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## **Fertile soil: The production of Prefigurative Territories by the Indignados movement in Barcelona**

Viviana Asara<sup>1</sup> and Giorgos Kallis<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Institute for Multi-Level Governance and Development, Vienna University of Economics and Business.

<sup>2</sup> ICREA and Institute for Environmental Science and Technology, Autonomous University of Barcelona

### **ABSTRACT**

Social movements do not only protest and demand political change – they produce new spaces too. Why and how? If we understand this, we can appreciate better the specificity and potential of the last cycle of mobilizations involving the encampment of cities' squares. This paper shows how the Indignados movement in Barcelona evolved from symbolizing an alternative future in the square to constructing alternatives in the city after. We find that people in alternative projects re-appropriate and transform urban space because they want to live differently and produce a radically different city, now. We conceptualize these new spaces as 'prefigurative territories', integrating the seemingly divergent anarchist theory of prefiguration with Lefebvre's Marxist theory of space production. Prefigurative projects have strategic horizons and struggle with conflicts when opening up. Against those charging the Indignados with a fetishization of the occupied square and a failure to achieve political goals, we argue for the continuing relevance of the movement as it moved from the production of differential, to the production of counter-spaces. Further research should investigate how these counter-spaces feed into processes of political change.

**KEYWORDS:** Social movement, movement of the squares, Indignados, prefigurative politics, space production, territory, community garden, Henri Lefebvre, 15-M, social centre

### **1. Introduction**

On the 15<sup>th</sup> of October 2011, a protest with the slogan "United against the global crisis" was held in 950 cities all over the world, five months after the emblematic encampment of Plaza del Sol in Madrid on the 15<sup>th</sup> of May. The 15M, or Indignados ('indignants') as they came to be known, movement in Barcelona marched with a different slogan - "from indignation to action". The atmosphere in the streets was intense after clashes between police and anti-austerity protesters during the movement's blockade of the Catalan Parliament. To avoid a new encampment, the police diverted the march from its natural end, Plaza Catalunya, the city's central

square and site of May's occupation, to the nearby 'Arc de Triomf'. As the frontline of the parade arrived to the centre of the Arc, a group of activists started fervently digging and planting. Within an hour and as the last protesters were arriving, a fully blown vegetable orchard was ready.

This was no accident. One year after the encampment five new community gardens initiated by Indignados activists had blossomed in the city. Many more gardens were revived. And there was a proliferation of new projects - from social centres to self-managed urban lots and occupied ex-factories. The garden symbolized the evolution of the movement towards action. But what type of action?

Planting food orchards is not the typical repertoire of a social movement. The garden opens a crack (Holloway, 2010) through which we can untangle the specificity of the Indignados mobilization. Understanding how the movement prefigures an alternative order while producing new spaces gives us better sense of the visions and strategies of this latest 'cycle' of global mobilization, more perhaps than reading its manifestos. And in doing so, we can conceptualize better the ways social movements contribute to the transformation of urban space.

The mobilizations that started in 2011 brought the concept of space to the centre stage of the study of social movements (Pickerill & Krinsky, 2012). From Tahrir Square to Plaza del Sol, from Occupy Wall Street to Ghezi Park and Syntagma Square, the occupation of urban space represented a new, common repertoire that made these movements part of a distinct global 'cycle of protest' (McCurdy et al., 2016; Tejerina et al., 2013; Hardt and Negri, 2012). Space was not temporarily filled, but occupied, settled and transformed.

The camp was not just a repertoire of contention but a vehicle for transformative political change - claiming and practicing real democracy, while asserting the right to debate and self-organize in public space (Asara, 2016; Ramadan, 2013; Martínez and García, 2015).

The politics adopted in the Occupy camps have been described as prefigurative before (Pickerill and Krinsky, 2012; Giri, 2013), but their spatial materialities and transformative dynamics remain undertheorized. This paper argues that prefigurative politics unfolds through the appropriation and production of new space, and that studying the spaces produced by the movement as 'prefigurative territories' allows us to understand their transformative potential better. The indignant camps, as we will see, recreated the means of daily reproduction through the modification of space: from the communal kitchen to the medical care tent, from the library to the toilets and tents (Ramadan, 2013; Maeckelbergh, 2012; Marom, 2013; Martínez & García, 2015; van de Sande, 2013). This re-organization of space however was not simply instrumental for the purposes of mobilization. Following Lefebvre, we can read these as interventions in the very process of appropriation of social space, producing alternative forms of public space that contrast the dominant socio-economic order (Dhaliwal, 2012; Halvorsen, 2014). The question then is how and why the movement produced the new spaces that it did, and what does this tell us about its transformational strategies and potential.

Such questions have received less attention in the Indignados/Occupy literature because most empirical studies covered only activity during the occupation of the squares. If the Indignados were a symbolic movement that ended with the eviction from the squares, then the transformative potential of appropriating space is not relevant. Studies focusing on the Occupy movement note a loss of momentum after the encampments, charging activists with a fetishization of space, concerned with the occupied space and their activities there while losing the bigger picture of social change (Hammond, 2013; Marcuse, 2011). Kaika and Karaliotas (2014) emphasize the failure of the movement in Greece to accomplish democratic change, but they do not follow the movement after the square. A few recent studies recognize the importance of spin-off projects following the encampments (Karaliotas, 2016; Flesher Fominaya 2017; Erensü and Karaman, 2016; Hadjimichalis, 2013; Martínez & García, 2015), but there is scant empirical investigation of such projects (Erensü and Karaman, 2016; Martínez & García, 2015).

Social movement studies are often preoccupied with the *political* outcomes of a movement - outcomes related to institutionalized politics (see Bosi et al. 2015). Equally important however are the *social* outcomes (Varvarousis et al. 2017) of a movement – in our case here, the social infrastructure and forms of social organization generated in the aftermath of the square occupations. The term social recalls Marx’s concept of social revolution, taken forward by authors such as De Angelis (2014) and Lefebvre (2014:691, 762) - one of the main theoretical references of this article. The social for Lefebvre includes “the relations between individuals and groups and the totality of those relations – daily life” (Lefebvre, 2014:691). A revolution cannot be called truly transformatory if it does not involve also what is most difficult of all to change, everyday life. However, social outcomes are themselves political, as they can perturb established dominant systems, “pos(ing) the socioeconomic basis for a new polity” (De Angelis (2014:301). Lefebvre compares everyday life to “*fertile soil*” (Lefebvre, 2014:109):

“Here everyday life is compared to fertile soil. A landscape without flowers or magnificent woods may be depressing for the passer-by; but flowers and trees should not make us forget the earth beneath, which has a secrete life and a richness of its own”.

The fertile soil of the Indignados movement in Barcelona as nourished in prefigurative territories is the subject of this article.

After the clearing of Plaza Catalunya, the ‘autonomous faction’ of the movement (see Asara, 2016) moved to neighbourhood organizing, aspiring to materialize the square’s abstract discussions and political imaginaries (see also Asara, forthcoming) to change everyday life. Here we study and interpret the “new spatialities of transformation” of the movement that “prefigure experimental relations for new organizational forms” (Dikeç and Swyngedouw, 2017:12) introducing the new concept of ‘prefigurative territories’. This brings together the seemingly in tension anarchist literature on prefigurative politics with Henri Lefebvre’s Marxist theory on the production of space. Putting these two theories in dialogue, we can explain better why the latest cycle of protest

took the form that it did, and appreciate better its achievements and prospects. Lefebvre's reflections on differential space, counter-space, territory and everyday-life - that we will present below - constitute a fertile ground for an emerging theory of prefigurative politics of space. While studies on prefigurative politics have generally missed an understanding of the politics of space, the scant empirical investigation on the Lefebvrian concepts of counter-space and differential space has prevented an analysis of the processual generation of counter-spaces, which is offered here by insights from the theory of prefigurative politics.

