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Abstract

Analysing, through the lenses of Radical Planning, some of the interventions developed by grassroots movements in the city in contexts of conflict between them and different instances of the state, this paper aims to prove the diversity of ways in which the city is being created and recreated by different groups of people in very different ways. The study of four cases in Madrid, Valencia and London will provide firstly a thorough description of the way in which some of this groups function and secondly will help us to understand how diverse the practices and the logics behind them are, and the relations between them, the political and planning context and the governmental response.

Zusammenfassung/Abstract

Analysierend, durch die Brille des Radikale Planung, einige der Interventionen entwickelt von Graswurzelbewegungen in der Stadt im Kontext von Konflikten zwischen ihnen und anderen Instanzen des Staates, zielt dieses Papier darauf ab, die Diversität der Wege entlang derer sich die Stadt erschafft und neu erschafft durch verschiedene Gruppen von Menschen auf sehr verschiedenen Wegen. Die Studie von vier Fällen in Madrid, Valencia und London stellt erstens eine gründliche Beschreibung der Weise, wie einige dieser Gruppen funktionieren bereit und zweitens wird sie uns helfen zu verstehen, wie divers die Praktiken und die Logiken dahinter, und die Beziehungen zwischen ihnen, dem politischen und planerischen Kontext und der behördlichen Rückmeldung sind.

Resumen

Analizando, a través de las lentes del Urbanismo Radical, algunas de las intervenciones desarrolladas por los movimientos populares en la ciudad en contextos de conflicto entre ellos y diferentes instancias del estado, este artículo pretende probar la diversidad de formas a través de las cuales la ciudad es creada y recreada por diferentes grupos de personas de distintas formas. El estudio de cuatro casos en Madrid, Valencia y Londres proveerá primeramente una detallada descripción de la forma en la que estos grupos funcionan y seguidamente nos ayudará a entender la diversidad de las prácticas y las lógicas que las sustentan y las relaciones entre ellas, el contexto político y urbanístico y la respuesta del estado.

*Obviously to my friends in 4cities, to my family and to Cristina.
Also to the lazy, the unproductive and the idle.*

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INTRODUCTION

During the last years I have come across different urban studies, in different universities, in different cities and in different countries. Most of them have been focused in the big picture, the role of the big stakeholders, the influence of the state or the market, in different proportions, all the possible combinations and with different focuses. We have also had superficial approaches to participation and participatory planning, but always under a 'state-centric' and 'capitalo-centric' framework. As J. Friedman recognizes: "From its beginnings at the turn of the 18th century, with the industrial revolution under way, planning had been viewed exclusively from the perspective of the state" (2011: 6-7), developing a critique of this was his "radical planning" project. A project that is still ongoing.

The dichotomy state-market or public-private is obviously a simplification and should be considered as such, a tool to understand or interpret 'reality' (whatever it is) with its limitations, advantages and disadvantages, and specially should be considered one among many other. However more often than not, it is used as if it were 'reality' itself, turning upside down the logic of science: is not 'reality' what has to fit into the concepts we create, concepts are made to describe the multiple 'realities'.

Anyway, there are a number of spatial interventions in the city that hardly fit into this dichotomy. Those are spaces created by people, groups, collectives, individuals, etc., following different logics than that of the public or private investor or that of the professional planner and even different from that of participatory processes fostered or supported by any public or private institution.

This thesis is part of the project of visibilization, description and analysis of the spaces physically and symbolically created by this groups, collectives or individuals. Some of these spaces can represent alternative futures. We still do not know if this futures are going to be better or worst than what we have today, but if there is a chance, however small it could be, is worth it.

Structure of the thesis

After this introduction, in Chapter number two, the reader will find the statement of my goals and my main hypothesis. Chapter three accounts for the methodology of the research and is followed by a short presentation of some ethical concerns. The next one is an introduction to the case studies in Madrid, Valencia and London, and a brief theoretical contextualization. The next chapter (6) further develops the main concepts of the theoretical framework. Chapter seven is the summary of the field work and is followed by its analysis in Chapter eight and the conclusions in Chapter nine. Finally a list of the relevant bibliography and videography in the last pages, and the annexes.

THE GRASSROOTS PRODUCTION OF THE CITY: GOAL AND HYPOTHESIS

As I have mentioned, there is a lack of research in the field of radical planning. From my perspective this lack is even bigger when we consider the dynamics and the practices, more than the results of these practices. Therefore, in this thesis, my goal is firstly to give the reader a sense of how do the grassroots modify, change or build the city, very often against the plans of public institutions and investors and from the bottom. That is why I preferred more ethnographic descriptions than quantitative analysis. These in depth descriptions can, hopefully, provide relevant details that will allow us to understand the logics behind what these collectives do and how they do it, how do they organize themselves, their goals, what dynamics do they follow, and what practices do they perform. In this way we can enrich our knowledge about the complexity of the process by which the city is created and recreated.

The hypothesis of diversity

My more general hypothesis is that although the city is the outcome of a professionalized and exclusionary process there are also other ways in which the city is being produced. People, grassroots or social movements are relevant in the production of space and they engage in projects of space building in very diverse forms, in different contexts, with different goals, practices and organizational forms. These activities usually considered as spontaneous or informal have identifiable logics however complex and fluid they might be.

More concretely I claim that this diversity and the logic behind these practices in the city building project can be understood as urban planning or more specifically forms of radical urban planning. Therefore the conceptual tools developed by this theoretical body can be applied to their analysis, and through it, in turn, we can also enrich planning theory.

METHODOLOGY

The general idea behind this project is a comparative study of several cases of radical planning (as will be defined in the theoretical framework) based in the ethnographic work carried out in the case of Madrid, which will be compared with the rest of the cases (Valencia and London) in order to prove the hypothesis of diversity and explicative capacity of the chosen and suggested concepts in an attempt to enrich radical planning theory.

Therefore methodologies applied to the research have been qualitative. The need for an in depth analysis of the subtle differences of cases that have many similarities, suggested that the best approach would be an ethnographic description of the cases. As James Holston, a North American anthropologist, said, the “ethnographic investigation is the best way to establish the terms by which residents participate in the planning of their communities” (Holston 1999: 171). An ethnographic method, understood as an “attempt to describe, and to capture something of the texture and richness and underlying sense of a way of being and doing that could not otherwise be captured in writing” (Graeber, 2009: 32), was, thus, used in the case study of Madrid (*Solar de Matilde*) in which I carried out the research from late December 2013 until late February 2014, and in which I am still directly involved.

Being this my reference case, the descriptive chapter of Madrid is based on the notes, pictures, observations, conversations, websites, videos and emails that I collected during my participation in this project, some made by myself, some made by other participants. I complemented this with one semi-structured interview and for the broader context of the neighbourhood and the city with a literature review. With all this I wrote in depth descriptions or what the anthropologist Clifford Geertz would call “thick descriptions”: a very detailed account of different overlapping and intertwined dimensions which are the basis of the analysis (Geertz, 1973).

In the cases in Valencia (*Solar del Clot* and *Solar de Sant Pere*) I followed more often than in Carabanchel a more traditional approach. Since I did not participate in the actual process I used nine semi-structured interviews with key actors and participants and many informal chats and observation to rebuild the story of the building of the *Solares* as in depth as possible. I went to Valencia once for one week. Of course all this was complemented with secondary sources, maps, videos, literature and websites (luckily one of the groups has an impressive website full of relevant information) and again the sources are going to be specified during the descriptive chapters whenever needed.

The case in London, was done through literature review and online sources like websites, blogs, news and videos.

Given the circumstances, the topic of the research and the chosen methodology most of the conversations were informal and not recorded, so in most of the cases the conversations referred are reconstructions that I made in my notes. In the annexes the reader can find a list of the interviewees.

Video use in qualitative research

In the context of the case studies selected the use of video is quite common. During my research I found what Jewitt (2012) has called “naturally occurring video”, i. e. videos recorded by the

participants or by other actors related with the cases, and they have been a very useful resource for my thesis.

As mentioned before I was not able to observe with the same depth all the processes. In Madrid I carried out an ethnographic research; I went to Valencia for a week in which I carried out several interviews and direct observation, but because of time limitations and ethical concerns I was not able to go to London¹. For these reasons the use of video as a source was more intensive in the last cases.

Images in general and video in particular has been used and proved useful in different contexts, in social sciences since the early 20th century (Rosenstein, 2002) and its advantages and constraints have been largely discussed (Rosenstein, 2002 and Collier & Collier, 1986).

The methodology used was based in the collection of already existing videos as data source and its description, following again the idea of the thick descriptions for the sake of the unity, coherence and comparability of the case studies.

These descriptions of the videos were complemented and compared with the other sources: interviews, observations, literature, etc. to enlarge the focus and improve the validity of the analysis (Rosenstein, 2002: 26). Fragments of the thick descriptions can be found in the chapter fieldwork. A list of the videos used for each case study can be found in the Videography.

1 The fact that Grow Heathrow project is being developed at least partially against air transport and airport expansion prevented me to go by plane for ethical reasons, the alternative of other means of transport was considered infeasible because of time constraints.

ETHICS

One of the most problematic things I came across during this investigation were the ethical issues. Most of the case studies have a difficult legal context. The cases in Valencia and London are not only illegal in several senses, but are also in direct confrontation with the urban plans of the respective municipalities or with other institutions. They are taking part in a long term and very hard conflict that has sometimes been also violent and criminal, the latest of course, thanks to the response of the public institutions and the police. In Madrid, although the conflict was not that hard the circumstances suggested a cautious approach.

The way to deal with it was to tell everybody personally or in the general council or assembly and by the mailing lists, whenever possible, what I was doing and to explicitly ask if anybody had any inconveniences. The response was always open. Moreover I gave back the results of the process to the participants before presenting them in the University, and finally I never used the complete legal name of anybody but the names they used in the public forums where most of the actions took place. The only exception is that of public figures like journalist Sergi Tarín, whose name is already very well known, not only among his friends but also among his enemies.

The second thing it is worth clarifying is my own position during the research. It is clear already that I am not impartial here, but impartiality is basically and in broad terms a logical impossibility, especially in social sciences. My goal is not to give a hygienic, neutral, non contaminated description of this phenomena. I could not, since I am an active part of it. Instead, my goal is to give the reader a sense of the context and the way this kind of 'urbanism from the bottom' takes place, its characteristics, its goals and different examples of it in a way that somebody else could use my descriptions and give another interpretation of them. That is also the reason why I paid much attention to the descriptive chapters.

PRESENTATION OF THE CASE STUDIES

The case studies are located in Madrid (*Solar de Matilde*), in Valencia (*Solar del Clot* and *Solar de Sant Pere*), and in London (Grow Heathrow). All of them are in the periphery of their respective cities or metropolitan areas: Carabanchel in the south of Madrid, El Cabanyal in the east of Valencia and Grow Heathrow in Sipson, just next to Heathrow's airport in the west of the Greater London.

The word "*Solar*" in Spanish refers colloquially to a piece of land where something has been built or is intended to be built, so it could also be applied to Grow Heathrow. The three *Solares* in Spain are owned by the respective municipality, while the plot where Grow Heathrow is located has a private owner. They have been abandoned for a period between 2 and 10 years more or less. All of them have been occupied by groups in different processes that are going to be described later on. Occupied in this sense means that people started to use and change them physically and symbolically more or less intensively without any official permission of the owner. However this situation has also changed with time as we will see later on.

In all the cases studied this occupation has been illegal, so the most accurate term could be "squatted", this is for instance one of the terms used by the members of Grow Heathrow, although they also use terms like "swooped". In the other hand the term "occupy" (as in "occupy wall street") has been used in the last years in the context of the occupation of public space and has generalized all around the world in a much more open way than the more connoted, militant or traditionally activist "squat". This kind of militant activism is present in some of the case studies, but is not the norm. So "occupy" seems to be more appropriate because of its wider meaning. Finally in Spanish, my mother tongue, the term would be "*okupar*" or "*ocupar*" which has the same Latin root that occupy: "*occupāre*": to seize or take over.

I chose four case studies related enough to focus in this kind of conflictual processes of occupation and development by the grassroots but also with enough differences to represent a wide range of possibilities and features of this kind of urbanism. The case in Sipson, for instance, has a somehow different context and scale than the rest. It is in the edge between the city and the countryside, is much bigger, and also provides an international perspective to this thesis. This diversity allows me to prove the explicative capacity of the selected theoretical framework but is also helpful to show the actual opportunities opened up by this forms of radical urbanism, and their limits. In this way I avoid the extremes. Radical urbanism is not a futile, idealist exercise or a waste of time and energy nor a perfect solution for every problem. It is rather a very good starting point to change the city, maybe into something better, and to understand how urban spaces are produced in extremely different ways.

Finally I chose these and no other case studies because I got somehow personally involved in some of them (those located in Spain) even before starting the research process. In fact, I am writing this thesis as part of my involvement in them, to produce something that could foster the occupations, the construction of an alternative city, and that could also help the actors to see the open opportunities that we have in front of us.

Carabanchel and *Solar de Matilde*

Solar de Matilde is located in the centre of the District of Carabanchel, a district with 250.000 inhabitants in the southern side of the Manzanares river in Madrid. This river used to be the physical border between the city and the southern periphery. It still is a social and economic border. As many other of the peripheric districts specially in the south, it has a much more popular background than the city centre or than the northern areas. Higher levels of poverty and unemployment and lower levels of education and rent have been historical conditions (Gea Ortigas, 2002: 9-10). Unsurprisingly then, Carabanchel has always been inhabited basically by proletarians (as defined by Hardt and Negri, 2002) and service workers according to the needs of the rest of the city (Moreno Jiménez, 1983).

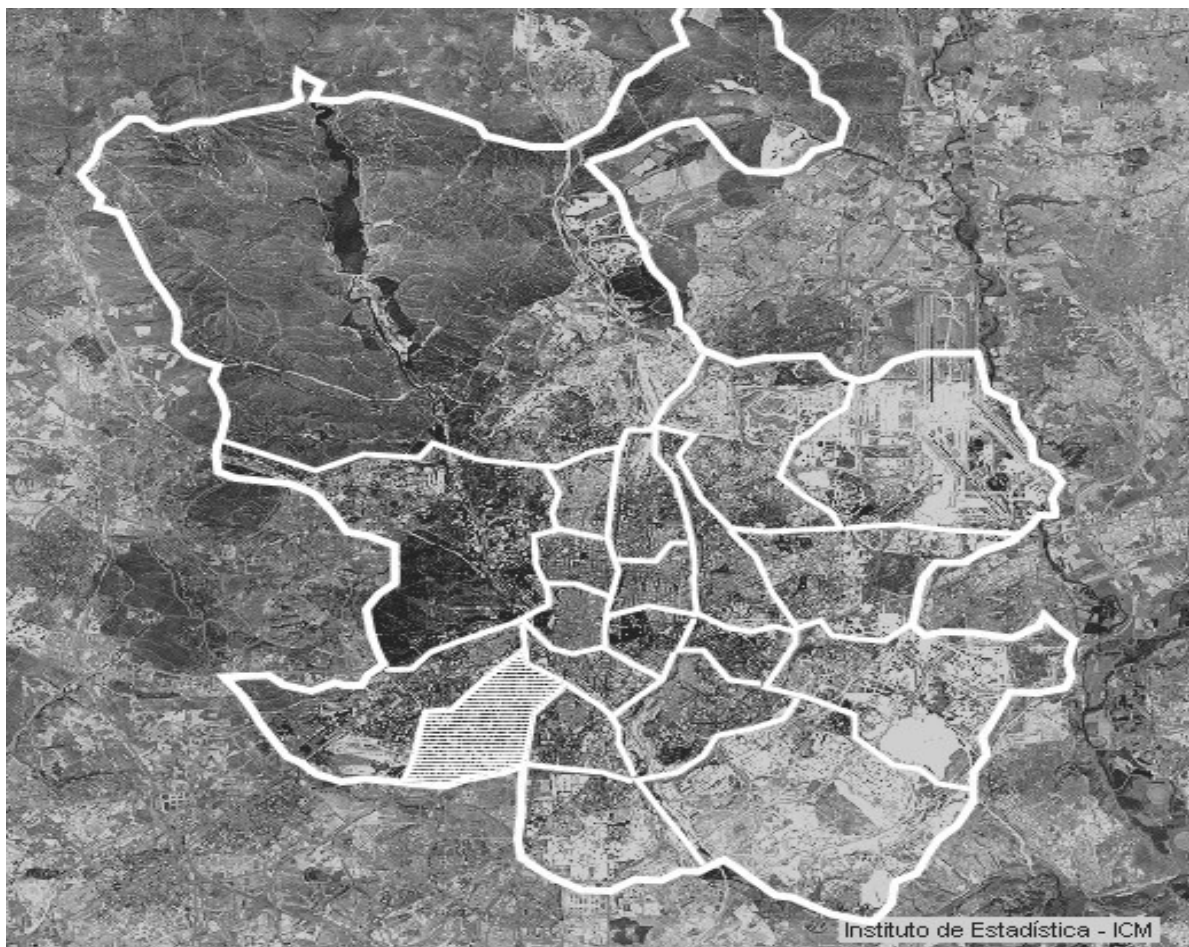


Illustration 1: The city of Madrid and the district of Carabanchel in the south west

Source: Self elaboration based on Instituto de Estadística ICM <http://www.madrid.org/nomecalles/Inicio.icm>

Solar de Matilde is in a small plot of around 280 sq meters in the 42nd of Matilde Hernández street, a street in the back of General Ricardos street, the main street that linked the district with the city centre. This is not far from the Oporto metro station, Valle del Oro square and Oporto square, an area that has become something like the heart of a very interesting network of social movements that sometimes converge there and that play a very relevant role in the development of this project (see illustration 13 in the annexes).

According with the aerial photographs, the *Solar* has been built since the 40s of the last century or maybe before. At some point between 2001 and 2004 the plot appears empty for the first time in 70 years. Since the demolition of the house the place has been overtaken by nature. There is a huge climbing plant in one of the lateral walls and a fig tree that dates back to at least, 1975. Apart from that it has been officially abandoned.

