



**MONASH** University

**The Politics of Neighbouring: Migration, Proximity and Planning in  
Madrid's *Barrios***

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## Abstract

Following the Global Financial Crisis, novel forms of political action have emerged globally. The 15M movement in Spain like Occupy and Nuit Debout has generated much excitement. *El barrio*, the Spanish neighbourhood, gained significance as a space around which the 15M movement attempted to construct alternative modes of political belonging. Rather than establish an inside and outside — the defining feature of conventional modes of political belonging — *el barrio* was seen to provide an open framework that puts neighbours, both citizens and non-citizens, in contact via the space of everyday life. Whilst there has been much interest in the novelty of frameworks constituted by contemporary movements, haste to identify the new has come at the detriment of more careful discussion of the changing conceptions of space and belonging underpinning these and their tensions, limitations and possibilities. The curious mobilisation of *el barrio* provides a fruitful focus to consider such transformations in the Spanish context. The role played by *el barrio* in grounding grassroots political action, whilst having novel elements, echoes earlier battles in the city.

I draw on Henri Lefebvre's thinking to conceptualise the *politics of neighbouring*. Lefebvre's work provides tools to track how contested frameworks are inscribed in the spaces of everyday life. He distinguishes between state space and grassroots democratic practices. This distinction helps identify both how dominant modes of political belonging are grounded in *el barrio* and how alternatives emerge. I focus primarily on Lefebvre's studies of political events — on the Paris Commune as well as those written on and around May 1968. These works are of particular interest as in them Lefebvre uses space as a tool of analysis to account for how specific forms of grassroots democratic practices become possible. Due to the specificity of these political studies, their insights are not easily transportable to different contexts. In this regard, I illustrate how the relationship between state space and grassroots democratic practice takes different forms in

three different historical moments. These moments are sometimes similar and sometimes markedly different from those studied by Lefebvre. This interpretation of Lefebvre contributes to recent scholarship contextualising and highlighting the importance of history in his work.

*El barrio* has simultaneously been a space where dominant notions of citizenship have been grounded and where alternate grassroots modes of political belonging have emerged. *El barrio* is a politically contested space shaped by the dynamic relationship between migration, relations of proximity and planning. Modes of political belonging grounded in *el barrio* are contextually specific and interconnected with global processes. To gain historical perspective on these I focus on three particularly intense moments of conflict in *el barrio* in Madrid: the Anarchist period, the Franco dictatorship and the period after the Global Financial Crisis. This allows me to explore both how *el barrio* is envisaged and contested at different moments in time and how past events reverberate in the contemporary context. Historical perspective contributes to a more nuanced understanding of the spatio-temporal dimensions of contemporary mobilisations and their tensions, limitations and possibilities.

## Declaration

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma at any university or equivalent institution and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, this thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text of the thesis.

Ari Jerrems



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# Introduction: Contested modes of political belonging in *el barrio*

The impact of the Global Financial Crisis (GFC) in Spain has accentuated the inadequacies of conventional modes of political participation. The spaces in which “solutions” to the crisis have been formulated, dictated by the technocrats of the so called Troika (European Commission, European Central Commission and the International Monetary Fund), are completely disconnected from the spaces in which democratic participation is possible. In 2011, in the wake of the GFC, the 15M movement swept across the country before the national elections reflecting dissatisfaction with austerity measures and the political class — attempting to open new channels for political participation. In correlation with the emergence of the 15M movement *el barrio*, the Spanish neighbourhood, gained significance as a space around which activists attempted to construct meaningful political alternatives. Whilst policies were dictated from an inaccessible transnational sphere, it seemed that some leverage could be gained by intervening on the space of everyday life.

In this thesis, I develop a spatial history of politics in *el barrio*. I use the Spanish term *el barrio* to highlight the specificity of the spaces that I am discussing and distinguish them from neighbourhoods more broadly conceived. I focus specifically on *el barrio* in the Spanish context as *el barrio* has different histories and characteristics in Latin America and East Harlem, New York — popularly referred to as “*el barrio*”. Throughout the thesis, I track the spatio-temporal conditions under which particular modes of political belonging become possible in *el barrio*. The historical perspective gained provides insight into contemporary initiatives. Similar uses of *el barrio* are prevalent across a diverse array of social movements in Madrid. The action of a group called *Brigadas Vecinales de Observación de Derechos Humanos* (BVODH, Neighbourhood Human Rights

Watch Brigades) is particularly intriguing in this regard. This group challenges police identity checks targeting migrants in Madrid by making visible, observing and recording police practices. Whilst these internal forms of “bordering” are overdetermined by European migration regimes, the group reframes the migrant in relation to *el barrio*. Migrants are redefined as neighbours due to their shared presence in *el barrio*. The group denounces police practices that discriminate between neighbours. BVODH, like the 15M movement, conceptualizes *el barrio* as a point of encounter around which to construct alternative common spaces. Rather than establishing an inside and outside — the defining feature of conventional modes of political belonging — *el barrio* provides an open framework that puts citizens and non-citizens in contact via the space in which their everyday lives are conducted.

The tactics employed by the 15M movement (e.g., Sánchez Cedillo 2016) and related groups such as the *Plataforma de Afectados por la Hipoteca* (PAH – Platform of people effected by mortgages) (e.g., Gonick 2016) have received substantial academic interest. The 15M movement is commonly mentioned as part of a rehearsed list including the Arab Spring, the Aganaktismenoi in Greece, Occupy globally and more recently Nuit Debout in France. Such movements have generated much excitement for inaugurating counter-hegemonic spaces of resistance in the midst of global transformations (e.g., Butler 2015; Hardt and Negri 2012; Sánchez Cedillo 2012; Stavrides 2014). For Stavros Stavrides, for example, developments in Greece represent “emerging new forms of resistance” (Stavrides 2014, 546). Movements have been interpreted as contesting neoliberal policies and austerity politics and as the crystallisation of emerging forms of politics that have opened up numerous fractures in conventional political frameworks in recent years. For example, prior to the emergence of these movements, scholars and activists were particularly interested in how a common condition of precarity provided a basis around which novel political movements may develop (Neilson and Rossiter 2008).

Authors have sought to interrogate specific features of these movements and their potential as counter-hegemonic spaces of resistance. Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri (2012), in their text *Declaration*, establish three common characteristics of recent movements: a strategy of encampment, the internal organization of the multitude and a struggle for the common. Judith Butler interrogates the importance of bodies assembling in public space. She suggests that this “compels us to reconsider the restrictive ways “the public sphere” has been uncritically posited by those who assume full access and rights of appearance” (Butler 2015, 8). Through the occupation of public space, precarious bodies become visible. Bodies assembling in public space instate “the body in the midst of the political field” offering a “provisional and plural form of coexistence” against individualization and shared injustices (*ibid.*, 11-16). Stavrides focuses on the openness of emerging common spaces. By remaining open and “infectious” such spaces constitute a “[t]hreshold spatiality [that] may host and express practices of communing that are not contained in secluded worlds shared by secluded communities of commoners” (Stavrides 2014, 547). Whilst there has been much interest regarding the potential creation of counter-hegemonic spaces of resistance by these movements, less work has sought to interrogate the lines of continuity that link these to earlier initiatives. Cristina Flesher Fominaya notes a tendency to conceptualise movements as radically new and the “future” of protest. She suggests that movements “are often characterized by observers, journalists, scholars and even participants as spontaneous, unprecedented and unexpected” (Flesher Fominaya 2015, 142). In such accounts, a haste to identify new spaces of counter-hegemonic resistance often inhibits more careful discussion of the continuities and discontinuities of conceptions of space and belonging forwarded by particular movements.

The curious mobilisation of *el barrio* by social movements in Madrid provides a fruitful focus to establish such lines of continuity. The role played by *el barrio* in grounding grassroots political action, whilst having novel elements, echoes earlier interventions in the city. *El barrio* has a long

history as a space where alternatives to the status quo have been imagined. Flesher Fominaya recognises this longer history noting an “important and long-standing tradition of neighbourhood association organizing” in Madrid (Flesher Fominaya 2015, 149). Recurrent mobilisations of *el barrio* permit an interrogation of changing modes of political belonging. Through political conflict, specific modes of belonging are inscribed in space. At the same time, previous battles leave traces that mark the physical landscape, ideas and memories shaping the conditions of future possibilities. *El barrio* is a setting in which historical processes and political relationships are spatialized, being both the focal point of greater transformations and constituted by its own specificities and complexities. Whilst *el barrio* is the site of local interactions, it is also a space in which conceptions of the nation-state, citizenship and diverse processes are inscribed.

This thesis contributes to debates on contemporary movements through a detailed analysis of *el barrio* in Madrid. Throughout the thesis, I explore how particular modes of political belonging are grounded in *el barrio* at specific moments in time. The following three questions guide research throughout the thesis:

1. How are modes of political belonging constituted in *el barrio* at different moments in time?
2. What relationship do conventional modes of political belonging have with grassroots practices?
3. What role do migrants play and how do they situate themselves in the constitution of these modes of political belonging?

I develop Anne McNevin’s notion of political belonging to conceptualise politics in *el barrio*. McNevin employs the broader notion of political belonging to de-centre citizenship and the nation-state as the exclusive frameworks of politics, defining political belonging as “a dynamic

ordering principle that structures different kinds of political communities across time and space” (McNevin 2011, 15). Political belonging is an ordering principle that serves to shape the degree of belonging of individuals to a political entity and their participation in it. Political belonging is produced and challenged by *politics* itself. Drawing on Warren Magnusson’s definition, I understand politics to be “ultimately about how people organize themselves in order to live”. Politics is what “brings our way of life into being, sustains it, extends it, develops it, and of course challenges it” (Magnusson 2011, 35-36). Politics posits particular modes of political belonging inscribing them in space. As a result, “[p]articular modes of political belonging become deeply embedded in our spatial, temporal and embodied ontologies. They contribute, in other words, to who we are” (McNevin 2011, 15). Following this definition, citizenship and the nation-state are one historically specific combination of political belonging and space but not the only one. Forms of citizenship are inscribed in *el barrio* as well as alternatives that emerge from grassroots political action. As no particular mode of political belonging achieves total control over space, I refer to efforts to bring these into existence as *political interventions*. Political interventions attempt to order or manage complex space and consist of different techniques and tactics that are implemented to organize and imbue life with particular *spatial frames* and *temporal rhythms* (Lefebvre 2004). Spatial frames refer to the physical infrastructure and conceptual frameworks that overdetermine how life is lived in a particular space, shaping the rhythms of everyday life. Temporal rhythms refer to the routines of the present, shaped by historical traces, which contribute to shaping spatial frames. As modes of political belonging are contested by other frames and rhythms, I use the term *political constellation* to identify the greater set of modes of political belonging in conflict and tension with each other in a particular space at a particular moment in time.

Modes of political belonging constituted in *el barrio* are historically specific and contested. Whilst *el barrio* is the space of immediate lived relationships, it is also constantly designed and planned



to foment particular kinds of relationships. It is simultaneously a space where dominant modes of political belonging are grounded and where alternate grassroots initiatives emerge building on relations of proximity. Political conflicts emerging in *el barrio* are contextually specific, interconnected with wider reaching transformations and constantly shaped and transformed by the arrival of migrants. Migration is a constitutive and transformative aspect of Madrid's *barrios*. As migrants arrive in the city, and new *barrios* are created, the established city is challenged. *El barrio* provides a space through which new arrivals negotiate their place in the city.

I use the broader term *migrant* to refer to the diverse groups of people moving in and out of *el barrio*. The term migrant refers simply to the condition of moving from one place of residence to another. This broad definition is intentionally utilised to account for the diversity of forms, reasons and durations for which one moves. This also serves to diminish the distinction between migrants moving within or across state boundaries. The term immigrant, implying those that come from outside the nation-state, naturalizes the existence and legitimacy of states particularly with respect to states' ability to determine who can and cannot move. This term also connects to contemporary rhetoric that attaches pejorative adjectives to the term, such as illegal or irregular immigrant. In this thesis, it is firstly the commonalities between forms of migration that is of interest and secondly, in relation to these, the different ways in which migration is conceived and governed. Rather than take notions such as illegal migration at face value, this allows me to highlight how certain forms of migration become illegalised.

In order to gain historical perspective, I explore three particularly intense moments of conflict in *el barrio* from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century up to the present: the Anarchist period leading up to the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939), the Franco dictatorship and the period after the GFC. The study of the Anarchist period focuses broadly on developments in both Madrid and Barcelona, the study of the Franco dictatorship concentrates on Madrid, whilst discussion of the current period is

centred specifically on two particular *barrios* in Madrid: Tetuán and Lavapiés. The purpose of going from a broader focus in the earlier studies and increasing in specificity in the later studies is to gain an appreciation of the context from which contemporary *barrios* in Madrid were formed as well as the political contests that have shaped them. The insights gained from historical perspective are brought to bear on the present.

To conceptualise how changing modes of political belonging are inscribed in *el barrio*, I engage with interdisciplinary scholarship primarily in International Relations, Political Geography and Political Theory. In recent decades, much work has contributed to rethinking political enquiry, reformulating what it means to be political and the spatial parameters within which one can be political. This critical interrogation of the parameters of political inquiry has created a fertile environment for interaction and interpenetration between disciplines and has led to the emergence of spaces of engagement across disciplinary boundaries (e.g., Lisle, Squire and Doty 2017). Much of this work has addressed broader theoretical questions whilst interrogating specific issues tied to citizenship, migration, borders and the city. The migrant condition has been examined to reveal the contradictions and limitations of conventional political frameworks and the modes of belonging they assume. For example, the political action of irregular migrants is seen to open up new modes of political belonging that challenge established frameworks (e.g., McNevin 2011). This interdisciplinary literature provides tools to conceptualise how specific modes of political belonging are inscribed in space. To integrate and expand on these insights I draw on the idea of spatial history (Carter 1987, Elden 2001b, Morton 2015, White 2010). In contrast to a history of space — that is a historical account of a particular space — spatial history employs space as a tool of analysis to grasp historical processes (Elden 2004, 152). In this thesis, I employ *el barrio* as a tool of analysis to track how diverse relations are inscribed in space over time and how particular modes of political belonging take shape in the process.

I elaborate on the idea of spatial history by drawing on the thinking of Henri Lefebvre. Lefebvre's thinking is usually associated with his theorisations of space (1991a), everyday life (1991b) and the urban (2003). Several scholars have noted the importance of Lefebvre's work for developing the idea of spatial history (Elden 2004, White 2010, Morton 2015). In this thesis, I highlight the value of Lefebvre's studies of political events for developing a spatial history. I focus on his study on the Paris Commune as well as a number of texts written on and around May 1968. These works are of particular interest as in them Lefebvre uses space as a tool of analysis to account for how specific forms of grassroots democratic practices — what he conceptualises as *autogestion* — become possible. Such practices constitute alternative modes of political belonging at specific moments in time. By focusing on these political studies, I am able to highlight how Lefebvre's work provides conceptual tools to write a spatial history of politics. In his political studies, Lefebvre uses space as a tool of analysis to conceptualise the spatio-temporal dimensions of political possibility. Whilst this same concern of exploring the spatio-temporal dimensions of political possibility encompasses much of Lefebvre's work, it is in these works that he articulates specific conditions of possibility most coherently. Lefebvre's political studies allow me to conceptualise how diverse contested modes of political belonging become possible in *el barrio* at specific moments in time.

Throughout his work, Lefebvre critiques the abstract organisation of space, and the forms of alienation that are produced, while also exploring the possibilities to develop grassroots democratic practices within the contradictions of space. In doing so, he distinguishes between abstract state spaces and grassroots democratic practices. Lefebvre's distinction between state spaces and grassroots democratic practices is adopted here to theorise the *politics of neighbouring*. This distinction helps identify both how dominant modes of political belonging become grounded in *el barrio* and how alternatives become possible. Nevertheless, as Lefebvre's political studies illustrate, both dominant frameworks and the possibilities of developing grassroots alternatives differ through space and time. The specificity of Lefebvre's analysis in these

studies guides the exploration of diverse constellations of the politics of neighbouring. The study of different contexts in this thesis helps strengthen the analytical traction of the conceptualisation of the politics of neighbouring.

Through a spatial history of the politics of neighbouring, I track the changing relationship between state and grassroots interventions in *el barrio*. This relationship is read in conjunction with a broader dynamic interaction between migration, relations of proximity and planning. Over the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the state colonised *el barrio* in order to pacify the rebellious masses. In the process, the relationship between state interventions and grassroots democratic practices crystalized around the figure of the citizen-neighbour. The citizen-neighbour was cultivated by the Spanish state through the planning of *barrios*. At the same time, grassroots interventions projected an alternative vision of the citizen-neighbour pushing to construct their own *barrios*. The figure of the citizen-neighbour provides an anchor to trace continuities and discontinuities marking the post-GFC period. I theorise the disarticulation of this figure through the differential treatment of neighbours. Certain political interventions have instilled racialized divides, diverse forms of precarity and consequently very different experiences of the same space. At the same time, the growing influence of creative city policies has led to an increasingly ambiguous relationship between the state and grassroots practices. In this context, grassroots interventions no longer push to attain ideal *barrios*, building on existing relations of proximity, instead they seek to reconstitute these relations and reconstruct common spaces. Past battles around *el barrio*, and ideas of what *el barrio* is, inform this push. Through my analysis of the spatio-temporal conditions making these interventions possible and the notions of space and belonging underpinning them, I conceptualise a *precarious proximity* shaping attempts to constitute alternate modes of political belonging. I argue that these attempts risk becoming grounded in a *white spatio-temporal* imaginary, tied to nostalgia for a lost past and based on a particular experience of *el barrio*, or

alternatively, being reduced to *simulacra of autogestión*, where they are co-opted and mobilised by creative city policies.

The benefits of the historical perspective gained are both comparative and cumulative. Comparative in that it allows me to trace how *el barrio* has been envisaged and contested at particular moments in time, illustrating changing conceptions of space and belonging and, cumulative because these previous conflicts reverberate in the physical landscape, ideas and memories that condition and inform contemporary political interventions. Through this analysis, I show how the idea of intervening in *el barrio* in the present is connected to a specific history. At the same time, I illustrate how the conditions under which contemporary social movements seek to intervene in *el barrio* are markedly different than in earlier times. Central to understanding these changing circumstances is the relationship between state and grassroots interventions. My analysis contributes to a more nuanced understanding of the continuities and discontinuities shaping the spatio-temporal conditions of contemporary social movements in Spain and the notions of space and belonging they forward. Moving beyond the haste to identify counter-hegemonic spaces of resistance, I highlight some of the tensions and limitations as well as possibilities of the modes of political belonging they make possible.

In order to grasp the politics of neighbouring in the post-GFC period, a period that differs substantially from those studied by Lefebvre, I draw on alternate theoretical sources. I draw primarily on Postcolonial Theory and Italian Neo-Marxism that similar to Lefebvre attempt to grasp the spatio-temporal conditions of political possibility. I note how notions of *autogestion* have been employed in different ways over the last three decades diverging from Lefebvre's theorisation of it. At the same time, I mobilise Ranabir Samaddar's (2010, 251) conceptualisation of a "postcolonial predicament". With this concept, Samaddar accounts for the differential inclusion of subjects within the same space. The differential production of subjects within the

same space is an underdeveloped aspect of Lefebvre's work. Lefebvre's limited theorisation on the differential production of subjects appears to be connected to his lack of attention to the colonial experience. Stefan Kipfer and Kanishka Goonewardena (2013, 106) have illustrated how Lefebvre does not adequately explore colonisation as a specific form of alienation. Throughout this thesis, attention is given to how particular interventions serve to produce differences along classed, gendered and racialized lines taking seriously Lefebvre's proposal regarding the colonisation of everyday life (Lefebvre 1984, 58-59; Lefebvre 1969, 92-93). This interpretation contributes to recent Lefebvre scholarship endeavouring to push it beyond its original context.

## 1. Note on Method

To develop an account of the different political conflicts in *el barrio* I draw on a wide range of primary and secondary sources. The approach taken draws inspiration from Lefebvre (discussed in more detail in Chapter 2). Lefebvre endeavours to find a balance between theory (philosophy) and empirical research (the social sciences). Lefebvre argues for the reinvigoration of philosophy through engagement with empirical material. Theory should always be challenged and rethought in relation to empirical detail. At the same time, Lefebvre recognizes the power of making sense of dispersed empirical data with theoretical frameworks. In his work, Lefebvre develops theoretical frameworks through engagement with a wide variety of empirical sources from different academic disciplines. In elaborating this project, I have similarly sought to engage with a diverse array of empirical sources in order to develop a theoretical argument. The empirical sources and methods used vary for the different historical moments studied.

For the earlier moments, the Anarchist period and the Franco dictatorship, I draw on secondary sources from an array of different disciplines in Spanish, English and French. I draw on secondary rather than primary sources here as others have already covered these historical moments in

detail. Rather than unearth new empirical material, I re-interpret existing material through the lens of spatial history. In doing so, I develop a novel reading focused on how particular forms of political belonging are inscribed in *el barrio* at specific moments in time. I draw primarily on the findings of a number of classic texts that provide high quality detailed empirical accounts of the historical moments studied. I supplement these accounts with more recent peer-review articles. Many valuable secondary sources were encountered at the Biblioteca Nacional de España that I visited on numerous occasions whilst doing my fieldwork.

The study of the current period uses a much wider variety of sources. In Chapters 5 and 6, I focus on two *barrios*: Tetuán and Lavapiés. Prior knowledge of these *barrios* and protest movements in them was acquired whilst living in Madrid between 2007 and 2013. This prior knowledge shaped my decision to focus on them and helped direct my fieldwork. I was a resident in Tetuán between 2008 and 2011 and Lavapiés between 2011 and 2013. Field notes were compiled over a five-month period spent in Madrid in 2015. Ethical considerations were addressed prior to departure and the Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee approved an ethics application. Participant observation was conducted in public spaces in both Tetuán and Lavapiés during daily life and when specific political interventions were occurring. Fieldnotes comprise of written notes, sound recordings and photos. Written notes were sometimes taken during observation or, particularly in the case of political interventions, shortly afterwards. Participant observation was also conducted at a number of public seminars. Written observations were compiled during these seminars. A number of loosely structured one to two hour interviews were conducted with participants of the 15M protests. Sound recording were made of these interviews. Forty-seven existing one to two hour interviews with participants recorded for the 15M.cc project made available on youtube.com were also consulted (15m.cc). Contemporary policy documents were analysed as were resources made available online by both active and past grassroots initiatives including studies, manifestos and videos. This empirical material compiled was used to develop a

theoretical reading of how particular forms of political belonging are inscribed in *el barrio* in the present.

As this thesis draws on a variety of sources in both French and Spanish a note on translation is needed. Translations from sources in these languages found throughout this thesis are my own. Where available, I have used English translations of Lefebvre's original texts in French. Where certain concepts in the original language are considered important these have been included in brackets. A number of key concepts have been left in the original language with an initial translation in English appearing in brackets. The key concept *autogestion*, due to its specificity, is kept in French. The term has been commonly translated as self-management and where this is the case I have reverted to *autogestion*. There is a detailed discussion of this term in Chapter 2.

## 2. Chapter Outline

In the following chapters, I firstly draw on recent literature to develop a theoretical understanding of *el barrio* as a politically contested space in which modes of political belonging are inscribed (Chapter 1). I conceptualise the politics of neighbouring and how contested frameworks are inscribed in space over time drawing on the work of Lefebvre (Chapter 2). The next four chapters (Chapters 3-6) focus on specific moments of political conflict. The relationship between migration, relations of proximity and planning as well as the particular forms taken by the politics of neighbouring are common threads linking the discussion of each historical moment.

In Chapter 1, I draw on recent literature to conceptualise *el barrio* as a politically contested space. I conceptualise *el barrio* as a dynamic space simultaneously shaped by migration, relations of proximity and planning in which modes of political belonging are inscribed. Migration constantly challenges established frameworks whilst relations of proximity shape *el barrio* and are shaped by



planning. Formulas and structures are conceived and developed in order to give form to *el barrio* and the interactions within it. To conceptualise how modes of political belonging are inscribed in space, I draw on the interdisciplinary literature on citizenship, migration and cities. Firstly, I employ work reconceptualising citizenship. This work helps develop an understanding of how modes of political belonging are brought into being and challenged by particular practices. Secondly, I analyse literature that explores political relationships formed around processes of migration. This assists in the conceptualisation of political battles occurring around the arrival of migrants in the city and how these relationships are inscribed in space. Thirdly, I discuss literature focused on political relationships in the city. This literature concentrates on political battles related to the management of everyday life. Finally, I draw on the idea of spatial history to conceptualise how political battles, diverse practices and ideas are inscribed in space through time. These bodies of work help to develop an account of *el barrio* which is dynamic, contested and historically contingent.

In Chapter 2, I employ the work of Lefebvre to elaborate on these insights. I mobilise Lefebvre's work to track how modes of political belonging are inscribed in space through time and to conceptualise the politics of neighbouring. The possibilities of *autogestion*, in contrast to state space, are the explicit focus of Lefebvre's studies of the Paris Commune as well as on the conditions and possibilities of his own time. Lefebvre identifies the increased importance of abstract conceptions of space in shaping everyday life. He conceptualises *autogestion* as a remedy to the alienation provoked by this abstraction. The understanding of the politics of neighbouring permitted by Lefebvre's political studies elucidates specific moments in time. I argue that the politics of neighbouring takes different forms at different moments in time. The specific forms taken are historically contingent and related to the dynamic relationship between migration, relations of proximity and planning.

In Chapter 3, I focus on how *el barrio* emerges as a political problem for the Spanish state amidst the rapid transformation of Madrid and Barcelona, with the growth of informal settlements on the outskirts and the impact of left wing political movements in the lead up to the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939). At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, both Madrid and Barcelona received a large influx of migrants mainly from rural Spain who were incorporated into the workforce largely in precarious positions of employment. These migrants established themselves in depressed areas of the cities and self-built areas of *chabolas* (shantytowns). The spontaneous development of these areas provided a problem for politicians, experts and technicians but also a space in which the ideas of revolutionary left wing politics found a ready audience. The Spanish Anarchists were particularly successful in building political cohesion through these spaces and relationships by employing their own particular forms of grassroots democratic practice. At the same time, the urban planning discipline emerged in Spain attempting to find solutions for problem *barrios*. Spanish urban planning drew on international planning knowledge. Around the same time, the neighbourhood unit concept established itself as a key planning concept to order slums and organise the expansion of the city. The relationship between abstract conceptions of space and grassroots democratic practice took a particular form in this context. In peripheral *barrios*, the impact of abstract conceptions of space was limited and inhabitants were largely left to their own devices — leaving ample space for the development of grassroots democratic practices.

Chapter 4 outlines transformations after the Civil War and subsequent attempts by the Franco dictatorship to deal with informal settlements on the outskirts of Madrid. Despite limited early efforts and certain utopian dreams, the Franco dictatorship was unable to stem the flow of impoverished migrants arriving in the city. Due to a lack of accessible housing many established *chabolas* in the peripheries. By the 1950s, the existence of peripheral *barrios* was perceived as an urgent problem by the Franco dictatorship. As a result, the dictatorship took a number of measures that included the mass construction of housing. The promotion of home ownership was

seen as an economic solution that would also create political subjects — citizen-neighbours — antagonistic with leftist ideas, hence avoiding the re-emergence of leftist politics in the *barrios*. However, whilst the dictatorship fuelled dreams of homeownership, they did not fulfil the expectations of the inhabitants of peripheral *barrios*, many of whom continued to find housing inaccessible and lived in self-constructed or run down homes. Others attained poor quality housing without any of the necessary amenities for everyday life. In this context *Asociaciones de vecinos* (Neighbourhood Associations) developed, building on neighbourly relations, transforming their *barrios* and mobilising their own vision of the citizen-neighbour. Through their actions, the *Asociaciones de vecinos* opened spaces of conflict and negotiation with the dictatorship. This relationship between the *Asociaciones de vecinos* and the dictatorship constituted another constellation of the politics of neighbouring in which grassroots democratic practices emerged both in tension and in cooperation with the state.

In Chapter 5, I focus on the conditions shaping the politics of neighbouring in the current period. I explore transformations that Madrid has undergone over the last decades and a new grouping of conceptualisations and interventions. I concentrate primarily on developments in Tetuán and Lavapiés. During this period of economic boom and crisis, the city again received a large intake of migrants that challenged and remade numerous *barrios*. In contrast with earlier transformations, a large number of migrants arrived from overseas. The GFC has had a significant impact on the city as work stability has decreased and unemployment has risen accentuating the precarity of many with regards to employment, housing and residential status. *Barrios* have a variety of different functions in this context; different interventions are made in relation to distinct spaces and subjects. State interventions provoke the emergence of forms of political belonging that diverge substantially from the ideal of the citizen-neighbour. As such, I explore the disarticulation of the citizen-neighbour and the production of *el barrio* as a differential space traversed by both favoured subjects and subordinated others. The city caters for desired individuals such as business

elites, homeowners, tourists and “creatives” whilst relying on subordinated figures whose experiences are shaped by precarity, racial profiling and instability.

Chapter 6 explores the relationship between grassroots democratic practices and the state in the current period. Attention to the specificities of this period highlights a number of complications undermining attempts to construct alternative modes of political belonging through grassroots democratic practices. The differential production of neighbours in this context makes it difficult to construct common spaces as it reinforces the existence of some as owners of *el barrio* and others as passers-by or illegitimate intruders. At the same time, initiatives in *el barrio* mobilising the Spanish concept *autogestión* have proliferated. Some of these initiatives have cooperated with the state to achieve their goals, whilst others have positioned themselves against it. *Autogestión* is mobilised both by local government and experts as a model to create a vibrant liveable city and, by activists, as a radical tool to transform society. Due to changing circumstances, I argue that interventions attempting to construct alternative modes of political belonging around *el barrio* face two simultaneous risks: disintegration and reification. Disintegration if they fail to build a common ground from which to construct relations of proximity. Reification if they become a cultural artefact disconnected from the reality of neighbourly relations.

# 1. *El barrio* as a politically contested space

No, no matter what clever bumpkins and some blinded *madrileños* claim, Madrid was not created by them. They created, and continue to create the “*Madriles*”. But creating the “*Madriles*” is what we *madrileños* call unmaking Madrid. Unmaking it, because it denies it of its traditional physiognomy, the free expression of its particular actions and reactions, its quest to achieve its own interests, the enjoyment of day to day peace... (Saínz de Robles 1962, 39)

Federico Saínz de Robles, in this extract from *Madrid: Crónica y guía de una ciudad sin par* (1962) laments the role played by migrants in the expansion of Madrid. He suggests that the continued arrival of migrants, and the transformations that the city underwent as a result, did not contribute to the authentic core of Madrid. Rather the arriving migrants founded the “*Madriles*” — the greater extension of the city that undermined this core. In contrast to Saínz de Robles’ suggestion, in this chapter I argue that migration plays a fundamental role in the constitution and transformation of modes of political belonging in the city. Such modes of political belonging are not rigid or closed off as Saínz de Robles would have it but rather the site of ongoing conflict and in a state of constant transformation. *El barrio* offers a privileged site through which to read such transformations as they are inscribed in space. Different overlapping modes of political belonging are constituted in *el barrio* at different moments in time. Dominant modes of political belonging i.e. citizenship are posited in *el barrio* whilst it is also the site where alternatives emerge from grassroots practices. In this chapter, I argue that the diverse modes of political belonging inscribed in *el barrio* are the product of a complex conflictual relationship between migration, relations of proximity and planning. In the first section, I conceptualise *el barrio* as a politically contested space. In the second section, I explore how recent literature centred on citizenship, migration and the city provides tools to theorise how specific modes of political belonging are inscribed in *el*

*barrio*. Finally, I draw on the idea of spatial history to conceptualise how such modes of political belonging are inscribed in space through time.

Employing *el barrio* to read transformations in modes of political belonging diverges substantially from the conventional focus of Political Science and International Relations. Mainstream approaches in Political Science and International Relations have been defined by the stable existence of the state. Political scientists have traditionally concentrated on how citizens participate within the state whilst studies in International Relations have focused on interactions between states. Critical approaches challenge this division. For example, Marxian scholars have long analysed structures cutting across state borders (e.g., Frank 1966; Wallerstein 1974; Cox 1981). Rather than taking the state as a stable object, Marxian scholars have reconceptualised it as a contingent ensemble of social relations (e.g., Poulantzas 1973; Jessop 1982). As such, political relations are not restricted to a particular sphere but rather cut across different scales. They may manifest themselves in international organisations, state institutions or everyday life. Marx himself paid particular attention to the repercussions of the development of capitalism on everyday life in his analysis of the working day in *Capital*, Volume I (Marx 1887, 214). Reading transformations in *el barrio* contributes to the critical literature. Focusing attention on *el barrio* decentres the conventional distinction between the inside and outside of the state. Dominant modes of political belonging are produced in *el barrio* whilst being juxtaposed against the diversity and complexity of everyday life. *El barrio* is not merely planned to produce these frameworks, it is also the historical product of migration, defined by relations of proximity and alternative modes of belonging.

Anne McNevin (2011, 37) suggests that citizenship and the state have dominated what it means to participate and belong politically. The formal structure of the state has been seen to offer a stable space that keeps the unpredictable anarchy beyond it at bay. It constitutes a rationally

constructed sphere that exists in contrast to the complexity and unpredictability of life beyond (Walker 1993). To achieve this it asserts a spatial order that restricts social, economic and cultural activity to within its confines (Magnusson 1996, 16-17). Within this framework, politics is seen to be conducted by citizens via elections, political parties etc. The citizen is conceived as the political individual that acts within the space made possible by the state. The state delimits the space in which politics is supposed to occur; citizenship demarcates who is and who is not considered a legitimate political actor. Étienne Balibar has argued that citizenship, “juridically (or quasijuridically) delimit[s] a certain type of “human being” and a certain model of rights and duties... crystaliz[ing] the constitutive social relations of a society at the level of the individual” (Balibar 1988, 723). Over the last few decades, scholars have noted how globalisation has undermined the taken-for-grantedness of the state and conventional understandings of citizenship. The centrality of these frameworks has been increasingly tested. In *Political Spaces and Global War* Carlo Galli suggests that “from the viewpoint of political spatiality, globalization marks a new epochality” (Galli 2010, 102-103). For Galli the distinction between a sovereign ordered inside and an anarchic outside is no longer feasible as political power now operates in an amorphous global sphere that cannot be closed off (*ibid.*, 116-117).

Numerous critical scholars have taken advantage of the waning influence of the state-centric imaginary in this context to rethink where and how politics occurs and who partakes in it. Whilst the project of rethinking what it means to be political has a longer history — and since the 1960s has been influenced by numerous struggles including decolonisation (e.g., Fanon 1967) and feminism (e.g., Crow 2000) — since the end of the Cold War, academic work on this question has increased in volume and influence. In this context, Walker (1993) has challenged the inside/outside distinction marking the jurisdiction of the disciplines of Politics and International Relations. Ruggie (1993, 171) has examined the emergence of modern territoriality suggesting that contemporary international transformations lead to the unbundling of territoriality and the

rearticulation of political space internationally. John Agnew has illustrated how IR's fixation with a stable territorial entity, the nation-state, has led to the exclusion of a huge diversity of factors such as "[p]rocesses involving sub-state units (e.g. localities, regions) or larger units (e.g. world regions, the globe)" (Agnew 1994, 57). To counter the state-centric imaginary, Warren Magnusson and Rob Walker have advocated challenging the "spaces for political action defined by the structures of modern thought" and discovering "the new spaces that people are creating". Focusing on these new spaces allows for a reconceptualization of politics and contributes to "de-centr[ing] the state as the subject of political analysis, the object of political struggle, and the basic category of political understanding" (Magnusson and Walker 1988, 40). Challenging the taken-for-grantedness of the state goes hand in hand with rethinking modes of political belonging. As McNevin suggests, "[b]y problematizing the spatial frame attached to territorial borders, we also problematize the privileged status of the citizen in relation to a range of noncitizen identities. We open thinking space for alternative social relations" (McNevin 2011, 37). Conceptualising how modes of political belonging are constituted in *el barrio* builds on the critical literature discussed in this section. State interventions are placed in relation to the complexities of everyday life. *El barrio* is not defined by state interventions, but rather these occur in conjunction with processes of migration, relations of proximity and alternate modes of belonging.

## 1. *El barrio* and the neighbourhood

The Spanish term *barrio* is similar to the English neighbourhood whilst being historically and conceptually distinct. In this section, I suggest that three characteristics are fundamental to understanding the historical production of *el barrio* and conceptualising it as a politically contested space: migration, relations of proximity and planning. I conceptualise *el barrio* as a space constituted by processes of migration, spontaneously emerging relations of proximity and



planning formulations that attempt to determine the spatial frames and temporal rhythms of everyday life.

The word *barrio* derives from the Hispanic Arabic *bārri*, signifying external or outside, that itself derives from the Classical Arabic *barrī* signifying wild — related to *barriya* referring to open country. The Real Academia Española gives three contemporary definitions of the term. Firstly, the sections into which towns and cities are divided. Secondly, as equivalent to the Spanish word *arrabal*, being a *barrio* outside the limits of a population. Finally, and similarly, it refers to a group of houses or a town that depends on a separate urban centre (Real Academia Española). *Arrabal* itself is a useful term for comprehending the importance of *el barrio* in the transformation of the city. *Arrabal* derives from the Hispanic Arabic *arrabād* from the Classical Arabic *rabaḍ*. *Rabaḍ* refers to a district outside of the centre or *madīna* and is frequently mentioned in medieval Islamic historical texts (Lévi Provençal 2005). The etymology of the word *barrio* illustrates the importance of migration to its constitution. Particularly the term *arrabal* alludes to an emergent development on the fringes of the established city.

Migration plays a constitutive and transformative role in the formation of *el barrio*. The city is transformed by the arrival of migrants and their incorporation into urban life. *El barrio* mediates the transformation of the city in this regard. Eduardo López Moreno and Xóchitl Ibarra Ibarra (1997) illustrate the importance of migration in their exploration of the term *barrio*. They draw attention to how *el barrio* is constituted in relation to the colonial city in the Mexican context. They argue that whilst Spanish colonial cities were conceived as closed coherent spaces, the historical development of these cities saw the emergence of *arrabales* of indigenous and sometimes Spanish populations around them. These settlements generally diverged from the urban model in their construction. According to these authors, over time, the *arrabales* became *barrios* of the city. They were slowly absorbed by cities and became an accepted part of them.

Similar processes in the Spanish context will be highlighted throughout this thesis. Accordingly, *el barrio* is a dynamic space continually constituted and transformed by historical processes of migration.

Like the term neighbourhood, *el barrio* implies the space constituted by people living in close proximity to each other. Relations of proximity, which may take on numerous forms, are a defining characteristic of *el barrio*. The etymology of the word neighbourhood illustrates the importance of relations of proximity. Neighbourhood comes from the old English *neahgebur* or near-dweller, *neah* signifying *near* and *gebur* dweller (Painter 2012, 522). The suffix 'hood' in turn refers to a particular condition of being, such as sisterhood, knighthood etc. This understanding of neighbourhood as the condition of dwelling in close proximity leads Lewis Mumford to suggest that "neighborhoods exist, as a fact of nature" (Mumford 1954, 257). Neighbourhoods exist where people live in close proximity and interact with each other. For this reason Joe Painter (2012, 531) suggests that neighbourly relations are not constructed around sameness, but build up precariously around encounters, infrastructure and trajectories. For Painter, the idea of neighbourhood is quite distinct from the idea of community. Whilst community supposes a certain commonality between people, the neighbour is far more ambiguous and "can be hostile as well as friendly, indifferent as well as interested, passive as well as active" (*ibid.*, 524). This meaning of the term neighbourhood is closest to the Spanish *vecindad* that refers explicitly to relations of proximity. The Real Academia Española defines *vecindad* as the quality of being *vecinos* or neighbours. The term also refers specifically to a group of people living in close proximity to each another. Additionally, it can denote the surrounding area of a particular place similar to the English vicinity (Real Academia Española). José María Benjumea Pino (1977) suggests that the difference between *vecindad* and *barrio* is that *barrios* have a certain degree of social, political and administrative autonomy that is reflected by shared social, religious and educational institutions.

In this sense, *el barrio* has become a key site for planning. Scholars have conceived specific neighbourhood environments as affecting the life possibilities of those living in them (Mayer and Jencks 1989). Over the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the neighbourhood unit established itself as a key planning concept internationally, promising to order relations of proximity. The neighbourhood unit provided a model for residential environments by planning all the necessary facilities (Brody 2013). The neighbourhood unit concept provided a framework through which planners sought to design neighbourly relations (Mumford 1954, 262). According to Peter Collison (1954, 463-464) there are two groups of aspects that underpin how the neighbourhood is employed as a planning concept; technical and social. On the one hand, planners outline the necessary attributes of the neighbourhood (limitation of traffic, population size, amenities, schools, shops, community centres public spaces etc.) and on the other hand, they seek the creation of community, cohesion and social balance. *El barrio* is thus a site to be intervened upon, through which certain objectives can be achieved and certain subjects produced. The neighbourhood unit concept is usually translated as *unidad vecinal* in Spanish (e.g., Benabent Fernández de Córdoba 2006). Nevertheless, a wide variety of similar concepts are employed in Spanish to denote planned relations of proximity (a number of which will be discussed throughout this thesis). These include *colonias*, *poblados*, *barrios completos* and *barrios tipo*.

*El barrio* is thus a dynamic space constituted by migration, relations of proximity and planning. Migration plays a constitutive and transformative role, challenging established relationships and planning. Relations of proximity develop over time and give particular characteristics to certain spaces. Planning seeks to impose certain blueprints to define these spaces. Throughout the thesis, I illustrate how *el barrio* provides a space in which both dominant modes of political belonging are inscribed and where grassroots alternatives develop. Rather than simply grounding dominant modes of political belonging, *el barrio* is the locus of ongoing conflict as it is challenged and shaped by constant transformations. It is a site in which specific forms of citizenship are spatialized at

particular moments in time, resulting in tensions, contradictions and conflicts that emerge from the complexities of everyday life.

## 2. The constitution of modes of political belonging in *el barrio*

In this section, I draw on recent interdisciplinary work in Politics, International Relations and Political Geography focused on citizenship, migration and the city to conceptualise how modes of political belonging are inscribed in *el barrio*. This literature makes possible a dynamic understanding of modes of political belonging that are both challenged and transformed by political practices. Firstly, I discuss work that emphasises how citizenship is both brought into being and challenged by certain practices. This aids in illustrating how practices constitute and disrupt established modes of political belonging in *el barrio*. Secondly, I analyse work focused on migration that illustrates its transformative role in the constitution of modes of political belonging. This serves to highlight how particular modes of political belonging become contested and mutate in relation to the arrival of migrants in the city. Finally, I explore work grounding the study of politics in the city, which allows me to conceptualise political practices taking place in a dynamic relational space.

### 2.1 Rethinking citizenship

Rather than take citizenship as a given, recent work has sought to develop an understanding of how notions of citizenship emerge, are strengthened, challenged and transformed by different practices in specific historical contexts. This work is useful for grasping the practices through which particular modes of political belonging are constituted in *el barrio*. The focus on practice helps avoid seeing dominant modes of political belonging as stable and natural but rather interrogates

how particular interventions constitute and challenge specific frameworks. Dominant and alternative modes of political belonging are brought into being at specific moments in time.

Kim Rygiel seeks to understand citizenship both through practices of government and practices of resistance. In conceptualising citizenship as government she focuses on “examin[ing] how certain citizen identities come into being through practices, technologies of power, discourses, and rationalities” (Rygiel 2010, 28). She employs citizenship as resistance in reference to the practices through which those excluded by dominant frameworks challenge these by acting as citizens (*ibid.*, 29-30). Rygiel’s conceptualisation of citizenship, similar to much work rethinking citizenship in this way, draws on Engin Isin’s theorisation of “acts of citizenship”. Isin suggests that rather than accept established frameworks, scholars should ask “[u]nder what conditions do subjects act as citizens? How do subjects transform themselves into actors? How do subjects become claimants of rights, entitlements and responsibilities?” (Isin 2008, 18). Isin argues that there is no predefined framework in which political action occurs, rather “acts of citizenship” emerge from “historically and geographically concrete situation[s]” (*ibid.*, 24).

