Re-Occupying the city
Social movements and food sovereignty in Barcelona

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Abstract

This thesis investigates the incorporation of food sovereignty in the habitual practices of social movements in Barcelona, Spain; in a context dominated by the aftermaths of the financial crisis of 2008. The aim of this study is achieved, on one hand, through the utilization of four theoretical concepts, which are the right to the city approach, food sovereignty, social movements and the practice theory. On the other hand, it is achieved by a qualitative research based on an ethnographic approach that highlights the actors’ discourses. The main methods used are semi-structured interviews, observations and informal conversations. Those are intended to analyse the practices that organizations and activists conduct regarding food issues and how these are entangled to a broader political stance. This master thesis has emphasised how food sovereignty has become in both an element of a wider struggle for recovering the city for the neighbours and an opposition tool against the neoliberal city.

Key Words:

Barcelona, everyday practices, food sovereignty, recycling-food networks, right to the city, social movements, urban gardening.
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1. Introduction

(...) If the city is the world which man created, it is the world in which he is henceforth condemned to live. Thus, indirectly, and without any clear sense of the nature of his task, in making the city man has remade himself.

Robert Ezra Park (1952, p. 73)

Nowadays, the decline of cities as public spaces, due to policies fostering the private property and competitiveness, is unrefutable. Therefore, the recuperation of the urban sphere by citizens is a common experience in cities of the Global North. A critical vision of the neoliberal project and the neoliberal city (Wacquant, 2014; Pacione, 2009) is claiming for the repossession of the collective, which requires conceiving public spaces as the expression of the life and practices in common (Swyngedouw, 2011). It aims to tackle future challenges and subvert logics that have determined the current condition. It is evident in Barcelona, moreover in the aftermaths of the 2008 economic crisis. The individuals’ organizations are contesting the urban planning and the life style of the privileged in the neoliberal city by multitude of everyday practices. These practices are rooted both in the traditional mind-set of Barcelonans and the current crisis scenario. These are also deployed in a wide range of practices all over the city, from to impede the gentrification processes or from aesthetical concerns in the neighbourhoods to ensure participation or to specific tasks such as housing alternatives or the incorporation of food sovereignty in their interests.

In this regard, there is a parallel development of researches about food sovereignty and social movements. Food sovereignty has become an important concept criticizing the market orientation of the agricultural production mostly related to rural social movements (Altieri, 2009). Whereas social movements, in urban areas, have been long discussed in social sciences with important inputs such as Touraine (1995), della Porta and Deni (2006), Melucci (1996) and a long list of other authors trying to depict the constantly wide and complex phenomenon of citizens’ organization.

However, the linkages between both are becoming clearer. Food practices have come to be considered not only as a nutritional issue, but also as a practice aiming at the appropriation of the urban spaces by neighbors (Stanchieri & Aricó, 2012). The outcomes of the activities related to food, such as urban gardening, are challenging the ideas about spaces, the using and the participation of inhabitants in the decision about their city (Purcell & Tyman, 2014). These are turned into political element in urban contexts questioning both social and alimentary performs (Fonte, 2013).

This study intends to depict these alternatives occurring currently in Barcelona through the analysis of the practices related to food issues as an opposition to the neoliberal context. The practices analysed are settled in a city profoundly affected by the 2008 financial crisis, which has shaped its course and its inhabitants as well. In the following pages, it will be discussed how the alimentation has become an element that organizations and the activists have integrated in their idea about the urban. Placing the food in a broader political action and creating through it a wider scope of
practices, the social movement is bringing out an alternative model to the neoliberal city.

1.1 Research aim and research question

1.1.1 Purpose of the study

Probably, the ideas behind every investigation are placed in a quite subjective motivation. We are constantly asking ourselves about the world surrounding us, and the questions arisen stimulate numerous investigations. That is why, it is inevitable to acknowledge the personal interest in every piece of research, which is speaking about the mentioned surrounding world, but also is speaking constantly about ourselves.

This master thesis is intended to investigate the connections between two approaches related to social change. On one hand, social movements, which have been already defined in its theoretical domain, mobilize crowds of people worldwide networking in some common topics, and making politics in an unorthodox manner; far away the formal configuration of political parties-state. On the other hand, there is the notion of food sovereignty proposing an alternative conception of food, but also a novel conception of labour, solidarity and socio-political ordering. It is easy to relate both social movements and food sovereignty due to the fact that they share basic principles. However, the question directing this study is how this relation becomes a practice. It tries to go further in the evident linkages and the potential social change embedded in both finding out how these are forging new types of relation with others, with the city and with the social structures themselves.

1.1.2 Research Question

Nowadays, we witness how politics and policies are being contested, demanding not only novel ways to do but also more participation in order to tackle the issues as sustainability or economic crises. The critique to the capitalist model of production, furthermore to the neoliberal globalization, has impacted diverse and important elements of our lives such as water issues, biodiversity and food. In this sense, social movements are acting as prophets of the present (Melucci, 1996) showing us how some of those issues would be handled in a more sustainable society. Accordingly, researches about how social movements deal with practices such as food sovereignty is needed. It will provide new understandings about the development of food production outside the liberal market, but also it will provide understanding regarding the recuperation of urban spaces through social practices in the bases of societies.

The aim of this thesis is to analyse how the urban social movements in Barcelona have incorporated food sovereignty within their regular practices and how the financial crisis has impacted in this relation.

Research questions

How have the urban social movements in Barcelona incorporated notions related to food sovereignty within their regular practices?
How has the financial crisis in 2008 impacted in social movements and their relation with food sovereignty?

1.1.3 Research aims

In order to answer the research questions the following objectives are proposed.

1. To investigate the social movements in Barcelona working with the food sovereignty concept.
2. To analyse how these social movements are using the urban space in order to ensure food sovereignty.
3. To investigate practices associated with an alternative food production/consumption both into social movements and involving extended neighbours.
4. To analyse the ideological support of these practices in relation to food.

1.2 Limitations

The limitations of this thesis are given by the small portion of the elements analysed in this thesis. There are much features involved in such vast phenomenon. This is important to bear in mind since the multidimensionality of these practices could be seen from many other approaches. Therefore, much research about the course of the social movements and the recreating process of a neighbours’ scale city is needed. In this case, only factors related to food practices are considered and it is tangentially touched other elements. There is also important to considerer that it is not a study case, thus, the descriptions are connected to the discourses limiting also alien opinions and other interactions.

However, it has been intended to focus on practices from the social movement discourse. The ideas regarding food as a movement itself are not included in this thesis. The scope has been maintained from the organizations and activists to the general critic to the city and the role played by alimentation in this regard.

1.3 Structure of the thesis

This thesis comprises eight chapters. In the first section, the formalities and the characteristics of the study are presented. In this chapter, description is also provided regarding the current settings of Barcelona: from the 2008 financial crisis to the historical perspective of the social movements including its geographical implications. The aims of the second chapter are to introduce the main theoretical concepts utilized in the analysis as well as a reviewing them. Consequently, these are contrasted and analysed with the development of the thesis itself; the main idea is to suggest how the concepts have worked in this particular case. In the third section, methodology, is presented methods deployed, the ethical concerns and the practical results of the methodology are portrayed.
From the fourth section, the findings of the empirical work are presented. The chapter four aims to describe and present the findings of fieldwork comprehensively. The key results are described in chapter five. Consequently, the information is discussed and related directly with the theoretical concepts in a discussion section, which is chapter six. In this chapter, the information also relates the research aims making a dialogue between the thesis formalities and its encounter with reality through the fieldwork. Chapter seven brings about the conclusions of the master thesis and the answers to the research questions. There, the role of the financial crisis is discussed and how the relation between social movements and food sovereignty is given today.

Finally, a brief further research section is provided in chapter eight with the objective of both to depict other elements escaping from this research and pointing out important issues detected for potential research.

1.4 Research context

1.4.1 Crisis 2008

Spain’s economy entered officially into recession in the third quarter of 2008. The out loud acknowledgment of the complex macro economic situation stated by Spanish authorities had immediate consequences: the Spain’s economy was downgraded by international credit rating agencies such as Standard & Poor (The Telegraph, 2012).

The causes of this crisis are blurry and the experts have not reached a consensus regarding this. On one hand, banks and credits ran irresponsible triggering financial bubbles in different economic sectors, namely in the real estate sector. On the other hand, the adoption of the euro as a common currency and the globalization led to liquidity excesses that fed the bubbles, which eventually burst causing vast deficits. As Royo (2014) has argued, there is another cause less mentioned. It connects the economic reasons of the crisis with social, and institutional factors sketching a wider picture of the situation. The author places the roots of the crisis describing how the Spanish elite has built an influence of network, disembebeded of the rest of the society. This has prevented elites’ fall due to clientelistic relations formed by personal-financial interactions. These elites have acted with a complete disregard of the main society and with no consideration of the real effects that their activities have had over the whole country’s population. This amorality has extended through the society explaining the generalized participation in the real estate bubble.

The consequences of these three elements: run-free credits, generalized deficits and the amoral behaviour of the elite impacted both in macro and microeconomics and the social effects have been dramatic bringing about precariousness and in many cases misery among Spain’s population.
The above table shows a comparative relation between the annual variation of economic growth (GDP annual variation) and the unemployment rates. If we compare the pre-crisis years (2006-2007) with the economic crisis occurred from 2008 the interwoven relation between both becomes clear. The decrease in economic growth is related to the increase in unemployment rates, which also has an important impact in current social configuration.

However, the Spanish context is not only upon macroeconomic processes. The last report launched by the European Anti Poverty Network, EAPN (2015a) shows that the poverty measures have reached concerning levels. This organization uses methodologically the AROPE index (At Risk Of Poverty and Exclusion), which measure poverty merging monetary indicators with social factors and material deprivation (EAPN, 2015b). In this report the AROPE index shows that in Spain there is a 27.3% of the population in poverty. In absolute numbers it means 12,866,000 individuals\(^2\). The population suffering severe material deprivation is 6.2%, a 38% more than the past report. The inequality, measured by Gini index, has increased reaching 33.7. Other important figures launched with this EAPN report show that poverty has also increased among those who has employment, totalling to 11.7% of workers living in poverty, which confirm that any type of work does not eradicate poverty.

In this context, Catalonia has also suffered the effects of this economic crisis. This Autonomous Community, which has a contested economic situation inside the Spanish context \(^3\), has decreased in numbers of its economic growth and increasing in the unemployment rates.

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1 GDP represents here the annual variation rate of this measure
2 The total population of Spain is 46.464.053 at 2014. This figure has decrease in a -0.28% compared with the 2013 figure due to massive emigration.
3 Catalonia has started an independency process arguing cultural and economic spoliation.
Moreover, the social context in Catalonia has been affected by the impoverished economy. The official figures show that Catalonia’s poverty risk is currently a 19.8% of the population whilst homes that receive some type of social help are 65% of the total. These figures depict the complex social and economic situation that includes one of the wealthiest communities of the Spanish State.

The crisis affects diverse domains of the life of the population. In the concrete case of this study, the impact that the crisis has over the alimentation is a critical issue and it is closely related with what social movements seem to be arguing for a long time: the social model deployed all over the world since WWII and exacerbated since 1970’s produce not only inequalities but also deprivation, even in the most sensitive spheres of human life such as food. The relation between alimentation and economic factors are well studied. The phenomenon associated with the low consumption of basic nutrients is known as “food insecurity” (FAO, 2015), and groups with inclination to suffer this are those that spend their incomes to a large extent to food consumption (Vivas & Antentas, 2014)

1.4.2 Social movements in Catalonia and Barcelona

Social movements are more than collectives, organization and individuals that compound them. The networks formed through the contact and actions deal with social change, primarily, as an active opposition to the dominant system in their realities. That is why social movements never are the same and depends upon the context since they have an intricate relation with it. However, the globalization has also globalized this opposition extending the activist networks throughout the planet creating different levels of action: the local context and the global one. In this process technology plays a crucial role and permits that activists can organize themselves regardless of the borders.

Table 2 Annual developments GDP-Unemployment Catalonia. Source: IDESCAT (2014, 2015)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>GDP %(^4)</th>
<th>Unemployment %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>-0.2</td>
<td>8.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>-4.4</td>
<td>16.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>17.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>-0.2</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>-1.3</td>
<td>22.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>23.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>N.D.</td>
<td>20.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^4\) GDP represents here the annual variation rate of this measure
The study of social movements acknowledges two stages in social movements’ history. A first stage linked to workers’ movements originating the labour parties all around the world and the Marxist oriented political parties such as the Communist or the Socialist party. The second stage is known as New Social Movements (NSM), and it comprises the citizens’ organization from a button-up notion. Into the NSM are diverse types of grassroots movements: squatting movements, neighbours’ associations, LGBT organizations, ethnic associations etc. workings towards social change and oriented to build a “collective awareness” (Alabart i Vila, 1998).

Historically, it is possible to employ in Catalonia the same categories used in the studies of social movements; nevertheless, the first stage is decisive due to its characteristic and the influence that exerts even today. The labour movement in Catalonia was less authoritarian and more libertarian. Here arose the anarchist movement with special strength, which is evident compared with other cities in Spain and Europe where political parties caught and enrolled workers into a hierarchical structure. It has defined the course of today’s social movements (Diez, 2013).

