

Doctoral Thesis

In, against, beyond and through the State
Limits and possibilities of Urban Commons in Barcelona

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ABSTRACT

In the last few decades the category of Common has re-emerged to draw a path of emancipation from capitalism without the State, reviving the thesis of autonomist Marxism. In this path, the Commons are autonomous social practices that produce emancipation, namely The Common, and through which The Common can be instituted. However, autonomist Common's theories are characterized by a certain reticence to address how emancipation can take place without the State. Considering that the relation with the State in contemporary Western society is ineludible, the research aims to assess the role of the State in the autonomist Common's emancipatory project. The analysis is set in the urban environment focusing on the relation between Urban Commons and the (local) State. The thesis hypothesizes that Urban Commons may need the support of the (local) State and this may flank the production of The Common with its own production of emancipation: The Public. Adopting a relational approach to the analysis of the case of Barcelona, the thesis demonstrates that Urban Commons need the (local) State. Many of them need the resources and the recognition of the (local) State, despite these may affect their autonomy, and all of them would benefit from a further support of the (local) State in terms of regulation, public policies and planning. However, despite the (local) State could theoretically flank The Common widening the spectrum of emancipation, it does not appear to do so. When the (local) State meets The Common it tends to replace it with The Public, and The Public tends to hinder and spatially marginalise The Common. Hence, Urban Commons should continue their struggle for autonomy. However, they should also struggle to obtain forms of support from the (local) State, preventing the latter from limiting their autonomy, transforming The Common into The Public, maintaining the hegemony of the production of emancipation and spatially marginalizing The Common. The thesis concludes sustaining that, as sustained by the autonomist Commons theories, the Common's emancipatory project can be constructed without taking over the State but it cannot avoid to securing forms of support from the State.

ABSTRACT (Italiano)

Negli ultimi decenni la categoria del Comune è riemersa per tracciare un percorso di emancipazione dal capitalismo senza lo Stato, rilanciando la tesi del marxismo autonomista. In questo percorso, i Beni Comuni sono le pratiche sociali autonome che producono l'emancipazione, vale a dire, Il Comune, e attraverso cui questo può essere istituito. Tuttavia, le teorie autonomiste del Comune sono caratterizzate da una certa reticenza nell'affrontare come l'emancipazione possa avvenire senza lo Stato. Poiché nella società occidentale contemporanea il rapporto con lo Stato è ineludibile, la ricerca mira a valutare il ruolo dello Stato nel progetto autonomista di emancipazione del Comune. L'analisi si situa nello spazio urbano indagando la relazione tra i Beni Comuni Urbani e lo Stato (locale). L'ipotesi della tesi è che i Beni Comuni Urbani possono aver bisogno del sostegno dello Stato (locale) e questo può affiancare la produzione de Il Comune con la sua produzione di emancipazione: Il Pubblico. Adottando un approccio relazionale all'analisi del caso di Barcellona, la tesi dimostra che i Beni Comuni Urbani hanno bisogno dello Stato (locale). Molti di loro hanno bisogno delle risorse e del riconoscimento dello Stato (locale), nonostante questo possa influire sulla loro autonomia, e tutti beneficerebbero di un ulteriore sostegno dello Stato (locale) in termini di leggi, politiche pubbliche e pianificazione. Tuttavia, nonostante lo Stato (locale) potrebbe teoricamente fiancheggiare Il Comune allargando lo spettro di emancipazione, non sembra farlo. Quando lo Stato (locale) incontra Il Comune tende a sostituire Il Comune con Il Pubblico, e Il Pubblico tende ad ostacolare e marginalizzare spazialmente Il Comune. Pertanto, i Beni Comuni Urbani dovrebbero continuare a lottare per la loro autonomia. Tuttavia, dovrebbero anche lottare per ottenere forme di supporto dello Stato (locale), cercando di impedire a quest'ultimo di limitare la propria autonomia, di trasformare Il Comune nel Il Pubblico, di marginalizzare spazialmente il Comune e di mantenere l'egemonia della produzione di emancipazione. La tesi conclude sostenendo che il progetto autonomista di emancipazione del Comune, come sostengono i suoi teorici, può essere costruito senza conquistare lo Stato, ma non può prescindere da assicurarsi forme di supporto da parte dello Stato.

ABSTRACT (Castellano)

En las últimas décadas, la categoría del Común ha resurgido para dibujar un camino de emancipación del capitalismo sin el Estado, retomando las tesis del marxismo autonomista. En este camino, los Comunes son las prácticas sociales autónomas que producen la emancipación, es decir, Lo Común, y mediante las cuales éste se puede instituir. Sin embargo, las teorías autonomistas del Común se caracterizan por una cierta reticencia a abordar cómo la emancipación puede tener lugar sin el Estado. Puesto que en la sociedad occidental contemporánea la relación con el Estado es ineludible, la investigación tiene como objetivo evaluar el papel del Estado en el proyecto autonomista de emancipación del Común. El análisis se desarrolla en el entorno urbano y se centra en la relación entre los Comunes Urbanos y el Estado (local). La hipótesis de la tesis es que los Comunes Urbanos pueden necesitar el apoyo del Estado (local) y esto puede flanquear la producción de Lo Común con su propia producción de emancipación: Lo Público. Adoptando un enfoque relacional que analiza el caso de Barcelona, la tesis demuestra que los Comunes Urbanos necesitan del Estado (local). Muchos Comunes Urbanos necesitan los recursos y el reconocimiento del Estado (local), a pesar de que puedan afectar su autonomía, y todos se beneficiarían de un mayor apoyo del Estado (local) en términos de regulaciones, políticas públicas y planificación. Sin embargo, a pesar de que el Estado (local) podría teóricamente flanquear Lo Común ampliando el espectro de la emancipación, no parece que lo haga. Cuando el Estado (local) se encuentra con Lo Común, tiende a reemplazar Lo Común con Lo Público, y Lo Público tiende a obstaculizar y marginar espacialmente a Lo Común. Por lo tanto, los Comunes Urbanos deberían continuar luchando por su autonomía. Sin embargo, también deberían luchar para obtener y asegurarse formas de apoyo del Estado (local), tratando de evitar que este último limite su autonomía, que transforme Lo Común en Lo Público, que mantenga la hegemonía de la producción de la emancipación y que margine espacialmente a Lo Común. La tesis concluye sosteniendo que, tal como lo sostienen las teorías autonomistas del Comunes, el proyecto de emancipación del Común puede construirse sin tomar el control del Estado, pero sin embargo no puede prescindir de asegurarse formas de apoyo por parte del Estado.

ABSTRACT (Català)

En les últimes dècades, la categoria del Comú ha ressorgit per dibuixar un camí d'emancipació del capitalisme sense l'Estat, reprenent les tesis del marxisme autonomista. En aquest camí, els Comuns són les pràctiques socials autònomes que produeixen l'emancipació, és a dir, El Comú, i mitjançant les quals aquest es pot instituir. Malgrat això, les teories autonomistes del Comú es caracteritzen per una certa reticència a abordar de quina manera l'emancipació pot tenir lloc sense l'Estat. Donat que en la societat occidental contemporània la relació amb l'Estat és ineludible, la investigació té com a objectiu avaluar el paper de l'Estat en el projecte autonomista d'emancipació del Comú. L'anàlisi es desenvolupa en l'entorn urbà i se centra en la relació entre els Comuns Urbans i l'Estat (local). La hipòtesi de la tesi és que els Comuns Urbans poden necessitar el suport de l'Estat (local) i això pot flanquejar la producció d'El Comú amb la seva pròpia producció d'emancipació: Allò Públic. Des d'un enfocament relacional que analitza el cas de Barcelona, la tesi demostra que els Comuns Urbans necessiten l'Estat (local). Molts Comuns Urbans necessiten els recursos i el reconeixement de l'Estat (local), tot i que puguin afectar la seva autonomia, i tots es beneficiarien d'un major suport de l'Estat (local) en termes de regulacions, polítiques públiques i planificació. No obstant això, tot i que l'Estat (local) podria teòricament flanquejar el Comú ampliant l'espectre de l'emancipació, no sembla que ho faci. Quan l'Estat (local) es troba amb El Comú, tendeix a reemplaçar El Comú amb Allò Públic, i Allò Públic tendeix a obstaculitzar i marginar espacialment El Comú. Per tant, els Comuns Urbans haurien de continuar lluitant per la seva autonomia. A la vegada, també haurien de lluitar per obtenir i assegurar-se formes de suport de l'Estat (local) tractant d'evitar que aquest últim limiti la seva autonomia, que transformi El Comú en Allò Públic, que margini espacialment El Comú i que mantingui l'hegemonia de la producció de l'emancipació. La tesi conclou sostenint que, com sostingut per les teories autonomistes del Comú, el projecte d'emancipació del Comú pot construir-se sense prendre el control de l'Estat, però no pot prescindir d'assegurar-se formes de suport por part de l'Estat.

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FIRST CHAPTER INTRODUCTION

*(intellectuals) have never counted for anything.
Machiavelli said: "They do not even turn a stone."
And entrusting ourselves to this image we can say that
precisely turning the stones, and discover the worms below,
is the maximum that the intellectuals have been able to do in our country:
solitary exercise, and at their own risk.*

Leonardo Sciascia, Macario e gli intellettuali

1.1 The category of Common in the autonomist Marxist perspective

This research is an investigation of the category of Common - the social practice of the Commons and the political theory of The Common¹- within an autonomist Marxist perspective. The thesis operationalises these concepts in the urban environment in order to respond to an apparently contradictory question: what the role of the State may be in the autonomist Common's emancipatory project. In this introduction are briefly presented the reasons for the formulation of this question, together with the presentation of the objective and the contribution of the thesis, its methodology and its structure. However, before arriving at these points, it is considered necessary to explain why the thesis focuses on the study of the category of Common from the perspective of autonomist Marxism and why it does not use other similar concepts that have already been widely analysed in the literature.

The category of Common can count on mainly two approaches: the liberal approach and the autonomist Marxist approach (Castro-Coma and Martí-Costa, 2016; Rossi and Enright, 2017). The liberal approach interprets the Commons as another form of management and government to place alongside the State and the Market without aiming to build a path of emaciation from capitalism. This is the case of the neo-institutionalist tradition of Ostrom and Benkler's law studies (Ostrom, 1990; Benkler, 2007). The autonomist Marxist approach, instead, interprets the Commons as a social practice that, being autonomous and alternative to the State and the Market, can produce emancipation from capitalism and institute an order based on The Common, i.e. based on the principles of self-government, equality of human beings and non-appropriability of resources. This is the case of the contributions of the political economy of the Midnight Notes Collective (De Angelis, 2003, 2012; Federici, 2011; Federici and Caffentzis, 2013), the Italian critical legal studies (Mattei, 2011, 2015; Marella, 2012; Alessandra Quarta and Spanò, 2016), the Marxist geography of Harvey (Harvey, 2010, 2012) and the political philosophy of both Hard and Negri and Laval and Dardot (Hardt and Negri, 2009; Dardot and Laval, 2015).

This thesis is interested in how the category of Common can produce emancipation from capitalism. Thus, while the liberal approach to the category of Common is described, it focuses on

¹ The differentiation of these terms is subtle but essential to read the entire work. With **the Commons** is intended the collective social practice that should produce emancipation. With **The Common** is intended the political theory that guides this emancipation and the same 'act of producing emancipation'. With **the category of Common** is intended that category alternative to the Particular-Universal and Market-State dichotomy in which both of them are included.

the study of the category of Common as the autonomist Marxist perspective has theorised it. This perspective states that it is necessary to draw a path of emancipation from capitalism, overcoming the principle on which it is based -the class's domination, the private property and the relentless accumulation of capital-. The interest in the emancipation from capitalism is also the reason why this thesis focuses on the category of Common and why it does not focus on other 'similar concepts'.

In the last decades, other concepts have been deployed by the academic literature to define forms of emancipation through the production and reproduction of practices alternative to the State and the Market, such as the concept of 'social innovation' (Moulaert *et al.*, 2013; Cruz, Martínez Moreno and Blanco, 2017). The most critical approach, proposed by Frank Moulaert (Vicari Haddock and Moulaert, 2009; Moulaert *et al.*, 2013), provides a vast critique of neoliberalism and its polarising, depriving, exclusionary effects on society and sees social innovation practices as a bottom-up response to challenge these effects. However, this literature tends not to link social problems to capitalism but mainly to neoliberalism. Consequently, the social innovation's emancipation does not seem to aim the overcoming of the principles on which capitalism is based. It seems to aim to challenge the neoliberal regime with practices that provide progressive solutions for problems of exclusion, deprivation, alienation, lack of wellbeing; and with practices that contribute positively to significant human progress and development (Moulaert, MacCallum and Hillier, 2013).

This thesis does recognise the value of these theories that support relevant forms of social change. In the current political, economic and social scenario they are dramatically needed. However, it presupposes that it is difficult to defeat neoliberalism without taking into consideration the functioning of capitalism itself. The new wave of the Polanyi's double movement (Polanyi, 1944) has shown it: it is not possible to protect society from the destructive and commodifying action of the Market because, as Marx already argued, this is an innate tendency of capitalism that, in order to accumulate capital, has to expand the scope of the commodification (Burawoy, 2003; Davies, 2012). In this perspective, neoliberalism is considered a further accumulation strategy, after liberalism and after welfarism, through which capitalism guarantees its survival. For this reason, this thesis believes that it is necessary to establish the overcoming of capitalism as the primary target of any emancipatory project. This does not mean discarding the defeat of the neoliberal strategy with the replacement of community-based strategies, but it means to think that this replacement will still be insufficient to determine a real emancipatory project.

Moreover, the definition of forms of emancipation that do not directly question the principles of capitalism can become easily co-opted by dominant classes who are always in the search for theories and practices to make capitalism appear more friendly and social. Perhaps, this is why, the concept of social innovation, despite its transformative meanings, has become so widespread in European programmes that use social innovation practices to counterbalance the public spending's restriction and increase competitiveness (Martínez Moreno, 2018). This is perhaps why the concept of Commons, as the neo-institutionalist approach has theorised it, has also been co-opted by the economic and political dominant classes at global and urban level (Caffentzis, 2010; Mattei, 2013; Bianchi, 2018). For all these reasons, this thesis focuses on the category of the Common as the autonomist Marxist debate has theorised it.

1.2 Introducing the debate of autonomist Common's theories

The Marxist theory, in all its currents of thought, has always criticised the State and has had as objective the overcoming of the State to destroy capitalism and establish communism. The objective of the orthodox Marxism currents was to take over the State through the party to impose the dictatorship of the proletariat that would eventually lead to the dissolution of the State (Marx and Engels, 1848). For the libertarian currents, linked by the critique to the authoritarianism of the State, the objective was instead to lead a battle of liberation of the workers without the mediation of a party and without taking over the State. There are many libertarian currents that have developed since the birth of Marxism among which it is possible to count, among others: Anarchism, born within the First International in 1860s-1870s because of the divergence between Marx and Bakunin who criticized all Marxist revolutionary method and argued that the State should not be conquered but only destroyed (Bakunin, 1873); Council Communism, born in Holland and Germany around the 1920s-1930s to break with the State socialism of the Russian revolution and arguing that workers' council, not the party, are the privileged form for the organization of the proletarian struggle (Rühle, 1920; Pannekoek, 1947); and autonomist Marxism -'Operaismo'-, born in Italy between the 1960s-1970s to promote the liberation from the politics of the compromise of the communist party and the trade unions, claiming that the conquest of spaces of social autonomy is the form to carry out the anti-capitalist struggle (Tronti, 1971; Negri, Bologna and Carpignano, 1976).

By the end of the short century, the neoliberal shift of Western nation-states, the failure of real communism and the social democratic shift of communist parties contributed to the discredit of orthodox Marxism and the celebration of libertarian perspective. In recent decades, both

anarchism and autonomist Marxism have experienced a renewed interest in their theories and practices (Hardt and Negri, 2001; Virno, 2002; Berardi (Bifo), 2004; Gordon, 2007; Williams, 2007). However, between the two currents, it seems that autonomist Marxism has gained a prominent place both in the social practice and in the theoretical production. The Italian experience, characterised not only by the theoretical speculation of its philosophers but also by a ten-year struggle in the factories and squares, ended with the harsh State repression in the late 1970s that brought into jail many of its members and its theorists. However, the intuitions on which it was based - the real subsumption in the capital of the social worker, the disregard of the State, the conquest of social autonomy, the focus of the analysis on the struggles before understanding the restructuring of the capital - did not disappear with the repression carried out by the State (Lotringer and Marazzi, 2007). In Europe and elsewhere, especially after the neoliberal shift, some of its theorists such as Negri and other post-Marxist scholars coming from different disciplinary fields - Caffentzis, De Angelis, Federici, Mattei, Harvey, Laval and Dardot - contributed to revive it in the light of the new historical events focusing their analysis on the category of Common (Hardt and Negri, 2009; Mattei, 2011; Harvey, 2012; Federici and Caffentzis, 2013; Dardot and Laval, 2015). This category began to be used, from an autonomist Marxism point of view, as an alternative both to the State and to the Market to pursue a path of emancipation from capitalism. It must be emphasised that not all these authors can be considered close adherents to autonomist Marxism. However, each of them, working on the category of Common from its disciplinary perspective, has contributed to nurturing this theoretical perspective with those who are less autonomists being more critical with this category while those who are more autonomist being instead less critical.

The post-Marxist scholars that have analysed the category of Common have used both the plural and singular inflexion of the term, the Commons and The Common. Those who used the category in its plural inflection, the Commons, have shown what these social practices should consist of, namely the need to create autonomous spaces based on solidarity and cooperative social relations, collective proprietary institutions, economic systems not subject to capital gain, direct and participated forms of government (De Angelis, 2003, 2012, Harvey, 2010, 2012, Mattei, 2011, 2015; Federici and Caffentzis, 2013); while those who have used the category in its singular inflection, The Common, have shown what the political theory that guides this emancipation should be based on, namely the institution of a new order, based on self-government, that produces emancipation by pursuing the same universality of the Universal but from the bottom, and by not appropriating material and immaterial resources (Hardt and Negri, 2009; Dardot and Laval, 2015). The contributions are different for their disciplinary fields and their theoretical adherence to the autonomist Marxist perspective, producing a polysemy of the category of Common (Revel, 2017).

However, beyond this polysemy, a shared vision of emancipation could be defined in which the Commons represent the instrument, and The Common the objective of a project of emancipation from capitalism without the State.

In the current political, economic and social landscape that characterises Western societies where the neoliberal turn has shown the complicity of the State and the Market and in which this turn does not seem to be terminated, the revolutionary project based on the category of Common is undoubtedly engaging. Firstly, it would allow overcoming capitalism without the conquest of the State and, secondly, it would allow overcoming it by using only one conceptual category. However, at least in Western societies, where the State is still very present, there could be doubts whether it is possible to draw a path of emancipation without it. Despite the extensive theoretical production and the various empirical researches, autonomist Common's theories tend not to dissolve this doubt and tend not to explain how emancipation can be achieved without the State. This does not mean that Common's theories do not address the problem entirely, but they tend to address it through a somehow ambiguous approach. The more theoretical contributions show a certain reticence to address the issue of the relationship with State. This reticence is facilitated by the high level of abstraction of their work that avoids facing concrete analysis. When empirical analysis on the Commons are carried out, the unavoidable relationship between the Commons and the State becomes evident. This is the case of the many empirical research carried out in the urban environment (Chatterton, 2016; Stavrides, 2016). However, also urban scholars show a certain reticence to address the question of the relationship with the State or, if they do address it, they tend to apply an overdetermined vision of it. This reticence seems to leave a theoretical and empirical not fully explored space in the autonomist Common's theories (Castro-Coma and Martí-Costa, 2016). It is therefore within this not fully explored space that this thesis is set with the aim to contribute to addressing the question of the State in this emancipatory project.

1.3 The objective and the contribution of the thesis

This thesis tends to agree with the autonomist Common's theories. However it shares with some scholars the preoccupation on the limits of these theories as they may appear dogmatic and not strategically and operationally effective (Davies, 2013; Cumbers, 2015). This is why it is believed that, in order to try to liberate these theories from their dogmatism and make them strategically and operationally more effective, it is necessary to reveal their limits and possibilities. This inevitably means addressing the question of the State in the Common's emancipatory project. This does not mean to start from an autonomist Marxist perspective to move towards a more reformist

perspective. It means instead that this thesis acknowledges the ineludible relation that the Commons have with the State and tries to shed light on it from an autonomist Marxist perspective, assessing what the role of the State may be in this emancipatory project.

The ineludible relation between the Commons and the State is analysed in the urban environment. This environment has been chosen for different reasons. Firstly, Common's theories advocate that the city is a privileged space to develop emancipatory processes; secondly, urban studies have proved to be rather fruitful for Marxist theories; and thirdly, being the city extremely dense in terms of private interests and capital investments and being the (local) State extremely present, through its administrative apparatus, control devices, regulations, public policies and planning, the relation between the Commons and the State can be analysed in all its facets. Therefore, the objective of this thesis is to operationalize the social practice of the Commons and the political theory of The Common in the urban environment in order to understand how Urban Commons emerge, develop and expand over time, how they produce The Common, and what the role of the (local) State can be in this process.

The hypothesis of this thesis is inspired by those scholars that propose a more moderate approach to Common's theories by bringing the State into the debate, such as Cumbers and Spanish critical political science literature (Subirats, 2011; Cumbers, 2015; Blanco and Gomá, 2016). Despite their theoretical differences, both approaches advocate for a more balanced emancipatory project in which both the State and the autonomy of civil society play a role. Taking up these contributions, the thesis formulates two main hypotheses suggesting how the debate on the State may be useful to the autonomist Common's emancipatory project. Firstly, the State can support the Common's emancipatory project. In the contemporary era, characterised by a wild and predatory capitalism that has set in motion the forces of the market in an extremely powerful and aggressive way (Harvey, 2012), it seems difficult to imagine that the Commons can maintain themselves and expand over time and can produce emancipation without being 'backed up' by the State - its economic resources, its proprietary resources and its legislative, policy and planning capacity -. Secondly, the State, through its production of emancipation - The Public - can flank the Common's emancipatory project at least until the Common will be hegemonic in the social space. As the Commons' bottom-up production of emancipation is at risk of elitism (Harvey, 2012), The Public, with its universal production of emancipation that comes from above, in the beginning, could limit the elitism of the Commons and wide the spectrum of the emancipation.

Bringing within the scope of the research the (local) State does not solve what can be an undisputed limit of this research and of all the researches that focus on the emancipatory power of the local scale. The local scale of the transformation seems limited in comparison with a global and expansive capitalism that relies on large-scale government structures such as nation-States and institutions well above the national scale. This limit is present and undeniable. However, focusing on this scale does not mean ignoring this contradiction, but it means to set the research within the same contradiction and understanding where it can lead. It is true that the city has a limit, not so much for its scale but for the difficulty in spreading the claim emerging from urban experiences of struggles towards different experiences of struggles and for the limited powers of the local government. However, it is also true that undoubtedly, in Western countries, the struggle against capitalism has taken on a markedly urban dimension and indeed the local government can be subject to changes that are unthinkable at other scales of government. Therefore, although the urban scale is limited to achieve a global scale of emancipation from capitalism, the city cannot be excluded from the analysis of a global scale of emancipation. This is why the thesis believes that it is from this scale that the analysis has to start in order to understand the limits and the potential of an emancipatory project without forgetting the limits of the urban struggles and the local government.

Through the analysis of the relation between the Commons and the State, firmly rooted in the urban environment, this research project aims at contributing to the autonomist Common's theoretical and empirical debates by crossing the disciplines of territorial planning and political science applied in the urban space. From this intersection emerges the need for a co-tutorship between the two doctorates, that of the IUAV - the University of Venice in Regional Planning and Public Policies - and that of the UAB - Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona in Politics, Policies and International Relations -. The doctorate of the IUAV suggested the thesis to consider the strong link between urban public policies and urban planning, where the latter is read as a spatial policy that is part of the local government's wide-ranging public policy spectrum. Moreover, this doctorate inspired the intuition to focus the analysis on the social practices, the Urban Commons, in order to understand how these can influence the political action of the local government and the public policy design. The doctorate of the UAB carried out within the IGOP -Institute of Government and Public Policies- has allowed the thesis, that started from a very antagonistic and bottom-up perspective, to reflect on the possibilities of emancipation that are also offered by local governments. In so doing the thesis is inscribed within one of the research lines of this institute that is dedicated to the study of the relationship between the institutional and political changes of

the local government and the social practices that develop in the city, especially in Barcelona, and in the whole Catalan context.

1.4 The methodology of the thesis

The urban space where this research is carried out is the city of Barcelona. The city is a paradigmatic case as it has been characterised by a long antagonist and progressive history with a marked autonomist tendency. This tendency, strengthened with the neoliberal turn and the outburst of the 15M, seems to have gained a prominent role in the social and political space due to the emergence of many Urban Commons (Nel·lo, 2015; Cruz, Martínez Moreno and Blanco, 2017; Blanco and Nel·lo, 2018). However, it is also a paradigmatic case to verify the hypothesis since it is now governed by the radical left-wing coalition ‘Barcelona en Comú’ that uses the Spanish political science discourse on the category of Common, as a representation of its political agenda. The thesis will not be able to evaluate fully the achievements of ‘Barcelona en Comú’ as, when the field work was carried out (March 2016 to June 2017), it was still too early. However, it will not lose the opportunity to shed light on the first policy changes of this radical left government.

In order to gather and interpret the evidence needed to answer the research question, the research adopts a relational approach inspired by the ‘ontology of the relational’ (Simondon, 1989; Balibar and Morfino, 2014). This approach allows deepening the relationship that the Urban Commons have with the local government, and also with private actors, starting from the idea that Urban Commons do not exist before weaving these relations and their very existence is the result of these relations throughout different space and times. The Urban Commons that are included in the research are all Urban Commons that fit into Harvey’s definition, according to which an Urban Commons can be considered as such when there is a crucial social relation between a social group and a material or immaterial resource. Thus, it includes both self-managing practices, such as self-managed art and cultural centre, food banks, services cooperatives; and reclaiming practices, such as water movements and housing movements. The research is structured on two scales of analysis, a broader one, based on a questionnaire that has been sent to more than 400 Urban Commons, and a more detailed one, based on the comparison of three embedded case studies of self-managed spaces: the Puigcerdà informal settlement, the Escocesa art centre, and the Can Batlló cultural centre.

1.5 The structure of the thesis

The thesis is structured into four main chapters. A theoretical chapter (chapter 2), a methodological chapter (chapter 3), an empirical chapter (chapter 4) and a concluding chapter (chapter 5).

The theoretical chapter analyses the debate on the category of Common, dividing the chapter into three sections: a section dedicated to the historical evolution of the debate on the category of Commons (section 2.1), a section dedicated to the current autonomist debate on the category of Common (section 2.2) and a section dedicated to the urban debate and analysis carried out on the category of Common (section 2.3). The first section shows how the category of Common had been eclipsed with the advent of industrial capitalism in favour of the great dichotomy - the State and the Market - and how it began to re-emerge in the second half of the twentieth century, thanks to the Ostrom's neo-institutionalist studies. Successively, it shows how the category of Common re-emerged in the autonomist Marxist debate, especially from the neoliberal shift when post-Marxist scholars started to advocate for a form of emancipation without the State embodied by the category of Common. The second section presents the contributions of autonomist Common's theories. It illustrates how the social practice of the Commons is interpreted by the political economy of the Midnight Notes Collective, the Italian critical legal studies, and Harvey's critical geography. Subsequently, it illustrates how the political theory of The Common is interpreted by the political philosophy of Hardt and Negri, and Laval and Dardot. The section also tries to solve the polysemy of both the Commons and The Common. Finally, it highlights how all Common's theories show a certain reticence to address how emancipation is possible without the State and how this reticence is favoured by the high level of abstraction of their contribution. The third section briefly introduces the evolution of the urban debate in Marxist theory -starting from Marx and Engels, passing through the so-called spatial turn with the contribution of Lefebvre, Castells and Harvey and up to the most recent theorizations on neoliberal urbanism- to show how the city has acquired a relevant role in the Marxist theories. Successively, it shows how the same relevant role of the city is proposed by some Common's scholars, presenting the reflection of the political philosophy of Hardt and Negri, the critical planning of Stavrides, and the critical geography of Chatterton, Pickerell and others. This section is needed to underline how also urban-related Common's theories maintain a certain reticence to analyse the Urban Commons' relationship with the State or use a somewhat over-determined approach to this analysis.

The methodological chapter begins with a summary of the Common's theoretical debate that leads to the formulation of the research question. Successively, it advances the hypotheses, illustrating how the theories of Cumbers and the Spanish political science literature are incorporated to formulate them. Finally, it proposes the research methodology, presenting the relational approach, the reason for the choice of the case of Barcelona, the types of Urban Commons that are included in the research and the two scales of analysis. The empirical chapter begins with an introduction of the case of Barcelona that illustrates the history of the relationship between the Urban Commons and the (local) State. Subsequently, it presents the data obtained from 101 replies to the questionnaire which show the support that Urban Commons receive from the Barcelona City Council, how this is perceived by the Urban Commons and whether any change in their relation is detectable with Barcelona en Comú government. Successively, it presents the three embedded case studies: the Puigcerdà informal settlement, the Escocesa art centre the Can Batlló cultural centre. Each case illustrates the reason for the emergence of the Urban Commons, its first relation with the City Council, how this relation evolved, what role the City Council had in their maintenance and expansion over time, whether it was able to support and flank the production of The Common and whether any change is detectable with the arrival of Barcelona en Comú. Following the presentation of the three case studies, they are critically compared in order to have a broader vision of how the City Council relates and supports different Urban Commons and what it does when it has to deal with different type of production of The Common in the city. The final chapter draws the conclusion on the role of the (local) government in the Common's emancipatory process eventually suggesting how the Urban Commons can deal with the (local) State for their own benefit.

SECOND CHAPTER THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

*We particularly ask you-
when a thing continually occurs
Not on that account to find it natural
Let nothing be called natural
In an age of bloody confusion,
Ordered disorder, planned caprice,
And dehumanized humanity, lest all things
Be held unalterable!*

Bertol Brecht, The exception and the rule

2.1 The re-emergence of the category of Common

Although the category of Common re-appeared in the academic debate mainly in the second half of the past century, it has a long history. As demonstrated by post-Marxist scholars through an archaeological excavation, in the pre-capitalist times the category of Common represented a reality which was very distinct from the Universal and the Particular, from the State and the Market, from the Public and the Private (Mattei, 2011; Dardot and Laval, 2015). Yet, starting from the development of industrial capitalism, the category of Common was eclipsed in the political, legal and economic landscape by sovereignty theorists, by bourgeois constitutional philosophers, and by liberal economic scholars (Locke, 1689; Hardin, 1968) in favour of the great dichotomy: the State and the Market (Bobbio, 1985; Subirats, 2011; Coccoli, 2014). Initially, the perpetuation of the capitalist order was possible thanks to the illusory contraposition of these categories. This contraposition was the dynamic that according to Karl Polanyi (1986-1964) characterised the modern history of Western liberal democracies and that he defined as the double movement (Polanyi, 1944) according to whom to the destructive and commodifying action of the Market it could respond with the defensive and redistributive action of the State.

However, from the neoliberal-shift onwards, when most of the Western nation States started to carry out a series of privatisation and commodification of national resources and assets, it became more evident that the State was not an institution that opposed the Market being instead an ally of the Market in the capitalist system. Thus, with the impetuosity of the neoliberal turn and the State's responsibility in supporting it, the State was heavily discredited and more post-Marxist scholars than in the past began to speculate about alternative possibilities to draw a path of emancipation without the State. The category of Common embodied these possibilities. The re-emergence of the category of Common cannot be attributed only to post-Marxist scholars. In the international academic debates, this category also re-emerged thanks to the work of the political scientist Elinor Ostrom (Ostrom, 1990; Hess and Ostrom, 2007). Since the 1960s, she began to devote her research to the study of the collective management of natural resources, showing that there are management's forms alternative to the State and the Market. Ostrom indeed was not part of any Marxist current. In her liberal approach, she saw the Commons as institutions that did not represent an alternative to the State and the Market from an autonomist point of view, but only as an institutional alternative to support the State and the Market in the capitalist order. However, her work has been essential to bringing to light the category of Common as an alternative to the State and the Market, underlining the need to self-govern certain types of resources.

The re-emergence of the category of Common by all post-Marxist scholar began with a sharp critique of the State in the neoliberal era. This critique was rooted in the update of the Marxist concept of enclosure carried out by different Common's scholars, such as the Midnight Notes Collective (Midnight Notes Collective, 2001), the Italian critical legal studies (Mattei, 2011) and Harvey (Harvey, 2005, 2007). The updating of this concept permitted two theoretical developments. Firstly, showing the alliance between the State and the Market in the neoliberal privatisation and commodification, it became manifest the failure of the Polanyi's double movement and the necessity to go beyond it. Secondly, the enclosure revealed the nature of what was being privatised and commodified. These were nothing but resources, assets, and wealth that *de facto* were produced by and belonged to (local, national, global) communities who were not considered proprietors *de iure*, i.e. the Commons. This evidence brought to light that not only Commons had been denied in favour of the State and the Market, but that the State and the Market continually plundered them. In this way the category of Common re-emerged from its opposite to become that empty signifier, in Laclau's philological meaning (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985) of an emancipatory path that aimed to achieve emancipation without the State, resuming and nurturing the autonomist Marxist hypothesis (De Angelis, 2003, 2012; Hardt and Negri, 2009; Federici, 2011; Mattei, 2011; Federici and Caffentzis, 2013; Dardot and Laval, 2015).

The objective of this chapter is to trace the evolution of the category of Common, starting from its existence in the pre-capitalist era, passing through its eclipse with the birth of industrial capitalism, up to its re-emergence from the neo-liberal shift onwards thanks to the contribution of post-Marxist scholars. This first section of the first chapter is divided into five parts. The first part titled 'The Category of Common from reality to eclipse' presents the meanings and the uses of this category in the pre-capitalist era. The second part titled 'The Polanyi's double movement' illustrates the Hungarian scholar interpretation of the contraposition between the State and the Market. The third part titled 'The liberal perspective on the category of Common presents Ostrom and Benkler's liberal theories on the Commons. The fourth part titled 'The Marxist and post-Marxist enclosure' presents the More, Marx and Polanyi's theorisation of the concept of enclosure and the Midnight Notes Collective, the Italian critical legal studies and Harvey' updating of the concept of enclosure. The last part titled 'The critique of the State and the re-emergence of the category of Common' show how the enclosures allow to post-Marxist scholars to ground a sharp critique of the State. This critique leads to the emergence of the category of Common as the new empty signifier of the emancipatory path from capitalism that aimed to do without the State, resuming and nurturing the autonomist Marxist current.

2.1.1 The category of Common from reality to eclipse

In pre-capitalist times the category of the Common was both a theoretical and a practical reality. The Common was theoretically distinguishable from the Universal and the Particular, and the Commons represented proprietary, government and economic institutions different from the Public and the Private, from the State and the Market. From a political philosophy point of view, the Common differed from the Universal in two characteristics. Plato sustained that the Common was characterised by its not-appropriable nature: The Common existed, it was shared by everyone but it could not be appropriated by anyone, i.e. it could be perceived as something that belonged to a person, and this person could treat it as such taking care of it, without this person being the owner (Coccoli, 2014; Dardot and Laval, 2015). In his thesis on the communion of goods and women in the V Republic, Plato sustained that the Guardians had to share all aspects of their life. In this sharing process, they were not supposed to say 'it is ours', but they had to say 'it is mine'. If the first expression was representative of what the Universal is, the second expression was representative of what the Common is. In the case of the Universal a good belonged to us, 'it is ours', because all of us have appropriated it. In the case of the Common a shared good belonged to me as it belonged to everyone else, without it being appropriated by me (Arruzza, 2011). Secondly, Aristotle sustained that the Common was characterised by its trans-genre nature: The Common was what was in common to different genres, i.e. both to man and animal, while the Universal was what is in common to only one genre, i.e. either man or animal. From a political perspective, if the Common was what was in common to all human beings, the Universal was what was in common to the human being of a single kingdom and/or state. In this sense, the common far transcend the Universal in its extension (Dardot and Laval, 2015).

From a proprietary institutions' point of view, the Commons were goods where the man-good relationship was a relationship of man's use of the good (Grossi, 1977; Mattei, 2011; Dardot and Laval, 2015). This was the case of the medieval common property where a man could not change or sell the good but only use it for his existence and subsistence. These goods were distinguished from public and private ones because in these cases the man-good relationship was of absolute dominium of the man over the good. In Roman Law, private good belonged to the individual owner fully and exclusively. He/she could exercise an unlimited dominium, *utendi et abutendi*, on the good, modifying it but especially commodifying it (Mattei, 2011; Dani, 2014). Although this form of dominium initially characterised only the private property, it soon became a feature also of the public property, where the State could modify and above all commodify its goods (Mattei, 2011). From the government's point of view, the Commons were goods directly

governed by the communities interested in their government (Mattei, 2011; Dardot and Laval, 2015). This was the case of the *res publicae* in the Roman republican age where those goods were managed by an organised community without the mediation of a public institution. These goods were distinguished from goods governed by the Market and by the State as these were managed by transcendental authorities where the community could not directly decide the rules for the use and enjoyment of the good. The State is a transcendent authority because it is controlled by the representatives of the people (Dardot and Laval, 2015). The competitive market becomes a transcendental authority because, as Polanyi explains, prices cannot be controlled by any authority other than the Market itself (Polanyi, 1944). From an economic institutions' point of view, the Commons were those institutions that operated through the reciprocity mode of integration where goods were exchanged through a chain of gift-counter gift form based on the consideration of the other and not on the need of a profit (Polanyi, 1944, 1977). This was the case of the economic system described by Malinowski (1884-1942) in the Trobriand island, where a pattern of circular support was instituted among different families to provide food and resources to all of them. This mode of integration was distinguished from that based on redistribution where the goods were collected in a centre and then redistributed, as in the case of the State; and from those based on competitive exchange where goods were traded between individuals or groups to make a profit, as in the case of the competitive market (Polanyi, 1944, 1977).

	Common	Universal	Particular
Political theory	Not-appropriable goods Trans-gene identities	Appropriation of territories and goods. National identities (State)	Appropriation of territories and goods. Individual identities (Individual)
Proprietary institution	Man-good relation based on use	Man-good relation based on dominium (Public property)	Man-good relation based on dominium (Private property)
Economic institution	Reciprocity exchange relation	Redistribution exchange relation (State)	Competitive exchange relation (Market)
Government institution	Direct government	Transcendental authority (State)	Transcendental authority (Market)

Table 2.1: Differences among the Common, the Universal, the Particular
Source: Author's elaboration

However, these characteristics of the political philosophy and of the institution of Common were the reasons for their eclipse, as they were irreconcilable with the fundamental pillars of industrial capitalism: the rise of nation-states, the imposition of the dominium-based ownership paradigm, and the spread of the competitive market economy. The rise of nation-state, supported by Machiavelli, Hobbes and Rousseau's theories of sovereignty, was essential for the development of industrial capitalism as this form of government was the structure that manages the interest of the bourgeois class. However, its imposition implied the State's territorial appropriation and control of its borders and the construction of national identities that stand against the not-appropriable nature and the trans-genre nature of Common (Mattei, 2011, 2015; Coccoli, 2012; Dardot and Laval, 2015). The imposition of the dominium-based ownership paradigm laid down in all Western constitution, including both the private and the public property, was necessary for the development of industrial capitalism as it implied the possibility of privatising and commodify goods and lands and introducing them into the competitive market system. However, its imposition implied the owner's absolute dominium over goods that stand against the relational use of the proprietary paradigm of Common (Mattei, 2011, 2015; Coccoli, 2014). The rise of the competitive market economy, supported by liberal theorists, was necessary for the development of industrial capitalism as this form of exchange guaranteed production and distribution of goods according to prices established through multilateral interactions that cannot be controlled by any authority, otherwise profit and thus capital accumulation can be undermined. However, its imposition, based on accumulation driven by profit, opposed the reciprocity mode of integration based on a lack of profit-making (Polanyi, 1944, 1977). Therefore, in the early stage of the development of industrial capitalism, there was no place for the category of Common. Alternatively, if there was a place, it had to be limited and insignificant (Mattei, 2011, 2015; Dardot and Laval, 2015). In other words, according to post-Marxist authors, the eclipse of the category of Common was the result of a necessary negation to establish the capitalist system based on the nation-state, on the dominium-based ownership paradigm, and on the competitive market economy.

2.1.2 The Polanyi's double movement

The negation of the category of Common was functional to the development of industrial capitalism which based its perpetuation on the opposition of the Universal and the Particular, the Public and the Private and the State and the Market (Bobbio, 1985; Subirats, 2011; Coccoli, 2014). This contraposition became the great dichotomy of the capitalist era epistemologically reducing the political, legal, and economic imaginary (Dardot and Laval, 2010; Mattei, 2011). As the French philosophers Laval and Dardot argue, in the modern and post-modern times the political, juridical,

and economic struggle has been between two contenders, the institution of the State and the institution of the Market, where the former tried to limit the intervention and the effects of the latter working with a defensive logic (Dardot and Laval, 2010). The State redistributed the resources that the Market tended to accumulate in private hands; the State guaranteed the rights that the Market tended to cancel for the sake of profit; the State, through public ownership, preserved goods and territories that the market tended to commodify. In other words, the State guaranteed the human beings' aspiration to universality and equality that the Market tended to undermine but leaving that necessary margin of freedom needed by human beings. This dichotomous contraposition of the two major forces at stake, since the birth of industrial capitalism to the present day, was the dynamic that the economist Karl Polanyi (1986-1964) defined as the double movement (Polanyi, 1944).

In his most famous work, *The Great Transformation* (1944), one of the sharpest critiques of the free-market system, Polanyi sustained that the history of modern society is a contraposition between two main organisations: the economic liberalism on which the market is based and the social protection on which the Society is based. Each principle is supported by different social forces and has different institutional aims. A general understanding of how the two principles work is given below:

‘(there are) two organising principles in society, each of them setting itself specific institutional aims, having the support of definite social forces and using its own distinctive methods. The one was the principle of economic liberalism, aiming at the establishment of a self-regulating market, relying on the support of the trading classes, and using largely laissez-faire and free trade as its methods; the other was the principle of social protection aiming at the conservation of man and nature as well as productive organization, relying on the varying support of those most immediately affected by the deleterious action of the market—primarily, but not exclusively, the working and the landed classes—and using protective legislation, restrictive association, and other instruments of intervention as its methods’(Polanyi, 1944, p. 132).

The contraposition between the two organising principles of the capitalist system gives rise to a tension between the force of the Market and the force of the Society that is defined as the double movement. This tension is the peculiar feature of our society since the development of industrial capitalism. To the stark utopia of the market system that tends to commodify as many

aspects of human life as possible and to the devastating effects that this produces on society at an economic and cultural level, society responds trying to limit commodification and its effects according to the principle of social protection which aims at the conservation of man and nature. In the following words, Polanyi (1944:76) explains it as:

‘Social history in the nineteenth century was thus the result of a double movement: the extension of the market organisation in respect to genuine commodities was accompanied by its restriction in respect to fictitious ones. While on the one hand markets spread all over the face of the globe and the amount of goods involved grew to unbelievable proportions, on the other hand a network of measures and policies was integrated into powerful institutions designed to check the action of the market relative to labour, land, and money. While the organization of world commodity markets, world capital markets, and world currency markets under the aegis of the gold standard gave an unparalleled momentum to the mechanism of markets, a deep-seated movement sprang into being to resist the pernicious effects of a market- controlled economy. Society protected itself against the perils inherent in a self-regulating market system—this was the one comprehensive feature in the history of the age’(Polanyi, 1944, p. 76).

In Polanyi’s discourse, the struggle is between the Market and the Society (Calafati, 1998). However, it was also clear to the author that during the modern era the protection was mainly carried out by the State, as an institution representing society. The early post-war years, with the new world order of the Bretton Woods agreement, the introduction of the Roosevelt's New Deal in the United States and of the Keynesian welfare policies and social legislation in Europe, were interpreted by Polanyi as the end of the double movement where finally the commodification push of the Market had been limited (Burawoy, 2003).

However, contra Polanyi's thought, this double movement did not end in the post-war period and above all the protection of Society was not resolved through the defensive role of the State. The commodifying tendency of capitalism came back vigorously in the seventies and eighties with the construction of the neoliberal regime that definitively broke the equilibrium based on the opposition of the State and the Market. According to Polanyi’s scholars, Polanyi's failure to predict this wave of commodification was due to his contradiction to Marxism, from which he needed to distance himself (Block, 2003). Polanyi did recognise the tie between capitalism and the Market

sustaining that self-regulated competitive markets have become dominant with the development of capitalism, but he did not understand how tight this tie is. This was due to a crucial missed concept in his theoretical framework which was represented by the Marxist concept of capital accumulation and its constant research for profit and growth (Burawoy, 2010).

Capitalism is a system based on the continuous accumulation of capital and, to continue to accumulate capital, it inevitably needs to expand. According to Marx and Engels, 'the need of a constantly expanding market chases the bourgeoisie over the whole surface of the globe. It must nestle everywhere, settle everywhere, establish connections everywhere' (Marx and Engels, 1848, p. 39). In other words, the State can introduce regulatory mechanisms that restrict the commodification process but, if they limit the accumulation of capital to such an extent that capitalism itself is not sustainable, capitalism will tend either to get rid of these regulatory mechanisms or to modify them. This is what happened with the neoliberal turn. The regulatory framework established in the post-war period was not producing a health capital accumulation and was in crisis. Thus, neoliberalism became the new contemporary strategy - after the liberalism of the late nineteenth-early twentieth century and after the post-war welfarism - that the capitalism deployed to continue to survive and accumulate capital.

At the end of the 1960s, capitalism already showed signs of a crisis. According to Harvey, although differently depending on the contexts, all western countries were experiencing the same signs. Unemployment and inflation were rising, the fiscal crisis of different States were provoking a plunging of tax revenues and soaring social expenditures, Keynesian policies were no longer working, and the fixed exchange rate was falling into disarray (Harvey, 2005, 2007). Thus, to solve its crisis capitalism needed to expand and to do so it had to commodify goods, services, and territories that until then had been kept out of the market system. Hence the need to intensify the privatization and commodification of both natural resources, such as land cultivated by indigenous peoples in the countries of the global South, public utilities of all kinds in western countries, from public assets to public services, and of information and research through the creation of patents and intellectual property rights at a global level (Harvey, 2005, 2007). This wave of privatisation and commodification, legitimised and supported by national States, have been interpreted by many authors as another wave of Polanyi's double movement which shows its pendular and continuous nature (Block, 2003; Dale, 2012; Subirats, 2014). This process was also detected by many post-Marxist scholars who conceptualised it through the updating of the Marxist concept of enclosure that led to the reviving of the autonomist Marxist traces and the re-emergence of the category of Common.

In reality, the re-emergence of the category of Common cannot be attributed only to post-Marxist scholars. In the international academic debates, this category also re-emerged thanks to the work of the political scientist Elinor Ostrom (Ostrom, 1990; Hess and Ostrom, 2003). Since the 1960s, she began to devote her research to the study of the collective management of natural resources, showing that there are management's forms alternative to the one of the State and of the Market. Ostrom indeed was not part of any Marxist current. She used a liberal approach that considered the Commons as institutions that did not represent an alternative to the State and the Market to overcome capitalism, but only an institution to be put in the capitalist order side by side to State and the Market (Caffentzis, 2010; Federici and Caffentzis, 2013). The Ostrom's liberal approach is not an isolated case, but many other scholars followed the same path, although within different disciplines. One of the most famous cases is undoubtedly the work of Yochai Benkler that studies the Commons as a new form of production within the discipline of information law and policy studies (Benkler, 2007). Their work has been essential to demonstrating the existence of the category of Common against its negation underlining the possibility that communities have to self-govern certain types of resources and to commonly produce a certain type of goods. Therefore, it is relevant to present their work.

2.1.3 The liberal perspective on the category of Common

The objective of Ostrom's work was to question orthodox models of collective action represented by Olson's 'logic of collective action' (Olson, 1971), by Dawes' s 'prisoner dilemma game' (Dawes, 1973) and by Hardin's 'tragedy of the commons' (Hardin, 1968). All these models invoked an image of helpless individuals caught in an inexorable process of destroying their shared resources as they postulated that people act only in their immediate interest and that they are not able to communicate among themselves. In her famous book *Governing the Commons* (1990), Ostrom criticised and disproved these perspectives. Firstly, according to her, these models were successful because of their tractability, which eased the prediction of the results and made them attractive for policy-makers who were pushed towards simple solution such as the privatisation or 'statalisation' of the Commons. However, they were based on an oversimplified interpretation of reality that assumed some fundamental variables equal to a constant, such as the degree of communication among individuals, their capability to craft their institutions and rules and to process the amount of information available. Successively, through a rigorous analysis of an extensive Commons' case study literature, Ostrom demonstrated that individuals were able to communicate, to take decisions together, to craft their institutions and rules, and to process

different amount of information. In other words, she demonstrated that communities of individuals were able to collectively organise and managed shared resources, denying the classical models of collective action.

Initially, the Commons analysed by Ostrom were a specific type of resources, the Common-Pool Resources (CPRs). These resources, according to neoclassical economic theory are resources that are characterized by a high degree of exclusion, which means that is difficult or costly to exclude people from the use of the resource, but not impossible; and by a high degree of subtractability, which means that whatever is taken away from the resource is taken away from anyone else. Examples of CPRs are natural productive resources, such as irrigation system, high mountain meadows, groundwater basins and inshore fisheries. Analysing the management of these types of resources, Ostrom built an analytical framework to show what are the variables that influence the collective actions. By applying this framework (and not a predetermined model), she demonstrated that individuals were able, through a cost-benefit analysis, to make decisions that were not motivated only by maximising their immediate interest. Moreover, she built a new theory of collective action that illustrated the design principles that permit the successful collective management of CPRs. These design principles were the followings: 1) the community that uses the resource must be well defined; 2) the rules on the use of the CPR must respect the local conditions in which it is located; 3) individuals who use the CPR must be able to participate in the decision making and in the change of the rules; 4) there must be people who check if the rules are respected or not; 5) who does not respect the rules is likely to be assessed graduate sanction; 6) there must be spaces for discussion in order to resolve the conflicts that are created; 7) external governmental authorities have to recognize the rights of the community to set their own institutions; 8) nested structure has to be in place in case of larger system (Ostrom, 1990).

Ostrom's design principles show one key issue of her understanding of the Commons that is also shared by the post-Marxist tradition: the need to self-govern a Commons. In the design principle number 3), 'the collective choice arrangement', she stated that most individuals affected by a CPRs' operational rules have to participate in crafting, in modifying and in enforcing the operational rules. Therefore, participation and horizontality in the government of the Commons are fundamental: Ostrom did not believe in any form of top-down imposition of the management rules and even less in the one imposed by an external governing institution, but in the collective of individuals' self-determination of their own rules. However, although she underlined the need for a community of individuals to self-govern their resources, she never used this collective governing form to challenge the capitalist order. As underlined by post-Marxist scholars, Ostrom's approach

was a liberal one that considered the Commons as an agent of neoclassical economic theory (Dardot and Laval, 2015). She demonstrated that this agent had a high level of social capital capable of self-organise itself. However, its action was pushed by a cost-benefit analysis according to a paradigm driven by the profit that used the resource as an input into a production process or a commodity to be sold according to market rules (Caffentzis, 2010; Federici and Caffentzis, 2013). In other words, in Ostrom's management of CPRs, individuals, after having sorted the collective management of the resource, act as individuals, or better said as entrepreneur perfectly integrated into the capitalist system. Therefore, for Ostrom, the self-governing form of the Commons cannot be used to overcome the State and the Market, but it represented only a further form of management to place side by side to the State and the Market.

In the last part of her life, Ostrom shifted her attention from the studies on natural resources to those on immaterial resources, especially knowledge (KCs). Ostrom referred to knowledge as all types of understanding gained through experience or study, whether indigenous, scientific, scholarly or otherwise non-academic (Hess and Ostrom, 2007, p. 8), although she focused mainly on the study of scholarly and scientific information. Her methodological approach continued to be that of neo-institutional studies but, in this case, the resources being analysed were completely different from the previous ones. Knowledge, in its intangible form, should generally be considered the classic example of a public good, a good available to all and where one person's use does not subtract from another's use, such as ideas, thoughts and scientific discoveries. However, digital technology, through digital libraries, digital repositories, community-based archives, and open access scholar journals allowing the distribution of this resource through the interchange and collaboration in network, has changed the same structure of the resource and its management. Therefore, although knowledge is not technically a CPRs, it is managed by digital communities as if it was a CPRs. For this reason, Ostrom and Hess argued that KCs could be analysed through the same analytical framework used in the study of CPRs management (Hess and Ostrom, 2003, 2007). Undoubtedly the KCs studies represented a significant step forward in Ostrom's thinking. She broke with the naturalism of economic orthodoxy (Dardot and Laval, 2015). She recognised that it is not only the intrinsic quality of the resource that can determine a Commons but the type of management that is adopted: the Commons are all resources, materials or immaterial, jointly managed by a collective of individuals (Hess and Ostrom, 2007). However, her approach remained a liberal one: KCs, as they were CPRs, were a form of collective management to be put side by side to the State and the Market.

The same approach was adopted by Benkler, another relevant Commons' scholar that has studied this concept from the information law and policy studies' perspective. In his extensive work titled 'The Wealth of Network' (Benkler, 2007) he demonstrated that the advent of technological change in the digital space had given rise to the development of a form of collaborative production that was not possible before: the Commons-based peer production. This production was based on a more decentralised, collaborative, nonmarket and non-proprietary pattern of organisation. According to Benkler, the development of the Commons-based peer production represented a very important turning point in the production system because it allowed the development of liberal political values that the forms of production of the State and the Market did not allow to develop: individual autonomy and freedom, a more genuinely participatory political system and social justice (Benkler, 2007). However, despite Benkler contributed to show a form of production alternative to the market-based and hierarchical production of the Market and the State, he did not translate the Commons into an instrument to challenge the capitalist order, but only as an instrument functional to a more just development of capitalist society (Papadimitropoulos, 2017). In other words, Ostrom and Benkler did importantly contribute to the theory of the category of Common, revealing its existence against its negation in the international academic debate. However, their work is situated in that liberal current, which differs from the autonomist Marxist current (Castro-Coma and Martí-Costa, 2016; Rossi and Enright, 2017), not allowing the two authors to see the Commons as an instrument for overcoming capitalism going beyond the State and the Market.

2.1.4 The Marxist and post-Marxist enclosures

The updating of the Marxist concept of enclosure has been fundamental for the re-emergence of the category of Commons from an autonomist point of view. However, before explaining how post-Marxist scholars have updated the concept of enclosure and how it allowed the category of the Commons to re-emerge it is also necessary to explain the origin of this concept.

- *Marxist enclosures*

The first theorisation of the enclosures was produced to describe the process of fencing of the English communal lands that occurred between the fifteenth and the eighteenth century and which is considered the process of formation of industrial capitalism. In the Middle Ages, the communal lands provided an indispensable form of livelihood to the peasants and the craftsman and generally for those who were not wealthy and had no property at all. In England, the Chart of Forest of 1215 guaranteed access to communal lands to allow this part of the population to procure

timber, fruit, and water (Linebaugh, 2008; Mattei, 2011; Dardot and Laval, 2015). However, starting from the fifteenth century up to the industrial revolution, the common lands began to be fenced by the lords and the rising middle class to increase their productivity using them for grazing and, commodifying them, putting them into the productive capitalist circle. The first written record of this process can be found in the book 'Utopia' (More, 1516) by Thomas More (1478-1535). According to More the fences and the private property were one of the main causes of the malaise of society that allowed nobles and lords to get rich at the expense of the same society. For this reason, he proposed a society based on the equality of classes, where private property did not exist and where the main employment for the whole population was agriculture.

The same enclosures were taken up by Karl Marx in 'Capital' (Marx, 1867). According to Marx, they represented the historical process of separating the producer from the means of production: the so-called original accumulation. Through this process, on the one hand, the quantity of the means of capitalist production was increased, with more land to be allocated for the textile industry and, on the other, the reserve of workers was created. The primitive accumulation was, therefore, a process that, centralising the resources in the hands of the capitalists and depriving the population of the means of subsistence, became the pre-condition for the transition from the feudal to the capitalist system. This process, initially hindered by the State, was subsequently facilitated by the State itself. Although the legislation of the time initially fought the enclosures, it was subsequently the same legislation that enshrined the legitimacy of this practice, legalising it. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the enclosures were legitimised by the Acts of Parliament called Acts of Inclosure. The objective of the Marxist theorisation of the primitive accumulation was to demonstrate empirically that the birth of capitalism depended not on a mere capitalists' saving but on a violent and cruel process based on the theft carried out by the bourgeoisie and by the State itself. Far from idealizing the Commons and the medieval society, according to its historical materialism, this process was still necessary for the future development of Communism: after the revolution that would conquer the State to impose the dictatorship of the proletariat and then dissolve it, another form of Commons, the producers' associations, would have created the socialist society sharing the means of production.

Subsequently, the enclosures were taken up by Polanyi in the 'Great Transformation' (Polanyi, 1944). He provided a precise description of the process, through the following words:

'Enclosures have appropriately been called a revolution of the rich against the poor. The lords and nobles were upsetting the social order, breaking down

ancient law and custom, sometimes by means of violence, often by pressure and intimidation. They were literally robbing the poor of their share in the common, tearing down the houses which, by the hitherto unbreakable force of custom, the poor had long regarded as theirs and their heirs'. The fabric of society was being disrupted; desolate villages and the ruins of human dwellings testified to the fierceness with which the revolution raged, endangering the defences of the country, wasting its towns, decimating its population, turning its overburdened soil into dust, harassing its people and turning them from decent husbandmen into a mob of beggars and thieves. Though this happened only in patches, the black spots threatened to melt into a uniform catastrophe' (Polanyi, 1944, p. 35).

The process described by Polanyi was the same one described by Marx, who also stressed the role of the state, which if initially opposed this process, subsequently became an accomplice. However, Polanyi's enclosures differed from those of Marx for a primary reason. According to Marx, the privatisation of land gave life to the army of workers who were then exploited in the wage relation. This exploitation represented the central experience of capitalism that was leading to an economic and cultural catastrophe. According to Polanyi, the privatisation of land was the first step towards its commodification together with the commodification of labour and money. This commodification represented the central experience of capitalism that was leading to an economic and cultural catastrophe (Burawoy, 2003). For this reason, he defined the land, along with labour and money, 'fictitious commodities' to underline how their commodification, although it was happening, was an utopia because these resources were not born to be commodified. However, according to Polanyi, once the privatisation has taken place, if the commodification had been controlled by the institutions (and therefore also by the State), this economic and cultural catastrophe could have been avoided. It was precisely this control of the commodification of land, labour and of money that the author appealed for in the theory of the double movement to protect society against its economic and cultural destruction.

The concept of the primitive accumulation, although necessary to explain the theft of the bourgeoisie and the State on which the birth of the capitalist system was based, had a limitation: it was rooted in the precise period that went from the fifteenth to the eighteenth century. All these authors have always interpreted it as an event linked to the birth of industrial capitalism. The term Marx uses is indicative of this limitation. The primitive accumulation is precisely that process necessary for the development of the capitalist system but which is exhausted once the system is

established. However, as many post-Marxist authors have demonstrated, from De Angelis to Harvey and Federici, there was no genealogy in the enclosures, and there was no linearity that leads from the primitive accumulation to the capitalist development. Enclosures are a discontinuous and constant mechanism of the whole history of capitalism through which this system reproduces itself (Federici, 2004; Harvey, 2005; De Angelis, 2007). This awareness became evident with the construction of the neoliberal regime and the privatisation and commodification carried out by the neoliberal State.

- *Post-Marxist enclosures*

One of the first updating of the concept of the enclosures came from the field of the post-Marxist political economy with the concept of the new enclosure, coined by the Midnight Notes Collective, with the publication of the pamphlet 'The new enclosure' (Midnight Notes Collective, 2001). This collective, composed by a group of Marxist scholars, including Linebaugh, Caffentzis, Federici and De Angelis, was formed in the late 70s and devoted its theoretical work to the anti-nuclear, anti-war and anti-capitalist movement. In the pamphlet, their reflection started de-linearizing Marx's primitive accumulation, claiming that the enclosures were not a 'one-time process exhausted at the dawn of capitalism but a regular feature of a path on capital accumulation' (Midnight Notes Collective, 2001). They argued that, with the advent of neoliberalism, this process, supported by the State, had increased dramatically to overcome the overaccumulation crisis of capitalism. The new enclosures operate as the old enclosure did: they end the communal control of the means of subsistence. The policies referred to in the pamphlet were: 1) land privatizations in developing countries such as Latin America and Africa, where people were thrown off communal land acquired by the World Bank to give space to industrialized forms of agri-business implementing the Structural Adjustment Programme of the IMF; 2) the growing homeless phenomenon in the United States, where people were unable to pay their mortgages or rents due to wage shrinkage; 3) the displacement in China, Soviet Union and Eastern Europe countries of millions of people from their communally operated lands to make way for the transition to the free market economy.

In the pamphlet, their theorisation of the new enclosures was still embryonic and mainly focused on types of enclosure quite similar to the old ones, such as the privatisation of lands, both rural and urban. This concept was widened in their subsequent works (De Angelis, 2007). However, what is to be emphasized here is not the completeness of the concept of new enclosures developed by the Midnight Notes Collective, but the scope of its re-introduction: it brought to light the ongoing predatory nature of the capitalist system that, through the joint work of the State and the

Market, constantly expropriates the Commons. It is precisely because of their ability to trace this parallelism that links the forms of primitive accumulation to contemporary forms of accumulation that the reflection on the limits of the primitive accumulation was brought back to the scene of Marxist theory.

The second updating of the concept of enclosure came from the Italian critical legal studies that, more than creating a new concept, they speculated about the nature of the privatisation of public properties that have been carried out by the State in many western countries starting from the 1980s. Many privatisations have been highlighted, from resources, such as water and electricity, to assets, such as the building heritage, to public services, such as education and healthcare. What this disciplinary sector emphasised is that the State was privatising on the basis of the Constitution and of the new laws dictated by the neoliberal regime, but what was privatised really belongs to all the citizens of the State. Mattei described it very well in the introduction of his famous book 'Beni Comuni. Un Manifesto'(2011) in which he wrote:

'When the state privatizes a railroad, an airline, or the health care, or seeks to privatize the integrated public service (i.e. drinking water) or the university, it expropriates the community (each individual member pro-quota) of its common goods (common property), in exactly the same way and specular with respect to what happens when a private property is expropriated to build a road or a public work. (...) In the process of privatisation, the government does not sell what it owns but what belongs pro-quota to each member of the community (...) However, while the liberal constitutional tradition protects the private owner against the public authority through the compensation for the expropriation, no juridical protection, let alone constitutional, exists in the confrontation with the state that transfers the goods of the community to the private' (Mattei, 2011, p. V).

Through this analysis of the privatisations, Mattei was able to reveal in a very simple way not only the crucial role of the State but above all the role of the law. The bourgeois constitutions had not only eliminated the category of Common reducing the property categories to the public and private but have always provided much more guarantees for the latter rather than for the first (Mattei, 2011).

The latest updating of the concept of enclosure came from the critical geography with the concept of 'accumulation by dispossession', coined by David Harvey (Harvey, 2005, 2007). The geographer, with the development of the neoliberal regime, speculated about the limits of Marx's concept of primitive accumulation and recognised the theoretical need to update its meaning previously expressed by the Midnight Notes Collective. The accumulation through dispossession is a broad concept that could be considered as a synthesis of the various theoretical updating of the concept of enclosures mentioned so far. It contains all those practices that had already been described by Marx and that provided for the expropriation of the means of subsistence, the transformation of the common property rights into private rights, the creation of the army of wage labourers, the appropriation of natural resources through colonial, neo-colonial and imperial practices. To these were added all the policies introduced by the neoliberal regime that provided for the privatisation of public goods and services (social housing, health care, education, etc.), the extraction of rent from patent and intellectual property rights and the financialization of the economy that had deprived the population of real wealth.

The essential features of the dispossession were the privatisation and commodification processes. Both allowed the releases of a set of assets at a very low (or zero) cost, so that capital can seize hold of and turn them into profit. In this way, Harvey explained the reasons why neoliberalism did not and does not generate wealth and income, but redistributed and redistributes wealth and income through a series of cannibalistic as well as predatory and fraudulent practices (Harvey, 2007). A crucial point in Harvey's discussion is to highlight the role of the State, a necessary partner for the implementation of this type of policy. The State - the neoliberal State - according to Harvey 'with its monopoly of violence and definitions of legality plays a crucial role in both backing and promoting these processes' (Harvey, 2007, p. 159). This favoured privatisation in Western countries, as well as in the former Soviet communist countries, and repressed the rebellions where the opposition to privatisation was more evident.

2.1.5 The critique of the State and the emergence of the category of Common

The updating of the Marxist concept of enclosure by post-Marxist scholars permitted two crucial theoretical developments that led to the reviving of the autonomist Marxist traces and the category of Common. Firstly, their analysis showed that capitalism has a predatory nature and, to expand and overcome its overaccumulation crises, it constantly needs to increasingly privatise and commodify goods and resources (Harvey, 2007; Hardt and Negri, 2009). Moreover, it showed that capitalism relies on the State to do it. This responsibility of the State reveals that not only Polanyi's

double movement did not end after the World War II, but that this movement was an illusion. It was not based on the opposition between the State and the Market where one institution defended society from the other, but on their alliance, where the first institution supported the logic of the other (Mattei, 2011; Dardot and Laval, 2015). This alliance represented the central post-Marxist scholars' critique of the State. This critique was very well expressed in the concept of the 'Republic of Propriety' proposed by Hardt e Negri (2009) and in the concept of the 'Neoliberal Reason' proposed by Laval and Dardot (2009).