Our analysis draws on 74 in-depth interviews and 6 mini-focus groups conducted by the first author between May 2011 and May 2014 (see Annex). 38 interviewees were women, and the age of the sample varied between 20 and 73 years. Interviewees told us about the origins of their projects, and how and why they became involved. The first author spent some 600 hours as participant observer in the square, in community gardens, and in occupied spaces and social centres. She attended numerous neighbourhood assemblies, coordination meetings and events, keeping ethnographic notes, and recording everyday practices of appropriating the territory, with attention to interpersonal and political conflicts. The interviews were recorded, transcribed and analyzed through a thematic analysis (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003).

Section 2 elaborates the concept of prefigurative territories by connecting the literature on prefigurative politics with that of the production of space. Section 3 analyses the prefigurative production of space in the occupied Plaza Catalunya. Section 4 follows the spread of prefigurative territories from the occupied square to three emblematic projects: four new community gardens, a self-managed project on an appropriated vacant lot, and a cooperative centre. We explain the shared origins, horizons and approaches of these projects. Section 5 discusses cross-cutting findings. We argue that the prefigurative politics of the movement evolved from being consistent in terms of means and ends and foretasting an alternative future, to the actual building of alternatives. If the Square merely *symbolized* another order, the 'spin-off' projects consciously started building it. We discuss the challenges the projects face in opening and scaling up and how they go about them, before concluding with the implications and open questions of this research.

## **2. Prefiguration and space**

### **2.A Prefigurative politics**

Prefigurative politics, or prefiguration, is an approach to activism and social change that inscribes the goals of the movement into its practices and activities, creating the (vision of) alternative society, both in the present, and through a future-oriented creation of alternatives. The concept lies at the interception between several debates: anarchist and autonomist activism and theories of social change (Clough & Blumberg, 2012; Ince, 2012; Graeber, 2009; Gordon, 2008; Goyens, 2009), the new politics of the New Left (Maeckelbergh, 2011b), Gandhian non-violence and direct action (Franks, 2003; Carter, 1988), the women's and alterglobalization

movements (Robnett, 1996; Anahita, 2009), Maeckelbergh, 2011a; Graeber, 2002) and, more recently, the cycle of Occupy protests (Maeckelbergh, 2012; Smucker, 2013; Giri, 2013; van de Sande, 2013; Pickerill & Krinsky, 2012). The anarchist origins of the concept can be traced to Landauer (2010:188), who advocated disengagement from existing modes of social organization and reconstruction through creation of alternatives (Day, 2005), or before, Kropotkin's (1912) proposal to enact immediately the social relationships we desire, instead of waiting for the revolution. This resonates with the idea of building the new world "in the shell of the old" (Day, 2005; Clough & Blumberg, 2012; Ince, 2012). Boggs (1977) and Maeckelbergh find such 19<sup>th</sup> century anarchist ideas also in syndicalist and council communists and the 1848 revolts, the 1871 Paris Commune and the Spanish Civil War.

Prefigurative politics consists of three elements (Yates, 2015):

1) an equivalence between means and ends, connected to rejection of hierarchy.

The premise is that an egalitarian society cannot start from authoritarian organization (Franks, 2003): "means and ends are not to be distinguished. Socialism is not an end that requires means. Socialism is action that carries its ends within itself" (Landauer, 2010:201). For critics like Breines (1982) this focus on means is typical of the New Left's "wariness of hierarchy and centralized organization", which sets it apart from the "strategic politics" of the workers' movement. Polletta, however, thinks prefigurative structures are ephemeral because egalitarian decision-making cannot be sustained in the face of social inequalities and the need for effective action (1999:12). Maeckelbergh (2011a) instead argues that prefigurative politics is not simply "expressive", but also strategic: through experimentation and horizontality, it creates the structures and processes necessary to decide collectively the goals of a movement. This also relates to the second dimension of prefigurative politics.

2) a foretaste of a future democratic society, which allows to collectively define open goals during the prefigurative process.

Prefiguration is "synecdochic" or else, "proleptic" (Yates, 2015) because "it contains elements of the object it is representing" (Franks, 2003; Carter, 1988). Prefiguration involves an action which is itself a model for the change one wishes to bring about (Graeber, 2009:210). Proleptic means that this action enacts or anticipates some feature of an alternative world as if it had already been achieved, "building the future in the present" (Yates, 2015; Pickerill and Chatterton, 2006). Personal transformation, for those advocating prefigurative politics, cannot be separated from structural change. Revolution is an ongoing process of social and personal transformation - to live and practice relationships and political forms that embody the desired society (Epstein, 1991; Breines, 1982).

3) the building of alternatives.

"Constructive direct action" (Gordon, 2008) or construction of alternatives (Yates, 2015) builds on *experimentation* in mobilization and everyday activities, and is rendered effective through *proliferation* of



similar practices and *demonstration* that alternatives are possible (Yates, 2015). As the Zapatistas said, “preguntando caminamos” (‘asking, we walk’, meaning ‘questioning, we advance’). The “struggle for a different society must create that society through its forms of struggle” (Holloway, 2010:45). Prefigurative politics espouses interstitial transformation - social change in the cracks of dominant social structures of power (Wright, 2010). This involves transformation of values, accretion and the building of community (Lakey, 1973; Breines, 1982; Epstein, 1991), and re-subjectivation in “real utopias” and alternative economic practices (Gibson-Graham, 2006; Wright, 2010). The point is to “stop making capitalism”: instead of “focusing our attention on the destruction of capitalism, we concentrate on building something else” (Holloway, 2010:50; Dinerstein, 2012).

The spatial dimension, however, that was so important during the square occupations of the indignados is missing from the prefigurative politics literature. To this we now turn, mobilizing Lefebvre’s theory of the production of space.

## **2.B Lefebvre and the production of space by social movements**

The emerging literature on the geographies of social movements, a field deciphering the “ways in which geography matters to the imaginaries, practices and trajectories” of social movements (Leitner et al., 2008:158) draws heavily on Lefebvre (1991, 2009a, 2009b). However, while the majority of empirical studies focus on Lefebvre’s “conceptual triad”, i.e. perceived, conceived and lived space (e.g. Halvorsen, 2017; Garmany, 2008; Eizenberg, 2011), here we are interested in ‘differential space’ and ‘counter-spaces’, concepts central though less systematically developed by Lefebvre and under-explored in the social movements literature (Leary-Owhin, 2016; Dhaliwal, 2012; Halvorsen, 2015).

For Lefebvre (1991), space is a social product. Each society and mode of production organizes and produces its own space and time. Social space is nowadays principally a commodity consumed; a means of production; and a means via which the bourgeoisie dominates. Space is “the weapon and the sign of class struggle”, revealing social relations (Lefebvre, 1991:349, 109). The deep conflict in the production of space stems from the intrinsic tension between the usage and appropriation of place for use value, versus its domination through private ownership for exchange value. For Lefebvre capitalism and the state organize space as abstract space - space that is fragmented (into discrete units that can be privatized and commodified); homogenous (flattening out spatial diversity and imposing a logic of exchangeability); and hierarchical, based on the distribution of power and resources (Lefebvre, 1991; Butler, 2012). Class struggle intervenes today more than ever in the production of space, preventing abstract space from achieving absolute dominance, “taking over the whole planet and papering over all differences” (Lefebvre, 1991:55). Only struggle can generate differences “which are not intrinsic to economic growth qua strategy, ‘logic’ or ‘system’” (ibid).

