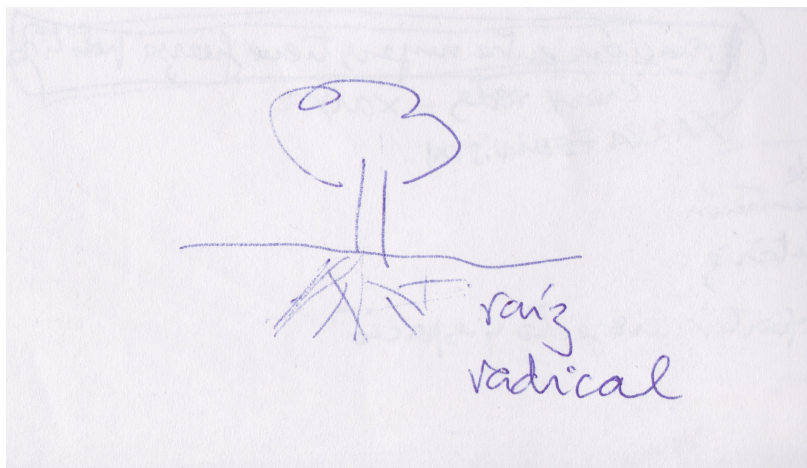


RADICAL ROUTES:
an ethnographic exploration of feminist
nationalism in Barcelona



A play on words in Catalan, drawn by Mercè: radical roots

RADICAL ROUTES: An Ethnographic Exploration of Feminist Nationalism in Barcelona

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Map of Barcelona, given to me by Maria

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yet they offer a provocative approach to addressing the social, economic, political and cultural realities taking shape in the density of urban centres.

Space and Object is devoted to individuals in their living spaces. In addition to the city, this section looks at technologies, materials and entire

petrol, food or newspapers in their shops. The desired amount is deposited in one location and then paid out again at another upon the presentation of a code sent by SMS. Around 25 per cent of Kenya's gross national product flows through the system.

**THE STRANGE, FAMILIAR
ENVIRONMENT OF THIS CITY IS
DENSE WITH STORY. THE
NARRATIVES FLY AT ME FROM
ALL DIRECTIONS.**

Teju Cole, *Every Day Is for the Thief*, 2007

**063 François Beaurain – Monrovia
Animated**

French artist François Beaurain first visited Monrovia, the capital of Liberia, in January 2014, and was instantly captivated by the city, its inhabitants and spaces. "I quickly realized it's really rather nice," he states. "There's a big discrepancy between what is

Beaurain's composition and use of colour, and show a different side of a country that is regularly associated in the media with its recent civil war and its consequences or Ebola. Beaurain's ultimate aim is to change this perception, internationally, creating different associations with the country – even if only online. The artist's stay in Monrovia has also

Mikhael Subotzky's and Patrick Waterhouse's joint project documents the life and atmospheres of the Ponte City skyscraper in Johannesburg. Created between 2008 and 2010, the photographers have generated an intimate and powerful portrait of Africa's tallest apartment building, a circular 54-storey building that rises up to 173

and aspirations form the basis for Subotzky's and Waterhouse's long-term project. Over two years, they took photos of every window, apartment door and TV set in the building. Subsequently, they pieced together six hundred pictures in three different lightboxes, maintaining the exact order of the different storeys and apartment loca-

Scan of quote from Teju Cole's *Every Day is for the Thief*, 2007, taken from the *Making Africa* exhibition text at the CCCB, Barcelona

INTRODUCTION

In the construction of this new country, women want to be there. And being there means that our proposals are part of the discussions, visible, our voices heard.

Feministes per la Independencia, 2014

If we understand that Catalan identity destabilizes fixed and imposed categories, such as Spanish nationality and borders, and also contests national projects based on ethnic origins, could some national identities be understood as queer?

Rodó-de-Zárate 2016

A week or so after arriving in Barcelona in 2013, a walk down Passeig de Gràcia amongst countless waving, striped red and yellow flags initially made me feel slightly uneasy. In the United Kingdom, where I am from, such a congregation of national flags could either mean it was the Queen's birthday, or an ultra-right English Defence League rally. These displays of patriotism and/or racial nationalism are not where you want to find yourself when first arriving in a new country. However, as I walked further down towards Plaça de Catalunya and through the centre of the city, I asked more questions; I began to acknowledge that my own perceptions and experiences of European nationalism were not necessarily applicable here, yet nevertheless important to keep in context. This was *La Diada* or *Onze de Setembre*, originally signifying the loss of independence and the defeat by Spain in the War of Spanish Succession in 1714. I gradually began to notice the variation in flags¹; the amount of young people and families wrapped in these national symbols, people in the spirit of protest and celebration of their culture, language and traditions. All with the underlying tension of if, and when they would be granted the right to decide, to have a referendum on their future. The loudest voices here are often those of liberal conservative parties, such as *Convergència*, who held power in Catalonia over long stints from the 1980s onwards. Yet, since the economic crisis of 2008, Spain's two-party system has gradually collapsed. Out of the explosion of a diverse set of social movements that have created a new set of grassroots-led political parties, a feminist political agenda has emerged both nationally and regionally. In Catalonia, this has been particularly present. *CUP*, *Podemos Feminismos* and *En Comú Podem* have all presented and electorally succeeded on manifestos that campaign against *terrorismo machista* on a policy platform that is designed to combat domestic violence and implement anti-patriarchal and anti-austerity political reforms. Simultaneously, in Catalonia, Catalan nationalism has witnessed extremely high-levels of engagement, pushed by the financial crisis of 2008, but also due to

¹ The straight red and yellow stripes of Catalonia, Saint George's cross (also found as England's national flag), two red and yellow striped flags, which later during my research it was explained that the *Estellada*, the one with a blue triangle and white star in solidarity with Cuba's independence, is often more associated with radical left ideas, and the one with a yellow triangle and red star is more in general for Catalan independence.

the refusal by the ruling right-wing Popular Party to engage with the demands from the Catalan government or for the desire for a referendum on independence.

I continued to live in Barcelona for the next three years, and I soon realised, through friendships, participation in political rallies and my own research and interests in marginalised voices, that there were many and varying facets to the desire for Catalan independence. Through working as an academic tutor and an English teacher in the city to sustain my studies, I was able to gain an insight into varying lifestyles. From privately educated students and their families in wealthy *Sarria*, in the west of the city, to volunteering for a social work and multicultural education organisation with students in the working class but gentrifying *Raval* district. I was able to gain access and build relationships with Catalan and Spanish families, as well as families from across the globe, and be privy to their conversations and ideas about the on-going independence debate. I dwelled in the city, exploring the different *barrios*, as well as travelling around the rest of the region, always coming face to face with its history, culture and politics.

In Catalonia a group of activists named, *Feministes per la Independencia* (Feminists for Independence), formed in 2014 as a reaction to the lack of feminist voices in the independence debate, believe in independence for Catalonia as inclusive of independence from “patriarchy, capitalism and militarism”, as stated on their website. *Feministes per la Independencia* meet weekly at *Ca La Dona* (House of Women), a symbolic building of great importance on *Carrer Ripoll* in the *Gótico* neighbourhood of Barcelona. Inspired by the ideals and desires of this group for the reformation of the existing system, and the possible creation of a new state through changing the spaces around them, my research explores the question of how the imagined space of an independent feminist Catalan republic interacts with the physical space of Barcelona.



Àngels showing me photos of *Feministes per la Independencia* at *La Diada* 2015, and a photo I took of people wearing the *Estellada* at *La Diada* 2013.





POLITICAL BACKGROUND

The recent political tension between the Catalan regional government and the Spanish state began after the 2006 referendum on a new Statute of Autonomy, designed to devolve more powers to the Catalan government (Muñoz, Guinjoan, 2013). A particularly contentious point was for the Spanish Constitution, in a non-legally binding manner, to recognise Catalonia as a 'nation'. Despite the Statute gaining parliamentary and public support, the conservative Popular Party (PP) appealed to the country's most powerful court, the Constitutional Court, in July 2010. Four years after the Statute had been democratically approved, the Court ruled that there was no legal basis for the constitution to recognise Catalonia as a 'nation', amongst other articles (Muñoz, Tormos 2015, 323). Two weeks later, around one million people marched through Barcelona contesting the ruling.

Over the next four years Catalonia witnessed an unprecedented level of political mobilisation originating from civil society. In 2012, around 2 million marched through Barcelona behind the slogan "*Catalunya, nou Estat d'Europa*" (Catalonia, a New European State). (Castello, Capdevilla 2015, 614) In 2013, Catalans created a 480-kilometre human chain from the French border to the southern tip of the region. Shortly after this, Catalonia held an 'informal consultation on independence' which, on this occasion, was partially organised by the Catalan government. (The Catalan government has since been taken to the Constitutional Court by the PP for orchestrating this 'information consultation' threatening its leaders with ten years in jail). More than 2.3 million people voted, of which 1.8 million voted for independence (Medir 2015, 268). In 2014, over one million people created a giant mosaic in Barcelona to call for a referendum, once again on September 11th, the region's 'independence day'. The protest of 2014 was notable for it being assembled into different sections to reflect Catalan society. This included a section for immigrants, young people, the deaf and blind, LGBTIQI people, unions and women, amongst others (Castello, Capdevilla 2015, 613). In this way, it is of paramount importance to my research, to note that the movement is as varied in its participants as it is unified in its purpose.

The large levels of local participation forced the issue of a referendum on secession from Spain to the top of the political agenda. In 2011 and 2012 the main pro-independence party ERC (*Esquerra Republicana Catalana* - Leftist Republic of Catalonia) increased its support and the large nationalist party (at the time non-pro-referendum on independence) lost its majority. Small pro-independence parties grew, most notable CUP (*Candidatura d'Unitat Popular*, Popular Unity Candidacy), a radical, left-wing, anti-capitalist and feminist grassroots-led party. In Catalonia's 2015 parliamentary elections, a coalition calling for independence named '*Junts Pel Si*' (Together for Yes), made up of left, right and centrist parties fell just short of a parliamentary majority. After a long period of negotiation a government was forced between CUP and *Junts Pel Si* that saw a new regional president

put in place. Carles Puigdemont, Catalonia's 130th president has created a two-year road map, preparing Catalonia's institutions to be ready for political independence within the next two years. The Spanish government continue to call these efforts, and those of the past four years, illegitimate and illegal.

<p>Per una República Catalana Lliure, Independent i Feminista</p> <p>Volem construir un nou país millor entre totes i tots, des de la llibertat, la diversitat i l'equitat i la sostenibilitat. Un país on la política transformadora de les dones sigui la Política.</p> <p>Les dones som subjectes de dret en totes les etapes de la vida i sigui quin sigui el nostre origen.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1- L'eradicació de les violències masclistes ha de ser una qüestió d'estat en la República Catalana. 2- Ens cal un sistema nacional d'educació pública, gratuïta, laica, catalana, de qualitat i coeducadora des dels zero anys fins a l'etapa universitària. 3- Exigim el dret al propi cos, el dret a ser mares i a no ser-ho, el dret a la reproducció assistida independentment de l'opció sexual, el dret a l'avortament lliure, el dret a decidir la nostra sexualitat. Cap d'aquests drets s'ha de veure condicionat per les creences religioses. 4- Reivindiquem un Pacte Nacional per a les Politiques d'Igualtat que les faci sostenibles, al marge de les conjuntures econòmiques i el color polític del govern. 5- Cal reconèixer i visibilitzar les dones i la seva contribució en tots els àmbits dels sabers, treballs i pràctiques feministes. Les dones tenim tot el dret al reconeixement de la nostra genealogia feminista. 	<p>For a Free, Independent and Feminist Catalan Republic</p> <p>We want to build a new and better country inspired by freedom, diversity, equality and sustainability; a country where women's transformative politics is recognised as Politics.</p> <p>Women are subjects of rights throughout their lives, irrespective of their origins.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1- The eradication of all gender-based violence must be a state affair in the Catalan Republic. 2- We need a national education system which is public, secular, in Catalan, of high quality and coeducational from kindergarten to university. 3- We claim the right to decide over our body, the right to motherhood and childlessness, the right to assisted reproduction regardless of our sexual orientation, the right to free abortion, and the right to decide our sexuality. None of these rights shall be tainted by religious beliefs. 4- We demand a National Pact for Equality with sustainable policies, regardless of the economic conjuncture and the ideological leaning of the successive governments. 5- Women, their contributions in all areas of knowledge and feminist practices must be recognised and made visible. We the women are entitled to have our feminist genealogy accredited. 
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6- La sostenibilitat de la vida ha de ser al centre de la política en totes les seves dimensions: econòmica, ecològica, social, cultural, de solidaritat, intergeneracional, de pau i seguretat. Volem viure en un país lliure d'exèrcits, on la seguretat de la població es basi en el diàleg i les mediacions. 7- Els treballs de cura i de reproducció social són responsabilitat de tota la societat. L'organització socioeconòmica ha d'incloure la co-responsabilització dels homes en aquests treballs. Hem de sostenir unes estructures públiques que garanteixin les condicions bàsiques per al benestar de tothom. 8- Exigim garantir l'equitat laboral i salarial, la fi de la divisió sexual del treball, l'eradicació de les totes les discriminacions a les treballadores i assegurar unes pensions dignes. 9- Reclamem un Estat laic que no s'adhereixi a cap religió on les creences religioses no influeixin en la legislació ni en les polítiques públiques. 10- Les dones hem de participar en el procés constituent, en la redacció de la Constitució, i en qualsevol espai de construcció nacional. Dones i homes hem de co-participar en tots els àmbits de decisió en paritat. <p>No hi ha llibertat nacional sense la llibertat de les dones!</p> <p>Visca Catalunya Independent!</p> <p>www.feministesperlaindependencia.cat @femvicat</p> <p>Feministes per la Independència #Tram82 eix #Igualtat #ViaLliure11S 2015</p> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. The sustainability of life must be placed at the core of policy in all of its dimensions-economic, ecological, social, cultural, from an intergenerational perspective, as well as in terms of solidarity, peace and security. We want to live in a country with no armed forces where citizens' security builds on dialogue and mediation. 7- Caring work and social reproduction are the responsibility of the whole society. The socioeconomic organization must include men's co-responsibility in this work. The new state must sustain public structures that secure the wellbeing of everyone. 8- We demand labour and wage equality, fair pensions, the end of the sexual division of labour and the eradication of female workers' discrimination. 9- We advocate for a secular state which does not adhere to any particular religion and where religious beliefs have no influence over legislation and public policy. 10- Women must participate in the constituent process of the new state, in the drafting of the Constitution and in all other areas of national building. Women's and men's participation in all decision-making arenas must meet parity. <p>There is no national freedom without women's freedom!</p> <p>Visca Catalunya Independent!</p> <p>www.feministesperlaindependencia.cat @femvicat</p> <p>Feministes per la Independència #Tram82 eix #Igualtat #ViaLliure11S 2015</p> 

The manifesto of *Feministes per la Independència*, on the left in Catalan, on the right in English.