According to Hardt and Negri (2009), 'modernity' is the order of domination imposed since the bourgeois revolutions. However, they argue that modernity is not constituted just by capitalist domination but lies between the relations of power that are established between capitalist domination and its forces of resistance, modernity and anti-modernity. These power relations had been translated at the political level in the opposition between Market and State, between Private and Public, between Capitalism and Socialism. Nevertheless, they claim, this opposition is illusory. The forces of anti-modernity are forces through which the forces of domination are strengthened and reconstituted continually exactly because they do not aim at overcoming modernity but instead fit within it. Modernity is based on a constitutive element represented by the Republic of Property, i.e. that legal order on which all Nation States are based whereby the private property reigns supreme. This concept is useful to the authors for two reasons. The Republic of Property, on the one hand, emphasizes the reciprocal constitution between forms of domination and forms of resistance, between State and Market, between Public and Private; on the other, it shows how the forces of anti-modernity, such as social democracy and real communism, have never been able to go beyond modernity because they have never set as their objective the overcoming of the Republic of Property. Social democracy has never questioned private property because it claimed that its effects can be simply limited through a programme of social reform. And real communism, although it has questioned property, it aligned itself with the same existing structures of the capitalist countries but with the State form of ownership and government. This is why, they argue, emancipation cannot be embodied by the anti-modernity, but it needs an alternative force that aims to overcome the 'Republic of Property'.

In 'La Nouvelle Raison du Monde: Essai sur la Société Néolibérale', Laval and Dardot (2009), propose a historical analysis that aims to understand the difference between the liberal reason of the '900 and the current one. Liberalism was theoretically based on three fundamental ideas related to the need to limit the intervention of the State in the economy: the Adam Smith's abandonment of the market to its natural course, the Jeremy Bentham's calculation of the

usefulness and the John Locke's natural rights of the individuals. However, this idea of laissez-faire went deeply into crisis at the beginning of the twentieth century and, when the liberal doctrine was recovered in the early 70s, it could not be applied in the same way. The authors claim that instead of limiting the power of the State, the 'Neoliberal Reason' implied the extension of the power of the State. To extend the logic of the Market beyond the mere sphere of the Market, it was necessary to reform the internal functioning of the State so that it became the main lever of this extension. Neoliberalism is, therefore, a group of practices and norms constructed politically, institutionally, and legally. This new phase of capitalism is not only producing devastating social and environmental effects, increasing social inequality and vulnerability, and leading to the destruction of human beings by the hands of other human beings. It is also transforming society, its social relations, and its subjectivities, subduing all institutions, activities, and times of life to the objectives and the rhythms of capital accumulation. That is, neoliberalism is leading to what Marx called the real subsumption of society into the capital, extending without limit the logic of competitiveness. In this framework, thinking that the power of the State can still protect society from 'Neoliberal Reason' is illusory.

In other words, the updating of the Marxist concept of enclosures made evident the complicity of the State and the Market in the neoliberal pillaging. In reality, this complicity, as claimed by Hardt and Negri, has always existed and was ratified in the 'Republic of Propriety', while the neoliberal turn has only allowed making it more evident than before because, as pointed out by Laval and Dardot, to apply the 'Neoliberal Reason' it is necessary a strengthening of the State action. Hence, with the neoliberal turn, it became more evident than before that it was impossible to draw a path of emancipation from capitalism through the State. Therefore, this whole generation of post-Marxist scholars started to look for a way of emancipation that could do without the State.

The second reflection brought out the category of Common as the heart of the struggle for emancipation. The update of the Marxist concept of enclosure showed that not only capitalism was based on the denial of the category of Common, but also on its looting. What was subject to enclosure - lands in the Global South countries that were being privatized, the scientific discoveries that were patented, the public goods and services that the State privatized and those assets that were financialized and whose value was pushed away from the real economy - were nothing but resources, assets, and wealth that *de facto* belonged to (local, national, global) communities who were not considered proprietors *de iure*. In other words, what the State and the Market were privatising and commodifying were nothing but a variety of Commons that were not recognised

as such by these authorities. If these proprietary forms were recognised, they could not have been privatised without the consent of the communities. This does not necessarily mean that the Commons cannot be privatised but that, at least, community members can have a voice over it, and often this voice prevents from the privatisation (Vidal-Folch, 2017)². Therefore, the Commons became the emblem of the struggle against the capitalist neoliberal plundering and represented an emancipatory alternative for society that went beyond the ‘illusionary’ State’s protection.

Thus, according to the post-Marxist authors it was not only necessary to draw an alternative path of emancipation without the State because taking over of the State did not lead to any kind of emancipation, but this alternative path could be embodied by the category of Common. For the Midnight Notes Collective, the Italian critical legal scholars and Harvey, the social practice of the Commons became the privileged means, or one of the privileged means, to stand against enclosures and draw a path of emancipation from capitalism. The political theory of The Common became the base and the objective of the political project of emancipation representing, for Hardt and Negri, the forces of the alter-modernity that can smash the Republic of Property, and, for Laval and Dardot, the alternative reason that could oppose Neoliberal Reason. Therefore, with the neoliberal shift, post-Marxist scholars made the category of Common re-emerge from their very opposite (Mattei, 2011) not only to go against its negation, but to transform it into that empty signifier, in Laclau's philological meaning, (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985) of an emancipatory path from capitalism, that aimed to do without the State, resuming and nurturing the autonomous Marxist current.

² In a recent study on social housing in Denmark, it has been demonstrated that cooperative houses were more resilient than public houses to the wave of neoliberal privatisation.

2.2 The category of Common in the post-Marxist perspective

Up to now, many disciplines have speculated about the category of Common from an autonomist Marxist perspective -from political economy to critical geography, to critical legal studies, to political philosophy- using both the plural and singular inflexion of the term: the social practice of the Commons and the political theory of The Common. Not all contributions can be defined as overtly part of autonomist Marxism. Even though, all of them, theorizing on the category of Common, on its limits and possibilities, have contributed to nurture this emancipatory path, whereby those who adhere more to the autonomist Marxist tradition tends to be less critical towards it while those who adhere less to the autonomist Marxist tradition tends to adopt a more critical approach. Indeed, the different disciplines, the different overtones within the autonomist Marxist approaches and the overlapping uses of the Commons and The Common have led to a conceptual confusion over the object of study (Subirats and Rendueles, 2016). As the French philosopher Judit Revel has recently argued, the category of Common is characterised by a polysemy that should be addressed by post-Marxist scholars (Revel, 2017).

However, despite this polysemy of the category of Common, the different contributions seem to share a common vision to achieve the emancipation from capitalism. This vision is based on the construction of spaces, the social practice of the Commons, that create 'institutionalities' alternative and autonomous from the State and the Market in terms of relation among human beings, and between human beings and goods, and in terms of proprietary, economic and governmental institution (De Angelis, 2003; Harvey, 2010, 2012; Federici, 2011; Mattei, 2011; Federici and Caffentzis, 2013; Alessandra Quarta and Spanò, 2016). The production, the reproduction and the expansion of the Commons should allow overcoming capitalism through the production of emancipation, The Common, and the construction of new alternative order based on self-government, equality and non-appropriability (Hardt and Negri, 2009; Dardot and Laval, 2015). In all cases, although there are significant differences between the more autonomist and the less autonomist Marxists, this vision faces a problem when it has to address how the emancipation from capitalism can be achieved without the State. Through theoretical contributions that remain at a high level of abstraction and do not tend to go down into empirical analyses, they manage to avoid a deeper reflection on the State and its role. In other words, the emancipatory project based on the category of Common faces a problem when it has to address the question of the State that, as it is shown, often remain unsolved.

The second section of this first chapter presents the different contributions to the category of Common by post-Marxist scholars. This section has three objectives. First, it aims to take up the Ravel's challenge and attempt to systematise the multiple contributions to the category of Common distinguishing the meaning of the social practice of the Commons from the meaning of the political theory of The Common. Secondly, it aims to define co-possible meanings, gathering the shared characteristics of the theories on the social practice of Commons and the political theory of The Common. This meaning-building exercise aims both to facilitate the understanding of the Commons and The Common but also to operationalise them in empirical analysis. Thirdly, it aims to show how all these theories, although they untie emancipation from the State, show a certain reticence to undertake a deeper reflection on how emancipation is possible without the State.

This second section of this first chapter is divided into three parts. The first part, titled 'The social practice of the Commons', illustrates the meaning of the collective practice of the Commons in three disciplines: the political economy of the Midnight Notes Collective, the Italian critical legal studies and Harvey's critical geography. The second section, titled 'The political theory of The Common', illustrates the two main political theories of The Common, the one proposed by Hardt and Negri and the one proposed by Laval and Dardot. In each of these two parts, beyond the presentation of the different theoretical contributions, the thesis tries to solve the polysemy, proposing a co-possibility of meanings of both the social practice of the Commons and the political theory of The Common, and illustrates how each of them relates to the question of the State. The third part, titled 'The emancipation of the Commons and The Common without the State', shows the generalised reticence of all these theories to reflecting on the State and its role, underlining how this reticence seems to leave a theoretical and empirical not fully explored space in the autonomist Common's theories.

2.2.1 The social practice of the Commons

The contributions to Common's theories that use the plural inflection of this category to define a social practice are mainly three: the tradition of the political economy of the Midnight Notes Collective (De Angelis, 2003, 2012; Linebaugh, 2008; Federici, 2011; Federici and Caffentzis, 2013), the tradition of the Italian critical legal studies (Mattei, 2011, 2015; Marella, 2012; Alessandra Quarta and Spanò, 2016) and the Harvey's critical geography (Harvey, 2010, 2012). By recognising the complicity of the State and the Market in the neoliberal plundering, all contributions share the need to define an emancipatory social practice that goes beyond the State and the Market. This alternative is found in the Commons, the collective social practices that create spaces autonomous

from the State and the Market and that give form to social relations and institutions different from the State and the Market. The differences among the contribution are many. These are mainly related to the contribution's discipline, the meaning given to the Commons and the theoretical approach within autonomist Marxism. However, it is possible to define a common interpretative framework where each contribution specifies the characteristics of the alternative social relations and institutions of the Commons. What these theories do not further elaborate is how the Commons can emerge, maintain, and expand in a given context over time. This unexplored space in these theories is due to a lack of empirical analysis that becomes functional to abstain them from addressing the question of how emancipation can be achieved without the State.

- *The Midnight Notes Collective's political economy's contribution*

A first significant contribution to the Commons theories is represented by the Midnight Notes Collective's political economy. According to them the Commons represent the privileged form of struggle to fight and the privileged cell to overcome capitalism beyond the State and the Market. Their contribution is relevant as it brings to light two issues often side-lined by the literature on the Commons: the historical relativisation of the use of the Commons, thanks to the historiographical research of Peter Linebaugh (2008), and the role of women, thanks to the feminist perspective of Silvia Federici (2011). The first, in his famous book 'The Magna Carta Manifesto', underlines how the Commons have always had an anti-capitalist meaning because they were the principle that linked the different struggles in their defence carried out by peasants and working people, from the revolts in Germany (1548) to the ones in the United States (the 1700s). The second underlines how, being the main subjects of reproductive work, women depended on access to communal resources more than men and have been more penalised by their privatisation (Federici, 2011). This is why they have always been more interested than men in the defence of nature's commons and, in many regions, they have been the first to come forward against its destruction (Federici and Caffentzis, 2013). The two perspectives show that not only the Commons have always seen struggles to defend them, but also that these struggles have often seen women at their forefront. However, in their view, although the struggles in defence of the Commons represent the first step to move from a capitalist society to a post-capitalist one, the struggles are not sufficient and it is necessary to build a social alternative that represents the basic cell of the new society.

This basic cell of the post-capitalist society is the Commons. According to them, the Commons are a collective mode of production and reproduction to regain control of the means of production and reproduction and disentangle the lives from the Market and the State (De Angelis,

2003; Federici and Caffentzis, 2013). An example of Commons can be represented by urban gardens created in many western cities with the aim to regain control over the food production, regenerate the environment and provide forms of subsistence (Federici, 2011). According to Federici and Caffentzis (2013), the criteria that distinguish the Commons' mode of production from other collective modes of production are the following: i) Commons are not given, they are produced through collective labour; ii) Commons must involve a 'commonwealth' in the form of shared natural and social resources: lands, forest, urban space, knowledge, communication all to be used for non-commercial purposes; iii) Commons require a community. This community should not be selected on the basis of any privileged identity but rather on the basis of the care-work done to reproduce the commons and regenerate what is taken from them; iv) Commons require regulations stipulating how the wealth is used and cared for based on the principles of equal access, reciprocity, collective decision making and bottom-up power; v) Commons entails equal access to the means of (re)production and egalitarian decision-making; (Federici and Caffentzis, 2013).

At the analytical level, one of the main focuses of the Midnight Notes Collective's Commons is the community. This must be characterised by a feeling of non-competitive solidarity built among its members, without which a Commons cannot be considered as such (Federici and Caffentzis, 2013). In this sense, their theorisation is relevant because it shows how the community is not only given by a group of people who share the resource or its management, as for Ostrom, but by the kind of relationships that are established among its members. However, the community of a Commons can also represent a risk, due to the cultural closure that this implies. As argued by De Angelis, communities can represent a cultural limit within which people have suspicious attitudes towards others who do not belong to the same community (De Angelis, 2003). Therefore, it is important to continually ensure that the community does not become an identity-based community, where those who do not respect the values established by the group are cut-off (De Angelis, 2012). For this reason, they believe that it is essential not to create communities that are closed from the outside because this can lead to an identity closure, and create instead trans-local relations between the autonomous community and the outside based on non-competitive forms.

The second analytical focus of the Midnight Notes Collective's Commons is the managing form. The management of a Commons must be carried out directly by the community and must be based on an egalitarian decision-making process. Emphasizing on direct management means that a Commons can be considered as such when it is not managed by an intermediary institution, such as the State. Clarifying this distinction, according to Federici and Caffentzis (2013), is necessary because the two categories are often confused. Repeatedly, Commons are defined as

resources that are instead public, such as the pensions, the health-care system and the education. Although these can and should belong to all the citizens of a State, they are very different from what should be considered a Commons because they are managed by the State. This does not mean, according to them, that it is not necessary to fight for what is public, since the public is where much of the past labour is stored, and it is important that it does not fall into private hands. However, it is necessary to keep in mind this distinction during the fight. Thus, the authors state that it is necessary to link the struggle for the public with the struggle for the Commons so that they can reinforce each other (Federici and Caffentzis, 2013). Nevertheless, they do not deepen what this distinction would imply, leaving the question open.

A step forward in this sense comes from the De Angelis's contribution. He, like his colleagues, argues that to move from a capitalist society to a post-capitalist society it is necessary to fight for the defence of the Commons, and it is necessary to create new institutions of the Commons: the basic cell of collective (re)production (De Angelis, 2003, 2012). These processes represent the two revolutions that must be carried out, where the struggle for the Commons represents the political revolution while the establishment of institutions of the Commons represents the social revolution. They are closely linked to each other because often the collective struggles against enclosures lead to the development of collective practices of (re)production. However, although necessary, these two revolutions are not enough. It is also necessary to advance the Commons in existing institution, referring to the public ones. In this way, De Angelis brings a crucial element to their theorisation on the Commons, as he recognises the need to include existing public institutions in this transformative process. However, he does not specify what he intends with the advancement of the Commons in existing public institutions. Thus, he starts to respond to the question left open by his colleges by stating the necessity that, beyond the struggle for what is public, it is also necessary to do something with what is public. However, his theoretical advancement is still limited, as he does not specify how something can be done with the public if this belongs and is managed by the State, the same State from which the Commons aims to disentangle from.

- *The Italian critical legal studies' contribution*

A second important contribution to the Commons theories is represented by the Italian critical studies. According to them, the Commons represent the privileged social and political tools for the direct satisfaction of communities' fundamental rights that go beyond the State and the Market. A starting point for this interpretation is represented by the work of the Rodotà Commission (Mattei, Reviglio and Rodotà, 2009) named after the illustrious politician and

academic Stefano Rodotà (1930-2017) who chaired it. The Commission, appointed in 2007 by the Italian Ministry of Justice with the aim to reform the Civil Code provisions on the property and public goods, proposed the introduction of common ownership. This served to eliminate from the proprietary, sovereign and economist logic those goods (public and private) whose access was necessary for the enjoyment of fundamental rights. The access represents the guarantee that allows connecting the person with his/her rights through a double operation: i) the effective construction of the constitutionalized person is entrusted to logics which are different from the proprietary one, therefore out of the mercantilist dimension; ii) the access is configured not as a purely formal situation but as an instrument that makes the good immediately usable, without mediation (Rodotà, 2015). With the change of Government (Berlusconi took office in April 2008) the proposal was shelved. However, part of this text deserves to be mentioned for the great theoretical contribution and the very interesting legal innovation that it represents. According to the definition expressed by the Rodotà Commission the Commons are:

(...) Goods that express functional usefulness to the exercise of fundamental rights and the free development of the person. The common goods must be protected and safeguarded by the legal system, also for the benefit of future generations. Holders of common goods can be public or private legal entities. In any case, their collective enjoyment must be guaranteed, within the limits and according to the procedures established by law. When the holders are public legal entities, the common goods are managed by public entities and are placed out of the market. Common goods, are among others: rivers, streams and their sources; the lakes and other waters; the air; the parks as defined by law, forests and wooded areas; high altitude mountain areas, glaciers and perennial snows; the shores and stretches of coast declared environmental reserve; wildlife fauna and protected flora; the archaeological, cultural, and environmental goods and other protected landscape areas' (Mattei, Reviglio and Rodotà, 2009)

According to Mattei, one of the Commission's members, the Commission's attempt was politically and theoretically very significant. It represented an indispensable political tactic because it helps to define a proprietary form that guarantees the satisfaction of fundamental rights based on the inclusiveness of access and the de-commodification of the good. However, he believes that making the Commons compatible with the Italian civil code, does not allow to overcome the Cartesian distinction between the object and the subject, that is, does not allow to overcome the

relation of dominium, that originates with the Roman law, between the owner and the good (Mattei, 2015).

Mattei argues that the Commons cannot be considered mere goods and must instead be considered as a social relation between a group of people and a good. This implies the overcoming of the paradigm of possessing and the moving to the paradigm of being: you cannot have a Commons, but you can be a Commons (Mattei, 2011). According to him, these social relations create institutional forms that go beyond the accumulation of profit and power typical of the State and the Market and they can progressively replace the State and the Market and overcome their domination. In order to achieve this replacement, according to critical legal scholars, it is required to work in parallel on two tracks: the tracks of 'the constituted', that is 'marked by the attribution of new meanings to existing systems and institutions'; and the tracks of 'the constituent', 'an unknown land marked by innovations if not real institutional inventions' (Alessandra Quarta and Spanò, 2016). Therefore, they too, as De Angelis, argue that not only it is necessary to create new institutions of the Commons, but it is also essential to transform existing public institutions into institutions of the Commons. However, they go beyond the Midnight Notes Collective on this theorisation because they can count on practical experiences, both in the creation of new institutions and in the transformation of existing public institutions with the Teatro Valle (Valle Theatre) case and the public water management service ABC Napoli's case.

The first case, the 'Teatro Valle Bene Comune' Foundation, was born in Rome in 2013 following the occupation of an abandoned public theatre. In the statute of the Foundation the participatory government of the institution is guaranteed, where this participation is open to all those interested in its government. This does not mean that anyone can be part of the decision-making process. This is entrusted to an assembly, made up of those who become 'bearers of work duties for the care and governance of the theatre' where decisions are made according to the method of consensus based on public discussion and sharing (De Togni, 2016). However, there are no limits to the use of the good: anyone, both members and any citizen can use it and eventually if one starts to participate more actively and take care of it, can enter the assembly and participate in its government. The second case, the public company for the management of public water, ABC (Acqua Bene Comune) Naples, was born in 2013 thanks also to the contribution of Ugo Mattei. In this case, conceiving a public service as a Commons meant guaranteeing the participatory governance of the company through a widespread control. This form of control takes the form of a monitoring committee, also known as the 'water parliament', made up of users, workers, environmentalists, and municipal councillors, selected with votes and draws. The parliament

verifies that the water management service respects the ecological and social principles of the water cycle and prevents that it falls into the bureaucratic dynamics and the speculative dynamic of the corporate system (Mattei, 2015).

Therefore, according to Italian Critical legal scholars, the logic that drives both processes of creating new institutions and transforming existing public institutions is based on the same principles: the commodification of the good and the crystallisation of power must be avoided to guarantee access to the good to all. In this way, the critical legal studies, unlike the Midnight Notes Collective, theoretically and practically deal with what should be done with what is public. However, they tend to avoid giving any merit of the transformation of what is public to the State.

- *The Harvey's critical geography's contribution*

A third significant contribution to the Commons is represented by Harvey's critical geography (Harvey, 2010, 2012). Unlike the Midnight Notes Collective and the Italian critical legal studies, Harvey believes that a privileged practice for fighting against capitalism does not exist and that all anti-capitalist practices can contribute to the same project. For this reason, it is necessary to fully understand what is meant by each practice and what are its limits and its contradictions. Among the emancipatory practices, Harvey includes social movements, workers' movements, emancipatory movements of race and gender, left-wing political parties and the Commons. Regarding the Commons, Harvey interprets them as practices of collective social organisation of production and redistribution of wealth and value which are based on horizontally networked systems of coordination that aims to displace market forces and capital accumulation (Harvey, 2010: 225). The relationship that the group builds with the good in a non-commodified way is a fundamental part of its theorisation. According to Harvey:

(a Commons) is to be constructed as an unstable and malleable social relation between a particular self-defined social group and those aspects of its actually existing or yet-to-be-created social and/or physical environment deemed crucial to its life and livelihood. There is, in effect a social practice of commoning. This practice produces or establishes a social relation with a common whose uses are either exclusive to a social group or partially or fully to all and sundry. At the heart of the practice of commoning lies the principle that the relation between the social group and the aspect of the environment being treated as a common shall be both collective and non-commodified-

off limits to the logic of market exchange and market valuations.’(Harvey, 2012, p. 73)

Harvey, like the Italian critical legal studies, considers that the relational aspect of the social group with the resource, material or immaterial, is fundamental to understand their essence for three main reasons. In the first place, this social relationship is crucial for the life and subsistence of the group. This indispensability moves the Commons to a level of collective need that sees the social relationship between the group and the resource closely linked to life and basic needs. Secondly, this relationship must imply non-commodification-off limits of the resource. This does not mean to exclude the resource from any commodification process, because this would be impossible nowadays, but it means that its commercialisation is possible if it is not moved by the objective to obtain a profit and it is necessary for the production and reproduction of the Commons. Furthermore, the emphasis on social relationships allows clarifying when a public good is to be considered public and when it is to be considered as Commons. If a social relationship is established between a public good and a social group for which the group perceives that good as crucial, acting with a political practice that appropriates it, defends it and enhances it for mutual benefit, that good, though considered public by law, becomes a Commons (Harvey, 2012). In other words, the difference between a public good and a common good lies in the existence of a crucial relationship that links a social group to that good and claims it for the community beyond the commodification off-limits and beyond the bureaucratic, top-down management of the State.

The second analytical focus of Harvey, as a good Marxist, is the proprietary dimension. This dimension starts with a critical speculation on the theory of value of the Lockean Orthodox economy. Locke's thesis had linked the right to private property to the natural law: when men create value mixing their labour with the land, the fruits of labour (i.e. its value) belong to the person who generated them. However, Harvey, echoing Marx who reasons starting from the same Lockean thesis, points out that when the value is created inside the factory, or when this is produced collectively, it should not give rise to private property rights, but it should rather bring out collective property rights because this is the labour force that has produced value. The Marxist thesis is used by Harvey to argue that the Commons are an example where the value produced collectively should remain collective rather than being privatised by the capitalist system. However, he argues, the way of thinking about the Commons is so influenced by the orthodox proprietary thesis that imagining that collectively produced wealth remains collective is unimaginable. An example of this is Hardin's (1968) thesis stating that the common property of the earth leads to its overexploitation. The problem is not, according to Harvey, the collective ownership of the earth,

but the fact that one cannot imagine the collective ownership of the cattle which, if it had been imagined, would not have led to any form of overexploitation. Harvey's reasoning is based on the firm conviction that in order to draw any emancipation path from capitalism it is necessary to carry on a battle over institutional arrangements (Harvey, 2010) that is, on the proprietary forms so that the value and the well-being produced belong and are redistributed to whom have created it.

However, Harvey is one of those post-Marxist scholars that, despite he celebrates the Commons as a form of the anti-capitalist struggle contributing to the autonomist Marxist tradition, also shows their limits, criticising the same autonomist Marxist tradition. These limits are mainly two: the scale and the elitism. The problem of the scale depends on the horizontal management of a Commons. In this regards Harvey grounds his critique in the Ostrom's empirical work. He claims that Ostrom's examples were all small-scale and that, if this scale was larger, horizontal management would not have been possible unless a 'nested structure' was used (see chapter 2.1.3). Alternative practices in which groups of people attempt to define self-managed spaces which are autonomous from the State and the Market, as the so-called 'solidary economies', are very widespread and have also reached a high level of political prominence all over the world. However, even in this case, their limitation lies in the reluctance and the inability to scale-up their activism into organisational forms capable of confronting global problems (Harvey, 2010). Although Harvey agrees that these practices provide a widespread basis of experimentation for anti-capitalist politics, he argues that these cannot be transformed into global solutions unless a sort of hierarchy is resorted. However, the idea of hierarchy seems to be anathema for anti-capitalist movements and above all for Commons' theories where one of the pillars is the direct and horizontal management of the reference resource. This preventive refusal of the hierarchy results in the impossibility of exploring other organisational forms that could represent an effective and appropriate solution to problems at a larger scale. With this Harvey does not want to stand against horizontality, in his view a desirable objective always and when it is feasible. However, he argues that the limits of this organisational form must be recognised when national or global problems are to be solved (Harvey, 2012: 70).

The second criticality is the elitism and the increasing inequality that the Commons can produce. He claims that not all the Commons, in fact, entails open access. Some are, like the air we breathe, but others are not open access. The public streets of our cities, for example, are open to everyone, but still they are regulated, policed and even, sometimes privately managed. Not to mention some Commons that, even being progressive, have limited access, such as a Soviet or the so-called 'Case del Popolo' (Houses of People) so widespread in the early twenty-century in Italy.

For this reason, it could be argued that although a Commons fights against its enclosure, in its most autonomous and independent forms it can create another form of enclosure. With this Harvey does not aim to fully criticise the more autonomous forms of Commons because, according to him, these still represent a no-commodified space in a ruthlessly commodified world (Harvey, 2010). However, he argues that it is problematic to aim to localism and autonomy, and therefore to the Commons, as a pure strategy as many left-wing movements do. This strategy can create progressive oases of well-being that would contribute little to boundlessly improving the living conditions of those in poverty or starvation. Instead, it could represent a perfect neoliberal strategy to reproduce class privilege and power.

The risk of elitism of the Commons has been resolved by the radical left with a vague and naive confidence on the fact that autonomously organized social groups can interact in inter-group practices that allow to rescue or supplement the well-being of near others which, due to their decisions or misfortune, cannot count on the same level of well-being. However, Harvey points out that, on a historical level, there is very little evidence that such redistribution can work. This shows that there is no limit to the reproduction of social inequality between communities, however progressive they may be. For this reason, he sustains that relationship between independent and autonomously functioning communities have to be established and regulated somehow (Harvey, 2010). Thus, he presents the work of Bookchin that proposes a form of con-federalism as the most sophisticated way to deal with this limit without taking into consideration the State. However, from his discourse on the hierarchy, it is evident that Harvey, although it is one of the major critics of the neoliberal State, does not entirely deny the need of a form of government like the State. In any case, although he criticises the limits of the left's thinking towards hierarchy, he falls into the same trap as he avoids to analyse deeper the role of the State.

2.2.2 Resolving the polysemy of the social practice of the Commons

- *The Commons as a social relation*

The works of the Midnight Notes Collective, of the Italian critical legal studies and Harvey represent a fundamental contribution to the theories of the Commons. Despite the different disciplines and the different theoretical approaches, the Commons are understood as collective social practices that represent the means, or one of the privileged means, that, creating autonomous spaces from the State and the Market and being alternative to them, can draw a path of emancipation from capitalism. The meaning given to the Commons by each discipline is different, depending on the respective theoretical framework and analytical focus. For the Midnight Notes

Collective the Commons are a collective mode of production and reproduction to regain control of the means of production and reproduction and detangle the lives from the Market and the State; for the Italian critical legal studies the Commons are political and social instruments for the direct satisfaction of fundamental rights that create institutional forms beyond the accumulation of income and power of the State and the Market; for Harvey the Commons are collective forms of organization of production and distribution of wealth and value that aims to displace market forces and capital accumulation.

	Midnight Notes Collective's political economy	Italian critical legal studies	Harvey's critical geography
Meaning of the Commons	A collective mode of production and reproduction to regain control of the means of production and reproduction	A political and social instrument for the direct satisfaction of fundamental rights that create institutions beyond the accumulation of income and power	A collective form of organisation of production and distribution of wealth and value that aims to displace market forces and capital accumulation

Table 2.2: Different meanings of the Commons
Source: Author's elaboration

However, despite the different definitions, a shared interpretative framework can be identified on the basis of the Commons relational nature that can group all definitions. According to Harvey, (2012) a Commons can be defined as such when it is established 'a social relation between a particular self-defined social group and those aspects of its actually existing or yet-to-be-created social and/or physical environment deemed crucial to its life and livelihood'. The crucial nature of the social relations between the group and the resource shifts the concept of the Commons to a place of collective need closely linked to the group's achievement of a decent life that recalls the need to reclaim the means of production and reproduction of the Midnight Notes Collective, the fundamental rights of the Italian critical legal studies and Harvey's need of collective production and distribution of wealth and value.



Figure 2.1: The Commons as a social relation
Source: Author's elaboration

Moreover, through the different contributions, it is possible to define a framework of relational and institutional aspects that characterise the Commons. The Commons can give form to alternative social relationships among human beings (De Angelis, 2012; Federici and Caffentzis, 2013) and alternative relationships between human beings and goods, creating institution which are different from the State and the Market in terms of economic institution (Mattei, 2011; Harvey, 2012) proprietary institutions (Mattei, Reviglio and Rodotà, 2009; Harvey, 2012) and government institutions (De Angelis, 2003; Federici and Caffentzis, 2013). Each contribution, depending on its disciplinary field, helps to define one of these aspects that revive those that were the aspects of the category of Common of the pre-capitalist era.

- *A community with solidarity and reciprocal relation among its members*

The transformation of social relations among the members of the community is analysed more in-depth by the Midnight Notes Collective, according to which the members of the community of a Commons build their social relations on a feeling of non-competitive solidarity, referring to the description of the Polanyian integration mode of reciprocity. Basing the relationship between people on solidarity means, in fact, developing a feeling inspired by the equity and the consideration of the other. Thus, the community or social group of the Commons is very different from that of Ostrom, where the exchange between individuals took place according to a rational cost-benefit calculation and where the engine that moved this relationship was always the profit. The community of the Commons is a balanced community that aspires to provide subsistence to all members without privileging anyone and where the decisions of each member are made considering the effects that they can have on the others. However, the community is also one of the most undisputed risks for the Commons. It can be transformed into a form of enclosure at both cultural and economic-social level. At a cultural level, the risk is that it begins to turn into identity-based communities that reject differences (De Angelis, 2012), while at the social level the risk is that the Commons become a practice that favours the reproduction of inequalities and social privileges (Harvey, 2012). The responses of the authors to these risks diverge. According to the Midnight Notes Collective, it is necessary to create trans-local relations between communities based on non-competitive forms. This thesis is dismissed by Harvey who maintains that on the historical level there is little evidence that such relationships between trans-local

communities can work. For this reason, he believes that the relationship between the communities must be somehow regulated to redistribute the differences even if he does not specify in what manner. In general, there is no preferential solution to this problem, the academic discussion is still open, and most likely only the concrete practice coupled with a careful empirical analysis will be able to provide some answers. However, this risk and its possible effects must be kept in mind since cultural closure and socio-economic elitism could threaten the emancipatory potential of the Commons and transform this practice into a valuable tool for the most unbridled neoliberalism.

- *A qualitative relation of use of goods*

The transformation of the relationships between the social group and the good is described mainly by the Italian critical legal studies according to which the Commons involve a relationship of human-beings with resources based on the paradigm of being to overcome the paradigm of possession of the bourgeois law. Overcoming the paradigm of possession means establishing a qualitative relationship of use of the group with the good, rather than a relationship of domination of the group on the good (Mattei, 2011) taking up the legal interpretation of the medieval Commons. As stated by Mattei, the social group cannot have a Commons, but the social group can be a Commons, a definition that comes close to the political philosophy of the Aristotelian common according to which we can feel that a Commons belongs to us, but we cannot own it. This different relation between social group and goods has two aspects: a proprietary one which implies not considering the resource as an asset in our possession *utendi et abutendi* and an economic one that implies not considering the resource as a good that can produce capitalist accumulation. Although often the literature of the Commons focuses on the change of the economic relationship, the change of the ownership relationship is also not less significant: the de-commodification of resources cannot happen without affecting the sense of ownership of human beings over things.

- *Economic institutions based on a no-commodification off-limits of goods*

The change of relation between social group and goods allows the creation of alternative economic institutions. In economic terms, establishing a qualitative relationship with goods means considering them for the function they perform for the community and not for the possibility of being sold and commodified. It means, in Marxist terms, to consider the resource for its use value and not for its exchange value. However, as Harvey sustains, this does not mean prohibiting any forms of exchange of the resource as this would be impossible in the contemporary world. Thus, it means to allow the exchange of the resource but not allow its commodification in the sense that the resource can be sold on the market as long as this sale is realised to reproduce the Commons socially and economically, and not to accumulate capital.

- *Proprietary institutions that are the expression of community value and prevent from commodification*

The Commons imply new proprietary forms which go beyond public and private ownership. Those who deepen this theme are undoubtedly the Italian critical legal studies and Harvey's critical geography. The former, through the work of the Rodotà Commission, established the characteristics of a possible common property to be introduced in the Italian Civil Code. This proprietary form implies that the access to the resource is guaranteed to all citizens of the state, that the resource must be safeguarded and protected for the benefit of all the citizens and the future generations and that it must be excluded from processes of alienation. The postulate is that the citizens of a state, neither the current nor the future ones, cannot be deprived through privatisation of a determined type of resources, namely the common goods, because these are essential to guarantee their fundamental rights. The proprietary form of the Commons of the Rodotà Commission is a sort of public property with extraordinary guarantees of protection that public property is maybe no longer able to guarantee. The conceptualisation of Harvey is instead different. He sees the common ownership as an institutional form necessary to redistribute value among the members of the community that created it. Leaning on Locke's thesis on the natural right of property Harvey argues that very often, despite the value produced is the result of common work, this does not give the right to common proprietary forms but to private proprietary forms that also privatise value and prevent its fair redistribution. Despite the different interpretation of common ownership, the two approaches indicate the need to have new proprietary institutions that are the expression of their community value and that prevent the resource from being commodified, guarantying its use to the social group.

- *Government institutions based on direct management and on participatory decision-making processes*

The Commons imply alternative forms of government. Those who deepen this theme are undoubtedly the Midnight Notes Collective and the Italian critical legal studies. According to the latter, the institutions of government of the Commons must be radically democratic institutions, never established and always constituting to avoid possible commodification and crystallisation of power. While the former establish that the Commons imply a form of direct and participated management. According to them, this is what makes possible to distinguish a public good, managed by the state authority, from a Commons. Direct management means that there is no institution interposed between the group and the resource as this is managed directly by the social group. The group, for both, must be established in relation to the care-work done to produce and reproduce the Commons. This implies an open group that can always be expanded when new people decide to devote themselves to its care. The participatory management implies that this must be carried

out in an egalitarian way according to a decision-making process as horizontal as possible. However, the type of direct and participated management is also, according to Harvey, one of the great limits of the Commons. He argues that these are incapable of representing a solution to global problems, precisely because of the need to maintain a horizontal management and because of the reluctance of the left to consider hierarchical management (Harvey, 2012). In this, Harvey is probably right, as it is difficult to think that the Commons can become a practice of emancipation from capitalism if non-horizontal forms of management are not explored and reluctance to hierarchy is overcome.

	Relation among human beings	Relation among human beings and goods	Economic institution	Proprietary institution	Government institution
the Commons	Reciprocity-based relation	Qualitative relation of use	Resources are exchanged but not commodified for profit making	Expression of community value and inalienable	Direct and participatory management

Table 2.3: Resolving the polysemy of the Commons
Source: Author's elaboration

2.2.3 The limits of the Common's theories and the reluctance towards the State

All these contributions on the Commons, the Midnight Notes Collective, the Italian critical legal studies and Harvey, are mainly theoretical contributions that remain at a rather high level of abstraction and do not tend to go down to the level of empirical analysis. This level of abstraction, although it represents a necessary theoretical level to understand the Commons, unfortunately, has a limit: it provides a rather static theory of the Commons. These contributions provide substantial information on different aspects of the Commons, such as their social relations and the institutions that allow them to stand out and be alternatives to the State and the Market. However, almost all contributions tend not to elaborate on how Commons can be produced and reproduced in a given context over time (Federici, 2011; Huron, 2015). According to the feminist perspective, this is a problem of the whole autonomist discourse on the Commons that tends to skirt the question of the reproduction of daily life. As Silvia Federici writes:

[the discourse on the commons as a whole] is mostly concerned with the formal preconditions for the existence of commons and less with the material requirements for the construction of a commons-based economy enabling us to resist dependence on wage labour and subordination to capitalist relations (2011: 287).

In reality, this approach allows these theories to maintain a certain theoretical coherence within the autonomist Marxism that otherwise could be lost. When it comes down to the level of empirical analysis, it becomes inevitable to relate the Commons to the other governmental and proprietary forms, and it could theoretically be more complicated to argue that the emancipation from capitalism can occur through the construction of spaces autonomous from the State and the Market. However, this type of static theorisation is against their very interpretation of the Commons. Interpreting the Commons as social practices means that they are born and develop in space and time. Thus, since they theorise the Commons in such a way, as supported by the feminist perspective, the question on how to produce and reproduce the Commons in a given context over time should be considered as an essential question of Commons' theories. However, currently, this issue is mostly side-lined leaving, as Huron sustains, a theoretical gap in autonomist Commons' theories that scholars should begin to fill (Huron, 2015).

The theorisations on the Commons becomes less static only when these scholars are concerned with the Commons' expansion. All the contributions share the need to define a path of emancipation from capitalism that involves the social practice of the Commons despite the scale-limit that such practices of social autonomy may represent. This need is resolved very differently by each contribution. Those who adhere more to autonomist Marxism and who see the Commons as the privileged means of the anti-capitalist struggle, i.e. the Midnight Notes Collective and the Italian critical legal studies, tries to expand the theoretical scope of the Commons so that they may represent practices of emancipation autonomous from the State and the Market also at a larger scale. However, as confirmed by both approaches, extending the theoretical scope of Commons means to define not only what the characteristics of the institutions of the Commons are, but also how existing larger institutions, such as the public institution, can be transformed into institutions of Commons and self-governed by social groups. Here their perspectives differ. The Midnight Notes Collective adheres the most to the theory of autonomist Marxism for which the State cannot be transformed, and hierarchical forms of government cannot represent institutions of the Commons. Therefore, although they aim to make this scale-leap, this goes against their theoretical

approach, and they do not explain how existing larger institutions can be transformed into institutions of the Commons.

The Italian critical legal studies, being slightly less close to autonomist Marxism, can theoretically and practically make this leap, showing how the Naples public water services provision is transformed into a water service of the Commons. Through this case, they prove that public institutions may be transformed into institutions of the Commons that respond to the principle of use value and direct management even if they use a structure that does not exclude hierarchy, whereby a 'popular control replaces the direct management'. The use of a hierarchical structure confirms the need to maintain these broader institutions, as only through them it is possible to ensure the universal access to fundamental resources - and therefore the respect, from their point of view, of fundamental rights- to a population as wide as that of an entire city. In order to avoid the discussion over the transformation of a public institution that might result uncomfortable from an autonomist Marxist perspective, it could even be argued that this institution is so different from the previous one that it does not represent a transformation of a public institution, but it is an *ex novo* institution. However, this question is rather irrelevant. What is relevant is that whether it is a transformation or a creation, this would not have been possible without the decision of the mayor of Naples and the approval of the Naples City Council. Nevertheless, the Italian critical legal studies are somewhat evasive on the role of the (local) State.

The Harvey's perspective is an entirely different one. He is one of the authors who less adheres to the autonomist Marxist perspective and therefore does not try to broaden the theoretical scope of the Commons. Harvey sees the Commons simply as autonomous social practices that cannot be considered as the privileged means of emancipation but only as one of the many means of emancipation. Although he recognises the virtues of the Commons, that of creating de-commodified spaces in a ruthlessly commodified world, he argues that the Commons cannot determine an emancipation from capitalism because of their scale limit. Thus, he believes that emancipation can only be achieved if there is a combination of different forms of struggle, such as social movements, workers' movements, emancipatory movements of race and gender, left-wing political parties. Thus, Harvey does not see the taking over of the State as something that has to be avoided. However, even when it comes to talking about the possible role of the State in the process of emancipation, it is rather vague. When he mentions that some forms of regulation of the Commons are needed to avoid the reproduction of inequalities, he proposes Bookchin's confederalist solution as one of the possible ones. However, he also keeps open the option of State's regulation, but without explaining how the State may structure this regulation and how the

Commons may relate with it. In this way, he shows a reserve in addressing the question of the State which is not too different from that of the Midnight Notes Collective and the Italian critical legal scholars.

2.2.4 The political theory of The Common

The contributions to Common's theories that use the singular inflexion of this category to define a political theory are mainly two: the work presented by Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri in 'Commonwealth' (2009) and the work presented by Christian Laval and Pierre Dardot in 'Commun. Essai sur la révolution au XXI^e siècle' (2015). Both contributions propose a political project to define a path of emancipation from capitalism through an autonomist Marxist approach. This project is embodied in the category of The Common, which represents the new form to produce emancipation and the order to be instituted. However, despite belonging to the same wide autonomist Marxist tradition, their theoretical approach is very different. Hardt and Negri are the expression of the updating of the Italian 'Operaismo', while Laval and Dardot are the expression of the updating of Castoriadis institutional autonomy. This difference leads to many theoretical discrepancies such as the same meaning of The Common and the radicality of their revolutionary project. Nevertheless, also in this case, it is possible to define some common elements between their revolutionary projects, such as the bottom-up emergence of the revolution, the focus on self-government, the necessity to create institutions of The Common, and also a certain reticence to analyse more in-depth how emancipation can take place without the State.

- *The Common as a mode of production*

The first important contribution to the formulation of the political theory of The Common comes from the work of Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri who published in 2009 'Commonwealth', the final volume of a trilogy that began with Empire (Hardt and Negri, 2000) and was followed by Multitude (Hardt and Negri, 2004). Their work is an update of the theory of the Italian 'Operaismo', being Antonio Negri one of its major scholars. This updated theorisation is influenced by Marxist historical materialism, by Spinoza's political theory and by Foucault's theory of power. Their work illustrates the political project of The Common that aims at a radical revolution to liberate the multitude of the poor from the domination of modernity and to overcome the opposition between the force of modernity and anti-modernity, between the Market and the State, between the Private and the Public (see chapter 2.1.5). This revolution should institute an alternative order, an alter-modernity, based on the autonomy of The Common. Only through this autonomy, it would be possible to dismantle the Republic of Property on which all Western State are based and to break *entirely and radically* with current relations of power and the dichotomy between modernity and anti-modernity.

For The Common they mean:

'First of all, the Commonwealth of the material world—the air, the water, the fruits of the soil, and all nature's bounty—which in classic European political texts is often claimed to be the inheritance of humanity as a whole, to be shared together. We consider the common also and more significantly those results of social production that are necessary for social interaction and further production, such as knowledge, languages, codes, information, affects, and so forth. This notion of the Common does not position humanity separate from nature, as either its exploiter or its custodian, but focuses rather on the practices of interaction, care, and cohabitation in a common world, promoting the beneficial and limiting the detrimental forms of the Common. In the era of globalisation, issues of the maintenance, production, and distribution of the common in both these senses and in both ecological and socioeconomic frameworks become increasingly central. With the blinders of today's dominant ideologies, however, it is difficult to see the Common, even though is all around us'(Hardt and Negri, 2009, p. 8).

Hardt and Negri's radical liberation process is based on the autonomous production of The Common by a series of collective practices and struggles. These should aim to establish an alternative society based on forms of self-government and on new institutions in which the capacity to generate the production of commonwealth and the different self-government forms are highlighted and enhanced. In this sense, if collective practices are the means to be used to build the new society, producing autonomy, The Common represents the objective to be achieved in the liberation process when this autonomy will be eventually achieved and self-governed.

Therefore, in their vision, The Common represents an autonomous mode of production that proposes the overcoming of the epistemological impasse created by the opposition between the Universal and the Particular, between Public and Private. The Common transversely cuts the opposition between these, since, 'like the universal, The Common also makes a claim for truth, but instead of falling from above it is a truth built from below through collective practices' (Hardt and Negri, 2009, p. 126). This mode of production can be produced only by the subjectivities that are at the base of the productive and political processes: the multitude of the poor. This political subject is an open formation in which all those involved in the mechanisms of social production are

included regardless of belonging to a rank or of the possession of property. Thus, the multitude of The Common is that force that can oppose the Republic of Property' and break *entirely and radically* with current relations of power aiming at producing Universality, but from the bottom-up.

According to the authors, at the operational level the autonomy of The Common can be produced with two fundamental processes: i) the new composition of the immaterial work that shows a tendency to produce in a way that is increasingly autonomous from capital; ii) a political movement that accompanies the progressive autonomy of the immaterial work through a plurality of liberation struggles. A substantial part of the analysis focuses on the study of the production system of contemporary capitalism. The authors argue that we are facing a transition process in which cognitive work, consisting of images, information, knowledge, affections, codes and social relations, are counterbalancing the importance of the materiality of goods in the process of capitalist valorisation. However, they do not want to deny the existence of material goods, such as steel and automobile, but claim that the value of the latter depends more and more, and is increasingly subordinated, to immaterial goods and factors. In this cognitive and affective production, capital no longer organises productive cooperation as it did in the Marxist factory, but work tends to produce cooperation increasingly autonomous from capitalist command which faces more and more a greater difficulty in integrating it into its structures of power. This is why the authors believe that cognitive work can gain unprecedented autonomy in the production process and potentially provides the weapons and tools that can give rise to a process of liberation from capitalism.

However, the liberation process cannot be based only on the autonomy acquired by the multitude of cognitive workers, but it needs an organised political movement that accompanies their progressive autonomy through a plurality of liberation struggles that develop in parallel around different issues such as race, class, gender, and sexuality. Without believing that a form of struggle can hegemonically prevail over the others, Hardt and Negri argue that struggles can proceed in parallel while maintaining differences of conflict and divergences, but also combining into insurrectional events, linking up with each other and supporting revolutionary processes. The question is whether political struggles are ready to produce this autonomy. The answer, for the authors, relies on Foucault's theory of power. Since cognitive work is a bio-political work, that is, a work that shapes the subjects that produce it, it is possible that the multitude of workers, gaining ever-increasing autonomy in the work sphere, also develops specific democratic political capacities that can organise the plurality of liberation struggles. In other words, at least theoretically, if it is possible to detect the capacity for self-organisation and cooperation in the work sphere, then the

development of the multitudes' political capacity is not a problem since, by constantly producing The Common through biopolitical work, the multitude automatically transforms itself. This process of production of economic and political autonomy takes the name of 'exodus': the escape of the multitude from the Republic of Property. It is precisely against the excessive spontaneity of this exodus that Hardt and Negri have received the greatest criticism.

According to the analysis of Laval and Dardot (2015), the interpretation of Hardt and Negri takes up a pattern of orthodox Marxism based on the optimism of highly erroneous historical materialism. Just as Marx believed that capitalism contained within it the seeds of a communist society, Hardt and Negri seem to propose a scheme of production of The Common according to which the irreversible and intrinsic autonomy of intellectual work and the prevalence of knowledge in the production gives in itself birth to a Common that, due to its progressive expansion, would break out the capitalist shell that hinders it. However, according to the authors, this thesis is based on a double error of interpretation. First of all, it is believed that the cognitive work produced outside the companies is produced outside the sphere of action of capitalism, when it has never been so evident that all the systems of production are under the logic of the market; and secondly, it considers that the capital does not already have an active function in the 'putting at work' of knowledge workers and in the 'putting into value' of the knowledge, when instead the sociology of work in the last years has done nothing other than to demonstrate how the new forms of neoliberal governmentality aim at an ever deeper submission within the enterprise. Laval and Dardot, therefore, argue that these new forms of power, used by the capital to model the process of cognitive work and the subjectivity, are developing increasingly psychological and control techniques in which intellectual work is not free but is each time more subsumed to capital. For this reason, the authors argue that Hardt and Negri present a too spontaneous scheme of the production of The Common eluding, instead, the fundamental question on the concrete forms through which The Common is produced or reproduced today.

The criticism that Laval and Dardot move to the thesis proposed by Hardt and Negri can be widely shared. Relying on the spontaneous autonomy that cognitive work conquers in advanced capitalism can be problematic because it underestimates the series of devices that capital has developed to control this type of production. However, credit must also be acknowledged to this thesis. It offers an analysis of the changes in the technical composition of work that cannot be underestimated by any revolutionary project that intends to achieve the emancipation from capitalism. Furthermore, it must be specified that Hardt and Negri repeatedly stress that the exodus, far from being a spontaneous process, must be organised. The technical production of

work tends to bio-politically produce and reproduce more and more independent forms of life through processes of subjunction that pass through cognitive work. However, they argue that 'this does not mean that the revolution has been started and that the problem of transition has been solved' because 'first, the autonomy of the biopolitical production is only partial, since it is still directed and constrained under the command of capital; and second, these economic capacities are not immediately expressed as political capacities' (Hardt and Negri, 2009, p. 362). In other words, it is necessary to read their analysis not as an endorsement *tout court* of the analytical criteria of historical materialism, but as an analysis that, inspired by this, can bring out the potentials of the economic and social changes of advanced capitalism that can be exploited by the revolutionary struggle. Realizing this potential is the objective of the political project of 'The Common, but this political project must be organised and governed. The power that can play this role is the 'constituent power'.

The constituent power is a force that aims to articulate the different struggles while maintaining the diversity of their claims, in order to transform the revolution into a powerful and lasting process. This will become such only when it will be able to invent and institutionalise a series of customs and collective practices. The multitude, in fact, has no interest in gaining control of the State, not even to orient it towards other ends. The multitude has an interest in getting their hands on the State to dismantle it because the State represents the centre of the domination that assures capitalist exploitation and defends the power of property and the identity hierarchies. According to them, this does not mean that, in a first phase, the involvement in the State institutions is not useful. It is necessary to facilitate the development of struggles against the subordination, but the liberation can only propose their destruction.

However, the revolution is not an enemy of the institutions; it only needs institutions of different kinds, namely the institutions of 'The Common. The institutions of 'The Common are those that widen the tear caused by the revolts against the established order while remaining open to internal conflicts. These institutions must consolidate collective customs, habits, practices, and capacities and must be characterised by an open temporality to be continuously transformed by the singularities that constitute them. They must not become the representation of a constituted power, but of a constituent power, systematically open to the evolutionary process and to the conflict. The institutions, conceived in this way, become indispensable components of the insurgency process and of the revolution. The authors argue that the realisation of 'The Common in long-lasting institutions has nothing to do with spontaneism or innatism. It must be organised by the constituent political force. Only once these institutions of 'The Common have become widespread,

they will constitute the new society, the alter-modernity on which the project of The Common is based.

- *The Common as a principle*

The second important contribution to the formulation of the political theory of The Common comes from the work of Christian Laval and Pierre Dardot who published in 2015 'Commun. Essai on la révolution au XXI siècle', a volume that follows the previous publication 'La nouvelle raison du monde, essai sur la société néolibérale' (Laval and Dardot, 2009). Through an elaboration of Castoriadis's autonomist Marxism and influenced by Proudhon's associationism, their work illustrates the political project that aims at a revolution that would allow the society to emancipate from the Neoliberal Reason and from capitalism. This emancipation should be achieved by transforming the central institutions of the society through the application of the political principle of The Common in all areas of life. The Common in their work is a principle that emerges from the democratic and social practice and must order, impose and hold all the political activities of the society in transformation, creating a new form of law destined to transform the organisation of society, establishing The Common.

The law of The Common is based on the questioning of the proprietary right, that is the form of domination *utendi ed abutendi* of the man on the good and, above all, its possibility to alienate it typical of both public law and private law. Proceeding in the same direction of the Italian critical legal studies, the two French philosophers argue that establishing the principle of The Common means instituting what is not-appropriable, taking up the characteristics of the category of The Common in the classical era (see chapter 2.1.1). Laval and Dardot's not appropriability does not refer to the good that cannot be appropriated but refers to what is forbidden to appropriate because it is subtracted from the sphere of appropriation and is reserved to common use. In the latter case, in fact, goods are not left to the free disposal of the State because they are not susceptible to any form of appropriation, both public and private. Therefore, in reality, The Common can be understood as a non-state public, which means that The Common should not be considered as a property but only as something that is entirely outside the property regime and that does not count on any holder of the right.

The question is therefore how these rules of law of The Common can be produced. Laval and Dardot start claiming that the production of the rules of law of The Common could be apparently comparable to the production of the rules of law of the Anglo-Saxon Common Law that establishes the rules through the perpetuation of old customs. However, using the history of

law in their argumentation, they show that in the case of the Anglo-Saxon Common Law rules and norms are always established by a reduced corporation of professionals who select the customs to be codified. Therefore, the Common Law is a form of production of unilateral law that, in the struggle that is created in the production of law, has interpreted only the customs of the privileged few at the expense of the customs of the poor. This is why the authors claim that the establishment of the not appropriable can only take place through a practice that produces the rules of law from below. It can be compared, more than anything else, to proletarian law, where workers had to create rules and institutions, such as the trade union. The production of rules of law from below is what they call 'instituent practice'.

Instituent practice is a conscious political practice that is opposed to the spontaneous mode of production theorised by Hardt and Negri. It is carried out through the participation of human beings in the same activity where they share responsibilities and obligations in carrying out this activity. The instituent practice creates rules of law by virtue of a transfer from the quality of the action to the quality of the law that it produces. *Contra* Hardt and Negri's multitude, the subject who is dedicated to this activity does not precede it but is produced by the activity itself. In other words, only the practical activity can make things become 'Common institutions', in the same way that only practical activity can produce a new collective subject, without believing that the institutions and this subject can pre-exist this activity. In this way, the instituent practice is at the same time a practice of action and what is instituted by the action. The force that implements this practice is what they define as the 'instituent power'.

Unlike Hardt and Negri, who often indifferently use the notion of institute/constitute 'The Common and believe that the power capable of creating the new institutions of 'The Common is a constituent power, Laval and Dardot argue that 'The Common can only be instituted (and not constituted) through an instituent power. The difference lies in the fact that the institution of 'The Common through the constituent power is linked to a grammar of the bourgeois law that used this power to give life to the sovereign authority of the State, from which, in reality, 'The Common wants to emancipate. Whereas the institution of the Common through instituent power refers to a power that is not inscribed in a form of bourgeois law and incorporates the idea of creativity and transformation, reviving the ideas of Castoriadis. According to the Greek-French philosopher, the instituent power is the power of creation. It consists in giving faith to a specific human capacity of the collective work of all to create, starting from nothing, a radically original meaning, an image of what is not or what has not been.

However, Laval and Dardot specify that the creation of what is new is not an absolute creation that starts from nothing excluding any pre-existing knowledge. The instituent practice, as far as radical its creation may be, always works 'starting from' and 'on' something already established. In other words, the conscious self-institution always takes place on the basis of certain conditions inherited from the past that the instituent practice seeks to transform radically. This practice has two objectives: i) to establish new rules of law, i.e. to create new institutions, starting from what is already established and giving them a different meaning; ii) to continue beyond the limit of the inaugural act as a continuing institution, never stopping the creative act. With the second objective the authors specify that the institutions of The Common must continually revive their rules, always remaining open to the history, the places, the statutes and the activities that characterise them and to the relations of domination and exclusion that develop within them. Only in this way it can be avoided that what is instituted becomes established. The theoretical point that will be most criticised of their work by Negri will not be the instituent power nor the need to create the institutions of The Common but the way the French authors propose the realisation of these institutions.

In the same way that Laval and Dardot criticise the operativisation of The Common theorised by Hardt and Negri, considered by them to be too spontaneous, the latter criticise the operativisation of The Common theorised by the two French authors. Negri, in an article published in the Italian newspaper *Il Manifesto* (Negri, 2014), agrees with the authors on the need to de-reify The Common and on the fact that this can only be done through a conscious political praxis to create 'institutions of The Common'. However, he adds, the two French philosophers have an overly 'idealistic' view of the implementation of this praxis due to an excessive de-materialisation of the concept of capital and class struggle. This de-materialisation depends on the absence of a historically reflexive methodology. Negri argues that in the work of Laval and Dardot capital seems a timeless and omnipotent machine where the 'real subsumption' is not seen as the conclusion of a historical process but it is considered only as a figure of the process of 'enlarged reproduction' of capital in which the working subjectivities are internally subjected to the command. Therefore, the class struggle no longer exists because the productive subjectivity that resists does not exist and, as a result, the concept of capital no longer exists. The idea that the principle of The Common is a category of the activity, of the institution, which is not based on reality but establishes the reality, which cannot be conquered, but can be eventually managed, does not clarify how The Common is claimed, where the subjects who build it are, which the figures of the development of the capital that constitute the background are. In other words, if The Common can only be instituted, what make us fight? Negri asks. Indeed, the criticism that Negri proposes can be widely shared. After

all, it is difficult to imagine any revolutionary process that does not take into account social subjectivities and that is not based on the struggle. However, the two French philosophers, although they categorically exclude the existence of a social subject that exists *a priori*, in reality do not entirely exclude the struggle. The same production of law, according to them, is the result of protests. This understanding emerges from the theoretical excursus that they do on the Anglo-Saxon Common Law that shows how this was the result of the clash between the rights of the poor and the right of the privileged, in which the latter prevailed.

In the last part of the book, the authors try to concretely explain what it means to institute the principle of The Common through what they call an exercise of political imagination. In this way, they put on the table a series of proposals that want to illustrate what it means to institute the principle of The Common in various areas such as law, power, economy, culture, education and social protection. The proposals will not correspond, the authors warn, to historical transformation, but must be understood as the premises of a 'new reason' that can develop. Hereafter, not all the political proposals are listed, but only the most relevant ones for this discussion, namely what it means to institute the Common in the political, proprietary, and public services sectors.

At the political level, the institution of The Commons means introducing the institutional form of self-government into every sphere of life. While self-management is limited only to the organisational dimension, self-government means creating institutions of government, work and life that allow the development of democracy, in the Greek sense of the term, allowing human beings to act together and have the possibility to define the rules that influence them according to the co-decision process. This self-government must not, however, close itself within its walls and govern independently; otherwise the private paradigm would reproduce itself. Instead, a system has to be created where the self-government of each Commons (cooperatives, urban spaces, management bodies of a forest, etc.) take in consideration the externalisation that this may have on others. Moreover, at the strategic level, the self-government should not just be limited to govern what concerns it but must consider the global character of the struggle necessary to free itself from the Neoliberal Reason. For this reason, they advocate a new practical internationalism that reflects on the federative principle that starts from self-government to create a multi-scale policy from the local to the global level.

At the proprietary level, to institute The Common means setting up the not appropriable. In concrete terms, this means that the user of a common good is linked to the other users of the

same common good by co-producing the rules that determine its use to replace the value of exchange with the value of use. This constraint does not divide the same property between two or more persons who are equal owners but comes from the co-obligation that prevails among all those who make simultaneous use of what is outside the property. The co-production of rules for the use is distinguished in a negative right to not threaten the use of other users and in a positive right to keep things collectively managed.

Finally, it is worth mentioning what it means creating public services of The Common. This means transforming public services to make them institutions destined to the right of common use and democratically governed. On the one hand, public services must be transformed in such a way that they guarantee the fundamental rights of citizens with regard to the satisfaction of their needs considered essential so that they are not the manifestation of sovereignty but the translation of an objective necessity that must be satisfied. On the other hand, it is necessary to transform them into democratic bodies that give to officials, but also workers and citizens, a right of intervention, deliberation and decision, within the respect of the laws and within the meaning of this class of services. Participatory democracy makes no other sense than this: not to cancel social conflict and political contradictions, but to incorporate them within it. In this sense, the authors directly refer to the Naples case of water management which represents the implementation of a public service of The Common. Although these proposals represent only a part of those enunciated in the book by Laval and Dardot, they help us to understand more clearly the political project of the two French philosophers, what the principle of The Common means and what it means to institute it.

2.2.5 Resolving the polysemy of the political theory of The Common

The works of Hardt and Negri and Laval and Dardot represent two fundamental contributions to the theory of The Common that start from this concept to define an alternative political project, a revolution, which would allow society to free itself and emancipate from capitalism going beyond the State and the Market. For both, the foundation of this society is The Common which becomes the objective of the revolutionary project. However, despite they all have the same desire to propose a revolutionary project based on this concept, their idea of revolution is very different, depending on their different theoretical approaches. They both can be included into the autonomist Marxist tradition, but Hardt and Negri are the expression of the evolution of the Italian 'Operaiismo' tradition and Laval and Dardot are the expression of the Castoriadis's autonomy tradition. The difference between the two traditions is deep and leads to strong theoretical discrepancies between the Hardt and Negri's revolution and the Laval and Dardot's

revolution. However, there are also some commonalities as they show the proximity between the two revolutionary projects based on The Common, although with the use of different vocabularies,

		Hardt and Negri's revolutionary project of The Common	Laval and Dardot's revolutionary project of The Common
Discrepancies	Political action	Radical break with current social relation and institutions	Radical transformation of current social relation and institutions
	Meaning of The Common	A mode of production	A principle
	Revolutionary subject	Multitude of the poor	Not <i>a priori</i> subject
	Revolutionary battlefield	Labour field	Normative field
Commonalities	The State into question	Republic of property	Neoliberal Reason
	Government structure	Self-government	Self-government
	Institutions of The Common	Institutions where the constituent cannot be constituted	Institutions where the instituent cannot be instituted
	New force alternative to State and Market	Constituent power	Instituent power

Table 2.4: Resolving the polysemy of The Common: discrepancies and commonalities
Source: Author's elaboration

- *Irreconcilable discrepancies*

First and foremost, they conceive a different method of political action that differently relates to existing institutions and thus with the State. For Hardt and Negri the political project of The Common is a project that wants to break entirely and radically with the current social relations and with the institutions of capitalism, including the State, to create a new society, an alter-modernity. For Laval and Dardot, The Common's political project is a project that aims to transform current social relations and institutions of capitalism, including the State, to create a new

society starting from the old. Secondly, this difference leads to interpreting The Common differently. The Common, according to Hardt and Negri, in addition to being all that naturally existing Common Wealth, is a mode of production that aims at the same universality of the Universal but produced autonomously through collective practices. The Common, according to Laval and Dardot, is a political principle to be applied in all areas of life through the collective institution of rules of law based on the principle of not appropriability, that is, on the use of the resource rather than its commodification. Thirdly this difference leads to conceive differently what the subjects are and what the favoured battlefield of the revolution is. Hardt and Negri claim that the subject to carry forward the revolutionary struggle is represented by the multitude of the poor who must be moved by a constituent power, while Laval and Dardot claim that there can be no subject identified a priori, but it will be the revolution itself to create it through the construction of an instituent power. Hardt and Negri claim that the favoured battlefield is the labour field, where this revolution has already started as the cognitive biopolitical production system facilitates the unprecedented autonomy of labour, provides foundations and tools for the revolution and can facilitate the rise of a political movement even if this is still not clearly detectable. Laval and Dardot claim instead that the favoured battlefield is the normative field, where this revolution, far from being a spontaneous and a process already started, must be built through a conscious political practice that aims to create new rules of law based on the principle of The Common. However, apart from these notable theoretical differences, some common points can be found.

- *Commonalities*

Firstly, both contributions question the pillars of capitalism, considered to be responsible for the denial and the plundering of The Common, the market system, the proprietary paradigm and the national states, and both hope for the overcoming of these, albeit with a break in the case of Hardt and Negri and with a transformation in the case of Laval and Dardot. Secondly, both contribution aims at building a new order in which The Common, expression of the self-governing power, embodies the objective of this political project. This project aims to overcome the Universal and the Particular because, according to Hardt and Negri, it aims at the same universality of the Universal but built from below; it breaks with the State and the Market because, according to both of them, it creates institutions based on self-government; it breaks with the Public and the Private because, according to Laval and Dardot, it goes beyond the Roman ownership paradigm to propose the principle of not-appropriability. As a result, in both cases, the revolution is a bottom-up process that is achieved through collective practices – the Commons- that progressively become autonomous from the State and the Market and produce emancipation: The Common. For both contributions, these practices have the objective to create alternative government institutions that

are always open to time, places and conflict: institutions where the instituent cannot become instituted (or in the words of Hardt and Negri, where the constituent does not turn into constituted). In other words, despite substantial dissimilarities of their theoretical approaches related to the differences within the autonomist Marxist tradition, their thesis converges in the revolutionary function of this political theory which aims at building from below, through collective practices, that is through the Commons, institution of self-government beyond the State and the Market.

2.2.6 The limits of The Common's theories and the reluctance towards the State

In both revolutionary visions, emancipation is not achieved through the State. This is a funding element of autonomist Marxism in all its currents, both to the 'Operaismo' of which Hardt and Negri belong, and to the autonomy of Castoriadis, of which Laval and Dardot belong, despite each tradition differently interpreted it. The two contributions, projecting the same differences on their visions relate very differently to the State: Hardt and Negri's theorisation aims to destroy it while Laval and Dardot's theorisation aims at radically changing it. However, since none of them mentions the need to take over the State, they do not explain how it is possible to destroy the State or radically change the State without taking the State power, leaving in their theorisation a space not fully explored.