This understanding permits a dynamic account of citizenship that is conscious of historical and geographical context. As such, it compliments work illustrating the historical specificity of notions of citizenship. McNevin notes that dominant notions of citizenship emerged in tandem with the development of a system of states through a process in which politics, political community and identity all became “linked conceptually to a relatively fixed relationship between state, citizen, and territory” (McNevin 2011, 16). Theorists have linked particular understandings of citizenship to specific historical conjunctures and types of state. Balibar (1988, 726) suggests that contemporary notions of citizenship developed simultaneously with colonialism and capitalism. The existence of the national citizen was made possible by the differentiation between the citizens of the nation-state and the governed subjects of the colonies. Through the colonial endeavour,

colonial powers included “a mass of individuals from minorities who [we]re at once protected and feared, simultaneously deemed unassimilable and obliged to be educated on the national model” (*ibid.*, 727). For Ranabir Samaddar colonialism produced a “clear territorial distinction between the sovereign state and the subjugated areas known as colonies... [as well as a] clear legal distinction between participants of the polity, that is citizens, and the subjects” (Samaddar 2010, 269).

Notions of citizenship have varied through time and space, with specific tensions and contradictions. Sandro Mezzadra and Brett Neilson argue that the citizen-worker monopolized understandings of politics throughout the twentieth century. The citizen-worker was connected to particular state forms prominent after the Second World War such as “the democratic welfare state, the socialist state, and the development state” (Mezzadra and Neilson 2013, 247). Dominant figures such as the citizen-worker defined a certain type of political subject with certain rights and duties. Their existence was made possible by the exclusion of others. Mezzadra and Neilson point out that from the beginning the citizen-worker “was crossed by race and gender divides” (*ibid.*, 248). In the current context Samaddar (2010, 263) argues that the disarticulation of the welfare state and the mass worker has led to the differential production of forms of instability and precarity undermining previous notions of citizenship. Mezzadra and Neilson (2013, 244) similarly note the disarticulation of the citizen-worker. Samaddar (2010, 268) suggests that transnational forces and transborder migratory movements unbundle nation, state, citizen and borders paving the way for the emergence of novel political subjectivities. The disarticulation of the citizen-worker is made evident by “the presence across many political spaces of migrant workers who are not citizens (and may not desire to be citizens)” (Mezzadra and Neilson 2013, 250). For Mezzadra and Neilson we encounter in this context “different, quite fragmented, and even irreconcilable figures of the political subject, the legal persona, and the worker” (*ibid.*, 250-251) marked by differential inclusion and “multiple conditions of “partial citizenship” or denizenship” (*ibid.*, 251).

Samaddar (2010, 252) conceptualises this reality as the “post-colonial predicament”. The post-colonial predicament is defined by the discursive and material production of differences between peoples reminiscent of colonial society.

Balibar (1988, 726) suggests that there has always been tension between the ideal of equality underpinning citizenship and the social conditions rife with inequality and exclusion. As a result, citizenship has long been a battleground on which those excluded and marginalised by the nation-state claim rights (Guillaume and Huysmans 2013, 25). Through their actions certain groups reconfigure the notion of citizenship, by acting as citizens as Rygiel suggests, or by constituting alternative modes of political belonging. Samaddar’s theorisation of the political subject seeks to capture the alternative modes of political belonging that emerge in tension and in relation to dominant notions of citizenship. Samaddar suggests that citizenship, “is an inadequate expression of the figure” (Samaddar 2010, xix). For Samaddar the political subject is formed in conflict with the dominant distribution of power and emerges through its “non-correspondence’ with the dominant reality” (*ibid.*, xvi). Thus the political subject:

conveys three senses: a collective sense, a sense of resistance to power, particularly to the legal resolution of issues of power, and the sense of *being a supplement*, in other words the figure is ‘not absorbed or exhausted by, while being marked by, political regimes, control systems, power structures, legal codification, and the present political establishments’... the figure symbolises desire, new flight paths of escape, resistance, and towards new existence (*ibid.*, xx).

Samaddar looks specifically at the conditions in which particular political subjects are constituted. To do so he sets out to “reframe the notion of the political subject in a material manner” (*ibid.*, xiii), arguing that political subjects gain definition in specific historical-political circumstances and

through conflict (*ibid.*, 1). In the current context, defined by globalisation and the proliferation of borders, Samaddar finds new forms of political subjectivity emerging amongst “[r]efugees, dismissed workers, fleeing peasants, persecuted minorities, or groups or collectives demanding self-determination, or women claiming autonomy and agency” (*ibid.*, xix) found in “scattered political spaces round the globe” (*ibid.*, 271). Samaddar suggests that these subjects constitute spaces of autonomy that exist in tension with the dominant framework of citizenship. For Samaddar “autonomy always points towards the supplement that remains after (the task of) government has been accomplished” (Samaddar 2005, 10). Thus, Samaddar’s political subject carves out a space of existence marked by the dominant framework of citizenship and the control systems, power structures and legal codifications that make it possible. Nevertheless, it is not absorbed or exhausted by these.

Both Rygiel’s notion of citizenship as resistance and Samaddar’s theorisation of the political subject are useful to identify particular aspects of how alternative modes of political belonging are constituted in particular circumstances. Rygiel’s formulation points to an intimate relationship between citizenship as government and citizenship as resistance, whilst Samaddar’s political subject creates new forms of existence largely in tension with the dominant framework of citizenship. Throughout this thesis, I argue that *el barrio* is simultaneously a space where dominant notions of citizenship are grounded and where these become undermined and challenged. The theorisations outlined in this section provide tools to track how different modes of political belonging emerge from and are inscribed in *el barrio*. In Rygiel’s account, the emergence of alternative modes of political belonging from grassroots politics in *el barrio* can be seen to contest dominant notions of citizenship, whilst Samaddar’s political subject can be seen to carve out a space of autonomy in spite of citizenship. Here McNevin’s theorisation of political belonging proves useful to bridge the gap and capture the ambivalent character of modes of belonging. McNevin’s conceptualisation of political belonging aids to decentre citizenship and capture how



such conflicts are neither exclusively contestations of citizenship nor are they wholly independent of citizenship. Rather these maintain an ambivalent relationship with citizenship, challenging it whilst also maintaining a certain degree of autonomy from it — and thus constituting a relatively independent sphere of political belonging. Beyond illustrating how alternative political subjectivities emerge from the material conditions of *el barrio* — contesting or autonomous from dominant notions of citizenship, political belonging allows me to conceptualise *el barrio* as a battleground traversed by overlapping and contested frameworks.

## 2.2 Migration

Modes of political belonging constituted in *el barrio* are neither stable nor closed off. They exist in tension with each other and are continually reshaped by processes of migration. Recent work on migration and bordering practices illustrates how migration is both shaped by and undermines established spaces and modes of political belonging. Scholars explore both how migration provokes the emergence of novel spaces and modes of belonging in specific historical circumstances and demonstrate how mechanisms of government attempt to shape processes of migration. Bordering practices shape the modes of political belonging available to migrants.

Samid Suliman (2016) has coined the term “kinetic politics” to capture the relationship between migration and politics. For Suliman “polity formation and political relations are not spatially determined (that is, by processes of boundary formation and relations that travel across boundaries), but are constituted through *movement* as people come and go” (Suliman 2016, 704). Therefore migration plays a fundamental role in the constitution of particular political constellations and is a “constitutive feature of social and political change” (*ibid.*, 704). The autonomy of migration perspective has similarly interrogated the relationship between migration and particular political constellations. For Sandro Mezzadra (2005, 143), the autonomy of

migration perspective explores the tension between the subjective experiences expressed by the mobility of labour and the attempts by capital and the state to exercise control over it. Migration is conceptualised as an act that rejects and challenges the reproduction of the social order<sup>1</sup>. Along these lines Serhat Karakayali and Enrica Rigo suggest that migration has played a key role “in reshaping the political and legal space of Europe” (Karakayali and Rigo 2010, 124). They read the European legal and political space as being:

a space that is dedicated not to a sedentary community but to the government of mobility, both inside and outside official member states’ perimeters. In adopting this view, we also suggest that the unity and continuity of the European legal and political space may only be reconstructed through migrants’ experience of its borders, which therefore contests and (re)constitutes any given distinction between the “alien” and the “citizen in Europe” (*ibid.*, 127).

Scholars have similarly noted how migration provokes the emergence of novel spaces and modes of political belonging. James Holston’s *Insurgent Citizenship Disjunctions of Democracy and Modernity in Brazil* illustrates how migration from the country to the city contributed to transformations in political society in Brazil. Holston studies the modes of political belonging constituted by the working classes in Brazil as they moved to the city. He suggests that new conceptions of politics emerged with the construction of urban peripheries, noting the confrontation and entanglement “between two citizenships, one insurgent and the other

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<sup>1</sup> This idea reflects the autonomy of migration perspective’s grounding in Autonomist Marxism. Mario Tronti in his text “The Strategy of Refusal” lays out some of the fundamental ideas of this approach. Tronti affirms that “the power of workers resides in their potential command over production, that is, over a particular aspect of society” (Tronti 1965) and that the working class gains radical potential when “it refuses to function as an articulation of capitalist society” (*ibid.*). It is most powerful when it refuses to act as a social partner of the social process. Due to the power wielded by the working class, through their potential refusal to participate in the social process, the development of the capitalist state only makes sense as a reaction to the initiatives of the working class via constant attempts to harness its energy (*ibid.*).

entrenched” (Holston 2008, 6). Holston suggests that from the 1970s in the peripheries, the working classes “build, through a process called autoconstruction, their own houses, neighbourhoods, and urban life. In that struggle, they also construct a new realm of participation, rights and citizenship” (*ibid.*, 6). In the contemporary context, scholars have illustrated how migrant practices challenge and reconfigure political categories and spaces (e.g., McNevin 2011; Mezzadra 2005; Squire 2011; Nyers and Rygiel 2012). They have explored concrete processes and spaces that are contested by the political action of migrants. For example, McNevin (2006) focuses on the struggle of the *Sans-Papiers* in France. She illustrates how irregular migrants challenge their outsider status, where they are policed as outsiders despite economic integration into the global economy, and in doing so push the boundaries of what it means to belong politically. The literature suggests that such practices of contestation illustrate the constitution of new modes of political belonging. Migrants act as “immanent citizens” (McNevin cited in Mezzadra 2011), “insurgent citizens” (Balibar cited in Mezzadra 2011) or “illegal citizens” (Rigo 2011) and in doing so interrupt administrative routines and open up debate around who has a right to speak, who counts and who belongs (Nyers 2010, 439).

Whilst migration has a transformative impact on particular political constellations, migration itself is shaped and restricted by government frameworks. For this reason, Stephan Scheel suggests that the autonomy of migration “cannot be thought in isolation to the governmental regimes in which [it] emerge[s]” (Scheel 2013, 281). Scheel argues that there is always an “irreconcilable conflict between migration and attempts to control and regulate it” (*ibid.*). Samaddar, who Scheel refers to, suggests that one must interrogate “the concrete historical backdrop... against which autonomy emerges as the Other, the counter-reality, the name of politics not subsumed by governmental rationalities of the government” (Samaddar 2005, 11). In this way migration is a transformative practice against a concrete historical backdrop in relation to specific policies that seek to govern it. In particular circumstances, it creates ambiguous spaces of negotiation around

which new modes of politics emerge and new forms of management are conceived. Partha Chatterjee's work on the "politics of the governed" is particularly useful to conceptualise such spaces of negotiation. Chatterjee (2004, 74) focuses on the sites of negotiation and contestation that are constituted around governmental categories. He describes the creation of an informal settlement along the railway tracks in southern Calcutta, India, by outlining the processes through which migrants arrived and established themselves as a community. Informal arrangements were established to provide services and welfare benefits to the population (*ibid.*, 56). Rather than seek to constitute an alternative framework, Chatterjee notes how the settlement mobilised the categories of government in order to gain recognition and services (*ibid.*, 57). In doing so, Chatterjee draws attention to the ambiguities and contests that such actions provoke around political frameworks. It is not simply a matter of the state imposing a certain vision from above, but rather a space of negotiation and conflict emerges around migration, settlement, grassroots organization, emerging claims and the official government concepts that attempt to grapple with these ambiguous spaces.

Migration in the contemporary context is marked by bordering practices that define notions of citizenship and shape modes of political belonging. Recently, scholars have drawn attention to the implosion and explosion of bordering practices (Squire 2011, 2), in which border policing is implemented in a greater global space leading to the appearance of numerous novel "borderscapes" (Rajaram and Grundy-Warr 2007). In this context, borders have folded inwards via internal police checks targeting irregular migrants (Inda 2011) and practices of deportation (De Genova and Peutz 2010) that seek to eliminate the presence of unwanted members within the community. Internal walls separate some parts of cities from others, while gated communities protect privileged residents from perceived danger (Antonioli and Chardel 2007). On physical borderlines, new techniques ensure that only wanted visitors/migrants arrive; walls (Brown 2010), fences, border patrols and biometric technology (Amoore 2006) speed up the path of desired

guests and business, whilst simultaneously excluding the unwanted. Borders work pre-emptively to prevent undesirables reaching their destination, thus denying them rights they may have on arrival. Travellers' data is analysed prior to departure meaning that certain passengers become "irregularized" (Nyers 2011) before arrival. Boats carrying migrants are pre-emptively stopped or removed to peripheral territories such as islands (Rajaram 2007), and migrant processing centres are externalised to third countries (Andrijasevic 2010).

These practices serve to produce certain notions of citizenship and shape migrant experiences. Authors illustrate how contemporary bordering practices incorporate migrants into society within a differential regime (e.g., Balibar 2002; Rigo 2011). The organization of lived space similarly serves to incorporate migrants into society within a differential regime. Ella Harris and Mel Nowicki have noted how space plays a key role in "instigating, advancing and exploiting precarity" (Harris and Nowicki 2014). Francis Collins in his study of the regimentation of everyday life of migrant workers in South Korea and their relegation to peripheral dwellings, suggests that as a result "almost all time is spent oriented to their role as workers rather than providing scope for incorporation as urban residents" (Collins 2016, 1174). This positions them at a distance as he suggests, "[i]n Seoul the spaces within which migrants are situated are literally and ideologically generated in the urban periphery". As a result the lives of these migrants are disconnected from the rest of urban life where they are restricted to sleeping quarters near factories on the outskirts of the city (*ibid.*, 1173).

This literature provides an understanding of the interrelationship between processes of migration, space and frameworks of government. Modes of political belonging are constituted in space by specific practices in relation to processes of migration and frameworks of government. Political interventions posit and undermine particular spaces and modes of belonging in relation to these processes. Thus, attention to migration challenges the stability of modes of political belonging.

Whilst migration emerges within particular conditions that shape its possibilities, its non-correspondence with established frameworks creates spaces of ambiguity around which negotiations and alternative political relationships emerge and novel governmental interventions appear.

### 2.3 The City

Recent literature has conceived urban space as a relational space in which different political constellations are grounded. Through contested interactions, different actors seek to impose certain frameworks on urban space. This understanding of urban space allows me to conceptualise *el barrio* as a space in which political battles are grounded. Work on urban politics provides an analytical distinction between top-down and grassroots political interventions. As such, *el barrio* can be conceived as the site of tension between planned interactions, seeking to govern relations of proximity and grassroots interventions, building on the spontaneity of these. Conceptualising *el barrio* in this way allows me to track how dominant notions of citizenship and alternatives emerging from grassroots democratic practices are inscribed in space.

In the literature, urban space is conceptualised as dynamic, contested and in constant transformation. Martin Coward notes that unlike states, “cities have been perceived as spaces in which difference proliferates and mixes. Initially as a place of migration, receiving mobile subjectivities, then as a polis in which agonistic interplay is a constitutive feature” (Coward 2012, 471). The city is a space in which contradictory tendencies coincide and interact. Angharad Stephens emphasises how political life in the city draws our attention to “moments, meetings and collisions through which communities are enacted” (Stephens 2010, 37) and as such challenges temporal understandings that imply “completion, fulfilment, or telos” (*ibid.*, 35-36). Coward, focuses on “the materiality that lies between us” in the city and seeks to reveal “a surface of

contact, a point of articulation, at which heterogeneous elements are assembled into complex ecologies of subjectivity” (Coward 2012, 479), to which ideas of citizenship and community become entwined (*ibid.*, 468). He suggests that understanding the city in this way makes “all ideas of separateness, completeness and sovereignty” unsustainable (*ibid.*, 479).

Warren Magnusson’s *Politics of Urbanism: Seeing like a City*, building on similar ideas, uses the city as a tool for his project of decentring the state. For Magnusson, the city is the heterogeneous lived space of everyday life that contrasts with the abstract theoretical space imagined by the state. The city is produced by “proliferating practices of government and self-government” (Magnusson 2011, 5). Political authorities emerge and attempt to assert themselves against a complex relational backdrop. Order is thus not simply imposed from above. Rather “[o]rder is always temporary and local” and “[t]ransformations are non-linear and hence inherently unpredictable” (*ibid.*, 7). Urban order does not “have an easily comprehensible form. It will always be in the process of refiguration” (*ibid.*, 5). For this reason, Magnusson suggests that thinking urbanism politically, due to the intersection between diverse and contradictory processes, calls for a different understanding of politics. It can no longer be assumed that politics takes place exclusively within the established institutions of the state (*ibid.*, 9). Rather politics, through its conceptualisations and interventions, continuously configures and reconfigures space. Thus as mentioned in the introduction, Magnusson suggests that instead of conceptualising politics as the way in which people are ruled it should be “ultimately about how people organize themselves in order to live” (*ibid.*, 35). The focus is on the different ways that people, think and act with one another. Politics is what “brings our way of life into being, sustains it, extends it, develops it, and of course challenges it” (*ibid.*, 35-36). Rather than achieving control over space, politics is made up of interventions that attempt to order or manage complex spaces. It is comprised of different techniques and tactics that are implemented to organize or manage life.

Isin highlights conflict inherent in city based political interventions. For Isin (2007, 212) the city is a complex of difference, undergoing constant change as political battles are fought. Different groups seek to impose themselves and their representations on the city. Power largely defines and results from the possibilities of different groups to do so. As the city is a space where conflict is inscribed on the physical terrain, a close study of its transformations reveals the changing nature of power relations. A particular group attempts to “constitute itself as a universal point of view — the point of view of those who dominate the city and who have constituted their point of view as natural by representing the city as unity” (Isin 2002, 275). These battles of representation and identification are in turn inscribed in space:

Just as groups bring themselves into real existence through work, including organizing, arranging, and communicating, they also bring themselves into existence in material space by building, congregating, assembling, and confronting. All this work involves the creation and production of space... To put it in another way, groups cannot materialize themselves as real without realizing themselves in space, without creating configuration of buildings, patterns, and arrangements, and symbolic representations of these arrangements (*ibid.*, 42-43)

Literature on urban politics tends to make an analytical distinction between top-down and grassroots interventions. Studies have conceptualised the neighbourhood as a specific space within which political battles are grounded (e.g., Whitehead 2003). Much of the literature emphasises the tension between ‘exchange value’ — space conceived as a commodity that is bought and sold — and ‘use value’ — space conceived as a good to be used. John Logan and Harvey Molotch argue that “the neighbourhood is the meeting place of the two forces, where each resident faces the challenge of making a life on a real estate commodity” (Logan and Molotoch 1987, 99). Logan and Molotoch argue that the neighbourhood, like urban space more generally,



is simultaneously the space where many of the routines of daily life and the identities and networks underpinning them are grounded (*ibid.*, 103-109) and a space that different types of organization and institutions intervene upon to organize urban space and life (*ibid.*, 111).

David Madden suggests that the neighbourhood should be comprehended as a “spatial project”, because it is a space in which diverse groups intervene in an effort to attain certain objectives. For Madden neighbourhoods “are inherently political and often conflictual — the products of complex, long-term struggles between groups over land use, ownership, planning, identity and purpose” (Madden 2014, 481). Understanding the production of the neighbourhood for Madden involves tracing “who produces them, using what techniques, in what contexts and towards what ends” (*ibid.*, 481). Madden notes a diverse array of actors who participate in the production of neighbourhood spaces including “[l]andlords, speculators, brokers, corporate developers, investors, economic development corporations and a whole range of other groups [that] participate in the project of commodifying neighbourhood, of producing neighbourhood as a special kind of commodity” (*ibid.*, 481). Neighbourhoods are also shaped by “[s]tate actors at various scales — national, urban, suburban, among others — [that] pursue spatial projects, as in federally funded urban renewal schemes or city-financed development initiatives” (*ibid.*, 481). At the same time, neighbourhoods are impacted on by “[s]ocial movements, civil society organizations, ethnic associations, religious groups, media organizations of various sorts, cultural and social entrepreneurs, even political parties” (*ibid.*, 482).

This literature provides insight into how particular modes of political belonging are inscribed in *el barrio*. As Madden illustrates, rather than simply opposing one another, various “spatial projects” interpenetrate and collectively serve to produce political constellations in *el barrio*. *El barrio* is the site of tension between planned interactions governing relations of proximity, and grassroots interventions building on the spontaneity of these. Whilst the conflict between exchange value

and use value provides insight into the specific modes of political belonging that are inscribed in *el barrio*, it does not map neatly onto them. Thus, instead of adopting this distinction, I contrast modes of political belonging produced by state interventions and grassroots alternatives. Whilst the state transforms space by favouring exchange value over use value, it also produces spaces to foment particular types of uses, interactions and subjects. Similarly, beyond reclaiming the use value of space, grassroots interventions constitute particular modes of political belonging through their unique use of space.

### 3. Spatial history

An understanding of *el barrio* as a politically contested space is necessarily an account of how the dynamic relationship between migration, relations of proximity and planning occurs over time. Particular modes of political belonging are inscribed in space at specific moments of time in conjunction with this dynamic relationship. To conceptualise how particular modes of political belonging emerge and are inscribed in space over time, in this section, I draw on the idea of spatial history. As I suggested in the introduction, in contrast to an historical account of a particular space, spatial history employs space as a tool of analysis to elucidate historical relationships. In doing so, spatial history can serve to illuminate power relations and undermine accounts that “reduce space to a fixed, mappable essence... devoid of historical social relations of production and power” (Morton 2015, 833). Spatial history helps to conceptualise how modes of political belonging emerge in the context of particular historical conjunctures and, simultaneously, how these modes of political belonging are inscribed in space. Scholars who have developed the idea of spatial history have drawn attention to how understandings of space and forms of occupying it emerge from a broader and more diverse series of relationships. Additionally, they illustrate how understandings of space, shape space in different ways at different moments in time. Rune Bennike suggests that spatial history both “seeks to clarify the ways in which... spatial position and

territoriality has emerged out of broader and more diverse landscapes” and “emphasise the history of spatial production and the spatial productivity of historical representations” (Bennike 2015, 55-56). Erik Steiner likewise argues that spatial history attempts to “understand history looking through the same lens in two directions. That is, how spatial relations stimulate cultural, social and political change, and how changes in technology, economy, and policy create new spatial relations” (Steiner 2014, par. 4).

Spatial history illustrates how certain understandings of space emerge over time and in conjunction with a broader series of relationships. Paul Carter’s *The Road to Botany Bay: An Essay in Spatial History*, one of the earliest academic studies to explicitly set out to write spatial history, focuses on how understandings of space take form and define Australia over time. He suggests that traces of the emergence of particular understandings of space are already found in “the letters home, the explorer’s journals, the unfinished maps” (Carter 1987, xxiii). For Carter, understandings of space are constructed linguistically through the search for words to describe unknown experiences and places. As such, Carter seeks to track the pathway from the unknown to “the spatial forms and fantasies through which a culture declares its presence” (*ibid.*, xxi). Building on Carter’s understanding, Bennike sees spatial history as “a history of beginning and transformations, a history of the delineation, naming, bordering, organisation and representation of space into the form of distinct places and territories” (Bennike 2015, 56).

Movement through space plays an important role in the transformation of space and the emergence of particular understandings of space. In Carter’s account, it is not simply the linguistic construction of reality that brings space into existence. Importantly for Carter (1987, xxiv), the naming and conceptualisation of certain spaces comes about through a history of travelling, through which these spaces are constantly rewritten and repeated. How spaces are conceptualised, defined and constructed emerges concurrently with the movement of people and

their relationship with the land. Richard White extends the importance of movement in a different direction. While Carter illustrates the role of movement in the emergence of names and concepts defining certain spaces, White (2010, 2) pays more attention to how movement contributes to shaping the physical landscape itself. In addition to understandings of space, spatial practices change through time. The Spatial History Project<sup>2</sup> at Stanford, which was formerly directed by White, is primarily concerned with the ways in which space is lived. White suggests that:

“[w]e produce and reproduce space through our movements and the movements of goods that we ship and information that we exchange. Other species also produce space through their movements. Spatial relations are established through the movement of people, plants, animals, goods, and information (*ibid.*, 3).

This emphasis on the impact of movement underplays the role of power relations in shaping space. Elden, by contrast underlines the spatial productivity of understandings of space. Elden suggests that spatial history should pay particular attention to the relationship between “conceptualizations of space and their practical applications” and in doing so interrogate “the way understandings of space have changed over time; and how space is fundamental to any exercise of power” (Elden 2001b, 6). Morton also employs spatial history to grasp power relations. For Morton, spatial history is a tool that reveals how spatial relations are not neutral but shaped by interventions and political battles over time (Morton 2015, 834). Morton illustrates how power relationships are congealed in space through a spatial history of the Monument to the Revolution

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<sup>2</sup> The Spatial History Project has centred its approach on visual and spatial methods. It uses software to translate “historical documents into datasets that can be digitally manipulated and recombined” (Steiner 2014). To do so scholars draw on a wide array of documents that are “sometimes obscure and frequently overlooked sources, such as railroad freight rate tables, hospital death records, or even nineteenth century Brazilian novels”. With these, scholars build interactive maps with various layers of data. This leads to projects that “are distinct from traditional historical practice in that they are strengthened less by narratives and more by visualization, and are dependent on the intelligent use of computer software such as Geographic Information Systems (GIS)” (*ibid.*).

in Mexico (Morton 2017). He traces transformations in capitalism and the Mexican state through understandings and uses of the monument, paying particular attention to how these have simultaneously been produced by the state and appropriated and transformed by protesters and social movements. He employs Gramsci's concept of "passive revolution" to articulate transformations in the way the state "organises space in our everyday lives through the streets we walk, the monuments we visit, and the places where we meet" (*ibid.*, 4).

In this thesis, taking cues from Elden and Morton, I employ *el barrio* as a tool of analysis to study how historically specific political relationships are inscribed in space. Employing space as a tool of analysis allows me to integrate the insights from the literature discussed in this chapter. It allows me to develop an account of the dynamic relationship between migration, relations of proximity and planning as it is inscribed in space. Political interventions in *el barrio*, underpinned by understandings of space, emerge in relation to particular forms of migration and relations of proximity. These understandings of space, as they impact on space through specific interventions, play a key role in defining the forms of migration and relations of proximity that are possible and desirable. Drawing on spatial history, modes of political belonging are comprehensible in relation to the movements and interactions that shape *el barrio* over time. *El barrio* is a space in which interventions occur and is produced and shaped by diverse contests. State interventions seek to manage and organise *el barrio*, generating particular modes of political belonging, whilst grassroots political practices build alternatives. Over time diverse interventions, movements and relationships combine to ground diverse political constellations in *el barrio*.

As such, *el barrio* is composed of a multiplicity of intertwined spatialities and temporalities. In his work on Cormac McCarthy's Border Trilogy, Morton highlights how spatial history allows for the analysis of the multiplicity and unevenness of space, that is "social, political, and economic differences across space" (Morton 2015, 831). In doing so, Morton illustrates how spatial history

can be employed to highlight how diverse spatialities and temporalities become intertwined. He does this by employing a rhythmanalytical perspective (this perspective will be explored in more detail in the following chapter). For Morton, McCarthy captures the contradictions of space produced by the Mexican revolution and the formation of the state. Transformations such as “agrarian reform and the expropriation of hacienda estates” coexist with “land tenure arrangements from the old agrarian order of the dictatorship of Porfirio Díaz” (*ibid.*, 836). Along similar lines, James Faubion suggests that the present is composed of an entanglement of diverse movements and tendencies drawing on Raymond Williams’ *Marxism and Literature* (Rabinow et al. 2008, 93-94). Due to the contemporaneous existence of diverse movements and tendencies, particular political interventions are never homogeneously implemented or coherent, but rather they are constantly rethought and reconfigured in contest with others. Williams argues that, to grasp a cultural system, it is necessary to go beyond an analysis of the dominant cultural systems and rather “recognize the complex interrelations between movements and tendencies both within and beyond a specific and effective dominance” (Williams 1977, 121). Williams conceptualises three of these: the dominant, the emergent and the residual. For Williams, the emergent refers to the “new meanings and values, new practices, new relationships and kinds of relationships [that] are continually being created” (*ibid.*, 123). The residual in contrast, refers to aspects formed in the past that remain active in the present. This can refer to experiences, meanings and values that are not comprehensible within the logic of the dominant culture but are nevertheless “lived and practised on the basis of residue — cultural as well as social — of some previous social and cultural institution or formations” (*ibid.*, 122).

The residual plays an important role in *el barrio* as residual aspects persist from previous interventions, informal constructions, interactions, conflicts etc. In *el barrio* the residual exists both through the endurance of physical infrastructure, the distribution of streets, and practices as well as in the realm of memory. The structure and layout of contemporary *barrios* makes

contemporary political interventions possible. Memory of past conflicts and forms of thinking about intervening in *el barrio* impact on and provide inspiration for contemporary actions. The realm of memory provides experiences and illusions from which to dream and conceptualise future *barrios*. Michael Janover explores the idea of nostalgia as a form of critique that could be said to emerge from the residual. For Janover the power of nostalgia “is not that it maintains the primacy of the past, but that it keeps alive the possibility that we will remember, sometime, thought and experiences that we have not yet had” (Janover 2000, 128). Following Williams’ theorisation, modes of political belonging inscribed in *el barrio* at certain moments in time never completely dominate space but rather exist in tandem with diverse movements and tendencies, both emergent and residual.

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In this chapter, I have explored recent literature to conceptualise *el barrio* as a politically contested space. I have argued that *el barrio* is a dynamic space shaped by migration, relations of proximity and planning in which historically specific modes of political belonging are inscribed. Spatial history helps conceptualise how particular modes of political belonging emerge and are inscribed in space over time. Work rethinking citizenship provides tools to conceptualise the practices that inscribe and challenge particular modes of political belonging grounded in *el barrio*. Literature on migration highlights the dynamic contested nature of modes of political belonging and how these are transformed. Spaces of ambiguity emerge around processes of migration where negotiations and battles are fought. Work on politics in urban space helps conceptualise *el barrio* as a relational space in which particular political constellations are grounded. The empirical chapters of this thesis develop a spatial history of *el barrio* illustrating how particular contests and relationships are inscribed in space at specific moments in time producing historically contingent modes of political belonging. In the following chapter, I direct attention to the work of Lefebvre to build on

the understanding of *el barrio* developed here. Lefebvre's thinking provides further tools to conceptualise how modes of political belonging are inscribed in space through time. Lefebvre theorises the production of space noting the conflictual relationship between state space, governing relations of proximity, and grassroots democratic practices, building on them.



## 2. Henri Lefebvre and the politics of neighbouring

In this chapter, I build on the theoretical understanding of *el barrio* developed in the previous chapter. I focus on developing an account of how specific modes of political belonging are inscribed in space over time. In the previous chapter, I drew on interdisciplinary work to conceptualise *el barrio* as a politically contested space. I argued that *el barrio* was the dynamic product of migration, relations of proximity and planning. I outlined how spatial history is useful to track how such interactions are inscribed in *el barrio* over time. Lefebvre's work provides a theoretical framework to integrate the diverse insights of the literature studied in the previous chapter. It provides tools to track how conflicting political interventions constitute particular frameworks in space at specific moments in time. Lefebvre distinguishes between the hierarchical production of state spaces and the possibilities for grassroots democratic practices, or *autogestion*, emerging from the complexities of everyday life. Lefebvre is particularly concerned with the increased importance of abstract conceptions of space in shaping everyday life.

Lefebvre explores the possibility of developing *autogestion* explicitly in his studies of political events — on the Paris Commune as well as on the conditions and possibilities of his own time. In these studies Lefebvre uses space as a tool of analysis to account for how specific forms of *autogestion* become possible at particular moments in time. Whilst Lefebvre is concerned with conceptualising the spatio-temporal dimensions of political possibility throughout his work, in these studies he focuses explicitly on how specific political relationships are inscribed in space. In these works Lefebvre explicitly spatializes history — rather than historicizing space as is often the case in his more wellknown texts (Elden 2007, 114). He outlines how specific relationships between government frameworks and practices of *autogestion* emerge in the context of a broader series of relationships. I employ this distinction between government frameworks and practices

of *autogestion* to conceptualise the politics of neighbouring. This allows me to trace how competing modes of political belonging become possible at specific moments in time. Due to the specificity of Lefebvre's political studies, it is necessary to explore how the politics of neighbouring takes different forms in different contexts. I end the chapter by outlining how Lefebvre's work helps to conceptualise the politics of neighbouring as well as highlighting the need to draw on additional theoretical tools to rethink the spatio-temporal dimensions of political possibility in different contexts. I suggest that the differential inclusion of subjects within the same space is an underdeveloped aspect of Lefebvre's work. This becomes particularly problematic in understanding the contemporary context shaped by the "post-colonial predicament". On the other hand, notions of *autogestion* have been employed in different ways over the last three decades diverging from Lefebvre's theorisation. It thus becomes necessary to account for how this concept has changed.

Lefebvre published prolifically from the 1920s until the end of his life in 1991 on a wide range of topics including everyday life, literature, philosophy, space, urbanisation and the state. Lefebvre's work is particularly useful for understanding how particular political relationships are produced in space over time. Lefebvre conceptualises space not as an ideal abstract sphere that can be neatly captured by theory but rather the product of ongoing social relationships and political contests. For Lefebvre, space is inherently political and the site of political struggle. He emphasizes the production of space, critiquing ideas of "objective neutral and empty space" (Lefebvre 1991a, 36). For Lefebvre space cannot be captured by abstract models but only through the study of concrete processes. He argues that "every society... produces a space, its own space" (*ibid.*, 31) and as a result every space has a history (*ibid.*, 46). Lefebvre interrogates both representations of space and the practices through which these are inscribed in space and challenged. In doing so, he draws attention to dominant political frameworks as well as the complexities and possibilities emerging as these enter into contact with the diversity of life. To do so he utilises a wide variety of material

and disciplines including anthropology, sociology, history, geography, literature, politics and philosophy<sup>1</sup>. Lefebvre argues that it is necessary to overcome the limitations of the theorist whilst at the same time avoiding spreading oneself too thin by simply compiling empirical data. On this Lefebvre argues that:

We must try to overcome simultaneously the shortcomings of the philosopher and those of the non-philosopher (his lack of ideological clarity, his fumbling myopia and constricted outlook), borrowing for this purpose the terminology of philosophy and its more elaborate concepts, isolated here from speculative systematizations and directed towards the study of everyday life (Lefebvre 1984, 13).

The simultaneous critique of the limitations of traditional philosophy and the social sciences is a recurring theme in Lefebvre's work. Lefebvre attributes his critique of philosophy and the social sciences to Marx. For Lefebvre (1969, 16), Marx simultaneously critiques the absolute categories of philosophy and the fragmentation of knowledge in the social sciences, attempting to reconstruct theory by re-integrating the holistic approach of philosophy and the empirical insights of the social sciences. The theoretical focus of the philosopher plays an important role in such an approach. It provides a conceptual apparatus through which to make sense of the world. Lefebvre suggests that this is because the philosopher does not acknowledge separation, "[t]he philosopher thinks the different elements simultaneously and collects differences into a totality: urban places in the cosmos, times and rhythms of the city and that of the world" (Lefebvre 1996, 89). Nevertheless, the constant revision of the relationship between philosophical concepts and their actual content is necessary. This means that theory is constantly elaborated, revised and renewed.

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<sup>1</sup> "La Méthod d'Henri Lefebvre" by Remi Hess offers a useful introduction to Lefebvre's method (1991).

Lefebvre generated a series of concepts to engage with his own historical context. He argues that Marx's work was "necessary but not sufficient to enable us to understand our time, grasp events, and if possible, guide them" (Lefebvre 1969, 23). For Lefebvre, everyday life, space, the urban and the state were fundamental aspects of his time, not addressed sufficiently by Marxist thought. Lefebvre conceptualised political frameworks inscribed in space through a number of geographical scales and the complexities emerging as these interacted with the diversity of space. Throughout his life, Lefebvre developed numerous concepts in an attempt to capture the interactions between the complexity of life and the diverse political relationships that give it form. In his influential *Production of Space*, he makes an analytical distinction between abstract spaces and contradictory and differential space. In his political studies, this distinction provides him with conceptual tools to comprehend French society. His studies enable him to depict the interventions of the bureaucratic state and explore the possibilities of developing grassroots alternatives through practices of *autogestion*.

Lefebvre's theorisations of space and urbanisation have been particularly influential in the Social Sciences in English. Engagement with Lefebvre's work first appeared in Marxist urban theory from the 1970s (e.g., Harvey 1973; Castells 1977; Smith 1984) and later in postmodern geography, particularly in the 1990s (e.g., Soja 1989). Kipfer et. al. (2008, 3) suggest that these first two waves of Lefebvre scholarship, exemplified by the work of David Harvey and Edward Soja, have shaped understandings of Lefebvre in English over the last three decades. Ákos Moravánzky, Christian Schmid and Lukasz Stanek (2014, 5) similarly argue that the dominance of these interpretations has shaped engagement with Lefebvre's work. Elden (2007, 114) suggests that whilst Lefebvre simultaneously attempted to spatialize history, historicize space and spatialize sociology, the majority of earlier interpretations of his work in English focused on historicizing space rather than spatializing history. Such works developed historical accounts of particular spaces rather than using space as a tool to analyse historical relationships. As Elden notes, Lefebvre himself often

appeared to be writing a history of space rather than a spatial history. Lefebvre's most explicit attempts to spatialize history are not found in his most well-known theoretical texts but rather in his political studies (*ibid.*, 114-115). By focusing on these political studies, I am able to highlight how Lefebvre's work provides conceptual tools to write a spatial history of politics. At the same time, taking into account the historical specificity of Lefebvre's political studies, I endeavour to expand on Lefebvre's theoretical work to strengthen its analytical purchase beyond its original context. In doing so, I contribute to more recent Lefebvre scholarship which has embarked on a holistic engagement with his work and attempted to expand its insights into the present. This "third wave" of Lefebvre scholarship has been facilitated by recent in-depth studies (e.g., Elden 2004; Merrifield 2006; Goonewardena et. Al. 2008; Stanek 2011; Butler 2012; Stanek et. al 2014) and provides a more nuanced, contextualised understanding of Lefebvre's work.

Lefebvre's work has also had an important impact in Spain. Céline Vaz argues that there are firm links between Lefebvre and Spain. Vaz (2012, 83) suggests that Lefebvre considered Spain a familiar "horizon" noting that he cycled around parts of the country as an adolescent and when based in Navarrenx travelled there regularly as he enjoyed its "*esprit de fête*". Lefebvre had two noteworthy Spanish students: Manuel Castells who later critiqued Lefebvre's work in *The Urban Question* (1977) and Mario Gaviria (Fraser 2011). Gaviria became good friends with Lefebvre and was instrumental in promoting his work in Spain (writing many of the prologues to the Spanish translations). Lefebvre would take his visitors in Navarrenx to Gaviria's home in Navarra on the other side of the Pyrenees (Vaz 2012, 83). Lefebvre's relationship with Gaviria, and the resonance of his work with the Spanish context, led to his work appearing much earlier in Spanish than in English. *El derecho a la ciudad* (*The Right to the City*) appeared in Spain in 1969, one year after its publication in France and well before its first translation into English in 1996. *De lo rural a lo urbano* appeared in 1971 (*Du rural à l'urbain* 1970) and is still untranslated in English. *La vida cotidiana en el mundo moderno* (*Everyday Life in the Modern World*) appeared in 1972 four years

after its publication in 1968. *La revolución urbana* (*The Urban Revolution*) also appeared in 1972 two years after its publication in French. *El pensamiento marxista y la ciudad* (*Marxist Thought and the City* published in 2016 in English) appeared in Spanish 1973, the year after its publication in French<sup>2</sup>. Interest in Lefebvre's work in Spain was explicitly connected to urban conflict in the 1970s and diminished in the 1980s (Vaz 2012, 85). Contemporary urban battles have led to a resurgence of interest in Lefebvre's concepts that I will explore in more detail in Chapter 6.

Greig Charnock, Thomas Purcell and Ramon Ribera-Fumaz give an account of the production of space in their analysis of contemporary Spanish politics developed in *The Limits of Capital in Spain: Crisis and Revolt in the European South* (2014). However, these authors do not engage with Lefebvre directly but rather develop their account through a discussion of the work of David Harvey. These authors argue that urbanism should be "considered in relation to the necessity of crisis in capitalism" (Charnock et. al. 2014, 84). This is because urban centres play a fundamental role in the "spatial organisation of capitalist production" (*ibid.*, 84). Urban forms are produced and transformed by capitalist development and "the competitive struggle between capitals and national states" (*ibid.*, 85). Charnock, Purcell and Ribera-Fumaz suggest that, through successive crises, the state transforms struggling to "manage the contradiction between the need to secure the conditions for the expanded reproduction of capital, on the one hand, and the demands of capitalists and the working class on the other" (*ibid.*, 105). Despite such references to a conflictual relationship between capitalists and the working class, little real attention is given to the impact of social movements on the production of space in their text. Rather than being active participants, contemporary social movements are largely interpreted as symptomatic of a particular mode of production. My own approach takes seriously the generative political power

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<sup>2</sup> *El pensamiento marxista y la ciudad* was first published in Mexico by Extemporáneos. The Universidad Politécnica in Madrid republished it in 1983.

of social movements, drawing from Lefebvre's understanding of the production of space, as outlined below.

## 1. The Production of Space

In this section, I outline some of the key theoretical elements of Lefebvre's understanding of the historical production of space. I focus particularly on his distinction between abstract space and contradictory and differential space. Lefebvre was particularly concerned with the emergence of abstract frameworks organizing space at different geographical scales. He contrasted these with grassroots forms of *autogestion* emerging from contradictory space. For Lefebvre, abstract frameworks and *autogestion* offered contrasting forms of management that intervened in space constituting specific frameworks that shape the spatial frames and temporal rhythms of life.

In *The Production of Space*, Lefebvre (1991a, 33) envisages a dialectical relationship between what he terms *representations of space*, *spaces of representation*<sup>3</sup> and *spatial practice*. *Representations of space* refer to space as it is conceived and codified through expert knowledge. With this concept he seeks to capture "conceptualized space, the space of scientists, planners, urbanists, technocratic subdividers and social engineers" (*ibid.*, 38-39). For Lefebvre, representations of space constitute the dominant space of any given society. Conversely, the concept *spaces of representation* seeks to capture space as it is lived, inhabited and used. *Spaces of representation* emerge in relation to representations of space seeing as space is lived through images and symbols (*ibid.*, 39). However, in contrast to ideal theoretical space, lived space is lined with contradictions and ambiguity. Lefebvre for this reason suggests that it is sometimes coded and sometimes not (*ibid.*, 33). *Spatial practice* adds a dynamic dimension to the dialectic as it refers to the actual

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<sup>3</sup> I revert to the more common translation of *les espaces de representation*, spaces of representation, in contrast to representational space as is translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith in *The Production of Space* (Lefebvre 1991a).

practices that produce and reproduce space. Lefebvre argues that *spatial practice* has a certain degree of cohesiveness without being “intellectually worked out or logically conceived” (*ibid.*, 38). For Lefebvre, this dialectical relationship does not constitute a theoretical model but rather serves as a guide to conceptualize how space is produced through time. The objective is not to isolate the variables that explain the production of space but rather develop concepts to “rediscover the unity of the productive process” (*ibid.*, 41). There are thus no hard and fast rules about how space is produced. Rather “spatial practice, representations of space and [spaces of representation] contribute in different ways to the production of space... according to the society or mode of production in question and according to the historical period” (*ibid.*, 46).

Lefebvre’s later work on rhythm highlights the relationship between space and time in the production of space. He suggests that rhythm analysis, the study of rhythms, does not “isolate an object, or a subject, or a relation” but rather seeks to “grasp a moving but determinate complexity” (Lefebvre 2004, 12). Political interventions seek to impose certain rhythms on everyday life and movement in the city. He thus argues that “for there to be *change*, a social group, a class or a caste must intervene by imprinting a rhythm on an era, be it through force or in an insinuating manner... its acts must inscribe themselves on *reality*” (*ibid.*, 14). However, space is not the product of a single rhythm; instead, Lefebvre argues that there is an “interaction between a place, a time and an expenditure of energy... Repetition (of movements, gestures, action, situations, differences)... Interferences of linear processes and cyclical processes... Birth, growth, peak, then decline and end” (*ibid.*, 15). Multiple interventions impact on and contribute to shaping complex space. These interact with, shape and are shaped by, enter into conflict with and override each other. Diverse political interventions can be seen to “rhythm” movements and relationships. They organise and manage the movement of people through their everyday lives. Spatial forms are left behind as particular historical processes unfold, and condition future interactions.