The second stage, where NSM appeared, has had various phases in its development. According to Alabart i Vila (1998), the first one is linked to the opposition against Spain’s dictatorship using a new law of associations in 1964. This law reformed the Franco’s prohibition of meeting and impelled the first neighbours’ organizations triggering the pursuit of democracy and direct participation. In the second step, from Franco’s death, the local residents’ associations experienced an important increase counting 300 groups between 1975-1978. They gained importance and were considered in the democratic process because its representative character. The third period began with the first democratic municipal election, and the political parties tried to institutionalize these groups and dismantled their assemblies to use members as potential electors. This divided the general organization; the governmental institutions and parties took the political control and the grassroots movements were marginalized “The mistruth among both parts (the representative one and the grassroots) became the rule” (Alabart i Vila, 1998, p. 18). Nowadays, the neighbours’ organizations have been revitalized by the increased use of communication technologies leaving room for organizations to arise again.

Additionally, other important group in the current setting is the squatters’ movement. It began in the 1980’s, but the general recognition came with the case of “Cinema Princesa” in 1996, which was the first violent eviction. This movement promotes a political stance against consumerism and wants to create an alternative way of living in the middle of the city. The members are not, necessarily, marginal people tried to obtain a place to live. It is a political movement that contests the capitalist use of space from an anti-hegemonic perspective; therefore, they pursue to extend this practice as much as possible (Alabart i Vila, 1998). Today the occupied houses, converted into cultural and social centres, are extended all over the city.

In the current context there are more variants than these two described above. There are organizations linked with the pro-independence movement in Catalonia, which are an important input into the social movement configuration today, environmentalist

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5 Dictator Francisco Franco ruled the country from the end of the Spanish Civil War until his death in 1975. The dictatorship is known as a totalitarian and nationalistic military regime.
organization (urban gardening and consumption groups) and a vast diversity of people working towards building a different society.

Besides this historical trend, there is an important event that is signposted as an important influence in today’s citizens’ mobilization. It is known as 15-M. It takes its name by a pacific demonstration organized on the 15th May in 2011. This demonstration convened to protest against cutbacks, the general policies of government benefitting banks after the financial crisis outbreak and the insufficient democracy in Spain. The protestors coined the slogan: Real Democracy, Now! that showed not only their dissatisfaction with politicians but also the lack of confidence in the whole political structure in Spain (Cué, Diéz, & Gutierréz Calvo, 2011). The demonstration began in Madrid, the Spanish capital, and gave way to a general camping in squares and public spaces all around Spain, including Catalonia.

The important fact from 15-M is the synergy emerging from it. The encampment lasted days, organizing assemblies and diversity of groups reunited by topics of interests in the improvised camping sites. The role of the Internet and social media is undoubted (Casero-Ripolles & Feenstra, 2012) This stimulated the neighbours and acquaintances to work together, taking their neighbourhoods back to the neighbours, and in many cases strengthened linkages and created new ones.

1.4.3 Geographical context in Barcelona

Barcelona is the capital of the homonymous county in Catalonia. Nowadays, the city is subdivided into ten districts. These are former municipalities, which after an expansive conurbation during the 1900’s and 2000’s were annexed shaping the modern Barcelona.

![Figure 1 Barcelona and its districts](image-url)
Barcelona is also a segregated city where the richest inhabitants occupy certain parts of the city whereas the less-favoured ones reside in different neighbourhoods. It becomes clear in the next map.

![Map of Income Distribution](image)

**Figure 2 Income and spatial distribution (2012). Source: Sobrepere, 2014**

This map shows the income separated in five colours representing the average income in given neighbourhoods. The data presented in the map is calculated in a relation of 100 as average. Consequently, the highest incomes represent double the average whilst the lowest incomes do not reach a half of this measure (Sobrepere, 2014). Comparing the above map with a similar one, but with the data from 2008; at the beginning of the crisis outbreak. The distribution of income in the neighbourhoods presents some differences.

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6 The orientation of the map seems to be inverted in the source. The right border of the map corresponds to North in a geographic map. However, this disposition allows a simplified understanding of data.
The 2008 map show a similar distribution of income. The neighborhoods with the highest incomes are surrounded by middle-classes, which dominate the city centre. A massive low-income class is concentrated in the peripheries whereas a small lowest-income class dominates a small portion in the right of the map.

The comparison is interesting in order to understand the effects that the financial crisis has had in the region. The first clear difference between both maps is the extension of the highest-income areas increasing its territorial existence. The same trend is possible to find in the lowest-income areas which are also increased its presence, concluding that the financial crisis has not only increased the gap between the wealthiest and the poorest but also has deepened the extremes.

The middle-class in Barcelona has increased as well, but it seems has taken the place of highest incomes showing a mobility between the highest and the following income sector. That could happen due to a decrease of income in certain parts where wealthiest inhabitants live rising the middle-class sector. The average income dominates the city centre and its outskirts in 2008 whilst in 2012 the average income is reduced. The low-income has increased in comparison between 2008-2012. Lastly, the lowest-income sectors of inhabitants have proliferated in the same time gap quadrupled its presence.

The orientation of the map seems to be inverted in the source. The right border of the map corresponds to North in a geographic map. However, this disposition allows a simplified understanding of data.

Figure 3 Income and spatial distribution (2008). Source: Data'n'Discussion
Other interesting geographical information is the physical location of social movements and some other initiatives.

The figure 4 shows a map where initiatives such as urban gardening, social finances and self-managed spaces are located. According to this map, these activities are concentrated mostly in the city center. In the outskirts, these actions are less common with some exceptions like urban gardening. This concentration of social activities is straightforwardly related to the middle-classes and average income sectors, drawn in the figures 2 and 3. It links the activities with social features such as income stability. However, it is another feature that has to do with the concentration of such activities in the center. Traditionally, the center of Barcelona has been inhabited by working class giving way to the first stage of the social movements in Catalonia described above during the first half of the 20th century. The organizations dominated the city

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The project “Barris I Crisis” (Barris i Crisi, 2014) has researched about social innovations and their geographical location after the crisis. The map presented here is possible to find in their website in which is also possible to add other categories. The categories included in this partial quotation of this work intend to present the most suitable features according the purposes of this thesis.
until their defeat during the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939). The neighborhood where the workers’ organization dominated are traditionally neighborhood with a imbricated social fabric and it is a feature facilitating the current organizations’ location.

Figure 5 Picture of bombings map on Barcelona 1936-1939. Source: Guía de historia urbana BCN. Museu de Historia Barcelona (Ayuntament de Barcelona, 2011)

Figure 5 shows where the Italian Fascist Army, collaborator of the Nationalist Spanish Army, bombed in Barcelona not only targeting the Republican Army facilities but also populated neighborhoods with the purpose of intimidating and discouraging republican supporters (Ayuntament de Barcelona, 2011).

The figures 2, 3 and 4 illustrate how some social features repeat in the spatial dimension. The current average income and the social initiatives, showed by the map of the “Barris I crisis” project, are concentrated in almost the same context. It could link directly the organizations with some economic sectors in Barcelona’s setting. However, in the confrontation with the figure 5 it is added a new element. The same location of the current social movements and average income suit in the historical localization of social movements even before the Spanish Civil War. It permits inferring a relation between past and present organizations and it suggests the importance of tradition in today’s groups.

1.4.4 Alternative food production in Catalonia

As a first background of communitarian or less industrialized food production in the Catalan context could be attributed to the agrarian cooperatives. These have always been an exceptional way, for small and medium holders, to develop agriculture with a market orientation and to compete with larger landowners. At the beginning of the 20th century, this tendency grew prompted by the governments, especially in Europe,
being adopted by the Spanish State through the Law of Agricultural Unions in 1906 (Planas, 2014). These unions extended to the entire country and Catalonia was not the exception. Agrarian cooperatives were a usual experience encouraged by the local government at this time: the “mancomunitat. These experiences were sporadically forbidden, during the two Spanish dictatorships (1923-1930; 1939-1975) and enormously affected by the war periods (WWI and the Spanish Civil War). Nevertheless the dynamism of the sector in Catalonia is unquestionable and it represents an important part of the tendency to create associations in the rural Catalonia.

The current production and consumption against the industrialized food market began with a small community in 1970’s called “Vida Sana”. According to Badal et al. (2011) a solid network of peasant and distribution places replicated the experience spreading the production and consumption of organic food throughout the countryside. During the next twenty years this model increased its members to a great extent even initiating a school that instructed courses oriented to organic food production in 1989.

Nowadays, the food movement in Catalonia comprises diverse organizations such as peasants, consumers, researchers and political collectives among others. In Catalonia’s capital, Barcelona, the trend has taken an incredible strength, despite the fact that the city is mostly for industrial purposes, the urban gardening movement has reached an immense popularity and consumers prefer organic and local production as a habitual practice. For example, the consumption network of cooperatives and groups were, according to Vivas (2010), thirty-six in 2010 and, at least, eleven city gardens working from a counter-hegemonic perspective (Aragay Esmerats, 2010). That is showing how this tendency is growing with different nuances from the consumers’ perspective towards anti-systemic stances.

2. Theoretical Framework

In this section the concepts used for the analysis are described and outlined providing the theoretical context in which this study is conducted.

2.1 Practice theory

The social can be understood from different perspectives. Throughout the history of social science there have been two main streams dominating and discussing each other around what the social is and where it is. The first one is the methodological individualism, which supports the idea of the social embedded in individuals approaching to their own goals. Here the *homo economicus* is the main category of comprehension of human activity. The second one is *holism* where the individual disappears into a deep and complex social structure, which is dominating human world, a world of a *homo sociologicus*. Theorists have used each concept as an “ontological phenomenon” (Schatzki, 1996, p. 1). In the interstice of these macro
social explanation arises the cultural theory that is based on human action as the main explanation of the social and its order as well (Reckwitz, 2002).

Practice theory is a branch of the cultural theory, which comprises the culturalist mentalism approach, textualism and intersubjectivism as a part of this main theory, but distinguished from these other. Historically its development is rooted in the Aristotle tradition; nevertheless it was dismissed in the ascension of Christian ideology spread throughout the Western world. Contemporarily, the praxis tradition was retaken by phenomenologist philosophers, and Marxist scholars at certain extent, who theorized about the indivisible nexus of theory and practice placing being as an essential element of rationality. The current stream of the practice theory; founded upon the phenomenology tradition, the Marxist tradition and the Wittgenstein’s influence has come strength from 1970’s giving special attention not only the practices themselves but also trying to identify where systems, such as society and social order, come from. How they originate, removing the importance of explaining systems as a given structure, and how they are very much entrenched into our quotidian performances (Nicolini, 2012).

Practice theory deals with both the practice understood as routinized behaviours that relate body uses, mental activities, things, knowledge and processes, among others, enabling to agents to decode and move into the world (Reckwitz, 2002), and the social order that practices create (Schatzki, 2005). Furthermore, practice refers to what people do and how they do or how they perform in a given context. Because practice is expressed in human body that is, at the same time, a sort of turning point where activity, mind, the individual and the social are articulated. Simultaneously, the social order responds to practices not as a fixed superstructure but rather as a sensitive net of shared ideas and knowledge. Both practice and social order are involved in a bidirectional relationship where practice impact on social order as much as order impacts in practice (Nicolini, 2012).

The purpose of the practice theory is not a new one. Reckwitz (2002) argues that the practice theory is a novel light upon social and human agency, which are, more or less, the final aim of the social theory. Nevertheless, and from an epistemological point of view, practice theory reconsider the relationship between theory and practice. It raises practice as a key element in theory construction. Likewise, human agency encourages theory while agents take a theoretical perspective that orient practice involving “thought and action together” (Barnes, 2005, p. 28). It is especially important considering that practices imply a “know how” which is based in the ability of agents to act in specific practices. This “know how” is grounded in theory, but also in a general practical understanding regarding a given situation, therefore, in the simple act of act theory is embodied.

Beside this, the ability to perform in the social context implies certain power that agents exert in order to be intelligible to others. This power refers to a broad understanding of the practice and the theoretical implications involved in performance, therefore, to be an agent implies to be an active member of the group (Barnes, 2005), and to be an active member implies to know what and how to exert practices. This element, to be active, is crucial when the power to act in society is related with social change. It places social change in a lower sphere of concretion;
hence, practice theory sees social change as an on-going process, which is furthered by action and human activity.

Despite the fact that practice theory is useful to understand both the human agency itself and the role of practice in social order, it does not offer a complete and final theory that explains social life in its whole dimension. Practice theory is valuable to understanding the social from a synchronous perspective, but it does not explain its own production and reproduction (Barnes, 2005). That is a limitation that must be considered in the application of practice theory in the social analysis.

Summarizing, Practice theory is a useful tool to depict agency contrasting to social order and social change. It permits to include participation in the social configuration at the lowest level, which is suitable in the coming analysis.

2.2 Food sovereignty

Alimentation is one of the most prominent themes of our life. Food is discussed from different scope and spheres. From a political and scientific point of view it has had different definitions regarding what is a good alimentation for humans and what is not. Currently and from a broadly accepted discourse, a good alimentation is related to enough consumption of nutrients and access to food. The definition used globally, known as food security, includes these topics:

“Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food which meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.” (FAO, 2015)

However, there are contested voices criticizing the narrow scope of this definition. From 1990’s, peasants worldwide began fostering an alternative definition of what is good alimentation, a definition that includes other factors such as fair production process and cultural appropriateness in it.

