SPATIAL PLANNING

IN AN

AGE OF ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP
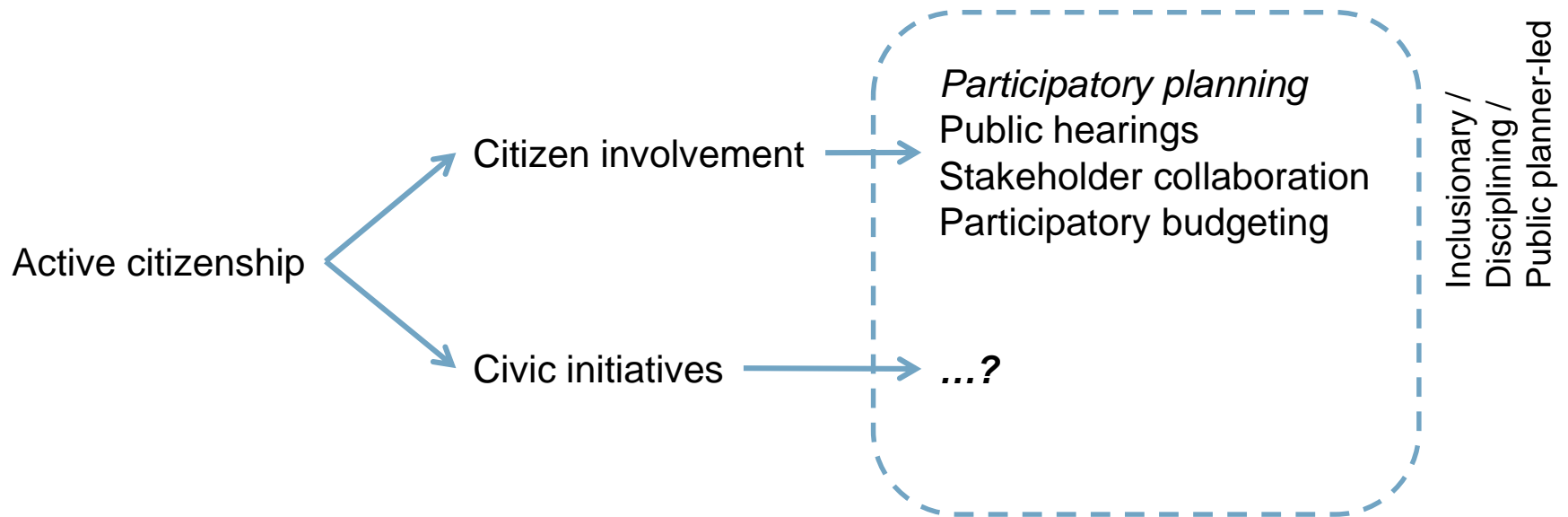
Dr. ir. Beitske Boonstra | Ghent University | Place Making and Complex System Conference | Jerusalem | 27-09-2016

CIVIL SOCIETY ON THE RISE

"participatory society"

"social innovation"

"active citizenship"

"potential of civil society"

CONVENTIONAL SPATIAL PLANNING

Active citizenship

Citizen involvement

Civic initiatives

Participatory planning
Public hearings
Stakeholder collaboration
Participatory budgeting

…?

Inclusionary /
Disciplining /
Public planner-led

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SELF-ORGANIZATION:
A POST-STRUCTURALIST VIEW

Spontaneous emergence of order out of disorder, due to internal drivers,

local interactions and lack of centralized control.

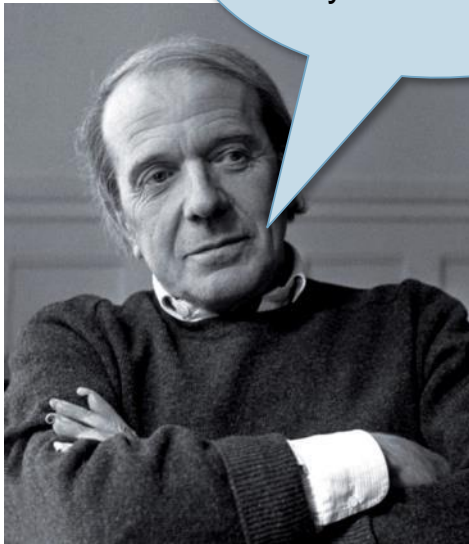(Prigogine/Stengers 1984, Cilliers 1998, Teisman 2009).