Morton draws explicitly on Lefebvre's work on rhythmanalysis to develop his understanding of spatial history. He tracks how diverse rhythms are inscribed in space to shed light on the entanglement of spatialities and temporalities implicated in the production of space. Morton suggests that a rhythmanalytical perspective is particularly useful because it allows a reading of space as the "the product of a multiplicity of relations and trajectories of time" (Morton 2015, 834). Whilst Lefebvre gestures at the potential of rhythmanalysis for shedding light on historical processes, he does not develop this idea in much detail (see Lefebvre 2004). Morton's work thus provides additional tools to build on Lefebvre's account. For Morton, space and time are "always already co-present" (Morton 2015, 840) and a rhythmanalytical perspective serves as a tool to conceptualise "how temporal rhythms are spatialised, how time and space are linked" (*ibid.*, 833). Morton identifies the intersecting relationship between the state management of space, the appropriation of territory, the rural and the urban, and "the rhythms of everyday human life" (*ibid.*, 842). In this thesis, building on Morton's work, I conceptualise how spatial frames and temporal rhythms emerge through particular political battles. These shape *el barrio* permitting specific forms of political belonging.

### 1.1 Abstract space

Much of Lefebvre's work focuses on how abstract frameworks shape society by imposing certain spatial frames and temporal rhythms. Japhy Wilson has illustrated the centrality of the concept of abstract space in Lefebvre's work (Wilson 2014, 516). Wilson argues that Lefebvre's ideas on history, the state and the politics of difference make sense only in relationship to the concept of abstract space (*ibid.*, 517). For Lefebvre, the increased influence of abstract space is connected to the development of capitalism. This is because space is conceived in terms of its exchange value, "space tends toward a unique code, an absolute system, that of exchange and exchange value" (Lefebvre 2003, 167-168). Wilson identifies a process of abstraction, central to Lefebvre's

comprehension of abstract space, through which “a richly differentiated socio-spatial reality is progressively emptied of its substantive content and reduced to the ‘economic’ abstractions of money and the commodity, the ‘cultural’ abstractions of quantification and calculability... and the ‘political’ abstraction of state power” (Wilson 2014, 519). Linked to the process of abstraction, Lefebvre identifies the emergence of reductive representations of space, unified strategies and systematized logics applied to space (*ibid.*, 167-168). Abstract representations of space “intervene and modify spatial textures... informed by effective knowledge and ideology... [t]heir intervention occurs by way of construction” (Lefebvre 1991a, 41). For Lefebvre abstract space is conceived and implemented by the state and increasingly on a worldwide scale.

The state is a fundamental participant in the production of abstract space. For Lefebvre (1977, 157-158) the formalisation and codification of interactions and the stabilisation of these is its main activity, “the state intervenes directly in everyday life via multiple institutions, civil status, civil code, marriage and divorce, tax and the police” (*ibid.*, 154). This formalisation and codification is supported by the production of what he terms state space [*l’espace étatique*] (Lefebvre 2009, 249) that rationalizes, partitions and territorializes social relations “within an abstract objectified grid” (*ibid.*, 142). As a result, the state is responsible, as Brenner and Elden illustrate, for the:

production, regulation, and reproduction of a vast range of capitalist spaces — from factories, industrial farms, housing estates, commercial zones, suburban enclaves, and large-scale urban ensembles to roads, canals, tunnels, port facilities, bridges, railway networks, highway grids, airports, and air transport corridors, public utilities systems and diverse techno-institutional infrastructure for communication and surveillance (Brenner and Elden 2009b, 20).

The impact of abstract space is the object of critique in Lefebvre's studies of everyday life and urbanism. Lefebvre highlights the alienating structures and routines imposed on daily life. Everyday life is impoverished as it is increasingly "organized, neatly subdivided and programmed to fit a controlled, exact time-table" (Lefebvre 1984, 59). Urban planning similarly rationalises the landscape orienting it towards consumption and production. Planning seeks to remove disorder from everyday life and boost productivity. Consequently, all aspects of life are programmed. Lefebvre illustrates, for example, how planned housing estates offer "a complete way of living (functions, prescriptions, daily routine) which is inscribed and signifies itself in this habitat" (Lefebvre 1996, 79). Lefebvre coins the State Mode of Production (SMP) to capture the state's role as manager in this regard. The state presents itself as a business [*entreprise étatique*], "the head of state becomes the head of business, manager of national affairs" (Lefebvre 1977, 160). The state becomes a managerial state (*ibid.*, 172), managing space and population (*ibid.*, 174) and justifying its methods on technocratic discourse. Throughout the twentieth century it develops, as Brenner and Elden suggest, "historically and contextually specific spatial strategies... at once to facilitate capital accumulation and enhance political domination" (Brenner and Elden 2009b, 359).

The production of state space is understood in the context of a broader process of *mondialisation* or becoming global (Brenner and Elden 2009a, 21). Lefebvre suggests that, "[w]orld space is the field in which our epoch is created" (Lefebvre 2009, 189). He observes the emergence of a worldwide scale in the second half of the twentieth century through certain infrastructure and managerial knowledge. He suggests that with the proliferation of "airports, highways, vertical cities of concrete, horizontal cities of detached houses... [w]e enter into a world of combinations whose every element is known and recognized. The resemblances border on (abstract, self-evident) identity and visible equivalence" (*ibid.*, 212-213). The circulation and institutionalization of technocratic management concepts plays a fundamental role in the constitution of the worldwide scale (*ibid.*, 220). Joachim Hirsch and John Kannakulum have suggested,

correspondingly, that with “the growth in the significance of international organizations, especially in the IMF, the World Bank, the OECD, and the WTO...” a common space for the “international managerial class... made up of functionaries of states and international organizations, representatives of companies and media, employees of academic think tanks, and so on” has emerged (Hirsch and Kannankulam 2011, 27-28). Brenner and Elden note that, for Lefebvre, the process of *mondialisation* “implies a continual, ongoing making and remaking of worldwide social space” (Brenner and Elden 2009a, 22). Brenner illustrates how Lefebvre conceptualises a “scaffolding of spatial scales” upon which capitalism is continually “territorialized, deterritorialized and reterritorialized” (Brenner 1997, 143). No single spatial scale can be attributed “causal primacy” in this process, rather “local, regional, national and global social relations overlap within the same worldwide territorial grid of capitalist modernity” (*ibid.*, 145). As such, the process of *mondialisation* does not lead to the homogenisation of space but rather particular spaces are “specialised and parcelled out” (Lefebvre 1976, 85). Peripheral spaces are produced in relation to centers. Lefebvre suggests that in the process, “[c]olonisation... is made general. Around the centres, there are nothing but subjected, exploited and dependent spaces: neo-colonial spaces” (Lefebvre 1976, 85).

## 1.2 Contradictory and differential space

Despite the growing importance of abstract space, Lefebvre emphasises that historical periods “are accompanied by emergences and interferences, shifts, advances and delays” (Lefebvre 2003, 28). In *The Production of Space*, Lefebvre (1991a, 353-356) draws attention to contradictions between qualitative and quantitative space, the production and consumption of space, worldwide and fragmented space, exchange value and use value. He uses contradictions to identify the possibilities for an alternative society. This is the reason his most in-depth analysis of contradictions is found in his studies of revolutionary events such as *La Proclamation de la*

*Commune* and *The Explosion*. In one part of *The Production of Space*, Lefebvre reflects on the example of the “vast shanty towns of Latin America (favelas, barrios, ranchos)” (Lefebvre 1991a, 374) to illustrate how differences appear at the margins of ordered space “either in the forms of resistances or in the form of externalities” (*ibid.*, 373). He admires the shantytowns — despite recognizing their poverty — suggesting that they represent “[a]ppropriation of a remarkably high order... [t]he spontaneous architecture and planning... prov[ing] greatly superior to the organization of space by specialists” (*ibid.*, 374).

In “The survival of non-capitalism” (2014) Chris Hesketh, drawing on Lefebvre, seeks to elaborate on the idea of differential space. Hesketh pays particular attention to Oaxaca in southern Mexico in his attempt to situate “non-capitalist spaces within the global political economy” (Hesketh 2014, 878). Differential spaces like Oaxaca are shaped by the influence of capitalism but “not subsumed entirely to its form of social relations” (*ibid.*, 886). Like Lefebvre, Hesketh interprets such spaces as “important for transformative activity” (*ibid.*, 878). Drawing on Arturo Escobar, Hesketh argues that sites of non-capitalism “offer sites of opening for different forms of politics and economics” (*ibid.*, 882). Rather than being sites that are lost in the past or in the process of being destroyed, “non-capitalist spaces can be expanded and learned from” (*ibid.*, 882). To illustrate the potential of differential space, Hesketh argues that recent struggles including the resistance to a superhighway project, dam expansion and mining interests in Oaxaca have emerged from “the democratic tradition of control over territory and the survival of non-capitalist relations with land” (*ibid.*, 888). Wilson similarly notes the emergence of counter-projects grounded in local realities in reaction to the implementation of the Plan Puebla Panama (PPP) in Southern Mexico. The PPP was a regional development programme launched in 2001 to develop infrastructure and promote foreign direct investment in Central America and the Southern States of Mexico (Wilson 2014, 521). Wilson shows how “the PPP was opposed by numerous place-based social movements that challenged the reduction of social space to an abstract factor in the logic of accumulation, and

that emphasized the profound connection between space, identity and social practice in the history of Mexico's indigenous and peasant populations" (*ibid.*, 526).

Lefebvre's political project revolves around the potential of differential space. Lefebvre critiques the alienation provoked by abstract space in order to reveal these possibilities. Lefebvre advocated the creation of diverse forms of social life, value, ideas, "in one word differences" (Lefebvre 1970, 38). He suggests that abstract space may be appropriated by those who inhabit it (Lefebvre 2003, 167-168), an argument encapsulated by his notion of "the right to the city" (Lefebvre 1996). The city is where such appropriation is most prevalent. Despite being "colonised" by abstract space, through everyday interactions, the city continues to be occupied and used (Lefebvre 1996, 167). Below I focus on how Lefebvre's broader political project is articulated through the concept of *autogestion*.

Lefebvre only ever published three texts that focused explicitly on *autogestion* in 1966, 1976 and 1986 (Trebitsch 2003, 65). Nevertheless, as Michel Trebitsch suggests, similar themes are present throughout much of his work. Trebitsch notes for example how Lefebvre develops the idea of autonomy, the auto-production of the self and the *autogestion* of society in the chapter on the "production of man" in *Dialectical Materialism* (*ibid.*, 66). For Lefebvre, *autogestion* is seen to undermine the hierarchical production of space and everyday life creating an "opening toward the possible" (Lefebvre 2009, 150). He suggests that *autogestion* subordinates abstract government frameworks to the complexity of social life. Through *autogestion* individuals and groups seek "to harness the organization of everydayness, to appropriate for themselves their own proper social life, by abolishing the discrepancy between the technical control of the outside world and the stagnation of practical relations" (Lefebvre 2009, 146). It thus signifies a mode of grassroots democratic management "prioritizing the social needs that are formulated, controlled, and managed by those who have a stake in them" (*ibid.*, 148). This form of management becomes

possible, according to Lefebvre, “in the weak points of existing society” (*ibid.*, 144). As such “*autogestion* requires a set of circumstances, a privileged place”. Lefebvre suggests that *autogestion* is born in contradictory societies tending towards a high level of abstract order (*ibid.*, 146).

*Autogestion* is conceived as an alternative mode of managing society and establishing the spatial frames and temporal rhythms of life. Through the SMP concept, Lefebvre conceptualises how the bourgeois state is transformed into a managerial state managing space and society through abstract categories — the reproduction of the state being an end in itself. Lefebvre critiques the state’s hierarchical forms of management. With the concept of *autogestion*, Lefebvre proposes radically democratising the management of space and life, allowing them to be shaped by the actual contents of society (rather than abstract categories). Thus while the state imposes particular forms of consciousness, space, structures and styles, with *autogestion* these emerge spontaneously and are constantly shaped and modified through the participation of diverse actors.

Lefebvre’s theorization of *autogestion* is entrenched in a particular time and place. During the 1960s and 70s, *autogestion* was a key word employed among leftist circles in France. The lifespan of the term in leftist circles in France corresponds approximately with the publication of the journals *Autogestion*, *Autogestion et Socialisme* and *Autogestions*. *Autogestion* first appeared in 1966 and the final issue of *Autogestions* appeared twenty years later in 1986 (Weill 1999). According to Claudie Weill (1999, 29-36), the term was used to conceptualise the tactics of activists during the events of May 1968 in France, the approach of certain French trade unions as well as political experiments in Yugoslavia and Algeria. The Spanish *autogestión* appeared during the same period. As with the French *autogestion*, the Spanish *autogestión* was first used to account for Yugoslavian political experiments in the 1950s (Hudson 2010, 581-82). Juan Pablo

Hudson (2010, 581-82) argues that the Spanish *autogestión* was a direct translation of the Serbo-Croatian *samoupravlje*, made up of the prefix *samo* (auto) and *upravljje*, translated as *gestión* (management). Frank Mintz (1977, 27) suggests that the Spanish translation emerges in tandem with the use of the term *autogestion* in French. The first translation of slavic equivalents to *autogestión* Mintz encounters appeared in a 1967 Russian-Spanish dictionary. Early texts found using the term in the catalogue of the *Biblioteca Nacional de España* (Spanish National Library) are published around this time and introduce experiments in Yugoslavia or elsewhere. These include *La empresa yugoslava de autogestión* by Ricardo Alberdi (1967), *Autogestión en Checoslovaquia* by Sik Ota (1969), *Yugoslavia: Autogestión en la economía* by Bruckner Branko (1969) and *Autogestión en Yugoslavia* by Juan Gómez Casas (1970). From the mid-1970s, the number of texts employing the term increases considerably and more theoretical texts appear such as Roberto Massari's *Las teorías de la autogestión* (1975) and *Fundamentos teórico-históricos de la autogestión* by Heleno Saña (1976).

Frank Georgi (2003, 7) conceptualises *autogestion* as a utopian thought/practice that attempts to construct concrete alternatives at the level of everyday life, referring to it as the last utopia. Georgi suggests that ecologists share this vision, as do right to the city activists, feminists and other communitarian utopias. The use of the term by other French theorists share similarities and differences with Lefebvre. Both Alain Touraine and Serge Mallet associate it with a new form of class conflict. Mallet (1965, 64) suggests that automatization and the changing nature of working class jobs has fundamentally changed class relations. Workers come into conflict with the techno bureaucratic structure that directs the economy shifting demands towards the control of the enterprise itself (*ibid.*, 67). Similarly, Touraine (1977, 159) employs *autogestion* to capture a tendency within the society of the time. He suggests that in post-industrial society, management of the apparatus of production defines the ruling class. Technocrats manage large organizations in which workers are increasingly alienated from what they are producing. In this context, the



nature of contestation changes, individuals and groups seek to take control over their own affairs. It is “the protest of the human being, of the autonomy of his experience and expression, his capacity to manage or to control the changes that affect him” (*ibid.*, 160). He notes that contestation becomes a decentralizing force, making direct demands for the management of society by the users of its machines, of its products, of its communication (*ibid.*, 162). For Cornelius Castoriadis, *autogestion* is a form of politics that is incompatible with the hierarchical structures that govern all aspects of contemporary society. He suggests that a self-managed society is one that controls its own affairs and in which decisions are made collectively, as he states “those concerning a neighbourhood, by its inhabitants; and decisions concerning all of society, by the totality of men and women living there” (Castoriadis 1988, 217). *Autogestion* refers to a type of society where norms emerge from the behaviour of individuals but are always contestable and are never imposed from the top down (*ibid.*, 219).

A pamphlet titled “Apuntes Históricos Autogestionarios” (Historical Notes on *Autogestión*) published in 1977 by the *Colectivo Autogestionario de Valencia* provides insight into how *autogestión* was envisaged in Spain. According to this group, “the direct organisation of collective life at all levels... has its origins in so called primitive society, and in our times has gone from being a utopia... to being a reality inscribed in the heart of modern society, with the appearance of... the working class” (Colectivo Autogestionario de Valencia 1977, 4). The group suggests that (the assembly) “*la asamblea* in the factory, in *el barrio*, etc. is the only place of power, management and decision of the working class” (*ibid.*, 44-45). The group outlines numerous experiments including the Paris Commune (*ibid.*, 15), the Soviets (*ibid.*, 16), Spanish Anarchism (*ibid.*, 22), Poland and Hungary in 1956 (*ibid.*, 26). Yugoslavian experiments are seen as false *autogestión* as they reconcile *autogestión* and authoritarianism (termed as *cogestión*) (*ibid.*, 31) and experiments in Algeria are seen as partial (*ibid.*, 35). The battles for *autogestión* in industrial countries at the time of writing is linked to the failures of bureaucratic socialism and state capitalism. May 1968 in

France and later revolts in Italy “reveal a profound discomfort and at the same time the creative potential of the new generation” (*ibid.*, 41-42). This and a number of other texts reframe the Spanish Anarchist experience as an example of *autogestión*. In the pamphlet *Autogestión en España*, Juan Gómez Casas argues that Spanish Anarchism demonstrates that “*autogestión* is possible” (Gómez Casas 1976, 4). In 1977 Mintz’ *L’autogestion dans l’Espagne révolutionnaire* (1970) is translated into Spanish as *La autogestión en la España revolucionaria*. Mintz justifies his use of the term *autogestión* rather than the Spanish “*colectivización*” in order to link the Spanish experience to the activist and academic discussion of the time (Mintz 1977, 26). He notes that in a two part study published in *Noir et Rouge*<sup>4</sup>, the first part (published in June 1965) referred to Spanish collectives and the second part (published in February 1966), adopted the term *autogestion* (*ibid.*, 27).

## 2. Lefebvre’s political studies

Prior to the publication of *The Production of Space*, Lefebvre undertook a number of political studies through which he developed his thinking. In them, Lefebvre employs space as a tool of analysis to track how *autogestion* becomes possible at particular moments in time. He differentiates between the spatio-temporal conditions produced by dominant conceptions of space and emerging alternatives constituted by practices of *autogestion*. In *La Proclamation de la Commune* he explores the conditioning factors and the emerging consciousness, space, structure and style of the Commune. He uses a similar approach to explore the political battles of his own time. In addition, he outlines how capitalism and the state shape everyday life and the city before exploring how the May 1968 protests open the possibility for alternative forms. He highlights the increased importance of abstract frameworks governing everyday life and conceptualises

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<sup>4</sup> An assortment of texts from *Noir et Rouge* from 1966, 1967 and 1968 were published in Spanish in Argentina in 1969 in a text titled *La autogestión, el estado y la revolución en Rusia (1917-1921), Italia (1920), España (1936-39), Yugoslavia (desde 1950), Argelia (desde 1962)* (Proyección: Buenos Aires)

*autogestion* as a remedy for these. The relationship between state space and *autogestion* is formulated through these works to illuminate the spatio-temporal conditions of political possibility of his own time.

## 2.1 *La Proclamation de la Commune*

*La Proclamation de la Commune* is Lefebvre's most systematic and in-depth historical study. This work was controversial at the time of publication as members of the Situationist International claimed that Lefebvre had plagiarised their ideas<sup>5</sup>. In this text Lefebvre explores how a form of *autogestion* became possible at a particular moment in time. He intends this study as a basis to imagine possibilities in the present (Lefebvre 1965, 395). He outlines both what he terms the negativity of the event, the details of the historical backdrop on which it occurs, its elements, causes, reasons and conditions, and the positivity of the event, the unique process that emerges from this historical backdrop (*ibid.*, 407). Whilst Lefebvre mentions the state's role in producing abstract spaces, attention to this is less extensive than in the later studies on his own time. This is due to differences between the historical moments studied. The increased importance of abstraction is reflected in *Everyday life in the Modern World* (1971 [1968]) to be discussed below — that seeks to outline changes in society to update themes addressed in the first volume of *Critique of Everyday Life* published in 1947 (1991b). In *La Proclamation de la Commune*, while abstraction conditions the possibility of the Commune to a certain extent, its realisation is piecemeal and is undermined by multiple contradictions. Lefebvre identifies a number of different

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<sup>5</sup> There is evident interpenetration between Lefebvre's work and that of the Situationist International. Numerous studies on Lefebvre have explored his relationship with the Situationist International and particularly his relationship with Guy Debord (e.g., Butler 2012). Elizabeth Sussman's description of the Situationist International's project reveals some of the similarities. She argues that the Situationist's advocated "converting art from a precious, consumable object to a principle permeating daily life. Transformation would take place in quotidian, everyday uses of the city and building, in a revitalization of art through a negation of its traditional values, and in the subversive appropriation of dominant, mass-media representations" (Sussman 1989, 4).

conditioning factors. He explores economic conditions, historic conditions brought about by certain events, social conditions caused by underlying and emergent social structures as well as ideological structures and their devaluation (Lefebvre 1965, 407-408).

In his discussion of economic development Lefebvre illustrates transformations through a number of indicators such as the expansion of train lines, increased coal and iron extraction (*ibid.*, 69) and the entrenchment of industrialisation (*ibid.*, 71). He demonstrates how the French economy grew and certain sectors prospered. As the economy grew, the structure of society and the city changed. He notes how a number of settlements that were previously outside Paris were incorporated into it in 1860 making a total of 20 new *arrondissements* (districts) (*ibid.*, 73). Intensive industrialisation was accompanied by increased migration to the city boosting the number of proletariats living in precarious conditions (*ibid.*, 75). The state apparatus attempted to shape these economic and demographic transformations (*ibid.*, 89). It attempted to adapt to the emerging demands of the bourgeoisie and the workers whilst consolidating power and becoming corrupt. As a result, it became unpopular with all aspects of society (*ibid.*, 93). In general its interventions on the economy served to protect private property and distribute subventions, protect and foment large iron companies (*ibid.*, 93). The economy grew unequally across areas of production and in different regions (*ibid.*, 87) whilst political, economic, administrative and cultural values (reflecting the dominant groups) were increasingly centralised in Paris (*ibid.*, 87).

Lefebvre suggests that the state alienated large parts of the population as it appeared to be governing for a small group of wealthy capitalists rather than for the majority of the population. Classes became polarised as capitalists gained in wealth whilst large sectors of the population were pauperised (*ibid.*, 77). The city itself was increasingly alienating. It began to lose its human measurement and become monstrous (*ibid.*, 32). Nevertheless, Lefebvre argues that the state had not yet become organised, technical and bureaucratic. The segregation of the city planned by

Georges-Eugène Haussman had not yet succeeded in undoing the singular identity of Paris (*ibid.*, 132-133). In many *quartiers* (neighbourhoods), there was coexistence between classes, making contradictions strikingly evident. Lefebvre argues that whilst there was a military Paris and an official Paris with palaces, monuments, streets etc. this image was superimposed on the people's Paris of the *quartiers*. The *quartiers* had their own originality and particularity — that Lefebvre argues they had not entirely lost at the time of writing — and social cohesion where news was transmitted quickly through local networks (*ibid.*, 134).

According to Lefebvre, a number of historical occurrences made the Commune possible. Most important was the defeat of the government at the hands of the Prussians which left the capital isolated and “reduced to autonomy *de fait*” (*ibid.*, 207). As Lefebvre suggests, “on the night of the 18<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> of March 1871, the state, the army, the police disappear, all that had power over human life evaporates” (*ibid.*, 289). He also notes important changes occurring in the social structure of the peasantry (*ibid.*, 81-83), and the intensity gained by the workers movement from 1969-1970 (*ibid.*, 79). He suggests that there was cross fertilisation between workers movements in the provinces and Paris between 1868 and 1870. A strike in Le Creusot provided an earlier unelaborate model of *autogestion* (*ibid.*, 81-83). The workers movement increasingly positioned itself against the state (*ibid.*, 94).

Lefebvre argues that a positivity, a creative spontaneity, emerged in the space abandoned by the state connected to the lived reality of the people. In studying the positivity of the event, Lefebvre attempts to uncover something that the circumstances and conditions cannot capture, particularly “how revolutionary fervour is lived” (*ibid.*, 22). The event materializes from history but does not belong to it. The negative conditions lay the groundwork for spontaneity breeding an active community and an explosive communion, “spontaneity as part of the total phenomena appears at the same time as condition, cause and reason” (*ibid.*, 409). This fervour intensified as

the state apparatus deserted Paris. Lefebvre outlines elements of this spontaneity and the political frameworks constituted by identifying an emerging consciousness, emerging space, emerging structures and ultimately an emerging style.

The emerging consciousness was tied to a particular temporal imagination; an understanding of the identity of the people in relation to the past, present and future (*ibid.*, 34). Lefebvre argues that the emerging consciousness was formed through an encounter between a consciousness of history and a consciousness of class “and an image of the possible” (*ibid.*, 35). He argues that this consciousness was “not just elitists” but became a phenomenon of the masses and served as an intermediary between reality and theory: a praxis (*ibid.*, 119). Lefebvre recognized that the different groups involved had different visions of what the Commune was. The ideological unity between these different tendencies was never more than an unstable compromise that was always in question (*ibid.*, 138). The different currents of opinion converged in the Commune but did not correspond with a well defined social type (*ibid.*, 139).

Through its actions, the Commune transformed the spatial frames and temporal rhythms of life in the city. Lefebvre argues that:

The Commune represents until our time the only attempt at revolutionary urbanism, it unearths the signs of the old organisation, capturing the sources of sociability (in that time the *quartier*), recognising social space in political terms and not believing their innocence (demolition of the *Vendôme*, occupation of churches... and conserving all considered positive) (*ibid.*, 394).

The commune built on social spaces that were already present. When the siege led to the disintegration of the economy and everyday life, Lefebvre argues that it was naturally

reconstructed around life in the *quartiers*, the clubs, the battalions and legions of *la garde* (*ibid.*, 179). Lefebvre highlights the social spontaneity of the street, the café and the festival that he identifies as the social spaces of the poor (*ibid.*, 124). The poor used cafes, bistros and clubs not simply as places to eat and drink but as places of encounter (*ibid.*, 123). During the siege the spontaneity and intensity of social life in the city increased. Committees formed around the spontaneous effervescence of life in the *quartiers*. Habitual barriers between private life, and social life, the street and the house, everyday life and political life were blurred. A mass in fusion appeared ready to take new forms, men and women took charge of their affairs (*ibid.*, 181).

The organization of life during the Commune led to the development of an emerging structure. Lefebvre defines this form of organization as *autogestion*. He argues that the Commune was the first trial of *autogestion* on a large scale (*ibid.*, 307). This form of organization built on ideas already present in the workers movement. The workers movement battled for decentralisation (*ibid.*, 87) and “the direct democratic management of their affairs by citizens united in councils, commissions and committees” (*ibid.*, 154). A decentralising program was presented during the Commune putting the provinces in charge of their affairs (*ibid.*, 88) and arranging public participation around the *quartiers* (*ibid.*, 289). At the same time, Lefebvre suggests that this framework offered a radical critique of the state and politics (*ibid.*, 390) avoiding constructing itself around a fixed apparatus (*ibid.*, 183). For this reason, he argues that:

A new type of state created by the working class takes control and it is a state that is withering away... doing away with permanent army, with bureaucracy, the police, established magistrates, in brief all the apparatuses of the state and government installed in class based societies. The state that emerges is as a consequence more democratic than all other forms of state. It becomes more democratic by putting the social and society above politics, bringing politics to an end (*ibid.*, 391).

Lefebvre attempts to capture the fusion of these emerging characteristics by conceptualising an overarching style, the *fête* (celebration, festival). Practical action can be identified to have a particular style. Style is not simply consciousness, ideology or individual works; it is what ties these together in praxis. For Lefebvre the Commune was “A huge festival, a festival of the people of Paris, essence and symbol of French people and people in general... Spring festival in the city, festival of the disinherited and the proletariat, revolutionary festival and festival of the revolution, total festival, the biggest in modern times” (*ibid.*, 21). The celebratory atmosphere permitted the communion of contradictory currents. Lefebvre argues that the Commune became an:

unlimited opening of the future and the possible... a fundamental spontaneity (that is not to say it was not conditioned by historic and social conditions, of the proletariat) pushing aside the sediments deposited during years, the State, the bureaucracy, the institutions, dead culture... Social practice becomes freed, it is changed in connection with community... politics and society are going to disappear and be resolved by civil society. The political function as a specialised function will cease to exist. Everyday life is transformed into a perpetual festival. The daily fight for work and bread no longer make sense (*ibid.*, 389).

Lefebvre’s study of the Commune illustrates how a particular form of *autogestion* emerged from specific historical conditions. It developed a peculiar consciousness, space, structure and ultimately style. In doing so, it intervened upon the historical conditions imprinting particular spatial frames and temporal rhythms on life in the city. This established a mode of political belonging that undermined the frameworks established by the state, emerging in the spaces where it was weakest, grounding itself in the *quartier*.



## 2.2 *The Explosion, Everyday Life in the Modern World and The Right to the City*

Read together, *The Explosion* (1969), *Everyday Life in the Modern World* (1984) and *The Right to the City* (1996) offer a similar exploration of the spatio-temporal conditions shaping everyday life in the city at a particular moment in time. These studies have a polemical tone that is testament to the period in which they were written. They focus on a particular mode of capitalism shaping everyday life and the city in France at the time they were written. Lefebvre highlights the increased abstraction of space and everyday life. The spatial frames and temporal rhythms imposed by capitalism, mediated by the state, are laid out in order to explore the conditions and possibilities for emerging forms of *autogestion*, particularly those experimented with during the May 1968 protests.

At the beginning of *Everyday Life in the Modern World*, Lefebvre (1984, 63) notes changes that had occurred during the 50 years prior to its publication. He argues that everyday life is increasingly rationalised and emptied of all other content. Aspects of older forms of societies, considered irrational, are marginalised. For Lefebvre, traces of pre-capitalist society were much more present before the Second World War but have now been set aside as folklore. At the time of writing he argues that “everything is ostensible de-dramatized; instead of tragedy there are objects, certainties, ‘values’, roles, satisfaction, jobs, situations and functions” (*ibid.*, 65). Lefebvre gives everyday life a specific meaning in order to conceptualise how capitalism and industrialisation structure life outside of work by imposing certain daily patterns and fomenting certain desires. Through these structures, the working class begins to lose its distinctiveness and incorporates similar desires to the middle classes (*ibid.*, 41).

The state plays a fundamental role in organizing everyday life in the city in this way. It is “actively involved in housing construction, city planning, urbanization” (Lefebvre 1969, 44-46). Everyday

life in the city is addressed as a technocratic problem and is “engulfed by economic factors, by market and currency” (*ibid.*, 16). The bureaucratic structure of the state distances the inhabitants from decision making and involvement in politics. Groups outside the bureaucracy are “reduced to the role of passive members of non-political society” where “they make proposals; they become objects of programs. They cease to be agents and political “subjects,” they have become “subjects” of power” (*ibid.*, 49). “[P]olitical activity proper” becomes something “reserved for politicians and specialized organisms” (*ibid.*, 51). The planning of space and the city plays a fundamental role in the rationalisation of everyday life. Planning implements a vision of the city that is made up of an:

[a]ssortment of neutralized places, each as neutral as possible, but each one assigned to a specific function, from above or in the whirlwind of an entity; these are ghettos, hygienic ghettos, and functional too; there is the ghetto of creativity and hobbies (do-it-yourself, collecting, gardening), the ghetto of happiness and freedom (holiday resorts and holiday camps), the ghetto of speech (small groups and their talk), there is a place for Femininity and one for Youthfulness, one for traffic circulation, one for trade and one for consumption, and there are places for communication (Lefebvre 1984, 185).

Spontaneous interaction is reduced and as a result:

Neighbourhood and district fade and crumble away: the people (the ‘inhabitants’) move about in a space which tends towards a geometric isotopy, full of instructions and signals, where qualitative differences of places and moments no longer matter. Certainly these are inevitable processes of dissolution of ancient forms, but which produce contempt, mental and social misery. There is a poverty of daily life as soon as nothing has replaced the symbols, the appropriations, the styles, the monuments,

the times and rhythms, the different and qualified spaces of the traditional city (Lefebvre 1996, 127).

Lefebvre conceptualises urbanisation as a continuum “going from zero point in urbanization (the non-existence of the city, the complete predominance of agrarian life, agricultural production and the countryside) to full urbanization (the absorption of the countryside by the city and the total predominance of industrial production, including agriculture)” (Lefebvre 1984, 122). The conjuncture at the time of writing is marked by the advent of the industrial city, a “period when the expanding city proliferates, produces far-flung peripheries (suburbs), and invades the countryside” with a double movement of “explosion-implosion, condensation-dispersion” (Lefebvre 1996, 122-123). The industrial city becomes associated with the industrial enterprise. It is “the material device apt to organize production, control the daily life... and the consumption of products” (*ibid.*, 126). Lefebvre notes how in this context “[n]ew constructions are strangely reminiscent of colonial or semi-colonial towns, with their straight roads crisscrossing at right angles and their frequent police patrols” (Lefebvre 1984, 59).

Older aspects of the city are incorporated into this new arrangement and transformed. Areas that maintain an intense urban life such as the Latin Quarter in Paris with its entertainment, promenades and festivities become “a high quality consumption product for foreigners, tourists, people from the outskirts and suburbanities” (Lefebvre 1996, 73). The use value of these different aspects of the city and everyday life is superseded by exchange value. Thus activities and places are to be bought and sold rather than used. Everyday Life in the city becomes something that is commodified and is broken down into specific activities of consumption. Lefebvre argues that “all the conditions come together thus for a perfect domination, for a refined exploitation of people as producers, consumers of products, consumers of space” (*ibid.*, 85). The city becomes less and

less a diverse, contradictory whole and is “regrouped in ghettos (suburbs, foreigners, factories, students)” (Lefebvre 1969, 93).

Despite this, Lefebvre (1996, 126) argues that urban society continues to be “built on the ruins of the city” and thus it contains multiple contradictions. The city is layered, global processes of industrialization and urbanization occur in tension with diverse ways of inhabiting the city (*ibid.*, 126). Urban society, Lefebvre suggests, has a tendency to revive the festival and reappropriate space. Despite rationalisation and planning, urban society still contains simultaneity and encounter. Encounter offers the possibility of a synthesis. Synthesis occurs through the practice of inhabiting the city. Lefebvre suggests that as such the inhabitants of the city:

reconstitute centres, using places to reinstitute even derisory encounters. The use of places, monuments, differences, escape the demands of exchange, of exchange value. As a place of encounters, focus of communication and information, the urban becomes what it always was: place of desire, permanent disequilibrium, seat of the dissolution of normalities and constraints, the moment of play and unpredictable (*ibid.*, 129).

Lefebvre envisages the construction of a new city. He imagines the city as an oeuvre that reinstates its use value (*ibid.*, 149), an ephemeral city perpetually being created by its inhabitants as a work of art (*ibid.*, 173). He reads the events of 1968 as the beginning of the construction of a new city (Lefebvre 1969, 65). Similar to his study of the Commune, he reads these protests as a celebratory reappropriation of urban space. He notes how “Paris changed and was restored — the vistas, the streets, the Boulevard Saint Michel which, rid of automobiles again became a promenade and forum” (*ibid.*, 118), “through the localized or generalized phenomena (strikes, occupations, demonstrations) and through the relations of generations, groups and classes, something new and

different was emerging" (*ibid.*, 120). Practices of *autogestion* sought to dismantle bureaucracy and centralized state management, direct democracy challenged "the old relations between those who [we]re active and those who [we]re passive, between the rulers and the ruled, between decisions and frustrations, between subjects and objects" (*ibid.*, 86).

In *The Explosion*, Lefebvre provides an analysis of the event as an urban phenomena unfolding in several stages. It originated in the Faculty of Letters (and Humanities) of Nanterre spreading through Paris and then the provinces becoming focused in the Latin Quarter and the Sorbonne (*ibid.*, 104). Nanterre was a ghetto designed for students and teachers in the midst of other ghettos made up of "functional buildings that [we]re utterly devoid of character" (*ibid.*, 105). The students who initiated the protests derived "their sense of a marginal existence from the actual social condition" (*ibid.*, 67) that was shaped by the structures of "middle-income housing projects, and new towns and neighbourhoods" (*ibid.*, 98). Lefebvre suggests that a spontaneous interaction between classes emerged. Workers and students met on the streets in isolated areas (*ibid.*, 81-82) and the university became "a "social condenser" and the focus of a whole range of prevalent questions and problems" (*ibid.*, 109). The movement "tried consciously to unite cultural and political revolution, workers and students. It began to elaborate a project of generalized [*autogestion*]" (*ibid.*, 121-122).

### 3. Conceptualising the politics of neighbouring with Lefebvre

Through his political studies, Lefebvre tracks the increased impact of abstract representations on the production of space and everyday life. Lefebvre's distinction between abstract frameworks and grassroots democratic practices helps conceptualise political conflict around the neighbourhood and *el barrio*. Abstract frameworks are mobilised to govern relations of proximity at the same time that urban space provides the possibility to build alternatives through grassroots

democratic practice. Due in part to increased abstraction, the conditions and possibilities of *autogestion* were markedly different during the Commune than during Lefebvre's time. The development of neighbourhood planning between these instances contributed to the abstract frameworks shaping space and governing everyday life. Neighbourhood planning offered abstract models that could be implemented to foment desirable relations — through which the national scale and desirable citizens could be produced. Lefebvre's interpretation of the relationship between abstract state spaces and practices of *autogestion* differs through space and time. For this reason, it is important to recognise the historical specificity of this relationship when employing these concepts in different contexts — particularly considering the fact that more recent ideas shaping neighbourhood design have adopted certain aspects of Lefebvre's thinking. To evaluate the politics of neighbouring in different contexts, to paraphrase Lefebvre on Marx, Lefebvre is necessary but not sufficient.

Over the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, urban planning concepts developed and circulated globally. These provided technocratic knowledge to manage society. Early neighbourhood planning sought to encounter an ideal living arrangement and recuperate local society and primary ties seemingly threatened by processes of modernization and industrialization (Madden 2014, 471). The specific planning concept aimed at constructing neighbourhood space, the neighbourhood unit, established itself as a central feature of urban planning. Whilst popularized by Clarence Perry in 1929, the neighbourhood unit concept emerged out of a social progressive milieu in the USA — Donald Johnson (2002) argues that the “neighbourhood unit” was already used by architect William Drummond in 1912-1913. The proper planning of neighbourhoods, according to Vice-Chairman of the New York Housing Authority Mary Simkhovitch in 1944 could “ensure a stable existence for the coming generation which, while leaving enough freedom to experiment in, [would] reduce the casual haphazardness of existence and provide an ordered life full of the rewards which reason alone can effect in the midst of chaos” (cited in MOMA 1944, 3). By mid-

century the neighbourhood unit concept had spread globally, individual neighbourhoods were being planned in different contexts following specific models. The spread of the neighbourhood unit contributed to the reproduction of similar formations on a worldwide scale.

Urban planning more generally gained importance in tandem with concerns regarding the movement of workers to the city and the creation of slums. It emerged towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century as “part of a concerted effort to design — using rational social scientific theories — an alternative to the chaos of the nineteenth-century city” (Larson 2011, 40). Urban planning set out to provide solutions for these problems by creating structures to foment certain desirable types of interactions and subjects. Much concern revolved around the idea of “the masses” — prevalent in much Western thought of the time. The dominant strand of German sociology in the 1920s suggested that “the mass was a dangerous phenomenon... that emerged in social spheres that were unruly, disorganized, and mentally and materially impoverished”...“it was a residual category that designated social formations lacking organization and inner differentiation” (Jonsson 2013, 56). Ideas were often translated into racial terms, the “working classes and stateless people” of the industrial world” were compared “to the “savages” of the colonial world” (Mbembe 2003, 18). To avoid the dangers of the masses and the radical politics they were prone to, urban planning developed techniques to pacify, control and order space — “colonising” everyday life as Lefebvre suggests<sup>6</sup>. Eyal Weizman (2012, 165) notes how European cities in the nineteenth century were redesigned in order to both “design out” crime and “design out” resistance. He argues that planners, experts and politicians saw a “need to destroy the slum, which is not only infested by crime but also the reason for crime and turn it into some kind of suburban construction that is more conducive to control” (*ibid.*, 166).

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<sup>6</sup> Antonio Gramsci in “Americanism and Fordism”, similar to Lefebvre, identifies how technical knowledge generates particular kinds of spaces in order to produce particular kinds of individuals tailored to the new requirements of work in the industrial city. For Gramsci “[t]he new methods of work are inseparable from a specific mode of living and of thinking and feeling life” (Gramsci 1999, 289) linked to “a process of psychophysical adaptation to specific conditions of work, nutrition, housing, customs, etc” (*ibid.*, 281).

In *Proclamation de la Commune*, Lefebvre depicts the *quartiers* of Paris prior to wholesale planning. In this context, the *quartier* is seen as a space of difference and possibility beyond the centralised state. As a weak point of the state, it is the logical site for the development of practices of *autogestion*. In his later studies, Lefebvre argues that everyday life and the city have since been colonised by abstract conceptions that regiment the routines of life. The increased influence of neighbourhood planning plays a key role in bringing about such changes. Neighbourhood planners explicitly sought to create certain forms of relationships whilst avoiding others. They sought to maintain and promote intimate community relations amidst transformations associated with industrialization and mass migration to the city. Clarence Perry's concept was influenced by the writings of sociologist Charles Cooley, the settlement house movement, the community centre movement and the garden cities movement (Lawhon 2009). The settlement house movement "began as a response to a rapidly growing immigrant population, large-scale industrialization, and the problems of urban slums" (Koerin 2003, 54) at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. By establishing settlement houses in impoverished neighbourhoods, the movement attempted to intervene in these spaces to avoid urban disintegration and restore coherence and order in society. To achieve this the "houses developed a broad array of services to address social ills" as well as offering cultural and recreational activities (*ibid.*, 54). The community centre movement, that Perry was involved in, also sought to provide for the "vast urban wilderness that lacked even the bare elements of social life and had sunk into a state of barbarism" (Mumford 1954, 269). It similarly sought to do so through a "common building and meeting place where the residents could come together for the purposes of play, education or sociability" (*ibid.*). The Garden City movement offered a more holistic solution to better the "well-being and housing of an impoverished urban working class" (Richert and Lapping 1998, 125-126). The planning of Ebenezer Howard, that inspired the movement, envisaged healthier decentralized urban areas



with ample gardens and green spaces to replace the insalubrious living conditions associated with working class areas (*ibid*).

The planning of neighbourhood space was intimately tied to the general concerns of planning a peaceful, productive, submissive society. Jason Brody notes that the development of the neighbourhood unit concept was borne out of Perry's "disillusionment with the community centre movement's inability to transform social conditions of slums... he argued for new public powers of eminent domain to raze slums and assemble plots large enough to develop comprehensively planned neighbourhood units from scratch" (Brody 2013, 343). In accordance with this reasoning, an exhibition held at the Museum of Modern Art (MOMA) New York would claim in 1944, "a good neighbourhood can either be built on vacant land or can replace slum areas in cities" (MOMA 1944, 1). Lewis Mumford (1954, 259-261) adds that the development of the neighbourhood unit emerged out of two interlinked concerns. Firstly, it was conceived as a solution to boost social integration and resolve problems of social impoverishment. Secondly, it developed in tandem with the growth of the suburbs as an attempt to shape society by planning newly constructed spaces.