In a debate between Hardt, Negri and Harvey, who moved the same criticism to them, the two authors reply that they have nothing against the possibility of taking over the State, this is why they are interested in the Latin American pink tide. However, they do not see the taking over of the State a necessary action for revolution as they claim that winning power and managing it in a nation-state, in a solitary way, is today impossible (Hardt, Harvey and Negri, 2009). This is why social forces have to rely on other instruments and create autonomy from the State and the Market. However, although they do not deny this possibility to take over the State, it remains unclear how the State could destroy itself, if it is governed by progressive forces and, if it is not, how the multitude can destroy it without taking over it.

Laval and Dardot, on the other hand, sustain the need to transform existing institution and thus, implicitly, the need to transform institution governed by the State (despite they do not explicitly state it). In this sense, their perspective is more similar to the Italian critical legal studies' perspective. The example of a public institution transformed into an institution of 'The Common' is for Laval and Dardot again the Naples public water service. However, although the Mayor and

City Council's role emerge in the Laval and Dardot's narration, it is simply not recognised as a transformation that occurs through a (local) State institution. In this way, Laval and Dardot use a theoretical escamotage considering as bottom-up 'instituent practices' what in reality are practices that happened through institutions of the State governed by radical left political parties. This escamotage is used in order not to admit that these new public institutions of The Common take place (also) through the support of the State. In actual fact, this escamotage is the foundation of their entire theoretical construction that, sustaining that The Common is instituted by changing existing institutions (and not by destroying them as in the case of Negri and Hardt) does not specify the fundamental role that the State may have in this transformation. Their theory may seem more convincing because it can be considered less radical than Hardt and Negri's one. However, if in Hardt and Negri's case the reticence to take into consideration the role of the State can be justified by the radicality of their revolutionary vision, in the Laval and Dardot's case, whose revolutionary vision seems to include also the State, this reticence seems less justified.

2.2.7 The emancipation of the Commons and The Common without the State

In summary, the different contributions seem to share a common vision on the emancipatory path from capitalism, despite the important theoretical differences due to the different disciplines, the singular and plural use of the term, the greater or lesser adherence to the theories of autonomist Marxism. This vision is based on the construction of spaces, the social practice of the Commons, that create 'institutionalities' alternative and autonomous from the State and the Market in terms of relation among human beings, and between human beings and goods, and in terms of proprietary, economic and governmental institution (De Angelis, 2003; Harvey, 2010, 2012; Federici, 2011; Mattei, 2011; Federici and Caffentzis, 2013; Alessandra Quarta and Spanò, 2016). The production, the reproduction and the expansion of the Commons should allow overcoming capitalism through the production of emancipation, The Common, and the construction of new alternative order based on self-government, equality and non-appropriability (Hardt and Negri, 2009; Dardot and Laval, 2015). In greater detail:

the Commons are social practices recognisable for the crucial social relation established between a social group and a material or immaterial resource which aim to create new form of institutionalities alternative and autonomous from the State and the Market and beyond their social relations and institutions. The Commons imply: i) social relations among human beings based on reciprocity and on the consideration of the other; ii) relation of human beings with the resource based on a qualitative relation of use; iii) economic institution where the resource can be exchanged

but not commodified for profit-making; iii) proprietary institutions that are the expression of the community value and that protect the resource from possible commodification; iv) government institutions based on direct management whereby the social group participates in the decision-making process. The main risks of the Commons are the elitism, namely the reproduction of inequalities through their exclusionary collective model, and the reluctance towards hierarchical forms of organisation that does not allow them to expand.

The Common is the political theory that defines the revolutionary path for the emancipation, the same act of producing emancipation and the new order to be instituted. This revolutionary path aims at overcoming the principle on which capitalism is based: the institutions of domination, such as the national and super-national government form, the propriety paradigm, being either the public and the private property, and the capital accumulation determined by the competitive market economy. Emancipation is produced from the bottom through different collective practices that progressively institute (or constitute) the new self-governing order of The Common. This order is based on two principles. The principle of equality, which is the condition whereby people of a community have the right to be considered on equal terms and have and have equal access to material and immaterial resources; and the principle of non-appropriability, which establishes the common use of resources instead of their commodification and/or sovereign appropriation by private enterprises, individuals and nation-states.

Although it has to be theoretically and empirically recognised that the Commons and The Common represent two different realities they are part of the same emancipatory project that seeks to revive the thesis of the autonomist Marxism. The works on the political theory of The Common represent a trespassing on the political philosophy field of the works on the social practice of the Commons and an attempt to provide the latter with a revolutionary intellectual horizon. In this horizon, the Commons represents the practice emerging from the bottom, the means, through which The Common, the objective, can be produced and instituted. What links the means with the objective is the 'institutionality'. The Commons are autonomous social practices that aim to create new institutionalities beyond the social relations and institutions of the Market and the State; and The Common is instituted when these institutionalities become predominant in the social space. Thus, although from a theoretical and empirical perspective the social practice of the Commons does not have to be confused with the political theory of The Common, and the means does not have to be confused with its objective, it is essential to keep in mind the link that unites them as they are part of the same emancipatory project.

In the current political, economic and social landscape that characterised Western societies in which the neoliberal shift has shown the complicity of the State and the Market and in which this turn does not seem to have ended, the revolutionary project based on the category of Common seems undoubtedly engaging. Firstly, it permits to overcome capitalism without the conquest of the State and secondly, because it permits to overcome it by using only one conceptual category. The adoption of this autonomist Marxist perspective is reasonably sharable. All Common's scholars, from the neoliberal turn onwards, sharpened their critique of the State. The Midnight Notes Collective, the Italian critical legal studies and Harvey updated the concept of enclosure through which the responsibility of the State in the aggressive capitalist plundering became manifest; and Hardt, Negri, Laval and Dardot theorised the Republic of Property and the Neoliberal Reason through which it was elucidated the indissoluble and solid relation between the State and the Market throughout the capitalist history. However, when Common's theories are deprived of their abstraction and are brought into the real world, it seems slightly difficult to think that is possible to achieve the emancipation from capitalism without the State. The more moderate theoretical approaches, such as the Italian critical legal studies, Laval and Dardot and Harvey, that somehow try to get into consideration the State (but often without call it 'State'), represent a confirmation of this doubt. Imagining the emancipation without the State is difficult, as this is terribly present in contemporary society.

The idea emerged at the beginning of the process of neo-liberalisation and globalisation, according to which the State would have played an increasingly reduced role and was losing power (Cable, 1995; Schmidt, 1995; Strange, 1997), resulted in being an illusion. As confirmed by many scholars, the State in Western societies, although with due differences according to the contexts, is nevertheless a stable institution that neither has disappeared nor has lost power. Governance studies have shown that the State maintains its role by orchestrating the decision-making mechanisms of a global and multilevel governance (Weiss, 1998; Pierre and Peters, 2000; Le Galès, 2006). The post-Foucauldian studies have shown how, despite the State has to be understood as part of an exercise of power that transcends it, it continues to exercise a part of it through informal techniques and decentralised and dispersed devices (Marinetto, 2003; Swyngedouw, 2005).

Therefore, in Western societies, the State is still very present, although in a markedly different way from the post-war welfare State, as it is immersed in a globalised governance of neo-liberalised capitalism that implies the use of different forms of control. Conversely, within its boundaries, the State is present with its widespread and capillary government structure on the territory that goes from the national scale to the neighbourhood scale. It is present at the legislative

level with the establishment and respect of the laws to which no one can be exempted from. It is present with its policies that invest large areas such as education and health, and with its planning that controls every portion of the territory. It is present with the regulation of social and civil rights that are guaranteed or not to its citizens, and it is present in ensuring security with its armed bodies.

In other words, as shareable as the theory of Common could be, it seems legitimate to question whether, within Western societies, it is possible to draw a path of emancipation from capitalism without the State where the relationship with this seems to be ineludible. However, when Common's theories have to address the question of the State are rather evasive. The most radical and most autonomist, such as the Midnight Note Collective, Hardt and Negri, are evasive in the sense that, coherently with their autonomist ideas, they argue that it is not through the State that emancipation can be achieved, and thus they confirm that there is no need to take it into consideration. The more moderate approaches and the less autonomists, such as the Italian critical legal studies, Laval and Dardot are evasive in the sense that, even considering the inevitable presence of the State and considering that, to expand the Commons is necessary to act upon larger institution such as the existing public institutions, do not recognize the role of the State that in such transformation acts through its decision-making processes and governmental bodies. Even the case of Harvey, who argues that there cannot be emancipation only through the Commons and does not exclude the taking over of the State, it tends not to speculate so much about this taking over, leaving more space in his theory to revolutionary movements. Moreover, when he claims that hierarchical organisations are necessary to limit the reproduction of inequalities through the Commons, he avoids deepening the role of the State, although it is also to this that he refers to.

In conclusion, the autonomist Common's theories show a certain reticence to analyse deeper how emancipation can take place without the State, a reticence that results in not taking into consideration the State in the emancipatory process, in the most radical cases, and in not admitting that emancipation also passes through the State, despite its presence is not ignored, in the more moderate cases. This reticence to address the question on the State is a characteristic of all these works. They can adopt it because their theories remain at a level of abstraction that is not set against empirical analysis. This level of abstraction is understandable for political philosophers who work on the political theory of The Common. In fact, when Harvey accuses Hardt and Negri of lacking 'concrete proposals', the two authors argue that this is not the aim of their book. In their own words they say 'It is not of course that we have no interest in 'actual political organisation' and 'real actions'; on the contrary, our own political histories are full of such engagements. Instead, we

think that a book like ours should strive to understand the present but also challenge and inspire its readers to invent the future' (Hardt, Harvey and Negri, 2009).

The level of abstraction of the contributions of the social practices of Commons is less justified and leaves many open questions. Firstly, two open questions are how the Commons can scale-up - a topic that is only theoretically addressed by all contributions - and how the Commons can reduce their risk of elitism - a topic that is not fully addressed by all contributions-. Secondly, none of the contributions explains how the Commons can overcome capitalism and thus, the State and the Market if, initially, since their emergence and development, they have to relate to them. Likely, if these analyses were made, doubts could emerge about the possibility of Commons to achieve emancipation without the State. In other words, leaving Commons's theories at a high level of abstraction is functional to the different currents of autonomist Marxism to do without the State. However, empirical analyses on the social practice of the Commons, although still scarce, have been made and have brought to light some issues that the abstraction of all Commons's theories have preferred not to address. In this sense, the most relevant contribution comes from the urban studies field where the limits and possibilities of Urban Commons have begun to be analysed. The contribution of urban scholars has to be carefully taken into consideration. According to the same theory, the urban environment represents the privileged space to draw this path of emancipation.

2.3. The urban spatialisation of autonomist Common's theories

The centrality of the city in Marxist perspectives has deep roots, although recent in the history of Marxism, and is not exclusive to these theories. The works of urban Marxists, such as Lefebvre (Lefebvre, 1968, 1970, 1974), Castells (1977, 1983) and Harvey (1973), contributed to bringing the urban question to the heart of Marxist analysis and vice versa, showing how the production and reproduction of capitalism and the city were closely intertwined. However, following Marx's dialectical approach, they also showed the urban nature of many of anti-capitalist struggles and highlighted their urban-related claims. In doing so, they not only deepened the city's role in the development of capitalism and the protests against it, but they have also produced theoretical advancement on capitalism and protests that go far beyond the urban dimension. Following these relevant contributions, the link between Marxism and the urban has never been abandoned and has been integrated into contemporary urban theories. These, by analysing the role of the city in the implementation of the neoliberal strategy, and by analysing how this strategy is continuously contested and struggled over, keep underlining the Marxist dialectic that links the development of capitalism to the contestation to it. They also demonstrate the essential contribution that the urban studies literature may bring to Marxist theories.

The contributions that spatialise the Common's theories in the urban context retake the broad Marxist theorisation on the city and incorporate it into their emancipatory project using the same dialectical formula. The city is the place of capitalist plundering that acts through monopoly rent and produces enclosures limiting the use and access of the city to the poor (Hardt and Negri, 2009; Hodkinson, 2012; Stavrides, 2014, 2016). However, the city is also the place where the political project of The Common can develop because it is here, and not anymore in the factory, that the anti-capitalist struggles are rooted, and it is here that spaces of resistance, the Urban Commons, may emerge and develop (Pickerill and Chatterton, 2006; Hardt and Negri, 2009; Chatterton, 2010b, 2016, Stavrides, 2014, 2016). Therefore, it seems that not only the theories of autonomist Marxism have a new category that becomes the means, the Commons, and the objective of the emancipatory path, The Common, but they also have a privileged space for this emancipatory project: the space of the city. In other words, Common's contributions that focus their analysis on the urban environment advocate for an urban spatialisation of the emancipatory project of Common. Moreover, except the theoretical elaboration of Hardt and Negri, the different contributions by geographers and planners on the Urban Commons offer empirical investigations that permit to reduce the level of abstraction of Common's theories and de-staticise them. These

investigations reveal some concealed truths of Common's theories. Firstly, that the total autonomy of the Commons does not exist and that they need to relate with the Market and especially with the State, and secondly that, in order to define an emancipatory path, the role of the State has to be at least taken into consideration in the emergence and development of Urban Commons. However, they are all characterised by a certain reticence to analyse the relation with the State, and when this is analysed, they use an over-determined approach that tends to underestimate its role.

This third section of the second chapter has three objectives. First of all, it aims to show the dialectic that characterizes the Marxist interpretation of the city - a privileged space for capitalism development but also a privileged space for capitalist contestation -, starting from its first conceptualizations in the 1960s-1970s, moving to the analysis of the neoliberal period, up to the theoretical contribution of autonomist Marxists. Secondly, it aims to illustrate the significant contribution that urban scholars bring to the general understanding of the phenomena that they investigate, being either the functioning of capitalism or the characteristic of neoliberalism. Thirdly, it aims to show the main theoretical and empirical contributions that urban autonomist Marxist scholars bring to Common's theories and how they, through their empirical analysis that de-stabilise these theories can bring to light some theoretical contradictions of autonomist Common's theories, first and foremost the need for acknowledging the presence of the State and its role in the emergence and maintenance of Urban Commons. This is why this third section of the second chapter is divided into three parts. The first part titled 'The urbanisation of Marxism' presents the evolution of Marxist debates on the city, from the marginal contribution of the old patriarch, Marx and Engels, to the contribution of the first Marxist urban scholars, such as Lefebvre, Castells and Harvey, to the recent contribution on the neoliberal turn. The second part titled 'The urbanisation of Common's theories' presents the main contributions that link the emancipatory project of Common to the city, from the political philosophy of Hardt e Negri, to the critical planning of Stavrides, to the critical geography of Chatterton and Pickerell and others. In both parts are underlined the main theoretical advancement of urban Marxist theories that, as it is shown, go well beyond the urban dimension and help to understand better both the functioning of capitalism and the Common's emancipatory project. The last part titled 'The false autonomy and the ineludible relation with the State' underlines how the empirical analyses suggest the ineludible relationship with the State while showing a certain reticence to analyse this relationship or using a rather over-determined approach in the cases where this relationship is analysed.

2.3.1 The urbanisation of Marxism

For a long time, 'the urban' has been side-lined in Marxist debates and theories. The old patriarchs, Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, never put the urban at the forefront of their critique. This does not mean they did not take into consideration the urban at all but that, in their writings, it represented more a backdrop into the capitalist mode of production rather than a central stage, more a scenery rather than an actor (Merrifield, 2002). Marx acknowledged the relationship between the speed of capitalist accumulation and the growing city density when he wrote 'The greater the concentration of the means of production and the greater is the corresponding concentration of workers within a given space; and therefore, the more quickly capitalist accumulation take place' (Marx and Engels, 1848). However, he never linked the industrialisation process with the urbanisation process and never considered the city as a privileged place for the organisation of workers' movements, notwithstanding the revolutionary upheavals of 1848 and 1871 in Paris had clear urban roots (Harvey, 2012). Engels, instead, understood better the relation between capitalism, urbanisation and revolutionary movements. In his famous works 'The condition of the working class in England' (Engels, 1892) and 'The Housing question' (Engels, 1872) he highlighted the link between capitalist accumulation and urban development and exposed the real estate speculation aggressiveness and the terrible living conditions of the working class. He also identified the city as a special ground for the labour movement where 'the working class could pit its will and rise up against the rich and bourgeoisie' (Merrifield, 2002). However, even if Engels marked a step forward in the interpretation of the urban space compared with his colleague Marx, he continued to see it as a superstructure of the economic dimension that remained the only objective of the revolution. For Engels, as for Marx, the working class terrible living conditions in the city could only be improved through the re-conquest of the means of production.

This obscuration of the 'urban' in Marxist theory meant that for many decades the real correlation between capitalism and urbanisation was hard to be understood. Up until the sixties the city has been mainly considered as an inert object: to be studied by sociologist and to be modified in quantitative terms through zoning and mapping by urbanists. The Chicago School of Sociology produced a descriptive analysis using almost anthropological research methods and interpreting the city as a spatial organism of human ecology that negatively influenced its inhabitants (Borelli, 2012). One of its main representatives, Louis Wirth (1897-1952), building on what already described by George Simmel (1858-1918) with his 'blasé attitude', considered the city a pathological organism carrying disorder and corruption where social relations between individuals were characterised by superficiality, anonymity and transience. In this urban culture where the

community was destroyed, alienation was fostered, deviance was promoted, the only solution was identified in a nostalgic return to a rurality that had been lost; in other words, the interpretation of the city started to be permeated by an anti-urban feeling that became the only cure for the afflictions that the city had caused. The Plans made by urbanists in this era prove this, from the Garden City proposed by Howard (1898) to stop London growth where citizens could return to live in contact with nature, to the Paris 'Voisin Plan' by Le Corbusier (1925) where a series of high-rise buildings were surrounded by an enormous urban park. Although conceptually distant, these Plans, which had greatly influenced the collective imagination and the urban practices, had in common the aspiration to save city dwellers through the plain and the simple abolition of the city (Jacobs, 1961).

Through this city planning culture, which lacked a critical discourse capable of revealing the relationship between capitalism and urbanisation, the city and its planning have been for a long time a plain instrument of the bourgeois ideology to facilitate the speculative interests of this class (Tafuri, 1973). However, at a certain point, things changed and the city was put at the centre of critical debates revealing its connection with capitalist development as well as with its contestation. This process is part of a broader social science's turn that took place in the 1960s-1970s, the so-called 'spatial turn', whereby the spatial analytical dimension was brought into the heart of all social science's disciplines (Soja, 2010). Many authors who contributed to this spatial turn were Marxists, among which Lefebvre, Castells and Harvey.

Lefebvre has been one of the first authors that spatialised Marxist theories, demonstrating that the capitalist mode of production exists not only in time, as the German philosopher believed, but also in space (Borelli, 2012). According to Lefebvre, 'Space is not only an indifferent medium, the sum of places where surplus is created, realised and distributed. It becomes the product of social labour, the very general object of production and consequently the formation of surplus value' (Lefebvre, 1970). Therefore, Lefebvre becomes the first to demonstrate how capital not only uses the first circuit of capital to produce value, namely the circuit of industrial production, but it also uses a second circuit, the real estate investment where capital is injected when the first circuit is in a crisis. However, Lefebvre argues that there is nothing new in this. In his own words:

'Dominant groups have always produced a particular space. What is new is the total and global production of social space. This goes far beyond simply selling space bit by bit. It attempts to completely reorganise production as something subordinate to the centre of information and decision making' (Lefebvre, 1970, p. 155).

According to the French philosopher, in fact, in 1968 the production of the urban space was already becoming more relevant in the system of capitalist production compared with the industrial production. This is why he claims that, after the Industrial Revolution, it will be the time of an Urban Revolution, a revolution that will transform society in an urban society, namely 'a society that results from a process of complete urbanisation' (Lefebvre, 1970).

However, the capitalism development's urban spatialisation shifts also the spatialisation of its struggles. In his now very famous essay, *The Right to the City* (Lefebvre, 1968), he argues that the main objective of the conflicts in the context of the Urban Revolution should be to reclaim the 'Right to the City'. According to the author, this right is both 'a cry and a demand' to transform and renew the access to urban life. This implies taking part in the production of the space's decision-making and defend the free access to use and benefit from the space (Borelli, 2012). As a result, the Lefebvre's Right to the City is not only a slogan demanding the right of access to basic needs in the city, but it is about something more. It is the right of access to a specific urban quality neglected in public debates, the right of access to resources of the city for all segments of population and, most of all, the right of access to the possibilities to experiment with and realise alternative way of life (Schmid, 2012). This vision of the urban dimension that the revolution against capitalism should have adopted was also inspired by the wave of 1968 urban movements that took place across different cities of the globe thanks to which it is strengthened the idea that the urban space is a space of political possibilities where actions and uprisings can take shape. Even though his urban Marxists theories received several critiques, such as his excessive optimism in the possibility to realise the Right to the City (Harvey, 2012) the French philosopher makes a significant contribution. He moves the analysis of capitalism in the urban space and also demonstrates that, as the contradictions of this system are more manifest in the city, this becomes a privileged place to challenge them (Borelli, 2012).

Another important contribution to the spatialisation of Marxist thought comes from one of Lefebvre's student: Manuel Castells. With the publication of 'The urban question' in 1972, differently from other urban Marxist analyses that represented an 'urbanistic theorisation of Marxist problematic' in which space became the object of study to which Marxist thinking can be applied, he provides a scientific Marxist understanding of the urban phenomena, where the space became the expression of the social structure of class relation in which it is embedded (Castells, 1977). In this way, he aims to take the distance from the same Lefebvre's approach. Castells acknowledges the Lefebvre's idea that the city is integrated into the capitalist production process,

but he sustains that production operates predominantly on a much bigger scale, such as the regional and national scale. According to him the city, more than being a place for production, is a place for the collective reproduction of labour power (Merrifield, 2002). The central experience of this process is the collective consumption that therefore becomes the main analytical focus. The labour force needs individual and collective goods to consume in order to reproduce itself. Between the two types of goods, Castells sustains that the more predominant in the urban space, and the one that characterises every urban form, is the collective consumption: the consumption of facilities such as schools, hospitals, transport, housing, leisure. These types of goods have little or no market place which means that their consumption is not assured by capital. This is why the State intervention is needed in order to provide them and organise their consumption, but as usual, the State does it according to the need of the dominant classes (Merrifield, 2002). In other words, the Keynesian welfare was the privileged mode for the post-war State to guarantee the reproduction of labour power by providing goods for collective consumption that was too risky for the capital to provide as they had a little profit rate. The space where all this process took place was the city that thus became a central place for the capitalist development.

However, also for Castells, the city becomes a central space to contest capitalism as according to him, the demands over collective consumption and reproduction foster the politicisation of citizens that contest and struggle over how these collective goods are provided. The form to contest and struggle over these goods are defined by Castell's urban social movements. These movements are a certain type of organisation of social practices, the logic of whose development contradicts the institutionally social logic. They are characterised by their non-class basis that operates outside the realm of production, as the more classical workers' struggle (Pickvance, 2009). They aim to change the urban meaning in order to produce 'structural transformation,' i.e. they undermine the societal hierarchies which structure urban life and create, instead, a city organised on the basis of use values, autonomous local cultures and decentralised participatory democracy. The categories by which Castells proposes to study the transformation carried out by urban social movements are three basic elements of the social structure: the economic, the political and the ideological sphere. Since Castell's theorisation, urban social movements have expanded, changed and fragmented and the urban social movement literature now includes a variety of movements, from the more progressive to the more reactionary, from the community-oriented to the city-wide and regionally/globally movements, but his insights remain central to urban Marxist theories. Firstly, urban social movement's theories signed a displacement of the class struggle from the workplace to the city, following the theorisation of many Marxist scholars, including Lefebvre and Harvey. Secondly, the focus on the collective

consumption shows its applicability especially with the neoliberal turn, where privatisation of the public infrastructure and services represent a central contestation of local as well as supra-national demonstrations of the anti-globalisation movement (Mayer, 2006).

The work of the Marxist geographer Harvey retakes and reworks Lefebvre's contribution. He builds on the French philosopher's analysis, updates them and enriches them with new insights relating it to the latest capitalism development. His work can be considered a link between the old and the new generation of urban Marxists. First of all, Harvey endorses the importance of the second circuit of the capital (Harvey, 1973). He agrees with Lefebvre that the production of space has been and still is a key element of capitalist development. Recurring examples in his literature are the economic growth of the United States after the Second World War and the economic growth of China in the last decades. These are not only linked to a robust industrial growth but also to a robust urban growth. However, Harvey believes that the real estate is not only a circuit that complements industrial production in the capitalist development but it is also the circuit where capitalism takes refuge to overcome its overaccumulation crisis (Harvey, 2010). The most famous examples mentioned by Harvey are the case of Hausmann's Paris urban transformations which served to absorb the capital blocked by the 1848 crisis, and the Robert Moses's New York suburbanisation after the 1929 crisis. Furthermore, elaborating on the latest development of the global economy, Harvey demonstrates that, in the last decades, especially starting from the seventies when the investments in production have diminished in Western countries, the urbanisation becomes the cause of its crisis (Harvey, 2010). The debt-financed housing crash of 2007-8 is only the last and larger evidence of the terrible effects that the real estate's speculation and financialization may cause. Thus, Harvey shows how urbanisation is not only as a source of capitalist production through land's speculation but also a form of capital absorption that allows capitalism contradictions to overcome its crisis and the same cause of the crisis. In other words, according to Harvey, all phases of the capitalist cycle, the capital production, the capital absorption and its crisis, are strictly related to the production of the city.

Due to the strict relation that Harvey sees between the city and capitalism and due to the limited changes conceivable at other scales, he believes, like Lefebvre, that the city is a great place where to start and articulate anti-capitalist struggles. Also Harvey claims Lefebvre's Right to the City and, even if he argues that in all likelihood this Right, as conceptualised by the French philosopher, 'could have lost its original sense because the city has changed' (Harvey, 2012) he believes in the need to claim it. As a result, Harvey re-conceptualises it arguing that nowadays struggling for the Right to the City does not mean struggling for an individual right that already

exists, but it means instead reconstructing a collective right that re-define the city as 'as a socialist body politic able to stop the destructive form of urbanization that facilitate capital accumulation and control the urbanization process to institute new mode of urbanization' (Harvey, 2012, p. 138). Here too, Harvey's discourse, as Lefebvre's one, draws on the many struggles and social movements that developed in cities across the globe in the last decades, especially those protests against neo-liberal policies and the crisis that these have produced. Some relevant cases that he mentions are the El Alto struggle in Bolivia for the defence of previously nationalised natural gas resources and the Occupy Wall Street movement in New York. Despite Harvey, as a good geographer that always takes into consideration the 'scale question', acknowledges that the urban struggle could not on its own make capitalism fall, because the scale of the city can do very little, he sticks with the idea that indeed the city is the perfect place to start this struggle, to articulate it with other struggles and scale them up.

After these urban Marxist contributions, many scholars have continued along the same path. The recent urban Marxist literature has analysed under these lenses the relation between neoliberalism and the city. According to their perspective, cities have been at the forefront of the neoliberal strategy as local governments started to direct their energy to achieve economic success pursuing international competitiveness among cities (Peck and Tickell, 2002). Through these analyses, the Marxist urban studies literature has helped to better understand the very nature of neoliberalism through three main theoretical advancements. The first advancement concerns the temporality of neoliberalism. By understanding the process through which neoliberalism operates, several authors have identified two main phases: the 'roll out' and 'roll back' neoliberalism, where the first corresponds to the destruction and discredit of the Keynesian-welfarist urban institutions and the second corresponds to the construction and consolidation of neoliberalised urban state forms, modes of governance, and regulatory relations (Peck and Tickell, 2002; Peck, 2013). The empirical examples collected in the city are, among others: the move from the elimination of public monopolies for the provision of standardized municipal services to the privatization and competitive contracting of municipal services; the move from the razing of public housing and other forms of low-rent accommodation to the creation of new opportunities for speculative investment in central-city real estate market; and move from the elimination and/or intensified surveillance of urban public spaces to the creation of new privatized spaces of elite/corporate consumption. The second advancement concerns the territorial variation applied by the neoliberal strategy. Through the comparative analyses carried out in several cities across different context, it has been possible to underline how neoliberalism is not a monolithic and uniform strategy but is extremely variegated. It does not exist in a single, pure form, but it is always articulated through

historically and geographically specific-strategies that bring to different outcomes according to the territory-specific and scale-specific existing regulatory framework and political culture (Peck, Theodore and Brenner, 2013). Always through comparative analysis in different cities, it was possible to underline how, although neoliberalism is a variegated strategy according to context, these local variations tend in reality to strengthen neoliberalism itself which unfortunately appears far from being terminated and always in evolution (Davies and Blanco, 2017)

The third theoretical advancement retakes and reinforces the Marxist dialectical construction: neoliberalism is always contested (Leitner, Jamie and Sheppard, 2007; Peck, Theodore and Brenner, 2013; Mayer, Thörn and Thörn, 2016b; Davies and Blanco, 2017). The intuition of the first generation of urban Marxists according to whom the city was becoming the centre of the protest not only because many revolts were based in the city, but because they had the city itself as the object of their dispute, seemed to be confirmed by the many protests that emerge against neoliberalism in different cities across the globe. In a book published in 2007 'Contesting neoliberalism' Peck, Sheppard and other scholars -mainly critical geographers- analyse these forms of contestation ranging from direct action, to lobbying and legislative action and to alternative socio-economic practices. These forms are never a contestation of neoliberalism *in toto*. They can be a contestation of some specific outcomes produced by neoliberalism, such as the privatisation of public services and the dismantling of welfare programmes. Alternatively, they can be a contestation against other forms of injustice that although not directly produced by neoliberalism they are facilitated by it, such as the human right struggles against dictatorship and torture in the Global South (Leitner, Jamie and Sheppard, 2007). This perspective is also shared by urban social movements studies which, analysing the various 'urban uprising' emerged in many cities especially since the 2007-2008 crisis onwards, such as the 'Indignados' Movement in Spain and the 'Gezi' protest in Turkey, underline how, although these are extremely differentiated, they are all the reaction to neoliberal urbanism (Mayer, Thörn and Thörn, 2016a). One of the main differences between the two approaches is that, while social movement studies, although they recognize the relationship between neoliberalism and crises, are more focused on the study of collective action, the critical geography aims to use the analysis for 'decentralizing' neoliberalism and arguing that neoliberalism and its contestation are co-implicated and from their relationship they emanate different forms of the same variations of neoliberalism.

To summarise, initially, Marxist theory lacked the understanding of the relations between capitalist development and urban development so that the interpretation of the city and planning were largely permeated by an anti-urban feeling. This changed in the 1960s and 1970s thanks to

the contribution of urban Marxist scholars, among which Lefebvre, Castells and Harvey represent only some of the most celebrated cases of a much larger tradition. Their work has been crucial to bringing back the city to the heart of the Marxist debate but it has also been crucial to deepen the same understanding of capitalism, unveiling the relevance of the city in all phases of capitalist development, from its production to its reproduction, to the cause and the resolution of its crisis. However, their contribution has been fundamental also to bring to light the fact that the urban environment, and not only the working environment, could become the place where capitalism can be challenged. In their perspective, even though the city represents the privileged space for the development of the capitalist system, it is not a place from where to escape through a return to a rural environment, as sustained by sociologists and planners of at the beginning of 1900. The city becomes the place where and for which to struggle through urban social movements and by reclaiming the Right to the City. The construction of this dialectic perspective of the city, as a place and a constitutive element of capitalism and as a place and a constitutive element of its struggles, has become a constant of Marxist urban studies. The recent literature that explores the relation between the city and neoliberalism, and between the latter and the protests against it, confirms this dialectic. Moreover, it continues to show how setting the research in the urban environment is fruitful for the theorisation of neoliberalism and protests. The centrality of the city and the same Marxist dialectic is also taken up by many of the post-Marxist scholars who have speculated about the category of Common. Here too their contributions, thanks to their empirical analyses rooted into the urban environment, play a significant role in the theorisation of the Common's emancipatory project, bringing to light some contradictions that more abstract contributions do not fully address.

2.3.2 The urbanisation of Common's theories

Not all Commons' theories have put the city at the centre of their debate. The Midnight Notes Collective and Laval and Dardot do not identify the urban as the focus of their analyses. While others, such as Harvey, Hardt and Negri, directly link the emancipatory project from capitalism to the urban space. (Hardt and Negri, 2009; Harvey, 2012). To these more theoretical contributions, empirically-based contributions of the urban planning and geography have to be added (Hodkinson and Chatterton, 2006; Pickerill and Chatterton, 2006; Chatterton, 2010a; Stavrides, 2014, 2016). The empirically-based contributions unveil the urban nature of the Commons and contribute to de-staticise the wider Common's theory. In all cases, from Hardt and Negri to Chatterton, the same Marxist dialectic is applied. This means to analyse on the one hand how the capitalist pillaging act in the city and what the types of enclosure are to which it gives

forms; and, on the other hand, to analyse how the Commons may define spaces autonomous and alternative to the State and the Market in order to build the new alternative order based on the category of Common. Hereafter are presented the different contributions produced by Hardt and Negri, by critical planners, such as Stavrides and by critical geographers, such as Chatterton, Pickerell and others. Harvey is not included not because his contribution is considered irrelevant but because his work although focused on the urban environment does not deepen the urban nature of the Commons.

The most theoretical understanding of the city's Marxist dialectic coming from Common's theories is the one proposed by the political philosophy of Hardt and Negri (2009). According to the two authors both the material environment - the built environment - and the social environment - the affections, relationships, desires and knowledge - represent the commonwealth that is produced in the city and the same environment where this commonwealth is produced. The predatory logic of capitalism aims to plunder this commonwealth, acting through the real estate's monopoly rent. In the Marxist analytical method, capital creates surplus-value through the production of commodities and in the city the commodity par excellence is represented by the real estate property. The real estate value has been always a problem for classical economists. This value, in fact, does not depend so much on the work incorporated in the construction process that concretizes in the square meters and in the quality of the propriety, as the neoclassical theory of value sustains, but also and above from both negative externalities - pollution, traffic, crime, etc.- and positive externalities - proximity to green areas, transport, quality of neighbourhood relations, cultural events, etc. Controlling and monetising negative externalities and taking advantage of positive externalities is the process through which it is possible to expropriate the commonwealth. Hardt and Negri claim that one of the most effective examples of this process is what the urban studies literature defined as 'artists-led gentrification' (Cameron and Coaffee, 2005) where the commonwealth produced by the creation of an intellectually stimulating, fashionable and dynamic environment is soon used by real estate speculators to take advantage of real estate properties located in these areas. In their perspective, this expropriation of the city's commonwealth has always existed, but it has indeed become more aggressive with the neoliberal turn. However, shifts are not always negative and the recent shift in the capitalist mode of production is what can facilitate the structuring of a new wave of struggle based on The Common.

According to the two authors, the city becomes essential for the construction of the political project of The Common, especially in the light of the shift from industrial to cognitive capitalism. If before the factory represented the production's site, the workers' meeting space and

the place where antagonism and rebellion revealed themselves, these activities now have changed, transcending the factory's walls and permeating all the metropolitan area. The production has switched from being concentrated in the factory to be spread in all the recesses and interstices of the city because the city itself, the access to its resources and the tradable goods have become the prerequisite of the production and the result of the same production. Workers' encounters have gone from being a daily event among individuals belonging to the same social class to encounters happening unpredictably and randomly between individuals that often come from different places, with different languages, knowledge and mentalities. The organisation of the rebellion changes from having as objective the conquest of the means of production to having as objective the city itself. In other words, according to the two authors, with the new mode of production, with the new encounter and with the new formulation of claims, the metropolis represents the place where it is possible to organise the political struggle of the multitude to constitute the autonomy of The Common. For this reason, they propose a fascinating but rigorous analogy: The metropolis is for the multitude what the factory was for the working class (Hardt and Negri, 2009, p. 256) and it is here that new emancipatory project of The Common can be built.

Another significant understanding of the city's Marxist dialectic coming from Common's theories is that proposed by the Greek planner Stavros Stavrides. Using post-Foucauldian lenses, he is one of the most well-known scholars who theorise on the urban enclosure but also on its opposite, the Urban Commons (Stavrides, 2014, 2016). Stavrides conceptualises the contemporary city as an archipelago of 'urban enclaves'. The image of the archipelago indicates that the urban space appears as a vast sea of urban chaos which surrounds urban islands of various size and forms, i.e. urban enclaves. This image helps the planner to explain and interpret, through his post-Foucauldian approach, the capitalist spatial urban order. He sustains that urban enclaves are spaces defined by specific protocols of use in which forms of controls are employed to ensure access to those who are qualified as 'inhabitants' defining specific forms of spatial ordering. This capitalist spatial order is achieved through the application of a sovereign and disciplinary power. The sovereign power imposes obligation and patterns of behaviour. While the disciplinary power knows, controls and organises the space in order to situate, classify and mould the inhabitants. Typical examples of urban enclaves are the large department store, a bank or a corporate power, a shopping mall, a huge sports stadium, an entire neighbourhood such as the so-called 'gated communities'. Additionally, the capitalist order continuously tries to integrate the remaining urban sea into its urban order. Examples of such attempts are state-led gentrification, mega-events and large-scale redevelopments that, despite they cannot be interpreted as urban enclaves *tout court*, are in the process of becoming urban enclaves through total planning and surveillance. However, the

urban sea cannot be controlled entirely and the capitalist order has to deal with exceptions continuously. These are the mechanism that establishes new potential rules and within these mechanisms, there are the Urban Commons.

In his theorisation of Urban Commons Stavrides follows his reasoning on urban enclaves and his post-Foucauldian approach. The Urban Commons are distinguished from public spaces and private spaces because they are produced by people in their effort to establish a common world that houses, supports and expresses the community that participates in and against the capitalist order (Stavrides, 2016). Urban Commons allow creating transformative political subjectivities in which sharing and participation are performed and in which equality becomes a presupposition of the collaboration and an objective of the collaboration. The greater preoccupation of this theorisation is how these practices can maintain and direct their action so as not to be transformed into another form of enclosure. According to Stavrides, an Urban Commons in order not to be transformed into an urban enclave must respond to three main qualities: comparison, translation and power sharing. Comparing means that different identities meet, mutually expose themselves and create ground of mutual awareness comparing their differences in order to recognise them and be open to the arrival of new-comers without forcing them to follow precise rules. Translating means that once different identities meet and recognise each other, they can negotiate among them and create bridges by translating their differences without reducing them to common denominator. Sharing power means that, among all these different identities, power must be shared and dispersed through organisations that give form to different level of participation even when they scale-up. These three qualities allow the Urban Commons to expand beyond the limits of their community and become threshold spaces (Stavrides, 2016).

The threshold image is one of the central conceptualisations on the Urban Commons brought forward by Stavrides. This image is a necessary conceptualisation to avoid one of the greatest risks of the Commons, urban and not, - to turn into urban enclaves - but it is also useful to bring to light a central aspect of the nature of the Commons, especially the urban ones. According to him, thresholds may appear to be mere boundaries that separate an inside from an outside. However, these boundaries represent an act of separation that is always and simultaneously an act of connection. Thus, threshold spaces are material and mental construction that create these conditions of connection and separation, of entrance and exit and that perforate boundaries. The act of crossing a threshold is an act that can contribute to producing new transformative subjectivities. With such crossing, subjectivities usually abandoned a familiar place for a place that is 'other'. Thus, crossing a threshold means approaching the 'otherness' and allowing the encounter

between different social groups and between different life courses (Stavrídes, 2016). An example of a threshold is the social housing block called the 'Alexandras complex' built in the outskirts of Athens in order to house Asia Minor refugees. Here, despite the hostile and unfriendly environment, refugees started to transform outdoor places into playground and meeting places where vesting, small fests and everyday encounters between neighbours were taking place. Therefore, according to Stavrídes, the main feature of Urban Commons, and the condition required to be considered as such, is precisely this being a threshold space. This metaphorical image, in reality, is more concrete than it seems and leads the planner to define an important truth not only of the Urban Commons, but of the nature of the Commons in general. According to him, in fact, 'We need to abandon a view that fantasises about uncontaminated enclaves of emancipation' (Stavrídes, 2016, p. 56). These uncontaminated, egalitarian and anti-authoritarian spaces are actually another expression of urban enclaves, and for Urban Commons to remain a practice that produces emancipation, it has to overstep the boundaries of any established community. In other words, the autonomy of the Commons does not exist and to be emancipatory social practices, they must relate and mix with 'the other'. This process for Stavrídes is conceived at the level of civil society: 'the other' is represented by other inhabitants of the city. However, this process does not entail the relation with other institutions, such as the State, whose role is generally overlooked in his theory. This minor consideration of the State is also because, although Stavrídes analyses Urban Commons' cases in space and time, he is not so much concerned with the limits and the possibility they face in maintaining themselves over time but in the general theorisation of the nature of the Urban Commons.

Another important understanding of the city's Marxist dialectic coming from Common's theories is the one proposed by the critical geographers. First of all, like all other contributions they reflect on the plundering process and how this is applied in the urban environment. This is analysed by Hodkinson (2012) in a paper where he clarifies what enclosure means in the city of the Global North. Although his conceptualisation does not seem to be very different from those illustrated by Stavrídes, it is worth presenting it because the theoretical lens are different, and so is the definition. With the term 'urban enclosure', he refers to that 'multidimensional process that aim at finding new urban outlets for capital accumulation, controlling the use and exchange value of urban space or shutting down access to any urban space or sociality—commons—that offers a means of reproduction and challenging capitalist social relations' (Hodkinson, 2012). In the city, enclosure operates through the 'privatisation' of spaces and services formerly publicly owned and open/affordable, and through the 'fencing off' of the city itself through the countless residential, office and retail developments. However, they are not only about the closing of soil and land in a

narrow sense, but they shut down access to any space or sociality that threatens the ideological or material dependence on capitalist social relations. Thus, the main effect of this process is not only to 'displace' and 'exclude' the urban poor from the city but also to threaten the existence of any space of resistance in the city that threatened the capitalist logic. However, these spaces of resistance, represented by the Urban Commons, exist and continue to exist in the city and are the best way to challenge enclosures. Hodkinson concludes the article by saying that the Urban Commons are the only way to protect society against market forces, enabling people to survive independently or with degrees of independence from wage labour (Hodkinson, 2012).

Initially, the critical geographers' contribution did not refer directly to the Urban Commons but to the 'autonomous geographies'. Pickerell and Chatterton define 'autonomous geographies' as those spaces characterised by both a rejection of hierarchy and authoritarianism and a belief in collective self-management, where people desire to constitute no capitalist, egalitarian and solidaristic forms of political, social, and economic organization through a combination of resistance and creation (Pickerill and Chatterton, 2006). One of the most relevant empirical contributions on autonomous geography is the research project they carried out in the UK that analyses social centres, Low Impact Developments (LID) and tenants' networks resisting gentrification (Chatterton and Pickerill, 2010). This project focused on the 'everyday practice of autonomous activists, investigating: the core ideas, beliefs and visions of activists; how activists' ideas are translated into action; how spaces for participation permit this translation; and border crossings and/or boundaries between activist and non-activist spaces. Although their main findings are related to the 'messy and complex' activist's condition and to the difficult implementation process that a horizontal decision-making process may face, they bring forward the first reflection on limits and possibilities for these spaces to be sustainable in the long run. According to the results of this research, all activists express a strong desire for more stable and long-term spaces. This desire translates into a process of legalisation where social centre instead of squatting try to rent or buy a space and where LID apply for formal planning permission instead of taking the risk of being evicted. However, while legalisation has the benefit of consolidating these practices this also produce the effect of transforming these practices into 'essentially non-radical and liberal project' that may create the same alienating, authoritarian structures as capitalist society with radical groups feeling unwelcome or forced to limit their radicalism in order to protect the space (Hodkinson and Chatterton, 2006). In this way, their contribution starts to dynamize the theory of Commons. They show the difficulties to exist that Urban Commons face in time and space. This difficulty is often resolved with an institutionalisation which involves a relationship with the State. However, being

very activists/community-focused and being very into autonomist Marxism, the analysis of the relationship with the State is rather side-lined in their research.

Subsequently, starting from reflections on autonomous geographies, critical geographers have introduced the concept of Urban Commons to analyse these practices. According to Chatterton, the Urban Commons are social and spatial practices, which create new vocabularies and repertoires of resistance against capitalism, that are collectively owned and governed by those who depend on them – the commoners (Chatterton, 2016). Through further empirical analysis carried out in urban space, he also comes to conclusions about the nature of Commons that are similar to those of Stavrides. These conclusions concern the impossible autonomy of the Commons. In an article titled ‘Building transitions to post-capitalist urban commons’, he points out that ‘autonomy can only be considered a partially fulfilled desire that is fought for and struggled over as these geographies have to be coexisting with a myriad of other public and private forms of ownership and governance (Chatterton, 2016). Yet although he acknowledges this co-existence, he does not modify his empirical approach. This continues to remain an approach that is mainly focused on what is happening within the community and pays little attention to the relations that this community has with the outside, and therefore with the State. Nevertheless, from the moment the concept of Urban Commons was introduced into critical geography, empirical contributions have multiplied. Case studies go from the community garden in New York (Eizenberg, 2012) to community-led trust in London (Bunce, 2016) to independent cultural space in Dublin (Bresnihan and Byrne, 2015). Their approaches are very different and unfortunately, these works have not been coherently systematised. However, by understanding the Urban Commons' possibilities and limits to existing over time, they start to dynamize Common's theories and to address the role of the State.

In the analysis of the independent cultural spaces in Dublin, Bresnihan and Byrne (2015) show the transformative potential of these practices but also their main limits. The two most relevant constraints are represented by the intervention of public authority that most of the times either evict or shut them down, and by the increasing rent prices with the consequent impossibility for communities to afford them. In his analysis of the community garden in New York, Eizenberg (2012) underlines how these spaces represent an alternative to the dominant social space that redresses the right to public space. However, she points out that they are perceived as a menace by the City Council and that this does not help them to improve their conditions but contributes to marginalise them. In her study on a limited-equity housing cooperative in Washington, Huron (2015) claims that the urban commons represent a possibility to reclaim space

in the city. However, they have to face two challenges: the first is the experience of working together with strangers and the second is the maintenance of these practices within a space saturated with conflicting uses and capital investment, where the participants are constantly tempted by the seduction of short-term individual gains. Bunce (2016), in the analysis of the community land trust, highlights how they represent a progressive rethinking of land tenure in cities. However, in order to maintain themselves, they have to find compromises with public agencies and private actors that may undermine their emancipatory potential. In other words, the contributions of critical geography show that when empirical analysis on Urban Commons are realised it is difficult not to take into consideration the relationship they have with other actors and with institutional forms, including the State. However, although all contributions recognise the need to take this relationship into account, they generally tend to look at it in a rather over-determined way, illustrating mainly its negative impact on Urban Commons.

2.3.3 The false autonomy and the ineludible relation with the State

The urban spatialisation of Marxist thought has been very fruitful for Marxist theories which, with the contributions of urban Marxist scholars of the 1960s and 1970s and of recent ones, has understood how the development of capitalism, in all its phases, is connected to urban development. Moreover, by applying the Marxist dialectic, urban Marxist scholars have connected the centrality of the city for the struggle against capitalism, not only because it is there where many of the struggles develop but also because it is the city itself that becomes the object of the claims. In other words, there is a certain tendency in Marxist theories that advocate for an urban spatialisation of the struggles against capitalism. This tendency is also taken up by many Common's authors through the same Marxist dialectic. From the Common's theories perspective, the city is the place of capitalist plundering that acts through monopoly rent and produces enclosures that limit the use and access of the city for the poor (Hardt and Negri, 2009; Hodkinson, 2012; Stavrides, 2014, 2016). However, the city is also the place where the political project of The Common can develop because it is there, and not in the factory anymore, where the anti-capitalist struggles are rooted, and it is there where spaces of resistance, the Urban Commons, emerge and develop (Pickerill and Chatterton, 2006; Hardt and Negri, 2009; Chatterton, 2010b, 2016, Stavrides, 2014, 2016). Thus, also these contributions advocate for an urban spatialisation of the anti-capitalist struggle and thus for an urban spatialisation the Common's emancipatory project. However, their work does not linger on to the theorisation of this spatialization and, through empirical analyses that de-staticising Common's theories, they propose essential theoretical advancements. These are

mainly two: one related to the nature of the Urban Commons and the second one related to possibilities and limits of Urban Commons to emerge and develop over time.

First of all, the urban study literature suggests that total autonomy does not exist. The imperfect nature of the Urban Commons' autonomy and the need to relate to 'the outside' is supported by both Stavrides and Chatterton. However, both authors pay little attention to the relationships that Urban Commons have with the State. This depends on a different conceptualisation of 'the outside'. According to Stavrides Urban Commons, to be considered as such, have to overspill the boundaries of their community (Stavrides, 2016). The outside with which they should relate is the remaining civil society and is therefore on the basis of this relationship that his empirical analyses are concentrated. Chatterton argues instead that Urban Commons have to relate to other types of ownership and governance (Chatterton, 2016). The outside with which they relate are economic, and public institutions but his analyses remain very community-focused. Additionally, although he recognises that Urban Commons in their search of maintenance face different institutionalisation's processes, thus they relate with the State, this is scarcely scrutinised. In other words, urban analyses show that the autonomy of Urban Commons is impossible because these practices are forced to relate with 'the outside' and therefore must be seen as practices that tend to the autonomy but without being able to achieve it perfectly. However, even if relating to the outside means also relating to the State, none of the two authors focuses his analyses on this relation, being both strictly adherent to autonomist Marxist. Overlooking this relation could be more understandable in the case of Stavrides because its outside is the civil society, but it could be less understandable in the case of Chatterton as its outside is represented by other institutions, and therefore also by the State.

Secondly, the urban empirical studies, by analysing how Urban Commons emerge and develop over time, suggest the ineludible relation with the (local) State. However, this relation is analysed with a similar approach in all cases. They underline how the (local) State often hinders the development of these practices or redefine their emancipatory capacity, but they tend to underestimate its role. Among all the urban gardens analysed by Eizenberg (2012) 400 gardens were preserved under the Parks and Recreation Department of New York City; some of the independent cultural space studied by Bresnihan and Byrne (2015) received funding by the City Council or another administrative body. However, their theoretical discussion ends without giving any relevance to these, albeit marginal, contributions of the public institutions. Only in the case of Bunce's East London Community Land Trust the alliances with the government, although it has influenced the trust's 'intended vision', it was recognised as a necessary action in order to maintain

the Urban Commons (Bunce, 2016). In other words, although these studies do not tend to avoid the analysis of the relations Urban Commons have with the State, they use a rather overdetermined approach that tends to underestimate its role.

In conclusion, despite Common's theories are based on achieving emancipation from capitalism without the State, the urban study literature, through its empirical contributions that analyse how Urban Commons may exist in a given context over time, demonstrates that the relation with the State is ineludible. However, although all contributions acknowledge it, they adopt similar analytical lenses. All works tend to ignore the study of this relation with the State and whereby this relationship is not ignored its role tends to be underestimated. In this way, the approach of the urban study literature on the Commons follows the same approach of the Common's theories previously presented in which all the contributions show a certain reticence to analyse deeper the role of the State (Castro-Coma and Martí-Costa, 2016). This reticence should be justified by the adherence of these theories to autonomist Marxism that clearly opposes the State. However, this thesis believes that, precisely because this perspective sustains that emancipation should not involve the State, it should be explained how this process can take place. Avoiding taking into consideration the role State more than endorsing these theories could make them fall into a dogmatism that becomes not very fruitful in strategic and operational terms (Davies, 2013; Cumbers, 2015).

THIRD CHAPTER RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research question: the role of the (local) State in the Common's emancipatory project

Starting from the 1980s onwards, when the alliance between the State and the Market in neoliberal privatisation and commodification became evident, the State suffered from a great discredit. From this moment on, the autonomist Marxist current of thought has been revived by many post-Marxist scholars focusing their analysis on the category of Common (De Angelis, 2003; Hardt and Negri, 2009; Harvey, 2010, 2012, Mattei, 2011, 2015; Federici and Caffentzis, 2013; Dardot and Laval, 2015). This category, representing the category that had been denied in favour of the State and the Market for the development of industrial capitalism and representing what was plundered by the State and the Market through old and new enclosures, emerged from its opposite, starting to represent the empty signifier, in Laclau's philological meaning (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985) of an emancipatory path based on self-governing practices that intends to achieve emancipation without the State.

Many post-Marxist scholars coming from different disciplines and with different theoretical approaches have used the category of Common to analyse the social practice of the Commons and the political theory of The Common (De Angelis, 2003; Hardt and Negri, 2009; Harvey, 2010, 2012, Mattei, 2011, 2015; Federici and Caffentzis, 2013; Dardot and Laval, 2015). Not all contributions can be defined as overtly part of the autonomist Marxist current even though, all of them, theorising on the category of Common, have contributed to nurturing it. However, despite their differences, a shared vision of the emancipatory path can be outlined. This vision is based on the Commons, that create 'institutionalities' alternative and autonomous from the State and the Market. The production, the reproduction and the expansion of the Commons should allow overcoming capitalism through the production of emancipation, The Common, and the construction of new alternative order based on self-government, equality and non-appropriability. The vision also has a privileged place to carry out the emancipatory project, the urban space, taking up the centrality of the city in anti-capitalist struggles highlighted by many urban Marxists (Hardt and Negri, 2009; Harvey, 2012).

Nevertheless, although these theories aim to achieve emancipation without the State, they are somehow evasive regarding how such emancipation can take place without the State. Most radical cases tend not to explain how the State may be destroyed or overcome without taking over it, and less radical cases that seem to get the public action into consideration in the emancipatory project tend not to recognise that this action comes from the State. This reticence to analyse deeper the

State translates into a rather static theorisation that avoids analysing how the Commons emerge, develop and expand over time. These empirical analyses, if carried out, would likely call scholars to address the role of the State. However, avoiding empirical analysis is functional to keeping theories at this high level of abstraction that allows them not to address the question of the State. In other words, although autonomist Common's theories want to do without the State, it is not clear how this is possible, leaving a not fully explored theoretical and empirical space in their theories.

The researches carried out on the Commons in the urban environment contribute to shed some light on this not fully explored space within autonomist Common's theories. When the urban study literature descends to the empirical level, dealing with what are the limits and possibilities of the Commons in the urban environment and providing a more dynamic analysis, it emerges the need to address the State. Urban studies suggest, first of all, that the Urban Commons are not fully autonomous social practice, but they have to relate to 'the outside'; secondly, they suggest that the relation with the (local)State is ineludible (Chatterton, 2016; Stavrides, 2016). Nevertheless, even if the urban studies show the need to take into consideration the relation that Urban Commons have with the State, they apply analytical lenses similar to the one used by Common's theories. Most radical scholars tend not to focus their analyses on the Commons-State relation and less radical scholars that analyse this relation tend to use an over-determined negative perspective of the role of the State.

Hence, as it seems that the relationship the Commons have with the State is ineludible, this thesis aims to investigate this relationship to understand what the role of the State may be in the Common's emancipatory process. The analysis is carried out in the urban environment, as this is considered by Common's theories as a privileged space to develop the emancipatory process and it has been proved of being fruitful for Marxist theories. Therefore, the thesis investigates a specific type of Commons, the Urban Commons (UCs), and how they relate to the (local) State. Being the city a space extremely dense in terms of private interests and capital investments and a place where the (local) State is extremely present, not only through its administrative apparatus, but also through its control devices, laws, public policies and planning, here the UCs- (local)State can be analysed in all its facets. Thus, the research question is formulated as follows:

What may the role of the (local) State be
in the development of UCs and
in the production of UCs' emancipation?

3.2 Hypothesis: Urban Commons need the (local) State

The hypothesis of this thesis is inspired by those scholars that propose a more moderate approach to Common's theories by bringing the State into the debate (Subirats, 2011, 2016; Cumbers, 2015; Blanco and Gomá, 2016). In an article titled 'Constructing a global commons in, against and beyond the state' Andrew Cumbers reflects on the emancipatory project proposed by the Common's literature, questioning the assumptions on which it is based. Cumbers begins by endorsing the criticism of the State that the Common's literature proposes. However, the author sustains that, when it comes to the real emancipatory capacity, the State has to be taken into consideration as it is not only an accomplice institution of the Market but it is also an institution to struggle for and through which to struggle. In the end, the history of the post-war welfare nation-States shows that many real achievements have been obtained through the State. In the words of Cumbers:

'it must be acknowledged that the state has been an important terrain of struggle for certain basic rights and freedoms (...). Although we can admit that the outcomes of such struggles are often partial, uneven between places and in some instances highly flawed and problematic, often because of hierarchical and dominant capitalistic rationales within state bureaucracies, this does not detract from the importance of the state as a site of struggle'(Cumbers, 2015).

Thus, according to Cumbers's argument, the State continues to be a fundamental institution to pursue an emancipatory project. This does not mean that the autonomist Commons' perspective has to be rejected, but that a 'more nuanced approach is needed that sees the State and grassroots civil society as part of inter-mingled, dynamic and ongoing relationships that can both stifle but also promote emancipatory path' (Cumbers, 2015). In this way, Cumbers comes close to all the more moderate contributions of the Common's theories such as the Italian critical legal studies, Laval and Dardot and especially to Harvey's point of view. These works try to get the State into consideration in the emancipatory project but without acknowledging its role. Instead, Cumbers' directly points his finger at the State and at the role it might have, adopting a position between autonomism and reformism.

This perspective is also supported by the Spanish critical political science literature that in the last years has been elaborating on the category of Common. This literature takes up and reworks

the theories of its more moderate scholars, such as the Italian critical legal studies and the political philosophy of Laval and Dardot, studying how the category of Common can be used to change the State and to change the relationship between the State and the organized civil society (Subirats, 2011, 2016; Blanco and Gomá, 2016). They sustain that the category of Common can serve to reformulate the State democratically. This transformation of the State implies the transformation of public policies, which should be based on equality, justice and on the consideration of the diversity, the transformation of how public policies are produced, which should be co-produced by the State and civil society, and the transformation of the role of civil society in the policy design, which should pursue civil society's autonomy (Subirats, 2011, 2016; Blanco and Gomá, 2016).

Their theorisation is supported by extensive empirical analyses, carried out in the Catalan region, that suggest that it is possible to implement policies that aim to produce an equal, just and diverse emancipation, that are co-produced and that leave autonomy to social practices. In not all policies the role of the State and civil society is the same. In some cases, such as the transformation of the mobility of Barcelona, the role of the State is preponderant. In other cases, such as the co-management of civic centres and schools in Catalan municipalities the two actors have a more balanced role. While in some other cases, such as the re-appropriation of urban voids by groups of neighbours in Barcelona, the role of the State is minor (Blanco and Gomá, 2016). In other words, they use the category of Common to advocate for a shift from the 'State-centred' theory in which the State is considered the main producer of emancipation, as in the Polanyi's double movement, to a 'Common-State' theory in which emancipation is produced by both the State and the autonomy of civil society, in a sort of Polanyi's triple movement (Subirats, 2011; Subirats and Rendueles, 2016) that implies different degree of collaboration between the State and the Commons.

This thesis, like Cumbers, shares the critique of the Common's theories towards the State: after the neoliberal shift, the crisis, and the austerity measures, it is difficult to see in the State a pivotal actor of any emancipatory project. In this sense, the elaboration of the autonomist Common's emancipatory project is historically shareable due to the general lack of confidence in the State and its policies in the current political and economic conjuncture. However, like Cumbers and the Spanish critical political science, this research believes that when the emancipatory capacity of the social practices of the Commons and their potential to produce The Common is analysed, the State has to be taken into consideration. Therefore, the hypothesis takes up the theoretical contributions of both Cumbers and the Spanish critical political science, but it remains within the autonomist Marxist debate. Theoretically, this means to understand how the debate on the State may be useful to the autonomist Common's emancipatory project. Empirically, this means to

analyse the Commons-State relationship to understand how this may be beneficial to UCs and not how this may be beneficial to both.

Having stated this, the hypotheses of the thesis are mainly two. Firstly, the State can support the Common's emancipatory project. In the contemporary era, characterised by a wild and predatory capitalism that has set in motion the forces of the market in an extremely powerful and aggressive way, it seems difficult to imagine that the Commons can maintain themselves and expand over time and can produce emancipation without being 'backed up' by the State - its economic resources, its proprietary resources and its legislative, policy and planning capacity. Secondly, the State, through its production of emancipation - 'The Public' - can flank the Common's emancipatory project, at least until the Common will be hegemonic in the social space. Precisely because the Commons risk producing a form of emancipation only for some social groups (and thus become other enclosures), 'The Public', with its universal production of emancipation that comes from above, in the beginning, could limit the elitism of the Commons and wide the spectrum of the emancipation.

These hypotheses acquire greater credit in the urban space subject to strong real estate speculation, where UCs may have more difficulties in developing and producing 'The Common' over time, and where the density of the urban fabric and the territorial differences could increase the risk of elitism of the Commons. However, the space of the city, as the Marxist dialectic suggests, is also the space in which the (local) State may support and flank the Common's emancipatory project. Again, it is the Spanish critical political science that suggests it. From their perspective, the local government is central governmental space where it is possible to achieve radical changes that are difficult to be pictured out at other governmental scales, such as the national or European ones (Ubasart González, 2014; Subirats, 2016). This literature has inspired and is inspired by the current Spanish local government experiences, where radical left coalitions now govern five major cities. In other words, according to this literature, the (local) State is the privileged governmental scale where their Common-State emancipatory project may be implemented giving rise to what has been defined as the 'New Municipalism' or the 'Municipalism of the Commons' (Blanco and Gomá, 2016; Subirats, 2016). Therefore, this thesis, by sharing the idea of the local government's potential for radical change with the Spanish political science literature, formulates the hypothesis as follows:

The (local) State can support the development of the UCs and it can support and flank the production of UCs' emancipation

3.3 The empirical approach: a relational approach

According to Cumbers, the Common's emancipatory project does without the State because it lacks the analysis of the relations between the State, the Market and the Commons and it has the tendency to look at them with an over-determined and over-simplified vision (Cumbers, 2015). Although Cumbers' article remains at a higher level of abstraction, his perspective has been previously confirmed by the analysis of the Common's urban study literature. Here, most of the times, scholars do not tend to focus their research on the State-Commons relation and in the few cases in which this relation is analysed they tend to underestimate the role of the State. Therefore, the idea of this research, taking up Cumbers' suggestion, is to place the relations between the State and the Commons (without dismissing the analysis of the Commons with private and market actors) at the heart of the empirical analysis trying not to use over-determined and over-simplified perspective.

Therefore, the ineludible relation that UCs have with the (local) State (and the Market) it is considered as the postulate of the research and as a guide for the entire empirical work. The analysis of these relations aims to shed light on three scarcely explored questions:

- Illustrating the role of the (local) State in the emergence, maintenance and expansion of the UCs;
- Understanding whether the (local) State may support the production of The Common;
- Understanding whether the (local) State may produce emancipation through the Public and how this may flank the production of The Common.

Applying a relational approach means adopting a relational ontological and epistemological stance in the study of the UCs. These have been theorised by the 'ontology of the relational', a philosophical theory formulated in the second half of the XIX century by Simondon and subsequently taken up by Balibar and Morfino (Simondon, 1989; Étienne Balibar and Morfino, 2014). The 'ontology of the relational' is based on the rejection of the subject's Cartesian line of separation between inside and outside that has characterised the dominant philosophy of modern times. It is based on one essential idea: the interpretation of the entities of the world in relational terms, where the subject, the individual, is made of the relations he/she has with the environment and thus it is impossible to define its limits (Morfino, 2014). This type of subject has been defined as 'The Transindividual' by Simondon (1989) who was the first philosopher to put this theory forward.

	(local) State	Urban Commons
Governmental institution	Transcendental government	Self-government
Proprietary institution	Public property	Non-appropriable property
Economic institution	Redistribution	Reciprocity
Emancipatory action	The Public	The Common
Emancipatory type	Top-down universality	Bottom-up universality
Emancipatory instruments	Regulation, public policies and planning	NA

Table 3.1: UCs and the local (State): institutions and emancipation
Source: Author's elaboration

According to Simondon, a 'Transindividual' is a relative individual whose individualization is an ongoing process that will never terminate because the subject will never live in complete isolation (Simondon, 1989). This ontological stance implies two main epistemological stances in the study of the subject: 1) to prioritise the process of subjectivization instead of considering the individual as already constituted; 2) to sustain the primacy of the relation over the terms of the relation itself (Balibar and Morfino, 2014). These stances imply that the subject is not studied as a substance or a foundation, but it is studied as the result of a process that can never be accomplished once and for all since its products are only the momentary consolidation of a meta-stable balance. Although the ontology of the relational and the resulting empirical approach have been theorised to analyse individuals, these can also be used for the relational analysis of this research.

Applying the ontology of the relational to the study of UCs means, at ontological level, not only considering the UCs as practices that have to relate to the (local) State and the Market but also considering them as practices whose birth and development is the result of the relations with the (local) State and the Market. At the empirical level, it means firstly to analyse the UCs considering

their multiple temporal layers that determine their history, without thinking that an UCs exists before weaving relations with the local government and private actors since its genesis is determined by their relations as well as their evolution over time. Secondly, it means that the essence of an UCs has to be understood as a ‘combinatory logic’ with the (local)State and the Market. Thirdly, it means considering the contingency of the relations between the UCs, the (local) State and the Market as a metastable balance and not as something terminated and concluded. Finally, it means considering the continuous evolution of an UCs because, even if it reaches a metastable balance, it will never be autonomous and isolated but it will continue to maintain the same relations with the (local) State and the Market.

In other words, applying the ‘ontology of the relational’ to the study of the UCs means that rather than *starting from the reality* of UCs *to study the relations* they have with the State and the Market, it means *studying the reality* of the UCs *starting from the study of the relations* they have with the State and the Market.

