



Becoming-common of the public.
Municipalist lessons on urban
commoning as alter-planning

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Becoming-common of the public

Municipalist lessons on urban
commoning as alter-planning

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To Silvia Federici, who has inspired and encouraged me to find my place within the commons, to re-enchant the world.

To my late father, Fernando Méndez de Andés, who provided many of the material and immaterial conditions that made this thesis possible.

Declaration

I, the author, confirm that the Thesis is my own work. I am aware of the University's Guidance on the Use of Unfair Means (www.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid/unfair-means). This work has not been previously been presented for an award at this, or any other, university.

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This thesis is the fruit of many collective projects and reflections, and of my involvement in urban social movements over two decades. But no research on the commons would be possible without the practitioners who sustain and give meaning to the proposal of thinking new forms of social organisation. As the Zapatistas say, *solo entre todos sabemos todo*. So, my gratitude goes first to all the commoners, the feminists, the urban activists, the militants, the 'partisans of the possible'.

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I couldn't have done it without all of you.

Abstract

Four years after the square occupations under the banner of 'Real Democracy Now', civic platforms took part in the Spanish municipal elections and consolidated an institutional assault, winning in some of the most important cities, like Madrid, Barcelona, Zaragoza or A Coruña, and dozens of smaller towns and villages. Spanish municipalism appealed to the idea of the commons to promote institutional change towards radical democratic management of collective resources. Municipalist implementations of the commons political hypothesis as a radically democratic decision-making over collective concerns went beyond these narrative and normative aspects to articulate a programmatic constellation of elements capable of defining an alternative form of 'city-making'. Based on this experience, this thesis is an inquiry into how commons can proliferate beyond discrete examples, on the assumption that municipalism and planning can provide valuable lessons and tools.

The research examines: 1) the role of the commons within the Spanish municipalist political hypothesis; 2) how this hypothesis has been deployed in urban commoning processes in Barcelona; 3) future scenarios in which commoning processes constitute an alternative form of social organisation; and 4) the possibility of defining planning as a commoning methodology.

This exercise is particularly necessary in the context of a planetary eco-social crisis that affects not only the climate, but also the legitimacy of collective governance structures, from local governments to the International Court of Justice. At this critical moment, the aim of this activist research is to make visible the resonances between theory and practice, and to identify potential lines of action that could be taken back to the practitioners and policy makers involved in commoning processes discuss whether or not a transformation towards the commons as a form of social organisation is feasible and worth risking, while constantly asking the question: Do we have a common cause?

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List of Abbreviations

15M - May 15th movement

ANT - Actor-Network Theory

BCN - Barcelona

BeC - Barcelona en Comú

CPR - Common Pool Resources

EMN - European Municipalist Network

en - English

EoP - Ecology of Practices

es - Spanish

EU - European Union

GT - Grounded Theory

IOPD - International Observatory on Participatory Democracy

IPCC - International Panel on Climate Change

OM - *Observatorio Metropolitano*

OS - Open Science

PEMB - *Plan Estratégico Metropolitano de Barcelona*

PAH - *Plataforma de Afectados por la Hipoteca*

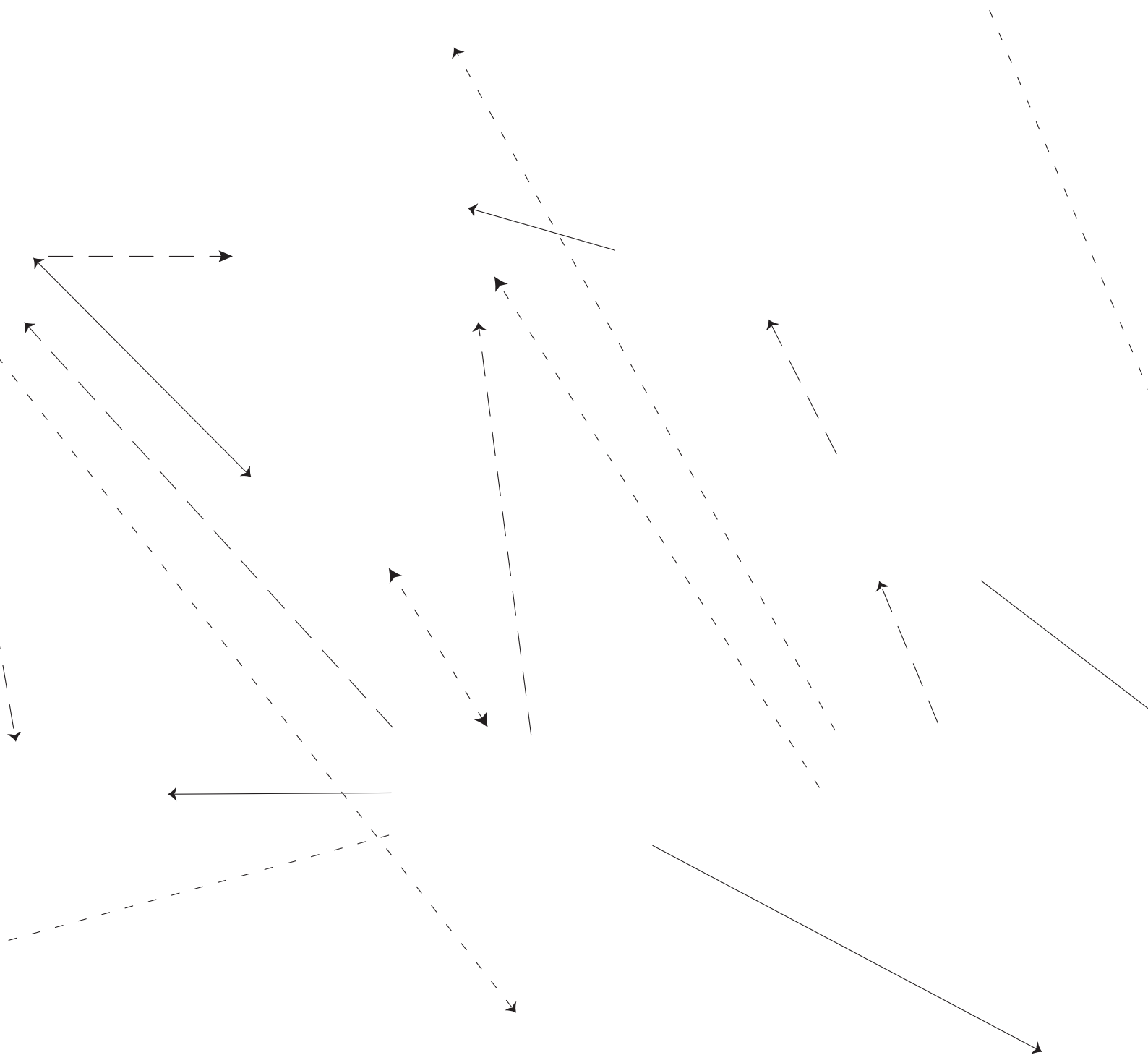
TINA - There Is No Alternative

UC - Urban Commons

UK - United Kingdom

US - United States of America

PART I - FRAMEWORK



Chapter 1 - Introduction. Commons proliferation 'from the middle'

We start in the middle of things, in medias res [...] Action had already started; it will continue when we will no longer be around.

Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory*, 2005

Introduction: In the middle of things

The doctoral research I present in this thesis looks at the potential becoming-common of public material and immaterial structures as a compiling of the democratic efforts of the municipalist experience that took place in Spain between 2015 and 2023, the systematisation of insights produced by urban commoning processes in Barcelona, and the analysis of how they can inform an alternative future for metropolitan territories. In this enquiry, I define the 'becoming-common' as a transformative processes that go "back to the past, starting from the present that poses the question, not to deduce this present from the past, but to give the present its thickness" (Stengers, 2015, p. 34), and also to project into the future a 'lure of the possible' (Stengers & Debaise, 2017).

I have situated the research at the intersection of three areas of study and practice, each with its particular relevance and shortcomings, theoretical and practical backgrounds. One is the recent experience of a 'new municipalism' born out of the occupation of squares in 2011 and a 'new politics' that proposed an 'institutional assault'. With 'municipalism' I refer to local experiences of public institutional structures that seek to incorporate radical democratic governance. The second area is the urban commons, as part of an emerging interest in new forms of commoning that started in the 1990s with the development of scientific knowledge and political hypotheses around the collective governance of shared resources. I understand urban commoning processes as collective actions to self-manage collectively created and maintained resources that take place in complex, heterogeneous territories. In my definition, urban commoning involves the production and reproduction of "material and immaterial elements, traditional communities of production and reproduction, and the new networks of knowledge and socialisation, located halfway between autonomy and institutionalisation" (Méndez de Andés, Aparicio, & Hamou, 2019, pp. 1–2, my translation). The third, and last, is the field of urban planning, considered as a technology to imagine and put into practice alternative forms of collective organising. Here, I will consider planning as "a way to imagine a future and make it happen" (Tafuri, 1976, p. 70), an alteration of the "existing course of events" (Campbell & Fainstein, 1996, p. 6) using the potential of a territorial situation. Finally, commons proliferation incorporates into this alternative vision the idea that "in order to survive, commons have to grow" (Stavrides, 2021) and assumes the task of "generating new iterations through replication and multiplication" (Baibarac & Petrescu, 2017, p. 231).

The present introductory chapter, presents how the research operates in 'the middle of things': between national, local and translocal territorial scales, translating between Spanish, Catalanian and English, but also between activism and academia. Its design is situated in the overlapping of three areas of study, and intersects with practice and theory. This chapter presents the context in which the research is situated, it offers an outline of the design and the gaps it seeks to address, and concludes with a reflection on my positionality as a researcher and practitioner. The opening quote by French sociologist Bruno Latour serves as a reminder of the messy nature of qualitative research, especially when applying activist methodologies - as we will see in Chapter 2 - and of the importance of the position 'in the middle' when researching processes that are in the making, as in this case.

1.1 Context

In the last decade of the 20th Century, US political scientist Francis Fukuyama declared: "We cannot picture to ourselves a world that is essentially different from the present one, and at the same time better" (Fukuyama, 1992, p. 46). This statement appeared one year after the collapse of the Soviet Union and three years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, and developed in parallel with the debate on the urban crisis and the role of planning as a tool for shaping territories and populations. I argue that the identification of a crisis in urban planning can be seen as a consequence of the transformation of the 'end of history' into the 'end of future'. This assumption was expressed by the British Marxist urban geographer and member of the Plan C collective, David Harvie, in an article for *The Guardian*, in which he said: "We can not go very far with utopian visions because too often, they have turned wrong, and we don't trust in the possibility of building a city based on transformative foundations" (Harvie, 1993, np).

My assumptions behind this thesis are that the commons can provide such a 'transformative foundation' for imagining and practising a different and better world, and that the experience of developing commoning processes within municipalism can provide arguments for considering the commons as a coherent social system. These assumptions are based on three main aspects of the unfolding economic, social, political and environmental crisis, which I will term an eco-social 'polycrisis', to characterise a term that has been in use for a few years now (Tooze, 2022). The first aspect of this polycrisis is the inability of nation states to represent and protect the commonwealth and the general interest. The public duty to cover social needs in the West has been represented by a welfare state, implemented in a very asymmetrical way even in Europe, which was built to counteract the enclosure of collective forms of mutual aid by capitalist expansion and privatisation by placing them under public control (Wahl, 2011). The crisis of this public provision follows austerity and funding cuts as well as privatisation and commercialisation of services, and is part of the functional cooperation of nation-state structures with private forms of expropriation that has been a constant in the critique of capitalism (Poulantzas, 1977). The second aspect of the polycrisis is the lack of validation of bottom-up processes of self-organisation and cooperation that exist on the margins of the market and the state. These processes are not recognised as economic actors or stable social structures, but have been identified as social infrastructures and mutual aid networks that are particularly relevant in times of crisis (Klinenberg, 2018; Solnit, 2009). Finally, the third aspect is the social internalisation of the TINA neoliberal mantra that 'There Is No Alternative' and

the dystopian imaginaries created around the impossibility of imagining a future that is "different and at the same time better" (Harvie, 1993, np). Spanish philosopher Marina Garcés (2017) has defined this impossibility as a 'posthumous condition', a denial of individual or collective agency over the events that shape our material and immaterial living conditions.

Recent events have deepened the unfolding eco-social polycrisis and have the potential to break such a posthumous impasse. I am referring to events such as the COVID-19 pandemic that began in November 2019 and the energy crisis caused by the war in Ukraine in 2022, or the environmental consequences of ever-increasing capitalist production outlined in the latest report of the International Panel on Climate Change - IPCC (2023) and the lack of international action in the face of this climate emergency, as demanded since the collapse of the Copenhagen Accord in 2009 (Shamsuddoha, 2010). These events have exacerbated inequalities in access to basic necessities - such as water, food, energy, shelter and protection - while also triggering networks of mutual support, the development of alternative infrastructural solutions and a rise in social activism. In doing so, they have provoked a political mistrust and democratic crisis, reflected in the rise of the far right, raising issues of social justice, democratic control of institutions and the role of popular sovereignty across Europe (Katsambekis et al., 2022; Abrial et al., 2022; Matos & Sabariego, 2020), which, I will argue, expose the urgent need to radically transform how collective life is organised.

This thesis investigates the credibility and plausibility of a progressive alternative to the eco-social polycrisis, based on a radical democratic and interdependent management of shared resources. The research project was conceived in the context of Spanish municipalism as a response to the apparent crisis of planning in its capacity to propose a desirable and feasible future based on collective social needs and the tools necessary to achieve it. The research context consists of interrelated scales to examine: a) the public policies on urban commons implemented in Spain by municipalist city governments between 2015-2019; b) the commoning process developed by the Barcelona City Council in collaboration with social initiatives between 2015-2022; and c) the latent potential to extend such processes as part of a metropolitan strategic planning for 2050 in the Barcelona Metropolitan Area and the resonances in metropolitan systems across Europe, specifically in Berlin, Belgrade and Brussels. The articulation between national, local and trans-local scales acts as a knowledge transfer that, as we will see, is part of the proposal to proliferate the commons without imposing a model but mediating between localities.

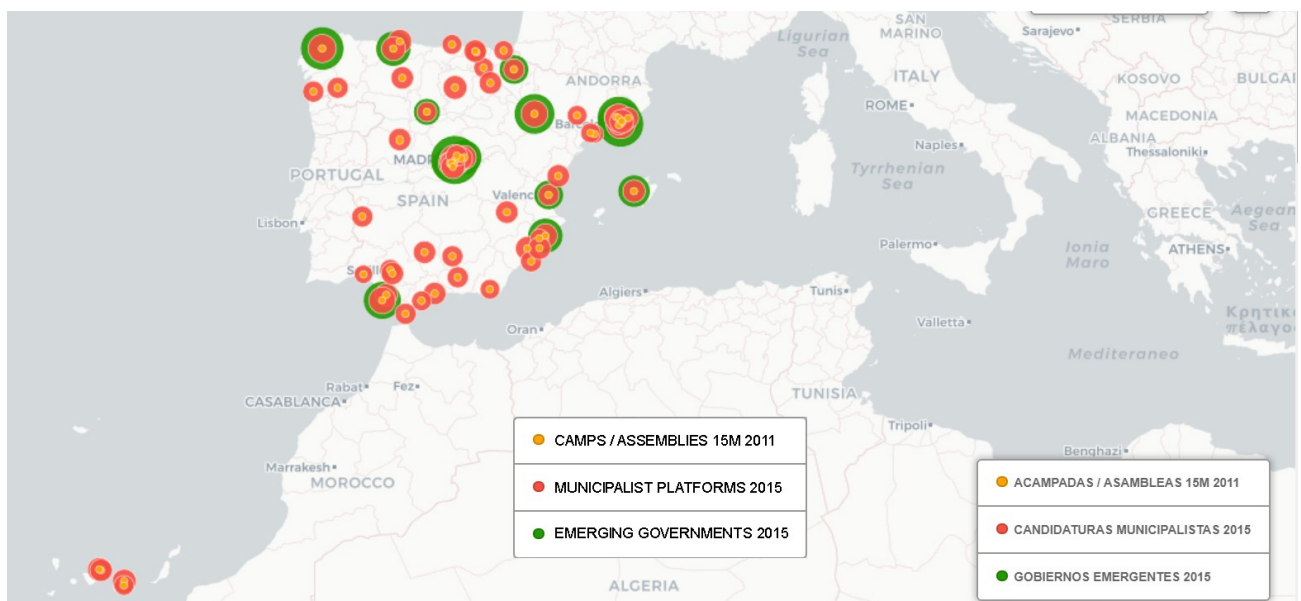
1.1.1 National scale: Spanish municipalism

Arguably, Spanish municipalism has been the most relevant - albeit brief - experience in the Western world of what was called a democratic '*asalto institucional*' [institutional assault] (Jurado Gilabert, 2021; Rubio Pueyo & Fernández Iglesias, 2020), mirroring what Karl Marx (1871) called the Parisians 'storming heaven' in the 1871 Commune. This was called a 'municipalist wager' (Observatorio Metropolitano, 2014) that began with the squares movement that followed the financial crash of 2008 and the intervention of the European Union (EU), which resolved to bail out private banks and prioritise the reduction of public debt. These austerity measures and EU interventions particularly affected the so-called P.I.G.S.: Portugal, Italy and Greece. In Spain, the movement that occupied squares and set up assemblies in 2011 was named the '*indignados*' by the media - after the success of the book *Indigne Vous!* written a year before by a French ex-diplomat

and co-author of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Hessel, 2010) and the 15M by its activists. It emerged as a reaction to the bail out of the financial markets at the expense of cuts in public services and infrastructure, but also as a rejection of the political corruption, especially at local level, that underpinned the real estate bubble that provoked the crash.

The squares of the 15M followed the Arab Spring and inspired to the Occupy movement. They were set after a national demonstration that took place one week before the 2015 local elections to demand a '*Democracia Real Ya*' [Real Democracy Now]. In the following days, dozens of assemblies and encampments appeared over the country. Four years later, electoral platforms promoted by citizens and joined by old and new political parties presented in the 2015 municipal elections and formed part of the local governments in 15 of the 16 cities with more than 100,000 inhabitants, as shown in the map created by Spanish activist and technologist Arnau Monterde (2016) in Figure 1.1. The municipalist movement that emerged from the 15M appealed to the idea of the 'commons' and the principles of democracy, sustainability, universality and inalienability (Observatorio Metropolitano, 2011) to drive institutional change, incorporating the concept into projects, regulations and strategic plans, but also into public narratives and internal debates. Public policies gave shape to public-social collaborations some successful and some contested, in which material, financial, legal and symbolic resources were made available to a wider and more diverse range of actors (Monterde, 2019).

Figure 1.1: Municipalism and the 15M



Source: Arnau Monterde (2016). "Map of 15M encampments (2011), municipalist candidacies and emerging governments (2015) in Spanish cities with more than 100,000 inhabitants". Available at arnaumonty.wordpress.com. Creative Commons AT-SA 4.0 Internacional.

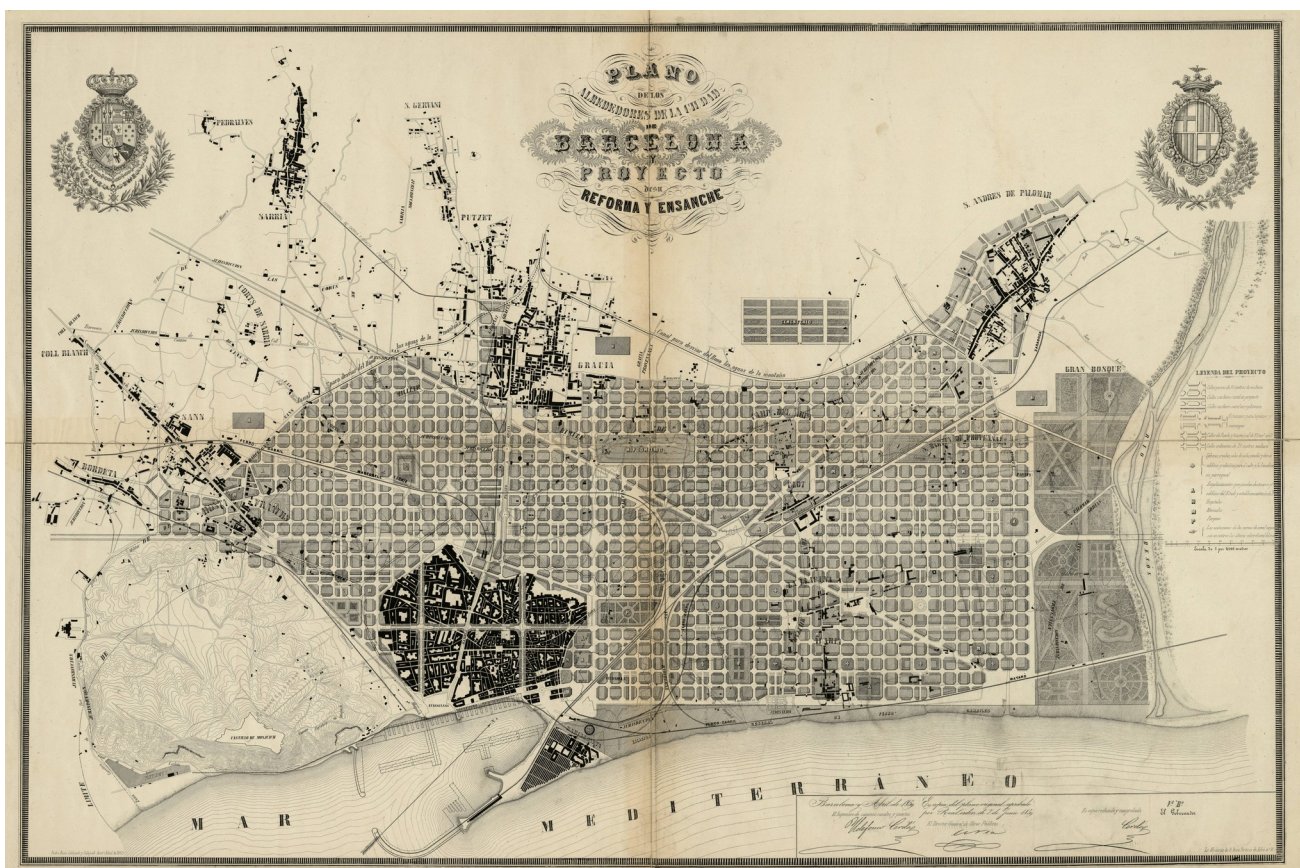
This Spanish municipalist experience has been short but intense. By 2015, there were dozens of electoral platforms driven by social actors in cities, towns and villages across the country. Taken together, these heterogeneous electoral actors formed the third political force in Spain, with 1,9 million votes and 1.153 elected city councillors (Monterde, 2019, p. 28). Four years later, in the

2019 local elections, most of the municipalist governments lost, with the exception of Barcelona. This setback came after four years of cultural wars in which democracy lost the narrative to both neoliberal and social democratic populism, and the rise of the far right. The shift to national politics was particularly visible during the COVID-19 pandemic, with a resurgence of the legitimacy that state institutions had lost during the period of austerity and cuts in social spending. In the 2023 local elections, BeC also lost the mayoralty, and a new national platform called 'Sumar' - which translates as 'add' but also 'unite' - took on the task of representing change in politics.

1.1.2 Local scale: Barcelona

At the local level, the research focuses on the most relevant experience within Spanish municipalism, the municipalist *Barcelona en Comú* (BeC) [Barcelona in Common], which held the city's mayoralty between 2015 and 2023. Presently, Barcelona municipality covers 100 sqkm with 1.6 million inhabitants (Instituto de Estadística de Cataluña, 2023) and is the second largest municipality on Spain. Like many other traditional European cities, Barcelona saw its mediaeval walls demolished in the 19th Century, allowing the connection between the old city centre - rebranded in the 19th Century as “Gothic” - and the new urban developments around it. Figure 1.2 shows the expansion of the new neighbourhoods compared to the existing city, in black.

Figure 1.2: Barcelona Eixample



Source: *Ildefons Cerdà i Sunyer (1859). "Ensanche de Barcelona. Plan de los alrededores de la ciudad de Barcelona y del proyecto para su mejora y ampliación, 1859". Public domain available at es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plan_Cerd%C3%A1#/media/Archivo:PlaCerd%C3%A11859b.jpg. Original map at the Museu d'Història de la Ciutat, Barcelona.*

The grid pattern of the '*Eixample*' [Extension] is similar to many other cities, from the well-known case of the Ring in Vienna, to contemporary developments in Madrid with the Plan Castro of 1860, in Valencia by Calvo, Ferreres and Arnau in 1884 (Piñón Pallarés, 1984), or in Zaragoza by Ricardo Magdalena (Yeste, 1993). In Barcelona, Ildefonso Cerdá's plan covered all the available space between the sea, the mountains – Montjuic and Tibidabo - and the Besós rivers, incorporating two small villages - Gracia, and Sants - and effectively determining the city's expansion for the next two centuries and until today. Although Cerdá's *General Theory of Urbanisation* plan of open slabs around green spaces that pedestrians could use to get across the city though public space was not respected - for the blocks were, for the most part, built in its full perimeter - the grid allowed to incorporate the remaining industry in places like Poble Nou and, later, new urban projects as in the extension of the Diagonal Avenue in the 1990s or in the new 'digital district' 22@ that consolidated the Private-Public-Partnership (Martí, 2005) in the 2000s. Parallel to the commodification and reification of the city, social demands for social spaces, economic autonomy and housing rights (Taller contra la violencia inmobiliaria y urbanística, 2006) are part of a rich legacy of anarchist Ateneus and cooperatives developed in the 19th and early 20th centuries. The urban expansion accelerated at the beginning of the twentieth century by two Universal and International Expositions, in 1888 and 1929, entered into crisis after the last of these global events, the Cultures Forum of 2004 (Subirats et al., 2006).

The development of Cerdá's Expansion was fuelled by two Universal exhibitions in 1888 and 1929. After the hiatus of the Civil War [1936-1939] and Franco's military dictatorship [1939-1976] and in the wage years of the 32 years socialist rule in the city, the 1992 Olympic Games was an opportunity to represent Barcelona to the world and to the tourist industry. The Olympic Games were an important element of the so-called 'Barcelona Model' was developed since the 1970's and championed by architects and urban planners such as: Jordi Borja (1995), urban geographer, Barcelona deputy mayor 1983 -1995, Barcelona Metropolitan Area vice president 1987-1991 and director of the consulting Jordi Borja Urban Technology; Oriol Bohigas, architect, Barcelona Urban Planning Deputy Councillor 1980 -1984, urban planning advisor 1984-1991, Barcelona City Councillor 1991-1995, director of Barcelona School of Architecture – ETSAB 1977-1980 and founder of MBM Arquitectes, that designed the Olympic Villa and Olympic Port; and Oriol Nel·lo, Barcelona Institute of Metropolitan Studies director, 1988-1999, PM at the regional Parliament of Catalunya 1999-2004 and Territorial Planning Secretary for Catalunya regional government 2003-2011. Cultural critique Mari Paz Balibrea (2005) argues that Barcelona deployed this model, or 'method' as argued by Oriol Bohigas (Capel Sáez, 2007), as an urban, economic, social and cultural model that organised physical and symbolic capital around a trademark that deployed a city attractive to investors and visitors alike. Urban social movements in Barcelona have sought to dismantle the 'Barcelona model' and the municipalist government of Barcelona enacted a change from Universal Expos to the more recent Super-Block model (Bianchi, Salazar, & Pera, 2021).

1.1.3 Translocal scale: Metropolitan systems

The third, translocal scale focuses on the metropolitan scale in Barcelona and other European territories. Metropolitan areas are seen as 'critical zones' where it is possible to reterritorialise political questions and create "new forms of citizenship and new types of attention and care for life

forms to generate a common ground" (Latour, 2020, quoted in Petrescu & Petcou, 2023, p. 277). This metropolitan character is considered as a space to create an 'open source resilience' based on translocal connections, peer production and collaborative technologies, with the potential for a 'regime shift' towards the democratisation of urban development (Baibarac & Petrescu, 2017).

Barcelona's compact, dense urban structure was considered relevant for the analysis of commoning processes in this thesis, but made it too specific a territory for a resonance across the European continent. For such a task, a more heterogeneous urban system such as the Barcelona Metropolitan Region is a more appropriate territorial scale. In this scale, I refer to 'metropolitan systems' as heterogeneous urban territories within a nested administrative system that includes regional, metropolitan, municipal and district levels, reflecting territorial complexity and functional interdependence. In Barcelona, there is an office for the *Plan Estratégico Metropolitano de Barcelona* (PEMB) [Metropolitan Strategic Plan], which aims to address the urban challenges of the 21st century polycrisis, and to rethink the tool of the 'strategic plan' so that it promotes the capacity to "articulate alliances, coordinate projects and channel citizens' energies and creativity' as part of a 'new generation of strategic plans" (Estela Barnet, 2018, np).

A relevant aspect of the proliferation of commons is the ability to scale in, out and across commoning processes without imposing a pre-existing model or blueprint, but through situated replication based on 'a dynamic of pragmatic learning about what works and how' (Stengers, 2005, p. 195). To this end, this research incorporates contributions from other European metropolises beyond Barcelona, namely Belgrade, Berlin and Brussels, to provide a trans-local, trans-European perspective in identifying the conditions and requirements of urban commoning processes. The choice of the cities was based on their similarity as multi-scalar territories, the existence of an alternative planning process - ranging from more institutional tools to autonomous citizen-based - and the available access to the actors involved in them.

The metropolitan systems included in this chapter have different administrative designations: Barcelona is a functional 'metropolitan region' with no administrative responsibilities, Brussels is an administrative region, Berlin is a federal state and Belgrade is a city. Although the traditional definition of metropolitan areas considers them in terms of 'work mobility and commuting zones' that are 'economically and socially linked to the city' (UN Habitat, 2020, p. 4), the metropolitan systems included in this study are defined by a relationship between heterogeneous entities linked by processes of alternative planning that operate across geographical and administrative scales.

As shown in Table 1.1, the alternatives to traditional urban planning in these systems are the *Barcelona Demà Compromís Metropolità* [Barcelona Tomorrow Metropolitan Commitment] deployed for the metropolitan region (Pla Estratègic Metropolità de Barcelona, 2021); the interaction between the Berlin Senate, the Berlin-Mitte district and civil associations in the deployment of a *Modellprojekt* [Model Project] in the Haus der Statistik (ZUSAMMENKUNFT Berlin eG, 2019); the social response to the contested planning for Belgrade 2041 (*Beograd 2041*, 2021), which will affect rural and urban communities; and the study commissioned by the Brussels region to develop an urban commons policy (CLTB et al., 2023).

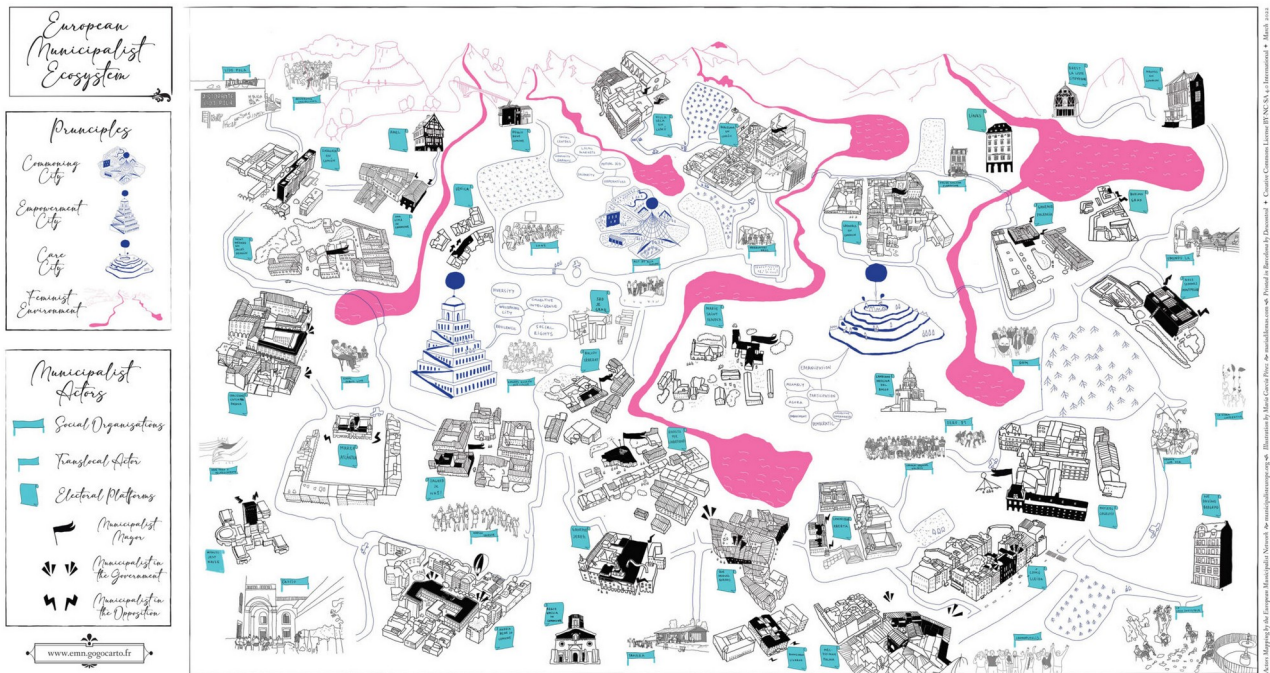
Table 1.1: Selected metropolitan systems in Europe

Urban System	Population	Current Planning	Alternative Planning	Promotor
	Density			
	Nested units			
Belgrade Capital City	1.2 million	Master Plan of Belgrade (2016)	Unofficial Community Planning	Ministry of Space
	33 hab/Ha			
	17 municipalities			
Barcelona Metropolitan Region	5.2 million	Metropolitan Plan (1978)	Barcelona Tomorrow Metropolitan Commitment 2030	PEMB - Plan Estratégico Metropolitano de Barcelona
	16 hab/Ha			
	36 municipalities			
Brussels–Capital Region	1.2 million	Sustainable Regional Development Plan (2018)	Urban Commons Policy	Brussels Regional Parliament with social partners
	75 hab/Ha			
	19 municipalities			
Berlin Federal State	4.5 million	Urban Development Concept Berlin 2030	Model Projects	Urbane Praxis Berlin
	43 hab/Ha			
	12 districts			

Source: Author based on interviews and online information.

This identification of possible 'resonances' between local experiences located in different points of Europe has been a constant in municipalist and commons mobilisations through different gatherings and knowledge exchange projects, such as the regional Fearless Meetings in Brussels, Warsaw, Naples and Belgrade that took place in 2018-2019 and the Cities for Change online summit in 2021, the two editions of the ECA - European Commons Assembly in Brussels in November 2016 and Madrid in October 2017, the EU research project gE.CO - Generative Commons project, or the creation of a European Municipalist Network (EMN), to name but a few. Figure 1.3 shows the EMN 'municipalist ecosystem' seeking "to identify common grounds and generate collaborations" and "to map the current state of the European municipalist movement identifying established and emerging municipalist initiatives in different parts of Europe. The collective cartographic process developed an analytical rationale to offer a multi-dimensional understanding of each organisation's values and practices" (European Municipalism Network, np).

Figure 1.3: European Municipalist Ecosystem



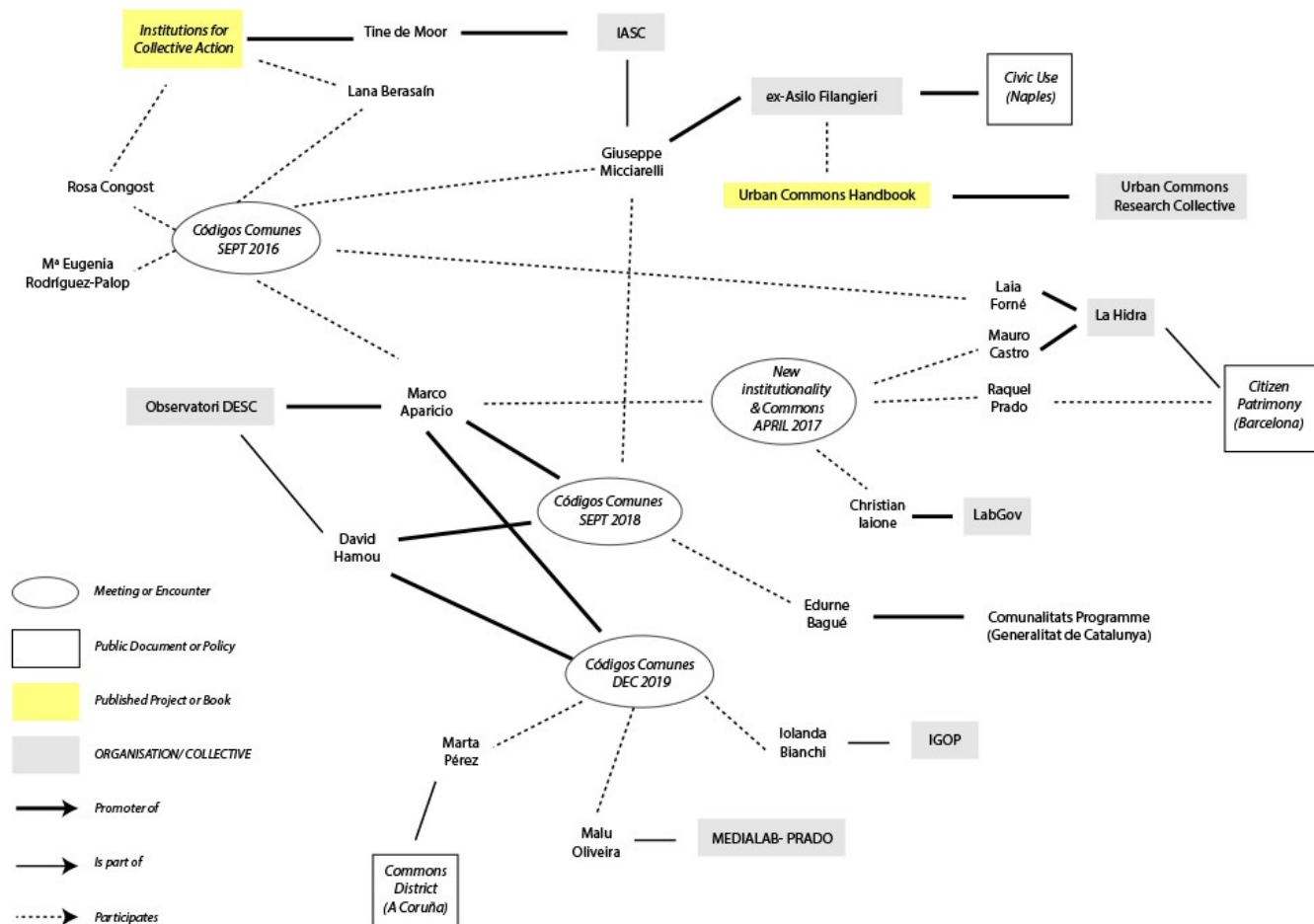
Source: European Municipalist Network <https://municipalisteurope.org/mapping/>, map by María García Pérez, Creative Commons License BY-SA-NC 4.0 International.

1.1.4 Positionality

The practice-led aspect of this thesis draws on the experience of urban social movements, understood as "collective actions consciously aimed at transforming social interests and values in the forms and functions of a historically given [territory]" (Castells, 1983, p. xvi). My practice has contributed to and been nurtured by various experiences. Firstly, via the participation in collective practices working on the theory and practice of commoning in public space, such as areaciega [active 2003-2005], Observatorio Metropolitano de Madrid [active 2005-2015], the public space intervention project urbanacción [active 2007-2011] and the Códigos Comunes project and Oficina de Acción Comunal [active since 2016].

Figure 1.4 reflects my perception of the urban commons epistemic community and how, as we will see in the next chapter, one of the consequences of this overlapping fields of practice is that the community of practitioners this research relates to is a constellations of actors, related to different areas and organisations. Secondly, as an activist of Ahora Madrid, where I have worked as a strategic planning consultant at Madrid City Council and as a founding member of the municipalist collective Madrid129 and the European Municipalist Network (EMN). The study of the conditions of commoning processes in urban contexts has involved the production of documents, seminars and workshops on issues related to new institutionality, radical democracy, open source, the crisis of the welfare state, the nature of urban commons and, more recently, the production of public policy. These activist and political practices was intertwined with my professional activity, as an urban designer working in planning and landscape architecture at Bureau B+B in Amsterdam, Gustafson & Porter in London, as a freelancer in Madrid, while teaching the same subject at the Universidad Europea de Madrid.

Figure 1.4: Urban commons epistemic community



Source: Author

In all these experiences, I have recognised the importance of technical, communal, theoretical and emotional knowledge in municipalist and commons political projects. It has been an experience that resonates with the idea put forward by British sociologists Nikolas Rose and Peter Miller (1992): that any institution - public or civic - makes decisions and develops its social structures through the knowledge, experimentation and evaluation of a complex system of everyday operations: a set of technical choices, more or less approximate calculations, apparatuses and devices, documents and procedures through which its ambitions are embodied and made effective.

According to this assumption, the transformative potential of integrating commoning projects into existing urban governance structures depends, among other things, on their capacity to generate transformative knowledges, technical and operational tools of analysis and self-evaluation. This endeavour faces a number of institutional, academic and social challenges. On the one hand, the nature of the commons is eminently practical: they are not an essence but a process and need to apply dynamic and situated methodologies to the different modes of organisation, development and consolidation. On the other hand, I will argue that the possibility of replicating and proliferating these processes requires a 'meso' scale: a theory of practice that links the 'macro' scale of general

theoretical frameworks with the 'micro' scale of applied practical devices. According to French philosophers Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, such a meso-scale brings its own challenges:

It's not easy to see things in the middle, rather than looking down on them from above or up at them from below, or from left to right or right to left: try it, you'll see that everything changes. It's not easy to see the grass in things and in words. (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 23).

From the point of view of political actions, this research is positioned in the middle of the three 'things' that intervene in policy, defined by various accounts (Bache & Reardon, 2016; Durose & Richardson, 2015; Haas, 1992) as political, advocacy and epistemic. These three spheres are formed by: a) politicians as those with the power to create public action; b) advocacy coalitions that share values and beliefs and create a vision around which they raise awareness and propose 'new ideas and policies' (Bache & Reardon, 2016, p. 17), and c) epistemic communities that share professional status and recognised 'expertise'. Epistemic communities develop a 'grammar' (Durose & Richardson, 2015) around a consensus of knowledge that provides a 'concept of validity' (Haas, 1992, p. 3). In relation to their work around the concept of 'well-being', British political scientists Ian Bache & Luoise (2016) argue that the three kind of practitioners - policymakers, experts and citizens - provide the motivation, means and motor for public actions. I argue that this division of roles and elements suggests a professionalisation in different areas: institutional policy, academic knowledge production and the civil third sector, with demarcated responsibilities and capacities. In my perception of the municipalist experience, actors came from social movements with a shared "political struggle over the alignment of problem definitions and policy instrument" (Mukherjee & Howlett, 2015, p. 70) and a willingness to "articulate cause-and-effect relationships and thus frame issues for collective debate" (Dunlop, 2013, p. 229): once in government, they were able to operate at the intersection of political, epistemic and advocacy positions.

This thesis is also in the middle of things. Not only between the fields of municipalism, commons and planning, and between scales, but also between theory and practice, and between the past, the present and the future. Firstly, it seeks to identify the practical learnings produced by social and institutional processes during the municipalist mandate in Spain. The aim is to create legible and interdependent tools that are simultaneously situated in the local context and transferable to trans-local scales. Secondly, it seeks to identify a 'meso' scale that links the 'macro' theoretical discourses around the emerging urban commons and the 'new municipalism' with the projects developed in concrete territories at the 'micro' scale. Finally, it seeks to situate its conclusions in the shift in planning towards an alternative paradigm. This 'meso' scale is both the subject of research and an epistemological position. As a researcher, I have positioned myself in the middle of the three areas of study, a middle ground where I have found myself best operating. As we will see, the research is interested in connecting middle elements. The middle is also an epistemological position: in each chapter, I enter from the middle, focusing on the particular aspect of the knowledge and the specific lens I find most suitable to the question posed. I examine the commoning logics, strategies and protocols of a particular type of practice and try to relate them to the specificities of actual experiences. This is not an exercise in imposing an understanding but in negotiating a common ground. The proposal presented in this thesis is not a final product but part of the shared attempt to expand such ground.

1.2 Gaps in knowledge

Recently, academic authors from different disciplines (Arboleda, 2021a; Dean, 2016) have proposed the possibility of thinking of a 'good' place around state-centred structures that articulate urban activism - such as the squares movement - in post-capitalist organisations. I argue that these state-centred proposals are in line with 'actually existing neoliberalism' (Brenner & Theodore, 2002a) in that alternatives outside state-marked divisions are considered 'utopian' and naive. This impossibility of simultaneously thinking of an alternative to capitalism and the nation-state is also deployed in popular culture, where the dystopian images of the future represented in films, books, games and other cultural vehicles increase the difficulty of creating 'collective imaginaries of the future that propose tools for transforming the present' (Garcés et al., 2017, my transcription and translation). In her study of the relationship between utopian narratives and realities, Spanish writer Layla Martínez discusses how dystopian narratives "turn (understandable) collective anxiety into paralysis" and - at the same time - "make utopian futures of a better world seem childish and unrealistic - not only in films or books, but also in politics" (Martínez, 2020, p. 8, my translation). In this thesis, I argue that the creation of feasible 'utopian' futures is the task of an alternative form of planning that transforms the way cities organise and provide urban systems for complex, heterogeneous territories so that they support the proliferation of commons.

In this section, I will look at the gaps in theory and practice, and in-between, as a reflection of the political and cultural expression of commoning alternatives in the intersection between municipalism, the commons and planning. The interest in these three areas is driven by the assumption that articulating the commons' need to proliferate - to expand, replicate and deepen - within municipalist democratic governance can provide a framework to think about the territorial implications of such a transformation. The Spanish experience has proven to be a political space for the study of the articulation between the commons and municipalism, as reflected in the number of academic productions focused on the Spanish case: doctoral theses (Bianchi, 2019; Cámara, 2018), special numbers in academic journals (Thompson, Russell, & Roth, upcoming) and research projects (Bua, 2023; Kioupkiolis, 2017), among others. However, there are few explicit links between these two fields and urban planning. In this thesis, I assume that the incorporation of planning as a non-deterministic tool with "the capacity to 'envision' and 'explain' the future through mechanisms that shape the knowledge of the world in a way that allows to remake it" (Stein, 2019, p. 8) is one of the conditions for the proliferation of commons processes. I will also argue that the potential of planning to "imagine a future and make it happen" (Tafuri, 1976, p. 70) depends on its ability to generate new mechanisms of knowledge production capable of informing a paradigm shift. The 'epistemic choreography' (Perry, 2022) on which this inquiry is based faces a twofold gap in this knowledge production. The first gap concerns scholarship that engages with the intersections between democratic municipalism, urban commons and alternative planning. The second knowledge gap exists not in academia but, more importantly, in practice.

1.2.1 Gap in theory

From a quantitative point of view, a 'comprehensive search' in Google Scholar (Martín-Martín et al., 2018) shows an exponential growth in the number of academic and grey productions in the overlapping fields of urban commons, municipalism and critical planning since the beginning of the

wave called "new municipalism" (Blanco, Gomà Carmona, & Subirats, 2018), even taking into account the growth of academic publications worldwide (Fire & Guestrin, 2019). Table 1.2 below shows a tenfold increase in academic production written in English about research on municipalism, commons and planning over the last decade: in 2014, there were 168 results for 'municipalism' and 355 for 'urban commons', but only 4 for 'urban commons' AND 'municipalism' AND 'planning'. By 2023, this intersection had reached 246 results.

Table 1.2: Google Scholar search results per epistemic area and year [en]

By decade	Municipalism	"Urban commons"	Planning	Municipalism, "urban commons" & planning
1984-1993	131	54	1.470.000	0
1994-2003	408	178	511.000	3
2004-2013	809	905	2.170.000	6
2014-2023	4.040	8.501	1.820.000	220
By year in the last decade	Municipalism	"Urban commons"	Planning	Municipalism, "urban commons" & planning
2014	168	355	1.640.000	4
2015	188	512	1.410.000	5
2016	205	554	1.500.000	2
2017	270	737	1.420.000	11
2018	328	830	1.420.000	14
2019	455	973	1.090.000	14
2020	503	1.100	915.000	26
2021	618	1.080	614.000	37
2022	575	1.120	337.000	53
2023	730	1.240	295.000	54

Source: Author. Based on Google Scholar online search on 8/2/2024.

A qualitative analysis of the 20 publications in English considered more relevant by Google Scholar and filtered for their relevance to this thesis, shows that articles in the first half of this decade, 2014-2019, focused on concepts such as right to the city (Blanco, Gomà Carmona, & Subirats, 2018), radical democracy (Corsín & Estalella, 2014) or social reproduction (Chatterton & Pusey, 2019). Urban commoning is seen as a practice that can take place at the margins of planning (Porter et al.,

2011) or be established as a design practice where expertise is transferred to communities of place-makers (Brain, 2019). Since 2020, urban planning is seen as a contested governance technology (Sareen & Waagsaether, 2023), where some existing trends, such as decentralisation (Abubakari et al., 2023) or co-design (Meroni & Selloni, 2022), can be reinforced, or as a tool functional to capitalism that can be redirected (Sevilla Buitrago, 2022). In the intersection of urban commons and municipalism in Spain, the range of alternatives includes more inclusive decision-making (Sareen & Waagsaether, 2023) or strengthening co-production in urban decision-making processes (Bianchi et al., 2022). However, despite some shared concerns, none of these approaches address the question of how to plan for the commons in a context where modern planning principles are no longer fit for purpose. Moreover, the most influential articles on the 'new municipalism' written by British urban scholars (Thompson, 2020; Russell, 2019) only refer to the urban commons as one of the elements of the municipalist context.

Table 1.3 presents the growth trend of academic production in Spanish, which shows some differences compared to the English academic production.

<i>Table 1.3: Google Scholar search results per epistemic area and year [es]</i>				
<i>By decade</i>	<i>Municipalismo democrático</i>	<i>"Comunes urbanos"</i>	<i>Urbanismo</i>	<i>Municipalismo, "comunes urbanos" & urbanismo</i>
1984-1993	429	0	29.300	0
1994-2003	1.700	1	79.400	0
2004-2013	6.250	32	163.00	0
2014-2023	10.233	1.020	341.600	85
<i>By year in the last decade</i>	<i>Municipalismo democrático</i>	<i>"Comunes urbanos"</i>	<i>Urbanismo</i>	<i>Municipalismo, "comunes urbanos" & urbanismo</i>
2014	956	18	33.000	0
2015	1.060	104	35.500	2
2016	1.050	115	33.000	3
2017	1.110	53	38.300	1
2018	1.120	78	38.400	11
2019	1.230	80	38.200	10
2020	979	154	37.400	16
2021	1.110	159	37.000	22
2022	859	160	33.500	13
2023	759	99	17.300	7

Source: Author. Based on Google Scholar online search on 8/2/2023.

In the Spanish-speaking context, reflected in Table 1.3, the publication on urban commons only started in 2007, and the production on democratic municipalism shows a decreasing trend in the last two years. Contrary to the English production, the number of publications in the literature on urbanism has remained constant over the last ten years. Despite this increase in academic production in the last five years, there is still a relatively small number of articles dedicated to the intersection of municipalism and the urban commons. This scarcity may be due to the difficulty of finding empirical case studies, especially since the loss of municipalist city governments in Spain in 2019 and Italy in 2021 and 2022. The new experiences emerging from the municipal elections in France in 2020 and Croatia in 2021, where urban commons experiences and struggles have been very influential, could still contribute to this field of study. Table 1.3 presents the growth trend of academic production in Spanish, which shows some differences compared to the academic production in English.

1.2.2 Gap in practice

In the municipalist experience, both sides of the inside/outside institutional divide - the social movements that proposed and supported the 'municipalist wager' and the resulting local governments - recognised the importance of technical knowledge and administrative tools, often developed through tedious official formats, to carry out the proposed 'institutional assault'. My practice as an activist in the social movements and as a consultant to the municipal government resonates with the definition of 'governmental technologies' as "the complex of everyday programmes, calculations, techniques, apparatuses, documents and procedures through which authorities seek to embody and give effect to governmental ambitions" (Rose & Miller, 1992, p. 175). In this respect, the experience gained in the everyday management procedures of local governments aimed at 'doing in common' resonates with that of self-governing social centres in the realisation that - as activists from the ex-Asilo Filangieri in Naples explained - the collective rules, principles and practices enacted are not technocratic managerial constraints detached from a political project, but a 'politics of self-governance' "based on an everyday practice that cannot be reduced to mere 'administration'" (Akbil et al., 2021, p. 186). Municipalist politics aimed at a '*Ciudad Futura*' [future city] - the name of the municipalist proposal in Rosario, Argentina - through a prefigurative politics that combined tactics, political orientations, shared understandings of how to do things, and movement activity that 'forms part of a general understanding of politics as an instrument of social change' (Yates, 2015, p. 2). Some of these administrative experiences have been collected in publications and repositories that characterise municipalist interventions as belonging to the commons, feminist and right to the city movements, as in the municipalist Atlas of Change (Ciudades del Cambio, Junqué, & Méndez de Andrés, 2018), or as having an expanded understanding of public ethos (Fernández-Casadevante, Morán, & Prats, 2018).

However, despite, or perhaps because of, their prefigurative nature, these constituent transformations did not affect the traditional tools of urban planning, creating a knowledge gap in practice on how to plan the commons in the city. Commoning administrative experiments were not part of a new master plan document that defined the uses and urban forms of the future municipalist city, but operated in the intersection between the new openness of democratic institutions and the new agency of social demands (Méndez de Andrés, 2019, p. 138). The municipalist urban

transformations were implemented through public-social interventions in social services, economic development, urban projects and cultural production.

Various projects and publications from the fields of architecture, and of urban and 'spatial practices' have engaged in the production, systematisation and analysis of commoning processes that operate at different levels between the vision of the city as a general 'common' and the specific experiences of each particular 'commons'. In recent years, there have been several compilations of concrete 'micro' experiences of autonomous spaces of collective housing management, urban gardens or time banks: the journal Arch+ published *An Atlas of Commoning* (Gruber et al., 2018); curator Francesca Fergusson (2014) edited *Make_Shift City: Renegotiating the Urban Common*; German architects Dagmar Pelger, Anita Kaspar and Jörg Stollmann (2017) published *Spatial Commons - Urban Open Spaces* as a Resource at TU Berlin, and research on *Urban Commons in the ex-Yu Region* was conducted by Serbian architects Ivar Čukić and Jovana Timotijević (2020) of the collective Ministry of Space. Also, Parsons School of Design dedicated a number of its *Journal of Design Strategies* to 'Cooperative Cities' (Rendón & Mitrašinović, 2017), with a public discussion organised by Mexican architect Gabriela Rendón. The 'Cooperative Cities' publication recognises the role of women, with contributions including Silvia Federici on 'Commoning the City' and Paris-based architect Doina Petrescu on 'A Feminist Reinvention of the Commons'. These publications present a wide range of experiences— social centres, community gardens, housing cooperatives, land trusts, community health centres or self-managed clinics – as constellations of particular experiences that resonate with commons. However, in the analysis of urban commoning processes presented in the extensive documentation produced by a combination of architects, practitioners and researchers on urban commons, being it exhibitions, publications, compilations or academic literature, the urban commons potential to transform public institutional arrangements with the proposal of an alternative system is not addressed. Regardless of the format, commons appear as 'pockets of resistance' outside the market and the State that confront the urban enclosures, and commodification of the different aspects of urban life.

These questions are also reflected in the two compilations I have participated in. The Sheffield School of Architecture is home to the Urban Commons Research Collective, of which I am a member. We have produced an operational *Urban Commons Handbook* (2021), as an archive of practices and concepts along seven threads or 'controversies' - economies, ecologies, knowledges, socialities, localities and governance - as a systematisation of urban commons that goes beyond the organisation of seemingly unrelated practices and connects to interventions by professionals in the field of urban design and planning, such as Greek architect Eleni Katrini (2019) or Austrian architect and planner Gabu Heindl (2017). In an intervention aimed at the Spanish municipalist community, *Códigos Comunes Urbanos* [Urban Common Codes] reviews the different urban commoning practices implemented in the context of municipalism (Méndez de Andés Aldama, Hamou, & Aparicio Wilhelmi, 2020). The first focuses on self-contained cases, while the second explores the impact of commoning processes in municipalist public policies and programmes.

1.3 Research outline

This thesis examines the municipalist experience to identify the potential elements of a strategy to incorporate the spread of commoning practices into urban planning. By analysing public-social collaborations developed in Spain and beyond, the theoretical and empirical research analyses processes and strategies produced by local governments, social practices and planning professionals to identify: the elements that define these commoning processes, how they relate to municipalism and planning, in which fields they operate, who the actors are and the potential lines of transformation. The research considers how the political hypothesis of the commons has influenced municipalism, how municipalist policies and programmes have re-appropriated collective elements assumed by the modern public/private dichotomy to enact a resurgence of the commons, and how planning can help to shift the focus from resource redistribution to democratic empowerment.

1.3.1 Objectives and questions

The thesis mobilises theory and practice to see how concepts resonate with concrete experiences, combining militant research and engaged scholarship around four objectives and related questions:

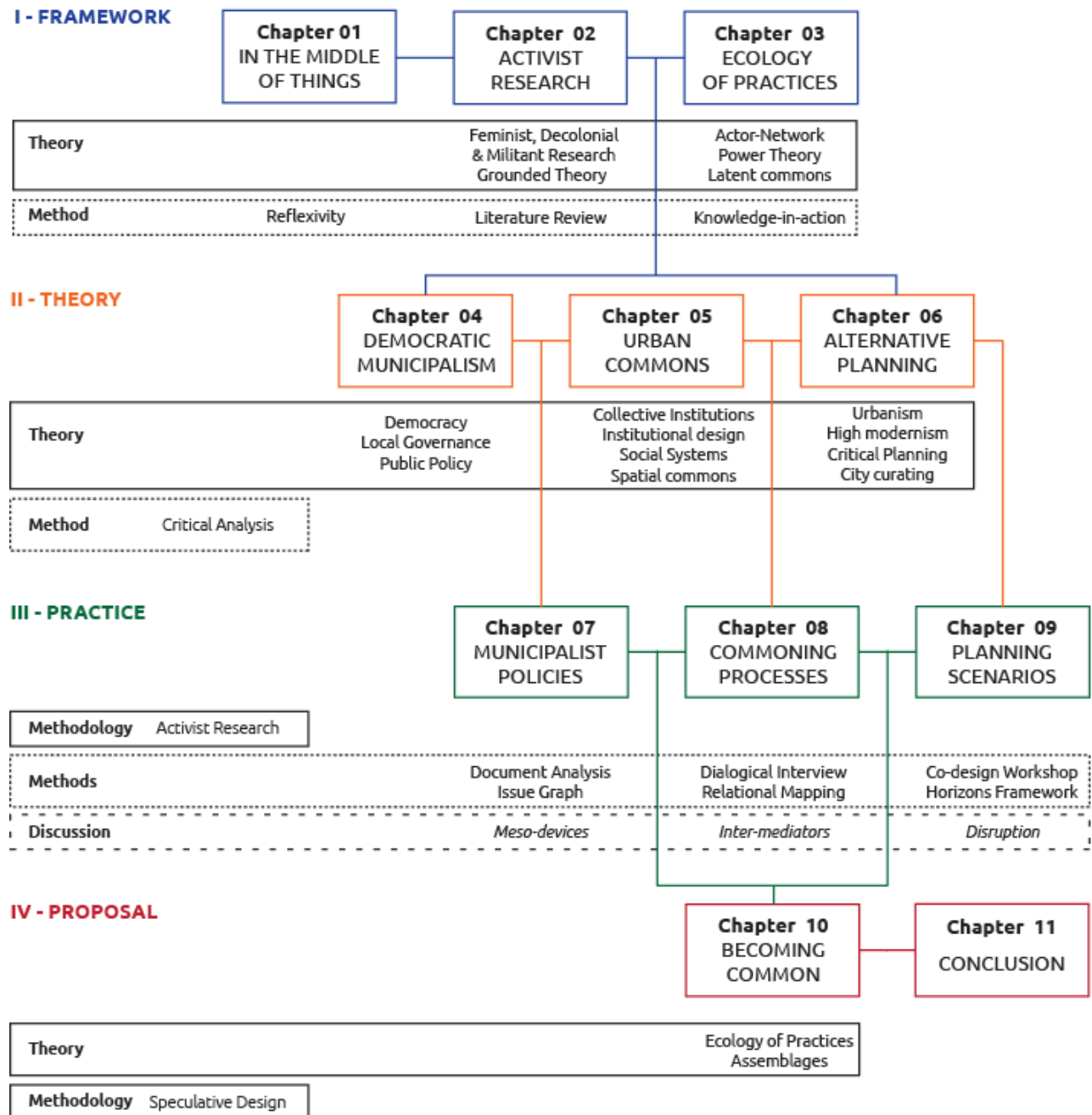
- *Obj. 1:* To define the urban governance transformations produced by the commons political hypothesis. *Q. 1:* What aspects of the commons were incorporated into the municipalist movement in Spain and how?
- *Obj. 2:* To describe public-social collaborations of urban commons re/production. *Q. 2:* Which are the human and non-human actors involved in urban commoning processes in Barcelona?
- *Obj. 3:* To identify the characteristics of the transformative potential of commoning processes. *Q. 3:* What kind of transformative horizons can urban commoning experiences define?
- *Obj. 4:* To propose a commons-based planning strategy. *Q. 4:* What are the enabling conditions and instruments required for these transformations?

I have mobilised the three areas of study - municipalism, commons and planning - to address the questions and objectives. To this end, this thesis presents and analyses the commoning policies, processes and proposals generated in the recent municipalist experience in Spain, as well as the strategies, limitations and potentials identified by the social and institutional actors involved. In articulating these contributions, I apply the Belgian philosopher Isabelle Stengers' concept of an 'Ecology of Practices' (EoP), adopting a prefigurative approach that considers theory as a tool for thinking planning 'not as it is, but as it could become' (Stengers, 2005, p. 186). This exercise is interested in how the elements of EoP - requirements, obligations, diplomacy and technologies of belonging - operate among actors involved in the construction of a transformative horizon based on the commons principles of democratic governance, universal access, eco-social sustainability and de-commodification of the material conditions of life's reproduction. Applied to municipalist policies, processes of public social collaboration and future scenarios, the idea of an 'ecology of commoning practices' provides a framework for redefining planning not as an instrument of subordination - as state planning has often been used - but as the deployment of vectors in a field that has been 'unfolded and refolded' and where the strategies of belonging, diplomacy and fostering provide pragmatic learnings to enact a becoming (Stengers, 2005, pp. 190, 195).

1.3.2 Thesis structure

Figure 1.5 shows how the research process is divided in four parts: **Part I - Framework**, sets out what, how and why the research is being conducted and the concepts mobilised. **Part II - Theory**, discusses the theoretical approaches that inform the inductive background in the three areas of this study: democratic municipalism, urban commons and alternative planning. **Part III - Practice**, analyses and discusses the fieldwork findings. **Part IV - Proposal**, offers the elements of the 'becoming-common of the public', as a proposal based on the thesis' main contributions, and the conclusions include an overview of potential lines of future research.

Figure 1.5: Thesis structure



Source: Author.

Parts II and III are linked by specific aspects of the research areas: the centrality of democratic demands in municipalism, the processual nature of urban commons, and alternative proposals to current planning frameworks and techniques.

Democratic municipalist policies

The first aspect of this thesis identifies the transformations produced by the commons political hypothesis in urban governance models. It is interested in how the municipalist movement in Spain has incorporated commons principles into its political and governmental actions, procedures, debates and discourses. The first objective assumes that urban commons' theories and practices have informed the operational implementation of the democratic demand expressed in the squares' occupation movement, which started in 2011 and made possible the municipalist movement in Spain. In this assumption, there is a mobilisation towards the democratic governance of urban territories that has been articulated within the Spanish municipalist movement and implemented by local municipalist governments through processes of public-social cooperation.

As a contribution to this objective, in Chapter 4, I will analyse municipalism as a form of radically democratic local governance and the Spanish experience from the point of view of democratic governance aimed at transforming local decision-making structures and the entrepreneurial logic of public institutions. Looking at the practice, in Chapter 7, I will analyse the documentation produced by municipalist activists and governments in their meetings, publications and public policies.

Urban commoning processes

The second aspects of the thesis characterises public-social collaborative processes of re/production of urban commons by analysing the human and non-human actors - stakeholders, frameworks and procedures - involved in urban commoning processes in Barcelona, and their connections. This objective assumes that commons can be considered a form of organising collective action able to affect the public governance model. This objective is informed by processes of public-social collaboration that aim to create a new kind of practice that transforms both the state-driven logic of public institutions and the usual strategies of social demands. It incorporates Actor-Network Theory (ANT) and considers actors that include human individuals and organisations as well as non-human agents that affect the processes - what Latour calls 'actants' - such as institutional habitus, shared social understandings, or legal frameworks.

To this end, in Chapter 5, I will examine the theoretical and practical construction of the commons from different approaches, highlighting the understanding of urban commons as expanding processes that are not limited to the self-management of a particular shared resource by a particular community, but act as a social organisation. In Chapter 8, I will analyse interviews with people involved in municipalist, commons and planning processes in Barcelona and with practitioners of commoning processes. The analysis of the interviews develops a mapping of the commoning processes active in Barcelona that characterises the actors involved.

Alternative planning proposals

The third aspect of the thesis identifies potential transformations of urban policies based on commons principles, by exploring what kind of transformative horizons urban commoning

experiences define. This objective highlights how problematic it is to consider urban commons as organic, spontaneous processes that cannot be pre-designed, given the highly planned context in which commoning processes take place. The underlying assumption is that in the face of a 'crisis of planning', the possibility of thinking processes that promote the proliferation - replication, strengthening, and expansion - of urban commons requires the ability to imagine the social and institutional transformations needed to create a plausible alternative, and to identify the instruments that would make them possible.

In Chapter 6, I will discuss planning theory on alternative planning frameworks to inform the proposal to shift from planning projects, such as the blueprints defined by modernist planning (Pinder, 2005; Tafuri, 1976) and the state vision form above (Scott, 1998) to planning as a process driven by everyday practices and experiences (Valdivia, 2020; Spain, 2014; Hayden, 1981). I will argue that planning must be deployed as a commoning methodology, which requires a re-shifting. In Chapter 9, I will present an analysis of the existing boundary conditions for urban commons and the results of interviews and a workshop that inquires on the future scenarios of commoning processes in the Barcelona metropolitan region and three other European metropolitan systems. These sessions contribute to a re-shifting of the underlying logics, operational principles and protocols applied in urban processes.

1.3.3 Re-assembling a becoming-common of the public

The idea of a 'becoming-common of the public' is born out of the realisation - generated by my activist mobilisation, institutional experience and professional practice - that the symbolic and practical construction of the state has maintained characteristics of the commons and, at the same time, social self-organisation in institutions of collective action has produced modes of governance and organisational structures that cover spaces usually associated with the nation state and its public institutions. In the collective exploration of the concepts and ideas to make sense of the municipalist proposal, we have seen how the political discussion of the commons is often confronted with the question of the public as the protector and reflection of a 'common good' that the modern state is unable to produce or assume.

This proposal of transformation combines three concepts, each of them with its own history. First, '*becoming*' is a term used by French philosophers Deleuze and Guattari to define a process of emergence, an " 'intermediate state' between its established contents and their ordered expressions" which intensifies the potential of a situation as part of a 'continuum of potential' (Massumi, 2005, p. xxvi). As we will see in Chapter 10, according to the Japanese philosopher Jun Fujita Hirose (2021), '*becoming*' expresses the potential of an existing revolutionary form to establish an 'absolute limit to capitalism'. Secondly, the 'commons' is used, as we will see in Chapter 5, to identify processes of self-governance organised by communities around collective resources, but it is also an abstract ideal that incorporates values and principles and goes beyond specific examples. Finally, the concept of the 'public' does not refer to an abstract constituency, but to the administrative realm of state governance as much as to the *res publica*, the non-state public sphere. In this sense, 'making things public' (Latour & Weibel, 2005) is an empowerment strategy that dismantles the privatisation of structural inequalities. As US philosopher Judith Butler (Butler, 2018) argues, public

'performance' is where individual vulnerabilities and needs can be politicised and constituted into collective acts of resistance.

The articulation of these three concepts in a 'becoming-common of the public' emerged as part of my work on urban commons within the Observatorio Metropolitano (OM), and I have discussed it on various occasions. I first presented the term and the political hypothesis behind it in an academic-activist seminar on 'Struggles in Common' organised by the Provisional University (2013) in Dublin, under the title 'Becoming-common of the public: Changes from the lower level of potentiality to the higher level of actuality in the crisis of the welfare state'. The session included other presentations by activist-academics such as Peter Linebaugh and Amanda Huron, as well as UK-based collectives The Free Association and Plan C. I further developed the concept in its articulation with municipalism in the workshop 'Becoming-common of the public, becoming-institution of the social', organised with the OM at the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía in February 2015, in the midst of the electoral 'municipalist wager'. The aim of this workshop was to gather experiences that "share a practical and experimental approach that seeks cooperation and integration into existing governance structures and the creation of spaces for institutional recognition as levers for the transformation and dismantling of these same structures" [extract from the seminar programme].

One of the participants in the MNCARS seminar was Laia Forné, from La Hidra, who went on to work as a consultant for the Barcelona City Council in the development of the Civil Patrimony Programme. This programme was presented at the OIPD as a 'becoming-common of the public' and characterised as 'a new way of doing and being a public institution' capable of 'ensuring the public value of goods by creating mechanisms of transparency, participation and community assessment' through the use of 'public-community partnership' (Ajuntament de Barcelona, 2018). The term is also used to describe the programme on its website. This use by the municipalist government of Barcelona en Comú proved the usefulness of the concept for activists. In parallel, British scholars working on municipalism have considered the notion of the 'becoming-public of the public' as a municipalist 'underpinning principle' (Russell, Milburn, & Heron, 2023, p. 2134). and 'political horizon' (Roth, Russell, & Thompson, 2023, p. 2020).

However, this interest in the concept has stopped short of explaining how this becoming has been mobilised in the political narrative and operationalised at the administrative level, and what happens in between, which is what this thesis is invested in doing. Incorporating urban activist backgrounds into a practice-led doctoral research project has required a reflection on how to engage with academic production and militant methodologies, and the multiple translations between activism and academia. This thesis seeks to fill this academic gap and to continue the activist exploration of municipalist 'common codes' (Méndez de Andés Aldama, Hamou, & Aparicio Wilhelmi, 2020) by providing the theoretical and empirical foundations to develop the concept within urban planning and as part of a social practice of city-making that avoids both high modernist authoritarianism and its still modernist counterparts.

Conclusion

This thesis addresses the gaps in theory and practice by exploring the intersections between democratic municipalism and the commons, between the commons and alternative planning, and between the theory and practice of urban commons. As such, it is part of a broader effort to radically democratise the various aspects that shape the world through institutions of collective action.

I have first contextualised the research in the three different scales in which it takes place: the national network of Spanish municipalist governments that emerged in the 2015 local elections; the local public-social collaborations developed in this dense and almost fully developed territory of Barcelona, where urban transformations take place through economic, social, political and environmental considerations; and the metropolitan urban system in Barcelona and other heterogeneous and complex European territories. I have also presented my position on these overlapping geographical territories as situated at the intersection of three political and epistemic domains: municipalism, commons and planning. Secondly, I have explained how these three areas articulate the structure of the thesis and link Part II - Theory and Part III - Practice with the objectives and questions of the thesis around three main concerns: democratic municipalist policies, urban commons processes and alternative planning proposals. The aim of this articulation is to propose a strategy for the becoming-common of the public as a re-assembling capable of meeting the challenges of the current polycrisis, presented in Part IV of this research. Finally, I have identified the gaps in knowledge, both theoretical and practical, that this research seeks to fill by investigating the policies, processes and proposals of urban social movements that seek to proliferate commoning processes.

In the next chapter I will continue the presentation of the research framework with a description of a methodology that draws on my activist experience and militant research practice, an iterative research design inspired by grounded theory, and the use of situated and adapted methods of inquiry and analysis.

Chapter 2 - Methodology and Design. Practice-led activist research

Nothing Comes Without Its World.

Donna Haraway, *Modest_Witness@Second_Millennium. FemaleMan_Meets_OncoMouse: Feminism and Technoscience*, 1997

Introduction: Research in practice

The practice-based doctoral research presented in this thesis uses an activist research methodology to create, share and contrast knowledge with social and institutional actors who have been part of municipalist, commoning and planning experiences in Spain and European metropolitan areas. The 'in practice' aspect that informs this research is threefold. Firstly, as explained in Chapter 1, the research has been guided by a personal practice in the three fields of municipalism, commons and planning. Secondly, the theoretical and empirical research is interested in concrete practices of commons city-making that not only constitute the research inputs but also inform the outputs, as I will explain in the activist methodology section of this chapter. Finally, the knowledge produced seeks to be useful 'in practice' as part of a process that Gibson-Graham call 'doing thinking': the assertion that there is not a binary distinction between reflection of thought and 'embodied engagement with the world', but an action deployed by the act of thinking that is "touching the world and being touched by it and, in the process, things (and we) are changing" (J. K. Gibson-Graham, 2006, p. xxix). Situated within the overlapping areas of municipalist social mobilisations, institutional transformations towards the commons, and planning social city-making processes and strategies, the practice-based approach is applied to questions and problems that "cannot be fully understood from either a broad macro-structural approach or a very local, micro-level analysis" and require a 'meso-analysis' through the study of internal factors and actors, technologies, power and authority, external conditions and assumptions (Best, 2013, pp. 20–21).

This chapter presents the basis of my practice-led research. Firstly, an activist methodology that combines practices of 'doing thinking', engaged scholarship, militant research and decolonial and feminist approaches. Secondly, the design of the research project to co-produce a theory that is grounded and iterative, and thirdly, the methods used to explore and analyse each iteration.

2.1 Activist methodology

Methodology is important because it frames the questions being asked, determines the set of instruments and methods to be employed, and shapes the analyses. Within an indigenous [activist] framework, methodological debates are ones concerned with the broader politics and strategic goals of indigenous [activist] research. (Smith, 2012, p. 239)

This research on the becoming-common of the public has been conceived as part of an activist work that seeks to develop theoretical tools as political devices. The activist methodology described in

this chapter is concerned with how research is done (Harding, 1987a) as much as it is with the outcomes of a 'process of composition' that aims to strengthen 'the aspirations and elements of alternative sociability' (Colectivo Situaciones, 2003). The research methodology draws on doing-thinking practices to incorporate practice-based knowledge production, militant research for the experience of how to know what we need to know, decolonial methodologies to reflect on how to engage with a collective agenda that is not always explicit, and feminist methodologies to provide a framework for an ethics of care.

2.1.1 Doing-thinking

Two urban and architectural reflections in the US resonate with the idea of 'doing thinking': the experience of 'doing by learning' developed by the social worker and educator Jane Addams (1912) in her community work at Hull House in Chicago, and the reflexive practice of architects described by the philosopher and professor of urban planning at MIT, Donald Schön (1983).

The Hull House was part of the Settlement House programme of the early 20th century in the US, tackling urban poverty and exclusion with an action-oriented approach that aimed to reform social sciences by producing new knowledge (Harkavy & Puckett, 1994, p. 309). The approach of Jane Addams and her colleagues is seen as unique in its efforts to address community needs and validate community knowledge, often in the form of maps (Residents of Hull-House, 1895), and the integration of an emerging practice of 'social work' with the production of a new kind of knowledge that recognised the complexity, interdependence and situated nature of urban problems and triggers the need for a strategy invested in "revealing and clarifying deeply embedded impediments to change" (Harkavy & Puckett, 1994, p. 316). Almost a century later, Donald Schön's observation of an architect's professional practice identified a flow of inquiry that dealt with complex information and different ways of looking at things simultaneously. From Schön's point of view, the reflective practitioner applies a particular process of inquiry through three elements: first, a problem-setting that is built as a dynamic problem that keeps the inquiry in motion, second, a 'seeing-as' and 'doing-as' that uses a repertoire of their previous experiences as "a means of processing data into sets of similarities that do not depend on a prior answer to the question" and, third, an experiment in practice that is primarily interested in changing the situation by following a logic of affirmation, not confirmation (Schön, 1983, pp. 133–153). Applied to planning, this 'reflection-in-practice' is framed as a 'balancing act' of mediation, requiring an understanding of the field of actors and interests, the definition of the elements of negotiation, mediation or inquiry, and the design of interventions within the constraints of established credibility and legitimacy. In this case, the planner's role as a mediator is framed by the problems posed, the strategies adopted, the facts deemed relevant and 'interpersonal theories of action' (Schön, 1983, p. 354).

2.1.2 Engaged scholarship

Activist research refers to a tradition of engaged scholarship that sees knowledge production as a 'societal intellectual enterprise' (Weiss, 1979), a collective endeavour that articulates new forms of political action with new ways of mobilising and elaborating projects as part of a 'scholarship with commitment' (Bourdieu, 2000). According to the Australia-based critical place scholar Marcia McKenzie (2009), this engaged scholarship is an 'intervention': a process of knowledge production

that aims to mobilise new research imaginaries in the public sphere. By developing an activist methodological approach, my research engages with a tradition of militant, feminist and decolonial research and with the experience of militant research projects, such as *areaciega*, *Observatorio Metropolitano* and *Oficina de Acción Comunal*, which aim to generate knowledge with and for - rather than from or about - the political communities involved in processes of transformation.

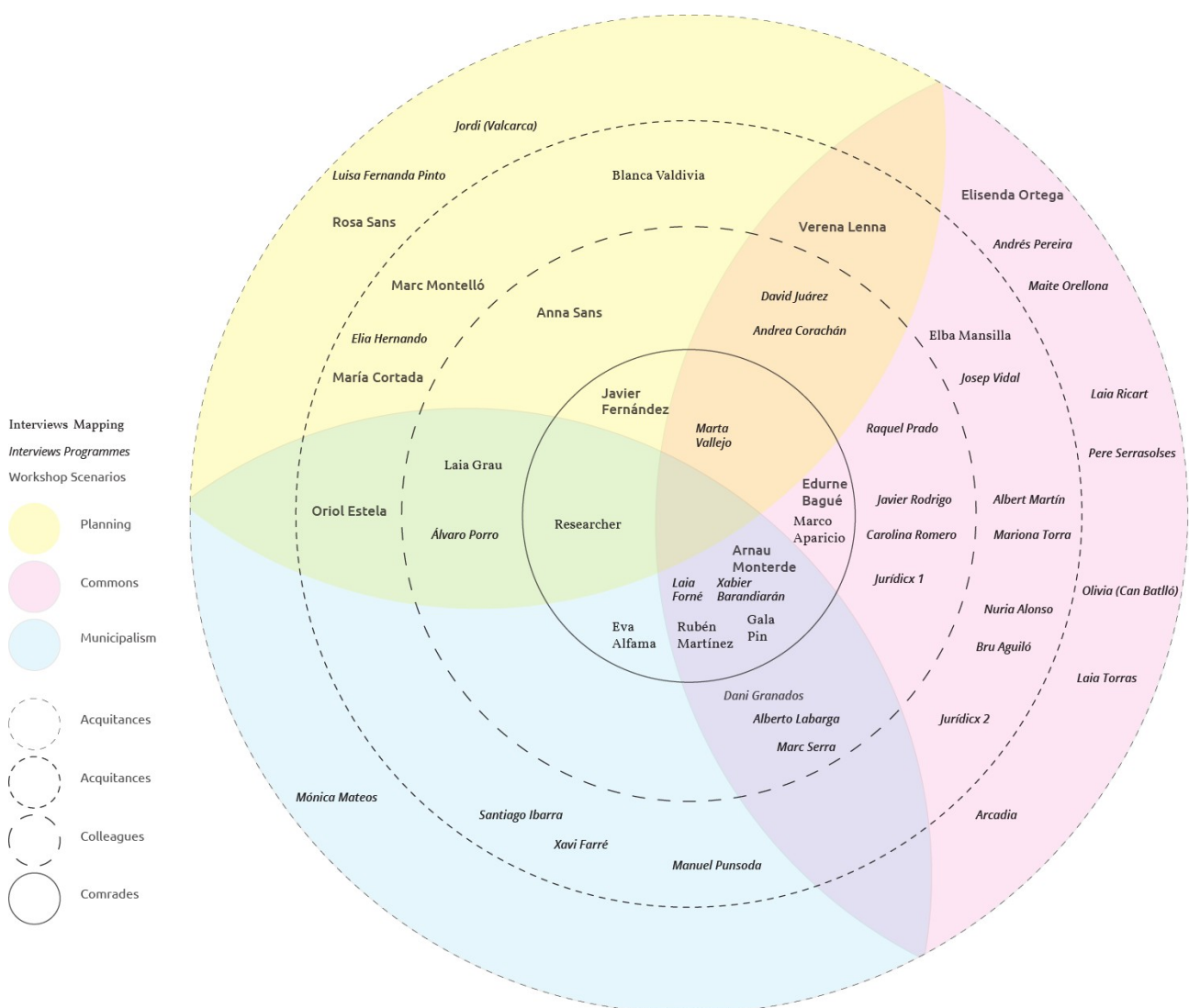
The term 'engaged research' is an attempt to reconcile the non-descriptive and emergent quality of 'militant researchers' who seek to co-produce theories and practices of alternative knowledge, with what Latour considers a multiplication of 'modes of existence': the experiences, tonalities, particular conditions that require specific ontologies and languages (Latour, 2013, p. 288). Such engagement replaces the confirmation of laboratory hypotheses with a 'scholar activism' seeking to fulfil the requirements of academic institutions and epistemic communities while, at the same time, it is committed to sustaining the work of the communities involved in the co-production of knowledge (Derickson & Routledge, 2015, p. 9). The use of collaboration and co-production, ethics as a care practice, and situated standpoints reflect this commitment. Donna Haraway argues that this situated engagement does not mean abandoning the production of rational knowledge that produces 'objectivity as positioned rationality' as an "ongoing critical interpretation among 'fields' of interpreters and decoders [...] does not pretend to disengagement: to be from everywhere and so nowhere, to be free from interpretation, from being represented, to be fully self-contained or fully 'formalisable' but to deploy a 'power-sensitive conversation'" (Haraway, 1988, p. 590). In my research, the potential of such conversation to transform urban planning lies in its political nature as a shared public debate about the interactions that take place in the *polis*.

My approach to collaborative research seeks to establish a 'dynamics of pragmatic learning of what works and how' (Stengers, 2005, p. 195) by creating collaborative spaces of encounter. These spaces of exchange enabled practitioners to identify the material and immaterial conditions that have facilitated or constrained their practices, and to reflect on the empowerment strategies employed to overcome their blockages. Following principles of co-production by design (Zamenopoulos & Alexiou, 2018), the research involved stakeholders from different backgrounds, professions, interests and demands (Foth & Axup, 2006). The design assumed that "knowledge(s) are contextual, situational and interactional" (Mason, 2002, p. 63), and that activist research is often 'messy and emotional' (Askins, 2009, p. 10). It employs an iterative process designed to embrace 'the unexpected and unanticipated, the difficult and awkward, the messy and complex' (Punch, 2012, p. 91), with each phase contingent on the previous one.

In their reflection on the methodological implementation of collaborative research, British and South African co-production researchers Beth Perry and Warren Smit argue that the role of 'active intermediation', as a 'set of interstitial practices between research and practice' is a key, 'foundational aspect for the reflexive practice of academic-activists. Although in this doctoral research, I was not able to engage in 'structured dialogues' during the fieldwork, analysis and writing, there is a shared concern that "accounts of design and methods were insufficient to capture our practices within our respective contexts" (Perry & Smit, 2023, p. 688). This is one of the reasons why I created an online repository to document the research process.

With the aim of producing a research *with*, rather than *about*, the communities involved, workshop and interview participants are not regarded as data providers but as actors who take part and contribute to the research process. The participants were part of a network of trusted relationships forged through years of activism. Some of them were directly involved in the fields under study - municipalism, commons and planning, while others were contacted specifically. They are all involved in social and municipalist movements at the local and trans-local levels, are part of a community of activist-researchers working on urban commons, or are activists and professionals working on questions that shape economic, social and spatial urban configurations. Figure 2.1 shows the interviewees and workshop participants in Barcelona and their involvement in the three research fields.

Figure 2.1: Research participants in Barcelona



Source: Author

Another shared characteristic of the participants was their involvement in the socio-political public sphere, an area of interest in this research. Social actors include urban activists in social centres, popular memory, social and solidarity economy and community culture; professional actors include public workers, civil servants, architects and urban planners. Political actors include former city councillors and their political advisors, as well as directors of the urban planning and participation departments who were active at the time of the fieldwork. As explained in the Open Science section, I asked participants' consent to publish their interview transcript and how they would be identified, if by their name or pseudonym. Of the 75 participants in the research - 40 women and 35 men - 83% chose to be identified by their name, and 91% allowed to publish their interviews in a public repository under a Creative Commons licence and to be reused in other research projects. Although shared qualitative data is not often used as a secondary source, the open data requirements of many funding bodies create a potential for this type of qualitative analysis (Kern & Mustasilta, 2023).

2.1.3 Militant research

A relevant influence on how the OM developed its militant research practice was the work of the Madrid-based feminist collective Precarias a la Deriva (2004) and their self-inquiry into female precarity. Spanish feminist activist and translator Marta Malo de Molina (2004) argues for the production of 'common notions', and traces the idea of a 'militant research' back to the 'workers' inquiry' of the Italian *operaisti*, feminist consciousness raising groups, institutional analysis based on pedagogy and psychotherapy in France, and various experiences of co-research, such as Colectivo Situaciones in Buenos Aires, or the Collective Sans Ticket in Brussels. According to Malo de Molina, these experiences share 'concept-tools' such as co-research, self-valorisation; departure from the self, intersectionality, micro-politics, economy of desires, or lines of flight. Their practices outline three main lines of intervention: a) the creation of collective processes of knowledge production that combine the use of major and minor knowledges; b) the production of knowledge for emancipatory social movements through a virtuous loop from practice to theory to practice; c) they consider research "as a lever for interpellation, subjectification and political re-composition" that created 'common notions' in the search for forms of cooperation and resistance capable of transforming the material condition of metropolitan realities (Malo de Molina, 2006).

In addition, Colectivo Situaciones reflects on the figure of the 'researcher militant' as a counterpower with specific decisions and procedures, identifying a performative-connective function of militant research that is triggered by a 'desire for the common when the common is in pieces' (Benasayag & Sztulwark, 2000). This reflection points to questions relevant to this research, such as,

How do we create consistency between the experiences of a counter-power that is no longer spontaneously unified nor does it desire an external, imposed, statist unification? How do we articulate the points of power and creation without creating a hierarchical unit responsible for 'thinking' for 'everyone', for 'directing everyone'? How do we trace lines of resonance within the networks of resistance without subordinating others or being subordinated ourselves? (Colectivo Situaciones, 2004, p. 99, my translation)

The Argentinian feminist Verónica Gago, a founding member of Colectivo Situaciones, reflects on the relationship between the production of conceptual frameworks and the capacity of militant

research to reframe the situation, that is, to "name and valorise modes of existence that denounce and combat the modes of exploitation and domination" (Gago, 2017, p. np). Gago uses three examples from Argentina's recent history to illustrate how this strategy reframed the popular self-organisation in the 2001 crisis as the creation of a 'destituent multitude' (Hardt & Negri, 2005), the rise of populist left politics as the return of Maquiavelo's 'Prince' (Gramsci, 2017), and the community-based responses to the neoliberal structures of precarity as the production of '*entramados comunitarios*' [communal lattice] (Gutiérrez Aguilar, 2018).