“Food sovereignty is the RIGHT of peoples, countries, and state unions to define their agricultural and food policy without the “dumping” of agricultural commodities into foreign countries. Food sovereignty organizes food production and consumption according to the needs of local communities, giving priority to production for local consumption. Food sovereignty includes the right to protect and regulate the national agricultural and livestock production and to shield the domestic market from the dumping of agricultural surpluses and low-price imports from other countries. Landless people, peasants, and small farmers must get access to land, water, and seed as well as productive resources and adequate public services. Food sovereignty and sustainability are a higher priority than trade policies.” (La Via Campesina, 2006)
This definition, that has become a political manifesto, is a bottom-up description of how the food chain has to work. The well-known organization “La Vía Campesina” is one of the most noticeable association working towards food sovereignty promoting a good and reasonable development without leaving a great part of earth’s population, such as peasants, women, small holders etc., behind (Edelman, et al., 2014). This concept also raises the self-determination principle going further than the technical definition of food security (Badal et. al., 2011).

However, food sovereignty, in this study, will comprehend other dimensions enriching the discussions deployed further. Firstly, the development of food regimes is an important evolution to take into account. It clarifies not only the major connections of food chain with other spheres (as markets, colonialism, etc.) but also depicts the historical evolution of the different ways in which the Western society has understood food⁹, and the repercussions that it has had elsewhere. Secondly, moral economy is other important concept that describes the correlations between social unrest and food riots. It will be used to analyse the current context and its relation to food issues.

Food regimes are defined as a given structure that manages food production and consumption worldwide (Holt-Giménez & Shattuck, 2011). Following the same authors, they distinguish three food regimes: The first food regime (1870-1930) coincides with the European industrialization powered by cheap food supply from colonies. In the colonies, food, especially grains, was produced to feed a growing European population, alleviating also the land-use shifting from food production to industrial purposes. The second food regime coincides with the notion of “green revolution”. It comprises an enhanced food production by new agricultural improvements namely fertilizers, chemical pesticides, genetic and manipulation of seeds. Animal protein also arrived at this point of development, changing the traditional cattle breeding into a “Concentrated/Confined Animal Feeding Operations or factory farming” (Weis, 2007, p. 59). This new stage of food production acquired an international role by “food aid” from North to South, establishing new types of market dependency. The third food regime analysed by Holt Giménez and Shattuck (2011) is called the corporate food regime, and has it onset from 1980 and remains relevant until today. This concept is also depicted by Lang & Heasman (2004) naming it as paradigm. Both are related to the capitalist expansion and the total control of market both in policy and production. This food regime-paradigm has as the main goal the increasing of profits, which is accomplished by the establishment of the agro-food corporations, normally transnational corporations, (TNC’s) and the control from production until consumption, as well as controlling the retailing places. Nowadays, after three decades of market control many countries are in complete dependence on this globalized market.

Regarding moral economy, it is a concept introduced by the British historian E.P Thompson in 1970’s. sought to describe a group of politics and pre-politics ideas related to the administration of welfare in society. Under this notion, wealth should be distributed fairly among people (Patel & MacMichael, 2009). This notion has been used to describe the forces behind food riots, which historically have arisen in

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⁹ The importance of highlight Western development in this topic is related to the evolution of a Western market society spread by political processes such as colonialism.
connection with the rising of prices or shortages of food, but also behind food activism and undoubtedly associated to pledges for the legal execution of food as a human right (Hossain & Kalita, 2014)

Moral economy and food sovereignty have a straightforward association. Both are related with the inclusion of fairness in society and both are also connected with profit critique. These ideas are suitable with what social movements are globally claiming. In the classic works of Thompson the food riots burst due to the weakening of moral principles driving the economy (Patel & MacMichael, 2009). Perhaps it is applicable to link an alternative food chain as a critique against a massive commodification of nature and, evidently, food as well (Weis, 2007).

2.3 Social movements

Social movement has been a contested concept responding to diverse contexts in social science throughout time; consequently, it is possible to find different stages of conceptualization about what the social movements is. An important first stage in the subject is associated with workers’ mobilization organized around production as the central concept involved into it. This incorporates topics such as class struggles and workers’ conditions among others, and the conflicts were normally related to material gains and the conditions of the welfare state (Offe, 2008). A second stage is interconnected to the events in May 1968 in France and its aftermaths. It was named “New Social Movements” and a new type of social conflicts arose in connection with topics such as “cultural reproduction, social integration and socialization” (Habermas, 2008). This new trend, which is not that new at this moment, turned into a powerful critique of social order and its political doings instilling a different conception of how society has to be built, and it allowed other perspectives to enter the debate such feminism, environmentalism and citizenship challenging the representative democracy and traditional politics (della Porta & Diani, 2006). This was the starting point of theories that placed the focus over actions, interactions and even emotions to analyse social movements.

Currently, there is another important force to take into account in the analysis of the relation between action, agents, the state and corporations. It is globalization, and it has become an important power both shaping society and resistances. Despite the fact that the term is rather widespread, globalization must be acknowledged as a multidimensional phenomenon, which has multiple significances depending upon the scope or the sphere where the concept is being used (Pieterse, 2001). From the perspectives of social movements discussion, globalization has created a global network, a new transnational activism, which has permitted knitting solidarities on a small scale grounded upon jointed interests (Appadurai, 2008). Globalization has produced a whole new scenario to social movements allowing new and more extended relations, but also has allowed a more coordinated antagonism and more sophisticated surveillance techniques.

There is a school differentiation in this topic. Whereas, New social movement is mostly used in Europa as an analytical concept, in U.S.A the main school about social movements is comprised in the “resource mobilization theory” (Edelman, 2001)
Since the theoretical considerations are diverse, there is also a variety of definition about what a social movement is. According to della Porta & Diani (2006) the concept of social movement includes three categories defining it. The first one is the conflicting relation with clear opponents, which supposes the pursuit of the control of the same interest by different actors identifying the collective effort by political means. The second idea comprised the informal network formed between actors. It suggests that actors and organizations form social movements when they are engaged in specific goals whilst they are able to keep their autonomy and independence. The third and last part of this concept refers to collective identity, not as a fixed membership but like a mutual recognition of their participation in the pursuit of the same goals. At the same time, other definition arises from the French school (Hannigan J. A., 1985). Within this definition, Alain Touraine (1995) conceptualized the social movements considering both collective action and organizations opposing to a central social conflict that confront those who shape social directions and transformations with “those who are subjected to its effects” (Touraine, 1995, p. 371). In other words, this definition places class struggle in the middle of its concerns.

Furthermore and acknowledging that social conflict is extremely important when it is dealing with the concept of social movement, it is important to emphasize that focusing only on the conflict itself does not allow to escape from a dominant viewpoint, which categorizes social movement as a social dysfunction or just a response against “something” that must be corrected in the social dynamic (Melucci, 1996). This idea denies the chance, for collective action, to have an effect over social change. Moreover, it also removes the contesting character towards power that social movements have almost by force. Taking into account these definitions, it should be pointed out the immense role that globalization is playing in the current character of social movements, which is adding the international context. This transformed the localized concerns into transnational matters, which has also re-signified the globalization meaning far away from the supranational entities (McDonald, 2006).

Summarizing, the social movement does not refer to a monolithic organization. The concept used in this study comprises different types of activism. Moreover, social movements are acknowledged as informal networks having a more or less shared identity and pursuing a common interest. This interest is opposed to groups or individuals trying to channel the society’s path, and they are important elements of social change acting in many occasions, as Melucci (1996) has pointed out, as prophets of our time.

2.4 Right to the City

The right to the city is an important topic of discussion in urban planning and social sciences. Henri Lefebvre originally conceived this idea envisaging the city as a space where inhabitants meet their needs. Into the Lefebvrerian city, democracy is a participative and continuous process contesting the capitalist representative democracy that has a segregated city as an outcome. In his model, which is also a political project, the inhabitants demand the city to themselves exerting their right to the city entitled to living and using the city (Pacione, 2009). Therefore, the right to the city enable a shift of dominance: from the profit driven structure controlled by national and corporative interests to the people’s influence (Vogiazides, 2012).
According Purcell (2002), Lefebvre illustrated the construction of the urban space as an interwoven net of social relations, uses, representations and the concrete built space. He named, firstly, as “perceived space” to the tangible place where people encounter each other. Secondly, “conceived space” to the mental representations of space. Thirdly, he named “lived space” to the mixture of both the perceived and the conceived space, which is experienced by inhabitants on a daily basis and is where social life occurs. In this sense, the urban is not merely planned; it is more than the city, it is something that happens.

Undoubtedly, the argument of the right to the city is extremely appealing. It responds, from democracy, to the unequal relations lived in the current urban spaces. However, it is important to maintain a critical distance from it. Purcell (2002) argues that the right to the city, in its most Lefebvrerian sense, does not imply a direct solution to urban problems. Because of the lack of precision in the project of the right to the city, the outcomes are unknown. How close is close enough for the inhabitants to have influence in the decisions concerning the places they live in? How would policy avoid marginalization, promote integration on various geographical scales, and risk creating other types of segregation? This warning is not a counterargument against the right to the city, but it is a cautionary sign for us going forward.

In this regard, how the right to the city could be understood is mostly the base of David Harvey’s considerations about this topic. His analysis is based upon a holistic critique to the capitalist city and its urban planning. He suggests the threat of an urban planning is linked to the neoliberal setting, which is aiming at an elite or defined as consumption of good, disguised as a solution to social problems such segregation and lack of democracy (Zukin, 2006). This argument, despite the fact that it is promoted as a new urbanism, maintains old practices. For example, it aims to obtain social control through governing the physical space, pleading for the small community ideal (Harvey, 2000). This new urbanism is impelled by the excess of surplus, which is investments in infrastructure with debt funded construction works, and oriented to those who can afford the new urbanism, creating the quality life in urban spaces as a commodity (Harvey, 2013).

The former idea leads us towards enquiring into the urban. What is finally the urban? The urban is distinguished from the city despite its direct link. There are cities less urban than others and even non-cities spaces embracing an urban setting. The urban is not only places and physical spaces, but is a life style singularized by the same interwoven elements mention by Lefebvre warping each other in precarious and unstable relations. Into the urban, the encounter points are mainly fortuitous and, opposed to rural settings; there is a distance between participants, and almost a labour of the social (Delgado, 2008).

Summarizing, the right to the city is more than the right to the physical space: to occupy or decide about it. It implies the right to exert, assuming the urban as a

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11 Harvey mentions this association between capital and urban development is not new. It has been seen before in Paris arose in seventeenth century, USA post war, New York City 70’s crises and even in the subprime crises in USA in 2008 (Harvey, 2013)
symbolic place of volatile relations, and the inhabitants’ social performance. Therefore, a city plenty of rights is an inclusive scenario.

2.5 Theory implications

Using the four previous theoretical concepts to analyse how the relations between food sovereignty and social movements is occurring today imply applying these concept directly to reality. The empirical findings will report about it. This section, instead, has as purpose to reflect about the mentioned four concepts in an ex-post basis exercise.

The present thesis has tested theory in the empirical reality. Accordingly, there are some inputs taken from the experience of the research that could be interesting to expound.

Firstly, an interesting topic already noted in the practice theory depiction is the lack of explanation of the origin of the practices. It has been an important topic in this thesis since the practices apparently are not only rooted on thoughts and knowledge, but also exist in other elements such as tradition, which plays an exceptional role in the issues investigated. In certain ways, it is necessary to create a type of genealogy\textsuperscript{12} of the issues (ideas, uses or practices) extracting those elements that acting in today’s scenarios. Those elements could be considered as vestiges of primary experiences or even historical events that shape the today’s practice. The linkages that may emerge would work as underground connections revealing not only origins of practices but also amplified relations with other elements or other practices.

A second element emerged from the application of theory is the political implications of right to the city. Even though it has been mentioned in the introductory section, there is an important trend in activism that consists in implementing the right to the city approach in their activist practices. That is interesting since, from an academic viewpoint, the concept has found a niche and it has embodied itself in reality. The concept is used now both in academics and social movements. It is a phenomenon to consider in further research and is an interesting theoretical target to research.

In third place, the food sovereignty concept opened the possibility to think about sovereignty in a broader spectrum. It is adopted by social movements in a daily basis as long as it is sympathetic with a major project of social change. In this sense, the conception of an appropriate food transcends its own limits making possible to apply the term in other spheres. The appropriateness becomes a type of resistance against the globalised market, which is conceptualized as non-appropriate system since it does not privilege the common interest.

\textsuperscript{12}The term genealogy is used referring the method proposed by the French philosopher Michael Foucault, where ideas are traced implicating not only the origin of ideas and practices but also their presence in current contexts.
Regarding social movements, this study has found that the concept should acknowledge other types of features in the social movement. For example, the extent of their work is given by the same elements of its definition: identity, opponents, networks, which implies constrain the potential social change achieved. Part of these limitations also implies endogamy, a reproduction of practices in the same spaces, persons and others. The challenge to social movements, therefore, is become more inclusive and for theory to capture inconsistencies in a more evident way.

The four above theoretical concepts are intimately related with the subject studied. These were used in a consistent way trying to create a nuanced whole. In this regard, it was strategically successful since the adoption of just one theory force to keep the analysis into this framework. On the contrary, using a set of concepts allows segmenting the reality and analysing it by sections. The results could be unified again making the ties, linkages and connections evident in the subject.

3. Methodology

This section explains the basis of the research work considering the field of study and other elements appropriated such as ethical issues and practice application of the methods.