Lefebvre calls these maximal or produced differences. Maximal difference involves the “shattering of a system” (ibid:372) and the idea of total revolution, a utopia, meant, in a way that closely resounds with prefigurative politics’ prolepsis, as “willing what is revealed by creating itself: difference” (Lefebvre, 1980:111). Differential forces resist the homogenising imperatives of industry and growth that segregate society and destroy nature (ibid:79). Differential space is produced through appropriation, as in the midst of uprisings (Lefebvre, 1980), such as the occupations of May 1968 in France. Differences can also be produced in the interstices of everyday life, such as in Latin American shanty towns (Lefebvre, 1991:373). Difference does not always take the form of resistance. It could also unfold as “exteriorities” like a heterotopia, with an ephemeral character. Space appropriation concerns use-value and the transformation of space in order to serve the needs of a group. Differential space is a space of enjoyment, where life rhythms and times are lived. It “restores unity to what abstract space breaks up – to the functions, elements and moments of social practice. It will put an end to those localizations which shatter the integrity of the individual body, the social body, the corpus of human needs, and the corpus of knowledge” (ibid: 52).

The encampments in the squares, as we will see, are a Lefebvrian differential space, in which the differences of human social life and the integrity of human needs are affirmed (Dhaliwal, 2012). However, the forces of homogenization seek to absorb differences, and “will succeed if these retain a defensive posture and no counterattack is mounted from their side” (Lefebvre, 1991:373). Hence for Lefebvre the “project for a different society” should take the “road of the concrete” via “active theoretical and practical negation, via counter-projects or counterplans”, embodied in what he called ‘counter-space’ (Lefebvre, 1991:419). Counter-spaces are differential spaces from where an offensive strategy is mounted, merging an “inventive capacity” with “a radical critique of the political realm, politics and the state” (Lefebvre, 1991:387, translation modified). They start to emerge as “initially Utopian alternatives to actually existing 'real' space” (Lefebvre, 1991:349), for example “when a community fights the construction of urban motorways or housing developments, when it demands 'amenities' or empty spaces for play and encounter” (ibid:381). They involve a collective management of space and relationships with different groups “with their multiple, varied and even contradictory interests” (Lefebvre 1991:419,422) - even “unlikely alliances” between very different groups and people (Lefebvre 1991:380). They can constitute a leeway to slowly change everyday life (a similar concern of prefigurative politics) and not just institutions or political apparatuses, a necessary corollary of a revolutionary social transformation (Lefebvre, 2014). Struggling for concrete objectives, “local powers” (ibid) force authorities to take their counter-projects into account, opposing a real democracy to administrative rationality (Lefebvre 1991:420; 2009a:250), and could lead to wider, radical revolt (ibid: 235). Territory is for Lefebvre a historically specific form of social space, “being produced and reproduced by the actions of the state and through political struggles over the latter” (Brennen & Elden, 2009:367). The politics of space is fought out over diverse territorial arenas (Lefebvre, 2009a:35), opposing the state’s production of the national territory to the configuration of territory as the stake, site and dimension of social struggles for *autogestion* (Lefebvre,

2009a:134; see also Halvorsen 2015). In a means-ends consistency fashion, autogestion is for Lefebvre both the means and the end (Lefebvre, 2009:194), pointing to a transformation of everyday life (Lefebvre, 1976:124) through intervention in the space and the realm of social needs (Lefebvre, 2009:193). We combine these insights on territory, the spatiality privileged by the Occupy/Indignados (Halvorsen, 2012, 2015), differential and counter-space, with the prefigurative politics literature in the next section.

## **2.C Prefigurative territories**

Prefigurative territories are spaces produced through prefigurative politics. Prefigurative politics emerges in moments of contestation, when through appropriation groups produce processual political spaces. Our proposition here is that as a social movement develops, prefigurative territories may evolve from a consistency between means and ends and a proleptic enactment of the future, to the third more powerful dimension of prefiguration, the building of alternatives. This happens through a movement of preservation of the first two components but further realization and becoming into the third, which resonates with Lefebvre's dialectical thought (see Goonewardena et al, 2008:31). This movement parallels an evolution from differential to counter-spaces - prefigurative territories in which the "project for a different society" takes an offensive "road of the concrete" (Lefebvre,1991:419) by setting clear specific objectives and counter-plans. Prefigurative politics is grounded in the territory as a site of becoming through practices of resubjectivation and alternative economic institutions (Gibson-Graham, 2006) transforming everyday life by determining new social needs, and animated by a transformational vision to upscale through networking.

According to Lefebvre, revolutionary praxis cannot be separated from the theory of everyday life transformation (Lefebvre, 2014:390), and the latter means nothing without production of an appropriated space (Lefebvre, 2009a:186). A prefigurative understanding of territory opens the spatial and political imagination to radical alternatives (Ince, 2012) by managing the space collectively (Lefebvre's *autogestion*) and living the values participants wish to be hegemonic, proleptically revealing something by creating it (Lefebvre, 1980). Mounting a counter-attack by a self-management of territory, counter-spaces can force authorities to take into account their counter-plans, while engaging in demonstration and proliferation through open prefiguration.

This evolution resonates with Badiou's (2012) fidelity to the inaugural event – in our case we will show how the prefigurative territories after the square kept the imprint of Plaza Catalunya's social practices and imaginaries, but also evolved to something new. The occupied square displayed the first two components of prefigurative politics, while the projects that followed evolved into the third. In the projects, radical imaginaries were not just symbolized, but concretely implemented with a transformational perspective. While the synecdochic dimension of the square involved building the future in the present, the projects that followed focused on building the present towards the future.

Integrating prefigurative politics with Lefebvre's theory of differential and counter-space lets us see the political prospects of movements like the Indignados under a different light and respond to Polletta's (1999) concern about the transient character of prefigurative structures. The means-ends consistency expressed in horizontal decision making by prefigurative movements is not necessarily a rejection of organization (Breines, 1982), but a creation of horizontal and decentralized organization (Graeber, 2002) for the 'autogestion' (i.e. self-management) of territories. The strategic dimension of prefigurative politics lies in collectively determining the way forward by experimenting with different practices and social relations (Maeckelbergh, 2011a), but also, we argue, in a vision of transformational change and set of concrete objectives materialized in counter-spaces. "Open prefiguration" (Dhaliwal, 2012) aims to engage with diverse groups with multiple interests (Lefebvre, 1991:380) leading, if successful, to internal and external (re)politicization. Conflicts are unavoidable and ensure that prefigurative territories do not turn into 'insular enclaves' (Dhaliwal, 2012) or closed self-reproducing communities (Karaliotas, 2017:14).

Let us now see how these ideas explain the material reality of the occupied square and the projects that followed.

### **3. Plaza Catalunya: The space of an occupied Square**

The encampment of Barcelona started on 16 May 2011, one day after the attempt to evict protesters from Plaza del Sol in Madrid. 150 people took part in the first assembly, proclaiming the Square as a "free and pacific space". The first assemblies were "very improvised [talks], people going up to the microphone and shouting words" (I13:17). A car in the middle of the square provided electricity to a stage attached to it. After initial moments of excitement and chaos, the Square "looking like a Moroccan 'souk', with so many people looking for something although there was not much to search for" (I24:471), activists divided the central square into three spaces for "open forum and discussions". They symbolically named these spaces Tahrir, Iceland and Palestine. The "General Assembly" (GA) became the organ deciding on issues linked to the management of the Square, with autonomous commissions multiplying day by the day, responding to the needs of a swelling encampment (see Figure 1).