2.1.4 Decolonial methodologies

Activist research relates to decolonial ethos in its intention to look 'in the eye of the Empire' and propose an independent research agenda that considers its accountability through questions such as: "who is the research for?, what difference will it make?, who will carry it out?, how do we want the research done?, how will we know it is worthwhile?, who will own the research?, who will benefit?" (Smith, 2012, p. 239).

Maori scholar and educator Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2005, 2012) argues that methodological debates are concerned with the broader politics and strategic aims of indigenous research, which can also be applied to urban activist research. For Tuhiwai Smith, indigenous research operates on a shifting ground that aims to negotiate and transform institutional practices and research frameworks. She identifies a political project to establish an indigenous research agenda derived from 'clear and straightforward' struggles, such as the need for self-determination and to regain control of our destinies. She challenges Western 'rule of practice' that has imposed its interests through a system of validation and recognition that establishes the validity of a particular type of evidence and research validation, the dominance of the written text over oral testimony, a scientific knowledge based on 'facts', the sanction of values and morals that are assumed to be shared, the idea of a neutral and objective truth, what responsibility and accountability mean, and what constitutes expert knowledge (Smith, 2012, p. 99). Smith identifies these elements, used in the validation of evidence in the context of English treaties and the legal system imposed in Aotearoa - New Zealand, as conforming to the vision of the 'Imperial eye'. Decolonial methodologies counter this vision with an 'Indigenous Research Agenda', which constitutes an approach and programme for self-determination that has a crucial spatial dimension.

Indigenous and decolonial methodologies inform a 'critical place inquiry' concerned with the historical relationship between political structures of domination and land as the physical support of spatial and place-based practices capable of supporting 'futures' different from the expansionist colonial project that is "linked to current environmental devastation and curtailed possibilities for future generations" (Tuck & McKenzie, 2015, p. 5). As Canadian-based Unangax̄ scholar Eve Tuck and her US-based writing partner Wayne Young - co-founders of The Land Relationships Super Collective - argue, decolonisation is not a metaphorical concept but a territorial reclamation in the context of settler colonialism context where "[l]and is what is most valuable, contested, required" (Tuck & Yang, 2012, p. 5). In my research, I acknowledge Tuck and MacKenzie's aim to "maximise the potential to act as a form of intervention, or as public scholarship" through the implementation of a 'strategic methodological approach', "which involves selecting the methodology and methods of research best suited to the type of data and analysis most likely to critically inform the decision-

making and conditions surrounding a particular issue" (Tuck & McKenzie, 2015, p. 93). In the spatial project of an alternative urban planning, decolonial methodologies create a 'decentering' practice that generates embedded, provisional and strategic collective knowledge of how to deploy an action for urban reappropriation (Bou Akar et al., 2021).

2.1.5 Feminist concerns

The third contribution to activist research can be found in feminist research theory and practice and how, as UK-based feminist Maria Puig de la Bellacasa argues, feminist knowledge production is a process of 'thinking-with, dissenting-within and thinking-for' better understood as an ontological care for "those doings needed to create, hold together and sustain life's essential heterogeneity" (Puig de la Bellacasa, 2012, p. 198). Romanian UK-based architects Corelia Baibarac and Doina Petrescu (2019) describe the methodology associated with this careful thinking as relational, mediated, situated, and open. These aspects have been developed in my research through relational mapping, mediated translation, situated perspectives and, importantly, open science.

Relational Mapping

Relational mapping based on Actor-Network Theory (ANT) - the theoretical framework is explained in more detail in Chapter 3 - as developed by UK-based scholars such as Doina Petrescu (2007), Albena Yaneva (Yaneva, 2009) or Paul Routledge (Routledge, 2008) in their aim to represent human and non-human actors is particularly suited to discovering, representing and analysing connections between heterogeneous and seemingly unrelated elements. This capacity is recognised by the use of 'tactical cartographies' (Car-Tac, 2006) to map social mobilisations, which is considered one of the main characteristics of militant research (Malo de Molina, 2004). I consider the relational mapping of commoning practices used in Chapter 8 as a technique to discover operational resonances within parameters of indetermination. The mapping method I have developed for this mapping exercise applies ANT to focus on actions and actors and identify the effects of commoning processes through an interest in the controversies generated, the means to stabilising them and the procedures for generating collective action, as outlined by Latour (2005).

Mediated Translation

Another of such ANT procedures is the task of mediation to "transform, translate, distort, and modify the meaning or the elements they are supposed to carry" (Latour, 2005, p. 39). I will argue that this mediated translation, operates at different levels in this research: from Spanish to English, from practice to theory, from activism to academia, and vice versa. First, the linguistic translation is from English to Spanish in most - but not all - of the theoretical and academic constructs and from Spanish and Catalan to English in most - but not all - of the political and practice-based contributions. The linguistic aspect of translation is the aspect most often addressed in the academic literature written in English, especially in research carried out in environments and languages unfamiliar to Anglo-Saxon researchers. Secondly, a different dilemma arises when the translation from Spanish activism to British academia also means a cultural translation from experience to report. Although academic translation - as much as transcription (Bucholtz, 2000) - is supposed to be a technical process capable of accurately reproducing the source oral or written expression, it is also assumed that there are "no such standards [of rigour, as in data collection, analysis,

interpretation and reporting] exist for translation of translinguistic qualitative research" (Lopez et al., 2008, p. 1729), and that situated translation is always 'political': undertaken from a standpoint and within power structures that need to be acknowledged. In practice-based activist research, where researchers do not see themselves as 'objective instruments', as goal of cultural translation has a non-neutral intent (Temple & Young, 2004, pp. 163–164). From this situated position and purpose, meaning is not 'lost' in translation (van Nes et al., 2010), but is transferred from where the meaning originated to where the researcher stands and in the direction she is looking at. A third aspect of this mediated translation is the transformation of a dynamic and rhizomatic research fieldwork into the fixed and linear narrative of a written account, still aiming to produce "a description or a proposition where all the actors do something and don't just sit there" (Latour, 2005, p. 128). Instead of simply transporting effects without transforming them, each of the points in the text may become a bifurcation, an event, or the origin of a new translation.

Situated Perspectives

The adoption of a situated feminist standpoint follows the idea that "the only way to find a larger vision is to be somewhere in particular" (Haraway, 1988, p. 590). It entails a feet-on-the-ground vision, which is particularly appropriate in planning research because it resists the top-down vision deployed by the State: a dihedral projection from the vantage point of an infinitely distant point, so that the projection is perpendicular to the ground and thus measurable. In contrast, a situated standpoint of epistemic - and territorial - production, creates "images [that] are not the products of escape and transcendence of limits (the view from above) but the joining of partial views and halting voices" (ibid.).

As a practical attempt to situate the perspectives incorporated in this doctoral research, I have included the full names, geographical and epistemic fields of relevant authors cited in the thesis. This attempt to situate the theoretical background of the thesis aims to situate the bodies behind the concepts discussed, but it has several shortcomings. First, while the inclusion of surnames may help to identify perceived gender, it is only effective in backgrounds familiar to the reader - such as Western names in my case - and it cannot take into account the self-assigned gender, or lack thereof, of the authors. Secondly, even if I agree with the self-proclaimed Spanish writer Max Aub (1969, p. 214) - who was born in France but argued that we are from the place we grew up to the world - geographical identification is not easy, especially in a globalised context and within an academic industry where scholars move from country to country depending on the availability of positions and funding, a mobility reinforced by other socio-economic-political conditions. Whenever I have found it difficult to identify a relevant territorial influence, I have noted the most recent place of academic practice or residence. Thirdly, and finally, to identify scholars to a particular epistemic field - often through their university degrees or departments - can be seen as part of the modern 'compartmentalisation' (Tsing, 2015) that I challenge in this thesis, as discussed in Chapter 3.

However, I consider that non-situated notations flatten the background and create a false homogeneity that hides crucial aspects of the 'politics of citation' (Dion & Mitchell, 2020; Ali, 2019). For all its limitations, the format I have used in this thesis is a call for explicit consideration of qualitative 'conscientious engagement' (Mott & Cockayne, 2017) with the gendered, geographical and epistemic diversity of the references used to produce our 'common notions'. As the British

feminist writer, academic and activist Sara Ahmed has noted, "[c]itation is feminist memory. Citation is how we acknowledge our debt to those who came before; those who helped us find our way [...]" (Ahmed, 2017, pp. 15–16).

Open Science

The practical implementation of the methodological commitment to openness embraces the Open Science (OS) approach that "produces transparent and accessible knowledge, created and disseminated through collaboration and networks" (Vicente-Saez & Martinez-Fuentes, 2018, p. 434). In this qualitative, practice-led inquiry, the interest in 'openness' relates to the three main aspects of the OS schools as a public, democratic and pragmatic endeavour: it addresses the unequal access to scholarly knowledge and calls for its free distribution; it is also concerned with the social impact of scientific production, the development of social science and the communication and dissemination of results; finally, it considers that knowledge creation is strengthened by collaboration, the creation of networks and transparency (Fecher & Friesike, 2014).

In the practical implementation of OS principles, this research project incorporated an ethics of care that met the expected 'bureaucratic demands' while taking into account the context of the research field and the relationship with the communities and practices involved in it (Gillan & Pickerill, 2012, pp. 134–135). My consent forms - included in the Ethics Application 034257 approved on the 7 July 2020 - offered the possibility of sharing the content of interviews and workshops with a creative licence and uploading them to a qualitative database. In the absence of a specific 'community' to be held accountable, the aim of sharing the research inputs, outputs and design addresses the question of reciprocity in general terms. The request for permission to publish and reuse the contributions placed the conversations with the research collaborators in the public sphere and as part of the exchanges and discussions that have taken place since the 2011 squares movement, on the role of urban commons in the transformation of social and public institutional structures that take care for collective resources. The open nature of the contributions to this research acknowledges that "situated knowledges are about communities, not about isolated individuals" (Haraway, 1988, p. 590) and that this research is interested in collective endeavours rather than individual experiences.

The publication of the project on the Open Science Framework platform was awarded runner-up in the University of Sheffield Open Research Prize 2023. This publication of the research process and results, including data and metadata, not only meets the requirements of the Economic and Social Research Council as a funder seeking to make 'data' reusable, but also provides the context in which the contributions to this research were produced and analysed.

2.2 Grounded research project

The design of the research project aims to operationalise a process of 'caminar preguntando' [questioning while walking], as the Zapatistas say, by adapting grounded theory to a situated production of knowledge. This process simultaneously deployed interdependence, by making each iterative phase of research dependent on the previous one, and multiplicity, by using a different time frame, territory and method of inquiry in each phase.

2.2.1 A co-produced theory from the ground up

The research design is inspired by Grounded Theory (GT) as theorised by US sociologists, originally by Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss (1967) and updated for the 21st century by US sociologist Kathy Charmaz (2005). The first aspect of my interest in GT is the use of an emergent methodology to build theoretical frameworks that "begin[s] with inductive logic, use emergent strategies, rely on comparative inquiry, and are explicitly analytic" (Charmaz, 2011, p. 359), combining data collection and analysis in an iterative process. The resulting 'grounded theories' are considered "systematic statements of plausible relationships" able to build a middle-range theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1994, pp. 278–279). The approach used to design this research is a constructivist grounded theory, which rejects a first and more positivist idea that 'data could speak by itself' (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) and argues that social phenomena are not subjective but 'actively constructed', so researchers do not 'discover' data and theories but create them through their interaction and analysis (Thornberg & Charmaz, 2014; Charmaz, 2008).

The second aspect of interest is the combination of inductive, deductive and abductive analysis, where abduction refers to the search for plausible relationships in the construction of a middle-range theory co-produced by researchers and research participants where each iteration in the fieldwork is contingent on the previous one. The 'early leads and ideas from nascent analyses' lead to "where to go, whom to ask or observe, and what kind of data to collect next" (Thornberg & Charmaz, 2014, p. 155), paving the way for the next phase. GT combines inductive, deductive and abductive approaches in a process where the prior theory and knowledge, the findings and inputs from fieldwork and the analytical conclusions take place simultaneously. The introduction of abduction means that researchers apply or create 'codes' that better explain a particular situation - which I have re-conceptualised in this research as 'characterisations'. The 'constant interplay' between induction and abduction in the research process has been compared to the work of the fictional character of Sherlock Holmes, "mov[ing] back and forth between data and pre-existing as well as developing knowledge or theories, and makes comparisons and interpretations in the search for patterns and the best possible explanations" (Flick, 2014, p. 162).

The third aspect is that the induction-deduction-abduction process is enabled by an iterative process in which "[e]arly leads and ideas from their nascent analyses direct [the researcher] as to where to go, whom to ask or observe, and what kind of data to collect next" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 155). In my design, however, this iteration is expansive rather than immersive: it does not seek to produce a more saturated or dense set of data but it moves across temporalities and scales, interested in different phenomena and using different methods of inquiry and of analysis.

GT methodology embraces the inherently collaborative and situated character when considering that researchers and research participants interact and co-construct inputs, and that the researchers' backgrounds - the 'socio-cultural settings, academic training and personal worldviews' which 'inevitably colour the data, coding and analysis' - influence the theories co-produced (Thornberg & Charmaz, 2014, p. 154). In my activist and militant-research experience, this consideration relates to an idea of co-production that goes beyond the field of research and is articulated with the political and epistemic institutions involved in the processes under study. As Beth Perry (2022) argues, co-production is not a methodology but a 'praxis', an 'epistemic choreography' around

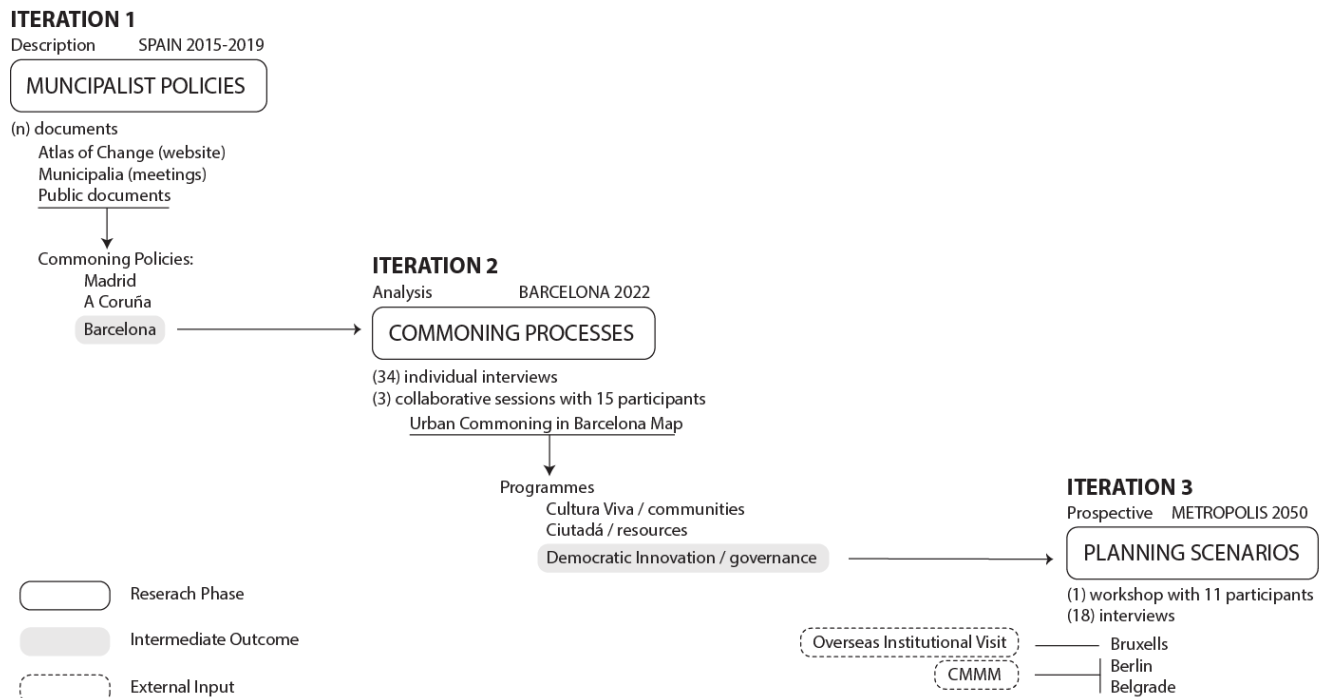
communities engaged in social justice and critical thinking that is mediated by the academic institution through the definition of boundary spaces, the mobilisation of knowledge claims and the negotiation of value and perception of impact. This creates a space for the co-production of a critique that is created 'from the middle' and is engaged in both promotion and debunking.

The aspect of collective thinking means that the collaboration of research participants relied on the research's ability to bring forward shared 'matters of concern' (Latour, 2004). The main question posed by decolonial methodologies would then be to whom these concerns matter, which is often a question of trust that lies behind the more opportunistic question of who is interested in participating in the research or who could devote time and energy to thinking together. In the various iterations described in the next section, I discussed with participants what I had done previously, my hypothesis and my findings. Collaboration occurred in the dialogic interviews, when the map created from the interviews was discussed with other interviewees, and in the collective mapping and workshops sessions.

2.2.2 Research iterations

The research iteration process is deployed in three phases of theoretical and empirical inputs generated in the three fields of practice, each with different methods of inquiry and analysis. These iterations combine the discussion of the theoretical proposals presented in Part II - Chapters 4 to 6, and the analysis of the fieldwork findings presented in Part II - Chapters 7 to 9, into the proposal presented in Part III - Chapter 10, as shown in Figure 2.2.

Figure 2.2: Fieldwork iterations



Source: Author

I - Municipalist Policies / National level - Spain / Past - 2015-2019

The theoretical discussion on democratic municipalism [Chapter 4] underpins the analysis of the municipalist narratives and norms produced in Spain between the 2015 and 2019 local elections [Chapter 7]. This first iteration deals with the recent past at the national level. Its main concern has been to identify how the political hypothesis of the commons has been articulated at the local level.

II - Commoning Processes / Local level - Barcelona / Present - 2022

Urban commons theories [Chapter 5] contribute to the framing of dialogical interviews with actors involved in commoning processes and analyses of the actors involved and their interactions through relational mapping [Chapter 8]. This second iteration analyses processes taking place in real time at the local level in Barcelona. It was concerned with the most relevant actors and relations for the proliferation of commons at a programmatic meso-level.

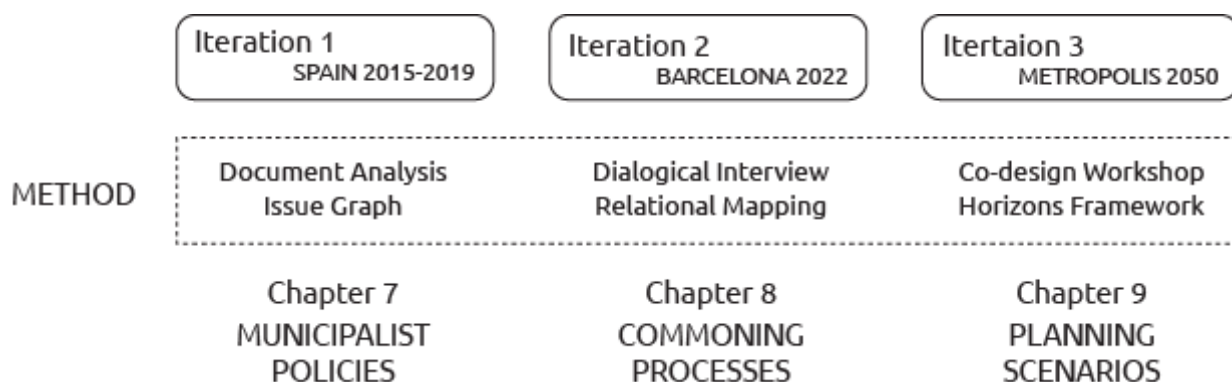
III - Planning Scenarios / Translocal level - Metropolitan systems / Future - 2050

The discussion on alternative planning theories and practices [Chapter 6] underpin the co-design of future scenarios for commons proliferation and the role of planning in a horizon framework [Chapter 9]. This third and final iteration proposed an exercise at the metropolitan scale on the potential role of public-common transmediation as planning for commoning practices.

2.3 Methods of inquiry and analysis

As part of engaged and activist research, fieldwork is conceived not as 'a means of data extraction and truth-seeking, but as an interaction in which knowledge and understanding are created and explored in the moment' (Collins, 2016). Sampling is therefore purposive and convenient, selecting the available social and institutional actors involved in the phenomena under study. In each iteration, a primary method is used, supported by secondary methods when necessary. I have chosen the methods, shown in Figure 2.3, based on their ability to generate empirical analysis and to synthesise and translate concepts and ideas between different experiences located within, outside and between state institutions and academia (Campbell & Vanderhoven, 2016).

Figure 2.3 Iterations, methods and chapters



Source: Author

Methods have been described as 'techniques for gathering evidence' (Harding, 1987a, p. 3). In this section, the process of gathering evidence and contributions is referred to as 'methods of inquiry' and the techniques for analysing such evidence and contributions are referred to as 'methods of analysis'. Methods of inquiry are regarded as procedures for gathering contributions to collective thinking. Methods of analysis characterise and translate the concepts and ideas identified in the contributions.

2.3.1 Methods of enquiry

The methods used to gather evidence are document analysis, dialogical interviews and co-design workshops.

Inquiry Iteration I: Interpretation of documentation

The documentation analysed includes three types of public documents produced in presentations and debates, in publications and by local governments, as shown in Table 2.1. The debates were documented through video recordings, transcriptions and written accounts of municipalist meetings. Publications include written documents such as reports, manifestos, compilations and books produced by municipalist organisations and individuals identified with or writing about the municipalist movement. Policies were formalised in the public documents produced by local authorities, such as policy frameworks, plans, ordinances or administrative procedures.

Public documents often provide a description of the public discourses produced through municipalist meetings and publications, and inform the analysis of public policies produced by city councils. The interpretive approach explores the 'meaning within content' of documents as social constructs and part of collective processes of production and consumption (Bloor & Wood, 2006). This approach recognises that, as British sociologist Amanda Coffey argues, 'speech acts': language not only describes situations, emotions or desires, but also helps to create or change a situation. In the same way, "[policy] documents deploy discursive or rhetorical devices - to create plausible accounts and construct believable versions of reality; in other words, documents *persuade*" (Coffey, 2014, p. 372, italics in the original).

I found the documents used in this research through an online search. Online archiving is not only one of the municipalist ambitions of transparency and a legacy of its techno-political culture, but also a legal requirement for public administrations - according to Art. 6. Institutional, organisational and planning information of Law 19/2013 of 9 December on transparency, access to public information and good governance. Municipalist debates were searched and documented based on my experience as a participant in the municipalist movement. Meetings and gatherings were circulated among municipalist activists at the time, and reports and conclusions were shared through public and private channels. Also, I was involved as a speaker or coordinator in some of the events and projects mentioned.¹

1 This disclosure acknowledges that, as the German data analyst and scholar Udo Kelle (2014) points out, it is recognised that any empirical research based on observations of social processes is tinted by the languages and networks in which is embedded, while being shaped by prior theoretical and practice-based ideas and knowledge, and 'impregnated' with expectations.

Debate	Promotor/s	Participants	Date
<i>Ciudades por el Bien Común</i> [Cities for the common good]	Barcelona en Comú	Ahora Madrid, Guanyem Badalona en Comú, Zaragoza en Común; Marea Atlántica, Compostela Aberta and Cádiz sí se puede	09/2015
<i>Fortalecer los bienes comunes desde el municipalismo</i> [Strengthening the commons through municipalism]	Barcelona en Comú, Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung	Barcelona en Comú, Ahora Madrid, Marea Atlántica and Zaragoza en Común	04/2016
Fearless Cities	Barcelona en Comú	International municipalist movement	06/2017
Municilab 2017	Barcelona en Comú	Municipalist movement	10/2017
Municilab 2018	Barcelona en Comú	Municipalist movement	10/2018
Inclusive Democracy Conference	IOPD	Madrid, Barcelona, Zaragoza, Pamplona, A Coruña and Valladolid	11/2018
<i>Ciudades en Movimiento</i> [Cities in motion]	Foro Transiciones	José Luis Fdez-Casadevante, Nerea Morán y Fernando Prats	2018
<i>Ciudades Democráticas</i> Democratic Cities]	UOC	Laura Roth, Arnau Monrde, Antonio Calleja-López (eds.)	2020
<i>Atlas del Cambio</i> [Atlas of Change]	Cities of Change	Marta Junqué and Ana Méndez de Andés (coord.)	2017
Fearless Cities. A guide to the Global Municipalist Movement	Barcelona en Comú	Marta Junqué and Kate Oshea (eds.),	2018
POLICY	City	Policy Type	Date
Public-Social Partnership	Madrid	Programme	5/2018
Civil Patrimony	Barcelona	Programme	12/2016
Culture for the Common Good	Zaragoza	Strategy	12/2015
Commons District	A Coruña	Administrative Delimitation	12/2016
Ecological Common Goods	Móstoles	Project	12/2018
Public-Social Partnership	Pamplona	Programme	12/2018
Ecological Common Goods	Alcalá de Henares	Project	4/2019
Common Culture	Cádiz	Strategy	12/2016

Source: Author

Inquiry Iteration II: Dialogical Interviews

In this study, 56 people participated in 50 interviews, of which 10% - three in Barcelona, two in Belgrade and one in Brussels - were collective interviews with two or three people. In the first round in Barcelona, nine persons participated in eight interviews to identify urban commons processes active in the city. A second phase with 26 participants and 23 interviews went deeper into some of those experiences. A third phase, with 20 participants and 17 interviews, focused on the resonance with three European experiences. The apparent unbalance between Barcelona and European interviews is balanced when taking into account the 38 participants from Barcelona in the workshops and the accumulated knowledge on the Barcelona situation. While figure 2.2 showed the research participants who contributed with their knowledge of commoning processes in Barcelona, wTable 2.2 lists all participants in the individual and collective interviews, including the effort to situate the debate on the proliferation of commoning processes in Belgrade, Berlin and Brussels. These dialogical interviews were semi-structured qualitative interviews with public personas, institutional players, experts and social practitioners involved in the development of projects and public policies related to urban commons. The interviews took place as dialogical encounters, enacting an 'ethics of reciprocity' (Powell & Takayoshi, 2003) through an exchange of personal experience and analysis. If semi-structured interviews with an open structure constitute a 'purposeful conversation' (Mason, 2002), the dialogical aspect underlines the exchange aspect, which aims to produce knowledge with the participants, not to extract data from them.

Table 2.2: Participants in individual and collective interviews

<i>Name / Pseudonym</i>	<i>Surname</i>	<i>Interviewee Code</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Role</i>
Interviews Barcelona / Phase 1				
Activist BCN		INT-ActivistBCN	F	BeC activist and former advisor
Marco	Aparicio	INT-MarcoA	M	President O Desc
Mónica	Garriga	INT-MonicaG	M	Som Procomuns member
David	Gómez	INT-DavidG	F	Som Procomuns member
Laia	Grau	INT-LaiaG	F	Barcelona City Planning Manager
Elba	Mansilla	INT-ElabM	F	Activist and Coopolis member
Rubén	Martínez	INT-RubenM	M	Activist and IDRA member
Gala	Pin	INT-GalaP	F	Former City Councillor Participation
Researcher BCN		INT-ResearBCN	M	Researcher
Blanca	Valdivia	INT-BlancaV	F	Feminist urban planner at Punt.6
Interviews Barcelona / Phase 2				
Albert	Martín	INT-AlbertM	M	City Participation Department
Álvaro	Porro	INT-AlvaroP	M	SSE Commissionat
Andrea	Corachán	INT-AndreaC	F	Teatre Arnau Assembly member
Arcadia		INT-Arcadia	F	Can Battló activist
Carolina	Romero	INT-CaroR	F	Decidm product owner
David	Juárez	INT-DavidJ	M	Architect and Straddle3 member
Elia	Hernando	INT-EliaH	F	City public worker

Table 2.2: Participants in individual and collective interviews (cont.)

Name / Pseudonym	Surname	Interviewee Code	Gender	Role
Jordi		INT-Jordi	M	Urban activist
Josep	Vidal	INT-JosepV	M	Regional General Director
Laia	Forné	INT-LaiatF	F	Former City Participation Advisor
Laia	Ricart	INT-LaiaR	F	Teatre Arnau Assembly member
Laia	Torras	INT-LaiaT	F	City public worker
Legal Counselor 1		INT-Legal1	M	City Legal Department
Legal Counselor 2		INT-Legal2	F	City Legal Department
Manuel	Punsoda	INT-ManuelP	M	City Participation Department
Mariona	Torra	INT-MarionaT	F	Legal advisor
Marta	Masats	INT-MartaM	F	Casa Orlandai member
Mónica	Mateos	INT-MonicaM	F	City Culture Department manager
Nuria	Alonso	INT-NuriaA	F	Canòdrom coordinator
Olivia		INT-Olivia	F	Can Battló activist
Pere	Serrasolses	INT-PereS	M	Bici Hub member
Raquel	Prado	INT-RaquelP	F	Legal advisor
Rosa	Sans	INT-RosaS	F	Ateneu de Memoria Popular member
Santiago	Ibarra	INT-SantiI	M	City District advisor
Xabier	Barandiarán	INT-XabierB	M	Decidim collaborator and researcher
Xavi	Farré	INT-XaviF	M	City District advisor
Interviews Belgrade / Phase 3				
Ana	Džokić	INT-AnaD	F	Stealth & Ko gradi grad member
Iva	Čukić	INT-IvaC	F	Ministry of Space member
Jovana	Timotijević	INT-JovanaM	F	Ministry of Space member
Lujba	Slavković	INT-LujbaS	F	Nova planska praksa member
Marc	Neelen	INT-MarcN	M	Stealth & Ko gradi grad member
Paul	Currión	INT-PaulC	M	Activist
Predag	Momčilović	INT-PredagM	M	Zajedničko member
Interviews Berlin / Phase 3				
Frauke	Gerstenberg	INT-FraujeG	F	raumlabor-berlin member
Iver	Ohm	INT-IverO	M	Activist
Julian	Zwicker	INT-JulianZ	M	Activist
Markus	Bader	INT-MarkusB	M	raumlabor-berlin member
Planner BER		INT-PlannerBER	F	Urban planner
Researcher BER		INT-ResearBER	F	Commons researcher
Tomma	Suki	INT-SukiT	F	X-Tor member
Interviews Brussels / Phase 3				
Advisor BXL		INT-AdvisorBXL	M	Groen Party advisor

Table 2.2: Participants in individual and collective interviews (cont.)

<i>Name / Pseudonym</i>	<i>Surname</i>	<i>Interviewee Code</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Role</i>
Allan	Wei	INT-AllanW	M	Activist
Benedikte	Zitouni	INT-BenedikteZ	F	Researcher
Joaquin	De Santos	INT-JoaquimS	M	Consultant
Lotte	Stoops	INT-LotteS	F	Groen Party parliamentary
Verena	Lenna	INT-VerenaL	F	Researcher

Source: Author

The sampling in the first round of interviews was informed by my activist experience in social movements and the municipalist movement. Based on this experience, I defined a pool of potential participants who would understand the commons political hypothesis and who were involved in municipalist politics and policy in one way or another. The resulting 'sample' was determined by suitability and opportunity: people who were familiar with the research hypothesis and available at the time of fieldwork. does not attempt to represent the general population of Barcelona or even the municipalist scene. Its purpose was to identify experiences related to urban commons and city-making in the context of the municipalist government.

Although I was acquainted - to varying degrees - with all the interviewees in the first round, their contributions provided insights into experiences and perspectives that I had not known or expected and helped to identify the interviewees in second round in a snowball technique. A third round of interviews included European actors participating in commoning processes in Berlin, Belgrade and Brussels. Interviewees in Berlin and Belgrade came through their involvement in the CMMM project, where I was part of the scientific committee, and included other actors working on municipalism, commons or planning with whom I have worked in the past or who were suggested by them. Actors in Brussels were identified during my Overseas Institutional Visit there.

Through the thesis, will quote the interviewees with the code between square parenthesis. In all cases, the translation will be mine. Annex A4 contains a table with the links to the interviews that have been transcribed and uploaded to the University of Sheffield data repository.

Inquiry Iteration III: Collaborative Workshops

The collaborative workshops focused on the relationship between actors in three existing programmes in Barcelona and a future scenario for the metropolitan region. The collaborative format produced for the workshops fits with the research aim: to envision a metropolitan future in which commoning is a hegemonic form of social organisation that requires different kinds of knowledges, experiences and perspectives. Belgian architect Liesbeth Huybrechts and her colleagues (2017) argue that the use of co-design in meso-political contexts contributes to the process of 'institutioning', defined as the transformation of existing 'institutional framing' based on cultural values such as democracy, institutional actions such as participation, and policies such as administrative guidelines.

Table 2.3: Participants in collaborative workshops

<i>Name / Pseudonym</i>	<i>Surname</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Role</i>
Workshop 1: Cultura Viva			
Andrea	Corachán	F	Community culture activist
Bru	Aguiló	M	Canòdrom coordinator
Cultural Producer		M	Community culture activist
Dani	Granados	M	City Culture Advisor
Marta	Vallejo	F	Community culture activist
Workshop 2: Democratic Innovation			
Andrés	Pereira de Lucena	M	Decidim Association member
Arnau	Monterde	M	City Democratic Innovation Director
Carol	Romero	F	Decidim Product Owner
Elisenda	Ortega	F	City public worker
Maite	Orellona	F	Decidim Association member
Nil	Homedes	M	Fundació Ferre i Guardia
Nuria	Alonso	F	Canòdrom coordinator
OS Activist		M	Former City Councillor
Workshop 3: Civil Patrimony			
Eduarne	Bagué	F	Researcher
Laia	Forné	F	Former City Participation Advisor
Laia	Torras	F	City public worker
Marc	Serra	M	City Councillor Participation
Marco	Aparicio	M	President Observatori Desc
Workshop 4: Future Scenarios			
Anna	Sans	F	City Urbanism Department worker
Arnau	Monterde	M	City Democratic Innovation Director
Eduarne	Bagué	F	Researcher
Elisenda	Ortega	F	City public worker
Luisa Fernanda	Pinto	F	Researcher
Marc	Montelló	M	Barcelona Regional Director
Marco	Aparicio	M	President O Desc
María	Cortada	F	Barcelona Strategic Metropolitan Plan
Oriol	Estela	M	Barcelona Strategic Metropolitan Plan
Researcher		M	Ecosystemic processes researcher
Verena	Lenna	F	Rsearcher

Source: Author

I have used the workshop method of inquiry for its capacity to produce collective knowledge. A workshop is a facilitated collaborative session that is practical and outcome-oriented (Senabre et al., 2018). The workshop format includes a co-production by design aspect, where 'design' is considered broadly, from places to systems to structures. In these workshops, the design aspect primarily applies to the workshop format. I designed the first three workshops based on the second round of interviews and co-facilitated them with actors from the experiences under analysis. The fourth workshop was co-designed in collaboration with two organisations with invested interests in strategic planning and future scenarios.

In this last case, the co-design also applied to the scenarios that emerged from the workshop.

Co-design means that people come together to conceptually develop and create things that respond to certain matters of concern and create a (better) future reality [...] The key task in co-design is, therefore, the negotiation, creation and development of socio-material structures and processes (Zamenopoulos & Alexiou, 2018, pp. 12–13, italics are mine).

2.3.2 Methods of analysis

Methods of analysis include knowledge graphs, relational mapping and horizons framework.

Analysis Iteration I: Graphs

I used knowledge and issues graphs to analyse the archived documentation of municipalist debates and to establish relationships between events, people and concepts. A knowledge graph is "a graph of data intended to accumulate and convey knowledge of the real world, whose nodes represent entities of interest and whose edges represent potentially different relations between these entities" (Hogan et al., 2021, p. 3). In the public policy analysis, I created issue graphs to show how ideas and concepts are connected. In these graphs, issues are connected by a 'predicate' that defines the relationship between the two objects of analysis (Kumar et al., 2019). Traditionally, these analysis methods have been applied to the analysis of large data sets (Waller, Rayner, & Chilvers, 2023; Chen, Jia, & Xiang, 2020). In this study, however, I use graphs as a diagrammatic tool to visualise relationships and reveal patterns.

Analysis Iteration II: Relational mapping

Maps reveal hidden aspects that are considered relevant and outside 'normal perceptions' (Kollektiv Oranotango+, 2018), and there is a well-established tradition of using mappings as a form of self-inquiry and as a representation of problems and demands (Gago, 2017; Tuck & McKenzie, 2015). In Spain, this tradition of activist mapping includes the "Gibraltar Strait Critical Cartography" by Hackitectura (2004), the map of the "Other Málaga" developed for the local Social Forum (Entransito, 2008), the action-map on "What is the Forum really about?" (2004) including the companies involved in the 2004 Forum of the Cultures in Barcelona or the MadMadrid mapping included in *Madrid ¿la suma de todos?* (Observatorio Metropolitano de Madrid, 2007). During the Fada'iat meeting organised by Indymedia Estrecho and held in Tarifa in 2005, the US art critic Brian Hlomes (2006) pointed out that social movements always make treasure maps, where the treasure is someone to work with. In contrast to the geolocation and categorisation of those maps, the mapping

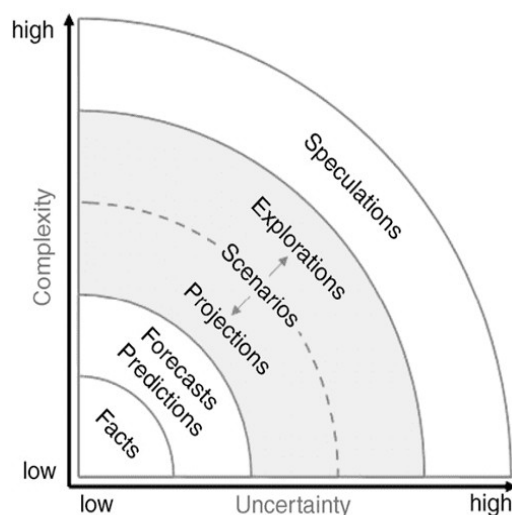
method I have developed for this research locates the experiences mentioned in the interviews not within a set of spatial coordinates, but as part of an 'ecology'.

This method followed three considerations. Firstly, the mapping process did not attempt to define what is or is not a 'commons' as a static definition, but was interested in what might be involved in a process of becoming a 'commons'. Secondly, the mapping does not present a list of discrete projects, but describes a system within broader urban processes. Finally, the mapping elements have a triple characterisation: they are commoning actors, situated in a field, and within a public-social habitat. With this aim in mind, the method used to produce the mapping presented in Chapter 8 is based on the analysis of the interviews and the characterisation of the elements involved using an actor-network framework. Unlike the issue graphs used in Chapter 7, my mapping of urban commoning processes in Barcelona mapping - explained in Chapter 8 and presented as a proper map with two sides in Annex B - deploys layers with different types of elements and defines a conceptual territory where the institutional coordinates are linear, as in a pentagram, and the elements are deployed as nodes-actors, vectors-links and areas-fields.

Analytical Iteration III: Horizons Framework

The use of future scenarios involves an analysis of the current situation based on existing information and knowledge, and a projection of the implications of extending, deepening and broadening existing elements. Scenarios provide plausible descriptions of how the future might develop, based on "coherent and internally consistent set of assumptions about key relationships and driving forces" (IPCC, 2000, p. 63), and offer a 'feasible depiction of a conceivable future reality' (Piñeiro & Navacerrada, 2012, p. 18, my translation). Figure 2.4 shows how scenarios assume a higher degree of uncertainty, derived from the assumption that the 'future boundary conditions' may differ substantially from the present.

Figure 2.4: Complexity and uncertainty in forecasting methods



Source: Zurek & Henrichs, 2007, p. 1285.

Scenarios differ from predictions and forecasts: predictions aim to provide an accurate estimate of the future situation of an existing system following an extension of current dynamics, while the

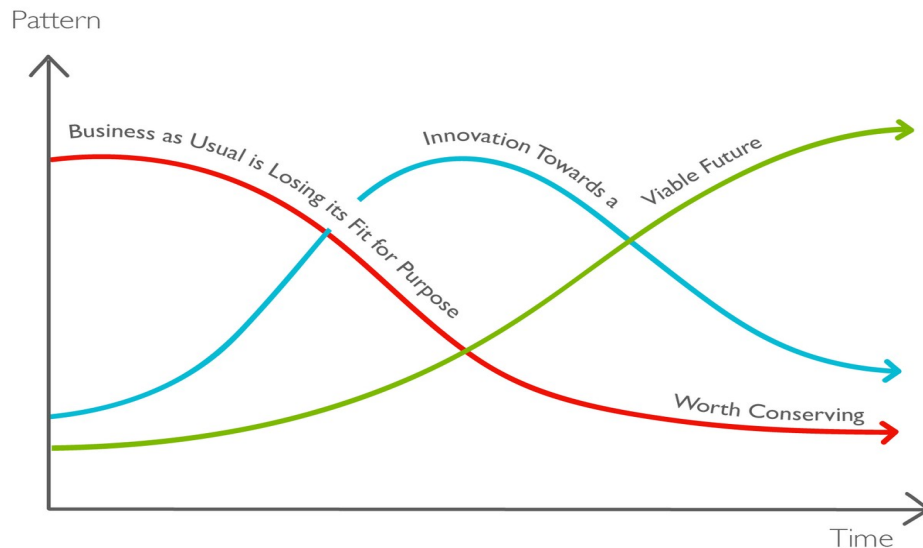
more nuanced forecast is a projection that includes assumptions about future developments that may or may not occur. Scenarios occupy a middle ground between the higher complexity of speculation and exploration and the lower uncertainty of projections and predictions, which makes it suitable for this research.

Future scenario methods were initially developed for military and commercial interests, such as the RAND Corporation's war game scenarios at the beginning of the Cold War or the oil industry's climate change scenario. Scenarios of this kind have been used to reduce uncertainty and risk for state security and in commercial and market-oriented sectors. Future scenarios have also been used for non-commercial purposes, for example in environmental science forecasting since the 1970s. More recently, they have been used by the IPCC and the Partnership for European Environment Research's Millennium Ecosystem Assessment. These research projects recognise that "practices of bringing the future into the present and shaping the present to anticipated futures take socio-material form in the complex architectures and infrastructures of everyday life" (Granjou, Walker, & Salazar, 2017, p. 6). However, the implementation of scenario-building methodologies in contexts with high levels of complexity and mutability, such as urban planning, face various challenges, including the lack of a consistent methodology (Stojanovic, Mitkovic, & Mitkovic, 2014) and the focus on reducing uncertainties (Chakraborty & McMillan, 2015). Here, scenarios are often used to provide inputs to the planning process, either as suggestions to be incorporated (Khakee, 1991), as an assessment of their resilience (Rogers et al., 2012), or as information provided by heterogeneous stakeholders (Abo-El-Wafa, Yeshitela, & Pauleit, 2018). In a context where urban planning is still expected to produce a project or a territorial development model expressed through concrete materialisations, scenarios act as a method that feeds data into the planning process, rather than a methodology that defines the planning process. In relation to the question of commons proliferation posed in this thesis, I will argue that future scenarios in planning can help to identify the elements of the existing reality that contribute to the desired social objectives and to generate hypotheses about the future, in which new elements and dynamics can be incorporated. As a prospective tool, the use of future scenarios is seen as a methodology that produces 'interesting results' that are considered usable and rigorous, but also capable of challenging prior assumptions and opening up new lines of inquiry (Ramirez et al., 2015).

In my backcasting analysis of the future scenarios workshop, I have used the Three Horizons (3H) framework developed by Bill Sharpe and others (Sharpe et al., 2016; Sharpe & Hodgson, 2006), and shown in Figure 2.5. In the 3H framework, at the top of the present, the red horizon represents a 'world in crisis', sustained by traditional and recent forms of 'business as usual', containing elements worth preserving. At the bottom of the present situation, the green horizon represents the vision of a future 'viable world' that can be identified by 'pockets' in the present. Starting at the bottom, the intermediate blue horizon represents a 'world in transition'. developed so it can put in question and disrupt the more prominent 'world in crisis' and foster the transformation needed to develop the emerging 'viable world' fully. This framework assumes a continuous and uneventful rhythm of change similar to the older Kondratieff economic 'long waves', implying a deterministic approach, and a development in waves similar to the more contemporary Gartner 'hype cycle' applied to emerging technologies (Roselló, personal communication, 2023). Despite these shortcomings, and following the aphorism that "all models are wrong, but some are useful" (Box, 1979, p. 202),

used the 3H framework as a deliberate simplification of a more complex and yet to come process of becoming. I consider that a horizon framework allows for the exploration of conditions of possibility that "feed on uncertainty" (Latour, 2005, p. 115) rather than reducing it, and allows for thinking beyond the usual categories of what is considered possible, realistic or inevitable, and exploring 'radical departures from the status quo' (Iwaniec et al., 2021, p. 2).

Figure 2.5: 3H framework: Evolution of future scenarios



Source: H3Uni <https://www.h3uni.org/tutorial/three-horizons/>

My interpretation of the 3H framework seeks to develop plausible scenarios in which commoning practices proliferate, requiring an exercise in speculation that involves a transformation of 'future boundary conditions' (Zurek & Henrichs, 2007, p. 1285) that must remain imaginable and feasible. In line with the propositional nature of this research, the 3H framework has been designed to represent positive, desirable futures. It also incorporates a 'value bias', whereby "solutions that create conditions conducive to life and establish regenerative patterns are valued more highly than those that don't" (Wahl, 2020, np). While in the original 3H framework the horizontal axis defines a timeline, in my analysis it refers to situations that may or may not occur at different times, assuming that the hegemony of each horizon is likely to play out differently depending on the specific fields, actors and territories involved. From this a-synchronic point of view, all horizons are likely to play a relevant role at any given moment, a state of overlapping realities already explored in an early assessment of the future of the Internet (Randall, 1997).

Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the situated, relational, mediated and open production of careful thinking applied in the research project. It presented: an activist methodology, influenced by militant, decolonial and feminist research practices, engaged in a collective process of knowledge production by epistemic communities working on urban commons; a research process inspired by grounded theory, combining induction, deduction and abduction in an iterative process; and finally, a research process that applies different methods in each of its iterations.

First, I have argued that the activist methodology used in the research takes a collaborative approach, incorporating the contributions of the participants, and their motivations and horizons of change. The research inquiry into the questions presented in Chapter 1 is informed by the explicit aim of militant research to produce knowledge for, not about, the processes involved in the research. Secondly, I have explained how the research design is informed by collaborative practices of epistemic co-production and co-design, and how the research iterations move through territorial scales and time frames: it looks at past municipalist narratives and norms at the national level, in Spain; it focuses on urban commoning processes that were active at the local level, in Barcelona, at the time of the research; and it explores the potential horizons of transformation at the metropolitan level, in Barcelona and other European metropolitan systems. Finally, I have explained how each of these iterations uses different methods of research and analysis and. In the first iteration, I analysed publicly available documentation. In the second iteration, I conducted dialogical interviews and used relational mapping to represent the relationships between actors, fields and habitat. In the third iteration, I analysed a collaborative production of prediction scenarios as backcasting.

The next chapter presents the conceptual framework used to articulate the research enquiries and findings, the inputs and contributions gathered from theory and practice, into a proposal for a becoming-common of the public.

Chapter 3 - Theoretical Framework. Ecology of Commoning Practices

An ecology of practices [...] does not approach practices as they are—physics as we know it, for instance—but as they may become.

Isabelle Stengers, 'Introductory notes for an ecology of the practices', 2005

Introduction

This research project considers theory as "a box of tools [...that] must function" (Deleuze & Foucault, 1977, p. 208) that is used to produce a framework that supports the thesis aim: to identify the elements of the proliferation of the commons. The theoretical toolbox of the thesis is based on the idea of an Ecology of Practices (EoP), proposed by Belgian philosopher of science Isabelle Stengers which "functions in minor key" (Stengers, 2005, p. 186). Australian feminist economists J. K. Gibson-Graham argue that such minor keys build 'weak' theoretical frameworks that help make sense of 'thick' descriptions, urging us to resist the temptation to produce a 'major key' theory that builds on strong discourses that 'organise events into understandable and seemingly predictable trajectories' to explain the totality of all experience. Instead, they argue for a theory that avoids the need to re-elaborate and confirm what we already know, and that requires careful reconsideration of a diversity of 'small facts' that speak to 'large issues' (Gibson-Graham, 2014, pp. 148–149). Applying the EoP to the proliferation of urban commons is a 'translation' from the science wars triggered by the sociological analysis of laboratory practices to the culture wars triggered by the municipalist transformation of institutional practices. The constellation of theoretical concepts within and beyond ANT, presented in this chapter, supports this translation.

Firstly, this chapter presents the elements that define Stengers' EoP as a 'tool for thinking' that is capable to 'address and actualise this power of the situation that makes it a matter of particular concern' (Stengers, 2005, p. 185). Secondly, it introduces other ANT concepts used throughout the thesis, such as matters of concern and hybrids, as developed by Bruno Latour (Latour, 1993, 2005), which are used in the understanding of commons as an a-modern practice, and the idea of assemblages, used in the reframing of planning. Thirdly, the chapter introduces the concepts of 'field' and 'habitus', developed by Pierre Bourdieu (Bourdieu et al., 2020; Bourdieu, 2012), which are used to address questions of power, and the concept of 'latent commons', developed by US anthropologist Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing (2015), which contributes to a horizon of transformation based on the proliferation of commons.

3.1. Ecology of Practices (EoP)

In her text "Introductory Notes on an Ecology of Practices", Stengers proposes the idea of an ecology in which no practice is 'like any other' (Stengers, 2005, p. 184). Stengers' text was prompted by concerns about how scientific knowledge is produced and validated, and by whom. With the EoP, she argues that scientific knowledge produced in a laboratory comes from one

'practice' among many others. In this argument, Physics has nothing to say about, for instance, Neopagan practices. Stengers proposed the EoP to create a composition without assimilation of seemingly opposed fields. In Stengers' case, the opposing fields were engaged in the 'science wars' between the different modes of knowledge production, where physics and the laboratory occupied a hegemonic position. The use of the EoP framework to analyse the becoming-commons of the public is justified on the assumption that the proliferation of commoning processes entails a transformation of what the 'public' - as an ethos encompassing the common good and the general interest - means and can achieve. It also assumes that the institutional practice of enacting such public ethos changed in the municipalist experiences.

3.1.1 EoP elements

Isabelle Stengers defines the elements of EoP as: a) technologies of belonging that mobilise practitioners, b) challenges faced by practice, c) diplomacy enacted in the borders between constraints and obligations, and the potential for d) empowering and e) fostering found in the transformation of dynamics, learnings and relations.

a) *Technologies of belonging* make causes and obligations present. Stengers insists on seeing obligations not as burdens but as attachments that are not imposed from outside but incorporated - that is, embodied - as a shared responsibility that defines a political community: "not a technique of production but, as Brian Massumi put it, works both as challenging and fostering" (Stengers, 2005, p. 192). The Belgian sociologist and Stengers collaborator Benedikt Zitouni explains that, for resurgent ecologies to exist, the obligations cannot be something that we 'simply' choose but:

We rise to the occasion of what is required from us, what it demanded from us. But we will only rise to the occasion [...] if we are made to care for it in one way or another, which means a reframing [...] First, we need to reframe to such an extent that the present becomes thick of possibilities [INT-BenedikteZ].

Despite the relevance of the term in Zitouni's explanation of Stenger's EoP, 'reframing' is an operation that has never been explicitly articulated in ANT theory. However, it is used in various declarations of intent: as the need to "to reframe both what capitalism and what ecology might mean, allowing ecological thinking to reorient the study of capitalism and new kinds of capitalist critique to infuse the study of ecological crisis" by Latour and others (2018, p. 587) or in identifications such as the recognition of a "reframing of GMOs themselves [...] no longer seen as worthwhile innovations" by Stengers (2010, p. 21). In this thesis, this underexplored concept will be relevant in characterising the commoning processes taking place within the municipalist project.

b) *Challenges* are defined through the recognition and reinterpretation of borders as limits of the habitat in which the practice operates (Stengers, 2005, p. 184) in Frichot, 2017, p. 147). This transformation of limits does not involve the unification of elements on either side of the divide: there is no final convergence that overcomes a previous divergence. Deleuze and Guattari (1970) propose a 'disjunctive synthesis' to define a non-convergent challenge. Applied to urban planning, the 'disjunctive synthesis' challenges zoning and other planning mechanisms that prevent the composition of heterogeneous and contradictory elements, and opens up the possibility of an ethos that embraces difference and 'apparent impossibilities', using assemblage theory to see elements

as complementary, mapping "the multiplicity structuring the possible behaviour patterns of a system and the points at which the system might change" (Hillier & Metzger, 2021, p. 42).

c) *Diplomacy* accepts the risk of reformulation. Out of the 'disjunctive synthesis', diplomacy creates the possibility of a conjunction: the creation of something that is 'this and that' where previously it was necessary to choose between 'this or that', creating attachments of obligations as attachments that cannot be ignored. The risk of diplomacy is that such a reformulation is not a process of 'good-will' negotiations around a shared understanding, but a process of "constructions among humans as constrained by diverging attachments, such as belonging" (Stengers, 2005, p. 193). In terms of governance, attachments translate into shared values, principles and rules, or what we have called 'common codes' (Méndez de Andés Aldama, Hamou, & Aparicio Wilhelmi, 2020).

d) *Empowerment* entails a transformation of personal stakes into collective power, as one of the conditions that allow diplomacy to take risks. In turn, the attachments achieved through diplomacy renew an empowerment of the practice. This process of empowerment by conjunction requires an actualisation of causes that must be performed through rituals (Stengers, 2005, p. 195). Here power is not defined as power-over or power-to, Spinoza's distinction between *potestas* and *potentia* (Negri, 1981) or Deleuze's between *puissance* and *pouvoir* (Lambert, 2013) - but as an actualisation of the practitioners' capacity in operating within their habitat (Frichot, 2017, p. 147).

e) Finally, *fostering* enacts the relation between belonging and becoming and creates a dynamics of pragmatic learning about what works and how. I will argue that this enacting allows to consider planning as a mechanism for fostering commoning practices and expanding their capacities and potentials. As the Australian architectural philosopher Hélène Frichot points out:

[...] an ecology of practices does something more than simply describe what you are already doing anyway. It pushes further, aiming to forge 'new practical identities' for practices, new connections, new possibilities, and this very often requires an adventurous and speculative leap. (Frichot, 2017, p. 147)

3.2 Hybrids and assemblages

Two other key concepts proposed within Actor-Network Theory help to translate the idea of an ecology of practices into the articulation between municipalism, commons and planning. Firstly, I draw on Bruno Latour to explain the relevance of ANT theory to this research as a 'change of topology', linked to the use of concepts such as 'habitat' and mapping as a method of analysis - as presented in Chapter 2 - and the concept of hybrids as an a-modern ontology, with its relationship to the idea of a 'meso' level. Secondly, I use the concept of assemblages to think about planning as a process of 'open-ended gatherings' (Tsing, 2015, p. 22) within a conscious choice for urban complexity (Stengers, 2000).

3.2.1 A-modern hybrids

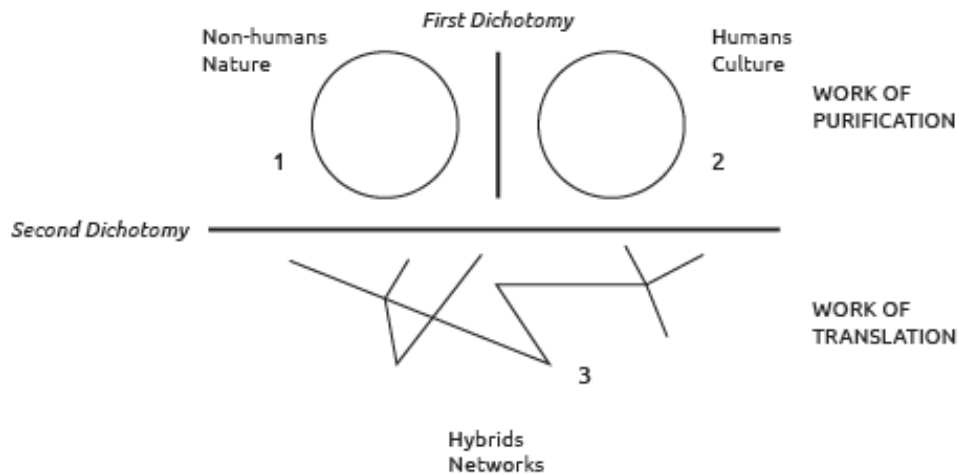
Actor-Network Theory, according to Bruno Latour, is:

[...] a change of topology [where] one is asked to think in terms of nodes that have as many dimensions as they have connections. As a first approximation, ANT claims that

modern societies cannot be described without recognising them as having a fibrous, thread-like, wiry, stringy, ropy, capillary character [...]. As part of this exercise of confronting the categories established by modernity and "to rebuild social theory out of networks". (Latour, 1996, p. 269)

Figure 3.1 shows Latour's understanding of modern 'purification', which, as I will argue, allows for an understanding of the commons as a-modern and therefore outside of its dichotomies:

Figure 3.1: Modern purification and translation



Source: Bruno Latour (1993), Figure 1.1 Purification and translation, p. 11.

In his book *We have never been modern*, Latour contrasts the 'work of translation', which offers an interpretation of hybrids and networks, with the 'work of purification', as the act along two different dichotomies. The first organises the world in opposite pairs: human culture and non-human nature, objects and subjects, and men and women, among others. The second operates between this modern organisation in separated realities that sit 'above', as the recognised mode of functioning, and a world of 'hybrids', the networked actors that operate in-between the impossible separation of the modern constitution.

In this scheme, translation creates hybrids as "mixtures between entirely new types of beings", while purification separates them into "entirely distinct ontological zones" (Latour, 1993, p. 10). The first type of elements are 'networks' and the second, the 'modern critical stance'. In *The Art of Being In-between*, US ethnohistorian Yanna Yannakakis argues that while Latour considers a unidirectional mode in which something enters and exits transformed, she proposes a bidirectional transfer in which something passes and returns through mediators who act as brokers: "bridges positioned in multiple coalitions whose role in the network requires not only translating but also applying a 'tactical' sensibility" (Yannakakis, 2008, p. 10). As we will see, I will propose to add more layers to this multiplicity of mediations.

In extending hybrids into the field of knowledge production, Latour proposes the construction of 'matters of fact' so that they become 'matters of concern'. Matters of concern would then be more

than a modern construction of 'facts', but a 'gathering' of ideas, controversies, forces and fields of intervention around a given situation, creating a 'descriptive tool' that aims not to subtract but to 'add' to reality. The thick description advocated by Gibson-Graham would then bring in the things that integrate the partial account of reality given by the 'matters of fact' into something meaningful for people's lives. It is a theoretical exercise that does not seek to debunk but to 'protect and care': the main concern in these matters is to fight against simplification and reduction, to accept nothing less 'flowing with the flow' (Latour, 2014, pp. 232, 24–25):

A matter of concern is what happens to a matter of fact when you add to it its whole scenography, much like you would do by shifting your attention from the stage to the whole machinery of a theatre. (Latour, 2014, p. 39)

I will argue that the shift from facts to concerns is a shift towards a theory in 'minor theory' that operates at the meso level. Following the double meaning in Deleuze's proposition of 'thinking *par le milieu*', minor theory operates 'through the middle' of things and 'with the surroundings', that is, without a priori ideal definitions and inevitably entangled in its habitat (Stengers, 2005, pp. 186–87). This argument is based on Latour's consideration of 'the social', where he reconsiders scale in such a way that

Macro no longer describes a wider or a larger site in which the micro would be embedded like some Russian Matryoshka doll, but another equally local, equally micro place, which is connected to many others through some medium transporting specific types of traces. (Latour, 2005, p. 176)

Following ANT theory, I argue that such a 'medium' - the "substance regarded as the means of transmission of a force or effect" according to the Merriam Webster dictionary - is not just an intermediary but an actant in the meso-scale.

3.2.2 Urban assembling

Assemblage is the English term used to translate Deleuze and Guattari's concept of '*agencement*', a term that shares the same root as agency in French. The assembling aspect of 'putting together' highlights ANT's definition of 'assemblages' as 'arrangements endowed with the capacity to act in different ways depending on their configuration' (Çalışkan & Callon, 2010, p. 9). However, Tsing provides the opportunity to think beyond a set of given pieces when she characterises assemblages as 'open-ended gatherings':

They allow us to ask about communal effects without assuming them. They show us potential histories in the making. [...] Thinking through assemblage urges us to ask: How do gatherings sometimes become 'happenings,' that is, greater than the sum of their parts? (Tsing, 2015, p. 22)

I argue that this interpretation, when applied to commons, allows us to think about the elements of commoning processes - community, resource and management - and the relationship to their boundaries without pre-existing assumptions about what or how they should be.

Applied to urban studies, assemblages are seen as having 'increasing traction' (Rankin, 2011). The North American urban geographer Katharine Rankin argues that thick descriptions of everyday

urban life resonate with the concept of assemblages, opening up a social field that is broader than the one conceived under capitalist unity, and the Australian urban planner Jean Hillier calls for a redefinition of planning practice that, in the face of a contingent and uncertain world, abandons the imposition of spatial certainties and embraces 'an ontology of becoming that emphasises movement, process and emergence' (Hillier, 2005, p. 273). In Rankin's view, assemblage ontologies move away from the intention of describing unknown situations in order to make them clearer and reduce their complexity - an intention I would argue is associated to works critical of capitalism such as Mike Davis (1990) *City of Quartz* or Hardt & Negri (2001) *Empire*- as they seek to "delineate on-the-ground processes of assemblage, and the making and unmaking of hegemony [through] tools that can render grounded accounts of how people inhabit induced governmental subjectivities" (Rankin, 2011, p. 564).

I will argue that the analysis of contemporary socio-political-economic developments in urban territories as 'open-ended' assemblages makes sense under Stengers' argument that modern urban planners explicitly chose - mainly for practical reasons, she says - against complexity and in favour of complications. Instead of considering cities as complex entities that are constantly modified and negotiated, modernist planners developed rules and conventions that made it possible to stabilise such entities and make them 'workable', as a practical operation that transformed a city '*se faisant*' [in the making] into a territory '*tout fait*' [already made] (Stengers, 2000). In the making of urban territories through assembling, the US-based Mexican philosopher and architecture professor Manuel de Landa conceives of assemblages as the articulation of relational and spatial elements that conform to a 'social whole'. This 'whole' emerges from relationships between heterogeneous and autonomous parts that can be 'unplugged' from any given whole and connected to another set of interactions. In an attempt to address the problem of scale, assemblages become 'individual entities', 'an individual person, an individual community, an individual organisation, an individual city', operating at different scales but able to "directly interact with one another" (De Landa, 2016, p. 10). Also, that the separation between relational and spatial processes mirrors the modernist separation between material and immaterial, social and institutional or immanence and contingency.

This dichotomy is challenged by UK-based architect Tanzil Shafique in his analysis of 'housing relationalities', where he argues that for an effective implementation of assemblage theory, it is necessary to move "beyond simply describing empirically the connectedness between these, the task is to identify the *kinds* of entanglements based on how they operate on the ground" (Shafique, 2022, p. 1018, italics in the original). Shafique characterises assemblages along three elements: the material and performative entanglements organised in overlapping 'tendencies', the "organising mechanisms" of production processes, and the lines of desires that establish assemblages and conform an unpredictable "landscape" of possibilities, while Tsing refers - unapologetically - to "disturbance" as the process that "opens the terrain for transformative encounters" that rearrange existing assemblages (Tsing, 2015, pp. 160–162).

3.3 Power and proliferation

Following GT, the inductive application of EoP raises the need to complement ANT's theoretical framework with concepts that help to incorporate questions of power configurations and the

possibility of proliferation. In Chapter 6, we will see how these two aspects relate to the question of planning as a configuration of possibilities that modernity has deployed in the service of 'new forms of economic accumulation' (Tafari, 1976, p. 8). The two concepts directly concerned with constructions of power incorporated into the theoretical toolbox of this thesis are field and habitus, while the question of proliferation has been addressed through latency and prefiguration.

3.3.1 Field and habitus

In sociological analysis, 'field' refers to "an ensemble of relationships between actors antagonistically oriented to the same prizes or values" (Turner, 1976, p. 135, quoted in Martin, 2003, p. 20), while Bourdieu elaborates on how power dynamics define a 'field' as a system of relations and differences between subjects. In his lectures at the College of France, Bourdieu defines two paths towards the construction of the concept of field. On the one hand, he draws a theoretical path which deals with the typological definition, the interactive relations and the structure of "the site of a more or less overt struggle over the definition of the legitimate principles of the division of the field" (Bourdieu, 1985, p. 734, quoted in Martin, 2003, p. 23). On the other hand, a practical path concerned with the relationship between the field and its effects and the characterisation of the positions of the actors in relation to each other (Bourdieu et al., 2020, pp. 238–244).

For Bourdieu, a field is a historically constructed space that has its own institutions and its own rules so that a network of relations is established between positions whose incidence in each specific field is given both by their position - present and potential - in the power structures established in that field and by the relations established with other positions in the field, which "can be defined as a weft or configuration of relations [...] It is at each moment the state of the relations of force between the players that defines the structure in the field" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 74, my translation). Applied to institutional analysis, a field is defined by the relations between nodes of a given configuration, "points or positions in organizational space and the forces binding them together" (Emirbayer & Johnson, 2008, p. 6), where habitus is seen as the link between macro- and micro-level processes). In an interpretation less focused on domination and closer to ANT, Haraway (1988, p. 590) notes how 'fields' are defined by 'interpreters' and 'decoders'. within a 'power sensitive' conversation.

Bourdieu argues that power struggles within the field are coordinated not by an ideological strategy but by the concept of 'habitus', a cultural unconscious that functions as a matrix of open dispositions that organise and transform experiences (Bourdieu & Chartier, 2010). With this articulation, Bourdieu would define behavioural structures based on elective affinities that aim to produce a "common sense" and a homogeneity of practices that make the world readable. I will argue, however, that habitus is not simply a reflection of social structures, but a pattern of internalised principles that change according to our interactions and that are relevant to processes of commoning. Following E. P. Thompson's explanation of traditional English commons, I will use habitus in a more practice-oriented sense:

Agrarian custom was never fact. It was ambience. It may best be understood with the aid of Bourdieu's concept of 'habitus' - a lived environment comprised of practices, inherited expectations, rules which both determined limits to usages and disclosed

possibilities, norms and sanctions both of law and neighbourhood pressures [...] Form gave sanction to [...] field of play and possibility, in which interests knew how to coexist and contend. (Thompson, 1991, p. 102,179)

3.3.2 Latency and prefiguration

Thompson's idea of a 'field of play and possibility' is developed through the concepts of latent commons and prefiguration. In *The Mushroom at the End of the World*, Tsing introduces the concept of 'disruption' as a condition for the existence of 'latent commons' and explains how, in the case of mushrooms, this latency 'emerges' to the surface through human disruption of the productive landscape: "Rather than seeing only the expansion-and-conquest strategies of relentless individuals, we must look for histories that develop through contamination" (Tsing, 2015, p. 29). Following Gutwirth & Stengers' (2016) idea of resurgent commons, I will consider 'latency' as a situation in which the memory - even the imaginary - that makes collective resources 'commons' is lost, even though they retain some of the commoning aspects, such as universal access. Even if, unlike the traditional and digital commons, there are no legal figures to invoke, the urban commons can re-emerge because they never ceased to be there, even if in a latent form. I am interested in the previously invisible associations and in the potential of these latent commons and link them to the potential consideration of commons as a social system. Here, the interest in what is managed in common and by whom addresses the same question that Latour posed for 'the social' more than a decade after *We have never been modern* and almost two decades ago now: How to re-assemble the commons?

As we will see in Chapter 9, one possible strategy links disruption to planning as a tool for promoting 'prefigurative' practices of commoning. The prefigurative nature of politics as 'an instrument of social change' (Yates, 2015, p. 2) also links municipalist and planning concerns with urban assemblages as "attachment to something in a disappearing world, dwelling on possible becomings, pressing for, insisting on, all those 'might haves' or 'could bes' implicit in situations" (Stengers & Debaise, 2017, p. 17). In her study of urban social movements from alter-globalisation to Occupy, US political scientist Marianne Maeckelbergh argues that "practicing prefigurative politics means removing the temporal distinction between the struggle in the present and a goal in the future; instead, the struggle and the goal, the real and the ideal, become one in the present" (Maeckelbergh, 2012, p. 6). In the 1980s, the British New Left sociologist Wini Breines coined the term 'prefigurative politics' "to designate an essentially antiorganizational politics characteristic of the movement, as well as of parts of new left leadership; it may be recognised in counter-institutions, demonstrations and the attempt to embody personal and antihierarchical values in politics" (Breines, 1980, p. 421). From its inception, the concept was rooted in the communal organisation of democratic and non-authoritarian revolutionary processes, such as Spanish anarchism or the Italian workers' cooperatives of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, involving a rejection of hierarchical authority relations, a critique of centralised forms of power, and a commitment to "democratisation through local, collective structures that anticipate the future liberated society" (Boggs, 1977, p. 103).

Prefiguration presents planning as an "experimental anticipation projected into the future" (Mannheim, 1929, cited in Tafuri, 1976, p. 54). As an example of the prefigurative aspect of

utopias, the UK political scientist Ruth Kinna refers to the 'democratic General Assemblies' based on consensus decision-making and the creation of mutual aid institutions such as 'kitchens, libraries, clinics, media centres' described by US anthropologist David Graeber (2011). Kinna argues that such political prefiguration should "go hand in hand with the desire for long-term, broad-horizon imagination" and "the continuous exercise of testing the imaginary landscapes against the necessities and the subterranean flows of daily life" (Campagna & Campiglio, 2012, p. 5, quoted in Kinna, 2016, p. 202).

Conclusion

This chapter concludes Part I - Background by providing an account of the theoretical toolbox used in the research 'in the middle' presented in this thesis. It sets out the concepts within and outside the ANT framework that will be used to build a meso-theory that mediates across fields and habitats, but also - as we saw in Chapter 2 - across scales and temporality.

I have explained how the thesis mobilises elements of Stenger's Ecology of Practices, namely technology of belonging, diplomacy and fostering and becoming, which I will apply throughout the thesis. These elements are complemented by other concepts used in ANT, such as a-modern hybrids and matters of concern, assemblage theory and prefiguration, which provide the framework for the proposal to reassemble the elements involved in the proliferation of commons, the concepts of field and habitus, used to analyse the articulation between municipalist politics and policies, and those of latency and disruption, used to carry this articulation further into planning.

The following three chapters form Part II - Theory, and will discuss the conceptual proposals from theoretical and practical backgrounds in the fields of municipalism, commons and planning, and a discussion of their applicability in this thesis through the lens of alternative practices for urban democracy.

PART II - LEARNING FROM THE THEORY



Chapter 4 - Democratic Municipalism

2015 was a turning point for all of us [...] We worked mostly with spaces that had - whenever possible, whenever we could find it - that spark of an awakened community that wanted to do things [...] and that's where we were when everything changed.

Interview with David Juárez, 2022

Introduction

As explained in Chapter 1, this practice-led thesis is based on personal and collective experiences in three areas - municipalism, commons and planning - that provide a ground for rethinking the conditions of possibility of a social organisation based on collective action as an alternative to the modern nation-state and the neoliberal capitalist market. This chapter is dedicated to municipalism as an attempt to radically democratise local institutions and their governance, based on the municipalist experience that took place in Spain between 2015 and 2019, and will continue in Barcelona until 2023. I will characterise municipalism in Spain as a democratic endeavour and discuss the theoretical production on municipalism generated by academia and social movements in order to identify the roots, goals and potentials of this experience and to provide a theoretical framework for the analysis of the practice-research part of the thesis. The aim is to establish the context in which municipalism functions as a vectorial and prefigurative practice in the productive but contested intersection between the goal of opening up governmental instruments and the respect for the agency of social movements.

In this chapter, I will first discuss the municipalist roots of radical democracy projects at the local level. I will identify a history of urban demands that has taken different forms in different territories, what has been identified as a 'new municipalism' and what I have reformulated as 'democratic municipalism'. I will argue that the Spanish municipalist movement has sought to develop an institutional and governance transformation in which democracy acts as what Isabelle Stengers (2005) calls a 'cause': a shared responsibility that defines a political community. Secondly, I seek to define the municipalist transformative horizons and actions as they have been developed in Spain. I will argue that these transformations were produced by the political climate of the 15M, but also used the administrative tools at hand to create a municipalist governmentality that affected both the administrative narrative and the normative. Finally, I discuss the articulation between the commons and the municipalist political hypothesis. I will argue that this articulation is a process of 'commoning the government' that was implemented as a vectorial and prefigurative strategy that informed municipalist public discourse and institutional policies through the debate on the commons as a political concern.

4.1 Local democracy

The Spanish 'municipalist wager' (Observatorio Metropolitano, 2014) was mobilised by the assemblies of the movement that occupied the squares on 15 May 2011 and was part of an "institutional attack" by the "politics of change" initiated by the *Podemos* [We Can] party in the 2014 EU elections. In this context, the 15M slogan "They call it democracy, but it is not" and "we are not commodities in the hands of bankers" gave shape to concrete demands that were recognised as part of a new "common sense" (Manetto, 2011). This 'political mood' required a new political organisation radically democratic (Fernández-Savater, 2012), and made the idea of municipalist local government not only desirable but feasible. This idea was part of a history of urban democratic movements that, I will argue, saw the municipal administration not as the local branch of a national project, but as the foundation of a political transformation across scales. In this most recent version, municipalism is rooted in urban social movements that have sought to take control of the streets since the late 1990s, and in struggles for the right to the city, especially in terms of housing and urban services - but also refugee and migrant rights, or precarity within a rich history in Western culture of regarding cities as the democratic space *par excellence*.

Democracy starts at your doorstep. Local politics, grassroots institutions and candidacies directly created and controlled by citizens are some of the elements that today are grouped under the term "municipalism". Here and there, we see a multiplication of experiences of citizens' organisations that simply want to "change things" through what is closest to them. These local political projects aim to renounce the "party" form as an organisation structured by a given ideology and subject to pyramidal discipline. Their aim is more immediate: to recover the original definition of democracy, in which those who govern and those who are governed are one and the same. (Observatorio Metropolitano, 2014, p. 13, my translation)

One of the most commonly used references is the classical *agora* in ancient Athens in the 6th century BC, which the Greek political scientist Cornelius Castoriadis describes as an open and shared space for discussion between "equals" - a consideration that excluded women and enslaved people - and contrasts it with the *oikos*, the domestic private space, and the *ecclesia*, the institutional space, detached and restricted (Castoriadis, 2012). Looking at the Central European 'Hansas' that emerged in the Late Middle Ages, from the 9th to the 11th century, the Belgian historian Henry Pirenne argues that these communities of local merchant guilds gave meaning to the old German saying '*Stadtluft macht frei*': 'the air of the city sets you free' by creating networks of exchanged goods and knowledge to protect local production from global competition and the expansion of the emerging deregulated capitalist markets (Pirenne, 1963). The Italian writers' collective Wu Ming drew a best-selling metaphor for the anti-globalisation movement in the 1990s around the German peasant revolts of the 14th and 15th centuries, in which the Anabaptists proclaimed "*Omnia sunt communia*": everything belongs to everyone. The Anabaptists established towns as autonomous territories, coined their own money and confronted the local nobility and the transnational rule of the Catholic Church (Blissett, 2000). In his detailed account of one of the most emblematic urban revolts, the Paris Commune of 1871, the French philosopher Henry Lefebvre identifies a shared ideology among the various groups that participated in it: a "direct democratic management of their affairs by citizens in councils, commissions and committees" that sought to overthrow the centralised rule of the nation-state established after the French Revolution (Lefebvre, 2018 [1965],

p. 139, my translation). The French Communes - for there were more than one (Tilly, 1990) - demanded a new kind of democracy that rejected the loss of local autonomy implemented by the Napoleonic Code, which effectively sought to centralise the governance of the country and neutralise any local associations formed under the old regime, such as guilds, municipalities, communes or neighbourhood councils (Dawson, 1940). Despite its short period of self-government - a bit more than two months - the Paris Commune produced an imaginary of emancipation that had long-lasting effects to the point that, one hundred and forty years later, in a meeting with social organisations and networks at La Tabacalera Social Centre, the Italian philosopher Toni Negri called the occupation of the squares that began in Puerta del Sol in May 2011 the "Madrid Commune".

4.1.1 Urban expropriations and revolts

The history of democratic urban self-organisation and revolt stands in opposition to the modern processes of urban accumulation that began with the industrialisation and capitalist commodification of modern Western cities and continue with finance capitalism. Cities are not only the most densely populated territories - with 56% of the planet's population living in urban areas (UNCTAD Handbook of Statistics, 2023) - but also the site from which state and market powers are projected onto the non-urbanised territories they dominate (Soja, 2000; Massey, 1995).

Critical geography has been very explicit about how urban capitalist market production, exploitation and accumulation, together with modern nation-state control, regulation and segmentation, have shaped cities, first to serve the needs of industrial factories and the workers they needed, and later to introduce hygienic measures to reduce mortality and insalubrity, while spatially controlling potential revolts, as Haussmann successfully did in Paris (Harvey, 2003). Cities were put at the service of consumerism, serving as showcases for the products of an increasingly global economy, exhibited in galleries, as the German writer Walter Benjamin reflected in his account of the Passages in Paris. This culture of production and consumption spread through global events such as International Fairs, World's Fairs. As an emblematic example, cities like San Francisco, Barcelona and Londres used the Olympic Games to promote new urban developments. Different political economy analyses have described how cities provide material and immaterial assets for old and new gentrification processes (Smith, 1996), act as financial reservoirs that fuel an urban 'growth machine' (Molotch, 1976), and constitute the operational ground of neoliberalism (Brenner & Theodore, 2002b). Lately, with the development of the financial economy, cities are increasingly seen as spaces at the service of a new post-industrial era, with attributes such as 'creative' (Florida, 2005), 'smart' (Townsend, 2013) or even 'cognitive' (Neom, 2024).

Parallel to these processes of what Harvey (2004) has called urban 'accumulation by dispossession', the 21st century has seen a series of urban uprisings that, according to the US political anthropologist James Holston (2019), begun with the '*piqueteros*' in Argentina, who took their name from the practice of blockading traffic in the metropolis, and went on to reclaim industries and organise community economies, continued with the indigenous-inspired 'water wars' in Cochabamba, Bolivia, defending the self-built and managed urban infrastructure inspired by traditional collective management in 2000, to the riots in the French *banlieues* in 2005 and the protests that followed:

[...] occupied the arteries and lungs of cities everywhere, beginning in 2009 in Athens and Reykjavik, spreading to Tunis, Cairo, New York, and Madrid in 2010 and 2011, erupting in Santiago and Phnom Penh by 2012, circulating through Istanbul and Sao Paulo in 2013, Caracas and Hong Kong in 2014, reaching Paris [in 2016] with the *Nuit Debout* movement. (Holston, 2019, p. 133)

This list could be expanded to include less urban-centric uprisings in Europe, such as the Italian '*Forconi*' in 2011 (Wilno, 2014) or the French '*Gillet Jeune*' that began in 2018 (Dianara, 2018), as well as numerous non-Western mobilisations in Africa (Branch & Mampilly, 2015) and Asia (Weizman, Fisher, & Moafi, 2015).

The image of democratic demands taking to the streets is often associated with the massive counter-summit protests that 'reclaimed' the streets of Seattle in 1999, and stormed the 'red zone' of Genoa in 2001. However, the localised closures of specific public spaces are also a relevant element of the global movement to reclaim that 'another world is possible', the slogan adopted by the Porto Alegre Social Forum (Monereo & Riera, 2001). In Turkey, the disappearance of Gezi Park - one of the smallest green spaces in Istanbul - sparked a series of protests between May and June 2013. This seemingly anecdotal protest was also a rejection of the so-called 'mad projects' of the mayor's office - where some of 'Erdogan's 'megalomaniac' projects' (Aktar, 2014) include the Istanbul Canal, the Third Bridge and the World's Largest Airport - and triggered a wave of protests that spread across Turkey. According to the Turkish Ministry of Interior, the protests spread to 80 cities, with more than half a million people taking part in nearly 5,000 demonstrations questioning their assigned political role in a democracy and reclaiming the ability to decide on public issues (Deniz, 2013). We have also seen how the redevelopment of a square in Zagreb, Croatia, mobilised the protests of the *Pravo na grad* [Right to the city] movement in 2008, not only against the construction of the city's fifth commercial centre with built-in luxury apartments, but also against the conception of the city as commercial space sold on the market and the lack of self-organised spaces. In Belgrade, protests against the construction of luxury apartment towers and the commercialisation of public space along the Sava River sparked the movement *Ne da(vi)mo Beograd* [Don't let Belgrade d(r)own], which later formed a municipalist party and presented to the local elections. As Brazilian urbanist and activist Raquel Rolnik pointed out at the Fearless Cities summit, these urban struggles are against collective ownership of the territory in opposition to international finance capital where "all occupations, all conflictual and self-made planning, all non-designed public spaces, are meaningful outposts that are not only resisting and confronting, but also prototyping, other ways of thinking about cities" (Raquel Rolnik in Méndez de Andrés et al., 2018).

In 2011, with the Arab Spring, a wave of protests that fused old and new forms of organisation and protest emerged around an essential element of the democratic imaginary: the square as agora. The 'squares movement' produced self-organised common public spaces that functioned without a central authority that could control them through representation (Stavrides, 2013). A genealogy of these occupations begins in Egypt in January 2011, continues with the 15M camps in Spain, travels to Syntagma Square in Athens, multiplies exponentially with Occupy Wall Street in September and its derivatives in the US, and later a call made from the squares in Spain for the 15th October extended the camps to cities mainly in Europe but also in other parts of the world, mostly in Latin America, as shown in Figure 4.1. The occupations of hundreds of squares around the world were

brief moments of extraordinary intensity that took place in less than a year, with camps in dozens of countries involving millions of participants.²

Figure 4.1: Squares' movement



Poster in Spain with the legend: "Cities joining the 15-M movement". Source: <https://www.pedroamador.com/aniversario-15m>

Even if the more emblematic occupations - such as Madrid's Puerta del Sol or New York's Occupy Wall Street - lasted only a few weeks, their impact spread through space, as a reference for other territories, and through time, as a reminder of what is possible. I will argue that the occupations of the squares were a response to the crisis of representative democracy and the inability of national governments to effectively protect state-run systems of mutuality - such as education, health and other means of social reproduction - from market privatisation and expropriation. Recent events such as the 2008 financial collapse, widespread processes of gentrification, floods, fires and heat waves, and the COVID-19 outbreak have also raised doubts about the ability of national governments to effectively control and address global processes that directly affect people's everyday lives, such as tourism and real state financialisation, environmental extractivism and pollution, or climate change. In Europe, the squares movement took place in the context of the cuts and austerity policies implemented after the 2008 financial crash. These public actions - implemented across Europe, but particularly in the so-called 'PIGS' countries of Portugal, Ireland, Greece and Spain - generated a social discontent in which, as the European Commission recognised, "not only the legitimacy of certain policies and institutions was questioned, but also fundamental

² At the time of the squares occupations in Spain, a figure between 6 and 8,5 million people declared to have participated in the 15M movement, and around one million said they were 'intensively' engaged in the encampments (El País, 2011). Three years later, 71 % of the people surveyed still agreed with the 15M movement demands and principles (Ferrándiz, 2014).

questions about the locus and exercise of popular sovereignty were put on the agenda" (Horizon 2020, 2016, p. 202).

In Spain, the camps followed a demonstration against political corruption organised two weeks before the 2011 local elections under the banner of 'Real Democracy Now' and turned into a collective response to austerity, the privatisation of social reproduction and the appropriation of cooperation. When they were dissolved, the newly found collective agency was translated into neighbourhood assemblies, different 'human tides' against the privatisation and dismantling of public services (Méndez de Andés, 2014), the civil disobedience movement against housing evictions (Colau & Alemany, 2014) and various local groups working on urban and social rights (Blanco, Gomà Carmona, & Subirats, 2018). However, despite the scale and energy of the protests, there was a perception of a political 'glass ceiling' that hampered the impact of their demands at the policy level. In the following section, I will present municipalism as a civic strategy that sought a 'constitutive' impact with the idea that 'things can be done differently' (Rubio-Pueyo, 2017).

4.1.2 A history of municipalist proposals

For my research, I have adopted the European Municipalist Network's (EMN) definition of 'municipalism' as a political project that promotes self-government and autonomy at the local level and aims to transform existing institutional structures to establish radical democratic processes based on values such as social justice, feminism and the commons (EMN Mapping Working Group, 2021). Following the experiences of the municipalist organisations that are part of the EMN, I have considered municipalism as a political project that aims not only to identify the problems of its administrative environment and propose solutions appropriate to its scale, but also to reorganise the social and political arrangements of a specific territory through democratic participation and co-creation of the institutional tools available to the government. As we will see in the case of Barcelona, these strategies of democratisation have been an attempt to redefine the urban processes and strategic objectives that shape the government's agenda. I will argue that the municipalist in Spain challenged the validity of the institutional procedures traditionally used to design public policies and implement concrete actions. It questioned the role of politicians and 'experts' in defining problems, the type of knowledge that informs the decision-making process or the assessment criteria used by institutions. Experiences in other parts of the world, the self-governance and autonomous potential of local government resonate with the municipalist political hypothesis with the creation of autonomous territories, such as the Zapatistas in Chiapas, México, Rojava in Kurdish territory, or the 'comunas' in Venezuela.

Different scholars have attempted to locate the Spanish 'municipalist wager' within the manifold attempts to reduce state power 'to its minimum possible expression' by strengthening local democracy. For example, US writer Adam Greenfield (Greenfield, 2024) identifies four types of municipalism, according to a right-wing versus counter-hegemonic ideology, and participatory versus non-participatory governance schema: 1) municipal socialism concerned with local collective ownership of the infrastructures of everyday life; 2) libertarian municipalism, with assemblies and horizontal decision-making processes; 3) reactionary localism - local authoritarian, top-down politics, sometimes turned into ethnonationalist enclaves; and 4) participatory municipalism implemented as institutional liberal regimes. In Greenfield's schema, Spanish

municipalism starts out as libertarian, driven by horizontal assemblies, but once in government it resorts to socialist policies. British economist Matthew Thompson asks "What is so new about New Municipalism" and identifies similar trends in the history of the 20th century. First, the socialist project of garden cities and town and country planning was replaced by an emergent institutional municipalism, where municipal governance is 'an apolitical, technical exercise aspiring to scientific method'. 'New municipalism' would then be a response to the local management and institutionalisation of neoliberal austerity and localised globalisation, combining urban cooperation and competition, and proposes three models: a) managed municipalism, such as the 'Preston model' of municipal socialism; b) autonomist municipalism, that of Rojava in Kurdistan and Jackson in the USA; and c) platform municipalism, as in Spain. Matthew Thompson's 'platform municipalism' would work 'within, against and beyond' neoliberalism, often with the help of digital platform technologies such as the participatory software Decidim developed in Barcelona (Thompson, 2020).