FEMINIST NATIONALISM AND INDEPENDENCE

The oppression of our nation is not a particularity that may or may not affect us, it is inherent in our reality that we must transform.

Olivares et al, 1982

From the Spanish Civil War 1936-1939, to the ensuing fascist dictatorship that lasted until Francisco Franco's death in 1975, and the transition to democracy shortly afterward, feminism has developed, split and changed alongside these political and social transformations. Mary Nash in her article *Political Culture, Catalan Nationalism and the Women's Movement in Early Twentieth-Century Spain*, firmly places her research within the context of Spain's political culture, not as solely the development of gender roles and identity (Nash 1996). In fact, Catalan feminist nationalism was not primarily interested in suffrage, as in other parts of the world, but with civil liberties. Nash describes how Catalan feminism shifted with time and continuing engagement with the political sphere. "Their rethinking of gender relations was expressed in relation to the Spanish state and Catalan society and was, thus, politically and class motivated although not formulated initially in terms of political rights for women" (Nash 1996, 48). It is also important to note that pre-1930s Catalan feminism was an activism and political interest of the bourgeoisie, much like the wider independence movement.² According to Stanley G. Payne, nationalism from a radical left-wing perspective was "unknown prior to the emergence of the militant *Euskadi Ta Azkatasuna* (ETA- Basque Homeland and Liberty) in the 1960s" (Payne 1998, 488). The Catalan feminist movement can be seen to have been vying for recognition for their role in social reproduction, especially within Catalan culture. Feminism in Spain has developed closely in tandem with regionalism and nationalism, which can be particularly seen in the case of Catalonia, as well as the Basque country. As in Catalonia, Basque women were rallied to the cause of nationalism to become guardians of the language and culture and bastions of morality due to their role in the family and in the domestic and private spheres of society. However, many also wanted to break from the limitations that these roles provided, often coming into conflict with Catholic ideals of womanhood.

Nash notes the importance of specificity in the narrative of feminism in Catalonia (ibid) thus, the micro element of my research focuses on the current activism of a particular group in Barcelona. In this way, I hope I can distance my research from feminism as perceived as a global issue with global objectives and the "many faces of liberal feminism" (Ibid). Nash also argues that the Anglo-American interpretation of global feminisms based in a narrative of equality may not be sufficient for in-depth or accurate analysis, especially in terms of the "rigid oppositional categories" that this narrative

² In my research it has been possible to see how complex the development of nationalist feminism has been, as many of my participants were born into working class households, outside of a bourgeois class set.

allows for, such as “equal/different”, “mainstream/peripheral” and “radical/conservative” (Nash 1996, 46). Maria Rodó-de-Zárate (2016), goes beyond this.; she explores how using Anglophone words such as ‘queer’ to describe the identity of young lesbian activists in a Catalan town, become irrelevant in a new context. She argues for intersectionality, in that the production of knowledge outside of Anglophone academic discourse can significantly contribute to “queer conceptualisations that can contest the hegemonic ones” (Rodó-de-Zárate 2016, 155).

PARTICIPANTS

The theory discussed below will act as the instruments for analysis that I have co-constructed with my participants. The five women that I have included in this thesis from the group *Feministes per la Independència*, are highly conscious of their activities within the group, their relationship to their form of nationalism and the spaces around them. They lend multi-vocality to the analysis, as their insights allowed me to shape my understanding of their connection to nationalism and their perceptions of the city. The voice that is most present is Mercè's, whom I met first and I was able to gain the best rapport with. Almost immediately, Mercè and I formed an almost student-teacher relationship. As a former university professor, she was always trying to give me advice about how to narrow my studies, checking in on my progress and always speaking very clearly and slowly in Spanish to help me understand. She was a wealth of information on the development of Catalan history, politics and feminism, as well as being so generous with her personal experiences; the story of her grandmother and mother forms the crux of my analysis of her relationship with Catalan nationalism and her *barrio*, *Eixample de l'Esquerra*. Mercè introduced me to Aina and Tania at the *Jornades Catalanes de la Dona*, where Aina, a Mallorcan teacher who lives in *Gràcia*, was convening a panel about independence and feminism, and Tania, a professor of politics, was a speaker on the panel. Tania, my only participant who spoke with me in English, had a great influence on me as she was a feminist intellectual with whom I could co-construct my analysis and theory on the movement as a whole with. Although I did not spend as much time with her, her insights were so succinct that I have used them to inform my studies. It was important for me however to keep a critical distance so as not to act as a propaganda piece for her views and activism. Tania also gave me the email address of five other women who were part of the group. One of whom was Àngels, who walked with me in the *El Born* neighbourhood, and Maria, who both Mercè and Tania had recommended that I speak with. However, she was reluctant the first two times I spoke with her, telling me that she did not have a good memory, and thought she wouldn't be helpful for my studies. Once we did meet though, she displayed such generosity and warmth with her knowledge; as my oldest participant, having been a member of parliament, working in a school and as an activist, she provided a rich insight into a lifetime of feminist thinking and activism as a *Catalanista*.

CO-CONSTRUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

i. Feminist Ethnography and Thick Description

Ethnography is not just a research tool, but an ethos, a way of looking which is both qualitative and exploratory. Its wide and varied methods for collecting data have accommodated my inability to speak fluent Spanish or Catalan, despite the fact nearly all my research was done in Spanish, with references to Catalan vocabulary, history, traditions and culture. In researching feminist activism, I have drawn on the work of several feminist ethnographers who “explore the positionality of the anthropologist as ethnographer”. (McDowell, Sharp 1999, 91) By positioning myself as a collaborator and an observer, as well as a student of my participants’ activism, I have been able to address questions of ethics and voice, as well as the production of knowledge. Through participant observation, while attending meetings, assemblies, rallies, protests and marches, I have used “thick description” (Geertz 1973) to make sense of the myriad perceptions, senses and meanings that I interpreted from my interactions and experiences.

ii. Narrative

During the first contact with my participants, after first emailing or briefly speaking with them about this project, I conducted several semi-structured and unstructured interviews. This helped to build rapport, as well as for me to feel comfortable speaking Spanish with them. Usually on our second interview, my questions became much more personal, and many times I received life-stories and anecdotes about their past and their origins, especially in regards to their development as activists. Catherine Kohler Riessman (2008) discusses ways in which anthropologists can effectively re-story data, from audio recordings of an interview or an informal conversation, photographs or written material. The knowledge that I participate in meaning-making and the creation of narratives in my observation and analysis interlinks with the notion that we cannot access unmediated material (Riessman 2008). Furthermore, the necessity of multiple translations from Spanish and Catalan to English, by myself and others, will add yet more interpretation to the transcribed and interpreted material. As Geertz argues, “Anthropological writings are themselves interpretations, and second and third ones to boot. [...] They are, thus, fictions, in the sense that they are “something made.”” (Geertz 1973, 15). Continuing on the subject of fiction, many manifestations of Catalan nationalism and feminism have been literary, such as the poetry of Maria Mercé Marçal and the writing of Montserrat Roig and Carmen Riera. As these names and others have been present in the words of all my participants, it has therefore informed the way I ask questions, for example, using quotes from poems or works of literature as prompts during interviews. The distinct authorial or narrative voice that can be found in much anthropological writing has allowed me to borrow from narrative methodology in my work as well. (Geertz 1988)



Photo by Joan Guerrero. Santa Coloma, 1970. Taken from the exhibition: *Barcelona. The metropolis in the age of photography, 1860-2004*, at Virreina gallery, 2016

iii. Feminist Psychogeography

To be able to understand the ways that private ideas of possible futures intersect with public space in Barcelona, and what meaning can be derived from how the personal traverses with the public, I have drawn on human geography, specifically feminist psychogeography. Psychogeography is a practice used across many disciplines that aims to understand how space and place has an impact on human behaviour. As such it is not only a theoretical approach, but also a method to collect data. Feminist psychogeography, according to Alexander Bridger (2013) is a conscious move away from classical masculinist heteronormative perceptions and creations of public space. Bridger defines feminist psychogeography as “a practice [which] involves walking through various places” (Bridger 2013, 288). He argues that “the gendered body is therefore like a ‘vehicle’ through which the person experiences and makes sense of their relation both to others and to place” (ibid). The *dérive*, an unplanned walk through an urban environment that Bridger discusses, was originally a way of understanding the effects of urbanisation on the inhabitants of a city by the Situationists in the 1950s.³ Historically, a Situationist approach to map making, walking through the city, and then understanding space, principally aimed to challenge “capitalist formation of space” (Bridger 2013 285) and to “begin to envision what non-capitalist environments would look like.” The future society that my participants imagine is one which is distinctly anti-capitalist (Bridger 2013, 289). This combination of political activism and intervention in this method (ibid) is something I found to be present in the way my participants experience and understand space, and thus was an effective way to collect data.

iv. Field Sites

Around the Olympics of 1992 a huge regeneration took place in the city of Barcelona. Importantly, the seafront was cleared and transformed into beaches and Antoni Gaudí’s architectural work was essentially rediscovered. Huge amounts of money was pumped into infrastructure, aesthetics and the tourism sector. Because of the regeneration and the levels of tourism, there have been fears that Barcelona will turn into a ‘Venice’, a kind of theme park for tourists, and largely uninhabitable for its residents. Having lived in fairly central parts of the city, I can attest to the alarming impact these levels can have on quality of life. However, Barcelona can also be seen as a laboratory in this sense; changes, improvements and experiments in city planning have opened up space for a retelling of history. The re-naming of streets and squares in the city has been a way for many feminist activists to reclaim space and make women’s history visible. Although my participants generally did not walk in any socially and economically neglected areas, I take inspiration from the *dérives* of the Situationists.

³ The Situationists were a group of avant-garde writers, artists and intellectuals who formed in Paris in 1957 to create ways of counteracting capitalist society and its effects on urban environments and their inhabitants. The most famous member was Guy Debord. However, the movement was not inclusive to the inputs of its female members, who were often side-lined or ignored.

According to Bridger, “participants would wander around these environments, taking interest in the forgotten and neglected areas of urban environments, and observing how people navigated urban spaces” (Bridger 2013, 286). To allow my participants to engage with their space in this manner, I based the location and routes on the places that are already meaningful to them. For example the *barrio* of *Esquerra de l'Eixample* for Mercè, as she has lived there her whole life and had continuously mentioned the area in our interviews. At the beginning of our walks, we would discuss a rough route to take in a familiar area. This allowed for natural wandering to take place, if it occurred. The routes seemed to reflect their everyday routes, for example, walking to work, back home from the station or between areas they feel a strong connection with. Using this method meant that my participants therefore could become observers as well as the observed, and my role as a researcher as well as a student becomes clear in the filmed footage of the walks. I believe it my intermediate level of Spanish, coupled with the fact that I am not native to the city, although familiar with it, allowed my participants to notice elements and dynamics of the city that perhaps they do not always notice. Whilst they walked I asked questions in a semi-structured and unstructured way, usually only giving prompts if they provided space for me to talk themselves, or if I didn’t understand something.

v. *Video Walks*

After the initial interviews with my participants, a certain level of rapport was built and negotiated between us. I subsequently asked them to show me their neighbourhood whilst I filmed. In the context of a community garden, Sarah Pink (Pink 2007) discusses walking with video. Pink describes how the walks she conducted, were “an exercise in experiencing and imagining”, culminating in a form of “place-making in itself” (Pink 2007, 243). According to Bridger, “the feminist critique of space should also involve a reflection of one’s role in research and what sort of knowledge can be produced” (Bridger 2013, 289). Using this method I had to become a participating researcher, learning from the experience of my participants. Walking together with my participants engendered a close connection to the ways they moved, reacted with their environment and what evoked memories, ideas or feelings. A focus, therefore, on a developmental process where the form and method coincided, allowed me to research the idea of independence as an actively imagined place, made physical through the activism of my participants in the space of Barcelona.

A sense of collaboration was also created through the use of this method. Although we would briefly discuss an area with relevance in their lives, for example their neighbourhood, and plan a route together, the video walks allowed for a conversational and exploratory route to emerge. This then created space for interventions and detours. As Pink writes, this “physical co-presence, emphasised by common movements [...] is also important in ethnography as we attempt to live and move as others do” (Pink 2007, 214). I moved with, and even found myself trying to imitate the movements of participants, not only to follow them with my camera, but to try and adjust to their way of seeing. With my older participants, it was especially interesting to be very attentive to their physical needs, and the sheer generosity of their efforts in cooperating in this project.



Screen shots of video walks with Mercè, Maria, Aina, Àngels and Tania

vi. Ethics and Reflections

During my fieldwork, my role as a student allowed for an excuse to delve deeper into often contentious or controversial opinions surrounding the independence debate. However, it wasn't just during my time as a student that I was made aware of my privileged position as a British person in Barcelona. There is a very distinct divide between 'expats' and 'immigrants' in this area of society, and 'expats' occupy a much more privileged position which is self-proclaiming and self-perpetuating. This has its effects in terms of work security, general reception and legal status, amongst other privileges in comparison to the discrimination that many 'immigrants' receive. Although I was and am very critical of making these often racist and classist distinctions, it is important for me to recognise that as a British person, I was able to get work and move through the city in a way I know someone deemed not in the category of 'expat' would not be. As well as this, the discussion of intersectionality is key in this project, and although all my participants are white and were born in Catalonia, they describe intersectionality in their activism. However, it is not to be ignored that many feel any kind of nationalism, intersectional or not, is exclusive to those with genetic ties in a given area and thus is racist and regressive. Continuing with reactions against exclusivity, it could be argued that a male voice is missing from this thesis. However, I start from the conceptualisation of Spanish society as inherently patriarchal, and thus I feel that the male voice is what my participants are fighting to have their voices heard over. However, it is also not to be discounted that there are many men who would align themselves with this feminist struggle for independence as allies.

