EPISTEMOLOGIES OF THE SOUTH AND LOCAL ELECTIONS IN SPAIN: TOWARDS POLITICS BASED ON THE COMMONS?

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Resumen: Este artículo explora en qué medida y bajo qué condiciones los nuevos municipalismos ciudadanos que iniciaron la fase de "asalto institucional" con las elecciones locales del 24 de mayo de 2015 están contribuyendo a crear una praxis instituyente de lo común como principio articulador y horizonte de sentido de una política de emancipación democrática alternativa a la hegemonía del neoliberalismo. En este sentido, se establecen las coordenadas epistemológicas y políticas desde las que estas candidaturas movilizan la cuestión de lo común como disparador institucional de procesos contrahegemónicos capaces de generar nuevas formas de producción y gestión de lo social y lo político, proponiendo algunas elementos de discusión para el análisis y comprensión de sus retos, implicaciones y limitaciones.

Palabras clave: epistemología de lo común, nuevos municipalismos, democracia, ciudadanía, transformación social.

Abstract: This work explores the limits and extents of the Spanish new citizenship municipalities, that initiated the phase of "institutional assault" in the Spanish local elections on 24 May 2015, in order to build an institutive praxis of the commons as a horizon of sense and an articulation principle of democratic politics of emancipation, alternative to the hegemony of the neoliberalism. In this sense, the text establishes the political and epistemological coordinates from where this candidacies mobilize the Commons as an ins-
titutional trigger of counter-hegemonic processes, able to generate new manners of production and management of social and political issues, proposing elements of discussion to analyse and comprehend its challenges, implications and limits.

Keywords: Epistemology of the common, new municipalism, democracy, citizenship, social transformation.

INTRODUCTION[*]

"Thus it is that democracy, if it is to survive the shrinking of the world and the assaults of a hostile modernity, will have to rediscover its multiple voices and give to citizens once again the power to

speak, to decide, and to act; for in the end human freedom will be found not in caverns of private solitude but in the noisy assemblies where women and men meet daily as citizens and discover in each other's talk the consolation of a common humanity".[1]

The privatisation processes imposed by neoliberalism against the context of the capitalism global crisis generated in 2008, have caused the emergence of resistance collective demonstrations inscribed in a new cycle of protests and mobilisations[2] in the global scale. In every case, from Tunisia to United States of America, Turkey to Brazil, Greece, Portugal or Spain, among other geographies, collective action in public space has been intensified, giving rise to diverse forms of politicisation *from below* related to shared social struggles and developed mainly in local and national scopes but linked globally over the Internet.

A specific question in the Spanish case is the displacement of an important part of this forms of politicization to the electoral field, where the political cycle that begins with the emergence of 15M in May 2011 has permitted the aperture of a space for action out of the traditional bi-partisan system with the *Partido Popular* (PP) and the *Partido Socialista Obrero Español* (PSOE). These processes have propitiated the appearance of new political parties and electoral platforms at national scope as *Partido X*, *Podemos* or *Unidos Podemos* (the electoral coalition between *Podemos*, *Izquierda Unida*,

Equo and other leftist forces), while at local scope, the protest cycle has crystallised in the formation of citizen municipal candidatures which in the municipal election of 24 May 2015 have obtained notable achievements in the medium and largest cities as Barcelona, Madrid, Málaga, Cádiz, Zaragoza, Santiago de Compostela and A Coruña among others.

Taking these premises into account, we want to present some reflections – although provisional– that may help to draw a clearer idea about the contributions of current municipalist processes to build the strained, fragile and dynamic politics of the Commons. We regard it from the perspective of the sociology of emergencies with which we can identify "signals, tracks, latencies, possibilities that exist in the present but are signs of the future, possibilities that are emerging but are disqualified because they are embryos and are not very visible things"[3]. Thus our intention is not to anylise the estate of the question nor to compile all the latest works that have been published on the new municipalism and the Spanish social movements but to investigate , to what extent, in what sens and within what limits, in the context of the current economic, political and institutional crisis on-going since 2008, the new citizenry municipalisms are contributing to establish, beyond the discursive field, an instituting *praxis* of the common as an articulating principle and horizon of meaning of a new policy of democratic emancipation. We asked ourselves about the practices and discourses of the above mentioned epistemology of the common that challenge the capitalist logic of privatization and commodification. Our aim is to offer a list of thoughts and critical analyses which we think should appear in the programme of investigations. We wonder if this practice promotes the institutionalization of the core of "good sense"[4] amalgamated in the popular mind that provides the ability to critically read

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[1] Barber, B. R., *Strong Democracy: Participatory Politics for a New Age*. Berkeley, University of California Press, 1984, 311.

[2] Sidney Tarrow identifies five elements to explain the concept of the cycle of protest: a phase of intensified social conflicts, their geographical spread, triggering lobbying actions more or less spontaneous combined with forms of organized participation, the emergence of new organizations, symbols and frames of interpretation of the world and, finally, expanding the repertoire of collective action. From our understanding, it seems reasonable to think that we have a process of this nature. Cf. Tarrow, S., *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics*. New York, Cambridge University Press, 2011.

[3] Santos, B. S., *Renovar la teoría crítica y reinventar la emancipación social (encuentros en Buenos Aires)*. Buenos Aires, 2006, CLACSO, 30. The translation is ours.

[4] Gramsci, A., *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci*. London, Lawrence & Wishart, 1971, 323.

reality and gives the work a transformative and "conscious direction"[5].

In order to foundament this thesis, the article is devided in three sections that complement each other. In the first part, based on some of Antonio Gramsci approaches on the common sense in the dialogue with the epistemology of the south by Boaventura de Sousa Santos we tackle the challenge of constructing a common sense of the common as a central strategy of a popular counter hegemony capable of structuring another forme of society. In the second one, we go over what provides a context to the emergence and creation of new local candidacies in Spain, insisting in the meaning of municipalism of the common as the key element of the establishment of another kind of politics and democracy. The third part shows some exemples which, from the perspective of the emergences, points out this paradigm of the common where we place the new municipalismes.

1. TOWARDS A NEW COMMON SENSE OF COMMONS

Commons appeared in this political cycle as an activator principle for the material and social forces that defy neoliberalism and bet for the construction of alternative forms of rationality capable of channeling the multiple aspirations implied in these "other politics". In the case of Spain these have in part developed into the institutionalisation of municipal candidacies based in a citizen's rescue programme against the consequences of the austerity programs. From this perspective, Christian Laval and Pierre Dardot state that the Commons has become "the political principle that defines a new regime of struggles at global level"[6], a marginal principle in the Western political culture since anarchist, communist and socialist fights of the late XIX century.

15M contributed to creating collective practices and founding spaces of the Commons as a political principle able to generate high intensity democratic experiences, such as

listening, assembly and consensus behaviours, as well as collective behaviours of socialisation in which people support, compenetrate and coordinate themselves daily in order to stop evictions, to defend public health from privatisation, to denounce (*escraches*) banks and politicians who are made responsible for the crisis.

Thus, although included, the Commons does not refer here to goods under legal protection against the accumulation and dispossession capitalist logic described by Karl Marx, Rosa Luxemburg or David Harvey. Following Silvia Federici[7], common constitutes a social association with political relevance; a space where liaisons of reciprocity are created to initiate counter-hegemonic processes against the social and political dominant order; a contribution to alternative meanings, to the established ways of living, and to the learning to develop ways of living based in which Boaventura de Sousa Santos called the "principle of the community"[8]. This implies a comprehension of the social relationships that allows to transcend the egoist self-interest of liberal and capitalist logic for the sake of value-funded interactions of solidarity, reciprocity, mutual support, social responsibility, respect to diversity and emancipatory collective action.

From this perspective, the community conceived as a social construction involves rejecting an essentialist vision to submit, as suggested by Marina Garcés, to the idea of a common world[9] inscribed in a field of relationships that emphasizes the values of interdependence, the us, the co-involvement, the being- with, the vulnerability and the unfinished wealth of the world.