The idea of municipalism has had different waves - sometimes considered as a 'new' municipalism - mostly related to urban reform efforts within the project of municipal socialism. In the first half of the 20th century, 'municipalism' was one of the main descriptors in socialist programmes, not only in Western Europe and the United States (Forman, Gran, & Outryve, 2020; Haderer, 2008), but also in countries such as Turkey and India. In the UK, both the urban transformations at the beginning of the twentieth century in London and the recent local government co-production plans in Birmingham to 'use local assets and the local state to work with the grain of community interest' have been framed as 'new municipalism' (Slatter, 2010). Historical accounts of 'new municipalism' begin in the late nineteenth century in relation to public and civic management of urban utilities, such as Joseph Chamberlain's reforms in Birmingham and the networks of local authorities in the early decades of the twentieth century (Clarke, 2009). In more recent UK history, local government has been the scale of a socialist project, with the Great London Authority under Ken Livingstone as the most advanced example of local power. The London Edinburgh Weekend Return Group (1980) was the first to propose acting '*In and Against the State*' as a transformation of the state from within, not only its administrative structure but also the network of social relations that define us and our problems. At present, 'Community Wealth Building', 'a people-centred approach to local economic development that aims to reorganise local economies so that wealth is not extracted but redirected back into communities' (CLES, 2020), and I will argue is seen as a continuation of this municipal, that is, local, programme by the Labour Party.

Historical experiences of socialist municipal socialism include Turkey in the 1970s, with a local conception of politics influenced by the Paris Commune, municipal socialism and urban social movements and related to the provision of social services - also called 'welfare municipalism' (Çetin, 2014). Three social democratic municipalities, Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir, sought autonomy from the central government by implementing a 'new municipalism' (Bayraktar, 2007). In Bangalore, India, 'social municipalism' promoted an 'unprecedented' 'middle-class engagement with municipal concerns and public-corporate involvement with the municipality', built on a sense of citizenship and the 'mobilisation of aesthetics' (Nair, 2006, pp. 125–131). Outside of socialist influence, the Italian *Rete Meridionale del Nuovo Municipio* [Southern Network for a New Municipalism] was founded in 2006 - before the 'neomunicipalismo' hat started in 2011 with *Massa Critica* [Critical Mass] in Naples and *Cambiamo Messina del Basso* in Messina - to engage local

politicians and social movements in democratic decision-making processes as a new approach to the local conflict around the proposed Messina Bridge that aimed to avoid the Not-In-My-Backyard syndrome with hybrid organisations that could be considered 'a resource for democracy' (Della Porta & Piazza, 2008, p. 867).

In light of these analyses and examples, I will argue that considering 'new municipalism' as a category rather than a process reduces the complexity of the heterogeneous experiences, territories and political compositions from which the theory draws its components. My argument is based on the Spanish experience, where the demand for a radical local democracy, adopted by hundreds of electoral platforms in 2015, was developed - in discourse and practice - as 'democratic municipalism' (Zapata, 2015), which aimed to implement the radical democratic demands born in the movement of the squares as an institutional transformation (Calvo Martínez & de Diego Baciero, 2019; Commonsopolis & La Común, 2018).

4.1.3 Spanish 'democratic municipalism'

The French sociologist David Hamou argues that, contrary to the idea - often expressed in the Anglo-Atlantic sphere - that the US philosopher and activist Murray Bookchin inspired municipalism in Spain, "the theorist of 'libertarian municipalism' forged his own theory in contact with the history of the libertarian movement in Spain", which he studied in several books (Hamou, 2023, pp. 205–276). In his doctoral thesis, Hamou traces the genealogy of Spanish municipalism to the anarchist '*Municipio Libre*' [Free Municipality] and to 19th-century federalist ideas that opposed state-centred sovereignty. He quotes Francisco Pi y Margall, president of the First Spanish Republic in 1873, who advocated a radical democratisation of power based on decentralisation:

Today, power must be reduced to its minimum expression. Does centralisation strengthen it? I must decentralise it. [...] Since I cannot dispense with the electoral system, I will make suffrage universal; since I cannot dispense with supreme magistracies, I will declare them as revocable as possible. I shall divide and subdivide power, I shall mobilise and, surely, I shall destroy it. (Pi y Margall, 1931 [1854], pp. 195–196, my translation, italics in the original)

In their compilation on the most prominent features of the 'democratic cities', BeC activists and scholars Laura Roth, Arnau Monterde and Antonio Calleja-López explain the use of democracy as the main characteristic of the municipalist movement:

With the notion of "democratic cities", we seek to place at the centre of the political debate the power of citizens and movements to recover the collective capacity to manage common issues at the scale of the immediate, the everyday, the city. Democracy is an intersectional vector from which to think about the political organisation of the city, and the city is presented as the political scale on which numerous inequalities materialise, conflicts arise and new forms of governance of the commons are constructed. (Roth, Monterde, & Calleja-López, 2019, pp. 14–15, my translation).

The concept of 'new municipalism' was introduced by academics and political actors Ismael Blanco, Ricard Gomá and Joan Subirats, based at the Institute of Public Policies in Barcelona – in the context of the existing local governments as defined by the Spanish *Ley de Bases* of 1985, and the

epochal change produced by the occupation of squares and potential commons-proximity binomial it has created. The new format of self-governance at the local scale – called 'new municipalism' – was presented as an articulation between an agenda of policies oriented towards the right to the city and forms of production of these policies oriented towards the construction of urban commons. Table 4.1 presents some of the social organisations deemed as most prominent social influences:

Table 4.1: Social organisations influencing Spanish municipalism

Organisation and networks	Thematic space	Social movement
PAH [Anti-eviction movement] Energy Poverty Alliance	Housing emergency Energy poverty	Urban Activism Neighbourhood Associations Social rights
Tenants' Union Social Centres	Right to housing Right to the city	Urban Activism Neighbourhood Associations Urban Commons
<i>Sindihogar</i> [Domestic Workers Union] <i>Las Kellys</i> [Hotel Cleaners Union]	Work precarity Gender & Care	Social Syndicalism Feminism
<i>Queremos acoger</i> [Refugees Welcome] <i>Papeles para todos</i> [No Borders]	Refuge and citizenship	Antiracism Solidarity
<i>Agua es vida</i> [Water is life] Food sovereignty networks	Urban Sovereignty	Ecology Urban Commons

Source: Ismael Blanco, Ricard Gomá Carmona and Joan Subirats (2018), pp. 21-22, my translation

The image of social processes as different vectors operating in a field of power, which together lead to a change of direction is a metaphor offered by the Mexican mathematician and sociologist Raquel Gutiérrez Aguilar during a discussion in Madrid in 2015 on the incorporation the commons political hypothesis in the municipalist politics, and the resonance with the experience of the 'water war' in Cochabamba, Bolivia, in 2000, in which she participated (Gutiérrez Aguilar, 2014). As we will see in Chapter 9, I will argue that such vectors operate in a field full of pre-existing experiences, and that urban commoning in particular contains the "signals, tracks, latencies, possibilities that exist in the present but are signs of the future, possibilities that are emerging but are disqualified because they are embryos and are not very visible things" (Gramsci, 1985 cited in Aguiló Bonet & Sabariego, 2016, p. 96),

4.2 Spanish democratic municipalism

Following the radical democratic proposal of 15M, in 2014 a heterogeneous mix of collectives and individuals from what has been characterised as 'urban social movements' (Castells, 1983) decided to join the 'politics of change' initiated by Podemos in 2014 and participate in the 2015 municipal elections in Spain. This new institutional assault took the form of citizen-led electoral proposals that formed 'municipalist platforms', promoted by social actors linked to the anti-austerity movement that took to the squares in May 2011 (Rubio-Pueyo, 2017) and the urban social movements that

reclaimed the right to the city and the commons (Blanco, Gomà Carmona, & Subirats, 2018), and joined by old and new parties.

4.2.1 Cities of Change

'Cities of change' was the name given by the Spanish media to the local governments in cities such as Madrid, Barcelona, Zaragoza or A Coruña that emerged in the 2015 local elections as the result of a process of confluence between different political actors. This process of confluence gave rise to a 'municipalist platform' that embraced the idea that the starting point of an institutional transformation to incorporate radical democratic processes would be at the local level, the closest to the citizens and their needs. Activists and the media adopted the term 'municipalist platform' to describe a type of political organisation between a traditional party and the usual social movement. In this thesis, I will use the term muni-platform to refer to the municipalist political organisations that presented for the Spanish municipal elections of 2015 and 2019, adopting an open organisation different from the traditional forms of the party coalition or the 'left front' (Rubio-Pueyo, 2017). The Spanish municipalist electoral formula consisted of a heterogeneous constellation of candidacies and political actors, with varying degrees of mutual understanding (Rivas, 2015). Figure 4.2 shows the most relevant configurations of the "municipalist wager" under 'the spirit of the confluence'.

Figure 4.2: Muni-platforms: Most prominent electoral platforms in the 2015 local elections in Spain



Source: Pablo Rivas (2015) for Diagonal newspaper, Creative Commons License by-SA.

These 'platforms' were composed of representatives of state political parties, belonging to old or 'new' politics and with a long institutional trajectory, coexisting with people politicised during the 15M camps, activists from local associationism, the social and solidarity economy, self-managed social centres, the copy-left movement and autonomous social movements, with different priorities and forms of organisation. Even if this confluence took a different form in each territory - as electoral parties, self-organised electoral groups, coalitions or "instrumental" parties - they shared a common approach based on five principles: 1) participatory political programmes drawn up through popular participation, 2) open electoral lists, 3) ethical codes with salary limits and anti-corruption measures, 4) crowdfunding and micro-credits for the electoral campaign, and 5) citizens' signatures to validate the candidacy (Méndez de Andés, 2016). Muni-platforms proposed to enact democracy from the scale closest to the people, as a bottom-up example of the 'new politics of change' that aimed to translate the politics and procedures of social movements, each with different and sometimes conflicting strategies, into the institutional arena. As a result of the 2015 local elections, they entered the government or were presented in the local plenary in 15 of the municipalities with more than 100.000 inhabitants, and in many other towns and villages, winning the mayoralty in Spain's two largest cities, Madrid and Barcelona (Monterde, 2019).

I will argue that, once in government, a second, non-electoral kind of confluence took place between electoral platforms and social organisations working in the fields of ecology, energy and territory, feminism and care, social rights and freedoms, democratisation and spheres of participation, LGTBI, remunicipalisation, social economy, commons and cooperatives, research, social analysis and culture, or animal rights. In my experience, this articulation generated a complex web of relationships inside and outside the electoral-institutional space, with different levels of structural consistency and understandings of the transformation of local politics, city council structures and even political ontologies. The groups closer to the 15M sought to mobilise public institutions and structures as a means of addressing questions of democracy within the "governmental technologies, the complex of mundane programmes, calculations, techniques, apparatuses, documents and procedures through which [...] embody and give effect to [self-governance] ambitions" (Rose & Miller, 1992, p. 175), bringing tensions between public institutional design and the dynamics of social processes. And social movements agendas were not the only ones involved in the municipalist local governments. On the one hand, the confluence platforms included two national parties with a state-centred vision: Podemos and the traditional left-front party, Izquierda Unida. On the other hand, all the leading muni-platforms were in minority governments that depended on the support of the Socialist Party - as in Madrid, Barcelona, A Coruña or Zaragoza - or governed in coalition with other political parties - as in Valencia, Oviedo or Iruña. The result was a tension between the more collectivist and the more statist visions, and a constant need for negotiation within and outside the municipalist movement itself, from the first drafts of the joint electoral programme in 2014 to the last plenary vote on the 2019 budget.

In this double confluence, I argue that a different political organisation emerged: municipalist governments - muni-governments in this thesis - had to negotiate with the local institutional structure of the nation-state, with the more traditional parties in the plenary, as they were all in a minority even if they held the mayoralty, and with the political agendas of the different actors who were part of the muni-platforms. Organisational responses to the challenge of articulating social and

institutional plurality, combined with the need to capture citizens' concerns, interests, aspirations and proposals and translate them into political action once in government, have taken different paths.

From the proliferation of digital platforms for collecting and voting on citizens' proposals, to processes of co-designing public policies, the direct involvement of social agents in the management of services and infrastructures, or the support of self-organised initiatives. These strategies aimed to bridge the gap between the 'inside' and the 'outside' of the institution, to involve new social actors in the decision-making process and to adapt priorities to different promoters, thus effectively shaping and co-producing public policies and actions. I will argue that the resulting configuration of municipal organisations and governments resembles the figure of the Roman god Janus with two faces, looking in different directions but sharing one mind.

The municipalist wager in Barcelona

As we will see, the municipalist experience in Barcelona is the most relevant of the Spanish 'cities of change'. Not only did Barcelona en Comú (BeC) organise most of the municipalist meetings and debates, but it was also the only city to explicitly include the term 'urban commons' in an official document, and the only muni-government that lasted two mandates. The strength of the municipalist and commons hypothesis in Barcelona is part of a long history of local neighbourhood mobilisations in the 70s and 80s, community-led projects and squatted spaces, and the development of a solid social and solidarity economy.

The Catalan architect Josep Maria Montaner - a city councillor with Barcelona en Comú between 2015 and 2019 - describes the 'Barcelona model' as a social democratic city that promotes major events as a model of urban development and a framework to encourage the articulation of the social interest of public initiatives and the economic interest of private investment, leaving the implementation to experts and professionals as a technical issue (Montaner, 2007). Mirroring the strategy adopted in the 1980s, with a high quality renovation of public spaces and services outside the city centre, the urban implementation of the Olympic Games took a decentralised approach, with buildings scattered throughout the city. In 2004, Barcelona organised the first Universal Forum of Cultures, with a more concentrated intervention around the extension of the Diagonal Avenue and its connection to the seafront, and a new tourist attraction that went 'from acupuncture to prosthesis' (Montaner & Muxí, 2002). The Forum, fiercely contested by social movements, was the last of these major events. In the years that followed, the format was transformed into recursive international fairs and festivals, such as Mobile World, Sonar or Primavera Sound. In each format, the Barcelona model was underpinned by an image of the city that incorporated cultural aspects, applied to the design of physical space through urban furniture, buildings and public spaces, and the cultural products - art collections and cultural events - organised around them, effectively creating a 'trademark' (Balibrea, 2005). Such 'Barcelona trademark' and the urban regeneration projects it developed were based on a desire for social peace and an image of consensus that was contested by collectives that experienced the consequences of the commodification and mercantilisation of the city on different fronts (Unió Temporal d'Escribes, 2004). Social movements in Barcelona had organised against urban regeneration projects in deprived areas of the mediaeval city centre in a process of gentrification supported by the incorporation of the MACBA museum

and the CCCB (Subirats et al., 2006), as well as the opening of a new 'Rambla' that cleared the dense urban fabric of the Raval, perceived as a modern Haussmann 'percement' (Horta, 2021). There were also mobilisations against the 'civic ordinance', which imposed administrative sanctions for disturbing the 'tranquillity' of the city (Méndez de Andés & Aparicio, 2017).

In this context of cultural and architectural touristification, some of the most relevant organisations were born around housing issues, either in the fight against 'mobbing', identified as 'urban and real state violence' by an activist collective organised as a permanent workshop in 2004 (Taller contra la violencia inmobiliaria y urbanística, 2006), or in the reclaiming of access to affordable housing by the 'V de Vivienda' collective in 2007-2008, the resistance to evictions by the *Plataforma de Afectados por la Hipoteca* [Platform of People Affected by Evictions] (PAH), founded in 2009 with Ada Colau as spokesperson - depicted in Figure 4.3 - and now the fight against touristification and vulture fund investments by the *Sindicat de Llogaterxs* [Tenants Union], founded in 2017 which called for the first rent strike in April 2020 (Merino, 2020).

Figure 4.3: Ada Colau as spokesperson of the PAH



Source: *Oriana Eliçabe*, 9th May 2014, Creative Common at-nc-sa. The image shows PAH activists in Plaza de Catalunya, Civil's Legislative Initiative to change the Mortgage Law. In the centre with the mic, Ada Colau Barcelona's mayor 2015-2023.

In the aftermath of the 2008 financial crash, and fuelled by the 15M movement, the inspiring anti-eviction PAH effectively created a social agreement on the causes of the housing crisis in Spain and the consequences of the financialisation of the property market, as well as the political decisions on how to tackle such a crisis, which led to the implementation of austerity policies. The combination

of legal petitions, legal civil disobedience, illegal squatting tactics and the imaginative and networked actions of a national organisation based on self-organisation and mutual aid exemplified the characteristics of the 15M and occupy movement, and the solidarity of the 99%. (Colau & Alemany, 2014). Out of this tradition of urban contestation, in the 2015 municipal elections BeC presented an electoral proposal that included relevant actors from social movements and the existing parties Iniciativa per Catalunya and Podemos, led by housing activist Ada Colau, one of the founders of PAH (Forti & Russo Spena, 2019). Colau's slogans that "citizenship is far ahead of the institutions" or the need to have "one foot in the institution and a thousand in the street" link the municipalist institutional assault with the anti-austerity movement that took to the squares in May 2011 and the urban social movements that reclaimed the right to the city and the commons. From this point of view, the municipalist proposal reclaimed new forms of radical democracy, with the participation of citizens in the matters that concern them, taking local government as the scale closest to the people and to the actual territories, that is, to the resources, communities, activities and infrastructures that "shape these matters". (Observatorio Metropolitano, 2014).

Following this aim, Barcelona en Comú municipalist approach shifted the urban model. Old operations, such as the 22@, were modified to include local inhabitants' needs and their economy, and a new city-wide proposal started to take shape: the *Superlla* [Superblock] (Rueda, 2011). This city-wide intervention re-structured public and private transport to create a double grid where motor vehicles would use every other street, and pedestrians will have their own street system with squares created in the Eixample's famous chamfered street corners. The superblock model, however, aimed to be more than a re-organisation of urban mobility. According to the publication by Barcelona Urban Ecology Agency, they conform to 'the basic units of an ecosystemic urbanism' covering key aspects linked to energy, biodiversity, water and waste management and social cohesion (Larios, 2021, pp. 118–120). The superblock proposes a new paradigm on principles of proximity, integration and hybridization. The expansion from interventions in the public space to urban project supporting care structures, as in the *Vilaveïna* project (Tarafa & Recio, 2023), or productive activities along the Besós river (Méndez de Andés, 2022) outlines a municipalist urban planning based on ecological, democratic and feminist principles.

4.2.2 Municipalist governance and change

Muni-governments sought to overcome the inside-outside divide, build political power and develop democratic institutions by embedding their political and administrative actions in the social fabric of their territories. The participatory co-production and democratic procedures were seen as a way to involve social organisations that supported and connected with the 'outside', to build alliances with other territories and to construct a horizon of structural transformation. However, in the municipal elections of 2019, only BeC revalidated its government, but lost it in the 2013 elections. However, as we will see in more detail in Chapter 7, during their term of office, between May 2015 and May 2019, the muni-platforms organised internal debates, set up collaborative networks and implemented policies and programmes that effectively showed how things could be done 'differently', while providing inspiration and learning for a growing international municipalist movement.

In this context, the intended municipalist 'change' can be interpreted in two ways. A first, straightforward interpretation is that the municipalist 'institutional assault' aimed to produce a change in the institutional structures and legal apparatus of local administrations. This aim would imply a change in the local instances of the modern nation-state, and has been assessed as such in recent academic accounts that have investigated the transformation of specific territories - such as A Coruña and Santiago in Galicia, Madrid or Barcelona - and policies - such as participation, culture or migrants and refugees. Overall, the conclusions of this first type of change are discouraging. According to academic researchers, municipalism in Galicia was "unable to consolidate the necessary governing capacity to deliver its agenda and succeed politically" (Bua & Davies, 2022, p. 2); the Madrid experience resulted in "fractions, disagreements and obstructions" which "compromise the long-term sustainability of initiated changes" (Janoschka & Mota, 2021); innovative forms of participation in Madrid and Barcelona were either dominated by "previous organisational inertia" or their long-term effects only affected "the memories of participants and associations" (Fernández-Martínez, García-Espín, & Alarcón, 2022, p. 27); finally, migrant and refugee policies are seen as irrelevant because, admittedly, they have 'little capacity to change the administrative structure and its inertia' and would "produce divisions within migrants' social movements" (Fernández-Suárez & Espiñeira, 2021, p. 63).

At the same time, I will argue that even if the scholarly evaluation of the institutional change produced by radical democratic bottom-up local administrations highlights the limitations encountered during one electoral term - four years in Spain - in transforming the dynamics created by transnational capitalist commodification and nation-state bureaucratic apparatuses with centuries of history as a failure, it still recognises the potential of such an attempt. In describing the ambitions of the policies under study, municipalism is deployed as an 'anti-systemic force' where institutional governance is not understood as a 'bastion of power' (Bua & Davies, 2022, p. 17) (Bua & Davis, 2023) and as a "reorganisation of local governance through transversal actions in citizen participation, open government, territorial coordination, socio-public cooperation, gender and diversity policies" (Janoschka & Mota, 2021), characterised as an attempt to incorporate "the world of social movements, new critical associations and non-oligarchic forms" (Fernández-Martínez, García-Espín, & Alarcón, 2022, p. 27).

I will also argue that a second interpretation of the municipalist change in the term 'cities of change' is that such muni-governments did not produce change, but were produced by a change in the political sphere that began in 2011 with the 15M movement and was first formalised in institutional politics in 2014 with the formation of parties such as Podemos and the muni-platforms. This distinction between 'producing' or 'being produced by' change is politically relevant because it locates the agency, limits and potentials of transformation in two different places. In the first case, the transformative capacity is in the hands of state structures and therefore dependent on 'national' structures. In the second, it lies in the potential of emerging and territorialised bottom-up processes that are not yet instituted but are in the process of transforming existing institutional forms. In this sense, other experiences assess municipalist change in relation to emerging bottom-up processes at the local level and around commons and urban commons, the right to the city and popular movements that have turned distrust in political structures into the creation - or support - of electoral proposals based on local democracy demands. For example, the referendum against the

privatisation of water in Italy in 2011 under the slogan '*Aqua, bene comune*' [Water, a common good] was directly linked to the social municipalist movement in Naples, *Massa Critica* [Critical Mass]. Similarly, the Right to the City mobilisation in Zagreb was one of the bases of the municipalist initiative *Zagreb Je Nast!* [Zagreb is Ours!], which has spread throughout Croatia as *Mozemo* [We can]. As a third example, the Yellow Vests in France developed forms of communalist organisation (Van Outryve, 2023) and also joined local municipalist proposals, as in the case of *Nante en Commun* [Nante in Common]. This intersection between bottom-up transformations, some of them linked to the commons political hypothesis, and social and institutional municipalism has been promoted and documented by international initiatives such as the Fearless Cities in Barcelona in 2017 and elsewhere since, the Cities for Change Forum held in Amsterdam in 2021, the Minim web platform or the EMN, as processes interested in producing an international narrative of municipalism as an ecosystem 'in the making' (European Municipalism Network, 2021).

4.2.3 Municipalist city-making

In this section I will discuss how Spanish muni-governments sought to shape the city through public interventions that did not correspond to the comprehensive urban planning tools developed since the beginning of the 21st century around the CIAM - *Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne*, such as zoning, the separation of public and private or motorised and pedestrian circulation, and the concentration of leisure activities and green spaces. Instead, municipalist urban plans were a mixture of short-term '*ad hoc*' interventions and long-term socio-political goals. In the short term, they incorporated the 'guerrilla' style strategies developed by urban social movements, such as tactical urban interventions in public space, but also an institutional identification of urban services to be re-municipalised or de-privatised, including water, energy and internet provision, along with the construction of collective bakeries, fab labs or leisure and cultural services. They also introduced disruptive elements into existing practices, such as social clauses in public procurement or the inclusion of participatory and co-production processes at all levels of decision-making. In the long term, there was a sustained deployment of feminist and environmental policies that combined interventions in the public sphere, with institutional campaigns or the organisation of seminars and debates aimed at the general public, with the involvement of social actors in public services and the transformation of the built environment. In the medium term, many of the muni-governments implemented new administrative structures that aimed to counteract the existing institutional 'habitus' and its constraints. In their political programmes, many muni-platforms defined the city in terms that did not refer to standard administrative areas such as 'Economy', 'Social services', 'Urban Planning' or 'Culture and Sports' but with transversal areas of intervention such as 'A City for Life', 'A City in Common', or 'New City Model'. This re-configuration of the administrative 'ontology' aimed to connect social and ecological issues, gender, social and economic inequality.³

Various examples of this strategy appear in the compilation of policies included in the *Atlas del Cambio* (2018) produced by BeC in collaboration with other platforms months before the end of the first municipalist term, which I helped to coordinate. This 'political geography of municipalist change' included plans, programmes and projects that supported concrete day-to-day policies, while

3 This knowledge is based on my personal experience as part of a municipalist city government and through the participation in municipalist meetings and debates between 2014 and 2018.

outlining a path towards a future municipalist city that was considered 'democratic, livable, collaborative, caring and fearless', a vision represented in the website and shown in Figure 4.4:

Figure 4.4: Atlas del Cambio [Atlas of Change]



Source: ciudadesdelcambio.org

The Atlas emphasised the prefigurative nature of municipalism by proposing a vision composed by experiences that could be perceived as scattered but had the potential to identify a 'future municipalist city' (La Comuna, 2018a). Thus, the participatory processes aimed not only to incorporate individual and collective contributions, but also to establish new models of strategic decision-making. In Badalona - a city of 200,000 inhabitants that is part of the Barcelona metropolitan area - the participation of municipal employees, the presentation of proposals, the deliberation and voting on the elements of the Municipal Action Plan, and the participation and monitoring of 45% of the city's investment budget were developed with the declared intention that social rights, leadership and urban opportunities, as well as shared governance, should be the guiding principles in the drafting of the strategic documents that characterise governmental action in each mandate. This strategy of combining actors and fields of intervention was also used in the construction of spaces of public-social co-management, whether permanent, such as the Cultural Council in Zaragoza, or temporary, such as the Coordination Table of the Milan Pact in Castellón. In these spaces, the priorities were the cooperation between institutional and social organisations and the production and exchange of information, criteria, decisions and strategies, with varying degrees of structural overlap.

Another level of municipalist collaboration was the articulation of a municipalist network that recognised the interdependent and trans-territorial nature of the challenges ahead and challenged the idea that municipalism could fall into an assumed 'local trap' (Purcell, 2006). Although Bookchin claimed that 'the demand for 'local control' has ceased to mean parochialism and insularity' (Bookchin, 1980, *Toward a New Municipalism*, para. 4), in the UK context 'municipal' often refers to a question of scale, leading to a view of municipalism as limited in its impact and aspirations. In contrast, the Spanish cities of change sought to go beyond the local and work together towards

common goals. This objective had a social precedent in the experience of social movements that created networks around housing rights, with the anti-eviction platform PAH; support for migrants, with the network Ferrocarril Clandestino; and open culture and free software, with a series of hackmeetings, among others. The possibility of creating spaces for coordination and exchange resonated with the institutional need to unite efforts at the local administrative level in the face of state policies. These efforts took the form of political meetings, from which emerged institutional trans-local networks, such as the Municipalist Network Against Illegitimate Debt and Cuts, created in 2016, but also informal exchanges between municipalists in charge of the daily management of the city council.

4.3 Commoning the government

In 1990, Elinor Ostrom published her findings on the governance of the commons as an account of the institutional techniques of economic goods on the margins of public and private property. I will argue that, twenty-five years later, the experience of Spanish municipalism has applied the commons political hypothesis as part of a broader transformation in the management of public, private or collectively owned resources, in which arrangements for 'governing the commons' (Ostrom, 1990) are replaced by the explicit aim of 'commoning the government'. And that this aim has been incorporated as a municipalist objective, advocating not only radically democratic decision-making - as the 15M movement has demanded - but also access for all to public and collective resources, the protection of these resources from capitalist expropriation, and respect for the social and environmental impacts of urban activities, encompassing the principles of democracy, universality, inalienability and sustainability.

Furthermore, I propose that muni-governments have tested the potential of considering the commons as a form of governmentality capable of informing both the narrative and the normative of their political action (Dolenec & Žitko, 2016), where the political potential of the relationship between the commons and the state depends on what contemporary social movements and struggles make of it. In this section I will argue that: a) the political hypothesis of the commons can be seen as a municipalist governmentality; b) this governmentality was shaped by the vectorial and prefigurative aspects of municipalism; and c) these vectorial and prefigurative aspects performed the commons as enunciation, concern and protocols.

4.3.1 Commons as municipalist governmentality

A look at the mention of 'commons' in the programmes of the four main muni-platforms in Spain - Ahora Madrid, Barcelona en Comú, Zaragoza en Común and Marea Atlántica. in A Coruña - reveals an uneven result. In the full 72-page programme of Ahora Madrid, there is a mention of 'promoting collective management of common goods' and 'commons' in section 2.4. It includes citizen participation as a form of management, along with digital and analogue participatory processes and budgets. Instruments include “a) Promote municipal regulations for the cession and co-management of public spaces by citizens with regulations that guarantee the right to the use and management of public spaces in appropriate transfer conditions” and “b) To lease and co-manage available, disused or under-used structures or spaces owned by the municipality for the development of social and cultural projects” (Ahora Madrid, 2015, p. 24). In Barcelona, the 2015 electoral programme

included a section on a “City in Common” where recovering water [management] and culture [production] as common good’ and was part of a ‘Change of [Urban] Model’, and ‘Committing to new forms of management in common’ was part of the ‘Open Democracy’ strategy (Barcelona en Comú, 2015, pp. 30, 37, 61). In the Zaragoza en Comú 20ou15 electoral programme, ‘culture as a common good’ is part of the ‘Creative City’ (Zaragoza en Común, 2015, p. 31), while in the Marea Atlántica programme for A Coruña – which had the less factual name of “99 measures for the 99%” - the term ‘common/s’ does not appear anywhere (Marea Atlántica, 2015).

By entering the institution and assuming the responsibility of governing, the electoral approach of the confluence, with five methodological points, had to be replaced by a political action capable of defining 'municipal action plans'. This new political action can be considered as 'governmentality', defined by the French philosopher Michael Foucault (2008) as the techniques and procedures used to govern populations and their individuals. The adoption of governmentality as part of the commons-municipalist political hypothesis was proposed by the Croatian political scientist - and current deputy mayor in Zagreb with the muni-platform Zagreb Je Nast - Daniela Dolenc (Dolenc, 2013), who applies Foucault's concept to the analysis of self-management in Yugoslavia, as theorised by Branko Horvat in his idea of a federation of self-governing communes (Horvat, 1969, cited in Dolenc & Žitko, 2013). In their account of the ex-Yugoslav experience, Dolenc and Žitko (2016) aim to identify the concepts, objects, borders, arguments and justifications of the discursive field that rationalises power, as well as the specific forms of intervention, agencies, procedures, institutions and legal forms that govern subjects and objects. This proposal resonates with the aims of the municipalist 'institutional assault' in that it points to the limits of the autonomist logic of creating 'spaces of freedom' - what the Belgian political scientist Chantal Mouffe (2013) criticises as an 'exodus' strategy - and argues that it is not enough to create a 'political rationale', but that it is also necessary to develop the capacity to produce, in practice, institutions capable of embodying it.

I will argue that from the perspective of a democratic municipalism, the articulation of narrative and normative elements, encompassing both ideational and practical components, can be seen as a strategy to produce a new technical, institutional, social and relational habitus governing the fields of power. Following Iolanda Bianchi (2019), the inclusion of commons' principles in democratic municipalism as narrative and normative would a call to proceed not only in, against or beyond the state, but also 'through' it. This was the statement of the former municipalist mayor of Barcelona, Ada Colau, when she said, regarding the measures taken by the national government during the COVID-19, that the collective response to the pandemic crisis shouldn't strengthen the state, but the public, the commons. In municipalist practice, the explicit goal of implementing a democratic city within a 'commons tradition' of democratic management of public and collective resources, such as water, energy, open space or housing (Roth, Monterde, & Calleja-López, 2019), faced various limitations, some of which were specific to the democratisation efforts, and shared with other political movements such as the right to the city, others were more specific to the Spanish context, and others regarded structural limitations.

The discussion of shared concerns between the right to the city and municipalism focuses on the tension between the transformative goals of social movements and the tools and techniques available to municipalist local governments, as analysed by Raquel Rolnik and Spanish human

rights researcher García-Chueca (2019). This tension shows the limits of incorporating demands for urban democracy within a 'rights' framework that is part of the liberal discourse centred on individual, privatised rights, including that of private property, and the material and immaterial dimensions in the struggle for social reproduction, where the material dimension belongs to reformist politics and the immaterial dimension is linked to a political revolutionary transformation, where 'the full emancipatory potential of the right to the city remains outside the institutional agenda' (Rolnik & Garcia-Chueca, 2019, p. 12, my translation). In this first aspect, I will argue that the incorporation of the commons approach operates explicitly outside the construction of absolute property - public or private - and the subjectivities created, with a focus on self-management, autonomy and collective use. I will also argue that the political hypothesis of the commons under municipalism aims to incorporate immaterial and material aspects as narrative and normative that operate across the institutional 'inside' and 'outside'. Among the contextual limitations of the Spanish experience, the first relates to the composition of the city assemblies, where all muni-governments were in minority governments or in coalitions with socialist and other left-wing electoral options. They were therefore forced to negotiate with conventional party structures, always in fragile political equilibriums. In addition, they faced non-electoral opposition from local and translocal economic interests lobbying for their self-preservation. A case in point is the number of lawsuits filed by the multinational Agbar against Barcelona city council and their plans to remunicipalise the city's water supply (Macías, 2022).

On the social side, the 15M 'climate' that brought the muni-platforms to government lacked a clear identity and formed a fluid political force that was difficult to articulate. Also, social movements faced a perceived loss of collective memory and practical knowledge of how to govern things in common, and the illusion of an ideal and somehow nostalgic community. Finally, regarding the structural limitations of municipalism, I will argue that the more structural aspects have to do with the Leviathan spirit that defines the nature of the public institutions of the nation-state as defined by Hobbes (1651) and the difficulty of reconciling it with many of the core features of commons modes of governance, and the difficulty for the liberal notion of representation to accommodate a 'real democracy' based on the active participation of citizens in decision-making. Institutional inertia also resists municipalist institutional transformations when the existing bureaucratic apparatus protects the established habitus as a guarantee of institutional stability. And there is a 'structural limitation to the role of local and regional particularities', including cities, in modern state structures (Dawson, 1940). These structures are deemed as centralised and hierarchical, with local funding and investment often largely dependent on the national level. There is also a hierarchy where the administrative level is seen as dependent on the legislative level and with limited function. This diminished capacity of local government has often been exacerbated by the neoliberal dismantling of the welfare state and a strategy of making the provision of social reproduction dependent on the private market (Wahl, 2011).

4.3.2 Vectorial and prefigurative politics

Despite the specific, contextual and structural limitations it faced, I will argue that the municipalist experience in Spain was successful in building a political project that was not only a method, a programme or a type of political actor, but also an assemblage of interests, demands, resistances and

proposals from different organisations and fields of action that created new political, symbolic, affective and economic frameworks. The knowledge and networks produced by social movements took democracy as the point of departure for a vectorial municipalist political action, which did not mean "imbuing local autonomy with greater democracy or justice" or succumbing to "the tendency of researchers and activists to assume something inherent about the local scale" (Purcell, 2006, pp. 1931, 1924). What was at stake, what the Madrid-based militant research collective Observatorio Metropolitano (2014) called the 'municipalist wager', was the possibility of transforming municipalities into something more than the local branch of the national state: a different kind of institution, more open to participation, co-creation and transformation. The municipalist confluence developed a programme situated 'in the middle', between social movements and electoral politics, state visions and autonomist practices, local democracy and global interdependence. Municipalism as a political organisation was situated between the claim of the 15 May movement that politicians "do not represent us" and the tactical proposal of entering the electoral system with what I will call not so much an "institutional" as an "instituting" attack. As such, municipalism can be seen as a materialisation of Deleuze & Guattari (1970) concept of 'disjunctive synthesis'.

The prefigurative nature of the municipalist proposal can be seen in the aim to act as a catalyser of a 'future city' and to put into practice proposals that transform urban environments towards more caring, democratic, collaborative and liveable cities (Ciudades del Cambio, Junqué, & Méndez de Andés, 2018). In this prefiguration, municipalist public procedures - plans, projects and protocols - have a constituent character despite their administrative nature (Méndez de Andés, 2019). Marianne Maeckelbergh's (2012) description of prefigurative politics as a strategy that overcomes traditional dichotomies in social mobilisations, between organisation and hierarchy, goals and singularities, or politics and process, resonates with municipalist experiences of commoning processes. In the Spanish eco-social movements, commons were seen as a response to a systemic crisis, "where the real catastrophe is to do nothing", and the first step of mobilisation resonates with municipalist roots: "to initiate a constituent process as a basis for legal and institutional change that protects the commons" (Fdez-Casadevantes, Morán, & Prats, 2018, p. 37).

4.3.3 Performing the municipalist commons

Municipalism prefigured and performed commoning processes through several processes. The first performance was discursive: the language used and how muni-platforms and muni-governments incorporated different forms of the commons - the common good, the common or in common - into names, titles and statements. As Isabelle Stengers points out - in defiance of Whitehead's assertion that instinct prevails and 'words do not matter' - the function of 'denomination' is 'not as a starting point for a process of reasoning, but rather as a point of accumulation around which other names will be added' (Stengers, 2011, pp. 37–44). I will argue that words matter because naming is worlding, and politics 'enacts' events and states of affairs. It uses language not only to describe reality but also to 'employ discursive or rhetorical devices - to create plausible accounts and construct believable versions of reality' (Coffey, 2014, p. 272). Performance is a political act, just as politics is performative. From Rosa Parks' famous act of disobedience on a segregated bus to the Argentinean *escraches* [exposures] of military torturers or the white overalls of the Italian *disobedienti* [dissidents], the embodiment of the political performance creates a new language and

the space to be heard differently. In Spain, the anti-eviction platform PAH embodied the art of performing individual problems as collective concerns through public performances - such as flamenco dancing in a bank office - that enunciated and created a public political space capable of holding new narratives and successfully problematising housing debt through a 'putting-in-common' that questioned not only the individualisation of problems but also the solutions offered (Méndez de Andés Aldama, Hamou, & Aparicio Wilhelmi, 2020, p. 179).

I argue that the performative aspects of the commons within municipalism - from party names to swearing-in ceremonies, event titles and policy frameworks - can be seen as interventions aimed at producing an alternative, non-state, multiple, counter-Leviathan 'body politic' in public space. That the symbolic actions of naming political actors and formulating the political genealogy of the municipalist proposal were embodied in municipalist activist debates about how social and institutional actors could work to strengthen existing movements and how public policies could be organised around a common programmatic axis. And that this commoning has, in some cases, been successfully translated into institutional practices and projects.

Commons as discourse

In defining the identity of the muni-platforms, many included 'common' in their name - as in Barcelona, Zaragoza or Terrasa en Comú or el Comú de Lleida - while others opted for *ganemos* [let's Win], *cambiamos* [let's Change] or *ahora* [now]. 'Commons' here reflects the spirit of confluence as well as the connection to a political tradition that was referred to by the two city councillors in Madrid - one from the militant research collective Observatorio Metropolitano, the other from the squatted social centre Patio Maravillas - who were sworn in with '*Omnia sunt communia*' [Everything for everyone] (Gil, 2015). The Anabaptist motto was used by the Italian writers' collective Wu Ming in their bestseller *Q* - published under the name Luther Blissett (2000) - and is the title a book on commons as forms of social organisation by Massimo de Angelis (2017). The inclusion of 'urban commons' as a category in the Atlas of Change makes explicit the intention to develop these statements into public policies, linking the remunicipalisation of public services with self-managed social centres and social and solidarity economy projects, cultural initiatives and different forms of social income.

Commons as concern

Debates on the commons were present in all national and international municipalist analyses and debates. The term was included as a central theme or part of a strategic line in national meetings organised by BeC in 2016 - Reinforcing the Commons - and 2017-2018 Municilab 2017; as a specific debate session in the Spanish Municipalism, Counterpower and Autonomy - MAC meetings from 2016 to 2018; and in international meetings with social and institutional actors organised by Barcelona en Comú in 2017 - Fearless Cities - and 2018 - OIPD Conference. The question of what the commons could mean has also been a theme in publications produced by municipalist actors. In the *Fearless Cities* book edited by Barcelona en Comú activists Marta Junqué and Kate Baird (2017) - published in Spanish, Catalan, English and French - there is a chapter on 'The Commons' by Barcelona City Council advisor Laia Forné, Italian legal scholar and member of *Massa Crítica* in Naples Giuseppe Miccarelli and Barcelona activist Iolanda Fresnllo (2019). The book *Democratic Cities* - promoted by the techno-politics group coordinated by

renowned sociologist Manuel Castells at the Universidad Oberta de Catalunya included a chapter on commons and municipalism as the 'past and present of a popular conquest' (La Hidra, 2019).

Commons as policies

As we have seen, muni-governments considered the commons as an explicit and implicit element of their programmes. While social and institutional actors considered the possibility and practicality of regulating the commons, the concept was used to characterise public policies and in indifferent public documents. As we will see in more detail in Chapter 7, 'commons' appeared in plans and programme documents of half of the sixteen main muni-governments. Commons were included as a core element in strategic plans, as the main result and support element in programmes and by-laws, or as interventions within broader objectives. They were also identified as a guiding principle in another six municipalities, with public interventions in cultural production, social and solidarity economy, public space, basic income, water remunicipalisation or food sovereignty.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have discussed Spanish municipalist focus on radical democratic governance, inherited from the 15M movement, which made it part of a critique of representative democracy and finance capitalism, how it deployed vectorial politics aimed at transforming institutions and social movements, and the prefigurative nature of the politics carried out by muni-governments.

I have started this chapter with an analysis of the municipalist roots in the urban democracy for urban autonomy and self-government and, more recently, in the experience of the occupation of squares, which since 2011 has linked assemblies and encampments to contemporary urban revolts against a new wave of urban enclosures. The definition and brief historical outline of the 'new' municipalism and how the electoral muni-platforms presented in the 2015 Spanish municipal elections explained the democratic aspect of Spanish municipalism, linked to urban social movements working on issues of migration and precarity, the right to the city and the anti-eviction movement. In the second part, I have analysed the so-called 'cities of change' and the Spanish municipalist 'confluence' as a heterogeneous configuration that had to mediate between old and new political organisations, social and institutional processes, and community-based and state-led policies. I described the transformations sought by the 'cities of change' and the limitations imposed by the administrative structures of the public institutions of the nation-state on the incorporation of a commoning logic and the efforts to define processes of urban transformation that were not set out as a polished image and comprehensive master plan, but as a constellation of programmes, projects and policies. I have also referred to the various political organisations that seek to implement the municipalist institutional attack as 'muni-platforms', and the local governments formed by municipalist elected officials as 'muni-governments'. Throughout this thesis I will also use the term 'cities of change' when referring to the combination of muni-platforms and muni-governments, of municipalist politics and policies, in the construction of a shared vision. In the final section, I have offered an interpretation of the commons as a municipalist governmentality that incorporates vectorial and prefigurative elements. I described how municipalist governance functioned as vectorial, prefigurative political projects in which the commons were part of the prefiguration of a future city that aimed to shift the focus from the redistribution of goods to the democratisation of

power and to provide universal and sustainable access not only to inalienable resources but also to decisions over those resources. The political hypothesis of the commons has been seen not only as narrative and normative, as discourse and policy, but also as political concerns discussed in municipalist debates.

The next chapter will look at the practical and theoretical knowledge produced by the emerging field of urban commons to understand how it resonates with the municipalist practice discussed in this chapter and the alternatives to state-centred planning discussed in Chapter 6.

Chapter 5 - Urban Commons

[...] the idea of transformation does not only point to the miraculous break with what is already there - a historical cut, interruption of normality, etc. - but also tackles the problem of duration, the continuity of a collective and tentative power of action that reappropriates our capacities and our possibilities of existence [...] in the one world of our common dimension.

Marina Garcés, *Un mundo común [A world in common]*, 2013 (my translation)

Introduction

The commons constitute the second area of theory and practice that informs this research, in examining how the municipalist experience and the tools of planning can contribute to the proliferation of commons. The assumption behind this chapter is that the potential proliferation of commons as radical forms of emancipation entails a transformation in how commons are perceived and how the commons relate to the private and, more specifically, the public domain, and it proposes a hypothesis of how theory and practice around urban commons contribute to this transformation. I will argue that, while commoning practices have been seen as organic, spontaneous processes, the possibility of incorporating commons principles and practices into urban planning requires an understanding of commoning as a durable, stable and potentially expanding practice capable of establishing forms of social organisation alternative to the modern nation-state and the capitalist financialised market. This characterisation of commoning processes as a form of decision-making in complex territories - such as cities - is inspired by the municipalist experience presented in Chapter 4, and will inform the alternatives to urban planning explored in Chapter 6.

To this end, I will first reflect on the emancipatory nature of the commons and discuss how the different interpretations of the English term 'commons' in Spanish serve to identify the three main theoretical schools, their limits and potentials. I will also propose a synthesis of the previous elements. Secondly, I will reflect on the articulation between the public, private and common domains and the role of the modern construction of 'perfect property'. In this relationship, the commons is presented as a-modern and urban commoning experiences as resurgent processes. Thirdly, I will discuss the state of the art of urban commons, both in theory and practice, and the consideration of urban commoning as city-making 'in the middle' of commons dichotomies and urban proliferation dilemmas. Finally, this section will reflect on the main challenges posed by the proliferation of the commons and propose elements that could contribute to overcoming them.

5.1 Commons political proposal

In the literature, commons refer to forms of cooperation, mutuality and shared ownership found in different parts of the world: from traditional management of resources such as irrigation systems, fisheries or open fields to contemporary forms of collective action around housing, public space or

urban infrastructures. As a political hypothesis, commons are seen as a strategic site from which to articulate seemingly dispersed struggles and propose an emancipatory horizon. This horizon is based on old and new practices that have survived as recognised and formalised activities, but have also emerged from spaces of possibility at the margins of the state and the market.

At a political and economic turning point, two foundational texts for the political and scientific production of the commons were published in 1990, one year after the fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989 and two years after the private equity fund KKR acquired the food conglomerate Nabisco for \$25 billion in the first major leveraged buyout operation that paved the way for the hegemony of finance capitalism (Bin, 2020; Duménil & Lévy, 2004). In October 1990, appeared US Midnight Notes Collective magazine issue #10 on the "New Enclosures", highlighting resistance to the transnational expansion of new forms of capitalist accumulation. The following month, US political scientist Elinor Ostrom published *Governing the Commons*, which presented the commons as a more effective - more democratic, more accessible and more sustainable - form of management than either the market or the state. In the following decades, academic research and political mobilisations developed along these two lines, generally identified as neo-institutional and neo-Marxist (Huron, 2017; Caffentzis, 2004).

Elinor Ostrom (1990) presented the management principles of goods that, according to classical economics, are rival but not exclusive and whose management is neither private nor state. Ostrom's work on common pool resources (CPRs) had begun in the 1970s, after her doctoral research on water management (Ostrom, 1965) and continued in the decade of the 1980s, when the neoliberal transformation of capital and the state was underway. Ostrom founded the Digital Library of the Commons at Indiana University, which contains more than ten thousand documents, and was awarded the Nobel Prize in Economics in 2009, testifying to the soundness of collective management of resources. From a different political tradition, the publication of the Midnight Notes Collective referred to the new cycle of enclosures as an actualisation of the privatisation of common lands - forests and pastures - that began in England in the 6th century (Thompson, 1991). Midnight Notes Collective (1990) linked the debt crisis in Africa to the repression of students in China, the housing struggles in Switzerland or the occupation in the United States, interested in the composition of the struggles against capitalist development. This publication is part of a political practice and writings on the commons that have supported social movements confronting the multiple processes of accumulation. Members Silvia Federici, Peter Linebaugh and George Caffentzis have been active in struggles on the periphery of production used by capitalism to extend the processes of enclosure and accumulation that are functional for the development of industrial capitalism through what Marx identified as capitalism's 'primitive accumulation' of the commons in Britain. As Silvia Federici (2004) points out in *Caliban and the Witch*, this period also enacted the enclosure of women's bodies as a form of appropriation of the reproduction of the productive subject, and the enclosure of territories and bodies has continued in each cycle of capitalist expansion. In the early 21st century, the emergence of digital production, the centrality of knowledge, information and relational elements in the new cycle of accumulation, and the privatisation and exploitation of human and planetary resources led to a third commons of political and theoretical production around global resources and the so-called 'immaterial' and digital commons (Benkler, 2006; Lessig, 2002; Shiva, 1997).

5.1.1 Commons in translation

Commons are found in many cultures, each with a specific connotation. In European languages, the term 'commons' is associated with 'spheres of communality' such as "*usi civici, wastes, mir, Allmende, Algme, open fields, talvera, toumière, Marknutzungen, Almeinde, allmaenning, almindig, gemeentegronden, ejidos [...]*" (Borremans & Robert, 2006, p. 36). In non-Western cultures, such spheres are even broader: the Lakota term '*mitakuye oyasin*' could be translated as 'all my relations', the Maori concept of '*kaitiakitanga*' as 'guardianship, protection' of the human environment and also on its behalf (Bazzul & Tolbert, 2017), and the Zulu and Xhosa term '*ubuntu*' - sometimes translated as 'I am because we are' - was adopted by the open software project because of its 'belief in a universal bond of sharing that connects all humanity' (Official Ubuntu Documentation, 2013). In English, the term 'commons' is also a polysemic concept that can refer to a type of commodity, a political goal, consumer 'costumes in common' or new digital forms of production, the basis of human reproduction or a site of strategic struggle, among other things. In the academic literature, commons are considered to be formed by a community that takes care of a collective resource through a shared governance model. In this governance, there is equal access to the resource and democratic decision-making that guarantees the conservation of the resource in the same conditions, that is, not depleted or privatised. These constitutive principles of universality, democracy, inalienability and sustainability (Observatorio Metropolitano, 2011) are complemented by practical aspects such as the definition of limits, the situated nature of rules, or the recognition and responsibility across scales (Ostrom, 1990).

The various elements of the commons constellation - as the material management of resources, but also as common good and commonwealth, or as commonality - have formed a political hypothesis used as a strategic tool to link diverse struggles. Indigenous communities protecting their lands and customs, the spatial demands of social movements, the creators of new digital products protecting their ability to produce and share knowledge and software, ecologists claiming that capitalist development is incompatible with the survival of the human race and millions of other species on Earth, or feminists reclaiming the centrality of care and reproductive work. Social movements have mobilised the notion and practice of the commons as a proposal for a politics that can create new collective imaginaries of the future and, at the same time, propose tools to transform the present. It also served to distinguish these community-based proposals from state-centred initiatives - whether Keynesian, socialist or communist - that shared similar concerns about the consequences of unrestrained capitalist development (Caffentzis, 2004, p. 5).

In 2007, the Spanish militant research collective Observatorio Metropolitano (OM) produced a collective research on the urban processes taking place in what was perceived as a provincial capital compared to Paris, Berlin, London or Barcelona, but was revealed to be a financial centre for investment and the real estate bubble that would burst the following year in 2008. When the financial crash hit Madrid's economy, the OM proposed the concept of 'commons' as a political strategy that could articulate the seemingly dispersed discontents. At the time, we [at the OM] borrowed the English term 'commons' and translated it into Spanish and to urban activists who saw it as a mediaeval, long-lost concept. This translation attempt resulted in *La Carta de los Comunes* [The Charter of the Commons], a steam-punk story, half fiction, half political statement, signed under the pseudonym 'Madrilonia', which stated:

That there can be no city, nor any viable society, without recognition of the goods, knowledge and wealth that are common to all and that make collective life possible. That these communal resources are essential for the sustenance of life, and that they include both natural elements such as land, water, forests and air, and other resources that have hitherto been managed by public and private hands with little regard for their conservation and improvement, such as public spaces, sanitation, health and education, care, culture and knowledge. (Observatorio Metropolitano, 2011, p. 17, my translation).

In this charter, the OM adopted the simplest Spanish translation of commons as *comunes* and, more specifically, as *comunes urbanos* [urban commons]. In the different interventions that followed - with texts, seminars, workshops and debates in social centres, cultural institutions and academic environments - we carried out a translation that operated not only between English and Spanish, but also between theory and practice, and between conceptual proposals and lived examples. The following section draws on this experience to reflect on how Spanish implementations of the concept of the commons illustrate three different theoretical and political approaches to the commons: as economic assets with collective management that guarantees their sustainability, as community-led processes that resist enclosures and privatisation, and as a human right to access universal resources.

***Bienes comunes* - Commons as economic assets**

The work of Ostrom and the IASC - International Association for the Study of the Commons, is concerned with the institutional arrangements that govern 'common pool resources', defined in classical economics as rival resources whose access is difficult to exclude, at least without solid social agreements. CPR is generally applied to traditional commons, also considered as 'natural' commons, such as forests, irrigation systems, based on a tradition of collective management, without any particular political connotation, and the analysis of their governance forms is rooted in game theory and the idea of 'rational choice' (Ostrom, 1998).

In Spain, this approach is related to rural commons and the traditional management of fields, forests and irrigation systems, such as the exemplary case of the irrigation canal network of the *Acequia de Valencia* (Peris Albentosa, 1997). The focus on the resource in this translation is underlined by the inclusion of the term *bienes* [goods], as in *bienes comunes* [common goods], *bienes en mano común* [goods in common hands] or *bienes de acervo común* [common-pool resources]. In Spanish legislation, common goods are assets owned by the community but managed by the local administrations for the benefit of the inhabitants of a municipality. They are intended for the direct, personal and free use of the neighbours and, as a rule, cannot be privatised and turned into a source of income by the local administrations, according to *Decreto 1372/1986*. In practice, common goods in the hands of town councils can be considered public property with certain specific characteristics, according to a ruling of the *Tribunal Supremo* [Supreme Court]. There is another legal figure, that of communal forests, in which a community of users is recognised as the governing and managing body of this forest resource, according to *Ley 55/1980*. In areas that have remained predominantly rural, such as Galicia, communal forests account for 45,380 ha of forest area and represent one third of the total forest area, and here

The administration, enjoyment and provision of local forests in common ownership correspond exclusively to the respective community of owners, which has full legal capacity for the fulfilment of its purposes, including the exercise, both in judicial and administrative proceedings, of any action that may be necessary to the protection of its specific interests. (*Ley 55/1980, de 11 de noviembre, de montes vecinales en mano común*, my translation).

The neo-institutional approach divides commons into 'material' goods, those found in nature, such as water, forests, fisheries, and 'immaterial' or 'human-made' goods (Hess, 2000), mostly subject to digitalisation, such as information or software. One consequence of this categorisation is the difficulty in identifying new emerging commons in urban environments, where, for example, street trees are presented as commons (Hess, 2008). British-Canadian legal geographer Nicholas Blomley argues that CPR scholarship has traditionally had "much less to say about the urban commons" (Blomley, 2008, p. 318) than other approaches. Moreover, even when Elinor Ostrom used the term 'commons', she was explicit about the distinction between commons as open-access resources - closer to the 'universal commons' discussed later in this section - and commons as common-pool resources (Ostrom, 2010).

Comunal - Commons as resistance processes

As a starting point for considering the commons as a process, the neo-Marxist approach sees the commons as collective forms of solidarity and mutual aid with the capacity to provide for the material and immaterial needs of social reproduction, and as a way of politicising the practices and resistances present in different parts of the planet. This approach assumes that there is "no commons without a community" (Mies, 2014) and is not concerned with the institutional regime of the commons, but with their capacity to confront the enclosures of the commons with struggles to protect and reclaim the binding values assumed by these political communities. Some of these struggles include environmental activists and indigenous peoples resisting the exploitation of whole ecologies (Mies & Shiva, 2014), feminist struggles against the enclosure of women's bodies as providers of care work (Federici, 2013; Mies & Bennholdt-Thomsen, 2001), or resistance to the commodification of cultural assets such as traditional remedies and designs.

The prevalent Spanish translation of this approach is '*comunal*' [communal] and '*comunalidad*' [communality]. Following Gustavo Esteva's critical translation of Ivan Illich's use of the term 'common', *comunalidad* was developed by Mexican indigenous researchers, such as the Zapotec anthropologist Jaime Martínez Luna (2010) and others in the Oaxaca 'commonality' (Nava Morales, 2019). In 2015, the First International Conference on Communality was held in Puebla, México, bringing together researchers, practitioners and activists from the Americas and beyond. The term '*comunalidad*' was incorporated into the governmental environment when, in 2020, the Catalan government initiated a programme for the development of cooperative and communal economic projects with the aim of developing *comunalitats urbanes* [urban communes]. The term 'communal' is used in relation to processes of communality, with Arturo Escobar's (2017) reflection on autonomy and design are considered as 'the realisation of the communal', and is understood as the pre-modern forms of organisation still alive in indigenous cultures. In 2019, the first International Congress on Communal Democracy held in San Sebastian, Spain, combined theoretical and practical knowledge, addressing issues of community, popular power and self-government.

A turning point in the neo-Marxist concept of the commons as a process is found in US-based social historian and Midnight Notes Collective member Peter Linebaugh's book on the history of the legal agreements that granted political and economic liberties in England - the *Carta Magna* of 1215 and the *Carta de Foresta* [Charter of the Forest] of 1217 - where he turned the noun 'commons' into the verb 'commoning':

To speak of the commons as if it were a natural resource is misleading at best and dangerous at worst—the commons is an activity and, if anything, it expresses relationships in society that are inseparable from relations to nature. It might be better to keep the word as a verb, an activity, rather than as a noun, a substantive. (Linebaugh, 2008, p. 279)

This view of the commons as a process that resists enclosure by capitalism, and of the state as an institution that is functional and subordinate to capitalism (Poulantzas, 1977), resonates with Western emancipatory projects that have tried to influence capitalism and the market since the 19th century: the labour movement, workers' strikes and cooperatives. More recently, the social and solidarity economy, the doughnut economy, or the degrowth movement, also focus on the means of production and the market as a way to gain life space - more time, better working conditions, more income - from capitalism. In this approach, communities and resources around the world are as interconnected as the transnational capitalism that encloses them.

***Procomún* - Commons as universal rights**

This third theoretical approach operates as a distinct one in Spanish thanks to the use of the neologism '*procomún*', an out-of-use Castilian term recuperated in the Spanish translation of the book *The Wealth of the Networks* by US technologist Yochai Benkler (2006). *Procomún* is understood as 'what belongs to everybody, and to nobody' (Lafuente, 2014) This approach focuses on what I will call 'universal commons', as a principle of access to unregulated, potentially infinite resources. Universal commons include what Roman Law called '*res communis*', the non-rivalrous and non-excludable resources, such as the air, oceans, and rivers, but also contemporary forms such as knowledge and information. This approach also applies the universal right to access to general concepts, such as health or culture, making it clear that the community involved is one extended to all humankind, but also that the most crucial characteristic is their unrestricted and unregulated access. In Spain, one of the most relevant actors in the 'commons world' was the *Procomún* Laboratory, based at Medialab-Prado and active between 2007 and 2014 (Ergosfera, 2019). This citizen laboratory 'brought into existence' the term *procomún* "as an epistemic object, an experimental domain quite different from the conventional conceptualisations that understand it as a property regime or a type of good' (Estalella Fernández, Rocha, & Lafuente García, 2013), including areas such as the atmosphere, public space or the internet.

In the digital domain, considering common goods as an unregulated shared resource is consistent with considering the commons as a 'sector of value creation' (Bollier, 2007) and as an alternative form of production that capitalism can incorporate into its processes of accumulation. It combines the possibility of harnessing the surplus value of open software 'hyper-production' within cooperative models (Bauwens & Kostakis, 2014) with emancipatory digital tools used as a technical solution to a political problem: the question of trust (Brekke, 2019). However, considering digital

production as immaterial or non-scarce does not take into account the material conditions of the infrastructure involved: the unequal distribution of cables and servers), the need for energy and heat distribution, and increasingly the exploitation of rare minerals such as lithium and cobalt needed for the ever-increasing processing and storage capacities. At the same time, the non-conflictual autonomy of the global commons is being challenged by forms of enclosure, such as the speculation on CO2 emissions into the atmosphere through the Carbon Stock Exchange, the privatisation of water granted by the national constitution in the case of Chile, or when maritime rights have to be renegotiated due to the disappearance of island states under rising sea levels.

While the strength of this argument is particularly relevant for digital and relational products - where there is no scarcity or rivalry at the point of access as unlimited 'things' that are 'entirely socially constructed', such as 'software, scientific databases, the electromagnetic spectrum, the arts and so on' (De Angelis & Harvie, 2014), I will argue that this conceptualisation is also applied to so-called 'global commons', such as air, language or energy from the sun, where it is not possible to define the precise communities or forms of shared governance. I will argue that the characterisation of the commons as 'what belongs to everyone and no one' represents the most liberal, hands-off interpretation of how to organise collective resources. In this approach, the *procomún* remains dissociated from private and public forms of governance or decision-making because there is no decision to be made or community responsible for it. In this type of commons, there is no scarcity and therefore no rules and no free riders - or rather, everyone is a free rider.

5.1.2 Commons as social organisation

The three previous approaches are often seen as incompatible or even contradictory. The opposition between the neo-institutional and neo-Marxist approaches is widely recognised in the literature and questions the ability of the former to resist appropriation by public and private forms of property and to ensure the sustainability and inalienability of the commons. The differences between universal commons and CPR have been explicitly outlined by Elinor Ostrom and reflect the political need to identify democratic models of governance. In the difference between the universal commons and the commons of resistance, communities play a crucial role. However, I argue that the becoming-common of the public - as well as the private - domain requires a characterisation of the commons as a form of social organisation which, I will argue, sits between the seemingly irreconcilable positions of neo-institutional management theories of economic goods and the neo-Marxist call for political organisation through community resistance while also operationalising the universality of the commons as a right:

Commons are generated in so far as subjects become commoners, in so far as their social being is enacted with others, at different levels of *social organisation*, through a social practice, commoning, that is essentially horizontal [...]. (De Angelis, 2017, p. 104, italics are mine)

Italian economist Massimo de Angelis applies a cybernetics analysis to consider the commons as a 'social systems' that is "prone to adaptive, dynamic, self-preserving and evolutionary behaviour, impasses, collapse and the overcoming of impasses, since they are more than the sum of their parts and therefore prone to unanticipated, emergent characteristics" (De Angelis, 2017, p. 106), and he later would use Stattford Beer's Viable System Model to urban systems in 'the City as a Commons'

(De Angelis, 2022a). De Angelis, who is close to the neo-Marxist tradition, incorporates the neo-institutional approach in a theoretical framework that spans 'from Elinor Ostrom to Karl Marx' (De Angelis, 2017, pp. 143–197). He distinguishes between open access regimes as a 'res nullis' with no limits and the commons as 'communal governance of a shared resource' made by Ostrom (1990, pp. 335–336, cited in De Angelis, 2017, p. 144) and reverses the Marxian cycle of money - commodity - more money M-C-M', incorporating issues of labour production and regeneration (Cox & Federici, 1975). De Angelis identifies a potential 'structural coupling' between different commons and the form of the capital-commons, while I will argue for a relationship with the public in which the confrontation with the state that remains in the tension between reform and revolution and the limits of 'the need to dismantle the existing state', as expressed by the spokesperson of *La Coordinadora for the Defence of Water and Life*, Oscar Olivera (De Angelis, 2017, p. 321) in relation to the 'Water Wars' in Cochabamba, Bolivia. His understanding of commons as social systems - potentially able to emerge as a stable form of social organisation, I will argue - appeals to commoners and social movements, urging them to 'grow' the commons through elements used in the analysis of complex systems, namely the production of autonomy, boundaries and sense. Regarding the commoning boundaries, De Angelis states that 'the multiplication of commons [ecologies] implies the multiplication in which commons systems operate' (De Angelis, 2017, p. 267).

In order to identify the elements of the expanded commons systems that are integrated into a commons' social organisation, I propose to consider it as a 'disjunctive synthesis', an assemblage that operates across the three commons approaches discussed above. Table 5.1 offers my characterisation that necessarily simplifies the complexity of the approaches mentioned and the overlaps between them.

Table 5.1: Characterisation of the commons' theoretical approaches

Commons as...	Focus on...	Main component	Main principle	Boundary system
Asset	Efficiency	Governance	Sustainability	Cooperation
Process	Reproduction	Community	Inalienability	Conflict
Right	Access	Resource	Universality	Detachment

Source: Author

This characterisation according to the theoretical positions in relation to their political positions, principles, elements and boundaries necessarily simplifies the complexity of the approaches mentioned and the overlaps between them. For example, the French sociologists Christian Laval & Pierre Dardot (2019) propose 'the Common' - with a capital C - as a political principle that is confronted with a managerial approach and can be seen as a combination of the commons as a conceptual right without a defined community and resource, with the conflictual approach to capitalism of neo-Marxism. Authors from the neo-institutional approach to digital goods, such as the US researcher Charlotte Hess (2007) and the legal scholar Sheila Foster (2012), have also included conflict and rights in their analysis. Finally, US and Italian philosophers Michael Hardt

and Toni Negri (2009), close to the neo-Marxist approach, conceptualise the 'commonwealth' as part of the global commons, where there is no defined community but an abstract 'multitude' and the city is an abstract reservoir that collects and distributes the commons.

However, I will argue that this simplification provides a basis for discussing the role of conflict and autonomy. The neo-institutional approach, based on the nature of goods and linked to material, 'natural' resources, sees the commons as an independent domain, outside and complementary to the state and the market as a non-conflictual idea. The neo-Marxist approach sees commoning as a process of resistance that establishes its autonomy from capitalist forms of dispossession through conflict. In this approach, commons and communities are produced - that is, identified and incorporated as such - through the process of resistance to the enclosures of traditional structures and organisations, the realisation of the value extracted from care and relational work, or the composition of new fields of commoning. The liberal approach does not even consider conflict. Its main premise is that resources are not scarce, that there is no need for decision-making by a particular collective, and that there is no consideration of external constraints such as planetary limits or capitalist enclosures. The fourth approach I propose, shown in Table 5.2, considers commons as social organisation, is based on the autonomy of the commons in relation to modernity and the transformation of both the private and the public spheres into something that is not directly linked to these two spheres, but also not completely separated from their related constellations: an assemblage of elements, material and immaterial assets, traditional and new communities, new and old collective understandings.

Table 5.2: Characterisation of commons as social organisation

Commons as...	Focus on...	Main component	Main principle	Boundary System
Asset	Efficiency	Governance	Sustainability	Cooperation
Process	Conflict	Community	Inalienability	Conflict
Right	Access	Resource	Universality	Detachment
Social Organisation	Autonomy	Relation between resource, community and governance	Democracy	Multiplication

Source: Author

5.2 Public, private, common

This tension between the capital-commons and state-commons forms is part of the intellectual debate where the commons literature often understands the commons as part of the triad of private, public and common domains (Mattei, 2011). However, I will argue that these three domains have very different characteristics: while public and private have a defined, recognised normative structure set up around the concept of a 'perfect property' (Congost, 2007), the commons domain is more diffused. Compared to the commons, legally private and public are clearly defined concepts: the private sphere relates to capitalism and the market, while the public sphere pertains to the

government and the nation-state. This division enacted by modernity, as we have seen, is sanctioned by two different sets of legal codes: Private Law covers the relations between individual subjects, and Public Law covers the relationship between governments and their citizens. Private and public spheres form part of a constellation where 'private' relates to the individual but also to domestic, restricted spaces, while 'public' relates to open and civic spaces and is linked to citizenship. Although academic scholarship often characterises the commons as collective property that aspires to the same rights as private or public property, the commons is based on use, not ownership. Its constellation relates to mutuality and the common good.

5.2.1 Perfect property

The construction of modern 'perfect property' in Europe sought to eliminate the 'bundle of rights' of communal management of the commons. Examples include the English Enclosure Acts of the 18th and 19th centuries (Thompson, 1991), the dismantling of local autonomy and small-scale autonomous administrations in France after the French Revolution of 1789 (Tilly, 1990), or the liberal economic reform implemented through the Spanish 'confiscations' in the late 18th century, which dismantled the commons regime and privatised or transferred former collective properties to local administration (Congost, 2007). During the Weimar Republic, Bismarck actively sought to replace collective resources to support social reproduction with state provision of services, in a process in which the transformation from 'social' to 'public' properties and concerns played a crucial role in the mechanisms of mutuality used as the basis of the welfare state (Wahl, 2011).

However, the distinction between public and commons regimes is evident in US historian Elisabeth Blackmar (2006) account of the Anglo-Saxon legal tradition of public property held by governments, which allows public officials to determine who has access to resources according to their constituencies, as opposed to common property, where no individual can be denied the use or benefit of resources. Furthermore, the debate setting public against private is a false dichotomy; the state is as much a representation of a multitude of individuals as it is a market actor, and the collusion between state and private interests places business interests on both sides of the equation. In Britain, where urban communities were better able to protect the social dimension of the commons by coming to terms with the aristocracy (Thompson, 1991), and where commons survived within cities as parks and recreational areas (Bowden, Brown, & Smith, 2009), the transformation was enacted through the idea of a public space. In a contemporary attempt to reverse this process, the Community Land Trust model seeks to reinstate the commons as part of the triad: a collective property that creates inalienable and nonmarketable assets that, like the commons, are based on use-value rather than financial value (Center for CLT Innovation, 2022). However, I will argue that, from a modern perspective, the Community Land Trust scheme retains the 'perfect' character of ownership, and the construction of individual relationships and responsibilities on the part of residents remains unchallenged.

In the modern division of property between the apparatuses of the nation-state and the capitalist market, I argue that the most public nature of the state is incorporated as welfare and the most individual nature of the market is incorporated as neoliberalism. The development of the welfare state in Western countries has been an attempt to reconcile financial accumulation and the provision of livelihoods, where the public sphere takes care of social reproduction, while the private sphere

takes care of production, creating an asymmetrical flow of care in and out of institutions, with many aspects being absorbed into other spheres. This asymmetry is one of the conditions for what Spanish and Latin American feminist economists call the 'capital-life conflict' (Colectiva XXK & SOF Sempreviva, 2021; Pérez Orozco, 2017), where the overlooked work of reproduction attached to the domestic sphere is feminised to the extent that, as Veronika Bennholdt-Thomsen and Maria Mies (2001) put it, women are somehow treated as commons and commons are treated as women. According to the Spanish feminist economist Amaya Pérez Orozco (2017), the collective construction of care as a commons would mean a democratisation of households, taking care out of the domestic sphere and into the collective public sphere as a chosen responsibility. The collectivisation of the domestic sphere is a response to the paradoxical fact that the neoliberal attack on welfare institutions has required strong states, operating through the domination of the public decision-making apparatus and the collapse of the state guardianship of social wealth through the progressive privatisation of welfare infrastructures, which become privately owned or managed.

As I will discuss in more detail in the next chapter, the neoliberal wave individualised and segmented social life according to a free market and liberal discourse, while at the same time supporting the development of a strong state capable of intervening in the market with appropriate policies. This policy operation was brilliantly implemented by the governments of US President Ronald Reagan and UK Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher in the 1980s. I will argue that the emergence of the political hypothesis of the commons in the 1990s, as a demand for democratic management of collective resources that guarantees equal access, confronted the privatisation of public resources for social reproduction, mainly housing, health and education, the privatisation and financialisation of access to them, and the dismantling of the public and private structures that maintained them. I will also argue that municipalism recognised that, while the modern nation-state was re-claiming a role as guarantor of the collectively produced commons, it needed to involve social actors in carrying out the institutional transformations necessary to fulfil this duty.

5.2.2 Common-Public articulations

The interpretation of what constitutes 'the public' is a crucial question for a becoming-common of the public. Chantal Mouffe (2007, 2011) understands the public as an agonistic arena, "always striated and hegemonically structured", where the democratic political composition between different - sometimes antagonistic - political subjects takes place. For Belgian architect Wim Cuyvers (2007), on the other hand, the 'real' public is almost invisible, and its nature opposes the commodification of the city, urban wastelands that refuse control without being 'anarchic', the place of things that the market does not need, but that people need. It is an uncontrolled space of need and vulnerability, but also of autonomy, the opposite of private and privatised space. For Bruno Latour and Peter Weibel (2005), the public is the site of the composition of the 'body politic', the site of a politics of things public - '*res publica*' - organised as matters of concern. 'Making things public', as Judith Butler (2018) argues, is an empowerment strategy that dismantles the 'privatisation' of structural inequalities by enabling a 'public performance' where individual vulnerabilities and needs can be politicised and assembled as collective acts of resistance. In my proposal, I understand 'the public' as an ethos that is not produced by the state apparatus, but that gives meaning and continuity

to the modern nation-state as part of a legacy of institutions of collective action, including the commons.

I also argue that the identification of common elements between the commons and the public emphasises the provision of collective forms of reciprocity and moves away from the distinction between public, private and collective property regimes, transforming the structures of governance and also the subjectivities produced by modernity. Following Latour (1993, 2013) and Tsing (2012, 2015), I consider that modern structures are neither overarching nor isolated and 'self-contained', and that the public-private-collective property regime is not the same as the neoliberal market division of capitalism or the bureaucratic apparatus of the nation-state (Deutscher, 1969). Moreover, while private enclosures are driven by the need of capitalist markets to maintain the constant growth of the rate of utility with an equally constant rate of accumulation by dispossession (Harvey, 2004), public enclosures are enacted by the nation-state in its aim to organise and control an overlapping system of rights and economic forms through the simplification (Scott, 1998), unification (Hobbes, 1651) and direct central rule (Tilly, 1990) of populations and territories. From this point of view, considering the commons as a third element within a triangulation or opposition of public and private spheres places the corresponding analyses and proposals as part of the 'work of purification' pointed out by Latour (1993). That is, as a modern construct and places the corresponding analyses and proposals on the same level: the one defined by modernity. I argue that thinking of the commons as a horizon of transformation, as a lived experience and a framework for action, intertwined with these two currents - the public and the private - through different points of intersection operates as a vectorial 'line of flight' that creates a horizon of transformation is situated on a different, a-modern, level.

At this level, the articulation between the public and the commons faces two main challenges. On the one hand, the conception of the state as an ally of capitalist market hegemony makes it difficult to identify when and how modern state institutions include or exclude collective decision-making over collective resources in meso-level processes. On the other hand, the idea that a proper form of the state can confront and neutralise the effects of market-private capitalism (Arboleda, 2021a; Dean, 2016) fails to recognise the role and position of the state in crisis. Addressing both challenges, Marxist authors such as Federici and Caffentzis argue that

[...] one of the challenges we face today is connecting the struggle over the public with those for the construction of the common so that they can reinforce each other. This is more than an ideological imperative. Let us reiterate it: what we call '*the public*' is actually wealth that we have produced and we must re-appropriate it. (Caffentzis & Federici, 2014, p. 102, italics in the original).

I will argue that in the case of the urban commons, the connection and reinforcement between the public and the commons that Federici and Caffentzis talk about is one of the necessary conditions for the resurgence and proliferation of the commons.

5.2.3 A-modern resurgent commons

The re-articulation between the commons and the public - which could also apply to the commons and the private, but is not the focus of this thesis - can be understood through the four different

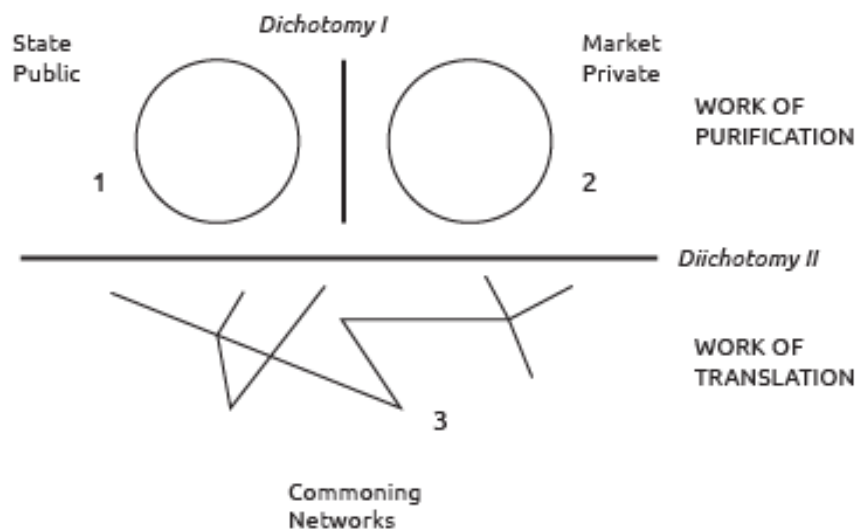
understandings of the boundary conditions in the four approaches to the commons that I presented earlier: In the neo-institutional approach, the commons is an independent domain that co-operates with the state and the market, with non-conflictual exchange in the boundaries; the neo-Marxist approach includes the conflictual aspect in its resistance to capitalist modes of accumulation and the extension of its boundaries, while the state is subordinated to the market and can be liberated from it; in the liberal approach, the commons is detached from both the market and the state, as there are no boundaries or constraints; however, the commons as a social organisation addresses the boundaries established by modernity by transforming both the private and the public into something that is not directly connected to these two spheres - either as cooperation or as resistance - but also not entirely separate from them - as detachment. In this approach, the commons functions as an assemblage of elements, linking autonomy and interdependence, traditional and new communities, and emerging and consolidated collective understandings.

The public-common assemblage as social practice that I propose would see the commons not as part of a triad and articulated in relation or in opposition to the private and the public, but as something in-between, incorporating elements of both, while creating a different logic outside of such triad: an a-modern social organisation concerned with the 'choice of complexity' (Doucet, 2011). Commons confront the idea, created by modernity, that humans exist as independent and autonomous entities, detached from our environment and from others - an idea that Tsing (2015) identifies as the construction of 'self-contained' units, functional to the idea of a linear 'progress' of industrial capitalist development, unaffected by other ecosystems and therefore irresponsible for its impact on them. From the ANT perspective outlined in Chapter 3, commons form hybrids as assemblages of shared resources with the communities that use them, through self-governance in a non-extractive interdependence between humans and non-humans, and processes of resilience (Baibarac & Petrescu, 2019). Irish geographer and activist Patrick Bresnihan highlights this interdependent nature, arguing that commons needs to negotiate around the limits and potentials offered by any particular contexts (Bresnihan, 2015). One of these particular contexts is the saturated space in which urban commons operate, "already densely packed with people, competing uses, and capitalist investment" (Huron, 2015, p. 1).

Re-interpreting Latour's diagrams of the work of purification as representing the first modern dichotomy between 'Public / State' as 'Private / Market' - shown in figure 5.1 - I will argue that in such saturated, interdependent spaces there is a work of purification that locates the commons in the public or private domain as self-organised forms of social provision overseen by the state or as a form of collective property capable of entering the market, leaving the urban commons as hybrids only when they remain on the margins of both systems, using wastelands. Here, the description by Latour (1993) of the modern condition contributes to understanding the difference between the public institutions of the state and the collective organisational practices of the commons as a separation established by the two dichotomies. Applied to the commons, the modern public/private divide defines a form of organisation based on the construction of 'perfect property', while a networked world of shared experiences can only be incorporated into public or private law as an exercise in 'purification', such as that enacted by the neo-institutional versus neo-Marxist divide. However, as Latour states in the title of his book, 'we have never been modern', public and private have never been able to account for all the associations and actions that take place outside these two

domains. I will argue that the becoming-common of the public is capable to deploy a rationale that challenges the principles of state rationality: the construction of subjects with individual rights and obligations, the need for a leviathan-like representation that unifies a multiplicity of irreducible elements, the hierarchical organisation of beings, values, needs and desires, and the simplification and segmentation of complex territorial systems. Also, that such rationale can be defined not so much as insurgent, but as 'resurgent'.

Figure 5.1: Commoning hybrids. Public-Private-Common purification and translation



Source: Author interpretation of Bruno Latour (1993), Figure 1.1 Purification and translation, p. 11

The characterisation of 'resurgent commons' is proposed by Isabelle Stengers, in collaboration with Belgian legal scholar Serge Gutwirth (2016), as a distinction from 'insurgent commons'. Insurgent commons would be the traditional commons, the digital commons and the most obvious urban commons: the re-appropriation of abandoned spaces such as social centres and community gardens. These commons are able to resist the new enclosures using legal tools created 'before the attack' and benefit from a legal pluralism where property values, free access and autonomy co-exist. In the resurgent commons, however, commoning practices arise even when modernity has "erased the memory of the very possibility of commoning in the old, non free-access sense" (Gutwirth & Stengers, 2016, p. 5). Two other possible characterisations of the commons as a-modern hybrids can be found not only in the concept of 'latent commons' (Tsing, 2015), discussed in Chapter 3, but also in the idea of a 'fugitive planning of the undercommons', which resists conformity and considers that "[planning] is not an activity, not fishing or dancing or teaching or loving, but the ceaseless experiment with the future presence of the forms of life that make such activities possible" (Harney & Moten, 2013, p. 74).

According to Stengers and Gutwirth (2016), resurgent commons result from generative processes founded on a relationship of interdependence that produces new rules and obligations. I suggest that this condition resonates with what Castoriadis identifies as infra-power: the latent capacity to

'institute' that emerges only in an appropriate context and under certain conditions (Castoriadis, 1989, cited in Bagué, 2020). The elements of this 'social instituent imaginary' are neither entirely old nor entirely new: they 'emerge' from another time and space or political field of action in which they have been latent - like the commons described by Tsing (2015). In the process, the three components that make up the commons - namely, the resources, the communities and the modes of governance - are not given, but have to be continuously created and re-created through social interactions (Stavrides, 2016).

5.3 Urban commoning

According to Amanda Huron, urban commons differ theoretically but also materially (Huron, 2015, p. 1) from traditional pastures, forests, fisheries or irrigation systems, and from digital or relational commons based on information and knowledge systems. However, I argue that urban commons processes combine these elements as "emerging systems of organisation and governance that, like cities themselves, combine material and immaterial elements, traditional communities of production and reproduction, and the new networks of knowledge and socialisation, and are located halfway between autonomy and institutionalisation" (Méndez de Andrés, Aparicio, & Hamou, 2019, p. 22, my translation).

Here I consider that the 'urban' aspect does not refer to a specific type of built territory or to a certain level of population and building density, but to the relationships that have developed between physical structures, such as buildings, squares, water supply or sewage systems, and the social life of those who inhabit them, their systems of organisation and interaction, cultural production, social relations and interdependence with other ecological, economic or political systems. Since the Industrial Revolution, cities have evolved as wild organisms in need of control (Quetglas i Riusech, 1972). Urban territories have also been sites of capitalist exploitation and accumulation and are ecologically problematic, affecting human and non-human environments with pollution, slums, heatwaves, floods and anonymity. At the same time, I will argue that what we call 'cities' are diverse, heterogeneous territories with rich cultural and political ecosystems that have evolved over millennia and have proven to be efficient modes of social cooperation, also in relation to present and future climate-related crises (Xue, 2014; Oyón Bañales, 2011). Processes of commoning in urban territories - both recognised and latent - have been the focus of intellectual work that has sought to document and analyse these experiences.

5.3.1 Urban commons theory and practice

Applying the idea of the commons as an a-modern hybrid to urban environments requires addressing the specificities of the "theoretical gap between the politics of commons reclamation [of 'alter-globalisation theorists' or neo-Marxists] and the everyday practice of the long-term maintenance of commons [of 'CPR theorists' or neo-institutionalist]" (Huron, 2015, p. 5). In the urban commons literature, it is possible to identify a kind of 'Ostrom in the city' (Foster & Iaione, 2018) vs. 'New Urban Enclosures' (Hodkinson, 2012).

On the one hand, neo-institutional theorists, who focus more on natural, material and traditional situations, seek to transfer the stable, solid institutional arrangements of traditional commons

systems to urban commons as shared resources in the city, such as community gardens, social centres or public squares. US legal scholar Sheila Foster (Foster, 2012) categorises urban commons according to their economic characteristics of rivalry and exclusivity, and identifies different cases of the so-called 'tragedy of the commons' in the use of streets, parks and other public spaces, as well as local services. In 'The City as a Commons', Foster and Italian legal scholar Christian Iaione argue for the need to develop new 'devices' and 'innovative approaches' into "co-design process that has the effect of profoundly shaping and affecting the urban planning process" (Foster & Iaione, 2016, p. 338). Their Co-Cities framework sees the city as an 'infrastructure' that supports co-governance partnerships between public, private, epistemic, social and community actors. This co-governance of common pool resources depends on an 'enabling state' that facilitates institutional urban experimentation and access to digital tools, platforms and data (Foster & Iaione, 2022, pp. 191–192). Elinor Ostrom's collaborator Charlotte Hess maps the 'new commons' as "an open-access good" 'without pre-existing rules or clear institutional arrangements" (Hess, 2008, p. 1). Hess identifies urban features that are either very general, very specific, or both at the same time, and are attributed to a community that benefits from and cares for such commons, which is as abstract as the city's inhabitants. In this approach, it is possible to 'think of the city itself as a commons' that is "subject to the same types of rivalry, or contestation, and congestion that needs to be managed to avoid the kinds of problems or tragedies that beset any other commons" (Foster, 2012, p. 2016).

In the neo-institutional literature, commons resources appear not only as a collection of unarticulated situations ranging from the abstract concept of 'safety' to the concrete presence of street trees, but it also includes private gated communities and the controversial figure of Business Improvement Districts, as well as parks where non-profit organisations take care of maintenance, as in Central Park in New York, USA, or where self-organised social actors take care of different activities and habitats, as in the National Urban Park in Stockholm, Sweden (Parker & Johansson, 2011). I will argue that these examples are different from self-organised community self-management, as in the reclaimed Parque Augusta in São Paulo, Brazil (Silva de Oliveira, 2021) and that examples as the case of considering roads as commons also follows and exemplifies the focus on shared maintenance of public infrastructure without questioning the decision of why, how and for whom such structures were built in the first place. These examples show how the neo-institutional approach is functional to what US historian Elisabeth Blackmar calls the 'neoliberal appropriation' of the concept of the commons: what Blackmar identifies for public space in the US can be extrapolated to urbanism more generally: first, the importance of the negotiations that determine who has access to what resources and how they are used when dealing with an amorphous community; and second, how the bourgeoisie trusts that government agencies that claim to deliver improvements on behalf of a wider constituency of citizens will enhance their well-being as private owners (Blackmar, 2006, p. 51).

The neo-Marxist approach, on the other hand, is more connected to digital, immaterial and relational processes, linking the urban commons to social movements and seeing the city as a site of social conflict where the urban commons is subject to private and public 'new enclosures' (Chatterton, 2010; Midnight Notes Collective & Friends, 2009; Blomley, 2008; Midnight Notes Collective, 1990). In this approach, the urban commons emerge from social relations as something that "is not to be construed, therefore, as a particular kind of thing, asset or even social process, but

as an unstable and malleable social relation" (Harvey, 2012, p. 76). I will argue that considering the city as a commons-based social practice is different from considering the city as a commons, as in Iaione and Foster's 'Ostrom in the city' or co-city framework, which explicitly seeks to adapt principles and analysis from the so-called 'natural' commons, focusing on open space and land (Foster & Iaione, 2018). Also, key figures in the neo-Marxist literature on urban commons also refer to the city as an abstract site of constantly distributed biopolitical production, as both the 'source of the common' and 'the receptacle into which it flows' (Hardt & Negri, 2009, p. 154). However, Marxist writer and activist Silvia Federici challenges this 'immaterial' approach with a feminist critique of how "with its emphasis on knowledge and information, this theory skirts the question of the reproduction of everyday life [and, as the commons discourse as a whole] is mostly concerned with the formal preconditions for the existence of commons and less with the material requirements" (Federici, 2010, p. 287).