Whilst analysing my data, I wrote memos and notes through open coding (Cresswell 2013) whilst analysing my data. Throughout these memos, I noted keywords and collected open codes which shed light on the issues and themes that arose from the words and actions of my participants in their interviews. I have organised each theme around subsequent thick descriptions (Geertz 1973) of the walks I did with my participants and the open coding and analysis for each area and person, to paint a wider picture of the overlapping issues, desires and ideas that presented themselves. However, it's important to note that all the translations, unless otherwise stated, are my own. Because I am not fluent in Spanish, or indeed Catalan, I went through extensive checks with friends and colleagues, to make sure that they were as accurate as possible. Yet, in translation, the many layers of meaning that are conveyed in conversation, in a gesture, or through the specific use of a word or phrase, can sometimes only be interpreted by the person present. I have tried to my best ability to convey the same sense of personality and word choice that I believe my participants would use in English. Thus, opening my thesis up to be translated back into Spanish with the original wording of my participants will be the next step in my aim for on-going consent. I hope that the layers of translation and interpretation in this thesis can add to the multi-vocality and co-construction of the project.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In *Mapping Women Making Politics*, Kofman et al argue for feminist perspectives to study the production of knowledge in political geography and debates on nationalism and territories (Kofman et al 2004). According to this work, studies of space often maintain a ‘rational’, ‘apolitical’ and ‘objective’ viewpoint overlooking the specific and local constructions of meaning (Kofman et al 2004, 4). This maintained approach, referred to as ‘masculinism’, “is associated with the illusion of transparent space and an all-seeing vision, often described as “the view from nowhere” (ibid). Before expanding further on this masculine view of space, I will first elaborate on the feminist theoretical avenues I have used to explore my research question, and to give meaning to my data.

i. Progressive Feminist Nationalism

The terms feminism and nationalism are almost always at odds with one another when discussing them in a European context (Kaplan in West 1997, 3). The role and representation of women in nationalist causes has often oscillated between hypersexualisation of their ephemeral mother status and breeders of citizens, to almost asexual saint like veneration. A very specific relationship was held in relation to the nation state with female citizens: “For women, the state largely functioned as the maker or defender of a “*Kinder, Kuchen, Kirche*” ideology. By the 1920s or 1930s, those views had gained the upper hand. A number of European countries then saw a rapid decline in public space and public self expression” (Kaplan in West 1997, 7). Considering that nation-ness and nationalism stem from the cultural roots of religion and a dynastic realm to legitimise and give rise to the concept, it is interesting to approach particularly nationalist endeavours as moving markedly away from, and defining themselves against, these two pre-requisites. Horizontalism and secularism are at the heart of the desires of these feminist *independentistas*.

In her chapter, Kaplan states that she can find only two examples in Western Europe of the combination of progressive feminism and nationalism: Italy and Finland. (Ibid) It could be argued that Spain should be added to this list. Because of Spain’s unique political trajectory in the 20th and 21st century, the narrative of progressive feminist nationalism in Europe as an oxymoron can be reconfigured. Any advances for progressive left-wing ideologies and policies for women were crushed by the Spanish Civil War and the ensuing fascist dictatorship. Yet still, in Spain, there existed feminist nationalisms that were ready to take up the progressive cause when political oppression legally ended. Alongside the liberal bourgeois movements in the 19th century in Catalonia as aforementioned, Basque nationalism, as well as Catalan nationalism, have both had, and still have,

significant progressive feminist histories, with activists who collaborate with women around the world, for example with Kurdish women and Scottish women.⁴

The meaning of community and citizenship are central to the concept of a nation. Benedict Anderson illustrates this “communion” as essentially *imagined* and non-existent, when he writes, “members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them or even hear of them” (Anderson 1983, 6). This is consistent with Catalan citizenship and dominant historical and contemporary interpretations of community in Catalonia. *Les Països Catalans*⁵, perceived as modern day Catalonia, Valencia, the Balearic Islands and parts of southern France, are often conjured in the idea of a nation, claiming affinity with historical boundaries in the spirit of historical injustice and inclusiveness. Yet, reactions to this are varied, and often uncomfortable or incredulous. Although few people can deny that there is a shared culture, language and historical ties. Thus, the concept of citizenship is integral to any society or nation, whether imagined or concrete. In *Mapping Women Making Politics, Feminist Perspectives on Political Geography*, the concepts of “belonging and inclusion” (Kofman et al 2004, 1) are used to understand how citizenship is experienced, or indeed not experienced, in societies and political movements. Kofman et al, argue that through disruptions in the field of political geography during the 1980s and 1990s (Kofman et al 2004, 3) much like the crisis in Anthropology at that time, a space for a feminist perspective could manifest itself through a focus on the *constitutive*:

“an on-going process in which societies are made – are constituted – in and through struggle. This is understood to be a complex and multivalent struggle, involving actions and behaviours in both the formal spaces of the state and spaces of home, neighbourhood, workplace, community, and media. The struggles have a strong normative element, as they revolve around the recognition of personhood and debates about what this means for the formation of just, democratic societies.(Brown and Staeheli 2003).” (Kofman et al 2004, 3)

The phrase an “on-going process” to describe the way we construct societies is particularly relevant to my project and findings. As well as this, through the mention of “struggle” being the means in which the ideal society (or nation) is achieved, a Marxist feminist perspective is evoked. According to Alan Sears, “the distinguishing feature of Marxist-feminist theories is the insistence that the dynamics of class, gender, race and sexuality are internally related but not reducible to one another.” (Sears 2005, 94)

Catalan nationalist feminism has developed within the framework of antagonism towards the existing society and state, thus the spaces mentioned above have been the spaces I have explored in my

⁴ *Gatamaula*, a feminist activist group make regular connections and activities in collaboration with and in support of Kurdish people.

⁵ The Catalan Countries

research. Looking broadly at feminist activist groups in Barcelona, it is possible to draw lines of connection along explicitly anti-capitalist rhetoric, as well as being anti-patriarchal. The group '*Vaga de Totes*' (in Catalan, Strike for All), for example, encourage women who undertake unpaid labour to strike, under the argument that this unpaid labour props up a capitalist economy which disproportionately harms women. At the beginning of my fieldwork, I was drawn to focus on political actors in the form of *diputadas* (female members of parliament), who could be seen as elites, staying within the confines of understanding politics solely through institutional frameworks. However, I soon realised that it was through local structures and forms of organisation, like the aforementioned group, that I could see the constitutive elements of the society. Tamar Mayer describes how "Nation cannot be described in gender neutral terms" (Kofman et al 2004,153), as necessarily one must inscribe power, gender and sexuality as organising concepts within the national structure. Mayer also states that "members of the nation share an ideology, which serves as an emotional glue. It is always connected to the process by which the nation was or is "othered" (Kofman et al 2004, 154). However, once the surface is scratched beneath the museums and the flags and the processions, Catalan feminism not only represents a fraction of the picture, but that emotion is actually in many ways detached from the flag and the territory, the borders and the myths. It can be seen as more rooted in individual stories and a call to change completely, yet using cultural symbols and activities to make visible this struggle.

ii. Intersectionality

*To fate I am faithful for three gifts:
Having been born a woman
Of low class and oppressed nation.
And the turbid azure of being three times a rebel.
-Divisa, Maria Mercè Marçal*

In 1976, the *Primera Jornada Catalana de la Dona* (First Conference of Catalan Women) was held in *La Universitat de Barcelona*. Thousands of women gathered to debate, discuss and divulge the necessity for a Catalan women's movement. This year on March 7th, the 40th anniversary, was held in the *Paranimf* (auditorium), the same room where it was held four decades ago. As I walked over to the event, I saw a purple scarf, a badge, a t-shirt in the same colour. I'd become accustomed now at these feminist meetings to seeing how people wear this colour to signify they are part of the movement. I asked myself, is this someone who is fighting and dreaming, actively imagining and creating the foundations of their country? The *Paranimf* is inside the Gothic building of the university in Plaça Universitat; a grand, high hall with neo-Romanesque pillars, red velvet seating and high arched windows, entered through huge, carved wooden doors. I sit at the back of the room during this event, and after taking out my camera and notebook, I notice a giant pearlescent vulva sculpture on the stage, the clitoris is a pearl. The silvery opal labia are surrounded by waves, blue with white crests; it seemed like a shrine. A series of talks, performances, singing and chanting ensues over the next two hours; a performance about the female body and birth, about sexuality, trans-identities, songs with a rousing chorus of '*Disobedencia!*', a photo set of influential women from around the world (a huge round of applause for Virginia Woolf), a performance by refugee women, all connected through the use of Catalan and the subject- independence for Catalonia.

In 1982, a group of poets, writers and activists wrote an article for the *Jornades: 'Dona i Nació: Feminisme i Nacionalisme'* (Woman and Nation: Feminism and Nationalism). It outlines the "no-man's land" (Olivares et al. 1982) within which the debate of feminism and nationalism occupied at the time of the post-Franco transition to democracy, in the context of a new Spanish constitution being written. One of the signatures on the article in 1982 was of the militant communist, poet, feminist, lesbian activist Maria Mercé Marçal (Ibid). Her poem *Divisa* ('Motto') is indeed a motto which was repeated to me across all the interaction I had with Catalan feminists; that their struggle was threefold: "*Having been born a woman/ Of low class and oppressed nation.*" During an interview before the *Jornades*, Mercè explained to me how important this maxim is for their group and the Catalan feminist movement as a whole:

"It's not a transversality, it's an intersectionality. Intersectionality is very distinct and therefore, this is what Maria Mercé said, she said it in the 80s and still now the 'Jornades Catalanes de la Dona' in 2016 returns to and kicks off with this. We return to kick off with this,

because of the three motives, because of the three motives, or because we are anti-patriarchal, we are anti-capitalist, you understand? We are Catalanistas. We reclaim these roots, the identities where you can place them, where you can put them, no? Like, always the focus is that the 'Catalanismo' from the feminist movement is always to welcome, it's always to welcome, it's always to welcome, it's never been to marginalise anybody, is it simply to welcome. I welcome you in my way of being and I recognise your way of being and you welcome my way of being. From my language, you welcome my language. This is the approach, no?" (1)

The vivid images that are conjured from this poem can be found now, forty years later, in the same city where it was written: Barcelona. It makes visible the internal experiences of these women and digs up the invisible structures of oppression in society. It struck me immediately as not only a strikingly beautiful poem, but one which clearly calls its readers to identify and to take action.

Not only does the 1982 article seek to define the space of the creation of a separate state, it also discusses the intersectionality of oppressions that are inextricably linked with the oppression of women: "Feminism should be a tool for global release, breaking the chain of interrelated oppressions on which society is based" (Olivares et al. 1982, 99). Arguably long before many other feminist movements in Europe or North America, Catalan feminists understood that to tackle the issues they faced everyday because of gender discrimination, they must also address those of cultural, political, racial, class, sexuality and religious discrimination (Rodó-de-Zárate 2016, 157). In contrast to other nationalist thought based on purity of lineage and nostalgia, current feminist nationalism in Catalonia is not concerned with race (ibid). Its intersectionality tries to ensure that the voices of migrant women in Catalonia have the loudest voice surrounding this topic. On the 8th of March, International Woman's Day, many of the chants and banners I saw and took part in tackled varied, yet interlocking issues, surrounding religious values imposed on women's bodies, gender violence, unpaid labour and cuts to service that disproportionately affect women.

iii. *Space and Place*

a. *The Body and Space*

By locating the body within a social context, it is also placed as a social agent in meaning making. Allen Feldman in his book *Formations of Violence: The Narrative of the Body and Political Terror in Northern Ireland*, places the formation of the body directly as a political subject in specific spaces from his readings of Hegel, Nietzsche and Foucault (Feldman 1991). In doing so, this understanding of space can only be formed with the role of the body included. Furthermore, gender must be taken into account in the formation of bodies in space, specifically through the writing of Judith Butler, *Bodies that Matter*, where she discusses the idea of the body in terms of her earlier work on gender performativity. She raises the question about the politicised gender identity in the body and its use towards a political goal (Butler 1993), and then the potential consequences of “disidentification” (Ibid) surrounding exactly which bodies matter in political, public and private discourse. Michel Foucault’s discussion of ‘docile bodies’ (Foucault 1975) has been extremely useful in gaging a further understanding of post-structuralist feminist critique, especially when thinking about the female body as the primary target of social control in a patriarchal Spanish society and how this plays out in the experience of my participants.

b. *Plurality*

In her paper ‘A Global Sense of Place’ Doreen Massey discusses how because of internationalization of capitalism in our modern times, there is contemporary uncertainty in what we mean by place. She explains that this “time-space compression” (Massey 1991)⁶ has often given rise to defensive and reactionary nationalism and “sanitized heritages.” Yet, as Massey asks, “Is it not possible for a sense of place to be progressive; not self closing and defensive, but outward-looking?” A feminist perspective on the opportunities that the reinvention and recreation of the nation of Catalonia seem to present a chance to understand my participants’ sense of place to be that of a progressive nationalism. Furthermore, it is important to work against the conceptualising of space as static or non-dynamic. She discusses ‘locality studies’ (Massey 1994, 5) as a reaction against place and space being conceptualised as static or bounded in the academic field of geography. Through their memories, everyday experiences and the way they make meaning from their neighbourhoods and their city, I hope to understand my participants’ ideas through the local and the specific, adhering to the notion that this is not static or inflexible, and can shed light on the processes around their experiences, in wider contexts.

