



City profile

Seville: A city with two souls



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ABSTRACT

Seville is a city of 700,000 inhabitants in the south of Spain. It is currently the administrative capital of the region of Andalusia. However, Seville was once the most important city in the Spanish Empire, and a global metropolis when it monopolized trade with 'the Indies'. Its historical past, its subsequent decline and its traditions (many of them religious) generate a range of perceptions among local society as to what the city should be. After being transformed in the wake of the two World Expositions that were staged in the city in the 20th century, at the beginning of the 21st century a change was proposed to Seville's planning model that would not clash with its past. This profile seeks to analyze this period and interpret whether these changes and transformations to the city are part of a consciously created city model and to consider any inconsistencies and internal contradictions. The conclusions show that in periods of large-scale change in the city, the starting-point has to be an agreed city model that enables tradition and modernity to exist side by side, and that is based on greater public participation. The city profile of Seville is significant and useful as an exemplary case of a historic city being capable of renewing the relationship between urban space and the citizen.

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Introduction

The city of Seville has had a major presence throughout history from the time of the first Mediterranean civilizations, through its Roman and Moorish past, and culminating in its emergence as the hub of Spain's monopoly over 'the Indies' after the discovery of America. The cultural vestiges and historical remains of the time can still be seen, some acknowledged by UNESCO as a World Heritage site. Its historical past, its subsequent decline, and its adherence to its traditions and customs have created two perceptions of the city, and the search for summary solutions defines a large part of urban discussion in Seville.

This clash between tradition and modernity has become more evident with the changes to urban development in the city since the last part of the 20th century. A period of crisis followed the holding of the 1992 Universal Exposition in the city, and at the beginning of the 21st century Seville sought a new endogenous planning model that was more balanced and sustainable. This process was the perfect scenario for the dialectic battle to be played out between the two souls of the city.

This *City Profile* does not focus on a detailed study of the fertile history of the city of Seville, but on interpreting the motives,

controversies and circumstances that have accompanied its great transformations, focusing especially on the changes that took place during the first decade of the 21st century. The historical process and the contemporary urban dynamics of Seville and its urban region may serve as a road-map for finding ways to bring city functions up to date and face up to the new social, economic and political challenges that the current deep crisis presents.

To this end, the article is structured in three sections. The first offers a brief description of the history of the city, from the first pre-Roman settlements to the beginnings of democratic era when Franco's death brought an end to the dictatorship. The following section discusses changes to the city arising from the staging of the 1992 Universal Exposition and its subsequent stagnation. Finally, the last section is devoted to recent changes during the first years of the 21st century, emphasizing the commitment to a more sustainable and diversified city. The final conclusions provide an analysis of the main general lessons that can be learned for urban planning in historical cities from this case study, and of local society's reaction to the sweeping changes that the city has experienced in recent decades.

The city and its history

For at least the last two thousand years Seville has existed at the center of the Guadalquivir river valley (see Fig. 1), at the very point to which the effects of the tides are felt and the river is navigable.

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The Mediterranean's first seafaring cultures – Phoenicians, Greeks, and Carthaginians – had intense contact with the first settlers of the land. Later, from the 2nd century BC, the whole area, known as *Baetica*, became one of the most Romanized areas of the Mediterranean, so much so that the first Emperor of Rome who was not from the Italian peninsula, Trajan, as well as the family of his successor, Hadrian, came from the town of Italica, 5 km outside Seville. This vibrant past left huge marks on the city that, today, lie beneath it. Archeological remains that have been found show a city-port with a very active economy and a good level of infrastructure and public buildings that, without doubt, would have played a major role in the exchange of the Mediterranean triad of goods (wheat-wine-oil) from the interior of Roman Hispania to the Mediterranean through the city's port. Seville's importance enabled it to carry on being a major center of population after the collapse of Roman civilization. The presence and role of its Bishop, Isidore of Seville (6th cent.) turned the city into a major seat of culture during the higher medieval period (Fontaine, 1988).

