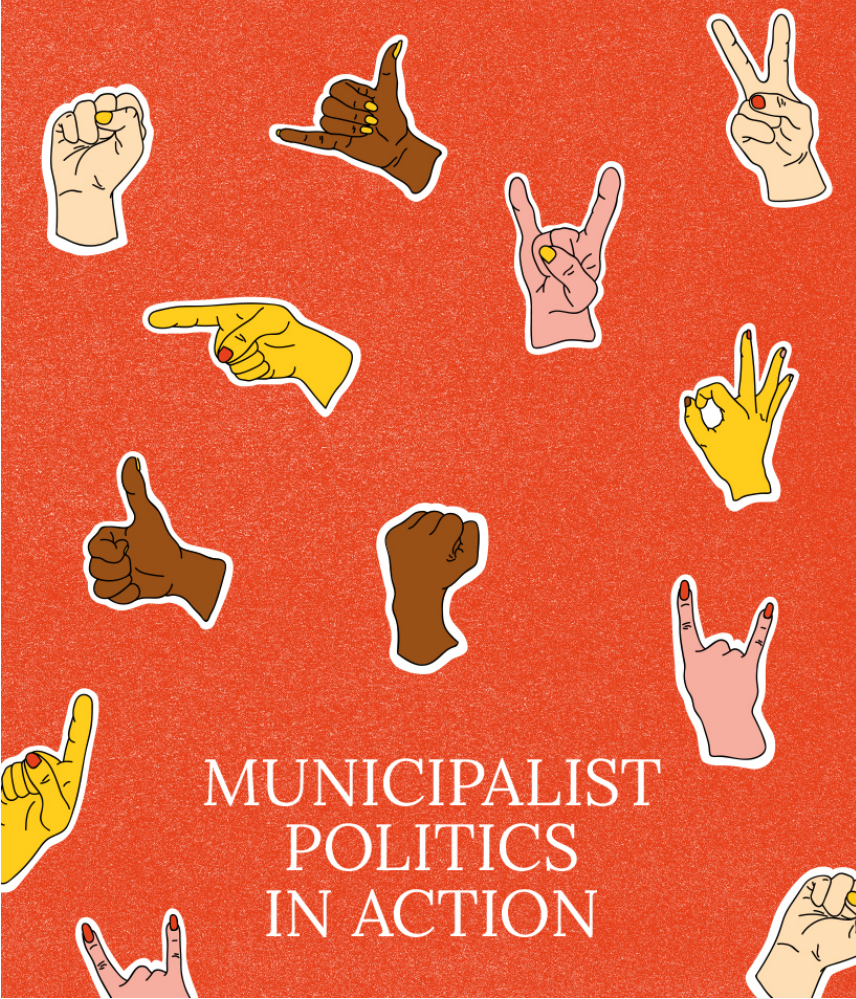
FEARLESS CITIES



MUNICIPALIST POLITICS IN ACTION

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Published by **Fundació Sentit Comú**

sentit comú

Fundació Sentit Comú
fundaciosentitcomu.cat

First edition: September 2022
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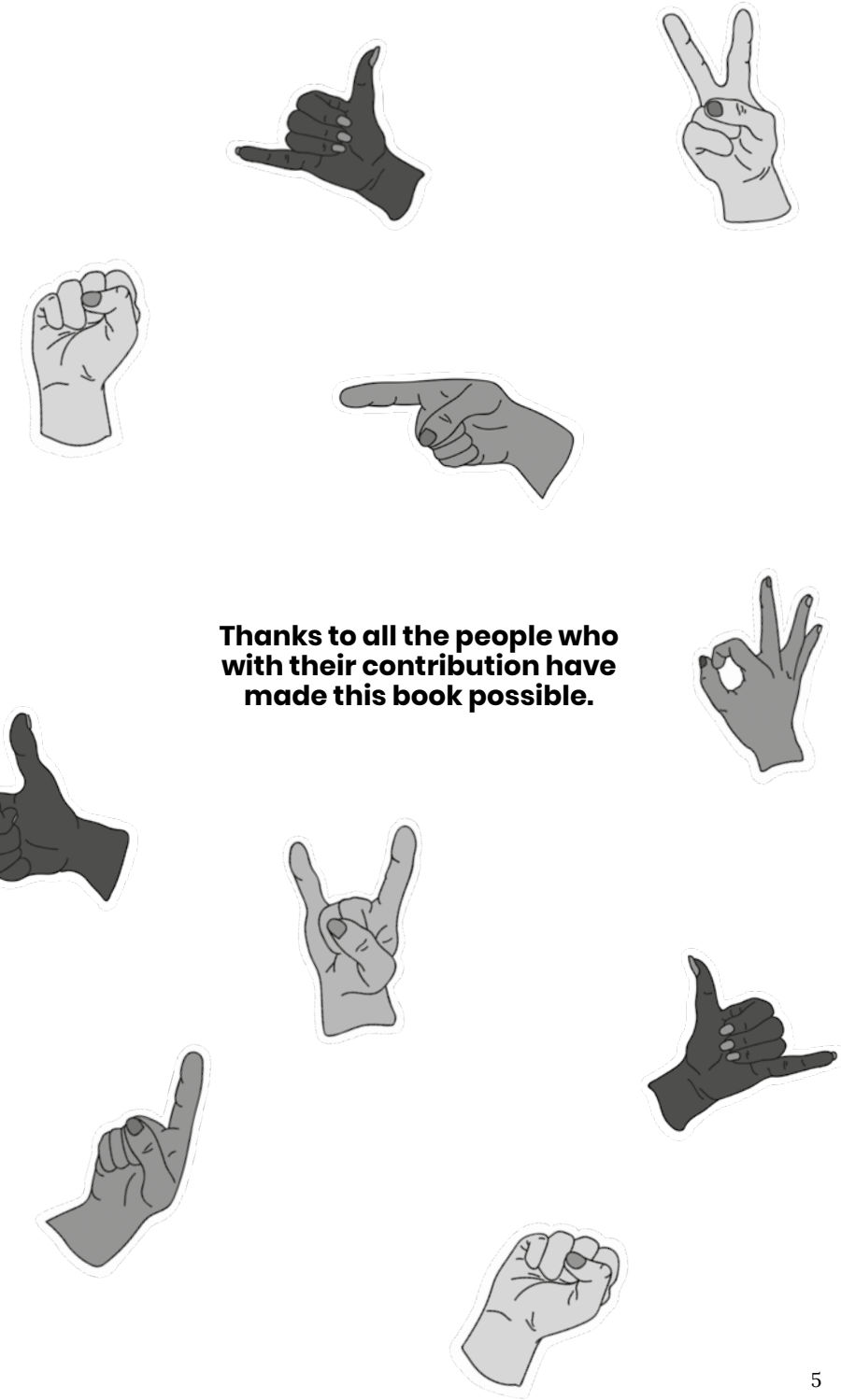
ISBN: 978-84-09-43226-4
Printing and binding: Cevagraf
Impreso en España — *Printed in Spain*



Thanks to all the people who with their contribution have made this book possible.

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INTRODUCTION

In 2017, the international municipal movement met in Barcelona with the aim of fostering global networks built on solidarity and hope. This summit served as a catalyst for municipalism and its expansion across all continents. Over the course of the following years, regional gatherings of Fearless Cities were held in Warsaw, New York, Brussels, Valparaíso, Naples and Belgrade, demonstrating the organisational strength of the global movement for ordinary people's right to cities and towns.

This book gathers some of the debates that took place in July 2021 during the second global edition of Fearless Cities, which emerged with the ambition to tackle the most challenging and provocative issues that cities, towns and rural areas are currently facing.

Who really calls the shots in our cities? What would a queer municipalism look like? Is it possible to end violence against people and the planet?

Municipalism is defined by its transformative will. That's why we don't shy away from complex debates or difficult decisions.

For us, "Fearless" means being brave enough to reach out to those who think differently, strong enough to be vulnerable and bold enough to get involved in the reality of a place instead of watching what's happening from the sidelines.

In the first edition, we already defended that we possess something capable of overcoming fear: something as simple and yet as difficult, as strong and yet as fragile, as hope. Five years later, and within the context of ecological, social and economic crises, we are more convinced than ever that our only option is to speak plainly about our fears and think together about how we can face them.

Let us reclaim the power of proximity, learn from each other and keep growing our global network!

BUILDING THE MUNICIPALIST MOVEMENT

GETTING OUR HANDS DIRTY: STORIES OF ACTIVISTS AND ELECTORAL POLITICS

BARCELONA: MUNICIPALISM IN PRACTICE

Elena Tarifa

> "They want us lonely, but they will find us in common" was the slogan of the election campaign that in 2015 led our municipalist project to govern Barcelona City Council. And the fact is that, against all odds, for the first time the city had common people at the head of the municipal institution, thanks to the unity of so many people and organisations that decided to take a step forward together.

Barcelona en Comú did not come out of nowhere. It all began in June 2014 when a group of people from social movements in the city, such as the PAH, a platform for people struggling with mortgages, neighbourhood activists, various cooperative and social movements and individuals came together to encourage the progressive political parties and movements of the time to join a municipalist project that would return the city to its residents for the next municipal elections in May 2015.

In previous years we had taken to the streets and social media but, nevertheless, we found that change was blocked from above, by formal power. The time had come to take back the institutions and put them at the service of the common good. We decided to take back the city for its residents through Barcelona en Comú, a public platform led by activists and ordinary people. We decided to go local because it is a way to get close to the people, where changes are more palpable and closer and where residents' diverse participation in the different political approaches for the city is possible. We also wanted to commit to innovative policies that could change people's daily lives and in which they would play leading roles.

After seven years, and regardless of how long we are at the helm, Barcelona City Council will never be the same again. There is a watershed moment when ordinary people joined the institutions, because innovative municipalist projects and policies have been implemented. For example, Barcelona has elected its first female mayor, Ada Colau, an anti-eviction activist and an ordinary person, not from the political class; a Code of Ethics has been established that limits the salaries of our elected representatives and the number

of mandates; and feminism has been put at the forefront of our policies, with the creation of the first Councillor's Office for Feminism and LGBTI Affairs in Barcelona City Council, the gender mainstreaming unit under municipal management and the pioneering LGTBI Centre, while actions that improve the lives of many women have been promoted, such as the free municipal childcare service for the most vulnerable families.

Other examples of daring policies have been the Special Tourist Accommodation Plan (PEUAT), an instrument to regulate and limit tourist flats, which has helped Barcelona City Council to reverse the process of pushing residents out of the city centre, and the commitment to a healthy, greener, fairer and safer public space that encourages social relations and the local economy, with Super City Blocks, green hubs designed to reclaim part of the space currently occupied by private vehicles for citizens. The creation of the first municipal public and green energy company, Barcelona Energia, and the launch of a free municipal dental service for people with fewer resources are additional achievements.

But if there is one thing that has been particularly impacted, it has been the closer relationship with residents, allowing them to participate in the main decisions of the city through new forms of participation. In this regard, we passed a new municipal regulation on participation that was rejected by the High Court of Justice, as it allowed popular residents' initiatives, such as that presented to municipalise the city's water supply, which is a great threat to the company that currently supplies it and consequently was appealed in the courts.

We have also promoted what we call e-democracy through the use of the free software platform *decidim.barcelon*a, which has been shared with residents and with other municipalities and institutions, and which has served both to collectively construct our electoral programme and to prioritise the actions of the Municipal and District Action Plan by the city's residents. It has also been the instrument for voting on the hundreds of projects presented by residents in the city's first Participatory Budgeting, where the €30 million investment of the 2022 municipal budget has been directly decided by those who participated in the different rounds of voting.

We haven't forgotten where we come from

Another one of our 2015 campaign slogans was: "We will never forget where we come from". For us, the institution is a tool, not an end in itself. The movement we have built, that of the *Comuns* ("Commons"), is now more important than ever to consolidate a more participatory form of government, to

support the political approaches taken by Barcelona City Council, to be able to influence the institution inside and out by taking care of our links with social movements and to build our own discourse outside of the institution. One of the challenges from outside the municipal council is to manage expectations about what we can really do and what we want to do, because we cannot do everything. Another challenge is the relationship with social movements; are we part of these movements? In any case, being inside the institution, we must not lose sight of the demands of the movements, something that is not easy but absolutely necessary, bearing in mind that sometimes they can be much more demanding with the policies that we propose or that we can implement and that there are also emerging movements to which we must pay heed.

In this sense, it helps that many of Barcelona en Comú's activists come from neighbourhood associations and diverse social movements; this helps to keep the channels of communication open. Also, the fact that we have assemblies of the *Comuns* in almost all the neighbourhoods of Barcelona helps to maintain this dialogue with different local social and civil actors. In this sense, we try to maintain real-time communication channels between the municipal councillors of Barcelona en Comú and the organisation, through specific spaces and regular meetings, to try to combine day-to-day decisions with joint reflection with the organisation on how to achieve long-term changes.

Furthermore, we have to deal with media that are against us, controlled by the elite and the big economic groups, in addition to the countless legal actions and strategic lawsuits (lawfare) against our most radical policies, such as that against the Special Tourist Accommodation Plan or those filed against the mayor and some councillors by vulture funds for forcing them to offer social rent to vulnerable families.

Another challenge has undoubtedly been to govern in coalition with the Socialists' Party of Catalonia (PSC) and to reach broad agreements with the other groups on major city issues. Thus, we are aware that working for a city model that puts people and sustainable living at the centre must be compatible with reaching agreements on issues that can get more majority support, and that we must build on small victories to advance towards major changes that need the majority support of the population.

Local changes, global effects

Although working at the local level was our starting point, from the beginning, those of us who participated in Barcelona en Comú were certain that the democratic rebellion in Barcelona would not just be a local phenomenon.

We wanted Barcelona to be the trigger for a citizens' revolution in Catalonia, Spain, Europe and beyond, working side by side with citizen platforms similar to ours that won in other cities in Spain and internationally, as well as with progressive and citizen platforms with the aim of changing the current neoliberal political and economic regime from below.

Thus emerged Fearless Cities, an informal global movement of activists, organisations, councillors and mayors working to radicalise democracy, feminise politics and drive the transition to an economy that puts care for people and planet at the centre.

The first Fearless Cities event was organized by Barcelona en Comú in 2017 and was attended by more than 700 people representing more than 100 municipal organisations from all continents. The book documenting this first Fearless Cities meeting has already been translated into five languages.

Since then, local municipalist platforms have organised decentralised regional Fearless Cities events in Brussels, Valparaiso, New York, Warsaw, Belgrade and Naples, until this second edition of Fearless Cities online in the summer of 2021, showing that local changes achieve global effects. Whether from the institution or from activism, we will continue to work in a network, together, so that municipalism can be a real engine for change in people's lives anywhere in the world.

SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AND THE RISE OF MUNICIPALISM IN BOLOGNA: A LITTLE INTRODUCTION, A LITTLE CONTEXT

Francesco Gentilini and Emily Clancy

The relationship between Bologna and the international left is bigger than someone would guess by simply wandering through the streets of this not-so-big city that lies 80 kilometers north of Florence, on the other side of the Apennines. The story of this relationship could more or less be told through the tales of two main characters.

First of all, it must be said that, throughout the "short twentieth century", Bologna has been the main stronghold of the largest communist party in the Western world, the Partito Comunista d'Italia (PCI). For as long as the PCI existed, it governed Bologna. Not only that, but the Party was an omnipresent body in the city's life: in the mid-1970s, approximately 35% of Bologna's population was officially registered as a member of the PCI. Today, in the age of "liquid parties" and post-modern politics, even trying to conceive a political organization that could gather such massive popular support is nigh on impossible.

The other leading character in the story is the universe of leftist movements that fought for the emancipation and recognition of "new" political subjectivities, whilst also pushing for more radical reforms between 1968 and 1978. Make no mistake, this universe was wildly diverse and some of its components often collided with each other. Nevertheless, all these movements often openly challenged the local communist administration and just as often put themselves in open opposition to the Party. Akin to what happened in many other countries, the young, student-centered social movements were trying to replace the old, grey values and ways of the Communist Party. As often was the case, the Party responded with a heavy hand when necessary, just like when in 1977 Bologna's mayor Renato Zangheri and the PCI's secretary Enrico Berlinguer praised the police and the army for clearing the student-occupied

streets in the university neighborhood of clashes that, among other accidents, resulted in the death of 25-year-old student Francesco Lorusso.

This dual dynamic of conflict and dialogue is what has always fueled the dialectic around the Italian Left's main points of debate, in Bologna just as in the rest of the country. The Party and the Social Movements have always been natural-born adversaries in a way, with vastly incompatible values of reference. And such a dynamic still goes on today.

Fast forwarding to a decade later, many things began to change. Only two years after the fall of the Berlin wall, the history of the Italian Left was once again re-shaped in Bologna: with the explicit desertion of any direct reference to the communist tradition, the PCI suddenly became the PDS (Democratic Party of the Left), leading to a schism that saw the birth of a number of communist parties that aimed to be the new voice of the Italian radical left. This turning point is what today many see as the beginning of an end: the end of the old Left who made social justice, worker's rights and wealth redistribution their primary values.

Nevertheless, it was surely a beginning too: from then on, the newly adopted social-democratic agenda of the newborn Democratic Party ("Partito Democratico" is the name that the Party has assumed since 2008, dropping – not casually – the world "Left" from its name) began to make way for new, "post-modern" sets of values and views while getting rid of the old slogans and dogmas. It's through this relentless process that a sort of Italian version of Tony Blair's "Third Way" came to see the light of day since the early 1990s, opening the Party's gates to the acceptance of some of the political right's worst features (neoliberalism, the privatization of public services – from schools to health –, tougher repression towards migrants, to mention just a few) while holding onto some of the most problematic legacies from the PCI's past (a deep annoyance at self-managed and occupied squats and social spaces – which they often had cleared thanks to police intervention –, a strongly industrially-centered view of economic development that did not always take into account the consequences for the environment and climate change). Twenty-five years later, the process culminated in the Democratic Party's leadership being taken over by Matteo Renzi (who has today left the party to fund his own political organization, "Italia Viva", the closest thing to an Italian version of Spain's "Ciudadanos"). Renzi's leadership ratified and sanctioned the definitive desertion of any socialist heritage of the Party (which, must be said, had been under constant erosion since 1991 and, therefore, was easy prey to Renzi's campaign), re-locating it within the political space. Such a tendency led the way for a nationwide sense of abandonment

and betrayal for those who once believed in the glorious prophecies of the Socialist and Communist parties.

Nevertheless, as the Party was slowly moving away from its tradition, the Social Movements found new strength by refreshing and rebooting theirs. With the arrival of the 1990s, new organizations arrived on the scene, new uprisings took place and new social spaces were occupied and began to self-manage themselves. Student unions took to the streets again and the no-global movement began to shape new forms of civil disobedience and creative political demonstration. The universe of Italian movements kept on gaining momentum until the G8 of 2001 in Genoa, when the State decided to repress their demands in blood once more. Twenty-four years after Lorusso's murder, Carlo Giuliani was killed at point blank by a policeman during clashes at Piazza Alimonda. His dead body, captured by news agency photographers, became the symbol of the death of the Movement's struggle as a unified front.

The following years, therefore, saw a new equilibrium: while the Party quickly moved away from its roots, the Movements tried to bounce back from their "defeat". Neither were dead, but neither were what they used to be before. These were also the years of Berlusconi's "regime" and, most importantly, cultural involution: through decisive and pervasive control of a large share of the national media, the new leader of the Italian center-right managed to set the agenda for many of the topics that engaged the attention of public opinion. The impact of those decades of cultural regression and political distortion of constitutional values is hitting harder than ever in today's times. To make matters worse, the decline of Berlusconi's era came with the rise of a grotesque new political agenda, not unlike the one that many other European countries experienced: the era of Austerity. Although it never apparently hit as hard as in other States, like Greece and Spain, the Troika's dogmas of political economics dealt a highly devastating blow to the already not-so-sound Italian welfare state.

In such conditions, the Left and its diverse souls have struggled to find a way to represent an alternative for the Italian people: the Party can't help but lose members and voters, while the Movements have been struggling to take back the scene and impose their agendas. In the meantime, the Right appears to steadily gain momentum as the years pass. And the more it gains momentum, the more right-wing parties turn into radical organizations with neo-fascist sympathies. After all, differently to every other South-European country, Italy has never witnessed a leftist answer to the everlasting political crisis of recent decades. Some victories have been celebrated, but the overall political picture of the country's last 30 years is quite grey. Definitely neither red, nor green.

A civic coalition of citizens takes the stage

In such grim times for the country's national political situation that was once home of thelargest communist party in the Western world, a new horizon of progressive political agency is emerging in the city. In 2016, a few months before the municipal elections, a group of Bologna's citizens decided to try to change the situation of their local context. Their personal stories were very different, but they saw that as an opportunity for mutual enrichment rather than as an obstacle. They thus decided to form a coalition of political subjectivities who found common ground in a set of values and practices. Their "civicness" and political engagement were the weapons that they sought to use in order to influence their local administration: this is the reason why they decided to call their organization "Coalizione Civica".

Refusing to identify their organization as "just another leftist party", they began to shape their identity by putting forward a horizontal, non-hierarchical approach: the electoral program and the statute of the association were decided through a participatory process and, following the same approach, Coalizione Civica selected its candidates through open primaries (following the example of Podemos party's "primarias ciudadanas"). That was the occasion for many citizens to take part in a real political laboratory of municipalism, whose goal was to gather the city's best political and social practices, prioritizing the city's needs over individual experience.

Despite the blatant neglect of local media covering the electoral campaign, Coalizione Civica managed to gain 7% of the votes and to elect six representatives in local institutions: two members of the City Council, as well as one member in Bologna's four out of six Neighborhood Councils. But, besides the mere electoral result, there is one element worth mentioning to fully grasp the result of Coalizione's first run for public office: those six people came from very different and diverse political experiences; leftist parties, citizen movements for public schooling, social movements and occupied social spaces. All of these worlds came together to form the universe that Coalizione Civica managed to create, building a bridge between different political visions and traditions with the goal of taking over (or better still, "taking back") the city.

Following the 2016 elections, it was the time to build a solid and efficient – yet as horizontal as possible – internal structure. First of all, Coalizione Civica, besides being a formal association of citizens, is what in Italy is identified as a "lista civica" (the definition of a party list presented at a local election with no official connection to a national political party and that mostly campaigns on local issues). In the history of the city, not a single "lista civica" had ever lasted longer than a single electoral appointment. Our goal was to change that by building a space of political agency beyond national political parties that could be sustained over time. A space of connection between social struggles working from the bottom-up and the top-down institutional levels; a space that could be the common house of every citizen that wishes to contribute to a dual-power struggle to reshape the city.

Therefore, we drafted the organization's statute and organized our action into "territorial groups" (divided by neighborhood) and "thematic groups". Moreover, we decided that every leadership role of the organization must be filled by a gender-based diarchy. Soon enough, other cities saw the birth of organizations that openly emulate Coalizione Civica's structure and approach: the most famous and successful of those being our "sister" Coalizione Civica Padova, which was set up in 2017 and immediately managed to form part of the local government after their first participation in Padova's municipal elections. The common model is that of a "political civicness", which may sound like an oxymoron but, on the contrary, represents a radically new approach to leftist action: the intersection of different experiences, organizations and life stories is the fertilizer that allows every participant to keep their own experience and language while still being able to communicate and cooperate with the others. We like to say that everyone is mutually refusing to wear individual political "uniforms" to put on that of Coalizione Civica.

Through all these years, while building alliances with hundreds of activists from vastly diverse backgrounds, we managed to influence the city's public opinion on a number of issues (from the need to reduce inequalities to the right to housing; from workers' rights to the fight for the environment; from sustainable mobility to the struggle for public schooling, and so on). Besides our everyday activities, our long-term goal is to construct a new, radical political hegemony in Bologna.

Over their first five years in the City Council, Coalizione Civica stood opposed to the Democratic Party's administration of mayor Virginio Merola. Our motto for the mandate was "to govern from the opposition" (#governaredallopposizione), meaning that our main goal was to try to find every possible way to make the administration's agenda steer as left as possible. It clearly was not always easy, but our struggle has yielded some tangible results: among others, one of our biggest wins was stopping the urban forest known as "Prati di Caprara" from being cemented over. Thanks to a strong alliance with a group of citizen committees, we managed to protect a green lung with more than 45 acres of trees and plants from the construction of malls, residential buildings and a private multi-level car park. What was the administration's official project for the area three years ago has today become unfathomable,

and the whole city is now aware of this ecological struggle. And that, in our opinion, is a good example of hegemony.

Besides focusing on local struggles, it has always been clear to Coalizione Civica that a municipalist movement's action must be intertwined with the national and European context. We are proud members of the Fearless Cities Network and we entertain good relationships with other organizations from all over the continent, from Barcelona to Barletta, from Amsterdam to Naples, from Turin to La Coruña, and so on. Nevertheless, we have always believed in the importance of granting internal pluralism, and in every member of our organization being free to adhere to any other political space or project provided it was not in direct competition with Coalizione Civica at the local level.

From governing from the opposition to governing from the government

The year 2021 has been the year in which Coalizione Civica has finally managed to become part of the city's government: after months of negotiations over who then came to be the Democratic Party's candidate for mayor, Matteo Lepore, Coalizione signed a public electoral agreement that engaged the future mayor on seven key points for the upcoming mandate. This process was completely public and open to debate and contributions from mere sympathizers and, of course, from members of the organization too. The core of the signed agreement is the product of years of mutual political input of Coalizione Civica's working groups and their ownership is collective. That is how we managed to take the demands and contributions of many of the city's movements and put them directly on the administration's agenda. It took five years, but we made it happen. Clearly, not all of our agenda has been translated into the electoral program, but the negotiating process, led by our Emily Clancy (now Deputy mayor of Bologna), saw us obtain many of the results we wished for. Not only that, but in recent elections Coalizione Civica increased its number of members elected in local institutions by four: while in 2016 we could count on two representatives in the City Council and four in the Neighborhood Councils, today we rely on three of our members elected in the City Council, twelve in the Neighborhood Councils and, as mentioned before, the seat of Deputy Mayor of Bologna.

Now we are facing a new phase, filled with new challenges and perspectives. Being a part of the city's government, we had to adapt our approach to social and political change. We are also undergoing a process of restructuring the organization to better fit this phase. During the recent electoral campaign, we opened our doors to meet new people, some of which also became candidates on our lists. That's why, during the campaign, we called ourselves "Coalizione Civica Ecologista Coraggiosa e Solidale". Now we have to cement these new relationships to further grow and expand our capacity to exert an impact on the city. Thanks to our work in the last six years, we managed to move the political axis of the city's administration (after at least a decade of excessive conservatism, to say the least) much more to the left.

Just a year before the elections, many of us thought that forming a coalition with the Democratic Party was an impossible task to achieve. Now, we find ourselves in this new venture and it is safe to say that the challenges and difficulties are exceeded by the satisfaction of being able to actively influence the muncipality's policies. We believe that it is from such a position of power that we can better serve the city. Still, we do not want power at any cost: working within the contradictions without contradicting yourself is no easy feat, but we reckon it is worth a try. Only the next five years will tell us if we made the right bet. In the meantime, what we are aspiring to in Bologna is something that also speaks to the whole country: in times in which the Left has to face the most barbaric right parties since WWII and social democratic parties are often highly contaminated by the fumes of neoliberal values, Coalizione Civica is trying to show that an alternative is possible, and that the old values of our communitarian and socialist heritage are still extremely relevant. All they need is a little adaptation to our times. Together, we believe, we can still triumph.

WHY LOCAL POWER?

Maga Miranda

I am 30 years old, the same number of years that since the Social Revolt in October 2019 in Chile have been seen as responsible for the inequality and abuse affecting our country today. “It’s not 30 pesos, it’s 30 years”, was one of the slogans that managed to capture the discontent expressed in the different types of protests that have shaken different corners of our country since October, against the 30-peso rise in the Santiago underground fare. Thirty years, marked by the governments of the Concertación [coalition of centre-left political parties], once opponents of the civilian-military dictatorship that ruled the country for 17 years, after the Coup d’État on 11 September 1973, which took over a Chile determined to recover democracy with the plebiscite of October 1988. The promise was also to bring justice and compensation to the thousands of victims of the state genocide perpetrated by Augusto Pinochet and the conspiratorial right.

The promise of the political parties of the Concertación was that “happiness is coming”. However, despite the macroeconomic indicators, the per capita income and our participation in the OECD, happiness never came. On the contrary, what came was inequality, the relaxation of employment laws and labour market precariousness, a rise in living costs and the feeling that, despite everyone’s best efforts, the salary could not cover basic needs, such as housing, health and education.

It was in education where the crisis erupted for the first time since the return to democracy, because although the groups of victims of human rights violations were always demanding justice, truth, compensation and guarantees of non-recurrence, the truth is that they did not become massive demands, as was the case with what was known as the “Penguin Revolution” in 2006, a movement I took part in as a secondary school student. With that revolution, Pinochet’s illegitimate constitution was challenged for the first time. It also challenged the failed policy of market-based municipalisation of public education.

From then on, secondary students became actors and political subjects in a movement that only grew as the years passed, partly due to the continuous "belittlement" we were subjected to by the government authorities of the time.

It was also the "penguins" (secondary school students dressed in navy and white uniforms who were given this nickname by citizens) who jumped the first turnstile in the massive days of protest, avoiding the Santiago underground, who started the revolt in October 2019 and who have led us to the verge of perhaps one of the most important democratic processes in recent decades: writing a new Fundamental Charter in a Constitutional Convention composed 100% of members elected by universal vote, with gender parity and seats reserved for Indigenous Peoples.

It is important to highlight that we are witnessing the birth of a new Chile, one that has woken up and expressed itself clearly against an exclusive economic, social and political model. This is an opportunity to build a new Chile together, one that gives a voice and space to those of us who have been systematically excluded from major decisions, which in turn, entail enormous responsibility.

What we chose in May 2021 proved to be much more than a constituent member, a regional governor, a mayor or a councillor. What we chose was the opportunity to build the country in which we want to live in the years to come, to revert the antidemocratic cycle and emerge from the post-dictatorship and to break away from Pinochet's legacy, both in terms of local governments and the constitution.

I have a background in activism. When I was 15, I took active part in the Penguin Revolution. Then, during my university years, I was part of the largest mobilisation for higher education since the return of democracy in 2011, when more than 1 million students came together on the streets. Then came a revival of the feminist struggle, in a wave against violence, for sexual and reproductive rights and for equality in the feminist May of 2018. During those same years, I began my activism in the defence of neighbourhoods and cultural heritage in a community organisation that seeks to defend neighbourhood life against the advance of real estate speculation in one of the most acute crises in the region where I today have the honour and commitment to lead a council, Estación Central.

In this context, facing the decision to run for city council made more sense than ever; to put myself at the service of a collective project seeking transformation, seeking to overcome the neoliberal model and participate in the drafting of a new constitution brought a sense of urgency, but also a sense

of need, to the idea of contributing to the emergence of democracy from local power, facilitating public participation through town councils. But also, understanding that if the changes we wish are to take place, we need to participate on all fronts, perhaps in the small role of the town council, but also in the writing of the new constitution and the presidential debate.