⁶ “Time-space compression refers to movement and communication across space, to the geographical stretching out of social relations, and to our experience of all this. [...] It is capitalism and its developments which are argued to determine our understanding and our experience of space.” (Massey 1991)



An all female group of *Castellers*, who build human towers, at the *Jornades Catalanes de la Dona*, June 2016

c. *Imagined Places: Feminist Utopia*

At the end of the road for feminist science is a vision of utopia- where objectivity will be so completely revised that situated knowledges will be tough enough to resist the coups of dictatorial thought. Ruth Behar, 1996

Many writings on the concept of utopia start with its double meaning: ‘Eu-topos’, meaning a ‘happy place’ or a ‘good place’, or ‘Ou-topos’, meaning ‘no place’ or ‘nonplace’ (Sharp McDowell 285, 1999). Continuing with the concept of sense of place as ‘nonplace’, Benedict Anderson’s *Imagined Communities*, states that nationalism “is not the awakening of nations to self consciousness. It invents nations where they do not exist” (Anderson 1983, 4). According to Anderson, invention should be assimilated to “imagining” and “creating.” These ideas held in parallel can shed a progressive and feminist light onto the long sullied and unsuccessful history of utopian thinking and societies.⁷ If we approach the concept of nation as one which is inherently imagined and thus creative, the concept of a utopia can be seen as “an approach toward” (Sharp, McDowell 286, 1999).

Anderson notes that many utopias have also been depicted as “criticisms of contemporary societies.” (Anderson 1983, 69) It is possible to see feminist desires for independence in Catalonia as a criticism of contemporary Spain. Contemporary Spanish society was indeed conceptualised as patriarchal, capitalist and rooted in the traditions of Catholicism by my participants. Thus, I feel it is important to understand their idea of utopia as one which is also gendered. Although utopias have been most visibly “imagined by men” (Wilson 2001, 9), feminist utopias have been explored in the realms of literature for centuries, and in human geography there is a tradition “to imagine alternatives and utopian societies, cities and nations from a feminist perspective. For example, Elizabeth Wilson sees the “city as an emancipatory site for transgression.” (ibid) In the act of imagining a new nation, one “typically gives a central role to *desire*” (Sharp and McDowell 1999, 286) dreaming, desiring and imagining take centre stage in the goals of feminist independence for my participants. I would like to take a feminist approach to the understanding to open up paths, which are “multi-directional, open-ended, transgressive and not afraid of ambiguity or flux” (Sharp and McDowell 1999, 286). A masculinist approach to utopia and nationalism can also be counteracted through seeing the imagining of new nations and utopias from a feminist perspective as “a movement beyond set limits into the realms of the non-yet-set” (Bammer 1991, 7).

⁷ There have been historical tendencies of dystopia arising from utopian visions and ideas, often racist patriarchal and classist. (Benjamin, Sanders and Zorach 2002)

ANALYSIS

i. Crossing the Boundaries of Citizenship

I could see on every walk I went on with my participants that their connections to their *barrio* as citizens was always evolving. I feel this is illustrated through community organising and experiences that Mercè shared with me. Mercè's *barrio* is *Esquerra de l'Eixample*, part of the historic extension of the city of Barcelona by Ildefons Cerdà in the 19th Century, the left side of which was (and still is) more working class than its right side, *Dreta de l'Eixample*. When we left *El Mercat del Ninot*, Mercè told me: "*So for me, Carrer Villaroel, It's my street.*" (1) We were entering into her locality, into the webs of meanings, memories and stories that this street conjured for her. She spoke about the formation of the Neighbourhood Association, showing localised organising and her mother's involvement at its beginning:

"It is very dear to me, because my mother was one of the founders. My mother Rosa Vidal, who was in an era where there wasn't a woman [present in organisations like this], she had always been in a shop in the face of the community. [...] And she knew all the neighbours in the barrio and the Association was formed when my mother was able to get all the neighbours to become part of the Association. [...] And my mother, she worked very hard for women in the Women's Committee in Esquerra de l'Eixample and was very much worried about problems, also about abortions for older women. My mother was also looking for ways for single women to have a way out."
(2)

This is an example of a woman using her sense of community and citizenship, and her understanding of the intricate networks of women and their experiences, to make changes in a political way. Kofman et al (2004) define a feminist perspective on citizenship as constitutive and on-going, based in struggle across all 'private' and 'public' spaces. This break from representing women through the binary of 'private' or 'public' is also present in Donna Haraway's work, 'The Cyborg Manifesto': "If it was ever possible ideologically to characterize women's lives by the distinction of public and private domains, it is now a totally misleading ideology [...] I prefer a network ideological image, suggesting the profusion of spaces and identities and the permeabilities of boundaries in the personal body and the body politic" (Haraway 2001, 307). In her perception of her mother's role in the community, Mercè parts from 'private' representation and symbolised her basis for a sense of citizenship. The 'networks' that Mercè made visible to me on our walk and in our interviews, illuminated significance running from the deeply personal to the ideological and political, otherwise inanimate to myself, having only caught a glimpse of these complex and rich communities in the *barrios* of Barcelona as a resident.



Fig. Mercè on the balcony of her mother's flat



Fig. Mercè showing the book she made, containing the stories her mother had collected.

Catalan flags can be a clear signifier of how popular independence sympathy is in an area of the city. Her mother was a *Catalanista* and in this account, we can see the layered oppressions her mother faced; where she addresses the ‘disappearing’ and silencing of a culture. By actively celebrating her Catalan culture, something which was banned and potentially very dangerous to do until Franco’s death in 1975, she made visible a part of her identity which was being silenced. Mercè cited these examples to show how this influenced her own ideas, and thus her own desire for her country to be independent.

“My mother, she always kept her Republican spirit and her Catalan spirit - always, always, always. She spoke Catalan to celebrate San Jorge, the 11th of September and others... because ever since she was young she had been educated in this way.” (3)

When we walked past the flat where her mother had spent her last few years, on *Avinguda de Roma*, Mercè pointed out to me that the flag on her mother’s balcony had been blown in by the wind. Completely unexpectedly, she then asked if I’d like to go and see her mother’s flat. It was a very interesting cross over into a private space, illustrating for me “ the permeabilities of boundaries in the personal body and the body politic” (ibid). Perhaps because I found it difficult then to move my language into this type of expression, having been so generously given an insight into this space, I found it difficult as a researcher to express my gratitude and almost distanced myself. However, it was such a display of her mother’s, and to me also her own, nationalism, which crossed over the boundaries of private space and private symbolism into their life-long imagining of a Catalan republic, and fighting for it in the way they interacted with their surroundings.

Not only did Rosa Vidal have the Catalan flag proudly displayed in memorabilia in her apartment, Mercè’s mother also had written a book, collecting the stories of people through the neighbourhood, placing the importance of these folkloric and life histories at an intersection with her nationalism. Mercè took the stories her mother had collected, and for her 80th birthday, had turned it into a book, called *Xamfrà*, in Catalan meaning the ‘corner’. She had drawn a picture of her mother’s tree and the fountain where she used to play as a child, recognising and perpetuating the legacy of these deeply symbolic places. Mercè referred to this book after she had shown me as “just the memories of my mother”, yet they seemed to me to be a materialisation of the multi-vocality and the fluid networks of citizenship which personified this neighbourhood for her and her mother, Rosa. The book represented to me a bridge between the intimate and intricate webs of human life in the *barrio* and the politics of a sense of “nation-ness” (Anderson, 1983) that their experience in this area contains.

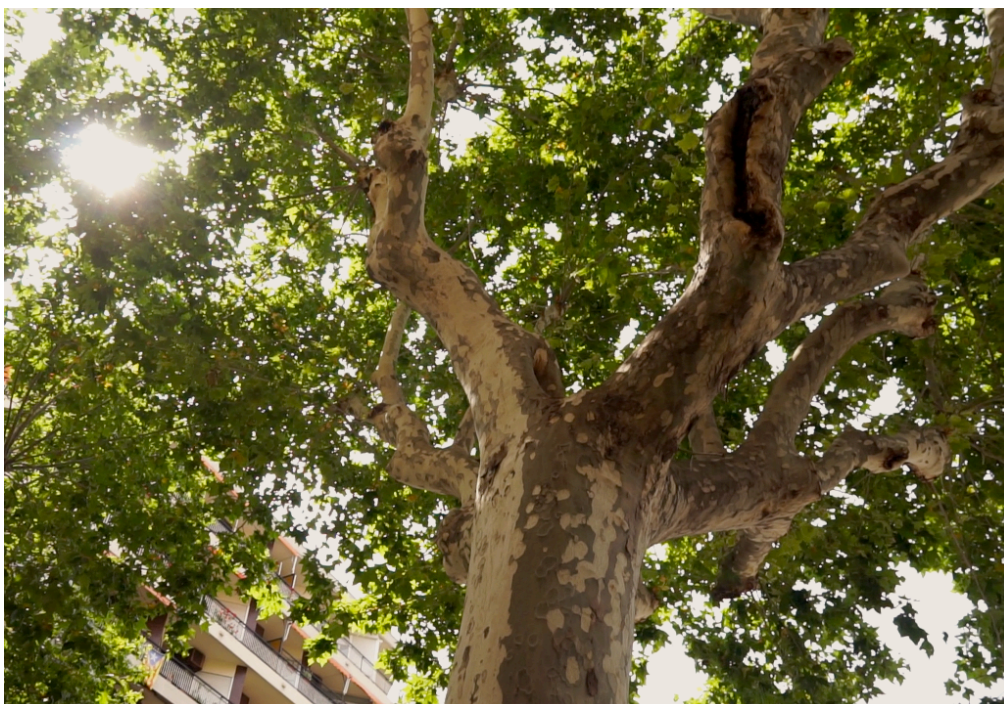
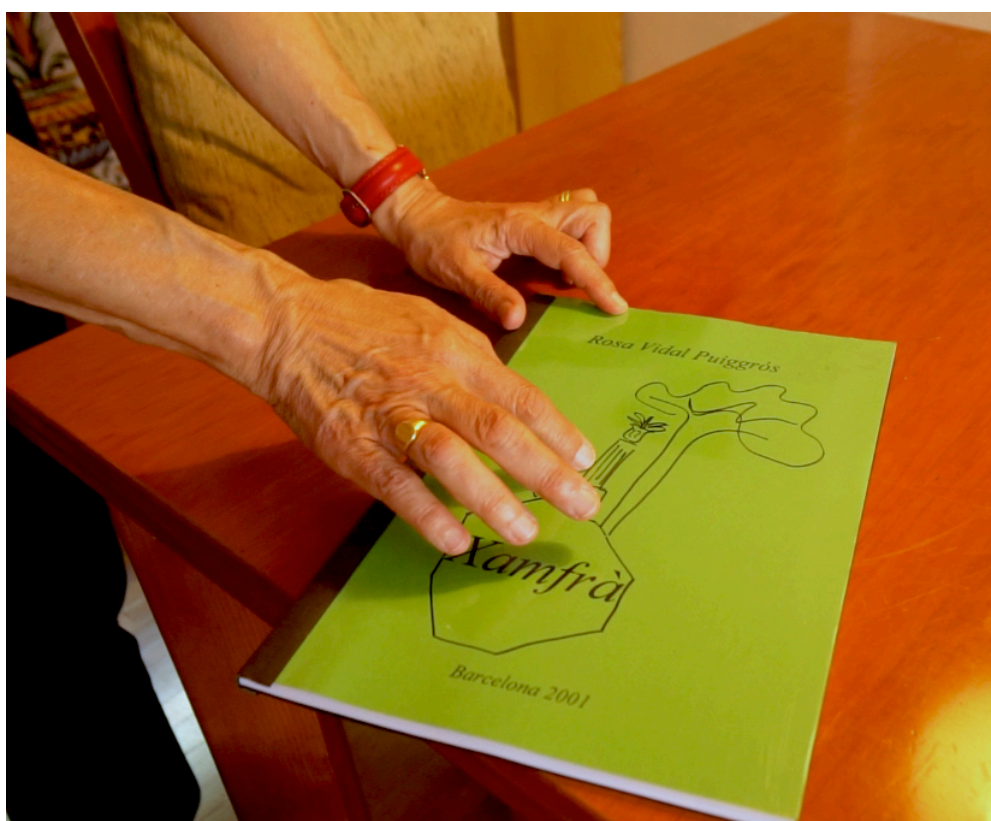


Fig. The tree outside the shop that Mercè's mother used to own



Fi. The front cover of *Xamfrà*, depicting the tree and the fountain

The walk with Mercè was not just a matter of walking and talking about what we saw and what she remembered; her connection and knowledge of the area, although textbook quick and historian deep, shows a feminist approach to the production of knowledge. She wove multi-stranded ropes of connections and webs through the streets we walked on, jumping from a quip on the form or architectural style of a building and, drawing my eye towards it, enriching it with a critical gaze, to the tree where she would play with her friends and sister, signifying, not only an idea of sanctity and emotional value, but a zone of protection her mother knew that the children would be safe in the surroundings of that tree.

“Here where [...] the Chinese bazaar is, it used to be Carmeta’s bakery, Carmè, small [as a nickname], Carmeta. And here too, all the women would meet here, and I used to like coming here a lot, because as I would come from the store here in front, I would queue- they would say ‘hey, hey, this girl! Give her the bread first! you know?’” [...]

“So in this part of the street, I played a lot, I really played a lot. Here in this shop, there was a ‘Alpargateria’, espadrilles are shoes made of ropes in a ‘Alpargateria’ you know? And there was where the grandmother had the shop, and she had three granddaughters who would play with me. You know, here, and there was a small grocery store.” [...]

“And my mother, for my mother, this tree, this tree, especially this, for my mother was a sacred tree. Because the tree was her tree. Always, always. We, of course, we would play here, we played jump rope, jump rope, everything in this area, everything in this part right here. It is a very old tree. You can already see it is very very old.” (4)

Setha M. Low discusses how feminist knowledge of place can be created through exploring how we perceive and understand “the implications of knowledge as embodied, engendered and embedded in place” (Low 2007, 7). Mercè’s description highlighted that although the street has changed and that she can see that it will continue to change, the places are alive with emotion, memory and the impacts it has on her creation of meaning in the surrounding context of the city. As Donna Haraway has written, “Location is about vulnerability; location resists the politics of closure, finality” (Haraway 1996, 196). By understanding the way in which Mercè perceives, experiences and makes meaning from the physical, emotional and cerebral landscape of her neighbourhood, a different kind of knowledge of nationalism and citizenship is produced. One which is fluid, subjective and open to the experiences of others.

ii. *The Invisible and the Visible*

The invisibility of women in the ‘public’ sphere, (that of politics the work place, in the design and use of public facilities etc.) necessitates that they must be relegated to the ‘private’ sphere, or the domestic sphere, thus gendering the concept and use of space (Klein 1995, 97). Since second-wave feminism in the Anglo-centric context stated that the ‘Private is Political’, there have been widespread assertions by feminists to move women out of the closed, invisible spaces of the home and private spaces, into the visible platforms of work, politics and public space. Setha M Low et al, define gendered space “to include particular locales that cultures invest with gendered meanings (e.g. the home as female, the workplace/battlefield as male), sites in which sex-differentiated practices occur [...] or settings that are strategically used to inform identity and produce and reproduce asymmetrical gender relations of power and authority” (Low 2007, 7). Perhaps precisely because spaces were so gendered during the Franco regime in Barcelona, the absence of a male figure in Mercè’s life gave particular authority to the roles the women in her life held.

