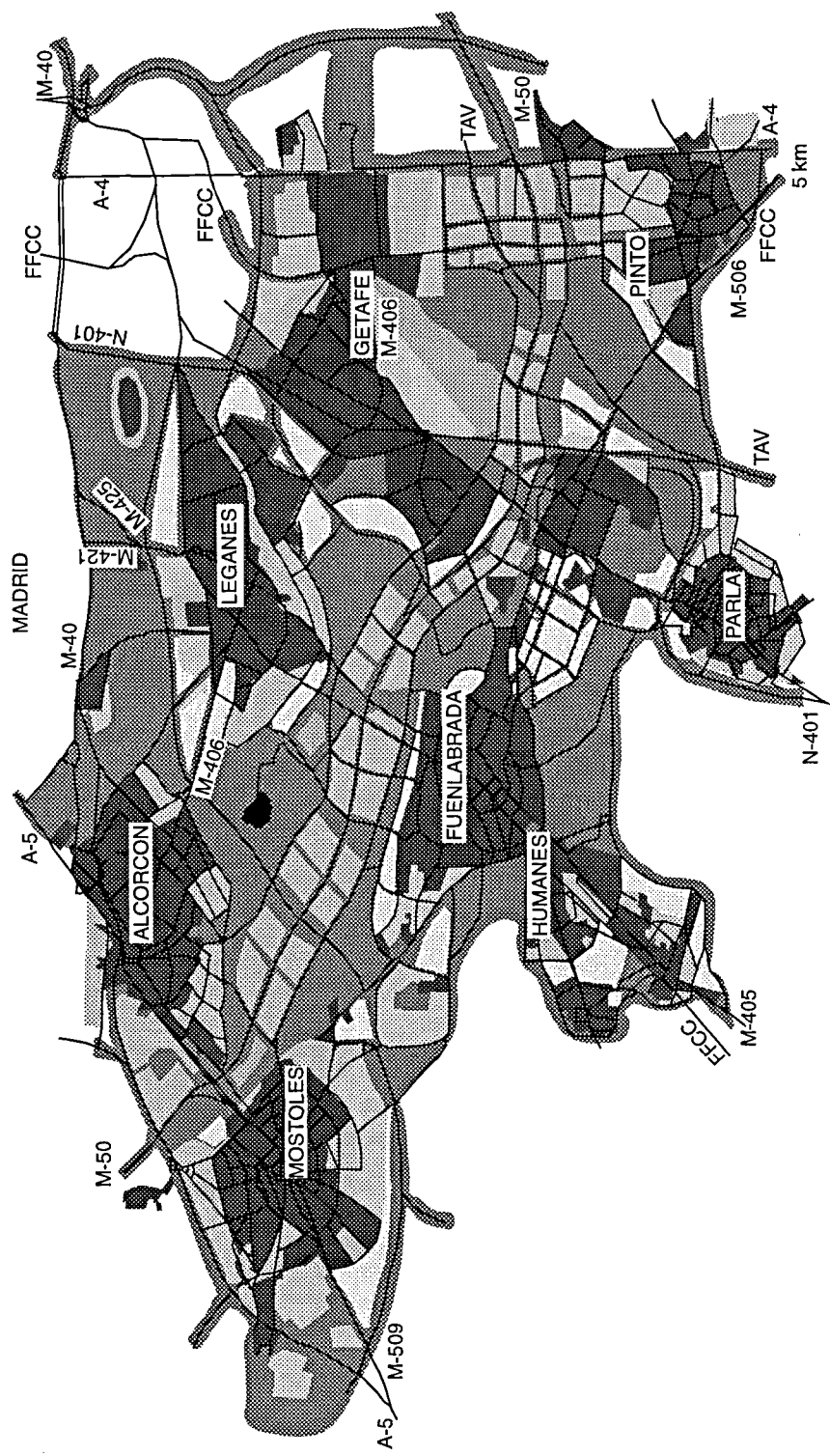
Figure 2. The central area of *Gran Sur*, highlighting the seven towns.