On 4 July 2021, the promulgation ceremony of the Convention took place in an historic, unprecedented event, with gender parity and seats reserved for Indigenous Peoples. I am certain that this process will open up our democracy, changing the rules of the game so that those who have been marginalised thus far become the ones to take the helm of our country. This was followed by the debate around the presidential elections in November of the same year. The debate was about two matters: to safeguard the constituent process and for executive power to accompany the popular mandate of transformations proposed in the social outburst, with important reforms to the pension system, tax collection and the redistribution of power.

The opportunity we have today, with the government of Gabriel Boric, beyond the action of political parties, is the beginning of a real democracy, which achieves these two objectives and does not forget that the wisdom of our peoples has imposed on us a democratic standard that must be above the legal minimum with which former politics used to play. We are witnessing the death of the old and the birth of the new, and how we go about this transition could mark the way we do politics forever in our country.

A JOURNEY THROUGH THE HISTORY OF MUNICIPALISM

MUNICIPALISM HAS A HISTORY. LET'S LEARN FROM IT.

Kate Shea Baird

Over recent years, the global municipalist movement has taken huge leaps forward. We've woven a diverse international network of activists, movements, councillors, mayors and parties committed to building power from the bottom up. We've built an increasingly cohesive shared municipalist identity (whether under that name or not). We've shared stories, held workshops and exchanged policies in order to learn from one another. We've unearthed and incorporated municipalist theory, most notably from Murray Bookchin, giving us a lodestar toward which we can aim our daily practice.

The first Fearless Cities summit and book both served to collate and record many of these milestones. But municipalism wasn't invented in 2017, or in 2015. It has a long, rich history in many towns and cities around the world and, I propose these experiences be one of our movements' principal sources of knowledge and inspiration.

The reasons to value our history are worth recalling. First, while our movement is rapidly evolving and growing, contemporary experiences, especially those of municipalists in government, are still few and far between. Looking backwards is, if nothing else, a way of multiplying the library of practices from which we can learn. Second, historical experiences also hold added advantages with respect to contemporary ones. As prosaic as it may be, earlier municipalist movements and governments in our own countries, if they are relatively recent, may have faced legal and cultural contexts more similar to our own than contemporary experiences on the other side of the world. What is more, the activists, councillors and mayors involved in those experiences will certainly have more time and energy to share their experiences than those who are 'practising' municipalism today; we all know that limited time and energy are one of the main obstacles to municipalist collaboration. Finally, and most importantly, historical examples have the advantage of the perspective that only time, analysis and considered reflection can give. It is in

these cases that we can identify more clearly what worked, what didn't, and assess the legacy of the municipalist project in the town or city concerned years, or decades, later.

It should be clear that contemporary municipalists, who face myriad challenges, don't have the luxury of reinventing the wheel. Yet, we can't look to history for a 'how-to' guide, as such. The very nature of municipalism means that each specific experience is highly unique to its local context. What we can, and should, look for are examples of how different experiences dealt with the recurring dilemmas and themes of radical municipalism: the relationship between institutions, movements and citizens; if and how to participate in supramunicipal politics; the role of leadership and the limits of representation; the delicate balance between transparency and caring for and protecting our own; the pressures of powerful economic interests and, relatedly, how to communicate in the face of a hostile media. Observing how different strategies have played out in practice will give us tools with which to navigate our own decision-making and, perhaps even more usefully, to effectively manage the consequences of whatever decisions we do make.

If our movement has thus far neglected its history, I have no doubt that this is because of a lack of knowledge, rather than of interest. This, of course, is no accident. We remember Thatcher and Reagan, not just because of their historical relevance, but because vast economic, political and cultural resources have been poured into preserving their legacy. Foundations and institutes in their name, biographical books and documentaries, academic conferences and seminars help today's neoliberals to keep both their policy agenda, and the community around it, alive. By contrast, there are just a handful of books published about the experience of the radicals who governed major British and American cities during the same period. These were either written by activists and local councillors themselves, or by academics sympathetic to them. We owe those who undertook this invaluable labour of documentation and testimony our recognition and thanks. They did so with an activist spirit, so that we today might have access to the municipalist lessons of the past. It will be up to us to ensure that we, in turn, fulfil our duty to record our own experiences for the municipalists of the future.

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MUNICIPAL SOCIALISM IN THE 1980s: THE LONDON EXPERIENCE

Owen Hatherley

The Greater London Council was founded during the 1960s, "Swinging London", and the first flashes of gentrification in inner boroughs such as Camden, but otherwise an era of sharp population decline in the metropolis. The 'GLC' was devised by a Conservative government, but had some left-wing support because it acknowledged that "London" as legally defined and London as it really existed were no longer the same place, with the suburbs paying their share of tax for the inner city that they commuted to and used. Yet much Labour opinion was against it, including that of Isaac Hayward, head of the London County Council (LCC) when it was abolished in 1964. This was largely because of an understandable fear that London, which had been a one-party social democratic city-state since the 1930s, could now be winnable by the Conservatives, which is exactly what happened. Or rather, Greater London became a marginal, a bellwether, shifting between the main parties at almost every election until 1981. Labour were on course for a landslide at the next scheduled elections when the GLC was abolished by governmental fiat in 1986. This move, unprecedented in a democracy, left London as the only capital city in the world without an elected local government.

Yet when most people in London hear the initials 'GLC', they think – if they think of anything at all – of the five years when it was controlled by the radical left, from 1981 to 1986, under the leadership of Ken Livingstone.

Seen at the time by the tabloid press and the Labour right as the lunatics – the "loony left" – taking over the asylum, it has been remembered by today's young socialists, mostly born in the 1980s and 1990s, as a period in which their forbears constructed a new and viable socialism. The Labour left often prefers to root itself in older figures such as Aneurin Bevan, but the continuity is obvious. At the top of the left-wing Labour Party that came so close to

victory in 2017 but was then soundly defeated in December 2019 was Jeremy Corbyn, a north London Labour MP elected in 1983, close to the GLC's debates and sharing its ideas; Diane Abbott, who had been the GLC's press officer; and of course John McDonnell, the GLC's second-in-command and its finance minister. Somewhat belatedly, given that in the early 1980s journalists like Neal Ascherson saw Ken Livingstone as a future Labour leader, the GLC New Left had taken over the leadership of the Labour Party, just as they always planned to. It only took them thirty-four years.

Livingstone himself, soon after seizing power in 1981, told *Marxism Today* that the new ruling group at the GLC was "the post-1968 generation in politics". That is, it was gloriously, explicitly, anti-racist, anti-homophobic, anti-imperialist, anti-sexist; it was celebratory, creative and propagandistic. It loved murals, pop music, bright colours and clothes; it scorned state nationalisation and funnelled money into co-ops and communes. It was also much closer to the extra-parliamentary left, and refused the traditional Labour distinction between the "legitimate" and "illegitimate" left. Most of the major London figures in the Labour New Left were non-aligned socialists with some sympathy for Marxism, such as Ken Livingstone, John McDonnell, Valerie Wise, Robin Murray, Mike Cooley, Linda Bellos, Hilary Wainwright, Doreen Massey and Sheila Rowbotham, but some had been members of Trotskyist groups – both Ted Knight, who took over the borough of Lambeth, and Bernie Grant, who did the same in Haringey as the first Black leader of a London council since John Archer in the 1910s, had been members of the Socialist Labour League, which was proscribed by Labour in the 1950s.

But there is another way of seeing the GLC era – as being the start of the creation of the multicultural capital of the "creative industries" that we know now. Livingstone, a much more compromised figure in his two terms as London Mayor from 2000 to 2008, argued this to Andy Beckett in the 2010s: "we didn't want to see London continue to decline, (though) I don't think we saw it challenging New York in the way it eventually did". That's precisely what happened, although not in the way he would have imagined in 1981.

There were several different facets to the New Left project at the GLC, and it's useful to divide them into an industrial programme and a propagandistic programme. At the smallest level, the replanting of herbaceous borders after the creation of bleak, blank lawns by the GLC parks department in the 1970s was seen by Livingstone as an example of local socialism in action, combining care and commitment to public space, the enjoyment of civic life and the creation of skilled jobs, all in one simple policy. At the other end of the scale, the GLC's large budget – always carefully balanced by McDonnell – was mostly ploughed into the Greater London Enterprise Board (GLEB), an experiment in

"People's Planning". It was intended by Livingstone, McDonnell and its head, Mike Cooley, as way of creating "state monopolies based on workers' control and workers' self-management, (to) move qualitatively away from the dreadful existing examples, totally unresponsive to consumers, which are responsible for the hostility to public enterprise that undoubtedly exists". London Transport, under the GLC's control, was also part of the experiment – given for the first time in decades proper investment, and with ridership expanded by a policy of cheap tickets known as "Fares Fair", spitefully defeated in court by the Tory council in the outer borough of Bromley.

Light industrial sites that had declined and closed were rejuvenated with co-ops and small enterprises. This was combined with "People's Plans" produced for ex-heavy industrial areas. A detailed "People's Plan" was produced for co-operative housing and industries on the gigantic Royal Docks site in Newham (the last dock to close, in 1980), and the GLC bought up putative sites for similar plans at Coin Street by the National Theatre, Battlebridge Basin near King's Cross, and Courage's brewery in north Southwark. In each case, as GLEB activist-planners Hilary Wainwright and Maureen Mackintosh made clear, "these projects would not have existed were it not for a history of organised struggle on the part of local groups". Mike Cooley, head of the GLEB, had been the prime mover of the "Lucas Plan" of 1976, that aimed to turn Lucas Aerospace into a concern producing useful, non-lethal goods, self-managed by a workers' collective. In their posthumous account of the GLEB, Mackintosh and Wainwright refused to claim victory in any of this – these were experiments, nothing more, and nothing was definitively achieved, although thousands were employed by the GLEB in one way or another.

The GLEB worked out of an office in the Elephant and Castle, rather than in the palatial old LCC headquarters of County Hall, so as to be "more accessible – no long corridors!" Their critique of the old municipal socialism was broadbrush in the extreme – the authors of one GLEB report claimed that People's Plans were "a response to the alleged fact that the majority of Londoners have been… just the victims of planning" – but their work still reads as a serious, constructive programme – something that is worth remembering given how much the GLC's policies were regarded, at the time, as "loony". But to understand that reaction, you have to turn to their policies on race, gender and culture – always far more the focus of the relentless tabloid attacks of the time.

During the Brixton Riots of 1981, caused by aggressive racist policing and by far the largest-scale civil unrest in post-war London, the new Chairman of the Greater London Council was seen, as *The Times* noted with horror, "on the streets of Brixton at the height of the rioting". He publicly, unashamedly

defended the rioters, and refused an invitation to the Royal Wedding then taking place elsewhere in the capital so he could be in Brixton on the "front line". Pondering the apparently puzzling mass popularity in inner London of the GLC's policies of loud support for the ANC, for Irish unity, for Black power and for gay rights – all of these absolutely monstered in the press, far more so than McDonnell's economics – Livingstone suggested that "maybe all the racists have all gone off to live in Finchley or Croydon South". This was not moralistic, but political and practical, as he would tell *New Left Review* in 1983: 'I have always felt that the Labour Party's almost exclusive concentration on the employed white male working class was a weakness. My own view is you can't transform society solely on that basis. You need a coalition which includes skilled and unskilled workers, unemployed, women and Black people, as well as the sexually oppressed minorities… that means we have to change.'

This sometimes set him at odds with other experiments in radical municipal socialism then being carried out by local authorities that had their "rates" – the amount they could legally raise from local taxes – capped by the Thatcher government. Noting the hostility of some in Liverpool Council to his support for gay rights, he pointed out that London then housed a fair few hundred Scousers who had fled that city's homophobia.

Most famously, the GLC's Cultural Revolution entailed a series of public festivals, concerts and events. The foyers, terraces and cafes of the LCC's Royal Festival Hall were opened up to the public all day as a "front room for London", taking a cue from Stockholm's Kulturhuset. The GLC under the New Left broke totally with the cultural puritanism that had always lurked in the London Labour Party. London's first municipal socialists, the Progressive Party of the 1890s, were committed to eliminating pubs, and had closed as many music halls as they could manage. This became a mere memory in the early 1980s, as the bohemian subcultures that had emerged in – and moved to – the capital since the 1960s were given their own taste of power. The peak was a July 1984 festival in County Hall itself during the Miners' Strike, and it is impossible still not to feel a shiver up the spine on reading Maureen Macintosh and Hilary Wainwright's description of it.

For those of us who had been working in County Hall since the early days of the Labour administration, one of the striking changes that had taken place was in the kind of people who came to County Hall and were encountered strolling round the corridors. Gradually, the visiting officials and dignitaries of earlier times were replaced by a cross-section of Londoners, ranging from punks and Rastas at one end to parties of Bangladeshi old-age pensioners at the other – all of them uncowed by their august surroundings and treating the place as if it were their own. At the July 1984 festival, this aspect of the change at County Hall reached an exuberant high point. Throughout the day, County Hall swarmed with young punks, skinheads, Rastafarians and a host of other Londoners. They camped on the grand staircase (in the past reserved for VIPs only) and in the wood-panelled corridors of the Principal Floor. The council chamber was used for a rolling debate on the abolition of the GLC, which at one point was also given over to speeches by Anne Scargill and the Miners' Wives. The atmosphere was quite extraordinary – no-one at County Hall had seen anything like it before.

This was a performance of democracy and accessibility, a momentary vision of the city the London New Left wanted to build; we will never know if it could have been sustained, but Margaret Thatcher was evidently terrified it might. Livingstone governed a left-shifting capital in a country that had turned sharply to the right. Polls and local elections between 1983 and 1986 showed the leftward shift in the capital was highly popular within it. Livingstone and the radical GLC intended London to be a microcosm of what socialist government would look like in Britain as a whole. The government knew this, and crushed it.

This is an edited extract from *Red Metropolis*, published by Repeater Books in 2020.

CHICAGO: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UNDER HAROLD WASHINGTON (1983-1987)

Pierre Clavel

"Progressive" actually meant implementing policies that were redistributive and participatory, and had the potential to spread throughout government. In Chicago under the mayoralty of Harold Washington, the most important department bringing this into effect was the Department for Economic Development (DED), where Commissioner Robert Mier took a number of steps toward industrial retention, which I shall list and then discuss:

Complicated Chicago

Washington was a charismatic, talented mayor, with a strong program opposed on racial grounds to a white ethnic city council majority that had longtime allegiance to the established Democratic Party machine. Washington's program prioritized racial equity in service distribution, as well as a neighborhood-based approach to economic development focused on small and medium-sized manufacturing firms.

Both aims flew in the face of national policy and local history. Racial segregation in housing and other policies and services was ingrained. Manufacturing in general was out of favor in private finance and national policy. In the face of these obstacles, the Washington administration failed to make dramatic and visible improvements. The widespread consensus is that Washington and his policies – while led by a charismatic mayor – were ultimately outmoded, irrelevant to current issues.

Response to plant closings

The industrial retention effort in Chicago was, nevertheless, noteworthy. A community-based social movement and institutional support had built up over a number of years and, through Mier, the DED and the involvement of

other departments, the city adapted to it. Describing the industrial retention initiative will prove enlightening.

- Mier had come to Chicago in 1975 to teach city planning at the University of Illinois Chicago (UIC) and to provide outreach to community organizations as director of its Center for Urban Economic Development. He threw himself into the work of neighborhood organizations and made alliances with their activist leaders, placing students with them as interns and, later, working with them jointly on research and action projects. This sort of cooperation between academics and activists was unusual, but Mier's success with it was already getting notice prior to his move into City Hall.

- The social movement was represented by neighborhood organizations that organized themselves into purpose-oriented themes, and sought funding that involved several local foundations. CANDO, the Rehab Network and CWED were prominent examples that pursued community economic development ("CED") themes and proved able to work with Mier in City Hall.

- An underlying theme for organizers nationwide was resistance to plant closings. Manufacturing was under stress, and layoffs and closings started to peak in the late 1970s. Much attention was devoted in Chicago to five major steel mills in the city's southeastern area that were all making layoffs as Washington campaigned in 1983. Another focus was on smaller factories, some of which appeared possible cases for action such as worker and/or community or city buy-outs. One focus of attention was Dan Swinney, who had been working as a union steward, then organizer in the city's Westside, and who stood behind the publication of the *Midwest Labor Review*.

- Many who had been neighborhood activists took positions in City Hall, and proved able to collaborate with the neighborhood network. Mier was one of them. But there were significant obstacles. The new hires confronted holdovers loyal to the machine inside City Hall, while in the city there was an elaborate, albeit defeated, structure they saw as the "growth coalition" led by elites and machine allies in sectors such as real estate development, which Washington had hoped to defy. Kari Moe, a key Washington aide and ally, had characterized working in City Hall as "going to war with someone else's army".

- But there was also support. Local foundations bought into the neighborhood-based, small-manufacturing focus that Washington supported. Another base of support came from labor activists. A prominent example was Dan Swinney, who had led shop-floor activism in the steelworkers' union, and later established the Center for Labor and Community Research (CLCR) along with a journal, the *Midwest Labor Review*. This smallish initiative kept some of the support for decentralized economic policy alive, while labor more generally remained tied to the Daley machine and its efforts to re-emerge after Washington's death.

- Once in place after Washington's election, DED and City Hall established a set of policies that reinforced many of these varied decentralization interests:

  - DED created the Local Industrial Retention Initiative (LIRI) – roughly half a dozen community development agencies that seemed the most organized and capable of those committed the "jobs not real estate" orientation of policy.
  - Grassroots support for planned manufacturing districts, a project initiated by a young planner/organizer, Donna Ducharme, and the New City YMCA that eventually led to a commitment from Washington, was largely pursued after his death.
  - The Steel Task Force resulted in a large-scale research effort that produced arguments in favor of a manufacturing presence in Chicago.
  - Workforce development policy had a start under Washington, credited with a role in the eventual success of the city "getting it right" under Daley, much later.
  - In the wake of Washington's death, opposition forces endeavored to take control of a less hopeful narrative. But when a concerted attack appeared in the *Chicago Tribune* in August 1988, a number of foundation executives were determined to respond, the most noteworthy being the creation of the Policy Research Action Group (PRAG) under the auspices of the McArthur Foundation: PRAG was a consortium of four local universities and 15 community-based organizations that provided internships in support of the neighborhoods for several years into the Daley administration.[1]

Discussion

A shared intellectual capital emerged from these efforts that supported an alternative city development policy capable of posing an alternative to the "growth coalition" and downtown-heavy approach associated with the Daley machine previous to 1983.

To an extent – and for some in a highly costly manner – Chicago's neighborhood coalition was caught unawares by Washington's sudden death in November 1987. Much of the intellectual capital was intact; many organizations and

[1] Nyden, Philip and Wim Wiewel, "Collaborative Research: Harnessing the Tensions between Researcher and Practitioner" (1992) *The American Sociologist* 23, 4b (Winter) 43-55.

institutions were strong and coming into their own, learning how to work with one another. However, much of their base was undeniably thrown into a leadership vacuum and City Hall was in an uncertain position: for eighteen months under the interim mayor Eugene Sawyer there would be uncertainty as to a permanent successor mayor – with an election due in June 1989. Subsequently, Richard M. Daley, son of the long-time machine boss Richard J. Daley (1955-1976), would continue to offer support to parts of the DED strategy for several years (though Jarrett and Ducharme were finally let go in 1995).

This denouement should tell us something about the nature of progressive coalitions, particularly through the way the dwindling of the Chicago effort was interwoven with specific City Hall and support system structures that also waned (but sometimes, perhaps, rose). Part of the story was City Hall's growing capacity to "securitize" what had been periodic income, piecemeal but predictable over a period of years. Daley's staff figured this out in the 1990s with moves like the sale of the "Skyway", a toll-generating freeway, and later, the rights to city parking meter revenues. Most glaring to community activists was the increasing use of "tax increment finance" (TIF), whereby redevelopment properties could be "sold" based on projected income over a period of years. These projects, as a whole, allowed Daley to acquire city income to "beautify" the city and thereby lay claim to tourism dollars, thus facilitating a turn back to the embellishment of the loop area, away from the remnants of the Washington DED emphasis on small factories and neighborhood prosperity.

THE MUNICIPALIST TRADITION IN MODERN SPANISH POLITICS

Pamela Radcliff

In the traditional narrative of political modernization in Western Europe, the liberal and then democratic nation state was consolidated as the normative site of citizenship, authority and claims-making. In this narrative, the population evolved from an implicitly primitive local worldview towards integration into the modern nation, propelled by a process of State-led structural integration. Indeed, most of the hegemonic political movements of the 19th and 20th centuries framed the State as the engine of progress, the architect of the nation and the defender of citizens and their liberties. From this perspective, localism and provincialism were obstacles to the forward march of history, quaint relics of pre-modern small-mindedness. Critiques of this top-down model have revealed a more complex ongoing dynamic between local, provincial and national identities and institutions rather than a linear process of amalgamation and consolidation. In particular, a wealth of scholarship on regionalist and provincialist movements has situated them squarely inside the dynamic of political modernity and nation-building.

However, less attention has been paid to the quieter role municipalist movements played in this dynamic, as a consistent counter-weight to the dominant homogenizing and centralizing forces of modern Spanish politics. From different ideological positions and in distinct historical contexts, municipalist political movements over the last two centuries have defended an autonomous local political sphere as the core unit of self-governance, community identity and citizen participation. While individual case studies of municipalist movements and platforms exist, the long-term arc of the phenomenon has not been fully acknowledged.

I argue that the municipalist tradition has been an important thread of modern Spanish politics since the war of independence (1808-1814), and that it should be fully incorporated into the historical narrative of modernity. Beginning in

the war of independence, municipalist platforms, either implicit or explicit, were a consistent and ongoing feature of the political landscape, from the Progressive party in the 1830s, to the Federal Republicans in the 1860s, the Anarchists in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the Citizen Movement of the 1970s and the Municipalist Platforms of the 21st century. Without minimizing different contexts and ideologies, for all of these movements the municipality was the site where the community of ordinary citizens and the most proximate governing institutions intersected, providing the natural foundation for self-government. Through citizen participation around the defense of community interests, municipalities would be the building blocks that would in turn connect the local to the larger political unit. There is no question that all of these movements were relative "losers" in the long-term political struggles over the location of authority and decision-making. But the unresolved nature of the tension between local, regional and State-led political projects means that the conflict keeps recurring, with municipalism waxing and waning in relation to competing political currents. The upshot has been an ongoing pattern of municipalist movements and, equally significant, a consolidating narrative of municipalism as an alternative political framework deeply rooted in Spanish history.

So what are we to make of this tradition of municipalist movements over 200 years? Across this period, municipalism has been a recurring language of political renewal and reconstruction in moments of crisis, articulating common themes of decentralization, local autonomy and communitarian participation as core values from which to regenerate political life. The municipalist thread waxed and waned in response to other political forces and vis-à-vis the opportunities provided by liminal transition moments, from the 1830s to 1868, 1931, 1936 or 1978. Notably, they were almost always minority voices in these times of transition, when the dominant political forces focused on the transformation of state power, or to a lesser degree, regional power, but rarely local. Not tied to a specific ideological perspective, municipalist ideas have emerged from across the political spectrum while sharing the conviction that keeping power, authority and decision-making close to citizens' everyday lives is more likely to result in policies that benefit the community as a whole. In contrast to the autonomous individualism of liberalism and liberal democracy, or the socialist working class, municipalists begin with the geographic community of neighbors and residents as the core unit of the larger polity. In contrast to localism, municipalism usually views local government as a building block or a channel, not an autarchic fortress.

In addition to the common principles that make the case for continuity, it is equally important to understand the specific issues that sparked recurring waves of municipalist enthusiasm, from the sale of common lands in the

1860s to the unregulated construction of the 1960s urban landscape. At the same time that these movements have to be situated in their historical context, it is also striking how invested they often seemed to be in constructing a narrative of continuity that legitimated the current project through historical precedent. From this perspective, the story of municipalism as a consistent thread has been told repeatedly, but almost always from the margins by the movements themselves.

So why is it important to move this narrative from the margins to the center of historical analysis and what are the questions for further investigation? One compelling answer arises from the presentist goal of providing historical context for the current revival of municipalist platforms, including the differences and similarities between this particular moment and previous contexts that favored these ideas. In other words, how does the history of the municipalist tradition shape our understanding of what is happening today? More broadly, acknowledging the municipalist thread as a constituent element of political struggles over the last two centuries further complicates our understanding of the trajectory of modern politics. The questions to pursue from this perspective include the particular contexts in which municipalist discourses have emerged and submerged, and how this process shaped and reflected the configuration of political forces since 1808. Finally, how specific is this thread to modern Spanish politics and if not, what are the points of comparison and contrast with other states? Pushing us ever further away from a linear evolutionary model in which the development of more complex organisms signifies progress, inserting the municipalist thread reveals a dynamic tension about the locus of authority, decision-making and power that remains unresolved today, yet more evidence that there is no "end of history" in sight.

ORGANIZING IN THE 2020s: CHALLENGES AND INNOVATIONS AT INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

ORGANIZING IN THE 2020s: AN INTRODUCTION

Steve Hugues

> I used to have a quote – at the time I did not know who it was by – on a handwritten piece of paper taped to my wall: "Large change doesn't come from clever quick fixes from smart tense people, but from long conversations and silences among people who know different things and need to learn different things." (I later learned these were the words of the writer Anne Herbert.)

Our conversation on organizing and innovations at the international level, which took place over the summer of 2021 at the Fearless Cities conference, was one of those long conversations. The distance between some of the organizing projects represented in this discussion ensures that intense periods of mutual exchange and learning, such as this one, are often followed by long periods in which people are left to reflect, experiment, and innovate on their own.

In this section, we will hear from organizers working in different geographies and with different constituencies. We hear the viewpoints of people pursuing complementary, if slightly different, strategies to achieve political change in the United States. We hear about the work of building power in government and in the neighborhoods of the municipalist struggle in Barcelona. And we hear about labor organizing from various countries around the world.

The question is, how does it all fit together? In this period of intersecting and escalating global crises, where do these different organizers situate their work? How do they see what they are doing as contributing to a larger alignment of forces that could achieve large-scale social transformation and effectively take on the power of globalized capital?

There are no easy answers here. And beware the person who tells you that the organizing we do is just one thing, unchanging, frozen in time. In fact, organizing is always evolving, and its practitioners are always translating what they learn from others to the time, place and conditions of where they work.

The people in the pages that follow are organizers who are in conversation with one another – not just on this panel, or in this book; but over the years. These organizers are concerned about the challenges of building leaderful movements as well as the pitfalls of so-called "leaderless" activism. They are asking themselves how to both skill-up the movement so it has the technical know-how to win, while also cultivating the ideological grounding of members and leaders. They are pressing forward with an urgency that we have to actually win the power to govern, and then effect real change in people's lives when we are in government.

So indeed, these movements, and these organizers, have different things to learn and different things to teach. And in the pregnant silence that follows this latest exchange between them, they are getting ready to take action.

ORGANIZING: CHALLENGES AND INNOVATIONS

Kate Shea Baird and Bea Martínez

Some things in Barcelona en Comú haven't changed since we shared our experience of participation and organizing at the first Fearless Cities meeting (and book). Our overarching political goals remain the same: to join forces to win the elections and transform our city, and to do so in an open, democratic and empowering way. Nevertheless, the context has evolved and, needless to say, we have gained new knowledge thanks to our own experience and exchanges with other political organisations. In this chapter, we want to share some reflections from three different experiences: 1) the municipal election campaign of 2019, thanks to which we managed to re-elect Ada Colau as mayor of Barcelona; 2) Barcelona en Comú's organisational consolidation since it was founded in 2015, with an emphasis on mechanisms of activist participation and empowerment, and 3) the impact the pandemic has had on us as a municipalist organisation rooted in proximity and direct contact between people.

In the last quarter of 2017, we began to prepare for the elections of 26 May 2019. In 2015, they hadn't "seen us coming", so we had the advantage of being an unknown and undervalued candidacy, but we knew that the very opposite would be the case in 2019: we would be the opponent to beat for every political party. That's why we were convinced of the need to continue to innovate in organizing and communication techniques, both to attract new activists and to be able to throw our adversaries off balance. The incorporation of door-to-door campaigning and the creation of a campaign choir (the Cor Rebel de Barcelona) are two examples of this spirit of innovation.

Without a doubt, door-to-door canvassing was one of the pillars of the 2019 campaign and will be again in 2023. Why did we decide to take it up?

Admittedly, we wouldn't have done so if it weren't for our international network. Our allies from organisations in the USA persuaded us that it aligned with our values and way of doing politics; they trained us and even knocked on doors with us. Initially, there was some scepticism over whether it would

be a technique that could be imported to Barcelona. We soon realised that it could. The huge potential of door-to-door canvassing is the combination of listening, getting close to and sharing moments with the community, with the "science" of deciding which doors it's best to knock on and the "art" of knowing how to listen to glean the information we need.

After all, if we're talking about democratic radicalism, what is more radical than listening to and giving a voice to residents who have never been asked, for instance, what they think of their neighbourhood? Of all the organizing techniques that we've put into practice both before and since, door-to-door canvassing is by far the one that has allowed us to reach the least politicised people. That's why our plan was to continue using it beyond the election campaign to reach our political goals; what we didn't know was that we would endure a two-year pandemic.

We started training Barcelona en Comú activists in July 2018; a little too late, in hindsight. First, we trained about twenty highly motivated people from different neighbourhoods and, little by little, others joined in. Our first practice canvas was in the Sant Antoni neighbourhood in September. There we discovered that our numbers, in terms of doors opened and conversations had, were better than those in other countries. We were also surprised to find that people were much more receptive than we had anticipated and so the fear of going door to door gradually evaporated. Initially, the training was longer and more intense and, as the number of people trained grew, we shortened the training time. To this end, it was key to ensure that new people could go out canvassing with more experienced activists, which allowed us to increasingly decentralise the activity. So, a few months later, we had small, self-organised groups going door to door at different times and in different neighbourhoods. We soon discovered that door-to-door canvassing was a gateway for the inclusion and empowerment of new activists. Knocking on doors and listening to community residents is not only a means to reach more diverse people, but also to bring them into the organisation. Of those who joined the organisation to knock on doors during the campaign, many now hold elected office within Barcelona en Comú or have become district councillors.

One of the major lessons we've learned is how vital it is that the entire organisation believes in the importance of door-to-door canvassing and legitimises its central role in the campaign if it is to live up to its full potential. The communication strategy must be focused on organizing new activists and the campaign and communication team should take what activists are hearing on the doors into account when fine-tuning and segmenting campaign messages . In short, for the organizing to work, the entire organisation has to be committed to the undertaking.