The paradigm of the common rejects the idea of an immunitary community, a *communitas* whose essence is the *immunitas*[10]. To Zygmunt

[5] Gramsci, A., *Selections*..., op. cit., 329.

[6] Laval, Ch. and Dardot, P., *Común: ensayo sobre la revolución en el siglo XXI*. Barcelona, Gedisa, 2014, 59. The translation is ours.

[7] Federici, S., *Revolution at Point Zero: Housework, Reproduction, and Feminist Struggle*. Oakland, PM Press, 2012, 115-148.

[8] Santos, B. S., Santos, B. S., *Toward a New Common Sense: Law, Science and Politics in the Paradigmatic Transition*. New York, Routledge, 1995, 23.

[9] Garcés, M., *Un mundo común*. Barcelona, Bellaterra, 2013, 117-145.

[10] Cf. Esposito, R., *Communitas. The Origin and Destiny of Community*. Stanford, Stanford University

Bauman, in a clear critic to Hardt and Negri approaches, a crowd does not constitute a community[11]. Alongside Manuel Castells[12], Bauman speaks of togetherness[13], of being together in an area of relational exchanges among plural subjects "where people are *with* others and neither for nor against them, that is, in sheer human togetherness"[14], communicative and discursively engaged with the common world. Common opposes the prevailing common sense of identity around the identitary essences that deny or hide the other, blocking the potential for the individuals and the community to define it and dwell in it, not to mention to manage or decide it.

Facing the defensive conception of citizenship and democracy, common opposes a shifting, offensive, active and participatory conceptualisation: *koinonia* against *polis*. Perhaps in part, and because of this, Bauman understands community as an entangled web of social interactions with meanings and purposes differentiated[15]. This difference or this *différance*[16], as Derrida would say, involves a political action with a purpose. In other words, it involves a project, a movement and a movement that differs (in the sense of delay, but also to propose, to differentiate) from the confined community based on the proper, on the property, tantamount to the community as *sameness*.[17] Therefore, the paradigm of the common is an event[18], the sign of a project, and this in a chronotropically[19] way: historical and dialogical[20] time-spaced as a telic framework[21], a plot, a cultural "knitted community".[22]

Press, 2010, 1-19. The topic of the *immunitas* as an essential feature of the community articulated around the selfness and proprietary *versus* the common and shared can also be found in Esposito, R., *Immunitas: The Protection and Negation of Life*. Cambridge, Polity Press, 2012. To deepen the immune as the configuration of the individual, biological space, which reaches to the common, social and environmental space in terms of biopolitics appropriation of bodies and the immune experience in these bodies from Feminist Critical Theory, cf. Haraway, D., "The Biopolitics of Postmodern Bodies: Determinations of Self in Immune System Discourse", *Differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies*, vol. 1, nº 1, 1989, 3-43.

[11] Bauman, Z., *Community: Seeking Safety in an Insecure World.* Cambrige, Polity Press, 2001.

[12] Castells, M., *Communication power*. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2013, xli. Vid. also Castells, M., *Networks of outrage and hope. Social movements in the Internet age*. Cambridge, Polity, 2012, 10.

[13] Bauman, *Community…*, op. cit.

[14] Arendt, H. *The Human Condition*. Chicago, University Chicago Press, 2011, 180. Arendt's political community is not a space that annuls the differences, since may be appropriate reduce it to its minimum expression in order to participate in a formal equality relationship between individuals. Assert that we are together - neither against nor for - does not eliminate nor denies the plurality and agonism of life. In the community of Arendt differences are recognized. What is agonic is the conflict, but does not necessarily involve violence. It is precisely the breakdown of the togetherness, of being together, which creates loneliness and violence, in the sense of breaking the intersubjectivity and the possibility of human communication.

[15] Bauman, *Community…*, op. cit. To further explore what means for this paradigm the purposeful sensed work against the meaning of work in the neoliberal capitalist subjectivity, cf. Pérez Orozco, A., *Subversión feminista de la economía*. Madrid, Traficantes de Sueños, 2014, 40-53.

[16] Derrida, J., *Margins of Philosophy*. Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1982, 17.

[17] Bauman, *Community*…, op. cit.

[18] This *event* is the shared experience, the differentiated and differentiating context. Vid. Sabariego, J., *Los otros derechos humanos*. Sevilla, Atrapasueños, 2007. Cf. Bakhtin, M., *Las fronteras del discurso*. Buenos Aires, Las Cuarenta, 2011. Especially for what concerns us here, vid. Todorov, T., *The Totalitarian Experience.* London, Seagull Books, 2011.

[19] Bakhtin conceptualizes the *chronotope* as the movement that interrelates temporality and spatiality matching the material complexity and dislocating the temporal linearity and spatial dimensionality where are situated the dominant analytical categories in the hegemonic paradigm in which we build our interpretations of the world, that preclude us to interpret this complexity. To interweave indissolubly times and complex spaces, condenses the traditionally segregated dimensions in the established discourses to respond to the dynamic complexity of counter-hegemonic practices. Vid. Bakhtin, *The Dialogical Imagination*…, op. cit. Vid. also Sabariego, *Los otros derechos*…, op. cit., 83-85..

[20] Cf. Todorov, T., *M. Bakhtine, le principe dialogique*. París, Le Seuil, 1981.

[21] Cf. Holoquist, M., *Bakhtin and his World*. Londres-Nueva York, Routledge, 1991. Vid. also Hogan, P. C.,

As we have already seen, community means sameness in the prevailing common sense, the absence of the Other, especially the absence of the Other obstinately different[23]. Those who claim for the Commons are stubbornly different: the others, denied and marginalized – *denizens*[24] and *marginezens*[25]–, the invisible-ones, the precarious, the homeless, the heterogeneous versus the homogeneous, the outside and the open against the closed, the "amoeba-communities"[26] against the "fortress-communities"[27]. It is the perception of the community as safeness[28], says Bauman, that critically leads us to the community as a defensive and an immune, as well as paradoxically, to the community as a ghetto in which it is impossible to live in common. Separation, in a life in common, criminalises the residual difference[29].

For us, this mobilizing principle of the Commons represents a new epistemology of democracy that questions the commonplaces (*topoi koinoi*)[30], the traditional contexts that in recent

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The politics of interpretation. New York, Oxford University Press, 1990, 48. To deepen the conceptualisation of this thelycum framework (telic emplotment) as the plot constantly hatched in building new common senses for the social movements, which endows them with an updated textuality, that is, providing them with memory and transforming them into project, with sense and in a context, vid. Sabariego, J., *Los otros derechos…*, op. cit., 80.

[22] Bauman, Z., *Culture as Praxis*. London, Sage, 1999, 14.

[23] Bauman, *Community*..., op. cit.

[24] Standing, G., *A Precariat Charter: From Denizens to Citizens*. London and New York, Bloomsbury Academic, 2014. Vid. also Hammar, T., *Democracy and the Nation State: Aliens, Denizens, and Citizens in a World of International Migration*. Avebury, Aldershot, 1990.

[25] Martiniello, M., "Citizenship of the European Union: a critical view", in Bauböck, R. (ed.), *From Alien to Citizens. Redefining the status of immigrants in Europe.* Avebury, Aldershot, 1994.

[26] Santos, B. S., *Toward…,* op. cit., 485.

[27] Ibid.

[28] Bauman, *Community*..., op. cit.

[29] Bauman, Z., *Liquid Modernity*. London, John Wiley & Sons, 2013.

[30] "Commonplace" (*topoi koinoi*) is a concept introduced by Aristotle (cf. *Rhetoric*, I, 1358a) respect to widespread general premises on which our argumentation is based. Since these

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decades have been defining, ordering and translating the complexity of the instituting policy in the fields of the instituted politics: temporality, spatialities, methodologies, sociabilities and subjectivities.