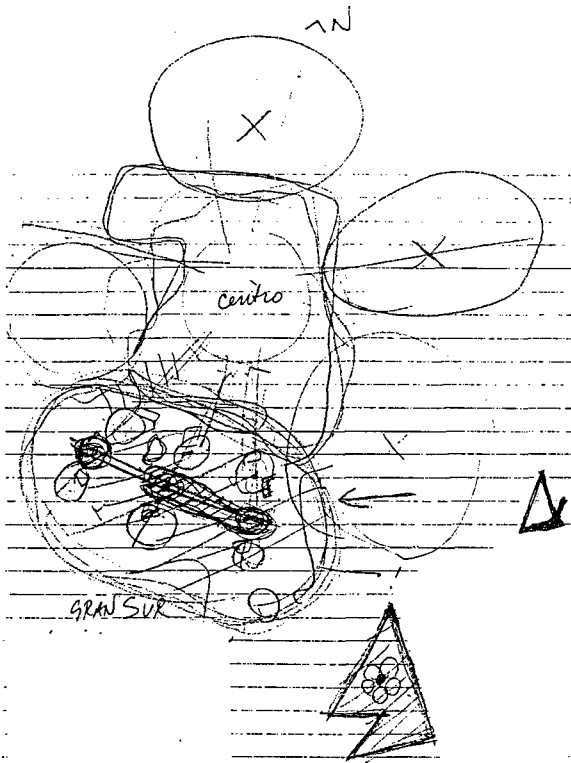**Figure 3.** Image of the *Gran Sur.*

Figure 4. Félix Arias' conceptual sketch of the *Gran Sur*.

11. Evolution of the Image, Evolution of the Project

The city of the south was not just a large-scale mixed use development project. It was to be a "strategy that governed the territory". The *Gran Sur* began as a mental image of a single person. Félix Arias, director of the *Oficina de Planeamiento Territorial* (regional planning office) in the *Consejería*, came up with the idea in 1986. The image in his mind was simple and clear. See his sketch (Figure 4). It occurred to him that for any intervention to have a real impact, it would have to counterbalance the city of Madrid's centrality. The south needed its own identity separate from Madrid. It needed its own transverse axis of communication not linked to downtown. The identity problem was solved in three ways. First, the project was conceived on a grand scale, forging an area of new centrality by combining seven municipalities with over half the area of Madrid city, and nearly one million people. Second, was giving it a name, *la Ciudad del Sur*, the City of the South.[10] Third, was to break the dependence on Madrid, expressed physically by the radial connections to the centre of Madrid, with a transverse axis (the beltway M-50) that connected the towns among themselves.

The most remarkable aspect of this drawing and the internal image it represents is that it was reproduced exactly in form and sequence in most other interviews by the author regarding the *Gran Sur*. Furthermore, drawing the sketch was the first thing that interviewees did when explaining the project. Almost all interview respondents qualified the role of images as 'fundamental'. This can be attributed to the persuasive power, durability and widespread acceptance of the image.

While principal players were able to draw clear diagrams representing the project's essential image in *ex post facto* interviews, they did not start with a clear image. The *Gran Sur*

"was not born with a defined image, at least not very defined", said one regional government representative. In the words of a regional planner, it has "never been a precise image". Rather, the image developed and coalesced throughout the life of the process. The image took shape through a back and forth interaction between visual images—drawings, sketches, designs and plans—and mental images. The process produced "an agglomeration of concrete images and images in the minds of the participants" in which the visual and mental images began to resemble each other more closely with each passing step. The process was facilitated by, in the words of a professional planner, a "common language by way of images". This recalls the saying of the ancient scholastics *"pictura est laicorum literature"*—images are the literature of the layman.

The image was so strong that it lived through several project revisions done by the *Consejería*, Arpegio S. A., and a variety of consultant teams contracted by them. The project is routinely referred to as a *'pieza metropolitana'*, a piece of the metropolis. The fact that it is being built, a regional design becoming a reality, contributes significantly to improving the image of the *Gran Sur*. It is seen as a continuation of a long planning tradition in Madrid in which each major new plan that was realized endowed the city with a characteristic urban fabric distinct from the prior pieces of the city. Each of these pieces has its own identity. The old city, the expansion, the linear city, and so on; each easily discerned by its inhabitants. "This enables us to postulate a metropolis as a varied accumulation of settlements that are not necessarily socially stratified".[11] In this way the social image of territorial equilibrium—balancing the rich north with the poor south by enriching the latter—matches the physical image—endowing the south with new parks, new areas of centrality for settlement, and a linear axis to consolidate the entire area.