“So, I didn’t have a father figure, I didn’t have one. I don’t have a father figure. I have the figure of my grandmother and my mother, who were always present- and my father was absent.” (1)

She shows how through the actions of her mother, her state education was countered through the education she gained at home, and she was shown things against the status quo at the time.

With this definition a narrative of disappearing and making women and minorities invisible in public spaces can be traced through historical injustices and ideas surrounding the presence of Francoism and the Catholic church in Catalonia. Mercè describes here how the beginning of her life and her childhood represent a time of deep oppression of women:

“I was born in the year 1947... in post-war Spain - it was very, very hard because the republic thought that if they won the allies would get rid of Franco. And that wasn’t how it was. The second world war ended and neither the Spanish nor the Catalans got rid of Franco and the Catalans didn’t get rid of Franco’s fascism. So, when I was born everything was very dark, everything was grey. There were rations ...uh... rationing, you could only buy oil and bread, with some tickets, with some stamps. Understand? Okay. The people were scared. It was a fearful time. The women were disappeared into their homes. Because of fascism, like German fascism, you had to- like I told you before, adhere to the three Ks - Kirche, Kuchen and Kinder.” [Kitchen, Church and Children.] (2)

The relationship between the state and the oppression of women seem to be clearly paralleled for Mercè in this telling of her history. Indeed as Kaplan states, this tripartite of pillars that women had to uphold in society was widespread, as aforementioned in my Introduction chapter: “For women, the state largely functioned as the maker or defender of a “Kinder, Kuchen, Kirche” ideology. By the 1920s or 1930s, those views had gained the upper hand. A number of European countries then saw a

rapid decline in public space and public self-expression. This was a consequence of dictatorial regimes” (Kaplan 1999, 7) If the state could be the “maker” of these ideologies, then perhaps they can also be the ‘un-makers’, and by mentioning this multiple times to me⁸, a strong basis for the desire to take women out of strictly gendered spheres became evident in my understanding of how Mercè perceived the space around her alongside her desire for Catalan independence.

In feminist theory however, there have been widespread efforts to reconfigure what this dichotomy of ‘public’ and ‘private’ space can mean, and has often tried to deconstruct it completely (Wischermann 2004, 185). Judith Butler, in *Gender Trouble*, sought to redefine gender as non-binary (Butler 1990), and Donna Haraway, in her work *A Cyborg Manifesto*, writes an “ironic dream” of the “socialist feminism in the late twentieth century” (Haraway 1983). Haraway’s essay feels particularly fitting when discussing possible future societies, and how feminists can imagine them. Her “cyborg is a creature in a post-gender world; [...] The cyborg is resolutely committed to partiality, irony, intimacy, and perversity. It is oppositional, utopian, and completely without innocence. No longer structured by the polarity of public and private, the cyborg defines a technological polis based partly on a revolution of social relations in the *oikos*, the household” (Haraway 2001, 293). Haraway’s description of a cyborg illustrates how, if the dichotomy is broken, we can also reconfigure the significance of the activity within the traditional ‘private’ sphere, and render these actions significant and powerful. As Mercè witnessed the physical ‘disappearing’ of women to the ‘private’ sphere, and thus the disabling of women and minorities in an actively creative role in public space, her account of the activism of her mother and grandmother are particularly poignant, as she shows how important and influential they were for her own activism.

“My mother and my grandmother always worked in a little shop, a farm dairy shop, a farm shop that sold milk - milk, cheese, butter, eggs, you know? A farm shop of these things. In this type of shop, public farm shops were always only for women. Men didn’t come to buy things, only women came. So, my mother changed it into a psychological space, of, of, of, confessions for all the women that came to the shop and explained their stories.”

[...]

“The fact, the fact was that the environment was so, so, so feminine, or so, so, so of women and we would see everything [...] [They would tell her] this had happened, that had happened, this husband had done this, or said this, this person had no money etc etc... this person has lost this, you know? All of that, ok, it seemed... well, it builds up to create an awareness of the maltreatment of women, and the discrimination of women.” (3)

Although I have applied Haraway’s theory of the “oikos” here, Spain has deep roots in anarchist movements,⁹ and during the Second Republic of 1931-1936, women were active agents in Barcelona

⁸ Mercè mentioned this concept at least once every time we spoke in depth about her history and the history of Spain.

⁹ *Mujeres Libres* (Free Women) was founded around 1937 after the Second Republic, to address the specific needs women faced in the anarchist struggle.. They were anarcho-feminists militants who felt that although they could participate in the

politicising other women through the *ateneus*¹⁰ (Hadfield 2001). Rachel Hadfield notes that “speculation has centred upon the various reasons for the lack of female participation in the trade unions. This absence may be contrasted with female agency in the local community, the *barri*, and at home” (Hadfield 2001, 1). There is such a strong narrative of women organising and protesting in the city outside of overwhelmingly male establishments, that it is hard not to associate the actions of Mercè’s mother with those of her predecessors and contemporaries. Even when faced with the desperate need, precarity, violent oppression they were faced with during the Civil War and the ensuing dictatorship, there have always been efforts to disrupt the social reproduction of wealth and power. As Hadley states: “Catalan working-class women were able to open a door to the Anarchist movement through their experience within the *ateneus*; an experience which provided a significant contrast to that within the patriarchal CNT”¹¹ (Hadley 2001, 4). Mercè’s involvement with the everyday lives and problems of women in her neighbourhood gave rise to the perspective that women were, and are, at a fundamental disadvantage in society. Her mother and grandmother, as working class women crossed the boundaries presented in the public/private dichotomy. Actively visible to their community, against Francoist ideals of gender and space, they represent rebellion in their use of space. Resistance was how, under Franco, the *Kuchen*, *Kirche*, and *Kinder* were brought into the space of the shop, making visible and loud the struggles of these women.

As we walked through Mercè’s *barrio* of *Esquerra de l’Eixample*, we entered into the gay district of Barcelona, *Gaixample*. Moving through this set of blocks, roughly six across by three in between *Carrer Comte d’Urgell* and *Carrer de Balmes*, we talked about the solidarity that could be felt in this area after the homophobic murders at a nightclub in Orlando, Florida the week before. This sense of community was then promptly reconfigured by Mercè’s account of the invisibility of lesbian identity that she feels when she walks in this area, even though it is right on the doorstep of where she grew up and still lives. She physically experiences the invisibility of her identity in this area, as well as being very clearly aware that this is not only a gendered issue, but one which heavily involves the role of capital:

"When you call it 'Gaixample', really you are talking about masculine gay men. I mean, it is the dominance; the invisibility of lesbians is invisibility. That in fact, when speaking of 'Gaixample', we are talking about a gay Eixample, but something masculine. And also, when we talk about the 'Gaixample' [a van drives past loudly and she repeats] we're talking about Pink Capitalism- of gay people, but gay people with money. Right! We are not talking about working class gay people, we are talking about gay people with money- who can pay for services, who can afford the clubs, who can afford massages, people who can pay for all this." (4)

struggle, they still came second to men. (Acklesberg, 2005) They have a huge influence still in Spanish and Catalan feminism and anarchism.

¹⁰ *Ateneus* are self-organised associations centred around art, culture, politics and more and can be found in all neighbourhoods.

¹¹ Anarchist trade-union - Confederación Nacional de Trabajo

The area of *Gaixample* should be an area which represents a safe inclusive environment for LGBTQI people, yet for Mercè who is an anti-capitalist activist in her desires for a future Catalan republic, it seems to represent the very structures LGBTQI¹² people are so often excluded from. In Alan Sears 'Queer Anti-Capitalism: What's Left of Lesbian and Gay Liberation?', he states that if queer culture is depoliticised, "many queers are left out in the cold" (Sears 2005, 93). He continues to note, in the same vein that Mercè sees in her surroundings of *Gaixample*, that "people with money (more often men than women) have privileged access to the commercialized spaces and consumer lifestyles that define visible queer "communities". (ibid) Sears draws on "post -structuralism and the works of Michel Foucault" to illuminate "the contradictory ways that lesbian and gay politics have been caught up within the dominant relations, showing how gains in cultural visibility or civil rights can situate queers more deeply inside systems of power" (Sears 2005, 94). Thus, lesbian culture is often made invisible in the dominant narrative of capital and consumerism in this space.

Once queer or marginalised identities gain visibility, they can arguably be seen to fit into existing structures of power and inequality. For example, the dominance of gay male erotic images to celebrate LGBTQI culture as a whole, but also to *sell* gay culture, can often render lesbian culture and presence as invisible, or perhaps at best visibly represented as encompassed in gay male imagery. As we walked past the office for Pride, a month long celebration in Barcelona which was about to start, she showed me a poster advertising an event, which although it included the words 'gay and lesbian', showed an overtly masculine hypersexualised image of two men at the beach. I understood this as not a criticism of this culture, but of the dominance of this kind of masculine homoerotic representation as the dominant form associated with LGBTQI events and culture. I then asked whether she felt that as a whole Catalonia is a good place to live, in terms of LGBTQI rights:

"Yes, yes, Catalunya is a very welcoming 'pueblo', and we have a law against LGTB-phobia. It is very important because it exists virtually nowhere else, which can denounce and persecute hate crime and homophobia. And so, Catalonia is a 'leader', on the front line, you know?" (5)

The visualisation of Catalonia as on the front line of the fight against homophobia, provides an insight into what Mercè sees as a real opportunity for progress and change within a separate state; with this legal framework already in place, a space can be created where visibility is not encumbered by profit margins and a dominant culture that favours 'Pink Capitalism' over safe and inclusive spaces, then the possibility of a feminist Catalan republic can be imagined and worked towards. Within the existing structures, fuel for the imagination and future societies can be stoked into possible realities.

¹² Mercè uses the acronym 'LGBT'[Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual], and I used this with her when I spoke with her in Spanish. However, I use the acronym LGBTQI in my analysis: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual, Queer and Intersex people. I make the assumption that she would also use this if it were more widely used in the Spanish language.

We moved fluidly from gay district to church, to anarchist centre, to her mother's house and where she used to play with her friends as a child. This eclectic mash of ideas, beliefs and lifestyles doesn't seem to phase her, to go from homoerotica to church in one sentence. It is interesting and symbolic to witness these transitions from one street to the next. Although she says her identity is invisible in one area, and she is a non-believer in the other, her knowledge and the importance she places on the areas very much show her attachment to it. The possibilities of improvements, cohabitation, of living history and telling the stories in the way we move and consume through our streets shows to me the possibilities she sees in an independent Catalonia.

One of my interviews with Mercè took place at *Ca La Dona*. Having heard this building mentioned from the moment I expressed an interest in this topic the year before, I weaved through the crowded tourist playground of the *El Gotico* between *Las Ramblas* and *Via Laietana*, to find the quiet street of *Carrer Ripoll*. It is somewhat unassuming for such a symbolic institution, nestled around the giant 13th Century cathedral square and the incessant traffic of the *Via*. I found Mercè busily working in the temporary archives and as was custom with her, she immediately took me on a tour of the building, telling me the history, pointing out the Roman arches and the broken tiles, telling me about the renovations that are taking place. Finally, she showed me the archives: behind big thick, opaque purple curtains she pushes back rows of metal archival containers, which you could wheel back and forth to reveal books, posters, propaganda, articles, magazines and paraphernalia connected with women and the struggle for women's rights and social justice. She tells me that women have been creating space and have been forging a place for themselves in the city, visible and public since the transition from the dictatorship to democracy:

"And so, we started to ask for 'a room of one's own', like Virginia Woolf, understand?" (6)

Having a space to organise, debate, record and participate the history and struggle for women's rights is central to the visibility of the issues and people who are affected by power structures in the city, the region and the country. The archive acts as a way in which women can record and account for history that they have been erased from. Documenting and organising marginalised voices, stories, facts and productions allows agency in the way their history is told and presented to society. Mercè works with other members of her group and other volunteers to organise the archive, dealing with donations and digitizing a catalogue to make it accessible to anyone who wishes to access it.

As well as self representation and autonomy over the telling of women's history in a Catalan context to tackle the erasure of marginalised identities, the presence of women's history in the streets of Barcelona can be seen as a way to make the invisible visible in public spaces. In the middle of my research, I moved to the *barrio* of *Esquerra de l'Eixample*, where Mercè lives. After reading and hearing about the poet Maria Mercè Marçal so much, it was wonderful to find a small inner courtyard

dedicated to her in the block next to my new apartment. Mercè also told me that there had been people in her *asociacion de veïns* who had opposed the idea, telling of the struggle that these seemingly small gestures conjure in society. When we walked to the apartment of Mercè's mother, she showed me the small garden dedicated to another woman who is very important to the political history of Catalonia, Enriqueta Gallinard.

"Street names, names of places, women's names; here they have put the name of Enriqueta Gallinard, who was a politician, from the Esquerra Republicana party (Republican Left), from the time of the republic, they have made this small little garden. They do this or women's names, but not in large streets, only in small places." (7)

Even though it was significant for Mercè to show me this street sign, she shows evident dissatisfaction with the process; they are visible, but in small, almost tokenistic ways. Many groups around the world dedicate themselves to increasing the presence and stories of women through statues, street names and plaques to commemorate the role women play in society, as well as to address the blatant inequality in this area. In Barcelona, this is decided by the *nomenclator* of the city council.