3.2 Research Design

Qualitative research consists a study of phenomena within its own scenario. It is a “situated activity that locates the observer in the world” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 3). The phenomena are not isolated, and these are not studied as a compact set of data. The studied situations are considered in its broadest dimension, which implies studying the phenomena with the environmental streams that can exert influence over them. The final objective of qualitative research is to bring about interpretation of phenomena including the actors’ meanings. Those kinds of researches use data attitudes, experiences, interviews, interactions, observations, even thoughts and beliefs of both the individuals involved and the researcher (s) as well (Jha, 2008).

When the research is focused on the insiders’ understanding and the categories that they create to explain the phenomena, we are in front of the emic approach (Zhu & Bargiela-Chiappini, 2013), and despite the fact that research is always the product of the researcher’s interpretations; the investigated context and discourses produced into it will take a privileged position in the analysis. This research inscribes itself as a qualitative research using the emic approach, and consistently with it, the methods selected to the data collection process were:

The ethnographic approach: This method comprises the immersion of the researcher in the studied society, or the context to study, in order to collect primary data regarding the culture or phenomena (Byrman, 2001). Fieldwork is crucial in this process since this research aims to understand the context through individuals’
practices, which involves the observation of such practices and the own actors’ interpretation about them. Besides this, ethnography not only includes a particular way to collect data, it also comprises the way in which information becomes a text and the whole process even including the post fieldwork period (Tedlock, 2000).

**Semi-structured interviews:** The purpose of interviews is to collect information elaborated discursively by the actors. The interview is guided from the research objectives aiming at incorporating interviewees’ own experiences (Galletta, 2013). Semi-structured interviews contain a phenomenological purpose and are based on the field being also pre-set and formal (Fontana & Frey, 2000).

**Observation:** This method, entangled with the fieldwork, is appropriated to this study in order to increase information about the topic studied. The participant observation succeeds in certain investigative context such as cases limited in size and location, obscure information about the research problem, unclear borders between insiders/outsiders point of view, research problem dealing with insiders’ meanings and interactions (Jorgensen, 1989). It suits this research due to the small number of sample groups involved and the significance of their own viewpoints to the research aims.

### 3.3. Operationalization of concepts

The methodology is intended to build a bridge between theory and reality (Feldman, 2011). In this research, the methodology endeavours to become this link as well. The steps followed to accomplish this can be described in the next table.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concepts</th>
<th>Dimensions</th>
<th>Variables</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food Sovereignty</td>
<td>Right to the city</td>
<td>• Space perceived</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>• Space Experienced</td>
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<td>• New urbanism</td>
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<td>Food sovereignty</td>
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<td>• Moral economy</td>
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<td>• Appropriate food</td>
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<td>Social Movements</td>
<td>Social movements theory</td>
<td>• Class identification</td>
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<td>• Collective identity</td>
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<td>Practice theory</td>
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<td>• Embodied theory</td>
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In the above table, the concepts intended for the research have been extracted from the research question. Succeeding, the dimensions section comprises how these concepts will be understood, sectioned by the theories used to research about the concepts. Finally, the variables represent how the theories have been applied to reality and what elements of the theory were investigated.
The result of the variables researched can be found in the discussion section. This table shows both what is going to be found in the discussion and how the theories have been used to analyse the empirical reality.

3.4 Data Collection process

The design of this research included a period of data collection. It is possible to divide this process in two broad steps. The first one was the research on secondary sources. It aimed at creating an analytical context that provides enough information to understand the major discussions related to the issue and to prepare the fieldwork. This stage dealt with, on one hand, the depiction of the economic and political situation in Catalonia, which frames the internal settings and its external relations. The product of this information was included in the introduction chapter. On the other hand, it was oriented to find and understand the major context of the cases visited during the fieldwork. The process here was dominated by informal conversation with the acquaintances living in the city and delving into the media information about the organizations and networks working with food issues. The second step was the fieldwork, which is described in the next section.

Fieldwork in Barcelona

Firstly, it is important to clarify that fieldwork was carried out during a short period of time in Barcelona, the main reason of this investigation taking an ethnographic approach instead of designating it as a proper ethnography study. The observation was not enough to declare deep findings or cultural meanings. Nevertheless, it was thought to bring together individuals’ agencies and discourses regarding their own practices inside social movements considering food sovereignty. This was achieved by the observation process, and complemented with interviews, informal conversations and contextual information.

The work in Barcelona can be understood in three stages. The first one is the personal contact with the sites and organizations to describe the situation regarding food sovereignty and social movements in Barcelona. The number of cases selected was eventually four and they will be described at length in the next chapter. The second stage is the observation process that was carried throughout the duration of the fieldwork. Here, also included are the informal conversations held during the visits. The product of these observations and conversations were systematized in the field notes, which are an essential part of the material to analyse. The third stage contains the interviews conducted during fieldwork. There are seven semi-structured interviews with activists working both in the same cases described and other experiences. These interviews represent the major part of the information and the most substantial portion of the applied method. Besides this, other activities carried out during the visit were my own participations in two assemblies, which also produced notes used as the primary data for this study.

The information collected is ordered in the “Empirical findings” section. The information is deployed, firstly, in quotes from the semistructured interviews. The interviews were conducted in Spanish, but the quotations have been translated to
English. The interviewees are not specified by names, due to anonymity explained in the “ethical issues” section, they have received a code comprising the gender (W or M) and the number of the interview. The original quotes have also been added as a footnote at the end of the same page. Beside this, field notes have been identified by the date it took place; likewise, the information from the informal conversations has been included systematically as field notes.

**Interview schedules**

The interview schedule was designed to cover the main four topics of this research, which are: Food sovereignty, right to the city and the spatial relation of practices, social movements and social practices as a political stance.

1. Food sovereignty: how the interviewee understands the notion and how her/his collective/group understands it as well. The political implications of the food sovereignty. The critiques behind food sovereignty.
2. Right to the city: What is the role of the spatial dimension. Who / what is contested by the social movements in the city.
4. Social movements: participation, participation degrees, differentiated participatory practices (who and when they participate).

The topics proposed do not imply the rigid application of them. The topics were there to introduce the conversations and were an important resource to bring about informal conversations regarding some of these topics. That is why, it must be noted that the relevance of the topics changed their priority during the application of the interviews. Primarily, the topics were suggested in the above order and the first interview was carried out following the schedule in its strict order. However, the topics number two, the right to the city and four, the social movements acquired an unexpected relevance and became the crucial subjects of the conversations in the later interviews. This situation influenced the analysis and these issues became the focus of study as a direct result of the interviewees’ discourses.

The information obtained from the interviews will be used in the findings to explore the research questions in detail. This information became the main source of the analysis, and some parts of it will be quoted in order to exemplify issues and to show the discourses related to the practices.

**3.5 Ethical issues and the methods applied**

The ethical issues are bounded to the application of methods in an unquestionable way. That is why the ethical issues are reviewed jointly with the specificities of the methodology in practice.

Ethics is involved in two main domains in this research. The first one is related to the methodology. The ethnographical approach focuses on the experiences and discourses of the actors, instead of an academic and external point of view. This implies an on-
going dialogue about the limits of this thesis, which are permanently contested by the reality, affecting the design of the research. The second main scope involving ethics is the particular case of this study. The development of social movements is normally threatened by legal limits. The activists and organizations are dealing with institutions that frequently criminalize their actions and in many cases, depending upon how radical they are, receive harassments by the police. That is why the consensus regarding identities, singularized places and locations was taken into account and negotiated specifically in each of the cases in the study.

In the practical order, the first ethical issue implied a personal involvement with the interviewees creating a fluid dialogue that allowed transparency. It worked through the establishment of closeness. In most of the cases, the relation was set in previous stages before the fieldwork, except in the case number two13 where the contact was not made in advance to the actual interviews. For cases number one, three and four the ethical challenge was less difficult since the limits were established and agreed in the earlier conversations and a personal relation was initiated after establishing the grounds of engagement. After the fieldwork, there were no disturbances in the dialogues or inconsistencies leading to distrust in the data collected.

The ethical issues implying anonymity were established previously as well. I proposed from the very first contact to use codes with the purpose of hiding the identity of the interviewees, which was accepted and celebrated by each participant. Regarding places, these are also coded, such as cases or initials, and mentioning their exact location is avoided. In spite of this, it was communicated to participants that places will be difficult to not singularize due to the importance of spatial dimension involved in the practices that I wanted to describe. However, in the cases number one and two, the places are squats, which means special precautions were taken to protect the identity of the locations and the squatters’ identity.

The methodology was strictly followed, and it worked well in most cases. The only hesitations that I, as researcher, had were regarding the above-mentioned case number two. Where the lack of informant made me reconsider whether to include the case or to set it aside. The main methodological idea was, firstly, to base the cases on interviews more than other techniques such as observations, but the case number two made me reconsider about the reasons behind the lack of respondents willing to be interviewed. Since I had the same procedures as the other cases, it was particularly curious the fact that I had not been able to get in touch with a member of the network for an interview. Furthermore, the contacts were sporadic and they avoided personalizing the information, even though I was invited to the general assembly. Once at the place, I noticed how imbricate the network is in the neighbourhood and that made me wonder about the intimacy of the practice. After the meeting, I understood that they were focused on maintaining their work for their survival and not interested in being interviewed. Therefore, the only way to obtain close information in this case, would have been by participating in the network’s everyday routine because that is how thing are explained by themselves, but this was not possible due to time constraints. Finally, I decided to include this case, mentioning this fact, in order to depict social movement’s genuine focus on the practices and what is happening outside them is not distracting their work.

13 Cases are described in the next section
4. Empirical Findings

As it was mentioned in the methodology, the empirical findings are based on the information from four organizations, semi-structured interviews, observations and informal conversations outlined in the field notes, and contextual information from secondary sources.

The display of findings will be presented in two parts. The first part will be the description of the four places visited with the purpose of illustrating the conditions in which the social movements are taking place. The relevant topics are food sovereignty and the activities related to it. The second part is a comprehensive set of information gathered in the application of the methods mentioned above. In this section, the premises, ideas and discourses are compiled by topics following the variables mentioned in the methodology section. The findings described below are not necessarily attached to places; on the contrary, they are intended to reveal crosscutting meanings and significances of the practices through participants’ discourses.

4.1 Cases observed

4.1.1 Case one

The first case is an occupied former bank office. This place has been taken over as a meeting place for neighbourhood associations, activists and the general public interested in the neighbourhood (field notes, 25th March 2015). Due to the historical characteristics of this community, social organizations and grassroots movements claiming their own space like this had not existed until now.

This neighbourhood was, in its beginnings, the residential area of middle classes escaping from the crowded centre of the city after the industrial revolution. This zone has had a reputation of social homogeneity. However, during the last decades, gentrification and the generalized impoverishment of the city dwellers have allowed the mixture of classes leaving behind the exclusiveness of its earlier years (field notes, 23th March 2015). Now, this area is claiming the same social issues as the rest of the city.

This squat started after the eviction of one of the most important occupied buildings in Barcelona: L.C.\textsuperscript{14} The LC was an important confluence centre that started to mobilize the neighbourhood in 2008. The massive participation transformed the building into an icon, especially for young people, due to the diversity of activities that were offered there. After the eviction in 2014, many of the participants of the LC felt inclination to continue the activities elsewhere. Consequently, they took the current squat. The process of building this new centre aimed to be more inclusive than the LC. Therefore, significant efforts were made in order to include young people but also immigrants, children, and the elderly. This new occupied space will be a direct reference to the generalized social explosion that arose after 15-M movement\textsuperscript{15}.

\textsuperscript{14} L.C. is the chosen code to this specific occupied social centre.

\textsuperscript{15} 15-M movement was described in introduction section.
Into this occupied space, there is a food-recycled network. The purpose of this network is to use the food categorized as waste by the established market. That implies that the network maps the greengrocers and grocery shops in the neighbourhood, which are willing to leave the unsold products that would otherwise be thrown away aside for them. It is not a simple process because strict health laws prevent both dumpster diving and waste donations in Spain. Nevertheless, they have found shopkeepers that separate some of the leftover products and leave them in special boxes or stacked beside the garbage containers. The most open and collaborative shops are, undoubtedly, bakeries that donate the bread they failed to sell during the same day. It marks a crucial difference both in the quality of the products and in the quality of the relationship established between the network and the bakeries.

Despite the fact that they work basically with waste, food is in good conditions, and it is the main ideological argument to recycle it: the industrialized market uses a little portion of the agricultural production, which must match beauty standards and visual quality, otherwise it is discarded. It provokes that much of the production does not reach final consumers and thus influencing prices, and leaving the market dominated by not nutritional premises but aesthetical principles. At the same time, there is an increasing number of people either having difficulties to feed themselves properly or certainly starving, even in developed countries. The solution that they have found to the overproduction-starvation paradox is to claim those aliments discarded as an ethical and social justice issue.

In the practical order, this network, firstly, divides into small groups, which are going to take the products from the streets or directly from the shopkeepers. Then, they reunite the food that is mostly fruits, vegetables and bread, in the occupied space and it is laid out on the large tables to make them visible to the participants. The distribution among the participants is made in an orderly manner. Those who have participated in the collection round have the right to take the products, but the distribution is per family unit. It avoids storing the food and permits a fairer distribution of the products.