The great ally of capitalism is the people's communicative and physical loneliness. In this sense, the motto "En soledad nos quieren, en común nos tendrán" questions directly the constant attempt to impose a neoliberal capitalist subjectivity that, as has been well-expressed by Tzvetan Todorov, does not just refers to the establishment of a system based on the isolation, but rather on the impoverishment of communication among human beings[31]. "Solitudinem faciunt, pacem appellant" ("They create a desert and name it peace"), should we say with Tacitus[32], imposing what Slavoj Zizek calls the "desert of the real"[33], which from the this subjectivity is qualified as peace and security, while the epistemology of the Commons demands, paraphrasing Marx and Engels, the movement of real.[34] By communicative impoverishment we understand also, with Todorov, maybe in a Spinozist and

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commonplaces work as self-evident truths, as common views (*doxai*) on which there is an implicit accordance, the *topoi koinoi* allow the arguments ordinary production and its dialogized exchange. In this tradition, *doxa*, as the widely believed truth, argues from the commonplaces that mainstream the hegemonic common sense but not on it, these commonplaces are not called into question, it is discussed from these as elements that organize the dialogue, but the dominant discourse do not put these at hand, as they are the commonplaces that give legitimacy to the hegemonic discourse.

[31] Todorov, T., *Life in Common: An Essay in General Anthropology*. Lincoln and London, University of Nebraska Press, 2001, 98.

[32] Tacitus, C. P., *Cornelii Taciti libri qui supersunt,* II, 3 *Agricola*, ed. J. Delz. Stuttgart, en B.G. Teubneri, 1983, secc. 3

[33] Zizek, S., *Welcome to the Desert of the Real: Five Essays on September 11 and Related Dates*. London and New York, 2002.

[34] To look into the historical and political relations of this discussion of the common-goods and the claims for common in the social movements of the Second Industrial Revolution and its major theoretical developments in that precise context, see Marx, K. and Engels, F., *The German Ideology*. New York, International Publishers, 1970.

Deleuzian perspective, the limit of the desire's[35] final aim, which for Todorov is none other than the relationship among human beings itself, the possibility to deliberate and participate, to take joint decisions, the ability to entrench the desire updating its power.

Communication is a strategic question for this epistemology, not only etymologically[36]. A new space of social interrelation that escapes from the legal and political hegemonic limits of the public and the private is being built from common action. But is not only about building new narratives, a new lexicon or, it would be better said, a new counter-hegemonic hypertextuality. This auto-communicative *praxis*, as Castells has named it, is[37], by the way, a self-organizing *praxis*, constant, that questions the whole system and the cultural, economic, legal, social and political order that has established it, and thus defining not only this new space, but also new rhythms, new complex temporalities, plural and heterogeneous, eclectic, horizontal, of course, according to new forms of production.

These new perceptions of ourselves and, especially, of the others, with the others, as Benjamin Barber[38] asserted in the middle nineteen eighties, influence directly in an active, offensive, participative and co-responsible conception of democracy and citizenry, in a common pedagogy that transcends the linearity of electoral periods and fiscal years, instituting the complex time of

deliberation, interpretation, participation and decision making without delegation.

The pedagogy of the Commons supposes what Donatella della Porta and Mario Diani characterize as a critical process of apprenticeship[39] and is no other than the generation of critical interpretations oriented to transmute the dominant system: from values to culture and from goods to affection, the intersubjectivity and the social relationships as a whole and the production and self-production of relationships themselves; a process that leads to questioning the proper foundations on which community is defined and established, moved by an interpretative social interaction that, throughout participation, modifies biographies and narrations of who are engaged articulating struggles and social demands that lived "en soledad" (loneliness) up to now, conditioned by the proper ideological and organizational structure and which are taking place in common under the wing of this paradigm.

Beyond the defense of the Commons as something that is not new, particularly theorised by Negri and Hardt[40] in the middle of the last decade, and more recently by Laval y Dardot[41], and considering the critics[42] received, we would like to highlight here that novelty lies not only in the network structure and the horizontal methodology that characterizes this *praxis*, but also in the *différance* regarding communication and the innovative, massive, global and local use of media and communication in the construction of new common meanings and understandings.

This epistemology of the Commons challenges the economic, political and social dogmas on

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[35] For Spinoza, desire is one of the leading passionate states of the human being. Above desire is based the tendency of being to remain and, ultimately, the human existence. Vid. Spinoza, B., *Ethics.* Ware, Wordsworth Editions, 2001.

[36] "Communicatio" has its origin in the Latin word "communis", common, communion, revealing the close relationship between communication and communion.

[37] Castells, M., *Networks…,*. op. cit., 9.

[38] For Barber, the "strong democracy" is conceived "*as* epistemology and thereby inverting the classical liberal priority of epistemology over politics". He adds: "When politics in the participatory mode becomes the source of political knowledge - when Such knowledge is formally severed from philosophy and then becomes its own epistemology - then knowledge itself is redefined in terms of the chief virtues of democratic politics". Barber, B. R., *Strong Democracy…*, op. cit., 166 -167.

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[39] Della Porta, D. and Diani, M., *Social Movements: An Introduction*. Malden, Blackwell Publishing, 2006, 192.

[40] Cf. Negri, A. and Hardt, M., *Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire*. London, Penguin, 2005. And also: *Commonwealth*, Cambridge, Belknap-Harvard , 2009.

[41] Laval, Ch. and Dardot, P., *Común*..., op. cit.

[42] Cf. Amin, S., "Contra Hardt and Negri. Multitude or Generalized Proletarianization?", *Monthly Review,* vol. 66, number 6 (November), 2014. And also: Callinicos, A., "Toni Negri in perspective", in: Gopal, B. (ed.), *Debating Empire*, London, Verso, 2003, 121-22.

which the hegemonic common sense has been established, in order to build a counter-hegemonic "good sense"[43] around the dominant conceptions of democracy, liberty, equality, dignity and human rights as the foundations of a *raison d'Etat* appropriated by the neoliberal rationality in the last three decades, since these notions have served as an *écran* for the global appropriation of material and symbolic resources that enable them. The clash of these resources has become essential to the understanding of these processes around the Commons, linked to their own self-organization and production. Henceforth, it comes to overhaul and reinterpret their own historical conceptions, re-historicize it to overcome the dogmatic perspective that ballast material and patrimonial dimensions intertwined with protection and regulation of common goods[44].

Therefore and following Bruno Latour, the expression of this network epistemology transcends the usual parameters on which the concept of network is based, not only regarding non formal modes of association and human relationships traditionally analysed by the sociology of organizations but also the analyses of the technological networks which favour the contemporary relationships through information and communication technology[45]:

> "Network is a concept, not a thing out there. It is a tool to help describe something, not what is being described. It has the same relationship with the topic at hand as a perspective grid to a traditional single point perspective painting: drawn first, the lines might allow one to project a three-dimensional object onto a flat piece of linen; but they are not what it is to be painted, only what has allowed the painter to give the impression of depth before they are erased. In the same way, a network is not what is represented in the text, but what readies the text to take the

relay of actors as mediators"[46].

A network is not the unmovable cartography of a determined social territory. It is a dissipative structure[47], a rhizome[48] in constant mutation that loses and wins elements in a *continuum*.[49] These networks we are talking about are connected in many ways through constant exchanges of information. This common action is telic. More than actors, what gives meaning to the network, its constant orientation, are the social interactions in it. The network is aim-oriented. When we are networking we plot the history[50] with the fabric of experience and practice, creating contexts, narrations, temporalities, re-territorializing and de-territorializing commonplaces, creating interdependencies, reciprocities. We should not lose sight of the fact that the exchange, the network, is not only an end in itself in which clash is also a part. That's why to network, balance is death, the loss of its capacity for self-transformation, for transformation of reality, its ability to show what is absent, making emerge what has been denied and made invisible by the dominant common sense.

The network —as a rhizome— is, as Bakhtin[51] expresses, chronologically and topologically a sign, an event and a project that states the inseparable interrelationship of complex temporalities and spatialities, neither univocal nor linear. A project not only to emerge the absent but to open new discourses, a new

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[43] Gramsci, A., *Selections…,* op. cit., 323.