The implementation of such abstract spaces contributed to the forms of alienation discussed by Lefebvre. In this context, Lefebvre argues that "[n]eighbourhood and district fade and crumble away: the people (the inhabitants) move about in a space which tends towards a geometric isotopy, full of instructions and signals, where qualitative differences of places and moments no longer matter" (Lefebvre 1996, 127). In this quote Lefebvre points to the disappearance of neighbourhood as a space of simultaneity and difference and its supplantation by abstract frameworks. By shaping relations in a particular way, these abstract spaces contributed to the working classes adopting similar ideals to the middle classes. Neighbourhood planning can thus be conceived as a civilizing project promoting particular relations and values — making Lefebvre's

references to the colonisation of everyday life unsurprising. In contrast to the homogenisation imposed by such processes, Lefebvre advocated the implementation of differences and the reappropriation of the streets. As Liette Gilbert and Mustafa Dikeç argue, for Lefebvre “there is a series of rights crucial to fully participating in society. Such rights include the right to information, to express ideas, to culture, to identity in difference (and equality), to [*autogestion*]” (Gilbert and Dikeç 2008, 261). *Autogestion* counters the hierarchical production of space paving the way for alternatives providing alternative modes of political belonging. Lefebvre mentions the *Asociaciones de vecinos* in Spain<sup>7</sup>, discussed in detail later in this thesis, as an example of how the hierarchical production of space may be countered. He notes how the “*comités de vecinos*” were in 1977 “undertaking efforts questioning the organization of society at the same time as that of cities and space” (Lefebvre 2009, 227). His argument continues:

These movements are resurrecting the concept of “use” without reducing it merely to the consumption of space. They emphasize the relations between people (individuals, groups, classes) and space with its different levels: the neighbourhood and the immediate, the urban and its mediations, the region and the nation, and finally, the worldwide [*mondial*]. These movements are experimenting with modes of action at diverse scales, always in the light of the participants’ experience and knowledge. Their current development suggests a possible convergence between struggles regarding work (the workplace) and those concerning all of space, that is to say, everyday life [...]” (*ibid.*, 228).

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<sup>7</sup> Vaz suggest that there is a feedback loop between Lefebvre’s thought and the interventions of the *Asociaciones de Vecinos* in Spain. She seeks to demonstrate how Lefebvre’s ideas provide theoretical tools for the AVs whilst their interventions simultaneously impact on his thinking. For Vaz, the success of Lefebvre’s thought in Spain cannot be understood without noting its resonance with the Spanish political context (Vaz 2012, 84).

Lefebvre's understanding of the politics of neighbouring, distinguishing between state space and the possibility of *autogestion*, is focused on particular moments in time. In order to explore the politics of neighbouring beyond Lefebvre's context, it is necessary to draw on additional sources. Kipfer and Goonewardena highlight a key contextual limitation of Lefebvre's work in this regard. These authors illustrate that whilst Lefebvre conceptualises colonisation as a specific "territorial relation of domination" through which he accounts for the production of fragmented peripheries, "he does not adequately specify the distinction between different varieties of 'colonisation' and their particular forms of determination" (Kipfer and Goonewardena 2013, 106). Lefebvre's engagement with colonisation is scattered and brief. As a result, "[w]hile Lefebvre repeatedly mentions the degree to which 'colonisation' means different things for students, women and immigrant workers, he does this descriptively, without theorising fully why this might be case" (*ibid.*, 106). These authors suggest that Lefebvre was unwilling "to properly explore the specificity of colonisation as a particular form of alienation" (*ibid.*, 106). This lack of attention to the specificity of colonisation is reflected by Lefebvre's limited theorisation of the differential production of subjects in the same space. Lefebvre's lack of attention to the differential production of subjects becomes particularly problematic for understanding the spatio-temporal dimensions of political possibility shaped by the "post-colonial predicament" in the contemporary period. As noted in the previous chapter, in this context the production of differences through space contributes to the emergences of "different, quite fragmented, and even irreconcilable figures of the political subject, the legal persona, and the worker" (Mezzadra and Neilson 2013, 250-251). In order to grasp the politics of neighbouring in this context, explored in detail in Chapters 5 and 6, I employ the work of Samaddar and other alternate theoretical sources that assist me to conceptualise the "post-colonial predicament". Whilst the differential production of subjects is of particular interest in the contemporary period, throughout all the empirical chapters I endeavour to track how political interventions serve to produce differences along classed, gendered and racialized lines.

Whilst early neighbourhood planning sought to order cities challenged by transformations provoked by industrialisation, migration and the proliferation of slums, such wholesale social planning has since become unpopular. Kenny Cupers (2016), in his study of the demise of public housing in Western Europe and North America, traces a shift away from such large scale social planning towards the promotion of private property as a basis on which to achieve the same peace, productivity and submissiveness. Unsurprisingly, David Madden and Peter Marcuse (2016), in their own study, link this demise of public housing explicitly to the shift towards neoliberal policies. During this same period, David Harvey (1989) notes a shift away from managerialism towards entrepreneurialism. Cupers (2016, 166) traces an epistemological shift from “habitat” to “human territoriality”. The notion of habitat, underpinning the neighbourhood unit concept, was structured around a believed causal relationship between human beings and their environment, and thus engineering the correct environment was central to improving society. Human territoriality on the other hand directed attention to the idea that inhabitants are naturally territorial. Urban design should capitalize on this by allowing people to extend “their territory from the private dwellings into the street and beyond” (*ibid.*, 176). This would help avoid the “high crime rates, vandalism and neglect” associated with public housing (*ibid.*, 177).

Cupers suggests that the idea of appropriation drove sociological research and architectural design throughout Europe in the 1960s. This work forwarded the idea that in order “to counter the problems of alienation in modern housing estates... inhabitants needed to be able to personalize their everyday environments”. French sociologists illustrated how housing estates were reappropriated and favourably compared the single-family home to mass housing constructions — in a number of studies for which Lefebvre wrote prologues (*ibid.*, 171). Dutch architect John Habraken made similar observations. He accentuated the importance of the

ownership of space, noting the need for “a personal environment where one can do as one likes; indeed it concerns one of the strongest urges of mankind: the desire for possession” (cited in *ibid.*, 172). The problem with mass housing estates was that that inhabitants could not possess them, vandalism and graffiti being the logical results (*ibid.*, 173). Cupers continues by exploring Oscar Newman’s *Defensible Space: Crime Prevention through Urban Design* that suggests that “the task of the designer was to capitalize on this “natural impulse” (*ibid.*, 176) of human territoriality noting how Newman’s notion of defensible space then served as a justification for the privatization of government owned housing in Great Britain under Thatcher (*ibid.*, 178-179). Instead of strictly structuring the urban landscape to determine everyday rhythms, the self-interested interaction between rational individuals became the key to achieving optimal results and fomenting the production of the right kinds of subjects.

At the same time, urban space was increasingly conceived as a product to be consumed, the use value of space acquiring exchange value — a tendency noted by Lefebvre<sup>8</sup>. Lefebvre’s student Mario Gaviria explores the “neo-colonisation of space” in his studies of the production of tourist spaces in Spain in the 1970s. Gaviria (1977, 745) notes a tendency in Europe and the USA towards the consumption of experiences (or personal time as he calls it). He draws attention to a tendency towards the consumption of time spent in certain environments, particularly peaceful sun filled places. Gaviria studies how charter companies and governments produced spaces of leisure along the Spanish Mediterranean coast. He suggests that particular environments offered experiences that could be marketed as a product. Tourists expected certain things and as a result, as Gaviria bitinglly observes, resorts were not solely comprised of buildings, rather there had to be at least a “few people on the beach, fisherman fulfilling their decorative mission in the old harbor, and indigenous folk who are kind and forthcoming to tourists” (Gaviria 1974, 28)<sup>9</sup>. A similar tendency

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<sup>8</sup> The recently rediscovered *Toward an Architecture of Enjoyment* is particularly interesting in this regard (Lefebvre 2014).

<sup>9</sup> As translated in Stanek 2014.

can be found in particular neighbourhoods as Lefebvre notes in relation to the Latin Quarter. A variety of actors set about producing particular neighbourhoods as a certain type of experience. Touristic neighbourhoods may take on a variety of different forms offering certain experiences. They may be emblematic of a typical national identity, a trendy youthful present, of an idealized past or even an activist history.

The connotations of the term *autogestion* began to change in this context. Giorgi (2008, 36) suggests that the term fell into disuse throughout the 1980s in French. It was abandoned by the trade union *Confédération française démocratique du travail* in 1986, the same year that the journal *Augestions* stopped being published. For Giorgi, social *autogestion* was replaced by the *autogestion* of oneself, this shift coinciding with social atomisation and the appearance of the contemporary liberal democratic hedonist individual (*ibid.*, 36-37). Hélène Desbrousses-Peloille conducted a study showing the mutations of the term *autogestion* in French and its contradictory meanings already evident in 1986. Desbrousses-Peloille (1986, 620) shows the diverse usages of the term. When associated with social movements, it tended to refer to groups and individuals taking charge of their own affairs. However, when associated with business it tended to refer to the self-managing individual, the entrepreneur of one's own work. For Desbrousses-Peloille, these two usages had in common the theme of "the self-production of society". They advocated free movement, flexibility and spontaneity that challenged the rigid structures of bureaucratic society (*ibid.*, 629). Similar to Giorgi, she tracks how the leftist use of the term is gradually abandoned in favour of the self-managing individual (*ibid.*, 620). Going beyond these observations, Klaus Ronneberger suggests that the battle for *autogestion* becomes integrated into the "new spirit of capitalism" (Boltanski and Chiapello 2005). Following Ronneberger, capitalism blunted the battle for

“autonomous subjectivity”... “by offering something new in terms of identity and consumer culture to respond to the wishes and demands of social movements. The neoliberal project, thus, picked up the criticism of the authoritarian welfare state and at the same time turned it against its subjects. In this relationship, a convergence can be detected between alternative leftist and conservative groupings, for critique of the state and of bureaucracy was one of the decisive ideological discourses that paved the way for capitalist restructuring (Ronneberger 2009, 111).

These developments complicate the politics of neighbouring described by Lefebvre. Lefebvre’s thinking targeted the bureaucratic state identifying *autogestion* as a tool to radically transform society. Brenner argues that while Lefebvre employs the term neoliberalism on occasions in his later work, he does this in reference to a specific strand of thinking amongst the French right and does not address broader economic restructuring and the epistemological shift sketched above in any detail. Lefebvre’s focus on a historically specific state form thus constitutes a “contextual limitation” of his theoretical framework (Brenner 2008, 242) that needs to be taken into account when considering different conflicts. As the meaning of the term *autogestion* changes, e.g. as anti-heirarchical impulses are appropriated by consumer culture and the use value of space gains exchange value, the relationship between state space and *autogestion* becomes ambiguous.

According to Brenner such complexities are not entirely lost on Lefebvre however. He suggests that Lefebvre noted the use of the term *autogestion* by a wide range of actors in France in the 1970s, including both “anti-statist and statist political projects, anti-productivist and productivist visions of modernization, and radical-grassroots and traditional liberal forms of political participations” (*ibid.*, 235). This led to “a great outburst of confusion” (Lefebvre 1976, 40; cited in *ibid.*, 235). In this context, Lefebvre argued that talk of decentralisation “too frequently amounted to no more than a “simulacrum” of democratization” (Brenner 2008, 236). In Spain, there was a

similar proliferation of the term *autogestión*. The term appeared in the language of diverse political groups from the CNT to the Carlistas<sup>10</sup>. A piece from *Askatasuna Revista Libertaria de Euzkadi* published in a CNT publication in 1976 suggested that Christian Democrats, Socialists, Nationalists and Communists employed the term in different contexts. They argued that “*autogestión* is a word that is so overused that it implies everything except what it really is” (*Askatasuna Revista Libertaria de Euzkadi* 1976, 8) and that many employed it “as an illusion to cheat us” (*ibid.*, 9). Lefebvre maintained the value of *autogestion* as a political project despite the confusion. However, he suggested that it continually needed to be rethought and recreated. It was “not a magical formula, a system, a model, or a panacea; it [was] not a purely technical or rational operation; it [would] not solve all the workers’ problems... and it [was] in constant danger of degenerating or being assimilated into considerably less radical projects of “co-management” (*co-gestion*)” (*ibid.*, 240).

In the remaining chapters, I track different constellations of the politics of neighbouring at specific moments of time in *el barrio* in Madrid. Particular political constellations and the modes of political belonging constituted by interventions, share similarities with Lefebvre’s accounts but also important differences. I read particular constellations in relation to the specific conditions in which they emerge and particularly the dynamic relationship between migration, relations of proximity and planning outlined in the previous chapter. In my investigation, I follow the two simultaneous directions of spatial history suggested by Steiner. On the one hand, *el barrio* becomes conceived as a space to be intervened on politically in relation to migration and occupation of space. On the other hand, these conceptions and interventions give *el barrio* form and shape migration. Migration to the city stimulates cultural, social and political changes. At the same time, particular conceptions and technologies develop and political contests emerge around these changes. Lefebvre’s work provides a framework to conceptualise different political

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<sup>10</sup> The Carlistas are a traditionalist Monarchist party.



interventions and contests in this space. Specific practices contribute to the emergence of particular modes of political belonging grounded in *el barrio*. As Lefebvre illustrates in his study of the Commune, these are tied to particular temporal imaginaries, forms of occupying space and organizational structures. Lefebvre differentiates between technocratic, hierarchal forms of management and grassroots democratic forms emerging from the actual inhabitancy of space. *El barrio* is not the product of any of these individual interventions but rather is a result of the complex negotiations between them and the historical complexities of the moment.

In the next four chapters, I explore specific contest in *el barrio*. In Chapters 3 and 4, I explore earlier conflicts connected to the creation of *barrios* on the outskirts of the city from the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century up until the 1970s — through the continual arrival of migrants. I discuss how grassroots democratic practices employed by the Anarchists and the *Asociaciones de vecinos* contest and help to give form to these spaces. Both the Anarchists and the *Asociaciones de vecinos* impact on the *barrios* imbuing them with a sense of political belonging. At the same time, the Spanish state attempts to address the perceived problem of the impoverished working class *barrios*. The state continually develops plans to order the city in an attempt to create environments that reduce conflict and create desirable citizens. As a result, the government conceptualises *el barrio* as a site on which to intervene. Strategies are developed by both the movements and government of the time. These interventions each have their own temporal assumptions regarding the future of precarious settlements in the city; envisaging their end with the arrival of an Anarchist or Francoist utopia or their transformation through the replication of ideal models of European modernity.

In Chapters 5 and 6, I explore battles in *el barrio* in the period following the Global Financial Crisis. Again a large influx of migrants, this time many from foreign countries, transforms and challenges constituted *barrios*. Strategies to govern *barrios* produce multiple environments with an

assortment of functions. The state makes different interventions depending on the spaces and subjects targeted. At the same time, contemporary social movements develop their own strategies. These tend not to pursue the creation of a common identity but rather seek to build spaces of encounter and interaction. Here the Spanish concept *autogestión* is readily employed, nevertheless its proliferation, and the relationship between practices of *autogestión* and state interventions, leads to ambiguity. The temporal imaginary of movements in this context is markedly different from earlier movements. The period of transit and settlement of migrants in *el barrio* is seemingly uncertain and the neighbourly relation is something that is permanently under construction.

### 3. Neighbourly relations as a political problem

In this chapter, I argue that in the lead up to the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) *el barrio* gained definition as a political problem. During this period, a large number of migrants arrived in the city. *Barrios* inhabited by working class migrants became perceived by elites as uncivilized, insalubrious and overrun by moral decay. Grassroots political movements, particularly the Anarchist *Confederación Nacional del Trabajo* (CNT), built on the conditions and relations of proximity in working class *barrios* to expand their political influence. The CNT's interventions contributed to building grassroots modes of political belonging grounded in such spaces that were in conflict with dominant frameworks. Due to spatial differentialisation and increased conflict, academics, experts and politicians envisaged ways of pacifying working class *barrios*. The urban planning discipline expanded its influence offering solutions for the city in transformation. Planners conceived frameworks to produce desirable relations and consequently citizens. In this chapter, I explore developments in both Madrid and Barcelona. Intense grassroots mobilizations in Barcelona contributed to the perception of disorder associated with impoverished spaces. In Barcelona, the impact of the CNT and subversive modes of political belonging were particularly pronounced and influential.

In this chapter, I reconstruct the dynamic relationship between migration, relations of proximity and planning to develop an account of the politics of neighbouring during this period. Following Lefebvre's lead, I employ space as a tool of analysis to account for how particular modes of political belonging become possible. As Lefebvre does in his study of the Paris Commune, I outline both the conditions making particular modes of political belonging possible and the emerging grassroots interventions that help to bring them into existence. Particularly intense relations of proximity in spaces constituted by migrants provide the basis for emerging modes of political

belonging fomented by grassroots interventions. Attention to the panic produced by impoverished peripheral *barrios* allows me to connect the constitution of these *barrios* to the development of abstract frameworks of government that were aimed at controlling them. The definition of *el barrio* as a political problem informs future state interventions.

The intensification of interest in planning solutions in Spain resonates with global developments. It is during this same period that the neighbourhood unit concept is formulated in the USA, as a solution to the malaise in industrial cities caused by mass migration and working class slums, and Lefebvre notes the increased abstraction of everyday life. Spanish planners drew on an increasingly global interchange of planning knowledge. However, concrete steps to reshape the city were tentative and despite plans to transform the city, the implementation of such plans was limited. Abstract frameworks of government, whilst being elaborated, were deficient in defining working class *barrios*. Similarly, whilst the neighbourhood unit was gaining influence globally as a theoretical concept during this period, the implementation of neighbourhood plans was less consistent. Authors often refer to Radburn, New Jersey, planned by Clarence Stein, Henry Wright and Marjorie Sewell Cautley, conceived in 1928 and mainly built over the next three years, as the embodiment of the neighbourhood unit concept (Mumford 1954, 262). However, the wholesale development of similar plans faced resistance on numerous fronts: from politicians, investors and residents. Brody (2013, 349) suggests that the early development of neighbourhood units in the USA was hindered by policies that were more focused on homebuilders and general contractors than municipal planning per se.

## 1. The constitution of peripheral working class *barrios*

In this section, I sketch how peripheral working class *barrios* were constituted in Madrid in the lead up to the Spanish Civil War and link these to similar developments in Barcelona. During this

period of rapid transformation, a large number of migrants arrived in these cities — many of them fleeing impoverished conditions in the countryside. The arrival of migrants led to the proliferation of informal settlements on the outskirts of the city. Over time, these settlements established themselves as autonomous entities disrupting the established structure of the city. Luis Enrique Otero Carvajal (2013) defines the period between 1900 and 1936 in Madrid as the “irruption of modernity” whilst José Luis Oyón (2007, 124) suggests that during this period, following the First World War, Barcelona acquired a truly industrial structure. The population and area of Madrid expanded exponentially as it developed its position as the bureaucratic, administrative and business centre of a modernising state<sup>1</sup>. The expansion of the role of the state and the finance sector provoked an increased demand for infrastructure that led to a sustained boom in the construction industry. As a result, the construction sector — building the infrastructure for a state in transformation — became a central aspect of Madrid’s economy (Otero Carvajal 2013, 3). In this context, many newly arrived migrants found work as *jornaleros* or day-labourers — generally employed on construction sites — and as domestic servants — employed in the houses of the expanding middle classes (*ibid.*, 3). Similarly, in Barcelona, most unskilled labourers were recently arrived migrants (Oyón 2007, 130). Whilst Madrid’s population at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was around 500,000, by 1930 it had reached nearly one million (Juliá Díaz 1984, 59). Outlying satellite towns like Chamartin, Carabanchel and Vallecas also grew rapidly adding another 200,000 to the population of the region (*ibid.*, 60-61). Susan Larson (2011, 36-37) notes that by 1930 only 37 percent of the city’s residents had been born there. In Barcelona, three quarters of the heads of households in working class *barrios* were born outside of the city (Oyón 2007, 130)

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<sup>1</sup> Historically, Madrid’s growth has been tied to its role as capital. It was a relatively small and inconsequential settlement until it became home to the Spanish *corte*, the residence of the king, and effectively Spanish capital in 1561. María Carbajo Isla (1985, 67) estimates that in 1561 there were less than 20,000 inhabitants in Madrid. From this moment onwards it would grow and continuously be transformed by the arrival of migrants (the population had already risen to 100,000 by the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century).

The influx of migrants saw Madrid reconfigured by peripheral *barrios* with large areas of *chabolas*, where many of the new arrivals lived in marginal conditions (Juliá Díaz 1984, 61-62). Concentrations of *chabolas* sprang up — particularly in Tetuán and along the roads connecting Carabanchel, Vallecas and Canijellas to Madrid — offering “housing of very poor quality, without electricity, guttering and running water, in all directions: North, South, East and West. There were no schools and church congregations either” (Montero Díaz and Cervera Gil 2009, 18). Charlotte Vorms notes that between 1860 and 1930 the construction of the informal and spontaneously developing outskirts was more dynamic and produced more housing than the officially planned extension of the city. She illustrates how “the houses that for decades were considered provisional and not really part of the city, played a fundamental role in the absorption of demographic growth and the design and morphology of the city” (Vorms 2003, 3). In Barcelona, Oyón (2004, 3) notes that by 1936 the city was surrounded by a second periphery of working class migrants. Vorms (2013a) argues that the spontaneous growth of the outskirts was inseparable from the planned growth, and its inadequacies, of Madrid.

Uprooted families maintained webs of solidarity that contributed to intense social relationships in these liminal spaces. This was partially due to the insertion of large groups from particular towns and extended families in certain communities. Fernando Vicente Albarrán (2014, 7) provides insight into the role of family ties in the formation of *barrios* in the southern extension of Madrid. He shows that 90 percent of households were made up of families or people with family ties. Family ties served as a strategy of survival. A big extended family could convert a street into a mirror image of their town of origin, where everyone knew each other (*ibid.*, 11). Oyón (2007, 139) notes that, in the peripheral *barrios* of Barcelona, migrants rapidly recreated communities. The poor quality of housing, lack of amenities and entertainment were supplemented by primary sociability: the street, family connections, neighbours and friends. Beyond such connections circumstances led to particularly intense sociability. Shared kitchens, bathrooms and public wells

and the balconies of the *corralas* [interior courtyards typical in Madrid] provided spaces of interaction (Montero Díaz and Cervera Gil 2009, 18-19).

The existence of peripheral *barrios* contradicted and challenged the modern metropolises that were under construction. Electricity “transform[ed] the appearance of the city... [and] altered the way in which spaces were transversed”. Public transport altered the “centrifugal and centripetal effect on the growth and functional zoning of the city, encouraging relocation out to the suburbs” (Parsons 2003, 78). While at the same time, whole sections of the city continued without electricity and the poor travelled by foot (*ibid.*). The literature suggests that prior to these transformations, both Madrid and Barcelona, had maintained a degree of equilibrium through the coexistence of different social classes in the same urban space. As Madrid expanded, it became divided into three main zones. The centre composed of the old city and the new Gran Vía with its bank buildings, limited companies (Juliá Díaz 1984, 124), hotels and department stores (*ibid.*, 43). The rational grids of the *ensanche* (city extension) and what Juliá Díaz describes as the “irrational chaos of the *extrarradio* (outskirts)” where “anyone could build their house or raise their shack wherever they liked, without infringing any type of norm” (*ibid.*, 41-42).

Oyón (2008, 126) notes a process of spatial differentialisation between segments of the working class in Barcelona. He argues that the working class was spread across three main areas in the city. Certain central *barrios* had undergone a process of proletarianization and had received a large number of migrants from outside the city, whilst outside the city centre the working classes were predominantly split between the *suburbios populares* (working class suburbs) and the “second periphery”. The *suburbios populares*, whilst having large numbers of unskilled workers and migrants, housed a mix of social classes including skilled workers. A higher percentage of Catalan workers were found in these spaces. The second periphery in contrast was dominated by unskilled migrant workers (*ibid.*, 127). In 1936, whilst the membership of the CNT and the socialist *Unión*

*General de Trabajadores* (UGT) were fairly similar in the central working class *barrios* and the *suburbios populares*, in the second periphery, affiliation to the CNT almost doubled that of the UGT (*ibid.*, 390).

## 2. The CNT and political belonging in peripheral *barrios*

Migrants arriving in the major cities were largely left to their own devices by the state. In this section, I explore modes of political belonging emerging from relations of proximity and grassroots practices in working class *barrios*. Chris Ealham (2010, 23) has convincingly argued that working class *barrios* in Barcelona provided a framework for modes of belonging for working class inhabitants and recently arrived migrants. He suggests that *el barrio* provided a series of cultural frames and collective identities through which Spanish workers made sense of the urban world. Its streets: “were perceived as an extension of the home and were to be used as their occupants desired, whether for leisure, for solidarity or for protests” (*ibid.*, 30-31). The CNT became particularly influential in peripheral *barrios* deepening spatial differentiation in the city and contributing to alternative modes of belonging. Through constant contact with inhabitants through the spaces of everyday life and through numerous interventions transforming space — including the establishment of *Ateneos Libertarios* or Anarchist Social Centres — the CNT was able to garner widespread support. Whilst the majority of inhabitants did not participate actively in the CNT, the CNT’s actions were seen to be aligned with the interests of the inhabitants of these spaces. This allowed them to mobilise the people at specific moments in time. Whilst migrants were active participants as both activists and members in the CNT, the participation of women was conditioned by entrenched gender roles and social structures.

Anarcho-syndicalism had a profound impact on the Spanish political landscape at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, firstly in rural Andalusia and later in urban areas. The impact of Anarchist ideas



in Spain, compared with other European countries, has received much academic attention. Most of the early interpretations based the success on Spain's underdevelopment (e.g., Brenan 1950; Borkenau 1986). More nuanced accounts later illustrated how Anarchism's success was grounded in its organizational flexibility and adaptability (Mintz 1977). Authors have more recently illustrated how the CNT built on relations of proximity in working class *barrios*, both in Madrid (Julía Díaz 1984) and Barcelona (Ealham 2010; Oyón 2008). These studies are particularly useful to track how the interventions of the CNT contributed to the constitution of particular modes of political belonging grounded in working class *barrios* and added to the unfolding class conflict culminating in the Spanish Civil War. Spanish Anarchists believed that workers had a right to manage their own affairs directly without mediation from the state (Álvarez Junco 1991, 321). Political action was taken directly in order to undermine and transform the social, political and economic order in a way that could not be achieved through parliament. Forms of direct action ranged from violent means such as sabotage and terrorism through to strikes, collective contracts, agitation and propaganda (*ibid.*, 408-409) to cultural and social initiatives. Political intervention grounded in immediate lived space was coherent with Anarchism's philosophy of direct action. Álvarez Junco suggests that anarchists saw the ideal space for participation as being the "autonomous municipality" or commune (*ibid.*, 324). It thus made sense to intervene in *el barrio*.

The CNT built on and fomented the intense relations of proximity in peripheral spaces. Anna Monjo (1998, 143) has illustrated how the CNT's effectiveness in mobilising working class inhabitants was not based on mass participation, but rather on its ability to build on relations of proximity. It became entrenched in the spaces of everyday life mobilising the inhabitants at specific moments. Whilst the CNT established grassroots *Comités de Barriada* [Neighbourhood Committees] with centres in the main working class *barrios* (Ealham 2010, 40), only militants with knowledge of Anarchist principles were involved in its ideological, tactical and strategical discussions. The participation of the majority of members and sympathizers was limited to

financial contributions and partaking in mobilisations. No formal engagement was needed for this kind of participation as contributions were taken in the workplace, on the street or in *el barrio* (Monjo 1998, 144). Monjo outlines how militants maintained close relationships with the members and sympathisers of the CNT both in the workplace and in *el barrio*. It was these relations of proximity that allowed them to spread information and acquire firsthand knowledge of their concerns (*ibid.*, 152). Personal relationships between members, sympathizers and militants meant that contact “was lived directly without intermediaries” (*ibid.*, 153). Ealham argues that as a result the CNT infiltrated “workplaces and neighbourhoods like never before, allowing it to become enmeshed with a web of communal, kinship and reciprocal networks” (Ealham 2010, 41).

Oyón (2008, 395) argues that affiliates and militants of the CNT in Barcelona were predominantly unskilled workers and recent migrants. He suggests that a large number of CNT militants came from migrant dominated peripheral *barrios* (Oyón 2004, 6-7). He compares a sample of militants from both the CNT and the UGT noting that 64.9 percent of those from the CNT were not Catalan, 20.2 percent were illiterate and 7 percent were white collar workers. This is in contrast to 41.2 percent of UGT militants who were not Catalan, 3.9 percent who were illiterate and 25.6 percent who were white collar workers (Oyón 2008, 396). A number of factors conditioned participation in the CNT. As noted above, in order to play an active role in discussions, knowledge of Anarchists ideals was necessary. Monjo argues that literacy defined the possibilities of acquiring the necessary knowledge to do this. This proved an inhibition, due to high levels of illiteracy concentrated in particular areas of the city — much higher amongst women (8% of the overall population in Madrid and 15% of the population in Barcelona were illiterate in the 1930s) (Monjo 1998, 145-146). Additionally, a high level of interest and commitment was needed to attend talks and conferences where knowledge could be acquired. As a result, Monjo suggests that the majority of members and grassroots militants did not regularly attend conferences, read anarchist

papers or even have radios in their houses to inform them of unfolding political events (*ibid.*, 147). More intense participation and commitment was not considered necessary by the CNT, as workers were seen to have the same opportunities to participate in activities and it was up to the individual to decide whether to participate or not (*ibid.*, 145). This assumption of equal opportunity proved particularly problematic with regards to the participation of women. Monjo notes that the majority of militants were men whilst women faced numerous barriers (*ibid.*, 155). Gloria Espigado Tocino (2002, 42-43) argues that traditional gender roles were both challenged and naturalised by Spanish anarchists. She suggests that activists often reproduced patriarchal norms in their daily life. Similarly, Ealham notes that despite anarcho-feminist Federica Montseny becoming Spain's first female cabinet minister, male attitudes were slow to change, "[m]any of the daily impediments to the full participation and political life continued... cafes and bars remained male spaces; even by day women faced sexual harassment on the streets and on public transport" (Ealham 2010, 188-189). Nevertheless, Monjo (1998, 155-156) argues that women made influential contributions to the anarchist cause through other channels, spreading ideas and creating opinion through the spaces of everyday life, in domestic and family work and through interactions with other women.

The CNT was able to mobilise support due to its positive image as defender of the working class garnered through direct action and diverse interventions in working class *barrios* fomenting class solidarity and mutual aid (Monjo 1998, 148-149). The CNT actively created its own spaces in *el barrio*. Particularly relevant in this regard were the *Ateneos Libertarios*. Such centres continued a tradition of similar cultural institutions catering for working class populations. *Ateneos Casinos Obreros* [Worker's Social Centers] first began to appear in the 1880s providing basic lessons and leisure activities for workers. The first centres linked to class struggle began to appear at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, whilst the explicitly anarchist *Ateneos Libertarios* proliferated during the Republic (1931-1936) (Bernalte Vega 1991, 87-89) and were able to consolidate and expand

their influence during the Civil War due to the power vacuum left in liminal barrios (*ibid.*, 312). During the Republican period there were approximately twenty *Ateneos Libertarios* in Madrid each emerging through the initiative of activists in their own *barrios* and being self-financed and self-run (*ibid.*, 108-109). *Ateneos* did not form part of a master plan but rather emerged spontaneously accepting only some common guidelines (*ibid.*, 576). Bernalte Vega suggests that the *Ateneos* were “intimately connected to the social environment in which they installed themselves (and this is why these are designated to different *barriadas*<sup>2</sup> in Madrid)” (*ibid.*, 80).

On the one hand, *Ateneos* sought to have a direct revolutionary impact on society developing a parallel proletarian culture (*ibid.*, 9). Alternatively, they had a variety of cultural functions providing education for children and adults, libraries, book exchanges, conferences as well as theatre and art groups (*ibid.*, 90). Monjo notes (1998, 146) that beyond promulgating libertarian ideas, the *Ateneos* attempted to spread literacy and give practical knowledge regarding health, sexuality, food as well as scientific knowledge about the world. Bernalte Vega (1991, 49) suggests that *Ateneos* bridged the gap left by the state’s inability to provide necessary resources and education in peripheral spaces. Additionally, she notes that they provided a meeting place for militants outside of work (*ibid.*, 111). Oyón (2004, 5) argues that, in recently formed peripheral *barrios*, the *Ateneos* provided one of the only secondary sources of sociability. For this reason Monjo (1998, 152) suggests that even if workers did not regularly attend the *Ateneos*, life in *el barrio* revolved around them.

Peripheral working class *barrios* provided a space through which recently arrived migrants negotiated their place in the city. The grassroots interventions of the CNT contributed to modes of belonging imbuing peripheral *barrios* with a sense of class-consciousness. The CNT’s success in infiltrating peripheral *barrios* was in part due its ability to build on the intense relations of

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<sup>2</sup> The term *barriada* is used here to designate peripheral working class *barrios*.

proximity in these spaces. It created physical infrastructure such as the *Ateneos* that served as reference points for life in *el barrio* and offered services not provided by the state. The success of the CNT in these liminal spaces contributed to preoccupation amongst elites regarding the ungovernability of working class *barrios* and augmented contests and conflicts in urban space during and in the lead up to the Spanish Civil War.

### 3. Peripheral working class *barrios* and the unfolding conflict

Juliá Díaz (1984, 61) suggests that during this period, there was a process of differentiation between the ecologies of the different social classes in Madrid. For Juliá Díaz, migration and changing forms of political action provoked spatial differentiation and an emerging class-consciousness in peripheral *barrios*. The infiltration of working class political movements such as the CNT was considered a key contributing factor in the differentiation of space. Juliá Díaz, Vicente Albarrán (2014) and Montero Díaz and Cervera Gil (2009, 14-15) all attribute increased conflict in the city during the 1930s to this differentiation of space. Oyón (2007, 134) notes how the emergence of peripheral *barrios* in Barcelona led to the fragmentation of the working class, distancing the reality of Catalan workers from the migrant dominated periphery. Peripheral *barrios* in both cities were seen to fuel the unfolding political conflict leading up to the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War. Conflict emerging in and from peripheral *barrios* increased the urgency to develop “solutions” for them.

Successive governments developed particular strategies in an attempt to curb conflict. Political leaders sought ways of increasing identification with the state and controlling political unrest. In 1923 Miguel Primo de Rivera came to power after a coup d'état. The official head of state, King Alfonso XIII, later legitimated the dictatorship created. Primo de Rivera's dictatorship was tasked with maintaining order and stability. The rigidity of the previous parliamentary monarchy had

made it incapable of adapting to the changes that society was undergoing, particularly the appearance of working class political movements (Villacañas Berlanga 2014, 490). The parliament had not incorporated working class parties; it remained a regime of elites and was unable to canalize the emerging masses into the institutions (*ibid.*).

The Primo de Rivera dictatorship sought to pacify the unruly masses in two key ways: firstly, by resolving economic problems and secondly by fomenting identification with the state. Abandoning democratic forms of representation, the dictatorship drew on the experience of the fascist regime in Italy — it was believed that parliamentary regimes were incapable of resolving economic problems underpinning problems of order (*ibid.*, 502). The dictatorship sought to foment national pride amongst the masses promising the rebirth of the Spanish nation and a grandiose future to match its imperial past (Quiroga Fernández de Soto 2009, 253). The Spanish liberals' admiration of the French and British systems was considered anti-Spanish and a threat to the essence of the Spanish nation. The dictatorship organised mobilisations against the critics of the dictatorship who were labelled as “foreigners jealous of the “resurrection of Spain” (*ibid.*). Events such as the *Fiesta de la Raza* (Festival of the Race) were organised in order to glorify the imperial history of Spain. The *Fiesta de la Raza* attempted to mobilize the masses in the streets (*ibid.*, 251-252).

The Unión Patriótica (UP – Patriotic Union) was created as the official party of the dictatorship. According to Alejandro Quiroga Fernández de Soto, the creation of the UP had two main objectives; on the one hand, to canalize the movement of the masses by integrating them into a process of antidemocratic mobilization, and on the other hand, to indoctrinate them with nationalistic values (*ibid.*, 239-240). The UP attempted to infiltrate society by incorporating and unifying social Catholic movements in its structures, creating publicity and propaganda commissions, inviting citizens to join and constitute municipal and provincial chapters that could install the movement in “each and every *barrio*” (*ibid.*, 242-244). Cultural centres were opened in

order to spread propaganda and undermine the attraction of their Socialist and Anarchist equivalents — such as the *Ateneos*. These embarked on pedagogical missions, organising “patriotic conferences” as well as “acts of patriotic affirmation” consisting of conferences, followed by a banquet, speeches and parties with traditional dancing in an effort to create a festive atmosphere to attract the working class (*ibid.*, 245-246). A glorified history of Spanish imperialism was promoted by education centres and public libraries; teachers were instructed to spend a number of hours a week explaining the glorious history of Hispanic culture (*ibid.*, 251-252).

Due to the financial crisis, increased social tension and the loss of support from the King and the military, in 1930, Primo de Rivera was forced to resign. Elections were held in 1931 and Republican forces were victorious; the King fled. An initial alliance was formed between progressive middle class forces and peaceful working class parties. Together, they set out to stabilise society through rational modernization (Villacañas Berlanga 2014, 517). They attempted to ease political tension by cultivating positive identification with democratic institutions and relying on the faith of the population in the state’s ability to provide fair management (Quiroga Fernández de Soto 2009, 264-266). Technical knowhow and better management were the basis of creating harmony. Republican leaders expected citizens to have faith in official process and the legal system, as this would lead to a harmonious society “with all citizens contributing to the well-being of the social organism; and the modernist vision of the city as a democratised, non-hierarchical space, equally accessible to all citizens” (Ealham 2010, 63). Ealham argues that the first Republican government “naively assumed that rank and privilege would not affect the legal process, believing the chaotic and disorderly market forces could be reorganised through the endeavours of enlightened public agencies” (*ibid.*, 63). The first Republican government was put under pressure simultaneously by conservative forces and by leftist political movements that were unwilling to wait for the government to work out issues through official processes (Villacañas Berlanga 2014, 519). The

patience of the working classes was tested by economic woes. The construction boom ground to a halt at the beginning of the 1930s and an employment crisis ensued. The crisis had a devastating effect on already precarious peripheral *barrios*. Juliá Díaz argues, that when the construction boom ended, “works [we]re paralysed, the unemployed multipl[ied]” and social conflict was aggravated (Juliá Díaz 1998, 67). The unemployed had little or no support and often had to provide for whole families (Juliá Díaz 1984, 100). In peripheral *barrios*, where the most severe effects were felt, consciousness of a common condition intensified tensions. Juliá Díaz argues that political action emerging from peripheral *barrios* increased as a result, painting a picture of inhabitants of working class *barrios* from the North and the South of the city, “marching towards the city centre” (*ibid.*, 58-59) during protests.

Due to the limited capacity of the Republican government to make wholesale changes, and as it faced increased social conflict, special policing measures were instituted to intervene in working class *barrios*. In the case of Barcelona, Ealham suggests that since the “debt-ridden local authorities” were unable “to oversee the urbanisation and sanitisation of the peripheral barris<sup>3</sup>” (Ealham 2010, 80) and “[a]s the gulf between republican institutions and the unemployed grew, the authorities displayed increasing paranoia on the issue of public order” (*ibid.*, 70). The *Ley de la Defensa de la República* (The Law of the Defence of the Republic) was implemented in 1931 giving exceptional powers to defend the progressive constitution (Villacañas Berlanga 2014, 519). *La Ley de Defensa de la República* was directed at subversive practices and “established new categories of deviancy” (Ealham 2010, 78). Secret meetings were treated as illegal and strikes were prohibited when they “did not give eight days notice to the authorities or [if they] appeared to have ‘political’ motives” (*ibid.*). In 1933, the *Ley de Orden Público* was implemented allowing “curfews to be imposed on specific neighbourhoods” and “the suppression of the constitution in

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<sup>3</sup> *Barri* is *barrio* in Catalan



time of social unrest and its replacement by martial law and the transfer of civil power to the army high command until 'order' had been re-established" (*ibid.*, 78).

A range of specific security measures were taken to maintain order in the *barrios*. Ealham notes the creation of the *guardia de asalto* (assault guards), a motorised rapid response force (*ibid.*, 72). The *guardia de asalto* were mobilised in an attempt to quell social conflict. Ealham outlines how in their interventions "[d]etention without trial was frequently combined with the police 'swoop' (*ratzia*), a lightning raid by the security forces, sometimes backed by army units, into the *barris* which would be searched thoroughly from house to house" (*ibid.*, 77). Ealham suggests that the use of the *guardia de asalto* led to an increased militarisation of urban space (*ibid.*, 99). Describing interventions during a rent strike, he suggests that such operations "resembled those of foreign army of occupation in hostile territory, entire neighbourhoods were invaded by security forces, which searched houses and workers centers" (*ibid.*, 118).

Policing measures also sought to limit migration that was blamed for provoking a swathe of problems including unemployment. Ealham notes how the *Ley de Vago y Maleantes* (Vagrancy Act - 1933) "was used as an anti-nomadic device to impose a fixed and repressive spatial ordering on migrant and seasonal workers, who were interned in camps where they were subjected to capitalist time-space discipline" (*ibid.*, 79). In Barcelona, Esquerra Republicana (ERC) emphasised the link between unemployment and migration, attributing it to the "excessive supply of labour... and advocated the repatriation of non-Catalan migrants" (*ibid.*, 67). They attempted to reduce unemployment through the voluntary and then forced repatriation of migrants and whilst "the ERC lacked the authority to regulate the access of Spanish citizens to Catalonia, it was determined to change Barcelona's status as an 'open city' and halt the migrant 'invasion'" (*ibid.*). Ealham also suggests, "[t]he ERC was obsessed with erecting a *cordon sanitaire* of migration controls, which would be enforced by new migration police based at Barcelona's railway stations and port and

along the main road entrances to the city. The ERC also favoured a “passport” system, requiring migrants to provide evidence of a job offer or proof of saving” (*ibid.*, 68).

The precarious situation of the progressive Republican government, challenged on the one hand by the extra-parliamentary Anarchist movement, simultaneously faced strong resistance on the right from the *Confederación Española de Derechas Autónomas* (CEDA – Confederation of the Autonomous Right). The CEDA was a coalition of anti-Republican parties that adhered to the rules of the Republic with the aim of taking it down from within. The values that formed its basis were “religion, homeland, order, family and property” (Villacañas Berlanga 2014, 529-530). The CEDA formed part of a coalition government after elections in 1933 and effectively halted many of the progressive reforms forwarded by the first Republican government (*ibid.*, 532). A month after CEDA lost the next elections in 1936 to the Popular Front, a coalition made up of left-wing forces, right wing forces attempted a coup d’état leading to the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War (*ibid.*, 534).

During the Civil War, the autonomous character and conflictual nature of peripheral *barrios* was accentuated. Ealham (2010, 174-178) notes how Anarchists transformed certain *barrios* in Barcelona during the conflict. He argues that in this context *barrios* were defended from intrusion, barricades being erected. Neighbourhood revolutionary committees filled the vacuum left by the state (*ibid.*, 174) and the “overwhelming majority of the committees practiced a radical form of neighbourhood democracy that drew on Barcelona’s working-class culture, with its emphasis on community self-reliance” (*ibid.*, 178). In this context, *Ateneos* began to give less importance to cultural initiatives and instead became the focal point of the experimentation of Libertarian Communism. In Madrid, they began to organise the socio-economic activity of *barrios* taking control of defence, detecting opposition, expropriating property and goods and providing provisions (Bernalte Vega 1991, 363). In Barcelona, violent armed groups “pursued the goal of

community purity, of a neighbourhood purged of reactionaries and the construction of a revolutionary city through the violent eradication of the social networks that perpetuated the old city” (Ealham 2010, 175).

#### 4. Neighbourly relations as a political problem

Effectively, a grid surrounded by chaos; middle class urban reason wrapped in its complete negation: houses rose here and there, following no urban plan whatsoever, following rural guidelines in an urban setting (Juliá Díaz 1984, 56).

Most experts, politicians and planners saw peripheral *barrios* as chaotic, unruly and dangerous. Social ills and radical political ideas were connected to nefarious environments. In the above quote, Juliá Díaz juxtaposes the chaotic emergent city with the abstract grid of the planned extension of the city. He writes from the position of reason, seeking to make sense of how the Republican government was overcome by chaos in its attempts to achieve harmony in the early 1930s. The chaos of the emerging settlements and the government’s inability to satisfy the working class’s needs, contributed to the outbreak of the Civil War in Juliá Díaz’s interpretation. The government failed, for a variety of reasons, to manage these spaces. Independent of the veracity of Juliá Díaz’s description it creates an image of how these sites were conceived as centers of instability and instigators of social conflict. This imaginary fed the preoccupation amongst elites regarding the ungovernability of such spaces, which lead to the conceptualisation of peripheral *barrios* as spaces in which to intervene, both through urban planning and policing measures, in order to tackle social conflict. Through interventions, governing relations of proximity these spaces could be pacified.