Later and to conclude the activity, the participants hold an assembly. This is the peak of the activity to many of the participants. During this assembly, they have the discussion about how the activity was carried out. Did they have any problems? Have they noticed differences in the relations with the shopkeepers that they encountered? These post-activity discussions are intended to define how embodied are the action in the neighbourhood. Are the shopkeepers leaving better products compared to the weeks before? Or the opposite, are the products worse? For example, the assembly that I participated in discussed the case of a shopkeeper that cut the vegetables before throwing them away, despite the activists having explained to him to keep them intact and the reasons why they were collecting the waste. The assembly decided to talk

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16 Todas los actuales movimientos en el barrio parten en el 15-M
17 The food waste in Spain has reached 50k tons been not allowed to re-use it neither by private persons nor charity entities (López-guillén, 2012)
with him again (Field notes, 23rd March 2015). The assembly is the moment to review all the practicalities and to reinforce the collective feeling.

This particular case deals with an important feature. The activities that they make touch slightly on a crucial social border. They walk the streets taking the food mostly from garbage areas. The participants recognize this issue as a borderline that they cross often.

“It is complicated, for many, to take the waste from garbage. There is something contesting the basic premises of the capitalist society” (W-1)18

4.1.2 Case two19

The case two shares many features with case one. It is also a recycling-food network working with waste from grocery shops and greengrocers, and it is also an encounter point in an occupied former bank office. The main differences with the previous case are related to the context and environment in which this case operates. The neighbourhood, in which this network is established in, is a recognized community with history of social movements. During the last decades, social and political organizations have established in this area creating a dense social fabric and a well-known socialist tradition in their community life. This political background in this community eases the instituting and the proper functioning of the recycling-food network, which has achieved to be an inclusive network of people. Here, it is possible to find young people, immigrants and the elderly working co-ordinately to collect and distribute aliments.

The main argument to start such a network is to ensure the neighbours’ provision of food in an area inhabited by the working class, with a strong class identity (Field notes, 22nd March 2015)20. However, here it is also possible to find other arguments, such as community work and mutual support as an ideological stance that antagonizes the market-individualist way of life. These positions become visible practices in the organization of the network itself. The division of the tasks and the active cooperation of shop owners with the group show the close collaboration and the community goal that is achieved. With the mutual support between the shop owners and the activists, the activists may take on different tasks, for example, to help in their grocery shops or with their small vegetable gardens guaranteeing, thus, the reciprocity of the left over food products. In other words, there is an equal exchange between work and fresh products to the network. This strategy is not only a good agreement for both the shop owners and the network but also contributes to enhancing the social structure in the

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18 Es complejo para muchos el sacar de la basura. Esto cuestiona las premisas básica de la sociedad capitalista
19 This case is described, basically, by observation and informal conversations. It was not possible to find an interviewee before fieldwork, which affects the amount of information collected, and that is why there is not quotation in this case. Further clarifications are in “Ethical issues and methods applied” section.
20 The generalized process of gentrification and the exacerbated tourism experienced in Barcelona nowadays have brought dwellers with diverse social origins to the neighbourhood, nevertheless it has not accomplished to mixture them opening even further class differences.
neighbourhood, putting the donation of products far away from charity and closer to an alternative economy.

From a practical point of view, the tasks are organized monthly and every neighbour participating in the network takes turns to achieve the proper functioning of the system. Every duty is a shared activity prompting precisely the collective work as a value itself. The activities can range from helping the shop contributors to collect the products from grocery shops and bringing them to the squat. Unlike the case one, there is no meeting before each collection and everyone comes with the products directly to the assembly to distribute them. In the meeting, there are two steps running at the same time: the people in the assembly form pairs to share products whilst those designated to do it divide the products making food-baskets. Afterwards, each pair shares one food-basket and negotiates between them the distribution of the products in that basket. This method has been found after few years of improvement. Jointly with dividing of the products, the assembly is an opportunity to discuss and improve the network system giving also an important value to the time shared as a network.

The most noticeable attribute of this case is the community work. How the neighbours work together but also how the same structure of an embedded social relation among them allows this type of collaboration. It results in an important force stimulating a collaborative way of understanding the social life.

4.1.3 Case three

This case is rather different than the cases presented above. This is not an occupied place nevertheless it began as one. It is an immense abandoned textile mill dating from 1800’s. It was once a part of the industrialized core of Barcelona. In recent years, the area suffered recklessness from the authorities and despite the fact that it was included in the modern urban planning of Barcelona - it was never used. According with many in the field, the Municipality wanted to build on the terrain, but the neighbours wanted less spaces oriented to property speculation and more green open public spaces for the community (Field notes, 25th March 2015). However, the economic crisis arrived hindering the building plans and were never completed.

Nowadays, the zone is no longer abandoned. Since few years ago, some neighbours’ organizations and collectives interested in communitarian and self-managed experiences began managing the area. The neighbours took over the place in 2011 with the clear idea of stimulating the public and green spaces in their zone by negotiating with the Municipality. The authority ceded part of the former industrial complex, which is currently used in activities ranging from free-of-charge classes of dance, languages and a public library (Field notes, 25th March 2015) and this research focused on the urban gardening.

In Case three, the urban gardening began even before the occupation of the area. The idea to grow a green space in this underutilized space was instigated by several neighbours to participate in the general project. After a while, a commission was formed to take charge of the urban gardening and the garden (it was decided that the space should shelter both a small productive space but also an aesthetic garden). The history of the urban garden and the aesthetic garden can be divided in two. The first
part is the green space in a small part of the complex comprising 50m² of cultivable land. The second part places the garden in another corner of the complex with much more cultivable land available reaching 286m², where the urban garden is currently growing. However, this new space is threatened by the authorities’ plans to build a residential complex of social housing, but that plan is contested by the community, since the location and dimensions were more convenient for the urban gardening purposes.

Regarding participation, the start up of this urban gardening was not easy. At the beginning, and despite the enthusiastic claim of green spaces in the neighbourhood, the task overlapped other activities inside the complex and not many had the time enough to devote to such intricate project.

“Many members of the collective agreed with the urban gardening, theoretically; but in practice none had the essential knowledge” (M-5)²¹

The garden went ahead by the intense work of the small commission and its few members. The information collected suggests that the goal of achieving the garden was powerful enough to engage at least a couple of people in it, who were involved in the negotiations with the authorities, took the practical duties seriously and took the whole project forward. However, the neighbours participated in other terms, for instance, donating new plants and caring for the new spaces to keep them alive. This led to allowing the garden to survive and the project to grow.

“What we lack is people understanding about the gardens belonging to this wider project, then, they also are part of the wider project”(W-2)²²

Currently, there is more participation in the garden. The build of a community surrounding the garden activities is one the most significant goals achieved by the collective. There is an important participation of the neighbours in the project, even though many are not interested in other activities of the place or in the horizontal organization that the collective suggests. On the contrary, those engaged in the main project participate in both assemblies in the garden and in the complex reinforcing of both projects. The garden is receiving important inputs of participation turning into a point of encounter in the neighbourhood.

4.1.4 Case four

Case four is related to case three. It is an urban gardening in a big communitarian space, which was occupied in a first moment and then ceded by the Municipality, at least a portion of the lot. It is placed in the middle of a traditional neighbourhood of the city²³. The place itself is an abandoned lot. The main motivation to occupy the

²¹ Muchos miembros del colectivo estaban de acuerdo con la idea del huerto, pero realmente nadie tenía mucho conocimiento de lo que había que hacer
²² Lo que falta es que la gente entienda que el huerto es parte de este gran proyecto y que ellos, entonces, también son parte del proyecto en común.
²³ This case share features with case 3 in its objectives and activities, and share neighbourhood with case 1.
plot was the necessity of green and communitarian spaces in the neighbourhood. The authorities had planned few communitarian facilities in the area, but the neighbours claimed their right to influence both the planning progression and the building process as well.

“We want to participate. We do not want to just look how the facilities are built. We have something to say about them. Though the discussion now is if we really want them or we prefer to have the lot as a green spot in the neighbourhood” (M-4)24

The urban gardening is an important part of the activities on the site, though it came after occupation began. They have achieved to maintain the crops for some seasons and the practices have been modified during this period to improve their farming techniques. At the beginning, the first harvests had no programmed destination and were given the harvest away to participants and neighbours with real necessities. Afterwards, those participating in the garden realized the potentialities that the harvests had in order to assure a real communitarian space. The collective started with organizing communitarian dinners, which reunited several hundred people. The vegetables harvested in the garden were used in the meals pointing out the large capacity of the garden to produce but also the benefit of using the products for the community, which are spent in a horizontal and in an inclusive activity. Moreover, it has fostered neighbours’ participation and interest in the garden.

One of the most important modifications in practices is the full use of the products. That means that the commission, which works connected, but autonomously, from the general management of the lot, decided to use the surplus of production to make different types of preserves. These conserves are intended to the communitarian dinners during the winters to avoid buying in the regular market.

The space has positively affected the neighbourhood. The participation has been crosscutting and they have established networks inside the neighbourhood especially with schools. Currently, there are schools that visit the urban gardening.

“The most significant potential we see it in the children. They come here and are really impacted about the lot and the vegetables (...) last year a little boy came and planted some pumpkin seeds. He came week after week to take care of his pumpkin. It was amazing”(M-4) 25

Similarly with the third case, this garden has a small core of participation, which is organizing and more involved in the gardening issues. They take the operative decisions regarding the garden caring and participating into the general assembly as well. The variety of activities has fostered the autonomy of the commissions; nevertheless, they work jointly in many situations such as the communitarian dinners.

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24 Queremos participar, no queremos sólo ver como se construyen, tenemos cosas que decir sobre ellas. Aunque ahora la discusión está enfocada en si realmente las queremos acá o sería mejor dejar esto como un sitio verde para el barrio.

25 Lo más significante es el potencial que esto tienen en los niños. Vienen y quedan impactados por el lugar y las verduras (...) El año pasado un niño vino y plantó unas calabazas, después vino todas las semanas para cuidarla. Ha sido de lo más increíble que ha pasado”
4.2 Social movements and food sovereignty

In Barcelona, the organizations and political actions are rather common. These have incorporated historically on diverse topics. Therefore, the connections between activism and critical stances about food in both production and consumption are spread all over the city. The question is in the air, indeed, and the city inhabitants have diverse methods of approach to an alternative food chain. It means that there are many positions addressing food sovereignty and the engagement in the collective actions at the same time.

That is why there are wide spectrums ranging from a regular food practices, which comprises market participation, to projects of self-sufficiency, which are based on communitarian experiences.

![Figure 6 Food behaviours towards food sovereignty in Barcelona](image)

The previous figure is a simplified ordering of the current situation regarding food consumption in Barcelona. This ordering suggests that there is a trend going towards food sovereignty. Regarding the figure itself, the first square “market consumption/charity” refers to the food consumption made around the formal capitalist market. Market consumption implies both those who do not have a deep knowledge about alternative food chain and those who cannot afford to participate in it, economic and socially speaking. About charity, it comprises the food consumption of those who do not have enough resources basing their food consumption on the products delivered by charity initiatives. In this stage, people are involved in food chain as individuals being the industrial food chain untouched. In the second square are placed those consuming organic/ecological products through the formal market without any visible evidence of organization. The critics against market food are still based on health and individual preferences. The third square refers to a type of

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26 Squares one and two are simplified according information collected during the fieldwork. These generalizations pretend to be examples connected with the other squares, and these not represent the reality with accuracy being possible to find more nuances in those cases comprised in squares one and
evolution of the second one. People here are organized in consumption groups that buy and trade organic products, but also with a social concern attached to it. The fourth square is the groups working with recycled food, as those described in cases one and two, in the preceding section. The last one comprises examples like three and four in previous section but also some cases, mentioned by the interviewees, working towards a complete self-sufficiency of food products.

This path, which characterized the relation of social movements and food sovereignty, entangled features from different order. There is an important imbrication of context, ideas, possibilities and resistances. Those will be described in the next section systematized as social factors and food issues.

4.2.1 Social Factors

Most of these experiences, which we can place in the above arrow towards food sovereignty, are deeply embedded into the social context. In this case, it is important to situate them as a social practice where other features play an important role as well. Likewise, the findings associated with this sphere highlight the social composition of the groups share some basic characteristic such as ethnic, the embodiment of the theory, identity, spatial affiliation and limits of the action. These are described below.

Homogeny: The groups are, mostly, homogeneous in features as ethnic and class that means groups are compounded basically by natives or well-integrated immigrants. It does not imply a limitation for participation from other ethnicities; as well the groups are intrinsically open to working with recent immigrants.

“There have been immigrants who have come to the network, but they have not remained. We do not know why, but we do not want to pressure them either. I think it is complex to join a social movement if you are recently arrived. We would like more immigrants joining us” (W-1)

The groups are also located in the most centric part of the city. Following the map on page 16, the groups work in areas where homogeny is present. The comparison of figures 2 and 3 on page 16 shows this evenness. It is important to mention that this homogeny does not exclude others but it is a characteristic of the groups.

Identity: With identification, I refer to the idea of self as a differentiated entity from the other. The members of the groups and activists’ consulted acknowledge an important force reuniting them as a self. This self shows up concretely as mutual support and encouragement during struggle with the police, in the squat cases, or during negotiations with the authorities in the case of ceded areas.

two. The particularities of those are beyond the scope of this study and they are recognized limits of this research.