[44] Cf. Klein, N., "Reclaiming the Commons", *New Left Review,* 9, (May-June 2001), 81-89.

[45] Latour, B., *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory*. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2007, 129.

[46] Ibid., 131

[47] Gregoris, N. and Prigogine, I., *Exploring Complexity: An Introduction*. New York, W.H. Freeman, 1989.

[48] Deleuze, G. and Guattari, F., *Capitalisme et schizo-phrénie, tome 1: l'Anti-Oedipe*. París, Minuit, 13-35.

[49] We think this is not the place to undertake a thorough analysis of the diversity and complexity of social networks, but just to point out some features of these, discernable in the municipalist processes as part of the Epistemology of the South. To delve in a categorization of analytical methods and the type of social networking, cf. Wasserman, S. y Faust, K., *Social Network Analysis: Methods and Applications*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1994.

[50] McNeill, J. R. y McNeill, W. H., *The Human Web: A Bird's-eye View of World History*. New York, W.W. Norton, 2003.

[51] Bakhtin, M., *The Dialogical Imagination: Four Essays*. Austin, University of Texas Press, 2008, 84-258.

intelligibility, new consensus and interpreta-tions of the world, since "the current constitu-tion of the Commons does not pass by any of the figures of the Commons that are installed in our imaginary"[52]. All of this in an ecology of knowledges[53] made of complemen-tarities and articulations where diverse knowledges intert-wine and build mutually, as made necessary by the constant translation of practices drawn from a group of context epistemologies, counter-hegemonic and from the rearguard[54] that Santos designates as epistemologies of the South[55] as opposed to the epistemologies of the North, that contribute to the reproduction of colonialism, sexism and racism, among the main naturalized systems of oppression and domination.

The absent and the emergent in the network allow the proposal of a sociology of absences and a sociology of emergences, as Santos has enunciated it[56], extending the present –know-ledges, practices, agents– through an exercise of epistemological and political imagination that questions the sociocultural monocultures imposed in the context of the hegemonic neoliberal globalization, rescuing wasted expe-riences, humiliated or systematically produced as invisible, questioning the commonplaces, in other words, the established knowledge that limit what is possible and impossible, and those who have established it historically, opposing the *epistemicide* caused by the global North to bring out what is *not yet* there against the neoliberal imperative of the *still more*[57]; replacing the "homogeneous and empty time"[58] that condemns us to the imposition of its linear vision of the live-in-common productive and reproductive processes, influencing the poten-tial of alternative knowledge and emancipatory practices from the experience.

2. MUNICIPALISM OF THE COMMONS: HISTORY AND MEANING

As any process of social mobilization, the emergence of citizenry municipal candidatures is the result of an intersection of preceding social and political events and dynamics at one point. Thus, these applications are an exponent of the development of networks that the *quincemayista* (15M) ecosystem creates in the neighborhoods since 2011. In fact, they demonstrate the hegemony of the electoral / institutional side of 15M[59] focused on finding new forms of institutional participation based in shared objectives, projects and political actions that represent a rupture –or at least a certain disruption– with the political culture of the Spanish Transition[60] from dictatorship to current Parlamentary monarchy, regarding the methods, processes, discourses and even the image. It should be recalled, in this regard, as a first failed attempt the project 'Suma, la gente primero', promoted in 2013 by *Izquierda Unida* and other organizations as well as 'Alternativas desde Abajo', promoted the same year by organizations such as *Izquierda Anticapitalista* and social movements, which ended up being diluted in municipalist initiatives as *Municipalia*[61] (after renamed as *Ganemos*), and other national parties like *Podemos*.

Thereby, the *Ganemos* initiative outpoured in

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[52] Pelbart, P. P., *Filosofía de la deserción. Nihilismo, locura y comunidad*. Buenos Aires, Tinta Limón, 2009, 12. The translation is ours.

[53] Cf. Santos, B. S., *Epistemologies of the South: Justice Against Epistemicide*. Boulder, Paradigm Publishers, 2014.

[54] Ibid.

[55] Santos, B. S., *Epistemologies of the South*…, op. cit.

[56] Santos, B. S., *Epistemologies of the South*…, op. cit.

[57] Laval, Ch. and Dardot, P., *Común…,* op. cit., 232. The translation is ours.

[58] Benjamin, W., "Theses on the Philosophy of Histo-ry", in *Illuminations*, New York, Schocken, 1968, 261.

[59] Cf. Aguiló Bonet, A., "Radicalidad democrática y nuevos movimientos populares: las luchas por otras democracias". *Kult-ur*, vol. 1, number 2, 2014, 78. Available in: <http://www.e-revistes.uji.es/index.php/kult-ur/article/view/1499 > [accessed on 10th-11-2015].

[60] AA. VV., *CT o la cultura de la Transición: crítica a 35 años de cultura española*. Barcelona, DeBols!llo, 2012.

[61] Cf. Pérez Colina, M., "¿Y ahora qué? De la presentación de Municipalia a la victoria de Ahora Madrid, en busca del movimiento municipalista", *Diagonal*, 14-10-2015. Available in: <https://www.diagonalperiodico.net/blogs/fundaciondeloscomunes/y-ahora-la-presentacion-municipalia-la-victoria-ahora-madrid-busca-del> [accessed on 10th-11-2015]. Cf. Marcellesi, F. and Martínez, R., "Guanyem y Municipalia: unidad y diversidad por una causa común", *Público.es*, 07-07-2014. Available in: <http://blogs.publico.es/otrasmiradas/2395/guanyem-y-municipalia-unidad-y-diversidad-por-una-causa-comun/> [accessed on 10th-11-2015].

the neighbourhoods of many cities impulsing the municipalist new cycle[62]: "During the past few months a series of agreements, primary elections and programmes have been slowly coming to the boil in order to construct democratic citizenry candidacies that, town after town, village after village, would work on new organisation and political formulas which would answer to each social and political class specific to each place",[63] maintains Pablo Carmona, current Councillor of *Ahora Madrid*.

The 26 May 2014, a day after the European elections, the cooperative press society *Traficantes de Sueños* announced its course *Asaltar los cielos (round 3)*, to facilitate the strategic objective of thinking and designing a municipallist proposal to address key questions around how to build a real democracy, testing if municipallism would be a powerful weapon and a tool for political aggregation.[64] That same day, the cooperative circulated the book: *La apuesta municipalista: la democracia empieza por lo cercano*, co-written by the *Observatorio Metropolitano de Madrid*, whose introduction states:

> "Close institutions and candidacies directly, created and controlled by the citizens are some of the elements that have come together today under the name of "municipalism" […] We are talking about political projects for goverment but which renounce "the party", the big structured oraganisation, for a certain ideology and subject to piramidal discipline. Their aim is closer; it consists in giving back the reality

to the identity among rulers and ruled which gave meaning to the original democracy".[65]

The 15 June 2014 the foundational manifest of the platform *Guayem Barcelona* appears: "We do not want a coalition nor an alphabet soup. We wish to avoid the old party logics and construct new areas which, even though respecting their own identity, would mean more than just the sum of the parts that make it up".[66]

The 26 June 2014 *Guanyem Barcelona* was officially launched, a project led by Ada Colau, a spokesperson of the *Plataforma de Afectados por la Hipoteca* (PAH) (Eviction Affected people Platform) and the current Mayoress of Barcelona. Her purpose, besides contributing to boost the "democratic revolution"[67] from below, was to win the Town hall thanks to the confluence of the "social majority who has had enough of the present political situation, which is only for the powerful, and who want a change"[68]. A few months later, on November 4, from that same participatory logic, the public presentation of *Ganemos Madrid* was held as the "area where citizens can participate, people from social movements, parties and groups who want to win the city of Madrid".[69] Thus, as Olga Rodríguez, a participant of *Ganemos Madrid*, highlights, the successful development of the

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[62] Cf. Calle, A., "Las urnas municipales y el nuevo ciclo político", *Público.es*, 22-07-2014. Available in: <http://blogs.publico.es/dominiopublico/10611/las-urnas-municipales-y-el-nuevo-ciclo-politico/> [accessed on 10th-11-2015]. Vid. also Zapata, G., "10 notas sobre nuevo municipalismo y una postdata", *eldiario.es*, 15-10-2014. Available in: <http://www.eldiario.es/interferencias/notas-nuevo-municipalismo-postdata_6_313978640.html> [accessed on 11th-11-2015].