Looking at the practical experiences of urban commoning, I will argue that the neo-institutional vs. neo-Marxist dichotomy is far from clear. In recent years we have seen a broadening of the scope of commons beyond the usual social centres and community gardens. This work has brought together different theoretical dimensions aimed at identifying the sites of production and reproduction of the conditions of our lives, the people with whom we share these conditions, and the different kinds of actions we use to engage with the city. Urban commons scholars have looked at the resources, communities and governance that form the commons, and new sites of 'urban commoning' have been identified in many of the functions defined in urban planning, such as cooperative housing as a transition to a post-capitalist commons (Ferreri, 2020; Chatterton, 2016), independent and squatted spaces as incubators of commoning practices (De Tullio, 2018; Bresnihan & Byrne, 2015), the development of food sovereignty as a commons (Schutter et al., 2018; Ferrando & Vivero Pol, 2017), the potential and shortcomings of community-based urban, energy and digital infrastructures (Pappalardo, 2022; Barandiaran & Calleja-López, 2018; Bagué Tova, 2017), or the role of health and care (Entrar Afuera, Rotelli, & Gallio, 2018; Vega Solís, Martínez Buján, & Paredes, 2018). Non-Western contributions to how urban commoning is produced and reproduced in everyday life include the management of waste and other informal activities by Indian sociologist and anthropologist Vinay Gidwani & Amita Baviskar (Baviskar, 2020; Gidwani & Baviskar, 2011), or the concept of 'black commons' as a 'framework for recognition, reconciliation and reparations' by African diaspora scholars Julian Agyeman & Kofi Boone (2022). Each of these functions poses different problems in terms of scale, territorial impact, level of expertise or availability of resources. Housing, for example, is made up of domestic units and therefore flexible in scale and private by definition, while the autonomy of consumption cooperatives is territorially dependent on other forms of production, and urban infrastructure is inherently collective in scale and often dependent on technical knowledge for decision-making.

At the same time, various productions from the fields of architecture, urbanism and spatial practices have been engaged in the production, systematisation and analysis of commoning processes operating at different levels between the vision of the city as a general 'Common' and the specific experiences of each particular 'commons'. On the one hand, there have been several compilations of concrete 'micro' experiences, dealing with autonomous spaces of collective housing management, urban gardens or time banks. For example, the journal Arch+ published *An Atlas of Commoning*

(Gruber et al., 2018), curator Francesca Ferguson (2014) edited *Make_Shift City: Renegotiating the Urban Common*, German architects Dagmar Pelger, Anita Kaspar and Jörg Stollmann (2017) published *Spatial Commons – Urban Open Spaces as a Resource* at the TU Berlin, and Serbian architects Iva Čukić and Jovana Timotijević (2020) from the Belgrade-based collective Ministry of Space conducted a survey of *Urban Commons in the ex-Yu Region* carried out by Parsons School dedicated vol. 9 of its *Journal of Design Strategies* to 'cooperative cities' (Rendón & Mitrašinović, 2017) which was co-edited by Mexican architect Gabriella Rendón and celebrated the role of women in building collaborative, cooperative cities, with contributions from Silvia Federici writing on "Commoning the City" and Doina Petrescu on "A Feminist Reinvention of the Commons". Last but not least, Sheffield School of Architecture is home to the Urban Commons Research Collective (Akbil et al., 2021) which has produced a *Handbook of Urban Commons* and aims to develop an archive of practices and concepts along seven threads or 'controversies': economies, ecologies, knowledges, socialities, localities and governance. This handbook and the categories it presents are part of an attempt by professionals in the fields of architecture, urban design and planning to engage in an analytical study of urban commons that goes beyond the construction of resonances between seemingly unrelated practices towards the possibilities of replicating and systematising commons. Thus, the work on urban patterns by Greek architect Eleni Katrini (2019) or on urban strategies of democratisation by Austrian architect and planner Gabu Heindl (2019).

Despite this interest and extensive documentation, I believe that the analysis of urban commoning processes presented by architects, practitioners and urban commons researchers - whether in exhibitions, publications, compilations or academic literature - does not sufficiently address the capacity of urban commons to transform the institutional arrangements of the public sphere. I argue that these compilations present a wide range of experiences - social centres, community gardens, housing co-operatives, land trusts, community health centres or self-managed clinics - as constellations of particular experiences that resonate with commons. Whatever the format, they emerge as autonomous spaces outside the market and the state, and as 'pockets of resistance' to urban enclosure and the commodification and marketisation of various aspects of urban life.

5.3.2 Expanding urban commoning as practice

I will argue that considering urban commoning as a 'social practice', that is, as "embodied, materially mediated arrays of human activity centrally organised around shared practical understandings" (Schatzki, 2001, p. 11), shifts the focus from 'pockets of resistance' to the proliferation of alternative forms of production and reproduction. It also helps to navigate the gaps across an 'urban' condition that is often seen as a "condensed 'macro-foam' of singular bubbles" (Borch & Kornberger, 2015, p. 9, quoted in Özkan & Baykal Büyüksarac, 2020). In the theoretical constructions that aim to make sense of the entanglements between knowledge and concepts, facts and values, time and history, world and representation (Robbert & Mickey, 2013), urban commoning can be seen as a composite of managerial and political commons, natural and material traditional commons and artificial, immaterial digital commons, or between the political considerations of administrative management as opposed to political governance.

De Angelis addresses the urban territories complexity in terms of size, heterogeneity and interactions, and the need to articulate it under a commoning governance through an autonomy of

the parts, with cohesiveness of the whole, where the main social force for commons recomposition, scaling and network formation relies on the multiplication and interweaving of commons:

Commons ecologies are the interrelation among different commons and their environments brought about by a particular type of commoning that puts them in communication and sustained cooperation, that is *boundary commoning*. (De Angelis, 2017, p. 287, italics in the original)

This consideration of cities as complex systems and through the cybernetic Stafford Beer Viable System Model is based on two premises. First, the need for 'living well within [planetary] limits' imposed by the interplay of climate emergency and social justice. Second, that the city 'as a whole' - the social organisation that regulates and modulates collective decision-making - "intends to put social reproduction as its key purpose, and its inhabitants intend to govern it as a commons" (De Angelis, 2022b, np). Similarly, in Stavros Stavrides' *Common Space: The City as Commons*, the main characteristic of this commoning is not the framework in which it takes place, but the process itself, where "there are no tools and no subjects of action that are not transformed by the very process in which they get involved" (Stavrides, 2016, p. 259). Stavrides suggests learning from precarious practices, such as those of migrants and street vendors, and from struggles that prefigure different social relations, such as the Occupy movements. Against the tactical use of containment and (en)closure as "temporary political means to pursue a common political end" (Harvey, 2012, p. 79), Stavrides argues that "for practices that produce common space, and are being shaped in the process of producing it, to be able to exceed the limits of capitalism, they must be practices of *expanding commoning*" (Stavrides, 2016, p. 266, italics are mine).

In my view, seeing the urban commons as a 'system' aims to articulate key features of the commons - from the neo-institutional, neo-Marxist, digital, traditional, 'immaterial' and urban commons domains, and the many situated experiences in between - into a horizontal and situated social practice of community sharing whose overarching cause is 'care, solidarity, conviviality, community and ecology' (De Angelis, 2017, pp. 104, 85). Here, systems thinking is applied to address complexity as a choice, according to Isabelle Stengers, of processes 'in the making' over cities 'already done' (Doucet, 2011) as a primary feature of the adaptability and resilience of the commons (De Angelis, 2017, p. 279).

Following this characterisation of the commons as a practice of social organisation, presented earlier in Table 4.2, the key component is the relationship between resource, community and governance. I have also argued that in the resurgent urban commons these three elements are not given, but are 'in the making'. They are being formed in situations where the commons principles of democracy, sustainability, inalienability and universality encounter several limitations due to the nature of urban assets, the scale of the communities involved and the collision between private, public and common modes of governance. At the same time, existing socio-economic relations and market pressures in urban contexts make it difficult to guarantee access to basic social needs in non-commodified ways, making existing examples of urban commoning fragmented, contested and far from perfect processes. I will argue that the proliferation of commoning practices requires a re-creation of physical and mental spaces currently occupied by capitalist and nation-state structures. Also, that the analyses of existing urban commoning processes will help to identify how they are transforming

both the imaginary of new uses and possibilities, and the norms and rules that would sustain them. In my experience, this proposition is met with caveats and warnings about why the proliferation of commoning experiences is infeasible, dangerous or even undesirable, especially in the case of urban commons. These caveats can be grouped around three main issues: scale, boundaries and structure.

The first major caveat is that the provision systems on which urban communities depend are complex and costly in terms of time and expertise, and are therefore not scalable. Here, collective decision-making on essential services is considered infeasible, and the only possible common activities are those related to leisure, recreation and other non-essential activities, while the provision of essential services must be de-commodified and managed by the state (Micciarelli & Goñi Mazzitelli, 2020). Due to the nature of urban resources, communities and governance, this caveat points to the limits of the capacity to develop common processes when they require a high level of technical knowledge, such as a hospital surgery or an airport control tower, or when they affect a large territory or population, such as CO2 emissions or water supply. In this critique of the proliferation of commons, complex systems require central command with expertise that cannot be replaced by 'good will'. In my experience, the most commonly proposed solution to this scale problem is to reduce communities to a scale close to the maximum number of meaningful relationships according to human cognitive capacity - known as the Dunbar number - which has been set at 150 individuals (Hernando et al., 2009), and to deal with systems with as little complexity as possible, so that direct decision-making is possible. I will argue that an alternative proposal would be to embrace the global and interdependent nature of struggles for the commons and address the problem of scale not by reducing elements, but by multiplying their connections to create heterogeneous, overlapping and non-self-contained situations. Following Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing, I consider that the proliferation of commoning practices in planned city-making does not rely on strategies of 'precision-nested scales' where "the small is encompassed neatly by the large [...] crafted for uniform expansion [that] avoid[s] the project-distorting effects of transformation" (Tsing, 2012, p. 507). In my proposal, the becoming-common of the public is not a matter of scaling, but of consolidating processes that are more grounded than a general concept or ethos, such as 'the city as commons' or the 'democratic city', and more outreaching than a set of specific experiences in defined territories and formats, such as the square assemblies, the urban garden, the time bank or the social centre.

A second important caveat in the commons discourse concerns the difficulty of finding communities truly based on mutual aid and cooperation, and the claim that, despite the evidence presented, communities and processes of solidarity have disappeared. From the perspective of neoliberalism, this caveat echoes the infamous assertion that "there is no such thing as 'society'" (Thatcher, 1987). From the perspective of the modern nation-state as conceived by modernist German philosopher Georg W. F. Hegel, only public bureaucratic institutions and workers are free from individual selfishness and capable of safeguarding the common good (Shaw, 1992). From the perspective of the market economy, Nobel Prize economist Friedrich A. von Hayek takes from Adam Smith that only the 'invisible hand' of the market can transform selfish individual competition into a 'spontaneous social order' which would "dispense with arbitrary power and foster creativity and individual liberty" (Whyte, 2019, p. 159). The familiar image of collective ownership unregulated by the market as leading to a 'tragic' depletion of common resources was first

introduced in the 19th century by the British economist William Foster Lloyd (1833) in the midst of the English Enclosures Acts and as part of the debate over Malthusian theories of overpopulation, this rationale suggests that collective resources will inevitably be depleted by 'rational choice' behaviour that seeks to maximise individual gains, turning commoners into free riders and leading to an 'inevitable' catastrophe (Cox, 1985). Although such argument does not correspond to actual experiences of traditional or contemporary collective management, and it has been denounced as rooted in white supremacist and fascist ideals (Amend, 2019; Doctorow, 2019), it is still an image widely used to justify the adoption of collective property under private or public control, even if the Library of the Commons at the University of Indiana, founded by Elinor Ostrom, has a wealth of resources that shows that commons regimes do not function as unregulated sites of open access, but are delimited and regulated. These studies prove that, first, collective resources and the communities associated with them need to be identified. Second, in order to have effective governance capable of making decisions and implementing them, it is necessary to identify the community and the conditions of access. To this end, in traditional commons in England, for example, there was an annual 'perambulation' in which the community walked the boundary of the forest, re-establishing the boundaries of the commons and removing any barriers to access (Linebaugh, 2008, pp. 74–75). In the idea of the perfect property, boundaries are created as principles of inclusion and exclusion, but in conceptualising commons as processes, boundaries are membranes that both separate and connect, letting some things in and others out. Greek architect Stavros Stavrides (2006, 2018) identifies this porosity and openness as a condition for creating a 'shared city'.

The third and final caveat is seemingly on the other side of the limits' argument, but functional to it: that commons cannot be institutionalised or structured without losing their democratic, bottom-up character, and must therefore remain either as a small community based on organisational affinity, or as a system that provides free access to open resources with no strings attached. In this caveat, democratic governance is a bottom-up, self-organised, spontaneous practice that cannot be regulated by institutional structures. However, the experience of traditional commons calls this into question. Historically, the well-known example of the forest commons in England were regulated by a kind of 'constitution', the *Carta Foresta*, since 1217. Also, already existing centuries-old commons, such as the *Acequia de Valencia*, have a well-established set of rules and a formal tribunal to enforce the rules and agreements (Peris Albentosa, 1997). Dutch historian Tine de Moor (2008) has explored how traditional commons produced legal, social and physical structures that were challenged and transformed over time to ensure their continued existence. Even more contemporary radical approaches to self-governance, such as the Occupy movement, have also relied on a political culture built and sustained over time (Flesher Fominaya, 2015). At the same time, as Gidwani & Baviskar (2011) point out, the social nature of commoning processes relies on an understanding of the commons as 'a dynamic and collective resource - a multifaceted form of social wealth - governed by emergent custom and constantly negotiating, resisting and evading the fixity of law'. This approach is particularly relevant as it has emerged in the Global South and in relation to urban resources - such as rivers as places to wash clothes or fish - that do not exist in Western urban areas. However, it is a reflection that resonates with the difficulty of structuring commoning processes.

I will argue that this tension between scales, limits and structures is present in the urban planning 'against' the urban commons (Sevilla Buitrago, 2022). At the same time, the dynamic commoning processes identified in this chapter can be seen as engaged in an unstructured city-making that pre-figures the elements required for a resurgent becoming-common of the non-state public. I will also argue that the expropriation and dispossession of the commons, historically and today, have not been spontaneous processes or 'natural' developments guided by the 'invisible hand' of the market economy, even less so in urban areas. On the contrary, gentrification and touristification, changes in mobility patterns and working conditions, privatisation of public spaces and services are the result of planned legislation, economic developments and investments. These 'enclosures' can be seen as consequences of the physical expansion and growing economic centrality of urban areas across the planet, and that the role of planning - and planners - is crucial to understanding how the state both uses and is used by organised capital through urban developers and landowners.

In challenging urban enclosures, I believe that the focus on co-production, transdisciplinarity, integration of theory and practice, and resilient agency points to a general 'practice' that acts as a framework for situated 'practices' and as a support for their specific strategies and tactics (Petrescu and others 2019). One of these frameworks is the idea of open-source and co-produced resilience, which links ecological repair and regeneration with democratic self-governance as an alternative principle for the production of territories. Some of these situated practices, such as the R-Urban project in the periphery of Paris, would see metropolitan areas as 'critical zones' where it is possible to 're-territorialise political questions' and create 'new forms of citizenship and new types of attention and care for life forms in order to generate a common ground' (Latour, 2020, np, quoted in Petrescu & Petcou, 2023, p. 277). This common ground is seen as a space for an 'open source resilience' framework based on trans-local connections, peer production and collaborative technologies, with the potential for a 'regime shift' towards democratising urban development (Baibarac & Petrescu, 2019, p. 229). In the overlap between established modes of knowledge co-production and situated tactics that provide 'capability and capacity to act', Beth Perry and Warren Smit (2023) identify two sets for epistemic interventions in co-production: strategies of intermediation and tactics of unsettling. Strategies of intermediation can be strategic, relational or grounded, and work within institutional structures to mediate between actors and between research and practice, while tactics of unsettling act as disruption, legitimation, displacement or emplacement. A second framework would be the disruptions that "unsettle established processes to reveal cracks and opportunities" and "intervene in existing policy cycles or processes to challenge the status quo" of epistemic hierarchy and habitus, "the usual way of doing things" (Perry & Smit, 2023, p. 691) producing new legitimacies and rearranging actors' positions.

I will argue that understanding the urban commons as a practice of city-making requires a methodological approach with the potential to influence processes 'in the middle': between autonomous urban social movements and emerging muni-governments, between neo-institutional and neo-Marxist approaches to the commons, and between the impossibility of scaling up latent commons and the need for urban commons to grow. As we will see in the next chapter, alternative forms of planning for the proliferation of commons would require the definition of transformative horizons and processes, rather than the implementation of project blueprints. Following a feminist critique of economic politics, 'commoning makes explicit and politicises the rules governing access,

use, benefit, care and responsibility' (Healy & Gibson, 2017, p. 17). This, I will argue, would be the function of planning.

Conclusion

This chapter presents the commons as a politically emancipatory project capable of defining a practice of social organisation that is not based on the constant accumulation and dispossession enacted by contemporary neoliberal capitalism and that is not subject to the authority of the hierarchy, segmentation and binary rules of the nation-state.

I began this chapter with an overview of the political hypothesis of the commons, proposing to consider the commons as a form of social organisation based on the three main political approaches that consider the commons - mainly - as an asset, a process or a right. The assemblage of the commons as a social organisation incorporates elements of sustainable efficiency, defence of social reproduction against privatisation, and expanded universal access, with a 'disjunctive synthesis' of cooperation, conflict and detachment. I have argued that the multiplication of commoning resources, communities and governance locates the autonomy of the commons in relation to the modern construction of the public and private spheres. Secondly, I have presented the articulations between the public, private, public and common domains as constructed through the construction of 'perfect property'. I argued that this division is part of other dichotomies produced by modernity - such as culture and nature, or objects and subjects - which assign collective interests and social reproduction to the state and individual interests in production to the market, leaving the commons as an a-modern 'hybrid'. I have proposed that the public domain retains elements of the collective-common logic that coexist with state technologies. In urban contexts, where the institutionality of a-modern processes has been lost, the commons are resurgent processes that need to be re-created, and where the latency of the collective in the public domain is more critical. Third, I have presented theoretical and practice-based reflections on urban commons that transcend the classic neo-institutional/neo-Marxist divide, arguing that the analysis of existing experiences of urban commoning can provide elements for overcoming the three main caveats to the proliferation of commons: the question of scale, boundaries and structure. Finally, I have suggested that urban commoning should be seen as a practice - a set of 'embodied shared understandings' - of city-making that expands in relation to the boundary conditions of the commons and requires a new methodological approach to planning.

The next chapter will provide the theoretical framework for considering urban planning as a tool for fostering the commons potential of a given territory and for the analysis conducted during the fieldwork, presented in Chapter 9.

Chapter 6 - Alternative Planning

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Introduction

In the previous chapter, I proposed that urban commoning should be seen as city-making based on the design of urban processes rather than urban projects. This chapter critically assesses the role of planning ideology and techniques in the enclosure of urban commons experiences and the elements that support their proliferation. It discusses the calls for a return to statist models that place the responsibility for planning efforts in the hands of a solid and emancipatory state, and the various contributions on how neoliberal 'pragmatic capitalism' depends on state planning that simultaneously provides spaces flexible enough for the expansion of global and shifting capitalist accumulation and is engaged in the production of centralised, hierarchical and compartmentalised social and architectural blueprints. The aim is to identify the theoretical framework of a contingent and non-prescriptive planning methodology capable of re-imagining what a 'good place' might be - as a site of *'buen vivir'*, the good life, based on the Aymara *'sumak kawsay'*.

First, it will identify the crisis of urban planning as a crisis of the modernist tools of the state in its consideration of cities as assets at the service of capitalist production. This section will discuss the foundations of modernist and neoliberal planning, looking at the imaginaries, structures and infrastructures that accommodate and depoliticise the task of urban planning. Second, I will discuss the alternatives to modernist urban planning, the visions, theories, practices and analyses of reality they offer, and the extent to which they are able to refocus planning on its capacity to alter existing conditions. The third section discusses how to plan for the commons and I will argue that planning has the potential to support and sustain collective resources, resilient communities, and democratic modes of governance. In the face of the crisis of planning, planning-in-common can help to define a new vision of what it means to develop 'good places', and to develop tools to counter the TINA neoliberal lack of future with feasible imaginaries of better futures for urban territories.

6.1 High modernist and neoliberal planning

Following the Italian historian Manfredo Tafuri's assertion that "[p]lanning is a way to imagine a future and make it happen" (Tafuri, 1976, p. 70), in this section I will discuss the crisis of modernist planning from a dual perspective. First, as a crisis of conceivable imaginaries of what a future city could be and, second, as a crisis of the instruments to make it happen. In this double unfolding, I will argue that the crisis of planning's imaginaries is related to the postmodern 'end of history' (Fukuyama, 1992) that has triggered the end of the future and is functional to the TINA neoliberal mantra. Secondly, as a crisis of the instrument used by modernist planning and the limitations of a

state vision-from-above that has not been able to account for the level of complexity, interdependence and collaboration deployed in human and non-human relations.

6.1.1 High modernism: the city as a forest

In his *Observations sur l'architecture*, French priest and scholar Marc-Antoine Laugier (1765), considered the first modern planning theorist, wrote that: “*Il faut regarder la ville comme une forêt*” [we should think of the city as a forest]. This statement follows the Enlightenment shift towards human rationality, accompanied by a paradoxical transformation in which the 'city' was no longer an organic entity interwoven with other social processes, but a 'natural' - almost picturesque - environment. In Laugier's vision, the pre-capitalist structure of accumulation, based on the appropriation of land and the organisation of agriculture, was also seen as a 'natural process' taking place on a universal, non-situated and a-historical 'tabula rasa': in the idea of the city as a forest, 'there was no disparity between the value attributed to nature and the value attributed to the city as a productive mechanism of new forms of economic accumulation' (Tafuri, 1976, p. 8). According to the French urban historian Françoise Choay (1997), the conceptualisation of the city as an autonomous entity is a recent cultural production, understood as such since the 15th century in learned circles and only since the 18th century outside them.

In *Seeing Like a State*, US anthropologist James C. Scott (1998) draws on his studies of rural settlement programmes in Asia to trace the link between planning and state power as territorial domination. In his account, the control, regulation, and exploitation of forests are the 'founding moment' of state planning and the processes of simplification and segmentation that enabled the control of complex socio-economic-environmental territories through systems of legibility and the administrative ordering of nature and society. These procedures were explicitly incorporated into urban planning in the Athens Charter, written by Swiss architect Le Corbusier and adopted by the *CIAM - Congrès International d'Architecture Moderne* [International Congress of Modern Architecture] in 1933. The principles of modern architecture and urbanism based on the pursuit of functionalism, technological development and universal compositional elements were particularly influential after the Second World War, in the period known as 'High Modernism' (Frampton, 1980). According to Scott (1998), the development of early forestry science in Prussia and Saxony in the late eighteenth century created a synoptic view of the ensemble that imposed narrow frames of reference that corresponded to the moment when state efforts at fiscal forestry - which saw timber as revenue - reflected the market understanding of the forest as an economic resource to be 'efficiently and profitably managed'. The resulting technology applied a 'high modernist' rationale based on a limited set of elements and variables to measure inputs and outputs, and to calculate, predict and increase the production and productivity of territories. This state vision is driven by an aerial perspective that not only flattens and simplifies the complexity of social system, but also incorporates the 'laws of production' into a new universe of conventions explicitly presented as "natural" (Tafuri, 1976, p. 89). For Scott, "[r]adically simplified designs for social organisation seem to court the same risks of failure courted by radically simplified designs for natural environments" (Scott, 1998, p. 7), where the failures of state-directed planning - in urban and agricultural areas - mirror the ecological disasters produced by monoculture, mechanised and engineered commercial forest production. Both warn of the consequences of implementing a

productivist logic that simplifies and flattens social and ecological complexity, and make a strong case for human and non-human diversity and resilience, as it has been discussed in other accounts (Haraway, 2016; Tsing, 2015; Gibson-Graham, Cameron, & Healy, 2013). In these accounts, nation-state institutions incorporate the modern ideology based on a progress, which includes technological development, the expansion of economic production, the mastery of nature - including human nature - and the rational design of the social order, while high modernist planning implements the logic of the state through planning techniques that incorporate modernist features.

I will argue that one of these modern planning techniques is the master plan, which emerges as a 'Leviathan' (Hobbes, 1651): a unity representing the multitude, reducing a heterogeneous array of interests, desires or needs to a single figure, a unitary form that overrides the multiplicity of urban life and differs from it as much as it conditions it, where by-laws are expressions of hierarchy, with rules imposed from above and administered by bureaucracy. Another technique would be zoning, which organises the simplification and segmentation of complex situations to make territories readable and controllable, concentrating uses and assigning them unambiguous measurements and values - even if these uniform areas, rendered in the same colour on the plans, are often pixelated in reality, as shown in the Tijuana-San Diego border by Fonna Forman & Teddy Cruz (2019). A third technology would be to assign a use and a set of parameters to the entire territory, without exception, thus recreating a binary organisation of the world into oppositional pairs, as discussed in relation to the commons: here the distinction would be between the planned and the unplanned, in a legal construction where there is no in-between.

British social geographer David Pinder (2005) has identified alternative 'visions' of the city, including the 'restorative' urban visions of William Morris and Ebenezer Howard, the dissident utopian spaces proposed by an avant-garde of surrealists and situationists - notably Ivan Chtcheglov's 'Formulary for a New Urbanism' - and the unitary urbanism of Constant Nieuwenhuys in *New Babylon*. All these visions shared a view of urbanism as an extension of architecture, 'the simplest means of articulating time and space, modulating reality and creating dreams' (Chtcheglov, 1953), and despite their stated intention to offer a progressive alternative to their contemporary urbanism, both Choay and Tafuri see modernist elements in them. Choay notes how making urban planning a matter for architects - as creators and artists - produces a depoliticisation that leaves urban planning in the hands of actors more interested in questions of form and function than in questions of power and social relations. In her view, both the progressive urbanist legacy of socialist-utopists such as Fourier and Owen, continued by the CIAM and by figures such as Tony Garnier in France or Arturo Soria y Matta in Spain, and the culturalist urbanism that emerged from the thinking of Ruskin and William Morris, which sought to reproduce an image of beauty similar to that of ancient cities, treat the city as a built project (Choay, 1970, pp. 1143–1144). In her critique, the "absolute lack of impact of the architects' collective Archigram in contemporary urban planning proves that the insistence on considering cities as 'things' rather than processes would impede innovative and self-generating urban processes" (Choay, 2009, pp. 182–183, my translation). Both architecture and planning served the capitalist-industrial programming and planned reorganisation of building production and the city as a productive organism, a machinery deploying plans for the planned domination of capital over space and time where "it was the entire city that assumed the structure of an industrial machine," (Tafuri, 1976, p. 114).

6.1.2 Neoliberal planning

As the 2008 financial crash demonstrated, many contemporary cities are not a product but a repository of financial accumulation, and urban real estate investment is increasingly central to the growth strategy of the global capitalist economy. US architect and urban planner Samuel Stein (2019) points to several reasons: low federal interest rates in the US, massive urbanisation programmes in China, the United Arab Emirates and other non-Western countries, and the work of equity funds looking for 'undervalued' investment opportunities. In an increasingly polarised world, wealthy individuals see real estate as the safest place to 'hide' their money, turning real estate investment into what US geographer Cindi Katz calls "vagabond capitalism's eternal quest for profitability" at the expense of social reproduction (Katz, 2001, cited in Stein, 2019, p. 3). This process of land accumulation has led to massive urban transformations towards inequality and displacement in all regions of the world, whether through evictions from private and public property, gentrification, or touristification processes driven by market interest in investing or disinvesting in particular areas and types of property.

While modernist planning delimits and simplifies the city, these processes have given rise to a neoliberal planning that operates a different domination of capital, deploying processes of financialisation and commodification that apply a different logic to that of the state. Non-explicit neoliberal planning has ideologically and institutionally transformed the process of urban development, creating territories that are 'highly engineered by external institutions that have no formal governing role in any municipality' (Hackworth, 2007, p. 16). In contrast to the modernist strategy of unification, US political scientist Wendy Brown (2015) suggests that neoliberalism brings with it a doctrine of fragmentation. This apparent lack of 'planning' does not mean that there is no plan with a well-defined logic behind a seemingly scattered, unarticulated accumulation of urban projects and interventions, as explained in the case of Madrid by the Observatorio Metropolitano (2007).

Historically, the modernist city was developed to meet "the demands imposed by the conditions of goods distribution, organisation of production and capital accumulation" (Hamel, 1993, p. 19) to the point that - contrary to the US cultural critic Frederic Jameson's statement that "urbanism is at a dead end" (Jameson, 2003, p. 65). New Zealand-based sociologist Campbell Jones argues for a return of economic planning, and that "the question is not whether or not to plan", but *where, how* is done and *who* is involved in the process (Jones, 2020, pp. 6–7). Cities in North America and Western Europe under neoliberal urban governance have been more than the local arena of global or national projects: they are strategic 'incubators' and 'targets' of policy experiments, institutional innovations and ideological projects 'central to the reproduction, mutation and continual reconstitution' of the neoliberal system (Brenner & Theodore, 2002a, p. 28). I will argue that despite all the neoliberal reasons for the 'undoing of democracy' (Brown, 2015), the postmodern 'pragmatic capitalism' built around logistics, flexibility and networks, and neoliberal strategies of territorial exploitation and capital accumulation (Angotti, 2020), state economic planning has not disappeared, but rather expanded and transformed under different forms, to the point that the Financial Times coined the term 'Gosplan 2.0' after the nickname of the *Gosudárstvennyi Komitet po Planírovaniyu*, the State Planning Committee that oversaw central economic planning in the Soviet Union (Kaminska, 2016). As an indicator, between 2015 and 2018 the European Central Bank bailed out

the economy with an estimated €2.6 trillion (Carvalho, Ranasingh, & Wilkes, 2018). Scenario analyses carried out by transnational corporations, portrayed as surveys of alternatives, are also part of this planning effort. This is the case of Shell, which set up a special department in 1965 (Wilkinson & Kupers, 2013) through which, the company claimed, they did not intend to 'predict or control the future of its business environment', but only to be able to consider all possible strategies and make informed decisions. The assumption of such neutral position, and that "the company's actions had no impact on the scenarios" was later seen by the same analysts working on the programme as 'disingenuous and self-serving, even irresponsible' (Kahane, 2004, p. 17, quoted in Curry & Hodgson, 2008, p. 9).

At the same time, I will argue that neoliberal, market-driven modernist development has always depended on processes of social reproduction and is 'parasitic on informal processes which it could not alone create or sustain' (Scott, 1998, pp. 309, 6). Despite their claims to be objective, functional, efficient and scientific methods, some of the most iconic modernist plans either failed to be implemented, as in Wren's plan for London, did not work as expected, as in Le Corbusier's design for Chandigarh, or could not produce the desired effects they sought, as in Brasilia. As Stavrides points out,

[p]lanning has always to readjust its ambitions, however, because reality often escapes models imposed on it. Urban governance focused on the most unpredictable, and thus ungovernable, parts of the urban sea has to be flexible, metastatic and always open to new knowledge concerning possible patterns of urban life in order to be able to intervene and regulate. (Stavrides, 2016, p. 27)

6.1.3 The organic city

Stavrides' definition of urban life as 'unpredictable' and 'flexible' can be linked to a consideration of the city as a forest, an 'organic' social construct in which nature acts as what Chantal Mouffe (2005) calls an 'empty signifier' for which there is no agreement about its meaning or the object it represents, so that it generates a multiple and indeterminate place that is beyond contestation and disagreement. According to Mouffe, this semantic and discursive 'emptiness' triggers a process of depoliticisation that operates along three lines. First, nature is a metaphor for a multiplicity of complex realities that can only be represented through associated images. The conflictual superimposition of elements, desires and negotiations is replaced by a figure of speech susceptible to agreement. Second, as a transcendental and universal organising principle that justifies norms and disciplines, for example, the protection of property rights by governments as a natural order was argued by Locke in relation to sovereignty (Blackmar, 2006, p. 52). Any attempt to define and determine this void corresponds to a political project that is 'naturalised' and not explicitly stated. Thirdly and finally, it is a place where the production of fears such as the apocalyptic visions of the climate crisis and libidinal desires for a 'better world' are displaced (Swyngedouw, 2011). This naturalisation of processes extends to social reproduction when

[a]ll the labour that goes into the production of life, including the labour of giving birth to a child, is not seen as the conscious interaction of a human being with nature, that is a truly human activity, but rather as an activity of nature, which produces plants and animals unconsciously and has no control over this process. This definition of women's

interaction with nature - including her own nature - as an act of nature has had and still has far-reaching consequences. (Mies, 1998, p. 45)

When the processes that shape cities - such as the urban commons and other forms of social cooperation that make them possible and desirable - are 'naturalised', we end up trying to fill with meaning an idea that has become an empty signifier. This process creates a need for generalisation and homogenisation, which neutralises the complex processes and their possible proliferation in concrete territories. It is possible to see this dynamic in the debates about urban commons when they are presented as spontaneous and 'natural' processes of managing what is 'freely available for anyone to use' (Benkler, 2006, p. 306). It is also possible to identify such a generalisation when the city is considered as a commons, a contemporary 'city as a forest' (Laugier, 1765) approach, which would only need an adaptation of the 1215 Chart of the Forest - the English chart of economic liberties that for centuries accompanied the chart of political liberties established in the 1213 *Carta Magna* (Linebaugh, 2008). Other authors, such as the Chilean sociologist Martín Arboleda (2021) and the US political scientist Jodi Dean (2016), have linked the need to plan for the future and the ability to activate processes towards such a future with a return to statist models, historically implemented through centralised (Tilly, 1990), hierarchical (Hudson & Rönnblom, 2020) and authoritarian (Scott, 1998) plans seeking to control social (Sandercock & Forsyth, 1992) and architectural (Valdivia & Ortiz Escalante, 2018) aspects of urban life.

6.2 Alternative planning methodologies

In the first edition of the influential *Readings in Planning Theory*, US urban planners Scott Campbell and Susan Fainstein define that: "Planning is an intervention with an intention to alter the existing course of events" and they link the social legitimacy and economic effectiveness of planning "the enduring question of public interest" (Campbell & Fainstein, 1996, pp. 6, 10). This succinct definition has been lost in subsequent revisions and updates of this planning theory compendium, but I would like to rescue it for a discussion of alternative - and altering - planning theories and practices. Here I will discuss their capacity to alter not only the territories in which they are applied, but also the principles behind state-led modernist planning. I will argue that modernist counter-proposals to the impositions of state planning - either in favour of or as a countermeasure to capitalist exploitation, from utopian Marxist designs to the Situationist Babylon City - have either followed the 'unitary' logic of the modern planning vision with a different kind of blueprint, or sought to incorporate a wider range of inputs under a different kind of expertise. In contrast, a potential planning for the commons will draw on critical planning, feminist and southern methodologies, and municipalist practices to propose an alternative future for urban territories.

6.2.1 Insurgent planning

I have assumed that advocacy, participatory or community approaches, based on an alternative unified actor entitled to design the city, follow the same state and market-driven logic. However, two distinct traditions of non-hierarchical planning share the critique of state-driven modernist planning: advocacy planning with community-based and bottom-up approaches, which aimed to influence the planning process by incorporating stakeholders' needs and criteria of social justice and

participation; and counter-planning, which aimed to challenge the processes and neutralise their effects. The community-based critique of state planning instruments includes reflections by John Friedman (1969) on action planners and the role of revolutionary social action in radical social change. In this tradition, there have been calls to control the technologies that enable the communication of citizens' needs and desires - later conceptualised as 'participation' - as part of public decision-making (Krieger, 1971), calls for 'advanced democratic planning' under the 'dual nature' of capitalism that goes beyond participatory practices (Roos, 1974), and a critical theoretical analysis of conflict and negotiation in US planning through the lens of 'progressive' practice (Forester, 1989). In the second tradition, the idea of 'counter-planning' links the disruption of the present with a planning for the future that understands planning as a social process. Counter-planning aims to defy the traditional features of urban planning, using 'rational' decision-making and problem-solving skills to anticipate and prepare for future events (Randolph, 2017), without admitting its intention to shape them, as was the case with Shell.

In *After the Planners*, US architect Robert Goodman (1972) reflects on the failure of 'advocacy planning' as the process by which planners incorporate the interests of different groups and to establish 'an effective urban democracy' (Davidoff, 1965 cited in Goodman, 1972, p. 60) within a pluralistic society. The two main aspects of this failure were that a) the institutional power only pretended to listen to the demands of the communities, but the existence of 'counter-professionals' and the design of alternative proposals could not bring about the fundamental changes needed to give decision-making power to the communities, and b) the 'architects remained the 'experts' and "custodians of egalitarian progress and improvement" (Webber, 1963, p. 241, quoted in Goodman, 1972, p. 57). Long before the idea of 'tactical urbanism', Goodman proposed working 'outside the system', drawing inspiration from self-built settlements, squatters and guerrilla architecture, and called for

[...] an open-ended *collective assembly* of the many design decisions made by the people who actually use the environment [...] an architecture which would grow from the experience of use [...] must itself be viewed as a way of generating possibilities, not defining outcomes (Goodman, 1972, p. 243, italics are mine).

The Brazilian urban planner Rainer Randolph Randolph sees counter-planning as "the expansion of social experiences [and] potentials of the present" and the validation of spaces of representation that "strengthen civil society itself in terms of increasing its autonomy and combating inequalities" (2017, pp. 2, 8). These strategies resonate with Isabelle Stenger's concepts of 'fostering' and 'empowering' practices and with Holston (1998) 'insurgent planning' linking "oppositional practices from the past and forms of resistance in the present, thus creating spaces of possibility where the future can be imagined differently" (bell hooks, 1994, np, in Holston, 1998, p. 1). US urban scholar Elizabeth Sweet (2015) situates Latina 'kitchen table planning' as an insurgent and counter-hegemonic practice linked to early twentieth-century 'municipalist housekeepers', Chicana feminisms and community building in the context of anti-immigrant policies in the US, while the 'insurgent history planning' drafted by Sandercock (1998a) seeks to expose the 'inadequacies of the modernist planning paradigm' as an exercise without which it is impossible to imagine alternative futures for planning.

6.2.2 Feminist urbanism

Feminist futures offer a glimpse of the principles that stand in opposition to the state and traditional utopian attempts to impose a new order, "to create dams and canals to protect against threatening fluidity and fragmentation, to fix women in their 'proper' place, and to control the female body" (Wilson, 1992, p. 104 quoted in Pinder, 2005, p. 108). The feminist city has been envisioned since the fifteenth century with the ideal of a "City of Ladies" (De Pisan, 1999 [1405]) - which was partially realised in the urban *beguines* of the thirteenth century in the Low Countries (Böhringer, Deane, & Engen, 2014) - up to contemporary theories and practices of urbanism (Col·lectiu Punt 6, 2019), planning (Sandercock & Forsyth, 1992) and urban design (Kern, 2021). In urban planning, feminism provides inputs from everyday social reproduction that are particularly relevant to commons planning strategies. Feminist urban practice is interested in specific historically and materially situated transformations. They involve the material production of spaces as well as the immaterial production or desires, and the generative feedback loop between the two involves transforming the Anglo-Saxon concept of 'community planning' and 'participatory processes' into 'a way of assembling a collective economy of desires' (Petrescu, 2005, pp. 43–44).

As I noted earlier, the spatial, economic and political enclosures produced by modernist state planning in the service of capitalist development go hand in hand with its reliance on the 'everyday city' created by its inhabitants. Planning had the task of restructuring production and consumption - the planned coordination of production - architecture - building production - and urbanism became the object rather than the subject of planning. Feminist planning critiques urban planning as a "carrier of the Enlightenment mission of material progress through scientific rationality" where urban planning becomes a state-driven public policy at the service of capitalism:

[...] the official, or modernist, version of planning history is the story of planning by and through the state, part of a tradition of city and nation building tradition. Nevertheless, alternative planning traditions have always existed outside the state and sometimes in opposition to it. (Sandercock, 1998a, p. 2)

Interestingly, Scott (1998) illustrates the alternatives to the authoritarian high modernist regime through the example of female figures, namely Jane Jacobs, Rosa Luxemburg and Alexandra Kollontai, without mentioning feminist or even women's issues. First, in his critique of the state's simplistic, top-down and hierarchical management of territories, Scott contrasts Jane Jacobs's street-level, experienced systems, functional analysis, networks and self-organisation, and diversity, multiple use and complexity with Le Corbusier's modernist ideas, extended by CIAM, of aerial perspective, visual order and form as a prerequisite for efficiency, the centrally planned city and zoning for use. He then shows how Rosa Luxemburg and Alexandra Kollontai's defence of an emergent, unpredictable revolutionary process in Russia clashed with Lenin's notion of a vanguard party defining the revolutionary social structure. Here, the blueprint developed by an executive elite based on scientific expertise is confronted with the validation of the everyday experience of workers' organisations that put into practice a *metis* based on complex, creative, bottom-up initiatives. Despite these examples, there are no references to a feminist or gender perspective in any of the problems created by the 'seeing like a state' (Scott, 1998), where there is only one mention of the 'reproduction of everyday life' in a footnote about the contrast between the 'rigid

visual aesthetics' of the formalised city centre and the informal 'settlements and slums' where 'squatters' do reproductive work such as cleaning, cooking and childcare without any recognition of their most likely gender (Scott, 1998, p. 437).

Moreover, even though Campbell & Fainstein make a critique of the modernist planning paradigm as a history of "great men with great ideas" (Campbell & Fainstein, 1996, p. 6), their 'readings in planning theory' are also mostly written by white men, including Richard Foglesong, Peter Marcuse, David Harvey, Robert Fishman and Robert Self, and only in an extension of this critique to the 'everyday city' does one woman appear: the Australian-American urbanist Leonie Sandercock. Two decades earlier, Sandercock had precisely asked where, in this 'mythical story' of the rise of planning, were the "others"?

Where are women? Where are Native Americans, African Americans, Mexican Americans, Japanese and Chinese Americans? Where are gays and lesbians? Where are they, both as subjects doing planning, contributing to city and community building, researching urban problems and as objects (victims, if you like) of planners' neglect or desire to have control over these groups' particular concerns and needs in cities? (Sandercock, 1998b, p. 8)

I will argue that one of the reasons for the exclusion of women from the 'mythic history' of urban planning is that concrete visions of a feminist city are often based on what is considered a 'domestic' scale, limited in size and scope, and confined to enclosed and segregated spaces. Also that feminist urbanism replaces the finished and polished vision, or a 'product-oriented' modernist future, with a process-oriented vision that

[...] involves multiple possible futures-in-process rather than a single, finished image; is emergent and contingent rather than totalising and comprehensive; is situated in a critique of the mundane present to reveal opportunities for concrete action and gives the marginalised a voice rather than being dissolved into the homogeneous utopian society" (Hudson & Rönnblom, 2020, p. 3).

At the same time, feminist architects, urban planners and collectives - such as the Matrix Feminist Design Co-operative in the UK, *Mujeres Urbanistas* [Women Planners] and *Precarias a la Deriva* [Precarious Women Adrift] in Madrid, or *Punt 6* [Point 6] in Barcelona - have advocated for changes to the built environment to make it safer and more habitable for a wide range of human activities and needs, and have achieved significant changes. Also, the feminist movement around #metoo and the recent feminist strikes demonstrate an understanding of the struggles that occur in women's lives through physical, domestic and economic violence (Cavallero & Gago, 2021; Segato, 2017; Federici, 2004), which "can never simply be 'designed out'" (Kern, 2021, p. 97). This is because, as Tafuri (1976) reminds us, modernist urban planning was never a matter of design, but of a public reorganisation of production and consumption that left out reproduction. In the context of urban planning, feminist urbanism warns against the limitations of "taking gender as the primary category of equality" (Kern, 2021, p. 39) without also considering the intersectional, interdisciplinary and interscalar nature of feminist planning (Col·lectiu Punt 6, 2019, p. 6) and the incorporation of experiences based on 'other' cities that coexist with those challenged by mainstream feminism and are often ignored. As an example, Kern mentions the experience of the

US writer and activist James Baldwin who wrote about his life in New York - in the same neighbourhood and at the same time as Jane Jacobs - as being filled not with friendly encounters on the sidewalks, but with police harassment and the feeling of being an outsider.

6.2.3 Pluriverse planning

James Baldwin's experience underscores the need to include a diversity of viewpoints in urban planning. The irruption of grassroots social movements into the political arena and the influence of other forms of radical traditions have thrown the mechanism of modernist urban planning into crisis, challenging the notion of who the 'we' is that has the 'power to change the world' and the dominant position of Marxism as the only theoretical framework for thinking about a better future (Fournier, 2002). Within this framework, Indian and Chilean urban planners Raksha Vasudevan and Magdalena Novoa (2022) propose the term 'pluriversal planning' to identify a field of theoretical production that embraces multiplicity and situated knowledge produced from, by and for communities. The concept builds on the work of Colombian anthropologist Arturo Escobar in his *Designs for the Pluriverse*, where he uses relational ontology to construct 'autonomous yet radically interdependent local worlds' (Escobar, 2018, p. 78) and draws on Indian urban researcher Gautam Bhan's consideration that

[...] pluriversal planning acknowledges multiple centres and multiple sites of knowing, being, and acting that exist outside of the dominant modern/colonial system [with scholars that] are deeply engaged with communities and contribute to imagining other ontological, epistemological, and axiological realities that look to the past while envisioning futures. (Bhan, 2019, p. 79)

Vasudevan and Novoa's (2022) pluriversal planning adopts a plural and contested approach to counterplanning that recognises both the limitations of collaborative planning theories and the potential of practices that use the authorised language of rights and inclusion to support their claims, exploiting the fact that hegemony itself produces contradictions within which counter-hegemonic practices can emerge. While they see collaborative planning as failing to address the transformation of existing power relations, they also consider that the strategic use of the hegemonic planning discourse can produce temporary gains that enable community organisations to work towards long-term solutions, within an insurgent framework that promotes practices that are both 'temporary, fluid and context-specific'. A shared consideration would be the need to subvert planning technologies that are "inextricably linked to the rise of Western modernity through fundamental processes of domination and control" (Escobar, 2018, p. 145, quoted in Vasudevan & Novoa, 2022, p. 79). The aim would be to produce 'new bodies of thought' that engage in a reconnection of practice and theory, where practices are 'calls for things' that are not fully there, and theories are as much a 'discursive intervention' as an 'accurate representation' (Bhan, 2019, p. 640).

Pluriversal planning expands with the contributions of Southern theories that address what Brazilian architect Juliana Canedo called the 'planning the unplanned' (Petris & Canedo, 2021) and the need to create transformative 'political horizons' that support the social transformations of a given territory, as pointed out by Gutiérrez Aguilar (2017). These are 'tactical improvisations' applied in conditions where locality is more than just an approach but also a specificity that establishes 'differences without separability' (Ferreira da Silva, 2016). The ability to make the local 'operational'

as an extension of localities is part of what UK theorist Tina Campt (2019) refers to as 'the affective labour of adjacency': the recognition of a disparity between different positions and the work to 'feel across that difference'. This perspective situates urban planning as a 'tendency', that is, "not the projection of a rational order that force would eventually implement. [but] a possibility implicated in the present state of things" (Berardi, 2012, p. 144, quoted in Kinna, 2016, p. 210).

In the intersection of the 'otherness' of Southern theories and feminist planning, queer planning goes beyond gender and sexuality as identity markers to explore the potential of queer theory to radically democratise planning processes. According to UK-based geographer Vanesa Castán Broto, queer theory reframes participation and inclusion as part of an ethos of mutual support, it challenges the conception of closed defined communities and identities as "an intricate pattern of feelings and behaviours that have to be routinely negotiated in space" (Castán Broto, 2021, p. 315) and introduces the question of embodiment, the incorporation of emotions, affects and affections that in the analysis of physical configurations and interactions. Queer planning takes in the needs of those who do not conform to the modern binary construct (Forsyth, 2011) to alter existing planning theory and practice so that ["r]ather than treating individuals and communities as static and continuing, planners must cultivate a more open and less narrowly conceived set of assumptions about the communities with whom they might be working" (Doan, 2011, p. 221). US gender studies scholar Stephen Seely proposes a 'queering theory from the South' that learns "from and with the modes of concrete abstraction that queers in the global South have developed for negotiating their erotic lives" (Seely, 2020, p. 1234). They look at the South African practice of 'ubuntu' to negotiate between different understandings of justice, freedom and the obligations at work:

[*ubuntu*] implies both the unity of 'Being-becoming' and the multiplicity of forms this becoming takes". *Umuntu* highlights the inextricable bond between the individual person and all other people. This notion is expressed in the famous maxim *umuntu ngamantu nga bantu*, which can be roughly translated as 'a person is a person only through other people.' (Seely, 2020, pp. 1236–1237).

The emergence of a new body of theory and practice related to 'decolonial, postcolonial and abolitionist planning' was validated at the Planning Futures Conference organised by Columbia GSAPP in March 2021, which attracted more than 2,000 participants online. In the first panel on 'Decentering Planning' (Bou Akar et al., 2021), Lebanese urbanist Mona Fawaz discussed how planning acts as 'collective knowing', creating a new spatial imaginary in which planning can hold space for alternatives. In this creation of alternatives, Fawaz stated that: "We don't have the luxury to let [the public] go", recognising that the kind of apparatus able to act as a custodian is 'still to be invented'. In the same panel, UK-based urbanist Simone pointed out that the actual existing states have so many fractures that they could - and can - disappear, and at the same time 'the state' as a disciplinary and custodial concept is distributed across so many entities and actors that it is difficult to know where it begins and ends, opening up spaces of possibility in structures that are 'solid enough to be held accountable, open enough to negotiation' - a condition that favours other conceptions of what planning could be.

6.2.4 Municipalist planning

The planning strategy of Spanish municipalism developed under the consideration of a 'crisis of urban planning' (Roch Peña, 2011) constructed as a leftist critique of the limitations of the tools developed by the planning discipline, the inability of progressive urbanists to generate an image of an alternative city, and the 'continuous failure' of existing urban planning techniques, especially the figure of the master plan, in the face of complex social processes (Domínguez Ezquiaga, 1998). In practice, muni-governments rejected the tools offered by modernist planning, as in Madrid, or implemented a planning strategy based on projects, as in the 'model' of the super-block. However, even if the municipalist experience has not yet embarked on a long-term project of coherent planning action, I will argue that the combination of urban commoning and municipalist practices prefigures a city 'in the making' (Vollaard et al., 2019) that supersedes both the 'provisional statement' of avant-garde visionaries such as Chetchglov (Pinder, 2005, p. 3) and the authoritarianism of 'high modernism' that preceded it (Scott, 1998).

On the one hand, Spanish municipalist activists adopted the incorporation of a 'distinctive feminist epistemology' which, in the context of municipalism, is no longer considered 'controversial', as Sandercock & Forsyth pointed out in 1992, but rather a necessary dimension of women's presence in the public sphere. The Barcelona-based collective Punt 6 includes as one of the characteristics of its feminist urbanism agenda "the recognition of the role of municipalism and self-governing spaces in relation to neoliberal and state urban governance" (Col·lectiu Punt 6, 2019, p. 165), and Spanish municipalism incorporated feminist perspectives, needs, desires and dreams into the public decision-making apparatus and placed women in positions of power. The most obvious example is Barcelona, where in the second term 2019-2023, Barcelona en Comú promoted an all-female institutional urban structure, with female - and feminist - figures in charge of the city, from Mayor Ada Colau to the City Manager, the Deputy Mayor for Ecology, Urbanism, Infrastructures and Mobility, the Director of the Urban Planning Office and three Department Directors under her.

Also, although the responsible for sustainable development in the muni-government of Ahora Madrid dismissed any use of planning instruments for their 'inadequacy' in the task to 'define an urban model' and 'solve the structural problems of our city' (Calvo, 2016, my translation), Barcelona implemented an extended version of the superblock proposed by Salvador Rueda (2011), which followed not only the consolidated traces of Cerdà's plan, but also his intention of "not propose the model of a new city, but rather generative structures that would make it possible to adapt the old city to the new techniques [construction, transport, telecommunications] deduced from a double analysis of the specific situation of Barcelona and the components of the city in general" (Choay, 2009, p. 169, my translation). Cerdà's *Teoría general de la urbanización* [General Theory of Urbanisation], published in 1867, aimed to establish a scientific method of urbanisation that combined the physical disposition of buildings – in the familiar reticulated scheme connected by different axes - and 'a body of knowledge, principles, doctrines and rules'. More than 150 years later, BeC super-block plans for Barcelona maintained a system that "is in motion, with fluctuating boundaries that cannot be fixed, and an endlessly mobile population [... where] habitation is not reduced to mere 'housing'" (Choay, 2009, p. 237, my translation). The superblock not only shaped public space and urban mobility but became an urban concept with ramifications into other areas, as mentioned in Chapter 1.

6.3 Planning for the commons

In her introduction to the 'Planning Futures' conference she organised, US-based Lebanese urbanist Hiba Bou Akar asked, "What do we need to do?", when existing imagined futures are rooted in violence, "What are the timelines and materialities of planning in the search for a better world? What future should we plan?" (Bou Akar et al., 2021). As I have argued before, I consider that the political hypothesis of the commons offers valuable insights into these questions. However, with a few exceptions - such as Marcuse (2009) or De Angelis (2022a) - the theoretical and empirical productions related to commoning processes have not been able to present modes of proliferation of urban commons that explicitly address the question of planning, that is, making plans for them. Most of the existing studies and references to urban commoning experiences focus on traditional practices and reclaimed spaces in wastelands, and are based on a naturalistic idea of collectivisation and self-organisation. When it comes to territories with complex systems, heterogeneous populations and a variety of nested institutional systems, such as urban and metropolitan areas, the dominant approaches of the commons introduced in Chapter 5 - namely the neo-Marxist and the neo-institutional - imagine the city as a forest exploited by the market and foraged by commoners, following the image of early modern planning. I will argue that the interest in applying an alternative approach to the commons planning lies in the need to move beyond the occupation of wastelands, margins and reclaimed spaces to the re-appropriation of collective resources involved in processes of production and reproduction.

6.3.1 Commons planning

As for the possibility of planning for the commons, Linebaugh builds on Occupy and the squares movement, and challenges the difference between natural and urban territories, civilised and 'barbarian' cultures, to conclude that:

[...] the commoners of the world can no longer retire to the forest or run to the hills. Unprecedented as the task may historically be, the city itself must be commonised. (Linebaugh, 2014, p. 40)

In the glossary of the *Carta Magna Manifesto*, Peter Linebaugh added modern amplification to a few of the medieval archaisms he had used, advancing a possible characterisations of urban commoning, implemented through a series of urban programmes, with a list of modern 'amplifications' of the traditional English commons: urban squats, social centres and community gardens are presented as a contemporary version of *assarts* where sections of forested land are converted to collective farmland, so that empty buildings an urban plots subject to speculation processes become housing or community spaces; both *cartbote*, the wood for building carts, and *chiminage*, the right of way, would be translated into an accessible, non-commodified public transport service, while self-repair workshops for vehicles would be the amplified form of *ploughbote*; price-controlled and local access to fuel in Venezuela or Nigeria would be the equivalent of *firebote* and *turbary*, the wood and peat for fire; and social housing would be the equivalent of *housebote*, the right to take wood from the forest to build or repair the house (Linebaugh, 2008, pp. 301–311). Later on, in a text on *The City and the Commons*, Linebaugh sees the city not as a modern forest but as a place of exchange with a triple declination: a court, a fortress and a port, a place of protection, sovereignty and exchange (Linebaugh, 2014, p. 25).

In line with the commons' radical consideration of social reorganisation in the face of multiple contemporary crises, Marcuse follows the idea proposed by US feminist philosopher Iris Marion Young (2011 [1990]) that promoting a 'just city', that is, to incorporate distributive justice as a guiding concept in urban planning is a necessary but insufficient goal. Young notes that, firstly, the distributive approach to power, social capital or recognition renders these aspects 'static things rather than a function of social relations and processes'; secondly, it renders 'invisible the social structures, processes and relations that produce and reproduce these distributions' (Young, 2011 [1990], pp. 16, 241).

Marcuse argues that the calls for the implementation of 'planning justice' as a remedy for injustice or 'unfairness' are associated with notions of social utility and efficiency, and often require the remediation of processes rather than the elimination of their causes, whereas commons planning 'directly' addresses the 'question of power' and the 'conflictual character of injustice' (Marcuse, 2009, p. 94). In this vision, the commons are a way of addressing structural causes of injustice by reclaiming access to the full potential of cities through a distributed exercise of power. This reclaiming raises questions about who has access to the benefits of urban processes, who should intervene in the decision-making processes to allocate these benefits, what institutions are needed to implement them, and how community-based and commons interests can be incorporated. I will argue that it also raises questions about who and how to define the broad logics and principles of a desirable, better future that is 'articulated, designed and defined' through a 'democratic decisions that accompany the process' where its implementation is not responsibility of planners but of all residents and users of the commons (Marcuse, 2009, pp. 94, 194, 102). Commons' focus on transdisciplinarity, integration of theory and practice, and resilient agency (Petrescu, Petcou, & Nilsson, 2019) points to a planned definition of a general 'practice' that acts as a supporting framework of situated 'practices'. One of such commoning frameworks is the idea of an open-source resilience, a co-produced resilience that combines ecological repair and regeneration with democratic self-governance as a necessary contribution to 'planetary ecological repair' that can 'offer an alternative to the extractive and exploitative relations of the capitalist economy' (Petrescu & Petcou, 2023, p. 275).

Extending Marcuse's proposal of commons planning to more than human worlds, the Stockholm-based urban researcher Jonathan Metzger asks "what can become of urbanity in the future in a way that can also make a difference in the present", and argues that such commoning practice requires a new 'relational understanding' (Metzger, 2015, pp. 135–136). The question of who would be involved in the creation of this new understanding relates to Isabelle Stengers' explicit aim 'to design the political scene in a way that actively protects it from the fiction that 'people of good will decide in the name of the general interest' and the recognition that collective thinking must take place 'in the presence of those who would otherwise be likely to be disqualified as idiotically having nothing to propose' (Stengers, 2005, p. 1002, quoted in Metzger, 2015, p. 134). Metzger proposes a practice of spatial planning that 'seeks to identify what needs to be done in the present in order for places to become somehow normatively 'better' in the future - a practice that is not only collective, but could also potentially contribute to collectivising concerns and caring for the fate of urban milieus through practices of shared visioning and agenda setting' (Metzger, 2015, p. 140).

I will argue that this expanded notion of 'commons planning' can be seen as a 'matter of care' that combines the attachment, commitment and belonging of those affected by it with a broader concern and care (Puig de la Bellacasa, 2017, pp. 89–90). It also challenges some of the dichotomies within commons studies: "the distinction between the material/natural commons and the immaterial/social commons [which] can be analytically helpful [but] tends to be overstated, obscuring the continuity and inseparability of the material and the immaterial, the natural and the social" (Bresnihan, 2015, p. 95). Its aim is not to create individual or collective improvements, either in a particular place or as a general framework, but to engage human and non-human actors in a planetary coexistence that "demands that we try, in thinking about and acting for place management and development, to see the larger issues in small actions and the little implications of greater endeavours" (Metzger, 2015, p. 141). Examples of commons planning as democratic efforts linked to public actions include local 'Assemblies of the Commons', such as the one that emerged from the 2016 *Nuit Debut* in Grenoble (Bakçay & Haliloğlu, 2023) the emerging ecosystem of public commons agreements based on the experiences of Naples, Bologna, Marseille or Amsterdam, which seek to transform both institutional and economic relations (Dau & Krausz, 2022) or the Water Observatory in Terrassa, which has integrated the local network for the defence of water as a common good into the political decisions of the re-municipalised water service (Bagué, 2020b).

6.3.2 Feminist planning for the commons

Feminist methodologies (Naples, 2007; Harding, 1987b; Mies, 1983), cosmovisions (Povinelli, 2019; Puig de la Bellacasa, 2017; Stengers, 2010; Haraway, 1985), and perspectives (bell hooks, 2017; Pérez Orozco, 2017; J. K Gibson-Graham, 2006) have nourished theoretical frameworks that connect spheres previously separated by the androcentric male gaze: private and public, humans and non-humans, experts and amateurs, production and reproduction - an aspect particularly relevant to the political hypothesis of the common (Federici, 2019b; Mies & Shiva, 2014) and feminist urban planning of the 'everyday city' (Spain, 2014; Velázquez, 2006; Hayden, 1985).

Based on this rich legacy, it is possible to identify three characteristics of feminist planning that resonate with the a-modern' vision of the city' of the commons:

1. Open processes - Similar to the idea that the commons should be conceived not as an object but as an action – expressed by the verb 'commoning' – and "a set of relations, a means through which social relations are being expressed" (Stavrídes & Verlič, 2015, np), Norway-based political scientists Christine Hudson and Malin Rönnblom (2020) state that feminist futures are process-oriented rather than product-oriented mechanisms that allow for multiple possible futures in the making - the exact opposite of a single, finished future. The strategies at work are emergent and contingent, focusing on the mundane present and its potential to reveal opportunities for concrete action, rather than being totalising and comprehensive. Such aspirations require an openness to many 'others' who are excluded from both the current 'man-made world' described by US feminist geographer Leslie Kern (2021) and homogeneous utopian societies.

2. Multiplicity and diversity - Marion Young (2011 [1990], pp. 238–241) advocates a multiplicity with four central features. First, social differentiation without exclusion, with social representations of groups and open boundaries. Second, a variety of multi-use differentiation of the social space.

Third, the eroticism of encountering the exotic and unexpected through both physical and social connections. Fourth, a sense of 'publicity' where physical, social and political public spaces form accessible 'forums' that facilitate dialogue.

3. Centrality of social reproduction - Feminist urban theory is invested in the accessible and democratic design of everyday life that confronts the pervasiveness of the male gaze and the spatial model that produces the kind of 'gendered spaces' studied by US urbanist Daphne Spain (1992), often analysed through biased data (Criado-Perez, 2019). From office floor plans and classrooms to Frankfurt's kitchen cabinets and public toilets, feminism argues that the design of even the most mundane spaces is used to define women's roles and their 'proper place' in the city (Spain, 2014). In contrast, feminist interventions such as the social work of Jane Addam (1912) in Chicago's Hull House, public urban advocacy by Jane Jacobs (1992), or the writings of Dolores Hayden (1979, 1981) and the activism of Silvia Federici (2017, 2019a) have extended social reproduction from domestic spaces to collective spaces, city streets and beyond.

I will argue that feminist planning aims to define the urban hardware and software - both the physical supports and the relationships - involved in social reproduction. In the first aspect, the 'caring city' paradigm (Kern, 2021) presents some of the feminist logic behind crucial aspects of urban planning and how design features can affect accessibility, mobility in public space by providing safe and accessible transport, lighting, mowed sidewalks and community gardens - as well as livelihoods through affordable housing and a livable minimum wage, public services such as health and education, and everyday infrastructure such as safe and clean public toilets. In the second aspect, the analysis of the 'androcentric urbanism' by Spanish urban sociologist Blanca Valdivia (2020) as developed in both capitalist and communist regimes introduces additional elements of the 'caring city', such as the relationship between time, reproductive tasks and well-being, to assume the fragility of our vulnerable and finite bodies, and the affective and emotional burdens of care work.

6.3.3 Planning *eutopias* in common

In the title of his novel *Utopia*, Thomas More plays with the phonetic similarity between *outopia*, as a *non* [oú] place and *eutopia*, as a *good* [εὖ] place. The fictional account of the possibilities and factualities of a better place located nowhere, that More situates on the island of Utopia,. Since then, 'utopia' has been interpreted as either an iconoclastic critique of the status quo or a closed blueprint of a totalitarian society (Oudenampsen, 2016).

However, UK anarchist feminist Ruth Levitas finds a sense of utopia that is more analytical than descriptive: 'the desire for a better way of being' with the potential trigger for political action towards a prefigurative exercise (Levitas, 2000, p. 19). In urban planning, Choay notes that utopias are not about the rules of world-building, but an imaginary elaboration of a counter-society, and that "utopian" - that is, ideal, unrealised norms and models - proposals function in urbanism as instaurational texts for built spaces (Choay, 1997). In this section, I propose to look at the capacity of planning to extract the *eutopia* part of utopia and deploy it as a prefigurative realisation of a 'good place' that, as Kinna (2016) points out, can help identify and define collective struggles with the potential to create 'projects that build a new world in the heart of the old' - as foreshadowing -

and generate a link between a yet to come social transformation and the everyday direct actions that take place in the present.

Another sense of *eutopia* has been identified by Leonie Sandercock (2002) in the task of organising hope, mediating memory and negotiating anger, following Italo Calvino's call to "seek and learn to recognise who and what, in the midst of the inferno, are not inferno, then make them endure, give them space" (Calvino, 1978, p. 165). In Sandercock's vision of a feminist and decolonial 'cosmopolis', the capacity to 'imagine alternative futures' triggers alternative forms of planning that, against the deterministic and static imaginaries of traditional utopias, foster the capacity of 'living together in difference', based on a social project that embraces contestation and change (Sandercock, 2003). I will argue that, to avoid falling into the trap of the 'utopian blueprint', planning for the commons emerges as "a method linked to practice rather than a descriptor of a social condition" (Kinna, 2016, p. 204). What US activist Cindy Milstein describes as a political project to "imagine dreams and ways to embody its ethics and then tries to implement them" (Milstein, 2010, p. 67) not as a vision set in some faraway neverland, often guided by colonialism, that ignores material needs or desires, but

[...] precisely a means of taking full account of material as well as non-material needs and desires— not simply bread and butter, but bread, butter, and also roses— and imagining ways that everyone can fully satisfy them. (ibid.)

The possibilities of an alternative future with a different social organisation - more-than-human, communal, a-modern, situated and compassionate - have been populated by the work of storytelling and speculation carried out by thinkers such as Donna Haraway (1985, 2016), Anna Tsing (Tsing & Elkin, 2018; Tsing, 2015), Ruth Kinna (2009, 2016) or Ursula K Le Guin (2008) These imaginaries of cyborgs, children of compost, rhizospheres and latent commons grow in the ruins of capitalism, creating altering worlds where gender, ecosystems and power perform and conform differently and other 'imaginary landscapes' produced by a 'creativity, individuality, and inventiveness of desire' that link utopian thinking with the ontological condition of becoming (Kinna, 2016, p. 205). These alternatives are not naively utopian endeavours but rather stem from a "realistic assessment and respect for probability" that is far more realistic than the implausible images deployed by capitalist publicity (Le Guin, 2011, p. 78) and have the potential to prefigure an 'ecology of [urban] practices' interested in cities "not as they are, but as they may become" (Stengers, 2005, p. 186).

So far, I have argued that planning for the becoming-common of the public relies on forms of governance that link material and immaterial elements, at varying levels of abstraction and concreteness, to the planning of the city as a commons. I have explained how this becoming can be seen as a vector out of the modern logic of private-public regimes, and how it is concerned with different tensions arising from previous accounts of the commons: a) the tension between the city as an abstract receptacle of the commons or as a series of autonomous spaces; b) between urban commons as man-made, structured endeavours or as spontaneous, 'natural' processes; c) between the top-down institutional policies that implement collective imaginaries and the bottom-up character of social transformations. I have argued that addressing these tensions requires a methodology of urbanism that avoids high modernist authoritarianism and its still modernist avant-garde counterparts. In my proposal, the becoming-common of the public is not to be understood as a

'commonisation' of the 'partner-state' or a call to act 'in and against' it: it operates alongside the public and through the commons. I will further argue that feminist planning for the commons expresses the intention to de-state the public through de-centralisation, de-segmentation, de-individualisation and de-unification, confronting the modernist planning of Le Corbusier's *Ville Radieuse* as much as the Unitarian urbanism of the Situationists Babylon. What I will call 'planning-in-common' escapes the perfectly measurable dihedral vision by adopting a situated point of view and horizon and embraces pluriversality, diversity, situatedness, accessibility, hope and care.

As we will see in Chapter 9, the need and opportunity to propose such planning is rendered possible by the signs of crisis in the current model of high-modernist planning driven by state-public and capital-private actors, and by the pockets of urban commoning practices as a prefiguration of a common future. As a process, planning-in-common does not define the production of the physical environment and the resources it requires, but where and how these resources are located and distributed, and the connection between them and the environment. This kind of planning is not interested in reducing uncertainties but in expanding potentials.

Conclusion

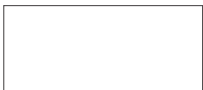
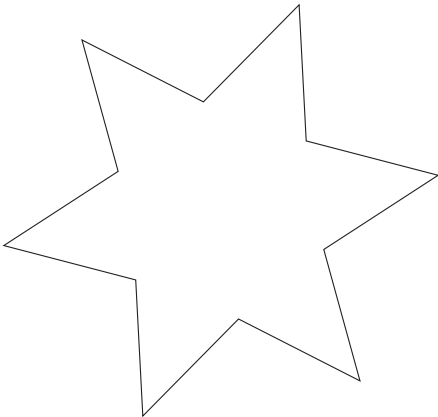
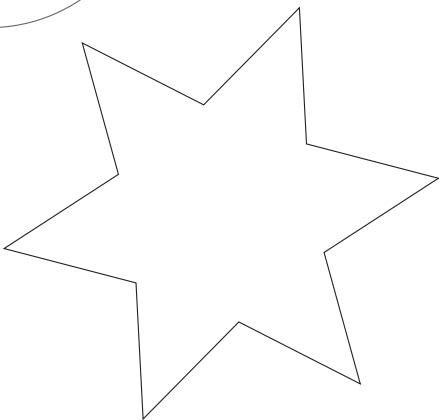
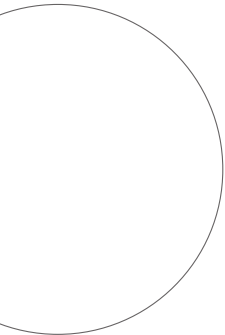
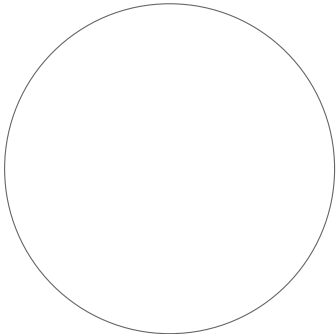
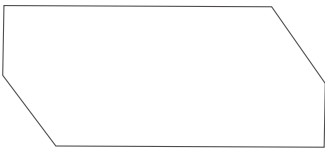
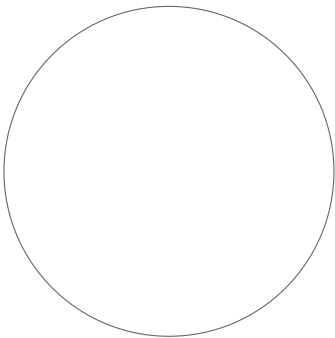
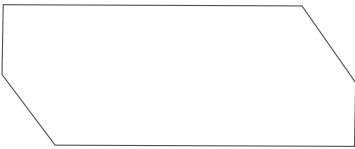
This chapter has discussed the articulation of existing planning experiences with a commons social practice that organises social life. It has addressed how the city has been 'seen' by the state as a territory controlled from above, how it has been 'imagined' by architects as a material shaped according to architects' hopes and desires, and how the everyday alternatives have challenged these images with the needs of care activities and prefigurative processes that define '*eutopias*' that are far from blueprints of a ready-made city.

First, I have presented two logics that feed on a 'crisis of planning': the high modernist project of the nation-state to control and exploit territories, which aims to impose on territories a blueprint created from above, and the neoliberal city, fragmentary, flexible and networked, which employs a stealth planning. I have argued that modernist planning and its counterparts reflect the state binary, segmentation, hierarchy and Leviathan logics, which are confronted with a neoliberal apparent lack of premeditation. I have also argued that both approaches share the early planner's consideration of the city 'as a forest': an organically growing resource that can be controlled and commodified through planning, and how this naturalistic understanding simplifies urban complexity and depoliticises the processes within. Secondly, I have conceptualised the theories and practices that effectively challenge modernist ideology as produced mainly in three peripheral sites. First, a 'pluriverse' of southern urban theories for understanding planned and unplanned urban processes. Second, the long tradition of feminist urbanism and urban thought that links urban production and reproduction. Third, the more recent experience of municipalist transversal planning by method and by policy, which sees planning as a process rather than a product and relies on the capacity of social processes to shape and care for the city, and on local institutions to support such processes. Thirdly, I have discussed how the idea of commons planning can move from ideas of distributive justice to a transformation of how modernist planning works. I have proposed to think of planning as a process 'in-common' and an exercise in creating practical imaginaries of a good place, an '*eutopia*', capable

of resisting the new urban enclosures and producing new forms of commoning that integrate the horrors of an alternative future with the embodied experiences of existing commons.

This chapter is the last in Part II - Theory. The next empirical chapters in Part III - Practice will argue that the municipalist experience, as an insurgent practice defending existing forms of commoning, has served as a testing ground for 'resurgent' commoning processes that need to reinvent and re-establish lost cultures of collective management, and as an inspiration for alternative forms of engaging urban planning in the process of becoming common.

PART III - LEARNING FROM THE PRACTICE



Chapter 7 - Municipalist Policies in the Cities of Change

To characterise is to go back to the past starting from the present that poses the question, not so as to deduce this present from the past but so as to give the present its thickness: so as to question the protagonists of a situation from the point of view of what they may become capable of, the manner in which they are likely to respond to this situation.

Isabelle Stengers, *In Catastrophic Times: Resisting the Coming Barbarism*, 2015

Introduction

As explained in Chapter 2, the research fieldwork developed in three phases, each addressing a different temporality and territoriality. This chapter presents the findings, analysis and discussion of the first phase. It looks at the municipalist narratives and norms produced in the recent past across the national territory of Spain. In this chapter, I will argue that the analysis of documents produced by, for and within the Spanish municipalist movement provides a vision of what activist, political scientist and Democratic Innovation coordinator at Barcelona City Council, Arnau Monterde, calls "the tension between the 'whats' and the 'hows' which positions municipalism as a set of political projects valuing both dimensions equally in the construction of their narrative and their collective process, and which constantly intertwine them" (Monterde, 2019, p. 26, my translation).

This chapter follows New Zealand educator Carol Cardno's assertion that "[t]here is no such thing as a value-free policy: all policy has value-based intent" and that every policy action is underpinned by a belief system (Cardno, 2019, p. 624), to identify the role of urban commons as part of the municipalist value systems. The analytical approach is based on the call made by Daniela Dolenc (2012) to expand the ideational component of the commons into norms and regulations, which provide a practical component. I also apply the concept of 'technologies of belonging' by Isabelle Stengers (2005) to characterise the attachments that mobilise municipalist practitioners and make present the causes and obligations of the commons. In my analysis, I would identify the elements of the municipalist articulation between the ideational 'what' and the practical 'how', looking at how the urban commons has been introduced as a political value in municipalist political discourses and debates in Spain, what kind of commoning policies have been developed by Spanish municipalist city councils, and what have been the links between the political ideational debates and the institutional practical policies.

In order to explore these questions, this chapter collects documents - namely, recordings and texts - produced by organisations and individuals that were part of the municipalist movement in their internal debates, development and public communication, and in the policies produced by municipalist city councils during the first term of the 'municipalist wager,' between the local elections of May 2015 and May 2019. The first section examines the presence of the commons political hypothesis in the internal debates, public interventions and policies produced by the municipalist movement. In the second section, the analysis of these documents locates this political, performative and regulative articulation between the commons as a radical democratic form of

urban governance and the public policies that aimed to implement this transformation. In the third section, the discussion focuses on different aspects of municipalist commoning governance.

7.1 Urban commons and municipalism

In order to deduce the role of the political hypothesis of the commons in the Spanish municipalist movement, I have examined the political interventions during public rallies, the debates proposed in seminars and round tables during internal meetings, and the political actions deployed by the 'cities of change' at the national level. As we will see in the analysis of the official documents, the political arguments and practical proposals indicate a general agreement on what the shared values of municipalism are, and which of them concern public-led processes that incorporate the idea of the common. Sometimes the concepts are seen as founding elements, a justification, a goal or an expected outcome, depending on the public action. I will argue that, together, they form a municipalist 'value system' (Cardno, 2019, p. 624).

7.1.1 Public interventions

The most relevant public interventions for this research were produced by the municipalist political space in September 2015, October and November 2018 - at the beginning and end of the municipalist mandate - with the aim of presenting municipalist policies and promoting their understanding, both for the general public in Spain and for more specialised national and international audiences. On the government side, the 'Cities for the Common Good' public rally addressed the general public, while the International Observatory on Participatory Democracy conference addressed a more specific audience. Both meetings were promoted by the Barcelona City Council and brought together elected representatives from the municipalist 'cities of change' to explain their policies. On the political organisation side, the online *Atlas del Cambio* [Atlas of Change] was part of an effort to document the public policies implemented so far. The Atlas explicit aim was to engage in a prefigurative narrative of the change that had taken place and to generate an archive of potential institutional actions (La Comuna, 2018b).

Cities for the Common Good - September 2015

At the beginning of the Spanish municipalist mandate, on 4 September 2015, BeC invited the leaders of the municipalist organisations - namely Ahora Madrid; Guanyem Badalona en Comú; Zaragoza en Común; Marea Atlántica; Compostela Aberta and Cádiz sí se puede - to celebrate the first 100 days of the municipalist movement in office with a public meeting entitled '*Ciudades por el Bien Común. Ganar compartiendo experiencias de cambio*' [Cities for the Common Good. Winning by sharing experiences of change]. This municipalist rally aimed to present the municipal governments and also a common programme based on institutional ethic protocols, social housing policies, and participatory and feminist measures. The public speeches advocated an urban model based on the 'right to the city' and proposed the creation of municipalist network cities (De Delàs, 2015). In the rally, the newly appointed mayor Ada Colau stated: "Given the inability of states like the Spanish state to solve people's problems, we, the cities, are here to look for solutions" (Rigol, 2015, np, my translation). This meeting inaugurated the construction of the 'cities of change' as an informal, 'ad hoc' network made of political organisations, urban activists and local governments.

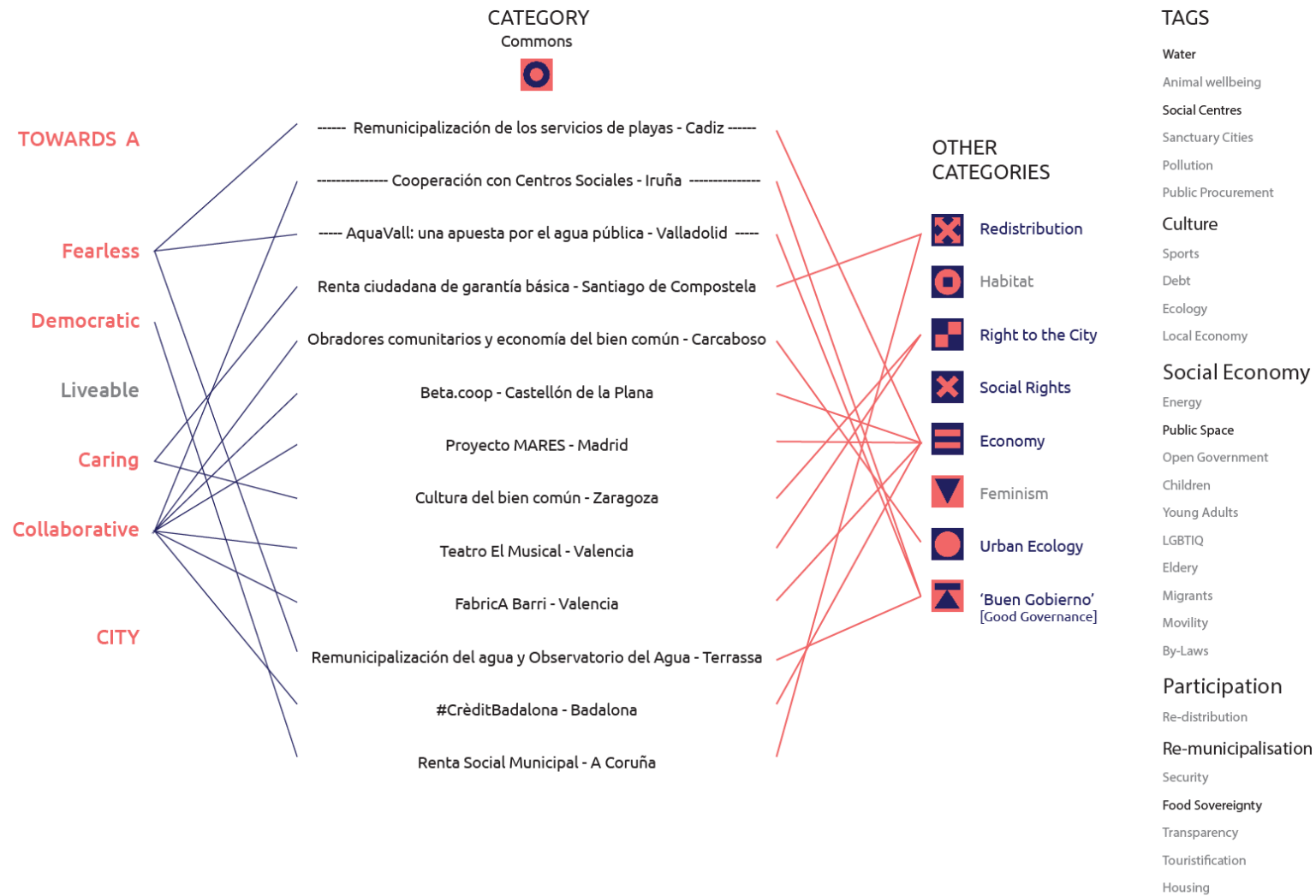
International Observatory on Participatory Democracy – November 2018

Towards the end of the 2015-2019 mandate, in November 2018, Barcelona City Council hosted the XXVIII Conference of the International Observatory on Participatory Democracy (IOPD), an institutional space for knowledge exchange "with the aim of deepening the roots of democracy in municipal governance" (OIDP, n.p.). The Participation Department of Barcelona City Council was involved in the organisation of the event, where many of the social and institutional actors active in local democracy, co-production and urban commons in Barcelona and Spain took part in various round tables, workshops and public interventions discussing the issue of commons, direct democracy and participatory policies. Participants included councillors from municipalist governments in Madrid, Barcelona, Zaragoza, Pamplona, A Coruña and Valladolid, as well as other municipalities in Europe interested in commons and municipalism. Among the latter were Grenoble - which had successfully remunicipalised the water company in 2001 (Lobina & Brochet, 2019) and created a commons assembly in 2017 (Dereva, 2017) - or Amsterdam - which would organise the Cities for Change Forum in 2020. The meeting also appealed to research efforts to deepen public-social co-production which were seen as aligned with the municipalist interest in democratising local politics. In the opening session of the IOPD, Ada Colau noted that in the face of a 'weak and low-intensity' democracy, it was the responsibility of governments to "rebuild the very idea of community" in order to address "our daily needs, our challenges, our desires and also the current global uncertainties" (#OIDP2018, 2019, my transcription and translation). However, the institutional practice of this democratic goal separated communities from policy makers in the two round tables that directly addressed the issue of commons. One aimed to understand the processes and modes of management of "commons in practice", bringing together only practitioners from social experience, while the other focused on the "legal regulation of commons", with only institutional actors.

Atlas of Change - October 2018

In autumn 2018, a few months before the 2019 local elections, 16 muni-platforms presented the online *Atlas del Cambio* [Atlas of Change], compiling the public policies implemented in different cities. These actions of municipalist local governments were organised according to categories that show the influence of political projects such as the commons and feminism. The Atlas brought together concrete, plenary-approved and operational public policies around a common narrative: the ongoing construction of a fearless, democratic, liveable, caring and collaborative city. In this narrative, 'commons' is one of the categories used, along with 'right to the city', 'urban ecology' or '*buen gobierno*' [good governance], a term used by both the World Bank (Minogue, 1999) and the *Zapatistas* (Martínez Espinoza, 2006). I will argue that, of these three public communications, the Atlas of Change made more effective use of a narrative that presented implemented policies to generate a public discourse about the achievements of municipalist governments, but also about the political horizon of municipalist action. As we will see, this horizon of change was collectively produced in municipalist meetings and debates, where the political hypothesis of the commons occupied a relevant space. This relevance is reflected in the Atlas, where the commons is seen as a social economy and collaborative process rather than defining the built environment as a condition of urban liveability, and where democracy and participatory governance are as central to this vision as redistribution and provision, as shown in Figure 7.1.

Figure 7.1: Municipalist commons: Public policies under the 'Commons' tag in the Atlas of Change (2018)



Source: Author. Based on ciudadesdelcambio.org. The size of the tags is related to the number of times they are associated with the different public actions..

In the analysis of the policies included in this Atlas that I produced for the compilation on Democratic Cities, I used the four political arenas described by US political scientist Theodore J. Lowi (1972) to argue that municipalist policies, constrained by the use of administrative rules and lacking legislative capacity, paradoxically sought to produce interventions in the constituent power arena more than in the regulatory, distributive or redistributive ones (Méndez de Andés, 2019). I identified how, for example, in their resistance to national austerity and migration policies, or in the implementation of direct democracy procedures or self- and co-governance protocols, the new local politicians seek to redefine the rules and norms of the established political and economic power to go beyond the state administration and management of these matters. Some of these constituent processes - as the gender equality and LGTBIQ policies supported by the feminist movement - are situated in a collaboration that articulates the 'inside' and 'outside' of the institutional in ways that "do not require normative frameworks, but are based on common objectives that mobilise society and institutions alike" (Méndez de Andés, 2019, p. 133, my translation).

7.1.2 Municipalist debates

As we will see, Spanish muni-platforms explicitly called on municipalist actors to come together and discuss the question of the commons and how it could be articulated with the policies they were trying to implement. In this section, I will present the internal gatherings that took place between 2016 and 2018, where the commons was a central theme of the debates, and the reflections on the possibilities of implementing policies that would strengthen the commons and incorporate common goods and the common good in local politics and policies.

Strengthening the commons - April 2018

The first Spanish pan-municipalist programmatic meeting, entitled *Fortalecer los bienes comunes desde el municipalismo* [Strengthening the commons from municipalism], took place in Barcelona in March 2016, co-organised by BeC (2016) with the German foundation Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung. The meeting brought together both social and institutional actors: it started with a round table with representatives of some of the platforms most involved in the democratic municipalist space, and ended with a debate with local activists from the housing, energy, environmental, debt and anti-globalisation movements. While in the first session institutional actors focused on the challenges and limits of the 'institutional assault', in the second session social actors presented the need to better articulate communication and collaboration between activist initiatives and municipalist governments. Through these two sessions, five workshops reflected the programmatic field of interest of urban commons: public services, cooperatives, housing, co-production of public policies and public space. The working session brought together social movements, activists and researchers to discuss the state of the municipalist platforms and their relations with social movements after ten months in the institutional arena. In the programme we can see a focus on 'commons' in the reframing of re-municipalisation as re-communalisation, the relevance of co-production and co-implementation strategies and methodologies, and a strong thematic presence of housing and social economy issues. However, 'urban commons' was only used in relation to public space.