The conquest and Islamic period (7th–13th cent.) resulted in sweeping changes to the city's urban structure. Islamic Seville's period of greatest splendor came with the land becoming an independent kingdom in the 11th century. Seville stood out as the capital of the *Taifa*, the Arab kingdom of the same name in Spain which stretched from the south of Portugal, the Algarve, to the province of Cadiz (Bosch, 1988). A key strategic decision for the future of Seville dates from this time: the expansion of the area contained within the city walls, tripling the size of the city that had existed up to that time. This large urban area enabled the city to grow in the following centuries and enabled it to play a central role during the lower medieval period, after it had been captured by the Kingdom of Castile (1248) and then at the heart of the Spanish Empire (Vincent, 1991). Today, Seville possesses one of the largest and most highly populated historical city centers in Europe, and this without doubt both marks and defines the city. Vestiges of Islamic Seville can be seen in the layout of its streets, the Seville *Alcazar* (fortress-palace) and in its principal monument and the symbol of the city, the *Giralda* (the cathedral bell tower).

After the discovery and conquest of America, Seville became the most important city in the Spanish Empire and a global metropolis

(see Fig. 2) when it monopolized trade with the Indies (Lovell, 2001). During the 16th and 17th centuries, fleets of ships sailed out from its secure inland port towards America and returned laden with gold, silver and all other manner of products (Garcia, 2004). Seville's cultural and artistic life was vibrant, with an example-in-point being that the writer Cervantes began to write his most important work, *Don Quixote*, in one of the city's jails (Canavaggio, 2003). It was also the birthplace of the painter Velazquez and it was here that he spent the first part of his career (Tiffany, 2012). A number of colonies of traders of different nationalities (French, Genoans, Germans) also formed part of Seville's Golden Age urban landscape. It was during this period in history that the last of the most significant items were added to the catalog of Seville's heritage. This included the completion of the cathedral, within whose precincts stands the Arabic minaret, the Giralda (the belfry that tops the tower is a 16th century renaissance addition), and the current General Archive of the Indies, where information about the Spanish colonies was centralized. These last two historical buildings and the Alcazar were recognized as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1987.

In 1717 Seville lost its monopoly on trade with America. The city descended into a long period of decline, while at the same time starting to forge a new personality that would come to be the international archetype of what is 'Andalusian' and 'Spanish', characterized by flamenco music and bullfighting, amongst other things (López, 2008). A good example of this is that Seville became the imaginary scenario for numerous operas (Mozart's *Don Giovanni* and *The Marriage of Figaro*, Verdi's *The Force of Destiny*, Rossini's *The Barber of Seville*, Beethoven's *Fidelio* and Bizet's *Carmen*, among others) and an exotic allusion in romantic literature (Colmeiro, 2002; Sentaurens, 1994).

After this long decline, the city reached the 20th century as a barely industrialized provincial capital, the base of the Andalusian land-owning aristocracy, and clinging to its traditions.

The Ibero-American Exposition of 1929 was held in Seville. Its success was not total due to the lack of visitors and its little international impact, as well as the debts that were incurred (Brajos, Álvarez, & Parias, 1990b; Calvogonzalez, 1989). However, this did contribute to the development of another monumental ensemble



Fig. 1. The location of Seville. Source: National Geographic Society. Adapted by authors.



Fig. 2. The metropolis of Seville during the Spanish Empire (in the background, the Giralda tower). Source: “View of Seville”, oil on canvas attributed to Alonso Sánchez Coello (1531–1588).

around the *Plaza de España*, an area that has often been used as a backdrop to movies, including super-productions, such as *Lawrence of Arabia* and *Star Wars* (see Fig. 3). The city is no less photogenic now and proof of this is the fact that it has recently been chosen as a location shooting of HBO’s television phenomenon, *Game of Thrones*.

However, Seville’s economic underdevelopment meant that the city went into the 1930s immersed in major class conflict. The trades unions and anarchist and communist political organizations held a certain sway in the city, which resulted in it being labeled *Sevilla la roja* (‘Red Seville’) (Macarro, 1989). During the Spanish Civil War (1936–1939), while not being destroyed physically, it was subjected to significant rearguard repression by the troops of General Franco (Braojos, Álvarez, & Espinosa, 1990a; Martínez, Álvarez, & García, 2012).