[63] Carmona, P., "Primeros retos del ciclo municipal", *Diagonal*, 29-05-2015. Available in: <https://www.diagonalperiodico.net/panorama/26877-primeros-retos-del-ciclo-municipal.html> [accessed on 11th-11-2015]. The translation is ours.

[64] For more information, see: <http://www.traficantes.net/nociones-comunes/asaltar-los-cielos-round-3> [accessed on: 11th-11-2015].

[65] Observatorio Metropolitano de Madrid, *La apuesta municipalista: la democracia empieza por lo cercano*. Traficantes de Sueños, Madrid, 13. Available in: <http://www.traficantes.net/sites/default/files/pdfs/TS-LEM6_municipalismo.pdf> [accessed on 11th-11-2015]. The translation is ours.

[66] Available in: <https://guanyembarcelona.cat/es/firma/> [accessed on 12th-11-2015]. The translation is ours.

[67] Colau, A., "Concretar la revolución democrática", *Público.es*, 22-07-2014. Available in: <http://blogs.publico.es/dominiopublico/11899/concretar-la-revolucion-democratica/> [accessed on 12th-11-2015].

[68] *El periódico de Catalunya*, 27th June 2014. Available in: <http://www.elperiodico.com/es/noticias/politica/colau-llama-los-hartos-politica-ganar-alcaldia-barcelona-3334329> [accessed on 12-11-2015]. The translation is ours.

[69] Available in: <http://ganemosmadrid.info/ganemos-madrid/> [accessed on 12th-11-2015]. The translation is ours.

municipalist processes will depend on finding "areas where we, who suffer the spending cuts would find our place in order to sabe democracy and simple values like solidarity".[70]

However, it was not long before tensions around the various processes of convergence aroused In many cases, the obstacles came from the "old politics"[71], which resorted with opportunism to enroll in the registry of the Interior Ministry a party called *Ganemos*, which prevented the registration of citizenry' initiatives with this mark[72]. *Guanyem* renamed *Barcelona en Comú* and *Ganemos Madrid* became *Ahora Madrid*. In Galicia, the *Mareas* were well-stated in the main cities: *Marea Atlántica* in *A Coruña*, *Compostela Aberta* in *Santiago* and *Ferrol en Común* in *Ferrol*. The municipal movement paved the way to the institutions by citizenry candidatures legally constituted in the form of coalitions, instrumental parties or groups of voters under headings like *Ganar* (To win), *Ahora* (Now), *Participa* (Participate), *Sí, se puede* (Yes, we can), *Somos* (We are) or *Común* (Common).[73]

But now, which of these candidates from below would make part of the common paradigm succinctly stated in the previous section? Or rather, on what actions and thoughts should the activity of these municipalism questioned by the Commons be based?

In 2010, still far from the electoral seizure of municipal elections in May 2015, and a year

before of "the indignation revolts"[74], José Iglesias Fernández described the process of transition from the market and public services municipalism to a communalist model that would subvert the existing relations of production and consumption from the horizontality of an assembly-management and the direct participation drawn from the premise of the distribution of political power.[75]

Despite the emergence of these initiatives in the institutions via elections, then a non decisive factor in the Iglesias Fernández' analyses, and too soon to glimpse the scope of their municipalist bid nor peer the state of the art in this transition, Iglesias theorization seemed not to have much relevance for some key issues to understand today the set of processes that converged in local government elections on May 24, 2015 and that reports directly to the paradigm of the Commons.

The first of these questions refers to the new common sense of the Commons that challenges, as we have seen, the temporalities, the linearities that segregate the past, the present and the future, postponing solutions as if future generations were segregated from us.

In this paradigm of the Commons, the municipalisms address the existing institutions, pushing them to overcome this segregation, to project holistically, rethinking law, justice, its character and essence beyond issues involving the production, distribution and management of goods, the definition of the *munus*[76] and the

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[70] *Diagonal*, 4th November 2014. Available in: <https://www.diagonalperiodico.net/global/24576-ganemos-madrid-despega-oficialmente-con-la-peticion-30000-firmas-ciudadanos.html> [accessed on 12th-11-2015]. The translation is ours.

[71] Ortega y Gasset, J., "Vieja y nueva política" (1914), en *Obras completas*, vol. I (1902-1915). Madrid, Taurus, 2004, 710ss.

[72] It was the case of Julià de Fabián, Councilor of *Ciudadanos en Blanco* in the Town Hall of Santa Maria de Palautordera (Barcelona).

[73] Thirty-seven of the citizenry municipal candidacies that concur to the elections on May 24 under the brand *En Común* were recognized as related to *Barcelona en Comú*, which were allowed to use the brand name and logo and request advice on creating the candidacy. The directory is available in: <http://www.tercerainformacion.es/spip.php?article 84306> [accessed on 15th-11-2015].

[74] Santos, B. S., "Towards a Socio-Legal Theory of Indignation", in Baxi, Upendra; McCrudden, Christopher; Paliwala, Abdul (orgs.) *Law's Ethical, Global and Theoretical Contexts. Essays in Honour of William Twining.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015, 115.

[75] Cf. Iglesias Fernández, J., *Sobre el decrecimiento y otras rendiciones. Interpretación crítica sobre el decrecimiento y el consumo responsable*. Málaga, Zambra, 2010, 47ss.

[76] Esposito, *Communitas*…, op. cit., 1-19. The Latin term *munus*, etymologically present in the words common, community, municipality or remuneration, refers to the gift, but also to the inseparable duty linked to whom that receive it, to the co - responsibility and reciprocity for both, the recipient and the donor. The gift creates a social bond, the bond between the recipient and the donor, which

tension that underlies between the gift and the duty in light of neoliberal capitalist appropriation, which involves questioning the distinction between facts and values, between having and being[77], in which the current economic model is based.

On the other hand, another question to consider, although linked to the previous, is the comprehension expressed in these processes of how reclaiming the Commons cannot be focused in the long term to allow the capitalist extraction and exploitation in the short term:

> "An analysis limiting itself to rights is helplessly loaded by bourgeois rhetoric: it maintains an individualistic vision where there can be no solid "belonging" to a generation [...], it de-emphasises duties and obligations which are crucial for a relational vision of reality such as that offered by the Commons".[78]

The municipalist processes of 24M show the urgent need to rescue the Commons, as well as other promising commonplaces –sustainability, degrowth, ecology, participation, democracy, citizenship, politics and so on– from the appropriation of what is established institutionally, with the contribution of the academia and objective science, for example, the dominant economic and legal theory. This requires an epistemological revolution of the Commons[79] that escapes from the dictatorship of the number, placing the utilitarianism of cost-benefit analysis in a different order, at other scales, promoting new social learning for transformation in which self-organization and resilience are strategic vectors:[80]

"Self-organization (the ability of the components of a system to organise without formal, hierarchical direction) and social learning (the capacity for new values, ideas or practices to be disseminated, popularised and become dominant in society or a sub-set such as an organisation or local community) can be found across all forms of adaptation. (...) Social learning is as important for transitional or transformational adaptation. It requires a high level of trust, a willingness to take risks in order to extend learning opportunities, the transparency required to test and challenge embedded values, active engagement with civil society and a high degree of citizen participation. The advantages for social learning where there is close interaction between social actors is clear, with social learning and self-organisation reinforcing one another, so that a social system exhibiting rich capacity for social learning is also likely to have considerable scope for self-organisation".[81]

The Commons is neither public nor private. What distinguishes these candidatures and places them in this new paradigm, its true political innovation, is the possibility of suggesting from institutions, the right to control the resource management, the citizenry control from below; the possibility of a model of urban planning with a strong interplay of self-regulation; the possibility of deliberation, participation and common control, taking the plurality, diversity and differences in society as a starting point.