27 One of the cases most mentioned by interviewees and during informal conversation is Can Masdeu, which is in city outskirts. www.canmasdeu.net

28 “Ha habido algunos inmigrantes que han participado algunas veces, pero no se han quedado y no sabemos realmente el porqué. Aunque no hemos querido preguntarles ni presionarlos tampoco. Me imagino que es difícil integrarse a una organización si has llegado recién. De todas formas, nos gustaría poder llegar también a esos grupos de inmigrantes o a los que no tienen permiso también”.
“(...) mutual support from other organizations has been really important to come over hard times like eviction” (W-1)²⁹

At the same time, there is an important identity feature related to the social class. The people in the organizations and the activists categorize themselves into a precarized social class and as a part of an impoverish former middle class, which is potentially a referent to take the same decisions and have the same reasons to become activist or member of the social movement. It creates identification by experiences, which is a platform to recognize each other.

“If you are starving but I am not and I am able to understand your problems, but we will not connect at all” (W-3)³⁰.

However, this identity also limits the scope and preventing them from reaching a broader audience. The identification within the social movement excludes other differentiated discourses. Social movement remains always within the same slogans and in the same performances.

“The social movement moves into a kind of comfort zone. There is no room to other thoughts, other persons. (...) Assemblies not always ensure an horizontal practice”(M-3)³¹.

“It is important to include those who do not come just for ideological reason, but for necessity” (W-2)³².

Other important element is tradition. As it was stated in the introduction section and illustrated by the maps on pages 14 to 16, there is a tradition in the city of participation and grassroots organizations. The social movements and activists that were consulted refer to this tradition (field notes, 23rd March 2015) as an antecedent and as a proof of the learning that they have received from the past and have develop to today.

Embodied theory: The participants of the groups and activists consulted share an ideological posture, but there are a variety of nuances inside it. It provokes a diversity of political opinions, but all of them into the same compass. In spite of this, it is still possible to point out the common or aligned opinions. The interviews and the informal conversation shed light on a particular “way to do” as an action rooted in thoughts. This embodied theory is exemplified in some cases; the first one is the already mentioned in pursuing of community life. The strengthening of the social fabric in the activists’ neighbourhoods is a priority and many of the actions implemented and activities planned follow this path. The members of the organizations and activists do not discuss about the real weight or the necessity to

²⁹ El apoyo entre organizaciones es fundamental para sobrevivir los momentos difíciles, por ejemplo cuando nos desalojaron
³⁰ “Si tu tienes hambres, pero yo no, yo te puedo entender mucho, pero no vamos a conectar”
³¹ “El movimiento social se mueve en espacios de confort, no hay espacio para otras ideas ni otras personas (...) las asambleas no siempre aseguran una practica horizontal.
³² Es importante incluir a aquellos que no llegan sólo por ideologia si no que también por necesidades.
reinforce the neighbourhood life; their great concern is how to achieve a better and close community and to what extent they could take this further.

The second example is about shared values. There are common ideas regarding some aspects of activism that are aligned, for example, the common stance against professionalization of the practices. The formalization of some of the practices is seen as an enormous lost in their attempts to build a direct democracy, especially in regard to decision-making process (field notes, 23rd March 2015). It seems to be an extended opinion (field notes, 23rd March 2015 & 24th March 2015) that professionalization is not in their scope, however, they acknowledge the important work that some other organizations are carrying out in a more formal way.

In this regard, and in order to exemplify the differences on shared values, other organizations’ work is fruitful. PAH is an organization continuously mentioned in conversations and interviews. This organization has become a paradigm due to the high level of effectiveness accomplished and the broad sphere that they cover. Nevertheless, it is not found a clear reason about why social movements involved in food issues have not achieved similar scale of success like the PAH. Interviewees argued that the objectives of PAH and them are completely different. PAH works, for example, with complex and emergency housing situations; with people that have already lost their homes or at risk of being evicted whilst the social movements that I consulted work in a long-term project. It seems that professionalization not only is not required but also it does not suit social movements objectives.

The comparison with PAH directs us to other example of ideological alignment. The interviewees admit a capital circumstance preventing them to imitate the mentioned organization. Unlike housing issues, food has been tackled by charity for a long time. The delivery of aliments directly from municipal social services or religious institutions has restricted others to come closer to the neighbours’ organizations (W-4). Those services are not only well organized but also these types of measures avoid people with real needs to socially expound their precariousness (W-1). It is an important factor considering the generalized impoverishment of middle classes after the crisis. The charity procedures are marked as the extreme opposite to what the consulted activists want to attain (field notes, 24 March 2015). Organizing neighbours in groups or in activities meets the goal of social justice through the mutual support. They diagnose the lack of both a better distribution of resources and solidarity in society. These problems are in the roots of poverty and unevenness. Charity is only a palliative action, but it leaves the structures untouched (W-3).

33 Formalization or professionalization means: to become a stakeholder in certain issues, to exert a broad work and to earn community recognition.
34 PAH (Plataforma de afectados por la hipoteca). This grassroots organization is a platform reuniting the people who have been evicted from their homes or those who are in risk of eviction. This platform is national organization created to palliate one of the most sensitive consequences of the economic crisis: the lost of home. It works giving support to those going through an eviction and trying to prevent eviction with direct actions. The importance of this organizations lies into its mobilization capacity and effectiveness in its attempts to make visible a social issue, which is normally hidden behind the individual responsibility. They have also extended their work to the occupation of unused buildings placing the evicted there. Their methods are pacific demonstration and direct action based on civil disobedience.
Charity works so well and it is the mass media support involved and food corporations wash their image with it” (W-1)\(^35\).

**Spatial affiliation:** Spatial affiliation refers to the importance that the neighbourhood acquires into the actions of the social movements. One of the primary ideas regarding politics is the territorialization of the practices (Abèlés, 2004). These practices; rooted in thoughts, perceptions and social representations, obtains significance in social performance, which is by definition public. Territorialisation, as a part of the politics, and the practices exerted on a given territory compound the public sphere. In this sense, the activists and organizations carrying out a certain type of relations into the neighbourhood not only are pursuing the goals ahead of them; they are taking over the public space for themselves.

This occupied territory, which could be understood as the physical territory itself and the symbolic territory as well, is used and embraced creating a spatial identification. This affiliation is in the ground of the defence of the spaces gained, once more, physical and symbolical, against the evictions or the atomization of the social movements.

“If the lot, we have two objectives. The first one is to create the space to do activities on it. We can mark this as done. The second one, in which we are working nowadays, is the struggle for the whole place” (M-4)\(^36\).

It affects the vision regarding the whole city.

“We said: it is not possible that this lot is underused. We are going to do something there inside”(M-4)\(^37\).

“This city should be decided by people. Citizens’ participation has to be everywhere even in the smallest details” (W-3)\(^38\).

Social movements and the general perception, both in actions and discourses, question the current urban development of Barcelona.

*From Franco’s death, there have been thirty-two years of left-wing governing the country*\(^39\).* The last four years the country has been in hands of the liberal right-wing. Barcelona has been thinking as a corporations’ city during all this time. However, the most incredible thing is that the neoliberal policies have been applied not by right wing but for all the nuances in the left-wing*\(^40\).* It is a

\(^{35}\) Es que la caridad funciona muy bien. Ellos tienen a los medios y las empresas aprovechan de lavar su imagen.

\(^{36}\) Sobre el espacio nosotros teníamos dos objetivos: el primero era hacer un espacio para poder tener actividades ahí, que ya está. El segundo, y es en lo que estamos ahora, es la lucha por el espacio completo.

\(^{37}\) Nos dijimos: no es posible que este espacio esté tirado, tenemos que hacer algo con el.

\(^{38}\) Es que la ciudad debería estar decidida por la gente. La participación de los ciudadanos tiene que estar en todo, incluso en los más pequeños detalles.

\(^{39}\) Country refers to Catalonia.

\(^{40}\) The left-wing comprises political parties such as: PSC, The Catalanist Social Party; ERC, Republican Left Party of Catalonia; ICV, coalition between the former PSUC Unified Socialist and Political Parties of Catalonia and The Green Party.
critical point because if the situation was the opposite: the left-wing recently in the power and the right-wing traditionally applying liberal policies; we would be trying to give a chance to the left-wing and maybe the social movement would be less massive. (M-5)\(^{41}\).

Social movements contribute in building new spaces in current physical lots. In those the participation acquires an important role endowing new significances to the neighbourhood.

“The idea behind of using this lot, and it is a shared idea among us, is that we are opening a space to the neighbourhood, to be managed by the neighbourhood and created by the people. People can come inside and using it not because they are managers now, but because they are neighbours. They can come inside because they are attending a workshop or because they want to drink a beer inside or because they just want to spend their time with friends in the lot, but the difference is that this space is managed by neighbours and authorities have nothing to do with it.” \(^{42}\) (M-4)

However, this spatial affiliation is also rooted in tradition. The places and neighbourhoods visited are the same spaces where other organizations in the past had emerged (see maps shown in section 1.6.3). Many argued that it is more than tradition because they are trying to improve those past experiences in order to avoid failures. Neighbourhoods’ history plays a role in current organizations (Field notes, 23\(^{rd}\), 24\(^{th}\), 26\(^{th}\) March 2015).

**Limits of action** The social movements described here are inclusive grassroots organizations. They act from a bottom-up approach and, as it has been mentioned, they always want to include more people. In spite of this, there are always parts of society that the social movement do not reach in terms of physical and social boundaries. When it is discussed who is active in the organizations, the action have borders both in neighbourhood’s borders and the social borders as well.

“At the beginning we gave the food away, to everyone: take these tomatoes, take whatever you want, but since there are people who is too humble, they

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\(^{41}\) Desde la muerte de Franco la izquierda ha gobernado el país por treinta y dos años. Los últimos cuatro años el país ha estado en mano de la derecha liberal. Pero Barcelona ha sido pensada como una ciudad ligada a las transnacionales durante todo este tiempo. Sin embargo y lo más increíble es que las políticas neoliberales han sido aplicada por la izquierda en todas sus gamas. Esto es importante porque si la situación fuera al revés, o sea la izquierda recién en el poder e históricamente un gobierno de derechas aplicando el neoliberalismo, nosotros ahora estaríamos dándole un a oportunidad a la izquierda y el movimiento social sería, por supuesto, menos masivo.

\(^{42}\) La idea del espacio y una cosa que nos ha unido a todos los que estamos dentro del espacio es esto: es que estamos abriendo un espacio para el barrio y para sea gestionado desde el barrio y para que la gente se lo haga suyo. La gente puede entrar allá y ocuparlo no como gestor si no como vecino, sea esto porque quiere participar de un taller, sea porque quiere tomarse una birra o sea porque quiere pasarse la tarde con los amigos, pero con la peculiaridad de que sea un espacio gestionado por los vecinos y que no nos tengan que decir nada.
did not dare to come and ask for food. We knew it, so we changed the strategy” (M-4)\textsuperscript{43}.

The limits of the action appear also when environmental concerns are discussed.

“It is difficult to mobilize people around environment. Works are more important issue. It seems you need a sort of material stability to start to worry about environment (...) It is especially real in precarious zones. In those places the premises of social movements do not enter in their concerns. (...) Poverty and marginalization help to avoid a lot of questions or critiques. They hold the critique back.” (M-3)\textsuperscript{44}.

This critique is placed upon how the social movement behaves towards the most marginalized.

“The discussion with similar ones does not work anymore. Any crucial issue in revolutionary history has come from the interwoven of different actors and other connections (...) finally, what makes people move is recognizing them in their own value”(M-3)\textsuperscript{45}.

\subsection*{4.2.2 Food issues}

Food as a main subject consulted is also possible to subdivide in subthemes. The information presented below is constructed from the interviews and field notes. They depict different concepts and ideas compounding food issues among activists in Barcelona.

\textit{Industry untrusted}

There is a general mistrust towards the food industry. The corporations related to food are perceived not only as carrying out a profit-driven activity in a topic of supposed general interest and a public health issue (Field notes, 24\textsuperscript{th} March 2015), but also are perceived as not reliable actors selling not reliable products.

“I really do not trust when I see those beautiful fruits at the supermarket. What do they contain? Are these real fruits? They look like plastic fruits, it is creepy”(W-2)\textsuperscript{46}.

\textsuperscript{43} Al principio regalábamos la comida a todo: sí, lleva estos tomates, toma lo que quieras pero como hay gente que es tan pobre y tan humilde, ellos no se atrevían a venir y pedir comida. Lo sabíamos así que cambiamos la estrategia.

\textsuperscript{44} Es muy difícil movilizar a la gente por cosas ambientales. Los trabajos son más importantes. Al parecer uno necesita primero una estabilidad material para empezar a preocuparse del medio ambiente (...) esto es aún más así en las zonas de precariedad. En esos lugares las premisas del movimiento social no calan. (...) la pobreza y marginación ayuda mucho a evitar ciertos temas. Ellos se reservan esas críticas.

\textsuperscript{45} La discusión con los pares ya no funciona más, cualquier evento crucial en la historia de la revolución ocurrió por el entrelazamiento de diferentes actores con otras conexiones. (...) finalmente lo que mueve a la gente es que se les reconozca en su propio valor.

\textsuperscript{46} Yo, es que de verdad, no confio cuando veo esas frutas tan lindas en el súper. ¿Qué tendrán? ¿Son frutas de verdad? Parecen plásticas, es terrorífico.
The critics to industrial food go to both products travelling long distances and the globalized market in general. Meanwhile the locally produced food is becoming valuable.

“To me, there is no sense in, if in my own country produce oranges, buying Moroccan oranges instead because those are cheaper” (W-2)\textsuperscript{47}.

However, and going further the production itself, there is a general stance against what food industry has achieved, perceiving the importance of awareness against the current food regime.