After the long post-civil war period, from the end of the 1950s and during the 1960s, the city became a magnet for people emigrating from the Andalusian countryside. The population grew to 400,000. However, it also underwent a far-reaching process of decline and numerous historical buildings were physically destroyed. To be precise, 25% of the 684 civil buildings catalogued as important in 1951 were demolished before 1984, and 5% more up to 1998 (Collantes de Terán & Gómez, 1999).

The 1992 Seville Universal Exposition: a major boost to urban redevelopment

The way that the city evolved over the last three decades of the 20th century was marked by two comprehensive urban and socio-economic events: its conversion into the administrative and political capital of the new Andalusian Autonomous Community, and the staging of the 1992 Universal Exposition.

The institution of democracy in Spain triggered a series of deep-running political and administrative processes including the regional decentralization that turned Seville into the capital city of Andalusia, the most populated region with its 8.4 million inhabitants, and the second largest (87 thousand square kilometers) of all the autonomous communities.

Once it had become the headquarters of the new regional administration the city called for the central government to put measures in place to restore Andalusia’s territorial balance (historically the poorest and most backward in Spain) and succeeded in

being awarded the staging of the 1992 Seville Universal Exposition to celebrate the 5th Centenary of the Discovery of America by Christopher Columbus.

This event had a huge impact on the city’s morphology (Perez, 1998) due to the enormous flow of investments – almost 6000 million Euros, of which 90% was committed to infrastructure outside the exhibition ground itself (Álvarez Rey, Domínguez Ortiz, García de Cortázar, Tusell, & Fusi, 2000).

Thanks to the 1992 Universal Exposition investments it was possible to carry out a root-and-branch transformation of the city in record time. To be precise, amongst other things, new ring roads were built for cars, and a new airport was designed by the Pritzker Prizewinner, Rafael Moneo; as for the railroad, the tracks that ran through the city were buried underground and a new central station was built to accommodate the first high speed train link in Spain with the city of Madrid; a stretch of the Guadalquivir River that had been blocked off in the middle of the 20th century as a flood defense was reopened, and 6 new bridges were built; new cultural spaces were also created, such as the Teatro de la Maestranza opera house and the Teatro Central.

City planning by necessity had to take in the design of the exhibition ground on Cartuja Island (see Fig. 4). This was conceived as a State project and designed and executed by governmental bodies with no links to the city itself. And for this reason, even today, the integration of the area into Seville’s urban fabric still presents difficulties (Perez, 1998).

The staging of the Exposition was a success in terms of both attendance, with 41 million visits (one of the most-visited universal expositions in history), and organization. Together with the 1992 Barcelona Olympic Games, it was the best debut on the international stage that a country like Spain, which was just seeing in a new era of democracy and had recently joined the European Economic Community (Pablo-Romero, 2002), could have. There is no doubt that the cosmopolitanism of the Exposition and the receptiveness to the wider world during the six months that it lasted, resulted in changes in the perspective that a large part of local society had of the city and in the way that they understood it. In addition, from the economic point-of-view, the years prior to the Exposition had seen increased employment and greater economic convergence with the rest of the country, with per-capita GDP in the city rising from 70.5% of the national figure in 1984 to 80% in 1992 (see Fig. 5).



Fig. 3. The “Plaza de España” (legacy of the 1929 Exposition) in real life and in the movies (Star Wars Episode II and Lawrence of Arabia).

Post-Expo: the model runs its course

With Expo ‘92 over, the city was plunged into the period of stagnation and depression that is common to many cities that have made a major socio-economic effort directed at one specific project once the project concludes. It also coincided with the beginning of a major economic crisis in Spain between the last quarter of 1992 and 1995 as a consequence of the crisis of the European Monetary System (Bustelo, 2000).

It should come as no surprise that in this climate the citizens came to accept the idea that any urban development in Seville by necessity had to be linked to external festive events, like the 1929 and 1992 Expositions that had so profoundly transformed the city. A city which, in other respects, also has its own calendar year marked by two mass festive events that define many of the features of its economic, social and urban development, Holy Week and the April Fair. The latter is a huge celebration. It has its roots in a 19th century livestock fair, but today it is held purely for fun and

is the greatest manifestation of Sevillian and Andalusian folklore (see Fig. 6).