El Cabanyal: *Solar de Sant Pere* and *Solar del Clot*

Both *Solares* are in the neighbourhood of El Cabanyal, in the District of *Poblats Maritims*, in the city of Valencia, less than 3 km away, from the *Ciudad de las Artes y las Ciencias*, Calatrava's piece of art, in the centre of the city. El Cabanyal is a very particular neighbourhood in almost every sense.



Illustration 2: District of *Poblats Maritims* in the east of Valencia.

Source: Self elaboration based on Google maps and Wikipedia.

It still has a unique street grid that we can appreciate clearly in any map, specially in those from the 19th century when it was still an independent town under the name of *Poble Nou del Mar* (See illustration 14 in the annexes). This structure is the outcome of the early and irregular occupation of this area by fishermen in the 15th century (Herrero and Soldevilla, 2010: 4). They used to settle down in lines parallel to the sea building small shacks, that were substituted by self-built brick houses from 1875 until the beginning of the 20th century, respecting always the same structure, a structure that allowed sun in both sides of each street, an efficient circulation of air, and a generally healthy environment (Herrero, 2006: 86). The architecture of the houses is also a heritage of this past. The size and the structure of most of the houses is highly influenced by the size and structure of the former shacks, but this is not their only value. Ramos Segarra describes the architecture of El Cabanyal-Canyamelar, as “popular modernism” with “some examples of rationalism” (2008: 69).

In 1897 *Poble Nou del Mar* became part of the Valencian district of *Poblats Maritims*. At the end of the 20th century the whole city of Valencia is under a huge transformation process: from the diversion of the river Turia to the construction of *Ciudad de las Artes y las Ciencias* in the city

centre. However in 1988 the Plan General de Ordenación Urbana (PGOU - General Plan of Urban Planning), still in force, declared the neighbourhood of El Cabanyal as a *Conjunto Histórico Protegido* (CHP - Protected Historical Set) (Herrero and Soldevilla, 2010: 7) and in may 1993 it was declared *Bien de Interés Cultural* (BIC - Site of Cultural Interest) by a Valencian Government Decree (*Decreto del Gobierno valenciano 57/1993, de 3 de mayo, por el que se declara Bien de Interés Cultural el Conjunto Histórico de Valencia*).

In 1998 all this protection measures where challenged by the Local Government of the Popular Party, decided to start the *Plan Integral de Reforma y Protección Interior* (PEPRI - Integral Plan of Reform and Interior Protection), which among other things includes the enlargement of the Blasco Ibañez Avenue towards the sea crossing El Cabanyal, cutting it in two halves. The impact of this project in the urban fabric is huge. According to Ramos Segarra it implies a stripe of destruction of 105 meters wide, the demolition of 500 buildings (1651 dwellings), and the modification of the historic urban grid (Ramos Segarra, 2008: 72-73). In social terms the impact is just invaluable.

I am not going through all the legal dimension of the case, but it is relevant to point out that after a long legal struggle, in December 2009 the Ministry of Culture signed an Order resolving the existence of spoliation and declaring the immediate suspension of the Plan and all the administrative acts related with it (Herrero and Soldevilla, 2010: 10). Despite this legal resolution the municipality and Rita Barberá, the Mayor, still demolished houses in 2010 and, in the spring of 2014 is still planning to develop the project. The effect of this hard, sometimes even violent, confrontation between the municipality, and concretely the Mayor, and a big group of the neighbours is that the municipality has abandoned El Cabanyal and the physical condition of it is deplorable. If in 1998 there used to be “337 plots and buildings in bad conditions out of 2385, today [2010] there are 664: the degradation has doubled during the 15 years of municipal government of the Popular Party” (Herrero and Soldevilla, 2010: 13-14).

Solar de Sant Pere

With about 400 sq. meters., it is in the core of the conflict between the municipality and the neighbours. The PEPRI includes not only the enlargement of the Avenue (to which they refer as Rita's Avenue), but also the creation of a boulevard in what today is Sant Pere street, the street in which *Solar de Sant Pere* is located. This is the heart of the conflict not only because in this area both overlap, but also because the older and strongest social movement has its home here: *Salvem el Cabanyal*, a platform in favour of the rehabilitation of the neighbourhood without its destruction, i. e. without the enlargement of the Avenue and the construction of the Boulevard.

The municipality, through a private concessionaire: Plan Cabanyal-Canyamelar, S.A.² (previously Cabanyal 2010, S.A.), which is in charge of buying the plots or buildings and of the development of the PEPRI, bought the houses that were previously in this site, in order to demolish them. But after the demolition they did nothing. The conditions of the plot were terrible, it was full of rainwater, rubble of the former houses and garbage, and remained like this for about two years.

2 <http://www.plancabanyal.es/funciones.php>



Illustration 3: Map of El Cabanyal: the area affected by the PEPRI. Solar de Sant Pere (small left) and Solar del Clot (big right)

Source: self elaboration based on Ramos Segarra, 2008.

Solar del Clot

Solar del Clot is located just in front of the *blocs dels portuaris* (block of the dockers), the biggest housing block of El Cabanyal. The *Solar* is about 600 sq meters. The width of the plot is exactly the width of the enlargement of the Avenue, but it used to be part of a much bigger sports centre. What remains now is a row of trees, some ruins of a former football field and lots of garbage (see Illustration 10). Actually this plot has had a relevant use in social terms only during the 10 years or something that the sports centre was working. This sports centre was demolished in 2011, and since then it has been officially abandoned. Its main use, according to some interviewees, was to be a landfill.

Heathrow Villages and Grow Heathrow

Grow Heathrow (GH) is located in the Village of Sipson, in West London, concretely in the London

Borough of Hillingdon, next to perimeter of Heathrow Airport, one of the busiest airports in the world, which is among other things a direct link between London and New York, moving about 3 million passengers between this two cities every year.

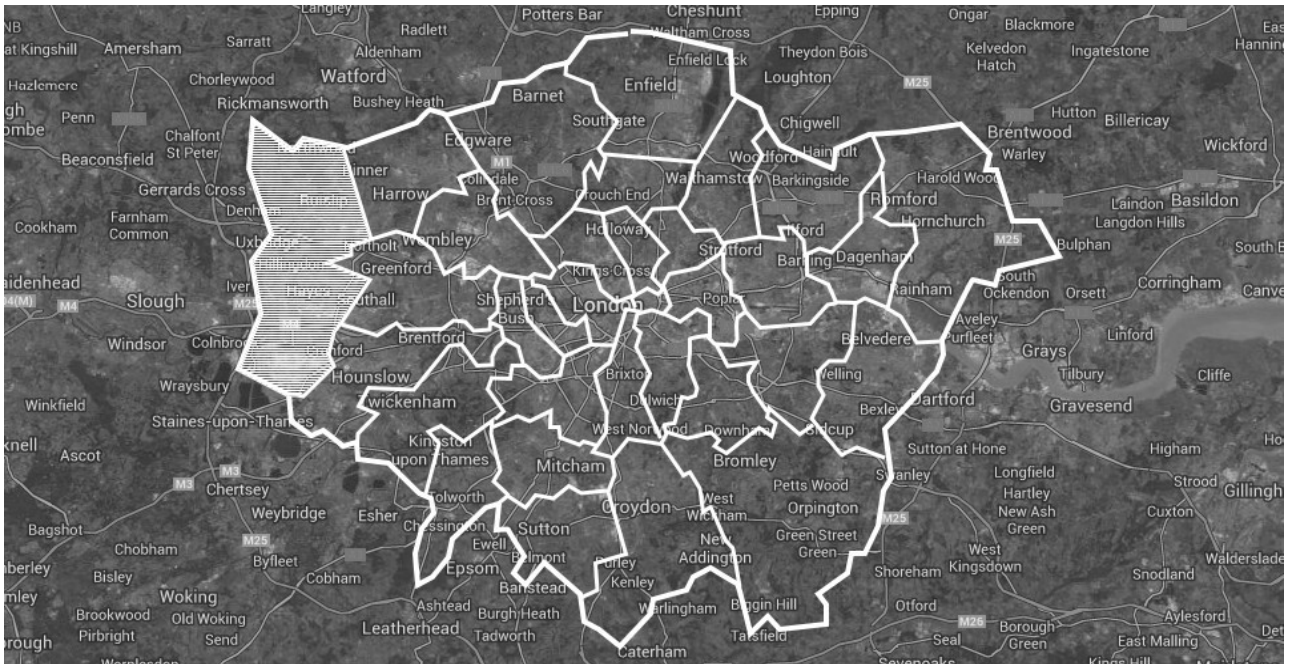


Illustration 4: Map of London Borough of Hillingdon in the west of the Greater London

Source: self elaboration based on Google Maps and Wikipedia

The London Borough of Hillingdon is much bigger than Carabanchel or El Cabanyal in terms of surface, but is comparable with Carabanchel in terms of population, about 270.000 inhabitants in 2011 (Heathrow Villages Ward Profile, 2013: 2), meaning that is much less densely populated. Heathrow Villages Ward, where Sipson is located, has about 12.000 inhabitants and is growing fast (19% since 2001) (ibid: 3). Because this Ward includes the airport and it is most of its surface, population density is extremely low (5.2 people per hectare).

In sharp contrast with the socio economic conditions in the cases in Carabanchel and specially in El Cabanyal, unemployment in Heathrow Villages was in 2011 in average 5% (ibid: 10). Housing conditions are also very different, most of the population (more than 60%) lives in “Whole houses or bungalows” (ibid: 10).

The village of Sipson is an ‘island’ between the M-4 motorway in the north and the A-4 and Heathrow Airport to the south. According to Mason and Whitehead “Sipson is a semi-rural area surrounded by the transport infrastructures that enable the city of London to function. It is an inbetween urban space because it comprises an uneasy blend of the edge-city and green-fringe” (Mason and Whitehead, 2012: 121). Sipson used to be located in the county of Middlesex until 1965 when the administrative area of Greater London was created in a process of expansion of the capital city similar to those described for Madrid and Valencia but two decades later.

Problems in Sipson started back in the early 2000’s when the British Airport Authority (BAA) started with the plans of building a third runway and the sixth terminal in Heathrow Airport. At the same

time the first demonstrations and rallies started³. The Department for Transport (DfT) of the Labour Government included this expansion as one of its proposals already in 2002 because of the expected surge in air transport demand. In the White Paper “The Future of Air Transport” (DfT, 2003), published in 2003 the DfT set a framework for the aviation policies for the UK for the next 30 years, that was restated in 2006 in the “Air Transport White Paper Progress Report 2006” (DfT, 2006). Since the beginning all this plans were controversial and very much criticized, even by the parties in opposition at this moment (Conservatives and Liberals). The construction of this runway and terminal was supposed to take place in most of Sipson’s land and would imply the demolition of about 700 houses not only in Sipson but also in Harlington and Harmondsworth the other two towns of Heathrow Villages (Illustration 5)



Illustration 5: Location of Grow Heathrow (central small square) and area affected by the Airport Expansion Plans. With the current second runway of Heathrow Airport in the south.

Source: Self elaboration based on Google Maps and BBC⁴

In 2010 when the new government, formed by Liberals and Conservatives won the elections, the BAA withdraw its planning applications for the third runway⁵. In 2012 the idea was recovered by the Tories, that apparently changed their mind, but with the final decision to be taken in 2015 after the next general elections (DfT, 2006). The situation is still confusing and there is no final decision yet, but Heathrow Airport Limited, the owner of the Airport, has released a new plan this year (Heathrow Airport Ltd., 2014).

The plot where Grow Heathrow is located is much bigger than the previous cases, about 30.000 sq. meters. Many times the size of *Solar del Clot*. It is in the north of the Village, more or less where the sixth terminal is supposed to be built. The place was, as in the previous cases, in very bad conditions: “The location, home to a series of dilapidated greenhouses, was routinely used for car-breaking and illegal waste tipping” (Mason and Whitehead, 2012: 121). The date of its abandonment is undetermined.

³ http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/1454215.stm

⁴ http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/shared/spl/hi/pop_ups/07/uk_enl_1195741463/html/1.stm

⁵ <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/8701433.stm>

SOME THOUGHTS ABOUT THE CHOSEN SPACES

In the cracks is where alternatives lie

Terrain vague

The places where the cases are located are not random. Although studying only four cases we could not find a pattern, according with M. Martinez (2004), squats, at least in Spain, –but this might be at least a European pattern–, tend to be located in certain areas of the urban tissue: the historical downtown, industrial reconversion areas and urban renovation areas with tertiary or residential “big projects”, or in other words there is a bigger probability and occurrence of squats in “urban areas visibly under a fast change in functions and economic interests” (ibid: 76), among other reasons, because one of their goals is to denounce this situations. This is also why squatters tend to prefer public properties that have been empty for a long term. His study was centred in the militant squatting movement of Madrid, but the logics behind them are probably similar to those of my case studies.

It is quite evident that *Solar de Sant Pere*, *Solar del Clot* and Grow Heathrow are located in urban renovation areas with this kind of “large-scale Urban Development Projects” that have become “catalysts of urban and political change”, as are described by Swyngedouw (2002) in the context of neoliberal urbanism (Harvey, 1989). *Solar de Matilde*, in the other hand is in Carabanchel a district that is maybe not a traditional heavy industrial zone in reconversion but a small commercial and industrial area in a doubtful but continuous state of restructuring, fostered recently by the crisis. There was no official master plan or rehabilitation plan in that area.

All of the plots in Spain are officially owned and largely abandoned, by their respective municipalities. We know that, in *Solar de Matilde*, thanks to an official source, the police that told the first squatters to ask the municipality for the cession of the plot. In both cases in El Cabanyal it is even easier to know: the municipality painted its property with brownish slash strokes. In Sipson the tenant was not a public institution though. Finally all of them have been abandoned for a long period, at least a couple of years, and their conditions were in all the cases terrible. This proves how those spaces in which capital is moving out are more likely to be occupied by the grassroots in this interstitial moments before capital moves in again.

There are other similarities between the spaces. They are officially outside of the circuits of the productive structures of the city. As Solá-Morales, an architect from Barcelona, points:

They are obsolete places where only certain residual values seem to remain despite the absolute disaffection from the activity of the city. They are, in one word, external places, strangers, that remain outside of the circuits of the productive structures (...) Their limits lack any effective inclusion, they are interior islands, emptied of activity, they are forgetfulness and traces that remain outside of the urban dynamic. They have become simply un-habited, un-safe, un-productive areas. In one word, strange places to the urban system, mental exteriors in the physical interior of the city that appear as the counter image of it (...). Solá-Morales (1995)

He is referring to *Terrain vague*, a very wide concept borrowed from French that refers to old industrial areas, polluted areas or harbours. My object of study is much more concrete, but I can still carefully draw on his definition. Carefully because he is being too categorical: “they are obsolete places” in a state of “absolute disaffection from the activity of the city”, “external places,

strangers that remain outside of the circuits of the productive structures". It sounds very much like something like non-places (Augé, 1995 see also Creswell, 2006) within the city. This might hold some truth but seems a bit exaggerated. There is no absolute disaffection from the activity of the city, at least if one recognizes the role that these places have been playing in the past, before the occupations. They have been used as landfills, as hiding places or as precarious playgrounds. They might have been partially isolated but they are not strangers, people knew very much about them, as they demonstrated recalling their history and their former uses. This is usually a forgotten feature of these "urban voids". They can be officially abandoned places because there was officially something before. As we will see, there is a relevant history about the past of each of these disaffected spaces. There used to be houses, sports centres, train tracks, but also people and biographies that for different reasons were pushed out. People have been for a long time thinking and talking about them and, as Georges Perec (1974) said "this is how space begins, with words only".

The history of this abandonment is part of the process of economic and symbolic reconversion of an area: "a *Solar* is the footprint of speculation" (Gosálves, 2011). In this sense the whole district of El Cabanyal, and for sure the abandoned plots studied, are the result of the policies of speculation, more or less in the same sense that Sipson, but in a very different context. These plots have no official use, and they are economically un-productive, "emptied of activity", but only if we consider economy as market economy and activity as economic activity. These places have had a productive role, nature took over these spaces and has kept them as productive places until now. In *Solar de Matilde* for example animals and plants grew, some of them very healthy. Rubble was, and is still slowly being transformed into earth. All of them were to a certain degree un-safe and un-healthy, but in cities like Madrid, London or Valencia this is not something specific of officially abandoned plots. Certainly most of their uses were marginal and sometimes also degrading (Fausto and Rábago, 2002), like storing garbage, scrap or rubble, but they were also used to play or hide. Sometimes the physical presence of people is directly avoided or forbidden fencing or walling them up, making them rather uncomfortable but this was never enough to keep them absolutely empty in neither of the cases.

For the same reason they are also an opportunity: "Occupation of urban voids becomes a citizens' right and an opportunity to build the city". (Fernández Áñez, 2011). If people have been pushed out there is also the possibility to break in again, and substitute these marginal, degrading uses for other more intensive, meaningful and open. And this is what more or less is slowly happening now, in different ways, with different paces. That is at least what I will try to show to the reader in the next chapters.

There is an ongoing battle to bring them back to the forefront of the social life of the neighbourhoods, even if they are kept out of the productive circuits of the official economy and of the official maps of the city. We are going to see for instance a small victory in this battle of *Salvar el Cabanyal* when they stamped their hand-prints in the walls of the *Solar de Sant Pere in El Cabanyal*, as a symbolic seizure. The brownish paint that the municipality used to paint over these hand-prints was their weapon in this war.

Weak points and cracks

This struggle started as a negation but for different reasons they evolved into a positive action. In

Solar del Clot everything started with a “we don’t want this place to be full of dirt” but was turned into “we want this place to be a space for the children to play, for the street market”, they were negating the abandonment and the enclosure, but furthermore they were overflowing this negation and opening up this places for different activities. Something similar happened in *Solar de Matilde* when they decided to come back after a first eviction and open up the place again, and in *Solar de Sant Pere* and in Grow Heathrow, when besides denouncing they started doing, beside destroying they started proposing (Pickerill and Chatterton (2006). In all the three cases the negation, the No:

“is backed by an other-doing. This is the dignity that can fill the cracks created by the refusal. The original No is then not a closure, but an opening to a different activity, the threshold of a counter-world with a different logic and a different language. (Holloway, 2010: 18)

In this interstitial spaces is where we find alternative practices, where as Mann (1986) says, new forms are “constituted, experienced and practised” (quoted in Pickerill and Chatterton, 2006: 9). Is in this apparently too small rebellions, in this cracks of the city where “the embryos of a new world” are, says Holloway, “the interstitial movements from which a new society could grow.” (ibid: 10). As he claims also, these are diverse spaces, almost anything could happen: “There is no purity here” he says, there is a “common rejection of the cohesive logic of capitalism, and an attempt to create something else” (ibid: 23). But this “something else” can be anything else. Diversity is surprising. Diversity, I would say, is its most characteristic feature.