Matching Actor-Network Theory,
Assemblage Theory and Complexity Theory

	Feedback systems	**Transition systems**	Emergent actor-networks
Representative	**Explaining** (and exploring) **urban form**	Discovering niches and managing system change	(Describing of and) **engaging in the emergence of initiatives**
Performative			

Civic initiatives as intrinsically driven, emerging and performative community-based networks of citizens and entrepreneurs.

THE BECOMING OF A "SELF"

Becoming (a self) is continuous - there is no being beyond becoming.

A self is formed in complex and dynamic networks of interactions and relations.

A self if formed by expressing what it is not.

Gilles Deleuze
18 Jan 1925 – 4 Nov 1995

Jean-François Lyotard
10 Aug 1924 – 21 Apr 1998
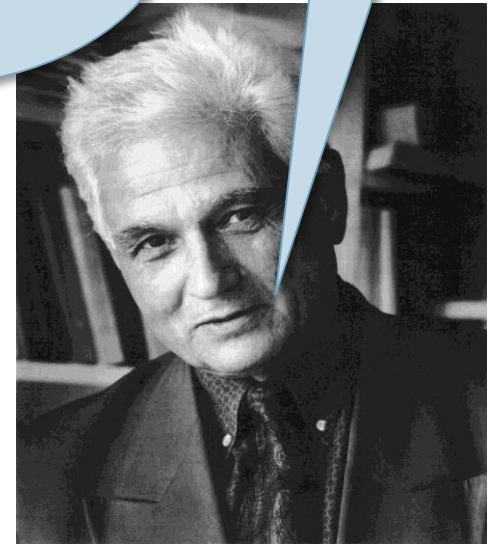
Jacques Derrida
15 Jul 1930 – 9 Oct 2004

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Business Improvement Districts, Birmingham
A legal framework for collective action
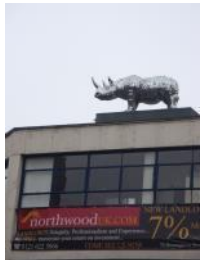
Co-Housing, Denmark
A tradition of do-it-yourself, together

Civic Initiatives, Almere
Policy to put citizens in the lead

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CONDITIONS THAT OPEN UP

	Unintentionally created	*Created for civic initiatives*
Situational / Local	**Intrinsic drivers of the initiators**	**The ability to recognize potentials for opening up, and the willingness to experiment**
Non-situational / generic	**General and planning legislation**	**Policy for active citizenship**

Who are these people?

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THE NEED FOR NAVIGATORS

People who 'connect' and constantly look for opportunities – from a civic, business/NGO and public perspective.

Not just 'boundary spanners' (Specht, 2012; Van Meerkerk, 2014), but actors who take a pro-active and mobilizing role in the establishment of (new) assemblages (Van der Stoep, 2014; Boelens, 2011; Van Wezemael, 2012).