Municilab – Autumn 2017 & 2018

In the autumn of 2017 and 2018 - during the second half of the municipalist term - the BeC 'Commons School', called *La Comuna* [The Commune], organised two Municilab programmes that combined political debates, presentations and panels with social events such as concerts, creative workshops and book launches. The aim was to create a space for 'reflection, creation and action on the role of cities in the world and the new ways of creating proximity policies and networks based on common challenges and shared strategies' (La Comuna, 2016). Commons played a prominent role in both meetings, which organised the debate around 'strands' dedicated to commons. The strand dedicated to commons in Municilab 2017 addressed specific issues relevant to the city government of Barcelona, such as the port, sex workers, sports facilities or food sovereignty, while the one organised in 2018 proposed a more complex and grounded set of issues: the metropolitan economy, the right to the city - with issues such as housing, mobility and public space - and water and energy infrastructures, but also less obvious sites of commons such as human rights and migration, community-based action and security.

Fearless Cities – June 2017

The first international municipalist gathering took place in Barcelona in June 2017, and the jointly produced book *Fearless Cities: A Guide to the Global Municipalist Movement* (Barcelona en Comú, 2019) served as a report of the discussions in the different round tables, but also as an international manifesto of municipalism in which the commons had a relevant presence. Social activists and a policy consultant from Naples and Barcelona wrote a chapter on 'The Commons', defined as 'the collective action used by the Fearless Cities - the international version of the 'cities of change' - to manage resources' (Forné, Micciarelli, & Fresnillo, 2019). Another section of the book - and the meeting - focuses on the creation of 'Non-State Institutions' as institutions of and for the commons, through a social self-management that "contains within itself new forms of power and democracy" (Novello, Mohammad, & Buckland, 2019, p. 82). It also addressed the development of 'economies for the common good', the struggles around public spaces, the remunicipalisation as a tool for the management of commons, opening up the possibility of organising communities around the democratic provision of services such as energy (Barcelona en Comú, 2019, pp. 94, 118), and the generation of an urban citizenship as a precondition for solidarity and support for the commons:

Neoliberal politics reduces the funding for public goods and also reduces the amount of commonwealth available, forcing us to look for different ways to protect the commons and challenging us to confront and overcome the urban corporate model, which builds cities that are unequal, fragmented, and determined by nothing more than the logic of the market. (Novello, Mohammad, & Buckland, 2019, p. 76).

The Fearless Cities meeting had an important international impact. Similar to the 'Sanctuary Cities' in the US which serves as protection against the punitive federal immigration policies, the 'Fearless Cities' label was neutral enough to be adopted by social organisations and local political projects. Regional meetings were organised by social movements around the world: in New York for North America, in Warsaw, Brussels, Naples and Belgrade for various European areas, in Valparaiso and Rosario for Latin America. The term has been adopted by local politicians regardless of their

affiliation to traditional political parties, such as the Green Party in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, or the Labour Party in Preston, UK. Finally, the knowledge generated during the conference has been used as a reference by English-speaking academics (Thompson, 2020; Cumbers & Paul, 2020; Russell, 2019).

In the municipalist meetings that took place in Spain between 2015 and 2019, the effort to combine social and institutional initiatives, involve social activists and members of the government, and portrait implemented policies and political debates reflected the institutional work of putting into practice the municipalist principles of citizen-led democratic processes. However, as we will see in the next section, even if the idea of the commons was highly relevant in the municipalist debates, this importance was not reflected in the public documents that supported municipalist policies.

7.1.3 Policy actions

This section presents the public actions carried out in the 15 cities with more than 100.000 inhabitants where municipalist platforms were part of the local government, either alone or in coalition.

Table 7.1 presents the public documents produced in the 15 Spanish municipalities with more than 100.000 inhabitants where a municipalist platform was part of the local government between 2015 and 2019. It compares policies, parties in government and participation in public action in these 15 cities. It shows which municipalist party or coalition held the mayoralty, which municipalities participated in the three public interventions mentioned above - the Cities for the Common Good rally, the IOPD conference and the Atlas of Change - and which municipalities produced official documents containing the Spanish terms *comunes* [commons], *bien/es comunes* [common good/s] and *comunes urbanos* [urban commons], along with which party was responsible for the department that created them. The official policies collected are part of contested and sometimes partially successful projects of public-common articulation, by making material, financial, legal and symbolic resources available to a wider and more diverse set of actors. They include strategic plans and frameworks, ordinances, reports and regulations. Some of them use the term 'commons' as a general framework, as in the case of Cádiz, where it appears only in the title of the document, while others concern very specific proposals that make use of tangible and intangible assets, as in the case of Móstoles and Alcalá de Henares, to promote urban gardening and agriculture. They also define new administrative divisions, in A Coruña, and provide guidelines for the development of cultural production, in Zaragoza, public-social collaborations, in Madrid, and community-led management of public assets, in Barcelona.




It also reveals a clear correlation between the composition of local governments and their public engagement in municipalist initiatives around the commons. First, none of the coalitions that included the Socialist Party took part in public or internal debates. Only two cities where the Socialist Party held the mayoralty produced a document referring to 'commons' [the most 'micro' approaches, as we will see in the next section]. Most of the cities that produced a public document referring to the concept of commons also participated in public events and internal debates where the idea of commons was presented and discussed.

Table 7.1: Municipalist commoning policies.

Municipality	Party/ies in Government	Mayoralty in 2015	Public Policy on commons	Policy information			Participation in public meetings			
				Terms included in the document	Policy Name [EN]	Year	Department in charge	Cities for the Common Good	Atlas of Change	OIPD Congress
Madrid	Municipalist platform	Ahora Madrid	X	common/s common good/s	Public-Social Partnership Ordinance	2018	Participation	X	X	X
Barcelona	Municipalist platform	Barcelona en Comú	X	common/s common good/s urban commons	Civil Patrimony Program	2016	Participation	X	X	X
Valencia	Coalition - Compromís + PSOE + Guanyem Valencia	Compromís								
Zaragoza	Municipalist platform	Zaragoza en Comú	X	commons/s	Towards a Culture as Common Good	2015	Culture	X	X	
Palma	Coalition - PSOE + Más per Palma + Som Palma	PSOE								
Alicante	Coalition - PSOE + Guanyem Alacant	PSOE								
Valladolid	Coalition - PSOE + Valladolid Toma la Palabra	PSOE								X
A Coruña	Municipalist platform	Marea Atlántica	X	commons/s	Districts Reorganisation Proposal	2016	Participation	X	X	X
Oviedo	Coalition - PSOE + Somos Oviedo + IU	PSOE								

Table 7.1 (cont.)

Municipality	Party/ies in Government	Mayoralty in 2015	Public Policy on commons	Policy information			Participation in public meetings			
				Terms included in the document	Policy Name [EN]	Year	Department in charge	Cities for the Common Good	Atlas of Change	OIPD Congress
Badalona	Coalition - Guanyem Badalona en Comú + ERC + ICV	Guanyem Badalona						X	X	
Sabadell	Coalition - ERC + CUP + Guanyem Sabadell	ERC								
Mostoles	Coalition - PSOE + IU + Ganar Móstoles	PSOE	X	common/s common good/s	Mostoles 2030. Transition City	2018	Environment [Ganar Móstoles]			
Iruña	Coalition - Bildu + Geroa Bai Aranzadi + IE	Bildu	X	common/s common good/s	Citizen Participation Regulations	2019	Participation [Aranzadi]	X	X	
Alcalá de Henares	Coalition - PSOE + Somos Alcalá + IU	PSOE	X	common/s common good/s	Local Agroecology Plan	2019	Environment [Somos Alcalá]			
Cádiz	Coalition - Cádiz Sí Se Puede + Ganar Cádiz	Cádiz Si Se Puede	X	common/s	Common Cultures	2016	Culture [Ganar Cádiz]	X	X	

Legend Parties	
Municipalist Platform	
Socialist Party	
Other	

Source: Author.

The only two exceptions were Alcalá de Henares and Móstoles - both with 200,000 inhabitants and in the Madrid metropolitan area - where the Socialist Party held the mayoralty. Another exception was Badalona - a town of 200,000 inhabitants in Barcelona metropolitan area - which participated in all public and internal events, but did not use a term related to the commons. Badalona did, however, develop a policy that was included in the Atlas of Change under the 'commons' category, as was the case of Valencia, which did not participate in municipalist public events.

Based on the analysis of public meetings and documents, I will argue that Spanish municipalism developed the political hypothesis of the commons through narrative and normative devices, as suggested by Dolenc (2012). Following the definition of 'narrative' and 'normative', I have identified how municipalist actors produced a 'series of events' that presented, defended and promoted a 'particular point of view' and 'set of values', while at the same time enacting "a principle of right action binding upon the members of a group" (Merriam-Webster).

7.2 Narrative and normative

Following the identification of municipalist narrative and normative elements, I will argue that the operational implementation of municipalism as a link between 'the whats and the hows' (Monterde, 2019) required an articulation between the ideational and practical elements of governmentality as a connection between different municipalist actors with different levels of political and institutional agency, with policies that are part of what I will call a municipalist '*meso-governance*'. This section analyses the elements described in the previous section - public interventions, municipalist debates and policy actions - to provide an insight into the municipalist values and political frameworks of reference. In this analysis, discourses configure a catalogue of specific interpretations, terms and metaphors that can be mobilised to 'characterise and evaluate actions and events' (Willig, 2014, p. 342). I will argue that in the choice of terms used to name and describe debate sessions, the principles invoked in policy justifications, and other concepts used to describe and analyse public policy, it is possible to identify the 'system of beliefs' that Cardno (2019) identifies as underpinning any policy. Figures 7.2, 7.3 and 7.4 will show the relationships between the municipalist 'what' and 'how' as a connection between participation in municipalist public interventions and the production of official documents that refer to the common(s).

In the first part of this analysis, I will examine the internal representations and debates about urban commons within the municipalist political space as social and institutional 'external mandates' and antecedents that produce a 'need' (Bloor & Wood, 2006, p. 627) for specific municipalist regulations. Here, the public accounts of the meetings and debates were made in video format. The second part focuses on the official documents produced by local governments that used the term 'commons'. When analysing the public actions of the municipalist governments, we will see that half of them used the Spanish equivalent of 'common/s' as '*lo común / los comunes*': namely '*bien/es comunes*' [common good/s] and '*comunes urbanos*' [urban commons]. In the analysis of normative documents, I define a macro scale for more general strategic documents, a micro scale for concrete implementations and a meso-scale for programmes that operate in between. The third part focuses on the three meso-policies produced in Madrid, Barcelona and A Coruña, and is

complemented with interviews conducted during the 2018 OPS meeting with the politicians responsible for these commoning policies.

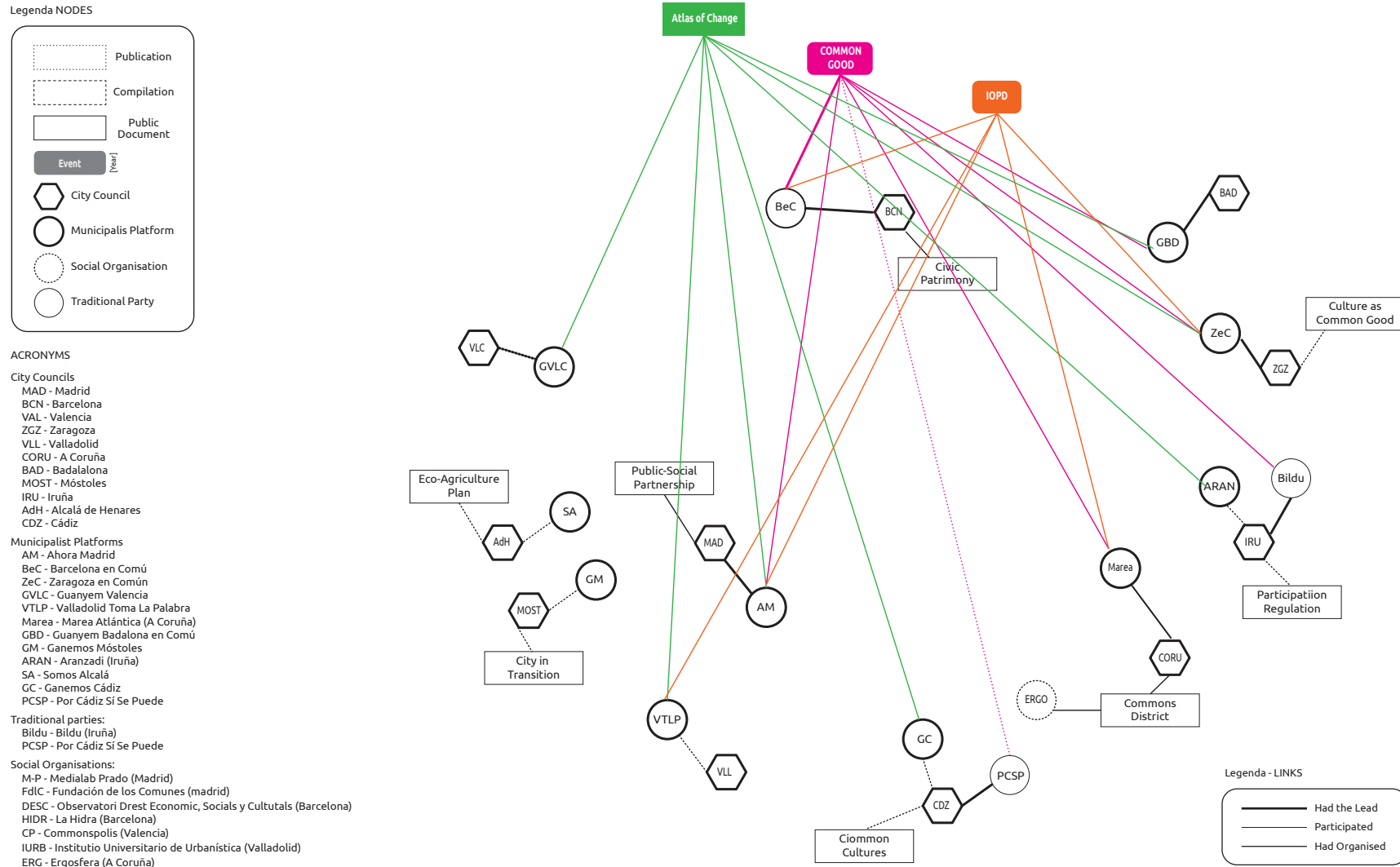
7.2.1 Narrative devices

Political narratives are relevant to the definition of a becoming-common because they are constituted by reality, but also constitute it. Political discourses 'resonate' through different actors and help to form 'political opportunity structures' between social mobilisations, their strategies and their capacity to transform their reality (Rootes, 1999). The narratives analysed here were created during face-to-face public presentations, seminars and internal debates, all of which were recorded and sometimes published in books or online repositories. In these narratives, the Spanish declinations of commons and derivatives, such as 'common good' or 'urban commoning', were not only alternative ways of naming the 'common': following its inherent polysemy, the municipalist narrative mobilised the 'commons' into different semantic spaces that resonated and overlapped, but were not entirely identical.

As the first aspect of this polysemic discourse, the 'common good' is aligned with the idea of a 'commonwealth' and the public-state mandate to provide for the general interest. These public representations of the municipalist commoning discourse were used in the opening and closing sessions of events organised by BeC - whether as a political organisation or as a local government - and helped to make visible a number of emerging national and international networks articulated around Barcelona. Although the evolution of BeC's political discourse - and practice as part of the international network - is beyond the scope of this thesis, it is interesting to note that in the second international meeting of Fearless Cities, held online in June 2021, the commons played a less prominent role than in the 2017 edition. While the term 'commons' appears 53 times in the book of the first edition (Barcelona en Comú, 2019), it is only used twice in the book of the second edition: once to refer to the activists of BeC as 'commons', and the second time to present the commons and the 'general interest' as 'goods' being plundered by real estate companies (Barcelona en Comú, 2022, pp. 14, 137). This gradual disappearance of the term 'commons' and the predominance of 'common good' reflects the shift towards a more state-centred politics explained in Chapter 1.

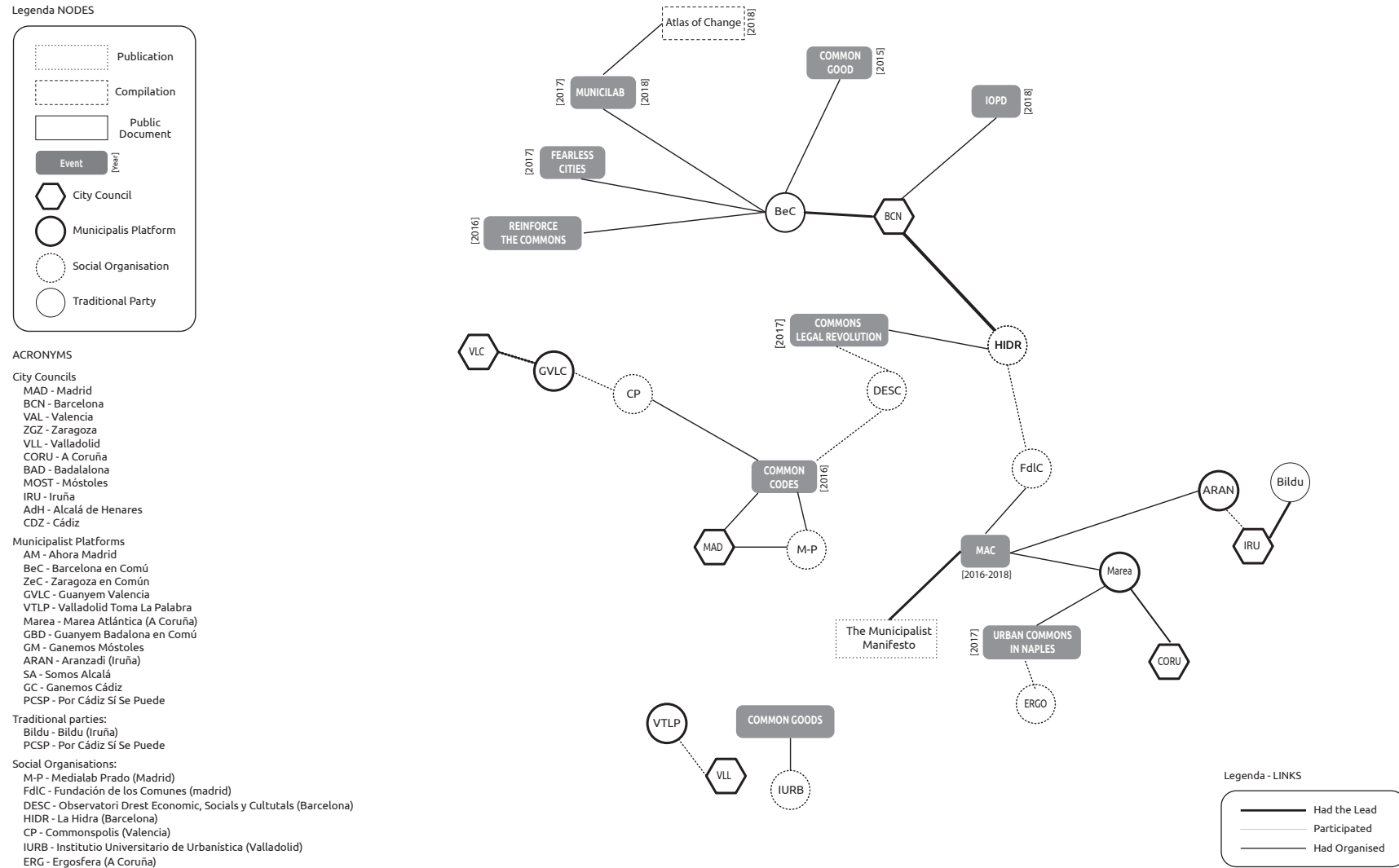
A second interpretation recognises the processual aspect of the urban commons and was used in seminars that extended the commoning hypothesis within urban social movements, including new references such as the experience of the ex-Asilo Filangieri in Naples or the various Co-Cities protocols in Italy. Also, the seminars organised by the *Códigos Comunes* [Common Codes] project in Madrid or the Barcelona-based think tank La Hidra aimed at a wider circle of professionals working in public administration, such as urban planners or technical consultants, as well as social activists involved in projects that might be involved in institutional efforts, and researchers able to provide a framework and understanding of the processes. At the same time, the construction of a political action around the commons was recognised as an internal process where “[m]unicipalism provides us with an opportunity to play with different ways of being a public institution, with forms of governance that make a clear commitment to the public-community management of the urban commons” (Forné, Micciarelli, & Fresnillo, 2019, pp. 105–106).

Figure 7.2: Municipalist 'whats and hows'



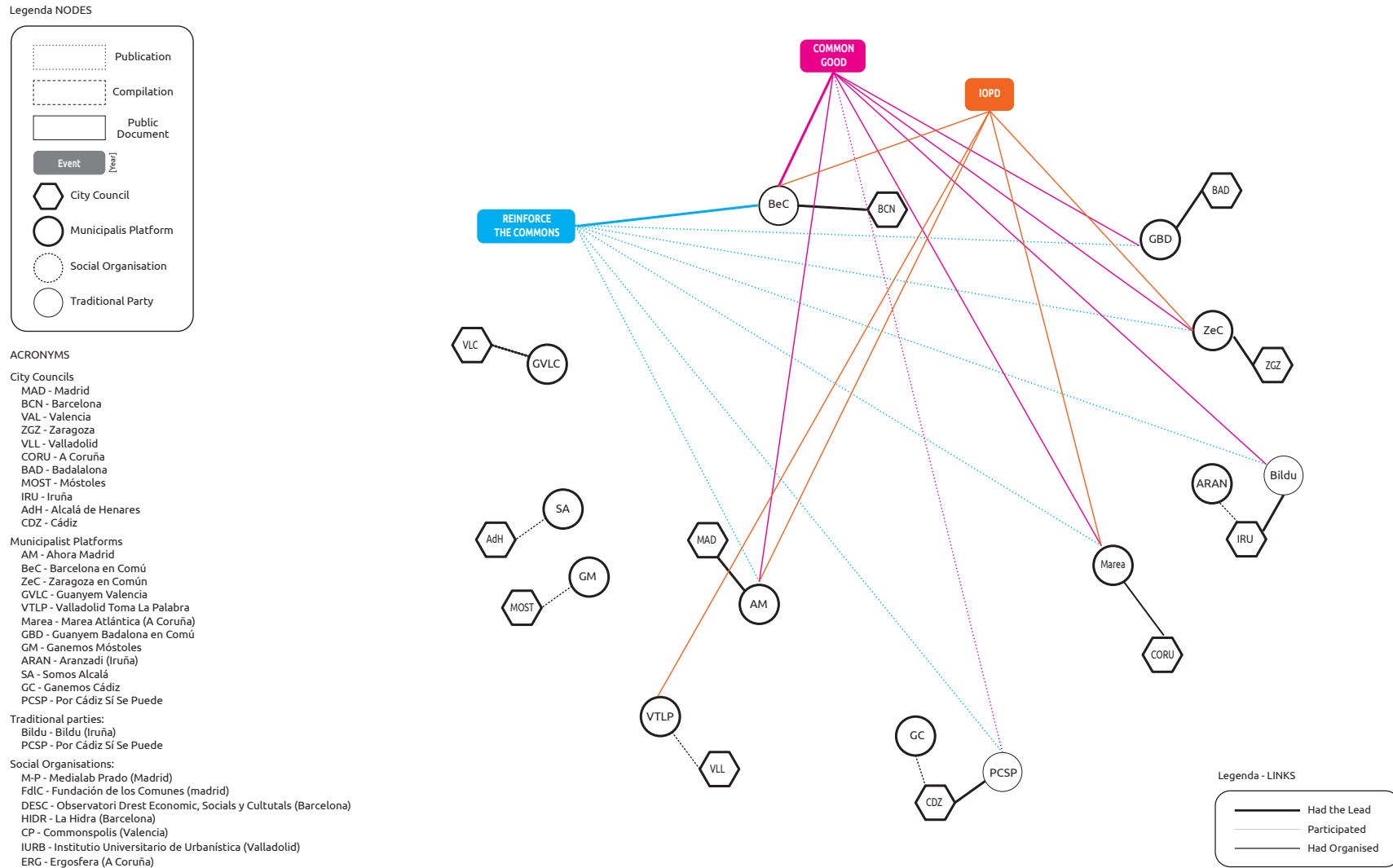
Source: Author

Figure 7.3: Municipalist debates: Gatherings and seminars on commons organised by municipalist platforms, city councils and social organisations



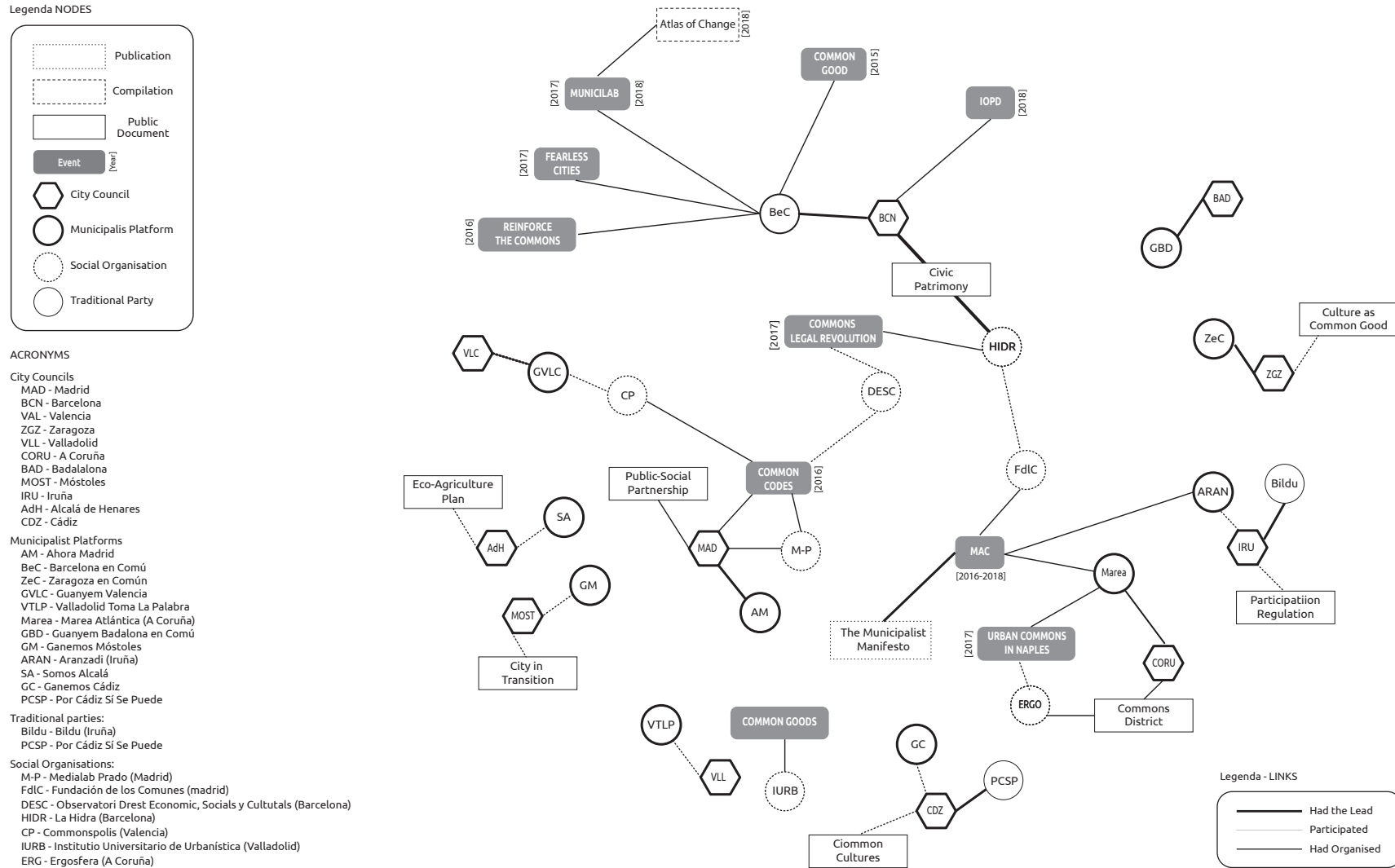
Source: Author

Figure 7.4: Commons debates: Participation in municipalist public events that had the common/s as a central theme



Source: Author.

Figure 7.5: Municipalism in the middle: Articulation of) hats and hows around the commons



Source: Author.

A third and final level of this narrative would be directed at the institution itself as the translation of political discourse into a politico-administrative format that is recognisable by both public workers and institutional structures. Social actors outside the institutional domain considered that the reappropriation of the commons is an institutional task, advocating for a commons' 'legal revolution' based on:

[...] the need to defend, design, implement and assume a set of rights, rules, obligations, and commitments to reappropriate what has been alienated and to guarantee the material conditions of subsistence and social reproduction requires [...] we also need to produce and press for legal frameworks to reverse the situation. (La Hidra, 2017, np, my translation)

In summary, the municipalist workshops and internal debates in the Municilab, Fearless Cities and IOPD gatherings presented debates on many aspects of the commons, reflecting on actors and tools, on what, who and how could be involved. They also sought to learn from experience and problematise limitations and potential. In a context of radical democratic accountability, commoning processes promoted by public administration were observed through tools and methodologies that focused on practical - not theoretical - aspects of institutional governance as they developed a framework for community management of public goods. At the same time, public procedures such as ordinances, strategic plans or programmes can be seen as the frameworks that local governments use to establish the criteria for who, how and when can access and use the tangible and intangible resources under their jurisdiction. As shown in Figure 7.5, normative devices implemented municipalist values - either as part of the content of the more abstract policies, described as justifications in the more operational policies, or included as rationales for the more concrete proposals.

7.2.2 Normative devices

As we have seen in Table 7.1, half of the muni-governments in large cities produced public documents that included references to the commons. In these official documents, it is possible to identify a number of implementation challenges. The first challenge was to create new institutional concepts that would transform the existing state-centred and increasingly mercantilist ontology. The new concepts used include the 'commons district' as a new kind of administrative unit, the 'general common use' as an administrative rule for an interior space in a building rather than the usual public space, or the 'common good' applied to cultural or agricultural seeds. The second challenge was to build alternative 'commons institutions', using public-social collaborations and partnerships to open up existing forms of public management. These efforts incorporated co-production and co-creation methodologies and focused on participation, transparency, social empowerment and diversity as core principles. A third challenge was the creation of concrete tools and regulations related to specific devices, such as the 'Library of Things' in Alcalá de Henares and Móstoles, or to new public-social agreements, such as the 'Civil Patrimony Self-Assessment' in the case of Barcelona. The intensity and ambition of these challenges correspond to what I have interpreted as a macro/meso/micro level, which I have characterised according to the degree to which these public actions have acted as a proposal for a political framework, the definition of specific devices or the expression of an institutional transformation. I have also looked at the objectives of the policies, their definition of 'commons' and the strategic elements they propose.

Figure 7.6 shows the result of this analysis, where of the seven documents, two would correspond to the macro concept of the 'common good'; two include micro instruments within a broader framework not related to the idea of the commons; and a further three propose a meso transformation of existing administrative procedures. As explained in Chapter 1, this macro-micro-meso characterisation is not a question of scale but of applicability. Macro-policies include strategic plans that deal with the commons as an abstract concept or as a symbolic reference and aimed to introduce a new rationale that would allow public-private instruments to develop new forms of relationships. However, they lacked the capacity to identify the relevant concrete communities, public commons resources and modes of governance. At the other end of the spectrum, commons micro-policies were hyper-concrete actions, concerned with a specific activity that would not challenge the existing understanding of the relationship between the public and the collective, but would provide concrete tools for communities to use.

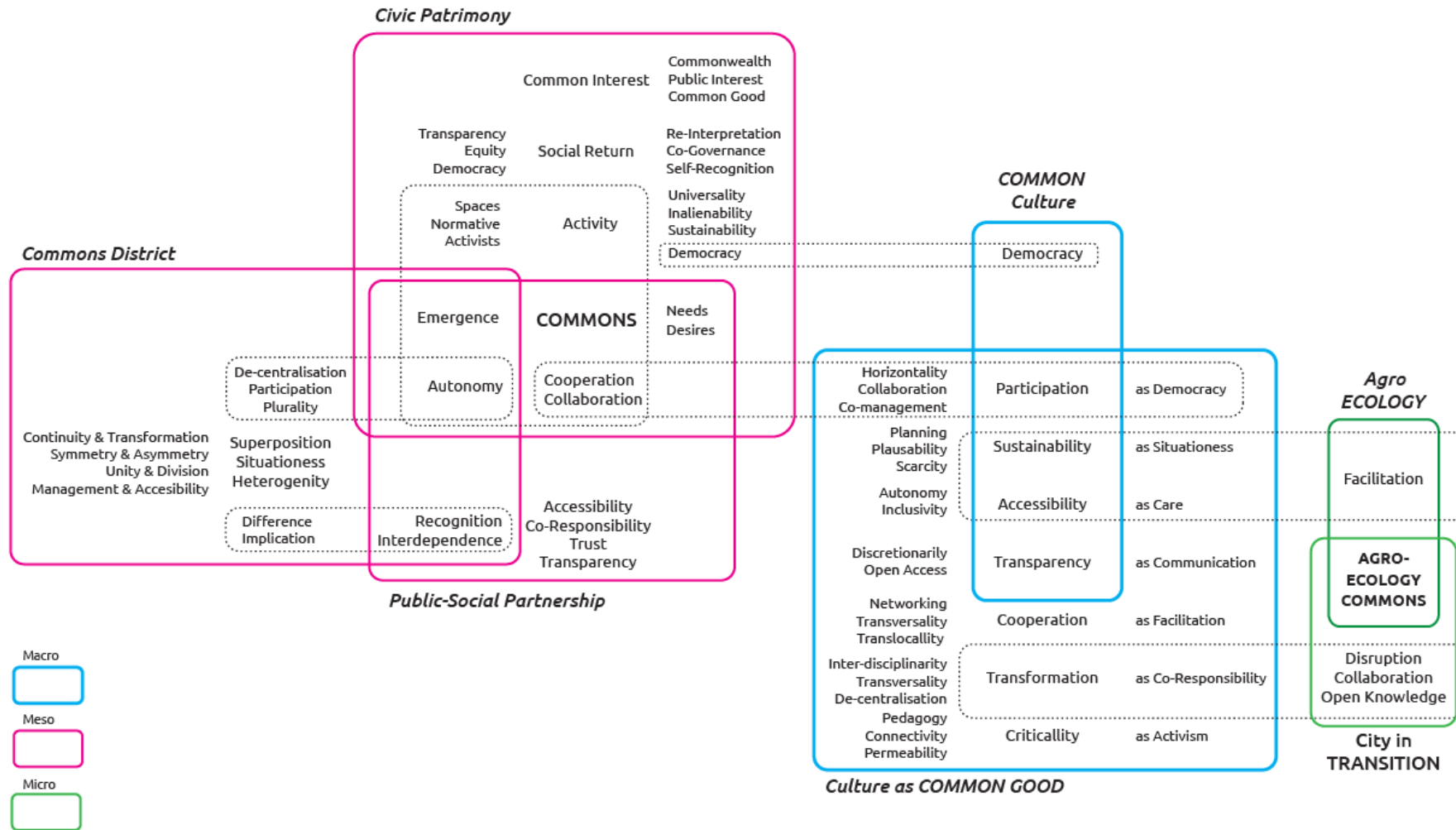
Macro-policies

The macro-level includes the idea of a 'culture of the common good' and incorporates the term 'commons' as a title. Here, it functions as an abstract concept, where culture is understood as what I called in Chapter 5 'universal commons' - similar to knowledge or security - where it is not possible to identify the concrete communities, resources and governance that apply to it. Considering culture as a 'common good' encompasses almost all possible notions of self-governance, democracy and cooperation, but does not offer concrete institutional strategies. While Cádiz's 'Common Cultures Strategic Plan' is based on four of the basic principles of the commons, namely participatory democracy, sustainability and accessibility - missing only inalienability - Zaragoza's policy paper 'Towards a Culture as Common Good' expands these four characteristics to include three more: cooperation, transformation and criticality. This last document also outlines an additional set of strategic principles and tools: empowerment and intersectionality, ethical procurement policies and the re-evaluation of public evaluation criteria, among many other extensions.

Meso-policies

At the meso-level of commoning, policies include an ordinance, a policy programme and the proposal of new administrative areas. Madrid's Public-Social Partnership Ordinance aimed to increase the autonomy of self-managed spaces; it considered the commons as 'emergent' and placed autonomy at the centre of collaboration and co-production processes. A Coruña's Districts Reorganisation Initial Proposal addressed the complexity of defining territorial boundaries while recognising a complex overlap of situations. Barcelona's Civil Patrimony Programme aimed to redefine 'public profitability' as 'social return' and is the only official document that explicitly mentions 'urban commons'. This programme considered the commons as an emergent phenomenon that requires a 'legal neologism': a new legal element that is not included in the separation between private and public law and that requires new rules, as we saw in Chapter 5. These three meso policies were accompanied by other administrative and strategic official documents that detail or complement them. As we will see in the next section, each constellation of procedures offers insights into different elements of the potential public-common domain and illustrate how they dealt differently with issues around autonomy, interdependence, co-responsibility, disruption and the collective.

Figure 7.6: Commoning public actions in the 'Cities of Change'



Source: Author. Based on publicly available official documents [see Annex A]

Micro-policies

The micro level includes documents developed in two medium-sized cities in the Madrid region, where the commons concerned shared community gardens, tools and seeds, trying to recover a lost sense of community and traditional reciprocity, and both propose common property. Mostoles' ambitious Eco-social Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals includes urban commons projects as a strategic reuse of tools and other objects as part of an environmental strategy, while Alcalá de Henares' Local Agroecology Plan linked its commons proposal to the existence of agricultural land and the traditional relational customs associated with it, efforts to preserve local seeds, and the creation of a new knowledge commons. also referring to the digital commons and the renewal of traditional commons in urban areas.

7.2.3 Meso devices

Meso-policies are 'in the middle', and I consider them as procedures that challenge the state-public rationale while offering a concrete implementation of a shift towards the commons, linking the 'macro' scale of frameworks with the 'micro' scale of devices.

Table 7.1 and Figure 7.2 showed the centrality of the municipalist platforms in Madrid, Barcelona and A Coruña, all of which developed commons-based public policies and participated in events aimed at communicating the municipalist commons-based political hypothesis. These policies provide particular insights into the three main elements of the commons - as explained in Chapter 4 - the shared resources, the community that cares for them and the rules of governance that apply to them. I will argue that they help to identify and articulate the emerging commoning elements and the high modernist features of the state that they challenge. These challenges to the public institutional structure may involve a subtle change at the administrative level, such as the inclusion of the phrase 'and other collectives' in the Madrid Regulation to include a new type of social entity in an institutional register, thus de facto creating a change in the institutional recognition of reality. It can also be a mixture of known procedures with new paradigms in the form of a process, as in the case of Civil Patrimony in Barcelona. Finally, it can propose an ontological challenge in order to provoke a debate, even if it ultimately leads to a rejection, as was the case with the proposal for the 'Commons District' in A Coruña. The analysis of these policies and the three interviews with the political figures responsible for them support the characterisation of their disruptive nature.

Public-Social Partnership by Ahora Madrid

In Madrid, I consider the inclusion of self-organised collectives 'who build the city' without legal status as a 'hack' on the existing administrative logic that provided them with institutional legitimacy to access material resources, such as spaces or grants. In her interview, Edurne Irigoyen, Chief of Staff of the Participation Department of Madrid City Council, who was involved in the regulation, explained that:

[the] capacity and power of the people has been particularly evident during the economic crisis, when the people have held Spanish society, and Madrid in particular, creating food pantries or the platform of those affected by the mortgage to defend themselves. So, from an institutional point of view, we need to let these kinds of citizens' initiatives reproduce (Méndez de Andés et al., 2023 np, my translation).

The co-management mechanism was operationalised in the '*Directrices para la gestión de autorizaciones o cesiones de uso de locales o inmuebles municipales adscritos a los distritos, a favor de entidades ciudadanas*' [Guidelines for the management of authorisations or transfers of use of municipal premises or buildings assigned to the districts, in favour of civic organisations], where the most prominent concept is 'community development', but the term 'commons' does not appear. At the same time, the Register of Entities and Collectives was recognised in the *Reglamento Orgánico de Participación* [Participation Regulations] - which dated back to 2005 but was modified in 2018 – where Title III refers to the register as the means “to obtain recognition from the Madrid City Council of the entities and groups registered with it in order to guarantee they can exercise the rights recognised in these Regulations” (Ayuntamiento de Madrid, 2018, p. 13, my translation). Like in a game of Russian dolls, the ordinance refers to the guidelines, which refers to the regulation, which refers to the register, where a small change – the inclusion of the category 'other collectives' - allowed access to the commons and institutional recognition to self-identified collectives and groups. The analysis in the *Ciudades en Movimiento* [Cities in Movement] compilation considers this point of Madrid's Public-Social Partnership Ordinance as a 'legal innovation' that “implies the generation of an expanded understanding of what is public, based more on effective citizen ownership and the recognition of new management modalities than on a new property statute” (Fdez-Casadevantes, Morán, & Prats, 2018, p. 129, my translation).

According to Irigoyen - who was a local activist and squatter before joining the city government - these nested regulations were a necessary step to recognise citizens' contributions to the construction of the city within a normative framework. For her, it was particularly relevant as a tool for public workers who, throughout the municipalist period, had to deal with unprecedented demands such as this recognition of subjects that had previously been invisible to the eyes of the administration. For the public officials in charge, "if there are no rules they can rely on to reduce the level of discretionary decision and personal involvement, the answer [to this kind of request] is 'no'" (Méndez de Andrés et al., 2023, np, my translation). In Irigoyen's view, the urban commons was "still a slippery term" in the institutional and normative context, but it was clear that:

The new forms of governance in municipalism try to give people space to participate in the political debate about what they want for their city and neighbourhoods. But outside the market and the state, outside the channels built by institutions to facilitate and enable public debate and decision-making, citizens are already organising themselves [...] Our institution must allow this type of citizens' initiative to take root and reproduce itself. For me, the great difficulty is how to facilitate and contribute to the strengthening of the autonomy of citizens, of the associative and civic fabric, and how to allow them to self-organise and produce their own responses to the new challenges we face. How do we protect all these issues without bureaucratising, stifling and restricting them? In other words, we do this by allowing these initiatives and civil society to develop in this non-state public space as they want. (ibid.)

A Coruña Commons District by Marea Atlántica

In A Coruña, the proposal to create a 'Commons District' that would affect the whole city, without being tied to a specific population group, was the result of a co-production that defied the high-modernist approach to territorial organisation in two ways. Firstly, it involved all those potentially

affected in the decision-making process on specific sites: the coast, open and public spaces and the historical heritage. In this reorganisation of A Coruña's neighbourhoods and districts, the people and organisations directly affected were able to provide information that was relevant to the definition of the new municipal boundaries. Such a participatory process effectively amounted to the co-creation of administrative boundaries. Secondly, even though the proposal was not implemented, the Participation Department saw it as a tool to promote the decentralisation of the local government. The resulting districts and neighbourhoods aimed to recognise the memory and diversity of the city. I consider that the designation as a "Common District" of areas such as the beach, the port or protected green areas, which are the responsibility of the whole city because they affect it as a whole, represented an innovation that challenged the prevailing institutional logic of segregation and compartmentalisation used in administrative rules and institutional governance.

Although there was no follow-up to the reorganisation proposal, according to Claudia Delso, A Coruña City Councillor for Participation, its overarching principles and lessons were applied to a new community centre, *Naves del Metrosidero* [Metrosidero Warehouses], developed in an abandoned military barracks with the intention of allowing the actual use and perception of different spaces to define what they are and how they work. On this occasion, the administrative document did not mention the 'commons', but the legal department justified the application of a 'general *common use*' (Asesoría Jurídica, 2019, p. 3, my translation, italics are mine) - that is, an access that is public, free and without charge - by appealing to the Article 9.2 of the Spanish Constitution and the mandate to promote political, economic, cultural and social participation. This co-decision process shows an institutional shift that relies on co-responsibility and the recognition of social legitimacy, side by side with institutional legality. This legal framework takes into consideration the emergent nature of collective processes, which can not be imposed but only recognised, and proposes mechanisms to promote this emergence as a provisional dynamization of social processes 'in the meanwhile'. Applied to the Metrosidero Warehouses, the general common use "[...] means it will be used commonly for the destination assigned to it: to stay there or walk through, to use and enjoy without the need for administrative permits or property rights. It is public and free of charge" and the only rules will be those "that we want to impose out of civility, and in which the only condition of use will be to respect the enjoyment of others and leave the space in the same conditions we found when we arrived" (Asesoría Jurídica, 2019, p. 5, my translation). In the words of the elected official in charge, cultural activist and researcher Claudia Delso:

There [in the Metrosidero Warehouses] we argued that, just as [Plaza de] María Pita is a public square where many activities coexist and people self-regulate their use of the space, so can a facility for young people. Even if there are walls and ceilings, we can consider that different ways of using and managing the space may coexist, according to the possibilities of 'general common use' [administrative regulation]. It is a great achievement for a public administration to be able, for the first time, to propose that a public facility must be accessible to all who wish to use it, according to minimum civic rules collectively decided. It includes the principle of co-responsibility between citizens and public administration. (Méndez de Andés et al., 2023, np, my translation)

Civil Patrimony by Barcelona en Comú

In the Civil Patrimony Programme, projects and proposals linked to the community are a prominent concern, while its conceptual framework defines the urban commons as a 'social relation' that generates institutions of collective action (Torra Duran & Prado Pérez, 2016, p. 2). From an administrative point of view, the regulatory form of such a self-management regime depends on an existing structure: the 'civic management', as defined in the City Charter, Barcelona within the Autonomous Region of Catalunya, approved in December 1998. The difference between Civil Patrimony as a supporting structure for the proliferation of urban commons and the previous format of community self-governing projects as a form of concession from the City Council to social organisations is made clear in the *Balance Comunitario* [Community Self-Assessment], the most important of the documents and agreements defined by the Civil Patrimony programme, according to Laia Forné, advisor to the Participation Department at the time [INT-LaiaF].

The co-design of the indicators of this 'balance' or self-assessment evaluates the projects and reverses the institutional hierarchy of who has the capacity to define the 'social benefit' of the public assets defined as 'civil patrimony'. The Civil Patrimony self-evaluation was co-produced by three types of actors: Barcelona City Council as a public institution, the XES - *Xarxa de Economia Social* [Solidarity Economy Network] as a social institution, and different community projects as actors affected by the process. The document places 'general interest' and social autonomy on the same level as public and social interpretations of responsibility. This is achieved by redefining concepts such as profitability, participatory co-governance and the self-recognition - as in Madrid - of collectives and public-social institutional organisms. Although the legal justification of the policy programme relies heavily on the concepts of profitability and efficiency, these are interpreted as factors of social return based on the benefits of using municipal assets. A relevant aspect of these 'social returns' is the role of self-assessment as an evaluation 'tool', not only in terms of accountability to the institution and to the wider community organised around the XEC - *Xarxa de Espais Comunitaris* [Community Spaces Network], but also as a method to continuously improve community management processes.

Creating a public and social evaluation of what is important and why is one of the challenges identified by former Barcelona Councillor for Participation, copyleft activist and former squatter Gala Pin. She discusses who can define collective goals in relation to the 'general interest':

[...] what I think is most interesting when we talk about urban commons or common goods (although it is not the same thing) is that those of us who came from certain kinds of struggles understood that these struggles were defending the general interest and that political action often went against it. Once you enter the institution, you realise that its logic leaves it to the majority of the plenary to define the general interest. For example, [in] a discussion with one of the senior officials of the city council [about an old decision to build a hotel], he said that at that time it was in the general interest because that was what the plenary of the city council had decided. And that made me think that maybe what we are defending is the commons, or the urban commons, which in a way operates exactly as we know it would: by saying that there is not only the private and the public, but also the commons. And that, unfortunately, the commons has no place in the conceptual sphere of institutional democracy, which is represented by the sovereign plenary. Somehow I see that there is a tension between the

general interest defined by the plenary of the city council and the need to define common goods and urban commons [...]. (Méndez de Andés et al., 2023, np, my translation)

7.3 Municipalist meso-governance

By looking at the debates, reflections and policies produced in the Spanish 'cities of change', this chapter has provided an insight into the municipalist political basis in relation to collective, radically democratic decision-making and redistribution. As I have shown, the narrative emerging from the municipalist electoral programmes, public and semi-public debates and presentations developed between 2014 and 2018 established a municipalist 'point of view' in a space between the social fabric and the structure of the public institutions, a movement with 'one foot in the institution and a thousand feet on the streets', as BeC used to say. As reflected in the internal debates of the Muncilab meetings, the municipalist set of values was aligned with the principles of the urban commons: democratic decision-making, sustainable use of limited resources, universal access and protection against enclosure and privatisation. The articulation of the commons within municipalism helped to shift the focus of this political project from a redistribution of resources to the radical democratisation of power. In analysing the municipalist politics and policies that helped to implement this project, I have identified a programmatic mesoscale created by the municipalist aim of connecting the what and the how, the narrative and the normative. I will argue that such a connection operates at two levels: as what Stengers (2005) calls a 'technology of belonging' and as a programmatic implementation of such belonging. Both levels are part of what I will call a municipalist '*meso-governance*' that operates a non-state logic and shares the principles of autonomy, overlapping, interdependence and multiplicity.

7.3.1 Municipalist meso-logic

I will argue that municipalism in Spain extended the political rationale of the commons with a meso-logic that articulated narrative and normative devices. If the narrative produced "a representation of a particular situation or process in such a way as to reflect or conform to an overarching set of aims or values" (Oxford Dictionaries, 2010), the normative produced procedures such as ordinances, strategic plans or programmes that local governments use to establish the criteria for who, how and when can access and use the tangible and intangible resources under their jurisdiction. I have characterised that this articulation between what the activist and Barcelona City Council advisor Arnau Monterde (2019) has called the municipalist mix of 'what' and 'how' is enacted through a *meso-governance*.

In this section, I will argue that the macro/micro articulation in municipalist discourse reflects the semantic ambiguity of the term 'commons' and addresses the need to distinguish between the commons as a moral economy, related to the 'common good' and 'commonwealth', commoning as a process, and a 'commons' as a particular experience. In the analysis of municipalist debates and policies, I have already identified different aspects of the commons in municipalist debates and policies, reflecting the tension between abstract values such as the 'common good' and concrete cases of commoning specific shared resources, as presented in Chapter 5. At the first more abstract level, debates on the commons activate political desires and an ethical compass to decide what is in

the general interest. As we have seen in the Municilab meetings, anything from 'security' to 'the right to migrate' can be considered a 'commons', even when it is difficult to identify the resources and communities involved. In contrast, the more concrete experiences of urban commons presented as examples, such as l'Asilo Filangeri, were of a manageable size and related to a specific territory. In these cases, the three components of the commons - community, resources and governance - are easily identifiable, which is not the case for large infrastructure services such as water and energy. In analysing the policies, I located the most explicit commoning public actions between the macro level of discourse - set out in policies, strategic plans and elsewhere - and the micro level of norm - in this case regulations and administrative demarcations. I argued that the policy documents belong to a meso-level that define and operationalise projects and programmes, situated between the more strategic macro-level which presents the need for such a policy and its objectives, and the more operational micro-level, which implements the policy through rules and procedures.

Following Coffey (2014), I have considered the documents studied as 'social facts', produced, used and shared with a specific purpose in mind: to generate and communicate a collective sense of the emerging democratic municipalism, what kind of 'change' it aims to achieve, and how local governments are implementing it. I have assumed that official documents connect the two spheres of Foucault's governmentality presented in Chapter 3, namely the narrative ideational aspect and the normative practical one, through a constellation of elements such as transparency, accessibility, participation, collaboration, intersectionality, sustainability and democracy. From this constellation, I will argue that the commoning logic of the municipalist *meso-governance* can be organised around four elements: the autonomy of self-management, the interdependence of responsibilities, the multiplicity of collectives and the overlapping of actors. In my analysis, these are the main transformations that municipalism has struggled to apply from the most ontological level of how the public institution 'sees' reality to the most mundane administrative desk procedures.

Autonomy of self-management

Autonomy is the enabling characteristic of local and social (self-)management and the central aspect of public-social cooperation. The autonomy of local government from the nation-state enables administrative actions that challenge the leviathan, compartmentalised and hierarchical modern institutional structures. The autonomy of social actors as 'actants' capable of affecting their livelihoods is based on the institutional recognition of social needs and desires in order to allow 'common use' through access to decision-making. In the Civil Patrimony, autonomy can be seen as a condition for reinterpreting the general interest: the ability of communities to define what is convenient, profitable and efficient, and to evaluate themselves in terms of a 'social return' that is accepted by the institutional apparatus, is a key social contribution to processes that rely on administrative discretion. In this programme, social needs and desires are the basis for the 'emergence' of the commons and its condition as an emerging 'legal neologism'. In this case, political will dictates that the public understanding of the commons as a legal figure should be shaped by activists in their active use of public spaces and their creative application of administrative norms. Applied to the institutional vision of its administered territory, as shown in the case of A Coruña, the commons replaces the top-down vision of 'seeing like a [local] state' with a bottom-up description of the territory, now co-produced by its inhabitants through participatory processes. Secondly, it dismantles the 'high modernist' segmentation (Scott, 1998) and 'capitalist

compartmentalisation' (Tsing, 2015) with a bottom-up collective production of the territory. From this standpoint, the Commons District proposal and 'general common use' used in Metrosidero Warehouses have helped to "recover sovereignty and decision-making capacity over spaces that belong to the city but have been taken away", and have considered citizenry as a large-scale community that "challenges us to think about the management model that could work if we understand the Commons District [and the Metrosidero Warehouses] as huge urban commons", as Claudia Delso explained (Méndez de Andés et al., 2023, np, my translation). In these examples, the role of public administration would be to "identify, recognise and understand" urban commons as "modes of doing" that are diverse and contingent in each territory, but share specific characteristics and criteria (ibid.).

Interdependence of responsibilities

I propose that interdependence links the macro level of the 'common good' with a meso-level programme towards emerging governance structures that transcend the idea of collaboration and move towards recognition, transparency, trust and access on the part of urban commons structures, and towards interdisciplinarity, intersectionality and decentralisation in transformative cultural practices. Here, the legal framework of Civil Patrimony would aim at sharing rather than dividing responsibilities. Within this interdependence, co-responsibility is considered in the 'Mostoles 2030. A City in Transition' plan as the central driving idea that should underpin any urban planning strategy, but also as a necessary "disruption" (Santiago Muiño, 2018, p. 13). The changes mentioned in the transition document address the new working conditions brought about by digitalisation, an ageing population, new migration flows or the care crisis. These changes are presented as an opportunity - one might add: a necessity - to rethink the whole urban model in all its different aspects: infrastructural - energy, water, mobility - but also the economic, institutional, cultural model and even collective identities. This need to transform the guiding principles of urban planning points to a strategic desire to influence the structural elements that allow the implementation of specific devices such as the micro-agro-ecological commons described, even if such a transformation is never framed as a commons. The other side of this disruption considers the role of institutions as facilitators, articulating accessibility with care and situated sustainability. The re-naturalisation of agricultural work in Alcalá de Henares is seen as an opportunity to incorporate an aspect of celebration in the production of collective identity and community bonds (Ayuntamiento de Alcalá de Henares, 2019, p. 7).

Multiplicity of collectives

Multiplicity relates to trust, involvement, and difference. Here, the commons contribute to the definition of a municipalist 'collective' in the articulation of:

- A community of social actors with a shared identity: "we, municipalists", part of platforms based on the idea of 'confluence', but distinct from other new and traditional political organisations such as parties or civil society organisations.
- A constellation of concepts and policies - in this chapter located at the international, national and local levels.

- A repository of grounded experiences of co-production that deploy a new operational logic within existing institutional governance and social mobilisation frameworks.

Collective access mechanisms do not only involve co-participation, but an ontological shift - a change in the categories that institutions use to operate in the world - through the self-identification of communities. An administrative action is introduced that neutralises the administrative habitus of individualisation and singularisation in order to avoid putting a single individual in charge - however nominal this idea is in the daily experience of many self-organised collectives. This opens up the possibility of self-recognition and shows the relevance of the community and the actors in this policy. Municipalist actors involved in the regulation and promotion of public-social partnerships and spaces, believe that the development of this new 'non-state public' requires public support for collective projects and initiatives, with resources such as money, spaces, opportunities for action and removal of obstacles and so on, while they also identify the need to create the legal framework for new non-regulated spaces where public institutions could 'do nothing' and allow the collectives to construct their self-managed project (Méndez de Andés et al., 2023).

Overlapping of actors

Overlapping develops the idea of multiplicity further by looking at the intersection of scales - city, district, neighbourhood, body - and the different ways in which different people understand the urban area. It recognises the existing heterogeneity and the tension between individualisation and connectedness of geographical and administrative limits, principles of territorial equity and specificity of populations and urban facilities, and also of needs and desires. A Coruña's administrative demarcation and its unimplemented proposal for a 'common district' challenged the binary vision of the nation-state, combining seemingly irreconcilable elements such as continuity and change, social unity and urban division, metropolitan management and sublocal accessibility. I will argue that this is an example of the 'disjunctive synthesis' (Deleuze & Guattari, 1970), aimed to achieve a convergence of unity and division operating across different scales and territorial characteristics. The Barcelona 'Community Assessment' also functioned as a tool for the overlapping, in this case, of spheres of evaluation. The co-production process of the assessment shifted the hierarchies of knowledge and evaluation, displacing the ability to assign value to the community of actors involved in the management of the civil heritage. The principles involved in this evaluation - namely: internal democracy and participation, transparency, autonomy and territorial implication - are located outside the institutional criteria applied in the externalisation of services to private actors (Soler & Calsamiglia, 2021, p. 12,14, 60). The self-produced character of the evaluation calls for a new 'social general interest' in the use of publicly owned buildings and spaces, and questions who defines it.

Conclusion

This chapter has looked at the first municipalist term 2015-2019, collecting documents produced by Spanish municipalist platforms to characterise the municipalist narrative and normative and the space in between. Based on the analysis of this public documentation, I have proposed the role of the commons as a municipalist technology of belonging that mobilises the cause of radical democracy. I have also linked the ideational narrative and the practical normative - as the two

elements of Foucault's governmentality - through the value system that forms the basis of a municipalist *meso-governance*.

First, I have analysed the relationship between participation in public presentations and internal debates, the composition of local governments and the production of public policies, and the resonances between social and institutional actors. I then related this resonance to the EoP concept of 'technology of belonging', which functions both as challenging the boundary conditions of the commons and as fostering a new emergent politics of commoning. Second, we have seen how, in this dual role of challenging and fostering, the commons political hypothesis has enacted a shift in the concepts and procedures used by public institutional structures. I have characterised these procedures as belonging to the macro, micro and meso levels, and analysed how the meso-level of public policies linked the commons narrative and the normative, social movements and government, techniques and aspirations. In these policies, I have identified an assemblage of heterogeneous but interdependent elements: a political rationale discussed in municipalist debates and reflected in the electoral programme, directives that translate political objectives into an institutional framework, a relationship with social projects promoted or supported by the local government with material and immaterial resources. Thirdly, this chapter has contributed to my proposal of a becoming-common of the public by identifying the value system that underpins a municipalist *meso-governance* logic based on autonomy, overlapping, interdependence and multiplicity.

As part of the iterative process of this research, the analysis of the municipalist narrative and normative provided information on how to proceed in the second phase of the research. First, the analysis of the municipalist documentation helped to identify the case of Barcelona as the municipality where the articulation between municipalism and commons was most explicit and best developed: not only did BeC organise most of the municipalist meetings and debates at the national level, it also produced the only official document that explicitly mentioned the term 'urban commons'. Second, the analysis identified the focus of interest at the meso level of what I will call 'programmatic commoning'. The next chapter will look at commoning processes in Barcelona that are driven by the collaboration - sometimes contested - of social and institutional actors, and will analyse the relationships at the time of the research.

Chapter 8 - Commoning Processes in Barcelona

[...] since I pull all the emphasis on adaptation; since I refute 'reality', and since for me what is possible is already partly real, I am indeed a utopian [...] a partisan of possibilities.

Henry Lefebvre, *Everyday Life in the Modern World*, 1971

Introduction

This chapter looks at processes of urban commoning developed by Barcelona en Comú (BeC) muni-government. While the previous chapter looked at past municipalist debates and policies in Spain's 'cities of change' in order to define how and through what means the political hypothesis of commoning was mobilised, this chapter analyses commoning processes active during the fieldwork in Barcelona. In this chapter, I will identify the actors involved in these processes and their role in the city, I will map them and the relationships established, and will analyse three commoning programmes to characterise the role of what I will call '*transmediators*'.

First, I will present the actors identified through the interviews as 'actants' with the capacity to intervene in different matters in the city, not so much to establish a definition of these urban processes as to identify an ecology of potential becoming. These commoning actants will be characterised as social organisations, political activists, and public and social initiatives and procedures. Secondly, I will present the relational mapping produced by an 'ad hoc' methodology I have developed, which locates the actors within institutional 'habitats', connected by different kinds of relationships that generate operational 'fields'. The resulting mapping will show the overlap between fields and identify three 'programmatic constellations' that bring actors together across fields and habitats, and around actors that I consider key to the development of commoning processes. Finally, I will use the three constellations to characterise a commoning transmediation and the role of the actors involved. I will mobilise the analysis of *transmediators* in the three commoning programmes involved in each constellation to identify how they reframe municipalist challenges and negotiations.

The choice of Barcelona for the second phase of this research was based on three characteristics. First, it is the only city that has developed a policy that explicitly mentioned the 'urban commons', and the only government that was re-elected for a second term in 2019. Second, while Barcelona had named the 'commons' and 'urban commons' as part of its political hypothesis, it also used a very similar word, '*comuns*' in Catalan, to refer to BeC party members, which made it awkward for the government to use the term in its public policies, programmes and projects. This terminological clash called for an interpretation of what constitutes public processes of urban commoning, regardless of their institutional designation. Thirdly and finally, Barcelona is a consolidated city, where urban land has been fully developed for several decades. This allows for a second reinterpretation of what urban development might mean in this context and what strategies effectively create new urban forms, which is part of the third phase of the research.

8.1 Commoning actants

Given the complexity of the Barcelona context, I started the identification of commoning processes by asking different actors in the city about ongoing projects and processes where they could identify some kind of political community, collective resource or form of self-management in which there had been collaboration between the city council and social actors. I then looked for elements that had an 'actant' commoning quality, and for processes and areas that I could explore in more depth in a second round of interviews. My questions were designed to frame the interviewees' own experiences and interests, and sometimes led to new lines of enquiry. Throughout these interviews there was a common thread of interest in processes of commoning the city, and the social and institutional transformation they achieved or failed to achieve. I sought to understand who was involved, in what role, and what political, economic and social factors were at play. Some of the initiatives have been extensively researched and reported elsewhere, such as the Can Batlló social centre, the emergence of the *Revolta Escolar* [School Revolt] and its link to the city's mobility strategy, or the many struggles for the right to housing. Others were projects I had not heard of before, such as the urban process in Vallcarca or the BiciHub. Finally, the interviewees also drew my attention to experiences that I was aware of, but had not previously considered relevant in the context of commons and urbanism, such the former *Cárcel Modelo* prison or the Fira grounds.

Commoning actors

The interviewees were selected for their personal experience in social movements that have been at the basis of municipalist, urban commons or planning processes, such as feminism, social centres, housing, migrants or the social and solidarity economy. Some of them also played an active role in urban commons processes promoted by the Barcelona City Council, either as elected councillors, policy advisors, consultants, project partners or social counterparts. Actors gathered from the interviewees' contributions, include participatory processes and social initiatives that have been particularly successful in articulating collective projects, such as *Teatre Arnau*. Following the most usual understanding of urban commons, social centres and community gardens are also mentioned; from well-known metropolitan spaces such as Can Batlló to very local centres of activity such as *Pou de la Figera* or *Harinera del Clot*. Other processes, such as struggles for housing rights, dealt with the politicisation of citizens or with municipalist prefigurations, as in the case of democratic innovation, remunicipalisation, or the appreciation of publicly and collectively owned resources.

As a first step, I defined the commoning elements as social and public organisations, civic and institutional initiatives, public procedures and cross-cutting political activators. Table 8.1 shows this characterisation, where organisations are social collectives and institutional agencies, including cooperatives, NGOs, professional offices, non-formalised collectives and other social actors formed by activists and professionals. Some actors are clustered in social activators, while others stand alone. Activators define areas of public interest where social organisations and initiatives can set their own goals and strategies, develop the tools to implement them and influence public policies; initiatives can be set up either by social organisations or by the city council and usually relate to a specific space or territory. In contrast to programmes, institutional initiatives have precise and clearly defined objectives; and procedures include projects, programmes and regulations that are implemented solely by public institutions or depend on the cooperation of social actors.

Table 8.1: Commoning actors in Barcelona

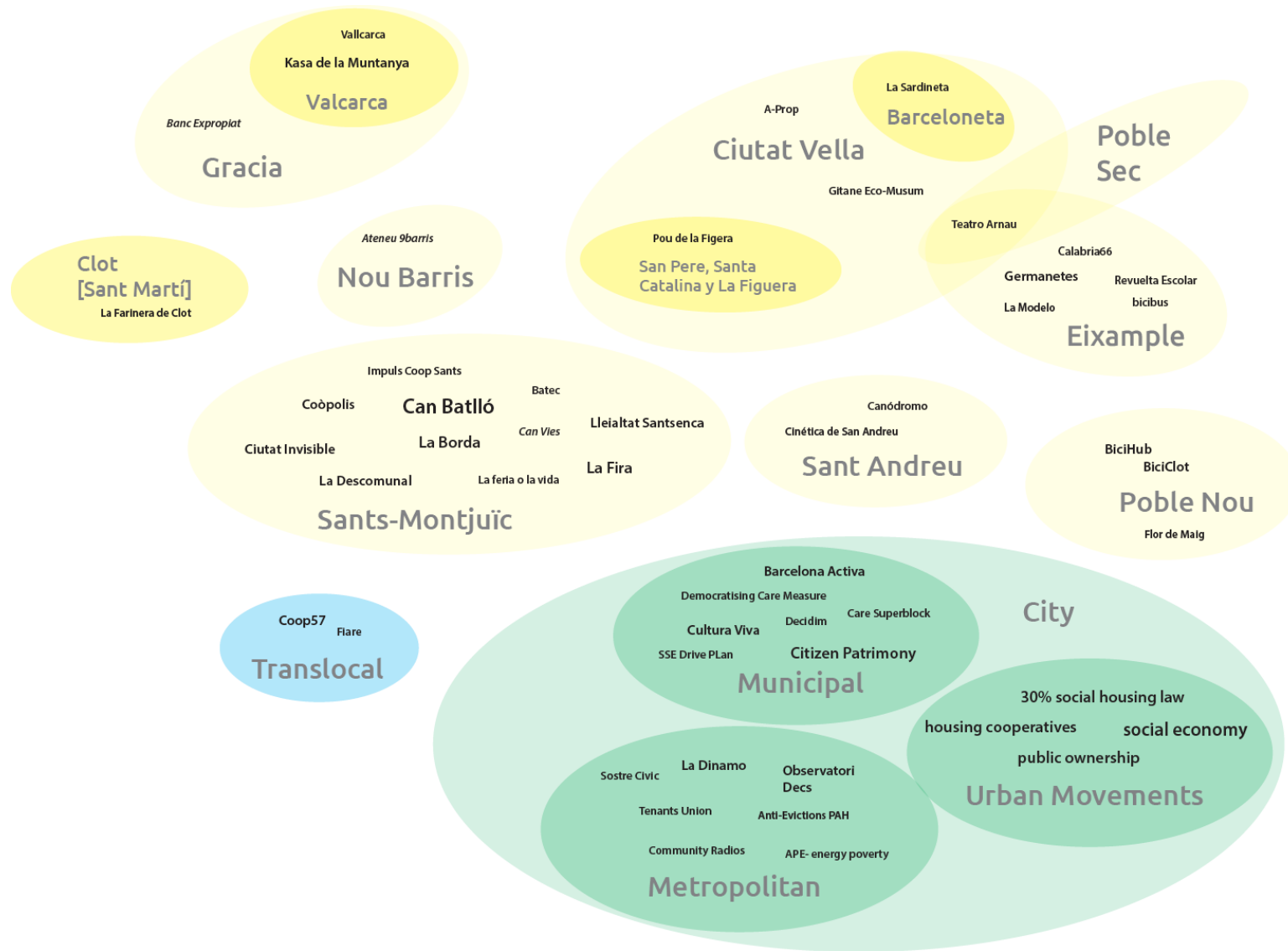
Organisations	Activators	Initiatives	Procedures
Calabria66	Community Spaces	Can Batlló	Social and Solidarity Economy Drive Plan
La Farinera del Clot	Occupied Spaces	Coòpolis	Democratising Care Measure
Flor de Maig	Social Economy	Batec	30% Law
Pou de la Figuera	Ethical Finances	Bici-Hub Cooperatiu	Super-Block
La Lleialtat Santsenca	Housing Rights	Revuelta Escolar	School Plans
Gemanetes	Transfer of Use	Care Super-Block	Bikebus
La Sardineta	Public Ownership	Decidim	Civil Patrimony
Kasa de la Muntanya		Canódrom	Municipal Chart
Can Vies		La Modelo	Democratic Innovation
Banc Expropiat		Teatro Arnau	La Fira
La Cinética		EcoMuseu Urbà Gitano	Cultura Viva
PAH		Community Radios Network	Public Premises
APE		La Fira o la vida	Remunicipalisation
Sindicat de Llogaters		Vallcarca	Cooperative Housing
La Dinamo			
Sostre Civic			
La Borda			
Coop 57Fiare			
Impuls Cooperatiu de Sants			
Observatori Desc			
Barcelona Activa			

Source: Author. Based on fieldwork interviews.

Territorial scale and frequency

Figure 8.1 illustrates the territorial dimension of this compilation. All the experiences have - in one way or another - a citywide resonance, but most of them are perceived as specific to certain districts or neighbourhoods, as in the case of social centres, which are mainly linked to districts [e.g. Can Batlló in Sants] and sometimes neighbourhoods [e.g. Kasa de la Muntanya in Vallcarca]. At the same time, citywide actors include institutional agencies [e.g. Barcelona Activa], programmes [e.g. housing cooperatives] and social organisations [e.g. Observatori Desc]. The scope of this research includes both iconic projects and lesser known initiatives, so the graph uses different font sizes to reflect how often each element was mentioned in the interviews. This differentiation only reflects how they were perceived by the interviewees. Well-known cases that were mentioned several times include social organisations such as the Observatori Desc or the La Borda housing cooperative, which were not included in the second part of the analysis, while there are less frequently mentioned experiences that I later considered relevant, such as the transformation of the former La Modelo prison or the Teatre Arnau.

Figure 8.1: Commoning actors in Barcelona: Territorial scale and frequency in mentions



Source: Author.

8.1.1 Organisations and activators

Organisations make up a third of the elements represented on the map. They are mainly collectives linked to activators, with three exceptions: two outstanding social organisations in the social field, Observatori Desc and Impuls Cooperatiu de Sants, and the only institutional organisation with a relevant presence in the interviews, the public economic development agency Barcelona Activa.

Squatted and Community Spaces

Squatted and community spaces refer to places - most often buildings and urban lots, but sometimes digital, non-physical spaces - where political communities carry out their activities. As discussed in Chapter 4, social centres and community gardens are the most recognisable form of urban commons. The deep historical roots of such spaces explain why the largest cluster of social organisations are community spaces, operating mainly at neighbourhood and district level. In Barcelona, spaces run by social actors have a tradition of institutional support, with recognition and support from the City Council through a 'civic use' scheme. While Barcelona City Charter included the possibility of 'civic management', which has been widely applied since 1998, the most politicised spaces have recently called for this concept to be extended to 'community management'. At the same time, squatted spaces have remained independent of any public or institutional support and are perceived as autonomous. However, there is no clear distinction between these two types of socio-civic centres. Many of the community spaces began as squats and were later recognised and supported by the municipality. In cases where the public administration has bought the properties and given them back to the collectives as temporary concessions, the spaces have usually maintained their allegiance to the squatting movement.

Community spaces are located in different districts of the city. They include Calabria66 in Eixample, La Farinera del Clot in Sant Martí, Flor de Maig and Pou de la Figuera in Ciutat Vella, or La Lleialtat Santsenca in Sants. This type of public-social arrangement also works for community gardens, such as Gemanetes in Eixample, which began as an occupied space and now houses municipal services and housing alongside the garden, or the more recent La Sardineta, promoted by a local association in the Barceloneta district of Ciutat Vella. The squatted spaces are a smaller but relevant group of actors with historical self-managed squatted social centres, such as Kasa de la Muntanya in the Vallcarca neighbourhood in Gracia, Can Vies and Banc Expropiat in Sants, or La Cinética in Sant Andreu.

Social Economy

The social and solidarity economy - also known as the democratic, community or proximity economy - is one of the most frequently mentioned social policy activists and the area that has been most successful in influencing public policies, programmes and projects. At both regional and local levels, public institutions have taken the lead in activating specific projects and processes. One example is the '*Ateneus Cooperatius*' [Cooperative Athenaeums], developed by the semi-autonomous regional government, the Catalan Generalitat, as a mechanism to promote cooperative and democratic forms of economic production. These Athenaeums are located throughout Catalonia, but Coòpolis in Barcelona is seen as a critical co-promoter of the programme.

Ethical Finance

Financial entities linked to the social and solidarity economy include cooperatives operating at translocal, national and international levels. Coop 57 was founded in 1995 by former employees of a publishing house that pooled their redundancy payments to create a financial service provider for social and solidarity economy projects. Fiare is an ethical cooperative bank promoted by social and solidarity economy actors that had to join the Italian ethical bank Banca Popolare due to the political consolidation of the banking sector in the Spanish banking system.

Transfer of Use

Ethical finance organisations have been instrumental in supporting a new type of cooperative housing scheme that uses a 'transfer of use' protocol based on long-term leases of public land, where the cooperative retains ownership of the building. This protocol is based on the logic of use-value rather than exchange-value, and promotes citizen empowerment by leasing public property under a scheme that returns the building to public ownership at the end of the lease.

Housing Rights

Housing cooperatives operate at the intersection of social, economic and environmental movements, as part of the broader area of housing rights defended by tenants' movements. Anti-eviction movements are among the most emblematic and relevant political actors in the city since the squatters' movements. The inspirational and influential weight of housing rights organisations on the municipalist movement can't be overstated. The most relevant - and internationally known - is the PAH. In addition to reclaiming the right to "adequate housing" - a right enshrined in Art. 147 of the Spanish Constitution - housing movements are the more domestic aspect of a collective provision of urban services, including public spaces and infrastructures such as energy and water, but also aspects such as health, food, education, etc. As such, the PAH works closely with APE, the association against energy poverty, and the new '*sindicats de llogaterxs*' [tenants' union].

Within the emerging field of housing cooperatives, we find advocacy projects in Barcelona and beyond, such as La Dinamo, a private foundation that has been promoting and supporting cooperative housing in transfer of use projects since 2016. Sostre Civic has been doing similar work since 2004 as an association promoting this cooperative housing based on transfer of use rather than property rights, and in 2014 they created a second-tier housing cooperative. Housing cooperatives include those that use transfer of use protocols to build affordable housing on public land. The best-known project in Barcelona, including internationally, is La Borda, designed by the Lacol studio and located next to the former Can Batlló factory.

Public Ownership

Public ownership of services - whether or not linked to remunicipalisation strategies - is linked to the promotion of publicly owned housing and housing cooperatives in the transfer of use protocol. It is also a strategy that can have an impact on democratic management and political decision-making, especially when promoted by social actors, such as the *Observatori de l'Aigua de Terrassa* [Terrassa Water Observatory]. However, Barcelona has not yet been able to develop a similar process. The process of water municipalisation in Barcelona has been promoted by *Aigua es Vida*

[Water is Life], a trans-local organisation that seeks to incorporate social participation and control in public water management.

Outstanding organisations

The Impuls Cooperatiu de Sants association provides legal and strategic support to the cooperative and social economy, and the Observatori Desc is a platform for the defence of cultural, social and economic rights. The Observatori has worked closely with the housing movements since the beginnings of the PAH. Members of this organisation include Ada Colau, who was elected mayor in 2015, and several city councillors, while many other BeC members also worked closely with the anti-eviction platform. On the institutional side, Barcelona Activa is the city's agency for local economic development, and during the BeC years it was transformed into a service to promote social and solidarity economy projects.

8.1.2 Initiatives

Among the many initiatives related to community and occupied spaces and social economy projects, the most frequently mentioned is Can Batlló, a social centre that emerged from a civic occupation and was granted a lease for a period of 50 years plus two 10-year extensions. Located on a 15,000 m² former industrial site in the Sants district, Can Batlló houses a bar, two printing companies - one self-managed and one for profit - a woodworking workshop and several outstanding projects such as the La Borda housing cooperative and the Coòpolis business incubator. Coòpolis is a public-social agency for the promotion of the social and solidarity economy, created as part of the aforementioned Cooperative Athenaeums. When it started, it was a social project with no physical space, no public funding and no legal identity. Since then, it has been involved in a number of initiatives, such as a programme for care cooperatives, and has supported the local energy cooperatives Batec and the mobility promotion node Bici-Hub. The latter is based in a bicycle self-repair workshop in Poble Nou developed by the Bici-Clot cooperative. Other social initiatives include the Revuelta Escola demand of measures to de-escalate - or 'pacify' in Spanish - traffic in and around schools. The 'Care Super-Block' is another public initiative that articulates the built environment with social reproduction needs and is part of the Super-Block [Superilla] public plan to transform Barcelona's public space, a major urban strategy of the BeC government.

As we have seen, the implementation of democratic and participatory processes has been one of the main objectives of municipalism. In this respect, one of the main tools used in Barcelona is Decidim, an open source software tool for participatory processes. Decidim has set up an association - funded by the regional and local governments - to manage it, and has a space in the Canòdrom, in a building used to follow dog racing competitions, which is both the organisation's headquarters and a venue for external meetings, projects and activities related to technology and democracy. The interviews highlighted two processes in which Decidim has been involved, related to public urban planning processes at the city level. The first is the controversial plans for La Fira, an institutional process that did not emerge from a social process and is part of "highly predetermined processes where there is no room for decision-making" [INT AlbertM]. Another participatory initiative mentioned in the interviews concerned La Modelo prison, built on the edge of the Cerdà extension, which was designed according to Jeremy Bentham's panopticon model.

Unlike the Fira, La Modelo process of reimagining this site was partly led by Decidim and resulted in a community-driven plan where part of the original structure would commemorate the former prison where many political prisoners were incarcerated during the Franco years. In the meantime, the building houses a parking space for the local Bikebus.

In the area of cultural production, the former Teatro Arnau was redesigned through a participatory process that focused on popular and community culture. Pending the completion of work on the building, the participatory process envisaged a *Teatro Arnau Itinerante* [Itinerant Arnau Theatre] to keep alive the local community and the metropolitan ambition of the project. The *EcoMuseu Urbà Gitano* [Urban Gypsy EcoMuseum], located in the central Raval neighbourhood, is related to this effort, preserving the memory of the Spanish 'gypsy' and Catalan rumba cultures. Another public initiative has been set up to acquire ground floor spaces and transform them into premises where social organisations can develop economic and social projects, expanding from the Ciutat Vella district to a citywide programme. The BPO, or *Bajos de Protecció Oficial* [Public Premises] programme uses ground-floor commercial spaces owned by the municipality to mirror the VPO, that is *Viviendas de Protecció Oficial* [Public Housing], public programme. In a less tangible realm, the Community Radios Network is an independent initiative supported - or initiated, depending on who is telling the story - by the city's Cultural Office. In terms of social initiatives, the mobilisation in Vallcarca to protect a seemingly run-down area near the touristy Parc Güell from gentrification is worth mentioning. There is also the *La Fira o la vida* [Your Fira or your life] campaign against the city council's plans to renew the concession contract with a public-private conglomerate for the use of the Barcelona International Fairs and Exhibitions site, which contains iconic historical buildings such as the 1929 German Pavilion, designed by Lily Riech and Mies van der Rohe. The campaign called for public housing, as the number of permanent residents in the city centre is falling due to unbridled tourism and gentrification.

8.1.3 Procedures

Another case that was repeatedly mentioned in the interviews as crucial to Barcelona's current and future transformation was the social and solidarity economy. The first Drive Plan for the Social and Solidarity Economy was set up by the City Council one year after the BeC took office, and extended over two periods: 2016-2019 and 2021-2023. In 2017-2020, the Democratisation of Care Measure articulated production and reproduction activities and was developed jointly by the Commissioner for Cooperative Economy, Social and Solidarity and Consumption and the Department of Feminism and LGTBI. Also mentioned is the local implementation of Catalan Law 18/2007 on the Right to Housing - often referred to as the "30% law" - that requires that at least 30% of all new housing developments and specific renovations be allocated to social housing and is widely seen as an outstanding achievement of the housing movement. Although such a law would fall under the category of 'procedures', it actually started as a social initiative supported and promoted by the housing movements. In the face of the lack of affordable housing and the increasing displacement of local residents in the central areas of the city, the local government started to promote cooperatives under transfer of use provisions. This was followed by the A-Prop temporary housing programme, which placed containers on the scarce vacant land in this highly compact city. The superblock urban project has strengthened movements for urban mobility,

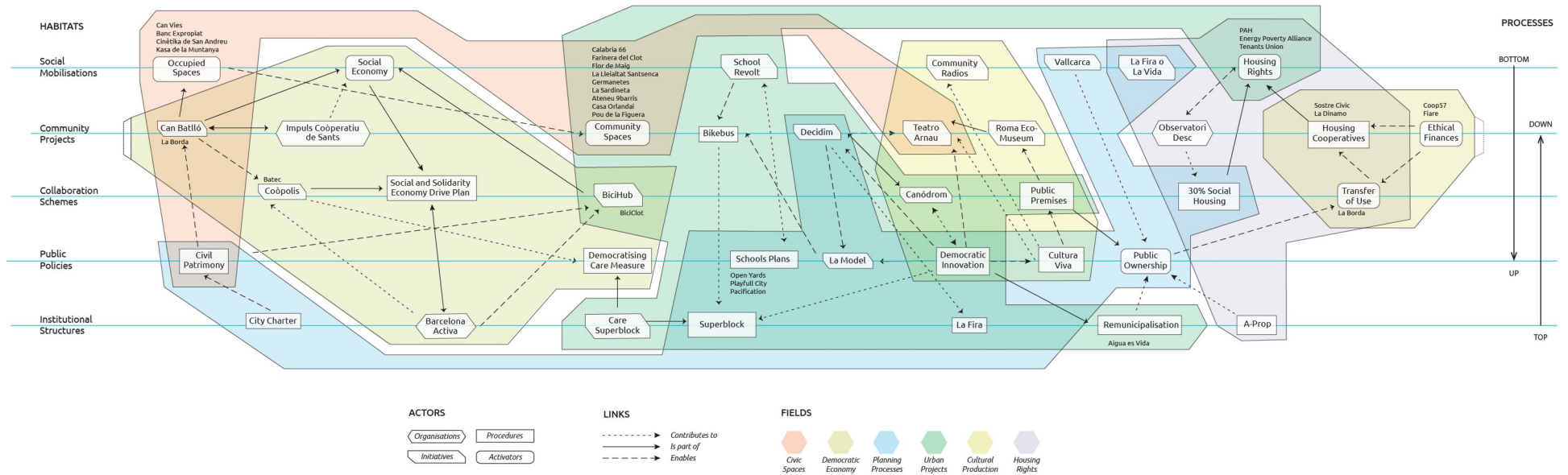
pollution reduction and the social use of public space. Visions of a more pedestrian and less car-centric Barcelona have been supported by the 'pacification' of public spaces around schools, as demanded by the School Rebellion. As part of the School Plans, the city government has reformed 100 such spaces in the first BeC mandate, and is aiming for a further 500 by the end of the second mandate in 2023. Finally, the Bikebus is a collective ride by children on their bicycles to school, accompanied by adults.

As highlighted in the previous chapter, the most recognised urban commoning process in Barcelona is the Civil Patrimony, conceived as a way to promote and develop self-managed spaces as urban commons. Reminiscent of the Italian experiences in Naples or Bologna, its indicators were co-designed with social actors, based on social and solidarity economy evaluations, and it was managed by a publicly funded technical office. Civil Patrimony emerged from the old civic centres, made possible by the City Charter, which provides for local autonomy and transfers specific powers from the Generalitat in Catalunya in specific areas, such as infrastructure, public space, heritage, mobility, or urban planning, according to Catalan Law 22/1998 (Generalitat de Catalunya, 1998). On the other hand, the Cultura Viva programme appears in the interviews as both a success story and a missed opportunity. While it made every effort to democratise access to culture, there is a sense that such efforts remained within a limited professional 'cultural sector' that was difficult to collectivise. However, the programme did fund two of the experiences mentioned in the interviews, namely the Public Premises initiative and the establishment of a community radio network. Also as a public procedure, there is the aforementioned process of the fairground developed on public land in Montjuïc, which has a public-private governance model that was challenged by the social initiative around La Fira. As the lease of the site, held by a consortium with the Catalan government and the Chamber of Commerce, was due to expire in 2022, the BeC government launched a process to debate its future, with the aim of democratising the development of an area considered crucial to the city's future, but which was perceived as a failure of participation.

8.2 Mapping the urban commons in Barcelona

Having outlined the complex ecosystem of latent commons developed under the BeC government, in this section I will present the results of the mapping process [see the compilation into an Urban Commoning in Barcelona Map in Appendix B]. The aim of the mapping exercise was to identify the elements and interactions involved in the transformation of the public imaginary, structures and operations towards a logic associated with the commons. From the inputs and contributions made during the fieldwork, I have included in the map, shown in Figure 8.2, the elements more directly related to the research focus on the connection between commoning processes and urban planning procedures. I also used the map in a second round of interviews focusing on the three programmes presented in the next section on commoning transmediation, and used their analysis as the basis for mapping workshops that discussed and modified the initial relational mapping and helped to incorporate a characterisation of the cooperation, negotiation and discrepancy relationship between them. Figures 8.3 to 8.5 present the web of relationships between institutional and social organisations, projects and processes that gives 'thickness' (Stengers, 2015) to the current emerging commons.

Figure 8.2: Mapping of urban commoning processes in Barcelona



Source: Author. Based on fieldwork interviews.

For this mapping, I developed an 'ad hoc' method that can be used in other efforts to represent human and non-human actors who have been part of commoning processes and who have had the capacity to act, i.e. to influence and transform the conditions of their development. Although this 'actant' condition of "attributing, imputing, distributing action, competences, performances and relations" (Latour, 1996, p. 374) is potentially present in all social subjects interacting in commoning processes, I have identified positions and situations active in specific common-public articulation between Barcelona City Council and the social initiatives. The aim of representing the potential of the entities' agency is not to measure "spatial distances, but the forces and intensities" along the affects, desires and power relations established by "fluid and elusive socio-cultural and spatial" entities (Petrescu, 2012, p. 137).

8.2.1 Mapping elements

The mapping of urban commoning is an analytical tool to identify and characterise commoning elements that can be applied to other situations and territories. My methodological proposal includes the interaction between actors, the fields of public intervention in which they operate and the socio-institutional habitats that I have assigned to them, as shown in Table 8.2.