The idea of the "Cor Rebel de Barcelona" was to create a choir that would breathe life into the campaign events through songs that reflected the values of Barcelona en Comú. We also wanted to put our political commitment to culture as a tool for social transformation into practice. The initiative was inspired by a New York activist choir, the Resistance Revival Chorus, and we were fortunate that Uri Mas, a long-time choir director, agreed to contribute his artistic leadership. He managed to set up the choir from scratch in just six months! Among the campaign repertoire were classic songs such as "Bella Ciao" and "Grândola, Vila Morena", as well as contemporary hits such as "Somos" from the popular TV talent show, "Operación Triunfo". Although they may seem like very different initiatives, the Cor Rebel choir has something in common with door-to-door canvassing: its capacity to broaden and diversify political participation. It has allowed us to engage many people in the campaign who otherwise wouldn't have taken part, simply because they enjoy singing and realised that they could be useful by lending their voice and enthusiasm to the campaign.

Organisational consolidation

At the first Fearless Cities gathering, Barcelona en Comú activists explained the principles of confluence; how the organisation came about; the development of the code of ethics and participation mechanisms, among other experiences. We think sharing some new reflections on these topics may prove interesting.

Our first reflection is that the dichotomy that is sometimes drawn between, on the one hand, electoral organizing (sometimes branded "electoralism") and, on the other, the promotion of participation and the deepening of democracy, is misguided. Not only do these two goals not contradict one another, in our view they are complementary and mutually reinforcing. In our experience, electoral campaigns represent a unique opportunity for new people to join Barcelon en Comú, make decisions and do politics together and open the organization up to the citizenry. After all, it is during elections that people pay most attention to local politics and can most clearly see the potential impact of their own political participation. The potential consequences of the electoral results motivate people's participation in the election campaign, since they see it as *useful*.

The challenge of continuing to expand and diversify participation is a widely shared concern within Barcelona en Comú, as it is in any organisation seeking to effect change. Our learning in this area is ongoing, and many questions remain unanswered, but we would like to share a few reflections here.

Firstly, if we want to increase participation, we must constantly, actively and clearly call for and invite it. In our case, we stopped doing so for a while after the 2015 elections, perhaps because of a lack of organisational capacity in a period during which we ran the city government for the first time, we formalised the organisational structure and held internal elections and set up a political party in Catalonia, among many other activities. The upshot was that it was quite difficult to join Barcelona En Comú as a new member between 2015 and 2018. Those who joined during that time did so at their own initiative and had to discover where and how to participate without any formal support. As of 2018, we corrected this shortfall and began to call on people to join us through social media and street recruitment. The result was impressive: between 20 and 30 people attended the welcome meetings that we organised and we managed to organize a mass welcome event of more than 100 people. Although inviting people to participate won't broaden participation on its own, it's essential to get the maximum number of willing participants to get involved.

The second reflection is closely linked to the first: once the invitation to participate has been made, there must be a clear way in and an efficient and friendly welcome and organizing circuit. For us, in practice this translates into inviting whoever signs up to participate in Barcelona en Comú to a welcome meeting where we explain how to participate and, even more importantly, we create a space where they can meet other activists and have fun with them. With these meetings, we aspire to reflect the three core principles of organizing: it must be *easy*, *fun* and *build community*. After the meeting, we follow up to put the participants in touch with the coordinators of the groups where they want to participate and to provide any necessary additional support. Our retention rate is still lower than we would like at each stage of this circuit, so we're constantly working on fine-tuning and improving it. For example, we've started to call those who have attended the welcome meetings to find out whether they are still participating in Barcelona en Comú and, if they're not, to ask why. We're also looking at ways of taking advantage of the incipient community created in the meetings and giving them continuity so that the people who meet there can support one another in their first political steps within the organisation.

But inviting people to participate and creating a follow-up circuit isn't enough. The ideal solution is to create a welcoming, participatory culture throughout the organisation; in other words, every activist must understand that welcoming and supporting new people is a shared responsibility in which everyone plays an important role. To promote this culture, after the 2019 elections, we created a welcome network bringing together the activists responsible for welcoming of all the organization's assemblies and groups.

We realised that if the welcoming of new activists is not the responsibility of anyone in particular, it often ends up being a responsibility that no one takes on. That's why it's important for each group to have someone responsible for welcome and why we encourage these activists to share the practices that work for them with one another through peer learning.

A welcoming culture is important, not just for involving people in existing activities, but also for launching new ones. This is because the most effective way to empower people is to take everyone's particular interests and abilities into account. This is where the fuel that feeds and drives activism lies: in the ability to get the best out of everyone, whether they're someone who is a programmer, dancer or passionate about statutes. But for this to happen, someone has to take an interest in getting to know each and every activist and give them personalised support so that they get down to contributing in the way that makes the most sense to them. And, again, this is everyone's job.

Lastly, we want to emphasize that we have invested resources into organizing, creating a new Participation and Organizing team on the Barcelona en Comú staff with two full-time positions. After all, a priority is only really a priority for an organisation if it is reflected in its budget.

Municipalism and the pandemic

Finally, we can't end this chapter without discussing the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on Barcelona en Comú. First and foremost, we have lost beloved activists, family members and friends without being able to hug one another and cry together while we grieve. We have also had to deal, like everyone else, with the psychological impact of the pandemic; loneliness, anxiety, depression and even despair. The effects of this experience should not be underestimated in an assembly-based political project that is rooted in community, proximity, direct contact with the community and on doing politics from a place of joy.

It was obviously impossible to carry out many of the political activities we had planned on assemblies, festivals, debates, information stands in the street, door-to-door canvassing and more. Despite having come up with new and safe formats such as mass bicycle rides and having made a strong commitment to digital infrastructure and phone banking campaigns, we have come up against major limitations. We have barely been able to see each other, let alone communicate with all of the residents of Barcelona. We always said that the main strength of municipalism was doing politics face to face, looking one another in the eyes. Having not been able to do so for over two years, we can confirm that it's true.

The lack of direct communication with neighbourhood residents, both as a source of information that allows us to put out feelers on the street and as a mechanism to debunk hoaxes and fake news, has had a noticeable impact. In the absence of this capacity, the negative campaigns against us on social media and the mainstream media have been able to do us more communicational damage than before.

Pandemic fatigue and the difficulty in carrying out our political activities have led to internal demobilisation too. One of our foremost challenges is to stop this phenomenon from bedding in. What will be harder to recover is the "time lost" in terms of creating new political leaders, a process that requires one to experience politics first hand and gradually take on responsibilities. In "ordinary" times, many of the activists who joined in 2019 would now be taking on leadership roles in their assemblies, but the pandemic has frozen the "life cycle" of activism in time and has hampered the development of newer activists. We'll feel the effects of this "lost generation" of activists in the years to come.

Our individual and collective recovery from the pandemic confronts us with an unprecedented challenge. There are no magic solutions, but thanks to the creativity and boldness of our activists in recent years, it's a challenge that we have more tools than ever to tackle. Tools such as door-to-door canvassing and the Cor Rebel choir that are based on the pillars of municipalism: proximity, empathy and joint action. It is through these values that we will be able to regain the strength, joy and empowerment lost during these years of lockdown and social distancing.

TOWARDS A LEADERFUL DISCIPLINE

Gabe Tobias

One of the most impressive feats of strength on the planet belongs to the shaggy ink cap mushroom, *coprinus comatus*. The shaggy ink cap, to put it kindly, does not seem very impressive. It produces no psychotropic toxins or fabulous colors. When picked, its limp tofu-grey body quickly disintegrates into a blackened mush. But the shaggy ink cap has a secret power. Mushrooms reproduce by sending fruiting bodies above ground – the parts we commonly see and eat. Most of the organism lies below ground, stretching over wide swaths of earth in filament networks. When the shaggy ink cap decides to fruit, it simply will not be stopped. By driving all the water across its networked body to one point, it can break through thick layers of concrete and stone. In what is essentially reverse fracking, this unassuming fungus uses a vast web of stringy microscopic threads to produce thousands of pounds of pressure, all to ensure that just one shaggy ink cap can rise to the surface.

Among progressives, we often speak of building 'leaderful' movements – movements that are not focused around one individual but are instead built around the resilience of a constant stream of formal leaders and leaders-to-be. Barbara Ransby wrote about the foundational leaderful principles of civil rights icon Ella Baker:

"*Baker was not against leadership. She was opposed to hierarchical leadership that disempowered the masses and further privileged the already privileged… She was calling for people to disinvest from the notion of the messianic, charismatic leader who promises political salvation in exchange for deference.*"

The approach suggested by Baker (and Ransby), and what so many progressive organizers have strived to build, is a truly leaderful movement. From the Black Lives Matter movement in the US to the Umbrella Revolution in Hong Kong or the student protests in Chile, time and again this same mantle of leaderful values is proudly claimed by progressive activists.

And yet, time and again, we encounter the same paradox. No matter how egalitarian and democratic our stated values, the most powerful and long-lasting movements grow around individual leaders. Senator Bernie Sanders literally made his slogan "Not Me, Us", and yet how clear is it that the political resurgence of the US left since 2016 is directly tied to him and his presidential campaigns, how rudderless that resurgence has seemed without the prospect of another Sanders run in 2024. Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez famously said, "For one of us to make it through, a hundred have to try". But those other ninety-nine don't have millions of devoted followers online. The first successful unionization of an Amazon facility in the US earlier this year was led by an incredible organizing committee of over one hundred workers. But the bright lights of the media shone predominantly on one man, Christian Smalls, no matter how many times he tried to lift up their historic win as a team effort.

There will always be individual leaders whose formal roles, compelling biographies, and personal charisma make them emblematic of – and fundamentally essential to – our movements. The power of an Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez or a Christian Smalls is largely in how unassuming they seemed just days before their breakthroughs. If a bartender can defeat the next Speaker of the House, if a packing-line supervisor can defeat the biggest corporation on the planet, then the powerful are never safe. Those wins are necessary fuel for movement building, and yet also lead inevitably to celebrity leadership. Which in turn tends to promote a steep hierarchy on the way to that leader, creating gate-keepers and replications of privilege along the way.

So then is all this talk of leaderful movements just virtue signaling? Is it even possible to sustain a movement without the gravitational pull of charismatic leaders?

I propose that we think of 'leaderful' not as a set of aspirational values, nor as a restriction on the fame any one leader should be permitted. We should instead think of leaderful as a discipline – a set of practices, embedded in every structure and activity of a movement. This discipline creates new leaders constantly, with the freedom to grow their own work while still existing within the goals and values the movement has set out for itself. This discipline sustains organizational structures and inter-organizational networks that breathe accountability. There are many approaches to building this discipline, but I'd like to describe one here in greater detail.

At Movement School, the organization I co-founded with Ilona Duverge in 2018, we have tried to hone the practices that build a leaderful discipline. One important practice worth highlighting is our use of 'freirean games'. Named after famed Brazilian activist and educator Paulo Freire, a freirean game is a simulated group exercise designed to foster both personal skill building and a values-rich learning community. The simulation can be of any context important to the movement, and the participants anyone who is currently or might soon be facing the challenges of that context. Think of a high-school model UN program. Over the past four years we have done freirean game simulations of various electoral campaigns and issue organizing campaigns, with dozens of participants from around the country in each. Every freirean game is co-designed with leading practitioners, who then serve as active mentors during and afterwards. Technical trainings are built in, giving participants skills that they then get a chance to practice. The design of the game itself is critical. As Freire wrote:

"No *pedagogy which is truly liberating can remain distant from the oppressed by treating them as unfortunates and by presenting for their emulation models from among the oppressors. The oppressed must be their own example in the struggle for their redemption.*"

Freirean games serve three key purposes, indicative of a leaderful discipline. First, freirean games are a space for all to learn, improve and innovate. One of the biggest barriers to creating new leaders is simply that most organizers and activists are not given an opportunity to lead. A freirean game is a space where all have the opportunity to take on the biggest challenges of the day, and to prove their potential to their comrades – and perhaps more importantly, to themselves. And, as Freire suggests, the design of the game ensures that a team of participants cannot be successful by replicating the status quo of a broken political system, but instead succeeds by learning to lead the people power of movements.

Second, freirean games build community and solidarity among practitioners. Honing the skills that make one successful cannot be a purely solitary pursuit in a leaderful movement. We have to see the value we provide as fundamentally linked to our comrades. Freirean games are focused around teams, both for accountability and support. The relationships built during an intensive freirean game are more durable than those built during traditional trainings, and more egalitarian than those formed in a traditional workplace.

And third, freirean games help break down gate-keeping and diversify our spaces. By purposefully selecting participants who are often marginalized from leadership roles – and by asking those who normally serve as gate-keepers to act as mentors – the practice of freirean games can help break down barriers. Each cohort begins to see themselves as rightful leaders, despite – and indeed perhaps because of – how little they look like the elite-educated

white men we have been taught to expect in leadership roles. And in the mentors, the participants have future employers and a support structure to help them succeed in the future.

In the midst of multiple overlapping global crises, our movements need a leaderful discipline. We must heed Ella Baker's call to build power in every space we exist, and around every person we meet. We must build a new generation of leaders, and then another after that, and then another. The first shaggy ink cap mushroom that bursts improbably through a slab of concrete will always look like a hero. They'll be interviewed on cable news. They'll go viral on social media. Good, says the leaderful movement – now who's next.

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REFLECTIONS ON THIS MOVEMENT MOMENT

Maurice Mitchell

I came to the Working Families Party (WFP) just after Trump had been elected. Before that, I had spent a number of years catalyzing the Movement for Black Lives, starting with the work I did as part of the first wave of uprisings that took place after the police murder of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri.

From where I am sitting, it is clear that it is no accident that Trump emerged when he did in the United States, nor that we have recently witnessed the largest social movement in American history. Globally, there have been a series of escalating crises, which are intersecting with one another. There is a great reckoning happening, and it is far from decided how any of this will play out.

So I am situating the work we are doing in the US in this broader context. I see my task now as one of getting the WFP in fighting form to combat the rise of white, Christian identity politics and to create a broad-based alignment of multi-racial working-class people who can lead this fight in America, election cycle after election cycle.

At the same time, I welcome these opportunities to be in dialogue with friends and comrades from around the world. Despite our best efforts to be parochial in the US movement, we somehow still find ways to exchange and learn on the international stage. And it is the ease with which this exchange happens – both in formal and organic ways – that still gives me hope.

The political culture in the United States is very entrepreneurial. Every day, there are hundreds, if not thousands, of people who wake up, look in the mirror and say to themselves, "today is my day to shine". They decide *they* are the ones ready to run for office. They then hire some consultants, run a poll to figure out what their message should be, and start fundraising.

From my perspective, this is completely backwards. For one, the people who wake up in the morning and tell themselves they were meant to hold office are all too rarely from working-class communities, communities of color,

or communities that have been told in ways – implicit and explicit – that America is not really for *them*. So one of the WFP's organizing tasks is to flip the script on this story. We need to find candidates who don't fit that mold, who don't even see themselves as candidates. This is an essential organizing task for our movement.

Elections are a tactic, a means to an end. And the electoral moment is a chance for us to engage in conversation with thousands, even millions, of people. Candidates play a critical role in helping voters make meaning of the world around them. If these candidates have an organizational background, if they are experienced organizers, if they feel a sense of accountability to the communities from which they come, they can play an essential role in providing strategic orientation to the broad majorities of voters we need to construct to win the election. But it is more than just winning one election. These candidates are an essential ingredient in building a majoritarian counterforce to the rising strength of the organized Right.

The political moment we are living in has had a profound effect on a lot of people. In the United States, the pandemic created conditions where people who never imagined it would happen to them found themselves standing in food-relief lines. Millions of people turned on the TV and saw the reality that many communities in America experience on a daily basis: the police violently harassing and hunting down our people. It was also a time when many people in the United States started looking at elections differently. Comfortable middle-class people started to become radicalized, and radicals started to become electoralized. In short, this period has opened up new space for us to organize. The conjuncture continues to shift, but I think as a movement – wherever we are in the world – we need to keep a keen eye on the next moments opening up for our rallying.

From my point of view, one of those moments is the ways in which ideas about leadership are shifting – or need to shift – to suit this moment. Partly in response to past failures, and partly in response to a general legitimacy crisis affecting all institutions operating under neoliberalism, we have seen movement experiments in "leaderlessness," or ultra-horizontal structures. I, however, draw from the historic Black liberation struggle, as well as my own experiences within the Movement for Black Lives, when I say it is actually a dialectical question: we need leaders and leaderfulness. We need to embrace the contributions of many, and also understand that leadership is necessary. And we need to understand that depending on the organizational form, leadership is going to look different. The kind of leadership needed in a social movement is not the same as in a political party, or a union, for example. But leadership is needed in all these spaces to further our collective struggle.

To me, this is an ideological orientation to the organizing I do. But ideology is not something that we wield as a weapon to make ourselves feel smarter or seem more righteous. It is a tool that we use to ground our work of building a movement with working-class people. It is a north star that we can follow through the dark night, towards the freedom we need to win together.

NEW CHALLENGES, NEW POLICY

TAKING PUBLIC SPACE BACK

RECONQUERING THE CITY: A REVOLUTION IN URBAN SPACE

Anke Kleff and César Ochoa

After almost a century of designing our cities in a car-centred way has driven us to larger, more polluted, more dangerous and less liveable urban areas, since the beginning of this decade, a revolution is finally transforming Europe's urban space.

Since very few non-disruptive traffic calming efforts had been made in recent decades, the domination of the space by cars to get around and park in urban areas had become overwhelming. In Barcelona, cars occupied 60% of the space, while actually only 20% of people's transportation is by car.

Nowadays, the combination of scientific evidence of the health threat posed by pollution, especially for children and older people, the climate emergency and the Covid pandemic has created the perfect context for an urgent urban revolution: taking back the public space from cars, reclaiming this public good from the great space predator.

In what used to be called a cultural war against cars, different actors such as politicians in government, the motor lobby and organized citizens have been defending conflicting interests. The future shape of our public space and the speed of changes depend on the strength and courage shown by each one. The urban revolution's 'weapons' are simple but effective: creating superblocks and connecting them, traffic calming in school environments, opening streets up to pedestrians and cyclists, and regulating speed limits in our city centres.

In this urban revolution, citizen participation is absolutely necessary. For example, when cities like Barcelona and Paris are protecting schools' environments by easing traffic in their direct surroundings, they use both structural and tactical urbanism. In planning these transformations, the role of family associations and the education community is essential: they demand, propose and co-produce the new configuration of the space.

Tactical urbanism, in whose logic we can include the first step in creating a large proportion of the superblocks or the easing of traffic in many school environments, is a powerful type of public space intervention with several advantages. Its cost ranges between 10% and 20% of the same transformation in classic structural urbanism, which gives it a much greater power to transform uses, it is faster and, perhaps the most important on democratic grounds, and it allows co-production by putting citizens at the core. The use of elements such as paint, benches, tables and flowerpots allow different configurations to be experimented with and evolve once the real use of citizenship is experienced.

Superblocks are offering a model to extend traffic calming in a whole area in the city. Reducing the number and speed of vehicles creates a liveable neighbourhood where people can sit, talk and hear the other person without the need to shout. Reopening streets to communities and to our everyday life, to come together to play and just build community, is highly political; it means creating space and breathing new life into the heart of our neighbourhoods.

The transformation of urban space must always go hand in hand with the fight for affordable housing. In this regard, improvements must take place in all neighbourhoods, not just the city centre. In Barcelona, the homogeneous distribution of improvements in the urban space throughout the entire city is part of the strategic approach to urbanism. All areas of the city should become more liveable, not only the city centre.

In our cities, transformations are meeting resistance from lobbies, the conservative press, etc. We must join forces, and defend the reclaiming of public space as an internationalist municipalist movement. Superblockers across all cities, unite!

SUPERBLOCK BARCELONA

Alícia Puig

In Barcelona we are launching the Superblock Barcelona project. This project aims to transform our city's morphology, the way we get around and interact with our streets, and adapt Barcelona to the 21st century.

Why are we launching this plan?

This plan responds to the need to make Barcelona, a very dense and polluted city whose public space is very unequally distributed, more liveable.

Every day, 1.4 million cars cross the city and for most of the year, the air is above 50 micrograms/m^3 of NO_2, flouting the WHO air quality guideline of not exceeding 40 micrograms/m^3. Sixty per cent of our public space is also dedicated to cars.

Therefore the city needs to rethink and reset its priorities: we need a plan that can democratize the public space and reduce pollution. And the Superblock project holds the formula to achieve these objectives.

What have we done thus far?

We call it Superblock because the Cerdà Plan for the extension of Barcelona in the mid-19th century was designed in blocks . During the last term of office (2015-2019), we rolled out the Superblock strategy by area. We took nine blocks and cut them off to traffic. We created a number of traffic-free islands, which helped to reclaim more public space.

In the neighbourhoods where the Superblock project was executed in the last term of office, some results can already be seen. The Sant Antoni neighbourhood, for instance, has seen a 25% drop in NO_2 and a 17% reduction in the levels of PM10.

What is our plan for the future?

In the current term of office, we wish to scale up this process: instead of focusing on a number of areas and making them car-free, we wanted to make one out of three streets in the city green streets.

This shall change the morphology and how we understand the streets. Because we are not only turning one out of three streets into green streets for pedestrians and vegetation. The other two out of three streets need to prioritize public transport and bike lanes. That is why we developed a more efficient bus system, with an orthogonal network, and we are building a tram that will connect the opposite ends of the city in 20 minutes. In terms of bike lanes, in six years, we have doubled the network, from 120 to 240 km and we now are extending it an additional 30 km.

Barcelona is a very car-friendly city today, which is something we have to change: we need to have a public transport-friendly city, where the most efficient way to get around is through sustainable mobility. As I said at the outset, 1.4 million motorized vehicles per day are used in the city, 40% of which are to get around within Barcelona. This could be drastically reduced if getting around by motorized vehicles was not as easy as it is now.

In conclusion, climate change is changing everything so we need to change our cities to adapt and mitigate its effects. We need to believe that there is a city of the future that is possible, a city that will be liveable by 2050. A green city, where everyone gets around by public transport or bike, a city that could be energy self-sufficient... Superblock Barcelona is the first step towards this future.

THE FIRST SUPERBLOCK IN BARCELONA: ROADMAP FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Patrick Kappert

September 2016 was the initial date for the superblock pilot project in the neighbourhood of Poblenou, Barcelona. It took almost two years for this pilot project to be finalised and it took five years and the Covid pandemic to have the administration go for a change of model and really start advocating for and rolling out superblocks in Barcelona. Now at the beginning of 2022, “superblock” is becoming the watchword in conversations abroad about what is making the difference here in Barcelona.

Priority for pedestrians, the removal of traffic lights, the use of loops to ease traffic congestion without prohibiting access to cars that travel at 20 km/h. The space freed up is used for picnic tables, children’s playgrounds or just empty space.

Changes in general receive criticism. Changes to protect nature, the environment or the health of cities’ inhabitants normally tend to be abstract and hard to grasp. The superblock is the same *and* different. It’s the same because it received enormous criticism in the early days. It is different because, unlike most measures to mitigate climate change and improve air quality, it has a surprising and very significant impact on cities and their public space: it improves quality of life for their users and inhabitants.

In this article we will first discuss the improvements to quality of life not always directly perceived from the perspective of the neighbourhood association “Col·lectiu Superilla Poblenou”, @superillap9.

Finally, we would like to draw a number of conclusions over the logical next step in continuing to transform cities towards liveable, sustainable and modern dynamic environments.

The neighbourhood association "Col·lectiu Superilla Poblenou"

Superblock Poblenou is not perfect. There are some conceptual issues over how to mark drivers' lanes, how to indicate pedestrian priority and one lane that allows traffic and has traffic lights. But, from the get-go, a major campaign was run that almost got the pilot project shut down. National public television reported fake news of traffic jams in surrounding streets and inaccessibility for services such as ambulances and fire engines. It was also claimed that some spaces had no designated use and were unsightly. And there were claims for the right to be able to just drive straight through the city's streets . And in some elections, politicians were terrified of letters and articles opposed to the superblock being published in the main newspapers.

As community residents, we were astounded about how such a storm of hype against the superblock was whipped up without contemplating reality, just to satisfy media advertisers, namely, car brands. We really felt they were playing with our health and our wellbeing.

We set up our association to defend the superblock pilot project and therefore advocate for the city of Barcelona's proposal.

Col·lectiu Superilla Poblenou is a unique neighbourhood organisation. Usually communities unite to contest something that cities wish to implement and to fight to stop its implementation.

We believed (and still do) that the manner in which the superblock is implemented can be greatly improved. We put forward improvements and ideas about what to do with the space. But amidst all the media hype and considering that the political party rolling out the superblock pilot project was a minority cabinet and the superblock was not foremost on their agenda of proposals to defend in the face of enormous political pressure, we started defending the superblock. We published pictures and posts in all the local Facebook groups and Twitter and engaged with anyone attacking the superblock with arguments unrelated to reality. A flurry of fake news surrounded the superblock. We also had meetings with all the political parties in the district to remind them that their agenda supposedly aspired to achieve cleaner air, that they voted in favour of the mobility plan that announced superblocks and that politicians have a responsibility to foster health and liveable cities for their residents.

We also attended all the district council meetings to make our voice heard. Furthermore, and since we published lots of photos and videos of the

superblock, unlike the city of Barcelona's failure to even mention the word (for fear of losing elections over bad press), all the national and international media came to talk to us and we appeared on local TV, in all sorts of press and spoke to students and researchers, urban planners and architects from all over the world. We got invited to discuss the matter in Mallorca, Zaragoza, Amsterdam and even Reykjavik.

But, over time, more and more people started using the space, publishing pictures of people enjoying and coming together in the public space and recounting their personal experiences. Superblock Poblenou survived only because we the residents showed the politicians what the reality actually was.

At the same time, we started getting to know each other, organising activities and enjoying the benefits of the superblock, which we tried to document. In fact, we identified a number of hidden benefits such as the quality of the public space, noise reduction and community building.

Quality of the space

We all grew up in times where accessibility and smooth traffic flow for cars were the main stumbling blocks when it came to thinking about urban planning. In times when individualism and the middle class were growing, the ideal was to have a car of one's own, a garden of one's own and services like the best (private) schools and shopping centres all concentrated on the outskirts of towns with convenient parking space.

Urban planners were mostly people with that exact profile. But in cities like Barcelona with a high density and a strong public transport system, only 25% of all journeys are made by car. Nevertheless, 70% of public space is dedicated to driving lanes and parking facilities.

Giving priority to pedestrians and liberating the middle of intersections had some strange side effects. People started talking in the middle of the public space, not only close to the buildings. Automatically this invites us to engage in group conversations. Two people talking on a narrow pavement seem to have a private conversation. People talking at an intersection is an invitation to join in. As a result, we started talking and getting to know one another!

Another question that arises is why do we use the best part of that public space, the middle, for cars on most occasions?

Noise reduction

As we were starting to talk, we identified another issue over time: if a car was passing by, we stopped talking and waited for the car to pass before we continued. Most of Barcelona's streets are characterized by the hum of traffic and people are forced to shout to hear one another properly. Noise reduction really improved the quality of our conversations.

And all of a sudden we could make out the sounds of birds and insects. Becoming aware that we are not the only specimen inhabiting the city was a major discovery.

As a driver

Car-owning residents got another surprise: it was nicer, less frustrating and equally fast to get around by car in the superblock. The removal of traffic lights facilitates traffic flow with drivers slowing down to let pedestrians and cyclists pass. And all the stress related to traffic lights dissipates. No driving while trying to go through an orange light or waiting over a minute for the lights to change. For a driver who lives inside the superblock, entry is almost like coming home and relaxing.

Social relations

Our neighbourhood had no community before the superblock. Thanks to the superblock, we have gotten to know each other, we have initiated activities and we have struck up friendships. In Covid times, we organized systems to help each other out when up against practical problems and quarantines. And now we grumble about "superblock tourism": there are only a few superblocks in Barcelona and people come to ours to celebrate children's parties, to learn how to ride a bike or to roller-skate and, at the weekend, there are the famous street drinking parties ('botellones'), all because the superblock is a nice place to be.

The future of cities

Cars are very useful tools. But without realizing it, we destroyed the social habitat for humans, that is, "the public space", giving it up almost entirely to traffic. But we live in the 21st century and we must respond to climate change, plus we know that noise and especially air pollution are reducing our life expectancy. Such pollution also bears a major impact on general health and the learning capacity of young children.

We also have technology: in 2023 all new vehicles will be fitted with a mandatory speed limiter. We can drastically remove 70% of all traffic lights and give priority to pedestrians again. Almost 85% of all journeys within cities are within a 10 km range: easily done on foot or by (E)-bike, which is a pleasant and active form of mobility that many people do not use because of the safety issues posed by cars. Within the next ten years, let's roll out a superblock system that allows every resident to have their own superblock within two streets and makes it possible for them to move across the city on foot or by bike solely through a system of connected superblocks. People are smarter than politicians give them credit for, and they are fully capable of appreciating a better quality of life. We have to get rid of motorways within cities: they are antiquated and against human life and well-being. We have to be bold and brave and implement these measures and give them two years for people to become accustomed to.

What's more, the superblock model does allow cars to get around everywhere but just as they were meant to be: a valuable tool at people's service.

THE CITY AS A HOME: THE RIGHT TO HOUSING

INTRODUCTION

Guillem Pujol

> The relationship we establish with our habitual dwelling is so special that it is unlike any other architectural structure or inanimate object. Our home protects us from the cold winter wind, from the torrential rains that fall in spring and from the intense rays of the summer sun. But home is more than just a shelter. We take loving care of our home; we decorate the walls with memories of our past and we know that on them we can project our future dreams. Home is where we long to return after a long journey, the place that continues to cradle us as adults.

In modern constitutions, this intimate relationship we have with our home has found a legal position which, on paper, should guarantee all citizens the possibility of weaving this exceptional link. However, we have known that this is not the case for a long time. The processes of industrialisation and urban growth characteristic of modernity generated a series of related problems, such as overcrowding and unhealthy living conditions, which made it impossible for part of the population to get access to decent housing. But we also know something else: what was framed by the politicians and "intellectuals" of the time as "the housing problem" was, in reality, the housing problem of the working and lower classes. And this continues today.

The great landowners of the past (nobles, aristocrats and part of the bourgeoisie) continue today to accumulate large amounts of housing in which they do not live, perpetuating social inequalities that can be traced back centuries. Many studies have shown this accurately. It is true that state housing construction policies grew during the second half of the 20th century, but they did so unevenly, and failed to solve a problem that, unfortunately, persists in our societies today.

Over the years, housing has mutated rapidly from a value in use to an exchange value, becoming the main mechanism of financial speculation that led to the economic crisis of 2009. Moreover, the global housing business has contributed to undermining its status as a privileged object, systematically breaking it up until it became what brokers call a "financial asset".

Many social movements have risen up, and are still rising up, to demand decent housing. Some of the movements have fought to regulate the price of rents and to curb the excessive power of landlords. Others struggle to ensure that eviction is not a capricious arbitrary act. Often, faced with the economic inability to afford housing, it has been the self-organised community that has put up walls and built roofs with its own hands. As long as there are houses without people in places where there are people without homes, we will not live in societies that aspire to call themselves just. Without a home, the world is a truly inhospitable place.