Social conflict and disorder was commonly interpreted as reflecting a retarded process of modernization. A long-standing narrative attributed historical peculiarities such as the success of

Anarchism to Spain's "difference" from the rest of Western Europe. This narrative has often been grounded in an orientalist reading of Spanish culture that — for historical or cultural reasons — is seen to lack Western order and reason. Spain is interpreted as a land plagued by informality and incapable of exorcizing its internal disorder. Thus Gerard Brenan suggests that the "Spanish pueblo has a totally different character to any other body of peasants and labourers in Europe. At regular intervals in the course of history, whenever it has considered its deepest interests to be threatened, it has risen and carried away everything before it" (Brenan 1950, 89). Franz Borkenau similarly suggests that "Spain is the country of the spontaneity of the people", as the masses "hate this modern civilization that was forced upon them" (Borkenau 1986, 5). Spanish politics is characterised by a dual reality of "the higher classes, the State, and the administration and the masses that detest them" (*ibid.*, 6). Numerous Spanish intellectuals at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century were concerned by this perceived duality<sup>4</sup>. They sought solutions to the increased disunity between elites and the masses. One of Spain's most well-known philosophers of the time, José Ortega y Gasset, who was involved with but also critical of the first Republican government, identified a disconnection between elites and the masses during the 1920s, both of whom he blamed for the disunity; the elites for lack of vision and the masses for their resistance to order. Ortega y Gasset saw the nation as an "organised mass, structured by a select minority of individuals" (Ortega y Gasset 2014, 98). The problem of Spain, for Ortega, was therefore that "the

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<sup>4</sup> María Zambrano in her essay *Los intelectuales en la drama de España* [Intellectuals in the Spanish Drama] written in 1937 offers a critical take on the role of the intellectual in this period. In this essay, she reflects upon the position of the intellectual and thought more generally in relationship to the unfolding Civil War in Spain. Zambrano links the unfolding violence to claims of an ultimate universal reason. She suggests that whilst desires for reason sought "to pacify the world, the world is burning with war" (Zambrano 1977, 50). She identifies a gap between the desire for a universal knowledge of man — the model human — and concrete human beings and their experiences. Thought based on the model human, and which remains in the realm of ideas and theories, is in fact a denial of the complexity of life. Fascism, she argues in this essay, takes this denial to the extreme. She describes it as a profound anguish and animosity towards life expressed through concrete human beings. It seeks to annihilate concrete human beings in order to install a life of fantasy. She states, "what is most serious about fascism, what causes it to commit a crime, is holding onto limits, using rebellion and violence so as not to leave an uninhabitable position" (*ibid.*, p. 30). A similar crime is seen to be committed by intellectuals that claim to have encountered the formula to pacify society. Whilst she similarly considers the search for Spain to be the key task of Spanish intellectuals, whilst "some searched for it, others ran away from it and others — the most dangerous ones — thought they had found it, considering themselves the owners of this knowledge and the only ones aware of it" (*ibid.*, p. 44).

masses refuse to be a mass — that is, to follow the directions of a minority —, [and thus] the nation disintegrates, the society is divided, and social chaos ensues” (*ibid.*).

Prominent conservative thinker Ramiro de Maeztu, supporter of the Primo de Rivera dictatorship and member of the *Unión Patriótica*, believed that a particular Spanish ethic was needed to unify the population. His proposal was the construction of Spanish Nationalism based on the defence of the Catholic monarch and the notion of *Hispanidad*. The term *Hispanidad* refers to a community of peoples sharing Spanish language and cultural values. De Maeztu drew connections between the context of class conflict and two historical processes in Spanish history: the conquest of Moorish Spain and the colonial experience. Here, De Maeztu (2012, 105) suggested that the values of *Hispanidad*, created by the *Reyes Católicos*<sup>5</sup> — the Catholic Kings, were mobilised to overcome differences. He suggested that the greatest achievement of the *Reyes Católicos* was the creation of a moral unity, both in Spain via the expulsion and conversion of Jews and Muslims, and with the people of South America through the export of civilization. For De Maeztu, “[t]he efficiency... of this civilizing act depended on the perfect interpenetration of two types of power: the temporal and the spiritual; an interpenetration without precedence in world history” (*ibid.*, 113). This achievement was what needed to be recaptured to deal with the disunity overcoming Spain (*ibid.*, 114). De Maeztu’s conceptualisation of *Hispanidad* would later contribute to the development of the Franco dictatorship’s ideology.

Social panic surrounding liminal *barrios* reproduced concerns regarding civilization and the need for civilizing missions similar to those envisaged by De Maeztu. Prevailing narratives reproduced a colonial imaginary that clearly distinguished between order/chaos, civilized/uncivilized. Vicente

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<sup>5</sup> Queen Isabella of Castile and Ferdinand of Aragon, whose marriage united the separate kingdoms of Spain in 1469, conquered the remaining Moorish stronghold in Granada and ordered the conversion or expulsion of Muslims and Jews. They also oversaw a period of colonial expansion and funded the expedition of Christopher Columbus to America.

Albarrán notes that “[b]eing from a certain *barrio* gave you a reputation and image that was conceived in terms of civilization, an image that created ideas about people that could be positive or negative” (Albarrán 2014). As early as the 1860s, the outskirts were described by journalists as being “a fetid swamp, inhabited only by reptiles or by ragged Moors and savages... beggars, gunslingers, thieves and gypsies” (*ibid.*). Writer Pio Baroja would suggest at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, that “Madrid is surrounded by suburbs where a world of beggars, wretches and outcasts live in worse conditions than in the depths of Africa” (Parsons 2003, 57). Peripheral *barrios* were popularly conceived as places of misery, vice and filth (Vorms 2013b, 49) — hotspots for infection and dangerous for public health — requiring regulation, rationalization and urbanization (Juliá Díaz 1984, 57). Both Vicente Albarrán (2014) and Ealham note how, particularly from the 1920s onwards, these spaces were increasingly discussed, written about and theorized by doctors, journalists, writers, social commentators, physicians, historians, local authorities, business groups and trade union leaders (Ealham 2005, 372). Medical language was used to diagnose such spaces as diseased (*ibid.*, 393).

The urban planning discipline developed in this context offering concrete solutions by ordering relations of proximity. Madrid’s first planners were idealistic political progressives who saw urban planning as a way to re-order and revolutionise society (Larson 2011, 45). An important earlier intervention was the construction of Gran Vía, a direct east-west thoroughfare through the heart of the city, first planned in 1862 but undertaken from 1910 onwards. It was “the ultimate manifestation of Madrid’s urge to architectural modernity” (Parsons 2003, 81). In the 1880s, Arturo Soria imagined a *Ciudad Lineal* [Linear City] as a “solution to these problems of modernity... the total reconstruction of the form of the city, into an ordered harmonious neatly geometric space” (*ibid.*, 2003, 80). The design of Arturo Soria’s *Ciudad Lineal* contained certain aspects similar to the neighbourhood unit concept. Soria believed that instead of fixing the ills of the existing city, it was cheaper and more efficient to remake the city from scratch (Navascués Palacio

1969). Soria's city was centred on transportation, but was conceived prior to widespread car ownership and thus revolved around tram and train lines. Similar to the Garden City model and the neighbourhood unit concept, it sought to bring urban dwellers back into touch with nature by "ruralizing the city and urbanizing nature" (cited in Masjuan 1996, 132). In the Ciudad Lineal, isolated houses were organized into rectangular blocks close to a central artery through which train lines would pass (Coronado et. al. 2009, 506) "Stores, offices, factories and municipal structures were to be located close to the transport corridor" (Velez 1983, 134). Congestion of smaller streets would be eased by the speed of flow along the railway line (*ibid.*, 133). A later advocate of the Ciudad Lineal, Hilarión González del Castillo, considered that the Ciudad Lineal could be developed in three different ways; next to the existing city to absorb growth, in order to connect two existing cities around a linking railway, or along a railway linking rural areas to the city (Coronado et. al. 2009, 510). In this way, farms would be able to "have access to the rails and business districts" (Velez 1983, 134).

For Soria, the Ciudad Lineal was the incarnation of progress overcoming class polarization and conflict. Populations would be assigned different zones determined by land value, which increased in relation to the distance from the railway. Individual plots would "imbue workers with a sense of middle-class individuality, which along with the physical isolation of the houses, would undermine any sense of collective identification" (Velez 1983, 136-138). Improved services would also address the source of conflict. Security would be vastly improved as troops could be swiftly deployed along the rail line and the rational planning of streets would reduce hiding places (*ibid.*). Soria's *Compañía Madrileña de Urbanización* (Madrid Urbanization Company) took active steps to implement this agenda commencing in 1894. However, implementation did not go smoothly. All development was stopped after increasing political and social instability and the death of Soria in 1920 (*ibid.*, 131). Whilst Ciudad Lineal exists as a district in contemporary Madrid, as Diana Velez notes, "as in many utopian experiments, the incongruity between the ideal system and the real

world in which it is to exist" (*ibid.*, 157) lead to its failure. The price of lots exceeded the means of the vast majority of the working classes who did not move there and the scarcity of labour diminished the Ciudad Lineal's attraction for capitalist development (*ibid.*).

During the 1920s, urban planning gained in importance in Spain and the first holistic urban plans to remake the city of Madrid were elaborated. Salaberry, Aranda, Lorite and Garcia Cascales' *Proyecto de Plan de Extension* [Project for an Extension Plan] published in 1923, was the first holistic urban plan for the city. These planners adopted a Taylorist approach seeking to develop ways to manage the city, smooth contradictions and class conflict (Parsons 2003, 81). In 1926, the *Primer Congreso Nacional de Urbanismo* [First National Urbanism Conference] was held (Sambricio 1982, 48). The increased importance of urban planning in Spain coincided with its development globally. Spanish urban planners were aware and influenced by a range of different international trends — through international journals, personal relationships and their attendance at international conferences. Carlos Sambricio (1982, 43) suggests that Spanish planners sought to emulate the four big institutions of urban planning — the School of Landscape and Architecture at Harvard University; The Town Planning School in Liverpool; *Seminar für Städtebau* in Berlin and the *École de Hautes Études Urbaines* in Paris. Despite growing interest in urban planning, it was not until 1929, when urban problems were becoming more severe and political unrest was becoming uncontrollable, that urban planning was taken seriously by the Primo de Rivera dictatorship. In this same year, an open competition was held for the creation of a project to plan Madrid's development. The winner was a project presented by Secundino Zuazo and the German architect Otto Jensen (Larson 2011, 51). Both the Second Republic and the Franco dictatorship would later adopt parts of this plan. However, its impact at the time was limited. The volatility of the Republic in part explains the relative lack of the planned development of affordable alternatives. Susan Larson (2011, 52) notes that four months after the Republic was created, a group of Spanish urban planners, architects, and engineers elaborated the the *Plan General de la*



*Red Viaria Principal de la Extension de Madrid*. This plan incorporated aspects of Suazo and Jensen's earlier plan and according to Larson "[n]ever before had a group of such skilled Spanish urban planners worked together to renovate Madrid" (*ibid.*, 53). However, the desire to resolve the urban crisis rationally was given little time to impact on the city.

Sambricio notes another factor contributing to the relative lack of planned development of working class housing during this period. In his discussion of planning during the Primo de Rivera dictatorship, Sambricio argues that despite fiscal advantages being given to attract the development of cheap new housing and *barrios* in the periphery, developers were not satisfied by the profit that could be made (Sambricio 1982, 41). Development was intrinsically linked to its profitability. Instead of creating affordable housing, developers and landowners tended to speculate with the land (*ibid.*, 45). Larson suggests that in the case of Madrid, to the dismay of urban planners, "even compromised versions of their urban visions were never implemented due to lack of private and/or state capital" (Larson 2011, 45). The aspects of plans that were easiest to agree upon and execute were those that would produce profit — not the creation of affordable housing for the working classes. Reforms that added to the grandeur of Madrid as a modern capital were attractive and hence "money poured into the reformation of the Gran Via at the expense of almost all other *barrios*" (Sambricio 1982, 40). Larson maintains that, particularly in the lead up to the Civil War, "the small, short-term project would always be undertaken instead of the far-sighted regional plan" (Larson 2011, 45). Sambricio (1982, 44) similarly notes that immediate benefits were always favoured over the holistic study and development of the region.

Nevertheless, in the context of urban conflict, working class *barrios* were identified as a political problem to be addressed. The reconstruction of such spaces, reorganizing relations of proximity, was heralded as a solution to simultaneously pacify them as well as resolve the crisis in the construction industry and decrease unemployment. In the lead up to the Civil War, developers

began to draw attention to the insalubrious and overcrowded conditions of workers. Plans to destroy and rebuild these areas, if promoted by government initiatives, could reignite the construction boom. This would serve to stoke growth, lower unemployment and thus decrease conflict (Juliá Díaz 1984, 109). At the other end of the spectrum, Edmundo Domínguez, General Secretary of Construction Workers in the UGT continuously proposed public works to get the industry going again (Juliá Díaz 1998, 136). Juliá suggests that everyone, from the *Cámara de la Industria* (Chamber of Industry) to the CNT, agreed that the planning of public works was the only way to save Madrid from the unemployment crisis (Juliá Díaz 1984, 137-138).

## 5. The relationship between government interventions and grassroots practices

Migration was a key constitutive factor in the creation of peripheral working class *barrios*. Many migrants arrived from impoverished areas during the economic boom. Their position in the city was precarious, a condition that was aggravated by the onset of economic crisis and employment loss. The impact of the CNT's interventions and grassroots politics had imbued peripheral *barrios* with a sense of class-consciousness. The CNT was able to contribute to modes of political belonging in working class *barrios* instilling certain spatial frames and temporal rhythms in them. They established themselves in *barrios* via the creation of infrastructure such as the *Ateneos* and built on relations of proximity. With this infrastructure, they were able to offer services and cultural activities to the inhabitants of *el barrio* that were not provided by the state. This infrastructure served to create centres of power from which they were able to increase their influence. With the outbreak of the Civil War and the weakening of the Republican government, the CNT's influence in managing affairs in peripheral *barrios* increased. In this context, peripheral *barrios* developed as relatively autonomous entities and contributed to class conflict.

In this period, the state had not yet “colonised” *el barrio*, as Lefebvre would suggest of everyday life in France in the late 1960s. Nevertheless, the arrival of migrants to the city, their informal settlement in liminal *barrios* and the forms of politics associated with these spaces fed preoccupation amongst elites. Ideas elaborated found solutions in fomenting identification with the state, securing space through police interventions and the rational planning of relations of proximity. Social panic regarding peripheral *barrios* resonated with global concerns regarding working class neighbourhoods. Knowledge developed drew inspiration from an emerging global field of expertise. Preoccupations reproduced a colonial imaginary that differentiated between order and chaos. The existence of liminal *barrios* was associated with backwardness — a lack of order and hygiene that provided the conditions for political radicalisation. Policing measures provided the most immediate solutions, whilst at the same time the reconstruction of lived environment began to be conceptualised as a solution both to the unruliness of these spaces and as a way of stimulating the economy and boosting employment. As such during this period *el barrio* gained definition as a political problem. A perceived need to govern relations of proximity gained definition. In the wake of the Civil War, members of the Francoist dictatorship would blame peripheral *barrios* for leftist political action that they held responsible for breaking Spanish unity. As a result, these *barrios* would suffer from revanchist policies and abandonment. Francoist planners initially sought ways of reorganising urban space in order to overcome the class conflict provoked by the emergence of homogenous working class *barrios*. The colonial imaginary of the regressive utopia of Ramiro de Maeztu would become particularly influential in this context.

## 4. The production of the citizen-neighbour

In this chapter, I trace the emergence of a political constellation around the figure of the citizen-neighbour during the Franco dictatorship. Again, I explore how state interventions and grassroots practices emerge in the context of the relationship between migration, relations of proximity and planning. I employ *el barrio* as a tool to trace how these diverse relationships are inscribed in space. Migrants again arrived in the city in large numbers transforming and constituting numerous *barrios* in the process. I illustrate how the dictatorship sought to produce ideal subjects hostile to left wing politics, faithful to Catholic values and traditional gender roles, through different interventions in *el barrio*. I conceptualise the subject sought by the dictatorship as the citizen-neighbour. *Asociaciones de Vecinos* (AVs – Neighbourhood Associations) were able to find room to manoeuvre within the frameworks of the dictatorship in this context, developing alternative modes of political belonging grounded in *el barrio*. Rather than radically oppose the conservative values underpinning the dictatorship's desired citizen-neighbour, the modes of political belonging constituted by the AVs emerged in relationship and in tension with the dictatorship's ideals. Rather than radically oppose these ideals, the AVs were able to portray themselves as realising them autonomously.

In the wake of the Civil War, the Franco dictatorship elaborated numerous strategies to govern relations of proximity and avoid the re-emergence of class conflict — reflected by plans for life in *el barrio*. The early dictatorship envisaged a return to the traditional values of Spanish society. These initial plans to transform *el barrio* had limited impact. The establishment of a relationship with the USA following the Second World War, and Spain's integration into International Organizations, lead to the incorporation of new ideas. A new approach formed revolving around the production of citizen-neighbours through homeownership and identification with middle class

values. The dictatorship developed strategies to incorporate migrants into the life of the city as active participants in modernisation. Nevertheless, throughout this period migrants continued to challenge and reconfigure plans for the city. The ideals of middle-class modernity encapsulated by the citizen-neighbour remained inaccessible for many — particularly those inhabiting informal settlements on the periphery. In liminal spaces, *Asociaciones de Vecinos* (AVs) developed grassroots practices building on relations of proximity and constituting alternative modes of political belonging. In doing so, they challenged the figure of the citizen-neighbour. However, the modes of political belonging constituted did not exist independently but rather negotiated a space in tension and in relation to dominant conceptions.

On a global scale, during this period, the neighbourhood unit concept gained influence. The neighbourhood unit provided a concrete framework through which to govern relations of proximity in order to produce particular types of citizens. Lefebvre noted the increased influence of abstract concepts and structures of governance fomenting identification with middle class values during the same period. These imposed certain spatial frames and temporal rhythms on life in the city. Whilst similar intentions undoubtedly underpinned state interventions in Madrid, the realisation of abstract plans were continually undermined by migrant arrivals and the construction of *chabolas*. The dominance of abstract space was thus less pronounced than Lefebvre suggests in his studies based on the French context. In Spain, the dictatorship was unable to remove spontaneous development completely and was instead forced to mediate its existence. To achieve this it attempted to harness the initiative and energy of migrants in the construction of new *barrios*. The harnessing of migrant energy and the preference for homeownership integrated the individual as an active participant in the production of *el barrio*. The AVs expanded and deepened this logic and claimed ownership over *el barrio* itself. Through the modes of political belonging constituted by the AVs, and in relation to the dominant framework of the citizen-neighbour, migrants negotiated their place in the city.

In this chapter, I continue to map out the relationship between modes of political belonging established through interventions attempting to govern relations of proximity and interventions building on relations of proximity. There are a number of similarities and differences with the Anarchist period here. The key similarity is the emergence of grassroots politics in the spontaneously constructed migrant dominated peripheries. In both cases, migration interrupted the dominant modes of political belonging, *el barrio* providing a space in which alternative modes of political belonging were constituted. Anarchist politics were imagined as occurring outside and in conflict with established political frameworks. Experts tended to conceive peripheral *barrios* in civilizational terms — anomalies breeding dangerous subjects and forms of politics. Spaces of reason and spaces of disorder were clearly differentiated. Whilst conceptions of order and disorder persisted during the Franco dictatorship, the politics of the AVs developed out of structures created by the dictatorship. The dictatorship sought to foment participation and identification with the state, and the AVs were able to build on this desire in order to develop alternative modes of political belonging in *el barrio*. In doing so, the AVs could portray themselves, not as undermining the state, but rather fulfilling its ambitions autonomously. In doing so, they constructed spaces for political participation revolving around grassroots practices both in relation to and in tension with the state.

## 1. The Early Franco Dictatorship

The Franco dictatorship sought to avoid the re-emergence of class conflict and previous instability by constructing a new society. Initially, the dictatorship sought to recapture the “authentic” Spanish nation drawing inspiration from the *Reyes Católicos* (as well as thinkers such as Ramiro de Maeztu discussed in the previous chapter). Villacañas Berlanga (2014a, 543) describes the mechanisms of rule as inquisitorial — inspired by the Spanish inquisition — as they sought to rid

the country of historically accumulated impurities. Repression rather than development marked the initial period of the regime. Ruralisation was encouraged, hierarchies were reinstated, peasants and workers were terrorized and hostility was shown towards modern forms of wealth — the stuff of Free-masons, Jews and Finance bankers (*ibid.*, 549). The Catholic Church regained its monopoly over education and participated in the crusade to achieve a traditional society. Villacañas Berlanga suggests that in this context the church was “master of truth and customs” and the state existed to defend its interests (*ibid.*, 549). Miguel Angel Perfecto argues that the dictatorship sought to recuperate traditional Catholic values that were seen to be threatened by liberalism and communism. The economic model of the early Franco dictatorship was based on three key ideas; economic nationalism, agrarian ideology and the colonization of the countryside (Perfecto 2015, 157). Owners, technicians and workers were all redefined as “*productores*” (producers) who would work together for the benefit of the nation-state. For this reason they were incorporated in the same compulsory union (*ibid.*, 149).

The term *democracia orgánica* (organic democracy) was used to define the ideal functioning of society around three loci of cooperation; the family, the municipality and the union (Giménez Martínez 2015, 107). Citizens were not supposed to participate in society as individuals but rather via the natural social groups they were part of (*ibid.*, 113). Salvador Cayuela Sánchez (2009) labels the subject sought by these mechanisms of government as *homo patiens*, a passive apolitical subject resigned to the natural order of things and the circumstance of everyday life. In this context, the *Movimiento Nacional* (National Movement) was created to mediate the dictatorship’s relationship with the masses. It sought to incorporate the masses into the structures of the dictatorship through mobilisation (Radcliff 2011, 7). The *Movimiento Nacional* acted as an intermediary between state and people through “non-political” movements (Radcliff 2007, 148-149). The right to association was prohibited outside of the natural social groups; the family, the municipality and the union (Giménez Martínez 2015, 127).

Similar to the quest for a country of *productores* organised into an organic democracy, the dictatorship sought to develop a form of urbanisation that would eliminate class conflict. López Díaz (2002) describes the early Franco dictatorships visions to incorporate migrants into the city as *transnochadas* — a word that in this case is used to describe the kind of ideas one has late at night whilst lacking sleep. He details debates and interventions revolving around the construction of the new city, to accompany the new society. As early as 1938, before the end of the Civil War, a group of architects met to discuss what the construction of this ideal city would look like (*ibid.*, 298). Class based *barrios* were blamed for aggravating class conflict. The *Servicio Técnico del Falange* (Falangist<sup>1</sup> Technical Service) states, “[a]s architects we can see that until now different independent *barrios* are built for different social classes, which naturally foment and stimulate class conflict. Now we want *barrios* for people who are united by a common goal” (cited in López Díaz 2003). Society was to function as an organic whole where different groups shared the same space and were ordered hierarchically. López Díaz argues, “the Falangist vision of the ideal *barrio* was based around the disappearance of class barriers and the exaltation of traditional families. *Barrios* should be united by a common goal and divided hierarchically” (López Díaz 2002, 302-304). Similar to Ramiro de Maeztu’s ideas about Spanish society in general, urbanists suggested that the greatest examples of such an organic totality were the urbanisms of the Spanish Reconquista and the colonisation of America (López Díaz 2003). Particular gender roles and the traditional family were central to this utopian vision. The creation of the correct type of home was needed to foment such roles and uphold certain values and traditions. In a speech to Falangist architects, Raimundo Fernández suggested that the goal of the future society should be to build “homes” [hogares] rather than buildings, as homes should be “the basis of spirituality, the framework in which the family exists” (cited in *ibid.*). According to the *Servicio Técnico del Falange*,

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<sup>1</sup> The *Falange Española Tradicionalista y de las Juntas de Ofensiva Nacional Sindicalista* (La FET y de ls JONS) (*Traditionalist Spanish Phalanx and Committees of the National Syndicalist Offensive*) was established as the sole Francoist party in 1937 (Pérez Montfort 1992, 92).



“[h]ousing has to be based on the following guidelines: the separation of the rooms by gender; each house should have a room that “symbolises homeliness”; with basic hygiene (ventilation, orientation, light, water) according to different regional characteristics” (cited in *ibid.*).

In 1938, the *Servicio Nacional de Regiones Devastadas* (National Service of Devastated Regions) was created to rebuild areas destroyed during the war. However, a revanchist sentiment and a lack of resources meant that little coherent action was taken to better the situation of impoverished *barrios*. Many blamed working class *barrios* for what they referred to as the “communist revolution” (*ibid.*). Opposition from conservative groups who defended capitalist development also hindered action (*ibid.*). In 1939, the *Instituto Nacional de la Vivienda* (National Housing Institute) was created. Whilst this institute did promote the construction of *vivienda protegida* (protected housing) and the construction of *vivienda minima* (minimal housing), housing created was limited and partially given to military offices and public servants (López Díaz 2002, 305). In general, concrete interventions in this period lacked coherence and as such failed to construct the type of city Falangists imagined. Indicative of this was the *Nuevo Plan General de Ordenación Urbana de Madrid* (New General Plan of Urban Planning) — elaborated by Pedro Bidagor in 1941 and published as law in 1946. Whilst this plan claimed to follow Falangist ideals, it reproduced many ideas forwarded by Zuazo and Jansen in 1929. Rather than create unified *barrios*, it used green belts to separate the middle-class extension of the city from the working class periphery (*ibid.*, 305).

One of the most faithful examples of the Falangist utopia was constructed at the same time that new ideas were gaining influence. Ciudad Pegaso was constructed on the outskirts of Madrid in 1956. Made up of 1500 dwellings, it was created by and for the state enterprise ENASA (*Empresa Nacional de Autotransportes S.A.*). The *barrio* was designed for the workers of a factory building Pegaso trucks. Housing was created for three different social classes. Social classes were to share

the same isolated space where they would quietly and pacifically go about their lives in order to uplift the company and through it the country. Despite sharing the same *barrio*, the church was the only place where the three classes met (Arias 2016). Workers lived in blocks of flats based on garden cities. They paid symbolic rent but had to have a perfect record with the company and in their family life. In addition, there was a section of row houses for intermediate managers, technicians, pharmacists and doctors etc. and another zone of big houses with gardens for directors and engineers. The social life of the higher class was planned around the *Residencia de Ingenieros* (Engineers residence), a luxurious social centre with pools and tennis courts (*ibid.*), whilst the rest of the residents were expected to socialise at the bars and cafes of *el barrio*, or in a social centre called *el Ateneo* (Pérez Matesanz 2016).

The insufficiencies of Ciudad Pegaso were indicative of the limitations of state interventions more broadly. The 1500 homes built did not provide sufficient dwellings for the families of the 8000 factory workers (La Marea 2016). The arrival of migrants in the city continued to exceed the dictatorship's limited attempts to construct a new society. Immediately following the Civil War, in the context of hunger, misery and unemployment, the arrival of migrants diminished. However, 275,000 migrants still arrived between 1940 and 1950 (Castells 1983, 218). During the following decade migration gained momentum. In the 1950s, 440,000 people migrated to the city (*ibid.*, 218), whilst from 1960-1970 this number increased to almost 700,000, the population increasing from 2.4 million in 1960 to 3.6 million in 1970 (*ibid.*, 220). Manuel Castells notes that while migrants were able to find low paying jobs, there was little affordable housing. In this context, spontaneously constructed *barrios* and *chabolas* filled the gap. Castells notes that in 1956 *chabolas* housed 20 per cent of Madrid's population (*ibid.*, 218).

In *Los otros madrileños: El Pozo del Tío Raimundo*, Esperanza Molina gives an in-depth account, drawing on years of ethnographic work, of how one particular peripheral *barrio*, El Pozo del Tío

Raimundo, constituted itself during this period. Molina's account provides a sketch of the divergent reality that was being constructed in these peripheral spaces. In 1927 a farm hand from the town of Martos in Jaen, Andalusia arrived in search of work, occupying the land. In 1942, migration began to grow steadily and increased during the 1950s. While migrants arrived from many different places, many of them came from Martos (Molina 1984, 34). Typically, men would arrive first and stay with family members or people they knew from their towns of origins. These contacts would help them to find work at construction sites in the city. After locating work, they would investigate acquiring a plot of land and building materials. When this was accomplished, they would send for their families. In one day, they would build their *chabola*. If they had a roof over head and a bed inside, they would not be kicked off the land only fined (*ibid.*, 37). When Molina arrived in 1956, she noted intense social relationships. The area was occupied by *chabolas* lined in rudimentary dirt streets. These streets would become mud whenever it rained. A pre-fabricated building was used as a school and library, a larger *chabola* to house the teachers; the church was in another *chabola* decorated by the children of *el barrio* (*ibid.*, 31).

## 2. The Developmental Period

During the 1950s, there was a shift in the approach of the dictatorship. With the Cold War underway, pacts were made with the USA — the dictatorship receiving recognition and aid in exchange for military bases (Villacañas Berlanga 2014a, 551). Aid came with a series of economic recommendations that were initially approached with caution but eventually led to the construction of a new economic approach — laid out in the First Plan of Economic Stabilisation designed after Spain joined the IMF and the European Organization of Economic Cooperation (*ibid.*, 551-552). The result of these transformations was the development of a Spanish brand of Catholic capitalism heavily influenced by technocrats associated with the Catholic Opus Dei sect (*ibid.*, 547). During this period, unprecedented economic growth and industrialisation was

experienced. Harrison (1993, 42) notes that by 1965 the factory had become the leading employer of labour. Cayuela Sánchez (2013, 164) notes an impetus to achieve the scientific organization of work, the fixing of work rhythms and the determining of optimal outputs. The government intervened to establish wages, salaries and working conditions — near full employment being guaranteed in exchange for low wages (Martín Aceña and Martínez Ruíz 2007, 38).

Castells (1983, 219) suggests that economic modernization was conceived by the dictatorship as a new formula to maintain the support of the urban middle classes. It provided an alternative model to achieve a docile submissive population. In contrast to the regressive utopia of the early Franco dictatorship, dreams of modernity including the acquisition of a house, fridge, washing machine and television were seen as the formula to eliminate social conflict (Cayuela Sánchez 2013, 165). Nevertheless, as Sophie Gonick perceptively notes, the new approach was also compatible with the society already envisaged by the dictatorship. The new policies were justified “through doctrines of social welfare, individual progress, and the importance of family life coherent with Falangist ideology” (Gonick 2015a, 38-39). Central to realizing these dreams of modernity was the middle class ideal of homeownership. Until this moment, the majority of the residents in the city rented — something that would be radically transformed during this period. The minister of housing during this period, José Luis Arrese, is quoted as saying “we want a country of homeowners not proletariats” (*queremos un país de propietarios no de proletarios*) (cited in *ibid.*). Whilst homeownership contributed to the broader production of middle class “imaginaries of comfort and consumer lifestyle” (*ibid.*, 36), it was also considered coherent with Catholic values. Arrese emphasised the centrality of the home in the “family mission” (*ibid.*, 38-39) and suggested that “the ideal formula, the Christian ideal, the revolutionary ideal from the perspective of our own revolution, is the stable and harmonious formula of property” (cited in *ibid.*, 39). Pamela Radcliff (2011, 39-40) notes that in this context the term *vecino*, most commonly translated as neighbour, had two interrelated connotations; both neighbour and homeowner. It thus makes

sense to conceptualise this figure sought by the dictatorship, incarnating Catholic values and traditional gender roles, as the citizen-neighbour.

Around the same time, following the end of the Second World War, the neighbourhood unit concept spread globally. Collison notes, that in this period the neighbourhood unit gained “sudden and widespread acceptance” (Collison 1954, 464). The MOMA exhibition, “Look at your Neighbourhood”, discussed in Chapter 2 suggested that the neighbourhood unit was tailored to “the need for comprehensive planning to make the post-war world a better living place for the individual, the family and the community” (MOMA 1944, 1). Brody similarly argues that during the “middle decades of the twentieth century the neighbourhood unit concept became the shared consensus for improving residential environments by reorganizing the production of urban space” (Brody 2013, 343). Collison notes that by 1947 it “was employed in as diverse countries as Poland and Algeria, the USSR and Canada as well as USA the country of its origin” (Collison 1954, 463). To a certain degree, this adoption of the neighbourhood unit concept is reflected in interventions in the Spanish context. Nevertheless, these interventions do not lead to the neat implementation of neighbourhood units.

Gonick illustrates how, during this period, “private property, and by extension the broader field of real estate, came to be defined as both a social tool for the creation and perpetuation of political subjects and an economic mechanisms for capitalist expansion” (Gonick 2015a, 28). The creation of the *Ley del Suelo* (Building Code) in 1956 was central to capitalist expansion in this regard. The new building code sought to give private initiatives the financial and juridical tools to develop affordable housing by making it a profitable business. The *Plan Nacional de la Vivienda* (1955- National Housing plan) implemented between 1956 and 1960, similarly attempted to encourage private initiative (Vorms 2013b, 45). López Díaz (2002, 334) notes, that as a result of these reforms, property developers would shape the future urbanism in Madrid. In conjunction

with these reforms, in an effort to cultivate homeownership, Gonick notes how “tax breaks encouraged people to purchase new homes... At the same time, urban rental laws (*ley de arrendamiento urbano*) froze rents at very low levels, discouraging landlords from renting or maintaining units” (Gonick 2015a, 37). Castells emphasises the state’s role as facilitator of capitalist expansion. According to Castells the state:

bought the land, lent the capital, paid for construction, channelled the demand, granted fiscal exemptions, and forgot to control the standards and legal requirements of urban infrastructure. A new real estate network emerged from the public housing bonanza, along with a booming construction industry — big developers absorbed most of the demand and created some of Spain’s largest firms (Castells 1983, 219).

New urban policy developed in tandem with renewed panic regarding the spread of *chabolas*. The inadequacies of earlier housing interventions were revealed by the spread of *chabolas* devouring the planned green belt (López Díaz 2002, 321). In 1957, the *Plan de Urgencia Social* (Social Urgency Plan) was created to tackle the *chabolas* by building 60,000 dwellings in two years economizing materials, labour and land. The plan was accompanied by police measures to tackle migration and informal settlements (*ibid.*, 335). A decree was released on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of August 1957 that intended to close the borders of the city and forbid migration to all those people who could not afford adequate housing. A surveillance force was created to police the periphery with special powers to destroy all constructions made without a permit and to relocate inhabitants to their village of origin (Vorms 2013b, 47).

At the same time, specific interventions were made to create affordable housing for the inhabitants of peripheral *barrios* and thus incorporate them as citizen-neighbours. The framework

for these was outlined in the *Plan Nacional de Vivienda*, which established different types of *poblados* or settlements. The plan had four distinct phases: Firstly, the creation of *poblados de absorción* (assimilation settlements) that were to house inhabitants of poorly constructed housing and *chabolas* temporarily. These were rented cheaply and were intended to be temporary. Secondly, the creation of *poblados dirigidos* (directed settlements) similarly sought to house migrants arriving in the city, however, these houses were constructed by the inhabitants themselves under the supervision of architects and technicians (Esteban Maluenda 2000, 125). Thirdly, the creation of new urban centres of higher quality with urban services available from the beginning. Finally, the construction of *barrios completos* or *barrios tipo* (similar to neighbourhood units) that would have the spatial outline and features that would allow them to be defined as *barrios* (*ibid.*, 126). Most relevant in transforming the peripheral *barrios* were the *poblados de absorción* and the *poblados dirigidos*. These were intended to order the new arrivals in Madrid, eliminating *chabolas* and structuring space to open the pathway for continued development.

*Poblados de absorción* had two main aims: firstly, to provide a cheap and fast way of housing the migrant population living in *chabolas* in the periphery and secondly, to organize them into autonomous satellite settlements around the city. Typically, these took the form of horizontal blocks of one or two storey homes or blocks of four or five stories. They were intended to be temporary and were built very quickly with cheap materials and very few amenities (Fidel 2007). In 1955, eight *poblados* were built; in Canillas, San Fermín, Caño Roto, Villaverde, Pan Bendito, Zofio and two in Fuencarral. In 1956, a second phase of construction began in Manoteras, La Elipa, Vallecas, Entrevías, Juan Tornero, General Ricardos, two in San Blas and a second phase in San Fermín. According to Esteban Maluenda (2000, 126), the building of these settlements created a basis on which to build the later *poblados dirigidos* following rationalist criteria and a preference for low cost options. A similar approach was taken for the later prefabricated *Unidades Vecinales de Absorción* (Neighbourhood Assimilation Units) (Moya González 1997, 84). Six *Unidades*

*Vecinales de Absorción* were approved for the outskirts of Madrid in 1961 and were built in just three months (over summer in 1963) (Valenzuela Rubio 1974, 622).

In the space opened up by the *poblados de absorción*, work began on the *poblados dirigidos*. Esteban Maluenda (2000, 126) suggests that whilst architecturally similar to the *poblados de absorción*, the key difference was that these were to be constructed through a process called *autoconstrucción* (self-construction). The idea of *autoconstrucción* was to harness the energy of migrants arriving in the city so that they would actively participate in the construction of their own homes. The homes built would become the property of the occupant after paying a small monthly amount over the course of fifty years (*ibid.*, 126). A young group of architects planned the construction and technicians supervised the construction process (*ibid.*, 126-127). The workforce was made up of groups of “*domingueros*” (Sunday workers), a term describing the fact that these people tended to work on their days off in order to construct their own houses (Esteban Maluenda 1999, 59). In 1956, construction began in Entrevias, Fuencarral, Canillas, Caño Roto and Orcasitas. In 1957, work began in Manoteras and in 1959 in Almendrales (*ibid.*, 127).

The *poblados* had numerous problems. Luis Moya González (1997) suggests that the majority of *poblados* were simply groupings of housing with little effort to construct a *barrio* with few open spaces and little thought being given to traffic and amenities. As a result of the new urban policies, following the damning critique of Manuel Castells, tens of thousands of houses were built on the periphery of Madrid amidst “low budgets, corruption, bad planning, and disregard for people’s needs, the estates began to crumble from the moment they were occupied” (Castells 1983, 219). In many areas, there was an “absence of all the proper elements of urban life with the natural exception of people. New schools, health care, open space, cultural facilities, a basic urban infrastructure, transportation, and so on, were totally lacking” (*ibid.*, 220). The *poblados* organized the outskirts paving the way for development, but with little concern for the basic needs of



everyday life. Castells suggests that developers left “empty spaces of several kilometres between clusters of blocks in order to raise the value of the land in between, which they also owned. They only built housing — no amenities, no paved streets, no lighting, little sewerage, little water, and poor transportation” (*ibid.*, 220).

Despite the limitations of state interventions in this period, there are two key developments with important repercussions. Firstly, the conversion of homeownership into a seemingly realistic object of desire fuelling the dreams and aspirations of those living in poor conditions. Secondly, the involvement of migrants in constructing their own *barrios* through the process of *autoconstrucción*. Cayuela Sánchez (2013, 174) notes how the emergence of a consumer society in this period raised the expectations of Spanish society that increasingly aspired to attain a lifestyle similar to its neighbours in Western Europe. Inhabitants of peripheral *barrios* strived to acquire living conditions similar to other Western European states — exemplified by ideal neighbourhood units. On the other hand, Esteban Maluenda (1999, 59) notes how the process of *autoconstrucción* sparked the enthusiastic participation of *domingueros*. According to Esteban Maluenda, participation in the construction of their own homes created a sense of euphoria. The logic underpinning *autoconstrucción* justified its expansion beyond housing and into *el barrio* itself. Inhabitants of peripheral *barrios* took the achievement of improvements into their own hands. Through the expansion of the logic of *autoconstrucción*, grassroots practices emerged both in tension with and in relation to state interventions.

### 3. Asociaciones de Vecinos

The AVs came to prominence amidst a growing urban crisis. Building a space for political participation within the frameworks of the dictatorship, in the 1960s and 1970s, they initially appealed for basic amenities such as pavement, transport, water and electricity in peripheral

*barrios* before evolving into a widespread movement that challenged the political system itself. In the process, they developed grassroots practices that shaped the spatial frames and temporal rhythms of life in peripheral *barrios*. The modes of political belonging constituted were not necessarily progressive. The AVs often forwarded quite conservative ideals, perpetuated entrenched gender roles and other forms of discrimination, and sought to achieve transformations that did not diverge significantly from model neighbourhood units. Nevertheless, their interventions built specific modes of political belonging through which migrants were able to negotiate their place in the city.

The emergence of AVs was made possible by the Franco dictatorship's concept of organic democracy. Radcliff (2007, 148-149) illustrates how the AVs emerged out of the framework of the *Movimiento Nacional* that promoted "non-political" movements within organic spheres of participation. Radcliff (2011, 9) sees the creation of family associations such as the heads of family, homemaker and school parent's associations, authorized by the *Movimiento Nacional* in 1963, as precursors of the AVs — instituted officially by the Law of Association in 1964. The ambiguity of the term *vecino*, conceived simultaneously as neighbour and homeowner, was paramount in justifying the existence of AVs within the frameworks of the dictatorship. Radcliff argues that initially the understanding of *vecino* used by the AVs was similar to that of the homeowner and thus the associations were imagined similar to earlier homeowners associations (*ibid.*, 39-40). Therefore, they appeared to be a coherent expression of the ideal of a country of homeowners aspired to by the dictatorship. Nevertheless, the ambiguity of the term *vecino* allowed options for different possibilities. Radcliff notes how in this space of ambiguity the AVs:

stretched the parameters of these early prototypes by offering inclusion to all *vecinos* of the neighbourhood, not just the homeowners... the new associations expanded their reach from the "private" realm of managing services to the more "public" realm

of community building and the common good” (*ibid.*, 240)... In terms of their goals, there was also a subtle shift in emphasis, from the organization of collective urban services benefitting homeowners to broader community-building and thus more abstract notions of “common good” (*ibid.*, 241).

The AVs initially formed in peripheral *barrios* in an effort to gain lacking services and infrastructure (*ibid.*, 8-9). Whilst strongest in working class areas, the AVs later spread to *barrios* throughout the city and expressed different concerns (Castells 1983, 233). Castells notes that:

The shantytown dwellers first demanded the improvement of services and later sought the redevelopment of their neighbourhoods for their own benefit. The repair of dilapidated public housing was required. Inhabitants of large peripheral housing estates struggled to obtain schools, health care centres, transportation, and other urban facilities. Residents of the new and massive concrete complexes claimed open space and green areas. Old neighbourhoods wanted to be protected from the bulldozer and gentrification, and demanded their improvement (*ibid.*, 222).

Radcliff (2007, 151) suggests that through the specific petitions of residents attempting to achieve change in their *barrio* new social networks and collective identities were constituted. In the process, the common concerns of *el barrio*, rather than the private concerns of homeowners, became the focus of the AVs. Certain AVs consciously framed themselves as public institutions open to residents and not simply organs expressing the will of members (Radcliff 2011, 281). Moving beyond the private interests of homeowners and creating a sense of public interest, the AVs sought to stimulate neighbourliness, organize cultural activities, improve *el barrio* and foment cooperation between neighbours (*ibid.*, 243). On the one hand, the AVs made important interventions to improve public services and facilities. Beyond petitioning the government,

Radcliff notes the emergence of what Jorge Borja has called *auto-soluciones* or autonomously developed solutions to problems. These interventions sought to transform *el barrio* and were often done after consultation with residents (*ibid.*, 283-284). Conversely, the AVs engrained themselves in *el barrio* by building on relations of proximity. They contributed to social life fostering cultural events. Castells notes how, during this period “[a]ll over Madrid, neighbourhoods, old and new, organized feasts and celebrations in a conscious effort to overcome their anonymity and social isolation” (Castells 1983, 222). He describes this process in *el barrio Orcasitas*:

One of the first initiatives of the association was to break down these inner social walls and to establish a cultural bond (for instance, an annual religious parade was organized to honour a Saint who, the leaders said, was going to protect Orcasitas from then on). A major element in this strategy was the building of the association’s public hall in the centre of the neighbourhood, using the residents’ voluntary labour on their Sundays off. The hall became the centre of new communal life, a place where one could take a warm shower, drink beer at a reduced price, play cards, attend meetings, hold discussions with neighbours and make friends. Children also fostered friendships and all kinds of activities were arranged for them. The association organized outdoor trips at weekends, taking children to the municipal swimming pools on hot days, arranging soccer competitions, and showing films on Sunday afternoons. This was a new social world evolved for the neighbourhood with celebrations, picnics, and in shared mobilization. At the end, Orcasitas had become a community in the precise sociological meaning of the word, primary relationships at the neighbourhood level being more frequent and more significant for most residents than anything else (*ibid.*, 246).