3.4 The research setting: Barcelona

The city that has been chosen to set the research is the city of Barcelona, the capital city of the Catalonia region, as it represents both a representative and a paradigmatic case (Yin, 2009). It is considered a representative case because it perfectly embodies the Marxist dialectic that links the city both to the capitalist development and to its contestation. Barcelona has an historical tradition of real estate speculation that started with the Plan Cerdà (Moreno and Vázquez Montalbán, 1991) and has continued up to present day through the neo-liberalisation of so-called ‘Barcelona Model’ of urban development (Blanco, 2009). However, Barcelona has also an historic tradition of antagonism and urban social movements that started with the resistance to the Franco army during the Spanish Civil War and has continued up to present day with the urban mobilization of the Indignados Movement (15M) that emerged after the crisis (Orwell, 1938; Martínez López, 2016). Barcelona is also a paradigmatic case as it is a city with a historical autonomist tradition based on its anarcho-cooperativist culture that, although eclipsed during Francoists regime and the first democratic years, it has re-emerged with the neoliberal turn and with the crisis. In the last decade, different UCs have emerged, such as self-managed cultural and social centres, working cooperatives, community-based economic practices and consolidated urban social movements (Nel·lo, 2015; Cruz, Martínez Moreno and Blanco, 2017; Grup de Treball Desbordes de la cultura., 2017; Blanco and Nel·lo, 2018). It is also a paradigmatic case to verify the hypothesis since it is nowadays governed by the left-wing radical coalition ‘Barcelona en Comú’ that uses the discourse

of the Common-State emancipatory project proposed by the Spanish critical political science literature as a representation of its political agenda (Barcelona En Comú, 2015).

However, it is essential to recognise that Barcelona is also a very peculiar case. The city counts on an economic wealth much more significant than other Spanish and European cities since Catalonia is one of the wealthiest regions in Spain and, although the 2007 crisis has heavily hit it, it has soon recovered with a consistent economic growth. It counts on a specific tradition of left-wing politics much more significant than other Spanish and south European cities, since left-wing political parties have been in government from its democratic turn onwards, -except during the 2011-2015 mandate- and it is now governed by radical left-wing coalition 'Barcelona en Comú'. This does not mean that empirical analysis will not produce generalizable theoretical conclusions, or in Yin's terms, that it will not have external validity (Yin, 2009). However, it has to be recognised that the possibility to contextualise the research in a similar privileged environment in terms of economic wealth, civil society's activism and left-wing political tradition are rather scarce in other Spanish and European cities.

3.5 Objectives of the research

The objective of this research is to bring the autonomist Common's emancipatory project in the empirical space of the city of Barcelona to answer the research question and verify the hypothesis through the achievement of the following objectives:

- Understand how UCs emerge, maintain and expand in Barcelona;
- Assess the role of the Barcelona City Council in the emergence, maintenance and expansion of UCs;
- Understand the limits and possibilities of the production of The Common;
- Assess whether the Barcelona City Council may support the production of The Common;
- Understand the limits and possibilities of the production of The Public;
- Assess whether the production of The Public may flank the production of The Common;
- Draw conclusions regarding the role of the Barcelona City Council in the emergence, maintenance, expansion of UCs over time and in the production of The Common.

3.6 The object of the research: which Urban Commons?

The UCs included in this research are those that respond to Harvey's definition: UCs are a social relation between a social group and a material or immaterial resource (Harvey, 2012). According to this definition, it is possible to include in this category not only those practices that are self-managing the resource, such as self-managed social centres and housing cooperatives, but also those practices that reclaim their relation with a resource, such as labour and water movements. It may seem questionable to include the latter because apparently, they are not born with the clear objective of creating spaces of autonomy but to address political demands to public institutions. However, this thesis has decided to stick with Harvey's definition that interprets reclaiming and self-managing practices as two forms through which UCs may express the relation with the resource, whereby in self-managing practices the relation is practised, while in reclaiming practices the relation is reclaimed. By using this understanding, the research uses an analytical approach that is similar to that of the social movement studies.

To explain the extent and the emergence of the urban uprising that have recently characterized several cities across the globe, including the famous 15M or Gezi Parks, social movement scholars include in their research different types of practices from the most institutional to the less institutional ones as it is difficult to separate one from the other's (Mayer, Thörn and Thörn, 2016a). In the Spanish case, Martínez argues that the 15M is a combination of different practices, from institutional practices, so-called 'tides', movement in defence of the public services, such as health and education, to autonomous practices, such as the occupation of public spaces, street and squares and the new type of squatted houses and social centre (Martínez López, 2016). Therefore, following an analytical methodology that is already used by social movement studies, this thesis has included all those practices that may express a relationship with a resource, being either material or immaterial. However, not being able to *a priori* define if the relationship of the group with the resource is in place, this thesis includes all those cases in which this relationship could potentially be present.

Therefore, in the empirical analysis the following categories of UCs are included:

- Reclaiming practices

They should explicitly reclaim the crucial relation with a resource, which can be labour, housing, civil rights, etc. In this category collective practices, such as movements against

privatisation of water, housing movements against eviction and labour movements against the insecurity of the labour market, including Trade Union, are included.

The inclusion of Trade Union could be questionable, especially from an autonomist Marxism standpoint, because it was also against their politics that this Marxist current of thought developed. However, as this thesis avoids any overdetermined interpretation of the State, it believes that it is possible also to avoid any overdetermined interpretation of Trade Unions and include them into the research as they are the expression of the relation between a social group and the 'labour' resource, theoretically fitting into Harvey's definition.

- Self-managing practices

They are alternative institutionalities that should practice the crucial relation with the resource. In this category, collective practices such as self-managed spaces -self-managed social centre, art centres, etc-, social and cooperative economic practices – services cooperatives, independent bookshops, etc.- and community-based economic practices -time banks, popular canteens, are included.

Finally, the thesis aims to be a testing ground to verify how such application of Harvey's definition can be constructive and productive in terms of scientific analysis.

3.7 Scales of analysis: the city scale and the in-depth scale

The research is a qualitative-interpretative study of the case of Barcelona. To gather and interpret the evidence needed to answer the research question, the research uses two different scales of analysis, a city scale and an in-depth-scale. Therefore, it uses a series of mixed methods: questionnaire, comparative embedded case studies, interviews, documents' analysis and direct observations. The fieldwork has been carried out from March 2016 to June 2017. The 'Barcelona en Comú' coalition won the election in May 2015 and, in this timeframe, it was too early to assess its role comprehensively. However, the research has tried to take into consideration the power shift in both scales of analysis with the aim not to comprehensively assess the role of 'Barcelona en Comú', but to capture at least a preliminary view of an ongoing process that is extremely relevant for the research.

For each scale of analysis, different corresponding methods are used to achieve different objectives. In the case of the city-scale analysis, it is used a questionnaire to provide a general

understanding of the relation between UCs and the Barcelona City Council. Through the questionnaire, the thesis aims to ground this relation into empirical evidence and to use this evidence to show the quantity and the quality of the relations, whether these relationships are necessary or not for the constitution and the development of the UCs and whether these relationships may affect UCs' autonomy. In the case of the in-depth scale of analysis, it is used a three embedded cases studies' comparison, where data are collected through interviews, document analysis and direct observations, in order to provide a detailed understanding of the relation among UCs and the Barcelona City Council. Through the three embedded cases studies' comparison, the thesis aims to understand how UCs emerge, maintain and expand over time, assess the role of Barcelona City Council in their emergence, maintenance and expansion, assess the emancipatory potential of The Common and the role that the Barcelona City Council may have in supporting this emancipation, assess the emancipatory potential of The Public, and whether this may flank The Common.

	City scale	In-depth scale
Type of UCs	Reclaiming and self-managing practices	Self-managed spaces
Methods	Questionnaire	Comparison of embedded case studies, interviews, documents' analysis and direct observations
Objectives	General understanding of the relation between UCs and Barcelona City Council	Detailed understanding of the relation among UCs and the Barcelona City Council

Table 3.2: Scales of analysis
Source: Author's elaboration

3.8 The city scale of analysis: the questionnaire

The objectives of this scale were the following: i) understanding the type and the relevance of the relation that UCs maintain with the Barcelona City Council, in economic and financial terms; ii) understanding the type and the relevance of the relation that UCs maintain with the Barcelona City Council, in discursive and negotiating terms; iii) understanding how the UCs perceive this relation vi) understanding how this relation has changed with the crisis and with the arrival of

‘Barcelona en Comú’. The questionnaire was called ‘Autonomy of Barcelona social initiatives’ and was divided into four sections, each of them containing both multiple choice and scaling questions.

- The first section is called ‘General information’ and contains seven questions to collect information about the sector in which the UCs operate, its year of birth, its location, the number of the people involved, the degree of self-initiative, and its objectives.
- The second section is called ‘Economic sustainability’ and contains fifteen questions to understand: the level of local government support to the UC in terms of funding and logistic support; how ‘publicly’ this support is given in terms of public procurement and public call rules; what types of other public and private economic support the UC receives; and, in case their aim is to be self-sufficient, as in the case of service cooperatives, how and to what extent this is possible.
- The third section is called ‘Relation with other social initiatives’ and contains seven questions to understand how the relation with other UCs strengthens the independence of the UCs from the local government and what are the economic, political and social factors that have facilitated or undermined this collaboration.
- The fourth section is called ‘Relation with the public administration’ and contains eight questions to understand how dialoguing and negotiating with the local government is essential for the success of the UC and to what extent this may influence the UCs’ decision-making processes, and how this has changed with the arrival of ‘Barcelona en Comú’.

The UCs included into this survey have been selected among reclaiming practices and self-managing practices. Within the latter, three main sub-categories have been created to process the data and highlight differences among different economic and social categories: self-managed spaces, such as social and cultural and art centres, social and cooperative economic practices, such as housing cooperatives and services cooperatives, and community-based economic practices, such as time banks and parenting groups. Finally, 428 UCs have been selected trying to keep a balance between the number of practices for each category:

- 117 reclaiming practices of which 93 Neighbours’ Associations³, 15 defence of rights movements (such as the anti-eviction movement la ‘PAH’ and the public water movement ‘Aigua es Vida’), 10 old and new Trade Unions (such as ‘Comisiones Obreras’ and ‘Las Kellis’).

³ Although Neighbours’ associations do not express a direct relation with a resource, they have been the pillar and the articulatory node of many different reclaiming struggles within the city since the beginning of the democratic period.

- 109 self-managed spaces of which 22 arts and cultural centres (such as the ‘Antic Teatre’ and the ‘Hangar’), 47 self-managed social centres (such as ‘Ateneu Popular la Base’ and ‘Can Vies’) that are not officially recognized as such by the City Council, 17 community-managed social centres (such as ‘Casa Orlandai’ and ‘La Violeta’) that are officially recognized as such by the City Council and 23 urban gardens (such as ‘Hort Fort Pinet’).
- 101 social and cooperative economic practices of which 3 housing cooperatives (such as ‘La Borda’), 15 teaching cooperatives (such as ‘Escola Gravat’), and 56 services providing cooperatives, such as energy provider, research consultancy, engineering consultancy and cultural provider (such as ‘Som Energia’, ‘Lacol Arquitects’, ‘La Hidra Cooperativa’ and ‘Zumzeig Cinema’), 24 independent libraries and bookshops (such as ‘Descontrol Editorial’ and ‘Pol.len Edicions’) and 3 second level cooperatives (such as ‘La Ciutat Invisible’).
- 103 community-based economic practices of which 22 time-banks (such as the ‘Barceloneta Neighborhood Time Bank’ and the ‘Gracia Neighborhood Time Bank’), 4 popular canteens (such as ‘Manajador solidari Greca’), 22 parenting groups (such as ‘El Cerc de Puces’ and ‘Tata Inti’), 45 consumers’ groups (such as ‘La cooperativa del Clot’ and ‘Llevat de Nou Barris’) and 10 exchange markets (such as ‘Trocasc’ and ‘El Traster de Can Ricart’).

In order to create this UCs directory, the research has used the IGOP’s directory of social innovation’s practices in the Catalonia region created within the research project ‘Barri i Crisis’⁴, which aimed to understand the role and emergence of social innovation in relation to urban segregation in the crisis scenario (Blanco *et al.*, 2016; Cruz, Martínez Moreno and Blanco, 2017; Blanco and Nel·lo, 2018). The practices selected in the IGOP directory responded to the following criteria: i) satisfy collective needs unsatisfied by the market and by the state; ii) empower involved individuals; iii) propose form of relation, production and consumption which are alternative from the dominant ones (Cruz, Martínez Moreno and Blanco, 2017). Thus, it was possible to find many of the social practices that in this research are considered as UCs. However, the UCs not only imply to respond to unsatisfied needs beyond the Market and the State but to define a political project beyond the State and the Market to draw a path of emancipation from capitalism. For this reason, the IGOP’s directory has been complemented adding to it practices that have been identified through personal research in the following way:

⁴ The full title of the study is "Disadvantaged neighbourhoods in the face of the crisis: urban segregation, social innovation and civic capacity", led by Dr. Ismael Blanco (Principal Investigator), Dr. Oriol Nel·lo, Dr. Quim Brugué and Dr. Eduard Jiménez. It has received the support of the Recercaixa Programme. For more information (mostly in Catalan) see: <http://barrisicrisi.wordpress.com>

- Reclaiming practices. The IGOP's directory included some of the defence of rights movements such as la 'PAH' and 'Aigua es vida' and the new forms of trade unions such as 'Las Kellys'. However, it didn't include neither Neighbours' Association nor other defence of rights movement such as immigrants' rights movements, nor old trade unions. All of them have been selected through an internet research and added to the UCs' directory.
- Self-managed spaces. The IGOP's directory included all self-managed social centres, arts and cultural centres and urban gardens. However, it didn't include community-managed social centres. All of them had been already listed in the research document 'Patrimoni Ciutadà' (Torra Duran and Prado Pérez, 2016) and added to the UCs directory.
- Social and cooperative economic practices. The IGOP's directory included housing cooperatives, teaching cooperatives and second level cooperatives. However, it didn't include independent libraries and bookshops, and services providing cooperatives. The former have been extrapolated from the LLibelista Network which is a network of independent libraries and bookshop and the latter have been extrapolated from the XES network (Solidary Economy Network), which is a network that do not include all existing services providing cooperatives but only those that aim to use these cooperative forms with a clear political objective (XES, no date). Thus, both of them have been added to the UCs' directory.
- In relation to the community-based economic practices, the IGOP's directory included all practices that have been included in the UCs' directory.

The research directory finally obtained cannot be considered exhaustive of all UCs in Barcelona. The reasons of this incompleteness have to be found in the limited time frame to carry out the research and in the limited resources available. However, it aimed to gather at least a significant and representative sample of the many UCs of Barcelona to collect enough responses to help answering the research question.

The survey was realized through the online survey development cloud-based software 'SurveyMonkey' which has been used to design and send the questionnaire and to collect and analyse the responses. The questionnaire was sent for the first time on the 25th of January of 2017 receiving 38 responses. From this date on, to increase the response rate, the questionnaire has been re-sent each month to all those non-responding UCs until June 2017, achieving 101 surveys completed in-full at the end of the fieldwork. Results and graphs are presented taking into consideration the whole group of respondents including together reclaiming movements, self-

management spaces, social and cooperative economic practices and community-based economic practices. However, in case either eminent differences among sub-groups' responses have emerged or peculiar aspects of an entire sub-group or of a practice need to be underlined, the result shows deference and peculiarities according to each question's need.

3.9 The in-depth scale of analysis: comparison of three embedded case studies

The second scale of analysis is an in-depth comparison of embedded case studies of three self-managed spaces in Barcelona. This method has been used with the aim to produce more robust results and increase the external validity of the research by comparing self-managed spaces of very different nature in the city (Yin, 2009). The goals of this scale of analysis are the following: i) understanding how UCs emerge, are maintained and expand over time; ii) understanding what the relation between the UC and the space is; iii) showing the threats that the UCs face and UCs' possibilities to maintain themselves and expand over time; iv) understanding the Barcelona City Council role in maintaining and expanding the UC over time; v) outlining the production of 'The Common' pursued by the UCs; vi) assessing the role that the Barcelona City Council may have in supporting this production; vii) analysing the production of 'The Public' and how this relates to the production of 'The Common'; viii) evaluating the difference between 'The Public' and 'The Common'; ix) assessing whether 'The Public' may flank the emancipatory production of 'The Common'; x) assessing whether the relation between UCs and Barcelona City Council has changed with the arrival of 'Barcelona en Comú' and whether the production of 'The Public' has been affected.

The three case studies have been selected among the UCs' category of self-managed spaces because, in the economic and socially dense space of the city of Barcelona, analysing UCs that have a relation with the space may be representative of the constant economic pressure that they face and the inevitable public regulated environment in terms of planning and policies they have to deal with. Within the category of self-managed spaces, the sub-category of urban gardens has been excluded and the selection has been made among all those cases in which a relation was built with a real estate property. The objective of the selection was to have three cases in which the class of the social group was different and in which the relation with the real estate property responded to a different claim in order to have a transversal vision of how the local government deal with different social classes and UCs' claims. Moreover, all cases had to take place in a private property in order to compare cases that started in the same 'hard' property condition (in the sense that they did not take place in a protected public property environment). Despite all the selected

cases are in a former industrial neighbourhood of Barcelona, the specificity of the location was not a criterion considered to select them, but only a shared characteristic among the cases that is the result of a common starting condition. Thus, keeping into consideration the criteria mentioned above, the three selected cases are the following:

- The Puigcerdà UCs, an irregular settlement self-managed by Sub-Saharan immigrants from 2011-2013 in the Poblenou neighbourhood.
- The Escocesa UCs, an art centre self-managed by a group of artists since 1999 in the Poblenou neighbourhood.
- The Can Batlló UCs, a social centre self-managed by neighbours and activists in Sants-La Bordeta neighbourhood since 2013.

These three cases represent three different UCs in the city, of which the Puigcerdà case can be considered a failed case, as the Sub-Saharan immigrants group was evicted from the building in 2013; the Escocesa case can be considered an uncertain case, as the management model was in crisis; and finally the Can Batlló case can be considered a successful case, as it is a social centre that is expanding its scope far beyond the self-management of the building. The success/failure variable was not considered a criterion to select the three cases but a result of the empirical research. However, analysing cases with different outcome in terms of the success/failure variable has contributed to understand what are the conditions and the factors that have determined the success/failure, relate them with the type of claims and classes that each UCs represents and the different approach of the Barcelona City Council in relation to each of them.

Furthermore, all cases of UCs have been threatened at a time in their history and this threat has turned into the social group struggle to defend the UCs. This threat / fight criterion was not used to select the case studies but was a result of the empirical research. However, the fact that all cases were characterized by a threat before and by a struggle allowed deepening the analysis of the evolutionary nature of the UCs, and also the evolutionary nature of the production of The Common. Moreover, another common feature, extremely useful to comparatively analyse the case studies but which was not a criterion of their selection, was that following the threat and the struggle of the UCs, the City Council has adopted dedicated public policies to address the needs that UCs was covering. This has allowed a better comparison between the production of The Common and the production of The Public.

	Puigcerdà UCs	Escocesa UCs	Can Batlló UCs
Type of UCs	Irregular settlement	Art centre	Social centre
Location	Poblenou neighbourhood	Poblenou neighbourhood	La Bordeta neighbourhood
Period	2011-2013	1999-current	2013-current
Original ownership	Private	Private	Private
Social group	Sub-Saharan immigrants	Artists	Neighbours
Success/failure variable	Failing case	Uncertain case	Successful case

Table 3.3: Selection criteria of the three embedded case studies
Source: Author's elaboration

The fieldwork has included documents' analysis, direct observations of each UCs assemblies and interviews with members of the UC's social group, public officials, politicians, activists and experts involved in the UCs. The research also aimed at interviewing private actors such as the private owners of real estates but, in all cases, they refused the interview, limiting the understanding of the relation that UCs have with them. For each case, the number of interviews varies according to the amount and the quality of available documents of analysis. The Puigcerdà irregular settlement's case cannot count on many published works, especially in the academic field, and for this reason, eleven interviews have been carried out. The Escocesa arts centre's case can count on a good amount of published work, also in the academic field and, for this reason, eight interviews have been carried out. The Can Batlló social centre's case, thanks to its success, can count on a considerable amount of published works, also in the academic field and, for this reason, seven interviews have been carried out.

Moreover, the cases and most of all the final discussion that compares the three of them, relies also on interviews carried out within the research project 'Austerity Governance'⁵ that explored the impact of austerity in eight cities, among them Barcelona, and analysed how each city has tried to create coalitions to govern and resist to it. The fieldwork has been carried out between October 2015 and November 2016 holding 40 structured interviews with different actors including government officials, elected politicians, members of political parties, activist, journalist and scholars have been made. The interviews focused on the impact of the 2008 crisis and

⁵ The full title of the study is 'Collaborative Governance under Austerity: An Eight-case Comparative Study' (Ref: ES/L012898/1), led by Professor Jonathan Davies. The research has been funded the by UK Economic and Social Research Council. See <http://www.dmu.ac.uk/ESRCAusterity>

austerity measures in the city of Barcelona and the institutional and citizens' response. In relation to citizens' response, questions also have been made regarding the potentiality of self-organization as a response to austerity, contributing to critically assess the three cases and draw conclusion at a more general level.

In order to facilitate the comparison, the presentation of the cases follows the same narrative structure. In this structure, all main objectives of the scale of analysis are not directly addressed. The cases are presented in the essentiality of their history, according to the following scheme:

- The type of emancipation that was produced by the UCs – The Common-;
- The crucial relation that linked the social group to the real estate property;
- The web of relations with the City Council and private actors that allowed the emergence of the UCs;
- How the UCs expanded;
- The economic conditions of the UCs;
- The factors that threatened the UCs;
- The struggle of the UCs
- The outcomes of the struggles and what was the role of the City Council;
- Limits and possibilities of the public policies implemented by the City Council;
- Impact of the City Council's public policies on the UCs and their production of The Common;
- Impact of the arrival of 'Barcelona en Comú'.

After each case study is presented, a comparative analysis of all three cases is carried out, addressing all objectives that this scale of analysis aims to achieve. Lastly, the complexity of two different scales of analysis is summarised in a final chapter that critically links the results of the two scales to answer the research question.

FOURTH CHAPTER EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

4.1 A brief history of the UCs-City Council relation in Barcelona

Barcelona has a long revolutionary and progressive history with a marked autonomist tendency. During the industrial revolution, the city was one of the most important industrial centres of the Iberian Peninsula and developed a strong labour movement characterised by an anarchist component inspired directly by Bakunin and Fanelli (McNeill, 1999). This movement found its economic model in cooperativism which flourish during 1920-1930, with an apex during the years of the First Republic (1931-1939). The cooperative culture crossed all areas of life: from production, with agricultural and workers' cooperatives, to reproduction, with the libertarian schools and the 'Ateneu Populares' (People's Athenaeum) spaces dedicated to the training and education of the working class (Grup de Treball Desbordes de la cultura., 2017). This anarcho-cooperativist culture also characterises Barcelona during the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939). In these years, in the Catalan city, outpost of the Republican front and one of the last cities to fall in the hands of the Francoists, the fight was coordinated by the CNT- 'Confederación Nacional del Trabajo' (National Confederation of Labor) - and FAI -'Federeación anarquista Ibérica '- (Iberian Anarchist Federation) - . They led the city to live a relatively long experience of collectivisation and socialisation of industries and services (1936-1939). At that time, many militants, members of International Brigades, came to Barcelona both in support of the Republican cause and intrigued by the Barcelona experience (Orwell, 1938). Among these, one of the best known, is certainly George Orwell, who in his book 'Homage to Catalonia', in which he describes his experience as a militant of the POUM – 'Partido Obrero de Unificación Marxista' (Workers' Party of Marxist Unification), an anti-Stalinist and anti-authoritarian party, gives us one of the most beautiful descriptions of Barcelona at the time of its arrival (December 1936):

'It was the first time that I had ever been in a town where the working class was in the saddle. Practically every building of any size had been seized by the workers and was draped with red flags or with the red and black flag of the Anarchists; every wall was scrawled with the hammer and sickle and with the initials of the revolutionary parties; almost every church had been gutted and its images burnt. Churches here and there were being systematically demolished by gangs of workman. Every shop and cafe had an inscription saying that it had been collectivised; even the bootblacks had been collectivized, and their boxes painted red and black. Waiters and shop-walkers looked you in the face and treated you as an equal. Servile and even

	(local) Market	(Local) State	UCs
Late 1800-1939	Strong industrialisation under economic liberalism	NA	Progressive strengthening of Anarcho-cooperativist movement culminated with collectivisation practices during the Spanish Civil War
1939-1970s	Autarchy economic policy ended in 1956 and followed by progressive liberalisation and de-industrialisation	Francoist governments and construction of a limited welfare state	Weakening of the Anarcho-cooperativist movement due to state repression
1970s-1979	De-industrialisation, economic crisis and unemployment	Democratic transition period	Progressive strengthening of neighbour's movement that was at the heart of the anti-Francoist struggle
1979-early 1980s	Construction of the 'Barcelona Model' in the search for economic development	Socialist party government and progressive expansion of the welfare state	Collaboration between the labour movement and socialist government
1980s- 2008	Development of the Neoliberal 'Barcelona Model' based on big events, real estate development and mass tourism	Socialist party governments and progressive expansion welfare state	Weakening of the labour movement and emergence of other differentiated organisations from self-managed social centres to housing movement
2008-2015	Strengthening of the neoliberal 'Barcelona Model' with the crisis and implementation of austerity measures	Conservative government and limited erosion of the welfare state	A peak of mobilisation with the '15M' uprising with the following creation of autonomous social practices and social practices attempting to take over local institution
2015-current	Attempt to overturn neoliberal Barcelona Model	Radical left government linked to social movements. Focus on welfare measure and attempt to support autonomous social practices	Strengthening of autonomous social practices

Table 4.1: Barcelona UCs' phases
Source: Author's elaboration

ceremonial forms of speech had temporarily disappeared. Nobody said 'Señor' or 'Don' or even 'Usted'; everyone called everyone else 'Comrade' or 'Thou', and said 'Salud!' instead of 'Buenos días'. (...) The revolutionary posters were everywhere, flaming from the walls in clean reds and blues that made the few remaining advertisements look like daubs of mud. Down the Ramblas, the wide central artery of the town where crowds of people streamed constantly to and from, the loud-speakers were bellowing revolutionary songs all day and far into the night. And it was the aspect of the crowds that was the queerest thing of all. In outward appearance, it was a town in which the wealthy classes had practically ceased to exist. Except for a small number of women and foreigners, there were no 'well-dressed' people at all. Practically everyone wore rough working-class clothes, or blue overalls or some variant of militia uniform'. (Orwell, 1938, p. 15)

Unfortunately, this experience did not last long. The Francoist troops won the Civil War, with the support of its allies, first of all, Hitler's Germany and Mussolini's Italy, and imposed the Francoist regime from the name of its dictator Francisco Franco, which lasted until his death (1975). The repression of the Francoist regime was harsh and during that time political parties were banned, the labour movement and its anarcho-cooperativist culture were weakened and socialist intellectuals and activists were surveilled, harassed and often imprisoned (McNeill, 1999). However, the Barcelona subversive soul did not wholly disappear. Although the regime confiscated the goods collectivised during the civil war and ordered the dissolution of all the cooperatives born during the Civil War, several working and agricultural cooperatives continued to exist although under the strict control of the institution established by the regime, the 'Obra Sindical de Cooperación'. Moreover, although the Francoist laws did not allow any type of association except those established by the regime, during the 1950-60 many collective organisations emerged clandestinely - cultural centres, trade unions, associations, etc.- (Grup de Treball Desbordes de la cultura., 2017). Finally, with the approval of the 'Ley de Asociacion' (Association's Law) in 1964 the associative forms were legalised. Among these, the forms that underpin civil society in the anti-Franco struggle, not only in Barcelona but throughout the whole Spain, were the 'Asociaciones de Vecinos' (Neighbours Association) (Andreu, 2014). Through an interclass alliance between workers, middle class and professional, the 'Movimiento Vecinal' (Neighbours' Movement) represented the critical movement in the organisation of the protest against the regime with a precise left characterisation (Nel·lo, 2015; Martínez Moreno, 2018).

The democratic turn (the first municipal elections were held in Barcelona in 1979) marked a significant transition. From this moment on, thanks to the push of its anarcho-cooperativist tradition, that was not swept by the years of Francoism, and the Neighbours' Movement, the city began to be governed by left-wing forces. The socialist victory initially gave rise to a close relationship between organised civil society and socialist parties, as many members of the Neighbours' Movement took on institutional positions that led to a progressive weakening of the Movement (Nel·lo, 2015; Blanco and Gomá, 2016; Blanco and León, 2017). Initially what is called the 'Barcelona Model', - a model of development and government characterised by the emphasis on urban development and the public-private partnership that made the city famous all over the world⁶ - was characterised by social and urban policies with a strong redistributive approach that attempted to fill the deficits left by Francoist governments and incorporate the demands of the Neighbours' movement into their model of the city. However, this was also a period of great economic crisis, due to the combination of global economic recession and rising unemployment, where public institutions were immature and a public administration had very limited capacity (Blanco, 2009). For this reason, the following step of the government was to strengthen the (local) State but also to find a way to lead Barcelona towards the economic success. This way was found in the big event of the 'Olympic Game' held in Barcelona in 1992.

Hence, from the nomination of Barcelona as a city to host the 1992 Olympic Games (1982), two distinct processes were produced. On the one hand, in a counter-tendency compared to the other European States, democratic political institutions and welfare state were strengthened. The local government began to intervene in areas such as personal services and planning (Blanco and Gomá, 2016; Subirats, 2016) accompanied by the regional government that began to intervene in sectors such as education and health (Nel·lo, 2015). This growing role of the State produced benefits in redistributive terms but was detrimental to social autonomy. Democratic institutions were constituted according to the 'classic public structure' based on hierarchy and bureaucracy and produced 'classic public policy' based on a universalist but homogenising approach that left very little space for self-managing demands coming from the Neighbours' Movement⁷. On the other hand, in line with the European trend, there was a rapid adoption of the neoliberal model. In Barcelona, this led to a neo-liberalisation of the 'Barcelona Model' characterised by an entrepreneurial city-management based on real estate speculation (Moreno and Vázquez Montalbán, 1991), major events, of which the Olympic Games (1992) represents only the most

⁷An example of the conflict between the top-down public policies and the bottom-up self-managing demands is the conflict around the production of the cultural centre of proximity narrated in the Can Batlló UCs case (see 4.3.3).

important of a long series (the 'Forum of Cultures' was held in 2004), the attraction of global companies and, subsequently mass tourism. This neo-liberalisation of the 'Barcelona Model' can count several phases (Muntaner, 2004; Blanco, 2009). However, it can be considered a gradual change of this model where, starting from the nomination of the Olympic Games (1986) up to the 2007/8 crisis, the arrival of private capital and its profit-making were fostered without regulating its aggressive action, especially in the real estate sector. In this context, although the cooperativist tradition began to be rebuilt and new cooperatives emerged, it always remained marginal.

In this period a progressive separation took place between the Barcelona democratic institutions and its civil society that, however, did not remain silent in the face of the neo-liberal turn. Surely, initially the Barcelona Model was not highly contested and benefited from a broad consensus but, with the passing of the years, things changed. The Neighbours Movement began to lose weight in the social mobilisation scenario, but new autonomous movements emerged (Blanco, 2009; Nel·lo, 2015). In order of appearance, the following practices can be mentioned: firstly, starting from 1985, the squatting movement experienced a surge with the emergence of several self-managed social centres (CSOAs) following the contact of Barcelonan activists with similar antagonistic environments in Italy, Germany and the Netherlands, and thanks to the wide availability of abandoned spaces (Piazza and Martínez Lopez, 2017). This movement produced autonomous cultural and social spaces through occupations and at the same time challenged the local government's policies, especially in the field of urban development. Secondly, new organisations linked to territorial environmental claims, such as urban and infrastructural projects and energy and consumption policies, connected to the ecologist and alter-globalist movement, appeared (Nel·lo, 2015; Blanco and Gomá, 2016). Thirdly, movements against the neo-liberalisation of the 'Barcelona Model' multiplied. As the real estate sector was one of the less regulated sectors where speculation was extremely evident, the most visible movements emerged in relation to the housing question. The set-up of the 'V de Vivienda' (H as Housing) platform promoting the demonstration 'No tindrás casa en la puta vida' (You will not have a house in your fucking life) established the housing question as a central question in the mobilisation scenario (Martínez Moreno, 2018). However, it will only be with the crisis that this whole combination of antagonist organisations will rise to gain a predominant role in the social and political space.

Barcelona was strongly affected by the 2008 crisis, albeit to a lesser extent than Catalonia and Spain as a whole (Davies and Blanco, 2017). At the electoral level, this led to the victory of the conservative coalition, *Convergència i Unió* (Convergence and Union), after more than thirty years of left-wing governments. The government of Xavier Trias fully aligned itself with the urban

austerity policies suggested by the European Union and conditioned by the central government that enacted new fiscal measures and spending control on the municipal budget. Urban austerity justified greater neo-liberalisation of the 'Barcelona Model', which compensated the recession with further privatisation and commodification of the city's heritage and public services (Davies and Blanco, 2017). Some examples may be represented by the new municipal ordinance that privatised public spaces increasing the terraces' area of bars and restaurants; the lifting the ban on building licenses for new hotels in the old district; and the privatisation of some municipal public services such as water and nurseries schools (Blanco, 2015). At the same time, the effects of the crisis, which resulted in a significant increase in unemployment and a series of brutal eviction, led to a strong social protest with the explosion in 2011 of the '15M' Movement (named after the day in which it began, the 15th of May). This movement took place in 57 cities in Spain with one of the largest concentrations in Barcelona, in Plaza Catalunya. This 'urban uprising' was constituted by several resistance movements (Martínez López, 2016). Among these practices, the most relevant and visible one was represented by the housing movement led by the PAH- 'Plataforma de Afectados por las Hipotecas' (Platform of People Affected by Mortgages) who fought against eviction and for the housing's right (Davies and Blanco, 2017).

In the following years this form of unprecedented urban mobilisation translated into two alternatives, a socio-community one and a political-institutional one. On the one hand, a series of autonomous social practices of production and reproduction - sustainable energy cooperatives, anti-eviction movements, community gardens, time and food banks, workers cooperatives, citizen telecommunications networks, self-managed art and social centres- increased and consolidated their presence in the city. In a research project on social innovation in Catalunya⁸, Blanco *et al* have identified more than 700 practices (Cruz, Martínez Moreno and Blanco, 2017; Blanco and Nel·lo, 2018). Indeed, not all have emerged from the 15M onwards, but it can be identified a progressive increase of them since the 2000s where the 15M represented a multiplying factor (Nel·lo, 2015). The study also shows that these practices were mainly concentrated in middle-class neighbours with high levels of social capital, which may suggest that popular classes have been excluded from these experiences. The same study shows that also in low-income neighbourhood some social practices also have emerged but mainly of a specific nature, such as the anti-eviction movement and solidary practices. The concentration of these specific type of practices, as demonstrated by Blanco and Leon in the analysis of one of the most deprived neighbours in Barcelona - Ciutat Meridiana -, has led to a re-politicization of the population and to re-strengthening of old practices

⁸ See note n.4 pag.113

such as Neighbours Association which, although weakened, have never disappeared (Blanco and León, 2017). Therefore, the studies of these authors show that, despite a different distribution in quantitative and qualitative terms of these practices is recognisable, their presence has led to a re-politicisation of society with a pronounced construction of social autonomy.

On the other hand, the protest triggered the rise of the 'New Left' both at the national level, with 'Podemos', and at the local level with the 'Candidacies of Change', platforms born in many Spanish cities from a variety of old and new social movements and political organisations (Eizaguirre, Pradel-Miquel and García, 2017). In the Barcelona, the platform took the name of 'Barcellona en Comú' and it managed to win the May 2015 election. As a result, Ada Colau, the former leader of PAH became the Mayor of the city. The Barcelona en Comú political programme, which starts from a sharp critique of the Barcelona Model, seems to adopt the vision proposed by the Spanish political science literature on the category of Commons which implied the strengthening the local welfare State and the promotion of the autonomy of social practices. In fact, in the political measure listed in the party's programme can be found, on the one hand, the construction of public housing, public investments in low-income neighbourhoods and the recovering of water as a common good; and on the other, the promotion of housing cooperatives, the fostering of new forms of community management, and the promotion of the social and solidarity economy (Barcelona En Comú, 2015).

It is therefore in this context-rich of UCs but with also a local government that could be both able to support them and able to flank the production of 'The Common' that the research is set. In reality, the research cannot deepen the analysis of the relationship between Barcelona en Comú and the UCs. The questions posed in the questionnaire refer to the general relationship between the UCs and the local government and the embedded case studies with their different timescales offer a cross-sectional view of the history of these practices over several periods of the city's local government. However, as mentioned in the methodology, the research does not lose the opportunity to analyse, both in the questionnaire and in the case studies how the relationship between the UCs and the (local) State changes and what role the latter could assume in the Common's emancipatory project with the arrival of Barcelona en Comú.

4.2 An overview of the UCs-City Council relation in Barcelona

In this section are presented the results of the questionnaire that has been sent to the 428 UCs in the city of Barcelona: reclaiming practices and self-managing practices, the latter subdivided into self-managed spaces, social and cooperative economic practices and community-based economic practices. The questionnaire has been prepared with the objective of understanding the relationships between the UCs and the public institutions, especially the City Council, and whether these relationships are necessary or not for the constitution and the development of the UCs and whether these relationships may affect the UCs' autonomy. Supposing that the City Council has a predominant role, further questions aiming at investigating more deeply the relationship with the Barcelona City Council have been included in the questionnaire. Out of the 428 invitations that have been sent, 298 UCs have opened the email and 122 have responded to the questionnaire with 21 of them not completing it. For this reason, the questionnaire can finally count on 101 completed responses, around the 24% of the total. These responses are divided as follows:

- 22 reclaiming movements of which 18 are Neighbours' Associations, 2 are defence of rights movements (among which the 'PAH'), and 2 are old and new Trade Unions (CC.OO. and Las Kellys).
- 30 self-managed spaces of which 5 are arts centres (among which the Escocesa UCs), 16 are self-managed cultural centres that are not officially recognized as such by the City Council (among which the Can Batlló UCs), 6 are community-managed cultural centres that are officially recognized as such by the City Council (among which the Casa Orlandai UCs) and 3 are urban gardens.
- 23 social and cooperative economic practices of which 1 is a housing cooperative (La Borda UCs), 1 is a teaching cooperative, 16 are services providing cooperatives, 4 are independent publishing houses and bookshops and 1 is a second level cooperative (La Ciutat Invisible UCs).
- 26 community-based economic practices, of which 8 are time banks, 8 are parenting groups, 8 are consumers' groups, and 2 are exchange markets.

Although there is a slight prevalence of self-managed spaces' responses, the average of sub-groups responses is quite balanced among them, without producing an over-representation of one sub-group over the others. Thus, the findings of this scale of analysis are presented in the following sections. In the 4.2.1 section the results of the questionnaire are presented and successively a summary of the key findings is outlined in the 4.2.2 section.

4.2.1 Results

The first section of the questionnaire, (see Appendix A), General Information, collected general data on each UCs that allows to clarify the emergence of UCs: when they were set-up and why, what were their political claims and what was the role of public institutions in their emergence phase. In order to understand the potential linkage with the country's economic, social and political situation, the first question asked if UCs were constituted before 2007 (i.e. before the crisis), or between 2007 and 2012 (i.e. during the toughest period of the crisis in which the level of poverty grew, austerity policies were implemented, distrust in public institutions increased and the 15M burst), or later than 2012, (i.e. when a limited economic recovery appeared and when the economic, social and political effects of the crisis should, in theory, have reduced). The responses to the Q13 question **'When did you start?'** were the following:

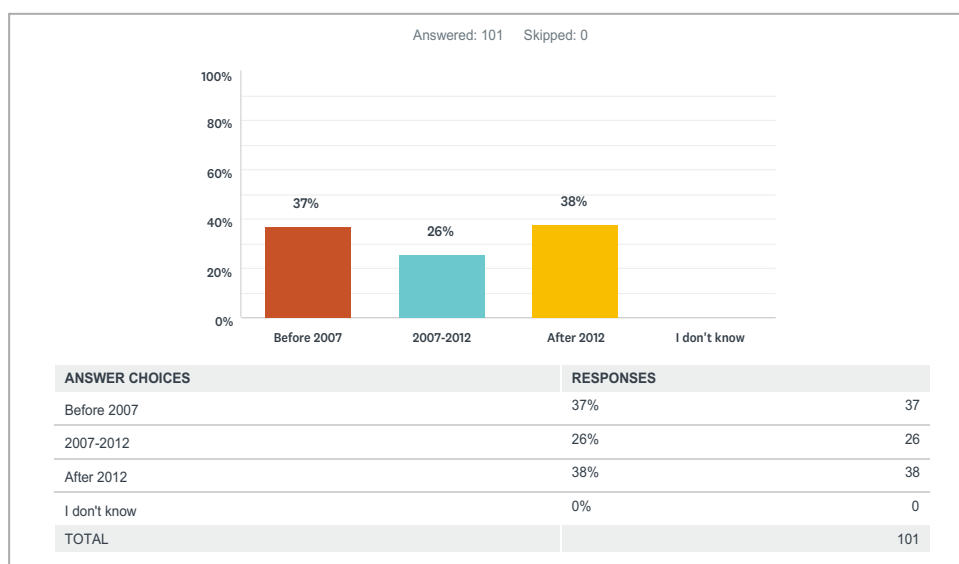


Table 4.2: When UCs have emerged
Source: Author's elaboration

The percentage bar chart shows that most of the UCs, the 64% of them, started their activity after 2007. This does not mean that the crisis and its economic, social and political effects were necessarily the cause of this increase, but surely, it is a fact that since 2007 there is a proliferation of UCs in the city and thus that the crisis and its effects could have played a key role in their emergence. Analysing the remaining 37% of UCs that started before 2007 almost half of them, 17 practices, are reclaiming practices, mainly Neighbours' Associations and the CC.OO. Trade Union, while the rest were equally divided among community-based economic practices, social and cooperative economic practices and self-managed spaces. This shows on the one hand that, before the crisis, Barcelona could count on a substantial number of UCs, but these were

mainly represented by the Neighbours' Associations and only marginally by self-managing practices, and on the other hand that since the crisis the establishment of self-managing practices has considerably increased, including the Can Batlló cultural centre and 'La Borda' housing cooperative, as well as non-traditional reclaiming movements, including the 'PAH' and 'Las Kellys' Trade Union. This shows that, despite the limited economic recovery, the need for self-organisation has not ended and instead it has even increased, with a new number of UCs established in just five years, between 2012 and 2017, that equal the number of UCs established before 2007.

The second question of this section allows understanding how UCs' political claims are structured in relation to public institutions. Respondents were asked to define their aims along a progressive line, starting from the claim for autonomy and self-government to the claim for public interventions on social issues. To the Q16 statement **'Among your objectives there are:'**, the respondents indicated the following:

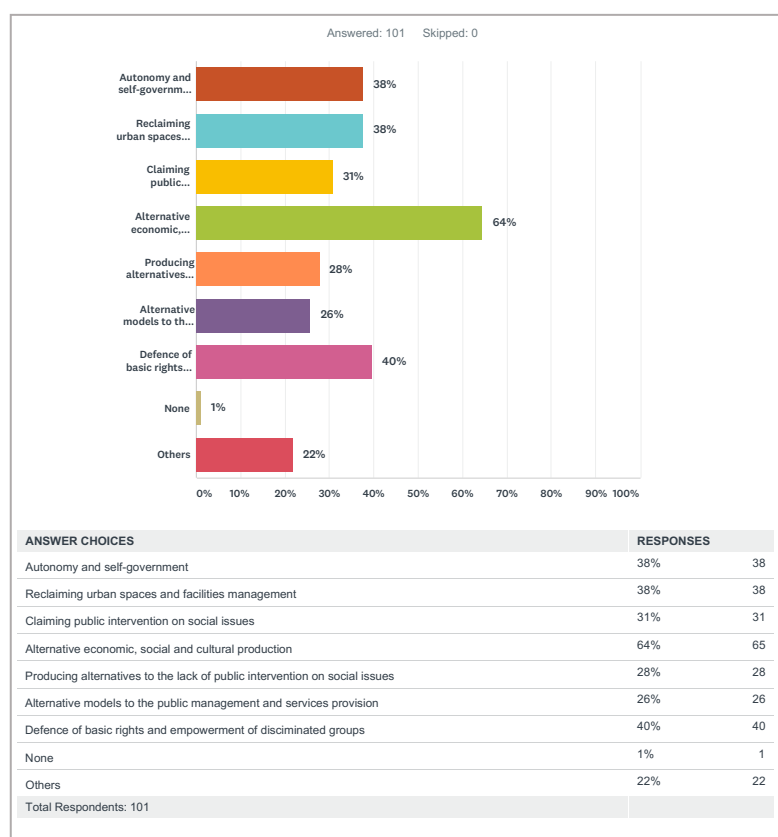


Table 4.3: Political claims of UCs
Source: Author's elaboration

The percentage bar chart shows that most UCs share objectives that are related to the creation of forms alternative to the State and the Market but without the need to state that they are an alternative to the State, such as the objective 'Providing an alternative to the dominant economic, social and cultural production' which is shared by 64% of UCs. Less UCs share objectives that are

related to the creation of forms alternative to the State and the Market and they also state that they are an alternative to the State, such as the objective 'Producing alternative to the lack of public intervention on social issues' which is shared by the 28% of UCs and the objective 'Producing alternative model to the public management and services provision' which is shared by the 26% of UCs. Only a reduced number of UCs, the 31%, share the objective 'Claiming public intervention on social issues'. Surely this data is influenced by the UCs' sample that is represented mostly by self-managing practices that are likely to be less interested in the intervention of the public institutions, and less by reclaiming movements that are likely to be more interested in the intervention of the public institutions. However, considering that about 75% of self-managed spaces, community-based economic practices and social and cooperative economic practices started their activities from 2007 onwards, it confirms that the necessity of alternatives that either do not need the intervention of the public institutions or opposes to the public institutions' model have developed mainly since then.

Moreover, the percentage bar chart also demonstrates that is hard to separate reclaiming from self-managing practices analytically. On the one hand, the 77% of the reclaiming practices share the objective 'Claiming public intervention on social issues' confirming that these practices predominantly address their claims to public institutions. However, the 23% of them share the objective 'Autonomy and self-government', and 45% share the objective 'Producing alternative to the lack of public intervention on social issues' among which many Neighbours' Association and the PAH. On the other hand, the 42% of the self-managing practices share the objective 'Autonomy and self-government' and the 74% share the objective 'Providing an alternative to the dominant economic, social and cultural production'. However, there are also the 17% of them that share the objective 'Claiming public intervention on social issues'. Therefore, the percentage bar chart demonstrates the difficulty in separating reclaiming from self-managing practices strictly. Despite most of reclaiming practices address their claim to public institution and most of self-managing practices do not address their claim to public institution, but they try to create alternative to them, there is also an intersection of claims whereby self-managing practices also address their claim to public institution and reclaiming practices also aim at creating space alternative to the State and the Market.

The third question allows understanding the role of the public institutions in the UCs' set-up. These were asked whether they started as an exclusively bottom-up initiative or they received the support of the public institutions, or they were promoted by a public institution. The responses to the Q15 statement '**You started as an initiative:**' were the following:

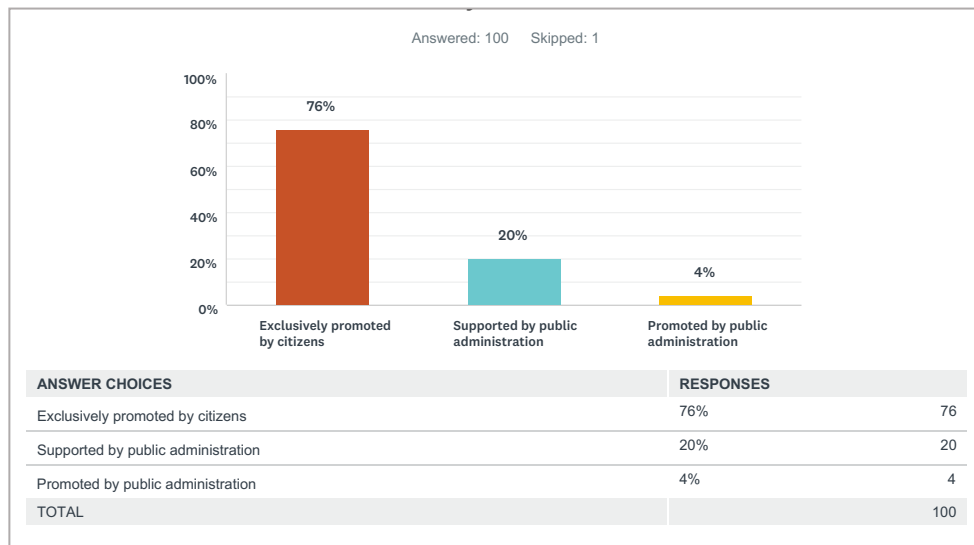


Table 4.4: How UCs emerge
Source: Author's elaboration

The percentage bar chart shows that the majority of UCs, more than $\frac{3}{4}$ of them started as an initiative exclusively promoted by citizens, while the public institutions played a role for the remaining $\frac{1}{4}$, supporting the set-up of the UCs in 20% of the cases and promoting the set-up of the UCs in only in 4% of the cases. Among the reclaiming practices, 81% started autonomously and only 4 Neighbours' Associations received the support of the City Council. Among the social and cooperative economic practices, 87% emerged as citizens' initiatives and only some publishing houses have received the support of public institutions. Among community-based economic practices, the 81% emerged autonomously, while two consumers' group and a time bank were supported by the public institutions and two time-banks were promoted by it. These time-banks responses are linked to the implementation in 1998 of the City Council public network of time banks (Ayuntamiento de Barcelona, no date b). Instead, among the self-managed spaces, only 60% emerged as a bottom-up initiative, 33% were instead supported by public institutions, mainly community-managed cultural centre but also some art centre and self-managed cultural centre among them the Escocesa art centre and Can Batlló cultural centre, while the remaining 7% were promoted by public institutions. It is curious to note that a significant number of self-managed spaces, including some self-managed cultural centres not recognized by the City Council, and among them the Can Batlló cultural centre, that in the previous question indicated that one of their goals is 'Autonomy and self-government', circa 43% of them did receive public institutions support when they started. This does not undermine their autonomy but shows how the City Council plays a key role during the starting phase of these experiences in the city, even the most antagonistic ones.

The second section of the questionnaire (see Appendix A), 'Economic sustainability', collected data that allows understanding the role of public institutions in the economic sufficiency of the UCs and, specifically, the role of the City Council. The first question asked to what extent the economic contribution from public institutions is relevant to keep carrying out UCs' activities. The responses to the Q17 question **'To what extent the public institutions' contribution, both in terms of public funds and public procurement, is vital for your survival?'** were the following:

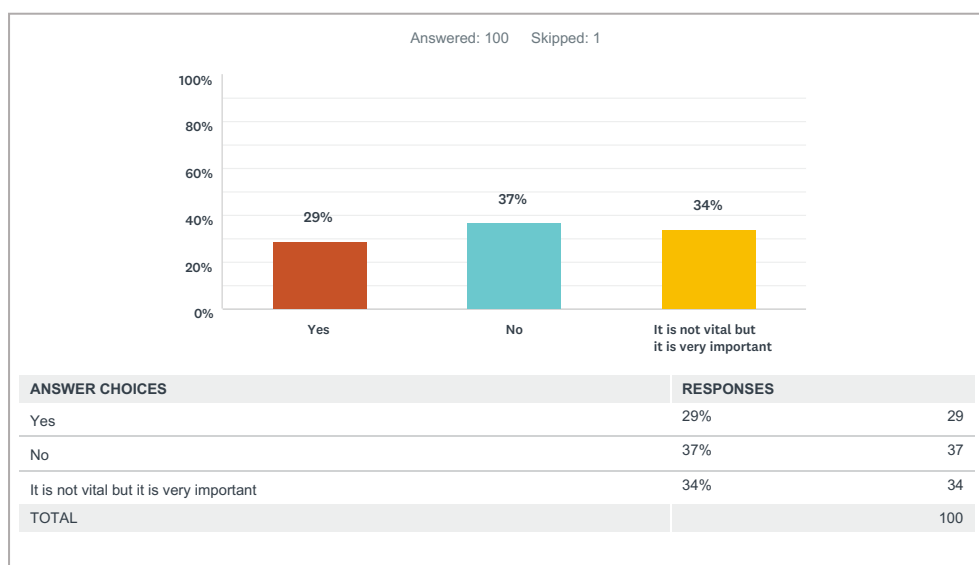


Table 4.5: Relevance of public economic support for UCs
Source: Author's elaboration

The percentage bar chart shows that for most of the UCs, precisely 63% of them, the economic contribution from public institutions is either 'vital' (29%) or 'if not vital is very important' (34%). This data is rather differentiated among the sub-groups. In the case of reclaiming movements, it reaches the 77% of them, including most of the Neighbours' Association and the CC.OO. Trade Union. It slightly diminishes in the case of self-managed spaces, where the contribution is vital or very important for 67% of them, for all the community-managed cultural centre, for all art centre, for some urban gardens and some self-managed cultural centre. This data consistently diminishes both in the case of community-based practices, for which it represents 56%, and in the case of social and cooperative economic practices, for which it represents the 52%. The economic contribution of public institutions is more vital to those practices whose main activity is not an economically remunerated activity. Although 37% of the UCs responding that the economic contribution is not essential (even if it does not mean that they do not receive it) represents a significant amount of practices that do not economically depend on the public institutions, it remains the fact that almost 2/3 of the respondents depends on it. At this point, it

is worth to cross the data of Q17 question described above with the data previously emerged from the Q16 question regarding the objectives of each UCs. The 63% of practices that say that the public economic contribution is vital or important for their survival have the following objectives:

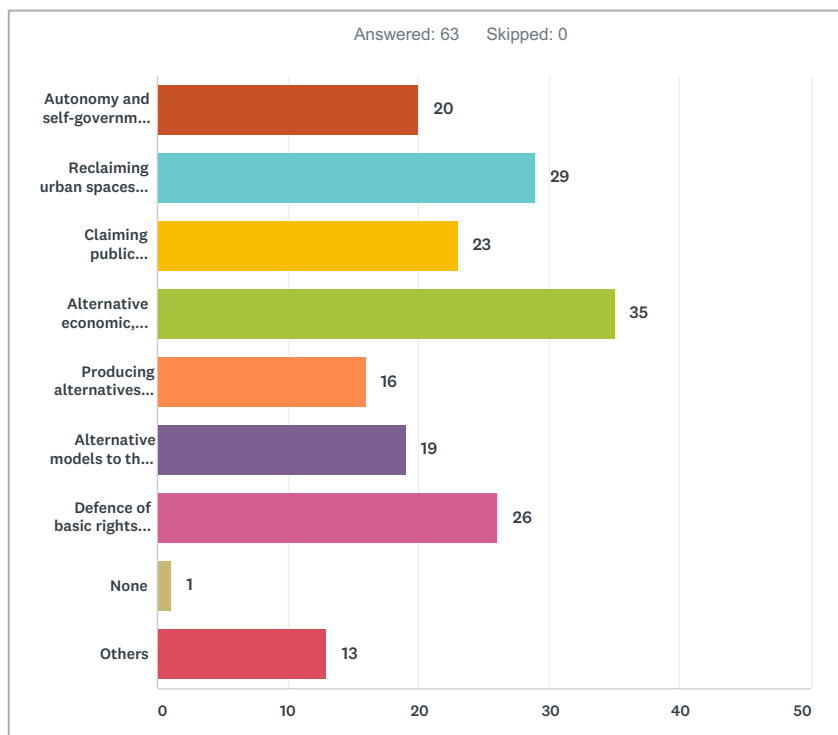


Table 4.6: UCs' political claims in relation to public economic support
Source: Author's elaboration

It is interesting to note that out of the total of the 38 UCs who have as objective 'Autonomy and self-government' circa 53% (20 of them) stated that the contribution of the public institutions is vital or very important. As it has been pointed out, economic dependence does not mean that autonomy and self-government cannot be achieved but that certainly it could be limited by it. This demonstrates an apparent disconnection between the objectives of the UCs and what is the daily reality of their survival. It is also interesting to note that out of the 26 practices that declared as their objective 'Producing alternative models to the public management and services provision', about 73% stated that the contribution of the public institutions is for them vital or very important and among the 65 practices that have the objective of 'Providing an alternative to the dominant economic, social and cultural production', approximately 54% stated that the contribution received from public institutions is vital or very important for them.

Ultimately the economic contribution of the public institutions, without specifying what kind of public entity, is very important for 2/3 of UCs. Of these 2/3, as resulting from the Q18 question, about 90%, almost 60% of the total, are financed by the City Council. The rest receives

economic contributions from the Province Government and the Regional Government, respectively the 5% and 13%, while no economic contribution is received from the Spanish State or the European Union. Therefore, not only the City Council's role in the economic and financial support of these practices is much more relevant than that of the province and the regional government but, above all, it becomes crucial for all those practices for which this funding is vital or very important for their survival. This does not mean that the City Council covers all the costs, on the contrary. The 63% of UCs for which the economic contribution from public institutions is considered either vital or important, responded as follows to the Q22 question that asked **‘What is the percentage of the City Council’s contribution to your project?’**:

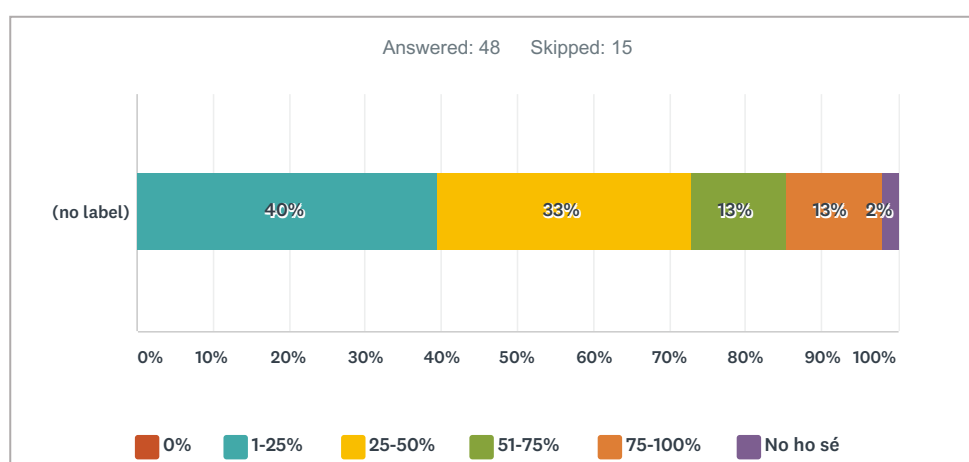


Table 4.7a: The amount of public economic support for UCs
Source: Author’s elaboration

The bar chart shows that for more than 70% of the practices the City Council economic contribution was lower than 50% of the cost of the project, while only for the 26% of them it was higher than the total cost. This means that even if the contribution of the City Council is a limited part of the total amount of money that the UC needs to survive, this contribution is either vital or very important for their survival.

The following part of the questionnaire is dedicated to better understanding the contribution of the City Council, both in terms of funding and contracting and how this contribution is given. To the Q19 question that asked **‘What kind of economic contribution do you receive from the City Council?’** the responses were the following:

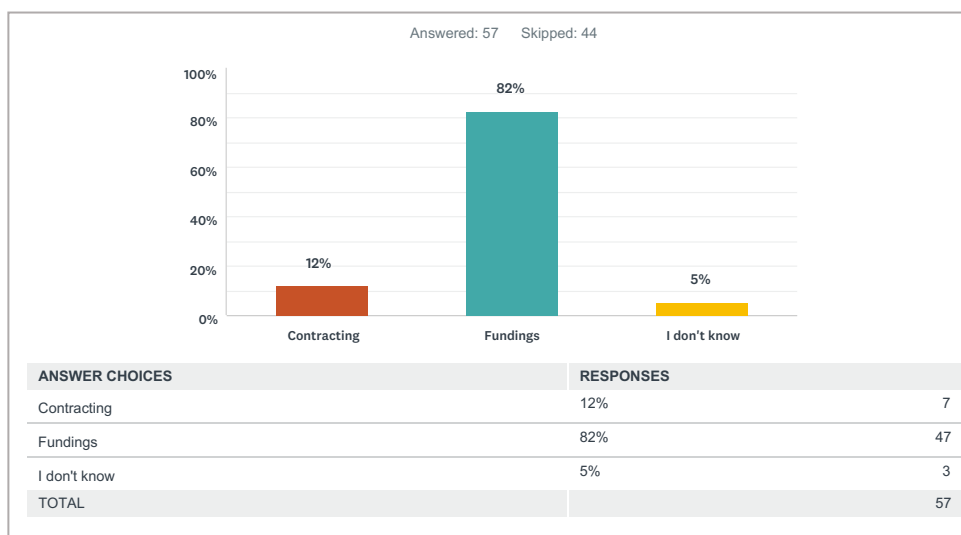


Table 4.7b: Type of public economic contribution for UCs
Source: Author's elaboration

The bar chart shows that, among the UCs that receive an economic contribution from the City Council (57 UCs), 82% receives public funds while 12% is contracted. The only sub-group that is contracted by the City Council is the social and cooperative economic practices, constituted mainly by services providing cooperatives, such as research consultancy cooperatives and engineering consultancy cooperatives. All other sub-groups receive funds from the City Council distributed rather equally among the different-sub-group: 32% are reclaiming movements, including many Neighbours' Associations, the CC.OO. Trade Union and the PAH; 28% are self-managed spaces, all community-managed cultural centre, almost all art centre but also some self-managed cultural centres and urban gardens; 26% are community-based economic practices, rather equally distributed among the different type of practices and 14% are social and cooperative economic practices, rather equally distributed among the different type of practices. In other words, the City Council distributes rather equally its economic contribution, through public contracting, mainly in the case of social and cooperative economic practices, and through public funding in all other cases. Importantly, in the case of the Barcelona City Council, the amount of public funds granted to promote a specific activity of public or social interest was in 2016 around 50M euro (taking into account only the City Council public spending and not the spending of other municipal public entities) (Ayuntamiento de Barcelona, no date c). While always in 2016 the spending on public contracting was around 578M euros (Ayuntamiento de Barcelona, 2016a). It is not the objective of this questionnaire to enter the discipline of public procurement, but it is worth to underline the significant potential to distribute resources that the Barcelona City Council has. Thus, in the following part of the questionnaire, it is shown through which procedure UCs get access to these resources.

To the Q20 question **‘Through which procedure the City Council has selected your contract’**, 4 out of the 7 UCs that are contracted by the City Council have answered that they were directly contracted by the City Council, while the rest went through a public selection procedure. To the Q21 question **‘How did you receive the funds’**, responses were the followings:

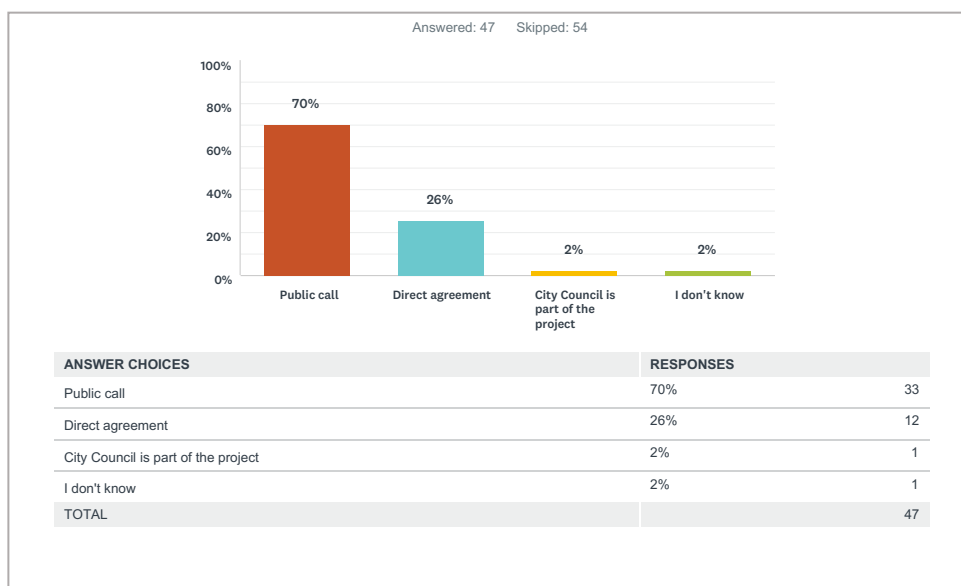


Table 4.8: Barcelona City Council public funds’ selection procedures
Source: Author’s elaboration

The bar chart shows that 70% of UCs stated that the funding was assigned to them through a public call. However, in the 26% of these cases, the funding was assigned through a direct agreement. This has been mainly the case for reclaiming movements, including Neighbours' Associations, the CC.OO. Trade Union and the PAH, but also in the case of some self-managed spaces, especially community-managed spaces such as la Casa Orlandai. The use of direct contracting and, albeit marginally, direct agreement is a prerogative of the City Council. Nevertheless, they are the sign of a discretionary power of the City Council in directing its significant economic resources which is not subject to public selection procedures. Moreover, if direct public contracting is possible only for a contract with a value lower than € 18,000, the regulation does not set an economic limit for direct funding.