The solution, however, cannot be to increasingly reduce the minimum living space. Projects that can be defined as substandard housing are often presented as supposed solutions to the housing problem: spaces so small, without any access to the outside world, that they can turn the sweet seclusion of the home into a traumatic confinement. The Covid 19 pandemic made this clear.

Today, cities all over the world are seeking to join forces to tackle a problem that is as universal as the fight against climate change and feminism. From Valparaiso to Rio de Janeiro to Barcelona, on the other side of the Atlantic, cities are already home to more than half of the population, and this percentage is expected to increase in the not-too-distant future. Cities have a more accurate and up-to-date view of what is happening within the limits of their administration than states do; it makes sense for them to have a more important role in drafting housing policies than they do at present. Moreover, if the objective is to build real solutions that allow us to move towards a definitive solution of the housing problem, they are destined to do so.

TOURISM: A KEY FACTOR FOR THE RIGHT TO HOUSING IN MANY TOWNS

José Manuel Mejías

Can the proliferation of the tourist housing phenomenon affect the right to housing in our cities? Phrased in this way, the question seems obvious. Of course it can. In fact, in our country, tourist overcrowding in large cities has caused an uncontrolled increase in the price of rents, a drastic reduction in the supply of residential housing in certain areas, cohabitation problems and the loss of identity of entire neighbourhoods.

In our case, we have taken the initiative to get ahead of the problem of the touristification of our municipality, using the tools at our disposal. We are a small municipal group (Ganemos Jerez), with only one councillor in the opposition, in a medium-sized Andalusian city (Jerez de la Frontera) where tourism is strongly promoted as an economic monoculture. And although at the moment there is no serious problem with tourist housing, we can see the writing on the wall, as we have a very deteriorated historic centre (with some areas in ruins) and the option of it becoming a theme park has appeared.

We wanted to act ahead of time, in a preventive and rigorous manner, by promoting a study financed with resources from the municipalist group itself, entitled: **"Analysis of tourist housing in Jerez de la Frontera: current situation and future prospects"**, which was carried out by an independent consultancy firm from our own city: **"Agua y Territorio"**. The study is available on our website: http://ganemosjerez.es/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/P07.21.-Inventario-VFT-Jerez-7-septiembre.pdf.

The research was developed through a quantitative analysis, using official sources from the Autonomous Community and the Ministry (Andalusian Tourism Register, National Statistics Institute, etc.) as well as from companies and websites specialising in the tourist housing business. It has also systematised all the official documentary information available on urban planning, economic development in the tourism sector and official housing plans. Finally, several **"Participatory Meetings"** were held. These may have

been the most interesting part of the study, one of which took place with professionals from the real estate and tourism sectors and specialised staff from the local administration and another with members of different social movements related to housing. These meetings helped to gauge and contextualise the available information, both quantitative and qualitative, which was available to all participants.

The main conclusions were:

1. At present Jerez does not have a serious problem with tourist accommodation, but if action is not taken soon, one could appear. There has been an explosive increase in the last five years, though there is still low tourist density.

2. We do not have a current gentrification problem, as the centre is very depopulated and run-down, with some areas in ruins, but its progressive rehabilitation is focusing on the construction of tourist apartments and housing. In the last decade, the age group that has reduced the most in the sparse population of the city centre is the under 45s. The ageing of the population and the lack of generational replacement is becoming evident.

3. Totally unregulated "platform tourism" has a negative impact on the traditional hotel sector. We may also be facing a phenomenon of oversizing, a new bubble effect in the real estate sector, as the supply of tourist accommodation is generally growing, but overnight stays are not growing at the same rate.

4. If we do not act now with other housing policies that consider repopulation as an integrating strategy, the centre of our city will be a large bar terrace, where there will be no life, no traditional shops, no schools, no resident families and no cohabitation. And all of this will end up totally dismantling our traditional neighbourhoods, which will lose their identity and culture.

Unfortunately, for now, it is not in our hands to implement public policies that protect the right to decent and affordable housing, since we are not in the municipal government, but we are, within our possibilities, advising and putting our political structure at the service of stopping evictions, promoting proposals for the comprehensive rehabilitation of neighbourhoods with substandard housing, facilitating access to housing for young people and housing alternatives for young foreigners previously under guardianship of the state, providing the grant of use of land to housing cooperatives or the purchase of second-hand housing for social renting.

Within the framework of these proposals and our defence of the right to housing, we have promoted this study on tourist housing, which is also a political action, with which we intend to:

- Unmask the current municipal government policy of construction and rehabilitation of the historic centre in Jerez because the "*housing policy and revitalisation of the historic centre*" is disguised as something it is not.

- Reclaim the need to regulate this economic activity, tourist accommodation, so that it is transparent, so that it is adequately taxed and does not compete unfairly with other establishments for overnight stays in our city, and so that it does not go against the right to life and housing of the residents of Jerez.

- Explain that what is sold as investments that are beneficial for Jerez, in reality are not an investment in the city, as they clash with the right and access to housing, drive out the few people who already live in the centre and greatly limit access to housing for new generations. These investments lead to an expansion of the tertiary sector in the city centre, extractive investments of the values and conditions of the territory as mere economic exploitation at the service of the tourism and real estate sector.

- Denounce the lack of municipal will to confront this situation. Jerez City Council has more than enough resources to have carried out a study of this nature or a much more exhaustive one years ago, but a small political group, with only one councillor, has had to come and do what should have been done before.

We strive for a sustainable model that puts people at the centre of its activity and that guarantees the right to decent housing and that does not give rise to speculation, to "anything goes" or to wild actions that disrespect our environment. We want a friendly model in which houses for residents and the economic development of the tourist sector can coexist with hotels and hostels, and also (why not?) with tourist apartments and housing, under logical and sensible regulation.

LIVING AND GAINING RIGHTS IN THE EUROPEAN LABYRINTH

Ana Fernández

During the last two years of the pandemic, the defence of the right to housing, in the context of a major health and social crisis, has run into the usual brick walls, strongly propped up by that faceless and tentacled entity that we call the market. Last December, we saw how the popular legislative initiative for a Law to Guarantee the Right to Dignified and Adequate Housing, presented by several social organisations to the Spanish Parliament, was left without the possibility of being addressed and debated, by the deed and grace of those who claim to be the representatives of the people. When it comes to vetoing (and silencing) civic initiatives on such a transcendental issue as the human right to housing, although supposedly of different political persuasions, the People's Party (PP), VOX and the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE) do not seem to present any differences. Far better that they "sort it out" among themselves.

Meanwhile, just one day earlier, on 13 December, but with zero media coverage in our territory, another deadline of equal or greater importance for the defence of this right came to an end, which could have an impact not only on the voracity of the market, but also on the very capacity to confront it at the local level. I am referring to the deadline for submitting comments on the European Regulation Short-Term Rentals Initiative. This faceless entity knows very well how to operate quietly and twist the arms of key actors on several fronts at once.

Those of us like me who live in Barcelona know that a firm municipal political will has a limited but certain margin to halt expulsion and gentrification processes linked to property speculation that directly affect the conditions of access to decent housing. These processes go hand-in-hand with the commercialisation of housing as a financial instrument for obtaining income and the touristification of cities as new mines for an extractive economy. Tools such as the Special Tourist Accommodation Plan (PEUAT) in Barcelona

have shown that these processes can be dealt with at the local level, despite limitations in terms of competences and resources. According to data from Barcelona City Council, between 2016 and 2020, this municipality had already recovered 1,982 of the apartments offered as tourist accommodation for housing use.

If approved, European regulatory initiatives such as the one mentioned above could jeopardise these types of local tools, yet they could also be of help if they are in line with defending the right to housing. Less than a year ago, following the mobilisation of different networks such as the European Citizens' Initiative "Housing for All", the European Parliament adopted a historic Resolution on access to decent and affordable housing for all [2019/2187(INI)]. It made particular reference to the negative impact of tourist rents in relation to residential rental prices and to processes of dispossession that make housing unaffordable for the local population, as well as the emptying of historic city centres and the deterioration of liveability in general. To this end, the European Commission was asked to regulate short-term contracts. However, and in clear contradiction of the spirit of this Resolution, the report issued by the European Commission (Inception Impact Assessment), aimed at underpinning the new regulatory proposal, goes in the opposite direction. In other words, it proposes a regulation to incentivise short-term rentals with a strict market orientation, seeking to eliminate what it calls the "administrative burden" of each location, which generate "barriers to market access" (a euphemism to refer to the control of licences and limitations at the local level).

In the era of artificial intelligence, digital platforms and the touristification of cities, occurring alongside an increase in inequalities and a decline in the purchasing power of the working class in the face of the profitability of capital, today's regulatory proposals must take into account the strong transnational and translocal component that runs through these processes now more than ever. Citizen action must be articulated not only at the local level, as with the *Iniciativa Ley de Vivienda* ("Housing Law Initiative") platform, which we celebrate despite its apparent "defeat", for showing the deficits and shortcomings of what we call 'representative' democracy, but also at other levels. With the same intelligence, civic action should therefore take advantage of the possibility of occupying and reclaiming spaces for advocacy at the regional level, in this case at the European level, because the potential impact of what is in play and decided upon in this sphere is enormous.

Therefore, along these lines of defence of fundamental rights such as access to decent housing, and perhaps also to continue feeding the spirit of rebellion and non-conformism that must keep us standing firm and alert in the struggle, I want to take advantage of this window on the world to communicate

and celebrate spaces of collective and inter-local construction, also generated thanks to the digital era. I am referring to the initiative driven by the European coordination of the International Alliance of Inhabitants (IAI), which in record time convened organisations and references working on these issues to inform, debate and propose an alternative to the current proposal for the regulation of short-term rentals put forward by the European Commission. With the participation of experts from different cities and over a hundred participants, the IAI held a virtual meeting on 10 December that resulted in the drafting of a joint commitment to regulate these rentals based on human rights. This text has been submitted to the European Commission as part of the consultation period for local organisations and administrations, which ended on 13 December. Both the meeting and the proposal are available on the IAI Facebook page.

Still with the bitter taste of what happened with the Spanish popular legislative initiative, it is difficult to maintain hope that the European institutions will listen to the clamour of organisations and citizens in the face of the "persuasive" power of real estate market operators. But in this time of Matrix Resurrections, continuing to strengthen spaces of resistance, articulation and public encounters to democratise institutions, and coordinating cross-border political advocacy in the defence of fundamental rights and basic needs, still seems essential to me.

This article was first published on 11 January 2022 in the column "*Una ventana al mundo: la actualidad global con mirada local*" ("A window on the world: global news with a local perspective") featured in La Futura Channel (lafuturachannel.net).

TRANSFORMING HOW WE CARE

CARE TASKS AND COMMUNITY SOLIDARITY

Luisa Broto Bernués

> As feminism has taught us, when we talk about care tasks, we are talking about valuing our vulnerability and interdependence, our responsibility towards others and the need to place the focus on the sustainability of life, a life worth living.

Therefore, the major challenge for public policy is not only *client satisfaction* but above all *client care*, based on measures for community-based care management.

The conception of social policies has usually been based on what have traditionally been called the *ethics of justice*, a set of procedures and rules that have been of key importance as an element to reduce arbitrariness and to guarantee equal access to social rights, services and benefits.

These are essentially universalist, egalitarian, rational, impartial, rights-centred and formalist ethics that focus not so much on outcomes as on procedures.

Despite the importance of this approach from any model that seeks a social rights perspective, its standardising, objectivist and sterile logic of needs and ensuring they are met is very limited to address individuality and develop emotional and strategic alliances with citizens.

It is here that the *ethics of care* takes on its full potential by placing the focus on context, variations between specific situations, subjective experience and emotional factors, care for the other, care for each other and care for the environment.

It is a commitment to the social dimension of the human being and to the leading role of people in building their own situation, through personal and collective empowerment, in the context of our networks of existence.

Because only through participation can we build a city where there is room for us all. Because being a citizen is much more than just living in the city; it

means claiming, recognising and exercising political and social rights that enable us to become involved in the policies of our cities.

If cities and their neighbourhoods are the space where global dynamics are most harshly manifested, it is also in cities and their neighbourhoods where we can implement policies for change, which, through proximity, respond to the real needs that we have rediscovered.

It is therefore increasingly necessary to implement public policies that move in this direction from the perspective of public-community management. We would like to propose some ideas that we have been working on in Zaragoza in recent years, most of which have not been developed in practice and are, in essence, strongly interrelated and linked.

Care Islands (perhaps it would be better to call them *Care Archipelagos*, like a set of islands that form a whole) are interdisciplinary and public-community spaces for the care of the needs of elderly people and people in situations of dependence.

In addition to responding to the home support needs currently attended to by the Home Help Service and the provision of other services and technical aids, the aim is that these islands will become a space for community support in coordination with the medical services, local businesses, neighbours and social entities, to weave networks of proximity, social and emotional support for non-professional carers and to detect and respond to situations of loneliness.

But this is not their only purpose. They would also be designed to meet families' childcare needs by providing 24-hour childcare 365 days a year, based on a wide range of community-based services to promote family work-life balance, adapted to the needs of the territories.

These mechanisms would include both work-life balance and home care systems for childcare, either individually or collectively, as well as spaces for exceptional or emergency situations that provide a 24-hour response, 365 days a year.

The use of these mechanisms would be on an hourly basis at a reduced price, adapted to the real needs of work-life balance and affordable for families.

The need for care in this project is no longer a mere individual need to which an equally individual response must be provided with a menu of services. It must be considered as a collective need in a specific context, not an isolated

event but part of a complex situation that urgently needs a response. In this way, the whole community is made co-responsible without this entailing an abandonment of functions by the public sector.

An important instrument for the management of these policies and as part of the Care Islands would be the promotion of *care cooperatives*, understood as cooperatives of users and workers which, with a lower level of bureaucratisation, entail a greater exchange of informal information, the construction of community networks and, in short, community self-management in meeting its own needs.

Placing care at the centre is an ethical imperative, a legal requirement and a political responsibility for the construction of the private and public world, which contributes to consolidating gender equity, equality, solidarity, social fabric and support and social justice.

MOVING TOWARDS THE CITY OF CARE: THE CASE OF BARCELONA

Gemma Tarafa Orpinell, Carolina Recio Cáceres and Elia Gran

Care work is essential to sustaining life. In the wake of the impact of the pandemic caused by Covid-19, this statement has become more apparent and meaningful. Despite the shift in perception, care has still not managed to shake off its aura of invisibility. It is as if *what* sustains people's lives didn't exist, as if it were a natural and inherent part of women's lives and is therefore not worthy of social and monetary recognition. In this respect, the provision and receipt of care has not yet become a citizen's right. We have not had robust public policies that consider the right to give and receive care to be one of the keystones in building a social state.

The feminist movement and a substantial number of social science academics have advocated for care as a lynchpin in our lives. Care work, which remains invisible, is what sustains us in our day-to-day lives; we need to feed ourselves, to have access to basic hygiene and to live under optimal conditions of cleanliness and safety, emotional and physical well-being, and so on. And to this must be added the fact that we live with people who at certain stages of their life require more care due to their lack of personal autonomy, especially at the beginning and at the end of life.

The Covid-19 pandemic has revealed our vulnerability as individuals and as a collective. Production-related activity slowed down for a few months, but we never stopped caregiving. An example is that many of those who were declared frontline workers during this period of exception were in fact working in the realm of caregiving; from health care, which was obviously crucial to alleviating the pandemic, to caring for the elderly and people with disabilities in nursing homes and at home, to caring for socially vulnerable groups. These are jobs that, by their very nature, are strongly feminised. Nor did home help wane, which grew on account of the closure of schools and day centres. With schools closed and fewer facilities open, families had to assume the cost of

24-hour care while teleworking. It was clear then that feminist activism was not a rallying cry but a reality (sometimes very challenging for those who had to take on the burden of caregiving).

The unprecedented situation we have experienced must be taken as an opportunity to bring care out of the grey area in which it finds itself and to reassert care as a keystone in building fairer societies by proposing a reform of the current systems and policies that affect care. We must update them, provide them with resources and think about them from the perspective of the need to give and receive care throughout our lifetime. Cities must be the places where we can think of new, innovative proposals that put care at the heart of policies.

Cities are the spaces for everyday life in which we get around, interact, consume, work and care on a daily basis. The city is the ideal place to rethink the systems of social organisation for care, moving towards more human, more egalitarian and more community-based places, where the idea of interdependence guides public-community actions.

Barcelona, a caring city

Barcelona City Council has been leading this shift in mindset for some years now. We are a city that seeks to be recognised as a caring city, as a city for life. It is for this reason that the feminist perspective runs through all policies to prioritise life. From urban planning policies, which are transforming the city so that it is the people who are re-appropriating the public space, to social policies that put people's needs first.

This view was encapsulated in the government's measure for the **Democratisation of Care**[2] presented in 2017. Several of the transformative interventions have been designed in line with this approach, with the aim of creating policies that generate new frameworks based on rights and that remove care from the exclusively private (and highly unequal) domain.

First of all, some of the care services for dependent persons provided within the framework of what is set forth by the State Dependency Law and the Autonomous Community Law on Social Services were rethought. The aim was to redefine and improve the services that Barcelona City Council should provide, seeking out points of improvement that we were able to identify using the city's tools.

[2] https://ajuntament.barcelona.cat/tempsicures/sites/default/files/mg_para_la_democratizacion_de_los_cuidados.pdf

The revision of the municipal home help service (SAD) was a first step towards a new way of organising the service, designed to improve the quality of care for users and to improve workers' conditions and recognition. This has been complemented by other services that are already part of the Barcelona model, such as housing with services for the elderly, which are proving to be an excellent resource for promoting older people's autonomy.

Secondly, a commitment was made to social innovation as a hallmark of social policies. This has given rise to innovative proposals that seek to put care first: the Barcelona Cuida care centre, the Vila Veïna community care initiative and the municipal childminding service. These constitute new responses based on an analysis of the complexity that currently goes hand in hand with life in the city:

The **Barcelona Cuida**[3] care centre is a pioneering municipal centre that provides advice, guidance, support and information to care workers. Its aim is to become a meeting point for different services, programmes and resources related to care. Noteworthy among the programmes it offers are those related to guidance and support for both domestic workers and families who need to hire care workers, in an endeavour to offer tools so that this hiring is legal and entitles the workers to rights. In 2021, this meant that the legal advice teams assisted 1,308 people, of whom 874 were caregiving families and 348 domestic workers. This guidance service, among other outcomes, led to the regularisation in 2021 of 140 domestic workers' contracts, who until then had an informal contract. The centre also aims to be a space for the coordination of professionals and services and to host organisations that can provide group services and mutual support related to care.

Another step towards the caring city is the project initiated in 2021 known as **Vila Veïna**[4]. This project aims to divide the city into area units of between 10,000 and 30,000 inhabitants and to organise and meet care needs based on proximity. It is centred on the premise that a smaller area unit can facilitate this approach to care and foster communities that care for each other throughout the city. The project is inspired by the 15-minute city model and the desire to create a "village" imaginary. The ultimate goal is to build care communities based on proximity, fostering community ties and relations in order to approach care from a collective dimension and not alone. Between now and 2023, 16 Vila Veïna units will be rolled out throughout the city and four of them have been up and running since last October. Each Vila Veïna offers a portfolio of services linked to guidance on the care process (provid-

[3] https://www.barcelona.cat/ciutatcuidadora/en/barcelona-care-centre/centre

[4] https://ajuntament.barcelona.cat/vinclesbcn/en/noticia/vila-veina-the-new-community-care-initiative_1065580

ing information on all the resources offered by the city), respite services for carers (mutual support spaces and healthy walks) and projects aimed at early childhood care (family spaces and municipal childminding space). It also aims to complement this with small-scale actions in public spaces so that neighbourhoods are also care spaces from an urban planning point of view.

Finally, another innovative service to be highlighted is the Concilia Service, a free after-school childminding service. The municipal project aims to facilitate the reconciliation of work, family and personal life through a service that responds to existing work-life balance needs, mainly for women, in terms of childcare.

In short, Barcelona City Council is determined to be a feminist and caring city. This is not just a slogan. In Barcelona, the facts show that we are laying the groundwork not only in terms of discourse but also in terms of tangible transformations with a view to moving towards a city that cares.

Care emerges both in the design of the urban model (Superblocks urban initiative humanises the city and gives prominence to pedestrians and human relations) and in constant review and innovation in the field of social policies. A fair and fearless city is a city that lends support and cares, which lays the foundations for developing a decent and fulfilling life for all its residents. This is the path chosen by Barcelona.

CAN WE THRIVE WITHOUT ECONOMIC GROWTH?

TOWARDS A NEW ECONOMIC MODEL: AN INTRODUCTION

Toni Ribas

Since neoliberalism became the predominant ideology, back in the 1980s, the obsession with economic growth has heavily conditioned politics and business management all over the world.

Thus, government regulations at all levels are focused on growth and making it easier for companies and investors to make bigger profits, while ignoring important considerations like social welfare, equality, work conditions, work-life balance and, above all, the preservation of the environment.

As a result, many workers' rights, painfully acquired over decades of struggle, have ceased to exist. Overpopulation and automatization, among other causes, mean that there are fewer jobs available, and the perversion of the law of supply and demand makes it extremely difficult for people to find decent work no matter how high their level of education is.

The gap between the haves and the have nots is wider every day. Wealth is in very few hands, and those in real need of a job (i.e. a proper income to make a living) are forced to take whatever jobs the companies offer, often with deplorable conditions: long hours, a low salary and a defiant take-it-or-leave-it stance on the part of their future employer.

The circular and caring economics of our grandparents have long been left behind and have been replaced with a linear model of Extraction-Production-Consumption-Waste. This model is depleting natural resources, wasting an incredible amount of energy, and leaving millions of tons of waste that we cannot possibly manage.

The greenhouse gas emissions associated with this model are exponentially rising and no one can argue now that climate change is not human-induced. The effects of climate change are making living conditions extremely difficult, especially in underdeveloped countries, leading to migration flows and

to potential competition for jobs, which leads to racism and totally unacceptable foreign policies.

Developed countries, however, are not immune to climate change. Crops and wildlife are deeply affected by the rise in temperatures and extreme weather, and so food production is reduced and prices climb, in accordance with capitalist laws.

So, the promises associated with perpetual economic growth (jobs for everybody, good money for all, and general well-being) turn out to be a fantasy, actually taking us back a few decades in terms of social rights, average income and public services.

But these are the concepts that are widely used to define development or prosperity, and as we clearly see that economic growth does not imply prosperity for most people, maybe we should look at other means to achieve this goal. Prosperity is not only income, it is universal access to health, education and housing; it is the preservation of the environment so we can all live in a beautiful and healthy place; it is balancing our working lives with our family lives; it is being able to improve our relationship with other people by building communities that can support and help each other. It is, in essence, giving everyone a chance to live a happy life.

The challenge then is to switch to an economic system that takes all these elements into consideration, and serves all mankind to have a better life without destroying the natural resources that make human life possible.

The capitalist model of eternal growth, where GDP is the king, where issues like 'externalities' (direct and indirect damage to the environment or society caused by the production system, which are not included in indicators like GDP), the care economy, or social justice are not taken into consideration fails to guarantee equality and well-being for all. Are there alternatives to this model?

In this chapter we will explore some of them, trying to shed some light on the problem and confront the predominant orthodoxy in economic thought. For decades now, universities and schools of economics all over the world no longer question the capitalist system, thus teaching future economists almost as one would teach a religion, including only the concepts and ideas that uphold economic growth as the only possible way to thrive.

It is time for a different approach.

NO FEAR OF ECONOMIC DEGROWTH

Gabriela Cabaña

> Increasingly robust evidence from degrowth and post-growth economic approaches is showing that decoupling economic growth from resource use – what is called "green growth" or even "dematerialisation" – is extremely unlikely, if not impossible. Impossible at least in the scale, depth, speed, magnitude and resilience we so urgently need. This is so clear that in our current policy scenarios, like those built by the IPCC reports, we are still trusting in scaling up carbon capture and removal technologies that do not yet exist to offset our emissions overshoot. This is a hugely irresponsible approach to the ecological breakdown we are facing.

Unlike what mainstream green growth approaches assert, renewable energy technologies have limits – both on land use and material requirements like balsa wood and rare earth minerals – and also rely heavily on fossil fuels and their derivatives like plastic. The way they are often designed as massive enterprises also relies on a logic of people's displacement from their land. Therefore, we cannot simply expect renewable energies to conveniently come to sustain our current energy use. This critical point is often brushed away through wishful thinking about some miraculous technological breakthrough that is yet to come.

There is one historical fact we need to understand: the exploitation of fossil fuels gave us an incredible source of very concentrated and apparently cheap energy for a couple of centuries. I say "apparently" because it had – and continues to have – many negative consequences that have been intentionally overlooked so cheap energy can circulate globally in a smooth way. It would be a mistake to put those same expectations and demands on renewable technologies like wind and solar energies, not only because of the technical impediments, but also because it would continue to reproduce the imperialistic and exploitative relations of our productivist civilization.

More than sitting down and waiting for policy makers to come up with a new techno-fix – the last one among ecomodernists is go back to nuclear,

re-branded as “green” – a truly radical political thinking must challenge the ideology of economic growth. Economic growth has so far been the unmovable wall we have been trying to adjust around, both from the left and the right. It is time to bring down that wall. The improvement of living conditions and provision of social rights for everyone can be achieved with existing wealth and resources (probably even with less), if we are willing to challenge the power structures that keep that shared human patrimony firmly in the hands of a few. Growth ideology relies on waste and the forced creation of scarcity. We can transform the political principles that guide our economies to do the opposite: to create a shared, radical form of abundance. This is the invitation of degrowth.

The emerging post-pandemic world (that we are still not sure when will come about) offers a possibility to re-think and challenge the foundations of our current economic system. Or at least that could be expected, as we have seen in its bare reality the inability of our societies to take care of all people when faced with a direct danger to our health. This could have been a good time to remember that we have created what we call “the economy” not to produce a certain amount of goods, but to keep each other comfortable, fed and safe. Pushing people under the bus to keep “the economy” afloat only makes sense in a blindly reifying system like ours. Different post-Covid recovery funds are sadly pointing in this direction. In Chile, for instance, our plan repeats a known formula: big investment projects in infrastructure and pushing people back to employment. It has even been proposed to “speed up” the evaluation of environmental standards in large investment projects. All when existing evidence is solid in that ecosystems and biodiversity degradation puts us at risk of new pandemics and other still unsuspected consequences of destroying our planet.

It might be controversial, but we could build an army of green infrastructure and still be in a huge social and ecological crisis. If we focus on emissions only, at the expense of the care of the web of life, we will continue repeating the mistakes and injustices that took us here in the first place. A corporate-led energy transition will not be a just transition. The problem all these grandiloquent plans share is that they diagnose the main problem to be low economic activity (low growth, a contraction or recession, and fear of future depression) so they aim at pumping growth back again. These epistemic principles blind us from looking at that paradigm from the outside and seeing that something of this logic is not working. Why have we designed our economies to rely on growth for stability and providing well-being to people? How can we transition from our growth obsession into degrowth? Or rather: into a Pluriverse of alternatives that degrowing would make room for? This often appears as the most difficult question to answer. When you see we are

not even close from being in a “safe space” – as framed by the doughnut model – and want to move there, you start asking: why is this so difficult? What are the logics and suppositions that are guiding our economic decisions? We need to open the box of political economy, of global history, colonialism and ecological destruction. There, degrowth can offer a very powerful explanatory paradigm.

There is already a rich garden of alternatives; other ways of living together that challenge domination and centre on care. Indigenous people in particular offer a wide range of civilizational projects, fascinating political arrangements that have managed to create other forms of communal decision-making and sustain their livelihoods in a non-destructive way. They have a lot to teach us on how to move to healthier ways of being, of relating to each other and the rest of the living world. Re-thinking ideas like “work” and “property”, for instance, are good starting points to widen these conversations. It is not a coincidence that precisely these often marginalized and oppressed peoples have been for a long time now denouncing the catastrophic consequences and crimes of our capitalist system and its obsession with expansion and never-ending growth. They also encourage us to have no fear of economic degrowth.

MORE GREEN ENERGY, MORE LOCAL INDUSTRY, MORE JOBS

Eloi Badia, Christo Casas and Quique Gornés

The Climate Emergency has upended everything we knew about how the economy works. By way of example, we have not yet overcome the health crisis brought about by Covid-19 and we are already in the throes of a supply crisis, especially of fossil fuels, compounded by Russia's war in Ukraine. If we do not act in time and plan for transformation, when (or if) we emerge from this crisis, we will be up against an even worse one.

There is no choice between strengthening the economy and tackling the climate emergency; this is a false dichotomy. Both struggles have to go hand in hand: they will be fought together or not at all. The future of our society lies in the ecological transition and the future of the economy lies in decarbonisation. This is the only way we will achieve greater energy sovereignty, as we will not be subject to international conflicts, fuel shortages and capital flows.

The projections made by the International Monetary Fund and the European Central Bank for Spain and the rest of Southern Europe are quite clear in terms of the economic impacts of the climate emergency if we do not act now: the economic downturn would exceed 6% while the investments needed to mitigate the effects of the climate crisis would be around 1% of GDP.

We do not have the option of maintaining the former energy model based on fossil fuels; we have to move towards a new model based on renewable energies where generation is decentralised and distributed equally throughout the territory. The need to supply parts, the installation of new generating equipment and the adaptation of distribution networks to the new reality are an opportunity for industrial sectors that we cannot afford to miss. The current cost of electricity may be the catalyst that instigated this change, but it is much more than a material issue: the planet's survival is at stake.

Apart from promoting the creation of new jobs, a just energy transition must allow us to leave behind the extractivist, polluting and expensive model in favour of a new green, inexpensive and fair model that leaves no one behind and guarantees the right to energy. It must also guarantee a balance with the surrounding territory: we, compact cities with a high population density, have a responsibility towards the more dispersedly populated areas that must be based on local generation with existing resources. Barcelona is the densest metropolis in Europe, but we have no potential for wind or hydroelectric power. What we do have is thousands of square metres of roofs and rooftops and twice as many sunny days as many European capitals, an opportunity we cannot afford to miss. Photovoltaic power will be the key.

But, above all, our model must be based on efficiency and reduced energy consumption, allowing us to take advantage of all residual energies that are currently on the decline. Suddenly, energy renovations of the current building stock will allow the construction sector to be restructured into what really contributes most to the common good. In Barcelona alone, 65% of dwellings (almost half a million) predate the first technical regulations on thermal insulation. All the energy we save in the city will mean less pressure on the rest of the territory and more skilled jobs.

We will also have to transform our consumption model to stop generating tonnes of materials to be disposed of, convert waste into the necessary resources and close materials' life cycle. In this regard, the European Union has undertaken a geo-strategic commitment to gaining autonomy from other regions in the supply of raw materials by developing a circular economy capable of generating large numbers of jobs.

In closing, one last major challenge will be decarbonising mobility in all its facets. Firstly, we must promote rail transport over short-haul air travel and road freight transport. This will require us to update infrastructure that needs to be adapted to meet these commitments. Secondly, we must increase and strengthen public transport infrastructure in the metropolitan area so that private mobility is reduced as much as possible. Thirdly, we must electrify the remaining private mobility, both for passenger and freight transport and, preferably, as shared vehicles. This brings us closer to understanding mobility, including private mobility, as a service and not as property. We have the right to get around ourselves and to move things, which does not mean the right to own a vehicle.