[FIGURE 1 HERE]

The Square gradually turned into a "psychomagic" differential space riddled with "imagination and creativity" (I19:616), a micro-cosmos of symbolized alternatives combining psychophysical needs with social needs, artistic and cultural expressions. The first commissions, each with its tent in the space, realized the synecdochic dimension, enacting the future world in the present, while securing the social reproduction of the Square. A Kitchen commission provided food to everyone with voluntary contributions, avoiding the use of plastic

dishes. An Environment Commission demanded an ecological encampment - it organized recycling and cleaned the Square. An Economics commission managed the money collected through donations, while an Infrastructure Commission set up the technical facilities, from the green electricity of cycling dynamos and solar panels powering the stage and the tents, to the installation of bathrooms. An Activities commission coordinated speeches, concerts, and other events, set up a library with donated books and a cinema discussion space, as well as an art gallery with canvases and sculptures. An Education commission operated a children's playground, and set up a study room, next to the Theatre tent, so that "students can study here in the square"[1]. The Health Commission offered first aid, natural therapies and psychological help. A Living Together Commission detected and prevented conflicts, organising sessions of laughing therapy and massages, performed in a Harmony Space, next to the Community Garden. Like Lefebvre envisioned, life rhythms and times were lived in the encampment. For Veronica "the square was "emotions with legs... it was a space for experimenting, to try, to relieve yourself, where everyone brought to the table the emotions she was carrying" (I79, focus group). Poetry reading was one of the most emotional moments, featuring renowned Catalan leftist poets such as Enric Casasses and Blanca Llum Vidal.

In Lefebvrian terms, a 'mirroring integration' was established between the corpus of knowledge and the corpus of social needs. The social production of space produced practices and political imaginaries. The division of commissions and spaces charged with the organization of the encampment was paralleled a few days later with a similar distribution of sub-commissions within the Commission charged with producing the Contents (texts, demands) of the movement (see Figure 1). The commissions charged with the management of the square focused on reproductive tasks, e.g. the Environment Commission took care of cleaning the square. Their Content counterparts instead charged with theoretical discussions and produced manifestos, e.g. the Environment Sub-Commission of the Contents Commission discussed environmental problems and policies. In the square's differential space abstract reflections (Lefebvre's corpus of knowledge) about the future society to be were integrated with practices of social reproduction (Lefebvre's social body and corpus of human needs).

A community garden was planted the sixth day of the encampment. The crowds flowing in stepped on and destroyed the flowerbed of the square. A group of activists, forming a Garden Group, replanted the damaged 60 square metre plot with edible plants. This was a modification of public property and the Legal and Environmental Commissions worried that authorities could use this legal infringement to order an eviction. The Garden Group wrote in response a letter and manifesto explaining "what's the point of a garden in Plaza Catalunya". The garden, they claimed, was "a symbolic space" to re-appropriate and reflect on public space through collective creation; a space from which to denounce the capitalist agro-industrial model, making possible "another city, a city with more gardens and less banks, with more common spaces and less privatizing speculation" (15M Garden Group, 2011). "In the same way a real democracy cannot exist if the control of the economy is in the hands of banks, a real democracy cannot exist if the control of our food is in the hands of multinationals" (15M Garden Group, 2011). A "coherent space" builds consistency between process and

claims for structural political change (or means and ends, in prefigurative language): “crowning the square’s beautiful assamblarian abstractions”, the garden allowed to “reduce the distance between our ideas and our acts”, demonstrating that “we are capable of self-managing what we demand” (ibid). Similarly to other studies on communitarian gardens (Calvet-Mir and March, 2017), “political gardening” in the square involved a vision of collective transformation - of the local community and the global economic system. The garden was hence synecdochically prefigurative, “a symbolic space of reflection on urban agro-ecology and on the necessity to change the agro-food model” (I41). As powerfully put by a participant,

“Plaza Catalunya was a micro-cosmos of alternatives, there had to be a garden to explain that (...) the power we have is also to decide what we eat and produce, no? That we could also come full circle in the Square, produce what we would eat in the collective kitchen.” (I40:132).

#### **4. After the square**

“We have to widen the movement to other places. We changed the face of Plaza Catalunya, but we can change the face of all Catalunya and of all Spain” (participant of the square at the GA, 23 May)

During the first month of occupation it became clear that the movement had to decentralize and change format, to ensure a sustained participation of new people. There were different views on whether and when the encampment should end (Asara, 2016), and it was the GA that finally took the decision to leave the square. Neighbourhood assemblies mirroring the GA were set up during, and continued after the end of the occupation, meeting periodically. In this second phase, the mobilization shifted - in the words used by activists in the square - to the ‘creation of alternatives’.

The neighbourhood assemblies, however, gradually lost their initial dynamism while new place-based projects were born in their bosom, attracting more people and energies. The proximity in the Square had forged new networks and collaborations between different movements such as the squatters’ and alterglobalization movement (Martínez & García, 2015), and between activists and people new to activism, propelling projects presented like the ones we present below. As more traditional, massive forms of contentious political action such as the blockades of the Catalan and Spanish Parliaments failed to have a political effect, counter-projects predominated in the third phase of mobilization. Compared to the dominance of networks in the alter-globalization movement, the Indignados gave pre-eminence to territory (Halvorsen, 2012) as a space from where prefigurative politics could launch alternatives.

In this and the next section we follow the aftermath of the square in the urban gardens of the neighbourhoods of Poble Nou and Raval; in ‘Recreant Cruïlles’, a re-appropriated vacant lot in the middle class neighbourhood of Nova Esquerra de l’Eixample; and in a cooperative social centre in the neighbourhood of Poble Sec (‘Ateneu Cooperatiu La Base’, thereafter La Base). These are neighbourhoods in the centre of Barcelona, walking distance from Plaza Catalunya. Except Eixample, a middle class neighbourhood with pockets of high income,

the other three are working class inner city quarters (Raval also with a strong presence of immigrants) (Barcelona Municipality, 2014). All three experience a process of gentrification by professionals and tourism.

The social composition of the projects varies. We did not collect data on participants' profiles, but from our direct experience these cannot be dismissed as middle-class professionals in search of lifestyle experiences. Most core participants in Raval, Poble Nou or Poble Sec were unemployed or precarious salaried workers in their late 20s and 30s, facing problems with rising rents and costs of living. This has a bearing on the type of alternatives being created (see also Blanco et al, 2015). These projects answered both ideals of radical socio-economic change and needs to create resilience support mechanisms, offering solutions to concrete needs and problems, such as support with child caring or employment opportunities. In Eixample instead the demographic was older, slightly less precarious and more oriented to quality of life considerations. Let us present here the projects, focussing on what is common and what is different among them.

All projects we studied were to a lesser or more degree spin-offs of the square. After interactions in the square, for example, a dozen of 'community gardens' in Barcelona - that is gardens sharing communitarian and self-management principles and often squatting land (Camps-Calvet et al., 2015) - formed a network . The network exchanged information, tools and autochthonous seeds, held joint meetings and launched a new website. In October 2011, the 'Garden Commission' of the indignados assembly of the neighbourhood of Poble Nou squatted a 1,000 square metres empty lot, creating the first indignados garden of the city for about 20 families (two more gardens were to follow in Poble Nou - our observations here are from all three gardens). Our other case study, the Xino Garden in Raval preceded the occupation, but the Square brought new recruits and renewed activity (figure 2).