Table 8.2: Mapping elements

HABITATS	ACTORS	LINKS	FIELDS
<i>Social Processes</i> belong to the civic sphere	<i>Organisations</i> are social collectives and institutional agencies	<i>Support</i> contributes or provides infrastructures and resources	<i>Civil Spaces</i> serve as political incubators
<i>Community Projects</i> emerge from social processes	<i>Initiatives</i> are projects, public programmes and campaigns	<i>Belonging</i> produces attachments as being part and ascribes	<i>Democratic Economy</i> merges social economy, cooperative movement
<i>Social-Public Programmes</i> are co-produced	<i>Procedures</i> are social and institutional regulations	<i>Enabling</i> engages with an articulation	<i>Urban Services</i> includes metabolic services and welfare state provisions
<i>Public Policies</i> incorporate social demands and mobilisations	<i>Activators</i> are public policies, social mobilisations and political drivers		<i>Planning Processes</i> are actors seeking to impact the urban fabric design.
<i>Institutional Structures</i> belong to the state logic			<i>Cultural Production</i> are projects led by communities with institutional support
			<i>Housing Rights</i> are struggles expanding housing demands and enacting alternatives

Source: Author.

I have identified the mapping elements along with the analysis: the need to represent the processes taking place motivated the creation of a grounded methodological-theoretical framework. I started by defining the habitats, from the more institutional to the more social. I then positioned the actors, taking into account the relationships expressed in the interviews. In the resulting configuration, the commoning actors and the links between them delineated the fields of public-social intervention. The resulting mapping, situates the actors in habitats defined along a gradient of social and institutional involvement, while the links between them define the fields of intervention. It represents a linear gradient in which the four types of actors relate to each other through links and define fields, creating a system of points, vectors and areas.

Actors and habitats

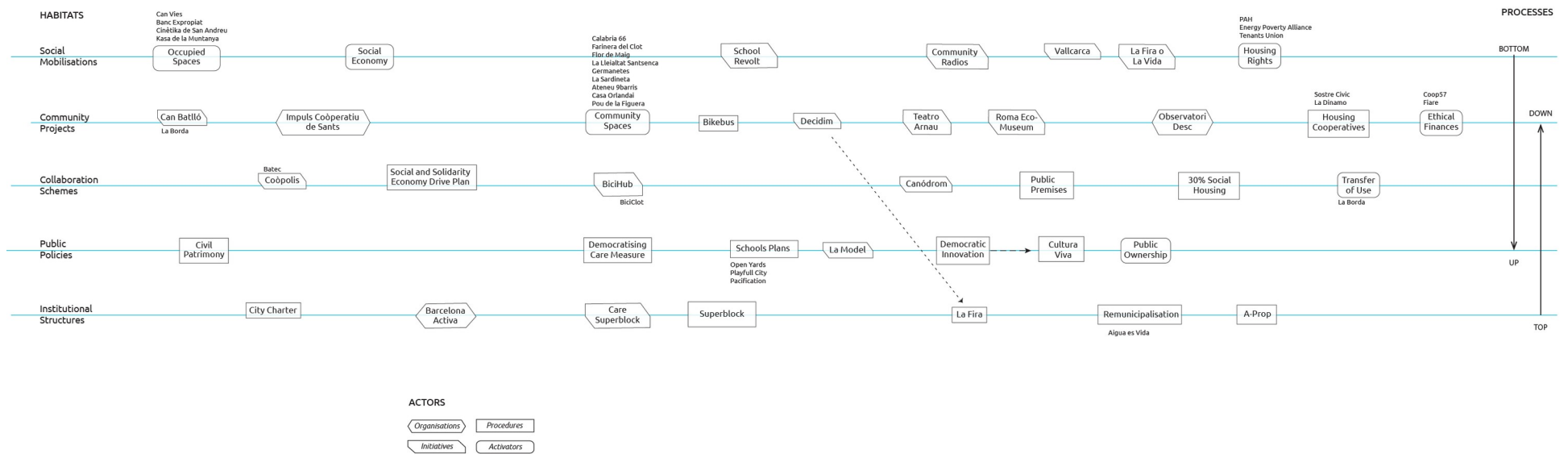
Figure 8.3 locates actors between a socially autonomous habitat or the most institutional habitat according to a gradient that creates a 'thickness' in the binary division between public and social, institutions and movements, the political division between 'inside' and 'outside'. According to Stengers, habitats are "the context in which you do your work and the habits that circumscribe your methods" (Frichot, 2017, p. 139). In my urban commoning mapping, habitats range from autonomous processes set in motion by and for the social to structures ascribed to the institutional sphere of the nation-state, in a gradient of self-directed social mobilisation, community projects, collaborative programmes, local public policies and city council institutional structures.

In the mapping, the different habitats are represented with a bottom-up and top-down visual order that inverts the spatial hierarchies of Western representation. Things at the top - usually the geographical north - are considered more important than those at the bottom - usually the south. This spatial distribution has been openly subverted in decolonial representations of the world, such as the Strait Map by the Seville-based collective *hackitectura* (2004). In my case, however, the fact that bottom-up processes originate at the top of the map was not a conscious theoretical choice, but the practical result of my interest in how the social elements influence and transform the institutional ones.

This gradient places social processes at the top and public institutions at the bottom:

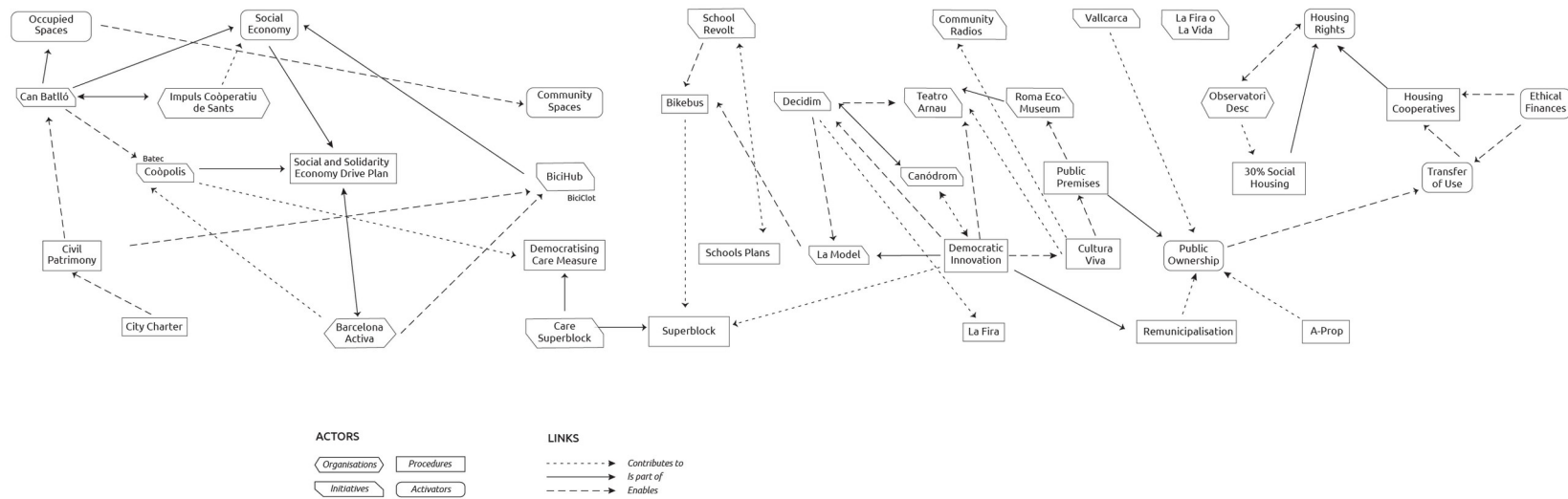
- **Social mobilisations** are part of the civic sphere. For example, squatted social centres - such as Can Vies - or the social organisation against gentrification in the Vallcarca neighbourhood.
- **Community projects** are generated by social processes with institutional support. This support can be as simple as the municipal police helping to organise collective bike rides to schools in the Eixample, or as ambitious as the purchase, renovation and maintenance of community centres that are then managed by local collectives, such as l'Ateneu 9barris or La Lleialtat Santsenca.
- **Co-production schemes** are public projects and procedures involving civil society actors. Co-production has been applied to the promotion of economic processes and communities, as in the case of Coopolis, to the legislation and promotion of affordable housing and its implementation, with the 30% law and the transfer of use cooperatives, or to the development of metropolitan coordination spaces, such as Bici-Hub.

Figure 8.3: Actors and habitats



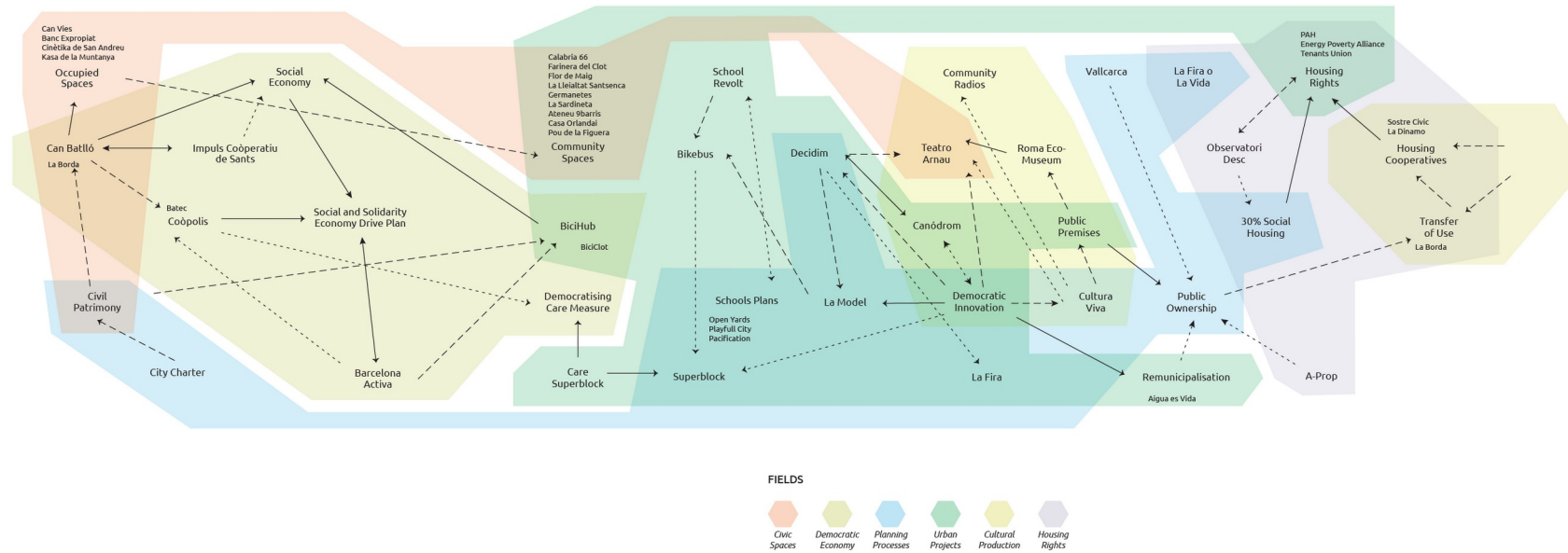
Source: Author. Based on fieldwork interviews.

Figure 8.4: Actors and links



Source: Author. Based on fieldwork interviews.

Figure 8.5: Fields of commoning



Source: Author. Based on fieldwork interviews.

- **Public policies** are municipalist actions that actively seek to incorporate social demands and mobilisations and extend processes of collective action and communalisation: projects promoted and managed by the City Council, co-designed with social actors, a notable example being La Modelo, or interventions in buildings and public spaces that seek to mitigate the effects of harmful dynamics such as air pollution, sexism or the urban heat island, such as the School Plan, which seeks to design inclusive playgrounds and mitigate traffic in front of school buildings.
- **Institutional structures** belong to the logic of the state, without the influence or interaction of social actors. This institutional architecture includes agreements with other levels of administration, as in the Municipal City Chart that established Barcelona's local autonomy, specialised agencies such as Barcelona Activa, or city-wide projects such as the internationally known superblocks.

Links

The links between actors define the fields and help to identify the programmatic constellations. Figure 8.4 shows the relationships between actors that emerged from the direct questions, which were not always answered in a straightforward way, supplemented by my interpretation of the interviews. I defined three types of links

- **Supporting** implies some kind of material or immaterial contribution, such as the creation of a legal, cultural or political framework that strengthens the actor in question. In the case of the School Rebellion movement and the superblock model, the relationship was bidirectional: the demands of the movement were strengthened by the actions of the city, while the somewhat controversial policy gained social support thanks to social activism.
- **Enabling** suggests that one element would not have been possible without the other. For example, Barcelona Activa enabled the creation of the BiciHub mobility centre. Bi-directional enabling is exemplified by the synergies between the Observatori Desc and the housing movement in Barcelona.
- **Belonging** refers to a second-level arrangement or framework. For example, the 30% social housing campaign and the resulting regulations are part of a broader housing rights movement that includes housing co-operative initiatives.

Fields

Fields are areas of intervention defined by resonances, i.e. processes are not compartmentalised - as in the administrative logic - but are assembled in overlapping fields. As explained in Chapter 3, the concept of 'field' is based on Pierre Bourdieu's definition of a particular 'configuration of relations between positions' (Peillon, 1998). While Bourdieu's concept emphasises hierarchical positions of power, 'field' here refers to the relational aspect. Figure 8.5 above has presented six fields of action: civic spaces, democratic economy, urban services, planning processes, cultural production and housing rights.

- **Civic Spaces** refer to interventions that create community incubators. This field includes the most well-known 'urban commons', such as social centres and community gardens, and initiatives such as Can Batlló and Teatre Arnau, which will be examined in detail in the next

section. As an area of social and institutional intervention, it also includes the Civil Patrimony programme, which aims to promote the public-social co-management of spaces.

- **Democratic Economy** includes cooperatives and the social and solidarity economy. According to the XES (2018), in Catalonia, this sector accounts for 8% of the local economy and 10% of the workforce. Its epicentre in Barcelona is the Sants district, where the city's most emblematic commoning project is located: Can Batlló. Crucially, this field includes two institutional actors: the public organisation Barcelona Activa and the Social and Solidarity Economy Drive Plan procedure. The field expands to include housing cooperatives and political activators through ethical finance, connecting both ends of the map.

- **Urban Services** is a field that expands the usual urban metabolic services - water, energy, transport, waste - and welfare state provisions - health, education, culture - by considering housing and its associated utilities as a public service. It includes actors involved in the democratisation of water - such as Aigua es Vida -, energy communities, housing, digital tools - such as the participatory software Decidim - and metropolitan infrastructures, such as the former prison La Modelo.

- **Planning Processes** include experiences that seek to influence the design of the urban fabric, either by protecting existing buildings or by proposing new uses.

- **Cultural Production** includes actors that are seen as exceptions to an otherwise self-centred and focused experience that focuses on issues related to its own industry. These cultural outliers include the Cultura Viva procedure, which contributed to the creation of a network of community radio stations, and the community-based Teatre Arnau, an old theatre that has been squatted on several occasions and kept alive by the Arnau Itinerant project during the reconstruction of the theatre's premises. Another example is the modest initiative to buy up empty spaces for social and cultural use in the Ciutat Vella district, which has been scaled up to a citywide community-based initiative.

- **Housing Rights** struggles have been one of the main social drivers in Spain since the bursting of the financial bubble in 2008, which precipitated a crisis in the property investment and mortgage debt system that had fuelled the Spanish economy in previous years. Between 2015 and 2023, Barcelona's municipal government included many housing activists, some of them founders of the anti-eviction platform PAH, such as former mayor Ada Colau or Barcelona's councillor for housing, Lucía Martín. These activists brought their political concerns to the administration, while new forms of mobilisation and proposals - the tenants' association or the cooperative housing movement - extended the demands for public support and cooperation beyond the issue of evictions. This field includes the public provision of temporary housing, the A-Prop, to the social contestation of displacement in Vallcarca.

Given the focus of the research on the nexus between social experience and institutional instruments, some of these fields correspond to traditional 'fields' in institutional structures. However, I have introduced certain qualifiers to further delimit these fields, as in 'democratic economy' or 'cultural production', or to reinterpret them, as in 'urban services'.

8.2.2 Mapping overlaps

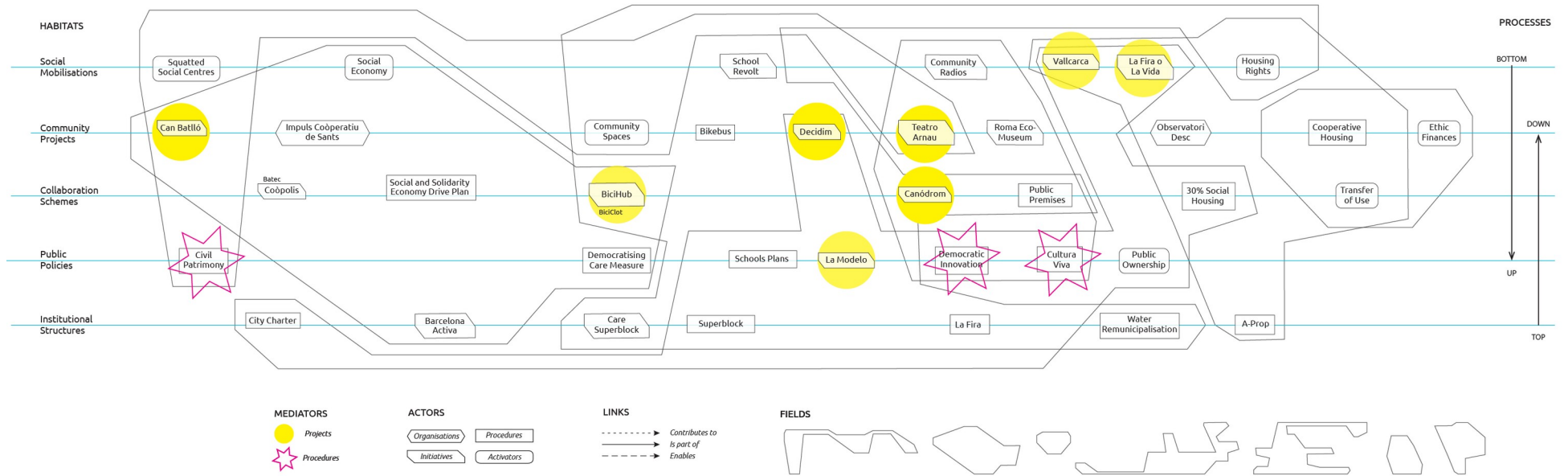
Mapping is always an exercise in description, analysis and hypothesis building. In this exercise, the mapping elements were characterised in order to reveal their relationships and identify pathways for action, and three main findings related to displacement, in-betweenness and connection emerged:

1/ There is a **shift** in habitats. The social-institutional gradient shown in Figure 8.6 places the elements gathered from the interviews along five lines: social processes, community projects, public programmes, public policies and institutional structures. Looking at the link between actors, one interpretation of this scheme is that bottom-up and top-down approaches are not symmetrical. There is a displacement that keeps social mobilisations out of reach of institutional processes, while most institutional instruments are inaccessible to bottom-up initiatives. This asynchrony does not mean that the two levels are isolated from each other, but that direct relations are not possible. In order to create public-community cooperation, intermediate elements are needed, and this involves some degree of interaction, exchange or cooperation between public and social actors, whether through community building, resource management or governance models.

2/ Key actors are **in the middle**. There are always actors that bridge the asynchrony between bottom-up and top-down processes. The creation of public-community collaborations requires what I call 'intermediators' actants capable of 'translating' rules, intentions and also languages, and of opening up spaces for negotiation. For example, I saw how Coopolis, which has executive role in the implementation of economic development programmes, mediates between the public agency Barcelona Activa and the cooperatives from the care sector, but Coopolis also contributed to the measure of democratising care with a report from a feminist perspective, and are part of Can Batlló [INT AlvaroP, INT ElbaM]. The relevance of this middle position is more evident where it has been absent, as in the case of the Fairgrounds in Montjuic. Here, the institutional process and the social initiative La Fira o la vida lacked an intermediate element. The social mobilisation lost agency and the participatory process was then unable to influence the institutional structure. The capacity for action of both institutional and social actors was short-lived and limited to two separate actions: a social contesting the legitimacy of the City Council over an important part of the city, and on the institutional side, and an institutional need to include housing demands [INT LaiaF, INT DavidJ].

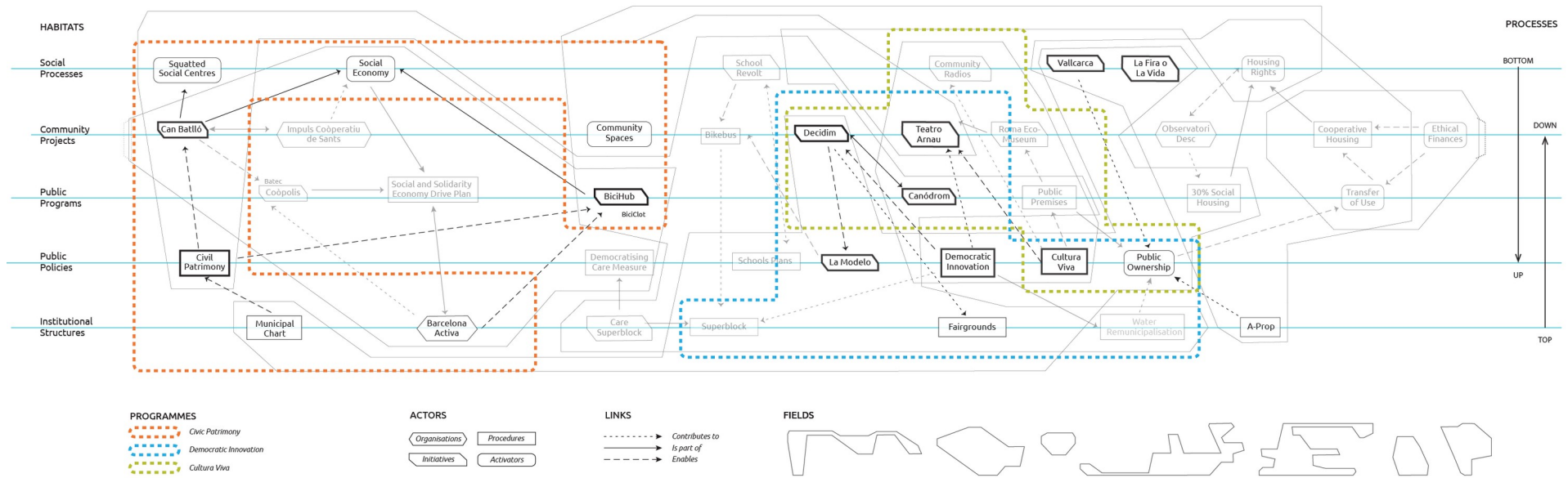
3/ **Intersectional mediators** emerge. My mapping analysis suggests that the initiatives that proved most relevant to the commoning efforts were not located at the centre of gravity of a particular field of action - as 'best practices' do - but at the edges of each field, and in connection with others. Figure 8.6 shows two characterisations. Firstly, the yellow circles represent initiatives located in a 'threshold' situation which, as Stavrides points out, transforms boundaries by creating a space that is neither here nor there: "[...] a spatiality of in-betweenness [...] in which differences are offered a stage to exchange approaching gestures between public and private" (Stavrides, 2016, p. 155): be it initiatives between planning and social economy, like the Bici Hub, social economy and civic spaces, like Can Batlló, civic spaces and cultural production, like Teatro Arnau, or between urban project and planning processes, like La Model. Secondly, the magenta stars highlight the three processes located at these intersections: Civil Patrimony, Cultura Viva and Democratic Innovation, which I will characterise in the next section as 'commoning programmes'.

Figure 8.6: Overlaps and habitats gradient



Source: Author. Based on interviews

Figure 8.7: Commoning programmes



Source: Author. Based on interviews

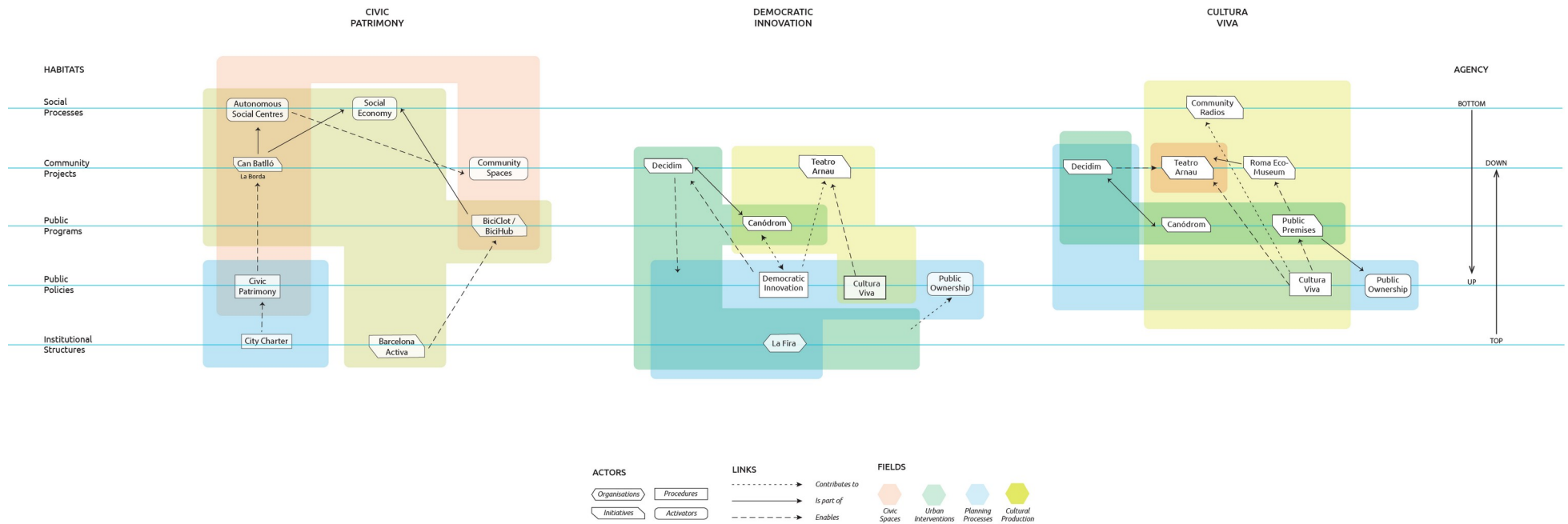
Following Brian Holmes (2006), I will argue that one of the 'treasures' of this map is the identification of initiatives and programmes that could contribute to the research questions. This mapping can therefore be described as tactical, in that it aims to identify who to ask next and what to look for. In the context of Barcelona, the physical development of the city is constrained by clear geographical and administrative boundaries, and therefore the Master Plan has no capacity to define new urban areas. It is therefore possible to consider that what urban programmes do is a different kind of urban development, based on what already exists in the territory. Therefore, the city is produced by the changes in the existing urban fabric and by the public support or restraint of activities in its already saturated space. Following the definition of planning that I proposed in Chapter 6, commoning programmes aimed at decision-making processes, resource allocation and community creation can be seen as a planning tool that is able to 'alter the existing course of events' (Campbell & Fainstein, 1996, p. 6). Such an existing course has been outlined by, among others, the IPCC report in its warning about the consequences of climate change (*IPCC Sixth Assessment Report*, 2023) and the altering planning methodologies have been outlined in Chapter 6.

Programmatic constellations

The urban commons map defines four types of actors: initiatives, links, fields and habitats, which operate within a public-common gradient. While other existing activist urban commons maps in Barcelona and elsewhere (Oficina de Acción Comunal, 2022; Observatori Metropolità de Barcelona, 2014; De Soto, 2012) often refer to a physical territory, the elements of my map are positioned in relation to social or institutional habitats and their resonance with other elements in the same field. The resulting mapping reflects the complex constellation of actors and the interaction between projects, institutional structures, legislation and political motivations. In Stenger's ecology of practices, technologies of belonging are created through demands and obligations related to care "in one way or another, which means re-framing" so that the present situation becomes "thick with possibilities" [INT-BenedikteZ]. Thus re-framed, mapping the urban commons in Barcelona becomes an attempt to interpret the "thick present" of the urban commons within municipalism, that is, "the tentacular web of troubled relations that matter now" (Haraway, 2016, p. 2). In this 'tentacular web', I have organised the in-between in constellations called "programmatic constellations", shown in Figure 8.8.

Commoning programmes are identified as municipalist meso-devices that act from-the-middle, in overlapping fields of commoning, connecting different levels of the social-public habitat. The resulting programmes operate between epistemic production, policy making, political processes and knowledge exchange. In the overlaps and thresholds, I identify different constellations of municipalist 'programmes' that connect municipalist policies with existing procedures. In the case of BeC, three concerns were consistently identified as commons in their electoral programmes: community spaces, digital tools for participation, and cultural rights. These policy concerns were implemented through three public programmes, each is located in a constellation of actors, procedures and projects, and each is linked to its most emblematic initiative. I have referred to the three constellations above as 'commoning programmes' in order to highlight the link between the electoral apparatus, the 'what' defined in political discourse and the 'how' deployed in specific projects and initiatives.

Figure 8.8: Programmatic constellations



Source: Author. Based on interviews.

Commoning programmes operationalise public support for collective forms of management through a reframing of institutional codes, affecting three aspects of policy-making: 1) the empowerment of social mobilisation and support for autonomous projects; 2) the generation of disruptive public administrative policies and procedures; and 3) the production and dissemination of practice-based knowledge through practitioners' peer-to-peer exchanges and academic networks.

1) The push to empower social processes includes professional demands, such as cultural workers' demands for paid and unpaid work. It also address issues of high and low culture and access to spaces, as in the case of the Teatre Arnau vase, eventually extending to broader movements to reclaim democratic sovereignty and access to public goods, rooted in social movements with a long history: copy-left culture and open software, in the case of Decidim, or self-managed social centres, in the case of Civil Patrimony.

2) The development of public policies and regulations includes the new 'Chart of Cultural Rights', where proximity is seen as a precondition for democracy. Examples include the Municipal Action Plan, co-designed and validated by Decidim, or the co-governance of cultural infrastructures - from the neighbourhood to the metropolitan level - and events such as La Mercé City Festival. Among the disruptive administrative procedures are the collaborative strategic plan on cultural rights produced by Cultura Viva, a set of specific regulations for the allocation and evaluation of projects by Civil Patrimony, and Decidim's incorporation of open source protocols through a Social Contract, binding for all those using the software.

3) The production of practice-based knowledge was deployed through meetings with the communities involved: from the annual Decidim Fest as an open call for the meta-decidim community, to ad hoc debates on urban commons in the framework of Civil Patrimony or the permanent working group of Cultura Viva. The relationship with academic theoretical production is deployed through reports such as the Decidim's White Paper (Barandiaran, Calleja-López, & Monterde, 2018), the theoretical framework of the Civil Patrimony (Castro, Fresnillo, & Moreno, 2016), or the state of the art of 'grassroots culture' (Ruiz Fernández, 2019) (Ruiz Fernández, 2019).

This reframing is carried out by actors which share the overlapping characteristics of the programmes of displacement, in-betweenness and connection, and transmediation.

8.3 Commoning transmediation

The figure of '*transmediators*' builds on what Latour calls '*mediators*', as actants that "transform, translate, distort, and modify the meaning or the elements they are supposed to carry [...] No matter how seemingly simple a mediator may look, it may become complex; it may lead in multiple directions which will modify all the contradictory accounts attributed to its role" (Latour, 2005, p. 939). For Latour, mediators differ from 'intermediaries' which do not transform what they transmit. For example, "[a] properly functioning computer could be taken as a good case of a complicated intermediary while a banal conversation may become a terribly complex chain of mediators where passions, opinions, and attitudes bifurcate at every turn." (ibid.). My conceptualisation of transmediation - a concept triggered by the relevance of intermediary structures and in-between agents in Berlin's 'urban praxis' [INT-MarkusB] and the common-common partnerships organised around Decidim [INT-XabierB] - extends Yannakakis' (2008) proposal of a bidirectional mediator

with the possibility of actants operating across different fields of theory-practice and habitats - from the more 'social' to the more 'institutional'.

8.3.1 *Transmediators*

In my analysis of the commoning programmes, a particular kind of relationship emerges: a commoning transmediation that is able to reframe situations by translating meanings between different arenas: institutional/social, academic/lay, citizen/politician, neighbourhood/district, city/metropolitan, and so on. These actors defy political science's traditional tripartite segmentation of policy-making stakeholders of community advocacy, political power, and academic epistemic production (Haas, 1992). More importantly, *transmediators* operate at the thresholds between public administration's demarcation of 'competences' and the overlap and expansion of citizen participation. They also act in different capacities: as activists, researchers, civil servants, party members, political advisors, technical consultants or cultural producers. This position stands in contrast to many debates and discourses on commons and municipalism, which are framed in a dichotomy between an institutional 'inside' (bureaucratic, managerial, state-driven, rigid top-down structure) and a social 'outside' (informal, collaborative, dynamic bottom-up process). This division has been seen as a simplification that fails to reflect the many contradictions and frictions of a possible public-common articulation: a symptom that "the political vocabulary structured by oppositions between state and civil society, public and private, government and market, coercion and consent, sovereignty and autonomy and the like, does not adequately characterise the diverse ways in which rule is exercised in advanced liberal democracies" (Rose & Miller, 1992, p. 174).

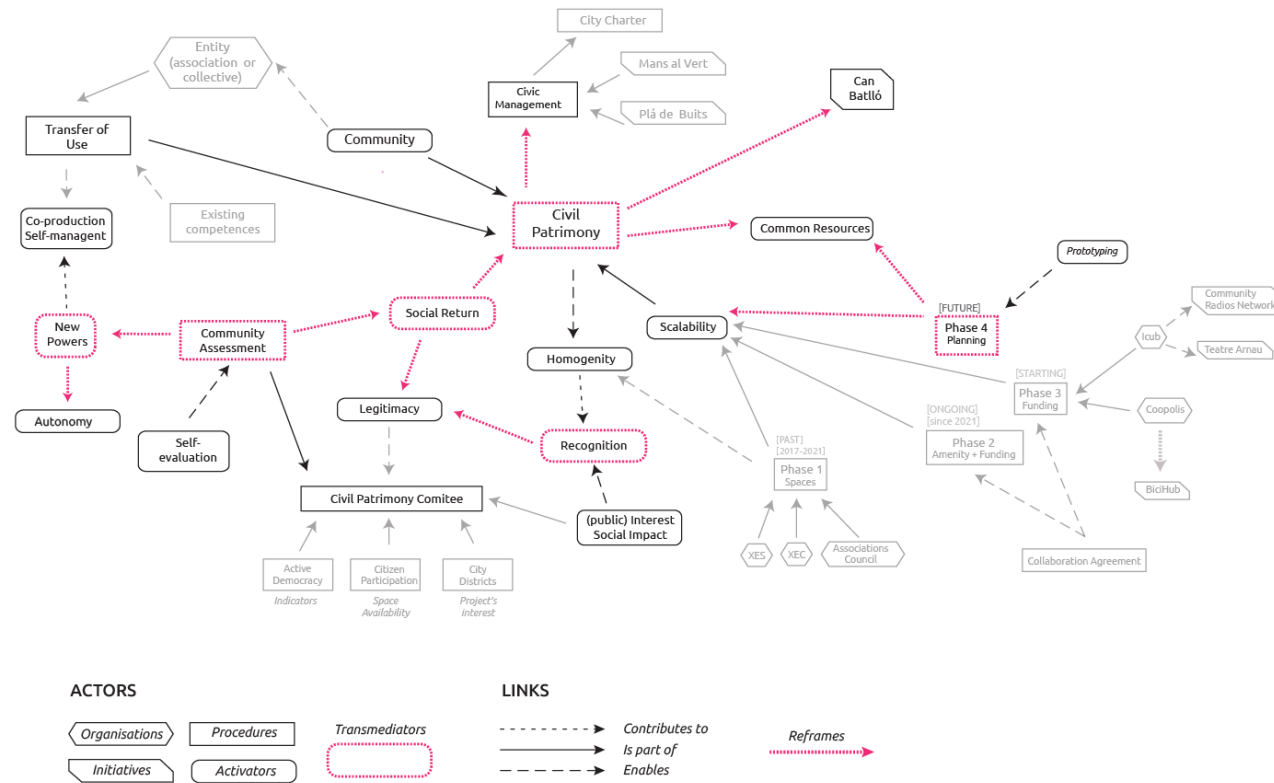
Transmediators' primary function is, therefore, translation, which is one of the operations of what Stavrides called 'institutions of expanding commoning'. The other two operations are with sharing, which keeps the process open, and comparison. While comparison makes different subjects and experiences relevant and meaningful to each other, the mutual awareness of the difference must be followed by the translation between views, actions, and subjectivities, which translation negotiates:

Translation seeks correspondences, but it cannot and does not aspire to establish an absolute, unobstructed mirroring of one language with another. An institution does – or should do – the same, thus keeping alive the expanding potentiality of commoning. Indeed, 'the common is always organised in translation'. Expanding commoning does not expand according to pre-existing patterns; it literally invents itself. Translation is this inherent inventiveness of commoning, which constantly opens new fields and new opportunities for the creation of a common world always-in-the-making. (Stavrides, 2015, p. 14)

8.3.2 Programmes

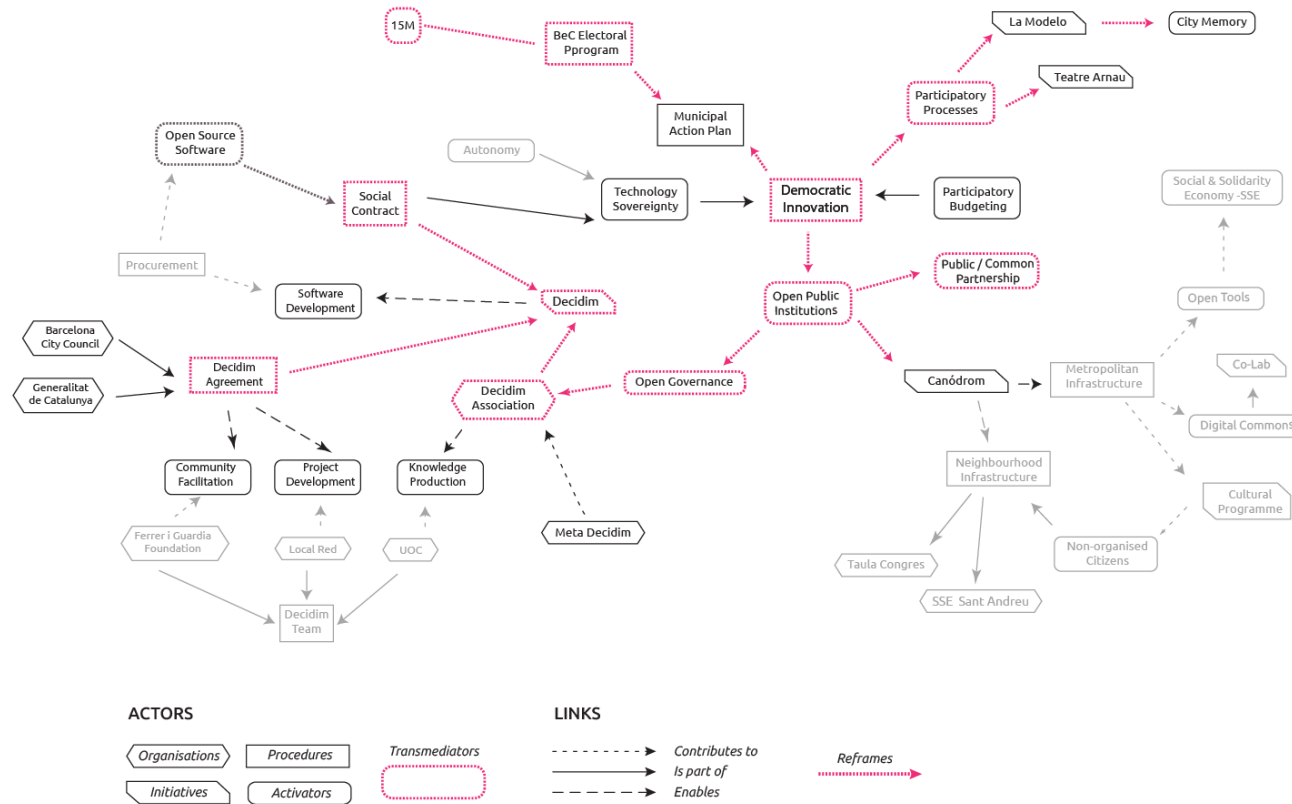
The mapping of urban commoning in Barcelona simplifies a complex ecosystem and provides a static picture of evolving processes expanded with a more detailed analysis of the three commoning programmes, based on interviews with members and participants in the threshold initiatives and processes, and three co-production sessions involving public officials, policy advisors, public workers and practitioners. Figures 8.9 to 8.11 provide a graphic description of how the *transmediators* interact and the reframing processes they enable.

Figure 8.9: Civil Patrimony programmatic transmediation



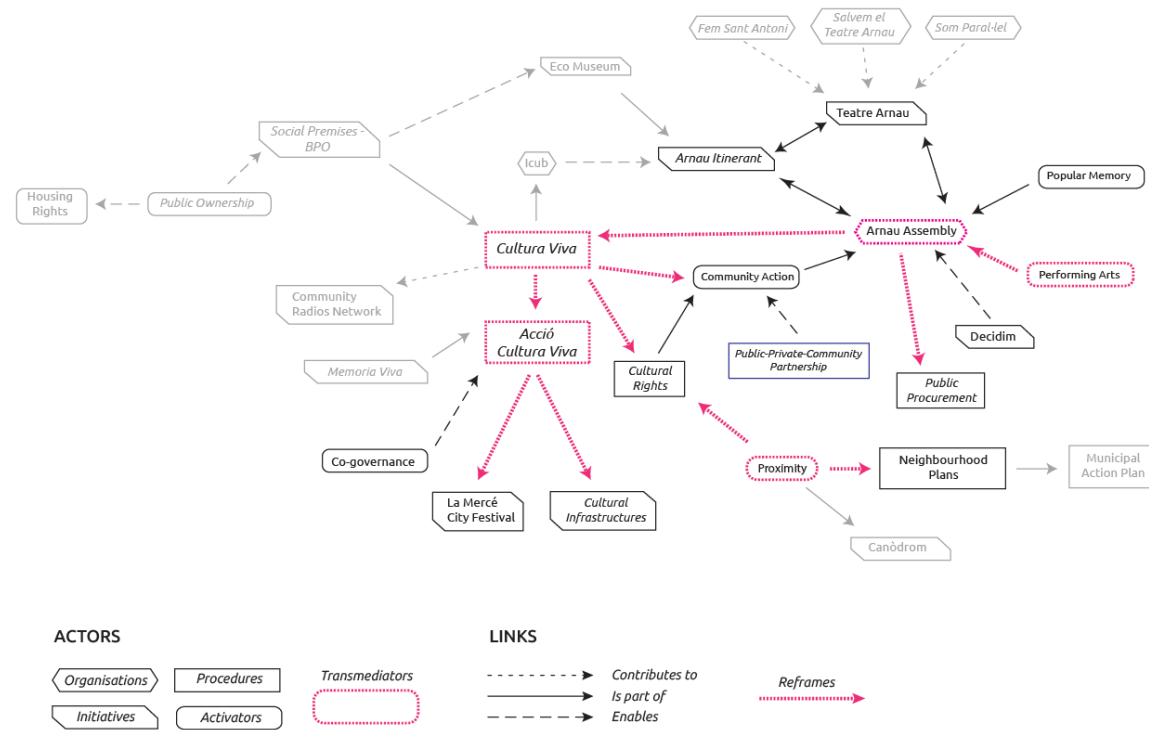
Source: Author. Based on interviews and workshops.

Figure 8.10: Democratic Innovation programmatic transmediation



Source: Author. Based on interviews and workshops.

Figure 8.11: Cultura Viva programmatic transmediation



Source: Author. Based on interviews and workshops.

This analysis is based on three collaborative mapping workshops. The session on Civil Patrimony was attended by the municipal councillor in charge of the programme, a former councillor, a civil servant and the director of a social organisation working on social rights. The session on democratic innovation was attended by members of the Decidim association, the director of the Democratic Innovation Programme and a former municipalist councillor. Finally, Cultura Viva was discussed with the responsible policy advisor and cultural producers involved in projects participating in the programme. The participants in these discussions can be identified as *transmediators* themselves, linking institutional and social spheres, with an interest in contributing to academic knowledge, but also in learning from each other. The characterisation of the programmes has been informed by the interviews conducted prior to the collaborative sessions.

Civil Patrimony

In the Civil Patrimony programme, the idea of 'social return', community assessment, the demand for recognition and the potential of planning emerged as *transmediators* able to reframe legitimacy and autonomy, resource allocation and scalability..

Legitimacy was reframed thanks to a 'strong, mobilised and competent community' that supported the innovative transformation pursued by the political branch of the local government, even in the face of much internal opposition [INT-AlbertM]. The internal legitimacy provided by a new protocol for the biennial evaluation of 'social returns' - based on proximity, social impact, democracy and transparency, care and process - [IN-LaiaF] was linked to the increased autonomy granted to the civil self-management of public patrimony.

This reframing of resource allocation is contested by the more technical branch of government, which was less involved in the municipalist project. For them, the legitimacy of the programme was not a means to achieve autonomy, but an end in itself: many elements of the assessment seek to prove that the project "deserves to enjoy a public good" [INT-ManuelP]. From the point of view of the social organisations, however, the programme provides an autonomy that reframes the demands of the actors who were already involved in some form of civic management and who have regained their capacity to "decide for themselves" [INT-MarionaT] as a way of "materialising and appropriating something that already existed" [INT-Raquelp].

In the Civic Patrimony, the reframing of scalability envisages the creation of a 'relevant' pilot project that could, in the future, 'modify the [existing] urban planning' and influence the uses defined in the Barcelona Master Plan [INT-AlbertMí]. The identification of a relevant project was important in order to overcome: a) the difficulty of creating a general framework for many 'different specificities, different legal forms, different goods' [INT-MarionaT], and b) the size of the projects - where a site like Can Battló, with 15,000 m², is considered by the technicians to be "so big that it gets out of control" [INT-ManuelP].

Democratic Innovation

In the Democratic Innovation Programme, the concept of open public institutions and open governance, Decidim and its Social Contract and the 15M movements appear as intermediaries capable of transforming public-common partnerships into a public-common, or even a common-

common coalition. These elements are seen as allowing decisions to be taken through participatory processes set up by the local government and the composition of the meta-Decidim community.

The public-common partnership is reframed here by a constellation of public, private and collective actors who have co-created a community in which Decidim is a shared digital infrastructure operating under non-zero-sum game rules. This new mode of production fosters the capacity for collaboration and the mobilisation of emotions, desires and knowledge that are linked to existing experiences of commoning. As a result, the participatory process is reframed as a democratic innovation through the recognition that "much of the decision-making capacity is not exercised at the moment of deciding between predetermined alternatives, but precisely at the moment of exploring what is possible" [INT-XabierB].

Furthermore, the redefinition of a sense of community building is based on a multidisciplinary and multi-institutional composition, bringing together a variety of experiences and know-how, with people from the academic world, local organisations linked to the territory, experts in facilitation and political actors from the city council. This community was invited to participate in the definition of Decidim as a tool and as 'infrastructure' [INT-CarolR].

Cultura Viva

In the Cultura Viva programme, the framework set up as Acció Cultura Viva and the Teatre Arnau project appear as the main mediators. The Teatre Arnau had its own constellation, where the mediating device is the Assembly, affected by three concerns: popular memory, community action and, more relevant, working conditions in the cultural sector. The elements of reframing recognised the needs and expertise of cultural producers and 'hacked' the institutional habitus behind public procurement processes and community building.

In terms of recognition and procurement, one of the achievements of Teatre Arnau was the recognition of an autonomous, non-expert actor, 'not integrated in the chain of command, in the chain of [usual] interlocutions' [INT-AndreaC], who demanded to transform the way contracts work - in services, affecting activities, but also in construction. This recognition influenced the final configuration of the theatre building, which gave the project strength and meaning. More importantly, it created "a way of doing things that could be contagious" [INT-AndreaC]. The reframing of the idea of community building went beyond a common cause to the co-production of a process in which community was something fluid and malleable, striving "to be able to be porous or to be able to adapt to different places to reach out to different community logics, to different ways of accessing different physical places" [INT AndreaC].

8.3.3 Reframing diplomacy

As explained in Chapter 3, according to Stengers' Ecology of Practice (EoP), "the question of diplomacy [is] a matter of challenge" (Stengers, 2005, p. 92), and to take up this challenge is to take a risk or, as the Observatorio Metropolitano (Observatorio Metropolitano, 2014) put it, to place a 'wager'. In EoP, diplomacy aims to produce "constructions among humans as constrained by diverging attachments" (Stengers, 2005, p. 193), a description that resonates strongly with my own experience of the 'municipalist wager' that risked the agency and the composition of the transformative 'common sense' born in the squares. I will argue that such wager involved the

obligation of actualising a belonging 'in common' of the assembly, social movement, or municipalist platform, into the 'becoming-common' of a social organisation. I will also argue that, applied to the municipalist context and to the municipalist practice of empowering and fostering urban commons, commoning programmes challenged the borders imposed by public institutions, while negotiating the assumed obligations of the political hypothesis of the commons. As such, the reframing operations identified in these programmes are part of the municipalist diplomatic attempts to transform the logic of nation-state governance, and to redefine the obligations created towards social actors.

In this section I will analyse the disruptions to state legitimacy, autonomy and habitus created by Barcelona's commoning programmes, using the EoP to define three aspects of the becoming-common of the public: challenge, diplomacy and empowerment, as shown in Table 8.3.

Table 8.3: Challenge, diplomacy and empowerment

	Legitimacy	Agency	Habitus
Challenge - no final convergence overcoming a previous divergence	May 15 as political context Production of new imaginaries Resources' availability decision-making Co-responsibility	Work waged -unwaged, expert-amateur Professional-activist involvement Definition of the community Institutional support	Public control Redefinition of general interest Homogeneity Incorporation of social (a-legal) subjects
Diplomacy - the possibility of a conjunction where a disjunction ruled before	Transformation of the institutional ontology	Processes in 'minor key' Descaling of tools to social needs	Asynchrony of institutional & social times Public incorporation to community processes Space for minor-key activities
Empowerment - transformation of the particular wagers into [collective] power to make a cause present	Processes over product Community values over 'excellence' Collaboration over competition Incorporate social actors to institutional spaces	Political inputs Existing self-management Overlapping of territorial reach	New memory of what is possible Hacking of public procedures New social contract

Source: Author.

The first aspect is to make the public 'stay with the trouble' (Haraway, 2016) by challenging the administrative security of things that are this or that. The second effort is the municipalist notion of 'confluence' as a diplomatic conjunction that seeks to include as many elements as possible and to

reformulate the internal obligations of the common and public spheres as shared commitments. Thirdly and finally, the aspect of empowerment deals with the transformation of individual responsibilities into collective power, through agreements that make present the commitment to a 'real democracy'.

During the municipalist government in Barcelona, from 2015 to 2023, the legitimacy built by the 15M demand for a 'real democracy now' was further supported by the production of new imaginaries promoted by Cultura Viva, the participatory processes promoted by Decidim and the discussion of shared collective resources in the Civil Patrimony, among other policies. These experiences, however, also show how the principle of agency in commoning processes has been challenged in several ways. One is the dependence of the community on institutional support in processes that potentially extend to the entire administrative territory, as in the case of Decidim's infrastructure. Another aspect is the relationship between production and reproduction, and the tension between waged and unwaged, expert and amateur work in the cultural sector, or professional and activist involvement in the case of Decidim as open source software. Finally, commons challenge the institutional habitus when they contest control over decision-making, as in the case of democratic innovation, but also over who controls and archives information, as in the case of Community Assessment. They further challenge the structural habitus of how to interpret the 'general interest', reframed by the idea of a 'social return' in the Civil Patrimony.

The diplomatic efforts towards the aforementioned 'disjunctive synthesis' are reflected in the institutional attempt to redefine an administrative subject for the social fabric, which entails a transformation of institutional ontology. The inclusion of social, non-legally recognised actors as administrative subjects was considered a 'temporary solution' in Barcelona, although this recognition could be introduced in Madrid's Public-Social Partnership Ordinance, as explained in Chapter 7. In Barcelona, the non-binary nature of the commons is integrated by public institutions in the cultural field, with 'minor key' processes that dissolve the differences between 'high' and 'low' culture, as in the programming of different city festivals. The municipalist diplomatic effort to reconcile differences is reflected in the asynchrony of institutional and social 'time', where political decisions in the social sphere are considered slower than in the executive branch of the City Council, due to the assembly methodology. On the other hand, operational processes are perceived as faster when they are carried out by social actors who do not have to deal with the public bureaucratic apparatus. A further break in the habitus of separation and segmentation can be found in the inclusion of public actors in community processes in the Civil Patrimony programme, which is reflected in the production of spaces for community processes in the institutional structures of Cultura Viva.

The empowerment of commoning processes affects social legitimacy when it prioritises the impact of community processes and values over the 'excellence' of its products, and the relevance of collaboration over competition, as shown in both cultural production and the Community Assessment. This increase in social legitimacy is also visible when empowerment measures include social 'expertise', as in Teatre Arnau's public tenders. The agency of the commons is empowered by politicians who are directly invested in the principles and values of social processes, as in the case of open source culture and democratic innovation, and when there is an existing political community that supports such agency, as in the case of both Decidim and the social centres. A new

instance of agency is developed in the overlap between different territories: the neighbourhood in the Casals de Barri, the city in festivals such as Grec, in Cultura Viva, or metropolitan policy with the local social and solidarity economy, in the Canòdrom. There is also a reframing of the public habitus that creates a new memory of what is possible. For example, in the administrative changes promoted by the actors involved in Cultura Viva, or the outreach for inclusivity in its programming team. In relation to public procurement, administrative 'hacks' include the use of infrastructure along the lines of Decidim's Social Contract.

8.3.4 Commoning strategies

While the previous chapter analysed the municipalist politics of commoning through four structural elements that challenge the logic and habits of the state-public: autonomy, overlapping, interdependence and multiplicity, in the analysis of practical examples of commoning programmes I have identified a set of strategies used to put these logics into practice: connectivity, dynamism, mutuality, permeability, protection, transparency, situatedness, self-management.

An example of **mutuality** can be found, for example, in how the Democratic Innovation programme reframed public-common partnerships as a mutual common-common coalition, by addressing questions of co-production, co-responsibility and co-governance. It is implemented through the online platform Decidim and on the site of the Canòdrom centre, both of which have been conceived as Open Public Institutions. Also, Decidim's Social Contract enacts a **protection** of the project's core commoning principles by incorporating ethical considerations in the contractual relation between social, private and institutional subjects by defining the shared obligations derived from the institutional use of their open source software. **Situatedness** is exemplified by the Civil Patrimony incorporation of the self-assessment criteria developed by the XES; which was based on the one developed by the XES - *Xarxa de Economia Social*. The assumption of self-determined parameters can be considered an example of the EoP expansion of obligations that are considered as attachments and not as burdens. Questions of **permeability** and **dynamism** arise from the organisation of political community-building across the three main projects of the programmes. The emerging communities around Teatre Arnau and Decidim strive to provide new 'mediating' relations between active actors that can impact the usual processes or introduce new elements to them. In Decidim, institutional and professional interests are incorporated in a political community that originated in the open software movement but has expanded its principles through a digital infrastructure for democratic participation. In the case of the Teatre Arnau, the labour-related demands from the cultural sector stand at the crossroads of professional and amateur work recognition and in the struggle for the sustainability of community culture production. This seemingly narrow sectoral demand provided a political basis for actors involved in community and neighbourhood culture. The access to different kinds of resources relate to **self-management** as a matter of legitimacy, recognition, regulation and reciprocity. Reciprocity, in the case of Civil Patrimony, occurs when the concept of social profit allows the incorporation of institutional "profitability" into the social activity. The recognition of social subjects in the Civil Patrimony is deemed a 'temporary non-scalable' tool that would need an impact to change the habitus, similar to the *Acción Cultural Viva* collaborative programming. Reframing how the administration recognises the communities requires that they be treated as actors with autonomy from the public

administration but with institutional agency. This agency is enacted, for example, in the 'hacking' of administrative procurement and contractual processes -see how the Teatre Arnau recognised alternative technical expertise that produces a new administrative habitus. Strategies of **transparency** are also implemented across the programmes, in the organisation of open assemblies and meetings, and the will to document the processes. Lastly, strategies of **connectivity** can be found in the articulation between the neighbourhood and the metropolitan scale but also between different fields of action. For example, the Public Premises scheme was extended from the Ciutat Vella in the heart of the city centre to the rest of the city. Its inclusion in the public-common ownership policy provides spaces for the Cultura Viva producers and is a potential field of expansion of the Civil Patrimony programme. The Teatre Arnau, based in the intersection of three neighbourhoods, expands its activities in the festivals with metropolitan, regional and national impact. Also, Canòdrom activities develop neighbourhood and city-wide community culture activities, connecting democratic innovation and cultural programmes.

This analysis of the commoning programmes in Barcelona as *transmediators* enacting strategies based on commoning logics will be used in the proposal of a becoming-common of the public presented in Chapter 10.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have mobilised contributions from interviews and workshops [compiled in Annex A] to map the elements that have actively participated in processes contributing to the construction of political communities, shared resources and self-governance in Barcelona. The first mapping has located human and non-human actors in their social-institutional habitat and identified the relationships between them, defining a meso-level of municipalist governance that I have called 'commoning programmes'. A second diagrammatic analysis has focused on these programmes to characterise what I have termed *transmediators*, acting between different habitats and fields, and to identify strategies of *meso-governance* that rely on trans-mediating actors to effectively reframe the state-public institutional logic into a public-common one.

First, I have presented the actors involved in the commoning processes and the institutional and social transformations in which they participate. Following the ANT framework, in this mapping I have included human actors - the individuals who participated and the social organisations included in the mapping - along with non-human actors who operate between the social hybrids of social commoning and the institutional processes of purification: the political desires that activate commoning efforts, the formal and informal regulations produced to organise and make sense of these processes, and the projects initiated by social and institutional instances. Secondly, these actors are located in a social-institutional gradient of habitats, where the connections between them define fields of action. I have argued that these elements create a relational mapping methodology capable of revealing overlapping interactions and what I have called programmatic constellations that operate at the meso-level of municipalist governance. I have also argued that this relational mapping identifies two new elements that are considered critical to the implementation of municipalist commoning processes. First, the presence of human and non-human actors as *transmediators* that provide translation across different habitats and fields. This element is based on

the ANT concept of 'mediators', extended to different points that use different tools, producing an extension of the work of translation into a multi-directional trans-mediation. Finally, I have focused on three programmatic constellations around Civil Patrimony, Cultura Viva and Democratic Innovation, with an analysis of the processes of transmediation, reframing and diplomacy, and a definition of the main strategies involved in such programmatic commoning. I have argued that these strategies are part of the becoming-common that contribute to the 'disjunctive synthesis' between elements of the state-public, public-common and common-collective domains.

As a result of this second phase of the iterative research process, Democratic Innovation emerged as the programme more directly involved in governance and working across scales, which are characteristics of interest for my becoming-common of the public proposal. Also, the governance of Decidim as a digital infrastructure - which already included local and regional administrations and a use that extended to the international sphere - had the ambition to expand and proliferate, especially through the collaboration with the Plan Estratégico Metropolitano de Barcelona - PEMB [Barcelona Strategic Metropolitan Plan] in its successful bid to become the European Capital of Democracy 2024-2025. These aspects provided a framework for my interest in the metropolitan scale and in working with the PEMB in the context of their collaboration with Decidim in co-designing metropolitan future scenarios, which I will present in the next chapter.

Chapter 9 - Planning Future Scenarios

Without stories of progress, the world has become a terrifying place. The ruin glares at us with the horror of its abandonment. It's not easy to know how to make a life, much less avert planetary destruction. Luckily there is still company, human and not human. We can still explore the overgrown verges of our blasted landscapes - the edges of capitalist discipline, scalability, and abandoned resource plantations. We can still catch the scent of the latent commons - and the elusive autumn aroma.

Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing, *The Mushroom at the End of the World: On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins*, 2015

Introduction

With the aim of asserting the relevance of the political project of the commons, as well as the pertinence of the municipalist experience to inform urban planning strategies, this chapter builds on the analysis of municipalist policies at the national level, presented in Chapter 7, and current commoning practices at the local level, presented in Chapter 8, to focus on future scenarios at the metropolitan level. As I argued in Chapter 2, metropolitan systems are heterogeneous, multi-level and interdependent systems, and for this research they are considered to be a more appropriate scale at which to compare different territories across Europe. The aim of this metropolitan forecasting is to identify the long-term transformative potential of urban commoning processes, using scenario building as a method to first develop possible, plausible and internally consistent future scenarios, and then to identify the elements involved.

In this chapter, I will first describe the status quo, based on the knowledge provided by commoning actors, and reflect on how the current boundary conditions might be transformed by the proliferation of existing practices that are seen as 'pockets of the future', asking what organisational forms these pockets might take. I will employ a forecasting exercise to identify potential transformative processes, using future scenarios as a method of analysis to address some of the concerns identified in the theory of municipalism, commons and planning: namely, the limitations of the local scale within the modern nation-state, the difficulty of scaling up the commons, and the crisis of urban planning as a tool to produce better living environments. Secondly, I will analyse this forecast using an adaptation of the 3H framework presented in Chapter 2, mobilised as a backcasting exercise into the intermediate horizon. I will identify the disruptive elements involved in the shift from current limits to future possibilities, for which a fourth, latent, horizon is proposed. Finally, I will discuss the potential planning tools for a future in common: the role of becoming in the proliferation of the commons, the relevance of disruptive and latent horizons, and the resonances between the strategies employed in different European territories. In this context, the exercise of forecasting and backcasting future scenarios imagines commoning as a relevant social practice in the year 2050. Based on the theoretical framework presented in Chapter 7, I was particularly interested in the 'signals, tracks, latencies and possibilities' involved in changing planning strategies.

9.1 Forecasting

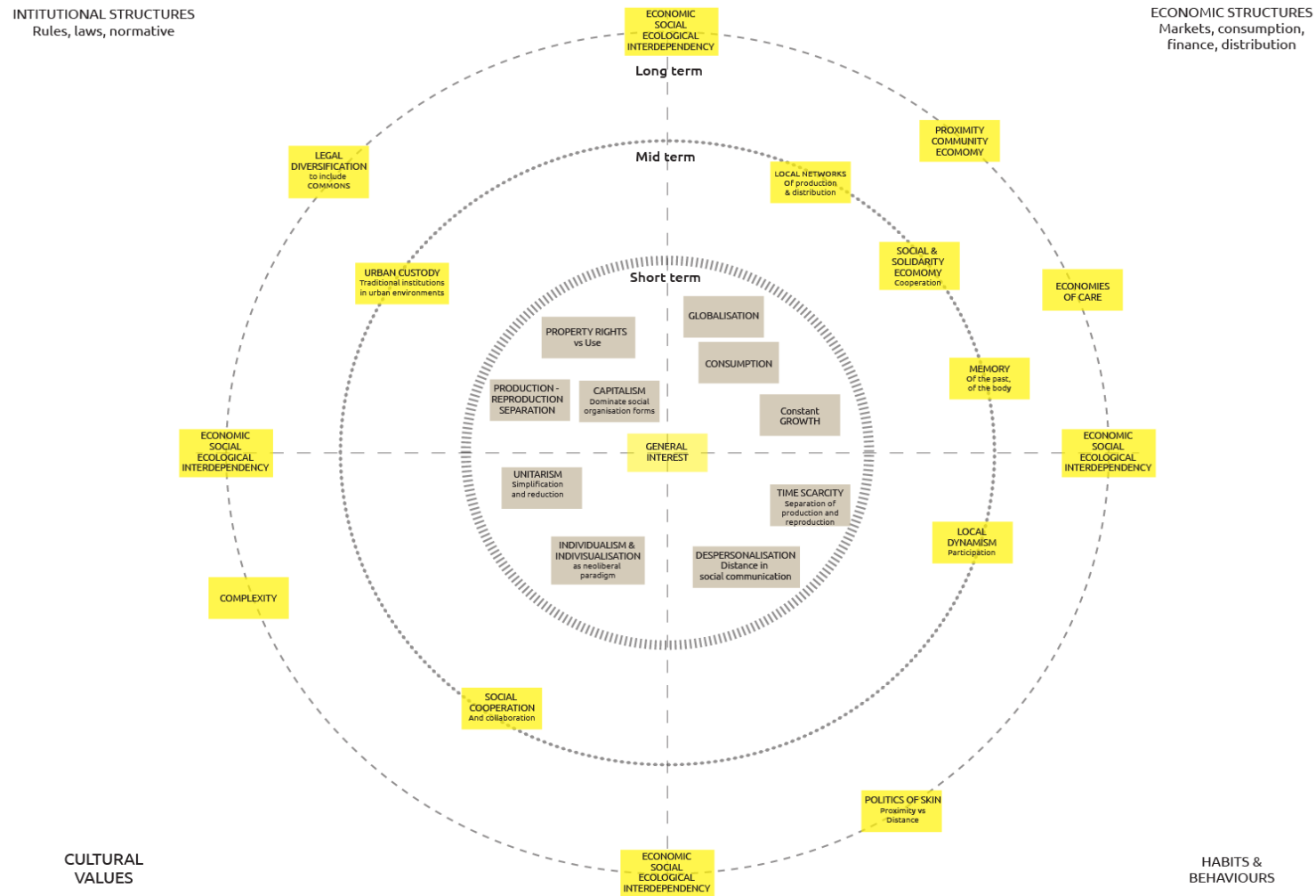
Scenarios are used to present plausible, possible and internally consistent ideas and arguments about "how the future may unfold, based on 'if-then' propositions" (European Environment Agency, Isoard, & Henrichs, 2005, p. 87). With these aspects in mind, this section assesses the needs and potential of past public-social collaborations, the boundary conditions of the public-commons articulation in the current situation. It also outlines a future scenario, where each aspect relates to future transformations and enabling conditions, and includes different contributions. As mentioned in Chapter 2, the inputs collected for the third phase include the results of collective mapping and future scenario exercises carried out in workshops and interviews.

9.1.1 Boundary conditions

Based on the reflections on the four horizons framework I have proposed and the theoretical questions presented in Chapter 5 about the capacity of commons to be 'produced' or planned, I will argue that the notion of boundaries emerges as a condition for the development of commons as social systems. For our purposes, the definition of 'boundary' would entail a membrane defined by practices, values, senses and challenges. A boundary 'direction' would translate the fields of empowerment within the commons into an effective social force that impacts on the environment formed by other systems - capital, state and ecological systems (De Angelis, 2017, p. 98).

In the interviews and collaborative mapping workshops that took place during the second phase of my fieldwork, we discussed what would be the most relevant factor to consolidate and maintain the commons so that they could respond to social needs "from a non-liberal perspective of the economy and offer different alternatives to recover the neighbourhood, and the city, for the people", as the Director General of the Social and Solidarity Economy of the Catalan Regional Government, put it [INT-JosepV]. Figure 9.1 shows the results of the first preparatory session for the Future Scenarios workshops, which addressed the tensions between the two main spheres of social organisation - state and market, in grey - and the potential development of commons - in yellow - in four areas: institutional structures, economic structures, habits and behaviours, and cultural values. In addition, this preparatory meeting discussed three critical aspects of the boundary conditions that could transform the common assumptions created by the state-market domains and the emerging commoning processes. First, a new vocabulary that could link 'commons' to a 'collective good' that can reproduce, expand and scale. The collective good would be linked to the common good, to well-being, to self-management of common pool resources, and to a new common sense that responds to commercial extractivism, but also to a 'Big Society' - David Cameron's flagship political programme in 2010 (Espiet-Kilty, 2016) - that promotes individual voluntarism to compensate for the withdrawal of the welfare state under austerity. Secondly, a tangible impact at the human level through policies based on 'proximity'. Recognising that some processes, such as the climate emergency, are not visible at the local scale or in the short term, and that collective needs need to be addressed across overlapping scales, types of action and communities, leads to the question of multiplicity and permeability. Finally, the need to overcome the impossibility of envisioning a future that is different and better than the present. This was perceived not as a 'crisis of imagination' but as a matter of *doxa*, or creed: the conventional wisdom and system of beliefs that shape what is possible, plausible, desirable and needed .

Figure 9.1: Public–Private–Commons boundary conditions



Source: Author, based on workshops inputs.

In the interviews with commoning practitioners in Barcelona, Belgrade, Berlin and Brussels, public institutions appear as bureaucratic, closed and opaque structures, with time frames that are not adapted to those of social processes. Public structures seem to be partitioned into departments that do not communicate with each other. For some areas and projects, public institutions need civil society organisations as partners, but also civil society's resourcefulness and desires to use the resources now owned by public institutions to their 'full social potential'. In his experience with environmental de-artificialisation projects in Brussels, researcher and activist Allan Wei states that:

The most basic condition [for commons proliferation] is the fact that public authorities still have a deficit in their operational abilities, and in fact, the commons is answering to some kind of structural weakness in public authorities and civil servants' experience. [INT-AllanW]

The interviews show that there is a widespread recognition of the lack of capacity of the state and the market to resolve the climate emergency. Practitioners across Europe believe that "the scenario is degrowth, the struggle for existing rights and adaptation" [INT-LaiaF] and that there is "a reality that is catching up with us: that we will have more and bigger problems and that commons will be one of the solutions" [INT-PredragM]. In contrast, civil society organisations are seen as having the right tools, not least because new disciplinary systems linked to new modes of production have increased "the capacity to collaborate, to inform, to mobilise and share enthusiasm, emotions and cognitive resources" [INT-XabierB]. Nevertheless, the central role of the state as a supporter of commoning processes is seen as a "need" [INT-VerennaL], both for commoning practices and for the institution [INT-LaiaF], which could - and should - be addressed by specific policy projects [INT -LotteS, INT JoaquinS].

9.1.2 Commoning frameworks

I will argue that strengthening the emerging urban commons means, among other things, fostering conditions of possibility organised around the three elements that make up commoning processes: communities, resources and governance. First, the need to create expansive political communities. Second, the centrality of access to material and immaterial resources - that is, space, money and time, but also organisational tools, policies, or knowledges that are currently held and exercised exclusively by the state. Third, the production of norms and frameworks for horizontal self-management with democratic control and participation.

At an operational level, this constellation of commoning needs is seen as requiring a new institutional cultural imaginary and a greater legitimacy for existing communities, as well as recognised and unrecognised actors, that produce a social fabric beyond bureaucratic spaces and actors. The possibility of a new institutional imaginary and legitimacy is based on a memory of processes that have contested, reappropriated and sustained the social fabric, made resources universally accessible and proved that public institutions can contribute, whether willingly or not. In the discussion, I found that the issue of shared resources was located along the social and solidarity economy and civic spaces. Here, a pre-existing community had already identified a co-governance model and sought to create, share and redistribute different types of resources: spatial, financial and epistemic. The issue of political communities was articulated around a spatial and emotional sense of territory, with proximity policies covering the spatial aspect, while the emotional was linked to

issues of memory, sense of community and other aspects covered by cultural initiatives. The issue of democratic governance was concerned with developing a model of open institutions that create spaces where communities apply particular decision-making processes to different kinds of resources, such as public land or buildings.

The underlying question was "how to articulate, how to make the leap of scale in the governance of these commons, because we are starting to see the limits of the current model", as Carol Romero, technologist and product owner of Decidim [INT-CarolR], pointed out. I took the three commoning programmes and projects in Barcelona, analysed in Chapter 8, as a basis for analysing these elements of commoning empowerment, where Teatre Arnau provided insights on the community, Can Batlló on the resources and Decidim on the governance.

Community

Teatre Arnau was promoted by a heterogeneous community and was seen as an outcome of the 'community culture' supported by the Cultura Viva programme. For obvious reasons, the 'community' plays a central role in generating a 'community culture', where it is both object and subject. From an administrative point of view, however, "the bare community, at a legal level, does not exist" [INT-RaquelP]. According to the leviathan logic of the modern nation-state, every collective must be represented by a legal figure - a condition that Madrid had circumvented, as we saw in Chapter 7, by changing the Register of Associations. In the Teatre Arnau, however, the community is not a fixed one, but an ongoing process to include as much support as possible, leading to a feeling among assembly members that 'there were never enough of us'. This sense of 'incompleteness' was seen as a strength in that there was always a perceived potential - and need - to be always "more" [INT-AndreaC].

Resource

Can Batlló, like many other social centres and community gardens, began as a demand for access to a resource - in this case, a 13,000 m² area of industrial buildings - for community-based projects, and is considered a best case of the Civil Patrimony. However, the Civil Patrimony objective of guaranteeing access to public assets for social actors depended on its ability to argue for the 'viability' of public-commons partnerships. This was done by bringing to life the concept of 'social return', which could be assessed through a 'Community Balance Sheet', a tool based on the social self-assessment developed by the Social and Solidarity Economy Network. This self-assessment generated two kinds of legitimacy: one for the social actors to use a public asset - in the case of Can Batlló, potentially for 50 years - and one for the city government to institutionalise such access as a 'commons'. Also, with the idea of social return, the city government proves the value of these projects within the institutional habitus and brings an internal deliberative legitimacy to granting social actors access to public assets. This double legitimacy relies on the ability of the Civil Patrimony programme to homogenise and regularise the multiple formats in which previous administrations had granted access to unused public municipal buildings and vacant land.

Governance

Decidim, as a self-managed tool based on open-source software that facilitates citizen participation in local governance, is considered a public-common infrastructure financed by the public

administration. As such, it had to involve institutional, social and technical actors at different levels of a wider governance: from local to regional, national and international; from developers to users, promoters and policy makers; from technical to social and political criteria. Decidim's governance is based on the experience of the Open-Source Software community. The exercise of applying open source principles to the institutional domain applies not only to the development of the Decidim software, but also to Decidim as an urban infrastructure linked to different communities: the political community seeking a democratic innovation, the productive community of software developers, and the different communities that use it. In this constellation, Decidim seeks to develop a prototype of an "open public institution" [INT-XabierB]: a nested system of meta, infra and supra communities and processes. Decidim as an infrastructure is both a tool, a software that is autonomous and self-managed, and an 'open public institution' that implements an interdependent governance involving different needs, actors and rules in a process of becoming common.

Emerging circuits of commoning

I will argue that in each of these experiences, one of the three commoning elements is consolidated through cooperation within institutional structures, while the other two remain as a concern under internal negotiations or a struggle that questions social and institutional protocols and habitus. The commoning elements are thus engaged in a virtuous circle of re-appropriation and consolidation, demand and displacement and questioning and contestation, in which none of the elements is taken for granted, yet they all feed into each other. Table 9.1 characterises the commoning elements in each of the programmes, their main initiatives and processes challenging state-public ontologies and protocols. The three dynamics of these processes are: the consolidation of re-appropriated commoning elements, the displacement of demands and requirements in social and institutional habitats, and the questioning of the role of the public as custodian of the common good.

<i>Table 9.1: Commoning elements. Role in consolidation, displacement and contestation strategies</i>			
Programme / Project	Consolidation	Displacement	Contestation
Cultura Viva <i>Teatro Arnau</i>	COMMUNITY Considered as object and as subject <i>Plural and in different territories</i>	GOVERNANCE Territorial proximity and affects <i>Co-governance is an ongoing process</i>	RESOURCE Availability of spaces and of recognition <i>The space and working conditions are causes</i>
Civil Patrimony <i>Can Batlló</i>	RESOURCE Access to public real estate assets <i>Fulfilled demand within a process</i>	COMMUNITY Different understandings of autonomy <i>Political community is not constituted</i>	GOVERNANCE Autonomy depends on co-responsibility <i>Co-governance as a struggle</i>
Democratic Innovation <i>Decidim</i>	GOVERNANCE Established Open Source protocols <i>Cooperation and interdependence</i>	COMMUNITY Who governs the governance <i>Political, technical and institutional</i>	RESOURCE Mix of private and public actors and wills <i>Space is granted as condition of existence</i>
<i>Source: Author, based on fieldwork in Barcelona</i>			

With this characterisation, I aim to illustrate the emergent nature of urban commons and how the communities, resources and governance involved have different levels of stability and are able to mobilise different aspects of the becoming-common of the public. In this analysis, I have characterised three types of actions. Consolidation are achievements that empowers the processes and enables cooperation with state-public institutions. Displacements take place in the negotiations with the public sense of the common good around collective needs that have not yet been satisfied and are already undergoing diplomatic efforts. Finally, contestation appears in the discrepancies with the more state-oriented parts of the public that challenge existing - not yet transformed - understandings of the roles and capacities of the different actors.

I will argue that considering the three elements of commoning as part of a dynamic process, rather than as a given, is one of the main characteristics of the resurgent urban commons. The analysis of the three programmes in Barcelona and their main projects offers a set of strategies used to activate the potential of each of the elements from different positions. The third phase of fieldwork aimed to explore these potentials beyond a single programme in a given municipality.

9.1.3 Future scenarios in common

The collaborative session of the future scenarios workshop was part of three complementary lines of work that share an interest in methodologies for co-creating transformation horizons and the tools to implement them in a specific time and space framework. As part of the iterative process of this research, the workshop was inspired by the collaboration between Decidim and the PEMB and the interest in extending the strategic planning process to a trans-local process using Decidim. This project was included in the Climate Emergency Actions of the first 'European Capital of Democracy' 23/24 as a 'democratic innovation for a democratic city' that 'focuses on "issues they have in common looking for collective responses to shared issues using a shared participation infrastructure" (Ajuntament de Barcelona, 2022, p. 42).

The workshop 'Communal Futures in the Barcelona Metropolitan Area' was the result of a collaboration between a) myself, as a researcher, who provided a framework based on my research on how to integrate commoning processes in planning, and the analysis from the first two phases of fieldwork; b) the technical office of the PEMB - Plan Estratégico Metropolitano de Barcelona [Barcelona Metropolitan Strategic Plan] and c) Elisabet Roselló, founding partner of Postfuturear, a strategic consultancy interested in systems-based strategic innovation and strategic planning in different dimensions. The PEMB developed the first metropolitan plan - still in force - in 1978, outlining the use, typology and infrastructure configurations for the Barcelona metropolitan area. However, in 2021, they started to draft the Barcelona Tomorrow Metropolitan Commitment (Pla Estratègic Metropolità de Barcelona, 2021), which included innovative participation and deliberation formats in the field of strategic planning, using the Decidim online platform and following the 'missions' approach proposed by the Italian-American economist Marianna Mazzucato (2018). The choice of 2030 as the target year for the Commitment responds to an institutional logic of commensurability with global frameworks such as the UN Agenda for Sustainable Development - established in 2015 (Esquivel & Sweetman, 2016) or the European Union 8th Environment Action Programme (2022), also designed with 2030 in mind. Strategically, such a date is almost short term, but it is a way to align policies at different scales, where European

regions, states and cities converge in a relatively near future, with a temporality closer to electoral cycles. In contrast, our future scenarios workshop proposed the year 2050, a date widely used in discussions on climate change and the environmental and energy crisis. Importantly, it was the limit to achieve net-zero carbon emissions in the models that limit to 1.5°C the rise in global temperatures in the special report of the IPCC (2022), and the date assumed by the Net-zero emissions agreement (United Nations). It is also used by the private sector, as in the influential Four Plausible Futures report by Arup (2019) Setting 2050 as the horizon for transformation also helped to create a space for participants to imagine less immediately feasible outcomes that could potentially relieve anxiety than a closer target date.

The workshop was held on 8 February 2023, with a preparatory meeting on 18 January 2023 and a follow-up meeting on 11 July 2023. The workshop session was attended by researchers, consultants, professionals, technicians and public managers from the Barcelona Region, the University of Girona, the Vrije Universiteit Brussel, the Urban Planning Department of the Barcelona City Council, Decidim, the Communal Action Office and the director and members of the PEMB. The workshop proposed the specific time-space framework of 2050 in two different municipalities of the Barcelona Metropolitan Area: Terrassa, a former industrial city with more than 200,000 inhabitants and an area of 70.2 km², and Montcada i Reixac, a semi-rural municipality with 35,000 inhabitants and an area of 23.34 km². The two sites were chosen to reflect the diversity of metropolitan areas.

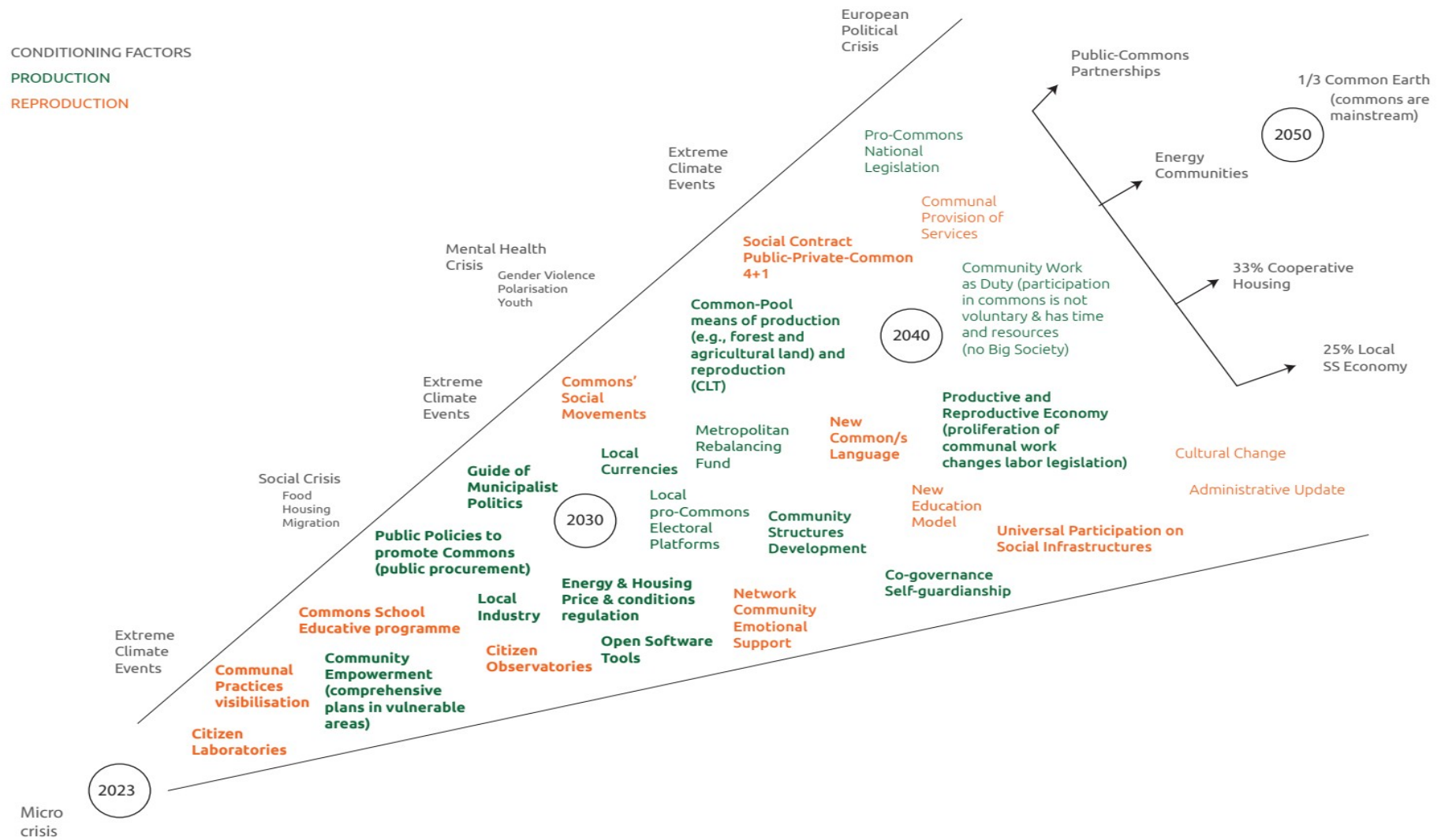
Following Elisabet Roselló's warning that the exercise of imagining 'positive futures' is not a problem of imagination, but of plausibility and of beliefs, the workshop participants formulated the following **boundary conditions**:

1/ The existence of long-term elements such as global capital flows, the platform economy and digitalisation, social inequalities at planetary and local levels, an individualistic culture with political disaffection and polarisation, and insufficient public response to the challenges faced. These aspects are seen as so deeply rooted in society that it is almost 'impossible' or 'implausible' that they would disappear altogether. These conditions recognise that the proposed transformations will affect only part of society, while other parts will continue to operate under the logic of the state and the market.

2/ At the same time, there is enough experience and accumulated knowledge to believe that it is possible to develop projects along the lines of what the Ecuadorian and Bolivian constitutions call '*buena vida*' [good life], based on a plurality of mass media, time management with a collective, common good, commitment, a new distribution of reproductive and care work, reconnection with nature and less consumerism.

3/ Although the possibility of change is often seen as being triggered by a single major event - such as the comet in the film *Don't Look Up* (2021) - or a moment of 'awakening' - such as the heatwave in the novel *The Ministry for the Future* by US writer Kim Stanley Robinson (2020) - workshop participants envisioned a series of micro-crises relating to climate, housing, food, migration and health, affecting not only local contexts but also the wider European scale.

Figure 9.2: Barcelona Metropolitan Region 2050 Scenario



Source: Author. Based on the *Communal Futures in Barcelona Metropolitan Area* Workshop

The problems inherent in the incremental nature of the climate emergency were addressed through two main questions. First, how the proliferation of communal experiences could produce a mental shift towards the commons, creating a critical mass capable of displacing the predominantly private, market-driven logics of production and creating the material conditions of possibility of the commons. Second, how new collective forms of knowledge and cultural shifts could generate alternative and altering supporting structures for the mental and physical health emergencies produced by the coming polycrisis. Within these boundaries, the different phases of this speculative exercise shown in Figure 9.2 above are:

2023 - 2030: We see an expansion of existing practices of knowledge production and public-social co-management. In terms of knowledge production, this phase sees the development of citizen science, popular schools and education - from existing citizen laboratories to formal commons education programmes. In terms of co-management, it goes far beyond the usual examples of social centres, inspired by the oft-mentioned experience of water management in Terrassa or the use of open software governance tools for infrastructures with extended territorial links. The generalisation of common pool resources - such as forest and agricultural land held in common under customary law - is combined with collective urban services, such as housing under community land trusts and similar schemes, effectively combining collective production and reproduction.

2030 - 2040: There is a shift in the role of the state as provider of essential services that guarantee the material conditions of urban life - such as housing and energy technology. In this phase, measures range from price control formulas to autonomous services provided by cooperatives. Here, the creation of a new language of the commons, including principles of mutual aid and solidarity, and a new educational model is seen as a condition for the legal recognition of the commons and the development of self-organisation, public-social co-responsibility and reciprocity principles to be enacted in public policies. Extended policies to promote the commons in urban services would then be developed by experienced local pro-commons platforms and published, for example, as Guides of Municipalist Politics. Systems of mutual aid in social reproduction will consolidate formally 'marginal' practices such as community health or collective emotional support.

2040 - 2050: There is a shift towards community economies as socio-economic processes and a detachment from the financial economy, the expansion of alternative economies such as social and solidarity economy initiatives and the subversion of waged and unwaged relations through basic income schemes. There will be a nation-wide legal recognition of the commons at supra-local level with national pro-commons legislation and a collective governance of 'community structures'. Existing co-governance of resources and self-guardianship of rights will develop towards a generalised proliferation of collective work practices able to change labour legislation and affect the productive and reproductive economy. Communal provision of services will be based on universal participation in social infrastructures where community work is a social duty and participation in commons is not voluntary but part of a system of reciprocity that provides time and resources.