“The crisis has had a positive aspect. It has made people think” (W-2)\textsuperscript{48}.

“The awareness has grown, a lot, especially because our farmers’ market. Where the food comes from has become a normal question in the neighbourhood” (M-4)\textsuperscript{49}.

\textbf{Green wash}

The potential green wash that exists behind some actions concerning healthier food is completely banned from the activists’ actions.

“The social movement has helped to launch the critique, but supermarkets are trying to take advantage from it, and make the organic just a new product” (W-2)\textsuperscript{50}.

There is a constant conflict between the transformative potentialities of an alternative food chain and organic food into the formal market. Organic market food is seen as both a fashion trend and a business niche without content.

“If you eat organic just because it is stylish, no, I am not interested in” (W-2)\textsuperscript{51}.

The tendency of organic market consumption acquires attention in social movements, but to point out how this is oriented to a high-income group. This type of food, with less affordable prices taking into account the income average showed in the figures 2 and 3 on page 16, is focused on a free-chemical production leaving behind other features required to accomplish “the organic” understood by social movements. The market organic food is not necessarily tied to distances concern, plastic packaging or,
in many cases, it is not concerned about the fairness in the productive chain (Field notes 23rd March 2015).

“The idea is really good, but it has to get natural (...) not for an elite but as a daily basis practice” (W-1)52.

The perception of food as an active critique against capitalism is extended in the movements. It is not only something that exists, but is also a stance to cultivate. Practice and deliberations behind it are equally important.

“The most important thing is these action do not forget the anti-capitalist critique” (W-1)53.

“There is a risk that practices stay stuck in forms, organic food, assemblies etc.” (M-3)54.

The members of organizations and activists show a deep understanding of the challenge that implies to create and to develop alternatives. That is why, the questioning about what happens into the movements and their practices remain present in the conversations.

Recycling food as a political stance

The recycling-food networks are understood by activists as a matter of straightforward common sense. Especially when the financial crisis appears as a critical point.

“The economic crisis is the ground of recycling. That is why the limits should be extended, because when a product is waste? Who decides it? (W-2)55.

Recycling-food networks face complex social issues. The organizations are aware of this activity is connected with the popular image of marginalization, which become self-explanatory regarding why there are not more neighbours involved in such networks.

“Recycling is complicated because it is linked to poverty and marginalization, which is linked to criminality and a lot of other negative meanings” (W-1)56.

“It has been a normal practice (recycling food) into social movement, but now it has exploded” (W-1)57.

52 La idea es buena, pero tiene que ser natural (...) no desde una elite sino que como una cosa de cada día.
53 Lo más importante de las acciones es no olvidar que es una crítica la capitalismo.
54 Existe siempre el riego de quedarse estancado en las formas, lo orgánico, asambleas, etc.
55 La crisis es la base del reciclaje. Por eso los límites deberían extenderse. ¿Cuándo deja de estar bueno un producto? ¿Quién lo decide?
56 Es reciclaje es fuerte porque está ligado a pobreza y marginación, que a su vez está ligado a un montón de connotaciones negativas.
57 El reciclaje es normal, pero ahora sí ha estallado.
“We are trying to re-legitimize the recycling taking it out from the negative conception and putting it as a common sense issue. If there is food throw away, in good condition, is much worse to leave it in the trash cans” (W-4)\(^{58}\)

In spite of them carrying out a practice that is undoubtedly controversial, the activists are questioning how subversive could it really be to use wastes. Into the movements is questioned whether or not they are useful to the same critiqued system (Field notes, 23\(^{rd}\) March 2015).

“Is recycling really anti-capitalism? We are taking the waste of the system (...) at the same time, I feel it could subvert the capitalism logics” (W-4)\(^{59}\)

Growing food as a political stance

It seems one of the main challenges that organizations and activists are facing nowadays is about community building. In this sense, urban gardening advocates the activity as a political one instead of a productive one. It emphasizes the communitarian use of the products ensuring participation and spread of the collective logic.

“(Urban gardening) They are not an alternative nowadays. They are a trend, but they are looking just for basic products” (W-2)\(^{60}\)

“The explosion of urban gardening as an encounter point, not for self-sufficiency, because these do not produced very much” (W-1)\(^{61}\)

“Not everybody wants to grow a garden, but everybody wants to have one in the neighbourhood” (M-4)\(^{62}\)

“Achieving the urban gardening is to break with what our neighbourhood has been historically. It has been a crap neighbourhood” (M-4)\(^{63}\)

Middle-term consumers’ group

There is another trend in food consumption. It is a half way between market consumption and food sovereignty. This trend does not belong, or at least it was not

\(^{58}\) Nosotros estamos tratando de darle una nueva legitimidad al reciclaje también, quitándole la concepción negativa y poniéndolo como una cosa de sentido común. Si hay buena comida tirada, es tanto peor, dejarla en los contenedores de basura.

\(^{59}\) ¿Es el reciclaje realmente anticapitalista?. Estamos tomando los restos del sistema. (...) por otra parte esto igual puede llegar a subvertir la lógica capitalista.

\(^{60}\) (Los huertos urbanos) no son hoy en día una alternativa, pues sólo producen lo básico.

\(^{61}\) La explosión de los huertos es porque son un punto de encuentro y no como autosuficiencia pues tampoco producen mucho.

\(^{62}\) No todos quieren hacer un huerto, pero todo quieren tener uno en sus barrios.

\(^{63}\) Conseguir el huerto es quebrar con lo que ha sido históricamente este barrio. Que ha sido un barrio de mierda.
found, in the researched social movements being only referred by interviewees as a distant practice.

Consumers’ groups are people organized informally around food shopping. They buy directly to organic local producers creating a relationship of trust. These groups are represented in the middle of the figure 6 (page 39). The aims of them touch slightly on food sovereignty and making organization an important outcome of this practice 64.

**Thinking about food sovereignty**

The merging of ideology and food issues provoke to consider food sovereignty as a step further towards the social change that they seek and the city that they want to re-create. 

“*An important part of the members in our organization has moved to the country side. They wanted to work further in food sovereignty*” (W-1)65

“The motivation arose from the idea that, in the middle of the city, and in a place where urban gardening (has exploded) at least where people are growing food in their balconies. To have our own gardening to supply our food, and to eat from it. It arose as a powerful vindicatory idea, but also as a green space between the grey concrete. Not only because the green, but also because it is a green space allowing people to participate (...) using it for our public dinners (...). And I really believe it could be called to work towards food sovereignty” (M-4)66

5. Results

• There is a correlation between the financial crisis onset in 2008 and the current trend of social movements in Barcelona.

The information collected shows the financial crisis in 2008 has had an important impact in the social movement in general. It is especially clear when it is touching upon topics such as participation, awareness and the trajectory of the current movements.

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64 Those groups are not within the topic of this thesis, nevertheless, it is an interesting topic for further research.
65 Una parte importante de los miembros del colectivo se han mudado al campo, para llevar más allá la soberanía alimentaria.
66 la idea surge, porque en la mitad de la ciudad, y en un lugar en que los huertos (han explotado) al menos también donde la gente cultiva su comida en los balcones. Tener nuestro propio huerto pensando para suplir nuestra comida, para comer de él. Surge como una idea ponderosa de reivindicación, pero también como un espacio verde entre el cemento. No tan solo por el verde sino que también por la oportunidad de la gente de participar (…) el uso para nuestras propias cenas (…) y de verdad, esto puede ser llamado trabajar por la soberanía alimentaria
Starting with the trajectory of social movements. It is commonly acknowledged that social movements find their antecedents in the traditionally socialist political stances of Barcelona, both before the Spanish Civil War, as stated in the introduction of this study, and the post-Franco period with the vicinal organizations. Taking this into account, the interviewees and the informal conversation repeatedly mentioned the 15-M as a tipping point after the crisis outbreak.

The 15-M, already described in the introduction, was meant for individuals to meet with peers in common spaces to grow a sense of feeling of community. This feeling, often described as fury but also hope in change, came from the final burst of the real-estate bubble, the cutbacks and the governmental support to the financial sector bankruptcy (Cué, Diéz, & Gutierrez Calvo, 2011). Those encounters and the activities surrounding 15-M movements fuelled to participants to remain organized in their neighbourhoods leading to todays’ organizations.

This does not imply that organization had not existed before 15-M. Actually, the organizations have always existed in the neighbourhoods in Barcelona, with more or less intensity. The important fact is the crisis directed the individuals to organizations, and for many it was an inflection determining participation.

The second point where the 2008 economic crisis has manifestly impacted on individuals around social movements is the awareness gained through the collapse of a way of life. Interviewees have mentioned it as a positive outcome of the crisis. It is especially true for those who were organized in social movements even before the crisis. The crisis came to confirm what they have been talking about from long ago, reinforcing the premises of their own life style. In certain way, less consumption became the trend due to the crisis.

Last but not least, participation and crisis have tangible links. The organizations have had to cope with everyday situations that have contested them in a variety of forms. For instance, organizations have incorporated other topics impelled by the crisis outburst such as housing, cutbacks in social services and a generalized reduction of the welfare state. It is paradoxical since the organizations have maintained a anti-state speech and today they are, or at least many of them, negotiating spaces with the authorities or discussing other topics. It has happened mainly due to the participation and diversification that organizations are experiencing now. It is not perceived as a loss. On the contrary, those who have been in the social movements historically assess as a positive outcome towards the participatory stream.

• Social movements have found strategies to cope with adversity in their daily practices accomplishing a sui generis organization based on their own experience.

The social movements in front of new scenarios and in front of new topics have had to find ways to organize their activities. It is evident in the relations with the food issues. Every organization and activist consulted has described the current activities as the result of a number of trial and error. Even though organizations are in contact and working mostly as a part of a larger network, none has plagiarized the strategies of the others. The recycling-food networks, the urban gardening and other experiences find its strategy through managing their own realities. That is why the experiences are
theoretically replicated but these are also unique since they respond to their proximate context.

The strategies outlined must be functional to their purposes. Recycling-food networks should accomplish a generous collection of food, but at the same time, they have to find the way to create a cohesive assembly that reproduces the model in an autonomous method. The urban gardening carry burdens that obligate them to find methods to carry out their activities in a holistic manner. For instance, the practical tasks, such as cultivating and harvesting, must suit the large amount of people working on the tasks and individuals’ schedules. At the same time, it has to contemplate the specific ends of the urban gardening and the significances of the spaces, neighbours’ relations and other elements vital to these movements.

- Food practices in social movements aim at recomposing the social fabric in the neighbourhoods.

The financial crisis and the relations with social movements is one of the clear findings of this research. Nevertheless, this relation has a precedent that is impossible to obviate, this being a trigger of participation and point of departure of social movements nowadays. Neoliberalism, as the contemporary economic and social model developed in the Western societies, has based its premises in an individualistic life style. It has broken the social fabric that has existed in Barcelona and current model has left the traditional neighbourhood’s life in a hidden place. Consequently, the social movements more than reinvent a new one; they are rebuilding the ties that already existed.

Understanding the loss of density in the generalized social relations in the neighbourhoods helps to understand the dimension of the social movements tasks. Within this, the construction of a new type of neighbourhood is a priority. It contributes to the knitting of a new social fabric, or the restoration of the old one, based upon community ties and the appropriation of the urban space. Therefore, food has become a practice included in their political agenda, but it is included due to the input that it has as the final objective.

6. Discussion

The following discussion is made up between the empirical findings and the theory. The intention is to create an analysis that answer the aims and the questions proposed at the beginning of this research. An essential element of this discussion is the use of the variables described in the methodology section (3.4 Operationalization of concepts), which will be found systematized in the next paragraphs.
6.1 Social movements in Barcelona and food sovereignty\textsuperscript{67}.

In order to describe the social movements, and despite the paradox that it may represent, it is important to mention what they are not. Social movements related to food issues in their daily practices are not “food movements”. Furthermore, they do not recognize themselves as a part of the food movements, which comprises those organizations that raise food as their main goal. Instead they highlight a different objective and a different way to carry out their practices.

However, the organizations and the activists investigated suit perfectly in the definition of social movement offered in the theoretical framework (della Porta & Diani, 2006; Touraine, 1995). The information presented in the previous section revealed that the social movements is antagonizing with the industrialized food regime, but also (and perhaps at larger extent) is diverging with a city model shaping a model of the society that they do not agree with. They are in open conflict with capitalism as well. This conflict order both how the members act and how the actions are justified where food sovereignty is not the exception. The activists carry out an everyday practice that goes beyond the food issues moreover, food sovereignty is seen as an element in harmony with the rest of their antagonist performance. The performances come from the antipathy against capitalism, but are oriented to overcoming it. This creative performance is based on premises such as solidarity and equal value, which differentiates from the individualism that they critique. In this context food sovereignty is an expression of their critical positions.

Besides this, the organizations and activists are connected in a mutual support network, which is basically conformed by individuals that known each other creating an informal environment tied by engagement. Interests in common are distinguishable and furthermore a collective identity is created around topics and activities, including a class notion that provides a bigger context to both their conflicts and the collective action.