As the plan gained acceptance, its image and name took on broader social and political purposes. In 1988 it became known as the City of the South and the Southern Metropolitan Zone. Later it was called *Madrid Sur* and *Ciudad Lineal del Sur* (Southern Linear City). After Arpegio took over the project in 1991, its name underwent a marketing morphosis from the New Metropolitan South to the Great Metropolitan South to the Great South. Each name represents a broader vision and a clearer image of the project. The new shorter names were designed to have a wider marketing appeal. The fact that the name given by a marketing and development agency has stuck while the names given by the planning department have not, and the fact that Arpegio's *Gran Sur* documents are in English and Spanish suggest the strong interaction between marketing and planning. The regional government proclaimed 1994 to be 'The Year of the South'. Even the phone book picks up the term. The four-volume 1995 edition's southern zone volume is now called *Madrid Gran Sur*.

12. Methods

Three major changes in methods occurred during the 1980s in Madrid. One was the use of images in developing planning strategy and in building new institutions. The second was *concertación*. The third was the use of *convenios*—signed agreements ratifying outcomes of *concertación* that were used to implement planning.

13. Images as Cornerstones of Method

Madrid touched the future with new images for the *Gran Sur and Madrid Región Metropolitana*. These images (mental images of process participants and external/representational images) used to represent the project, were the glue that held the process together. They paved the way for political accords because beneficiaries could 'see' what they were getting. This was

true of the agreement signed in 1988 by the seven municipalities and the president of the regional government that gave the green light to change its status from plan to project.

In the *Gran Sur* images shaped political discourse. According to a politician in one of the southern towns, "the role of the image was fundamental". It was fundamental because the techno-political process used to reach agreement between the regional government and the southern municipalities was *ad hoc*, outside statutory planning procedures. This same politician affirmed that they used "a complicated political negotiation process because there was no formal political instrument" available. As in any *ad hoc* political negotiation, flexible postures are key in opening the door to the accord. The image, as it took shape, was never precise. "The image is not a blueprint, it is not fixed, it is flexible", as a regional government political appointee pointed out. At the same time it was being molded, it still possessed a clarity that afforded conviction by core boosters. "The Mangada team knew exactly what it wanted". Yet this same team let the image acquire a life of its own, a life that animated negotiations to turn the image into a project now being realized.

14. Consensus Building (*Concertación*) as Method

Concertación, the second new method, builds on the informal processes so prevalent and effective in Madrid regional planning. *Concertación* has been confirmed as the tool to use to get things done. It is used to reach agreement on important matters, such as large-scale projects and capital investments, and multi-year infrastructure programs. It is used when money is on the line, when vital interests are at stake. "If there isn't *concertación*, things don't get done".[12]

'Interadministrative *concertación*' is used to effectuate intergovernmental coordination among and within levels. 'Social *concertación*' is used between government and interest groups or other social and economic agents. Planning through social *concertación* is becoming more collective. It has spread to such activities as strategy making, conflict resolution, and plan making.[13] *Concertación* is also being used by national ministries and other regional departments to prepare and implement policy and large-scale projects.

Concertación is another step in the evolution of the metropolitan planning institution away from acting directly on the region to acting directly on other agents, who in turn act on the region. This, however, has bumped against the prevalent home rule attitude. Therefore the *Communidad de Madrid* and especially the *Consejería de Política Territorial* have been prime movers in an educative form of region-wide social *concertación* to create a 'plan culture' and a 'regional culture' so that the sense of working together and the sense of the region as a whole permeate processes and permit collaboration.