For the final **2050 scenario**, participants were asked to envision a commoning future scenario in the two metropolitan municipalities through the lens of the strands proposed by the Urban Commons Collective (Akbil et al., 2021): governance, socialities, infrastructures, localities, economy, ecology and knowledge, as shown in Table 9.2.

Table 9.2: Future scenarios workshop strand analysis

Montcada i Reixac	Terrassa
<p>Governance / Decision-making Assembly of communal lands: Irrigators community Land community 1 local association (Athenaeum) 1 food coop Catering coop</p> <p>Socialities / Socialisation Model Diversity – as in the municipality Community food Harvest celebrations linked with cultivated areas Share other resources beyond food Local currency as social elements Artisanal beer Children activities Other diversity aspects around food</p> <p>Infrastructures Spaces: store, kitchen, Athenaeum Agricultural park legal figure, internal regulations or regenerative agriculture Ethic Code <i>Decidim</i> for assemblies & decision-making 4+1 rules Contracts – ethic public procurement</p> <p>Localities / Environment Connection with other metropolitan initiatives Transformation of the agricultural park Local currency dynamization</p> <p>Ecology / External resources Access to land through collective land pooling Community tasks (the +1 time slot) Water (river +wells) with irrigation community</p> <p>Economy / Resources Self-consumption + sale in local market Integration in local currency circuit Kitchen service for schools & public services Community compost Surplus used in jams and ferments Collective selling point</p> <p>Knowledge Documentation & systematisation of processes Training Exchange with other coops Rotation of roles Good practices awards Story telling Educational degree in agroecology</p>	<p>Governance / Decision-making Internal regulation 3 different assembly spaces Stability through continuity Collaboration Ethics Code – rotation, no double positions, recognition Reciprocity State regulation Co-governance Law co-production/co-creation</p> <p>Socialities / Socialisation Model <hr/></p> <p>Infrastructures Public-communal infrastructures Open Source software services Energy Community Internet Community Community Education Infrastructure</p> <p>Locality / Environment <hr/></p> <p>Ecology / External resources Sustainability of basic needs</p> <p>Economy / Resources Public & Common resources – Communal service (education) Autonomous cooperative Community contribution (non-monetary) Legal and social recognition (symbolic capital)</p> <p>Knowledge <hr/></p>

Source: Author. Based on inputs from the future scenarios workshop.

9.2 Backcasting

Based on the results of the workshop, I carried out a desk analysis as a backcasting method using an adaptation of the Three Horizons framework presented in Chapter 2. This framework combines the constraints of the actual boundary conditions, the transformations pointed out by the 'pockets of the future' embedded in the present, and the potential future situation to form strands of reality - here called 'horizons'. This backcasting exercise allowed me to incorporate the 'pragmatic learning' of activists and practitioners from previous research phases. The key advantage of this horizons framework is that, unlike other scenario-building methods, it does not distinguish between competing realities but between the different weights of three coexisting horizons.

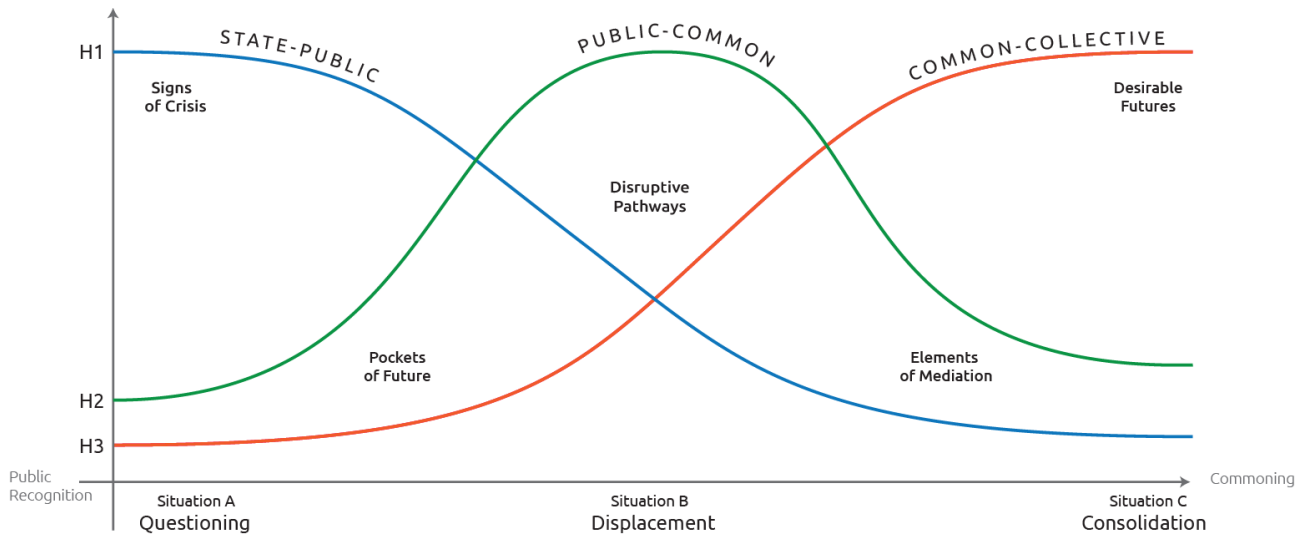
9.2.1 One-Third-Commons Horizons

The horizons framework used for backcasting provides an 'orientating heuristic' (Schaal et al., 2023) for identifying patterns of change and linking current possibilities to a proposed commoning scenario, here called 'One-Third-Commons'. According to the 3H initial framework, each of the three horizons presented different social organisations as hegemonic in the collective production and reproduction of metropolitan systems.

This framework (Curry & Hodgson, 2008) assumes that we live in a world in crisis where voices are beginning to challenge the underlying assumptions of the nation-state in horizon 1 [H1]. This crisis is opening up space for a transformative horizon 3 [H3] that is seen as inevitable, although there are differing views on the nature of the change required. In the near future, the limits of the current situation are more evident, but there is still a lack of concrete and generally accepted solutions to develop the necessary changes. Although in horizon 2 [H2] new social and digital technologies, alternative social institutions and economic models have already been developed, there is a lack of technical and material resources, social consensus and broad political agreements. This situation creates two challenges for H2 to replace the previously hegemonic H1. The first is to develop and connect existing H3 experiences and demonstrate that they would work on a meaningful scale. The second is to reinforce the emerging values and vision associated with the desired future and to reframe the values that have informed the social system in H1. If successful, a new 'dominant system' will emerge from a process that retains complexity so that it is not possible to describe the precise form such a system will take.

I named the transformative future scenario proposed in the workshop, shown in Figure 9.3, a 'One-Third Commons Earth' after the 'Half-Earth Communism' project (Vettese & Pendergrass, 2022). In this scenario, commoning practices would be an effective, recognised third mode of organisation, alongside private and public, with its own legislative body. In this scenario, commoning practices take care of a third of the resources, institutional bodies and social relations. According to the 3H framework, the three potential horizons involved in this transformation would be H1 with 'business as usual' State-Public Procedures, H2 with innovative Public-Common Partnerships and H3 with Common-Collective Practices.

Figure 9.3: Commoning horizons of change



Source: Author interpretation of Sharpe et al. (2016)

H1 – State–Public Procedures

The state-public horizon constitutes the dominant form of management of collective resources in the present situation. The structural strength and robustness of public institutions is worth preserving and learning from, as social structures must also generate their habitus towards institutionalisation. The remaining elements of the State-Public horizon in the desirable future will act as connectors to the public domain as guarantors and mediators of universal access to collective resources.

H2 – Public–Common Partnerships

Emerging public commons strategies transform elements of state-public legitimacy as guardians of the common good, creating public recognition and validation of existing commoning experiences. The new public-commons legitimacy created is linked to what Stengers calls 'collegiality' [INT-BenedikteZ]: the ability of each community of practitioners to define requirements and obligations. Elements of public-common assemblages remain in the desirable future as *transmediators* in processes of public-common co-creation.

H3 – Common–Collective Practices

A horizon where urban commons are a hegemonic form of social organisation follows the anti-globalisation cry that 'another world is possible'. It begins with prefigurative initiatives for alternative provision of urban systems - housing, care, local economy, mobility. This new paradigm is already present in existing, recognised commoning practices, which constitute veritable pockets of the future embedded in the present, as they struggle to proliferate within the adverse boundary conditions maintained by the state-public and market-private boundaries.

In this analysis, I consider that the different combinations of hegemonies created by the intersections of the three horizons define a process that is not deployed as *chronos*, that is. the sequential passage of time marked in the original diagram as T1, T2, T3, but as *kairos*, as relevant periods of time with specific characteristics, corresponding to what I have called 'situations' - SA, SB, SC - in which opportunities arise.

- **Situation A** [SA] challenges current state-public procedures in the "business as usual" horizon [H1] and shows signs of crisis.

- **Situation B** [SB] displaces state-public hegemony [H1] with a horizon on innovation reinforced by public-common partnerships [H2] based on shared futures with the common-collective [H3]

- **Situation C** [SC] consolidates desirable futures based on emerging patterns [H3] and incorporates the remaining elements of mediation from state-public [H1] and common-collective [H2].

In my analysis, I have defined the non-consecutive but related situations as SA - Contestation of challenging conditions, SB - Disruption by transformation and SC - Consolidation of plausible futures. These three situations incorporate aspects of challenge, contestation and disruption, informed the role of challenge and diplomacy in the Ecology of Practices assigned by Isabelle Stengers (2005), the role of disruption in fostering latent commons introduced by Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing (2015), and the role of plausibility in the production of operational imaginaries pointed out by Isabel Roselló during the Future Scenarios workshop.

9.2.2 Disruptive strategies

Based on analyses of the assumed 'One-Third Commons' scenario, I will argue that the disruptive nature identified by Tsing (2015) is a critical element in the proliferation of latent commons. In her account, the disruption is triggered by the varying commercial value of matsutake mushrooms, but I will argue that similar disruptions apply to other forms of collectivisation. Not just as what the 3H model calls a 'world in transition' capable of transforming the status quo (Iwaniec et al., 2021), but as a necessary condition that cuts across all three situations. The order of the argument will follow a forecast-backcasting logic, as described in the Three Scenarios framework, rather than a linear one. I will first present the contesting of the limits of current boundaries [SA], then the desirable consolidation of emerging processes [SC], and finally the disruptive situations [SB] that would make this trajectory possible.

Situation A – Contesting present conditions

In the initial situation [SA], there are experiences of the emergence of autonomous common-collective processes [H3] and public-common partnerships [H2] that challenge state-public procedures and the role of public institutions as custodians of collective resources and arbiters of the common good and general interest [H1]. In this situation, social and institutional actors recognise the limitations and shortcomings of the public institutions of the modern nation-state as signs of crisis. In a potential process of becoming common, the identification of shared values would amount to a constituent process.

I will argue that SA transforming potential requires the identification of a supra-local collective subject to identify the elements of change, to agree on them, to provide mechanisms for debating

their implications and implementation, and to validate possible implementations. Some of the names associated with this type of collective entity are 'Democratic Confederation', in Rojava (Mazzucotelli, 2015), 'Commune', in the proposal of an extended Occupy Wall Street (O'Brien & Abdelhadi, 2022), or new terms such as 'Bolo'bolo' (P. M, 1983) and I have named such an entity, as the 'collective'.

Situation C – Consolidation of plausible futures

Fast forward to the final consolidation stage [SC], the envisioned operations within the desirable future 'in common' can be described by generalising the rules - procedures, protocols and regulations - that are already in place in the commoning 'pockets of the future'. Following the characterisation proposed in the workshop, the rules identified in the different forecasting exercises - workshops and interviews - are organised around governance, socialities, infrastructures, localities, economy, ecology, knowledge and governance issues, as presented in Table 9.3:

Table 9.3: Commoning strands, strategies and protocols

Commoning Strand	Strategies	Protocols
<i>Governance and decision-making</i>	Collaboration	Combination of actors
	Reciprocity	
	Ethical Codes	Time limitation
	Inter-Recognition	Rotation
<i>Socialities and social dynamics</i>	Pluralism	
	Diversity	
	Inclusivity	
	Co-responsibility	Catalyst responsibilities
	Transparency	
<i>Infrastructures and provision of services</i>	Co-governance	Open Source Software services
		Citizen Observatories
	Collective Ownership	Community Land trust
<i>Localities</i>	Supra-local connections	
<i>Ecology and environmental conditions</i>	Collective access	Common-Pool
		Energy Communities
	Self-Sustainability of basic needs	Food sovereignty

Table 9.3 (cont.)

Commoning Strand	Strategies	Protocols
<i>Ecology and environmental conditions (cont.)</i>	Community economy	Local currency
		Cooperatives
<i>Knowledge</i>	Documentation of processes	
	Training	
	Dissemination	
	Knowledge Exchange	Rotation of roles
		Educational courses

Source: Author's production, based on the strands defined in the Urban Commons Handbook (Urban Commons Collective, 2022).

In this situation, common-collective practices [H3] have become mainstream within the collective production-reproduction sphere. However, they coexist with some residual elements of public-common partnership [H2], acting as *transmediators* of public-common co-governance and co-production of supra-local processes and projects. Elements of state-public institutional procedures [H1] remain in the desirable future as a way of fostering both collective and state obligations towards the common good:

I think what we have learnt in municipalism is that the community is stronger when it has an alliance in the institution, which would not be able to scale or multiply so much on its own. And that public administration achieves much more when there are actors who push it. [INT-LaiaF].

The purpose of including potential 'protocols' in this analysis is twofold: it serves as an example of how the rules have been applied in past and ongoing practices, and as a catalogue of future implementations. In this analysis, protocols are the most firmly established level of commoning organisation, dependent on the needs, limitations and potential of each initiative, while protocols are the explicit form of habitus that requires rituals to be performed.

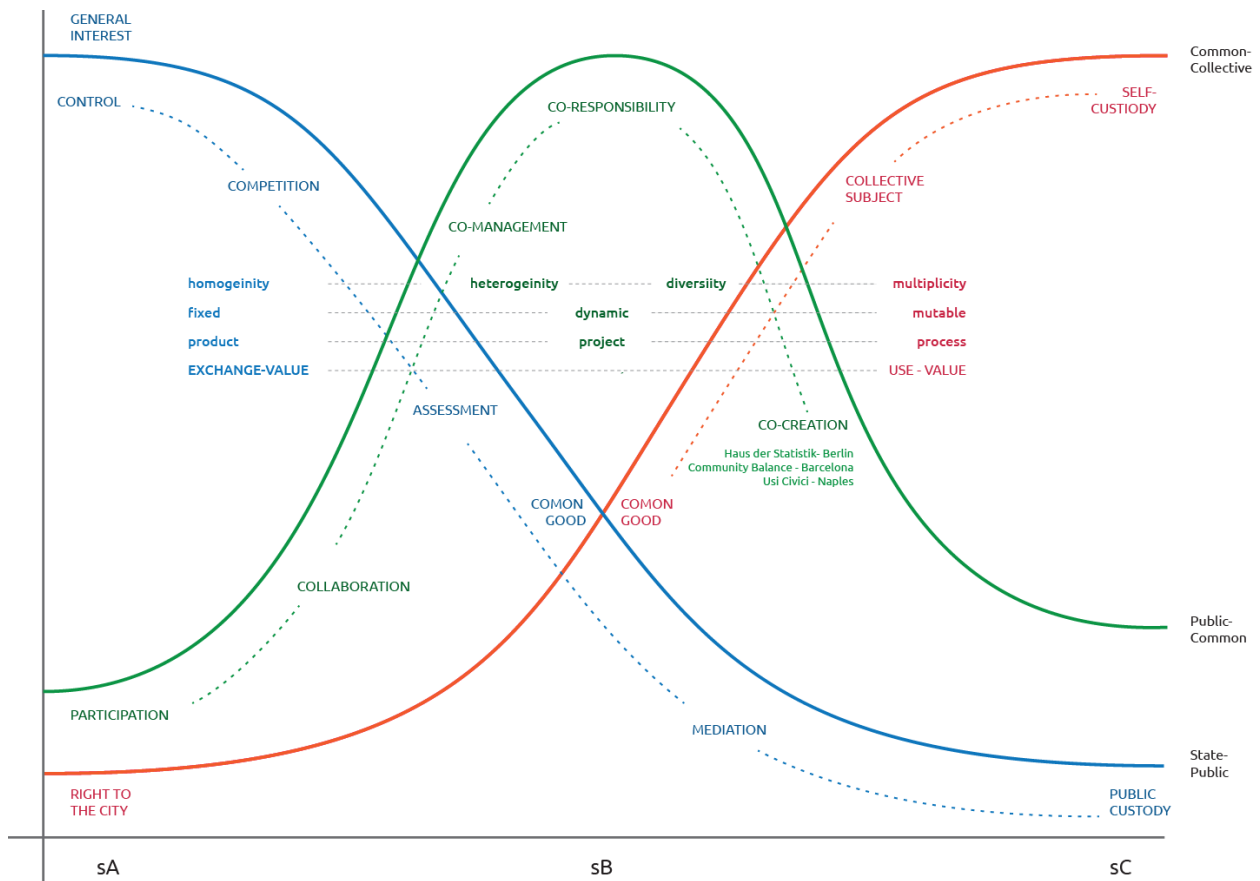
Situation B – Displacement of disruptive innovation

According to the backcasting method, from the initial and a target situation outlined above, the intermediate situation [SB] is derived. In this situation, in response to the crisis of the nation-state, emerging public-common processes [H2] become so hegemonic that they are capable of stripping the state-public procedures and administrative structures [H1] of their habitus elements and of promoting common-collective practices [H3]. This situation is the basis for an analysis of the underlying principles identified in the processes of negotiation and cooperation, and the elements that shift the understanding of the public and common spheres.

9.2.3 Commoning horizons: the 4H framework

In the 3H framework, the apex of the public-common horizon and the elements around it are considered the 'triangle of change' within the three horizons. However, I will argue that change as a process extends beyond this centrality. The proposed hegemony of the horizon [H2] is based on the pragmatic learnings of 'what works and how' as experienced in the negotiation processes initiated in Barcelona around emerging urban commons initiatives. These negotiations addressed unresolved issues and took place in institutional spaces where municipalist political will had not yet overcome technical habitus. Instead, social actors sometimes pushed the limits of the institutional and political capacity of state-public institutions, or the political-social transformations generated by the seeds of common-collective processes ended up confronting and affecting a shared social consensus of what is possible or not. The hypothesis of the Third Commons Earth scenario, shown in Figure 9.4, is that these negotiations - as a kind of 'micro-engineering' [INT-VerenaL] - can induce changes in the state-public institutional fabric that resonate and empower commons initiatives.

Figure 9.4: Strategies in 'commoning horizons'



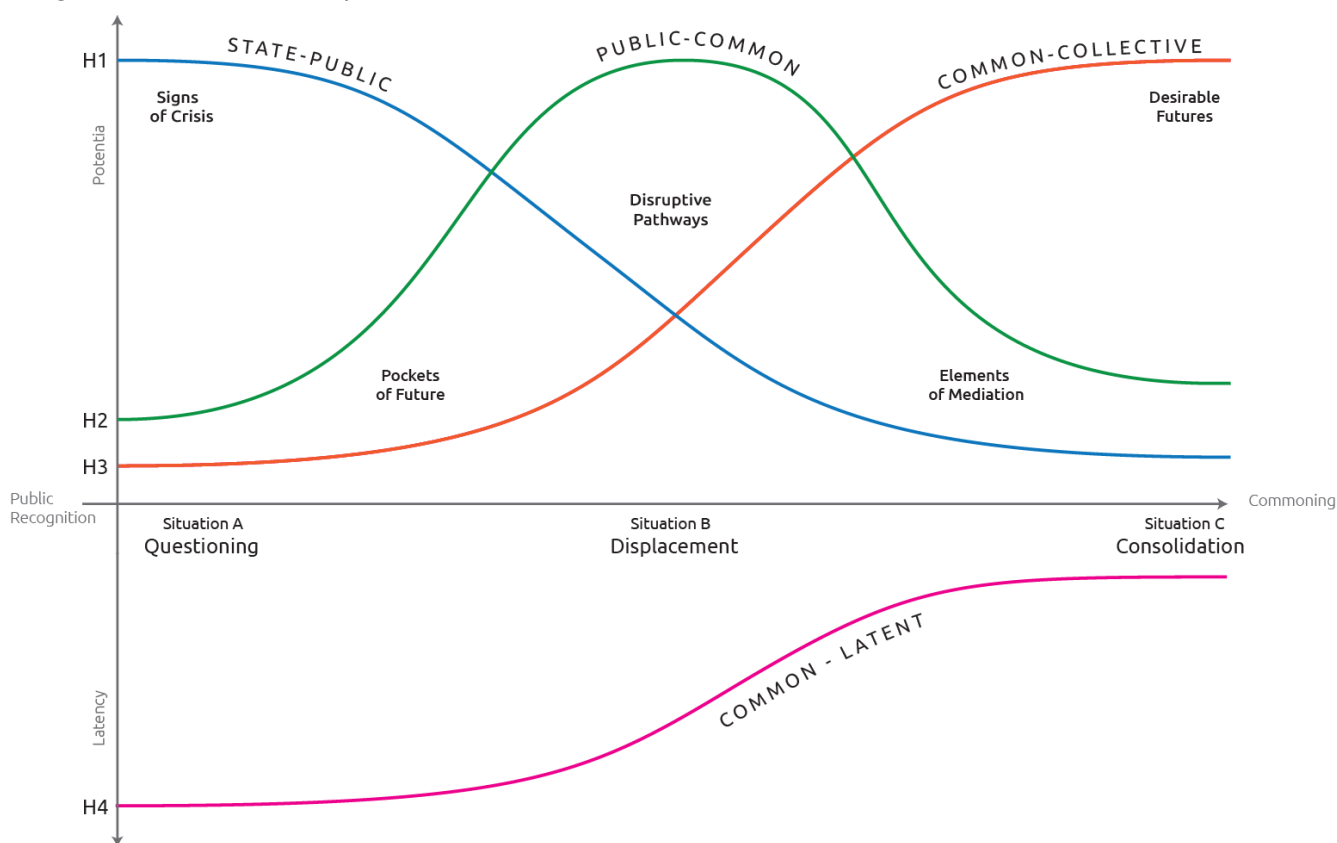
Source: Author interpretation of fieldwork findings following the Three Horizons Framework (Sharpe et al., 2016)

Among the disruptive strategies employed by the public-common [H2] and the elements of the state-public [H1] and the common-collective [H3] that they affect in the intermediate situation [SB], two sets of negotiations stand out. The first is about which resources can be transformed into commons - in a desirable and justifiable way - and how to introduce co-responsibility and co-

supervision as part of self-governance. In the second, community appears as external to the public ontology. While state-public institutions are urged to recognise communities, the negotiation of who constitutes them, or how they should be defined and expanded, remains an internal process. In Situation A, public-common partnerships were possible thanks to a prior transformation in the relationship with state structures - as we will see in the next section, from participation to collaboration to co-management, from negotiation to disruption. A dual strategy of cooperation with the state-public in a becoming-common of the public and a consolidation of the common through a becoming-institution of the collective.

In considering the planning elements required to promote the commons, a horizon framework would need to include elements that operate as a-modern hybrids: the latent commoning processes that are not yet legible and 'visible' to planning structures. I therefore propose a Four Horizons framework to include a common-latent [H4] alongside the existing state-public [H1], the desired common-collective [H3] and the disruptive public-commons [H2]. This fourth horizon, shown in Figure 9.5, introduces the possibility of building hegemonic common-collective processes not only by depleting and transforming the institutional forms of the state-public, but also through latent "entanglements that might be mobilised in common cause" (Tsing, 2015, p. 135).

Figure 9.5: Five Horizons framework



Source: Author re-interpretation of the Three Horizons framework

I will argue that the main process behind the emergence of latent commons is their consolidation through reassembly: emerging commons stabilise and feed into the becoming-institution of the collective as empowerment, and foster processes that are here and now in the 'trouble' posed by the

Anthropocene, Capitalocene and Plantationocene (Haraway, 2015). Latent commons are not visible to a public gaze that divides social processes into public, private and the use of non-productive spaces. Nor is it possible to incorporate them into the social fabric without losing control of a process of transformation as a "political, social, and public negotiation, occurring within complex adaptive systems" (Curry & Hodgson, 2008, p. 7).

9.3. Commoning the future

As we saw in Chapter 7, municipalist prefigurative politics aimed to define an alternative set of values, protocols, imaginaries and terminologies that had to connect with existing material and immaterial structures while defining a new horizon of change. In this section, I will argue for a characterisation of the horizon of change as a 'future in common', based on three assumptions: 1) in complex urban territories, as Stavrides noted in the conference organised by Lines of Flight at The University of Sheffield, "in order to survive, commons have to grow" (Stavrides, 2021, np, my transcription). This means that there can be no inward processes of commoning without outward processes of becoming-common; 2) the possibility of such becoming requires a change in the relationship with public institutions as custodians of the common good - a change that can be enacted through disruption; and 3) one of the aspects of this becoming is the resonance between different situations and locations produced by mutual learnings and shared understandings.

9.3.1 No commoning without a becoming-common

This strategic position makes potential planning for the commons disruptive in that it does not - only - oppose state-driven modernist planning, but mobilises desires and potentials through the empowerment and fostering of prefigurative forms of commoning. Municipalist experiences in the 'cities of change' illustrate what such prefigurative planning might look like, most notably in Barcelona, where the city cannot grow any further outwards and the city government has had to try alternative forms of urban regeneration instead. In the commoning processes mapped in Chapter 8, we have seen how municipalist processes transform a given situation through three elements: by transforming fields of intervention with overlapping needs and desires, by deploying strategic vectors as supporting programmes for these disruptive transformations, and by promoting particular projects as nodes where locally driven interventions can have a city-wide impact.

As we have seen in the analytical framework of Chapter 3, Isabelle Stengers defines the final element of her 'ecology of practices' as a fostering that actualises technologies of belonging into a becoming. Becoming is a concept developed by Deleuze and Guattari that operates as a 'function of an open system' (Massumi, 1996): it activates desires and produces a subjectification capable of resisting coercive power. The subjectivity transformation of becoming is linked to narratives and storytelling as "significant figurations of the kind of subjects we are in the process of becoming" (Braidotti, 2003, p. 21). In *The Carta Magna Manifesto*, Peter Linebaugh proposed turning the noun 'commons' into a verb: 'commoning', as a statement that the articulation of the three elements as a 'social relationship' (Linebaugh, 2008, p. 279) is as important as their presence. Commoning is concerned with the production and reproduction of existing commons. But I will argue that in the latent commons that - like African cities - are 'yet to come' (Simone, 2004), in urban environments, where the memories and practices that link production and reproduction have been lost to

institutional eyes, but are still alive in everyday relations and environments of mutual learning, enjoyment and support, there is no commoning without a becoming-common.

The elements of the becoming-common of the public involved in disruptive planning would be: a) organised, political communities capable of reaching beyond their own limits; b) material and immaterial public resources - space, money, time and tools, policies, knowledge - transferred by the state to public-common initiatives for common-collective processes; and c) norms and frameworks for horizontal self-management based on democratic access, governance and control, involving three processes of becoming:

a) Becoming-community - We could see such becoming in the open spirit of the community at Teatre Arnau, which strives to continually 'become more', embracing the mutating nature of unlikely compositions, open process and incompleteness. "No commons without a community," said Maria Mies (2014). However, existing urban commoning processes show that communities do not always precede them. They are also constantly evolving and in the making. Recognising who or what the community is seems to be the main difficulty for those within it. Concerns about its nature as a functional community - as assumed in the neo-institutional model - or as a political one - as reclaimed in the neo-Marxist model - were deployed in the case of Can Batlló, where the community is seen as self-centred [INT-LaiaC] and not constituted [INT-Arcadia]. Despite the existence of a formalised assembly, there is a perceived lack of a shared strategic vision of how such a space affects the city in general. A second concern arose in Decidim in the overlap between the political and operational communities, which made it easy to define but difficult to identify the open source aspect, which relies on shared pre-existing codes. The development of the code as software, on the other hand, opened the project to new members.

b) Becoming-resource - Can Batlló offers a glimpse of the becoming of several types of resources simultaneously: by its sheer size, the space provides a ground for economic, educational, social and organisational activities. In this case, the formalisation of the commons beyond marginal experiences, the use of vacant, derelict wastelands and the incorporation of material and immaterial assets into commoning processes is a kind of growth that is seen as 'profitable'. The logic of 'perfect property', which does not distinguish between public and private logic in the management of assets, requires a cost-benefit justification from the public institution, where social production is often dismissed as 'unaccountable'. In order for social actors to make use of public resources, they have to justify their value in relation to two dominant logics: a) to the logic of the nation-state, they have to prove their value as subjects through their commitment to the community and the territory, and b) to the logic of the market, they have to prove their efficiency and profitability. I will argue that the becoming-resource can be the trigger for politicisation and mobilisation over the social control of such assets - as is often the case with water - or over the recognition of the material and labour conditions that make social production and reproduction processes possible - as in the case of the Teatre Arnau. Resources can then be the ground that defines a community when it is constituted by those who have "skin in the game" [INT-MarcN] and therefore cannot do without them.

c) Becoming-governance - We have seen how the complexity of the actors and administrative layers involved in Decidim requires a multi-layered open governance with some key characteristics: the autonomy of digital, social and institutional technologies, the interdependence of actors and

scales, and a non-zero-sum logic where different kinds of capital cannot be accumulated, but are always redistributed. I will argue that the most salient characteristic of this triple governance is the assumed interdependence between the open software project, the municipalist political project of 'real democracy' as demanded by the 15M movement, and the institutional responsibility to support and use a new kind of infrastructure. It is this interdependence with infrastructures that transforms the public-common partnership into a common-common partnership with public, private and social actors - local and regional governments, associations, cooperatives, companies and foundations - who share the same principles.

9.3.2 Alter-planning the commons

I will call '*alter-planning*' to the possibility of re-imagining the urban future and 'making it happen'. As outlined in Chapter 6, such an alternative and altering - that is, transforming - process would employ a methodology based on the experience of existing insurgent, feminist, pluriversal and municipalist planning. It adopts principles of interdependence, embodiment, resilience and openness. More importantly, *alter-planning* practices seek to transform the way planning is used, adopting a processual approach that avoids blueprinting. I will argue that such an alternative and transformative planning process, like the urban commons, would be a resurgent practice. I will also argue that by analysing the situated processes taking place in Barcelona, it is possible to identify strategies of commons proliferation and insights into the public role in democratic planning for the 'common good'.

I have argued before that the Spanish experience was able to develop processes of the becoming-common, affecting public ontologies that govern resources, legal recognition and modes of co-governance. But none of this would have been possible without the Spanish 15 May movement. The 15M resonated globally through the occupations, acting as an external disruptive element rooted in something shared between the commons and the public, even if not always enacted by the latter. The 15M's core values of democracy and the common good spilled over into the possibility of a municipalist institutional attack that expanded internationally, such as the Fearless Cities meeting and the European Municipalist Network project. In analysing the situated processes taking place in Barcelona, I argue that it is possible to identify strategies of commons proliferation and insights into the public role in democratic planning for the 'common good'.

According to German urban planner in Berlin [INT-PlannerBER], the common good - Gemeinwohl in German - was an essential concept included in the European Union New Leipzig Charter (Informal Ministerial Meeting on Urban Affairs, 2020) promoted by the German presidency and adopted as a policy framework document to guide national and regional urban policies within the EU. This Urban Charter focus on 'the transformative power of cities for the common good' states that: "Public authorities should act in the interest of public welfare, providing services and infrastructure for the common good" (Informal Ministerial Meeting on Urban Matters, 2020, p. 6), where 'inclusive, affordable, safe and accessible' urban services include health care, social services, education, cultural services and heritage, housing, water and energy supply, waste management, public transport, digital networks and information systems, public spaces, green and blue infrastructure and cultural heritage.

This concept of *Gemeinwhol* was also reclaimed in the Berlin referendum on the expropriation of big landowners, and has led to a public-common partnership called AKS Gemeinwhol - where AKS stands for *Arbeits- und Koordinationsstruktur* [Working and Coordination Structure] and *Gemeinwohl* refers to the 'common good'. AKS develops an 'interface for initiatives, administration and politics' in the Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg district of Berlin. From the point of view of a Berlin activist involved in both projects:

[...] when it is about commons and developing commons, and then comes the administration, which needs to get used to working together also in informal spaces and informal structures to actually see what their work is doing [...] in the issue of commons and the commoning processes, we have to include a transformation of the administration. [INT-JulianZ]

And according to the planner in Berlin, who was involved in the writing of the New Leipzig Charter:

[...] for the planning discipline itself, *Gemeinwohl* has always been in the law, describing what urban planning should be striving for: it is for the common good. It is to provide people with essential needs. It very much directs what cities have to provide [INT -PlannerBER]

However, I will argue that experiences such as the attempt to re-municipalise the water service in Barcelona, supported by a participatory 'process', or the formal expropriation of public housing in Berlin through the legal figure of the referendum, show that what is at stake is not only the interpretation of the 'common good' or material access to the decision on essential urban services, but - as the Horizons framework suggests - a transformation of the 'old values' that have given shape to a 'world in crisis': "a world in which we find ourselves today and the way in which it is expressed and represented in the dominant discourse" (Curry & Hodgson, 2008, p. 7). I will also argue that the transformation between horizons can be seen as part of a vectorial politics - as implemented by the Spanish municipalist governments - and that the key transformations in this horizon are those that initiate a path of commoning that can be extended beyond public-common partnerships to sustain autonomous common-collective processes. In this research, I consider the ambition to transform such boundaries as a 'becoming-common' and the primary process behind it as a 'disruptive' process. This concept of disruption as a generative process is based on Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing's idea of a 'slow disruption' that occurs in ecosystems subjected to 'destruction, imperial conquest, profit-making, racism and authoritarian rule' - such as the commons ecosystem under capitalism and state rule - where "diversity is created in collaborative synergies; it is always *becoming*" (Tsing, 2014, p. 95, italics are mine).

The same logic warns against the utopian notion of an abundance of potential commons that will 'redeem us' because the potential commons are with us, "here and now, amidst the trouble" (Tsing, 2015, p. 255). Nor will this proliferation of commons be achieved with a modern concept of 'scalability' based on 'the ability to expand without rethinking basic elements', implementing heterogeneity and uniformity, not allowing change or transformation 'in the nature of the expanding project' (Tsing, 2012, p. 506). I will argue that although the existing commons have not redeemed us so far, and we are still in capitalist trouble, we have never been truly and fully modern (Latour,

1993), and the commons have never disappeared. Even if the living world is 'not amenable to precisely nested scales' (Tsing, 2012), I will also argue that commons - existing here and now, however latent - cannot be scaled up within an overarching, controlling project, as modernist planning proposes, but it is possible to use disruptive methods to foster the conditions in which commons proliferate. To do this, latent commons characteristics must be incorporated into collectively shared visions of how we organise together within the becoming-commons of the public and the becoming-institution of the collective. Moreover, even if Tsing warns us that 'latent commons don't institutionalise well', commoning institutions differ from state law in that they are comfortable with friction - as E. P. Thompson (1991) points out - and can incorporate latent 'infection, inattention and poaching' (Tsing, 2015, p. 255). Also, as a reverse capitalist accumulation, the institutionalisation of latent commons can be seen as an opportunity to open new interstices where further latency can develop, creating a virtuous complementary cycle of consolidation of processes and disruption of new enabling conditions, where 'deterritorialisation is always determined in relation to complementary reterritorialisation' (Deleuze & Guattari, 1988, p. 60, my translation).

To counter the negative characterisation of latent commons that they are not exclusively human enclaves, that they can't save us, that they are not well institutionalised, and that they are not good for everyone (Tsing, 2015, p. 255), I propose to include the following elements in a 'planing-in-common': instituent latent commons that involve an entanglement of human and non-human activities, an immanent effort to re-world, the construction of ad hoc disruptive institutions, and the inclusion of conflict as part of the process. The basis for such considerations can be found in various European examples.

9.3.3 Learning from elsewhere

One of the consistent elements mentioned as part of the proliferation of urban commoning projects is the exchange of knowledge and imaginaries that emerge from other successes and struggles. Italian urban commons pioneers in Naples and Bologna [INT-LaiaF] have inspired urban commons programmes in Spain. The Community Land Trust networks in the UK and Brussels were influenced by the schemes set up by Bernie Sander's administration in Burlington, Vermont, USA (Center for CLT Innovation, 2022). In the case of the La Borda cooperative in Barcelona:

[...] there was a fundamental part of approaching international references from a theoretical point of view, visiting them and getting to know new things, and finally creating our own model [...] Not only the written part, but also the living experience of people who devote time to you, who invite you to get to know them. [INT- ElbaM]

Following this tradition, I thought it appropriate to look at complex, nested urban systems in Europe where the commons have been discussed and implemented at different levels and under different conditions. This final section looks at alternative planning strategies in four European cities - Belgrade, Barcelona, Brussels and Berlin - to identify their main strategies and the role they could play in a disruptive methodology. The choice of cities is based on the opportunity to visit them and to get to know the people and spaces involved in the projects mentioned.

These initiatives, presented in Table 9.4, apply different strategies, such as the 'missions' proposed for *Barcelona Demà Compromís Metropolità* [Barcelona Tomorrow Metropolitan Commitment] as a way of articulating public action in the metropolitan region, despite its lack of administrative identity; the creation of a vision of Belgrade 2041: Back to the Future short film, based on urban processes of social confrontation in the face of authoritarian power without a participatory institutional approach; the participatory design of an urban commons policy for the Brussels region, part of the coalition agreement between the Socialist, Liberal and Green parties; the concrete 'model projects' initiated by Urbane Praxis in Berlin, in which the social coalition Haus der Statistik Initiative, together with four public actors at the level of the Berlin Senate and the district of Mitte, developed more than 100,000 m² in the central Alexandre Platz for cultural, administrative and residential use.

Table 9.4: Alternative planning strategies in Europe

Promoter	Project	Character	Output
Plan Estratégico Metropolitano de Barcelona	Barcelona Demà. Compromís Metropolità	Proposition	Plan
Ministry of Space	Belgrade 2041: Back to the Future	Contestation	Vision
Region of Brussels / Community Land Trust Brussels, Communa, Ecores & Equal Partners	Commons public policies & Assembly	Collaboration	Policy
Urbane Praxis Berlin / Initiative Haus der Statistik	Modellprojekt Haus der Statistik	Prefiguration	Project

Source: Author, based on interviews

I will argue that all of them have engaged social and - where possible - public actors to address the two key questions posed in the Belgrade 2041 film: "What is the city we want to live in?" and "How to make this vision and desires come true?». The altering strategies identified include:

- **As-if devices** - The production of prefigurative, near-real *eutopian* projects that refer to what is not there but should be, exposing the lack of political democracy and civic agency. Present at Belgrade 2041 and the Haus der Statistik in Berlin.
- **Programmatic hacks** - When social actors include disruptive projects in a coalition programme supported by a minority party as a bargaining chip. Present at the Haus der Statistik in Berlin and the Commons Policy in Brussels.
- **Activist pooling** - A gathering of all kinds of civil society actors in all fields and at all levels of mobilisation who are concerned about the issue at hand and might be willing to act. Present at Brussels Commons Policy and Belgrade 2041.

Based on the analysis of interviews with activists in Barcelona, Berlin, Belgrade and Brussels, I have compiled in Table 9.5 some of the characteristics of the potential proliferation of the commons in a future where it is seen as a hegemonic force, and key examples.

<i>Table 9.5: Metropolitan commoning characteristics</i>	
Characteristics	Key examples
Neutralisation of segmentation, compartmentalisation and binarism; recognition of complex situations that require elements that are this and that at the same time.	Teatre Arnau community
Identification of boundaries that allow differential access from either side of a boundary that acts as a membrane, not a border.	Decidim governance
Consideration and justification of different degrees of openness - physical, informational or conceptual - in access to tangible and intangible assets.	La Modelo participatory process
Transformation and change within established parameters.	
Ability to become something other than what was planned or expected.	Haus der Statistik Coop5 model
Ensuring respect, privacy and security at an individual, community, local or global level; acknowledgement that not everything can be collective.	Can Batlló
Recognition of the multiple implications of a given situation; neutralisation of institutional undifferentiated efficiency.	Social Premises Programme – BPO
Decision-making autonomy within a negotiated articulation between autonomy and interdependence (hence not a value).	Can Batlló
Ability to relate heterogeneous elements through all their potential connections and resonances.	Brussels Urban Commons Policy
Resource sharing based on equity and redistribution; recognition that exchange capacity is precarious and can be replaced by a gift economy.	Cooperative movement
Source: Author, based on interviews.	

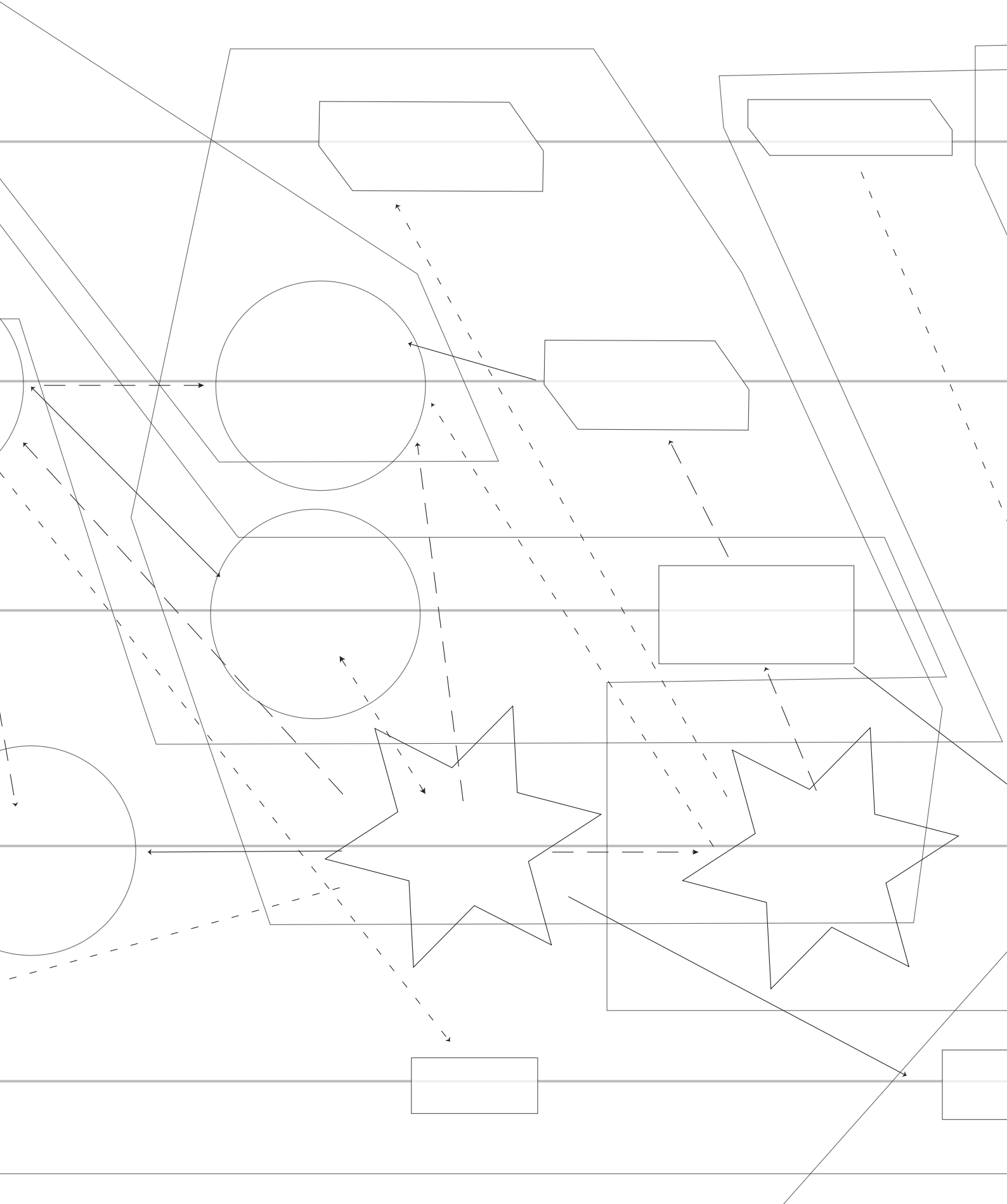
Conclusion

This chapter has reflected on the limits and potentials of the current situation, presented a projection towards a commoning horizon in 2050 and proposed strategies to achieve it, using a future scenarios method to envision a feasible proliferation of commons and opening the territorial framework to heterogeneous metropolitan systems. The scenarios mobilised in this study operate as a transformation towards a coexistence of public, private and commons social organisation, assuming that the commons is an element of a public-private-commons triad and proposing a future in which commons based organisations are hegemonic. The analysis focused on the alternatives to modernist urban planning used by social and institutional municipalist actors, and the actual and potential elements required.

First, I have presented the future scenario method used to propose a situation in which the practice of commoning represents one third of all social relations. This scenario was based on the identification of the current crisis of public and private logics and the current experiences of commoning as 'pockets of the future'. Secondly, I have identified four horizons in the transformation towards the 'One-Third Common Earth': an ongoing crisis of the state-public, a disruptive emergence of the public-common, a consolidation of the common-collective, and the resurgence of latent commons. Within these four horizons, I have proposed that the proliferation of urban commoning processes through recognised and unrecognised commoning practices is triggered by a crisis of the 'business as usual' model of public institutions and enabled by the disruptive horizon created by public-common partnerships, which can respond to this crisis by promoting common-collective practices. Finally, I have argued that planning for a 'future-in-common' requires a public ontological shift towards a new vocabulary and social discourse, with new situated rules, such as an engaged administrative discretion, legal hacks in public procurement and other processes that cede control over state-public resources as part of institutional micro-engineering and knowledge production. I have also considered how this search for recognition towards state-public structures and proliferation towards the social fabric is present in various experiences taking place in the European context that make use of as-if devices, programmatic hacks and activist pooling.

To conclude this Part III, I will argue that, applied to the question of planning, the challenges that commoning practices will face will revolve around the capacity of commoning actors to incorporate and address issues of scale, imaginary and practice. This last challenge, that of practice as doxa, requires a reframing of existing institutional habitus and social arrangements around new 'embodied, materially mediated arrays of human activity centrally organised around shared practical understandings' (Schatzki, 2001, p. 11). This chapter has contributed to this task by identifying the proliferation of these 'shared understandings' and 'material arrays' of commoning activity, while in the next chapter, Chapter 10, I will propose a tool for reassembling these elements into a becoming-common by considering urban planning as a methodology that cannot be reduced to its components, but nevertheless relies on them to multiply its potential.

PART IV - PROPOSAL



Chapter 10 – Becoming-Common/s

The place in which [we]'ll fit will not exist until [we] create it

Re-interpretation of James Baldwin by Greek organiser Ivan March, 2023

Introduction

One of the inputs that shaped this research was a question about the role of urban planning in the development of urban commons posed by Greek political scientist, and PI of the Heteropolitics project, Alexandros Kioupiolis (2017, 2021). I interpreted this question as a way of extending the logic of the commons into the realm of institutional governance as a becoming-common of the public. This 'becoming-common' assumes, firstly, that commons are not 'natural', organic and spontaneous processes of self-organisation, but a mode of social organisation that requires specific conditions. Secondly, that these conditions are not beyond our control.

As explained in the first chapter of the thesis, the becoming-common hypothesis has been analysed 'from the middle' of municipalist politics of change in Spain. Spanish municipalism has been presented as a continuation of the 15M movement, which occupied the squares in response to a process of disenfranchisement from national and local governments and expressed distrust of public institutions as regulators of market interests and protectors of social rights. However, the experiences of institutional transformation and urban commoning analysed in Chapters 7 and 8 showed how the ability of public institutions to act for the common good is hampered by two opposing forces: the rigidity and hierarchical structures of public institutions on the one hand, and the mutating rationality of neoliberalism on the other. At the same time, Chapter 9 offered a glimpse beyond the modernist planning tools traditionally used to reimagine the future of cities and 'make it happen', which have reached their limits. Re-interpreting James Baldwin, I will argue that the urban planning into which the urban commons will fit will not exist until we create it.

In discussing and analysing the theories and practices presented in Parts II and III of the thesis, I have sought to frame the becoming-common of the public as a desirable, feasible and necessary planning methodology to support the proliferation of commoning practices. Desirable because of the growing awareness of the disastrous ecological, social and economic effects of current modes of capitalist production, supported by national and transnational legal frameworks and administrative procedures in different territories. The expansion of self-organised forms of social organisation - from assemblies in the squares to cooperatives and the municipalist movement - and the self-organised support structures created during the COVID-19 pandemic show the effectiveness of mutual aid and collective service provision. Possible, because there is ample evidence that traditional, digital and urban commoning experiences have been able to create meaningful social relationships based on mutual aid, recognition of needs and equal access to resources. Finally, necessary, because the top-down planning tools used by the nation-state to effectively implement

the common good and deploy collective resources to address the emerging polycrisis are not up to the task.

In this chapter, I will mobilise the previous analyses in a proposal of the becoming-common of the public as an altering urban planning based on a disruptive methodology based on *meso-governance* devices that foster an ecology of emerging commoning practices. Such a strategy seeks to avoid the hierarchical, leviathan-like, segmenting and binary logics of the state. Instead, I hope to provide a breeding ground for practices based on cooperation and mutual aid, and to deploy democratic operational mechanisms for decision-making and operational implementation.

10.1 Disruptive method-planning

The theoretical discussion presented in Chapter 6 revealed an urban planning 'in crisis', caught between the territorial domination of the nation-state and the need for constant growth of the transnational capitalist market. Its traditional tools, such as the master plan and zoning, as well as its counter-planning alternatives, either based on community participation or insurgent autonomous zones, were also deemed ineffective. In my empirical analysis of the policies and programmes enacted in the Spanish 'cities of change', I have shown how Spanish municipalist governments were able to define and advance a political hypothesis about the urban transformations needed "to alter the present course of events", as Fainstein and Campbell (1996) defined planning, and how the current course of events challenged by municipalist policies is perceived as an eco-social polycrisis, confronted by the municipalist proposal of a more democratic, egalitarian and interdependent provision of collective services.

10.1.1. Method-planning

As discussed, the modern idea of the city as a forest (Laugier, 1765) and collective action as 'spontaneous coming together' (Harvey, 2012, p. xxvii) is problematic for at least three reasons:

- It follows the modernist logic that the city is like a forest to be exploited, rather than a complex system within a dense network of connections and interdependencies.
- It offers a naturalistic approach to commoning that conceals these relationships and assumes a natural, somehow unchartable, course of action.
- It overlooks the existing collective resources that support social reproduction, which have been created as a shared commonwealth and are currently managed by the state as its property.

As an extension of the statement by Silvia Federici (2020) that when capitalism plans, we must counter-plan, I argue here that we must also de-plan and alter-plan. While counter-planning suggests a reverse force along a particular vector of intervention, de-plan means dismantling the elements of such a vector, and alter-plan means establishing a different movement within alternative sets of coordinates. In this multidirectional transformation, disruption is a crucial feature to produce new institutional frameworks through the challenge created by the institutionalisation of latent commons. As the four horizons framework I presented in Chapter 9 highlights, the proposal for public becoming-commons renews the interstices and potential fields of commoning latency identified by Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing (2015) in mushroom-gathering practices.

One of the main differences between my proposal for an 'altering planning' and the high modernist techniques of territorial control is that method-planning does not involve designing a project, but setting the conditions for a process. As a methodology, urban planning involves a prospective and speculative way of thinking that can organise transformations and generate a vision of the future city not as a static, fixed image, but as a dynamic assemblage of elements. Method-planning adopts the feminist standpoint that how things are done is more relevant than what is done, and sees city-making not as the construction of a product through a project, but as the deployment of a process through a plan. Planning as a methodology raises the question of how to imagine a future for complex, heterogeneous urban systems whose shape cannot be clearly defined and which emerge from non-linear processes of transformation.

10.1.2 Disruptive elements

Planning as a disruptive methodology for a becoming-common of the public seeks to transform the categories by which the nation-state operates in the world by making explicit the logic that confronts its ontological elements at the macro level. It employs strategies of a collective technology of belonging that already operates in, against and beyond existing public institutions at the meso level, thereby allowing situated protocols to emerge at the micro level. To implement this becoming-common, I have identified a set of logics, strategies and protocols that can be thought of as 'planning' in the sense that they are the structure through which "people produce and reproduce the rules [of their society] and translate them into their spatial expression and institutional management" (Castells, 1983, p. xvi). I will argue that by creating an alternative set of logics, strategies and protocols to those implemented by modernist planning, the way in which society 'produces and reproduces' its rules is transformed.

The characterisation of the elements shown in Table 10.1 is drawn from a specific experience, the municipalist movement in Spain, analysed from a particular viewpoint: that of an activist and urban planner whose aim is the proliferation of commons and the identification of resonances across different territories. From this situated point of view, explained in detail in Chapter 1, my identification of the logics, strategies and protocols to be empowered and fostered has been guided by the problems presented in the analysis of the three research areas. Namely, how state vision and administrative habitus set the boundaries for radical democratic processes, how the resurgent commoning elements - communities, resources and self-management protocols - emerge and evolve in friction with these boundaries, and how the conditions are created for this emergence to be recognised, nurtured and consolidated into social practice. I will argue that the inclusion of a different concern, from a different standpoint, for example the articulation of non-human forms of existence from a radical ecological approach, would be able to use the same format of analysis to define logics, strategies and protocols, with a different kind of becoming as a result. The following characterisation is one of the possible configurations of a planning methodology, in itself an exercise in future scenario building based on a specific position and fields of research, and does not claim to be prescriptive.

Table 10.1: Commoning logics, strategies and protocols

MACRO LOGICS Commons VS Nation State	MESO STRATEGIES	MICRO PROTOCOLS
Multiplicity VS Leviathan Overlapping VS Dichotomy Autonomy VS Hierarchy Interdependence VS Segmentation	Permeability Transparency Dynamism Protection Situatedness Self-Management Connectivity Mutualism	Co-Production Collaboration Co-Responsibility Co-Governance Plurality Heterogeneity Inclusiveness Diversity Documentation Peer-Learning Memory-keeping Story-telling Legibility Interpretation Dissemination Pedagogy Facilitation Training Social Return (inter) Recognition Regulation Reciprocity (Supra) Connectivity Proximity

Source: Author

My characterisation of these rules along three levels of macro-logics, meso-strategies and micro-protocols mirrors the traditional legal structure around values, principles and rules, but applied to the 'common codes' (Méndez de Andés Aldama, Hamou, & Aparicio Wilhelmi, 2020). While the current legal system establishes a hierarchical structure according to the level of concrete implementation that these three elements allow: values are ethical components, rules are practical implementations, and principles link the two levels, in my proposal the distinction between the three levels depends on the degree of consensus and the type of communities and spheres of intervention to which they apply. Thus, macro-logics require a consensus within the whole becoming-common

practice; meso-strategies concern each of the fields of commoning and can be negotiated at that level; micro-protocols are decided and implemented by each specific commoning initiative.

Macro-logics

Becoming-common presupposes the identification of generic, common-based logics that disrupt the foundations of the state-public and place them in crisis. Macro-logics are negotiated as social agreements, they become stable when they are adopted and applied within the framework of the common-collective. Becoming-common logics are linked to ontological transformations that challenge the world 'as we know it'. Interviews and workshops revealed four key logics of the becoming-common of the public: multiplicity, overlapping, autonomy and interdependence.

Multiplicity replaces the institutional Leviathan by accepting the possibility not only of a multiple subject, but also of multiple configurations of the same framework. Public discretion is the institutional tool used to deal with the discrepancy between rigid, atemporal rules and the flexible, situated problems of everyday life. The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines discretion as a decision made by one's own judgement or choice. It is an individual and situational decision that should not be replaced by collective responsibility. As such, the institutionalised individual decision implemented by local officials has been associated with corruption and arbitrariness. However, actors involved in municipalism and dealing with institutional structures have also reclaimed it as a form of micro-institutional autonomy.

Overlapping replaces dichotomy. This re-engagement requires the neutralisation of an operation within the state-public which functions as a high modernist strategy to simplify reality by applying homogeneity within atomised compartments, reducing complexity and flattening the social fabric. Dichotomy is not only the modernist procedure of dividing the world into opposing pairs - the simplest form of segmentation - but also an all-or-nothing principle, where things cannot move through administrative categories - from irregular to regular resident, for example - until a certain number of requirements have been met in their entirety.

Autonomy replaces hierarchy. In this context, autonomy refers to a site-specific sphere of action without the imbalance of peculiarities to embrace diversity and divergence, and the conflictual diplomacies, interpretations and translations when different site-specific positions share the same environment or influence each other. Autonomy replaces hierarchy by applying principles of co-responsibility and co-operation, but also procedures for increased pluralism, mixture, heterogeneity and inclusion.

Interdependence replaces self-contained segmentation as the modus operandi of modernist capitalism, as opposed to 'transformation through encounter' (Tsing, 2015, p. 28). It has two dimensions. One concerns the biophysical limits and constraints of environmental resources, the need to share these resources and to be aware of the effects of our individual and collective actions, which are inextricably linked to other human and non-human beings. The other concerns the operational symbiogenesis that made life on the planet possible in the first place (Margulis, 2011), that is, the need to transform and mutate together with others.

Meso-strategies

In order to put values into practice, strategic principles need to be discussed and agreed upon within each area of intervention. Principles are 'the place where the community negotiates itself into existence':

And that's why I think that the question of governance and community are very intimately connected. They are formed together, if you like, so that the community comes into existence as it negotiates its principles, moves away from the very vague ground of values, and starts to become something more solid. [INT-PaulC]

Strategies are the operationalisation of these principles, which makes them a key element of public-common articulation, combining the logic of shared values with the more normative character of protocols. Strategies can be combined and negotiated, as not all processes or situations require or can follow all principles. For example, strategic openness may not be applicable to all processes and may need to be adapted according to the scarcity of resources allocated. Similarly, some principles, such as transparency, may not be effective in certain processes. It is important to consider the combination of applicable policies and principles, as well as their specific needs, into situated protocols and rules adapted to each situation. I use the concept of strategies rather than principles also to highlight the vectorial aspect of this kind of transformation.

Proliferation strategies can act as desirable vectors of institutional transformation, influencing state-public structures towards radically democratic forms of organisation. It is important to note that these strategies are not inherently moral or immoral, but should be implemented based on the needs and requirements of the process. For example, in a real case of building design for social housing, it was found that although transparency is a well-established strategy mentioned in all the documents studied, it is not applicable in the case of domestic violence, where victims might require a protective environment. In contrast to protocols, which aim to implement principles at a micro level and are negotiated within the initiatives, the discussion of collective strategies would take place within the scope of the initiatives, rather than being left to individual projects. As reflected in Table 10.2, the research has identified the following commoning principles:

Permeability recognises boundaries that act as a membrane rather than a barrier, allowing differential access from either side. It includes porosity, allowing inside-out transparency and outside-in recognition, and relates to interdependence, accessibility, openness and inclusivity. **Transparency** refers to the degree of openness in access to physical, informational or conceptual assets. **Dynamism** involves transformation and change within established parameters. It is linked to disruption, where existing conditions need to be altered in order to protect fragile ecologies. **Protection** includes respect for privacy and security at the individual, community, local or global level. It recognises that not everything can be collective. **Situatedness** recognises the multiple aspects of each situation and neutralises institutional undifferentiated efficiency. **Self-management** implies an articulation between autonomy and interdependence that needs to be negotiated, thus it is not a fix value. In terms of equity, it encompasses social justice principles of redistribution. **Connectivity** refers to the linking of heterogeneous elements through their potential connections and resonances. In relation to cooperation, it is the principle that enables co-production, co-governance and collaboration, but it is also a condition for heterogeneity, difference and overlap.

Mutualism involves the sharing of resources on the basis of equity and redistribution. The capacity for exchange depends on the level of precariousness and can be replaced by the gift economy. It is linked to co-responsibility and is a dimension of security, as it involves reliability and trust.

Micro-protocols

Micro-protocols are situated elements, defined for and by each specific project and negotiated between those who implement the strategies in a concrete bundle of needs, desires, possibilities and constraints. These protocols correspond to a set of practical understandings with explicit rules and what Schatzki calls 'teleo-affectivity': the desires, beliefs and expectations associated with a practice (Galvin & Sunikka-Blank, 2016, p. 65). The following are some of the aspects mentioned in the public documents, experiences and future scenarios that can be considered as protocols:

Co-production, collaboration, co-responsibility and co-management; plurality, heterogeneity, inclusiveness, pluralism and diversity; documentation, memory -keeping, peer-learning, storytelling, legibility, interpretation, dissemination, pedagogy, facilitation and training; social return, (inter) recognition, regulation, reciprocity, (supra)connectivity and proximity.

An important feature of the protocols is their contingency, linked to a sense of opportunity and appropriateness. For example, the Civil Patrimony programme advocates the use of public goods as collective resources, where social return is a crucial element. In this context, social return refers to efficiency, profitability, convenience and opportunity when the resource in question is scarce and there are competing needs. However, in a cultural environment, for example, immediate social return is not necessarily a rule to be followed.

10.2 Meso-governance

As my analysis of the fieldwork in Barcelona shows, the proliferation of commoning practices operates in the in-between. I have defined this in-between as a meso-scale that connects the inside and outside of municipalist governance - movements and institutions, policies and mobilisations - but also the 'whats and how's' of commons governmentality. In this analysis, municipalism uses the commons as a technology of belonging to articulate the 'what' generated within urban social movements with the institutional implementation of the 'how' implemented by the government. This articulation creates a new space between, on the one hand, the discursive field that rationalises power and, on the other hand, specific forms of intervention that are governed by the existing political rationale. Municipalist '*meso-governance*' links ideational, practical and programmatic components through three operations: reframing, transmediating and altering.

Reframing

Acting 'from the middle', *meso-governance* seeks to influence three spheres: ontological values with macro-logics, institutional principles with meso-strategies, and administrative rules with micro-protocols. In terms of reframing ontological values, *meso-governance* challenges the categories used by the institution to understand reality. Although closely related to constituent power, ontological processes influence the basic administrative rules that determine how reality is identified and structured. These transformations challenge the assumed understanding of who can define the general interest, while opening up its meaning with a new constellation of concepts such

as social return or common interest. In addition, new institutional principles allow for new forms of organisation, whether as part of local government, the social sphere or as hybrids. These principles - which, in the context of the becoming-common, are related to the distribution and redistribution of power, i.e. economic and political democracy- that determine how co-institutionalisation develops. The procedures for meso-level governance are an expression of the municipalist ambition to create a hybrid space that is neither fully public-state nor fully social-organisational, but rather both and in-between. *Meso-governance* uses the framework proposed by disruptive method-planning to create opportunities for reframing through actions that construct four asynchronous horizons of change.

In the examples of European metropolitan areas other than Barcelona, this reframing involves communities, resources, institutional protocols and relationships with different strategies. In Berlin, for example, the Koop 5 governance scheme in the Haus der Statistik model project involves institutional and self-organised actors in a decision-making structure that superimposes top-down political decisions on bottom-up needs and possibilities. This creates a spatial configuration by inhabiting the in-between. In Belgrade, a new negative-positive imaginary is created by those who choose to stay and fight for the city. In Brussels, the political proposal to the regional government includes an Assembly of the Commons composed of existing commoning practices and thinkers.

Transmediating

With the actualisation of belonging into becoming, I see commoning actors as part of what Bruno Latour calls 'mediators': active elements that transport, translate and transform meaning.

Commoning trans-mediators act from the middle and towards different fields and habitats. In the articulation between commons and municipalism that challenges modern state rationality with a collective project based on radical democracy, *transmediators* operationalise a shift in the current political rationale towards a new configuration, the collective.

An example from the Barcelona commoning processes, the case of the open software platform Decidim, helps to illustrate how municipalist *transmediators* operate across communities, institutions, fields of knowledge and languages. Decidim embraces open source principles and proposes the use of open technologies to create open institutions, creating a new vocabulary in democratic innovation programmes. It works across local and trans-local, institutional and social, tangible and intangible spaces. Its governance includes local and regional government, a foundation, a social organisation and a university. The community of people using the tool includes open software activists, programmers and a network of municipalities worldwide. Canòdrom and Meta-Decidim bring together physical and online communities and spaces. In addition, knowledge exchange is facilitated through the link with the UOC and the production of books, white papers and academic results.

Altering

Drawing on the concept of 'altering practices' proposed by Petrescu (2007), I define becoming-common altering operations as the strategies that transform the terms of what and how can be planned under a common-collective logic. These operations re-establish the link between production and reproduction, focus on the embodied experiences of everyday life, and expand

present potentials to produce an alternative vision of what constitutes a 'good place' for a good life. They follow the alternative planning strategies outlined by feminist, decolonial and municipalist experiences in reframing urban planning, and assume the task of providing not a definitive, closed image of the transformations ahead, but an assemblage of frameworks, everyday practices and visions ready to answer the question: What if? The aim of altering operations is not to create an alternative vision that can be imposed in any condition, but to define the elements of emerging transformative processes and 'give them space', as Italo Calvino (1978) urged us to do.

Applied to the Four Horizons framework proposed in Chapter 9, altering operations would produce a vector of transformation in each situation that affects all horizons. In the 'present' Situation A [SA], altering operations challenge the state-public structure of Horizon 1 [H1] and reclaim the commons existing as collective public goods, challenging the inevitability of the world 'as it is' and creating a crisis of the status quo. The potential for creating a Situation C [SC] under a prevailing common-collective logic, where H1 acts as a supporting structure, is produced by new imaginaries, knowledges, new vocabularies and memories in the public-common Situation B [SB] and their ability to transform and leave traces in bodies and organisations. In SB, H2 is based on displacement and transformation. The extension of commoning to a territorial and demographic scale requires a change of boundaries, introducing new scales, subjects, valuations and concepts. The aim of H3 is to consolidate and sustain this transformation, starting with the micro-engineering of institutional understandings and ontologies, altering the existing habitus towards commoning logics. In SC, the shift in H4 involves an institutionalisation of the resurgent latent commons, since only stable forms can curate and keep open commoning processes.

I argue that in order for these operations of reframing, transmediation and alteration to enact a commoning of the public, it is necessary to redefine the field in which they operate. I have proposed to think of such a field as an 'ecology of commoning practices', following Stengers' concern with the generation of new 'practical identities' that approach practices not as they are, but 'as they might become' (Stengers, 2005).

10.3 Commoning practices

This research is not interested in how the commons work in themselves - the production and reproduction of specific projects, either as management of common pool resources or as political commoning - but in how they challenge and negotiate their limits, what Massimo De Angelis (2017) calls 'boundary conditions'. In this sense, the idea of 'becoming' within social practices can be seen as an extension of the proposal to consider the noun 'commons' as a verb, commoning. While Linebaugh's operation highlighted the central role of active processes of production and reproduction and the communities involved as an internal process within any commons, my proposal of a 'becoming-common' sees commoning not as something that exists internally and without conflict - as in the traditional (Ostrom, 1990) or digital commons (Benkler, 2006) - nor as a process that seeks primarily to resist enclosures - as in the commons formed against the new enclosures (Midnight Notes Collective, 1990) - but as a process of proliferation - for, as Stavrides (Stavrides, 2021) pointed out, commons cannot survive without growing.

The becoming-common of the public assumes the task of reintroducing the commons into the socio-political arena and its logics into the public regulatory framework. This has already been proposed by legal scholars in relation to constitutional (De Cabo Martín, 2017; Marella & Rodotà, 2012) and administrative (Micciarelli, 2014; Mattei, 2011) legal structures. In the previous chapters, I presented an analysis of the Spanish municipalist experience and the challenges faced by the actors involved in this task: a) how to open up and democratise the decision-making processes of public and collective resources; b) how to extend their co-governance and co-responsibility to the political, technical and administrative spheres; and c) how to develop through operational tools that promote the institutional recognition, strengthening and promotion of urban commoning processes.

According to Latour (1993), these challenges cannot be resolved by the modern division of the world into public and private spheres as sanctioned forms of social organisation. I have argued that in order to implement this becoming effectively, it is necessary to develop the political hypothesis of the commons as a social 'practice': the 'embodied, materially mediated arrays of human activity centrally organised around shared practical understandings' (Schatzki, 2001, p. 11). To avoid repeating the processes of depuration and compartmentalisation that modernity has enacted, my proposal for a becoming-common of the public considers the commons as an organising political practice within an ecology of social practices in which human activities are engaged. Applying Stengers' characterisation of the elements of an 'ecology of practices', my proposal for a becoming-common of the public considers democracy as a shared cause of democratic governance. The squares movement established democracy as an attachment that could not be ignored and the political hypothesis of the commons as a technology of belonging, and the actualisation of such belonging into becoming - what Stengers calls 'fostering' - is enacted through trans-mediators and disruptive planning where:

We do not know what a practice is able to become; what we know instead is that the very way we define, or address, a practice is part of the surroundings which produces its ethos.
(Stengers, 2005, p. 195)

Mirroring the multiple meanings of the term 'commons' - as a political principle adopted by a community, as a mode of organisation that implements collective governance, or as a concrete articulation of elements that are necessary resources - in this research, 'practice' has also created a constellation of meanings: a field of collective action, as in the 'practice' on which this research is based; a set of commoning initiatives - as 'commoning practices'; and the embodiment of 'shared practical understandings' (Schatzki, 2001, p. 11) in the 'practice of commoning'. Using Isabelle Stengers' (2005) characterisation of an Ecology of Practices (EoP), I consider the commons as the embodied sharing of practical understandings, and will locate the practice of commoning in relation to other practices within the public-common habitat. I thus apply EoP as a theoretical framework interested in 'how things might be', resonating with how commoning initiatives might be expanded through a multiplication of the [eco]systems in which they operate and contributing to a methodology of disruptive planning. Following the EoP elements described in Chapter 3, in the articulation of municipalism, commons and planning towards a becoming-common of the public, I will argue that: a) the cause is democracy, b) the technology of belonging is the political hypothesis of the commons; c) diplomacy is enacted by municipalism; d) the challenge is defined by the state-

public institutions; e) empowering is deployed through commoning meso-programmes; and f) fostering is deployed through planning.

a) Democracy as a 'cause'. In the intersection of municipalism and the commons, democracy is a cause, a horizon of transformation, a catalyst and an enabler that articulates needs and desires, demands and possible futures, grievances and proposals, and takes state bureaucracy as a risk. The commons unites the collective around the cause of democracy and allows it to accept the risk. If democracy is the cause, the commons functions as a technology of belonging that defines a community engaged in developing socio-administrative frameworks of the becoming-common, enacted through programmatic *meso-governance*.

b) The commons as a 'technology of belonging'. Here, 'technology' refers to forms of becoming-institution that are part of the task of making society 'durable' (Latour, 1990). In municipalism, commons "can and must address people from the point of view of what they may become able to do, think and feel because they belong" (Stengers, 2005, p. 190). What 'they may become' is then influenced by a sense of autonomy that incorporates obligations, constraints and attachments as conditions of its existence (Latour, 1999, cited in Stengers, 2015, p. 113). Municipalist autonomy is related to the municipalist goal of establishing a non-state public capable of transforming itself into a commons-public, creating an interdependence between social and institutional autonomy.

c) Municipalism as 'diplomacy'. Diplomacy, as a practice, translates and negotiates constraints provided by the context and obligations, that are assumed by the practice "to create the ground for negotiations between differences without reducing them to common denominators" (Stavrvides, 2016, p. 43). The creation of a municipalist meso-scale not only links the narrative and normative spheres of governmentality, it also generates a democratic *modus operandi* 'in the middle' that takes such diplomatic task:

This is why the technology of belonging is not a technique of production but, as Brian Massumi put it, works both as challenging and fostering. Its two main matters of concern are the question of empowering, a matter of fostering, and the question of diplomacy, a matter of challenging. (Stengers, 2005, p. 192)

According to Stengers (2005), diplomacy involves a risk, i.e. a plausible but not guaranteed possibility of transforming a dichotomy that requires something to be 'this or that' into a confluence of 'this and that'. Diplomacy deals with situations in which fixed borders, which have to be torn down in order to create a definitive convergence, are replaced by porous borders that negotiate the previous divergences. I will argue that, in the traditional inside/outside divide that separates state action and rationality from social mobilisation and demands, we have seen how municipalism has sought to incorporate these divergences, often expressed as conflicts.

d) State-public as a 'challenge'. Commoning as a social practice challenges state-public values, a challenge that the municipalist hypothesis takes up when it affirms, as Ganemos Madrid stated in their manifesto, that "things can be otherwise" (LQSomos, 2015). In this transformation, municipalist diplomacy reformulates obligations as attachments that cannot be ignored. In the Spanish 'cities of change', such a reformulation transformed the co-produced electoral programmes of the muni-platforms into official Municipal Plans adopted by the muni-governments, effectively

transforming social demands into institutional appendages that articulate politics and policies, strategies and regulations, political discourse and institutional budgeting. Another aspect of this challenge is the reformulation of the boundary conditions that establish obligations and constraints on both sides of the public-commons divide. Such reformulations challenge the modernist project of the public sphere.

e) Commoning meso-programmes as 'empowering'. The socio-administrative frameworks of the becoming-common are put into practice through commoning meso-programmes that empower existing situated practices. *Meso-governance* programmes are often implemented through processes seen as institutional 'hacking' [INT-VerenaL] to compensate for the inherent limitations of public institutions in dealing with the complexity of eco-social processes [INT -AllanW]. They directly engage with the commoning elements, reinforcing the re-emergence of common resources, political communities and collective management.

f) Planning as 'fostering'. I argue that planning helps to foster commoning practices that actualise the commons as a technology of belonging in the becoming-common. The methodology of disruptive planning incorporates pragmatic learnings from commoning experiences into a framework of logics, strategies and protocols. This facilitates existing and emergent dynamics that 'enact the relationship between belonging and becoming, producing belonging as experimentation' (Stengers, 2005, p. 195).

As discussed in the chapter on planning theory, method planning challenges the high modernist view of plans as blueprints designed by actors with the right technical knowledge, and reassembles the experience of the everyday city to expand its capacities.

Conclusion

This chapter outlines the proposal of commoning the public as a process that aims to: a) mobilise a demand for democracy to reclaim the collective means of social production and reproduction that currently operate under the logic of the modern nation-state, b) recognise and expand existing urban commons initiatives that create collective forms of subjectification and action, and c) consolidate these alternative and altering disruptions into a commoning social practice through planning methodological strategies.

First, I have characterised method-planning as a disruptive framework capable of generating processes to be operated rather than projects to be executed. Considering commons as a social practice, this method-planning defines macro-logics that neutralise the ontological principles of state-public structures and procedures, meso-strategies that operationalise commoning logics in different fields of action, and micro-protocols used in specific commoning initiatives. Secondly, I have defined a municipalist *meso-governance* that combines conceptual and practical elements into a new practice of commoning across different spheres of action, habitats and epistemic domains. I have argued that such *meso-governance* is implemented through trans-mediators, both human and non-human, that translate and transpose narrative, normative and knowledge production, and a constellation of protocols, attitudes and roles. The resulting transformations contribute to the incorporation of commoning principles into existing regulations, transform decision-making about resource distribution, and produce new shared understandings among constituents. Third, I have

identified how the new practice of commoning operates within the boundary conditions of existing public, private and common social organisational practices. I have characterised the interaction between public and commoning practices, and I have characterised democracy as a cause that mobilises practitioners across fields and habitats, the commons as a technology of belonging that operates at the mesoscale, municipalism as a diplomatic practice that challenges the boundaries established by the state-public domain, and planning as a methodology capable of empowering existing and latent commoning practices to promote the becoming-common of the public.

This chapter has presented the proposal of considering the becoming-common of practice as a method-planning that uses disruption to promote *meso-governance* based on programming devices capable of empowering and fostering the commons within an ecology of social practices, based on the discussion and analysis presented in Parts II and III of this thesis. The next chapter will summarise and discuss these research findings and present related past and future work.

Chapter 11 - Thesis Conclusion

Introduction

The first introductory chapter of the thesis presented its aim, which is to examine the municipalist experience in Spain and to identify how the potential of the becoming-common of the public can be incorporated into urban planning. In this final chapter, I will summarise the conclusions of the thesis based on the research objectives and questions, present the findings from the fieldwork and analysis, and outline the main elements of my proposal for a becoming-common of the public. Secondly, this chapter will identify my contributions to the theory and practice of the urban commons, as well as my findings in each area. Thirdly, I will identify some of the limitations and potentials of the research process and methodology. Finally, I will highlight possible directions for future research.

11.1 Research findings

As part of the theoretical framework presented in Chapter 3, the proliferation of the commons is defined as the deepening, extension and expansion of shared resources among the communities that benefit from and care for them, by fostering the process of 'commoning' (Linebaugh, 2008) that produces and reproduces such experiences. This proliferation involves modalities of strengthening, extension and replication that avoid the modernist concept of scaling as growth and the problematic connotations associated with the modernist and capitalist expansionist project (Tsing, 2015; Scott, 1998). I propose to extend the traditional understanding of the commons as particular initiatives and to make it more concrete than an ethical-political demand, to consider it as a form of social 'practice'. I understand this practice as the embodied activities involving material elements and organised around 'shared practical understandings' (Schatzki, 2001, p. 11) of radically democratic and interdependent forms of self-governance. In considering the commons as a 'practice among others' (Stengers, 2005), I have argued that their proliferation operates within an ecology that includes private and public forms of organisation.

I have taken the idea of an 'ecology of practices' proposed by Isabelle Stengers as a theory that "does not approach practices as they are [...] but as they may become" (Stengers, 2005, p. 186), and translated it from the knowledge production domain where it was conceived, to the governance of material and immaterial resources in urban contexts and the municipalist attempt to democratise public institutions. Based on this theoretical framework, I have argued that the potential of these programmes as public-social arrangements, as part of a becoming-common of the public, relies on the vectorial, prefigurative nature of municipalist policies in the Spanish context. While the prefigurative nature of emancipatory policies, such as municipalism, is well established in the literature (Lightsey, 2017; Kinna, 2016; Maeckelbergh, 2011), the proposal to consider the municipalist articulation of 'whats' and 'hows' (Monterde, 2019) as a 'vector' of change borrows from Raquel Gutiérrez (2017) description of the situation in Bolivia during the water and gas wars. In my interpretation of Spanish municipalism, these vectors are deployed as efforts to foster

commoning processes that originate in existing initiatives and define a horizon of transformation for institutional and social habitus, pushing the limits of the here and now.

During the fieldwork, I used an iterative process that included documentation of past commoning public policies at the national level, interviews about processes taking place in real time, and a collaborative session on future scenarios at the metropolitan level, as explained in Chapter 2. Along the way, I collected empirical input on public policies of urban commoning implemented during the municipalist experience in Spain, analysed programmes and projects taking place in Barcelona, and inquired about other commoning and alternative planning processes in Europe. These experiences have revealed the potentials and limitations of the municipalist and commoning political hypothesis, as well as the different strategies implemented to realise a city-making based on the desire for autonomy and self-management, with the recognition of a social, territorial and environmental interdependence.

Since the first research proposal was presented in 2018, the ambition to establish the conditions for the possibility of a social organisation based on commoning principles, and the assumption that municipalism and planning could contribute to it, has encountered various obstacles. At the national level, with the defeat of most of the municipalist platforms in the 2019 Spanish municipal elections; at the local level, with the challenge of adapting the a-modern constellation to the institutional framework of planning in the context of Barcelona; and at the European metropolitan level, with the will of territorial proliferation facing a heterogeneous variety of situations, from abstract political and concrete institutional cooperation in Brussels and Berlin to the authoritarian planning regime in Belgrade. At the same time, I have witnessed a shared understanding of what is at stake, of the consequences of the political crisis, but also of the potential and the need for social cooperation.

In conclusion, I propose to consider the existence of a municipalist **meso-governance** [Chapter 7], where **transmediators** operate within a public-social programmatic commoning [Chapter 8], and define **alter-planning** as a disruptive methodology [Chapter 9]. I would argue that the assemblage of these elements has the potential to transform the existing boundary conditions set by the modern nation-state through a **becoming-common of the public** [Chapter 10], allowing existing and latent forms of commoning to proliferate.

Meso-governance

[Question 1] What aspects of the commons were incorporated into the municipalist movement in Spain and how?

I have argued that Spanish municipalist movements have incorporated the political hypothesis of the commons as a means of achieving political and economic democracy, through a *meso-governance* that aims to link the ideational component of political narratives and discourses, as the 'what', with the practical component of administrative norms, as the 'how'. I also argued that the public debates and documents produced by municipalist platforms and city governments demonstrate a connection between these two elements, and constitute what I have termed '*meso-governance*'.

In my analysis, I have shown how the commons has been mobilised as a political enunciation used in the name of some of the parties - such as Barcelona 'en Comú', that is, 'in common', or in the title of public rallies and events; as a concern discussed in national and international activist meetings; and as an institutional protocol that includes the concept in proposals, strategic plans and regulations. By analysing the different municipalist meetings and debates, mainly organised in Barcelona, and how these concerns defined the commons as belonging to the democratic branch of municipalism, I have shown how the political hypothesis of the commons mobilised and linked municipalist platforms, social actors and public policies. Secondly, I analysed the seven municipal policies produced by municipalist governments in Spain between 2015 and 2019 that incorporated the notion of the commons and proposed a distinction between macro, micro and meso policies. I identified two macro frameworks applied to culture, where the principles of democracy and accessibility played a central role; two micro initiatives that appealed to ecological and sustainability concerns; and three meso programme devices developed in three most relevant 'cities of change' - namely Madrid, Barcelona and Zaragoza - that provided insights into the articulation of common resources, communities and modes of governance.

[Objective 1] To define the urban governance transformations produced by the commons political hypothesis.

I have defined the municipalist transformations in urban governance as the adoption of meso-governance based on a commons logic of democracy, sustainability, accessibility and universality. I argued that in order to implement this logic, it is not enough to use ideational and practical elements that conform governmentality as defined by Michael Foucault (2008) and proposed for the commons by the municipalist vice-mayor of Zagreb, Daniela Dolenec (2012). My analysis of the Spanish municipalist narrative and normative devices, presented in Chapter 7, indicates that in order to effectively implement the values stated in the ideational documents, the municipalist governments established programmes that articulated the two elements of governmentality into a new *meso-governance* organised around four foundational logics: autonomy of self-management, overlapping of actors, interdependence of responsibilities, and multiplicity of collectives.

Trans-mediators

[Question 2] Which are the human and non-human actors involved in urban commoning processes in Barcelona?

I have characterised the key actors in the constellation of initiatives, relationships and fields that constitute Barcelona's urban commoning processes as 'trans-mediators' who operationalise the articulation between public municipalist policies and socio-public processes of urban commoning. *Transmediators* extend Bruno Latour's concept of 'mediators' as actors who transform, translate and distort meanings and elements, extending their translation capacities in multiple directions and along multiple vectors, effectively enacting their capacity to modify all the contradictory accounts attributed to their role (Latour, 2005, p. 939).

This characterisation has been developed from the analysis of relevant experiences for this research and further discussed with social, institutional and academic interviewees. Firstly, I have analysed the actors involved in urban commoning processes active in Barcelona during 2021-2022. The

analysis is presented in Chapter 8 through a relational mapping that shows the organisations, political activists, initiatives and procedures situated in a gradient of habitats from social processes to institutional structures. These actors were active in different urban fields, ranging from the economy, housing or culture to services and spaces or planning processes, and were linked by different types of relationships. *Transmediators* are identified as actors in the middle of knowledge production, decision-making and political action processes that translate the commoning processes between fields and habitats. Secondly, I have examined the trans-mediation features of three programmes that addressed issues related to commons in Barcelona en Comú electoral programmes. These programmes include common spaces, cultural rights and digital tools for participation, were implemented within the Civil Patrimony, Cultura Viva and Democratic Innovation programmes, and put into practice in the Can Batllo, Teatre Arnau and Decidim projects.

[Objective 2] To describe public-social collaborations of urban commons re/production

I have argued that public-social collaborations of urban commons are reframing protocols driven by four sets of concerns:

- The introduction of co-production, co-responsibility and co-governance to transform public-common partnerships into common-common coalitions.
- The empowerment of community building as a political action on the basis of plurality, heterogeneity and inclusiveness.
- The opening up of institutional legitimacy to enhance civic agency through recognition, regulation and reciprocity.
- The potential of connectivity as a strategy to scale.

Alter-planning

[Question 3] What kind of transformative horizons can urban commoning experiences define?

I have proposed four transformative horizons defined along four vectors of disruption: Horizon 1 - A **questioning** of the current boundary conditions established by the state-public logic in order to reclaim the legitimacy and recognition of existing commoning initiatives. Horizon 2 - A **displacement** of existing structures and aspirations, transforming both institutional and collective expectations and creating space for latent commons to emerge. Horizon 3 - A **consolidation** of existing processes, supporting their extension as replicable practices, instituting common collective processes involving the public under non-state logics. Horizon 4 - The **resurgence** of latent commoning processes, invisible to the state-public vision.

These four horizons emerged from a co-design workshop that defined two future commoning scenarios for the Barcelona Metropolitan Area as a forecasting exercise. In the subsequent backcasting analysis, I used the prospective 3H framework (Sharpe & Hodgson, 2006) and complemented it with a fourth horizon that includes the latent commons described by Tsing (2015).

[Objective 3] To identify the characteristics of the transformative potential of commoning processes

I have identified a transformative potential in processes - in Barcelona - that support the four vectors of disruptive displacement identified in the 4H framework I have proposed. Their main

characteristics are, first, the production of contested visions through new vocabularies and discourses that link existing 'pockets of the future' with alternative *eutopias*. Second, the co-production of policies and programmes that generate new rules and social and institutional habitus. Third, the proposal of prefigurative projects that create a new memory of what is possible by effectively engaging with political communities, public resources and self-management tools.

Becoming-common of the public

[Question 4] What are the enabling conditions and instruments required for these transformations?

Table 11.1 shows the conditions and instruments I have considered necessary for a disruptive transformation of the present situation into a future-in-common, combining the three previous analyses operating at the macro, meso and micro levels.

Macro logics	Diversity, overlap, autonomy and interdependence
Meso strategies	Permeability, transparency, dynamism, protection, situatedness, self-management, connectivity, mutualism
Micro protocols	Co-production, collaboration, co-responsibility, co-governance, plurality, heterogeneity, inclusiveness, diversity, documentation, archiving, peer-learning, memory-keeping, legibility, interpretation, dissemination, pedagogy, facilitation, training, social return, (inter) recognition, regulation, reciprocity, (supra)connectivity, proximity

Source: Author.

[Objective 4] To propose a commons-based planning strategy

I have proposed a strategic planning for a becoming-common of the public based on three types of actions: neutralising the modern logics embedded in the state-public domain, incorporating commoning strategies that create the possibility of a public-common, and strengthening the protocols used to sustain what I have called the common-collective. This method-planning makes a reinterpretation of the institutional-legal structure based on values, principles and rules, and organises a strategic becoming-common that is organised at the level of abstraction - from ethical values to operational rules connected by ambiguous principles - but at the level of consensus needed: all commoners share the macro-logics, but meso-strategies are applied in different combinations to different fields of action, while each specific initiative can choose its own particular micro-protocols.