Therefore: 'navigators' (cf. Hillier, 2010; 2011), heading in a direction but without a known destination – internally and externally connected and with legitimacy in their own organizations/networks.
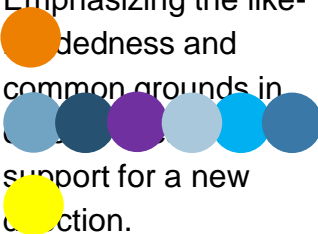
What do these people do?
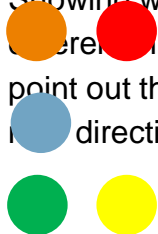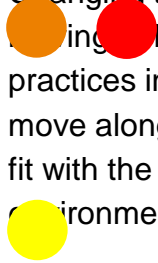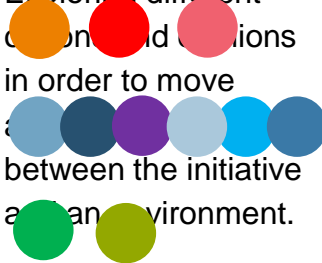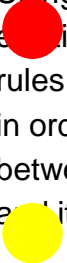
BEHAVIOR IN SELF-ORGANIZATION
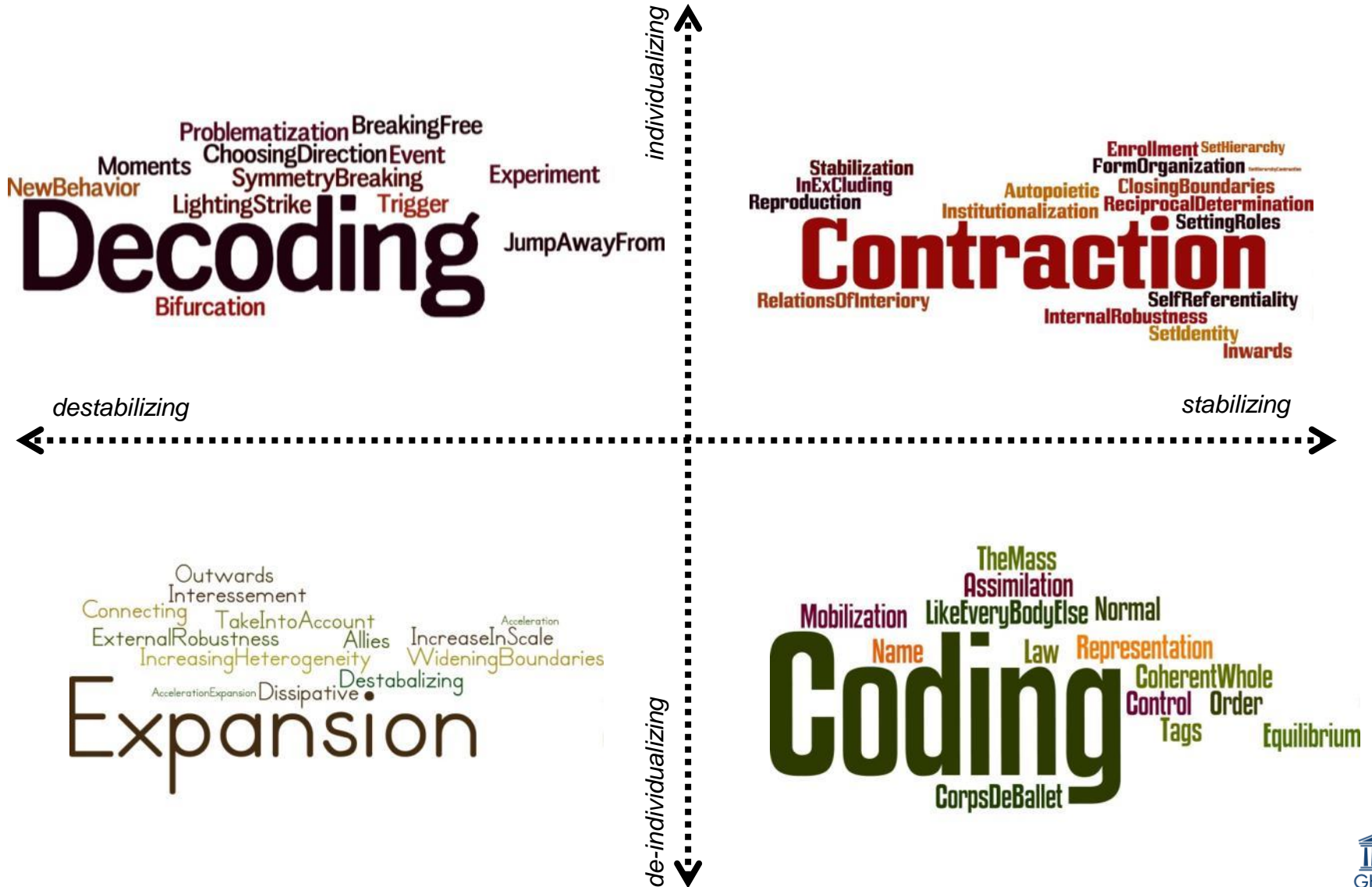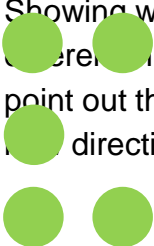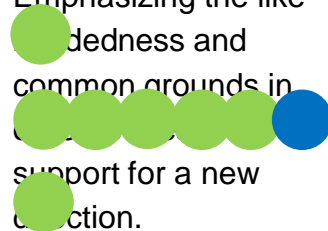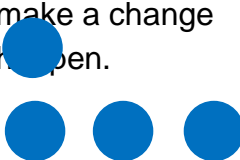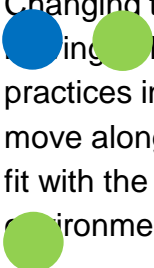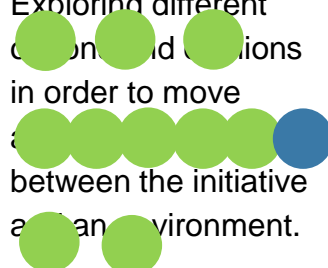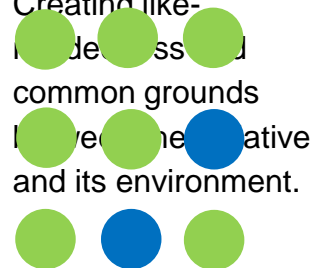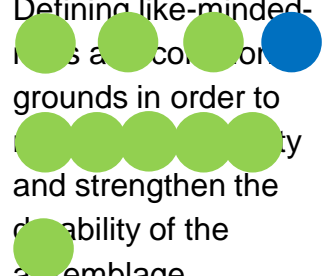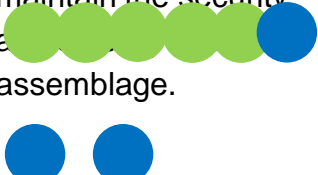
INTENTIONALITY*BEHAVIOR