In the antipodes of Hardt’s and Negri’s idea that “there are not any more weak links” (2002: 68-69), Lefebvre made a quite simplistic, but useful, division of social space between “strong points”: points of the existing society, “in economic and social sectors that were well positioned with reference to the market and competition. Banks, for instance” (Brenner & Elden, 2009: 143) and “weak points”:

Between them are found zones of weakness or even lacunae. This is where things happen. Initiatives and social forces act on and intervene in these lacunae, occupying and transforming them into strong points or, on the contrary, into “something other” than what has a stable existence. Weak parts, voids, are revealed only in practice, through the initiative of individuals who have the capacity for the latter, or through the haphazard investigations of groups that have the capacity to intervene. If weak points can thus be changed into strong points across the whole of a social structure, they can equally result from a straining or a collapse of the whole (destructuration) (ibid: 143).

This strong and weak points are changing all the time because of the social struggle for and against the *status quo*:

Alongside strong sectors, or even at the heart of these strong sectors, every society has its failures and deficiencies, its lacunae. Without these it would remain forever solid. It would have no more problems, no more history. Juridical relations give form to the relations of production, signaling their difficulties and attempting to iron them out. Likewise, political institutions would shore up the strong points as part of a global strategy of the dominant class, or of those class fractions which are in power. The same goes for ideologies. But circumstance intervenes in structure, and the latter can bend or be bent toward a reorganization. (ibid: 146).

When Valencian municipality walls up the houses or when police is evicting squatters their are trying to close this cracks, to push away this weak points.

These contested spaces, these interstices are the places where “daily struggles are made and remade, both symbolically and materially, and where people live by their beliefs and face contradictions from living between worlds – the actually existing and the hoped for” (Pickerill and

Chatterton, 2006: 8). These places, the *Solares Okupados*, are the physical outcome of different forms of radical planning. The small differences will show essential to understand them. The devil is in the details.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

From The Right to the City to Radical Planning

In the last years, Lefebvre's (1968) concept of the Right To The City (RTTC) has gained momentum almost everywhere from very different perspectives to the point that it has lost part of its potential radicality (De Souza, 2010; Purcell, 2002). In fact it has been used by governments, NGOs, international agencies and social movements (Kebrowski, 2012), from very different, often contradictory, perspectives. For me it is a good starting point to develop a comprehensive theoretical framework for my case studies. I will start with a brief and critical revision of the RTTC as formulated by Harvey drawing on Lefebvre's open concept and further developed by authors like Purcell or De Souza, this last one from a libertarian perspective. Later on, I will consider another concept very much developed by Lefebvre —though largely forgotten— that, I argue, will provide a clearer idea of what the RTTC can be: *autogestión*.

Broadening the Right to the City

For Harvey the RTTC is “a right to change ourselves by changing the city” (Harvey, 2008: 23). From Harvey's Marxist perspective, however, this right is focused on the ability of a centralized power, i. e. the state, to exercise “control over the production and utilization of the surplus” (ibid: 37). His state centric perspective becomes even clearer when he claims that: “Raising the proportion of the surplus held by the state will only have a positive impact if the state itself is brought back under democratic control”. (ibid: 38). Though how would this democratic control be remains unanswered. However, the idea of the RTTC should not be closed to the ability of the state to produce or change the space, even if it is under democratic control. As other authors like Purcell points:

[Lefebvre's] right to the city is not a suggestion for reform, nor does it envision a fragmented, tactical, or piecemeal resistance. His idea is instead a call for a radical restructuring of social, political, and economic relations, both in the city and beyond. Key to this radical nature is that the right to the city reframes the arena of decision making in cities: it reorients decision-making away from the state and toward the production of urban space. (Purcell, 2002: 101)

What Purcell is doing is to de-centre the role of the state to pose the core of the decision-making in hands of the *citadin*, to use Lefebvre's term. That is why Purcell calls for the “urban politics of the inhabitant”. While Harvey's focus was on how should social movements organize and act to make a demand to and exercise control over the state (Harvey, 2008: 37), for Purcell the core of the idea is that people, inhabitants, should control the production of the city in a complex and conflictual restructuring of power relations: “The right to the city stresses the need to restructure the power relations that underlie the production of urban space, fundamentally shifting control away from capital and the state and toward urban inhabitants” (Purcell, 2002: 102), in this way also opposing the liberal-democratic depoliticized versions of participation (Miraftab, 2009; Mouffe, 2005), or what Swyngedouw called the post-political city (2011).

As De Souza reminds us, the role of inhabitants and the decentering of the state in the production of space was already in Lefebvre's writings. He, for instance, did not talk about participation or

control but about *autogestión*, and furthermore about *autogestión generalisée* (De Souza, 2010: 318; Brenner and Elden, 2009), a concept that was essential for him and that is essential to understand him in his more radical facet:

autogestión can be only one element of a political strategy, but it will be the essential element, giving value to the rest, and without which the rest would be worth nothing. The concept of *autogestión*, today, is the opening toward the possible. It is both the way forward and the endpoint, the force that can bear the colossal load weighing on society, and which can overcome it. It shows the practical way to change life, which remains the watchword, the goal, and the meaning of a revolution. (ibid: 150)

This anarchist and autonomist rooted concept, maybe erratically used, and under-theorized in Lefebvre's work (De Souza, 2009, 2010) opens up the field of the RTTC to this non mediated practices developed by inhabitants of the city outside of the framework of capital and the state.

Territorial *autogestión*, can be considered a form of direct or grassroots democracy, a territorial mode of self-governance for communities, towns, and even entire subnational regions (ibid: 28) and in a more general way as the conceptualization Lefebvre made of the Marxist idea of the withering away of the state. According to Brenner and Elden, for Lefebvre:

autogestión is not only a project of radically democratic governance but a conflictual, contradictory process through which participants continually engage in self-criticism, debate, deliberation, conflict, and struggle; it is not a fixed condition but a level of intense political engagement and "revolutionary spontaneity" that must "continually be enacted". (ibid: 16)

In this way the RTTC or the Right to Space —the right or the obligation for the grassroots to produce their own space, "which can no longer be a capitalist space, (ibid: 248)—, a further development of the RTTC, becomes not something to fight for in the present to be obtained in the future but something that is already here, something that we have the right and the duty to produce, something that is being won and lost all the time by different actors. A right that is always being enacted, despite the obstacles. A right that is not necessarily given but that can also be taken. And that has tangible results that can be analysed, I claim, using conceptual tools from urban planning theory.

Radical Planning

Planning theory provides us with useful concepts to understand the logics behind the cases presented. It is true that traditionally the practices of the grassroots, the disenfranchised and the marginalized did not find a place in the academic or professional analysis. They have been underestimated, ignored and invisibilized in favour of the state-centred and capital-centred approach. There is, for example Harvey's fatalistic complain in 1976: cities are "founded in the exploitation of the many by the few", and "an urbanism founded on exploitation is a legacy of history" (quoted in Brenner et al. 2009: 177).

This is still the dominant view, but since the 70's also an epistemological break took place. That is what J. Friedmann describes: "From its beginnings at the turn of the 18th century, with the industrial revolution under way, planning had been viewed exclusively from the perspective of the state" (Friedmann, 2011: 6). This was also missing in his analysis:

Missing was the great counter-tradition to state-centric planning that had accompanied the evolution

of industrial capitalism from the beginning and had emerged from within civil society geared not towards societal guidance from a central command post but social transformation from myriad points of resistance and innovative practice. (ibid: 60).

Despite the broad variety grouped under the concept “great counter-tradition” he decided to conceptualize them as a single intellectual tradition because “they shared a critique of social oppression and a yearning for a more emancipated, egalitarian and self-directed society” (ibid: 60). The conceptualization was made starting with a dichotomy from “societal guidance” to the “social mobilization tradition of planning”. Is in this last one in which non-state centred practices are included. Things have changed a lot and planning theory has been very much enriched since the 70's but this is still my starting point. This practices, “in one form or another”, says Friedmann:

are all, emancipatory practices that seek to create a space for the collective self-production of life that lies beyond bureaucracy, the profit motive, or the national obsession with military overkill, unlimited growth, corporate gigantism, and the communist menace. (ibid: 64).

The dichotomy he established: “societal guidance” and “social mobilization” should not be considered as an absolute opposition but as a “continuum ranging from local inclusion in synoptic planning schemes devised by the state (Arnstein, 1969) to participation in grassroots social movements that seek broader social transformation” (Beard, 2002).

The continuum going from “societal guidance” to “social mobilization”, however has been overflowed, nuanced and enriched in the last decades by different authors. Two features of this last enriching worth highlighting now: most of the concepts and theories that enriched this continuum, especially those closer with the social transformation tradition, which are the main focus of my research, work very much around the idea and context of conflict and more concretely conflictual relations with the state, be them open or subtle, direct or indirect, conjunctural or structural. The second feature that I want to stress here is that some of this theories or concepts have been developed in the global south, South Africa, Indonesia, Malaysia or Brazil, either by local authors or by western authors that studied there.

Both things are relevant, I claim, firstly because conflict has been and is still partially outside of part of planning theory and is one of the most problematic issues (Allmendinger and Tewdwr-Jones, 2002). For instance the very popular in academic and institutional circles, communicative planning, has been strongly criticized for this reason (for a broader critique Mouffe and Laclau, 2001 and Mouffe, 2005).

Stressing conflict, especially with the state, has also a very desirable effect: to de-centre the role of state in planning. This opens up the possibility of non state-centred approaches to planning, which, I have to stress, does not mean to ignore or obviate its role, that would be unscientific and irresponsible. What this means is that the state should not be considered as the institution with the monopoly of the legitimate production and conceptualization of space or as the source of its legitimate sanction. The level of conflict with the state, the relations established with it and therefore its decentering could have different degrees, and that should be empirically tested. There is a lot of diversity there, but lets go one step at a time.

The second relevant thing is that some of this theories have been developed and mainly applied in underdeveloped or developing countries. This entails a challenge over this research since my case studies are located in the developed west, with a very different context. Proving that this concepts and theories are valid and have potential explicatory capacity in this context would give them more soundness.

I will develop two main planning theories that can be understood as different points in the side of the social transformation tradition of planning and I will suggest a number of concepts that can help to describe radical practices which in turn will, hopefully, broaden the field of radical planning.

Lets proceed thus, having in mind the words of Richard White (unpublished): “throwing off the shackles of capitalocentrism and seeking a “post-neoliberal” urban society, one which is economically, socially and environmentally just, should hold no fear.”

Decentering the state: insurgent planning as an open conflict

Radical planning as defined by Friedmann:

stands in necessary opposition to the established powers and, more particularly, the state. For the state to engage in radical planning poses a contradiction in terms. Still it would be wrong to ignore the state's existence or to treat it as an adversary only. Its presence is pervasive, and social advances achieved through a radical planning that bypasses the state will quickly reach material limits. To go beyond these limits, appropriate actions by the state are essential. Such actions must be fought over in political struggle for the legitimate claims of the disempowered (Piven and Cloward 1979; Peattie and Rein 1983). The ultimate aim of these struggles —the reassertion of political community in civil governance— will undoubtedly require a permanent restructuring of the state. (ibid: 77).

This situation of conflict in which people performs actions at the margins or in opposition with the state, are conjunctural: “appropriate actions by the state are essential”. To push the state to move in the desired direction “requires a permanent restructuring of the state”. This is the arena where this war takes place, the arena of the official politics. Following Friedman we have to bypass the state as a continual struggle to press the state (and its institutions) to do whatever we want: the state is a tool. Lets follow this path a bit further to see where it takes us.

J. Holston, a North American anthropologist studying mainly in Brazil, coined in the 90's the concept of insurgent citizenship and its spatial pair, insurgent urbanism:

when citizenship expansion and erosions focus on urban experience, they constitute insurgent urbanism which informs this development in several ways. First, they present the city as both the text and the context of new debates about fundamental social relations. In their localism and strategic particularism, these debates valorize the constitutive role of conflict and ambiguity in shaping the multiplicity of urban life. In a second sense, this heterogeneity works against the modernist absorption of citizenship in a project of state-building, providing alternative possible sources for the development of new kinds of practices and narratives about belonging to and participating in society. This “working against” defines what I called an insurgent citizenship, and its spatial mode of insurgent urbanism. This insurgence is important to the project of rethinking the social in planning because it reveals a realm of the possible that is rooted in the heterogeneity of lived experience, which is to say, in the ethnographic present and not in utopian futures. (Holston 1999: 171).

This concept and theory of citizenship, and its relation to urbanism has been tremendously fruitful for planning theory. It de-centres the role of the state, showing how citizenship, and for that matter urbanism, is not its monopoly and in the other re-centred the ideas of conflict in both themes citizenship and planning. And it points something else: “the heterogeneity of lived experience”, the diversity of the practices that are already taking place. It is a critic to modernist “utopian futures”, and an acknowledgement that insurgent urbanism is already part of the city, not something to be

obtained in the future. About the de-centring of the state, a bit later Holston follows Friedmann's steps:

planning needs to engage not only the development of insurgent forms of the social but also the resources of the state to define, and occasionally impose, a more encompassing conception of right than is sometimes possible to find at the local level. (...) It needs to operate simultaneously in two theaters, so to speak, maintaining a productive tension between the apparatus of state-directed futures and the investigation of insurgent forms of the social embedded in the present (Holston, 1999: 171-172).

What for Friedmann was a struggle for the "permanent restructuring of the state" for Holston is the "productive tension between the state-directed futures and the insurgent forms". It is a bidirectional struggle, a dialectic in which the grassroots, the makers of the radical or insurgent planning, use, or try to get state structures to be used as tools.

But not only that, the state remains as a sanctioner of legitimate recognition. For Swyngedouw, who prefers the term insurgent spatial practices or insurgent architects (2011, forthcoming a; forthcoming b) political activity is not about "expressing demands to the elites to rectify inequalities or unfreedoms, the daily choreography of interest and conflict intermediation in public policy arrangements, or a call on 'the state' to undertake action" but is a "demand to be counted, named, and recognized". In this sense, he argues that "Political struggle proper is therefore not a rational debate between multiple interests, but the struggle for one's voice to be recognized as the voice of a legitimate partner" (ibid: 7).

As a development of Holston's and Friedmann's concepts, F. Miraftab, a Turkish professor of urban and regional planning studying Cape Town urbanism, develops the idea of insurgent planning as this:

radical planning practices that respond to neoliberal specifics of dominance through inclusion. It highlights the hegemonic drive of neoliberal capitalism to stabilize state-citizen relations by implicating civil society in governance, and it stresses the importance to radical planning of the contested terrains of inclusion and dominance, (Miraftab, 2009: 32).

If for Holston the emergence of insurgent planning, considered as a theory and as a practice was a result of the problematic outcomes of modernist planning, for Miraftab it is a response to the neoliberal governance through inclusion.

In this way, insurgent planning gives theoretical ground to those situations in which the grassroots are challenging the state by either the rejection of the neoliberal way of control and dominance: a hygienitized form of participation stripped of all meaningful politics; or by the rejection of state urban plans that do not include participation, those more related with modernist planning, and maybe more recently also with postmodern large-scale projects for instance. In an effort to include more practices, which may seem a bit excessive because it breaks with the centrality of conflict, Miraftab also includes those spaces sanctioned by the state, using the dichotomy invited/invented spaces. In the one hand we have invited spaces "defined as the ones occupied by those grassroots and their allied non-governmental organization that are legitimized by donors and government interventions". In the other, invented spaces as "those, also occupied by the grassroots and claimed by their collective action, but directly confronting the authorities and the *status quo*" (2004a: 1).

The concept, as described by her, goes a bit further. It can be identifiable as "purposeful actions that aim to disrupt domineering relationships of oppressors to the oppressed, and to destabilize

such a *status quo* through consciousness of the past and imagination of an alternative future” (Miraftab, 2009: 44):

They are counter-hegemonic in that they destabilize the normalized order of things; they transgress time and place by locating historical memory and transnational consciousness at the heart of their practices. They are imaginative in promoting the concept of a different world as being, Walter Rodney says, both possible and necessary. (2009: 33)

Using the term ‘insurgent’ gives already a hint about what kind of means and what kind of situations are going to emerge in the creation of this insurgent spaces (Hou, 2012). These are, more often than not, actions and situations of open conflict: “emergence, insurrection, equality and theatrical staging through performative acting” (Swyngedouw, 2011: 7). But there are contexts where an open conflict is not a possibility.

Covert planning: a form of subtle resistance

According to V. Beard (2002) radical and insurgent planning practices has been developed in contexts where liberal democracy is already established, therefore “it fails to address how planning as social transformation can occur within political environments where open challenges to power are both dangerous and ineffective.” (ibid: 18). Covert planning is thus, this kind of planning from the social mobilization perspective which occurs in a “highly restrictive political environment where responses to social activism encompass real physical and social harm” (ibid: 15).

This is a very relevant difference. In this case there is no open challenge to the governments, but an apparent fulfilment of the official expectations. Covert planning practices tend to use officially approved channels and goals, but, here is the key, with an instrumental perspective: “covert planning is instrumental in creating the social and political spaces necessary for radical action in the future” (ibid: 19).

Thus, this are much more invisible and hidden ways of resistance: it “is more subtle, nuanced, and incremental than Alinsky-style community organizing” (ibid: 28). Covert planning, “describes a form of planning that does not overtly challenge current power relations yet is a first step leading toward more ambitious social change” (ibid: 24). Although this supposed linear trend (a first step suggests that there are going to be further steps) is not granted, Beard empirical study in Indonesia has validated this approach.