15. Legal Agreements for Implementation and Financing

Convenios (agreements), the third new method, have come to substitute the planning instruments prescribed by law just as *concertación* has come to take the place of planning processes enabled by law. They capitalize on the strengths of the informal processes and endow the institution with flexibility. However, there is a dark side to these agreements, a potential for their abuse. A prime mover behind the use of *convenios* in Madrid has warned of their abuse. "Disgracefully, the agreement, in many cases, has tried to substitute these administrative instruments and has been converted into other things, into a barely rigorous horse trading, sometimes wrongly used, or used with negligence on the part of the administrations."[14]

16. The Role of Planners

The role of planners in the Great South was to create images and mobilize resources to attain them. Architects by training, creating a physical image was their *forté*. Mobilizing resources

entailed amassing political will and commitment. A select cadre of planners who were pivotal leaders of the citizens movement enjoyed the trust and respect of the politicians and officials responsible for the strategy's development and implementation. The planners cashed in their political capital that was earned in the grass roots mobilizations. Their 'expertise' stemmed from intimate knowledge of the key players, the territory, and the issues. They knew what the problems were and which solutions were feasible.

17. Consequences of Image-based Strategies

The image played a role in the southern municipalities' revisions of their own general plans. All agreed to revise their plans to incorporate the *Gran Sur*—a political decision for each. The image let their professional staffs and/or consultants develop local pieces of the larger image for inclusion in their general plans. The image was strong enough to get the southern suburbs to go out on their own again and to act independently. They did this with the power of a new positive self-identity and a supportive regional framework behind them.

The confidence boost provided by the image is enhanced by real improvements. The new University Carlos III in Getafe (Getafe is now known as the capital of the south), the public multi-sport complex, the completion of the beltway (ring road) in the south, and the opening of new parks (the largest regional park is known as the '*Pulmón del Sur*'—Lung of the South) have all contributed to the south's recovery. Finally, the image has been converted to a marketing tool by Arpegio, the towns, and real estate development firms.

Such was the import of the image in the zonal strategies and of building pieces of the metropolis that a powerful public development agency, Arpegio, S. A., came into being. It was created in 1988 and was placed in the Consejería de Política Territorial. It buys land, prepares it for development (infrastructure, utilities, etc.), and develops or co-develops it. The *Grand Sur* is one of its main projects. Arpegio has become a locomotive in the application of territorial policy.

Paradoxically, in spite of and in part because of these successes, in the 1990s the regional planning department became weaker. In 1991, responding to critics decrying the excessive power of the *Consejería*, transportation was separated into its own department, the *Oficina de Planeamiento Territorial* was abolished, and environmental policy was moved to the *Agencia de Medio Ambiente*. The director resigned, as did his key lieutenants. The *Consejería* that remained was politically weaker and poorer in leadership, authority and resources.

18. Factors Behind the Image that Led to its Use

Saying that the image was central to the creation of an institution could be a simplification. An institution is not built around an image. Structuring the institution over time—forming the organizational structure and filling it with people who shape its processes, invent and carry on traditions, and invest it with personal and societal values—still must occur. In some cases, though, an image can be a driving force, an inspiring vision capturing the essence of what the institution stands for. An image becomes integral to the evolution of an institution when it captures salient characteristics that form part of the mental images of the institution that its members use to understand and perpetuate it.

In addition to its origins as a technician's image, the Great South had more general sources. It responded to the political needs of the new regional government to establish itself as a player on the political scene. It met many social needs that surged from the 1970s citizens movement. It tried to respond to the economic needs of an area in deep recession with 25% structural unemployment. It stemmed from the ideologies of the socialist party and the regional government it ruled.

The role of traditional politics is not to be discounted, however. The seven towns did not have a history of cooperation, much less the resources to make it happen. The *Communidad de Madrid* took advantage of party discipline to impose its vision of their future. All the municipalities were governed by the same party as the region was except one, which was governed by the then closely related United Left party. It was able to use this strong-handed approach, in part, because the goals of the strategy were shared. In the words of Eduardo Mangada: "If there is no political agreement there is no strategy".[15] The EC supported the project with Structural Funds. In short, too many forces were pushing the strategy to fruition. It was in the words of some a *'proyecto contado'*, a given.