In the spaces being established, the AVs constructed particular modes of political belonging experimenting with forms of political participation and organization. Castells notes how AVs claimed to represent clearly defined spaces. AVs claimed competence over a specific territory, “in many cases borderlines were drawn on a map to clarify areas of responsibility” (*ibid.*, 225). Radcliff suggests that within the frameworks constituted “new practices of citizenship could be explored... sites in which democratic practices, such as elections, representation, public campaigns, interest group pressure and even language of self-representation could be cultivated” (Radcliff 2007, 142). They “organized activities and projects, held elections and assemblies, mounted public campaigns, and appealed to government officials for more investment in their local communities” (Radcliff 2011, 272). She also highlights a growing culture of assembliesim and experimentation with self-management (*ibid.*, 297). From the late 1960s, the statutes of the AVs “explicitly position the association[s] as an intermediary between the members or *vecinos* and the government. Barrio Concepción (1966) pioneered what would become a common mandate to *gestionar*, or take steps to arrange the management of problems with the authorities” (*ibid.*, 256).

The alternative modes of political belonging emerging in *barrios* were marked by their own tensions and exclusionary practices. The AVs were not necessarily progressive and were often shaped by rather conservative worldviews. Castells suggests that the AVs “generally reacted negatively to the disruption of traditional ways of life, particularly family life and patriarchal authority” (Castells 1983, 271). Entrenched forms of discrimination were often reproduced. Esperanza Molina (1984, 45-46) notes atrocious discrimination against Roma people who were excluded from communitarian sentiment in El Pozo del Tio Raimundo. Radcliff (2011, 111) argues that whilst the AVs theoretically offered a more gender neutral sphere for participation — in contrast with the explicitly gendered homemakers and heads of household’s associations — there were numerous difficulties for women who wished to participate. Castells notes that women “attended very few committee meetings; their membership was included on their husbands’ card”

(Castells 1983, 246). Informal patriarchal norms underpinned the way in which AVs operated and as such gender neutrality “only served to mask what were de facto male organizations, as revealed by the early practice of enrolling one member per household” (Radcliff 2011, 112). Despite these difficulties, Radcliff suggests that because of women’s battles the AVs did begin to provide a tangible space for women’s involvement. Nevertheless, as women fought to participate in associations “the gender neutral *vecino* language made them and their special interests largely invisible in the public face of the movement” (*ibid.*, 112).

The AVs provided modes of political belonging through which migrants and inhabitants from precarious settlements negotiated their place in the city. Reminiscent of Lefebvre’s theorisation of *autogestion*, Radcliff sees community organization emerging “in the gap between urban deficiencies and an unresponsive State” (Radcliff 2007, 151). In constituting particular modes of political belonging in *el barrio*, the AVs did not position themselves in opposition to the state but rather in relation to and in tension with it. Radcliff (2011, 235) argues that they built horizontal ties whilst also establishing a working vertical relationships with the state and private companies. AVs negotiated with “private contractors that built their defective houses or the companies whose bus lines did not extend into their peripheral neighbourhoods” (*ibid.*, 297). In addition, the AVs negotiated with the state that “was the provider of inadequate public services or the builder of badly constructed public housing” (*ibid.*). As they lacked resources to resolve all problems autonomously, they needed to seek external help. In doing so, Radcliff suggests that AVs tended to adopt either a “collaborationist” approach that avoided confrontation and worked together with authorities or an “oppositional” approach through which AVs employed “coercive” measures (*ibid.*, 298). The statute of the AV of Carabanchel Bajo, cited by Radcliff, provides insight into how AVs positioned themselves:

Considering the enormous and rapid expansion of peripheral neighbourhoods in the big cities, the resources of the state are not sufficient to cover the great necessities that, in every sphere, arise for their inhabitants.

For the same reason situations exist in which the inhabitants cannot enjoy the benefits and shoulder the responsibilities of an ordered and balanced community life. At the same time there is a legal structure that offers a solution to these problems, fundamentally regulating the natural right of association. We are imbued with a strong work ethic and willing to cooperate with the state, in those areas in which, either the state doesn't have the resources to extend itself, or it has left this area to the free initiative of the citizens (cited in *ibid.*, 2011, 235).

Such positioning, in relation to and in tension with the ambitions of the state makes sense in the context of the two developments noted in the previous section. The AVs expanded the logic of *autoconstrucción* and ownership beyond their initial intensions. This sense of ownership was extended into *el barrio* and was reflected by the emblematic slogan "*el barrio es nuestro*" (*el barrio* is ours). Inhabitants demonstrated willingness to participate in achieving a country of citizen-neighbours emulating not the ideals of the dictatorship, but those of the European middle class. As such, the desired outcomes were often quite similar to the neighbourhood units shaping the spatial frames and temporal rhythms of life elsewhere. The redevelopment of certain peripheral *barrios*, particularly after the transition to democracy (1975-1978), seems to reflect the achievement of ideal neighbourhood units. Thanks to the mobilizations of AVs, residents participated directly in planning through procedures instigated by the Madrid Metropolitan Planning Authority in 1977 (Castells 1983, 245-246). In his account of redevelopment in Orcasitas — which had by 1979 become a model for similar developments in other peripheral *barrios* (*ibid.*, 244-245) — Castells notes that:

Shacks were demolished and all the dwellers were rehoused in the same place in new, good, affordable government sponsored housing... By 1980, 1,500 housing units had been built and 760 additional flats were underway, enough not only to serve the Orcasitas' families but also several hundred from surrounding shantytown settlements... Land and shacks were expropriated, but land was to be valued at its original rural price, while shacks were to be valued at the market price after the shantytown's development... The residential complex was better equipped than most middle class neighbourhoods in Madrid, including a new school, kindergarten, civic centre, health centre, sports facilities, and funds and support for cultural and recreational activities. Residents also obtained a sizeable public park (about 70 hectares) close to the neighbourhood, large enough for the population of southern Madrid (*ibid.*, 1983, 244).

#### 4. The relationship between government interventions and grassroots practices

In this chapter, I have outlined how *el barrio* became the site of negotiation and conflict between different political interventions during the Franco dictatorship. The Franco dictatorship initially set out to eliminate political conflict and the problems of a society in transformation by imposing a regressive utopia based on an idealised account of the "grand" moments in Spanish history. By recuperating the eternal values of Hispanic Catholic society, the working class would be converted into "*productores*", who would work together with the other classes, respecting natural hierarchies, in order to uplift the nation. Individuals would contribute through organic spheres such as the family, the municipality and the union in order to carry out this mission, guided by the dictatorship and ultimately the Catholic Church. Working class migrant-heavy *barrios* were



culpable for the earlier conflict, responsible for dividing society and distracting it from its divine mission. Thus the new *barrios* envisaged by Falangists, needed to reflect this common mission, incorporating the various elements of society into the same hierarchical space. However, despite such grandiose plans, the reality of developments in the city was far from the Falangist's vision of it. Resources were scarce and migrants continued to arrive in the city, many establishing themselves in informal settlements on the periphery that again challenged and remade the city limits.

Changes inaugurated in conjunction with external influence and technocratic knowledge stimulated the development of a new model that sought to unite Catholic values with capitalist development. In this context, consumerism, middle class values and particularly the ideal of homeownership were seen as tools to create social cohesion, promote family values and ultimately avoid the re-emergence of class conflict. These ideals crystallised in the figure of the citizen-neighbour. More serious attempts were made to house the impoverished fringe dwellers of the city — moves made to incorporate them into the dream of universal homeownership. On the one hand, a new building code was implemented to facilitate the participation of private enterprises in the construction of housing and make it a profitable business — thus increasing housing supply. Furthermore, government initiatives sought to resolve the disorder of the outskirts and provide housing that would help integrate recent arrivals into the market. The *poblados de absorción* created space for continued development, while the *poblados dirigidos* seemingly provided a pathway from the status of precarious migrant to citizen-neighbour. However, whilst stoking the desires of those arriving in the city, interventions did not cater for everyone and did not live up to expectations. The transformation of the city led to significant amounts of subpar housing but little else to appease the growing expectations of the population. Housing developments lacked the necessary infrastructure and amenities for everyday life.

The constitution and transformation of particular peripheral *barrios* is incomprehensible without the impact of migration and the spatial frames and temporal rhythms developed through the interventions of the AVs. *Barrios* were produced through the arrival of people to the city and political contests, expressing contrasting visions, regarding their position in the city. The different interventions attempted to mediate the arrival of migrants and their precarious implantation in the city, each with their own temporal assumptions about future *barrios*. The initial plans of the Falangists projected a regressive utopia based on the eternal values of Hispanic Catholic culture into the future. Workers were to respect the natural order and hierarchy and peacefully go about the task of aggrandising the nation. However, in the context of sustained flows of migrants, future interventions provided pathways to permanence in the city through the organization of their position within it. During the developmental period, the state envisaged their incorporation as modern middle class homeowners (or their exclusion and expulsion to their towns of origin). The AVs in contrast, sought to construct *barrios* from the infrastructure of both informal settlements and the poor quality and underserviced housing built during this period. Migrants could participate in the construction of their own *barrios*, *autoconstrucción* and *auto-soluciones* providing a basis from which residents could claim *el barrio es nuestro* — the neighbourhood is ours.

In the changing context of transformations and growing expectations, the AVs pursued the attainment of ideal *barrios* where the state was unable to provide them. The AVs initially formed through efforts to achieve services and amenities in peripheral *barrios* but rapidly developed into a much more expansive movement. Associations intervened in particular spaces, giving them form. In the process, they broke from the Franco dictatorships ideal of private homeownership reclaiming the common space of *el barrio*. They transformed different *barrios* through *auto-soluciones* — resolving problems and creating infrastructure without intervention from the state. They experimented with forms of participation and decision-making, organized festivals, cultural

events and developed traditions. Through their interventions, the AVs gave territorial form and cultural content to particular spaces in the city. Rather than waiting for solutions from the state, migrants were able to participate actively in the constitution of their own *barrio*. Through their actions, the AVs opened spaces of conflict and negotiation with the state that allowed them to, on some occasions, speed up the transformation of their *barrio*. Particularly after the transition to democracy, wholesale changes were achieved in peripheral *barrios*. However, the desired outcomes of AVs often reflected desires for European modernity — the ideal *barrio* approaching the ideal neighbourhood unit.

Through the study of negotiations and conflict during the Franco dictatorship, I have conceptualised the emergence of a political constellation around the figure of the citizen-neighbour grounded in *el barrio*. In Chapters 5 and 6, I employ this political constellation and the figure of the citizen-neighbour as analytical tools to trace continuities and discontinuities shaping *el barrio* in the post-GFC period. In the following chapter, I track the disarticulation of the citizen-neighbour through the space of *el barrio*. I note how the state actively produces differences between residents in *el barrio* during the post-GFC period, rather than seeking the unitary citizen-neighbour, leading to very different experiences of the same space. At the same time, the citizen-neighbour persists both as a figure of aspiration and nostalgia and a tool employed to reimagine neighbourly relations.

## 5. The disarticulation of the citizen-neighbour

In this chapter, I track the disarticulation of the citizen-neighbour. The figure of the citizen neighbour serves as an analytical tool to explore transformations in the current period. I focus on developments in two *barrios* in Madrid: Tetuán and Lavapiés. I outline how a different series of relationships are inscribed in *el barrio* in this context, shaping the modes of political belonging that are possible. The last decades have seen both economic boom and crisis. Up to the Global Financial Crisis (GFC), Madrid was considered a success story of neoliberal policies. A large influx of migrants from outside the state's borders contributed to reshaping numerous *barrios*. The GFC impacted negatively on work stability and unemployment, austerity measures exacerbating already tenuous situations of employment, housing and residential status. Throughout the boom and crisis, forms of political belonging diverging substantially from the citizen-neighbour have become increasingly visible. In this context, state interventions do not seek to produce homogenous spaces inhabited by citizen-neighbours, but rather differential spaces populated by both favoured subjects and subordinated others. These transformations have led to the disarticulation of the citizen-neighbour. Despite its disarticulation, the citizen-neighbour persists as a powerful figure of aspiration and nostalgia. It is in this context that social movements have emerged and attempted to overcome boundaries separating residents.

Neoliberal policies have been implemented in different ways and with different ramifications at diverse spatial scales globally since the 1970s (Brenner, Peck and Theodore 2010). Neil Brenner and Nik Theodore argue that "the overarching goal of... neoliberal urban policy experiments [has been] to mobilize city space as an arena both for market-oriented economic growth and for elite consumption practices" (Brenner and Theodore 2002, 21). Neoliberal policies have reconfigured state interventions in *el barrio* and reshaped the politics of neighbouring in ways that Lefebvre

could not have envisaged. In 1990, Gilles Deleuze noted a shift away from forms of government grounded in the production of abstract spaces. He identified a transformation from “environments of enclosure” such as the factory, which distributed space and ordered time “to compose a productive force within the dimension of space/time”, towards forms of control intervening in complex space, punishing and purging undesirable subjects (Deleuze 1991, 3). In this context, state interventions have accentuated the differential production of subjects. To grasp the spatio-temporal dimensions of political possibility during this period, I employ Ranabir Samaddar’s notion of the post-colonial predicament. This allows me to track the differential production of subjects in the same space.

The historical studies in the previous chapters facilitate a more detailed analysis of the contemporary period. They help to identify the changing relationship between migration, relations of proximity and planning. Different interventions, planning or building on neighbourly relations, mediate the position of migrants in the city at different moments making certain forms of political belonging possible. During the period studied in this chapter, *el barrio* becomes a site for real estate speculation, an experience marketed to particular types of individuals and a space for global trade. State interventions produce spaces catering for desired individuals such as business elites, homeowners and tourists. The experience of others is shaped by labour precarity, racial profiling and instability. Whilst the city is significantly transformed as a result, the historical studies in previous chapters allow me to establish lines of continuity with past conflicts. In this sense, these studies contribute to a clearer understanding of the residual aspects shaping the physical form and memories present in contemporary *barrios*.

## 1. The production of the “global city”

Spain's incorporation into the European Economic Community (ECC) in 1986 led to Madrid establishing itself as a global business and financial centre. With integration into the ECC, the Madrid based stock market was transformed and received a steady inflow of investment. Privatised state companies and multinational corporations established their headquarters in the city. Madrid became a hub linking capital flows between Europe and Latin America (Rodríguez López 2007a, 55-64). Simultaneously, the city became one of the most important logistical centres in Southern Europe, serving as a centre for transport, packaging, storage and associated industries as well as becoming a neurological centre from which flows, distribution and coordination were governed (*ibid.*, 78-80). Scholars suggest that Madrid has been a prodigious follower of neoliberal policies during this period (Rodríguez López 2007a; Méndez 2012). Through neoliberal policies, cities have sought to make themselves more attractive for "flexible" capital by providing the correct incentives and labour conditions (Harvey 1989, 9). Ricardo Méndez (2012, 32-34) notes how successive Spanish governments fomented the financialization of the economy by allowing speculation, concentrated investment in real estate and the deregulation of the labour market.

Before the financial crisis, Madrid's economic model and its insertion in the global economic system was considered in high regard by a number of International Organizations (*ibid.*, 30). In a report published in 2007, OECD experts suggested that Madrid had excelled economically (OECD 2007). Madrid also improved its position in *The Globalization and World Cities Research Network's* rankings — reaching tenth spot globally and third in Europe. It satisfied all the requirements to attract investment: capacity for economic growth, global market connectivity and a trustworthy image (cited in Méndez 2012, 37). Harvey illustrates how cities have attempted to depict themselves as "cultural, retail, entertainment and office centers" (Harvey 1989, 8). The Madrid government invested heavily in branding the city as a spectacular "global" city. Indicative of this effort were consecutive bids to attract the Summer Olympics and Eurovegas (Gonick 2016, 218).

During this same period, there was a rapid increase in private investment in real estate. Charnock, Purcell and Ribera-Fumaz argue that rapid urbanisation was tied to particular material conditions that made investment in the construction industry and real estate market particularly profitable from 1997 to the crisis (Charnock et. al. 2014, 103-104). They suggest that “landlords, capitalists, and local states in Spain... were experiencing heightened competitive pressures on their own revenues and abilities to manage the urban effects of deindustrialisation and social fragmentation after the 1980s” (Charnock et. al. 2014, 104). Speculation in the real estate market became an important generator of wealth in this context. Speculative urbanisation led to the “expansion of fictitious capital and debt” (Charnock et. al. 2014, 103) and provoked a housing boom and the creation of a real-estate bubble (Charnock et. al. 2014, 103-104).

Fiscal measures were taken to promote development and through it the spread of homeownership (Méndez 2015, 7). New laws sought to tackle the lack of affordable housing by increasing competition among developers and reducing land scarcity. In theory, this would push down housing prices (Charnock et. al. 2014, 95). The government provided the infrastructure to encourage urban development. At the regional level, this included the extension of the metro, light rail and highways. The national government assisted with extensions to the airport, a fast interurban rail and connecting highways (Méndez 2012, 39). The construction sector flourished, representing 12 percent of all employment, contributing to the development of complementary industries and services (*ibid.*, 40). As a result, large real estate and building conglomerates gained influence over the local authorities (Méndez 2015, 7). The urban landscape was dramatically transformed; “[b]oth the capital and its suburban hinterland experienced unprecedented rates of urbanization” (Gonick 2015a, 65-66). During the two decades following 1995, nearly 1,000,000 family homes were built (Méndez 2012, 37). The remaking of Madrid went hand in hand with a process of “touristification”. In 2012, the tourist industry represented 9 percent of Madrid’s Gross Domestic Product and generated around 190,000 jobs (Ayuntamiento de Madrid 2012, 249). In

2016, Madrid had 6.7 million visitors. Due to the high numbers of tourists, parts of the city have been completely transformed. Observers have recently noted how the increasing demand for hotel rooms, and Airbnb apartments, have transformed central *barrios* increasing rent and retail prices (Carmona and Encinas 2017).

Migrants contributed to urban development both as workers and through demand for housing. Rodríguez López (2007b, 99) indicates that between 1995 and 2005, the number of people employed in the city increased by 1,100,000. At the same time, more than 500,000 people migrated to the city from overseas. The foreign migrant population jumped from 135,000 in 1999, to 800,000 in 2006 (*ibid.*, 125) constituting 87.35 percent of demographic growth between 2001 and 2003 (Frizzera and García Almirall 2008). In 2016, foreign citizens made up around 13 percent of the region's population, 862,085 people — having peaked at 1,118,991 in 2010, with another 335,821 foreign born migrants having acquired Spanish citizenship (Comunidad de Madrid 2016). Initially, the majority of migrants came from Latin America (Ecuadorians and Colombians being the largest groups), Morocco and China, whilst more recently the Romanian population has established itself as the largest single nationality (*ibid.*). Many migrants moved into low socio-economic zones (Frizzera and Almirall 2008), finding housing in the more affordable areas in the city centre and peripheral areas to the southeast (Jeannin and Alcolea 2006, 84). Méndez (2012, 40) notes how migrants became concentrated in traditional working class *barrios* such as Lavapiés, Tetuán, Usera, and Puente de Vallecas. Similar to previous instances, *barrios* with high migrant populations have become perceived as insecure. Sergio García García and Débora Ávila Cantos (2016, 48) note how foreign migration was increasingly associated with insecurity from the year 2000. In surveys conducted by the *Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas* (Centre of Sociological Research) in 2002, 15.3 percent strongly agreed and 44.3 percent partly agreed that there was a relationship between insecurity and immigration (Rodríguez Díaz 2006).



By 2007, growth was waning and the GFC sent the economy into crisis. Restrictions on credit had a significant impact on real estate development. This resulted in massive losses of employment in the construction sector, which eventually impacted on other sectors and consumption more broadly (Méndez 2012, 41). The destruction of jobs was coupled with austerity policies and further deregulation of labour relations (*ibid.*, 43). Fiscal austerity contributed to reductions in public services and employment, and reduced investment in infrastructure, research and welfare (Méndez 2015, 13-14). It also contributed to the proliferation of abandoned spaces, the exhaustion of funds leaving buildings unfinished. Scholars have noted a heavy reduction in urban land development (Díaz-Pacheco and García Palomares 2014). The website *Cadaveres Inmobiliarias* (or Real Estate Corpses) has mapped abandoned construction sites in Madrid (Cadaveres Inmobiliarios). Similar abandonment has been noted throughout Europe and the US, in the context of post-GFC austerity. Scholars have drawn attention to what has been described as “austerity urbanism” (Peck 2012). Peck suggests that austerity has been used to entrench neoliberal reforms emerging as “a historic opportunity to press for yet smaller small-state settlements at the urban scale” (Peck 2012, 626). Fran Tonkiss argues that as a result, “cities are bearing the physical scars of disinvestment, disuse and decline” (Tonkiss 2013, 312). Cian O’Callaghan, Mark Boyle and Rob Kitchin (2014) assert that ‘ghost estates’ and unfinished projects are emblematic of the landscape of austerity in Ireland.

## 2. Fragmented *barrios*

Different forms of belonging have become increasingly prevalent in *el barrio* — particularly after the onset of the GFC. The purpose of this section is to elaborate on these different forms of belonging and how they have been produced through practices differentiating between residents in *el barrio*. Particularly relevant in this regard, is access to housing, the spread of precarious forms of employment and policing practices that differentiate between neighbours on racial grounds.

Samaddar's conceptualisation of the post-colonial predicament helps comprehend the differential production of subjects in this context. Samaddar (2010, 262) suggests that the role of "place" in the formation of political identity shifts with the emergence of novel forms of "work". He notes the splintering of the workforce employing the conceptual figures of the nomad, the displaced, and the besieged settler to account for this (*ibid.*, 263). Following Samaddar's theorisation, the nomad embraces flexibility and individualism to overcome job insecurity. The displaced person is forced into a nomadic lifestyle whilst having their permanence in a particular place constantly challenged. The besieged settler senses that their permanence and stability is being taken away from them. Samaddar's figures are identifiable in *el barrio* in this context and provide a starting point to conceptualise the differential production of neighbours and the subsequent disarticulation of the citizen-neighbour.

Numerous studies have highlighted the privatization of space in Europe and North America during this period. This process has been linked to the privileging and protection of certain subjects and the policing and abandonment of others. Margaret Kohn (2004, 2-3) outlines a broad trend in North America towards the privatization of public space. She argues that public places increasingly mimic the strategies of private spaces by attempting to control access, by permitting some and excluding others. This tendency is reflected most clearly in the proliferation of privileged zones within the city, such as business improvement districts and gated communities in the suburbs. Kohn suggests that privatization "reinforces existing patterns of segregation. It makes it easier to ensure that business people do not encounter street people, consumers do not confront citizens, and the rich do not see the poor" (*ibid.*, 7).

Scholars have suggested that the implementation of neoliberal policies has exacerbated the differential treatment of spaces and subjects. Loïc Wacquant (2012, 67) argues that with the shift towards neoliberal policies, the 'invisible hand' of the market is wedded to the 'iron fist' of the

penal state. Mustafa Dikeç (Dikeç 2007, 284) outlines how, in France, the conservative government established three priorities in urban policy in 1993, “authority, identity and activity”: authority was to control problem neighbourhoods, identity was to integrate second and third generation migrants, and activity was to attract businesses to particular areas. Wacquant (2012, 74) argues, that the implementation of neoliberal policies in the USA and France has served to accentuate the freedom of the wealthy, while the state simultaneously has become more intrusive and paternalistic with respect to the urban poor. In this context, Wacquant notes how “the state marks out and manages” certain areas as problem territories, “in its quest to make markets and to mould citizens who conform to them” (*ibid.*, 76). In her study of New York, Emily Kaufman (2016) illustrates how certain zones are designated as hot-spots. These zones are subject to intense surveillance and militarized policing that see the “extension of military ideas of tracking, identification and targeting into the quotidian spaces and circulations of everyday life” (Graham cited in Kaufman 2016, 72). She goes on to note that “at the neighbourhood scale, the[se] practices also mark ‘dangerous’ mobilities, for the ways residents move through their neighbourhood... this profiling of dangerous people, places, and mobilities shapes residents’ mobility” (*ibid.*, 73). Sergio García García and Débora Ávila Cantos (2014) outline similar developments in Madrid. They note an increased police presence and the elaboration of regulations that limit the use of public space.

At the same time, scholars have drawn attention to processes of gentrification in particular neighbourhoods remaking spaces to cater for favoured subjects. In his early study, Neil Smith (1996, 61) notes how the deterioration and devalorization of inner city neighbourhoods produced the possibility for profitable reinvestment. Neglected neighbourhoods were targeted by urban renewal projects, financial institutions and property developers as spaces that could be marketed to urban elites as “potential market[s] for construction loans and mortgages” (*ibid.*, 1996, 68). Simultaneously, public housing was diminished in favour of private home ownership. Private home

ownership was conceived as a way to eliminate high concentrations of poverty and the social problems associated with housing projects (Hanlon 2010, 80). James Hanlon (2010, 80) notes that many public housing projects in the USA have been demolished, redesigned and replaced by “mixed-income” neighbourhoods. This redevelopment has served to entrench privately owned housing, “revalorizing previously ‘undervalued’ urban space”, thus consequently forcing the majority of poorer residents to relocate” (*ibid.*, 94).

In Madrid, interventions have entrenched the homeowner as the desired resident of *el barrio* — alongside guests such as business elites and tourists. Gonick (2015a, 71) suggests that the promotion of homeownership represented both a social ideal and a strategy of growth during this period. The hypotheses underpinning incentives for housing development was that it would lead to a drop in housing prices (Gaja 2005, 23-25). Gonick illustrates that the main focus of low-income housing policy during this period revolved around subsidizing mortgages. She argues that through subsidies given “for units in specific housing estates, based on age, income and family size” (Gonick 2015a, 71) and tax incentives for developers and buyers, homeownership became “the de facto state-housing program” (*ibid.*, 71). Despite this, housing prices grew exponentially as did the debt of homeowners (Gaja 2005, 23-25). Meanwhile the rental market remained small and under-regulated permitting exploitative practices by property owners. In 2007, 87% of the population found housing by buying it and only 13 percent through rent (Méndez and Plaza 2016, 105). Landlords frequently discriminated against migrant tenants in this context and demanded huge *avales bancarias* — large sums of money deposited in banks to be left untouched for the duration of the contract — or down payments equivalent to several months’ rent in advance (Gonick 2015c, 9).

The dominance of homeownership and the complications of the rental market made it difficult for many to acquire stable housing. In 2006, the group *V de Vivenda* was created to draw attention

to the difficulties faced by young people in acquiring housing during this period of spiralling housing prices and high rates of precarious employment (Huerga 2015, 57). Despite the influx of migrants little official help was made available (Gonick 2015c, 6-7). The migrant was framed as “a rational actor who must choose to take up this project, crafting her sensibilities, habits, demands and desires to fit the prescribed conventions of the dominant culture” (Gonick 2015a, 99). Gonick argues that without a coherent plan for migrant integration, “integration became closely allied with the spread of homeownership through the instrument of the mortgage” (2015a, 84). The positive treatment migrants received from real estate agencies and banks, was in contrast to the hostility they were accustomed to in other aspects of their lives (*ibid.*, 101). Property ownership provided a number of advantages for migrants to avoid the difficulties of the rental market and facilitated other needs. For example, in order to bring over family, migrants needed to have secured housing that was otherwise difficult to acquire through the rental market (Gonick 2015a, 100). Extremely precarious arrangements also played a role in housing arriving migrants. These included what have been pejoratively labelled *pisos patera* — small poor quality apartments shared by many people (De Llano 2011). These were often linked to *chabolismo vertical* — substandard blocks of crowded small or extremely small apartments sometimes lacking bathrooms and running water. A large number of such substandard buildings continue to exist in certain central *barrios* such as Lavapiés (Carranco 2008). *Chabolas* persist in some areas — particularly in Cañada Real (Gonick 2015c) — over 2000 being recorded in 2012 (García Gallo 2012).

In the wake of the GFC, this obsession for homeownership provoked acute problems. During the boom period, many accumulated large amounts of debt in order to acquire property. Debt and employment loss led to an eviction crisis (Méndez and Plaza 2016, 106). According to estimates from the *Plataforma de Afectados por la Hipoteca* in Madrid, there were 5499 evictions in 2008, 7405 in 2009, 12,648 in 2010 and 13,415 in 2011 (Colau and Alemany 2013). There was a

concentration of foreclosures and evictions in the south of the city (Obeso 2014, 338) — the districts most effected being San Blas, Tetuán, Puente de Vallecas, Villa de Vallecas, Usera, Carabanchel, Latina and Vicálvaro (*ibid.*, 338-339). Gonick (2015b, 8) cites a survey of 6,000 foreclosures concluded in February 2012 that revealed that 35 percent of those people affected were foreign born. The prevalence of foreclosures and evictions amongst the migrant population was reflected by the emergence of the *Coordinadora Nacional de Ecuatorianos en España*. It was formed to deal specifically with the problem amongst Ecuadorians. This group inspired the creation of the well-known *Plataforma de Afectados por la Hipoteca* (Vilella 2012).

Below I introduce Tetuán and Lavapiés, the *barrios* that discussion is focused on in this chapter and the following chapter. Then three factors are discussed that have contributed to the fragmentation of *el barrio* during this period: precarious employment; the persistence of the citizen-neighbour as a figure of aspiration and nostalgia; and the differential treatment of neighbours connected to a white spatio-temporal imaginary.

## 2.1 Tetuán and Lavapiés

The first settlement in Tetuán is said to have been created on the 11<sup>th</sup> of May 1860 when troops returning from war in Africa set up camp in an area north of the city centre previously named Dehesa de Amanuel. Because of this settlement, the area was renamed Tetuán de las Victorias (named after the Moroccan city Tétuoan). Businesses were established around the settlement (Burgos 2010a). Subsequently, migrants settled the area, many living in makeshift housing. Whilst relatively far from the city centre, it was well connected via the main street Bravo Murillo. Housing was built on either side of the main thoroughfare. There were initially two settlements that became a homogeneous urban conglomerate in the 1930s (Burgos 2010b). Tetuán was from its very beginning a *barrio* of migrants. Currently, it is also one of the *barrios* with the highest proportion of foreign migrants in Madrid. In 2013, according to the Madrid City Council there were

30,884 foreign migrants in *el barrio*, 19.8% of the population. The largest individual groups were from the Dominican Republic, the Philippines, Ecuador, Romania, Morocco and China (Lin Qiu 2013). Due to this long history of migration and numerous government interventions, the landscape is diverse with a variety of housing types existing side by side. Some suggest that there are two Tetuáns. Development to the west of Bravo Murillo is unplanned with narrow winding streets. On the east side of Bravo Murillo, the structure of streets and buildings are planned and regular (Sánchez 2014). Tetuán is composed of multiple pockets. The area closest to Cuatro Caminos is sometimes referred to as the little Caribbean, due to the visibility of the Dominican population (*ibid.*). The Muslim population is particularly visible around the Abu-Bakr Mosque (or Madrid Central Mosque); and areas of *casas bajas* still remained along Paseo de la dirección in 2015. Whilst more recently there has been suggestions that it will undergo gentrification (García Vega 2014) Tetuán is often described as dirty, dangerous and abandoned. One conservative newspaper described it as Madrid's Bronx (ABC).



6.1 Remaining *casa baja* near Paseo de la dirección (2015)

After the GFC, numerous interventions have occurred in Tetuán. In recent years, mobilizations have attempted to stall the forced eviction and demolition of *casas bajas* built in the 40s and 50s such as at 29 Ofelia Nieto (Abellán Bordallo 2014) and the area of Paseo de la dirección (Salido Cobo 2016). The *Asamblea Popular de Tetuán* (the people's assembly of Tetuán) — emerging out of the 15M movement — and the *Okupa*<sup>1</sup> La Enredadera (La Enredadera) have been involved in leading campaigns that highlight social problems. The campaign *Invisibles de Tetuán* [Tetuán's invisibles] attempted to make visible issues affecting inhabitants in the wake of the crisis. It began after the *Ayuntamiento de Tetuán* attempted to close a Food Bank started by the *Asamblea Popular de Tetuán* on the pretext that there was no need for it in *el barrio*. The campaign argued that certain residents were invisible for those planning and governing *el barrio*. The *invisibles* included “the evicted, the people who have their water, electricity and gas cut off, the people who cannot give their children three meals a day, who are discriminated against by the police due to the colour of their skin, who are excluded from the public health system” (Invisibles de Tetuán). Conflict has also emerged in relation to the neo-nazi *Okupa*, Hogar Social, which occupied buildings in Tetuán and created a social centre with a foodbank that distributed to Spaniards only. This group argued that they preferred to give their resources “to our neighbours [rather] than to those that come from outside” (Martín 2014).

Lavapiés does not exist as an administrative unit. Nevertheless, it exists within the popular perception of its residents and the inhabitants of the city. Legend has it that it was the Jewish sector of the city in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. However, little evidence has been found to uphold this commonly held assumption (Carretero 2013). It has been one of the main *barrios* in which migrants have settled in central Madrid throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Like Tetuán, it since received

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<sup>1</sup> *Okupa* is the term used by the Spanish squatting tradition in reference to occupied buildings. This tradition will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter.



a high proportion of foreign migrants (31 percent of the population in 2013) due in part to low prices linked to the poor quality of buildings in the area (*ibid.*). Similar to Tetuán it has often received negative attention in the media, being described as dirty, dangerous (Giura and Rodríguez 2012) and to be avoided by tourists (Sevillano 2008). However, in recent times, it has increasingly been linked to ‘edgy’ forms of tourism and gentrification (Fanjul 2013) that commodify the very dirt and danger identified as problematic — a trend I examine in more detail in Chapter 6. It has been transformed over the last few decades through numerous government interventions, such as the creation of cultural institutions, public subventions for building owners, policies to attract certain groups to *el barrio* as well as an increased police presence and video surveillance (Sequera 2013, 7-8). Jorge Sequera has shown how Lavapiés has been actively constructed as a cultural centre to attract the creative classes and tourists. Such measures have gone hand in hand with increased policing and security measures such as video surveillance and police patrols targeting certain residents (*ibid.*).

Recently, Lavapiés has been depicted as suffering from problems of “coexistence” and “integration”. A special plan, the *Plan de Mejora de la Seguridad*, was developed in 2012 to address these problems as well as a perception of insecurity. Despite official concerns, claims of insecurity have little empirical basis (Delegación del gobierno 2012, 14). The plan declared Lavapiés a priority security zone due to the existence of a specific types of delinquency linked to the migrant population, *Okupas* and the 15M movement (*ibid.*, 7-9). Government Delegate Cristina Cifuentes argued that intervention was needed in Lavapiés so that “[i]t was not converted into a ghetto or a marginal territory” (cited in Bonfilgi 2014, 67). Problems of coexistence were associated with the diversity of its residents. The plan differentiated between “national citizens, many of them elderly, who were born and grew up in *el barrio*; groups of young people, related to different anti-system groups that want to convert Lavapiés into a reference point of their protests... [and] immigrants from a multitude of countries and cultures: Asian, Caribbean, etc.”

(Delegación del gobierno 2012, 13). According to the plan, tensions emerged from the interaction between these groups. “Anti-system” groups were attributed with inhibiting police interventions, as they challenged police actions against drug trafficking conducted by “black citizens” (*ciudadanos de raza negra*), and in doing so put others at risk (*ibid.*, 10). The plan depicted “national citizens” as being under siege by the migrant population and “anti-system” groups.

## 2.2 Precarious forms of employment

Precarious forms of employment played a key role in fuelling Spain’s economic boom and shape the relationship between particular individuals and *el barrio*. Precarious forms of work have made the ideal of homeownership, so important to the figure of the citizen-neighbour, unfeasible for a significant part of the population. Nuria Alabao (2017) shows how precarity has affected women disproportionately in this context. She notes how in 2017, the majority of the female workforce was employed in roles marked by precarity and low salaries, particularly those associated with traditional gender roles such as care work and cleaning. Precarity has also shaped the work conditions of many migrants. The majority of migrants arriving in the city from overseas during the boom period were incorporated into low wage; low skilled positions (Méndez 2008). Less than 10 percent of migrants became high earning professionals (Rodríguez López 2007b, 125). Many migrants found work in construction, the service sector, hospitality, care, domestic work, sales, reception, cleaning, and security (Rodríguez López 2007b, 103-107). Incorporation into the workforce was particularly gendered. In a study conducted by the *Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas* (CSIC), 50.2 percent of migrant men surveyed began work in construction, 27.5 percent in services, 10 percent in industry and 10.1 percent in agriculture. In contrast, 85.2 percent of women found employment in the service sector with housework constituting 49.6 percent of all jobs (with particularly high rates amongst Latin American women) (Méndez 2008). On average, migrants earned significantly less than Spaniards (*ibid.*). Of those

interviewed in the CSIC study, many had worked without a contract and in short term positions during their first year in Spain. While employment stability improved slightly over time there continued to be high rates of informality and precarity in subsequent years (*ibid.*).

Temporary work agreements constituted 34 percent of all work in 2007 (Nieves 2015). The number of people employed in permanent positions has remained relatively stable in the wake of GFC, the crisis impacting most heavily on workers who, prior to the crisis, held low paid temporary positions (Méndez and Prada-Trigo 2014). As these types of positions were most prevalent amongst residents in traditional working class *barrios* (Méndez 2012, 43), Méndez and Prada-Trigo (2014) argue that the crisis has reinforced socio-spatial segmentation and the split between the north-west and the south-east of the city. Despite reduction in total employment following the GFC, the number of temporary work agreements has remained high. Precarious low paid (or unpaid) forms of employment have been purported as necessary in order to achieve economic recuperation. Mara Ferreri has noted how, in the context of austerity, there has been a pervasive logic that “carries an ‘unvoiced assumption of total personal flexibility’, normalising ... ‘pop-up people’ who exist in a state of ‘precarious or intermittent employment’” (Ferreri 2015., 185). In 2014, Spain had the second highest rate of temporary forms of employment in Europe at 24 percent (Nieves 2015). Between January and July 2015, 90 percent of all work agreements signed were temporary (Munera 2015). Additionally, much of the work available was for very short periods. 41 percent of new temporary positions created in January 2015 lasted for less than a month. This increased to 46 percent in December 2015 and 47 percent in August 2015 (Nuñez 2015). Between January and July of 2015, employment lasting one week or less made up 25 percent of new positions (Munera 2015).

The possibility for exploitation of workers has been exacerbated by high levels of unemployment. Between 2006 and 2011, overall unemployment in the region rose from 6.49 percent to 18.51

percent. At the same time, unemployment amongst the foreign migrant population increased from 9.43 percent to 29 percent, and for people under the age of 25, unemployment rocketed from 17.36 percent to 43.63 percent (Méndez and Prada-Trigo 2014). The resulting options for Spanish youth have often been limited to temporary work agreements and unpaid, or poorly paid internships. Youth unemployment has pressured many to accept any form of work on offer (Alderman 2013). Numerous organizations including *Oficina Precaria*, have denounced jobs being camouflaged as unpaid or poorly paid internships in this context (Juventud Sin Futuro and Oficina Precaria 2016). A high rate of short term and poorly paid work has meant that young people lack the workplace stability to move away from home. In 2014, more than seven out of ten young people who worked lived at home (Consejo de la juventud en España 2014, 91). Prior to the 15M protests in 2011, the group *Juventud Sin Futuro* (Youth without a future) summarised the issues facing Spanish youth with the slogan “*Sin casa, sin curro, sin pension, sin miedo*” (Without a house, without a job, without a pension, without fear). There has been a mass exodus of youth seeking work in other member states of the European Union or further afield since the GFC. *Juventud Sin Futuro* has documented and drawn attention to such youth migration. On the 27<sup>th</sup> of October 2015, the group launched a campaign titled “*Vidas Nómadas*” (Nomadic Lives) in order to give a voice to all those who had been forced to leave in order to build a future for themselves (Juventud sin futuro and Marea Granate 2015). The group conducted a study of 8487 youths who had left Spain. They noted that the majority of these felt they had no other option than to leave: 89.54 percent felt that they were forced to leave, 79.89 percent wanted to return whilst 81.30 percent felt that returning was not possible (Verdes-Montenegro and Padilla 2015).

The forms of precarity outlined in this section make homeownership unrealistic for a significant part of Madrid’s population. As noted in the previous chapter, homeownership constituted a key component of the figure of the citizen-neighbour. Homeownership permitted a degree of permanence in *el barrio*. This permanence facilitated the creation of a sense of ownership of *el*

*barrio*. Homeownership and permanence continue to define the ideal citizen during the post-GFC period — the spread of homeownership being one of the goals of urban planning and development. However, precariousness and temporariness shape the possibility of adhering to this ideal. The precarious housing arrangements and the eviction crisis mentioned earlier, in combination with precarious work arrangements, have played a key role in shaping the relationship between particular individuals and *el barrio*. Consequently, the ideal of homeownership conflicts with the limited capacity of many to attain it. Particular groups have been compelled to move in and out of *el barrio* (and the nation-state) in search of work and a more stable existence. The mobility of migrants and young people is contrasted with the stability of the homeowner. A perception of temporariness associated with mobile inhabitants informs the creation of a distinction between those who *el barrio* belongs to and those who are passing through. Racialised distinctions further entrench this perception as I outline below.

### 2.3 The citizen-neighbour as a figure of aspiration and nostalgia

Despite the diversity of forms of inhabiting *el barrio*, the citizen-neighbour continues to be a powerful figure of aspiration and nostalgia. In this context, the citizen-neighbour takes on a racialised (white) and temporalized (original) quality. The citizen-neighbour is depicted as being overwhelmed by change wrought by non-white, racialised newcomers and is no longer capable of maintaining control over *their barrio*. After struggling to maintain their position in the city, the citizen-neighbour's achievements are undermined by an influx of problems arising from irregular migration, crime and rising house prices. A white spatio-temporal imaginary frames the "autochthonous" inhabitant under siege by problems brought by racialized others. Racial identity becomes a marker of temporalized ownership wherein a white<sup>2</sup> resident perceives that they have

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<sup>2</sup> I employ the term 'white' in this thesis to account for the perception of particular individuals regarding their position in *el barrio*. I draw on Ghassan Hage's (1998, 98) theorisation of being 'white' as a mode of

a *prior* claim on *el barrio*, regardless of when they arrived, relative to a non-white resident who, also regardless of their arrival time, are *perceived* as not belonging.

In recent years, numerous television programs have appeared giving sensational accounts of problem *barrios*. These have drawn attention to problems of “integration” and “coexistence” in concentrated areas of migration — similar to those outlined in the *Plan de Mejora de la Seguridad de Lavapiés*. The program *Reporteros 360* on the government owned Telemadrid station, recently presented reports documenting life in both Tetuán (*Reporteros 360a*) and Lavapiés (*Reporteros 360b*). The main focus of these reports were problem issues linked to both regular and irregular migration, the occupation of buildings, antisocial behaviour, drugs and crime. These diverse elements were constantly linked throughout the programs. This genre of program depicts a citizen-neighbour under siege by a swath of problems that are transforming their *barrio*. Media reports frequently attach certain problems to defined migrant groups. There are recurrent mentions of black drug traffickers, Latin American gangs (Gil 2016), Islamic terrorists (Lázaro 2017), petty crimes committed by Romanians (Negre 2014), apartments packed with sub-Saharan migrants (De Llano 2011) who live from hawking (Durán and Luque 2016) and the informal settlements of Romanian Gypsies (Abdelrahim 2010). Migrants are often perceived as having links with mafias run by foreigners (BVODH 2015, 56), framed as the bringers of diseases (*ibid.*, 57) and conceptualised as part of an invasion (*ibid.*, 57).

In the face of such threats, *el barrio* is perceived as being in danger of becoming something else — a ghetto as Government Delegate Cristina Cifuentes suggested about Lavapiés. The use of the term ghetto (*gueto* in Spanish) by Cifuentes is significant because it underlines the panic associated with the disruptions linked to the impact of racialized others in *el barrio*. Referring

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self-perception which is largely unconscious. Within the white spatio-temporal imaginary, the perception of being white corresponds with a perception of belonging in and owning *el barrio*.

originally to an enclosed space delegated to Jews in Venice in 1516, the term ghetto has spread over the last century to describe African American neighbourhoods in the US and later, spaces inhabited by racial others more generally. Bruce Haynes notes that ghetto denominates the relegation of “a group of persons distinguished as morally different and identified by a particular ethnic feature... to a physical space that is isolated from other areas of the city” (Haynes 2008, 348). The idea of *el barrio*, in contrast to the ghetto, is grounded in a white spatio-temporal imaginary, where a particular type of citizen is understood as *the* legitimate neighbour and ‘owner’. George Lipsitz has illustrated how US society “is structured by a white spatial imaginary” grounded in certain forms of occupying space that revolve around the “properly gendered prosperous suburban home” (Lipsitz 2011, 13). Similarly, Charles Mills has drawn attention to what he calls “white time” that is constructed around particular time maps of “collective memory” and “common past” (Mills 2014, 29). In relation to *el barrio*, such imaginaries link the neighbour and belonging to particular itineraries and forms of inhabiting space. Subjects and trajectories outside of this imaginary appear not to belong or threaten *el barrio*. Within the white spatio-temporal imaginary underpinning Cifuentes’ statement, if *el barrio* becomes a ghetto, it becomes a space that is no longer controlled by citizens. Consequently, it is no longer properly part of national space and threatens it. This constructs a particular narrative linking the past, present and future (see Baldwin 2012) of *el barrio*. After claiming it as their own, *el barrio* is becoming a space that no longer belongs to the citizen-neighbour. Constant control and vigilance is thus required to avoid the ghettoization of *el barrio*.