In this scenario the city government, made up of a conservative-Andalusian nationalist coalition, proposed a bid to stage the Olympic Games as its project for the remainder of the decade. In other words, another major externally-planned event that would give a boost to the city with its new investments (Renau, 2010). There was no historical justification for this project, as the modern Olympics have never been held in a city the size of Seville, only in great world capitals. The total failure of a bid that did not even make it to the International Olympic Committee’s final selection stage was therefore not surprising. However, the bid did entail major costs for the city, such as the construction of an Olympic stadium with a capacity for 60,000 spectators. Opened in 1999 it is currently underutilized, and is no more than the occasional scenario of major concerts, and sporting and even religious events.

By the end of the decade the city’s urban-territorial model seemed to have run its course and it was engaged in an economic



Fig. 4. Nighttime view of the Seville 1992 Universal Exposition.

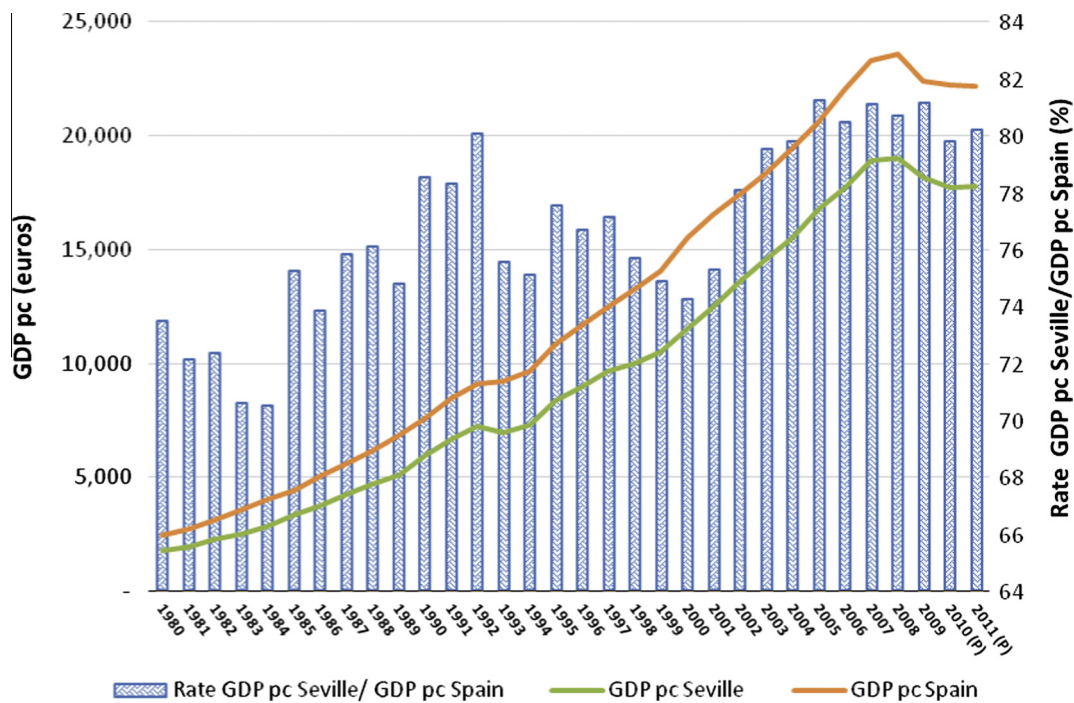


Fig. 5. Convergence of per-capita GDP between Seville and Spain (1980–2011*). Source: Prepared by authors with data from the Spanish National Statistics Institute (<http://www.ine.es/en/welcome.shtml>). * Latest available data for provinces.

decline that returned it to the same level of economic convergence that had existed at the beginning of the second half of the 1980s (see Fig. 5).

21st century: The development of a new urban planning model

At the beginning of this century, the drafting of a new General Urban Development Plan (PGOU) was begun, coinciding with the

socialist party's return to power on the city council (from 1983 to 1991 the mayor had been a member of the socialist party), initially with the support of the Andalusian nationalist party and subsequently with the support of the communist party.