Towards the end of our walk through *Esquerra de l'Eixample*, Mercè cut off a description of the group's anti-military stance, with a laugh:

"Now you'll see a very funny thing [laughs], which is a tiny, tiny garden [pitch of her voice raises to show how small she thinks it is], on the inside of one of the blocks, an island, called Sappho. Sappho! [I make noises to suggest I know who Sappho is][...] Let's see if we can get in. I don't know how to enter, but it's over here." (8)

We both continued laughing after she said this, I think because of the irony that the garden of Sappho is in such a strange part of the city. It's behind a *Mercadona* supermarket on *Avinguda Roma*, a huge, wide road that leads up to *Plaça de Sants*, where the city's main train station is located. It is in no way remarkable, certainly not for its beauty, perhaps only for its wide expanse of road, the strange set of modern apartment blocks and the clear vista it provides for the squat square-ish building of the station. She told me it was one of the first places to be renamed, but she couldn't remember when or why there, signifying to me that she had never been there before. After we sat down in the park for a while, I noticed that the sign, which should have said *Jardin de Sappho*, instead had been graffitied over to say *Jardin de Belen*. We both continued to laugh in the same ironic way, until Mercè said:

"This is, [makes an incredulous and disgusted noise], this is a homophobic aggression. This... This... well it's clear. And it's not like they had added anything [obviously connected to lesbians to the sign in the first place], that's why they put 'Lesbos, Greek poet', you know? They didn't put, um, 'lesbian icon', or something. They didn't even put that!" (9)

This aggression is felt very close by Mercè, and the aggression towards the space by the vandalism to the name and the ideas that it represents is at odds with the efforts being made by citizens and in the city hall.



Fig. The statue in *Plaça Diamant, Gràcia*

A favourite *plaça* of mine in the *barrio* of *Gràcia*, is *Plaça del Diamant*, which is named after a book by Mercè Rodoreda, an account of a young woman around the time of the Civil War in Barcelona, closely relating the protagonist Colmeta's inner life amongst the streets of *Gràcia*. I came late to the book, after first seeing the statue that sits in the square. It is haunting and powerful, but I was drawn to it immediately, especially as it is not the only statue of a woman in the area, making visible the bodies of women in public spaces. The statue is of a woman, naked from the waist up screaming with her arms wide and high, breaking through a flat expanse of metal. There are doves flying upwards around her legs. To the side is a crudely carved figure of a man fully dressed in a cap and a military suit, with what look like knives or daggers stuck into his chest. It was an arresting statue without the information, but once I had read the book, the statue became even more of a symbol of how women, and the experiences of women are becoming more visible in the symbolic spaces and streets of the city. As well as speaking to me about the invisibility of women in the media and on the TV, Aina also spoke to me about sexist images of women in advertising in public spaces. Perceptions of fear are particularly relevant when "determining the gendered experience of public space" (Rodó-de-Zárate 2016, 414). Specifically with the example of the media representation of women, it is possible to see how both work very well together, i.e. 'advertising as white men speaking to other white men', if traced back to base creator/audience. In her study of young lesbians in Catalonia, Rodó-de-Zárate posits "that being visible in an adult, masculine and heterosexual space makes [...] women subject to the visual domain of the masculine gaze, which is internalised and acts as a panoptic that disciplines young women, whether they see it or not" (ibid). Parts of the feminist struggle I have seen in the city, and from my participants, tries to tackle media representation, as they see it as inherently linked to the oppression of women and minorities in public spaces, as well as a way to create spaces which would exemplify the Catalonia that they want. In *Gràcia* I saw all the time ways in which feminist activist directly tackle this "disciplining" of women in public spaces, by graffiti-ing and vandalising overtly sexist advertising in public spaces. I was once even given stickers to plaster on these public spaces, calling out the *masclisme*.

Àngels' walk was one which centred around the history of women in the *El Born* district, walking with me from *La Fossar de les Moreres*, a memorial square designed by a female architect commemorating the fallen Catalan dead, next to the cathedral of *Santa Maria del Mar*. She brought photos with her to show me the human chain that was formed on the last *Diada*, or independence day, showing many of the women in their group in the countryside of Catalonia participating in the mass movement, making sure their desires and their causes were made visible with the rest of the *independentistas*. At the time, *Feministes per la Independencia* were planning what they would be doing for the 2016 event. She also told me of a group who operate within *Ca La Dona* working specifically on women's history, bringing ideas of the visibility to the forefront of our conversations. Àngels wanted to focus our walk around three key sites of importance to women and Catalonia in this area; "*Ca La Dona, Proleg* [a feminist book shop], *que La Bonnemaison, no? como un triangulo.*" The library is named after Francesca Bonnemaison, who founded the *Biblioteca Popular de la Dona* (Women's Popular Library), to help educate working class women in the early Twentieth Century, something which exemplifies the liberal beginnings of Feminist Catalan nationalism at this time. Àngels knew the owner of the book shop *Proleg* (Prologue in Catalan), a Catalan woman most likely in her late 70s, who spoke to me in Catalan, showing the ties the women in these institutions keep, to work together and help build networks around their causes and visibility.

I met Tania at her office at *Universitat de Pompeu Fabra* university, in the same campus where the 40th *Jornades Catalanes de la Dona* was held. She explained how being visible was one of the main reasons that *Feministes per la Independencia* organised as an activist group as well as a political group.

“[...] probably it was 2014, we started discussing this, that, um, there were not enough women voices in the public debate. There were of course, top leading figures who were females, such as Carmè Forcadell when she was leader of the ANC¹³, or Muriel Casals as the leader of Omnium, Teresa Forcades in Process Constituent. But they looked like, you know, exceptions even if they had, um, a broad media presence, you know, there were not many women in the debates, on TV, on panels that these organisations or groups were having from the cities, or around the country, and we thought that it was not only about women's presence, but not having feminist voices in the debate.”

For Tania, a feminist voice is not deemed an automatic label just by virtue of being a woman. I found that above all the use of the word ‘feminist’ in the work and name was not a token to show they were concerned about women, but they use this word as a way to make visible social and political injustice. She continued:

“And that if this so-called project was going to be successful, or at least if we thought that it could be successful, we should have feminists working on it. Because, you know, it's the foundational basis for the new state, so that any sort of influence that we might have at the time- lobbying political organisations, lobbying political parties would be again for the future state.”

The process of independence, however likely or impossible, is happening. Visibility and the sound of feminist voices are tantamount to moving the group's activism from discussions, to action and the potential for influence in the political sphere. This willingness to work in tandem with political parties and representatives whom did not necessarily hold the same views as them is something which made this group particularly interesting for me, as I usually hear and encounter that politics and activism often do not go hand in hand. However, by having their presence visible, Tania feels that their goal is also more visible, and thus perhaps more real.

¹³ ANC stands for Assemblée Nacional de Catalunya

iii. *Imagined Futures*

The story of *Ca La Dona* is one of social justice and activism in that it originated as an occupied building, which was eventually legitimised by the Town Hall. As Mercè said,

"This exists because a group of coordinated women decided to occupy it. They were the first 'okupas.'" (1)

Through civil disobedience and by using their bodies in public space to force this issue onto the public agenda, their cause could be legitimised by the Catalan government. Through the history of this struggle, it's possible to imagine change through similar organising and the concept of an on-going process which permeates the whole movement. In Mercè's imagination, the occupation of this building can show possibility for change. Thus, as discussed previously, space can be understood as gendered. Furthermore, according to Massey, Time-space dichotomies are also gendered. Where time and space are dichotomous, the relationship is kept in a polarized position in the same way as other Western dualisms in thought, such as masculine and feminine. Feminist geographers have railed against this defining through "continuous series of mutual oppositions" (Massey 1994, 6). Therefore, "it is [...] moreover, time which is typically coded masculine and space, being absence or lack, as feminine. [...] It is time which is aligned with history, progress, civilization, politics and transcendence and coded masculine. And it is the opposites of these things which have, in the traditions of western thought, been coded feminine" (Massey 1994, 6). By focussing again on networks, community and occupation of spaces, this binary can be broken, and 'masculine' progress, history and politics can cross over into the 'feminine' realms of dreams, desires and imagination.

Seen from a Marxist feminist perspective, this struggle is about imagining an alternative society to the patriarchal capitalist one which they live in presently. As Haraway states, "Liberation rests on the construction of the consciousness, the imaginative apprehension of oppression and so of possibility" (Haraway 2001, 291). In her descriptions of the neighbourhood, Mercè spoke about the class oppression and conflict that she experienced, as well as showing pride in its working class roots and the way the community organises:

"The Left [Esquerra de l'Eixample] was the most working class neighbourhood, and the other was the most bourgeois. If you want beautiful modernist houses, you have to go to the other area, the right [Derecha de l'Eixample]. And instead I am very interested, because here they put all the services that the bourgeoisie didn't want to see." (2)

Here she can see how this has benefitted the neighbourhood; how a *bourgeois* society effectively tries to erase the facilities and public amenities that working class citizens rely on. When we walked past her mother and grandmother's old shop, it was easy to see the difference in intersection of the roads in terms of upkeep and 'money'. A well-dressed couple walked past, and she stopped to say:

"Interestingly, the street Consejo de Ciento was richer than Carrer Villaroel. Villaroel was the poorest. You know, there was a bit of class there, they still had a little class. " (3)

This illustrated to me that she sees and experiences class in her everyday life, and even has a certain pride in this part of her history; that these are the people who have made changes in the city and the country. Because *Esquerra de l'Eixample* contains most of the public services and facilities, like the Hospital Clinic, which Mercè referred to as the heart of the *barrio*, the recent flurry of cuts to public services are high on the agenda of the community's problems, especially in light of the austerity measures of the right-wing PP government. *Dreta de l'Eixample*, experiences a significant amount more tourism. Mercè shows disillusion with policy at the moment, but also shows how there is an existing structure within Catalonia that could be successful if operating within its own terms and no restrictions from capitalist, patriarchal society.

Nearing the end of our walk, Mercè and I came upon a huge skeleton of a building under construction on *Avinguda de Roma*. As soon as she laid eyes on this building site, her anger was visible:

"This, this is so awful. This was the Telefonica building. [...] But then now, now, they're doing a huge deconstruction, and they say, they say, they're going to make it into a hotel. [Makes disbelieving noise] it is awful, because you already know that Barcelona is being turned into a hotel. Because look, this is a hotel, over there is a hotel, and now, if all of this is a hotel, of course Sants station is here, of course, well, here's your problem! I mean, the station is very close!" (4)

Considering her stance on occupation and direct action, as well as the stance of the current mayor of Barcelona on private property and tourism¹⁴, I asked her whether people were trying to stop or protest this development.

"Yeah, but The council also wants to stop it, the council itself, Ada Colau also wants to stop it. But then, of course, [...] you have to pay the owners. What happened to El Banc in Gracia, pfff, you know? So here is the problem. Property, private property." (5)

Here, Mercè is referencing *El Banc Expropiat*, (The Expropriated Bank) in *Gràcia*, an occupied bank turned community centre, which was secretly paid for by the last right wing mayor to stave off riots before the mayoral elections. Mercè can already see that the development in the city can't be stopped, even when you have a mayor who is actively against the over development of tourism. If you can pay, you can do it. In an anti-capitalist society, however, perhaps this couldn't happen. By perceiving that what they have already in place is being hindered by a structure which does not recognise their political, and perhaps even national values, Mercè can imagine the possibilities of what they could achieve outside of this system.

¹⁴ Ada Colau was a social activist before she became the first female mayor of Barcelona. She was part of PAH, a radical action housing group, who would regularly occupy banks and the houses of tenants who were about to be evicted, famously having been arrested for her activism. Ada Colau did not want to pay for the renewal of the lease on El Banc even though she agreed with the movement and was/is part of it. She wanted to give them a new space, but the problem is speculation and private property, and the occupiers did not want to be given a new space for this reason. They radically oppose speculation and the monopoly of private property owners in their *barrio*, as well as in wider society.



Fig. *Plaça de la Vila de Gràcia, Gràcia*

I lived in and around the *barrio* of *Gràcia* for three years, which is often referred to as *La República Independiente de Gràcia*, for its close-knit community spirit, history of organising and occupation, as well as the significant lack of big chain businesses. Although it is a fairly middle class *barrio* of Barcelona, it is not surprising to see every balcony hung with the *Estellada* flag of independence. I met Aina in *Plaça de la Vila de Gràcia*, her favourite part of the neighbourhood and she told me about the importance of the *plaças* in *Gràcia*:

“It is very important for identity, yes, it’s a basic idea [...] It is a place of identity, to talk, to find out about things, to meet people, ... it’s a second home..” (6)

The affinity that Aina feels in this area with the squares is something I felt very strongly about living in the area, and I even found it difficult occasionally to allow her to show me things without trying to steer the conversation or the direction of the walk. The powerful symbolism and importance of *the plaças* is certainly not unique to Barcelona, or even to Spain, yet *Gràcia* can be seen as a microcosm for autonomous organisation and resistance through community action and occupation of spaces and buildings. I attended *El Banc* before the evictions took place and was in the midst of the protests and the riots that ensued the eviction by the police. The sheer scope of the communication between residents and the level of engagement in the conversation surrounding the topic from all sides represented the kind of potential that all my participants spoke of in their hopes for an independent Catalonia.