But deliberation cannot be just a rational process, the institutionalization of a formal communicative sphere only possible by eradicating differences; rather, deliberation must be based on these differences, on their recognition, on the elements that provide it with the agonistic plurality and heterogeneity of the complex textuality and contextuality, wealth and movement.[82]

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underscoring its agonistic character. Cf. Mauss, M., *The Gift: The Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies*. Cohen & West, London, 1966. Vid. also: Laval and Dardot, *Común*..., op. cit., 28-32.

[77] Cf. Fromm, E., *To Have or to Be?* New York, Harper & Row, 1976.

[78] Mattei, U., "Future generations now! A commons-based analysis", in Bailey, S., Farrell, G. et al. (eds.), *Protecting future generations through commons*, Trends in Social Cohesion, number 26, 2013, Strasbourg, Council of Europe Publishing, 16.

[79] Ibid., 17.

[80] Pelling, M., *Adaptation to Climate Change: from resilience to transformation*. London, Routledge, 2011, 47.

[81] Ibid., 170.

[82] Cf. Honneth, A. and Joas, H., (eds.), *Communicative action. Essays on Jürgen Habermas's The theory of communicative action*. Cambridge, MIT Press, 1991. In a different perspective, vid. Meehan,

Togetherness is a horizontal process of social learning, of co-implication and responsibility from otherness. Therefore, it is also a substantive issue related to new ways of conceiving the Commons, politics and institutions from the deliberative and participatory democratic radicalism[83], questioning horizontally and co-responsibly the principles of equality and distribution of the political power, from the material to the immaterial[84]. The underlying social learnings of the institutional transformation show in this paradigm the capabilities of these municipalist bids to raise critically alternatives to the established, challenging the limits[85] and the willingness to take risks in the passage through the recognition of the limits to the possibility of affecting changes in the institutions, framing the adoption of other values and other practices.

In his analysis of municipalism, Iglesias Fernández and other authors have conceived it as a *praxis*[86], as a process that arises in the neighborhoods, the context we live in, that we build on and which gives us the possibility and ability to operate. Capitalism has become strong appropriating the social bond –*munus*–, rewriting in an immune manner the relationship between gifts, commitments, duties and community counterparts of the citizenry, eliminating reciprocity and complicities, the "co-", shared responsibility and joint work, and has reinterpreted them in an utilitarian key according to its interests in order to establish a predatory logic of exploitation of human beings, of their connections and relationships, their

dreams and their ability to desire, as well as the resources and contexts in which we take part. A logical instrumentalization of social relations, human subjectivity and power, which are subsumed to the profit-oriented production, concentrated in fewer and fewer hands. This appropriation has included the institutions of democratic life, the public sphere and what has been considered as Commons in recent decades, both in its financial secondment and its legal, philosophical and political one.[87]

Municipalism as a process and the communal society as an alternative to capitalism to arise, in the words of Iglesias Fernández[88], with the idea of re-municipalise for the citizenry the common resources that have been alienated by neoliberal logic of institutional appropriation, both in regard to its use and enjoyment as their production, management and operation in a counter-hegemonic logic, which in our view, would also include the production of a municipal space for political and social experimentation from which a rationality of the Commons emerges.[89]

3. MUNICIPALISM AND PRAXIS OF THE COMMONS

The Commons, as we have said, does not refer here to a third kind of goods along with the public and private goods, but they constitute a counter-hegemonic political rationality that can serve as a guiding principle for the reorganization of society. Thus, as a political

J., *Feminists Read Habermas. Gendering the subject of discourse*. New York, Routledge, 1995.

[83] Di Robbilant, A., "Property and deliberation: a new type of common ownership", en Bailey, S., Farrell, G. et al. (eds.), *Protecting…*, op. cit., 76.

[84] Sabariego, J., "La globalización de las relaciones entre cultura y política: una nueva ecología social de la identificación", in Herrera, J., Molina, B. et al., *Investigar la paz y los derechos humanos desde Andalucía*. Granada, Eirene, 2005, 437-455.

[85] Vid. Bateson, G., *Steps towards an Ecology of Mind: Collected Essays in Anthropology, Psychiatry, Evolution, and Epistemology.* New York, Ballentine, 1972, 60ss.

[86] Taifa. Seminario de Economía Crítica, *Informes de Economía Crítica, 9: Reflexionando sobre las alternativas.* Barcelona, Taifa, 2013, 94ss.

[87] Laval y Dardot, *Común…*, op. cit., 31-32.

[88] Iglesias Fernández, J. "La sociedad comunal como una alternativa al capitalismo", *Kaos en la Red*, 21-09-2014.Available in : < http://2014.kaosenlared.net/secciones/96375-la-sociedad-comunal-como-una-alternativa-al-capitalismo> [accessed on 16th-11-2015] and by the same author: "El municipalismo como un proceso contra el capitalismo", *Kaos en la Red*, 17-07-2014. Available in: <http://2014.kaosenlared.net/secciones/92261-el-municipalismo-como-un-proceso-contra-el-capitalismo> [accesed on 16th-11-2015].

[89] Laval, Ch. and Dardot, P., "Propriedade, apropriação social e instituição do comum", *Tempo Social, revista da sociologia da USP*, vol. 27, number 1, 2015, 262. Available in: <http://www.scielo.br/pdf/ts/v27n1/0103-2070-ts-27-01-00261.pdf> [accessed on 17th-11-2015].

principle, common imposes making participation in one activity the basis of political obligation and, therefore, the coactivity as the foundation of joint obligation.[90] From this perspective, the Commons refers to the mutual obligation and reciprocal responsibility to act according to the rules that a political community has been given; an obligation that is not based on identity or group membership (ethnic, national, etc.) or the legal fiction of a social contract, but in participating in the same activity: "Political obligation comes completely from common action".[91] Therefore, the Commons appears immediately as an eminently practical task, as a way to act –a *praxis*– and not as a way of being or having, as a way of doing politics whose holistic and crossed-logic exceeds the commonplaces that so far confine institutional politics.

So, from the conflicting and creative plurality of the Commons, we have selected counter-hegemonic experiences that constitute this paradigm, in which municipalisms lies by the common building of the policy of openness, experimental, networked and emerged from streets and squares in movement. It is important to emphasize that our approach is not defined in terms of verifiable results from the analysis of one or more particular cases, but focuses on emerging processes and construction, on fluid and hybrid networks, which are not devoide of contradictions that rehearse and share a continuous way of doing politics that goes beyond the dominant topics of political hegemony.

Thus, we pay attention to the potential, the unfinished, to what through a continued "democratic experimentalism"[92] is linked to social criticism and is not allowed to be caught by the academic rigid schemata. We do not speak, therefore, of these processes in local government as an expression of an alternative political canon, but as an ecology of knowledges and practices in networks with multiple simultaneous dimensions whose separation is purely strategic, as all dynamic network listed below are invaded reciprocally.

Methodology

One of the contributions of municipalist processes that reveal other ways of doing politics in common is in the field of methodological and organizational dynamics. Without trying to hide their electoral strategy – the declared intention of winning votes and succeed electorally– they have achieved to resemantize the hegemonic political common sense, creating a "sociopraxis"[93], instituting processes involving "creative outbursts"[94]. Not surprisingly, there are those who speak of a *Ganemos* method[95] in reference to a set of techniques, tools and styles of an inclusive and participatory type to ensure municipal politics from below. But, beyond Galcerán considerations and beyond the specifics of each case, what do these methodological practices have in common?

Basically, the reconfiguration of politics as an exercise of collective intelligence[96] and action from a new type of organizational logic different from traditional partisan forces. This logic has materialized largely in participatory confluence processes among movement-parties[97], groups of voters, instrumental parties, social movements and civil society organizations for the establishment of popular municipalist candidatures.