Liliana Suárez-Navaz in *Rebordering the Mediterranean: Boundaries and Citizenship in Southern Europe* provides insight into how racial categories have emerged since Spain’s incorporation into the European Union. She studies negotiations in relation to the place of African migrants in an Andalusian town. She suggests that in their initial reactions, the locals were unsure of the migrants’ position and thus negotiations emerged pertaining to how to “put them in their place”

(Suárez-Navaz 2004, 222). The experience of poverty and earlier emigration of residents from the town allowed for the creation of an association between new arrivals and the impoverished classes of the past (*ibid.*, 223). Nevertheless, as Spain became integrated into Europe, she notes that the redefinition of national discourse created a “primordially unequal caste system, a multiple and hierarchical system of legal statutes that perpetuates global inequalities and reinscribes class and ethnic racism in the form of legal exclusion and marginalization” (*ibid.*, 224). The documentary *Flores de Luna* (Vicente Córdoba 2008) illustrates the creation of similar hierarchies in the peripheral *barrio* Pozo Del Tío Raimundo (discussed in Chapter 4) in Madrid. The documentary outlines the history of *el barrio* — from informal settlement to the arrival of foreign migrants. Whilst some older residents are more careful with their assessment of the migrant presence in the contemporary context — remembering their own experiences, many of those interviewed correlate the arrival of the racial other with problems and the undoing of unity. This is firstly articulated through the presence of Roma people and, later, with the arrival of Ecuadorians, Moroccans and Chinese. Youths who were interviewed complained that they were becoming foreigners in *their barrio*.

The notion of ownership is a fundamental facet of the white spatio-temporal imaginary. As noted in the previous section, homeownership and the associated permanence, is contrasted with the perceived temporariness of others. Infused with a white spatio-temporal imaginary, the white citizen-neighbour perceives themselves as being the owner of *el barrio*. They perceive themselves as being overrun by racial others who do not conform to their ideals of permanence and homeownership. Ghassan Hage’s exploration of the imaginary of a nationalist owner and manager of national space is useful to elaborate on this idea of ownership. Hage draws attention to particular imaginaries underpinning white discourses on migrant arrivals in their neighbourhoods in Australia. He suggests that these provide categories employed in everyday practice, “[u]sing them, people worry (in a specific racist way), about their neighbourhood, about walking the



streets at night, about where they can do their shopping and what kind of shops are available to them and so on” (1998, p. 31). Hage suggests that categories of spatial management connect neighbourhood space to the nation-state. Thus, “[e]ven when people are speaking about specific localities, they often end up articulating these to the space of the nation. They may experience what they consider as ‘too many Muslims’ or ‘too many Asians’ in their street or in their neighbourhood, but [they will conceive] the ‘problem’ in national terms” (*ibid.*, 38). In this regard, unfamiliar faces in the neighbourhood may be attached to a perceived undoing of the nation (*ibid.*, 75). On the other hand, the citizens may be seen as capable of “tolerating” a certain number of migrants in their neighbourhood (*ibid.*, 91), or, may even be proud of accumulating migrants in their neighbourhood. For example, “boasting about the x number of different ethnic restaurants they have” (*ibid.*, 161). Hage’s thinking here draws attention to how the persistence of the citizen-neighbour as a figure of aspiration and nostalgia constructs a particular type of individual as the rightful owner and manager of *el barrio*. *Their* barrio is enhanced by certain acceptable types of foreign influence, cuisine for instance, but is also at risk of being undone by the arrival of racial others.

## 2.4 The differential treatment of neighbours

A white spatio-temporal imaginary underpins the differential treatment of residents inhabiting the same space. The perceived loss of control over *el barrio* serves to justify the criminalization of certain inhabitants through distinctions grounded in racial categories. *Brigadas Vecinales de Observación de Derechos Humanos* (BVODH) has drawn attention to the proliferation of racially informed police identity checks in this context. According to the information compiled by BVODH, organised checks have intentionally targeted people of stereotypical non-European appearance in public places throughout the city — and have been most common in working class *barrios*. Police have justified checks by making reference to security concerns associated with migrants,

such as those discussed in the previous section. Here I outline how such checks have served to perpetuate and entrench racialized categories reaffirming boundaries between residents. They have exacerbated the precarity of some, irregularising their presence, and further fragmented *el barrio* as a result.

BVODH have documented racially informed police identity checks in different urban spaces throughout Madrid since 2009. They have recorded how police checks have taken place at different times of day in public spaces such as streets, squares and parks, in and around public transport, common meeting places and in private establishments. Police checks have been aleatory and planned, visible and hidden (BVODH 2011, 11-12). BVODH's reports suggest that checks initially varied from discrete smaller operations to spectacular events where helicopters were used (BVODH 2012, 28). Those detained and who were not in possession of the necessary documentation, faced the possibility of detention in a *Centro de Internamiento de Extranjeros* (CIE -Immigration Detention Center) and subsequent deportation. In their second report, BVODH (2012, 14) indicates that during 2011, 11,456 people were detained by the state with 6,826 of them being deported. The official justification for such checks was initially ambiguous. BVODH recorded how the police initially cited a number of different reasons to justify the checks by associating problems with migration. Some police were recorded suggesting that such checks were part of the border regime determining who had a right to be in the country (BVODH 2011, 46), whilst other suggested they were specific interventions against terrorism and drug trafficking (*ibid.*, 45). Whilst the justification for checks was initially ambiguous, increasingly the validation of these checks was determined as crime prevention. BVODH (2012, 33) argues that the police began to justify differentiating between individuals on racial grounds, due to the perceived problem of delinquency amongst foreign migrants.

These police checks have served to perpetuate and entrench racialized identities by irregularising the presence of certain residents, accentuating their precarity, and have further fragmented *el barrio* as a result. The most frequent site for police checks, as recorded by BVODH, was around public transport: inside or at the entry of metro and train stations (BVODH 2011, 29). Peak hour was the most frequent time reported for these checks (BVODH 2012, 25). Undercover checks were conducted daily around a square where *jornaleros* congregated in the morning, as they waited to be hired (BVODH 2011, 51). The regularity of checks in certain places indicates that checks primarily targeted the working population of non-European appearance — as argued by BVODH (2012, 25). The possibility of police checks forced those targeted to change their daily routines and habits. BVODH's Informant Abdelkader stated that he no longer went to the park due to his fear of raids. Miguel went to work by taxi despite only earning 800 euros a month (BVODH 2011, 53). Scholars have illustrated how similar mechanisms governing migrants have incorporated them into society in a differential regime. Enrica Rigo argues that such practices have served to differentiate between individuals within the same legal and political space. For example, she argues that irregular migrants are included into the workforce whilst at the same time being policed as external to the legal and political system (Rigo 2011, 207-208). Inclusion and exclusion for migrants is constantly revised through work permits and other temporary authorisations. As a result, even regularised foreign workers can live in a state of precarious partial inclusion seeing as the loss of a job threatens them with irregularity (*ibid.*, 208). The Real Decreto Sanitario 16/2012, removing health care cover from foreigners without a resident permits in Spain, further added to the precarity and irregularisation of certain inhabitants in this regard (BVODH 2015, 15).

Nicholas De Genova (2011, 91) has suggested that such mechanisms of control produce forms of labour subordination. In Madrid, police checks have served to control, segregate and stigmatize particular sections of the migrant population facilitating their management as cheap labour (*see* BVODH 2011, 12). As checks have been racially informed, they have not solely served to entrench

the precarity of migrants that do not have the required legal status. They have served to criminalize and irregularise all residents with particular physical characteristics. Residents perceived as belonging to racialized groups are interpellated as outsiders who are under constant surveillance. They are produced as foreign to *el barrio*. For this reason, BVODH (2011, 14) has denounced the encroachment of borders into *el barrio* as well as the creation of a differential regime of rights (*ibid.*, 55). As Sergio García García suggests, checks have produced a “neighbourhood body... crossed by identity borders that makes it a fragmented space, which in turn is manageable” (García García 2012, 585). Balibar (2002, 79) illustrates how such practices create borders that are polysemic in character. This means that they effect different individuals and social groups in divergent ways. He argues that they intentionally differentiate between individuals along class and race lines, giving individuals “different experiences of the law, the civil administration, the police and elementary rights” (*ibid.*, 81-82). For Balibar:

For a rich person from a rich country, a person who tends towards the cosmopolitan (and whose passport increasingly signifies not just mere national belonging, protection and a right of citizenship, but a surplus of rights – in particular, a world right to circulate unhindered), the border has become an embarkation formality, a point of symbolic acknowledgement of his social status, to be passed at a jog-trot. For a poor person from a poor country, however, the border tends to be something quite different: not only is it an obstacle which is very difficult to surmount, but it is a place he runs up against repeatedly, passing and repassing through it as and when he is expelled or allowed to rejoin his family, so that it becomes, in the end, a place where he resides (*ibid.*, 83).

In *el barrio*, racialized categories in addition to citizenship status or country of origin shape the polysemic experience of borders. As I have outlined above, the white spatio-temporal imaginary

of *el barrio* interpellates certain subjects as not being part of *el barrio*. The production of certain groups as external to *el barrio* provokes a condition of displacement as noted by Samaddar. Police checks interpellate racialized groups as provisional, conditional members of *el barrio* whose presence is subject to constant revisions. The extent to which they belong in *el barrio* is thus continually questioned. A sense of provisionality disrupts the construction of neighbourly relations. Joe Painter has illustrated that the construction of neighbourly relations is a slow process. For Painter “the possibility of these contingent, but repeated, encounters” ...“depends in part on the relatively long duration of these two neighbours' near-dwelling” (Painter 2012, 531). This constitutive feature of neighbourly relations is undermined by developments explored in this section. The differential treatment of neighbours leads to diverse experiences of *el barrio*. Correspondingly, Painter has suggested that the meaning of neighbourly relationships is dependent on experiential circumstances, “[f]or migrants, refugees, exiles, and travelling peoples, those whose lives are marked willingly or otherwise by restlessness and mobility, neighbours are often transitory, unknowable, or actively hostile” (Painter 2012, 531).

### 3. Reconstructing the neighbour

In the previous chapter, I traced the formation of a political constellation around the figure of the citizen-neighbour as it emerged through conflicts in *el barrio* throughout the Franco dictatorship. In the current context, the citizen-neighbour, and the space that it is seen to inhabit, becomes increasingly splintered. Overseas migration, the production of different environments in particular *barrios*, precarious housing arrangements and policing practices differentiating between neighbours, lead to the fragmentation of *el barrio*. I have noted the production of spaces to attract business elites, real estate speculation and environments provided for tourists. The existence of these spaces rely on subordinated figures that are integrated as precarious temporary labour. The purpose of state interventions in this context is not to produce one universal form of political

belonging. Rather, the interventions produce diverse conditions and experiences for those inhabiting and passing through space. Differential treatment serves to naturalize distinctions between neighbours; defining some as permanent and original inhabitants, some as welcome guests and others as conditionally tolerated or at risk of being removed.

In this context, following García García, “symbolic barriers that impede imagining commonality” cross *el barrio* (García García 2012, 585). At the same time, *el barrio* has become the space in which different social movements have attempted to reimagine a common space. In this way, BVODH envisages itself as, “a space that is being built by the neighbours of Madrid against discriminatory (racist, xenophobic, classicist) social control in our *barrio*... to pave the way to construct an us full of meaning” (BVODH 2011, 11). BVODH challenges boundaries that have arisen between neighbours and attempts to enter into discussion with *el barrio* in order to reconstruct neighbourly relations. An important part of their intervention is what they call “*vecineo*” (translatable to spending time with the neighbours), which involves entering into conversation with neighbours to discuss the group’s actions and the practices being observed (BVODH 2012, 20). In order to dilute arguments in favour of police checks, they seek to use a language that reduces the gap between a perceived them and us (BVODH 2013, 23). BVODH suggests that

what began as denunciation, has started to become a political exercise reviving debate in public space, reappropriating the street as a meeting place, and in this way constructing a potentially subversive tool. This “re-politicization” of the street involves challenging the dominant subjectivities of consumer society and pushing for the re-composition of community ties, the re-signification of collective identities, recognizing each other as neighbours (*vecinas y vecinos*), beyond our place of origin, sharing a *barrio*, a common territory, ultimately breaking boundaries (*fronteras*) (*ibid.*, 23).

Similar interventions from other groups have also attempted to diminish the gap between a perceived them and us. During the inauguration of the *Fiestas Populares de Lavapiés*, (The People's Lavapiés Festival) — a celebration organised once a year since 2012 by the *Asamblea Popular de Lavapiés* (The People's Lavapiés Assembly)<sup>3</sup> — speakers sought to work towards incorporating all residents into a common project. Phrases deployed repeatedly at these events included “*el barrio para quién lo habita*” (*el barrio* should be for those that live in it) — meaning that it should be a space to be lived in rather than a site of consumption and speculation, and, “*ningún ser humano es ilegal*” (nobody is illegal) — suggesting that *el barrio* should be constructed as a space without borders where all are welcome. In order to reconstruct a collective memory and common past, the speakers sought to celebrate the rebellious history of Lavapiés, as a space where different waves of working class people had arrived and fought for their position in the city.

BVODH's attempts to challenge borders in *el barrio* have been criminalized in this context. The *Plan de Mejora de la Seguridad de Lavapiés* explicitly targeted their interventions. Cifuentes blamed BVODH directly for pressuring the police “in a way that was completely unacceptable” (cited in Bonfigli 2014, 66). In the plan, BVODH are classified as an “anti-system” group, that interrupts police action being conducted against drug traffickers by hiding behind claims that these are repressive acts against migrants (Delegación del Gobierno 2012, 10). Introduced regulations have allowed a clamp down on BVODH's actions. Police are now able to establish security perimeters in order to impede the observation of identity checks. New laws allow observers and those challenging police checks to be charged with obstructing the police. BVODH have been involved in a number of legal cases due to police accusations of individuals obstructing their work (BVODH 2015, 39).

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<sup>3</sup> The *Asamblea Popular de Lavapiés* is an assembly emerging out of the 15M movement.

However, at the same time there has been a proliferation of interventions in *el barrio* to foment neighbourly relations. Some of these actions have been encouraged by the government, whilst others have been criminalized. Margrit Mayer has illustrated how, in the context of austerity in Europe and North America, governments have actively distinguished between grassroots initiatives. She notes an ambiguous relationship between neoliberal development and apparently subversive practices. She suggests, “principles such as self-management, self-realization and all kinds of unconventional or insurgent creativity [have] become not only easily feasible, but a generative force in today’s neoliberalizing cities” (2013, 12), whilst other forms of grassroots action are criminalized. She further suggests that:

[P]olicies tend to deepen the existing divides and oppositions among the different groups locked out of or exploited by the neoliberal city and dispossessed in its crisis management. They even create further splits and divisions. By implementing both, the inclusive and repressive strategies simultaneously, the concessions and incorporation offers to the savvy creative types, and the marginalizing stigmatizing and punitive strategies to the rest, local authorities contribute, for example, to sharpening the differences among (and creating collisions between) more culturally oriented vs. more politically oriented movement groups. They also tend to exacerbate the distance and alienation between stigmatized and other groups, whether homeless, undocumented or migrant youth... (*ibid.*, 15).

In this chapter, I have traced the disarticulation of the citizen-neighbour in the post-GFC period. In this context, diverse forms of belonging become apparent in *el barrio*. Whilst the citizen-neighbour persists as a figure of aspiration and nostalgia, racialized others receive special attention from the state. In an attempt to overcome these divisions, grassroots responses have emerged with the objective of generating a more inclusive space in *el barrio*. In Chapter 6, I draw



attention to a proliferation of interventions in *el barrio* in this context. I explore how diverse interventions receive different treatment from the authorities that provoke tensions, complexities and possibilities. Attempts to construct an alternative mode of political belonging around *el barrio* face numerous difficulties and at times even risk entrenching and amplifying boundaries between neighbours. The differential treatment of neighbours, identified in this chapter, and the ambiguous relationship between state interventions and grassroots democratic practices, discussed in the next chapter, highlight a politics of neighbouring that diverges substantially from that found in Lefebvre's studies.

## 6. The possibility of neighbouring

In this chapter, I explore the possibilities of constituting alternative modes of political belonging in *el barrio* following the GFC. In the previous chapter, I conceptualised the disarticulation of the citizen-neighbour through the production of racialized divisions and diverse experiences of temporariness and precarity. Here I draw attention to a proliferation of interventions in *el barrio* mobilising notions of *autogestión*. These tend to be grounded in a particular spatio-temporal imaginary envisaging “persons” and “neighbours” interacting in *el barrio*. Attention to how political relations are inscribed in space exposes a number of tensions and complexities underpinning the possibilities of alternative modes of political belonging in this context. The production of different spatial frames and temporal rhythms in *el barrio* complicates the construction of common spaces and naturalises the status of some as owners — producing others as passers-by or illegitimate intruders. Concurrently, interventions compete with *simulacra of autogestión* and risk becoming products or cultural artefacts. Creative city policies and “austerity urbanism” provoke an ambiguous relationship between state and grassroots interventions, where these are both fomented and criminalized. It becomes increasingly difficult to distinguish meaningfully between state and grassroots interventions as a result.

As I have outlined in the previous chapter, the relationship between migration, relations of proximity and planning inscribed in *el barrio* is markedly different in this period. Subsequently, grassroots interventions negotiate a different series of complexities, tensions and possibilities. Throughout this thesis, I have employed *el barrio* to create a line of continuity to connect political battles in the current period to earlier moments. *El barrio* has served as a tool of analysis to track how modes of political belonging are made possible and certain relations are inscribed in space in given periods. This reveals changing conceptions of space and belonging and the tensions and

complexities they negotiate as they enter into contact with the complexities of everyday life. Historical perspective provides tools to assess the possibilities of constructing alternative modes of political belonging in the current context. Throughout the Franco dictatorship, *el barrio* was a space in which both dominant and grassroots modes of political belonging were grounded. In the previous chapter, I outlined how, in the period following the GFC, specific state interventions have produced different subjects in the same space. In this context, grassroots interventions have emerged conceiving *el barrio* as a point of encounter in which to reconstruct common ground. *El barrio* is conceived as an open framework that places neighbours, both citizens and non-citizens, in contact via the spaces of everyday life.

Analysis in this chapter, building on previous chapters, helps to move beyond an appreciation of contemporary movements as simply inaugurating counter-hegemonic spaces of resistance in order to highlight some of their tensions, limitations and possibilities. Even studies that pay specific attention to the historical production of the present tend to reproduce similar understandings of contemporary movements. For example, in *The Limits of Capital in Spain: Crisis and Revolt in the European South*, Charnock, Purcell and Ribera-Fumaz provide a detailed analysis of transformations leading to the contemporary political crisis through an appreciation of the development of capitalism. However, they produce only a one-dimensional account of contemporary social movements, reading these as reactive to capitalist development. In their brief discussion of social movements, they focus solely on anti-austerity and anti-capitalist elements, interpreting movements as “the most visible manifestation of struggle over the reproduction of the working class and against the state” (Charnock et. al. 2014, 106). Movements are viewed as initiating counter hegemonic spaces of resistance in the wake of the GFC and in reaction to a particular conjuncture of capitalist development. The “European South”, they suggest, will “be a crucial laboratory for anti-capitalist politics and critical imaginaries” in coming years (*ibid.*, 130). The analysis developed in this thesis moves beyond such accounts providing a

more nuanced understanding of the continuities and discontinuities shaping the spatio-temporal conditions of contemporary social movements and the modes of political belonging they construct.

There have been important developments in Spanish politics since the emergence of the 15M movement. On the 24<sup>th</sup> of May 2015, Ahora Madrid, a coalition formed by Podemos, Ganemos Madrid, Izquierda Unida, Equo and independents<sup>1</sup>, won Madrid's municipal elections (Kassam 2015)<sup>2</sup>. Members of the coalition came from a diverse array of social movements — including the ex-president of the *Federación Regional de Asociaciones Vecinales* (FRAVM- Regional Federation of Neighbourhood Associations) (Gil 2015)<sup>3</sup>. Both Podemos and Ganemos Madrid emerged out of the space created by the 15M protests. There has been much interest globally regarding the emergence of Podemos<sup>4</sup> that has been perceived as a renewing force for the European left (Jones 2016). Ganemos Madrid on the other hand is not as well known internationally. Ganemos defines itself as a space for citizen participation and incorporates people from social movements, political parties and other initiatives (Ganemos Madrid 2014). Ganemos grew out of the platform *Municipalia*, created in 2014 (Ganemos Madrid). The platform built itself around assemblyism and horizontal democracy adopting the slogan “*La democracia empieza por lo cercano*” (democracy begins up close) (Pérez Colina). Ganemos places particular importance on grassroots involvement

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<sup>1</sup> Mayor Manuela Carmena is a former high profile judge and not attached to any political party in the coalition (Cruz 2015).

<sup>2</sup> Izquierda Unida or United Left is a nationwide party bringing together a number of different leftist groups (Izquierda Unida). Equo is a Green party that was formed in 2011 (Equo).

<sup>3</sup> Peruvian born Rommy Arce running for Podemos became the first foreign-born councillor in the Ayuntamiento de Madrid (Sánchez 2015).

<sup>4</sup> The emergence of Podemos is a complex phenomenon that cannot be treated in detail here. Podemos was launched in January 2014, led by a group of academics from the Universidad Complutense de Madrid (Iglesias 2015, 18). Podemos believed that the 15M movement had highlighted a crisis of the credibility of the established political order dominated by the two major parties, the Partido Popular and the PSOE (Socialist Party). The crisis created the possibility for the formulation of an alternative set of political demands. The leaders of Podemos set out to articulate a series of new demands by participating in numerous television talk shows. Through this “mediatic leadership”, they sought to dichotomize political debate “building the 15-M's new ideological constructs into a popular subject, in opposition to the elites” (Iglesias 2015, 14). They drew inspiration from Latin American political movements, Ernesto Laclau's theorization of populism and experience gained from running their own television program (Iglesias 2015, 14). They avoided the traditional topics of the left, instead focusing on issues highlighted by the 15M movement, such as “evictions, corruption and inequality” (Iglesias 2015, 16).

in decision-making. It is thus of little surprise, that special mention was made of Madrid's *barrios* in Ahora Madrid's election program:

It is time to promote life in the *barrios*, strengthening how citizens live together, increasing the number of services, resources and shops in close proximity to them, preserve and rehabilitate public and private dwellings, and promote community activity in *el barrio*. It is time that the *barrios* discover their worth, organize and develop their capacities (Ahora Madrid 2015, 9).

Nevertheless, the hold Ahora Madrid has on Town Hall is tenuous. The coalition won 20 of a possible 57 seats and formed government thanks to an agreement with the PSOE (Socialist Party) (Kassam 2015). To complicate matters further, the conservative Partido Popular, now led by Cristina Cifuentes, continues to control the regional government of the Comunidad de Madrid. The Partido Popular also controls the federal government. In this chapter, I do not review changes made by Ahora Madrid, nor do I judge their success. I am more interested in the tensions and complexities produced as grassroots interventions interact with the state in the broader context shaped by neoliberalization and austerity politics. It is in relation to this broader context that there has been a proliferation of interventions revolving around *el barrio*. The Ahora Madrid government, and their emphasis on grassroots participation, blurs the boundaries between state and grassroots interventions further, accentuating these broader tensions and complexities.

The relationship between state interventions and grassroots practices has acquired new forms over the last few decades in Europe. Mustafa Dikeç (2007, 277) argues that in the early 1980s, French urban policy drew explicitly on Lefebvrian concepts such as the right to the city and *autogestion* before becoming increasingly centralised throughout the 1990s. Juan Pablo Hudson (2010, 594) shows how the Spanish term *autogestión*, similar to the French term *autogestion*, has

taken on new meanings throughout this period. He argues that the term has been appropriated by both business language and representative politics. Businesses have incentivised autonomy and creativity in combination with repressive disciplinary measures. Nation-States and International Organisations have promoted community self-organization integrating forms of self-government into hierarchical structures. Scholars have more recently paid attention to an entanglement between state interventions and grassroots practices. Grassroots practices have been regarded as adding attractiveness to urban space. Margrit Mayer suggests that as a result, “[n]ot only the cultural milieus of artists and other ‘creatives’, even radical squats and self-managed social centers have taken on an ambiguous role” (Mayer 2013, 11).

The attraction of these grassroots practices is linked to government efforts to plan “creative cities” (Landry 1995). Policy makers have become increasingly interested in creating the conditions capable of attracting what has been termed as the “creative class” (Florida 2002). This refers to innovative thinkers, whose ingenuity and entrepreneurial spirit make them the motors of the economy of the future (in theory). Peck in his critique of Richard Florida’s influential argument, notes how Florida envisages cities in “a high-stakes ‘war for talent’, one that can only be won by developing the kind of ‘people climates’ valued by creatives — urban environments that are open diverse and, dynamic and cool” (Peck 2005, 740). Such urban environments are seen to amalgamate an array of attractions that “can include arts and culture, nightlife, the music scene, restaurants, artists and designers, innovators, entrepreneurs, affordable spaces, lively neighborhoods, spirituality, education, density, public spaces...” (*ibid.*, 743). Within this framework the “buzzing trendy neighbourhood” (Florida cited in Peck 2005, 741) plays an important role as it provides the habitat within which creativity can flourish.

#### 1. Interventions in *el barrio*

In recent years, numerous initiatives have emerged intervening in *el barrio* and drawing on notions of *autogestión*. Whilst there are many important differences between these numerous interventions, in this section I conceptualise a number of common characteristics. These illustrate how *el barrio* is conceptualised as a space in which to intervene. I argue that the majority of interventions share three key characteristics. Firstly, they are grounded in the occupation of space, secondly, they attempt to foment neighbourly relations, and thirdly, they advocate the open participation of all those who wish to be involved. They intentionally avoid reproducing stable established identities. They attempt to build common spaces by fomenting neighbourly relations, creating spaces constantly shaped and recreated by the “neighbours”. In 2010, prior to the emergence of the 15M movement, the group Vecinitxs (neighbours) had already articulated the desire to build alternative spaces in *el barrio*. The group sought

to imagine other ways of imagining *el barrio*, to intervene in it, raise our voices and have real impact beyond sporadic protesting. To meet, share experiences, converge, construct *barrio* and recover the strength and creativity of the [AVs]. To recover the streets, reappropriate *el barrio* and make the problems and challenges that affect it our own... all of us were brought together by our will to construct a more liveable, accessible, participatory and *autogestionado* (self-managed) *barrio* (Vecin@s 2010).

The occupation of space is used as a tool to reclaim a space for political participation and in doing so transform it. The 15M protests initially sought to *tomar la plaza* (to take over central squares) and then to *tomar el barrio* (reclaim *el barrio*). As the central camp was dissolved, the movement shifted its focus to numerous *asambleas de barrio* (neighbourhood assemblies) that met regularly, forming working groups focused on social issues such as housing and migration. Rather than seek to reach a certain outcome, assemblies sought to connect a diverse range of people through the occupation of public space. From the outset, the movement focused on generating its own spaces

rather than simply protesting. Of most importance was the expansion of the material, ideological and affective spaces that had been generated in Madrid's central square. Adolfo Estalella (2016) notes that assemblies were made possible by modest, provisional and precarious architecture in public spaces — they attempted to find a foothold and maintain openness by conducting meetings in open spaces. Due to the precarity and temporariness of the spaces created, Estalella suggests that beyond decision-making and consensus, much energy was needed in order to sustain the spaces themselves.

The occupation of space is employed as a tool to interrupt and transform relations in *el barrio*. The *Fiestas Populares de Lavapiés* are organised yearly to coincide with the official Lavapiés festival, offering an alternative model for *el barrio*. The *Fiestas Populares* were fashioned in contrast to the commercialization and corruption that underpinned the official festival. In 2015, when I was in Madrid, the organisation of the official festival was outsourced to a private company that was involved in the ongoing Púnica corruption scandal. The organizers of the *Fiestas Populares* advocated that the event should be *autogestionado* — run by and for the neighbours. The *Fiestas Populares* took place over a number of days and were held primarily in public spaces throughout *el barrio*. They included a walk around a number of *corralas* (typical type of housing in Madrid) accompanied by talks, the creation of spontaneously constructed free terraces, the planting of trees along the streets, a waterfight, a futsal competition, bowls and a vegan friendly 'bull run' (involving a giant ball instead of a bull). The visibility of activities in *el barrio* sought to provoke the interest of passers-by, attract participants and disrupt the rationale underpinning the official festival.

The occupation of space permits an openness that allows for the establishment of relationships that help to transform space. This openness is used to challenge the production of differences between inhabitants. The 15M movement became known for its open, and sometimes seemingly



endless, assemblies in squares and *barrios*. The aim of constituting an open space of dialogue was tied to an “unhurried temporality” (Corsín and Estalella 2013b, 156). Long and arduous discussions were necessary for the construction of consensus and anyone who wished to was able to speak and participate in such meetings. Assemblies avoided establishing ideals, but rather, invited people to participate in action and decision making (Fernández-Savater 2012, 677). Inclusive language was used to diminish the boundaries between people. Individuals were encouraged to identify as “persons” rather than associate with predefined political categories. Amador Fernández-Savater (2012, 678) argues that this was done to avoid closing the movement off — avoiding separation through identification with movements and particular identities. Raúl Sánchez Cedillo suggests that for this reason the 15M was a “prototype” toward the foundation of a new political order made up of “whatever people (*personas cualesquiera*)” (Sánchez Cedillo 2012, 574).

Similar to the person, the “neighbour” became a category employed to diminish barriers between participants. Corsín and Estalella explore the figure of the neighbour in their ethnography of the *asambleas de barrio*. These authors theorise the neighbour as “not a stranger, nor a friend but a form of sociality whose value is an effect of ambience-experimentation” (Corsín and Estalella 2013a, 121) and “the rights holder to experimentation” in *el barrio* (*ibid.*, 134). Corsín and Estalella see neighbours brought together and constituted by interactions in assemblies. The constitution of neighbours is fragile and provisional, they “appear to be qualified less by their belonging or relational incorporation into established systems of meaning (symbolic, ethical, of exchange, commensuration, proportionality, or otherwise) as by their very instability and provisionality” (*ibid.*, 134). *El barrio* is produced through their interactions, bringing together “relations, itineraries, and material culture” (*ibid.*, 133), as “a rhythmic arrangement and as an atmospheric installation” (*ibid.*, 122). Through the *asambleas de barrio*, following these authors, *el barrio* emerges

as an infrastructural and methodological event... On the one hand, the assembly format requires a strenuous investment in material, textual, and archival production of “assembling” as an urban spatial object. The assembly defines itself as a particular kind of object — a piece of urban hardware that warrants its own temporal and spatial continuity by means of other objects, devices, and technologies that participants in the assembly mobilize. On the other hand, the process of assembling in itself produces a novel sense of urban neighbourliness. Neighbors are “assembled into” being social and political subjects through the process of assembling... the popular assemblies movement is reimagining citizenship in terms of an archival, an infrastructural, and methodical practice of urban conviviality (Corsín and Estalella 2013b, 170).

## 2. The proliferation of *autogestión*

Whilst the purpose of the previous section was to elucidate the common features of interventions in *el barrio*, here I explore the proliferation of interventions drawing on notions of *autogestión*. In this context, *autogestión* is employed in two important ways, with inevitable crossovers and interpenetration. Firstly, as a model to reinvigorate democratic participation and create a more liveable city. This usage is most prevalent amongst an emerging group of “experts of *autogestión*” who cooperate with the state to achieve their goals. Secondly, *autogestión* conceived as a transformative practice that establishes itself “inside and against” the capitalist order. This usage of the term is most common amongst activist groups who position their interventions explicitly against the state. I illustrate how the growing influence of experts of *autogestión* in conjunction with creative cities policies and austerity, has led to the proliferation of initiatives employing the term but diverging substantially from *autogestión* as understood by activist traditions.

At a roundtable titled “*Proyectos de Autogestión: Berlin y Madrid*” (Projects of *Autogestión*: Berlin and Madrid) held at the *Colegio Oficial de Arquitectos de Madrid* (COAM – The Official Association of Architects in Madrid) in 2015, *autogestión* was discussed by a group of articulate experts in the association’s conference space — where free beer was provided by the sponsor Heineken. In 2013, one of the spaces being discussed, *El Campo de Cebada*, an occupied square that negotiated an agreement with the local government, had been awarded one of Spain’s most prestigious awards for Architecture and Urbanism at the *XII Bienal Española de Arquitectura y Urbanismo* (The Twelfth Spanish Biennale of Architecture and Urbanism). The Biennale describes *El Campo de Cebada* “as a space that was emptied by the demolition of a building which is now intensely and openly managed, and transformed through the actions of neighbours, architects, cultural agents, AVs and the administration who attempt to include as many people as possible in decision making” (cited by Zuloark). Official recognition garnered by experiments in *autogestión*, and the emergence of a group of experts associated with it, sits awkwardly with activist traditions. The *Okupa* — or squatter — tradition (e.g., Martínez and García 2010) for example, conceptualises the occupation of abandoned buildings as a way of producing environments that are “inside and against” the capitalist order (Domínguez Sánchez-Pinilla 2010). Occupation is an explicitly political strategy against property speculation and the lack of affordable housing and services (Martínez and García 2015, 159). Occupied buildings provide a framework within which to build alternative modes of politics, through social projects such as social events, political debates, artistic and cultural expression as well as economic *autogestión* (Domínguez Sánchez-Pinilla 2010, 6). *Okupas* are considered spaces that have been freed temporally from the logic of the market and offer the possibility to construct another kind of society (*ibid.*, 24-25).

Whilst in Madrid, I attended a series of talks at the Matadero Contemporary Art Centre for a project titled *Los Madriles: Atlas de iniciativas vecinales* (Los Madriles: Atlas of neighbourly initiatives). The idea of the project was to map the exceptional spaces constructed in the city by

neighbours in order to create a point of encounter between them. The map identified hundreds of spaces described as spaces of new possibilities, participation and *autogestión*. Four meetings were held, the topics being “Critical Maps for Action”, “Open Culture and Social Processes”, “Neighbourly Urbanism” and “Participation and Governance: A City that Governs itself”. Panellists varied from members of social movements, the Ahora Madrid government, researchers, architects and the president of the FRAVM. Whilst some speakers offered a more conventional critique of the mercantilization of the city and structural inequalities between centre and periphery, many speakers lined their interventions with the specialist terminology of experts in *autogestión*. Expressions like “*infraestructura cultural*” (cultural infrastructure), “*metodología de participación*” (methodology of participation), “*gestión participativa*” (participative management), “*contenedores participados*” (participative containers) were prevalent as was talk of hybrid agreements between experts, government and self-managing spaces. The Matadero, where the talks were held, reflected the kind of hybridity advocated. The Matadero is intended as a creative interdisciplinary laboratory. The Art Centre’s name, *Matadero* (slaughterhouse), refers to the old slaughterhouse where the centre is located. In reusing the slaughterhouse, it borrows aesthetically from *Okupas* (but evidently with many more economic resources). The space where talks were held was a big open room with an amphitheatre replicating similar designs to those found in occupied squares such as *Campo de Cebada*.

Mayer suggests that grassroots practices have increasingly been mobilised by local government in Europe and North America in the wake of the GFC. She suggests that “[l]ocal authorities nowadays eagerly jump on (sub)cultures wherever they sprout in order to harness them as location-specific assets and competitive advantage in the interurban rivalry” (Mayer 2013, 11). Entrenching this entanglement, there has been an increased acceptance and promotion of low-cost “pop-up” initiatives (Harris 2015) and “temporary urbanism” (Ferreri 2015). Ferreri notes how a special place has been made for “projects of temporary reuse” ranging from pop-up shops and bars to

squats and guerrilla gardens, all of which envisage themselves as marginal alternative practices (Ferrerri 2015, 181). Such practices resonate with neoliberal strategies that “off-load” “government functions not only onto private corporations and charities but also onto ill-equipped residents who [are] then expected to produce or shop for basic security, educational and recreational services on an individual basis” (Kinder 2014, 1769). Due to their increased acceptance and prevalence, the temporariness of individual projects, interventions and spaces are “becoming an increasingly permanent trend” impacting on the urban landscape (Ferrerri 2015, 187).

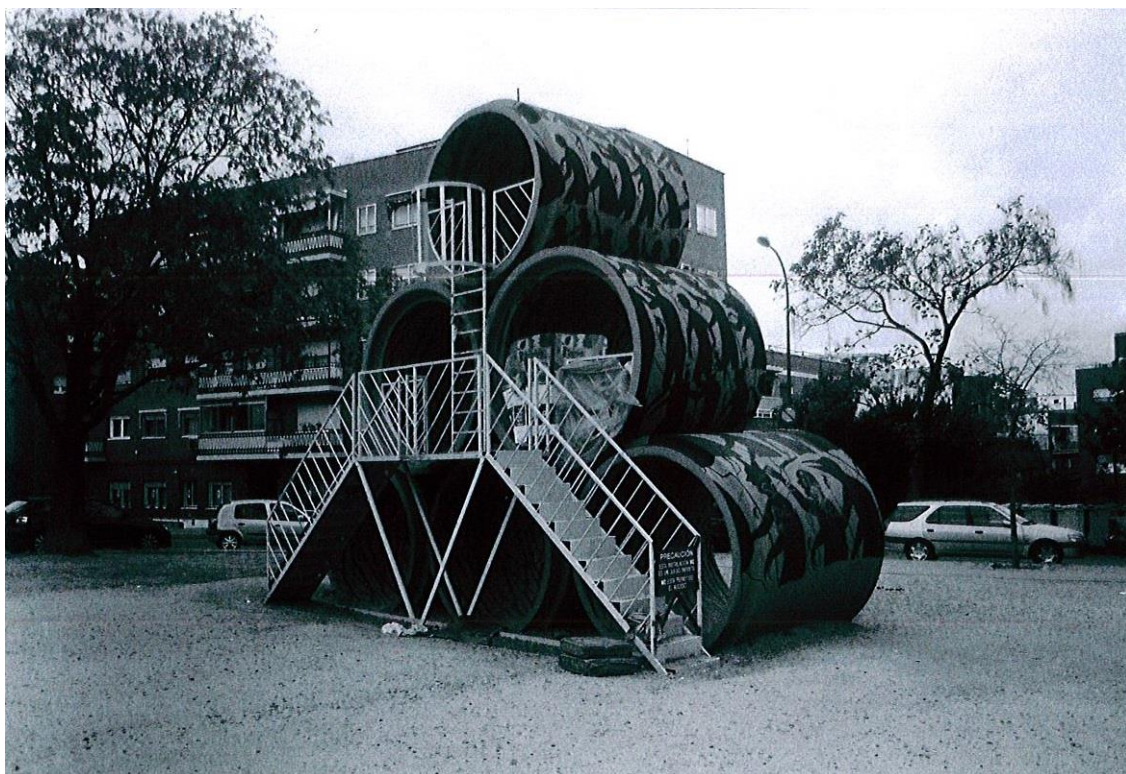
Official recognition and government accommodation for projects of *autogestión* make sense in the context of austerity urbanism and creative cities policies. The document *Hacia el Plan Estratégico de Cultura del Ayuntamiento de Madrid (PECAM) 2012-2015* (Towards a Strategic Cultural Plan for Madrid’s City Council) provides insight into thinking in Madrid in this regard. The document argues that cultural initiatives and cultural vitality can make important contributions to economic recuperation (Ayuntamiento de Madrid 2012, 12). A reduction in investment demands rethinking priorities in interventions, rationalizing management and enhancing coordination between different levels of governments and other actors (*ibid.*, 13). The document seeks to identify ways of bolstering the “local cultural ecosystem” in order to allow the creative industries to appropriate urban space without excessive investment (*ibid.*, 32). The entrepreneurial spirit of the creative industries — listed as architecture, libraries, craft, film, television, videogames, patrimony, culture, design, festivals, music, publications, radio and visual art — is seen to contribute to the vibrancy and the marketability of the city (*ibid.*, 22).

To attract creative industries the document identifies the need to attract “creatives”. The plan suggests that creatives like collaborative dynamics integrated in the social context, “in general, they like to provoke relationships of proximity with the neighbours and create social networks in

their surroundings, favouring social cohesion". (Ayuntamiento de Madrid 2012, 27). The document draws attention to the diverse models emerging, including private initiatives, *autogestión*, coworking, online platforms and crowdfunding that provide low-cost alternatives to increase the vibrancy of the city (*ibid.*, 32). *Autogestión* is thus linked to a range of other novel phenomena that can contribute to creating (low-cost) vibrant hip cities. Social movements are depicted as beneficial, particularly when they involve local residents and connect cultural initiatives with the everyday life of people. Social art is regarded as holding potential, as it integrates collaborative practices that are committed to community, society and environmental surroundings. It actively intervenes in the city to improve the urban landscape (*ibid.*, 34-35). The document also advocates capitalising on the value of intangible goods such as local memory, traditions, history, public space and cultural diversity. It suggests that the City Council should strive for the inclusion of the migrant population constructing an inclusive city for all, regardless of origin, gender, age, ethnicity, religion or economic status (*ibid.*, 35-37).

The *Paisaje Tetuán* (Tetuán landscape) project was one initiative that formed part of the *Plan Estratégico de Cultura*. The project set out to improve the urban landscape through artistic intervention. It was co-ordinated by Intermediae, a space within the Matadero focused on projects of social innovation and investigating new ways of involving audiences in the production of art and culture. Intermediae was created in 2007 and its program is open for projects and proposals that create relationships between creators, spaces, networks, experiences and practices exploring collective production (Intermediae b). A working group was created to develop specific interventions in Tetuán receiving a small amount of government funding. The working group was comprised of different art collectives from Tetuán including Moenia, Pkm, Taller de Casquería, Mood Studio and writer Bea Burgos. Architects and landscapers "linked to or interested in working in Tetuán" such as Estudio Montes, Pez Arquitectos, Ahora Arquitectura and Galería Magdalena were also involved as well as a number of other collectives involved in the creation of different

types of instalments in public spaces throughout the city: Germinando, Perricac, La Fresquera, Basurama and Zuloark (Intermediae a). The project was composed of numerous facets including the remaking of public spaces, murals and reminders of the history of *el barrio*. Due particularly to limited funding the specific instalments of the project used low cost materials. Although they differed, all of the interventions were similar in that they focused on transforming *el barrio* and attempted to create spaces that would provoke the interaction and participation of the neighbours. After the initial interventions in 2013, the project has continued in order to co-design activities with residents and help sustain, spread, mediate and evaluate the interventions already in place (*ibid.*). The project has served as a prototype that has been reproduced in a later project in the south of Madrid called "*Paisaje Sur*". Four interventions were made involving different collectives, two in public squares (La Plaza Leopoldo Luis and on Hierbabuena street) and two in abandoned plots of land (on the corner of Matadero and Ángel Puech street, and on Lope de Haro Street) (*ibid.*).



7.1 Hypertube 2015

The intervention in La Plaza Leopoldo Luis was slightly different from the other interventions because it primarily beautified and made functional a square that already existed. Plants were added in structures of tubing, shaded spaces were created using already existing structures and as the square was named after a poet, lines from his poems were stencilled onto walls. On Matadero Street, the intervention saw the creation of a public garden and shared space, *La Huerta de Tetuán*, with photos of residents made into posters arranged on the wall. Both this space and, *Ganando Metros* on Lope de Haro Street, were fenced off. *Ganando Metros* claimed to be “gaining metres” for the city. It was envisaged as a space in which different meetings could be conducted with a stage and seating. It was intended to be transformed through interaction with the neighbours. One of the designers suggested that the space was intended as a prototype for the construction of small squares. It would be transformed in relation to problems and negotiations as they emerged (Intermediae c). This ideal of open participation was most clearly expressed in the intervention on Hierbabuena Street. Here a structure was erected called the “Hypertube” which was essentially a pile of premade concrete tubes with a structure of steps and ladders (see above). The Hypertube was conceptualized as an inhabited monument that had no defined use. It was intentionally conceived as unfinished and to be transformed through how it was used by neighbours and their opinion about it. It invited the neighbours to remake it through play. It was installed in a square that was abandoned and was intended to reactivate it, “Hypertube seeks to condense and overlap at different levels the activities that are usually conducted in public squares such as sitting, resting, chatting, contemplating, reading and eating” (Burgos 2013).