So there is resistance and this resistance is conscious, meaningful and relevant. Even if is not open and explicit. Beard, then draws on J. Scott’s theory of everyday resistance to explain the relevance and the features of this kind of actions. As Scott (1985: 6) claims:

Resistance of this kind does not throw up manifestos, demonstrations, and pitched battles that normally compel attention, but vital territory is being won and lost here too. For the peasantry scattered across the countryside and facing even more imposing obstacles to organized, collective action, everyday forms of resistance would seem particularly important.

This everydayness of resistance is much more ubiquitous than we normally think and it will be visible in several of the cases studied (White and Williams, 2012).

The existence of this kind of subtle resistance as described by Scott also opens a door to a brief discussion of the Gramscian concept of Hegemony. The main idea behind this concept is that

culture and values are, at least, as important as force and violence when it comes to domination. Hegemony is a form of rule based on the consent of the led “a consent which is secured by the diffusion and popularization of the world view of the ruling class” (Bates, 1975) by different means. Although Gramsci considered Hegemony not as a moment or as an absolute but “as a continual interaction of complex and articulated forms of domination and resistance” (García Raboso, 2013), authors like Scott or Roca have criticized this concept because it has tended to obscure the aforementioned practices of subtle resistance or at least to hinder their analysis, especially in the case of the symbolic resistance. In this sense, Scott (1985) says, Hegemony as “consent and passive compliance of subordinate classes” should be re-examined. In doing so Scott developed the idea of the everyday forms of resistance that would “demonstrate the absence of consent of the subaltern classes, and therefore, the absence of hegemony (García Raboso, 2013). In the same way Beltrán Roca (2008) argues that “traditional historiography tends to focus in the hegemonic relations of power” and that “when following Gramsci we perceive hegemonic relations, there is actually a myriad of everyday power struggles, which, sometimes, are able to invert the balances of power without reaching a declared confrontation”.

But again covert planning is more than everyday resistance. It is part of a potentially linear trend that enables the possibility for more or less radical actions. Covert planning could, thus, evolve to something else, like radical or insurgent planning, could transform in something different, like participatory planning, something else yet to be named or could stay in this state for ever.

Going further: a kind of planning in the interstices of capitalism

The issue of citizenship understood in Holston's terms, is a good starting point to analyse cases in which the state is not considered as a potential tool but as an obstacle or an enemy as De Souza says (2010). Although as I said, Holston's notion of insurgency de-centres the role of the state as the source of citizenship, and for the same reason as the only producer of the urban space, it keeps a door open to its predominant role. The same goes for Friedmann's “productive tension between the state-directed futures and the insurgent forms”. This is problematic to understand the planning practices and groups that, although not denying the role of the state in the present do not agree with either its ubiquity nor its necessity in the future, and it is unfair with the honest engagement of architects and planners that do not match under this normative framework, like J. Turner or C. Ward for example.

I decided to start here with the debate about the source of citizenship because I think it leaves a door open to more in depth analysis about the state and its role and how the relation between it and the groups involved helps to interpret their practices.

D. Graeber claims as Holston that the state is not —nor now and, more evidently, nor in the past— the only source of citizenship (Graeber, 2004: 68-70), but he does that from an anarchist perspective. Although is not answered in his book, the question of “how do we theorize a citizenship outside the state” it is a beginning. We can add that the question of “how do we theorize a planning theory outside the state?”, becomes urgent as well. As he says:

With the current crisis of the nation-state and rapid increase in international institutions which are not exactly states, but in many ways just as obnoxious, juxtaposed against attempts to create international institutions which do many of the same things as states but would be considerably less

obnoxious, the lack of such a body of theory [a theory of citizenship and planning outside of the state] is becoming a genuine crisis (ibid: 70)

This challenges Friedmann's and Holston's ideas about the relation of radical or insurgent planning practices and theories and the state. However enriching their perspectives are, they are being normative in the definition of radical planning: "it does not matter how radical you are", they seem to say "your will always depend on the role of the state and how much you influence it through participation in politics". So, albeit Friedmann mentioned the anarchist perspective when defining his social mobilization theory of planning (Friedmann 2011: 60), it is finally left out of the scene. And this is problematic because many spaces are being created all the time by groups that are essentially denying the necessity of a structure of dominance like the state or other state-like institutions. They are very well aware of its present relevance, they suffer it, but they probably disagree about its pervasiveness and its necessity (Graeber, 2004; Williams, 2004; White and Williams, 2012).

With De Souza, they tend to perceive that

The state is not a "partner" (...); the state apparatus as such is an enemy, even if it is sometimes (dialectically) more or less genuinely open to pressures from below as a government. To which extent this openness can be used by social movements (instead of the movements being instrumentalised by the state), is something which has to be decided on a case-by-case basis. Social movements must learn to deal with the state with pragmatism, but also without illusions. (De Souza, 2010: 329).

Developing a theory of anarchist planning is out of my reach, but I can start pointing to some ideas and concepts from the autonomist and anarchist tradition that can help in the task of framing the practices of groups that inscribe themselves in this perspective, and this could be a first step.

Prefigurative politics and direct action

Pickerill and Chatterton (2006: 10), developed the concept of 'Autonomous geographies' which largely coincides with what I am going to develop:

Autonomous geographies are based around a belief in prefigurative politics (summed up by the phrase 'be the change you want to see'), that change is possible through an accumulation of small changes, providing much needed hope against a feeling of powerlessness. Part of this is the belief in 'Doing It Yourself' (see McKay, 1998) or creating workable alternatives outside the state.

They name the principles which define European autonomous movements in the following way:

collectivism; independence from political parties, trade unions and capital circulation; popular power, self-determination and decentralized direct democracy; consensus based decision-making (or horizontality); diversity and pluralism; the revolution of the everyday; internationalism; and conscious spontaneity, militancy and confrontation as tactics. This freedom with connection – confrontation with proposition – is key, the core principle informing autonomous geographies (ibid: 5)

I will start drawing on this but rather focusing in the concept of prefigurative politics which is secondary for them. Apparently the concept comes from the 70's writings of Carl Boggs, a political sciences professor, talking about social movements: "By "prefigurative", I mean the embodiment, within the ongoing political practice of a movement, of those forms of social relations, decision-making, culture, and human experience that are the ultimate goal." (Boggs, 1977), Although the idea is much older (Ince, 2012: 1653). In the field of political anthropology David Graeber (2009:

235), much more recently, defines it in the same line, when talking about the definition of revolution:

Rather than a cataclysmic seizure of power, they proposed the continual creation and elaboration of new institutions, based on new, non-alienating modes of interaction —institutions that could be considered "prefigurative" insofar as they provided a foretaste of what a truly democratic society might be like.

In the same sense, Beltrán Roca, another anthropologist, defines it as: "a revolutionary action that builds from the very moment in which is put into practice the world to which it aspires" (Roca, 2008). It is a furtherance of the old anarchist saying: "A new world in the shell of the old".

They mention the social relations, decision-making processes, culture, human experience, institutions... basically everything. They could have added the economic relations or the gender relations or for the same reason the planning practices that put into practice the world to which they aspire within the existing realm. This is the basic idea: living the revolution today.

Prefigurative politics, explicitly or not, have been enthusiastically adopted by many groups and collectives in the recent times, being some of them Occupy Wall Street, the Movement of *Cooperativas Integrales* in Catalunya, the 15M movement, the squatting collectives and many others, that make a clear link between their goals and their practices (E. Hardt, 2013). "It does not make sense", they argue, "to pursue an economically just, socially egalitarian and environmentally sustainable society through authoritarian or unsustainable means", a completely different approach than that of Alinsky (2012 [1971]: 61): "To say that corrupt means corrupt ends is to believe in the immaculate conception of the ends and the principles".

The concept of prefiguration is in a very good moment. It has been already applied not only to the analysis of the practices but also to characterize social movements in contrast to the more classical traditions of Resource Mobilization (RM) and New Social Movements (NSM) that emerged in the second half of the 20th century. These theories were primarily concerned with the relations between the social movements and the state or with identity issues: "Whereas RM scholars focused on structural aspects of social movements, and paid particular attention to movements in relation to the state, then, NSM brought in culture and the role of identity" (ibid: 9). In contrast prefigurative movements are "engaged in a new kind of politics that often emphasizes the local, the cultural, the present, and the possibilities of other ways of being" (Harcourt and Escobar, 2005: 14 quoted in Hardt, 2013), or other ways of doing, I would say.

Prefigurative politics as exposed here are in line with the concept of non-mediated action or direct action. As Graeber points:

[D]irect action is the insistence, when faced with structures of unjust authority, on acting as if one is already free. One does not solicit the state. One does not even necessarily make a grand gesture of defiance. Insofar as one is capable, one proceeds as if the state does not exist (...) and leaves it to the state's representatives to decide whether to try to send armed men to stop her. (Graeber, 2009: 203)

to later add:

[D]irect action represents a certain ideal —in its purest form, probably unattainable. It is a form of action in which means and ends become, effectively, indistinguishable; a way of actively engaging with the world to bring about change, in which the form of the action —or at least, the organization of the action— is itself a model for the change one wishes to bring about. At its most basic, it reflects a very simple anarchist insight: that one cannot create a free society through military discipline, a

democratic society by giving orders, or a happy one through joyless self-sacrifice. At its most elaborate, the structure of one's own act becomes a kind of micro-utopia, a concrete model for one's vision of a free society. (ibid: 2010)

The constitutive elements of Direct Action are, according to Roca (2008), “pleasure, creativity and provocation”. Following them and rather than trying to push the state to act in a certain way, they obviate the state whenever possible. It is not a tool anymore. In the case of insurgency, in Holston's, Friedman's or Alinsky's sense, the state is not obviated but confronted, but not to eliminate the state itself, but to change one's position in the social hierarchy, in the structures of power.

Power as power-to-do

Rather than asking for their representatives to do something for them, they deny the necessity of representatives and reclaim their own ability to do by themselves. Holloway calls this capacity of doing, power-to-do: “Power, in the first place, is simply that: can-ness, capacity-to-do, the ability to do things. Doing implies power, power-to-do” (Holloway, 2002: 47).

The recuperation of the power-to-do is in the core of the struggle against its negation, the power-over, the state (Holloway, 2002: 65), and right now is, explicitly or not, one of the main goals of different social movements like *Zapatistas* or fractions of the Occupy movement. Power-over, the antithesis of power-to-do appears when, through violence or the threat of violence: “people arrogate to themselves the projection-beyond (conception) of the doing and command others to execute what they have conceived.” (ibid: 48). Enaction of power-to-do implies that the first negation is backed by an other doing. That the refusal becomes an act of creation as Castoriadis said (Castoriadis, 1991, quoted in Pickerill and Chatterton, 2006), but not necessarily as a confrontation but probably as Hardt and Negri claim as an exodus or a desertion (Hard and Negri, 2002, 2004)

I propose the concept of prefigurative planning to analyse those radical planning practices that rejecting the engagement in state politics and through direct action produce the spaces they need partially as display of their power-to-do and partially as a way to increase it.

Prefigurative planning, thus, can be defined as the continual creation and elaboration of spaces, based on new, non-alienating modes of interaction and principles described for the European autonomous movements, and prefigurative planning practices would be those that create the kind of spaces to which they aspire. A non-mediated kind of planning, direct action applied to the production of space, which entails the enacting of power-to-do its reclamation and its enlargement.

Lets see how this concepts help us to understand the case studies that are going to be described in the next chapter.

FIELDWORK

Carabanchel: *Solar de Matilde*

Background: The Cooperatives Movement and the 15M

The 28th of April 2011, the 15M movement got decentralized in Spain. For Carabanchel the surroundings of the Oporto metro station and Valle del oro square were chosen to hold the local version of this movement, the *Asamblea Popular de Carabanchel* (APC - Popular Assembly of Carabanchel).

Some social movements that remained more or less confined to their local context got spread all over the country thanks to the 15M movement, specially those projects with similar horizontal structures and transformative goals. One of these movements that is very relevant for the contextualization of *Solar de Matilde* is the movement of the *Cooperativas Integrales* (CI – Integral Cooperatives) and more concretely the first of them, the *Cooperativa Integral Catalana* (CIC – Integral Catalan Cooperative). This is a project based in the idea of the creation of a network of alternative social and economic structures and relations that allow people involved to transit to an alternative system of production and distribution of the goods and services needed based in the rejection of capitalist economic relations like waged labour. The CIC was born in 2009 in Catalunya. During 2011 it arrived to Madrid and the *Cooperativa Integral de Madrid* (CIMA – Integral Cooperative of Madrid) was founded. Although it disappeared only a few months later because of internal problems, many of the people involved started similar although smaller and more concrete projects in different areas of the city, Vaciador or the *Nodo de Autogestión Integral* (NAI – Integral Selfmanagement Node, a group working on autonomous production and self-sufficiency) where some of them. *Solar de Matilde* was, 3 years later, another one.

During the autumn 2013 there was a group of people from Carabanchel in the search for a place to start a garden. Some people from the Red de Derechos Sociales (RDS - Social Rights Network. A group of people organizing to provide some social rights autonomously), some people from Vaciador (a collective housing and artistic project), and some others, formed the core of people working on that. They probably met in the EKO (one of the squats of the neighbourhood) or in the APC, as Juan Nadie said in a video report made by the “*Centro de Medias*” (ganjah, 2013) of this assembly.

Opening up the *Solar*

Jesús, one of the participants in *Solar de Matilde* that lives in another collective housing and self-employment project called La Nave, located also in the neighbourhood, described the opening process as follows:

An assembly was made before the opening and it was decided how the opening was going to be, the usual stuff, closed/open door or what we were planning to do there. A little bit of everything. The day in which the door was going to be open was chosen, the people in charge of opening and replacing the lock, the time... It was made at night (...). (*Personal communication, originally in Spanish*)

The conditions of the plot when they broke in were not very good: “It was a mess”, Jesús said, “full

of woods, stones, because there was rubble from the former house and from the working sites of the sides (...) and a lot of shit, not more than dirt...”.

One week after the opening they started to clean up but in less than 20 minutes the police was already there and they got evicted. Only a week later they worked out two different ways to open it again. The first one was to fill an application asking the municipality for the cession of the plot, knowing that the absence of a response is equal to a positive response in Spanish administrative law, a suggestion made by the policemen of the first eviction. The second one was to re-occupy the plot. All this was decided in an assembly. The day of the second opening police came again. This is, in Jesus’ words, what happened next:

So the police was called again and the police came again. This time national and local police. But there we were with the closed door and with people putting pressure on them and people inside. So we resisted inside without opening the door(...) And well by coincidence there were people from the Urban Gardens Network of Madrid, doing a bike ride around the urban gardens of Madrid. And right when the cops were there, they passed by the *Solar*... they were going to El Toboso. Then, they knew that there was something going on here and they made a stop, with which there were in the street likely from forty to fifty people with the cops and this time we got them to leave. We got them to leave explaining them all the stuff the local cops told us about the fifteen days before, like: ‘this is the paper, there is a copy, take it with you and ask’. (...) And effectively the locals got a copy of the thing (...) and went away without opening the *Solar*. (*Personal communication, originally in Spanish*)

All this took place during November last year when. A website⁶, and the Facebook account were opened during the second week of the same month. Around the same dates the mailing list should have been opened. The “official” presentation of the *Solar* in the neighbourhood was made through an open release to the neighbours:

For the popular agrarian reform

Neighbours of the *Solar de Matilde*:

We are neighbours of the neighbourhood who have decided not to wait any more to recover the land. We have already expropriated shamelessly many spaces subjected to abandonment and speculation, many lands subjected to spoliation and decay.

Administrative or policing mediation won’t guarantee in any case a solution to the problems that we can individually perceive in the neighbourhood.

This is why we do not resign ourselves to give up again to the way of punishment whether administrative, criminal or police as a model for conflict resolution, and propose the direct dialogue between people, as a way of living and reappropriation of the social fabric destroyed evidently by speculative practices in our neighbourhoods, the inability of the government, labour exploitation promoted by profit; commodification, after all, of our lives.

This plot belongs to the City since '77, having been inhabited by a family until the demolition of the house after a neighbourhood complaint.

We don’t ask, we get it back

FOR THE AGRARIAN REFORM. FOR THE SAKE OF ALL

Matilde is here to stay!!

Table 1: Open letter to the neighbourhood

Source: <http://elsolardematilde.wordpress.com/carta-abierta/>

6 <http://elsolardematilde.wordpress.com/>

My first contact with the assembly of the *Solar* was on early January. I will now describe very briefly some aspects of the daily life there during the first couple of months. Hopefully the reader will get a sense of the way this kind of collectives work in this kind of spaces.

Learning how to organize and build *Solar de Matilde*

During a walk through Carabanchel, organized by the *Universidad Popular de Carabanchel* (UPCA - Popular University of Carabanchel) I met an old guy, long white beard, that was also participating in *Solar de Matilde*. His name is Fernando. He told me about the *Solar* and the project. We ended up the walk in the Fair of Skills, a fair of *autogestión* and self-employment projects. One of the stands was from the NAI. Javirex a school teacher in his late 30s or early 40s, that was participating in both the NAI and the *Solar* told me that the next working day in the *Solar* was on December 27th. This was the first time I went there.

Most of the people working there, maybe 20, (although it fluctuates between 2 and 10, depending on the day) were between 25 and 70 years old, about two thirds of them men. Most of them, but not all, were already active in the squatting movement of Madrid, or collective houses and self-sufficiency projects, projects which goal is to be able to produce what they need avoiding wage labour as much as possible.