[FIGURE 2 HERE]

Like the gardens of Poble Nou, the decision to occupy and transform Recreant Cruïlles, a vacant 5500 square metre urban lot belonging to the municipality (figure 3) also came out of the Indignados' neighbourhood assembly in Eixample Esquerra.

[FIGURE 3 HERE]

Likewise La Base (Figure 4), an umbrella project hosting nine different sub-projects in a rented building, with more than 150 members, was conceived in autumn 2012 in one of the commissions of the Indignados' assembly of Poble Sec.

[FIGURE 4 HERE]

The decentralization of the movement from the squares was vital for the proliferation of spin-off projects, but these projects were possible not only because of the surrounding ‘social climate’ [2] (Fernández-Savater, 2012), but also because of the bequests left by previous social movements. If the Indignados “could take the decision to ‘go back to the neighbourhoods’ this was because they had *somewhere to go*” (Fominaya, 2017:8). The neighbourhood movement dated back to Francoist Spain (Castells, 1983; Borja, 1975), and continued its role in Spanish political life as an “institutionalized movement” through so-called ‘neighbourhood associations’. The imaginary of the square, and the projects after, was strongly imbued also with ideas from Barcelona’s rich anarchist and cooperative past. La Base’s cooperative project (more on this below) was inspired by the Catalan tradition of workers associationism at the turn of last century and the *Ateneus Populars* - cultural and political centres for the working classes – and by consumers’ cooperatives set up at the time to satisfy workers’ necessities. The knowledge, networks and spaces provided by Barcelona’s vibrant squatters’ and alterglobalization movements were also important and apparent in the facilitation and contents of square assemblies, and later, in the use of squatting in some of the cases (see also Martínez & García, 2015) such as the gardens, or the convergence with squatting activists in La Base.

The projects we studied had different tenure arrangements, and different degrees of conflict or engagement with authorities and the market. The community gardens squatted private space and they were thus illegal. La Base instead rented the space from an individual in the market. The activists there were seeking a certain degree of permanence free to develop their projects without the vulnerability and insecurity of an illegal occupation. Recreant Cruilles on the other hand was a self-managed project on a previously disused public lot and an interesting case since it was operating since 2013 under a cession of use scheme from the municipality. Activists started to meet in front of the fenced lot back in autumn 2011, mounting a campaign with public events, participatory seminars and assemblies in order to discuss with the neighbourhood how to appropriate the lot and what projects to implement. They eventually applied for a call by the municipality to cede ‘empty spaces’ (disused public property) to community organizations with programs to self-manage them. The space in Recreant Cruilles included in the call, and eventually granted, was 580 square metres, but some activists saw it as a ‘Trojan horse’ (I75) for appropriating the whole 5500 square metres lot.

Activists in Recreant Cruilles, as in the other cases we studied, aimed to appropriate a differential space and transform it into a counter-space, a territory or from which they can launch a broader transformation in the neighbourhoods and in the city. The municipality had promised back in 2006 to build public housing and two schools in the lot. The project was intended to generate momentum and press the municipality to swiftly deliver the promised facilities, while creating a new green and cultural space in the abandoned lot. The core group organized public events and participatory seminars open to everyone to decide the type of projects the neighbourhood wanted in the space. As Lefebvre argues, the production of this counter-space involved articulation with diverse actors, in the case of Recreant Cruilles the Association of Students’ Parents and environmental groups. There was also close collaboration with the Neighbourhood Association of Eixample Esquerra, which the activists joined and through which they applied for the municipality’s call since this



required juridical standing. Operating since January 2014 the project granted by the municipality includes a community garden and spaces for cultural and social activities. It is envisaged as a spur for broader planning modifications in the neighbourhood, including pedestrianization and the creation of the first square in the area, and the transformation of what a participant described as an ‘alienated neighbourhood’ (I73). The occupied lot then served as the space from which to launch a broader transformation of the surrounding territory.

Like *Recreant Cruilles* and the Square, we observed in all projects a multi-functionality - combining (re)productive with political or intellectual activities. In the *Poble Nou* gardens participants grew food, held assemblies, and organized concerts and jam sessions, communal meals, activities for children and workshops. Rather than just ‘productive spaces’, activists envisaged their community gardens as ‘agro-cultural spaces’ (I40), where people can enjoy together cultural activities organized in a green space in the middle of the city. The *Poble Nou* garden put in practice communal self-management and agro-ecological agriculture, but also served as a launching site for denouncing housing speculation and house evictions propelled by the loan and housing crisis, and affecting the lives of activists and neighbours. The personal and the political, the productive and the reproductive, came together in the garden.

*La Base* (Figure 4), likewise, was not only a gathering, social space, but also a project for self-employment and a self-managed economic infrastructure. It was also a site for organizing and coordinating political action. After collective refurbishment, the building opened in January 2014. Participants shared objectives and principles – such as community, autonomy, equity, solidarity and permaculture – in their projects and also set up a common fund to pay for non-remunerative activities. The nine sub-projects hosted in *La Base* included a consumers’ cooperative including 40 families; a communitarian canteen; a catering cooperative; a bar (all four projects using food supplied by a local organic farmer); a collective providing social support to female migrants; an IT-support collective; a 3,000-book library; a co-maternity and shared nursing group including 30 families committed to free education principles; and a ‘Crafts Ateneu’ providing training and services on carpentry, construction and electrician’s works. *La Base*’s weekly agenda includes plenty of social, cultural and political activities, and the space is used by many other collectives. In synergy with the *Poble Sec*’s *Indignados* assembly, a second-hand barter market is frequently held. *La Base* participates also in an anti-gentrification campaign with 60 more entities to stop the city’s new plan for *Poble Sec*.

As our interlocutors from *La Base* argued, the local dimension enables to “bring the revolution to our everyday life” (I49) and to create and sustain a “base” (therein the name), rooted in community and autonomous economic structures. While activists have a diversity of backgrounds, *La Base*’s group shares an ideological commitment to the overarching concept of ‘cooperativism’. Cooperativism for them is not only a form of ownership and work organization but solidarity, mutual support, and direct participation of all in a common project. In terms reminiscent of Lefebvre, the transformational vision of *La Base* is grounded on the concept of ‘cooperative neighbourhood’ - a self-managed solidarity infrastructure based on cooperation among neighbours, and aimed at “satisfying all aspects of our lives” (I49:388), building gradually a political counterpower in the neighbourhood and later, the city (Córdoba-Mendiola and Dalmau 2013).

As in La Base, activists in the urban gardens do not work there only to meet their needs, but also because of a long-term dream to supply the city with food through (peri) urban agriculture. The gardens are a synecdochic production of this future, in a concrete place, like La Base is a concrete production of the vision of a cooperative neighbourhood. For participants in Recreant Cruïlles too, their project exemplifies the shift of the Indignados movement to a proactive attitude “from protest to proposal and from proposal to action” (I69:38). Instead of only making demands to the state, they acted to realize these demands demonstrating that “a different model of a city” (I69) is possible. They want a city with less cars and more space for pedestrians and they put this in practice when for example, they close the surrounding streets to traffic for the whole day during the monthly ‘Market of the Peasants’, with stalls from agro-ecological farmers occupying the streets.