At that time, the prestige of the idea of entrusting the city's development to some exceptional external event had practically faded into history and no alternative remained but to do some endogenous planning. Academic sectors, citizen's associations



Fig. 6. Seville April Fair.

and social agents all took part in drafting the *PGOU* and the city's first Strategic Plan. This planning benefited from the context of a national construction boom, since referred to as the "real estate bubble" (Romero, Jiménez, & Villoria, 2012), which led to a sharp rise in municipal funds allotted to public works and urban projects.

The following gives an account of the four keystones of the *PGOU*, which have had a significant impact on the current appearance of the city.

Public space

One of the key elements of the new city model described in the *PGOU* was the reconsideration of public spaces. The priority changed in favor of the pedestrian and mobility on foot, especially in the historical center (Ayuntamiento de Sevilla, 2000).

The relationship between local society and the idea of pedestrianizing major city center shopping streets has always given rise to disputes (Taxiltaris, Basbas, Nikolaou, & Tzeveleakis, 2002), and Seville was no different in this respect. The upshot was that only one shopping street (Tetuán Street) had been pedestrianized during the whole of the democratic era and had sparked a bitter controversy that had lasted a good part of the 1990s. However, the economic success of the operation, which turned it into one of the most expensive shopping streets in all of Spain as far as cost per square meter of retail floor space was concerned, was used as evidence to champion the creation of more pedestrian areas in the city (see Castillo-Manzano, López-Valpuesta, & Asencio-Flores, 2014a).

One of the first actions undertaken in the *PGOU* was the pedestrianization, with traffic restrictions, of the main avenue in the center of the city (see Fig. 7), which stretches from the Plaza Nueva (where the City Hall is located), to the great esplanade of the Puerta de Jerez and San Fernando Street. This latter is the site of the old 18th century tobacco factory, the largest in Europe, and currently

the main campus of the University of Seville. Social stakeholder platforms (retailers, hoteliers and restaurateurs, and taxi-drivers, amongst others) opposed pedestrianization of the avenue as they interpreted it as an assault on the esthetic heritage and uniqueness of Seville (Del Campo, 2009).

However, successful pedestrianizations made public perception very positive from day one, and although this did not prevent conflict and the opposition of certain sectors, in political terms it did facilitate other major pedestrianizations in the historical city center (Alameda de Hércules, Alfalfa-Plaza del Salvador sector), as well as of other shopping streets outside the center.

Another of the main reference points of the city's make-over was the construction of an architectural showcase, the *Metropol Parasol* designed by Jürgen Mayer, a project known locally as "Las Setas" (the Mushrooms) (Shapiro, 2011; Webb, 2011), located in the Plaza de la Encarnación, the largest open area that remained in the old city (see Fig. 8). "Las Setas" include an observation walkway on the top floor, a fresh food market on the ground floor and even a Roman archeological enclave on the ground floor. This project also triggered a controversy among the more traditional people of Seville due to the project's excessive modernity, and also the cost overruns associated with it. However, it would appear that the townspeople are once again coming round -albeit more slowly- to a position of general praise for the project, helped by the impact that it has had internationally. One example of this is that the model of the *Metropol Parasol* is part of the New York MOMA collection (see http://www.moma.org/collection/browse_results.php?object_id=100411) and that it was one of the finalists in the European Union's 2013 Mies Van der Rohe Awards for Contemporary Architecture.

The *PGOU's* ongoing commitment to transforming the city's architecture resulted in the proposal that a skyscraper should be constructed that would become the symbol of the city and the headquarters of the Sevillian Savings Banks. The design of the



Fig. 7. Pedestrianized avenue in the old city center (in the background, the tram).