Illustration 6: *Solar de Matilde*. Early spring, 2014

Source: Self elaboration

During the winter the meetings in the *Solar* were in the morning, which in Spain goes from 9h to 14h. The construction of the *Solar* was very slow and progressive: once all the rubble was piled in a corner, we started digging the patches, with some borrowed tools: hoes, shovels and beaks at the beginning and step by step a few more: an axe, hammers, hand saw, more shovels... First a couple of small patches next to the fig tree, then the second one, the third one and now, already in the summer, we are starting the fourth one. At the same time we built composters, so that we can bring organic wastes. Marco a guy living in the same building where Vaciador is, maybe in his early 40's built a bulletin board to post some relevant information, like what is planted in each patch. The 27th of December after about one month of work, we planted the first seeds:

At 14h30 we were all tired, but one patch was ready to be planted. In Vaciador there were some broad bean seeds and after a moment of doubt we decided to plant them right away. So everybody stopped the other tasks and Juma went to get them. They were only 12. There was a sudden problem when we were ready to plant them: none of us has any clue about the depth at which they should be planted or any other specificity about it... but there was an easy thing to do, ask a mother... Javirex called his. She knew all about it: you have to bury them a palm deep, plant them in groups (because the stem could be weak to resist the wind), but the number should be odd. We split the seeds and planted them. That's how the orchard started. (From my diary)

We were having two working days a week on Wednesdays and Saturdays. The decisions about everything —organizational issues, news, where to plant, how and when—, were mainly improvised and disorganized, but from time to time we held not very well organized, general assemblies in which we worked out general lines of work. At the beginning of January we had one, the first one for me:

At 13h we stop working to start the assembly. In this moment we are four men and five women. I start the assembly presenting myself and my project of research of occupied voids in the city. I asked if anybody has any problem with it: "it could be anonymous if needed, I will pass my results before handing them out to my professor". No objections, no blocks. Marco thinks that it is nice to have scholars, to have a branch in the academy... Some questions are raised: "What are you studying?", "What is this exactly?", "I studied anthropology and now I'm studying a masters degree in Urban Studies in six different universities..." and all the silly explanations about my studies. "I also studied anthropology", says Javirex, "me too" says Milk, and another girl with glasses has also studied it. Suddenly the relation between anarchism and anthropology that Graeber and Roca have claimed in very similar books, seems evident. When I said something like "this should mean something!" Javirex replies: "yes, that we are all sociopaths!" (from my Diary: January 11th)

This assembly was basically irrelevant in organizational terms but very productive in relational issues, we did not decide almost anything but to wait and find information, but at least we got to know each other a bit better. We still do not know much about planting, let alone managing an orchard, but this changed after a couple of weeks when Manuel appeared. When I got to the *Solar* the next day, he was already there:

"Hey Anníbal, good morning, here I am with the last farmer of Carabanchel", said Marco. Manuel is a guy maybe in his late 60's. A quiet but open guy. He came to give us a hand with some advices about when, how and what to grow in the garden. (...)

More people starts to come, we are 8 now, 6 men and 2 women, so we decide to have an assembly (...). Manuel is really enthusiastic about occupied plots (...). He wants to explain us everything: how to use the tools, how to prepare the seedbeds, what to grow and when to plant it. So his explanation is quite long, very detailed. (...) Here and there he includes part of his life, part of the history of Carabanchel, about the characteristics of the soil and so on. Marco gets impatient: "We find

everything very interesting but we really need to focus on the tasks, we have to decide because we are running out of time and we are meeting only once a week". Manuel speeds up. Finally he and Virginia share all the seeds they have with everybody and we start to plan what we are going to plant in each patch. The outcome is as follows: in the patch where the garlic is already planted we are going to plant some beans and chickpeas. In the big patch we are going to grow tomatoes, lettuce and onions; in the new one eggplants, peppers and cucumbers and in the two small next to the fig tree lettuce and peppers. We are also going to grow aromatic plants and zucchini in the surroundings of the patches. This plan is gonna change almost every week.

We have to do seedbeds next Saturday in the *Solar* with some boxes we already have in EKO, that people from Aliseda, (another community garden) has been preparing before. "We're all together, its all part of the same project" says Manuel, "at some point to be able to grow enough food for us, to be self-sufficient". He is very optimistic. (from my diary January 25th)

Before that we were working with the decisions taken before squatting which were not very specific. The result was in one word messiness.

We kept working as always digging, cleaning, finding or building new tools, bringing more useful stuff, like pallets, bins or chairs, mainly found in the garbage or donated by the people working in the *Solar*. Some weeks planting a lot, sometimes intuitively and sometimes following Manuel's instructions. Some weeks just cleaning or preparing seedbeds, sometimes digging to start new small patches on the margins of the plot, and sometimes just having fun with the stuff we found there: bullet casings, cups, bones, pieces of windows and doors... Sometimes we just met to have a drink and discuss there about politics or the last eviction of a squat or of a neighbour. Slowness, discontinuities, randomness in the organization, seem like distinctive features of this space.



Illustration 7: Solar de Matilde. Early summer 2014

Source: Carmen Givica's archive

Direct action: The Water Issue

During most of the time since the beginning of the occupation rain was enough not to worry about water. Since the beginning also, Javirex has been thinking about it. "Water is the limiting factor in urban gardens" he repeats. "People in El Toboso [a plot next to the EKO, where a neighbours association got a patch in the back of a church] are paying [for the water to this church] about five hundred Euros a month during the summer", he adds. In *Solar de Matilde* there are different approaches and different possibilities. We can ask our neighbours for water, but then we would have to install a water meter and pay them for our consumption. Not too many people thinks this would be a very good solution, but this has the advantage that we would not need to store the water, we could get it whenever we need it.

A second option would be to get it from the street pipe that is a few meters away from the door. This looks like the best option, sounds feasible, would be very close and very very cheap. Marco has been working on it a lot. He opened the cover with a screw driver to check how we could plug a hosepipe and open the shut-off valve. He even built a tool for this purpose. The valve is a square shaped stick, so he built a square shaped pipe with the help of a neighbour of his block. The tool never worked, it broke, and it looks increasingly difficult to get the water this way.

There is a third option. Maybe a hundred meters to the west there is a small square with a public fountain. This is the plan that Marco sent us through the mailing list:

(...) The issue of opening the water valve in the street is becoming very difficult. I've worked out a key that fits well, but it was hard, very hard. I don't think it's gonna work.

What do you think if we bring the water from the fountain with a long long hose. They are 130 meters of hose (I've counted them). Is not that much. I can bring 40 meters that I have at my place.

We find the hoses, we link them and that's it.

It would be a simple operation and at the same time fun: we stretch out the hose, we fill up the containers in 8 minutes and we pick it up. Total: 18 minutes.

How does it sounds for you??

Kisses, Marco

Although it seems like a joke, it is just on the edge. It sounds like a silly plan maybe, but we are running out of options. And there is still the problem of the storage. This was Javirex's reply:

(...) Hose operative running.

And also an inquiry about hydrants, lets see what they tell us.

Kisses

The fourth option is to somehow get several containers and fill them with rain water, we were also planning to build a roof to collect it. It sounds like a good idea but it obviously has some problems. The worst one is that it is already too late to start, rain is going to be more and more scarce. We should have been doing this since the very beginning. We also do not know how much water we are going to need. And finally, how are we going to find containers big enough? Some people has suggested that we could 'expropriate' some big garbage containers from the street. But this should be done late at night after the garbage truck collects the garbage. Another problem is that this containers are much bigger than the door, and quite heavy, so we would have to throw them up the wall with the risk of breaking them.

There have been a couple of even worst ideas like getting the water out of the pool behind the *Solar*...

Marco has brought a small blue container. It is like 150 litres big. A week ago I found a much bigger one with a valve already installed, and two days ago, Richard, a Colombian guy in his late 30's, active in the RDS, found a smaller one, full of some kind of disgusting fish oil. So finally the problem got solved by itself. At least partially. On the 5th of March, I went to the *Solar* with Milk, the British girl, and Marco brought a small trolley to carry up his container, he filled it up also there in the fountain. So that's how we are dealing with the water issue so far. Filling the containers in the fountain and bringing them with the trolley. This is clearly unsustainable in the long term.

On Saturday 8th, we were a lot on the *Solar*: Javirex, Carlos, Marco, Yoel, Virginia, Salva, and some others. There were very good news. Apparently Fernando brought to Javirex a faucet to get the water out of the street pipe valve. Suddenly it looks a lot easier than a week ago, and the problem is about to be solved. But when we opened the small iron cover we found out that a piece is missing, so we cannot plug the faucet to get the water. Carlos, Javirex's brother, told us that this is not that weird. This pieces got stolen very often, so the way to solve this is to get another one from some other place. This is not supposed to be a problem. However we are already thinking about how to deal with it in case it works. How is it going to be to fill the containers with this huge hose going inside of the plot? How long will it take and how risky is it going to be?

El Cabanyal: *Solar de Sant Pere*

Background and Organization: Neighbourhood associations

Salvem el Cabanyal is an officially registered association formed of several independent entities: neighbours, merchants, political parties in the opposition and cultural entities⁷. They have been coordinating themselves through an uninterrupted open weekly assembly, since 1998 —a few months after the presentation of PEPRI—, and through bigger general assemblies that take place in the *Ateneu Marítim* with less frequency. All this assemblies are much more formalized than those in *Solar de Matilde*. They are also much bigger. In the weekly meetings there could be about one hundred people and in the general ones, many more. In all of them there is a previous elaboration of an agenda and a formal call for participation that is distributed through their website, with posters and through social media. The assembly itself is also very well structured. Spokespersons, the president of *Salvem*, the president of *l'Associació de Veïns del Cabanyal-Canyamelar* (Neighbours Association of El Cabanyal-Canyamelar), and representatives of other relevant entities that form part of *Salvem* sit in a table in front of the rest of the participants. They have microphones and bottles of water, inform the rest of the last news of the situation in El Cabanyal or of the projects that are being developed. The people in front of the table make interventions, vote or ask questions from time to time and they get answered by the people in front, which seem to have better access to relevant information and an organizing role.

According to Lola, a woman in her late 40's, the way in which the decisions are taken in *Salvem el Cabanyal* is very simple: somebody brings an idea, a proposal or something, they vote and if there is a majority in favour the proposal is approved. That was what happened with *Solar de Sant Pere*. Somebody brought the proposal of rehabilitating and paving the *Solar* to one of the weekly assemblies, and apparently it made sense for most of them, maybe because many of them live in the street where the *Solar* is located or maybe because it fits very well in the main strategy of *Salvem*, that of visibilization of problems and denounce. Actually, Lola said that the goal was “to show, to prove to the municipality that it was possible” to rehabilitate. She has been living in *El Cabanyal*, for 30 years but she also lived in France, UK, and other cities in Spain. She knew the good old Cabanyal, much better times, a more beautiful place. She says with sadness: “they want to take our homes, they want to demolish our houses”.

Before cleaning and paving it, they did a propaganda campaign in different media, and an administrative complaint, denouncing that the municipality was breaking its own rules leaving the *Solar* in this conditions, they were apparently forced to fence it up and keep it clean. Lola thinks that they kept it like this to degrade the neighbourhood.

The works

After that they cleaned and paved it. They rented a paving roller, a tractor and a truck, scaffolds, bought cement and paint. It was made apparently in one day. The atmosphere was very festive and relaxed with popular music and drinks. The job was made by themselves, some of them drive the truck and the pave roller. The scene is also very familiar, there are children sitting on the knees

7 <http://www.cabanyal.com/nou/la-lluïta/la-lluïta-1998/?lang=es>

of their parents while they drove the paveroller, or painting the walls. Some men are wearing a blue helmet, all the same, and they look new. Following a somehow strict division of labour while the drivers of the machines and the ones wearing the helmets are mostly men, women remain on the edges of the *Solar* as observers or preparing some drinks, at least at the beginning when the work consists on removing rubble and garbage. There are also many chairs where the observers can sit for a while or where the workers can rest.



Illustration 8: *Solar de Sant Pere the day of the rehabilitation*

Source: *Cabanyal.com*

There are more or less one hundred people there. Some of them are wearing special T-shirts, one of them is black: “*equip Salvem CABANYAL CANYAMELAR*” (Cabanyal Canyamelar Team) in the back they were numbered until 1651, the total number of dwellings that were supposed to be demolished if the Blasco Ibañez Avenue would be built —actually about a third of them were demolished before the patrimony law was enforced.

Once cleaned and paved they painted it. They actually took symbolic possession of the *Solar* ironically leaving their hand-prints in the wall of the adjacent buildings. However the image is powerful, and despite the time they still use a picture of this day and the symbol of the coloured hand-print in their website⁸. They also painted soccer goals on the walls, and some other graffiti: “*El Cabanyal per als veïns no per a les rates!*” (Cabanyal for the neighbours, not for the rats!) or “*Rita [the major] prevarica*” (Rita prevaricates), while the rest of the wall is being painted in white. Finally a couple of young men are painting the logo of *Salvem*: “*Solar rehabilitat per la plataforma Salvem el Cabanyal*” (Plot rehabilitated by the Platform *Salvem el Cabanyal*). Cops pass by from time to time. They don’t seem to care much about it. They asked what was going on, but my guess is that they are not prepared to deal with a hundred neighbours in their late 40s building and

8 <http://www.canbanyal.com> last access, August 17th 2014

repairing the city.

In the wall of the building adjacent to the *Solar* this was already written:

Sant Pere street threatened You won't walk over us Town Hall, aumsa, Cabanyal 2010⁹ We won't let you condemn us Neither demolish. For a worthy live We will be in the neighbourhood Resisting for it to keep it ALIVE!!

Table 2: *Salvem's* poetry

Source: *cabanyal.com*

It took the municipality not very long to paint over all this slogans and hand-prints with wide diagonal stripes of light brown, brown and dark brown, “war colours” Sergi (a journalist/activist of the neighbourhood) says (see Illustration 9). This is the way one can identify all the property bought by the municipality in the neighbourhood, through the aforementioned companies.



Illustration 9: *Solar de Sant Pere*. The brownish stripes of the properties of the Municipality

Source: self elaboration

Anyhow, they have been using and transforming this space ever since. They use it whenever they need it. For Lola “it is a space we know is there and we can use it”. And they use it with very diverse purposes like projections, assemblies, dinners, meetings, etc. One of the moments of the year when they use it more intensively is *Cabayal Portes Obertes* (Cabanyal Open Doors), an artistic festival —interestingly many people involved in *Salve* are somehow related with the study or practice of fine arts—, developed against the threat of the neighbourhood by the PEPRI,

⁹ AUMSA and Cabanyal 2010 are the concessionaires developing the PEPRI.

organized by *Salvem el Cabanyal*. Open in this case means two things, first that the neighbourhood is open for everybody to visit it, which is the main goal of the festival: to show El Cabanyal to the rest of the city. And second because it is made through an “open call to all the artists who want to show against power abuse and anti-democratic practices involved in real estate speculation being developed in our cities and right now in the neighbourhood of El Cabanyal, as a result of neoliberal practices in current societies”¹⁰.

Almost every year, since 1998 there have been between 160 and 200 plastic arts, music, photo, media, theatre or dance projects, in the streets or theatres of the neighbourhood but specially in the houses of the neighbours who “dress them” with coloured cloths, paint and pictures and open their doors to the attendant public.

In may 2013, for instance, in the 15th edition of *Cabanyal Portes Obertes*, *Salvem* brought Carles Santos Ventura, a very popular Valencian, eccentric artist to play the piano. He did it in *Solar de Sant Pere*, under a tent because it was raining, with his own grand piano. While some people from *Salvem* were checking the state of the tent, some children were playing football or running around in the other side of the *Solar*. Carles Santos arrived and played in front of one or maybe two hundred people still carrying umbrellas.

El Cabanyal: *Solar del Clot*

The situation in the *bloc dels portuaris* is extreme. Since the building and the *Solar* was supposed to be demolished to enlarge the Avenue, the municipality is trying to empty it using whatever means. Some flats have been bought by Plan Cabanyal-Canyamelar, S.A and in some cases the doors and the windows have been walled up to prevent squatting. The image is that of a derelict building. Many neighbours are under the threat of eviction, and all of them are in economic trouble. Some do not even have a Habitation Certificate, because they lack water or power.



Illustration 10: *Solar del Clot* before the cleaning day with the *Bloc dels Portuaris* on the right.

Source: Google Maps

10 <http://www.cabanyal.com/nou/portes-obertes/>

In this situation they decided to organize, occupy and clean up the *Solar*. Here again I start the reconstruction of the history.

The beginnings: *Millorem el Cabanyal*

Pili is one of the neighbours of the building with whom I had an informal chat, she is a young gypsy: "It's difficult you know", she said slowly when I closed my notebook, "not only because you need the money, but because we need to be all together". According to her, the situation has improved a lot, "at the beginning we didn't know each other, we didn't know Sergi, or Adela (a sociologist working on her PhD in El Cabanyal and also engaged there), and they have been working a lot here". She is not very enthusiastic about the situation neither about our conversation.

Costi another neighbour of the *blocs*, about 35 years old and with five children, was also informally interviewed in the evening of the first of February. Tío José, a man in his late 50s with a patriarchal semblance and his wife joined a talk that finally was about everything but *Solar del Clot*: the problem of the lack of ownership of the houses, the problem of the demolishing plan of the municipality, the threat of eviction or the situation of abandonment. In my notebook I only happened to write: "they are very conscious about the situation, that they are the poor and that they are being squeezed out".

Everything started at Costi's place a couple of years ago with some meetings with Sergi and Tomás, Pili's Husband. They shared the idea that they wanted to do something for the neighbourhood and for themselves. So they decided to constitute an association called *Millorem el Cabanyal* (Lets Improve El Cabanyal). Tío José is the President, but Tomás, the spokesperson and Sergi who is not part of the association but also lives in the *bloc* seem to be the actual engines of it. They had several meetings together with more neighbours. In some of them Adela and Aitor (an architect also doing his PhD research in El Cabanyal) facilitated some meetings to improve communication among them. In this meetings there were between 10 and 20 people, most of them inhabitants of the *bloc*, and they took place mainly at somebody's house. At some point they decided that the *Solar del Clot* should have a better use, and that they could clean it and use it differently. Then, through Sergi and Adela, they contacted many other associations and groups from El Cabanyal and from other parts of the city.

Francesc, a retired teacher of Catalan in his late 60's, very active in *Salvem*, but whom also participated in *Solar del Clot* was essential to get the history of the occupation. He got to know about the plans for *Solar del Clot* through Sergi and Adela. Some people from El Clot came to one of *Salvem*'s open assemblies to tell them about the ideas they had about the *Solar* and invited them to come. They went and later on they invited back the people from El Clot to come to one of the dinners they were organizing in the street.

Surprisingly Francesc has the exact dates of the meetings they had to work in the *Solar* written down in a small notebook: There was a meeting the 10th of September. At least, Aitor, Costi, Adela, and Francesc himself, went. In the meeting they decided to meet again on the 21st to clean the *Solar del Clot*.