Reassembling the Commons

In her 'Introductory notes for an ecology of practices', Isabelle Stengers (2005) proposes to consider practices as part of an ecology with three sets of elements: a technology of belonging around a cause, and two main concerns: diplomacy, as a matter of challenging, and empowerment, as a matter of promoting.

I have applied this framework to experiences of commoning within Spanish municipalist governments, proposing that democracy acted as a cause that mobilised practitioners towards the

political hypothesis of the commons. I have argued that in this mobilisation, the political hypothesis of the commons acted as a technology of belonging that identified social and institutional actors committed to the democratic transformation of public structures and institutions. I have shown how municipalist public representations and internal debates about the commons were incorporated and how this narrative was linked to public policies, differentiating these commoning proposals from other actors in the electoral confluence. By analysing the meta-devices used to operationalise this political hypothesis of belonging to the commons and the programmatic experiences in Barcelona, I have outlined the challenges of commoning social-public collaborations and the diplomatic strategies employed by the different actors. Finally, I have also argued that the recognition and legitimisation of public commoning initiatives contribute to their empowerment, but that fostering processes that could turn commons belonging into becoming requires a commoning methodology capable of producing a vision of a better future - what I have called *eutopia* - and the tools to make such a vision not only desirable but feasible.

11.2 Thesis contributions

From a theoretical point of view, I will argue that the 'becoming-common' can be seen as a 21st century development of Deleuze & Guattari's 'becoming revolutionary' and their evolving proposal to impose an 'absolute limit on capitalism' which, according to Jun Fujita Hirose (2021; Sato & Fujita Hirose, 2018) went through 'becoming out of class' in *L'Anti-Œdip* [The Anti-Oedipus] (Deleuze & Guattari, 1972), a 'becoming minority' in *Mille Plateaux* [A Thousand Plateaux] (Deleuze & Guattari, 1980) and a 'becoming animal' in *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie?* [What is Philosophy] (Deleuze & Guattari, 1991). In my own iteration, the notion of becoming, defined as an intermediate state that intensifies the potential of a situation (Massumi, 2005), is combined with the commons as a hybrid situated outside the modern hierarchy of decisions about the means of reproduction, but with a resurgent potential (Gutwirth & Stengers, 2016). I also consider the argument that storytelling is a central feature of the process of becoming, as a "collective, politically invested process of participating in and contributing to the making of myths, operational fictions, significant figurations of the kind of subjects" (Braidotti, 2003, pp. 21–22). These potentials place the political hypothesis of the commons within a constellation of notions such as community, collective or commonwealth, and attributes such as democracy or universality, which are linked to the idea of the public as custodian of the common good.

The practice-led research presented in this thesis has aimed to develop a theoretical philosophical concept and to provide empirical evidence, theoretical analysis and operational proposals for the actors involved in the collective effort of proliferating urban commons, offering terms and arguments that might resonate with their needs and understandings. In Chapter 1, I have situated this doctoral research 'in the middle', between practice and theory, academia and activism, looking at processes that are evolving and in the making, and at the intersection of three epistemic and political fields: municipalism, commons and planning. The reflections on urban commons overlap with those on municipalism and planning, and constitute the thesis' contribution to a 'theory in practice' (Schön, 1983). The following sections outline the dissertation's contributions to the theory and practice of urban commons, its academic findings, and its interventions in policy practice.

11.2.1 Urban commons in municipalism and planning

The municipalist experience of introducing the commons political hypothesis into public institutional action challenges many theoretical and practical assumptions about how collective self-governance of shared resources works. As we saw in Chapter 4, the commons as a practice based on economic and political democracy incorporates neo-institutional, neo-Marxist and universalist approaches to the commons as a) an asset with shared, self-governed and efficient management, b) with a community engaged in commoning, a process of production and reproduction that resists capitalist expansion through dispossession, that c) is extended as a universal human right to access non-scarce and non-restricted resources. Considering the commons as a practice of becoming-common establishes an autonomy from the modern dichotomies that have organised collective assemblages, which Latour (1993) calls 'hybrids', into opposing pairs - nature and culture, city and countryside, public and private property - and then separates the non-conforming elements - that I identify as commoning practices - as invisibilised modes of organisation. As we have seen in the discussion of the theoretical frameworks applied to the commons, in Chapter 5, a-modern commoning hybrids are only recognised and included in the modern dichotomy if they: a) have better economic performance, as demonstrated by neo-institutionalists, and are assimilated to b) generate political conflict that disrupts capitalist forms of accumulation - as valued by neo-Marxists, or c) deal with vital elements such as knowledge or atmosphere that are too abundant to generate conflict or too loose to be reduced to a managerial form.

I have proposed to acknowledge the latent commons ignored by the modernist worldview and incorporate them in the proliferation of the urban commons as a practice. This proposal assumes that the 'public' domain is a sphere through which the urban commons can resurface, if it acts not as an initiator of top-down processes, but as a guardian of collective resources that can be given space and the right conditions in which to proliferate. The articulation of the commons as a non-modern practice intersects with the public and the private, creating a form of social organisation outside the logic of the capitalist market and the nation-state, and raising the question of how to re-appropriate collective resources that are now considered public. This conception of the urban commons is not an abstract principle or a set of concrete projects, but a process of 'commoning' the public, which involves transforming the structures that regulate the creation, governance, management and maintenance of the collective resources on which social reproduction depends. The proliferation of commons combines an expanded notion of 'universality', from everyone in the community to everyone who might need it, and of sustainability, from the resource itself to the sustainability of the expansion and interdependence of the various commoning environments.

In this thesis I have argued that considering the commons as a social practice, rather than as a series of discrete projects, can be better developed in urban environments, where the 'urban' is understood as a degree of complexity of human and non-human relationships, rather than its usual designation as a particular scale or density. In this thesis I have defined urban commons as processes 'in the making' that need to regenerate, reclaim and reinvent the three elements of the commons: the communities, the collective resources involved and the modes of governance used. In urban commons, these elements are neither given or pre-existing customary activities - as in traditional commons - nor 'gifted' resources of a non-rival nature with little or no co-responsibility - as in global or immaterial commons. Because these collective processes have to be re-created, in the case

of urban commons, public re-appropriation is a necessary condition for their re-emergence as latent and resurgent commons. Urban commons are latent because they start from situations that have lost the memory, even the imaginary, that makes them a kind of commons, although they retain elements of them that 'resurge' through disruption. They are resurgent because they have to reappropriate shared resources, but they also have to regenerate mental structures, social agreements and legal codes. Planned and unplanned urban processes based on operational localities, resonances and vectors can contribute to an alternative commons-based planning that does not seek to create a predefined blueprint, but rather what Raquel Gutiérrez Aguilar (2017) calls a transformative 'political horizon'. I will argue that the most relevant transformative horizon in planning is the feminist city, a situated approach from the street level that focuses on caring for human and non-human urban life. Other elements of feminist alternative planning that resonate with urban commoning include the overlapping of interests and needs, and the articulation of production and reproduction embedded in the processes of the everyday city.

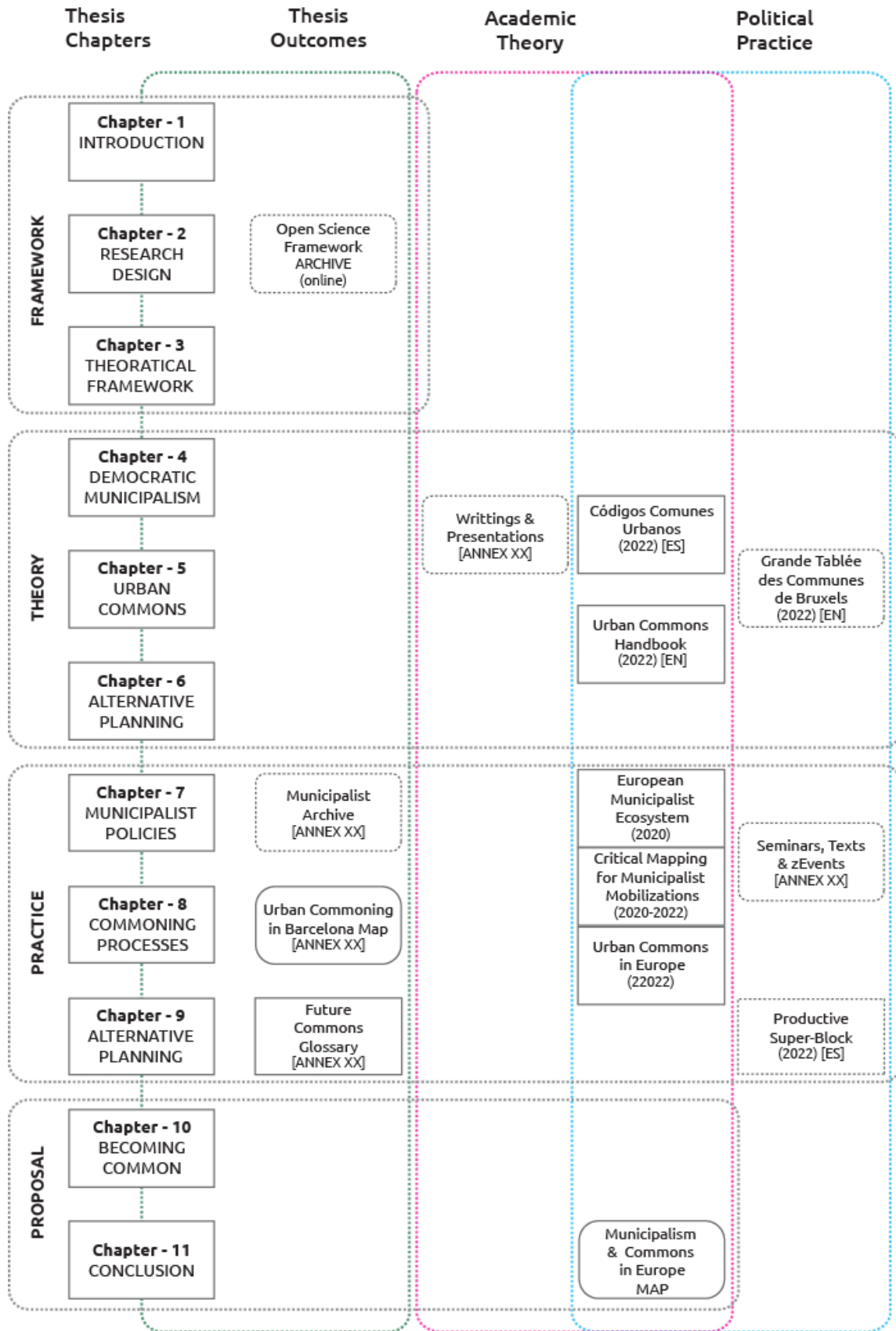
I have argued that a condition for extending urban commoning processes beyond wastelands and underutilised resources is to consider the city in all its complexity as a social and urban system, in contrast to the modernist vision of human agglomerations as a forest or a machine. In the modernist case, there is an inherent a-politicisation in the naturalisation of human activities and the forms they take, making them - under the modernist gaze of the state and the market - objects to be conquered and commodified, or infrastructures to support private, public and social actors alike. The commoning approach calls for a system that includes diverse elements capable of challenging and expanding the boundary conditions set by nation-state and capitalist market structures, while maintaining the autonomy of the parts within an organisational form that regulates and modulates collective decision-making. In this regard, I have proposed to think of prefigurative commoning practices as pockets of an *eutopian* speculative future, focusing on the 'good' attributes of the utopian vision while rejecting the *outopian* idea that such a place is actually nowhere. Faced with the constraints defined by public institutions supporting private interests as the 'boundary conditions' of the commons as a system, the question of how to proliferate urban commoning processes based on existing prefigurative experiences is then a question of how to enact an *alter-planning* methodology.

11.2.2 Academic outcomes

The practice-led production developed through this doctoral research goes beyond the documents included in the thesis, and has been motivated by the engagement with the municipalist, commoning and planning practices that underpin my research.

In the theoretical field, there are three types of outputs. First, the Open Science Framework project is an archive of all the doctoral research documentation under a Creative Commons licence. Second, the annexes contain the distinctive outcomes of the thesis: the Municipalist Archive in Annex A, the map of Urban Commoning in Barcelona in Annex B, and the Glossary of Commoning Practices in Annex C. Third, Epistemic Contributions to the community concerned with the political hypothesis of the commons include seminars and publications. TFigure 11.1 shows the relation of outcomes with the different sections in the thesis.

Figure 11.1: Research outcomes and interventions



Source: Author

Open Science Framework project document the research process, from the initial proposal to the ESRC White Rose Doctoral DTP award that has funded this doctoral research, to the transcripts of interviews produced during the fieldwork. As part of my award as runner-up of the University of Sheffield Open Research Prize 2023, I stated that:

The OSF platform helps researchers to go beyond the question of replicability and offers the opportunity to contextualise qualitative data, while contributing to the different aspects of the Open Science 'schools of thought' (Fecher, B. & Friesike, S. , 2014) namely, to provide access to research, make data and data analysis open and reachable, and foster collaboration and innovation. [...] So far, the project has helped disseminate open research practices among Post Graduate Researchers who have had the opportunity to access the project's documentation, incorporating transparency and accessibility to enable informal exchanges of practical knowledge [...] (Ana Méndez de Andés Aldama, 2023).

The Municipalist Archive compiles official documents of public policies produced by the Spanish Municipalist City Council between May 2015 and May 2019, interviews with political actors in Barcelona that took place between September 2022, and publications produced by the Municipalist movement between 2014 and 2023, all in Spanish. The compilation of Spanish policies provides information that has been considered as 'just invaluable' in contexts where "many people just talk about superblocks and not the flanking developments in Spain regarding the alternative urban redesign" (Zahn, 2023). I have also treated the Urban Commoning in Barcelona map as a distinctive outcome because it provides an image of fieldwork research on commoning processes that has been successfully used to communicate with academic and non-academic audiences. Finally, the Future Commons Glossary contains short definitions, quotations and longer entries on terms and experiences that I consider relevant to.

Within the archive, one of the main research outputs is the qualitative database of interview transcripts, carefully edited and revised by the interviewees. The motivation for the time-consuming and resource-intensive task of making almost 40 hours of interviews readable in a fluid way is not so much transparency - qualitative research is situated and contextual, and no matter how accurate the transcription of 'hmmms' and 'ahhhs', it will remain so - but as a contribution to the emerging community of researcher-practitioners aiming to create an action-based knowledge in the field of urban commons and municipalism. The importance of the interviews lies in how they helped me to understand the practices and the moment of shared thinking. Interviews here are similar to 1:1 workshops. I have used them to support the situated knowledge produced, to ensure the accuracy of the quotes and as a methodological process where the interviewees also have control over their own words. Unlike the interviews analysed in Chapter 7, where the transcriptions were part of a different research project and used as secondary data, in the rest of the study the interviews have not been interpreted as text. I have incorporated the living knowledge produced in and through each of them into the subsequent discussion of the themes. The transcripts will be added to the University of Sheffield's data repository as a contribution to the knowledge commons on urban commons.

Epistemic Contributions include presentations at academic conferences that have sought to locate municipalist analyses at the intersection of the commons and other relevant fields: alternative economies at the Social and Solidarity Economy and the Commons Conference, Lisbon, 2019; practices of autonomy at the Democracia Komunal Conference, San Sebastián, 2022; the climate

crisis on the environmental movement at the Degrowth Conference, Zagreb, 2023; and AHRA - care. In addition, as part of the Lines of Flight research group at Sheffield School of Architecture and the Urban Commons Research Collective, I have co-organised seminars and workshops and participated in presentations that have informed collective 'shared ideas' about the articulation between urban commons, municipalism and planning. In texts addressed to the research community, I have offered my analysis of municipalist policies as part of 'democratic cities' (Méndez de Andés, 2019) and my analysis of different approaches to the urban commons (Méndez de Andés Aldama, 2023). I have also co-authored an academic paper on 'commoning infrastructures' that aims to address the issue of scale in public-common partnerships (Varo et al., 2023).

11.2.3 Practice-based interventions

Contributions to the practice have been less strategic and driven by the situated needs of organisations and collectives and the opportunities to engage with them. On the one hand, I was involved in two collaborations that developed during the overseas fieldwork in Barcelona and the institutional visit to Brussels. In the first case, I worked with the Barcelona Urban Planning Department on the conceptualisation of a 'productive superblock'. In the second, I contributed to La Grande Table des Communs as part of the Urban Commons Report conducted for the Brussels Region. In both cases, my analysis of social-public collaborations in Barcelona and how collective processes could constitute a form of planning was included in reports aimed at informing public interventions. On the other hand, I was invited to participate in events and debates organised by social organisations, such as the feminist collective Lucha y Siesta in Rome, which was in dialogue with the City Council and the Lazio Region, or the self-governed space Hangar X in Berlin, which wanted to expand its activities in the former Tempelhof airport. I contributed to these experiences with a situated analysis of the constraints and limits imposed by public institutions and the strategies used by other commoning projects in their attempt to 'hack' these institutional frameworks. Other interventions took place in festivals and programmes such as Urbanize! in Vienna, Gemeine Stadt in Berlin or Model in Barcelona, which used the sites of cultural production to reflect on how to intervene in urban situations.

All of these events targeted specific people and spaces within public institutions that were seen as open to concerns of local democracy and citizen participation, such as the Vienna City Council for Culture, the Berlin Landeszentrale für politische Bildung or the Barcelona Regional Urban Development Agency. These exchanges demonstrated the relevance of the municipalist experience of incorporating the urban commons into public policy, and that it has been an inspiration in different contexts.

11.2.4 In-between

Working in the space between theory and practice, I was involved in three academic and activist research projects that aimed to map municipalist and commons practices in Europe and offer their findings as a tool for practitioners. The Critical Mapping for Municipalist Mobilizations project, based at the TU Berlin, focused on housing struggles in Berlin, Belgrade and Barcelona. The EMN aimed to create a representation of the European municipalist ecosystem and reflect it with an

online map. The *Oficina de Acción Comunal* [Community Action Office] mapped urban commons processes across Europe based on activism and academic research compilations.

As part of the effort to link theory and practice, I also co-authored and co-edited two non-academic publications that aimed to link theoretical and practical reflections in two complementary directions. *Códigos comunes urbanos* [Urban Common Codes] (Méndez de Andés Aldama, Hamou, & Aparicio Wilhelmi, 2020) brought together activist research and presented theoretical frameworks for community-based practitioners. The *Urban Commons Handbook* by the Urban Commons Collective (Akbil et al., 2021), collected experiences of commoning as a practice in academic environments. Both interventions attempted to bridge the gap between academic and activist methods and formats in order to provide theoretical tools for community and urban commons activists based on experiences on the ground.

Following Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2012), I recognise that the potential impact of these interventions needs to be assessed in terms of their ability to provide usable and actionable knowledge for community, community and planning practitioners. I see the contribution to non-academic publications and debates as part of this impact.

11.3 Limitations and potentials

One of the main limitations of this research is that, despite the activist research focus on 'subaltern' knowledge and experiences (Spivak, 2003), the participants in the experiences explored in this research and the people who collaborated are predominantly white, non-migrant and middle class. This socio-economic composition is typical of the municipalist movement in general, and also of the 15M movement, which inspired and enabled it. As we have seen, municipalist politics took into account issues of race and class - especially in relation to economic redistribution and democratic decision-making - but there was not a large presence of people from these backgrounds in the organisations.

As explained in the methodology section, and despite the focus on collaboration and respect for practices, this practice-led research differs in some aspects from the classic participatory action research approach. Firstly, the project is committed not so much to create an embedded but rather an 'hyperbolic embodied knowledge' (Haraway, 2016, p. 78). This means that I am not an academic body, alien to the practice, trying to be incorporated into an existing community dynamic, but I am a practitioner myself, active in different practices - research, social mobilisation, public policy and urban planning - who seeks to act as a mediator between them to produce a particular knowledge that sits in-between. Second, there is not a single and well-identified community that participates in the research and to which I should be held accountable, but a constellation that acts as an "extended peer community" (Perry, 2022, p. 2) of actors who have either actively participated in the research or are part of epistemic and political communities. It is them who have shaped the research aim and questions, and there is a shared responsibility towards them that takes into account political commitments and acknowledges my active role in the process (Kokot, 2017).

A second limitation relates to the research design, where each phase takes the conclusion of the previous one to a different research ground, with different methods of inquiry and analysis. Although this iterative design is inspired by grounded theory, in my interpretation such an iteration

does not aim to 'saturate' the data, but to triangulate between different sources and motivations: what the municipalist platforms intended to do, what happened in practice and what is considered necessary to disseminate such experiences through the analysis of public documentation, interviews with practitioners and workshops with a range of social and institutional actors. Through this iterative process and the constantly shifting terrain and elements from phase to phase, the focus remains on the networked relationships across scales, actors and temporalities, but a more in-depth analysis of each of the situations studied could have been possible studied could also have been possible under a different context and framework.

The third limitation relates to the fact that the analysis of the first phase pointed to the well-known case of Barcelona as the most relevant terrain for the next iteration. The limitation of this seemingly obvious choice is a potential repetition of findings due to the abundance of studies and research projects on some of the leading social processes taking place in Barcelona, such as the PAH anti-eviction movement, the Can Batlló social centre, the social and solidarity economy projects in Sants or the BeC municipalist government. However, unlike previous activist and academic research - such as the research on urban commons in Barcelona by the Observatori Metropolità de Barcelona (2014), the Catalan architect Carlos Cámara (2018) or the Italian political scientist Iolanda Bianchi (2019) - my study does not focus on how each of these processes works in itself or how they can be categorised, but on how different elements of these commoning processes relate to the public domain and to municipalism as a political hypothesis. Another difference is that my research is not only concerned with analysis and characterisation, but also with projecting the commoning processes involved in the study beyond their current manifestation.

11.4 Future research

The first proposal of this doctoral research was drafted in December 2018, when some of the documents analysed in the first phase of the fieldwork were still being produced, and the Spanish 'cities of change' included relevant municipalities such as Madrid and Barcelona, but also Zaragoza, Valencia or A Coruña. In the 2019 Spanish local elections, most municipalist platforms lost the mayoralty and even their presence in government, with only Barcelona en Comú retaining a municipalist government. At the same time, the 'politics of change' represented by Podemos gained influence at the national level, eventually becoming part of a national coalition government. At the same time, the political hypothesis of the commons lost relevance in institutional discourse. In Barcelona, for example, the concept lost presence in the electoral programmes and in the discourses produced by the platform, which focused on the more leviathan 'common good'.

This shift in the political mood from a demand for local democracy to a struggle with national politics was exacerbated by the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic, which made it even more difficult to sustain a political movement that was born in squares packed with people and in numerous assemblies and demonstrations. Between 2019 and 2023, the municipalist government in Barcelona was able to develop relevant policies in all areas of institutional action, from the well-known pedestrianisation plan that created the superblocs to the implementation of new public services such as municipal dentistry or babysitting. However, in the municipal elections of May 2023, Barcelona en Comú also lost the municipal government, and in the national elections of July 2023, a

new platform aimed at articulating political parties and mobilising citizens, Sumar, ran in the national elections and then joined the coalition government. At the European level, following the results of the Italian and French local elections, part of the international municipalist movement has shifted towards the social sphere, while in Serbia and Croatia the electoral platforms are still growing in relevance.

These external events and changes, together with internal limitations and shortcomings, have influenced the possible next steps along three main concerns: the gaps in the theoretical framework and case studies presented in this research, the possibility of renewing the scenario methodology with new strategic tools, and the transformation of democratic governance from urban social movements focused on proximity to local politics to an articulation with the current planetary polycrisis. In the course of this research, three questions emerged: a more relevant incorporation of non-Western ontologies into the theoretical framework of the commons and the coordination efforts of commoning practices at the European level; the incorporation of a disruptive planning methodology into the tradition of scenario building as a 'serious game'; and the articulation of meso-commoning programmes with efforts to address the causes and consequences of the climate crisis.

11.4.1 Research scaling

A first potential line of work would be to extend the research through new areas of theory and practice. In terms of practice, the first, more obvious proliferation would be to deepen knowledge of commoning practices at the European level. The inclusion of European cases in the thesis aimed to highlight the potential resonances with other territories. However, in order to broaden the notion of interdependence, it will be necessary to deepen the study of the experiences in Belgrade, Berlin and Brussels - a self-organised collective urban vision, an institutional urban commons policy and a co-produced urban project - and to include others. Such a broadening of research could be used to test the capacity of my relational mapping method to produce comparative analysis and to assess the replicability of my characterisation of *transmediators* and *meso-governance*.

Theoretically, a second extension would be the inclusion of Southern and non-hegemonic experiences in the articulation between local democracy, commoning processes and strategic planning. The focus of this work has been on Europe, discussing concepts and references produced in the Anglo-Saxon and Spanish contexts. In this respect, there is a gap in the knowledge and mobilisation of non-Western theories and practices, with some points of contact with decolonial standpoints, southern commoning processes and urban theories. A first step in this direction was the workshop 'Translation in common/s as a matter of care' co-organised with the Urban Commons Research Collective for the AHRA 2023 conference. In our proposal, we acknowledged that "in contexts where the commons are contested, people gather, establish practices, have conversations and produce knowledge on their own terms" (Urban Commons Research Collective, 2023).

In my practice, the main influence on the need and opportunity to decentre the theory of the commons towards a non-Western ontology comes from Latin American indigenous thought and its relevance for theorists and practitioners of the commons. For example, the *Comunalidad* conferences held in Mexico, Puebla in 2015 and Oaxaca in 2017, which incorporate the concept of '*comunalidad*' coined and developed by indigenous scholars (Nava Morales, 2019; Martínez Luna,

2015). Finally, the crucial indigenous contribution to the a-modern character of the commons, with concepts such as the Aymara *ch'ixi*: a perceived grey colour made up of small fragments of black and white, like a granite stone or a snake:

[...] *ch'ixi* entities are powerful because they are indeterminate because they are neither black nor white, but both at the same time. The serpent is both above and below; it is both masculine and feminine; it belongs neither to heaven nor to earth but inhabits both spaces, like the rain or an underground river, like a lightning or a vein in the mine. (Rivera Cusicanqui, 2018, p. 98, my translation).

11.4.2 Democratic provision of services

In November 2021, the Swiss environmentalist and co-author of the 6th IPCC report, Julia Steinberger, wrote the following tweet:

[...] I want to reorient my research direction: it's still going to be about Living Well Within Limits, but much more applied. I'm calling it "Democratizing Provisioning Systems." Basically, we need to move to democratic economic control of the provisioning systems (health, food, housing, mobility, energy, etc etc) that we rely upon for living well. That will be one of the main ways we can decarbonise them, make them available/affordable to all, and protect each other in the face of inequality & climate impacts. (@JKSteinberger, 2021)

This statement resonated strongly with my understanding of urban commons as the radically democratic management of collective resources under principles of sustainability, universal access and de-privatisation. At the same time, the political commons hypothesis would extend Steinberger's definition to include an aspect of democratic - political, not just economic - control over such provisioning systems. This perspective opens up the possibility of linking a seemingly technical issue to a global challenge with many local implications. Yet this question is absent from many discussions on how to plan urban activities. For example, in the round table on economic development policies of the *Barcelona Demà Metropolitan Plan* [Barcelona Tomorrow Metropolitan Plan] that I attended in June 2021, the climate crisis was mentioned by the moderators at the beginning and end of the session, but it was not discussed by any of the politicians, officials and researchers present, nor was it included in any of the concrete proposals for public policies and programmes.

In this context, future research on the management of urban commons as democratic provision of services could explore new areas of commons proliferation. It could also apply lessons learned from municipalist actors on how to effectively mobilise narratives and produce normative frameworks that challenge the neoliberal TINA mantra, while creating a space between these ideational and practical elements. In addition, the inclusion of a multi-species environmental approach would involve a different kind of non-human actor. Bruno Latour recognised the agency of technological non-human actors, and I have considered legal administrative artefacts such as protocols and regulations, as well as beliefs and causes that have the capacity to transform situations, as non-human actors. Considering more than human actors as part of the ecology of practices could lead to productive new research.

11.4.3 Scenarios as a 'serious' planning game

The third line of potential research focuses on future scenarios and how they could be opened up to alternative modes of planning, as demonstrated during the fieldwork. As a follow-up, the elements identified in the Barcelona scenario workshop could be applied to public policy. A potential line of research would be to use the future scenarios workshop I co-designed as a starting point for the development of a 'serious game', similar to *The World (Peace) Game* developed by US architect Buckminster Fuller. The purpose of Fuller's game was "to make the world work, for 100% of humanity, in the shortest possible time, through spontaneous cooperation, without ecological offence or disadvantage to anyone" (Buckminster Fuller Institute, 2022, np). A more recent example with a similar aim is the online game *Half-Earth Socialism*, where La Pham and Tseng (2022) have developed a simulation of planning processes on a planetary scale, which they call the 'Planetary Crisis Playing Game'. Like Buckminster Fuller, they recognise the human desire to think creatively outside of reality by referring to such simulations as 'games'. The use of this term does not diminish the importance of simulations in achieving the common good. A contemporary reason for radical alternative planning is the belief that it is easier to imagine the end of the world than the end of capitalism. Such planning, as proposed in the *Peace Game* or the *Socialist Earth*, requires a suspension of beliefs - belief in the Cold War logic or in capitalism as the only possible system - and the acceptance of a new set of rules. This is a similar endeavour to radical and disruptive planning. Games propose a dynamic based on an objective and a mechanism for interacting with elements that could use the elements identified in this thesis: the logics, principles and protocols, the actors and the interaction between fields and habitats.

Summary

In this thesis I have demonstrated the potential of the commons-municipalism articulation to provide the tools and strategies necessary to redefine planning as a methodology for the proliferation of commoning practices. I have proposed that such a planning methodology is based on a radically democratic governance of the common resources that sustain collective life and is applied to urban territories as examples of open, complex, interdependent social systems.

Like the research that underpins it, this proposal is situated 'in the middle'. It combines theory and practice in an interplay of epistemic fields and experiences at different times and territorial scales. In the theoretical field, the discussion is situated at the intersection of municipalism, urban commons and planning. The analysis of practices looks at the past, present and future, moving between national, local and metropolitan scales. The analysis of the politics and policies developed in Spanish municipalist 'cities of change', the experiences of social-public commons processes in Barcelona, and the future scenarios and transformative horizons outlined in the European metropolis converge in the proposal of a becoming-common of the public.

The idea of a becoming-common challenges the modern urban planning and governance binary logic of dichotomic elements and remains 'in the middle', between the public and the common, the social and the institutional, the discourses and the regulations. This in-between position characterises elements such as *meso-governance*, trans-mediators and disruptive planning as tools to transform existing 'pockets of the future', experiences of urban commoning, into a future social

practice. This commoning practice would be part of an ecology of social configurations that deal with the construction of communities, the allocation of resources and decision about matters that must be considered a shared concern, because they have shared effects. These decisions cannot be taken by the public administration of the nation-state or the private interest of the capitalist market but must be decided in common.

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ANNEXES

ANNEX A - Archive

A.1 - Municipalist public meetings in Spain (2015-2019)

Participation of Spanish municipalist platforms from cities with more than 100.000 inhabitants in public interventions and debates. Annex A.1 has been uploaded to the OSF project: <https://osf.io/4amdv>

Table A.1: Municipalist meetings

Type	Title	Date	Place	Participant cities	Source
Public Rally	<i>Ciudades por el bien común I</i> [Cities for the common good I]	09/2015	Barcelona	Madrid, Barcelona, Zaragoza, A Coruña, Iruña, Cádiz, Badalona, Santiago de Compostela	https://pongamosquehablodemadrid.com/2015/08/28/ciudades-por-el-bien-comun-barcelona-4-de-septiembre-de-2015/
Public Rally	<i>Ciudades por el bien común I</i> [Cities for the common good I]	11/2015	A Coruña	Madrid, Barcelona, Valencia, Zaragoza, A Coruña, Cádiz, Santiago de Compostela, Ferrol	https://www.europapress.es/nacional/noticia-alcaldes-ciudades-bien-comun-celebraran-sabado-nuevo-encuentro-coruna-20151128095434.html
Public round table	<i>Fortalecer los bienes comunes desde el municipalismo</i> [Using municipalism to strengthen the Commons]	4/2016	Barcelona	Barcelona, Zaragoza, A Coruña, Madrid, Cádiz, Badalona	https://www.teixidora.net/wiki/Jornades_Enfortir_els_b%C3%A9ns_comuns_des_del_municipalisme_2016/04/15/apunts
Public rally	Fearless Cities: global networks of refuge and hope	6/2017	Barcelona	Madrid, Barcelona, Zaragoza, A Coruña, Badalona, Compostela	https://2017.fearlesscities.com/fearless-cities-global-networks/
Public presentation	<i>Atlas del Cambio</i> [Atlas of Change]	10/2018	Online	Madrid, Barcelona, Zaragoza, A Coruña, Jerez	https://municilab.cat/es/actividad/presentacion-de-atlas-del-cambio-una-geografia-politica-del-cambio-municipalista
International conference	OIDP	11/2018	Barcelona	Participants: Madrid, Barcelona, Zaragoza, A Coruña, Valladolid	Source: https://www.oidp.net/docs/repo/doc464.pdf

Source: compiled by author, based on various sources.

A.2 - Debates, mappings, archives and collections (2014 - 2023)

An archive of debates, mappings, archives and collections of projects, programmes, policies and experiences related to municipalism and urban commons, at the Spanish national and the international scale. Annex A.2 has been uploaded to the OSF project: <https://osf.io/9tsc6>

Table A.2: Debates and compilations on municipalism and urban commons

Type	Title	Date	Place	Authors / Organizers	Source
Mapping	<i>Comunes urbanos en Barcelona</i> [Urban Commons in Barcelona]	2014	Online	Observatori Metropolità de Barcelona (orgs.)	https://web.archive.org/web/20220123092551/http://bcncomuns.net
Collection	<i>La revolución jurídica de los comunes</i> [Commons Legal Revolution]	2017	Barcelona	La Hidra (coords.)	https://soundcloud.com/fundaciondeloscomunes/sets/la-revolucion-juridica-de-los
Debate	Municilab 2017	10/2017	Barcelona	La Comuna / BeC (orgs)	https://municilab.cat/es/programa/2017
Archive	<i>Atlas del Cambio</i> [Atlas of Change]	10/2018	Online	Marta Junqué & Ana Méndez de Andés (Coords)	http://ciudadesdelcambio.org/
Debate	Municilab 2018	10/2018	Barcelona	La Comuna /BeC (orgs.)	https://municilab.cat/es/programa/2018
Collection	<i>Ciudades en Movimiento</i> [Cities in Movement]	2018	Madrid	Fernández-Casadevante José, Nerea Morán & Fernando Prats	https://blogs.fuhem.es/forotransiciones/wp-content/uploads/sites/51/2018/11/CiudadesEnMov_WEB_PLIEGOS.pdf
Collection	<i>Ciudades Democráticas</i> [Democratic Cities]	2019	Barcelona	Laura Roth, Arnau Monterde & Antonio Calleja-López (eds.)	https://openaccess.uoc.edu/handle/10609/97747
Collection	Fearless Cities: A Guide to the Global Municipalist Movement	2019	Oxford	La Comuna / Barcelona en Comú (eds.)	https://fearlesscities.com/sites/default/files/fearless_book_en.pdf
Archive	<i>El mundo de los Comunes</i> [The World of the Commons]	2019	A Coruña & Madrid	Ergosfera / Todo por la Praxis	http://www.ergosfera.org/archivo/comunes/descargas/linea_tiempo_comunes_20000px.jpg
Collection	<i>Códigos Comunes Urbanos</i> [Urban common codes]	2020	Barcelona & Valencia	Ana Méndez de Andés, David Hamou & Marco Aparicio (eds)	https://commonspolis.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Codigos-comunes-urbanos_2021.pdf
Collection	<i>La política de lo común</i> [The politics of the commons]	2023	Barcelona	Rubén Martínez Moreno (ed.)	https://lapublica.net/es/revista/la-politica-del-comu/

Source: compiled by author, from various sources.

A.3 - Commoning Policies in Spain (2015-2019)

List of the official documents produced between 2015-2019 by Spanish municipalist governments in cities with more than 100.000 inhabitants which included the Spanish, Catalan and Galician equivalent to the term 'commons'. In the case of Barcelona, the include the documents taken into consideration in the policy analysis and other official documentation produced in that framework of the programme, such as internal memos or public presentations. The documents listed in Table A.3 have been uploaded to the OSF project: <https://osf.io/xqynv/e>

Table A.3: Municipalist commoning policy documentation

City	Policy Type	Document/s Name [es/cat/gal]	Type of document	Administrative action	Date	OSF link	Source
Madrid	Public-Social Partnership	<i>Ordenanza de Cooperación Público-Social del Ayuntamiento de Madrid</i>	Ordinance	Plenary Definitive Approval	2018/5/30	https://osf.io/86kcp	https://sede.madrid.es/FrameWork/generacionPDF/ANM2018_35.pdf?idNormativa=eb53ebd8dfcf3610VgnVCM2000001f4a900aRCRD&nombreFichero=ANM2018_35&cacheKey=62
Barcelona	Civil Patrimony	<i>Comuns urbans : Patrimoni ciutadà : Marc conceptual i propostes de línies d'acció</i>	Report	Publication in the "Gazeta Municipal"	2017/2	https://osf.io/5am8x	https://bcnroc.ajuntament.barcelona.cat/jspui/handle/11703/115392
Barcelona	Civil Patrimony	<i>Comuns urbans : Patrimoni ciutadà : Marc conceptual Jurídic i propostes normatives</i>	Report	Publication in the "Gazeta Municipal"	2017/2	https://osf.io/brh5a	https://bcnroc.ajuntament.barcelona.cat/jspui/handle/11703/115397
Barcelona	Civil Patrimony	<i>Decret D'Alcaldia de creació de la Taula de Patrimoni Ciutadà</i>	Instruction	Publication in the "Gazeta Municipal"	2017/11/21	https://osf.io/qthju	https://bcnroc.ajuntament.barcelona.cat/jspui/handle/11703/106291
Barcelona	Civil Patrimony	<i>Instrucció relativa al programa Patrimoni Ciutadà</i>	Instruction	Internal Memo	2017/10	https://osf.io/u4xt6	https://bcnroc.ajuntament.barcelona.cat/jspui/handle/11703/106291
Barcelona	Civil Patrimony	<i>Programa de Patrimoni Ciutadà d'ús i gestió comunitàries</i>	Report	Public presentation	2017/11	https://osf.io/hbgcu	http://hdl.handle.net/11703/124623

Table A.3 (cont.)

City	Policy Type [en]	Document/s Name [es/cat/gal]	Type of document	Administrative action	Date	OSF link	Source
Barcelona	Civil Patrimony	<i>Requisits o criteris pel govern, l'ús i la gestió dels Patrimoni Ciutadà – Borrador</i>	Rules of procedure	Internal Memo	2018/12	https://osf.io/6etpq	https://bherria.eus/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Requisits-i-criteris-Patrimoni-ciutad%C3%A0-v12juny.pdf
Barcelona	Civil Patrimony	<i>Criteris per al disseny d'una política municipal</i>	Documentation	Report	2018/12	https://osf.io/yhg2m	https://bcnroc.ajuntament.barcelona.cat/jspui/handle/11703/115391
Barcelona	Civil Patrimony	<i>Circular sobre el circuit de funcionament intern del programa de Patrimoni ciutadà en l'adjudicació d'espais municipals</i>	Instruction	Publication in the “Gazeta Municipal”	2019/7/31	https://osf.io/w49yp	https://bcnroc.ajuntament.barcelona.cat/jspui/handle/11703/115154
Barcelona	Civil Patrimony	<i>Balanç Comunitari</i>	Indicators	Public presentation	2019	https://osf.io/s5eug	https://ajuntament.barcelona.cat/participaciociutadana/ca/patrimoni-ciutadana/balanc-comunitari
Zaragoza	Culture as Commons	<i>Hacia una política cultural del bien común</i>	Strategic Framework	Public presentation	2015/12	https://osf.io/3pjdb	https://www.zaragoza.es/contenidos/cultura/publicaciones/hacia_una_politica_cultural_del_bien_comun.pdf
A Coruña	Commons District	<i>Informe sobre a proposta inicial de reorganización do municipio da Coruña en distritos</i>	Report	Public presentation	2016/12	https://osf.io/r34c9	https://www.coruna.gal/participacion/gl/procesos-participativos/organizacion-en-distritos
A Coruña	Naves do Metrosidero	<i>Aprobación do "Plan de usos das Naves do Metrosidero"</i>	Report	Internal Memo	2019 /4/30	https://osf.io/57h2p	https://acorunapublicshare.blob.core.windows.net/repositorio-web/ParticipacionInnovacionDemocratica/Naves%20do%20Metrosidero/Naves%20de%20Metrosidero_Plan%20de%20usos%20e%20mec%C3%A1nicas%20de%20xesti%C3%B3n/Informe%20Asesor%C3%ADa%20Xur%C3%ADdica.pdf

Table A.3 (cont.)

City	Policy Type [en]	Document/s Name [es/cat/gal]	Type of document	Administrative Action	Date	OSF link	Source
Móstoles	Ecological Common Goods	<i>Móstoles 2030 - Una ciudad en transición</i>	Strategic Plan	Public presentation	2018/12	https://osf.io/cdtve	https://www.mosto.es/ayuntamiento/concejalias/concejalia-seguridad-emergencias-movilidad-medioambiente/medioambiente/mosto-2030-ciudad-transicion
Iruña	Public-Social Partnership	<i>Reglamento de Participación Ciudadana</i>	Regulation	Plenary Definitive Approval	2019/12/24	https://osf.io/u23q7	https://bon.navarra.es/es/anuncio/-/texto/2019/251/32
Alcalá de Henares	Ecological Common Goods	<i>Plan de Agroecología Local</i>	Strategic Plan	Plenary Initial Approval	2019/4/26	https://osf.io/tge5c	http://www.ayto-alcaladehenares.es/portalAlcala/RecursosWeb/DOCUMENTOS/1/0_19974_1.pdf [Dead link as of March 2014]
Cádiz	Culture as Commons	<i>Culturas Comunes</i>	Strategic Plan	Public presentation	2016/12/15	https://osf.io/uyc4a	https://institucional.cadiz.es/sites/default/files/areamunicipal/documentos/DOCUMENTO%20COMPLETO%20CULTURAS%20COMUNES%20sin.pdf

Source: compiled by author, from various sources.

A.4 - Interview transcripts

The interviews were a dialogue with people with experience in different fields and related to commoning processes, and who were involved in the municipalist project in different ways: from elected city councillors of BeC to urban activists in opposition to their city government. The interviews were an opportunity to share the aims and framework of the research project with actors interested in urban commoning in Barcelona. In the second round, interviews were conducted face-to-face as much as possible. Tables A.4 and A5 list the edited transcripts in Spanish and English that have been uploaded to ODRA, the digital repository of The University of Sheffield. Transcripts are accessible via the OSF project as well.

Table A.4: Transcripts of interviews in Spanish

Interview Code	Name / Pseudonym	Surname	Key words	Date	Location	OSF project link
INT_ActivistBCN	Activist BCN		BeC, districts, participation, care	02/11/21	Barcelona	https://osf.io/s9zh4
INT_AlbertM	Albert	Martínez	Civil Patrimony, participation	22/02/21	Barcelona	https://osf.io/25zwx
INT_AlvaroP	Álvaro	Porro	SSE, institutional design, cooperative, Bloc 4	01/03/22	Barcelona	https://osf.io/4kxg5
INT_AndreaC	Andrea	Corachán	Teatre Arnau, community	15/05/22	Barcelona	https://osf.io/eaygq
INT_Arcadia	Arcadia		Can Batlló, self-organisation, pedagogy	20/07/22	Barcelona	https://osf.io/5sprh
INT_BlancaV	Blanca	Valdivia	feminist urbanism, community	13/12/21	Barcelona	https://osf.io/u2fba
INT_CaroR	Carolina	Romero	Decidim, open software, community,	26/04/22	Barcelona	https://osf.io/fvta3
INT_DavidJ	David	Juárez	architecture, Al Fira, A-Prop	10/12/21	Barcelona	https://osf.io/d7ekt
INT_ElbaM	Elba	Mansilla	Coópolis, la Borda, care policies	02/12/21	Barcelona	https://osf.io/2cfkd
INT_GalaP	Gala	Pin	participation, Decidim,	13/12/21	Barcelona	https://osf.io/96kgt
INT_JosepV	Josep	Vidal	community economy, commons	10/03/22	Barcelona	https://osf.io/djvxx

Table A.4 (cont.)

Interview Code	Name / Pseudonym	Name	Key words	Date	Location	OSF project link
INT_LaiaF	Laia	Forné	Civil Patrimony, community assessment,	25/04/22	Barcelona	https://osf.io/w6t43
INT_LaiaG	Laia	Grau	planning, urban services, public land	12/11/21	Barcelona	https://osf.io/6szqj
INT_LaiaR	Laia	Ricart	Teatre Arnau, scenarios, performance	13/05/22	Barcelona	https://osf.io/kxaud
INT_LaiaT	Laia	Torras	BPO, institutional design	22/04/22	Barcelona	https://osf.io/p2j8g
INT_Legal1	Legal counselor 1		Civil Patrimony, public responsibility	15/11/21	Barcelona	https://osf.io/pa2hu
INT_Legal2	Legal counselor 2		Civil Patrimony, public responsibility	15/11/21	Barcelona	https://osf.io/pa2hu
INT_ManelP	Manel	Punsoda	Civil Patrimony, participation	15/11/21	Barcelona	https://osf.io/pa2hu
INT_MarcoA	Marco	Aparicio	Odesc, housing, commons	30/11/21	Barcelona	https://osf.io/6jtkq
INT_MarionaT	Mariona	Torra	Civil Patrimony, regulation	09/11/21	Barcelona	https://osf.io/5v78f
INT_NuriaA	Nuria	Alonso	Canódrom, open software	22/03/22	Barcelona	https://osf.io/qwhe3
INT_Olivia	Olivia		Can Batlló, assembly, negotiation	05/09/22	Barcelona	https://osf.io/7z32t
INT_Raquel P	Raquel	Prado	Civil Patrimony, regulation	09/11/21	Barcelona	https://osf.io/5v78f
INT_RosaS	Rosa	Sans	La Modelo, participatory process, memory	25/04/22	Barcelona	https://osf.io/zs7nc
INT_RubenM	Rubén	Martínez	urban commons, urbana processes	02/12/21	Barcelona	https://osf.io/86b73
INT_XabierB	Xabier	Barandiarán	decidim, open institutions	01/04/22	Online	https://osf.io/n32xj

Source: interviews transcribed and edited by author.

Table A.5: Transcripts of interviews in English

Interview Code	Name / Pseudonym	Surname	Key words	Date	Location	OSF project link
INT_AdvisorBXL	Advisor		urban commons, institutional procedures	17/07/23	Online	https://osf.io/cw876
INT_AnaD	Ana	Džokić	cooperatives, urban commons	18/05/22	Belgrade	https://osf.io/zhx64
INT_FraukeG	Frauke	Gerstenberg	Haus der Statistik, cooperation	14/10/22	Berlin	https://osf.io/463nh
INT_IvaC	Iva	Čukić	activism, urban commons, planning	18/05/22	Belgrade	https://osf.io/9386x
INT_JoaquinS	Joaquin	De Santos	CLT, commons	29/06/22	Online	https://osf.io/qmt82
INT_JovanaM	Jovana	Timotijević	deliberation, mini-publics, commons	18/05/22	Belgrade	https://osf.io/9386x
INT_LujbaS	Lujba	Slavković	urban planning, advocacy	20/05/22	Skopje	https://osf.io/69htp
INT_LotteS	Lotte	Stoops	urban commons, policies, procedures	17/07/23	Online	https://osf.io/cw876
INT_MarcN	Marc	Neelen	cooperatives, urban commons	18/05/22	Belgrade	https://osf.io/zhx64
INT_MarkusB	Markus	Bader	Urbane Praxis, commoning	22/11/21	Berlin	https://osf.io/vn9tc
INT_PlannerBER	Urbanist Berlin		New Athens Charter, <i>Gemeinwohl</i> , planning	24/05/22	Belgrade	https://osf.io/3qzxb
INT_PredragM	Predag	Momčilović	urban commons, environment	21/05/22	Skopje	https://osf.io/a8jrn
INT_TommaS	Tomma	Suki	collective organisation, doing together	22/11/21	Berlin	https://osf.io/mknst
INT_VerenaL	Verena	Lenna	urban commons, knowledge production	19/05/23	Online	https://osf.io/49kg7

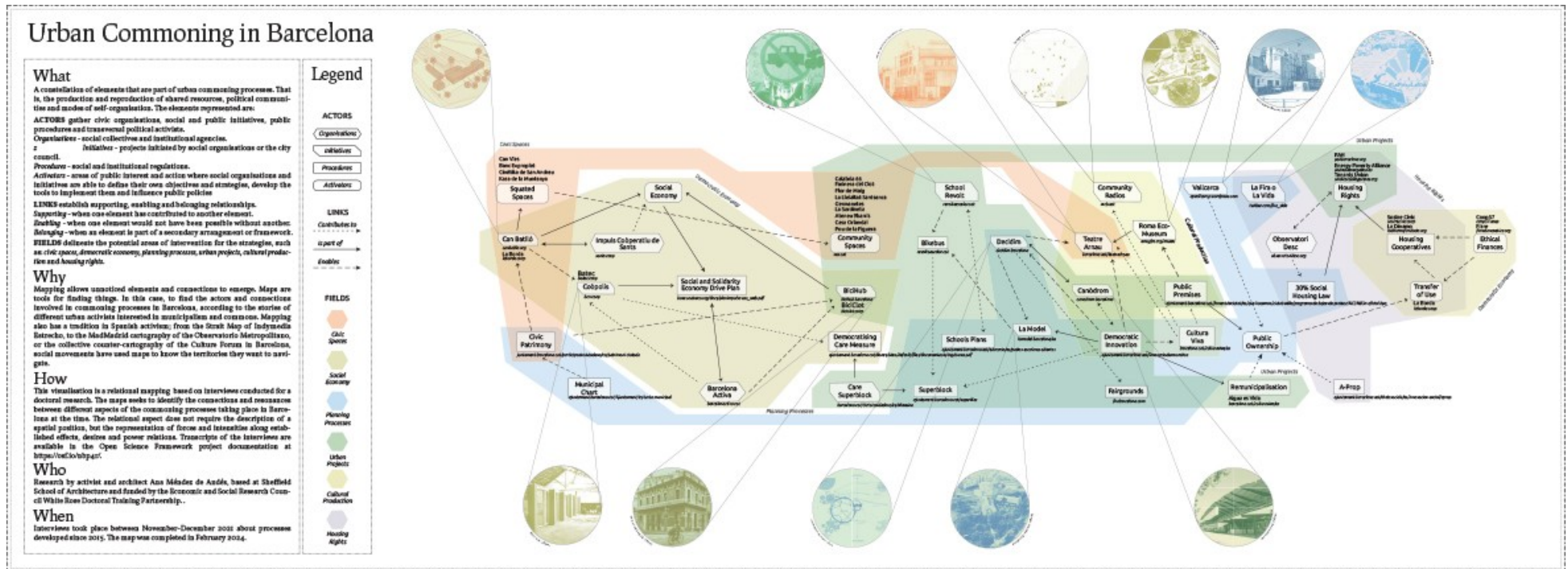
Source: interviews transcribed and edited by author.

As explained in the ethics section of Chapter 1, semi-structured interviews were conducted as dialogical encounters in which an ethics of care was established through the exchange of personal experiences and analysis. The interviews were transcribed and edited for ease of reading. The aim of the transcriptions is to provide clear, readable information about the processes, rather than an account of individual expressions and moods. Therefore, idiomatic expressions belonging to the oral domain have been adapted and the order of sentences has been rearranged where necessary. In addition, words, references and names have been added for the sake of clarity - these are indicated in the transcriptions by square brackets. The interviewees were informed of the nature of the transcription and had the opportunity to review and amend the edited version.

ANNEX B - Urban Commoning in Barcelona Map

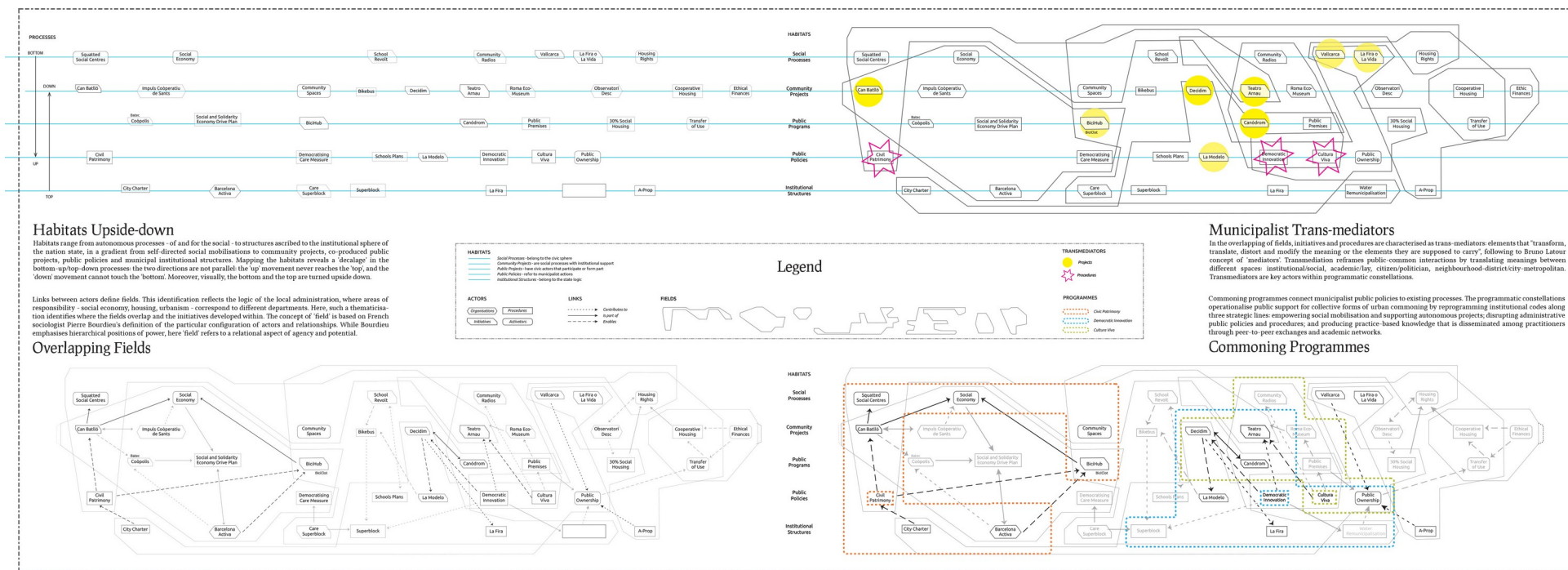
The Urban Commoning in Barcelona Map compiles the mapping exercise presented in Chapter 8 in a 80cmx20cm format with double sides, presented here and uploaded to the OSF project: <https://osf.io/w49gp>

Figure B.1: Urban Commoning in Barcelona map - Side A



Source: Author.

Figure B.2: Urban Commoning in Barcelona map - Side B

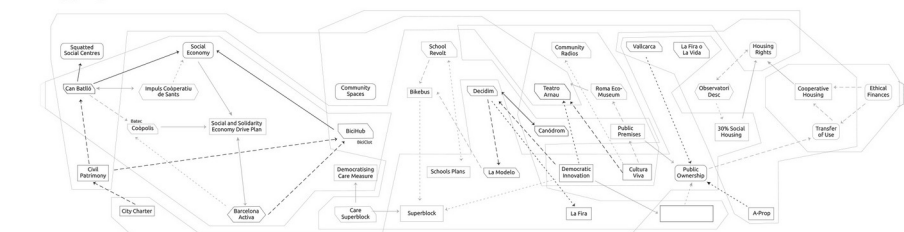


Habitats Upside-down

Habitats range from autonomous processes - of and for the social - to structures ascribed to the institutional sphere of the nation state, in a gradient from self-directed social mobilisations to community projects, co-produced public projects, public policies and municipal institutional structures. Mapping the habitats reveals a 'decalage' in the bottom-up/top-down processes: the two directions are not parallel: the 'up' movement never reaches the 'top', and the 'down' movement cannot touch the 'bottom'. Moreover, visually, the bottom and the top are turned upside down.

Links between actors define fields. This identification reflects the logic of the local administration, where areas of responsibility - social economy, housing, urbanism - correspond to different departments. Here, such a thematization identifies where the fields overlap and the initiatives developed within. The concept of 'field' is based on French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu's definition of the particular configuration of actors and relationships. While Bourdieu emphasises hierarchical positions of power, here 'field' refers to a relational aspect of agency and potential.

Overlapping Fields

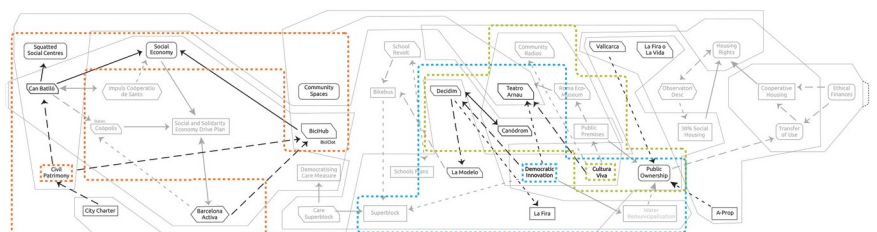


Municipalist Trans-mediators

In the overlapping of fields, initiatives and procedures are characterised as trans-mediators elements that 'transform, translate, distort and modify the meaning or the elements they are supposed to carry, following to Bruno Latour concept of 'mediators'. Transmediation reframes public-common interactions by translating meanings between different spaces: institutional/social, academic/city, citizen/politician, neighbourhood-district/city-metropolitan. Transmediators are key actors within programmatic constellations.

Commoning programmes connect municipalist public policies to existing processes. The programmatic constellations operationalise public support for collective forms of urban commoning by reprogramming institutional codes along three strategic lines: empowering social mobilisation and supporting autonomous projects, disrupting administrative public policies and procedures; and producing practice-based knowledge that is disseminated among practitioners through peer-to-peer exchanges and academic networks.

Commoning Programmes



Source: Author.

ANNEX C - Glossary of Future Commons

ALTER-PLANNING

BECOMING

COMMONS

ECOLOGY OF PRACTICES

LAW (FOR) THE COMMONS

MATTERS OF CARE

MESO

MILITANT

NEGOTIATION

POST-CAPITALISM

PROLIFERATION

PUBLIC

RE/PRODUCTION

SELF-MANAGEMENT / SELF-GOVERNANCE

TRANSLATION

The idea behind this glossary is the need for a new language and a new narrative based on common practices that was identified in many of the interviews during the fieldwork for the thesis. The relevance of this new narrative is not only a matter of dissemination and communication, but also of creating a change in understanding. This glossary collects (mostly) existing terms that have the potential to change institutional structures in what computer science calls its 'ontology'; "a representation, formal naming, and definition of the categories, properties, and relations among concepts, data, and entities" (Wikipedia). In this case, such a change in representation is aimed at creating a public common domain.

ALTER-PLANNING

The 'irreducible approach' to architectural and urban problemsⁱ requires a 'pragmatic method' able to take into account "each notion by tracing its respective practical consequences"ⁱⁱ. It also requires a characterisation of grounded experiences that reject the modernist 'universal general model' that applies external categories and ideologies. In this sense, we could say that commons alter-planning theoretical framework deploys a situated view that produces an always partial perspective, not based on a bird's eye view, as the 'seeing' of the stateⁱⁱⁱ, dihedral and infinitely distant, but a partial perspective from the ground, as a conical projection with a particular point of view and horizon. Such 'oligopticon' view will also contrast with Benjami's 'panopticon', as it does not deploy an overarching, complete panoramic view, but relies on a holistic connection between non-hierarchical, multiple points^{iv}.

The French urban theorist Françoise Choay attributes the term 'urbanism' to the Ildefonso Cerdá, who proposed it as a 'neologism' in his *Teoría general de la urbanización*, published in 1867.^v More recently, the English term 'urbanism' has been seen as a way of escaping the more technical and deterministic approaches of state-led 'planning', in both senses of the term. Firstly, in relation to urban design, 'the dominant mode of planning in modern times' would be proposed and developed by the CIAM. Second, in relation to the development of a modern state apparatus that uses social science methods 'to manage society'.^{vi} Choay's definition of 'urbanism' will include both aspects: "the indissociable union of what Romans called *urbs* - the physical territory of the city - and *civitas* - the community of citizens who inhabit it"^{vii}. The urban unit, the '*commune*', is something more than the space the buildings occupy: "the community of its inhabitants, the collective body in the physical as well as moral sense"^{viii}. In non-technical language, the Merriam-Webster dictionary defines urbanism as "the study of the physical needs of urban societies", while the Wikipedia defines it as "the study of how inhabitants of urban areas interact with the built environment". In this sense, the concept of 'pluritarian urbanism' is one of the possible declinations of what Vasudevan & Novoa^{ix} have defined as 'pluriverse planning' and as a way of thinking a critique of modernist planning that confronts 'unitarian urbanism' and embraces different traditions of counter-planning, and pluriversal planning with two aspects that propose alternative 'lines of flight' from the tradition of high modernist urbanism through insurgent planning theory and feminist urban practices.

Examples of alter(ring) planning include insurgent and counter-planning, from community spaces that struggle against local regeneration projects to create spatial configurations where communities reconnect culture and nature, the digital and the analogue, the institutional and the emergent, such as R/urban in the Parisian banlieues,^x to temporary autonomous zones that confront national development infrastructures while creating political communities, such as the *Zone À Défendre* (ZAD) in Notre Dame des Landes.

BECOMING

A concept developed by Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari as 'a function of an open system' that 'operates between the actual and the virtual'.^{xi} Rose Braidotti adds that in the actualisation of a line of flight, 'becoming' activates the positive power to - or potentia - that resists the reactive constraints

of power over - or potestas - and mobilises the desires necessary to carry out a transformation of subjectivities 'in a process that is co-extensive with both power and resistance to it'.^{xii} Jun Fujita Hirose defines becoming as the realisation of a 'potentia' articulated by desires, mutations and lines of flight that refuse to accept the imposition of capital and its associated unequal exchanges, general categorisations and hierarchies.^{xiii}

COMMONS

The commons resonates as a space of protection born in the everyday life of people, from their needs and uncertainties, seeking logics of self-government and self-management to create material and emotional bases of human existence. [...] Beyond the classic strategies of social movements vis-à-vis public powers, pivoting on the axis that goes from delegation / incidence to opposition / resistance, the construction of the commons implies erecting a space of creation/dissidence, of creative autonomy, oriented towards satisfying needs and self-protection of rights.

Ismael Blanco, Ricard Gomà & Joan Subirats, *El nuevo municipalismo: derecho a la ciudad y comunes urbanos*, 2018 (p. 18).

Commons are the social struggle most directly concerned with the possibility of collective and self-organised governance and management rooted in democratic, equitable and sustainable principles. The possibility of enacting an alternative to market and state control of social organisation - sanctioned by the division of legal codes into private and public law - is based on the analysis of commoning experiences of cooperation, collective action and mutual aid, where it is possible to recognise that commons are not lost, but happen here and now. We know this from a theoretical perspective because of the political economy analysis of how each new cycle of capitalism is based on a primitive accumulation of commons and how these enclosures keep happening. We also know it in practice because - more obviously in moments of crisis - collective care sustains our lives.

I don't use the term "the commons", for technical [reasons]. The term "commons" to me means a wide diversity of non-private goods, so I use the term "common-pool resources as a technical term to refer to resources where it is difficult to exclude people - not impossible, but difficult - and where whatever I take, takes it away from everyone else. Now, public goods may also be commons, in the broader sense. so when we talk about "the commons" then I am thinking about both public goods and common pool resources. Public goods are like knowledge: it is still difficult to exclude people, but if I use your book, and the kind of ideas that you have, that doesn't exclude others.

Elinor Ostrom, Defining "the commons", 2010 (video transcript is mine)

At a MayDay Rooms meeting at the School of Walls and Space in Copenhagen, Midnight Notes collective members offered another definition of the commons as a political hypothesis with three aspects:

[...] the first etymological, sharing the same root as community or communism; the second as an expression of political desires that confront the multiple ways in which capital dispossesses us of wealth and space; the third as a form of cooperation that is

alive in many parts of the world and indeed is part of a human history in which privatisation is a small part both temporally and spatially.

Silvia Federici, George Caffentzis and Peter Linebaugh, *Definition of Commons*, 2013 (np)

The fortune of the commons

The tragedy of the commons is the title of an article by the neo-Malthusian biologist Garret Hardin and a concept based on a pamphlet by William Forster Lloyd (1980 [1833]), *Lecture on the Checks to Population*, written in the midst of the Enclosure Acts. Hardin posed the problem of a communal pasture where each shepherd added a single sheep to his flock until the field was gradually exhausted and no more animals could be fed. The metaphor assumes that common resources are open fields that can be exploited to the point of exhaustion by free riders seeking maximum individual profit. In his view, the only way to ensure the sustainability of natural resources in an overpopulated world was their privatisation and/or trusteeship under a strong and sanctionable state.

While Foster Lloyd's pamphlet exposed the consequences of overgrazing in the English countryside, Robert Bish shows how Hardin's argument follows the idea expressed by other environmentalists that during the enclosure of the commons in Britain, the lords and nobles had to exclude the peasants from grazing on what was formerly common land in order to protect them from overuse that would destroy the pasture.^{xiv}

He didn't use [the word 'tragedy'] to suggest that this was sad. He meant that this was inevitable. Hardin, who argued that much of the natural sciences was grounded by limits – such as the speed of light or the force of gravity – quoted the philosopher Alfred North Whitehead, who wrote that tragedy “resides in the solemnity of the remorseless working of things.

Harford, Tim. «Do You Believe in Sharing?» *Tim Harford* (blog), 31 August 2013. <https://timharford.com/2013/08/do-you-believe-in-sharing/>.

The Tragedy of the Commons' was invented by a white supremacist based on a false history, and it's toxic bullshit': Hardin wasn't just inventing false histories out of a vacuum. He was, personally, a nasty piece of work: a white supremacist and eugenicist, and the Tragedy of the Commons paper is shot through with this vile ideology, arguing that poor people should not be given charity lest they breed beyond their means (Hardin also campaigned against food aid).

Doctorow, Cory. «The “Tragedy of the Commons” Was Invented by a White Supremacist Based on a False History, and It's Toxic Bullshit». *Boing Boing*, 7 March 2019. <https://boingboing.net/2019/03/07/scientific-fraud.html>.

What Hardin describes is no more than a derivative of the prisoner's dilemma applied to a deregulated, open-access resource exploited by uncooperative, selfish beings, a situation that does not correspond to actual experiences of collective management. Our own "fortune" of the commons is that we inhabit multiple ecosystems, generated and sustained by commoning activities,

[...] an ecosystem of practices with symbiotic and non-parasitic relations between the common and the public, the communal and the private. An ecosystem where the collective would not be an aggregation of individuals, but where each individual can be seen as a superposition of his or her different collective spaces: a unique configuration from the combination of different communities. Not only communities of different kinds of affects, but also communities of micro-organisms - like the bacteria we carry in our stomachs - on which we depend to live, or the authors of texts, songs or tiktok videos we talk to in our heads.

Méndez de Andés, Ana. «Comunalizar la ciudad: un reto para la planificación estratégica urbana». *Plan Estratégico Metropolitano de Barcelona* (blog), 2023. <https://pemb.cat/es/blog/comunalizar-la-ciudad-un-reto-para-la-planificacion-estrategica-urbana/173/>.

ECOLOGY OF PRACTICES

A tool for thinking through a 'technology of becoming' that is not an instrument of submission, but a force that has been unfolded and refolded, and where the strategies of attachment, diplomacy and fostering will help to define 'a dynamics of pragmatic learning of what works and how'.^{xv} Applied to commoning practices, the various elements of ecology link them to the democratic requirements established in the occupied squares in 2011, the municipalist assault on public institutions, the programmatic policies developed by municipalist governments, and the potential to incorporate grounded learnings into a planning methodology:

An ecology of practices does not have any ambition to describe practices 'as they are'; it resists the master word of a progress that would justify their destruction. It aims at the construction of new 'practical identities' for practices, that is, new possibilities for them to be present, or in other words to connect. It thus does not approach practices as they are—physics as we know it, for instance—but as they may become. [...] Maybe we can then speak again about some sort of progress, but, as Brian Massumi puts it, it would be a progress brought about by a 'social technology of belonging', addressed to the many diverging practices and their practitioners as such [...]

Stengers, Isabelle. «Introductory Notes on an Ecology of Practices». *Cultural Studies Review* 11, n.º 1 (2005): 183-96. <https://doi.org/10.5130/csr.v11i1.3459>.

LAW (FOR) THE COMMONS

The emancipatory project of the commons aims to put social justice back at the centre of the legal adiscourse and to provide people with direct mechanisms for action at different levels. Italy has produced a number of widely recognised examples of this aim. These include the ABC - Aqua Bene Comune Napoli company as a public 'commons', as explained by Ugo Mattei,^{xvi} the proposal of the 'Rodotà Commission' for the inclusion of common property in Italian civil law, presented by Maria Rosaria and Stefano Rodotà^{xvii}, the 'Regulation on the Collaboration Among Citizens and

Administration for the Care and Regeneration of Urban Commons' implemented by the City of Bologna,^{xviii} the bottom-up process of negotiation and co-creation of the legal notions of 'urban commons' and 'civic use' in Naples between 2011 and 2017, documented by Maria Francesca De Tullio^{xix} (and Giuseppe Micciarelli^{xx}, or the draft of a European Charter of the Commons, analysed by Anna Simonati.^{xxi}

A workshop on the 'Law (for) the Commons' at the European Assembly of Commons, held in Madrid in October 2017, aimed to define the potentials and challenges of such an undertaking. The Law of the Commons workshop at the European Commons Assembly aimed to identify “legal opportunities and tools able to guarantee the protection and development of commoning practices” in relation to emerging urban commons as well existing processes and projects. The call appealed to “existing knowledge and institutional analysis in management of traditional commons, as well as contemporary legal practices for local, national and European legislation. It can also investigate instances where these concepts have been applied at the local scale.” The participants expressed their interest in “the generation of platforms to exchange existing knowledge and experiences in legal mechanisms, as well as the production of practical tools to be used at European and local levels in relation with legislation, norms and institutional interaction.” It included the experience in the “production of municipal regulations for shared administration, which protects urban commons (squares, gardens, schools, cultural commons, streets, etc.) and compels local governments to collaborate with citizens”.

The workshop defined three main aims: to foster the SOCIAL SUPPORT OF THE VALUE OF THE COMMONS, to INSERT THE URBAN COMMONS IN THE EXISTING LEGAL FRAME, and to modify such frame with an IMPACT ON THE LAW. The three aims made use of different set of existing tools and conditions: driving forces, bridging elements, apparently inoquous dangers, advancing strategies and blockades.

TO CREATE SOCIAL SUPPORT OF THE VALUE OF THE COMMONS, through initiatives such as a school of commoning, the main driving force would be COMMONS-BASED INSTITUTIONS, making use of a NEEDS-BASED SELF-EDUCATION, COLLABORATIVE WORKSHOPS and a virtuous combination of FUNDING, ORGANIZATION and CONSELHOS??. To overcome the dangers of a NON-IDEOLOGICAL DISCOURSE (AND UNDERSTANDING) OF THE COMMONS and the potential transformation of CARE ECONOMY in to BIG SOCIETY, it would be necessary to make use of CONVIVENTIAL METHODOLOGIES. This enterprice will have to overcome the NEOLIBERAL SUBJECTIVITY and the NEED OF RESOURCES in a paradigm of scarcity and austerity.

The objective TO INSERT THE URBAN COMMONS IN THE EXISTING LEGAL FRAME the main is based on the experiences and practices of MUNICIPALISM and COLLECTIVE MANAGEMENT RIGHTS. These two make use of the soncepts usuch as SOCIAL RESPONSABILITY, DIVIDED PROPERTY, SOCIAL RENTABILITY, the PREVALENCE OF COLLECTIVE MANagements as criteria, and the URBAN CUSTODY (custodia urbana) as tools. The main obstacles are the EXPERT KNOWLEDGE that creates hidvisible and accepted den hierarchies and the more visible and ahegemonicPRIVATE EFFICIENCY PARADIGM and the UNDERSTANDING OF PROPERTY AS AN “ABSOLUTE” RIGHT WITH NO POSSIBILITY OF OVERLAY. Possible tools to overcome these dangers are the creation of a COMMONS OBERVATORY and CITIZEN-BASED CITY

COUNCILS, the development of a CHARTER OF THE COMMONS REPOSITORY as tactical mapping and the PRACTIC EXPERIENCES IN URBAN COMMONS MANAGERMENTS developed in Spain.

TO HAVE AN IMPACT ON THE LAW, the vehicles are the COUNTER-HEGEMONIC USE and the COMMON PRODUCTION OF THE LAW. They can make use of POPULAR LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES, SOCIAL-AND-COMMON / PUBLIC PARTNERSHIPS, and COMMONS LICENSES (such as Creative Commons) AND CONTRACTS. The hidden difficulties of this task include the task TO IMPLEMENT SOCIAL VALUE IN THE ASSESSMENTS OF PROJECTS AND CONTRACTS (in public procurement), strategies to SCALE-UP OF SOCIAL VALUE and the possibility to adopt SOCIAL RENTABILITY AS PRINCIPLE. More obvious obstacles are the LACK OF EDUCATION IN LEGAL FACULTIES about modes of relation beyond public and private paradigms. The main strategy to overcome this was the INFORMATION ABOUT POTENTIAL ACTIVITIES AND LEGAL TOOLS.

MATTERS OF CARE

Bruno Latour (2004: 236 [critique runs out of steam]) proposes a counter-measure to the Enlightenment idea of critique as a construction of 'matters of fact' detached from any 'parliament, forum, agora, congress, court': an exercise in redefining 'things' as objects that are also issues connected to the forums, meeting places, town halls where people debated.^{xxii} Latour's conditions for a shift from 'matters of fact' to 'matters of concern' include the following specifications: they matter and are part of invested interests; they are desired, not imposed; they become 'something to be explicitly recognised as a 'gathering''; and they are durable, not frozen and immutable, but 'kept up, cared for, accompanied, restored, duplicated, saved' by the people for whom they matter.^{xxiii}

For Latour, the operation of transforming facts into concerns seeks to incorporate objects of research - or 'things' - that are too strong to be treated as fetishes and far too weak to be treated as indisputable causal explanations of some unconscious action. Instead of looking for scientific facts as solid and indisputable explanations. For Isabelle Stengers, however,

[...] the relevant tools, tools for thinking, are the ones that address and actualise [the] power of the situation, that make it a matter of particular concern. But to be an actant towards the matters of concern: [...] demands learning what it takes to give to such situations the power to have their concerned protagonists thinking together, recognizing each other's diverging voices as legitimate, even necessary.

Stengers, Isabelle. «Introductory Notes on an Ecology of Practices». *Cultural Studies Review* 11, n.º 1 (2005): 183-96. <https://doi.org/10.5130/csr.v11i1.3459>.

Following Stengers, Maria Puig de la Bellacasa expands the concerns a step further into "matters of care", incorporating the notions of belonging and action of those concerned, and urges us to look for the "neglected things" that "joins together an affective state, a material vital doing, and an ethico-political obligation [...] Thinking matters of fact as matters of care does not require translation into a fixed explanatory vision or a normative stance (moral or epistemological). I suggest, rather, that it can be a speculative commitment".^{xxiv}

MESO

A position 'in the middle'. here, a position between dichotomies. Elke Krasny concern about *architecture and care*^{xxv} and Beth Perry involvement in *co-production as praxis*,^{xxvi} are two grounds to identify some of the key divisions assumed in the theory and practice of architecture and urbanism, which operate along three binary lines: a) between culture and nature, mind and body, the impartial declarations of objectivity and the engaged understandings of subjectivity that are often made to correspond to critical thinking and the co-production of knowledge; b) between the guilded mestiere of providing shelter as a craft and the individual art of producing architecture as an act of creativity that is seen as an opposition between external determinism and internal freedom; c) between the domestic, reproductive space driven by necessity and dependence and the public, productive space of autonomy and independence.

Culture	Nature
Mind	Body
Object	Subject
Impartiality	Engagement
Explanation	Understanding
Critique	Co-production
<i>Arte</i> (Art)	<i>Mestiere</i> (Vocation)
Creative Genius	Learned Skill
Freedom	Determinism
Productive	Reproductive
Public	Domestic
Autonomy	Necessity
Independence	Interdependence

MILITANT

"To have skin in the game"

Interview with Marc Neelen, 2021

The Observatorio Metropolitano defined militant research as a means of providing the knowledge and political tools necessary to confront processes of change. In Spain, the idea of 'militant' research helped to connect small and embryonic projects of independent, activist research taking place in the city and within social movements, and to create a space where activists, technicians, academics and concerned parties could meet. This Metropolitan Observatory was active between 2005 and 2015. It published a first collective research,^{xxvii} and four manifestos^{xxviii} - including *The Charter of the Commons*, and *The Municipalist Wager* - and edited two compilations on urban processes.^{xxix}

NEGOTIATION

According to Deleuze, 'negotiation' is not a matter of bringing all sorts of things together under one concept but rather of relating each concept to variables that explain its mutations.^{xxx} For the Community Economies Collective,

[...] is interested in how we might build economies through ethical negotiations that take place amidst in-between spaces, where there is no pre-determined pathway to follow. The real spaces of negotiation are where ethico-political decisions are made. We identify these key concerns around which negotiation is crucial: How do we survive well through the work that we do? What kind of ethical encounters do we have in market and non-market transactions, via monetary exchange as well as household sharing, gifting, volunteering, or fairtrade? How do we acknowledge the multiple forms of surplus that support life? Not just surplus that becomes surplus value, but surplus labour in all forms, and of course, all that we've habitually taken from nature and considered surplus. How do we think about commoning the property, knowledges, and resources upon which we depend? How do we think about finance and its role in enabling?

Petrescu, Doina, y Katherine Gibson. «Diverse economies, ecologies and practices of urban commoning». En *Architecture and Feminisms*. Routledge, 2017.

POST-CAPITALISM

As part of an exercise of 'imagining and enacting' a post-capitalist city, Australian economist Katherine Gibson contributed to the calculation of the 'value of the commons' in the R/Urban project through a 'post-capitalist accountancy' of the capacity of urban commons to generate 'resilient urban futures'.^{xxxii} Such exercise is part of the call by the joined authorial persona J. K. Graham-Gibson to rethink and 'take back' the economy through the identification, analysis and replication of 'diverse economies' of which commons belongs.^{xxxiii} In this feminist critique of economic politics, "commoning renders explicit and politicises the rules that govern access, use, benefit, care and responsibility"^{xxxiii}, a function similar to planning. The link between diverse economies and urban commons has been stressed in a dialogue between Petrescu and Gibson that recognises the work done by J.K Gibson-Graham, and the Community Economies Collective "to represent and perform the economy as a project of becoming" that "challenges how economies have been conventionally thought in such a way that capitalism has come to be normalised" over alternative forms of production and reproduction, represented in the idea of an iceberg where the visible tip is a small percentage of the so-called 'real economy' while a heterogeneous economic landscape of transactions, forms of provision and subsistence remain under the water line.^{xxxiv} Graham-Gibson *Postcapitalist Politics* develops in three aspects: language politics and the new terms needed to identify 'matters of concern'; politics of subjectivity that challenge the idea of alternative discourses to mainstream economy as 'romantic, futuristic, utopian, and not possible to participate in'; and politics of collective actions that can reshape [urban] economies.^{xxxv} The Community Economies have included ecology politics to extend towards non-human interactions and planetary co-productive relationships. The resonances between economy and architectural

approaches show how the two aspects are so crucial to the development of a transforming alternative to capitalist development as they have been in its deployment.

PROLIFERATION

A form of re-growth of commoning practices based on transformation, heterogeneity and diversity, which defies the modern 'scalability' based on 'the ability to expand without rethinking basic elements', through heterogeneity and uniformity. In contrast, the modern expansion project "that counted as progress did not allow changes in the nature of the expanding project"^{xxxvi}. Commons proliferation explores the possibility of expanding, replicating and deepening the commons political project by transforming its internal and external boundary conditions. If "all forms of property can be potential commons"^{xxxvii}, there is a centrality to the process of 'becoming' a commons that relies on latent commoning processes and is particularly relevant to emerging urban commons.

PUBLIC

In their text 'New Directions for Planning Theory', Leonie Sandercock and Ann Forsyth identify three feminist strategies that redefine the meaning of public and private: First, the personal is political and private issues such as domestic violence are in fact public.^{xxxviii} Second, there is a deliberate strategy of making and manifesting private issues public until oppression is eradicated. Third, at the same time, the opposite strategy is needed: to make private and to de-scrutinise behaviours that "have traditionally been seen as part of the public domain of planning", such as the structure of households and sexual relations. In these three strategies, there is a notion of the state acting as a 'public patriarchy', deciding what is public and what deserves publicity.

RE/PRODUCTION

Social reproduction is a central issue in the feminist struggle to make sense of the world in order to change it. It has been a central issue in international mobilisations, from the first campaign for 'wages for housework' in the 1970s to the call for an international feminist strike by Argentinian feminists in 2018, and through a plethora of women-led mobilisations against land depletion and expropriation, feminism has become one of the most relevant 'political horizons' on a global scale.

One of the main contributions to the issue of re/reproduction in planning is the idea of an 'everyday' feminist urbanism, including US architect Dolores Hayden's 'domestic revolution', which takes feminist design from the domestic - the kitchen - to the immediate - the neighbourhood - to the urban - the city.^{xxxix} US urbanist Daphne Spain analyses the 'redemptive places' that 'saved the city'.^{xl} Social, not-for-profit housing such as boarding houses, vocational schools and settlement houses; urban care infrastructures such as public baths, playgrounds and buildings for social organisations - which welcomed and protected a migration flow to Chicago in the late 19th century and provided women with a route into what female reformers of the time called 'municipal housekeeping'.^{xli} They constitute an 'extended domestic sphere' in which women's activism extends from housing to education and knowledge production.

SELF-MANAGEMENT / SELF-GOVERNANCE

Self-management refers to the autonomy of commoning activities within the commoning assemblage of a specific community, shared resources and collective decision-making. Christian Laval and Pierre Dardot^{xliii} present 'the common' as a political principle that presupposes a separation between administrative, managerial procedures - seen both as part of the bureaucratic nation-state and as neutralised by the neoliberal agenda - and a politico-ethical instance usually identified with governance, but practitioners at the ex-Asilo Filangieri in Naples beg to differ:

In l'Asilo, everybody finds themselves shifting the focus of their attention from the content of the activities to the way they do them. These modes of doing revolve around an ecology of relationships based on a series of interconnected ideas: a practice of hospitality and openness; a desire to overcome identity approaches and confrontation through heterogeneity; centrality given to the processual elements that generate and multiply reflection (that is, slowness, consensus practice in response to conflict, circulation of competencies) as opposed to the achieving immediate objectives (verticalism, role-fixing, functionalism, circumvention of criticality and dissent); the logics of cooperation, mutualism and interdependence; to deviate from competitiveness and the automatisms of individual behaviour; a political action that reduces the pure claim in favour of a diffuse and contagious representation of modes; the transformative, and possibly conflictual, relationship with institutions rather than mere closure; the possibility to review acquired positions and lines of conduct at any time; the idea of a potentially infinite community that does not identify with a legal entity, with a space, or with a territory; the absence of obligations in favour of widespread responsibility, nourished by the quality of relationships; the attention to desires and the possibility for their realization; an experimental attitude - here as well on the level of modalities as well as on the level of content; a first-person participation in problem solving; and the development of trust as a premise for interpersonal relationships within the community.

Akbil, Emre, Alex Axinte, Esra Can, Beatrice de Carli, Melissa Harrison, Ana Méndez de Andrés, Katharina Moebus, Thomas Moore, and Doina Petrescu. *Urban Commons Handbook*. Barcelona: dpr-barcelona, 2021.

The Circle and The Squares

The circle and the square' is a phrase coined by Silvia Federici after visiting Spain and seeing the many assemblies, mostly in the form of a non-hierarchical circle, that took place in the squares. Indeed, the occupation of Spanish squares in May 2011 - called the 'Indignados', 'Take the Square' or simply '15M' movement - played an important role in the idea of self-government and radical democracy in Spain. It caused a rupture in the political culture established in the 'transition' to democracy since the 1970s^{xliiii} and created a new 'climate'^{xliiv} that opened the cycle of the so-called 'new politics'. Of all the encampments set up between mid-May and the end of July 2011, the one in Madrid's Puerta del Sol was the only one that consisted of collective spaces set up under a blue waterproof structure.

During those weeks, the camp - with its assembly, its committees and working groups, its demarcation of camping areas and its infrastructure, its digital hub connected to the outside world by Twitter, websites and telegrams - produced an unprecedented claim by all kinds of citizens to the

decision that governed such a collective space. Under the tents, people self-organised to provide water and food for thousands, created a system to provide a sense of security and control based on respect, built structures to protect themselves from the sun or the rain. It was a space designed to support the collaboration of people united by little more than the conviction that things could and should be organised differently. For weeks, the inhabitants of 'Acampada Sol' put into practice some of the basic characteristics of the public commons. Here, the neoliberal logic of individualisation - the assumption that relationships develop in a natural, well-functioning system and that problems are due to individual actions, characteristics and attitudes - was dismantled through the production of spaces for listening and collective self-organisation. The occupation of the squares was an embodied experience of 'commoning'^{xlv} that nurtured the municipalist political project and demonstrated the capacity of public spaces to function as sites of collective empowerment.

Urban Tactics

Doina Petrescu^{xlvi} has argued that commoning urban tactics are part of an altering architectural feminist practice based on the production of desires and modes of (re)producing social life, resilient practices capable of repairing social ecologies in times of crisis, and alternative, transgressive practices developed through co-design and co-production. Following Gilles Deleuze, these altering practices can be seen as becomings triggered by 'urban tactics'. According to Petrescu, urban tactics 'work with time and are opportunistic in their method; they do not 'plan' but use their own deviousness and the element of surprise to get things done'.^{xlvii} Urban tactics are engaged activities for city inhabitants to re-appropriate the city through spatial devices that enable it to be transformed into a self-managed space. This idea of self-management is historically and politically loaded, linked to a history of radical politics and social experimentation aimed at taking control of people's lives and organising their present and future.

TRANSLATION

[...] an experiment of common space creation is that any form of work and cooperation is implicitly or explicitly an act of collective self-regulation and self-management. [...] The rules established by the assembly formed institutions of commoning, as did the rules that established a rotation of duties (such as, for example, the collection of rubbish). Institutions of expanding commoning need to be flexible because 'newcomers' need to be included in them without being forced to enter a pre-existing taxonomy of roles. Comparability is the motor force of expanding commoning. However, comparability is not enough. Institutions of commoning need to offer opportunities as well as tools for translating differences between views, between actions and between subjectivities, one to the other. If comparability is based on the necessary and constitutive recognition of differences, translatability creates the ground for negotiations between differences without reducing them to common denominators [...] Expanding commoning does not expand according to pre-existing patterns; it literally invents itself. Translation is this inherent inventiveness of commoning which always opens new fields and new opportunities for the creation of a common world always in-the-making. The creation of common spaces involves practices of translation that build bridges between people with different political, cultural or religious backgrounds.

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