Fig. 8. “Las Setas” (Metrosol Parasol) – “The Mushrooms” – and the “15M” social movement against the economic crisis.

skyscraper was entrusted to the Argentinean architect César Pelli and it is envisaged that it will be finished in 2015. The height of the building, the highest in the Andalusian region at 180.5 meters, has once more sparked an intense debate, as traditionally the

construction of tall buildings has not been allowed in order to enable the *Giralda* to stand out above the rest of the city. Supporters of the project argued that the tower is not in the historical city center and 1.5 km from the *Giralda*. The detractors involved

UNESCO as they believed that it was an affront to the great monuments of the city. Finally, in 2012, despite it criticizing the fact that the building work had not been halted, UNESCO's listing of the monuments as world heritage in danger was avoided and the city pledged to "avoid similar developments in the future" (UNESCO World Heritage Committee, 2012).

Another addition to the roster of controversial buildings in Seville was a new University library, which it was proposed that an Iranian architect, Pritzker prize-winner Zaha Hadid, would build in some gardens (*the Prado de San Sebastián*) near the main campus. People living in the area took the matter to court as the work was being carried out in a green belt area and they succeeded in having the structure that had already been built demolished.

Urban and metropolitan mobility

Mobility has always been one of the prime concerns of people living in Seville and, as such, its improvement stood out as one of the main challenges to the city model being promoted in the first decade of the 21st century.

The extraordinary growth in the level of motorization from the 1990s onward had meant that in just a few years traffic problems had returned to the same, or even a worse state than before the new network of access and ring roads had been created for the 1992 Exposition (Junta de Andalucía, 2008).

The PGOU stopped giving priority to private vehicles and began to promote sustainable mobility, whose emblems were: subway Line 1, the tram, and a commitment to the bicycle.

Subway

The mobility project that required the greatest volume of investment during this period was the construction of Line 1 of the Seville subway. The city had been committed to developing a subway since the 1970s. Building had even commenced on the first line, although this project was later abandoned due to the project's high cost caused by the city's clayey ground. After the 1992 Exposition the Seville subway project was renewed with a network of 4 lines. Construction on Line 1, which was metropolitan in nature, was begun in 2003, and the service came into operation in April, 2008, with 22 stations and a length of 18 km. Apart from its contribution to mobility, the subway became an important instrument for revitalizing retail commerce in historical city districts, as it improved access to these from peripheral neighborhoods (Castillo-Manzano & López-Valpuesta, 2009). However, the current economic crisis and the resulting lack of public funds have postponed the plans for the remainder of the network *sine die*.

Tram

Access to the southern part of the urban shopping center, which had been largely pedestrianized, was solved by the construction of a tram line between 2006 and 2007 (see Fig. 7). The line was 1.5 km long and had four stops. In 2011 a second phase extended the route by another 880 m. The high cost of this line -around 140 million Euros- was due to the fact that the opportunity that these road works provided was taken advantage of to make general improvements to the streets involved. This urban development model, with a per-kilometer cost of 65 million Euros, is once again incompatible with current budget restrictions. It there seems unlikely that the planned extension to the line will be constructed.

Bicycle

From 2005 Seville committed to the construction of a network of bicycle lanes that by 2010 was over 120 km long. Parallel to this a

public cycle hire system was put in place in Seville, managed by concession. This has all been to the benefit of bicycle use in the city, quantified as 72,000 daily journeys made by bicycle in 2012, equivalent to 9% of all mechanized journeys made in the city. The city's flat terrain and mild climate during a good part of the year has favored bicycle use and turned Seville into a national and international benchmark as regards bicycle mobility (Castillo-Manzano & Sánchez-Braza, 2013b). Proof of this is the fact that the city is now ranked number four on the prestigious international Copenhagenize Index 2013 of bicycle-friendly cities (see <http://copenhagenize.eu/index/>), only behind Amsterdam, Copenhagen and Utrecht.

These three major contributions to sustainable mobility have also been the cause of controversy. The subway was criticized during its construction phase for the negative effects on the local retail sector, a powerful lobby in the city (Castillo-Manzano & López-Valpuesta, 2009). Meanwhile, the implementation of the tram was a contentious subject due to the esthetic impact of the overhead lines in the vicinity of the Cathedral and also their effect on the processions during Holy Week (Del Campo, 2009). Technological advances and new battery systems enabled the overhead cable system to be dismantled along a large part of the route in the monumental part of the city not long after it had been brought into operation (García, Fernández, Andrés, & Jurado, 2010).