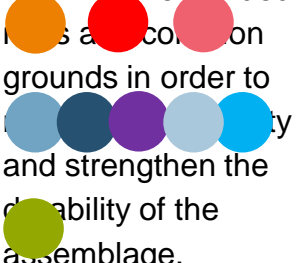|	Decoding	Expansion	Contraction	Coding
Interfering for change (cf. Mol, 2004a; b)	Showing what could be different in order to point out the need for a new direction.	Exploring different options and opinions in order to point out possible futures.	Emphasizing the like-mindedness and common grounds in order to create support for a new direction.	Setting up rules and regulations in order to make a change happen.
Networking for a fit (cf. Latour, 2004; Boelens, 2009)	Changing things and leaving behind old practices in order to move along and find a fit with the environment.	Exploring different options and opinions in order to move along and find a fit between the initiative and an environment.	Creating like-mindedness and common grounds between the initiative and its environment.	Using (or tweaking) existing and new rules and regulations in order to find a fit between the initiative and its environment.
Assembling to maintain (cf. Hillier 2007, Thrift, 1996)	Defining what should be changed in order to maintain the quality and stability of the assemblage.	Disseminating and exploring different possibilities of and for the assemblage, in order to strengthen its stability and legitimacy.	Defining like-minded-ness and common grounds in order to maintain the stability and strengthen the durability of the assemblage.	Upholding rules and regulations in order to maintain the security and stability of the assemblage.

PLANNING STRATEGY: A FLAT ONTOLOGY

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THE ART OF CREATING CONSISTENCY

› **Flat ontology** (cf. DeLanda, 2002): Civic/lay and public/professional planners are unique single individuals that differ in scale, but not in ontological status.

› How to act amidst a **redundancy of emerging selves**, and ongoing struggles between these emerging actor-networks.

› Bent towards co-evolution and **create consistency** – moving in the same direction, with a mutual increase of strength and without loosing the "self".

  › *Not because frameworks are saying so, but by genuinely empathizing with these emerging selves, by knowing and supporting their and one's own intentionality, and by making strategies as open and known as possible.*

TOWARDS A BAROQUE HARMONY…

… in which different and independent voices are brought together through a web of reciprocal reference, interacting with each other and harmonically interdependent, but never loosing ones individuality and independency in rhythm and contour (cf. Kwa, 2002).

THANK YOU! Beitske.Boonstra@Ugent.be