However, we cannot tackle this new mobility without also considering a new spatial planning model and other factors that are here to stay, such as teleworking. The halt in activity in the city of Barcelona during the months

of the Covid-19 pandemic led to a substantial reduction in greenhouse gas emissions: in 2020 alone, emissions dropped by 22% compared to 2019. But we must be acutely aware that this reduction was not of a structural nature and that, once the pandemic is over, we cannot return to the previous figures. This shows the enormous effort that must be made to cut emissions and achieve the ambitious targets set while guaranteeing citizens' well-being.

The ecological transition that all economic sectors will undergo will generate thousands of jobs at all levels of training and education, more stable and lasting employment than that which depends on the umpteenth property bubble or that associated with the tourist monoculture that we have endured in recent years.

We know that this transition cannot be made with the budgets of the authorities alone, whether local or European. And we will therefore need to reach agreements with production sectors across the board, also knowing that, if we want a fair energy transition and an economy with democratic rules, public leadership is crucial.

PRISON ISLANDS AND THE MUNICIPALITIES STANDING UP TO FORTRESS EUROPE

LESBOS

Lara Lussón

The media spotlight was on Lesbos in 2015. The war in Syria had been going on for four years, but we were not aware of the magnitude of that conflict until we began to see on our televisions how hundreds of thousands of people were arriving on that and other Greek islands in toy dinghies and with those orange life jackets that have marked history forever. Those life jackets that protect dignified bodies while stripping Europe of any trace of dignity. Those life jackets that cover the shame of the wet and dirty clothes of the displaced people while exposing the great shame that is the fortress of Europe.

Lesbos became one of the "cage islands" referred to in this chapter, concentrating more than 30,000 asylum seekers at a time in the three active refugee camps. Today, all that remains is the camp known as Moria 2, a prison for innocent women, men, girls and boys, the result of a fire of its predecessor, which was nothing more than another example of the weariness and desperation of those human beings who are being stripped of all identity and who are promised, because they are entitled to it, a life that never comes.

Overcrowding can never be the solution. Nor can a lack of solidarity. The way our systems are designed, as well as the reception system in Europe, makes it completely impossible for us to make this whole problem of "cage islands" disappear without the empathy of other municipalities and regions on a small scale and without state and European solidarity and support on a larger scale. Europe knows that if it does not provide legal channels to seek asylum in the countries of origin, people will be forced to arrive at their destination to ask for asylum. No matter how many metres the walls they plan to build are raised, this will continue to happen. It is such an obvious fact that denying it and continuing to force them to risk their lives and pay one mafia after another cannot be explained if it is not for the lucrative security business.

But what about those municipalities that are assumed to be hotspots because of their location? Why is the responsibility of dealing with the emergency and subsequent consolidation of the situation given to places that are not prepared for it? It has been widely demonstrated that a more equitable distribution of displaced persons, as well as the investment of resources, would

not only alleviate tensions, but would also favour compliance with simple rules such as that each person is entitled to four metres of individual space while their administrative situation is being resolved, or the right to be within three kilometres of basic services.

In case there are any doubts, no, this does not happen very often. It certainly did not happen in Moria. Similarly, the directives of the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) are not met, which set the duration of the process at six months from the time of arrival in the territory and the asylum application until the case is resolved. The average duration in Spain and Greece is two years.

Not to mention the lack of gender training of most of the people in charge of security in the camps, who are not capable of detecting cases of gender violence; the lack of training in children's issues, which could have perhaps prevented the suicides of three minors in Moria in 2021; the lack of training in LGTBI rights that could help to detect and prevent dozens of attacks.... No, refugee camps should never exist; but if they do, it is mandatory that they are structured with a gender perspective and with the staff in charge trained in all these areas.

All of the above creates a climate of initial empathy in these caged territories, which is then followed by weariness and final tensions. The cycle is repeated over and over again and always responds to the same stages.

When there is a tragedy or emergency situation such as a mass influx of people fleeing famine or war, the local population tends to become involved and empathise. Let's be honest, no one likes to look drama in the eye and do nothing. It is often very admirable how civil society organises itself. However, a few months later, when the situation starts to become embedded and the migrant population begins to feel desperate, the first altercations resulting from this loss of hope tend to appear. Rumours begin to spread that these people are violent, and it is precisely at this point that the far right enters the scene.

Through the repetition of the message of fear, it succeeds in spreading its hate speech. The act of one person is enough to condemn tens of thousands. It is impossible to be surprised because it always happens in the same way. It is at this point that the empathy and human rights approach that had initially permeated the local population begins to disappear. This loss of solidarity combines with the desperation of those who see how their papers never arrive and who cannot continue their journeys unless they pay the mafias again

and risk their lives between borders and barbed wire. Not to mention deportations and the fear of them.

Thus, the more the life of migrants in camps is perpetuated, the more the feeling of hindrance and rejection grows. Because just as nobody likes to see an emergency and do nothing out of a basic question of morality, nobody likes to live with this drama on their doorstep every day for six or seven years, while observing, moreover, that the European Union does not provide solutions or watching NGOs arrive laden with blankets, clothes, medicines and school supplies donated in other European countries instead of investing the money that it costs them to transport these second-hand items by sea in local businesses.

To give some examples of this rejection, establishments in Lesbos began to ban entry to applicants for international protection and patients could arrive at a hospital emergency room with their head split open or about to give birth and have to wait until every last Greek person had been treated.

This is the perfect breeding ground for the worst situations. Tensions continue to rise and the first attacks on migrants take place. In Greece, marches have been organised all around the country with the sole slogan of "hunting migrants". Following these events, migrants protest because they feel attacked, not to mention the continuous violation of rights that they have been suffering for months or years.

And these protests bring back the discourse of violence, hatred, fear and stigmatisation. And this in turn gives rise to new local protests. Which in turn lead to new protests by migrants... and so on in an endless loop that never ends while the European Union sends money to Turkey, Morocco and Libya and washes its hands without offering any kind of alternative for asylum seekers or for the municipalities that have to cope with this migratory pressure on their own.

Cities like Barcelona, Lampedusa and La Laguna (and even Lesbos in the early years) that stand up to these situations and try to dignify them deserve all respect and admiration, but I end this text with anger. Anger at having to refer to them as "fearless cities". Fear of what? Of defending human rights? Should we be proud of those places that comply with their legal duty? Should we applaud as extraordinary what is supposed to be basic in Europe, where it has not only been demonstrated that there is room for everyone, but also that we need immigration? The answer is no.

Lampedusa

LAMPEDUSA, A FRONTIER ISLAND IN THE HEART OF THE MEDITERRANEAN

Antonello Ravetto Antinori

I have been working as a journalist for the past 25 years, and one of the fundamental rules governing my profession is to look at the facts objectively. However, when you are in Lampedusa and you see that coffins have just been brought to the cemetery, and you realize that those coffins contain the bodies of those who lost their lives just hours earlier, a few hundred metres away from the coast, you feel anger, dismay and sorrow. And then it is hard, even as a journalist, not to be tempted to "take the right side", to take the side of respect for human rights, to take the side of those who think that saving those endangered at sea is a duty that comes before any law, before any government provision. It is tough because the Italian Minister of the Interior signed a measure in 2019 called the "security decree". This decree actually imposed sanctions on those who rescue migrants at sea in territorial waters, sanctions aimed mainly at NGO operations.

In the aftermath of that decree, the Mayor of Lampedusa and Linosa, Totò Martello (with whom I began working in 2018 as his spokesperson), posted a photo on his Facebook page sporting a T-shirt that read *#iosonopescatore* ("I am a fisherman" in English). He posted that photo to underline a concept: for the community of Lampedusa, a small island of just 22 square kilometres in the heart of the Mediterranean – closer to the coasts of Africa than to those of Italy – the 'law of the sea' applies first and foremost. Fisherman's rules also apply, according to which a person in danger of drowning must be rescued, regardless of nationality, skin colour or whether they are in territorial or international waters.

Lampedusa is a border territory, a first point of arrival for most of the migrant boats that intend to reach Italy and Europe from the North African coast. But Lampedusa is above all an island 'far from everything', where the simplest things often become hard and 'impossible' things become commonplace.

Landings on Lampedusa have been occurring practically non-stop for more than 30 years, a time frame that has seen real emergencies. One such example is the arrival, during the "Arab Spring" in 2011, of some 30,000 people fleeing from the African coast on the island, which has a resident population of approximately 6,000, in barely more than a week. Days during which the people of Lampedusa actively participated in the welcome by providing food, clothing and material support to migrants, including toys for children travelling with their parents.

Barring exceptional situations, the reception machine has been organized and structured over the years to the point that you can be on the island today and not even notice that a landing is underway. In this sense, Lampedusa often experiences two parallel realities: the migrants who arrive in their boats and enter the port, where they are immediately received and rescued; and, a few hundred metres away, Italian and foreign tourists swarming the golden beaches, who come to the island for its extraordinary natural beauty and crystal-clear sea, and to watch the turtles, dolphins and even whales that pass by the island during certain months of the year: after all, these are 'migrations' too.

There is a reception centre on the island which, on paper, can accommodate just over 250 people, but in fact can receive more than 1,000 in some cases in the event of a large number of landings or slow transfer procedures (especially when bad weather and sea conditions prevent ships from docking to transfer migrants to other facilities, usually in Sicily). After the migrants disembark on the island or are rescued at sea, medical-screening procedures begin on the quay at Molo Favaloro. Once the migrants are moved to the reception centre, each migrant is identified and then, after a few days, transferred. In this sense, Lampedusa is a frontier territory engaged in 'first reception'. Until the outbreak of the Covid-19 emergency, migrants were not obliged to remain in the reception centre during their stay on the island: they were allowed to leave and were often found walking along its streets. But once the pandemic spread, the rules changed due to health requirements and now migrants are expected to stay inside the centre until they are transferred to other facilities outside Lampedusa or on 'quarantine ships' that are normally stationed off the island.

The Municipality of Lampedusa has no direct competence in reception procedures or in the management of the reception centre: everything is managed by the Ministry of the Interior and the Public Security Forces, in agreement with the health institutions. Totò Martello, however, has never taken his role as mayor lightly as regards these issues. On the contrary, he has always constantly monitored every situation related to migratory flows, pointing

out any flaws in the reception machine and making proposals to the local authorities, the national government and the European Union. He has done this by bringing political and institutional issues to the fore in an endeavour to ensure security, the protection of human rights and the satisfaction of the local community's needs (with the aim of reconciling Lampedusa's humanitarian commitment with its commitment to tourism).

For example, the Italian Government's dispatch of 'quarantine ships' during the Covid-19 emergency was arranged precisely following requests from Mayor Martello, who called for this measure since the reception centre would not allow guests to stay for the time necessary to comply with the quarantine protocol at the time. Moreover, as mentioned above, Mayor Martello's commitment was aimed at supporting the local community, since Lampedusa's population has often had to bear the burden of humanitarian reception alone, even at the cost of considerable sacrifice. To sum up this concept, we can say that support for humanitarian reception in a border territory must go hand in hand with support for the local community.

It is mainly thanks to the generosity of the local community that Lampedusa has become an internationally recognized 'symbol of welcome' over the years. It is the experience of Lampedusa, together with that of 18 other border territories in 14 European countries, that was the "driving force" behind the "Snapshots from the Borders" project, which also brought together 17 other partners from civil society associations. The project, funded by the European Union, began in 2017 and concluded at the end of 2021. Its lead body was precisely the Municipality of Lampedusa and Linosa. Through this project, major initiatives were carried out, both to strengthen the voice of border territories – creating a network to make their needs and experiences known to national governments and Brussels – and, through the execution of activities, to raise public awareness on issues related to migration flows, the correct narration of events and the fight against fake news, respect for human rights and the protection of collective memory.

Since 2020, the Municipality of Lampedusa and Linosa – at the initiative of Mayor Totò Martello – has also joined UCLG. Bringing together more than 1,000 members from over 120 UN countries, it the largest international association of cities and local governments. After Lampedusa joined UCLG, a process was begun that will lead, following extensive dialogue and exchange among hundreds of governments, local authorities and international associations, to the birth of the "Lampedusa Charter". This Charter is a sort of "manifesto" that collects guiding principles related to the different and complex aspects related to migration flows and human mobility, and more generally to the need to protect the personal rights of every human being.

All this experience on the phenomenon of migratory flows, all these years at the front line of humanitarian reception by the community of a small island of fishermen in the middle of the Mediterranean, must however be channelled into an action aimed at offering proposals to the various local, national and international institutions. It is for this reason that Mayor Totò Martello has launched a process called "Lampedusa, Island of Peace" which intends to permanently launch initiatives for international dialogue, cooperation, training, artistic and cultural events. A process capable of involving institutions, the world of schools and universities, associations and national and international organisations, to ensure that the Mediterranean can finally be a "sea of peace".

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BARCELONA: THE CITY THAT WANTS TO BE A REFUGE WITHIN FORTRESS EUROPE

Marc Serra

Anyone who has migrated knows that cities and municipalities play a key role in reception processes. In fact, this is the view of a recent European Commission Eurobarometer survey, according to which 90% of Europeans believe that local and regional authorities play a "very or rather important" role in the inclusion of immigrants, a percentage that rises to 94% in the case of Spain.

What a large part of the population is unaware of is that local administrations in Spain do not have any competences in the area of immigration and asylum. Despite being the closest and most accessible level of government to the migrant population, municipalities do not have the tools to regulate migratory flows, nor to grant residence and work permits so that they can carry out their migration plans.

Local authorities are faced with the difficult task of managing the most immediate reception needs (accommodation, subsistence, healthcare, education and professional training, language learning, etc.) with resources that are monopolised by states and that are all too often in short supply. Of the tens of millions of euros of European funds that the Spanish state receives for receiving and integrating immigrants, much of it ends up being spent on border control and expulsion policies.

The city of Barcelona has witnessed the arrival of foreigners grow progressively over the last 20 years. Whereas in the year 2000 there were about 46,000 people of foreign origin registered as residents in the city (3.5% of Barcelona's population) in 2020, this figure had already increased to 360,000, or 21% of the total number of residents, and rose to 29% if we count all residents born outside of the state. However, this figure still has some way to go to reach the 37% seen in cities such as New York and London, or 62% in Brussels.

When Barcelona en Comú came to the city government in 2015, resources for reception services were doubled. In doing so, the municipal government not only strengthened the services of legal assistance, professional integration and support for migrants, but was also able to set up a municipal programme for receiving refugee families, which has already become a benchmark in Europe. Nevertheless, despite the fact that the foreign population has increased in recent years, contributions from the state and the government of Catalonia have remained frozen.

But that's not all. In addition to this lack of resources for reception are administrative irregularities, which have become the main obstacle faced by the immigrant population in their attempts to pursue their life ambitions autonomously within our country. Without papers, they have no possibility to work legally or to access social security benefits such as the state's Minimum Vital Income or the government of Catalonia's Guaranteed Income for Citizens, and something as fundamental as renting an apartment (or rather a room) becomes an odyssey.

Within Fortress Europe, the "borders" do not disappear when one manages to enter the European Union. Borders continue to exist in racist raids, in detention centres and in a Law on Foreigners that can entail the same consequences as external borders: cutting short the migration plan and the possibility of being a subject of rights in Europe by means of a return to the place of origin through forced expulsion or condemnation to precariousness.

Against this backdrop, authorities such as Barcelona City Council have claimed to be cities of refuge, guaranteeing universal access to all municipal services, so that there are no first- and second-class citizens, at least at the local level. Facilitating the registration of inhabitants as a gateway to education, social and public health care has made it possible to send out a powerful message of solidarity and inclusion in the midst of a European Union that flirts with the politics of fear and the intolerance of the far right.

It is estimated that around 500,000 people are living undocumented in Spain. In Barcelona, around 80% of the people assisted through reception services do not have residence and work permits. In light of this, the municipal government has driven pioneering programmes to document immigrants which, by way of public employment offers, have enabled the documentation of a few hundred people. This is a considerable figure, but it is clearly insufficient to address a problem that can only be solved by a structural change in the legislation on foreigners.

By law, 500,000 signatures are needed to process a popular legislative initiative in the Congress of Deputies. This is the objective set by the campaign *Regularización Ya* ("Regularisation Now"), which proposes that residence permits be granted to all undocumented immigrants residing in Spain. According to a recent study by the porCausa Foundation, documentation would raise the average tax contributions of each documented person by more than €3,500 per year, in addition to the boost to aggregate consumption, and thus to economic activity and job creation overall.

The popular legislative initiative *Regularización Ya* comes at a time when labour shortages in some sectors such as transportation, agriculture, hospitality and construction are so evident that the Spanish Confederation of Business Organisations (CEOE) is demanding legislative reform. For the time being, the state government has just made a surprise announcement on immigration reform. Yet, whether this turns out to be the umpteenth reform that cynically uses immigrants as cheap labour or real change that puts an end to second-class citizenship in our cities remains to be seen and will depend on social mobilisation and its capacity for advocacy.

ORGANIZATIONS AND CITIES FROM A FEMINIST PERSPECTIVE

THE FEMINIST MOVEMENT: A LEVER FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

Eva Abril

In recent years, we have seen the feminist movement grow and proudly take to the streets and squares of many cities around the world. Thousands of people demanded the right to visualise their own existences, realities and experiences, which turned out to be, to a large extent, collective. The feminist movement was by no means a novelty, even if some liked to call it a fad. Yet, what was new was the strength shown in these gatherings.

As was to be expected when the system detects a strong trend, the social-political movement that is feminism began to become a danger that must be, at the very least, neutralised. To start with, conservative parties have tried to appropriate the term, the market begins to monetise the trend with, for example, T-shirts with feminist phrases, slogans and references to feminist historical figures. Women from the highest echelons of society have jumped on the bandwagon and called themselves feminists, albeit, as they themselves indicate, with nuances.

On the other hand, far-right parties and far-right parties that brand themselves conservative set out on a crusade that they no longer hide or disguise. Feminists are the enemy to be vanquished because, among other things, we endanger the basic structure of society: the family. This imaginary family that preserves the essences of the Eurocentric, white, ableist, Christian, heterosexual civilisation...

The feminist movement has always been diverse, without a unified voice, and with highly disparate tendencies that have caused tension in certain debates. Nuances and discrepancies are inherent to the movement itself, even if at the current time there are different symptoms that may put us on standby.

The normalisation of hate speech is dangerous in itself, yet what is even more dangerous is this normalisation permeating the whole of society and spreading like wildfire. When the most basic social consensuses of respect

and coexistence are broken, we find replicas of these behaviours in places as disparate as high schools, residents' associations, political organisations and, of course, within feminism. Perhaps it is something we need to rethink as a community.

This chapter discusses feminist municipal politics. In this vein, the following questions are raised: Is feminism still a valid driver of change to transform society? Can society be transformed if we consider women as the only valid subject of feminism? Can we ignore issues such as origin, social class, skin colour, sex and gender dissidence in order to address this transformative challenge? Another important question is whether only women can make feminist policies. Or whether, in the end, it is all just about identity.

How, then, do we root feminism in everyday reality? What can municipalism do to implement transformative feminist policies? If the municipality is the level of government closest to the people, a city government whose main objective is to put people's lives at the heart of policymaking will be a municipalist government that creates feminist policies.

Let us take a practical example. Residents in one neighbourhood have noticed that there are some spots that are unsafe at night. In collaboration with the city council, they manage to change the design, eliminate blind spots and better illuminate these areas. This action improves the lives of women, of course, but is also good for the whole community. There are also men who are afraid of walking at night. So carrying out such an action is clearly of benefit to the community as a whole.

Another example could be if we rethink cities in a bid to prevent so much traffic, such as by increasing the frequency of public transport, lowering levels of pollution, pacifying streets, etc. The benefits will be felt by the whole of society but, above all, it will impact those who use public transport, who walk around the city and who take their children to school, regardless of their gender, sex, etc.

In conclusion, I would like to respond to the questions proposed above. Feminism will always be valid as a lever for social change; what we need to rethink are the strategies to achieve it. According to my understanding of feminism, it cannot be transformative if we only involve women, especially if they are from white and middle-class backgrounds. Looking at society in a binary way shuts out the majority of those who compose it.

WHAT ARE FEMINIST POLICIES? AN APPROACH FROM THE FEMINIST NETWORK

Nieves Salobral Martín

Before providing a rough definition of feminist policies, it is worth highlighting their scope within municipalist initiatives, or initiatives for change. These citizens' platforms spurred the design of a set of feminist proposals in order to imbue their ethical ideology, to transform the relations and structure of these organisations with new strategies and, of course, to incorporate specific and cross-cutting objectives and actions in the design of their political programmes.

During the period of the government for change, between 2015-2019, many of these programmatic proposals were the subject of exchange and reflection between feminist leaders from a network that reached many municipalities and cities in the state. And despite this magnificent collective work, not all of them will be implemented in their municipalities, nor will they be sufficiently well received by their organisations. This has been highlighted in research conducted by members of the network, which gathers the testimony of more than 50 activists on different aspects of their work in these organisations and in these governments, in which those policies qualified with the municipalist "stamp" were also distinguished.

This research process has culminated not only in the strengthening of the network, called Akafem, but also in its participants' approval of its fundamental meaning in the current local political framework. They understand, on the one hand, that it is essential for feminism to be the main essence of the programmes, structures and strategies of municipalist initiatives; but, on the other hand, they agree that their main purpose is to transform the political and economic relations of municipalities and cities in order to foster gender equality and the free expression of diversity within the limits of what is ecologically and humanly sustainable.

This feminist approach to municipalist policies is aimed at guaranteeing the right to relationships free of sexist violence, reinforcing policies aimed at the prevention and care of intimate partner and ex-partner violence and recovering the perspective of agency of the assisted women. It is also clearly committed to making sexual violence visible, preventing and addressing it through the following proposals:

- Joining forces with the feminist movement, promoting purple points in neighbourhoods in order to raise awareness at popular festivals.

- Establishing prevention protocols in collaboration with nightlife social organisations.

- Opening spaces of care and support for women who have suffered sexual violence.

- Designing new models of police and urban security in relation to sexual violence.

Other more specific meeting, care, information and counselling mechanisms that were promoted or created include:

- Permanent centres for women and groups to meet; equality centres; other centres aimed at covering the information and mutual support needs of domestic workers; and other centres for information, advice and healthcare, managed by LGTBI organisations.

However, the essential focus of the network is to transform the economy to put the vulnerability of life at the centre through different actions:

- Promoting the proposals of the feminist economy of life support and making care work visible, designing policies that have an impact on the social redistribution of care work and demanding the ratification of Convention 189 on Domestic Workers.

- Implementing city-wide plans and strategies to address the needs of interdependence, co-responsibility and reconciliation and shaping ecologically sustainable urban spaces to be dedicated to fostering links and care-giving tasks, whether by transforming school environments, activating cultural programming with the community or formulating community health promotion programmes.

Along the same lines of adherence to the proposals of the feminist economy, measures have been organised aimed at:

- Researching the structural conditions and economic inequality that have led to a context of feminisation of poverty, in order to design measures aimed at transforming economic structures to promote decent employment for women and other discriminated social groups.

Finally, in order to establish a sufficient, solid political and legal framework for the implementation of such specific and cross-cutting measures, municipalities or cities propose tools such as:

- Gender equality ordinances, plans and strategies, which allow either long-term planning and prioritisation or even legal stability of the measures. Likewise, they also propose the drafting of equality plans aimed at the municipality itself as an employing institution.

In its policies, the network also incorporates a strategic reflection on the complexity of the subject of feminism today. It takes into account the social hierarchy between different social groups, established by the patriarchy in complicity with capitalism, and the unequal impact of its different axes of oppression or discrimination on each of them. This requires an intersectional drafting of measures, taking into account the interaction between the categories of gender, class, racialisation, migratory origin, ability/disability and age.

In order to implement all these policies, this network of municipal initiatives for change has always considered the need not only for feminist advocacy in organisations, but also for the maintenance of fluid communication channels with the movement. Public policies or the distribution of budgets lose meaning without this anchoring of reflection and feedback from the institution through spaces shared with the movement, where, in addition, synergies can be established to spread the feminist struggle to all corners of the cities.

In short, feminist municipalist policies or policies of change assemble strategies in several ways: the transformation of economic relations with life support at the centre of public policy, the guarantee of rights for a broad and complex subject of feminism, feminist advocacy in political organisations and, above all, a reflexive link with the movement in order to implement public policies in a meaningful way.

CITIES TAKING CARE OF THE PLANET

TRANSFORMING THE ECONOMIC MODEL FROM CITY COUNCILS

Tània Corrons and Álvaro Porro

In 2019, in the face of the rapid and unprecedented deterioration of nature (i.e. of the conditions that make life on the planet possible, including our own), the UN called for "a fundamental, system-wide reorganisation across technological, economic and social factors, including paradigms, goals and values". Then coronavirus came, and it became even more urgent to address this reorganisation, because we experienced the weaknesses of the world-system and citizens began to demand much more involvement from public institutions in addressing the crisis. This UN demand - which arrives late - has already come a long way, with many public policies implemented (exemplified in this article in the cities of Grenoble and Barcelona), increasingly strong social movements intensifying their pressure on institutions and some global action plans.

One of these action plans is the Green New Deal (GND), which puts forward a set of policy proposals to achieve this urgent reorganisation of the entire socio-economic system by integrating economic, green and social justice under one umbrella. Environmental and social policies are often presented as if they were incompatible, as if a choice had to be made between one or the other. But this dichotomy is a smokescreen that takes the focus off the real problem: our economy is designed to move huge amounts of money, which fuel production and consumption, regardless of where the money goes, what it is used for, how it is distributed and what impact this distribution has on the environment or individuals. The global financial and economic system tends to prioritise the interests of the rich 1%, resulting in high levels of social and climatic inequality across the globe.

Thus, to address the climate emergency, we must also address the social and economic injustice that affects the most vulnerable majorities. The GND is an effort in this direction, a first step, which is beginning to be partially implemented in some places, both in North America and in Europe, with

approaches to build solutions to the crisis to which this unsustainable and highly unequal dynamic is leading us. In this struggle, local power has an important role to play because the economy must be brought back to the territory: to develop sovereignty and self-sufficiency, to mutualise risk and to ensure that we work together to provide housing, education, healthcare and everything else that is fundamental to the wellbeing of the social majorities. An example of what can be achieved through local power can be found in the cities of Grande-Synthe, Paris and Grenoble, which, alongside four environmental organisations, joined forces to file an appeal against the French government's "climate inaction". Following this, in November 2020 the highest administrative court gave the French government three months to demonstrate that behind its abundant environmental rhetoric there is also a real effort to fight climate change and that it will be able to meet its commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 2030.

Despite assuming the limitations of local power, given that economic inequality is structured in nation-states, city councils can play a fundamental role. The capacity to create new imaginaries is an essential first step to bring about social change. Second is the capacity to experiment and innovate in the implementation of public policies, from community experiments to bottom-up approaches. Third is the capacity to strengthen transformative economic fabrics: the social and supportive economy; social clauses in public procurement and contracting, taking advantage of the high-demand capacity of city councils; and urban planning in cities and how this promotes the context in which lives and the economy develop. An example of this is "the Spain of swimming pools", which has fostered an individualistic living model, with state-subsidized private schools, and ends up generating a very individualistic model of social relations as well. Fourth and finally is the capacity to weave direct alliances with civil society. By developing these capacities, cities can play a fundamental role in persuading states to take new paths towards greater environmental, economic and social justice.

Plans such as the GND can also play an important role in structuring new imaginaries and applying practical changes in economic policies. For this to happen, the administrations that implement them must be supported, as has been done in Barcelona, by: 1) an increase in public spending oriented towards certain fields that foster the green transformation of the city, such as urban planning, waste management, mobility and the construction of public housing, which can drive transformation of the economy and employment; and 2) tax reform and financial regulation, such as trying to introduce clauses that make it difficult for companies that have money in tax havens to bid in public tenders. It is essential to push in both directions in order to talk about redistributive economic policies that put social equity and sustainability on the same level.

Today, large corporations and wealthy individuals are able to move their money out of the state to avoid paying the corresponding taxes, resulting in high levels of social injustice, while the most vulnerable people are increasingly turning to far-right political options in the hope that someone will defend their interests. In the face of this drift, progressive forces must bring realistic and hopeful approaches to rebuilding the economy and its priorities. To do this, and at the risk of talking about very big problems and very small solutions such as municipal solutions, we must continue to promote projects in our communities that enable us to imagine a different future in which we share prosperity and protect the planet. The local government of Grenoble, for example, is changing the rules of the game with social water pricing that is directly linked to the national social system and does not allow more than 3% of household income to be spent on water bills. This has a direct impact on citizens' pockets and reduces inequalities. Meanwhile, the local government of Barcelona has created a municipal electricity company with 100% renewable energy and social pricing and has developed a model of housing construction through cooperatives that generates a new model of urban planning on public land that cannot be privatised.

In addition to continuing to inspire change from the local level, we must also join forces with other cities to be stronger, fight in the courts when the rules are breached and work side by side, from civil society, with the progressive political parties that push for these changes from the institutions. Although these changes may seem small and insufficient, we cannot leave the institutions, where change can happen, in the hands of forces that prioritise protecting the privileges of the 1% over taking care of their citizens and the planet. May the great global challenges not prevent cities from doing what they can, creatively and courageously!

THE CLIMATE CHALLENGE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE: CITIES TAKE ACTION!

Eric Piolle

Our economic model must change radically

Our present economic system has GDP growth as its sole objective. But its environmental and human cost is immense and jeopardizes our very existence. The situation has become critical for forests, oceans and biodiversity, as well as for us, the planet's inhabitants. We are facing extreme weather events that will become more and more frequent. The consequences of climate change are already clearly visible to us in Grenoble, in the heart of the Alps: temperatures are rising, snow cover in winter is receding, glaciers are disappearing, sections of mountains are collapsing…

Reinsurer Swiss Re has estimated that a warming of 3.4°C will lead to an 18% drop in global GDP in the next thirty years. While the health crisis has already hit the economy hard, climate change will exert an even greater impact.

Faced with these observations, we run the risk of becoming despondent and discouraged and paralyzed by fear. Instead, I believe that we must act quickly and ambitiously. Our societies tend to polarize between "realists" and "utopians", between "radicals" and "pragmatists". For me, the challenge is to be all of the above at the same time. I define myself as both radical and pragmatic, as an agent of change. I fervently believe that we must concentrate our efforts on how to live better, focusing on relationships rather than goods, fighting against social inequalities and the exploitation of populations, and taking care of our environment to also ensure the future of humanity.

It is in this spirit that we shall host the **International Forum for Well-Being** in Grenoble for the second time from June 29 to July 1 2022. We want to "count what matters" and to change the compass to measure what makes sense. We can do so by using indicators of well-being such as social connectedness, conviviality, freedom to get around, health, quality of public service, mutual aid… It's time to change repositories.