Finally, the implementation of the bicycle in Seville was also rejected for similar reasons, due to the esthetic problems that cycle stations in the historical old town area might cause and, once again, for its negative effects on the correct running of the religious activities. This rejection led to the widespread vandalism of cycle stations that put the very survival of the public cycle hire system at risk (Castillo-Manzano & Sánchez-Braza, 2013a).

Economic diversification and the fight against social exclusion

With the post-Expo crisis over, the city embarked upon the first decade of the 21st century fully sharing in the intense growth cycle of the national economy.

Seville's per-capita GDP in 2000 was 74.2% of the national mean. Convergence with Spain as a whole had halted since 1992. From then until 2005 convergence with the national average grew at a sustained rate until it reached 81.2% (see Fig. 5). The unemployment rate in the city, which had stood at 18.9% in the second quarter of 2001, fell 6.8 points up to the same period of 2008, and reached its historical minimum of 10.5% in 2005 (Sevilla Global, 2008).

Part of this success was due to the boost that the municipal government gave to historical and traditional local industries that were currently languishing, such as the aeronautics, agro-food and auto industries. For example, during these years EADS-CASA opened a new manufacturing facility in the city. In 2004 the project for the final assembly of the AIRBUS 400-M military aircraft was also initiated, making Seville a benchmark in the European aeronautics industry. There are currently some 80 aeronautics companies in Seville province, and the majority of these are ancillary firms of Airbus and Boeing. This is possibly one of the few industrial sectors that has been able to generate employment during the economic crisis, although the Andalusian aeronautics sector's 'economic miracle' has come at the cost of hefty public subsidies from the regional government during the past decade (260 million Euros between 2005 and 2012 alone).

Other landmarks include the new Heineken-Cruzcampo plant (320 million Euros invested, the biggest private investment made in Andalusia), the upgrading of the Renault Nissan plant (which produces a third of the gearboxes for the entire Renault group) and the ABENGOA technology center. The last is a local company

that is now among the world's elite in solar energy and has been able to adapt to the crisis in Spain by increasing its roster of international customers. Proof of this is the fact that during the first quarter of 2014 86% of the 48,000 million Euros worth of orders on its books were from foreign customers. The most recent step in its international expansion has been the decision to trade separately on the NASDAQ, where ABENGOA already traded through its energy and environment subsidiary, ABENGOA YIELD.

The city also has placed great hopes on the port for its future industrial development. However, the port is surrounded by a mix of as many successful projects, such as the logistics zone, as other projects with doubtful financial outcomes, such as the new lock (with a cost of 160 million Euros) and the duty-free zone. In fact, the port's future still depends on its being dredged (around 30 million Euros), and this work has been halted for years due to its likely environmental impact on the Doñana National Park. Doñana is a stopping-off place for thousands of species of birds migrating between Europe and Africa and was declared part of the Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO in 1994.

The city's economy based fundamentally on services, public administration and tourism was thus diversified. Tourism, specifically, accounts for approximately 11% of the city's economy (Ayuntamiento de Sevilla, 2003). With over 3 million overnight stays per year (3.7 in 2013), Seville is the third most-important urban tourist destination in Spain after Madrid and Barcelona (Medina, Rey, & Ruffin, 2010). Some segments of tourism are currently being promoted. These include Conference Tourism (a 120 million Euro extension to the city's Conference Center was opened in 2012) and cruise tourism. With respect to the latter, hopes have grown up around the previously-mentioned dredging of the river helping to turn the city into an international point of reference for this type of tourism. The reality is, however, that the trend towards ever larger cruise ships (see Castillo-Manzano, Fageda, & González-Laxe, 2014b) makes it impossible for inland ports like Seville to be able to play a significant part in this.