Aesthetically, the instalments of *Paisaje Tetuán* are similar to guerrilla gardens and occupied buildings. Such initiatives have also been able to create a tenuous place for themselves in this context. For example, the occupied square *Esta es una plaza* (This is a square) gained temporary permission to occupy an abandoned plot in Lavapiés. A group of people who met at a workshop



on urban intervention in 2008 conceived *Esta es una plaza* as an experimental project to create a public space out of the abandoned lot. After targeting the plot of land, they discussed what needed to be done in *el barrio* with neighbours. They then constructed temporary structures using donated and found materials, built a garden, a sports area, an open-air theatre as well as green spaces and spaces to rest. It was first opened in December 2008 and the collective then applied for government permission to occupy the space. After a little over a year of conflict, temporary permission was given in January 2010 and the project continues until the present moment (*Esta es una plaza*).

The *Centro Social Autogestionado La Tabacalera* (La Tabacalera Self-Managing Social Centre) is another particularly well known case of an initiative that has been able to strike agreements and acquire funding from the government. Cabinet Ministers had agreed on converting the old Tobacco factory in Lavapiés into a National Arts Centre in 2007. However, due to lack of resources it was unable to go ahead. Rather than leave the building in disuse, an agreement was struck to convert the space into a self-managing (*autogestionado*) Social Centre. Later in 2012, the building was leased to a project for a two year period and permission to occupy the space was made renewable every two years for a maximum of eight (La Tabacalera a). The project drew on the knowhow of the *Okupa* tradition (particularly successive projects related to the *Centro Social el Laboratorio*). Its offerings reflected that of other *Okupas* with exhibitions, concerts, a café, and workshops of different types including Arabic lessons and dance classes. From the outset, the space was organized through the kind of assemblies popularised by the 15M movement (Fernández Maeso 2012). One of those behind La Tabacalera suggested that the project itself was a work of art, arguing that the role of the artist in contemporary society was to imagine modes of relation and modes of being (La Tabacalera b).

Harris argues that such interventions that temporarily occupy urban space can both “create interruptions within prevailing spatiotemporal distributions” but also “smooth over th[e] cracks and perpetuate the dominance of neoliberal ideals” (Harris 2015, 593). Temporary urbanism can be used to “pilot low budget, sustainable, more localised forms of site-specific coming together” but also play a pioneering role opening up new frontiers for gentrification (Ferrerri 2015, 182). Ferreri suggests that “[a] core appeal of temporary urban projects is... the lure of the experimental and the pioneering which takes on an embodied spatial dimension in the exploration and physical occupation of underused, neglected and marginal sites” (*ibid.*, 182). Ella Harris and Mel Nowicki (2014) note how temporary interventions have become an “important means of maintaining cultural and commercial activity”, offering a “flexible, fast and low-cost solution[s] to damaged or dilapidated urban environments, used to keep city life ticking over until a longer-term solution is found” (*ibid.*). Ferreri notes how, in London:

[v]acant spaces have been increasingly presented by urban policy makers as the most visible negative symptom of the global recession, and as detrimental to the return of consumers’ and investors’ confidence. In an effort to counter negative perceptions, temporary projects... offer a quick-fix solution in the form of positive visual and experiential fillers, which could transform a failed or stalled redevelopment project into an item of attraction for event-based tourism (Ferrerri 2015, 183).

The attraction of such projects makes sense in the context of the thinking evident in the *Plan Estratégico de Cultura*. The *Plan Estratégico de Turismo 2012-2015* (Strategic Tourism Plan) similarly outlines how specific areas of the city should be marketed to tourists. The provision of diverse cultural offerings underpins how different *barrios* can cater for different types of tourist. The plan outlines three specific facets of Madrid’s cultural offerings linked to specific *barrios* (Ayuntamiento de Madrid 2012, 251). “*El Madrid más real*” (The most real Madrid) focuses on the

most well known tourist attractions. “*Madrid gana de cerca*” (Madrid wins up close) attempts to establish complementary routes through certain *barrios* such as Salamanca, Embajadores, Las Letras, La Latina and Madrid Río. “*Madrid play-offs*” focuses on innovative and alternative facets of the city that are located in trendy and avant-garde *barrios* such as Chueca, Lavapiés and Malasaña (*ibid.*, 252). Grassroots initiatives, occupied squares and social centres can contribute to the edginess of such *barrios* and, following the logic of these plans, can be mobilised to attract a particular type of tourist.

Nevertheless, as I noted at the end of the previous chapter, not all interventions receive the same treatment from the authorities. Thus, whilst the experiment in La Tabacalera has been officially legitimated and *Esta es una plaza* has gained temporary permission to occupy a plot of land, similar initiatives have been shut down. The Solarpiés project, with similar offerings to *Esta es una plaza*, which occupied another abandoned plot of land in Lavapiés, did not gain recognition from the government. Solarpiés has been the site of ongoing conflict due to plans to construct a hotel in its place (Gutiérrez 2014). The *Centro Social Okupado Autogestionado Casablanca* (Casablanca Occupied Self-managing Social Centre) is another particularly high profile initiative that was closed by the government. The building was first occupied in April 2010 and the Social Centre was definitively closed in September 2012. The *Okupa* was the meeting place of numerous social movements in Madrid and played an important role in the 15M movement. Many important meetings of the movement were held in this space and it was also where the movement stored its collaborative library (Juanatey Ferreiro 2012). Similar to La Tabacalera, it organized a wide variety of initiatives and cultural projects. It was the site of a “people’s university”, a kindergarten, a free shop, a library and an urban garden. It held workshops in dance, Pilates, sexual education, yoga, painting, self-defence, bike repair amongst other things (15Mpedia). A similarly influential *Okupa* in the development of the 15M movement, Patio Maravillas, in Malasaña was also closed (Patio Maravillas).

### 3. Aporias of neighbouring

In this section, I focus on a number of complexities and tensions emerging as contemporary notions of *autogestión* enter into contact with the reality of *el barrio*. Two issues in particular attract attention. Firstly, the usage of ambiguous notions such as “persons” and “neighbours” distorts the differential production of neighbours defining their possibility of participating and intervening in public space. In the process, such practices risk reproducing a white spatio-temporal imaginary — where the citizen-neighbour persists as an object of nostalgia. This underplays the difficulties posed by “assembling” in *barrios* crossed by diverse spatial frames and temporal rhythms, itineraries, degrees of temporariness and senses of ownership. Secondly, complexities emerge concerning what I conceptualise as the “*simulacra of autogestión*”. Reproductions and imitations of *autogestión* in *el barrio* advance towards something else entirely: *autogestión* as a product to be consumed by tourists or a tool to reinvigorate abandoned urban spaces paving the way for further speculation.

#### 3.1 The persistence of a white spatio-temporal imaginary of *el barrio*

In the final seminar of *Los Madriles* entitled “Participation and Governance: A City that Governs itself”, one member of the public made the point that whilst the discussion was on participation and governance: only one member of the panel was female. I was similarly left asking where the voice of migrants was. Migrants had hardly received a mention throughout the discussions. A charitable interpretation of this would assume that this was due to their inclusion under the ambiguous banner of neighbours. However, the fact that migrants had no visible role in proceedings made this unlikely. The lack of input was similarly reflected in the map of initiatives elaborated by the project. This included very few entries for Tetuán, the majority of which were

part of the *Paisaje Tetuán* project. The diverse forms of inhabiting *el barrio* developed by migrants were not considered. Actions constructing *el barrio* were assumed to take particular forms. In an earlier session, a cultural centre organizer had suggested that there was a need to generate culture in peripheral *barrios*. He claimed that before his cultural centre had installed itself in one such *barrio*, there had been no culture at all. His civilizing vision represented an extreme version of the broader white spatio-temporal imaginary underpinning discussion. This imaginary limited the scope and nature of the forms of interaction that constructed *el barrio*. The constitution of other spatial frames and temporal rhythms in *el barrio* were invisible or at best secondary.

Following this white spatio-temporal imaginary, the reconstruction of a fragmented *barrio* begins with the white activist or expert in *autogestión*. Their role is to facilitate the meeting of neighbours who are disconnected from one another. In *White Nation*, Ghassan Hage (1998) recounts a children's story that attempts to represent the multicultural nature of Australian society. Each individual brings from his or her country of origin an ingredient to make damper. What Hage points out here is that the job of making and mixing the damper remains in the hands of the white Anglo individual. The white spatio-temporal imaginary defines the starting point of mixing in this case. Similarly, in diverse interventions, neighbours are expected to adapt to the spatial frames and temporal rhythms made possible by white activists and experts. A striking feature of many of the spaces constituted by interventions in this context is their whiteness, following Delacey Tedesco and Jen Bagelman "[w]hiteness is not a demographic predominance of visible biophysical traits but a complex system of cultural, spatio-temporal and political productions that define inter-subjective and communal boundaries of inclusion and exclusion" (Tedesco and Bagelman 2017, 389). The whiteness of a particular space leads to different experiences of this same space. It serves as a barrier determining the extent to which individuals feel the right to occupy it. Sara Ahmed argues that whilst "[w]hiteness is invisible to those who inhabit it. For those who don't inhabit it, whiteness appears as a solid: a body with mass" (Ahmed 2014). Coded white, particular

spaces become integrated into the itineraries of certain inhabitants whilst appearing foreign to others. When I was leaving *Esta es una plaza* on one occasion, a family of South American origin stopped me to ask me what the space was for and the cost of entry. This encounter, whilst anecdotal, indicated a differing perception of the place of this space in their perception of *el barrio*. They did not perceive it as a space integrated into the habitual rhythms of *el barrio*, but rather a separate space where access appeared to be conditioned.

The differential production of neighbours shapes the possibilities of conforming to certain frameworks proposed by the white activist or expert. With movement of people in and out of *el barrio* and the differential treatment of racialized subjects, the possibility of conforming to the rhythms of particular spaces becomes fraught with problems. For example, the limited access to public space of some makes the “unhurried temporality” presupposed by certain initiatives unrealistic and exclusive. This is especially the case for those whose precarious working lives may not allow the time for open-ended discussions and debates. The assumption of the possibility of an unhurried temporality remains entrenched in a particular experience of *el barrio* in which this is feasible — a white spatio-temporal imaginary. The possibility of neighbours being brought together and constituted by fragile and provisional interactions in open air assemblies, as Corsín and Estalella advocate, is thus more tenuous than these authors suggest. The very prospect of such interactions is grounded in a particular experience of *el barrio*.

Beyond the safety of these spaces, constituted by particular interventions, are a diversity of other trajectories in *el barrio*. The interventions of *Paisaje Tetuán* exist in parallel to intense areas of socialization in the streets and public squares of Tetuán. Social interaction is particularly animated along Calle Bravo Murillo, Calle Almansa, Plaza de la Paloma and Plaza Leopoldo Luis (where one of the interventions took place). This was evident when I first lived there in 2008-2011 as it was in 2015. In spite of the traffic, noise and pollution, groups of people would congregate around

benches along Bravo Murillo. Plaza de la Paloma<sup>5</sup>, an irregularly shaped space in front of the Super Cor supermarket was the main space of socialization in *el barrio*. Regardless of the state of disrepair of the square, particularly in the evenings, it was full of children playing, riding bikes and participating in football games. People of diverse origins and all ages would occupy the square. The neo-Nazis from Hogar Social (discussed in more detail below) were also visible on occasions. Closer towards Cuatro Caminos, neighbours of Dominican origin were more visible. Groups of men were regularly playing dominos and cards in the La Plaza de Leopoldo Luis<sup>6</sup> throughout the day and there were numerous hairdressers, shops, cafes and restaurants, which particularly catered for Dominicans. Oyón (2009) suggests that in this regard, migrant populations tend to inhabit *el barrio* in ways that most resonate with earlier waves of migration to the city. He notes sociability in the streets, close family ties and neighbours coming from the same towns of origin. However, these modes of belonging exist in parallel to *el barrio* as the white expert reconstructs it. The alternate spatial frames and temporal rhythms are seemingly outside the white spatio-temporal imaginary of *el barrio* underpinning these. In this regard, Nancy Wence Partida (2015, 135) suggests that the different rhythms of everyday life in contemporary Madrid tend towards relations of *coexistencia* (coexistence) rather than *convivencia* (implying cultural exchange through living together).

In distinguishing between *coexistencia* and *convivencia*, Wence Partida draws attention to the multiple forms of belonging constituted in *el barrio* in Madrid. *El barrio* does not mean the same thing for everybody. Some may feel that they are legitimate owners of *el barrio* and treat others as intruders or temporary disturbances, whilst others may feel like outsiders or detached from their lived space. The white spatio-temporal imaginary produces certain assumptions regarding what a neighbour looks like, the spaces in which they move, and the time they have available. This

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<sup>5</sup> Listen to a sound recording here <https://soundcloud.com/ari-jerrems/plaza-canal-de-isabel-ii-2-09-2015>

<sup>6</sup> Listen to a sound recording here <https://soundcloud.com/ari-jerrems/plaza-del-poeta-leopoldo-luis-03-08-2015>

complicates the creation of common spaces. Wence Partida notes the reaction of certain Bolivian groups in Madrid during the 15M protests. Debates took place discussing whether they should become involved and the majority opted against it. She suggests that whilst the center of attention in July 2011 was what was occurring in Sol, in many spaces in the city it seemed as if nothing was happening. As she writes:

Each day as one arrived at the camp, it seemed as if one entered a space at the margins of the rest of the city: new platforms of virtual communication, new rules in the micro-city... But when one crossed the Manzanares river and arrived at Usera, one felt the sensation that that world that seemed to be everything, became foreign and distant (*ibid.*, 140-141).

Numerous interventions encourage “persons” and “neighbours” to abandon predefined political categories and labels in order to optimise interactions. Corsín and Estalella note how assembly politics draws on deliberative democracy and Rawls’s “normative ‘veil of ignorance’ through which we are all made into strangers” (Corsín and Estalella 2017, 122). However, underpinned by a white spatio-temporal imaginary, these “persons” and “neighbours” provide problematic frameworks for interaction. Gonick notes how in the anti-eviction movement, “the most vocal activists... are young, Spanish and often male... when not moderated, their emotionally lade political rhetoric can display the bravura of machismo” (Gonick 2015b, 8). Gonick illustrates how particular methods and language imposed by dominant participants alienate others in particular assemblies (*ibid.*, 6). She outlines a number of examples of this here:

During one of my first neighborhood assembly meetings in a historically working class neighbourhood towards the north, a young Colombian single mother, Ariana, told the group that after a year of struggle against her bank, she was feeling dejected and



contemplated abandoning her case. Ariana is a victim of domestic violence with two children, one with special needs. In this moment, she was exhausted from the constant negotiation, action, and activity that had marked her journey. Several male activists, smoking furiously, began to berate her for proposing to jump ship. The assembly had expended so much energy on her case, she could not give up now — it wasn't fair and the road to victory is long and arduous. In another assembly, one of the most radical in Madrid, a young Senegalese family attended a stop-evictions meeting and presented their case. The assembly immediately began brainstorming spectacular acts of disobedience in the family's local bank branch: blocking the bank, setting up an encampment, and papering the area with flyers. The family never returned: the parents, out of work for several years, no longer had legal residency papers, and such emblematic actions might put them at risk of deportation (*ibid.*, 9).

Marisa Ruiz Trejo (2013) notes similar tensions in her autoethnographic observations on the 15M protests. Ruiz Trejo observes the reproduction of gender and racial hierarchies amongst participants and how these defined which voices and messages were considered legitimate. De-identification for the white male was relatively risk free whilst for other groups it meant forgetting a series of other battles that their identities were bound up in. Consequently, she highlights how diverse trajectories and experiences become invisible from the neutral perspective of persons and neighbours.

As a result, the possibility of modes of political belonging being constituted are marked by tensions and fracture lines. A theoretical concept of open participation does not guarantee that it ensues in practice. During the *Fiestas Populares*, many events were cleverly organised to attract open participation. Nevertheless, music, dancing and fun tended to draw a big heterogeneous crowd, while openly political initiatives drew a much smaller crowd. On the other hand, many of the most

successful interventions have defied the spatio-temporal parameters of lived space. The 15M movement has been successful in continually recreating temporary infrastructures and forms of political participation. A pop-up city was created in the Plaza de Sol supported by social media. Different nodal points of interaction emerged particularly around internet environments. The common condition of young emigrants identified by *Juventud Sin Futuro* and *Marea Granate* (Maroon Tide in reference to the maroon colour of Spanish passports), allowed these groups to construct a transnational common space around the figure of the precarious Spanish emigrant. These interventions moved beyond modes of political belonging built around stable spatial entities such as *el barrio*.

### 3.2 Simulacra of *autogestión*

During my time in Madrid, the Reina Sofia Museum, one of the city's prime tourist attractions, held an exhibition on Constant's *New Babylon*. Lefebvre had been enthused by Constant's project as it attempted to create an architecture that abolished the rigidities of everyday life. In his imagined society, Constant envisaged no separation between abstract conceived space and space shaped through action. Space was to be actively transformed through the participation of its inhabitants. *New Babylon* would thus be a society in which each individual was able to impact on space and in doing so express their creativity (Constant 2009, 12). During the exhibition, the bookstore outside the museum was filled with books on *autogestión* and experimental urbanism. This reflected the wider proliferation of *autogestión* visible throughout the city. With the increasing visibility of *autogestión* and the emergence of experts of *autogestión* came what I term here the *simulacra of autogestión*. Reproductions and imitations of *autogestión* made it difficult to distinguish between practices. Some interventions seemingly contributed to gentrification and touristification whilst others pitted themselves against it.

*Paisaje Tetuán*, as a government funded intervention did not seem to involve *autogestión* at all. However, it mobilised similar ideas to contemporary practices and was discussed by experts as an example of the potential of *autogestión*. As such, it was a confusing simulacrum of *autogestión*. How to interpret these interventions? Were they part of a covert plot to gentrify Tetuán? Were they meant as kitsch monuments to attract a particular type of tourist to *el barrio*? Were they radical interventions transforming urban space? Were they misunderstood works of art? Apart from the beautification of the already well-established Plaza Leopoldo Luis, interventions were disconnected from the more intense rhythms of *el barrio*. Initially, I found them difficult to locate. I walked past *Ganando Metros* and the Hypertube on numerous occasions without realizing that they were there. The majority of the time both *Ganando Metros* and the *La Huerta de Tetuán* were shut and were not in use (seeing as both of them were fenced off and needed a key to enter). I was able to enter *La Huerta de Tetuán* on invitation and saw a number of events occur there. I never saw *Ganando Metros* in use despite living nearby. On the Facebook page, there are numerous photos of events being held there including meetings, birthday parties etc. Nevertheless, in comparison with the frenetic pace of La plaza de la Paloma, these appeared to be cordoned off works of art. The most controversial intervention was the Hypertube. Due to the abandonment of the square, it took me quite a while to realise that these concrete tubes were in fact part of the project. It was heavily criticised by residents and associations due to its appearance and lack of safety. Despite the intention that it would be transformed through play, at the time of my fieldwork, access to the structure had been blocked off with a sign stating that it was a work of art and not a plaything. One critic scathingly referred to it as “enlightened despotism”, complaining that such an intervention was carried out instead of the needs of the inhabitants of *el barrio* being met (Las Interferencias 2014). Due to the discontentment of neighbours, the structure has since been removed (Asociación Vecinal Solidaridad Cuatro Caminos-Tetuán 2016). Beyond the intentions of the experts involved in each of these interventions, their impact on *el barrio* remains uncertain. They may indeed begin to form part of a tourist trail or be appropriated

by neighbours invigorating life in *el barrio*. On the other hand, they may simply be removed or abandoned — their remains persisting as a testament to a failed utopia.

Successful grassroots interventions, in carving out a stable space in the city, face the challenge of touristification. This was the case for *Esta es una plaza*. I tended to spend time in *Esta es una plaza* during lunch times and evenings when I was working from the nearby library at the Reina Sofia Museum, whilst doing my fieldwork. *Esta es una plaza* often felt like a piece of paradise in the middle of grey urban space. It was filled with colourful paintings, greenery and a lovely garden. It was often peaceful with few people there during the day, but was much busier in the evenings. You could often find children playing, people sitting and chatting, eating, playing music or table tennis. I saw tourists come and go on numerous occasions. One afternoon I was sitting in *Esta es una Plaza* when:

a group of American and Northern European tourists enter on a guided tour. The tour guide, North American by accent, sniffs the rosemary on his way through the plaza. He stands in front of the mural of workers chopping down the *Oso y el Madroño* (the Bear and the Strawberry tree — symbol of Madrid). The tourists look very impressed; they are mainly in their early twenties. Some have a typical hippie appearance, loose clothing and dreadlocks. The guide explains how the mural symbolises how speculation and gentrification is leading to the loss of spaces like this one. His explanation is well backed up with evidence. He mentions Solarpiés up the road and how it is going to be made into a hotel... As I write this, more tourists have walked into the square with their cameras<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> Fieldnotes 7/08/2015

In a confusing twist, the battle against the touristification of Lavapiés seemed to become the object of interest for a tour of *el barrio*. The particular trajectory of *Esta es una plaza*, fomented by its success, constituted it as a cultural artefact to be consumed. Such artefacts contributed to establishing a particular itinerary for “revolutionary tourism”<sup>8</sup> where progressive types came to witness and learn from these models. Lavapiés increasingly had the ambience of a destination *barrio* for the edgy tourist. Similarly, I came across a large number of academics — with an important contingent of PhD students — studying the diverse interventions in the city and particularly in Lavapiés (me being one of them of course). This academic interest was attracted by and contributed to the construction of such practices as the “future” of revolutionary action. By far the most disturbing appropriation of *el barrio* in this context, was the *#bemorebarrio* campaign run by clothing store Pull and Bear, part of the Inditex group (owned by Amancio Ortega, briefly the world’s richest man in 2015), that attempted to market their new line of clothes by appealing to people’s connection to their *barrio*<sup>9</sup>.

Groups whose politics diverge significantly from the leftist politics initially associated with these practices also employ practices mimicking autogestión. In Tetuán, a group of neo-Nazis occupied a building in order to establish the social centre, Hogar Social Ramiro Ledesma in 2014 (Martín 2016). In 2015, members of Hogar Social regularly set up a stand outside of the SuperCor supermarket on the edge of Plaza de la Paloma to collect food. After a wave of protest from neighbours, they were eventually evicted from the occupied building. They have since occupied a number of other buildings throughout the city. Hogar Social Ledesma has utilised occupied buildings to provide housing for Spanish families who have suffered evictions and they have stored books, toys, mattresses and food collected to be redistributed to Spanish families only. Additionally Hogar Social holds conferences and debates to provide a forum for the discussion of

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<sup>8</sup> Jose Luis de la Flor used the term “*turismo revolucionario*” in a conversation.

<sup>9</sup> See campaign video, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MJbeEY7um4I>

a range of right wing themes. The group has justified its existence because of a perceived need to defend Spanish nationals who suffer due to a disproportionate amount of government benefits being destined to migrants (Esteban 2015).

#### 4. Precarious proximity

As I have outlined in this chapter, in this context, the relationship between grassroots and government interventions is marked by ambiguity and tension. The possibility of constituting alternative modes of political belonging in *el barrio* is defined by these complexities. By focusing on the specificities of the current period, in relation to past instances, I offer perspective on changing notions of belonging in *el barrio*. Attention to the specific conditions in which notions of *autogestión* emerge, the diverse forms that they take and the production of differences between neighbours provides the basis for a more critical appreciation of the possibilities of alternative modes of political belonging in the current context.

Precarious proximity defines both the condition of and the method used to construct alternative forms of belonging in *el barrio*. In their quest to build a common space around *el barrio*, contemporary grassroots initiatives simultaneously face the risk of disintegration and reification. Disintegration if they fail to build a common ground from which to construct relations of proximity. Reification if they become a cultural artefact disconnected from the reality of neighbourly relations — appropriated as a product or a theoretical model in the process. Encountering common ground is made more difficult by the diverse experiences and conditions of those sharing *el barrio*. The different experiences lead to tensions and misunderstandings. The very possibility of occupying public space and constructing common ground is restricted by practices that marginalise and banish certain bodies from sight. Grassroots initiatives struggle to find ways to overcome and navigate this specific terrain of temporariness and precarity. At times,

they may be invested in maintaining them, consciously or otherwise. The impulse to imagine and create a common figure of the neighbour threatens to erase the differences and inequalities present in *el barrio*. Particular interventions become conceived as theoretical objects of expert knowledge or become tourist destinations catering for niche markets. Seemingly rebellious practices are incorporated into dominant discourses on creative cities in the process.

Barriers and borders between neighbours condition and challenge the construction of common spaces. Attempts at reconstructing *el barrio* are defined by access to public space, work hours and other commitments. The production of differential conditions of precarity defines the possibility and willingness of many to become involved. The temporary nature of the inhabitancy of some, contrasts with the long-term settlement of others; some are seen as belonging to and owning *el barrio* whilst the status of others tends towards indefiniteness. Grassroots initiatives in this context necessarily reconstruct and rethink the neighbourly relation, putting neighbours back into contact with each other, rather than building on pre-existing relationships — as was the case in the past. Particularly due to this transience and temporariness of such initiatives, there is a constant struggle to build common ground. The possibilities of developing a common sense of belonging in *el barrio* in this context are closely connected to the problem of ownership. Whether or not one feels they belong in *el barrio* is influenced by government practices that produce some as legitimate owners and others as conditional outsiders. Different experiences lead to varied senses of ownership of *el barrio*. In the earlier contexts, grassroots political interventions built on the sense of ownership of the inhabitants in *el barrio*. Class-consciousness and a common situation of precarity, or the shared experience of building *el barrio* from the ground up, contributed to fomenting a sense of ownership. During the 1970s, the AVs were able to formulate the claim that *el barrio* was theirs. However, in the current context the permanence of the homeowner is contrasted with the precarious inhabitancy of youths and migrants. Therefore, some are produced as the legitimate owners of *el barrio*, whilst others occupy temporary marginal positions. Racial

categories are a defining factor in the perceived ownership of *el barrio*. Perceived ownership of *el barrio* defines who feels a right to participate in the management of local affairs. Preconceptions entrenched in the popular imaginary create tensions that inhibit the construction of a shared sense of ownership and belonging.

The role of the migrant in *el barrio* is conceived differently now than in earlier instances. This is evident in the shift from the emblematic slogan of the AVs “*el barrio es nuestro*” (*el barrio* is ours) to the “*el barrio para quien lo habita*” (*el barrio* for those who live in it) of the *Fiestas Populares de Lavapiés*. In the first case, inhabitants aspired to the acquisition of a degree of permanence. Migrants that arrived to the city made particular spaces their own over time. In the context of the Franco dictatorship, the search for a permanent dwelling in the city was linked to social and government ideals of a stable Catholic community and homeownership. The ingenuity and makeshift urbanism of the inhabitants of *chabolas* were a means to achieve permanence. Importantly, the process of neighbouring and the creation of *el barrio* occurred as a product of conflict and over time. In the previous cases, grassroots practices were able to build on neighbourly relations to generate modes of political belonging in *el barrio*. These enabled migrants to renegotiate their position in the city through *el barrio*. Contemporary practices seek to reconstitute the neighbourly relation in order to construct a common ground on which to build a space of belonging. In theory, this is conceived as a way of uniting fragmented *barrios* to overcome the numerous boundaries between neighbours and the diversity of lived experience. Whilst in earlier cases, political action in *el barrio* was built around a “we”, in the current context practices of *autogestión* seek to overcome the division between them and us. As I have illustrated in this chapter, these efforts are laced with tensions and complexities. Such initiatives risk becoming complicit with the very exclusions they are intent on fighting in the first place.



Efforts to reconstruct *el barrio* are complicated by the temporariness of near dwelling and the uncertain status of some. Precariousness and transient circumstances makes establishing connections more difficult and less desirable for those that feel that they are temporary. The temporality underpinning contemporary practices of neighbouring is notably different in this context, as it does not envisage an overcoming of the condition of precarious proximity underpinning the possibility of establishing neighbourly relations. *El barrio* exists more as a continuously unresolved problem than as an established reality. Instead of aspiring to permanence, grassroots initiatives work within these conditions of possibility, defining the process of neighbouring as an ongoing and unfinished process, neighbours change, values change, everything changes.

# Conclusion

In this concluding chapter, I recap the main insights from the thesis and outline some future directions to expand on the work conducted. By employing *el barrio* as a tool of analysis, I have established a line of continuity between conflicts occurring during different historical periods. This has permitted me to track how competing modes of political belonging are inscribed in *el barrio* at specific moments. Theoretically, by drawing on the idea of spatial history, I have integrated the insights from an interdisciplinary literature focused on migration, borders, the city and citizenship. I have expanded on these insights through an exploration of Lefebvre's work. In his political studies, Lefebvre employs space as a tool of analysis to interrogate the spatio-temporal dimensions of political possibility at particular moments in time. Lefebvre's approach has helped develop the idea of spatial history and theorise the emergence of diverse constellations of the politics of neighbouring grounded in *el barrio*. Empirically, I have identified continuities and discontinuities in conceptions of space and belonging constructed by diverse political actors in Spain. By exploring continuities and discontinuities in conceptions of space and belonging, I have shed new light on contemporary social movements. The analysis conducted thus contributes to a more nuanced discussion of the modes of political belonging social movements make possible as well as their tensions and complexities.

## 1. A spatial history of political belonging

I have developed a spatial history of modes of political belonging as inscribed in *el barrio*. I have utilised spatial history to develop and integrate the insights of interdisciplinary work in Political Theory, International Relations and Political Geography, focused on citizenship, borders, migration and the city. This literature provides tools to theorise how modes of political belonging

are produced by specific battles and practices. Spatial history, by employing space as a tool of analysis, helps elucidate specific historical processes. I develop an understanding of spatial history through a reading of recent literature and expand on this by drawing on Lefebvre's work — focusing particularly on his political studies. I then mobilise spatial history to track how diverse relationships are inscribed in *el barrio* over time and highlight how previous conflicts reverberate through the physical landscape, ideas and memories conditioning and informing contemporary interventions. I have theorised *el barrio* as the meeting place and battle ground of diverse trajectories, processes and interventions. I have conceptualised how modes of political belonging emerge in relation to competing modes of belonging and a wider series of processes — that I have theorised through the relationship between migration, relations of proximity and planning. Politics has been conceived as being composed of diverse conflicting interventions changing through space and time. Migration has been read as a transformative and constitutive component of political constellations that take form in complex relational spaces.

Through an exploration of the intersection between migration, relations of proximity and planning at particular historical moments, I have highlighted continuities and discontinuities underpinning political contests in *el barrio* and the changing ways in which *el barrio* has been envisaged and contested by political actors. Migration has been a constitutive and transformative aspect of all the instances studied in this thesis. During the Anarchist period, migration fuelled the creation of peripheral *barrios*. The shared experience of inhabitants in these spaces underpinned the development of grassroots practices. The inability of the state to shape the reality of peripheral *barrios* was filled by grassroots interventions. At the same time, the “problem” created by migrants became the focus of particular strategies of control. Following the Spanish Civil War, numerous state interventions attempted to pacify problem *barrios* and eliminate alternative modes of belonging. State strategies attempted to integrate migrants as citizens, through the production of citizen-neighbours, by structuring *barrios* and fomenting particular kinds of

relationships. Despite the challenges migrants caused the state it also found ways to incorporate the vitality of these migrants in order to advance its own projects. In the post-GFC period, migration, this time from beyond the borders of the nation-state, has again reshaped *el barrio*. State interventions have actively differentiated between residents in this context leading to different experiences and senses of belonging in *el barrio*.

Lefebvre's work has served to theorise how conflicting modes of political belonging are inscribed in *el barrio*. In his political studies, Lefebvre employs space as a tool of analysis to explore the spatio-temporal conditions of political possibility at particular moments. I have adopted Lefebvre's distinction between state space and *autogestion* to conceptualise the politics of neighbouring. Lefebvre draws attention to the increased influence of abstraction and state strategies in the production of space whilst exploring the possibilities of *autogestion*. In his earlier study of the Paris Commune, the impact of abstract space was partial. However, in the studies of his own time, Lefebvre argues that abstract state space has "colonised" urban space and everyday life. He illustrates how the impact of abstract state spaces fundamentally transforms urban space, and in the process, the possibilities for grassroots alternatives. I have conceptualised the politics of neighbouring as a conflictual relationship between abstract state space and grassroots practices in *el barrio*. I have argued that the development of neighbourhood planning contributed to the abstraction governing everyday life identified by Lefebvre. Planning offered a framework through which desirable relations and particular political subjects could be produced in *el barrio*. At the same time, *el barrio* has also been a space in which grassroots alternatives have been imagined and constituted.

In the studies of specific historical moments in this thesis, I have illustrated how different political interventions produce specific forms of occupying and organizing space with temporal imaginaries that position migrants in society in particular ways. While the situation of recent arrivals was

shaped by access to work, housing and public space, *el barrio* provided a site through which the position of migrants in the city was contested and negotiated. During the earlier periods studied there was an assumption that peripheral *barrios* would be integrated by processes of modernisation or through regressive utopias. In the wake of the Civil War, migrant concentrated *barrios* were seen as anomalies that needed to be eliminated. To achieve this end the dictatorship implemented structures to correct the spatial frames and temporal rhythms of such spaces in order to create the correct types of subjects. The model citizen-neighbour epitomised the future image of such *barrios*. The AVs forwarded their own claim to permanence and stability in *el barrio* and pronounced ownership of *el barrio*. Notwithstanding the precarious nature of their tenure in the city, the new arrivals envisaged their transition from migrants to stable residents. In the contemporary context, the citizen-neighbour persists as an object of nostalgia with important ramifications. State interventions no longer seek to produce *barrios* that are solely inhabited by citizen-neighbours. Rather *el barrio* is a space that is populated both by favoured subjects and subordinated others. A white spatio-temporal imaginary informs understandings of ownership of *el barrio* in this context. This imaginary allows some inhabitants to be constructed as temporary, others permanent, some owners, others visitors. At the same time, austerity and creative cities policies feed an ambiguous relationship between state and grassroots interventions.

The study of three specific constellations of the politics of neighbouring in this thesis has allowed me to highlight a dynamic and changing relationship between state spaces and grassroots practices. I have argued that while Lefebvre's work helps to conceptualise the politics of neighbouring, alternate sources are needed to think the politics of neighbouring in changing circumstances. The interpretation of Lefebvre's work developed in this thesis thus contributes to recent Lefebvre scholarship that has built on his insights to address changing circumstances. To account for recent developments, I have utilised work from Postcolonial Theory and Italian Neo-Marxism. I have argued that it is necessary to supplement the limited tools Lefebvre provides for

conceptualising the differential production of subjects in the same space. I have shown the importance of the differential production of subjects in the same space for contemporary politics. I have illustrated the production of very different experiences of *el barrio*. I have drawn on Samaddar's theorisation of the postcolonial predicament to expand on the differential production of subjects. The "coloniality" of the differential production of subjects brings attention to Lefebvre's lack of coverage of the colonial experience. To address Lefebvre's oversight, I have endeavoured to stay attentive to the production of differences along classed, gendered and racialized lines throughout the thesis.

## 2. Re-assessing social movements in Spain

The perspective gained through a spatial history of modes of political belonging grounded in *el barrio* has allowed me to reconsider political movements emerging in the post-GFC period in Spain. Whilst there has been much interest regarding developments in Spain, the majority of academic work has focused on the novelty of the social movements emerging, linking them to similar movements that are seen to have created counter-hegemonic spaces of resistance in the wake of the GFC. This remains the case in more sophisticated studies underlining the production of urban space in Spain. This focus on novelty, whilst illuminating certain important aspects of contemporary movements, comes at the detriment of more rigorous analysis that pertains to changing notions of space and belonging. I have provided insights into the continuities and discontinuities that have shaped the notions of space and belonging that are forwarded by contemporary movements. I have also noted changes in the relationship between abstract state spaces and grassroots democratic practices. This serves to identify some of the tensions, complexities and possibilities of the modes of political belonging made possible by contemporary movements.

The figure of the citizen-neighbour has served as an anchor to track the emergence of numerous forms of belonging in this context. I have argued that the disarticulation of the citizen-neighbour shapes the possibility of contemporary movements constituting alternative modes of political belonging in *el barrio*. The differential production of neighbours in this context creates a *barrio* splintered and inhabited by diverse figures. This fracturing causes problems for grassroots practices which attempt to build alternative modes of political belonging around *el barrio*. In their quest to reconstruct *el barrio*, grassroots initiatives simultaneously face the risk of disintegration and reification. Disintegration, if they fail to create common ground on which to construct relations of proximity. Reification, if they become a cultural artefact appropriated as a product or as a theoretical model that becomes disconnected from the reality of *el barrio*. On the one hand, the use of abstract notions such as “persons” and “neighbours” employed by contemporary movements fails to take into account the splintered nature of *el barrio* and inadequately engages with the diverse rhythms and trajectories shaping them. Certain interventions risk perpetuating a white spatio-temporal imaginary where it is the role of white activists and experts to construct *barrios* where they did not exist already — overlooking the diverse array of forms of inhabiting *el barrio* already present. Conversely, I have noted the emergence of simulacra of *autogestión*. Aspects of *autogestión* have gained mainstream acceptance and a group of experts have appeared who promulgate it. In this context, it becomes increasingly difficult to differentiate between state interventions and grassroots practices. *Autogestión* is repackaged as a model and a product. Policing actively differentiates between interventions, permitting some and criminalizing others. In this context, it becomes important to interrogate the trajectories of particular practices, the exclusions they create and the unexpected ramifications which result. Seemingly radical initiatives may be appropriated for uses or meanings that diverge substantially from their initial intentions. Specific interventions may unwittingly contribute to processes of gentrification or touristification. Academic interest and “revolutionary tourism” similarly contribute to these processes.

I have highlighted a complex and changing relationship between the citizen and the neighbour. Modes of citizenship impact on neighbourly relations whilst neighbourly relations both challenge and reproduce modes of citizenship. Through my analysis, I have highlighted the convergence of the citizen and the neighbour during the Franco dictatorship. The grassroots interventions of the AVs reconfigured the notion of the citizen-neighbour building on the sense of ownership of *el barrio*. In the current context, the ownership of the citizen-neighbour is contrasted to the conditioned existence of others. Oyón (2009) has asserted that contemporary interest in *el barrio* may be connected to its demise. I have noted that the very possibility of being in public space and creating a sense of ownership is conditioned by police practices and dominant discourses that marginalise certain residents. Establishing common grounds is complicated by the diversity of experiences of those inhabiting *el barrio*, experiences that lead to tensions and misunderstandings. These tensions shape the potential of the mobilisation of the neighbour. The citizen-neighbour haunts the construction of a shared sense of ownership and belonging around the figure of the neighbour. Whilst contemporary initiatives attempt to unite fragmented *barrios* to overcome the numerous boundaries between neighbours and the diversity of lived experiences, they risk grounding themselves in nostalgia. Whilst past grassroots initiatives in *el barrio* provide memories that allow contemporary movements to imagine the constitution of alternative modes of political belonging in *el barrio* — where the migrant is reconceptualised as a constitutive figure, the changing relationship between the citizen and the neighbour complicates the possibility of doing so. For this reason, in addition to bringing neighbours together, grassroots initiatives face the challenge of reconstructing and rethinking the neighbourly relation itself.

### 3. Future directions

In this final section, I explore a number of areas that may be expanded upon in future research. I pinpoint three main areas that warrant further investigation. Firstly, I identify possibilities to



develop the theorisation of a spatial history of political belonging through both empirical and theoretical research. Secondly, I outline the potential for a wider exploration of the relationship between grassroots and state interventions, expanding on the specific study of Madrid conducted in this thesis. Finally, I argue that an exploration of the convergences and differences between notions of autonomy, *autogestion* and *autonomia* may build on insights from this thesis.

In this thesis, I have focused specifically on how modes of political belonging are inscribed in *el barrio* at three different moments in time. To conceptualise spatial history, I have focused on the insights of a number of works that explicitly set out to write spatial histories. I expand on these through an in-depth study of Lefebvre's work. Due to the specificity of my focus, scope remains to develop the theorisation of a spatial history of political belonging. Both further empirical studies and theoretical exploration promises to provide tools to expand on work done in this thesis. This thesis provides a basis from which to elaborate similar investigations in the future. In order to develop spatial history, I focused specifically on the work of Lefebvre. While Lefebvre would see his work as historical materialism, I illustrate how it contributes to spatial history. It is thus logical to assume that a wealth of theoretical tools can be garnered from more sustained engagement with scholars whose work contributes to developing the idea of spatial history whilst not framing it as such. For example, Elden argues that the work of Michel Foucault, when read through a Heideggerian lens, can be interpreted as a type of spatial history. Elden argues that two of Foucault's major projects, the *History of Madness* and *Discipline and Punish* can be understood as spatial histories (Elden 2004, 152; Elden 2001). Morton similarly draws on the work of thinkers like Doreen Massey and Gramsci to further his understanding of spatial history (Morton 2015, Morton 2017). Eyal Weizman's recent work on forensic architecture also appears to converge with the idea of spatial history. Forensic architecture develops a range of tools that conceptualise how political relations are inscribed in space. In this work, Weizman theorises space not as "a neutral, abstract grid on which traces of a crime can be plotted out, but itself a dynamic and elastic

territory, a force field that is shaped by but also shapes conflict” (Weizman 2014, 9). Sustained engagement with theoretical works such as these promises to advance the theorisation of spatial history developed in this thesis.

In this thesis, I have read the relationship between state interventions and grassroots practices specifically in relation to Madrid. From this reading, I have been able to chart how this relationship has transformed over time. There is potential for a wider exploration of this relationship in different circumstances. To develop a historical understanding of this relationship it appears necessary to focus more heavily on the colonial experience. The relationship between the abstract colonial notions of space that imposed themselves on different cosmologies and the development of state spaces outlined by Lefebvre appears to offer a fruitful line of investigation. Kipfer and Goonewardena (2013) have already done important work in this regard. They have highlighted how more attention to the notion of colonisation helps capitalise on the theoretical tools provided by Lefebvre. These authors have drawn on theorists such as Frantz Fanon to fill the gaps left by Lefebvre’s analysis and trace transformations in space from the colonial to the global city (e.g., Kipfer 2007).

Lefebvre’s theorisation of *autogestion* resonates with similar concepts utilised in contemporary academic debates. Autonomy for example has been employed by contemporary authors in order to account for emerging forms of political action (e.g., Samaddar 2004). Robbie Shilliam (2016) conceptualises “hinterlands” that have been cultivated to avoid incorporation into the structures of colonial governance. In this thesis, I have focused specifically on *autogestion* as employed by Lefebvre and later notions of *autogestión* used in the Spanish context. There is potential for more exploration into interrelated concepts such as autonomy and *autonomía*, their trajectories and the ways that different thinkers and movements have employed them. In this regard, Federico Luisetti et. al. have recently attempted to bring together thinkers from the traditions of

Autonomism and Decolonial Thinking, in order to highlight the “growing number of convergences between conceptions of autonomy emanating from both European social movements and decolonial movements in the Americas” (Luisetti et. al. 2015, 1).

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The 15M movement and related groups have been interpreted as creating counter-hegemonic spaces of resistance. Analysis in this thesis has contributed a more nuanced understanding of the spatio-temporal conditions defining these contemporary social movements in Spain. I have drawn on a longer history of political conflicts in *el barrio* in Madrid to do so. *El barrio* has been employed as a tool of analysis to explore how different political constellations are spatialized at particular moments in time. Lefebvre’s work has been utilised to develop the idea of spatial history and theorise the politics of neighbouring. Historical perspective gained has allowed me to highlight how *el barrio* has been conceived and contested at specific moments and illustrate continuities and discontinuities defining contemporary conflicts. Previous political battles reverberate in the physical landscape of *el barrio* and contribute to the ideas and memories shaping present conflicts. This thesis has provided a sophisticated understanding of the modes of political belonging made possible by contemporary movements and the ways in which these are grounded in *el barrio*. It has moved beyond the haste to identify counter-hegemonic spaces of resistance and focused instead on the conditions, limitations and possibilities of these.

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