The cleaning day

It was kind of a party. Children, men, women, different ages, Roma and not Roma or *Payos* as Roma people refer to the everybody else. Francesc prepared some posters. He drew the lines of the drawings for the children to fill them with colours. The scene is very messy. At the same time a man or a woman is emptying a bucket full of dirt and rubble in a dumpster, while a small child is bringing half a brick with his hands to the same place. They do not have any specific tools, they cut some dry branches of the palm trees with knives. In the middle of the football field some people are sweeping all over. In some other corner children are standing around a couple of tables painting Francesc's posters with colours. Some others are just playing.

At both sides of the plot, many people are playing football and tennis in the privatized sport centre. The difference is astonishing. They have a new fence, uniforms, referees, everything seems perfect, the order of the actions there contrasts with the chaotic cleaning day. Half of the people wear red, the other half yellow. In the tennis field everybody is at the same side practising the backhand. It seems as if there should be a clear difference between the way the officially built space and this recovered space are used.

After a while somebody brought some drinks and some bread. In the same table where children were painting a young woman is trying to give them the food and drinks in equally small amounts. The same happens with bread and some cold meat. Children sat in the floor to eat. Francesc is going all around the fence with the posters already painted, hanging them from the fence: "*aquí juegan niños, por favor, recoge lo que tu perro haga*" (children play here, pick up what your dog does), "*som del clot i el millorem*" (we are from El Clot and we improve it), "*se necessita màquina de barrer, por favor, traigan una*" (a sweeping machine is needed, please, bring one). Somebody is painting a big banner: "For the sake of everybody, keep the *Solar* clean. *Millorem el Cabanyal*". And Olegario a gypsy guy in his 30s is hanging it in the front door of the *Solar*. Somebody says with a very distinctive accent: "the municipality is going to be ashamed".



Illustration 11: Francesc hanging one of the posters with some children

Source: Sergi Tarín

Slowly improving: the market and the football goals

They were having irregular weekly meetings until October, when everything got a bit stopped and the situation is still evolving very slowly: “we are a bit inactive now” said Tío Pepe. Mainly because they tend to depend on the ability some people, basically Sergi and Tomás, has to mobilize the rest. Tomás is in his early 40’s. A very lively, smart, confident person. Kind of a leader. He has a very well structured thought and discourse, and a very good sense of what is going on now: “People anyway are downhearted because of the situation”. He also has a well shaped idea about what he would like to see in the *Solar*, how to do it in broad terms and a strategy that could work or not but that seems logical. His discourse is mostly about citizen rights, and about discrimination of the gypsies. He was born in El Clot, long before the construction of *bloc dels portuaris*, when there were only small houses. Now he makes his living recycling junk and selling second hand objects in the street markets, like most of his neighbours. One of the most impressive things about Tomás was the clarity of his thought: “The *bloc dels portuaris* is the spearhead of the struggle against the enlargement of the Blasco Ibañez Avenue, the *bloc* is like the watchtower of the struggle, if its demolished all the rest are little houses. That is the strength we have, the support of 400-500 people living here”. Its scope: “Spain has the resources to give to all its people a decent live, maybe not the raw materials, not the physical resources, but there is enough for everybody”. And his radicality, although he tend to use a much more restrained discourse to have results with the municipality and the police. “Pure strategy”, he said, to later add: “the struggle not as a confrontation, we don’t want to infuriate them, we need the support of the municipality”. He asked me not to write details about this. Again basically strategy I thought. His idea of using the *Solar* is part of a set of activities intended to the improvement of the living conditions of the neighbourhood. Focusing on the street market for instance he argued that in the long term “the goal is to get some 4€ for each stand a day, that could be 400€ a week for the association, with this money we could invest in the improvement of the building, or buy a van to pick old furniture up and sell it. Later on we could form a cooperative and gain more resources to work on cleaning, plumbing...”

Sergi is a bit younger. He moved to the *bloc* a few years ago, and he has become very good friend of many inhabitants. Since many people there does not know about their social or labour rights, about the relations with public institutions and so on, he has become kind of a reference person in the neighbourhood. Everybody knows that he is a journalist. He has lots of contacts with many social movements in the city, and the very presence of somebody with a camera ready to film dissuades any abuse by any institution, lets say the police.

Despite the irregular activity of *Millorem* at some point somebody drew by hand on the floor of the *Solar* the shape of the stands that the neighbours were going to use in the street market, and assigned a number to each one. Around 60 or 70 rectangles of some 5 sq meters each, following the same order than in an official street market. On December 14th at around 11h, they organized the first one, after asking to and getting from the police a punctual permission.

Even though all markets are not only economic places but also social places, this one was specially social, to the point that little economic transactions were made for the desperation of the neighbours. There were also food, drinks, music and children activities, and you could support them with an *Aportació Solidària* or solidarity contribution for 3€.

They asked for permission every week to organize the street market. It worked a couple of times,

but once the police realized that they were planning to organize it regularly they asked for additional permissions. Since they have not got them yet, there is no street market right now.

However they do organize some punctual activities. On Saturday 25th of January they organized a day of activities. The initiative this time was apparently shared between the *Ateneo Libertario*—an anarchist group from the neighbourhood, which is not very sympathetic with associations like *Salvem* because of their will to negotiate with the municipality and their rejection of squatting, something they are proud to share with many people in El Clot—, and the neighbours of *el bloc*.

The *Ateneo* prepared a whole day of activities, including a *rastro* (the market) and *distris anticomercials* (distribution of anticomercial, anarchist fanzines, etc). Afterwards they built the football goals in the middle of the *Solar* with the parents, and children helped them to paint it. At midday—which in Spain, starts at 14h— they cooked paellas. At 16h there was a football match and afterwards some live music.

London

Background: Transition Heathrow and the occupation

Before 2007 most of the resistance to the airport expansion project was made in legal terms. Neighbours organized around a group called No Third Runway Action Group (NoTRAG), and in different occasions they sent petitions and letters to different instances without much success:

Local people had battled against expansion plans for years, mostly with passive petitions, polite letters and a little genteel placard waving. It wasn't until 2002, when hundreds of homes were threatened, that the No Third Runway Action Group (NoTRAG) was formed. Yet we were still playing by the rules, while BAA and the government appeared to be planning to move the goalposts.¹¹

In August 2007 a much more radical action took place in Sipson: a Camp for Climate Action (CCA) was organized near Heathrow Airport. This found a lot of local support in the community. After the Camp, there was already a call for convergence between CCA and the Transition Culture, two movements that have very similar ecological concerns, basically related with climate change and peak oil issues, although from different perspectives. The first one is more related with protests against the inability of governments to solve these problems, and the second one is more focused in the construction of local solutions. In 2009 the convergence between this two groups and a third one: Plane Stupid, another grassroots, consensus-based movement which main concern are the ecological consequences of air transport, made possible the birth of Transition Heathrow with the intention to defend their community against BAA's plans of airport expansion. The first of March of the next year, a group of about 20 environmentalists got into the site. Some of them got there by bike or walking and they just jumped over the low fence that surrounds the plot. They reported it as follows:

Today, community activists from the group Transition Heathrow moved into an abandoned market garden in Sipson. Around lunchtime, about 20 people "swooped" on the land in Sipson, one of the villages due for demolition if the third runway at Heathrow goes ahead. After securing the site, the group immediately informed their new neighbours and local residents of their intention to reopen the old market garden for the benefit of the local community.¹²

The group was diverse in gender and age groups but most of the people should be in their mid 20s to early 30s. In this same moment they started the cleaning up of the area with some rakes and shovels and with their hands. They opened the main entrance and started the restoration of the green houses. They also hung a big banner in the front door, which is going to be something like an advertising fence. In the next years different banners against airport expansion or announcing different activities in Grow Heathrow are going to be hung there.

One week after the opening, a week of works, cleaning and taking the rubble out, they welcomed the community to present the project. Since then "30 tonnes of rubbish were cleared" and "the site has been transformed from a derelict mess into a beacon of community strength and a great example of how to live sustainably on this planet"¹³. Many neighbours came to show support, and they seem quite optimistic about the chances they have against the BAA's plans.

11 <http://www.transitionheathrow.com/2011/09/how-the-transition-town-movement-found-transition-heathrow-2/>

12 <http://www.transitionheathrow.com/2010/03/swoop-on-abandoned-market-garden/>

13 <http://www.transitionheathrow.com/grow-heathrow/>



Illustration 12: Grow Heathrow in 2012. Reclaim the fields

Source: Transition Heathrow Archive

Grow Heathrow now

Since then Grow Heathrow has become a vibrant local community working in different activities. The concrete goals of Grow Heathrow are basically related with the recuperation of the historic productive capacity of the area: “return the Berkeley Nurseries site back to its intended purpose — a thriving market garden that will provide our community with locally produced, organic fruit and veg”. With the recuperation and sharing of knowledge and practical skills, relevant for this purpose, and finally with the promotion of self-reliance in different fields:

We produce our own food, use solar and wind power meaning we're completely off grid, we collect water from the greenhouse roofs to feed the plants, fruit and vegetables, we use fuel-efficient rocket stoves to heat water and are equipped with wonderful compost toilets making humanure¹⁴

These ideas were shared since the beginning but something very interesting is the clarity with which they express the relevance for them of the access to land. As Paddy, a guy in his early 30's that has been involved in Grow Heathrow since the occupation, said two years after the occupation:

Access to land is one of the most fundamental political things to fight for. Land is what enables our communities to have autonomy and control over the major things that affect them... where the food comes from, where the energy comes from, water supply, shelter, housing... without access to land many of those things are unachievable, I mean is probably the essential element of survival in the midst of this crisis.¹⁵

Grow Heathrow has also been described as the only community space they have in Sipson, a community space that is open to everyone and that even has the support of the local Member of

¹⁴ <http://www.transitionheathrow.com/grow-heathrow/>

¹⁵ <http://vimeo.com/37850262>

Parliament (Local MP), many metropolitan politicians and most of the local residents. However the goals of Grow Heathrow are quite radical in their scope and scale: “experimenting with how we can take back control of our lives without relying on the government or corporations”¹⁶, this is a revolution disguised as gardening.

This is very telling of the characteristics of this project. Of course, all this goals match with the principles and long terms goals of the Transition Network¹⁷ and those are in turn reflected in Transition Heathrow's goals:

- To develop and promote community and resource autonomy to support long-term community resilience
- To establish replicable structures of organisation, which could provide a model for future non-hierarchical, consensus-based communities¹⁸

As a community space it has a very intense use. Among other things within Grow Heathrow there are many people living there permanently, there is an open bike workshop every Thursday, like those described and analysed by Elizabeth Lonrenzi in Spain (2010), an arts group on Fridays, a wood workshop, they have seed beds and the greenhouses. On Sundays they organize a gardening club, they also have a permanent free shop, a living room, a pizza oven and so on. They have also organized permaculture workshops, and have also hosted different meetings and activities organized by other groups with similar principles and goals.

16 <http://youtu.be/R9cQ4tDfSI8>

17 <http://www.transitionnetwork.org/about>

18 <http://www.transitionheathrow.com/about-us/>

ANALYSIS

The order followed in this analysis is not that of the presentations of the cases, but the one followed in the theoretical framework to better understand the differences and the similarities of the cases.

Solar de Sant Pere: an open conflict

The process of “construction” of the *Solar de Sant Pere*, started a few years after the demolition of the houses that were previously there. The platform *Salvem el Cabanyal* decided in one of their assemblies to do something there “to show, to prove to the municipality that it was possible” as Lola said. This is indicative of their relation with the municipality of Valencia, their action was partially an action of denounce partially a positive action for the rehabilitation of their neighbourhood, specially in Sant Pere street, the one in which the enlargement of the avenue and the boulevard overlap.

The relation with the municipality is an open and very explicit conflict: they oppose the enlargement plan of the Blasco Ibañez Avenue and furthermore they oppose and clearly defy the right wing political party in government for the last 23 years. This conflict is personalized in the mayor, Rita Barberá, who is the main advocate of the PEPRI. Her name is widely used during the protest and in the slogans of *Salvem el Cabanyal*: “Rita prevarica” was written in a graffiti in the *Solar*. And they even have an alternative name for the Blasco Ibañez Avenue: Rita’s Avenue.

This situation is conjunctural. With another mayor or with the permanent revocation of the plan and the rehabilitation of the neighbourhood, their relation with the municipality could be very different. This is what they actually want: the municipality to open up a participatory project, whatever that could mean. One of their main slogans is “*Rehabilitació sense destrucció*” (Rehabilitation without destruction), as we saw in several of their banners. Is not that they need the municipality to give the first step, they have done many, but they acknowledge the state as the main and legitimate producer of the urban space.

They have been trying to open up channels of communication with the municipality during the last 16 years, since the birth of the platform, without any success. Public policies were those of *faits accomplis*, evicting and demolishing houses even when it was clearly illegal, because, as the narrative of *Salvem* goes, they want the degradation of the neighbourhood. The abandonment of the plot, the war colours used to paint the walls of the *Solar* are very good examples of that.

The mayor is determined to develop her plan at almost any price. The municipality is trying to bypass the neighbours closing all the communication and participation channels sometimes with rather questionably legal means. For this reason one of the main fields of action of *Salvem* is the legal struggle, where, as we saw, they have had their main victories, like the declaration of immediate suspension of the enlargement plan in 2009.

They use, intensively and extensively, all the legal means and channels at their disposal to press the municipality to react in a certain way. That matches with Friedmann’s and Holston’s claim about the acknowledgement of the state as an indispensable actor and about the limits of radical practice that considers the state only as an enemy. “To go beyond these limits” Friedmann said, “appropriate actions by the state are essential”.

The state is a tool, and the arena of state politics, specially in the local level is where action takes

place. Although *Salvem* is an independent association with its own visions about what they want for El Cabanyal and they not always coincide with those of other groups, they want the support of and give support to political parties in the opposition and other social movements with which they share principles and ideology, and furthermore they are also part of *Salvem*. In the origin of the platform there were political parties of the opposition, and they still establish more or less official and sound alliances mainly with left wing parties like Esquerra Unida and left wing nationalists like Compromís. Some of the interviewees also mentioned “La PEPRI” the ‘female’ version of the official PEPRI and the alternative plan for the neighbourhood started by the PSPV-PSOE (the socialist party in its Valencian version), from which they also have support.

Their strength in the political struggle for the restructuring and reorganization of the relations of power within the state framework, to use Friedman’s terminology has historical roots. As we saw *Salvem* has strong links with the traditional Neighbourhood Associations movement (maybe the Spanish version of the Community Organizing of Alinsky in North America, with which it has many similarities (Alinsky, (2012) [1971]) that was the predominant form of socio-political organization from the 60’s until the late 80’s in Spain (Castells, 1986). Concretely *Salvem* is linked with l’Associació de Veïns del Cabanyal-Canyamelar (Neighbourhood Association of Cabanyal-Canyamelar). This movement, studied very much in depth by Castells during the 70’s and 80’s, particularly in Madrid, but also in the rest of Spain, has some basic characteristics that make possible to trace a line between these modes of organization, goals and practices and those of *Salvem*, and in this way provides ground to better understand the practices and the logics developed in *Solar de Sant Pere*.

As *Salvem* the traditional Neighbourhood Associations have always been linked with the left wing parties (clandestine at the beginning but that became legal at the end of the 70’s) with which they had a mutual dependence that more recently tended to evolve in a more institutionalized relationship. The main claims of this movements (housing, education, public health and public hygiene, open spaces...) are also found in *Salvem* like their pyramidal structures of organization (Castells, 1986: 315), although much less hierarchical. It is not that *Salvem* is the heiress of the Neighbourhood Associations, but they tend to act coordinated and they seem to share the same ideological basis and similar goals. They tend to converge and they have done so. Just as an example by October 2012 there was a meeting in which *Salvem el Cabanyal*, l’Associació de Veïns del Cabanyal-Canyamelar, l’Associació de Comerciants (Commerce Association) and others, gathered together to unify goals and press the municipality in the same direction: “against criminal spots, to end social and urbanism degradation, to start a plan of housing rehabilitation, and to start a plan to dynamize, regenerate and foster neighbourhood commerce” (Sergi Tarín, 2012b).

In the same sense, practices like the festival *Portes Obertes* and the dinners in the *Solar*, that I described in the previous chapter, though maybe more sophisticated, resemble one of the most relevant practices of the old Neighbourhood Associations, the revitalization of the folk festivals (Castells, 1986: 353).

Therefore, as in the past with the Neighbourhood Associations, the focus in the legal and communicative fields and also in the symbolic field (Martínez, 2010), that of the slogans and banners, that for the meaning of El Cabanyal, for a narrative of the neighbourhood not as the worse off area but as a diverse a lively neighbourhood is largely functional to the aforementioned political struggle. It is better understood as a function of the political struggle than as isolated means of protest.

But let's return to the concept of insurgent urbanism to see how far it explains what is going on in *Solar de Sant Pere*. The term 'insurgent' refers, as we said, to situations of open conflict, against neoliberal practices of control through participation and against modernist planning practices related with the project of state building. It is not the case in *Solar de Sant Pere*, since the municipality is not eager to use inclusion as a tool of dominance, they prefer to use force or just invisibilization. Thus, it is not that they are rejecting the participatory plans of the municipality, they do not even exist. Here they are creating the means to actively participate in a broad sense in the construction of the city bypassing the municipalities block while the municipality maintains this block. Something more similar to the case here could be Irazabal and Neville's grassroots urbanism in post-Katrina New Orleans (2007) in which they claim that instead of emerging out of the rejection of a depoliticized participation, it comes from the abandonment or inefficacy of the state and the public institutions in a context of natural catastrophe or urgent necessity. But of course the context, the scale and the developed practices are very different.

As described by Miraftab, insurgent planning can be identifiable as "purposeful actions that aim to disrupt domineering relationships of oppressors to the oppressed, and to destabilize such a *status quo* through consciousness of the past and imagination of an alternative future" (Miraftab, 2009: 44).