Fig. The Civic Centre in *Sant Maeri*

The change of usage and symbolism for the built environment can also belie the perception of possibility. Because of the political shifts and history of the city, the city's architecture and areas have been transformed through not only the re-naming of streets, but the repurposing of buildings. This was particularly apparent to me the second time I met Maria in *Sant Martí*, where she has lived for a long time. She had brought a map with her so we could see where the *barrio* extended to and where she was going to take me. The metro station comes up onto *Rambla de Guipúscoa*, a tree lined and very, very loud thoroughfare. Maria, at 85, is my oldest participant and despite her initial doubts surrounding her 'usefulness', her generosity and effort was quite overwhelming for me. We walked for two and a half hours, stopping only in the middle for a moment, whilst I changed the battery of my camera. Following a central sculpture on the *Rambla*, a metallic strip which coiled upwards into waveforms along the road, she read the chronological history of the area to me, occasionally stopping to tell me, for example, about the working class history of the area. Despite the noise and pollution, every bench was occupied along the *Rambla*. We came across a building soon along our path which was covered roof to floor in a painting of a woman's face:

"This is the civic centre of the neighbourhood. It was the residence of the women's section of the Falange¹⁵ ... of Franco. [...]. They came here, had their classes here, and their things, until at one point, when the Falange was already over, well, people in the neighbourhood were in neighbourhood associations, and so we occupied it." (7)

To go from being a bastion in fascist and conservative structures of women in the society to being an occupied building by the community and feminists is a stark contrast, and reminded me of how much Maria has seen and experienced in the city. The huge face on the building tucked in amongst trees set back from the road is so striking that, I'm so shocked to see that I had been to the building next door dozens of times; this squat, stern midnight blue glass building is the Spanish office for immigration in the city, notorious for its massive queues, intimidating staff, complex paperwork and dreary bureaucratic processes. My interaction with the city and its infrastructure is enriched by the knowledge and experiences of my participants, and their imagination for what has been and could be. Maria continued to tell me about the radical uses of the building after it was occupied:

"Well, the town hall.. we left it for a moment, but we had meetings, and just at the end, it became a civic centre. The women who had a committee here in the neighbourhood met here, it was illegal because, well, people came to ask us to guide them in relation to abortions." [Laughs, because it's almost unbelievable to her](8)

She continued to tell me that they managed to establish a family planning clinic in the hospital, and acted as a centre for women, fighting for the changes in society, that are still not free from precarity, especially in terms of women's safety and health. We continued through the *barrio*, where she

¹⁵ The Falange is the fascist ideology under which Franco ruled during his dictatorship. Interestingly, it was also anti-capitalist, but also anti-democracy and anti-liberal. Apart from being very conservative and entwined heavily with the Catholic church, it was nationalist in its aims to completely crush any regional separatism.

showed me that the neighbourhood has a high population of elderly people who tend to vote in a right wing political direction, as I gradually started to notice the presence of just as many Spanish flags as there were Catalan ones. The very tall high rises that cluster around the tiny remaining section of the old *Sant Martí* and its park, which is changing and developing quickly, don't seem to be a main cause for concern to Maria, when I question her on building work that is happening. It seemed more that she focussed on larger structural issues in her society, especially as she told me she had stopped being so active in the neighbourhood since the 1980s, to focus her attention on the feminist struggle centred around *Ca La Dona*. Growing up in *Hospitalet*, a working class area on the edge of the city, her father was imprisoned for his views during the dictatorship, and was also a member of the POUM, a dissident Marxist political group; she recounted a difficult time during rationing after the war:

*"... Hunger, worry, because my father had political ideas and had to hide many things .. I remember in my house there was a frame on the large dining table, as big as this window [points] of Marx!
And us young ones, we said 'who's that?' and he says, 'it's your grandfather.'" [Laughs] (9)*

After her father explained to her the intersectionality of their struggle, including race, class and gender, she continued with this:

"In the 80s when I met Maria Mercè Marçal, who was a nationalist, for independence and so on, we had the idea that, we wanted the revolution to be by women, working class, and Catalan, no?" (10)

With this political history in her lifetime, Maria showed me she can envision what is possible from the ashes of the systems that have crumbled before.

Tania used the recent political upheaval and instability in Spanish politics to explain why she doesn't believe that what her group is fighting for can happen in the existing structures.

"Either none of this is possible, or it is much more likely to happen in the near future than Spain; you just saw the results of the general election last weekend.¹⁶ I mean but, you cannot say ok this electorate is stupid, I think this is not very democratic, I mean people vote what they vote, so we just have to accept that there is a majority of Spaniards that, you know, are right wing, [...] But that's a reality, so I don't buy these Podemos and all the Confluencia thing that, 'Yeah, we still can reform Spain!' Come on! The country in which the Popular Party is residual, it already exists! [laughs] You know, and it's here! So, don't, don't let us wait, you know, maybe two generations to see political turmoil and maybe, yeah, maybe Spain is different, but these are, you know, there is a strong support for this, this party and what it means in terms of policy and it's a party, and people don't seem to care that it's a party that governs against the other half of the population. You know, it's not just pro-independence groups, um, but it's against social movements, I mean with the Ley Mordaza, you know, this very strict law."¹⁷

There was a sense of urgency in Tania's voice here. By seizing "history, progress, civilization, politics and transcendence" (Massey 1994, 6), working across politics and social activism, a sense of agency is created. She went on to explain that she did not mean to be disingenuous, and that it could also be seen as a pipe dream.

"I mean, we wish, though we are realistic and most probably we won't get a hundred per cent, or even [laughing] eighty per cent of what we sustain here, but as I said, I think we have a stronger chance to make, to, to, to see some of this happening in the near future, with a new state, than rather trying to reform a state that doesn't seem to be that reformable."

Although I didn't manage to get an ethnographically deep set of interviews with Tania, her approach to understanding the city is interesting in terms of what she decided to point out and lend meaning to. I was also able to access her in-depth and high level of knowledge, especially as she is someone who is quite inaccessible in terms of her very busy schedule and demanding job and role as an activist and professor at *Universitat de Pompeu Fabra*, Barcelona. We didn't walk in her *barrio*, but instead walked a route between the university to *Ca La Dona*, one she takes weekly to the meetings. However, I asked her where she lived and how she moves through the city and what the sentiment towards independence was like there:

"Well, even if we live close to Hospitalet, you always tend to go close to the city centre, but um, my partner's family lives in Hospitalet, and it's the neighbourhood closer to Barcelona, and it's one of the oldest neighbourhoods. And, and there you can find, um, um, you know, significant amount of support for independence, now the more you move to the suburbs, the less support you find."

¹⁶ Almost a majority to the right wing Partido Popular, a party founded by fascists

¹⁷ *Ley Mordaza*, also called a 'gag law' that stops a lot of freedoms, such as calling on people to protest on social media, disrupting public events and trying to stop a public eviction.

Places which are unsympathetic or sceptical to the idea of independence can be seen to have less of a connection to a well- established sense of community in the city. It places further importance on the presence of networks and community to not a sense of “nation-ness”, but also the indignance and desire to change things as an action against the existing state.

The role of historical symbolism in the city, and the living tributes to change played a large part in the walk I took with Tania. Again, We walked past *Parc de la Ciutadella* in the *barrio* of *El Born*. The park is the central green space of the city, and she described to me the significance of the area to the autonomy of the people and the government:

“Part of that area was demolished by the king, and the park was a citadel, and it's one of the few citadels in the world I guess, that, because it's very close to the sea, right? That it's not built to defend the city against potential you know, enemy forces, but rather the canons point at the city (from the sea?) No from the citadel, from.. and actually they were, they were used several times against the city, to keep the population calm, you know? [...] The park itself was a neighbourhood in the city, it was completely destroyed when the citadel was built. And from that citadel, one of the few remaining buildings is actually the parliament, the current Catalan parliament, which used to be the arsenal of the citadel, so it has strong symbolic power as well, right? So it's taking back a building that used to bomb the city from, you know? To, well, to to be the the site of the um, of people's sovereignty.”

The possibility of change which is so evident in this account can be easily linked to how Tania feels about the possibility for fundamental change that independence could enable. In this account her imagination and the progress of history are entangled. If such a significant turn can have been possible in the architecture of the city, what else is possible, if one can imagine it?

iv. *Value in the Process: Utopia as 'Non-place'*

"Away with your man-visions! Women propose to reject them all, and begin to dream dreams for themselves." Susan Anthony, 1871, American activist

Tania talks about the process of independence as a fluid non-static approach to the idea of statehood and as an instrument for change rather than through a traditional approach to nationalism as an all encompassing goal with a definitive end.

"Everyone sees independence as an instrumental, uh, mechanism to achieve a different country. It's not that independence will solve all the problems, but the public debate has been stuck on procedural issues for a long time. [...] We might disagree on the type of state we would like, not the... I mean the type of relationship with the Spanish state, we would like, but of course we agree on the basis of what a feminist state should look like. Right? So even if they don't want to participate, they are happy that there are feminists engaged in discussions and you know, providing input on what a feminist state, well, a feminist ... it's sounds very utopian! This is our goal, we know we probably won't get there, but feminising and feminist-ising, you know, both the process as well as the outcome of the process."

It seemed to me here that Tania referred to 'utopia' in the sense that she did not want to be misconstrued as an illusionist trying for an impossible reality. In David Pinder's *In Defense of Utopia*, he calls for a revival in utopian urbanism, to be redefined in "more open and process orientated ways." as "cities are imaginary as well as real places," (Pinder 2002, 238) which are constructed through desires, dreams, fears alongside materiality. For Tania, the idea of independence is a catalyst for action and visibility of their voices and presence within the debate, encouraging their desires to be heard and made tangible, whether in policy or by changing public debate and opinion.

Mercè's attitude to this sense was similar, in that perhaps even more that the ultimate goal of independence, it is the physical experiencing of the struggle as well as the imagining of a future society, that is central to their activism:

"The processes are very slow, but the feminists also know that the process alone is enriching, to serve, you learn in the process. [...] To value the process, we don't lose anything by doing it. We are winning, we are learning, we are seeing possibilities. Maybe today, we won't do it, or tomorrow, but maybe when we read the paper in 10 or 15 years - a triumph, you look and you see, it was this, you know?" (1)

A feminist approach to the concept of utopia is one which is not fixed, which is still being imagined, created and invented. Thus, the process can perhaps be seen as the utopia; a nonplace, a path, a perpetual state of transition. As discussed previously, it is possible to perceive and experience space gendered, thus it is also possible to embody utopias, suggesting the "materialisation in the concrete designs for buildings, towns and cities, of the abstract visions of Utopian literature. These built forms structure space." (Bingaman et al. 2002, 17). The process does not have to come to an end, nor does the utopian vision have to manifest itself outside of the "radical possibility of the fragment",

concentrating itself on the “work left incomplete, unfinished- social transformation in the making” (ibid).

Whilst we were at *Ca La Dona*, after lamenting the current problems within the education system of Spain and the legislations which affect the everyday life of its citizens, Mercè, in a great sense of jest, said:

“If we get independence, we’ll do everything new, and everything will be great!” [Laughs a big hearty laugh, with a good hint of irony] (2)

To joke about something which is so rooted in serious oppression and conflict from her accounts and the stories of many others of my participants, was at once refreshing and intriguing for me. It was a direct statement in combat with any notions of nostalgic nationalism that is often associated with the cause. She continued:

“There is a utopian element, but it’s... no it’s a ... about ... feminists have always, ... we have said ‘another world is possible’. Well, in this idea of another possible world, to be independent is another type of possible society, another possible world, another possible model. Actually, actually, like always, a utopia has to serve as an engine... it has to serve as the motor of the challenge.” (3)

Thus, the idea of utopia serves as a motor, a challenge to work towards, and so it provides a means for a process to take place, a way to make change tangible if there is a goal, or an idea, an organisation of society, to work towards.

“The challenge, that, that, that, that challenges you and you get up and in this positive sense; not in the sense like [sarcastically] ‘Ahhh utopia’, that nobody has seen, there are pink colours and everything... no! [seeing life through rose tinted lenses] That’s not it! It is simply a goal that says, “I will arrive, or I won’t arrive,” But this encourages me, it encourages me, it says, ah, look, come, look what we are doing, look what we are doing, look what we are doing! To remove this sense [of blind utopia] is positive, that’s to say, it’s not a negative approach. It would be a negative approach to say ‘no we can’t do anything, here is a disaster and it’s fatal... This is one thing, in the place of the other, which is - ‘we can do it, we can look, we can see what is it.’ You know? ‘Let’s see if we can change - let’s see if we can change.’ (4)

This can be seen as a middling position, one which tampers the blind optimism and often dogmatic ideals of utopianism, and cynicism towards social change. George Eliot coined the term “meliorism” to describe just this belief in the improvement of society, that “social improvement in a world of injustices was feasible only when distilled through scepticism.” (Waddell, 2012) A sense of compromise is introduced, but significantly not defeatism, as Mercè uses the word “winning”; they are winning through their action, their dreaming and the presence in the debate. As Akash Kapur states, this kind of utopianism is “aiming not at perfection but at improvement, accepting the vagaries of human nature as a premise that policy must accommodate, rather than wish away, meliorism forces a longer, more calibrated approach.” (Kapur 2016)

For Maria, the struggle for independence and for feminism has been a lifelong one, and she doesn't intend to give up:

"I'm fighting to the end, eh. I believe in this, in this Catalan Republic of Catalan Countries, not only of Catalonia. Catalan countries, because I know that in Valencia and the Balearic Islands there are a lot people who agree with us. If we do not get this in a fair manner, in this negotiation, the struggle of women, the struggle of feminism, if we do not succeed with this, there will not be a republic as we believe it has to be. At least from the point of view of the women, who are on this path, no? Now, it will be very difficult, it will not be easy. It will not be easy." (5)

As I descended the escalator, after parting ways at the end of our walk in *Sant Martí*, she turned and raised her fist, loudly whispering, "*i Visca Catalunya!*", almost instantaneously bringing her hand to her mouth with a mischievous gasp and a smile.

Conclusion

In a time of political uncertainty in Spain, the possibility of Catalan independence is still in the realms of the “not yet set” (Bammer 1991, 7). However, at the root of my study, the body is central to place making in its current form as fluid, dependent on social interaction and activism, as well as being at the construction of an elastic future society. What is particularly poignant to me is the age of my participants; most will never live to see the fruits of their efforts (which are concrete and engaged with current politics) if there indeed ever will be any. Thus the idea of independence is an active imagining to change the physical spaces around them, a means to move towards something, rather than a static goal that must be reached at all costs.

Emphasis on process, from the process of independence being perhaps more important than outcome, to being visible in the process of creating a new state and in public space, means that not only is the very meaning of being a citizen fluid and elastic, but the concepts and constructs in that of creating a new state are also not fixed in stasis. Doreen Massey’s meditations on how difficult and most likely impossible it is to draw boundaries around places pertains to plurality of identities and meanings of places. Another seemingly disjointed effect of placing nationalism and feminism together are the ideas of borders; recreating them or enforcing them. Yet this seems to be the antithesis of a progressive place-making exercise in that of Catalonia in the views of *Feministes per la Independencia*. It is important then not to represent different boundaries, but to show fluidity through the passing of time, through memory, through the way a single person navigates the meanings from their surroundings. In my research I tried to explore how to avoid lines and border marks when attempting to understand the pluralities in my participants’ interaction with their neighbourhoods and the city, with their ideas of nationalism. Moving one step further, Massey uses the constructs of social relations as an interpretation of space and place, rather than just the physical borders or boundaries indicated on a map: “Economic, political and cultural social relations, each full of power and with internal structures of domination and subordination, stretched out over the planet at every different level, from the household to the local area to the international.” (Massey 1991) In this way then, I could read the data I gathered with my participants alongside this interpretation of place-making as one which is at a cross section, as well as a sum of, all our relationships.