The garden is both the symbol and the medium of this prefiguration and is no coincidence that all projects want their food garden. The garden is the space that infuses the political with the social, the productive with the reproductive, the present with the future, the symbolic with the material. In Recreant Cruïlles a 40 square metre permaculture garden was conceived as a tool for thinking about another food consumption model. The seasonable vegetables it produces are consumed by its growers and shared during collective celebrations that bring people together. In La Base there is a campaign to obtain the cession of use of a garden from the municipality, and turn it into a space of permaculture. The permaculture principle - a symbiotic connection with nature and its rhythms – is promoted by activists in La Base as a way of life that cohabits the territory. In a means-ends fashion, activists put in practice these permaculture principles when choosing ‘agroecological’ products for their canteen or catering, and in using ecological products and methods for the refurbishment of the building.

## **5. The prospects and tensions of prefigurative territories**

The cases analysed show how prefigurative politics is interwoven with re-appropriating and producing new space - a symbiotic relationship which we called prefigurative territories. Prefigurative politics evolved within the Indignados movement from the first two components of prefiguration, the synecdochic-proleptic and the means-ends consistency, in the encampment, to a third moment, the creation of alternatives, in the spin-off projects, that preserved nonetheless the first two dimensions. With concrete projects, the creation of alternatives was no longer ephemeral. Contrary to critics (e.g. Taylor 2013; Smucker, 2013; Gitlin 2013; Giri, 2013), our cases show that the prefigurative politics of the squares does not necessarily degrade to “lifestylism” or stay congealed into a fetishization of space in the form of the camp (Marcuse, 2011; Miller & Nicholls, 2013). Let us elaborate.

The square’s prefigurative politics involved production and intervention onto the space, but this materiality was contingent and symbolic. Plaza Catalunya was “a micro-cosmos of alternatives”, a space synecdochic of

the diverse radical imaginaries it contained and gave life to. The children's playground, the community garden, or the poetry readings all signified an alternative society; one where emotional arousal, solidarity, cooperation and sharing, equality, autonomy and self-management, ecological visions, artistic and cultural sensibilities, caring and creative expressions were moulded. The Square was a differential space "restoring unity" to "the functions, elements and moments of social practice" (Lefebvre, 1991:52), satisfying the needs of its daily reproduction, from psychophysical wellbeing to food, "coming full circle" through the community garden "eating what we cultivate", and demonstrating that "local, seasonal, ecological agriculture managed by the producers" (15M Garden Group, 2011) is possible. The Lefebvrian mirroring of abstractions and social needs helps us to reject a vision of the prefigurative politics of camps as expressive, personalistic, and process fetishizing (Gitlin, 2013; Smucker, 2013; Taylor, 2013), and even more so if we follow the evolution of the square.

*Experimentation* bridges the second (prolepsis) to the third dimension of prefigurative politics. Experiments consistent with their ends are developed within the bounds of "a pragmatic desire to maintain and build alternative projects" (Chatterton & Pickerill, 2010:480), adapted to everyday constraints, but always entailing self-reflection and a continuous work of self-definition. As one participant of La Base told us: "we will not be able to change things if we do not organize ourselves in a way that is an image of what we want to do and that strengthens us. ...[Otherwise] we won't be able to change the existing order, and we would only be able to reproduce it" (I48:72). Like Recreant Cruïlles, which is a laboratory for reform of the city's planning model, La Base is a laboratory for a cooperative urban economy combining activism with self-employment. The ecological construction works, the use of agro-ecological products and self-employment are prime examples in La Base of an experimental "living according to alternative values", carried out through self-management of territories. As differential spaces mounting an offensive strategy, counter-spaces affect everyday life by reconnecting different spaces (of work and non-work, everyday life and the environment) (Lefebvre, 1991:382,59) and intervening in the realm of social needs (ibid, 2009:193).

The building of alternatives expresses also a concern for *demonstration*. As one interviewee of Recreant Cruïlles mentioned referring to the activities and celebrations that closed the traffic in adjacent streets: "(our objective is) to demonstrate not so much discursively, but in the daily practice by occupying space...that it is indeed possible that the neighbourhood is really pedestrianized and experiment with what this would imply" (I69:34). Born as an "initially Utopian alternative to actually existing 'real' space" (Lefebvre, 1991:349), the projects seek to demonstrate the "impossible-possible" (Lefebvre, 1980:111), that the alternatives proposed are "not at all utopic" (I50: 246, La Base). In La Base demonstration connects to history, demonstrating that the radical cooperativism of the 1930s was not a "marginal alternative", but one that can be part of the future.

Another shared concern of the projects is *proliferation*, and a continuous opening up of the territories to the wider neighbourhood, i.e. open prefiguration (Dhaliwal, 2012). The projects we studied all keep detailed

records of their activity, and the information is freely accessible for the wider citizenry. The projects emerged out of the confluence of diverse movements and groups and actively want to change their neighbourhoods. 'Opening up' is vital, especially if the projects are not to turn into "insular enclaves" (ibid). A commitment to open prefiguration differentiates prefigurative territories from scenes (Leach and Haunss, 2008) or conventional social centres, that following Hirschman's (1979) typology are exit strategies (Mudu, 2012:418) or "infrastructure for escaping" (Sguiglia, 2011). Activists in the Xino garden for example, purposely advertised and opened their project to the quarter. In Poble Nou, after the success of the first garden, the activists occupied two other nearby lots, responding to peoples' needs for more spaces like it. Likewise, the Recreant Cruïlles project from its outset was based on proactive inclusiveness, involving citizens and environmental organizations. The cartoon painted on the entrance door of the occupied lot declared: "this space is yours". La Base, although housed in a rented property, was also conceived as a space for the wider neighbourhood. It has an open membership policy, and it was fruit of collaboration between Indignados participants and other activists. Open prefiguration means that the projects are not spaces outside of hegemonic social relationships, but interstices in the centre of the city. Following Lefebvre, prefigurative territories can endure as counter-spaces only as long as they are capable to open up to the wider, non-activist environment.

Opening up, however, inevitably involves tensions with residents or other groups who may not share the political objectives or ambitions of the core activists who start a project. The question is not whether there is conflict or not but whether conflict is productively renewing politics, or instead it leads to a stalemate. In the square, conflict over the possible legal repercussions of the garden pushed the Garden Group to develop a political case for the garden. In Poble Nou, many of the new participants in the two new gardens were not linked to the Indignados movement, and did not care to protest against gentrification, or share a communitarian ethic. As one of the founding participants put it, they merely wanted "a piece of land to cultivate" (I44:25). As a conflict bred, core activists produced a "Handbook of the Good Orchard" to define what were the minimal behaviours participants should comply with (i.e. taking care of the orchard and participating to the assemblies), threatening with exclusion those that did not. Open prefiguration engendered a conflict that led to a repoliticization of political gardening (Calvet-Mir and March, 2017) through a resolution that, although fragile, implied the imposition of one of two parties's interests over the other, and inevitably the exclusion of a few.

Similarly in the Xino garden, when the garden assembly reached out of the activist core, it attracted new recruits who did not have an activist profile, many motivated by the enjoyment of a pleasant neighbourhood space. As an activist complained, they "did not get assembly dynamics" (I40) and were not following established farming rules. A clash between old and new participants ensued over "who is going to impose their vision about the garden", or ultimately "whose garden is this" (I40:743). After a period of conflict, the assembly decided to organize a day of formation and debate in which to discuss "how we all would like the garden to be". Veteran participants explained the way the assembly process works, and shared farming knowledge. They discussed rules over practical matters, adjusting and accommodating these rules where

necessary to the expectations of the new participants. In this case, the conflict resolution involved some confluence and compromise (and even, as some of our interviewees put it, ‘personal transformations’).