Supposing that the contribution of the public institutions is not limited to public procurement or funding, it was considered necessary to analyse how the UCs secure a space for their activities within the city, imagining that, in this case too, the public institutions could play an important role. It was therefore asked to specify the type of ownership of the space where the UCs are located. The responses to the options provided at Q29 **‘The ownership of the space where you are is:’** are the following:

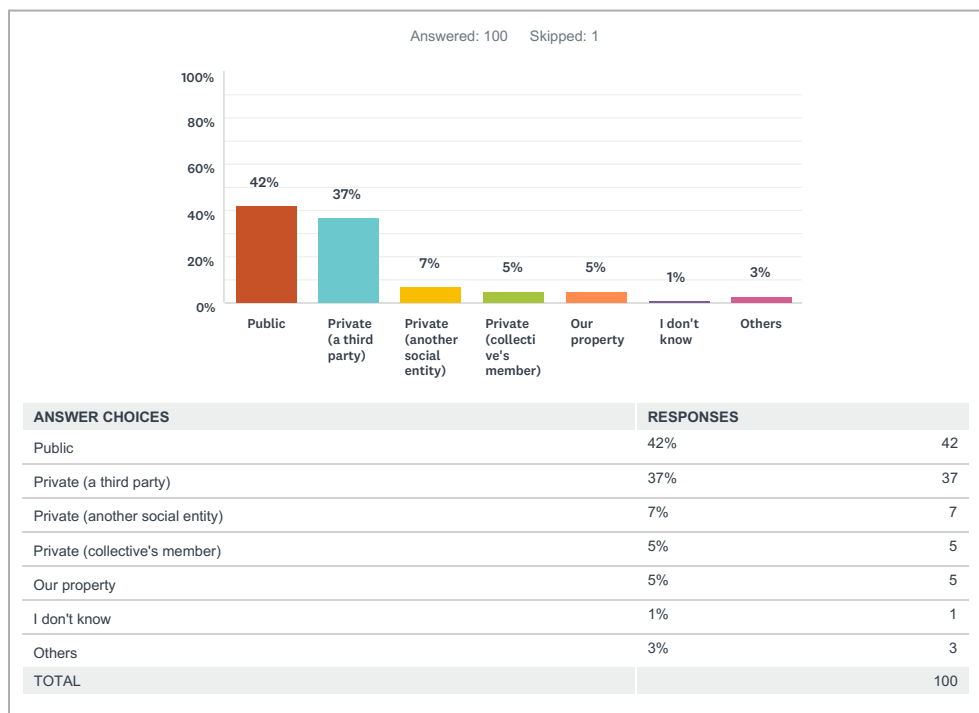


Table 4.9: UCs' types of spaces ownership
Source: Author's elaboration

The percentage bar chart shows that almost half of the UCs, the 42%, are located in a public property, while only 5% of the UC owns the space and the rest are located into a private property that in the 37% of these cases is owned by a third party, in the 7% of the cases is owned by another social entity and in 5% of the cases is owned by a member of the UCs. This differentiation among private forms of ownership has been made in order to understand to what extent UCs rely on the free property market and to what extent they rely on an internal-community property market. This can indicate both the kind of ease that they have in finding a space and on its cost. Although in the last two cases UCs can obtain a space more easily and at a lower cost, this is a high minority component that makes up only 12% of all UCs, while the rest of UCs not located in a public property are located in a third-party free-market property. However, the most interesting figure is represented by the fact that the 42% of UCs are located in a public property. This changes for each sub-group. The public ownership of the space is respectively the 57% in the cases of reclaiming movements, the 48% in the cases of community-based practices, the 53% in the cases of self-managed spaces and it diminishes only in the case of the social and cooperative economic practices, reaching the 9% of the cases. This means that, if the latter are excluded from the responses because of their self-sufficiency capacity, more than half of the UCs are located in a public property.

Among all UCs located in a public property, it was considered necessary to understand also how the public property was assigned and who is the public entity that owns the space. Supposing

that the City Council owned most of the spaces, to the Q30 question ‘**Through which procedure has the City Council assigned you the space?**’ responses were the following:

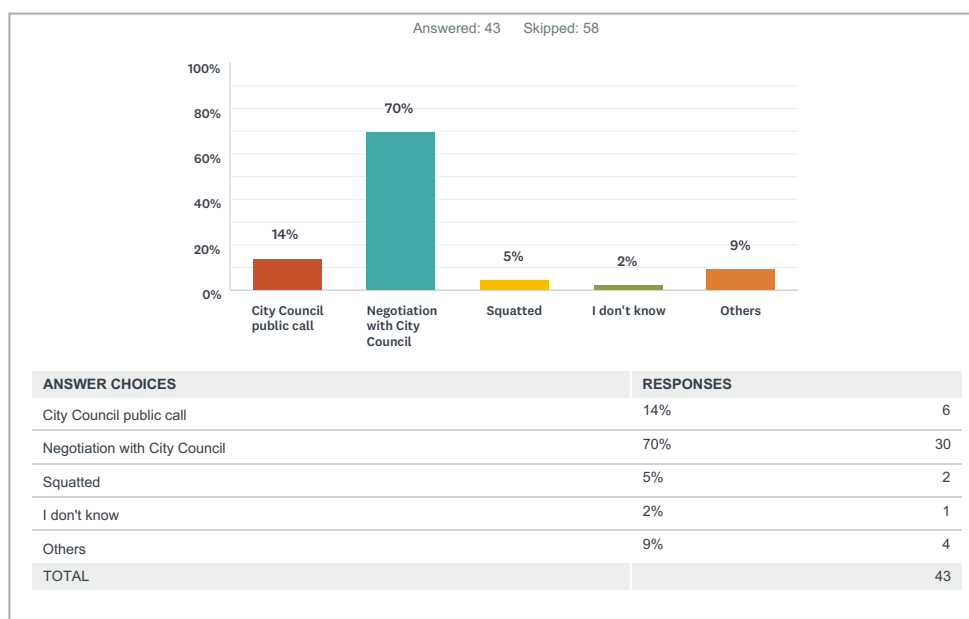


Table 4.10: Barcelona City Council public spaces’ assignment procedures
Source: Author’s elaboration

First of all, the percentage bar chart shows that the City Council owns 84% of the property where UCs are located, while among ‘others’ there are mainly UCs who didn’t know who the owner was and only one that specified that it belonged to the ‘Patronato Municipal de la Vivienda’ (the Barcelona public entity that manages public housing). Among the properties that are owned by the City Council, 14% have been assigned through a public call, while 70% of them have been assigned through a direct negotiation. The UCs that benefitted the most from this informal procedure are mainly Neighbours’ Associations, time-banks, community managed spaces and self-manages spaces, as in the Can Batlló cultural centre case. It has to be mentioned that also the Trade Union CC.OO. and the housing cooperative ‘La Borda’ took advantage of this procedure.

At this point, it was considered necessary to understand if this assignment procedure has been habitual or not for the Barcelona City Council. Crossing the data of UCs that have been granted a property through negotiation with the one resulting from the Q13 question that asked the period in which they started their activities, the result shows that this seems to be a practice that has remained quite habitual over time. Obviously, it is not sure if when an UCs started, it had access to the public property where it is now located and if this has been the result of further negotiations. However, this is very likely in most of the cases, i.e in the case of the Neighbours’ Associations due to the good relationship with the City Council at the beginning of the democratic

period, or in the case of the time-banks whose development was supported by the City Council itself, or in the case of the community managed spaces and self-managed spaces for which the date when they started coincides with the date of conquest of the space, as it is the case of Can Batlló cultural centre.

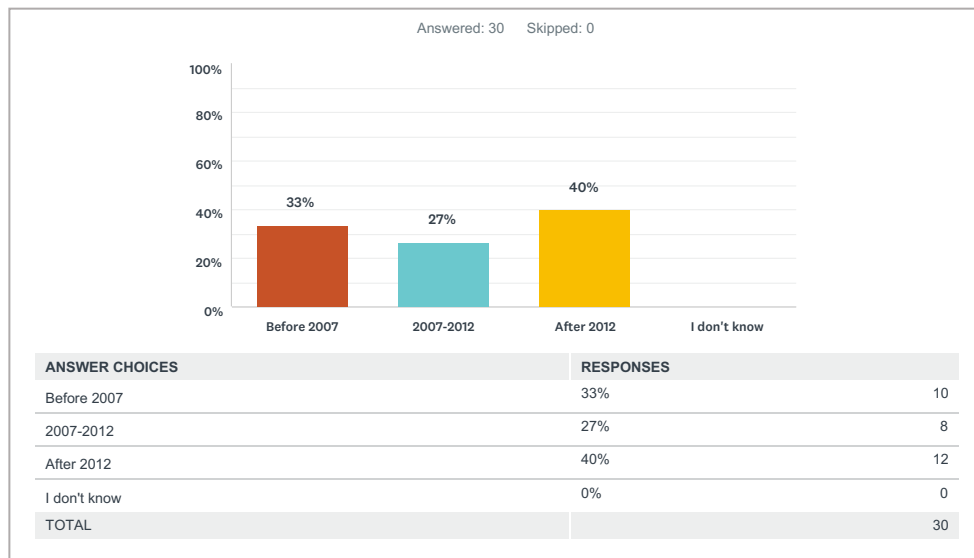


Table 4.11: Public spaces' direct assignment procedures in relation to UCs' set-up
Source: Author's elaboration

The last section of the questionnaire (see Appendix A), 'Relation with the City Council', collected data that aims to understand the UCs' perception of the type of relation that they maintain with the public institutions in general and with the City Council in particular and whether this has changed with the arrival of Barcelona en Comú. The first question aimed to understand the perception of the support received from public institutions and whether this changed after the UCs' set-up (see question Q15). The responses to the Q39 statement '**After your initial stage, you are an initiative:**' were the following:

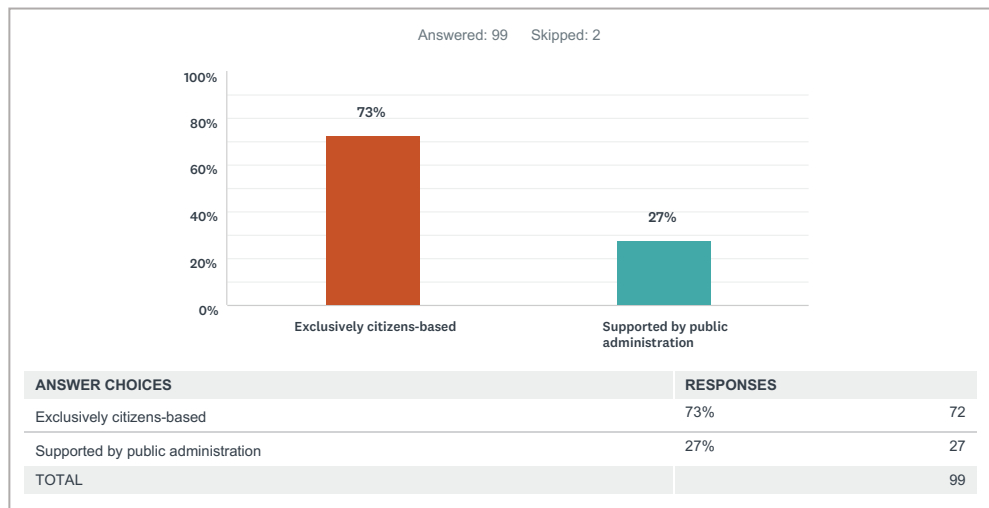


Table 4.11: Autonomy’s perception of UCs
Source: Author’s elaboration

The percentage bar chart shows that the majority of UCs, almost $\frac{3}{4}$ of them, consider themselves as an exclusively citizens-based initiative while the public institutions play a role in their maintenance for the remaining 27%. The number of UCs supported by public institutions is higher in the case of self-managed spaces (12 of them) since it includes most of the community-managed cultural centre and art centres and also some self-managed cultural centre and urban gardens. It diminishes in the case of community-based economic practices (6 of them) and social and cooperative economic practices (6 of them), and it is very low in the case of reclaiming movements (3 of them), including a couple of Neighbours' Associations. Apparently, this data does not show a major difference with the Q15 question as it appears that most of the practices that started through a bottom-up process remained as such, and that those that were promoted or that started with the support of the public institutions also kept receiving their support. However, if the data resulting from the Q15 question are crossed with the data resulting from the Q39 question, it emerges that the 15% of the UCs that started as exclusively bottom-up practices, during their development they began to receive support from the public institutions. This has happened for a variety of practices, including some services cooperative, the housing cooperative 'la Borda', some community based economic practices and some community-managed cultural centres.

This shift can have two main explanation. Firstly, it is possible that the UCs’ project was conceived by a citizens’ collective who, however, needed the support of public institutions in order to implement it. This is evident in the case of ‘La Borda’, where, although the initiative was conceived within Can Batlló UCs self-management (see section 4.3.3), it had to immediately rely on the City Council support to secure its feasibility. Secondly, it is also possible that some UCs have developed an autonomous path and only after a period of time they have started being

supported by the public institutions, as in the case of some services' cooperative or other UCs that have been incorporated into City Council's programmes, of which some were already existing, as in the case of Civic Centres Network (see also section 4.3.3) that incorporated some self-managed spaces, while others were specifically created taking inspiration from the same UCs, as the urban gardens programme established in 1997 (Ayuntamiento de Barcelona, no date a), the time banks programme previously mentioned (Ayuntamiento de Barcelona, no date b) and the 'Pla Buits' (Urban Void) programme established in 2013 (see also section 4.2.3) (Ayuntamiento de Barcelona, 2013).

However, it also emerges that the 12% of those practices that started with the support of, or were promoted by public institutions, perceive now themselves as exclusively citizens-based. Among them, there are some consumers' group and a couple of time banks, some self-managed cultural centre, including Can Batlló cultural centre, a couple of independent bookshops and publishing houses, and a couple of neighbours' association. In these cases, it is possible that UCs have counted on the support of the public institutions to start, through a public fund or the assignment of the space, but that after this initial phase their activity did not need the public institutions' support. So, although in most cases the role of the public institutions has remained unchanged from the constitution of the UCs, this role has changed for about a third of them, where in some cases the public institutions have worked mainly as an activator of the UC and then left it to its own course. While in some cases the public institution has started to support the UCs after its constitution through different forms, including the incorporation into municipal programmes.

However, most of the practices, i.e. the 73% of them, have confirmed that they consider themselves as exclusively citizens-based. This means that they do not consider themselves as supported by public institutions. If this data is crossed with data resulting from the Q17 in which it was asked whether the economic contribution of the public institutions is fundamental for the survival of the UCs, the following results are obtained:

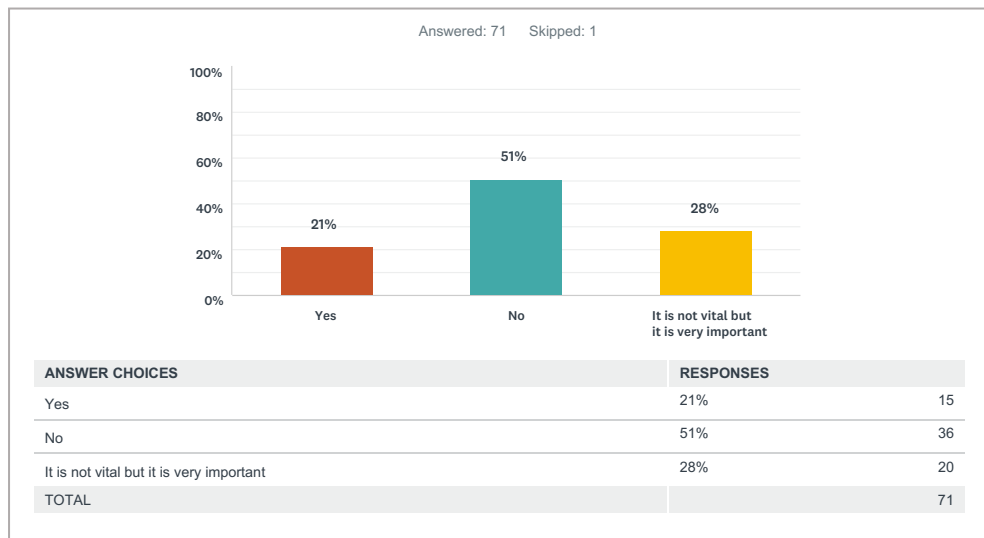


Table 4.12: Autonomy’s perception of UCs crossed with their public economic support
Source: Author’s elaboration

The percentage bar chart shows that, among the 72 UCs who consider themselves as exclusively citizens-based, the 51% responded that the economic contribution of the public institutions is not vital, while for the rest 49% this contribution is considered either vital, for the 21% of them or very important, for the 28% of them. These responses are evenly distributed among all the sub-groups of practices. Furthermore, if the same intersection is repeated with the data from Q29 that asked who is the owner of the space where UCs are located, it emerges that about 32% of them are located in a public property. In this case, the percentage is mostly distributed among self-managed cultural centres and community-managed cultural centre, Neighbours' Associations and time banks. In any case, regardless of the type of practice, it is clear that there is a considerable number of UCs, about 40%, that despite sustaining that they perceive as citizens-based actually they receive either an important economic contribution or carry out their activities on a public property

Probably this can be because the UCs need to claim their autonomy politically. This is confirmed when the question of their autonomy is placed indirectly, taking the City Council as the reference authority. The same 73% of citizens-based UCs, to the Q40 question in which they are asked to agree with a statement **‘The support and the dialogue with the City Council is essential for our project to continue’** from a scale from 1 to 5, where one stands for ‘strongly disagree’ and five for ‘strongly agree’, they responded as follows:

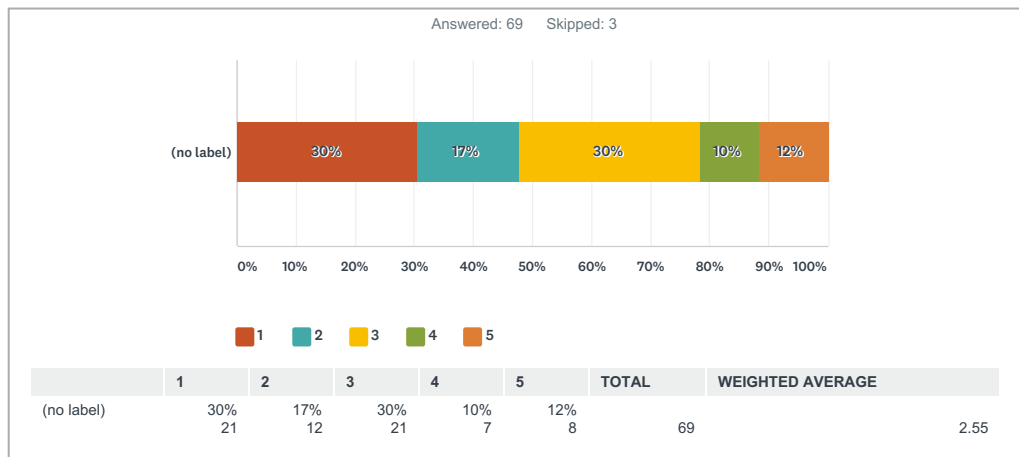


Table 4.13: UCs' perception of the necessity of the City Council's support
Source: Author's elaboration

Although the bar chart graph shows that almost 50% of these practices either strongly disagree or disagree with the statement, there is another 22% that either agree or strongly agree with it. This means that for the 22% of these UCs the support and the dialogue with the City Council is considered essential to continue the project. These UCs include various time-banks, parenting groups, services cooperatives and Neighbours' Associations. This data, although a minor one, should not be underestimated, especially if it is combined with the 30% of UCs that neither agree or disagree with it. Although this 30% chose not to position itself, it is also true that it was not able to say that the City Council's dialogue and support are not indispensable. Among these practices, it is also found the Can Batlló cultural centre. The crossing of these data shows that despite many UCs consider themselves as exclusively citizens-based, about 22% of these affirms that the role of the City Council is essential to continue their project, confirming that the need to define itself exclusively citizens-based sometimes appears to be more a political claim than an actually-existing condition.

However, the UCs overestimation of their autonomy could also be due to the fact that, even if the public institutions support them, they do not perceive their work threatened by these and do not believe that the public institutions influence the UCs' activity. This is demonstrated when this is asked to them, taking the City Council as a reference authority. Among all the UCs that have declared that the public institutions' support is either vital or very important, in the question Q41 in which they were asked to agree with the statement **'The relation with the City Council has influenced our autonomy'** from 1 to 5, where one stands for 'strongly disagree' and five for 'strongly agree', they responded as follows:

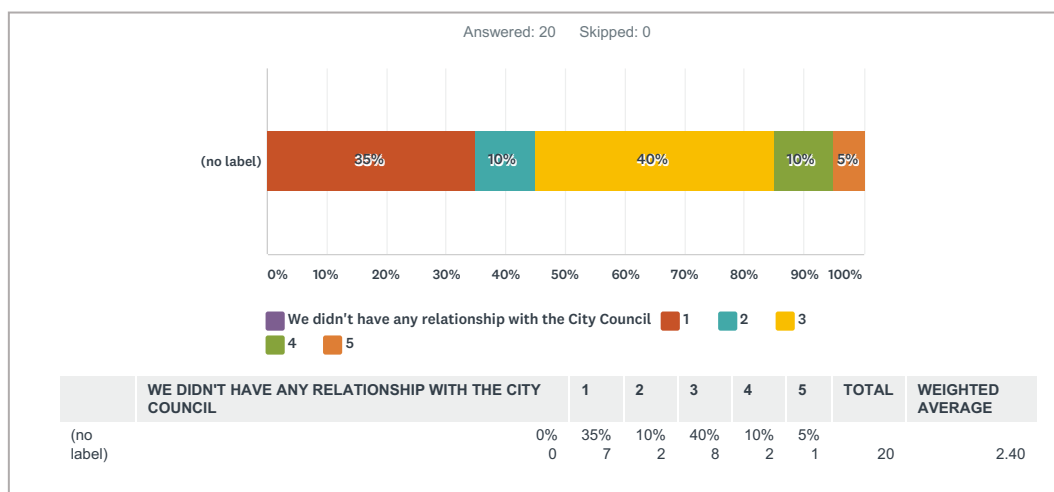


Table 4.14: Influence of public economic support of UCs' autonomy's perception
Source: Author's elaboration

Out of the 63% of UCs that have declared that the public institutions' support is either vital or very important, almost 45% of them claim that the relation with the City Council did not limit their autonomy, a data evenly distributed among the various sub-groups, and only the 15% of them claim that it did. These data demonstrate that the economic support UCs receive from the City Council's does not necessarily threaten their autonomy. This may due to a public institutions' respect for the autonomy of the activities and projects of these practices or to an underestimation of the support received from the public institutions, which is taken for granted by UCs, even if actually it should not be.

Among the relations with public institutions that the UCs maintain, it is very probable that the relationship with the City Council plays an important role since this will be the one that provides more in economic and proprietary terms. This hypothesis is confirmed by the responses to Q44 that asked **'What scale of government you maintain mainly a relation with'**. In more than 80% of the cases, this relation is maintained predominantly with the City Council or its neighbourhood scale, and only marginally with other levels of government (3% with the Regional government). For most practices, the relationship with the City Council, or its neighbourhood scale, is the most widespread relationship. This is why it is supposed that important political shift may affect it with the arrival of Barcelona en Comú. In the last responses, it has been evaluated how the relationship with the City Council has changed with the current left-wing coalition. In the Q43 question in which they were asked to agree with the statement **'After the 2015 municipal election significant persons of our collective work for the City Council'** from a scale from 1 to 5, where one stands for 'strongly disagree' and five for 'strongly agree', they responded as follows:

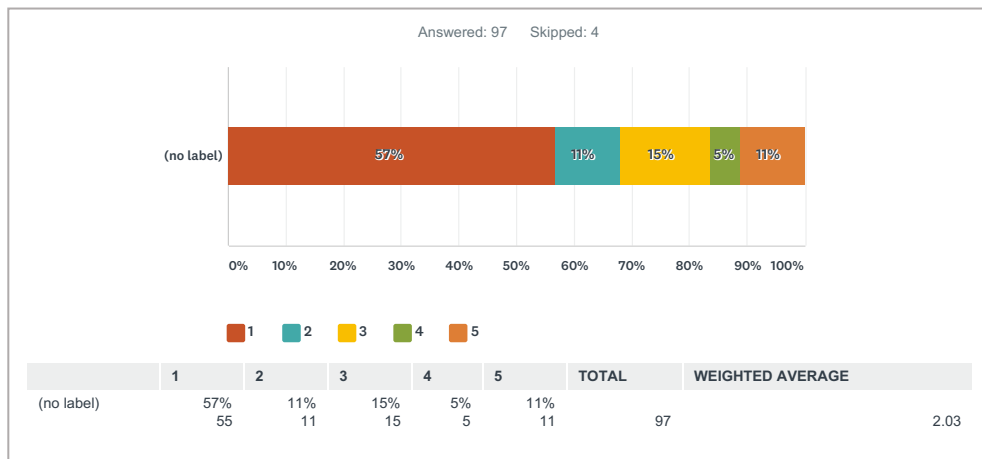


Table 4.15: UCs' members that started to work for Barcelona en Comú local government
Source: Author's elaboration

The bar chart shows that most of the UCs either strongly disagree or disagree with the statement, respectively the 57% and the 11%. However, around the 16% agree or strongly agree with the statement, and the remaining 15% has decided not to define its position. There is a marginal part of the UCs whose members, with the arrival of Barcelona en Comú, have become part of the City Council government or collaborate with it, among which there are members of many services cooperatives, of some community-managed cultural centre, self-managed cultural centre, Neighbours' Associations and la PAH. Furthermore, it should be highlighted that the remaining 15%, even if they have decided not to position themselves, in reality, have not been able to claim that none of its members is now involved in City Council activities, among which, also Can Batlló cultural centre. The fact that a minimum number of UCs agree with the question's statement suggests that the relationship between these and the municipal government is likely to change, both in terms of dialogue and in terms of economic and proprietary support. It is too early to outline this change in all its aspects clearly, but to confirm this hypothesis, the last question asked to define its relationship with the City Council before and after the 2015 municipal elections. To the Q46 question **'Which of the following concepts better define your relationship with the City Council before and after the 2015 municipal election'** among confrontation, indifference, dialogue and collaboration, the responses were the following:

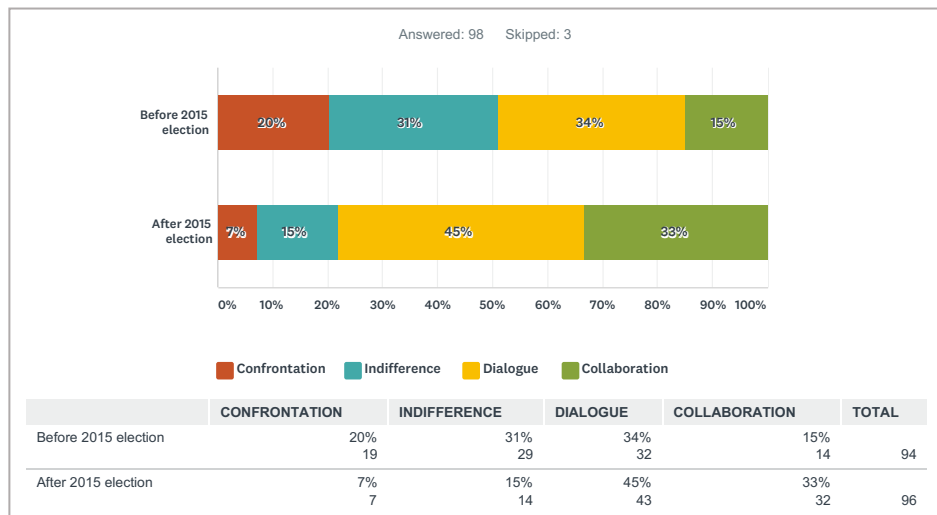


Table 4.16: UCs' change of relationship with the Barcelona en Comú local government
Source: Author's elaboration

The percentage bar chart shows that before the 2015 municipal election the UCs bar is divided in two, with 51% of UCs that chose as a concept either 'confrontation' or 'indifference', respectively the 20% and the 31%, and 49% of UC that chose as a concept either 'dialogue' and 'collaboration', respectively the 34% and the 15%. The 'confrontation' is spread mainly among self-managed cultural centres, some Neighbours' Associations, few art centres and independent publishing houses and bookshops, the CC.OO. Trade Union and the PAH. The 'indifference' response is spread mainly among the sub-group of community-based practices but also among a significant number of self-managed cultural centres and services cooperatives. The 'dialogue' and 'collaboration' is spread mainly among Neighbours' Association, some community-managed cultural centres and services cooperatives. This also includes the Escocesa art centre and Can Batlló cultural centre.

After the 2015 municipal election, the percentage bar changes substantially. The 78% of the UCs, more than 2/3, responded stating that the best concept to define their relation with the City Council is either 'dialogue' or 'collaboration', respectively the 45% and 33%, with the 'collaboration' data that has doubled. Those UCs that chose 'confrontation' and 'indifference' reduced substantially reaching the 22% of them. Among those who passed from the 'confrontation' to either 'dialogue' or 'collaboration', there are mainly self-managed cultural centres, some Neighbours' Association, the CC.OO. Trade Union and the PAH. While among those who responded that the concept shifted from 'indifference' to 'dialogue' and 'collaboration' there are most of the community-based practices and many self-managed cultural centres. Can Batlló cultural centre and the Escocesa art centre have chosen 'dialogue' both before and after the 2015 municipal election.

Finally, with the arrival of Barcelona en Comú, there is, first of all, a partial transfer of some members of the UCs into the municipal government, but above all, there is a substantial change in the perception of the relationship between UCs and City Council, which significantly improves respect to the previous mandate. The consistency of this change may well be due to the fact that before Barcelona en Comú, the municipal government was in the hand of the liberal-democratic coalition, *Convergència i Unió* (Convergence and Union). The positive change in the perception of the City Council remains and it is very likely that this will also be transformed into forms of economic and proprietary support for the UCs.

Currently, Barcelona en Comú has developed some programmes that aimed at supporting these practices. First of all, the municipal government has recently approved the 'Plan de impulso de la economía cooperativa social y solidaria' (Social, Solidary and Cooperative Economy Promotion Plan). This plan aims to support both business entities, catalogued in this research as social and cooperative economic practices, and community activities, catalogued as community-based economic practices. The plan aims to work along two lines, promotion and strengthening, providing these practices with training, funding, spaces and infrastructures, communication and networking support, and investing from 2015 to 2019 almost 25M euros (Ayuntamiento de Barcelona, 2016c). Secondly, Barcelona en Comú is working on a programme called 'Patrimoni Ciutadà' (Community Heritage) (see also section 4.2.3). This programme, inspired by similar programmes already approved in other European cities, such as in Bologna (Bianchi, 2018) and Naples (Micciarelli, 2017), is still under development, but its guidelines have been presented. It aims at creating a new unitary legal framework that recognises the UCs' value and legitimacy, supports and promotes the emergence and development of UCs, while maintaining the diversity and degrees of autonomy (Castro-Coma and Martí-Costa, 2016). The plan is directed to the subgroup that in this research has been defined as self-managed spaces, including those self-managed cultural centres that even if they do not aim to be part of the City Council network are benefitting from the allocation of the spaces or some form of support by the City Council, as in the case of Can Batlló cultural centre. The creation of these two programmes shows that the change of relation is not only an UCs perception, but it is also related to a policy effort of the City Council aiming at supporting and promoting UCs.

4.2.2 Summary

The questionnaire aimed to understand the relation between UCs and the public institutions, in particular with the City Council, and whether this relation may influence the constitution and development of UCs and their autonomy. On top of directly interrogating the UCs on this relation, the questionnaire tried to pose questions that would allow going beyond the UCs' own perception attempting to reveal possible contradictions and ambiguities. The picture of the UCs in Barcelona that emerges from the questionnaire shows that, although they tend to perceive themselves as citizens-based practices that started and developed without the support of public institutions, in reality, the dialogue with and contribution of public institutions, and especially of the City Council, seems to be significant, if not so much in the emergence phase, certainly for their maintenance and survival.

Regarding the constitution of the UCs, it emerges from the responses to the questionnaire that most of them started without the support of a public institution (apart from the case of self-managed space in which about 30% stated that they had received such support in the starting phase). The constitution of these UCs mostly through bottom-up processes seems to be a feature of Barcelona throughout the democratic period. However, this feature has changed both in quantity and in quality since the 2007 crisis, confirming the findings of social innovation scholars that have focused on the case of Barcelona (Nel·lo, 2015; Blanco and León, 2017; Cruz, Martínez Moreno and Blanco, 2017; Blanco and Nel·lo, 2018). If, before the crisis, the constitution of the UCs was contained and consisted mainly of reclaiming practices, such as Neighbours' Association and Trade Unions, and only marginally of self-managing practices, with the crisis the number of the UCs has increased considerably and it is constituted mainly of instituent practices and some new forms of reclaiming practices, such as the PAH.

This shift suggests that, with the economic crisis, the need for self-organisation to propose alternatives to the failure of the market economy and the public institutions in dealing with it has increased considerably. Furthermore, the continuous emergence of UCs, even after the timid economic recovery, suggests that this necessity was not only linked to the economic consequences of the crisis such as impoverishment and unemployment, but also to its social and political consequences that go far beyond the economic ones, such as the mistrust of public institutions. This hypothesis is confirmed by the fact that the primary objective of reclaiming practices is to request public intervention on social issues. While, the primary objective of the self-managing practices is to propose an alternative to the dominant model of social, economic and cultural

production, without requesting the intervention of the public institutions but through either the creation of forms of autonomy and self-government and through the creation of forms alternative to the public model. Although the questionnaire has also shown the overlapping nature of these claims- with self-managing practices also reclaiming public intervention and reclaiming practices reclaiming autonomy- this means that from the crisis onwards there is a need for self-organisation which is stronger than before.

Apparently, the same number of UCs that have been constituted through bottom-up processes (73%) has maintained its citizens-based nature. In reality, for some of them, this condition has changed over time with 12% of the practices that have started with the support of the public institutions, probably a financial aid or obtaining the right to use a public property, and then continued to carry out their projects independently; and 15% of practices that started independently and then received support from public institutions, probably obtaining financial aid or being included directly in a public program as in the case of time banks, urban gardens and community-managed spaces. In any case, regardless how the support changes throughout the UCs life, it remains the data that most of the UCs, about 2/3 of them, perceive themselves as exclusively citizens-based practices. However, more than half of the UCs receive an economic contribution, either vital or if not vital considered to be very important, by the public institutions, mainly from the City Council, and almost half of the UCs are located in a public property, almost exclusively owned by the City Council. This means that, among the UCs, some recognise this support and do not consider themselves citizens-based, but a rather good amount of these do not recognise this important support.

Among all the UCs that claim to be exclusively bottom-up practices, for 49% of them, public institutions' procurement, either contracting or funding, is vital or very important, 32% of them are located in a public property and the 22% of them confirm, in another question, that the dialogue with and the support of the City Council is indispensable to carry out their activities. This indicates that there is a mismatch between the UCs' perceptions about their relationship with public institutions and the actually-existing relationship. As demonstrated by the responses to the questionnaire, this mismatch can have several reasons. First, it may be due to a political need for UCs to define themselves exclusively as citizens-based practices. Secondly, it may be due to a public institutions' respect for the autonomy of the activities and projects of these practices. Thirdly, it could be due to an UCs' underestimation of the support received from the public institutions that is taken for granted, even if actually it should not be. Therefore, for these reasons and most likely for a combination of them, it is understandable that there are UCs that, although they receive

support from public institutions, in some cases they declare themselves to be citizens-based practices. However, this support cannot be underestimated. This support does not mean that UCs' activities, decisions and goals are influenced (even if the opposite cannot be ruled out) but nevertheless that, since most of these practices have a limited self-sufficiency and they are located in the Barcelona high speculative real estate environment, the public institutions have the capacity to permit the existence and development of most of them.

Theoretically, the UCs support through funding, contracting and assets transfer, which allow their existence and development, should be carried out through public selection procedures that ensure transparency. However, it appears that the City Council does not always proceed in this way. Sometimes, these contributions are negotiated directly with the City Council, in the 26% of the cases of funding, in 60% of the cases of contracting and the 70% of the cases of assets transfer. Among these direct procedures, only direct public contracting has a ceiling and cannot exceed 18,000 euros per contract, while there is no ceiling for direct funding or direct transfer of assets. All these direct forms of public procurement and asset transfer are a prerogative of the City Council. However, they reveal the possibility for the City Council, and therefore also for other public institutions, to be able to discretionally decide which UCs to support, with the risk of supporting those practices that either have a more significant influence on the City Council for their mobilisation capacity or have a political affinity with the government in charge.

This means that for many UCs maintaining a good relationship with public institutions, and especially with the City Council, is important for their survival and that very few UCs can actually afford not to have a relation at all. This relationship may be facilitated by a City Council with a left-wing government into power. Before the arrival of Barcelona en Comú, when the conservative government was into power, half of the UCs maintained a relationship of 'confrontation' and 'indifference' towards the City Council; while currently almost 80% of them maintain a relationship of 'dialogue' and 'collaboration' and the 'confrontation' and 'indifference' has reduced to 22%. This improvement of relationship does not mean that the UCs have started receiving more economic and proprietary support. However, by observing the first policy instruments approved by Barcelona en Comú (or in the process to be approved)- 'Plan de impulso de la economia cooperativa social y solidaria' and the 'Patrimoni Ciutadà' programmes, it seems that this relation will also translate in forms of support. Whether these programmes will be able to support UCs without undermining their autonomy cannot be established at this point in the research. Once these programmes are implemented, further investigation will be needed to assess what type of support they are providing and the degree of autonomy these are leaving to the UCs.

4.3 A detailed analysis of the UCs-City Council relation in Barcelona

In this section are presented the results of the comparison of the three embedded case studies analysed in the city of Barcelona: The Puigcerdà UCs, the Escocesa UCs and the Can Batlló UCs. The objective of this scale of analysis was to provide a detailed understanding of the relation among UCs and the Barcelona City Council by showing how UCs emerge and develop over time, assessing the role of Barcelona City Council in their emergence and development, evaluating the emancipatory potential of The Common and the role that the Barcelona City Council may have in supporting this emancipation, assessing the emancipatory potential of The Public, and whether this may flank the emancipatory project of The Common. Not all these objectives are explicitly expressed in the presentations of the case studies, as the narration of the cases is limited to the essentiality of their history. The presentation of each UCs' case focuses on the type of production of The Common, the birth of the UCs, what difficulties it faces to be maintained over time, the impact of the City Council and its public policies on the UCs, up to Barcelona en Comú. However, this essentiality will be functional to lay the foundations for the comparison that is subsequently carried out and allow to meet all the proposed objectives. Thus, in 4.3.1 section, the Puigcerdà UCs case is presented, in 4.3.2 section, the Escocesa UCs case is presented in and in the 4.3.3 section, the Can Batlló UCs case is presented. Successively, in the 4.3.4 section, a comparative analysis of the three embedded case study is carried out.

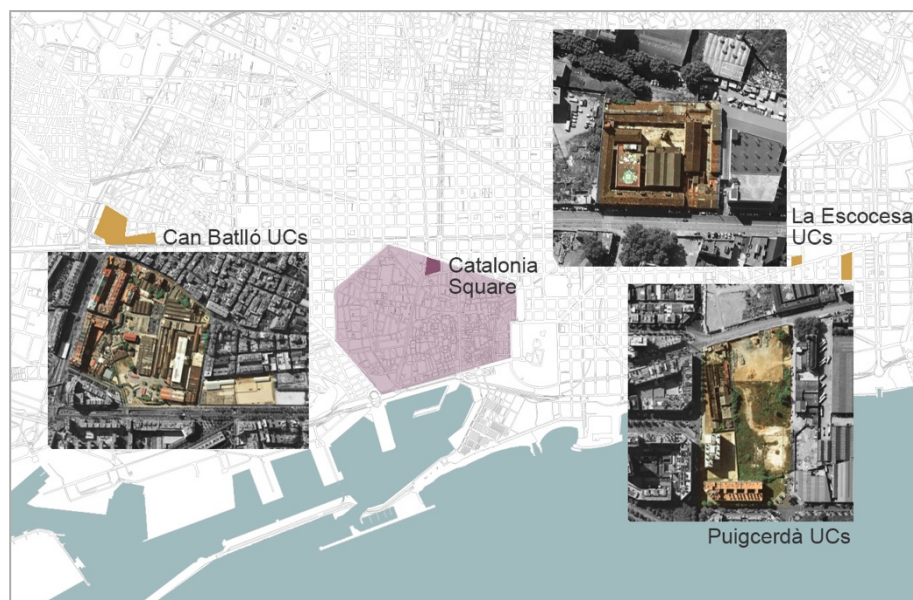


Figure 3.1: Embedded three case studies' location in Barcelona
Source: Author's elaboration

4.3.1 The Puigcerdà UCs



Figure 4.1: Image of the Puigcerdà UCs
Source: El Periódico website

Summary of the Puigcerdà UCs

The Puigcerdà Urban Commons is an informal settlement set up at the margin of the former industrial neighbourhood of the Poblenou that took place between 2011-2013 made of mainly Sub-Saharan immigrants. After the crisis, they were excluded from the formal labour and housing market, and they occupied the warehouse and practised waste-picking to subsist. Despite at the beginning the occupation was tolerated by the City Council and the private property, when it grew to reach around 300 inhabitants, the local government started to perceived as a political threat and it pushed the owner to undertake legal action for the eviction. Sub-Saharan immigrants responded with a strong mobilisation to defend their occupation but also the rights of the whole Barcelona Sub-Saharan immigrants. However, it was not possible to stop the eviction. Once it happened some of them entered the Irregular Settlements Plan and the Waste picking cooperative, two City Council's programme that emerged from the Puigcerdà occupation to address the sub-Saharan immigrants' condition. However, both programmes were not sufficient to adequately address it. As a result, many Sub-Saharan immigrants lost their form of subsistence and the empowerment they had achieved through occupation.

Urban Commons	The Common
The relation was established between a group of mainly Sub-Saharan irregular immigrants and an industrial factory	Subsistence and empowerment of an excluded social group of Sub-Saharan irregular immigrants

Table 4.17: Puigcerdà UCs' main analysed elements
Source: Author's elaboration

Location of the Puigcerdà UCs

Barcelona, Poblenou neighbourhood, Carrer Puigcerdà 127

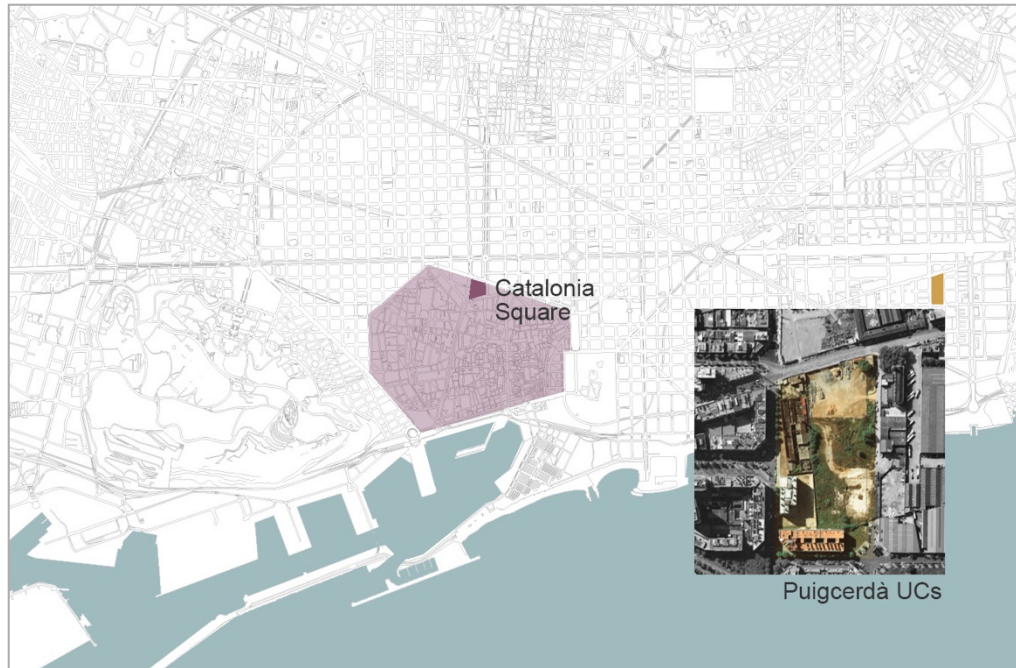


Figure 4.2: Location of the Puigcerdà UCs
Source: Author's elaboration

The timeframe of the Puigcerdà UCs

August 2011 - June 2013

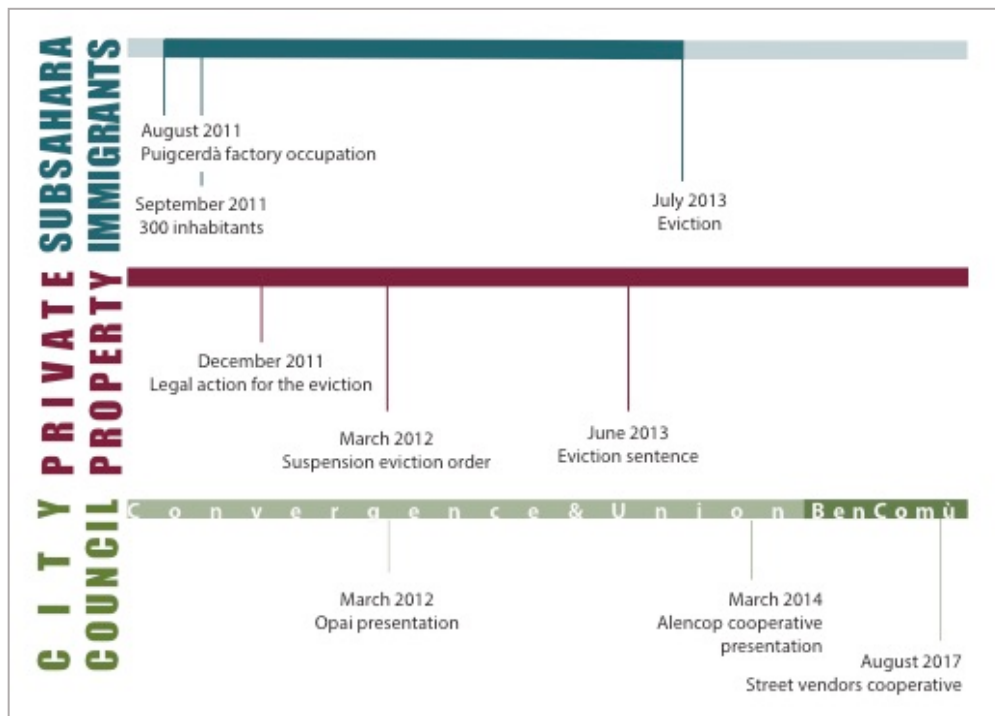


Figure 4.3: Timeframe of the Puigcerdà UCs
Source: Author's elaboration

The Common in question

From the 1980s onwards, Southern European countries started to receive significant migration flows, especially from Latin America and Africa, due to the need to include cheap labour workforce in their labour markets (Arango, 2000). In Spain, from 2002-2007, mainly due to the boom of the construction and the agricultural sectors, the immigrant population more than doubled, making this country Europe's largest absorber of migrants (Domínguez-Mujica, Guerra-Talavera and Parreño-Castellano, 2014). In addition to the population coming from ex-colonies, a relevant sub-Sahara population arrived, mainly male and aged between 20-45 years old, that quickly found regular or irregular employment in the booming agriculture and construction industry (Isusi and Corral, 2007). The living condition of this immigrant population has always been far worse than other immigrants condition, such as the ex-colonies ones, due to its multiple exclusion in economic, political, social, cultural and spatial terms. This mainly depended on: i) the precarious and underpaid working conditions, at the very bottom of the production chain that force them to live on the limit of subsistence; ii) the unstable and sometimes irregular administrative conditions that preclude their access to citizen's rights, including the right to vote; iii) different religions and languages that limit cultural integration (Haan and Maxwell, 1998). These conditions were favoured by the same state institutions that, despite favouring their arrival, it never tried to sort them out and even worsened it, by hardening the immigration law and by avoiding adequate workplace inspections, so that this group could be exploited and dominated to foster competitive economic growth. However, in some cases, it is the same hardening of the living conditions imposed by market and state forces that push Sub-Saharan immigrants to self-organise in the informality creating alternative forms of subsistence and empowerment.

During the 2007-8 crisis, Sub-Saharan immigrants were expelled from the formal labour and housing markets, and their administrative status became even more precarious due to the difficulty in obtaining the renewal of their residency permits. With this hardening of their condition of multiple exclusion, they found a viable survival strategy through informal housing solutions and informal economic activities (Pradel-Miquel, 2017). This does not mean that informality emerged from the crisis (Mingione, 1999). Many studies have shown how, especially in the South European countries, informality is a historically structural feature of these economies (Quassoli, 1999). However, it is through informality that during these times immigrants' subsistence is often guaranteed, especially for those suffering from multiple exclusion such as Sub-Saharan immigrants. This informality has to be considered not as a form of unregulated but a form of deregulated activity which is determined by the same market and state forces and thus functional to the reproduction of capitalism (Roy, 2005). However, it also becomes a form of activity that not only

provides subsistence to the social group but also a source of and the possible basis to develop political mobilisation that allows this social group to claim their economic, social and political rights (Varley, 2013). It is, therefore, this self-provision of subsistence and empowerment of a group of Sub-Saharan immigrants that can be found in the city of Barcelona, precisely in the years after the crisis, in the Poblenou neighbourhood.

The Puigcerdà UCs

The Poblenou is a former industrial neighbourhood of Barcelona. Due to this economic specialization the Poblenou has always been an area with a pronounced working-class and self-organization spirit where marginal groups found their place of refuge through informal housing solution, starting with the arrival of Spanish and Catalan peasants during the Francoist regime that gave form to the *barraquism* (slum) phenomenon (Borja, 2009). However, despite the ongoing regeneration process promoted by the 22@Plan (see also section 4.3.2), it has kept welcoming marginal groups. In more recent times, sub-Sahara immigrants that needed a refuge settled in the neighbourhood giving form to the Poblenou informal settlements phenomenon (Pradel-Miquel, 2017). In the aftermath of the crisis, different groups of sub-Sahara immigrants without access to living spaces and jobs began occupying Poblenou abandoned factories that didn't undergo the 22@Plan's regeneration process and began surviving through waste picking activities (Pradel-Miquel, 2017). According to a study carried out by XAPSLL, from 2008 to 2011 the number of informal settlements in Barcelona raised from 265 to 695 with most of them located in the Poblenou and occupied by sub-Sahara immigrants (Sales Campos, 2013). Nevertheless, these informal settlements never lasted: as they took place mainly in private property, eviction was constantly looming and when it happened the sub-Sahara groups had to go around in search of another place and finally occupy another vacant factory. Some of the interviewees defined this process as the sub-Sahara people's circular occupation phenomena. It is during this circular process that the Puigcerdà informal settlement took place.

In August 2011, a group of 20-30 sub-Sahara immigrants evicted from another factory located in Badajoz Street 112 found the vacant factory in Puigcerdà Street 127, a vast space of 12.000 sqm constituted by numerous warehouses occupying two Cerdà's block. They moved in to provide themselves with shelter and to carry out their informal economic activities, mainly waste picking. At the time of the occupation, the factory was owned by 'Finca Riana S.L.', a real estate company, whose main owner was 'Iglesia Baciana,' a family that was also involved in different cooperation projects for women's empowerment in the Global South through its private foundation Maite Iglesias Baciana. The property was part of the 22@Plan. However, it never

underwent any redevelopment project as it was located at the very margin of the neighbourhood. In the beginning, according to residents and activists, the occupation was tolerated by the private property, by the municipal police (Guardia Urbana), by the regional police (Mossos de Escuadra) and by the City Council. The private property decided not to take legal action against the occupants, and police forces and the local government decided not to enter into a confrontation, probably, as an activist said, because it was better to keep them in the same place for reasons of inspection and social control.

The expansion of the Puigcerdà UCs

Due to the combination of different factors such as the massive dimension of the space, its localisation at the margins of Barcelona and the worsening conditions of many sub-Saharan immigrants the informal settlement of Puigcerdà quickly grew to an incredible level. According to one of its first inhabitants, they passed from the 20-30 persons during the first days to 100 after a week and 200-300 after a month. Although it is impossible to estimate the number of inhabitants precisely, it is certain that the Puigcerdà settlement did grow considerably, becoming as a politician in charge said, 'a city within the city' (PUCs-04). This was given not only by the number of Puigcerdà inhabitants but also by the large number of the people and companies attracted to the settlement during the day to do business with the waste picking informal economy. In those times, Puigcerdà became, the main metropolitan hub for waste picking activities, attracting daily more than 500-800 people. Noticeably, not all these people were inhabitants of the factory. Even if waste picking was the main economic activity of Puigcerdà's sub-Saharan inhabitants, all people involved in waste picking were not living there. In other words, in Puigcerdà, there was a clear mismatch between the boundaries of the waste picking economic group that could range between 500-800 people and the boundaries of the sub-Saharan inhabitants' group, that could range around 200-300 people.

In the factory, there were many nationalities and languages, as well as there were many different needs of many vulnerable persons to be satisfied. In this environment, co-habitation conflicts proliferated: because of sleeping places, because of inter-ethnic and inter-generational rivalries and because of unbalanced power relations where some groups dominated others according to their nationalities (Cameroonians and Nigerians were the worse off while Senegalese were the one better off) and to their position in the waste picking economic chain (waste pickers were the worse off while waste dealers were the one better off). In other words, the Puigcerdà inhabitants' group was a highly unequal social group, reproducing the same inequality of the 'outside' world. Nevertheless, despite all co-habitation difficulties, the sub-Saharan inhabitants

managed to build an organisational structure in order to deal with daily problems and conflicts. They were divided into sub-groups according to their nationalities, where each one had a representative. The representatives were in charge of negotiations once problems and conflicts emerged and they filled the role of spokesman when negotiations with institutions and civil society organisations started. These negotiations were planned and prepared during weekly assemblies that became an essential moment in order to keep the group together, to articulate the discourse and to structure their struggle. Far from being a perfect and just organisation, this system, based on national groups, spokesmen and weekly assemblies, allowed the sub-Saharan social group to organise life within the factory and to shape its relation with civil society organisations and institutional actors.

Economic sustainability of the Puigcerdà UCs

From the economic point of view, the sub-Saharan social group was completely self-sufficient. However, the self-sufficiency has to be considered in the light of the informal economy and the informal settlement in which it took place, outside of which the same self-sufficiency would have been impossible. Many different activities started to develop within the wall of the factory, such as a restaurant, a second-hand shop and a bicycle workshop, serving the same factory and the Barcelona inhabitants. Nevertheless, the primary source of subsistence was represented by the informal economy built around metal waste collection: waste picking. According to the literature, waste picking entails all those activities related to the informal handling of waste, ranging from collecting, composting, sorting, processing and selling (Dias, 2016). In Barcelona, waste picking was mainly related to the collection from public spaces of metal waste and technological appliance (Ortiz, 2013). This activity should be legally performed by private enterprises, waste managers, who are in charge of the collection of metal waste that is then sold to steel or other recycling companies. However, the legal margins in which these companies operate are often blurred, characterising this economic sector with a foggy side.

Moreover, beyond waste managers, the waste collection can be performed by single individuals, who can sell waste to waste managers or directly to recycling companies as long as there is a proof of the transaction. Nevertheless, if the purchase of metal waste from individuals is legal, its collection by individuals is not. In Barcelona, as established by the Civic Ordinance of 2005, waste picking in public spaces is an illegal activity that can be fined up to 500 euros (Ayuntamiento de Barcelona, 2005). Yet it has always been somewhat tolerated by police forces since it is an activity that, being spread only across the suburban area of the city and invisible to public eyes, it ensures a source of income to people that have no space in the formal labour market.

This activity, although it has always existed in Barcelona, sharply increased in the aftermath of the crisis contributing to 22% of the volume of metal waste industry in 2013 (Gremi Recuperació de Catalunya, 2013). In order to carry this activity out Sub-Saharan immigrants needed huge but hidden spaces to sort and collect metal waste and where waste managers and recycling companies' trucks could arrive to collect it. This is why the Puigcerdà factory occupying two Cerdà's blocks at the edge of the Poblenou neighbourhood represented a perfect location.

Within the Puigcerdà factory, waste picking was organised in the following way. Sub-Saharan waste pickers scoured throughout the outskirts of Barcelona picking up all kind of metal waste and technological appliance through their pick-up carts. Once they had enough material or simply at the end of the day, they used to go to the Puigcerdà factory where, in each warehouse, they could find a scrap dealer with a scale to whom they could sell metal waste and technological appliance. Once goods were sorted and classified, the waste dealer could price and sell them to waste managers or other recycling companies. Although waste managers or recycling companies particularly appreciated waste pickers' labour as they were able to achieve a level of waste sorting accuracy that was impossible to be achieved through mechanised processes their work was underpaid (Gremi Recuperació de Catalunya, 2013). Even working all day long, making a living through waste picking was hard. Metal waste sales prices ranged per kilo from 0.6-0.9 euro for aluminium, to 4.5 euros for copper, to 0.16 euro for other metals, with a waste pickers' average earnings per day ranging between 10 and 15 euros (Gremi Recuperació de Catalunya, 2013) leaving Sub-Saharan waste pickers under the poverty line. In other words, in the post-crisis Barcelona, waste picking was not providing sub-Saharan immigrants with full self-sufficiency as it was based on the exploitation of their labour by other actors of the economic chain, such as waste dealers, waste managers and recycling companies. However, in those times of crisis waste picking was not only necessary but also inevitable for sub-Saharan immigrants as, due to their expulsion from the formal labour market, it was the only niche of the market that was accessible to them.

The relation between Sub-Saharan immigrants and the Puigcerdà factory

Indeed, the relation that the sub-Saharan inhabitants had with the Puigcerdà factory was based on economic necessity. In their condition of multiple exclusion, in which their main economic activity was not providing self-sufficiency fully, they had to find an accommodation, feed themselves and save some money to send to their families in Africa. This is why finding other forms of subsistence that could integrate the waste picking one, such as a place to live where they had not to pay a rent where they could carry out other informal economic activities and where they could create a network of mutual support to pool resources together, was essential for sub-Saharan

immigrants. The occupation of the Puigcerdà factory helped to find a solution to all these issues. In there, they managed to build informal domestic spaces, so that their housing needs were satisfied without having to pay a rent. They could carry out all informal economic activities. They could engage in forms of mutual support, pooling resources together and helping each other's in daily tasks to guarantee their livelihood and even save some money to be sent to their African families. In other words, through the space of the factory, all residents of the Puigcerdà factory could produce and reproduce their life through an integrated form of subsistence despite their condition of multiple exclusion. However, the occupation of the factory did not allow the sub-Saharan group only to subsist, but also to empower itself. Within the walls of the factory, firstly, they managed to build an organisational structure that allowed their self-government. Secondly, they structured life according to their culture, preserving their African identity and turning it into the cement of the same group. Lastly and certainly most importantly, within the wall of the factory, with the support of local social movements and civil society organisations, they finally became a collective political subject. Usually, sub-Saharan immigrants, as a neighbour said 'were always an invisible group' (PUCs-06), whose condition never achieved the public and political debate. However, being together in the same space and especially when the first eviction order arrived, they started to reclaim their right for them and the whole Barcelona African community. To summarise, the relation of the sub-Saharan inhabitants' group with the factory was twofold. On the one side, the Puigcerdà factory represented that crucial shared resource for their subsistence. On the other, the Puigcerdà factory represented that crucial shared resource for the development, the institution and the maintenance of a community spirit among some of them. This twofold relation is best summarised in a comment of one of the residents, who said:

'This was our place. We liked the life within the factory. If they had allowed us, we would have liked to keep living there together, in our way of understanding life' (PUCs-08).

Initial City Council's approach to the Puigcerdà UCs

The City Council, governed by the conservative coalition Convergence and Union, although it was aware of the circular occupation phenomenon carried out by Sub-Saharan waste picking immigrants in the Poblenou tolerated both Poblenou informal settlements and waste picking activities without including in its agenda any policy to tackle their condition of multiple exclusion. This represented a convenient choice for the City Council. Through these occupations and waste picking, both expressed in the Puigcerdà's informal settlements, the City Council could keep this group socially controlled without having to sort out their condition out as they were self-

providing their subsistence through waste picking and they were providing shelter through the occupation of the factory. Moreover, the fact that they were taking place at the invisible edge of Barcelona far from its city centre and its touristic area contributed to maintaining the condition of this social group wholly silenced in the political and public debate. Nevertheless, the City Council's approach changed when the Puigcerdà informal settlement expanded in terms of the number of residents and increased the informal economic activities. As a neighbour said: 'the Puigcerdà settlement grew to such a magnitude that it became a public problem deserving political intervention' (PUCs-05).

The threat: The City Council approach and the private ownership of the estate

With its expansion, Puigcerdà informal settlement became a political risk for the City Council for different reasons. Firstly, Puigcerdà settlement was an entire portion of Poblenou of about 12.000 sqm where legitimate municipal authority was inexistent and where the control was entirely in the hand of the sub-Saharan inhabitants. Secondly, the Puigcerdà factory's reputation, being considered a marginalised space occupied by marginalised people, began to threaten the city image, turning into the motive of its shame: 'what the Third World is doing within the modern Barcelona?' (PUCs-06), many people were asking surprisingly. Thirdly and most importantly, Puigcerdà represented a place where the Sub-Saharan inhabitants, by being together, were becoming a political subject structuring collective claims to challenge their condition of marginality and poverty, achieving a dangerous degree of empowerment. In the light of this out of control situation that represented a threat to the 'Barcelona Brand' and, especially, of the growing empowerment of the Sub-Saharan community, a direct intervention of the City Council seemed inevitable. Although Puigcerdà informal settlement had allowed, at least for a period, the subsistence of many Sub-Saharan immigrants relieving the City Council of tackling their exclusion, the before-mentioned political risks and especially the political self-organisation were too dangerous for the City Council. One of the residents said: 'when African people are self-organised is not convenient for them (the City Council)' (PUCs-04). Thus, the City Council understood that to eliminate this risk it had to evict them, although this eviction would have meant sorting their subsistence out.

The official reason given by the City Council to justify the eviction were others. The eviction was officially justified mainly in relation to the health and safety risks and in relation to the illegality of the waste picking economic activity. However, these reasons were perceived differently by the Sub-Saharan social group. In relation to the health and safety condition, a politician said:

(within the Puigcerdà factory) 'sanitation was embarrassing as there was no water, no light, and rubbish was all over the place' and that 'people were exposed to life-threatening risks because of the structural unsafety of the building' (PUCs-02).

These conditions were so precarious that a social service' public officer stated:

'When I went in there (the factory) I got so nervous that I made a report and I said, here we have to do something ... we have to give an exit to these people...this cannot happen' (PUCs-01).

These conditions were also confirmed by the many reports commissioned by the City Council to the police forces, the fire brigade and the Red Cross. However, Puigcerdà inhabitants did not perceive such a risky situation and, in order to improve their health and safety conditions, they repeatedly demanded the City Council to facilitate access to running water and light. Nevertheless, this demand was always denied with the excuse that the factory was privately owned. Moreover, the City Council even occasionally closed down the public fountains around the factory, worsening their health and safety conditions. In other words, despite a real concern of the social service department about their health and safety conditions, it seemed that the City Council was preventing its improvement to justify the eviction further.

In relation to the waste picking informal economy, the City Council always stigmatised the Puigcerdà informal settlement, sustaining that this was the hub of an activity from which a foggy and probably illegal industry was benefitting. According to a public officer:

'some people in the waste industry were doing very well. Containers (of waste managers and recycling companies) entered there to load before going to the port to be shipped. There were people there who made business and a very good profit taking advantage of the misery of many other people' (PUCs-01).

However, although it seemed that the City Council understood the chain of exploitation and the foggy side behind this economic chain, it did not do anything to solve them, and it always used the illegality of this economic activity to justify the eviction. As a public officer said:

‘Do you know what it means having 500 people here (Puigcerdà) every day up and down with their pick-up carts and trucks coming in and out? It was not pretty, it was not a nice place’ (PUCs-01).

In any case, beyond these more or less convincing City Council’s official reasons to justify the eviction, the most convincing one was the private ownership of the estate. The City Council always sustained that the eviction was inevitable because the estate was privately owned and it could not do anything to stop it.

At the end of 2011 (few months after the occupation) the private property undertook the legal action for the eviction. The media justified the legal action as it seemed that the owner aimed to regain possession of the property to redevelop into a Self-Sufficient Island (La Vanguardia, 2012). The Barcelona Self-Sufficient Island was a public plan that aimed to develop a new housing model based on local energy production and sustainable management of resources (Ayuntamiento de Barcelona, 2012c). In a press release of the Barcelona City Council in 2012, one of the two Puigcerdà blocks was indicated as part of the Plan with the property of the estate belonging to both the municipality and the private developer (Ayuntamiento de Barcelona, 2012d). Although currently, the ownership of the building is still 100% of Finca Riana S.L., this statement can be understood in the light of the redevelopment conditions established by the 22@Plan in which for each 100sqm of redevelopment 31sqm had to be transferred to the municipal government (Ayuntamiento de Barcelona, 2000). However, it is supposed that the formal transfer of a part of the property to the public administration had not yet occurred at the time when these documents were published. Otherwise the government could not justify anymore the eviction through the private ownership’s excuse. In any case, despite the media presented the plan as being already in place at the time of the occupation, it was not supposed to be implemented in the forthcoming months as the project was still in its preliminary phase. This is to say that, despite the development of the estate into the Self-Sufficient Island would have given more legitimacy to the legal action undertaken by the private property, this action was not as urgent as it seemed from the press and it was not as independent from the City Council political will as it seemed.

Different sources confirmed the pressure put on the owner by the City Council. Firstly, in the Final Sentence of the eviction (Juzgado Primera Instancia 21, 2013) it is mentioned that due to the structural unsafety of the building the City Council would have fined the owner if no legal actions would have been undertaken. Secondly, one of the Puigcerdà residents who said to have once privately spoken with a member of the Iglesia Baciana family said that ‘it was not the owner

who aimed for the eviction, as the owner never complained' (PUCs-08). Thirdly it has also been confirmed by an activist who said:

'the City Council pressured the owner because it was accountable for any accident in Puig Cerda, but in reality, it did not care. Who truly aimed to end with the occupation was the City Council itself' (PUCs-07).

In other words, the private ownership of the building has facilitated the City Council intervention that, despite it always supported the eviction as a solution to the occupation pushing as much as possible for its achievement, shifted its responsibility to the owner. However, far from exempting the owner from any responsibility and missing its interpretation of the facts, it could be finally sustained that Finca Riana S.L. supported the Barcelona City Council's political will undertaking the legal action required to carry out the eviction which was seen as the only solution to dismantle this informal settlement and to stop their empowerment finally.