The latest IPCC report reminds us of a fundamental truth: the climate challenge also entails the challenge of the equitable sharing of power and resources.

The greater the inequalities, the more vulnerable we are. The concentration and privatization of resources in the hands of a few threatens the adaptation of one and all. The states generating the most greenhouse gas emissions must imperatively raise their ambitions. Moreover, global solidarity must be strengthened to support the countries most exposed to the consequences of climate change.

Cities have a major role to play in the pursuit of climate, social and economic justice.

States are lagging behind today. However, citizen and political movements are pushing to pursue a new path. Cities in particular can experiment with new ways of doing things. They can engage in major transitions to reduce their environmental footprint, to build a more inclusive economy and to offer different trade relationships.

Certainly, the most common position remains that of the dogma of growth, competitiveness and a trade war. But we can commit to other things, especially short circuits, reusing, green jobs that cannot be relocated, the social and solidarity economy... This is what makes sense, and this is what we are advocating for in Grenoble.

Our local experience of the Green New Deal

Grenoble boasts a long history of innovation in the social, technological and democratic realms, among others. The city marks the birthplace of France's first mutualist movement, the provision of mutual aid and assistance between workers in the glove-making enterprise. It is here that original forms of citizen participation were born, and we are still coming up with new ones by placing citizens at the heart of decision-making, from participatory budgeting to construction sites open to the public, including a petition and citizen voting system.

We are also committed to focusing on indicators of well-being. We are also making strides towards integrating the environment and gender equality dimensions in our public procurement.

It is a dynamic being put in place across the board. It also includes local stakeholders, companies, universities, the research community and public partners to advance further in this direction.

There are multiple levers, it's up to us to use them... and to come up with new ones.

Grenoble is the European Green Capital for 2022: it is a golden opportunity to further accelerate our transition projects.

Grenoble was named European Green Capital by the European Commission. For us, this is an outstanding recognition of the innovations we are developing in environmental and social terms. It also marks an opportunity to give impetus to an even broader dynamic across our entire territory and our partner cities to boost transitions further.

We have 12 months, 12 themes and 54 challenges to accelerate sustainable transformations related to water, biodiversity, waste, organic and local food that are accessible to one and all... The momentum is picking up, and I invite all cities that wish to join us to exchange and compare ideas and projects and to share initiatives that work here or elsewhere.

Together, we can put people and the planet back at the heart of our way of thinking, deciding and taking action.

ARE LOBBIES ALMIGHTY?

HOW DO LOBBIES SHAPE OUR CITIES?

Beatriz Gomes Dias, Professor and Lisbon City Councillor for Bloco de Esquerda
Isabel Pires, Member of Lisbon Municipal Assembly for Bloco de Esquerda
Vasco Barata, Lawyer and member of Lisbon Municipal Assembly for Bloco de Esquerda
Ricardo Moreira, Engineer, member of Bloco de Esquerda, Lisbon

More and more people want to participate in the making of the cities they live in. People want to be a part of the everyday decisions about traffic, public transport, bicycle lanes, housing, air pollution, public space, and so on. People are no longer satisfied with voting every four years, and they want to be involved in their cities' strategic decisions.

But sometimes people feel that their voice is not heard by the municipality. Sometimes it feels like there are other forces pushing a hidden agenda and that decisions are being made behind closed doors.

Lisbon has two examples of such forces, namely, car and airbnb lobbies.

Over the past six months, Lisbon has been governed by a right-wing mayor. Mr. Moedas promised more parking spaces, less parking tolls and less bike lanes. Since he is a former European Commissioner, he also promised independent studies to support the shift from the policy to reduce car dependency that had been in place over the last number of years.

Unfortunately, the independent studies did not materialise and he used a communication agency article to demonize a proposal by the opposition to reduce the speed limit in the city. The president of the ACP – Automobile Club of Portugal – is a member of the City Council in the mayor's party and has threatened an injunction if some policies to reduce car dependency pass in City Council. Lisbon's car lobby is alive and kicking.

The other example is the airbnb business. Lisbon is experiencing a housing crisis; it is now the third most expensive city in the world to live in and housing prices are rising three times faster than wages. One of the problems is the number of airbnb businesses, especially in the old part of the city, where airbnb flats occupy more than 50% of the apartments.

But when the left majority suspended new airbnb permits and proposed re-evaluating the regulation, Mr. Moedas posted on Twitter that retracting private entrepreneurship was a huge mistake. The airbnb association immediately reacted, claiming that stricter regulation would cost them and the city millions in losses. Recently, the Supreme Court ruled that a house is for residential purposes and that an airbnb is a business. The lobby therefore initiated a campaign to change the law and tackle the Court's decision. Lisbon's airbnb lobby is alive and kicking.

The right to the city and the people's right to participate in the construction of their city are not compatible with corporate lobbies that directly influence power.

COMPLAINTS, FAKE NEWS AND ONLINE HARASSMENT: DEFENDING THE RIGHT TO THE CITY AGAINST BARCELONA'S BIG LANDOWNERS

Janet Sanz

As I write these words, an obscure entity called the Association for Transparency and Democratic Quality filed a complaint against the mayor of Barcelona for awarding subsidies to social groups. Ada Colau will have to testify as a defendant before the judge, despite the fact that the Public Prosecutor's Office has already investigated these subsidies and found no signs of any criminal irregularities. She will do so with all this implies media-wise, now and when she goes to testify: a torrent of fake news, biased headlines that seek to cast suspicion on the integrity of the mayor, the government and the party, so that it seems that we are all equal. And yet, we are not.

All this will happen while this Association for Transparency continues, paradoxically, to operate in the shadows: the first journalistic investigations revealed that its headquarters is an unidentified office in which there is a law firm, where they refuse to give the name of the association's chair or spokesperson, although they do recognise that "we have been after Ms Colau for a long time". Investigations also point to a relationship between the association and the establishment of Agbar, the company that manages Barcelona's water, which revealed that it is mainly devoted to persecuting Spanish municipalities such as Valladolid that are engaged in water remunicipalisation processes.

In Barcelona, the attacks on the Agbar Group began in 2016, when the High Court of Justice of Catalonia ruled that the award of the water management contract had not complied with public procurement criteria. The company launched an offensive in the courts with the aim of stopping water

remunicipalisation from being part of Barcelona City Council's plans: they appealed the ruling before the Supreme Court, filing complaints against the subsidies awarded to entities that advocated municipalisation as well as against the regulation on public participation that allowed water-related consultations to be made.

I am explaining the facts at some length because when we talk about lobbies, we often run the risk of exoticising how this type of process works and giving it a certain film-like glamour, as if they were groups of powerful capitalists plotting in secret. But the reality is that they are neither exceptional nor dramatic scenarios, but a mud machine that works nonstop and in broad daylight: the courts are used to wearing down civil servants, bringing the proceedings to the court's attention and criminally prosecuting those of us who try to change things from within the institutions. The lobbies' complaints not only serve to bring down projects, but also to delay and block them, sowing suspicion in public opinion that the city council is carrying out "indictable" policies along the way. This strategy is bolstered by the action of allied media of disinformation, in many instances subsidised by these very companies, which proliferate their lies on social media through armies of bots.

Just a year ago, I was the one who had to testify before the judge. In my case, it was a complaint against the London Private Company SL, the new owners of the Casa Buenos Aires in Vallvidrera, after a new proposal involving the public prevented it from being turned into a luxury hotel and agreed to acquire the property to protect the building and turn it into a public facility for the elderly. The whole process had been public and transparent, approved by a government committee and by an absolute majority in a plenary session in Barcelona City Council: few things generate as much consensus in the city as the protection of heritage.

But while we await the judge's verdict, the strategy of filing a complaint against the owners already served its purpose: fake news began to be published (which was only set right when the damage had already been done), equating my indictment and that of the building's technicians with cases of speculation and urban corruption, demanding my resignation and also trying to call me into question on a personal level, digging through my social media history. This is a "class" strategy that seeks to scare and sideline those of us from further down the ladder away from the institutions, because we must face criminal proceedings without the privileges and resources of these lobbies. It is also used to demobilise citizens, sowing distrust in politics and in the parties' capacity to change things.

Casa Buenos Aires concerned a single hotel, a single property. But in 2017 we approved the PEUAT, a special urban development plan for tourist accommodation to ban the construction of more hotels in the city centre and to put an end to the granting of new tourist flat licences throughout the city. It was necessary, given the fact that Barcelona was on the verge of tourist collapse: a city of 1.5 million inhabitants had gone from 7.8 million tourists in 2014 to 11.9 million in 2019. The hotel construction boom resembled the real estate boom that had led to the crash of 2008, and the regulation of tourist accommodation was essential to ensure that Barcelona could be a city with tourists but not for tourists.

Thus, faced with an unprecedented measure to ensure residents' right to the city, the hotel lobby organised and decided to wage war in the courts, mobilising public opinion to present the regulation of tourism as an illegal measure that could trigger an economic apocalypse. This is the constant pattern we have witnessed in the relationship with the lobbies: what they cannot win politically, they try to win in the courts, obstructing any attempt to defend the commons and public interest against private property.

The court tried to overturn the PEUAT on the grounds that there was no economic appraisal of the plan, but Barcelona City Council developed such an appraisal, thus saving this much-needed regulation. It has been a long and difficult process, but we have finally been able to update and approve a new PEUAT, shielding it from legal attacks by lobbies and broadening it to meet new challenges, such as the rampant growth of tourist rooms due to platforms like Airbnb: there are currently some 7,700 room listings on digital platforms, but without this regulation they could amount to almost 700,000.

However, we are not only up against the interests of the hotel lobby. Like Barcelona, there are many other cities that must govern the activity of multinationals such as Airbnb and Blackstone. These business giants have the resources, the means and sufficient time to block local governments in the courts and collect complaints against public representatives who endeavour to defend the right to the city, housing or water. It is a David against Goliath scenario that must be reversed with initiatives such as the one in 2019 that led us to mobilise alongside Paris, Vienna and Brussels to demand that the European Commission amend the current legislation that leaves cities with no power against global economic actors. Also along this line, the creation of political networks such as Fearless Cities establish common spaces of resistance.

It is equally imperative to reflect collectively on the methods employed by these lobbies, as we do in this book, to come up with joint strategies against corporate offensives that stretch far beyond legal prosecution. Only then, through collaboration between cities and institutions, will we be able to put an end to the impunity surrounding these methods of anti-democratic lobbying and ensure the defence of the public interest and the common good as opposed to the profits and property of a few.

IS A MUNICIPALIST POLICING POSSIBLE?

A MUNICIPALIST RESPONSE TO PUBLIC SAFETY

Lucía Morale

> Even if we aspire to and work towards a world without violence, without crime, it is not our reality, and never has been in the history of humanity. So we must work on building security, but we must also know that security is not a permanent state that can be achieved; it is not a harbour to dock at. On the contrary, it is an ongoing process, ever open and changing just like society. This is important for managing expectations, objectives and promises related to security policies.

It may seem obvious, but we need to think about security policy as we do any other policy field. And that means going through all the steps that involve drawing up a public policy: performing a diagnosis, designing an action, implementing and evaluating it. And this, which at first glance seems like an easy path, is not always so easy in security policy.

Security issues are very much in the press and in the media. They are issues that are connected to primitive aspects of the human condition – such as survival and fear – and are very close to ideas of transgression, injustice and punishment, so it is very easy to use them to manipulate and stir up effervescence. Moreover, it is much easier "to sell" a quick and instant prescription of "vigilance, imprisonment and no tolerance for bad people" than a discourse of "long-term solutions, understanding and analyzing the problems and working together to reach a solution". However, traditional prescriptions have proven ineffective in solving the problems of violence and, in general, only shift them elsewhere or exacerbate them. Therefore, if we believe in a municipalist policy, we must try and there are some elements that could help us.

Firstly, security must be governed, as is done in any other area of public policy. Security is not a matter that can be left to the police to decide on their own. Security and protection policies need political definition and coordination. Of course, when we say "politics" we mean public policy and not party politics.

The police are a security actor and have a role to play, but it is not their role to define public policy. Likewise, defining the tasks of the police and redefining

police organization is part of public security policy. It is, therefore, necessary to take responsibility for managing the police, defining their scope of action, and establishing criteria for their intervention.

We must also put aside the prejudiced views that claim that the left is against the police. The left prioritizes public service to the citizenry, where the police fit into that definition will depend on the circumstances and the particular police force. So, it is wrong to say that to seek a better public service is to be anti-police.

Secondly, in a municipalist model, we must develop integrated intervention strategies to respond to the problems of violence in the short and in the long term. The police could be a short-term action, but we must necessarily work to solve the origin of the structural and cultural violence if we want to solve the problem in the long term, and for that, we need other actors.

So, the police are or should be, an actor within an ecosystem, in which we have, or should have, other actors, thinking about and taking action on public security.

Moreover, we need to analyze what problem we have to solve and assess whether the police are the right agent to intervene in this field.

Again, it is easy to send out patrols but the question is, does the problem we face need police? And if it does, to what extent and doing what? It is very important not to turn a non-police problem into a police problem, otherwise, we will be even further away from the solution.

We need to think about problems from a broader perspective and plan/design actions in the short, medium and long term. This also calls for using data beyond police statistics and integrating all services that may play a role in the solution – such as social services, health, housing, etc. – into the debate. With this goal in mind, we need to have and to evaluate other services. The approach cannot be expanded if we have 1,000 police officers, but only ten social workers and one mediator. We then have to evaluate the services that we want to intervene in so that they have the capacity to respond adequately to the problems we face.

Thirdly, broadening the agents that contribute to and take part in the public policy process is imperative. Traditionally, security policy was aimed at protecting the state and the dominant social class, which is why security policy has been carried out by the conservative and power spheres of society.

We must incorporate sectors that until now have seen limited participation, such as women, migrants, minorities, etc., and establish priorities, actions and evaluations with them. There is a need to focus on the real needs of neighbourhoods and to work with them.

Fourthly, there is an urgent need to incorporate a gender and human rights perspective in public security policy. But, not only in terms of policing, which is obviously important but also in the whole process of devising and implementing a policy. Do the data we use have this perspective? Do the objectives we create have this perspective? Do we measure the impact of our policy on different people? Whose problems and what kind of problems are we considering when we talk about public security?

We need human rights values to be present not only in political discourse but also in the design of policies and in the guidelines given to the police.

If we think for example of public order management, we have often seen how political authorities ask for control of a situation “at any price” or are indifferent to the impacts of the measures applied by the police. This does not help to prevent abuses. Here in Barcelona, we saw it very clearly in the events of 1 October 2017 surrounding the Catalan referendum. It shows two opposing models of intervention in the face of the same conflict, but it is not the only example in this regard.

The design of police protocols and training must be realistic and practicable and, if possible, involve external actors.

But even with clear objectives and good protocols and training, there are limits to these mechanisms. Training will not work magic, it can help improve performance and establish a framework for action, but there must also be a good system of accountability in the event of abuse.

A system of accountability should be implemented, not only internally but also externally and with social participation. Today’s technologies, mobile phones and networks help to achieve this, but there is still no homogeneous vision in society of this need for control.

And we keep hearing right-wing parties say that if we control police action then we are “tying their hands” and that “we will have to abide by the consequences” or that “crime will increase” and “we must let the police do their job”.

This is not acceptable; no public service can be exercised without democratic control, much less one that can seriously affect people’s integrity and

fundamental rights. Incorporating the idea that accountability is not a matter of ideology, but of confirming the democratic system is essential.

In conclusion, we must accept that conflict, violence and insecurity are realities that always exist and must be managed. We must listen to what the problems are and question the old formulae because it is clear that they have not been effective, and this is partly because they have always been designed by and for a powerful minority. In this sense, we must be vigilant of the fact that security issues will be a tool for the right to consolidate an opposition based on prejudices about the left model.

In this framework, in order to address the problems more effectively, the only way forward is to build alternatives with the citizenry, to broaden participation, including the participation of professionals from other fields besides the police. And to establish security system governance that includes accountability in every realm of the security system and the protection of rights at the core of public policy.

CAMPAIGNS FOR DEMOCRATIC AND LOCAL ACCOUNTABILITY IN LONDON IN THE 1980s

Nadine Finch

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, a very active debate raged in London and a few other English cities over the need to reform the manner in which a number of communities were being policed. Margaret Thatcher and a distinctly right-wing government were in power and they increasingly viewed the black and Irish communities, trade unionists and political activists as "the enemy within" a country being developed to serve business and ruling class interests.

Archives contain many documents produced in the 1980s by the Greater London Council's Police Committee Support Unit and its successor, the Police Monitoring and Research Group at the London Strategic Policy Unit.[5] But these documents represent the outcome of the analysis and campaigns of a much wider range of individuals and groups.

By the time a radical Labour Party administration came to power, led by Ken Livingstone, in Greater London in May 1981, police monitoring groups had already been started in a number of local London boroughs. This led to borough councils, such as Islington, setting up their own police monitoring committees, after the borough elections in 1982. The development was also reflected at a national level and Labour's Programme for the general election in 1983, which it did not win, stated:

"*Our aim is to ensure that we have a truly accountable police force, committed to the maintenance of law and order on the basis of a real respect for the individual liberty of all sections of the community.*

We will also ensure that individual police officers are answerable for their actions".

[5] Funded between 1986 and 1988 by the Labour London boroughs of Camden, Ealing, Greenwich, Hackney, Haringey, Islington, Lambeth, Lewisham and Southwark.

At this time, the national Labour and many local parties were heavily influenced by radical trade unionists, academics who had entered universities at the end of the 1960s and, most importantly, local community groups who were standing up to what were often racist and violent forms of policing. There had been popular uprisings within the predominantly black communities in Brixton in London, Toxteth in Liverpool, Handsworth in Birmingham and Chapeltown in Leeds. The Newham Monitoring Project had been set up to monitor racist attacks and the lack of police response following the murder of Akhtar Ali Baig in 1980 and similar groups resisting police misconduct were formed in Southall in London, Bradford in Yorkshire and elsewhere.

Meanwhile, the British Army and the Royal Ulster Constabulary were using ever more violent paramilitary policing techniques, perfected in earlier colonial confrontations, to police the people of Northern Ireland and particularly the nationalist community, also seen as an "enemy within". At the same time, the sky-rocketing rates of unemployment and poverty were bringing local people and trade unionists onto the streets to protest and they then acquired first-hand experience of the policing previously experienced by the black, Irish and traveller and gypsy communities.

The GLC and LSPU police monitoring units not only documented these events but also developed their own proposals for democratic and accountable police forces, which would meet the needs of the entire community and not merely the elite. They opposed the Public Order Act and argued that the freedom to assemble, demonstrate, march and act in solidarity was essential in a liberal democracy. They campaigned against the militarisation of the police force, both in Northern Ireland and elsewhere in the United Kingdom, as exemplified by the manner in which the 1984-1985 Miners Strike was policed.

This was underpinned by the belief that the police had to be accountable to the communities that they policed, not merely by being employed by politicians elected every five years or so, but by opening up the police's day-to-day operations to local scrutiny within the community. There was an understanding, based on academic research, that it was the most vulnerable members of the community, namely, women, the elderly and those subject to racist attack, that were in most in need of protection by the police from organized criminals and right-wing extremists. Therefore, they should have a say in how the community should be policed.

Both the GLC and LSPU police monitoring units employed academic researchers and lawyers and were well funded. As a consequence, they published widely on subjects ranging from the policing of the black and Irish communities to the need for police accountability.[6] They noted the number of miscarriages of justice that had occurred because the police tended to "round up the usual suspects" and then use violence to extract a confession and argued that policing must be evidence-based and that this would be assisted by gaining the respect of the different communities and working with, and not against, them.

The Units also brought together a wide range of local people in workshops and conferences that led to a far greater understanding of the social conditions and repression that underpinned some confrontations with the authorities. Events, such as the miners' strike, were also being played out on national television and revealed to many, who had had little previous contact with the police, the fact that officers were being permitted to act with impunity.

The positive municipal experiences in London did not outlive the 1980s and the long Thatcher years and were also abandoned by an increasingly right-wing national Labour Party. But the ideas lived on in the monitoring projects that survived and in groups, such as the Institute of Race Relations and Statewatch. They also resurfaced in the work of some police and crime commissioners and some multi-agency safeguarding hubs, in which the police work as part of a team with social and health services and other agencies.

The belief in the community's right to scrutinise police and state behaviour has also led to on-going campaigns for police accountability and to a raft of recent revelations about the illegality of police behaviour, whether it was in Northern Ireland, the tragedy that unfolded at Hillsborough Stadium or the sexual abuse perpetrated by undercover police officers, masquerading as political activists.[7] It is hoped that such campaigns will also be established and will succeed as we enter a further period in which the Conservative government is rendering protest unlawful and reducing the powers of judges and lawyers to hold the elected government to account.

[6] For example, *Police Accountability and a New Strategic Authority for London*, Police Monitoring and Research Group, Briefing Paper No. 2.

[7] Undercover Policing Inquiry presently being conducted by Sir John Mitting.

LET'S STAND UP TO THE FAR RIGHT!

CONFRONTING HATE ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Javier Toret

Between 2011 and 2013, social media such as Twitter, Facebook and YouTube were used by hundreds of millions of people around the world to mobilise in the streets to protest against the lack of democracy and for greater social justice in the face of economic and media powers. This technopolitical use of social media was decisive for large online movements to break out and decisively take over the public space. The Arab Spring was the spark, then 15M and Occupy. In 2012, we saw the Mexican yosoy132 and in 2013, Occupy Gezi in Turkey. In this whole cycle of interconnected revolts, activities on social media were combined with the seizure of squares and streets. Large-scale self-organisation processes were generated, giving a great boost to the forces of social transformation. It was the technopolitics of the 99%.

All this organizing activity was followed by a counter-insurgency of power: the technopolitics of the 1%. In 2013, the big data consultancy firm Cambridge Analytica (CA) was founded by conservative billionaire Robert Mercer and far-right communication strategist Steve Bannon. The company was dedicated to data mining and analysis and focused on providing tools and analyses geared towards political communication strategies for political campaigns. The first time the technology developed by CA was used on a massive scale was in the Brexit campaign in the UK in 2016. The outcome and impact of CA's work was key to millions of people wanting to leave the European Union. It mobilised both those who were convinced as well as the disillusioned doubters, providing them with information at the right frequencies (according to each individual's personality and interests) to change their behaviour. The mix of personality profiling, data matching and dynamic digital advertising managed to decisively affect the minds of millions of people in support of Brexit. A few months later, Bannon was the director of Trump's campaign in the US elections and CA designed a fraudulent data capture strategy that obtained more than 50 million data of people from the US with the aim of having an impact through personality analysis of advertising driven by artificial intelligence.

CA was said to have a profile of every American eligible to vote. In this campaign, fake news played a major role in very tough smear campaigns. Trump himself started a war against the media, accusing all the critical press of spreading fake news (popularising the term), while at the same time running a campaign based on attacks with blatant lies. The bigger the lie, the more attention he got and the more the media focused on him, paradoxically turning the media attention to his advantage. Trump won his first campaign inaugurating and consolidating a style of politics based on polarisation, aggressive confrontation against political rivals and campaigning based on fake news.

In 2018 in Brazil, six months before the elections, Bannon visited Flavio Bolsonaro, son, right-hand man and digital strategist of the Brazilian presidential candidate Jair Bolsonaro. With a manual similar to that developed by Trump, the campaign became, as seen so far, elections where hybrid warfare practices and massive disinformation techniques were most brutally carried out. In these elections, WhatsApp became the strategy for spreading fake news on a massive scale.

We could say that until 2022, the techne or technopolitics of the 1%, the proliferation of hate, "digital violence" and the harassment of women, LGBTI, activists and the left on social media is constant. Violence and hate that operate as a destroyer of social conversation, as a culture of intimidation and as a fear of expressing oneself freely in the digital public space, has become widespread and normalised on digital social media.

The challenges for the transformative forces of the world lie in knowing how to defuse the noise, protect themselves from intimidation and recover communicative initiative under forms of innovation that can lead to new forms of self-organisation and social communication that can spur on the digital and media fabric of the 1%, like in the 2011-2013 phase of interconnected revolts.

THE NEUROSIS OF THE EXTREME RIGHT AND THE JOY OF BONDING

Maria Eugenia R. Palop

I

> In these times, the extreme right has effectively channelled the anger and resentment of those who considered themselves losers and also the fear of those who had something to lose. We have to channel those emotions towards a radically opposite response.

We have to fight fear with joy. Building joyful communities that nurture the good "among" us, which are fuelled by our individual peripheries. We must build hope and trust in the future.

II

The same awareness of vulnerability and dependence that has given rise to the extreme right can find a well-knit fabric to break down its borders in relational philosophy. An imaginary of the common that places values on the revolution of care and affinity, which is set in motion with the same human material, but calling upon a completely different semantics of experience.

Relational philosophy is not based on self-sufficiency lost for circumstantial reasons, but rather on vulnerability and dependence as a structural condition of what it means to be human. And it doesn't blame the poor or foreigners for systemic instability or a shortage of resources, but the unbridled greed of the rich and speculators. For this reason, instead of supporting the processes of dispossession, privatisation and a nouveau-riche mentality, as the extreme right does, relatively explicitly, it is built from a politics of the common; a politics for sustaining life, mindful of the need for common goods and relational practices that encourage their shared management.

We undoubtedly have good reasons to be afraid, not of the poor, but of poverty, not of foreigners, but of exile, not of migrants, but of precariousness and bleakness; it is the wealthy few and not the numerous needy that we have good reason to fear. So our refuge cannot be that abstract and fanciful national class-conscious community, that is hierarchical, exclusive and expulsive, but our day-to-day experiences of interaction, our emotional relationships or the bonds that we recognise as valuable and we wish to nurture.

III

There are always reasons to be afraid. Whoever you are, whether you have abundance or scarcity, the fear of losing everything can always be just and reasonable. The problem is that when we construct a world from fear, self-fulfilling prophecies usually occur. We expect to be hurt and we defend ourselves pre-emptively; and if others act on the same premise, it is easy to go from pre-emptive defence to pre-emptive war, self-defence and full-scale war.

Fear is not conducive to optimal solutions but, at best, to suboptimal solutions. The Prisoner's Dilemma is a clear example. Each player wants the other to cooperate, yet is tempted to defect. Greed, distrust and fear prevent the subject from acting in their own interest and inevitably alienates them from the others. What is disturbing about the Prisoner's Dilemma is the way in which the common good loses ground to individualism. The lack of trust in others shatters any form of collective action in advance.

When we give up the ethics of generosity and stop cooperating, interactions and encounters cease, and we develop paranoid personalities that only create sad passions. Terrified and unable to recognise ourselves as parts of a whole, we become worn down, and this vicious circle suppresses our desires, our freedom and our ability to be happy.

IV

We are freer to the extent that we see ourselves as the result of relational synergies in a permanent state of (re)generation, the product of a continuous process of reflection, evaluation and dialogue with others. Autonomy is, by definition, relational because it is indivisible from interdependence; because, as Taylor often underlines, mutual recognition occurs in our experience of us, understood as a dialogical experience of identity. And those relationships are not only the ones we enter into throughout our lives, but the ones we have with subjects we do not identify by name: standardised relationships and unchosen ties that we have inherited and with which we have to contend

day after day. Years ago, in *Postures of the Mind: Essays on Mind and Morals*, A. Baier declared: "[…] persons essentially are second persons" […], "persons who exist with, before, and after, other persons", "persons are essentially successors, heirs to other persons who formed and cared for them" […]. "My first concept of myself is as the referent of 'you', spoken by someone whom I will address as 'you'".

So fear robs us of freedom and autonomy because it isolates us and pulls us apart. What's more, this isolation is an endless source of sadness.

V

Sadness, as Deleuze says, following Spinoza, does not make us smarter but more ignorant, clumsier and more submissive. That is why the powerful want us to be sad and that is why joy is the resistance of the poor.

Joy is the antidote to fear and endows us with potential and agency. When we appeal to joy, we do not stop being victims, but we do stop being dependent on our victimisers.

The extreme right, however, with its constant appeals to fear, does not let us escape from the victim-victimiser dichotomy because it only offers a securitarian and punitivist way out. The punitivist response, however understandable it may be, individualises a structural issue and ends up weakening the emphasis on social coercion to which we are all subjected. In other words, when all that is sought is to criminalise and punish a specific aggressor, the reference stops being class or "we", and simply becomes "I", the victim. If the law protects us only through the use of sanctions, it divides us, depoliticises us and leaves us unprotected as a group.

Moreover, a legislative project detached from a redistributive political-economic programme, from a broader social agenda on the subject of violence, and focused solely on criminal justice, has a very limited scope, confirms the status quo and fuels the system's utilitarian dynamics. It is largely sterile: these dynamics may lead to spectacular punishments for aggressors singled out by the media, individualised far-reaching reprisals to deter third parties, but they are useless once we get rid of a few bad apples.

In short, the police state and militarism that the extreme right mobilises in the face of the emergencies it triggers and/or magnifies, re-victimises us, isolates us and leaves us unprotected, sad and subdued.

VI

Laughter is the sharpest sword, claimed Miguel Hernández. In the face of the neurosis of the extreme right, let us defend joy, pen by pen.

SOME REFLECTIONS FOR THE FIGHT AGAINST THE EXTREME RIGHT

Gerardo Pisarello

I would like to approach my reading on the current rise of the extreme right from a personal viewpoint. I am originally Latin American. I arrived in Barcelona in 2001, after living in Madrid for some time. Since then, I have combined university teaching with social activism. Suddenly, in 2014, I became the city's deputy mayor.

My roots could not have foreseen such an outcome. In fact, if not for a long process of protest that challenged traditional politics, opening up new democratising processes, this would have been impossible, both within and without these institutions. In addition to the anti-war movement and 2003 movement for an alternative Europe, this extensive cycle should most notably include the strikes and public marches surrounding the eruption of the 15-M movement in city squares in 2011.

Today, I am a member of Congress in Madrid, but the context has changed significantly. On the one hand, movements such as the feminist, LGTBI+ and environmental movements have gained fresh momentum. Yet at the same time, we are witnessing a counter-wave that has one of its fullest expressions in the rise of a new right wing with neo-fascist overtones. This new right wing, which may take shape in one or more parties, continues to defend the neoliberal model, and does so with increasingly violent means and goals. It resorts to hate speech and fake news that stigmatises the same groups that gained prominence during the wave of democratisation: migrants, racialised groups, women's movements, feminists, trade unions and so on.

In reality, this extreme right requires violence against any alternative that could lead us out of this crisis with a minimum of social and environmental justice, any alternative aimed at redistributing and recognising those who have been stigmatised or violated for reasons of class, gender or ethnicity.

Meanwhile, we observe that there is a certain bewilderment as to how to confront this extreme right. Sometimes people appeal to fear, to the seriousness of its advance. It is true that it is important not to trivialise the issue, not to think that this extreme right is just another political option. We must be clear that these people are willing to use forms of mafia violence to attain their goals: beating up LTGBI+ people and migrants, using thugs to evict vulnerable families, raiding trade unions and engaging in outright persecution and harassment of political opponents on social and digital media. We cannot minimise or lose sight of this. We have seen them support coups, as in Bolivia. We have seen them shoot at the black population, as in the US or on Europe's southern border. We have seen them targeting and persecuting the LGTBI+ population, as in Brazil or Hungary.