In Recreant Cruïlles too there were two parties with diverging interests. The core Indignado activists wanted the whole plot to become a green area. They proposed to place the planned public facilities into other empty buildings in the neighbourhood, avoiding the construction of new facilities. The more traditional neighbourhood association and the parents group on the other hand, perceived the occupation as transitory and only as an instrument for pressing the municipality to construct the promised facilities. This was a conflict-in-process during fieldwork, later solved by the group officially accepting the construction of only one public school.

In La Base, inclusion meant also internal conflict, as individuals from different groups and with different viewpoints came to constitute the project. During the refurbishment of the building, there was tension between environmental activists on the one hand and participants coming from the squatter and student movement on the other. This centred around the question of carrying out the work in a more ecological manner (using organic paint etc), which had higher costs and required more work and time. Through constant deliberations here environmentalists convinced the rest of the group to abide to a permaculture principle in its everyday doings.

Conflicts should not be seen as failures. In some cases a conflict may lead to the exclusion of some people, in others to compromises, creative solutions or renewed politicization. Whatever their outcome, the presence of conflicts is the necessary fruit of relationships between diverse groups and the “unlikely alliances” of counter-spaces (Lefebvre, 1991:380). There is no automatic opening up - it has to be proactively worked out. Our fieldwork was undertaken during the early life of these prefigurative territories and their dynamism may fade away with time if the activist cores become more endogamic, and detached from local residents. Prefigurative territories face constraints - limited time, burn-out, or economic difficulties, such as those affecting the self-employed cooperativists in La Base. This may lead to limiting engagement with people in the neighbourhood, despite aspirations for broader change at the city level; and it may create contradictions. While the means-ends consistency is sought, prefigurative politics can entail also pragmatic negotiations such as paying rent or doing remunerated work, creating a “sense of living between worlds: the one they are struggling against and the one they are trying to achieve” (Chatterton and Pickerill, 2010:737).

Like other prefigurative projects, the ones we studied have a strategic transformational vision, that goes well beyond the bounds of their immediate territory. Community gardens activists want to supply the city with organic agriculture, Recreant Cruïlles activists to change the planning of the neighbourhood, and La Base yearn to create a “cooperative neighbourhood” and a “common city”. Can they do it though?

This depends on the articulation between counter-spaces and broader processes of political change. This is the object of further research (Asara and Subirats, 2016). Here we note that in Spain, unlike elsewhere, the squares

gave rise to institutionalized political movements such as *Podemos* or *Barcelona en Comú*, the party that now governs the city of Barcelona. Social outcomes were related to political outcomes and the indignant territories and people constituted a counter-hegemonic sounding board and a core constituency for the emergence of the movement-party *Barcelona en Comú* (Asara and Subirats, 2016). In some cases prefigurative territories functioned as launching sites for political outcomes. Activists in Recreant Cruïlles for example were central in electing Josep Lluís Rabell president of the Eixample Esquerra neighbours association. Rabell became President of the Barcelona Neighbours Association and three years later was elected in the Catalan Parliament elections as deputy of the new left-wing coalition “Catalonia Yes We Can” (including *Podemos*), of which he was President. Several participants of the square and prefigurative projects are activists in the new party *En Comú*, mayor Ada Colau herself was previously a seasoned activist in mobilizations against housing evictions. But this story merits a paper on its own (Asara and Subirats, 2016).

## 6. Conclusions

The prefigurative territories of the indignados movement are the mark of interstitial transformations (Wright, 2010), counter-spaces from which a broader offensive strategy is mounted, while contributing to a transformation of everyday life. Following Lefebvre, prefigurative territories can fertilize the soil in a way that “flowers and magnificent woods” (Lefebvre, 2014:109) can eventually flourish (see also Varvarousis et al. 2017). This paper is one of the few studies of the concrete materialities of the place-based projects of the movement of the squares. In Chatterton and Pickerill’s (2010:481) words, “what is still missing are detailed empirical accounts of the messy, gritty and real everyday rhythms as activists envision, negotiate, build and enact life beyond the capitalist status quo in the everyday”. This was our concern in this paper. We showed how prefigurative territories can evolve from the first two dimensions of prefigurative politics, the means-ends consistency and the proleptic/synecdochic enactment of the future, to the third more powerful building of alternatives, in a way that resonates with the Lefebvrian evolution of differential spaces into counter-spaces. Counter-spaces can only endure if the building of alternatives is conducted through open prefiguration, in a ceaseless effort to open up the projects to the city. If successful, this should help politicize wider groups of society and support a political movement. Prefigurative spaces can “keep society open to alternative practices and futures and cultivate the capacity to develop these” (Levitas, 2013), while showing that alternative ways of life are possible, eroding constraints (Wright, 2010), everyday constraints that nonetheless are evident in processes of reaching out, networking or upscaling.

To return to our starting question, the central symbolism of the garden for the Indignados movement is not coincidental. The movement literally tries to plant its alternatives – self-governed green spaces, social centres, cooperatives, and community gardens– in the territory and create what Lefebvre termed a fertile soil. The garden is both symbol and manifestation of producing new space - a future produced now with elements of the past; a space that serves basic human needs and becomes the interface of new social relations and new relations

with nature. Equality in these new spaces is not simply demanded or theorized; it is worked out in practice through a horizontalization of decision-making processes, and a sharing of the produced commons. As the projects attempt to open-up and scale-up, they encounter unavoidable contradictions. But it is precisely the experimental and open character of prefiguration what may allow the projects to evolve rather than perish.

## Footnotes

[1] Minutes of the Acampada, which can be found at <https://acampadabcn.wordpress.com/documents/actes-de-lassemblea-general/>

[2] Fernández-Savater (2012) depicts the 15M as a social climate, meaning “a mental state a different collective disposition towards reality, marked by the empowering experience of the squares and spread into the entire society”.

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## Annex: List of Interviews and focus groups<sup>1</sup>

NUMBER of Interview	AGE group <sup>2</sup>	SEX	GROUP <sup>3</sup>
1	1	F	Sant Andreu neighborhood assembly
2	1	M	International C.
3	1	M	International C
4	1	F	S.Andreu neighborhood A.(self-managed health group)
5	1	F	Culture C., Outraged University, Degrowth C.
6	3	M	Square participant, Procés Constituent
7	1	M	Poblenou neighborhood A., Flor de Maig
8	2	M	Nou Barris neighborhood A.
9	2	F	Gracia neighborhood A.
10	1	M	Sants Neighborhood A.
11	2	F	Sarrià-St. Gervasi neighborhood A.
12	2	F	Poble Sec neighborhood A.
13	1	F	Education C., Degrowth C.
14	2	F	Communication C.
15	2	F	Sant Antoni Neighborhood A.
16	1	F	Degrowth C.
17	1	M	Square participant (Economy C.)
18	1	M	Square participant
19	2	M	Square participant, Alternatives C.
20	2	M	Education C.
21 Focus G.	2-3	Mixed	Sant Andreu neighborhood A.
22		F	Health C.
23	3	M	Sants neighborhood A.
24	1	M	RDN
25	1	M	Popular Consultation group, Electoral System Reform C.
26	1	M	Gracia neighborhood A.
27	3	M	Poble Sec neighborhood A.
28	1	F	Square participant
29	2	M	Dreta de l'Eixample neighborhood A.
30 Focus G.	1-2	Mixed	PACD, International C., Culture C.
31	1	F	PAH - Poble Sec neighborhood A.
32 Focus G.	1	M	X-Party, RDN

<sup>1</sup> The interviewees' names reported in this article when citing interviews' extracts have been changed so as to guarantee anonymity.