The struggle of the Puigcerdà UCs

Since the undertaking of the first legal action by the private property, the sub-Saharan community, organised around the 'Som 300' organisation (We are 300), started to struggle to save the informal settlement from the eviction and to defend their basic rights. They soon received the support of many local social movements and civil society organisations, among which the Poblenou Neighbourhood Association, human rights organisations, a team of lawyers and the left-wing opposition parties. Their support was crucial, not only in drawing the media attention on their cause but also in building the struggle, both at the level of discourse and at the level of everyday actions. In the beginning, they were reclaiming three main rights in relation to housing, employment and papers. In terms of housing, they were reclaiming the right to use the factory as a living and working place, standing up against the eviction and demanding from the public administration to do some basic works on the building such as bringing running water and lights. In terms of employment, they were reclaiming the right to legally work as waste pickers and be formally included in the waste recycling sector, by legalising waste picking and creating a waste picking cooperative. In terms of papers, they were reclaiming the right to administratively be included in the Spanish society obtaining a residence permit. The first result of this struggle, thanks to the support of the team of lawyers, was represented by the cancellation of the first eviction order for a formal technicality in March 2012. However, despite the expectations and hopes generated by this achievement, the legal action soon was reactivated by Finca Riana S.L. and the eviction seemed only a matter of time. Nevertheless, although it seemed that the Puigcerdà factory's fate was already

marked, the Sub-Saharan political subject continued to organise marches and events, and they started not only to defend the factory inhabitants' rights but the whole Barcelona African immigrants' rights, expanding their claim far beyond the wall of the factory.

The City Council's approach to the Puigcerdà UCs: The Irregular Settlements Plan

As the date of the eviction approached and the media and social pressure increased, the City Council decided that in order to limit its reputational costs, it had to provide for the subsistence of the group that would have crumbled through eviction. For this reason, the City Council decided to implement a public programme to provide an integrated form of subsistence dedicated primarily to this social group, at least until they could get into the formal labour and housing market. Before the occupation of Puigcerdà, the City Council never worked on public policies to address sub-Saharan immigrants' conditions, re-directing these people towards general social care services, such as the Social Inclusion Service (SIS). However, as a public officer mentioned, they were ineffective in order to tackle such a problem as they targeted a profile very different from the one of the sub-Saharan social group. This is why the City Council decided to create a dedicated social care service called 'Oficina de Asentamientos Irregulares'- Irregular Settlements Plan (Opai). The objective of Opai was to 'provide a support to all people living in informal settlements in Barcelona during their path towards a social, economic and administrative inclusion, guaranteeing decent life conditions, in terms of housing, employment and administrative status, with the aim to eradicate the informal settlements phenomena from Barcelona' (Ayuntamiento de Barcelona, 2012b). The Opai began to be operational in January 2013, facing the Puigcerdà settlement as its first and primary challenge. However, despite the objective to provide the subsistence, the Opai turned out to be more an aesthetic than effective operation because it always prioritised the eviction of this social group over the provision of subsistence to this social group, prioritising the political problem over the social one.

During the period before the eviction, Opai's focus was to 'drain' as many people as possible from the Puigcerdà informal settlement in order to limit the growth of the informal settlement and of the effects of the humanitarian crisis that would have followed the eviction. Thus, the first step was to send the Red Cross to define a census of the inhabitants (that has always been contested by the same inhabitants) setting the number of Puigcerdà inhabitants who were going to be entitled of social cares, in order to avoid a 'knock-on effect'. Afterwards, the Opai's social workers proposed to Puigcerdà residents who were listed in the census to enter the programme. Among recorded residents, only some of them decided to enter the Opai while all those people who distrusted institutions decided to stay and resist in Puigcerdà until the eviction order would

have arrived. However, when the eviction seemed around the corner, many more people decided to accept the support of the City Council and entered the programme. Sub-Saharan immigrants who decided to enter the Opai were guaranteed accommodation until they were economically self-sufficient to access the formal housing market. By the end of 2013 more than 260 people were housed by the Opai (Ayuntamiento de Barcelona, 2014). Finding a considerable amount of accommodation in such a short time was a logistic challenge for the Opai that, in the beginning, being the people too numerous and being the amount of public housings too scarce, housed Puigcerdà residents mainly into guest houses, spending an enormous amount of money. In parallel, the plan started to develop a more integrated social service where each person could be followed by a social worker with whom he/she would have drawn a work plan according to his/her administrative status and his/her working skills. People who entered the Opai were able to decide if they wanted to benefit only from the accommodation or if they preferred a more integrated support. However, the integrated support part of the programme was the one that took a long time to become operational and, in the beginning, the accommodation represented the only real support offered by the City Council.

Concerning the administrative status, the Opai started to provide an advisory service through a team of lawyers. Nevertheless, since this was an area of responsibility of the Spanish State, the Opai could do very little. According to the Spanish Immigration Law, only by having a full-time one-year contract, immigrants could apply for a residency permit. However, the City Council never denied its support to the cause and backed by the sub-Saharan political subject in defence of immigrants' rights, pressuring the delegation of the Spanish State to issue exceptional residency permits to all recorded residents and processing also the requests that were not supported by legal requirements. However, the delegation of the Spanish State always denied any facilitation to the regularisation of irregular immigrants. According to the Social Rights Department Report by the end of 2013, only 4 people obtained a residency permit (Ayuntamiento de Barcelona, 2014). Therefore, the only area of intervention left to the City Council, besides the provision of temporary accommodations, was the employment area. In this relation, the Opai built a training and employment plan through which enterprises were financed by the City Council, the regional government and the Caixa Bank to hire people with irregular administrative status at least for one year. Through this policy, the municipality allowed immigrants, on the one hand, to apply for a residency permit and, on the other hand, to start being economically self-sufficient. However, also this part of the plan took a long time to become operational and the first year only 20 employment contracts were negotiated.

In summary, the Opai was trying to provide an integrated form of subsistence, but some of its measures were inappropriate and ineffective to tackle the condition of multiple exclusion of such numerous sub-Saharan social group. Guaranteeing accommodation for all recorded residents and re-housing, during an indefinite period, more than 260 people into guest houses was a temporary and costly solution that didn't solve their conditions since the Opai could not provide employment and administrative regularisation for all. Considering that out of 260 people housed only 20 of them signed an employment contract and only 4 were issued a residency permit, it means that many people find themselves with a place to sleep but without any possibility to subsist, as they couldn't carry on informal economic activity and couldn't pool resources together any longer. A sub-Saharan resident said:

'In a way, he (the politician in charge of the Social Rights Department) achieved that people were not thrown into the street by putting them in a hostel, paying a lot of money, as he said. But why has this money been spent? Because you cannot live in a hostel ... you need food, you need work. Surely it is a way to help, but it was in his own way' (PUCs-08).

The same subsistence also lacked for all those people who went on their own either because they distrusted institution or because they were not listed into the Red Cross census or because they were at risk of repatriation. In other words, the City Council, despite guaranteeing accommodations to all recorded residents prevented that the majority of them would have ended up in the street after the eviction, it was actually worsening the conditions of some of them as it couldn't guarantee that type of integrated subsistence that they were able to provide themselves within the factory.

The City Council had it clear that it was impossible to provide from one day to the next the same type of integrated subsistence that the sub-Sahara inhabitants had managed to achieve within the factory. Even though the City Council was aware of this impossibility, it never put into question the eviction order as the only solution and never tried to work with the Puigcerdà inhabitants. Although the Sub-Saharan inhabitants request to continue living in Puigcerdà, to keep providing for their subsistence through waste picking and to maintain the sub-Sahara community that had been created, the City Council never thought that the Puigcerdà settlement could have been maintained and improved thanks to the support that the City Council could have provided. As a politician of the opposition said:

‘Never the Convergence and Union's government had a personal and human attitude and never empathised with the possibility that something could have been developed there (Puigcerdà factory) with the Sub-Saharan inhabitants' (PUCs-03).

This is because the primary objective was not to provide for the subsistence of the sub-Saharan group but as a neighbour said the primary objective was ‘to disintegrate them, disperse them, and if it could be done, then let them go' (PUCS-06). In other words, the City Council main objective was to eradicate the settlement and disarticulate the Sub-Saharan community, debilitating their self-governing capacity, weakening the strength of their collective claims and dynamiting the political subject. Besides, sustaining the eviction pushing the legal action of the owner, draining Puigcerdà, offering individual legal and employment support, re-housing residents in guest houses all over Barcelona and building an individual-oriented social care service with the Opai, actually crumbled and scattered the Sub-Saharan community. The latter, once the eviction order took place, had lost the possibility to meet into assemblies, to discuss actions and strategies, to mobilise marches, that is, to empower themselves.

Eviction

Despite the struggles and the protests, the appeals and the marches, the eviction order arrived in June 2013 and it was executed the 24th of July of the same year. The use of police forces was impressive with 50 police vans of the regional police that arrived early in the morning on site. After the eviction, some of the residents accepted the accommodation places offered by the Opai while another group decided to continue its struggle moving into the near-by Sant Bernat Church for three more days, before also deciding to accept the accommodation of the Opai or to go on their own. All people who did not enter the Opai either because they distrusted institutions or because they were not listed in the census of the Red Cross or because they were at risk of repatriation relied on their solidarity network and the support of civil society organisations. The latter, in fact, kept guaranteeing help and support to all the residents. On the one side, they organised an informal office within the ‘Ateneu Flor de Maig' (an occupied social centre) in order to advise and assist all the resident of Puigcerdà with their residency permit, processing more than 87 applications. On the other side, due to the ineffective social intervention proposed by the public administration, they were pushing the City Council in order to guarantee employment support to the sub-Saharan social group. In this respect, an idea that already emerged during the period of the occupation was taking hold capturing the interest of the City Council: the waste picking cooperative.

The City Council's approach to the Puigcerdà UCs: The Waste Picking Cooperative

The City Council included in 2014 this pilot waste picking cooperative in its agenda. The project aimed to provide an integrated support to a selected group of sub-Saharan immigrants, in terms of housing and administrative support, while developing a cooperative that had the aim of formalising waste-picking, spreading cooperative values and empowering workers. The 'Alencop' cooperative project was supported by a technical team of two people gathered in an association called 'Procop'. It was planned to be developed into two phases involving a progressive increase of cooperative workers. In the first phase 2014-2015, 15 people were selected among 35 candidates proposed by the Opai, of which not all of them were coming from the Puigcerdà settlement. In the second phase, 2015-2016, 15 more people were incorporated, of which not all of them were coming from any informal settlement. Thus, the group of people was very diverse in terms of administrative status, language skills, basic needs and adherence to cooperative values. As soon as workers were selected they were given housing, basic needs and administrative support. In terms of housing, the project involved the provision of rent public housing, but at least in the first phase, this provision was not accomplished due to the scarcity of the Barcelona public housing stock, so they had to turn to the private housing market. In terms of basic needs, Procop created a social currency in order to justify the expense of the City Council, and each worker was given the value of 200 euros per month. Nevertheless, many of the workers were unsatisfied with this solution. They argued that the network of shops was not big enough to provide an acceptable degree of freedom in the selection of food and products that often resulted more expensive than in other shops. In relation to the administrative status, a collective application was submitted by a team of lawyers, demanding regularisation for 'exceptional reasons' for all irregular workers. Currently, 23 out of 30 have been regularised, considering that 5 had already a residency permit, 18 already undertake the regularisation process, and 7 people are pending for a response. The collective regularisation was considered a success, since it was the first time that such regularisation was demanded for an entire collective and not individually (IGOP, 2017).

In parallel to this, Procop and selected workers were working to set up the waste picking cooperative that became operational in June 2015 with the name of Alencop. Although Alencop is commonly addressed as a waste picking cooperative, the economic activity changed substantially from the one carried out by the same workers when they were doing informal waste picking. In order to formalise and regularise this activity within the framework of existing rules that consider waste-picking illegal, Alencop provides a free service for home waste collection. Thus, from a legal point of view, waste is freely and spontaneously donated by enterprises and private individuals to

the cooperative. In the first phase, the service was provided only in the Sant Martí and the Sant-Andreu district. Once the collection is terminated, waste is stored and sorted in a private warehouse. At this point in the chain, once waste is classified, it has to be sold to waste managers or other recycling companies in the same way as informal waste pickers were doing. Currently, Alencop is not a self-sufficient business and can count on a very limited turnover. Public resources cover 80% of the business, while only the 20% is in-house produced. The project aims to achieve a balanced system where, in the forthcoming years, 50% of the economic sustainability would be guaranteed by the same cooperative. Nevertheless, in order to achieve this sustainability level, the business spectrum has to be widened since waste house collection would never provide such a turnover. This is why the cooperative is currently working alongside two strategies. On the one hand, they aim to increase the number of individuals and enterprises that donate waste by bringing the service to other neighbourhoods and by stipulating agreements with more enterprises. On the other hand, they aim to acquire an environmental licence in order to become a waste manager and increase the treatments they can carry out over waste, beyond the simple collection and sorting.

Alencop project is still ongoing and it is difficult to evaluate it. It surely represents a big step forward in comparison with the Opai programme. However, the diversity in the workers' group represents one of the biggest limits of the project that could be considered as a model whereby the creation of the cooperative and the development of cooperative values among participants should not be the starting point, but the aim of the project itself (IGOP, 2017). This is a commendable objective which would also be understandable considering that it started from scratch. What makes it less understandable is the fact that the origin of this cooperative is based on the ashes of the Puigcerdà settlement where a community on which it could have been possible to work already existed. It is evident that the City Council's intention was not to work with the same Puigcerdà inhabitants' group and didn't have the objective to help this community to rebuild itself, especially after all the effort put to reach its disintegration. From the economic point of view, Alencop represented an attempt to regulate the relation of exploitation built between market forces and waste pickers. However, since it does it within actually existing rules, it changes substantially the way this economic activity is usually informally carried out. Through this type of formalisation, waste picking does not provide economic self-sufficiency for the cooperative that relies mostly on public funding. This economic dependence impacts workers' empowerment that, without having the conditions to become more accountable for the management of the business and to self-sustain themselves, do not feel to be part also of a workers' cooperative but only of a social inclusion scheme.

What remains of Puigcerdà UCs

Nothing is left of the Puigcerdà UCs. Currently, the Puigcerdà site is still one of those in-the-meantime spaces pending redevelopment opportunities in the Poblenou. The Self-Sufficient Island has not been built and the ownership is still in the hand of the of Finca Riana S.L. The only work carried out is the demolition of a consistent portion of the estate, perhaps to avoid further occupation. The unaccomplished development of the area is a further evidence of the lack of urgency behind the legal action undertaken by the private property and confirms the crucial role played by the City Council in pushing for the eviction. Concerning the Sub-Saharan community, the political subject they formed has been wholly disarticulated with the eviction. The City Council partially guaranteed the subsistence to those who entered the Opai and to those who entered the Alencop cooperative. However, most of them went on their own, still at the margin of the labour and housing market and the margin of the administrative system, but without the possibility to rely on such an integrated form of subsistence and without collectively reclaiming their rights.

What remains of The Common in question

Although migration flows from the Sub-Saharan region has diminished, currently, many sub-Sahara immigrants irregularly live in Barcelona. They are still in a condition of multiple exclusion and they still have to find informal forms to subsist. What has changed is not their conditions but the difficulty to self-organise to change them and the way to face them. With the eviction of Puigcerdà and the implementation of the Opai, the sub-Sahara immigrants' empowerment and political mobilisation were brutally held back. Some people gathered in the 'Espacio del Inmigrante' (Immigrant' Space) organisation and who continued to keep struggling by giving support to sub-Sahara immigrants, but the Puigcerdà dispersion caused the disappearance of the collective perspective of the struggle, characterised by a larger scale and long-haul. Moreover, in order to have a roof to sleep, they stopped the occupation of big industrial factories in the Poblenou and moved towards single-flats occupation in even more suburban areas, such as the 'Mina' or the 'Besos' neighbourhood. Some informal settlement, with a reduced number of residents (ranging from 6-10 people), still persist in the Poblenou, while bigger informal settlements currently are taking place outside Barcelona, in smaller cities of the metropolitan area, such as Badalona. In order to reach a sufficient income to subsist and because the amount of metal waste that can be collected has decreased with the crisis of the construction sector, there are less and less people working as waste pickers while more and more are working as informal street vendors since tourism is always a reliable economic sector in Barcelona.

It also seems that the need to self-organise a political subject has not entirely disappeared and, despite the City Council's intention to disperse it with the eviction of Puigcerdà, it is being currently re-articulated. This articulation has been built around the new informal street vending activity. In recent years, as street vending has increased in the public touristic space of Barcelona and the government of Barcelona en Comú seems more permissive, the issue has emerged in the public debate as an argument to attack the new government and claim a more direct intervention to control it. However, as the sub-Saharan street vendors again have seen their primary form of subsistence threatened, they have organised themselves, always with the support of social movements and civil society organisations, giving form to the 'Sindicato Popular de Vendedores Ambulantes' (Street Vendors' Popular Union). The Union with the campaigns, 'Surviving is not a crime' and 'No one is illegal' has the aim to dignify and legalise this activity while struggling for the whole immigrants' rights, especially administrative ones. The Union was officially set up the 10th of October 2015. It is still too early to evaluate its achievement, but surely it represents a starting point for re-organising a social group that otherwise would have been silenced.

The approach of Barcelona en Comú

Almost all the interviewees were quite critical with the new government. Almost everyone has claimed that if the government of Ada Colau had to face an informal settlement as big as that of Puigcerdà, it would not have been able to stop the eviction. Most likely the approach would have been different. It may have intervened earlier and the relationship with the sub-Saharan social group and with the other social movements could have been more fluid. However, most likely the outcome would have been the same. In fact, as a neighbour said:

‘the government of Barcelona en Comú has had already to solve some cases of informal settlements, albeit of smaller dimensions, such as the Calle Pamplona one (Poblenou) and, in the end, it proceeded in the same way of its predecessors’ (PUCs-06).

Moreover, the Opai is still an active programme, but it still maintains a significant imbalance between housed people and people who are regularised and offered work contracts (Ayuntamiento de Barcelona, 2016b). The novelty is that the City Council does not wait anymore for private companies to offer contracts which are now offered directly by public companies. Furthermore, facing now the problem of the informal street vendors, the City Council's response has been the setting-up of a cooperative of Street Vendors in the summer of 2017. This cooperative is too recent to be evaluated, but at first sight, it does not seem much different from the one created by the

conservative government. Surely, as claimed by a public social worker, unlike the past government that built policies for immediate reaction, this government takes the time to reflect and plan more long-term and so it is probably for this reason that they have not implemented any new policy. In other words, there are no substantial changes in the policies of Barcelona en Comú to solve the multiple exclusion of the sub-Saharan immigrants, although there is undoubtedly a greater openness and greater dialogue. As the same public social worker said:

‘There are good intentions and I hope there are more margins of manoeuvre, but at the moment they (Barcelona en Comú) are not being brave enough to address this issue from an alternative perspective’ (PUCs-09).

4.3.2 The Escocesa UCs



Figure 4.4: Courtyard of the Escocesa UCs
Source: Archzine website

Summary of the Escocesa UCs

The Escocesa is an art centre set up by an artists' group at the end of 1990 in the industrial neighbourhood of the Poblenou during its economic activities' decline when artists could benefit from affordable studio spaces. With the redevelopment of the area put in motion by the 'Barcelona Strategic Cultural Plan' and the '22@ Plan', real estate speculation undermined the space. After a year-long artists' struggle, the Escocesa was saved by the City Council that turn the building into a public asset and included it into the 'Art Factory Programme', temporarily granting the space with an ambiguous agreement to the same artists' group. After ten years, due to the programme's professionalising requirements and due to the programme's need to provide universal access to studio spaces, the City Council aimed to force artists' group out in a moment when no more affordable studio spaces in the Poblenou were available. This was perceived as a threat by artists' group that did its utmost to keep staying in the Escocesa art centre.

Urban Commons	The Common
The relation was established between a group of artists and a former industrial warehouse	Democratic and de-commodified art production

Table 4.18: Escocesa UCs' main analysed elements
Source: Author's elaboration

Location of the Escocesa UCs

Barcelona, Poblenou neighbourhood, Street Pere IV 345

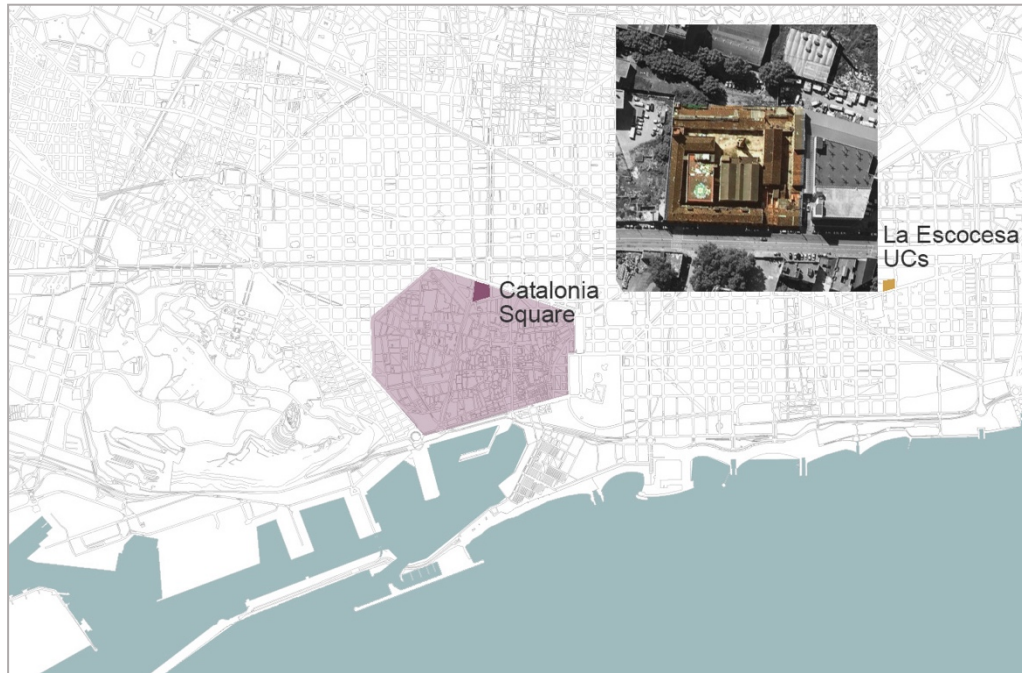


Figure 4.5: Location of the Escocesa UCs
Source: Author's elaboration

The timeframe of the Escocesa UCs

1999-current

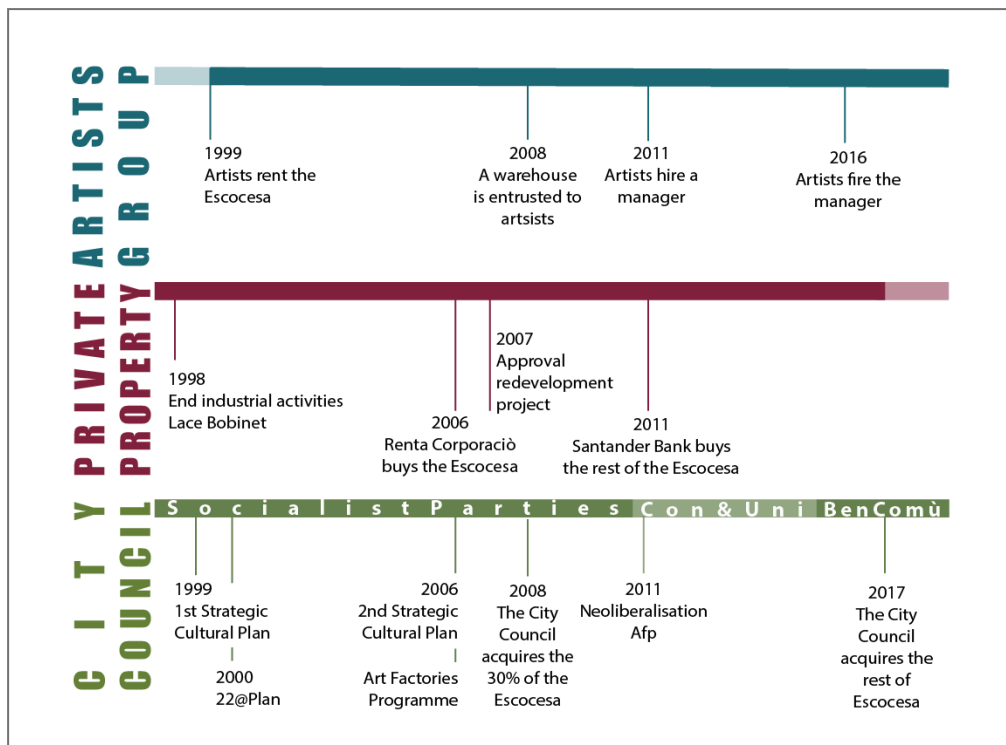


Figure 4.6: Timeframe of the Escocesa UCs
Source: Author's elaboration

The Common in question

Art production, as well as the condition of artists, has profoundly changed in the last century. Since the 1950s art has become a valuable and secure economic good whose production is financed both by private actors and public institutions (Zukin, 1989; Harvey, 1990). Both patronages, despite the public one has also contributed to democratising art production, have created a high-competitive environment, where artists struggle among them to be sponsored and where artists' creativity is affected by the parameters dictated by the public and private needs. In this highly competitive environment, young, unsaleable and low-income artists who cannot obtain or fail to obtain any type of patronage or do not want to adapt to private and public demands, have serious difficulty in continuing their careers. Some artists' groups have tried to break away from this pressure, developing collective forms to democratise and de-commodify art production without being subject to market and political demands. The example of the many artists' community galleries and alternative art spaces that developed in Soho in the 1970s were an evidence of this need (Zukin, 1989). In some cases, following the uneven geographical and historical development of capitalism, the achievement of such democratised and de-commodified art production has been facilitated by the same market and state forces that provide access to affordable working spaces within the city.

Since the 1960s and 1970s, many Western cities' industrial neighbourhoods have undergone a decaying process during which land and property values have dropped. Artists' groups began settling in these in-the-meantime spaces attracted by the aesthetic of the urban fabric in decay, the diversity of the social composition, the freedom from middle-class conventions and restraints, but especially by the low-cost accommodation for living and working spaces (Cameron and Coaffee, 2005). In those neighbours, artists' concertation grew significantly producing different types of independent art centres and giving form to what in the literature has been defined as a 'creative milieu', an area that, recovering the Marshallian concept of agglomeration, contains and generates a diverse spectrum of creative activities and spaces that relate and interconnect among each other (Scott, 1999). In these milieus, where rent prices were far below market average, artists and especially young, unsaleable and low-income artists, could settle and produce art not entirely but definitely more independently from market demands and cultural policies as they did not necessarily have to worry about the economic and artistic success of their careers. In other words, in these creative milieus, affordable access to workspace was allowing a democratisation and de-commodification of art production. Many are the example mentioned in the literature: from Soho and the East Village in New York (Cole, 1987; Zukin, 1989) to the East End in London (Green,

2012). Among them, it can also be mentioned the Poblenou neighbourhood in Barcelona (Martí-Costa and Pradel i Miquel, 2012).

The Escocesa UCs (1999-2006)

From the 1980s onwards, in the Poblenou industrial neighbourhood (see also the section 4.3.1), factories started to close down and artists' groups began settling in the area creating numerous art spaces and giving shape to what in the literature has been called the 'Poblenou creative milieu' (Martí-Costa and Pradel i Miquel, 2012). Within this creative milieu, there was also the Escocesa art space. Before being an art space, the Escocesa was a Scottish factory dedicated to the production of cross-stitch for curtains and other household items since the late XIX century. The factory was constituted by a 7500 sqm warehouses surrounded and enclosed by factory workers' houses. The business continued until 1984 when, as many other factories in the Poblenou, stopped its activity. For some years the factory has been self-managed by some of its workers who created the 'Lace Bobinet S.A'. However, the self-managing attempt also failed and industrial activities officially terminated in 1998, leaving the warehouses empty (Nug Arquitectes, 2009). After one year, in 1999, creative professionals started to rent the factory. A group of artists who was forced to move out from another Poblenou warehouse, 'The Submarine', found the vacant building of the Escocesa. In the beginning, they were around 12-13 artists with very different specialisation and different social status. They rented two warehouses using two different organisations, each one occupying one of them: the 'Espai M' and 'Los del Otro Lado' organisations. The two organisations were constituted in order to facilitate the relation with the owner who had to deal with and be paid by the two organisations instead of dealing with and be paid by many tenants.

In those times the Escocesa art space was rather independent. Artists maintained a relation with the owner to pay the rent. This relation, despite the initial distrust of the owner, was rather peaceful, as both of them were benefitting from it. Artists could benefit from the affordable renting prices of wide industrial spaces in a rather central area of the city while the owner could benefit from a low but constant profit in a time when these spaces were otherwise unprofitable. Instead, artists did not have any relation with the Barcelona City Council. In those times, the City Council, despite it was working on the first Strategic Cultural Plan for the City, it did not pay much attention to the development of the Poblenou creative milieu (Martí-Costa and Pradel i Miquel, 2012). During this time, within the factory, artists did not develop strong relational ties among them. Their cohabitation was peaceful, but each of them was mainly interested in maintaining its space in the factory to produce his own art without any aim to build a shared art project. This is also why

conflicts were rather absent because, as an old Escocesa member said, 'they were sharing little, mainly the bills, and few decisions had to be taken together' (EUCs-04).

The relation between artists and the Escocesa warehouse (1999-2006)

Indeed, the relation that all the artists had with the Escocesa warehouses was mainly based on economic interests. Artists needed access to affordable spaces to work, with some specific characteristics, such as wide-open areas, abundance of natural light, and proximity to the city centre, and the industrial site of the Escocesa met all of them. Through this access, if generally only who can afford the uncertain economic stability could attempt the artistic profession, in the case of the Escocesa, and the Poblenu creative milieu, also young, unsaleable and low-income artists could find a workplace and produce art. One of the French residents of the Escocesa, who was in those time just starting off her art career, said:

'I left Paris because it seemed hard for me to start (my professional artistic career). Just to rent a workshop you needed a lot of money or you had to sign up for a long waiting list of at least two years. The space in Paris is a total luxury, it is not accessible to everyone. Instead, finding a workshop here (in the Poblenu) was relatively easy. The Poblenu and the Escocesa have allowed me to live in a great peace bubble, ideal for developing my work peacefully, and this nourished the energy I needed when I was creating' (Serfass, 2011).

However, some artists also began to develop an identity relation with the space. One of the artists affirmed:

'Mainly we needed a space to work and the Escocesa was a perfect one. However, we also developed an identity spirit within the Escocesa and the Poblenu. When you take a place like this, you refurbish it and you begin to work enjoying your time, you identify yourself and your work with the place' (EUCs-04)

Basically, in the case of the Escocesa factory, the artists social group developed relational ties with the factory mainly due to economic reasons, but it also developed an identity relation with the same Escocesa art space and the Poblenu.

Economic sustainability of the Escocesa UCs (1999-2006)

During the early years, the Escocesa art space was economically self-sufficient. The artists' social group was not receiving any type of public funding as a group and each artist was paying the rent separately. Being many different artists working in the factory that did not come together to develop a shared project, each of them was managing its economic sufficiency differently. There were more established artists for whom arts was their primary source of income, able to sell their work in the art market or through public funding channels; there were artists who were enough well-off that didn't have to worry about self-sufficiency; there were artists that were unable to make a living from arts production, because their arts was not matching market or political criteria or because they were at an embryonic stage of their careers still in the process of trial and experimentation; and there were artists who knew they were not going to make a living with art production, so they had to rely on other jobs for their sustenance. In other words, giving the high number of residents, the economic sufficiency differed from case to case, with some artists that were more and some who were less economic self-sufficient. This diverse and free-of-restrain environment, which was of inspiration for all artists, was a peculiarity of the Escocesa art space.

The expansion of the Escocesa UCs (1999-2006)

As time passed the number of artists who rented a space in the factory grew consistently as well as in the entire Poblenou. By the end of 2006, there were around 75 artists in the Escocesa among painters, sculptors, photographers, circus performers, etc. (Nug Arquitectes, 2009). At a neighbourhood level, also the artists' concentration grew. There are not institutional statistics but, according to the Catalan Visual Artists Associations, by the end of 2006 in the Poblenou, there were 232 artists and 12770 sqm of studios spaces (Paül Agustí, 2014). In this creative milieu, artists began to be aware of their important presence in the neighbourhood. Thus, they decided to set up an annual event in which also the Escocesa took part, the 'Poblenou Open Workshop', with the aim to show the artists' workplaces to neighbours and to establish contact with the local associative life (Martí-Costa and Pradel i Miquel, 2012). The event took place since 1996 and, for the first eight editions, it has been self-organised by artists without any type of intervention and support of the City Council. It represented the evidence of the creative milieu and the relation established among the different art spaces. Moreover, it represented the evidence of the relation between the artists and the neighbours. Unlike other cases of creative milieu in the literature where artists were not welcomed by neighbours that were afraid to be displaced by them, in this case, original Poblenou neighbours never perceived them as a threat, also because of the abundance of abandoned spaces, and considered them instead as an integrated part of their social and economic environment.

The City Council's approach to the Escocesa UCs: from laissez-faire to the 1999 Barcelona Strategic Cultural Plan and the 22@Plan (1999-2006)

During this first phase, the Poblenou creative milieu, as well as the Escocesa art space, also existed because of the City Council's laissez-faire's approach. Although the industrial decline began in the 1970s, the Poblenou neighbourhood maintained its original planning zone for a while. In the 1976 PGM, the Poblenou was zoned as Area 22 (Industrial area), i.e. urban area dedicated mainly to the location of industries and warehouses where development was limited to the building index of 2sqm roof/sqm. With the disappearance of industrial activities, these buildings limits were unprofitable in terms of real estate development. However, in those times, the City Council had not developed any plan to regenerate the neighbourhood. Therefore, as many other creative milieus in Western cities, the artists' concertation in the Poblenou can be considered as what in this literature has been defined as an 'unplanned creative milieu' (Zukin and Braslow, 2011), a milieu that emerges from the lack of public and economic interest in the area. However, these milieus always had a temporary duration since art spaces contributed to revalorize urban areas for its future re-development. This is a well-known process in the literature called 'artists-led gentrification' (Cameron and Coaffee, 2005). It has been widely demonstrated how the arrival of artists progressively prepared the ground for a process of urban revalorization attracting the interest of both local administrations and real estate developers that transform old industrial neighbourhoods into service-based neighbourhoods, sweeping along the current social composition. In this process artists were the pioneer or the shock troops of a first wave of a gentrification process in which artists were successively displaced by wealthier cultural class (Cameron and Coaffee, 2005; Zukin and Braslow, 2011).

In the cases of other unplanned creative milieus, such as Soho in New York and the East End in London, gentrification was mainly driven by private real estate developers with a marginal contribution of the public administration (Zukin and Braslow, 2011). However, in the case of Poblenou creative milieu, the Barcelona City Council played a leading role in the activation of the redevelopment process through the implementation of a pro-growth cultural strategy, i.e. the 1999 Strategic Cultural Plan, and a pro-growth land-use reform, i.e. the 22@ Plan. Both strategies were based on the paradigm of the creative city (Florida, 2003) and the knowledge city (Knight, 1995) that established a link between the installation of culture/creative companies and economic growth. However, although in both strategies culture and creativity were considered the key drivers for the post-industrial transformation of the neighbourhood, the presence of the Poblenou creative milieu was not taken into account in designing these policies.

The City Council adopted the first Barcelona Strategic Cultural Plan in 1999, promoted by the City Council and by ICUB, a public agency created in 1996 merging the different cultural management offices (Zamorano and Rodríguez Morató, 2015). The Plan had two objectives: on the one hand, it aimed to promote culture as a source of social cohesion, increasing the participation of citizens in cultural life and completing the network of public cultural facilities, such as social centres and libraries; while on the other hand, it clearly framed culture as the engine of economic development of Barcelona that could foster the transition from an industrial to a post-industrial city and could augment the city international projection and the recognition of Barcelona as one of the European cultural capitals (Ayuntamiento de Barcelona, 1999). In order to achieve the last objective, the vision of Barcelona as a knowledge city was clearly pictured as the driver of these transformations. In this framework, knowledge included a variety of cultural sectors, such as arts, university and research, technology and communication, and more classic cultural industries, such as publishing and record industries.

The same concept of the knowledge city became the strategic drive of the 22@ Plan, the Poblenou land-use reform adopted by the Barcelona City Council in 2000. Although no reference was made in the 1999 Strategic Cultural Plan to the 22@ Plan and vice versa, it is evident that the approaches are similar. Also in this case knowledge was considered as the new engine for the economic development of the city, recognising that the ‘competitive capacity of Barcelona will depend on its capacity to integrate new technology and to intensify the tertiary-industrial activities rich in knowledge’ (Ayuntamiento de Barcelona, 2000). And also in this case, knowledge should contribute to the city's internationalisation, through which Barcelona, ‘technological capital of Spain, is to become one of the principal technological capitals of Europe’ (Ayuntamiento de Barcelona, 2000). The activities that were included in this development framework were activities related to the information and communication technologies, multimedia, research, design, culture and knowledge.

One of the objectives of the 1999 Strategic Cultural Plan was also to facilitate the condition for the development of the creative sector. However, the Plan's policies implication, from the creation of a dedicated office for the promotion of Barcelona cultural production to the attraction of foreign investment for the audio-visual sector, demonstrated an entrepreneurial approach where the promotion of this sector was seen in the light of the economic development and of the internationalization it could bring (Morató, 2005). It is curious that the Poblenou was mentioned as an area that offered the opportunity to rethink the traditional industrial uses for the ‘creation of private-public spaces suitable for cultural creation and the development of cultural products’ in

order to provide spaces, with the most advanced technologies and infrastructure, that can attract creators and producers from everywhere (Ayuntamiento de Barcelona, 1999). However, in the definition of this transformation, no mention was made to the existing creative milieu of the neighbourhood.

A similar approach can also be found in the 22@ Plan. The City Council considered the Poblenou as a mere area characterised by a 'functional obsolescence' that the same City Council had to solve (Ayuntamiento de Barcelona, 2000). In the 22@ Plan, the many vacant factories, together with those occupied by artists, were considered only disused architectural artefacts, symbols of the economic downturn of the city that had to be turned into productive spaces as soon as possible. In this scenario, the existing artists' community was not considered a productive agent and was only a further demonstration of the economic obsolescence. The redevelopment norms established by the 22@ Plan represented the aim to revert the obsolescence process and re-activate the area through an entrepreneurial approach to cultural, economic and planning policies. In other words, the 22@ Plan and the same 1999 Strategic Cultural Plan interpreted the Poblenou with the same approach: as an empty container to be filled with new functions where no pre-existing cultural agents were present. Thus, both of them did not take into consideration the unplanned creative milieu of the Poblenou to shape their policy agenda.

The threat: the private redevelopment of the estate

The 22@Plan re-zoned the Poblenou neighbourhood from 22A (industrial activities) to 22@ (ICT-driven and knowledge activities) incrementing the building index from 2sqm roof/sqm to 3sqm roof/sqm. In this way, the City Council reactivated real estate developers and banks' interest in the area that soon started to invest in its redevelopment. Therefore, many art spaces started to be under threat and to progressively disappear through a direct and indirect expulsion. Direct expulsions were due to the many redevelopment projects that were carried out where art spaces were located, while indirect expulsions were due to the rise of rent prices that shifted from being under the city average before the plan to be over it after its approval (Martí-Costa and Pradel i Miquel, 2012). There are not institutional statistics, but according to the data collected by an artists' organisation, the Catalonia Visual Artists Association, from 1994 to 2007 eighteen creative spaces had disappeared: 9670 sqm where 188 artists were working (Paül Agustí, 2014). In this context, also the Escocesa art space began being under threat as it was directly affected by a new redevelopment project.

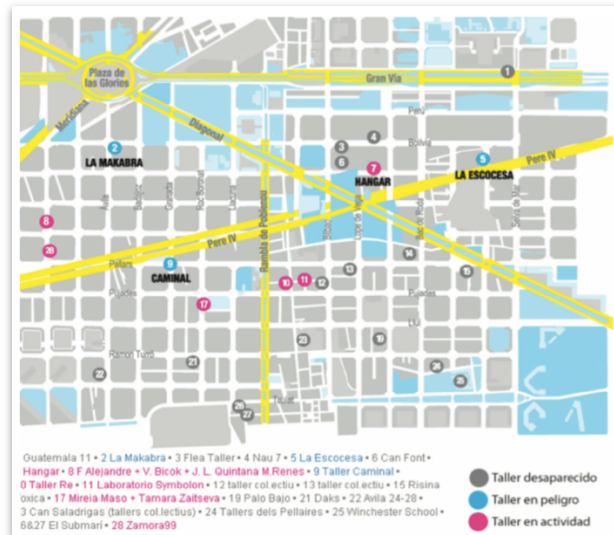


Figure 4.7 Closed and under threat art spaces in 2004 in Poblenou
 Source: Escocesa website

At the end of 2005, the factory was bought by 'Renta Corporación S.A.', a Spanish real estate company created in 1991 to buy, transform and sell estates in European and especially in Spanish capital cities. Some of the interviewees have sustained that this company had dubious connections with Catalan political parties. In some cases, it appeared that such company acquired properties from the municipality to then sell them back to the same City Council after few years at substantially increased prices. Apparently, in the case of the Escocesa art space the plan was not to speculate in such a way, but to redevelop the factory, reforming the existing housing along the Street Pere IV, converting the rest into lofts and handing the remaining 30% (two warehouses) to the City Council as public facilities. As established by the 22@ Plan, for each 100 sqm of private redevelopment the public administration had to retain 31sqm of land, of which 18 sqm to be dedicated to green zones and 10% to public facilities (see also section 4.3.1). The Escocesa redevelopment was approved and made public by the City Council in March 2007. As soon as Renta Corporación S.A. bought the factory, it started to offer economic compensation to artists to facilitate their departure. Many of them accepted the indemnification and moved somewhere else. Only a reduced number of artists decided to remain until the end of their contracts refusing the compensation and campaigning against the redevelopment project.



Figure 4.8 Redevelopment project for the Escocesa warehouses
 Source: Barcelona City Council

The struggle of the Escocesa UCs

Since the implementation of the 22@Plan the Poblenou artists' community came together to defend their interests giving form to a long period of struggles, protests and negotiations in order to preserve their creative spaces, with more or less successful outcomes. Many were the cases that reached the public and political debate, such as the struggle against the disappearance of Can Ricart and the Makabra, two longstanding art spaces of the neighbourhood. However, the artists' struggle was not the only one in the Poblenou. Many local residents and many small and medium enterprises that couldn't afford a place in the new knowledge district began to be displaced somewhere else. This is why artists and neighbours under threat built a sort of a resistance coalition that tried to defend the existing Poblenou physical, social and economic environment. Therefore, in the variety of struggles, those concerning the artists' expulsion was only one of a variety of struggles that included struggles to preserve the industrial heritage, to secure affordable housings for neighbours and to have more participatory processes for each redevelopment projects. Through this mobilisation, the resistance coalition managed to put their claims on the City Council table. From 2006-2007 onwards, many were their achievements. The Plan's social housing provisions were improved, the participatory mechanisms for each redevelopment project were increased, the number of listed heritage buildings raised (with the Special Plan of Poblenou Industrial Heritage) and also the artists' request for affordable studio space was translated into a new policy instrument (Martí-Costa, 2010).

Regarding the Escocesa art space, artists who decided to remain and to struggle were few, around 15 people. This group of artists was mainly formed by those young, unsaleable and low-income artists who could not afford to pay higher rent for a studio space. As one of the artists said 'We were the losers, the one who had no alternative' (EUCs-01). Despite their few resources, all of them aimed to keep alive the Escocesa art space (Eme, 2007). Therefore, in order to channel the claims to the City Council and to facilitate institutional negotiation, they gather into the existing 'Espai M' organisation (Eme). In 2007 the Eme organisation decided to present a project to ICUB to take advantage of the possible transfer of two warehouses that the City Council was dedicating as public facilities space. They proposed the Escocesa to become a public art centre to experiment, produce and spread fine plastic arts. Within the 2400 sqm of the two warehouses, the proposal planned to preserve 800sqm of studio space for the 15 members of Eme, to offer 1000sqm to 20 artists' residencies at an affordable price and to dedicate the remaining 600sqm for public uses and facilities such as a theatre, exhibition space and a darkroom. From an economic point of view, they proposed the City Council and the Regional Government to carry out refurbishment works while economic self-sufficiency of the centre was guaranteed through artists' rents, membership fees and revenue from events and facilities' letting. All the money gained would be reinvested in the same activities of the Escocesa in order to promote a no-profit management. Eme proposed itself as the possible manager of the public art centre, justifying it on the basis of the experience of its members, the international relation it had with other artistic groups, the relation with the neighbours of the Poblenou and finally because it was able to value the collective good that the Escocesa was (Eme, 2007).

The City Council's approach to the Escocesa UCs: the 2006 Barcelona Strategic Cultural Plan and the Art Factory Programme

The 2006 Strategic Cultural Plan emerged from the necessity to update the previous one as the objectives set were considered to be already achieved and new challenges were at the door (Ayuntamiento de Barcelona, 2006c). It represented a shift in the cultural policy approach of the Barcelona City Council and of ICUB from an entrepreneurial towards a more democratic understanding of culture. The new Plan, although it recognised the role of culture as a means to achieve social cohesion and economic development, clearly established that culture had to be the aim and not only the means of cultural policies. The first statements in the Plan were rather illustrative: 'the current challenge of culture, and it is not a minor challenge, is to extend it to all social strata, creating spaces for the enjoyment of culture, for participation in the definition, implementation and evaluation of cultural policies' (Ayuntamiento de Barcelona, 2006c). According to a public officer who contributed to its drafting, the new Plan 'considers culture not as a

commodity to foster economic development, but as a right that everyone can benefit from, independently from his status' (EUCs-03). In specific, the Plan also designed a policy instrument, the 'Fabricas de Creación'- Art Factory Programme (Afp) -, that seemed to counter the negative effects that previous cultural approach had on the Poblenou creative milieu.

The Afp aimed to support existing and new creative activities through the provision of a network of public arts factories across Barcelona. Each factory should represent a different artistic specialisation, assigning its management to arts companies, association or groups. The Afp responded to the Strategic Cultural Plan's objective 'to invest on all type of community-based, private and public initiatives that daily make possible the existence of spaces of risk, of test and trial, and of experimentation in all kinds of artistic languages' (Ayuntamiento de Barcelona, 2006c). Spaces included in the network had to comply with four main principles. Firstly, they had to be in the public interest. This means that the artists' access had to be guaranteed by an open and transparent selection process that also allowed the rotation of artists. Secondly, they had to pursue cultural and artistic interests, giving spaces over to experimentation and innovation, while also sustaining artistic excellence. Thirdly, they had to develop a territorial dimension, forming a relationship with the neighbourhood and offering cultural services to promote social cohesion. Lastly, they had to become spaces for technological innovation in the creative sector. Moreover, all factories included in the network would be publicly funded so that the economic sustainability of each factory would not be a crucial dimension but had to be assessed on a case by case basis according to the management system of each space (Ayuntamiento de Barcelona, 2006b).

The Afp was constituted by two phases: The first phase involved the selection of building and its entrustment to art groups; The second phase involved the refurbishment of the buildings after which the factory would become fully functioning Art Factory and would be publicly funded. The first stage of the programme was characterised by the research of public industrial buildings across the whole Barcelona area that could be included in the network. The requirements for buildings' inclusion were two: the first requirement was that these had to be public industrial buildings of more of 2000 sqm or, if not public, these had to be located on private land undergoing a development process so that these buildings could be transferred to the municipality; the second requirement was that the building had to be in a good state of conservation to avoid costly renovation. However, the inclusion of factories in the network was not based only on these characteristics. The plan also aimed to preserve and take advantage of existing art and creative spaces and experiences with a longstanding trajectory. The Escocesa factory was included in the selection but surprisingly it was not considered for its existing creative activity, but only as an

industrial building that met physical and proprietary requirements (Ayuntamiento de Barcelona, 2006b). According to the 22@Plan 30% rule, two warehouses should be transferred and become public assets. Basically, when the Afp was firstly formulated the ICUB was not fully aware of the artists' group settled in the Escocesa and its claims.

During this first phase, beyond the Escocesa, other six factories were included in the Afp: Fabra i Coats, La Central del Circ, Hangar, La Seca, El Graner, and Ateneu Popular de Nou Barris, of which only Hangar was a former Poblenou art space. This demonstrated that there was no aim to preserve the Poblenou creative milieu. The agreement between the ICUB and each art group for the entrustment of the buildings changed according to its arts specialisation, to its management history and to each art project's objectives. Some factories were long-standing self-managed art spaces and, for this reason, they were allowed to continue to be managed by previous associations (The Ateneu Popular de Nou Barris by the Associació Bido de Nou Barris, Hangar by the Catalan Visual Artists Association). Other factories were entrusted to different organisations, each one representative of a specific artistic sector (Central del Circ to Catalan Circus Performers Association and El Graner to the Catalan Dance Association). Only one space benefitted from a public call (La Seca, that was given to the Performing Brossa Space), and only one was retained and managed by the same Afp to become a multidisciplinary art space (Fabra i Coats). The Escocesa warehouses, included into the programme for their physical requirement, were finally entrusted to the Eme organisation.

The 1st of January of 2008 two warehouses of the Escocesa estate were transferred from Renta Corporacion S.A to the ICUB to be included into the Afp. However, as the ICUB did not yet have a clear idea of the type of artistic specialization that the two buildings could accommodate and, since it was not aware of any other art organization to entrust them to, it decided to take advantage of the presence of the Eme organization by welcoming their claim to manage the building. Thus, on the same month, one of the two warehouses was temporarily entrusted to the Eme organisation. The other warehouse, instead, remained vacant. According to public officers, the temporary entrustment was due to the fact that the Escocesa was not recognized as a long-standing self-managed art space, as in the case of Ateneu de Nou Barris and Hangar, because the Eme association was not an association with a long-standing tradition of social and/or cultural activism and it couldn't rely on well-structured arts project. The contract signed between the ICUB and the Eme organisation established that the organisation could manage one of the two warehouses until the renovation project of the building had been completed, i.e. the second phase of the programme. From that moment on, the Escocesa art project had to be re-discussed and a

public call had to be done to assign the management of the space. The contract did not prevent the Eme association from participating and eventually winning the call. However, in case Eme was to win the call, it was required that the association members would need to leave after two years in order to provide a complete artists' rotation for the sake of public, cultural and artistic interest and to guarantee its open accessibility and use. Presumably, the renovation project would have started after three years so that, considering this time plus the two years, Eme members could maintain their affordable studio spaces for approximately five years.

The evolution of the City Council's approach to the Escocesa UCs

2008-2011

During the years 2008-2009, after the entrustment of the building and before the Afp second phase began, the Escocesa became a not-for-profit art centre self-managed by the Eme organisation. It had an exhibition and a multidisciplinary space and twenty-one studio spaces, of which fourteen were occupied by Eme's members while the other seven were long-term (one of two years), short-term (up to six months) and dedicated stay (project-related) temporarily rented through public calls. From an internal management point of view, the assembly was the administrative body accountable for decision-making of the Eme organisation. In relation to the permanent and temporary artists' status, the assembly decided that also the temporary artists could be part of the organisation and vote. This was a controversial decision that successively profoundly influenced the manageability of the Escocesa because for temporary residents the Escocesa represented only a transitory workplace to which they were related for economic and professional interest only. From an economic point of view, the Escocesa was self-sufficient. Artists paid a symbolic rent of around 100-120 Euros, depending on studio space size, that together with the membership fees were going to be reinvested in shared arts activities and projects to be carried out by the Eme organisation. In this period, the Escocesa continued to participate in the Poblenu Open Workshop, but it also started to organise a more integrated range of activities such as festivals, workshops, conferences, debates and interchanges with other international arts factories. The Escocesa was also enjoying a good level of independence from the ICUB. In this period, in fact, the ICUB was not giving the Escocesa any financial support on top of the temporary entrustment of the building because of its temporary situation, therefore it did not require the Escocesa to meet specific characteristics or performances. Moreover, the relation with Renta Corporacion S.A. became a rather peaceful. Due to the crisis, the company decided to stop the redevelopment and therefore it did not represent anymore a threat to artists.

In 2010, the second phase of the Afp began and all the factories started to be refurbished. The Escocesa was the only one in which the refurbishment works did not start. The reasons given by a public officer were that 'in those years of economic crisis, in which the municipal budget shrank in all areas, the Afp did not have enough resources to carry out all of the works' (EUCs-06). Thus, it had to prioritise some projects and on this priority list, the Escocesa was the last one. However, a small amount of funding was allocated in a timely manner to secure the building as it was already operating as a sort of public art centre. As soon as the refurbishment works were completed in all other factories, they became fully functioning Afp's Art Factories and started to receive a constant public subsidy. Thus, the Escocesa was the only factory that was not entitled to receive public funds as it could not be considered a fully functioning Afp's Art Factory because the refurbishment was not carried out. However, as the Escocesa was part of the programme and it was functioning as a sort of public arts centre, in order not to leave it in a particularly disadvantaged position the ICUB decided in 2010 to transform the timely allocation into an annually-renewed contribution. In the beginning, the amount of the contribution was small, around 4000-5000 Euros, but it progressively increased over the following years. However, these funds were much lower in comparison to others Afp's Art Factories. This precarious condition created by the postponement of refurbishment works and the reduced amount of public funds has profoundly influenced the manageability of the Escocesa.

Being part of the Afp and being a publicly-funded, albeit imperfect, arts centre implied progressive structural changes in the Escocesa. Firstly, the relationship between the Escocesa and ICUB changed. The latter, in order to justify its inclusion in the programme and the direct investment of public money, began to be more demanding towards Escocesa especially in relation to its compliance towards public and cultural interests. Two of the demands were the most pressing: the realisation of as many public activities as possible and the rotation of as many artists as possible, reducing the number of permanent artists in order to guarantee an open access of the centre to creative professionals. Secondly, the internal management changed. Artists involved in the management, especially the president of the Eme organisation, were no longer able to carry out his/her art project. The management entailed such an amount of work that it could not be carried out during an artist's free time, but rather required a person to be contracted full-time. Thus, at the end of 2011, the organisation decided to hire a manager through a public call dedicating a part of its budget to this new administrative role. The manager became the president of the newly created Board of Directors also constituted by the vice-president, the secretary, the treasurer and five representatives of the Eme organisation. However, even though the Eme organisation appointed the manager, soon he was perceived as a sort of representative of the public institution within the

organisation mainly because he actively pushed the Escocesa to satisfy the public and cultural interests. The assembly still met once or twice a year in order to approve main administrative decisions taken by the Directive Board, e.g. budget allocation. During this period, the rest of the Escocesa estate was sold by Renta Corporacion S.A to the Santander Bank which, in any case, still did not seem to carry out the redevelopment plan.

2011-2016

From 2011 onwards, the Afp was affected by a major cultural policy change. In this year the municipal elections were won by the conservative coalition. The new government set a new cultural agenda, also having an impact on the Afp design. The new guideline for the programme represented a shift towards a market-oriented cultural approach whereby the Arts Factories had to become frontline art centres in order to contribute to the city's cultural internationalisation and professionalisation (ICUB, 2011). In the word of the same 2011 ICUB Report, the guiding lines of the Afp were: 'positioning factories on an international scale; generating new content with the highest quality and artistic excellence; promoting the integration of these factories within existing cultural projects and networks; and seeking new ways of hybrid management (in collaboration with other sectors beyond the public administration) in order to make them viable and sustainable in social and economic context as complex as the current one' (ICUB, 2011). In relation to the Escocesa, the ICUB became less tolerant of its precarious conditions because they did not allow the factory to achieve these new objectives. As one of the artists said, 'the Escocesa was a burden for the ICUB which would have liked to get rid of it' (EUCs-07). However, as the ICUB could not send away the Eme organisation until the renovation works had been done and not having any intention of actually carrying them out, it began to put the artists under pressure, pushing for an internal collapse of the Escocesa by underfunding the project while over-demanding results.

During these years, from 2013 onwards public funds increased. Nevertheless, this contribution was still the lowest in comparison with other factories. In 2013 the Escocesa received 44.400 Euro while the Ateneu Popular de Nou Barris 240.901 Euros, Fabra i Coats 156.925 Euros, El Graner 388.287 Euros, La Central del Circ 321.044 Euro, la Seca 254.673 Euro, Nau Ivanow 140.605 Euro and Hangar 486.341 Euro (Eme, 2013). This situation made all Escocesa's artists feel discriminated by the public administration and always in competition for funds with other factories. The underfunding also caused many social tensions among the same Escocesa artists. Since a part of the resources could finance art projects of both permanent and temporary residents, the result was that especially young, unsalable and low-income artists, for whom a little contribution meant a lot, were struggling for an extremely limited budget. Moreover, the underfunding also increased

the tension among artists and the manager. In order to be positively evaluated by the Afp and to receive more funds, the Escocesa had to maintain a high level of performance that was difficult to achieve with inadequate resources and relying only on the overworking and the exploitation of both the artists and the manager which were therefore accusing each other of creating a tense environment.

According to a public officer, the reduced funds were due to two main factors: firstly, the art project developed by Eme never fully developed and secondly, the Escocesa still retained too many permanent studio spaces without a fully artists' rotation and against the public interest. Regarding the first point, according to institutional actors, the Escocesa never achieved that expected level of a frontline creative centre as other Art Factories did. It always remained in between the old tradition of alternative space of the unplanned creative milieu and the new vision of professionalised creative space of excellence promoted by the ICUB and the new government. However, according to Escocesa's artists, the Escocesa never became such a space precisely because of the underfunding. Regarding the second point, surely the Escocesa was still retaining many permanent studio spaces even if this amount was progressively diminishing. In 2016 eleven studio spaces were rented to permanent artists and ten studio spaces to temporary artists while the original ratio was 14/8. In other words, the underfunding caused several tensions both internally, with Escocesa's artists competing for funds among themselves, and externally with the Escocesa factory competing for funds with other Arts Factories. Moreover, it created a mutual distrust between the factory and the ICUB, with the Escocesa accusing the ICUB of unjust funding distribution and exploitation, and the ICUB accusing the Escocesa of inefficiency, lack of capability and privileges' protection.

In reality, the reasons for all of these tensions are rooted in the protraction of the precarious condition created by the postponement of refurbishment works and the integration of the Escocesa into the Afp as an imperfect Arts Factory. Due to the lack of realisation of the works, the artists were paying off the effects of a non-compliance with the ICUB requirements, which was implicitly recognised by the ICUB since the underfunding can be interpreted as an assessment of non-compliance. However, this precarious situation that should have lasted no more than five years became an advantageous situation for permanent artists. Since there was no prospect for the works to be carried out soon, the temporary privilege of permanent artists that were retaining affordable studio space (100-120 Euro/per month) was becoming more and more a consolidated privilege. This is the reason why no movement developed among artists to press the ICUB to start the renovation works and more conflict arose with the manager who was pushing the Escocesa to

comply with the rotation's requirement. Retaining the affordable studio space in such a central location of the city and benefitting from, although limited, public funds was an extremely advantageous situation that none of the artists sought to change. As expected and somehow desired by the ICUB, the attempt to protect the space privilege of permanent artists, along with the tension in the struggle for the monetary resources among all artists and the tension between artists and the manager caused, at the end, the collapse of the Escocesa.

What remains of the Escocesa UCs

In September 2016, the Escocesa artists decided to dismiss the manager. This decision was officially taken by the Assembly with a majority vote and it was heavily pushed for by a sub-group of permanent artists who saw him as a threat to their privileges on the space. The dismissal of the manager can be seen as the last desperate attempt by some artists to maintain their affordable studio space stopping the transformation of the Escocesa into a fully functioning Afp's Arts Factory. However, this move, far from achieving its objective, led the Escocesa into a chaotic management period, contributing to worsening the already conflictual relations among artists and between artists and the ICUB. The tension among permanent artists increased. Some of them realised that their privilege on the space and on the funds could finish while others wanted to try at all cost to still retain their privilege. In relation with the ICUB, the chaotic situation brought more pieces of evidence to the accusation that the Escocesa was inefficient, lacked the required level of professionalism and only aimed at protecting its own privileges. This is why the ICUB felt more legitimated to impose its vision on the factory. At the end of the summer 2017, the Escocesa was in an uncertain transition period, with no manager and with a newly appointed president of the assembly who had good relations with the ICUB. The latter, despite its non-compliance, still aimed to lead a progressive transformation of the Escocesa to become a fully Afp's Arts Factory, with many public arts activities and with the rotation of all its artists. Being the Escocesa factory a public property and being part of the Afp, the artists' group no longer had any legitimacy to maintain their affordable studio spaces, especially in the re-valued, saturated area of the Poblenou.

What remains of The Common in question

There are no more traces of the creative milieu in the Poblenou neighbourhood. Nor there are in other areas of Barcelona. The overall Barcelona rent prices have considerably increased and keep increasing without any possibility to control them. However, the artists' need to access to affordable spaces to democratise and de-commodified art production has not disappeared. Thus, currently, many artists moved to the L'Hospitalet de Llobregat, a former industrial city contiguous to Barcelona and connected by the metro line. Here, a new unplanned creative milieu has emerged

with many different art spaces that occupy and use former industrial factories. As one of the artists who settled in the Hospitalet mentioned ‘We started looking for Poblenou, but we noticed that at the same price we had twice as much space in L’Hospitalet and this was a relief for our penniless art career’ (EUCs-08). However, the L’Hospitalet de Llobregat City Council has decided to take advantage of existing art spaces to target the area with a new cultural policy -the Hospitalet Cultural District - that aims to use culture to regenerate the L’Hospitalet the Llobregat from the economic cultural and urbanistic point of view (L’Hospitalet de Llobregat, 2015).

The approach of Barcelona en Comú

The Barcelona en Comú approach to cultural policies shows two lines of work that seem to change the public view in relation to art production and the condition of artists. Firstly, this government recognises the need to free art from public patronage. As stated in 2006-2020 ‘Plan de Actuacio Municipal’ (PAM), ‘Barcelona suffers an excess of cultural institutionalisation with an excess of public protagonism in its cultural actions’ that has to be reinverted. Secondly, this government recognizes the need to foster an artistic and cultural production that benefits the community and not the ‘Barcelona Brand’, through the support of bottom-up artistic experiences that streamline marginal territories and through the improvement of established programmes such as the Afp, so that it will be able to not only generate commercially successful well-known art and cultural products, but also to help socially and culturally regenerate territories of the city (Ayuntamiento de Barcelona, 2017b). However, after two years from the new government's arrival, there are no striking changes in implemented cultural policies that can be detected. At the moment, nothing has changed in relation to the Escocesa and the Afp, on which the ICUB is still working on its revision.

It is clear that the new government have different priorities and that, if culture is undoubtedly important, it is not the most important question for Barcelona, as for example it is the housing one, an undeniable problem, at the centre of the electoral campaign and on which it is much more probable that local government will be evaluated when new local elections will be held. In fact, in relation to access to affordable spaces, as one of the current City Council manager said:

‘Barcelona en Comú is striving to retain affordable living spaces both through the construction of new public houses and through the purchase of existing buildings to be dedicated to public housing but it is not trying to retain affordable workspace to preserve endangered economic activities, as for example art activities’ (EUCs-03).

In fact, the most relevant news regarding the Escocesa is that the City Council recently bought in summer 2017 the rest of the Escocesa real estate from the Santander Bank to build public housing (La Vanguardia, 2017). In other words, although Barcelona en Comú has defined a line of work that aims to limit art and cultural activities' dependence on public patronage and to support bottom-up art practices, it does not yet seem to understand that affordable access to space, more than art activities direct funding, is functional to democratize and de-commodify art production. Perhaps, the local government is already resigned that real estate speculation has already gone too far and that no more affordable workspace for art activities which also young, unseleable and low-income artists can benefit from, such in the case of the Poblenou creative milieu and the Escocesa, can be retained within Barcelona.

4.3.3 The Can Batlló UCs



Figure 4.9 Entrance of the Can Batlló UCs
Source: El Punt Avui website

Summary of the Can Batlló UCs

Can Batlló UCs is an umbrella project that sums different self-managed spaces, a housing cooperative, a school cooperative, an urban garden, among others, that are organised around the ‘Bloc 11 Cultural Centre’. It is located in a part of the 14 hectares former Can Batlló industrial site in La Bordeta neighbourhood. The whole site had been reclaimed for more than 35 years by neighbours to be transformed into public facilities and spaces. However, since the City Council never undertook any redevelopment project of the area, La Bordeta neighbours decided to realise some of those public facilities and spaces through self-management. Despite strongly demanding their autonomy in terms of decision-making process and in terms of self-sufficiency from the City Council, their management model is based on a constructive relationship with the latter that goes beyond traditional social centres’ antagonism and third sectors’ collaboration. This model combines the tension between the claim for self-management with the claim of the defence of the public.