Practices in *Solar de Sant Pere* and *Salvem*'s strategy, are at least partially following this principles. They do in the sense that they replace the state in the rehabilitation of the street, in the construction of the city, becoming in this way counter-hegemonic. They are 'invading' the assumed monopoly of the state in the production and sanction of legitimate spaces, although as we saw they are doing so mostly as a protest, as a demand, they are not planning to develop their own rehabilitation plan for the neighbourhood, (they have done so, but to present it to the municipality to be discussed) or to foster alternative economic relations. This is a conjunctural situation. The state is their tool. They are also imaginative in their protests: they use poetry and arts, like Carles Santos piano concert. They use their houses as stages and as exhibition halls in the *Portes Obertes* festival, they use movies, books, and many other non-traditional ways of protests, and they share their contents in at least three different languages: Spanish, Valencian and English. They are also imaginative in the sense that they have visions of the future of the neighbourhood. These visions are maybe not so alternative or clear: "we want a different thing each day" said Sara, but they are there. Finally they also use the history of the neighbourhood as a tool, it is "at the heart of their practices". The best evidence are the denounces about the destruction of the cultural and architectonic heritage and the subsequent declaration of immediate suspension of the plan in 2009 by the Ministry of Culture.

Following Miraftab and Holston, we can say that they are, actually very explicitly, innovating in the way in which they engage with the state, they are creating out of their daily practices their own substantive citizenship in a conflictual opposition with the formal citizenship, emptied of any meaningful content by the Municipality. Opposing to that *Salvem* and the neighbours of El Cabanyal decided to find their own way of participation, i. e. their active citizenship through the physical reconstruction of their neighbourhood, in this way they enacted insurgent urbanism, breaking the theoretical assumption under which citizenship by itself implies rights and duties, and in this way becoming another example of how "formal membership in the nation-state is increasingly neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition for substantive citizenship" (ibid: 4).

Comparing this groups, the urban planning contexts and their goals, we will find the main

differences, the nuances that shape the diversity of radical planning. Lets see the next cases.

Solar del Clot: subtle resistance

Although in terms of town planning El Cabanyal is a rather coherent area, there are many *Cabanyales* and El Clot is one of them. A very particular place within a particular place. If the whole district looks like a war zone, El Clot is perceived as the worse off area, the most deprived, dangerous and excluded, and for sure people living there has some of the worst socio economic conditions in the city, even worst than those in Sant Pere street. Despite being both in the affected area of the enlargement plan, in Calle Sant Pere and in El Clot, and more specifically in *Salvem el Cabanyal* and in *Millorem el Cabanyal*, the socio-economic and cultural characteristics are very different. Despite the fact that they are very much related, the way in which they conceive the process is also very different.

People in *Millorem el Cabanyal*, people cleaning the *Solar del Clot* and people living in *blocs portuaris*, which largely coincide, are mainly Roma population, basically with the only exception of Sergi, Adela and Aitor. Most of them make their living recycling, buying and selling junk or antiquities in street markets. They are not activists, there are no anthropologists or artists there. Their houses are not in very good conditions, some of them have been squatted, have illegal power or water connections or do not have them at all. Furthermore they are mainly inexperienced and have little time for political engagement, again with the exception of Sergi and maybe Tomás, that have some knowledge about their rights, the legal procedures or even their possibilities. That is one of the reasons for Sergi to be that popular. Some others are so busy trying to stop their evictions or trying to get some money for the everyday expenses that they do not have the time, nor the strength to engage in any kind of protest. The scene is terrible. The echo of the words of Tomás resonates: "People are downhearted because of the situation".

Despite all, they are not just passively waiting for their neighbourhood to be demolished by the municipality nor for it to perish or get totally ruined because of the abandonment. They do not have the capacity nor the will to promote big demonstrations, or to organize festivals (although they sometimes participate in those organized by *Salvem*), they do not have the support of political parties or public figures, they are not a cohesive group with clear political ideas, like the assembly of *Solar de Matilde*. *Millorem el Cabanyal* is a much younger organization that is not yet registered and not very well organized. Some of them have kinship ties, that is a lot, but that is all. They are in the process to be more cohesionated. It is a matter of time according to them, but so far they have only had a few messy meetings with the help of Adela and Aitor, whom, by the way, have acted as facilitators of this process in a very similar way to the one described by Friedmann in "Mediations of Radical Planning" (Friedman, 2011). There is not much history of mobilization behind this case. I could not find any previous social movement that explained the characteristics of this one (although other local social movements could have influenced it), therefore the importance of the figures of Sergi, Adela or Tomás, they are creating some sort of social movement almost out of thin air.

In the previous case we have dealt with a highly empowered group, we will also in the next cases. But is not the case here. The situation in El Clot matches with the context described by Beard: "highly restrictive political environment where responses to social activism encompass real physical and social harm" (Beard, 2002: 15). The context studied by Beard is very different in some

senses, but the conditions of the population are very similar. She was studying local people's involvement in Indonesia and Malaysia where the political-economic context is very different from that of Valencia. But Beard, at the end of her paper points to the potentially broader explanatory power of the concept when applied "for highly disadvantaged communities that exist in liberal democratic settings" (ibid: 24).

Back to the history of *Solar del Clot*. What they want is to be treated as a legitimate interlocutor of the municipality, they would like to be named, counted as, Swyngedouw said. Hence they tried to become an official association and of course they recognize the municipality as legitimate, despite the violence and the abuses.

What they have done so far is to clean the plot, build football goals and run a few street markets and ask for permission to run a few more. Everything sort of quietly. Without grandiloquent manifestos or explicitly mocking the mayor in public, in a set of practices that does not actually look very revolutionary. However a deeper analysis can reveal something else that helps to understand the logic behind it. According to Beard, covert planning is "more subtle, nuanced, and incremental than Alinsky-style community organizing" (ibid: 28), and for the same reason than the Spanish Neighbours Association Movement. So we also have to be more careful in the analysis. Lets take a closer look.

When they, with the help of *Salvem* and other groups in the city, started the cleaning of the *Solar*, Francesc, the old Catalan school teacher, painted a few drawings with some slogans for the children to paint them. Surprisingly none of them was directed to the municipality, none of them was mocking the mayor or criticizing her, not even denouncing the enlargement plan. It was very striking to see that most of the messages written there were directed to themselves: "We are from El Clot and we improve it". They were even avoiding the use of improper language, they replaced *caga* (shit) for *haga* (do): "*aquí juegan niños, por favor, recoge lo que tu perro haga*" (children play here, please, pick up what your dog does). The big banner they hung in the fence said: "For the sake of everybody, keep the *Solar* clean. *Millorem el Cabanyal*". One would expect some criticism towards the perceived responsible of the situation, the municipality. At least some protests, some claims, but there was nothing there. We have seen *Salvem* doing something very different, using the walls of the *Solar de Sant Pere* as a protest. In a very different way they were repeating very often that what they wanted was, first, a clean place in which children could play, whereby most of the messages were about the hygienic conditions of the *Solar*, and second, a place where they could make a living, arguments that sound very much mainstream, and difficult to reject for the municipality specially in a Spain in crisis. They do not pretend to be counter-hegemonic, nor transgressive, not even particularly imaginative. They do not claim to be showing the municipality that it can be done. But they are still occupying a *Solar*.

Their relation with the municipality is not that of an open conflict like *Salvem*. But that does not mean that they are satisfied with the situation, or that they accept it resignedly, there is no identification with the ideas of the municipality, there is no hegemony in the Gramscian sense, but a covert resistance, a myriad of small almost undetectable resistances. In the same way that "the wise peasant bows deeply and silently farts when the great lord passes", as the Ethiopian saying recalled by Scott (1990) goes, they publicly hung childish posters in the fence of the *Solar* while were quietly criticising the municipality: "the municipality is going to be ashamed". As I noticed earlier they are very well aware that they are in the middle of a confluence of economic and political interests, at least Tío Pepe, Costi, Tomás and Segi were very explicit in that, and they

know that they are the weak part, “the poor”. So there is resistance and this resistance is conscious, meaningful and relevant. Even if it is not open and explicit it is relevant, as Scott said: under these circumstances “everyday forms of resistance would seem particularly important (1985: 6 quoted in Beard, 2002).

He was talking about Southeast Asian peasants, but he described these forms of resistance as the “weapons of the weak”, and population in El Clot are clearly, in a very weak position. As a collective they do not have the capacity to start an open conflict, and it could be even worse. They know that. That is also why Tomás was softening his discourse as a strategy to be able to engage in negotiations with the municipality or the police, the branch of the state with which they have a closer relation, much to their regret. It is in this line that they decided to ask for permission several times to use the *Solar* as a street market, none of the other groups did so. And this is also the reason to stop doing it when the municipality decided to ask for a more general permission that they have not yet obtained (although the fact that it was economically a disaster was also a good reason). None of the other groups stopped after the first conflicts with the public institutions.

I should stress again the fact that this is a deliberate and active strategy, proving the agency of subordinate classes (Beard, 2002: 19), and it has brought some results already, however small they may look, in this context they are highly valued by the neighbours. Things have improved, Pili and Tomás emphasized. Now they have common plans, now they know each other. In other words they feel now a bit more empowered. And more concretely children have a clean and much nicer place to play. If it goes on in time, something we can not know, it may also prove the linear thesis of Bear: “covert planning is instrumental in creating the social and political spaces necessary for radical action in the future”. At least Tomás was clearly envisioning a future in which their effort could go much further in the long-term, although it was not through more radical action, but through more covert action.

***Solar de Matilde* and Grow Heathrow: recovering the power-to-do**

Of course we can find practices, ideas or tendencies that can fit under the concepts of radical planning, covert planning or insurgent urbanism in the terms developed before, but they do not explain what I claim are the main characteristics of the projects and practices developed in the assembly of *Solar de Matilde* or Grow Heathrow. For the same reason these concepts lose explanatory capacity if the goal is to get the nuances and the differences between these projects and those enacted by *Salvem el Cabanyal* or *Mil·lorem el Cabanyal*. Let's give the suggested concepts a try to understand what has been happening in Carabanchel and in Sipson.

Prefigurative social movements

As we saw, the origin of the assembly of *Solar de Matilde* is double, in the one hand the project of the *Cooperativas Integrales* (CI) and in the other the squatting movement of the neighbourhood and the Popular Assembly of Carabanchel which in turn emerged out of the 15M movement in 2011.

The movement of CI is very much linked with the idea and the movement for degrowth and started as a regional response to the crisis of capitalism in Catalunya (Fernández Moya and Valle

Collantes, 2012). As Carlson (2012: 6) says, the CIC is

“a transition initiative” in Catalunya, Spain, for autonomous, democratic, and ecological living from the capitalist system. CIC, incepted in May 2010, has emerged as a response to the crisis in Spain, built upon and drawing from a regional legacy of activism and alternatives-building, including the anarchist, cooperative, and more recent, Indignados/15M movements.

This Cooperative, and by extension, the movement of *Cooperativas Integrales*, defines itself as Integral, because it “gathers all the basic elements of an economy such as production, consumption, finance and its own currency, and aims to integrate all sectors of activity required to live”¹⁹.

In the other hand we have the 15M movement which, as Carlos Taibo says (2011) has at least two souls. One of the critical anticapitalist movement and the other one formed by angry unemployed and precarious-in-every-sense people that want a more or less radical political reform. From this point of view the “soul” of the *Solar de Matilde* collective is more linked with the first one, and this one in turn with old radical leftist movements, from where the CIC also emerged. Movements of radical rejection to capitalism but also to the state. This kind of groups, that have proliferated perhaps in the last two decades —actually 2014 is the 20th anniversary of the *Zapatistas* birth— have been defined by Graeber (2009: 216) as “small-a anarchists” to “distinguish them from those who identify with any one particular strain [of anarchism]”. In their open release to the neighbourhood, the assembly of *Solar de Matilde*, though not explicitly, pointed to some of the traditional aspirations of anarchists, like non-mediated relations, *autogestión* and direct action:

we do not resign ourselves to give up again to the way of punishment whether administrative, criminal or police as a model of conflict resolution, and propose the direct dialogue between people, as a way of living and reappropriation of the social fabric destroyed evidently by speculative practices in our neighbourhoods, the inability of the government, labour exploitation promoted by profit; commodification, after all, of our lives. (my translation)

We can add something else about this kind of groups paying close attention to what we saw in Grow Heathrow.

Unlike other transition projects, Transition Heathrow emerged out of the rejection of and the confrontation with a large-scale project: BAA's airport expansion plans.

The Transition Culture (TC) movement (Hopkins, 2008) is very similarly defined to the CI movement: “a grassroots initiative that focuses on the development of locally centred community responses to the twin threats of climate change and peak oil production” (Mason and Whitehead, 2012). The Transition Culture is promoted by the Transition Network, which is in turn, a charitable organization “whose role is to inspire, encourage, connect, support and train communities as they self-organise around the Transition model, creating initiatives that rebuild resilience and reduce CO2 emissions” sometimes around the figure of the “facilitator”, a kind of “community organizer” in Alinsky's terms that learn how to start or to strengthen Transition initiatives in different ways. The most relevant feature of the projects that follow this Transition Culture, whether or not directly involved in the Network is that they aim to develop resilient small scale communities by producing as many of the things they actually need to survive and by reducing the consumption of those that they cannot produce, being oil the paradigmatic example.

In a very similar way than the 15M movement and the CI movement, the Transition Network is a

19 CIC's website <https://cooperativa.ecoxarxes.cat/>

sort of decentralized network: Each Transition group or town is independent and “develops projects and priorities based on its particular place and scale” (Hardt, 2013: 11). They may engage with the local government, but in a very autonomous way, a way which resembles the idea of insurgent citizenship. As Hardt (2013: 12) claims:

Throughout the process of engaging local government, however, Transition groups are encouraged to engage on their own terms as a Transition initiative is a citizen-led effort, which will only flourish with widespread grassroots support and participation.

This can be clearly seen in the case of Grow Heathrow. They have the support of local politicians, as we saw. But this is not the main feature of Transition projects in general or of Grow Heathrow in particular, as we also saw their goal is much broader. They have been defined as a “prefigurative social movement” (Hardt, 2013). They explicitly use the concepts of direct action or consensus based decision-making to describe their practices, exactly the same than 15M or the CI movement. And through these processes and actions they also explicitly aim to the construction of alternative ways of living as independent of public institutions as possible. This is why considering these projects just as community gardens or the occupations as protests falls short to understand their relevance.

Grow Heathrow—even more explicitly than *Solar de Matilde*— is a community garden, but is also perceived and enacted by the squatters as a project of building resilience and self-reliance in a local scale, as we saw concerning for instance their food and energy self-sufficiency projects that is able to host permanently many people.

But Grow Heathrow has also complex and mixed origins. As Mason and Whitehead pointed out Camps for Climate Action were extremely relevant in the formation of Transition Heathrow and therefore also influenced Grow Heathrow's existence. CCA is: “a British activist network that strategically occupies prominent political and economic locations (including power stations, the headquarters of banks, and G20 summits) in order to bring attention to the lack of progress on addressing the threat of climate change. (2012: 120). The Camps for Climate Action are not an organization but a gathering of different autonomous groups, that organize for a concrete action, basically camping, against different institutions like banks, governments or, like in this case, airports to enact a radical critic of their inherent unsustainability. They tend to perform spectacular actions to call mass attention on something they consider relevant and are “far more transitory and politically confrontational” than the Transition Towns (Ibid: 122). The influence of CCA in Grow Heathrow can be clearly perceived. Firstly it makes easier to understand why this transition initiative uses squatting or swooping which is not that common within this Transition Culture and secondly it reinforces the horizontal and consensus-bases organizational structures of Grow Heathrow. Finally the role of demonstrations and protests as part of the core of the project seems also to be related with its role in the CCA. Of course people in other Transition initiatives or in *Solar de Matilde* are also demonstrating and supporting demonstrations, but in the case of Grow Heathrow this is much more central.

Planning contexts

Grow Heathrow is being developed under the threat of the expansion plan of the airport, a large-scale project, and it is being developed as an explicitly confrontational space, very concretely in this case, against BAA's plans. Unlike in the *Solar de Matilde*, there is a hard struggle for the use of

land. While Grow Heathrow is reclaiming the use of this plot for community resilience building, the BAA reclaims it for the improvement of British economy and air transport, more or less the same arguments used by the Municipality of Valencia for the enlargement plan of Blasco Ibañez avenue, just replacing air transport with urban mobility.

The differences with *Solar de Matilde* here are big. In *Solar de Matilde* I did not find any public urban plan they were opposing to, no rehabilitation plan for the neighbourhood or any other specific change in the built environment promoted by the municipal government or any public or private institution. There have been changes, of course. But, this is secondary in this case. There is not even an open conflict between the municipality or the mayor and the assembly of the *Solar*. The mayor or the planning office are probably unaware of the existence of the occupation, and if they are they have done nearly nothing to evict the place apart from the first time when there was a denounce by a neighbour. In this case there is only an abstract opposition to speculation, the inability of the government and commodification of life, as they said in the open communication to the neighbourhood. This could not be considered a denounce more than in abstract terms. It is not a demand to push the municipality to fulfil its duties, it is an effort to replace it. In this case there is no struggle for the use of land, it has little exchange value, so there is no need to start an open conflict. We can see clear traces of the sort of subtle resistance described in the case of *Solar del Clot*, but for very different reasons.

The absence of an open conflict might obscure the fact that, unlike in the cases in Valencia, the rejection here is structural. Although not that explicitly this groups are anarchist inspired or at least tend to follow most of the anarchist practices and principles. Small-a anarchists. That is why they refer to themselves as an assembly in *Solar de Matilde* or a working action group in the case of Grow Heathrow, instead of an association or a platform, which *has* open assemblies, and also explains the way they organize the decision making processes.

Direct action, power-to-do and prefigurative planning

That is why in *Solar de Matilde* they were defiantly saying “We don’t ask, we get it back”. That also explains why they called the squatting action as part of a “Popular Agrarian Reform”. The way the assembly of *Solar de Matilde* acts looks much more clearly linked with the bypassing of the state, the obviation of their rules and of the participatory channels whenever possible. The state is not a tool, it looks more like an obstacle. Not a very big one ye, though.