None of this is minor. However, appealing to fear, or even to a simple anti-fascist discourse, can also be a problem because many of the causes that produce the growth of the extreme right have to do with the inability of the left, of progressive alternatives, to enact social, fiscal or economic policies that truly confront the rising inequality. The extreme right works upon this malaise with huge media and propagandistic capacities, redirecting people towards attitudes of hatred and contempt for the most vulnerable, towards policies of confrontation among the poor, between those who are recent and the latest to arrive.

And this is not all. To defend its programme, the extreme right has never hesitated to play the card of rebellion and mockery, above all, directed against what it defines as "politically correct thinking". In this sense, we have seen huge creativity (and stacks of money) expended by far-right youtubers, with ultra-modern videos on TikTok, with songs and dances.

In other words, the far right has made an effort not to be reduced to a sepia-coloured image of old men stuck in the past. They have managed to diversify their offensives, when needed adding what might be described by their own people as a festive touch to the discourse. For example, during the pandemic, they tried to re-signify and give centrality to the concept of freedom by presenting it as the right to do whatever one pleases, to develop one's own aspirations to the maximum, even if this could have harmful consequences on the health or free development of others, starting with those who are in a more vulnerable situation.

This idea of freedom undoubtedly operates as a kind of whim of those who have the most resources. At times, this has enabled the far right to rant against health controls; at others, against any kind of property or market regulation. Rent and price controls, progressive tax policies and the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions are all presented as "sad" limitations to the individual's "joyful" ability to do as they please.

The danger of this "aspirational" conception of freedom is that it connects with a certain individualism rooted in certain everyday practices and in social media itself after decades of neoliberalism. Exclusive promotion of the self, of one's own image, becomes functional to the neoliberal need to dissolve community and cooperative links, especially in the world of work. But that is not all. Removing one's mask or having a beer outdoors in the midst of a pandemic, travelling and ceaselessly consuming with no concern for the consequences amongst remote indigenous peasant populations are also presented as the ultimate expression of freedom, when in reality, they camouflage privileges with a clear bias of class, and more often than not, one of gender or ethnicity.

There is no single, sure-fire recipe for resolving all this. What we do know is that some responses do not work. On the one hand, we have what US political philosopher Nancy Fraser calls neoliberal progressivism: the idea that it is enough to defend certain issues of recognition (diversity of gender, ethnicity or sexual choice) while overshadowing redistributive or class issues. In other words, defending an anti-racist, feminist, LGTBI+ discourse that does not question the economic and class-based roots that generate the extreme right. Or, to put it another way, a discourse on diversity that refrains from talking about political economy and the need to counteract accumulation and concentration of financial, rentier and real-estate property.

That said, it is equally true that the answer should not be a kind of left-wing populism that simply pits those at the bottom against those at the top as the sole confrontation, losing sight of the role played by certain fundamental questions of recognition.

All of this cannot merely be resolved doctrinally. The extreme right does not have that problem because the extreme right tries to reduce everything to a single issue. It feels more comfortable with uniformity: one idea of nation, one idea of family or one idea of affective relations – all exclusive. Compared to this, we must insist on what Boaventura de Sousa Santos has been proposing for some time: find a project for change that can defend equality when differences create hierarchies and defend diversity when equality creates uniformity.

Thus today, we have many elements on which to build a progressive, left-wing alternative, committed to recognising, redistributing and deepening democratic participation in different spheres of life. This is where we need to defend the specific areas where this can best bear fruit. Municipalism is one

of the most important because it is the democratic laboratory par excellence. It is the best place to deal with the fears, anxieties and social insecurity on which the ultra-right is building its project. A robust municipalism, capable of developing its own close relationships and institutions, is fundamental for considering how to democratise states so as to avoid their most bureaucratising, mercantilising elements.

Alongside municipalism, obviously, there is internationalism. There is a need for a solidarity-based internationalism, which furthermore takes into account the issues of class, ethnicity and gender that shape international relations. This is of particular concern to those of us who live in Europe. At times we tend to brush alternatives coming from the south under the carpet, when it is on the periphery that some of the harshest yet meanwhile most interesting experiences of resistance to the extreme right are occurring.

Being internationalists in addition to municipalists is especially important because the radicalised right is itself structured internationally. In Spain, we have here all the deployment around what Vox calls the Iberosphere. That is, a zone of political, economic and cultural influence conceived from a neo-colonial mindset with one clear project: to promote alliances, lawfare operations, even *coups d'états* if necessary, to prevent other alternatives with emancipatory content from gaining ground.

I like Fearless precisely because it is a promise of being together in a very diverse way. It is an opportunity to surprise ourselves by making connections between the local and the international, and by pooling the opportunities and limits posed by state mediation. During the pandemic, we discovered the potential of building these links virtually, over the Internet. But we also noted that the bonds that move people to act require a physical, bodily presence.

It is in these encounters that we have to test the kind of "affective" reaction with which we confront the extreme right. At times, this means seriously denouncing what is happening so as not to trivialise it, even recalling the historical background of what the extreme right is presenting as "new" – fascism, classic dictatorships and so on. But the truth is that this use of 'serious' denunciation should not let us forget our joy either. No resistance, no sustained mobilisation, is possible without this festive dimension, without this connection to joyful passions that counteract and even ridicule the necro-passions that the ultra-right are mobilising.

TRANSPARENT AND FAIR MUNICIPALITIES: CHALLENGING CORRUPTION AND ORGANIZED CRIME

MUNICIPALITIES AGAINST CORRUPTION

Júlia Miralles de Imperial

Corruption is a problem that affects every country and therefore every city in the world. It is a common misconception to think that developed and democratic countries are exempt or less affected by the problem, but it has been shown that insufficient integrity of governance is a widespread public problem. Spain is an obvious example that more advanced economies also have much room for improvement in the quality of governance but, for example, Sweden is a less obvious case and, in contrast, major cases of corruption have been uncovered there too, especially in cities.

Moreover, corruption is a problem that is particularly found at the local level, a fact that has been observed in very different countries such as Spain, Italy, the United States and, as we have already mentioned, Sweden. The reasons why municipal governments are where most corrupt behaviour takes place and, above all, how to combat this situation, is one of the main questions that we will address in this chapter.

But why is fighting corruption fundamental? Corruption has been shown to generate an inefficient allocation of resources, to undermine free competition, to drive some actors out of the market and to create a climate of legal uncertainty that discourages business activity. However, in order to justify anti-corruption policies, the effects on the economy are clearly an insufficient reason, as corruption equally or more seriously harms our social and political system.

Corruption has a negative impact on the very foundations of our democracy, as it weakens the functioning of institutions and renders them unresponsive to the objectives established through democratic participation.

In turn, it reduces people's trust in the political system and generates disengagement. This produces a vicious circle that weakens the democratic system, as people who perceive high levels of corruption stop trusting institutions, which in turn makes them less likely to demand proper institutional integrity.

Furthermore, corruption has relevant impacts on social equality. In a corrupt government or administration, public resources are not allocated according to the principles of promoting equity or equality before the law; instead, individuals or actors who can use their influence, who can pay bribes, and who are willing to do so, control the final decisions about who benefits from public policies.

Corruption is also linked to other scourges of our democracies, which turn them into more unequal systems and reduce governments' capacity to promote public policies to improve citizens' lives. These scourges are tax havens, tax evasion, money laundering and even organised crime.

A brief summary to explain that there are many, many reasons to continue fighting against corruption and that these go far beyond economic reasons, which are what most sectors claim. Fighting corruption is fighting for our democracy.

Therefore, we should not see corruption as an element that only makes liberals uncomfortable because of its negative effects on economic growth, but rather, egalitarian institutions that work for the wellbeing of all their citizens must undoubtedly have among their main objectives the construction of honest and quality governments.

In this chapter, three experts who have worked on governance integrity policies in academia and institutions explain the characteristics of the current situation, especially in towns and cities at the global level, and ways to combat it both at the local level and in European institutions.

ARE CITIES AT HIGHER RISK OF CORRUPTION? WHAT ARE THE MECHANISMS OF CORRUPTION FOR CITIES?

Eliška Drápalová

Since the Corruption Perception Index was publicized in 1995, even ordinary citizens are aware that corruption varies hugely across world regions and countries. Most people are able to name the best ranking countries and guess those at the bottom. Yet, most people are unaware of large disparities between cities and regions within the same country that might be wider than differences across continents. By way of example, some Italian cities and regions are renowned for mafia infiltration and corruption, while others have successfully eradicated corruption. The same is true of other cities across the globe.

This local variation is essential to understanding how corruption spreads because consequences of corruption materialize, especially in cities. Public money pocketed by politicians is lost to local budgets – missing infrastructure, inadequate education or health care. Instead, the money goes to overpriced and disproportionate stadiums, empty airports – other monuments of corruption that have no public value but to create deficits. Corruption influences entrepreneurship and local economic development and work opportunities. Corrupt governments discriminate more against women and minorities and are associated with high levels of informality and violence. As a result, citizens migrate from poorly-governed cities to better-governed ones, thus further deepening the disparities within the territory (Drapalova, 2021). The research shows that the difference between well-governed cities thriving economically and those where corruption is prevalent has been growing over the last decade. Growing territorial disparities created by corruption have contributed to a wide array of problems today such as the rise of populism (Agerberg, 2017).

Local governments are at a higher risk of corruption, even in countries with low levels of corruption. For example, Swedish municipalities are more

vulnerable to mismanagement than national government agencies. This higher risk is due to the combination of higher opportunities and fewer protections against corruption unique to the local level. Democratization in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE), Latin America and elsewhere empowered many local governments. In recent decades, local governments (cities, towns and villages) have (re)gained more autonomy, political power, more responsibilities, and in some cases, more revenue and more personnel. However, greater resources (own taxes) and competencies (procurement) also bring more opportunities for mismanagement and corruption.

The higher vulnerability is accounted for by a combination of local political and institutional factors such as the concentration of (scarce) resources, proximity between actors, and the greater discretion of local bureaucrats who deal with implementation. Local governments often play a prominent role in procuring and delivering services to citizens. Local civil servants handle registration and licensing and provide core services, healthcare and education, and in some cases, may hold cross-cutting responsibilities for economic development or poverty alleviation. At the same time, public procurement and service provision are becoming increasingly complex. With the implementation of new public management (NPM) and privatization, there has been a proliferation of semi-autonomous agencies that deal with land planning, transportation and other profitable policy areas. This growing complexity makes procurement and public goods provision more challenging to control and protect from mismanagement. A second factor that increases the vulnerability of local government is the greater discretion of politicians and local bureaucrats handling implementation and regulation and licenses. Local politicians relate to particular places for their electoral support, where they contact their followers, creating a breeding ground for vote-buying, clientelism and patronage practices. At the local level, connections between politicians and businesses or influential people are close. They live in the same place, went to school together, meet in the same bar, or may even be relatives.

At the same time, cities (especially smaller ones) have fewer protections against corruption. Towns have a lower probability of being audited by the central government and a lower capacity for local administration to scrutinize their operations and control politicians effectively. With the exception of capital and large cities, the media scrutiny is weaker, as well as the activity of watchdog organizations and NGOs. Filipe Campante and Quoc-Anh Do (2014) show that US cities situated further from the capital have less media scrutiny and higher corruption. Smaller cities in particular do not have anti-corruption institutions and have lower administrative capacity (obsolete

IT technologies, lack of specialized and prepared staff) that would effectively control corruption from within.

Running the risk of gross simplification, we can say that the corrupt mechanisms operating at local level exploit these specific opportunities and weaknesses.

- **Exploiting (scarce) resources**. Actors willing to engage in corruption take advantage of the complexity of public procurement and the scarcity of public resources. It is worth noting that the problem is not excessive resources but their scarcity combined with the discretionary and personal use of them. Scarcity creates opportunities for corruption, long queues for hospital treatment, and insufficient, limited city budgets pushes them to use the land to finance the city's budget, resulting in land speculation, corruption and real estate abuse. Major discretionary funds in the mayor's hands can be used to finance supporters, as well as discretionary legislative and executive powers.

- **Exploiting politicians' and civil servants' discretion**. Local political representatives wielded considerable power in distributing financial gains within the municipality but faced little pressure to account for their actions (Mungiu-Pippidi & Johnston, 2017). Furthermore, civil servants at local level have greater discretion when issuing permits, licenses and subsidies. Many researchers argue that insufficient control mechanisms of the activities of local representatives from 1997 to 2007 can adequately explain the intensity and spread of local corruption in Spain (Quesada et al., 2013).

- Corrupt networks **frequently exploit limited control mechanisms from the central and internal audit institutions**. Corruption schemes operate unobserved due to the lack of social pressure and scrutiny from watchdog organizations and NGOs. A lack of transparency transforms information into privileged capital for powerholders and their associates. Lack of information (transparency) on the local budget and spending programs makes it easier for funds earmarked for schools, hospitals or natural disaster relief to be spent on less socially beneficial purposes such as oversized stadiums, airports and bridges to nowhere (della Porta & Vannucci, 1999; Reinikka & Svensson, 2005).

- **Exploiting the politicization of civil servants**. Rebecca Weitz-Shapiro researched clientelism in Argentinian cities and found politicized civil servants supported the mayor acting as broker distributing subsidies and goods to loyal citizens (Weitz-Shapiro, 2014). Similar roles of civil servants as corruption brokers were observed in the Romanian, Bulgarian and Hungarian countryside (Mares et al., 2016, 2017). Politicized civil servants are unlikely

to effectively control public spending or procurement and blow the whistle when aware of irregularities.

- **Exploiting vertical territorial** (political and economic) dependence. Whether the country is centralized or federalized, local governments are frequently part of vertical corruption networks and schemes organized at the central level. These vertical networks use cities as cashing subsidiary offices that collect bribes, favours or award contracts to connected firms or loyal collaborators.

Consequently, the efforts to limit corruption or maintain good government are a system-changing effort that includes everybody and should be directed towards restricting discretionary powers of politicians, reducing the complexity of regulation, increasing the independence and professionalism of administration, empowering and including the local press and citizens in broad coalitions (Mungiu-Pippidi, 2013). This sounds hard to accomplish, but the existence of virtuous cities, sort of islands of good government, even in institutionally unstable environments in highly corrupt countries, shows that cities can successfully fight corruption. Cities change faster and have unique strengths such as social capital and citizens' cooperation to drive change.

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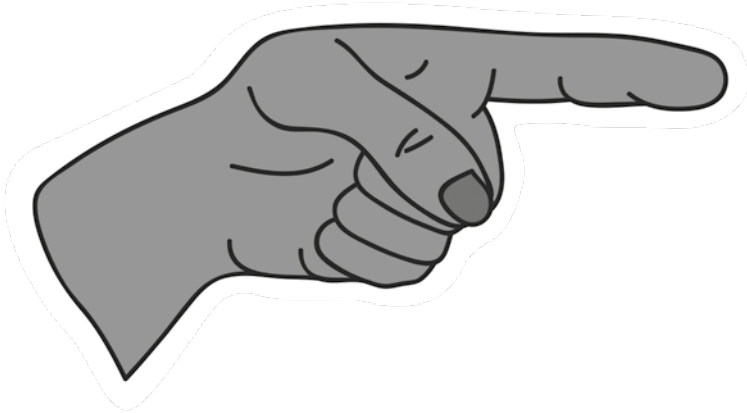

THE CITY AND CORRUPTION

Joan A. Llinares

Corruption undermines the rule of law and impedes its normal functioning by threatening the constitutional principles that inspire it, particularly the submission of all public authorities to the legal order, the equality of all before the law and the obligation of the Public Administration to objectively serve the general interest.

In a recent conference as part of the training activities of the Valencian Anti-Fraud Agency (AVAF), a Professor of History of Philosophy at the Complutense University of Madrid, José Luís Villacañas, stated that corruption robs us of money and dignity in equal parts, and its systemic entrenchment paves the way for tyranny.

The late Professor José Vidal-Beneyto always maintained that the fight against corruption is the greatest challenge of our democracy and called for a general movement of reprobation against corrupt practices, with public participation.

Also in a lecture given in Valencia on the occasion of International Anti-Corruption Day, Spain's first anti-corruption prosecutor, Carlos Jiménez Villarejo, maintained that the phenomenon of corruption in democratic states has structural causes that are connected with the organisation of the state and its public authorities, and the structure of public powers. Among other reasons, this is due to the inadequacy of controls that renounce their functions, either through passivity or more or less covert complicity with those in power.

We could continue with quotes from Victoria Camps, Manuel Villoria or Adela Cortina on public ethics and integrity, who all agree that the fundamental axis of any political system is the exemplarity of those governing it. There is no use in demanding ethical behaviour from citizens if those at the highest levels of power do not set an example: integrity is built from the top down.

The framework for public integrity is a legal system that is constructed on the basis of the goal of those in power to fight corruption. There is a need for legal standards followed by exemplary and strongly-enforced behaviour. Without rules and a culture of compliance, it is impossible to put an end to the inertia that comes from centuries of abuse and misuse of power, as well as the appropriation of the public realm for the benefit of private interests. With rules, but without a culture of compliance, we open the door to social cynicism.

The municipal administration is the closest level of government to the people and good governance of the city provides a good path to follow to fight one of the scourges that does the most damage to democracy and the economy. Corruption siphons off public resources in order to hand them over to mafias embedded within our administrations and governments. According to the OECD, between 10% and 30% of major construction projects are lost due to ineffective control and mismanagement. City and urban planning are synonymous with an ecosystem in which the general public has been marginalised in favour of large stakeholders that have taken decisions outside of democratic structures while thinking only of their own benefit. Predatory and speculative urban planning has been built on the capture of municipal institutions, which have often succumbed to the immense power of the alliances between developers, banks and speculators, even when they have tried to resist.

Further, many of the services that a city must guarantee its residents have, over time, lost their nature as municipal services, becoming private concessions with opaque management and thus an attractive target for large companies whose capacity for influence and power is often greater than that of the municipal administrations themselves. This imbalance has resulted in the capture of the public realm by corporations that are accountable to no one, and that extract income from people through fees and prices with little or no public oversight.

Fighting corruption in our cities involves establishing a framework of integrity and corruption prevention measures that are articulated from the top down: from the firm intention of government teams to fight corruption, to the establishment of systems of transparency in contracting and management in general, codes of ethics and conduct for all, elected officials and civil servants with ethics committees including a broad capacity for action, structured risk mapping to strengthen weak spots, complaint and alert channels that allow for the participation the general population and government employees in detecting irregularities, protection systems for whistleblowers and, above all, an office such as the one set up by Barcelona City Council in 2016, the Office for Transparency and Good Practices, or Madrid City Council's Office against Fraud and Corruption, to develop programmes and systems to help in the prevention, detection, correction and prosecution of fraud and corruption in connection with anti-fraud agencies, wherever they exist. These bodies must have the necessary means and sufficient resources to carry out their control tasks, guarantee their independence from the rest of the municipal bodies and ensure their accountability to the highest representative bodies of municipal democracy.

Only a firm conviction among the people's political representatives that municipal democracy is intimately linked to the fight against fraud and corruption will lead to more efficient cities that are aligned with the general interest and the common good.

MONEY LAUNDERING, TAX FRAUD AND FINANCIAL CORRUPTION IN THE EU: WHAT IT IS AND HOW TO FIGHT IT

Ernest Urtasun and Jesús Hernández

Scandals related to cases of financial corruption, money laundering and tax evasion in the EU are, unfortunately, recurrent. In the last eight years, the LuxLeaks, Panama Papers, Offshore Leaks, Bahama Papers, Pandora Papers, OpenLux, CumEx case and the most recent Suisse secrets are proof of this. These scandals have been accompanied by regulatory reactions of varying degrees of importance. In turn, they have defined the reforms required to move forward in a political agenda that achieves true tax and economic justice.

To begin, we must highlight the role of investigative journalism and of whistle-blowers who have reported the scandals. They have been instrumental in exposing the real problem and at the same time generating the necessary public and political attention to develop European standards in this matter in recent years. That is why they always deserve recognition for their work when this issue is discussed, bearing in mind that some of them, such as Falciani, Deltour and Halet, have been subjected to judicial persecution and in the most extreme cases, such as those of Daphne Caruana Galizia and Ján Kuciak, have paid with their own lives.

When trying to define a European dimension of the problems of money laundering, tax fraud and other crimes related to financial corruption, two different levels can be highlighted. The first refers to the problems of funds managed directly by the EU. The second (and much more complex) dimension is related to a global economy and to actors taking advantage of a fully integrated European single market, but with fragmented tax administrations and without the necessary tools to ensure compliance with the principle that taxes are paid where the economic activity is actually carried out.

Regarding the rules for controlling the money managed by the EU, the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) and the European Court of Auditors are relatively efficient and modern organisations that have reduced irregularities and misuse of European funds.

But an Achilles' heel remains: the Common Agricultural Policy. A 2021[8] analysis of the application of CAP funds in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia and Romania shows opacity and corruption in its management. In recent years, European Union funds for agricultural subsidies in these countries has tended to end up in the hands of local oligarchs linked to ruling elites or large agricultural conglomerates and macro-farms instead of helping small and middle-sized farmers. There are documented cases that include conflicts of interests, nepotism and cases of blatant corruption and fraud.

The new challenge for the EU in terms of clean and transparent management is the payment of European pandemic recovery funds, the Recovery and Resilience Facility. For the moment, the Commission is seeking a balance between a strict and prescriptive monitoring of investments and a spending flexibility for states that allows them to accelerate expenditure and absorb funds, contributing to a quicker recovery.

In this context, it is worth highlighting the rule of law mechanism, which came into force on 1 January. For the first time we have a mechanism that links the payment of EU funds to compliance with the rule of law. However, the mechanism is not as effective as had been claimed when it was approved at the end of 2020, after fierce resistance from several Member States.

The second level where in-depth intervention is needed to ensure tax and economic justice is the mismatch between the competences and capacities of Member States at the tax level and the reality of an increasingly integrated internal market. The most obvious case is the mechanism of aggressive tax planning, whereby large multinationals take advantage of a more integrated EU internal market to pay less tax. They reflect state limitations and the need for more European integration in the fight against tax fraud and, above all, the need for more political will.

Over the last few years, improvements have been made at the global and European level to anti-money laundering standards and the OECD's standard for the automatic exchange of information (Common Reporting Standard). However, many EU Member States do not adequately implement EU anti-money laundering directives and the Commission is pursuing several infringement cases for non-transposition. A clear example is Luxembourg,

[8] https://www.greens-efa.eu/en/article/document/where-does-the-eu-money-go

whose transposition of the anti-money laundering rules that were created precisely in the wake of LuxLeaks has been very poor. Another example is Malta, which was in principle subject to this legislation but was nevertheless identified by the Financial Action Task Force as a high-risk jurisdiction.

We must also refer to the disappointing exercise of the EU list of tax havens. It began as an ambitious and far-reaching exercise, which achieved significant changes in a number of tax havens. Yet in recent years, the process has become increasingly politicised. The list now includes Panama, which in 2018 was incomprehensibly removed from the list only to be put back on it in 2020. But it does not include jurisdictions such as the British Virgin Islands, home to two-thirds of the companies exposed in the Pandora Papers investigation. Neither the OECD nor the EU has ever dared to single out the United States, despite the fact that, by failing to meet the tax information exchange criterion, the US should be on the EU's list of tax havens. The US does not adhere to the OECD's CRS because it applies its own standard called FACTA, but under this regime there is no full reciprocity or sharing of information on the final beneficiary of non-US assets. In addition, the tax regimes of Nevada, Delaware, South Dakota and Alaska are very aggressive in the taxation of capital gains taxes.

The list does not include any EU countries either, despite the fact that according to Oxfam[9], Cyprus, Ireland, Luxembourg, Malta and the Netherlands show typical tax haven economic indicators such as high levels of Foreign Direct Investment, intellectual property payments, interest and dividends. Luxembourg is a paradigmatic case of a tax haven in the heart of the EU: 90% of the companies there are foreign; 50,000 front companies manage up to six trillion euros, without 20% of them having had any activity in recent years; and 80% of investment funds do not say who their final beneficiary is.

Most international tax evasion schemes could be avoided by implementing a minimum corporate tax rate. At present, there is some global political will to move towards a global minimum corporate tax rate to fight evasion, following the global agreement reached at the G20 in Rome in October 2021. The EU Minimum Effective Corporate Tax Rates Directive transposes one of the pillars of the OECD global agreement and provides for a minimum effective tax rate of 15% for multinationals. However, it could not be adopted due to the dissenting vote of only one country: Hungary.

This setback to tax justice demonstrates once again that the unanimity rule in tax matters in the EU is a fundamental problem. As a state competence, tax decisions should be taken unanimously, but in today's context of

[9] https://www.oxfam.org/es/node/15757

ever-increasing economic integration, it makes no sense at all. This is why we have been urging the Commission for years to make new proposals under Article 116 TFEU, the only mechanism that actually makes it possible to bypass the unanimity deadlock, by establishing a qualified majority instead, to avoid vetoes by individual Member States. We cannot accept that one country's opposition should hijack an overall proposal aimed at increasing tax justice in Europe - in this case it was Hungary, as in others it was Ireland or Luxembourg.

Intermediaries such as lawyers, consultancy firms, portfolio managers and real estate agents have actively helped to launder money, avoid tax and hide wealth. The LuxLeaks case showed that PwC was at the centre of the tax evasion machine in the EU, just as the Pandora Papers showed a similar role for McKensey in the US. Given the role played by these intermediaries in all the scandals uncovered, our anti-money laundering framework must also address their activity, especially in the context of actions against the wealth of the Russian oligarchy mostly hidden in the EU. There is one clear conclusion here, which is that we need a register of EU assets, including real estate, works of art or planes and yachts, with information on the final beneficiaries.

In summary, the diagnosis and roadmap are clear: strengthen transparency and anti-money laundering rules; adopt the minimum rates directive; thoroughly reform the EU blacklist; create an EU asset register; and improve enforcement of anti-money laundering legislation with infringement procedures against non-compliant states. What is really needed now is the political will to carry out these reforms. Because without tax justice, there can be no economic justice or social equality.

EPILOGUE

MUNICIPALISM AND THE FEMINISATION OF POLITICS: THE GLOBAL HOPE

Ada Colau, mayor of Barcelona
Manuela D'Ávila, writer, journalist and professor of Public Policy
Irací Hassler, mayor of Santiago de Chile

In July 2021, and now when writing this book, we all meet again to foster an international municipalist process that is more vital than ever. This movement is certainly not perfect and the major structural changes that need to be encouraged in this time of multiple global crises will take years, and even decades, but the path is created by walking. In this sense, Fearless Cities 2021, with more than 1,200 participants from 50 countries, showed that the municipalist network is consolidating and growing.

In these years, municipalism has demonstrated its capacity for real transformation, transferring demands from social movements to governments and institutions. Barcelona today has for years been the Spanish city with the greatest social investment. We have increased social investment by 50%, doubling economic aid for inclusion and promoting social innovation programmes such as options for the homeless through Primer Hogar ("First Home") and the project Vínculos contra la soledad ("Links Against Loneliness"). We have strengthened formerly weakened public services with new mental health services. These include Konsulta'm to provide psychological support through a preventive approach and a municipal dental service. We have also created Vila Veïna to facilitate access to public care resources and services.

We have created a new institutional framework that did not exist, promoting deliberative policies through Decidim. And we have taken decisive measures against tax fraud through which we have recovered 150 million euros from large companies. In the area of housing, we have built more than 2,100 social units and are promoting public/community developments. By using recycled shipping containers, we have created APROPs, or fast-track public housing. Meanwhile, in the face of strong opposition from lobbyists, we have regulated tourist flats and closed down 7,500 illegal tourist apartments. To combat tourist overcrowding, we have also demanded limits on the growth of infrastructure, such as the airport, and are proposing to reduce the maximum number of cruise ships arriving in the city to three per day. We are also building a new green Barcelona for the people through the Superilla ("Superblock") plan to reclaim one million square metres of public space for residents.

And we can only do all this together. The case of housing has shown the importance of networking with other cities, enabling us to keep a steady hand on the large digital platforms. Together we have been able to do many things for those who voted for us, things that had not been done before (things that they told us were impossible), yet that today are starting to become a reality.

In Chile, we are at a historic moment that has enabled us to create real changes. We are at a constituent moment. We have seen profound transformations occurring precisely in a country where the neoliberal model has been implemented to the letter, where all of our social rights have been commodified. This moment of change arises from the feminist movement, the social movement, the student movement and the environmental movement, giving us the chance to become empowered, to say "Enough!" of this exclusionary, unequal model. We need to create real change. But we have not done it alone. We are following the example of many other women and other movements around the world and in Latin America. Today, we hope this means a transformation towards a new Chile, fairer, more secure, a green Chile, a better Chile.

Good living is a word that has been central to our country. Living well is what we are currently looking for in Chile and

in our neighbourhood and capital, where we have a tremendous wealth: our communities, their history, their heritage, their urban parks.

In this year of management we have proposed new ways of doing politics, with new perspectives for community security, the creation of the first intersectional institution in Chile, such as our Subdirectorate for Gender Equality, sexual diversity and inclusion. We have also promoted co-management processes to improve our neighbourhoods, from a sustainable perspective, where the construction of a waste management plan has been fundamental. In addition, we have concentrated efforts on the planning of our Neighbourhood Care System "Stgo cares for you", which will have the first Care Building in Chile, that will become our largest investment, and whose central objective is to put the life of our neighbours in the centre.

In addition, we have proposed a new approach to education in our 44 educational establishments from an open to dialogue, non-sexist and communal point of view. We are also the capital city of education in Chile, with a significant number of emblematic schools and high schools for our country, which today seek to respond to historical demands for the strengthening of public education.

We seek to contribute from local governments to the generation of change in the constituent moment that we are living. We know that in many cases we are the first encounter between people and institutions, so it is essential to generate concrete actions that can change the daily lives of everyone, that allow transformations to improve our day to day and that sometime give rise to a good living.

In Brazil, there is a very young social movement for generating new ideas, where women and black people play leading roles. The regeneration of the left in Brazil must not only place our women at the centre but especially our black women and men. If we want a country where social justice exists, it has to be by confronting the racism that structures economic inequality. These new left-wing social movements are on the streets, where workers — *uberised* workers, workers without rights — live with economic insecurity.

Today, our poorest communities are highly mobilised and have a political visibility they never had before, largely thanks to the Internet. This is a generation that has never lived without technology, without the power of political mobilisation that their smartphones give them. These new empowered generations have gone to university under the Lula and Dilma governments, whereas previously we had only 1% of young people at university. Today, half the students in public universities are from peripheral communities, or young and black. This is a fundamental basis for change in social movements. Nowadays it is impossible to imagine a movement for social and political transformation that does not inhabit both spaces, the streets and social media, concurrently.