18.1 Multiple Images

Whereas in the text I have often used the term 'image' in its singular form, the actual 'images in use' were multiple. There were always many images operating at the same time. Furthermore, each individual's and each agency's interpretation and use of these multiple images varied. This is not to deny the power of the concept that provided a common framework for these strategies, represented by Arias's sketch in Figure 4. In fact, the diversity of images seemed to reinforce the central concept. Each actor was able to develop and extend the image (and therefore the strategy) in her or his own area of activity.

18.2 Historical Use of Images in Madrid Planning

A complex image of this type has been the common thread among the plans that have led to the formation or substantial modification of planning institutions in Madrid since 1860. The complex image that transformed the institution is the plan. In contemporary language (and in these cases) it has been called a strategy. Historically, successful Madrilenean plans have built on the past, responded to existing demands, and imparted a picture of what tomorrow could bring. Plans themselves have become institutions in their own right. They have painted a vision of the future. The past followed, in the form of a changed institution.

In Madrid the string of events typically followed a three-step cycle. First, the plan, in response to a crisis or a new problematic that the current rules of the game (and therefore existing city plan) were not able to cope with any more. Second, the law to adopt the plan. Third, the formation of an institution created by the law to realize the plan. In this way the image/plan led to the institution. This occurred with Castro's *ensanche* (expansion) in the nineteenth century. It was drafted in 1859, adopted in 1860, and institutionalized in 1892 by the 'Law of the Expansion'.

A plan-law-institution sequence that brings image-led structuration into bold relief is the Bidagor Plan of the post civil war period. Published in 1942, adopted by national law in 1944, and institutionalized by a decree in 1946 that created the City Planning Commissariat for Madrid and its Environs, it was the first supra-municipal planning institution. The plan presented a crystalline image of the new Madrid.

In 1961, a new metropolitan plan was prepared, adopted by law in 1963, and institutionalized by a 1964 decree which created the Commissariat's follow-ons, COPLACO and Madrid's city planning department.

The most recent instance of plan-led institution building are the twin strategies of the *Consejería de Política Territorial* for the *Gran Sur* and *Madrid Región Metropolitana*. The images provided regional and sub-regional identities where none and/or negative ones existed beforehand.

18.3 Theory and Directions for Research

The role of images in Madrid's planning and governance can also be seen in other cities and regions. My research in Barcelona reveals that an image of mounting major events (world's fairs, Olympics) to reinvent itself has propelled much urban planning and growth in Barcelona since its first Universal Exposition in 1888. New Jersey's 1992 State Plan captured its main image in its title, 'Communities of Place'. The image helped provide a foundation to the 5-year negotiation process called crossacceptance used to prepare this growth management plan. Holland's *Randstad* (Ring City) and Green Heart and Copenhagen's Finger Plan exploited a strong physical image of their territories which have been perpetuated across decades by several levels of government. More recently, preliminary indications suggest that the image behind the Thames River Gateway strategy in southeast England between London and the Channel Tunnel was vital in its development and adoption.

The image is relevant to planning because it is through changing our internal (mental) image that we change our mind about an issue, or see it in a new light. It is central to the frame reflection process that practitioners undergo in exercising their profession (Schön & Rein, 1994). While Lynch (1960) showed that we all carry images of a city in our mind, my findings suggest that these images are part and parcel of the planning process. More research into how these images are formed and changed, and how they are used and abused, is needed. Much research on images exists outside of planning. It is our task to bridge the gap.

Regarding institutions and their evolution, these findings point to a positive correlation between the creation and development of an institution and the image which captures its thematic content. Discursive practices which are routinized via repetitive behaviors into institutions are based on or molded around images. These are not only visual images. They include metaphors and myths. In this sense, images can be seen as lubricants for discourse and agreements, and the glue which binds participants to a process and facilitates their coordination.

This coordinating role of the image becomes more important as metropolitan planning and governance become more fragmented due to increases in size and the bringing in of more stakeholders into policy making. More research is needed to formulate a new theory of institutional evolution that better integrates images. More research is needed to formulate new theories of planning that stretch communicative ones into the institutional realm.