SPANISH TRANSCRIPTS

CHAPTER III THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

ii. Intersectionality

(1) Es que es tan importante para nosotras, el slogan de una gran poeta catalana que es María Merce Marçal, que también era maestra, que también era profesora, y que lo dijo muy bien, nosotros son las tres cosas, se han la cosa ser: dona, de classe baixa, de clase baja, y de nación oprimida, que decir la lengua, tal, tal, tal, pero fijate que son tres. No es una transversalidad es una *interseccionalidad*, *interseccionalidad*, es muy distinto, y entonces, claro, entonces, esto lo dijo María Mercé, lo dijo en los años 80 y todavía ahora Jornadas Catalanas de la Dona en el 2016 volvemos a sacar esto, volvemos a sacar esto, por los tres motivos, por los tres motivos, osea porque somos anti patriarcales somos anticapitalistas, entiendes? y somos catalanistas. Reivindicamos la raíces, las identidades dónde se pueden colocar donde se pueden poner, no? como siempre atención es que el catalanismo desde el movimiento feminista siempre es de acogida, siempre es de acogida, simples de acogida, ya no es nunca para marginar a nadie, que es simplemente para acoger, yo te acojo desde mi manera de ser y reconozco tu manera de ser y te acojo de *mí* manera de ser. Des de mi lengua, yo te acojo desde mi lengua, es este el planteamiento no.

CHAPTER IV ANALYSIS

I CROSSING THE BOUNDARIES OF CITIZENSHIP

(1) Entonces para mí, la calle Villaroel, es como una ... es mi calle.

(2) Para mí es muy entrañable porque mi madre fue una de las fundadoras mi madre Rosa Vidal qué es un era que no era una mujer que había estado siempre en una tienda de cara al público [...] y conocía a todas las vecinas del barrio y cuándo se formó la Asociación mi madre pudo captar a todas las vecinas para que formaran parte de la Asociación. Y para mi madre trabajó mucho para las mujeres en la Vokalía de mujer estaba Esquerra de l'Eixample y se preocupó muchísimo de los problemas también de abortos de las mujeres mayores. Mi madre busco la manera también de de pasear a las mujeres solas hacia una salida.

(3) Mi madre siempre guardó su espíritu Republicano y el espíritu Catalanista, siempre siempre siempre. Te hablare Catalan celebrar San Jorge, 11 de Setembre y tal, tal, [...] porque ella de pequeña había sido educada de esta manera.

(4) Aquí donde [...] el bazaar de los Chinos, antes era la la panadería de la Carmeta, Carme, pequeña, Carmeta. Y aquí también, todo las mujeres encontraban aquí, y aquí a mí gustaba mucho a ir, por que como yo era de la tienda aquí en frente, yo me podría collar- de 'ay! ay! a este nino vamos a dar el primero, vamos a darle primero, sabes?" [...]

"Entonces, en este trozo, de calle, yo me jugado much, he jugado muchísimo. Aquí, en esta tienda, había una alpargateria. alpargatas, son zapatos hechos de cuerdas, en un alpargateria. sabes? Y había era la abuela tenía la tienda, y tenía tres nietas que jugaban conmigo. Sabes, aquí, y había una, una pequeña colmado. Colmado es una tienda de" [...]

"Y mi madre, para mi madre, esto árboles, este árbol, sobre todo este, para mi madre era un árbol sagrado. Porque el árbol, era su árbol. Siempre, siempre. Nosotros, claro se jugábamos aquí, jugábamos a salta la cuerda, la comba, todo en este trozo, todo en este parte de aquí. Es un árbol muy viejo. Y así nota, que es muy muy viejo.

II. THE INVISIBLE AND THE VISIBLE

(1) Entonces yo, la figura de mi padre no la tengo, no tengo una figura de padre, tengo una figura de abuela y de madre siempre presente, y mi padre ausente.” [...]

“Mi madre, mi abuela nos educaron para que fuéramos económicamente independientes. porque lo que se vivía en esta época de los años 50, y 60, en España, era que las mujeres no tenían independencia económica, dependiente del marido, y entonces pues claro...

(2) Yo nací en el año 1947.... en España posguerra, muy, muy dura, porque la república - pensaba que si ganaban los aliados conseguiríamos sacar fuera Franco. Y no fue así, ya se terminó la guerra mundial y no conseguimos, ni los españoles ni los catalanes. Y las catalanas no conseguimos que los había dos echarán fuera el fascismo de Franco. Entonces, cuando yo nací todo era oscuro, todo era gris. Había ración ... uhh.. racionamiento, solo se podría comprar aceite y pan, con unos tickets, con unos sellos. Entiendes? Vale. La gente tenía miedo. Era momentos de miedo. Las mujeres estaban desaparecidas en su casa. Por qué el fascismo, como el fascismo alemán, tiene a que yo que te dije a las tres Ks- del ‘Kirche, Kuchen y Kinder.’

(3) Mi madre y mi abuela siempre trabajaron en una pequeña tienda, una granja lechería, una granja de vender leche, leche, queso, mantequilla, huevos, sabes? Una granja de estas. En este tipo de tiendas, de granjas el público era siempre solo mujeres, no venían los hombres a comprar, solo venían mujeres, entonces, mi madre se convirtió en especie de psicología, de... de... de de profesora de toda las mujeres que llegaban a la tienda y van explicando sus historias.

[...]

El hecho, el hecho de que el ambiente fuera tan, tan, tan femenino, o sea tan, tan, tan de mujeres, y viéramos toda [...] ha está de paso esta, ha esta marido le han dicho esto, a esta ? pasa esto, a esta la no tiene dinero, a esta ... tal... esta ha perdido estas ... sabes? Todo esto, claro, parece que no, pero va creando también una conciencia del malestar de las mujeres, y de la discriminación de las mujeres.

(4) Cuando se llama ‘Gaixample’, es verdaderamente, de gays masculinos. Osea, es el dominio; la invisibilidad de las lesbianas es invisibilidad. Que, en realidad cuando se habla de ‘Gaixample’, estamos hablando de una eixample gay, pero algo masculino. Y también, cuando hablamos de el ‘Gaixample’ [a van loudly drives past and she repeats] estamos hablando de dinero rosa [pink capitalism], de gays, pero de gays con dinero. Claro. No estamos de hablando de gays de la clase trabajadora, estamos hablando de gays con dinero. que pueden pagar servicios, que pueden pagar los clubs, que pueden pagar los masajes, que pueden pagar todo esto.

(5) Si, si, Catalunya es un pueblo, muy acogedor, y tenemos una ley contra la LGTB-fobia. Muy importante que es prácticamente no hay ningún en otro sitio, que se pueda denuncia y perseguir como crimen de odio la homophobia. Y esto, en catalunya es 'leader' de primera fila, sabes?

(6) Y entonces empezó a pedir la ‘habitación propia’ de la Virginia Woolf, entiendes?

(7) De nombre de calle, de nombre de sitio, de nombre de mujer, han puesto el nombre de Enriqueta Gallinard, que era una mujer política de Esquerra Republicana, de la época de la república, lo han puesto a este pequeño jardincito. Para nombres de mujeres, pero no en grandes calles, en pequeños sitios.

(8) Ahora veras una cosa muy divertida, [laughs], que es un jardincito pequeñito [raises pitch of her voice to show how small she thinks it is], de interior de isla, de illa, que se llama Sappho. Sappho! [I make noises to suggest I know who Sappho is]. Pero pequenito asi. [...] Vamos a ver si podemos entrar. Que no sé cómo se entrar, pero está aquí.

(9) Esto es, [makes a disgusted sound], esto es un agresion homofobica etcetera etcetera, esto, esta. Ta clarísimo. Y eso no que pode nada, por eso lo pone, lesbos, poetisa griega, sabes? No pone, um, icona de las lesbianas. No lo pone!

III. IMAGINED FUTURES

(1) Entonces de aquí, salio la, lo que es ahora Ca La Dona. Esta salido porque un grupo de mujeres de la coordinadora, decidieron ocupar, fueron las primeras okupas.

(2) La izquierda era el barrio más trabajador y lo otro era el más burgués si tú buscas casas bonitas del modernismo tienes que ir a la otra zona a la zona de la derecha y en cambio aquí soy muy interesante porque aquí pusieron todos los servicios que los burgueses no querían ver .

(3) Es interesante, de la calle Consejo de Ciento era más rica, que la calle Villarroel. La Villarroel era mas pobre. Sabes, había un poco de clases, todavia habia un poco de clases.

(4) Esto, esto es tan horroroso. Esto era la edificio de la Telefonica [I ask just for offices?] Oficinas de la telefónica, taller, ... Entonces ahora, ahora, gran desmontado y dicen, dicen, que van hacer un hotel. [makes disbelieving noise] Es horroroso, por que ya sabes que Barcelona se está convirtiendo en un hotel. Por que mira, esto es un hotel, aqui es un hotel, y ahorra, si todo estos son un hotel, claro la estacion de Sants esta aqui, claro, su problema! Si, el estacion de Sants esta muy cerca!

(5) Ya, pero.... El ayuntamiento, también tiene ganas de parar, el propio ayuntamiento, Ada Colau, también tiene ganas de pararlo. Pero, entonces, claro, [...] Hay que pagar, a las propietarios. Lo que pasa del Banco de Gracia, pfff, entiendes? Entonces, aqui, es el problema. De propiedad, de propiedad privada.

(6) Es muy importante para un identidad propia, si, la plaça es basica. [...] es un lugar de identidad propia de conversar, de conocernos, de conocer gente, de... es la segunda casa.

(7) Esto, es el centro cívico del barrio. Que era, la residencia de las sección femenina de la Falange... de Franco. [...]. Aquí tenia... vivian aqui, tenían aquí sus clases, y sus cosa, hasta que en un momento dado, cuando ya se acabó la Falange, pues.. la gente del barrio estábamos en asociaciones de vecinos y tal, lo ocupamos.

(8) Bueno, el ayuntamiento, nos dejo, de momento, pero, tuvimos reuniones, y tal y al final, se consigue que es fuera un centro cívico. Los mujeres que teníamos una vocalía de mujeres aquí en el barrio, era clandestino porque lo que venían era pedir los de relaciones para guiar abortar. Y cosas de esto, o nos venían y nos denunciaban que su marido respetaba, o cosas por estilo, no? O que no sabían dónde dejar sus hijos, o, en fin. Tenemos charlas, y tal, y entonces cuando se ocupó este edificio, nosotros cogimos una parte del los bajos. Y alli estábamos mucho mejor porque la asociación de los vecinos era pequeñita y nos cambiamos y .. aqui, y bueno y al final ... cuando ya los tratos con el ayuntamiento ya fueron oportunos y, nos escucharon lo

que pedimos es que se muntada en centro de planning. Que entonces, no había centros de planning para los mujeres. Y si, en el centro de sanidad, pusieron el centro de planning.

(9) Hambre, preocupaciones, por que mi padre tenía ideas políticas y tenía que .. esconder muchas cosas, yo recuerdo en mi casa había un cuadro en el comedor grande, como esta ventana [points to big window we're sat next to], del Marx! Y vosotros pequeños decíamos 'quién es?' y dice, 'es el abuelo.' [Laughs]

(10) En los años 80 cuando conocía la MMM, que era nacionalista independentista y tal, en la que tenía aquella, que de idea que quería la revolución como mujer, como clase trabajadora, y como catalana no?

IV. UTOPIA AS NON PLACE

(1) Los procesos son muy lentos, pero las feministas también sabemos que el proceso por el solo, es enriquecedor; sirve, aprendes en el proceso aprendes. [...] Valorar el proceso, no perdemos nada haciendo esto. Estamos ganando, estamos aprendiendo, estamos viendo posibilidades, quizá hoy no lo podemos hacer, ni mañana, pero quizá cuando lean esos papeles de aquí 10 años o 15, de gana mira tú por si, era esto, sabes?

(2) Si conseguimos la independencia, lo hacemos todo nuevo, y lo hacemos todo bien!

(3) Qué es un elemento utópico pero es que... no es una... de.... Las feministas ya de siempre, o sea, hemos dicho 'otro mundo es posible'. Pues, en esta idea de otro mundo posible, estar de independencia es otro tipo de sociedad posible, otro mundo posible, otro modelo posible. En realidad, sea, en realidad, como siempre, una utopía tiene que servir de motor, tiene que servir de motor de reto.

(4) De reto, que, que, que, que, te interpela y te pones en marcha y entonces es en este sentido positivo, no en el sentido de *[sarcastically]* 'ahhhh utopía, que nadie lo ha visto, hay de color de rosa de color de todo...' no! no es esto! sino que es sencillamente un objetivo qué dices, 'llegaré, o no llegaré.' Pero esto, me anima, me anima, dice, ah mira, ven, mientras vamos haciendo, vamos haciendo, vamos haciendo! A ver si podemos, a ver si podemos, a ver si podemos! Sacar este sentido es positivo, o sea, no es un planteamiento negativo. Es el planteamiento negativo sería de eso es decir, 'no podemos hacer nada, aquí es un desastre esto es fatal.' Esto es una cosa, en cambio la otra es- 'podemos hacer, podemos mirar, podemos a ver qué es.' Sabes? 'A ver, si cambiamos, a ver si cambiamos, a ver si cambiamos.'

(5) Yo lucha en esta final, eh. Yo creo que en este, en este república Catalana, de paisos Catalans, no solamente de catalunya, eh. Paisos Catalans, porque yo se que Valencia y Baleares hay mucho gente que está de acuerdo con nosotras. Si no conseguimos de una manera justa, en esto interviene, la lucha de los mujeres, la lucha de feminismo, si no lo conseguimos con esto, no sera una república como creemos que tiene que ser. Por lo menos en des del punto de visto de la mujeres, que estamos en este camino, no? Ahora, sera muy difícil, no sera facil. No sera facil.

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Declaration in lieu of oath

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I hereby assert that my Master thesis - or in the case of group-work my *marked part* of the thesis- was independently composed/authored by myself, using the referred sources and support.

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I agree/disagree that a copy of my master thesis can be borrowed from the library.

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