It is not about the formation of popular fronts to unite leftist forces or simple electoral coalitions or machinery of electoral war. To converge in this context, refers to something more complex and innovative, one –and post-

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[90] Laval, Ch. y Dardot, P., *Común*..., op. cit., 661.

[91] Ibid. The translation is ours.

[92] Unger, R., *Democracy Realized: The Progressive Alternative*. London, Verso, 1998.

[93] Villasante, T., *Desbordes creativos: estilos y estrategias para la transformación social*. Madrid, Los Libros de la Catarata, 2006, 416.

[94] Ibid.

[95] Galcerán, M., "El 'método Ganemos' o aprendiendo a hacer política en común", *Diagonal*, 14-06-2015. Available in: <https://www.diagonalperiodico.net/la-plaza/27036-metodo-ganemos-o-aprendiendo-hacer-politica-comun.html> [accessed on 20th-11-2015].

[96] Lévy, P., *Collective Intelligence: Mankind's Emerging World in Cyberspace*. New York, Plenum Trade, 1997.

[97] Cf. Kitschelt, H., "Movement Parties", in Katz, R. and Crotty, W., *Handbook of Party Politics*. London, Sage, 2006, 278-290.

party– policy which has allowed the creation of a linked front of parties, movements, groups and networks based on the collective set of networking methods of the 15M ecosystem.[98] What this is about, without denying the conflicts and tensions inherent in any social relationship, is the "articulation of processes of discontent"[99] from multiplicity; self-organization of networks, groups and citizenry' movements, as the emerging systems theorised by Steven Johnson[100]. *Barcelona en Comú*, for instance, is configured both as an area of response to bipartisan consensus PP-PSOE and a space of confluence where heterogeneous movements such as the Platform of People Affected by Mortgage (PAH in its spanish acronym), *Marea Blanca* and *Procés Constituent* interface with activists from national parties like *Podemos*[101], *Izquierda Unida* or *Equo*, with militants from parties from Catalonia, like *Iniciativa per Catalunya*, and with members of civil society not organized in parties nor movements, but who show their outrage towards the social and political situation.

In addition to the networked confluence, there are other important methodological innovations which are worth mentionning: the use of direct and participatory democracy in the election of their candidates through a system of open primary elections, to fight the old politics of cronyism and thick fingers; the commitment to counter-hegemonic forms of leadership (collective, collaborative and facilitator)

allowing disperse power[102] and seek co-leadership against the personalities and individual leadership; a participatory and open program developed collectively, as in the case of *Zaragoza en Común*, they picked citizen proposals via digital platforms, sectoral forums, neighborhood forums and consultations with experts and social movements to able to hear "that 'ours' that is usually ignored by traditional politics"[103]; self-financing campaigns through microcredit loans or citizens, a so far largely unexplored path between the political parties; techno-political[104] uses of devices to promote participation, horizontal internal communication and collective action through platforms such as *Reddit*, *Titanpad*, *Loomio* and probably inspired by the social network of 15M, *N-1* use, especially during the election campaign; transmedia[105] techniques massively disseminated through social networks (*Instagram*, *Facebook*, *Twitter*, *Telegram*, *Tumblr*, *YouTube*, *WhatsApp*, etc.), which meant the opening of a field of artistic experimentation to the service of political activism, as in the case of Manuela Carmena's election campaign for Mayor of Madrid, where the *Movimiento de Liberación Gráfica de Madrid* (Graphic Liberation Movement of

[98] Gutiérrez, B., "Ganemos, Guanyem: democracia en red, espacios en red", in the blog *Codigo-Abierto.cc*. Available in: <http://codigo-abierto.cc/ganemos-guanyem-democracia-en-red-espacios-en-red-2/> [accessed on: 20th-11-2015].
[99] Calle, Á., "El gobierno de las muchas: sobre unidad, confluencia y multiplicidades", *Diagonal*, 08-07-2015. Availble in: <https://www.diagonalperiodico.net/la-plaza/27286-gobierno-muchas-sobre-unidad-confluencia-y-multiplicidades.html> [accessed on 20th-11-2015]. Translation our.
[100] Johnson, S., *Emergence: The Connected Lives of Ants, Brains, Cities, and Software*. New York, Simon and Schuster, 2012.
[101] Cf. Elorduy, P., "Podemos y el horizonte municipal", *Diagonal*, 21-07-2015. Available in: <https://www.diagonalperiodico.net/panorama/23252-podemos-y-horizonte-municipal.html> [accessed on 21th-11-2015].

[102] Cf. Zibechi, R., *Dispersing Power: Social Movements as Anti-state Forces*. Oakland, AK Press, 2010.
[103] As can be readed in the page number five of the collaborative Electoral Programme of *Zaragoza en Común* to the municipal elections of 2015. The translation is ours.
[104] Cf. Bennett, W. L. and Segerberg, A., "La comunicación en los movimientos. De los medios de comunicación de masas a las redes sociales", *Telos. Revista de pensamiento sobre comunicación, tecnología y sociedad*, nº 98, June-September 2014, 63; Sampedro, V., "Democracias de código abierto y cibermultitudes", in Aznar, H. and Pérez Llavador, J. (eds), *De la democracia de masas a la democracia deliberativa*. Barcelona, Ariel, 2014, 163-181 and Sierra, F. (coord.), *Ciudadanía, tecnología y cultura. Nodos conceptuales para pensar la nueva mediación digital*. Barcelona, Gedisa, 2013. Cf. also Toret, J., (coord.), *Tecnopolítica: la potencia de las multitudes conectadas. El sistema red 15M, un nuevo paradigma de la política distribuida*. Barcelona, UOC, 2013 and Gutiérrez-Rubí, A., *Tecnopolítica*. Barcelona, Gráfiko, 2014.
[105] Cf. Jenkins, H., Ford, S. and Green, J., *Spreadable Media: Creating Value and Meaning in a Networked Culture*. New York, New York University Press, 2013.

Madrid) played a leading role, showing off an explosion of creativity that filled *arti*vist social networks illustrations, drawings, masks and even songs, as can be seen in hashtags as #madridconmanuela, #efectocarmena and #manuelamania.

Space-time

Both dimensions in the network are fed in such a way that they cannot be separated, have an ontological character since we are speaking of a new epistemology. It is, in short, to develop a new framework for relations between movements, candidates, institutions and citizenry in a network of space-time complex[106], neither public nor private, as we argued, in which the time-of-life, the one that continues with the necessary slowness of complex learning, would be a strategic dimension. A constitutive relation of the territory, a common space-time versus ownership and neoliberal totalization[107] in order to constitute the difference[108].

Regarding the emergence of this space-time complex in the linearity of the institutions of the municipal representative democracy present in the rhythms and limits of their corporate bureaucracies and administrative operations, a transfer is raised in these candidatures, transfer which is understood as a reappropriation, retrieval and management of urban spaces for citizenry. A process advanced in Madrid (the neighborhood *vocalías* of the *Juntas Municipales de Distrito*, *Esta es una plaza*, *Auditoría Ciudadana de la Deuda* and *Entre Patios*, the first cooperative based in the Right to use), Barcelona (*Can Batlló*, the proposal to create a municipal electric operator), Seville (*Oficina de Vivienda*) and Cádiz (reduction of municipal debt inherited in 10 M €, according to Mayor Hall Budget Office).

Subjectivities

To reappropriate a subjectivity –subjugated

until now– is a necessary condition of our ability to produce intelligible senses from the practices, that is, to build a collective "us" that can transform, in an emancipatory key, politics and democracy. In this regard, one of the contributions of these municipalisms to politics of the Commons usually lies in having contributed to the development of political subjectivities that destabilize the neoliberal logic of loneliness that separates atomized individuals and uses them as a resource for their interests, and thus producing accounting subjectivities trained to compete with each other.[109]

Therefore, as Foucault[110] or Simondon[111] have exposed, collective subjectivity has just undergone a subjective process of normalization, which individualizes it.