Apart from all these initiatives and large-scale projects, which are generally linked to public money, what is true in general terms is that the city has failed to create an environment in which private initiative takes the lead in promoting growth and improvement in welfare conditions in the city. Fig. 5 is a fair reflection of Seville province's dependence on public initiative, showing that convergence with Spanish GDP per capita increases during periods of more expansive public expenditure (i.e. 1986–1992 and 2002–2009), but then falls back during periods of budgetary restrictions (i.e. 1993–2000 and after 2009). No data are available for GDP per capita post 2011, but if the unemployment rate for Seville is compared to the national rate, the only possible conclusion is that the Sevillian economy continues to diverge from the economy of the country as a whole. To be precise, the unemployment rate in Seville province stood at 32.4% during the second quarter of 2014, compared to a national rate of 24.5%.

Together with this commitment to economic diversification, the fight against social exclusion also had to be tackled. A large number of working class neighborhoods were untouched by the city's urban renewal generated around the 1992 Exposition. During the 2005–2007 period the Neighborhood Plan was put into action with an investment of over 108 million Euros. However, the most serious case of inequality, social exclusion and marginalization in the city can be found in the group of neighborhoods that make up the so-called *Polígono Sur* sector. From 2003 on an action program was initiated and coordinated by all the administrations (local, regional and national) on the novel basis of the participation of the local residents. Since then, some successes in urban redevelopment, social improvements and public safety have been achieved in the area, although integration and the definitive normalization



Fig. 9. Holy Week in Seville (in the background, the Cathedral and the Giralda tower).

of certain parts are still far from being accomplished (Caravaca & García, 2009).

Conclusions

The rich historical tradition of the city of Seville created an original archetype with the city adhering to tradition and customs, especially after it began its decline at the beginning of the 18th century. This social archetype has inspired universal myths, such as Don Juan and Carmen, and has been able to capitalize on many of the elements that define Spanish national folklore with a fair amount of success, including flamenco music and, to a lesser extent, bullfighting. Even its best-known events, Holy Week (see Fig. 9) and the April Fair (see Fig. 6), are also expressions of the city's enormously proud vision of its identity.

Against this backdrop the city has seen major urban transformations, first with the 1992 Exposition at the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s and, later, after the economic decline of the 1990s, during the first decade of the 21st century. It is therefore not surprising that many of these transformations have been contested by a significant part of the public and the media that, during every decade, have appointed themselves as the champions of the traditional *soul* of the city. Social support for these major works, especially those of the last decade, such as the subway and the tram, the extensive pedestrianizations and flagship actions in the shape of *Las Setas* and the skyscraper (the so-called Pelli Tower), has been implicit and demonstrated in the polls, but not demonstrated explicitly at the time that the projects were undertaken. In fact, during the years that the townspeople suffered the externalities of the works, it was not easy to find groups of activists in favor of these large-scale works and transformations, with the exception of cycling associations that supported the policies to promote the bicycle.

To summarize, Seville has been a battlefield where tradition and modernity have been vying with each other, but one that provides important lessons for urban management. The battle scars have been deep but the fact of the matter is, after implementing all these changes, the leftist coalition lost the 2011 municipal elections in the scenario of the national economic crisis and the municipal unemployment rate standing at 24.97% during the fourth quarter (Sevilla Global, 2012). For the first time during the democratic era the city is being governed by an absolute majority of the conservative party.

However, surveys (CANP, 2011, 2012) reveal that with time and national and international recognition, support for these transformations has become widespread. It therefore comes as no surprise that the conservative party is studying new pedestrianizations and extensions to the cycle lanes, when traditionally it has been closer to those who opposed these projects. This change could also be influenced by the evident erosion of its electoral support (in the latest European Parliament elections of March, 2014, the conservatives obtained 27.8% electoral support compared to 49.31% in the municipal elections that swept them to power in May, 2011).

In short, today the city's two souls must still seek a model of co-existence that prevents the city from being subjected to profound transformations or a degree of urban stagnation, depending on the party that is in power. Be that as it may, the economic crisis and, above all, the institutional crisis brought about by the public's feelings of widespread corruption has generated social demand for greater involvement in political construction at all levels, including the municipal level. It is therefore difficult to think that in the future it will be possible to see processes of urban renovation like those undertaken in the city of Seville at the end of the 1980s and during the first decade of the 21st century, unless it is with the presence and direct participation of townspeople who are increasingly more connected, increasingly more demanding as to the control of public management, and increasingly more involved. This is good news for the development of a humanist city model.

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