Urban Commons	The Common
The relation was established between a group of neighbours and a former industrial site	Public facilities and spaces

Table 4.19: Can Batlló UCs’ main analysed elements
Source: Author’s elaboration

Location of the Can Batlló UCs

Barcelona, Sants Distric, La Bordeta Neighborhood, Carrer de la Constitució 25

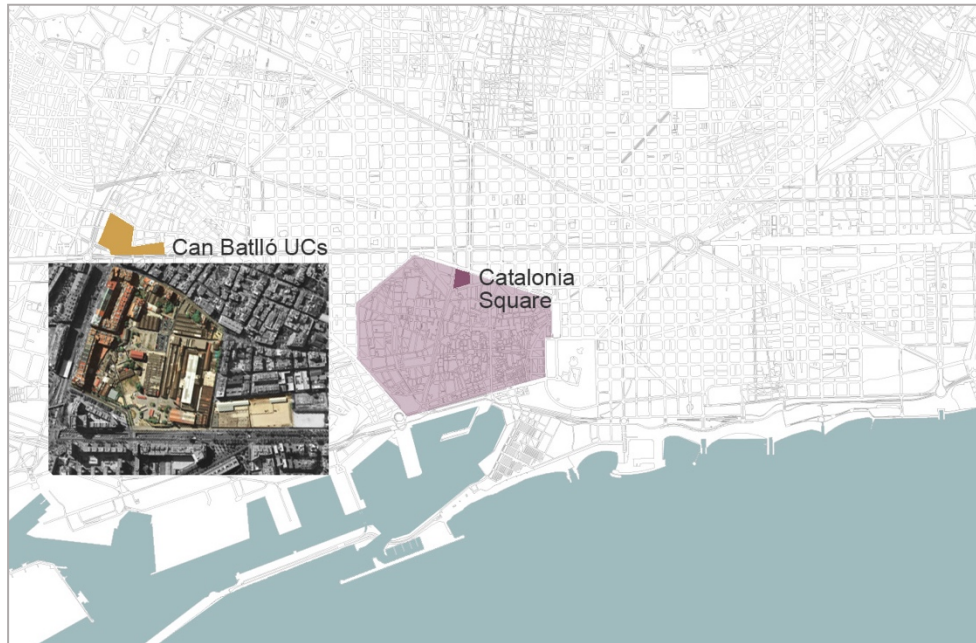


Figure 4.10: Location of Can Batlló UCs
Source: Author's elaboration

The timeframe of the Can Batlló UCs

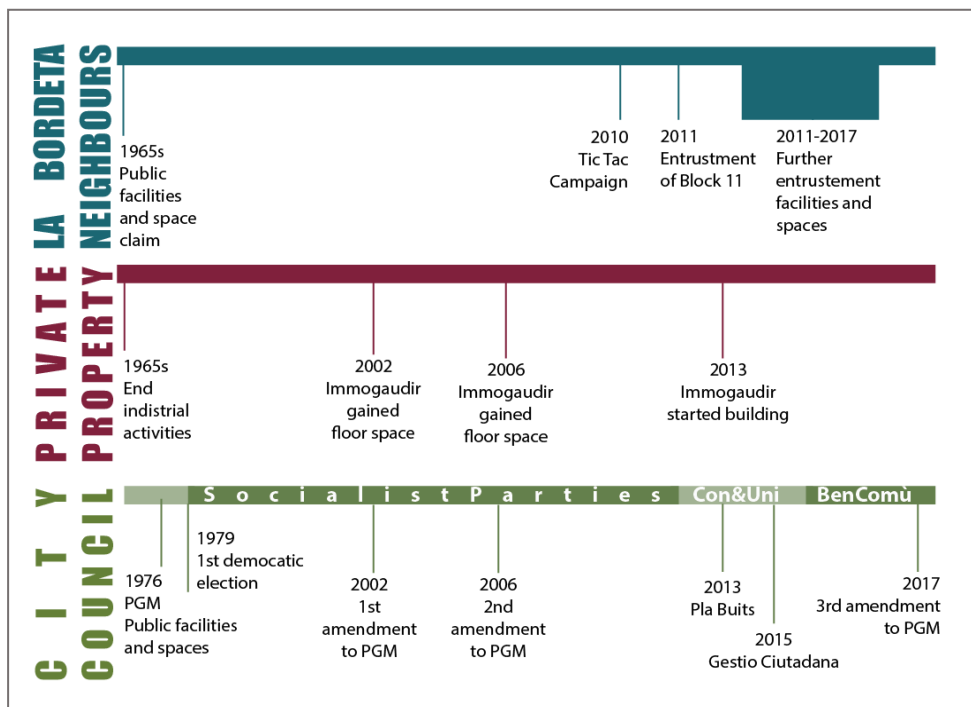


Figure 4.11: Timeframe of Can Batlló UCs
Source: Author's elaboration

The Common in question

From the post-war period onwards, with the development of the welfare state, local administrations have been in charge for the provision of citizens' facilities and spaces in cities. After the institutionalization of the discipline of modern town planning, local governments have been able to control and balance city urban development through the 'Plan' (Benevolo, 1963). The plan allowed, on the one hand, to rationalize the growth of the territory according to zones, typical areas of homogeneous type establishing the parameters and the amount of growth and, on the other, to balance the 'private' development with the 'public' development, establishing the amount of space to devote to citizens' facilities and spaces (hospitals, schools, libraries, cultural centres, green areas, etc.) through urban planning standards (Benevolo, 1963). Subsequently, their realisation was usually carried out by the same public administrations by expropriating the areas and taking charge of the projects. In reality, along the complexification of urban development processes, the expropriation system has been progressively flanked and substituted by other mixed-development systems that rely more on private initiative; moreover the management of some of these facilities and spaces have been externalised by public administrations (Bel and Fageda, 2017). In any case their ownership remained in the hand of public institutions and the use remained open to all citizens. This is why they always been defined as public facilities and spaces.

In some cases, the management of public facilities and spaces has been reclaimed by citizens' groups and it has been self-provide by them. The reclaim and self-provision of these spaces has a double function. On the one hand, it has a political function, as citizens' groups make political demands regarding urban areas where they operate, fostering the rethinking of orthodox urban development as well as urban policies at large. On the other hand, it allows experimenting with alternative forms of organization and government (Martínez Lopez, 2017). As the social movement literature shows, these practices have a long history in European cities with different cycles and phases. The first phase began in the late 1960s mainly through buildings' occupation that give forms in the south of Europe to squatted 'CSOA' social centre (Piazza and Martínez Lopez, 2017). However, with the neo-liberalization of the urban planning and policies that has given more space to private initiatives and sold off entire parts of public assets (Mayer, 2013; Grange, 2014) and with the effects of the crisis that left many empty spaces and abandoned buildings (Tonkiss, 2013), reclaiming and self-managing practices have multiplied in European cities. This multiplication happened also in Barcelona and in the Can Batlló UCs case.

The Can Batlló UCs (1976-1980)

During the Francoist regime the Barcelona approach to urban development left important urban deficits, especially in the working-class peripheral neighbourhoods (Borja, 2009). The industrial neighbourhood of La Bordeta, in the Sants-Montjuic district, was one of them. At the end of the dictatorship it was characterized by a high density and by a strong deficit of public facilities and spaces in comparison with the average of the whole city (Ayuntamiento de Barcelona, 2017c). However, La Bordeta neighbourhood did have a space that could provide a solution for this deficit. From the late XIX century, the Can Batlló industrial site, a huge textile complex enclosed by walls, occupied about 14 hectares which was almost 25% of the neighbourhood's area. The factory had been active until 1964 when due to the crisis of the textile industries it shut down and it was reconverted into approximately 700 workshops rented by workers and artisans, giving form to the so-called 'Ciudad de los Oficios' (City of Trades) (Roman and Corbella, 2014). The factory was owned by the Muñoz-Ramonet family, one of the most 'daring' business family of Barcelona known for its relation to the Francoist elite (Subirats, 2015). Since the shutdown of the factory, the Sants Social Centre, the main representative neighbours' organization, began to claim the area to be used for public facilities and spaces. Responding to this demand, when the General Metropolitan Plan (PGM) was approved in 1976, the entire Can Batlló site was designated as Area 17, 'Zona de renovació urbana en transformació de l'ús' (Change of use for urban renovation), i.e. 'urban area that includes lands with inadequate buildings or uses but apt to absorb the deficits of roads, green areas and facilities' (Area Metropolitana de Barcelona, 1976). The PGM Area 17 allowed that, until the planned transformation was realised, existing uses could be maintained. However, the PGM did not define the planned transformation, which was left to a subsequent detailed plan.

The City Council's approach to the Can Batlló UCs (1980-2006)

Starting from the democratic turn, during the development of the first phase of the 'Barcelona model' (1980-1986), the City Council approach to urban development was to compensate for the urbanistic deficits through small-scale projects in order to provide both suburbs and central areas with public facilities and spaces. However, despite the City Council development interventions, there was already a movement that claimed the self-management of some of those spaces: the cultural centres. Many Neighbours' Associations, organized around the 'Pro People's Athenaeum' campaign, were demanding to be let to provide cultural centres with the support of the public administration, taking back the People's Athenaeum tradition (Andreu, 2014): cultural spaces managed by the urban proletariat that developed at the beginning of the 20th century, then banned during the dictatorship. Nevertheless, the left-wing City Council realized the public

network of 'Centros Cívicos' (Civic Centres), a network of 52 cultural spaces at neighbourhood scale. The first one was inaugurated in 1982, but it wasn't well received by Neighbours' Association as it was interpreted as a form of normalized participation that suppressed the self-management's demands (Sánchez Belando, 2015). During this first phase of the 'Barcelona model' no public facilities and spaces were realized in the Can Batlló site by the City Council, as there were neighbourhood more in need than La Bordeta and no self-management claim emerged from La Bordeta neighbours, as they were still relying, sooner or later, on the City Council intervention.

Successively, with the pre-Olympic period (1986-1992) Barcelona was marked by unprecedented urban development to prepare the city for the big event with the regeneration of several public spaces, the construction of new public facilities and important infrastructural transformations. However, also during this period, the Can Batlló site was not redeveloped due to a lack of interest of the City Council that did not consider the Can Batlló site a priority area of transformation, probably because it was nonetheless peripheral and because, as an activist commented, 'it was an area linked to neighbourhood needs and no to the city Olympic ecosystem's needs' (CUCs-01). The opportunity to transform the area appeared only in the 2000s, on the occasion of the transformation of the adjacent Gran Via avenue. As this represented the main entrance to the city from the airport, it became the object of an important regeneration project through the undergrounding of 2 km of the road, the construction of a new 'Ferrocarrils de Catalunya' train station and the development of the 'Europa Plaza', 34 hectares area to be dedicated to a business-economic district (Roger I Casamada, 2000). However, back then the 'Barcelona model' began its neo-liberalisation process, starting to recognize private interests in public redevelopment projects. Thus, the Gran Via avenue's transformation awakened the owners' interest who was aware of this process and understood the real estate's profit opportunity. In fact, the entire Can Batlló site was owned by 'Gaudir', a real estate company created by the same Muñoz-Ramonet family to take advantage of the general growth of the construction sector.

Despite the original qualification of the PGM, after various negotiations with the City Council, in 2002 Gaudir managed to obtain the approval of a first detailed plan that introduced the destination of 57,000 gross floor sqm to residential use, of which between 25% and 50% had to be dedicated to 'some sort of social housing' (vivienda de protección oficial) while the rest could be left to free-market housing (Ayuntamiento de Barcelona, 2002). However, this achievement was not sufficient for Gaudir that tried to push its economic ambition even further. Following further negotiations with the City Council, in which also the Sants Social Centre participated to defend their demands, the last amendment to the plan approved in 2006 designated 116.427 gross floor

sqm to residential use, of which 67% free-market housing (985 houses), 12% affordable housing (*vivienda concertada*, 179 houses) and 20% social housing (291 houses). The development had to be realized through a 'compensation system' requiring Gaudir to undertake the entire redevelopment, including the public part, under the control of the public administration (Ayuntamiento de Barcelona, 2006a). In other words, with the approval of the 2006 amendment Gaudir obtained the right to dedicate 18.000 sqm of the Can Batlló site to private redevelopment, privatizing land that had been previously designated as public land. This approach was a consolidated feature of the neo-liberalised 'Barcelona Model' and of the left-wing governments that created it: in order to foster the city urban development, it didn't mind ceding public land to private companies as long as they could carry out the development (Moreno and Vázquez Montalbán, 1991). As one of the neighbour said, for Pasqual Maragall, the mayor who governed the city of Barcelona from 1982-1997, the idea was:

'You can do what you want, at the condition that you develop it and it cost nothing to the City Council' (CUCs-03)

Through this model the private sector gained wide profits and the City Council guaranteed the realisation of public facilities and spaces despite at the same time it was depriving neighbours of part of them.

In addition to the recognition of private interest in public redevelopment project, another constant of the neo-liberalization of the Barcelona model was the outsourcing of many of the public facilities that had been created during the first democratic period. In relation to the Civic Centres Network, starting from 1992 onwards, its management underwent an outsourcing process through which the majority, around the 65%, gradually passed from public to private management (Sánchez Belando, 2015). Over the same period, some cases have developed despite they always remained a reduced number, in which the Civic Centres management was reclaimed and eventually entrusted to citizens' associations through different management models (Castro, Fresnillo and Moreno, 2016). However, these cases were always in a legal limbo where self-management was resolved case by case through a temporary granting of the space and they were treated as an exception by the City Council. The dominant model of the citizens' facilities and spaces provision remained that of the public provision and management (or at most outsourced). Actually, there was also another model represented by squatted 'CSOA' social centre linked to the anarcho-libertarian movement. These, although they were cultural facilities, were not recognised by the City Council in the Civic Centres Network.



Figure 4.12: Redevelopment project for the Can Batlló site
Source: Architect website

The neighbours' relation with Can Batlló facilities and spaces (1976-2006)

The relationship that linked La Bordeta neighbours with the Can Batlló area expressed the reclaim of the right to live in a neighbourhood with adequate public facilities and spaces. This relationship is demonstrated by the repeated attempts made by La Bordeta neighbours to have this right recognized. Firstly, during the 'Transition' period that followed the dictatorship, the Sants Social Centre pushed for this area to be dedicated to public facilities and spaces in the PGM. In reality, the claim was modest, as a neighbour said 'we claimed it but silently' (CUCs-04), but it demonstrates the existence of a social group that already in the '70s was reclaiming that spaces (Soler, 2014). The approval of the PGM, therefore, recognized this right and sanctioned it transferring the responsibility for its realization to the City Council. From that moment on, La Bordeta neighbours waited for the City Council' redevelopment project but they never stopped thinking that that space belonged to the neighbourhood. In fact, when the negotiations between City Council and Gaudir began La Bordeta's neighbours always participated in order to push for the redevelopment to be realized through expropriation and to avoid that larger parts of public land were sold-off to the real estate (Soler, 2014). Surely, none of the Sants Social Center members was completely satisfied with the result of 2000-2006 negotiations, but they understood that they had no alternatives and accepted the owner's conditions. In the end, as a neighbour said, 'we got something too, we obtained the approval of a detailed plan, with a green area and with the realization of some of the public facilities that we had requested' (CUCs-05). Thus, with this Plan, La Bordeta neighbours obtained their demands recognised and were waiting the beginning of the redevelopment project by Immogaudir, the new name of Gaudir.

The threat: the 2007-8 economic crisis

Despite Immogaudir already had a final project realized by an architecture firm, the redevelopment did never start. One year after the approval of the 2006 detailed plan, the 2007-8 housing crisis burst and Immogaudir realized that what should have been homes sold at 6000 euors/sqm would have been sold to much less or very probably would not have been sold, so they did not go ahead with the project and postponed it to an indefinite date, being denied their relation with the space. La Bordeta neighbours continued to claim the Can Batlló site for the neighbourhood and continued to put pressure on the City Council who, in response, repeatedly replied that the redevelopment project would have soon started. However, despite the reassuring promises of the City Council, at the end, they understood that, as a neighbour said, 'with the crisis not a brick was going to be put' (CUCs-03). In other words, with the outbreak of the crisis La Bordeta neighbours became aware that the negation of public facilities and spaces was going to last, since the 14 hectares of the Can Batlló industrial site were destined to remain an underused and an inaccessible area. Thus, being aware of this threat they decided to turn it into an opportunity, intervening themselves to get those public spaces and facilities realised.

The struggle of La Bordeta neighbours (2010-2011)

The Can Batlló site wasn't the only redevelopment project affected by the crisis and La Bordeta neighbours weren't the only group of citizens' reclaiming spaces within the city. In that period, the construction sector stopped its activity and many spaces were left vacant and many buildings were left abandoned, pending the reactivation of the economy to be redeveloped. Moreover, local public spending shrank reducing investment for the realisation and maintenance of public facilities and spaces. Facing this scenario there were many cases in which groups of citizens reclaimed these vacant and abandoned spaces, not only to experiment with alternative forms of management, but to challenge dominant urban planning and policies (Calvet-Mir and March, 2017; Piazza and Martínez Lopez, 2017). Thus, what happened in Can Batlló site has to be understood in this widespread mobilization scenario in which reclaiming and self-managing practices spread in Barcelona, following a generalized trend detectable also in many other European cities affected by the crisis, such as Berlin, Paris and Rome (Tonkiss, 2013; Colomb, 2017).

At the end of 2010, La Bordeta neighbours set up the 'Can Batlló es por el barri' Platform - Can Batlló is for the neighbourhood Platform - (CB Platform) supported by the Sants Social Center and soon joined by many activists coming from the urban mobilizations anticipating the 'Indignados' movement (Soler, 2014). As an activist said:

'it did not matter who made it, the private property or the City Council, the important issue was to open up the space to the neighbourhood' (CUCs-04).

To do this they launched the 'Tic-Tac' campaign. This count down campaign consisted to set a specific date, the 11th of June 2011, close to the local municipal Election Day (the elections were to be held on May 22nd but the new government would have taken power on June 11th) threatening to squat the factory if by then the project had not been started. However, despite the pressure made to the City Council and the weekly Tic-Tac demonstrations, it did not seem that the situation was going to be unblocked. Thus, in that period the possibility to squat the factory became increasingly probable. Moreover, during the CB platform's meetings a discourse was emerging among the members. The discourse was:

'What is missing in this neighbourhood? Well, the facilities that the City Council does not want to do, we are going to do them ourselves.' (CUCs-05).

In other words, during the Tic Tac campaign that put on the table the possibility of the occupation, an important shift in the Platform claims occurred: the claim for public facilities and spaces became a claim to also self-manage some of them.

The occupation threat was not well received by any of the other stakeholders because of the turbulent political and social scenario of the moment (Sánchez Belando, 2017). In May, the 15M broke out and Plaza Catalunya was repeatedly occupied becoming the scenario of anti-austerity protests. The property began to be frightened that such situation could be reproduced also in Can Batlló and asked the City Council to protect the industrial site with police forces the day of the threatened occupation. However, the left-wing coalition still in charge did not want to worsen its reputation in the days before the election confirming that police forces would not be sent. Eventually, in May 22nd the conservative coalition won the elections but it would have taken power only on June 11th. This meant that the socialist party didn't care anymore about the day of the occupation and the new government, although it cared, could not do anything to stop it. In other words, no political force was going to intervene. This is why the private property decided to take the path of negotiation. In the end, Immogaudir had nothing to lose: its right to build on a portion of space had already been ratified in the 2006 modification of PGM and, after the redevelopment, the rest of the space had to be in any case transferred to the City Council.

On June 6th, the Immogaudir's attorney called the Sants Social Centre and told to its members that they were willing to transfer them a warehouse. This proposal, although tempting, was rejected by the CB Platform because they weren't demanding Immogaudir's building entrustment, but Immogaudir's building transfer to the City Council that in turn would have entrusted it to the CB Platform. Beside the claim to self-manage public facilities and space, the logic of the CB Platform was to ensure that the space could be definitively torn away from the private property and assigned to the entire La Bordeta neighbourhood. Therefore, this could be achieved only if the warehouse became a public property. In this way, the CB Platform openly contested the City Council's approach to urban development. If the left-wing administrations had sold off and lost public land to encourage private speculation, the CB Platform was trying to recover that land, making the public nature of the property its guarantee. As one of the neighbour said:

'Although we want to self-manage, we want to defend the public and we want to preserve the public heritage, its land and its buildings, not as the City Council did for so many years' (CUCs-03).

With this logic in mind, it was organized a negotiation table in which Immogaudir, the left-wing City Council still in charge and the CB Platform took part. June 9th was agreed the 1500 sqm warehouse 'Bloc 11' (Block 11) transfer to the City Council that in turn would be assigned to the CB Platform.

The choice of the Bloc 11 depended upon the fact that, in the detailed plan, it was already defined as a public facility, it was a listed building and it was close to the main entrance to the industrial site (Marcé, 2014). The contract between the City Council and the Platform (legally registered with the Sants Social Centre as the CB Platform was not a legal body) established a precarious (temporary) entrustment of the Bloc 11 to the CB Platform. However, according to a CB Platform member 'the contract was so ambiguous that it would have been very difficult, if not impossible, to send us away' (CUCs-07). In the contract, there was obviously a clause that would have allowed the City Council to take back the building from the CB Platform, but the conditions set for this were so tight that the right to use it could be considered to be 'sine die'. Some voices within the Platform stressed that this agreement was a limited achievement in comparison to the possibility to reclaim the whole area. However, the majority of the people involved realized that this was an indeclinable offer. If they had occupied the area, they would have never been able to defend the space for a long time and would most likely have ended up with the eviction, letting the

situation fall back to the starting point. While, in this way, the CB Platform was granted the use of a warehouse and on June 12th, with the keys of the space in hand, they triumphantly entered Can Batlló site, re-opening a space that had been closed to the public for more than 35 years, to start self-managing it.



Figure 4.13: Triumphal entry and celebrations in Can Batlló UCs on June 12th 2011
Source: Can Batlló website

The Can Batlló UCs (2011-2016)

Following the triumphal entry and the celebrations, the first General Assemblies were convened. In the first place, they tried to clarify what functions the building should host. Priority was given to those activities that were missing in the neighbourhood, deciding to install on the ground floor a popular library, an auditorium and a meeting space with a bar and on the first floor, a space for sporting activities and several activity rooms. In order to create these spaces, organize their management and coordinate them, various independent commissions and working groups were formed, including, Activities, Library, Space and Design, Communication, Negotiation, Maintenance and Infrastructure and Management Model. They always reported their work to the General Assembly, which was the sovereign body functioning according to the principle of deliberative democracy (Marcé, 2014). Little by little, the spaces and activities of Bloc 11 took shape. In September 2012, after about a year of work, the 'Josep Pons' library, the meeting space, the auditorium and the bar were inaugurated at the time of Annual Neighbourhood Festival. At the same time, a regular cultural programme, which maintained a declaredly critical perspective, albeit a-political, was run proposing film projections, workshops, reading clubs, exhibitions. All rigorously open and free for all. So, after about a year of collective work, the 'Bloc 11' became a

self-managed cultural centre, providing alternative and non-standard socio-cultural services (Sánchez Belando, 2017) and governed according to the principle of horizontal and direct democracy and to the social and solidary economy (Parés, Ospina and Subirats, 2017).

During that first period, the General Assembly also produced a deep internal reflection on the type of self-management that they aimed to develop. In November 2012, the document 'Internal regime of Bloc 11' was issued. In the document, the Assembly defines the nature of the cultural centre:

(The Bloc 11 Cultural Centre) is a neighbourhood space self-managed in the form of direct democracy by the 'Can Batlló is for the Neighbourhood' Platform. This space, located in the industrial site of Can Batlló, is a municipal property, but it has been transferred to the neighbours of Sants and La Bordeta. It is not, therefore, a municipal facility, but a public facility, of the neighbourhood and for the neighbourhood' (Plataforma Can Batlló es por el Barri, 2012).

Newly, the public character of the space was underlined, but this does not mean that the question of self-management was losing importance. In several parts of the document the preservation of self-government emerges as a key feature of both the decision-making process, is established. It is stated:

'all processes (decision making, participation, information, etc.) are decided autonomously by the General Assembly, commissions or working groups, without external determinations' (Plataforma Can Batlló es por el Barri, 2012).

Moreover, in the document is also stated:

'(the Bloc 11 Cultural Centre) must move towards economic self-sufficiency at all levels of the organization (...) and potential funding should not put into danger the independence of Bloc 11' (Plataforma Can Batlló es por el Barri, 2012).

In other words, the Bloc 11 Cultural Centre claimed both its self-management and its public nature, making this tension between being a self-managed space but also a public space the main distinctive feature of this project. However, this tension was not perfectly resolved. Despite the CB Platform's aim to guarantee the open access and use of facilities and spaces not everyone felt free to access and use them. This was perfectly explained by the words of a City Council manager, who said:

'In Sants there are two libraries, the Can Batlló one and the Vapor Vell one. The latter is a public library while the Can Batlló one is a community library. Are they the same? The service offered is the same. Surely in the public library there are some better books or more books due to public funding. But even if the service is the same these libraries are different and I believe that the main difference is not that one has less trim while the other is a luxury one. I believe that the main difference is that when you enter in the Vapor Vell no one is going to look at you, you enter a library that is a public service and no one is going to ask you if you are from the neighbourhood or not, you will collect your books and do what you would do if you enter in the Lesseps one (another public library in the Gracia neighbourhood). If you enter in Can Batlló library, and I did it two or three times, they turn and look at you. Who is this person? Wearing a suit? Because it is a community library and you do not belong to this community, and therefore there is a fundamental difference' (CUCs-07).

Moreover, despite the self-managing claim, in reality the Sants District (who was the government level in charge of negotiating with the CB Platform) played an important role in the development of the Bloc 11 Cultural Centre. This, under the political indication of the liberal-democratic government, supported the Bloc 11 Cultural Centre through material contributions and the adoption of a special approach in relation to law and administrative procedures. Justified by the fact that it was investing in its 'real estate assets', the Sants District carried out all necessary structural works in order to guarantee the structural safety of the building, paying all the bills, such as water and electricity, providing workers through a work re-insertion programme of the same City Council and paying for costs related to works initially not foreseen but that could be considered as structural, like the auditorium soundproofing. Furthermore, the Sants District took an approach that, according to the same neighbours, was very flexible. This approach allowed the project to develop despite the limits imposed by a bureaucratized and standardized administration,

distinguishing and valuing those that were real requirements and those that were formal requirements of the legislation. For example, in the case of health and safety regulation, the Sants District was strict about the library's fire regulation, because of the flammable material, but was more flexible in relation to the licenses of the bar. As the District manager himself mentioned:

‘in Can Batlló we have had to always play at the limit ... I do not say that we have not complied with the rules, but strictly following the rules, we could not have made progress’. (CUCs-05)

All these issues were discussed and negotiated during bi-weekly meeting between the CB Platform and the District that progressively built a constructive relation of mutual trust between the two.

This constructive relation has been considered to be of 'friction' by activists and instead to be of 'co-existence' by the public administration. According to the activists the friction is due to the fact that:

‘our management model and their management model are different, because the administration has rules to comply with, a structure to make work, which by definition opposes people’s empowerment and self-sufficiency, but we do not reject the relationship’ (CUCs-02).

According to the City Council the co-existence is due to the fact that:

‘Can Batlló is not so outside the institution, but it has codes that are considered as new institutionality. It is not antagonistic, it does not live in a situation of confrontation with the State and with the public administrations, but it coexists with a series of formulas, not written but practiced, of dialogue with the administration’(CUCs-06).

Independently from the point of view of each force, it can be said that the success of the Bloc 11 Cultural Centre was the result of the CB Platform member’ ability to combine an exemplary self-management model in terms of democratic and economic quality with the promotion of the public character of the cultural centre. However, it was also the result of the constructive relationship they managed to build with the Sant District and the City Council, which goes beyond

the antagonism of some squatted 'CSOA' social centres and goes beyond the collaboration of some civil society and third sector organizations, building a model that, despite the fact that it does not deny the relations with the City Council, it maintains its autonomy.

Expansion of the Can Batlló UCs

Over time and following their requests, further warehouses and spaces were entrusted to the CB Platform by the conservative government. In the new spaces, always assigned through temporary contracts, different activities were set up. Some activities expanded the spaces of the Bloc 11 Cultural Centre where further temporary activities (such as workshop or reading group) could be hosted. Others activities were complementary to the Bloc 11 Cultural Centre which settled permanently in the assigned space, such as the carpentry, the beer workshop, the social movements documentation centre, the mobility workshop, the collective print, the family space, and the urban gardens. The inclusion of other temporary and permanent activities transformed the project. From the mere self-management of the Bloc 11 Cultural Centre, it expanded to a larger self-management project, the 'Can Batlló umbrella project' (Can Batlló UP), involving several activities, of which the cultural centre was only one. All activities were selected by the General Assembly and they must function according to the social and solidary economy principles and must provide a social or economic return (or both) for the Can Batlló UP. In particular, in the case of permanent activities, these must also be approved by a joint committee, made by representatives of the CB Platform and of the District, that had the objective of avoiding the creation of lucrative activities and individual economic gain (Plataforma Can Batlló es por el Barri, 2012).

Successively, the Can Batlló UP further expanded its ambitions, including three large scale and long-term projects to demonstrate that community management is an alternative to public management also in other sectors (Parés, Ospina and Subirats, 2017). The projects presented for approval to the City Council were the following: the first one was 'La Borda', an housing cooperative that aimed to build more than 40 apartments on a public plot through a 75-years-duration public land lease to the cooperative; the second was 'Coopolis' an agency that aimed to foster the promotion of social and solidary economy at a city scale and also to address the high unemployment rate of the District; the third one was 'Arcadia', a cooperative school that aimed to provide primary and secondary education. Only 'La Borda' was approved by the liberal-democratic government while the others had to wait for the change of government in 2015, when 'Barcelona en Comú' won the elections, to be approved. The scheme was the same, the space remained public and was temporally and autonomously assigned to each project. However, these were part of the large Can Batlló UP. They therefore provided a social and/or economic return to the latter and

participate in its General Assembly, giving form to a successful management model that worked through a network of commission and autonomous projects, each of which is horizontally managed according to a rationale of democratic cooperation (Parés, Ospina and Subirats, 2017).

Economic sustainability of the Can Batlló UCs

From the economic point of view the Can Batlló UP aimed to be entirely self-sufficient because as a neighbour said 'having money means having freedom' (CUCs-02). However, it relied on the City Council contribution in terms of buildings' structural safety and main buildings' works. The City Council didn't have a set annual budget for these contributions but it changes it according to Can Batlló UP needs as they were presented to the Sants District. The first year the District spent 120.000 euros to cover infrastructural works of the Bloc 11 Cultural Centre, while the following years the contribution was set around 20.000/30.000 euros. Beyond the public contribution, the Can Batlló UP reached budget parity (Plataforma Can Batlló es por el Barri, 2015). The revenues were generated by commissions and projects that managed their own budget always according to the principle of social solidary-economy and at the end of the month, if a profit is generated, it is transferred to the 'Can Batlló common budget'. The 'CB common budget' is needed in order to cover urgent expenses (often although the City Council agrees to cover some buildings works their costs are anticipated by Can Batlló UP), management expenses (internet, cleaning, transports, etc), and to finance projects that either do not produce profit, such as the library and the urban gardens, or need support in their start-up phase, such as the beers workshop. Currently, the major income, around 75-80%, is generated by the Bar and the by the Coopolis project, while another 20-25% is generated by other activities and events (Plataforma Can Batlló es por el Barri, 2015). It has to be specified that, currently, all commissions (including the Bar), except the long-term projects, are carried out through voluntary work where volunteers do not receive any form of monetary remuneration. Although the Can Batlló UP is not at a loss, this economic does not allow to make the project strongly self-sufficient. In fact, the achievement of economic sustainability continues to be one of the major debates within the General Assembly.

The City Council's approach to the Can Batlló UCs (2011-2015)

At the city scale, one of the necessity of the liberal democratic government was to tame the wave of reclaiming and self-managing practices that spread across in Barcelona. This was achieved through the implementation of the 'Pla Buits' (Vacant Spaces Plan) and the legal framework of the 'Gestió Ciutadana' (Civic Management). On the one hand, the Pla Buits had the purpose 'to stimulate unused land in the city of Barcelona, through activities of public interest of a temporary nature, led by public or non-profit entities, encouraging the involvement of civil society in the

regeneration of the urban fabric of the city' (Ayuntamiento de Barcelona, 2013). Vacant plots were temporary assigned through a public call to community organisation and the City Council assumed the costs of upgrading the plot and supplying electricity, water, etc. while the rest of the expenses had to be carried out by the same organisation. On the other hand, the Gestió Ciutadana aimed to regularize under the same legal framework the forms of self-management within the public Civic Centres Network, and give rules for the assignment of future ones. It is defined as 'an instrument of citizen participation through which a no-profit organization can manage facilities and municipal services that are subject to indirect management with the aim, among others, to promote citizen participation in public interest initiatives, including the management itself' (Ayuntamiento de Barcelona, 2015). The facilities' management was temporary assigned through a public call and no-profit organisations receives a fixed-annual contribution by City Council that, in case it was insufficient to cover the cost, it could be compensated by external funds. Through these two programmes the City Council tried to institutionalise the more 'moderate' self-managing practices, while retaining a degree of control over them, as the assignment of spaces in the Pla Buits was very limited in time and the cultural production in spaces under the Gestió Ciutadana was still under the supervision of the City Council. Thus, not all reclaiming and self-managing practices fell into these two scenarios, but only the more institutionalised and institutionalisable ones.

Despite the practices that were regularized through the two programmes could count on a less risky legal and economic situation, many more antagonist self-managing practices who did not want to be considered directly connected with the City Council and maintain their autonomy, did not participate either to the Pla Buits nor the Gestió Ciutadana, as in the Bloc 11 Cultural Centre case. This always refused any form of institutionalization of its relationship with the City Council and always refused to join the Gestió Ciutadana and enter the public Civic Centre Network. However, it did receive a kind of informal support by the City Council (informal in the sense that it was never temporary and economically regularized by the City Council). Thus, the Bloc 11 Cultural Centre can be considered part of all those more antagonistic practices, although no as antagonistic as the CSOA Social Centre, that were trying to maintaining their autonomy while receiving a no-formalised City Council support. These two approaches adopted by the City Council with more institutionalised and less institutionalised self-managing practices has to be considered part of City Council's strategy that, although it apparently seemed to recognize and legitimate self-managing practices, it actually aimed at taming them in any possible way by providing either a formalized public support, as in the case of Pla Buits and Gestió Ciutadana or a no-formalized public support, as in the case of the Bloc 11 Cultural Centre. In addition to this benefit, the City Council had the opportunity to save costs as, in both cases, the cost of formal and informal support

to these self-provided facilities and spaces was less than the cost of public-provided public facilities and space. This process could be considered actually part of a generalised trend in all European cities, whereby public institutions were seeking to tame the wave of reclaiming and self-management practices (Tonkiss, 2013; Colomb, 2017).

While the Can Batlló UP self-management was carried out, the CB Platform had always continued to push for the unlocking of the entire Can Batlló site, re-claiming the realisation of public facilities and spaces. Responding to this demand, in January 2012 the City Council signed an agreement with the property to modify the development system from a 'compensation' to a 'cooperation' system, through which the realization of public facilities and spaces became again a City Council's responsibility. The beginning of the City Council's works was financed through the 'Pla Empenta' (Push Plan). This plan had the objective of investing public resources to unblock eleven regeneration processes across Barcelona whose development had been slowed down or paralyzed by the real estate crisis (Ayuntamiento de Barcelona, 2012a). In the case of Can Batlló site, the City Council invested 10M euros and compensate workers and artisans' tenants in order to allow the ownership transfer (from private to public), which took place in the autumn of 2012, and start some works, such as some workshops' demolition, a provisional urbanization of the site and the building of the first public housing block. However, the works were left to a preliminary phase since, with the shift to the cooperation system, the detail plan had to be re-approved. Although this re-approval slowed down the Can Batlló public redevelopment, it was beneficial for both the CB Platform and the City Council. The CB Platform could use the new plan to have some of their demands included, such as the change of use of some spaces, the re-design of the green area and the conservation of some industrial buildings. The City Council could ensure the pacification of the CB Platform protests while saving time, as it still did not have a comprehensive vision for the public redevelopment of the area, with many facilities still without a defined use.

In any case, the agreement between the City Council and Immogaudir left unchanged the latter's right to build 985 free-market houses, since this right was considered, according to a Sants officer, non-negotiable. However, as Immogaudir still claimed that didn't have sufficient capital to undertake real estate development and in order to facilitate it, the City Council bought at the cost of 23M euros an Immogaudir property located in another neighbourhood that was meant to be expropriated. In this way, the real estate agency could use the revenues to start the redevelopment project in the Can Batlló area. In other words, to unblock the Can Batlló project, at the beginning, the liberal-democratic government invested around 33M euro on the entire site, of which more than 2/3 were for the private property's expropriation to foster its redevelopment. It is not clear

whether these resources could have been designated to the public redevelopment project, but it is clear that, in this way, the City Council did not invest excessive resources in the public redevelopment (the total cost of the intervention were set around 150M euros) and instead invested most of them in the Immogaudir private redevelopment.

The future of the Can Batlló UCs

Currently the Can Batlló UP seems to be a consolidated project recognized by a wide spectrum of Barcelona civil society. The autonomy of the spaces together with the defence of the public has allowed to gain respect both from the antagonist movements linked to the squatted 'CSOA' social centres and from the more moderate third sector-related civil society. This makes the Can Batlló UP legitimated both at the neighbourhood scale, as a space conquered by La Bordeta neighbours that provides public facilities and space for this community, and at the city scale, as a self-managed paradigmatic space in Barcelona that wants to become a point of reference for self-managing practices. Moreover, the Can Batlló UP is recognized, although also for political reasons, by the City Council. Nowadays it would be impossible to imagine that the relationship created between the CB Platform and the space could be broken, privatizing the space or returning its management to the public administration, since the City Council is aware that a massive civil society mobilisation will defend it. This is demonstrated by the fact that, although, according to the 2006 detail plan some of the CB Platform-granted warehouses should be demolished to rebuild new facilities and to gain green spaces, what the Sants District is trying to do is to relocate them in newly built spaces or other existing spaces that will not be demolished. As a CB Platform activist who now works as a technician in the Sants District said 'the square meters that have been granted in concession by the City Council are a conquered space, an armoured space' (CUCs-06).

The future of The Common in Can Batlló UCs

There are many elements indicating that the Can Batlló UCs will continue. However, La Bordeta neighbours are aware that their work is just at the beginning. On the one hand, they have to struggle with the City Council to obtain a new detail plan and get their requirement included, in order to qualitative improve the plan and gain additional space in concession. On the other hand, they have to deepen the debate on the expansive horizon of their project taking into account, above all, the debate on economic sustainability and on the possible professionalization of their work. In this regard, the voices of older activists are more relaxed and satisfied with what they have achieved so far compared to the younger members who are more critical and more ambitious about the Can Batlló UP and would like to push the debate further. As one of the activist asks himself:

'Are we resolving all that we wanted to solve here, or not?, or are there things that are not solved? Why are we not a little more ambitious and consider things that the cooperativists were thinking about before? If we are together we are able to generate many things. Economic sustainability is one, but then there is sustainability at the food level. We can have an ecological food distribution system, think about mutual insurance forms at the level of dental insurance or vision insurance. They are all possibilities, a space like this can teach us many things at the level of organization and management and model, of this way of living or understanding life' (CUC-01).

In other words, despite the 35 years of struggle, the Can Batlló UCs is just at the beginning of its experience. However, it seems that it will continue to be a practice that represent a self-provision model of public facilities and spaces that, depending on its ability to solve all pending issues, it will show all its possibilities and its limits.

The approach of Barcelona en Comú

With the 'Barcelona en Comú' government, the relationship between the CB Platform and the City Council certainly improved. This was related to the fact that CB Platform's participants were particularly close and sometimes they even coincided with the Barcelona en Comú' members, so that a few reduced numbers of activists are now in the public institutions (see also section 4.1). In these cases, however, it was decided that those who became members of the City Council government would no longer be able to officially participate to the Can Batlló project, always according to the principle of maintaining in any case the independence from public institution. Nevertheless, the improved relation depends on the fact that the new government uses the discourse of the 'common' as an important point of its agenda that wants to give more space to the autonomy of social collectives in Barcelona. Therefore, the Can Batlló UP case becomes an instrument that can represent the materialization and the symbol of the City government political thought. For this reason, the new government widely supported the Can Batlló UP: it approved a new detailed plan for the site in which the CB Platform was considered an official stakeholder (Ayuntamiento de Barcelona, 2017a), investing 65M out of the 150M needed for its realisation (López, 2017); and it also started to work on a legal framework that could officialise the transfer of urban spaces to social collectives (Castro, Fresnillo and Moreno, 2016), to legitimize their relationship with the spaces while maintaining their autonomy (see also section 4.1 and 4.2.1).

In relation to the new detailed plan, in 2017 the City Council approved a new amendment of the Can Batlló plan. This did not change the repartition of the amount of space to be dedicated to private and public use and also maintained unchanged the free-market housing gross floor square meters. Nevertheless, it introduced qualitative changes to the public facilities and spaces accepting the CB Platform claims in order to i) valorise the industrial complex, maintaining buildings that had been already allocated to the CB Platform but earmarked to be demolished; ii) introduce new type of facilities, such as the Coopolis Project and the Arcadia project; and iii) improve the design connection between the public green area and the neighbourhood (Ayuntamiento de Barcelona, 2017a). However, despite the incorporation of such instances of the CB Platform, some decisions shade light about the conflicts between the City Council and the CB Platform. This conflict was about the use of the central warehouse. This building was the most important part of the project because it is a 22,000 sqm listed building whose final function will have an impact on the entire area of Can Batlló. Obviously, the CB Platform would like to obtain the entrustment of at least a part of the building to use it for the Coopolis project (even if the plan establishes another area dedicated for this), while the City Council would like to include a city-scale public facility, such as the Municipal Archive. For this reason, the CB Platform accused the City Council of missing the global vision of the project while the City Council accused the CB Platform of lack of realism because the refurbishment of the site is to be costly and that's why they have to think about a building's use where also other investors can contribute. In other words, despite the excellent relationship with Barcelona en Comú, this was the first discussion that takes place in Can Batlló UCs. However, it seems that between the two the City Council imposed its vision and the central warehouse will become the Municipal Archive (Ayuntamiento de Barcelona, 2018).

4.3.4 Summary comparison of the three case studies

The analysis of the three embedded UCs cases aimed at understanding: what conditions permit the emergence of UCs; and what conditions may favour or limits the maintenance of UCs; what role is played by the City Council in both the emergence and the maintenance; what possibilities and limits of The Common are in achieving emancipation; what role the City Council could play to support the production of The Common and the maintenance of the UCs; what role the City Council instead plays; and, which the possibilities and limits The Public has in achieving the emancipation and in flanking The Common. The cases analysed had the following common features that allow the comparison. In all three cases, a social group established a relation with a space within the city, giving life to a UCs. In all three cases, this relation allowed the social group to produce The Common. However, in all cases, the existence of the UCs and the same production of The Common was threatened at some point. At the time of the threat, the UCs interfaced with the City Council. This has intervened favouring, hindering or eliminating the UCs depending on the case, and supporting the production of The Common or replacing it with the production of The Public. The different outcomes in the history of each UCs are due to the fact that they were actually very different from each other: for the social group that established the relationship with the space, for the type of relation that the social group established with the space; and for the type of The Common produced by the social group. Furthermore, the cases developed in different timeframes in the history of the city, characterised by different approaches to the collective actions, different approaches to the public action and different political cultures. Instead of considering these differences as a limit, the comparative analysis has used them to draw a common framework that allows answering the research question and verifying the hypothesis to show not only the limits and possibilities of each case, but also how the City Council's approach changes in relation to different social groups and in relation to different types of production of The Common.

		Puigcerdà UCs A failed case 2011-2013	Escocesa UCs An uncertain case 1999-current	Can Batllò UCs A successful case 1976 - current
1.	Factors that determined the emergence of UCs	<p>A social group excluded from the formal labour and housing market and from administrative rights.</p> <p>Lack of public policies to address Sub-Saharan immigrants' exclusion.</p> <p>The UCs was initially politically 'beneficial' for the City Council.</p> <p>Access to marginal private space with no private redevelopment interests.</p>	<p>A social group facing competitive access to its work environment.</p> <p>Lack of public policies to support art production.</p> <p>The City Council was indifferent to the UCs.</p> <p>Access to marginal private space with no private redevelopment interests.</p>	<p>Rights' negated and deprived to the social group.</p> <p>Lack of implementation of the 1976 Plan.</p> <p>The City Council was indifferent to the UCs.</p> <p>No access to marginal (theoretically public) space with no public/private redevelopment interests.</p>
2.	Type of production of The Common	Subsistence and empowerment of the social group.	Democratic and de-commodified art production.	Provision of public facilities and spaces.
3.	Limits of the production of The Common	<p>Limited subsistence due to the exploitation of Sub-Saharan immigrants.</p> <p>Unregulated access to Puigcerdà but unplanned multiplication of other informal settlements in the Poblenou.</p>	Limited access to spaces to the Escocesa but unplanned multiplication of other self-managed art spaces.	<p>Public facilities and spaces could not be realised by La Bordeta neighbours.</p> <p>Open access to the space given by its public nature.</p> <p>Unplanned but limited multiplication of other self-managed public facilities and spaces.</p>

<p>4.</p>	<p>Factors that threatened the maintenance of UCs</p>	<p>Criminalization of informal settlements by the City Council.</p> <p>Legal action was undertaken by the owner for the eviction pushed by the City Council.</p> <p>Sub-Saharan immigrants could not decriminalise squatting and waste picking.</p>	<p>Lack of City Council interest in maintaining affordable studio spaces for artists in the Poblenou.</p> <p>Rise of private redevelopment interests due to the approval of the 22@Plan.</p> <p>Artists could not regulate private redevelopments and control rent prices.</p>	<p>Change in the redevelopment system from public to private and commodification of part of the site.</p> <p>Stop of the redevelopment project due to the lack of private capital gain with the 2007/8 crisis.</p> <p>Neighbours could not influence the private gain of the private property.</p> <p>Neighbours could not access and use the space.</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>What the City Council could have done</p>	<p>Acquire part of the factory and assign it to the social group.</p> <p>Decriminalize squatting and waste-picking.</p> <p>Improve living conditions within the factory.</p> <p>Intervene in the waste-picking economic chain to limit exploitation.</p>	<p>Acquire part of the factory.</p> <p>Amend the 22@Plan.</p> <p>Preserve affordable studio spaces in Barcelona.</p>	<p>Unblock the redevelopment by changing the development model.</p> <p>Investing resources in the redevelopment of the area.</p> <p>Entrust a building to the CB Platform.</p>

6.	What the City Council did	<p>Destruction of the Puigcerdà UCs</p> <p>Informal Settlements Plan (Opai)</p> <p>Waste pickers cooperative (Alencop)</p>	<p>Apparently temporary preservation of the Escocesa UCs</p> <p>Arts Factories Programme (Afp)</p>	<p>It favoured the use of the Can Batlló UCs</p> <p>New development model (cooperative system)</p> <p>It unblocked the development (Pla empenta)</p> <p>Entrustment of a warehouse to neighbours (Block 11 Cultural Centre)</p> <p>Formal policy instrument to support institutionalisable self-managing practices (Pla Buits, Gestió Ciutadana)</p> <p>Informal (economic) support to more antagonistic self-managing practices</p>
7.	Limits of The Public	<p>Opai Limited achievement of subsistence (mainly shelter was provided) and limited universality as it excluded most of the irregular immigrants.</p> <p>Alencop Very limited universality due to the limited number of cooperativists Limited empowerment due to link to public funding and control Difficulty in transforming irregular activity into regular activity unless it is highly subsidised.</p>	<p>Afp Limited universality as it was also favouring first line arts activities Further professionalisation and internationalisation of the programme.</p>	<p>Pla Empenta Limited investment of resources in comparison to the whole project with an important injection into private hands.</p> <p>Pla Buits and Gestió Ciutadana Limited inclusion of practices (institutionalisable ones) due to the control maintained by the city council and limited space to social autonomy.</p>

8.	The evolution of The Common	<p>Smaller informal settlement emerged in neighbouring cities (Badalona).</p> <p>Single house squatting in Barcelona. Street vendors as a new form of subsistence.</p> <p>Empowerment with Street Vendors Union.</p>	<p>New art spaces emerged in undervalued neighbouring cities (Hospitalet de Llobregat).</p>	<p>Ongoing redevelopment of the site.</p> <p>Expansion of the Block 11 Cultural Centre into Can Batlló UP but limited: Limited access to space due to ideological reasons</p>
9.	Barcelona en Comú	<p>Opai continues with no major changes.</p> <p>Alecop continues with no major changes.</p> <p>New cooperative for street vendors.</p> <p>Informal settlements are still evicted, but there was an improvement of the relation with the City Council.</p>	<p>Afp continues (but ongoing reformulation)</p> <p>The Escocesa will become fully functioning Art Factory, but there was an improvement of the relation with the City Council</p>	<p>Improvement of the relation between Can Batlló UP and the City Council.</p> <p>Ongoing elaboration legal framework 'Patrimoni Ciutadà' that aims to support the autonomy of social practices</p>

Table 4.20 Summary comparison of three case studies
Source: Author's elaboration

- *The emergence of UCs: the condition of the social group and the role of the City Council*

In all the three cases, the emergence of UCs was linked to a perception of a disadvantaged condition by the social group. In the case of Puigcerdà UCs, it was linked to the Sub-Saharan immigrants' highly exclusion condition, that with the financial crisis, did not have a form to subsist. In the case of the Escocesa UCs, it was linked to the condition of artists and especially those young, unsalable and low-income artists who have to pursue their career in a highly competitive environment where those who do not get public or private patronage are likely to be pushed out. In the case of the Can Batlló UCs, it was linked to the condition of La Bordeta neighbours had been negated and partially deprived of public spaces and facilities for more than 35 years. Public institutions have played an important role in determining these conditions because, in all cases, addressing them was or could have been a prerogative of the City Council. The inclusion of immigrants, the provision of public facilities and spaces and the promotion of art creation were or could have been a prerogative of public institutions. However, in all cases, the City Council was ignoring or was pretending to ignore that these conditions had to be addressed either through dedicated policies or through their implementation. In the case of the Puigcerdà UCs, the multiple exclusion of Sub-Saharan immigrants was not addressed by the City Council who did not develop or implement any policy for this group. In the case of the Escocesa UCs, this condition was not addressed by the City Council who in the 1990s did not consider art production as a public objective requiring public policies to support it and promote it. In the case of Can Batlló UCs, this condition was due to a lack of implementation of the 1976 PGM and the following amendments which, in line with the neo-liberalisation trend of the same 'Barcelona model', deprived the social group of part of their UCs. Therefore, in all cases the perception of the social group's disadvantaged conditions was directly or indirectly caused by the City Council who, ignoring or pretending to ignore these conditions, did not build any public policy to tackle them; or, if there was a policy it was not implemented, or it was later modified with a neoliberal approach.

- *The relation of the social group with the space*

In all cases, the disadvantaged social groups found in the relationship with the space an instrument to improve their condition. Sub-Saharan immigrants found in the occupation of the Puigcerdà factory the possibility to provide themselves with a shelter and to subsist through a combination of informal economic activities. Artists found in the collective rent of affordable studio spaces in the Escocesa factory the possibility to keep producing art without having to rely on private and public patronage. Neighbours found in the reclaiming of public facilities and spaces a way to have them realised. Importantly, the improvement of the social group condition has to be

considered in relation to their needs. For Sub-Saharan immigrants the relationship with the space was of economic necessity: it was crucial for the production and reproduction of their own subsistence. For the artists the relationship with the space was of economic advantage: it was crucial to continue their art activity, but certainly not for their subsistence. For La Bordeta neighbours the relationship with the space was of respect for their rights: it was crucial to see their rights as citizens recognised, but certainly not to carry out their economic activity, nor for their subsistence. The different type of relation that each group has with the spaces does not mean that an UCs could be considered more legitimate than others, but simply that each UCs and its production of The Common must be understood in relation to the needs of each social class.

- *The initial approach of the City Council*

In all cases, the initial setting-up of the UCs was not hampered by the City Council. In the case of the Puigcerdà UCs, initially the occupation of the factory permitted Sub-Saharan immigrants to try to find a solution to their exclusion without the necessity for the City Council to develop any public policy to address this; in the case of the Escocesa UCs, the renting of the factory by the group of artists allowed the City Council not to design any policy to support a democratic art production model; in the case of Can Batlló UCs, initially the reclaiming movement was rather quiet and was not seen as a threat by the City Council. Therefore, it seems that in all cases, the emergence of the UCs was also possible thanks to a laissez-faire /non-hostile approach of City Council for whom the UCs was either beneficial or irrelevant.

- *The space where UCs took place*

In all cases, the factories where UCs took place were privately owned and located in former industrial areas that were marginal in economic, social and spatial terms and thus with no interests to redevelop them. In the case of the Escocesa UCs that started in 1999, the factory was located in the former industrial Poblenou neighbourhood that at the time was experiencing a severe industrial decline and the 22@Plan was not yet adopted. This is why the Escocesa's owner welcomed the arrival of artists as he could make a minimum profit with the rent. In the case of Puigcerdà UCs that started in 2013, the factory was also located in the Poblenou neighbourhood but at the time when this was already subject to the regeneration strategy of 22@ Plan. However, since this factory was even more peripheral than the Escocesa UCs, the owner did not redevelop it yet and didn't have any plan to redevelop it and thus the occupation of the building was irrelevant. In the case of the Can Batlló UCs, the site was located in the former industrial neighbourhood of La Bordeta Sants that, despite being subject to the 1976 PGM Plan, was never realised because the City Council did not consider it a priority area of transformation. In this case, the private interest on land initially

was left out with the approval of the 1976 PGM and, successively, when the private interest returned, the abundance of land (14 hectares) permitted to restrict this interest into a limited area. In other words, in all the cases the factories were located in marginal areas where speculative private interests either had been excluded through planning or were not present due to a lack of planning or due to a lack of impact of existing planning. However, in all the cases, the marginality and the lack of private interests, which permitted the emergence of all UCs, was perceived as problem by the City Council that tried to solve it through a pro-growth planning strategy, as the 22@Plan, or where this was not possible through a neoliberal modification of the existing planning strategy.

- *The management of UCs*

Each UCs was structured according to a model of management and economic sustainability that allowed the UC to survive over time. These models were different and changed a lot depending on the case. In the case of the Escocesa UCs, initially, the management was rather informal because the artists shared little and had to agree primarily to pay the rent and pay the bills in a model in which each artist was responsible for finding his subsistence. In the case of the Puigcerdà UCs, the governance structure was immediately created to mediate conflicts and inequalities despite these continued to persist in a model where every Sub-Saharan immigrant was responsible for his own subsistence but also counted on sharing with other members of the social group. The case of Can Batlló UCs was different, because initially the group's struggle was organised around the Sants Social Centre and, since they were not self-managing the space but they were only reclaiming it, they did not have to deal with solving any economic sustainability. However, these organisational forms, both the management and the economic sustainability, did not remain stable over time and changed with the same evolution of the UCs.

- *The production of The Common*

The UCs, allowed the social group to produce The Common. In the case of Puigcerda UCs, The Common was represented by the achievement of subsistence and empowerment of the social group; in the case of the Escocesa UCs, it was represented by the democratization and de-commodification of art production for the social group; and in the case of Can Batlló UCs it was represented by the realisation of public spaces and facilities for the social group. However, only in two cases, the Puigcerdà UCs and the Escocesa UCs, The Common was initially produced by the social group, where the self-managing of the space allowed the first to create an integrated form of subsistence and to structure its political subject and the latter to produce art without being too dependent on public or private patronage. While in the case of Can Batlló UCs, initially the production of The Common was requested by the social group to the City Council. This could

depend on the fact that if in the first two cases no public policy was either designed, adopted or implemented, thus the social group was pushed to self-organize itself; in the case of Can Batlló UCs, the public policy was designed, adopted but not implemented, and the social group was initially requesting its implementation. In fact, only when they understood that this implementation would never have happened, they decided to self-organise themselves to produce public facilities and spaces. Thus, it could be sustained that an UCs take the form of a self-managing practice or a reclaiming practice depending on the greater or lesser perception of the social group that its condition could be improved by the City Council. This means that the form The Common is initially produced also depends on the vision that the social group has of The Public. However, under no circumstances, the production of The Common was initially collectively claimed by the social group, not even in cases where it was actually self-produced by the social group.

- *The universality of The Common within and outside the UCs*

Initially, each The Common had a different universal tendency within the UCs, given by the democratic access to the space; and outside the UCs, given by the expansion of The Common beyond the UCs. Initially, in the Puigcerdà UCs, Sub-Saharan immigrants did not have a democratic regulation to access the space despite the size of the factory allowed them not to deny access to anyone. In the case of the Escocesa UCs, artists did not have an organisational system to regulate access to the factory. In the case of Can Batlló UCs, access to space was given by the same public nature of the spaces and facilities that was being reclaimed. Thus, the universality within the UCs was very different from case to case, but they shared the fact that initially, no UCs was aiming to expand the production of The Common beyond the UCs. However, this does not mean that there was no expansion of The Common beyond the UCs. In the case of Puigcerdà UCs, this expansion was given by the other informal settlements that developed in the Poblenou neighbourhood that gave shape to the informal settlement phenomena. In the case of the Escocesa UCs, it was given by the other art factories in the Poblenou that gave shape to the Poblenou creative milieu. While in the case of the Can Batlló UCs, from the democratic turn until the financial crisis, the expansion was given by other, despite not numerous, self-managed cultural centre that existed already in the city. In other words, none of the social groups initially aimed to expand The Common beyond the UCs and, in the cases where this expansion was happening, this was not planned by the social group but was given by the multiplication of similar UCs and by the breadth of the marginal area where the UCs were developing. However, the UCs, as well as The Common they were producing, did not remain unchanged over time. An important factor of change was undoubtedly the moment when the UCs started being under threat and when movements in its defence developed.

- *The threat to the UCs*

All UCs were threatened at some point. In the case of the Puigcerdà UCs, the main threat was represented by the eviction order. This was the result of the legal action undertaken by the owner, strongly pushed by the same City Council, to recover the property. In the case of the Escocesa UCs, the main threat was represented also by the eviction order to facilitate the speculative redevelopment of the estate. However, this was the outcome of an increasing speculative pressure on land, triggered by the same City Council with the approval of the 22@ Plan. In the case of the Can Batlló UCs, the threat was represented by the 2008 crisis that was preventing the owner to undertake both the private and the public redevelopment of the area. However, the development model in force in the Can Batlló site, which established that the owner was responsible for the public space works, was approved by the same City Council in order to move the cost of the redevelopment to the owner in exchange of the transfer of public land for private redevelopment. Basically, the risks that the UCs could face were of two types. In the case of the self-managing practices where the social group was already using the space, the risk was represented by the social group being deprived of the space. In the case of the reclaiming practice, the risk was instead represented by the ongoing negation of the social group's relation with the space. If the first risk jeopardised the very existence of the UCs, the latter was preventing its use by the social group. In all cases, the risk was represented by the actions of the owner and by the private property of the asset. In the first two cases, in which the social group used the property, the owner claimed it back, while in the last case, in which the social group claimed the property, the owner held it hostage. In other words, in all cases, the private property of the asset put the UCs at risk because social groups were not entitled to decide how that asset could be used. However, in all cases, even in those where at first sight it seemed that owners were accountable for the threat, the City Council also played either a direct or indirect role in threatening the existence and the legitimation of the UCs.

- *The struggle of UCs and its impact on the production of The Common*

In all UCs the social group responded to the threat with a mobilisation to defend the relationship they had built with space. The mobilisation influenced the structure of the UCs and the production of The Common. First of all, in all cases, in order to make the struggle more effective, each social group established a new organisation. Sub-Saharan immigrants established Som 300, the Escocesa artists established the Eme organisation and la Bordeta neighbours established the CB platform. Moreover, in all cases, the production of The Common began being collectively claimed by the social group. Sub-Saharan immigrants demanded their right to keep living and working as waste pickers within the factory. Artists demanded to keep working in the

Escocesa and transform it into a more democratic art production centre. La Bordeta neighbours, while keeping demanding the realisation of public facilities and spaces, they also demanded to self-manage some public facilities and spaces. Additionally, in all cases, social groups joined a wider mobilisation that expanded their claim beyond the limits of the UCs. Som 300 started to claim also housing, working and administrative rights for the whole Barcelona African community. Eme organisation joined the whole movement of neighbours and artists that were reclaiming their right to keep living and working in the Poblenou. While the CB platform joined the wave of claims for self-managing facilities and spaces that spread across Barcelona in those times. In other words, the threat led, in all cases, the social group to restructure itself at the organisational level and to collectively reclaim the production of The Common. Each group, with the threat, understood that the production of The Common could be more effective than the production of The Public or that it was a necessary production because The Public was absent and, outside the UCs, they could not produce the same kind of emancipation. Furthermore, this struggle expanded the universality of the production of The Common beyond the UCs itself. In the case where The Common was self-produced through a self-managing practice, this expansion was achieved by developing a reclaiming practice that claimed the production of The Common for all people affected by the same disadvantaged condition. In the case where The Common was not self-produced but it was demanded to the City Council through a reclaiming practice the expansion took place thanks to the emergence of the self-managing need that, instead of limiting the universality of the struggle, it expanded it with the connection to a widespread existing need for self-management in the city.

- *Limits of the production of The Common*

The Common was limited in its production and expansion. These limitations were different from case to case. In the case of the Puigcerdà UCs, subsistence and empowerment were produced within the factory but if the production of empowerment was achieved, the production of subsistence was limited due to the Sub-Saharan inhabitants' exploitation by more powerful actors within the waste-picking economic chain that maintained them under the poverty line. Access to space was not currently limited but it could have reached a limit if more people were to be housed in the factory. The expansion of The Common beyond the Puigcerdà UCs was also facing constraints. Before the emergence of the Puigcerdà UCs, the emergence of other informal settlements was not hampered by the City Council. However, with the growth of the Puigcerdà UCs, the presence of informal settlements began to be perceived by the City Council as being problematic. In the case of the Escocesa UCs, the de-commodification and democratisation of art production were produced and achieved within the factory, but the universality of The Common within the UCs was only partly due to the same physical limits of the factory and the Escocesa's

artists need to maintain their studio spaces. The Common expanded beyond the Escocesa UCs thanks to the emergence of the Poblenou creative milieu. However, if before the 22@Plan the expansion of The Common through UCs could appear unlimited in the Poblenou, following the approval of the 22@Plan it started to face important constraints due to the rise of property prices that was pushing owners to evict artists in the entire Poblenou creative milieu. In the case of Can Batlló UCs, the production of The Common could not be achieved by the Can Batlló UCs due to a lack of resources and entitlement to carry out the redevelopment. However, some public facilities and spaces could be realised by the CB Platform but, even in this case, it needed to get access to a public building and to the resources to refurbish it. The expansion of The Common through other UCs it was taking place in Barcelona thanks to the spread of the many self-managed spaces and facilities that started to develop with the crisis. However, their existence and spread were always dependent on the access to a private or public space and to the resources to manage it. In other words, the production of The Common was limited because it was often on the margins of legality and on the margins of economic sustainability. It is universally limited because access to each UCs was limited. This limit can be overcome by reproducing other UCs.

However, the real limitation is that UCs cannot control the factors that allow them to multiply and cannot control the factors that could facilitate the production of The Common. The existence of the Puigcerda UCs (and other informal settlements) was facilitated by the laissez-faire approach of the owner that was tolerating a theoretical illegal (although it could be considered informal) occupation of its property and of the City Council that was tolerating a theoretical illegal activity (although it could be considered informal). In fact, once this tolerant approach was over, the Puigcerda UCs immediately faced the risk to disappear as Sub-Saharan immigrants were not able to change the law to decriminalise their informal activities. The existence of the Escocesa UCs and of other art factories depended on the economic, social and spatial marginality of the Poblenou neighbourhood where factories were located, and on the vastness of the same neighbourhood. Once marginality was over and property value increased, owners refused to keep renting factories to artists. However, artists did not have the right to intervene in the owners' property rights as also they did not have the right to control property prices in the Poblenou nor in other areas of Barcelona. In the case of Can Batlló UCs, the realisation of public spaces and facilities (as in many other cases in Barcelona) depended on the site's owner's decision of realising them which in turn depended on the profit-making of the real estate operation. Obviously, the social group could not influence the profit-making expectation of the owner. Thus, also in this case, when this condition lacked, the social group was risking not to be able to use the UCs. This was the reason why the social group understood that perhaps it was easier and more effective to create another UCs to

self-realise some public facilities and spaces. However, even in this case (unless they preferred to go for a precarious squatting of the space), the setting-up of another UCs depended on the possibility to access a space and to get it entrusted for a reasonable period of time. In other words, in all cases, the maintenance of the UCs did not depend on factors that were controllable by the social groups that were risking to have their production of The Common halted. However, in all cases, none of the social group wants to break their relation with the space and renounce to the production of The Common. Therefore, social groups, being aware of their limits, asked the intervention of that actor that was able to influence those uncontrollable factors and that could help them not only to keep maintaining the UCs but also to overcome the limits of the production of The Common. The actor who had the entitlement and the resources to do all this was the City Council and the social groups were well aware of it.

- *How the City Council could have supported UCs and helped them overcoming the limits of The Common*

In all cases, the City Council could have done much to support UCs and help them overcoming the limits of The Common. In the case of Puigcerdà UCs, to support the UCs, the City Council could have avoided the eviction by acquiring the factory or at least part of it since, according to the same 22@ Plan, for each private redevelopment the 30% of the area has to be dedicated to public facilities and spaces. To support The Common, it could have improved the living condition within the factory bringing running water and light; and it could have intervened in the waste-picking economic chain to limit the underpayment of waste-pickers by setting up a public company that could directly buy metal waste at a reasonable price to improve the Sub-Saharan immigrants' subsistence. And to support the expansion of The Common, it could also have de-criminalised squatting and waste picking in order to reduce the risk of further eviction orders for all informal settlements. In the case of the Escocesa UCs, to support the UCs, the City Council could have prevented the artists' eviction by acquiring the factory or at least part of it since, also in this case, the 30% rule of the 22@ Plan applied to the private redevelopment. Additionally, to support the expansion of The Common, it could have started to preserve affordable studio spaces for the whole artist's community in the Poblenou by amending the 22@ Plan or by preserving affordable studio spaces in Barcelona. In the case of the Can Batlló UC, to support the UCs, the City Council could have granted the space to La Bordeta neighbours to permit the self-management of some public spaces and facilities. To support The Common, it could have intervened in the redevelopment system to unblock the realisation of public facilities and spaces. To support the expansion of The Commons it could have favoured the emergence and development of self-managed public facilities and spaces. In other words, the City Council had

both the resources and the entitlement to support the maintenance of the UCs and to help them overcome the limits of The Common, both in terms of production and in terms of expansion.

▪ *The intervention of the City Council and the limits of the production of The Public*

The City Council's response was very different from case to case. In one case it destroyed the UCs, in another case it pretended to save the UCs and in the latter case it supported the UCs. In all cases, the City Council intervention did not limit itself to these actions but intervened with its own production of emancipation, The Public.