In view of this, the municipalist processes have helped to create a kind of alternative subjectivity that Rosi Braidotti[112] qualifies as nomadic, open, in movement, away from all stasis and oriented to "rebellious action"[113], as a form of resistance that deviates from the so-called natural order of events that reproduces the hegemonic senses. Evidence of this is provided by Ada Colau's statements when, shortly before being elected Mayor of Barcelona, in an interview, she raised the

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[109] Laval, Ch. and Dardot, P., *The New Way of the World: On Neoliberal Society*. London, Verso, 2014, 19.

[110] Foucault, M., *Society Must be Defended: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975-76*. London, Penguin, 2004.

[111] Simondon, G., *L'individuation psychique et collective*. París, Aubier, 1989.

[112] Braidotti, R., *Nomadic Subjects: Embodiment and Sexual Difference in Contemporary Feminist Theory*. New York, Columbia University Press, 2011. Related to nomadology as a characteristic feature of new social movements, cf. Melucci, A., *Nomads of the Present: Social Movements and Individual Needs in Contemporary Society*. Philadelphia, Temple, 1989. Vid. also "Treatise on Nomadology – The War Machine" in Deleuze, G. and Guattari, F., *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. London, Continuum, 2004, 387-467.

[113] Santos, B. S., "From and Epistemology of Blindness to an Epistemology of Seeing", in Santos, B. S. (Org.). *Cognitive Justice in a Global World: Prudent Knowledges for a Decent Life*. Lanham, Lexington Books, 2007, 431.

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[106] Harvey, D., *Spaces of Capital: Towards a Critical Geography*. New York, Routledge, 2001.

[107] Bégout, B., *Common Place: The American Motel*. Los Angeles: Otis Books/Seismicity Editions, 2010.

[108] Foucault, M. and Deleuze, G., *Theatrum Philosophicum seguido de Repetición y Diferencia*. Barcelona, Anagrama, 1999, 89.

possibility of disobeying unjust laws[114]. It is, in other words, a subjectivity based on the collective production of a common sense of the Commons that unlocks what is possible to the isolated and humiliated subjectivity, plotting networked links where the whole is not the sum of its individuals or groups, but the "self-portrait of a collectivity"[115].

Sociability

The sociability generated by the epistemology of the Commons challenges the loneliness that characterizes the neoliberal, individualistic, atomized and dispersed sociability, promoting linkages beyond private property, labor and consumption and their utilitarian uses to extract value. These candidacies reflect new links and social ties present, for example, in their proposals for a different organization of the economic output of the city. Hence the importance of the cooperative, the solidary economy, the trade of proximity, the criticism of the logic of appropriation by dispossession that neoliberalism has implemented in recent decades.

Thus, during the election campaign in May, Ada Colau, in line with the economic initiatives from below, launched the proposal of a social currency for Barcelona as a community mechanism for exchange and reciprocity of the neighborhoods. Moreover, in its election pro-gramme, *Ahora Madrid* bid to create a munici-pal public credit bank and an agro-ecological land bank in public ownership, but it seems that local government has given up on this measure. These are indications that enable us to glimpse new battles and possibilities, expectations of what could be a common future.[116]

Translations

The fragmentation of subjectivities, experien-ces, contexts, spaces and times submitted to

the globalized neoliberal capitalism requires, as noted by David Harvey[117], a common language for which the translation of social practices that integrates this plot is a necessary condition. Translation, in this context, means committing to the creation, from the diversity and mutual complementarity, reciprocal intelligibilities bet-ween knowledge and practice, as Santos describes[118]. In this way, translation involves a set of processes of value production in the form of imaginary meanings and habits to re-appropriate and redefine commonplaces such as democracy, human rights and identity, among others, as a basis for its proposal to build alternatives.

Translation is, therefore, a survival challenge for municipalist candidacies from below in a short political cycle, with the huge municipal debt and the lack of power. Acquiring the latter to tackle this challenge involves the horizontalisa-tion of the institutional hierarchies, to open them, to go from the "participatory governance as a 'conflict management' to democracy from below with the 'organization of the conflict'".[119]

As expressed by Laia Forné and Rubén Martí-nez, of the *Fundación de los Comunes*: "Our city government [*Barcelona en Comú*] has behaved like a laboratory of social engineering that has managed, co-opt and institutionalize social production; a dynamic relationship between Public Administration and movements that are now closer than ever to be changed"[120], implementing mechanisms that enable the translation of the citizenry actions, common social links and battles reflected in rights.

CONCLUSIONS

Rather than conclusive answers we have raised some "points" that can help us have a clearer

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[114] Vid. *El País*, 01-06-2015. Available in: <http://ccaa.elpais.com/ccaa/2015/05/31/catalunya/1433095687_171375.html> accessed on 22th-11-2015].

[115] Braidotti, R., *Nomadic Subjects…*, op. cit., 41.

[116] Aguiló, A., "Colau, Carmena y las nuevas figuras de lo común", *eldiario.es*, 7-10-2015. Available in: <http://www.eldiario.es/contrapoder/colau_carmena_6_438916130.html> [accessed on 1st-12-2015].

[117] Harvey, D., *Spaces of Capital…*, op. cit.

[118] Santos, B. S., *Conhecimento prudente para uma vida decente: "Um discurso sobre as ciencias" revisitado*. Porto, Afrontamento, 2003, 32.

[119] Forné Aguirre, L, and Martínez Moreno, R., "El Ayuntamiento de Barcelona está diseñado para que nada cambie", *Diagonal*, 21-11-2015. Available in: <https://www.diagonalperiodico.net/la-plaza/28466-ayuntamiento-barcelona-esta-disenado-para-nada-cambie.html> [accessed on 25th-11-2015]. The translation is ours.

[120] Ibid. The translation is ours.

idea about what the present municipalist processes provide to the construction of politics of the Commoms. We are facing an incomplete complex scenario of (dis)continuities, ruptures (still more symbolic than real) and emergences of initial signals, despite the brief institutional experience of these candidacies, these processes come with social and democratic effects which contribute to dismantle the discourses and practices associated with the old ruling policy over the last decades.

However, to fully deploy the emancipating and transforming potential of battles for a new policy and a new institutional framework of the Commons, it is necessary to avoid the assimilation into the institutions of the 1978 worn out political system.

The regulatory framework of capitalism and the hegemonic liberal democracy are powerless to this task, so these candidacies will have to take bold decisions if they want to make of Commons the political principle of production and reproduction of life.

In May 2001, Naomi Klein published an article entitled "Reclaiming the Commons"[121] in which, from the experience of the first World Social Forum in Porto Alegre (Brazil) in January of that year, she realized the importance of the interplay of local and global battles under way, in a network of networks against privatization of life at all scales and dimensions on the planet. It was the emergence of a "subaltern cosmopolitanism"[122] that generated the so-called alter-globalization movement or the movement for a global justice. The heterogeneous and plural character of this movement of movements, such as the exchange of experiences and social practices against the uniqueness of neoliberal capitalism, led to what Boaventura de Sousa Santos describes as an Epistemology of the South which, as we have seen, is an epistemology of the Commons; of the radical democratic to decolonize, de-commodify and democratize the complexity of life from capitalist reification in

all its dimensions and meanings; a "globalization of hope"[123] drawn from horizontal links and mutually social relations plotted cooperatively.

This global articulation from below reached, in May 2015, the municipal institutions in Spain as a clear sign that –as Benjamin Barber notes in the *exergo* of this work– we have to rediscover the many voices claiming for the right to deliberate, to decide and to lead their own lives, to escape from the condemnation of solitude and silence of an enclosured citizenship in the capitalist artifices of privacy, a citizenry claiming for popular power in noisy assemblies, plotting a network in which to know each other, recognizing themselves through the otherness, in their common condition.

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[121] Klein, N., "Reclaiming the Commons". *New Left Review*, 9, May-June 2001, 81-89.

[122] Santos, B. S., *Toward a New Legal Common Sense: Law, Globalization, and Emancipation*. London, Butterworths, 2002, 458.

[123] Klein, N., op. cit., 81.