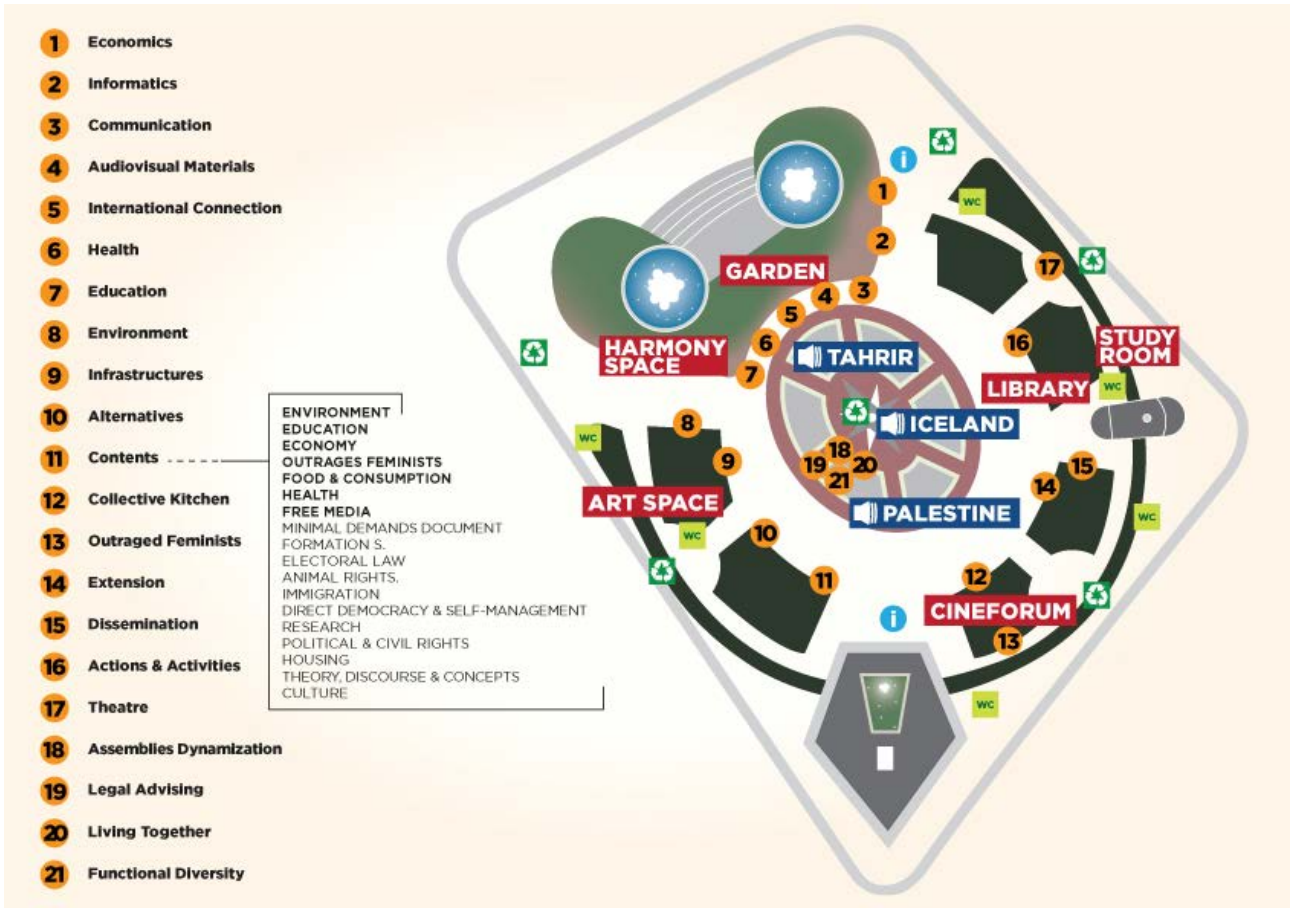
<sup>2</sup> Age is divided into three groups: 1) from 20 years to 35; 2) from 36 years to 50 years; 3) from 51 years to 75 years.

<sup>3</sup> "C." stands for Commission, and "A." stands for Assembly.

33	2	F	X-Party
34	2	F	RDN, La Dispersa group
35	2	F	Global Square of Tunis World Social Forum
36	2	F	PACD
37	2	M	Square participant
38	2	M	Square participant, Flor de Maig
39	2	M	Catalan Integral Cooperative
40	1	F	Square Garden/Xino Garden
41	2	M	Pl. Catalunya garden
42	1	M	Fort Pienc Garden
43	1	F	Xino Garden
44	3	F	Poble Nou Indignant Garden
45	1	F	Xino Garden
46	3	M	Forat de la Vergonya Garden
47	2	M	Poble Nou Indignant Garden
48	1	M	Ateneu La Base (La Seca)
49	1	M	Ateneu La Base (La Igualitaria)
50	1	F	Ateneu La Base
51	1	M	Ateneu La Base (Espai de trobada)
52	2	M	Ateneu La Base (La Seca, Altaveu)
53	3	M	Ateneu La Base
54	3	M	Ateneu La Base & Can Batlló
55 (Focus G.)	1	F	Can Batlló, Space Design C.
56	1	M	Can Batlló (LaCol, Coópolis, La Borda)
57	2	M	Can Batlló (garden)
58	1	F	Can Batlló (LaCol, Coópolis, La Borda)
59	1	F	Can Batlló (garden)
60	3	M	Can Batlló (Strategy C., Coópolis, La Borda)
61	1	M	Can Batlló (Carpentry C.)
62	3	M	Can Batlló (SSC, Negotiation C., Strategy C.)
63	3	F	Can Batlló (Bar C., Activities C.)
64	2	F	Can Batlló (Bar C., La Canya)
65	3	M	Can Batlló (Infrastructure C.)
66	2	M	Can Batlló (garden)
67	1	M	Recreant Cruïlles (garden)
68	3	M	Recreant Cruïlles (Neighborhood Association)
69	2	M	Recreant Cruïlles (Public Space C.)
70	3	M	Recreant Cruïlles
71	1	F	Recreant Cruïlles
72	1	F	Recreant Cruïlles
73	1	M	Recreant Cruïlles (Public Space C.)
74	2	M	Recreant Cruïlles
75	1	M	Recreant Cruïlles
76	1	M	Can Batlló, La Ciutat Invisible
77	2	M	La Ciutat Invisible
78 Focus G.	2	Mixed	Can Batlló (Paideia)
79 Focus G.	1-2	Mixed	Square (Facilitation Flotilla)
80	2	M	Square participant

## Annex 2: Figures

Figure 1. The spatial organization of the Square occupation.



**Figure 2.** Poblenou indignat garden. Source: personal photo.





Figure 3. The setting of Recreant Cruïlles. Source: personal photo.





Figure 4. The inauguration of La Base. Source: personal photo





Multilevel Governance and Development  
Wirtschaftsuniversität Wien  
Institutsvorstand : ao.Univ.Prof. Dr. Andreas Novy  
Welthandelsplatz 1  
A-1020 Wien, Austria  
Tel.: +43-1-31336/4777 Fax: +43-1-31336/705 E-Mail: [mgd@wu.ac.at](mailto:mgd@wu.ac.at)  
<http://www.wu.ac.at/mgd>