—Puigcerdà UCs

In the case of the Puigcerdà UCs, the conservative government never aimed at defending the existence of the UCs and allowing the Sub-Saharan inhabitants to produce The Common. Instead, when the Puigcerdà UCs became a political risk for the City Council, it pursued its elimination through the eviction and it tried to substitute The Common with two different type of production of The Public: The Opai and Alencop. The Opai aimed to provide an integrated form of subsistence (but not empowerment) - working, housing and administrative rights- to the Puigcerdà's Sub-Saharan inhabitants and other informal settlements' inhabitants, through an individual-based welfare scheme where a social worker supported each immigrant. The Opai represented the typical production of The Public where the City Council, after having split the social group apart, guarantees subsistence on an individual basis under its strict control. However, the problem of the Opai was not that it was producing The Public, but its limited results. Firstly, it was not able to provide subsistence, as it could provide mainly housing but not employment and papers; secondly, the universal reach of the subsistence was limited as many irregular immigrants preferred not to enter the programme as they were afraid of repatriation. These limits of the Opai were instead covered by The Common. This was actually guarantying an integrated form (despite) limited subsistence and empowerment to all those irregular immigrants who did not have space in the formal labour and housing market and were also scared of being repatriated. However, the City Council never valued The Common produced through the Puigcerdà UCs and other informal settlements, and it designed the Opai as the only instrument to entirely and immediately replace the production of The Common with the production of The Public without being able to do it as it did not favour empowerment, and its provision of subsistence was more limited than The Common itself. As a result of its implementation, after the Puigcerdà UCs' eviction, many Puigcerdà inhabitants at best found themselves with a partial possibility to subsist but without the possibility to empower themselves, at worst without the possibility either to subsist or to empower themselves.

With the Alencop, the City Council wanted to provide an integrated form of subsistence and empowerment for informal settlements' inhabitants through a collective-based scheme that had the aim to bring into the formal economic circle the informal economic practice of waste picking. The Alencop seemed to be a policy to reproduce 'The Common' through the creation of an UCs through the support of the City Council. However, it appears clear that the Alencop cannot be considered a UCs that was producing 'The Common'. Firstly, because the relationship between people and resources has been imposed. Secondly, because the sub-Saharan immigrants do not perceive that they are controlling their business, as actually they are not. Moreover, this policy has shown several limits. First of all, despite subsistence was achieved, this has a limited universality due to the limited number of cooperative's members; secondly, the empowerment was limited because it brought together people selected through an individual-based process that didn't share any previous collective experience and that felt to be strongly dependent on the public financial help; and thirdly, it shows the difficulty of transforming an informal practice into a formal economic activity, unless this is highly subsidized. Surely the effort behind the construction of this policy instrument, which does imply a different policy approach to solve the irregular immigrants' problems, deserves to be further evaluated. However, this production it may be considered as an innovative policy instrument, but it has to be analysed and evaluated for what it is: a production of 'The Public' that takes place through a collective unit with a very limited universal reach.

_Escocesa UCs

In the case of the Escocesa UCs, the City Council seemed to aim to support the UCs and the production of 'The Common' with the implementation in 2006 of the Afp by the social democratic party government. With this programme, it seemed that the City Council aimed at strengthening the production of 'The Common' by supporting existing art spaces; and extending the universality of 'The Common' through the creation of new art factories. However, also this programme was not supporting UCs and was not producing 'The Common'. All existing and new UCs received public funding to support their activities, bounding art production to the public administration's criteria based on quality and excellence. These criteria were exacerbated with the conservative coalition arriving in power in 2011, when the programme's aims were changed and became subject to further criteria of professionalisation and internationalisation. This is why - except in the case of the Ateneu Popular de Nou Barris that relied on a long self-managing history - the production of 'The Common' was progressively transformed into a production of 'The Public' operating through collective units where art production was subject to the City Council criteria. Moreover, this production of 'The Public' has shown some limits. The Afp should have improved

universality in the collective units by allocating spaces through public calls. However, the universality actually shrank, as artists' selection has been mainly focused on well-established artists, excluding those young, unsalable, and low-income ones. This does not mean that the City Council did not have to set up a program like the Afp but that this programme had a very limited universal reach. The problem was that in the implementation of this policy the City Council abandoned any ambition to support The Common. The City Council never understood or tried to understand that only by guaranteeing affordable studio spaces in the Poblenou or in another neighbourhood of Barcelona, without necessarily directly funding art production, the Common could be supported. Thus, as it was expected, all art spaces in the Poblenou disappeared, without having the opportunity to create more UCs, due to the generalised increase of property price even in other areas of Barcelona. In this scenario, the Escocesa was one of the few UCs that still persisted in the Poblenou.

This transformation of The Common in The Public was also happening in the Escocesa UCs although this transformation was impeded by the same contract stipulated by the City Council. This contract did not allow the City Council to expel the group of artists until refurbishment works were carried out. Thus, the Escocesa UCs became a strange hybrid space where two visions were co-habiting. The Eme association's vision who perceived the Escocesa factory as UCs where they could produce The Common; and the City Council's public vision, that perceived the Escocesa factory as an Art Factory where access to space had to be further universalised and where art production had to be professionalised. Everyone pushed for imposing its vision. The City Council was favouring the implosion of the Escocesa UCs by underfunding the project and over demanding results and the artists defending their relationship with space at all costs. Indeed, the defence of the UCs by permanent artists represented the defence of the interest of a particular collective on a universal space (a public spaces), achieved through the closure of the group within the UCs. However, it has to be considered in the light of the no-compliance of the agreement by the City Council and, above all, with the impossibility to set up another UCs in the Poblenou and in Barcelona. Currently, it seems that between the two visions the administration's one is prevailing and that, within a couple of years, the Escocesa UCs will become a fully functioning Art Factory, perhaps eliminating one of the last UCs of the Poblenou creative milieu.

_Can Batlló UCs

The case of Can Batlló UCs is the case in which, without any doubt, the City Council, although governed by the conservative coalition, supported the emergence and the maintenance of the UCs and its production of The Common. First of all, the City Council fostered the production

of The Common. This was achieved by taking back the production of The Common in its hand by changing the development model from a compensation to a cooperation one and by favouring the land ownership transfer from private to public. Moreover, it also began its production setting in motion a further amendment to the 2006 Plan and realising preliminary urbanisation works in the area. In other words, the City Council was producing the Common that La Bordeta neighbours, due to the lack of resources and entitlement, were not able to produce. Additionally, in the case of Can Batlló UCs, the City Council supported the production of The Common through an UCs. It assigned one of the buildings to the CB platform and later supported the production of The Common through financial contributions for the renovation of the building and through a flexible approach in the application of laws and administrative rules. This City Council's contribution allowed the CB Platform to give life to the self-managed cultural centre, the Bloc 11 Cultural Centre, which was an embedded UCs within the wider Can Batlló UCs.

It may seem strange that the 35 years long disadvantaged condition of La Bordeta neighbours was resolved with the arrival into power of the conservative coalition. However, the City Council's decision corresponded to a precise strategy that was beneficial to the government. Firstly, producing The Common responded to the economic need to restart the construction sector in Barcelona. The policy instrument that was used to achieve this goal was the 'Pla Empenta' which used public finances to subsidise the activation or reactivation of both public and private regeneration projects. The same was done for the Can Batlló UCs site where, moreover, it would seem that the conservative coalition government gave economic priority to the private development rather than to the public development which was left, with the excuse of the need to update the plan, only to a preliminary phase. Secondly, allowing the production of The Common through the embedded UCs responded to the necessity of pacifying the social conflict that had developed in the city since the 15M. This pacification took place with the direct support to the more institutionalizable self-managing claims into two policy instruments, the 'Pla Buits' and the 'Gestió Ciutadana'. However, it took also place through the indirect support of the more antagonistic UCs such as Bloc 11 UCs, that, although being antagonists, did not deny the support of the City Council. Both approaches responded also to the austerity policy of the City Council that in this way did provide public facilities and spaces but at the same time reduced the costs of its production. Moreover, the Bloc 11 UCs was possible thanks to the lack of competitive interests in the space: the private interests, though present, had been confined to a specific area; the City Council, not having defined the functions and uses of many public spaces, had no reasons to oppose the CB platform's proposed uses if they were in the general interest. In other words, in Can

Batlló UCs, the abundance of space and the lack of planning of the City Council permitted to accommodate the interests of all actors at stake, also the Bloc 11 UCs.

The Bloc 11 UCs represented the production of The Common through the support of the City Council. Although it developed through the relationship and the constant support of the City Council (as also stated in the questionnaire by the same CB Platform), the Bloc 11 UCs succeeded in carrying out its self-management project. In fact, the main decisions were taken in the general assembly and the cultural plan of the centre was decided by them. Furthermore, the Bloc 11 UCs represented the possibility of expanding the production of The Common beyond the UCs. Firstly, this was possible thanks to the conquest of further spaces next to the UCS that led the Bloc 11 Cultural Centre to become an umbrella project for a series of others UCs – the urban garden, the family workshop, the La Borda housing cooperative and the Coopolis cooperative agency-. Secondly, it was possible thanks to the link that Bloc 11 UCs established with the multiple self-managed spaces that emerged in the city. However, even the production of this The Common showed some limits. Firstly, it represented a partial production of The Common as the number of public facilities and spaces was limited and the rest had to be produced by the City Council; secondly, the production of The Common was at the limit of economic sustainability and if the City Council did not finance the more relevant contributions this production would not have been possible; thirdly, it shows the limited universality of The Common production by a UCs which, despite the claim of the public nature of its access, fails to achieve it because it becomes the expression of an antagonistic culture in which not all feel to be part of.

Summary

In all cases, the City Council's intervention was decisive in preserving or destroying the UCs and in allowing or impeding the production of The Common and its expansion. Being all UCs located on private properties, the easiest way to save or support the use of the property by the UCs was to intervene in the ownership of the spaces making them public. However, this operation was carried out only in Can Batlló UCs case because the ruling government, although it was a conservative one, would have benefited politically from it, and because this operation was beneficial to the wide economic development of Barcelona and useful to pacify the society on turmoil. The same approach was not taken in the case of the Puigcerdà UCs, whose destruction was promoted by the conservative government itself. In the case of the Escocesa UCs, instead, the ownership transfer was carried out by the social democratic government but only because the building had been designated to enter a public program and not to defend the UCs. In all cases, it becomes clear that, the City Council, despite having the entitlement to intervene, exercises its power discretionally

according to its political advantages and to the possibility to utilise these advantages to foster the city economic growth. This discretionary power allows some UCs to be recognised and sometimes even supported by the City Council while others are destroyed by the same City Council.

In cases where UCs were eliminated, the City Council's action aimed at replacing, more or less directly, the production of The Common with the production of The Public: in the case of Puigcerdà UCs, with a clear desire to eliminate the former, in the case of the Escocesa UCs, with not a clear desire to eliminate it, but adopting plans and policies that would have prevented its production. This production of The Public, in some cases, has been clearly designed and implemented as the classic production of The Public, as in the case of the Opai, which represented a typical welfare programme that has shown to be more limited in its achievement of subsistence and in its universality than the production of The Common. In other cases, the City Council has tried to reproduce The Common. This is the case of the Alencop cooperative and the Afp programme. In the first case, an attempt was made to reproduce, in the public administration's laboratory, The Common that had been extinguished through the creation of UCs. In the second case, an attempt was made to expand The Common that had not yet been extinguished, supporting existing UCs and creating new ones. Both cases, however, show how, despite working on a collective basis, they are producing The Public because they tie the production of emancipation to an important public subsidy that threatens the self-governing capacity of the social groups. This production also has some limits which are different from the one related to the classical production of The Public. A quantitative limit of its universality due to the limited number of people who can benefit from it unless many collective units are reproduced across the city; and a limited universality of access because their limited universality must maintain selection criteria that often do not allow access for those people who would need it. In this scenario, the only real attempt to support the UCs and its production of The Common is the case of Can Battlò UCs. Evidently, the overall strategy used by the City Council also responded to the political and economic needs of the government. However, it represents a good example of the support that the City Council may give to the emergence and maintenance of an UCs and to the production of The Commons without destroying and limiting their self-governing capacity.

- *How the production of The Common evolves*

In the cases in which the production of The Common was substituted by or transformed into the production of The Public, the necessity of its production has not disappeared. In the case of Puigcerdà UCs, the many Sub-Saharan inhabitants that did not enter the Opai or the Alencop, together with the inhabitants of other informal settlements, have found a different strategy to

produce *The Common*: collectively occupying small houses and working informally as street vendors to subsist. Moreover, the Sub-Saharan group is also empowering again through the set-up of the Street Vendors Union that is fighting for Sub-Saharan immigrants' rights. In the case of the Escocesa UCs, the many artists whose requirements did not coincide with those of the Afp, or who did not want to enter the program, especially those young, unsalable and low income artists, have found another area where they can produce *The Common*: many of them are now settled in the neighbouring Barcelona city, the Hospitalet the Llobregat, where many art factories are rented and used by the artists reproducing the same creative milieu that was before in the Poblenou neighbourhood. On the other hand, in the case of the Can Batlló UCs, where the production of *The Common* was supported both through the implementation of the plan and through the Bloc 11 UCs, the social group continues to participate in its production. It tries to get its requests included into the amendment of the 2006 Plan and it keeps active the Bloc 11 Cultural Centre while expanding its activities.

- *The Common with Barcelona en Comú*

Obviously, it is too early to evaluate the policy changes towards these three cases of UCs with the arrival of Barcelona En Comú. In any case, it has been tried at least to capture the direction in which the new government turns its gaze. It can be sustained that in the case of the Puigcerdà UCs and the Escocesa UCs there are no relevant changes. All the programmes for the production of *The Public*, the *Opai*, the *Alencop* and the *Afp* have been maintained. However, as the production of *The Common* has not disappeared, the City Council is again forced to deal with it. In order to tackle the spread of street vendors throughout Barcelona, the City Council has replicated the same policy instrument of the previous conservative government setting-up a street vendors cooperative: a production of *The Public* through a collective unit. Again, this may be considered an innovative policy instrument but its universality is too limited and it is not able to solve the subsistence of this social group. The same programme is used to tackle the few informal settlements that remain in the city of Barcelona which, in the same way as Puigcerdà, are supposed to be evicted, although they maintain in this process a more dialoguing relation with the City council.

In relation to the artists' need for affordable studio spaces, it seems that new government has rightly more critical priorities than preserving art activities in the city (such as preserving and creating affordable homes). Moreover, it seems to have assumed that this production has already been pushed out of Barcelona and no policy instrument would be able to bring its production back. The response to this need continue to be represented by the Afp. In relation to the latter, the ICUB

is working on a reframing process of the program, but it is hard to think that this will transform it into an instrument to support The Common. More likely, the new government would try to reduce the neoliberal turn of the Afp as shaped by the conservative government. Also, regarding the Escocesa UCs, despite the relation with the City Council has improved, its process of becoming a fully-functioning Art Factory seems unstoppable. In other words, in relation to art production and integration policy, Barcelona en Comú does not seem to have developed a truly alternative vision that would support The Common. This may depend on the fact that these policy areas were not priority policies area of the new government. For this reason, this consideration must be read in the light of the analysed policy areas and therefore must be understood within its limits. Moreover, this does not mean that no change at all is detectable. The improvement of the relation between UCs and the City Council is already a change of the approach, but this does not turn into a concrete policy shift or at least into a concrete policy design shift that would be able to support the emergence and maintenance of UCs and the production of The Common.

In the case of Can Batlló UCs, the new government has instead shown a greater commitment to supporting the maintenance of UCs and the production of The Common. Firstly, it has supported the expansion of the Bloc 11 UCs assigning more spaces to the CB platform. Secondly, it seems to support the expansion of The Common through the new (despite not yet approved) legal framework Patrimoni Ciutadà. Thirdly, it has amended the 2006 Plan through a participatory process that has involved the CB platform as an official stakeholder and it has invested considerable resources for its realisation. However, this does not appear to be a full commitment. Firstly, the planning process has demonstrated that, despite the participatory process, the City Council maintains the control of the emancipatory production. This was evident from the space conflict on the central warehouse in which the City Council had the final word. Secondly, the legal framework has not been adopted yet by the City Council and only when it will be adopted it will be possible to establish whether this instrument is truly able to support The Common or it is a further extension of the production of The Public through collective units. In other words, Barcelona en Comú seems to support UCs and the production of The Common, but only in specific policy areas, such as the production of public facilities and spaces, while in others, it does not seem to give space to this production.

FIFTH CHAPTER CONCLUSION

*Linear time is a Western invention;
time is not linear,
it is a marvellous tangle where at any moment,
points can be selected and solutions invented
without beginning or end.*

Lina Bo Bardi

5.1 From the research question to the research results

This thesis had the objective to shed light on the Commons-State relation to understand the role of the latter in the Common's emancipatory project. The analysis, set the urban context of Barcelona, aimed to understand what the role of the (local) State may be in the development of the UCs and their production of The Common. The hypothesis suggested that the (local) State can support the development of UCs and it can also support and flank the production of The Common. In order to answer the research question and test the hypothesis, the research has adopted a relational approach that allowed deepening the UCs-(local)State relation in Barcelona. This relational approach was based on two scales of analysis, a city scale one that collected data on 101 UCs through a questionnaire and details scale one that has compared three embedded case studies. The results of the research show a very complex reality that it does not permit to entirely discard the research hypothesis as UCs do need the support of the (local) State to develop over time, but it also does not permit to fully confirm it, as the (local) State tends to replace The Common with The Public and the latter may hinder or marginalise the production of The Common. The main results are presented here below.

5.2 The role of the (local) State in the emergence of UCs

▪ *The role of the (local) State throughout history*

The case of Barcelona was selected as it represents a paradigmatic case of analysis because of its long revolutionary and autonomist history. UCs have always existed thanks to the anarcho-cooperativist tradition that can be traced back to the last decades of the nineteenth century. This tradition, which saw its culmination with the collectivisations carried out during the Spanish Civil War, was repressed during the Francoist regime but did not vanish. It was absorbed by the Neighbours' Movement which, although more than reclaiming autonomy it was addressing its demands to the (local) State, it kept this tradition alive during late-Francoism and the Transition. With the democratic turn, the left-wing governments tried to co-opt this tradition by strengthening public institutions and putting the State at the heart of the production of emancipation, in all its scales. However, the strong neo-liberalisation of the economy, the advent of the crisis and the implementation of the austerity measures have led to a social shock that has caused the re-emergence of this autonomist tradition with a multiplicity of practices: from anti-eviction movements to foods and time banks, to housing and services cooperatives, to self-managed art and social centres. This history of Barcelona shows that reclaiming and self-managing practices

represent different forms of UCs through which social groups have structured the struggle in different historical periods. Although the form they assume depends on the role adopted by the State, they can be analysed together regardless of how the claim is directed towards the State, as this claim may change over time. In the case of Barcelona, the emergence of many self-managing practices in the last years cannot be fully understood without appreciating that they come from a long autonomist tradition that, although eclipsed when the (local) State was a repressive one and when it became later more socially-oriented, has never disappeared. However, this tradition highlights the peculiarity of the Barcelona case, as not all cities may rely on it.

- *The lack of the (local)State and the distrust in the (local)State*

By and large, empirical analysis have shown that the emergence of UCs is linked to the (relative) disadvantaged condition of social groups. This is a theory already well-developed by social movement studies that have stressed how the collective action emerges from conditions of '(relative) deprivation' (Gurney and Tierney, 1982). This research would like to underline that this (relative) deprivation depends on a lack of intervention of the (local) State. In all embedded case studies, solving the disadvantaged condition of the social group was a prerogative or could have been a prerogative of the (local)State, but this did not intervene. This does not mean that if social groups are not in a disadvantaged condition or the (local)State intervene to address it social groups do not tend to self-organise. However, it is often because of this (relative) disadvantaged condition where the (local) State does not intervene that social groups are led to self-organise either to resolve it autonomously or to request to the (local)State its resolution. This means that when the (local) State is not addressing the satisfaction of social needs, UCs are more likely to emerge.

The form under which UCs decide to organise themselves depends on the perception they have of the (local) State (and of the State in broader terms). The nature that UCs have assumed in recent years, with the proliferation of different self-managing practices, depends on a changed perception of the (local) State. It seems that many social groups do not consider the (local) State, and the State in general, able to solve social groups' problems or satisfy their requests, especially after the neoliberal shift and even more after the crisis. This perception remains also after the end of the crisis. It seems more a paradigm shift in which the Commons' scholars critique of the State has now been assimilated by many sectors of society that see the creation of spaces autonomous from the (local)State (and the Market) as a solution to achieve emancipation which is more effective than claiming the direct intervention of the (local) State. The many self-managing practices that emerged throughout Barcelona also after the timid economic recovery are a demonstration of this.

This means that the current historical moment could be a privileged moment to multiply the emergence of UCs, especially self-managing practices.

This affirmation may seem to be contradictory in the case of Barcelona. Here, the neoliberal turn and the crisis, alongside the proliferation of self-managing practices, has also given rise to practices that instead aimed (and managed) to take over the (local) State. However, these processes should not be interpreted as a contradiction, but as the creation of autonomy at different scales. In Barcelona, some social groups have decided to claim their crucial relationship with an urban void or with an essential public service, while other social groups – the ones that constituted Barcelona en Comú - have decided to claim their crucial relationship with the local institutions. From this point of view, the Barcelona en Comú social group has seen the local institutions as a space that can produce emancipation in a completely different way from the (national and regional) State. This means that, in the case of Barcelona, the current historical moment could be crucial for the UCs because they may count on the support of the (local) State that could facilitate their emergence, maintenance and expansion in the city.

- *The role of the public property*

One of the main problems faced by an UCs in the city is access to space. This can be achieved accessing the free real estate market, accessing the free rental market, accessing a reduced rental market or having access to a publicly owned space (granted for free or at a reduced rent). Having access to a space for free or at prices lower than the market one can facilitate the emergence of an UCs, especially in those cases where the UCs needs abundant space to carry out their activities and do not have sufficient resources to buy a property or to access the free market. In Barcelona, only a reduced number of UCs are in a property rented at market price and only a very little number own the space. Most UCs benefit from a 'facilitated' access to space in the sense that they are in a property assigned for free, or at prices lower than those of the market. Among the UCs that benefit of a 'facilitated' access to the space most of them are in a public property. However, public ownership has not always been the easiest form to access a space in the city. If the questionnaire had been done at a different time, many UCs would result to be located in an under-priced private property due to the existence of undervalued areas within the city which are now very difficult to find in Barcelona. This revaluation of urban space is not a unique phenomenon. The same phenomenon is happening in many European cities (Rossi, 2017) Perhaps, the peculiarity of Barcelona, compared to other cities such as Paris, Milan or London, lies in the fact that it has maintained undervalued areas until recently and therefore, at this moment, their disappearance appears more noticeable.

It is the (local) State that decides what to do with a public property. The decision to entrust the space may be subject to the discretionary choice of the (local) State that may favour one UCs rather than other. This entrustment should be regulated by public selection procedures that should limit this discretionary logic. However, in the case of Barcelona, these procedures seem that have not been often used, being the direct negotiation with the City Council the most adopted one. The reason behind this approach may be that the entrustment of spaces to social groups has been considered for a long time as an administrative exception that was resolved according to a 'case by case' logic with a direct negotiation between the social group and the City Council. However, the direct assignment of public properties to social groups looks set to change in Barcelona. With the increase of the speculative pressure in the city, there will always be greater competition for 'facilitated' access to space, and not only among UCs. The competition could lead to conflicts that can put into question the Barcelona discretionary model in the assignment of a space. Therefore, a standardisation of the access to public space seems to be unavoidable for the City Council. The approved public programmes such as the 'Pla Buits' and 'Gestió Ciutadana' are a demonstration of the public institution's emerging need to regulate access to public space. However, although this normativisation could contribute to making the space assignment process more democratic and transparent and resolving potential conflicts over the access to space, it does not solve the competition for access to space. Moreover, space remains public and, despite it is assigned through a more transparent and democratic process, this could be subject to the political will of the (local) State that could design the selection criteria a way that could facilitate the assignment of a space to an UCs rather than another.

- *The not hostile attitude, the laissez-faire attitude and the direct support of the (local)State*

The positions adopted by the (local)State in relation to UCs may facilitate their emergence. These positions are mainly three. The (local) State may directly support the emergence of the UCs, or the (local) State may indirectly support the emergence of the UCs with the adoption of a non-hostile approach or a laissez-faire approach. In Barcelona the local (State) rarely provide a direct support for the emergence of an UCs. This means that many UCs have emerged thanks to the indirect (local) State's support. All types of support are hardly a strategy that genuinely aims to support the Common's emancipatory project but they usually respond to the political and economic needs of the government in power. The political and economic needs behind the (local) State's support should not discourage UCs from accepting it. The case of Bloc 11 UCs shows that, although it was the result of a political strategy of the conservative government, it was also thanks to this strategy that the Bloc 11 UCs managed to grow and expand.

5.3 The role of the (local) State in the maintenance of UCs

- *The role of the public property*

To develop over time, UCs must maintain a continuous use of the public or private space to which they have had access. However, except the cases where UCs can afford either to buy a property or to pay a rent at market prices, this continuous use depends on the possibility of staying in a space with a reduced price or for free. In the case where the property is private, this use depends on the lack of speculative interest on the space. However, this is always a temporary condition seen as a problem by the public administration since it is considered as an obstacle to economic growth. Therefore, real estate speculation is often stimulated by (local) State planning that puts the maintenance of the UCs at risk. Once real estate speculation is set in motion, the public ownership becomes the only solution to maintain the UCs. However, just as the entrustment of a public property to an UCs can be characterised by high discretionary logic, also the decision to acquire a private property to save an UCs is subject to the will and discretion of the (local) State. As demonstrated by the research, through the property acquisition, the local (State) can favour the salvation of some UCs more than others. Moreover, the public property has drawbacks. Firstly, it can affect the autonomy of an UCs. Once an UCs is in a public property, it has to respond to the principle of an open and democratic access to all. Although all UCs should aim at these principles, not all of them necessarily can adopt it, and the same essence of the UCs may be affected. However, in the case of Barcelona, there is a significant number of UCs that, although they receive the City Council's proprietary support, they do not perceive their autonomy as being threatened because of this. Secondly, the assignment of a public property to UCs is always temporary. In the case where the assignment is very short, this temporality can significantly influence the possibility of developing an UCs. Indeed, there are cases in which the social group acquires such a high level of legitimacy both at the social and political level that it is difficult, but not impossible, that this space could be taken away.

- *The economic support of the (local) State*

UCs often needs the economic support of the (local) State. It seems that in Barcelona a large number rely on it. Thus, in most of these cases, the economic contribution of the Barcelona City Council becomes the only alternative that allows UCs to survive. However, just as in the case of the proprietary support, the economic support can be characterised by high discretionary logic. It seems that in Barcelona the allocation of economic resources is much more regulated and therefore transparent than the assignment of proprietary resources. This does not mean that the

selection criteria cannot favour some UCs rather than others but that, at least, it should be more difficult. However, also the public economic contribution has drawbacks. It risks affecting the autonomy of the UCs, as the allocation of resources may be subject to the compliance with public criteria that may push the UCs in adopting different values (such as competition and excellence). There is a significant number of UCs that, although receiving the City Council's economic support, do not perceive their autonomy being threatened. Moreover, the economic contribution can always be cancelled or significantly reduced over time. This may be connected to the decision of the City Council not to finance certain types of practices, but also to the City Council's limited economic resources. In this sense, the case of Barcelona seems to be a privileged one, thanks to its good financial conditions, that permit the City Council to reserve a reasonable amount of resources for the support of UCs.

- *The recognition of the (local) State*

The recognition by the (local) State is essential for the maintenance of an UCs. This finding emerges above all from its opposite. When an UCs is not recognised by (local) State because it is considered dangerous or because it is considered irrelevant, its existence is at risk. If the (local) State considers it dangerous, it will likely push for its destruction, while if it considers it irrelevant, it can adopt public policies that can undermine its existence. The recognition of the UCs by (local) State can be increased by the social legitimacy that an UCs acquires. However, this is not sufficient to guarantee the recognition since this often depends on what is politically convenient for the (local) State to recognise.

- *The struggle against the (local) State*

When an UCs is under threat, structuring a struggle is an essential instrument that UCs have to survive. The struggle allows making visible the crucial relation that the social group has with the resource, leading to different results. First, it links the struggle of a single UCs with that of other similar UCs (an art space with other art spaces, an informal settlement with other informal settlement). Secondly, it favours the confluence of other social groups in the UCs defence, expanding the group's relations with the resource far beyond the limits of the directly interested social group. Thirdly, it calls into question the (local) State because the struggle often implies a claim for the recognition or support of the UCs. The UCs' struggle does not necessarily lead to the UCs survival. The UCs success in its struggle depends on several factors, such as the political strength of the social group, the support that this can have from other UCs, the climate of social conflict in the city and the strength of the (local) State. However, the struggle is undoubtedly an important instrument to conflict with the (local) State and push it to act and take or change a

position. In all the analysed cases, the struggle of the UCs has led the (local)State to intervene, favouring the development of UCs in one case, destroying the UCs in another and co-opting it in the other case. The emergence of the struggle shows the plural nature of the UCs. Self-managing practices develop also their reclaiming nature when they are under threat. This means that an UCs may be considered a reclaiming or self-managing practices. However, this is not a totalising form but only the predominant one that can co-exist with the other that may emerge depending on the UCs need of the State. This shows that not only UCs take the form of self-managing or reclaiming practices depending on the role adopted by the (local)State throughout history but also an UCs takes the form of a self-managing or reclaiming practice along the course of its life, according to the need or not of the State support and recognition.

5.4 The role of the (local) State in the expansion of UCs

- *The expansion of a single UCs*

The expansion of UCs in the city can mainly take place through two processes. Firstly, the expansion may take place through the expansion of a single UCs. The reluctance towards hierarchy does not necessarily limit this expansion. The case of Bloc 11 UCs shows that it is possible to create horizontal structures formed by autonomous UCs that coordinate with each other. This example seems to disprove the UCs scale limits that many scholars sustain. However, it does not prove that the scale limit does not exist, but rather that it is not a limit, or at least, it is not just a limit in itself. The ability to scale-up depends on the willingness and organisational capacity of social groups and on the possibility of expanding. This possibility, in turn, depends on those conditions that allow the emergence of UCs which are the non-hostile or the laissez-faire or the favourable attitude of the (local)State and the possibility of access to space. In other words, the ability to scale-up does not depend exclusively on the ability to organize a large scale participatory governmental structure but also on the possibility of having these conditions together: an organized group with common objectives aimed at the expansion of the UCs, a local(State) that at least does not hinder the expansion and a space to carry out this expansion.

- *The multiplication of UCs*

Secondly, the expansion may take place through the multiplication of similar UCs. All analysed UCs were not isolated cases but part of a variety of similar UCs. However, their multiplication depends on the same conditions that allow the emergence and development of UCs in which the (local) State, through its economic and proprietary support and its recognition has the power to favour or limit this expansion. When the (local) State decided not to support or not

recognise these UCs, they did not last. The analysed cases do not allow to draw conclusions about the organisational model and whether the horizontality is a limit or not. None of these UCs had federated and were developing a common project. This is perhaps a first step that should be done by UCs: recognising similar UCs, federating and trying to build an alternative management model on a larger scale.

5.5 The support of the (local) State to The Common

The production of The Common shows different limits. Firstly, The Common is limited in its universality. Common's theories are often accused of elitism as the access to the UCs is limited in both physical and ideological terms. However, like the question of scale, universality is not a limit in itself. If it were possible to expand The Common, both through the expansion of single UCs and through the reproduction of UCs, universality would be much less limited. The many art spaces that were born in Poblenou in the 1990s show the possibility for many artists at that time to benefit from affordable studio spaces in the area, choosing the art space that they preferred depending on the affinity to the group of artists and the discipline. Thus, the production of universal emancipation by the UCs more than depending on the access to space depends on the UCs' expansion capacity, whereby the role of the (local) State has been already highlighted. This does not mean that UCs do not have to be concerned about maintaining democratic access to space. This must remain a priority for UCs in order to be called as such. However, this access is not essential for the achievement of universality as it is instead the expansion of the production of The Common.

Secondly, The Common is limited because it is an activity often at the margins of legality, which often represents a source of value extraction for capitalism through the exploitation of labour or through rents, and often does not have adequate resources to be produced and sometimes cannot even be produced by the social groups due to lack of entitlement. All these limits make the production of The Common reduced in scope and precarious over time. Through the support that the (local) State could give in terms of recognition, and proprietary and economic resources, the reduced scope and precariousness could be limited. However, the (local) State could also act at the regulation level and implement public policies that remove the other obstacles to the production of The Common. Some examples are the decriminalisation of currently illegal activities, the implementation of policy instruments that could reduce the exploitation of UCs' social groups, the definition of planning policies that can reduce the precariousness of some spaces and activities at-risk, and the recovering of the public capacity of implementing plans.

These (possible) interventions of the local (State) - regulation amendments, policy instruments and planning- not necessarily have to be considered a production of The Public just because they are established by the State. These interventions might be implemented to support and even to produce The Common that theoretically can maintain its common nature if it is supported or even realised by the (local) State. It may seem contradictory that the production of The Common can be supported or produced from above, by the (local)State. However, The Common does not depend so much on who materially produce it, if an UCs produce it or if the (local)State produces it. The production of The Common depends on who controls that production. Thus, the threat to The Common is not the intervention of the (local)State, but the type of intervention of the (local)State, as the latter hardly acts through supporting interventions. Decriminalizing illegal activities would mean to rethink the rules of our western-bounded legal scheme. Preserving spaces and activities at risk would mean to go against the pro-growth planning strategy that local governments have usually pursued. In other words, the (local)State may support The Common, but this implies a radical overturn of the same rules of the (local)State and the same rationality of the (local)State. The case of the self-managed spaces and facilities that are currently supported by the (local) State demonstrate that this support is possible because it fits within the limited range of possibilities pictured out by the City Council.

5.6 The capacity of the local (State) to flank The Common with The Public

When the (local)State intervenes, it usually tends to replace The Common with The Public. This replacement can occur through two processes. The classic production of The Public, i.e. public (theoretically) universal policies that do not tend to rely on the agency of individuals, and the collective-based production of The Public, i.e. public policies that imitates 'The Common' through the creation of diversified collective units that would give more space to the agency of individuals. However, The Public cannot fully replace The Common because The Public is also limited. Firstly, it is limited in its universality. Despite the supposed universality of The Public, the classic production of The Public seems to pursue a formal rather than a substantial universality, risking to exclude some of the people who most need this emancipatory action. Whereas, on the other hand, the collective-based production of The Public, although it represents an innovative emancipatory action, is still unable to respond to a universal need, producing emancipation for a very limited social group. Secondly, The Public is limited because it tends to accommodate pro-growth pressure through the commodification of its public assets, the privatization of its services and through the embracing of capitalistic values, such as competitiveness, in its policies. These

processes, at least in the case of Barcelona, although they have increased in the last decades, do not seem to be linked to the conservative or progressive nature of the political parties that govern the city as they are a feature of the production of The Public that has been structured throughout the whole democratic era.

Due to the described limits of The Public, The Common cannot disappear. The production of The Public is not capable of replacing the production of The Common entirely because it cannot produce a form of universal and non-commodified emancipation. However, the need for many social groups to continue producing that same emancipation remains. The Common, when dissolved, re-emerges in other forms and other places. Generally, all those UCs that do not fit in the limited range of possibilities pictured out by the (local) State are progressively pushed at the margin of the city and even outside it. This The Public/The Common's spatial distribution demonstrates that The Public and The Common cannot co-exist in the same social and/or physical space. This does not mean that these two types of emancipatory production can never co-exist but that sooner or later one of the two will tend to become hegemonic on the other. This The Public/The Common's spatial organisation also demonstrates that the urban space is witnessing a process of spatial occupation that favours not only the presence of the Market but also a stronger presence of the State.

Although The Common does not disappear, depending on the 'efficiency' of the production of The Public, it tends to take one form rather than another. The analysis of Barcelona historical evolution, and the results of the questionnaire, have demonstrated that when the State addresses most of the demands for emancipation of social groups, UCs tend to structure in reclaiming practices rather than self-managing practices. The former rather than creating and claiming autonomous spaces and autonomously produce emancipation tend to demand to the State the production of emancipation. Thus, although the production of The Public is considered to be necessary, an excessive production of The Public can be a deterrent to the creation of the autonomy of The Common. For this reason, the current historical moment, in which the State, independently from the political forces that govern it, seems less interested in producing emancipation, and in which social groups have started to systematically distrust the State, can be a crucial moment for the emancipatory project of The Common. This historical moment could be what the social movement study defines as a window of opportunity (Tarrow, 1998). In the case of Barcelona, this window of opportunity could further be facilitated by the governing coalition Barcelona en Comú that has stressed in its programme that it aims to support the autonomous development of social practices (Barcelona En Comú, 2015).

5.7 First impressions of Barcelona en Comú

As specified in other occasions, it was not the objective of this thesis to fully evaluate the relation of UCs with Barcelona en Comú. It was not in its possibilities. The relational approach involves a study of temporal layers in the structuring of the UCs that implies a temporal distance from the object of study to look at it retrospectively. However, the thesis did not want to lose the opportunity to see the direction in which the new government seem to be going. The analysis showed that the relationship between the (local) State and the UCs has improved considerably with the arrival of Barcelona en Comú. This means that the UCs could more easily negotiate with the (local) State that could recognise and therefore support them, both in economic and proprietary terms. However, it does not seem that Barcelona en Comú, until now, has adopted an approach capable of transversely supporting The Common. This support is detectable in some sectors such as the economic production and the production of public facilities and spaces where two instruments, one adopted, the 'Plan de impulso de la economía cooperativa social y solidaria', and the other still to be adopted, the 'Patrimoni Ciutadà', suggest that there is an attempt to support the autonomy of the production of The Common. However, in the other analysed policy areas, such as the immigrants' integration and the art production, this change is not detectable. In these areas, Barcelona en Comú uses the same public policies adopted by previous governments without radically changing what is deemed possible in the rationality of the local government. In other words, Barcelona en Comú currently seems to discretionally support only some UCs whose support does not imply an overturn of the political and governmental rationality. In any case, whether these policies represent a real support of The Common has to be assessed by further study. However, supporting The Common in certain areas can represent an opportunity to strengthen The Common and a ground for experimenting these forms of support. Moreover, being Barcelona en Comú a better interlocutor for UCs, they could more easily negotiate and above all try to ring-fence some forms of support already secured.

5.8 Concluding remarks

The objective of this thesis could be considered contradictory: the understanding of the role of the State in the autonomist Common's theories. However, in the light of the results of the research carried out, it may hopefully be a little less so. These theories are right to stress the need to build an emancipatory process without the State given the proven fallacy of all the theories that saw in the taking over of the State the way to achieve emancipation such as reformism and real

communism (Hardt and Negri, 2009; Dardot and Laval, 2015). They are also right considering the spread of the practices of autonomy not being a peculiarity of Barcelona, although they have gained here a predominant role in the social space, but of all European cities (Cellamare, 2018). However, it cannot be not considered that in western society the State is everywhere. Therefore, it is believed that the autonomist Common's theories should come to terms with the State, especially if the city is claimed as the privileged space to develop the Common's emancipatory project. The research has demonstrated that in this space, dense of capital investment and speculation interests, the role of the (local) State has to be taken into consideration because UCs generally need its support. Many UCs need the (local) State's economic and proprietary resources, and all of them need its recognition to emerge, maintain and expand over time; moreover, all UCs would benefit from the intervention of the (local) State in terms of regulations, policies and planning to remove the obstacle to their production of The Common.

Accepting the support of the (local) State should not be considered as a contradiction for UCs but only as one of the paths that UCs may undertake to permit their survival in the city. Moreover, such support should not be considered to be a weakening of their emancipatory potential because the support of the (local) State does not necessarily mean losing autonomy or reducing the emancipatory capacity of UCs. The UCs may continue to maintain their self-governing capacity despite the relation with the (local) State and the support they receive depending on the power relation structure established between the two. Therefore, it would be helpful to distinguish between the actually-existing autonomy, which is the autonomy that all UCs lacks as they relate with the (local) State (and with many other actors) (Chatterton, 2016; Stavrides, 2016), and the relative autonomy which is represented by the decision-making power UCs maintain over their resources and their emancipatory project. Indeed, the outcome of the UC's relation with the (local) State does not necessarily bring to a relative autonomy, as often this may impact the essence of UCs, their value and their emancipatory project. However, this should not discourage UCs from starting to approach the (local) State to explore what kind of support they can receive being, this crucial for their survival. This does not imply necessarily entering into collaboration with the State, but creating a relational space in which confrontation, conflict and collaboration intermingle according to the context and the strength of both the UCs and the (local) State.

Undoubtedly, the economic and proprietary support is particularly important. Many UCs are on the margins of economic sustainability or give rise to activities in to which the capitalist system does not attribute value or does not give it an adequate value. Many activities lacking this economic stability do not therefore have the possibility of guaranteeing an adequate space in the

city where rent prices are controlled only by the free real estate market. Consequently, as these resources are needed and often the UCs does not have them, using the resources of the (local) State could significantly contribute to the survival of the UCs. For this reason, one of the main objective of the UCs' struggle should be to try to achieve and guarantee the use of the economic and proprietary resources of the (local) State negotiating conditions that can preserve their relative autonomy, and ring-fence these resources as much as possible. However, the support of the (local) State should not be overestimated, and the Common's emancipatory project should not rely primarily on it. Precisely because it is the (local) State that decides what to do with its resources, this support can be subject to the discretionary logic driven by political interests and economic pressures that can direct it to certain UCs rather than others, and can always be cancelled or reduced when the (local) State decides to do so. Stressing the decision-making power of the (local) State does not mean that the UCs' capacity to struggle for achieving and maintaining these resources is denied. However, it has to be emphasised that unfortunately it is always the (local) State that has the last word on what to do and how to allocate its resources. Thus, the UCs should never abandon their struggle for the construction of both economic and proprietary autonomy.

The struggle for economic autonomy seems to be more structured than the proprietary one. The first can rely on existing Common's economic institutions where the economic activity does not aim at profit-making and accumulation of capital, such as cooperatives. In this sense, the cooperative tradition, of which Barcelona and many other cities are rich, can provide an enormous wealth of experience. Nevertheless, the struggle for the proprietary autonomy cannot rely on its institutions. Currently, although some forms of common ownership exist in non-urbanized areas, there are no forms of common ownership in the city. There are not institutions in the city where, as Harvey says, the value produced in common in the space can be kept and redistributed to the social group that produced it (Harvey, 2012). It seems that at property level the eclipse produced by the great dichotomy is extremely powerful. Currently, although the proprietary question is becoming increasingly problematic in the city due to the rise of speculative pressure, no fight for a common property is recognisable. The proprietary struggle is carried out in a rather classic way: claiming the acquisition of public land and claiming a more stringent regulation for the private market. However, given the ease with which the (local) State sell off its assets, regardless of whether right-wing or left-wing political forces govern it, and given the lack of predisposition of national and regional State to regulate the real estate market, this struggle for a proprietary form of the Commons should be at the centre of the overall Commons' struggle. In this sense, the contribution of the Italian critical legal studies with the elaboration of the common property proposed by the Rodotà Commission, although limited, is indeed an important point from where to start.

The UCs also need the (local) State's recognition, whether direct or indirect. However, although this recognition can be guided and facilitated by the relationship that the UCs builds with the (local) State and by the legitimacy that UCs have at the social level, it does not depend exclusively on the relationship, but on what is politically convenient and legally possible for the (local) State to recognise. In this sense, what is legally impossible become often an excuse for the (local) State to not recognise what is politically inconvenient. This is why widening the meshes of what is legally recognisable is another important struggle of the UCs.

In the last years in Barcelona, as well as in other European cities, different policy instruments have been approved that seem to recognise and support the existence of self-managed public spaces and building. In Barcelona, this is the case of the 'Pla Buits', 'Gestió Ciutadana' and the upcoming 'Patrimoni Ciutadà'; in other cities this is the case of 'The Regulation of the Urban Commons' in Bologna, the 'Civic Uses' in Naples (Micciarelli, 2017; Bianchi, 2018) and the different policies measures in Berlin (Colomb, 2012). None of these policy instruments seems to extend the meshes of what is legally recognisable. They seem to officially recognise and support UCs that were already but unofficially recognised and supported by the City Council, leaving out of the law those that are politically inconvenient. However, since through these policy instruments the forms of both economic and proprietary support are defined, UCs should struggle to guarantee that these instruments are effectively supportive and not mere tools to control what is possible. The proliferation of these institutional forms of recognition opens an interesting field to deepen at academic level. It is indeed necessary to analyse the new coming instruments, such as the Barcelona one, to understand whether they guarantee forms of support to the UCs. It would also be interesting evaluate the results of a comparative analysis of all the policy instruments to underline similarities and differences.

The role of the (local) State in the emancipatory project of The Common is not limited only to forms of economic and proprietary support, and recognition of the UCs, but could facilitate the production of The Common itself. The production of The Common is always precarious, often at the margin of legality, often exploited by market forces and hard to be carried out by social groups. It could be a prerogative of the (local) State to remove these obstacles through regulations, policies and planning. However, removing them often means, again, enlarging the meshes of what is possible and what is not, of what is legal and what is not. And the (local) State often avoid to do it. Currently, it is not sufficiently explored how regulation, policies and planning can reduce these obstacles. It is unexplored both by UCs, which generally tend to look sideways at the intervention

of the (local) State and by the (local) State, which is used to producing its own emancipation. Moreover, it seems also to be not sufficiently explored at the academic level by each disciplinary field. It has always been thought that regulation, public policies and urban planning should be functional to the production of The Public. Therefore, the UCs should struggle to push the (local)State to create regulations, policies and plans to remove the obstacles to the production of The Common. This also means that, at the academic level, the critical approach to these disciplines, have a interesting field of exploration ahead of them. A possible research path that departs from this thesis may be to continue to analyse how public policies and planning can support the production of The Common, collecting experiences and analysing cases in different cities where public policies and planning are trying to remove the obstacles to the production of The Common. In this sense, the path opened by the Spanish critical political science literature is undoubtedly a relevant point of departure for this research.

In summary, through the economic and proprietary support of the (local) State, through its recognition and through the elimination of obstacles to the production of The Common with regulation, policies and planning, UCs would have more possibilities to emerge, survive and expand. However, the expansion of UCs, which is not limited by the horizontal organisational structure but by the same possibility of the UCs to grow and multiply in the city, can be a risk for the (local)State and the State in broader terms. Facilitating the expansion of the UCs means to challenge one of the main critique that is moved to Common's theories and that leads its critics to re-evaluate the role of the State, namely the limited universality of The Common that, producing emancipation through collective units, automatically exclude part of all those citizens who do not participate in that collective unit. According to these critics, the (local) State and therefore any State, including all citizens within its administrative boundaries in the production of emancipation, would ensure this universality.

The thesis shows instead that The Common is not universally limited because of the collective-based production of emancipation but because the limited possibilities of its expansion. If UCs expand and multiply throughout the city, this limit, although never wholly annulled, could undoubtedly be re-balanced and the limited universality of The Common would seem less limited. The universality of The Common could even overcome that of The Public. The universality of The Public is theoretically unlimited, but only within the administrative and territorial boundaries of the State and of the people for which it produces emancipation, be it a nation or a city. The Public does not move because it is anchored to those territorial boundaries that the liberal doctrines and the bourgeois constitutions created. The production of The Common is instead unlimited in

boundaries and free in movement. The Common does not respond to an administrative or territorial limit or to a single population. The Common is produced, transforms and moves independently of the boundaries and independently of the identity conferred by the (local) State. Therefore, the problem of The Common is not its limited universality, but the condition in which it takes shape: the informality, the scarcity of resources, the wildest exploitation.

Due to this considerable emancipatory potential of The Common, the (local)State and the State in general have clearly no interest in making The Common expand. The result is that when the (local)State decides to relate or is pushed to relate with a production of The Common it tends to replace it with the production of The Public, apart from some exceptional cases which, however, seem to be somewhat limited. When The Public is produced, it shows its limits. Beyond being limited by its boundaries, The Public is also limited within its boundaries. Due to its formal achievement of universality and to its commodification tendency, The Public often fails to produce emancipation for all citizens to which it would refer, often leaving out of its emancipatory production those most in need and often introducing capitalist values in its production that nullify the emancipation itself. This is why The Public never manages to replace The Common. The need for social groups to produce emancipation and to do it outside the market imperatives of neoliberal capitalism will always remain. Therefore, The Common either moves or takes other forms.

The fact that The Public is limited and is not able to replace The Common, even though it tries to do so, does not limit its overall potential. The Public remains a form to produce emancipation that may temporarily expand the overall spectrum of the production of emancipation. However, the more the State produces The Public, the more the production of The Common could be threatened. The Common emerge from the political need to go beyond the State and the Market, but also it often emerges from the direct and unsatisfied need of a social group, often disadvantaged, to produce emancipation. If this production of emancipation is already resolved, it is more difficult for The Common to emerge, and the State knows this well. Therefore, the flanking of the production of The Common with the production of The Public could momentarily widen the overall spectrum of the production of emancipation, precisely because they work in a distinct but almost complementary way. However, the flanking of The Public to The Common could be counterproductive in the long term. Firstly, because, although it cannot completely replace it, it can inhibit its production. Secondly, because it can make it marginal in spatial terms. The progressive expulsion of The Common at the fringe of the administrative boundaries of the city, or even outside its administrative boundaries, is a sign of this process. The spatial production of The Commons is not a secondary issue. Its spatial marginalisation, outside

the centrality of the city, can make it marginal at the symbolic and imaginary level and further strengthen the great dichotomy.

In summary, the struggle of the UCs should be directed towards the (local) State to push it to support the UCs through its proprietary and economic resources and its recognition; and to remove the obstacle to the production of The Common through its regulations, public policies and planning so that the UCs can emerge, maintain and expand in the city. This struggle should be carried out preventing the (local) State from limiting the UCs' autonomy, from transforming The Common into The Public, from maintaining the hegemony of the production of emancipation, and from spatially marginalising The Common. This kind of struggle has to be carried out independently from the presence of a right-wing or left-wing government but only taking into consideration the modes of operation, including the opportunistic political interests and the momentary weaknesses, of the government in question and act accordingly. Historically, left-wing governments (but not only) have proved to be great promoters of The Public. So, rather than conquer the State, UCs should take advantage of the weak conditions of the State and exploit these moments to strengthen The Common. This does not mean abandoning any progressive parties' struggle for taking over the (local) State, but that this is not strictly necessary. However, in case the (local) State is taken over by progressive forces, and it is recognised a predisposition for supporting The Common, UCs should take advantage and use it to strengthen their emancipatory project, by ring-fencing spaces, resources, regulations and policies in their support.

The case of Barcelona, with the arrival of Barcelona en Comú, may fit within the last case. The new government programme seems to aim to maintain the autonomy of emancipatory social practices and support them. However, this support is far from being proved. Also Barcelona en Comú, despite it has improved the relation with the UCs and despite it has provided or is about to provide forms of support, does not seem to enlarge the meshes of what is possible and what is not, of what is legal and what is not. This is not a reason to dismiss its role, on the contrary. Understanding how the new policy approach of Barcelona can support the Common's emancipatory project will be a fundamental analysis to be carried out once this can be fully evaluated. Unfortunately, this was an impossible task for this research due to the timeframe in which it took place, but it represents a future research path. This analysis should not be limited to the city of Barcelona but include all those cities in which an autonomist tradition is currently combined with a government that could support it. In this sense, comparing the case of Barcelona and the case of Naples could be an interesting research to be developed.

Certainly, struggling for the support of the (local) State and expand The Commons in the city may seem a limited political action. Firstly, because the (local) State is immersed in a multilevel governance that limits its regulation, policy and planning capacity. Secondly, because advancing The Common in the city may seem reductive compared to a process of emancipation that aims to go far beyond the urban dimension. However, settling the struggle in the city is indeed a good point from where to start. Firstly, the (local) State, despite it cannot support the UCs fully, does have the capacity to support them in many forms. Secondly, the global dimension of emancipation does not exclude the struggle in the city, on the contrary. The struggle can be carried out at different scales and assume different forms depending on the type of State that faces. However, the struggle in the urban dimension does have a significant role.

The city is where The Common is most at risk, as market forces are incredibly aggressive and where the State is terribly present. However, the city is also where the politicisation of civil society can better structure the struggle and achieve forms of support from the (local) State that are perhaps unthinkable at other scales, such as the national one. Therefore, struggling to take over the space of the city is a crucial struggle for the autonomist Common's emancipatory project because it is in this space that it can obtain and secure from the State that type of support that it needs to develop and expand. This does not guarantee the expansion of The Common beyond the administrative boundaries of the city but, since the nature of The Common is to go beyond them, it permits to question and undermine them. Questioning and undermining these boundaries means questioning and undermining one of the fundamental nodes of the State system and thus one of the fundamental nodes of the capitalist system itself. To structure this struggle, UCs do not need to take over the State, as it is rightly claimed by autonomist Common's theories. However, paradoxically, they would need to obtain and secure the support of the State, especially the local one.

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APPENDIX A

Iniciatives Socials Barcelona

1. Informació general

Quina és la vostra àrea de treball?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Associació de veïnes i veïnes | <input type="radio"/> Llibreria o editorial |
| <input type="radio"/> Aigua és vida | <input type="radio"/> Serveis de comunicació i informació |
| <input type="radio"/> Moviment antidesnonaments | <input type="radio"/> Serveis investigació i coneixement |
| <input type="radio"/> Moviment turismesostenible | <input type="radio"/> Cooperativa d'habitatges |
| <input type="radio"/> Assemblea per la pobresa energètica | <input type="radio"/> Cooperativa d'ensenyament |
| <input type="radio"/> Assemblea d'aturats | <input type="radio"/> Cooperativa de segon grau |
| <input type="radio"/> Sindicat | <input type="radio"/> Banc del temps |
| <input type="radio"/> Defensa drets immigrants | <input type="radio"/> Mercat d'intercanvi |
| <input type="radio"/> Espai autogestionat | <input type="radio"/> Grup de consum |
| <input type="radio"/> Centre Cívic | <input type="radio"/> Grup de criança |
| <input type="radio"/> Espai de gestió comunitària | <input type="radio"/> Menjador ecològic |
| <input type="radio"/> Espai de producció artística | <input type="radio"/> Masoveria urbana |
| <input type="radio"/> Horts urbans comunitaris | <input type="radio"/> No ho sé |
| <input type="radio"/> Serveis a persones i/o empreses | <input type="radio"/> |
| <input type="radio"/> Altres (especifiqueu) | |

Iniciatives Socials Barcelona

2. Informació general

A quin districte esteu?

Iniciatives Socials Barcelona

3. Informació general

A quin barri?

Iniciatives Socials Barcelona

4. Informació general

A quin barri?

Iniciatives Socials Barcelona

5. Informació general

A quin barri?

Iniciatives Socials Barcelona

6. Informació general

A quin barri?

Iniciatives Socials Barcelona

7. Informació general

A quin barri?

Iniciatives Socials Barcelona

8. Informació general

A quin barri?

Iniciatives Socials Barcelona

9. Informació general

A quin barri?

Iniciatives Socials Barcelona

10. Informació general

A quin barri?

Iniciatives Socials Barcelona

11. Informació general

A quin barri?

Iniciatives Socials Barcelona

12. Informació general

A quin barri?

Iniciatives Socials Barcelona

13. Informació general

Quan heu començat?

- Abans del 2007
- Entre 2007-2012
- Després del 2012
- No ho sé

Iniciatives Socials Barcelona

14. Informació general

Quantes persones estan involucrades?

- 0-10
- 10-25
- 25-50
- 50-100
- Més de 100
- No ho sé

Iniciatives Socials Barcelona

15. Informació general

Heu començat com una iniciativa:

- Exclusivament ciutadana
- Rebent el suport d'alguna administració
- Promoguda per una administració

Iniciatives Socials Barcelona

16. Informació general

Entre els vostres objectius hi ha (pots marcar diferents opcions):

- Desenvolupar formes d'autonomia i autogovern
- Reivindicar la gestió d'un servei i/o un espai
- Reivindicar la intervenció pública en assumptes socials (treball /salut /habitatge /immigració /etc ..)
- Produir alternatives a les formes dominants de producció econòmica, social i cultural
- Produir alternatives a la insuficient intervenció pública en assumptes socials
- Produir alternatives a la gestió i prestació de serveis públics
- Defensar drets fonamentals i empoderar grups que pateixen discriminació
- Cap
- Altres

Iniciatives Socials Barcelona

17. Sostenibilitat econòmica

En general, diríeu que el finançament públic (contractació i/o subvencions) és fonamental per a la vostra supervivència?

- Sí
- No
- No és fonamental però és molt important

Iniciatives Socials Barcelona

18. Sostenibilitat econòmica

Rebeu algun tipus de finançament per part de l'Ajuntament (contractació i/o subvencions)?

- Sí
- No
- No ho sé

Iniciatives Socials Barcelona

19. Sostenibilitat econòmica

Principalment, de quin tipus?

- Contractació
- Subvencions
- No ho sé

Iniciatives Socials Barcelona

20. Sostenibilitat econòmica

Principalment, com ha seleccionat la vostra contractació l'Ajuntament?

- Avís públic
- Contracte menor (<18.000€)
- Derivat acord marc Ajuntament
- No ho sé
- Altres (especifiqueu)

Iniciatives Socials Barcelona

21. Sostenibilitat econòmica

Principalment, com heu rebut les subvencions de l'Ajuntament?

- Convocatòries obertes per a subvencions de l'Ajuntament de Barcelona
- L'Ajuntament és part del projecte
- Conveni
- Negociacions *ad hoc*
- No ho sé
- Altres (especifiqueu)

Iniciatives Socials Barcelona

22. Sostenibilitat econòmica

En quin percentatge els finançaments de l'Ajuntament contribueixen al vostre projecte?

0%	1-25%	25-50%	51-75%	75-100%	No ho sé
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Iniciatives Socials Barcelona

23. Sostenibilitat econòmica

Rebeu finançament d'altres entitats públiques?

- Unió Europea
- Estat
-
- Generalitat
- Diputació
- Cap
- No ho sé

Iniciatives Socials Barcelona

24. Sostenibilitat econòmica

Veneu productes i/o serveis a privats?

- Sí
- No
- No ho sé

Iniciatives Socials Barcelona

25. Sostenibilitat econòmica

Els preus dels vostres productes i serveis són:

- A preus de mercat
- Més assequibles que a preus de mercat
- Més cars que a preus de mercat

Iniciatives Socials Barcelona

26. Sostenibilitat econòmica

Quins altres tipus de recursos rebeu? (pots marcar diferents opcions)

- Recursos d'organitzacions privades
- Recursos de la xarxa
- Quotes dels socis
- Intercanvi mutu
- Cap
- No ho sé
- Altres

Iniciatives Socials Barcelona

27. Sostenibilitat econòmica

Sou part d'un programa o una xarxa municipal?

- Sí
- No
- No ho sé

Quina? (pots marcar diferents opcions)

- Fàbriques de Creació
- Pla Buits
- Pla Locals
- Xarxa d'Horts Urbans
- Xarxa de Centres Cívics
- Xarxa de Bancs del temps
- Xarxa de Fab Lab
- Xarxa de Biblioteca
- No és part de cap programa però està sota la Gestió Cívica
- Altres (especifiqueu)

Iniciatives Socials Barcelona

28. Sostenibilitat econòmica

L'espai on esteu és de propietat:

- Pública
- Privada (d'un tercer o tercers)
- Privada (d'una altra iniciativa social)
- Privada (d'un membre del nostre grup)
- Nostra (associativa)
- No ho sé
- Altres (especifiqueu)

Iniciatives Socials Barcelona

29. Sostenibilitat econòmica

A través de quin procediment se us ha estat assignat l'espai ?

- Avis públic obert
- Negociació amb l'Ajuntament
- Okupat
- No ho sé
- Altres (especifiqueu)

Iniciatives Socials Barcelona

30. Sostenibilitat econòmica

El pagament per l'espai és:

- Lloguer a preu de mercat
- Lloguer més assequible que a preu de mercat
- Cessió temporal gratuïta
- Okupat
- No ho sé
- Altres (especifiqueu)

Iniciatives Socials Barcelona

31. Relació amb altres iniciatives

Heu estat activament involucrat en algun d'aquests moviments ciutadans? (Pots marcar diferents opcions)

- 15M
- Mobilització antidesnonaments
- Campanya Guanyem Barcelona
- Manifestacions per la independència de Catalunya
- Cap

32. Relació amb altres iniciatives

Assenyala el teu grau d'acord/desacord amb cadascuna de les afirmacions següents en una escala de l'1 al 5 (on 1 és molt en desacord i 5 molt d'acord)

La col·laboració amb altres iniciatives ens permet de ser més autònoms respecte l'Administració pública

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

La col·laboració amb altres iniciatives ens ha permès tenir més impacte en la presa de decisions públiques.

No tenim un paper
en la definició de les
polítiques públiques

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

La col·laboració amb altres iniciatives ha augmentat després de la crisi per fer front a situacions d'emergència econòmica i social.

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

La col·laboració amb altres iniciatives ha augmentat després de les eleccions municipals del 24M de 2015 gràcies a un major impuls per part de l'Ajuntament.

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Iniciatives Socials Barcelona

33. Relació amb altres iniciatives

Sou part d'una xarxa social més gran?

- Sí
- No
- No ho sé

Quina?

- Plataforma Gestió Ciutadana
- Xarxa Espais Comunitari
- Xarxa Economia Solidària
- Xarxa Consum Solidari
- Confederació de Cooperatives de Catalunya
- Usurpa
- Federació d'Associacions de Veïns i Veïnes de Barcelona
- Altres (especifiqueu)

Iniciatives Socials Barcelona

34. Relacions amb l'Ajuntament

Més enllà del vostre origen, diríeu que, actualment, sou una iniciativa:

- Exclusivament ciutadana
- Rep el suport d'alguna administració

Iniciatives Socials Barcelona

35. Relacions amb l'Ajuntament

Assenyala el teu grau d'acord/desacord amb cadascuna de les afirmacions següents en una escala de l'1 al 5 (on 1 és molt en desacord i 5 molt d'acord)

El diàleg i el suport de l'Ajuntament és indispensable perquè el nostre projecte segueixi endavant.

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

La relació amb l'Ajuntament ha limitat la nostra autonomia.

No hem tingut cap
relació amb
l'Ajuntament

	1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Després de les eleccions municipals del 24M del 2015, hem participat en espais de de diàleg impulsats per l'Ajuntament on hem tingut un paper més rellevant en la definició de les polítiques públiques.

No hem participat a cap espai de diàleg

1

2

3

4

5

Després de les eleccions municipals del 24M de 2015, persones significatives del nostre col·lectiu estan treballant en/per l'Ajuntament.

1

2

3

4

5

Iniciatives Socials Barcelona

36. Relacions amb l'Ajuntament

Principalment, amb quina escala de govern hi manteniu relació?

Generalitat

- Municipi
- Districte
- Barri
- Cap
- No ho sé

Iniciatives Socials Barcelona

37. Relacions amb l'Ajuntament

Amb quina àrea de l'Ajuntament teniu relacions més freqüents?(pots marcar diferents opcions)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Regidoria de Presidència | <input type="checkbox"/> Comissionat/da de Cultura |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Regidoria d'Aigua i Energia | <input type="checkbox"/> Comissionat/da d'Ecologia |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Regidoria d'Arquitectura, Paisatge i Patrimoni | <input type="checkbox"/> Comissionat/da d'Educació i Universitats |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Regidoria de Comerç i Mercats | <input type="checkbox"/> Comissionat/da d'Esports |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Regidoria d'Empresa i Turisme | <input type="checkbox"/> Comissionat/da d'Immigració, Interculturalitat i Diversitat |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Comissionat d'Economia Cooperativa, Social i Solidària i Consum | <input type="checkbox"/> Comissionat/da de Memòria Històrica |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Regidoria de Feminismes i LGTBI | <input type="checkbox"/> Comissionat/da de Tecnologia i Innovació Digital |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Regidoria d'Habitatge | <input type="checkbox"/> Comissionat/da de Participació i Democràcia Activa |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Regidoria d'Infància, Joventut i Gent Gran | <input type="checkbox"/> Comissionat/da de Salut |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Regidoria de Mobilitat | <input type="checkbox"/> No ho sé |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Regidoria de Participació i Districtes | |

Iniciatives Socials Barcelona

38. Relacions amb l'Ajuntament

En termes generals, quin d'aquests conceptes defineixen millor la vostra relació amb l'Ajuntament abans i després de les eleccions municipals del 24 M de 2015?

	Confrontació	Indiferència	Diàleg	Col·laboració
Abans 24M	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Després 24M	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Iniciatives Socials Barcelona

39. Fi

Gràcies per la vostra participació !

APPENDIX B

B1. Puigcerdà UCs' interviews

Role	Interview Date	Code
'Atenció i Acollida a Immigració' Director, Barcelona City Council	12/10/2016	PUCs-01
'Immigration and community action' commissioner (2011-2015), Barcelona City Council	10/10/2016	PUCs-02
Political leader of ICV-EUiA	19/9/2016	PUCs-03
Puigcerdà UCs Inhabitant	25/6/2016	PUCs-04
Poblenou Neighbour s' Association member	27/06/2016	PUCs-05
Poblenou Neighbours' Association member	22/08/2016	PUCs-06
Puigcerdà UCs lawyer	28/09/2016	PUCs-07
Puigcerdà UCs Inhabitant	14/10/2016	PUCs-08
Opai consultant (anthropologist)	27/10/2016	PUCs-09
Opai Public officer, Barcelona City Council	10/01/2017	PUCs-10
Alencop cooperative Manager	15/01/2017	PUCs-11

B2. Escocesa UCs' interviews

Role	Interview Date	Code
Escocesa UCs Member 1996-2011	10/05/2016	EUCs-01
Eme organisation Manager	10/11/2016	EUCs-02
Icub Director (1999-2006; 2007-2008, Barcelona City Council	1/12/2016	EUCs-03
Escocesa UCs Member 1996-current	25/08/2016	EUCs-04
Afp Director, Barcelona City Council	3/2/2017	EUCs-05

Afp Public officer, Barcelona City Council	25/11/2016	EUCs-06
Escocesa UCs Member 2007-current	3/12/2016	EUCs-07
Poblenou Artist who moved to the Hospitalet	8/3/2017	EUCs-08

B3. Can Batlló UCs' interviews

Role	Interview Date	Code
Architect of LaCol and Can Batlló UCs' member	15/12/2016	CUCs-01
Can Batlló UCs' member	26/01/2017	CUCs-02
Can Batlló UCs' member	3/05/2017	CUCs-03
Can Batlló UCs' member	14/06/2017	CUCs-04
Director of the Sants District	18/01/2017	CUCs-05
Sants District Planning Officer	23/06/2017	CUCs-06
Barcelona City Council Director	1/12/2016	EUCs-07