Barcelona, Santiago and these movements in Brazil are examples of hope in a context of global crisis. We are experiencing a time of crisis which we must turn into an opportunity for radical transformation, because the old structures have become obsolete and threaten all life on the planet. As we leave behind the pandemic, in a scenario of war and humanitarian crises, we do not need a simple recovery. We need a transformation to attain cities that are just, feminist and sustainable for all of us. We cannot make this change easily. It means addressing major global challenges that also translate to a local context. This requires imagination and loads of innovation: together our ideas are better than each of ours individually. We must strengthen politics with people. That is where our power lies. That is where our strength lies. When you have no media power, you do not have the power of the oligarchy or the judiciary. Your only power is the power of the people. Throughout history, power is shown to be unstoppable when people organise and pursue the goals of transformation and social justice in a united front.

We have recently faced some very difficult times. Yet our strength has always been that people have organised together and done incredible things that no one could have imagined. For example, in Barcelona, a network was organised to manufacture masks using 3D printers. We provided resources from Barcelona City Council while other small companies provided transport and materials. Together, we manufactured thousands of masks and protective equipment for health professionals.

This is the resilient community that maintains its ties despite the difficulties. We are capable of things that states could never do because the strength of municipalism is this idea of sharing common space, extending our homes to merge with the public space that is the city, a city that allows us to meet and work together to change reality. It is precisely this policy of proximity to everyday life that encourages us to face challenges with people's well-being in mind.

It is municipalities that have the least resources and least competencies. We have no legislative powers to change the rules of the game, but we have the very great strength of community cooperation. Cities are spaces for new ideas, for creativity and innovation, for inventing things that did not exist before, new solutions and new ways of responding to old problems. We live in a time of great threats such as climate change and the extreme right, of a patriarchal capitalist system that is dying yet continues to cause suffering for so many people. But, like all moments of crisis, this is also a time of opportunity for profound transformation.

We must give space to these community, cooperative, feminist and green experiences, offer them space and strengthen them with all the tools at our disposal to promote these concrete examples of transformation which, little by little, are demonstrating that there are other ways of doing things and solving problems, from a position of proximity, on a daily basis.

In today's world of crisis and change, we see how there are movements that cut through everything at a global level. They brim with hope. Feminism is one. Municipalism is another. Amongst us all, starting from municipalism and feminism, we can foster countless experiences of rebirth, a new feminist humanism. Municipalities must be that common space that is open to all these transformations, to this innovation and to a full-throated defence of life. **They want us lonely, but they will find us in common**.

BIOS

› Eva Abril Chaigne
Eva Abril was born in the south of Madrid, but she has been a Poble Sec resident for five years. Though she is a photographer, she has been working as a secondary teacher for 16 years. Luckily it is a profession that she loves. LGTBI activism is one of her great passions, along with politics. In recent years she has been fortunate to be able to combine them, being an activist within the LGTBI feminist movement, where she has learnt a great deal. As a member of Barcelona en Comú's Executive Leadership, she undertakes to do everything possible to help the transformation and revolution that is occurring in Barcelona.

› Eloi Badia Casas
A graduate in Industrial Engineering (UPC), Eloi Badia has been a councillor on Barcelona City Council since 2015. Since 2019, he has been the Climate Emergency and Ecological Transition Area director. He is in charge of promoting Barcelona's Climate Emergency Declaration, a document containing more than 350 of the city's commitments to combat climate change. He has also promoted implementation of the Low Emission Zone (the largest in southern Europe, covering some 95 km^2) to combat pollution, Barcelona's most important health problem. His other goals include working towards the city's energy transition, increasing waste recycling, public water management and improving the city's greening and biodiversity.

› Luisa Broto Bernués
Luisa Broto Bernués (Huesca, 1965) is a social worker with experience in adult education, family education and support for people with HIV. Since 1998, she has been working at Zaragoza City Council's Community Social Services.

A member of the Plataforma de Profesionales de los Servicios Sociales ("Social Services Professional Platform") and the Espacio de Derechos Sociales ("Social Rights Space"), she is also an LGTBI activist and has been an elected staff delegate.

After serving as Deputy Mayor and Councillor for Social Rights on Zaragoza City Council between 2015 and 2019, she is currently a councillor for Zaragoza en Común on Zaragoza City Council.

› Gabriela Cabaña
Gabriela Cabaña is an anthropologist and PhD researcher at the London School of Economics and Political Science, currently studying energy policy and planning in Chile from an ethnographic perspective. She is a member of the Centro de Análisis Socioambiental (CASA), an organization researching and building critical perspectives for social-ecological transformation in Chile, the observatory Energía y Equidad, and president of the Red Chilena de Ingreso Básico (Chilean Network of Basic Income). She is interested in the intersections between degrowth, basic income, energy and the morality of work.

› Christo Casas
A graduate in Journalism (UV) and Political Science (UAB), Christo Casas has been a consultant in Barcelona City Council's Climate Emergency Area since 2022. He has participated in various municipal platforms and projects for citizen participation, climate emergency, health, civil rights and diversity. He has also coordinated communications for the Barcelona Youth Council, collaborating regularly with various media from a class-based, human-rights viewpoint.

› Emily Marion Clancy
Born in Bologna in 1991, Italian-Canadian Emily Marion Clancy is the Vice-Mayor and Deputy Mayor in charge of Housing, Climate Assemblies and Climate Office, Night Policies, Equal Opportunities and Anti-Discrimination Policies of the city of Bologna. In 2021, after her first election in 2016, she was re-elected city councillor, obtaining the most votes out of all the candidates running in the city election with the municipalist platform Coalizione Civica.

She holds a Degree in Law from the University of Bologna, a Certificate of Legal Studies from King's College, London, and a Degree in Public Administration from the SPISA School of Post-Graduate Studies at the University of Bologna.

› Pierre Clavel
Pierre Clavel is a retired professor at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York. He writes on the "politics" of planning. He sees planners representing all people, and finds those who oppose planners exasperating, especially the claims

that the market or pluralism is always better. He founded "Progressive Cities" that challenged this thinking, and wrote on the topic, convinced that writing about "progressive planners" is one of the best things an academic can do. His main publications include *The Progressive City* (1986) and *Activists in City Hall* (2010). Other papers can be found at www.progressivecities.org, and Cornell Library's digital collection on the subject of Progressive Cities and Neighborhood Planning, www.ecommons.cornell.edu.

› Ada Colau
Ada Colau Ballano is the first female mayor of the city of Barcelona. Committed to the values of the city and close to the needs of the people, she has changed the priorities of the agenda during her terms of office, incorporating community policies (such as the Neighbourhood Plan and housing policies, for example) and facing global threats like the climate emergency or feminism at the same time.

› Tània Corrons Mellado
Tània Corrons Mellado (Manresa, 1978) is an economist specialised in human rights and international cooperation. Her work over the last 20 years has focused on managing various companies and organisations. Since January 2020, she has been a member of Barcelona en Comú's Executive Leadership, where she is in charge of logistics, finances and human resources, as well as its spokesperson.

› Manuela D'Ávila
Manuela is a journalist, with a master's degree in public policy and a doctoral student in public policy at the Universidad Federal do Rio Grande do Sul. She was the youngest councillor in Porto Alegre, the most voted federal deputy in Brazil, and the most voted state deputy in 2014. She ran for the vice-presidency of the country in 2018. He founded the E Se Fosse Você Institute, aimed at combating disinformation and networks of hate. She published three books: *Revolução Laura*, *Por que lutamos? Um livro sobre amor e liberdade* and *E Se Fosse Você? Sobrevivendo às redes de ódio e fake news*. She is also editor and co-author of the books *Coletâneas Semper foi sobre nós: relatos da violência política de gênero no Brasil* and *Rede de Mentira e ódio: e se o alvo fosse você?*

› Dr. Eliška Drápalová
Dr. Eliška Drápalová has been a research fellow in the Research Group "Politics of Digitalization" at the Berlin Social Science Center (WZB) since January 2022. Prior to that, she was involved as a guest researcher. She obtained her PhD in Political Economy from the European University Institute in Florence, Italy. She was a postdoctoral fellow in the Organizations, Management and Leadership Cluster at the Hertie School in Berlin as well as the University of Gothenburg, Sweden. Eliška is a comparative political scientist and administration scholar interested in the quality of government and regulation in cities, smart cities and the effect of technology on public administration. She co-directs a DFG-funded project on regulating platform companies in EU cities and regions together with Prof. Kai Wegrich from the Hertie School (Berlin).

› Ana Fernández Borsot
A graduate in Law from the University of Barcelona, Ana Fernández has obtained the Certificate of Aptitude for the Profession of Lawyer (CAPA) from the Cour d'Appel de Douai (France). She is a member of the Observatorio del Derecho a la Ciudad ("City Rights Observatory") in Buenos Aires. She participates in various spaces that advocate for access to decent housing. She currently lives in Barcelona and is an active member of the International Alliance of Inhabitants.

› Nadine Finch
Nadine Finch is an Honorary Senior Policy Fellow in the School for Policy Studies at the University of Bristol. She is also an associate at Child Circle, a centre of expertise and public interest action on child protection and European measures. She was previously a human rights barrister, who specialised in children's rights, migration, child trafficking and international family law, and subsequently a judge in the Upper Tribunal of the Immigration and Asylum Chamber. She is a trustee for Statewatch and worked on race and policing issues between 1984 and 1987 at the Greater London Council and the London Strategic Policy Unit.

› Francesco Gentilini
Born in Bologna, Italy, in 1992, Francesco Gentilini has been a member of the neighbourhood council of Santo Stefano (one of Bologna's six neighbourhoods) since October 2021, when he was elected with the municipalist platform Coalizione Civica.

He holds a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science from the University of Bologna, a Master's Degree in Economic Analysis from the Solvay Brussels School of Economics and Management and is currently a PhD candidate in Sociology of Labour at the University of Florence with a thesis on Workers' Buyouts (WBO).

› Quique Gornés Cardona
A technical engineer in Public Works (UPC), Quique Gornés has been a consultant in Barcelona City Council's Climate Emergency Area since 2019. He has been involved in several projects promoting the human right to water and public water management at the ESF. He was the technical director of the water and sewerage service in Arenys de Munt from the service's remunicipalisation in 2012 until 2017. He also participated in preparing the Integrated Water Cycle Strategic Plan for the Barcelona Metropolitan Area in the Barcelona Regional municipal agency from 2017 to 2019.

› Elia Gran Lostau
A communications director at Barcelona City Council's Department of Health, Ageing and Care, Elia Gran has a degree in Journalism and a passion for independent investigative reporting. In the US, she wrote for print and radio media while working as a correspondent for Catalan and Spanish publications. She has been a digital content creator and networker for New York's *The Indypendent*, as well as a broadcaster on the weekly WBAI news show. A co-creator of the Mínimo platform, a municipalist observatory, she closely follows movements for urban rights and the struggle for decent housing, along with local and feminist movements.

› Irací Hassler Jacob
Irací Hassler Jacob, Mayoress for the Commune of Santiago. Her political trajectory starts under the wing of the student and social movements, where she performed as University Senator and General Secretary for the Student Federation of

the University of Chile. In that position, she situated herself in the debate regarding the right to education, and progressively, also made herself an active part of the feminist movement, defending sexual and reproductive rights, and currently spearheading municipal politics with a focus on rights regarding gender equality.

Her current role as a Mayoress, is part of a political construct that throughout time has gone hand in hand with political and social organizations. Thus, she performed as Counsel in the previous period. That is how, within the sociopolitical climate brought by the social movements of 2019, the Constitutional Mayoralty is born as a collective project, building a political and programmatic approach that has situated at the front and center the quality of life of all those who live in Santiago.

Currently, and having reached a year of management, the city council have drawn political objectives towards city rights, community security, strengthening public education, gender mainstreaming and a new model for waste management.

› Owen Hatherley
Owen Hatherley was born in Southampton, England in 1981. He received a PhD from Birkbeck College in 2011 for a thesis published in 2016 as *The Chaplin Machine* (Pluto Press). He writes regularly on architecture, culture and politics for *Architectural Review*, *The Guardian* and *The London Review of Books*, among others. He has published the following books: *Militant Modernism* (Zero, 2009), *A Guide to the New Ruins of Great Britain* (Verso, 2010), *Uncommon – An Essay on Pulp* (Zero, 2011), *Across the Plaza* (Strelka, 2012), *A New Kind of Bleak* (Verso 2012), *Landscapes of Communism* (Penguin, 2015), *The Ministry of Nostalgia* (Verso, 2016), *Trans-Europe Express* (Penguin, 2018), *The Adventures of Owen Hatherley in the Post-Soviet Space* (Repeater, 2018), *Soviet Metro Stations* (with Christopher Herwig, Fuel, 2019), *Red Metropolis* (Repeater, 2020), a collection of essays, *Clean Living Under Difficult Circumstances* (Verso 2021), *Modern Buildings in Britain: A Gazetteer* (Penguin, 2022), and *Artificial Islands* (Repeater, 2022). He is also the editor of *The Alternative Guide to the London Boroughs* (Open House, 2020).

He has edited and introduced an updated edition of Ian Nairn's *Nairn's Towns* (Notting Hill Editions, 2013), written texts for the exhibition *Brutalust: Celebrating Southampton's Post-War Architecture* at the K6 Gallery, and introduced William Morris' *How I Became A Socialist* (Verso, 2020). Between 2006 and 2010 he wrote the blog "Sit Down Man, You're a Bloody Tragedy". He is a commissioning editor at *Jacobin* and the culture editor of *Tribune*.

› Jesús Hernández
He is a Political Scientist and holds a Master's Degree in Taxation. He is specialised in parliamentary assistance on topics such as Taxation, Economic and Financial Affairs. Currently providing advice on topics related to the European Parliament's Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs to MEP Ernest Urtasun. He worked as an advisor to the Plural Left in the Spanish Parliament.

› Steve Hughes
Steve Hughes has over 20 years' experience organizing in the US and Europe. He lives in Prague and works on several trans-European and transatlantic organizing initiatives. Tracing his roots to the US labor movement, he transitioned to political organizing for the Working Families Party (WFP) in 2010. In 2014, he moved to Europe, but he continues to support organizing at the WFP. He has taken a leadership role in developing the European Community Organizing Network and he works closely with the Grassroots Power Project. In all these roles he serves as a link between the US and European organizing sectors.

› Patrick Kappert
Patrick Kappert (1971, Deventer, The Netherlands) is a knowledge engineer. Following his studies in cognitive science, he did a Master's in Environmental Public Management. In 2002, he migrated from the Netherlands to Spain and started living in Barcelona's Poblenou neighbourhood with his partner and later two children. He still cycles, but he also works as a computer scientist at QubiQ and is on the board of the Col·lectiu Superilla Poblenou and a number of organic food organisations in Barcelona's Sant Marti district. Living at the Superblock changed his perspective on urban public space and its purpose.

› Anke Kleff
Anke Kleff is a psychologist with a Master's degree in Organisational Development. She collaborates with private and public organisations in implementing processes of change, such as creating more participatory cultures and new forms of leadership and feminising the world of scientific research.

She is a member of the Barcelona en Comú Coordinating Body as a "common representative". As co-coordinator of the Barcelona en Comú Care Group, she helps raise awareness of the importance of emotional bonds and empathy as tools for political transformation.

› Joan A. Llinares Gómez
Joan A. Llinares Gómez (Alzira, 1953) is a graduate in Law (UNED) and a civil servant in the FHN corps. The current director of the Agency for the Prevention and Fight against Fraud and Corruption of the Valencian Community (AVAF), he was resources manager at Barcelona City Council, promoting and leading its Transparency and Good Practices Office. Previously, as director of the Palau de la Música Catalana, he detected and denounced the CDC's illegal financing scheme (3%). As an arts manager, he has been administrator of the National Art Museum of Catalonia (MNAC) and the Valencian Institute of Modern Art (IVAM).

› Lara Lussón
Lara Lussón (Madrid, 1988) is a journalist and social worker. In 2017, she moved to Lesbos, Greece, where she worked as team coordinator for a Maritime Rescue NGO. She has also worked on the border between Serbia and Hungary and on the Moroccan border with Ceuta, in both emergency and humanitarian contexts. She regularly travels to northern Argentina, where she has collaborated on projects for preventing violence against women. In Spain, she is part of the Refugees Welcome Social Care team, participating in conferences and debates on migration issues.

› Beatriz Martínez Alonso
Born in A Coruña, Beatriz Martínez Alonso is an activist and resident of the Guinardó neighbourhood. A graduate in Law and Political Science, she has a Master's degree in Conflict

Management and Resolution. A district councillor between 2017 and 2019, she currently forms part of Barcelona en Comú's Executive Leadership, where she oversees Care and the Participation and Organizing Area as a territorial delegate.

› José Manuel Mejías Vega
A social psychologist and public employee for 35 years, José Manuel Mejías Vega has worked professionally in the fields of citizen participation, socio-cultural energisation, social education and community development, especially in the area of training. A neighbourhood activist and pacifist, he has worked with children and young people in various groups and been part of social, trade union and political initiatives. He participated in 15M and was a member of ATTAC. Since 2014, he has helped to create Ganemos Jerez, a municipalist group in Jerez City Council. He is a member of the Coordination Commission, responsible for contacting and maintaining regular relations with other municipalist networks in Spain.

› Júlia Miralles de Imperial Pujol
A graduate in Political Science and Law from the Autonomous University of Barcelona (UAB), Júlia Miralles de Imperial teaches public policy at the same university while pursuing her PhD on anti-corruption policies. She participates in Barcelona en Comú and Catalunya en Comú in the fields of economics and international affairs, especially in projects related to tax justice and European policy. She is an executive member of both organisations.

› Maga Miranda Díaz
Maga Miranda is a 31-year-old art historian and arts manager. A feminist and heritage activist, she has been a member of Las Rejas Neighbourhood Heritage Committee in Santiago (Chile) for five years, which seeks to defend neighbourhood life against encroaching real estate developers. For three years, she has been an activist in the Revolución Democrática (Democratic Revolution) party in the Estación Central area and in the Frente Feminista (Feminist Front).

She is the President of the Metropolitan Region Executive Board for the 2021–2023 period. In the last national elections, she was elected Councillor for the Estación Central commune for the 2021–2024 period.

› Maurice Mitchell
Maurice Mitchell is a nationally recognized political strategist and visionary leader in the Movement for Black Lives. Raised by Caribbean working-class parents in New York, he began organizing as a teenager and never stopped. After working for several grassroots advocacy organizations in his home state, Maurice directed the NY State Civic Engagement Table. In the wake of the police murder of Michael Brown, he relocated to Ferguson and helped build the Movement for Black Lives. He went on to co-found and lead Blackbird, a movement anchor organization. In 2018, Maurice took the helm of Working Families Party as its National Director.

› Lucía Morale
Lucía Morale is a lawyer specialising in public security policies. She works on the relationship between police and citizens and on incorporating a gender and rights perspective into security policies.

Between Argentina and Barcelona she has worked in human rights organisations such as H.I.J@.S, CELS and IRIDIA. She has likewise worked in Argentina's Ministry of Security and Barcelona City Council's Security Department. She is involved in various international projects and is co-founder of the International Network for Security Innovation (RISE). A member of Barcelona en Comú, she was a member of the party's Coordinating Body and is currently head of the Barcelona City Council cabinet in the area of Social Rights, Global Justice, Feminisms and LGTBI.

› César Ochoa Díez
César Ochoa Díez holds a degree in Mathematics from the University of Barcelona and teaches at a public secondary school, where he participates in projects for pacifying the school environment and creating an energetic community. He has held various positions in the Barcelona en Comú organisation, from neighbourhood and district coordinator to being on the Executive. He is currently a Catalunya en Comú councillor and an active member of the Urbanism and Mobility Axis. He has contributed to drafting the programme in this area and has written several press articles, in addition to giving lectures on sustainable mobility and tactical urbanism.

› Eric Piolle
An engineer and graduate in civil engineering of the Grenoble Institut National Polytechnique (formerly INPG), Eric Piolle got involved in public life in 2009 after a career spent as a senior executive in the industry. He started as a Regional Councillor for the French Green Party (Europe Ecologie Les Verts) in the Rhône-Alpes area from 2010 to 2014. He was elected Mayor of Grenoble in 2014, and was re-elected in 2020. Grenoble is a pioneering city in France in terms of local democracy, the development of soft mobility (pedestrianization, cycling and public transport), local and organic food, its commitment to fighting against poverty and its ambitious policy to fight against air pollution. Thanks to its commitment, the City of Grenoble and its partners earned the title of European Green Capital 2022.

› Gerardo Pisarello
Gerardo Pisarello (Tucumán, Argentina, 1970) is a Spanish-Argentine politician and lawyer, with a PhD in Law who teaches Constitutional Law at the University of Barcelona. Barcelona City Councillor for the Barcelona en Comú municipal group between 2015 and 2019, during this period he served as first Deputy Mayor. Member elected for the Barcelona constituency in the Congress of Deputies in the 13th and 14th legislatures, for both of which he was elected a Mesa del Congreso (Board of Congress) member.

› Álvaro Porro González
Alvaro Porro González (Madrid, 1978) is an economist, activist and expert in various fields, including sustainable consumption, social and solidarity economics, community and collaborative economies, food sovereignty, social market, green taxation and participatory processes. He is currently a commissioner for Social Economy, Local Development and Food Policy at Barcelona City Council. He was the director of the Barcelona World Capital of Sustainable Food 2021 project, aimed at developing projects and policies to promote sustainable food in the city.

› Alícia Puig
Alícia Puig (Barcelona, 1995) is a graduate in the Humanities with a Master's degree in Economic History. Her academic research focused on housing and economic development.

She worked at the UNESCO Chair in Education and Technology at the Open University of Catalonia until 2018, when she joined the Barcelona City Council, first on the Ciutat Vella and Eixample team and currently in the Urban Ecology Area, where she deals with urban transformation issues.

› Guillem Pujol Borràs
Guillem Pujol is a political scientist, philosopher and journalist. He is the co-author of CARTHA – *On Making Heimat* (Ed. Park Books) and currently directs *Cataluña Plural*, a key newspaper on the media published by the Fundación Periodismo Plural: *El Diario de la Educación*, *El Diario de la Sanidad*, *El Diario del Trabajo* and *Revista*XQ.

› Pamela Radcliff
Pamela Radcliff has been a Professor in the Department of History at the University of California, San Diego since 1990. She received her BA from Scripps College (1979) and her PhD from Columbia University (1990). She is the author of several books and numerous articles on popular mobilization, gender and women's politics and civil society in 20th century Spain. She has published three single-authored books: *From Mobilization to Civil War: The Politics of Polarization in the Spanish City of Gijón* (Cambridge University Press, 1996), *Making Democratic Citizens in Spain: Civil Society and the Popular Origins of the Transition, 1960-1978* (Palgrave, 2011) and the *History of Modern Spain, 1808-Present* (Wiley Blackwell, 2017; Spanish edition with Ariel, 2018). She is currently researching the history of municipalist discourse in Spanish political culture.

› Antonello Ravetto Antinori
A 48-year-old journalist resident in Palermo, the city where he was born, Antonello Ravetto Antinori has been a spokesperson for the Mayor of Lampedusa and Linosa Totò Martello since 2018. From 1998 to 2000, he worked for the daily newspaper *Il Mediterraneo* and for the radio and television station *TRM*. From 2000 to 2001, he worked for the newspaper *L'Ora*. Since 2001 he has been working for the Sicilian Regional Parliament, covering political and parliamentary news. He has been working with the ANSA news agency since 2004. From 2018 to 2021, he worked on the European project "Snapshots from the Borders", working on issues related to migration flows and border territories.

› Carolina Recio Cáceres
Carol Recio (Barcelona, 1980) works at Barcelona City Council's Department for Health, Ageing and Care, where she has promoted innovative plans such as the Mental Health Plan and the Municipal Dental Service. She holds a PhD in Sociology (UAB) and has been an associate lecturer (UAB) and a researcher and consultant on Public Policy. She specialises in the sociology of gender and work. She was a district councillor for Nou Barris and was previously linked to the district's associative fabric. She is a mother and Barcelona resident.

› Toni Ribas
Toni Ribas is an environmental activist specialised in climate change, energy, pollution and waste. He is an advocate for degrowth as a tool for reducing inequalities and ending degrading living conditions. He has participated in the Movement for Climate Justice, Platform for Air Quality and 350.org. As a member of Barcelona en Comú, he participated in creating Barcelona Energia (Barcelona's public electricity company), representing the organisation at events such as the Growth in Transition Conference (Vienna), Can Cities Change the World? (Stockholm), Systems Change – Ecological Challenges (Oslo) and the Cities of Change project.

› María Eugenia Rodríguez Palop
A lawyer, teacher, researcher, essayist and feature writer, as well as a feminist activist, environmentalist and human rights specialist, María Eugenia Rodríguez Palop is a professor of Philosophy of Law at the uc3m.

She is currently an MEP. She holds the vice chair of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM) and is a member of the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development (AGRI), the Delegation to the EU–Mexico Joint Parliamentary Committee, the Delegation to the EU–Chile Joint Parliamentary Committee and the Delegation to the Euro–Latin American Parliamentary Assembly.

She has published several books, including recently *Revolución feminista y políticas de lo común frente a la extrema derecha* ("Feminist Revolution and Common Policies Against the Far Right", Icaria-Clacso, 2019).

› Nieves Salobral Martín
Nieves Salobral Martín holds a PhD in Philosophy. She is a specialist in gender and feminism and has been a feminist activist for several decades. She is also a member of Akafem, a feminist–municipalist network aimed at influencing local institutional policies so that they ensure that support for a life worth living is a central concern.

› Janet Sanz Cid
Janet Sanz is the Deputy Mayor of the Department of Ecology, Urban Planning and Mobility, where she has promoted the Special Urban Plan for Tourist Accommodation and the Barcelona Superilla ("Super City Block") plan. Born in Tamarit de Llitera (1984), she is a resident of Poble Sec and holds degrees in Law and Political Science and Administration (UPF). Most of her activism in associations has been dedicated to the youth movement, defence of human rights such as water and energy and the feminist movement. She is a member of Ecologistas en Acción, SOS Racisme and the CCOO trade union.

› Marc Serra Solé
Marc Serra Solé (1986) is a lawyer and sociologist. As a Councillor for Citizenship Rights and Participation, he has worked closely on promoting the new Office for Non-Discrimination and has been one of the driving forces behind Barcelona's active residency registration policies.

Serra has been a refugee expert at Barcelona City Council and has collaborated with various human rights organisations in the city. He co-directed the documentary *Tarajal: Dismantling Impunity at the Southern Border.*

› Kate Shea Baird
Kate Shea Baird works in the field of international relations for local governments and has written about municipalism for publications including elDiario.es, *NacióDigital*, *Roar Magazine*, *Red Pepper* and *La Futura*, among others. Between 2017 and 2021 she was a member of the Barcelona en Comú Executive and, in this capacity, worked on the organization's 2019 Barcelona election campaign. Kate continues to participate in Barcelona En Comú as an activist in the Poblenou neighbourhood assembly.

› Gemma Tarafa Orpinell
Councillor for Health, Aging and Care of the Barcelona City Council, she promoted the first Municipal Mental Health Plan in the Spanish state or the municipal dentist. Born in Barcelona (1971), she holds a PhD in Molecular Biology from the Universitat de Barcelona and did a postdoctoral fellowship at Yale University. She was Public Health researcher at the Universitat Pompeu Fabra, as deputy director of the Health Inequalities Research Group (GREDS-EMCONET) and she was also researcher at the Catalan Institute of Oncology. He has been an activist for more than 15 years in the movement for the abolition of external debt and for public and universal health. Mother of a son and a daughter.

› Elena Tarifa Herrero
Tarifa Herrero (Barcelona, 1973) is a journalist specialising in corporate communications and PR. She is likewise an expert on information with a gender perspective, with experience managing public policies for equality. A feminist and the mother of two daughters, she is pro-European and a social and trade union activist. Since 2015, she has actively participated in Barcelona en Comú's municipalist project, where she is involved in various activist spaces. These include the International Commission, since its creation, of which she is co-coordinator, and also the Catalunya en Comú International Sectorial, where she sits on its National Council. Since 2016, she has been a councillor for Barcelona's Horta-Guinardó district, developing innovative local policies from a local perspective to contribute to global changes.

› Gabe Tobias
Gabe Tobias is the co-founder of the Movement School. He spent a decade working around the world with Oxfam and other NGOs on urban development and education programs. After returning to the US, he worked with Justice Democrats to help elect Jamaal Bowman, Cori Bush and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, as well as starting the Movement School to train the next generation of organizers. In 2021, he ran the Our City project to help elect local progressive champions in New York City, where he is based.

› Javier Toret Medina
Javier Toret is a psychologist, researcher, social activist and expert in digital strategy, political communication and technopolitics. He was a promoting member of Democracia Real Ya, the group that launched the demonstrations of the *Indignados* movement in 2011. Author of the book: *Tecnopolítica y 15M: la potencia de las multitudes conectadas* ("Technopolitics and 15M: The Power of the Connected Multitudes"), with a foreword by Manuel Castells. He has extensive experience in training, team building and grassroots digital empowerment in different countries in the global south, including Brazil, Mexico, India and South Africa.

He is one of the initiators of Barcelona en Comú's municipalist project, which led to the activist Ada Colau's election as mayor in 2015. He worked on the digital strategy of her electoral campaigns. In addition to working as a technology consultant for Thoughtworks, he has been an advisor on communication and digital strategy for the Ministry of Universities of the Spanish government under Minister Manuel Castells. He is now the promoter of a new communication channel for social transformation: La Futura Channel (lafuturachannel.net).

› Ernest Urtasun
Ernest Urtasun (Barcelona, 1982) is a Member of the European Parliament for En Comú Podem, vice-president of the Greens/EFA Political Group, coordinator of the Parliamentary Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs, member of the Subcommittee on Tax Matters (FISC) and substitute member of the Foreign Affairs Committee. He holds a BA in Economics, Diploma in International Relations and completed the Spanish Diplomatic Corps College. Since 1998, he has been politically active locally and internationally with Young Green Left (JEV), the FYEG Federation of Young European Greens and the EGP-European Green Party.

In 2017, the international municipal movement met in Barcelona with the aim of fostering global networks built on solidarity and hope. This summit served as a catalyst for municipalism and its expansion across all continents. Over the course of the following years, regional gatherings of Fearless Cities were held in Warsaw, New York, Brussels, Valparaíso, Naples and Belgrade, demonstrating the organisational strength of the global movement for ordinary people's right to cities and towns.

This book gathers some of the debates that took place in July 2021 during the second global edition of Fearless Cities, which emerged with the ambition to tackle the most challenging and provocative issues that cities, towns and rural areas are currently facing.

For us, "Fearless" means being brave enough to reach out to those who think differently, strong enough to be vulnerable and bold enough to get involved in the reality of a place instead of watching what's happening from the sidelines.

Amongst us all, starting from municipalism and feminism, we can foster countless experiences of rebirth, a new feminist humanism. Municipalities must be that common space that is open to all these transformations, to this innovation and to a full-throated defence of life.

Ada Colau, Manuela D'Ávila and Irací Hassler

THEY WANT US LONELY, BUT THEY WILL FIND US IN COMMON

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