People in *Solar de Matilde* are not mainly denouncing the abandonment of the plot to be rehabilitated by someone else. They are using the land to grow food for them. Although they know that the production is going to be small to actually feed the group, and that Manuel is too optimistic (at least in the short term), that does not change the fact that the *Solar* is mainly a productive space (although also a social space...), i. e. that the focus is in the production of goods, in their capacity-to-do, in their power-to-do. That is why this spaces, both in Carabanchel and in Sipson, were recovered for orchards and not paved like in *Solar de Sant Pere*. But they also tended to increase this power-to-do, as we saw for instance, in all the learning processes described in *Solar de Matilde* or when in Grow Heathrow they organized permaculture workshops. “The model” claims Hardt “encourages experimentation and adaptation, seeing the movement itself as an iterative learning process”. In this way they also increase their autonomy and their capacity for *autogestión*.

In the same way Grow Heathrow’s activists claim to be establishing “replicable structures of

organisation, which could provide a model for future non-hierarchical, consensus-based communities”, and one of their goals is “[t]o develop and promote community and resource autonomy to support long-term community resilience”. Autonomous, non-hierarchical, consensus based communities, direct control by the affected people. It is a “revolution disguised as gardening”.

Both groups use direct action, and in the case of Grow Heathrow they even explicitly use the concept. However they use it in very different ways. In some, it coincides almost completely with the idea of power-to-do: the development of energy self-sufficiency in Grow Heathrow or the construction of the composters in *Solar de Matilde* is direct action as power-to-do, direct action as the emergence of independent structures of production. Also the way to deal with the water issue in both cases have now a more visible logic, it is a very good example of direct action as power-to-do. Instead of asking for it, instead of paying for it, water was just taken from the closest source, be that rain water or the closest public valve.

Also the way they organize, their assemblies, specially those in *Solar de Matilde*, where messiness, discontinuities, randomness and slowness, were the distinctive features, are a very informal version of the organization processes described by Graeber in *The Democracy Project* (2013) or by Martínez in *¿Dónde están las llaves?* (2004): consensus based decisions, asambleaism, *autogestión* and decentralization. This messiness and discontinuities are, by the way, essential features of the cracks and interstices where this places lie (Pickerill and Chatterton, 2006: 9). In this sense, direct action is not power-to-do but a form of organization.

That is what both of the groups are working in: not only in the physical but also in the organizational structures, that better enact the city they would like to see in the future, but here and now. In this sense both of them match with the idea of prefigurative planning.

CONCLUSIONS

In this thesis I have described, compared and analysed four cases of urban interventions by the grassroots, through the lenses of radical urban planning theory. Through the ethnographic description of the main case in Madrid I attempted to give the reader a sense of how these groups participate in the process of city building in contexts of conflict with public institutions or corporations. Comparing this case with two more in Valencia and one more in London I tried to show how diverse is the field of radical urban planning.

I started giving a critical account of Lefebvre's concepts of the Right to the City and *autogestión* as the broadest framework from which consider a non-state centred analysis of the construction of the city. Later on I developed two more concepts of planning theory: insurgent planning and covert planning. These concepts proved reasonably accurate to describe and analyse the cases in El Cabanyal (Valencia) but insufficient to grasp the nuances and differences between those and the cases in Madrid and London which common and main feature was the construction of alternative spaces of production outside of the framework of state politics and official urbanism.

This challenged Friedmann's and Holston's ideas about the relation of radical or insurgent planning practices and the state, and by the way also those of Community Organizing and the more traditional in Spain Neighbourhood Associations movement. This was also out of the scope of the concept of covert planning of Beard.

Rather than trying to push the state to act in a certain way, rather than taking part in the struggle for the restructuring of the state, these groups obviate the state whenever possible and they always try to replace it. In the case of insurgency, at least in Holston's, Friedman's or Alinsky's senses, the state is not obviated but confronted, but not to eliminate or replace the state itself and the relations that emerge within it, but to change one's position in the social hierarchy, in the structures of power. Rather than asking for their representatives to do something for them, the groups analysed denied, more or less explicitly the necessity of representation and just focused their projects in the autonomous production of goods and institutions.

About the theoretical framework

To analyse these spaces I borrowed concepts from the political sciences and radical geography like prefigurative politics, direct action, autonomous geographies or the distinction between power-to-do and power-over developed by Holloway. To group all these concepts in a coherent way I suggested the concept of prefigurative planning to describe "the continual creation and elaboration of spaces, based on new, non-alienating modes of interaction. A non-mediated kind of planning, direct action applied to the production of space, which entails the enacting of power-to-do, its reclamation and its enlargement."

Under the light of Prefigurative planning, Grow Heathrow and *Solar de Matilde* unveiled not mainly as protests or as symbolic actions, like in the case of *Solar de Sant Pere*, but as the tentative construction of the city from the bottom. Even the optimistic views of Manuel about the possibilities of self-sufficiency and specially the more solid projects of autonomy in Grow Heathrow showed ineligible logics.

The many ways in which direct action can be enacted (as a temporal occupation of land, as a way of organization in assemblies or as autonomous production of goods) shows the importance of Holloway's concept of power-to-do, and makes clearer the relation between it and prefigurative politics. Both entail the idea of "living the revolution today", either by the way the actions are organized (horizontally, consensus-based), as Graeber said, or by the emergence of autonomous and self-managed structures of production. In this sense direct action can be direct action as power-to-do, as a productive action; or can be a form of organization i.e. the production of a prefigurative institution.

The analysis of the practices and the contexts through the concepts used exposed the diversity of ways in which groups with different goals, actors, relations with the state and in different conflictual contexts, actually participate in the production of urban space. Groups tended to adapt very well taking into consideration their goals, their capacities and the political and planning context. Therefore the hypothesis of diversity was in broad terms, also correct. However, since there were many similarities between the cases and all the cases have been long and complex, in all of them we can find traces of all the practices described, and all the concepts could be applied to all of them to a different degree.

	Engagement with the state	Goals	Urban planning context	Empowerment
<i>Solar de Sant Pere</i>	Open and violent conflict. Will of engagement, use of official political and legal channels of participation	Mainly a participatory rehabilitation plan: "Rehabilitation without destruction"	Large-scale development. Conflict for the use of land between the municipality of Valencia and <i>Salvem el Cabanyal</i>	High
<i>Solar del Clot</i>	Covert conflict. Will of engagement, use of official political and legal channels of participation	Improvement of the living conditions. Rehabilitation	Large-scale development. Conflict for the use of land between the municipality of Valencia and the neighbours of <i>bloc dels portuaris</i>	Low
<i>Solar de Matilde</i>	Abstract conflict. No will to engage. Rejection of political and legal participation in the official channels	Self-sufficiency, improve their productive capacity, autonomy.	Only small scale changes in the neighbourhood. No open conflict for the use of land	High
Grow Heathrow	Open and violent conflict. But not with local political structures but with metropolitan and national ones Use of official political and legal channels of participation	Self-sufficiency, improve their productive capacity, autonomy.	Large-scale development. Conflict for the use of land between the BAA and Grow Heathrow collective	High

Table 3: Main characteristics and classification of the case studies

Source: Self elaboration

Four aspects of the cases emerged as especially relevant to understand their dynamics and to

select and develop concepts able to grasp the nuanced differences between them. Firstly, the way in which each of the groups decided to engage (or not) with the state (or other actors like Corporations). Secondly their goals: it is not the same to demand a participatory plan for the rehabilitation of the neighbourhood than to build an autonomous, self-reliant community. Another relevant aspect was the urban planning context, the existence or not of an open conflict for the use of land and finally the level of empowerment of the groups.

As can be seen in Table 3 each of the cases has a different combination of these aspects which can become in further and wider studies a more sound framework for the systematic analysis of radical urban planning cases.

About the methodologies

Ethnographic description carried out mainly in the case of *Solar de Matilde*, *Solar del Clot* and *Solar de Sant Pere* proved useful to grasp the differences between the cases. The diversity of practices and goals of the groups could not be understood without the thorough description of the context and the practices. It showed with reasonable clarity how people engage in different ways in urban planning, proving as well, that diversity is one of the main characteristics of radical planning. The description and contextualization of Grow Heathrow made through secondary sources, lacked depth and details that could have enriched the thesis, but in general terms was enough to provide an international perspective to the analysis.

The thick descriptions made of the videos used in the cases of *Solar de Sant Pere*, *Solar del Clot* and specially in Grow Heathrow, proved relevant but insufficient to contextualize and describe the cases with enough detail. The complementary sources, like the literature review, specially in the case of Grow Heathrow partially solved this problem. Although it was obviously insufficient to get the level of details obtained in the previous cases it was enough to get some nuances and details that enriched the comparison.

About the limits

This thesis is a synchronic account of four projects developed in four concrete spaces and moments. It is not the study of a complete process in the long term, which would require a diachronic monography of each of the cases. Since this kind of groups are not rigidly tied to a very specific kind of action, and new goals unfold with time, the explicative capacity of the concepts and theories used if we add the temporal dimension to the analysis, would be reduced.

In other words, this is a synchronic study. I studied the spaces and the groups, and it seems plausible that for different or changing contexts, the same groups would use different practices, so for a better understanding of them a diachronic account in the long term would be needed.

Apart from that, the focus in planning theory did not allowed me to approach the cases from other perspectives that would enrich the results, for example the analysis of the groups as social movements, which is only very marginally considered in the theoretical framework and in the analysis.

Finally although within my ethical perspective I considered the devolution of the results of the

research to the participants, this was only partially achieved. The need of translation of all the texts and adaptation of the content and the lack of time prevented me to do it. I could only send the results to a couple of participants that were able to read English, and did not have the time to include their remarks.

Together with the further development of the concepts suggested and the deeper and diachronic study of the cases, this is the most important part that should be a next step.

There is also a lot of information which was not used for lack of time and space. The most relevant part of this information is related with the general features of the spaces created, their similarities and differences. Some of them can be just named to be studied in the future, like the multifunctionality of the spaces, the scale and pace of their construction or the irregularity and chaotic development of the projects.

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ANNEXES

Interviewees:

<i>Solar de Matilde</i>	Jesus: member of La Nave, NAI and <i>Solar de Matilde</i> , 33 years old.
<i>Solar de Sant Pere</i>	Lola: member of <i>Salvem el Cabanyal</i> , Asambleia 15M Valencia, neighbour of El Cabanyal. 65 years old
	Lola X: member of <i>Salvem el Cabanyal</i> , neighbour of El Cabanyal, in her 40's.
	Sara: member of <i>Salvem el Cabanyal</i> , neighbour of El Cabanyal (Sant Pere street) in her late 30s
	Francesc: member of <i>Salvem el Cabanyal</i> , neighbour of El Cabanyal (Sant Pere street) in her late 60s (also interviewed for the case in <i>Solar del Clot</i>)
<i>Solar del Clot</i>	Pili: neighbour of <i>bloc dels portuaris</i> , in her late 30s, Tomás' wife.
	Costi: neighbour of <i>bloc dels portuaris</i> , in her late 30s, member of <i>Millorem el Cabanyal</i>
	Tomás: neighbour of <i>bloc dels portuaris</i> , in his late 30s, spokesperson of <i>Millorem el Cabanyal</i>
	Tío José: neighbour of <i>bloc dels portuaris</i> , in his late 50s, president of <i>Millorem el Cabanyal</i>
	Sergi Tarín: neighbour of <i>bloc dels portuaris</i> , in his mid 30s, independent journalist
	Miquel and Marta: neighbours of El Cabanyal, members of <i>Ateneu Libertari</i> .

Images

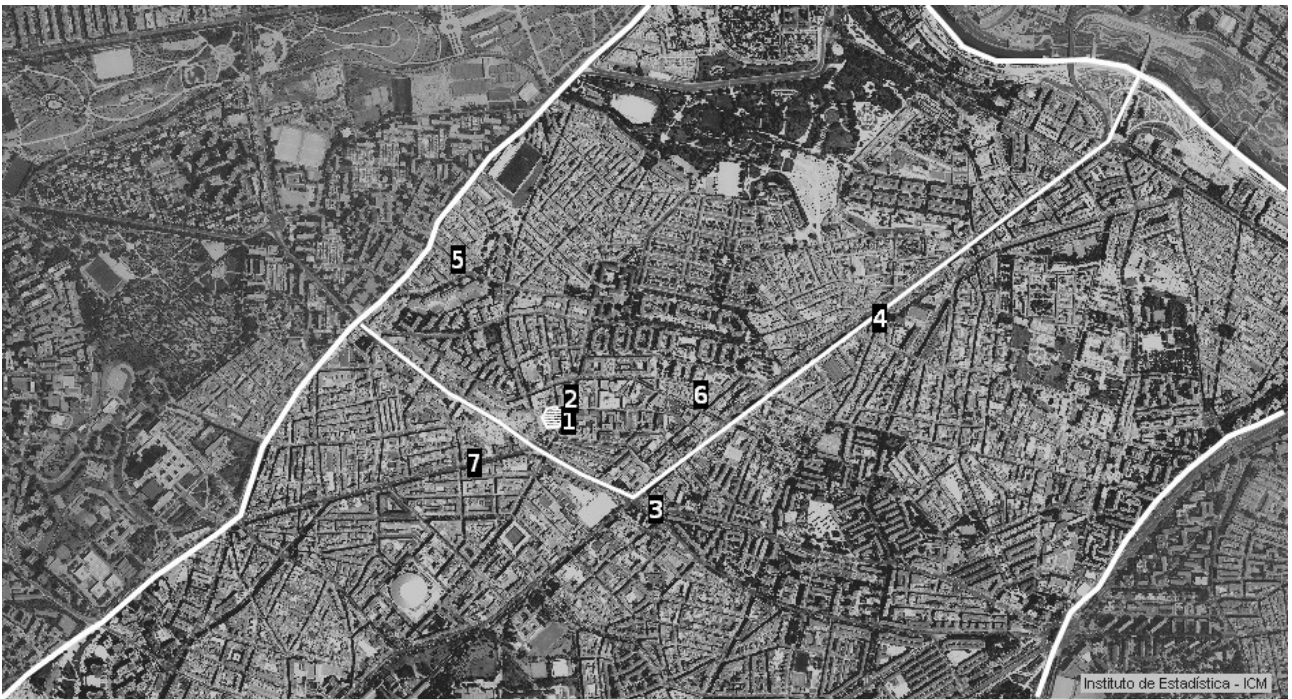


Illustration 13: Location of the network of social movements related with Solar de Matilde

1. Solar de Matilde

2. Vaciador (collective house and self-employment project)

3. Oporto square: meeting point of the APC

4. La Nave (collective house and self-employment project)

5. La Nave10 (collective house)

6. EKO (squat)

7. Gatónera (squat)

Source: Self elaboration based on Instituto de Estadística ICM <http://www.madrid.org/nomecalles/Inicio.icm>

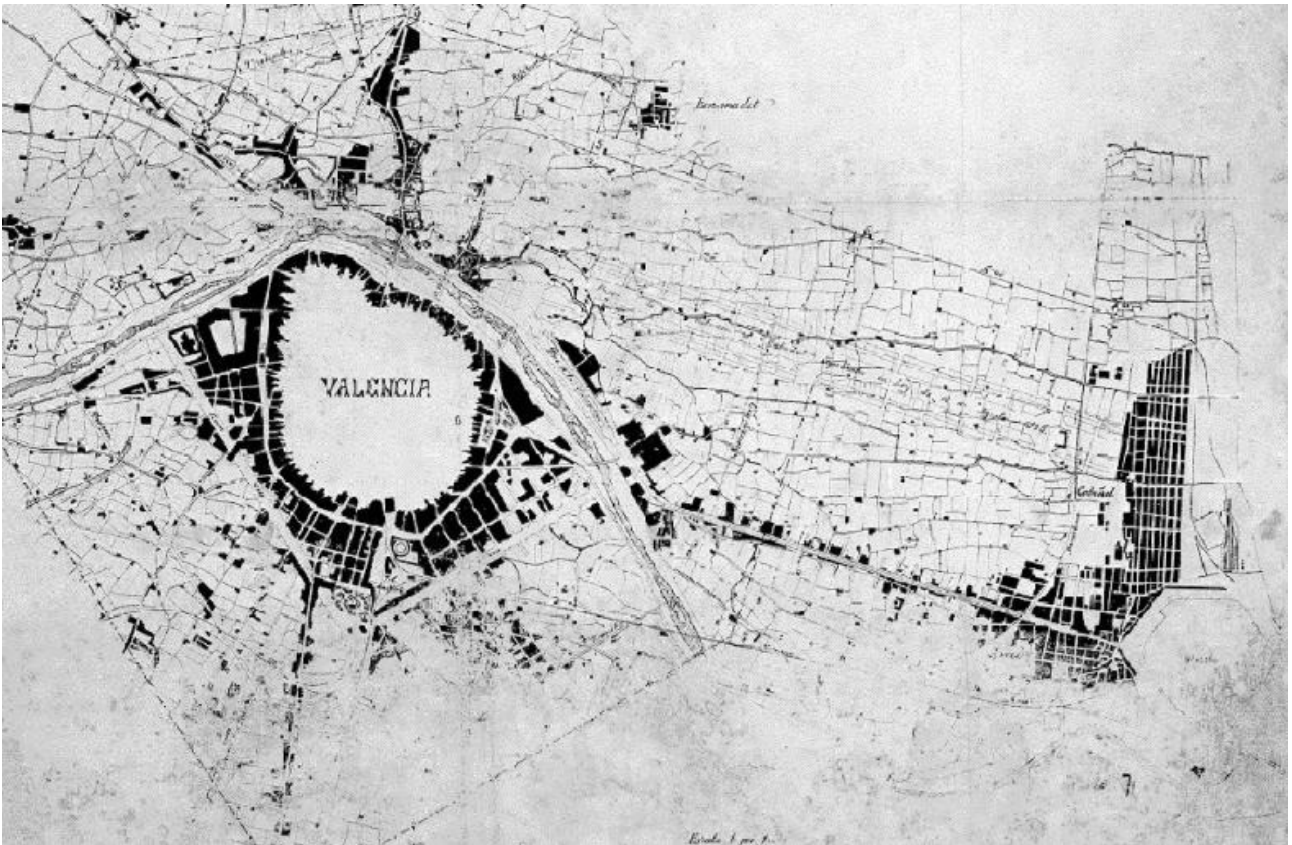


Illustration 14: Valencia in the 19th century. Poble nou del Mar in the East. Jose Manuel Cortina Pérez

Source: <http://plancabanyal.es/planos.php>