However, the social movements have some limits by the same identity that they possess. On one hand, there is ideology. Social movements move around nuances of their own mantras. The discourses into social movements are difficult to permeate complicating the arrival of new ones, as was revealed in the information regarding identity in the previous section. This produces self-absorption and a barrier to other ideas that in many cases could be complementary. On the other hand, the social movements in Barcelona are strongly rooted in the neighbourhoods, which happen, probably, due to the political and class tradition suggested in the maps in the introduction section (figures 2, 3, 4 and 5). The organizations work actively in their own neighbourhoods and networking with other organizations outside it, but differentially and not as a whole social movement. This is not necessarily negative, but this geographical limit prevents social movements to spread their practices in even more deprived sectors, for instance (figures 2, 3, 4 and 5). The figures organize how the social movement is located in the city. They are connected to each other and

\textsuperscript{67} This section discusses the first aim proposed, comprised of the variables shown in Table 3 "Variables researched". Within the dimension of “social movements theory” which includes the variables such as: class identification, clear opposition, informal networks and collective identity. These are originally extracted from the Theoretical Framework (section 2), which was then operationalized in the Methodology.
represent a diminishing presence in peripheries in both cases in upper class
neighbourhoods and most disadvantaged neighbourhoods. It represents a challenge
that social movements and the activists acknowledge continuously.

To these groups food sovereignty is not an end by itself. The consideration to include
food issues in their habitual practices is due to the importance that this idea has in
regard to a society beyond capitalism. This notion is an element inside the whole
picture of social change.

6.2 Recreating the urban space and claiming the city\(^{68}\)

Regarding the aim number two (shown on page 7) and accordingly with the relation
described between food sovereignty as a concept interwoven into the social
movement, the urban space has a contested and recreated role in how the city should
be. This contesting/recreating process arises from the urban dwellers and users’
representation about the city. However, the idea surrounding organizations goes
further than urban planning. They are not only claiming a physical space, instead the
bigger claim is about the relations building within city’s interstices. Social
movements are claiming the Lefebvrian lived space pointing out the inconsistencies
experienced by inhabitants between the social representation about the city and the
actual urban physical setting.

These inconsistencies can be understood in a bidirectional mutual influence: from the
physical space to inhabitants, which is the perceived space, and from inhabitants’
identities to physical urban space, the conceived space. Into the perceived space, the
physical space concerns inhabitants since it is the scenario of their social
performances. There must be coherence between individuals’ social representations
and city’s aims, and to this case, this coherence does not exist at a large extent. It is
possible to exemplify in the application of the Harvey’s new urbanism critic (Harvey,
2000). Into it, the urban planning and the discussions about an ultra connected city, a
business-friendly city or a neoliberal city\(^{69}\) is embodied in a neoliberal failed model.
In Barcelona, planners seem to be feeding a city ideal that is only possible to
concretize on some restricted areas and for a restricted portion of city’s inhabitants.
They are aiming at building a world city class meanwhile the city itself is struggling
with the consequences of a crisis provoked by the same model that they want to
replicate. Most of the city inhabitants are not allowed to enjoy this super connected
city, not only because they may not be able to afford the private solutions but also
because these projects do not reveal peoples’ imageries of the city, neither their
experiences with it.

Other example exposing the inconsistency from physical space to inhabitants’
representations is gentrification. Despite gentrification becoming a standard issue in

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\(^{68}\) Section 6.2 discusses the aim number two, and it refers to the dimension of the “right to the city”
shown in Table 3. It includes variables such as space perceived, space experienced, space lived and
new urbanism. These are extracted from the Theoretical Framework as discussed in section 2.

\(^{69}\) It is exemplified through the official projects regarding "BCN Smart City". It is a projected city
where citizens are consider consumers and where each offered service is mediated by a private
company.
crowded cities; it is a factor of main importance in current Barcelona’s urban configuration. On one hand, speculation has provoked the transformation of neighbourhood since it has removed inhabitants with lesser income from core areas and saturating them with new residents and breaking the social fabric\textsuperscript{70}. On the other hand, the city oriented to tourism has impelled gentrification and it is creating what the natives usually call, the “Barcelona’s amusement park”\textsuperscript{71}. A city focused in trivial entertainment to occasional visitors.

The traditional social fabric has been broken and the disconformities with the city development corroborate a city planning preferring a certain type of expansion. This gentrified, speculative and segregated model offers facilities and services that are not focused in inhabitants’ needs despite the fact that the city, as a physical place, is planned to be used in all its potential. The policies and efforts bringing about a world-city environment reduce the city to a small fraction of dwellers and users. It antagonizes for instance, with unemployment figures and the precariousness mentioned in this research. The current ideal of the city, in a neoliberal setting, is inconsistent with its own aims.

On the contrary, the conceived space contributes to the inconsistency in the lived space detected in Barcelona. It emerges from individuals’ identities and the spaces where these identities are put into play. Here is where the social life, the neighbours’ organizations, the inhabitants and even the “transient user” cross each other influencing and re-creating constantly the relations deployed over the city. It allows the identities re-order themselves regarding moments, hierarchies and especially regarding other identities. Even though there is not an open conflict and roles are clear among neighbours and in the neighbourhoods, the city is almost alien to itself. There is a insight of a city that does not allow identities to be fixed on its scenario, and it has been prepared for other actors, for others’ performances leaving at least two options: to depart or to resist. The people interviewed and the social movements seem, in general, have decided to resist.

In this inconsistent context, social movements in the urban setting are looking for endowing the everyday spaces with the new practices. Food sovereignty is seen as an element of a broader sovereignty. A sovereignty that is only exerted as long as the physical space is in concordance with inhabitants’ identities but also it must concord with desires and a shared vision of the future: a recovered space for the urban dwellers.

6.3 The practice of an everyday food sovereignty\textsuperscript{72}

\textsuperscript{70} It is a complex process simplified in these lines in order to provide a comprehensive example of the argument.
\textsuperscript{71} The consequences of tourism are a common topic showing it up in conversations quite often.
\textsuperscript{72} This section will discuss the objective number 3 mentioned in the research aims, and it is based on the dimension of “food sovereignty”. The variables included are: food regime, moral economy and appropriate food.
The information presented in the study regarding practices shows an imbricated relation between the idea of society, which we can identify as a long-term project, and the everyday practices.

There are three elements detected as aims in the practices: To materialize their antagonism against the productionist paradigm as food regime, to implement what they consider a sustainable food chain based on appropriate food and to install broader political practices where food sovereignty is an element. These three elements, which will be described here, constitute the activities of social movements regarding food. However, they cannot be understood as separate objectives. They categorize food as an element of society, consequently it is possible to deconstruct it and categorize it again, but in harmony with the general project of society that they are in search for.

The materialization of their antagonism against current food regime fulfils both a discursive and a practical role. Food sovereignty, and how social movements apply this concept, is coherent with the critique against the existing economic-political system. It is visible in examples like the recycling-food network, the urban gardening and the general stances about why people participate in these initiatives. The interviewees constructed discourses that relate their actions with both moral standpoints about the current food regime and associating the current food regime with market economy. It makes the actions, groups, and stances perfectly intelligible since the practices are not isolated but tied with their worldview.

Likewise, the materialization of the critique is understood in a dialectic relationship with the implementation of new practices. The features of practices stress the critique, thus, is possible to read actions not only as mere activities but also as a statement of intentions. From these intentions emerge the necessity to rebuild a food chain based on other appropriate premises such as local products and respecting seasonality of nature; the consideration of just and favourable work conditions for both producers and others involved in the food chain like shopkeepers and consumers; a clean production without pesticides and without genetic modified organisms; this food chain should also abandon speculative practices on food products and reduce the global market intervention in order to gain universal access to food to avoid starvation and nutritional diseases. Social movements put these ideas in practices like those described in the previous sections: avoiding waste to obtain affordable food, seasonality and local products in their urban gardening that roots all of these actions in the political position.

These considerations suggest a moral vision regarding food practices. Food should represent a performance rooted in a moral conception of life, jointly with other spheres of social life. The extended critique to neoliberal settings is also a critique to the productionist paradigm as food regime, and at the same time, it is going beyond that. The proposal of the social movements include a shift of food regime-paradigm and the creation of a new one is intrinsically based on a moral conception of production, distribution and reproduction of the social life.

In this regard, the trend in the food practices and the extensions of them, are seen as a need. The political project will be a success as long as the practices become replicable and replicated exponentially. The trend of practices is a goal of the political project.
that the social movements carry out since it is accomplished not by representation but by participation. Social movements are not targeting the hierarchical pinnacle of the state bureaucracy; the opposition that they personify is coherent with a direct democracy where the project reaches its maximal gist in an action on daily basis. Consequently, assemblies, participation and horizontality display its meaning and lucidity since everything surrounding them is politics and food as well.

6.4 Thinking the urban, the activism and the food. Ideological considerations

Throughout the main topics intended to study in this thesis, there is a thread knitting each other and endowing significances as elements of a coherent whole. Ideology works in this direction. It acts as metaphorical glue that bonds elements that may look very different in appearance, but jointly conform a harmonic discourse.

Ideology is connected with theoretical knowledge, and expressed in uses creating an embodied theory. This ideology includes the idea that society, in order to be inclusive and based on fairness, has to be built from the bottom. In this regard, the practices that we have reviewed are an expression of the pursued society. The embodied theory is noticed, for instance, when social movements decide to take back the neighbourhood as a political gesture and when they diagnose the individualism as the great threat to the social justice that they want to achieve. In such practices social movements reveal not only uses but also the knowledge behind the activities.

At the same time, similar ideological stances prevent social movements of pursuing the power of the state or the social institutions. Instead the organizations and activists antagonize with the institutionalization through seizing physical and symbolic spaces and fill them with significances. In such spaces, individuals can meet each other without the bureaucratic interferences because there is another dominating ideology. Those places are different than the institutional spaces where the individuals relate each other through given statuses, for example, schools or workplaces that put individuals on non-negotiable categories. In the area of social movements, the statuses can be transformed and are not fixed necessarily with the institutionalized ones. The statuses are redefined and are indeed negotiable categories creating other possibilities for individuals to carry out their social performances in diversified formats. Nevertheless, categories, institutionalized or not, are built upon ideological worldviews making the ideology the crucial factor defining social performances and the spaces where these actions take place.

7. Conclusions

This research proposed to study how the urban social movements have incorporated food sovereignty into their practices and how this relation has been affected by financial crisis in 2008. To fulfil this aim, four theoretical concepts were used, which

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73 The section 6.4 will develop the fourth aim relating it to the practice theory dimension illustrated in Table 3. It comprises variable such: knowledge, uses and embodied theory.
are food sovereignty, social movement theory, right to the city and practice theory. These concepts have been applied to the information collected during the fieldwork through observation, informal conversations and semistructured interviews using an ethnographical approach in order to obtain actors’ discourses and interpretations of the issues. The social movements analysed comprise recycling-food networks and urban gardening. Additionally, the study also consulted other activists in order to obtain a broader notion about food sovereignty within the social movements. The obtained information from fieldwork has been systematized through the variables stated in the methodology section. These variables have given the way to comprehensive topics in the discussion section, and have drafted the main results of the research. In the conclusions, the research questions will be answered with the emphasis on the main contributions of this research.

The relation between social movements and food sovereignty has been confirmed by this thesis. Regarding the main characteristics of this relation, it is possible to mention that food sovereignty is recognized by the members and activists, as an element both in the discussions and the actions. However, the incorporation of this idea has not changed the social movement in its objectives; it has become a complement but not a decisive element shifting the path of the Barcelona’s social movements. Therefore, it can be said that food issues have been absorbed by the organization as an element supporting the social movement’s ideals and their political agenda.

Inside the social movement, it has been working towards a food practice in the outskirts of the market even before the crisis. In certain ways, food sovereignty has always been there. Groups have recycled food from waste and cultivated vegetables to communitarian activities as a habitual practice. Nonetheless, it has acquired other dimensions and it has obtained a new relevance in the recent years. The crisis has amplified the extent of this practice mainly due to an increased neighbours’ participation and an escalation of necessities.

In this sense, the crisis has, indeed, affected the relation between social movements and food sovereignty. The crisis has pushed the social movement to reinvent and ask themselves, genuinely, about inclusiveness and the extent of their practices. The reactions have been dominated by the outline of new strategies, mentioned before as *sui generis*, that are intended to cope with the scenario but also are thought to befit properly in a broader ideological statement. The practices become, thus, novelty but suitable with social movements’ objectives.

More than anything, the crisis has also impacted in how social movements have incorporated food issues in a broader idea of sovereignty. Many of the consulted organizations and activists are struggling against the neoliberal dominance of the spaces and especially against the dominance of the city. Food issues frame, thus, in these objectives: to recover the neighbourhoods to neighbours arguing, at the same time, that the city can be different than the one planned under neoliberalism. The practices deployed by social movements, either through food practices or free-of-charge classes and communitarian discussion, reveal a necessity to reclaim the public spaces and manage them with a profound sense of democracy built from the bottom and for everyone.
The implication of social movement in the neighbourhoods and the interwoven relations that they organize upon the urban space is an important finding. How food sovereignty is almost a tool using the city and occupying the interstices of the urban is the testimony showing that they conduct a practice embodied in an insightful reflection about their realities; the awareness surrounds the practices. Consequently, the practices become strategies in an agenda with no other purpose than everyday life.

8. Further research

Connected with these findings, there are some issues that can lead to further research. Such is the case of the described relation between the city ideal and the social movements. Some questions that emerged from this study are:

- How is the urban affected by social movements?
- How does the social movements’ model of urban development look like?
- To what extent is this model applied nowadays?

Other research topics emanating from this thesis, but not directly related with the investigated issues are:

- Other experiences related to food consumption: organic consumption and organizations of consumers.
- Perceptions of the food issues divided by the geographical and social settings.
- Specific work of social movements in deprived sectors.
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