Notes

1. Resolution on technical merits reflected the regard politicians held for the leadership in the regional planning department, based on the latter's competence and political savvy derived from long and fruitful experience.
2. Barcelona is another leader and claims some of its own firsts. Its 1859 Plan for Expansion by Ildefons Cerdà, the introduction of zoning in the 1907 plan by Leon Jaussely, and the emphasis on using urban design scale projects as a city planning approach to create pieces of the city in the 1970s and 1980s all had repercussions in Spanish planning.
3. Consejería de Política Territorial (1991). *Compendio de Actuaciones Estructurantes*. Madrid: Communidad de Madrid, p. 4. All translations of Spanish are by this author.
4. The three working documents are *Madrid Región Metropolitana (MRM): Compendio de Actuaciones Estructurantes* (1991); *MRM: Actuaciones y Estrategias: Catalogo de Actuaciones* (1990); and *MRM: Actuaciones y Estrategias: Objectivos y Propuestas* (1990). The final document is *MRM: Estrategia Territorial y Actuaciones* (1991). The zonal strategies are *MRM: Estrategia Territorial: Zona Oeste Metropolitana* (1989); *MRM: Estrategia Territorial: Corredor de Henares* (1989); and *Una Estrategia para la Zona Sur Metropolitana* (1988). All published by the Consejería de Política Territorial except *Una Estrategia para la Zona Sur*, jointly published by the Consejerí de Política Territorial and the seven towns incorporated into the strategy: Alcorcón, Fuenlabrada, Getafe, Leganés, Móstoles, Parla, and Pinto.

5. A pleonasm, since the word region stems from the Latin *regere*, to govern.
6. 'Madrid Región Metropolitana' was reprinted in a monographic issue or *Alfoz*, 41 (1987). It was also reprinted in Echenagusia, Javier, editor (1991) *Madrid Punto Seguida: Una propuesta de lectura.* Madrid: Cidur Alfoz. It was elaborated by the Federación Socialista Madrileña (Madrid Socialist Federation) within its electoral program materials titled 'Pensar en Madrid' (Thinking about Madrid).
7. Arpegio, S. A. (1993) *Madrid Gran Sur Metropolitano: Territorio, Desarrollo Regional y Medio Ambiente.* Madrid: Comunidad de Madrid. See also Note 4 for the three published zonal strategies.
8. Data from ARPEGIO, S. A. (1993) *Madrid Gran Sur Metropolitano: Territorio, Desarrollo Regional y Medio Ambiente.* Madrid: Comunidad de Madrid, pp. 12–25.
9. Gabinete de Análisis Sociológico (1993) *Estudio de Base: Nuevo Sur Metropolitano: Informe, Volume I.* Madrid: ARPEGIO, S. A., pp. 69–70. This consulting firm prepared and executed a survey of 1200 residents, 400 in each of three municipalities of the south: Getafe, Leganés, and Fuenlabrada, with a 5% ± confidence interval. It also included nine discussion groups, sometimes referred to as focus groups.
10. Arias, Félix (1988) Ciudad del Sur, *Alfoz*, 56, pp. 23–26.
11. Zarza, Daniel (1991) *Arroyo Culebro: Estudio de Estructura y Ordenacion Territorial del Sur Metropolitano Para Madrid Region.* Madrid: ARPEGIO, S. A., p. 21.
12. Personal interview with Eduardo Mangada, 11 March, 1994.
13. Recent Constitutional Court decisions have ruled that existing law can overrule the *convenio*. This has caused some reluctance to sign *convenios* to conclude the negotiations. For this reason the regional government is modifying its planning law to provide a legal basis for *concertación, convenios*, and their structural counterpart the *consorcio* (consortium). The 1992 national planning law and the 1984 regional law do not mention *concertación, convenios*, or *consorcios*. See the Communidad de Madrid's proposed revision to its regional planning law, Consejería de Política Territorial (1994) *Proyecto de Ley sobre Medidas de Política Territorial, Suelo y Urbanismo de la Communidad de Madrid.* Madrid: Communidad de Madrid.
14. Interview with Eduardo Mangada (1989) *Urbanismo*, 7, p. 28.
15. Personal interview, 11 March 1994. In contrast, the other three zonal strategies (east, west and north) were not implemented. This was due to the lack of political agreement, primarily because the majority of the town councils in those sub-regions were not socialist except for eastern sub-region.

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